

BATTLETECH™

TOURING THE STARS



RIGIL KENTARUS



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INTRODUCTION

We began on Terra, a lonely, blue-green speck in the vastness of the void. It has been more than a millennium since mankind ventured to the stars beyond home, and while it has been a tumultuous history—at the very least—we have discovered, explored, and conquered worlds that our ancestors could only dream about. Humanity now occupies more than two thousand worlds stretched across a vast range of interstellar space known as the Inner Sphere.

For humanity as a whole, Terra, at the heart of it all, will forever be known as “Home.” But for the far greater majority of us, “home” is a very different speck amidst the infinite black. Our homes are many, varied, beautiful, and filled with rich histories—each unique to itself.

In the grand scale of interstellar history, it often becomes so easy to forget this, to see planets and solar systems as dots on an abstracted map. But, at the core of the matter, each of those dots is a place where men, women, and children live, work, love, and survive. Join us on a special tour of the Sphere, as we explore the richness of these worlds like never before!

—Professor Bertram Habeas, *Touring the Stars: One World at a Time*, Free Republic Press



Welcome to *Touring the Stars*, a campaign supplement designed to offer players the opportunity to learn about the worlds of the Inner Sphere, Periphery, and beyond.

The background information contained in the **Atlas** section gives players a world's geography, history, notable events, and other tools needed to create an unlimited number of *BattleTech* games for play, while the **A Time of War** section offers plot seeds and details for the planet's more notable events. These plot seeds can be used as stand-alone games, woven into an existing game, or as part of a larger on-going campaign.

The **Rules Annex** section explains planetary *Atlas* information for use in gameplay, as well as optional terrain tables, weather, and flora/fauna rules. Terrain tables can be used as a random chart to determine gameplay maps, or simply as a guide to provide ideas on the types of terrain found on the world. This section also contains a list of other rules that can be used to enhance your game experience. All players should agree whether or not to use any or all of these features before play.

Note: The last four pages of this PDF are sized for 11" x 17" paper. Please keep this in mind when printing out the document.

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ATLAS

RIGIL KENTARUS

Star Type (Recharge Time): K1V (167 hours)
Position in System: 2nd (of 5)
Time to Jump Point: 5.18 days
Number of Satellites: One (Riken Minor)
Surface Gravity: 0.85 (Rigil), 0.5 (Riken Minor)
Atm. Pressure: Rigil Kentarus: Standard (Breathable);
Riken Minor: Thin (Breathable)
Equatorial Temperature: 28°C (Rigil);
15°C (Riken Minor)
Surface Water: 66 percent (Rigil);
85 percent (Riken Minor)
Recharging Station: Zenith
HPG Class Type: B
Highest Native Life: Mammals
Population: 315,000,000 (27,000,000 Riken Minor)
Socio-Industrial Levels: B-B-B-C-B (Rigil);
B-B-C-C-C (Riken Minor)
Landmasses (Capital City): Rigil Kentarus: Arabia,
Little America/New Dubai (Minnesota), Worrens;
Riken Minor: Lesser Plateau (Destina Station),
Naskia (West Romaine)



RIGIL KENTARUS

Alpha Centauri was first identified in the nineteenth century as one of the closest stars to Terra, and its two major components (Alpha Centauri-A and -B) were soon understood to be quite similar to Terra's primary Sol. The twenty-first century discovery of a Terran-sized planet in Alpha Centauri-A's life zone made it a priority target for the Magellan Program. After an eleven-year flight, Magellan Three completed its braking burn into the planetary system of the brighter, larger Alpha Centauri-A in 2042. It autonomously selected targets for its four excursion probes, none of which found a habitable world. The world in the life zone, Alpha Centauri-A-II, was a superheated greenhouse hell world similar to Terra's sibling, Venus.

This failure was compounded by tragedy and irony. Tragically, Alpha Centauri-B did have habitable planets and was only tens of astronomical units away from the probe. The probe could have diverted at any time up to the last one percent of its braking burn from 68 percent of light speed. However, after the burn, Magellan Three's main fuel tanks were empty and discarded. Ironically, Western Alliance aerospace mega-projects like the Magellan Program had bureaucratically looted astronomy programs, delaying construction of instruments like the University of Maryland's TERRestrial Planet Imaging iNterferometer (TERRAPIN), which could and did spot Alpha Centauri-B's habitable planets—but not until 2040 thanks to Magellan's funding, rather than 2032 as originally planned. Due to the 2040 completion date, speed of light delays meant it was impossible to update Magellan Three's flight plan before it "failed" in its original mission at Alpha Centauri-A.

However, TERRAPIN's chief astronomer, Dr. Riken, found a new use for the failed probe that extended its life by decades. The core vessel had a small reaction control fuel reserve of a few kilometers per second

and powerful survey instruments. At Dr. Riken's urging, Magellan Three received new instructions in 2048 to begin a fuel-frugal gravitational ballet between Alpha Centauri-A, its largest gas giant, and then Alpha Centauri-B and its planetary brood. The probe settled into a swooping 3 AU elliptical orbit around Alpha Centauri-B in 2066, an orbit that would repeatedly fly by -B's planets over the next several decades. Its mapping flybys of Alpha Centauri-B-II greatly aided early manned exploration and colonization. (The doughty probe retired to an orbital museum in 2178, where it would survive until destroyed by Amaris's forces in 2769.)

Further Terran Alliance exploration of the world, originally named "Riken Major," and its habitable moon "Riken Minor" led to its prioritization for colonization. It fell to the Deimos Project to open access to the world. Riken Major and Riken Minor received scientific bases in 2112, delivered by *Pathfinder's* sister-ship *Ranger*, and the system became one of Terra's first interstellar colonies in 2117 following the settlement of New Earth. With heavy financial backing for the colony drawn from wealthy Islamic Terran nations like Indonesia and Iran, Riken Major was rechristened to its old Arabic name, "Rigil Kentarus," which the system retains to this day. ("Alpha Centauri" is used by locals to refer to the -A component of the system while Alpha Centauri-C, 0.1 light-year distant from the other stars, retains its archaic moniker "Proxima Centauri.") "Rigil" and "Rigil Kent" are common local nicknames for the system and planet.

