

# MECHWARRIOR

THE BATTLETECH ROLE PLAYING GAME



FASA CORPORATION

SECOND EDITION



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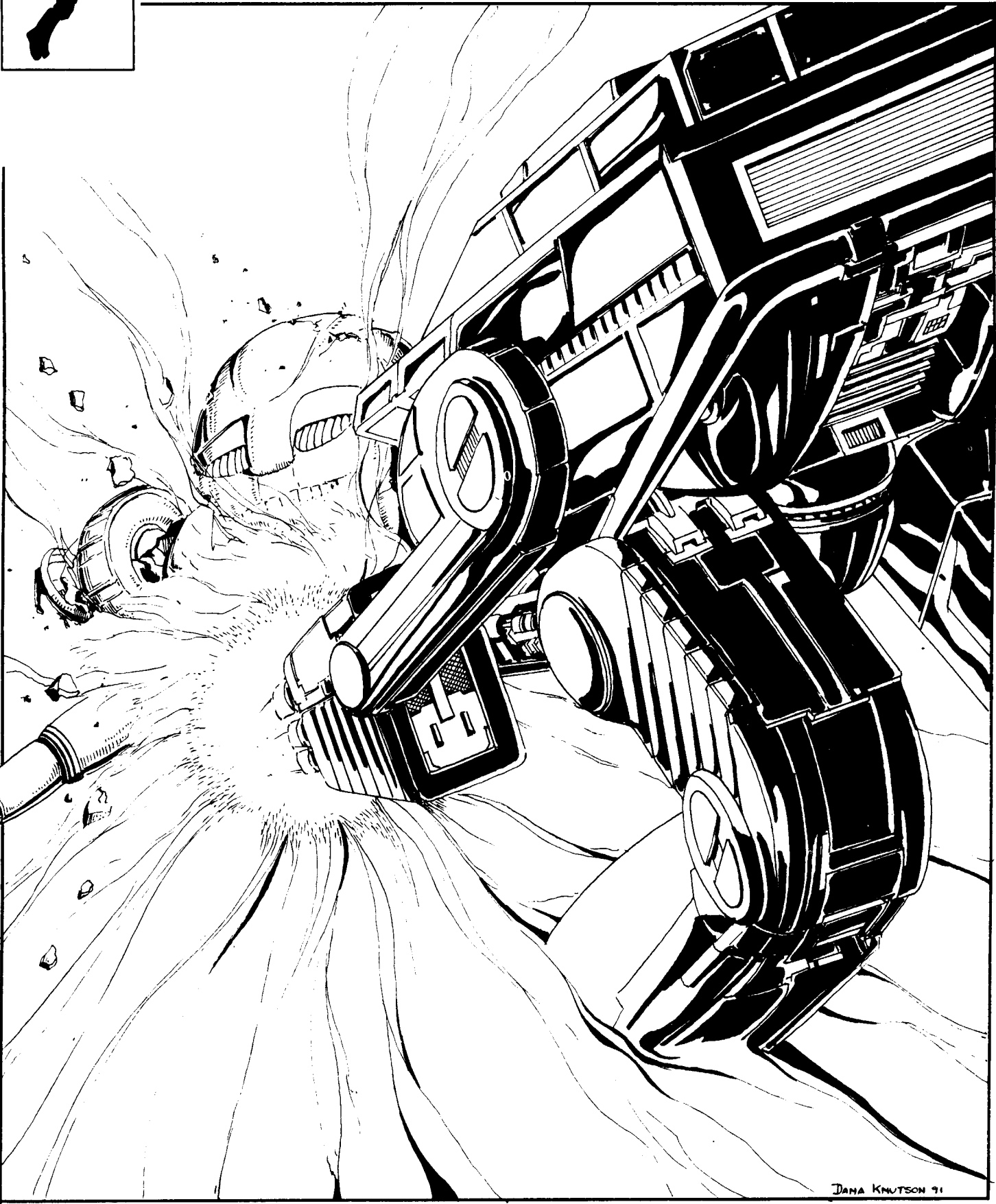
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# INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

By the 31st century, humanity has spread to thousands of worlds, while a handful of powerful empires wage continual war for the right to rule the stars. Foremost among the weapons used in that struggle are BattleMechs. Loaded with autocannons, missile launchers, lasers, and charged-particle beam weapons, these fusion-powered war machines of articulated armor stand upward of ten meters high. Piloting them are MechWarriors, the best, most intensively trained men and women available. Like the armored knights of an earlier age, MechWarriors are popular heroes, and their exploits are the stuff of legends.

**MechWarrior** is a roleplaying game that lets players generate characters from both from the Inner Sphere and the invading Clans quickly and easily. Because the rules provide for 50 different skills, players can create a wide range of character types, including MechWarriors, Techs, Scouts, AeroSpace Pilots, ComStar Acolytes, Infantry, and Merchants. Combat rules are given for engagements between characters, or players can integrate their characters into other **BattleTech** games so that they can take part in everything from a barroom brawl to a full-fledged war.

This book contains everything players need to explore a whole universe of adventures.

### USING THE BOOK

This revised version of **MechWarrior** has been updated to take into account the important new history and the technology that accompanied the Clan invasion of 3050. Every effort has also been made to refine the game mechanics.

**MechWarrior** has been divided into several sections for ease of use.

**Playing the Game** contains all the information needed to generate and roleplay characters in the **MechWarrior** universe, including sections on Skill Rolls, Character Construction, and Skills, plus a special section of pre-generated Archetypes.

**Running the Game** is especially for gamemasters. It covers the rules of combat, damage, and character advancement as well as a special section with tips for running a game or campaign.

The section entitled **The BattleTech Universe** is a primer on the history of the major states of the Inner Sphere and the Periphery, plus background on ComStar. This chapter also has sections on BattleMech and space travel technology, and a rundown of the economics and nobility systems in use in the 31st century.

Players will find what they need to know to play **MechWarrior** in the introductory section and in **Playing the Game**. At some later date, players may wish to read through more of the **BattleTech Universe** section to enhance their understanding.

Gamemasters, on the other hand, will have to be familiar with the entire book. For those who have no experience with gamemastering, it is best to start out as a player in order to gain a good grasp of the rules. **Running the Game** is of particular importance for the gamemaster. He or she needs to take the time to absorb the rules and other material in this book before trying to run a game.

The **Equipment** section describes all the various gear and weaponry that might be available to **MechWarrior** characters. Also included are the game notes relevant to the item.

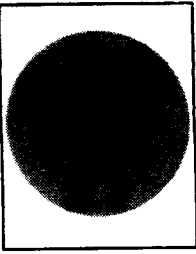
### INTEGRATING BATTLETECH

This revision of **MechWarrior** is fully compatible with the **BattleTech** game. Use the basic **BattleTech** rules as normal, but replace the **BattleTech** base values for Gunnery and Piloting with the **MechWarrior** Base Target Numbers for a character's Gunnery and Piloting Skill Roll.

For a Consciousness Roll in **BattleTech**, make the roll as normal. On the character's Condition Monitor, be sure to mark off one row of boxes as Bruise Damage on the character's Condition Monitor. (This is explained fully in the **Combat** section.)

We suggest using the rules in the **BattleTech Compendium** if the book is available. These rules cover most situations that will arise. The **BattleMech** dueling system presented in the **Solaris VII** campaign module gives more detailed rules for handling small-scale 'Mech engagements and is recommended for use with **MechWarrior**.





# BLACK CATS CROSS YOUR PATH

*Falstaff sweats to death  
And lards the lean earth as he walks along  
—Henry IV (Part One), II.ii.108*

Considering that a war is always on somewhere, things have been pretty quiet these days. It's nice to have a little rest time. Time to train some new recruits and to work out a few new ideas, but only the battlefield can really keep you sharp. "Big Bill Flynn," I say to myself, "a man like you has got to keep fighting, or he's going to turn into just another barroom mariner, always looking for a wedding guest to regale with a story." And there's nothing wrong with that, except that you've got to keep coming up with new stories.

Every year should bring new tales, and last year was no exception. For instance, we got a job to protect Lawrence, this four-bit semi-industrial town in the middle of nowhere. Some House jerk had a bee in his neurohelmet about one of those Star League parts depots being in or near the town. The town was expecting a raid.

I'm not saying the Black Cats are intolerably special, but there just aren't many mercenary infantry units. The life expectancy is too short. People hire you, then expect you to be dead when payday comes. Mostly, though, rich guys would rather hire a few nice-looking 'Mechs than a bunch of normal-size people. It makes them feel important. So we Black Cats mostly get jobs defending little cities. The nice thing is, these are people whose governments won't protect them with so-called "real troops," and so they're happy to see us.

To keep from going buggy, any infantry unit that lasts more than a year has to find creative ways to operate. So Boots (my boss, Sergeant Elizabeth Hill) is always trying newer and stranger ways to peel 'Mechs. Some folks say this means she's already buggy, but it's just a way of keeping us together. They don't call her "Boot Hill" for nothing, you know. She's been boss for nearly two years, longer than most infantry units last.

One of the nice things about being an infantry unit—maybe the only nice thing—is that the tinker boys—the 'Mech drivers—don't take you seriously. So, if you're a good infantry unit, you prove them wrong in fun and interesting ways. They're so humiliated. 'Tis sport, indeed, to see the engineer hoisted on his own petard.

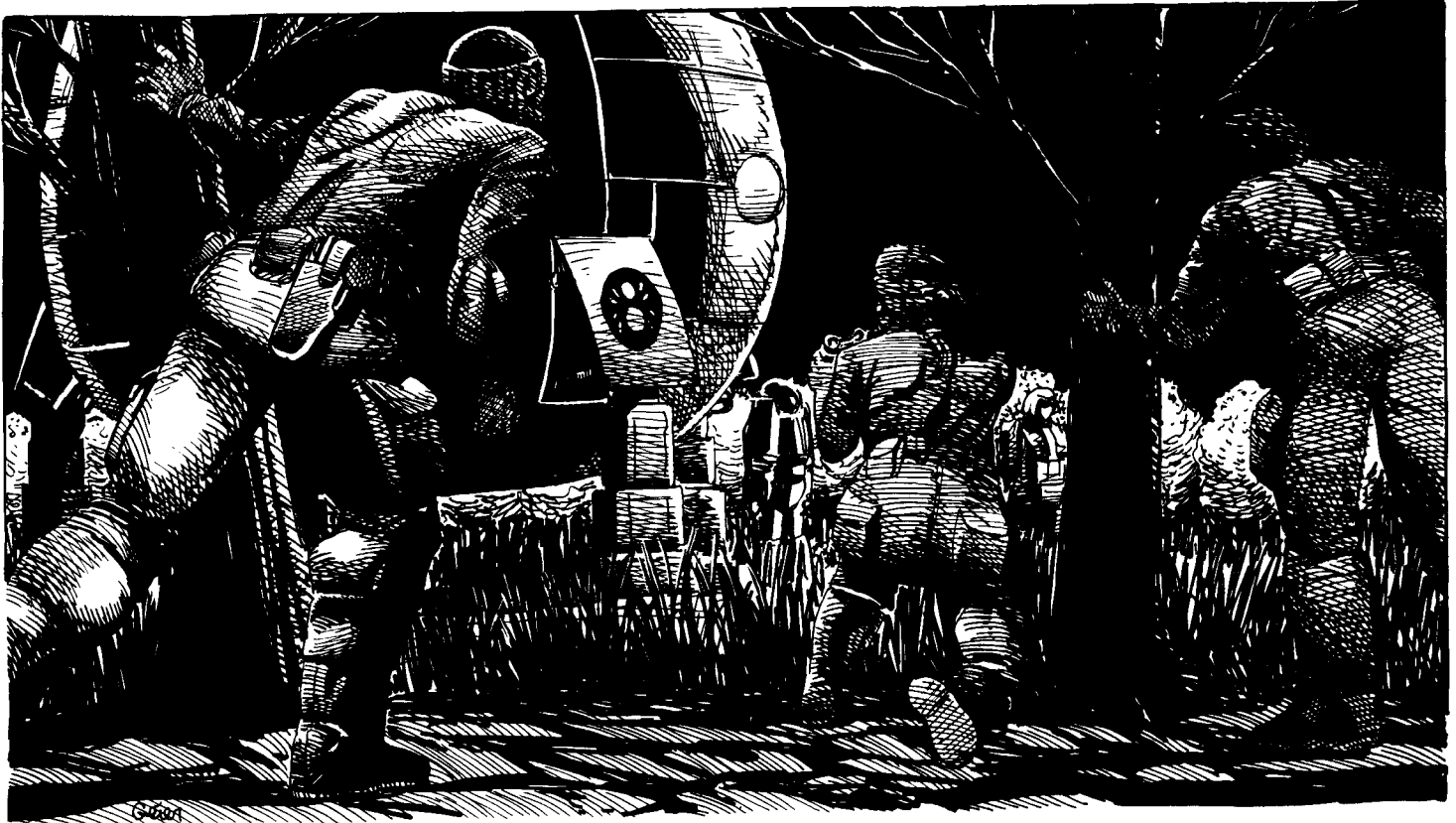
And in Lawrence we made those 'Mechs look petarded.

The raiders did, indeed, show up. And the locals went crazy. Almost from the second those DropShips were launched, the word was around town: "Widows! The Black Widows!"

I'll admit that made my stomach disappear for a few seconds, but then Boots snapped me back to the real world.

"If those are the Black Widows, I'm Siriwan Kurita," she announced. We were going to send a few Cats over for a look-see, but our employers were not happy with our calm manner in the face of what they thought would be a particularly slow, agonizing death of their world.

This is how Boots, Lou Lingg, my little self, and a few new guys and local cops ended up creeping through the woods on a nasty cold night, playing spies to look like we were earning our C-Bills. A



## BLACK CATS CROSS YOUR PATH

little acting is part of the job. Hell, a lot of acting, if you count looking nonchalant while running around the feet of 60 tons of tippy metal. Freezing our triggers off is part of the job, too, but not for no reason. I was just about to say so when we reached the camp.

"Ill met by moonlight, proud Titans," I muttered.

"Wannabees," said Boots. "We just dragged through nature's own cryonics lab for a bunch of Widow wannabees." Then she explained to the locals that this group of no-talents had apparently painted spiders on their 'Mechs, either to confuse people and strike fear into their hearts, or because they just wanted to imitate the Widows.

The Widow Battalion would have wept—or more likely shot them all—had they seen those clowns. There was only one company and some infantry that looked like hell. I hate dealing with guys like that. No challenge, no glory. They set up on the edge of town (we had walked nine clicks out of the way, thanks to the local city boys' sense of direction), obviously expecting to march in while the populace turned tail and fled. I like surprise parties.

The next day, we reviewed probable routes they would take into the city, then set up to meet them. Infantry has an advantage in a city, especially if we know our way around and the enemy don't. Small size works to a distinct advantage when you can squeeze into a tight spot and trap a big hulk.

The big galoots did not appear in town that entire day. Boots said it was possible they were waiting for dark, but it was more likely they had put themselves in such an obvious location because they were hoping the townspeople would simply evacuate. Of course, it was also possible they were merely stupid and didn't have a clue.

The next day, they finally got off their big cans, into their bigger cans, and headed into Lawrence. We met them at the edge of town, and took some potshots like any hometown militia in a sweat. Once we had their attention, Boots ordered a retreat and dispersed the squad into town.

Boots and I—well, Boots actually—had decided to lure some 'Mechs into this large industrial bakery. It was a maze of heavy machinery, vats, and conveyer belts, a good place to trap a 'Mech while it tried to crunch its way out. Let them eat cake, we said.

Once we had two fire teams into the bakery, Boots gets this very friendly look on her face. "Bill," she says, "how would you like to be the hero this afternoon?"

Well, I'd been the hero for Boots before, and it wasn't all it was cracked up to be. But she's the top kick in this outfit, so there's no odds in arguing. She sees the look on my face and says, "Have I ever shown you less than a great time?"

I decided not to answer that, and found myself leading my fire team out the bakery's back door. The raider 'Mechs had already pushed past the bakery and were strolling into town. Working our way from doorway to doorway, we finally got to within 50 meters of the two clumsy-looking buckets of bolts.

"Hi, girls," I said, as we squeezed a few rockets at their tin behinds. We knew it wouldn't hurt them much. We just wanted their attention. We got it. They turned around, and in the words of the poet, all hell broke loose.

'Mechs don't see infantrymen too well, thank god, but I would have given my kingdom, if I had one, for a horse. We were dodging and ducking and beating our feet back to the bakery. All I could think of was that Boots' surprise had better be good.

We hit the door about four kilometers slower than the speed of



light, with these two 50-ton soup cans following as fast as they could. The minute we broke through, Boots waved us off to the right. The 'Mechs smashed clean through the wall about two heartbeats after we got out of their way. I found some cover, then poked my head up.

The two 'Mechs were skating across the floor, trying to grab the walls with their cannons. They did some spins, nice pirouettes, crashed over and under a conveyer belt—one landing on top of the other—and slid on their bellies into a vat of lard. A geyser of lard poured over the 'Mechs.

Boots crawled up next to me.

"Nice touch," I told her. "Can we leave now?"

"Got a match, sailor?" Boots said as she lifted her flame thrower.

The lard burned beautifully. It smelled like all the mess halls in the galaxy at one shot.

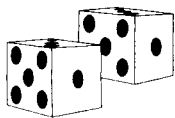
"Now," she said, "I think we better leave."

We took cover in another building just as the ammo in the 'Mechs cooked off.

"O! for a muse of fire," I sang out as the 'Mechs crashed through the top of the building, "that would ascend the brightest heaven of invention."

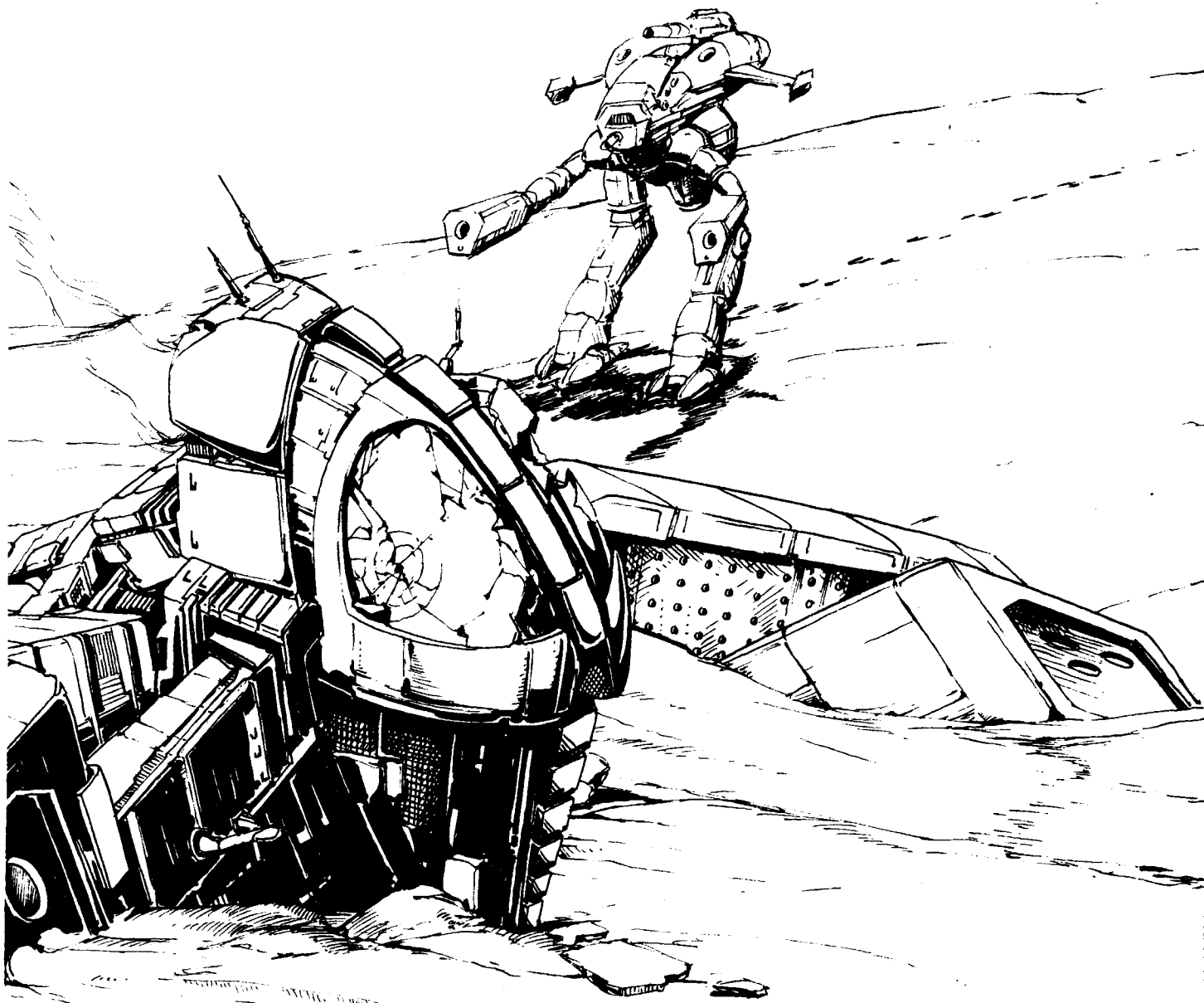
"Watch out," Boots said, clapping me on the back. "You might get what you're after."

# PLAYING THE GAME





# PLAYING THE GAME



DANA KNUSSON 91

# GAME MECHANICS

This section covers the rules players will need to roleplay **MechWarrior**. These rules cover most of the situations a character will encounter in the course of his adventures. The most obvious exception is combat, which is covered in detail in **Running the Game**, a section specially for gamemasters.

## SKILL ROLLS

Any time a character attempts an action whose outcome is uncertain or whenever someone attempts such an action against another character, a skill roll is the means for determining the outcome. A skill roll is a roll of dice against a number assigned to a character's level in a particular skill. The skill involved depends on the attempted action.

## BASE TARGET NUMBERS

To determine the Base Target Number for a particular skill roll, subtract the character's appropriate skill level from the Characteristic Base designated for that skill on the Master Skill List, p. 22. For example, if a character has an Athletic Characteristic of 10 and Running Skill Level 2, his Base Target Number for a Running Skill Roll would be 10 - 2, or 8. (Characteristics and Attributes are discussed in full below.)

## MODIFIERS

Modifiers to a skill roll reflect elements of the game situation that might affect a character's use of his skill. A modifier is a penalty or bonus applied to the Base Target Number to reflect the difficulty of the task at hand.

There are as many modifiers as there are possible skills and situations to which they might apply. Rather than publishing an exhaustive list of possible modifiers for every skill, each skill description includes guidelines to help the gamemaster assign a modifier for the various possible situations.

The Standard Modifiers Table is used to approximate any situation. This method depends upon the gamemaster's judgment and the cooperation of the players. So long as the gamemaster remains an impartial moderator and the players agree to abide by his judgments, resolving any conflict should be a simple matter.

### STANDARD MODIFIER TABLE

Task	Modifier
Easy	-1 to 5
Average	No Modifier
Difficult	+1 to 5

## MAKING A SKILL ROLL

To make a skill roll, the player rolls two six-sided dice (2D6). If the result is equal to or higher than his Base Target Number for an appropriate skill, plus or minus any modifiers assigned by the gamemaster, the character has succeeded at the attempted task.

### Automatic Success and Failure

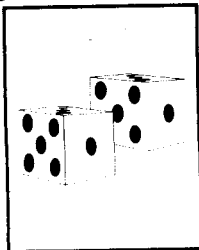
On any skill roll, a die roll result of 12 is an automatic success and a result of 2 is an automatic failure, regardless of the target number, unless the gamemaster dictates otherwise.

## MARGIN OF SUCCESS/FAILURE

Sometimes it is important to know not only if a character succeeds or fails, but how well or how dismally. This is determined by the Margin of Success, which is simply the number of points by which the skill roll succeeded or by which it failed.

For instance, if a character needs a 7 or more to succeed, he has a margin of success of 2 if he rolls a 9. By the same token, the margin of failure would be 3 if he rolled a 4 when he needed at least a 7.

The gamemaster can use Margins of Success or Failure to precisely determine the results of a skill roll. In most circumstances, a roll that succeeds by a wide margin will have a better outcome than one that comes up right on the target number. Conversely, a roll that fails by a wide margin will be more disastrous than one that misses by only a few points.





## OPPOSED SKILL ROLL

Any time two or more characters are using skills against one another, it is considered an Opposed Skill Roll. To determine the outcome, simply compare the margin of success for each character involved. Opposed Skill Rolls are a handy way to resolve a variety of situations involving many different skill combinations.

For example, Garrett is trying to steal silently past a Kurita sentry. The gamemaster rules that this will require an opposed skill roll that pits Garrett's Stealth Skill against the sentry's Perception. Garrett succeeds at his Stealth Skill Roll by a margin of 3, and the sentry makes his Perception Roll by a margin of 2. Because Garrett has a higher margin of success, he makes it past the sentry.

## UNTRAINED SKILL USE

Any time a character must make a skill roll for a skill he does not have, he is attempting untrained skill use. The die roll is made just as for a normal skill roll, but uses three six-sided dice (3D6) instead of 2D6. Total the two lowest dice to determine the outcome.

For example, the gamemaster decides that Garrett must make an Appraisal Skill Roll to determine whether he realizes the value of a rare bottle of wine he has been given. As Garrett does not have Appraisal Skill, this is an untrained skill use. Appraisal uses the Mental Characteristic Base, which for Garrett is a 9, giving him a base Target Number of 9. As no modifiers apply, Garrett's player must roll an 8 or better. He rolls 3 dice, a 2, a 4, and a 5. He adds the two lowest dice, the 2 and the 4, for a total of 6, which is not good enough. Garrett does not recognize the value of the gift and consumes the wine with his next meal.

## Automatic Success and Failure

When making an Untrained Skill Roll, an automatic success occurs only if all three dice are a 6, but an automatic failure occurs if two of the dice roll a 1.

## SAVING ROLLS

Any time a character attempts an action for which the rules provide no specific skill, or when someone attempts an action against him for which skill use would be inappropriate, he makes a saving roll. Saving rolls are easier to make than skill rolls. They are appropriate for simple situations such as deciding whether or not a character remembers something, which would require a Saving Roll against the Mental Characteristic.

To make a saving roll, the gamemaster determines which Attribute or Characteristic applies, and assigns any modifiers he sees fit. The saving roll is the same as a normal skill roll, but the player rolls three six-sided dice (3D6) instead of 2D6. He adds up the two highest dice to determine the outcome.

For example, Garrett tries to impress a potential client over drinks on the gameworld of Solaris. The gamemaster decides that this requires a Saving Roll against the Social Characteristic, which for Garrett is a 9, meaning he has a Base Target Number of 9. Because Garrett is somewhat unpopular on the game world, the gamemaster assigns a +1 modifier, resulting in a target of 10 or better. Garrett's player rolls 3 dice, and gets a 2, a 5, and a 6. He adds the 2 highest dice, the 5 and the 6, for a total of 11, which is more than enough. Garrett makes a good impression, which will help him get the job.

## Automatic Success and Failure

When making a Saving Roll, an automatic success is scored if the two highest dice total 12, and an automatic failure occurs only if all three dice roll a 1.

## THE EDGE

The Edge reflects the difference between player characters and NPCs—the difference between heroes and the rest of us. Each point of Edge can "buy" a new die roll during a game, with the following limitations: a player can buy one reroll at any one time, and the number of rerolls he can purchase in any gaming session is equal to the starting value of his character's Edge. Rerolls cannot be purchased for another character.

If a gamemaster decides to break an adventure into multiple sessions of play, he may decide to stretch a single cycle of Edge use throughout the adventure, regardless of the number of gaming sessions it takes. He must spell this out at the beginning, however, so players do not squander all their Edge in the first session.

Edge use is simple. Say, for example, that a character needs to roll a 7 or less to hit a target. He rolls a 5. Burning 1 Edge point, he rerolls the dice and gets his 7. When Edge points are used, they only go away until the end of the session or adventure. A gamemaster could allow Edge regeneration in mid-stream, but if he does, players should probably realize it means their characters are in way over their heads!



# CHARACTERS

## CREATING CHARACTERS

Before players can begin their adventures in the **MechWarrior** universe, they must create characters. By selecting the attributes, abilities, and skills that a character will possess, the player determines what that character can accomplish on and off the battlefield. Just as in life, a character's skills will increase as he gains experience, improving his chances for continued survival and even grander adventures.

Be forewarned, however. The **MechWarrior** universe is a dangerous one, which is also what makes it exciting. Overcoming seemingly insurmountable odds can be a thrilling experience that brings fame and fortune to the player characters. By the same token, the characters may not be up to the challenge, and one or more of them may perish.

Some of the best stories involve sacrifice and loss, and the death of any character should be treated as the dramatic situation that it is. It is still a game, however, and so any player who has lost a character should then generate a new one and get right back into the action. In no time, the challenge of playing the new character should make up for the loss of the old one.

## CHARACTER COMPONENTS

Before beginning to generate a character, players should check with the gamemaster to see if he has a specific kind of unit in mind for the game which could affect choice of character. The gamemaster may also need for the players' group to include certain kinds of characters to best fulfill the needs of an upcoming adventure.

A character in **MechWarrior** is based on several sets of statistics that represent attributes, abilities, skills, and equipment defining who and what he is, what he has, and what he can do. These statistics provide the groundwork for continuing to develop the character as he gains experience. Fleshing out the statistics reveals what kind of a person the player has created.

### Attributes

In **MechWarrior**, each character has five Attributes that provide the basis for most of the game mechanics that will define his capabilities. In a sense, a character's Attribute Scores are the foundation for building the rest of the character. Though attributes are seldom consulted during actual gaming, they are the basis for determining a character's characteristics. The five Attributes are Build, Reflexes, Intuition, Learn, and Charisma.

#### Build

Build (BLD) measures strength, stamina, and ability to withstand adverse conditions.

#### Reflexes

Reflexes (REF) measure dexterity, coordination, and overall agility.

#### Intuition

Intuition (ITN) measures perception, instinct, and the ability to think under pressure.

#### Learn

Learn (LRN) measures self-discipline and the ability to understand complex concepts.

### Charisma

Charisma (CHA) measures physical appearance, personal magnetism, and strength of presence.

### Characteristics

Characteristics are the basis for all saving rolls and skill rolls, which are the primary elements for determining the outcome of characters' actions. The Characteristics are Athletic, Physical, Mental, and Social.

#### Athletic

The Athletic Characteristic is used for any skill roll or saving roll that involves physical agility.

#### Physical

The Physical Characteristic is used for any skill roll or saving roll that involves coordination.

#### Mental

The Mental Characteristic is used for any skill roll or saving roll that involves reasoning ability.

#### Social

The Social Characteristic is used for any skill roll or saving roll that involves interpersonal skills.

### Advantages

Advantages include abilities, privileges, or other assets that a character may have but that are not covered by some other game mechanic. The advantages range from perks such as Nobility and Wealth to Inborn Abilities such as Ambidexterity and Natural Aptitude and paranormal abilities like Sixth Sense.

### Skills

Attributes define what a character is, and skills define what a character knows. More than any other statistic, a character's skills determine what kinds of actions he will be able to perform, a major factor in the kinds of adventures he will be able to play.

### BattleMech

Some MechWarriors own their own BattleMechs. A character who does has an easier time finding work and can usually negotiate better wages. Without a 'Mech, a MechWarrior must pilot whatever his unit has available, and will be held responsible for damage to any 'Mech assigned to him.

### Equipment

All characters start with some kind of gear, ranging from a simple tool kit or sidearm to a personal BattleMech. The kinds of gear a character has at the start depends on his skills and advantages.

### Assets

All characters start with an initial nest egg in C-Bills. Some characters have considerably more wealth than others, depending on their advantages.

### Edge

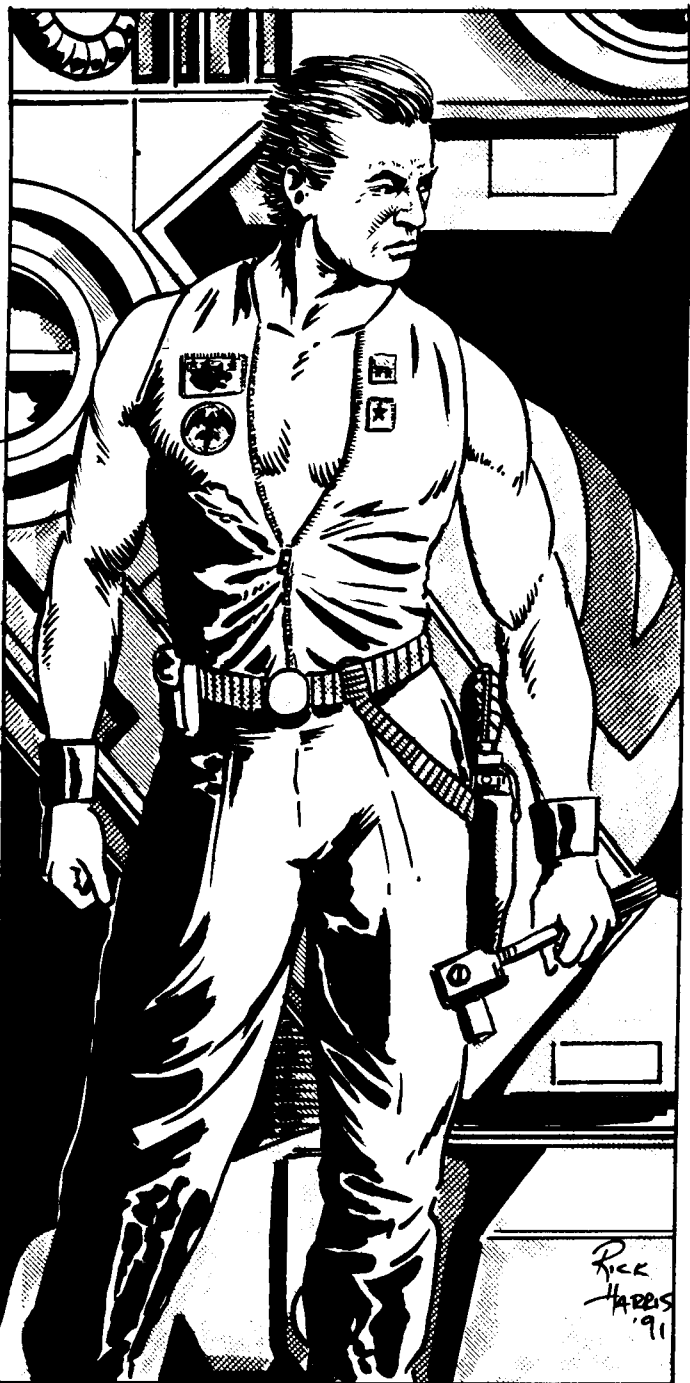
In fiction, the Edge is what separates a soldier from a hero. In **MechWarrior**, it is what separates player characters from non-player characters.

A character's Edge statistic is used to influence the capricious whims of fate that would otherwise keep him from accomplishing actions he should be able to perform. With luck, a character will have enough Edge to keep him alive.

## GENERATING CHARACTERS

This game includes two systems for creating a **MechWarrior** character: the Archetype system or the Character Construction system. Archetypes are pre-generated character types that a player can modify somewhat to suit his individual tastes. In contrast, the Character Construction system allows the player to build a unique character from the ground up.

The Archetype system is a fast and easy way to staff a company or to jump right into the action, and is recommended for beginning players. Because Character Construction is more involved and more time-consuming, it is more appropriate for experienced players who will be generating a small number of characters.



## Archetype System

To generate **MechWarrior** characters using Archetypes, each player simply chooses one of the character types presented in the **Archetypes** section, p. 33. This approach sacrifices individuality in favor of simplicity, but it lets the players get started right away.

### Modifying Archetypes

If a player wants more individuality than is provided by a particular Archetype, but does not wish to devote the time and energy needed for Character Construction, the gamemaster may approve the modification of Archetypes.

Modifying advantages is a simple matter. Just swap one of the Archetype's advantages for another of equal value. The advantages are listed on page 21.

It is also possible to adjust the Attribute Scores and Skills, but doing so requires a basic understanding of the Character Construction process.

To modify the attributes, simply redistribute the total number of points among them, as desired. Remember, though, that this will affect Characteristics and base targets for the character's skills, which must also be adjusted.

Changing some of the skills listed for an Archetype is fairly simple as long as the player changes only the skill and not the level. Again, check the characteristic base for the new skill and modify its base target if necessary. If an Archetype is using an Academy or University Package, this could also affect which skills a player can or cannot change.

### Creating New Archetypes

The Archetypes in this book were created using the Character Construction system with the Flexible Priorities option. To create a new Archetype, the gamemaster can generate a new one in the same manner and make it available to the players during character generation.

## CHARACTER DESIGN

To design a character, a player must follow the specific series of steps given below. It is easiest to perform them in the order given here, but sometimes a player may have something in mind for his character that will force him to start further on in the creation process and then "work backward" until he is caught up. For instance, if a player knows that he wants his character to have a noble title, he will have started at Step 3, Purchase Advantages, because a noble title is an advantage of 4 points. Working backward, the player knows he will have to assign 4 of his Priority Points to advantages in order to get the noble title he wants for his character. This will, of course, affect the rest of his choices for the character.

The following sequence is usually the logical progression of steps.

1. Assign Priorities
2. Assign Attribute Points
3. Purchase Advantages (if any)
4. Purchase Initial Skills
5. Finishing Touches



# CHARACTERS

## Character Concept

Before a player begins designing his character, he should have a character concept in mind. A character concept is a basic

idea about the kind of character the player wishes to portray. This concept will guide many of the player's decisions during character construction.

A character concept can be as simple or as complex as desired. The more a player knows about his character from the outset, the easier it will be to create that character. On the other hand, part of the fun of roleplaying a character is discovering who this imaginary person is, and so a sketchy concept can also be fun for the latitude it offers for developing the character during play.

## The Hook

The hook is the central concept around which a character revolves.

A hook can be anything from a voice the player uses when roleplaying the character (he talks like Sean Connery) to a "look" (picture Arnold Schwarzenegger with a mohawk), a detail of his background (an expatriate Kuritan, he has come to Solaris looking to redeem his honor), a skill (though only a fair MechWarrior, he is a master of the martial arts), an advantage (over the years, his extra Edge has pulled him out of so many scrapes he thinks he is indestructible), or a BattleMech (sure it's only an *Assassin*, but that is definitely not a medium laser in the right arm).

A hook of any kind gives the player a starting point from which the rest of the character will evolve. The hook also provides a focus that will help in roleplaying the character. By vividly imagining the hook, the player will automatically make associations that will help him make decisions and to interact as his character would.

When looking for a hook, the Archetype, Skill, and Advantage Lists are good places start. Another method is to borrow a favorite character from some other source (movies, television, books, and so on). If a player still cannot come up with a hook, his fellow players or the gamemaster may be able to help. Failing that, perhaps the player should go back to using an Archetype for a while.

## Assign Priorities

To begin character construction, the player must assign a Priority Level from 0 to 4 to each of the five categories listed on the Master Character Table. All five Priority Levels (0, 1, 2, 3, and 4) must be assigned. To determine the effect of these assignments, cross-reference the Priority Level assigned with the column for each of the five categories. This is explained in greater detail in the following section.

Mike is creating a character from scratch and must assign priorities. He must assign a 0, a 1, a 2, a 3, and a 4 to the five categories of the Master Character Table.

Looking over the categories, he makes some preliminary decisions. First, he knows his character will be human, so he assigns the 0 to the Race category. Second, he knows he wants his character to have a *Thunderbolt*, so he assigns the 3 to the BattleMech category.

This leaves him with the 1, the 2, and 4. The three remaining columns are Attributes, Skills, and Advantages. He has a lot of skills in mind for his character, but no Advantages, so he assigns the 4 to the Skills category and the 1 to the Advantages, leaving him with the 2, which he assigns to Attributes.

Looking over his decisions and consulting the Master Character Table, Mike takes note of what his decisions will mean for his character.

He has assigned a priority 0 to race, which means his character will be human. He assigned a Priority 2 to Attributes, giving his character 20 points to divide among his Attributes. He has assigned a Priority 4 to Skills, giving him 24 points to spend on his character's initial skills. He has assigned a Priority 1 to Advantages, giving his character a 1-point Advantage. Finally, he has assigned a Priority 3 to the BattleMech column, which means his character will begin the game in possession of a heavy Mech.

MASTER CHARACTER TABLE

Priority	Race	Attributes	Skills	Advantages	BattleMech
0	Human	18	8	None	Dispossessed
1	Human	21	12	1 pt	Light
2	Clan Warrior	24	16	2 pts	Medium
3	Clan Pilot	27	20	3 pts	Heavy
4	Elemental	30	24	4 pts	Assault

**Race** determines whether the character is a human from the Inner Sphere or a member of the Clan invaders.

**Attributes** determines the number of points that may be assigned to the character's initial attributes.

**Skills** determines the number of points used to purchase the character's initial training levels.

**Advantages** determines the number of points used to purchase the character's advantages.

**BattleMech** determines what kind of Mech the character owns.

## Flexible Priorities (Optional)

At the gamemaster's option, the player may assign Priorities from a pool of 10 Character Points to the five categories in any way he desires. This method is recommended only after the players have some experience using the basic method. It also requires careful gamemaster supervision because some players might abuse the options to create identical "optimized" characters with maximum combat abilities and little individuality.

## Assign Attribute Points

As described above, the player determines how many Attribute Points are available to his character when he makes his Priority assignments. He may distribute the Attribute Points among the five attributes as he desires.

BLD, REF, LRN and CHA each have a final value equal to the number of attribute points assigned to them during character creation. INT, however, has a final value equal to *half* (round down) the Attribute Points assigned to it.

A character's attributes have a profound effect on his capabilities and will influence who and what he is, so the player is wise to take some care in distributing the Attribute Points.

Each attribute is assigned a value that rates the character's relative ability within the field of that attribute. A human character's attributes are rated on a scale from 1 to 6. Characters may have one or more attributes that exceed this maximum, but such attributes are rare.

### ATTRIBUTE RATING TABLE (HUMAN)

1	Poor
2	Fair
3	Average
4	Good
5	Excellent
6	Remarkable
7+	Incredible

When assigning Attribute Points, bear in mind that each attribute is important in its own way. It may be tempting to give every character an Intuition of 6 and distribute the remaining points between the other attributes. Though this will produce good base target numbers for the character's skills, it costs twice as much, so it will leave him or her deficient in other areas.

Intuition is the best choice as far as skills are concerned, as it figures into three of the Characteristics. Reflexes is second-best for skills because it figures into two characteristics, but it is also used to determine a character's Initiative during combat.

The other three attributes figure into only one characteristic apiece, but each has important secondary uses. Build determines a character's damage capacity, and figures into the damage he inflicts in Unarmed Combat. A character's Learn sets certain limits on his initial selection, but it will also affect how quickly skills can be learned and improved. Giving a character a high Intuition and Reflexes is still a good idea. Most MechWarriors have exceptional values in both of these key attributes. Just remember other attributes have their uses too, so try not to slight them out of hand.



# CHARACTERS



## Minimum Values

Five centuries of MechWarrior history show that most successful MechWarriors have good Reflexes and Intuition and a reasonably robust Build. Therefore, no Inner Sphere or Secondary Clan MechWarrior may have Reflexes or Intuition lower than 4. Primary Clan MechWarriors must have a Reflexes or Intuition no lower than 5.

Note that although Charisma is not essential for the average MechWarrior, it is important for those who aim at a position of leadership. Learn is also important if the character plans to have a significant number of skills.

## Racial Modifiers

A character who has chosen to be a member of the Clans will have different attribute ranges than a normal human. In addition, he will have access to the Clan Skill Packages, which reflect the Clans' sometimes brutal but frighteningly effective training techniques (see Skills p. 22, for details).

### Clan MechWarriors

Several centuries of selective breeding have resulted in a caste of individuals ideally suited to piloting a BattleMech. Clan MechWarriors have the same physical appearance as their Inner Sphere cousins. The differences in their physiology are so subtle that they are undetectable by anything short of DNA analysis.

+1 Reflexes, +1 Intuition

### Clan Fighter Pilots

Smaller than most Inner Sphere pilots, Clan aerospace pilots have been bred to live in the cramped cockpits of their aerospace fighters. They have a slightly larger cranial capacity than most other humans, but the difference is barely noticeable under normal conditions.

-1 Build, +2 Reflexes, +1 Intuition

### Elementals

Enormous by Inner Sphere standards, Elementals are the only humans capable of withstanding the rigors of operating the mighty Clan Battle Armor suits. Elementals are physically similar to people with gigantism, but with little or no distortion of the extremities, proportions, or facial features.

+2 Build, +1 Reflexes, -1 Charisma

Toughness (see Advantages)

## Maximum Values

Because of the superior genes provided by the Clans' competitive breeding program, characters born into the Clans can have higher scores in some attributes, as summarized in the Racial Maximum Table.

Character	RACIAL MAXIMUM TABLE				
	BLD	REF	ITN	LRN	CHA
Human	6	6	6	6	6
Clan MechWarrior	6	7	7	6	6
Clan Pilot	5	8	7	6	6
Elemental	8	7	6	6	5

## Modifying Attributes

Once determined, Attribute Scores usually do not change over the course of play. The gamemaster may, however, modify them as a result of accident or other event during the campaign, or they may increase as a result of experience.

## Purchase Advantages

To choose advantages for a character, the player chooses from among those described on p. 21. The point costs for the various advantages are given in the table at the head of that section.

## PURCHASE SKILLS

Having assigned a Priority Level to Skill, the player knows how many skill points he has available to purchase the character's initial skills.

It costs 1 Skill Point to purchase a Level 1 Skill. A player can purchase extra skill levels at a skill-point cost equal to the sum of the levels up to and including that level. Level 2 costs 2 more points, for a total of 3 points. Level 3 costs 6 points (1 + 2 + 3), which is 3 more points than Level 2. Level 8 costs 8 more points than level 7, for a total of 36 points. These costs are summarized in the following table.

Skill Level	PURCHASING SKILL LEVELS Cost (in Skill Points)	
	Incremental	Cumulative
1	1	1
2	2	3
3	3	6
4	4	10
5	5	15
6	6	21

## Initial Skill Restrictions

A starting character may not buy any skill at a level higher than the character's LRN Attribute. For example, a character with LRN 4 can have no skill level higher than 4 at the time of character creation.

## SKILL PACKAGES

Skills may also be purchased in packages, which allow a character to acquire a group of specific skills at a reduced cost. These packages also simulate the advanced training available at academies and universities in the Inner Sphere or the specialized training given Clan warriors.

Each Skill Package has a cost in skill points. By paying this, the character acquires all the skill levels specified in the package description. Note that a character may build upon the skills included in a package, at the standard incremental cost. That is, if a package gives a character a skill at Level 2, he could raise it to Level 3 by paying 3 more points, and so on.

Skill Packages are a bargain in terms of skill points, but the skill-point investment somewhat limits the character's flexibility. This option is best used with characters who have a strong military background and whose primary focus is combat.



# CHARACTERS

## Clan Packages

These packages are available only to Clan characters. The cost break they provide is substantial (one-third as opposed to one-fourth for Inner Sphere packages). Because the training techniques start at birth and are an integral part of Clan culture, they may never be learned by a mere freebirth.

Package Cost	Skill	Level
20 pts	<b>Primary Clan Warrior</b>	
	Gunnery/Mech	4
	Interrogation	1
	Leadership	1
	Medtech	1
	Piloting/Mech	3
	Small Arms	2
	Survival	1
	Tactics	2
	Tech/Mech	2
	Unarmed Combat	1
12 pts	<b>Secondary Clan Warrior</b>	
	Gunnery/Mech	3
	Leadership	1
	Medtech	1
	Piloting/Mech	2
	Small Arms	2
	Survival	1
	Tactics	1
	Tech/Mech	1
	Unarmed Combat	1
16 pts	<b>Clan Pilot</b>	
	Gunnery/Aerospace	4
	Medtech	1
	Piloting/Aerospace	3
	Small Arms	1
	Tactics	2
	Tech/Aerospace	2
16 pts	<b>Elemental</b>	
	Blade	1
	Gunnery/Battle Armor	3
	Interrogation	1
	Medtech	1
	Piloting/Battle Armor	3
	Small Arms	2
	Survival	1
	Tactics	1
	Tech/Battlesuit	1
Unarmed Combat	2	

## Inner Sphere Packages

All Inner Sphere packages consist of Basic and Advanced Training that provide the character with a group of skills essential to his chosen specialty. Though not as cost-effective as the Clan Packages, they allow for more flexibility in skill selection.

## Basic Training

Basic training represents the essential instruction given all military personnel. Basic Training must be taken by all characters who purchase an Inner Sphere skill package.

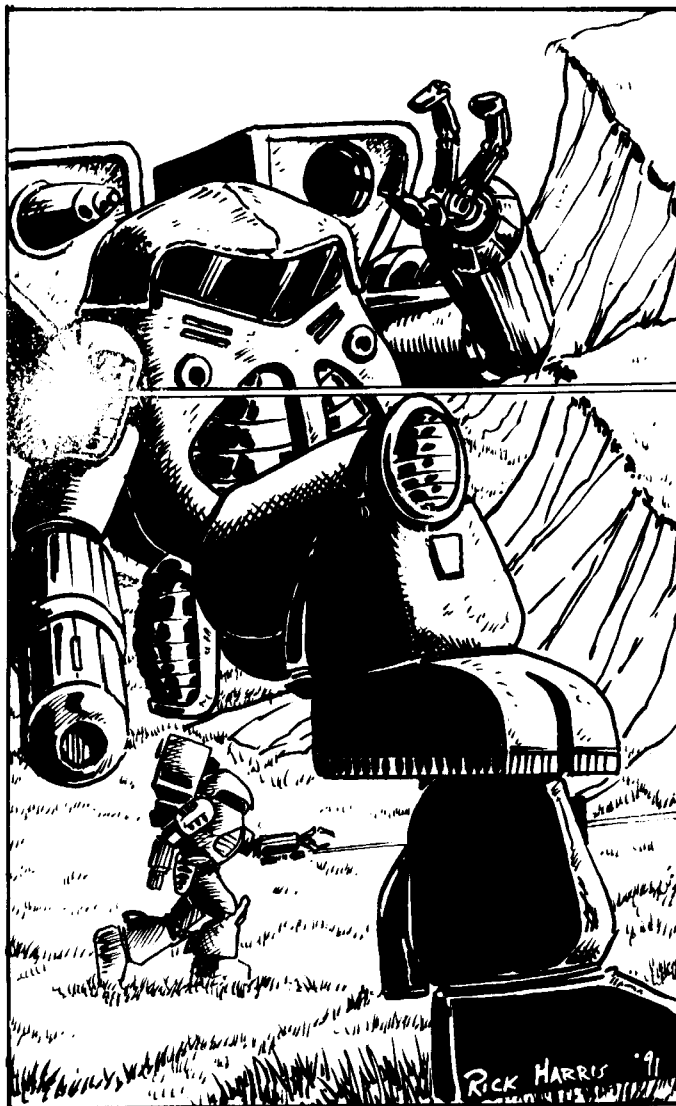
## Advanced Individual Training

The Academy and University Packages allow much more flexibility than the Clan equivalents. These packages automatically require Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training (AIT).

In AIT, the player chooses his character's Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), which determines which skills he will learn during his training. The University Packages allow for the study of two different MOS and/or Fields of Study.

## Choosing Skills

Once a character has chosen one or more MOS and/or Field(s) of Study, he must choose which skills he will take. These begin with the skills required for Basic Training and the MOS and/or Field(s) of Study chosen. He may choose the rest of the skill package from the electives listed for Basic Training and each of his MOS and/or Field(s) of Study. In the case of Specialists, the Electives list includes any skills not taken as requirements that are on the Required list.





## ACADEMY PACKAGES

A character who buys one of these packages has graduated from one of the military academies that exist throughout the Inner Sphere. An academy graduate automatically receives basic training and an MOS of his choice. The Academy Packages provide six skills each, the levels depending on which package the character has chosen.

### Basic Academy Package 9 pts

3 Skills at Level 2  
3 Skills at Level 1

### Advanced Academy Package 15 pts

2 Skills at Level 3  
2 Skills at Level 2  
2 Skills at Level 1

## UNIVERSITY PACKAGES

Most of the Great Houses of the Inner Sphere maintain a center of higher learning that provides more intense and diversified training than that offered at the military academies. Most famous among these is the New Avalon Institute of Science (NAIS).

A character choosing one of these packages has graduated from the university of his choice. Unlike the Academy Package, the player has several options for his selection of skill lists. The first option is to take Basic Training and one MOS. This allows the character to concentrate on one field.

The University Package also allows the character to take a combination of MOS and Fields of Study. With this option, the character takes Basic Training and any two skill lists. Certain

combinations are more common than others, as they reflect specific training programs. Some of these standard training programs are:

Commando: Infantry MOS and Recon Specialist MOS

LAM Pilot: Aerospace Pilot MOS and BattleMech Pilot MOS

Officer Candidate School (OCS): Any MOS and the Leadership Training Field of Study

Specialist (Motorized Infantry): Cavalry MOS and Infantry MOS

The University Packages provide 8 skills, their levels depending upon which package the character has chosen.

### Basic University Package 12 pts

4 Skills at Level 2  
4 Skills at Level 1

### Advanced University Package 18 pts

2 Skills at Level 3  
3 Skills at Level 2  
3 Skills at Level 1

## Expanding Package Options

If the list of Military Occupational Specialties and Fields of Study are insufficient to the specific needs of a campaign, the gamemaster may devise new ones containing the appropriate skills for use with the various Inner Sphere Packages. For example, a gamemaster who decides to run a ComStar campaign may decide that he will treat the training given ComStar adepts as an Academy Package using the Tech Specialist MOS and a specialized ComStar Field of Study of his own devising.

To create a new MOS or Field of Study, the gamemaster must first define what kind of training the new list will represent, selecting the appropriate skills from the Master Skill List. He should try to limit his selections to three to six skills. He then breaks down the chosen skills into Required Skills and Electives. In most cases, two specific skills will be Required and the rest will be Electives. In the case of flexible lists like the Specialist MOS, several skills may be listed as Required, with the "Choose 2" notation.

When expanding the options available to player characters, be careful to avoid skill lists that abuse the package system. A "ninja" MOS, for example, would be inappropriate. If the gamemaster thinks through the skill lists logically, he will usually include several skills that the players might not otherwise take. This feature is inherent in the package system as a necessity for game balance. The gamemaster must take care to preserve this.

Also note that the Academy and University Packages assume the character is taking the Military Sciences program. As an optional rule, the gamemaster may allow characters to enroll in other programs. This will allow them to take a Field of Study instead of Basic Training. Because only two Fields of Study are provided, this option works best if the gamemaster designs additional ones to flesh out the possible concentrations a character could take. For example, if the gamemaster decides characters should be able to enroll in a Technical program at the New Avalon Institute of Science, it might be a good idea to generate a Field of Study similar to the Tech Specialist MOS and a second Field containing various Special Interest and Career Skills that cover the various Sciences a comprehensive education would entail.



## INNER SPHERE SKILL PACKAGES

### BASIC TRAINING

#### Required

- Medtech
- Small Arms

#### Electives

- Bureaucracy
- Blade
- Leadership
- Support Weapons
- Survival
- Unarmed Combat

### ADVANCED INDIVIDUAL TRAINING

#### AEROSPACE PILOT MOS

##### Required

- Gunnery/Aerospace
- Piloting/Aerospace

##### Electives

- Technician/Aerospace

#### CAVALRY MOS

##### Required

- Drive or Piloting/VTOL
- Gunnery/Vehicular

##### Electives

- Gunnery/Artillery
- Technician/Mechanic
- Jump Pack

#### SPECIALIST (Recon) MOS

##### Required (choose 2)

- Demolitions
- Perception
- Security Systems
- Stealth
- Tracking

##### Electives

- Disguise
- Escape Artist
- Interrogation

#### BATTLEMECH PILOT MOS

##### Required

- Gunnery/Mech
- Piloting/Mech

##### Electives

- Technician/Mech

#### INFANTRY MOS

##### Required

- Unarmed Combat
- Support Weapons

##### Electives

- Drive
- Gunnery/Artillery

#### SPECIALIST (Tech) MOS

##### Required (choose 2)

- Communications
- Computer
- Engineering
- Security Systems
- Technician

##### Electives

- Cryptography
- Scrounge
- Tinker

### FIELDS OF STUDY (University Only)

#### LEADERSHIP TRAINING

##### Required

- Bureaucracy
- Leadership

##### Electives

- Protocol
- Strategy
- Tactics
- Training

#### MILITARY SCIENCE

##### Required

- Strategy
- Tactics

##### Electives

- Special Interest (SI):
- Military History

## FINISHING TOUCHES

By this time, the players have made all the most important decisions about their characters. All that remains is to calculate the last few statistics and round out his or her appearance and personality.

### Attribute Saving Rolls

To determine the saving roll for each of the attributes, subtract double the value of that attribute from 18 and write the result in the blank next to the Attribute on the Character Sheet.

For example, Garret has a Build 5, so he subtracts double the value of that Attribute ( $5 \times 2 = 10$ ) from 18 ( $18 - 10 = 8$ ), which gives him a Build Saving Roll of 8 or better.

### Characteristics

Before the player can determine his character's skill targets, he must determine his or her characteristics, which provide the base for all saving rolls and skill rolls. Each characteristic is determined by subtracting two attributes from a base of 18. The characteristics and the relevant attributes are as follows:

- Athletic:  $18 - (\text{Build} + \text{Reflexes})$
- Physical:  $18 - (\text{Reflexes} + \text{Intuition})$
- Mental:  $18 - (\text{Intuition} + \text{Learn})$
- Social:  $18 - (\text{Intuition} + \text{Charisma})$

For example, Garrett has an INT 5 and a CHA 4. To determine his Base Social Characteristic, add the sum of these skills ( $5 + 4 = 9$ ) from 18. The result, 9, gives him a base Social Saving Roll of 9. All Social Skills that Garrett has in Social Skills are subtracted from a 9 to determine his Base Skill Roll Target for those skills.

### Calculate Skill Targets

Having determined a character's Base Characteristics, it is possible to calculate the skill roll targets for any skills the character possesses. To do this, consult the Master Skill List, p. 22, which lists the individual skills plus the characteristic that defines them. Subtracting the character's skill level from the characteristic gives the base skill target for that skill. In other words, it is this number that the player must roll or surpass on 2D6 to succeed at an unmodified skill attempt.

For example, Garrett has a Base Physical Characteristic of 8 and Level 4 Gunnery/Mech. This means his Base Skill Roll Target for Gunnery/Mech is  $8 - 4$ , or a 4, a respectable level for a beginning character.

### Initial Edge

Unless a character has the "Extra Edge" advantage, he starts with an Edge of 1. This value can be increased when Edge is used and through experience. There is no maximum value for Edge, but a character always has an Edge of at least 1.



# CHARACTERS

## RANDOM 'MECH ASSIGNMENT TABLE

### LIGHT 'MECHS

2D6	Davion F-C	Steiner F-C	Kurita	Marik	Liao	FRR
2	Ostscout	Hornet	UrbanMech	UrbanMech	UrbanMech	UrbanMech
3	Spider	Spider	Locust	Javelin	UrbanMech	UrbanMech
4	UrbanMech	UrbanMech	Locust	Spider	Jenner	Stinger
5	Locust	Locust	Javelin	Wasp	Locust	Wasp
6	Locust	Locust	Jenner	Wasp	Locust	Panther
7	Valkyrie	Commando	Panther	Locust	Stinger	Commando
8	Stinger	Wasp	Wasp	Locust	Stinger	Jenner
9	Wasp	Stinger	Wasp	Stinger	Wasp	Locust
10	Wasp	Stinger	Spider	Stinger	Wasp	Javelin
11	Firestarter	Firestarter	Stinger	Stinger	Javelin	Spider
12	Hornet	Wolfhound	Stinger	Hermes	Raven	Spider

### MEDIUM 'MECHS

2D6	Davion F-C	Steiner F-C	Kurita	Marik	Liao	FRR
2	Wolverine	Assassin	Crab	Griffin	Scorpion	Scorpion
3	Hatchetman	Assassin	Kintaro	Hunchback	Trebuchet	Wolverine
4	Assassin	Wolverine	Wolverine	Whitworth	Phoenix Hawk	Sh Hawk
5	Phoenix Hawk	Cicada	Griffin	Whitworth	Phoenix Hawk	Centurion
6	Phoenix Hawk	Trebuchet	Whitworth	Hermes II	Vindicator	Ph Hawk
7	Dervish	Phoenix Hawk	Whitworth	Hermes II	Vindicator	Whitworth
8	Enforcer	Whitworth	Hunchback	Phoenix Hawk	Clint	Trebuchet
9	Enforcer	Centurion	Trebuchet	Phoenix Hawk	Clint	Hunchback
10	Whitworth	Shadow Hawk	Scorpion	Cicada	Dervish	Griffin
11	Centurion	Shadow Hawk	Sentinel	Dervish	Whitworth	Assassin
12	Griffin	Hatchetman	Wolf Trap	Vulcan	Blackjack	Hatchet

### HEAVY 'MECHS

2D6	Davion F-C	Steiner F-C	Kurita	Marik	Liao	FRR
2	Caesar	Catapult	Rifleman	Catapult	Ostsol	Grasshopper
3	Ostroc	Quickdraw	Grasshopper	Warhammer	Rifleman	Thunderbolt
4	Archer	Warhammer	Crusader	Thunderbolt	Grasshopper	Crusader
5	Crusader	Thunderbolt	JagerMech	Quickdraw	Archer	Quickdraw
6	JagerMech	JagerMech	Ostroc	Rifleman	Crusader	Rifleman
7	Rifleman	Rifleman	Dragon	Orion	Catapult	Dragon
8	Marauder	Crusader	Quickdraw	Grasshopper	JagerMech	JagerMech
9	Thunderbolt	Archer	Marauder	Crusader	Warhammer	Marauder
10	Warhammer	Grasshopper	Thunderbolt	Archer	Marauder	Ostroc
11	Ostsol	Marauder	Warhammer	Marauder	Quickdraw	Archer
12	Axeman	Axeman	Catapult	Ostroc	Cataphract	Warhammer

### ASSAULT 'MECHS

2D6	Davion F-C	Steiner F-C	Kurita	Marik	Liao	FRR
2	Banshee	Banshee	Hatamoto-Chi	Awesome	Charger	Banshee
3	Banshee	Banshee	Stalker	Awesome	Charger	Banshee
4	Victor	Banshee	Stalker	Cyclops	Atlas	Atlas
5	Victor	Victor	Charger	Cyclops	BattleMaster	BattleMaster
6	Victor	Victor	Charger	BattleMaster	BattleMaster	Victor
7	Awesome	Zeus	Victor	BattleMaster	Cyclops	Zeus
8	Cyclops	Zeus	Atlas	Stalker	Stalker	Charger
9	Atlas	Zeus	BattleMaster	Stalker	Stalker	Stalker
10	Atlas	Awesome	BattleMaster	Stalker	Awesome	Cyclops
11	Zeus	Atlas	Katana	Goliath	Goliath	Awesome
12	Marauder II	Atlas	Mauler	Goliath	Goliath	Awesome

## Purchase Equipment

Unless the character has the Well-Equipped advantage, he has 200 C-Bills with which to purchase personal equipment from the **Equipment**, p. 81. Without the Well-Equipped advantage, the character is restricted to equipment with an A Availability Rating. Any C-Bills left over after purchasing equipment are added to the character's initial assets.

## Determine Initial Assets

Unless the character has the Wealth advantage, he has assets of 500 C-Bills. These monies may not be used to buy equipment before the start of play. Any C-Bills the character has left over from his equipment allotment are added to the Initial Asset total.

## Determine BattleMech

For many, this last step is the most important. Most MechWarriors will have made their decision long before they get this far into the creation process.

A character who has assigned priority points to the BattleMech column is entitled to start the game with a personal 'Mech. The player may choose the 'Mech personally, or the gamemaster may use the tables on p. 20 to determine 'Mech assignment randomly.

The gamemaster may decide that all characters who have 'Mechs must roll dice against these tables if players consistently choose the same 'Mech or 'Mechs at the top of their weight class.

## Rounding Out the Character

Once a player has come up with all the necessary game statistics for his character, it is time to decide on details like a name, background, physical appearance, and personality. If stumped, see the notes on **Character Concepts** and **Hooks** on p. 14 for ideas. If that does not help, give it time. A character develops organically through the process of roleplaying him or her. Soon the character will take on a life of his or her own. It is a good idea to keep notes on some of the details that emerge during play so they will not be forgotten.



## ADVANTAGES

Following are the **MechWarrior** advantages and the points each one costs.

Ambidextrous	1
Exceptional Attribute	2
Extra Edge	1-3
Land Grant	1
Natural Aptitude	2-3
Sixth Sense	2
Title	1-3
Toughness	2
Wealth	1-3
Well-Equipped	1-3

### Ambidextrous

An ambidextrous character can use both hands equally well.

### Exceptional Attribute

A character who has purchased this advantage may buy one of his attributes 1 point higher than would normally be allowed, allowing a human character to have an attribute value of 7.

Because the Clans' selective breeding program has endowed them with this advantage as a racial characteristic, Clan characters (including Elementals) may not get this advantage.

Note that the attribute points must still be assigned to raise the affected attribute to a 7. This advantage only allows the Exceptional Attribute. It does not purchase it.

### Extra Edge

For every point a character invests in this advantage, his Initial Edge score is increased by 1 point.

### Land Grant

This advantage bestows a character with a noble title Land Grant commensurate with his station. See **Titles and Nobility**, p. 153 for details.

### Natural Aptitude

A character with this skill has a knack for one of the skills on the Master Skill List. He makes all skill rolls for that skill as if they were saving rolls (roll 3D6 and use the best two dice).

The cost depends on the type of skill. Combat skills cost 3 points, but non-combat skills cost only 2 points. The combat skills are:

Archery, Blade, Gunnery, Small Arms, Support Weapons, Throwing Weapons, and Unarmed Combat.

For purposes of this advantage, non-combat skills are any skill that is not a combat skill as defined above.

Note that this advantage is so effective that a gamemaster may opt *not* to allow its use if he believes it may destroy the game balance of his campaign.

### Sixth Sense

A character with the advantage of Sixth Sense has a special ability to sense danger. Whenever the character is about to be attacked, he may make an untrained skill roll (3D6, taking the worst two dice) against his Mental Characteristic. If successful, he is forewarned of the attack, and is able to make a preemptive strike against his assailant.

At the gamemaster's discretion, the sensitivity of characters with Sixth Sense can be increased so that they may make a die roll to sense approaching danger. If so allowed, a sensitive character



# CHARACTERS

might sense a threat like the arrival of an enemy DropShip (with a substantial modifier), but would not detect the ship like a radar blip. He would simply feel that "something was

amiss," or if his roll succeeded by a wide margin, he might tell his companions to "watch the sky."

Sixth Sense is a subtle ability that requires cooperation and communication between the gamemaster and the sensitive character. If this is not possible, the advantage is best not used.

## Title

This advantage gives a character a noble title. The exact title depends on how many points the character spends:

Knight	1 pt
Baronet	2 pts
Baron	3 pts

Note that this is an honorary title only, bestowing only social status unless the character also has the Land Grant advantage.

A character may also be heir to a title, in which case the title costs 1 point less (Baronet would cost 1 point and Baron 2 points). A character may not be the heir to a knighthood. A Land Grant must be purchased if the character's sire has received such a boon; otherwise all he stands to inherit is the title itself.

## Toughness

A character with this skill has exceptional resistance to physical abuse. He may make Consciousness Rolls as if they were saving rolls (roll 3D6 and use the best two dice). At the gamemaster's option, Toughness may also withstand the effects of interrogation and other forms of physical duress, in which case it functions as Natural Aptitude.

Note that a character with this Advantage will be able to stay conscious longer than his body wants him to, which allows him to continue to fight when he is in mortal peril. Take care not to let Toughness be used to the point where a character continues to fight long enough to get himself killed.

## Wealth

A character with the Wealth advantage starts the game with more initial assets than would normally be his lot. The extent of his resources depends on how many points he spends:

5,000 C-Bills	1 pt
50,000 C-Bills	2 pts
500,000 C-Bills	3 pts

Note that these funds are not *added* to the 500 C-Bills that characters normally get. The character with the Wealth advantage gets one of the amounts specified above *instead* of the 500 C-Bills. He may *not* use these assets to purchase equipment during character generation.

## Well-Equipped

Characters who have purchased this advantage start the game with better equipment than they would otherwise receive during character creation. In addition to increasing the amount of C-Bills the character may spend on equipment, this advantage makes more kinds of equipment available. The extent of these advantages depends on the points spent:

1,000 C-Bills worth of A or B Availability equipment	1 pt
5,000 C-Bills worth of A, B, or C Availability equipment	2 pts
25,000 C-Bills worth of A, B, C, or D Availability equipment	3 pts

## MASTER SKILL LIST

Skill Name	Characteristic
Acrobatics	Athletic
Administration	Mental
Alternate Identity	Mental
Appraisal	Mental
Archery	Athletic
Blade	Athletic
Bureaucracy	Social
Career Skills	Mental*
Climbing	Athletic
Communications	Mental*
Computer	Mental
Cryptography	Mental
Demolitions	Mental
Disguise	Mental
Drive	Physical
Engineering	Mental
Escape Artist	Physical
Forgery	Mental
Gambling	Mental
Gunnery	Physical*
Impersonation	Social
Interrogation	Social
Jump Pack	Athletic
Leadership	Social
Medtech	Mental
Navigation	Mental
Negotiation	Social
Perception	Mental
Piloting	Physical*
Protocol	Social
Quickdraw	Physical
Running	Athletic
Scrounge	Social
Security Systems	Mental
Seduction	Social
Small Arms	Physical
Special Interests	Mental*
Stealth	Physical
Strategy	Mental
Streetwise	Social
Support Weapons	Physical
Survival	Mental
Swimming	Athletic
Tactics	Mental
Technician	Mental*
Throwing Weapons	Physical
Tinker	Mental
Tracking	Mental
Training	Social
Unarmed Combat	Athletic

\*Subskills

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## Skills (By Characteristic)

### Athletic Skills

Acrobatics  
Archery  
Blade  
Climbing  
Jump Pack  
Running  
Swimming  
Unarmed Combat

### Physical Skills

Drive  
Escape Artist  
Gunnery\*  
Piloting\*  
Quickdraw  
Small Arms  
Stealth  
Support Weapons  
Throwing Weapons

### Mental Skills

Administration  
Alternate Identity  
Appraisal  
Career Skills\*  
Communications\*  
Computer  
Cryptography  
Demolitions  
Disguise  
Engineering  
Forgery  
Gambling  
Medtech  
Navigation  
Perception  
Security Systems  
Special Interests\*  
Strategy  
Survival  
Tactics  
Technician\*  
Tinker  
Tracking

### Social Skills

Bureaucracy  
Impersonation  
Interrogation  
Leadership  
Negotiation  
Protocol  
Scrounge  
Seduction  
Streetwise  
Training

## Skills (By Type)

These categories are purely for ease of reference. They are arbitrary, and the categories have no effect on the game system.

### Combat Skills

Archery  
Blade  
Gunnery\*  
Quickdraw  
Small Arms  
Strategy  
Support Weapons  
Tactics  
Throwing Weapons  
Unarmed Combat

### Rogue Skills

Cryptography  
Disguise  
Escape Artist  
Forgery  
Gambling  
Impersonation  
Interrogation  
Seduction  
Stealth  
Streetwise  
Alternate Identity

### Tech Skills

Communications\*  
Computer  
Cryptography  
Demolitions  
Engineering  
Security Systems  
Technician\*  
Tinker





## SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

### Acrobatics

Acrobatics gives the character a better chance of accomplishing any action requiring physical agility, such as jumping from a moving vehicle, leaping between rooftops, and the like.

A successful Acrobatics Skill Roll will also help the character break his fall, reducing the damage taken by 1 point for every extra point by which the die roll succeeds. If falling damage is reduced to half or more, the character can also tumble and land on his feet.

### Administration

A character with Administration Skill knows the basic management and accounting techniques necessary to run a business.

The character must make a skill roll on a quarterly basis to determine his efficiency or when dealing with a crisis. An exceptional margin of success indicates increased productivity. Failure indicates some form of mismanagement resulting in reduced productivity.

Administration is useful for characters who have received land grants because it will help them achieve steady income from those lands. See also **Titles and Nobility**, p. 153.

The Bureaucracy, Negotiation, and Scrounge Skills are all useful complements to this skill. The timely and appropriate use of any of these three should provide a useful modifier to the character's Administration Skill Roll.

### Alternate Identity

This skill means a character has created an alternate identity that will not be discovered under normal circumstances. If, however, the character makes some blunder that reveals his alternate identity to others in the course of the adventure, his cover is automatically blown.

A skill roll is required whenever the character is being investigated or his alternate ID is called into question. If the roll is successful, the Alternate Identity holds up. If the roll fails, the examiner discovers some flaw that reveals the character's true identity.

A player may purchase this skill multiple times to establish a series of alternate identities. Any character who wishes to infiltrate an enemy camp on a long-term basis will need this skill, especially if he must deceive other players in the group.

The Alternate Identity Skill is not needed if a character only needs to establish a temporary identity for a quick undercover run. If, however, that identity is later expanded to have an independent life of its own, the player must purchase this skill if his character expects the new identity to hold up under scrutiny.

### Appraisal

A character with Appraisal Skill can recognize and identify items with some intrinsic value. Appraisal also helps determine the best place to buy or sell the commodity in question.

If the skill roll fails, it means that the character either identified the item incorrectly or misjudged its value. The extent of the error





depends on the margin by which the die roll fails and the game-master's discretion. A rule of thumb is plus or minus 5 percent per point by which the roll fails.

Knowing a commodity's value does not mean the character will get full value for it when he tries to sell it or that he will be able to purchase it at its true worth. Negotiation Skill is used to determine the actual selling or purchase price.

## **Archery**

A character with Archery Skill has a working knowledge of long bows and crossbows. Archery Skill is used as the Base To-Hit Number in ranged combat using these weapons.

A character with Archery Skill has a working knowledge of his weapon, including basic care and maintenance. In addition, this skill lets him identify and evaluate these weapons and to identify the type of arrow or bolt an enemy is firing in order to determine what kind of weapon fired it. Archery Skill also allows a character to jury-rig a damaged weapon so it will function until it can be repaired.

## **Blade**

A character with Blade Skill can wield most kinds of edged weapons, including knives, bayonets, katanas, sabers, and vibroblades. Blade Skill is used as the Base To-Hit Number in combat using weapons of this kind.

A character who has Blade Skill has a working knowledge of his weapon, including basic care and maintenance. In addition, he can use this skill to identify and evaluate these weapons or to jury-rig a damaged weapon so it will function until it can be repaired.

## **Bureaucracy**

A character with Bureaucracy Skill is trained to operate within the framework of existing power structures such as civilian or military administrations.

A successful Bureaucracy Skill Roll allows the character to locate the person most useful to him in any given office or chain of command. He can also use this skill to manipulate this key individual into helping him. Bureaucracy can be useful when a character wants a specific duty assignment or needs to requisition a valuable piece of equipment from a tight-fisted quartermaster.

## **Career Skills (CS)**

A character with one of these skills has spent time outside of military service training for or performing a particular job.

Every Career Skill is a different skill. Career Skills span the universe in their possibilities. From CS/Beast Keeper to CS/Asteroid Miner, they cover every possible job in the **MechWarrior** universe. The only restriction is that no Career Skill may duplicate or overlap an existing skill or skills. A Tech has Technician Skill, not CS/Tech.

Career Skills include basic knowledge that would be vital to perform in that career area. A Level 1 in any chosen Career Skill means the character could find employment in that field, while a level 5 indicates extremely high regard from anyone familiar with his work.

## **Climbing**

A character with Climbing Skill can scale both natural and man-made obstacles. He must make a skill roll when planning a climb, when choosing the spot for pitons or belaying lines, when trying to hit a particular target with a grappling hook, or any of the trickier moves an ascent might require. Depending on the reason for the die roll and the margin by which it might fail, the penalty for failure can range from a difficulty modifier for the rest of the climb to falling, depending on what the roll was for and by how much the roll missed.

When assigning a difficulty modifier for the climb, the gamemaster should take into account the surface to be climbed and the time and equipment available for the ascent. Climbing a BattleMech using only the available hand- and footholds would require no modifier to the skill roll, but trying to scale a building without a grappling hook would be considerably more difficult.

## **Communications**

A character with one of the following Communications Skills is familiar with the operation of the appropriate types of communications equipment.

Two different skills fall under the category of Communications. They must be purchased separately and confer no ability in the other Communications Skill. Both skills include basic care and maintenance of the systems they encompass and the ability to transmit and receive messages reliably using the appropriate equipment.

### **Communications/Conventional**

This skill covers the operation of all kinds of communications gear except for the hyperpulse generator, which is a separate skill. A successful skill roll allows a character to intercept and jam enemy communications or to break the jamming of his own transmissions. The skill also includes a knowledge of listening devices and other covert surveillance equipment.

### **Communications/Hyperpulse Generator**

This skill is difficult to obtain because ComStar guards its secrets so closely. Some technicians in the Successor States have managed to learn this skill through the operation of the "black boxes" used by the F-C forces during the Fourth Succession War.

A character must make a skill roll whenever attempting to establish and send communications to a distant star system. (Aiming at a target up to 50 light years away is not an easy task.)

## **Computer**

Computer Skill gives the character a working knowledge of computer systems, basic operations, and programming.

When attempting a complex task such as searching a large data base or writing a new program, the character must make a skill roll. The gamemaster assigns a difficulty modifier appropriate to the complexity of the task, the time available to complete it, and the hardware and software the character is using.

A character with Computer Skill can both prevent and accomplish computer theft and similar intrusions into data bases or computer-operated security systems. Anyone attempting to gain unauthorized access into a protected system uses the Computer Skill Level of the programmer who created the security system as a difficulty modifier.

## **Cryptography**

A character with Cryptography Skill can decode and encode messages.

When a character encodes a message, he makes a skill roll and records the number of points by which his die roll succeeded. This value becomes the difficulty modifier for anyone attempting to decipher the encoded message.

A skill roll is required to decode a message without a key. As decryption is a time-consuming process usually aided by computers, the difficulty modifier assigned should be based on the length of the message, the time the character has to decode the message, and the kind of equipment he is using. Even with computers, decoding usually takes at least an hour. If the skill roll fails, double the time required for every point by which the roll failed.



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### Demolitions

A character with Demolitions Skill can set and/or disarm explosive devices and has a working knowledge of explosives and their applications. A character must make a skill roll for any demolitions task ranging from determining the kind and quantity of explosive it takes to open a safe without destroying its fragile contents to the construction of a time bomb. Demolitions Skill can also be used to inspect the site of an explosion to discover the type of detonator and explosive used.

Setting a trap requires a Demolitions Skill Roll. The difficulty modifier varies with the sensitivity of the explosive used and the complexity of the triggering device. In general, the harder it is to set a device, the harder it is to disarm. If the character setting the device fails his Demolitions Skill Roll, he must make a second roll using the same modifiers to avoid setting off the device accidentally.

Characters may also use this skill to disarm explosive devices. This includes bombs, mines, or other booby traps they may encounter. Disarming these devices is a difficult and dangerous endeavor. The character must make a skill roll with twice the difficulty modifier taken by the character who set the device. Failure means the character has set off the device, with the obvious consequences.

### Disguise

A character with Disguise Skill can change his appearance enough to be taken for someone else. To create or pierce a disguise also requires a skill roll. Disguise Skill includes a full knowledge of cosmetics and what is fashionable in the various levels of society and can also help a character conceal weapons or other items on his person.

Under optimum conditions, creating a disguise requires access to specialized equipment such as makeup, contact lenses, and costume pieces such as platform shoes or padded clothing. Improvised disguises are possible, but with a significant penalty.

Note that the ability to make oneself look like someone else does not confer the ability to act like that person. The Impersonation Skill needed to mimic voices and mannerisms is often used in conjunction with Disguise Skill. Disguise also complements Alternate Identity quite well, allowing the new identity to have a different appearance.

### Drive

Drive Skill allows a character to maneuver any kind of conventional, land-based vehicle of the 31st century, including wheeled vehicles, tracked vehicles such as tanks, ground effect vehicles, and hovercraft. Characters with this skill also know basic care and maintenance of these vehicles, and may even attempt minor repairs with the aid of a manual.

Whenever attempting to perform any difficult or dangerous action such as making a tight turn or maneuvering around obstacles at high speed, the character must make a skill roll. He can also push his vehicle beyond its normal limits with a successful skill roll. For this reason, an Opposed Skill Roll can be used to resolve any vehicle chases that may occur.

### Engineering

Engineering Skill deals with the complex principles of design, manufacture, and modification of equipment from existing technology, allowing a character to design equipment from scratch, modify an existing design, check a design for flaws, and determine how a design would best be executed.



Engineering is one of the most difficult and time-consuming endeavors a character can attempt, often requiring an entire staff of engineers and specialized equipment and computer systems. Something as complex as modifying a BattleMech design can take years and is well beyond the scope of this game. If the gamemaster allows, such activities can be pursued between game sessions, but bear in mind the impact the proposed design could have on the campaign.

During gaming, Engineering Skill is most often used for minor modifications such as retrofitting a 'Mech with new equipment or making minor design changes such as replacing armor with extra heat sinks. A skill roll is necessary to make these kinds of modifications without compromising the design integrity of the BattleMech. A difficulty modifier should reflect the extent of the modifications and the complexity of the systems involved.

A gamemaster who allows the design of new BattleMechs runs the risk of upsetting game balance to the point where the new design would affect the balance of power throughout the Inner Sphere. For this reason, it is strongly recommended that these kinds of applications be restricted to NPCs.

Even if the development of new designs is allowed, there are several mitigating factors. The first is cost. Research and Development (R&D) costs literally millions of C-Bills and so would not be economically feasible for most player characters. The second is manpower. Because of the specialized nature of components for a machine as complex as a BattleMech, a lone engineer would have to devote his entire life to do the necessary design work

himself. An R&D team normally consists of a core of engineers, each with his own team of assistants. The third is time. R&D should take a minimum of one year to attempt, but usually more. Last, but far from least, are facilities. Producing a prototype requires access to facilities and equipment that are very difficult to obtain without a contract with one of the Great Houses. Furthermore, the existence of such a contract would mean that House would own the completed design.

## **Escape Artist**

A character with this skill has a working knowledge of all manner of personal restraints and bindings and how to defeat them. He must make a skill roll when scoping out an escape route, slipping bonds, or dislocating various joints to create slack in bonds he will later try to slip.

Note that Escape Artist Skill does not include the Lockpicking ability covered by the Security Systems Skill, but the two skills are often used in conjunction.

## **Forgery**

A character with Forgery Skill can produce and detect forgeries. Forgery deals primarily with the techniques for producing forged signatures and documents, though it also gives the character familiarity with equipment that can detect an art forgery by analyzing the chemical composition of paints and paper. This skill does not confer expertise about works of art by any particular artist, as that would require a Special Interest Skill.

A character must make a skill roll when attempting to detect forged documents and seals or when attempting to produce a forged document.

## **Gambling**

A character with Gambling Skill understands the various concepts associated with gambling and the ways people have devised to cheat at games of chance. It also includes a working knowledge of most common games of chance and how to exploit them.

When attempting to cheat or when trying to spot cheating, the character must make a Gambling Skill Roll. At the gamemaster's discretion, a Gambling Skill Roll can also determine a character's success at games of chance. It is more fun, however, to let the character roleplay some of the game and then base his winnings on the outcome.

