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CHAOS MARCH

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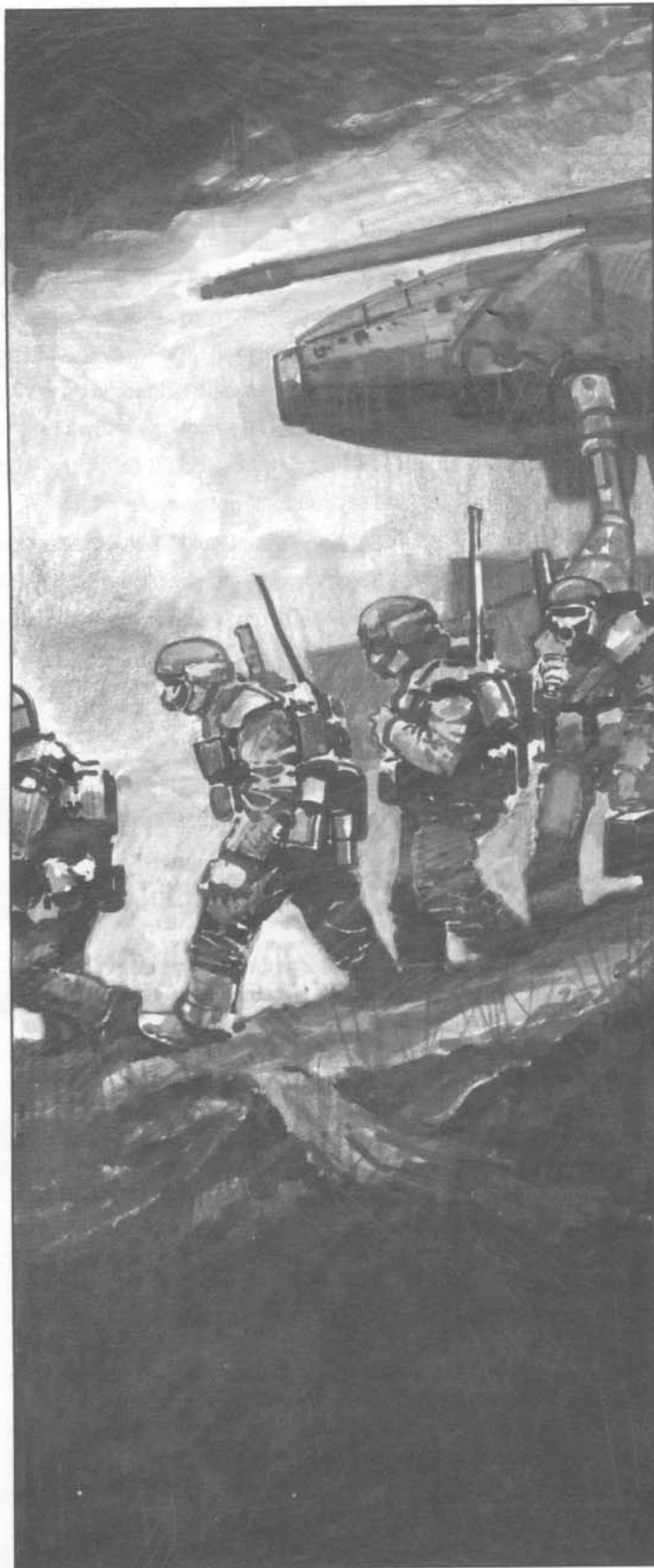
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INTRODUCTION

—From an interview with Cal Ecchardt, former lance commander of the Cold Steel Cowboys, a now-defunct mercenary unit, Outreach Channel 2, March 3058

"We thought the Clans were bad; the Chaos March is worse. Don't look at me like I'm crazy for saying that—I've been there. I know. With the Clans, you know who your enemies are. You never know in the Chaos March. The enemy could be the one your employer says it is, or the folks you're supposed to be protecting. Or even the guy whose contract you just signed. *You never know.*

"The place lives up to its name and then some. Every fool with a gun and a few delusions of grandeur is grabbing everything within reach, and trying for plenty that's not. They all want the power that seems so up-for-grabs, and a lot of 'em don't care who's standing in their way. It's all a dream, but nobody fighting sees it. They don't see that when Victor, Thomas, Katrina or even Sun-Tzu get things going again, the power they've grabbed will fade away to nothing. Fanatical troopers with crazy ideas still don't stand up to 'Mechs. It's just a matter of time before all these new little kingdoms come toppling down.

"But that's the question, isn't it? Time. Nobody knows how much time they've got before the real powers decide to come and take back the Chaos March. Could be months—could be years. I hope to hell it ain't years. Freedom's a nice ideal, but the reality in the March is anarchy. That kind of 'freedom' gets people killed.

"I'm glad I'm out of there, and I'm not going back. Facing guerrillas on Elgin is not my idea of a good time, or a way for a merc to earn a decent living. I'm a MechWarrior—I fight other MechWarriors. Now, after fighting in the March, I'm sick of all of it. I've seen too many buddies die in the March—come too close to death myself a few too many times. I'm through there. I need some order."

Chaos March is a campaign sourcebook for the **BattleTech** and **MechWarrior** game systems. This book offers general information about the area of the Inner Sphere known as the Chaos March, detailed summaries describing and analyzing the various political powers and factions that inhabit this tumultuous region of space, new **BattleTech** and **MechWarrior** rules, and gamemaster/referee information for running exciting Chaos March campaigns, including details on the planet Outreach.

The book is divided into four major sections: the **Guide to the Chaos March**, **Rules**, **Outreach** and **Gamemaster Briefing**.

The **Guide to the Chaos March** is presented as a download from MercNet, an online service supported by the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission from the Mercenary's Star of Outreach. The **Guide** includes the most up-to-date information on what factions are on which worlds, what forces they possess, and what mercenaries are fighting for them; contracts representing the full spectrum of employment opportunities available for mercs in the Chaos March; a catalogue of new vehicles and equipment available in the Chaos March; and personal accounts on a variety of relevant subjects, written from the perspective of those who live and fight in the March, struggling to stay alive and sane and maybe even scratch out a living amid the constant conflict.

The **Rules** section contains **MechWarrior** and **BattleTech** rules pertaining specifically to the Chaos March, including new rules for character creation, new archetypes and equipment cur-

rently available almost exclusively in the March, and new Level Three **BattleTech** rules for jury-rigging 'Mechs and scavenging equipment. This section also provides guidelines for creating and running a Chaos March campaign for either **BattleTech** or **MechWarrior**.

The **Outreach** section provides a detailed look at the world of Outreach and its main city, Harlech. This section offers information about people and places that player characters and gamemasters alike will find useful.

The **Gamemaster Briefing** section is for gamemasters and referees only. This section reveals the true state of affairs in the Chaos March, much of which does not appear in the **Guide**: the real strength of the various factions, their true allies, and their real objectives in hiring mercenary units.

Players and gamemasters need access to the **BattleTech Compendium: The Rules of Warfare** to play **BattleTech** campaigns in the Chaos March. This book also assumes that players and/or gamemasters and referees interested in running **MechWarrior** adventures in the Chaos March own **MechWarrior, Second Edition**. Gamemasters and players will also find the **Mercenary's Handbook: 3055** and **Hot Spots** useful, though not necessary. References to rules in these two sourcebooks are included for the gamemaster's convenience.

WARNING: The entry describing the current situation on the planet Northwind (p. 44 of the **Guide to the Chaos March**) reveals the ending of the **BattleTech** novel **Highlander Gambit**, to be released by ROC in April 1995.



WELCOME TO MERCNET

MercNet is the online database for mercenary units in search of employment and contract information. As part of your registration fee with the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission on Outreach, you have unlimited access to this online service through your MercNet account number.



The Rumor Mill ●

Pavel Ridzik's legacy apparently lives on in his sons, currently said to be heading up a small army to pursue yet-to-be-revealed ambitions. This and other stories in today's **Rumor Mill**.



Today's Features ●

Get the latest scoop on the hottest region in the Sphere. Our **Guide to the Chaos March** is featured this month as a primer for all interested employers and units. This is a must-read file for all out-of-work mercs!



The latest declassified breakthroughs in battlefield technology are being discussed live in the **MercNet Forum**. Guests include Dr. Thornton Jerrick of the NAIS and Elizabeth Kinkaid, head of PR at Irian BattleMechs Unlimited.



Jaime Wolf talks about his plans for expanding the Dragoons, his concerns about the Sarna March upheaval and his opinion of this season's new 'Mechs in this month's **Letter from the Commander**.

>>> You have selected Guide to the Chaos March. All related files are being downloaded to your terminal.



GUIDE TO THE CHAOS MARCH

This guide is intended to aid the mercenary in navigating the ever-shifting and always volatile political currents in the Chaos March. With worlds constantly changing hands between Successor States, independent powers, political factions large and small, and any number of ambitious local strongmen, the Chaos March is exactly what its name implies. Mercenaries looking to stay alive and employed must keep on top of events; this guide will help them do that.

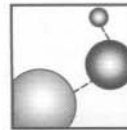
Wolf's Dragoons has compiled the following collection of reports and firsthand accounts of each disputed world and all known political factions and alliances in the Chaos March, including the best available information on who the major and minor players are, what forces they wield, the size of their spheres of influence, the factors that have propelled them to their current position of power, and where the March's changing politics seem most likely to carry them. The Guide also includes a brief overview of the recent events in the Inner Sphere that have led to the current situation.

Though most of the information in the following files is as up-to-date as possible, things can change virtually overnight in the Chaos March. Information that is good one day may be useless the next. Readers should keep in mind the dates of each report and personal account in the following files when considering all information in this database. Troop listings are accurate as of 1 February 3058. Loyalty ratings refer to a unit's loyalty to the faction it serves.

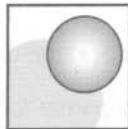
This guide includes the following files.



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CHAOS MARCH WORLDS

The following index serves as a convenient tool for mercenaries who wish to learn about the situation on a specific planet or who plan to accept contracts for only certain types of action. Select the page number provided for more information.

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CURRENT CONTRACTS

	Defensive Duty			Guerrilla Warfare			Planetary Assault	
	CC 58322-002-7	18		CC 58323-002-8	20		DS 58991-010-4	47
	TF 58991-004-6	21		SC 58991-001-9	17			
	Extraction Raid			Offensive			Retainer	
	IND 58803-008-3	37		ST 58991-008-3	19		IND 58996-012-9	36
	IND 58900-002-3	26						
	Garrison			Objective Raid			Security Duty	
	FWL 58722-002-3	40		IND 58722-005-4	29		IND 58996-011-5	34
				IND 58900-001-5	35			
				SC 58991-001-2	16			
				IND 58996-012-3	31			





CHAOS MARCH OVERVIEW

The region of space known as the Chaos March is held tight in the grip of unrest, squabbled over by powers large and small because of its strategic and emotional importance to many parties. The region was part of the Capellan Confederation for centuries, and much of it fell to Prince Hanse Davion's conquering troops during the Fourth Succession War. A small section of worlds from Hsien to Keid, cut off from the rest of the Capellan Confederation early in the war, briefly formed the Tikonov Free Republic under Pavel Ridzik, the Capellan Chancellor's former top military commander. Upon Ridzik's assassination near the end of the war, the Tikonov worlds voted themselves into the Federated Commonwealth. For the past thirty-odd years, this section of the Capellan Confederation has existed as the Federated Commonwealth's Sarna March. Its location in the Terran Corridor made the Sarna March the bridge between the two halves of the Federated Commonwealth.

Anti-Davion feeling in the conquered Sarna March ran high for many years, tempered only by the benevolent government of Archon Melissa Steiner Davion, co-ruler of the Federated Commonwealth. Archon Melissa brought a certain amount of economic stability to the poor and troubled region and in the process won personal popularity among Sarna's people. That tenuous acceptance of Federated Commonwealth rule ended with Melissa's death in 3054. The Archon's assassination, coupled with the ongoing movement of premier military units stationed in the Sarna March to the Clan front that began in 3050, allowed the agents provocateurs planted in the region by Chancellors Romano and Sun-Tzu Liao to more successfully stir up trouble. They did not, however, manage to loosen the Federated Commonwealth's grip on the Sarna March.

Sun-Tzu Liao had dreamed for years of reclaiming his nation's lost territory, but lacked the military strength to take on the Federated Commonwealth alone. He had hoped for the support of his prospective father-in-law, Captain-General Thomas Marik of the Free Worlds League, but Thomas proved unwilling to back the military adventurism of an ally he distrusted. In addition, Thomas refused to move against the Federated Commonwealth as long as his son and heir, Joshua Marik, remained in that realm undergoing treatment for leukemia. Joshua's death, and the decision by Archon Prince Victor Steiner-Davion to substitute a double for him, gave Sun-Tzu his long-awaited pretext for invasion in mid-3057. The Captain-General, determined to punish Victor for concealing Joshua's death, joined Sun-Tzu Liao in a swift and deadly attack on the Sarna March. While Marik's own forces took back former Free Worlds League planets, Capellan troops and Marik-backed mercenaries assaulted former Capellan worlds, often aided by Liao agents who had waited decades for this chance. Contested by three Successor States, the Sarna March quickly collapsed into chaos.

The invasion stalled, however, when Thomas Marik chose to settle for a separate peace with Katrina Steiner-Davion,

Archon of the newly formed Lyran Alliance (see **Federated Commonwealth/Lyran Alliance**, below). Having retaken his former possessions, Thomas was perfectly willing to end his conquest of Lyran territory, especially since Katrina had declared her worlds neutral. Without Thomas's backing, Sun-Tzu could not finish the war of conquest he had started. The disrupted Sarna March became a no man's land of conflicting allegiances, where no Successor State held undisputed sway. Thomas Marik's forces consolidated their hold on the worlds they had retaken; Capellan troops took other planets, and the Federated Commonwealth held on to or retook still others, including some claimed by the Lyran Alliance. On many planets that Sun-Tzu's troops had failed to take by force, Liaoist rebels aided by Capellan agents overthrew Federated Commonwealth governments and installed pro-Capellan regimes. On a great number of worlds, assorted political factions seized their chance to make names for themselves and joined the battle for control. Many of these worlds, no longer ruled by any Great House, have banded into alliances of their own in order to keep their new independence. Only the Draconis Combine has largely stayed out of the fray, as its Coordinator focuses all his efforts on finding ways to defeat the Clans when the Truce of Tukayyid expires.

Throughout the so-called Chaos March, only one thing is constant: the swift changes of power and allegiance as countless would-be leaders battle each other for supremacy.

FEDERATED COMMONWEALTH/LYRAN ALLIANCE

The recent Marik-Liao invasion of the Federated Commonwealth prompted an unexpected response from Victor's sister, Katrina (born Katherine) Steiner-Davion. On 18 September, 3057, Katrina declared the Lyran half of the Federated Commonwealth independent from the rest of that realm, and proclaimed herself Archon of the state she called the Lyran Alliance. In her first act as Archon, Katrina called all Lyran military units home from the Sarna March. By this act, Katrina split the Federated Commonwealth physically as well as politically; the abrupt departure of Lyran troops speeded the Sarna March's slide into anarchy, and the loss of control over that region has left the rump of the Federated Commonwealth with no access to free passage into Lyran Alliance space. Many observers initially believed Katrina was allying her newborn state with the Free Worlds League, but so far she has remained neutral.

Victor Steiner-Davion has not relinquished his claim to the worlds of the Alliance and still considers them part of the Federated Commonwealth. Archon Katrina appears uninterested in the Davion half of the Commonwealth, claiming instead the disputed regions of the Chaos March. The Archon has moved decisively to consolidate her holdings in the Lyran Alliance, but the loyalties of several regions within it remain in



question. The heavily industrialized Isle of Skye, true to its secessionist history, has given Katrina complete support. She also has strong backing from parts of the Donegal March. Along the Lyrans-Free Worlds border, however, many worlds keenly miss the benefit of Prince Victor's military experience in dealing with the newly aggressive Free Worlds League. They do not trust Thomas Marik's promise not to expand his realm beyond its Fourth Succession War borders, and they could easily go over to the Archon Prince's side at the first sign of Marik aggression.

—Transcript of Katrina Steiner-Davion's declaration of independence from the Federated Commonwealth, 18 September 3057

"My fellow citizens, I speak to you now about a situation that is most grave because it involves the security of our realm. As you know, the Free Worlds League, in conjunction with the Capellan Confederation, has launched an assault against the Sarna March of the Federated Commonwealth ... Thomas Marik says he launched this attack because my brother, Victor Davion, killed his son Joshua and installed a double in his place ... to put his own puppet Joshua on the Marik throne and thereby gain control of the Free Worlds League.

"... My brother has not answered these charges in public or in private ... I suppose it is possible that he does have an explanation ... I do not know, and I wait to hear from my brother.

"For the good of you, my people, however, I cannot afford to wait passively for Victor to account for his actions. He has broken faith with you, and I will not have you suffer while I cling to the faint hope that my brother can justify himself. To guarantee that the Lyrans do not suffer, I have given the following orders:

"First, I have decided to declare our Lyrans districts in a state of crisis. This gives me greater powers under the regency, which include the right to sever the connection between Lyrans agencies and their Federated Commonwealth counterparts. We will function in the interim as an independent political unit, which I have designated the Lyrans Alliance ... I want all my people, from Northwind to Poulso, from Loric to Barcelona, united and allied together, for we must work hard to safeguard ourselves in these dangerous times.

"Second, any Lyrans military unit serving in the Sarna March or elsewhere in the Federated Commonwealth is invited and urged to return here, to the Alliance. As long as Lyrans forces offer no resistance to Free Worlds League troops, they will be considered noncombatants and allowed to withdraw. ...

"My brother, the warrior, has taken his half of the Federated Commonwealth into war. I will not bleed my people to defend his actions. It is my sacred duty to ward your welfare—the same duty my mother honored before she was so cruelly cut down. I hereby lay claim to her mantle ... anything less would be to deny my heritage as a Steiner and my responsibility as your Archon."



—From a transcript of the tri-vid show *Public Eye*, with Pulitzer prize-winning historian Gillian Anderson as guest, General Broadcasting Corporation, Terra 3058

Anderson: Whether Katrina Steiner-Davion realizes it or not, she failed to make the clean break she should have when she created the Lyran Alliance. She left far too many loose ends, which may prove her undoing.

Host: How so, Professor Anderson?

Anderson: To give you the most critical example, far too many Davion troops were present within the Alliance when Katrina made her declaration of independence. Most of them are still there, and most of them hail from worlds that used to be part of the Federated Suns. They see Victor Steiner-Davion, not Katrina, as their commander in chief. These units have become "enemy troops" in the new secessionist realm, and they may well be attacked by pro-Katrina Lyran units, or launch their own attacks against the Alliance if ordered to do so by their Archon Prince. In FedCom troops alone, we're talking about 30 regiments and RCTs. When you add those to the Lyran units that remain loyal to Victor—and believe me, there are many—you have the potential ingredients of a nasty civil war.

Host: You don't see the pro-Victor Lyran units transferring their loyalty to Archon Katrina? Don't most Lyrans see Victor as a Davion, and therefore untrustworthy?

Anderson: The average Lyran citizen may, though even their convictions probably run only surface deep. For military units like the Tenth Lyran Guards, who know Victor because he served with them, loyalty to him runs pretty deep. Remember, Victor was raised on Tharkad. His roots are as Lyran as his sister's. He didn't become "the Davion princeling" until the Skye secessionists successfully portrayed him as favoring his Davion heritage. Their unrelenting smear campaign, plus the fact that Victor looks a lot like his father, created the "widespread Lyran mistrust" that's become part of the common wisdom in recent years. But Victor's Steiner upbringing and his sacrifices during the Clan invasion endeared him to the Lyran troops that survived the Clan onslaught, and to the families of those who died fighting the invaders.

Host: What about Lyran units in Davion space? Could Katrina call on them for assistance if Victor moves against her? And how can loyal FedCom units in the Alliance fight any winning battles without transport?

Anderson: They have transport. I know the news reports say that Katrina has commandeered all military JumpShips in the Alliance, but in fact several of the premier FedCom units have held on to their ships. Katrina would have to take them away forcibly, which might well trigger exactly the kind of civil conflict she wants to avoid. As for Lyran units in Victor's half of the Commonwealth, there aren't many of consequence.

Host: Are you suggesting that the Archon will be toppled from power?

Anderson: Nothing so definite. Katrina is an extremely adept politician, and none of us should make the mistake of counting her out too soon. However, she has her work cut out for her if she intends to keep her independence.

Host: It should be interesting to see the outcome, don't you think?



COMSTAR/WORD OF BLAKE

The Liao-Marik invasion brought Word of Blake loyalists to the Sarna March in droves, either following in the wake of invading troops or taking advantage of insurrections to overthrow ComStar administration of HPG stations on disputed worlds. On worlds conquered by Marik forces, Word of Blake acolytes immediately displaced ComStar personnel at all HPG facilities. Those ComStar personnel who did not escape the Word of Blake have been forcibly relocated somewhere deep within the League, possibly on the Word of Blake's stronghold of Gibson. The fate of ComStar personnel on Liao-controlled worlds is in question, though the Word of Blake does not seem to be moving onto those worlds en masse.

Of the newly formed minor powers within the March, only the Terracap Confederation has allowed the Word of Blake to take control of its HPG stations. As far as can be confirmed, ComStar retains its ownership of the HPG stations in the Sarna Supremacy, the Styk Commonality, and the Saiph Triumvirate. At this point, no one knows for certain who controls the HPG facilities within the Sirian Holds.

On several of the Chaos March's independent worlds, ComStar and the Word of Blake are engaged in running conflicts, with forces from one side or the other taking a facility one week and then losing it to their opponents the next. This low-level warfare has severely disrupted offworld communications on these planets, further isolating them from outside influences. Offworld communications from these disrupted worlds, when such communication exists at all, functions through a "pony express" system in which a JumpShip collects messages and then jumps to the nearest star system with a stable HPG facility. This facility then transmits the messages to their destinations.

Of particular interest to mercenary commanders looking for a berth, reliable rumor has stated that Brion's Legion recently left ComStar's employ on Terra, which leaves that contract open.