Rigil Kentarus was a beautiful world and among the most habitable in human space. Its diverse ecosystems were fairly compatible with Terra's, allowing humans to survive on Kentaran plants and animals with careful attention to differing vitamin availabilities. It had a lower

A close-up of a futuristic control panel. The panel is dark grey with a central rectangular display area. The word "ATLAS" is displayed in a bold, black, sans-serif font in the center of the screen. To the left of the screen, there are three yellow, pill-shaped buttons stacked vertically, with the word "ACCESS" printed below them. To the right of the screen, there are two red indicator lights, one above the other. On the far right, there are two vertical grey sliders and a circular port below them. The panel has a metallic, slightly worn appearance.

The most annoying issue for the new colonists was the world's tidal lock to its close-orbiting, Mars-sized moon. This imposed a grueling 56-hour day with extreme afternoon and pre-dawn temperatures. It also meant one hemisphere of Rigil never saw Riken Minor.

Minor became a popular target for Terra's wealthy, who established vacation homes there, and later became a major SLDF military facility. Today, Riken Minor hosts a diverse range of biomes stocked almost entirely with plants and animals from Terra, while its native life exists only in laboratories or near deep sea vents.

The original colonial organization encountered trouble within a decade. Few citizens of the founding nations were interested



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in immigrating, with issues ranging from disinterest in leaving comfortable lives on Terra to religious questions about performing the Hajj and orienting with Qibla. (The floodgates of Islamic interstellar colonization would only open in the twenty-fifth century, directed toward such areas as the Combine's Azami.) By 2130, entire sub-continents were being sold to other colonial development corporations. There were a dozen colonies and as many capitals on the planet until the Terran Hegemony centralized a planetary government in New Mecca in 2322.

The world's other supercontinent of Worrens was heavily settled by Terra's southern European nations in the 2130s, while a North American colony began belatedly in the 2170s on the archipelago-continent of New Dubai. (This was soon renamed "Little America" by all Kentarans except the American settlers, who prefer "New Dubai" to this day.) The system received an economic boost when hungry terraforming corporations lobbied the Alliance Parliament to terraform Riken Minor, which appeared to be a good replacement for the recently completed Lowell Project.

In the twenty-third century, Terran political strife drove intelligentsia to comfortable safe havens like Rigil Kentarus. This turned the colony into a center of higher education and art that prospered without interference from Terra's government, which was more focused on itself than its colonies. The new, dynamic Hegemony that grew from the ashes of the Alliance had some allure for Rigil Kentarus, but the Hegemony demanded a surrender of autonomy. It took a great deal of peaceful persuasion for Rigil Kentarus to join the Hegemony, which occurred only after a narrow vote.

This initial disinterest in Hegemony membership was reflected in the lackluster performance of Kentaran troop levies in the Hegemony's "campaigns of persuasion." In the most extreme example, a well-equipped Kentaran mechanized infantry brigade routed when faced with a light minefield and irregular infantry resistance on Denebola, abandoning the Terran infantry regiment they were attempting to relieve. In a glowing moment of Hegemony Armed Forces history, the outnumbered Terrans defeated the Denebola militia in detail. The less-reported conclusion is that the regiment then carried out James McKenna's direct order to decimate the Kentaran unit for cowardice. Many other flagging Hegemony militias found new backbone in Rigil Kentarus's shaming.

By the 2330s, a new generation of Kentarans had grown up during the flowering of the Hegemony and were considerably more patriotic than their parents. They made the world shine as a critical center of learning in the early twenty-fourth century and helped the Alliance-ravaged Terran university system get back on its feet. The Hegemony centralized the system's politically separated colonies with a new system-wide government housed in New Mecca. Under the new

government and aegis of the Hegemony, Rigil Kentarus became one of the wealthiest, most protected systems in human space. It was never attacked during the Age of War and its divisions later served ably in the Reunification War. Its cities grew to heights and beauty surpassed by only a few worlds of the Hegemony, and its natural beauty put it on the vacation circuit of the Inner Sphere's Star League-era nobility. Its population stabilized at about 1.5 billion—much less than the Hegemony planetary average, but Star League-era Kentarans seemed uninterested in large families or attracting immigration.

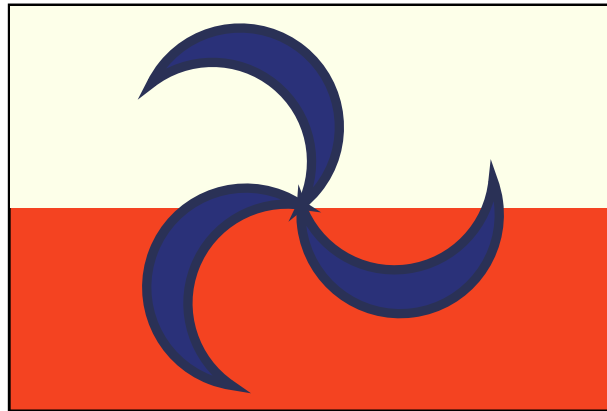
The system's downfall to its current, diminished state involves two devil's pacts separated by several centuries. First, Rigil Kentarus was particularly aggrieved over the "damages wrought by the disastrous child on Terra," to quote contemporary Kentaran opinions about Richard Cameron. The world's nobility enthusiastically embraced Amaris's plans in exchange for "economically stimulating local government reform," which meant they were able to dismiss much

of the Hegemony-installed government's regulatory structure and democratic features in favor of more direct rule. The nobles soon found themselves inadequate to the task of running a planet that was suffering the effects of orbital bombardment and the collapse of its interstellar banking industry (both due to Amaris's actions), and the deregulation they embraced with a religious zeal only resulted in further economic turmoil. Their mismanagement created numerous domestic critics, who found the "streamlined and direct" government had streamlined away civil rights. Firings and arrests

of critics were insufficient to quiet domestic unrest against the reformed Kentaran government and Amaris, leading to the creation of concentration camps and later death camps. Rigil Kentarus was, in fact, one of the extreme cases of the Amaris Coup, but ComStar popularized the system's travails as the norm of Amaris's rule. Shoddy historians continue to promulgate this version of the Coup.