Use of this skill is an easy way for a character to generate some extra income with a few friendly games in the barracks in between missions, but such wins could also foster hostilities that might backfire on the battlefield.

## **Gunnery**

A character with any of the Gunnery Skills is trained and proficient in the use of heavy weapons. Each of the five Gunnery Skills must be purchased separately; having one does not confer ability in any other Gunnery Skill. These skills all include basic care and maintenance of the weapon systems they encompass.

In combat, a character's Gunnery Skill Target is his Base To-Hit Number for the weapons covered by that skill. When **MechWarrior** is integrated with **BattleTech**, the appropriate Gunnery Skill translates directly into a character's Gunnery Skill Level.

## **Gunnery/Aerospace**

This skill confers familiarity with the weapon systems used on fighter craft, be they conventional aircraft, VTOL craft, or aerospace fighters (including LAMs in fighter mode).

## **Gunnery/Artillery**

This skill confers familiarity with all conventional strategic weaponry. This includes all static weapon emplacements and weapons such as Snipers and Long Toms, but does not include artillery pieces mounted on BattleMechs, e.g., the Arrow IV system.

## **Gunnery/BattleMech**

This skill confers familiarity with the weapons interface that controls all systems mounted on a BattleMech. Note that the BattleMech fire-control interface is flexible enough to support a wide variety of weapon systems, including artillery that would normally require Gunnery/Artillery Skill to fire.

## **Gunnery/Battlesuit**

This skill confers familiarity with all Battlesuit types and systems. Note that though Inner Sphere pilots would be able to figure out how to operate a Clan Elemental suit, they are physically incompatible with the suit's design and would be incapable of withstanding the punishment inflicted by its operation.

## **Gunnery/Conventional**

This skill confers familiarity with all conventional vehicle-mounted weapons, including those on motorized infantry and armor units such as tanks and APCs.

## **Gunnery/Spacecraft**

This skill confers familiarity with the fire-control systems on spacecraft such as DropShips and JumpShips. The skill allows the character to fire any weapons mounted on these vessels, regardless of type (including artillery pieces).

## **Impersonation**

A character with Impersonation Skill can assume a role and act out a part. He must make a skill roll to determine how well he assumes the chosen role. If it is the role of a real person, the impersonator will need time to study his subject if his portrayal is to stand up to scrutiny.

The gamemaster should impose modifiers based on the amount of time the character has to study his subject and the resource materials available to him. A character who attempts an impersonation of someone he has only glimpsed on the nightly holo news will usually be less convincing than someone who has spent time in personal acquaintance or observation of the other person.

## **Interrogation**

A character with Interrogation Skill can attempt to obtain information from a captured NPC, making a skill roll to determine whether he is able to extract the desired information. Modifiers should reflect the loyalty and willpower of the subject and the techniques the interrogator is willing to use.

Simple questioning may eventually reveal the information the character is seeking, but it is time-consuming and difficult. If he uses more ruthless methods, a failed skill roll means the subject dies before the interrogator can extract any useful information. Whatever the case, use only a single die roll to resolve the entire interrogation process.

Note that this skill mainly represents the ability to determine the truth of the subject's statements. Any brute with a pair of pliers or a welding torch can get a POW to talk, but it takes a trained interrogator to know if the subject is telling the truth.

Knowledge of interrogation techniques makes a character with this skill a more difficult subject. Such a character may apply his Interrogation Skill Level as a difficulty modifier to any rolls made against him.



## Jump Pack

A character with this skill knows how to use jump packs as a mode of transportation.

In addition to familiarity with all kinds of conventional jump gear, the skill also covers fueling, refueling, and basic care and maintenance of all associated equipment.

Use of this skill requires a die roll only when the character attempts a difficult action such as deploying from a moving vehicle. A failed roll can result in possible injury and a landing far from friendly troops, depending on the margin of failure and the gamemaster's discretion.

Note that Jump Pack Skill does not confer any knowledge of Battlesuit systems. Gunnery/Battlesuit and Piloting/Battlesuit cover all Battlesuit functions, including jumping.

## Leadership

A character with Leadership Skill can direct and command others in jobs or military operations. The skill is usually learned through both training and practical experience. A skill roll is necessary to determine if orders to subordinate NPCs will be carried out.

Modifiers should be based on morale, the character's track record as a leader, the tone and wording of the orders, and what he is asking the subordinates to do. Remember that Leadership is not mind-control. Do not use a skill roll to manipulate player characters or NPCs like puppets. Leading by example is far more likely to succeed than shouting commands and expecting blind obedience.

It is up to the character giving the orders to decide how to deal with an insubordinate character. His handling of such a situation will affect his future relationships with his those in his command, so it is wise to exercise caution when taking punitive action.

Note that Negotiation Skill works very effectively in concert with Leadership.

## MedTech

A character with this skill can stabilize wounded characters, perhaps even preventing death. Consult **Wounds and Healing**, p. 58, for a full description of how to use this skill.

Level 1 Medtech Skill represents basic first-aid training; Level 2 is advanced first-aid training. Level 3 is equivalent to paramedic skill, Level 4 is equivalent to nurse's or intern's training, and Level 5 or better represents the training of a doctor or surgeon.

## Navigation

A character with Navigation Skill can navigate FTL spacecraft by plotting jump points. This skill confers familiarity with the operation all the various kinds of navigation equipment on starships, and allows a character to read star charts, plot a course, and find the location of optimum zenith and nadir jump points and recharge stations.

A skill roll is necessary if a character with this skill wishes to determine the most efficient route between destinations.

Navigation Skill is also needed to plot pirate points, which are nonstandard jump points used to bring a ship closer to its destination. Pirate points are usually reserved for military actions, because their use can be dangerous if the course is not plotted with flawless precision. Depending on how much time the character has to plot the course, he must make a skill roll with a difficulty modifier of +2 or more. Failure can have disastrous results, subject to the margin of failure and the gamemaster's discretion.

## Negotiation

A character with Negotiation Skill is trained in the fine art of conversation and manipulation. A Negotiation Skill Roll will affect the outcome of any negotiation in which the character takes part. A successful roll will bring concessions, but a failed roll could mean a stalemate or worse. Negotiation is also useful for interpreting veiled messages. A successful skill roll means the gamemaster can spell out in black and white what might otherwise be hidden in the normally evasive language a diplomat might use.

This skill is also useful for haggling. The merchant's skill, if any, is a difficulty modifier to the character's skill roll. A successful roll allows the character to bargain a merchant down. For every point by which the roll succeeds, the seller will reduce his price by 5 percent (to a minimum of 25 percent of the original asking price). If the character makes his roll exactly, the merchant stands firm, but might throw in a little something extra. If the character misses, the merchant holds fast. Either buy at his price, or go without.

## Perception

A character with Perception Skill is a trained observer. A successful skill roll will reveal details that might otherwise go unnoticed. Perception Skill is often used for such tasks as conducting a search and eavesdropping.

This skill is useful in a variety of circumstances. The gamemaster can use Perception Skill Rolls to determine who sees an approaching enemy first or to find out if a **MechWarrior** notices that someone has tampered with the circuitry in his cockpit.

Perception Rolls give the gamemaster a good way to keep a story moving and to tell the players what their characters see and when they see it. Be careful not to overuse Perception Rolls, however, or they will bog down the flow of play. As with everything else, resort to game mechanics only when the outcome is uncertain.

## Piloting

A character with any of the Piloting Skills has sufficient familiarity with a class of craft to pilot all vehicles encompassed by the skill. Each of the three Piloting Skills must be purchased separately; having one does not confer ability in any other Piloting Skill. All Piloting Skills include basic care and maintenance of the craft they encompass, but not repair or retrofit, which belong to the appropriate Technician Skills.

A Piloting Skill Roll is necessary any time a skilled character attempts a difficult or dangerous maneuver, or when the vehicle is subjected to hazardous conditions. For 'Mechs, these conditions are outlined in detail in the **BattleTech Compendium**, pp. 18-19. When **MechWarrior** is fully integrated with **BattleTech**, the appropriate Piloting Skill translates directly as a character's Piloting Skill Level.

### Piloting/Aerospace

This skill confers familiarity with fighter craft such as conventional aircraft, VTOL craft, and aerospace fighters (including LAMs in fighter mode).

### Piloting/BattleMech

This skill confers familiarity with piloting all types of BattleMechs.

### Piloting/Spacecraft

This skill confers familiarity with piloting spacecraft such as DropShips and JumpShips. Note that Piloting Skill does not confer the ability to operate jump drives. The Navigation Skill is required to plot a JumpShip's course between systems.

## Protocol

A character with Protocol Skill has the social skills to interact with others in a professional and courteous manner. A character must make a skill roll when attempting to identify important people or to determine how to behave in formal situations. This skill imparts a certain courtly grace and is often considered the mark of the "well-bred."

Protocol Skill is crucial for diplomats and nobility but is also useful for any character who comes in contact with society's upper echelons. Even a mercenary could benefit from knowing how to behave if presented to an upper-crust personage, particularly in Kurita space, where an unintentional insult could have dire consequences.

## Quickdraw

A character with Quickdraw Skill can draw a small weapon (usually a pistol or dagger) and use it before another individual can react.

The character must make a skill roll to determine if he can get a shot or a throw before the enemy has a chance to react. If successful, the character gets one attack with his quickdraw weapon before the actual start of the first combat round.

If two characters attempt to use Quickdraw on one another, make an Opposed Skill Roll. The character with the higher margin of success gets his attack off first.

Note that Quickdraw can only be used at the beginning of a combat encounter and is a surprise move. The gamemaster should determine modifiers according to the enemy's alertness, knowledge of the skilled character's concealed weapon, and whether or not the enemy already has drawn weapons aimed at the character attempting this move.

## Running

A character with Running Skill is a practiced runner able to run farther and faster. Skilled characters can use Running to outdistance an opponent if they succeed in an Opposed Skill Roll. Unless the opponent also has Running, he must make an Athletic Saving Roll.

Running Skill is also factored into the character's base movement rate (see **Movement**, p. 53).

## Scrounge

A character with Scrounge Skill has a knack for acquiring materials that are normally difficult to obtain. This skill assumes the character has a network of contacts able to help him locate whatever he requires and that he is adept at uncovering existing networks or establishing new ones wherever he goes. Locating a desired commodity or service often requires an exchange of favors or other materials and becomes a kind of chain reaction throughout the network.

Locating a desired commodity requires a skill roll. Assign modifiers based on the value and rarity of the desired commodity, the time the scavenger has for his work, and how well-established is his network in the area.

Eventually, a scavenger will be able to find what he is looking for unless the gamemaster decides it is not available. A failed skill roll means that the commodity is not available in the immediate area, but does not rule out off-planet shipments or black-market contacts.

Note that Scrounge Skill does not help the character purchase the commodity at a good price. Once he locates the item sought, the character needs Negotiation Skill for haggling.





## Security Systems

A character with Security Systems Skill can establish or break security systems. Locating a weak point in security requires a skill roll. When a character has put a new security system into place, his Security Systems Skill Level is subtracted from any interloper's die roll attempt to determine if the interloper successfully slips through the security net.

With this skill, a character can open all types of locks and safes. The skill includes knowledge of the various electronic lockpicking devices needed to circumvent the locks and safes common in the **MechWarrior** universe.

Note that this skill does not include an understanding of explosives or demolitions. Demolitions Skill is, however, sometimes used in conjunction with Security Systems when the more subtle approach fails.

## Seduction

A character with Seduction Skill can charm anyone of the opposite sex who is receptive to his or her advances, bringing the seducer into the other's confidence. To determine whether the seducing character is able to stir affection in their subject, he must make a skill roll. In most cases, Seduction Skill is used to manipulate someone to perform some service for the character, such as providing information or other assistance.

The gamemaster can determine modifiers according to the character's approach and other factors that would matter to the subject of the seduction, especially what the subject might gain by cooperating with the character's proposition versus any potential risks.



The gamemaster decides whether successful use of this skill gains the character information or another desired good, but players are encouraged to provide a direction for such awards in their roleplaying. Negotiation Skill can be a boon in many circumstances that might arise when Seduction Skill is used.

## Small Arms

A character with Small Arms Skill is familiar with most types of guns.

This skill covers many weapon types, including slug-throwers, lasers, and other small weapons. It does not include unarmed combat, melee weapons, support weapons, or muscle-powered missile weapons such as bows and throwing knives.

The Small Arms Skill Level is the Base To-Hit Number in ranged combat using these weapons.

A skilled character has a working knowledge of these weapons, including basic care and maintenance. This skill can also be used to identify and evaluate these weapons, to determine the type of weapon being fired by an enemy by examining its effects, and to jury-rig a damaged weapon so it will function until it can be repaired. All these tasks require a successful skill roll to accomplish.

## Special Interest (SI)

A character with a Special Interest Skill has spent time studying a subject of particular interest to him.

Each Special Interest Skill represents a different skill. SIs have a broad range, including anything from SI/Famous MechWarriors of Solaris and SI/Poetry of the Draconis Combine to SI/Roleplaying Games. Granted, these are some of the more extreme examples of possible Special Interests, but they illustrate how to use these skills to round out a character's personality. The only restriction is that no Special Interest Skill may duplicate or overlap an existing skill or skills. A Tech has Technician Skill, not SI/Tech.

Whenever a character is attempting to recall information about the subject of a Special Interest Skill, he must make a skill roll.

Note that all dialects and languages are handled as SIs for the purpose of determining fluency and literacy. Level 2 in any language indicates fluency, with Level 5 making it difficult to distinguish the character from a native speaker.

## Stealth

A character with Stealth Skill can move quickly and quietly through all kinds of terrain and situations. Whenever a character using stealth encounters the chance of being seen or heard, he must make a skill roll. Modifiers assigned should be based on cover, lighting, and the vigilance of any possible observers.

This skill is required for the effective use of sneak suits, described on p. 85.

Stealth can also be used to camouflage objects and equipment. The gamemaster will base difficulty modifiers on the size and shape of the object to be concealed and the materials available to the character attempting to camouflage it. Camouflage requires several minutes to effect and may only be performed on immobile equipment. Note that camouflage is normally intended for a specific kind of observation. An APC that has been camouflaged to disguise it from aerospace reconnaissance will still be fairly obvious to any infantry in the area.

## Strategy

A character with Strategy Skill is familiar with the formulation of battle plans on a grand scale. Strategy is similar to Tactics Skill, except that it deals with broader plans: continental assaults, wars waged on multiple worlds or systems, and the like.

When planning a strategy or trying to find a weakness in an opponent's strategy, the character must make a skill roll. Success or failure will affect the allocation of troops and resources, which, in turn, will affect the outcome of the campaign. This skill also includes familiarity with the different forms of strategy typical of the various forces of the Inner Sphere, which may provide valuable insights into an opponent's plan of attack.

If the skilled character is on a military mission or assignment, assume that an NPC with this skill will see to it that supplies and reinforcements are available and on schedule. Enemy operations may, however, disrupt the supply line.

Note that this skill should not replace planning by the player characters. If the gamemaster has decided that he wants to game a military campaign, the characters may use this skill to help formulate their strategy, but they should be responsible for coming up with the battle plan.

## **Streetwise**

Streetwise Skill is similar to Protocol, but deals with the other end of the social spectrum. When attempting to ascertain how to behave when dealing with underworld figures, the character must make a skill roll. This skill allows him to blend in with such individuals, so that he seems at home in the rougher parts of town.

Knowing how to deal with the darker side of society can come in handy for any character type. Mistaking a yakuza boss for a ruffian can be a most regrettable error.

## **Support Weapons**

A character with Support Weapons Skill knows how to use and fire infantry support weapons such as mortars. These weapons are what help keep infantry alive in situations where armor units and BattleMechs are deployed.

The skill level is used as the base To-Hit Number in ranged combat using support weapons.

A character with Support Weapons Skill has a working knowledge of support weapons, including basic care and maintenance. Use of this skill can also identify the types of support weapons that opposing forces are using, to determine if a damaged weapon is still functional, or to jury-rig a damaged weapon so it will function until it can be repaired.

## **Survival**

A character with one of the Survival Skills has the ability to sustain himself in hostile environment. To find food, avoid dangerous situations, or locate suitable shelter require a skill roll. If the character is in the wilderness for an extended period, he must make a daily or weekly Survival Roll to determine the ongoing state of his health.

Modifiers should be based on the severity of the environment, available survival gear, and the amount of time the character has been exposed to dangerous conditions.

## **Swimming**

A character with Swimming Skill knows how to avoid drowning in water of depth greater than his height.

A skill roll is required to warn characters off from water that runs too quickly for them to cope, to avoid the rocks when diving into murky water, or to avoid drowning in a hostile environment such as a storm. This skill also allows the character to swim faster, and for longer periods of time (see **Running**).





# CHARACTERS

## Tactics

A character with Tactics Skills is schooled in the art of war. He must make a skill roll when formulating a plan of attack or trying to determine what will be the enemy's most likely action. Successful rolls can result in accurate guesses about enemy planning, and at the gamemaster's discretion, positive modifiers that will affect skill rolls for that combat.

Tactics Skill also includes familiarity with the tactics used by various forces in the Inner Sphere, which may provide valuable insights into an opponent's plan of attack.

As with Strategy, use of this skill should never supersede roleplaying. Ideally, the players' decisions should decide the outcome of a battle, not the skill rolls of their characters. Knowledge of Tactics should merely help the characters make those decisions.

## Technician

A character with any Technician Skill can repair parts in the equipment for which he is trained.

A skill roll is needed to determine if the repairs can be made, and if they hold after they are made. Modifiers depend on how bad was the original damage and what supplies are available for the repair.

Note that some overlap exists between these skills. Technician/Electronics, Technician/Mechanic, and Technician/Weapons all have BattleMech applications, but each skill covers only some of a 'Mech's systems, while Technician/BattleMech encompasses all aspects of 'Mech technology.

Note also that repairing a Land-Air 'Mech (LAM) requires both Technician/Aerospace and Technician/BattleMech Skills.

### Technician/Aerospace

This skill covers conventional aircraft, VTOL craft, and aerospace fighters.

### Technician/BattleMech

This skill covers all types of BattleMechs and all systems relevant to their operation. Note that this skill overlaps with Tech: Weapons because it deals with BattleMech weapons systems, but it does not confer familiarity with any other weapons systems.

### Technician/Electronics

This skill covers all types of electronic equipment, from communications systems to computers.

### Technician/Mechanic

This skill covers all kinds of mechanical equipment, from vehicles to heavy machinery.

### Technician/Weapons

This skill covers all kinds of weapons systems, from personal firearms to artillery pieces and BattleMech weapons.

## Throwing Weapons

A character with this skill is able to throw knives well enough to use them as a weapon.

His Skill Level becomes the Base To-Hit Number when throwing knives in combat. This skill can also apply to more esoteric thrown weapons such as darts and shuriken (throwing stars). A character who has this skill also knows basic care and maintenance. It also lets him evaluate throwing weapons for quality and balance.

Note that this skill does not include throwing grenades. No skill is required to throw a grenade, and training will do relatively little to increase a character's accuracy with grenade-like weapons.

## Tinker

A character with Tinker Skill can convert and modify equipment and gear. To convert a device from one function to another, the character must make a skill roll. Modifiers are based on the difference between the item's original functions and what they are being converted into.

Note that there are definite limits on what a character is able to do with this skill. He can use it to jury-rig damaged equipment or cobble together makeshift special-purpose gear, but he cannot use Tinker to turn a clock radio into a hyperpulse generator. Logic and the gamemaster's discretion must prevail, or else this skill will do more harm than good in a game.

## Tracking

A character with this skill can track or tail individuals in either wilderness or urban settings.

He must make a skill roll to ferret out clues to the passage of the person being tracked. The Tracking Skill Level can also serve as a negative modifier for people trying to track a character using the skill to pass unnoticed or to conceal his location.

## Training

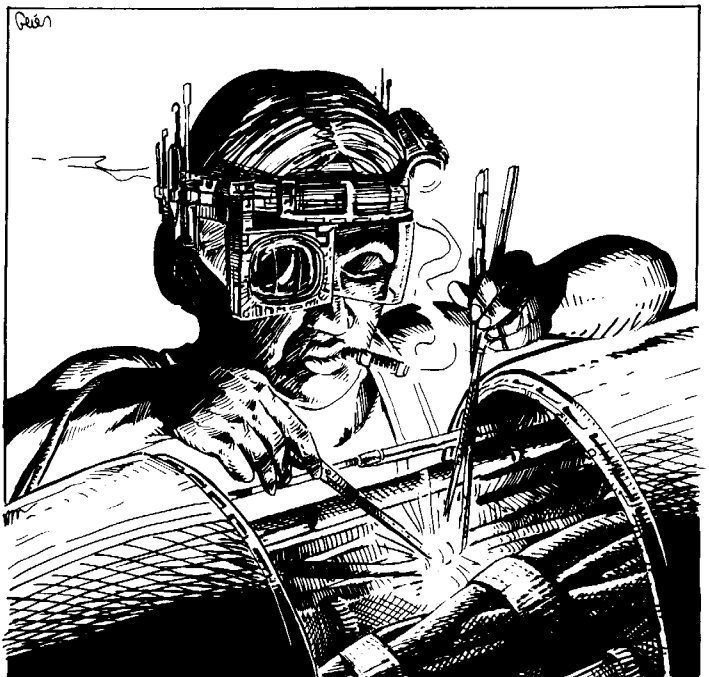
A character with this skill can teach others how to use a skill. This skill is important because it allows characters to transfer their skills to others. A skill roll is required to teach a skill successfully. A high margin of error indicates that the character has unwittingly passed on misinformation to his student.

Note that a character must possess a skill to teach it.

## Unarmed Combat

A character with Unarmed Combat Skill has undergone training in unarmed combat techniques. The character's skill level is the Base To-Hit Number in unarmed combat or in combat using improvised weapons.

Though unarmed combat is, technically, "the art of self-defense," instructors often include training in the use of brass knuckles or other particularly nasty forms favored by street fighters in shadier zones.





## MECHWARRIOR: BOUNTY HUNTER

A specialized form of mercenary, the Bounty Hunter is hired to seek out and defeat a particular opponent. The reasons why are none of the Bounty Hunter's concern, nor does he care what fate his prey will meet once captured. His only concern is tracking down and overcoming his quarry.

Because of the Bounty Hunter's questionable ethics, many mercenaries who value integrity view him with disdain. For this reason, a player character should take the role of a former Bounty Hunter who has his reasons for choosing a new line of work.

Attributes		Characteristics	
BLD	4 (8+)	Athletic	8+
REF	6 (6+)	Physical	7+
INT	5 (7+)	Mental	9+
LRN	4 (8+)	Social	11+
CHA	3 (9+)		

### Skills

Advanced Academy Package:  
BattleMech Pilot MOS

Alternate Identity	2	(7+)
Blade	2	(6+)
Gunnery/Mech	3	(4+)
Medtech	1	(8+)
Piloting/Mech	3	(4+)
Quickdraw	1	(6+)
Small Arms	2	(5+)
Stealth	1	(6+)
Unarmed Combat	1	(7+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

- Ablative/Flack Vest w/5 repair patches
- Deluxe Field Kit
- 2 Knives
- 2 Medkits
- 6 Microgrenades
- 6 Minigrenades
- Personal Communicator
- Sonic Stunner
- Sternsnacht Heavy Pistol w/10 reloads
- Sword
- Vibrodagger

BattleMech: Heavy





## MECHWARRIOR: GRIZZLED VETERAN

This character has been a MechWarrior longer than many of his comrades have been alive. To hear him talk, there is not much the "old man" has not seen or done. Sure he blusters, but he has earned it, and truth be told, most of what he says is true.

Many units value the Veteran's experience and will give him a command if he wants it. An able leader, he is an excellent choice for a lance command and though he may be slowing down a bit, he is still a tough combatant who can take on the fastest greenhorn with confidence.

### Attributes

BLD	5	(7+)
REF	4	(8+)
INT	6	(6+)
LRN	4	(8+)
CHA	5	(7+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	9+
Physical	8+
Mental	8+
Social	7+

### Skills

Basic University Package:  
BattleMech Pilot MOS

Gambling	1	(7+)
Gunnery/Mech	4	(4+)
Interrogation	1	(6+)
Leadership	2	(5+)
Medtech	1	(7+)
Perception	1	(7+)
Piloting/Mech	3	(5+)
Small Arms	1	(7+)
Tactics	1	(7+)
Technician/Mech	1	(7+)
Unarmed Combat	1	(7+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

Armored Vest  
Basic Field Kit  
Dagger  
Double-Barreled Shotgun w/10 reloads  
2 Medkits  
3 Microgrenades  
Personal Communicator  
Pistol w/20 reloads

BattleMech: Medium



## MECHWARRIOR: HOTSHOT

This character is the best MechWarrior the Inner Sphere has ever seen—at least so he thinks.

A reckless loner with an attitude problem, this arrogant whelp is constantly trying to prove himself against anyone and everyone who presents a threat to his fragile ego.

Few units would put up with him were he not almost as good as he claims to be. Despite his brash manner, he is a brave warrior with a good heart (and a big mouth).

### Attributes

BLD	4	(8+)
REF	6	(6+)
INT	5	(7+)
LRN	3	(9+)
CHA	4	(8+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	8+
Physical	7+
Mental	10+
Social	9+

### Advantages

Extra Edge (1 pt)  
Natural Aptitude\* (Gunnery/Mech)

### Skills

Gambling	1	(9+)
Gunnery/Mech	3	(4+)*
Piloting/Mech	2	(5+)
Quickdraw	1	(6+)
Seduction	1	(8+)
Small Arms	2	(5+)
Unarmed Combat	1	(7+)

Edge: 2

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

Armored Vest  
Mydron Auto-Pistol w/5 reloads  
and custom quick-draw holster  
2 Hold-Out Pistols w/5 reloads each  
(one for each boot)

BattleMech: Light





# ARCHETYPES



## MECHWARRIOR: HOUSE REGULAR

The 'Mech regiments of the Successor States are composed mostly of these characters, who represent the "average" MechWarrior. Though there are differences from House to House, they are minor and usually inconsequential.

When used as an NPC to fill out a unit, the House Regular will probably not own his own 'Mech. As a player character, assume that the character has recently mustered out of service with one of the Great Houses with a 'Mech and some of his gear.

### Attributes

BLD	4	(8+)
REF	5	(7+)
INT	5	(7+)
LRN	4	(8+)
CHA	4	(8+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	9+
Physical	8+
Mental	9+
Social	9+

### Advantages

Well-Equipped (1 pt)

### Skills

Advanced Academy Package:  
BattleMech Pilot MOS

Gunnery/'Mech	4	(4+)
Medtech	1	(8+)
Piloting/'Mech	3	(5+)
Small Arms	2	(6+)
Survival	1	(8+)
Tactics	1	(8+)
Technician/'Mech	2	(7+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

Armored Body Suit  
Auto-Pistol w/10 reloads  
Basic Tool Kit  
Deluxe Field Kit  
Hold-Out Pistol w/10 reloads  
2 Medkits  
5 Minigrenades  
Personal Communicator  
Rifle w/Bayonet and 10 reloads  
Vibroddagger

BattleMech: Heavy

## MECHWARRIOR: HULKING BRUTE

A massive individual possessed of unusual physical prowess, this character is more than a match for most in a brawl and though he barely fits in the cockpit, he can hold his own in a 'Mech as well.

As an NPC, the Hulking Brute is often a loud-mouthed bully who keeps his comrades in line with implied threats and menacing glares. As a player character, the big guy will usually be a soft-spoken fellow who does not know his own strength and takes the part of his smaller buddies in a scrap.

### Attributes

BLD	7	(5+)
REF	6	(6+)
INT	4	(8+)
LRN	3	(9+)
CHA	3	(9+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	5+
Physical	8+
Mental	11+
Social	11+

### Advantages

Extraordinary Attribute (BLD)  
Toughness

### Skills

Basic Academy Package:  
BattleMech Pilot MOS

Blade	2	(3+)
Gunnery/'Mech	3	(5+)
Medtech	1	(10+)
Piloting/'Mech	2	(6+)
Small Arms	2	(6+)
Unarmed Combat	2	(3+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

Armored Vest  
Basic Field Kit  
2 Medkits  
2 Minigrenades  
Pistol w/5 reloads  
Vibroblade

BattleMech: Light





## MECHWARRIOR: SCOUNDREL

Not so much a villain as a rogue, the Scoundrel is a rakish opportunist who is amused by the games people play and is determined to come out a winner whenever possible.

An able manipulator, he has seen the opportunities afforded by the lifestyle of a MechWarrior, and has familiarized himself with the skills necessary to gain employ as a soldier of fortune.

Despite his efforts, the Scoundrel has yet to obtain a BattleMech of his own, and must rely on his charm and wits to secure a position in a unit that has a spare Mech to loan him.



### Attributes

BLD	4	(8+)
REF	5	(7+)
INT	5	(7+)
LRN	5	(7+)
CHA	6	(7+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	9+
Physical	8+
Mental	8+
Social	7+

### Advantages

- Extra Edge (1 pt)
- Wealth (1 pt)
- Well-Equipped (1 pt)

### Skills

Appraisal	1	(7+)
Gambling	1	(7+)
Gunnery/Mech	3	(5+)
Negotiation	1	(6+)
Piloting/Mech	2	(6+)
Quickdraw	1	(7+)
Scrounge	1	(6+)
Seduction	1	(6+)
Small Arms	1	(7+)
Thrown Weapon	3	(6+)
Streetwise	1	(6+)

Edge: 2

Assets: 5,000 C-Bills

### Equipment

- Armored Vest
- Auto-Pistol w/10 reloads
- Basic Field Kit
- Hold-Out Needler Pistol w/5 reloads
- 4 Knives
- Laser Pistol
- Medkit
- 2 Microgrenades
- Personal Communicator
- Vibro dagger

BattleMech: None

## MECHWARRIOR: TECHNOPHILE

This character views his BattleMech as such an extension of himself that on the few occasions when he leaves his cockpit, he is ill-equipped to deal with other human beings.

Fascinated by all aspects of BattleMech design and operation, he is obsessed with his 'Mech, and insists on personally seeing to even the most perfunctory and menial maintenance tasks.

Though not the ideal team-mate, the Technophile is an excellent MechWarrior with useful Tech skills that make him a welcome addition to any unit.

### Attributes

BLD	3	(9+)
REF	4	(8+)
INT	6	(6+)
LRN	5	(7+)
CHA	3	(9+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	11+
Physical	8+
Mental	7+
Social	9+

### Advantages

Well-Equipped (2 pts)

### Skills

Basic University Package

BattleMech Pilot and Tech Specialist MOS

Computer	1	(6+)
Engineering	2	(5+)
Gunnery/'Mech	3	(5+)
Medtech	1	(6+)
Piloting/'Mech	2	(6+)
Security Systems	1	(6+)
Small Arms	1	(7+)
Technician/'Mech	2	(5+)
Tinker	1	(6+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

Ablative/Flack Vest  
 BattleMech Repair Kit  
 Deluxe Field Kit  
 Medipack  
 Microcommunicator  
 Pulse Laser Pistol

BattleMech: Heavy





# ARCHETYPES

## MECHWARRIOR: YOUNG NOBLE

Fresh out of the university, this character has been given a brand-new BattleMech and a position with a carefully chosen unit. To get where he is cost his family many favors, but he really is not ready for the responsibilities his new assignment entails.

If the Young Noble is given a command, his subordinates may resent him because he is obviously not the best choice. Fortunately, he is well-educated and pilots a powerful Mech that might keep him alive long enough to earn the respect of his comrades, and in so doing, become the man his family expects him to be.

### Attributes

BLD	3	(9+)
REF	5	(7+)
INT	5	(7+)
LRN	4	(8+)
CHA	5	(7+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	10+
Physical	8+
Mental	9+
Social	8+

### Advantages

- Land Grant
- Title: Baronet (Heir)
- Well-Equipped (1 pt)
- Wealth (1 pt)

### Skills

Basic University Package:  
BattleMech Pilot MOS and Leadership training

Bureaucracy	2	(6+)
Gunnery/Mech	2	(6+)
Leadership	1	(7+)
Medtech	1	(8+)
Piloting/Mech	2	(6+)
Protocol	2	(6+)
Small Arms	1	(7+)
Strategy	1	(8+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 5,000 C-Bills

### Equipment

- Ablative/Flack Vest w/2 patches
- Expensive Clothes
- Deluxe Field Kit
- Hold-Out Laser Pistol w/5 reloads
- 2 Medkits
- Microcommunicator
- Vibroblade adorned w/family crest
- Vibrodagger

BattleMech: Medium





## CLAN: PRIMARY MECHWARRIOR

Centuries of selective breeding have produced a humanity better suited to the rigors of BattleMech piloting. The primary MechWarrior is the pinnacle of the Clan ideal and his like compose most of the Clan's main battle force.

For the most part, Clan MechWarriors do not own their own BattleMechs, but are assigned 'Mechs as deemed necessary by their commanders. Therefore, player characters of this type who have left the Clans for one reason or another will be dispossessed.

### Attributes

BLD	5	(7+)
REF	6	(6+)
INT	6	(6+)
LRN	5	(7+)
CHA	5	(7+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	7+
Physical	6+
Mental	7+
Social	7+

### Advantages

Extra Edge (1 pt)

### Skills

Primary MechWarrior Package

Gunnery/'Mech	4	(2+)
Interrogation	1	(6+)
Leadership	1	(6+)
Medtech	1	(6+)
Piloting/'Mech	3	(3+)
Small Arms	2	(4+)
Survival	1	(6+)
Tactics	2	(5+)
Tech/'Mech	2	(5+)
Unarmed Combat	1	(6+)

Edge: 2

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

Armored Body Suit  
Basic Field Kit  
2 Medkits  
Pistol w/15 reloads



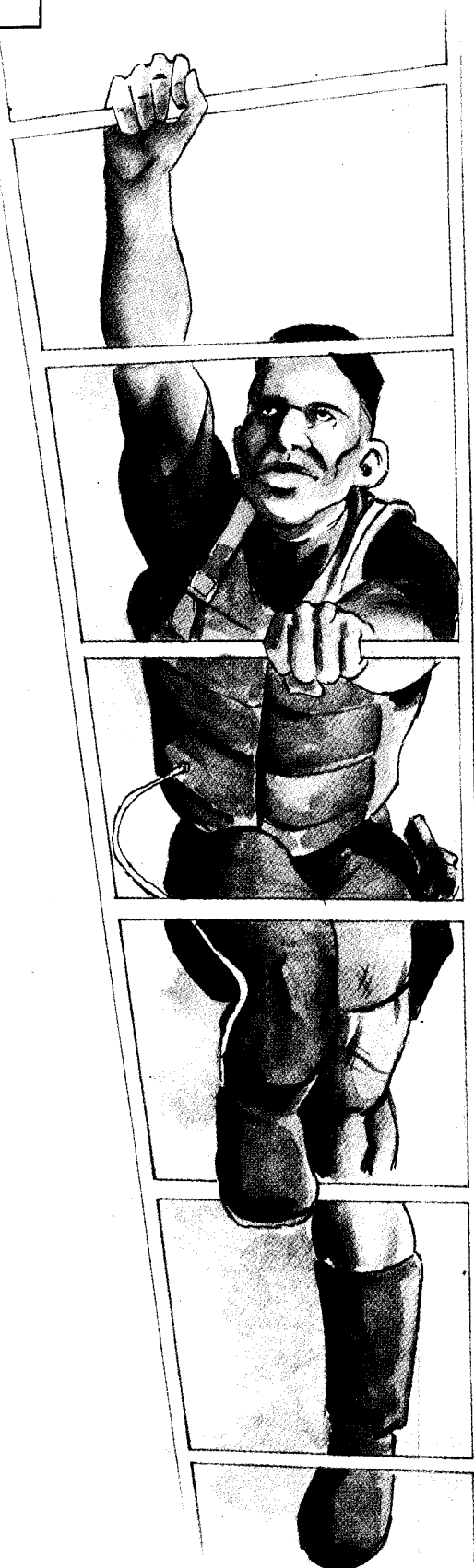


# ARCHETYPES

## CLAN: SECONDARY MECHWARRIOR

Though this character has undergone the same training as a primary MechWarrior, when tested, he was not chosen for a front-line position but was relegated instead to a support assignment.

A player character of this type is assumed to have left the Clans, taking with him some equipment and a medium BattleMech. If the character is to operate as a Clansman, the points invested in a BattleMech can be assigned to Extra Edge and Wealth.



### Attributes

BLD	5	(7+)
REF	6	(6+)
INT	6	(6+)
LRN	5	(7+)
CHA	5	(7+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	7+
Physical	6+
Mental	7+
Social	7+

### Advantages

Extra Edge (1 pt)

### Skills

Secondary MechWarrior Package

Gunnery/'Mech	3	(3+)
Leadership	1	(6+)
Medtech	1	(6+)
Piloting/'Mech	2	(4+)
Small Arms	2	(4+)
Survival	1	(6+)
Tactics	1	(6+)
Tech/'Mech	1	(6+)
Unarmed Combat	1	(6+)

Edge: 2

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

- Ablative Flack Vest
- Deluxe Field Kit
- 2 Medkits
- Personal Communicator
- Pistol w/5 reloads
- Rifle w/Sniper Scope, Bayonet, and 10 reloads
- Vibro dagger

BattleMech: Medium

# ARCHETYPES

## CLAN: ELEMENTAL

One of the genetic giants gene-engineered to pilot the Clan's mighty Battlesuits, this character is a deadly combatant both in and out of his armor.

As Elementals are often called upon to engage BattleMechs many times the combined mass of their entire Point, they have a well-deserved reputation for fearlessness.

Trained from birth to be part of an Elemental Point, these immense warriors are accustomed to sacrificing individuality to functioning as part of a team, making them far less erratic than one might expect.

### Attributes

BLD	8	(4+)
REF	6	(6+)
INT	6	(6+)
LRN	4	(8+)
CHA	3	(9+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	4+
Physical	6+
Mental	9+
Social	9+

### Advantages

Toughness

### Skills

Elemental Package

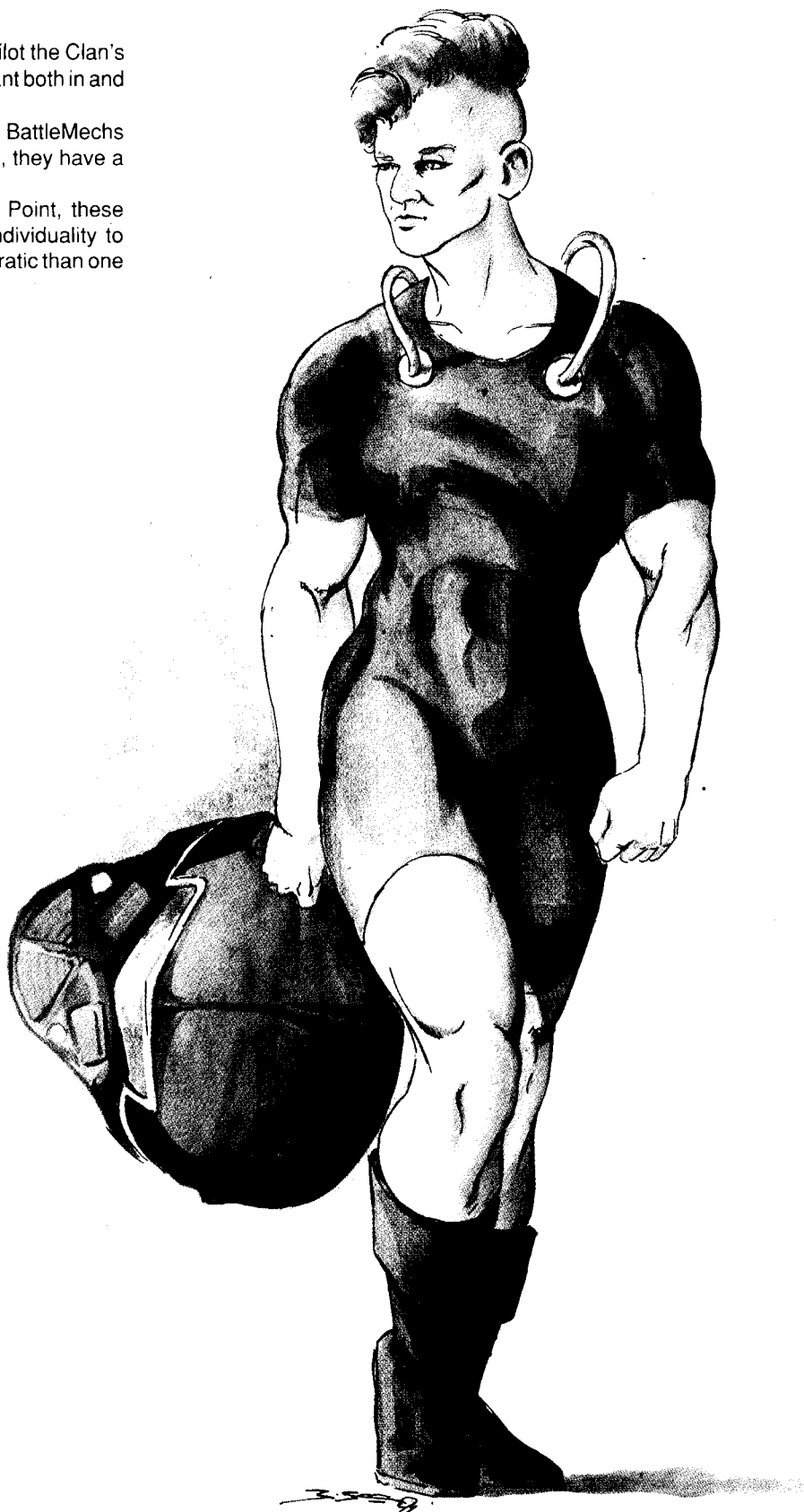
Blade	1	(3+)
Gunnery/Battlesuit	3	(3+)
Interrogation	1	(8+)
Medtech	1	(8+)
Piloting/Battlesuit	3	(3+)
Small Arms	2	(4+)
Survival	1	(8+)
Tactics	1	(8+)
Tech/Battlesuit	1	(8+)
Unarmed Combat	2	(2+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

Armored Body Suit  
Basic Field Kit  
2 Medkits  
Pistol w/15 reloads





# ARCHETYPES

## CLAN: PILOT

Sharing much with Inner Sphere aerospace pilots, the Clan fighter pilots are daring warriors who battle far above the juggernauts of the main battle force.

Reshaped by generations of DNA manipulation, Clan pilots have been adapted to the specialized environment of the aerospace fighter cockpit. Smaller and faster than other humans, they are able to push their machines to their very limits.

### Attributes

BLD	3	(9+)
REF	7	(5+)
INT	6	(6+)
LRN	5	(7+)
CHA	3	(9+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	8+
Physical	5+
Mental	6+
Social	9+

### Advantages

Extra Edge (2 pt)

### Skills

Pilot Package

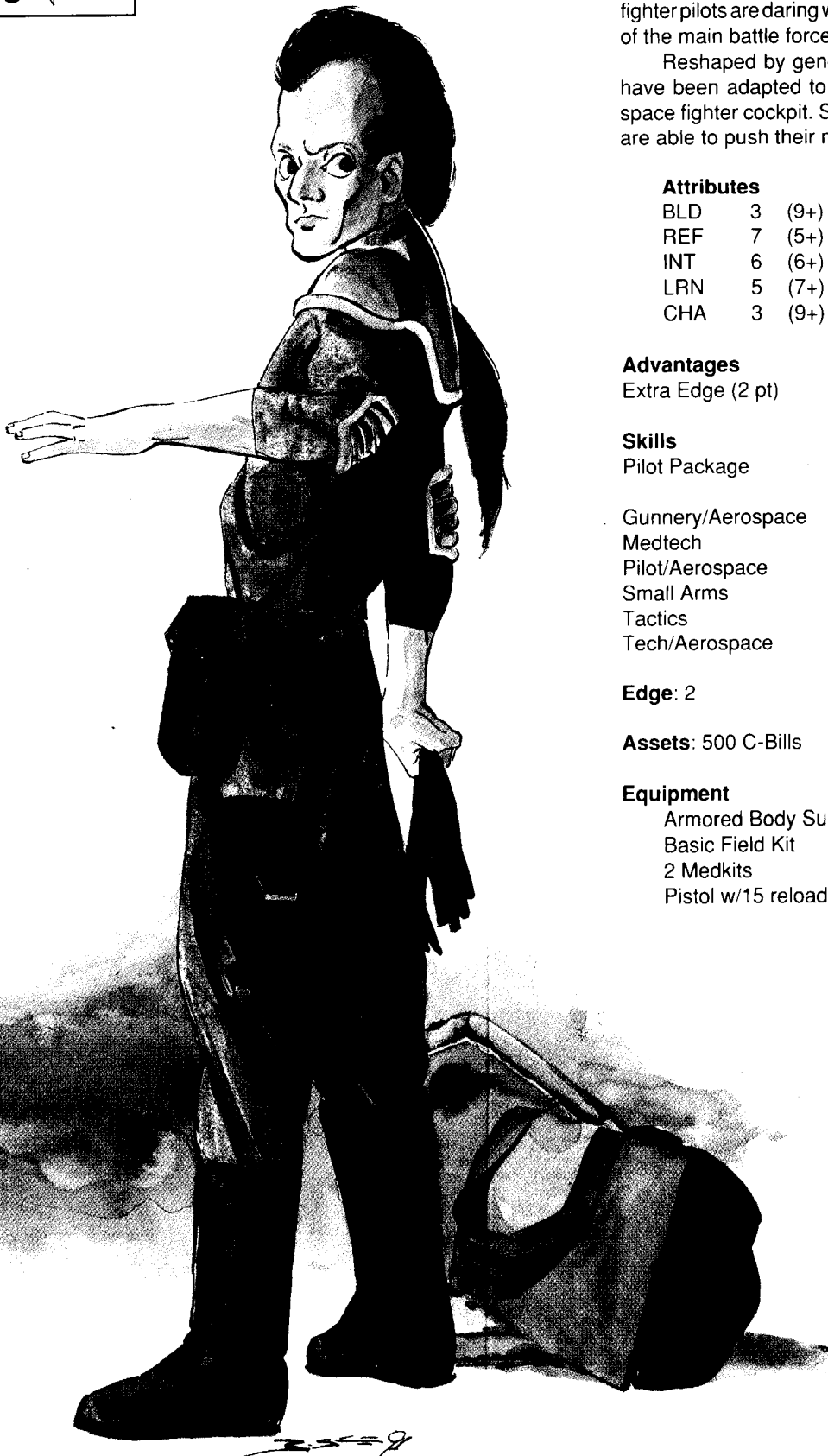
Gunnery/Aerospace	4	(1+)
Medtech	1	(5+)
Pilot/Aerospace	3	(2+)
Small Arms	1	(4+)
Tactics	2	(4+)
Tech/Aerospace	2	(4+)

Edge: 2

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

Armored Body Suit  
 Basic Field Kit  
 2 Medkits  
 Pistol w/15 reloads



## AEROJOCK

In a universe where the BattleMech is the undisputed king of the battlefield, some warriors choose to rise above the ground-pounders and their lumbering skirmishes.

Drawn by the freedom offered by the maneuverability and speed of aerospace fighters, this character lives on the edge with far less armor to protect him from enemy fire than his earthbound counterparts.

Even the most jaded MechWarrior realizes the value of these brave souls, particularly when aerospace support is all that stands between him and hostile artillery during a long, slow drop. . .

### Attributes

BLD	3	(9+)
REF	5	(7+)
INT	6	(6+)
LRN	4	(8+)
CHA	3	(9+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	10+
Physical	7+
Mental	8+
Social	9+

### Advantages

Extra Edge (1 pt)

### Skills

Advanced Academy Package:  
Aerospace Pilot MOS

Gunnery/Aerospace	4	(3+)
Medtech	1	(7+)
Perception	1	(7+)
Pilot/Aerospace	3	(4+)
Small Arms	2	(5+)
Survival	1	(7+)
Technician/Aerospace	2	(6+)

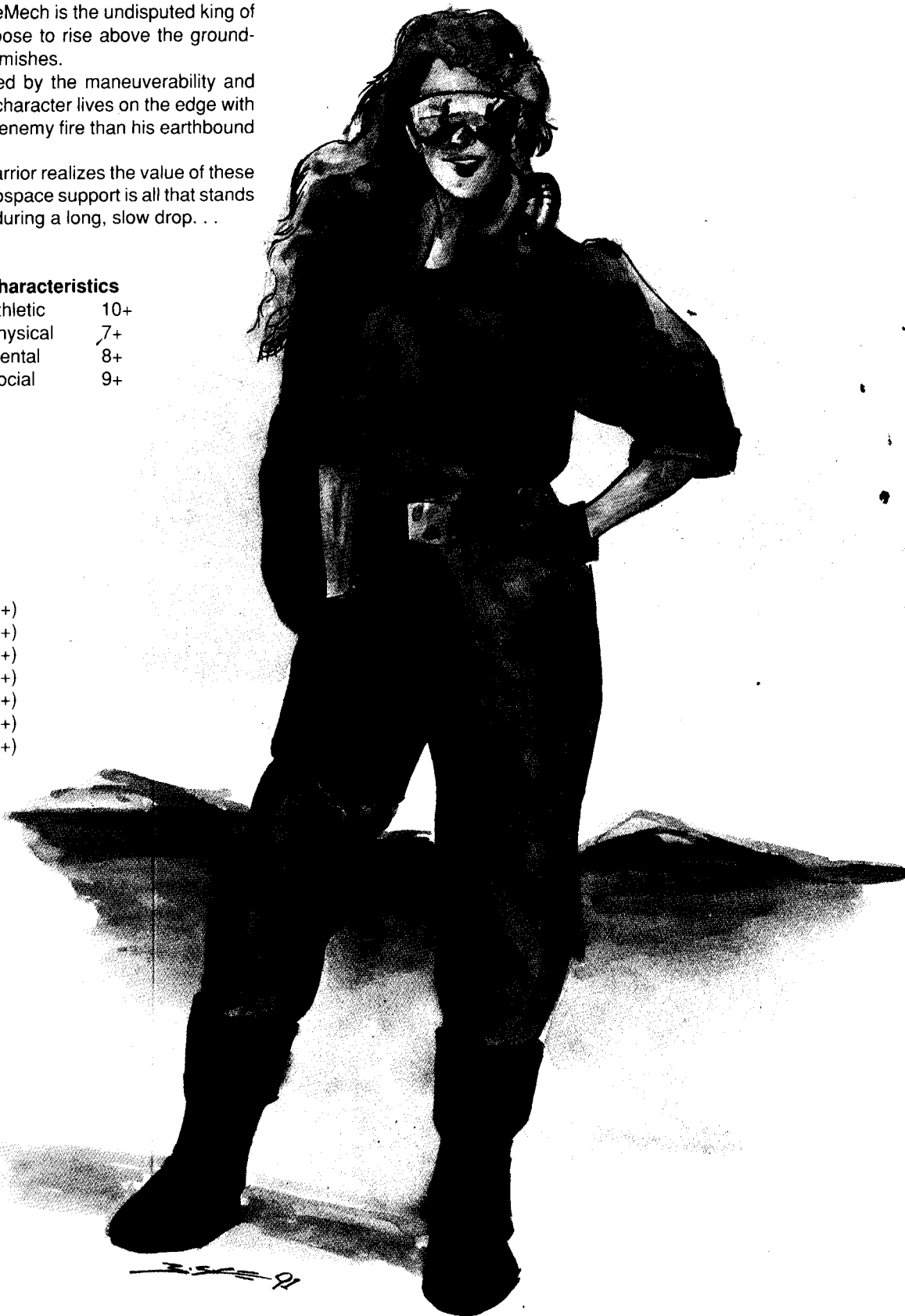
Edge: 2

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

Armored Body Suit  
Basic Field Kit  
2 Medkits  
Pistol w/15 reloads

Aerospace Fighter: Heavy



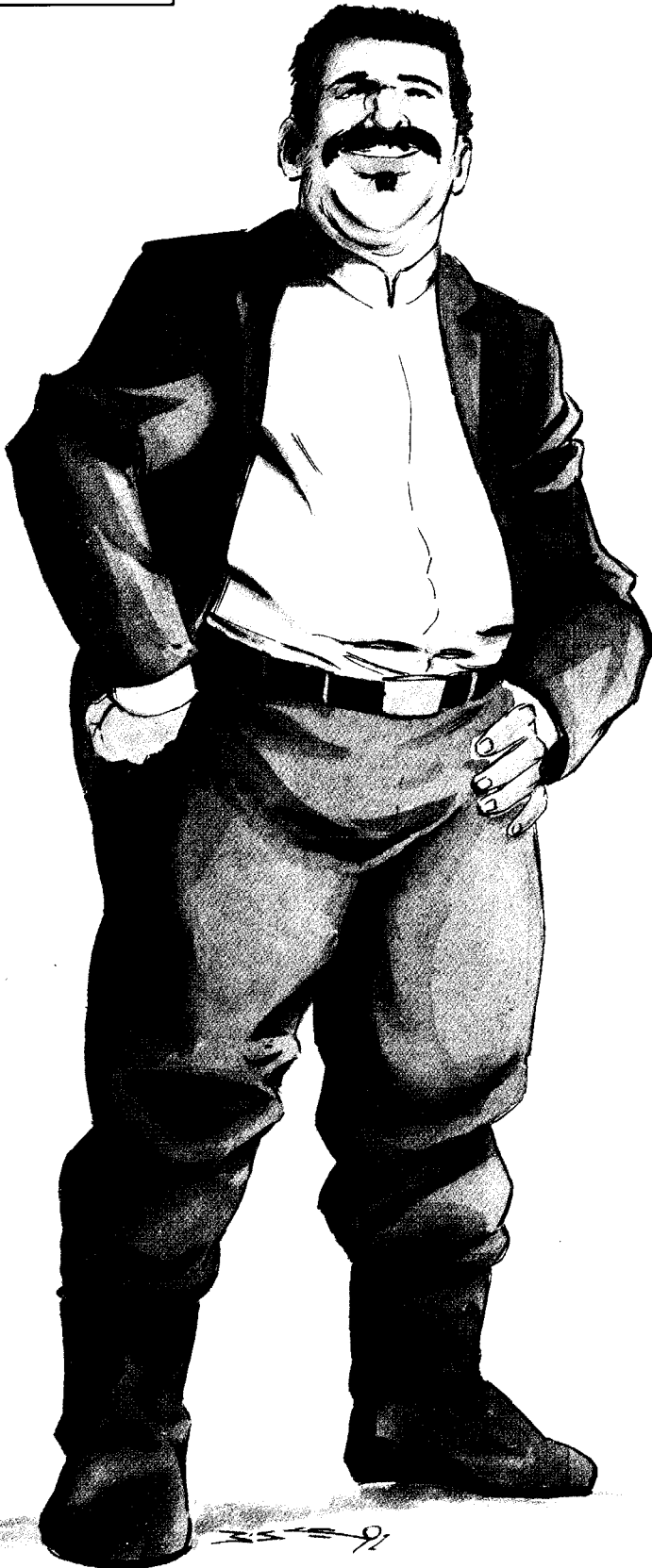


# ARCHETYPES

## FREE TRADER

In the aftermath of the Succession Wars and the wake of the Clan invasion, the Universe offers limitless opportunities to those farsighted few with the cunning to take advantage of them.

Unbound by affiliation to any flag, clan, emblem, or house, this character is truly free to pursue his dreams of fortune and glory wherever they may lead.



### Attributes

BLD	4	(8+)
REF	4	(8+)
INT	5	(7+)
LRN	6	(6+)
CHA	6	(6+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	10+
Physical	9+
Mental	7+
Social	7+

### Advantages

- Wealth (1 pt)
- Well-Equipped (1 pt)

### Skills

Administration	1	(6+)
Appraisal	2	(5+)
Bureaucracy	1	(6+)
Communication/Conventional	1	(6+)
Computer	1	(6+)
Gambling	1	(6+)
Gunnery/Spacecraft	2	(7+)
Navigation	2	(5+)
Negotiation	1	(6+)
Piloting/Spacecraft	2	(7+)
Scrounge	2	(5+)
Small Arms	2	(7+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 5,000 C-Bills

### Equipment

- Armored Vest
- Blackjack
- 2 Daggers
- Hold-Out Needler Pistol w/5 reloads
- 2 Medkits
- Personal Communicator
- Vibroblade

## SCOUT

In earlier times, this character might have been called a spy. Though his job requires a variety of illegal acts, from simple eavesdropping to murder, malice is seldom involved. The unpleasant role the Scout must sometimes play is simply another of the harsh realities of war.

The Scout is his unit's eyes and ears on the world where he is stationed and is just as important as those who pilot the 'Mechs of the main battle force. Living by his guile and his wits, he spends much of his time operating independently from the rest of his unit. As a result, his comrades often view him as a "loner."

### Attributes

BLD	4	(8+)
REF	5	(7+)
INT	6	(6+)
LRN	6	(6+)
CHA	3	(9+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	9+
Physical	7+
Mental	6+
Social	9+

### Advantages

Well-Equipped (2 pts)

### Skills

Basic Academy Package:  
Specialist/Recon MOS

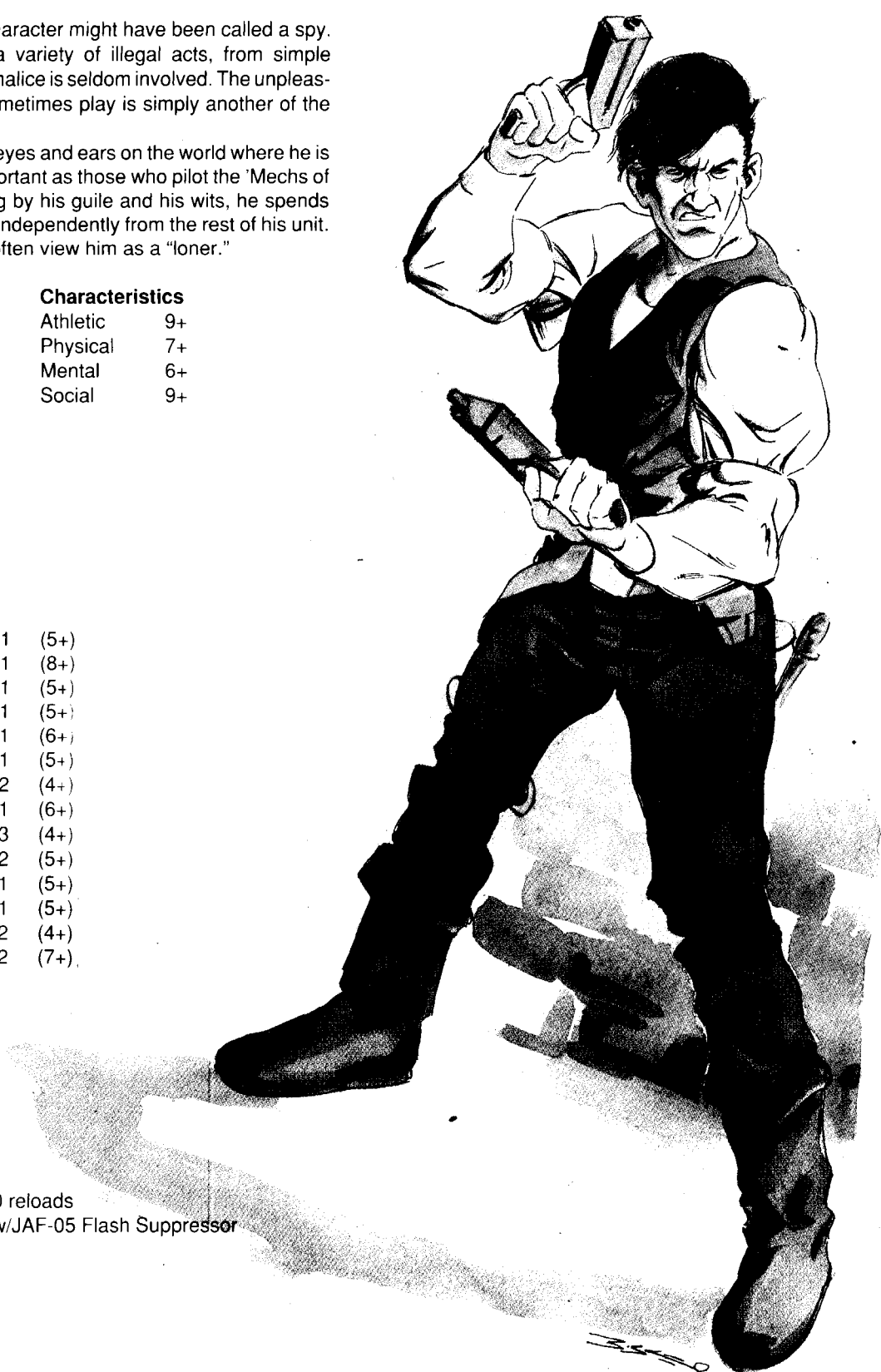
Alternate Identity	1	(5+)
Climbing	1	(8+)
Demolitions	1	(5+)
Disguise	1	(5+)
Drive/Conventional	1	(6+)
Medtech	1	(5+)
Perception	2	(4+)
Quickdraw	1	(6+)
Small Arms	3	(4+)
Stealth	2	(5+)
Survival	1	(5+)
Tactics	1	(5+)
Tracking	2	(4+)
Unarmed Combat	2	(7+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

Armored Vest  
Dart Gun w/5 reloads  
Disguise Kit  
GyroSlug Carbine w/10 reloads  
Hold-Out Laser Pistol w/JAF-05 Flash Suppressor  
Microcommunicator  
5 Microgrenades  
Mini Stunstick  
Vibro-Lockpick





# ARCHETYPES

## TECH

Though he has received military training, this character is not a warrior; but without him, wars could not be won.

The Tech's primary interest in life is figuring out how things work and how to keep them working. The BattleMech is his ultimate challenge, a system of infinite complexity based on lost technology.

His talent for repairing 'Mechs makes this character an invaluable member of any team, but his companions may have to look out for him if he becomes involved in a combat situation.

### Attributes

BLD	3	(9+)
REF	5	(7+)
INT	5	(7+)
LRN	6	(6+)
CHA	3	(9+)

### Characteristics

Athletic	10+
Physical	8+
Mental	7+
Social	10+

### Advantages

Natural Aptitude\* (Technician/BattleMech)

Well-Equipped (1 pt)

### Skills

Advanced University Package:

Tech Specialist MOS

Computer	2	(5+)
Engineering	3	(4+)
Medtech	1	(6+)
Security Systems	2	(5+)
Small Arms	1	(7+)
Technician/BattleMech	4	(3+)*
Technician/Electronics	2	(5+)
Technician/Mechanic	2	(5+)
Tinker	1	(6+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-Bills

### Equipment

BattleMech Repair Kit  
 Deluxe Tool Kit  
 Hold-Out Laser Pistol  
 Mechanic Repair Kit  
 Microcommunicator  
 Solar Recharger



## ADAPTING ORIGINAL MECHWARRIOR

Existing material published for the original **MechWarrior** is usable in the revised version with little or no modification. All the equipment presented in various sourcebooks and Technical Read-outs is also compatible with the revised system. For characters, simply use their skill rolls as presented without worrying about how they were determined.

## CHARACTER CONVERSION

If it becomes necessary to convert an entire character, such as an existing player character from an ongoing campaign, either start from scratch and build the character based on his capabilities in the old system, or convert the character according to the following guidelines.

Note that character conversion will require familiarity with the Creating Characters rules on pages 12-32 and is easier to accomplish using the Flexible Priorities option.

### Step 1: Determine Attributes

To determine the character's Attribute Scores, consult the tables below. Note that these tables do not provide a value for Intuition. In most cases, the character's Reflexes will be equal to his Dexterity in the old system, but some flexibility is allowed so that the player can adjust his Intuition to reflect the Characteristic totals that best reflect the character's capabilities.



### ATTRIBUTE EQUIVALENCY TABLE

Old Attribute	New Attribute
Body	Build
Dexterity	Reflexes
Learning Ability	Learn
Charisma	Charisma

### ATTRIBUTE CONVERSION TABLE

Old System	3	4-5	6	7-9	10-11	12
New System	1	2	3	4	5	6

### Step 2: Determine Skills

The skill levels in original **MechWarrior** are roughly equivalent to those in the new system. Most of the skills in the original also have equivalents in the new system. To determine what skills a character has, consult the table that follows.

Note that any skill not listed exists in the new system under the same name.

### SKILL EQUIVALENCY TABLE

Old System	New System
Athletics	Acrobatics, Climbing, Running and/or Swimming
Bow/Blade	Archery and/or Blade
Brawling	Unarmed Combat
Diplomacy	Bureaucracy, Negotiation and/or Protocol
Driver	Drive
JumpShip	
Piloting/Navigation	Navigation and/or Piloting/Spacecraft
Land Management	Administration
Mechanical	Technician/Mechanic
Medical/First Aid	Medtech
Pistol	Small Arms
Rifle	Small Arms
Rogue	Disguise, Forgery, Perception, Security Systems and/or Stealth

### Step 3: Determine Advantages

Most of the Additional Personal Characteristics and Inborn Abilities have been eliminated, notably all Abilities that had a negative value. Simply drop them from the character's description. The Advantages that exist in the new system are listed below.

### ADVANTAGES EQUIVALENCY TABLE

Old System	New System
Ambidextrous: Either	Ambidextrous
Natural Aptitude	Natural Aptitude
Sixth Sense	Sixth Sense
Thick Skin	Toughness



## Step 4: Character Construction

All that remains is to write up the character using the Creating Characters guidelines on pages 12-32 using the conversion notes as a guide during the character construction process.

Remember to pay the points for the character's BattleMech if he owns one. The gamemaster will have to decide whether the Wealth and Well-Equipped Advantages must be purchased for monies and equipment the character already owns. It is suggested that these points be paid for anything the character has at the start of the game, but nothing obtained during play.

The gamemaster may award additional skill points to reflect previous experience. The table below provides some guidelines for these awards. When in doubt, use the average award listed for the character's experience class.

### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE TABLE

Experience Class	Additional Experience
Green	0-4 (Average Award: 2)
Regular	5-12 (Average Award: 8)
Veteran	13-24 (Average Award: 18)
Elite	25+ (Average Award: 32)

It will be necessary to modify most characters somewhat to compensate for the new rules structure, but just as often the clarifications provided by the expanded skill list will help focus and define the character. Conversions may seem difficult at first, but after a few tries it should become second nature.



## CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Like real people, characters in **MechWarrior** develop and grow. Adventure Points (AP) and Skill Points (SP) measure that development in game terms. Each player is responsible for keeping track of his character's AP and SP. The player also determines when he wants to use them to improve his character.

### AWARDING AP

The gamemaster rewards the players for good gaming by awarding their characters Adventure Points at the end of the game or at various points along the way if the adventure is an extended one or part of a campaign. Most AP will be awarded for successfully completing the mission and/or for good roleplaying.

#### For Mission Completion

The gamemaster should have an idea of how difficult is the mission he has planned and of how many AP he will award for its successful completion. The awarding of AP to characters is totally up to the gamemaster's discretion, but the following guidelines may be useful.

A typical mission should be worth anywhere from 1 to 6 AP or more, depending on the complexity of the adventure, the dangers the characters faced, and their achievement of group and personal goals. The following scale is a guideline for awarding AP at the end of an adventure:

Group Performance	AP
Poor	1
Fair	2
Average	3
Good	4
Excellent	5
Remarkable	6
Incredible	7+

Players should note down these AP in the space provided on their Character Sheets as they are awarded, adding to any others that character has already earned. Players can spend these points to improve skills, attributes, or Edge.

#### Awards "Along the Way"

Not every session ends with a successfully completed mission. The most dangerous and complex missions often take several sessions to complete. In such cases, the gamemaster might award a few AP for that session's accomplishments, if the characters have taken steps in the right direction.

#### For Good Roleplaying

The gamemaster can award AP for good roleplaying or creativity, but these awards should be no more than a point or two for any character. He can also penalize a player for poor roleplaying. That does not mean penalizing beginning players for not knowing the rules or for not roleplaying well. The penalty should be reserved for a player who stubbornly refuses to cooperate or intentionally plays out of character—solving all puzzles even though his LRN is only 2 or consistently backstabbing his friends.

# CHARACTERS

When awarding AP at the end of a session, the gamemaster should penalize such uncooperative players by holding back some or all of their mission award. He should not remove AP previously earned, but he should feel free to award few or none for the current session. Consider this the carrot-and-stick approach to training good roleplayers.

## SKILL POINTS

Skill Points are the means by which a character qualifies for skill improvement. During gaming, **MechWarrior** characters will receive Skill Points for skills that they use and practice.

### Practical Experience

One of the best ways to learn a skill is to use it. In essence, every time a character uses a skill, he is practicing that skill. Unusual success or failure with that skill will often teach a character more about the skill he is trying to learn than countless hours of practice.

Every time a character rolls a 2 or a 12 while attempting to use a skill in the course of play, he will earn 1 Skill Point for that skill.

The gamemaster may also award Skill Points any time he feels that a character has used a skill in a particularly effective manner. Because rolling a 2 or a 12 only happens 1 out of 18 times a character makes a skill roll, it is more common for the gamemaster to award Skill Points than for a character to earn them as the result of random rolls.

### Training and Practice

Training and practice are the most common method for learning skills. At the end of every mission, all the characters involved receive a number of Skill Points equal to their LRN Attribute to assign to their skills.

### Time Passage

This method assumes that at least a week passes between missions. The Training and Practice bonus is not awarded at the end of any session that does not resolve the current mission or at the end of any session whose action the gamemaster knows will resume before a week has passed.

Therefore, characters with a unit that sees a lot of action without taking time for R&R will not have much time to spend honing their skills and will have to rely on practical experience for advancement. If, on the other hand, a character does not see action for a month or more, he will have plenty of time to brush up on his skills.

At the end of every mission that will not be followed by another for a month or more, the character receives a number of Skill Points equal to his LRN Attribute for every month that will pass before the next mission begins.

### Improving Skills

A player may improve any of his character's skills between missions. To improve a skill, the character must spend 10 Skill Points that were accumulated for that skill and a number of AP equal to the value of the new level. That is, raising a skill from Level 1 to 2 costs 2 AP, from 2 to 3 costs 3 AP, and so on.

### Buying New Skills

To purchase a new skill, a character must buy the skill at Level 1, which requires 10 Skill Points and 1 Adventure Point.

### Improving Skills without Spending AP

From time to time, a character will be out of commission for a relatively long period. This character could reasonably expect to be able to improve his skills even though he is not out on missions.

It is possible to improve skills without spending AP by spending a number of Skill Points equal to 10 times the AP normally required. A character may not raise any skill level higher than his LRN Attribute by this method.

### Improving Skills without Spending Skill Points

If a character sees a lot of action, he may end up with a lot of AP, but insufficient Skill Points to improve any of his skills. In such cases, the character may improve the skill by paying double the normal AP cost. This is somewhat inefficient, but may be the only option if the character is involved in an extended mission.

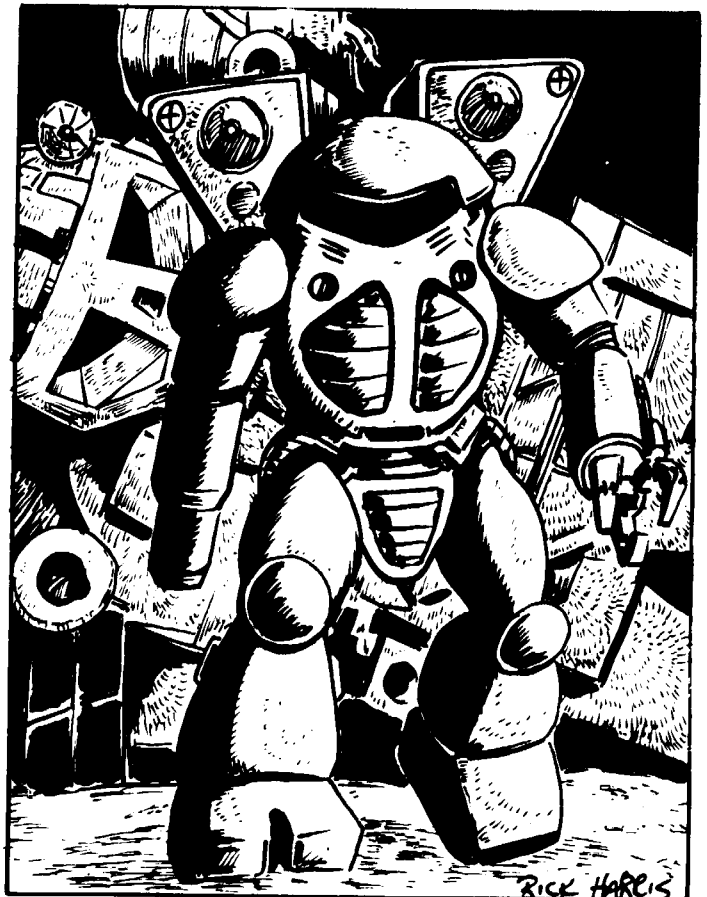
No character may raise his skill level higher than his LRN Attribute by this method.

### Improving Attributes

A character may improve any of the primary Attributes by 1 level by spending AP equal to 10 times the value of the new level, except for ITN, which costs twice as much. Therefore, raising BLD, REF, LRN, or CHA from 3 to 4 costs 40 AP, and raising an Attribute from 4 to 5 costs 50 AP. Raising ITN from 3 to 4 costs 80 AP and raising ITN from 4 to 5 costs 100 AP.

### Greater Edge

A character's Edge score may be raised 1 point by spending AP equal to 10 times the new score. Thus, it costs 30 AP to raise the Edge from 2 to 3, and 50 AP to raise the Edge from 4 to 5.





# PERSONAL COMBAT

In ancient times, man-to-man combat was one of the surest tests of a warrior's mettle, pitting his skill and courage against his enemies. As weapons technology improved, the warrior's individual skill began to matter less and less. In the modern world, anyone who can pull a trigger can kill another man.

Combat in **MechWarrior** is a deadly affair. Many of the weapons used deal out devastating damage far beyond what a mere mortal can withstand. Many times, a single shot is enough to lay a man low. On the battlefield of the 31st century, the first shot is often more important than the best.

The system that **MechWarrior** uses to resolve personal combat is similar to that of the **BattleTech** game. Like 'Mech battles, personal combat is divided into combat rounds. During each combat round, every character involved in the combat has a chance to act.

## SCALE

Personal combats can be conducted on a hexsheet similar to the **BattleTech** terrain mapsheets, but each hex represents a distance of 5 meters (roughly 16.4 feet), rather than 30. Even if a hexsheet is not used, ranges are given in terms of hexes.

When using a mapsheet, players can use almost any kind of counter to represent their characters on the map, provided the counters have markings to clearly indicate front and back.

## TIME

Each round of combat represents ten seconds of elapsed time.

## DETERMINING INITIATIVE

At the start of each combat round, every character involved rolls 2D6. The result of this die roll is added to the character's REF Attribute to produce his Initiative Score.

The character with the lowest Initiative Score takes his actions first; the character with the next-highest Initiative Score goes next, and so on, so that the character with the highest Initiative Score goes last.

If two or more characters tie when rolling for Initiative, compare their ITN ratings. The one with the highest ITN wins the Initiative, and so on down the line. If, after comparing ITN ratings, two or more characters still remain tied, roll a 1D6 to break the tie.

### Seizing the Initiative

High Initiative scores are intended to be of benefit to characters. Because characters with low Initiative scores act before those with high ones, the latter characters are able to size up the combat situation as it unfolds and take advantage of that knowledge.

Occasionally, however, acting late in a round can be detrimental. For instance, a high-Initiative character might want to block a doorway before an opponent can escape, or perhaps the character wishes to flee through the doorway before an opponent can block it. In such cases, characters with higher Initiative scores are allowed to "seize the initiative" and act out of sequence.

Suppose that during a particular combat round three Kurita guards discover a Kell Hound scout named Mikhail in the office of a Draconis Combine embassy. Mikhail rolls an Initiative Score of 11; the guards have 7, 9, and 13.

According to the usual rules, the guard with the 7 would move first, followed by the guard with 9, then Mikhail, and finally the guard with 13. Mikhail, however, wants to flee before his escape route is blocked off. Just as Guard 7 begins to act, then, Mikhail's player announces that Mikhail is "seizing the initiative" and acting immediately.

Guards 7 and 9 cannot do anything to stop him, but the gamemaster announces that Guard 13 is also going to "seize the initiative" to act before Mikhail. As a consequence, Guard 13 moves first and blocks the door. Next, Mikhail acts, and decides to leap through a window. Then Guards 7 and 9 act in their normal order. (Technically, Guard 9 could elect to "seize the initiative" and act before Guard 7, but there would not be much point to doing so as they are on the same side and Mikhail has already acted.

## Surprise

In most combat conditions, both sides are aware of each other. It is possible, however, for one or more characters to be surprised. If a character is surprised, he may not attack or perform any other action during the first round of combat.

## POSSIBLE ACTIONS

The three kinds of actions that a character can perform in a round are Incidental Actions, Simple Actions, and Complex Actions. These are defined below.

### Incidental Actions

Incidental Actions require little or no attention or physical movement. Examples include falling prone, dropping a weapon, or calling out a warning.

### Simple Actions

Simple Actions can be performed by reflex. They include standing up, walking, running, picking up a small object, readying a weapon, or making an attack.

### Complex Actions

Complex Actions require a character's full attention. Examples are sprinting or reloading a weapon.

## EXECUTING ACTIONS

A character may perform any number of Incidental Actions in his turn, but he may perform only two Simple Actions or one Complex Action.

Note that a character may never perform more than one action of a given kind (movement, combat, and so on) in a single round. In other words, a character may move and attack, move and prepare a weapon, or prepare a weapon and attack, but he may not move twice or attack twice.

In most cases, it will be obvious to what category an action belongs. When in doubt, assume it is the most time-consuming of the two possibilities. As always, the gamemaster's judgment is final.

When a character's turn comes up in the Initiative order or when he seizes the initiative, his character performs all his actions for the round at the same time.

## MOVEMENT

A character who is moving must choose what type of movement he will make that round. This choice will affect their chances of hitting an opponent. In order to carry out most movements, he must pay Movement Points (MP). The number of MP available to a character is determined by the type of movement chosen, as summarized below:

### Movement

Mode	Movement Points
------	-----------------

Walking	BLD
Running	BLD + REF + Running Skill Level
Sprinting	(BLD x 2) + REF + Running Skill Level

For example, if a character had a BLD of 4, a REF of 5, and Running Level 2, he would have a Walking move of 4, a Running move of 10, and a Sprinting move of 14.



## Movement Costs

In any given combat round, a **MechWarrior** character can move up to the maximum MP for the movement option selected. Characters do not have to spend all the MP available to them in a round, but they cannot save MP from one round to another.

Players spend MP to move from hex to hex. The cost of entering a given hex depends on the type of terrain in that hex. It costs 1 MP to enter a clear hex, for example.

Terrain and obstructions can add 1 or 2 MP, and sometimes more to the cost of moving into a hex. These modifiers encompass anything from undergrowth to furniture. In most cases, it costs a maximum 2 MP to enter a hex with light obstructions and 3 MP to enter a hex with heavy obstructions.

Man-to-man combat may be resolved using abstracted movement or on a mapsheet similar to those found in **BattleTech** and **BattleTroops**. Each hex represents a distance of 5 meters. Distances are usually given in terms of hexes. To convert distance back into meters for use with an abstracted movement system, multiply the number of hexes by 5.

In **MechWarrior**, there is no MP cost for facing changes or special movement actions. If a hexsheet is being used, each player simply moves his character's marker and faces it whichever way he likes. Any special movement action a character may take is covered by the Possible Actions rule. The first rule of **MechWarrior** combat is: Don't get bogged down by the rules! If the hexsheet slows you down, fold it up and put it away.

The determination of terrain modifiers is left entirely to the gamemaster's discretion. If he wishes more verisimilitude, FASA's **BattleTroops** game offers a detailed system for tactical movement.

## Evade

Evade is a special action a character may perform instead of taking a normal movement. Evade is a Complex Action that allows the character to dodge attacks. An Evading character has an MP allowance equal to his REF score. Evade gives a modifier to all attacks against the character during the current round, but the character must have executed the Evade maneuver before he is attacked (seizing the initiative is very useful for this). For example, if a character has yet to take an action and he is fired on by an opponent, he may seize the initiative and declare an Evade, which will modify his opponent's To-Hit Roll as well as the To-Hit Rolls of anyone else who fires on him during the current round. After his opponent rolls to hit, the character may move a number of hexes equal to his REF Attribute. Note that if an enemy with a higher initiative score seized the initiative when the character declared the Evade, they would be able to get off a shot before the modifiers for the Evade went into effect.

## RANGED COMBAT

The Weapons Table on page 102, summarizes all the combat information required for the most common ranged weapons used in personal combat. Each weapon is described in terms of Damage Dice, Range Limitations, and Ammunition. (Additional weapons are listed in other **BattleTech** products, such as **BattleTech Technical Readout 3026**.)

**Damage Dice** indicate the number of dice rolled to determine damage to the target, if hit. Some of the notations include a modifier to be added to the result of the dice roll.



# PERSONAL COMBAT

**Range Limitation** indicates the weapon's effective short, medium, and long ranges, measured in 5-meter hexes. Note that medium and long ranges cause skill modifiers, as indicated on the Ranged Combat Modifiers Table.

**Ammunition** indicates the number of shots available before the weapon must be reloaded or recharged. Reloading a weapon is a Complex Action.

## Ranged Attacks

In order to make a ranged attack in personal combat, a character must have a clear line-of-sight (LOS) to a target, have the target within range of the weapon being used, and have a final To-Hit Number (after all modifiers) of 12 or less.

## Ranged Combat Modifiers

The base To-Hit Number for a ranged attack is equal to the firing character's appropriate Skill Level as modified by any situational modifiers, as summarized in the Ranged Combat Modifiers Table.

### RANGED COMBAT MODIFIERS TABLE

Range	Modifier
Short	0
Medium	+2
Long	+4

Target Situation	Modifier
Stationary	-1
Walking	0
Running	+1
Sprinting	+2
Evading	+3
In Partial Cover	+1
In Full Cover (arm/head only exposed)	+3
Prone	+1

Attacker Situation	Modifier
Walked	+1
Ran	+2
Sprinted	+3
Using Off Hand	+2
Drew weapon this round	+2
Aimed Shot: Head	+6
Aimed Shot: Arm or Leg	+4
Aimed Shot: Torso	+2
Firing Burst (SMG)	-2
Careful Aim	-1/rnd, max -3

Special Situations	Modifier
Partial Darkness (night)	+2 (unless using IR scope/sight)
Total Darkness	+4

## Special Attacks

### Burst Fire

Characters using SMGs may declare during the ranged attack phase that they are firing a burst rather than a single shot. A burst does the same damage to the target as does a single shot (3D6), but if the shot is successful, all characters within one hex of the target also receive 1D6 damage.

### Aimed Shot

Characters may attempt to target their shots for a specific part of an opponent's body. To attempt an aimed shot, a character must have moved no more than one-half the MP allowed during the movement phase of the present combat round. The character must also have a clear view of the body part to be targeted (i.e., unobstructed by cover). A successful shot hits the intended location automatically.

### Careful Aim

Characters who do not move during a given movement phase and have a target within their LOS may forego firing and take "careful aim" at a single target in order to accumulate a firing bonus. For each round that a character chooses to take careful aim at the target, a -1 is applied to the To-Hit Number when the shot is made, to a maximum of -3.

If the character's aim is interrupted before the shot is made, all accumulated bonuses are lost. For example, if the aiming character switches targets, the careful aim is interrupted. Similarly, if the target moves out of LOS before the shot is fired, the bonuses are lost. Also, if the attacker takes damage before firing, the careful aim is considered interrupted.