—From a journal recovered after an unsuccessful escape attempt by prisoners at the Acubens School of Blake's Light, 3058

Day 3

As I look at what I have just written, I wonder if this is only the third day of my captivity after all. My room has no windows, and the few meals I receive do not appear according to any schedule. I have nothing by which to mark time save for my own awareness of its passing. Still, I believe only three days have passed.

My Word of Blake captors treat me as I expected them to. To them I am a heathen at best, a heretic at worst. They ask me—sometimes gently, sometimes with shouts and kicks—why I stepped off the True Path of Blake's Wisdom. Was I misled by the words of the "false" Primus and the "evil" Precentor Martial? Can I be reclaimed for what the Word of Blake calls truth? Or was I tainted from the start, meaning that they may consign me to what fate they choose without a moment's qualm? I don't know whether to laugh at their pretension or cry for the ignorance that drives it. I can't even hate them, because I once believed exactly as they do.

They will try to break me, I know. I wonder how strong I really am?

Day 7

For the last few days—I am not sure how many—I have heard nothing except the supposed words of Jerome Blake ringing in my ears, shouted at me between kicks and blows. They wanted me to repeat what they said, and hit me when I refused. The biggest of my tormentors loosened a few of my teeth. I hope today's bread won't be stale—I'm not sure I can chew it. My body aches and bleeds, but my spirit is still strong. I talk to myself whenever they let me—maybe that will help me stay sane. Maybe.

Day 11

They have allowed me to see other prisoners. I wonder why—surely their brainwashing would be more effective if they kept me isolated. Unless they feared I would break down completely? That's plausible. They've given me a respite before they start in on me again, because they still hope to salvage me. I'll take advantage of it while I can.

Day 12

We're getting out of here. One of my fellow captives—Warren is his name—knows the surrounding territory well. He says it is nothing but wilderness, and they think we can't survive out there. But Warren knows about living off the land. He knows where to go. He can lead us to safety, with the guidance of the Blessed—

Dear God, I'm doing it again. Their damned conditioning is taking hold. I've got to fight harder or escaping from here will do me no good.

Day 16

Talking to myself doesn't keep the demons at bay any longer. These days, I only talk to my notebook. Perhaps it will one day talk back (haha). Our plans proceed, but slowly. Four others have succumbed to re-education. I must stay strong—they won't imprison my mind they way they have my body!

Day ??

Pictures. Voices. My mother, screaming for me to listen. My father, scolding me. I've been a bad boy. That's what he said. Dead children in the streets. Burned-out 'Mechs. Clan 'Mechs, chasing the screaming people. The Blessed Jerome Blake raises his hand in benediction over the dead, and I can see him crying. His words soothe me. Can Blake's Divine Light save us? Something must. The Clan wars kill. The House Lords kill. Only Blake's true followers can cleanse us all of these evils.

Someone help me ... I can't last much longer.

Day ??

I don't know where I am, but I seem to be myself again—at least for awhile. Yesterday, Warren told me all is prepared. I can feel the Word of Blake's mental torture tugging at my mind, like the hands of damned souls trying to drag me down to Hell, but knowing we'll soon be free gives me the strength to fight them off. Tomorrow we step into the light. I cannot wait to return to Terra.

THE LYONS THUMB

The split between the Federated Commonwealth and the Lyran Alliance presented Archon Prince Victor with a problem. As Archon of the Lyran Alliance, Katrina has claimed several worlds in the Lyons Thumb, a region of Lyran space extending into the Draconis Combine. In the face of Liao-Marik attacks, Katrina began to reinforce the Thumb worlds. In an apparent response to the Archon's actions, Coordinator Theodore Kurita of the Draconis Combine has persuaded ComStar to install Combine troops on planets in the Thumb as peacekeepers under ComStar's aegis. Both Katrina and Victor Steiner-Davion have publicly welcomed the peacekeeping forces as protectors of Lyran territorial integrity against possible attack by Liao or Marik forces, though the Archon has objected in principle to the presence of foreign troops in her nation.

Close to nine full regiments of Combine troops took up residence on the worlds in the Lyons Thumb. Lyran Alliance units stationed in the area have also stayed close to home, suggesting that the Archon may not entirely trust the Combine not to take advantage of its position in her realm. She has made no move or statement against them, apparently unwilling to risk plunging her people into war with House Kurita.

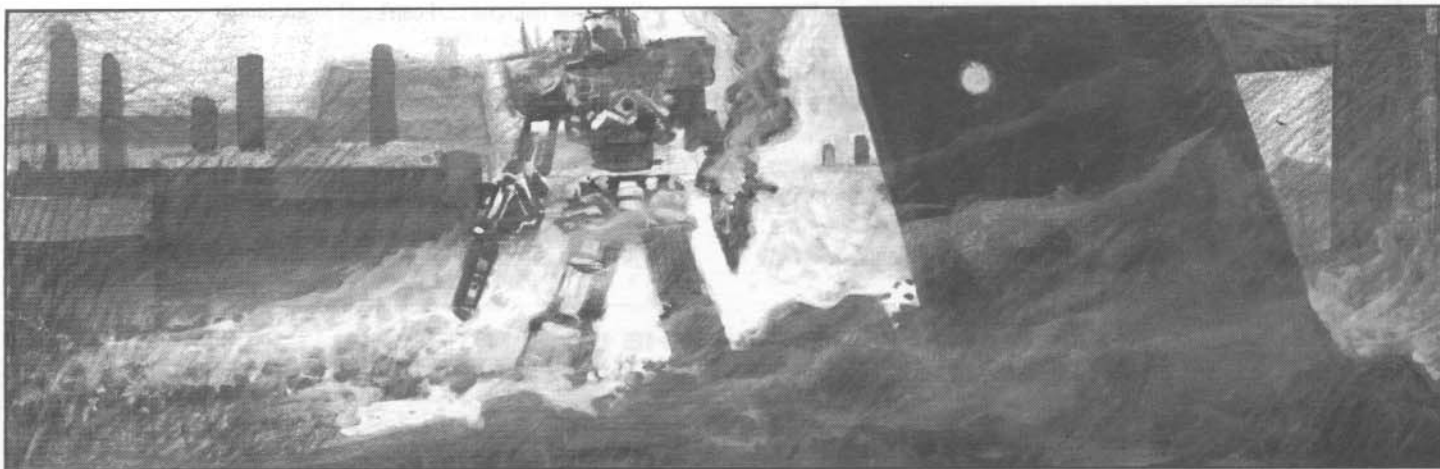
Of more practical relevance to mercenary units, ComStar monitors and inspects all ship traffic going into or out of the Lyons Thumb to prevent the Federated Commonwealth and the Lyran Alliance from bolstering their forces.



ALLIANCES

Civil unrest continues to plague most of the worlds of the Chaos March in the wake of the Marik-Liao invasion. However, stable governments have appeared on a few planets of the March, and many of these worlds have formed alliances to protect themselves against the anarchy that continues to rage among their planetary neighbors. Most of these allied worlds

seem to have consolidated their rule and some have already gained official recognition from various Successor States, providing an important source of stability in the power vacuum created by the invasion. Most of these new confederations seem content with their holdings at present, but at least a few are bound to try expanding their influence in the coming years.



SARNA SUPREMACY

SARNA

Days to Jump Point: 9

Recharge Station: Zenith, Nadir

Recharge Time: 6 days

ComStar Facility: A

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Sarna Martial Academy (2 battalions) (CO: Emperor Baranov)	Regular	Reliable	Sarna	Sarna Supremacy
Grim Determination (CO: Colonel Oliver Haarhar)	Regular	Reliable	Sarna	Sarna Supremacy

SAKHALIN

Days to Jump Point: 12

Recharge Station: Zenith

Recharge Time: 15 days

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Tooth of Ymir (CO: Colonel Susan Brownell Shadwell)	Veteran	Reliable	Sakhalin	Sarna Supremacy

KAIFENG

Days to Jump Point: 10

Recharge Station: Zenith

Recharge Time: 8 days

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Kaifeng SMM (CO: Leftenant General Cyndi Fallon)	Regular	Reliable	Kaifeng	Sarna Supremacy



Sarna was first settled in the mid-twenty-second century and quickly established itself as a commercial powerhouse. Within one hundred years, Sarna had become the seat of a mercantile empire—the Sarna Supremacy—that included more than fifteen nearby planets, including the worlds of Kaifeng and Sakhalin. The Supremacy's growing influence soon placed it at odds with the rival Capellan Co-Prosperity Sphere, leading to the Supremacy's unsuccessful invasion and boycott of the fledgling Capellan alliance. Tension between the two powers continued to grow, eventually leading to the Capellan-Supremacy War in the early twenty-fourth century. The short, bitter war ended in a stalemate, and relations remained cold between Capella and Sarna until the threat of a Davion invasion and growing Capellan power led the Sarna Supremacy to join the defensive alliance known as the Capellan Confederation in 2366. For the next several centuries, the worlds of the Sarna Supremacy continued to grow in prosperity. Sarna itself created an impressive industrial base centered on aerospace and 'Mech production facilities. As time wore on, relations between Sarna and Capella grew friendlier, although the former Supremacy worlds still retained a large degree of autonomy within the Capellan Confederation.

During the Fourth Succession War, Sarna, Sakhalin, and Kaifeng all fell under Federated Commonwealth control and became part of the Commonwealth's Sarna March following the cessation of hostilities. Archon Melissa Steiner Davion ordered the renovation of Sarna's industrial facilities, and the planets of the former Sarna Supremacy—located between the Davion and Lyran halves of the recently formed Federated Commonwealth—began to prosper from the burgeoning trade between Davion and Lyran worlds.

Given Sarna's wealth and strategic location, it is hardly surprising that Sarna was one of the first worlds targeted by Liao forces during the recent Capellan invasion of the former Sarna March. The Kaifeng SMM, the First Battalion from the Sarna Martial Academy, and the Grim Determination mercenary unit defended the planet against an invading force composed of Stapleton's Grenadiers and the veteran mercenary unit, Tooth of Ymir. Despite finding his force outnumbered, the Liao commander, Colonel William Asselin, ordered his troops forward. Sarna's defenders quickly established air superiority—thanks to the Academy's aerospace contingent—and soon the defending ground units had forced the Grenadiers back to their DropShips. The Grenadiers, who had suffered substantial losses, then fled Sarna, abandoning several 'Mechs in the process. The Tooth of Ymir troops quickly surrendered when they realized the Grenadier's withdrawal had left them significantly outnumbered.

With victory secured on Sarna, Planetary Governor Lorete Montog-Chandler promptly proclaimed the rebirth of the Sarna Supremacy and launched the hastily refitted Kaifeng SMM to liberate their homeworld of Kaifeng, which had been captured by a small Liao force. Within three weeks of landing on Kaifeng, the liberators—apparently aided by the planet's populace—had defeated the Capellan force and Kaifeng became part of the reborn Supremacy.



Next, Montog-Chandler turned her sights on the mineral-rich ice world of Sakhalin, another planet with long historical ties to Sarna. After commandeering the abandoned 'Mechs of the Grenadiers, the new Sarnese government contracted Grim Determination and the newly hired Tooth of Ymir to liberate Sakhalin. The invaders quickly defeated the single battalion of Kingston's Legionnaires that defended the world.

Montog-Chandler then redistributed her troops on the three worlds and moved quickly to consolidate her power. Her task was greatly aided when the Free Worlds League, ComStar, and the Federated Commonwealth extended diplomatic recognition to the newly reborn Sarna Supremacy. Although the resources of the fledgling Supremacy's three worlds theoretically enable the Supremacy to achieve economic self-sufficiency, Sarna still depends heavily on trade with the Federated Commonwealth for most of its manufactured goods.

Sarna itself is a heavily populated industrial world, with aerospace and DropShip manufacturing facilities, several commercial spaceports, and more than a dozen major cities. Approximately 70 percent of the planet's surface is covered by saltwater oceans, and Sarna's seven continents contain a mix of rugged mountain ranges and vast plains. By contrast, Kaifeng and Sakhalin are sparsely populated. Approximately 60 percent of Kaifeng's total land mass is covered by dense jungle, but the remaining land contains some of the most productive agricultural concerns in the entire Sarna March. In fact, Kaifeng supplies almost all of Sarna's food and exports agricultural products to other nearby worlds as well. Sakhalin is a polar world with vast mineral deposits. The world is largely uninhabited, except for several mining settlements along the planet's equator.



—From Profile of the Sarna Supremacy, *New Syrtis Multimedia*, broadcast in March 3058

"You know, things aren't as rosy as our rulers would like us to believe. Certainly, we're a proud state, especially now that we've gained our independence. But like they always say, 'freedom comes with a high price tag.'

"We've got a pretty tough military, that's true. But we need it—look at our situation. We're surrounded on nearly all sides by the Capellan Confederation. Would that make you feel secure? The Capellans don't like us being here, and Sun-Tzu's still probably angry that his troops couldn't take Sarna. The Capellans view the past twenty years as an aberration. They view Sarna as their rightful property, conveniently ignoring the fact that we ran an independent state before the Capellan Confederation was even born.

"We do have economic ties to the Federated Commonwealth, but that will only last as long as it serves them. We're independent and that's great, but now instead of receiving shipments of vital supplies as a member world of the Commonwealth, we have to buy them like every other independent trading partner.

"Most people here are still pretty excited about their new independence, but how long do you think that'll last once they start feeling the costs of that freedom? That'll be the real test for the Montog-Chandler government. If they can keep the people contented and productive, they'll have no problem keeping our military strong and our economy growing. And other than House Liao, I think the other Great Houses wouldn't mind seeing a stabilizing force like our Supremacy take root here in the old Sarna March."

—From an interview with a mercenary on Sarna, broadcast in March of 3058

"What's life like in the Supremacy? It all depends on what you do, my friend. Take me, for example—I'm a MechWarrior.

"What kind of treatment does that get me? Hell, I'm treated like a damn near king around here. Without me and mercs like me, the Supremacy wouldn't exist. Sun-Tzu is still kicking himself for not sending enough forces to take this place, and he can't do it now. Too many of us are dug in here, and he's got his forces stretched too thin to muster an invasion. The pay is good. What's that? No, I don't really see much action. A few Liao loyalists are still running around, but the Kaifeng militia's handling them. We can't go out on raids—attracts too much unwanted attention.

(Continued on p. 15)

STYK COMMONALITY

STYK

Days to Jump Point: 4
Recharge Time: 11 days

Recharge Station: Zenith
ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Assorted merc units (2 battalions)	Green-Regular	Reliable	Styk	Styk Commonality

GAN SINGH

Days to Jump Point: 13
Recharge Time: 12 days

Recharge Station: None
ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Assorted merc units (1 battalion)	Green-Regular	Reliable	Gan Singh	Styk Commonality

The worlds of Styk and Gan Singh comprise the defensive alliance known as the Styk Commonality. Both worlds were settled during the late 22 century, during one of the early waves of migration from Terra. Styk's impressive industrial base and the rich farmland and natural resources of Gan Singh made the worlds valuable members of the Tikonov Grand Union. In 2366, Styk, Gan Singh and the other worlds of the Tikonov Union joined the Capellan Confederation in response to growing Davion aggression. Styk later became an important center of trade and industry for the Confederation. Both worlds were captured by Federated Commonwealth forces during the Fourth Succession War. Much of Styk's famous Tao Mechworks were destroyed by fleeing Liao forces at that time, but within a few years the Federated Commonwealth had rebuilt the facility.

Under Melissa Steiner Davion's rule, both Styk and Gan Singh received generous aid to rebuild their economies, and the populations of both worlds seemed to adjust well to the rule of the Federated Commonwealth. Following the Archon's death, however, the Federated Commonwealth's Davion rulers saw the first stirrings of anti-Commonwealth terrorism begin in the mid 3050s. By 3057, both worlds were experiencing frequent bank robberies and shoot-outs between terrorists and planetary authorities. On Styk, Commonwealth troops had even become the target of frequent bombings.

Then in September 3057, Archon Katrina Steiner-Davion announced the formation of the Lyran Alliance and invited all Lyran military units to return to Steiner space. Shortly after this announcement, Styk's defenders—the Third Donegal Guards—abandoned the planet. Despite Styk's strategic importance, the Federated Commonwealth did not replace the troops. Within days of the Guards' departure, the planetary government disintegrated.

Following the fall of Styk's Federated Commonwealth governor, most observers expected Styk's new government to assume a pro-Capellan stance. This assumption was bolstered when the new regime sent a contingent of unidentified mercenaries in its employ to aid the anti-Commonwealth rebellion on nearby Gan Singh. Following the success of that action two weeks later, the new rulers of Styk and Gan Singh surprised observers by announcing the creation of the independent Styk Commonality. Within days the fledgling alliance had applied for and received diplomatic recognition from New Avalon and Atreus.



The future of the Styk Commonality appears uncertain. Styk itself boasts a large number of commercial spaceports and industrial facilities, including the Tao Mechworks. These assets are complemented by Gan Singh's vast supply of raw materials and agricultural capacity. In addition, the Commonality's location facilitates convenient trade with the Free Worlds League and the Federated Commonwealth. How the Commonality plans to defend those assets remains unknown, though unidentified mercenary groups are currently stationed on both Styk and Gan Singh. Little beyond their size is known of these units.

Styk is a heavily industrialized world that supports a medium-sized population. The majority of this population lives in several large cities located on the planet's nine continents. These land masses cover 22 percent of Styk's surface; saltwater oceans cover the rest. Gan Singh supports a slightly smaller population. The planet's northern and southern seas contain four temperate continents of rolling hills, and two large tropical continents are located near Gan Singh's equator. Farmlands cover nearly 85 percent of these tropical areas and approximately 45 percent of the temperate lands. About 80 percent of the population live in medium-sized cities located in the temperate continents.

(Continued from p. 14)

"Now, if you're not a MechWarrior, an aerospace worker, or a trader, your life's not so easy. The ruling class here makes no attempt to hide their disdain for the masses, but the people seem to stand there and just take it. They buy all that garbage about being free and independent. But you tell me—how many three-world states do you know that last longer than five years? Hell, the old Tikonov Free Republic didn't even last that long, and the St. Ives Compact is only around because they're basically a Davion protectorate.

"But you never know, things are still up in the air here in the March. And if the pay is good enough, the old Supremacy might be able to expand its borders.



—From a transcript of a broadcast of *State to State*, Atreus Broadcasting, March 3058

Jonathan Russert: I'm sorry, Mr. Ambassador, but it seems highly unlikely that the Commonality can become an influential player in the Sarna March. They just don't have the necessary resources and ...

Ambassador Dartain: That is where you are wrong. The Commonality has the perfect foundation from which to grow. Styk, our capital, serves as our industrial base, while Gan Singh provides an ample supply of agricultural products and raw materials. With these resources and our impending trade agreements with the Free Worlds League and the Federated Commonwealth, the Commonality's future seems quite secure.

Russert: But the Commonality has no regular military—90 percent of your forces are mercenary. Your government could be facing another coup in a few months if someone gets any delusions of ...

Dartain: Mr. Russert, the Styk Academy of War Sciences will be finished in early 3060, and ...

Russert: I beg to differ. Construction has stopped on the academy, and the Commonality has been unable to locate any respectable instructors. The Tao 'Mech factory is being operated by displaced FedCom personnel, and all of its production is slated to head straight to the Commonwealth for the next five years. Now how can you claim ...

Dartain: We are in negotiations with the government of the Federated Commonwealth on that very point. They have been quite sympathetic to our needs.

Russert: That's <deleted> and you know it. The Federated Commonwealth wants you back in the fold but simply can't reach you yet. They are just stalling.

Dartain: Completely untrue. The FedCom government is very supportive and understands our economic needs and desires.

Russert: Do you expect our viewers to believe that, Mr. Dartain? Styk was one of the most economically important planets in the Sarna March, and the Federated Commonwealth is not about to just let you go. I'm sure they are more concerned about where your additional funding is coming from. I've had sources tell me it's from Andurien separatists. Any truth to that?

Dartain: (long pause) I don't know what you mean.



ALLIANCES



**STYK
COMMONALITY
CONTRACT SC
58991-001-2**

Dragon Rating: C
Employer: Styk Commonality
Location: Shensi
Days to Jump Point: 14
Type of Action: Objective Raid
Length of Contract: 3 months
Unit Type: Mech
Unit Size: Company
Pay Rate: Average
Support: None
Transport: None
Salvage Rights: Full
Command: Independent
Contract: Legitimate

Situation

The Styk Commonality is one of the more stable states to be created out of the chaos of the shattered Sarna March. Although the Commonality possesses a robust economy and impressive industrial wealth, it relies on mercenaries to defend itself and perform military duties.

Objective

Hired units will travel to Shensi, retrieve a hidden supply cache belonging to the Capellan Confederation and return it to the Styk Commonality.

Contract

Although the Commonality enjoys a healthy economy, its government is somewhat cash poor at present. As a result, the Commonality government cannot afford to pay competitive rates. To offset this, the Commonality is granting full salvage and complete independent command to any unit it hires. At its discretion, the Commonality may pay a portion of the unit's transport costs as well.

Terrain

Shensi is a fairly temperate world, with nearly all types of terrain present. A 10,000-square-kilometer area of thickly forested hills surrounds the supply cache.