The SLDF-backed successor government was little better. The post-Amaris system government led an enthusiastic purge of Amaris collaborators, even carrying that purge to other systems like the notorious Windsor-Small massacre on Mars. However, the regime mostly focused on killing Rigil Kentarans in what became known as the "Kentaran Terror." The first post-Amaris government fell to a military coup by the system militia when Kerensky's Exodus was announced, but its replacement soon found itself executing as many domestic opponents as its predecessor. The ongoing "Kentaran Terror" meant that, unlike many Hegemony systems, Rigil Kentarus did not object to annexation by an "outlander House." The Lyran conquest (or liberation) of the system during the First Succession War brought stability and an end to the cycle of violence.

The now-impooverished system received less attention from other Houses than some of its ex-Hegemony neighbors, though it traded



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hands between the Draconis Combine and Free Worlds League several times across the Succession Wars. These exchanges led to the destruction of the original capital, New Mecca, in 2827, ironically by Lyrans seeking to liberate the world. The Free Worlds League Militia's poor and inexplicable concentration of troops in the city made the Lyrans decision to employ nuclear weapons a simple one. As a bonus, the local politicians who had courted and collaborated with the Free Worlds League were also present in New Mecca at the time of its leveling.

As part of its recovery, the system courted ComStar business and moved strategically valuable industries far from population centers. The world that emerged from this rebuilding in the fourth millennium was unimportant but comfortable, though generations of low birth rates and lingering bioweapon contamination meant its population was barely half its modest Star League-era peak.

Two centuries of relative peace and close ties with ComStar led Rigil Kentarus to a second devil's pact. Many former Hegemony systems joined the Word of Blake Protectorate either to renew ties with Terra or at Blakist gunpoint, but the Kentarans joined because they were believers in Blake's Word. Indeed, the large campuses around ComStar's First Circuit center on Rigil Kentarus meant there was a higher number of fundamentalist Word followers on Rigil Kentarus than on jaded, more populous Terra. The Kentarans' tenacious, scorched earth defense against Stone's Coalition saw more than half the planet's surviving cities damaged by tactical nuclear weapons and bioweapons deployed by the defenders. This understandably enraged the Wolf and Ghost Bear liberators, but they had few targets against which to vent their fury. The militia culprits usually died with their weapons as they attempted to lure in Clan troops, while the civilian refugees suffered under misaimed bioweapons that barely impacted the Clans. The lingering effects of

the Jihad caused the world's atmosphere to be listed as "tainted" for decades by governments and travel agencies around the Inner Sphere, though the worst problems were found primarily near urban centers.

In the years after the Jihad, Rigil Kentarus showed little sign of being one of humanity's oldest colonies. After the Jihad and Succession Wars-era Lyrans immigration, Stone's forced migrations nearly erased the old, geographically varied Kentaran cultures. (The world is perhaps one of the few where the Republic's programs achieved the desired melting pot effect.) The post-Jihad population was more interested in reconstruction than preserving political identities and successfully rebuilt a beautiful world, even eliminating the last traces of bioweapons in 3130 and convincing agencies around the Inner Sphere to again list the world as having a breathable atmosphere.

The Kentaran ecosystem has survived a thousand years of humanity's follies, and the new cities embrace this resilience. The new urban centers are compact and partly built with materials recycled from the ruins of the old, leaving little trace of past habitation on the world. Many new cities favor the sites of old Star League-era cities, which were more conveniently located near rivers and harbors than the Succession Wars-era habitations. The dominant architectural style is "Stone's Exuberance," which consists of seamless glass facades and soaring, multi-spired towers interconnected by strings of linear apartments and glass-roofed streets. These amount to semi-planned arcologies, which critics denounce as "akin to being trapped in endless malls." The new infrastructure includes high-speed maglev rail between cities and a mixture of trams and light rail inside urban areas. The world's air transport is under-developed because of its expense compared to rail. Likewise, the planetary government only maintains surface roads near cities; old transcontinental highways have gone generations without serious maintenance. Like many worlds in the Inner Sphere, water transport forms a critical but overlooked part of Rigil Kentarus's infrastructure, and the world is blessed with deep harbors and straits that allow numerous *Avalonmax*-class freighters to ply the seas.

An exception to this new, blended world is, ironically, the capital district of New Dubai (still informally known as "Little America"). This isolated, temperate chain of volcanic islands stands out on modern Rigil Kentarus for largely retaining its original colonial population composition. The islands are poor in mineral resources but densely populated with some sixty million residents, who have spent the past half millennium happy that their light industry, forestry, fishing, and mountain-climbing wheat terraces attracted the attention of few invaders. After New Mecca's demise, the planetary capital relocated to Minnesota, a minor island fifty kilometers from the nearest large city. Minnesota is notable for having the lowest per-capita population of any planetary capital city in the Inner Sphere, with only 27,000 permanent residents. Little Americans loudly prefer to work in their fields, microchip factories, and tourism jobs rather than seek out the civil service and orbital bombardment opportunities of Minnesota. (Historically, even the planetary militia and various invaders concentrated on Mesopita, a spaceport city on Worrens.) Local architecture leans toward High Terran Alliance, a distinct style from the rest of the world. To encourage tourism, locals play up American culture, though with less authenticity than even the Marian Hegemony's "Roman" culture. Despite the "historical revival" efforts by locals, tourists are usually more interested in the autumn color change



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in Little America's deciduous forest-covered mountains than learning how ancient Terran national leaders won global wars with their lasso-tossing, buffalo-riding skills.