## MELEE ATTACKS

Melee combat consists of close action between opponents in adjacent hexes. A character may only make a melee attack if he did not move faster than a walk during the current round. (The exception is a running or sprinting character who may attempt a grapple/tackle maneuver, as described below). The Weapons Table on p. 102 summarizes all the combat information required for the most common melee weapons used in personal combat.

### To-Hit Modifiers

Unlike ranged combat, melee does not require taking into account either weapon range or line-of-sight. The only considerations are the relative elevations of the two combatants, the type of movement each last performed, and the type of attack made. A character's base To-Hit Number with a melee weapon is equal to the appropriate skill level.

Consult the Melee Modifiers Table for modifiers applying to that base To-Hit Number.

**MELEE MODIFIERS TABLE**

Target Situation	Modifier
Stationary	-1
Ranged attack this round	-1
On higher elevation	+2
Ran	+1
Sprinted	+2
Evading	+3
Making all-out attack	-2
In partial concealment	+1
Attacker Situation	Modifier
Walked	+1
Ran (Tackle only)	+2
Sprinted (Tackle only)	+3
Making all-out attack	-2
On higher elevation	-2
Using wrong hand	+2
Drawing weapon this round	+2
Aimed shot: head	+4
Aimed shot: arm or leg	+3
Aimed shot: torso	+2
Partial darkness	+1
Total darkness	+2

## SPECIAL ATTACKS

### Aimed Shots

Characters may attempt to target melee attacks for specific parts of the body. To attempt an aimed shot, an attacker must have moved no faster than one-half the MP allowance during the current round. A successful aimed shot automatically hits the targeted location.

### Cushing

Attackers using cudgels, blackjacks, or clubs may make a special attack from behind in an attempt to knock their opponent unconscious. This attack, known variously as cushing or sandbagging, requires either a Hit Location Roll of Head (see **Damage and Recovery**, p. 56) or an Aimed Shot to the head. It gives one-half the weapon's normal damage. If the attacker strikes his opponent's head, the victim must make a Consciousness Roll at his current Wound Level (counting Bruise Damage). These latter are described in the next chapter.

### All-Out Attacks

Characters may attempt to put extra effort into a melee attack, throwing caution (and potential defense) to the wind. Any character attempting an all-out attack receives a -2 bonus to the To-Hit Number whenever trying such an attack. Opponents also receive a +2 modifier on any melee attacks against the character performing the all-out attack.

### Grapple/Tackle

At times, characters may attempt to attack using their bodies rather than weapons. When the attacker has either not moved or moved very little, this attack is termed a grapple. Otherwise, it is termed a tackle. In both cases, the objective is to restrain opponents, or to wrestle or shove them to the ground or floor. In making a grapple/tackle attack, the attacker suffers a penalty for moving during the current round, but also receives a +1 damage bonus for every two hexes traveled (round down). This represents the additional force generated by a running opponent against an immobile target.

The grapple/tackle attack is resolved in the normal fashion. The defender receives damage as above, and the attacker sustains damage equal to the defender's BLD score. All damage in grapple/tackle attacks are applied to the combatants' torsos.

If an attack is successful, players must determine whether the combatants fall to the ground. The defender makes an Acrobatics or Unarmed Combat (defender's choice) Skill Roll, using the difference between the attacker's and defender's BLD scores as a modifier. If the roll fails, both combatants fall to the ground.

During successive turns, the attacker has control of the defender. That is, the attacker may release the defender and move elsewhere. Otherwise, the defender must spend an entire combat round attempting to escape the attacker's grasp. This, too, requires an Acrobatics or Unarmed Combat Skill Roll, with the same BLD modification as before; an additional penalty of +2 applies if the combatants have fallen to the ground. The end result of all successful grappling attacks puts both combatants in the same hex.

### Firing Ranged Weapons Into Close Combat

Given the turn length and the proximity of grappling or wrestling combatants, the following simplification has been made to discourage trigger-happy combatants from firing into melee. Whenever more than one target, friendly or enemy, is present in a hex, the actual recipient of the ranged attack is determined AT RANDOM immediately prior to the To-Hit Roll. The reason for this is that a third party could not fire at one of two closely struggling combatants without risk of hitting the other. Naturally, if the To-Hit Roll fails, the attacker misses all targets in the hex.



## Area Effect Weapons

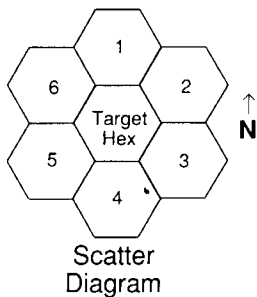
Many personal weapons fire rounds that explode on impact. Thus, even a miss can result in a target still being in the blast radius

of the weapon.

Weapons that list an Area of Effect number fire rounds that will scatter. This number indicates how many MechWarrior hexes are affected by the weapon. All personnel in the Area of Effect are attacked by the hit, not just one target. An Area of Effect number of 1 means that the target hex plus its 6 adjacent hexes are in the Area of Effect. A 2 means that those within the target hex and all others within a range of two hexes are affected.

Area effect weapons are fired at the target hex, not an individual, so modifiers for target movement and so on are ignored. If the attack misses, the round scatters and lands somewhere else, where it explodes and affects all characters in its Area of Effect.

If the To-Hit Roll equals or exceeds the modified To-Hit Number, the round hits the target hex; otherwise, the shot scatters. To determine where scattered shot lands, roll two dice. The first die gives the direction of the scatter as shown in the scatter diagram below. The second die gives the distance of the scatter from the target hex. Note that the round may not scatter through walls and other such obstacles, but should land at the hex immediately in front of the blocking terrain.



## DAMAGE AND RECOVERY

This section presents rules for how characters take damage in personal combat, the effects of damage, and critical hits. Also included are rules for the healing and recovery process, the effects of natural healing, first aid, and the various kinds of medical care available in the **BattleTech** universe.

When a character takes a hit in combat, there are five steps to determine the outcome of the attack, or the damage the character suffers:

1. Attacker determines hit location
2. Attacker determines damage
3. Victim takes damage
4. Victim makes Consciousness Roll
5. Victim checks for effects of damage

## HIT LOCATION

If a hit has been scored on a target, the attacker rolls 2D6, and compares this die results to the appropriate columns on the Damage Location Table to determine the hit location of the attack. Notice that a roll of doubles not only provides a hit location but also indicates that the character has taken a critical hit. These are indicated by an asterisk on the Damage Location Table.

Note that an attacker who declares and successfully executes an Aimed Shot does not make a Hit Location Roll, but hits the chosen location automatically.

**DAMAGE LOCATION TABLE**

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	L Arm*	L Arm	L Arm	L Arm	R Leg	R Leg
2	R Leg	R Leg*	R Leg	Head	Head	Head
3	Head	L Arm	Torso*	Torso	Torso	Torso
4	Torso	Torso	Torso	Torso*	Torso	Torso
5	Torso	Torso	R Arm	R Arm	R Arm*	R Arm
6	R Arm	L Leg	L Leg	L Leg	L Leg	L Leg*

If a Hit Location Roll indicates a body area that is protected by cover (i.e., a leg hit when the target is kneeling behind a stone wall), ignore the result and make another roll against the table. If a second "impossible" result occurs, let it stand, and treat the shot as a ricochet or other oddity.

## DETERMINE DAMAGE

Every weapon has a damage value, listed in terms of a roll of one or more dice plus any modifiers. A heavy pistol, for example, does 2D6 + 3.

In Unarmed Combat, a character does 1D6 + his BLD Attribute. That is, a character with a Build 4 would do 1D6 + 4 damage with his bare hands.

To determine damage, simply roll the indicated dice and apply any modifiers. When the attacker rolls a Critical Hit, the damage result is doubled. For example, if a character hits with a pistol that does 2D6 + 3 damage, he would roll two six-sided dice and add three to the total. If he rolled a critical hit, the damage result would be doubled.



## Taking Damage

The two kinds of damage possible in **MechWarrior** are Bruise Damage and Lethal Damage. Bruise Damage results from unarmed combat as well as attacks from certain weapons such as clubs. Lethal Damage is inflicted by most weapons, particularly firearms.

Unless the weapon description specifies Bruise, assume that an attack does Lethal Damage. If in doubt, the gamemaster's judgment is final.

Characters keep track of damage on the Condition Monitor, which is printed on the character sheet. A character has two damage boxes on each line for each point of BLD he possesses. To prepare the Condition Monitor for use, draw a line through all of the boxes that will not be used.

CONDITION MONITOR										
WF	CONDITION	SAVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	GOOD	3+	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
2	FAIR	5+	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
3	POOR	7+	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

The Condition Monitor for a character with a BLD of 5 would look like this.

When a character is damaged by an attack, mark off the number of boxes on the Condition Monitor of the Character Record Sheet equal to the damage value sustained. If the attack does Bruise Damage, a slash is used to record the damage. If the attack does Lethal Damage, use an X instead.

When all the boxes on one line have been filled in, the damage continues on the next line. If a character's damage fills up all the boxes on his Condition Monitor, he is dead.

When a character's Condition Monitor fills up with Bruise Damage, he falls unconscious. Any additional damage should be recorded by starting over at the top of the Condition Monitor and turning one box marked with Bruise Damage into Lethal Damage for every additional point of Bruise Damage sustained, skipping boxes already marked with Lethal Damage. In this way, it is possible to kill a character using Bruise Damage.

Lethal Damage supersedes Bruise Damage. When recording Lethal Damage, boxes already marked for Bruise Damage are treated as clear for purposes of that attack. In other words, Bruise Damage will always begin in the first clear box on the Condition Monitor, but Lethal Damage begins in the first box that does not already have Lethal Damage.

CONDITION MONITOR										
WF	CONDITION	SAVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	GOOD	3+	X	X	X	X	X	/	/	/
2	FAIR	5+	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
3	POOR	7+	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

This character has already taken 5 points of Lethal Damage and 9 points of Bruise Damage. If he takes more Lethal Damage, he will start in the sixth box of the first line and if he takes more Bruise Damage, he will start in the fifth box of the second line.

## Wound Factor

Wound Factor determines various effects such as the rate of deterioration of a wounded character who has not received medical attention and the target modifier to the Medtech Roll required to administer such attention.

A character's Wound Factor is determined by the location of the last box that has taken Lethal Damage. Bruise Damage is ignored when determining Wound Factor.

## Consciousness Rolls

Any time a character takes Lethal Damage, he must make a Consciousness Roll. With Bruise Damage, a Consciousness Roll is required only if the victim was hit on the head.

To determine the target number for the Consciousness Roll, consult the highest line that still contains undamaged boxes on the Condition Monitor.

To make the Consciousness Roll, the character must roll equal to or greater than the target number on 2D6. If the roll fails, the character falls unconscious. Note that the Toughness Advantage will allow a character to make his Consciousness Rolls as if they were Saving Rolls, rolling 3D6 and taking the best 2.

In the example, if the character has just taken damage, he would be in Fair Condition and would have to roll a five or better to remain conscious.

An unconscious character may not act in any way until he regains consciousness. See **Regaining Consciousness**, p. 59.

## EFFECTS OF DAMAGE

Whenever a character takes Lethal Damage, he compares the damage sustained to the Damage Threshold for the location hit. If the damage exceeds the Damage Threshold for that location, the location is Incapacitated. If the damage exceeds twice the Damage Threshold, the location is Disabled. See the Character Record Sheet.

Whenever damage exceeds the Damage Threshold for the location struck, the victim suffers additional effects, as summarized below.

All Build Saving Rolls required by Incapacitating or Disabling Wounds are made at a penalty equal to the character's Wound Factor.

### Head

#### Incapacitated

The victim loses consciousness and must make a Build Saving Roll. If the roll fails, the character falls into a coma.

#### Disabled

The victim falls into a coma and must make a Build Saving Roll. If the roll fails, the character has sustained injuries that cause a number of dice of damage equal to his current Wound Factor every minute until his condition can be stabilized. Though it is possible to survive a head injury, it is serious and will have later effects, as determined by the gamemaster.

### Torso

#### Incapacitated

The victim loses consciousness and must make a Build Saving Roll. If the roll fails, the character is suffering from internal injuries that cause a number of dice of damage equal to his current Wound Factor every minute until his condition can be stabilized. Though recovery is possible, these injuries are quite serious and will have later effects, as determined by the gamemaster.



## Arm

### Incapacitated

The victim's arm is badly injured. Any actions that require the use of the arm are performed at a +3 penalty. In addition, any significant exertion with the injured arm (such as heavy lifting or using the arm for an attack in Unarmed Combat) causes 2D6 Bruise Damage and requires a Build Saving Roll. If this roll fails, the arm is Disabled (see below).

### Disabled

The victim's arm is useless. If the character makes a successful Build Saving Roll, the arm can be saved. If the roll fails, the limb is so badly damaged that it must be amputated. A character whose limb has been Disabled through overexertion still must make a saving roll to avoid permanent damage.

## Leg

### Incapacitated

The victim's leg is badly injured. The character cannot run, and his movement rate is halved. Even walking is painful and requires a Build Saving Roll every round or 1D6 Bruise Damage. Immobilizing the leg requires the proper equipment and a successful Medtech roll.

### Disabled

The victim's leg is useless. The character immediately falls down and must make a Build Saving Roll. If successful, the leg can be saved. If not, the limb is so badly injured that it must be amputated. The leg will not support any weight, but crawling is possible if the character is conscious.

## Detailed Damage

The damage effects in this section are described in only the most general terms. Whenever a player character takes major damage, the gamemaster is encouraged to describe the injury in more detail. He could describe a character with an incapacitated leg, for example, as having been hamstrung or as having a broken bone. This description may alter the effects of the wound, subject to the gamemaster's discretion.

Certain injuries specify lingering effects. The gamemaster can use the following table below as a guideline to deciding what kind of penalty modifiers to assign. Again, the various modifiers are so general that the gamemaster has complete latitude in determining the extent of the character's injuries. By the same token, no gamemaster should be bound by this or any other table. If an attack suggests an injury to the gamemaster, go ahead and describe the effects as seems most fit.

Die Roll 1D6	DAMAGE MODIFIERS TABLE	
	Head Injuries	Torso Injuries
1	+1 penalty to all rolls	+1 penalty to all rolls
2	+2 penalty to all rolls	+2 penalty to all rolls
3	Blind (in one eye)	1/2 Movement Rate
4	Deaf (in one ear)	Coma
5	Disfigured: -1 CHA	Enfeebled: -1 BLD
6	Roll again twice	Roll again twice

## Coma

Certain attacks cause the victim to fall into a coma. A coma is a dangerous and unpredictable condition that, at the very least, will keep the victim out of commission for a while.

A comatose character must make a BLD Saving Roll every day. If successful, he then makes a Consciousness Roll at a +4 penalty to wake from the coma. If the BLD Saving Roll fails, the character takes 1D6 Lethal Damage as his condition worsens. It is entirely possible to succumb to a coma and die without ever regaining consciousness.

## HEALING AND RECOVERY

In the aftermath of any battle, the wounded must deal with the effects of their injuries. This section explains how characters can recover from any damage they have taken. Brutal as combat may be, the miracles of advanced medicine are a match for all but the most grievous injuries.



## Deterioration and Stabilization

The condition of any character who has taken Lethal Damage will deteriorate due to bleeding and shock unless his condition is stabilized by a character with the Medtech Skill.

A wounded character must make a Build Saving Roll every minute at a penalty equal to his Wound Factor. A successful roll means the character "hangs on" for another minute. If the roll fails, the character falls unconscious and takes 1 point of Lethal Damage for every point by which the roll failed.

Stabilizing a wounded character requires a successful Medtech Skill Roll at a penalty equal to the victim's current Wound Factor. Once a patient is stabilized, he is no longer in danger of deterioration.

## Regaining Consciousness

An unconscious character may periodically attempt to recover, the interval being a number of minutes equal to his current Wound Factor. To recover, the character must make a Consciousness Roll, as determined by his condition. If the roll is successful, the character regains consciousness.

If, for example, a character in Poor Condition has a Wound Factor of 3, he may attempt the Consciousness Roll every 3 minutes.

## Healing Bruise Damage

Non-Lethal Damage heals fairly quickly. For every hour of rest, a character heals a number of points of Bruise Damage equal to his Build Attribute. On the Condition Monitor simply erase damage that has been healed in the reverse order that it was taken.

If it becomes important to know exactly how fast a character heals from Bruise Damage, simply divide the hour of rest by the character's Build. This means that a character with BLD 2 recovers 1 point every 30 minutes, BLD 3 recovers 1 point every 20 minutes, and so on.

## Healing Lethal Damage

Unlike Bruise Damage, recovering from Lethal Damage can be a long, drawn-out process, especially if the wounded character is not under a doctor's care. The rate at which a character heals Lethal Damage depends on the care he is receiving.

## Natural Healing

If a wounded character is not under a doctor's care, he recovers a number of points per week equal to his Build if he is active, or twice his Build if he stays inactive to rest and recuperate.

To determine the amount of time a character would have to rest to recover from all his injuries, simply count the number of Lethal Damage boxes marked off on the Condition Monitor, divide by twice the character's BLD and round up. The result is the

number of weeks it will take for the character to recover.

As with Bruise Damage, it is possible to determine exactly how much time it takes for a character to recover a single point of damage, but it is much easier to deal with one-week blocks.

Let's say that Garrett has taken 23 points of Lethal Damage escaping an ISF assassin and needs to know how long he will have to hide out to recover from his wounds. He has a Build 5 and is resting, so he regains 10 points a week. Dividing 23 by 10, he knows that he will need his room for three weeks if he wants to be at his best when he goes out looking for revenge.

## Medical Care

If a wounded character is under a doctor's care, he will recover considerably faster than if he waited for his system to heal the damage naturally.

Every day, the attending physician makes a Medtech Skill Roll at a penalty equal to the character's Wound Factor, but with a bonus based on the equipment and facilities available to him (anywhere from -2 or -3 for a makeshift field hospital to a -4 or -5 for a state-of-the-art facility).

If the Medtech Roll is successful, the patient recovers a number of points equal to his Build. If the roll fails, the character does not recover that day.

It is theoretically possible for a character to recover less than he would by resting, but it is unlikely and would indicate gross incompetence on the part of the attending physician.

A character under medical care is effectively out of commission while he is recuperating.

## Major Wounds

Natural healing or various surgical techniques can counteract the effects of Incapacitating and Disabling Wounds. If a character chooses to recover on his own, he consults the Recovery Table to determine how long it will take his injury to heal. Until the wound is completely healed, all penalties still apply.

Surgery requires adequate facilities and a doctor with a Medtech Skill of 5 or better. The doctor must make a successful Medtech Skill Roll at a penalty equal to the victim's current Wound Factor plus a second modifier, as determined by the table below. If he fails, the patient must make a Build Saving Roll or take 1D6 x 1D6 points of Lethal Damage (yes, it is still possible to die under the knife in 3052).

Even if surgery is successful, the character must still recover for the period listed on the table below. During the recovery period, it will be as if the character still has the wound. If the character is not careful, the wound might re-open. The character must make a Build Saving Roll every time there is a possibility for this to happen.

### RECOVERY TABLE

	Incapacitated	Disabled
Head	-3 to heal/3D6 days recovery Natural Healing: 4D6 weeks	-5 to heal/6D6 days recovery Natural Healing: 6D6 weeks
Torso	-2 to heal/3D6 days recovery Natural Healing: 3D6 weeks	N/A N/A
Arm	-1 to heal/2D6 days Natural Healing: 2D6 weeks	-3 to heal / 4D6 days recovery Natural Healing: 4D6 weeks
Leg	-1 to heal/2D6 days Natural Healing: 2D6 weeks	-3 to heal/4D6 days recovery Natural Healing: 4D6 weeks

# RUNNING THE GAME

## GAMEMASTERING MECHWARRIOR

**MechWarrior** is unique among the line of **BattleTech** products. Where other **BattleTech** games focus on combat (whether at the level of individual soldiers or whole regiments), **MechWarrior** lets gamers play the lives of individual characters, to have adventures as the protagonists of stories. That, of course, is what roleplaying is all about.

Gamemastering such a game is a challenging but rewarding experience. One of the major challenges comes from having to roleplay a plethora of non-player, background characters. One of the best rewards comes from seeing one's friends have fun exploring the world the gamemaster creates. Though a gamemaster needs a good grasp of the rules and the game's fictional background, a really skillful one learns to make game mechanics so transparent that the story being created through roleplaying takes center stage.

This chapter contains suggestions for accomplishing these goals.



## RUNNING ADVENTURES

Following are some general hints on what makes for good gamemastering.

### Be Dramatic

The primary trick to running a satisfying adventure is for the gamemaster to immerse himself in his creations, to take them seriously. When setting a scene, for example, be dramatic. Appeal to the players' senses. Before beginning to describe what the player characters see when they enter a new situation, the gamemaster takes a moment to see it in his own mind, to hear its sounds and smell its smells. Then he describes it to the players exactly as he has imagined it. The gamemaster asks himself what he would notice first, generally beginning with that, then fills out the details around it. Save the most dramatic bit of information for last, however, to give it all the more impact.

Compare, for example, the following two scene descriptions:

"You go into the bar and see a lot of people sitting around talking. One of them has a club and is using it to threaten the bartender. It's really noisy inside and dark."

"When you push through the door into the bar, you are immediately assaulted by two things. The first is a wave of noise, created by too many people talking too much in too small a space. The second is an even thicker wave of stale cigarette smoke, with an undertone of unwashed bodies, spilled beer, and greasy food. It takes a moment for your eyes to adjust to the gloom, but when they do, you immediately notice a burly, bald-headed man reaching over the bar. In one hand, he has a billy club. The other is clenching the collar of the bartender's shirt."

Just as the gamemaster immerses himself in the image of a scene before describing it, he needs to take a moment to really become the NPC interacting with the player characters. Whether the NPC is an important figure that the gamemaster intended the player team to meet from the beginning or a street sweeper they suddenly decide to question, any encounter will be richer if the gamemaster mentally pauses to imagine some detail of that character's background and personality before speaking in his or her role. By his keeping up the drama, the players will not automatically know who is central to the adventure and who is not, which will make the game universe seem all the more authentic.

This is not to say that the gamemaster must invent a complete history and statistics for every NPC his player characters meet. In the case of the street sweeper, for example, he might simply decide that this is a retiree who is frustrated because he must work at a menial job because his pension does not make ends meet. Or the gamemaster might simply decide that this is an irritable old codger, without inventing the reason why. The point is, when the player characters talk to the man, it is an irritable old codger who replies to their queries, not merely the gamemaster saying, "The street-sweeper tells you that the spaceport is two blocks down and two blocks over."

## Be Confident

New gamemasters sometimes feel overwhelmed by the task before them. Relax. Remember that the point of the game is to have fun. Keeping that in mind, the gamemaster may find some of the following of help in enhancing his confidence.

First, become familiar with the game rules, especially any that seem likely to see use during the upcoming adventure. The gamemaster with a good grasp of the rules feels more in control. That does not mean memorizing them word for word. Just be familiar enough to be able to ad lib as necessary (see **Be Flexible** below). Concomitantly, some players in the group may be familiar with the rules. If that is the case, feel free to let them find the damage for a laser pistol, for example. In fact, letting the players share the responsibility for such matters enhances the sense of group participation in roleplaying.

It sometimes happens that a player wants to argue against a particular rule or the gamemaster's interpretation of it. To avoid interrupting the flow of the adventure plot, it is best to hold off such discussions until the adventure session is over. In the meantime, the dissenting player should simply accept the gamemaster's ruling for the moment. The gamemaster may decide to change later, but keep in mind that he has the primary responsibility for the story being developed, which is why he must be the final arbiter of the rules. Most players will respect this position and will usually put pressure on any individual who does not.

Another part of being prepared is for the gamemaster to make certain he has a good grasp of what his adventure entails. He may want to jot down a skeletal outline of the probable course of events, which is for reference during play. Keep statistics for NPCs and maps of encounter areas on separate sheets, but organize them before the session so that they are at hand when needed.

With the rules and storyline firmly under control, the gamemaster feels freer to devote his attention to making the game as dramatic and exciting as possible.

## Be Flexible

Often, players come up with plans or take actions that the gamemaster never dreamed they would attempt. So much for all his well-made plans and preparations. Rather than simply telling the players that they cannot follow that course, the gamemaster can take a moment to consider the results of this new turn of events, and then adapt his plot to fit. This may mean inventing some NPCs not previously anticipated, but that becomes easier with experience. Some gamemasters like to keep a file of pre-generated NPCs for just such occasions. If, on the other hand, the gamemaster does rule that he cannot adapt to the players' plan of action, try to let them proceed in their desired direction for a bit, then let it come to a dead end.

For instance, the player characters decide to look for sewer entrances to a compound they need to infiltrate, but the gamemaster has not prepared a sewer adventure. He has two choices here. First, he might let the team enter via the sewers, throwing a hastily created encounter with rats in their way, but allowing them inside the compound once they have dealt with the vermin. Alternatively, he might decide that none of the sewer entrances are big enough to let the characters pass through. Rather than simply telling them that, have the team find out through their own research. In that way, the false start becomes an integral part of the story the gamemaster and players are jointly creating.

On a related note, the gamemaster must remember that no set of rules can cover absolutely every situation. That is why gamemasters exist, and why he needs flexibility with the rules. Further, the rules are mechanical. It is up to the gamemaster to decide how a particular rule applies to a particular situation. More often than not, this usually means deciding upon appropriate modifiers to a target number. In other cases, it may mean deciding, for example, that there is so much smoke in the area that a laser pistol can only hit at very close range.

## Be Merciful

The players will spend some time creating their characters, and the longer they play those characters, the more they have invested in them, both in terms of experience points and emotional energy. It is a sad moment when a character has to die. This is especially true if the death is the result of a series of unlucky die rolls, but it could just as easily be because a player has not understood his character's peril or has not planned sufficiently for it. On the other hand, without some sense of danger, roleplaying would lose much of its excitement.

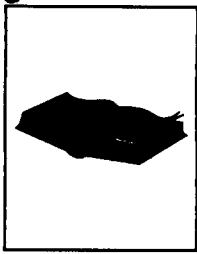
The gamemaster can help avoid death to player characters while maintaining the all-important sense of danger. The primary way is to choose adventures that seem appropriate to the player characters' mix of abilities and levels of expertise. This is not foolproof, however; player characters can still get killed if a player makes unfortunate die rolls or makes a serious mistake in planning.

Perhaps the best way to keep characters alive longer is to take something else away from them, other than their lives. Even on the battlefield, more people are removed from combat as the result of serious injury than death. The gamemaster may wish to institute a rule that all "killed" player characters are out of the present adventure, but that they only die on a roll of 1 on 1D6, and that a result of 2 to 5 means they are seriously scarred or crippled instead. Or perhaps the gamemaster will have the affected character wake up in a hospital days later, with all his belongings missing. In either case, tell the player that his character's fate will be determined after the adventure is over. That way, the player has to sweat for a while, which enhances the seriousness of the character's situation, without always ending in his death. The idea is to maintain a "sense" of mortal danger.

The other way to avoid player-character death should be reserved only for extreme situations. This is the good old *deus ex machina* technique in which some fortunate coincidence interrupts the villains before they can deliver the death blow. Generally, this means that the gamemaster sees that the characters are out-classed, and he wants to even things up. He might have some player-character allies show up unexpectedly; or better yet, have an innocent third party stumble onto the scene. If part of the enemy force is diverted to deal with this new encounter, the player characters have a chance to escape or fight back with fairer odds. Be careful with this option, however, because it can degenerate into a "cavalry-to-the-rescue" syndrome.

## Be an Example

By attempting to be dramatic, flexible, and merciful, the gamemaster is setting an example for the players to follow. The players will make less rules arguments, for instance, if they have learned to trust the gamemaster's reasonableness in handling matters. This trust should also counteract the tendency some players have of making their characters carry every weapon they



own everywhere they go (even into restaurants and libraries). They may even come to play their characters so faithfully that they will walk those characters into potentially dangerous situations unarmed, because they have come to believe that is what the character would really do. When a players' group becomes that devoted to faithfully acting the parts of their characters, the fun of roleplaying will reach new heights.

This seriousness of intent and focus on drama does not mean humor has no place in a roleplaying session. Part of the fun of getting together for a game is the levity that inevitably occurs. But dramatic focus is important if an adventure is to "come to life." Let the players blow off steam now and again by cracking jokes, but after a few minutes, ask them to turn their attention back to the adventure situation.

**Be a Storyteller**

Almost everything that happens at a roleplaying session can be incorporated into the story, thereby enriching the experience. Suppose, for example, that a group is gaming a particular adventure over the course of several sessions, and one of the players cannot make it to one of the sessions. How does the gamemaster deal with the loss of that character right in the middle of the plot? He can have someone else play the character, or he might play the character as an NPC that day. An even better solution is to invent some story to cover the character's absence. Perhaps the missing character was sent forward to scout things out and never returned (most likely having been captured by the enemy). If nothing else, the player character might have a sudden fit of fever from an old wound or an emergency call from a family member. Such things can serve not merely as an excuse for the character's absence, but also be spark plugs for subplots to enrich the story.

## PREPARING ADVENTURES

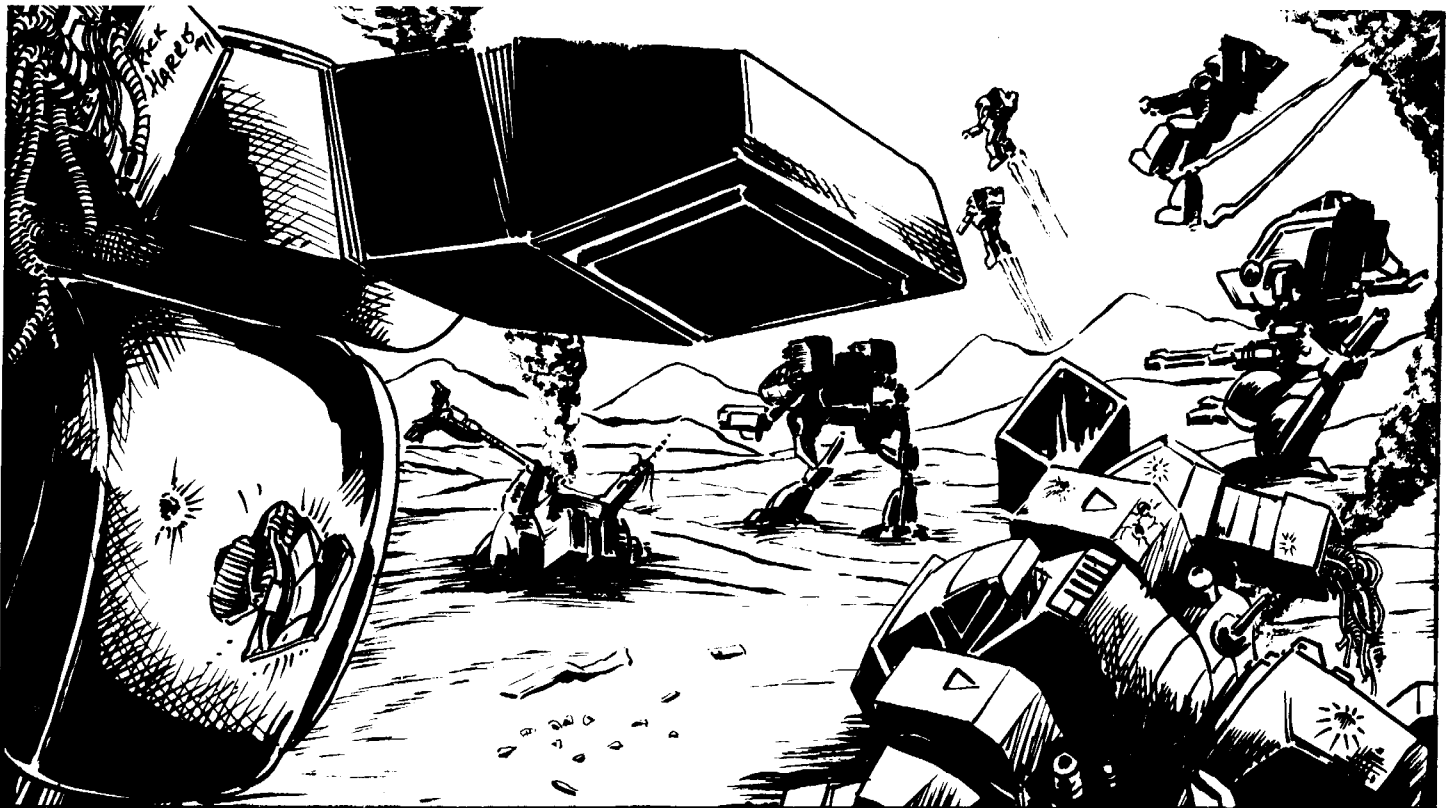
Now that gamemasters have learned how to run an adventure, they need to know how to create them.

### Start Out Small, then Work Big

It is almost always a good idea to start out small, and then expand. This rule of thumb applies in many ways. First, it means beginning with a portion of the **MechWarrior** universe that is familiar. A gamemaster may have a particular affinity for the Japanese-influenced culture of the Draconis Combine, for example, which could be a good springboard. As he becomes more familiar with the rest of the Houses, he can begin to branch out. Second, it means that the first time a gamemaster runs an adventure, he should make it a single scene with a combat resolution. For example, tell the players that their characters run into a group of off-duty local militia who want a piece of their hides, and will not take "no" for an answer. That lets everyone know how the rules will work. In later adventures, the gamemaster can begin to add in some interesting NPCs, a mystery or two, and the like.

"Start out small, then work big" also applies to the process of creating an adventure. First, choose a plot. It may be something the gamemaster has read in a book or seen in a movie or perhaps something of his own invention (see **Adventure Sources**, below).

Next, decide on the important scenes or encounters necessary to the plot. In part, this will depend upon what the gamemaster thinks his players will do when confronted with the situation; he might even create alternative scenes if the situation lends itself to the possibility of multiple courses of action. At minimum, the adventure should have an initial scene that involves the player characters in the story, a climactic scene in which they accomplish the adventure goal, and a final scene in which they reap the rewards of their actions. Generally, there are also several scenes between the introduction



and the climax, joining them together in order to reach that climax. The gamemaster may also include random encounters and red herrings to fill out the adventure and perhaps give the player characters the first threads of later adventures as well.

Finally, when the adventure is over, it is time to pass out rewards. This includes not only Adventure Points, but also captured items of equipment and new friends or contacts (which were actually gained during the course of the adventure). When it comes to Adventure Points, it is suggested that the gamemaster require players to spend them on skills their characters actually used to some effect during the adventure. If they have spent the entire time on a desert world, for instance, it is unlikely that they have improved Swimming Skills. Also, the gamemaster may want to let the players contribute to deciding bonus Adventure Points. One good way to do this is to have everyone secretly write out an event that they particularly enjoyed during this adventure, one in which some other player character played an important part, except that the players should not vote for their own characters. The gamemaster can then read those notes aloud, awarding extra Adventure Points to each character who is mentioned. This practice accomplishes several things:

1. It ensures that players are rewarded for events even if the gamemaster has forgotten them.
2. It fosters a sense of joint participation in the creation of the story.
3. It reminds everyone of the high spots of an adventure, which repeats the pleasure.

### Importance of Villains

One important point to remember when designing an adventure is that almost all players will be most satisfied if they feel they have bested someone who knows he has been bested. It is not much fun to play an adventure in which the player characters simply struggle to survive a DropShip crash on an airless moon. The adventure suddenly becomes fun if the team believes that by surviving they have thwarted the plans of, say, an evil warlord. What was originally a struggle versus a mindless, implacable universe has been transformed into a personal conflict. This means that even if the villains are far behind the scenes, remaining faceless while pulling strings, the players must have repeated evidence of the villain's machinations as well as the hope that their characters might someday defeat that character face-to-face.

### ADVENTURE SOURCES

The **MechWarrior** universe is vast, covering hundreds of worlds and multiple human cultures. Just about anything that fits under the banner of science fiction can occur at some place within the scope of this background. Novice gamemasters have a multitude of sources from which to draw.

For starters, this book provides information that may suggest adventures. If someone tells himself, "I'd love to drop my characters onto that planet and see how they fare," that could be the beginning of an adventure. As additional sourcebooks in the **BattleTech** line are released, the gamemaster can acquaint the players with the contents of those books by having their characters encounter them in adventures. For instance, a good way to reveal the Clan invasion to a group of players might be to send their characters to the Periphery on a mission to the Greater Valkyrate or the Oberon Confederation just in time to be caught in a Clan

attack. The various **BattleTech** novels are another excellent source of adventure plots, as are other science-fiction novels or movies. In fact, just about any plot from any other genre (westerns, mysteries, horror) can be adapted and set on a Successor State world, just waiting for the player characters to become involved. Don't forget to scan adventures published in gaming magazines or prepackaged adventure booklets. The gamemaster can also borrow from other science-fiction games, too. As discussed below, the goals and ambitions of the player characters can also be a source of adventure ideas.

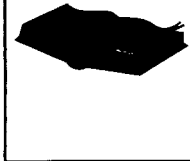
### Adventure Types

In designing adventures, it may help to think of them as belonging to one of several categories. One type might be combat adventures, in which the player characters must go out and best a foe in a head-to-head slugfest. Different, but still related would be covert missions, in which the characters have to infiltrate a position, smuggle an item, rescue a hostage, or "liberate" an item. "NPC-driven" could be another type, with a non-player character getting the players' group involved in a mystery or a plot of vengeance or greed. It may be that the NPC hires the player characters to do the job, or they might discover that they are the target of the operation. "PC-driven" adventures could include any of the above plots, as well as being spawned by player-character career goals. For example, if one of the player characters has declared that he or she intends to become known as the "best darned MechWarrior in the Inner Sphere," this goal could suggest adventure situations to be encountered along the way. Related to the idea of "PC-driven" adventures is what some groups call "Star of the Week." Under this system, each player character in turn becomes the focus of an adventure designed specifically to fit that character's history, goals, and skills, and the other player characters play supporting roles during the adventure. This ensures that all characters are thoroughly involved in the campaign and that no one character has the limelight all the time. Another type of adventure might be classified as the "generic situation," which includes such events as native uprisings, attacks by raiders, equipment malfunctions (requiring the player characters to seek out a new part). Often the nature of such events will be determined by the type of assignment a player character's unit has been given (see **Typical Unit Assignments**, p. 70).

### RUNNING A CAMPAIGN

Any set of adventures run with the same group of player characters is a campaign. Many gamemasters like to link their adventures together, so that the gains the player characters make in one adventure add to those made in another, until all the gains together culminate in some overall goal. Such a campaign is, in effect, one long adventure, with the individual adventures serving something like scenes. However the gamemaster runs his campaign, though, the major point is that the players experience a sense of constantly improving their characters.

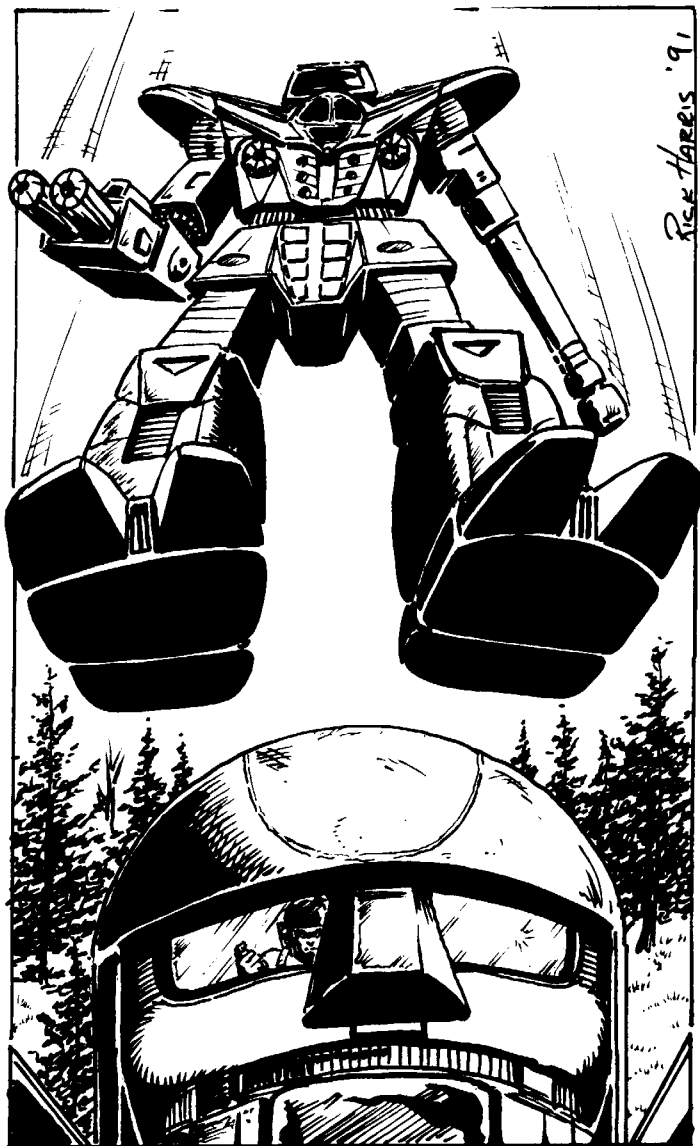
When first organizing an adventure group, the gamemaster may also want to remember the injunction to "start small, then work big." For instance, he might insist that all player characters be members of the same unit, and maybe even that their unit be a mercenary force. The unity of all the player characters serving together will simplify the logistics of getting them all together, and having them work as mercenaries makes it possible to move them anywhere within the Inner Sphere.



If the gamemaster decides not to require that all the player characters belong to the same unit, then he should certainly insist that the players help him work out why and how

their characters came to be companions. Running a campaign involving different player characters from different House units (or even some from the Clans, some from the Successor States, and/or some from ComStar) can mean more than a few logistical headaches, but the tangled player-character relations can also suggest a wide variety of adventures.

Part of running a campaign is determining what occupies the player characters' time between adventures. If enough time passes, characters will begin to age, and they will likely marry and have children. The gamemaster needs to give some consideration to how a character pays the bills between adventures. That does not mean keeping strict account of money gained and money spent, but rather insisting that the players consider where and how their characters will live, based on income and gains made during adventures. Again, such matters can become part of the story of the next adventure.



## CREATING A 'MECH UNIT

To adventure in the 31st century is to adventure in an age of war. Player characters will almost always be members of a military unit, but different units have different resources for training their members and sometimes different goals in that training. Therefore, characters will have different skills and equipment, depending on the unit to which they belong. That is why the character's unit must be determined before he or she can be designed.

Players can either choose the unit to which they wish their characters to belong (subject to gamemaster's approval), or they can roll dice to randomly determine the unit. Generally, all characters within the players' group should belong to the same unit. Though it is theoretically possible for them to belong to different units, this makes the gamemaster's job of creating suitable adventures much more difficult.

### BASIC STEPS

There are seven basic steps in creating a 'Mech unit:

1. Determine unit allegiance.
2. Determine unit size.
3. Determine aerospace support.
4. Determine DropShips and JumpShips.
5. Determine unit type/affiliation.
6. Determine unit support personnel.
7. Generate initial unit assets.

Players can use the tables in this chapter to randomly determine the unit in which their characters serve. It is also fine if the players already have a particular unit in mind. Many **BattleTech** products contain unit rosters that the gamemaster can use to determine such a unit's organization and to decide the player characters' place in it. If the players wish their characters to belong to a unit for which no roster has been published, use the tables in this chapter to generate the details. Another alternative is for the players to use these tables to create a previously unknown mercenary unit. The gamemaster is, of course, the final arbiter. If he and his players plan to randomly generate the unit type and affiliation, then read on.

### Determine Unit Allegiance

A unit's organization depends heavily on whether it belongs to one of the Successor States, the Clans, or even to ComStar. To determine allegiance randomly, the gamemaster rolls 1D6:

1	ComStar Unit
2-4	Inner Sphere Unit
5 or 6	Clan Unit

Having determined allegiance, the players will begin to think about adopting the mind-set of the culture to which their characters belong. In general, citizens of the Successor States tend to prize personal liberty and individuality (although each state—even each world—has its own cultural history that colors the expression of these values). Clan members, on the other hand, serve in distinct castes, and whether of a higher caste or a lower caste, most Clansmen wholeheartedly accept their lot. Most important to a Clan warrior is proving oneself worthy to donate genetic material for the next generation of vat-grown warriors. As for ComStar members, they are fanatically loyal to the quasi-religious worship of their founder, Jerome Blake.



## TYPICAL BATTLEMECH UNIT ORGANIZATION: THE SUCCESSOR STATES

### Lance

A lance is the smallest unit in Successor State BattleMech organization. It usually consists of four BattleMechs. Occasionally, a scout or two may be attached to a lance. An aerospace lance usually consists of two aerospace fighters and associated Techs.

### Company

By and large, each company consists of three lances of BattleMechs (12 MechS), sometimes with a fourth lance of aerospace fighters. Scouts are sometimes included in a company as a separate support group, but such a group is not generally considered a lance.

### Battalion

A battalion consists of three companies (36 MechS). In some battalions, aerospace fighters are organized as a separate company, rather than being attached to the Mech companies as air lances. The same may be true for scouts. A battalion may also have a command lance that provides mobile command and logistical support.

### Regiment

Though a regiment may consist of virtually any number of battalions, there are usually three to five. If a unit has DropShips, they are usually attached at this level of organization. Other support battalions such as infantry or tanks may be attached at regimental level as well.

### Support Units

Aerospace fighters and DropShips have been mentioned above. It is also possible for other types of support—infantry, artillery, and vehicles, for example—to be attached to a BattleMech unit. Such support groups are usually organized into battalions of their own, then attached at regimental level. (See *Mercenary's Handbook*, *BattleTroops*, and *BattleForce* for more information on such units.)

### Exceptions

While units of the major Houses follow the above method of organization very closely, irregular units such as mercenaries or Periphery military may deviate from it considerably because they lack sufficient numbers. Units with limited resources tend to flesh out their forces with vehicles and/or infantry.

These psychological differences affect how warriors from each culture do battle. Successor State forces see nothing wrong with using superior forces and/or trickery in battle, nor are many of them much averse to deserting if they feel their superiors have failed them. The Clans, on the other hand, value ferocity and honor above all else. They prefer to meet their enemies in straightforward battle, with relatively equal numbers, even if this means withholding forces from the conflict! Clan MechS never gang up on an enemy Mech in battle, always insisting on attacking one-on-one. And as might be expected, ComStar warriors hold fanatically to their orders, even in the face of certain defeat, believing their service is divinely ordained.

For more information on each of these cultures, see the background material starting on p. 106.

### Determine Unit Size

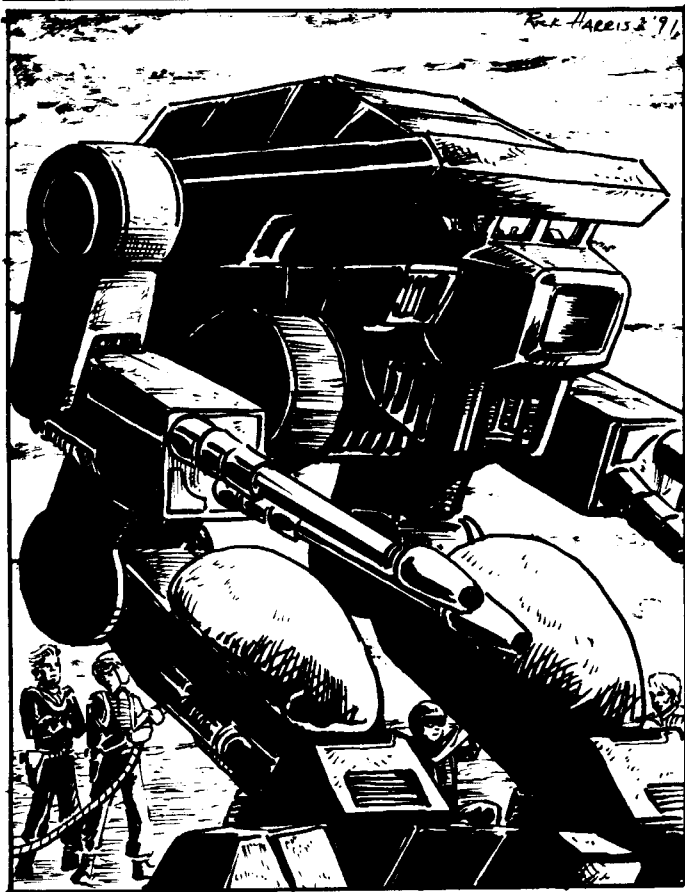
The size of the unit depends primarily on the number of players in the group. The Successor States (and ComStar) organize their BattleMech units into lances of four MechS each; the Clans use Stars of five MechS each. If there are only three players, for example, the player unit will likely be a single lance or Star. If, however, there are five or six players, the unit might be an entire company or Cluster. For positions not filled by player characters, the gamemaster will generate NPC statistics.

To determine the exact size of the players' unit, consult one of the Mech Unit Tables below. First, find the row in the appropriate table (Successor States, ComStar, or Clan) that corresponds to the number of players, then roll 2D6. A result of "Only PCs" means the unit has no NPCs, and so may have to be organized around a non-standard number of MechS. The other results are largely self-explanatory.

SUCCESSOR STATES/COMSTAR 'MECH UNITS				
# of players	PCs Only	1 Lance	2 Lances	Company
2	2	3-6	7-8	9-12
3	2-3	4-6	7	8-12
4	—	2-5	6-7	8-12
5	2-3	—	4-6	7-12
6	2-4	—	5-6	7-12
7	2-4	—	5-6	7-12
8	—	—	2-5	6-12
9	2-5	—	—	6-12
10	2-6	—	—	7-12

If the die roll result indicates a full company, roll another 1D6 to determine the unit's highest level of organization:

Die Roll	Level of Organization
1	Company only
2-4	Unit is part of a Mech Battalion (3 Companies)
5-6	Unit is part of a Mech Regiment (3 Battalions)



# of players	CLAN 'MECH UNITS			
	PCs Only	Star	Binary	Trinary
2	2	3-7	9-11	12
3	2-3	4-7	8-11	12
4	2-4	5-6	7-11	12
5	—	2-6	7-10	11-12
6	2-5	—	6-10	11-12
7	2-6	—	7-10	11-12
8	2-5	—	6-9	10-12
9	2-6	—	7-9	10-12
10	—	—	2-8	9-12

If the die roll result indicates a Binary or Trinary, roll another 1D6 to determine the unit's highest level of organization:

Die Roll	Level of Organization
1	Binary/Trinary only
2-4	Unit is part of a Cluster (3 Binaries/Trinaries)
5-6	Unit is part of a Galaxy (3 Clusters)

## TYPICAL BATTLEBORN UNIT ORGANIZATION: THE CLANS

### Point

The Point is the smallest unit in Clan military organization. Each point consists of one 'Mech, or two Aero-space fighters, or five battle-armored "Elementals" (specially bred infantry).

### Star

Five Points form a Star. This makes a Star roughly the same size as a Successor State lance. Though a lance is a fairly standard organization, a Star can—and often does—consist of several different types of Points fighting in unison.

### Binary/Trinary

Two Stars form a Binary, three a Trinary. This makes Clan Binaries and Trinaries roughly equivalent to a Successor State company.

### Cluster

Binaries/Trinaries are organized into Clusters in the same way that Successor State companies are organized into battalions.

### Galaxy

Similar to the Successor State regiment, which may include several battalions, a Clan Galaxy contains several Clusters.

### Distinctions

The Clan system allows great flexibility, and it also allows the need for irregular unit organization. More over, second-line Clan units are often composed of older, modest 'Mechs and few or no Elementals. Because these 'Mechs are incapable of the kind of modifications usually available to OmniMechs, second-line Star organization tends to rely on a mix of 'Mech sizes similar to those used in Successor State lances.

# RUNNING THE GAME

## Determine Aerospace Support

In this phase, players determine whether their unit presently contains a functional air lance/Point consisting of two aerospace fighters, two pilots, and two Techs.

Roll 2D6 and consult the Air Lance Status Table below. Treat units consisting solely of player characters as equivalent to the next-highest size class (i.e., 2-3 'Mechs = 1 lance or 2-4 a Star; 5-7 'Mechs = 2 Lances; 9-11 'Mechs = company or 6-9 a Binary/Trinary).

### AIR LANCE STATUS (SUCCESSOR STATES)

Die Roll	Unit Size
8-12	Lance
6-12	2 Lances
4-12	Company
Always	Battalion/Regiment

### AIR POINT STATUS (CLANS)

Die Roll	Unit Size
9-12	Star
6-12	Binary/Trinary
3-12	Cluster
Always	Galaxy

## Determine DropShips and JumpShips

To determine whether the unit controls one or more DropShips, roll 2D6 and consult the Unit DropShip Status Table. (Note that the DropShips listed on this table are intended as class indications; the exact type owned will depend on the particular unit, but will be roughly the size of the class listed. If more than one class is indicated, the numbers in parentheses (following the ship types) are ranges for a second die roll to determine which is owned.)

### UNIT DROPSHIP STATUS

Unit Size	Die Roll	DropShip Type
Lance/Star	2-8	1 Leopard
2 Lances	2-10	2 Leopard (2-6) or 1 Union (7-12)
Company/Binary	2-11	1 Union
Battalion/Cluster	Always	3 Union (2-10) or 1 Overlord (11-12)
Regiment/Galaxy	Always	9 Union (2-8) or 3 Overlord (9-12)

[NOTE: 1 Overlord Class DropShip = 3 Union Class; 1 Union Class = 3 Leopard Class]

Regiments often have a wide variety of DropShips available for any kind of mission. If a unit controls a DropShip, players may roll dice against the Unit JumpShip Status Table to determine whether they have a JumpShip. As with DropShips, the listings indicate size by mentioning a class of ship; the final determination of type depends on the unit to which the ship belongs.

### UNIT JUMPSHIP STATUS

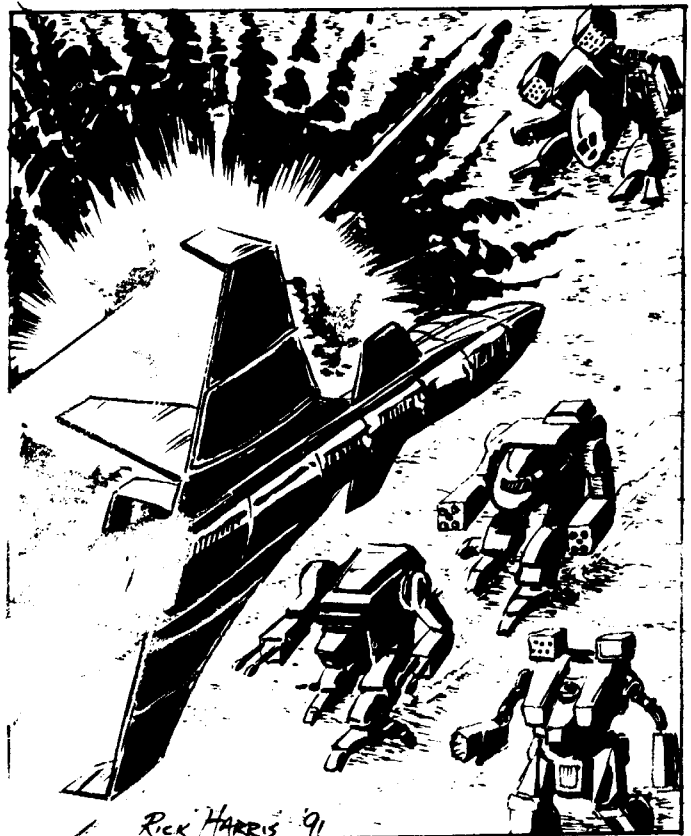
(Use only if unit has a DropShip)

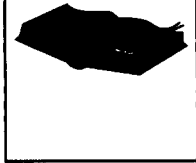
Unit Size	Die Roll	JumpShip Type
Lance/Star	2-5	Scout (2-9) or Merchant (10-12)
2 Lances	2-6	Merchant (2-8) or Invader (9-12)
Company/Binary/Trinary	2-7	Invader
Battalion/Cluster	2-10	Invader (2-7) or Monolith (8-12)
Regiment/Galaxy	2-11	Monolith

## Determine Unit Type/Affiliation

In this phase of generating a 'Mech unit, the players determine their exact affiliation within the group (Successor States or Clans) to which they hold allegiance. Successor State units roll dice to decide whether they are mercenaries or House forces. Clan units roll to decide the Clan to which they belong and whether they are part of that Clan's primary or secondary forces.

Aside from the major differences between Clan culture, ComStar culture, and Successor State culture, great diversity also exists among the individual Successor States. It is one thing to be a member of a House Davion unit and quite another to be a yakuza of the Draconis Combine or a member of the Kell Hounds mercenaries, and even more different to be a member of one of the Belt Pirates. Once players determine their affiliation, they can begin to think about the appropriate mindset of their characters.





To determine unit type for anything other than ComStar, first roll 2D6. (ComStar units are always regular units and have only one affiliation—to ComStar itself.) Apply the following die modifiers to the roll: -1 the unit consists of eight or less 'Mechs; -3 if the unit consists of four or less 'Mechs. If the final result is 2-6, the team is a Successor State mercenary unit or second-string Clan Unit. On a final result of 7-12, the group is a Successor State House unit or is a primary Clan unit.

After determining unit type, the players' group rolls 2D6 against the appropriate table below (Successor State, Mercenary/Militia, or Clans) to determine affiliation. Note that a result of "Minor Power" requires a subsequent 2D6 roll to determine the specific minor power. A result of "Minor Periphery" on that second table requires a 1D6 roll on the Minor Periphery Table to determine the exact location.

### SUCCESSOR STATE AFFILIATION

Die Roll	Result
2-3	Capellan Confederation
4-5	Free Worlds League
6	Draconis Combine
7-9	Federated Commonwealth
10-12	Minor Power

### MINOR POWER AFFILIATION

Die Roll	Result
2-3	Magistracy of Canopus
4-5	Outworlds Alliance
6-7	Free Rasalhague Republic
8-9	St. Ives Compact
10-11	Taurian Concordat
12	Minor Periphery

### MINOR PERIPHERY AFFILIATION

Die Roll	Result
1	Von Strang's World
2	Lothario
3	Star's End
4	Circinus
5	Alphard
6	Santander's World

If the player characters are part of a mercenary unit, roll 2D6 on the following table to determine the exact unit. A result of "Independent" means they belong to a relatively new unit with no history. In this case, they should create a name for themselves and an explanation of how they came into being, i.e., disaffected from some other unit, created by a new Periphery bandit lord, and so on. Results that list two possibilities include a 1D6 range in parentheses after each unit name.

### MERCENARY UNIT AFFILIATION

Die Roll	Result
2	McCarron's Armored Cavalry (1-3); Wilson's Hussars (4-6)
3	Lindon's Company
4	21st Centauri Lancers
5	Kell Hounds
6-7	Independent
8	Wolf's Dragoons
9	Eridani Light Horse
10	Hansen's Roughriders
11	Waco Rangers (1-4); Gregg's Long Striders (5-6)
12	Bounty Hunter (1-3); Snord's Irregulars (4-6)

Of the 20 original Clans, 17 remain in existence, the others having been absorbed or annihilated. Only 6 of the Clans operate within the Inner Sphere, however. To determine the Clan to which the characters belong, roll 1D6 on the Clan Affiliation Table, below.

### CLAN AFFILIATION TABLE

Die Roll	Result
1	Clan Ghost Bear
2	Clan Jade Falcon
3	Clan Nova Cat
4	Clan Smoke Jaguar
5	Clan Steel Viper
6	Clan Wolf

### Changing Affiliation

During the course of a **MechWarrior** campaign, most units will have opportunities to change their affiliation, so players should not be too disappointed if the initial, randomly rolled affiliation does not appeal to them. Mercenaries, for instance, can change affiliation fairly easily once a contract is fulfilled. Successor State units sometimes defect. And the Clans often adopt valiant prisoners of war.

On the other hand, players should consider that every affiliation offers some advantages to its members. At present, the Federated Commonwealth controls the largest and most powerful 'Mech forces in the Inner Sphere, plus offering the potential perk of training at the prestigious Davion military academy. One disadvantage in working for such a power is that the player characters will have a harder time making a name for themselves because they must compete with many renowned (and often larger) units for plum assignments. Indeed, they may end up exiled for long periods of garrison or riot duty on backwater planets. By the same token, working for a weaker state can be an advantage because of less competition and more opportunities to build a reputation.

A similar balance exists between the advantages and disadvantages of mercenary versus regular units. Mercenary units have much freedom of action and sometimes can pick and choose possible assignments, but they are also more susceptible to economic hardships and crippling losses of equipment or personnel. Regular units are usually better supplied, kept closer to full

## INITIAL ASSETS TABLE

House	Regular	Mercenary
Marik	5D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance	5D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance
F-C Steiner	5D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance	4D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance
F-C Davion	4D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance	4D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance
Kurita	4D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance	2D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance
Minor Power	3D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance	3D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance
Rasalhague	2D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance	2D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance
Bandit	2D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance	1D6 x 5,000 C-Bills/Lance

fighting-strength, and much more likely to be rewarded with lands, titles, and real political influence. These regulars often pay for their advantages by having to accept a less appealing range of assignments (including tasks either duller or riskier than the players' group might prefer).

If players do wish their characters to change affiliation, this can be an adventure in itself.

### Determine Unit Support Personnel

Every 'Mech unit usually has a number of non-MechWarrior personnel such as techs, engineers, aerospace pilots, and on-planet reconnaissance teams (scouts/spies). This section includes tables to generate estimates of a unit's support capabilities.

The abilities of support characters are left to the gamemaster's discretion, but assume that key NPCs have base target numbers of 4 or 5 in their primary skills. Exceptional NPCs such as Senior Techs will have skill targets in the 2 or 3 range or Natural Aptitude in their most important skill.

### Technicians

As a general rule, each MechWarrior normally has his own tech. Roll 2D6 for each 'Mech in the unit. A result of 2-9 means the 'Mech has a tech available. A roll of 10-12 means it has no tech. If a unit has 4 or more techs, there will also be a Senior Tech.

### Aerospace Personnel

Units always have a pilot and a tech for every aerospace fighter, and a pilot, a navigator, and a tech for every DropShip or JumpShip they possess.

### Recon Personnel

Many 'Mech units maintain a small cadre whose primary function is to provide the main 'Mech force with reliable intelligence about enemy positions and supply routes, water availability, and industrial targets. Smaller 'Mech units often do not have the luxury of such specialized personnel, and must use their aerospace fighters and/or recon lances to obtain the same information. To determine whether the players' unit has scouts, roll 2D6 and consult the following table.

### SCOUT ASSIGNMENTS

Unit Size	0	1	2	3
1 Lance	2-8	9-12	—	—
2 Lances	2-6	7-10	11-12	—
Company	2-5	6-9	10-12	—
Battalion	2-3	4-8	9-11	12
Regiment	Roll for each Battalion			

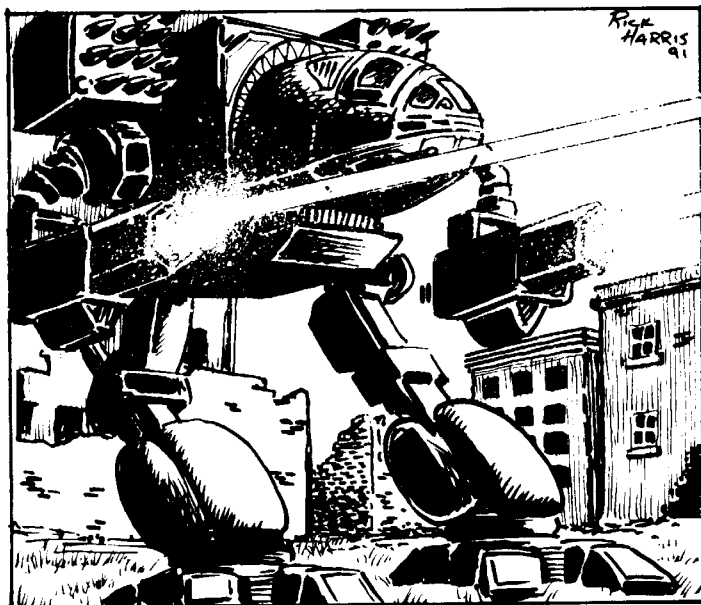
### Generate Unit Assets

After creating unit personnel, each 'Mech unit receives some initial assets to cover operating expenses and the purchase of additional equipment and materiel.

A unit's initial assets are determined by its size and affiliation, per the table below. Roll once for each lance, including aerospace. A unit also receives an additional dice roll if it owns at least 1 DropShip and another additional roll if it owns at least 1 JumpShip.

For example, a full company unit of F-C Steiner regulars has an air lance and 1 DropShip. This is the equivalent of 5 lances (3 'Mech lances, 1 air lance, and the DropShip). According to the table, F-C Steiner regulars receive 5D6 x 5 per lance, so the players roll 5 times, for total initial assets of 450,000 C-Bills.

The unit may spend its initial assets on vehicles and equipment in any way the gamemaster desires. They may purchase any equipment listed with an A or B availability in the **Equipment** section when the unit is being set up. Equipment from other sources (particularly **Technical Readout 3026**) is also available if the gamemaster has access to that book.



## FLESHING OUT THE UNIT

Once the unit has been defined and equipped, it is time to flesh out details such as a name, a history, the commander's name, and so on. The gamemaster can do most of this work, but it will be more fun for the players if they also contribute to individualizing the unit. A group effort usually produces the best results.

It is at this point that the gamemaster creates the attributes, skills, and 'Mechs for each of the NPC MechWarriors traveling with the unit. If the player characters represent half or less of the unit's total 'Mechs, the gamemaster should give the team the option of constructing a second, and sometimes even a third, player-character MechWarrior.

If the gamemaster does not have the time or inclination to create all the NPCs in a unit, he can use Archetypes, making any changes needed to individualize the characters. When generating NPCs, it is not so crucial to make everything perfect. Just make a few notes and run with it.



## TYPICAL UNIT ASSIGNMENTS

Once the players have generated a 'Mech unit, have outfitted it, and are ready to begin, the gamemaster may be uncertain about how to get the players' group started and what kind of events should occur during their adventures. This section offers some suggestions.

**MechWarrior** scenarios almost invariably begin with a combat assignment. The players receive instructions from their military superiors (if they are a House or Clan unit) or from their current patron (if a mercenary unit).

Of course, units starting the campaign without any affiliation will first have to find an employer (which may require the team to take on a temporary assignment from a local bureaucrat or private corporation to earn the funds to get off-world). The following sections describe a number of the most common 'Mech duty-assignments, and provide guidelines on the types of encounters likely to occur during each.

### Garrison Duty

Garrison duty is the most common of all 'Mech assignments. As its name implies, the players become part or all of the standing defensive 'Mech force posted on a given world to protect it against all comers. That includes enemy attack, subversion or revolt from within, or the depredations of the Bandit Kings. Most 'Mech units dislike such duty because garrison shifts (especially on backwater planets lacking significant resources to draw enemy attention) rarely offer much chance for profit or reputation-enhancing battle. Nonetheless, it is precisely the sort of assignment given to a unit low on a House's totem pole (as a players' unit will almost certainly be during its first few months of campaign existence).

Even though many garrison shifts are uneventful, a gamemaster can definitely liven up the players' tour of duty. He might, for example, make the planet the target of a full-scale attack by an enemy 'Mech force or (more likely) of hit-and-run raids by Periphery water-raiders or saboteurs from an enemy House.

Alternatively, the players may encounter rumors or physical evidence of rebellion among the native populace, and have to root out the troublemakers. Interesting adventure opportunities can even occur during a seemingly peaceful tour of duty if the unit is called upon to investigate rumors of a secret Star League supply cache, to explore such a facility and remove or neutralize any still-functioning security measures, or to guard an incoming trade shipment or important personage such as a visiting noble or ambassador.

Garrison duty should give virtually all characters in a 'Mech unit ample opportunity for encounters both inside and outside their 'Mechs. Gamemasters using the Encounter Tables in **Random Encounters and Events** as a means of generating encounters should roll on the General Encounter Table twice per month.

### Planetary Assault

On an assault assignment, the players' unit becomes part of a full-scale offensive force sent to an enemy-held world with orders to attack and secure that world for their House. To achieve such a takeover, the assault force will have to engage and defeat the enemy 'Mech garrison stationed on the world, and eliminate any other defensive forces present (conventional armor and infantry units, static and mobile artillery, and so forth).

Clan units may only engage in planetary assault against one another, as they are forbidden to advance further into the Inner Sphere.

## Short-Term Assault Assignments

Over the course of a major campaign, the players' unit will normally be given a number of short-term assault assignments. The groups may have to conduct advance reconnaissance of a region, to secure a specific territorial objective (ranging from a strategically located farmhouse, hill, or watercourse to an entire industriplex or a major city), or to assault an enemy unit, supply cache, or repair depot.

During the same time period, a unit's scouts and aerospace fighter pilots are also likely to be busy, but on totally different areas of the planet. The scouts are usually gathering intelligence about enemy troop strength and movements, and relaying that information back to Assault Central Command. Meanwhile, the fighter pilots will be conducting aerial reconnaissance flights or bombing missions, providing support fire for 'Mech assaults or attempting to seek out and destroy any remaining enemy fighters.

Assignment to a planetary assault team is generally considered a "plum," for it usually gives MechWarrior units their best chances for obtaining booty. Also, it can be an excellent opportunity to earn experience.

Most player characters will soon discover (especially if the invading and defending forces are evenly matched) that these rewards come hard-earned. Depending on the size of the contending forces and the tactics employed by each, an invasion campaign can take anywhere from a few days to weeks or even months. The time pressure will weigh most heavily on the attackers, as a campaign lasting more than four to six weeks normally allows the enemy sufficient time to bring reinforcements onto the scene, substantially altering the balance of the campaign.

During an assault, the gamemaster should provide 'Mech units with new adventure opportunities (in the form of new assignments or random encounters from the Battlefield Encounter Table) on a daily or even twice-daily basis. There is nothing wrong with player characters finding they have barely enough time to patch up their wounds (and 'Mechs) from one battle before being hauled into another.

## Raiding/Sabotage Missions

Raiding and sabotage missions, like assaults, require that players invade and attack an enemy-held world. The objectives of a raid or sabotage mission are usually more limited than those of assault, however. They often involve a significantly smaller force (often only one to two companies, or the players' unit alone). Possible objectives of such assignments might include:

- raiding for water or resources (especially if the players are working for one of the Bandit Kings)
- kidnapping scientists or Techs, or theft of their current research projects
- infiltration by agents provocateur to foment unrest and rebellion or to engage in political or industrial espionage
- sabotage of key installations
- conducting punitive raids (seldom occurs in campaigns between Inner Sphere Houses, but is common in conflicts between Houses and Bandit Kings)

Such assignments usually have a short time limit of two to five days (as the attacking force will generally not have the firepower to hold out against the combined might of the full planetary defense forces), and are likely to produce one to three Battlefield Encounters per day. The overall benefits from a successful mission of this

type will normally be lower than for an assault, but an especially energetic players' group can turn the circumstances to greater advantage. Some missions may require that units spend more time outside their 'Mechs than in (or even to leave their 'Mechs off-planet entirely).

Raids are very common along the border of the Clan Occupation Zone because the Clans may not seize any more worlds, but they can, and do, attack those within their reach.

## Relief Duty

Attempting to relieve a planetary garrison under attack is perhaps the most dreaded assignment a 'Mech unit ever receives. Unlike the U.S. Cavalry in Hollywood westerns (which always arrives to save the day), many relief 'Mech units land on-world only to find that they are "reinforcing" defeated units who have retreated somewhere into the planet's outlands. Even in cases where the defenders remain steadfast, reinforcements must usually fight their way onto the world through a gauntlet of hostile aerospace fighters and enemy 'Mechs who hold many of the best positions.

During a relief assignment, the gamemaster should have Battlefield and other Encounters occur at roughly the same frequency as in an assault. These are likely to be of greater severity, however. Scouts, in particular, will be very busy attempting to develop reliable information on the locations of both sides in the days following landing. In a situation where the original garrison has already "gone guerrilla" before the player characters arrive, the relief team may decide (or be ordered) to split its forces, using one group to attempt to hold the enemy at bay while the other goes into the back-country to hunt down and rally their surviving comrades-in-arms.

## Riot Duty

As a result of the general decline in the military might and administrative capabilities of the Successor State Houses and the continuing economic hardships and shortages that prevail throughout the Inner Sphere, outbreaks of civil disturbance and rebellion have become fairly common. In most cases, the regular on-world garrison will have responsibility for suppressing civil unrest and restoring planetary order. In the rare instance where revolutionary forces gain access to 'Mechs or aerospace fighters (either by capturing a 'Mech production facility or spaceport, or by convincing the planetary garrison to join the rebellion), outside 'Mech units may be called in to put down the revolt.

Few MechWarriors consider putting down rebellions to be a desirable assignment, for it places them in an unenviable position. All the while they are exposed to rebel attacks, they are restricted in their ability to retaliate because of the need to keep intact any planetary facilities they eventually retake. Because of this restriction and the rebels' ability to conceal their activities, it may take the players' team weeks or even months to quell civil unrest, despite an often substantial superiority in firepower.

As in relief assignments, scouts and aerospace fighter pilots normally play an important role in riot duty because the intelligence gleaned from their activities is often the only means the unit has for locating the rebel forces. Nevertheless, MechWarriors should also have plenty of opportunity to use their combat skills, both in and out of their 'Mechs.

An interesting variation for Clan characters is an assignment to a world taken in the invasion that has not yet bowed to the will of the Clans.

## MERCENARY UNITS

While the Clans find the concept of mercenary warriors distasteful, the Great Houses of the Successor States have traditionally depended upon mercenary units for support to their regular armies in the turbulent political climate of the times.

The advantages of mercenary life include flexibility of assignment, competitive salaries, and the choice of masters. Wolf's Dragoons are the most outstanding example of a successful mercenary organization. Although combat and their employers' shifting fortunes have certainly taken their toll on Wolf's Dragoons, the outfit has never fallen on the difficult economic times so common among other mercenaries.

Despite the demand for their services, mercenaries have economic woes that are a direct consequence of shortages of parts and hard cash.

Most mercenary units are at the mercy of their employers' integrity in remunerating their services, either in equipment or hard cash (preferably C-Bills). Most Houses are unwilling to pay in C-Bills, especially those whose H-Bills have an unfavorable exchange rate. Others might be unscrupulous enough to send the unit into combat, knowing that it will come out in desperate need of parts, which the unit will then have to obtain from its employer. All mercenary units must, therefore, be on guard against employers who might want to make them too dependent.

A mercenary unit's fortunes depend on the equipment and other resources it possesses. These resources fall into five categories: 'Mechs, FTL transportation, cash flow, spare parts and supplies, and technical/repair personnel. A surplus or deficit in any of these areas can have a crucial impact on the unit's future.

### Mercenary BattleMechs

A mercenary unit's prospects for employment depend on the number and condition of its BattleMechs. If the unit has more, better, or better-repaired 'Mechs, it can command a higher price for its services. By comparison, mercenary units whose 'Mechs are weak or ill-repaired will not be in a good bargaining position.

Unfortunately, this situation tends to be self-perpetuating. A well-paid unit can keep its 'Mech force strong and so will be in demand. A badly damaged unit, on the other hand, often needs a lucrative contract to be able to afford restoration of its status, yet high pay is exactly what its damaged status no longer permits.

### FTL Transportation

Though most mercenary units do have their own DropShips, not all have their own FTL transportation. Lacking their own JumpShips, the outfit will have to hitch a ride with a commercial or military JumpShip to get from one assignment to another. Both government and private corporations charge exorbitant fees (about 50,000 C-Bills to carry and drop a *Leopard* Class DropShip one time), and accept payment only in cash, making transportation a key point of negotiation in a mercenary contract. Because only a finite number of JumpShips exist, it has become part of the casuistry of war *not* to attack such vessels. The chances of acquiring a ship in the course of mercenary activities are vanishingly small.

### Cash Flow

C-Bills are accepted throughout the Inner Sphere as a universal coin of the realm, but employers will most often pay mercenary companies with their House currency. At times, this creates more

economic woes for the unit, for there is no guarantee that independent worlds or other Houses will honor the H-Bills of their current patron.

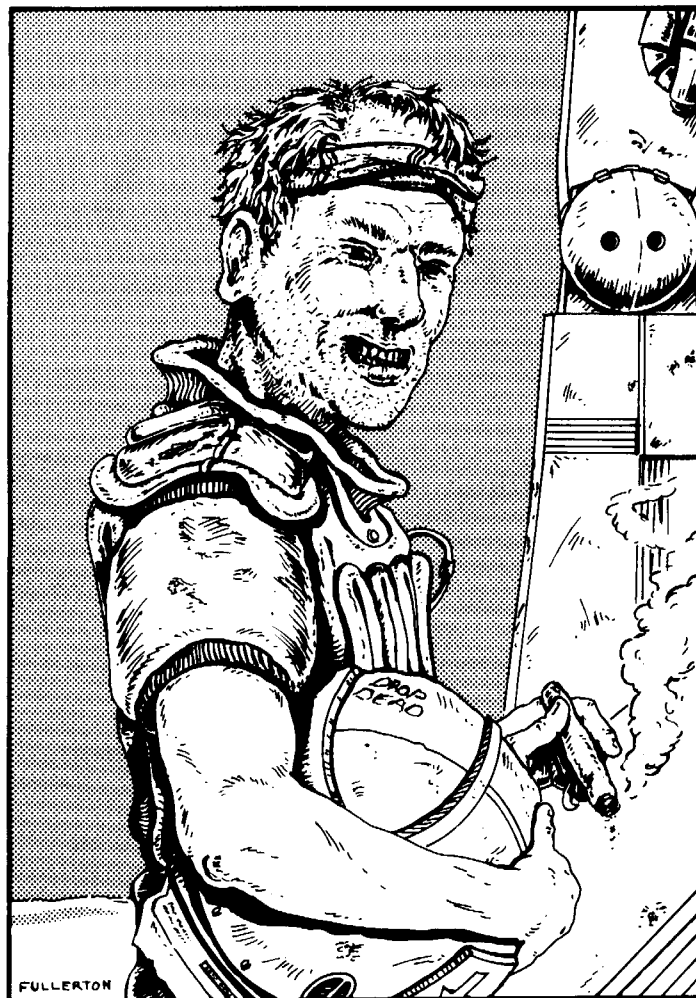
Contracts are sometimes paid with a combination of cash, goods, and services. The extent to which a mercenary unit demands currency as part of its contract may indicate whether the unit intends to stay around for awhile (the further one gets from the issuing House, the less chance of the currency being honored).

### Spare Parts

A mercenary unit tends to keep quiet about its surplus or deficit of spare parts. If a governmental or mercantile patron learned that a unit desperately lacked a particular 'Mech component, the price for the part would suddenly become astronomical. During negotiations, therefore, a mercenary 'Mech unit is usually careful not to reveal its actual situation. Of course, it is also true that the availability of spare parts is often beyond the control of either the mercenary unit or its patron in some areas of the Successor States.

### Technical Personnel

A mercenary unit lives and dies by its ability to make do with what it has. Units staffed with their own experienced techs are more versatile than units without, and so these repair services have become specialized and high-priced. If a mercenary outfit must depend on its patron for repairs, the unit's wages are likely to be less.





## Scarcity of 'Mech Equipment

As player mercenary units undertake and successfully complete contract assignments for their Successor House employers, they may sometimes receive a significant portion of their pay in kind. This may be either a negotiated share of the booty seized or the right to draw against House supply stockpiles. Along with battlefield scavenging, such arrangements represent the unit's primary means for replenishing their stores of spare parts and ammunition to keep their 'Mechs up and running.

Of course, such ad hoc arrangements are usually flawed when it comes to allocation. Units will not always be able to acquire all the components they most desperately need. Indeed, some key materials may be totally unavailable in certain areas for months or years at a time, as a result of the vagaries of war and the permanently overtaxed condition of the few 'Mech production facilities existing in the Successor States.

## Boom or Bust

For all the reasons enumerated above, mercenary units often find themselves in an inescapable cycle of boom or bust. A unit can realistically expect to complete only five to ten missions a year because of the amount of time required to travel into and out of system and to perform the logistical tasks necessary to support such missions. A mercenary lance usually earns from 300,000 to 800,000 C-Bill equivalents per mission.

A mercenary unit must either obtain spare parts from its patron or buy them outright, depending on availability. Even when available, costs can fluctuate wildly, being directly related to the rapaciousness of the patron, the House, or the planet. The cost of repairs, additional equipment, replacement parts, and even ammunition can rapidly drain available cash. In addition, the upkeep of a 'Mech costs approximately 5,000 C-Bill equivalents per month (rations, billeting, and so forth). Mercenaries may often have to pay non-patrons for necessary services such as refueling and even money-changing. This latter service can cost as much as 5 to 10 percent of the total amount, but is necessary for transactions with locals, who will only accept the currency of the ruling House. The total earnings of a company over the course of a year—anywhere from 5 to 20 million C-Bill equivalents—can be more than offset by the enormous overhead involved in operating a unit, paying its bills and expenses, and maintaining its hardware.

Mercenary units able or fortuitous enough to keep ahead of their financial obligations are few and far between. Units unable to manage their affairs wisely in the chaotic society of the Inner Sphere often get into trouble because of a lack of ready cash (though any of the other above-listed factors can be the cause of financial woes).

Whatever the circumstance, the unit will most often be forced to sell its services for a lower price. This might also include yielding the right to salvage on the battlefield or scavenging from abandoned facilities or storehouses, both important sources of replacement parts and equipment. Mercenary organizations placed in this position vis-a-vis their employer often are unable to escape from the vicious circle of the "company-store" syndrome, whereby continued service with the same employer drives the unit deeper into debt, but no escape is possible until that debt is discharged. This happens most often in Marik and Kurita space, and a unit that is actually close enough to the border to jump sides will often do so.

Over the past few decades, this has led to many mercenary units gravitating to House Davion.

Most mercenary units are constantly in danger of falling into desperate financial straits, whether through misfortune, accident, battlefield losses, a rapacious employer, or other circumstance. A gamemaster can choose to visit any or all of these events on the players' heads. Furthermore, the prevailing trends make these events likely, because more and more regular units in the Inner Sphere are becoming mercenary or near-mercenary units, increasing the competition for limited contracts and a fixed amount of available cash. The gamemaster should give the player characters some leeway, however. Although realism is part of the fun of roleplaying, a too-heavy dose may leave the players feeling that the game is more an exercise in futility—or bookkeeping—than an adventure in roleplaying.

## ENCOUNTERS AND EVENTS

Having developed the general outlines of a planetary assignment for the players' group, some gamemasters may still need assistance in creating adventure situations resulting from such an assignment or in inventing short encounters to spice up the adventure's slow periods. More experienced gamemasters may occasionally see their best-laid adventure plans go astray when the players ignore the scenario, blissfully wandering off in a totally unplanned direction.

The following encounter tables have been designed to aid both seasoned and unseasoned gamemasters. They provide a variety of potential encounters with NPCs, events, or strange phenomena, any of which could quickly and easily start an adventure.

The encounter situations have been organized into two basic categories: General Encounters and Battlefield Encounters. Gamemasters using the tables as their primary source for encounters should roll on these tables according to the type of assignment in which the players' unit is engaged. For specifics, see the Frequency of Encounters Table below.

FREQUENCY OF ENCOUNTERS		
Assignment	General	Battlefield
Garrison	Roll once every 2 weeks	Roll 1x/day *
Assault	Roll once/week	Roll 2x/day
Raiding	Roll once/week	Roll 3x/day
Relief	Roll once/week	Roll 2x/day
Pacification	Roll once every 2 weeks	Roll 1x 2 days

\*Only during periods when General Encounters indicate that combat will occur.