SAIPH TRIUMVIRATE

SAIPH

Days to Jump Point: 6
Recharge Time: 10 days
Recharge Station: Zenith
ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Canned Heat (1 battalion conventional) (CO: Major Jill Asweepay)	Green	Reliable	Saiph	Saiph Triumvirate

TALL TREES

Days to Jump Point: 3
Recharge Time: 7 days
Recharge Station: None
ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
The Metalicon (2 lances) (CO: Captain Jim Bob Dayle)	Regular	Questionable	Tall Trees	Saiph Triumvirate

NEW CANTON

Days to Jump Point: 11
Recharge Time: 6 days
Recharge Station: None
ComStar Facility: B

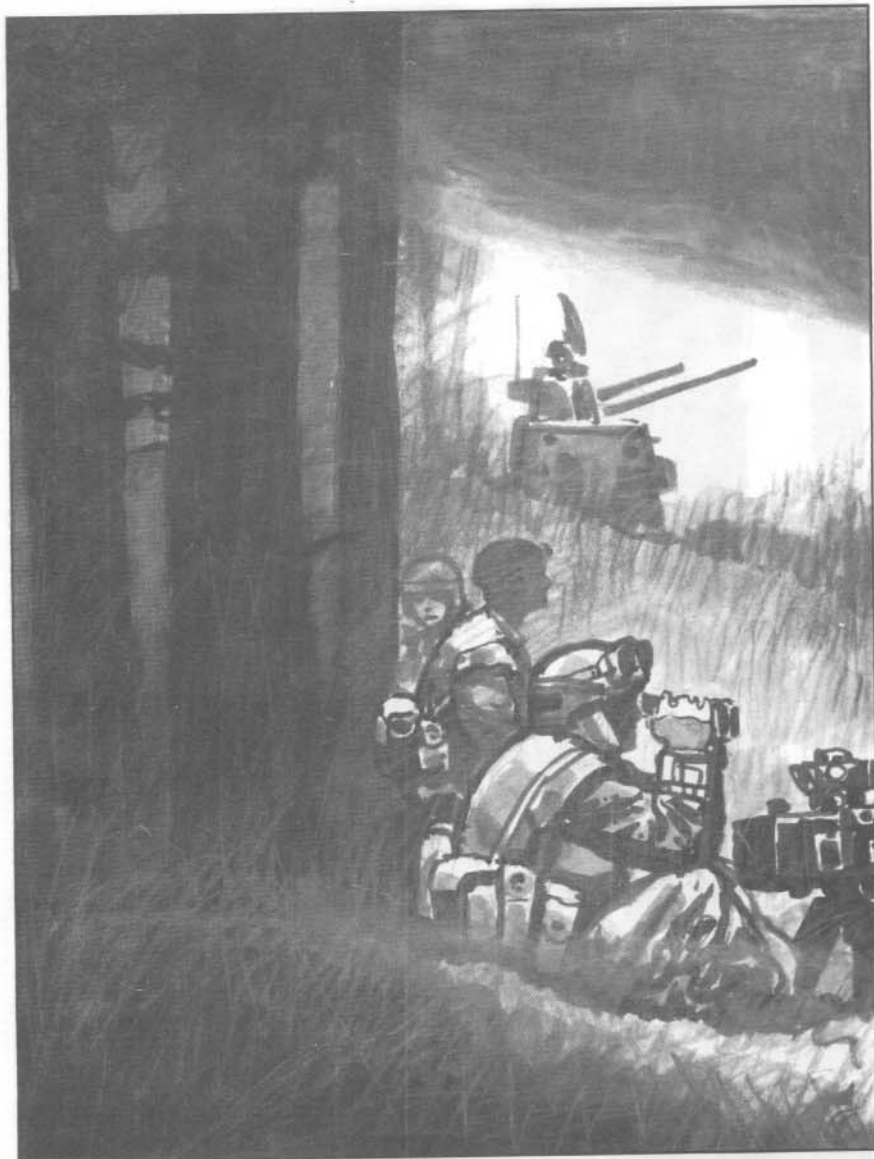
Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
The Balatine Guard (1 company) (CO: Major Han Winslow)	Regular	Fanatical	New Canton	Saiph Triumvirate
Stalwart Support (1 regiment conventional) (CO: Colonel Harry Sanders)	Veteran	Reliable	New Canton	Saiph Triumvirate

The so-called Saiph Triumvirate consists of the worlds of New Canton, Saiph, and Tall Trees. Like many other planets of the former Sarna March, the Triumvirate worlds were settled early in the history of mankind and fell under Liao control during the formation of the Capellan Confederation in 2366.

New Canton had been a minor trading power during its early history, and enjoyed relative autonomy during its centuries of Capellan domination. Some light industry was developed on the world, and New Canton was targeted by Marik raiders during the First Succession War, but otherwise little distinguished New Canton from numerous other Liao-held worlds in the area.

The forbidding, mountainous terrain—as well as the fiercely independent, warlike populations of Saiph and Tall Trees—prevented the Capellans from developing these worlds. Both planets served as sources of raw materials and agricultural products for Capellan industrial worlds, but Saiph's and Tall Trees' true importance lay in their locations along the Capellan frontier. Liao leaders made numerous attempts to establish greater control over the worlds by creating large-scale settlements over the years, but these failed. Eventually, Liao leaders resorted to forcing political prisoners and criminals to settle on the planets. Even these settlements met with only limited success, as their



relations with the planets' isolated communities remained strained at best. Despite this state of affairs, the Capellan government is rumored to have operated a genetic research installation on Tall Trees during the mid-thirtieth century.

All three planets remained under Capellan control until the Fourth Succession War, when they came under control of the Federated Commonwealth. New Canton enjoyed a boost to its prosperity under the less restrictive trade policies of the Federated Commonwealth, but daily life on Saiph and Tall Trees remained largely unchanged, as the planets' new rulers instituted a policy of nonintervention toward them.

When Archon Katrina Steiner-Davion announced the formation of the Lyran Alliance and invited all Lyran military units to return to Lyran space, the Fifth Lyran Regulars abandoned Saiph and Tall Trees, leaving the planets virtually unprotected. Both worlds fell into chaos almost immediately as rival ethnic groups began staking out territory. Within weeks, pro-Liaoist guerrilla movements claimed control of the worlds. In truth, these rebels controlled little more than a few cities and the spaceports on both planets. The remaining areas of Saiph and Tall Trees remained under the control of the various ethnic armies that had arisen.



**STYK
COMMONALITY
CONTRACT SC
58991-001-9**

Draught Rating: C
Employer: Minister Urnst Haller
Location: Pleione
Days to Jump Point: 2
Type of Action: Guerrilla Warfare
Length of Contract: 6 months
Unit Type: Infantry
Unit Size: Company or smaller
Pay Rate: Poor
Support: Partial
Transport: Full
Salvage Rights: Full
Command: Integrated
Contract: Unofficial

Situation

As a new state surrounded by powerful neighbors, the Styk Commonality entertains no ambitions to expand its holdings by capturing neighboring worlds. However, this is the official government stance; certain individuals find this policy unacceptable.

Objective

Minister Haller, a representative of the Gan Singh government, wishes to hire a unit to travel to Pleione and assist a guerrilla warfare campaign. Guerrilla cells have already been established on the planet, and the hired unit will spend most of its time training guerrilla fighters.

Contract

Haller is offering full salvage and complete transport to Pleione, but the unit must provide its own transport to Gan Singh. The unit will work with guerrilla leaders on Pleione to coordinate attacks, but will have more freedom of command when instruction begins.

Terrain

The Capellan world of Pleione is an inhospitable place. Deserts cover 95 percent of the planet's landmass, and the terrain is nearly featureless save for large rock formations that dot the land. Several of these formations were turned into military bases during the Star League era. The most notable of these is a huge formation called Thunder Rock. Capellan defenders used this base during the invasion of Pleione in the Fourth Succession War.



**CAPELLAN
CONFEDERATION
CONTRACT CC
58322-002-7**

Dragoon Rating: C-B
Employer: Capellan Confederation
Location: New Canton
Days to Jump Point: 11
Type of Action: Defensive Duty
Length of Contract: 6 months
Unit Type: 'Mech or conventional (hover)
Unit Size: Battalion or smaller
Pay Rate: Average
Support: Negotiable
Transport: Full
Salvage Rights: Half
Command: Integrated
Contract: Legitimate

Situation

New Canton is the main power of the struggling Saiph Triumvirate. Currently, the forces of the Triumvirate's leader, Count Balatine, control almost all of New Canton, except for a few spaceports and a vital island chain that connects the planet's two continents. Capellan-backed guerrillas maintain control over this lengthy stretch of large and small islands. The Confederation needs heavier troops to bolster the guerrillas and keep the islands under Capellan control.

Objective

Hired units will aid guerrilla forces in defending the island chain from attacks by Balatine's forces.

Contract

The Confederation is offering average pay and salvage rights to half of all enemy materiel claimed, as well as full transportation to New Canton and back into Marik or Liao space at the contract's conclusion. If the unit performs exceptionally well, the Confederation may pay a bonus. Any conventionally armed unit accepting the contract will need hover-based vehicles or some means of ferrying wheel or tracked vehicles between the islands.

Terrain

The island chain consists of approximately nine hundred islands that span the two-thousand-kilometer distance between New Canton's two continents. Fortunately, only one hundred fifty of the larger islands near the center of the chain are inhabited and controlled by the Liao forces. The terrain and size of the islands vary from flat stretches of fifty square kilometers to rocky uprisings that cover half of a square kilometer.





—From *Mercenaries of the March*, Wasat Press, March 3058

"Believe me, the Triumvirate is no place to work for long. Sure, it beats Caph, but what doesn't nowadays? Hell, nobody goes there to live—just to die.

"I served in the Triumvirate for three months. A couple of my comrades took extensions after the contract was up, but me, I couldn't do it. Why?

"Well, officially the Triumvirate is run by reps from all three worlds—New Canton, Saiph, and Tall Trees. But that's a load of <deleted>. Balatine has all the real power, and everyone knows it. And it's too bad. If Balatine wasn't running the show, things might actually work out for the Triumvirate. But Balatine's just a glamour boy with dreams of greatness. He can barely run his can, much less a realm.

"When I was stationed on Saiph, my buddies and me received three different sets of orders—while out in the field, engaging the enemy! One set of orders told us to disengage the rebels. The other told us to destroy them utterly. And the third told us to pack up and head out for New Canton! You can guess who sent us that last one.

"It's a mess, believe me. Nobody knows what they're doing."

At approximately the same time, New Canton was attacked by a Capellan invasion force consisting of McCarron's Armored Cavalry. That mercenary unit encountered the First Kestral Grenadiers, an elite unit fanatically loyal to Prince Victor Davion. The two units reached a stalemate after two months of protracted engagements. As both sides dug in to wait for reinforcements that would never arrive, the mercenaries and the Grenadiers came under more frequent attacks from terrorists and, later, unidentified 'Mechs. After several weeks of such attacks and the growing hostility from New Canton's population, both the Armored Cavalry and the Grenadiers withdrew from New Canton.

Shortly after the units left, a member of New Canton's old aristocracy—Count Lado Balatine—proclaimed the existence of the Free Republic of New Canton. Within three weeks, Balatine had sent 'Mech units to aid counterrevolutionary movements on Saiph and Tall Trees. Fighting alongside local armies, these units easily defeated the tenuous pro-Liao movements that had claimed the planets only weeks before. Shortly afterward, Balatine announced that the three worlds of New Canton, Saiph, and Tall Trees had joined together to form an alliance called the Saiph Triumvirate. No Great House officially recognizes the Triumvirate at this time.

New Canton is a temperate planet with a diverse economy of light and medium industry, several commercial spaceports, fishing, and a thriving agricultural industry. Approximately 80 percent of New Canton's population live in large- and medium-sized cities that are evenly distributed on the planet's two continents. Saltwater oceans cover nearly 85 percent of New Canton's surface.

Both Saiph and Tall Trees are sparsely inhabited, temperate planets. The heavily forested, mountainous terrain of both worlds has discouraged development on Saiph and Tall Trees, and the planets' populations rely primarily on mining, subsistence farming, livestock herding and hunting to provide the necessities of life. Most of Saiph's and Tall Trees' inhabitants live in isolated communities. Saiph supports two small cities and two spaceports, while Tall Trees offers only one city and spaceport.



**SAIPH
TRIUMVIRATE
CONTRACT ST
58991-008-3**

Dragoon Rating: D-C

Employer: Saiph Triumvirate

Location: Saiph

Days to Jump Point: 6

Type of Action: Offensive

Length of Contract: 1 month

Unit Type: 'Mech or conventional with
infantry support

Unit Size: Company or larger

Pay Rate: Poor

Support: See contract

Transport: None

Salvage Rights: Full

Command: Integrated

Contract: Legitimate

Situation

The Saiph Triumvirate, like many other new states that have emerged from the so-called Chaos March, is still consolidating its power. Although all of the major cities on Saiph are under government control, a few bandit gangs still roam the countryside, preying on the citizens of the Triumvirate. Rather than spend months tracking down these gangs, the Triumvirate wants to hire a 'Mech-equipped mercenary unit to perform the task in a few weeks.

Objective

Units will take an aggressive role in apprehending criminal elements on the planet.

Contract

Like many other fledgling states of the March, the Triumvirate is cash poor. To offset the low pay, it offers full salvage rights to captured equipment and access to the modest repair facilities located within the Saiph capital.

Terrain

Heavily forested mountain ranges cover 90 percent of Saiph's landmass and produce numerous freshwater lakes and rivers. A few small cities are scattered among the mountain ranges, and the planet contains two small spaceports.



ALLIANCES



**CAPELLAN
CONFEDERATION
CONTRACT CC
58323-002-8**

Dragoon Rating: B
Employer: Capellan Confederation
Location: Capolla
Days to Jump Point: 3
Type of Action: Guerrilla Warfare
Length of Contract: 8 months
Unit Type: Any
Unit Size: Company
Pay Rate: Average
Support: Negotiable
Transport: Full
Salvage Rights: Full
Command: Independent
Contract: Legitimate

Situation

Shortly after the Marik-Liao invasion began, pro-Liao rebels took control of Capolla. However, they soon discovered that their numbers were too low to govern effectively and within days they became involved in a war with FedCom loyalists. That short, intense war lasted until the current separatist regime took power.

Angered by the loss of the world, Chancellor Sun-Tzu Liao wants to disrupt the new Capolla government's attempts to consolidate its power. To this end, he requires mercenaries to augment the few remaining Liao rebel cells that exist on Capolla.

Objective

Units will make harassing attacks on the defending forces of Capolla, which consist of numerous, marginally trained militia troops and at least a company of BattleMechs from the mercenary unit known as the Fist of Mokai.

Contract

The Capellan government offers full transport from Outreach to Capolla and back again, as well as full salvage rights. The Confederation will provide little in the way of additional support, though some particulars may still be negotiated.

Terrain

Capolla is a world covered by vast mountain ranges filled with huge ore deposits and numerous jungles. Most of Capolla's cities lie between the mountain ranges. Several refugee cities have appeared inside old ore mines as well. Many of these mines are connected to one another by underground tunnels large enough to accommodate 'Mechs.

TERRACAP CONFEDERATION

TERRA FIRMA

Days to Jump Point: 6
Recharge Time: 9 days
Recharge Station: Nadir
ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Jeffrey's Own (1 company) (CO: Major William Jeffrey's)	Veteran	Reliable	Terra Firma	Terracap Confederation
The Fist of Mokai (1 company) (CO: Captain Rocco Valdez)	Veteran	Reliable	Terra Firma	Terracap Confederation

CAPOLLA

Days to Jump Point: 14
Recharge Time: 14 days
Recharge Station: None
ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Deliah's Gauntlet (1 company) (CO: Captain Deliah Finn)	Regular	Reliable	Capolla	Terracap Confederation

The Terracap Confederation consists of the worlds of Terra Firma and Capolla. Both former Terran Hegemony worlds were captured by the Capellan Confederation in 2785, and they remained under Liao rule until the Fourth Succession War, when they were captured by the Federated Commonwealth. Both worlds sustained diverse economies, with industries including interstellar commerce, high technology manufacturing and agriculture. In addition, Capolla contains numerous sources of ores and other raw materials. Both the Liao and Davion governments granted Terra Firma and Capolla considerable autonomy, and the populations of both worlds lived in relative peace and prosperity for hundreds of years.

However, that peace was broken in 3057, when Liao-backed guerrilla movements began staging hit-and-run attacks on the Lyran units that garrisoned the worlds. However, these movements achieved little success even after many members of the garrison units left following the creation of the Lyran Alliance. The balance of forces on Terra Firma and Capolla shifted drastically, however, with the arrival of the Blackhearts, a mercenary group allegedly contracted by Free Worlds leader Thomas Marik to support the Liao-fomented rebellions. Backed by the mercenaries' 'Mechs, the Liaoist guerrillas succeeded in defeating the remaining Lyran garrison units.

The guerrilla victories on both worlds proved short-lived, however, apparently for two reasons. First, the movements received little popular support on either planet. Second, the vicious fighting polarized the populations of Terra Firma and Capolla, leading to the formation of guerrilla groups supporting the FedCom cause. Neither the Liao nor FedCom loyalists were strong enough to defeat the other, however, and both planets fell into anarchic civil wars. The battles raged for weeks, then months, further deepening the animosity of all factions, until any type of settlement seemed impossible.



The inhabitants of Terra Firma and Capolla seemed destined to suffer years of bloodshed until a new mercenary unit—the Fist of Mokai—landed on Terra Firma. Despite the mercenary unit's infamous record (see the entry on **Sheratan**, p. 46), a separatist faction on the planet formed an alliance with the Fist. Bolstered by the strength afforded their side by the mercenaries' 'Mechs, the separatist troops easily defeated their opponents within three weeks. In return for their help, the mercenaries were designated as the planet's standing army. Within days, the new government of Terra Firma sent a contingent of troops and Fist 'Mechs to Capolla to aid a separatist movement that had requested help. After approximately two weeks, that movement won control of Capolla. A few days later, the leaders of Terra Firma and Capolla proclaimed the creation of the Terracap Confederation and announced their intention to follow a policy of non alignment with any Great House. Despite the new governments' requests for diplomatic recognition, no Inner Sphere power has yet recognized the Confederation as a sovereign state.

The fighting has left both Terra Firma and Capolla devastated. On Terra Firma, only two of the planet's thirty-six spaceports remain operational. On Capolla, only one spaceport of twenty-one is open to traffic. These operational spaceports—located near each planet's largest cities—are guarded by garrisons of the Fist of Mokai. Both planets' manufacturing facilities and cities contain vast tracts of rubble, and precious farmlands have been burned. Only Terra Firma's vast forest—the Okeenog Woodlands—and Capolla's numerous jungles escaped the devastation.



**TERRACAP
FEDERATION
CONTRACT TF
58991-004-6**

Dragoon Rating: D-B
Employer: Terracap Confederation
Location: Capolla
Days to Jump Point: 3
Type of Action: Defensive Duty
Length of Contract: 1 year
Unit Type: 'Mech or conventional
Unit Size: Company or smaller
Pay Rate: Poor
Support: None
Transport: None
Salvage Rights: Full
Command: Independent with liaison
Contract: Legitimate

Situation

Although allied with Terra Firma in the Terracap Confederation, Capolla has limited defensive capabilities. The Capollan government wishes to augment its own defensive forces to guard against any external threats while it consolidates its power.

Objective

Units will aid Capollan forces in defending the planet from attackers.

Contract

The Capollan government cannot afford to pay much or provide support, and so it is offering full salvage rights on any captured equipment. Any unit accepting this contract must provide its own transportation to Capolla.

Terrain

Vast mountain ranges riddled with ore mines and numerous jungles cover much of Capolla. The planet's inhabitants live primarily in large cities in the mountain valleys. Most of Capolla's military units are stationed in these cities.



ALLIANCES

TO: ALL COMSTAR HPG FACILITIES,
GENERAL DISSEMINATION
FROM: OFFICE OF THE PRIMUS, FIRST CIRCUIT

On 24 October 3057, ComStar HPG facilities on the Capellan worlds of Sirius and Procyon were forcibly seized by unidentified individuals. The fate of the ComStar personnel operating those facilities remains unknown. Since that time, no facility outside the system has received any transmissions from those stations. ComStar requests that anyone with information regarding conditions on Sirius or Procyon contact the nearest ComStar personnel immediately.

The agricultural worlds of Sirius and Procyon constitute the so-called Sirian Holds. Both planets were colonized during the first Terran exodus in the early twenty-third century, and they became part of the Capellan Confederation during a period of Capellan expansion in 2370.

Both planets would later become targets for low-level Marik raids, but little of note happened on Sirius and Procyon for the next several hundred years. Like many other planets in the area, Sirius and Procyon came under Federated Commonwealth control during the Fourth Succession War, but this development had no discernible effect on the daily lives of most of the planets' inhabitants.

Then in October of 3057, all communications with Sirius were lost. A month later, all transmissions from Procyon stopped. A few weeks later, a merchant vessel made a regularly scheduled stop in the Procyon system. He was informed that he had entered the territory of the Sirian Holds and was promptly ordered to leave or risk the destruction of his JumpShip. Unwilling to risk the lives of his crew, the captain paid for a recharge from the Procyon station and departed for the Free Worlds League.

Since that time, no vessels have been able to gain access to Sirius or Procyon. Some crews that have ventured into the

SIRIAN HOLDS

SIRIUS

Days to Jump Point: 6

Recharge Time: 5 days

Recharge Station: Zenith

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces: Unknown

PROCYON

Days to Jump Point: 8

Recharge Time: 14 days

Recharge Station: Zenith

ComStar Facility: A

Defending Forces: Unknown

system report receiving warnings that their ships would be disabled and crews taken prisoner unless they departed immediately, and at least two independent trading vessels have been reported missing after heading into the system.

Although HPG transmissions appear to take place between the two planets, neither world has replied to communications from outside organizations or states. Repeated requests by the Free Worlds League to open a diplomatic dialogue with Sirius and Procyon have gone unanswered. Even attempts by ComStar to open communications with the world have proved unsuccessful.

The current status of the two planets remains a mystery. According to the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission, two small mercenary units had been under contract to garrison Sirius and Procyon at the time of the Marik-Liao invasion. A battalion-sized 'Mech unit called Jo's Fourth Cavalry had been hired by the planetary government of Sirius and believed to be onworld when the communications blackout began. Boodelay's Backup, a regiment-sized conventional-arms unit, had been contracted by the government of Procyon and is believed to have been on that world when HPG transmissions ceased.

Sirius and Procyon are agricultural worlds, with large tracts of sparsely populated farmland and forest. Both worlds contain a mere handful of small cities and commercial spaceports.