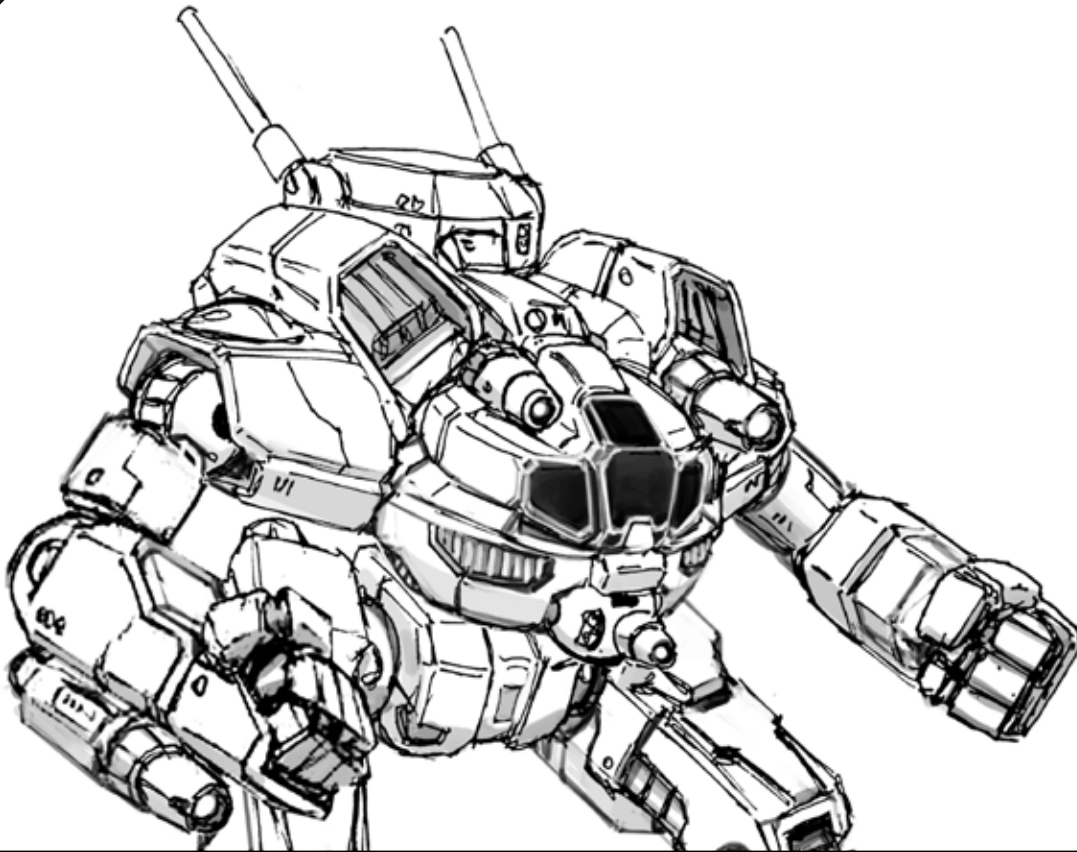
Riken Minor's diminished population also lives in relatively few cities, but these are low-density suburban sprawls that grew from Jihad-era refugee camps. The well-off but poorly-planned cities cover thousands of square kilometers along the coastlines of Riken Minor's warm, sometimes tempestuous seas, which provide diets rich in seafood and little else. These cities are either near the meridian of the pro- and ante-Rigil hemispheres that put Rigil Kentarus scenically just above the horizon, or the cities are on the permanent far side. Unlike the well-planned reconstruction of Rigil Kentarus, these sprawls are chaotic, basic services are haphazard, and utility access is uneven. However, most residents are fairly well off, as the poorly regulated private utilities, agriculture, and construction industries are constantly seeking new markets and customers, and competition keeps them affordable. City streets are frequently patchworks of repairs and potholes as three utility companies battle for business in one block, and reliability is atrocious, but few people on Riken lack necessities due to unavailability.

Riken's government has been able to establish some mass transit along main roads with trolley buses, but most personal transport is by electric and fuel cell cars on shoddy roads. Airships thrive in the low gravity and predictable weather of the tidal-locked moon, not only supplying long-distance transport but also serving as skycranes for the booming construction sector in cities. Visitors, however, may be unnerved by poorly maintained airships flying skyscraper modules overhead.

The moon's cities deliberately possess the common feature of being far from its military bases (and recently discovered Castle Brian ruins) that are directly under the larger world. During both the Coup and Jihad, the Riken cities of the sub-Rigil point were bombarded from orbit and struck with bioweapons. While Riken's human population is only now recovering, the mostly uninhabited world has seen its imported Terran ecosystem thrive after humans stopped bothering most of it. Today, only some stubborn holdouts persist in generations-old refugee camps, increasingly embittered that employment opportunities flow to the meridional and antipodal cities and that the tax-starved government will not invest in their camps. If the refugees had any significant weaponry or neighbors, they would probably resort to raiding or revolt.



A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS



GIVE US YOUR FOOD AND AMMO

Recommended Group Size: 1–4 player characters

Recommended Group Type: Pirates, Military, Mercenary, Security/Police

Recommended Skill Levels: Green–Regular (Key Skill levels of 1–4)

The perpetually ignored refugee camps around Riken Minor's military bases have nursed grudges for generations over their treatment by the Republic of the Sphere. The Republic's approach to dealing with the Jihad-ravaged world was to give local governments just enough aid to kickstart the recovery process, and Riken Minor's government spent its aid money where most of the population was: relocating far from the military bases. Those who didn't want to give up their land received minimal amounts of support. When the Kentaran militia sought to rebuild those military bases, they found the refugees living near them ill-educated and ill-skilled even for construction work, let alone filling jobs on militia bases, so outsiders were hired instead. The ongoing refugee camp protests get enough attention that a trickle of further aid is supplied, but not enough to change the government's preferred policy of relocating refugees to new cities elsewhere on Riken. Of course, the refugees don't want to leave.

The refugees' protest campaign has always included a low level of violence and even terrorism against the government and militia, though never enough to rise to the level of a resistance movement or merit a crackdown. But recently, small bands of BattleMechs and tanks, mostly Star League-era hardware, began attacking militia supply shipments and commissaries. The refugees are thrilled that so much of the pirates' loot is ending up in their hands and seem to think the pirates hail from among them. This, of course, doesn't answer the militia's burning question: how did refugees get their hands on SLDF Royal units?

Complications: A few obstacles for players to tackle.