## USING THE ENCOUNTER TABLES

When an encounter is called for, roll two dice. Read the results consecutively to produce a value from 11 to 66, then cross-reference the result on either the General Encounter Table or the Battlefield Encounter Table below. Each encounter is described more fully under **General Encounter Descriptions**.

## GENERAL ENCOUNTER TABLE

### Current Unit Assignment

Encounter	Garrison	Assault	Raiding	Relief	Pacification
New Supplies	11	11-13	11-14	11-12	11-12
New Personnel	12-13	14-16	15-16	13-15	13-15
Reinforcements	14-15	21-24	21-22	16-22	16-21
Attack by Natives	16-22	25-26	23-26	23-24	22-31
Attack by Raiders	23-26	-	-	-	32-33
Attack by Assault	31-34	-	-	-	34
Star League Facility	35-36	31-33	31-34	-	-
Epidemic/Disease	41-42	34-35	35-36	25-26	35-36
Natural Disaster	43-44	36-42	41-42	31-33	41-42
Important VIP	45-51	43-44	43-44	34-36	43-45
Interesting NPC	52-53	-	45-46	-	-
Oppty for Treachery	54-55	45-46	51-53	41-44	46-52
Eqpt Malfunction	56	51-54	54-55	45-51	53-54
Personal Challenge	61-62	55-61	56-62	52-54	55-56
Bounty Hunter	63	62-63	63	55-61	61
Profit-Making Oppty	64-66	-	-	-	62-63
Captive	-	64-66	64-66	62-63	64-66
Friendly Forces	-	-	-	64-66	-

## BATTLEFIELD ENCOUNTER TABLE

Die Roll	Event
11-14	Enemy Patrol
15-21	Enemy Assault Force
22-23	Ambush
24-25	Water Source
26	Aerospace Fighter Attack
31-34	Intelligence Report
35-36	Artillery Attack
41-42	Equipment Malfunction
43-44	Attack by Natives
45	Interesting NPC
46	Natural Disaster
51-53	Bad Weather
54-55	Assault Mission
56-63	Recon Mission
64-66	Static Anti-'Mech

## GENERATING OPPOSING FORCES

A number of encounters require that gamemasters generate the enemy 'Mech forces the players will face. In such a situation, the gamemaster can use the tables provided in the character generation section, p. 68, for determining 'Mechs by House.

The next step is to determine the enemy unit's experience level and abilities. See the following table.

### ENEMY EXPERIENCE LEVEL

Enemy Rating	Players' Unit Rating			
	Green	Regular	Veteran	Elite
Green	11-26	11-22	11-15	11-13
Regular	31-52	23-42	16-31	14-23
Veteran	53-62	43-56	32-52	24-43
Elite	63-66	61-66	53-66	44-66

### Enemy Rating Base Target Rolls

Enemy Rating	Base Target Rolls	
	Piloting	Gunnery
Green	6	4
Regular	5	4
Veteran	4	3
Elite	3	2

## GENERAL ENCOUNTER DESCRIPTIONS

### New Supplies

The players' unit locates (or receives from off-planet) an unexpected source of spare parts. The unit has a choice of receiving either:

1. a large shipment of common spare parts such as armor and heat sinks
2. a shipment containing any five 'Mech components the unit desires (including replacement limbs or parts that are normally unavailable, e.g., gyros or sensor arrays)

### New Personnel

The players' unit is assigned a new recruit. Roll 2D6 to determine the new recruit's class and experience.

#### Class

- 1-2 = Tech
- 3-5 = Scout
- 6 = MechWarrior (roll below for 'Mech)

#### Personal 'Mech (MechWarrior only)

- 2-3 None
- 4-6 Light 'Mech
- 7-8 Medium 'Mech
- 9-10 Heavy 'Mech
- 11-12 Assault 'Mech

#### Experience

- 2-6 Green
- 7-9 Regular
- 10-11 Veteran
- 12 Elite

### Reinforcements

An additional 1D6/2 (rounded up) battalions of 'Mechs land on the planet. If the players' unit is currently involved in combat with enemy units, these reinforcements may be either friendly or hostile, depending on the unit's current assignment (roll 1D6):

Assault	1-3 Attacker reinforced	4-6 Defender reinforced
Raiding	1-2 Attacker reinforced	3-6 Defender reinforced
Relief	1-4 Attacker reinforced	5-6 Defender reinforced
Pacification	1 Rebels reinforced	2-6 Defender reinforced

Note that a unit on garrison duty that has become involved in an enemy raid, assault, or rebellion is treated as the defending force on the appropriate assignment line above.

### Attack by Natives

The players' unit is attacked by a force of planetary natives. Roll 2D6 to determine the nature of this attack.

2-6 = The unit is attacked while outside its 'Mechs and must face its attackers in personal combat. The enemy force consists of 2D6-2 men, each with a Build of 5 and Level 1 skill in the weapon they carry. To determine the weapon carried by each, roll 1D6 against the following table, applying the appropriate assignment modifiers (Relief -3; Garrison +1; Pacification +2).

#### ENEMY WEAPONS

1 or less	Melee weapon only
2	Bow and Sword
3	Pistol
4	Shotgun
5	Rifle
6	SMG
7	Laser Pistol
8	Laser Rifle

7-12 = The unit is attacked while inside its 'Mechs. To determine the composition of the attacking force, roll 2D6 and apply the appropriate assignment modifiers (Relief -4; Garrison +1; Pacification +2).

5 or less = Infantry only. Attackers receive 1 platoon (29 men) armed with either 1-2 SMGs (1 point of damage per successful attack), 3-4 flamers (2 points of damage per successful attack), or 5-6 portable rocket launchers (4 points per successful shot) for each 30 tons of weight in the players' force.

6-9 = Attackers receive the infantry units described above, plus 1 Hunter or Vedette tank for each 100 tons of weight in the players' force. (NOTE: Gamemasters may choose to substitute a Manticore tank for 2 Hunter/Vedettes or a Demolisher tank for 4 Hunter/Vedettes).

10 or more = Attackers receive the infantry and armored units listed above, plus one 30 to 50-ton 'Mech (design is game-master's choice) for each 150 tons of weight in the players' force.

### Attack by Raiders

An enemy raiding force strikes the planet, with a total weight of approximately 75 to 90 percent of the on-planet defending force. Gamemasters should decide a primary target for the raiders based on the resources available on the world. Units with aerospace fighter strength can opt to contest the enemy landing. Thereafter, the gamemaster should roll twice daily on the Battlefield Encounter Table for the duration of the raid (i.e., until the raiders accomplish their objective or are turned back).

### Attack by Assault Force

The planet is struck by an enemy invasion force with a 1D6 total approximate weight:

- 1 = 80% of defending force
- 2 = 100% of defending force
- 3 = 125% of defending force
- 4 = 150% of defending force
- 5 = 175% of defending force
- 6 = 200% of defending force (The strike force's objective is the complete conquest of the planet. For the duration of this campaign, the gamemaster should roll three times per day against the Battlefield Encounters Table.)



## Star League Facility

The players' unit learns of rumors of a Star League facility (storehouse or supply cache, headquarters compound, or military base) concealed somewhere on the planet's surface. The players may decide (or be ordered) to investigate this rumor and search the indicated area. (The rumor may be true or false, at the gamemaster's discretion). If the players find a facility, they will probably also have orders to inspect it to eliminate any surviving security measures they encounter and to identify materials for House salvage.

## Epidemic/Disease

The decline of medical technology since the beginning of the Succession Wars has left planetary cultures susceptible to the outbreak and spread of strange and often deadly infectious diseases (produced by the malfunction of sanitation or water purification equipment, the discharge of spores from landing spacecraft, or the use of biological warfare).

Every player character who enters an epidemic area without proper protection (heavy environment suits or the equivalent) must make a Saving Roll against his Build to avoid contracting the disease. If portions of the unit contract the disease and are not isolated, they may infect others. Player teams who become involved in such a crisis may also attempt to aid the search for an antidote to the disease, by conducting their own research, being sent on missions to obtain samples of the infectious agent, and so on.

## Natural Disaster

The planetary environment in the vicinity of the players' unit is affected by one of the following major phenomena (roll 1D6):

- 1 = Avalanche
- 2 = Flood/Tidal Wave
- 3 = Earthquake
- 4 = Solar Flare/Meteor Strike
- 5 = Fire/Forest Fire
- 6 = Dome Decompression/Mine Cave-in

At the gamemaster's discretion, the players' group may either be caught within the phenomenon or have the task of rescuing personnel or supplies jeopardized by the disaster.

## Important VIP

An important personage comes to the planet where the players are stationed or else is discovered present on a world they are attacking. If the VIP is associated with the team's current employer, they may be called upon to escort or guard the VIP (both inside and outside their 'Mechs) during that person's stay on-world. If the VIP is an enemy, the players may be sent to capture or kill him. Alternatively, gamemasters can use this result as a prelude to an armistice or peace treaty.

## Interesting NPC

The players encounter one of the following NPC groups (roll 1D6):

1-2 = Trader: A free trader and his five-man crew recently arrived on-world to sell his latest cargo. The players may choose to become customers for the trader's goods, or they may find him a useful source of information about events in the surrounding space sector.

3-4 = ComStar Personnel: A ComStar Adept arrives from the star system's local relay station, accompanied by 1D6 other Adepts or Acolytes. These may request the unit's assistance to accomplish some task or behave so secretly about their on-world mission

that the players become curious, then involved either in helping or hindering that mission.

5-6 = Dispossessed MechWarriors: The arrival of 1D6 former MechWarriors from a planetary family that has lost its 'Mechs. This encounter can be friendly or hostile, depending on the gamemaster's discretion and the player team's roleplaying adroitness. If friendly, the warriors can be a source of replacement personnel or of information about planetary happenings. If hostile, treat this encounter as an Attack by Natives (see p. 75 for a description of this event).

## Equipment Malfunctions

One of the 'Mechs in the players' unit develops an operating malfunction that hinders its effectiveness. Roll 2D6 for each 'Mech in the unit. The 'Mech of the player who rolls lowest will suffer the malfunction. To determine the nature of the malfunction, roll a 1D6:

- 1 = Gyro damaged; +2 penalty to all Piloting Skill Rolls.
- 2 = Leg actuator broken; all MP halved.
- 3 = Weapon malfunction; weapon system jams on any To-Hit Roll of 10+, and is rendered useless for the duration of that combat.
- 4 = Weapon malfunction; weapons system suffers a +1 penalty to its normal To-Hit chances.
- 5 = Jump jet malfunction; unit cannot jump (if unit is not jump-capable, treat as result 2).
- 6 = Engine malfunction; engine generates 3 additional points of heat per combat round.

## Personal Challenge

Someone challenges one of the player characters to a duel. The challenger can be a dispossessed MechWarrior, an NPC member of the players' unit, a member of a rival unit from the same House, or even an enemy MechWarrior invoking the unwritten law of challenge combat as a means of settling a dispute. The challenge can be for either (1-3) 'Mech or (4-6) personal combat, and can be either a fight to the death (1-2) or to first blood (3-6). Regardless of the precise nature of the challenge, few MechWarriors will risk damaging their reputations by refusing such a challenge.

This event takes on an even greater significance if the players are of the Clans.

## Bounty Hunter

The players' unit encounters a bounty hunter, a rogue MechWarrior who makes his living collecting the bounties that various Houses (especially House Kurita) place on verified elimination of 'Mechs from certain "troublesome" enemy units. To determine the nature of this encounter, roll 1D6:

1-2 = The bounty hunter and three associates attempt to sneak up on the unit while the players are outside their 'Mechs, seizing one or more 'Mechs by outright theft. The bounty hunter has Build 5 and a Base Target Number 4 with Small Arms and Stealth. He is armed with a laser pistol and the equipment and know-how to crack a 'Mech's internal security system in 1D6 combat rounds. Each of his associates has a Build 5 and a Base Target Number 5 with Small Arms and Stealth. They are armed with either a rifle (1-4) or laser pistol (5-6), and need 2D6 turns to crack a 'Mech's security.

3-6 = The bounty hunter and his associates attack the players from ambush while both sides are in their 'Mechs. The gamemaster determines the makeup of the bounty hunters' four-man lance, or he can roll randomly on the Medium BattleMech Table, p. 20, in the character section. The bounty hunter is an elite MechWarrior and will pilot the unit's largest 'Mech. His companions are considered veterans.

## Profit-Making Opportunity

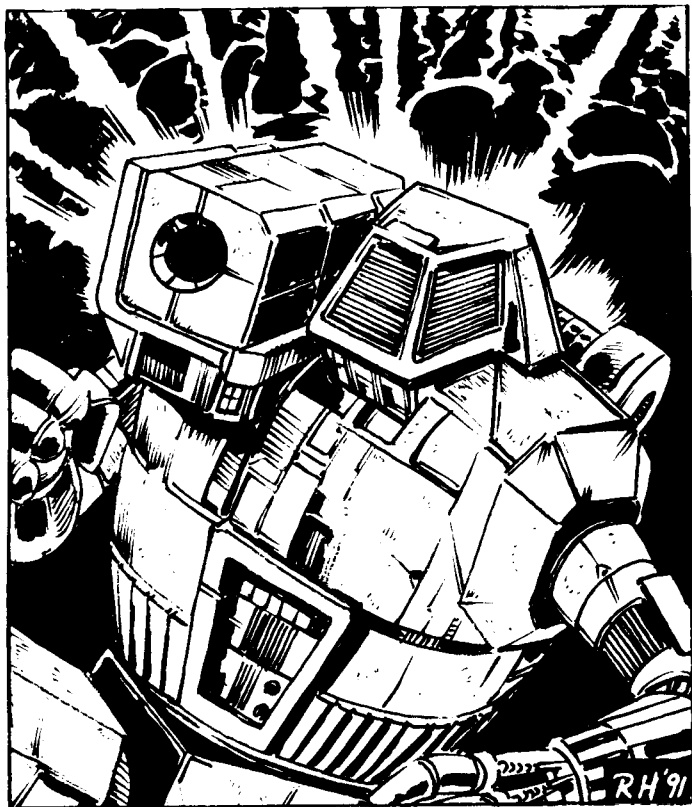
A private party (free trader, industrial complex, or even a local government official) approaches the players' team with an offer of a lucrative, short-term commission to perform a specified task such as guarding a cargo's safe overland passage, defending a major industrial facility that has been threatened with sabotage, or protecting a planetary official's life. Though accepting this offer will be financially rewarding, it could put the group in physical jeopardy. (Few private citizens would put up the money needed to hire a 'Mech unit unless they fully expected the assignment to be too dangerous for conventional forces.)

## Captive

The unit acquires an enemy captive who may possess useful information about his force's plans and activities. The captive will have 1D6 pieces of such information. Roll 1D6 again to determine the general importance of each. On a scale of 1–6, a 1 represents a fact of modest importance, on up through 6 representing a fact of great significance, e.g., the location of a major supply cache or the plans for the enemy's next offensive thrust. The players may also attempt to obtain this information from the captive through roleplaying and the use of Interrogation Skill.

## Contact with Friendly Forces

If the team has not already made contact with the garrison when they landed on-planet earlier, they now succeed in making contact to relieve the garrison. Depending on the desperateness of the situation, the planetary forces may be concentrated around a final stronghold or dispersed into guerrilla units in the planet's back-country regions. If the players' unit has already joined forces with the on-world garrison, treat this result as the appearance of a battalion of friendly 'Mechs previously believed lost in battle.



## BATTLEFIELD ENCOUNTER DESCRIPTIONS

### Enemy Patrol

The players' unit encounters an enemy patrol consisting of one light or medium lance. Both sides see the other simultaneously. Either side may fight or attempt to flee.

### Enemy Assault Force

The players' unit encounters an enemy assault consisting of (roll 1D6):

1–2 = 2 medium lances

3–4 = 1 heavy and 1 medium lance

5 = 1 company (1 heavy, 1 medium, 1 light lance)

6 = 1 company (2 heavy, 1 medium lance)

Both sides see the other simultaneously; either may choose to fight or attempt to flee.

### Ambush

The players' unit is ambushed by an enemy force of a weight roughly equal to its own. The enemy automatically wins the Initiative in the first combat round, and receives a +5 bonus to its Initiative in the second combat round. If one or more characters in the players' unit possess Tactics Skill Level 3+, he may make a skill roll against this ability. If the roll is successful, the players will detect the ambush before it is unleashed, depriving the enemy of the advantage of surprise. In either event, the players group will have to fight their attackers before they can withdraw.

### Water Source

The players come upon a water source of significant size (lake, pond, river, or stream). Roll 1D6:

1–2 = The water source is presently held by an enemy force roughly  $60 + (1D6 \times 10)\%$  of the player unit's own size. The players will have to drive off this enemy force to secure the water source for their own use.

3 = The water source is unoccupied, but its banks are guarded with static anti-'Mech defenses. If the players approach the water, turn to the Battlefield Encounter dealing with these defenses.

4–6 = The water source is totally undefended, and may be secured as a defensive position, at the players' option.

### Aerospace Fighters Attack

The players' unit is attacked by an enemy aerospace fighter (if any are present on the planet). The fighter will make five runs at the unit (either bombing or strafing) before departing. If the players' unit has one or more aerospace fighters stationed within a 15-kilometer vicinity of this assault, the players may elect to call in those fighters to intercept the enemy ship on its return flight and to engage it in battle. Otherwise, the attacked MechWarriors can do little except try to weather the worst of the assault.

### Intelligence Report

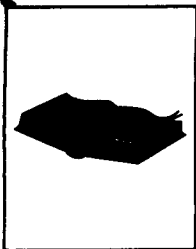
The unit receives an intelligence report from a friendly side's scout (possibly even a scout attached to the players' own unit). Roll 1D6 to determine the subject of the intelligence report:

1–2 = The location of an enemy repair depot or supply cache

3–4 = The location of a major enemy 'Mech force

5–6 = The location of a water source or well-fortified position

Roll 2D6 if the players decide to check out the report. On a result of 9 or less, the report is essentially accurate.



## Artillery Attack

The players' unit is attacked by an off-board artillery bombardment consisting of (roll 1D6):

- 1 = 1 Sniper Cannon
- 2 = 1 Long Tom III Howitzer
- 3 = 2 Sniper Cannons
- 4 = 1 Sniper, 1 Long Tom
- 5 = 2 Snipers, 1 Long Tom
- 6 = 2 Long Tom Howitzers

Each artillery piece involved has a forward observer concealed somewhere on the mapboard where the attack takes place. (The gamemaster should write down the location of these observers on a sheet of paper before the encounter begins.) The bombardment continues until the players either withdraw completely from the observers' line-of-sight (a very easy or a very difficult task, depending on prevailing terrain), or disable the forward observers.

## Equipment Malfunction

See General Encounters Description.

## Attack by Natives

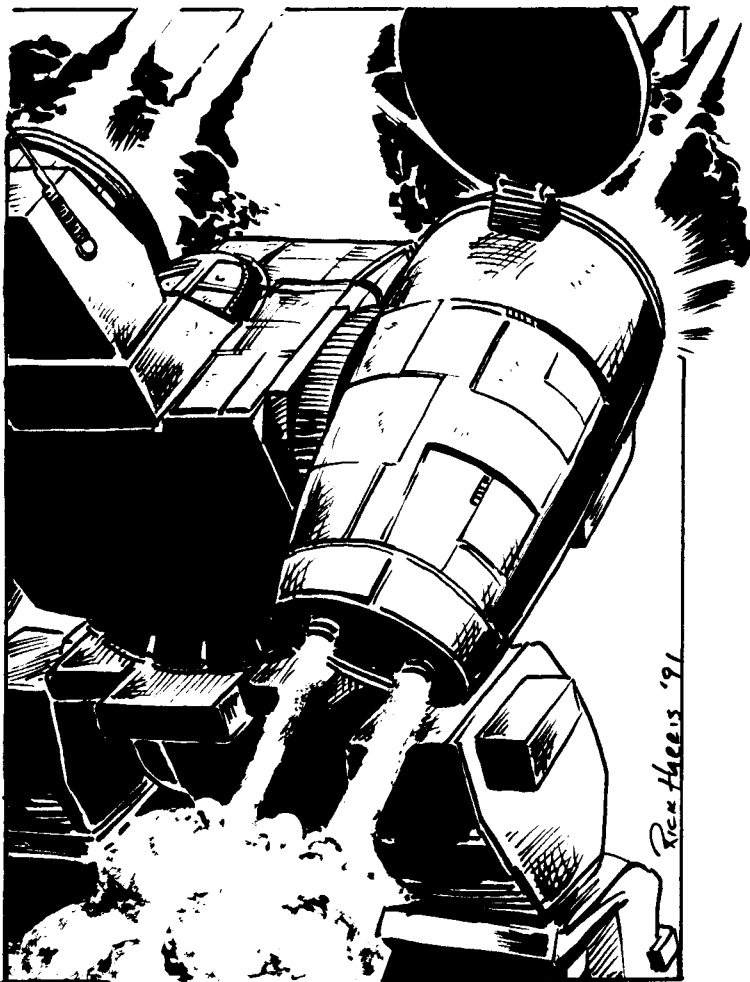
See General Encounters Description.

## Interesting NPC

See General Encounters Description.

## Natural Disaster

See General Encounters Description.



## Bad Weather

The region surrounding the players' unit experiences a 1D6 x 1D6-hour period of extremely bad weather (snow, heavy rain, fog, and so on) that diminishes 'Mech effectiveness. For the duration of this period, the movement of all 'Mechs is slowed by 1 MP/turn, with a +2 penalty to all To-Hit Rolls made at ranges of more than two hexes. For aerospace fighters, roll 2D6. On a result of 2-7, the fighter may not operate until the weather clears.

## Assault Mission

Two lances from the players' unit (or the entire unit, if smaller) are ordered to assault and secure a particular objective such as a water source, strategic geographical location, a factory, mine, industriplex, or an enemy supply cache or fortification. Roll 1D6 to determine the strength of the enemy forces defending this objective:

1 = If it is a geographical area, the target is undefended. If it is any other site, the area is defended only by infantry (1 platoon for every 50 tons in players' force) and conventional armor (1 Hunter tank for each 100 tons in the players' force).

2-3 = The area is defended by the conventional forces described above, plus 1 medium lance.

4 = The area is defended by 2 lances of 'Mechs whose total weight is roughly 60 to 80 percent of the players' own unit weight.

5 = The area is defended by 2 lances of 'Mechs whose total weight is roughly 100 to 120 percent of the players' unit weight.

6 = The area is defended by 2 or more lances of 'Mechs whose total weight is roughly 140 + (1D6 x 10) percent of the players' unit weight.

## Recon Mission

One lance of the players' unit is sent to scout out a particular geographical grid. Roll 1D6 to determine what the players find while investigating this area:

1-2 = Nothing unusual

3 = An artillery emplacement, defended by 2 jeeps with SRM-2s and a Hunter tank. If the unit attacks the emplacement successfully, roll 2D6. On a result of 2-8, the gun (1-4 Sniper, 5-6 Long Tom III) is still functional.

4 = A water source. If investigated, see the Water Source Encounter, p.77.

5 = An enemy patrol (see Enemy Patrol Encounter, p. 77)

6 = An enemy assault force (see Enemy Assault Force Encounter, p. 77)

## Static Anti-'Mech Defenses

The players' unit travels through an area mined with vibrabombs. The map area affected is mined with 2D6 vibrabombs. To determine the location and weight setting of each bomb, proceed as follows.

### Location

To determine the row of the map where each bomb is located, first roll 1D6 to determine the general map segment (1-2 = Row 01-06; 3-4 = Row 07-12; 5-6 = Row 13-18). Then roll a second die to determine the precise row within that segment. Repeat the same two-step procedure to determine the column used.

### Force Setting

Each bomb has a force setting of 20 + (2D6 X 5) tons, and will explode when that force is exerted on the bomb site.

Characters with a Tactics Skill Level 4+ may make a Saving Roll versus their score. If successful, they will identify the minefield's presence in time for the unit to safely skirt its boundaries.

## MAJOR EVENTS

Gamemasters who need assistance in creating initial assignments for their players or in fleshing out the ongoing history of their campaign universe can use the Major Events Table to "kick-start" their imaginations. The table lists eleven types of major events that commonly occur on the worlds of the Inner Sphere and that might become adventure opportunities for a 'Mech unit.

To determine how many Major Events occur in a given month, roll 2D6:

- 2-5 = 1 event
- 6-8 = 2 events
- 9-10 = 3 events
- 11 = 4 events
- 12 = 4 events + roll again

For each event indicated, roll 2D6 and read the die results consecutively to produce a number between 11 and 66. Then consult the appropriate entry on the Major Events Table below.

<b>MAJOR EVENTS TABLE</b>	
<b>Die Roll</b>	<b>Event</b>
11-14	Internal Strife
15-16	Armistice
21-22	Change of Allegiance
23-25	ComStar Activity
26-32	Periphery Contact
33-41	Major Campaign
42-43	Technological Advance
44-46	Star League Facility
51-56	Fall of Major World
61-63	Death of Major Personage
64-66	Change in House-House Relationship

The events indicated by the table results will occur **THREE MONTHS AFTER** the roll is made. Thus, a gamemaster starting a campaign in January 3052 would make rolls on the table prior to starting the campaign to determine the events occurring in January through March, and then roll on the Major Events Table during January to determine the events occurring in April of that year.

Because the gamemaster is always determining events well in advance of their occurrence, he can use his foreknowledge to generate encounters, rumors, and clues that will naturally build up to the major event. Similarly, he can create adventure assignments that put the players' unit smack in the middle of things when these events break. For example, if one of the Major Events rolled for April is Regimental Change of Alliance, the gamemaster should intersperse the time period between January and March with situations hinting that something is in the air. Some examples might be late delivery of pay or of parts shipments promised by the unit's present employer, an overheard argument between unit and House officials, a secret meeting between the unit commander and a mysterious stranger, and so on.

As the months go by, and more and more events are added to the calendar, the gamemaster can link multiple events together to form a major plotline. Thus, January's roll of a Major Campaign

starting in April can be the source of March's Fall of Major World result to occur in June. This, in turn, would cause May's Internal Dissension result to take place in the losing House's Royal Court in August.

Similarly, gamemasters can treat multiple die rolls yielding the same event result as an indication that the event is of truly great import. For example, three to four consecutive months of Technological Advance results might signal the reopening of a major 'Mech production facility or even the recovery of some aspect of JumpShip manufacturing technology. Or, the gamemaster could treat a recurring indication of ComStar Activity as a full Communications Interdiction against one of the Successor States. Following are some possible interpretations and uses for each Major Event result.

When using these tables, the gamemaster can determine which powers are involved in the events generated by using the Unit Affiliation Tables in the Unit Creation section, p. 68. Once the gamemaster has generated one of the factions involved, he can either generate the other (or others) randomly, or determine the most logical choice by examining the material in the **BattleTech Universe** section.

### **Internal Strife**

Depending on the gamemaster's preference, internal strife can take two very different forms. This event usually refers to internal discontent with House politics, expressing itself as planetary revolt, an assassination attempt against a duke or House leader, or as a full-scale power bid by a disaffected ruling House member. Alternatively, gamemasters can interpret this event as an outbreak of dissent within the players' own 'Mech unit, which could result in a mutiny or a permanent split-up of the unit.

### **Armistice**

Peace is temporarily declared along one of the contested borders, either between opposing houses or opposing Clans. This armistice may cover an area as large as the entire border or as small as a single planet, and can be for either a set or indefinite time limit. Gamemasters should note that although few, if any, parties will violate an armistice agreement by initiating a full-scale assault in the armistice zone, the agreement will normally not stop the opponents from continuing raiding activities or military buildups in the affected area.

### **Change of Allegiance**

The players' 'Mech unit changes allegiance from one Successor House to another (or in some cases, from the existing House regime to a rebel faction). As a result of this change of loyalties, player characters may often gain or lose large amounts of land, spare parts, or cold, hard cash.

### **ComStar Activity**

This event indicates a significant development affecting the relationship between ComStar and one of the Houses or Clans, or between the two factions of ComStar itself. Possible events might include the opening or closing of a major relay station, a ComStar request for 'Mech-unit volunteers to assist its Explorer Corps teams on a mission, or a call for aid from a relay station attacked or struck by a natural disaster. If this result is rolled more than two months in a row, treat the event as a full-scale Communications Interdiction, most likely as punishment for some gross transgression against the facilities under ComStar's sacred trust. (See **ComStar**, p. 141.)

## Periphery Contact

Interaction between the players' unit (or their current employer) and inhabitants of the Periphery occurs. Possible contacts are many

and varied, and include the arrival of free traders from the Periphery, House-sponsored exploratory missions to Periphery worlds believed to be uninhabited, raids on House worlds by Bandit King 'Mech forces (or vice versa), or even the establishment of long-term relationships between two Periphery states.

## Major Campaign

One or more factions begins a major offensive against its bordering neighbors. Such a campaign can consist of either a general assault on a number of enemy-held worlds along a given front, seeking to make inroads wherever the enemy is weakest, or a series of "stepping-stone" invasions aimed at the ultimate conquest of a single key objective. In either case, the campaign should involve a minimum of 10 to 20 'Mech regiments per side, and occupy the primary attentions of all the forces stationed on either side of the campaign front.

## Technological Advance

Researchers from one or more of the Inner Sphere powers succeed in recovering some bit of lost Star League technology, or they uncover an entirely new product or process. This advance is most likely to be related to military matters, and especially to technologies dealing with 'Mech, aerospace fighter, or JumpShip construction or repair.

At the gamemaster's discretion, the advance may apply to an entirely different aspect of society (medicine, communications, agriculture, and so on). If this result recurs several times within a period of a few months, the gamemaster should increase the significance of the discovery.

The most logical source of such major research developments is the NAIS in New Avalon or the copycat research institutes in House Kurita and House Marik. Of course, no matter where the initial discovery is made, the other Houses will soon have their own spies on the scene to try and gain the secret for themselves.

## Star League Facility

A major Star League facility (storehouse, administrative headquarters, military or naval base) is discovered in the Inner Sphere. As in the case of a Technological Advance, rumors of the discovery will travel quickly, drawing spies or military units to investigate or attempt to seize the facility.

## Fall of Major World

A planet with valuable resources or strategic significance changes hands. Such an event will usually have repercussions (retaliatory raids, unit transfers, and further assaults) up and down both sides of the border where the change has occurred.

## Death of Major Personage

An important figure dies. The death can occur as a result of combat, illness, or assassination. The possible repercussions can be as simple as the transfer of power to a newly promoted military leader or noble, or as disruptive as a planetary rebellion or full-scale civil war. At the gamemaster's discretion, this event can be treated instead as an attempt on a major personage's life, with the player characters having the opportunity to either perform or prevent the attempt.

## Change in House-House Relations

A significant change in the relationship between two or more Successor State Houses occurs. This event can be either a sweeping change such as the formation or breaking of an alliance or a subtle incident whose public effect is small but that will subtly improve or erode an existing relationship over the course of time.





# EQUIPMENT

Humans are, almost by definition, tool-using creatures. In order to accomplish the tasks they encounter, **MechWarrior** players will need certain equipment. A wide variety of equipment is available to characters in the 31st century. Of course, availability depends upon locale. Much of the equipment described in this chapter involves Star League-era technology that the Inner Sphere has lost or is only now regaining. The discovery of Star League information caches has yielded some of the recovered technology. Some has been stolen from the Clans, who have not only maintained Star League-era technology, but have even sometimes surpassed it. What becomes available to the player characters depends on their affiliations and what they can scavenge from their opponents.

## EQUIPMENT RATINGS

Each item in this chapter is rated in two ways. First, it is assigned a Tech Level of 1 through 4 to indicate its technical complexity. Each item is also classified according to its availability.

The Tech levels are:

1 = Low Tech. Requires normal industry; pre-20th century technology.

2 = Medium Tech. Requires normal industry; 20th-century or later technology. Still understood by Inner Sphere.

3 = High Tech. Requires heavy industry; Terran Hegemony to Star League period. Still understood by Inner Sphere.

4 = Advanced High Tech. Star League technology that is presently beyond the knowledge of the Inner Sphere to replicate, but still available to the Clans (and sometimes to ComStar). Within the Inner Sphere, such items still exist and are in use, but they can only be maintained and repaired, not produced from scratch. Such items are known as black boxes, which refers to equipment that will do what an operator tells it even if that operator has no idea how it works.

The availability ratings are:

A = Common to all forces.

B = Uncommon to Successor States; common to ComStar and Clans.

C = Rare to Successor States; uncommon to ComStar; and common to Clans.

D = Virtually unavailable in Successor States; rare to ComStar; and unusual to Clans.

Of course, what is available to a military unit might not be available to all player characters. It would be unusual for a scout to own a particle projection cannon (PPC), for example. The gamemaster has the final say-so on what equipment particular characters may have.

## POWER PACKS

Power packs are referred to in some of the following equipment descriptions. Power packs provide 20 energy charges. Various powered weapons require a specific number of charges to operate them, as follows:

Blazer	10 charges/shot
Laser Pistol	2 charges/shot
Laser Rifle	5 charges/shot
Sonic Stunner	4 charges/shot
Vibroblade or Neural Whip	1 charge/use (up to 5 min.)

Weapons requiring multiple charges per use are equipped with receptacles for more than one power pack. A laser rifle or sonic stunner normally carries two and a blazer carries four.

Military power packs, carried as backpacks and weighing 4 to 6 kilograms, have ten times the energy capacity of a normal power pack (200 charges).

## MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Medical technology reached its height about two centuries before the era of the Succession Wars, increasing the average life span of individuals to nearly 115 years through advanced diagnostic, preventive, and surgical techniques. In addition, techniques such as myomer implantation gained widespread use, further extending the capabilities of the human body.

### LASER SCALPEL (2/A)

The laser scalpel weighs 100 grams and is powered by a tiny rechargeable battery. Although a powerful but easy-to-use tool, the scalpel is inefficient as a weapon, due to its rapid rate of energy drain and extremely limited range. Cost: 50 C-Bills.

### MEDIPACK (4/C)

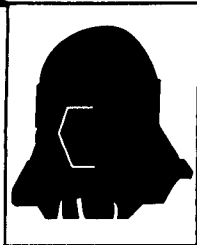
The Medipack is a thin box, contoured to attach to a MechWarrior's thigh, either strapped to the leg or hooked to a suit. The device was designed for use by the personal guard of Takiro Kurita, though medipacks have become common among many other House and Regular Army units.

The device monitors the wearer's vital statistics via several sensors attached to the wearer's skin. The unit determines if the wearer needs pain-killers or stimulants, and administers them as necessary.

The medipack weighs only 400 grams and has a built-in power supply that keeps it operating for up to 48 hours without need for recharging. The unit recharges by plugging into a power line in the BattleMech's cockpit, but medications must be replaced at least once a month even if none of the twelve doses were used.

When the medipack is set to keep the wearer conscious, it uses one dose of stimulant each time the wearer fails any Consciousness Saving Roll. Each time this occurs, the player takes 1D6 additional damage, which will affect any future Consciousness Rolls. The unit will not inject a dose if the character has 6 or fewer boxes on his Condition Monitor. However, the player may use a Simple Action to override it and force the injection if he so desires. Cost: 400 C-Bills.

Note: This item (or one very much like it) is standard-issue to all Clan Elementals.



## MEDKIT (12/A)

It is not always possible to get prompt medical attention for the many types of possible battlefield injuries. The medkit contains bandages, splints, gauze, antiseptic, and other first aid supplies. At least one 'Mech per lance/Star will carry a medkit. In competent hands, use of this kit ensures Level 2 medical care (see **Damage and Healing**). Using a personal medkit, one trooper can perform minor first aid such as bandaging a wound or applying a splint to an injured comrade. A personal medkit gives the user a -2 modifier to his target number for performing Medtech only. The kit may be used only once, after which it must be replaced. Weight: 250 grams, Cost: 10 C-Bills.

## PRESERVING SLEEVE (3/A)

The preserving sleeve is secured around a damaged limb, then adjusted to apply pressure and thus to control bleeding. The sleeve can also be adjusted to apply heat or cold, and will keep a wound clean and free from infection for up to 36 hours. While encased in a preserving sleeve, the injured limb is effectively immobilized. The preserving sleeve weighs 500 grams. Cost: 25 C-Bills.



## TECH GEAR

Within the Inner Sphere, two centuries of decline in technology have done much to transform the skill of repairing and refurbishing equipment from a science back to an art. Knowledge about specific kinds of equipment and how to repair it is more often handed down from master to apprentice than from teacher to student. Occasionally, the "mysteries" are shrouded in ritual, from the harmless (an experienced Tech will always wear the same pair of threadbare coveralls) to the absurd (before attempting to fix an HPG, a ComStar Tech must "desanctify" the equipment by reading a litany from an ancient manual). Further, because Techs often work with tools developed two to three centuries ago, they revere the tools themselves out of all proportion to their true function. It is as if the Tech believed the tools accomplished the task rather than the wielder.

## BASIC TOOL KIT (1/A)

This package contains a variety of essential hand tools such as hammers, wrenches, screwdrivers, and saws. A tool belt with enough hooks, fittings, and compartments for most of the tools in the kit is included. Weight: 15 kilograms. Cost: 250 C-Bills.

## DELUXE TOOL KIT (3/A)

This package contains more compact, durable, and versatile versions of everything in the Basic Tool Kit, as well as more advanced tools such as laser-cutters. Weight: 10 kilograms. Cost: 500 C-Bills.

## RECHARGERS

Rechargers are used to charge up expended power cells such as the batteries for lasers or communicators. The three types of rechargers are kinetic, fossil fuel, and solar.

Kinetic rechargers are the most primitive and most common. They use some kind of physical movement (a waterfall, for example) to create energy. Another common version is attached to a bicycle.

Fossil-fuel rechargers are also common. Fossil-fuel rechargers use a generator to convert energy released from fuel (usually gasoline or another hydrocarbon fuel) into electricity. These types of rechargers are most commonly found on worlds possessing fossil fuels.

Solar rechargers are an effective way to repower a battery, as they require only ultraviolet radiation to operate. Although rare, solar rechargers are still available.

Rechargers generate power at a rate equal to their recharge rating once every hour. For example, a solar recharger generates 45 points of power every hour, with an equivalent amount of fractional power for each fraction of an hour. Rechargers may be used as batteries.

### Kinetic Recharger (2/A)

Cost: 10 C-Bills

Recharge Rating: 5 Power Points (see Power Packs, p. 81)

### Fossil Fuel Recharger (2/A)

Cost: 50 C-Bills

Recharge Rating: 15 Power Points

### Solar Recharger (2/B)

Cost: 200 C-Bills

Recharge Rating: 45 Power Points

## REPAIR KITS

Each of these kits contain all of the basic tools and most of the parts needed to perform basic repair tasks relevant to each of the Technician skills. Extensive repairs usually require additional parts not found in the repair kit. These kits require restocking every few months at a cost of roughly one-tenth the cost of the whole kit. These kits are too large to be worn on a tool belt, but are portable enough to be carried in a tool box.

### Aerospace Repair Kit (2/A)

Cost: 2,500 C-Bills

### BattleMech Repair Kit (3/A)

Cost: 3,000 C-Bills

### Electronics Repair Kit (2/A)

Cost: 2,000 C-Bills

### Mechanic Repair Kit (2/A)

Cost: 1,000 C-Bills

### Weapon Repair Kit (2/A)

Cost: 1,500 C-Bills

## SCANALYZER (4/C)

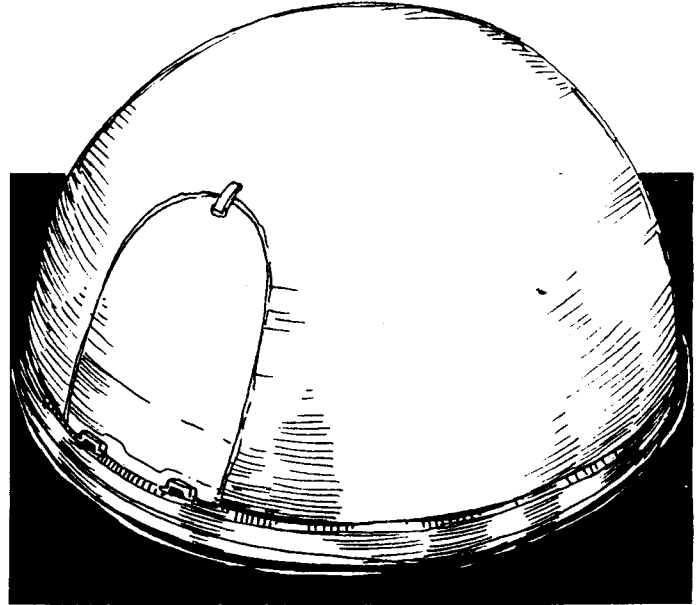
The scanalyzer accepts a sample of any organic or inorganic substance fed into it, then produces a list of the substance's elemental or molecular components, as well as a precise indication of the substance's flash and melting points, conductivity, and radioactivity.

The scanalyzer is a powerful analytical tool, but it is useful only to those who have the Engineering, Medical, or Computer Skill to interpret its output. The device is approximately 80 centimeters by 50 centimeters, and weighs 3 kilograms. Cost: 5,000 C-Bills.

## LIFE SUPPORT

Over the centuries of interstellar expansion, humans have encountered a wide variety of environments, climactic conditions, and atmospheric situations. Only a small percentage of discovered worlds are as accommodating to human life as Terra; therefore, many kinds of life-support devices have been developed to deal with unusual, or even hostile, biospheres. MechWarriors are generally unaffected by environments, as their 'Mechs are proof against extremes of temperature and atmosphere. A 'Mech unit, however, does need ready access to several types of life-support equipment for personnel operating outside of a BattleMech.

Under most conditions, player characters need nothing more than a field kit to survive in the wilderness. Extreme weather or environmental conditions, however, can damage and eventually kill an unprotected character. If the characters are operating unprotected in such conditions, the gamemaster should roll 1-4 D6 (depending on the severity of the weather) at the end of each day. The result is the amount of damage each character takes from the weather. This damage can heal normally.



## ENVIRONMENTAL BUBBLE (3/B)

Made of durable plastics and self-sealing ceramic-plastic polymer, an environmental bubble tent is a temporary shelter issued to field troops operating in the harshest weather conditions (deserts, arctic areas, thin air, and so on). These tents do not provide protection from vacuum, however. An environmental bubble can provide shelter and other requirements such as warmth, cooling, and sanitary facilities for a 24-hour period before needing to be recharged.

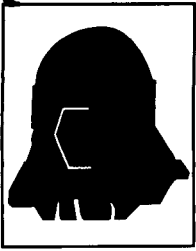
An environmental bubble provides limited protection from weapon attacks. The bubble reduces by 4 points any slug-thrower, laser, or other similar weapon damage to occupants. Flamer attacks may be made only on the bubble itself. Bubbles can sustain 10 points of damage per occupant. In order to return fire, occupants must either leave the bubble or destroy enough of it so that their fire can get through. For every 10 points of damage that a bubble sustains, there is a flat 9+ Target Number that the whole tent will collapse and become useless.

The maximum number of occupants per tent is twelve. The size of the bubble is equal to the maximum number of occupants multiplied by 7 cubic feet.

Cost: 200 C-Bills per occupant

Repair cost per Damage Point: 5 C-Bills

Repair cost per 10 Damage Points: 15 C-Bills



## **FILTER MASK/ RESPIRATOR (1/A)**

A filter mask is designed to remove trace impurities from breathable atmospheres. The atmosphere itself need not be contaminated or tainted per se. For example, a filter mask would be of use on a battlefield whose atmosphere was filled with smoke and debris from a previous combat.

A respirator permits breathing when NO breathable, uncontaminated atmosphere is available. A filter mask would be useless in a vacuum situation, for example, but a respirator would permit a user to breathe normally. The same would be true for underwater or high-altitude situations.

Both filter masks and respirators have limitations. The filter portion of a filter mask is disposable and must be replaced once per 24 hours in extremely contaminated environments, and once per 48 to 72 hours in more benign environments (gamemaster's discretion). The breathing tanks for the respirator, generally worn strapped on the back, provide only four hours of breathable air before they are empty. The mask weighs 300 to 500 grams, and the breathing tank 1 to 3 kilograms.

Filter Mask: Cost – 2 C-Bills

Respirator: Cost – 50 C-Bills

## **HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT SUIT (3/B)**

The hostile environment suit weighs 20 kilograms. It is similar to diving suits used in deep-ocean exploration, and is intended for use in the most hostile environments where temperatures or pressures vary widely from Terra-normal. A hostile environment suit is partially powered by actuators and myomers similar to but smaller than those on a BattleMech. Tools are often built into the suit's extremities. The hostile environment suit can easily withstand normal slug-throwing and melee weapons, and will modify laser attacks in the same way as an Armored Bodysuit (see p. 89).  
Cost: 10,000 C-Bills.

## **LIGHT ENVIRONMENT SUIT (2/A)**

This suit weighs 1 kilogram, but replaces the wearer's normal outer clothing. It is form-fitting and equipped with a helmet or filter mask/respirator combination. The suit is made of tear-resistant fabric, designed for use in potentially hostile environments that are within Terra-normal ranges of temperature and pressure. The suit would be sufficient for conducting operations on Mars, for example, but would be totally unsuitable for the surfaces of Venus or Jupiter.  
Cost: 200 C-Bills.

## **PERSONAL ENVIRON BAG (3/C)**

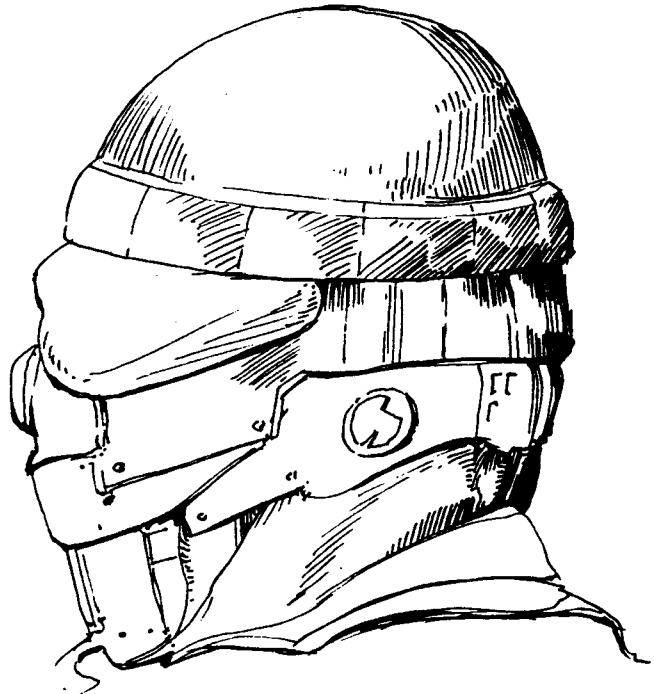
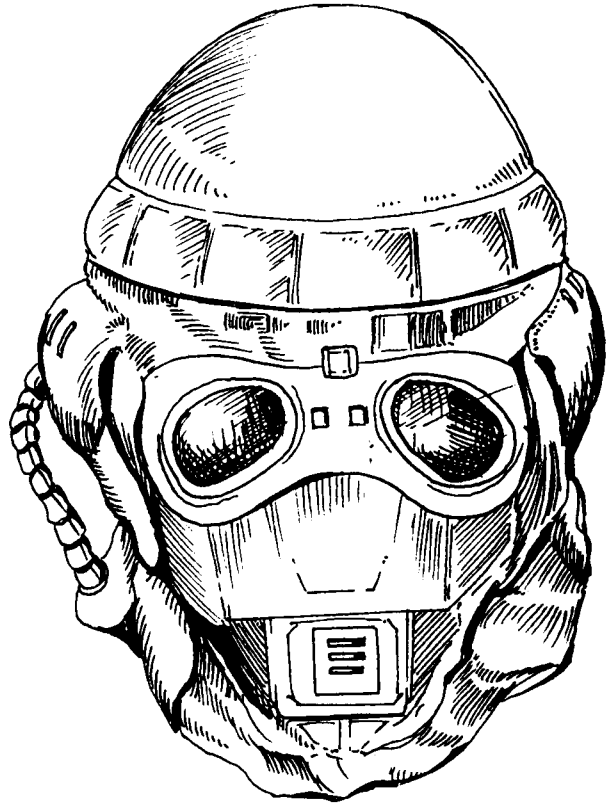
The personal environ bag, or "body bag" as it is popularly called, is a one-man environmental shelter similar to the environmental bubble tent. It is normally issued as part of a personal survival kit. The PEB, or body bag, is much more cramped than a bubble; a character in a PEB may not take any action. A character can survive as long as the bag is charged and he has enough food. The body bag must be recharged every 24 hours.

Cost: 300 C-Bills

Recharge Cost: 2 C-Bills

Total Damage Points: 10

Repair Cost Per Damage Point: 2.5 C-Bills



## ESPIONAGE/SURVEILLANCE GEAR

Security is a major priority at all levels of society. Computers and data storage facilities require informational security. Commercial facilities need security against theft of goods or services (or secrets). Finally, nations and solar systems must have internal security to protect against intruders. Both private citizens and Mech units need security, too, as they are threatened by a wide range of predators, from occasional thieves to pirates and Bandit Kings.

Security systems can be divided according to the object(s) or area(s) they are designed to protect. Although it is impossible to provide a complete list of all the myriad locks, intrusion/alert devices, and policing systems used in the 31st century, a small sampling follows.

### COMBINATION SNEAK SUITS

Though none of the sneak suits may be worn together, it is possible to purchase combination suits. Combination suits are even more expensive and difficult to find than regular sneak suits. Availability and costs are given below for each suit combination.

#### IR Sneak and Camo Sneak (3/C)

Cost: 21,000 C-Bills  
Recharge Time: Every 5 hours  
Recharge Cost: 30 C-Bills

#### IR Sneak and ECM Sneak (3/C)

Cost: 21,000 C-Bills  
Recharge Time: Every 5 hours  
Recharge Cost: 30 C-Bills

#### Camo Sneak and ECM Sneak (3/C)

Cost: 21,000 C-Bills  
Recharge Time: Every 5 hours  
Recharge Cost: 40 C-Bills

#### IR Sneak, Camo Sneak, and ECM Sneak (3/D)

Cost: 28,000 C-Bills  
Recharge Time: Every 5 hours  
Recharge Cost: 55 C-Bills

### DISGUISE KIT (3/B)

Disguise kits include cheek pads, colored contacts, hair dyes and pieces, stomach padding, shoe lifts, fake mustache, rubber nose, glasses, and other similar items needed to change an individual's basic appearance. Use of this kit gives a -2 modifier to the Disguise Skill Roll Target. Weight: 3 kilograms. Cost: 1,000 C-Bills.

### ELECTRONIC CAMOUFLAGE (3/B)

The electronic camouflage suit (also called a camo sneak) is used primarily by scouts wishing to avoid visual detection by people or electronic devices such as TV cameras or rangefinder binoculars. Sensors mounted in the suit detect the color and amount of light in the immediate area. A built-in computer analyzes the sensor's data and changes the suit's color to mimic the surrounding environment.

Cost: 7,000 C-Bills  
Recharge Time: 5 hours  
Recharge Cost: 20 C-Bills

The electronic camouflage suit reduces the wearer's vulnerability to visual detection. The suit will not work unless the wearer is in or in front of some type of covering terrain. For example, the wearer would be camouflaged if he were in a forest or standing in front of a wall, but would not be hidden if standing in an open field (the horizon is beyond the range of the suit's sensors). Of course, the wearer would be hidden in an open field if he were lying down. To detect someone in an electronic camouflage suit at long range, the scanner must make a roll against his Perception Skill, with a modifier of +4. At medium range, the modifier is +3, and at close range, the modifier is +2. Failure indicates that the scanner has not detected the wearer of the electronic camouflage suit.

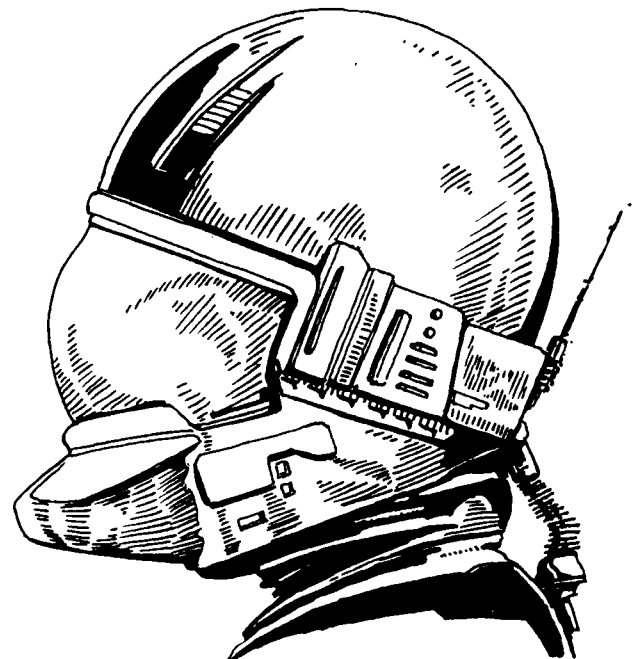
If a character is using Stealth Skill while wearing an electronic camouflage suit, he subtracts 3 from his skill roll target.

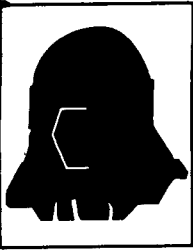
### ELECTRONIC COUNTERMEASURE SUIT (3/B)

The electronic countermeasure suit (also called an ECM sneak) is used primarily by scouts wishing to avoid electronic detectors such as radar sensors. The suit is made of a lightweight ceramic mesh. It contains thousands of electronic detection/suppression devices that can detect incoming electronic-detection signals. A computer built into the suit then decides what type of outgoing signal will fool the detecting sensor. It then transmits this signal, suppressing the sensor. The left hand of the ECM sneak vibrates slightly when the suit is jamming.

Cost: 7,000 C-Bills  
Recharge Time: 5 hrs  
Recharge Cost: 20 C-Bills

The ECM suit helps hide the wearer from all types of electronic sensors that emit and detect signals. The ECM suit will not stop electronic eyes, pressure plates, or other types of physical sensors. A character wearing an ECM suit will show up on TV cameras or rangefinder binoculars. To detect someone in an ECM suit, the radar operator adds 8 to his LRN Saving Roll. If the roll fails, the sensor will not detect the suit's wearer.





## ELECTRONIC SUITS

Fighting forces have used camouflage as a tactic for thousands of years. With the development of such practical (and cheap) electronic sensors as infrared detectors or portable radar units, however, conventional camouflage became almost useless. No matter how well or how much the human eye could see, the electronic eye could see it better.

Sneak suits, as their users refer to them, brought back the idea of camouflage. While wearing such a suit, a person could walk by detectors virtually unnoticed, permitting scouts and spies to sneak unseen into an enemy encampment. Unfortunately (or maybe fortunately), the cost and availability of the suits were prohibitive enough to limit sales.

In 3025, electronic suits have become even more difficult to find and to repair. Although the technology to construct sneak suits is still around, the parts and manufacturing equipment are becoming ever more scarce.

### Game Notes

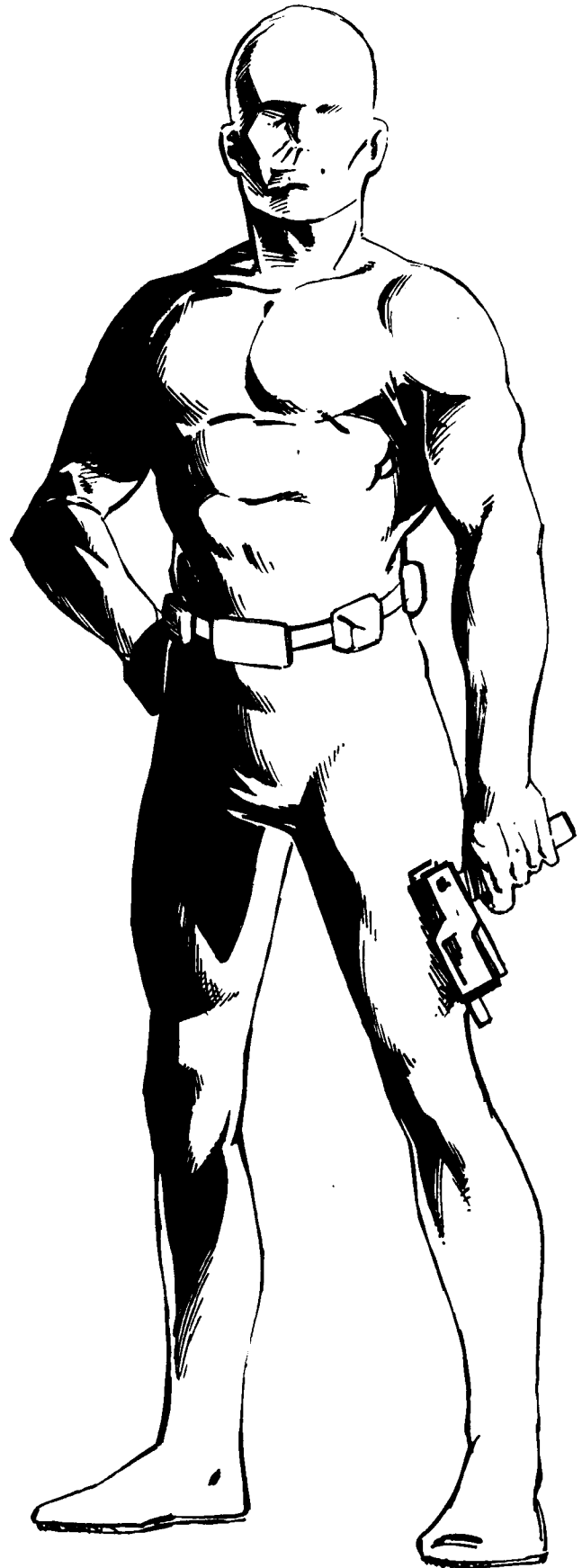
An electronic suit totally covers the wearer's body, including the face and head. A person wearing one can operate under the same conditions as someone wearing a light environmental suit (see p. 84).

Because the suit is a full-body covering and disguise, the user may wear only a limited amount of additional equipment. He may carry up to 3 additional kilograms, but no item may be larger than a rifle. The suit will not function if the user carries any other weight or bulk.

An electronic suit reduces by one-quarter all damage taken from slug-throwing weapons and bows, and stops 2 points of damage from energy weapons. All electronic suits have a total damage-absorbing capacity of 15 points over the wearer's entire body. They cannot be worn with other protective garments such as flak vests.

When a suit becomes damaged, it may no longer function. For the first 5 points of damage, the player must make a Saving Roll of 10 or higher to see if the suit has shut down. For every additional 5 points of damage thereafter, he subtracts 1 from the Saving Roll Target. The suit automatically stops functioning when the total damage equals 25 points.

The cost to repair a damaged suit is 15 C-Bills per damage point sustained, plus a surcharge of 250 C-Bills for every 5 points of damage sustained. For example, 4 points of damage would cost 60 C-Bills to repair. However, 5 points of damage would cost 75 C-Bills plus a surcharge of 250 C-Bills, for a total of 325 C-Bills. Once a suit loses all its damage points, it may not be repaired.



Electronics suits may not be worn in combination with any other sneak suit. Suits may be turned off at any time.

Camouflage and IR suppression suits are used to counteract some form of direct observation and to modify the observer's LRN Saving Roll. The observer has additional modifiers for the range and type equipment that he is using. These modifiers are given in the table below.

Type	Range (In Meters)		
	Close	Medium	Long
LRN Saving Roll Modifier	0	+2	+4
Naked eye	0-25	26-40	41+
Binoculars	0-40	41-75	76+
Rangefinding Binoculars	0-90	91-225	226+
I/R Scanner	0-30	31-75	76+

## FORGERY KIT (3/C)

Forgery kits contain small photo-reproduction devices, inks, papers, magnetic-strip generators, retinal-pattern producers, and other equipment necessary to forge passes and identification papers well enough to pass both human and computer scrutiny. Use of this kit gives a -2 modifier to the Forgery Skill Roll Target. Use or possession of this kit is illegal in most areas. Weight: 3 kilograms. Cost: 1,000 C-Bills.

## GRIPPER GLOVES (4/D)

Gripper gloves came from the laboratories of BabTech on the planet Clinton in the Lyran Commonwealth. These gloves are uncommonly thick, nearly 1 centimeter overall. They have large gauntlets that reach halfway up the wearer's forearms. Each glove has its own power supply providing several hours of continuous use.

Each glove can generate a hypersonic field in the fingertips. This field has a very low frequency and gauges itself automatically to the surface against which it is applied. When pressed against virtually any surface, the gloves adhere to the surface, supporting 150 kilograms each. A control built into the thumb of the glove deactivates the field.

The gloves are manufactured with myomer bundling and give the user incredible strength in the fingers and hands. The wearer can crush small rocks, force doors open, and so on. The gloves weigh almost 1 kilogram and are somewhat bulky, but many consider this a small price to pay for their capabilities. Though expensive and rare, the gloves are valued by thieves, who can use them to scale sheer surfaces.

Used in assaults and especially in city warfare, the gloves have proven invaluable, when available. Their only weakness is the amount of training required to use weapons or tools without crushing them. True experts can catch a bottle tossed to them without cracking or breaking it.

Characters wearing the gripper gloves have their REF Score reduced by 1. However, the amount of Unarmed Combat damage that a character does increases by 2. Characters may also use the gripper gloves to scale a vertical surface. Cost: 1,000 C-Bills.

## I/R SCANNER (3/A)

This device measures the intensity of infrared (heat) radiation at a range of up to 5 kilometers. The scanner can be adjusted, giving finer discernment in inverse proportion to the maximum range-setting. For instance, at a range of 10 to 20 meters, the scanner can recognize "heat shadows" as small as a rodent's. At a range of several hundred meters, the I/R scanner would detect a man-sized target (or larger), while at 2 to 3 kilometers, it detects only targets of 'Mech-size or larger. The scanner cannot identify the characteristics of the target, merely its approximate heat output. If the scanner is built into binoculars (see **Rangefinder Binoculars**), it may be possible to discern an "outline" of the target, but this would probably be of use only to the expertly trained eye. Cost: 100 C-Bills.

## INFRARED SUPPRESSION SUIT (3/B)

The infrared suppression suit (also called an IR sneak) is used primarily by scouts wishing to avoid infrared scanners and detectors. The suit is made of heat-absorbing materials, with environmental sensors (mostly heat detectors) inserted at strategic locations throughout. The suit's detectors register temperature in the area around the wearer. In a relatively cold zone, the suit matches the ambient temperature, releasing the wearer's body heat slowly to maintain invisibility. In a relatively warm zone, the suit absorbs the environmental heat and the wearer's own body heat to match the ambient temperature.

The IR suppression suit reduces the chance of detection by I/R scanners or rangefinder binoculars. To detect someone in an IR suppression suit at long range, the scanner must make a roll against his Perception Skill, with a modifier of +4. At medium range, the target modifier is +3, while at close range, the modifier is a +2. Against a heat sensor, the modifier is +4. If the roll fails, the scanner has not detected the IR suppression suit-wearer. A character may not use Stealth Skill against an IR scanner or heat sensor.

Cost: 7,000 C-Bills

Recharge Time: 5 hours

Recharge Cost: 10 C-Bills

## LOCKPICKS

The key advance in facility security has been the conversion from mechanical to electronic locking. Instead of a low-tech key-and-tumbler or combination mechanism, the most common locking devices are now based on generating a series of frequencies for specific increments of time. The "key" to this "lock" is usually a disk that is applied to the lock and operated much as the dial on a combination lock.

Facilities may also have equipment to perform fingerprint and retinal scans. To supplement the actual locks, facilities are sometimes protected by alarm systems with sonic stunners to immobilize or render intruders unconscious. These devices are increasingly more complex at Tech Levels 3 and 4. A Tech Level 2 lock can usually be defeated by higher-level lockbreaking devices. Of course, the most effective countermeasure is generally an armed 'Mech or a loaded SMG.

To open a lock, a player character must make a successful Skill Roll against Security Systems. The Base Target Number for this roll is modified by the lock's Tech Level and by any special equipment used. If the die roll fails, the lock remains closed and the character may try again. At the gamemaster's discretion, an unsuccessful attempt to open some locks will automatically trigger an alarm.

The gamemaster will decide what lockpick sets are available to player characters. These are rated according to the Tech Level of the tools they contain. Use of a lockpick set gives a negative modifier to the Security Systems Skill Roll Target, based on the difference between the Tech Levels of the lockpick equipment and the lock + 1.

A character will spot an alarm if the gamemaster makes a successful Skill Roll against that character's Security Systems Skill. This roll is modified by the alarm system's Tech Level and a search modifier. The search modifier begins at -3 and decreases -1 for each ten-minute period spent searching for the alarm system.

Having discovered an alarm system, the player character may attempt to disarm it. Use the same formula as for lockpicking to determine whether a negative modifier applies to the skill roll. Failure to disarm the alarm system usually means that it has been set off. If the system consists of weapons, all fire with a +3 To-Hit modifier.

### **RANGEFINDER BINOCULARS (3/A)**

Microminiaturization technology has permitted the development of this sophisticated combination of infrared sensor, binoculars, and telescope in a small, hand-held box 40 centimeters by 60 centimeters in size. The rangefinder binoculars (referred to usually as binoculars) provide an LCD readout of the approximate range of objects under its crosshairs, as well as light-level indicators. In addition to normal-vision range, they operate in infrared or ultraviolet mode, which permits use of the binoculars in relative darkness.

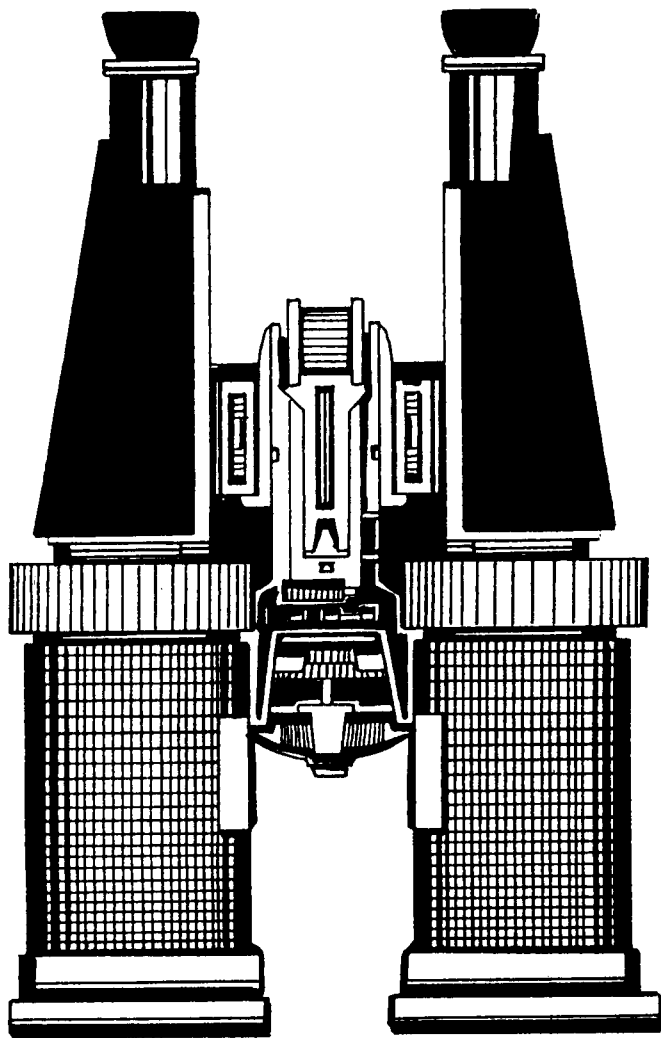
In clear weather, the binoculars' range is approximately 100 kilometers, and their magnification can be adjusted to 400 times, in increments of 0.5-1 times. They are sturdily built and will sustain impact, but are difficult to adjust and repair because the microelectronics used to build them is no longer in wide use. Cost: 250 C-Bills.

### **VIBRO LOCKPICK KIT (4/C)**

A small vibroblade with a limited power supply, the vibro lockpick kit is used for operations that require cutting locks. Small, slender, and easily concealed, the kit is standard-issue for intelligence agents on clandestine operations. Vibroblade technology is not new, but the compact design and power of this system are rare.

Powered by a small photoelectric cell and battery, the blade can operate for less than a minute, and it can take up to two hours of direct light to recharge. The blade extends only 7.5 cm, making it of little use in combat, but it is the bane of every locksmith within the Inner Sphere.

The battery has 5 power points available to it (see Power Packs, p. 81). It takes two hours in direct sunlight to fully recharge the lockpick. Using the vibro lockpick gives a -5 modifier to any lockpicking attempt. The device cannot be used as a melee weapon. Cost: 2,000 C-Bills.





## ARMOR EQUIPMENT

Many individuals make it a point to acquire some or all of the following equipment, even if it is not normally issued by their unit.

### ABLATIVE/FLAK VEST AND BODY SUIT (3/B)

The development of personal armor has been a military necessity for hundreds of centuries. In the current era, the most popular armor materials are bullet-resistant and laser-ablative. Though each of these materials has its advantages and disadvantages, ablative/flak armor is the most effective because it combines both types in one. Ablative/flak vests absorb a total 20 points of damage, and reduce by half the damage from slug-throwing or energy weapons. Ablative/flak body suits absorb 35 points of damage and reduce all weapons damage by one-half. A body suit also reduces the wearer's movement by one-half.

Vest Cost: 300 C-Bills  
Patch Cost: 15 C-Bills  
Body Suit Cost: 800 C-Bills  
Patch Cost: 25 C-Bills

### ARMORED VEST/BODYSUIT (2/A)

The development of hand-portable laser weapons makes much personal armor obsolete, because anything less resistant than the double-layered armor of a 'Mech cannot resist the weapon's energy. Therefore, armor is generally limited to clothing, environment suits (which permit modifiers to the chance of sustaining damage from certain classes of weapons), and the ubiquitous bulletproof vest.

Vest - Cost: 50 C-Bills  
Body Suit - Cost: 150 C-Bills

### MECHWARRIOR COMBAT SUIT (4/C)

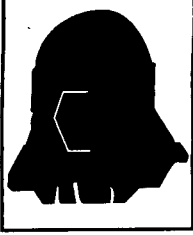
The MechWarrior combat suit was developed for the personal guards of House Kurita. The suit is a multifunctional, full-body unit, complete with a specially designed neurohelmet for BattleMech control. The MCS provides the wearer with a powerful integral cooling system to combat the high temperatures inside a 'Mech's cockpit. This cooling system is designed into a close-fitting, flexible undersuit. The outside of the suit is covered with a strong, heat-resistant polymer fabric that protects the wearer from shrapnel and some small-arms fire. A rigid vest fits over the chest to further protect the pilot.

The helmet not only provides the neurolink between pilot and 'Mech, but it also encloses the pilots' head, providing a constant supply of fresh air from the cockpit's life-support system through a set of connecting lines in the side of the helmet. These lines also link the helmet's communications gear into the 'Mech's powerful main systems. When these lines disconnect, the helmet's internal systems automatically take over, providing breathable air through a six-hour internal supply, and twelve hours of communications time using the small integral communicator, which has a 10-kilometer range.

Another standard feature of the suit is its provision for the attachment of the MechWarrior combat medipack. This unit attaches to a hook-up point on the wearer's thigh and monitors the pilot's condition, automatically injecting any necessary combination of pain killer and stimulants to keep the pilot functioning.

The MechWarrior combat suit absorbs one-fourth of all damage the wearer takes from slug-throwing and melee weapons and 4 points of damage from energy weapons. The suit loses its effectiveness after absorbing a total of 16 damage points. If the rigid vest is worn over the suit, it stops one-half of all damage taken to the wearer's chest from slug-throwing weapons and 4 points of damage from energy weapons, in addition to damage absorbed by the suit itself. The suit reduces the wearer's movement by one-fourth, but the rigid vest imposes no further penalties. The neurohelmet stops 15 points of damage to the wearer's head.





## MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

### BASIC FIELD KIT (2/A)

The basic field kit contains all the equipment necessary for camping out in the wilderness for short periods of time. This equipment includes a small butt pack, sleeping bag, heating tabs for food, utensils, collapsible cup, a ground cloth, matches, a 10-meter nylon cord, a survival knife, and similar items. One kit is required per person.

Having a basic field kit allows an injured character to heal normally when out in the wilderness. Weight: 2 kilograms. Cost: 10 C-Bills.

### DELUXE FIELD KIT (3/A)

The deluxe field kit contains all the equipment necessary for a prolonged stay in the wilderness. In addition to the standard equipment, there is also a rucksack, inflatable mattress, lantern, camp stove, thermal blanket, compass, and similar items. One kit is required per person. Weight: 5 kilograms. Cost: 100 C-Bills.

### EMERGENCY JETPACK (3/D)

A lightweight emergency jetpack allows a person to escape combat or some other dangerous event. These disposable systems were developed for the Star League Defense Forces, but are hard to come by now.

The system is relatively simple. The pack is small, about the size of a suitcase, and very light. It contains a solid rocket propellant and a hand-held electronic control system. The pack can lift 280 kilograms for 1 kilometer at a height of 30 meters. Maximum horizontal speed is approximately 160 KPH.

It takes less than a minute to put on the pack and activate it. The control system is hard-wired to the pack, and is disposable after use. Once activated, it takes only 5 seconds to ignite. Once fired, the system cannot be shut off.

The emergency jetpack uses the jump pack rules given on p. 28, with the following exceptions. Maximum altitude is 30 meters, and maximum distance flown is 1 kilometer. The emergency jetpack can be used only once. Cost: 5,000 C-Bills.

### GRAPPLE ROD (3/D)

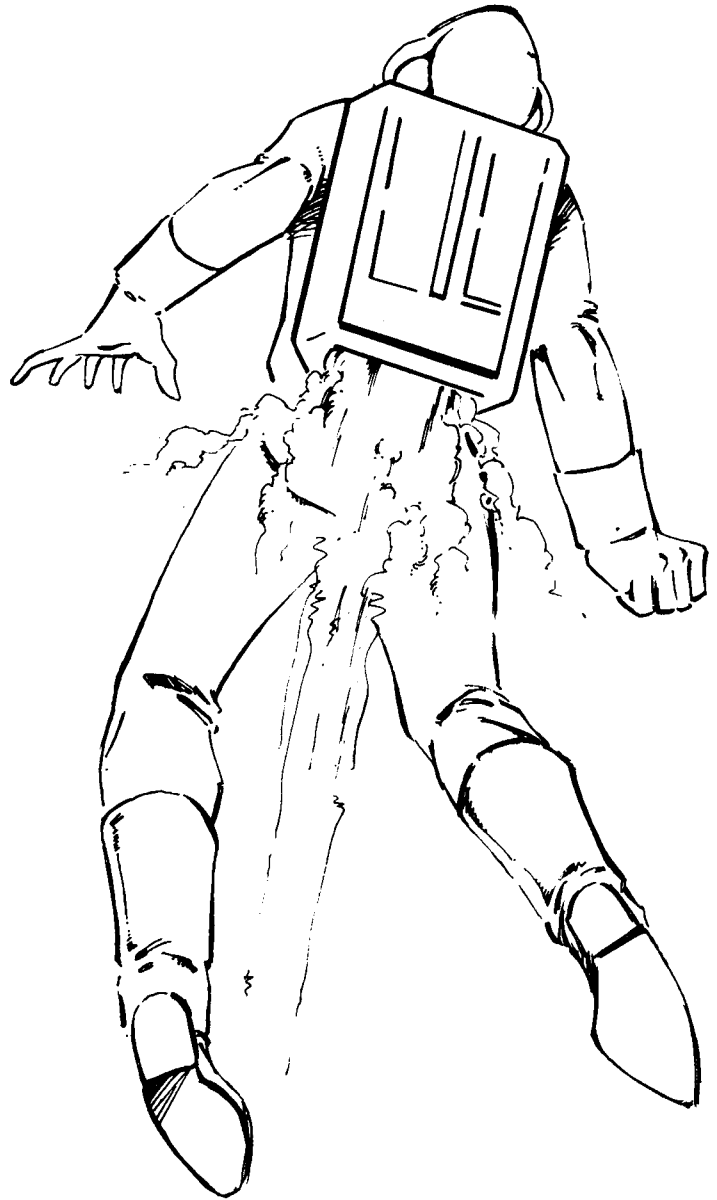
The grapple rod is a disposable tool for climbing a surface quickly. Its most common use is by infantry fighting against 'Mechs. A grapple rod is a one-meter-long shaft with a ball at one end and a small strap at the other. Controls are at the middle of the shaft. The ball is made of adhesive material, attached to 10 meters of lightweight nylon/myomer cable.

A soldier places his foot in the strap and depresses the lift button. A charge within the shaft fires the adhesive ball at the target. Once the ball is attached, the soldier activates another button, which causes a motor in the device to activate, pulling the shaft and the rider up the cable to the location of the adhesive. The infantryman can perform his mission and ride the cable back to the ground.

This tactic is used by infantry to swarm a BattleMech. Two squads can board a passing 'Mech in seconds, planting explosives and firing at vital areas. They quickly slide off the 'Mech and detonate the explosives. Cost: 500 C-Bills.

## COMMUNICATORS

Communicators used in the Successor States vary from traditional types using the radio spectrum to more esoteric models that combine lasers for line-of-sight transmissions with low-frequency channels for over-the-horizon transmissions. Most military communicators used at lance levels or higher have a secure voice-channel, direct line-of-sight (via lasers or microwaves), and over-the-horizon capabilities. Most also have the ability to send and receive visual and high-speed data transmissions.



## BASIC FIELD COMMUNICATIONS KIT (2/A)

Though the basic field communications kit has all the capabilities of an LR communicator, it is not so much for communicating as it is for coordinating. It has 40 different channels and can operate 15 channels at once. Standard accessories include a light video camera for visual transmissions, small dish antennae for receiving and sending laser or microwave communications, and re-transmission equipment that allows the unit to serve as a relay station for transmissions from other sets. Two long-range personal communicators can be linked to the basic kit, which gives it an extra six channels per communicator.

The basic field communications kit is worn on the user's back.

Weight: 5 kilograms

Cost: 400 C-Bills

Range: 50 kilometers

## LONG-RANGE PERSONAL COMMUNICATOR (3/A)

Long-range personal communicators are the most advanced hand-held communications devices available. The LR communicator can operate over 30 channels, and may use up to six channels at one time. In addition, the unit can send and receive high-speed compressed transmissions. A small recorder tapes the message to be sent and then transmits it at a speed from 100 to 1,000 times normal; incoming compressed transmissions reverse this process. These compression techniques reduce the amount of actual broadcast time, making it difficult for an enemy to triangulate on the set. Finally, a small video camera or range-finding binoculars can be plugged into the unit to send (but not receive) video pictures. The LR communicator is most commonly used by platoon commanders.

Weight: 1 kilogram

Cost: 200 C-Bills

Range: 25 kilometers

## MICROCOMMUNICATOR (3/B)

Small enough to fit into a ring or similar piece of jewelry, microcommunicators are used mainly by undercover police, spies, and anyone else who needs covert contact with another person or persons. Although their range is limited and they broadcast only on the radio spectrum, these devices are extremely useful for covert operations.

Weight: 1 gram

Cost: 200 C-Bills

Range: 2 kilometers

## PERSONAL COMMUNICATOR (2/A)

Personal communicators are the standard field communications set issued to individual soldiers. Each communicator can operate over ten different channels. Commonly mounted in a soldier's helmet, personal communicators come equipped with small earphones, and are either voice-activated or have throat mikes.

Weight: 100 grams

Cost: 50 C-Bills

Range: 10 kilometers

## PERSONAL WEAPONS

In the chaos of the 31st century, it is not uncommon for individuals, especially those belonging to military units, to wear a sidearm or other personal weapon at nearly all times. Some of the Houses of the Successor States also maintain historical traditions of carrying ceremonial swords and daggers.

### POWERED MELEE WEAPONS

Powered melee weapons are specialized devices with features to make them more effective in combat. These weapons operate from power packs (see **Laser Weapons** below).

#### Mini Stunstick (3/B)

The mini stunstick is a smaller version of the stunstick. The mini stunstick is available in different shapes, such as a glove or knuckle-covering. Use the same rules for knocking a target unconscious as for the stunstick. The weapon does 1D6 - 4 damage plus any modifiers. Cost: 50 C-Bills.

#### Neural Whip (3/C)

The neural whip is a thin blade with a small metallic ball covering its point, much like a fencing practice foil. When applied to exposed or lightly covered flesh, the initial effect is similar to that of a stunstick, generally rendering the target unconscious (see **Tranq Gun**, p. 101). The neural whip has more lasting and insidious effects, however. When used as a torture device, the whip can inflict long-term loss of attributes (gamemaster's option) as well as excruciating pain. Use of the whip was banned in the Star League era, with heavy civil penalties for possession or sale. In the present day, Houses Davion, Liao, and Steiner have banned the device in their realms. The weapon does 1D6 damage plus any modifiers. Weight: 300-500 grams. Cost: 500 C-Bills.

#### Stunstick (2/B)

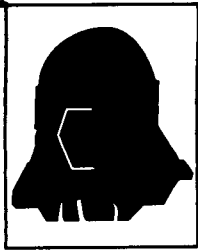
The stunstick was originally developed for use by civilian peacekeeping authorities for crowd control or prisoner management. Inner Sphere police and other civil authorities still frequently use stunsticks, which is how MechWarriors most frequently encounter them. The stunstick is approximately the same size and weight as a small blackjack or billy club. When activated, however, it delivers a powerful neural impulse to exposed or lightly covered skin, generally rendering the target unconscious (see **Tranq Gun**, p. 101). Continuous application of the stunstick will not, however, impart any additional damage or effect. The weapon does 1D6 - 2 damage, plus any modifiers. Weight: 200 grams. Cost: 200 C-Bills.

#### Vibroblade (2/A)

The vibroblade is a bulky version of a standard sword or other blade, and weighs 200 grams. When activated, it vibrates at an extremely high frequency, making it a highly effective cutting tool. The weapon does 2D6 damage. Cost: 100 C-Bills.

#### Vibrodagger (2/B)

The vibrodagger is a smaller version of the popular vibroblade. The weapon does 2D6 damage. Cost: 25 C-Bills.



## PRIMITIVE MISSILE WEAPONS

Primitive missile weapons include bows and crossbows. The **MechWarrior** combat system further divides these weapons into light and heavy categories, but the two sizes are not functionally different. No match for a rifle or laser weapon, primitive missile weapons continue in use primarily for sport. Among their few advantages is the relative quiet of their operation, making them useful for reconnaissance or espionage.

### Crossbow (1/A)

The crossbow, which partially replaced the longbow (see below) in medieval times, consists of a bow mechanism with a winding or cocking device, replacing the straight pull of the bow. Crossbows fire quarrels, which are shorter and heavier than arrows. One of the advantages is that a crossbow can be aimed like a rifle, which means that it is relatively easy to learn. Light crossbows weigh 1.5 to 2 kilograms, heavy crossbows 3 to 5 kilograms.

#### Light Crossbow

Cost: 10 C-Bills  
Range: 1-2/3-5/6-10  
Shots: 1  
Reload: 1 C-Bill/20  
Damage: 2D6

#### Heavy Crossbow

Cost: 20 C-Bills  
Range: 1-3/4-7/8-13  
Shots: 1  
Reload: 1 C-Bill/20  
Damage: 2D + 3

### Shortbow, Longbow (1/A)

Though bows do not have the range nor effect of higher-tech ranged weapons, they are relatively easy to produce. As a result, they are still used by individuals who cannot acquire more effective weapons. On some worlds, they have even been used by mobs versus better-armed police forces. Shortbows weigh 500 to 700 grams; longbows weigh 1,000 to 1,300 grams.