DUCHY OF SMALL

INGRESS

Days to Jump Point: 8

Recharge Station: None

Recharge Time: 7 days

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Ducal Militia (First, Second Companies) (CO: Baroness Candace Small)	Regular	Reliable	Small World	Duchy of Small
The Furies (CO: Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Garibaldi)	Regular	Reliable	Small World	Duchy of Small

SMALL WORLD

Days to Jump Point: 2

Recharge Station: Zenith

Recharge Time: 12 days

ComStar Facility: B

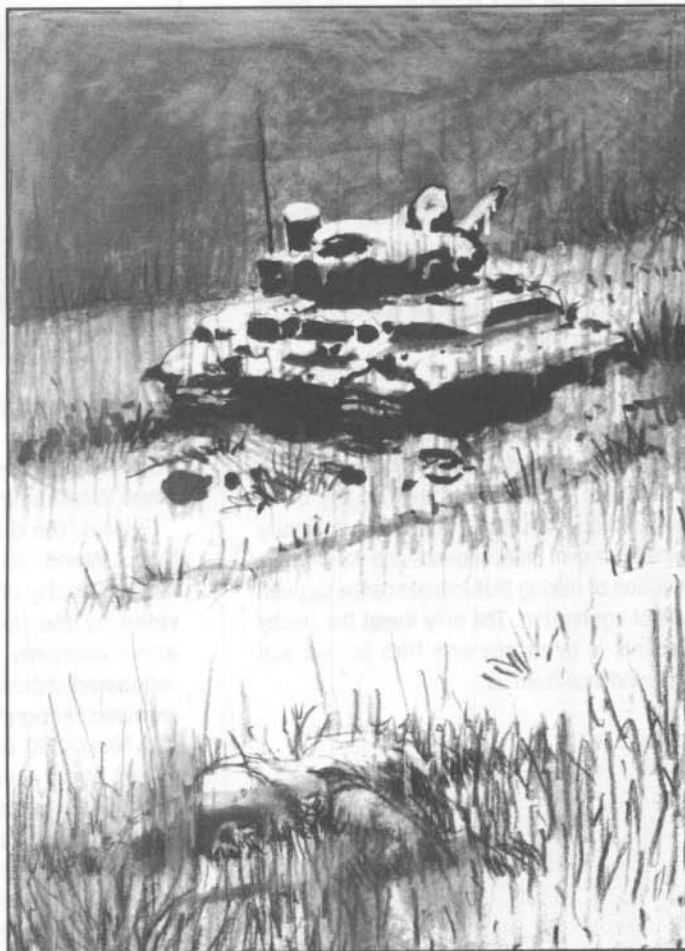
Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Ducal Militia (Third Company) (CO: Baron Klaus von Demer)	Regular	Reliable	Ingress	Duchy of Small
Ingress Legions (12 infantry regiments) (CO: High Commander Emily Bourles)	Green	Fanatical	Ingress	Duchy of Small

The planets Small World and Ingress form the alliance known as the Duchy of Small. Both worlds were settled during the first wave of Terran immigration. Then, as now, Small World was ruled by the Small family, one of the oldest ruling noble families of the Inner Sphere. Although the world has fallen under control of various realms during its history—Terran Hegemony, Capellan Confederation, Tikonov Free Republic, and Federated Commonwealth—the Smalls have always managed to maintain their position as rulers of the planet.

Despite its status, the family had long harbored an ambition, passed from generation to generation, to expand its influence beyond its homeworld. In 3050, this ambition prompted Duke Blake Small to set in motion a plan that would eventually lead to the Duchy of Small. Apparently, the plan began to take shape in the duke's mind after he learned he could lease portions of his world to his new Federated Commonwealth masters as cold-weather training areas for AFFC units. As a reward, the AFFC high command offered Small surplus and aging military hardware at low prices. The duke used this opportunity to assemble and arm a regiment-sized force of personal guards within the space of a few years.

When the Marik-Liao invasion began, Small saw his chance to expand his power. The Federated Commonwealth troops assigned to garrison the planet had been moved two years earlier to the Clan front and never replaced, as the inconsequential world seemed unlikely to become a military target. With Federated Commonwealth troops engaged in defending other planets against Marik and Liao attacks, the duke simply waited for the right moment. That moment came after his militia defeated a group of Liao-backed guerrillas who attempted to inspire an uprising on Small World. The same day as the militia's final





—From an interview conducted by Jackson Knox, Commonwealth Broadcasting, March 3058

In this interview, Councilman Angor of the Ingress government was surprisingly candid about his government's position regarding the Duchy of Small and the future of that alliance. I admit that his casual air made me wonder how long he would retain his office in the current political climate.

Councilman Angor: The Duchy? It's a temporary alliance, that's it—nothing more. We know that and the duke knows that. Right now, we just seem to work better together than apart.

Knox: How long do you think the alliance will last then?

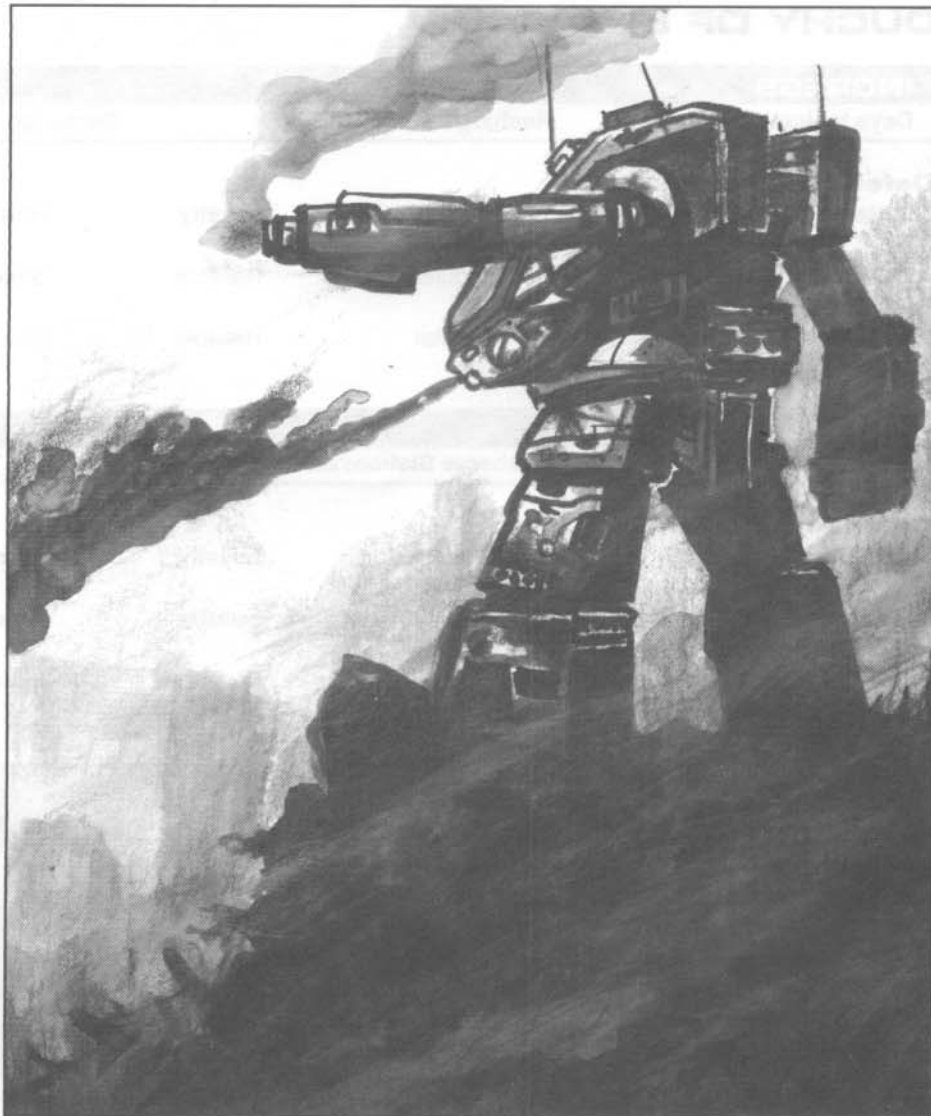
Angor: It's hard to say precisely. But I'm convinced it will not last more than three more years.

Knox: What makes you so sure?

Angor: It's simple, really. The duke needs us to help fuel his own economy. Small World has few means of generating income other than its radioactive exports, after all. We need him for protection. Our own militia lacks experience, training and 'Mechs. Once we build up our own defense force, we'll no longer have to rely on Duke Small for protection. And by then, the economy of Small World will have diversified enough to substantially reduce the duke's reliance on Ingress. So you see, everyone will come out a winner in the end.

Knox: Does the Duchy of Small have any plans to expand its holdings at this time?

Angor: Jackson, I can say with total honesty that the Duchy of Small has no plans to expand and presents no threat to any of its neighbors. Both our planets have finally gained our own independence and we have no intention of risking that independence through acts of aggression. The only threat the Duchy presents is to anyone who tries to take that independence from us.



victory, Duke Small made a speech to his subjects denouncing Liao adventurism, criticizing Victor Davion's neglect of the world's protection, and vowing that Small World would never again rely on the whims of a Great House ruler. Then the duke declared Small World an independent world—a declaration that went unchallenged.

Next, the duke sent envoys to nearby Ingress, which has long historical ties with Small World. Within three days, leaders of that planet had agreed to join the newly formed Duchy of Small. Under the arrangement, Ingress would receive protection provided by the duke's 'Mech militia, while Small World would benefit from Ingress's active economy, extensive natural resources, and agricultural exports. The duchy has requested diplomatic recognition from Atreus, New Avalon, and Luthien, but has not received recognition from any of the Great Houses.

Nearly 80 percent of Small World's landmass is covered by frozen tundra. The planet has a medium-sized population, and almost all of these inhabitants live in five large cities located on the world's two small equatorial continents. Small World's economy is almost totally dependent on its exports of radioactive elements and minerals mined from under its frozen exterior.

Ingress is a heavily populated world with a diverse economy. Trade and agricultural exports form the largest sectors, but Ingress also contains several light manufacturing facilities.



INDEPENDENT WORLDS

Many of the planets making up the Chaos March took advantage of the turmoil caused by the Marik-Liao invasion to declare themselves free from Federated Commonwealth rule. As the following descriptions indicate, these new realms became independent in many ways and for various reasons. For example, the leaders on the world of Keid conduct their affairs as loyal subjects of the Lyran Alliance, though their planet's near-total isolation from that realm leaves them in the same, unsupported condition as that of the populace on the planet Bryant, whose government chose independence as the

most likely way to avoid attacks from any of the Successor States disputing the area. For every planet whose rulers struggle to maintain the relatively uneventful existence established under Federated Commonwealth dominion, there is another world split into myriad tiny fiefdoms, and yet another realm still torn by two or more factions striving for total control of the world's assets and population. The confusion and upheaval that currently reign in the area known as the Chaos March will force the inhabitants of these isolated planets to further pursue whatever means they deem necessary to survive.

—From an editorial in Nopah Today, March 3058

The total abdication of central authority on Acamar has created a problem with which neither the Capellan Confederation nor the Federated Commonwealth seems willing to deal. With no garrison troops or other sizeable military presence to keep them out, the pirate bands that now abound throughout the Chaos March are traveling to Acamar to set up housekeeping on the empty estates of that world's slaughtered nobles. Not only do these pirates threaten the security of every honest citizen of Acamar, they also threaten nearby planets—including our own world. Nopah is only one jump away from Acamar, and no frontline garrison troops have arrived from any of the Successor States that wish to call our planet theirs.

The bandits must be dealt with now, before they become so entrenched that no power can move them. Unless action is taken soon, the core worlds of the Inner Sphere will suffer the same fate that our history books tell us befell the planets in the Inner Sphere's outermost reaches. Will the collapse of authority on Acamar and a hundred worlds like it finally push the Successor Lords to defend those who depend on them? Or are worlds like Acamar and Nopah too small to matter to the councils of the Great Houses? It seems only time will tell.

ACAMAR

Days to Jump Point: 9
Recharge Station: None

Recharge Time: 15 days
ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces: None



Orbiting a long distance from its sun, Acamar is a world of almost constant winter. Its vast mines of precious metals made it a jewel in the Capellan Confederation's crown for centuries. The Liao government gave Acamar's nobility the lion's share of profits from the planet's gold and silver trading, and so the nobles have always been staunchly pro-Liao. The merchant class, however, chafed under the status quo. Eager to see it changed, they threw their economic weight behind the rebel Pavel Ridzik during the Fourth Succession War and helped to found the Tikonov Free Republic. Upon Ridzik's assassination in 3029, the merchant class voted as a body to bring Acamar into the Federated Commonwealth. Under Commonwealth rule, Acamar's merchant class prospered. The nobles, though bitterly incensed, no longer had sufficient power to challenge the increasingly powerful middle class. They nursed their grievances along with their Liaoist loyalties, and bided their time.



CONTRACT IND
58900-002-3

Dragoon Rating: D-C
Employer: Atticks Enterprises

Location: Sheratan
Days to Jump Point: 9
Type of Action: Extraction Raid
Length of Contract: 3 months
Unit Type: 'Mech
Unit Size: Lance or larger
Pay Rate: Fair
Support: Negotiable
Transport: Negotiable
Salvage Rights: Negotiable
Command: Independent
Contract: Legitimate

Situation

The collapse of any semblance of stable government on Acamar has left Atticks Enterprises one of the few organizations with any power on the planet. Atticks' directors want to continue with business until better times come along, but it cannot do so unless it retrieves certain property from its holdings on other worlds in the Chaos March—specifically, the sizeable inventory of its major agribusiness on the planet Sheratan.

Objective

The hired unit will travel to Sheratan to retrieve foodstuffs from the warehouses of Hollingsworth Agrifoods, located in the city of Daggaknott. In order to accomplish this task, the hired unit may have to engage Sheratan's defending forces.

Contract

Atticks Enterprises offers fair pay and will negotiate most of the contract's major points. As the board of directors does not include military experts, Atticks will leave all command decisions up to the hired unit once the mission begins.

Terrain

Sheratan's lush forests and jungles spring from fertile soil, ideal for growing various fruits and vegetables from throughout the Inner Sphere. Agribusinesses such as Atticks Enterprises bought up acres of it, stripped the land of trees, and turned the bare tracts into huge farms. War has turned large stretches of Sheratan's woodlands into blackened wasteland, however, and much of the planet still burns, filling the sky with a gray haze.



The AFFC high command regarded Acamar as a secondary military target, stable and secure in its loyalty to the Federated Commonwealth. Consequently, its planetary garrison consisted of a small conventional force made up of reserves from the nearby planet of Kawich. When Liao and Marik forces attacked Acamar in 3057, the pro-Liao nobility saw their chance. Acting in concert with Capellan agents and their own private armies, Acamar's nobles overwhelmed the garrison in a series of swift attacks. To celebrate their stunning victory, the victorious Liao loyalists forced the captured garrison troops out into Acamar's brutal winter with scant clothing and supplies. Most of the garrison soldiers died; the few who found shelter were rescued a few days later by Patrick Gladden, the owner of a large silver mine.

Enraged at the thought of Acamar falling back under Capellan sway, Gladden persuaded several of his colleagues to form the Acamar Merchants Freedom Guild. In their first act, Guild members pooled their resources to hire a mercenary unit from Outreach to take back the planet. Better businessmen than generals, the merchants hired the Tiger Sharks, a combined-arms battalion that had served on the Marik-Periphery border. Unfortunately for the merchants, the Tiger Sharks looked far better on paper than they did in the field.

The Tiger Sharks hit the ground running, destroying numerous 'Mechs and vehicles and liberating two major cities in their initial engagements with Liao forces. A major counterattack by Liao troops, however, badly damaged the Tiger Sharks and prompted their commanding officer, Major Jason Timmus, to order an assault on Acamar's capital of Kalskag. Confident of Kalskag's defenses, the Liao government ordered the bulk of its troops to assault the headquarters of the Acamar Merchants Freedom Guild in the city of Flat.

The Tiger Sharks stormed into Kalskag, overrunning the few remaining government troops. They levelled the Capitol Building and killed several prominent nobles inside. In Flat, government tanks rolled over much of the city center, and the leaders of the merchants' resistance fled before the onslaught. With their employers vanished into hiding or offworld, the Tiger Sharks sought passage off Acamar, returning to Outreach to rebuild and seek a new contract.

No centralized government currently exists on Acamar. Most towns have become independent city-states with their own laws, many run by former members of the Freedom Guild and others by surviving Liaoist nobles. Acamar's people have largely ceased fighting and returned to mining, selling the ore to those traders brave enough to travel through the Chaos March. A remnant of the Acamar Merchants Freedom Guild, determined to see the planet under the FedCom banner, has set up offices on Outreach, where they hope to raise enough funds to hire more troops to retake their world.



ARBORIS

Days to Jump Point: 5

Recharge Station: Zenith

Recharge Time: 7 days

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Ishara Grenadiers (2 battalions) (CO: Choung Vong)	Regular	Reliable	Arboris	Capellan Confederation
Arboris SMM (1 mixed regiment) (CO: Lieutenant General Milton Mumvalda)	Green	Questionable	Arboris	Federated Commonwealth
Farmers Freedom Army (9+ infantry regiments) (CO: Unknown)	Green	Fanatical	Arboris	Farmers Freedom Army

The people of Arboris have a history of fierce independence. Before their actions in the current conflict, they proved their mettle in 2308 by seceding from the Capellan Hegemony to protest the rapacious taxes and debilitating draft imposed by that government to support an unjustifiable war. Though Arboris again stepped under the Capellan umbrella soon after the end of the Capellan-Supremacy War, neither House Liao nor, years later, House Davion succeeded in fully assimilating the populace.

When the two battalions of Ishara's Grenadier's landed on Arboris to retake the planet for the Capellan Confederation, they faced the understrength Arboris SMM. The Grenadiers pushed hard against the beleaguered militia, forcing them to retreat from every position they tried to hold and eventually driving the militia into the Hardina Mountains. Satisfied that they now controlled the planet, the Grenadiers began to harass the civilian population, hoping to turn up Davion loyalists and use them as examples of the futility of rebelling against House Liao.

Arboris's citizens refused to accept this treatment. Led by the commanders of the Farmers Freedom Army, a hastily assembled unit comprised mainly of the members of the local agricultural association, a makeshift army seized the militia's hidden weapons caches and launched their own attacks against the Grenadiers. Hundreds died in the initial assaults until Arboris's farmers learned that stealthy attacks against individual 'Mechs accomplished their ends equally well.

Unaware that the populace was successfully defending itself from the Capellan threat, the militia spent two weeks in the mountains repairing its equipment and reorganizing its ranks at a feverish pace. A forced march brought the militia to the town of Bantor just in time to see the Farmers Freedom Army engage the First Battalion of the Grenadiers. The militia quickly joined the fray and helped turn the tide against the Grenadiers, who fled back to the Arboris capital of Kansas Plain.

Before the militia commanders could congratulate the civilian army on its success, the FFA shifted its attack against the Arboris SMM. Understandably reluctant to return fire against civilians they were sworn to protect, the militia withdrew from the field. In subsequent attempts to communicate with the FFA, the militia commanders learned only that the independent army intended to defend its planet from all outside forces and that they considered the Arboris SMM to represent an outside force.



The situation between the three forces remains at a stalemate. Ishara's Grenadiers continue to destroy random targets in an effort to cow the population, but receive only sporadic support from the Confederation. The Federated Commonwealth has offered meager help to the Arboris SMM, but that force also remains on planet, harassing the Grenadiers and making regular attempts to negotiate with the FFA. Both units concentrate most of their efforts on blocking any shipments moving onto or off Arboris, confiscating any materiel sent to their enemy and effectively blockading the FFA. This tactic has had little effect so far, as Arboris's population traditionally has been nearly self-sufficient.



—An excerpt from *The War on Arboris*, Dangerlove Productions, March 3058

DISSOLVE FFA LOGO TO BURNING FIELD:

"People often quote the military man who said, 'War is hell,' but until you watch fields full of ripe grain ready for the harvest burning and belching great gouts of smoke into the formerly pristine air over your mortgaged farm and realize that your children might go hungry this year, you cannot know the truth of ..."

"No, let's cut that and start again. Too melodramatic."

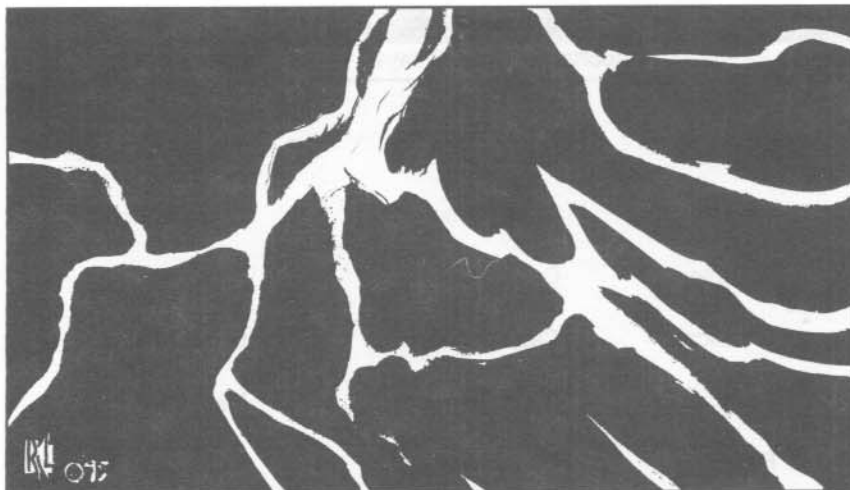
My video crew and I were on our way to what we hoped would be a peaceful meeting with a Colonel Elburn, one of the top men in the Farmers Freedom Army. We'd gotten plenty of footage showing the destruction caused by the Capellan invaders, hundreds of hours of interviews with ordinary people whose lives had been interrupted by the Arboris SMM trying to re-establish Davion control over the planet, and we'd even managed to pirate a few FFA communiques. It was those last messages that gave me the idea for the story that had us speeding down a dark country road at midnight.

Jena, the woman my contacts had sent to me from the small village of Iscan, assured us that this road would take us to Colonel Elburn and his band of renegades. The glowing haze of burning fields provided enough light for me to review my notes and try again to get all the apparent factions straight in my head. The one thing that seemed clear was that all members of the Farmers Freedom Army shared the same goal, but many members saw different ways of achieving that goal. So far, the army's lack of unity hadn't hurt its effectiveness, but something in the most recent set of orders from FFA headquarters made me believe that Colonel Elburn might be the one to break away.