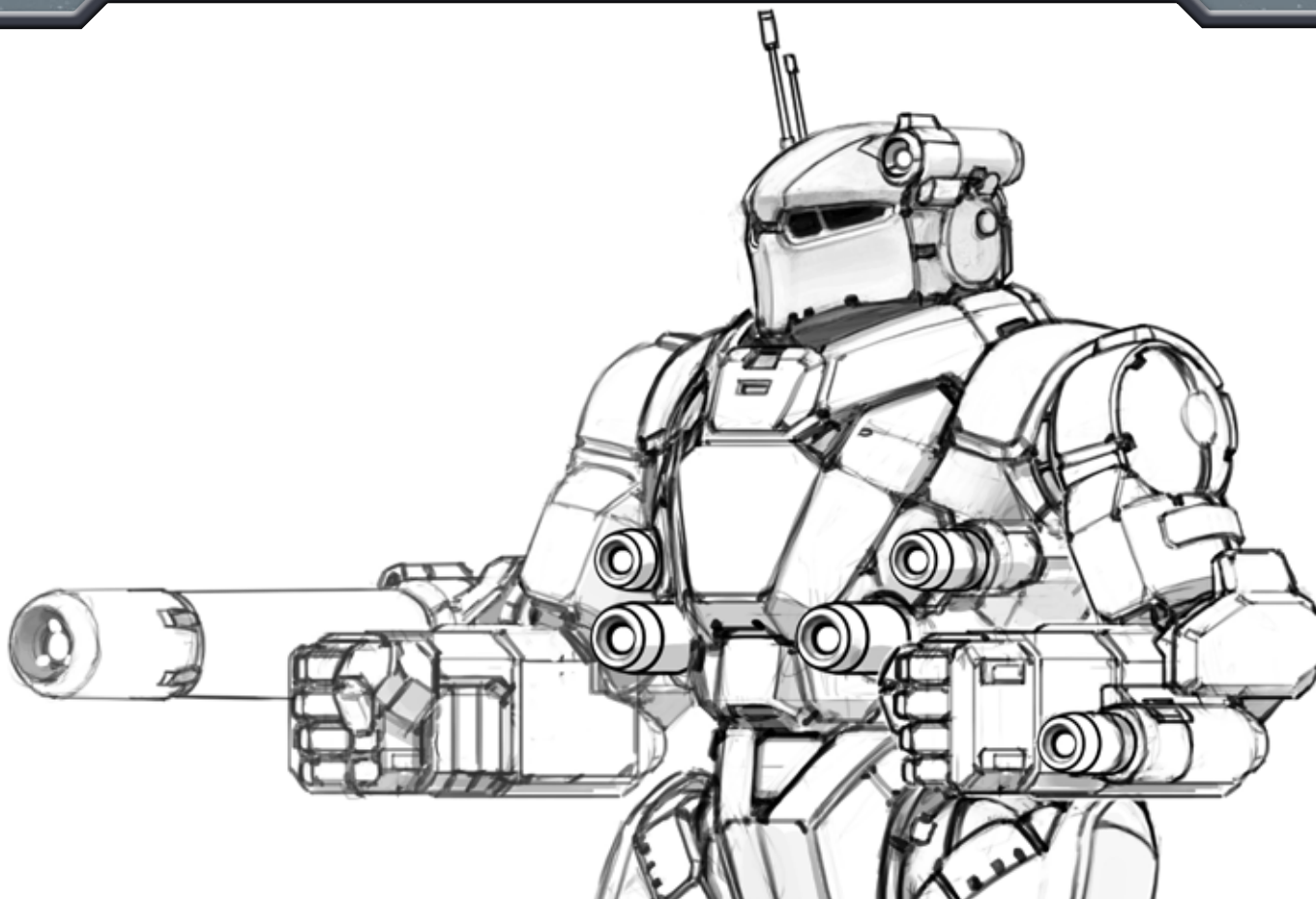
Fight the Man: While attempting to question locals near the area of 'Mech banditry, a protest brews around the PCs and turns into a riot. The protestors are not friendly to outsiders, which will give PCs problems if they're investigators or hope to get in with the locals.

12-Meter Tall Protestors: Whether the PCs are caught in the riots or not, several badly piloted SLDF-model light 'Mechs begin interfering with the investigation.

Friendly Fire: Rumors lead the local government and militia to believe the PCs are working with the pirates, and make several attempts to apprehend the PCs for "enhanced questioning."

Tips: This gives players an opportunity to battle in an unusual environment with low gravity of 0.5 G (see p. 237, *A Time of War*).

A TIME OF WAR ADVENTURE SEEDS



IN THE HALLS OF THE MOUNTAIN KING

Recommended Group Size: 2–4 player characters

Recommended Group Type: Pirates, Military, Mercenary

Recommended Skill Levels: Regular–Elite (Key Skill levels of 3–8)

The PC's efforts have led to an interesting fact: the ruins of the Star League fortifications on Riken Minor were not simple military outposts, as explorers and archeologists thought for centuries, but a Castle Brian. Refugees looking for salvageable equipment managed to break through into the heart of a facility that had eluded detection for centuries. They found ranks of gleaming Star League Defense Force BattleMechs, tanks, and other military equipment that would allow the refugees to finally “make it big.” Cooler heads suggested that the wiser idea would be to sell the fortune in historical hardware to collectors or to the Republic, but most loudly disagreed. After all, the refugees had never been treated fairly by the government, which wanted to give them a pittance and force them to move away from their precious land. Now they could take what they were owed.

Whether the player characters are pirates defending their barely functional Castle Brian or the unfortunate troops that have to seize the fortification, it's going to be a messy fight—and a glimpse of why the Liberation of the Hegemony was so difficult for the SLDF.

Complications: A few obstacles for players to tackle.

The Walls are Attacking! The Castle Brian has water traps, crushing walls, and minefields in its internal tunnel network; see p. 14.

Deferred Maintenance: While the Star League built well, five centuries of deferred maintenance have rendered many of the trap tunnels and internal communication systems useless. Any time a player (or the GM) wants to activate one of the turreted weapons or traps (see p. 14), roll 2d6: on 9 or higher it works.