#### Shortbow

Cost: 10 C-Bills  
Range: 1-2/3-5/6-8  
Shots: 1  
Reload: 1 C-Bill/20  
Damage: 1D6 + 1

#### Longbow

Cost: 20 C-Bills  
Range: 1-3/4-6/7-12  
Shots: 1  
Reload: 1 C-Bill/20  
Damage: 1D6 + 3

## PRIMITIVE MELEE WEAPONS

Primitive melee weapons include daggers and knives, swords, cudgels, and clubs. Of course, given the wide disparity in technology and equipment availability in the Inner Sphere, many more weapons are in use than are described below. Consider all the weapons described here as generic examples of the type.

### Bayonet (1/A)

The bayonet is a dagger-like weapon generally attached to a rifle. When unattached, it functions in all respects as a dagger or knife except that it is not usually balanced for throwing. The weapon does 1D6 + 3 damage. The bayonet is 200 millimeters long and weighs 250 grams. Cost: 5 C-Bills.

### Cudgel/Blackjack/Club (1/A)

Cudgels are at the lowest rung of the melee-weapon ladder. Sophisticated examples of the genre (e.g., billy clubs and blackjacks) might be specially manufactured, but a tree limb or a gun barrel will work just about as well. Cudgels and blackjacks are smaller examples of clubs. All are generally used from behind to knock an opponent unconscious. Cost: 1 C-Bill. Weight: 500-2,000 grams.

#### Cudgel/Blackjack:

Damage: 1D6 + 1

#### Club:

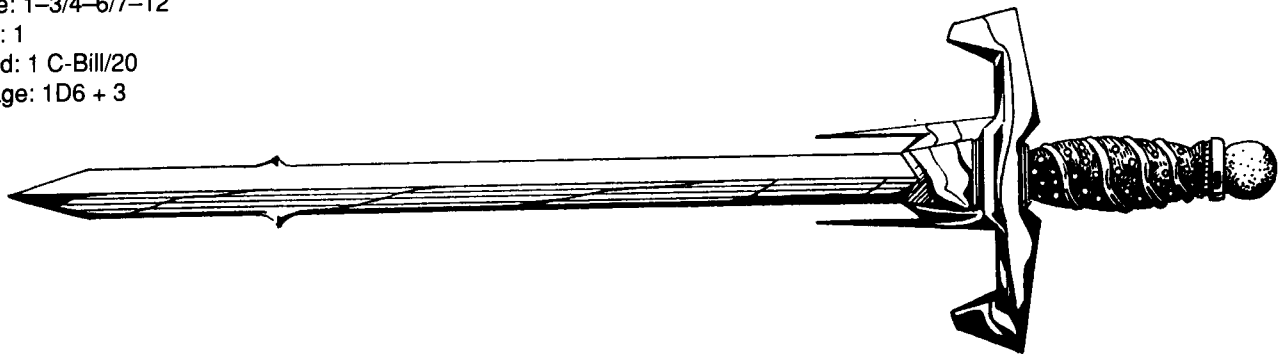
Damage: 1D6 + 2

### Dagger/Knife (1/A)

These weapons are flat, two-edged blades with sharp points. They are usually worn in belt or boot sheaths, or are sometimes strapped to the forearm. Also, many daggers and knives are balanced for throwing. These weapons do 1D6 - 1 damage. Daggers and knives are 200-250 millimeters long and weigh 250 grams. Cost: 2 C-Bills.

### Sword (1/A)

This blade is the final generation of stabbing/slashing weapon development. Its primary use is aboard ship, where projectile or laser weapons are not appropriate. Though a great body of experience has developed for using this weapon with skill, training has atrophied because the sword is no match for a good gun. A sword does 2D6 + 2 damage. It is about 800 to 1,200 millimeters long, weighing about 1 kilogram. Cost: 10 C-Bills.



## SMALL ARMS

Even the most rudimentary industrial capacity allows a planet to manufacture basic small arms and other infantry weapons. Interstellar economics and military logistics also make it more cost-effective to manufacture such expendable items as rifles, SMGs, and pistols locally than to import them to arm planetary garrisons. This factor, combined with the various military tactical doctrines in practice, creates tremendous variations even among similar weapon types.

For example, in the early years of the Star League, there were more than 200 different types of laser rifles, each with its own capabilities and designed to serve different tactical needs. Some military leaders were willing to sacrifice range for high damage potential, while others wanted range at the expense of firepower. This same tendency has continued into the present era, which is why many versions of the same weapon type still exist.

## LASER WEAPONS

Laser weapons are the cutting edge of weapons technology, with longer ranges and greater penetration capability than their projectile cousins. Due to the privations of the Succession Wars, however, projectile weapons in the Inner Sphere outnumber laser weapons by almost 20 to 1. Where laser weapons do exist, they are more likely to be in the hands of warriors than of civilians.

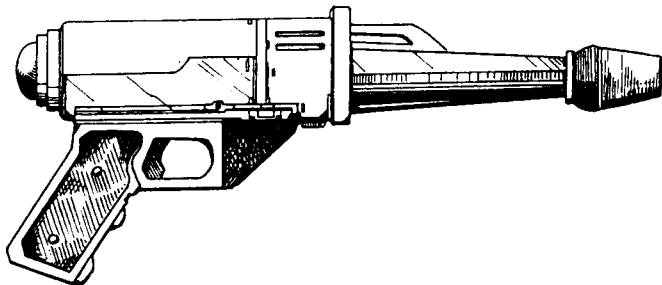
### Lasers (3/B)

Weighing only 1,000 grams, the laser pistol represents the highest power-to-mass ratio of any laser weapon. Though the weapon is rarely found outside the military, the laser pistol is the laser device most often encountered.

The laser rifle is probably the best-designed laser weapon, capable of devastating damage against a human being. As stated above, soldiers carrying laser rifles generally carry power packs considerably larger than those internal to the rifle, permitting them to use their weapons in a protracted fashion. The laser rifle weighs about 5 kilograms.

The hold-out laser pistol has its own rechargeable battery pack and weighs 50 grams.

The Nakjama and Sunbeam laser pistols weigh 1 kilogram each, and the Intek laser rifle weighs 5 kilograms.



### Laser Pistol

Cost: 750 C-Bills  
Range: 1-3/4-6/7-12  
Power Use: 2  
Damage: 4D6

### Hold-Out Laser Pistol

Cost: 100 C-Bills  
Range: 1-2/3-4/5-6  
Power Use: 3  
Reload: 5 C-Bills  
Damage: 2D6

### Nakjama Laser Pistol

Cost: 750 C-Bills  
Range: 1-4/5-9/10-14  
Power Use: 1  
Damage: 3D6

### Sunbeam Laser Pistol

Cost: 750 C-Bills  
Range: 1-3/4-6/7-11  
Power Use: 4  
Damage: 5D6

### Laser Rifle

Cost: 1,250 C-Bills  
Range: 1-9/10-21/22-30  
Power Use: 5  
Damage: 4D6 + 2

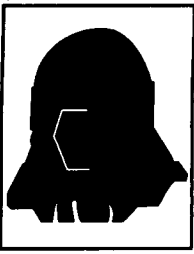
### Intek Laser Rifle

Cost: 1,250 C-Bills  
Range: 1-12/13-30/31-51  
Power Use: 2  
Damage: 2D6 + 2

### Blazer (3/C)

The blazer weighs nearly 7 kilograms, and is the ultimate in hand-held laser weaponry. It is, in effect, a "double-barreled" laser rifle. The blazer uses the same range and damage tables as the laser rifle, but delivers two hits to the same body part when it strikes an opponent. Its main disadvantage is that it is an energy hog, requiring either frequent recharging or a large, bulky power pack. It has most often been used by elite commandos in service to House Kurita or during the brutish civil wars within the Free Worlds League.

Cost: 2,190 C-Bills  
Range: 1-9/10-21/22-30  
Power Use: 10  
Damage: (4D6 + 2) x 2



## Pulse Laser (3/C)

Pulse laser weapons are the second generation of the common laser. While the laser puts all its energy into a single burst, the pulse laser fires a weaker beam of light. It makes up for lack of power by firing ten shots, however, just like an SMG.

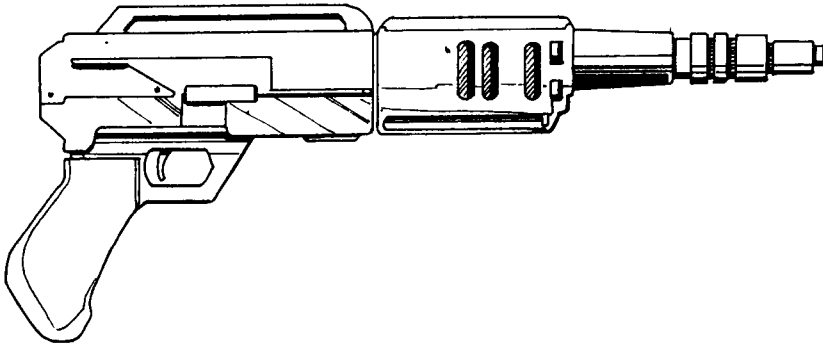
Pulse laser weapons may fire either single-shot or burst, following the same rules as an SMG. Any targets in the Area of Effect will take the full damage of the weapon. Pulse laser pistol: weight – 1 kilogram. Pulse laser rifle: weight – 5 kilograms.

### Pulse Laser Pistol

Cost: 1,000 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-2/3-4/5-8  
 Shots: 10  
 Power Use: 2 (per shot)  
 Damage: 3D6

### Pulse Laser Rifle

Cost: 2,000 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-6/7-14/15-28  
 Shots: 10  
 Power Use: 4 (per shot)  
 Damage: 3D6 + 2



## SLUG-THROWERS

These weapons include an array of guns, from the small handgun to the gyrojet rifle and the submachine gun. All slug-throwing weapons consist of a firing chamber, accessed by a trigger mechanism, and one or more barrels to deliver the projectile(s), generally metal or plastic-jacketed bullets, or slugs.

### Gyrojet Weapons (2/B)

Gyrojet, or "cone," weapons, are recoilless projectile weapons more closely related to a rocket launcher. They fire projectiles that do not drop off in velocity over distance, and deliver explosive damage at their destination. Thus, they are effective not only against personnel but also against vehicles. Five gyrojet weapons are listed here.

The heavy gyrojet gun is a heavier version of the battle-proven cone rifle. The heavy gyrojet gun simply uses larger, more powerful ammunition.

The gyroslug rifle is the logical development of the gyrojet rifle. Instead of firing a large rocket, the gyroslug rifle fires a smaller version of the same round. Each round has its own propulsion rocket and explosive warhead. The gyroslug carbine is a smaller version of the same weapon.

The heavy gyrojet gun weighs 8 kilograms, the gyroslug rifle weighs 1 kilogram, the gyrojet rifle weighs 3 kilograms, the gyrojet carbine weighs 500 grams, and the hold-out gyrojet pistol weighs 50 grams.

### Gyrojet Rifle

Cost: 1,250 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-12/13-36/37-72  
 Shots: 10  
 Reload: 200 C-Bills  
 Damage: 3D6 + 6

### Heavy Gyrojet Gun

Cost: 2,500 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-12/13-36/37-72  
 Shots: 5  
 Reload: 250 C-Bills  
 Damage: 6D6 + 6

### Gyroslug Rifle

Cost: 1,000 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-9/10-35/36-42  
 Shots: 50  
 Reload: 20 C-Bills  
 Damage: 3D6 + 3

### Gyroslug Carbine

Cost: 500 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-6/7-15/16-30  
 Shots: 20  
 Reload: 5 C-Bills  
 Damage: 2D6 + 5

### Hold-Out Gyrojet Pistol

Cost: 30 C-Bills  
 Range: 1/2/NA  
 Shots: 2  
 Reload: 1 C-Bill  
 Damage: 3D6 + 3

## Pistols (1/A)

Normally issued to officers and vehicle crews, the standard pistol has been the weapon of last resort for centuries. Following are five pistol types:

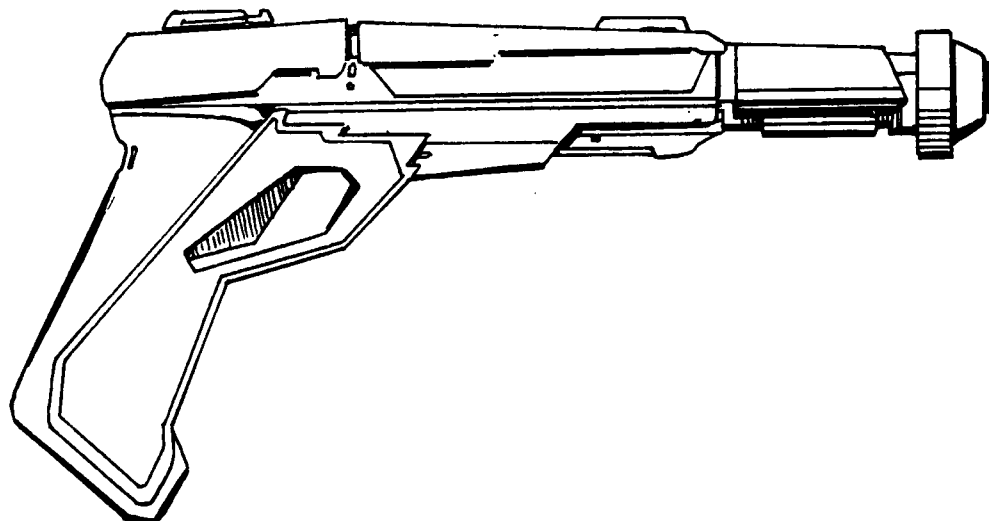
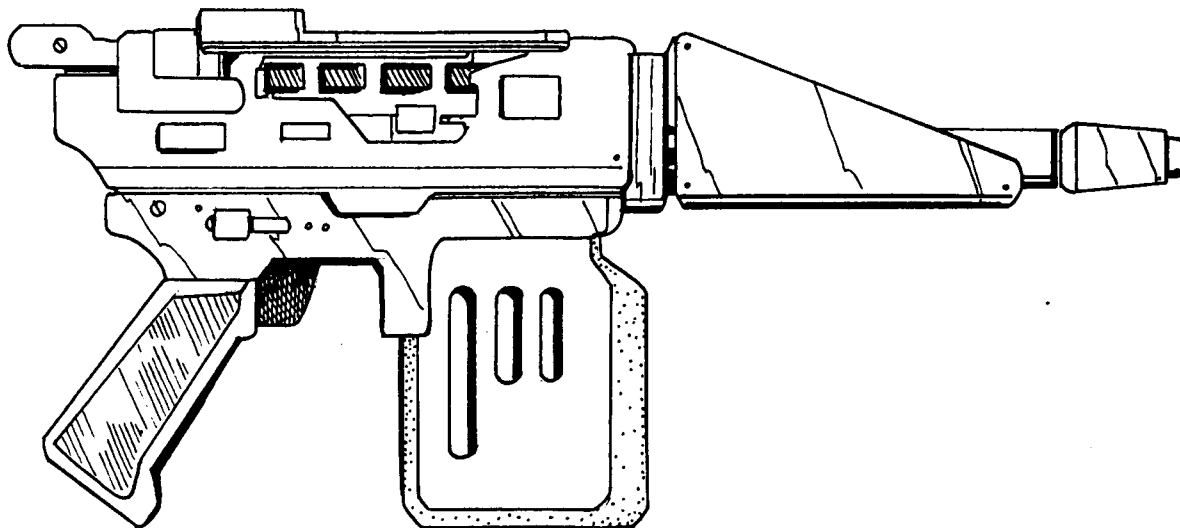
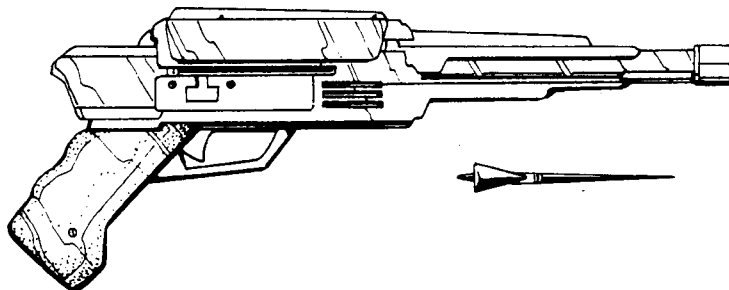
The standard handgun pistol weighs 600–800 grams. It fires a single shot with each pull of the trigger. (It is equivalent to the .357 Magnum of the late 20th century.)

The auto-pistol, a clip-fed version of the standard pistol, weighs 500–800 grams. It also fires single-shot, but carries more rounds.

The Sternsnacht heavy pistol fires single-shot. It weighs 1.5 kilograms.

The Mydron auto-pistol fires an automatic burst like an SMG. It weighs 1.5 kilograms.

The hold-out pistol is a small, light version of the standard pistol. Favored by scoundrels and gamblers across the Inner Sphere, it fires single-shot and weighs 50 grams.



### Pistol

Cost: 40 C-Bills

Range: 1–2/3–4/5–8

Shots: 6

Reload: 2 C-Bills

Damage: 2D6 + 3

### Auto-Pistol

Cost: 50 C-Bills

Range: 1–2/3–4/5–8

Shots: 10

Reload: 2 C-Bills

Damage: 2D6

### Sternsnacht

Cost: 200 C-Bills

Range: 1–2/3–4/5–12

Shots: 3

Reload: 5 C-Bills

Damage: 4D6 + 2

### Mydron

Cost: 100 C-Bills

Range: 1–2/3–4/5–12

Shots: 20

Reload: 4 C-Bills

Damage: 1D6 + 3

### Hold-Out

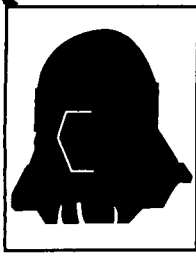
Cost: 20 C-Bills

Range: 1–2/NA/NA

Shots: 5

Reload: 1 C-Bill

Damage: 1D6 + 3



## EQUIPMENT

### Rifles (1/A)

This version of the rifle is fully automatic, capable of firing four bullets at a single pull of the trigger. It is designed for both range and accuracy, making it the most common slug-throwing weapon for non-military use. The rifle weighs 4–5 kilograms. (It most resembles the M-1 rifle of the late 20th century.)

The Federated long rifle weighs 4.5 kilograms, and fires single-shot.

The Zeus heavy rifle weighs 8 kilograms, and fires single-shot. (This weapon resembles the .50 caliber sniper rifle of the late 20th century.)

#### Rifle

Cost: 80 C-Bills  
Range: 1–6/7–15/16–30  
Shots: 10  
Reload: 2 C-Bills  
Damage: 3D6

#### Federated Long Rifle

Cost: 120 C-Bills  
Range: 1–8/9–18/19–33  
Shots: 10  
Reload: 2 C-Bills per reload  
Damage: 2D6 + 2

#### Zeus Heavy Rifle

Cost: 200 C-Bills  
Range: 1–7/8–18/19–28  
Shots: 5  
Reload: 1 C-Bill per reload  
Damage: 6D6

### Shotguns (1/A)

Shotguns are smoothbore guns that deliver high firepower with little regard for accuracy. They fire shells containing either several bullets or several dozen small pellets through either one or two barrels. A shotgun weighs 3 to 4 kilograms. (It is most like the Remington 12-gauge of the late 20th century.) The double-barreled shotgun can fire both barrels in one turn, doing double damage on one To-Hit Roll. The pump shotgun has six shots and improved range.

#### Shotgun (Double-Barreled)

Cost: 30 C-Bills  
Range: 1–3/4/5  
Shots: 2  
Reload: 1 C-Bill per 2 reloads  
Damage: 3D6 + 2

#### Pump Shotgun

Cost: 40 C-Bills  
Range: 1–3/4–5/6–8  
Shots: 6  
Reload: 2 C-Bills per 3 reloads  
Damage: 3D6 + 2

### Submachine Gun (1/A)

The submachine gun is a small automatic weapon, designed to be compatible with the pistol and firing the same size ammunition. It weighs 3 kilograms. The SMG fires four rounds per pull of the trigger, and the trigger can be held for multiple combat rounds to permit the firing of a "burst" pattern. (The SMG closely resembles the Uzi of the late 20th century.)

The Rorynex Industries submachine gun weighs 3 kilograms. The Imperator submachine gun weighs 4 kilograms.

#### SMG

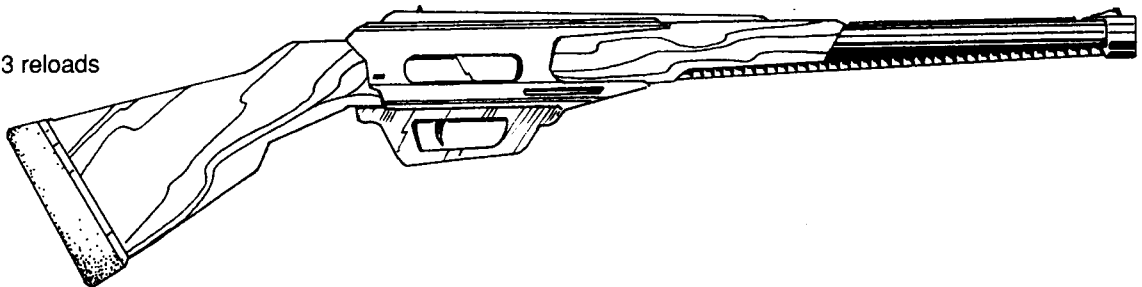
Cost: 80 C-Bills  
Range: 1–3/4–7/8–10  
Shots: 50  
Reload: 10 C-Bills  
Damage: 3D6

#### Rorynex SMG

Cost: 80 C-Bills  
Range: 1–3/4–6/7–9  
Shots: 100  
Reload: 20 C-Bills  
Damage: 3D6 + 3

#### Imperator SMG

Cost: 100 C-Bills  
Range: 1–4/5–8/9–11  
Shots: 50  
Reload: 10 C-Bills  
Damage: 2D6





## HEAVY WEAPONS

### GRENADES (1/A)

Grenades have become the infantryman's most portable support weapon. Grenades are used to create suppressing fire, to damage enemy vehicles, and to ferret out hidden troops. The grenade's only range limitations are based on the strength of the thrower and the size of the grenade.

There are three sizes of grenades: micro, mini, and maxi. The microgrenade has the smallest charge and is the cheapest, while the maxigrenade has the biggest charge and is the most expensive.

There are many types of grenades, including explosive, flash, and smoke. A micro smoke grenade fills one hex with smoke. Minigrenades fill the target hex and all adjacent hexes with smoke. Maxigrenades fill the target hex and all hexes within a 2-hex area with smoke.

A micro flash grenade temporarily blinds any targets lacking polarizing visors or sensors in a one-hex area. Mini flash grenades blind targets in the target hex and all adjacent hexes. Maxi flash grenades blind all targets in the target hex and within a two-hex area.

A micro explosive grenade does 2D6 damage to all targets in a one-hex area. Mini explosive grenades do 3D6 damage to all targets in the target hex and all adjacent hexes. Maxi explosive grenades do 5D6 damage to all targets in the target hex and all hexes within 2 hexes.

If the player successfully rolls his To-Hit Number, the grenade affects his target normally. Any explosions, flashes, and so on are centered on the target.

If the To-Hit Roll fails, the grenade will scatter. Follow the same procedure to determine the scatter as per Area of Effect rules, p. 56. It is also possible for a grenade to damage its thrower.

Each grenade may be used only once.

Microgrenades weigh 200 grams; minigrenades weigh 500 grams; maxigrenades weigh 800 grams.

#### Microgrenade

Cost: 1 C-Bill  
Range: 1/2-3/4-6  
Damage: 2D6

#### Minigrenade

Cost: 10 C-Bills  
Range: 1/2-3/4-6  
Area of Effect: 1  
Damage: 3D6

#### Maxigrenade

Cost: 20 C-Bills  
Range: 1/2-3/4-6  
Area of Effect: 2  
Damage: 5D6

### Automatic Grenade Launcher (2/A)

Infantry units use the automatic grenade launcher to lay down long-range suppressing fire or smoke, either directly or indirectly.

When using the launcher directly, the firer uses his Small Arms Skill. If he successfully hits his target, it takes the full effect of the weapon's damage. When using the launcher indirectly, the firer uses his Support Weapons Skill. In either case, if the firer fails his To-Hit Rolls, the grenade will scatter according to the Area of Effect rules, p. 56.

The automatic grenade launcher may also fire all its rounds at once, similar to an SMG burst. When firing directly, roll for each grenade normally. Any grenades that miss the target will scatter.

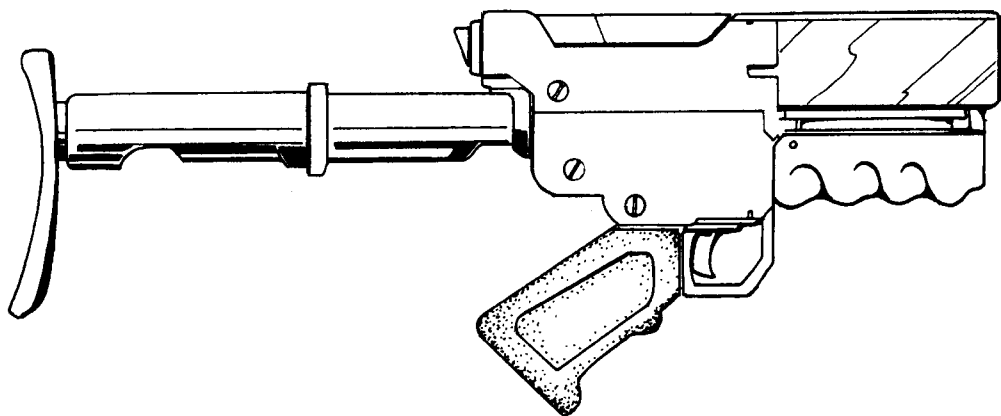
When firing indirectly, the firer's base chance to hit his target is either 9+ or his Support Weapons Skill, whichever is lower. The player must make a To-Hit Roll for each grenade in the clip. If the roll fails, one grenade will scatter for every point by which the roll is failed. Weight: 5 kilograms.

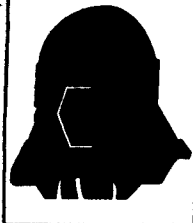
Cost: 465 C-Bills  
Range: 1-6/7-15/16-25  
Shots: 10  
Reload: 10 C-Bills  
Damage: 2D6

### Grenade Launcher (2/A)

The grenade launcher is a semi-automatic weapon that sometimes is attached underneath a rifle barrel. The launcher holds a clip of five mini-grenades in a tube reloading system similar to that of the pump shotgun. Grenades may only be fired directly from the launcher. Weight: 1,000 grams.

Cost: 100 C-Bills  
Range: 1-2/3-6/7-12  
Shots: 5  
Reload: 50 C-Bills  
Damage: 3D6





## HEAVY SRM LAUNCHER (2/B)

Like many of the heavier battlefield weapons, the Heavy SRM launcher is a more powerful version of the smaller weapon used by infantry units. The H-SRM is a favorite weapon for hit-and-run or ambush tactics because it has excellent range, good hit probability, and is heavy enough to damage a vehicle. Weight: 20 kilograms.

Cost: 3,000 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-15/16-40/41-48  
 Shots: 1  
 Reload: 5,000 C-Bills  
 Damage: 10D6 + 6

## LAW (2/A)

The Light and Very Light Anti-Vehicle Weapon is a development of the portable rocket launcher and similar support weapons. Unlike other support weapons, however, LAWs and V-LAWs can only fire once, after which they are discarded. Almost every infantryman carries one, just in case he needs additional firepower. LAW: weight - 4 kilograms. V-LAW: weight - 2 kilograms.

### LAW

Cost: 350 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-6/7-18/19-40  
 Damage: 4D6 + 6

### V-LAW

Cost: 75 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-4/5-12/13-25  
 Damage: 2D6 + 3

## LIGHT RECOILESS RIFLE (2/A)

The light recoilless rifle is the smallest version of the recoilless rifle. Weighing only 8 kilograms, the light recoilless offers an infantry unit accurate long-range fire, but has the disadvantage of lacking effective punch.

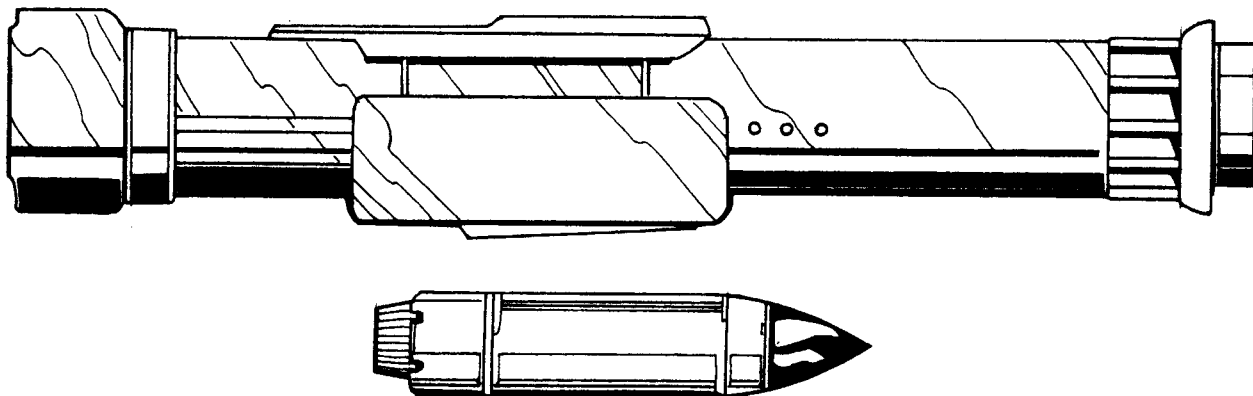
Cost: 300 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-12/13-25/26-35  
 Shots: 5  
 Reload: 50 C-Bills  
 Damage: 3D6

## MAUSER 960 ASSAULT SYSTEM (4/D)

Once the standard firearm of Star League Defense Forces infantry, the Mauser 960 is designed for use in extended campaigns against a variety of opponents—BattleMechs, vehicles, fighters, or other infantry. More important, it is a reliable system of firepower that is compact and easy to care for in even the worst circumstances.

The primary feature of the weapon is the pulse-laser system, which is supplemented by an auto-grenade launcher that fires grenades weighing 200 grams. The Mauser 960 also contains a survival pack within its stock. It has a vibroblade mounted as a bayonet and a sight for accurate fire. In general, it provides a wide variety of weapons that the infantryman can utilize in combat against an assortment of opposing forces.

The grenade launcher can be fired as a single shot or in automatic mode. The grenade mix can consist of the usual explosive, flash (affecting the hex hit), smoke (affecting the hex hit), or



thermite (causing fire on the struck object/opponent). It can also be used to fire Thumper rounds, which are unique to the Mauser 960. They explode with an adhesive that attaches a solar-powered transmitter that signals the enemy's position. This marks opponent BattleMechs for attacks by fighters and other more heavily armed forces.

The vibroblade bayonet can be activated from the rifle's trigger system. The mount contains a very small explosive charge that allows the infantryman to fire the bayonet at an attacking enemy. Its range is limited to only eight meters with any degree of accuracy, but it is another element in a universal fighting system.

The survival kit, with the exception of the folding spade, is stored in the weapon's stock. The emergency flares are long-burning and can be used as torches or for starting fires. The battery life on the flashlight is 48 hours of use. The rations consist of pill packages, and the medical kit provides only a one-meter bandage and a small aerosol disinfectant. The hollow stock can carry extra power clips or other weapons as well. The firing mechanisms for the auto-grenade launcher and the pulse laser are the same and can be activated at the touch of a single button.

The only disadvantage to the weapon is its weight. It is not as heavy as the large gyrojet rifles, but it is still a bulky device to carry for a long time. Its mix of firepower allows the Mauser 960 to operate in a variety of roles in combat, making it a favorite of both generals and common soldiers. Weight: 9.8 kilograms (unloaded).

#### **Pulse Laser**

Damage: 3D6 + 3

Range: 1-7/8-15/16-30

Power Use: 2

#### **Auto-Grenade Launcher**

Damage: 2D6 + 3

Range: 1-6/7-15/16-25

Shots: 6

#### **Survival Equipment:**

Folding Spade

2 Long-Burning Emergency Flares

Pulse Signal Stick

2 Packages of Emergency Nutrition Supplements

5 Meters of Nylon Cable

Flashlight

Wrap Bandage and Spray

#### **Extra Equipment:**

Modified Vibroblade Bayonet

UV/Starlight Scope

## **PORTABLE MACHINE GUN (2/A)**

The portable machine gun is one of the few weapons used by infantry squads as their main support weapon. A portable machine gun's high rate of fire and excellent damage potential make it an ideal weapon for almost any combat mission.

A machine gun always fires a burst of bullets, as found under the Burst rules for SMGs (p. 96). Each shot represents one burst. Weight: 10 kilograms.

Cost: 1,000 C-Bills

Range: 1-10/11-20/21-42

Shots: 15

Reload: 10 C-Bills

Damage: 4D6 + 3

## **PORTABLE ROCKET LAUNCHER (1/A)**

The portable rocket launcher comes in many styles and shapes. With its long range and heavy-hitting punch, the PRL can disable most armor units. Its one-shot nature limits the weapon's overall effectiveness, however, because the user must take time to reload after every shot. It is for this reason that infantry companies do not use the PRL as a main weapon. Weight: 2 kilograms.

Cost: 2,075 C-Bills

Range: 1-6/7-16/17-36

Shots: 1

Reload: 75 C-Bills

Damage: 4D6 + 6

## **SRM LAUNCHER (2/B)**

Arguably the last word in antipersonnel weapons, the short-range missile launcher is an anti-Mech weapon that does heavy damage to personnel targets, delivering a 2-pack of SRMs or infernos (napalm missiles). Most examples of the SRM must be placed and fired in an indirect arc, but a shoulder-mounted model exists, permitting the missiles to be fired directly at the target. Both models weigh about 10 kilograms.

Cost: 1,500 C-Bills

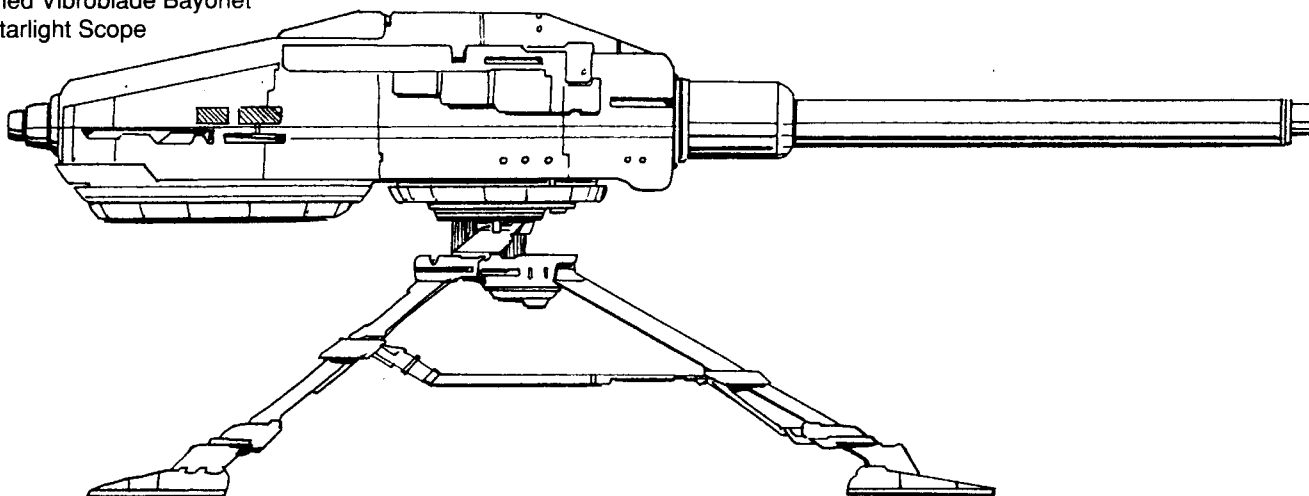
Range: 1-10/11-36/37-54

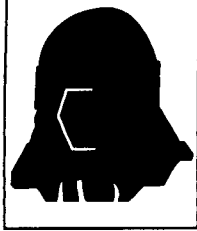
Shots: 2

Reload: Standard 2,000 C-Bills

Inferno 1,000 C-Bills

Damage: 5D6 + 6





## MISCELLANEOUS WEAPONS

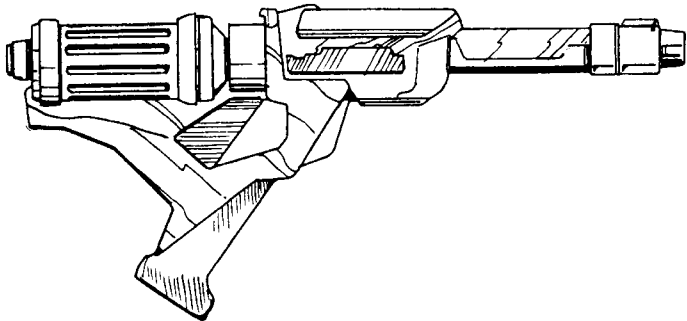
This section gathers a variety of devices not easily categorized. In some cases, these weapons function through a technology unique to themselves.

### DART GUN (3/B)

The dart gun is used when a non-lethal solution to an enemy is required. The dart gun contains a small, powerful battery that delivers a stunning electric shock.

When the target is hit, make a Saving Roll of 2D - 4 against his BLD Score. If the roll fails, the character is knocked unconscious. The dart gun will penetrate anything up to a light environment suit. Someone wearing heavier armor will be unaffected. Armor vests do not stop the dart gun.

Cost: 40 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-2/3-4/5-6  
 Shots: 2  
 Reload: 1 C-Bill  
 Damage: See description

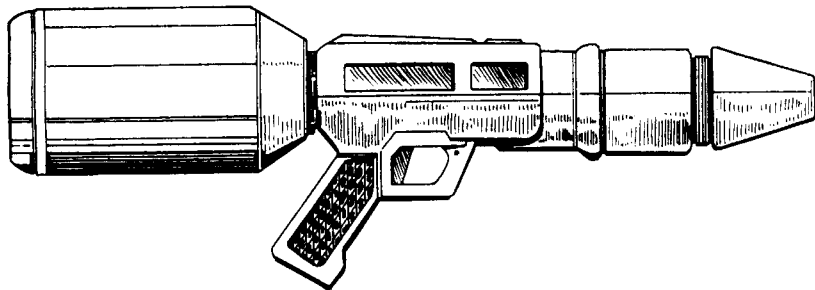


### FLAMER (2/B)

The flamer is a heavy metal tube with a trigger mechanism and a flash chamber attached. It is designed to deliver burning chemicals to the target at a temperature of 200 degrees C and up, generating heat through mixing a volatile sodium compound with oxygen in the well-insulated flash chamber.

Flamers are area weapons. They set fire to the target hex and all adjacent hexes if they hit it, but they can be highly inaccurate. Any character passing through an ignited target area takes 1D6 damage for each of the next three rounds. If a character is damaged by flamer fire, hits are distributed evenly across the body. Weight: 15 kilograms.

Cost: 100 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-2/3-4/5-6  
 Shots: 12  
 Reload: 2 C-Bills  
 Damage: 2D6



### FLAMER PISTOL (3/B)

The flamer pistol is a much smaller version of the flamer. Used mainly as a secondary weapon, the flamer pistol is usually hidden in a boot or sleeve. Though it does not do as much damage as a standard pistol, the flamer pistol does have a psychological advantage because most people, including soldiers, fear being burned.

A successful hit with a flamer pistol has the same effect as a hit from a standard flamer, except the flamer pistol affects only a one-hex area.

Cost: 50 C-Bills  
 Range: 1-3/4-5/6-7  
 Shots: 10  
 Reload: 1 C-Bill  
 Damage: 2D6

### NEEDLERS (3/A)

Needler weapons are among the most vicious ever developed. Instead of firing a single bullet or burst of energy, they fire a spray of plastic fletchettes. Needler ammunition consists of a small

block of plastic that the gun shreds and fires out at high velocity. Needlers always fire an automatic burst, just like an SMG. Any damage done by a needler is spread all across the body of the target, in the same way as flamer damage. Needlers can penetrate armor, but do not damage armor.

The three kinds of needlers available are the needler rifle, the needler pistol and the hold-out needler. The needler rifle is slightly larger than the pistol, having an extra handgrip connected at the front of the barrel. The needler rifle weighs 1 kilogram, the needler pistol weighs 300 grams, and the hold-out needler weighs 50 grams.

### Needler Pistol

Cost: 50 C-Bills  
Range: 1-3/NA/NA  
Shots: 10  
Reload: 1 C-Bill  
Damage: 1D6 + 2

### Needler Rifle

Cost: 75 C-Bills  
Range: 1-6/7/8  
Shots: 20  
Reload: 2 C-Bills  
Damage: 2D6 + 2

### Hold-Out Needler

Cost: 20 C-Bills  
Range: 1/NA/NA  
Shots: 5  
Reload: 1 C-Bill  
Damage: 1D6

## SONIC STUNNER (2/B)

The sonic stunner gun operates on a slightly different principle from the stunstick. It projects ultra high-frequency sound able to stun or render a target unconscious (see **Tranq Gun**). It only operates in direct line-of-sight, and is stopped by the first obstacle it hits. It does not affect inorganic material. Weight: 600 grams.

Cost: 100 C-Bills  
Range: 1-2/3-5/6-8  
Power Use: 4  
Damage: See description

## TRANQ GUN (1/B)

The tranquilizer gun is a small-bore rifle designed specifically to fire packets of small needles containing a powerful sedative. These needles will not penetrate armor, but will easily pass through cloth or mesh, dissolving in the target's bloodstream.

When the target is hit, make a Saving Roll of 2D6 - 2 against his BLD Score. If the roll fails, the character is knocked unconscious.

The tranq gun is most commonly used by civil peacekeeping forces, but is also used in sport hunting. (It was for use in sports and veterinary medicine that the gun was originally developed.) Weight: 1.5 kilograms.

Cost: 30 C-Bills  
Range: 1-2/3-4/5-6  
Shots: 10  
Reload: 1 C-Bill  
Damage: See description

## WEAPONS ACCESSORIES

### JAF-05 FLASH SUPPRESSOR (4/C)

The sophisticated flash suppressor, the JAF-05, was first developed in the Star League era. This system eliminates flash caused by the use of shell-firing rifles or grenade launchers. Furthermore, the JAF-05 can actually divert the "flash" caused by lasers. The absence of flash makes it more difficult for most BattleMech sensors to pick up the attacker's location.

The suppressor uses a prismatic deflector that catches the initial burst of photons produced when laser-beam-energy ionizes air. It then diverts that light energy in the direction set in the suppressor. The high-flash photons are set to collide 30 meters from where the laser was fired. The direction that the light can be channeled is adjusted by turning the entire suppressor assembly, and so it can be diverted down, up, or at some angle. The system is simple and has few moving parts, requiring little maintenance. Cost: 1,000 C-Bills.

If a weapon is fired in the dark, a character will immediately see the muzzle flash. However, characters must make a Perception Skill Roll to spot the muzzle flash of a weapon equipped with a JAF-05 Flash Suppressor. Use the following table to determine modifiers.

	Close	Medium	Long
Modifier	0	+2	+4
Range	1-10	11-20	21+

### SNIPER SCOPE (2/A)

Sniper scopes are low-power telescopic sights that magnify the firer's sight picture. Sometimes the scope has IR or starlight capabilities to enhance its night-combat abilities. Cost: 50 C-Bills. Starlight or IR-capable: 300 C-Bills.

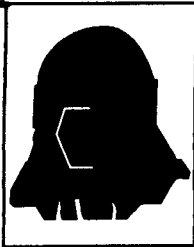
Sniper scopes may be mounted only on rifles. Using a sniper scope gives the firer a -2 target modifier to any To-Hit Roll. To gain this benefit, the firer must be braced and stationary. A normal scope may not be used at night. If the scope has IR or starlight capabilities, the -2 target modifier applies to the device's normal night To-Hit Modifiers.

### STARLIGHT SCOPE/GOGGLES (2/A)

Starlight scopes are used during night-fighting. They absorb light, including starlight, from the surrounding area, focusing it onto a small screen to show an illuminated view of the area. Starlight scopes are a fairly common item that have been standard-issue equipment to most front-line units for hundreds of years.

Starlight scopes are attached to weapons and are used in the same way as other scopes. Another version builds the scope right into a pair of goggles, which the user wears. Characters using starlight scopes in total darkness have a +4 rather than a +6 To-Hit Modifier for any shot at a range greater than 10 meters. Scopes used in partial darkness remove all partial-darkness penalties.

Sudden bursts of light will not damage the starlight scope or blind the wearer. The scope automatically shuts off when too much light enters the lens. Cost: 300 C-Bills.



## MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon Type	Skill Class	Damage	Power Usage
Cudgel/Blackjack	Unarmed Combat	1D6 + 1	
Club	Unarmed Combat	1D6 + 2	
Dagger/Knife	Blade	1D6 - 1	
Sword	Blade	2D6 + 2	
Bayonet	Blade	1D6 + 3	
Vibroblade	Blade	2D6	2/10 minutes
Vibrodagger	Blade	2D6	1/10 minutes
Stunstick	Blade	1D6 - 2 + special	2/10 minutes
Mini Stunstick	Blade	1D6 - 4 + special	1/10 minutes
Neural Whip	Blade	1D6 + special	

## PERSONAL WEAPONS TABLE: RANGED COMBAT

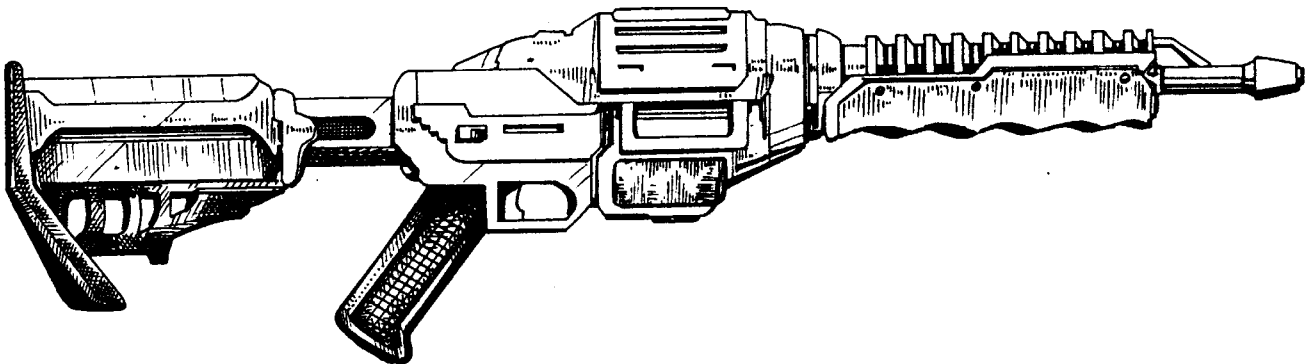
Weapon Type	Skill Class	Damage	Short	Medium	Long	Ammo
<b>Flamers</b>						
Flamer	Small Arms	2D6	1-2	3-4	5-6	12
Flamer Pistol	Small Arms	2D6	1-3	4-5	6-7	10
<b>Grenades*</b>						
Microgrenade	NA	2D6	1	2-3	4-6	1
Minigrenade	NA	3D6	1	2-3	4-6	1
Maxigrenade	NA	5D6	1	2-3	4-6	1
<b>Miscellaneous Weapons</b>						
Tranq Gun	Small Arms	special	1-2	3-4	5-6	10
Dart Gun	Small Arms	special	1-2	3-4	5-6	2
Sonic Stunner	Small Arms	special	1-2	3-5	6-8	Pwr Use: 4
<b>Needlers</b>						
Needler Pistol	Small Arms	1D6 + 2	1-3	NA	NA	10
Needler Rifle	Small Arms	2D6 + 2	1-6	7	8	20
Hold-Out Needler	Small Arms	1D6	1	NA	NA	5
<b>Primitive Ranged Weapons</b>						
Shortbow	Archery	1D6 + 1	1-2	3-5	6-8	1
Longbow	Archery	1D6 + 3	1-3	4-6	7-12	1
Lt. Crossbow	Archery	2D6	1-2	3-5	6-10	1
Hvy. Crossbow	Archery	2D + 3	1-3	4-7	8-13	1
<b>Pistols</b>						
Pistol	Small Arms	2D6 + 3	1-2	3-4	5-8	6
Auto-Pistol	Small Arms	2D6	1-2	3-4	5-8	10
Sternsnacht	Small Arms	4D6 + 2	1-2	3-4	5-12	3
Mydron	Small Arms	1D6 + 3	1-2	3-4	5-12	20
Hold-Out	Small Arms	1D6 + 3	1-2	NA	NA	5
<b>Rifles</b>						
Rifle	Small Arms	3D6	1-6	7-15	16-30	10
Fed. Long Rifle	Small Arms	2D6 + 2	1-8	9-18	19-33	10
Zeus Hvy. Rifle	Small Arms	6D6	1-7	8-18	19-28	5
<b>Submachine Guns</b>						
SMG	Small Arms	3D6	1-3	4-7	8-10	50
Rorynex SMG	Small Arms	3D6 + 3	1-3	4-6	7-9	100
Imperator SMG	Small Arms	2D6	1-4	5-8	9-11	50

# EQUIPMENT

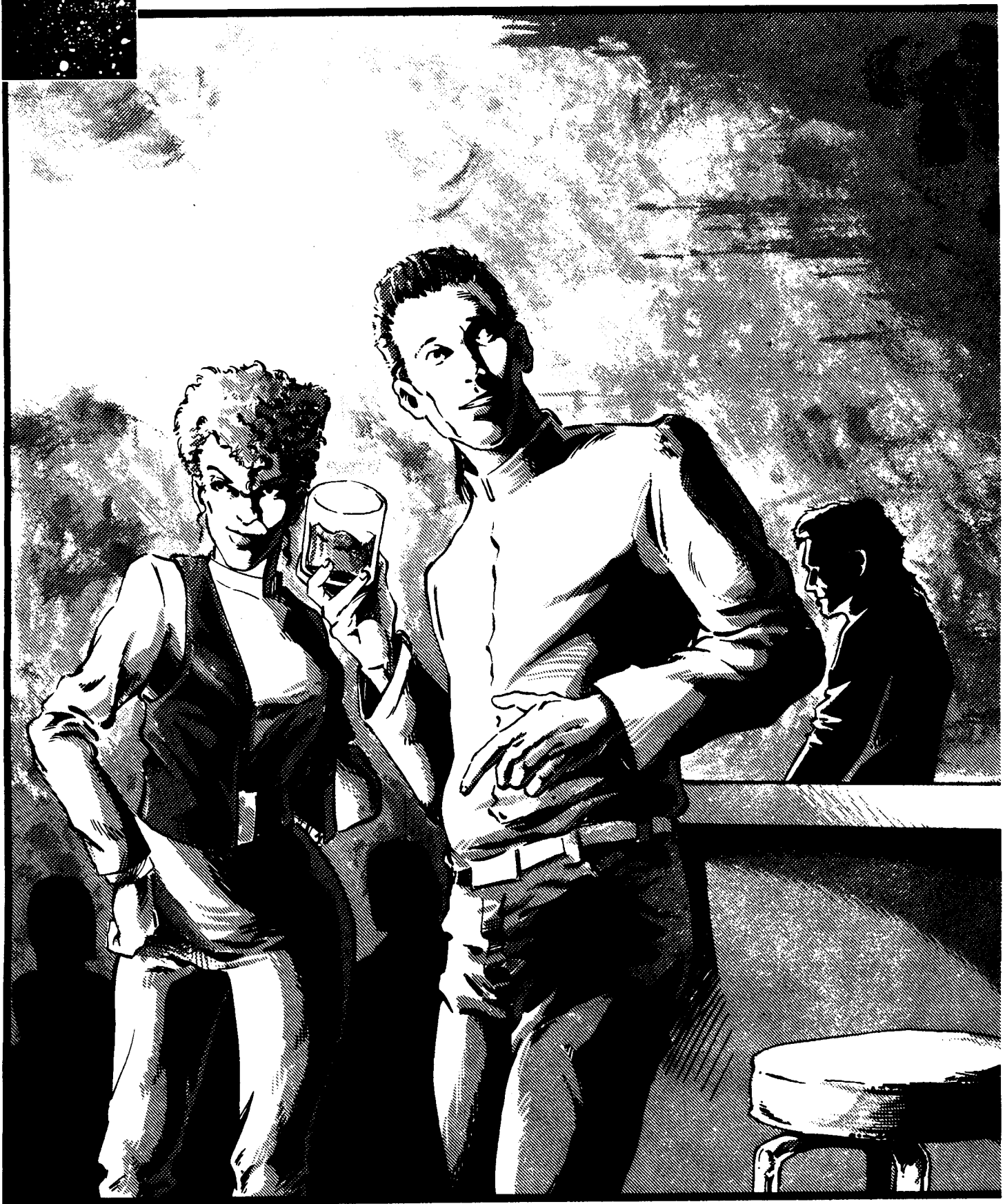
## PERSONAL WEAPONS TABLE: RANGED COMBAT (CONTINUED)

Weapon Type	Skill Class	Damage	Short	Medium	Long	Ammo
<b>Gyrojet Weapons</b>						
Gyrojet Rifle	Small Arms	3D6 + 6	1-12	13-36	37-72	10
Hvy. Gyrojet	Small Arms	6D6 + 6	1-12	13-36	37-72	5
Gyroslug Rifle	Small Arms	3D6 + 3	1-9	10-35	36-42	50
Gyroslug Car.	Small Arms	2D6 + 5	1-6	7-15	16-30	20
Gyrojet Pistol	Small Arms	3D6 + 3	1	2	NA	2
<b>Lasers</b>						
Laser Pistol	Small Arms	4D6	1-3	4-6	7-12	Pwr Use: 2
Hold-Out Pistol	Small Arms	2D6	1-2	3-4	5-6	Pwr Use: 3
Nakjama Pistol	Small Arms	3D6	1-4	5-9	10-14	Pwr Use: 1
Sunbeam Pistol	Small Arms	5D6	1-3	4-6	7-11	Pwr Use: 4
Laser Rifle	Small Arms	4D6 + 2	1-9	10-21	22-30	Pwr Use: 5
Intek Laser Rifle	Small Arms	2D6 + 2	1-12	13-30	31-51	Pwr Use: 2
Blazer	Small Arms	(4D6 + 2)x2	1-9	10-21	22-30	Pwr Use: 10
Pulse Laser Pistol	Small Arms	3D6	1-2	3-4	5-8	Pwr Use: 2 (per shot)
Pulse Laser Rifle	Small Arms	3D6 + 2	1-6	7-14	15-28	Pwr Use: 4 (per shot)
<b>Shotguns</b>						
Shotgun	Small Arms	3D6 + 2	1-3	4	5	2
Pump Shotgun	Small Arms	3D6 + 2	1-3	4-5	6-8	6
<b>Support Weapons</b>						
SRM Launcher*	Support Weapons	5D6 + 6	1-10	11-36	37-54	2
Hvy. SRM Launcher*	Support Weapons	10D6 + 6	1-15	16-40	41-48	1
Portable Rocket Launcher*	Support Weapons	4D6 + 6	1-6	7-16	17-36	1
Lt. Recoiless Rifle*	Support Weapons	3D6	1-12	13-25	26-35	5
Portable MG*	Support Weapons	4D6 + 3	1-10	11-20	21-42	15
Auto Grnd Launcher*	Support Weapons	2D6	1-6	7-15	16-25	10
Grnd Launcher *	Support Weapons	3D6	1-2	3-6	7-12	5
LAW *	Support Weapons	4D6 + 6	1-6	7-18	19-40	Cost: 350 C-Bills
V-LAW*	Support Weapons	2D6 + 3	1-4	5-12	13-25	Cost: 75 C-Bills

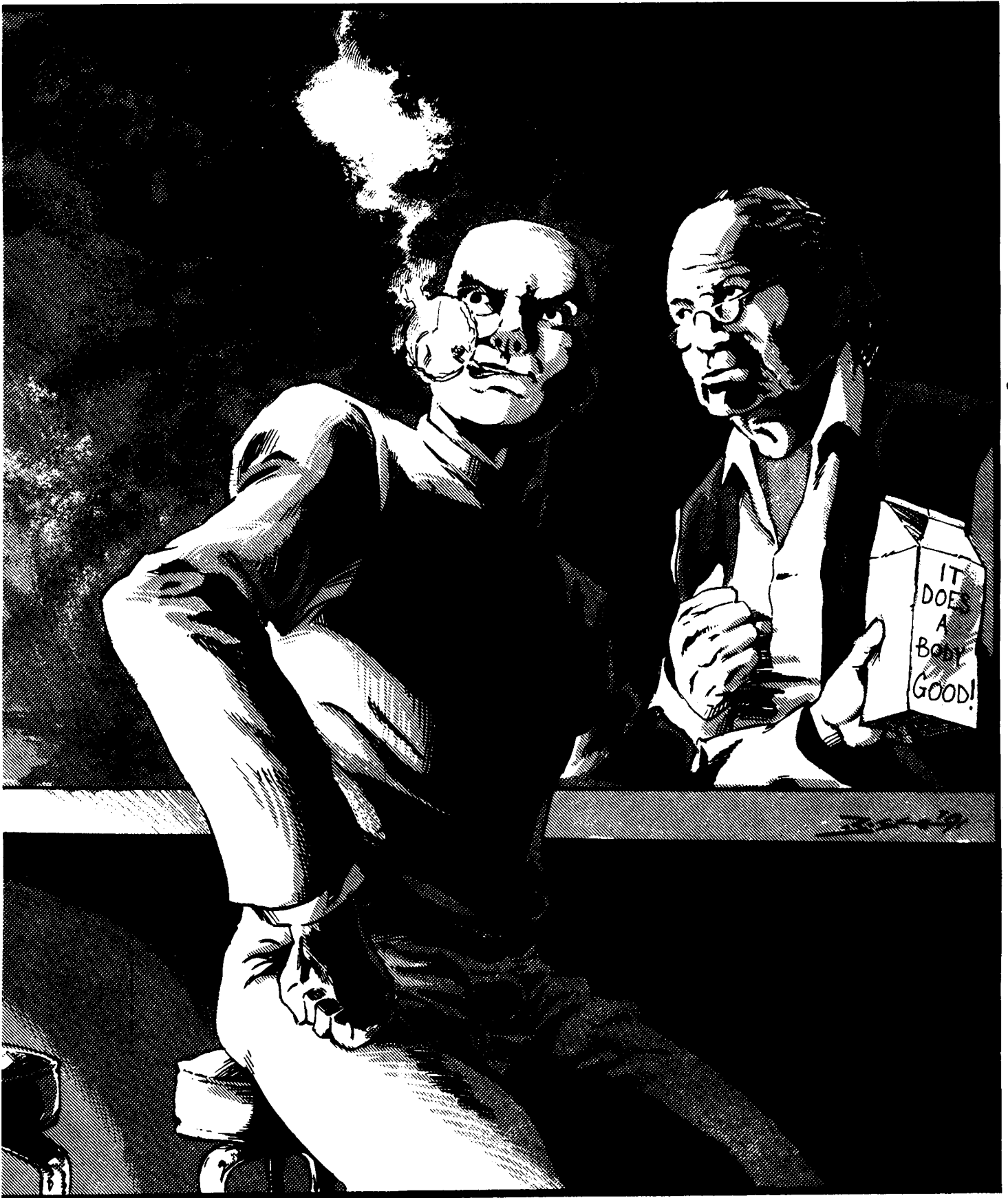
\* Area Effect Weapon

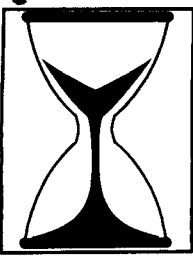


**THE BATTLETECH UNIVERSE**









# HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The fictional background on which **MechWarrior** is based has been developed in the numerous sourcebooks, novels, and adventure packs published in continuous expansion of the **BattleTech** game universe. This section presents an historical overview that lets players plunge immediately into the game universe. Additional detail is provided beginning on p. 115.

Anyone interested in delving even deeper into any events, persons, places, or technology mentioned in this historical overview can find all these and hundreds more described in vivid detail in the various **BattleTech** source and game materials. The Star League, for example, representing the golden age of man and technology, receives in-depth coverage in a book of the same name. Full-length books are also devoted to each of the Great Houses of the Inner Sphere and the Periphery. And these mentions barely scratch the surface. Millions of words have been published in the creation of the fictional **BattleTech** game background. The **BattleTech** novels alone (16 published to date, with more on the way each year) represent some of the richest source material. In many cases, the novels have been the prime vehicles for advancing the fictional history of the Successor States. A book like the **20-Year Update**, for example, only summarized events that brought the Inner Sphere to the brink of the Clan invasion. It is a handy reference to the political situation that was initially fleshed in rich detail via 5 novels. The current Clan invasion is being portrayed in the **Warrior** trilogy and the **Jade Phoenix** trilogy.

Those who DON'T want to delve deeper can still find everything they need to know about the **MechWarrior** game background in this book. Wherever these players feel the need for more detail, they can simply flesh it out imaginatively. **MechWarrior** and **BattleTech** are, after all, still a game.

## BREAKTHROUGH (2001-2100)

At the beginning of the 21st century, life on Terra had not changed much from what it had been at the close of the 20th century. Despite attempts at reconciliation in the 1990s, the planet's two giant superpowers still opposed one another, but now their tangled web of weaponry stretched outward into space. Over the next 100 years, however, the situation changed dramatically. By the end of the 21st century, the people of Terra stood poised in apparent unity on the brink of their first expansion into the stars.

Politically, humanity's new age began in 2011 when the bloody Second Soviet Civil War tore that nation permanently asunder. As the Soviet strife threatened to bring the rest of the planet to the brink of nuclear war, a joint force of North American and Western European troops intervened to end hostilities in 2014. This outcome greatly strengthened political ties between nations of the Western Alliance, resulting in a formal unification of Western military forces. By 2024, the Western Alliance included Japan, the newly liberated Eastern European nations, and the now-separate seven Russian states. Replacing the defunct United Nations as a world forum was the Alliance Parliament. As a vigorous sponsor of scientific research and space-exploration activities, the Alliance handsomely rewarded similar efforts by its member states.

As the economic benefits of Alliance membership became obvious, nation after nation petitioned the Parliament for membership status. By 2086, the Western Alliance had become the Terran Alliance, embracing more than 120 member-states. A complex formula based on date of entry, wealth, population, and military power determined each member's voting strength in Parliament.

The 21st century was an age of unsurpassed scientific innovation, most notably the development of fusion power as a major energy source. Alliance scientists built the first full-scale fusion reactor in 2020, and sent the first fusion-powered spacecraft from Terra to Mars in 2027. The voyage took only 14 days, a mere fraction of the five months the trip had previously required. Because of the fusion-power plant's efficiency, space vessels could now maintain higher-acceleration burns for much longer periods.

The development of efficient fusion drives made possible the first widespread exploration and exploitation of Terra's star system. By 2050, the Alliance had scientific outposts throughout the Sol system, had dispatched unmanned interstellar probes to several nearby stars, and had discovered habitable worlds around Tau Ceti, Epsilon Eridani, and Epsilon Indi. By this time, private multinational corporations also began to participate in spacefaring activity, establishing mining colonies in the asteroid belt, and even transporting entire asteroids from the belt to the Terra-Moon system. These corporations also engaged in technological research that resulted in breakthroughs such as the development of dense-but-lightweight materials for spacecraft and space-station construction and a variety of small, portable fusion reactors for equipment use.



# HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Not all the breakthrough research of the 21st century took immediate effect, however. Working together at Stanford University, America's Thomas Kearny and Japan's Takayoshi Fuchida published a series of papers from 2018–2021 that attacked the theoretical underpinnings of modern physics. The scientific community ridiculed their work, and both men died in obscurity before the century was half over. As has been the case with so many innovators, only future generations would respect and honor the value of these two men's daring research. It would be another 80 years before their theories would come to fruition.

Meanwhile, medical prosthetics research had led to the development of polyacetene fibers called "myomers." Under the influence of electricity, bundles of these fibers would contract strongly, like muscles. Unfortunately, the minimum bundle length required for the process was far longer than any human limb. This line of research would lie fallow for most of the next three centuries.

## EXODUS (2102-2313)

In 2102, scientists announced the greatest scientific breakthrough of the last two centuries, the theoretical prototype for a faster-than-light starship. Ironically, their work was based on the once-scorned theories of Kearny and Fuchida. The Terran Parliament authorized the Deimos Project, a crash program to develop an FTL drive. Although the Deimos Project culminated in the maiden voyage of the first FTL ship to Tau Ceti in 2108, the billions spent on it created resentment and even rioting in some of the poorer Alliance member-states. This rift in the apparent unity of Terra was never completely repaired, and the struggle between the "haves" and the "have-nots" would continue to plague the Alliance.

Shortly afterward, Alliance shipyards began producing FTL-drive colony ships. By 2116, the first permanent space colony was established on Tau Ceti IV (New Earth). As engineering improvements reduced the cost of building FTL ships, corporations and even dissident private groups began to acquire their own vessels to exploit the seemingly limitless potential of the stars. The Terran Parliament soon acted to place colonization under its sole authority, passing laws requiring that all colony ships have a Terran naval escort, and placing all colonies under Terran jurisdiction in the form of an Alliance-appointed governor. In 2172, the first Alliance Grand Survey reported the existence of more than 100 settled human colonies spread across a sphere 80 light years in diameter. The fourth survey, concluded in 2235, recorded the settlement of more than 600 worlds.

As more and more planets were settled, the colonists began to encounter the problem of impure water supplies suitable neither for human consumption nor for irrigation. As the costs of water purification equipment were prohibitive for most colony worlds, the lack of potable water tended to discourage new exploration. In 2177, however, entrepreneur Rudolph Ryan patented a process for transforming interplanetary tankers into FTL-driven "iceships" able to quickly transport huge icebergs across interstellar space. Within a few short years, the Ryan Cartel became the single most profitable enterprise within the Alliance, and its iceships stimulated the colonization of many worlds previously believed only marginally habitable.

With each expansion of human-occupied space, the time needed to transmit messages to and from Terra also increased,

making it difficult for Parliament to administer colony worlds directly. This forced the Alliance to delegate more authority to its appointed governors, who, in turn, had to grant extensive home-rule authority to colonists. When a coalition of colonies along the outer reaches of known space declared its independence in 2235, there began a bitter, 18-month battle with Terra, which became known as the Outer Reaches Rebellion. Much to its surprise, the Terran government lacked both the military resources and the political support needed to crush the rebellion.

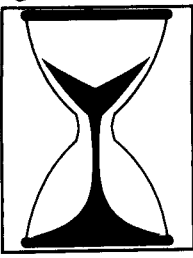
The loss of these rebel worlds set off a political crisis within the Alliance that ultimately resulted in a vote of no-confidence against the ruling Expansionist Party. Upon taking power, the new Liberal government withdrew Terran troops and administrators from all frontier worlds, granting the colonies independence, whether they wanted it or not. This isolationist policy soon proved just as unpopular as expansionism because of the resulting political turmoil and economic upheaval. By 2242, the boundary of Alliance holdings was no more than 30 light years from Sol, a single jump by an FTL-ship. For the next 70 years, neither major political party was able to establish parliamentary control on Terra, and their respective regimes alternated, falling as quickly as they rose.

To escape the constant political unrest and economic hard times, many of Terra's best and brightest began to migrate to the now-independent colonies during the latter half of the 23rd century. Later historians dubbed this period "the Exodus." Terrans colonized more than 1,500 new planets during the Exodus, extending the borders of the human-occupied space to more than 150 light years from Sol. With more and more of Terra's resources devoted to colonization, scientific research lagged. On the struggling colony worlds, too, the colonists were too pressed with the problems of survival to think much about developing new technology. Meanwhile, some of the ex-colonies were attempting to consolidate their independence by banding together for mutual support. In 2271, the Treaty of Marik was signed by three minor heads of state. Thus was born the Free Worlds League, the first of the great federations that would one day vie for power and dominion over all the rest.

## CONSOLIDATION (2314-2398)

The Terran Alliance ultimately collapsed beneath the weight of its own discontent in September 2314. When a short, vicious war broke out between rival Expansionist and Liberal factions, Fleet Admiral James McKenna intervened with Alliance military forces to halt the conflict.

McKenna was a proud, charismatic career officer with a spotless military record and a long family heritage of service to the Terran Alliance (and the Western Alliance before it). He was the archetypal hero, appearing at a critical juncture and turning the tide of history in a new direction. McKenna was determined to restore his native Terra to its former proud position as leader and progenitor of "Homo stelleris." After dissolving the Alliance, he declared himself ruler of a new state, the Terran Hegemony. Under his leadership, the Hegemony embarked on an active and successful campaign to restore Terra's political control over its former colonies. By the time of McKenna's death in 2339, the Hegemony had used military, political, and economic means to reassert its authority over more than 100 worlds.



## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In 2340, Michael Cameron, McKenna's nephew, was elected to succeed his uncle as Director-General. During Cameron's term of office, the Hegemony engaged in an ambitious, government-sponsored research effort. The first significant product of these efforts was the development of a prototype WorkMech, a fusion-powered mining vehicle that reproduced body movements through artificial muscle structure based on the myomer technology developed back in the 21st century.

The reemergence of Terra as both a political and scientific force created a new era of detente and relatively peaceful development for the whole human sphere. Starting with the Crucis Pact of 2317, a number of mutual-defense leagues and trade agreements similar to the Treaty of Marik were signed among worlds. Although most of these agreements granted member-worlds total sovereignty over internal matters, they also allowed more developed colonies to control poorer, younger neighbors. By the time the Hegemony and other states of the human sphere undertook the Grand Survey of 2389, ten separate states with strong central governments had emerged, each controlling worlds within communications range of their capitals. Six strong states had emerged in the "Inner Sphere," and other, smaller governments had sprung up at the fringes of colonized space, now known as "the Periphery." There were, however, frequent disputes over border worlds, especially those with ample water or mineral resources. This tended to make the boundaries of the various states a matter of tension or even war. As confrontations over these planets grew more frequent, an arms race followed, further exacerbating tensions throughout human space.

Though the other federations and states tried to follow the lead of the Hegemony in supporting new research activities, most lagged behind. In one other respect, however, the other governments mirrored the Hegemony absolutely: the creation of an hereditary leadership, embodied in a single ruling family. Commenting on this, social historians have argued that the dynastic form of rule probably offered a comforting reassurance after the chaos of the Exodus years.

### AGE OF WAR (2398-2550)

In 2398, a territorial dispute between the Capellan Confederation and the Free Worlds League erupted into a shooting war, as both ground and naval forces clashed in the Andurien system. This conflict was only the first of a dozen bloody but limited wars fought between 2398 and 2412 over ownership of key frontier worlds, the first such wars in more than a century. A new era of bloody conflict had begun.

In 2412, after a fierce battle in the Tintavel system resulted in thousands of civilian casualties, representatives of the ten states of the Inner Sphere and the Periphery met in the city of New Olympia on the planet Ares to discuss a remarkably chivalric set of interstellar laws governing the conduct of war. Instead of attempting to prevent war, the Ares Conventions sought to legitimize its conduct, banning it in heavily populated areas and prohibiting military disruption of civilian economies. All six states of the Inner Sphere signed the agreement, but only two of the Periphery States did so.

As a result of the Ares Conventions, war became almost a continuous fact of life in the 25th century. It was transformed, however. From being an awesomely destructive event, war was

now a curious, stylized feint and counterfeint in which outmaneuvered forces often surrendered rather than fight unfavorable odds. Compliance with the Conventions was almost universal, drastically reducing the human and economic costs of war. Unfortunately, it also promoted war as a means of resolving even the most minor dispute.

Throughout the next century and a half, the various interstellar states fought hundreds of little wars among themselves, all of them inconclusive. None of the governments was able to form either permanent, lasting alliances with one another or to establish long-term supremacy over its neighbors. Nevertheless, the hereditary governments of these states survived the years of violence surprisingly intact.

The one exception came in 2459, when the childless, unmarried Lady Durant, leader of the Rim Worlds Republic, named Terens Amaris her heir-apparent. In 2463, Lady Amaris succeeded Durant, and members of her line would rule in unbroken succession for almost three hundred years.

The Terran Hegemony had its fair share of battles during the Age of War. In 2431, Director-General Richard Cameron ordered his army to seize the Kentares system from the Federated Suns, and in 2475, it crushed a Free Worlds League invasion force at Oriente. In general, however, the leaders of the Hegemony hoped to avoid conflict, attempting to consolidate their power economically and technologically. Whatever the Hegemony's intentions, the state also became militarily superior with the invention of the BattleMech in 2439. Derived from the mining 'Mechs of the previous century and using the same myomer technology to power their movement, Terra's BattleMechs soon demonstrated greater mobility and adaptability to environments than conventional armored vehicles. They were also more heavily armed, with a full array of conventional and energy weaponry. The other states of the Inner Sphere also coveted 'Mech technology, but it only began to spread after a Lyran Commonwealth commando raid on the Hegemony 'Mech-production facility on Hesperus II in 2455. The Hegemony maintained superiority in the field, evolving new and better designs with more mobility and weaponry at lower cost and higher efficiency. Perhaps because of its military might, the Hegemony began to assume the role of mediator as the 25th century drew to a close.

### IMPERIUM AND REUNIFICATION (2551-2600)

A century and a half after the Age of War began, the Hegemony's role as mediator eventually brought an end to the wars through arbitration of a dispute between Houses Liao and Marik over the planet Andurien. (In an irony of history, these same two combatants had fought over this world 150 years earlier, initiating the Age of War.) Not only did Ian Cameron, 13th Director-General of the Hegemony, persuade the Capellan Confederation and the Free Worlds League to sign peace agreements, but he earned the friendship of their leaders, Terrence Liao and Albert Marik. In 2556, the three states signed the Clasp'd Hands Agreement, a secret subtreaty to the Andurien peace accords. The secret pact established special trade relations and promises of non-aggression. This led almost immediately to the Treaty of Geneva, which established these three as the founders of the Star League.

Between 2556 and 2569, Cameron used his mediator's skill to hammer out similar agreements with the Federated Suns, Lyran

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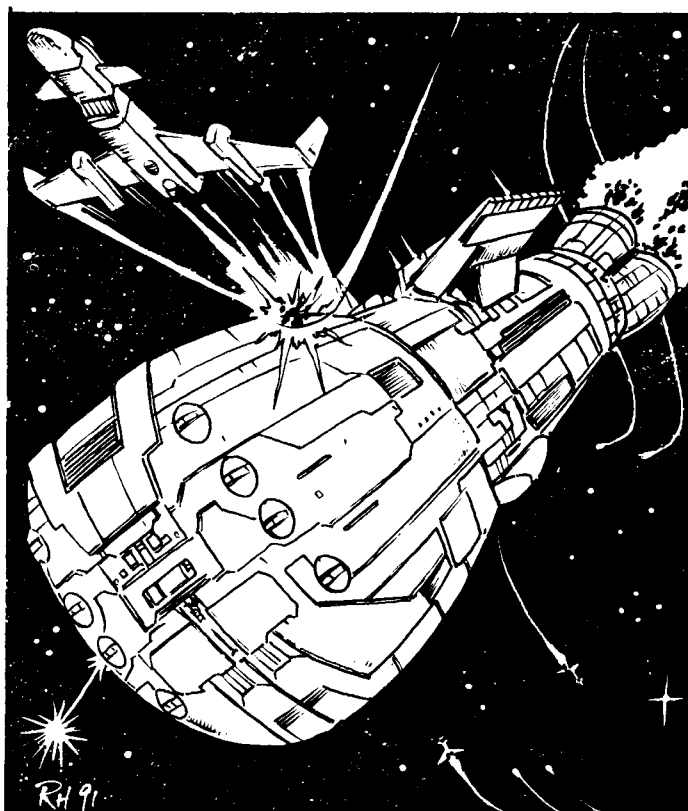
Commonwealth, and the Draconis Combine, the other three states within the borders of the Inner Sphere. In 2571, Cameron and the rulers of the other five states had established a new, unified hegemony called the Star League. In exchange for their recognition of Ian Cameron as First Lord of the Star League and arbiter of League foreign policy, the League Articles granted each of the other five leaders a seat on the High Council, autonomy over all domestic policy matters, and official sanction of the existing line of succession. Most important, all now had free access to the Terran military research apparatus.

The Periphery governments, on the other hand, wished to maintain their independence and resisted all diplomatic efforts to persuade them to join the League. These were the Outworlds Alliance, the Taurian Concordat, the Magistracy of Canopus, and the Rim Worlds Republic. Their traditions of autonomy were now centuries old, and they would fight to remain beyond the jurisdiction of the powerful Star League. The Periphery leaders began strengthening their militaries, knowing that confrontation was inevitable. In 2575, the Star League issued the Pollux Proclamation, ordering the Periphery states to join the League either voluntarily or by dint of force. Two months later, the Periphery states rejected the demand outright. In the next several years, the two sides fought a number of skirmishes and battles, but all-out war against the Periphery was not declared until 2578.

The Reunification War was a series of separate campaigns that lasted 20 long years and claimed more soldier and civilian lives than the entire Age of War. It finally ended in 2596, following the final bloody campaign that led to the surrender of the Taurian Concordat. In 2597, the four conquered Periphery states became Territorial States of the Star League. The League immediately launched a vast public-relations campaign aimed at building popular support for membership in the Star League among the people of the conquered territories. This effort was ultimately successful, with the League able to withdraw most of its garrison troops within ten years.

### THE GOOD YEARS (2601-2750)

During the 150 years following the Reunification War, the far-flung territories of the Star League experienced a new wave of scientific innovation and colonial expansion. To reduce the administrative problems caused by lengthy interstellar-communication lags, the Star League developed a vast and intricate network of communications relay stations employing FTL transmitters. Known as hyperpulse generators (HPGs), these transmitters were developed from technology based on Kearny-Fuchida hyperdrive principles. Research begun in 2615 came to fruition 15 years later when the first HPG message was successfully transmitted from Terra to the Lyran Commonwealth. The HPG was essentially a large "gun" that fired a high-frequency compressed pulse through K-F space at a target world. The pulse traveled the immense distance instantaneously, just like a faster-than-light spacecraft. Though the energy cost for a single transmission was of the same magnitude as for a jump by an FTL ship, an HPG pulse could travel up to 50 light years, while a ship could jump a maximum of 30 light years. When completed, the system effectively cut the average communication time between Terra and the Periphery from more than a year to about six months. (Communication time could be cut to days, but only at great cost.)

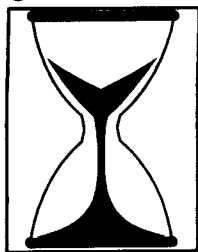


At the same time, League engineers developed a new, low-cost water-purification system. It was significantly cheaper to operate this system than to import water, making it economically feasible to settle Inner Sphere worlds previously ignored during the Exodus. The system also provided many settled worlds with an unexpected economic boon. The Ryan Cartel, the great iceship manufacturer and operator, was nearly driven bankrupt as fewer and fewer worlds relied on its services. By 2700, more than a thousand new worlds had been settled, and the Star League had expanded to control a sphere roughly 540 light years in diameter.

In a final important development, engineers working to improve BattleMech mobility were able to develop an improved, more efficient myomer. This improvement finally made it possible to construct artificial "bionic" limbs of human size, as well as full-scale, super-strong human exoskeletons for use in industry.

Spurred by the adoption of a universal currency and the removal of the artificial trade barriers imposed by the Age of War, trade and commerce also boomed. As prosperity grew, Star League worlds became increasingly interdependent. With development and transportation costs low, many planets evolved highly specialized economies that made them dependent on other worlds for basic commodities such as food, water-purification equipment, and replacement parts.

Only one major political crisis occurred during this golden age, and it was resolved fairly easily. In 2650, reports reached Terra that Tadeo Amaris, leader of the Rim Worlds Territorial-State, was expanding his personal army at an alarming rate. Michael Cameron,



having recently succeeded to the title of First Lord of the Star League, convened a special meeting of the Star League High Council, whom he persuaded to issue an edict restricting the size of personal military forces that any League member could raise. To back up this administrative action, Cameron gave Amaris a warning by sending several Star League Defense Force BattleMech regiments to conduct extended maneuvers just beyond the boundary of the Rim Worlds. Shortly after, League intelligence confirmed that Amaris had apparently disbanded his extra regiments. In truth, Amaris and other state leaders continued in secret to strengthen their militia and reserves. Though the Star League represented apparent unity among the stars, member-states continued to fight "Hidden Wars" during this "golden age" of peace and prosperity.

## CRISIS AND CIVIL WAR (2751-2784)

In February 2751, Simon Cameron, the fifth First Lord of the Star League, was accidentally killed during a mining-colony inspection on New Silesia, leaving his eight-year-old son Richard as sole heir. After deliberating for more than a month, the Star League High Council named young Richard as First Lord, but appointed Aleksandr Kerensky, commander of the Star League Defense Forces, as Regent and Protector. It soon became apparent, however, that the Council Lords perceived themselves as the Star League's true authority.

During the ten years of the Regency, the Council passed two edicts that would have far-reaching consequences for the League's future. The first was a reversal of Michael Cameron's Edict of 2650. This new edict allowed each League member-state to double the strength of its private forces, thus initiating a period of general military buildup. The second granted each of the six member-states ruled by the Council Lords a greater share of League revenues, while boosting the tax assessments on the four Territorial States. Not surprisingly, this second action provoked immediate unrest and rebellion in the Periphery, forcing Kerensky to strongly reinforce the Regular Army BattleMechs garrisoned there.

On February 9, 2762, First Lord Cameron reached his majority at age 18 and took his place on the Star League throne. A few days later, he issued Executive Order 156, ordering the complete disbandment of all private House armies. Enraged, the Council Lords wasted no time striking down the Order 156 as unconstitutional, eventually forcing young Cameron to rescind it. Only Stefan Amaris, ruler of the Rim Worlds State, supported Richard's initiative.

Relations between the High Council and the First Lord further deteriorated when Richard dissolved the High Council in 2762, vowing to rule by decree. The next year Richard's Taxation Edict of 2763 further burdened the Periphery's finances, escalating civil unrest. When the people of the Periphery rejected the Edict, Richard ordered General Kerensky to the frontier to cow the Territories into submission. In 2764, Stefan Amaris signed a secret agreement with Richard, pledging to defend Terra in the event of trouble. When even more troops, including Cameron household units, were sent to the frontier following the secession of New Vandenberg and 17 other Periphery worlds in April 2765, the secret agreement seemed almost prophetic.

By 2766, three-quarters of the Regular Army was engaged along the Periphery. On Terra, troops borrowed from Stefan's household guard replaced the Regular units sent to New Vandenberg, eventually outnumbering Regular forces remaining on Terra. In late December of that year, Amaris seized his chance, assassinating Lord Richard Cameron as well as every other man, woman, and child with a drop of Cameron blood, simultaneously moving his troops against Terra and the other worlds of the Terran Hegemony. On the first day, 95 of the 103 planets fell to the surprise attack. In January 2767, Amaris declared himself First Lord of the Star League. News of this coup did not reach Kerensky until May of 2767 when Stefan's forces completed their takeover of the Terran Member-State, and Amaris reopened communications contact. Kerensky immediately imposed a cease-fire with all Periphery realms except the Rim Worlds Republic, while declaring war against the usurper. Both Amaris and Kerensky called on the Council Lords to aid their cause, but none would commit to either side.

In August 2767, Kerensky took the Rim Worlds Republic, then advanced on the Terran Hegemony worlds Amaris had captured. The ensuing struggle lasted twelve grueling years, but Kerensky's forces inexorably advanced from world to world, finally liberating Terra itself on September 3, 2779. On the last day of that month, Kerensky captured Amaris, who ordered all his troops to surrender. In retaliation for Stefan Amaris' murder of the Camerons, Kerensky executed the usurper and his entire family in November 2779. The civil war was over, but the Star League Army had taken horrifying losses, dropping from 486 divisions to 113. One hundred million had died, four times that number were wounded, and ten times more left homeless. Equally disastrous was the severe damage to the interstellar communications network, the lifeblood of the Star League.