The storm clouds that had been moving in since sunset finally blocked both moons, and so we pitched camp by the light of one shuttered lantern—Jena warned us that the FFA swept the areas under their control at regular intervals, even at night. She added that many patrols were inclined to shoot first and ask questions later. Her words flashed through my head again when a hooded man woke me at dawn by prodding me with the business end of an assault rifle. I was lucky—they nearly broke my cameraman's arm when he fought them as they took his equipment. I truly believe we would have died if Jena's brother wasn't part of that patrol. As it was, she did a good ten minutes of fast talking, including liberal use of "for the cause," "those stinking Liao and Davion interlopers," "no, no, the good newszine show," and "yeah, she's single" to convince the patrol that we weren't spies.

The FFA soldiers blindfolded us and drove us at least another two hours into the remote parts of Arboris's southern continent. For at least the last ten minutes of the trip I could hear what sounded like men and women conducting military drills and running heavy machinery. At the speed we were moving, I guessed that made Elburn's camp alone a few thousand strong.

Still blindfolded, we were herded into a dark enclosed space. When they removed our blindfolds, I recognized the man facing us as Darin Elburn, president of the largest chapter of the Arboris Agricultural Association and respected spokesperson for the Peaceable Kingdom antiviolence group. If this was really Colonel Elburn, leader of the most volatile faction in the FFA, the next few hours looked to be very exciting indeed.



BRYANT

Days to Jump Point: 15

Recharge Time: 3 days

Recharge Station: Nadir

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Bryant Regulars (1 mixed regiment) (CO: Colonel Hunt Thomsen)	Regular	Reliable	Bryant	Viscount Dvensky

A world whose turbulent atmosphere constantly sends violent storms raging across its surface, Bryant was first colonized by the Terran Alliance almost nine centuries ago when Alliance scientists discovered how to tame its weather by using a network of storm inhibitors. The brutal battles of the Succession Wars destroyed the inhibitors, and the return of the constant tempests drove the surviving population to the calmer polar regions. Though the Capellan Confederation controlled the planet up until the Fourth Succession War, Liao scientists have never duplicated the ancient technology that allowed civilization on Bryant to prosper. In the latter decades of Bryant's history, up until it changed hands, the planet's Capellan rulers used it as a prison planet. The Federated Commonwealth in turn had little use for Bryant, and invested only token moneys in its subsistence-level economy. When Liao and Marik forces invaded the Sarna March, they bypassed Bryant for more tempting targets.

Taking advantage of the breakdown of what little authority existed, a local warlord calling himself Viscount Dvensky has claimed Bryant as his personal fiefdom. Anticipating a Liao attack, the self-styled Viscount appealed to Victor Steiner-Davion of the Federated Commonwealth for military support, but none was forthcoming. Dvensky has since declared Bryant independent, and apparently supports his government—such as it is—by sending bands of fighters loyal to him on supply raids against the nearby planets of New Home and Epsilon Indi. These so-called Bryant Regulars have been alarmingly successful, prompting calls for action against them from various quarters. According to rumor, Viscount Dvensky is secretly raising an army to capture Epsilon Indi or New Home, or possibly both. As yet, no one can confirm the truth of these rumors.

In the past few months, Bryant has attracted increasing numbers of explorers and treasure hunters searching for Star League relics that may still exist in the numerous abandoned cities across the planet.



CONTRACT IND
58722-005-4

Dragoon Rating: C

Employer: New Home Provisional Government

Location: Bryant

Days to Jump Point: 28

Type of Action: Objective Raid

Length of Contract: 8 months

Unit Type: 'Mech or Conventional

Unit Size: Regiment

Pay Rate: Average

Support: None

Transport: None

Salvage Rights: Full

Command: Independent with liaison

Contract: Unofficial

Situation

Repeated supply raids by fighters based on the planet Bryant have severely hindered the planet New Home's pro-Liao provisional government from consolidating power (see New Home, p. 43). After learning that the raiders are based on Bryant, the provisional government decided to launch a surprise attack on the brigands at their own base in hopes of destroying them. The government cannot spare any of its own troops at the current time, however, and has decided to hire mercenaries for the job.

Objective

The unit will devote the necessary effort and resources to locate and eliminate the raiders that have been striking at the New Home government's supply stores. If the unit seems unlikely to meet this objective within the specified length of the contract, the unit will instead destroy the raiders' ability to strike at New Home.

Contract

The provisional government can afford only average pay and no support or transportation. To make the contract more attractive, the government is offering full salvage rights and independent command to the hired unit, though the government requires the unit to maintain contact with its leaders through a liaison officer.

Terrain

Bryant is a temperate world characterized by constant storms that rage across nearly its entire surface. Only its polar areas are free of these storms. Apart from these polar areas, Bryant is virtually uninhabited. Dozens of abandoned cities—all dating back to the Star League—lie scattered throughout the planet's interior.



CAPH

Days to Jump Point: 7

Recharge Station: None

Recharge Time: 3 days

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Lindon's Battalion (CO: Colonel Sarah Lindon)	Veteran	Reliable	Caph (Cimmeron)	Draconis Combin
Gustafson's Grenadiers (2 battalions) (CO: Duchess Gustafson)	Regular	Reliable	Caph (Rehope)	FedCom
Denebola SMM (CO: Captain Lisa Gould)	Green	Fanatical	Caph (New Derry)	Lyrans Alliance
Stealthy Tigers (CO: Colonel Yuri Rauschenbusch)	Regular	Reliable	Caph (Aswan)	Marik/Liao
Always Faithful (CO: Colonel James Burrill Riel)	Regular	Reliable	Caph (New Zevon)	Marik/Liao

A center for advanced science and learning during the days of the Star League, much of Caph became a toxic wasteland of nuclear, chemical and biological fallout during the Succession Wars. The planet began to revive in the 3030s, as industry once again emerged in the more habitable areas and glimmers of prosperity encouraged slow but steady population growth. Some of the smaller cities on the rim of Caph's southern continent, untouched by the worst of humanity's terrible weapons of war, saw renewed growth and rebuilding during the 3040s. The Liao-Marik invasion, however, has destroyed much of Caph's progress. The planet is once again a wasteland, this time of broken 'Mechs and bodies. Numerous factions battle for survival amid the ruins of cities that once seemed to symbolize the beginning of better times.

The Denebola Skye March Militia and Gustafson's Grenadiers, the home guard of Caph's reigning duchess, were engaged in training exercises against one another on Caph when the invasion began. A third unit, Lindon's Battalion, was taking a brief shore leave on Caph before beginning their newly signed contract with the Draconis Combine. The attack on the Sarna March by Capellan forces sparked several events involving these three units, many of which happened so quickly that no one knows for certain precisely what happened. The following account, however, is reasonably accurate.

Leftenant General Josef Gould, commander of the Denebola SMM and an ardent Steiner loyalist, immediately came into conflict with Duchess Gustafson, who just as ardently supported the Archon Prince. At the start of the invasion, Liao agents on Caph launched a series of attacks as part of a "popular uprising" in the capital of Aswan and in New Derry, Caph's second-largest city. Without informing the duchess of his intentions, Gould crushed the Liaoists in the capital with his own troops. Upon hearing of his actions, Duchess Gustafson ordered Gould to recall his men and allow her Grenadiers to pacify New Derry. In reply, the Leftenant General marched his troops toward that city. The duchess pushed her own troops hard toward New Derry to stop Gould, and she sent a message to the Archon Prince warning him that Gould might try a power grab. The message, delayed by a freak technical foul-up, did

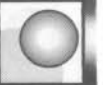
not reach Prince Victor until February of 3058.

Meanwhile, Lindon's Battalion had been caught by events in New Derry. Knowing that any action against the terrorists by her unit might look like a Combine attack, Colonel Sarah Lindon had kept her troops out of the fighting. When the Denebola SMM arrived in New Derry, Gould declared martial law and ordered Colonel Lindon to surrender to him. Lindon refused, arguing that as employees of a neutral state, the Battalion should not be treated as an enemy force. Gould then ordered his forces to wipe out Lindon's Battalion. The Battalion escaped, ran straight into Gustafson's Grenadiers, and received a safe-conduct to Aswan to await transport to the Combine.

As the Battalion marched toward Aswan, DropShips full of mercenaries in the employ of the Free Worlds League landed on Caph to assist the Liaoist insurgents. Gustafson's Grenadiers and the Denebola SMM, slugging it out with each other in New Derry, suddenly faced a new threat from two crack mercenary units: the Stealthy Tigers and Always Faithful. The Tigers easily captured Aswan and proclaimed it a Capellan possession. Meanwhile, Always Faithful split in two and marched toward the two large industrial centers of Rehope and Newann's Pass. After pleading in vain for a truce with Gould, Duchess Gustafson retreated from New Derry and raced for Rehope in an attempt to cut off the Always Faithful troops.

Back in New Derry, Gould received orders from Katrina Steiner-Davion to secure the city of Cimmeron, Caph's trading mecca. With Cimmeron in hand and the rest of Caph's reclaimed cities in chaos, Gould stood a good chance of claiming the whole planet for the newborn Lyrans Alliance. Gould immediately marched his forces toward Cimmeron.

Repelled from Aswan by the Tigers, Lindon's Battalion was also marching toward Cimmeron, the nearest sizeable city. Upon the Battalion's arrival, Colonel Lindon received an urgent message from the Coordinator of the Draconis Combine, requesting the Battalion to keep peace on Caph under the authority of ComStar. Soon afterward, Gould reached the outskirts of Cimmeron and ordered Lindon to abandon the city or face destruction. Lindon informed Gould of her orders and told him that his entry into Cimmeron would be an act of war, but Gould



refused to believe her and ordered his 'Mechs forward. Free to fight back, Lindon's Battalion engaged in a fierce battle with Gould's troops, savaging the Lyrans 'Mechs and killing Gould. The surviving 'Mechs of the Denebola SMM fled back to New Derry.

Gustafson's Grenadiers, meanwhile, had intercepted Always Faithful's First Battalion near Rehope and forced them to retreat toward Newann's Pass in a brutal, pitched battle. Though the fighting reduced her forces to less than two battalions, Duchess Gustafson rallied the surviving troops and marched toward Aswan. Her attempt to liberate the capital failed, but it cost the Stealthy Tigers a significant number of 'Mechs.

Currently, no single force truly controls the planet. The Stealthy Tigers remain in possession of Aswan, skirmishing almost daily with the Grenadiers and the remainder of the Denebola SMM. The Grenadiers and the Denebola SMM also attack each other, though they seem to prefer fighting the Marik-backed mercenaries. All three sides are scrambling to hire mercenaries to augment their dwindling forces. Only Lindon's Battalion has stayed mostly neutral, fighting only when necessary to keep peace in Cimmeron.

WARRIORS OF THE WASTELAND

—From *Mercenaries of the March*, Wasat Press, March 3058

The job on Caph was a piece of work. The pay was pretty damn good; living to spend it was the real trick. But then, we knew that going in. ...

Caph is sheer hell these days. Nobody's in control—I mean, nobody. We went there to kick in the heads of a few folks who'd taken advantage of the confusion to crown themselves kings of Caph's little towns. There's hundreds of them, held by Liao-loving guerrillas or taken over by pirates or local warlords and such. We'd signed on with the FedCom Duchess of Caph to sweep through these towns, root out the warlords and rebels, and give the place back to the duchess.

It started out easy. A few towns just plain gave up at the sight of our 'Mechs. As soon as a few garrison troops from the duchess showed up, we moved on. Then things got tougher. I remember one town chock full of Liaois—the locals put on a show of submission when we came in, but nailed us as soon as our guard was down. That one was our own stupid fault, really. Most of us got back to our 'Mechs and ran out of there. A couple of guys in the unit wanted to take over the place, but there were so many of the Liao-lovers that we could only have done it by wasting the whole town. And this unit just doesn't do that, y'know? Destroying a place to save it is a rotten battle tactic.

One place had its own 'Mech, more for show than for any real defense. We took out that scrapped-together piece of junk real quick and then had a serious talk with some locals, who saw the sense of coming over to our side. They fixed the 'Mech up and painted it in Grenadier colors—made the garrison troops feel right at home, I'm sure.

Not long after we left that town, we hit a recon company from the Denebola SMM. We tried to back off, but they came at us hard and we had no choice but to fight. I lost an arm from my BattleMaster, and one of my lancemates got killed. So did Captain Roberts, making me our acting commander. We tried to get to Rehope, the nearest city on the map, but we got lost. We must have wandered around the wastes for at least a week before we stumbled into a city that turned out to be Cimmeron. Lindon's Battalion has a good hold on the place—they let us in and pointed us in the right direction for Rehope. Of course, by the time we got there and hooked up with Gustafson's Grenadiers, we found out that most of the towns we'd liberated had been lost again.

Did I mention that the pay was good?



CONTRACT
IND
58196-012-3

Dragoon Rating: B
Employer: Lindon's Battalion
Location: Caph
Days to Jump Point: 7
Type of Action: Objective Raid
Length of Contract: 4 months
Unit Type: 'Mech
Unit Size: Company
Pay Rate: Average
Support: Full
Transport: One-third of cost to Caph
Salvage Rights: Negotiable
Command: Integrated
Contract: Legitimate

Situation

Working for the Draconis Combine and ComStar technically as peacekeeping forces, Lindon's Battalion protects the trading city of Cimmeron from the various warring factions on Caph, and has been called on to make peace between them.

Objective

The hired unit will invade the town of Crenton, near New Derry, and free political prisoners taken by the Denebola SMM.

Contract

Lindon's Battalion offers fair pay and access to its technical support staff before and after the completion of the mission. The Battalion will also assume one-third of the transportation costs from Outreach to Caph. The hired unit will have direct military command of the mission; a combined team from Lindon's Battalion and the hired unit will work out the mission plan. Lindon's Battalion reserves the right to send appropriate advisors and specialists on the mission along with the hired unit.

Terrain

Much of Caph consists of baked-hard ground and barren rock formations, though flora and fauna have returned to a few areas. Much, though not all, of the water on Caph remains contaminated by fallout from weapons used during the Amaris crisis and the Succession Wars.



INDEPENDENT WORLDS

—From *Mercenaries of the March*,
Wasat Press, March 3058

I remember one battle we fought against the Capellans. We were on patrol in the Drasken Chain, about twenty clicks outside Binsburg. With all our medium and heavy 'Mechs, traveling in the chain was real fun and games. Most of the islands in the Drasken Chain aren't more than a click wide and about the same length, and the distance between them is anywhere from half a click to two clicks. That kind of distance can be a problem because underwater terrain is so unpredictable.

We found out how unpredictable when we came up out of the water and headed for Little Bear Island. We were waist deep and about 700 meters from shore when they hit us. Hovertanks, VTOLs, hydrofoils, and fast-moving subs arrowed around the island's northern headland and sped right toward us. We couldn't run, not with all that water and an uneven ocean floor under our feet. We marched as hard as we could toward Little Bear, but the enemy picked off two of us clean.

When we reached land, they showered us with barrage after barrage of LRM fire from at least four aquacarriers. Cover on Little Bear practically doesn't exist, though at least on land we could move around well enough to get out of range of the hydrofoils. Our friends besieged us for two days before enough reinforcements arrived to scare them off. By that time, of course, we'd lost another three 'Mechs and taken heavy damage on most of the rest.

CARVER V

Days to Jump Point: 4

Recharge Time: 7 day

Recharge Station: Zenith

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces: Unknown

Carver V's small, scattered landmasses form chains of islands that twist and turn across the surface of this water-rich world. Fought over many times during centuries of warfare, Carver finally became a Federated Commonwealth possession during the Fourth Succession War. Every change of government throughout Carver V's history brought waves of new immigrants to this beautiful semitropical planet, giving Carver a multicultural heritage that few Inner Sphere worlds can claim. This same heritage, however, brought war to Carver V when local Liao sympathizers, aided and abetted by Capellan agents, took advantage of the Liao-Marik invasion to rebel against the planet's Commonwealth government.

The Liaoist rebels met stiffer opposition than they had expected from the planetary garrison, which consisted mainly of aged MechWarriors and vehicles. The garrison troops used Carver's scattered terrain to their advantage, fighting off Liao attacks and then melting away from pursuers. To aid the rebels, the Free Worlds League government sent a mercenary heavy aerospace unit—Angels of No Mercy—to eliminate the Carver garrison. Within two weeks of their arrival, the Angels drove the garrison force out of the capital of Korce, inflicting heavy damage.

As pro-Liao forces entered the capital, Marik sympathizers led by sleeper agents attacked them. The pro-Marik fighters believed that the Angels had come to help them take Carver V for the Free Worlds League. The Liaoist army fought back fiercely, while the Angels declined to offer aid to either side. They had been hired to destroy the Federated Commonwealth garrison; that job done, they moved on in search of new employment.

Currently, both Marik and Liao forces on Carver V receive aid from their home nations, while the remnant of the FedCom garrison is being propped up by the Lyran Alliance and the Federated Commonwealth. As many of the surviving unit members feel strong loyalty to one side or the other of the divided Commonwealth, the question of whose money and supplies to accept threatens to cause a bitter rift in the garrison. Carver V has also become a prime spot for mercenaries, as all four governments battling over the planet frequently hire merc units to fight for control of the various island chains. These battles are rough, as Carver's unusual terrain makes 'Mech combat difficult. The situation remains volatile, and no one can say for certain what forces may be operating on the world at any given time.

ELGIN

Days to Jump Point: 3

Recharge Station: Nadir

Recharge Time: 10 days

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Greyton Regulars (2 companies) (CO: Captain David Brewster)	Green	Reliable	Elgin (Greyton)	Count Fenchow
Blue Guard (2 companies) (CO: Captain Fullerton Baird)	Green	Reliable	Elgin (Vis)	Count Novgorod
Haman Hussars (1 company) (CO: Captain William Murdock)	Green	Reliable	Elgin (Zemlya)	Baron Haman
Kpay Lancers (1 company) (CO: Captain Charles Dunaldson)	Green	Reliable	Elgin (Kpay)	Baron Hart
Second Daman Rangers (1 company) (CO: Captain Abraham Bennet)	Green	Reliable	Elgin (New Ceram)	Baron Men Hou



The large islands that comprise the main landmasses of the planet Elgin support a wide variety of lifestyles, ranging from manufacturing to farming to service industries. The destruction of the Succession Wars dramatically reduced the world's manufacturing capabilities, but a substantial investment by the Capellan government for water purification facilities revitalized the agricultural sector prior to the Fourth Succession War. When the Federated Commonwealth took over the administration of Elgin, it wisely chose to limit its interference in the daily lives of the noble families who owned most of the planet's wealth. The government's primary contribution to keeping the populace happy was to station only a single battalion of AFFC troops on Elgin and allowing the most prominent families to contribute their own troops to complete the regiment of the Fifth Republican for the planet's protection.

It fell to the Fifth to counter the terrorist activities led by the Liao agents on Elgin, but the unit's efforts to protect the holdings of the nobles were largely unsuccessful. The family heads could find no explanation for their elite troops performing so poorly, until Baron Men Hou of the island New Ceram captured a Liaoist rebel and learned that the AFFC commander of the Fifth was a Maskirovka spy. What had appeared to be incompetent command was, in fact, deliberate collusion by Lieutenant General Abder-Rahman Barton with the Capellan government.

When Baron Hou exposed Barton as a spy to the other nobles, they immediately ordered their troops to obliterate the AFFC companies. As soon as the Federated Commonwealth troops were neutralized, the companies loyal to each baron turned on the others. The brutal free-for-all that ensued on the island of Jolo ended within an hour, as all seven barons chose to withdraw and save their strength to fight another day.

Only a handful of soldiers loyal to the Federated Commonwealth remain on Elgin. They devote considerable, successful effort to misdirecting the various nobles' troops so that they fight against each other. They have also surrounded the light industries on Jolo with elaborate traps and mazes to keep infiltrators away from the vast warehouses of personal weapons stored there. They must also contend with increasingly frequent attacks by pirate bands that raid the island's many small communities for supplies. These soldiers can take comfort in the fact that the pirates have also begun targeting the holdings of the nobles on their raids.

EPSILON ERIDANI

Days to Jump Point: 5 Recharge Station: Zenith, Nadir
Recharge Time: 4 days ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Eridani Guards (CO: Duke Pierre Benton)	Green	Fanatical	Epsilon Eridani	N/A

Epsilon Eridani's prime location in the Sarna March made it a valuable crossroads for much of the merchant traffic that flowed through the Terran Corridor. The commercial boom that followed the Fourth Succession War made Epsilon E a business and cultural mecca, which in turn made it a prime target for reconquest by the Capellan Confederation. At the time of the invasion, this planet's garrison consisted of the Epsilon Eridani SMM, a green unit with unclear loyalties. Though nominally loyal to the Federated Commonwealth, the unit's commander, Lieutenant General Pierre Benton, owed his first allegiance to his homeworld.

Chancellor Sun-Tzu Liao's earlier efforts to set up Liaoist cells on Epsilon E largely fell flat, and so he had limited resources to call on once the invasion of the Sarna March began. The few Liaoist rebels, however, caused damage far out of proportion to their numbers. A series of well-planned bombings killed hundreds of civilians and cre-

—From The Voices of Outreach IV:
Interviews with Mercenaries, *Tikonov Press*,
March 3058

What was I supposed to do? My lance was there for one reason and one reason only. We were hired by the AFFC to fieldtest some experimental long-range missile rounds out on the Kidman Stretches of Jolo. Not to help some frantic FedCom regulars beat a hasty retreat from an overzealous company belonging to some trumped-up noble.

Sure, we were technically employed by the AFFC, but a contract is a contract. You start taking liberties with it and so will they.

So we did what any other merc unit would have done. We stayed put. Leo, my scout, sat up on the hillside and watched them. Told us they were coming, and fast. About a company or so. Now, I knew that the FedCom had more troops than that on Elgin in the Fifth Republican, but I had no idea where the rest of the unit was hidin'. Leo said the friendlies were being chased down by at least a battalion, and they were coming straight at us.

When they reached our barracks, the Hauptmann ordered us to help him fight the advancing nobles units. I looked him straight in the 'Mech and told him what I thought of his order. It didn't matter to me. Morgan Hasek-Davion himself couldn't have made me help the Fifth. Hauptmann Ford got even madder when I beamed him a copy of our contract and sent one over wide-beam to the noble troops, which by this time had crested the hill and started to bear down on the Hauptmann and his crew.