Reinforcements: A group of refugee volunteers (Gunnery Skill 6, Piloting Skill 7) with half the Battle Value of the player character's force enters the battle. Their atrocious skills in a BattleMech are partly compensated by their use of Royal BattleMech variants. If the PCs lack BattleMechs, create comparable reinforcements of similar type as the PCs' equipment, i.e. infantry, tanks, etc.

Tips: This battle allows players to explore the unusual defensive architecture of the Riken Minor Castle Brian (p. 13), as well as the rules for Castles Brian found in *Tactical Operations*, p. 141 and *Jihad Hot Spots: Terra*, p. 203.

RULES ANNEX



The following section is designed to assist both players and gamemasters with guidelines and reference tables for using Objectives to create games and/or campaign based on the target systems, factories, or cities described herein. The following rules primarily rely on the players' understanding of the core game rules found in *Total Warfare (TW)* and *Tactical Operations (TO)*, but additional references may be made to *Strategic Operations (SO)*.

Players and gamemasters alike should realize that these rules are substantially less rigid than core rules. Players creating tracks and scenarios using the material in this annex are encouraged to accept, modify, or even completely ignore these guidelines if they prove too cumbersome.

USING PLANETARY DATA

The planet in this supplement is presented with a block of basic planetary data. This data provides key details that players can use to further tailor their game play, reflecting the unique features of the world. The following information identifies the core rules that apply, based on the indicated world data.

STAR TYPE, POSITION IN SYSTEM, TIME TO JUMP POINT

These lines are most pertinent to the advanced aerospace aspects of gameplay defined in *Strategic Operations*, and will generally have no impact on games that focus entirely on ground combat.

Star Type identifies the color, size, and stability of the world's primary star, as well as how long an arriving JumpShip requires to charge its K-F drive while in system (using only its jump sail). Particularly large and/or unstable stars can be prone to odd lighting effects that can affect combat, such as glares and solar flares. Rules for Glare and Solar Flare effects may be found in *Tactical Operations* (see p. 58, TO).

Position in System indicates how many orbital positions away from the star the world orbits; an "orbital position" may be held by other planets or asteroid belts.

The *Time to Jump Point* indicates how many days' worth of travel DropShips accelerating (at 1 G, the same acceleration produced by gravity on Terra) would take to travel from the system's standard zenith or nadir jump points to the world. This transit time includes a mid-point turnover and 1-G deceleration rate as well, which are standard transit rates to and from most worlds. Longer distances between the world and its local jump point mean longer transit times for incoming vessels and thus more time for local defenders to arrange defenses once they realize there are inbound attackers.

NUMBER OF SATELLITES

This line indicates how many natural satellites (moons) the world has (and their names, if applicable). Many orbital facilities may be found in the LaGrange Points (regions where the gravitational forces between the planet and its moon or moons cancel each other out), and some of these same points (specifically, places near the L-1 points) are occasionally used as "pirate points" by daring raiders who wish to radically cut down transit times and local defense preparations. In night combat situations, worlds with one or more moons or rings may produce lighting effects caused by solar reflections off the lunar surfaces (depending, of course, on lunar phases), while worlds without any moons at all may present equally distracting effects. To reflect these possible effects as applicable, see the Full Moon Night, Moonless Night, or Pitch Black rules, on p. 58 of *Tactical Operations*.

RULES ANNEX

SURFACE GRAVITY

Surface Gravity has a distinct affect on the performance of virtually all combat units in game play. Values higher than 1.00 reflect worlds where units are significantly heavier than they are under normal Terran gravity, while values lower than 1.00 reflect worlds where units are significantly lighter. The full effects of gravity on combat may be found on p. 55 of *Tactical Operations*.

ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE

This detail describes the relative density and breathability of the local atmosphere, and can have a profound impact on game play if the atmosphere is anything but "Standard (Breathable)." Thinner or Thicker atmospheres can affect the use of several unit types in gameplay and may even have an impact on weather conditions. Likewise, atmospheres classified as Tainted or Toxic can affect how various combat units' function and suffer damage in game play. For rules covering Atmospheric Pressure, see pp. 54-55 of *Tactical Operations* for pressure variations, and p. 56 of *Tactical Operations* for Tainted and Toxic Atmosphere effects.

EQUATORIAL TEMPERATURE AND SURFACE WATER

A world's *Equatorial Temperature* helps define whether the world can be broadly classified as hot, warm, or cold by indicating the temperate (in degrees Celsius) it averages at the equator—typically the warmest region on the planet's surface. Temperatures at the north and south pole of most worlds may average as much as 30 degrees colder than at the world's equator, but it is always important to know that local conditions such as weather and terrain can vary these averages somewhat. Nevertheless, the equatorial temperature helps players gauge whether much of the world will likely be arctic, tropical, desert, and so forth. If gameplay falls in regions where temperatures are extreme (below -30 Celsius or above 50 Celsius), Extreme Temperature rules (see p. 62, *TO*), will apply.

Surface Water reflects the percentage of the world's surface that is covered in water, and essentially defines whether the world might be covered in vast, lifeless wastelands, lush forests, or miniscule, rocky islands. Worlds with low Surface Water values (50 percent or less) will rarely see much rainfall or snowfall weather effects, and water or woods features on terrain maps may instead be considered sinkholes, craters, and rough terrain instead to reflect the lack of significant water sources and vegetation. Worlds with higher Surface Water values, meanwhile, will much more likely have active, precipitation-heavy weather patterns, and support more water and woods terrain features.

RECHARGING STATION, HPG CLASS, NATIVE LIFE, AND POPULATIONS

These details describe other noteworthy features of a target system that could affect campaigns to greater or lesser degree.

Recharging Stations describes whether a system has any space station capable of recharging a JumpShip's KF drive (and, if so, at which of the two standard Jump Points they are located). Recharging stations are often small and fairly unarmed, but also act as spaceborne hubs of trade and communication to the local world. Raiders often avoid these stations by taking non-standard jump points, so their arrival cannot be blown to the locals, but more significant invasions often begin by seizing the local recharge stations instead, to secure effective strategic control over the jump point.