Kerensky proclaimed himself Protector of the Realm once more, and invited the High Council to reconvene on Terra. Fearing Kerensky's popularity, the High Council immediately removed the general from his post as Protector, ordering him to disperse his Regular Army troops to create garrisons for the Terran Member-State worlds. The Council also appointed Jerome Blake as Minister of Communications, charging him with the restoration of the League's communications network, an effort that would succeed beyond the Lords' wildest intentions. (See **ComStar**, p. 141.) Kerensky, meanwhile, returned to New Earth, temporary headquarters of the Star League army. Though his troops were ready to help him overthrow the High Council, Kerensky refused to betray the Star League, the only government that ever united humanity under one banner.

The High Council, however, could make no boasts about unity. Each Council Lord asserted his own claim to the Star League throne, until all were exhausted by the futility of the struggle. On August 12, 2781, they officially dissolved the High Council, each Lord returning home determined to build his own army in order to seize power for himself. As the former Council Lords of the Star League built up their militaries, many remnants of Stefan Amaris' former regiments found new employment as mercenaries. Soon the Lords were attempting to buy the services of Regular Army regiments as well.

When Kerensky attempted to prevent the leaders of the Great Houses from their recruitment efforts among the SLDF, they called for his resignation. Instead, he summoned more than 100 division commanders and an equal number of lesser officers to a secret

meeting on New Earth, on February 14, 2784. After this meeting, League quartermasters spent the next six months quietly acquiring more than 200 transports as well as supplies and parts. The preoccupied Council Lords took no heed until mid-summer when they began to notice troop movements in the Periphery. On July 8, Kerensky flashed a one-word order to the ships assembled at the New Earth jump point and to those assembled above 50 other stars throughout the Inner Sphere. The one word was, "Exodus." More than a thousand ships made jumps that day. On November 5, this massive fleet had made its way to the New Samarkand system in the Draconis Combine. Eighty percent of the Star League army had chosen to join their fates to that of Kerensky. It took a whole day for the enormous armada to make its combined jumps out of the system. From that day on, Kerensky and his fleet disappeared into the dark embrace of the Periphery, apparently abandoning the Inner Sphere forever.

## THE SUCCESSION WARS (2785-3030)

Kerensky's dramatic exodus removed the last real obstacle to civil war. In December 2786, Minoru Kurita declared himself First Lord of the Star League, and the other four Council Lords quickly followed suit. Within months, war had engulfed the entire Inner Sphere.

The First Succession War lasted from 2787 to 2821, a conflagration of unparalleled brutality. The warring Lords of the five Great Houses cast aside the Ares Conventions, smashing cities, destroying vital industrial facilities, and butchering hundreds of millions of civilians. Few worlds escaped unscathed, and all were affected by the complete disruption of trade, commerce, and communications. By 2815, the warring states had lost most of their FTL shipbuilding capacity. The intense concentration of economic resources into military production had also forced a major drop in consumer goods production, creating a severe decline in trade. This loss of trade proved particularly disastrous for those worlds relying on high-tech water purification equipment. Without proper maintenance or spare parts, many of these facilities began to fail, forcing abandonment of the worlds or a return to iceship technologies. By the war's end in 2821, water-rich planets had become as strategically valuable as they had been 400 years before.

The peace of 2821 was uneasy, resulting more from exhaustion than any true reconciliation. Though no House Lord could claim to have made much progress toward his goal of dominion, too many atrocities had occurred to allow any sort of lasting settlement. From 2821 through 2827, the five surviving ruling Houses rebuilt as much of their military might as possible, concentrating their surviving scientists and engineers on those few worlds whose industrial capacity remained intact. Between 2828 and 2830, tensions along the borders of each rival state erupted, leading once more to all-out war.

The Second Succession War lasted from approximately 2830 to 2864, and was just as deadly, destructive, and indecisive as its predecessor. Hundreds of millions more died in countless battles across the Inner Sphere, though only a few dozen worlds ultimately changed hands. As the war destroyed more industrial facilities and killed off more scientists and engineers, some types of specialized knowledge and technology began to disappear entirely. By the end

of the Second Succession War, what had become known as the Successor States' overall level of technological knowledge had sunk to a level barely above that of Terra in the early 21st century. It was no longer easy to build advanced computers, large fusion-power plants, or starships. Instead, the leaders of the Successor Houses began to cannibalize existing equipment for the spare parts necessary to keep their current war machines in working order.

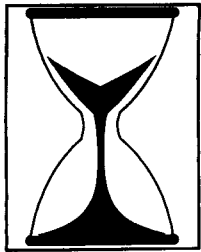
After a second brief respite, the Third Succession War erupted in 2866. It began when advance forces of the Draconis Combine invaded the coreward portion of the Lyran Commonwealth; war soon spread across the Inner Sphere. In the years that followed, combat became such a fact of everyday life that the period has become known simply as "the Succession Wars." Nonetheless, campaigns during this period never matched the violence of the previous two wars.

At first, the decrease in destruction and bloodshed appeared to be more a function of each army's reduced resources than a philosophical change in tactics. As time passed, however, and the exigencies of a scavenger economy took hold, each of the Houses realized it could ill afford further losses of vital resources. Gradually, an informal set of rules of war evolved, similar to the Ares Conventions. 'Mech units and armies still fought over possession of operational factories, but neither side attempted to harm the facility itself. (The losers simply consoled themselves with the idea that they would win the planet in the next war.) Major 'Mech battles, especially between mercenary units, were often fought in stages, with both sides allowing enemy Techs to enter the battlefield during periods of truce to attend to damaged 'Mechs. Other 'Mech units, again especially mercenaries, revived the old tradition of surrendering to a superior force and paying a ransom to obtain their off-world release. Most important, everyone recognized the sanctity of any side's JumpShips, and strictly obeyed the prohibition against attacking such craft. After all, without JumpShips, the war for supremacy could not be waged at all.

A second outgrowth of the destructiveness of the Succession Wars was the rise of feudalism throughout the Inner Sphere. The central governments of the ruling Houses no longer possessed either the administrative machinery or absolute military resources to maintain centralized control over their territories. Instead, each House Lord ruled a hierarchy of planetary nobles. These nobles were often drawn from the leadership of his most elite 'Mech units, having won full authority over worlds in exchange for the pledged service of their BattleMechs.

Indeed, the years of conflict wreaked havoc beyond the borders of the Successor States, creating the phenomenon known as the Bandit Kings of the Periphery. As the wars raged back and forth along the frontier, dozens of 'Mech units—most often composed either the fragments of defeated units or mutinous mercenaries—fled into the vastness of the Periphery. Several of these units emerged again, often after a number of years, as "kings" of one or more small worlds seized by force of arms. By the end of the 30th century, more than 60 known small kingdoms and principalities ringed the Inner Sphere, creating the ever-present threat of raids and piracy to the frontier worlds of each Successor State.

This era of tentative stability lasted for roughly a century. Interestingly, it was a call for lasting peace that marked the end of a relative balance of power among the Great Houses and began



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the ferocity of the Fourth Succession War. Recognizing humanity's slow but steady slide away from the glories of the Star League era and toward barbarism, Archon Katrina Steiner of the Lyran Commonwealth issued a Peace Proposal to the other House leaders in 3020. Only Hanse Davion, Prince of the Federated Suns, welcomed the initiative. Announcing that he would "take history by the throat," Davion began negotiations with the Archon. The result of these talks was the Federated-Commonwealth Alliance Document, which Prince Hanse Davion and Archon Katrina Steiner signed on Terra in 3022. In addition to trade and military agreements, the F-C Document contained a secret provision betrothing the Archon's daughter in marriage to Hanse Davion. Though the marriage would not occur until the twelve-year-old Melissa came of age, this was the first step on the road to eventual unification of the Lyran Commonwealth and the Federated Suns.

The other three Successor Lords were aghast at this sudden shift of power, which would lead to the eventual creation of a single state nearly as large as their three Houses combined. In October 3022, the Draconis Combine, the Free Worlds League, and the Capellan Confederation hastily signed the Concord of Kapteyn. The scope of the Concord was not as far-reaching as the F-C Document, however. It called mainly for an end to active hostilities between the three states, who now pledged mutual defense instead. This new relationship would also permit the three parties to coordinate their overt and covert efforts at derailing the Davion-Steiner alliance.

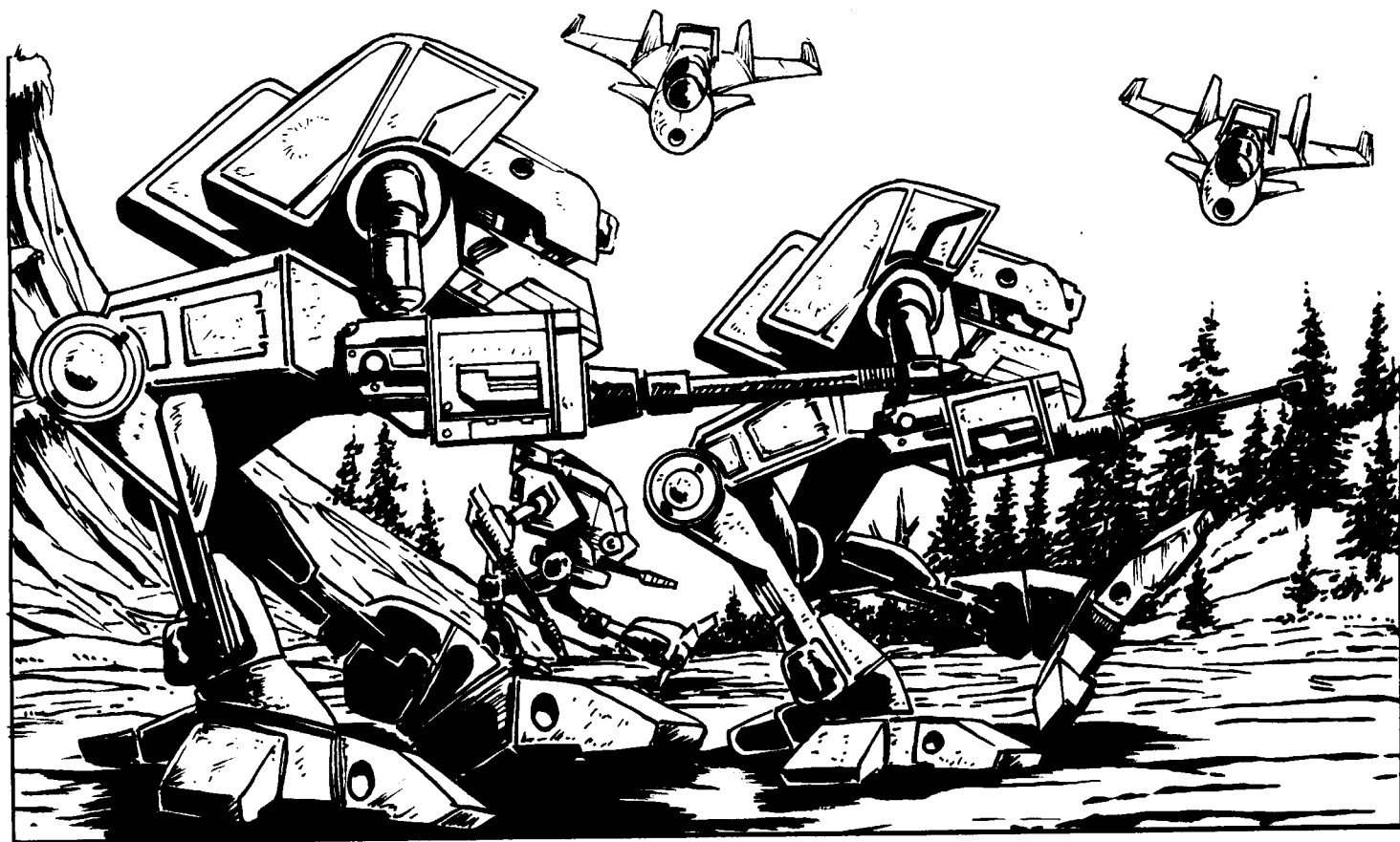
Perhaps most active in the covert attempts was the Capellan

Confederation under the leadership of Chancellor Maximilian Liao. Liao agents had already subverted Hanse Davion's brother-in-law, Michael Hasek-Davion, who was now providing them with valuable military intelligence. When the Chancellor next initiated a scheme to kidnap and kill Hanse Davion in order to replace him with a clone his scientists had created, he went too far. Davion eventually escaped capture and imprisonment and returned to his place on the throne. But he vowed revenge.

On 20 August 3028, Prince Hanse Davion and Archon-Designate Melissa Steiner were married at the ComStar headquarters on Terra. In attendance were all the important Steiner, Davion, Kurita, Marik, and Liao personages, as well as the great military commanders and other important persons of the Inner Sphere. Hanse and Melissa exchanged vows, and the Federated Commonwealth became a reality. At the wedding reception, the bride toasted the groom and bestowed him with gifts. When it was the groom's turn, he rose with a smile. In honor of their marriage, he said that he had for Melissa a vast prize. "Here, my love," the Prince of the Federated Suns said triumphantly, "I give you the Capellan Confederation."

And so began Operation Rat, a surprise attack on nine Capellan worlds that was occurring that very day. But this was only the beginning of a much larger offensive against the Capellans and against the Draconis Combine—the start of the Fourth Succession War.

The main weight of the attack fell on the Capellan Confederation. Having discovered Michael Hasek-Davion's treachery, Hanse Davion had been using him as a conduit to feed faulty intelligence





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to Maximilian Liao. In addition, Davion had managed to place Justin Allard, a Davion agent, in a position of power and authority in House Liao's military intelligence. The Capellan Confederation did not have a chance, and lost half its worlds.

The Draconis Combine fared a bit better, losing 53 star systems to the invading Lyran Commonwealth forces, but gaining 15 from attacks against the Federated Suns. Indeed, Theodore Kurita, heir to the Combine throne, was preparing to launch his own strong counteroffensive just as the war suddenly ground to a halt. Having achieved most of their objectives in the Capellan Theater of Operations, Hanse Davion and Katrina Steiner declared victory and a cease-fire in 3030. Each had his or her reason for wanting an end to the hostilities. The economy of the Federated Suns was reeling under an interdiction on interstellar communications that ComStar had imposed. As for Katrina, her realm was threatened by the growing power of separatists who opposed the Federated Commonwealth alliance.

Though the two-year-long Fourth Succession War was relatively short, it was a bloody conflict. Despite the constant border fighting that characterized the Third Succession War, the great states of the Inner Sphere had by then recovered somewhat from the ravages of the first two Succession Wars, and the political and social landscape had not much changed. In contrast, it would be 20 years before all the social, political, and military effects of the Fourth Succession War could sort themselves out.

In 3029, ComStar came under the leadership of Primus Myndo Waterly. The communications interdiction, which had been imposed on the Federated Suns after an alleged Davion attack on the ComStar station at Sarna, was lifted after Hanse Davion granted ComStar the right to garrison all its Federated Suns stations with its own troops. Similar arrangements with the other governments of the Inner Sphere soon followed. By the year 3050, ComStar had more than 50 BattleMech regiments under its control.

The boundaries of the Inner Sphere began to shift as a result of the war. In the Free Worlds League, the Duchy of Andurien seceded and allied itself with the Magistracy of Canopus. Ten years would pass and both Captain-General Janos Marik and his son Duggan Marik would die before Thomas Marik, the new leader of the Free Worlds League, would recover the Duchy.

Maximilian Liao went mad during the closing days of the war, eventually committing suicide in 3036. With over half of Liao's planets under the control of the newly formed Federated Commonwealth, the mantle of the Capellan Chancellorship fell on the shoulders of Maximilian's youngest daughter, Romano Liao. Despite losing more worlds when the St. Ives Compact seceded from the Confederation, Romano used sheer ruthlessness and brutality to fight off an invasion by the Duchy of Andurien and to rebuild the Liao military. Though the Capellan military did not approach its pre-Fourth War numbers, it became feared for the utter fanaticism of its troops.

Secession fever also reached into the Federated Commonwealth and the Draconis Combine. As Deputy for Military Affairs, Theodore Kurita skillfully maneuvered to turn the Combine's rebellious Rasalhague District into a bargaining chip with ComStar. In exchange for Rasalhague's independence and the right to garrison its hyperpulse stations with its own troops, ComStar agreed to supply the Kuritans with enough BattleMechs to rebuild their army. The Lyran Commonwealth, which had used Rasalhague rebels

extensively during the four Succession Wars, had by now occupied more than half the district. Faced with the Combine's support for Rasalhague independence, the Lyrans were forced to give up these worlds. With the stroke of a pen, Theodore Kurita created a neutral buffer state that reduced his borders with the armed might of the Federated Suns by more than 30 percent. Not all Kurita troops supported the move, however. A rebellion known as the Ronin Wars erupted inside the Free Rasalhague Republic, but it was quickly put down by loyal elements of the Draconis Combine Mustered Soldiery and the Republic's newly formed KungsArmé.

Theodore Kurita's wisdom in granting Rasalhague its freedom became clear in 3039. In that year, the Federated Commonwealth launched another major war, this one aimed at eliminating the Combine once and for all. Having rebuilt his army with ComStar-supplied BattleMechs, Kurita was able to concentrate his troops against the invaders, stopping the F-C forces' attack dead in their tracks.

By 3040, the Inner Sphere had settled down to its normal state of continual, low-intensity skirmishing, with no side making any major gains or taking any major losses. Nevertheless, the sheer size of the Federated Commonwealth made it seem only a matter of time before it would dominate the Inner Sphere, uniting the many worlds once more under one rule.

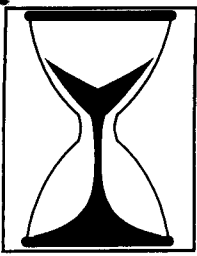
## RETURN OF KERENSKY

If Davion and Steiner thought their day had come, they were not destined to have all the time they needed. In 3050, an entirely new force entered the scene, and from a most unexpected direction.

When General Aleksandr Kerensky fled the Inner Sphere with most of the Star League Regular Army in 2784, he led his followers to a group of five previously unsettled worlds far from the Inner Sphere. The inhospitality of those worlds did much to forge Kerensky's followers into the almost preternaturally determined people now known as the Clans. So did the privations they suffered because the ratio of their laborers, scientists, and administrators was disproportionately low compared to the number of soldiers among them. To trim the number of warriors, Kerensky established a series of tests so grueling that only the most fit could succeed. Those who failed were retired out to civilian life. This was only fitting, for the general taught that it was his people's duty to remain strong, so that one day, after the Inner Sphere had exhausted itself with war, his followers might return as the saviors of humanity to reestablish the Star League on Terra.

But not everyone was ready for the privations that Kerensky demanded of his people if they were to survive. Initially, only a few officers rebelled, and Kerensky quelled their rebellion forcefully, not hesitating to execute the instigators. Just before Kerensky's death, however, tensions finally erupted into a civil war as destructive as any war among the Successor States. In the face of this conflict, Kerensky's son Nicholas gathered together those still loyal to his father's dream, including as many scientists and technicians as possible. In yet another Exodus, yet another Kerensky retreated to another cluster of worlds to let the rebels fight things out.

While the Succession Wars of the Inner Sphere resulted in the loss of much precious technology, this civil war was even more disastrous for the exiles, for whom technology meant the difference between life and death in the hostile environments of their new



## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

home. Nicholas used the war as an object lesson for his followers. He and his followers had only to remain true to their duty, for one day the Successor States would also collapse

from within. During the 20 years it took for the rebels to exhaust themselves, Nicholas built the caste system, transforming his followers into a full-fledged warrior culture. By the time they returned to reclaim the five planets of their now-exhausted rebel brethren, the followers of Nicholas had become fanatically devoted to both their leader and his vision of one day returning to save the Inner Sphere.

In 3005, the Clans took the first steps toward realizing the dream of restoring the golden age of the Star League. Realizing they needed intelligence about events during their long absence from the Inner Sphere, they sent Wolf's Dragoons to the Successor States, where the unit was to operate covertly as an information-gathering unit while working overtly as mercenaries. Based on Dragoon reports, the Clans took the Successor States to be little more than children squabbling among the ruins of their ancestors, using out-dated technology to do so. In 3050, the Clans decided it was time to launch a full-fledged invasion.

The invasion forces from Clan Wolf, Ghost Bear, Smoke Jaguar, Jade Falcon, Nova Cat, and Steel Viper tore a wedge through Rasalhague, the Lyran Commonwealth, and the Draconis Combine, a wedge aimed directly at Terra. While the forces of the Inner Sphere were able to claim a small victory on Twycross and also defeated the Clan invasion of Luthien, the Combine capital world, nothing seemed able to stop the Clans' advance toward humanity's birthworld and the home of ComStar, the planet Terra.

Though the Clans were in the midst of an invasion, their own ranks were divided over the question. The two sides were represented by what are called the Wardens and the Crusaders. The Crusaders pushed to take the Inner Sphere by force, while the Wardens interpreted Aleksandr Kerensky's vision as one of protecting Star League knowledge until the Successor States had matured enough to accept it once again. The Crusaders won the vote to launch the invasion, but the Wardens were not without resources. Through the medium of Wolf's Dragoons, they began preparing the states of the Inner Sphere to resist the coming invasion. Ironically, they also worked hard to lead the invasion, so that they might ameliorate the damage done to captured worlds.

Humanity had another self-proclaimed savior beside the Clans, this one within the Inner Sphere. Persuaded of its destiny to rule a united humanity, ComStar cooperated with the invading Clans, administering the conquered worlds and providing intelligence. The Primus of ComStar hoped in this way to play the Clans against the Successor States, letting them exhaust one another in war, leaving the way open for ComStar to step in and take power. It was only after learning of the Clans' intention to conquer Terra that ComStar reacted aggressively.

Anastasius Focht, Precentor Martial of ComStar's military, challenged ilKhan Ulric Kerensky to a Trial of Possession. The planet Tukayyid would be the site of the battle, but it would be a proxy for the battle's real prize: possession of Terra. On 1 May 3052, 50 ComStar BattleMech regiments and a host of lesser units met 25 Galaxies of the dreaded Clan invaders on Tukayyid. For some 20 days, these forces threw themselves at one another in a conflagration unsurpassed in the annals of war. In the end, ComStar emerged victorious over the Clans. Terra was safe for the time

being, for Focht had won a promise from the ilKhan that the Clans would halt their invasion for the next 15 years.

Upon his return to Terra, the Precentor Martial found that Primus Waterly had betrayed him. Not trusting in the military capabilities of her Precentor Martial, she had violated the agreement with the Clans by trying to seize the worlds that her people administered for them. She had also attempted to interdict interstellar communications throughout the Inner Sphere, hoping to cause a complete collapse of all authority but her own. Unfortunately for the Primus, some of the leaders of the Inner Sphere had obtained intelligence on the planned interdiction and they had seized ComStar hyperpulse stations on their worlds before the plan could go into effect. The rebellions on most Clan-occupied worlds were stillborn, and the few that succeeded were quickly brought back under Clan control after the battle of Tukayyid.

When confronted with Waterly's treachery, Focht did what his honor demanded. He executed Primus Myndo Waterly and seized control of ComStar. He then made Sharilar Mori, Precentor Dieron, the new Primus while he worked to restore ComStar to its role of guardian, repository, and disseminator of human knowledge. Though control of the HPG stations will again return to ComStar, it will be under the supervision of the Successor Houses. Some members of ComStar oppose this secularization, but Focht currently holds the upper hand.

In the Federated Commonwealth, joy over the Clan defeat was tempered with grief. On 17 June 3052, Hanse Davion, Duke of New Avalon, Prince of the Federated Suns, died quietly of heart failure. His son Victor Steiner-Davion succeeds him.

The Capellan Confederation also lost its leader, Romano Liao, but her death came at the hands of an assassin. Unlike their Davion counterparts, the vassals of House Liao breathed a sigh of relief as Sun-Tzu Liao took over the Chancellorship and repealed some of his mother's more repressive laws.

This, then, is the situation at present. The Clans have captured a large wedge of worlds from the Draconis Combine, the Free Rasalhague Republic, and the Steiner side of the Federated Commonwealth. Under the terms of the Trial of Possession for Terra, the Clans have vowed not to advance any further into the Inner Sphere for 15 years. That vow does not, however, prevent them from raiding into the Combine or the old Lyran Commonwealth. With the death of Hanse Davion, Victor Davion became ruler of the Federated Suns, and will soon be invested as Archon Prince of the united Federated Commonwealth. The Combine has been bloodied but not bowed. Under the leadership of Coordinator Takashi Kurita and his Warlord Theodore Kurita, the Combine is girding itself for more wars with the Clans. Meanwhile, ComStar faces what can only be described as a schism, with many of its Adepts and Acolytes streaming into the Free Worlds League of Thomas Marik, himself once a member of ComStar. Thomas, fearing that the Federated Commonwealth will now turn its might against his state, has agreed to a marriage between his daughter and designated heir Isis to Sun-Tzu Liao. He hopes thus to meld the fanaticism of the Confederation with the growing industrial might of the League. Because Thomas does not entirely trust his future son-in-law, he welcomes the presence of the disenchanting members of ComStar, whose fanatic loyalty to him could counterbalance the greed and ambition of Sun-Tzu.

After 300 years, the Inner Sphere is still at war.

# THE SUCCESSOR STATES

No matter to whom **MechWarrior** player characters owe their allegiance, the vast majority of their adventures will likely take place within the Inner Sphere. With the exception of ComStar's holdings, the Inner Sphere is virtually synonymous with the Successor States (ignoring for the moment the wedge of Inner Sphere worlds presently held by the Clans). For this reason, gamemasters of **MechWarrior** will need a grasp of the history, politics, and important personalities of those star empires.

## FEDERATED COMMONWEALTH

When Prince Hanse Davion and Archon Katrina Steiner signed the May 3022 Federated Commonwealth Alliance Document that would one day make their two states into one powerful nation, they must have foreseen the inevitability of war. The other Great House leaders could not help but tremble at the thought of the united military and economic might of the future Federated Commonwealth. A preemptive strike on their part would be out of the question; such an operation was beyond the scope of the capabilities of the signers of the Kapteyn Concord. Covert action, however, was well within their means.

It was one such action that the Davions have cited as justification for the war. In 3025, agents of the Capellan Confederation kidnapped Hanse Davion and placed a cloned imposter on the throne. To accomplish this, the Capellans had wiped out the man's own personality and replaced it with their version of "Davion." The Prince eventually escaped his captors, secretly made his way back to his court, and managed to prove his identity. The plot was never revealed to the public, but Davion vowed revenge. According to Romano Liao, her father, Maximilian Liao, received a message from Hanse Davion at the close of the Fourth Succession War. The message declared that the reason Davion had set his army against the Confederation, killing thousands of soldiers and visiting horror on untold millions, was revenge for what Liao had tried to do to Davion and for the destruction of another man's identity in order to create the Davion clone. Whatever Davion's desire for revenge, he and Katrina Steiner must also have envisioned their banner unifying the whole Inner Sphere, by one means or another. At the start of the Fourth Succession War, the Federated Commonwealth was only a pledge between Houses Steiner and Davion. By the time the war ended, it was a political fact.

Some opposition to the alliance still exists, however, much of it from factions within the two allied Houses. The death of Hanse Davion and the eventual accession of Victor to the Federated Commonwealth throne will not dampen that opposition. The Federated Suns and the Lyran Commonwealth have each been in existence for roughly seven centuries. If their alliance is to succeed, it will have to develop a similar strong identity to which its people can feel allegiance.

## FEDERATED SUNS

The Federated Suns was founded in 2317 by Lucien Davion, Prime Minister of New Avalon, when he negotiated a mutual defense and assistance agreement, known as the Crucis Pact, with 20 nearby star systems. Lucien became the federation's first president and New Avalon its capital. A member of the Davion family has led the Federated Suns in an unbroken succession for the past 700 years. Presently on the throne is Victor Steiner-Davion, son to Hanse Davion and Melissa Steiner, whose marriage effectively sealed the Federated Suns' alliance with the Lyran Commonwealth. The Federated Suns claims approximately 400 inhabited star systems under its aegis, nearly double the number of worlds controlled at the beginning of the Succession Wars. In addition, uncounted other worlds are claimed and exploited by Davion forces.

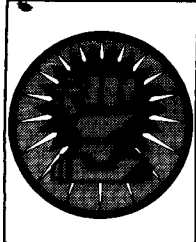
Much of House Davion's growth over the past 200 years has taken place at the expense of Liao's Capellan Confederation. This was particularly true at the end of the Fourth Succession War, when the Federated Suns took more than 100 worlds from House Liao.

An even more serious enemy to the Federated Suns has been the Draconis Combine, ruled by House Kurita, which nearly succeeded in conquering the Davion realm during the First Succession War. By forging an alliance with the Lyran Commonwealth in 3022, Davion forced Kurita to spread its 'Mech resources along two frontiers, leaving many worlds thinly defended. Prior to the Fourth Succession War, Davion forces were able to exploit this vulnerability, seizing the Combine worlds of Tancredi II and Galatia, as well as Star League storehouses at Galtor and Rowe, while losing very few units themselves. With the outbreak of war, however, the Federated Commonwealth had to rearrange its priorities. By the end of the Fourth War, House Kurita had managed to seize 15 worlds, including Galtor, along its border with House Davion.

Surprisingly, the Clan threat has done much to destroy the traditional Davion-Kurita rivalry. There is even rumor of a love affair between Victor Steiner-Davion and Theodore Kurita's daughter Omi, although official sources consistently deny the connection. It is known that Victor Davion led a mission to a Clan-held world to rescue Theodore Kurita's son Hohiro. With the Clan threat diminishing for a time, tensions will no doubt resurface. Clashes, at least minor ones, between Davion and Kurita forces will recur.

## LYRAN COMMONWEALTH

The Lyran Commonwealth was formed in 2340 as an amalgamation of three smaller mutual-defense leagues: the Tamar Pact, the Federation of Skye, and the Protectorate of Donegal. The original Lyran capital was Arcturus. Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities between the Commonwealth and the Draconis Combine in 2407, however, the Lyran government moved to its current location on Tharkad. Soon after, leadership of the Commonwealth passed from Alistair Marsden to his only heir, Katherine Marsden Steiner, and remains in Steiner hands to this day.



The Lyran Commonwealth currently consists of about 400 worlds. During the course of the first three Succession Wars, it had been slowly but steadily losing ground to the

Draconis Combine, which had taken over almost a fourth of the original Lyran territories (including more than half the old Tamar Pact worlds along the Combine border). The Fourth Succession War saw the complete reversal of that trend, however, with the Lyrans capturing 53 Kurita worlds, while losing only 2. That House Steiner retained those worlds during the 20 years between the end of the Fourth War and the invasion of the Clans says much about the strengths of the Federated Commonwealth. However, the Inner Sphere has been hard-pressed to stand up to the Clan invasion, and the Lyran Commonwealth has been second only to the Free Rasalhague Republic in number of worlds lost.

One reason that House Steiner has remained a formidable force in Successor States politics even in the worst of times is that its domain includes some of the most richly endowed planets in the Inner Sphere. These include Alarion, Coventry, Donegal, Summer, Tamar, New Karlsruhe, and Hesperus II. The latter is the site of the Star League's largest surviving military supply depots and the largest still-functioning 'Mech manufacturing and repair facility in the Successor States.

Regardless of its military fortunes, the Lyran Commonwealth has consistently maintained its reputation for making money. Until many of its most industrialized worlds fell to the Clan invaders, the Commonwealth's overall industrial output, particularly of non-military goods, outstripped that of the other Successor States. Even today, only the Free Worlds League surpasses the Commonwealth's GNP per capita. This economic strength has made the Steiner House currency the most stable in the Inner Sphere. Some of this success is due to human ingenuity, and some to the rich natural resources of the average Lyran member-world and to the relatively small amount of war damage sustained by the industrial plants of a few, key remote worlds. Over the years, the Archons of House Steiner have consistently sponsored innovative economic and trade policies, such as major tax advantages for industrial reconstruction projects, awarding land grants to successful entrepreneurs and victorious MechWarriors, and encouraging the activities of free traders. Many of these policies are still presently in force.

## PERSONALITIES

**Victor Ian Steiner-Davion**  
**Archon Prince Designate of the Federated Commonwealth, Duke of New Avalon**

Though physically short and unimpressive (1.6 meters, with blond hair and blue eyes), Victor Steiner-Davion makes up for it in determination and force of personality. These same qualities have led detractors to accuse him of a "Napoleon complex," which they argue is further aggravated by the impossibility of his ever living up to his father's legendary exploits. Adding fuel to the argument are Victor's disdain for sycophants and his periodic bouts of anger when he believes someone is treating him favorably because of his position rather than his abilities. Those who have been watching the new Prince's career claim that Victor need not fear being overshadowed by Hanse's image, that he is an exceptional man in his own right who will go on to his own greatness. As for Victor's anger at preferential treatment, his supporters say it is admirable.

As Morgan Hasek-Davion, Victor's commander during much of the recent Clan War, explains, "Victor knows how to win battles; he knows how to recover from losses; he knows how to adapt to changing circumstances; he knows how to make sacrifices for a larger objective; he never gives up. I see in him all the tenacity and brilliance of the Davions, together with the foresightedness and humanity of the Steiners. But Victor is more than simply an amalgamation of the two: Victor is Victor. He sees himself as a servant of the Federated Commonwealth, and he is confident of his ability to do the job. So am I."

Victor had just turned 22 when his father died of heart failure, leaving the young man Duke of New Avalon and Prince of the Federated Suns. Upon the death or resignation of his mother, Archon Melissa Steiner, he is destined to become Archon Prince of the Federated Commonwealth, with his brother Peter serving as regent in Tharkad and his sister Katherine as regent in New Syrtis. Though some may believe that Victor is too young to be Duke of New Avalon, let alone Archon Prince of the entire Federated Commonwealth, he has capable advisors and supporters from both Houses to lend him the voice of experience.



## **Melissa Steiner-Davion** **Duchess of Tharkad, Archon of the Lyran Commonwealth**

Many have made the mistake of underestimating Melissa Steiner-Davion, taking her remarkable beauty and natural shyness as proof that she is a mere figurehead. However quiet her exterior, it was by her own forceful personality that she held her own with her more extroverted husband, Hanse. When rumors arose of Davion troop excesses in maintaining order in the Sarna March, for example, it was Melissa who made the decision to remove the Davion forces and replace them with others from the Lyran Commonwealth.

Melissa's great concern at present is for her son Victor and the responsibilities he will soon face, a concern not lessened by his bouts of anger, nor by the fact that his father drove himself to an early grave as a result of overwork. She recognizes, however, that Victor has matured through his experiences in the Clan War, and she trusts that he will remember everything his father tried to teach him as it comes time for him to take up the reins of power over both halves of the Federated Commonwealth. Even when that day arrives, Melissa will undoubtedly remain a tempering influence on her son.

## **Morgan Hasek-Davion** **Duke of New Syrtis, Marshal of the Armies of the Federated Commonwealth**

The son of the late Michael Hasek-Davion, Hanse's treacherous brother-in-law, Morgan is first and foremost a military man. Steady and slow to anger, a man to whom actions mean more than words, Morgan has done an excellent job of uniting the military might of Houses Davion and Steiner.

Being in his late forties, Morgan is Victor Davion's senior by a number of years, yet he is one of the young Prince's staunchest supporters. Unlike his father, who continually sought to supplant Hanse on the throne, Morgan is as solidly behind his cousin Victor's rule as he was behind Hanse. Morgan sees Victor as a major hope for humanity, both in working to reunite the Successor States and in opposing the might of the Clans.

## **Ryan Steiner** **Duke of Porrima**

One thorn in Melissa Steiner's side has been Ryan Steiner, a second cousin and leader of the Skye separatist movement. Ryan is opposed to the unification of the Lyran Commonwealth and Federated Suns, and he has worked steadily toward gaining the political clout to prevent it. A popular figure among the people of the Skye worlds, Ryan has also drawn the support of many disaffected Lyran Commonwealth nobles.

## **Aaron Sandoval** **Duke of Robinson**

Sandoval was formerly Minister of the Draconis March, a region that Hanse Davion divided piecemeal among those nobles critical to his rule, hoping to keep them too busy to pose serious trouble. Aaron Sandoval has resigned that post in favor of his son James, and now spends most of his time attempting to rally support among Federated Suns nobles for the disbandment of the Federated Commonwealth. Aaron is a popular figure, referred to affectionately as "the old Duke."

## **MAJOR WORLDS**

Following are the major worlds of the Federated Commonwealth, given in order of relative importance.

### **New Avalon**

The capital of the Federated Suns since its founding 700 years ago and the ancestral home of House Davion, New Avalon is a temperate, Terra-like agricultural world whose rolling hills and ample water produce enough food each year to supply five other nearby star systems. It is also the site of the Royal Court and the New Avalon Institute of Science (founded by Hanse Davion). Three regiments of the Davion Household Guard and several regiments of mercenary units with long-standing affiliations to the Federated Suns are permanently garrisoned on New Avalon.

### **Tharkad**

Tharkad is capital of the Lyran Commonwealth and one of the five worlds ruled by the Steiner family (the other four being Duran, Gallery, Furillo, and Porrima). It is a cool, rocky world with a short growing season and long, often grueling winters. In addition to being home to the Royal Court (Archon and family) and the Estates General (a Parliament of representatives from each Lyran world), Tharkad also houses the remnants of an old Star League storehouse and a moderately flourishing metals mining and refining sector. The world is normally garrisoned by four regiments of 'Mechs (three regular and one mercenary).

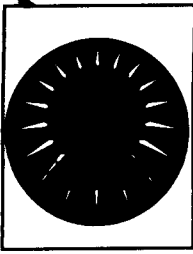
### **Kentares IV**

Kentares is the site of the Kentares Massacre, the worst atrocity ever committed in the Inner Sphere. A wealthy industrial world during the Star League years, the planet was captured during the First Succession War by Combine leader Minoru Kurita as part of an apparently triumphant drive toward New Avalon. Victory was short-lived, however, and Minoru fell to an assassin's laser. To avenge his father, Jinjiro Kurita exterminated the population of Kentares. Fifty million civilians, more than 90 percent of the world's population, died in the carnage.

While Jinjiro was busy with this atrocity, the Davions had time to rally their forces, and eventually succeeded in turning back the Kurita advance at Harrow's Sun. Though Kentares was repopulated with colonists after the massacre, it has never fully recovered its prosperity. Today it is largely a wasteland of ruined cities and rusting factories, garrisoned by a single battalion of 'Mechs.

### **Mallory's World**

Due to its strategic location providing access to over 20 key star systems in Davion, Kurita, and Liao space, Mallory's World has traditionally been a heavily fortified staging base for large-scale assaults into enemy territory. Once a flourishing agricultural planet of the Terran Hegemony, the planet has changed hands several times over the last two centuries. The last occasion was nearly 40 years ago, when the Federated Suns recaptured it in a pitched battle that cost the life of Prince Ian Davion. Since that time, the planetary garrison (normally two to three regiments strong) has repulsed repeated assaults by crack Kurita 'Mech units.



## Outreach

The planet Outreach was in decline before the Federated Suns ceded it to Wolf's Dragoons in payment for the mercenaries' aid during the Fourth Succession War. The glory days when the planet hosted the Star League Martial Olympics were nearly forgotten, as were the equipment production and repair facilities.

The Dragoons remembered, however. They reactivated those facilities and created a boom in military contracts for the planet. The Dragoons also offered training courses unparalleled in the Inner Sphere, and so have made their planet an enviable source for both instruction in the arts of war and the materiel to wage it. During their lean years, the Dragoons fronted for a number of reputable mercenary units. Now the newly renamed Wolf City, the principal city of the largest continent, is the center of mercenary hiring for the Inner Sphere, both reputable and not so reputable. Outreach has become the new "Mercenary Star," the planet's reputation eclipsing even that of Galatea in its heyday. Its position as the mercenary capital seems secure now that the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission, successor to the ComStar Mercenary Review Board, has located its headquarters there.

## New Syrtis

The home of Morgan Hasek-Davion and hereditary homeworld of the Hasek family, New Syrtis is only marginally habitable, but boasts large, workable ore deposits vital to the surviving industries of the Federated Suns. The world's arctic climate greatly aids its planetary defense, most notably against a year-long siege by the Capellan Confederation. New Syrtis is regularly garrisoned by two regiments of the Syrtis Fusiliers (the Sixth always being one of them).

## Kathil

Site of a former Star League naval base, Kathil contains the Federated Suns' best drydock facility for JumpShip and DropShip refitting or repair. Though under the administrative jurisdiction of the Capellan March, the planet has long been garrisoned by 'Mech regiments from the Crucis March, presently by the First Kathil Uhlands.

## Hesperus II

This rugged, mountainous planet is the site of an immense, partially functional 'Mech production facility as well as several large Star League supply depots concealed among the world's many deep, underground caverns. Many of the Lyran Commonwealth's finest military hours have taken place on Hesperus. Kurita or Marik forces have invaded the planet twelve times since the outbreak of the First Succession War, only to be repulsed just as many times.

The planet's severe terrain and bitter weather work in its defense, often wreaking havoc on the best-laid plans of its attackers. Depending on the Commonwealth's most recent intelligence threat-reports, anywhere from two to six full regiments of veteran and elite 'Mech units may be guarding Hesperus.

## Coventry

A pleasant, heavily inhabited world with a mild climate and a fully operational light 'Mech production facility, Coventry lies deep within Steiner space. It is generally garrisoned only sparsely, usually with a single regiment of Regular 'Mechs. Coventry's present ruler, Duke Harrison Bradford, was one of Katrina Steiner's staunchest supporters, and he remains a faithful political ally to Melissa as well.

## Alarion

The old Star League naval base located on this otherwise desolate world is the only major starship repair and refitting facility in Steiner space. It is heavily garrisoned at all times.

## Donegal

Sometimes known as the "Trader's World," Donegal is richly endowed with industrial grade diamonds, rare earths, and exotic plant and animal life. It has become a natural staging base for free traders transshipping cargos into and out of the Periphery.

## MILITARY FORCES

House Davion has been notable for the manner in which it has incorporated mercenary regiments into its forces. Many of these mercenaries have served the House for so long that they have become more of a standing army than a contracted force. House Steiner also has a tradition of relying heavily on mercenaries, especially during the reign of Katrina Steiner. With the alliance of the two Houses, many units, particularly mercenaries, have switched hands.

Following are brief descriptions of some of the more notable units in the Federated Commonwealth forces.

## REGULARS

### Crucis Lancers

#### 8 Regiments

2 Elite: 3rd, 7th

4 Veteran: 1st, 4th, 5th, 6th

2 Regular: 2nd, 8th

The Lancers were originally composed of expatriates from the Star League Defense Forces, but now also contain a smattering from several Crucis March worlds. The unit has broken up and reformed several times, and has been involved in some of House Davion's most important campaigns, including repeated action during the Fourth Succession War. The Seventh Regiment includes McKinnon's Raiders, a company renowned for its innovative, high-mobility campaign tactics.

### Ceti Hussars

#### 3 Regiments

2 Veteran: 1st, 2nd

1 Regular: 3rd

Based on New Earth, the Hussars served as the bulwark of Davion's Draconis March strike force prior to the Fourth Succession War. Though they scored a number of key victories, they also suffered extensive losses. Fortunately, they were not called upon for service during the Fourth War.

### Syrtis Fusiliers

#### 3 Regiments

1 Elite: 6th

2 Regular: 5th, 8th

The Fusiliers were formerly the Hasek-Davions' personal household guard, hand-picked from the worlds of the Capellan March. That changed as a result of the political maneuverings Michael Hasek-Davion made during the beginning of the Fourth Succession War. The Sixth Fusiliers are a crack unit, but have seldom strayed far from New Syrtis in the past few years. During the Fourth Succession War, the Fifth was terribly mangled during the severe battling for Sarna in the Capellan Confederation.

## Lyran Guard

### 12 Regiments

- 3 Elite: 6th, 11th, 15th
- 5 Veteran: 3rd, 10th, 14th, 19th, 26th
- 2 Regular: 30th, 36th
- 2 Green: 24th, 32nd

House Steiner has always maintained a large standing force of household 'Mechs culled from both personal planetary forces and from companies promoted for valor from other regular regiments. The Sixth and Fifteenth regiments are currently stationed on Hesperus II. The Third Regiment has traditionally served as the Palace Guard of the Royal Court at Tharkad.

## Skye Rangers

### 4 Regiments

- 1 Elite: 4th
- 1 Veteran: 10th
- 2 Green: 17th, 22nd

The heavy 'Mech regiments of the Skye Rangers have often played a major role in House Steiner's offensive campaigns. The Fourth Regiment was a key participant in the Commonwealth's successful assault on the planet Carse in 3023. The Seventeenth, which made a poor showing during the Fourth Succession War, was virtually destroyed by the Clans.

## MERCENARIES

### Kell Hounds

#### 2 Regiments

- 1 Elite: 1st
- 1 Veteran: 2nd

For a unit that has been in existence for only 40 years, the Kell Hounds have become one of the most respected mercenary forces in the Inner Sphere. That fame has cost them, however, including having earned the wrath of Combine Coordinator Takashi Kurita. Ironically, it was the Kell Hounds, together with Wolf's Dragoons, who were the deciding factor that saved Luthien when the Clans made a massive assault on the Combine capital world. Despite Takashi's previous Death to Mercenaries order, both the Hounds and the Dragoons willingly participated in the battle for Luthien.

Originally formed as a single regiment by the legendary Morgan Kell, the Hounds received a bequest so substantial after the death of Archon Katrina Steiner that they were able to form a second regiment.

### Gray Death Legion

#### 1 Regiment: Elite

Grayson "Death" Carlyle originally created this unit on Trelwan, a world now held by the Clans. Just prior to the Fourth Succession War, the Legion discovered a Star League library core on Helm. Factions from House Marik sought to forcibly seize the discovery, mistakenly believing it to be a storehouse-type find, but the Legion escaped, with the help of the Kurita Duke Hassan Ricol. Grayson Carlyle has passed copies of the library core to the other Houses. The information in this library core has been the key to the Inner Sphere's technological revival in the past 20 years.

### Eridani Light Horse

#### 1 Regiment: Elite

Originally formed from Star League regulars, the Light Horse was organized as a raiding and reconnaissance force, and has

worked for several different masters over the years. The regiment entered the service of House Davion in 3002. Two of the three Light Horse battalions possess no 'Mechs heavier than 60 tons. The unit saw heavy use as a raiding force during the Fourth Succession War.

### Lindon's Company

#### 1 Battalion: Veteran

Lindon's Company is a battalion-sized force of light and medium 'Mechs. It was originally formed from the remnants of a former House Kurita mercenary regiment that suffered heavy losses in a deep-penetration raid against Driscoll's World after promised Kurita reinforcements did not arrive. The survivors' hatred of the Draconis Combine runs deep.

### Hansen's Roughriders

#### 1 Regiment: Veteran

Colonel Gerhardt Hansen assembled the Roughriders from the remnants of a Marik regular unit that he led in unsuccessful rebellion against Janos Marik in 3014. The regiment long served House Steiner, but was moved to Davion space (still under contract to the Lyran Commonwealth) once the Davion-Steiner alliance began to reorganize their military.





## DRACONIS COMBINE

The Draconis Combine was founded in 2319, after a long and brutal military campaign conducted by Shiro Kurita, First Citizen of New Samarkand and Director of the Alliance of Galedon. The Alliance had been formed to combat another great mercantile alliance led by the wealthy Ozawa clan. Kurita was a brilliant tactician and strategist. He was also an accomplished statesman when it suited him, and a ruthless conqueror when it did not.

Raised in a military and social tradition dating back more than six centuries, Shiro embraced and embodied the "way of the warrior." Cutting a path through the Byzantine politics of New Samarkand, he forged an alliance of petty kings and lords that extended from the fringe of the Terran Hegemony to the borders of the Draconis Rift. Shiro then marshaled his modest military resources in a brilliant war of conquest that more than doubled the size of his realm. By the time of his death in 2348, the Draconis Combine, the domain he had built from almost nothing, stretched from the border of the Federated Suns to the edge of the Principality of Rasalhague.

Shiro Kurita's legacy continues to this day, not only in the all-pervasive military tradition of the Combine, but also in the self-reliance of its people, which some say borders on xenophobia. These two factors have contributed most directly to the constant belligerence of past and present Kurita patriarchs. Only on rare occasions have they set aside their dominant tendencies toward violence, arrogance, and ruthlessness in favor of alliance or cooperation. However, the next generation usually made up for it by redoubling its martial nature. The two most outstanding examples of this were Hehiro and Minoru Kurita.

Hehiro engaged in a rare display of trust when he signed the Treaty of Vega in 2569, setting forth the terms of the Draconis Combine's membership in the nascent Star League. His son Leonard, who succeeded him in 2591, very nearly undid this act through flagrant violations of his father's treaty with Ian Cameron. After Kerensky's exodus from the Inner Sphere, Minoru Kurita proclaimed himself First Lord of the Star League and began to plan and execute a massive attack against the Federated Suns. The campaign was going well for the Kuritans until a sniper shot Minoru Kurita in the back on Kentares IV. Following Minoru's assassination, his psychotic son Jinjiro massacred 50 million civilians on that world. The Kentares Massacre was an act that not only destroyed the momentum gained in the war against Davion, but also contributed to the alienation between Houses Steiner and Kurita, which Jinjiro allowed to flourish.

Until Rasalhague became independent in 3034, the Draconis Combine had expanded to the border of the Lyran Commonwealth, absorbing lesser states along the way. For 20 years the Free Rasalhague Republic served as a buffer between those two Great Houses, with only a small portion of Kurita space bordering the Lyran portion of the Federated Commonwealth. Now the Clan wedge serves to keep most of these two realms separate.

At present, the Combine consists of approximately 75 worlds. In 2617, the coreward world of Luthien replaced New Samarkand as the administrative capital, but Shiro Kurita's homeworld continues to play an active role. For example, House Kurita draws its palace guards and elite MechWarriors from the famous Sun Zhang Academy, the largest MechWarrior academy in the Inner Sphere. Furthermore, New Samarkand is the traditional base of operations for the Internal Security Force, the secret police of the Draconis Combine. The influence of the ISF permeates Combine society. The relationship between the Coordinator of the Combine and the Director of the ISF has varied, waxing and waning in cordiality through the years. Nevertheless, the ISF has remained utterly loyal to the Combine, if not to the House that rules it.

Though the Draconis Combine lost more than 50 worlds in the Fourth Succession War, this same conflict saw the brilliant rise of Theodore Kurita, heir to the Combine throne. His unconventional tactics were so successful that he earned the support and confidence of much of the Combine's military. Despite the power struggle this created between Theodore and Takashi, the Coordinator was almost forced to name his son Deputy of Military Affairs in 3030. Theodore took this opportunity to reshape the Combine's military according to his own views. It was Theodore who masterminded the strategy that successfully resisted the Federated Commonwealth's massive invasion of the Combine in the War of 3039.

Theodore also saw the wisdom of recognizing the Free Rasalhague Republic when its former Rasalhague Military District declared its independence from the Combine. The Free Rasalhague Republic created a buffer state between the Combine and the Lyran commonwealth, freeing up Combine troops for assignment on other borders.

Though Takashi and his son were often in disagreement during these crucial years, Theodore's successes and support among the military were undeniable. Some old-liners still oppose Theodore's methods and innovations, but the Coordinator seems to have made his peace with his son ever since Theodore's relative successes against the Clans in the recent invasion.





## PERSONALITIES

### **Takashi Kurita** **Coordinator of the Draconis Combine, Duke of Luthien, Unifier of Worlds**

Takashi Kurita is still a handsome, wiry man, though age has whitened his formerly black hair. It has not dimmed his steel blue eyes, however, and has touched his strongly Oriental features with few lines or wrinkles. He possesses all the attributes of his lineage: military skill and ruthless cunning, intransigence and insuperable arrogance. Since his father Hehiro's death at the hand of a Kurita household guard more than 45 years ago, Takashi has ruled the Combine. Because he commanded Hehiro Kurita's household troops at the time of the assassination, Takashi was at first suspected of complicity. However, the actual murderer was killed by his own comrades shortly after committing the deed, and the new Coordinator ordered a brutal purge during the first 18 months of his rule to silence any last accusing voices.

In general, Takashi Kurita has been an effective and forceful leader. Through judicious use of the ISF, and as a direct result of his complete and utter distrust of everyone, the Kurita warlord has thwarted nine attempts on his life and two abortive coups by members of his immediate family. The tenth known attempt occurred in 3040, when Theodore was able to save his father's life. Not only has Takashi suppressed opposition to his rule, he has hunted down and thoroughly crushed it. Following the tradition established by Jinjiro Kurita nearly two centuries ago, Takashi's authority is based on a superstructure of military commanders in each of four military districts (at Pesht, Galedon, Dieron, and Benjamin), rather than on a system of planetary nobility. The governments of individual planets have no real power outside their worlds, and have gradually yielded considerable authority to the military rear echelon, often in exchange for their lives. Takashi has been effective in playing off his commanders against one another, summarily replacing any who begin to win too great respect or popularity. This iron-fisted approach has kept the Coordinator firmly in power through almost five decades of near-continual war.

Of late, however, the Coordinator has become consistently more respectful of the ways and methods of his son Theodore. Theodore proved himself an honorable and able leader during both the Fourth Succession War and the War of 3039. At the close of the latter conflict, the older Kurita formally made peace with his son. Theodore's recent defense of Luthien, capital of the Draconis Combine, in the face of an awesome Clan force has gone far to cement the peace between father and son.

### **Theodore Kurita** **Prince of Luthien, Gunji no Kanrei (Deputy for Military Affairs)**

The political and military feats that Theodore Kurita has accomplished over the past three decades are astounding. Not only has he won the confidence of his father, who (given traditional House Kurita politics) had every reason to fear his talented son, but he has also gained the respect of Hanse Davion, the Draconis Combine's greatest enemy. With the invasion of the Clans, it was Theodore who first signaled to Davion the necessity to put aside their differences in the face of a greater mutual enemy. It was not long before the two realms had formally agreed to non-aggression against one another while fighting the Clans, culminating in Hanse Davion's active assistance in defending Luthien against the Clans and in allowing his son Victor to lead a rescue of Theodore's son Hohiro.

Theodore is in his mid-fifties. Though time has grayed his hair, a strict regimen of exercise and martial training has kept him in impressive form. He and his wife Tomoe have three children. Hohiro, the eldest, shows promise of becoming a leader as capable as his father, having acquitted himself admirably despite being trapped behind Clan lines on two separate occasions. The middle child, Omi, displays the submissive modesty expected of a Kurita woman, but she has proven a formidable player of politics. Hard-liners in both House Kurita and the Federated Commonwealth take a dim view of her deepening friendship with Victor Steiner-Davion, but she has vowed to her father to have no further contact with the new leader of the Federated Suns.

### **Subhash Indrahara** **Director of the ISF ("the Smiling One")**

Due to the power he wields as director of the secret police, Indrahara is one of the most feared men in the Combine. Outwardly affable and friendly, his demeanor belies the ruthlessness of his approach to his work. Now in his eighties, this once energetic and vital man is reduced to using a motorized wheelchair and canes to get around.

At the Kurita court, Indrahara's public image is that of a connoisseur of fine art and music, an epicure of dance and opera, and a student of great literature. His gregariousness has even earned him the nickname of "the Smiling One." This facade keeps others from scrutinizing him too closely.

Despite Indrahara's age and infirmities, he is more treacherous (and perhaps more dangerous) than Takashi Kurita himself. Those who cross him usually discover this fact too late and much to their shock. Indrahara is also something of a mystic. Over the years, he has created an inner circle of fanatical agents and spies personally loyal to him and known as "sons of the Dragon." The existence of this secret society is unknown even to Indrahara's longtime friend, Takashi Kurita.

Subhash has begun to recognize his own mortality. The Clan invasion taxed his abilities to the limit, and he now spends more time in his motorized wheel chair than out of it. His search for a worthy successor continues, but the task is made more difficult by the need for both Takashi and Theodore to approve the candidate. It is likely that Subhash will continue in his current position for as long as modern medical science can keep him alive.



## MAJOR WORLDS

### Luthien

The capital of the Draconis Combine since 2617, Luthien is a heavily industrialized and not especially wealthy world, dominated by sprawling, ugly cities whose air and water are seriously contaminated. The wars of the past three decades have delayed plans to repair the planet's ecology, and the recent Clan assault has left large areas around the capital city more scarred and ugly than before.

Luthien is within easy jump of many Clan-held worlds, and is not protected by the 15-year cessation of hostilities agreement struck between ComStar and the Clans. Therefore it is heavily garrisoned with four regiments of BattleMechs from the Kurita Household Guard as well as the Coordinator's personal regiment, the Claws of the Dragon.

### Buckminster

As a result of military campaigns near the beginning of the century, Buckminster suddenly became a front-line world, its formerly bucolic character abruptly shattered by the presence of BattleMechs and DropShips. A light industrial and agricultural world, the planet has never quite recovered from the somewhat disruptive presence of military units. The world has also long been rife with ISF informants and spies.

### New Samarkand

New Samarkand was once the mercantile and administrative center of the Draconis Combine, with bustling cities dominated by the mansions of the rich and frequented by the great mercantile houses and cartels. This wealth is a thing of the past, buried by the political and economic upheavals of the Succession Wars. Much of New Samarkand is now in decay. Although the ISF and the famous Sun Zhang MechWarrior Academy are based on the planet, its cities have also become a haven for thieves and scoundrels.

### Proserpina

Proserpina is a typical frontier world, stripped of most of its resources and brutally savaged by both attacker and defender. Especially vicious was the release of deadly nerve gases into the planet's atmosphere during a Third Succession War attack by the Draconis Combine, decimating Proserpina's civilian and military population and making it possible for House Kurita to take the world easily. Since that time, Proserpina has regularly served as a base for Kurita invasions and raids into Federated Commonwealth space.

### Al Na'ir

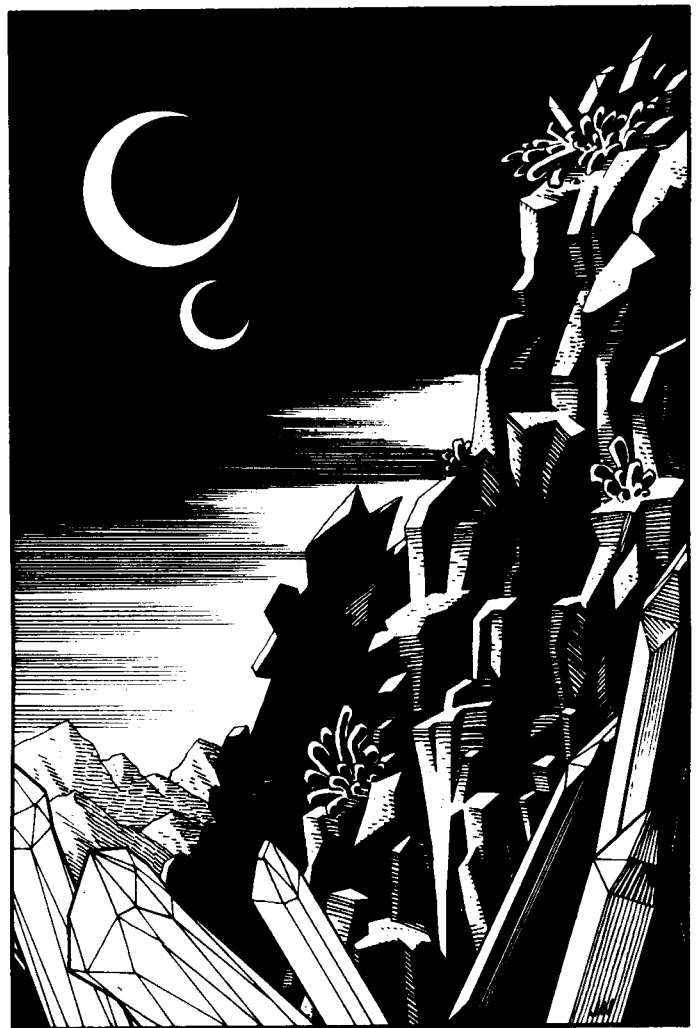
The planets in orbit around Al Na'ir (Alpha Gruis) are generally hot and inhospitable. Like most blue giants, Al Na'ir is too young in its stellar evolution for the development of habitable worlds. Tidal stresses caused by the primary's enormous mass were sufficient to pull one of its orbiting worlds apart, producing a metal-rich asteroid belt. The Trojan points of this belt constitute the settled part of the system. The zero-G environment is well-suited to 'Mech production facilities, and these are well-defended by static weapons as well as armament rescued from scuttled or crashed DropShips. The Al Na'ir belt is also a dangerous navigational hazard, unsafe even for highly skilled pilots unless they are intimately familiar with its inner reaches.

### Hoff

Much like Proserpina, Hoff has suffered profoundly from the Succession Wars. During the past 200 years, it has often been traded back and forth between Davion, Kurita, and even occasionally Liao. Once heavily industrialized, Hoff is still valuable for scavenging purposes, though its current importance is due more to its strategic location, the kind of cruel irony so common in this age of war.

### Quentin

An inhospitable planet located along the Draconis March, Quentin possesses functional 'Mech production facilities like those of Al Na'ir, 18 light years distant. It was held by House Davion until Combine forces captured the planet during the Fourth Succession War. House Kurita has held it ever since. The continual border fights between Davion and Kurita severely curtailed 'Mech production at both Quentin and Al Na'ir. With the tentative peace now existing between the two Great Houses and the general gearing up for war with the Clans, both systems have again become increasingly busy.



## MILITARY FORCES

House Kurita fields a force 80 regiments strong.

### REGULARS

#### Sword of Light

##### 5 Regiments

2 Elite: 2nd, 5th

2 Veteran: 1st, 7th

1 Regular: 8th

The Sword of Light comprises half of House Kurita's personal 'Mech regiments, and its warriors are drawn primarily from the Sun Zhang Academy at New Samarkand. As is so typical of the Combine bureaucracy, warriors have tended to be chosen more for their political orthodoxy and loyalty than their piloting talent. In practice, this has led to wide disparity in quality between regiments, and even between companies in the same regiment. Two regiments of the Sword of Light form the backbone of the garrison on Luthien. The other regiments are currently stationed on worlds throughout the Combine.

#### Night Stalkers

##### 2 Regiments: Veteran

These two light 'Mech regiments from the industrial world of Melisande have made quite a name for themselves as a crack fighting team, figuring prominently, for example, in the Combine's successful defense of Al Na'ir in 3023. Unfortunately, the Night Stalkers have also developed a reputation for insubordination, which means its ranks are usually dogged by numerous ISF agents.

#### Proserpina Hussars

##### 3 Regiments

1 Elite: 3rd

2 Veterans: 1st, 4th

The Hussars have long been the cutting edge of Kurita troops and are now spread out along the border of the Federated Suns. They are perhaps the finest practitioners of hit-and-run raids in the Successor States.

#### Legion of Vega

##### Approximately 2 Regiments: Veteran

The Legion is the brainchild of Takashi Kurita. It is an amalgamation of loosely organized, poorly led, and poorly equipped 'Mech lances drawn from bandit kingdoms, other houses, and mercenary regiment fragments from across the Inner Sphere. As it is the scrap-heap of House Kurita military, attempts to use it in a real offensive generally end in disaster. During the start of the Fourth Succession War, Takashi posted Theodore to the Legion. This posting boosted its image somewhat, and actually improved its performance. The unit is still suffers from a poor reputation even though its fighting ability is quite high. Until recently, it consisted of three regiments, but one was destroyed in battle with the Clans, and it was never rebuilt.

### Genyosha

#### 2 Regiments: Elite

Formed by Yorinaga Kurita at the command of Takashi Kurita, the Genyosha was created specifically to destroy the Kell Hounds just after Takashi proclaimed his Death to Mercenaries order. Despite the priority given to its choice of equipment and personnel, the Genyosha has never been able to achieve that purpose, even though they battled the Hounds during the Fourth Succession War. Hearing that the Hounds would be on Northwind, the Genyosha took part in that battle, which ended in defeat for the invading Draconis forces. It was also the Genyosha that attempted to kidnap Melissa Steiner in 3027.

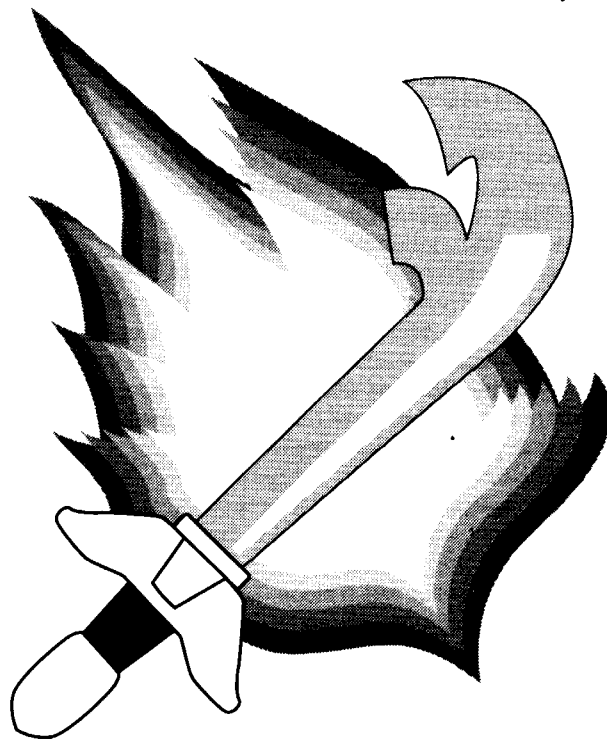
### Ghost Regiments

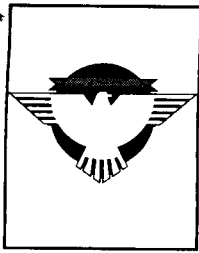
#### A Possible 12 Regiments

When Takashi named his son Gunji no Kanrei in 3029, Theodore took the position seriously. Believing the Combine's existing 'Mech units too traditional to adopt the changes that he desired, Theodore created a whole new set of units from the ranks of the yakuza crime syndicate, much to his father's horror. These same regiments have recently proven their worth in battles with the Clans.

### MERCENARY FORCES

Because of Takashi's condemnation of mercenaries prior to the Fourth Succession War, House Kurita presently has no major mercenary forces. Considering the valiant fighting that the Kell Hounds and Wolf's Dragoons recently did in the defense of Luthien, this is likely to change in the near future. Some reports indicate that the Combine has approached the Crescent Hawks with offers of missions against the Clans.





## FREE WORLDS LEAGUE

The Free Worlds League was formed in 2271 by the Treaty of Marik, which united three principalities in the volume of space the League presently occupies. These were the Grand Duchy of Oriente, the Principality of Regulus, and the Marik Commonwealth. All three were loosely structured, mercantile associations of worlds left behind in the chaos following the decision of the Terran Alliance to grant independence to many of its wayward colonies. The leaders of these states decided that it was wiser (and more profitable) to join together than to fight.

During the first 20 years of its existence, the League continued to expand, as neighboring groups joined to gain protection from pirates and hostile neighbors. In 2293, the League was determined to annex the six-world Stewart Commonality, which did not wish to join. Juliano Marik led his navy into the Stewart system, reducing its defenses in short order. The Stewart War was the first time the League Parliament designated a Captain-General, a post that was only intended to last for the duration of a crisis. Except for the appointment of a member of the Selaj family in 2306, by the mid-24th century, the Captain-Generalship had become virtually hereditary for House Marik, who had right of first refusal. The powers granted still applied only in time of war or crisis. In peacetime, House Marik was responsible for the maintenance and provisioning of the military.

The years 2314–2398, between the fall of the Terran Alliance and the subsequent birth of the Terran Hegemony and the outbreak of the Andurien War, were almost a century of enormous expansion for the Free Worlds League. Formed early, the League had an advantage over its neighbors and its essentially mercantile outlook boosted its growth.

The systems around Andurien had a long history of being traded back and forth between the Capellan Confederation and the Free Worlds League. In 2398, the Capellan Chancellor declared war on the League to win back the Andurien system. This battle has since become known as the first in the 150-year-era known as the Age of War. Just as the Free Worlds League had been growing and consolidating, so had the other interstellar powers. Tensions along the borders of the various states had been increasing for years. The Andurien War, which involved huge armed forces on both sides, was a trigger that set off similar conflicts among the various states of the Inner Sphere. Widespread wars on such a scale also created massive destruction, leading the six great houses and two of the Periphery states to sign the Ares Conventions in 2412. This agreement banned the use of nuclear weapons and restricted the use of force against civilian populations.

The Age of War saw the Terran Hegemony's development of the first BattleMech in 2439. The Lyrans and the Federated Suns got the technology soon after, but the Free Worlds League did not obtain it until 2462, when a group of Lyran technicians defected with a complete set of 'Mech plans. The first 'Mech vs 'Mech battle was fought between Steiner and Kurita forces in 2475, the same year the forces of the Terran Hegemony carried out a massive assault on the FWL fleet, destroying more than 20 ships.

The League would also fight two more wars for Andurien during this era of unrelenting violence. Historians date the end of the Age of War in 2556, the year that Ian Cameron, leader of the

# THE SUCCESSOR STATES

Terran Hegemony, negotiated the Andurien Peace Treaty, ending the Third Andurien War between the Capellans and the League. Several months later, the three powers signed the secret Treaty of Geneva, laying the groundwork for the creation of the Star League.

By 2571, all the major Houses of the Inner Sphere had agreed to form a unified Star League, but the four states of the Periphery refused. The next 20 years were spent in a vicious war against those rebellious governments. Millions died before the League finally won the surrender of the last Periphery state. A minor economic depression hit just after the war's end, but then an upswing began as major corporations throughout the Inner Sphere began to retool to produce civilian rather than military items. These were the good years, lasting roughly from 2600 to 2750. Science and industry contributed to making a better life for all, and the merchant-minded Free Worlds League prospered.

The rapid onset of the succession crisis and the Civil War fought between Stefan Amaris and the Star League resulted in the Free Worlds Parliament passing Resolution 288. This resolution assigned extraordinary power "for the duration of the crisis" to Kenyon Marik, an ambitious and belligerent individual. With the sudden and unexpected departure of 80 percent of the Star League fleet and military under the command of Aleksandr Kerensky, Kenyon Marik accurately surmised that the crisis would not end soon. Following in the footsteps of Minoru Kurita and then of John Davion, Kenyon declared himself First Lord of the Star League in July 2786. The First Succession War began when Archon Jennifer Steiner declared war on the Draconis Combine in retaliation for recent raids. Then Kenyon Marik led his troops in an attack that destroyed most of the Commonwealth's shipbuilding facilities along their common border. Kenyon next set off after booty left behind on former Star League storehouses, supply depots, and jump stations in the region of Terra. Having seized a portion of the former Terran state, Kenyon next turned his men against the Capellans, winning more worlds. When Kenyon Marik died in 2804, he still had not surrendered the authority granted him by the terms of Resolution 288.

Ever since, a House Marik member has continuously held the post of Captain-General of the Free Worlds League, ostensibly through the legal instrument of Resolution 288. At the beginning of each Marik's reign, that individual reiterates the Proclamation of 2779 made by Kenyon Marik, declaring the continuation of the crisis until further notice (presumably until House Marik rules the Inner Sphere). Public support has varied over the years, usually depending on the strength of the economy or successes on the battlefield.

During both the Second and Third Succession Wars, the Marik Captains-General have faced challenges to Resolution 288 in the League Parliament, leaving the provinces polarized and interfering with the war effort against the League's longtime enemies, Houses Liao and Steiner. During the first years of his rule, the late Janos Marik, Captain-General of the Free Worlds League from 2991 to 3035, attempted to rally support among the people of his realm by turning his attention to the League's many domestic problems. It was Janos' own brother Anton who set off the Marik Civil War in 3014, when he attempted to seize power for himself. Anton died at the hands of Natasha Kerensky, then a member of Wolf's Dragoons, mercenaries whom Anton had at first employed then betrayed. Janos executed the other leaders of the rebellion, including his own son Gerald.

On October 13, 3022, Janos Marik met with Takashi Kurita and Maximilian Liao to sign the Concord of Kapteyn, tying his realm's fate to that of the Combine and Confederation. The League's poor performance during the Fourth Succession War, during which it lost 13 important star systems, left Janos Marik in a precarious position. Derick Cameron-Jones, spokesman of the Principality of Regulus, began to lead a reform movement aimed at removing Janos Marik from the Captain-Generalship.

But fate was kind to House Marik. The Duchy of Andurien seceded in September of 3030, allying itself with the Magistracy of Canopus, starting the War of Andurien Succession. Marik used it as a pretext to force passage of the Internal Emergency Act of 3030, disrupting the opposition and consolidating his authority.

Shortly thereafter, he suffered a severe stroke that left his son Duggan struggling against his cousin Duncan for control. Then, in 3031, Thomas Marik, who had been serving as a ComStar Precentor in the Lyran Commonwealth, returned to the League with documents proving that Janos had named him as Heir-Designate. Janos Marik eventually recovered, but died in 3035 in a bomb blast that also killed his son Duggan and seriously maimed Thomas. Duncan had fortuitously left the room only minutes before. Most people believed that Thomas had also died in the assassination attempt, but in 3036, he returned, healed of his injuries, to resume control. Duncan died shortly thereafter, leading his troops in a glory-seeking attack against Andurien 'Mechs in the Xanth system. With Duncan gone, so was most of Thomas' opposition.

The Free Worlds League did not commit troops against the Clans, but did devote its BattleMech factories to producing replacements for 'Mech losses suffered by the Combine, Free Rasalhague Republic, and the Lyran Commonwealth. Thomas Marik did not give this support freely, however. His son Joshua suffers from leukemia. As an incentive, Hanse Davion offered the medical services of the New Avalon Institute of Technology. In hopes of saving the boy, Thomas agreed to support the front-line states.

Today, the Free Worlds League consists of approximately 400 worlds, divided into nearly 80 smaller principalities, ranging in size from the tiny Duchy of New Assam, consisting of a single continent on Tiber IV, to the Principality of Andurien, which spans four worlds and controls parts of five others. This balkanization of the League has historically made it easier for House Marik to remain in power, preventing any other party from developing sufficient clout to pose a serious threat, but it has also made administration of the realm a bureaucratic nightmare. Though the Free Worlds League has been insulated from the invasion of the Clans, diplomatic pressure by the Federated Commonwealth and Draconis Combine for the League to produce 'Mechs for use on the front lines has not made the Captain-General's job any easier.

Now that the Clan threat has receded and Hanse Davion is dead, the Captain-General hopes that the marriage between his heir, Isis Marik, and Sun-Tzu Liao will give him some leverage against the powerful Federated Commonwealth. Thomas also recognizes that such a move could result in Sun-Tzu Liao gaining complete control over his domain. As another check, Thomas Marik has opened the League to the disaffected members of ComStar, hoping to build a power base for use against his future son-in-law, if necessary. The Free Worlds League is now riding a tiger and no one knows whether Thomas Marik can get them off safely.

## PERSONALITIES

### Thomas Marik

#### Captain-General, Duke of Atreus

Tall and thin, with brown hair and eyes, Thomas Marik is in his early sixties. He is an introspective person whose long face shows burn scars from the bomb explosion that killed his father and his brother. A former ComStar Adept, Thomas has developed from a soft-spoken young man into a quiet but confident leader. Despite the upheavals of history, the Free Worlds League has prospered its fortune since his rule began. This alone has won him the people's respect, and Thomas has further endeared himself to League citizens by making frequent journeys and appearances throughout the realm. In a similar effort to understand through personal experience, he has taken BattleMech training to develop an understanding of the military system, a valuable supplement to the technological expertise he gained during his years with ComStar.

The dark cloud on the horizon of Thomas and his wife Sophina Desiree, however, has been his young son Joshua's battle with leukemia. Hanse Davion used Joshua as a bargaining point when seeking to persuade Thomas to push his nation to provide new 'Mechs for the Clan War. Davion offered treatment for Joshua at the New Avalon Institute of Science, where the boy is responding favorably, though still not cured.

Joshua's illness has also forced Thomas to recognize his illegitimate daughter Isis, to ensure an undisputed succession. His willingness to allow her to marry Sun-Tzu Liao reflects the hope that Joshua will recover. If Thomas truly believed that Isis might eventually take the Captain-Generalcy, he would never have placed the League one assassin's bullet away from domination by House Liao.

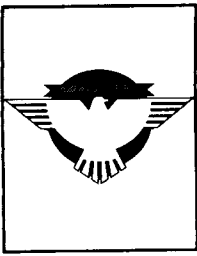
As a further guarantee against his future son-in-law, Thomas appears to be leaning toward accepting the title of Primus for the schismatic faction of ComStar that is breaking away.

### Christopher Halas

#### Duke of Oriente, Knight of the Order of Atreus

A quiet but effective politician, the Duke of Oriente is also a skilled military leader with several years' experience as a MechWarrior. He rules one of the largest principalities in the Free Worlds League, including the worlds of Lefarge, Pollux, and Fletcher, and the heavily fortified capital of Oriente. As a result of his position, the duke has been an important figure in the Free Worlds League Parliament, and an important ally for the Mariks.

Though a straightforward and honorable man, Christopher Halas initially considered Thomas Marik unable to fill his father's shoes. With the passage of time, however, Halas has come to be one of Thomas' most solid supporters, despite the fact that his own star has been eclipsed as a result.



# THE SUCCESSOR STATES

## MAJOR WORLDS

### Atreus

Atreus is the capital of the Free Worlds League and well-known for its architectural wonders such as the Marik Palace, the Palace of Justice, and the House of Government. The latter building is a fine example of 23rd century architecture, and is the only original capitol building still standing in the Successor States. Except for the capital city, whose principal industry is catering to government or carrying out its ceremonies, the rest of the planet is little developed.

### Kalidasa

The wealthy world of Kalidasa, an independent duchy a single jump from the Marik/Steiner border, still possesses some functioning 'Mech production facilities. Kalidasa's industrial facilities have produced new units for the Oriente Fusiliers and Household Guard contingents and are now being retooled to produce 'Mechs based on Star League-era designs. The planet's climate is hot, with a thin atmosphere, high winds, and searing sandstorms that make it quite inhospitable (and historically difficult to seize).

### Andurien

Though much-contested, Andurien has the distinction of having never been heavily damaged by an invading force. Its defenders have traditionally been more willing to offer their services to attackers than to let them devastate the planet. The planet still has the appearance of a wealthy, populous world, though MechWarriors (and their war machines) are not an uncommon sight. Andurien is most famous for its extensive Botanical Gardens, which boast samples of rare plants and trees from across the Inner Sphere. It was built by the hypochondriac Duke Allard of Andurien in the late 25th century.

### Oriente

A key world for centuries, Oriente lies along what was once the primary trade and communications route through the Free Worlds League. It is now the capital of the largest single province in the League, due mainly to the aggrandizement of the ducal House of Halas, heirs to Oriente since the extinction of the previous line in 2875. Oriente is a heavily industrialized world that has suffered bombardment (and then been rebuilt again) many times. It is in stark contrast to its distant neighbor, Andurien. Oriente nobles are, in fact, contemptuous of what they perceive as Andurien's spinelessness.

### Irian

Irian was once renowned for its craftsmanship and originality in developing new 'Mechs and equipment. The last design to come from it was the *Hermes II*, which is in wide use among the Free Worlds League. Irian was brutally attacked during the revolt of Anton Marik some 30 years ago, when its still functioning 'Mech plants were rendered so much slag. The Duchy of Andurien underwrote much of the reconstruction of these facilities, which returned them to at least limited production. Like the factories on Kalidasa, those on Irian are destined to play an important part in providing the Successor States with materiel for the Clan War.

## MILITARY FORCES

The Free Worlds League military strength is composed of 40 regiments.

## REGULARS

### Fusiliers of Oriente

#### 6 Regiments

2 Elite: Ducal Guard, 1st Brigade

2 Veteran: 2nd, 3rd Brigade

2 Regular: 4th, 5th Brigade

During the stormy reign of Janos Marik, the Fusiliers stood firm as the bulwark of the loyalist defense. In the civil war between the Marik and his brother Anton in 3014, the First Brigade led the defense at Calloway VI, turning the tide in Janos' favor. The Fusiliers are composed of three heavy (Guard, Second, Fifth) and three medium regiments, drawn from the best fighting men of territories ruled by the Duke of Oriente. Unlike many other units, the Fusiliers have always replenished or reformed their existing regiments, building on a legacy of valor that now dates back over five centuries.

### Free World Legionnaires

#### 5 Regiments

3 Veteran: 1st, 2nd, 3rd

1 Regular: 4th

1 Green: 5th

The Free World Legionnaires are the cornerstone of the Free Worlds League military. Based on the Davion Regimental Combat Team concept, the Legionnaires consist of a regiment of BattleMechs plus one armored regiment and two mechanized infantry regiments. The original equipment for these units came from the disbanded Defenders of Andurien regiments, which were defeated during the War of Andurien Secession. All personnel in these legions are screened for loyalty to the Captain-General. Within at least one of the Legions (the Fourth), ComStar personnel loyal to Thomas Marik are receiving training. It is not known whether they will remain with the Legion after completing their training or if they will go on to form the cadre for a new unit.

## MERCENARY UNITS

### 21st Centauri Lancers

#### 1 Regiment: Elite

After mutinying from House Liao in a dispute over pay, the Lancers went on to serve as free mercenaries in the Inner Sphere for more than 175 years. Their fortunes have waxed and waned somewhat over the years, but the unit has never lost its reputation for honest service. For the past 35 years, the regiment has served at a variety of posts along the Steiner border, somehow remaining aloof from the political turmoil swirling around them.

### Waco Rangers

#### 1 Regiment: Veteran

Led by Colonel Wayne Rogers, the Waco Rangers formerly served House Steiner, but left when the Lyran Commonwealth hired Wolf's Dragoons, against whom the Rangers swore a death oath, after the death of Rogers' son John.

### Crater Cobras

#### 2 Regiments: 1 Veteran, 1 Regular

The Crater Cobras were instrumental in House Davion's battle for Sarna during the Fourth Succession War, but left service of the Federated Suns after that war ended.

## CAPELLAN CONFEDERATION

The Capellan Confederation was one of the last alliances to be created during the 24th century. It was formed from the wreckage of the Capellan Commonality in July of 2366 as a "temporary" measure to defend those states against a Davion incursion. The Confederation was composed of the states of Tikonov, Sarna, Sian, and St. Ives, along with some independent worlds. To lead them through the crisis, the member-states selected Duke Franco Liao, the ruler of a small, water-poor mining world that bore his surname. An astute politician, Franco Liao presented himself to the leaders of the other states as a man who had only their best interests at heart and one not interested in maintaining dictatorial powers. Once in control, however, Franco ruthlessly held on to the power for both himself and his family.

Franco's heirs were soon entrenched as hereditary rulers of the Confederation. They achieved this by shrewdly playing on the fears of each member state, gradually infiltrating each opposing royal household with members of their prolific brood. Descendants of family Liao eventually took over the ducal thrones of Sian, Chisholm, and seven other worlds, thus assuring their continued rule.

From the earliest days, the Capellans have battled with their neighbors, the Free Worlds League. The First Andurien War, launched by the Confederation in 2396, heralded an Age of War across the whole Inner Sphere, and disputes over other border worlds frequently flared into full-scale conflict between the two. The Capellan forces usually came out on the short end, a pattern that repeated across the centuries.