Hauptmann Ford argued with me too long, because the noble-owned 'Mechs flanked him while he was jawing away. My unit still just sat there, and the whole fight erupted around us. What a strange experience—I've been in the thick of fighting too many times to count, but this was the first time I just sat back and let it happen around me.

Only two FedCom 'Mechs survived the battle. Our barracks were destroyed, but we still had our 'Mechs. No damage either, I might add.

I'll tell you this. When you're a merc, the only morals you can afford are the ones written on the paper you signed.



CONTRACT
IND
58996-011-5

Dragon Rating: C

Employer: Duke Pierre Benton

Location: Epsilon Eridani

Days to Jump Point: 5

Type of Action: Security Duty

Length of Contract: 6 months

Unit Type: Any combat

Unit Size: Company

Pay Rate: Average

Support: Half

Transport: Half cost to Epsilon Eridani

Salvage Rights: Negotiable

Command: Integrated

Contract: Legitimate

Situation

Epsilon Eridani is one of the safer planets in the Chaos March. Duke Pierre Benton's swift putdown of the Liao-backed revolution allowed him to unify the planet's government under his own leadership, and he has proved a just ruler. Bandit raids and political agitation in the outlying regions of Epsilon Eridani's northern and southern continents, however, continue to be a problem.

Objective

The hired unit will patrol outlying regions of Epsilon Eridani, hunting down bandits and any parties threatening Eridani's stability. Measures to be taken against such threats include arrest, detention, and military action.

Contract

The Epsilon Eridani government will assume half the cost of support for the hired unit, as well as one-half the unit's transport costs from Outreach to Epsilon Eridani. Salvage rights are negotiable. Field command rests with the hired unit, with the following conditions: that the hired unit will take note of advice from central command and will follow a patrol schedule determined by the Eridani government.

Terrain

Epsilon Eridani has a pleasant, if damp, climate. Few of the world's frequent rainstorms ever become true thunderstorms. The southern continent contains large regions of swampland, while the northern continent is drier and more rocky.

ated a serious crisis for the planetary government. As Epsilon's leaders dithered, Lieutenant General Benton grew increasingly frustrated with their inaction. Unable to sit by and watch his world crumble around him, Benton took matters into his own hands.

The Epsilon Eridani militia struck hard at the Liao cells, rooting them out with brutal efficiency. Within three weeks, no Liaoist presence to speak of remained alive on the planet. Instead of praising Benton, Council President Gloria Freeman saw the Lieutenant General's actions as flagrant disregard for the government and ordered him to surrender his unit to government commanders. Benton refused. Calling the Council "a gang of frightened bureaucrats unfit to govern a compost heap," he ordered his forces against the capital city of Madison. Cheered on by the local people, Benton and his militia seized the capital without bloodshed and arrested the Council leaders. Benton then publicly addressed Epsilon E's citizens, telling them he had temporarily suspended the Council and taken charge of the planet until new elections could be held. He further declared Epsilon Eridani independent of any Successor State for as long as he remained in control, "because our rulers from the Great Houses have not done well by us. Therefore, I believe we must do right by ourselves." Benton renamed the militia the Eridani Guards, and handily won a popular election two months after independence.

Under Benton's leadership, Epsilon Eridani continues to be a haven for interstellar commerce in the troubled Chaos March, where groups from various worlds can trade and cut deals. The city of Dori on Epsilon E's northern continent has become the planet's largest trading center. Heavy industry also continues to thrive; the new Kressly Warworks factory on the southern continent, long a minor producer of military vehicles, has just begun turning out its first BattleMech model, the *Lineholder*. Despite its mediocre performance profile, the 'Mech is inexpensive enough to sell extremely well to all the interested parties currently struggling for dominance in the March.

—A letter from a scout on Epsilon Eridani, April 3058

My Lord,

I send you greetings from the city of Dori on Epsilon Eridani. This is a lovely place, its sunny days cooled by the breezes off Lake Arous. Dori bustles with people from all over the March; I even spotted a few members of Hallaway's forces. I am happy to report they will not be returning home.

Your concerns that we might lack the funds to purchase all the equipment we need have fortunately proved groundless. Indeed, our buying power is great enough here that I am unsure what to buy. I have met a FedCom arms merchant willing to sell us everything we need, in addition to some prototype personal LRM launchers that he claims will give our ground troops a significant advantage in the field. For our few BattleMechs, he offered several tons of dead-fire missiles, which I recommend after seeing them test-fired; the attached file contains detailed information on these. I have also spoken with several other arms dealers from throughout the Inner Sphere who are also offering good deals.

As to the other matter, I have interviewed several of the best in the field. With luck, we can meet their price and rid ourselves of Baron Hallaway once and for all.

With respect,
Damon



CONTRACT
IND
58900-001-5

Dragoon Rating: D-B

Employer: Dylan Bangus

Location: Hamal

Days to Jump Point: 12

Type of Action: Objective Raid

Length of Contract: 2 months

Unit Type: 'Mech

Unit Size: Company

Pay Rate: Good

Support: None

Transport: Half

Salvage Rights: Full

Command: Independent

Contract: Unofficial

Situation

Dylan Bangus, a well-known underworld figure on Epsilon Eridani, is hiring mercenary units to travel to various worlds whose freedom fighters desire independence but lack the means to accomplish their goals. Units hired by Bangus may face heavy opposition when delivering supplies to Bangus's clients.

Objective

The hired unit will deliver arms shipments to separatists on the world of Hamal.

Contract

Dylan Bangus offers good pay, full salvage rights, and will assume one-half the cost of transportation for the unit from Outreach to his base of operations on Epsilon Eridani and from thence to Hamal. The unit will retain independent command of the mission.

Terrain

With its thin atmosphere and low precipitation level, Hamal consists mainly of stark, barren tundra. Violent windstorms whip the arid, frozen earth into vicious and often deadly "sand blizzards." Towns are small, few, and far between.



CONTRACT
IND
58996-012-9

Dragon Rating: D-C

Employer: Duke Benson Abraham

Location: Epsilon Indi

Days to Jump Point: 11

Type of Action: Retainer

Length of Contract: 1 year

Unit Type: Mech or conventional

Unit Size: Company or battalion

Pay Rate: Poor

Support: None

Transport: One-fourth to Epsilon Indi

Salvage Rights: Full

Command: Independent

Contract: Legitimate

Situation

Epsilon Indi is contested by the Federated Commonwealth government forces of Duke Abraham and the Epsilon Freedom Brigade, a Capellan-backed guerrilla unit. The Capellans have begun to gain the upper hand with the aid of the Langendorf Lancers, a mercenary unit sent by the Free Worlds League and working for the Capellan government since House Marik concluded a truce with the Commonwealth. The combined Capellan forces are pushing hard to destroy the duke and his troops, but the outcome is far from decided.

Objective

Hired units will perform a variety of missions against opposition forces, from harassment raids to assaults to defensive maneuvers, at Duke Abraham's discretion. Hired units may eventually aid government troops in routing the Capellans from the planet.

Contract

Duke Abraham offers full salvage rights in exchange for lower wages, and will assume one-fourth of the traveling cost from Outreach to Epsilon Indi. The hired unit will retain independent command, subject to the need for coordinating attacks with the duke's forces.

Terrain

Ruins of old cities dot Epsilon Indi's desolate surface, and many of these have become home for the thousands of refugees from the city of Krist. The ruins also often house criminals and bandits, who prey on people traveling between Epsilon Indi's towns and cities.

EPSILON INDI

Days to Jump Point: 11

Recharge Time: 8 days

Recharge Station: Zenith, Nadir

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Epsilon Indi Irregulars (1 mixed regiment, possible infantry) (CO: Grand General Samon M'Benga)	Regular	Fanatical	Epsilon Indi	Duke Abraham
Langendorf Lancers (CO: Colonel Gregory Millsey)	Regular	Reliable	Epsilon Indi	Capellan
Epsilon Indi Freedom Brigade (CO: Unknown)	Regular	Fanatical	Epsilon Indi	Capellan Confederation

Epsilon Indi is a wasteland of deserts, empty seabeds, and bombed-out cities. Life and human habitation on the planet is confined to the polar regions, the only areas clear of fallout from the nuclear weapons that Amaris the Usurper used to subdue Epsilon Indi when he attempted to take over the Star League. After the League's collapse, the Capellan Confederation claimed the world but devoted few resources to restoring it.

After the Fourth Succession War, the Federated Commonwealth designed and funded a few programs to rebuild in the areas not blanketed by radiation. Surveys of the planet's crust showed rich mineral deposits, and small mining companies set up shop. Between 3034 and 3049, the planet's tiny population doubled as the mining communities prospered. The hard work needed to make a viable living on Epsilon made its people fiercely proud of themselves and their world. Epsilon Indi's increasing viability, however, also made it attractive to Sun-Tzu Liao, who installed Zhanzheng de guang networks on the planet in hopes of destabilizing its government.

The Zhanzheng de guang rose up against the Federated Commonwealth government during the Sarna March invasion and captured several towns. Epsilon's citizens reacted swiftly and violently, forming vigilante groups and working with the regular militia. These combined forces invaded the captured towns and retook some of them, but others still remain in Liaoist hands. One spectacular vigilante attack killed most of the Liaoist leaders, effectively ending the revolution as an organized crusade. Several Zhanzheng de guang members, however, remain at large and carry out frequent terrorist attacks against forces loyal to the ruler of Epsilon Indi, Duke Benson Abraham. The Liaoist forces have recently been aided by the Langendorf Lancers, a Marik-backed mercenary unit. The Lancers and the Zhanzheng de guang have made several attempts to capture the town of Krist, a major center of Epsilon Indi's mining industry. So far they have not succeeded, but the city's defenders grow weaker with every assault.

The single largest and most effective armed force on Epsilon Indi is the Epsilon Indi Irregulars, composed of militia troops and local citizens. Commanded by Grand General Samon M'Benga, a close friend of the duke, the Irregulars are equipped with outdated 'Mechs, and Duke Abraham is unsure of the unit's ability to hold out indefinitely against determined and violent terrorist opposition. He has made repeated requests to the Archon Prince for reinforcements, but his pleas have gone unanswered because Epsilon Indi is a low priority for the Commonwealth. As a result, the duke's loyalty to his sovereign is gradually eroding.

Rumors persist that Liao infantry troops have landed on the planet. These rumors have intensified in the wake of the Capellan Confederation's buyout of the Lancers' contract.



FLETCHER

Days to Jump Point: 7
Recharge Time: 7 days

Recharge Station: None
ComStar Facility: B (possibly destroyed)

Defending Forces: Unknown

Fletcher's dense atmosphere and almost constant cloud cover keep it damp and chilly, befitting a planet whose major claim to fame is its use as a burial ground for countless Capellan Chancellors. Because it has so little in the way of resources or beauty to recommend it, Fletcher was largely ignored by Davion and Marik forces throughout the Succession Wars. Though the planet supports a large population, it has no real economic value beyond its self-sufficiency. As its people trade almost nothing, Fletcher has little contact with neighboring systems and is often skipped over on trade routes. Lightly garrisoned by its FedCom conquerors after the Fourth Succession War, Fletcher became a hotbed of terrorist activities by Zhanzheng de guang guerrillas, backed by Capellan Chancellor Sun-Tzu Liao. The Chancellor sent few troops to Fletcher during the invasion, preferring to use his armies against more valuable targets and trusting his carefully planted "revolutionaries" to take control of the planet for him.

As far as anyone can ascertain, however, the Zhanzheng de guang have proven unable to hold the planet. A surprisingly strong and effective citizen's militia is holed up with at least a few officials of Fletcher's Federated Commonwealth government in the planetary capital, and has so far resisted all attempts by Liaoist sympathizers to dislodge them. The guerrillas and a few Capellan troops attacked the capital in the early stages of their assault, apparently destroying Fletcher's HPG station. According to rumor, they have since captured several smaller cities surrounding the southern reaches of Fletcher's only landmass. All anyone knows for certain is that fierce fighting continues between Liao forces and the citizen's militia, who may or may not remain loyal to the Federated Commonwealth. Because the Commonwealth government has given Fletcher no aid since the initial attack, some military analysts believe that Fletcher will become an independent planet if the militia succeeds in defeating the Liao loyalists.



CONTRACT
IND
58803-008-3

Dragon Rating: B
Employer: Count Dane Lonly
Location: Fletcher
Days to Jump Point: 5
Type of Action: Extraction Raid
Length of Contract: 4 months
Unit Type: 'Mech, Special Forces
Unit Size: Squad
Pay Rate: Good
Support: See contract
Transport: 25 percent of cost
to Fletcher
Salvage Rights: Full
Command: Integrated
Contract: Unofficial

Situation

Count Dane Lonly enjoys a status as one of the higher-ranking nobles on the planet Slocum, located within the disputed Tikonov Reaches. Over the years, the count has diversified his wealth across dozens of worlds and maintains investments in every major power in the Inner Sphere. The recent civil war on Fletcher has given the count cause to fear for his interests there. Count Lonly needs a small strike team to travel to Fletcher, recover his assets there and deliver them to Slocum.

Objective

The unit must travel to the city of New Linz on Fletcher and retrieve several designated crates. If the unit cannot liberate the crates, the unit has permission to destroy the crates and their contents.

Contract

Count Lonly will pay 25 percent of the transportation costs from Outreach to Fletcher. The mission pay is good, and he is offering a bonus for returning all of the crates intact. Count Lonly can provide to the unit the names of several contacts on Fletcher who could help them accomplish their mission.

Terrain

Fletcher's terrain closely resembles that of Terra in the ancient British Isles. The planet's population has maintained self-sufficiency for hundreds of years through the judicious use of technology and wise resource management.



—From *Voices of Outreach IV: Interviews with Mercenaries*, Tikonov Press, March 3058

We knew they were up there. Ricky, our point man, had left the sign on the cave floor. We had to leave physical marks, can you believe that? The ferrous content of the rock there played hell with our communications. Couldn't get even five meters away from the rest of the unit before the radios were useless.

Anyway, we figured the enemy to be about twenty meters dead ahead. No light, of course. They killed their power when we chased them down here. Our side was using infrared and praying the other guys didn't have sneak suits. I made a mental note to requisition some ultrasound goggles for the troops.

I heard a rock hit the ground and right away I knelt down and brought my Intek up. I heard Rita do the same thing next to me, and everybody following us dropped as well. We all sat there and real quiet and waited. Sure enough, we heard it again.

Then we saw 'em—six troopers coming up the passageway, real slow. None of them had Ricky's IR marker, so I figured they either bagged him or he was hiding somewhere. They moved forward another five meters, then Rita let 'em have it, hosing down the hallway with her Calloway assault rifle. I wished she would have waited till they got a little closer, but I took her lead and let go with a burst of solid light from my Intek.

Three of them dropped from our assault and the rest took off running. Before I could stop her, Rita ran after them, firing all the way. She must have felt claustrophobic from the dark tunnel and let it get the best of her, because she knew the tunnel rats' favorite trick as well as the rest of us. I yelled at her to stop, but it was too late. The grenade exploded right under her.

She didn't have a chance. We waited for the rest to explode (this time it was three), then headed up to her. She was gone. The damn tunnel buggers use that tactic all the time—run away and drop grenades behind. All we could do was mark the spot and keep moving down the tunnel.

We'd done this kind of fighting before, but it seemed a damned stupid way to die just to make one greedy CEO president over a lot of other ones.



GENOA

Days to Jump Point: 1

Recharge Time: 21 days

Recharge Station: None

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces: Unknown

When a passing meteor forced the planet Genoa into a brief journey outside its orbit millenia ago, the world's lush plant life and plentiful animal life lost their fragile hold and died off, leaving only the dry, rocky, marginally habitable place that the smallest population of any system in a 60-light-year radius of Terra now calls home. The planet's attraction now lies in its rich deposits of raw materials—always in demand by industry—and high-grade gemstones. When the world's harsh surface drove settlers to make their homes underground, the population discovered huge underground lakes teeming with many unique aquatic species. The current citizens carefully nurture and harvest certain fish and export them as delicacies and as exotic pets.

Genoa was historically defended by only a skeleton force consisting mostly of militia troops and a few tanks. When the Liaoist rebels received the command to retake the world for the Capellan Confederation, they felt confident that they could easily crush the government's few defenders. An informer in the rebels' ranks, however, prepared the militia for the attacks, giving the defenders a few early victories. Fierce counterattacks by the Liaoists quickly turned the tide of battle to the rebels' favor. The rebels succeeding in killing the Genoan president and soundly defeated the Davion militia, but their efforts ultimately failed to secure the planet for Chancellor Liao.

As soon as the news of the president's death hit the streets, the heads of several small and large corporations operating on Genoa began jockeying to gain sufficient power and influence to become the next president of the planet. Political maneuvering quickly degenerated into physical conflict as companies made alliances of convenience to achieve their goals and betrayed those alliances just as quickly for new opportunities. These conflicts have escalated to the point where wealthy companies have hired infantry mercenary units to fight their battles in the tunnels beneath the surface, promising payment in precious gemstones. The bitterest fighting is for control of Genoa's two largest ore mines and the largest gemstone plant, because the CEO with the largest share of the economy is the one most likely to successfully declare himself president and hold that position.

The infighting between businessmen has taken a heavy toll on local and interstellar trade. Pirate bands that are taking advantage of the confusion in the Chaos March to plague the local planets also put a crimp in successful, uninterrupted trade. Because little exists on the surface of Genoa to discourage them from doing so, several pirate bands now make their home in that planet's relative safety.



HALL

Days to Jump Point: 5
Recharge Time: 8 days

Recharge Station: Zenith
ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Fourth Republican (approx. 1 battalion) (CO: Emperor Baranov)	Regular	Reliable	Hall	Emperor Baranov
Cater's Cohorts (approx. 1 company) (CO: Major Dick Cater)	Green	Reliable	Hall	Major Cater (rebels)
McNally Guard (1 company) (CO: Commander Stacy O'Shayne)	Regular	Reliable	Hall	Count McNally
Burton's Brigade (1 company) (CO: Captain Elly Burton)	Green	Reliable	Hall	Count McNally

When news of the Marik-Liao aggression reached the planet Hall, the defending Fourth Republican prepared to fend off an assault that never came. Instead of mounting a direct attack, Chancellor Sun-Tzu Liao directed his agents to foment a rebellion and so reclaim the world for the Capellan Confederation, but the Fourth ruthlessly crushed the rebel movement. Though the Fourth felt no particular loyalty to House Davion to justify its brutal actions, Hall's former status as part of the Tikonov Free Republic meant the unit loved the Capellan Confederation even less.

The Clan conflict left many rimward planets defended by green units and troops considered too unreliable for service on the front lines. Its history of vocal anti-Davion sentiment, discipline problems, and the current rumors of the unit recruiting out-of-work mercenaries after conducting only superficial background checks put the Fourth firmly into the unreliable category. When Archon Katrina invited all Lyran units currently serving in the Sarna March to return to the new Lyran Alliance, the commander of the Fourth Republican, Lieutenant General William "Bud" Baranov, recognized the message hidden in the Archon's speech: the mighty Federated Commonwealth was breaking apart.

After a quick meeting with his officers, Baranov led his troops against the capital city of Harney, casually swatting the poorly organized opposition and crowning himself Emperor of Hall. Though the unit secured only the capital, most of the planet's populace fell in line out of fear of what the unpredictable commander would do next. Only Count McNally, who controlled a sizeable region of land east of the capital, possessed sufficient military strength and economic assets to counter Emperor Baranov. Convinced that Baranov's next move would be against him, Count McNally hired mercenaries from Outreach to augment his own 'Mech forces, then settled in to wait.

Emperor Baranov had too much trouble in his own court to worry much about McNally. Several of Baranov's men had rebelled against him, and the two sides skirmished almost daily in Harney's streets. A city untouched by conflict since the First Succession War, Harney was rapidly falling to ruins. When Baranov finally drove the rebels out of Harney, that faction claimed several southern cities as its territory, and rumor has it that members of the faction have begun fighting among themselves.

All three sides continue to administer their small portions of Hall, occasionally fighting each other for supplies or territory. Emperor Baranov controls the only interstellar transport on Hall and uses it to conduct pirate raids in an effort to feed his troops and subjects. The emperor also is attempting to gain sole control over the ComStar compound in Harney so that he can deny his enemies access to interstellar communication. ComStar continues to block these efforts, and so Count McNally regularly sends out messages requesting assistance from various members of the Free Worlds League in ending Emperor Baranov's reign.

—A letter from a member of the Fourth Republican, April 3058

Dearest John,

We just returned from a raid on Elgin. I'm sorry it has been so long since I last wrote, but things have been, as always, quite stressful. Besides the raid (which, by the way, was a smashing success), we captured several tons of supplies and created more chaos on that poor world. Baranov believes that if a nearby world looks worse off than Hall, it will attract the attention we might receive. I don't know why he is so concerned about one of the Successor States noticing his activities. The last I heard, most of the major powers had written off the entire March for the rest of the year.

Anyway, back to what I was saying. There is more trouble brewing here in Harney. I've begun to hear rumors that Captain Ballat may take his command lance and several others either out of the city or directly against Baranov. If the rumor is true and Ballat is smart, he will just leave. Despite what you may have heard about the emperor, he is quite a commander and not a bad politician. I have heard that he has begun negotiating with Baron Montong on Hsien for his support. Any kind of help, especially food and clothing, would help fortify us enough to put more pressure on the rebels from our unit and on Count McNally.

I must confess something to you, John. I wish that I had never taken this assignment. If I hadn't been so poor at the time, the thought of regular military work, even for the Fourth, wouldn't have held such appeal. I would give anything to be back with you in Raymond's Armored Infantry, though I've heard reports that you might be defending against Sun-Tzu's troops any day now. Not a comfortable idea after seeing what they did to the AFFC, eh?

Well, I must go for now. You may want to talk to Colonel Raymond. The emperor has begun building up funds to hire a mercenary unit, and I have recommended your unit. Good luck. Shoot straight and keep your head down!

With love,
Clara



**FREE WORLDS
LEAGUE
CONTRACT FWL
58722-002-3**

Dragon Rating: C

Employer: Free Worlds League

Location: Hall

Days to Jump Point: 5

Type of Action: Garrison

Length of Contract: 6 months

Unit Type: Mech or conventional

Unit Size: Company or larger

Pay Rate: Average

Support: None

Transport: Negotiable

Salvage Rights: See contract

Command: Integrated

Contract: Legitimate

Situation

While the Free Worlds League has clearly stated that they initiated this conflict to reconquer the worlds lost to them during the Fourth Succession War, they state no objections to accepting into the League those worlds that wish to join of their own accord.

