# BATTLETECH<sup>M</sup> CLAN INVASION SCENARIO

# TRIALOF POSITION



## CLAN INVASION SCENARIO

# LECTURE: TRIAL OF POSITION

Hundreds of hours of simulator time, training exercises, and classroom lectures can only provide a glimpse of what it feels like to come under fire, to face a skilled opponent wielding a BattleMech for only one purpose: to put you on or in the ground.

The Inner Sphere's MechWarrior academies work tirelessly to prepare their charges for the reality of the battlefield, but the old saying is true—there is no substitute for experience. The best academies form training cadres to test cadets in real-world situations alongside veteran troops before graduation. The Clans, in their way, have a more direct solution.

Today, you will learn the danger every member of a Clan *sibko* faces before they can call themselves a member of the warrior caste. Today is your Trial of Position.

—Mackenzie Wolf, Outreach, 22 July 3051 📂

### RITE OF PASSAGE

At the center of Nicholas Kerensky's framework for the Clans was the idea that all rank, even the simple title of "warrior" must be earned through combat. Just as his founding warriors earned their place at his side through rigorous trials, nothing would be bestowed or awarded, and certainly not based on good grades or a family's influence or wealth.

Sibkin face combat trials throughout their education, with those who fail re-assigned to lower castes. While these are sometimes known as "Trials of Position," the term is used most often to refer to the final Trial of Position, during which a sibko member either becomes a warrior, is relegated to a lower caste, or dies in the attempt.

By tradition, most remaining *sibko* cadets undertake their trials around their twentieth birthday, though some Clans test cadets at age eighteen. Clans truly desperate for manpower may rush *sibkos* into taking their Trials at even younger ages, though with generally poor results. Cadets may not refuse or defer their trial when the time comes; any who do would immediately be welcomed to a lower caste. In practice, however, this does not occur-cadets who survive nearly a decade in a *sibko* are eager to shed their youth and become a true warrior of their Clan. Those who lack this singular drive tend to wash out long before they ever have a chance to refuse their trial.

## THE BEST TEACHER

The concept of a Trial of Position is universal throughout the Clans, though the exact implementation varies. Generally, the trial consists of a cadet, almost always augmented, facing three opponents one at a time. The first opponent is usually in a lighter unit than the cadet, the second in one of approximately equal weight, and the third in a superior unit. Cadets who best one opponent become a member of the warrior caste; those who defeat two become a Star Commander; and those who manage to defeat all three become Star Captains—a very rare feat that immediately puts the cadet at the forefront of their Clan's *ristars*. Cadets commonly test in pairs, which allows for the possibility that *zellbrigen* can be broken by one cadet firing on another's opponents. Cadets can also violate *zellbrigen* themselves by firing on an unengaged opponent. In either case, the act results in immediate melee conditions and usually a swift end to the trial.

To this core concept, each Clan adds their own wrinkles. Clan Steel Viper forces pairs of cadets to first face each other, with only the victor advancing to take their trial. Clan Jade Falcon requires cadets to face unaugmented foes to reach their 'Mech's cockpit and begin the trial. Clan Wolf places cadets in an assault OmniMech and opponents in somewhat lighter 'Mechs.

Cadets who fail their trial are not ordinarily allowed to retake it; exceptions exist within the Blood Spirits, Hell's Horses, Smoke Jaguars, and Steel Vipers. By tradition, Clan Ghost Bear allows cadets to retake their Trial of Position to join a different branch of their *touman*; their recently-elected new Khan, Bjorn Jorgensson, is an example, having failed to test out as a MechWarrior, but succeeding in becoming an aerospace pilot.

Warriors are required to retest throughout their careers, usually on the anniversary of their original trial. Those who do well are generally promoted, while those who do not either remain at their current rank or, if they performed particularly poorly, are demoted or reassigned to second-line units. The nature of these retests is even less codified than the initial Trial of Position, and recent combat action is often substituted for an actual trial. Among lower-ranking warriors, the retest can become a de facto Trial of Possession for a higher rank, whether open or against senior officers. For Galaxy Commanders and Khans, retesting is often routine and unimportant, but can become a political affair if their leadership is already in question or rivals wish to remove them.

### SECURING THE FUTURE

Inner Sphere analysts and military commanders sometimes view the practice of Trials of Position as a contradiction of the Clans' disdain of waste. It makes no sense, they argue, for a people focused on efficiency to risk losing valuable warriors. Clan commanders would make the same exact argument in favor of Trials of Position, claiming they weed out cadets who, despite their years of training, could still break under live fire and make mistakes that would cost the lives of other warriors and weaken the Clan. Likewise, an older warrior who takes part in a Trial of Position and cannot best a lowly cadet may themselves be past their prime and a detriment to the Clan's strength; depending how and when they fell, and to whom, such warriors may find themselves headed for a second-line or solahma unit. Value is not wasted by Trials of Position, Clan tradition holds-it is confirmed. The potential loss of a future Khan to a stray round or fluke battlefield fatality is, to the Clans, worth the benefit of every member of their touman being battle-tested.

The reverse is also an argument for efficiency: Trials of Position are often the first time *ristars* are revealed to Clan leadership, and cadets who perform exceptionally well are by design put immediately into positions of command, rather than being forced to languish and rot under the stewardship of more inept older warriors, as they unfortunately sometimes are in the Inner Sphere.

And make no mistake: newly-minted warriors *are* immediately expected to serve as full-fledged members of their Clan's *touman*, joining or even leading units of more experienced warriors and taking part in front-line combat. The opponent you face may be of an age with a high school graduate or college student, but their entire short life has been dedicated to excellence in combat—an excellence they have already proven by facing down death and emerging victorious.