It was Chancellor Aleisha Liao who proposed the Ares Conventions in 2412 after the Tintavel Massacre. These Conventions sought to protect civilians and property from the ravages of modern warfare. Under her leadership, the major ruling Houses, the Terran Hegemony, and two Periphery states signed an 80-page document that protected civilians and property from the ravages of modern warfare. After the adoption of the Ares Conventions, warfare over the next century and a half became increasingly ceremonial, an artistic exercise rather than an all-consuming act of destructiveness. But the Ares Conventions also led to the acceptance of warfare as a means of settling disputes between states—an attitude that resulted in the horrors of the First Succession War, when the Conventions were ignored.

Since the start of the Succession Wars in 2786, the Confederation has lost almost three-quarters of its original territories and most of its most valuable star systems to House Davion and House Marik. Maximilian Liao's signing of the Concord of Kapteyn allied his people to the Draconis Combine and their traditional enemy, House Marik, against the budding Steiner/Davion alliance. But Chancellor Liao's aborted "Operation Doppelganger" to substitute a clone for Hanse Davion resulted in Hanse Davion turning most of his military might against the Confederation, rather than against Kurita, during the Fourth Succession War.

The end of the Fourth Succession War saw the annexation of Sarna and Tikonov by the Federated Commonwealth (giving Houses Steiner and Davion a sizeable corridor of worlds to connect their two states) and the secession of the St. Ives Compact, a new state that is very friendly to the Steiner-Davions. Chancellor Liao was driven mad, and subsequently committed suicide. The mantle of the shattered realm fell to his daughter Romano Liao.

Yet Romano Liao managed to forge the remains of the Capellan Confederation into a rock-solid core of fanatic warriors willing to die rather than lose any more Confederation territory to the Marik or Davion devils. Their remarkable defense against attacks by the Andurien and Canopus forces just a year after being defeated by Hanse Davion's forces were proof of that. The Inner Sphere has left the Capellans alone since then. Even during the Clan invasion, most House leaders breathed a sigh of relief when Romano Liao refused to aid in the defense.

With the recent assassination of Romano Liao, Sun-Tzu Liao succeeded his mother as Chancellor. He immediately formed an alliance with the Free Worlds League, to be consummated with his marriage to Isis Marik, heir-designate to the Captain-Generalcy of that realm. The combination of the Marik industrial base joined to the power lust of the Liaos has given many House leaders pause. They cannot help but wonder if this union between two Great Houses will bring sweeping changes, like the interstellar war that accompanied the famous Steiner and Davion marriage of 20 years ago.

## PERSONALITIES

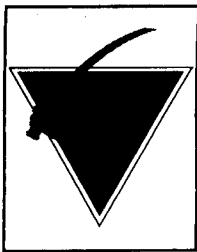
### **Sun-Tzu Liao** **Prefect of Sian, Chancellor of the Capellan Confederation**

Though Sun-Tzu has often been characterized as an even-tempered, compassionate young man, he has recently begun to demonstrate not only the williness of his mother, but some of her irrationality as well. It remains to be seen which side of his nature will win out in the next few years, depending perhaps on the number and nature of threats to his rule.

Sun-Tzu is tall and slim, with black hair and green eyes. He only recently became Chancellor, upon the death of his mother Romano Liao and his father at the hands of his aunt Candace Liao, Prime Minister of the St. Ives Compact. Candace and her husband Justin Allard were themselves the targets of an assassin that Romano had sent to murder them in New Avalon. Justin died in the attack, but Candace survived miraculously, swearing revenge on her deranged sister. It was she who returned to Sian to take revenge for her husband's death. She left Sun-Tzu alive to claim the Capellan throne, however, and his sister Kali alive to plague Sun-Tzu. Kali shows evidence of being as paranoid and irrational as her mother Romano. Sun-Tzu has recently arranged an alliance with Thomas Marik, which includes his betrothal to Thomas' current heir, his daughter Isis.

### **Tormana Liao** **Mandrinn of Capella, Leader of Liao Resistance**

Tormana Liao is a short, muscular man in his mid-fifties, but his long black hair and Oriental features make him appear much younger. He has always been considered something of a black sheep in the Liao family, mainly because of his refusal to be cowed by his tyrannical and paranoid father, Maximilian (grandfather to Sun-Tzu Liao and former Chancellor of the Confederation). For roughly 25 years, Tormana has lived on New Avalon as a guest of the Davions. There he has built and maintained a resistance movement whose aim was to overthrow his sister Romano. No one is certain how he will react to Sun-Tzu's accession to the throne of the Capellan Confederation.



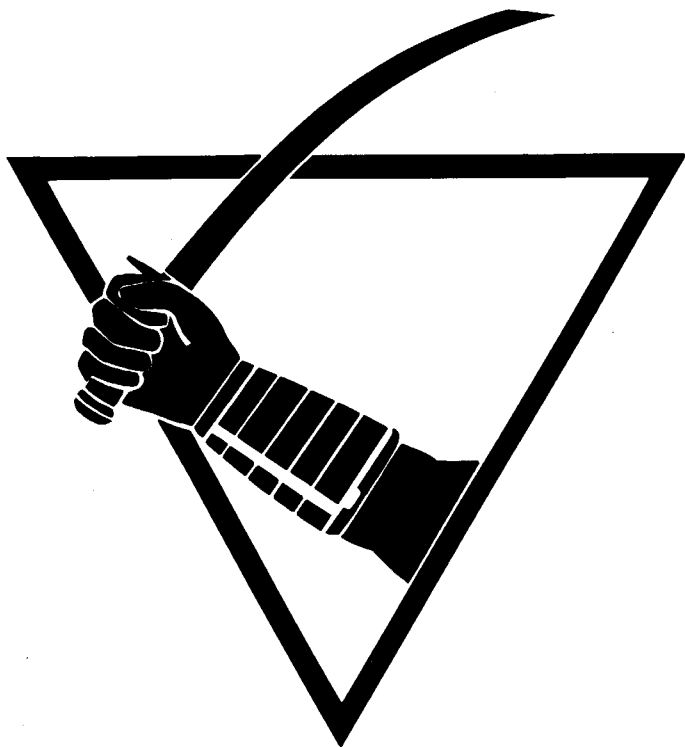
## MAJOR WORLDS

### Sian

The Confederation homeworld is a lush, tropical garden planet that is also richly endowed with precious metals and a still-functioning electronics industry. One of the few interior worlds remaining in Confederation space, the planet is the most thinly defended of any capital world, maintaining only two regular 'Mech regiments.

### Capella

The Capellan colony was originally founded by Ceres Metals, an extraordinarily aggressive (some would say rapacious) multiplanetary cartel whose unofficial slogan was for many years, "We Make What Terra Needs Most—Money!" Since the onset of the Succession Wars, Capella's enormous industriplexes (including the only surviving 'Mech production facility in the Confederation) have been responsible for maintaining Ceres' profitability. They continue to make money despite (or, in some cases, because of) the hardships suffered by many of Capella's fellow worlds. Nonetheless, life for most of Capella's common citizens has not been easy, as the planetary government has had to employ a number of draconian measures to keep the factories up and running. The planet is normally garrisoned by two to three 'Mech regiments.



### Carver

The watery world of Carver still harbors some much-depleted but still valuable Star League spare parts depots on two of its larger islands. The tactical mechanics of island-hopping make assaults and raids against these facilities somewhat complicated.

### Hsien

The doughty inhabitants of Hsien reside on the large moon of their star system's fourth planet, where they have long mined its rich ore reserves while fending off frequent raids by House Marik forces. Before Tormana Liao's defection near the end of the Fourth Succession War, he presided over this colony.

## MILITARY FORCES

Though not a serious threat to the military forces of any other House, the armies of House Liao are highly competent, particularly on the familiar terrain of their homeworlds. Descriptions of some of the most notable Liao units follow.

### REGULARS

#### Capellan Hussars

**3 Regiments:** Veteran

These three regiments comprise House Liao's household guard, and are usually stationed on either Sian or Capella.

#### McCarron's Armored Cavalry

**5 Regiments**

2 Elite: 1st, 2nd

2 Veteran: 4th, 5th

1 Regular: 3rd

Originally one of the largest mercenary units in existence, Colonel Archie McCarron's five regiments have since become considered a regular unit in the Capellan military. This is in spite of their reputation as the bad boys of the Successor States. Unkempt and undisciplined, they are true to little except their own rough code of honor. Nonetheless, there are few units a MechWarrior would rather have standing alongside in a pitched firefight.

In the 100 years since the Cavalry's formation, "Big Mac" has served every Successor Lord except House Davion at least twice, and has nearly doubled in size. In the years since rejoining the service of House Liao, McCarron's battalions have operated as a kind of roving super-utilityman. They move up and down the Liao borders in response to intelligence reports of enemy 'Mech concentrations, or they rush in to relieve units already under attack.

### MERCENARIES

#### Little Richard's Panzer Brigade

**1 Regiment:** Veteran

Formerly contracted to House Steiner, this unit left shortly after the Fourth Succession War. Rumor is that "Big Daddy" Richard Whitman was in love with Melissa Steiner and could not bear to see her marry Hanse Davion.

After "Big Daddy" died and his son, Colonel Richard "Sugar Baby" Whitman, took over, two companies of 'Mechs left the Brigade to become the Fourth Corps of the Taurian Concordat's Pleides Lancers.



# MINOR POWERS

## FREE RASALHAGUE REPUBLIC

The Rasalhague Military District had been in a state of continual foment for centuries, chafing under the rule of the Draconis Combine. During the Fourth Succession War, the Lyran Commonwealth courted rebels in the area, using them to gain valuable information concerning sites for assault and the like, but the war ended with the district still part of the Combine, and terribly upset with House Steiner because of it. The Combine conceived of a brilliant plan for dealing with the situation: it allowed the creation of the Free Rasalhague Republic in 3034, thereby relieving itself of the necessity for maintaining order in the district and creating a buffer state between its border and that of the Lyran Commonwealth, while also guaranteeing that the new nation would be favorably inclined toward its former ruler.

Unfortunately, not every Combine lord agreed with this policy, and many refused to pull out, staying instead to fight on their own. Those lords were named Ronin by Takashi Kurita, and the period in which the Republic fought them to claim the independence it had already been granted legally is known as the Ronin Wars.

Even after these lords had been defeated, however, the Republic was not to enjoy its independence for long. When the Clans began their invasion in 3050, the Free Rasalhague Republic lay directly in their planned corridor of attack. At present, the bulk of the Republic's worlds are behind Clan lines, and the Nation's Heir-Designate has been captured by Clan Wolf. As a result, much of the heart has gone out of the Republic's citizens.

After the battle on Tukayyid, the Republic was reduced to seven worlds, with their capital on Orestes, as far as possible from the Clan. They have only five battered regiments left to hold these worlds; which may be safe from Clan invasion, but are not safe from Clan raids. Rasalhague has, therefore, opened up its worlds to Precentor Martial Focht, so that he can station what remains of the Com Guards on them. All told, ten divisions of Com Guards are stationed on Republic worlds, with five on Tukayyid.



## MAJOR PERSONALITIES

### Haakon Magnusson

#### Elected Prince of the Free Rasalhague Republic

Just over 60 years of age, Haakon Magnusson is of medium height and build, with silver hair and blue eyes. The jagged scar running from his right eye was left by the butt of a Kurita infantryman's laser rifle. A veteran of years in the Rasalhague resistance movement, the Prince is known for his canniness, having earned the name of Silver Fox of Alshain. His popularity among the people helped see the fledgling nation through its initial years, but the Republic took massive losses in the Clan invasion. His own son Ragnar was captured by Clan Wolf, on Satalice in January of 3052.

### Tor Miraborg

#### Varldherre of Gunzburg, Military Commander of Radstadt Province

A fierce leader in his late fifties, General Tor Miraborg is popularly known as the "Iron Jarl." Miraborg evokes fanatical loyalty in his followers, who view him as a military hero. Miraborg was crippled during the Ronin Wars and remains confined to a wheelchair. He also bears a deep scar along the left side of his face, which many of his soldiers have maimed themselves to imitate as a symbol of their devotion to the Republic and the Iron Jarl.

Miraborg is also known for his hatred of mercenaries, who he believes did not fight tenaciously enough for their Rasalhague employer during the Ronin Wars. However Miraborg's spirit was broken by the time the Clans appeared over Gunzburg, and he surrendered the planet without a fight.

## MAJOR WORLDS

### Tukayyid

First settled in the 27th century, Tukayyid was just another anonymous agricultural world never deemed important enough to merit being garrisoned by a BattleMech regiment. All that changed in April 3052, when fleets of merchantmen chartered by ComStar came to evacuate the world's population. In May, the largest Mech battle in recorded history took place as over 10,000 Com Guard and Clan BattleMechs met on various fields of battle. After 20 days of fighting, an exhausted ComStar force stood victorious. Now the planet has the greatest concentration of ComStar military might outside of Terra. Given that the Great Houses will not allow ComStar forces back into their territories, Tukayyid and the remains of Rasalhague will host the forces of the Com Guard.

## MILITARY FORCES

### DRAKONS

1 Veteran: 3rd

The Drakons are fanatically loyal to the Republic. Unfortunately, that fanaticism has done them little good in facing up to Clan forces. Originally numbering four regiments, only the Third has survived the Clan invasion. They have always been a proud group, particularly disdainful of mercenaries, but the fight may have gone out of the unit, much as it has in the Republic as a whole.



## ST. IVES COMPACT

This newly created nation was formerly the St. Ives Commonality, a portion of the Capellan Confederation. Then, as now, it is ruled by Candace Liao, one of Maximilian Liao's daughters. Ever since Candace left the Confederation and married Justin Xiang, a close confederate of Hanse Davion, her small realm has maintained a close affiliation with the Federated Commonwealth. The Compact might have been absorbed into the Federated Commonwealth, much as the short-lived Tikonov Free Republic has been, but Candace staunchly asserted her realm's autonomy. Perhaps she feared that any other position would have driven her sister Romano Liao to a frenzied attack that might have damaged the Compact's worlds. Now that the apparently more rational Sun-Tzu has replaced Romano on the throne, the fate of the St. Ives Compact may also change.



## MAJOR PERSONALITIES

### **Candace Liao** **Duchess of St. Ives, Prime Minister of St. Ives Compact**

Candace is a stately woman in her mid-sixties. She is strong-willed and politically astute, but seems free of the plague of ambition that has destroyed other members of her family. Although Candace could have claimed the Capellan throne for herself, she has chosen to let her nephew Sun-Tzu do so instead. Her husband, Justin Allard, was killed in the recent assassination attempt on both their lives. Candace survived the attack, but a deep rumor has it that she traveled secretly to Sian to avenge his death by killing her sister Romano and her husband. Candace rightly assumed that Romano was behind the deed.

She is a great friend to the Steiner-Davions, and her son Kai is one of Victor Steiner-Davion's closest companions.

### **Kai Allard-Liao** **Duke Designate, St. Ives Compact**

Kai Allard-Liao is the son of the late Justin Allard—Hanse Davion's Head of Intelligence—and Candace Liao, an heir to the throne of the Capellan Federation. Recently, Justin was assassinated by an agent from Romano Liao, Candace's sister and Empress of the Capellan Confederation, and Candace was reported to have been killed as well, leaving Kai to take his place at Victor Davion's side. Fortunately, Kai and Victor have enjoyed a very close friendship for many years and served together during the initial battles of the Clan War.

Kai may be the greatest MechWarrior ever to come out of the Successor States. In single combat, he turns into a seeming machine of destruction. He has been plagued by a lack of confidence in his own abilities, however, and bears a load of guilt for warriors who have died in his command. But indications are that Kai learned to temper this crippling tendency during an extended period as a fugitive behind Clan lines.

## MAJOR WORLDS

### **Liao**

Original homeworld of the House of Liao, this mining world has been hard-hit by war, currently producing only a fraction of its former output, and with its citizenry at barely 100,000 inhabitants.

## MILITARY FORCES

### **ST. IVES LANCERS**

**2 Regular:** 1st, 2nd

The St. Ives Compact does not maintain much of a standing army, relying instead upon its Federated Commonwealth ally for defense in time of need. However, the St. Ives Lancers have provided for the defense of the capital world ever since the Compact seceded from the Capellan Confederation. Though neither unit has seen much large-scale action in the past 20 years, both have fought numerous small-unit actions in punitive raids against intrusion from the Capellan Confederation.

# THE GAMES

The average citizen of the Successor States believes that all MechWarriors are powerful figures with lands, titles, and great personal wealth. In reality, that is the exception rather than the rule. For every renowned mercenary regiment like Wolf's Dragoons or Hansen's Roughriders, there are a score of struggling units, battalion-sized or smaller, who fight day after day and year after year, half the time not knowing where their next meal or load of spare parts will come from. Sooner or later, many of these warriors become so desperate for cash that they travel to Solaris VII to try their luck at the games.

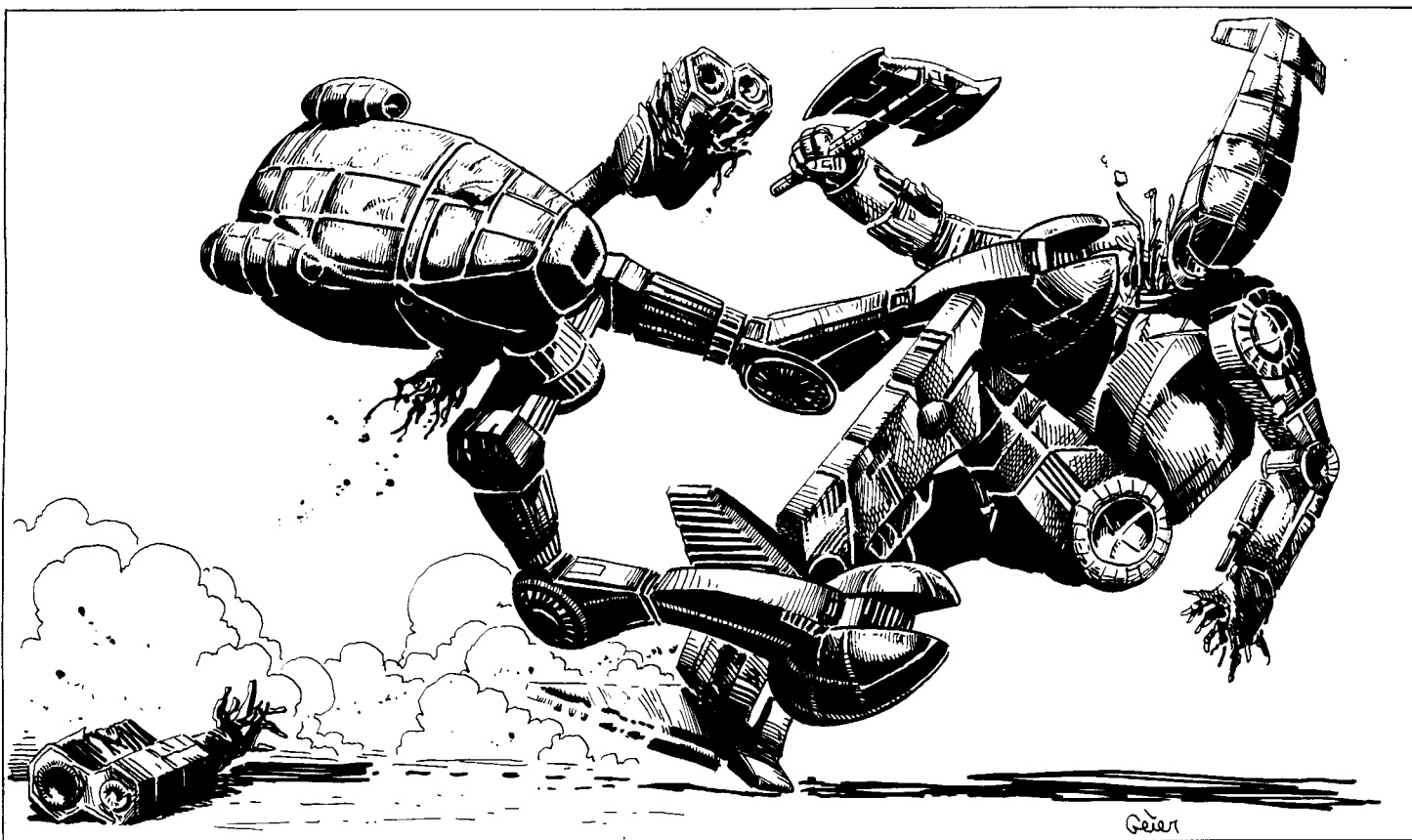
A rowdy frontier world on the border between Marik and Steiner space, Solaris has frequently changed hands over the past 200 years. Regardless of which side controls the planet, however, the planetary government sponsors games of gladiatorial combat, very like those of the Roman era some three thousand years ago on Terra.

Any MechWarrior willing to pay the entry fee of 5,000 C-Bills can face off against other warriors, alone or in pairs, in an arena jam-packed with spectators as bloodthirsty as their ancient counterparts. Contestants may surrender and break off a fight at any time by setting off a signal flare, but losers-by-retirement must pay their vanquishers a ransom of 100,000 C-Bills, as well as suffering a significant loss of reputation. Consequently, most battles continue until one side is either killed or totally incapacitated. Contestants receive salvage rights on all 'Mechs they destroy in combat. In

addition, those who survive to the final day and place high in the overall competition can earn themselves a hefty chunk of prize money (purses are based on the total number of entrants, with a contestant needing to win seven to nine total matches for a championship). Those who feel truly confident of their abilities can place bets with the arena bookmakers who impassively view the individual wins and losses as mere tallies in their betting books.

The games are big business on Solaris, bringing in substantial revenues to the planetary and House governments who operate them. Thus, whichever House is in control of the Solaris system has a strong vested interest in maintaining the integrity and reputation of the competition. Nonetheless, rumors abound of bribes, purse money being skimmed off, betting scandals, fixed draws, "ringers," and even covert team-up agreements made to eliminate certain "undesirable" contestants from the competition. Individual gamemasters can decide whether or not any of these tales are true.

Novice MechWarriors may find the games a good way to accumulate an initial capital stake or to earn a reputation that might attract gainful employment. More experienced warriors who have suffered a run of bad luck may also be drawn toward Solaris for the same purposes. Or, they may be sent there on assignment by House Marik or Steiner to investigate reports of illegal activities or a buildup of enemy forces using the games as a front. In any event, players should find their visit both entertaining and potentially dangerous.





# NEW AVALON INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE

In 3015, Hanse Davion initiated perhaps the boldest stroke of his still brief reign as Prince when he decreed that the Federated Suns would fund the construction of a brand-new university on its capital world of New Avalon. This facility was completed in late 3016, at which time Davion committed a sizeable number of his empire's scarce scholars and technicians to serve as its instructors. In the three decades since then, the New Avalon Institute of Science (NAIS) has become recognized as the most advanced center of higher learning and research in the Successor States.

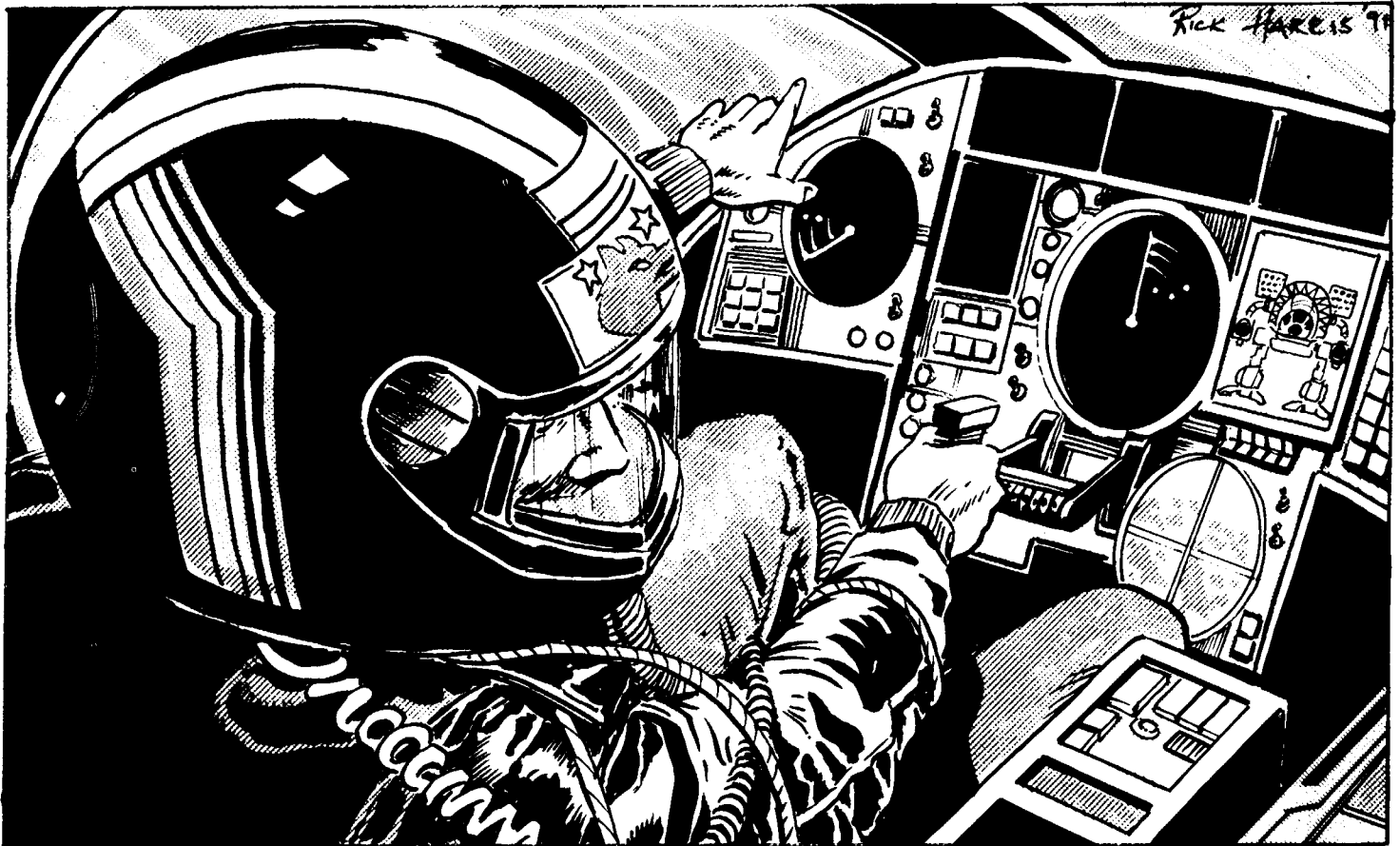
The Institute functions more like the 20th-century Sol military academy at West Point than a public university, however. Prior to admission, candidates are tested rigorously for both intelligence and political leanings, and aptitude tests determine which disciplines they may study. Those who are accepted become "wards" of the ducal government of New Avalon, and must commit themselves to ten years of service to the Federated Suns upon graduation. Course schedules are long and arduous (eight to ten hours per day), leaving the student little time for traditional campus high-jinks (or sleep, for that matter). Despite all this, however, no one doubts that the training is worth the price, and the current waiting list of candidates is ten times greater than the school's capacity.

NAIS offers training in seven major disciplines: Biology/Medi-

cine; Engineering; Mining/Metallurgy; Chemistry; Military Science; Finance; and Political Administration. The primary goal of the first five disciplines is to recover the lost technologies of the last millennium. The last two course areas serve primarily as a training ground for Davion bureaucracy, while training in Military Science produces officers for House Davion regular units.

A few noteworthy successes in the medical and metallurgical fields have already been achieved. Study in these disciplines includes much hands-on training and research, plus a lot of trial and error, because few scientific texts have survived intact to the present day.

The other Houses of the Successor States have watched the growth of the Institute with great interest and growing concern. As part of the alliance between House Davion and Steiner, the latter has been allowed to send a growing number of its own young scholars to the NAIS. Meanwhile, two of Davion's opponents, the Draconis Combine and the Free Worlds League, have followed Davion's lead by opening their own universities, though neither is as well bankrolled or staffed as the NAIS. Because of this disparity, House Kurita, Marik, and Liao all spend time trying to infiltrate their intelligence agents as students into the NAIS, or in attempting to bribe other students to enter their employ.



# THE PERIPHERY

The Periphery, stretching far beyond the borders of the Successor Houses into interstellar night, is a vast domain whose frontier is impossible to define precisely. Suffice it to say that the Periphery lies perhaps 150 to 200 light years (in any direction) from the Terran homeworld. From the time of its settlement—and despite its remoteness—the Periphery's fate has been intimately interwoven with that of the Inner Sphere, though differences and hatreds have divided the two down the centuries.

Much of today's Periphery was settled early in the history of space exploration. Indeed, many of the worlds were colonized by those wishing to escape the turmoil, persecution, or poverty of the Terran homeworld. The Periphery worlds and states have ever been characterized by this desire for independence.

The Rim Worlds Republic, the first organized Periphery state, was officially proclaimed in 2250. Lying on the far side of the Dark Nebula, the Republic worlds were settled by Hector Worthington Rowe and his anti-Terran Alliance followers. The Rim Worlds Republic is no longer in existence. It died a slow death after the defeat of Amaris the Usurper, the man who murdered First Lord Richard Cameron and attempted to win the throne of the Star League by force. The Amaris family had ruled the Rim Worlds Republic for several hundred years. With Kerensky's defeat of Amaris, the Rim Worlds eventually collapsed—partly from loss of leadership, partly because of pirate raiding, and partly because of Lyran Commonwealth seizures of former Republic worlds. The state was formally disbanded in 2786.

In 2252, the Calderon Expedition penetrated the unexplored Hyades Cluster, arriving on the planet Taurus in January 2253. Hidden from the prying eyes of Alliance bureaucrats, the colony transformed its mineral-rich worlds into centers of political and social equality. The Taurian Concordat, officially established in 2335, is a collection of representative democracies, with a member of House Calderon as Protector of the Realm.

The Outworlds Alliance is the second-largest Periphery state, but the weakest both politically and economically. First chartered in 2417, the Alliance planets lie at the juncture between the Draconis Combine and the Federated Suns. The provisions of the Alliance charter guarantee all its citizens freedom of expression, freedom of religious belief, and the right to pursue any economic scheme that does not infringe on the rights of other citizens.

Lying outward of the Free Worlds League, the Magistracy of Canopus was founded in 2530 by Kossandra Centrella. Still ruled by the Centrella family, the Canopus worlds form an autocratic state where women traditionally manage the government and the military. The Magistracy of Canopus, a roughly circular shell of systems, is the third largest of the Periphery realms.

## HISTORY TO 2785

As described earlier, by the year 2235 more than 600 worlds had been settled within 120 light years of Terra. In 2236, the colony on Freedom declared its independence from Terra, chafing at the high taxes and the high-handedness of Terran planetary governors and officials. Responding to the crisis, the Alliance sent in an armada, thinking to quell the rebellion in short order. This triggered

more revolts among the colonies. What should have been a short tour of duty escalated into a full-scale military operation involving more than a million men for a period of 18 months. By mid-2237, the Outer Reaches Rebellion consisted of more than 50 worlds in revolt against Terra. Despite their apparent superiority, the Terran armies could not win. Faced with unorthodox rebel tactics, lack of supplies, and unacceptably high combat losses, the Alliance high command recalled most of its troops by the end of that year.

In the wake of this debacle, the Liberal Party took power on Terra in 2242, almost immediately announcing that the Alliance would withdraw its officials and troops to within a 30-light-year sphere around Terra, granting independence to all worlds outside that sphere. The colonies were suddenly on their own, and many of them simply could not make it without Alliance support. This set off another wave of colonization as the people of battle-scarred or suddenly uninhabitable worlds set out to seek better homes among the farthest stars. It was in this new thrust into distant space that the future Rim Worlds Republic and Taurian Concordat were settled. In the years that followed, the rest of the Inner Sphere behaved toward the nascent Periphery realms with a benign neglect that allowed the latter to flourish.

The Outworlds Alliance and the Magistracy of Canopus were born during the Age of War. Founder of the Alliance was Julius Avellar, a Davion military man disgusted by the carnage of war. Another disenchanting member of the military was the founder of the Magistracy of Canopus. This time it was a female MechWarrior, Kossandra Centrella, a former Captain in the Free Worlds League unit, the Defenders of Andurien.

Except for the Taurian Concordat, the Periphery states were not much involved in the Age of War. In the years 2397-2417, the Capellan and Taurian navies clashed repeatedly as the Taurians attempted to hold onto worlds that House Liao insisted were "Capellan" holdings. Cruelty to Taurian POWs and outright massacres of Taurian civilians were so common that the embittered Taurians refused to sign the Ares Conventions in 2412.

As described in previous sections, the Age of War finally wound down after more than a century and a half of war. In one of the amazing twists of history, the leaders of the six Great Houses of the Inner Sphere would eventually so bury the hatchet that they voluntarily combined to form the Star League, which was officially proclaimed in 2571.

For a variety of reasons, the leaders of the four Periphery realms refused categorically to join the Star League. This set off the so-called Reunification War, the Star League's bloody, 20-year military assault against the Periphery. A separate campaign was fought against each Periphery state, all of which fought valiantly to maintain their independence. The Outworlds Alliance surrendered in 2585; the Magistracy of Canopus in 2588; the Rim Worlds Republic and the Taurian Concordat in 2596.

The victorious Star League then launched a massive propaganda campaign to create a veneer of unity after their conquest of the Periphery. So successful was this effort that the League had withdrawn most of its occupying forces from the conquered states by 2607. In the same year, the four Periphery states became associate, or Territorial Member-States, of the Star League.

## THE PERIPHERY

In the Good Years that followed, both the Inner Sphere and the Periphery prospered. The technological developments of the 27th and early 28th centuries (HPGs, small-scale myomers, and low-cost water purification) allowed greater communications among worlds and contributed to the exploitation of the vast resources of the Periphery. Trade and commerce grew exponentially. Many of the worlds of Star League, both inner and outer, became economically interdependent, which encouraged the specialization of worlds into agricultural, industrial, mining, and so on.

The long peace was finally broken in 2765 when New Vandenberg and 17 other Periphery worlds seceded from the Star League. They were reacting to Richard Cameron's Taxation Edict of 2763, which placed the heaviest burdens on the Territorial States. The rebellion brought down the full wrath of the First Lord, who sent General Kerensky and 98 divisions of Star League regulars against the Periphery.

As more and more troops were dispatched to the distant front, more regiments of Stefan Amaris' army took their place in and around Terra. By November 2765, Amaris' troops outnumbered the skeleton League garrisons that were all that remained on Terra. In late December, Amaris seized his chance. As ruthless as he was ambitious, he executed the First Lord and every other member of the Cameron line and seized all the worlds of the Terran Hegemony in his own name.

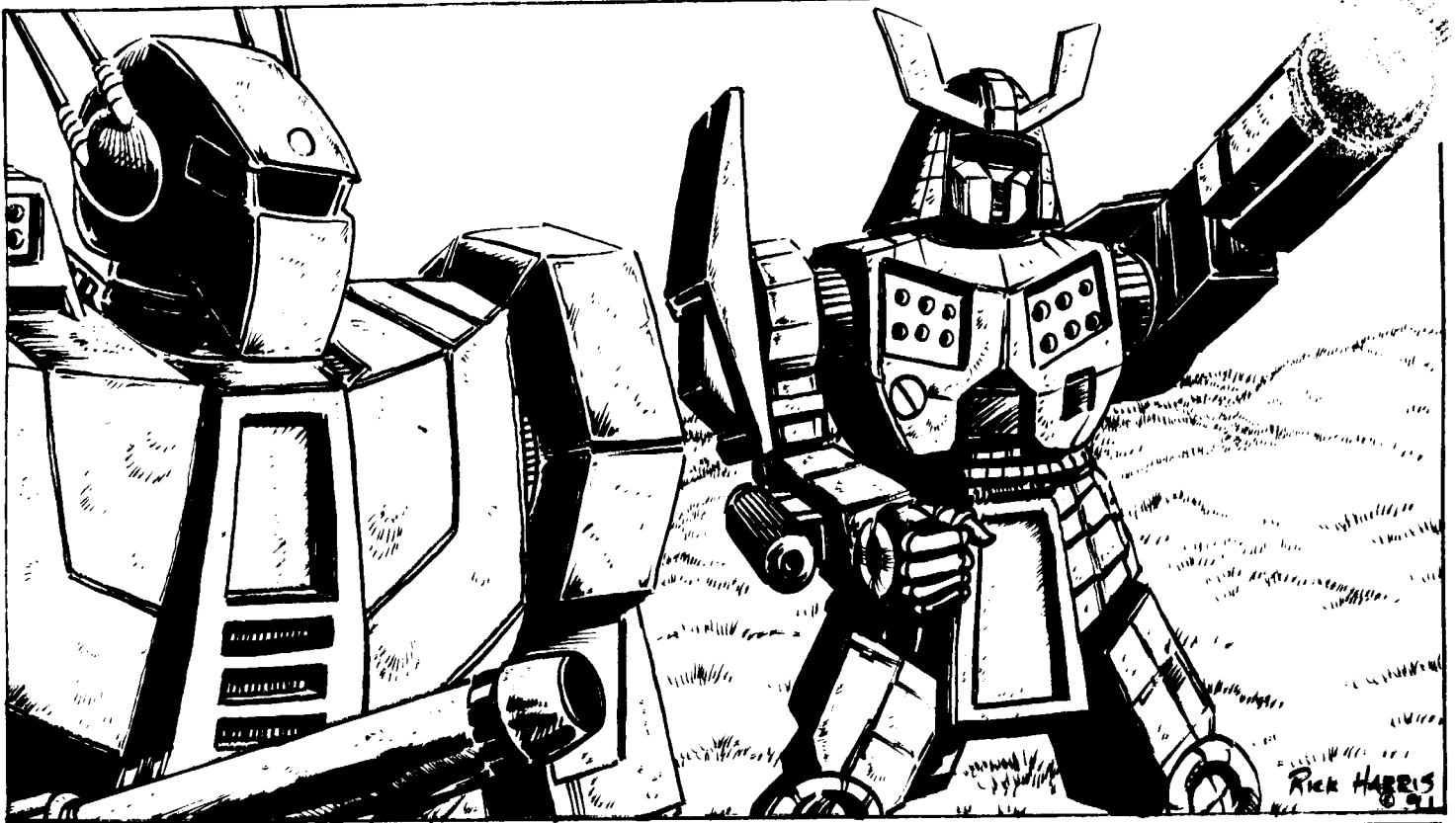
Fifteen years of civil war followed the Amaris coup. Before it ended, the fighting damaged the whole of the Star League, especially in the regions of Terra and the Rim Worlds. Vast sections of the League's HPG network were destroyed or disabled, effec-

tively cutting off contact between the Periphery and the Inner Sphere. The departure of Kerensky's armada in November of 2784 removed the last obstacle to open war between the states of the Inner Sphere. Turning on one another, the Successor Houses once more left the Periphery to its own devices. Over the next two and a half centuries, the distant outer worlds were finally free to follow their own paths.

### THE MODERN PERIPHERY: 2785 TO THE PRESENT

The collapse of the Star League had a profound effect on the balance of power in the Periphery. First, the Civil War and ensuing conflicts completely disrupted its interdependent economy. Second, Kerensky stripped the Inner Sphere as well as the Periphery of its 'Mech defenses in order to fight the Civil War. This left poorly defended planets prey to private forces still armed with 'Mechs. Third, loss of communication with the Inner Sphere and the ensuing Succession Wars increased the Periphery's isolation. Until now, the Star League had kept in check the conflict between the many factions within the Periphery. These grievances and differences now erupted openly.

The impact of some of these factors was felt only over the course of time, while others had an immediate impact. For instance, the interdependent economy of the Periphery was affected almost as severely as that of the Inner Sphere by the collapse of communications (see **Economics**, p. 144). This realigned the economic balance of power on the basis of true wealth, i.e., 'Mechs, ships, industrial facilities, valuable raw materials, and technology such as still-operating HPGs. Because of the lack of spare parts



and maintenance equipment, almost all worlds whose existence depended on trade with other worlds had to be abandoned. Just as in the Inner Sphere, any worlds dependent on extensive off-planet support for agriculture or pure water were maintained only if located in key strategic locations.

It took longer for political structures to disintegrate. In areas of space more densely populated with planets (such as the Hyades, the core of the Taurian Concordat), a semblance of organization remained. Areas such as the Rim Worlds suffered a different fate. With its planets stretched across an area as wide as this century's Federated Suns (but with a tenth of the population) and having suffered extensive damage during the Civil War, the alliance fractured into smaller entities, some no larger than a single world.

The early Succession Wars also influenced political structures in the Periphery. 'Mech units that had rebelled against their masters, had made a dangerous enemy, or whose members wished to seek their fortunes often journeyed into the less organized space beyond the Inner Sphere. There they often became de facto rulers of a world. Conquest was usually easy, because the worlds easiest to take were the most worthless in terms of natural resources, water, or location. This only spurred renegade 'Mech units to further conquests, usually against more heavily populated, richer targets. Although many believed these bandits would have little chance of survival without a solid base of operations, the bandits have gone on to become a menace to more stable worlds.

The next two centuries of Periphery history seem based on the dialectical interaction of two mutually opposing forces. On one side were the independent and self-styled "kings" of one or more worlds: bandits and privateers of the frontier who expanded their borders through menace, coercion, or occasionally by contracting their services to their neighbors. On the other side were the evolving alliances, some based on the remnants of past governments, others newly formed for the purpose of trade or mutual defense against other alliances or the selfsame Bandit Kings. (Alliances also allowed states to pool limited supplies of technological resources, such as parts for 'Mechs or water purification devices.) The Bandit Kings acted as a destabilizing force, destroying or dividing alliances. The alliances were a counterpoint to that trend, stabilizing regions to the point where trade and even technological development could begin again.

Within each type of government, there were social forces attempting to pull it apart. For example, an alliance often suffered from the inertia or internal disagreement of the members, and limited resources made it impossible to satisfy all parties at all times.

Though the rulers of the Successor Houses do not know all the details, they are aware that ComStar has maintained at least a tenuous contact with the Periphery, substituting small packet vessels where HPGs have been destroyed or disabled. ComStar's influence in the Periphery is insignificant compared to what it exerts in the Inner Sphere, however. Among the outworlds, it operates more as an information-gathering organization than a service-oriented one, because the existing communications equipment is in the hands of independent alliances.

Often a given alliance or confederation has been infiltrated by agents provocateur from rival states or even influential Bandit Kings, further weakening the government's cohesion. Generally,

the most successful alliances in the Periphery, as in the Inner Sphere, tend to be oligarchy-based, with power vested in one family or a small group of families. Sometimes even blood relationship does little to prevent divisiveness and treachery, however.

Bandit kingdoms, too, suffer from constant flux. Not surprisingly, the existence of many smaller provinces are closely tied to the existence of a charismatic leader. Thus, a weak or ineffectual successor can sometimes undo the gains made by a strong predecessor. As bandit kingdoms are not formal confederations, they may also change hands as a result of personal disagreements, disputes over battle plans, or even more subtle treachery. Indeed, such exchanges may take place even on a battlefield. This trend has prevented the formation of large-scale or long-lasting confederations of bandit lords. Nonetheless, Bandit Kings do not generally suffer from many of the problems that plague less tyrannical forms of government.

Both bandits and alliances have sought to develop the vast reaches of the Periphery in search of natural resources and new sources of spare parts and abandoned technology. Because of the need to invest so much men and material in defense efforts, development has been hampered. Nevertheless, continuing expansion and exploration has helped to maintain a relatively high level of technology.

States in the Periphery are more conscious of the need to maintain this level of technology for two reasons. First, they need technology to survive the natural forces against which man must contend. Second, technology makes the state more able to resist an attack by an aggressor. Indeed, because the worlds of the Periphery were forced (largely because of the beating given them by Kerensky) to redevelop industry and agriculture, they are more ideally prepared for war than the Inner Sphere, whose economy and outlook has largely been scavenger-based. Because of the lack of competent Techs and sufficient resources, however, military forces of the Periphery still cannot match those of the Inner Sphere, either in numbers or in firepower. The outworlds have been careful not to draw too much attention to themselves, lest one of the Successor States decide to embark on a campaign of conquest. In reality, the Inner Sphere defends its borders against bandits, and knows little about the activities beyond.

## COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE INNER SPHERE

Though the Periphery has been fairly cut off from the Inner Sphere since the time of the Civil War two and a half centuries ago, there is no absolute border where the Inner Sphere ends and the Periphery begins. Both independent 'Mech units and intrepid traders make their way beyond the Inner Sphere from time to time, and some information has trickled back into the Successor States. This is most true in the reaches beyond the Draconis Combine and the Federated Suns, where both Davion and Kurita spies have long attempted to woo support from the several states that form the Outworlds Alliance. Also, both Davion and the House of Calderon, rulers of the much-reduced Taurian Concordat, are engaged in economic infiltration of the wide, disorganized space between the rimward portion of the Capellan March (near Aldebaran) and the Hyades, the core of the Concordat.

## BANDIT KINGDOMS

There are many Bandit Kings in the Periphery, and their influence varies from power over one world to a dozen. Both their numbers and their relative strength are in constant flux, however. Several kings are fairly well established, and are known (by reputation at least) in the Inner Sphere and the Periphery.

### BANDIT KINGS

For each Bandit King, the following information is provided below: capital world and approximate location; number of 'Mechs and number of worlds controlled; current affiliation, if any. Although Bandit Kingdoms and alliances are grouped separately, the difference between the two is more semantic than actual.

#### Hendrik III, Oberon VI

(Coreward of the Draconis/Lyran border)

Hendrik is the leader of a confederation of Bandit Kings whose worlds lie beyond the accepted boundary of the Inner Sphere. He is descended from the first Bandit King, the famous Hendrik Grimm, who left the service of House Steiner after its leaders left Grimm's regiment to defend a position against insurmountable odds. Grimm settled his regiment in the near-Periphery Oberon system.

In the course of nearly two centuries, the Grimm's descendants have gradually expanded their authority over neighboring planets. Successive kings have turned gradually from banditry to diplomacy in dealing with these worlds, to the point that the adjective "bandit" may no longer apply. Over the past three decades, Hendrik's 'Mech strength has increased from two to three full regiments, and until very recently they were becoming much more aggressive in their attacks into the Inner Sphere. With the coming of the Clans, however, Oberon has been cut off from the Successor States. All ComStar contact with Oberon was lost in 3045. Reports are that Oberon VI fell to the Clans in 3049, but Hendrik's whereabouts are unknown.

#### Belt Pirates, Star's End

(Near the Draconis Rift, coreward of the Draconis Combine)

The Star's End asteroid belt is located in a star system near the edge of an empty void approximately 60 light years in diameter, stretching between Kurita space and the former Rim Worlds. Much of the Belt was mined out even before the Succession Wars, but it was known as a haven for pirates raiding into the Star League. After the League's collapse, these privateers proceeded as usual, with Kurita and Periphery worlds as the primary targets.

As the supplies of spare parts, especially for jump vessels, slowed to a trickle, the Belt Pirates became aware that their livelihood depended on the technical expertise to repair and replace malfunctioning avionics equipment. Though numerous





pirates have been killed while plying their trade, the technology of building and repairing JumpShips is by no means lost in the Belt. Hidden within the Trojan points of the Belt are zero-G graving docks and hangars, capable of actually reassembling functional JumpShips from scavenged components.

The Belt Pirates employ about a battalion of BattleMechs, mostly for the purpose of scavenging jump points for JumpShip hulks. The Belt Pirates currently are lead by Morgan Fletcher. Some reports indicate that the Clans have not taken Star's End. In fact, a recent report has 'Mechs in Star's End colors hitting a world occupied by the Ghost Bears.

## ALLIANCES

### The Outworlds Alliance

Ruled by the House of Avellar, the Outworlds Alliance is centered in the Alpheratz system beyond the coreward edge of the Federated Suns. Being relatively distant from the battles fought in the Periphery, the Alliance still fared badly in the Civil War. After the disintegration of the Star League, it was left to itself because of the bitter conflict between its two closest Inner Sphere neighbors, Houses Davion and Kurita. Like most organized governments in the Periphery, the Alliance never felt much psychological dependence on Terra as homeworld. Thus, the Outworlds were able to handle isolation with some aplomb, though their economic dislocation was significant.

In Star League times, the extent of the Outworlds was as great as that of the Draconis Combine, and spanned 150 worlds. Disassociation, abandonment, and loss of communications has shrunk this dominion to just over 40 worlds, but the Avellar family has provided just and competent leadership for two centuries.

During the past 20 years, ComStar has built five HPG units in the Alliance, and diplomatic envoys from both House Davion and House Kurita have sought to establish strong ties with it, culminating in the marriage of President Avellar to the Baroness Rebecca DeSanders of the Federated Suns. Not many actual gains have been made in wooing the Alliance, however.

### Taurian Concordat

The Taurian Concordat, ruled by the House of Calderon, is based in the close star cluster of the Hyades, rimward beyond the Federated Suns. It controls 30 worlds in an area spanning just over eight light years, one of the highest concentrations of solar systems in the human-occupied space. The Taurian Concordat was decimated by the Civil War, having been brutally beaten by Kerensky's forces after many of its worlds seceded from the Star League in 2765.

This realm's current leader, Thomas Calderon, is mistrustful of enemies and allies alike, spending a great deal of energy (and of his realm's treasury) to support this paranoia. The two most recent events to fan the flames of his fear were the creation of the Federated Commonwealth and the Canopus-Andurien alliance. Many believe that Thomas Calderon should step down from the post of Protector and permit his son Jeffrey to assume the throne. Affable, charismatic, and almost completely guileless, Jeffrey is the antithesis of his father.

The Concordat is somewhat impoverished due to severe legal restrictions on internal commerce and limitations on private exploration. The Taurian Concordat's delay in exploring and exploiting the

mostly abandoned buffer between it and the Federated Suns may lead to the Davions establishing their own outposts much closer to the Concordat's borders than the Taurians would like.

### Magistracy of Canopus

The Magistracy of Canopus, ruled by the House of Centrella, has grown rapidly in the last several years under the leadership of the charismatic Magestrix Kyalla, a two-meter-tall black woman who won the support of her countrymen through her exploits as a MechWarrior. Kyalla has also stirred the enthusiasm of her allies with the promise that Canopus might someday return to its former glory by taking advantage of the divisions in the Inner Sphere. One recent step taken toward this goal was the Canopian alliance with the Capellan Confederation's rebellious Duchy of Andurien. Following a disastrous joint invasion of the Capellan Confederacy, however, Kyalla found herself declared legally insane and replaced by her daughter Emma as Magestrix.

Spies from the Inner Sphere (especially those from ROM, ComStar's secret intelligence service) have been claiming for some time that the Magistracy of Canopus has a source of supply for its 'Mech units that lies "somewhere beyond the Periphery," and that this source has been the key to its phenomenal growth.

### The Greater Valkyrate

(Coreward of the Lyran Commonwealth)

The Greater Valkyrate is a new political unit formed by the union of Maria Morgraine and Redjack Ryan of Butte Hold, lying just off the edge of the Lyran Commonwealth, near the Oberon Confederation. With Morgraine's political savvy and the military power of Ryan's Rebels, the Greater Valkyrate threatened to become a band of wolves to savage at the borders of the Lyran Commonwealth. (Ryan is infamous for having led his subordinates in an uncontrolled destruction of a Marik agricultural world while serving as a battalion commander for Hendrik of Oberon.)

Unfortunately for the Valkyrate, its holdings lay within the path of the invading Clans, leading to at least one scrap between Ryan's Rebels and Clan 'Mechs. That fight resulted in the capture of Kenny Ryan, one of Redjack's many illegitimate children. Since then, the Valkyrate has been cut off from the Inner Sphere. Rumors abound of the remnants of the Valkyrate joining the Belt Pirates or even Oberon, but no hard data on their fate exists. At last count, Ryan's Rebels consisted of three battalions of 'Mechs.





# THE CLANS

For three complete centuries now, the Successor States have fought a continual series of wars to determine who would become the leader of a restored Star League. The Inner Sphere has been at war for so long that it has become an accepted way of life for many. Although numerous House Lords have coveted the rulership of a united Inner Sphere, relatively few have had the foresight to see it as a dream of a peacefully unified humanity, not merely a consolidation of power for their own House.

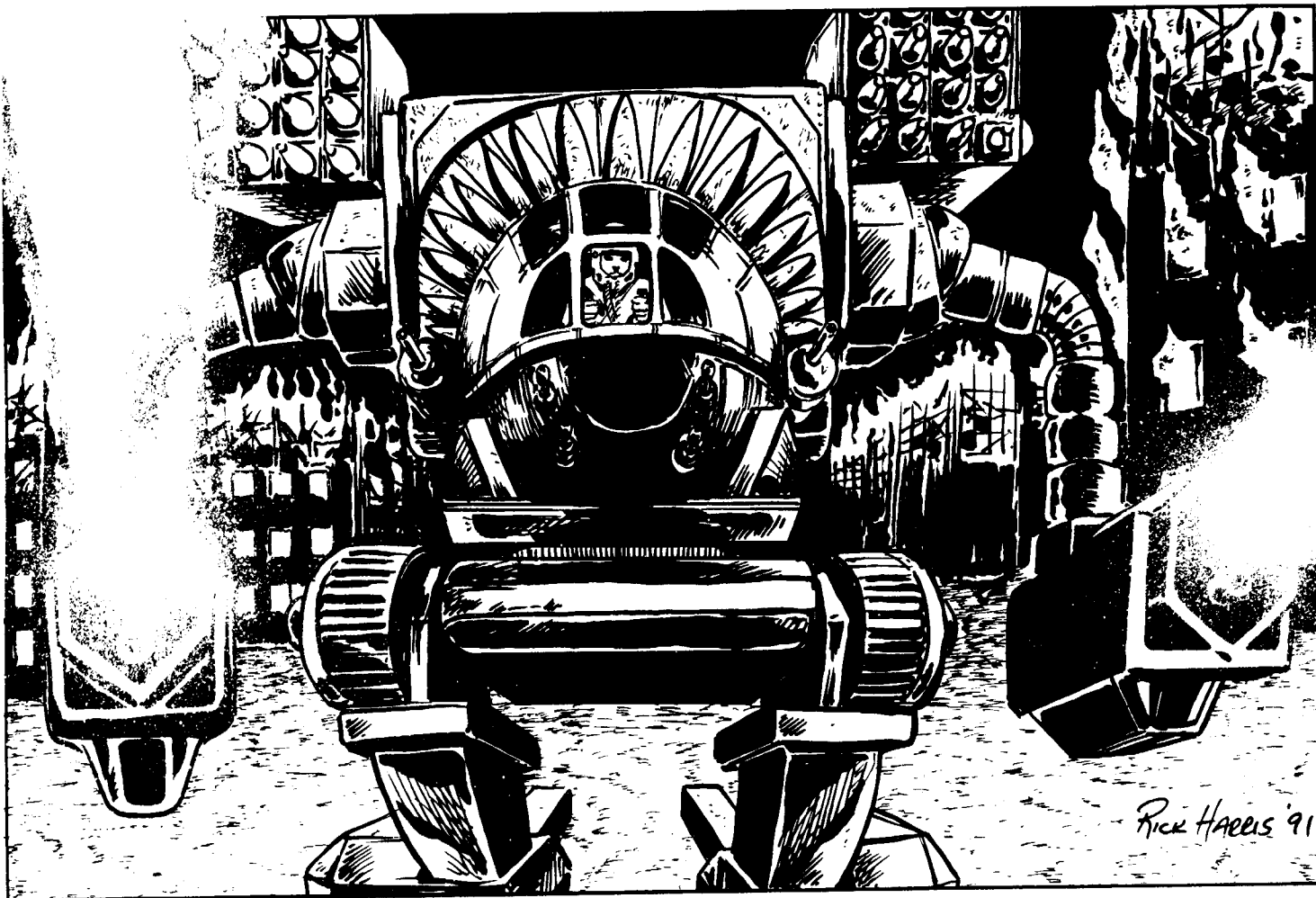
The coming of the Clans has brought dramatic changes to the Inner Sphere. Where once the lines of power and ambition were drawn five ways (six, when ComStar became politically active), allowing the Great Houses to balance their enemies against one another, now the lines are much more complex. In addition to each House's five traditional enemies, now they must also take the Clans into account. From all indications, the individual Clans making up the invasion force are often just as divided as the Inner Sphere Lords. Their loss on Tukayyid has resulted in a loss of solidarity.

The Clans seem to have sufficient military might to take on the entire Inner Sphere if they can become unified enough in that goal to present a united front. The agreement made between ComStar

and the Clans during the bidding for the Trial of Possession stated that the Clans would not continue their advance to Terra for 15 years. A line drawn out from west to east through Tukayyid limits any future expansion. But major areas in both the Combine and the Commonwealth remain fair game, as is simple raiding across that line. Because of infighting, the Clans seem to have lost their unity of purpose and it will no doubt be several years before even one Clan can rally enough to launch a concerted effort against the Combine or Federated Commonwealth.

The Inner Sphere is rapidly closing the technological military gap that once separated it from the Clan. Conversely, the Clans are attempting to modify their ritualized form of warfare in order to counteract new Inner Sphere tactics.

How the conflict takes shape over the next decades will likely determine the fate of human space for centuries to come, and will certainly have serious ramifications on the race's further development. Fortunately, there are a number of individuals on both sides of the line who look beyond the present shape of things to see into the future. Nevertheless, these far-seeing individuals must cope with more than their share of enemies.



## THE EXODUS

Stefan Amaris the Usurper has been blamed for initiating the centuries of conflict known as the Succession Wars, and his name is cursed among the Successor States to this day. But when Amaris betrayed the young Richard Cameron (the last First Lord of Star League) in December 2766, claiming the throne of Star League for himself, he not only set in motion the events that would begin the Succession Wars, but he also triggered another that culminated in the present Clan invasion of the Inner Sphere. Of course, he did not accomplish all this entirely on his own. Much of the blame for the current state of affairs falls on the shoulders of the Council Lords of Star League at the time.

Those Lords had appointed Aleksandr Kerensky as Regent of the Star League during the years of Richard Cameron's minority, then thought to strip Kerensky of that authority in the wake of the young First Lord's assassination. Kerensky did not see his position as one of personal power, however, but rather of responsibility, and he was not willing to abrogate that responsibility at the whim of a group of politically motivated sharks like Amaris and the other House Lords. His first action following Amaris' usurpation was to gather the Star League Defense Forces together to drive the traitor from his stolen place on the throne. During this period, the House Lords did not take sides, though the Lyrans, Capellans, and Federated Suns sent equipment and supplies to worlds taken by the general's troops. Once Kerensky had accomplished his mission and Amaris had been executed, he shocked the Inner Sphere by collecting his forces and leaving explored space, ostensibly forever.

This marked the beginning of the period that the Clans know as the Exodus. Though not all units of the Regular Army followed Kerensky into exile, most did, taking their families with them. No one knew exactly where they were headed, but they had faith in Kerensky and believed he must have a plan. That faith would be sorely tested over the next few years, however, as the fleet pushed further and further from human-occupied space without encountering habitable worlds. Along the way, some of Kerensky's followers revolted. General Kerensky quickly quashed the rebellion and summarily executed the leaders in an attempt to demonstrate the need for rigid discipline and loyalty if he and his people were to have any hope of surviving.

## SEEDS OF CHANGE

Eventually, Kerensky and his followers encountered what came to be known as the Pentagon, five marginally habitable planets some 1,300 light years from Terra. The planets were less than a single jump apart and only a few jumps away from a large globular cluster. A thick dust-nebula that they christened Kerensky's Cloak hid them from the Inner Sphere.

As Kerensky and his people set about colonizing the Pentagon worlds of Arcadia, Babylon, Circe, Dagda, and Eden, it became painfully obvious that they had a disproportionate number of warriors compared to the laborers, techs, scientists, and even administrators among them. Kerensky's solution to the problem was simple and direct: he established a series of grueling tests that would eliminate all but the very best of his warriors, who would remain in the military. The rest would be retested for their suitability to serve in other capacities.

## CIVIL WAR

The struggle to conquer the inhospitable Pentagon worlds disheartened many of Kerensky's followers, and the demotion of so many Regular Army troops to the ranks of laborers and techs left a great many more dissatisfied. Though the exiles from the Inner Sphere prospered in their new homes, some of Kerensky's followers resented the ascetic lifestyle and severe discipline on which their successful colonies were based. These and other tensions finally erupted in civil war on the planet Eden shortly before the general's death. While preparing his campaign, the grand old man suffered massive heart failure.

The general's designated successor was his son Nicholas, perhaps even more of an idealist than his father. It was Nicholas who transformed his father's dream of one day restoring the Star League to the Inner Sphere into a near-mystical vision of the future.

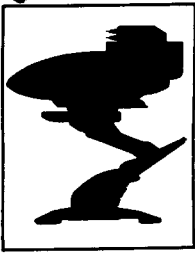
Unwilling to waste military resources on putting down the rebellion, Nicholas decided to lead his followers in another Exodus from destructive civil strife. He and his people traveled to Strana Mechty, one of the worlds hidden in the veil of stars in the Kerensky cluster. On Strana Mechty (Russian for "Land of Dreams"), Nicholas and his followers guarded their technology and went on with the business of survival while the Pentagon worlds destroyed themselves and their environments in almost 20 years of civil war.

By the time Nicholas returned to retake the Pentagon worlds, they found the planets nearly devastated. The battle to win back the Pentagon was nevertheless bitterly fought. In the end, many of the survivors welcomed Nicholas as a savior. Just as Nicholas had left the rebels to drive themselves to their own destruction, the Clans—who characterized themselves as the Star League in exile—believed that the Successor States would pound each other into barbarism, paving the way for the heirs of Kerensky to return as saviors of humanity.

## CASTE SYSTEM

It was during the 20 years of Nicholas' retreat to the Kerensky Cluster that the concept of "Clans" first came into being. Seeking to further cast off cultural ties to the Successor States, Nicholas reorganized his society completely, dividing it into 20 Clans, and replacing the old military system of four 'Mechs to a lance with a new one of five 'Mechs to a Star. He also created a five-tier caste system—laborers, merchants, techs, scientists, and warriors—in ascending order of prestige. The laborer caste he characterized as the "muscle" of the Clans, merchants as its "bones," techs as its "fingers," scientists as its "mind," and warriors as its "blood and soul." Because familiarity breeds expertise, and because it is assumed that genetics creates lines of individuals suited more for one occupation than another, most citizens of the Clans live, work, and die in the caste to which they were born. But every citizen is tested for individual propensities, and it is not impossible for a child born to one caste to be elevated (or demoted) to another.

Nicholas also established a genetic program for the warrior caste, whereby the best fighters contribute genetic material to a pool from which the next generation of fighters is created. The embryos of these new generations are cared for in artificial wombs, and each new group of individuals created from a particular set of genetic material is raised together in a "sibko" (sibling company).



## THE CLANS

Due to the intensity of testing in the warrior caste, each sibko is destined to lose 40 to 60 percent of its members by the time its members are of an age to become warriors. By the

time they reach their late thirties, the remainder will be considered too old to have retained their edge. They are then assigned to raising and training the new generation of fighters.

It was also during this period of reformation that the concept of "Bloodnames" was established. While most Clan warriors have no surname, bearing instead the name of their Clan, a few of the most elite can win the right to bear one of the surnames of the loyal warriors who went into exile on Strana Mechty with Nicholas Kerensky. There are 760 of these Bloodnames, with no more than 25 individuals bearing a single Bloodname at any one time. (The

most valued Bloodname is, as might be expected, Kerensky.) Only when one of the Bloodnamed dies can another individual fight for the right to bear that name, and the battles are intense, as often as not leaving a string of dead contenders along the way. This is because winning a Bloodname is one of the highest honors among the Clans, guaranteeing that the warrior's genes will be used in future generations, and ensuring that the holder's name will live forever in Clan lore.

### CLAN GOVERNMENT

In Nicholas' system, two Khans for each Clan are selected from among the Bloodnamed, one viewed as senior and the other as junior. The Khans of all the Clans together form the Grand Council. During times of crisis, they choose one from among their number to serve as ilKhan (chief warlord) to lead them. Other castes have their own leaders, too, but it is the Khans who have final say in any Clan decision. Politics within the Clans can be Machiavellian, but the militaristic nature of the society makes it no surprise that every decision can be challenged to trial by combat.

At present, there are two major political groupings within the Clans, the Crusaders and the Wardens. The Crusaders believe that it is the Clans' duty to conquer the Inner Sphere and reshape it into the Clan image in order to return the Star League to its rightful place. The Wardens disagree, arguing that it is the duty of the Clans to hold themselves in readiness to protect the Inner Sphere from outside dangers. Surprisingly, it has been a Warden, Ulric Kerensky of Clan Wolf, who served as ilKhan during most of the recent invasion. ilKhan Ulric believed it was better to lead the Clans cautiously, letting them learn the strengths of Successor State culture by experience, instead of letting a Crusader ilKhan push the Clans forward in bloody conquest.

### THE INVASION

Although many believe that the Clan invasion began in 3050, its first action goes back much further than that. In truth, the invasion began in 3005, when Wolf's Dragoons first appeared in the Inner Sphere. As their name might suggest, Wolf's Dragoons are actually a unit from Clan Wolf, in this case composed primarily of "freebirths" (individuals from nonwarrior castes, who tested highly enough to become warriors). They were outfitted with old-style Star League 'Mechs (better than that to which the Successor States' technology had degenerated, but antiquated compared to the Clans' new OmniMechs) and sent to serve the Great Houses of the Inner Sphere as mercenaries. Their real mission was to gather intelligence for the upcoming Clan invasion.

What almost no one among the Clans knew, however, was that the Dragoons were later given a secret "Warden" mission to begin preparing the Successor States for the upcoming battle with the Clans. Having analyzed the Dragoons' reports, highly placed Wardens had decided that it was the Kerensky dream to preserve Successor State society, even from its own people. There is no doubt the Inner Sphere would have fallen within the two short years since the invasion in 3050, had not Wolf's Dragoons rallied the leadership of the Inner Sphere to fight against the Clans.



# COMSTAR

ComStar, the interstellar communications network, is the brain child of Jerome Blake, one of the most influential men in the thousand-year history of interstellar space travel. An electronic engineer and high-level bureaucrat, Blake was appointed Star League Minister of Communications by the High Council of the League in 2780, after General Aleksandr Kerensky had defeated the usurper Stefan Amaris. The council charged Blake with restoration of the League's extensive and partially destroyed communications network.

## THE BLAKE REGIME

The Star League was a shambles in the years immediately following the civil strife of the mid-2700s, with 100 million dead and communications to the Territorial States completely cut. While the High Council was trying unsuccessfully to elect a new First Lord, they ordered General Aleksandr Kerensky to disband his troops. Then members of the Council further alienated Kerensky by trying to recruit Star League Defense Forces troops for their own military forces. When Kerensky objected, they called for his resignation as commander of the SLDF. Kerensky responded by calling together his loyal troops (some 80 percent of the Star League Army) and disappearing with them from known space. Meanwhile, tensions between rival member-states had escalated to all-out, armed conflict.

The first interstellar communication took place on New Year's Day 2630, when the first HPG message was transmitted from the first HPG station on Terra. Once fully in operation, the interstellar communications network could broadcast from Terra to Tharkad in just seven days. Messages to the most distant Periphery world took six months, at least twice the speed of previous transmission times. The system suffered grievous damage during the civil war. In the early years of Blake's ministry, the network's facilities were under constant attack, as the rival Council Lords attempted to capture or destroy them. Blake realized that the power struggle among the Great Houses threatened to destroy interstellar communications entirely. Pondering this crisis, he conceived of a radical means for maintaining communications among the stars—and perhaps even of maintaining civilization in the terrible times that he foresaw.

In a secret meeting held in the winter of 2786, Blake gathered together the administrators of the First Circuit relay stations on New Earth, Barnard, Alpha C, Bryant, Procyon, and Dieron. He explained his plan for a communications network that might survive the violence of the coming wars. Though simple in design, the plan was complex in execution. Blake managed, however, to obtain a promise from a majority of the Council Lords that they would guarantee the safety of the communications network if Blake would keep it out of politics. Because communications were crucial to all concerned, Blake was able to save the network and (he hoped) the high technology that had built it.

This success cemented his authority and provided him with a tangible base of operations for carrying out the rest of his plan. By

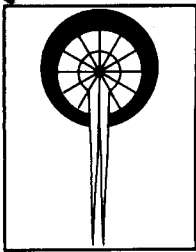
hastily recruiting several BattleMech regiments, Blake managed to capture Terra in a lightning operation in the summer of 2788. A huge find of spare parts and excess equipment allowed him to pay off the 'Mech regiments in his service. Blake then declared Sol a neutral system under the protection of the communications authority, and dispatched emissaries to the five House leaders through the good offices of the First Circuit. He was able to take advantage of the element of surprise and the House Lords' preoccupation with each other to obtain the assurances he needed to proceed with his plans.

Much of the early history of the interstellar communications net, which soon adopted the now-familiar name of ComStar, is shrouded in religious mystery. What is apparent is that both the bureaucracy and the technocracy of the organization were necessary to keeping ComStar isolated from the "outside world." Penalties for discussing even the most mundane technology with outsiders were extremely severe, including discharge from ComStar Service. Blake himself was something of a mystic who viewed the decline of civilization as retribution for its sins. He realized that the tremendous scope of destruction caused by the wars would eventually consume civilization unless some of its precious knowledge was retained. Regardless of ComStar's mundane, secular obligations, Blake believed that the organization had a higher obligation to maintain and preserve knowledge at all costs. Thus, ComStar became a haven for all manner of technicians, prospering while BattleMech regiments tore the rest of interstellar society apart.

Within 20 years, ComStar was operating at a profit. However, it had been forced to exclude more than 40 percent of the worlds once linked by communications in the Star League era, and had completely lost contact with the Periphery beyond the Inner Sphere (or so went the official line).

Blake's directorship of ComStar lasted for twelve more years, during which time ComStar continued to expand its services, improving and upgrading its stations and restoring a regular short-distance mail service to supplement its HPG (hyperpulse generator) transmissions. As a by-product of its existence, the organization helped reestablish a semblance of normal commerce by introducing a ComStar letter of credit (the ubiquitous "C-Bill"), which served as a medium of exchange between both rival and friendly houses, all of whom had also placed their own currencies ("H-Bills") in service (see **Economics**, p. 144).

At Blake's insistence, the First Circuit, now the absolute governing body of ComStar, met only in closed session and imposed a "secret-society" mentality on its subordinates. An internal security force known only as ROM (an acronym whose original meaning has been lost to history) was formed in 2811 to help prevent leakage of technological information to the outside and to help thwart defection of ComStar personnel to the Successor States. ROM quickly became feared and respected throughout ComStar, punishing not only "treason" but also "doctrinal" (i.e., policy) disputes with dispatch and efficiency.



## SECRET SOCIETY

Upon Blake's death in 2819, the First Circuit chose Conrad Toyama, First Tech of Dieron, as his successor. A staunch admirer of Blake, Toyama was determined to continue his predecessor's dreams and policies. Official ComStar history claims that Blake communicated "the Word" to Toyama on his deathbed, also revealing his fears that high-placed officials in the organization would betray ComStar. Whether true or not, it is apparent that Toyama had serious philosophical conflicts with several of his colleagues in the First Circuit and their supporters. They wished to have the activities of ROM brought under the Circuit's control and for ComStar to use its now tremendous resources and technological expertise to build its own BattleMech force and conquer the Inner Sphere. This faction bided its time while Blake was still alive, apparently hoping to persuade Toyama to their point of view. As it turned out, they could not have been more misguided.

Toyama was utterly opposed to ComStar taking an aggressive role in Successor State affairs. He based his stand on one of Blake's journal entries, a prediction of a future complete breakdown of civilization. Blake postulated a time when power would run out and the machines break down, when there would be no more BattleMechs and no more Succession Wars. Only then, Blake had written, would ComStar emerge from its isolation and relight the lamp of civilization, establishing itself as an enlightened theocratic oligarchy. Though the journal entry appeared to be mere speculation, Toyama looked upon it as gospel, a prophecy of things to come.

Toyama's reaction to the war-mongering of his opposition was swift and violent. Considering their proposals an affront to "the word of Blake," he used the tremendous (and largely unseen) power of ROM to remove his opponents, including four of the six members of the First Circuit and nearly 20 percent of ComStar's administrators and Techs. It took Toyama less than a week to purge the opposition, who were so taken by surprise that they never managed to organize any resistance.

Rapid changes in ComStar followed. Secure in his power, Toyama culled and published what he believed was the essence of Blake's world-view from his unpublished diaries. These ideas became essential to ComStar training. The corporate hierarchy was dismantled and replaced with a more plutocratic structure, grandly titled the ComStar Order. Trainees became Acolytes. Technicians became Adepts. Managers and administrators became Precentors. Pervading all levels of the organization (and responsible only to the Primus himself), was ROM, helping to ensure total obedience to the dictates of First Circuit. Toyama's great love of ceremony led to the development of elaborate rituals for important events and contacts with the Outside, from initiation of a new Acolyte to the Interdiction of a World or State from ComStar services. One example was the interdiction placed on House Marik following its attack on the ComStar station at Oriente in 2837. (Another, more recent one, was the interdiction against the Federated Suns during the Fourth Succession War.)

Toyama hand-picked his successor, Raymond Karpov. In order to further extend ComStar's influence over the Inner Sphere while remaining out of its politics, Karpov issued an edict in 2854 that threw open a fixed number of Acolyte positions to scions of

Great Houses and MechWarrior families. This also allowed ComStar to absorb what little technological innovation was going on outside.

The rigidity of the ComStar structure, the wide-ranging authority of the Primus and the First Circuit, and the all-pervasiveness of ROM have proved to be an effective combination. More and more of the litany and ritual of ComStar ceremonies became necessary for the accomplishment of ComStar operations. During Toyama's Primacy, a ComStar Acolyte might have uttered the "necessary" invocation prior to activating an HPG only because he feared a ROM agent would call him out if he did not. Less than 50 years later, a less sophisticated Acolyte might utter the same invocation because he believed that the HPG would simply not function if he did not. The rituals created by Toyama took less than two generations to become ritual magic, in the shadow of the saintly figure of the Blessed Blake.



## ORGANIZATION

The ComStar Order has changed little since Primus Raymond Karpov established the Doctrinal Edict that created a three-tiered hierarchical structure in 2861. The Primus, or Director, is generally nominated by his or her predecessor and confirmed by the First Circuit, which was enlarged to ten members in 2857, with the addition of Arcturus, Oriente, Altair, and Capella. Immediately below the Primus are the Precentors of the various stations, ranked according to the importance of their stations. Most prominent among these "A" stations are the ten of the First Circuit and the Center Station on Terra.

Directly responsible to each Precentor are a number of Adepts, ComTechs with at least one year of service to the Order. Unlike Precentors, who are transferred only by promotion or demotion, Adepts serve only one year at a given station, then are automatically transferred to another post. This policy discourages undue familiarity with lay personnel, superiors, or fellow Adepts. To further distinguish Adepts, an intricate system of rankings and degrees has evolved, indicating length of service, equipment training, and distinguished conduct.

Members of the Order with less than two year's service are called Acolytes. During an initial apprenticeship of ten weeks, the neophyte is introduced to the "outer mysteries" of the Order: hyperpulse equipment, the stations of the First and other Circuits, and the basics of celestial mechanics. Following this, applicants who have proved themselves worthy of the Order are initiated, which commits them to lifelong service. ComStar discipline and the continued effectiveness of ROM restrict renegades to a tiny few.

ComStar has two specialist branches: ROM and the Explorer Service. ROM is a highly secretive and extremely independent subculture within ComStar. It recruits according to its priorities, most often from within the Acolytes of the Order, though it is whispered that ROM also recruits laymen to perform its more feared tasks. From wherever they come, the ranks of ROM have included some of the most fanatical and vicious killers in the galaxy.

The Explorer Service was founded during the Primacy of Adrienne Sims. Particularly bright ComTechs may serve a year in the Explorers. Explorer teams consisting of two Explorer Corps leaders and five to eight Adepts are outfitted with a small JumpShip, a contingent of troops, and an old Star League stargate, then are instructed to rediscover worlds with which contact has been lost. ComStar policy is to inform the nearest Successor House of its responsibility for the safety of the Explorer team, thus guaranteeing some protection against the potential hazards of such service.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In 3029, Myndo Waterly took over as Primus of ComStar. It was she who was primarily responsible for the Interdiction of the Federated Suns during the Fourth Succession War (an interdiction that was less than crippling to House Davion, which had gained access to a number of black boxes that allowed it to duplicate the function of an HPG, albeit at a much slower rate). Waterly believed that ComStar should take a more active role in Inner Sphere politics, playing each Successor State House against the others in a plan to weaken them all until ComStar could step in and take total

control, fulfilling its role as savior of humanity and restorer of the Star League. Under her leadership, political maneuvering became the order of the day, and the Com Guards were secretly upgraded into a force as fanatically loyal and better-equipped (because of ComStar's Star League caches on Terra) than any other in the Inner Sphere.

When the Clans began their invasion of the Inner Sphere in 3050, Primus Waterly established diplomatic relations with them. She believed that by cooperating with the Clans, she could manipulate them into exhausting themselves while destroying the power of the Successor States as well. At that point, ComStar, which was acting as administrative go-between for the Clans on worlds they had captured, would rise up, drive out the invaders, and declare itself the leader of the new Star League—all to the greater glory of Blake, of course.

But the Clans were not so easily fooled. After working with ComStar during the initial invasion, the Clans returned a year later to inform ComStar that they intended to take Terra, which would fulfill their own long-held dream of reestablishing the Star League. ComStar Precentor Martial Anastasius Focht bid with the Clans to conduct the battle for Terra on Tukayyid, a minor world of the Free Rasalhague Republic. If the Clans won, they would claim both Terra and ComStar; if they lost, they would agree not to proceed any further than Tukayyid for a period of 15 years. A combination of brilliant planning by the Precentor Martial and political infighting within the Clans led to a ComStar victory on Tukayyid (by the barest margin), putting a stop to the Clans' advance against Terra for the next 15 years.

Meanwhile, however, the Primus had ordered the initiation of Operation Scorpion, in which the ComStar facilities on every world locked their doors and refused to conduct business, including refusing to continue to administer the Clan-held worlds. It was Waterly's belief that this would be the coup de grace that delivered the Inner Sphere into ComStar's hands. Unfortunately for her plans, a Kurita spy placed in the First Circuit leaked the information, allowing the Successor States to seize many of the facilities before they could shut down; the Clans, too, retained control on the worlds they held.

But the Precentor Martial was incensed at the Primus' perfidy. Returning to Terra, he confronted her, executing her by his own hand when she refused to recant her position. Then, with the aid of the Kurita agent, he set about restructuring ComStar, with the intent of demolishing its mystical trappings and turning it into a clearinghouse of knowledge to humanity.

Obviously, it will take quite some time for the Precentor Martial's plans to reach fruition. With the centuries ComStar has had to build its religious mystique, that cannot be changed overnight, especially with opposition still existing among some members of the First Circuit. Dissenters are already streaming to the Free Worlds League and proclaiming Thomas Marik to be the true Primus and not the heretic Focht. The rulers of the Inner Sphere currently control ComStar's hyperpulse stations. They will more than likely ask ComStar to return to operate the facilities, but they will certainly not allow the return of Com Guard troops. Rasalhague has accepted the Com Guard on its soil, but for how long? The coming years present great challenges to Precentor Focht and his new vision of ComStar.

# ECONOMICS

This chapter describes the major aspects of economics in the Inner Sphere. From all indications, Clan economics are another matter entirely, but they have yet to be studied in any detail.

## CURRENCY

During the period of Star League dominance, interstellar commerce was based on the exchange of League scrip, issued against a standard of germanium stored in Fort Knox on Terra. Germanium, the material composing early Quantum II K-F hyperdrive cores, was the accepted measure of wealth during this era, though the scrip's actual value depended more on the general confidence the business community had in the Star League government. Indeed, the amount of paper in circulation exceeded the amount of stored metal by a factor of 15- or 20-to-1.

The Amaris Coup and the subsequent long Civil War, culminating in Kerensky's exodus in 2785, destroyed the underpinnings of the Star League economy and ushered in nearly a century of financial chaos along with the start of the Succession Wars. Upon naming themselves First Lords of the League, each of the heads of the five Successor States issued new "League" currency bearing his or her likeness. Individuals were allowed to exchange their old League scrip for these new currencies at a sharply unfavorable exchange rate (because each Lord extracted a 25 to 50 percent fee to fund his war efforts).

As it became apparent that no one was going to win the First Succession War and restore the old currency to its former standing, League scrip soon became worthless on the open market.



In the meantime, the succession crisis began to have a radical effect on interstellar trade. During the two centuries immediately prior to the wars, the economies of many worlds had become extremely dependent on trade to provide them with essential raw materials, maintenance services, and spare parts. As the First Succession War intensified on every front, free traders found their livelihoods (and their lives) threatened by the constant danger of attack, the risk of having their vessels confiscated by a House government for use in the war effort, and the refusal of the various Houses to accept the scrip of its adversaries as legal currency. By the beginning of the 29th century, commerce between worlds had slowed to a trickle, driving many colonies to starvation and collapse.

## HOUSE BILLS (H-BILLS)

Following the First and Second Succession Wars, the galactic economy was converted from the germanium standard (which no House had sufficient stockpiles to sustain) to one based on water and similar crucial resources. Beginning with House Steiner in 2823, the emerging Successor States began to issue House bills against water supplies. Gradually, a loose set of exchange rates began to prevail, allowing the rebirth of a limited degree of interstellar commercial activity. House bills, or H-Bills, today constitute approximately 90 percent of all currency in the Inner Sphere. Each House issues its own currency, which vary considerably in value.

An advantage of H-Bills is that they represent real wealth, measured in terms of industrial strength and the availability of important natural resources. In the century and a half since the H-Bill standard came into wide use, it has become, more or less, the medium of exchange, assuming the value of "letters of credit" rather than certificates representing a fixed quantity of goods.

When a small new world is established, it usually issues its own private currency, but then transacts most business beyond its domain through barter. (A few of these worlds still require that outsiders deal in their own currency.)

## COMSTAR BILLS (C-BILLS)

The other important existing currency is the C-Bill issued by ComStar. These represent credit notes for its services. As the value of C-Bills is constant throughout the Inner Sphere, they can be used as a yardstick for all other currency. (A C-Bill has approximately the same purchasing power as five U.S. dollars from the year 1991.)

C-Bills constitute about 10 percent of the Inner Sphere's currency, their value based on a fixed amount of ComStar service, transmission time, or delivery distance.

The practice of issuing ComStar scrip was first approved by the First Circuit during the Directorship of Conrad Toyoma in 2835. The idea was to offer payment in kind for resources and services ComStar needed, as the organization had no natural resources or land of its own on which to base a currency. For the same reason, ComStar has always been dependent on its clients to provide essential sustenance for its Techs.

As a result, the issuance of C-Bills has helped to replace the system of barter that made doing business somewhat chaotic in the days when there was no viable alternative. Because of the high



regard for ComStar throughout the Successor States, their C-Bills are accepted everywhere, and also serve as a medium for transferring currency, especially between enemy Houses. This is even true within the Federated Commonwealth, which fell into some disfavor with ComStar during the Fourth Succession War. Regardless of how ComStar and the F-C feel about each other, the fact remains that C-Bills are a handy way of transacting business between worlds of different states.

Merchants, both free traders and those associated with large commercial lines, suffer the most and benefit the most from the proliferation of currencies. In eras when there was a fixed currency with a known value, it was harder to acquire a fortune, but once acquired, wealth was secure. In the Successor States era, fortunes can be made and lost with the meteoric fluctuation of H-Bill values. Canny merchants often keep their capital diversified in the currency of several Houses or in useful commodities that are saleable anywhere.

## CONVERTING CURRENCIES

The following table compares the value of the various currencies of the major Houses of the Inner Sphere.