The Free Worlds League needs a unit to travel to the planet Hall in the Chaos March and augment the forces of Count McNally against incursions by the forces of the self-styled Emperor Baranov.

Objective

The unit will serve in a defensive role as an employee of Count McNally, though the Free Worlds League holds the contract. The unit will defend Count McNally's holdings from all external threats.

Contract

The Free Worlds League will pick up the cost of transporting the unit to Hall, but doing so may affect pay rates. Count McNally will conduct negotiations for salvage rights.

Terrain

Hall's annual precipitation is far below the average for Terra, which gives the planet several large deserts. Considered one of the most beautiful worlds in known space, Hall owes this reputation to the strange, compelling rock formations found in each of the planet's deserts. From the air, it can be seen that many of these formations consist of solid walls of rock about five meters thick and sometimes more than two hundred meters long and of varying heights. The most unique feature of these formations is that most of the rock walls run parallel to one another, creating a vast complex of hallways.





HSIEN

Days to Jump Point: 10

Recharge Station: Zenith

Recharge Time: 6 days

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Montong Musketeers (2 companies) (CO: Captain Jack Draper)	Regular	Fanatical	Hsien	Baron Luis Montong V
Gael's Grinders (merc) (1 company) (CO: Captain Louise Holley)	Green	Reliable	Hsien	Capellan Confederation
Dendeez Guards (1 regiment conventional) (CO: Lieutenant Colonel Peter Angell)	Green	Fanatical	Hsien	Dendeez Province

When Hanse Davion struck at the Capellan Confederation in 3028 using the combined might and wealth of the newly announced Federated Commonwealth and began the conflict known as the Fourth Succession War, the planet Hsien, along with several other worlds, was temporarily cut off from its parent realm, the Capellan Confederation. When Pavel Ridzik, a top commander in the military of the Confederation, turned traitor to his nation and convinced those separated worlds to join him in forming the Tikonov Free Republic, Davion spared the fledgling nation his bloody conflict. Shortly after the end of the Fourth Succession War, Tikonov voted to join its fortunes to the might of the Federated Commonwealth. Hsien remained peaceful after the war and eventually gained a limited prosperity as House Steiner encouraged its lumber and canning industries. The Marik-Liao invasion abruptly ended the planet's slow economic growth.

The only unit stationed on Hsien at the onset of the invasion was the Second F-C RCT, a unit considered fanatically loyal to House Davion. Though determined to hold the world against the Liao assault, the Second RCT quickly fell to the First and Second Regiments of McCarron's Armored Cavalry. Marshal Irene Thome led the Second in a retreat offworld to Elgin, where she hoped to refit and resupply and return to Hsien. Unfortunately for the Second, the Free Worlds League mercenary unit Swann's Cavaliers, sent to aid the Capellan rebellion on Elgin, destroyed all of the Second but the command lance.

As soon as the units of McCarron's Armored Cavalry established the rule of Capellan governor Robert Thomay, they moved on to a new assignment. Their departure gave Baron Luis Montong V, the scion of the only family on Hsien of noble rank, the courage to reject Hsien's "upstart government" and declare his continuing loyalty to the Federated Commonwealth.

When Governor Thomay traveled to the island continent of Chone to meet with Baron Montong and enlist that powerful man's support for the new government, the baron treated the governor with great respect. He pledged to the governor the loyalty of his people and his personal cooperation, thereby guaranteeing Hsien's complete subjugation to House Liao. When the Capellan turned to leave, the baron drew his laser pistol and shot Governor Thomay in the back, then ordered his troops to throw the governor's entourage in prison. Baron Montong then proclaimed that, regardless of the decision the rest of the planet chose to make, his holdings still belonged to the Federated Commonwealth and that his loyalty remained with the Archon Prince.

The remaining populace of Hsien quickly severed all connection to Montong and most fully supported the new Capellan governor elected a short time later, though only one month after Baron Montong's declaration the province of Dendeez seceded from the Capellan government. All three realms continue to exist, though they plague each

—Excerpt from a public debate between Capellan Governor James Venten, Dendeez Prime Minister Roland Martin, and Baron Luis Montong V. ComStar Communications for the planet Hsien, February 3058.

THE CAPELLAN VIEWPOINT

"Long before the Davion Fox crushed half the life from the glorious Capellan Confederation in the Fourth Succession War, the people of Hsien embraced the prosperity and peace provided by their Liao leaders. Years of rule by the Federated Commonwealth did little to diminish my people's love for the Confederation and never succeeded in dulling our desire to return to the Capellan fold. Though we once again bask in the illumination of the Chancellor's wisdom and might, the Dendeez government refuses to accept the return of that good life and persists in its poor efforts to mimic the workings of true government.

"Foremost in its failings is the Dendeez government's complete inability to uphold its agreements with other nations. One of the few issues which that inadequate body successfully has addressed is its promise to desist broadcasting anti-Capellan sentiments into Capellan territory. Their pathetic appeals have no effect and serve only to prove the Dendeez government untrustworthy, which will damage the province's chances of successful reintegration with our benevolent government.

"Of course the radio broadcasts represent only a trivial annoyance, but it is the principle of the thing. They agreed to stop sending the signals and yet continue to do so. As loyal subjects of the Confederation, we will not be afraid to face the confrontation that must inevitably erupt as a result of blatant disregard of legally binding agreements. We will not shrink from the opportunity to herd our wayward brethren back to the comfortable and caring arms of the Capellan Confederation."

THE DENDEEZ VIEWPOINT

"The Dendeez Province is only interested in stabilizing its own economy and reaching self-sufficiency. Clearly, as our realm remains the only part of Hsien with an active industrial base, our resources make an attractive target for our paranoid, ambitious neighbors. The Capellan governor forces us to waste human resources better devoted to rebuilding the homes and industries damaged in the Capellan attack than on defending against

(Continued on p. 42)



(Continued from p. 41)

their misplaced aggression, which they justify with half-truths and deliberate misinterpretations. We need our realm's men and women in the factories, in the fields, and on the boats of our fishing fleets more than we need them patrolling our borders.

"We have no interest in or time for attempts to conquer other realms. Though Baron Montong regularly declares his intention to invade and squash both the Dendeez Province and the Capellan realm, Governor Venten seems content to ignore the Baron's more obvious military threat and instead to bully us. I sincerely hope that the governor's threat of starting a conflict is nothing more than a scare tactic. I dread the idea of our Guardsmen dying for no better reason than to topple the governor's palace."

BARON MONTONG'S VIEWPOINT

"You are both very stupid. Believe you me, the Federated Commonwealth will not just sit back and let every James, Roland and Harry who wants a personal fiefdom to carve little pieces out of that great empire. Prince Victor will send someone to teach you all a lesson, and when he does, my BattleMech forces will lead the charge to end your petty kingdoms."

other with daily skirmishes. The time and energy the respective governments devote to devising outrageous and complex trade compacts have slowed the exchange of goods to a trickle, but the situation is not yet critical. Though Baron Montong sends repeated pleas to Archon Prince Steiner-Davion for assistance in his efforts to smash the two rival realms, Prince Victor has not answered those requests. The balance of power on Hsien seems likely to remain stable for the foreseeable future.

KEID

Days to Jump Point: 7

Recharge Time: 9 days

Recharge Station: Zenith

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Thirteenth Lyran Guards Veteran (1 regiment) (CO: Colonel Thomas Peters)		Reliable	Uppsala	Lyran Alliance

Following the collapse of the Star League in the late twenty-eighth century, Keid fell under the control of the Capellan Confederation, where it remained until the Fourth Succession War of 3020–3030. One of the first worlds colonized during humanity's first interstellar exodus, Keid already contained extensive commercial centers and an ore-mining industry when it came under Liao rule. In later years the planet also became home to several training centers for Maskirovka covert-operations personnel.

After the Federated Commonwealth captured the world in the Fourth Succession War, Keid—along with the other worlds of the newly named Sarna March—came under the rule of Archon Melissa Steiner Davion. The Archon's benevolent rule seems to have fostered strong pro-Lyran loyalties among Keid's populace, loyalties that remain evident today.



Despite the population's pro-Lyran sentiments, Keid's inhabitants never developed strong loyalties to the Federated Commonwealth. Following Melissa Steiner-Davion's death, many Keidians became openly critical of Prince Victor Steiner-Davion. These sentiments apparently laid the groundwork for the short-lived anti-Davion rebellion that occurred following the recent Marik-Liao invasion of the Sarna March.

The rebel leader—identified as Roland Carpenter—exploited the population's religious fervor and moral outrage as well in his attacks on Duke Joseph Hunsen. Revelations about the duke's relations with a pair of underaged twins with ties to a known agent of the Draconis Combine led to his ultimate fall from power.

Within a week, however, Carpenter mysteriously disappeared, and planetary militia leaders installed the late duke's daughter, Duchess Arice Hunsen, in power. The duchess immediately ordered the execution of several rebel leaders, granted amnesty to rebel fighters and pledged her loyalty to Archon Katrina Steiner-Davion's newly proclaimed Lyran Alliance. The Archon responded by sending the Thirtieth Lyran Guards to garrison the planet.

Although the planet seems firmly entrenched in the Lyran camp, Keid remains isolated from the Lyran Alliance. Kuritan peacekeepers on Rigel Kentares, ComStar troops on Terra, and the government of the newly formed Sirian Holds (see p. 22 in **Alliances**) have all announced their intentions to prevent any military vessels from passing through their systems. However, this isolation has not prevented the government of Keid from espousing a pro-Lyran military and openly persecuting Davion sympathizers.

Roughly three-fourths of Keid is covered by saltwater oceans. The planet's landmass is comprised of three mountainous, heavily wooded continents.

—Excerpt from the interrogation of Lt. Rollo Marsten, aide to Roland Carpenter

"Nothing seemed out of the ordinary that evening. Carpenter was signing orders and taking care of administrative duties as usual. I was sitting across the room from him, watching the evening's holo-vid reports. He didn't appear distracted or nervous—or at least not any more so than usual. In fact, he seemed unusually confident. Everyone seemed to have accepted him as the planet's new ruler.

"Anyway, around 2345 hours Carpenter decided to head down to the kitchen for a snack. I took about five minutes to finish up some paperwork, then I joined him down there. We got our snack then headed back upstairs to the throne room. A few minutes later, Carpenter asked me to fetch him a laptop from one of the offices.

"When I came back, he was gone. I immediately notified the house guards, who began searching the grounds. Then I tried to call our military commander and discovered the communication lines had been cut. The next thing I knew, planetary militia troops had surrounded the palace and were demanding our surrender. Hell, I wasn't going to fight. I knew the thing was over as soon as Carpenter disappeared."

NEW HOME

Days to Jump Point: 8
Recharge Time: 6 days

Recharge Station: Nadir
ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Thirtieth Lyran Guards (CO: Lieutenant General Herbert Kingsley)	Veteran	Reliable	New Home	Lyran Alliance
New Home Regulars (1 mixed regiment) (CO: Lieutenant General Delores Whitman)	Regular	Reliable	New Home	Capellan Confederation

New Home has been fertile ground for violent Zhanzheng de guang activity ever since the end of the Fourth Succession War, making duty on the planet a hazardous proposition. The Thirtieth Lyran Guards, stationed on New Home when the Liaoist guerrilla cells launched open revolution, found themselves barely able to hold the government together in the face of almost daily bombings and killing of civilians. Frequent attacks on the unit's personnel and dependents further demoralized the Guards' commanders, Marshal Vincent Tanner and Lieutenant General Herbert Kingsley. Marshal Tanner declared martial law and suspended the ineffectual planetary government, but he was assassinated by the Zhanzheng de guang mere days after his declaration. Less than twenty-four hours later, word reached New Home that Katrina Steiner-Davion had proclaimed herself Archon of the independent, neutral Lyran Alliance and that all Lyran troops were invited to return home. Acting commander Lt. General Kingsley eagerly accepted the invitation, only too happy to bid New Home goodbye.

Most of the unit, however, preferred to remain on New Home. Many of the newer recruits were natives of that planet, and the brutalities of the Zhanzheng de guang had only made them more determined to free New Home forever from the threat of Capellan domination. Led by Lieutenant General Delores Whitman, Kingsley's second in command, the Thirtieth Lyran Guards mutinied en route to the Lyran Alliance. Whitman and the rest of the unit returned home, only to find that the Liaoist revolutionaries had taken control in their absence. Reinforced by BattleMechs and state-of-the-art weapons from the Free Worlds League, the newly christened New Home Regulars presented the Thirtieth Lyran Guards with formidable opposition.

Currently, an uneasy stalemate prevails between the New Home Regulars and the Lyran troops. The Thirtieth captured the cities of Findler and Mann in its initial assault and still holds them as far as anyone knows, but Liaoist resistance is a constant threat to their



—From *Voices of Outreach IV: Interviews with Mercenaries*, Tikonov Press, March 3058

Infantry don't often get the same attention that 'Mech jocks do, but the folks who know me and my unit give us plenty of respect. They know we deserve it.

My company took a contract to fight for the Thirtieth Lyrans Regulars on New Home. I know that unit; they're good people. That was enough for us. They wanted my unit for peacekeeping in the outlying suburbs of the city of Mann, but when I told the Thirtieth's rep we were an elimination unit, she changed her mind. That's what we do, see; me and my soldiers, we eliminate 'Mechs. The opposition had a bunch of brand-spanking-new machines, but the "pilots" were all guerrilla fighters. That meant they'd be used to thinking like guerrilla fighters, and they'd fight in BattleMechs the same way they'd always fought. They'd sneak around and attack in small groups or all by themselves. They'd be perfect targets for my unit; we could hide real well and take the enemy down.

Right after we arrived in Mann, we went on our first hunt-and-kill mission. Reports had tagged a small force of Liao 'Mechs in the woods about fifty clicks from the city. We took up positions and waited. Soon we spotted two 'Mechs, a *Wraith* and an *Apollo*. I'd never fought either one, but I knew a little about them. The *Wraith* would be the toughest; it has jump jets and could move damned fast.

Our two SRM platoons pelted each 'Mech with missile flights, our standard diversion. As the 'Mechs looked toward the missile barrages, the rest of us swarmed over the *Wraith*, scrambling for the sweet spots. The missile platoons shot off a volley of smoke rounds to hide us from the *Apollo*, so it wouldn't swat us off its buddy. Then our third platoon opened up on the *Apollo* with lasers and scattered TAF mines—that's Throw And Forget—to block its path. We finished planting charges on the *Wraith* and got the hell away, using the smoke as cover. The charges went off seconds later, totalling both the *Wraith's* hips.

The *Apollo* charged straight through the mines. He was faster than we thought, and might have trampled us flat if the mines hadn't slowed him down just enough so we could turn around and jump him. He did his best to swat us off and actually took out a few of my men, but we managed to plant the charges in the 'Mech's LRM bays. Then we hit the ground running, and I heard the *Apollo* go up behind me. We shot one last missile volley at each crippled 'Mech for good measure and got the hell out of there. See why I love my job?

control. Both sides in this conflict have received aid from patron states, but neither force has yet gained the advantage. The Thirtieth has hired mercenary infantry units to beef up its strength and to act as riot control where necessary. Rumor has it that the Thirtieth intends to claim New Home as its own, independent of the Lyrans Alliance and the Federated Commonwealth; if this is true, financial and military aid from both of those realms may dry up. Pirate raids against this troubled world present still another problem, and pirate bands based on the nearby world of Bryant are particularly troublesome, stealing large amounts of supplies and equipment from both major combatants.

NORTHWIND

Days to Jump Point: 12

Recharge Time: 8 days

Recharge Station: Zenith, Nadir

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
MacLeod's Highlanders (1 battalion) (CO: Colonel William MacCleod)	Veteran	Fanatical	Northwind	Northwind Highlanders
Stirling's Fusiliers (CO: Colonel Andrea Stirling)	Veteran	Fanatical	Northwind	Northwind Highlanders
First Kearny Highlanders (CO: Colonel Edward Senn)	Veteran	Fanatical	Northwind	Northwind Highlanders
Second Kearny Highlanders (CO: Colonel James D. Cochraine)	Regular	Fanatical	Northwind	Northwind Highlanders

WARNING: This entry reveals the ending of the **BattleTech** novel **Highlander Gambit**, to be released by ROC in April 1995.

Best known as the birthplace of the famed mercenary unit the Northwind Highlanders, Northwind is a nominally independent world. The Northwind Highlanders currently hold the planet, but their ranks have been depleted by a combination of fierce infighting and attempted treachery. Katrina Steiner-Davion claims Northwind as a Lyrans Alliance possession, though she has not yet sent troops to back up her pronouncement.

The Highlanders served the Capellan Confederation for centuries during the Succession Wars, but during those years of conflict Northwind fell to the armies of House Davion. For generations, Capellan chancellors promised the Highlanders they would one day regain their homeworld. That promise eventually came true, but at the hands of a Davion ruler. During the Fourth Succession War, Prince Hanse Davion offered Northwind to the Highlanders in exchange for their pledge to fight for the Federated Commonwealth. The Highlanders agreed, though a sizeable minority argued against betraying the unit's Capellan employers.

For almost thirty years the Highlanders largely ran their own affairs on Northwind. Many of them regarded service to House Davion as an acceptable price to pay for almost-independence; others, however, saw that service as an infringement on the freedom they had been promised. When several Highlander regiments were sent to reinforce the border between the Lyrans Commonwealth and the Clan Jade Falcon occupation zone, open dissatisfaction with Victor Steiner-Davion flared among members of the unit. Sun-Tzu Liao kept an eye on Northwind, and his network of agents on the planet brought word to him of the growing unrest. Knowing he lacked the strength to take Northwind by force, Sun-Tzu attempted to take it by subterfuge. He offered



Northwind and the Highlanders total independence if they seceded from the Commonwealth, and promised to back them militarily if Victor challenged them.

Sun-Tzu's offer, combined with Katrina Steiner-Davion's order releasing the Highlander regiments on the Clan border from service to the Federated Commonwealth, nearly split the Highlanders. MacLeod's Highlanders, the only regiment remaining on Northwind during the first stages of the Sarna March invasion, split into two factions. One side fought for independence; the other sided with the local FedCom militia to remain in the Commonwealth. Determined to keep Northwind and the Highlanders in his realm, Archon Prince Victor ordered the Third Royal Guards RCT to Northwind to re-establish order and calm the situation. The Third Royals' commander, however, interpreted his orders to mean taking any measures necessary to hold onto the planet—including decimating the Highlanders.

Though outnumbered, MacLeod's Highlanders held out against the Third Royals until Stirling's Fusiliers, another Highlander regiment, commanded by Colonel Andrea "Cat" Stirling, arrived home from a tour of duty on the planet Ozawa. The Fusiliers' arrival turned the tide against the Third Royals, and by the end of November 3057, Northwind finally had the independence the Highlanders had wanted for so long.

Northwind's capital city of Tara, once among the loveliest cities in the Sarna March, was heavily damaged in the fighting. The Highlanders still number more than three regiments, but many seasoned officers and soliders died in the bitter fighting. The Capellan Confederation and the Free Worlds League have recognized Northwind's independence; the Federated Commonwealth has yet to issue its official position on the issue.

—From an interview with a Highlander MechWarrior, Harlech Channel 5, April 3058

It was a hellish fight, to be sure. But we knew we'd win it. We fought for freedom; the Davions fought for nothing. We'd no choice but to win, did we now?

Two lances of my battalion created a diversion to draw off the Davion soliders so the Colonel and his strike team could take their objective. We drew them off, all right—they and almost two more lances headed straight for us. I was in my *BattleMaster*, kitted out with new tech and better weapons. My armor was getting thin from all the hits I'd taken in earlier fighting, but I led the charge anyway. We hit the Davions hard—I opened up on them with my cannon and took out the nearest pilot with one lucky shot. Things got worse after that. Most of the Davion 'Mechs were heavies; during the thick of the battle, they cost me three of my men. They died well, but it hurts like nothing else to lose someone who's followed you into the field.

Just as we were about to pull back, the Davion 'Mechs lightened up on their assaults. God alone knows what they did it for, but it was our luck that they did. We could have pressed them then, but we'd have died doing it, and my orders didn't include death-or-glory fights that day. So we turned away and headed further into Tara to get a little breathing room and pull the Davions in after us. They kept on us, and we kept them at a safe distance. When we saw Colonel Stirling's DropShips coming down, we knew it was over. A few hours later, the Davions left Tara for good.

It feels good to be free.

OUTREACH

Days to Jump Point: 3
Recharge Time: 7 days

Recharge Station: Zenith, Nadir
ComStar Facility: A

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Wolf's Dragoons (5 regiments) (CO: General Maeve Wolf)	Elite	Reliable	Outreach	Wolf's Dragoons

Outreach, the so-called Mercenary's World, was first settled during the twenty-second century by Terran colonists attracted by the planet's warm climate, large tracts of arable land, and abundant natural resources. During these early years, Outreach became known as an agricultural exporter, but tourism became the mainstay of the planet's economy after the planet began to host the Star League Martial Olympiads in 2704. Following the collapse of the Star League toward the end of the century, however, Outreach's tourism industry quickly died, forcing many inhabitants to emigrate.

In 2786 Outreach came under Capellan control, and its fortunes continued to decline for almost 200 years. During the Fourth Succession War, the Federated Commonwealth captured the planet. Following the cessation of hostilities, Prince Hanse Davion granted Outreach to Wolf's Dragoons, the most famous and formidable mercenary unit in the Inner Sphere. That action heralded a renaissance for the world. Determined to create a home for themselves, the Dragoons immediately began to rebuild Harlech, the decaying capital of Outreach. Within a few years, the Dragoons had transformed Outreach into the center of the mercenary trade for the entire Inner Sphere.