HPG Class defines the presence of a local hyperpulse generator on the planet, indicating its ability to transmit signals to other systems nearby. Such stations are always located on the planetary surface, and are largely considered inviolate by all but the most serious attack forces. (Attacking an HPG is still considered a crime against humanity by most civilized realms.) Class A stations reflect major interstellar communications hubs, while Class B stations usually send transmissions in massive bundles less frequently. Although any HPG can send an emergency signal to a nearby system within hours of an attacking force's discovery, many raiders target worlds with Class B stations (or no stations at all), in the hopes that their arrival will raise the alarm among nearby systems more slowly. Assault forces, meanwhile, may target Class A worlds in an effort to secure a realm's communications hub and disrupt responses to a border-wide campaign.

Native Life describes (in very basic terms) the highest level of native-born life forms the world has. More life-barren worlds in the Inner Sphere may be host only to microbes or plants, while more evolved planets often host their own species of animal life up to and including mammals. Though this rarely impacts a planetary campaign, it cannot be ignored that many local creatures can pose a threat—or a boon—to raiders and invaders in some circumstances, ranging from being a source for local food in the event of supply shortage, or a hazard to establishing secure perimeters while operating outside of vehicular protection. This detail, however, does not cover introduced species the human population may have imported to the world, so while a target world may be host only to native-born trees, horses originally raised on Terra may yet make an appearance.

Population defines the number of humans estimated to be living on world. Worlds with particularly high populations—those numbering in the billions—are often highly developed, with many major cities. Sparsely populated worlds—with populations in the millions or less—are less likely to have major cities than they are small towns or even tiny outposts and domed arcologies. As a more densely populated world often raises the threat of local armed resistance or merely more eyes to spot incoming invaders and more voices to raise an alarm, raiders tend to target lower populace worlds, while invaders often attempt to secure the greater manpower and infrastructure reflected in high population worlds.

SOCIO-INDUSTRIAL LEVELS

The world's Socio-Industrial Level is a five-letter code used to broadly define the world's level of wealth and development using a series of classic A-F letter grades. The more "A"s and "B"s that appear in this code versus "D"s and "F"s will generally denote a world that is more self-sufficient, technological sophisticated, and resource wealthy than the average. As many of these factors can be used to enhance role-playing aspects of game play, an in-depth explanation of this code structure may be found on pp. 366-373 of *A Time of War*.

LANDMASSES AND CAPITAL CITIES

The major landmasses (continents, regions, and/or island chains) identified on each world are then listed, with the planetary capital city listed (in parentheses) beside the name of the landmass where it is located. Traveling between landmasses often requires the use of high-speed rails (overland), aerospace transit (via DropShips, airships, and other aerospace craft), or seagoing vessels.

OPTIONAL RULES

RIKEN MINOR CASTLE BRIAN (CENTAUR CASTLE)

Though historians and generals alike have long stated that the Terran Hegemony's core systems lacked a Castle Brian, recent archeological excavations and activities by resistance groups on Riken Minor proved this incorrect. In fact, the "SDS facility" and "scattered garrison facilities" at Riken Minor's sub-Rigil pole were the tip of a particularly secretive Castle Brian.

Completed in 2419, the Riken Minor facility was one of the original Castles commissioned by Brian Cameron. Intended as a second line of defense in case an invasion breached the line of Castles along the Hegemony border, the Riken Minor Castle was also on the short list of facilities from which relief missions to a besieged Terra would be based. The Hegemony intended for the Riken Minor Castle to be as secret as possible, and it was occupied by only a small maintenance contingent for much of its existence. These maintenance crews all hailed from outside the Rigel Kentarus system, and official records suggest that they may have even been uninformed about the exact location of their posting. As these maintenance crews nicknamed the facility "Centaur Castle," it is debatable to what extent these efforts at secrecy succeeded.

The Riken Minor Castle was not activated during any of the Hegemony or the League's main conflicts. During the Coup, Stefan Amaris was able to quickly overrun the SLDF garrison in their surface facilities with subverted local militias, giving the Castle scant opportunity to prove its worth. A moderate amount of orbital bombardment contributed to the appearance of complete destruction. The Castle Brian was little involved in the liberation that followed, as the battles focused on Amaris's garrison and SDS facilities. Finally, many local records were lost in the Kentaran Terror. All these factors have no doubt contributed to its obscurity. Its rediscovery is a relatively recent event, and treasure hunters have begun probing the extensive facility in growing numbers.

The construction of the Riken Minor Castle Brian is similar to most Castles Brian. It is capable of supporting two Star League Brigades of troops and has numerous hidden exit tunnels covering a few hundred kilometers. The troops themselves have many underground housing facilities at their disposal. Each is capable of supporting about a regiment of troops, and the complex is believed to have at least twelve, and possibly as many as twenty such regimental complexes, such that the assigned Brigades can easily adjust where they are stationed within the Castle. Of note is the large number of aerospace launch and landing points, intended to deploy a significant number of Aerospace Fighters and small craft. While not of a scale and capability to label the facility a Port Castle, written records do indicate an intent for the Riken Minor Castle to disrupt shipping to Rigel Kentarus itself, and to insert troops there, in the event the world was occupied.

A large volume of tunnels exists between each of the main garrison locations in a crude honeycomb pattern. Taking advantage of the low gravity, engineers installed a vast quantity of adjustable walls. During infiltration by hostile forces, these walls could be manually or automatically opened and closed to split the invaders, or to lead them astray. Friendly forces (using the tunnels' communication systems) were kept informed about the correct path, while confusing or deceptive markings and tunnel configurations sought to frustrate

invaders. The Castle's designers also created numerous hallways where lengthy sections of the ceiling would crush hostile forces underneath hydraulically, as opposed to the more typical command-detonated (and permanent) collapsing of selected sacrificial tunnels.

Riken Minor's extensive water supplies were another feature utilized by the Castle Engineers, as numerous tunnels were rigged to be quickly flooded. Wall sections would be opened and closed to cause a submerged force to be washed against solid obstructions, while dragged in a deliberately confusing direction. Flooded tunnels would have also been effective at disrupting tunneling efforts.

It should also be noted that the overall tunnel network of the Riken Minor Castle has a large number of opportunities to align very lengthy tunnels, presumably to provoke poorly trained or inexperienced troops to overstress their equipment by maintaining excessive speeds compared to 1 G environments.