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#### SITUATION

Candace absently fidgeted with her necklace, succeeding with great effort in keeping her face neutral and unexpressive.

"I don't believe it! What a waste of time, to even invite that kid here." Clavell's fist slammed down on a control table nearby. Their monitor confirmed what Candace witnessed on the video feed a moment earlier: Sun-Tzu had initiated a melee and then ejected, leaving her son to face a half-dozen elite warriors alone.

Candace placed a hand lightly on the Dragoon officer's shoulder. "It's all right, Major."

"Sure. Sure. We'll reset the scenario for Kai alone. He can't continue like this."

"He can. He will," the duchess said quietly, gesturing at the monitor. The usual din of the proving ground control center faded as others saw the same impossible footage on their screens.

Kai had not powered down to await a fair trial. He was on the move.

#### GAME SETUP

The Defender selects two maps from the *BattleTech: A Game of Armored Combat* box set or *Map Pack: Grasslands* and arranges them with their long edges connecting. The Defender may select their home edge and deploys their units anywhere within 10 hexes of that edge. The Attacker enters from their home edge at the start of Turn 1 (see *Entering the Playing Area, Chaos Campaign: Succession Wars*, p. 7).

Forced Withdrawal rules are not in effect; the Attacker will not retreat until their assigned Defender 'Mech is destroyed. The Defender may choose to power down their 'Mech or eject at any time, ending the scenario.

#### ATTACKER

The Attacker is two groups of three 'Mechs; each assigned to one of the Defender's Mechs. For details on each MechWarrior's Special Pilot Abilities, see *Campaign Operations* pp. 70-82 or *Alpha Strike Commander's Edition* pp. 92-101.

- Major Sven Ngov (Gunnery 3, Piloting 3), HOP-4C Hoplite; Dodge, Maneuvering Ace.
- Major Christian Kell (Gunnery 3, Piloting 3), TDR-5S (C) Thunderbolt; Lucky (1), Sharpshooter, Speed Demon.
- Major MacKenzie Wolf (Gunnery 2, Piloting 3), MAD-5A Marauder II; Jumping Jack, Sniper, Weapon Specialist (PPC).
- Justin Xiang Allard (Gunnery 1, Piloting 2), BJ-1 Blackjack; Blood Stalker, Marksman, Natural Grace, Speed Demon.
- Colonel Jaime Wolf (Gunnery 1, Piloting 1), ARC-2W Archer; Blood Stalker, Cluster Hitter, Demoralizer, Iron Will, Sandblaster (LRM), Tactical Genius.
- First Prince Hanse Davion (Gunnery 1, Piloting 1), BLR-1G BattleMaster; Combat Intuition, Demoralizer, Lucky (2), Melee Master, Multi-Tasker, Tactical Genius.



#### DEFENDER

The Defender consists of two MechWarriors from the list of Young Royals (see *Special Rules*, below):

- MechWarrior 1 (Gunnery \*, Piloting \*), Daishi (Dire Wolf) W
- MechWarrior 2 (Gunnery \*, Piloting \*), Daishi (Dire Wolf) W

#### OBJECTIVES

Each of the Defender's 'Mech's will face the Attacker's 'Mechs one at a time as described under *Trial of Position*, below.

#### VICTORY CONDITIONS

The scenario ends when one of the two Defender 'Mechs has successfully crippled (see *Crippling Damage*, p. 258, *TW*) or destroyed all three of their opponents (see *Destroying a Unit*, p. 128, *TW*), or when both Defender 'Mechs have been destroyed, have powered down, or their pilots have ejected.

#### SPECIAL RULES

The following special rules are in effect for this scenario:

#### **Trial of Position**

In accordance with Clan traditions, each of the Attacker's 'Mechs will engage their assigned Defender 'Mech, in the order from top to bottom. However, if either of the Defender's 'Mechs fires on an Attacker unit not currently engaged with them or not assigned to them, a general melee is triggered; all restrictions on the Attacker are lifted, and all of their units may engage with either or both of the Defender's units.

#### **Young Royals**

During the Year of Peace, leaders of the Great Houses and their scions journeyed to Outreach at the invitation of Wolf's Dragoons to learn the true nature of the Clan threat and the Dragoons' ties to it, and to prepare for the invasion's renewal.

While their parents parlayed and tried to set aside historical enmities, the MechWarrior-trained young royals and their aides

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engaged in exercises overseen by MacKenzie Wolf and Christian Kell, culminating in modified Trials of Position which became known as the Outreach Trials.

The Defender must select two MechWarriors from the following list:

- Victor Steiner-Davion (Gunnery 3, Piloting 2); Lucky (2), Combat Intuition.
- Hohiro Kurita (Gunnery 3, Piloting 3); Blood Stalker, Natural Grace.
- Ragnar Magnusson (Gunnery 4, Piloting 4);
  Speed Demon, Terrain Master: Mountaineer.
- Kai Allard-Liao (Gunnery 1, Piloting 1); Dodge, Maneuvering Ace, Natural Grace, Speed Demon.
- Cassandra Allard-Liao (Gunnery 4, Piloting 3); Lucky (1), Range Master (Medium).

- Sun-Tzu Liao (Gunnery 4, Piloting 5); Antagonizer.
- Galen Cox (Gunnery 3, Piloting 3);
  Sandbaster (LRM), Weapon Specialist (LRM).
- Shin Yodama (Gunnery 2, Piloting 2); Demoralizer, Iron Will, Stand-Aside.

#### RECORD SHEETS

Record Sheets are included with this scenario for your convenience, see pp. 5-11).