CURRENCY CONVERSION TABLE					
	C-Bill	Kurita	Steiner-Davion	Marik	Liao
C-Bill	—	1.25	1.00	1.60	2.50
	—	(5/4)	(1/1)	(8/5)	(5/2)
Kurita	0.80	—	0.80	1.28	2.00
	(4/5)	—	(4/5)	(9/7)	(2/1)
Steiner-Davion	1.00	0.80	—	1.60	2.50
	(1/1)	(4/5)	—	(8/5)	(5/2)
Marik	0.63	0.78	0.63	—	1.56
	(5/8)	(7/9)	(5/8)	—	(11/7)
Liao	0.40	0.50	0.40	0.64	—
	(2/5)	(1/2)	(2/5)	(7/11)	—

## TRADING CARTELS

Though trade and commerce remain risky ways to make a living, a handful of large interplanetary trading combines have managed to flourish in the hostile environment of the last 200 years. These cartels also wield considerable economic (and often political) power in one or more of the Successor States. Some are holdovers from the halcyon days of the Star League, though their business focus and management structures are often much changed. Others are of a new breed, developed to exploit the vagaries of these troubled times.

Trading cartels generally concentrate their operations within one or more designated trade routes. They usually possess a fleet of 5 to 20 or more JumpShips, own two to three times as many DropShip freighters, and often wield significant influence at the planetary spaceports they serve. Most planets where cartels operate will accord their fleets immunity from attack, allowing the ships to operate freely across House borders, and even at times to enter the periphery of an active war zone. The most powerful cartels even maintain small 'Mech forces to oversee the security of

their vessels, warehouses, and production facilities. The power and political loyalties of these forces tend to be carefully monitored by the planetary and House governments whom they serve.

Player-character 'Mech units may come into contact with trading cartels in a number of ways: as possible short- or long-term employers of their unit's services, as potential sources of pay-as-you-go travel between worlds (for those units lacking their own JumpShips), or as sources of trade goods. The group may even serve as a cartel's permanent security force, as mentioned above. The following descriptions are a representative sampling of trade combines.

### CERES METALS

Ceres Metals is the largest remaining vestige of the glories of the Star League. One of the first developers of BattleMech technology, it remains a major economic force throughout most of the Inner Sphere. Though it has lost almost half its one-time industrial capacity to the ravages of war, Ceres continues to operate over 500 major metals mining, refining, and manufacturing facilities on nearly 100 worlds, producing all manner of military and non-military components and equipment. Its fleets of freighters have virtual carte blanche at the spaceports of all nations of the Inner Sphere, and its political power on several planets rivals that of the local bureaucracy.

Ceres retains its neutrality by supplying arms and equipment to anyone who can pay for them. The firm has held to that policy throughout the Succession Wars, and now rumor has it that Ceres is attempting negotiations with the Clans to establish similar relations with them. Planets where Ceres operates major facilities include Dorwinion and Ward (Davion), Kimball and Elidor (Kurita), Sarna (Liao), and Coventry (Steiner). Its main headquarters are on Capella (Liao).

### SYNGUARD CORPORATION

This medium-sized trading corporation operates along a route of worlds connecting the outer reaches of Kurita and Steiner space (extending from Alphecca and Duran to Moseby, Ozawa, and the Kurita capital of Luthien). Several Periphery Bandit Kings within striking distance of Synguard's trade routes have interfered regularly with the cartel's operation. It is to better defend against these threats that Synguard recently beefed up its private 'Mech forces. The corporation operates nine jump-capable ships, including three *Monolith* Class vessels.

### NEW EARTH TRADING COMPANY

NETC was one of the earliest intergalactic trading combines of the 2100s, and was a key principal during the first age of expansion. In the years 2300–2750, the company's trading operations became secondary in importance to its research and development efforts in robotics, which produced some of the greatest advances of that age. Since the Succession Wars, New Earth has returned its emphasis to trade, though its operations remain significantly more automated than those of most of its competitors.

NETC's primary base of operations includes the 30 or 40 worlds surrounding Sol. The company is said to possess a unique favored status with the relay stations of ComStar, and is their major supplier of food and repair stores (and possibly also information).



# BATTLEMECHS

## 'MECH COMPONENTS

As the Succession Wars have continued, spare parts for 'Mechs have become increasingly more valuable. This is due largely to the decline in the technological ability to produce these parts. One result has been a gradual shift toward obtaining spare parts as an intermediate objective of any military campaign. That is, capturing 'Mech limbs, armor shielding, myomers, and sensor arrays has become part of a campaign's goal, as well the means by which it would be forwarded. The supply of new replacements remains extremely limited, in the Inner Sphere because of a general technological decline (despite recent rediscoveries of Star League technology), and among the Clans because of the great distances over which resupply lines must stretch.

It is the most technologically advanced components that have become the most rare and valuable. For example, fusion reactors, used in JumpShips, DropShips, and aerospace fighters as well as 'Mechs, are produced on less than a dozen worlds of the Inner Sphere (the bulk of them being planets with undamaged, automated factories remaining from earlier centuries). The techs with the ability to run or repair these factories are nearly as rare, and their services are in great demand.

Other components, such as myomers and the composite "bones" that make up a 'Mech skeleton, are also produced using automated techniques that are no longer completely understood. As above, techs with the exceptional mechanical knowledge to run and repair the factories producing them are a select few (many being acolytes of ComStar).

It is still within the capability of Successor State industry to produce 'Mech armor and weapons, even high-energy weapons such as the PPC. The Clan invasion has made it painfully obvious, however, that present-day weapons and armor have declined in performance compared even to the Star League technology of two centuries ago.

## BATTLEMECH SECURITY

The key to piloting a BattleMech is correct use of a neurohelmet, which enhances impulses from the pilot's body to produce the desired action in the 'Mech. To "unlock" a 'Mech neurohelmet, the pilot either speaks a "key" word or phrase or transmits a series of motions or thoughts in a particular sequence that is usually quite short. It might be, for example, "raise right hand, turn head to left, and look at the heat level indicator for a count of four." Although a more complex sequence might be more secure, it would prevent 'Mech pilots from rapidly "starting up" their machines. The unlocking sequence prevents unauthorized individuals from being able to use the 'Mech by simply climbing in and donning the helmet. As a further security measure, failure to transmit the proper sequence can result in damage to the helmet or the wearer.

A sophisticated mechanism has, however, been developed to break through neurohelmet encoding. The codebreaker (4/U) is shaped roughly like a human head, but contains a complex computer system tied to electrodes. It requires 30 to 60 minutes to

decode and transmit the sequence that will unlock the helmet. Few of these codebreaking devices are available, leaving neurohelmet encoding mostly safe against casual thieves.

## CODEBREAKING

The codebreaking device gives a -2 modifier to Target for Rogue/Security Systems Skill rolls to override the protective coding in a BattleMech. (Attempting the task is only possible when using the codebreaking device.) The codebreaker yields a possible solution to the unlocking sequence and assigns a reliability rating, (see table below). The only way to test a solution is to actually don the neurohelmet and try it out. Each unsuccessful attempt causes 1D6 points of damage directly to the head. Each attempt takes (1D6 + 1) X 10 minutes.

### CODEBREAKING RELIABILITY RATING

Die Roll (1D6)	Rating
1	Low
2	Low
3	Low
4	Medium
5	Medium
6	High

The gamemaster should make all reliability rolls. Each successive attempt adds 1 to the Reliability Rating die roll. To successfully crack a code with low reliability requires a successful 2D6 die roll of 9 or more, medium reliability requires a roll of 7 or more, and a high reliability rating requires a 5 or more.

## PRIZE 'MECHS AND SCAVENGING

To keep from "throwing good 'Mechs after bad," it is common for one side to withdraw from the battlefield when it looks as though a reasonable chance of winning no longer exists. This leaves the remaining side in control of any disabled and destroyed enemy and friendly 'Mechs on the field. Some of these units will now be little more than scrap, with few or no parts remaining for salvage. Others, however, may have only suffered partial or totally repairable damage. Some may even be virtually intact, having been disabled either through overheating or the death of their occupant(s). These "prize" 'Mechs can be the most valuable booty a 'Mech unit collects.

Characters who learn to take maximum advantage of these opportunities greatly improve their chances for continued survival as well as their personal and family status.

Before they can scavenge for prize 'Mechs, the victors must first take care to eliminate possible enemies still lurking within. Most often, this would be a 'Mech pilot armed with a hand weapon. It could just as easily be a MechWarrior who has succeeded in restarting a 'Mech originally disabled by heat shutdown, however. It might even be a damaged 'Mech playing possum.

A victorious scavenging party that gets too cocky in approaching its fallen foes can encounter some rude surprises. Any real inspection of a prize will require that someone physically enter the enemy unit, making that individual a potential target for hostile fire. If the players' group takes precautions to give its inspection team proper cover, however, surviving enemy 'Mech pilots will more likely surrender than risk sacrificing their own lives. The exception may come when a history of bad blood exists between the two sides, or if the victors have a reputation for slaughter or inhuman treatment of prisoners. Depending on the tactics of the victor, remaining mobile 'Mechs may or may not attempt to fire or make a break for freedom. Such units are more likely to surrender if the two parties in the battle are both mercenary and if they believe they can ransom back their 'Mechs in exchange for cash or parts.

When the victors have eliminated all opposition (one way or another), the inspection team can begin to assess whether any salvage exists among the remaining equipment. Any character examining a 'Mech can make a Technician: 'Mech Skill Roll, with a die modifier of +4. If this roll is successful, the character can accurately assess the extent of damage the 'Mech in question has sustained. If the roll fails, the character can do little more than make sweeping generalities ("It looks fairly bad," or "It looks pretty much intact") or state the glaringly obvious ("Well, its head has been blown off"). Based on this information, a party may take any of the following courses of action:

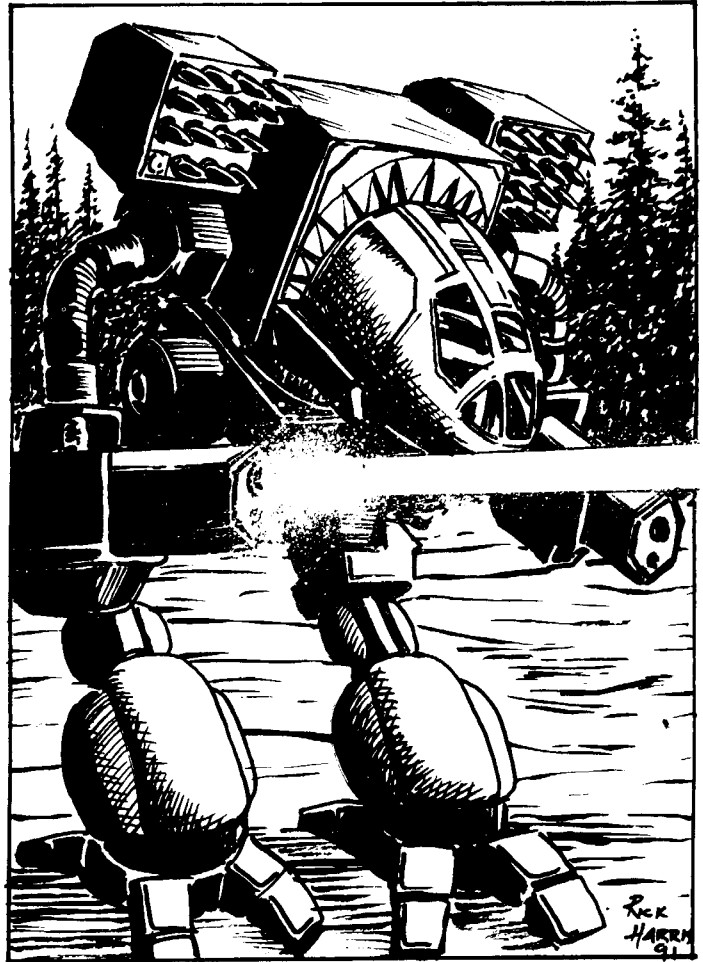
1. Attempt to restore the 'Mech to operational status, using the repair rules given in the next section.
2. Tear the unit down for salvage, adding its still functioning parts to the unit's supply stores.
3. Haul the 'Mech off the field as is, for repair or salvage later.

The base time for a character with Technician Skill Level 2 to tear down a 'Mech for salvage is 360 minutes. Characters with higher or lower levels receive adjust their time requirements as outlined below.

If the players' team has land vehicles at the battle site, it may use these vehicles to transport the salvaged parts or 'Mechs. In most cases, however, the group's 'Mechs will have to do their own hauling, using large, immensely strong nets suspended from their backs. 'Mechs can carry loads up to twice their own body weight. A 'Mech carrying a load weighing from 0 tons to one-half its weight loses 1 point from its Walking MP. Loads from one-half to 1x the 'Mech's weight reduce MP by one-half. Loads from 1x to 2x a 'Mech's weight reduce its MP by three-fourths. Units engaged in cargo-hauling cannot run or jump.

## BETWEEN-BATTLE REPAIRS

After each battle in an extended campaign, MechWarriors normally have an opportunity to repair some portion of the damage to their 'Mechs. The extent of the repairs possible immediately following a battle depends on several factors. These include the availability of repair materials in unit supply stores, the relative difficulty of the repair attempted, the competence of the Tech making the repairs, and the time the unit is willing to devote.

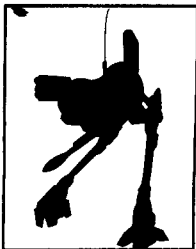


## MATERIAL AVAILABILITY

When a MechWarrior campaign begins, the player group's unit may have initial stockpiles of 'Mech replacement parts. Over time, the unit will deplete these stores by making repairs, and will have to replenish them with booty from raids, parts scavenged from defeated enemy 'Mechs, supplies received as wages or allotment from higher levels of command, or perhaps occasionally through purchase from House stockpiles. A 'Mech unit can generally only make repairs for which it has the necessary spare parts. A highly skilled Tech may, however, be able to surmount even this formidable obstacle (see **Jury-Rigging**, below).

## REPAIR DIFFICULTY

Different repair jobs have different difficulty levels. To represent this, the following Repair Difficulty Table lists modifiers to a character's Technician Skill Target Number for each type of repair. If a character's die roll equals or exceeds the Skill Target Number as modified by the number in the **Completely Repaired** column, the damage is entirely repaired. If, instead, the die result is lower than this Modified Target Number, but equal to or higher than the Skill Target Number as modified by the number in the **Partially Repaired** column, the damage is partially repaired, with the effects listed in the **Effects of Partial Repair** column.



# BATTLEMECHS

## TIME FACTOR

The time multipliers in the following table assume five laborers per Tech and the use of a repair platform. Absence of the platform adds 1.0 to the time multiplier. Absence of an individual laborer adds 0.2.

BASE TIME REPAIR MODIFIERS	
Training Level	Multiplier
0	2.0
1	1.0
2	.75
3	.5
4	.4
5	.33
6	.25

Repair rolls may only be attempted once per time required period on each damage area. A failed repair roll leaves the target 'Mech in the same condition as prior to the attempt. Thus, if a tech fails a repair roll on a 'Mech with a critical hit to one engine, the 'Mech could still operate, but would continue to generate 5 extra heat points per turn, and would have only 2 points of shielding left.

To determine the total time required to repair a 'Mech, simply add up the time requirements for each repair needed. (Note, however, that if three 'Mech sections need armor restoration or two separate engine critical hits need repair, an equal amount of time is required for each. Players and gamemasters must also remember that a repair takes the same amount of time whether it succeeds or fails. Indeed, whenever a character decides to make a repair roll for a given problem, he is committed to spending the block of time needed to see if the repair is successful.

After calculating all repair times for their 'Mechs, the players' team may then decide which, if any, of these repairs it wishes to undertake. A group may often discover that they do not have the time to complete all needed repairs or that one 'Mech will require

much more time to fix than its companions. The decisions about whether to repair or not to repair are as difficult to make as they are crucial to the 'Mech unit's future. A partially repaired 'Mech is often at a major disadvantage in its next battle. Conversely, a decision to tarry too long over repairs (especially in enemy territory) may lead to the enemy discovering and possibly catching the party unaware in an attack.

## REPAIR PLATFORMS

As a 'Mech unit travels from place to place, it will acquire certain useful equipment, often scavenged from abandoned or destroyed industrial sites. One of the most common nonmilitary items is a repair platform. This device is generally mounted on a wheeled vehicle with a hydraulically powered support that lifts a wide, contained compartment 10 to 20 meters into the air.

The repair platform is equipped with devices such as welders and grippers, which allow techs to repair damaged 'Mechs, replace portions of their armor or anatomy and so forth, even before the extreme heat generated by the battle has diffused. On some platforms, the compartment is also proof against most harmful radiation, thus permitting a tech to remove or replace a malfunctioning fusion reactor.

## JURY-RIGGING REPAIRS

A tech may attempt to jury-rig a temporary repair if the proper parts are not available. This adds +3 to the Base Target Number for repair die rolls. If successful, the repaired area will function normally as long as it is not further damaged. Each time a jury-rigged body segment is hit during combat, make a Saving Roll on 2D6 against the tech's Skill Roll Target. If the die roll result is equal to or more than the target, the repair holds. If not, the affected area returns to its pre-repair status.

In the case of a destroyed or blown-off body segment, jury-rigging a repair may often involve grafting an arm or leg from a different 'Mech type onto the afflicted unit. In such instances, remember to make appropriate adjustments to the unit's available weaponry, as well as any related changes to armor, heat-sink capability, or MP allowance that result from the switch.

Damage	REPAIR DIFFICULTY TABLE			Time Required
	Completely Repaired	Partially Repaired	Effect of Partial Repair	
Body Segment Destroyed	+5	—	240	
Body Segment Blown Off	+3	—	180	
Internal Structure Damaged	+0	—	90	
Critical Hit/Life Support	+1	—	120	
Critical Hit/Sensors	+2	-1	+1 To-Hit	150
Critical Hit/Engine	+1	-2	+3 Heat/turn	300
Critical Hit/Gyros	+3	+0	+2 to Piloting	240
Other Critical Hits	-1	—	120	
Damaged Weapons	+0	-3	Must be replaced	150
Armor Damaged	+0	-3	1D6 permanent loss	30
Ammo Reload	-3	—	15	
Repair/Replace Heat Sink	+1	-2	1/2 effect	120

# SPACE TRAVEL

In the thousand years since humanity's first leap into interstellar space, the sheer immensity of the universe has at times been overwhelming. Just as explorers of the Terran solar system were daunted by the distances involved in interplanetary journeys, so were the explorers of the 22nd and 23rd centuries awed by the almost inconceivable emptiness of space, with the bright stars so distant from Sol and from one other.

## HYPERDRIVE TECHNOLOGY

The device used to span interstellar vastness was the hyperdrive, commonly known by the names of its inventors, the 21st-century physicists Kearny and Fuchida. From the point of view of Einsteinian physics, the Kearny-Fuchida hyperdrive was not demonstrably feasible. What Kearny and Fuchida did, however, was to abstract Einstein's mathematics into a subset of their own.

The principle of the hyperdrive is fundamentally simple. It is a matter of generating a field of precise and known characteristics around a mass located at Point A, and then moving it through an alternate "dimension" called hyperspace (for want of a better term), instantaneously transporting the mass to Point B. A century after Kearny and Fuchida were publicly ridiculed for their ideas, the Terran Alliance *Pathfinder* made its historic "jump" to nearby Tau Ceti, demonstrating the practicality of hyperdrive technology and catapulting humanity into an entirely new phase of history.



## JUMP POINTS

Although hyperdrive technology has evolved in the last several centuries, its basic principles remain essentially the same. Jumps are accomplished by generating a K-F hyperspace field around a ship, which then transports the vessel from one location to another similar one near the destination star. Called variously jump, close, or proximity points, these locations are situated at the zenith and nadir of a system's gravity well, along a line perpendicular to the plane of the system and passing through the gravitational center. There are two to each system, always fixed and always at the same approximate distance from any world in the plane of the system. The actual distance from proximity point to system center is based on spectral type, as shown on the Jump Point Table below:

JUMP POINT TABLE						
Spectral Type:	B	A	F	G	K	M
Distance (km):	2E11	1E10	2.8E9	1E9	2E8	1E8
Distance (AU):	1300	67	19	6.7	1.3	0.7

**NOTE:** 1E11 = 1 x 10<sup>11</sup>

Transportation of cargo and passengers from one inhabited world to another is, therefore, a two-stage process consisting of travel from the inner part of a solar system to the jump point, and then the jump itself. The disparity in scale is immense.

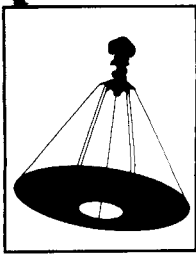
For example, traversing the interplanetary distance from Terra to Sol's jump point is close to 7 AU (where 1 AU = 92,900,000 miles), while the maximum effective range for a single hyperspace jump is 30 light years. As a light year is roughly 63,000 AU, the difference in distance is approximately (30 X 63,000)/7, or about 27,000 to 1!. Furthermore, the Kearny-Fuchida drive will not operate in a gravity well, so vessels must use considerably slower means to travel from the jump point to the inner system. Compared to the instantaneousness of jump, this trip by DropShip can take several days.

## PIRATE POINTS

Pirate points are non-standard jump points. Jumps to pirate points are usually made by only the most skilled navigators. Because the ship usually jumps to a point closer to its destination than the zenith or nadir of the planetary gravity, planetary conditions at the time of exit are of utmost importance. These calculations are time consuming and demand pinpoint accuracy. The advantage of jumping to pirate points is, first of all, a vastly reduced travel time (saving fuel and other consumables) and, of course, a lack of official and military presence.

## JUMPSHIP COMPONENTS

In addition to its electronics and life-support system, a JumpShip consists of two important components: the drive core and the drive sail. The drive core converts electromagnetic energy into a hyperspace field, and the drive sail gathers solar energy and transfers it to the core.



## SPACE TRAVEL

The first JumpShip, the TAS *Pathfinder*, was built around a drive core composed of a titanium/germanium alloy suspended in a long tube of liquid hydrogen. The core acted as a

large superconducting capacitor, storing the energy from an onboard fusion drive that processed deuterium from seawater. The fusion plant was capable of generating approximately 1,000,000 kilowatt-hours (a megawatt-hour) of energy, sufficient for one jump. It also imposed a mass constraint that seriously restricted the range of jump to 16 to 18 light years jump-and-return for a medium-size vessel. Finally, the time required to recharge the drive core was prohibitive (three to four weeks or more).

During the second century of interstellar expansion, an alternative source of energy was developed, whose technology is still standard many hundreds of years later. Advances in metallurgical and polymer technology in the early 2200s led to the development of the jump sail, a huge, flexible parasol of light metal with great tensile strength and a specialized coating capable of absorbing high amounts of radiation. When coupled with highly conductive energy transferral nets, these sails could transform solar energy from a system primary. The jump sail replaced the huge fusion reactor, permitting a JumpShip to "refuel" and jump further.

Early jump sails were extremely inefficient, truly enormous (50 kilometers wide), and vulnerable to stress tears and impact holes. Being so cumbersome, they were also difficult to deploy and retract. For that reason, there were occasions when the sail was left deployed during the jump, and emerged at the destination crumpled, melted, and sheared in many places. At least once, the entire sail was left behind at the point of departure. However, significant advances in energy absorption and improvement in structural technology resulted in considerable reduction in the size of the sail. A Star League jump sail was less than a kilometer in breadth, yet still capable of absorbing the requisite megawatt hours necessary to power a Kearny-Fuchida hyperdrive.

Military tactics for interstellar war evolved from the design of interstellar vessels. The long, thin drive core and the enormous jump sail were both prime potential targets for enemy attacks. Because of their vulnerability and because of the natural hazards such as meteors, gravitational stresses, and so forth within a solar system, JumpShip pilots rarely wished to travel deep into any solar system.

At major worlds and along key trade routes, the Terran Hegemony and its successors established recharging stations in the area of the jump point. These stations used the same "sail" technology used by the ships themselves. Though many of the stations across the present-day Inner Sphere are in ruins, the Successor Houses have made every effort to maintain or rebuild them. (A station of sufficient size is capable of transmitting sufficient energy for a jump in approximately 18 hours.)

In order to travel interplanetary distances, JumpShips carry subordinate vessels. In the Star League era, trends in naval architecture led to the development of the DropShip, a small- to medium-size, highly mobile vessel with aerodynamic capabilities. Though incapable of hyperspace jumps, DropShips were well-equipped with secondary (maneuver) drives capable of traversing interplanetary distances in a matter of days or weeks, and could carry large amounts of cargo or passengers. Vessels designed for

military use were built specifically to carry BattleMechs and aerospace fighters, as well as support equipment such as artillery pieces and command vehicles. The small number of ship types presently in use represent the highest (or perhaps the most fit to survive) stage in the evolution of DropShips.

### INTERPLANETARY MOVEMENT

Because of the distortions imposed on space by the magnetic field of a star and its planets, it is structurally unsafe to enter a system except at its jump, or close, points. For centuries, navigational computers have been computing Kearny-Fuchida jumps exclusively to and from these points. Because jump points lie at a considerable distance from the center of a solar system, it usually requires a normal-space journey of several days, and sometimes weeks, to reach the inner inhabited worlds of the system. DropShips serve this function.

DropShips are highly maneuverable, well armed, and sufficiently aerodynamic to take off from and land on a planetary surface. As the name implies, a DropShip is attached to hardpoints on the JumpShip's drive core, later to be dropped from the parent vessel shortly after in-system entry.

DropShips use fusion (EMH reaction mass) or liquid or solid fuel to propel themselves through space. They follow a traditional course pattern, accelerating in bursts until they reach maximum velocity at approximately the "turnover," or midpoint, of the journey. The vehicle then stops accelerating in the direction of the target, rotates its axis 180 degrees, and applies acceleration in the opposite direction. This creates a brake on velocity, and so the DropShip arrives more or less at rest with respect to its target planet.

DropShips are capable of extreme acceleration over very short periods of time. They can withstand the stresses of acceleration of up to 4G (four times Terran standard gravity) for several minutes, and an acceleration of 2-3G for two to three hours. Under most circumstances, however, a DropShip will conserve reaction mass by performing "burns" at 1G for several hours, between which times the vessel will coast.

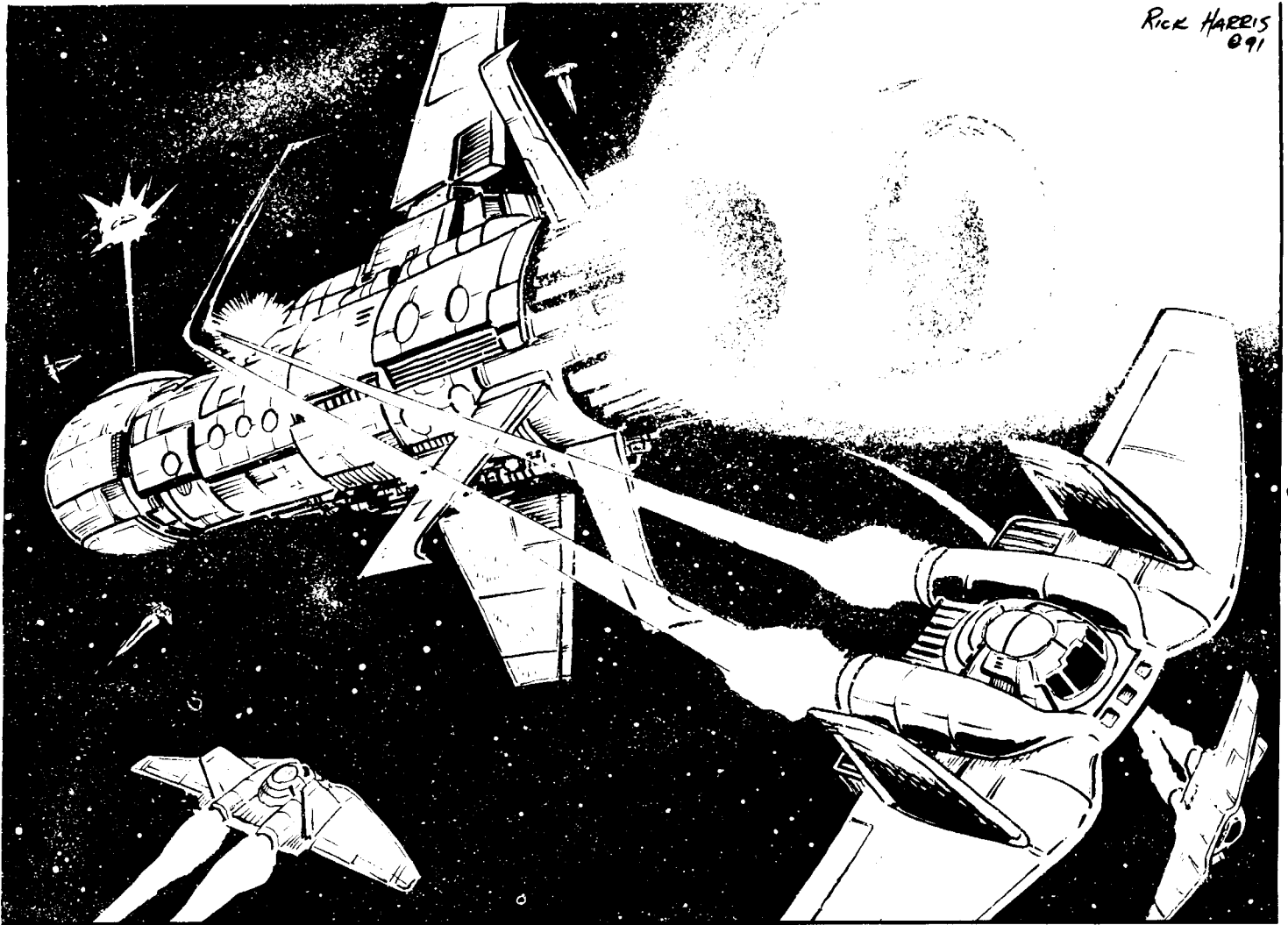
### TRAVEL TIME

The time needed to travel from the jump point to a planet varies according to the type of star, because the jump point's position depends on the spectral class of the system's star.

The following table shows approximate travel times from a jump point in each spectral class to the habitable zones of the system, assuming a steady acceleration of 1G.

JUMP POINT TABLE			
Spectral Class	Jump Point Distance	Transit Time	Turnover Velocity
B	2E11 km	105-110 days	4.45E4 km/sec
A	1E10 km	21-25 days	9.91E3 km/sec
F	2.8E9 km	9-12 days	5.25E3 km/sec
G	1E9 km	6-8 days	3.13E3 km/sec
K	2E8 km	3-4 days	1.40E3 km/sec
M	1E8 km	2-3 days	9.91E2 km/sec

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## TRANSPORTATION COSTS

Interplanetary and interstellar travel in the Inner Sphere are fairly easy. As there are enough JumpShips and DropShips calling at most worlds, travelers usually have only a short wait before finding a ship headed in their desired direction. Though JumpShips carry neither internal cargo nor passengers, most do carry a number of DropShips. It is aboard DropShips that passage may be booked.

The number of DropShips any given JumpShip can haul depends on size. The table below indicates the capacity of the most common JumpShips.

JUMP SHIP CAPACITY	
JumpShip Type	DropShips Carried
Scout	1
Invader	3
Monolith	9
Star Lord	6
Merchant	2

The fee for carrying any type of DropShip runs about 50,000 C-Bills and is usually non-negotiable. Though 'Mech DropShips never carry passengers, they are only one among many DropShip types plying the trade and travel routes of the Inner Sphere.

Passage on DropShips varies widely in both price and quality. For example, merchant DropShips offer very few passenger comforts because they are designed primarily to carry large amounts of cargo. Liner DropShips mix both passengers and cargo, and a few passenger DropShips still make scheduled runs between the more populated planets. Cost ranges from 500 C-Bills for a 30 light-year passage for one person up to several thousand C-Bills for a single 'Mech.

Mercenary units without their own interstellar transport are at a severe disadvantage. It is both more costly and more complicated to buy transportation for their men and 'Mechs than if the unit had its own DropShip and/or JumpShip. Mercenary units that must pay for travel usually include the cost in the terms of their employment contract, with their passage fees placed in bond to prevent future problems.

## HYPERPULSE GENERATOR

The key piece of ComStar equipment is the HPG (Hyperpulse Generator), which operates on the same general principles as a Kearny-Fuchida drive. The ComStar communications net is composed of a large number of powerful HPGs capable of transmitting or receiving an instantaneous signal across a distance of nearly 50 light years. These large facilities are called A stations. There are well over 50 A stations scattered throughout the Inner Sphere. In addition, there are stations capable of transmission and reception over a 20- to 30-light-year span. These are the B stations located at every inhabited world in the Inner Sphere, except for the independent worlds of Butte Hold, Redmond, Unuk al Hay, Santander, Oberon, and New Silesia.

Messages are processed serially, and the HPGs at an A station generally make transmissions to each station they serve every 12 to 24 hours, on a regular schedule. Comstar B stations process messages in the same way, though they transmit much less frequently (only two or three times a week), and always to the same A relay station.

A standard transmission length is 1 millisecond, at a cost of 1 C-bill. This is sufficient to send roughly two pages of text or a small image such as a photograph. Messages are charged on a per-transmission basis, with the final fee to send a message dependent upon how many stations are involved in transmitting the message.

It is also possible to send priority messages, but the costs are much higher. To send a priority message, the minimum transmission length is 1 second, which costs 1,000 C-bills. Because HPG

stations must be aligned perfectly for a clear transmission, a priority message is not sent by repositioning the transmitter. Instead, the message is sent along the station's present transmission path to stations best able to pass the message along to another HPG in a position to get the message "closer to home." The receiving station does the same, and so on, until the message can be routed to its destination.

Obviously, this is quite costly. Regardless of the origin point or destination of the message, it will have to travel to 1D6 x 1D6 relay stations before it reaches its destination, at 1,000 C-Bills a shot. If that were not enough, the station of origin assesses a service fee of 5,000 C-Bills for routing the transmission and interrupting normal schedules to put the message through. The costs will change as the HPG is realigned.

A potential client may check every 6 hours to see what his priority transmission would cost. For a non-refundable service fee of 1,000 C-bills, ComStar will do a cost analysis of an entire 24-hour period, in which case the costs are checked in advance for every 6-hour cycle so that the client may be apprised of the best time to send his message.

Even under optimum conditions, it takes several hours for a HPG message to reach its destination. To determine message-transmission time, roll 2D6 and add the number of stations that will have to broadcast the message to determine the number of hours it will require.





# TITLES AND NOBILITY

The title system of the early 31st-century Successor States descends directly from forms once common on ancient Terra. Two hundred years before the advent of space flight, all of Terra's independent states, with the exception of a few small and insignificant republics, were ruled by monarchs wielding varying degrees of near-absolute power. All that had changed by the time men first walked on Terra's moon. With only one last sovereign power still bestowing patents of nobility through royal privilege, the system seemed all but dead.

The course of history was reshaped, however, by humanity's migrations among the stars.

## ORIGINS

The origin of nobility titles can be traced back to feudal Europe, an era when monarchs were hampered by long travel times from place to place within their realm, and plagued by intrigue and opportunism among their administrators. Because they could not directly administer every part of their domains, kings were forced to delegate local power and authority to others. By bestowing patents of nobility, the monarch secured the loyalty of those delegates. Hundreds of years later, these exact conditions occurred again during the era of Terran Hegemony, forcing a similar solution.

The feudal power system is an interlocking network of obligation and responsibility. A monarch grants power to a relative or a distinguished servant, and this power is usually based on control of a piece of land. In exchange, the noble swears an oath of fealty to the sovereign. The sovereign may grant a charter to a nobleman to commemorate an important battle, for example, or to designate claim to a newly acquired piece of territory. Although it is extremely rare, a king may also title a commoner with a patent of nobility. Nobility titles are hereditary, generally passing from father to eldest son, and with complex laws and traditions governing the succession when an eldest son is unavailable to assume the position.

Michael Cameron, the first elected ruler of the Hegemony in the mid-24th century, is credited with reviving the nobility system as a means of rewarding and guaranteeing the service of local governors across the far-flung Terran empire. By the time his office became hereditary, the system of noble titles had become the one that would be used throughout the Successor States centuries later. It seems likely, however, that the foundations of modern nobility were already in place during the period of the Alliance, as Cameron himself claimed his own lineage and title back to Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel, under the Stuarts of England and Scotland.

The civil war and the disintegration of the Star League resulted in the Successor States, five major Houses and numerous minor ones vying for control of the scattered remnants of human interstellar civilization. A system of nobility remained intact. In time, each state evolved its own version as a result of wars, revolutions, and military or political purges. The names of various titles varied from state to state, as did the range and authority of each title-holder's power. Even within a single state's titled structure, chance events of history or birth could create enormous differences between its hereditary titles and the formulas of neighboring worlds.

## TITLE SYSTEM

The principle classes of nobility under the ruling sovereign are duke, marquess, count, viscount, and baron. Some worlds maintain all five noble classes or their equivalents, while others have done away with all of them.

Of the five, dukes and barons are the most common. Many dukedoms consist of a central duchy surrounded by dependent baronies, with none of the middle-level aristocratic classes. Dukes are the most common and most powerful expression of aristocratic presence throughout inhabited space, for each ruling House of the Successor States depends on an interlocking network of key duchies to support its political power.

Cameron based his nobility system on the English version, which differed significantly from the European system. The system in common use throughout Davion's Federated Suns is actually closer to the old European system than to the English. The Federated Suns use "count," for example, instead of the English "earl."

## PRINCE

The title of Prince (from the Latin *princeps*, meaning "first" or "leader") is less a title of nobility than a badge of rank, and can be applied to any leader exercising absolute or near-absolute sovereign power. Unlike other ranks of nobility, it is NOT a patented title, and is not granted to individuals by a sovereign as a reward for service. In hereditary monarchies, the title prince or princess is applied to members of the royal family who are in line of succession to the throne. Occasionally, powerful nobles may adopt the term "prince" as an honorary or formal title. There are also numerous examples of untitled military or political leaders seizing power and, with it, the title "prince."

Hanse Davion and his son Victor are the only Successor Lords to have adopted the title of prince, but it is quite common among worlds of the Periphery, especially those ruled by "kings" or "emperors." Beyond the Inner Sphere, the title can refer to the sovereign ruler of a world or a group of worlds, or to the royal heir to the throne in a hereditary monarchy.

A particular principality is sometimes traditionally reserved for a royal heir-apparent. This was the case of the Federated Suns in the old Star League, and is the chief legal basis for the Davion family's claim to rulership over all the Successor States. On many worlds, a prince receives title to a royal principality once he is designated heir to the throne.

A prince or princess is generally addressed as "your Highness" or simply "Highness."

With the establishment of the Federated Commonwealth, the ruler's title is Archon Prince. His or her regent in the Federated Suns is the prince or princess. His or her regent in the Lyran Commonwealth is addressed as archon.



## TITLES AND NOBILITY

### DUKE

The title of Duke is the highest-ranking of the various patented nobilities. It is descended from "dux," powerful military commanders with territorial responsibilities in the old Roman Empire. It is one of the most widespread of noble titles, and exists in all the major Houses of the Inner Sphere.

Throughout the Successor States, dukes and their families rule entire worlds in the name of the state's ruler. Sometimes their domain may include the planets of several star systems. The title of duke or duchess is directly linked to a particular territory, called a duchy. Some duchies are traditionally reserved for a state's ruler, passing to a successor upon the ruler's death. Thus, the Prince of the Federated Suns is also always the Duke of New Avalon.

As the most important of a ruler's viceroys, dukes wield enormous power. In most cases, their actual power over a local area is far greater than that of the distant and preoccupied head of state. Although they take an oath of fealty and promise to support the sovereign in war, treaty, and political maneuvering, many dukes of the Successor States are virtually independent of their House ruler.

Some dukes among worlds of the Periphery are, in fact, absolute sovereigns. This situation commonly arose when a duke in charge of a world or worlds rebelled and severed ties with the granting lord. Often, such individuals retained the title of duke (rather than styling themselves "king" or "emperor") to maintain legitimacy in the eyes of the populace, most of whom would have maintained some measure of loyalty to the original aristocratic system.



The titles "grand duke," "great duke," and "archduke" are encountered on some worlds. They mean "chief duke," but in fact rarely imply superiority over other dukes, being titles of honor, tradition, and usage only. A "duchess" is a female duke, and the title of duchess may be extended to a duke's wife.

A duke or duchess is always addressed as "your Grace."

### MARQUESS

Next below duke in order of rank is the marquess, also known variously among sundry worlds as "marquis" or "margrave." The origin of the title is from the German *mark* ("border") *graf* ("count"), and refers to the local ruler of a border territory or frontier.

In the Successor States, the title marquess or its equivalent is still applied to governors of frontier dependencies of empires, monarchies, or duchies that embrace a number of worlds. Some single-world duchies use the term to refer to titled provincial administrators elsewhere on the world than in the capital itself. On other worlds, it has become a purely honorary title divorced from the original titled responsibility.

A marquess is addressed as "my Lord," a marchessa (or grafina) as "my Lady."

### COUNT

The title of count, derived from the Latin "*comes*," or "*companion*," of the Emperor, generally brings with it responsibility over a "county" or "countship," though in many cases the title has become purely honorary. The equivalent of count in terms of noble rank on various worlds includes "earl" and "graf," while a "landgrave" refers to a graf of considerable power and landholdings—an "archcount."

Countships are generally far below duchies in terms of land, wealth, and power, but some individual counts have created powerful structures as great in extent and authority as many duchies or kingdoms. This is particularly true when a countship is annexed as a title of succession, that is, the heir to the throne automatically receives a particular land- or world-based countship. Rarely do counts rule an entire world. When they do, the world is usually uninhabitable or only marginally so, but important because of its resources, position, or tradition. Generally, a count exercises direct control over a continental land mass, or, on rich and fertile worlds, over a tract of land ranging from hundreds to thousands of kilometers across. Some counts are regarded as the sovereigns of particular cities or of the settled moons of worlds ruled by a duke or marquess.

A count is addressed as "my Lord," a countess as "my Lady."

### BARON

Lowest in rank of the orders of peerage is baron, the word being derived from the term "the King's man." The power wielded by a baron can vary tremendously. The title may be an honorific only, bestowed for service to the crown, or it can carry with it feudal attachments to land that confer real power on the owner. There are baronies encompassing an entire world, though most are restricted to individual cities or even a particular fortress and military settlement.

The usage style for barons follows that of continental Europe on ancient Terra, rather than of England. A baron is referred to as "Baron Smith," for example, rather than as "the Baron of Lemnos." A baron is addressed as "my Lord," a baroness as "my Lady."

# TITLES AND NOBILITY

## BARONET

The term baronet was originally created by James I of England to raise money, the idea being that commoners would pay for the privilege of being styled "baronet." Among the Successor States, it is occasionally encountered, generally as an honorary title conferred for service by a peer on a commoner. In most cases, a baronetcy is hereditary, the title passing to the elder son. Among the warrior cultures of the Successor States, it is frequently awarded as an honor for great bravery in combat on the part of an enlisted trooper.

A baronet is addressed as "Sir," followed by his full name. His wife is addressed as "Lady," followed by her husband's last name. A female baronet would be addressed as "Dame."

## ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

Within the Successor States, the concept of knighthood has returned to the original feudal idea of knightly orders. The sovereign grants a charter to these organizations, which are generally military and sometimes religious in nature, and dedicated to a particular set of customs, training methods, and philosophies.

There are literally hundreds of orders of knighthood throughout the Successor States, with individual orders being created by special decree of local rulers. The bestowal of knighthood is reserved as an honor for warriors who have distinguished themselves in battle, though some among the Successor States have retained or recreated the curious 20th-century custom of bestowing knighthoods for non-military achievements.

## SUCCESSOR STATE VARIATIONS

Each of the Houses has developed its own usages and forms of nobility, due to the vagaries of history or culture. A few of the major differences among them are described below.

### Lyran Commonwealth

The territories belonging to House Steiner are administered by an "archon," a title derived from a governmental system of ancient Athens, which vested power in a council of nine archons or magistrates. The Lyran Commonwealth is governed by a ruling council. Theoretically, the council holds elective powers over the archonship, but, in fact, generally approves a hereditary succession. The heir is the Archon-Designate.

The Archon is, by tradition, also Duke or Duchess of Tharkad, capital of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth nobility is less class-conscious or bound by aristocratic tradition than many other hereditary states. The title of duke, for example, is as much a political office as a mark of nobility. Individual worlds within the Commonwealth maintain some of the trappings of nobility, preferring in general the Germanic equivalent of the various titles (margrave, landgrave, graf, and prefacing a baron's name with the formal "Baron von.")

Under the Federated Commonwealth protocols, the title Archon will be replaced with Archon Prince to designate the head of the Federated Commonwealth. His or her regent in the Lyran Commonwealth is the Duke or Duchess of Tharkad.

### Capellan Confederation



## TITLES AND NOBILITY

"rented out" in mercenary fashion to another lord in exchange for goods, services, support, or favors. The allegiances, authority, and obligations among the various warlords of vary-

ing degrees of power and wealth can be exquisitely complex.

### **Draconis Combine**

Takashi Kurita styles himself Coordinator of the Combine, Duke of Luthien, Unifier of Worlds. The stark utilitarianism of Combine civilization tends to downplay the authority of individual nobles, though Kurita maintains the skein of dukedoms throughout his realm as a means of unifying power and consolidating it with his throne. Of far greater importance throughout the Combine are the local units of the ISF, Kurita's powerful and far-reaching secret police.

In compensation for the lack of noble titles, orders of knighthood are important among career military officers. One of the best known is the Order of the Dragon.

### **Free Worlds League**

The leader of the Free Worlds League is Thomas Marik, Captain-General and Duke of Atrous. Again, the mechanism of the aristocracy is largely intact.

The title "Captain-General" is, obviously, a military one. Though the post was created before the time of Kenyon Marik, he originated Resolution 288, a legal basis for an individual's retaining the title of Captain-General "for the duration of the emergency," including the power to summon and disband Parliament if necessary. Resolution 288 is now invoked by each successive Marik as he comes to power.

Under the rule of Janos Marik, the Free Worlds League underwent a civil war in which nobles of all ranks took sides. From his earliest days, however, Janos was a shrewd, even charismatic leader. Though some thought he had lost his touch with age, Janos rose to the challenge, defeating his enemies within and allying with his former enemies to meet the potential threat of a united Federated Commonwealth. Thomas, too, has proven to be a strong rallying point for the many diverse classes and interests of the League.

## LANDHOLDINGS

The feudal system that arose on Terra in Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire was based on land and on the power and obligations conferred by land. Because rulers with sizeable realms could not possibly oversee every city, farm, tributary, or dependency in their domains, they had to delegate a trusted brother, son, or other relative to rule in their name. This trust included the patent of nobility title to a specific property. Thus, duchies belonged to dukes, baronies to barons, and from counts came the 20th-century subdivision of land called counties.

The feudalism of the Successor States is quite similar, and has worked well thus far in the task of governing far-flung and diverse empires composed of many worlds. The system continues because it is effective, and also because of the enduring human fascination with the pomp and panoply of the rich and the powerful.

In feudal society, trusted governors and administrators are granted titles of nobility, and with those titles comes responsibility

for worlds or parts of worlds. Nobles collect taxes from their subjects and pass on a percentage to their lord. They swear fealty to their lord, and provide to that lord military assistance, supplies, and support in time of war, alliance, or treaty. In exchange, the noble receives the legitimacy and support of his ruler, protection from powerful neighbors, and the privileges and perquisites of being all but absolute monarch of the territory placed in their care.

A pyramid of feudal power and obligations has the capacity to tie hundreds of worlds to a single ruler, with each hierarchical level receiving power and a title to land from above, and delegating power and parceling out titles of land to those below. A individual's power is measured in terms of the numbers of people obligated to him for protection and service.

### **HOLDINGS**

Early in the expansion that colonized the stars, the concept of holdings became important in the intertwined political and economic workings of the galaxy. Although many nobles hold purely honorary titles with no real power of wealth or land attached to them, the most important nobles base their titles on the solid currency of property.

Holdings most commonly refer to landholdings, grants of land on some world or worlds connected to a particular title. Holdings vary in scope and value. The Duke of Omaha directly controls only a few thousand square kilometers on Newbraska's northern continent, but those holdings include the capital of one of the most important grain-producing agricultural worlds in the Federated Suns. The Duchy of Fenestere, on the other hand, includes five star systems with a total of 18 planets. Only one of these—a tide-locked, thin-aired, low-G, fire-and-ice expanse of desert and glaciers—is even marginally habitable.

As the rank of nobility falls, so do the extent and value of the holdings. A duke who rules a world may administer his holding through several marquesses, each controlling a continent. Each continent is divided into countships, which are in turn divided into baronies. Individual barons may control single cities, villages, or even single outposts or mountain fortresses.

A hold is more than land. It is a direct measure of the resources the noble can command: timber, food, water, metals, petroleum, factories, electronics, industries, lost remnants of Star League technology, and—most important—people. With sufficient holdings, even a baron can field and equip a small army, while a wealthy duchy can support hundreds of 'Mechs, thousands of troops, and the JumpShip fleet to carry them.

Occasionally, holdings can incorporate other property than land. This is particularly true of nobles who, through war or politics, have lost the land on which their title was originally based. In some cases, these nobles live as "guests" of some sympathetic, higher noble (often a relative) who may exact "rent" by using the poor relation to pioneer the uninhabited wilderness of some remote part of the benefactor's holdings, or by incorporating them into the region's military forces in time of war. Other nobles, particularly those who are themselves warriors, claim as their holds their JumpShips and the 'Mechs and troops aboard them. They survive by selling their services to those who need them, as mercenaries.

# TITLES AND NOBILITY

## WARRIOR HOLDS

Although holds are most commonly associated with particular patented titles, they are not the exclusive domain of the nobility. Nobles frequently award grants of land to warriors in their employ, and most mercenary companies have holds known as "securities." (Wolf's Dragoons, for instance, has been granted an entire world—Outreach— within the Sarna March of House Steiner's hereditary territory.) Such grants are important to warrior units. They offer the promise of home and property in the future and a sanctuary where the unit can rest and refit between campaigns in the present. Mercenary units are sometimes offered land grants in exchange for military services to a House, which tends to tie the unit to that particular ruler and world. Rulers may further guarantee a mercenary unit's loyalty by keeping its holding (including the unit's families) under their "protection." From this comes the term "securities."

Warrior holds generally encompass a few hundred or thousand square kilometers, room enough for a small town, with plots of land for each of the unit's people. A lord may award larger grants, perhaps even entire worlds, to units that have shown special distinction in combat. Other units are granted status as "the lord's men," with the right to settle within their lord's personal domains without holding title to any one plot of land.

The average income numbers on this table represent the typical annual cash surplus generated by a holding. All normal expenses, including normal defenses, will have already been paid. These figures should be considered the low end of the scale for the indicated title; gamemasters are free to increase them to represent traditionally prosperous holdings. Some barons, for example, might regularly average much more than 100,000 C-bills, perhaps nearly as much as a viscount.

LAND GRANT TABLE		
Title	Holding Size	Average Worth/ Yearly Income (in C-Bills)
Knight	10 sq. km.	25,000
Baronet	500 sq. km.	50,000
Baron	1,000 sq. km.	100,000
Viscount	5,000 sq. km.	500,000
Count	15,000 sq. km.	1,500,000
Marquess	100,000 sq. km.	10,000,000
Duke	500,000 sq. km.	100,000,000

## LAND INCOME MODIFIERS

The following table is to be used for adjusting the average yearly income of a holding, to represent the vagaries of a particular year and the abilities of the manager. To use this table, make a Skill Roll against the titled character's Land Management Skill, modifying the Target Number as indicated below. Then locate the line on the table corresponding to the number by which the dice roll exceeded or undershot the Modified Skill Target, and read across to the owning character's title. The result listed is the percentage change in the holding's earning (for the current year only).

For example, a baron with a Land Management Skill of 6, whose land was not contested, rolls a 9 with 2D6. No modifiers are applied, and the result is 3 points above the skill level, so the player consults +3 column. The result is that the Baron's 1,000 square kilometers of land will earn a surplus of 125,000 C-Bills (100,000 x 1.25) this year. The baron can spend this money as he desires.

LAND INCOME MODIFIER TABLE							
Skill Test	Knight	Baronet	Baron	Viscount	Count	Marquess	Duke
-7 or more	-90	-50	-40	-35	-25	-25	-20
-6	-80	-45	-35	-30	-25	-20	-15
-5	-70	-40	-30	-25	-15	-15	-10
-4	-60	-35	-25	-20	-10	-10	-5
-3	-50	-25	-20	-15	-5	-5	0
-2	-40	-20	-10	-5	0	0	0
-1	-30	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
+1	+10	0	0	0	0	0	0
+2	+20	+10	+5	+5	0	0	0
+3	+30	+20	+10	+10	+5	+5	0
+4	+40	+25	+20	+15	+10	+10	+5
+5	+50	+35	+25	+20	+15	+10	+10
+6	+60	+40	+30	+25	+20	+15	+10
+7	+70	+40	+30	+25	+20	+15	+15
+8 or more	+80	+45	+35	+30	+25	+20	+20



## HOUSEHOLDS

The term "household" is applied to the retinue of technicians, laborers, specialists, spouses, and children who are associated with a particular hold, especially that of a military unit. It includes people who travel with the unit as support personnel, as well as the administrators, soldiers, workers, and families who remain on the unit's "home" land grant (perhaps light years away). Noble warriors may have enormous households to administer their far-flung and extensive holdings while they are away on a campaign.

Even a single, four-Mech lance with four MechWarriors and two to four techs requires a number of support people not listed on battlefield duty rosters. These may include specialists such as medical personnel; planetologists to assess the biological or other hazards of an unfamiliar world; and experts in communication, electronic, and computer technology. There may also be cooks, orderlies, janitors, and personal servants, plus a platoon or more of ground troops to provide base security. Perhaps most important is the large work force of laborers, ranging from the untrained to the semi-skilled, to provide the muscle needed to erect quarters, load or unload cargo, and work under the techs in handling multi-ton chunks of Mech armor during repair work. These workers also tend to the multitude of small, routine maintenance and repair tasks required to keep a Mech operational.

The need to travel light dictates that most units, especially mercenary regiments, depend on the resources of the world where they serve for support. This labor force of assistant techs, variously referred to as "astechs" or "asties," is frequently hired on a temporary basis from the population of the planet where the unit is serving. A small retinue of astechs always follow the unit from world to world, acting as a cadre of trained workers on a new planet, and serving as the work force on uninhabited or unfriendly worlds.

No warriors in their right mind would depend for their safety on the potentially hostile natives of a strange world. To carry out vital services too numerous or specialized to be handled by the unit's own techs, there must be a staff of medics, and weapons, electronics, and computer specialists (popularly called "spectechs") also traveling with the unit wherever it goes.

Many units, even relatively small ones and especially those assigned to long stretches of garrison or outpost duty, allow the families of the troops and staff to live with the unit. Most spouses double as warriors, technicians, or staff, and ideally every person in the entourage would have duties in some capacity or other. Children are often in training as apprentices to the unit, which they will join formally when they come of age, and the staff includes tutors to educate them.

Units that have their own JumpShips have extensive staffs to care for shipboard routine, maintenance, repair, and supply. The logistical nightmares of a military unit operating from a world without a ready supply of food, water, and machine parts can be enormous.

There is a great deal of variation from unit to unit, and from noble to noble. A poor or efficiently lean Mech lance may have few if any personnel other than the warriors and techs themselves. They somehow manage to do most of the work themselves, supplemented by freelancers hired on a short-term basis. The household of a wealthy or ostentatious warrior duke with his own Mech company or regiment can amount to a small army in its own right, complete with a regiment of armored troops to guard it.

A unit's household includes not only the support staff traveling with the unit, but also the household personnel who remain in the unit's landhold, if there is one. This may include household troops and administrators. If the unit's families have remained in the hold, there will be a complete village with merchants and farmers, techs and astechs, medical personnel, children and teachers all living in a tightly knit community that depends on the absent military unit or on the unit's ruling noble for financial support.

The household community tends to be self-sufficient, compact, and stable. Any given community will have moved a number of times in its history. For example, they may have been evicted from one landholding by war or a change of masters, may have been living with the unit on a variety of worlds on garrison or occupation duties, or may have moved with the unit to another world as the result of a deal between two distant nobles.

The household community's principal loyalty is to itself and the Master of the Household, and through him or her to the baron or duke who supports them. Life is somewhat more stable within the households of warriors who are themselves nobles. With lands and holdings of their own through their patents of nobility, they are unlikely to be evicted or disenfranchised, and the common soldiers in the noble warrior's service can be relatively sure of a home when they retire.

## ENTAILMENT

Nobles have the right to hand out landholds from among their own holdings. They also have the right, within limits, to take a landhold back. Landholding commoners who displease their lord may have their rights to a hold revoked. Specifications of the hold and the circumstances under which it may be revoked are typically spelled out in the title contract when the holding is first conferred. For example, a particular hold might be granted to a warrior or noble and that person's family for perpetuity, though this is a rarity in a violent age of shifting alliances. On the other hand, an entailment clause could be invoked for so minor a matter as the lack of an heir to whom the property would pass after the landholder's death.

The legal twistings of hold contracts and titles can be daunting. Thus, the household staff of most landholding military units include several specialists in property and contractual law. The death of the landholder's lord could require new title negotiations with the lord's successor or even the landholder's immediate disenfranchisement, leaving the holder impoverished.

By common law and tradition, patents of nobility cannot be revoked, and those noble patents tied to a particular world or landhold cannot be separated from those holdings. Yet, attempts have been made throughout history to do just that, and the matter is usually settled only by a war.

Land represents a landholder's ability to raise and support a large household of staff, retainers, and troops. Land grant titles spell out the rights and responsibilities of household retainers, who frequently are considered part of the holding, rather than belonging to the landholder per se. This can be a severe burden to retainers and servants who have worked for a particular master for years, only to find themselves serving a new master because the old has been disenfranchised. Landholders whose holdings have been revoked are no longer able to support an extended family. There is usually considerable latitude in the legal rights and responsibilities of retainers.

## HOUSEHOLD PERSONNEL

Both the number of personnel and the range of their duties in the household of an independent military unit vary tremendously, depending on the unit's size and the philosophy of its organization. Some positions, however, are fairly standard throughout the Successor States (although they may be known by very different names).

### Senior Tech

The senior tech is usually attached to the unit's commander, and is in overall command of the unit's technical staff.

### Senior Astech

Usually an astech on the unit's permanent staff (rather than one hired locally), the senior astech is responsible for the training, discipline, deployment, and duty assignments of the unit's astech force.

### Medic

Medics in larger or well-equipped units are generally licensed physicians; those in small or impoverished units typically do double duty as warriors or techs. Medics hold sick call, treat the wounded, acquire and dispense medication, supervise sanitation and cooking facilities, and arrange for the evacuation, hospitalization, and medical retirement of badly injured personnel.

### Weapons Master

A tech with long experience with a variety of weapons systems, the Weapons Master is responsible for a unit's weapons, ammunition, and weapon power sources, including those mounted on 'Mechs. This person also serves as drill sergeant to direct the training of new recruits, and may be called upon to act as personal tutor in tactics, weapon handling, and hand-to-hand combat for the unit's warrior apprentices. Weapons masters are usually personal retainers of long standing in a commander's service.

### Computer Tech

This is a tech responsible for maintaining the household's computers and computer-based electronics. Such techs are responsible for the computer programs that govern everything from the unit's supply inventories to the printing of duty rosters and supply requisitions. They also work under the unit's senior tech to maintain BattleMech computers and their programs.

### Freehold Steward

This is the chief official who handles the affairs of the unit's holdings, and is answerable directly to the commander. In noble households, the person might be called a Chamberlain, and would administer the ruling noble's estate and palace affairs, whether or not the noble is present.

### Household Troops

These are a personal guard unit of foot or mechanized soldiers who protect a unit's (or noble's) landholdings, and who provide ground security forces, sentries, patrols, internal security, bodyguards, and support troops for 'Mech units in the field. The household troops may be merely a showpiece, or they may be seasoned fighters such as a well-trained, experienced mercenary unit.

### Planetologist

Larger units usually include a scientist/scientific team responsible for assessing biological, tectonic, meteorological, and other hazards on an unfamiliar world.

## CASTLE

The feudal trappings of Successor States civilization have resurrected another facet of Terra's Middle Ages. Permanent landholds connected by charter or deed to a particular ruling noble nearly always have a structure called the castle, which serves as headquarters and offices for the noble. It also provides space for barracks for household troops; repair, service, and storage facilities for 'Mechs; granaries and storehouses for food; quarters for the entire household staff; and a central rallying point for community functions such as award ceremonies and presentations.

Garrisons and mercenary units stationed on distant worlds will often try to acquire a local building to house the staff personnel, as well as the maintenance, repair, vehicular, weapons, and communications equipment vital to a military unit. When a local building is not available or the unit knows it will have to make a rapid withdrawal, temporary barracks and headquarters are scooped out of the ground by 'Mechs or other heavy equipment, then are roofed-over and camouflaged. One of the most important features of these headquarters is a central combat communications station, where unit staff can assess battlefield intelligence and maintain communications links with each 'Mech and tactical force in the field. The relatively greater power of their communications gear allows them to maintain contact with individual 'Mechs during combat, even when the 'Mechs of one unit may be out of touch with one another.

On landholds, the castle is the heart of the land title, protecting the hold's village community, and providing heavy mounted weapons to protect the local spaceport. On many worlds, even those not directly related to a ruling noble, massive fortresses have been constructed in strategic locations near spaceports, mines, industrial facilities, or vital cities. These serve as local headquarters for military forces garrisoning the area.

The largest castles are vast, walled encampments spanning hundreds of square kilometers, and mounting beam and missile weapons of great range and power. Castles have become strategically important because of the people, resources, and equipment gathered in them. In a nuclear age, such a single concentration of power and resources would be unwise, as it could be wiped out in one fell swoop. In the Successor States era, however, where nuclear weapons have been outlawed, the castle serves well once again.

Contemporary philosophers see the castle as a symbol of a once-mighty culture turning in upon itself, walled off against the encircling, barbaric night. Like the castles of Terra's Dark Ages, these may, in fact, guard the seeds of new civilization that will take root in the dawn of a new day.



# TABLES

## MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon Type	Skill Class	Damage	Power Usage
Cudgel/Blackjack	Unarmed Combat	1D6 + 1	
Club	Unarmed Combat	1D6 + 2	
Dagger/Knife	Blade	1D6 - 1	
Sword	Blade	2D6 + 2	
Bayonet	Blade	1D6 + 3	
Vibroblade	Blade	2D6	2/10 minutes
Vibro dagger	Blade	2D6	1/10 minutes
Stunstick	Blade	1D6 - 2 + special	2/10 minutes
Mini Stunstick	Blade	1D6 - 4 + special	1/10 minutes
Neural Whip	Blade	1D6 + special	

## PERSONAL WEAPONS TABLE: RANGED COMBAT

Weapon Type	Skill Class	Damage	Short	Medium	Long	Ammo
<b>Flamers</b>						
Flamer	Small Arms	2D6	1-2	3-4	5-6 98	12
Flamer Pistol	Small Arms	2D6	1-3	4-5	6-7 115	10
<b>Grenades*</b>						
Microgrenade	NA	2D6	1	2-3	4-6 98	1
Minigrenade	NA	3D6	1	2-3	4-6 98	1
Maxigrenade	NA	5D6	1	2-3	4-6 98	1
<b>Miscellaneous Weapons</b>						
Tranq Gun	Small Arms	special	1-2	3-4	5-6 98	10
Dart Gun	Small Arms	special	1-2	3-4	5-6 98	2
Sonic Stunner	Small Arms	special	1-2	3-5	6-8 131 Pwr Use: 4	
<b>Needlers</b>						
Needler Pistol	Small Arms	1D6 + 2	1-3	NA	NA 49	10
Needler Rifle	Small Arms	2D6 + 2	1-6	7	8 131	20
Hold-Out Needler	Small Arms	1D6	1	NA	NA 16	5
<b>Primitive Ranged Weapons</b>						
Shortbow	Archery	1D6 + 1	1-2	3-5	6-8 131	1
Longbow	Archery	1D6 + 3	1-3	4-6	7-12 196	1
Lt. Crossbow	Archery	2D6	1-2	3-5	6-10 164	1
Hvy. Crossbow	Archery	2D + 3	1-3	4-7	8-13 213	1
<b>Pistols</b>						
Pistol	Small Arms	2D6 + 3	1-2	3-4	5-8 131	6
Auto-Pistol	Small Arms	2D6	1-2	3-4	5-8 131	10
Sternsnacht	Small Arms	4D6 + 2	1-2	3-4	5-12 196	3
Mydron	Small Arms	1D6 + 3	1-2	3-4	5-12 196	20
Hold-Out	Small Arms	1D6 + 3	1-2	NA	NA 33	5
<b>Rifles</b>						
Rifle	Small Arms	3D6	1-6	7-15	16-30 492	10
Fed. Long Rifle	Small Arms	2D6 + 2	1-8	9-18	19-33 511	10
Zeus Hvy. Rifle	Small Arms	6D6	1-7	8-18	19-28 459	5
<b>Submachine Guns</b>						
SMG	Small Arms	3D6	1-3	4-7	8-10 164	50
Rorynex SMG	Small Arms	3D6 + 3	1-3	4-6	7-9 147	100
Imperator SMG	Small Arms	2D6	1-4	5-8	9-11 180	50



# TABLES

## PERSONAL WEAPONS TABLE: RANGED COMBAT (Continued)

Weapon Type	Skill Class	Damage	Short	Medium	Long	Ammo
<b>Gyrojet Weapons</b>						
Gyrojet Rifle	Small Arms	3D6 + 6	1-12	13-36	37-72 <i>1181</i>	10
Hvy. Gyrojet	Small Arms	6D6 + 6	1-12	13-36	37-72 <i>1181</i>	5
Gyroslug Rifle	Small Arms	3D6 + 3	1-9	9-35	36-42 <i>689</i>	50
Gyroslug Car.	Small Arms	2D6 + 5	1-6	7-15	16-30 <i>492</i>	20
Gyrojet Pistol	Small Arms	3D6 + 3	1	2	NA <i>33</i>	2
<b>Lasers</b>						
Laser Pistol	Small Arms	4D6	1-3	4-6	7-12 <i>197</i>	Pwr Use: 2
Hold-Out Pistol	Small Arms	2D6	1-2	3-4	5-6 <i>98</i>	Pwr Use: 3
Nakjama Pistol	Small Arms	3D6	1-4	5-9	10-14 <i>230</i>	Pwr Use: 1
Sunbeam Pistol	Small Arms	5D6	1-3	4-6	7-11 <i>180</i>	Pwr Use: 4
Laser Rifle	Small Arms	4D6 + 2	1-9	10-21	22-30 <i>492</i>	Pwr Use: 5
Intek Laser Rifle	Small Arms	2D6 + 2	1-12	13-30	31-51 <i>836</i>	Pwr Use: 2
Blazer	Small Arms	(4D6 + 2)x2	1-9	10-21	22-30	Pwr Use: 10 <i>492</i>
Pulse Laser Pistol	Small Arms	3D6	1-2	3-4	5-8 <i>131</i>	Pwr Use: 2 (per shot)
Pulse Laser Rifle	Small Arms	3D6 + 2	1-6	7-14	15-28 <i>459</i>	Pwr Use: 4 (per shot)
<b>Shotguns</b>						
Shotgun	Small Arms	3D6 + 2	1-3	4	5 <i>82</i>	2
Pump Shotgun	Small Arms	3D6 + 2	1-3	4-5	6-8 <i>131</i>	6
<b>Support Weapons</b>						
SRM Launcher*	Support Weapons	5D6 + 6	1-10	11-36	37-54 <i>886</i>	2
Hvy. SRM Launcher*	Support Weapons	10D6 + 6	1-15	16-40	41-48 <i>787</i>	1
Portable Rocket Launcher*	Support Weapons	4D6 + 6	1-6	7-16	17-36 <i>591</i>	1
Lt. Recoiless Rifle*	Support Weapons	3D6	1-12	13-25	26-35 <i>574</i>	5
Portable MG*	Support Weapons	4D6 + 3	1-10	11-20	21-42 <i>689</i>	15
Auto Grnd Launcher*	Support Weapons	2D6	1-6	7-15	16-25 <i>410</i>	10
Grnd Launcher *	Support Weapons	3D6	1-2	3-6	7-12 <i>197</i>	5
LAW *	Support Weapons	4D6 + 6	1-6	7-18	19-40 <i>656</i>	Cost: 350 C-Bills
V-LAW*	Support Weapons	2D6 + 3	1-4	5-12	13-25 <i>410</i>	Cost: 75 C-Bills

\* Area Effect Weapon



# TABLES

## PERSONAL EQUIPMENT PRICE LIST

### Armor

Personal Armor (Vest)	2/A	50	pg 89
Personal Armor (Body Suit)	2/A	150	pg 89
Ablative/Flack Vest	3/B	300	pg 89
Repair Patch	3/B	15 ea	pg 89
Ablative/Flack Body Suit	3/B	800	pg 89
Repair Patch	3/B	25 ea	pg 89
MechWarrior Combat Suit	4/C	*	pg 89
Mauser 960 Assault System	4/D	*	pg 98

### Communicators

Personal Communicator	2/A	50	pg 91
Long-Range Personal Com.	3/A	200	pg 91
Basic Field Communications Kit	2/A	400	pg 91
Microcommunicator	3/B	200	pg 91

### Espionage/Surveillance Gear

IR Scanner	3/A	100	pg 87
Lock-Pick Kit (Basic)	2/A	1,000	pg 88
Lock-Pick Kit (Mechanical)	1/A	500	pg 88
Rangefinder Binoculars	3/A	250	pg 88
Starlight Goggles	2/A	300	pg 88
Camo Suit (ECM)	3/B	7,000	pg 85
Camo Suit (IR Suppression)	3/B	7,000	pg 85
Camo Suit (Sneak)	3/B	7,000	pg 85
Disguise Kit	3/B	1,000	pg 85
Lock-Pick Kit (Advanced)	3/B	3,000	pg 88
Camo Suit (IR & ECM)	3/C	21,000	pg 85
Camo Suit (Sneak & ECM)	3/C	21,000	pg 85
Camo Suit (Sneak & IR)	3/C	21,000	pg 87
Forgery Kit	3/C	1,000	pg 87
Lock-Pick Kit (Vibro Blade)	4/C	2,000	pg 88
Camo Suit (Sneak, ECM & IR)	3/D	28,000	pg 85
Gripper Gloves	4/D	1,000	pg 87

### Life Support

Filter Mask	1/A	2	pg 84
Light Environment Suit	2/A	200	pg 84
Respirator	1/A	50	pg 84
Enivonmental Bubble	3/B	200/	pg 83
		occupant	
Hostile Environment Suit	3/B	10,000	pg 84
Personal Environ Bag	3/C	300	pg 84

### Medical Equipment

Medkit	1/A	10	pg 82
Laser Scalpel	2/A	50	pg 81
Preserving Sleeve	3/A	25	pg 82
Medipack	4/C	400	pg 81

### Rechargers

Recharger (Fossil Fuel)	2/A	50	pg 82
Recharger (Kinetic)	2/A	10	pg 82
Recharger (Solar)	2/B	200	pg 82

### Tech Gear

Repair Kit (Aerospace)	2/A	2,500	pg 83
Repair Kit (BattleMech)	3/A	3,000	pg 83
Repair Kit (Electronics)	2/A	2,000	pg 83
Repair Kit (Mechanic)	2/A	1,000	pg 83
Repair Kit (Weapons)	2/A	1,500	pg 83
Tool Kit (Basic)	1/A	250	pg 82
Tool Kit (Deluxe)	3/A	500	pg 82
Scanalyzer	4/C	5,000	pg 83

### Miscellaneous Equipment

Field Kit (Basic)	2/A	10	pg 90
Field Kit (Deluxe)	3/A	100	pg 90
Emergency Jetpack	3/D	5,000	pg 90
Grapple Rod	3/D	500	pg 90

\* Not normally available; priced at gamemaster's discretion

3x 7x 10x 12x



# TABLES

## PERSONAL WEAPONS PRICE LIST

### Primitive Melee Weapons

Bayonet	1/A	5	-	pg 92
Cudgel, Blackjack or Club	1/A	1	-	pg 92
Dagger/Knife	1/A	2	-	pg 92
Sword	1/A	10	-	pg 92

### Powered Melee Weapons

Vibroblade	2/A	100	-	pg 91
Stunstick	2/B	200	-	pg 91
Stunstick (Mini)	3/B	50	-	pg 91
Vibrodagger	2/B	25	-	pg 91
Neural Whip	3/C	500	-	pg 91

### Primitive Missile Weapons

Crossbow (Heavy)	1/A	20	1/20	pg 92
Crossbow (Light)	1/A	10	1/20	pg 92
Longbow	1/A	20	1/20	pg 92
Shortbow	1/A	10	1/20	pg 92

### Slug Throwers

Auto-Pistol	1/A	50	2	pg 95
Pistol	1/A	40	2	pg 95
Pistol (Hold-Out)	1/A	20	1	pg 95
Pistol (Mydron)	1/A	100	4	pg 95
Pistol (Sternsnacht)	1/A	200	5	pg 95
Rifle (Federated Long Rifle)	1/A	120	2	pg 96
Rifle (Zeus Heavy Rifle)	1/A	200	1	pg 96
Rifle	1/A	80	2	pg 96
Shotgun (Double-Barreled)	1/A	30	1/2	pg 96
Shotgun (Pump)	1/A	40	2/3	pg 96
Submachinegun	1/A	80	10	pg 96
Submachinegun (Imperator)	1/A	100	10	pg 96
Submachinegun (Rorynex)	1/A	80	20	pg 96

### Gyrojet Weapons

Gyrojet Pistol (Hold-Out)	2/B	30	1	pg 94
GyroSlug Carbine	2/B	500	5	pg 94
GyroSlug Rifle	2/B	1,000	20	pg 94
Gyrojet Rifle	2/B	1,250	200	pg 94
Gyrojet Gun (Heavy)	2/B	2,500	250	pg 94

### Laser Weapons

Laser Pistol (Hold-Out)	3/B	100	5	pg 93
Laser Pistol	3/B	750	-	pg 93
Laser Pistol (Nakjama)	3/B	750	-	pg 93
Laser Pistol (Sunbeam)	3/B	750	-	pg 93
Laser Rifle	3/B	1,250	-	pg 93
Laser Rifle (Intek)	3/B	1,250	-	pg 93
Blazer	3/C	2,190	-	pg 93
Pulse Laser Pistol	3/C	1,000	-	pg 94
Pulse Laser Rifle	3/C	2,000	-	pg 94

### Heavy Weapons

Rocket Launcher	1/A	2,075	75	pg 99
Recoilless Rifle (Light)	2/A	300	50	pg 97
LAW	2/A	350	-	pg 98
V-LAW	2/A	75	-	pg 97
Machine Gun	2/A	1,000	10	pg 99
Grenade (Mini)	1/A	10	-	pg 97
Grenade (Micro)	1/A	1	-	pg 97
Grenade (Maxi)	1/A	20	-	pg 97
Grenade Launcher	2/A	100	50	pg 97
Grenade Launcher (Automatic)	2/A	465	10	pg 97
SRM Launcher	2/B	1,500	2000	pg 99
Inferno round	2/B	-	1000	pg 99
SRM Launcher (Heavy)	2/B	3,000	5,000	pg 99

### Miscellaneous Weapons

Needler Pistol (Hold-Out)	3/A	20	1	pg 100
Needler Pistol	3/A	50	1	pg 100
Needler Rifle	3/A	75	2	pg 100
Dart Gun	3/B	40	1	pg 100
Flamer	2/B	100	2	pg 100
Flamer Pistol	3/B	50	1	pg 100
Sonic Stunner	2/B	100	-	pg 101
Tranq Gun	1/B	30	1	pg 101

### Weapons Accessories

Flash Suppressor (JAF-05)	4/C	1,000	-	pg 101
Sniper Scope	2/A	50	-	pg 101
Starlight or IR capable		300	-	pg 101
Starlight Scope	2/A	300	-	pg 101



# CHARACTER GENERATION TABLES

## 1. CHARACTER DESIGN

The following sequence is usually the logical progression of steps.

1. Assign Priorities
2. Assign Attribute Points
3. Purchase Advantages (if any)
4. Purchase Initial Skills
5. Finishing Touches

## 2. MASTER CHARACTER TABLE

Priority	Race	Attributes	Skills	Advantages	BattleMech
0	Human	18	8	None	Dispossessed
1	Human	21	12	1 pt	Light
2	Clan Warrior*	24	16	2 pts	Medium
3	Clan Pilot**	27	20	3 pts	Heavy
4	Elemental***	30	24	4 pts	Assault

### \*Clan MechWarriors

receive a +1 REF and a +1 INT.

### \*\*Clan Fighter Pilots

receive a -1 BLD, a +2 REF and a +1 INT.

### \*\*\*Clan Elementals

receive a +2 BLD, a +1 REF, a -1 CHA and the Toughness advantage.

## 3. ATTRIBUTE RATING TABLE (HUMAN)

1	Poor
2	Fair
3	Average
4	Good
5	Excellent
6	Remarkable
7+	Incredible

## 4. RACIAL MAXIMUM TABLE

Character	BLD	REF	ITN	LRN	CHA
Human	6	6	6	6	6
Clan MechWarrior	6	7	7	6	6
Clan Pilot	5	8	7	6	6
Elemental	8	7	6	6	5

## 5. ADVANTAGES

MechWarrior advantages and the points each one costs.

Ambidextrous	1
Exceptional Attribute	2
Extra Edge	1-3
Land Grant	1
Natural Aptitude	2-3
Sixth Sense	2
Title	1-3
Toughness	2
Wealth	1-3
Well-Equipped	1-3

## 6. PURCHASING SKILL LEVELS

Skill Level	Cost (in Skill Points)	
	Incremental	Cumulative
1	1	1
2	2	3
3	3	6
4	4	10
5	5	15
6	6	21

## 7. CLAN PACKAGES

Package Cost	Skill	Level
20 pts	<b>Primary Clan Warrior</b>	
	Gunnery/Mech	4
	Interrogation	1
	Leadership	3
	Medtech	1
	Piloting/Mech	3
	Small Arms	2
	Survival	1
	Tactics	2
	Tech/Mech	2
Unarmed Combat	1	
12 pts	<b>Secondary Clan Warrior</b>	
	Gunnery/Mech	3
	Leadership	1
	Medtech	1
	Piloting/Mech	2
	Small Arms	2
	Survival	1
	Tactics	1
	Tech/Mech	1
	Unarmed Combat	1
16 pts	<b>Clan Pilot</b>	
	Gunnery/Aerospace	4
	Medtech	1
	Piloting/Aerospace	3
	Small Arms	1
	Tactics	2
	Tech/Aerospace	2
16 pts	<b>Elemental</b>	
	Blade	1
	Gunnery/Battle Armor	3
	Interrogation	1
	Medtech	1
	Piloting/Battle Armor	3
	Small Arms	2
	Survival	1
	Tactics	1
	Tech/Battlesuit	1
Unarmed Combat	2	

## 8. ACADEMY PACKAGES

<b>Basic Academy Package</b>	<b>9 pts</b>
3 Skills at Level 2	
3 Skills at Level 1	
<b>Advanced Academy Package</b>	<b>15 pts</b>
2 Skills at Level 3	
2 Skills at Level 2	
2 Skills at Level 1	

# CHARACTER GENERATION TABLES

## 9. UNIVERSITY PACKAGES

<b>Basic University Package</b>	12 pts
4 Skills at Level 2	
4 Skills at Level 1	
<b>Advanced University Package</b>	18 pts
2 Skills at Level 3	
3 Skills at Level 2	
3 Skills at Level 1	

## 10. INNER SPHERE SKILL PACKAGES

### BASIC TRAINING

#### Required

Medtech  
Small Arms

#### Electives

Bureaucracy  
Blade  
Leadership  
Support Weapons  
Survival  
Unarmed Combat

### ADVANCED INDIVIDUAL TRAINING

#### AEROSPACE PILOT MOS

##### Required

Gunnery/Aerospace  
Piloting/Aerospace

##### Electives

Technician/Aerospace

#### BATTLEMECH PILOT MOS

##### Required

Gunnery/Mech  
Piloting/Mech

##### Electives

Technician/Mech

#### CAVALRY MOS

##### Required

Drive or Piloting/VTOL  
Gunnery/Vehicular

##### Electives

Gunnery/Artillery  
Technician/Mechanic  
Jump Pack

#### INFANTRY MOS

##### Required

Unarmed Combat  
Support Weapons

##### Electives

Drive  
Gunnery/Artillery

#### SPECIALIST (Recon) MOS

##### Required (choose 2)

Demolitions  
Perception  
Security Systems  
Stealth  
Tracking

##### Electives

Disguise  
Escape Artist  
Interrogation

#### SPECIALIST (Tech) MOS

##### Required (choose 2)

Communications  
Computer  
Engineering  
Security Systems  
Technician

##### Electives

Cryptography  
Scrounge  
Tinker

### FIELDS OF STUDY (University Only)

#### LEADERSHIP TRAINING

##### Required

Bureaucracy  
Leadership

##### Electives

Protocol  
Strategy  
Tactics  
Training

#### MILITARY SCIENCE

##### Required

Strategy  
Tactics

##### Electives

Special Interest (SI):  
Military History

## 11. MASTER SKILL LIST

Skill Name	Characteristic
Acrobatics	Athletic
Administration	Mental
Alternate Identity	Mental
Appraisal	Mental
Archery	Athletic
Blade	Athletic
Bureaucracy	Social
Career Skills	Mental*
Climbing	Athletic
Communications	Mental*
Computer	Mental
Cryptography	Mental
Demolitions	Mental
Disguise	Mental
Drive	Physical
Engineering	Mental
Escape Artist	Physical
Forgery	Mental
Gambling	Mental
Gunnery	Physical*
Impersonation	Social
Interrogation	Social
Jump Pack	Athletic
Leadership	Social
Medtech	Mental
Navigation	Mental
Negotiation	Social
Perception	Mental
Piloting	Physical*
Protocol	Social
Quickdraw	Physical
Running	Athletic
Scrounge	Social
Security Systems	Mental
Seduction	Social
Small Arms	Physical
Special Interests	Mental*
Stealth	Physical
Strategy	Mental
Streetwise	Social
Support Weapons	Physical
Survival	Mental
Swimming	Athletic
Tactics	Mental
Technician	Mental*
Throwing Weapons	Physical
Tinker	Mental
Tracking	Mental
Training	Social
Unarmed Combat	Athletic

\*Subskills

ZERO 6 MAN.  
ZERO 6 - LANG.  
PIL/GUN - VTOL  
PIL - MMU  
CHEMISTRY  
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~  
PIL - GUN/VTOL  
PIL - CYBERNETICS

# MECHWARRIOR

THE BATTLETECH ROLE PLAYING GAME



**T**here's an old saying that claims a 'Mech is only as good as the warrior who pilots it.

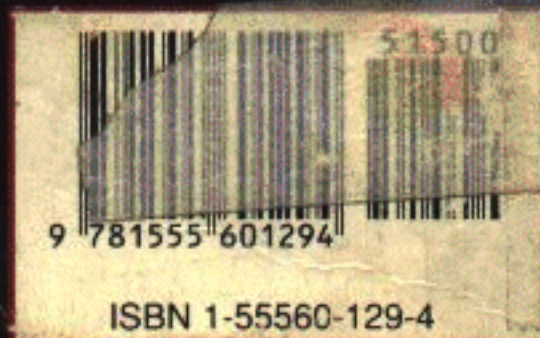
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