Other obstacles are more typical of all Castles Brian: pit traps intended to capture 'Mechs and vehicles, minefields, vibrobomb fields and hidden weapon emplacements.

GAME RULES

Using a Castle Brian complex in a game can create a battle unlike many others. It will also require more preparation on the part of the GM; in fact, the presence of a GM is strongly encouraged, even if the Castle is actively defended by a player-run force. There are several premises under which the Riken Minor complex could be the site of a battle, even if these never happened historically: Hegemony forces defending against a Draconis Combine invasion, SLDF forces defending against Amaris attackers, or SLDF forces attacking Amaris troops inside the Castle. The Castle might have also come into play during the Word of Blake Jihad, or during the Dark Age. In the thirty-second century, refugees lingering from the Jihad use the Castle Brian as a base of operations for insurrection against Riken Minor's government.

For reference, please consult the following rules:

- Automated Weapons (p. 133, TO)
- Castle Brian Complexes (p. 141, TO)
- Castle Brian Game Rules (p. 203, *Jihad Hot Spots: Terra*)
- High/Low Gravity (p. 55, TO)
- Minefields (p. 207, TO)

For an encounter similar to a more typical *BattleTech* game, it may be sufficient to use the Reinforced Weapons Bunker rules (p. 204, *JHS:T*) along with some ground forces, and a few Castle Brian Weapon Emplacements (p. 209, *JHS:T*).

To run a game inside the complex, players can use the Ishiyama Arena maps from the Solaris MapPack to simulate natural caves that connect to the complex (subsequent to damage or earthquakes), while a single urban map could adequately simulate one of the regimental complexes (both living quarters, hangars and storage). The long, honeycombed tunnels are best drawn manually on the back of hex maps, using 10 to 15 hexes (300 to 450 meters) for each "spoke." Block off portions that are unexplored, use physical objects to indicate portions that have been closed off by moving walls.

Using a variety of traps may make for more interesting game play. Typical traps would include minefields using conventional, command-detonated and vibrobomb mines in a variety of layouts intended to confuse the enemy. For example: the defender could employ

OPTIONAL RULES

combined minefields, which use command and vibrabomb minefields to let lighter units pass without incident while detonating against heavier assets.

RIKEN MINOR'S FLOODING TUNNELS

The engineers that built the Castle used the moon's abundant water sources to beneficial effect. Numerous tunnels can be flooded by destroying a series of baffles via remote detonation. In modern days a number of these baffles have failed due to age and poor maintenance, creating tunnels certain to be flooded for centuries. Players, meanwhile, may want to have tunnels flood while they are occupied.

Before game play begins, the GM must designate which hexes possess the flood valves needed to release water. Flooding a tunnel requires the command to be given in any Weapons Phase; the flooding effect will occur in the End Phase of the turn subsequent to the turn during which the command was given. For simplicity, the water will first affect the hex with the valve, immediately filling the entire hex from floor to ceiling, and then expand by one hex per turn in all directions unless blocked by a wall. Any BattleMechs that occupy a hex on the turn that it is being flooded suffer a +4 modifier to all Piloting Skill Rolls and must make an immediate Piloting Skill Roll with that modifier to remain standing. Units in the hex with an open valve suffer a +8 modifier instead of the +4 modifier. Other types of units are subject to being submerged.

Whenever a Piloting Skill Roll fails for any reason in a flooding hex, the unit resolves Falling Damage (if any) and is immediately displaced one hex away from the flood valve (roll 1d6 for a random direction if in the hex with the flood valve), taking damage as per Skidding (p. 62, TW).

Optionally, the flood system may be less lethal and only fill a tunnel or chamber to Depth 1.

Other traps that might exist in a Castle Brian:

- A Hidden Gun Emplacement that shoots 10 NARC launchers at one or two targets; to be combined with several NARC-LRM-equipped buildings to fire against any units struck by NARC beacons. For campaigns set after 3064, they can employ Explosive NARC Pod ammo ensuring these turrets will be difficult to ignore, even if the interlopers are equipped with ECM.
- Other Gun Emplacements with Automated Weapons that mount a large quantity of weapon types, such as SRM launchers, and limited ammunition durability. If the turret can run out of ammo in just a few turns, the invaders may want to weigh the time needed to destroy it versus sitting out the salvos—especially if faced with hostile defenders at the same time. Armoring the Emplacement will further increase the dilemma and might warrant additional ammo endurance.
- Several water-filled Depth 1 or deeper trenches, with numerous submerged buildings that have Automated Torpedo launchers. Command-detonated minefields can also be effective at causing breaches to any that pass.

MAPSHEETS TABLE

	2d6 Result	Map
RIGIL KENTARUS	2	Streams (Map Pack: Grasslands)
	3	Rolling Hills #1 (Map Pack: Grasslands)
	4	City Street Grid/Park #1 (MS4, MSC1)
	5	CityTech Map* (MS2, MSC1)
	6	Desert #1 (Beginner Box)
	7	Moonscape #1 (MS5, MSC2)
	8	Open Terrain #3 (Map Pack: Grasslands)
	9	River Delta/Drainage #2 (MS4, MSC1)
	10	DropPort #2* (MS7, MSC2)
	11	Rolling Hills #3 (Map Pack: Grasslands)
	12	Desert Sinkhole #2 (MS3, MSC1)

*Urban map

	2d6 Result	Map
RIKEN MINOR	2	Lakes (Map Pack: Grasslands)
	3	Moonscape #1 (MS5, MSC2)
	4	City Street Grid/Park* #1 (MS4, MSC1)
	5	DropPort #1 (MS7, MSC2)
	6	CityTech Map* (MS2, MSC1)
	7	DropPort #2 (MS7, MSC2)
	8	Military Base #1 (MS7, MSC2)
	9	Military Base #2 (MS7, MSC2)
	10	Moonscape #2 (MS5, MSC2)
	11	Desert #1 (Beginner Box)
	12	Desert Sinkhole #2 (MS3, MSC1)

*Urban map

RIGIL KENTARUS