Today, Outreach remains one of the few worlds of the so-called Chaos March untouched by the bloody conflict raging in the region. Unwilling to pay the high cost of battling the Dragoons' five regiments for control of the planet, Chancellor Sun-Tzu Liao proclaimed Outreach as an independent barony of the Capellan Confederation. Generally, business has gone on as usual on Outreach. The renowned Hiring Hall, which is operated under the supervision of the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission, continues to attract mercenaries and employers. In fact, the instability in surrounding systems has caused a surge in activity at the hall, as employers from the embattled worlds of the Chaos March come to the city in search of mercenaries. Just as the mercenary trade has benefited from the tensions in the March, so have Outreach's 'Mech and weapons dealers, as well as the numerous other industries that support the mercenary trade. However, the troubles in the March have dampened Outreach's tourist industry somewhat.



INDEPENDENT WORLDS

In addition to Outreach's healthy economy, the competent Dragoon government and the planet's state-of-the-art defenses have helped make Outreach an oasis of calm in the March. Dragoon commander Jaime Wolf rules the planet with a firm yet fair hand, and the Cyclops I Orbital Station enables the Dragoons to closely monitor all incoming DropShips. These two conditions virtually ensure that none of the surrounding unrest will spill onto Outreach.

Outreach contains twin continents, named Romulus and Remus. Romulus contains the planet's capital, Harlech, as well as all of its major cities and commercial enterprises. A mountain range known as the Ridge bisects Romulus, and outside of the cities, the continent's countryside turns in small farms and lightly forested hills. Remus, also known as the Outback, is the private hold of Wolf's Dragoons. The mercenary unit maintains a headquarters and training facilities on this arid desert continent. The entire planet enjoys a warm, temperate climate all year round.



SHERATAN

Days to Jump Point: 4

Recharge Station: Nadir

Recharge Time: 9 days

ComStar Facility: B

Defending Forces:

Unit Name	Experience Level	Loyalty	Homeworld	Faction
Sheratan Knights (2 battalions conventional) (CO: Lieutenant Colonel Toby Knight)	Veteran	Fanatical	Sheratan	FedCom

A sparsely inhabited, forest-covered world with thick jungles around the equator, Sheratan is one of the most beautiful planets in the Sarna March. During the invasion, it became one of the most bitterly contested.

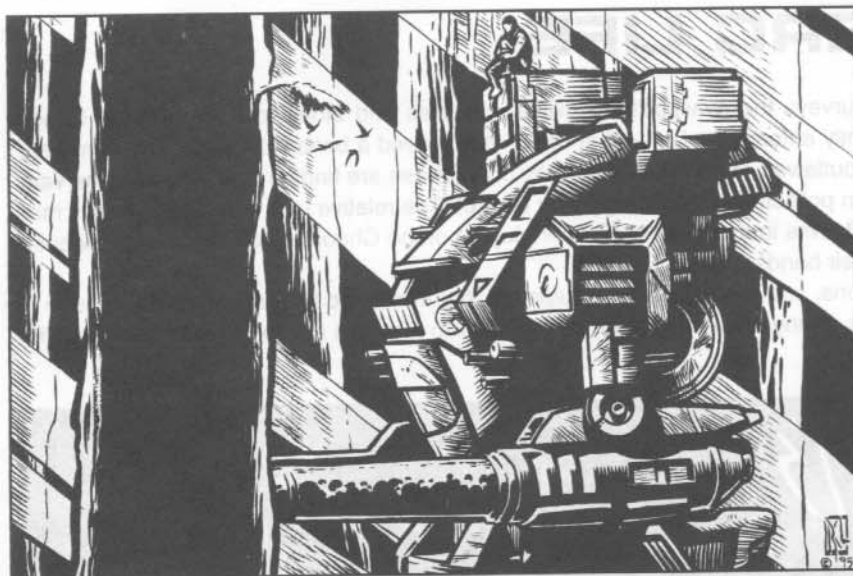
The Sheratan Knights, a single regiment of warriors utterly dedicated to the Federated Commonwealth, defended Sheratan from both invading forces and internal rebellions. The planet had suffered a protracted terrorist campaign by various groups set up and funded by the Capellan secret police since the Fourth Succession War, and so the Knights had superior training in dealing with guerrilla-style warfare. When the Capellan Chancellor ordered his agents on Sheratan into action concurrent with the invasion, bombings and mass shootings became commonplace in Sheratan's few large cities. The Sheratan Knights flushed out and destroyed many of the rebel cells, but the vast forests and dense jungles gave the surviving Liao guerrillas plenty of places to hide.

The arrival of the Fist of Mokal, mercenaries in the employ of the Free Worlds League, turned the tables in the Liaoists' favor. Seeing that Sheratan was lightly defended, the mercenaries landed in the capital and proclaimed the world a Capellan possession. The enraged Knights converged on the capital and engaged the Fist in a hit-and-run battle, downing several mercenary 'Mechs. Stunned by the attack, Major William Jeffreys ordered two of his mercenary companies to chase the Sheratan Knights into the forests and hunt them down while the third company held the fort in the capital.

With the aid of the Liao guerrillas, the Fist MechWarriors found and destroyed a battalion of the Knights. The remaining Knights set the forest ablaze, trapping the mercenaries in a burning hell. Major Jeffreys ordered his unit to charge through the flames, but escaped the blaze with only a company left intact. The inferno utterly destroyed the remaining Liao forces. The mercenary company in the capital retaliated by slaying thousands of civilians. When word of the brutal killings got out, the Fist of Mokal's contract was declared null and void and the unit itself was proscribed.

Before departing from Sheratan, the Fist started fires of its own. Soon, vast tracts of land across the planet were burning out of control. Unable to cope with the crisis, the planetary government collapsed. Various minor nobles and other charismatic leaders rose up to fill the power vacuum, and numerous petty kings are constantly contending with each other for control of the world. Meanwhile, the fires continue to burn, kept at bay only near the cities. Most of the resources that could be used to fight the fires are instead spent on small-scale warfare between the various factions. Smoke from the huge blazes makes the days hazy and the nights unnaturally dark.

The Sheratan Knights remain the only potential stabilizing force on the planet, but they control only the shattered capital city of Gellen's Heights and several square kilometers of surrounding territory. Rebel groups funded by the Capellan Confederation still operate on Sheratan, but the departure of the Marik mercenaries has greatly diminished their power.



—From *Mercenaries of the March*, Wasat Press, 3058

I never, I mean never, want to fight inside a fire again. Some people think 'Mechs are impervious to heat, that their heat sinks can handle any amount of stress. Ain't true, and I know from experience.

In a real hot fire, your heat sinks just shut down. The air gets as hot as the flames, and without cool air to flush through the sinks, you're in trouble. The heat of the fire just keeps building and building until your 'Mech turns into a ten-meter-tall ember.

I think about all the friends I lost back on Sheratan, and I just want to break something. The BattleMechs that made it out of the inferno looked like Hell itself. All were black as coal; it got so hot in there that the hands on Billy's Griffin had fused together. And we had to suffer all this because of some stinking infantry hired by the League who were supposed to help out Sun-Tzu. I'll never work for the League again. If I ever get back to Sheratan, I'll finish the job we started—by myself if I have to.

—From an intercepted transmission by the commander of the Sheratan Knights, March 3058

To our most noble Archon Prince,

I am proud to report, Sire, that the Sheratan Knights have survived and that we retain control of the capital city. However, that is the only good news I can give you.

The rest of the world is a shambles. Nobles who once served you now battle each other for domination; no fewer than fifteen separate factions have arisen so far, with more cropping up every week. Between the factional infighting, the Liaoist guerrillas, and the ongoing fires, Sheratan is in a sorry state. Lacking other orders, we have staked out defensive positions while gathering intelligence on the planet's other combatants. Many of the factions appear to be getting aid from merchants of various realms, including the Lyrn Alliance and your own dominion. Rumor has it that the Duchy of Small plans to invade within the next few months; I do not know if our troops can hold out against them. Please send troops as soon as possible, Sire. I believe we can hold out through the end of the year, but not much beyond that. As always, we will do our best for our nation and our Archon Prince.



CONTRACT
DS
58991-010-4

Dragoon Rating: C-B

Employer: Duke Blake Small

Location: Sheratan

Days to Jump Point: 4

Type of Action: Planetary Assault

Length of Contract: 8 months

Unit Type: 'Mech

Unit Size: Battalion

Pay Rate: Average

Support: Negotiable

Transport: One-third

Salvage Rights: Partial

Command: Integrated

Contract: Legitimate

Situation

The newly created Duchy of Small intends to expand its sphere of influence in the Chaos March, and seeks a high-quality mercenary battalion to gain a foothold on the nearby world of Sheratan.

Objective

The hired unit will be among the primary invasion forces in a coordinated assault on the planet Sheratan, conducted by the hired unit, Duke Small's army, and other allied troops. The hired unit will aid in securing the initial targets and capturing the entire planet.

Contract

Though the duke can pay only better-than-average wages, he can offer other incentives to a capable unit, including the support of his technical staff for needed refit and repairs. He will also assume one-third of all transportation costs from Outreach to his headquarters on Small World and to Sheratan. The operation is under the duke's command, but the hired unit's commanding officer will play an advisory role.

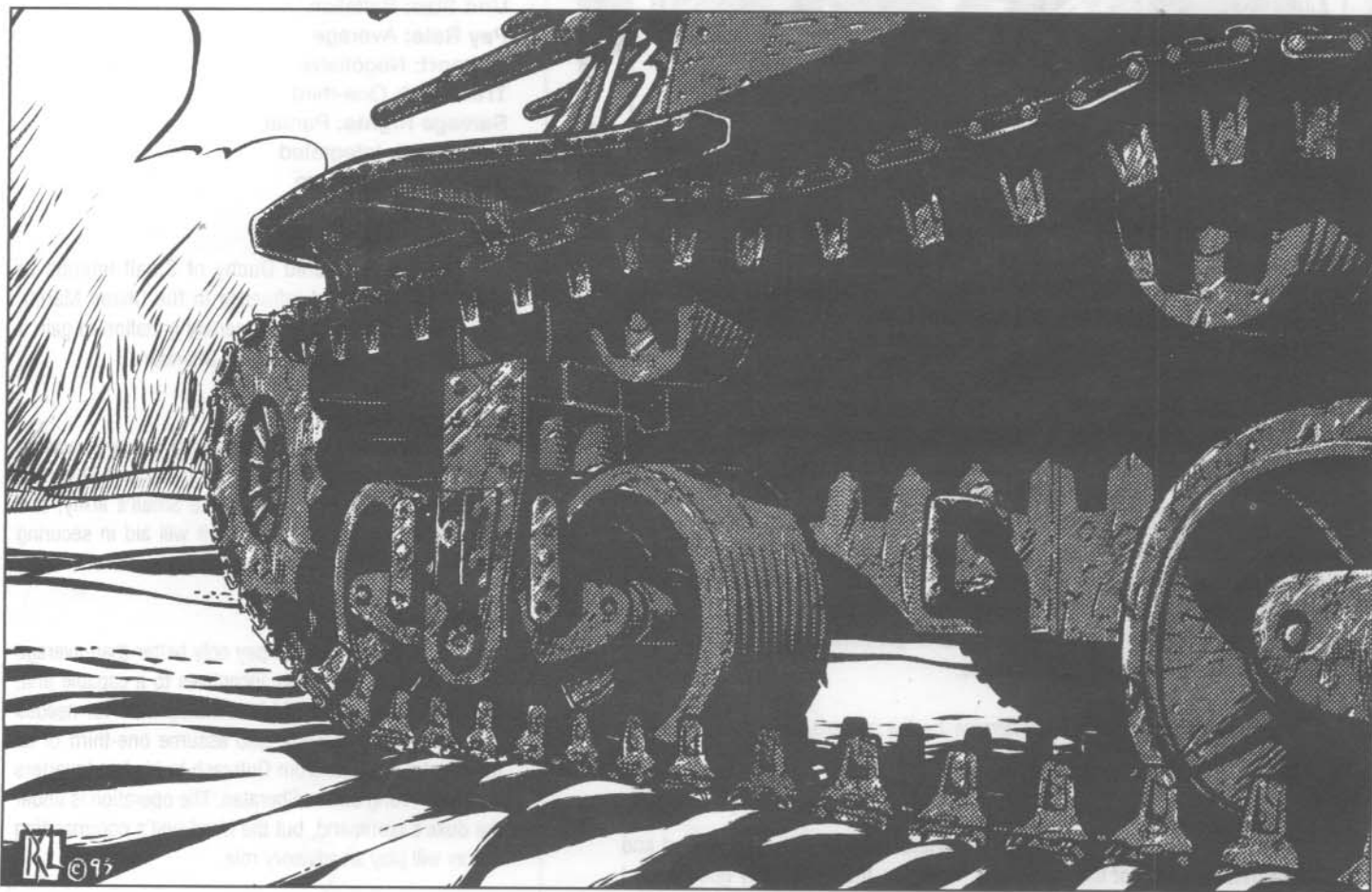
Terrain

Sheratan's lush northern forests and equatorial jungles spring from fertile soil, ideal for growing various fruits and vegetables from throughout the Inner Sphere. The Sarna March invasion has turned large stretches of Sheratan's woodlands into blackened wasteland, as the fires set during the initial battles for the planet continue to burn out of control. Some of these blazes have died out of their own accord, others have been stamped out by the de facto leaders of Sheratan's towns and cities. Enough of the planet is still burning, however, to fill the sky with a gray haze.

MERC LIFE

This special equipment supplement to *Merc Life* surveys the availability of military vehicles and other equipment in the Chaos March. The lack of authority and any means to consistently enforce the law in that region has proved a bonanza for all kinds of military manufacturing concerns. Weapons and other munitions outlawed or considered morally unfit for use are finding their way onto the various planets of the Chaos March as countless homegrown political factions struggle for control. The relative lack of available heavy military hardware in the area has set off a boom in the small arms industry, as the power players of the Chaos March scramble to acquire whatever weapons and useful equipment they can get their hands on.

The following catalogue lists vehicle designs, weapons, and miscellaneous equipment that interested buyers can easily acquire in the Chaos March. Mercenaries contemplating purchases of any such equipment are advised to exercise caution in their dealings with all Chaos March merchants.



VEHICLE DESIGNS

The countless small wars brewing in the Chaos March have sparked a business boom for a few of the Inner Sphere's smaller, less well-known military manufacturers. The lack of spare 'Mech parts turns many a battle into a confrontation between tanks and infantry, in much the same fashion as the wars fought on Terra more than a millennia ago.

Two companies—Michaelson Heavy Industries, located on the planet Ruchbah, and Kressly Warworks, located on Epsilon Eridani in the heart of the Chaos March—have seen sales rise dramatically in the past three months. In addition to increasing production of the tanks and other support vehicles that it has manufactured for years, Kressly expects to field its first BattleMech, the *Lineholder*, very soon. Michaelson Heavy Industries continues to produce large numbers of its strong-selling assault VTOLs and other fast-attack craft.

The vehicle designs presented below come from these corporations, and they are becoming increasingly common sights on the battlefields of the Chaos March. Technical data on the *Lineholder* will be added to this catalogue as soon as it becomes available.

BLIZZARD HOVER TRANSPORT

Mass: 25 tons

Chassis: Kressly Lightframe 2002

Power Plant: Nissan 95 Internal Combustion

Cruising Speed: 93 kph

Flank Speed: 135 kph

Armor: StarSlab 3

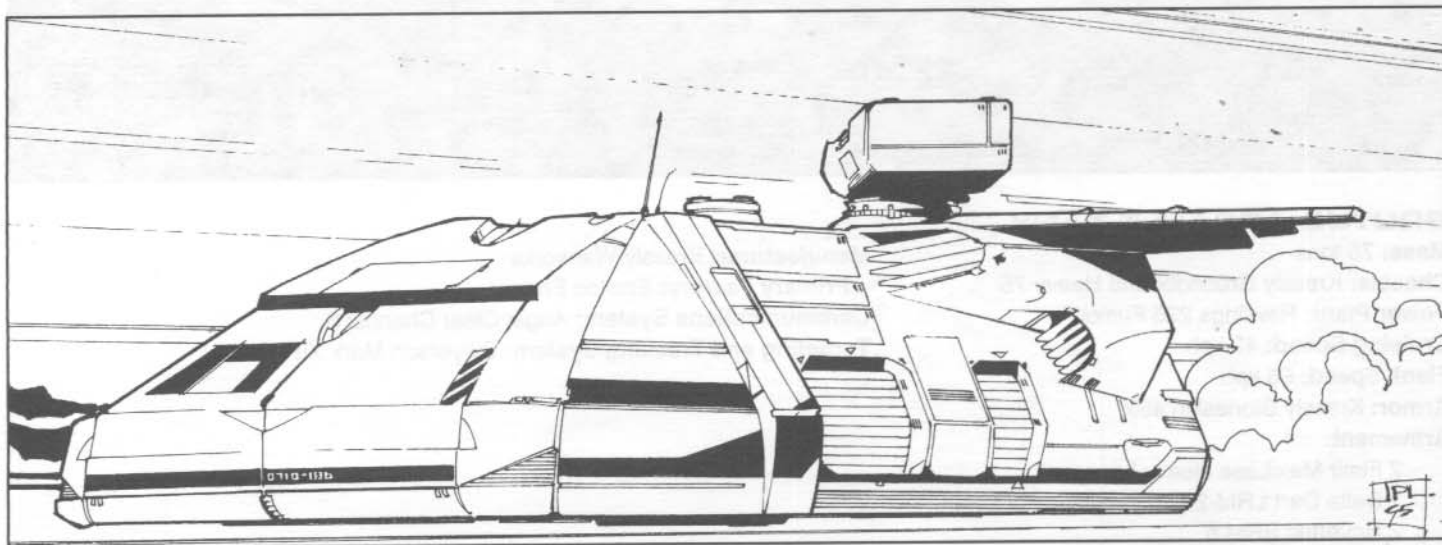
Armament: 1 LongFire V

Manufacturer: Kressly Warworks

Primary Factory: Epsilon Eridani

Communications System: Angst Clear Channel 3

Targeting and Tracking System: BlazeFire Sight Lock



Overview

Kressly Warworks designed the Blizzard in response to the need for a vehicle that could transport an entire platoon from one location to another more quickly than existing vehicles. Standard infantry transports had proved inadequate in the face of the rapid Clan advances, as the Federated Commonwealth found out to its cost during the Clan War. Because the AFFC lacked speedy troop transport countless ground troopers were stranded behind Clan lines and captured.

In designing the Blizzard, Kressly aimed for a vehicle that could move troops as swiftly and effectively as the famed Maxim transport but at a lower cost. The finished prototype met almost all Kressly's expectations: the Blizzard could carry more troops and move faster than the Maxim, but did not offer nearly as much protection. As a result, sales of the Blizzard remained low until the eruption of war in the Sarna March brought the vehicle renewed notice.

Capabilities

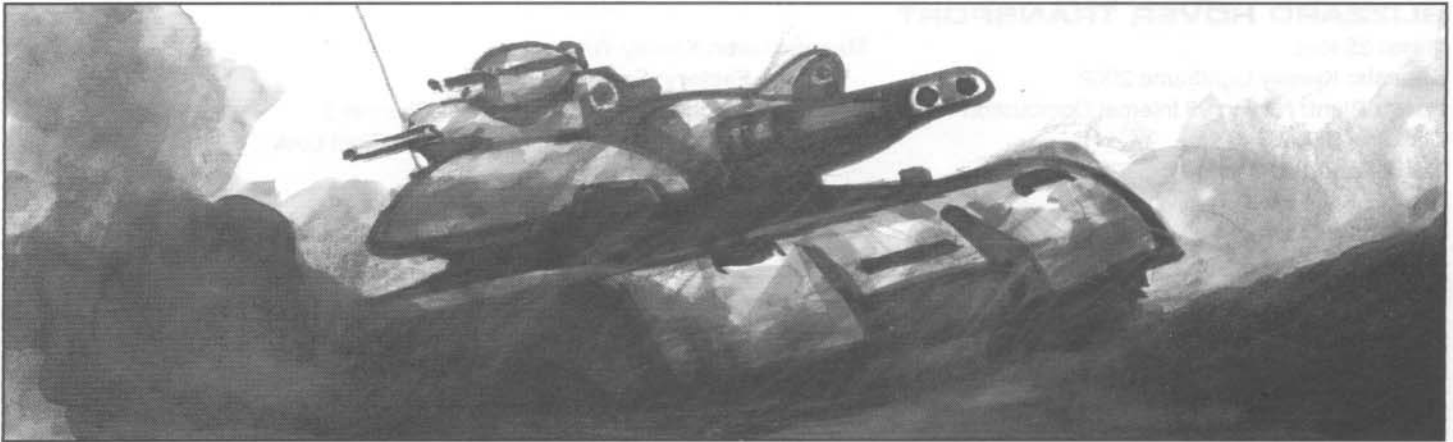
The swift Blizzard transport can carry an entire platoon of motorized or jump infantry; a simple modification of its cargo compartment allows it to carry up to two full platoons of standard foot infantry. Designed with infantry in mind, this hover transport offers extremely comfortable seating. The seats can be converted to beds for transporting up to fourteen wounded soldiers off the battlefield. The Blizzard's maximum speed of more than 130 kph allows it to reach most battle zones in seconds, and troops can disembark swiftly and efficiently from its multiple exit hatches. This focus on speed and comfort, however, comes at the expense of weapons and armor protection. The Blizzard's armor is adequate, but not exceptional. Its single turret-mounted, long-range missile launcher provides only token harassment fire against approaching units.

Deployment

So far, the Blizzard has appeared mainly within the boundaries of the Chaos March. The Federated Commonwealth and Lyran Alliance have expressed interest in the design but have yet to deploy the vehicle. The Blizzard may end up just about anywhere; Kressly's only factory is located on the so-called Trader's World of Epsilon Eridani, and the company does not discriminate against any buyers.

Variants

Because Kressly has not had much success with the Blizzard until recently, no known variants exist. Kressly promotes the craft's large cargo capacity as a strong selling point, and so is disinclined to tamper with it.



BRUTUS ASSAULT TANK

Mass: 75 tons

Chassis: Kressly Groundbound Heavy 75

Power Plant: Rawlings 225 Fusion

Cruising Speed: 42 kph

Flank Speed: 66 kph

Armor: Kressly Stoneskin 40X

Armament:

2 Fimir MaxiLase Heavy Lasers

1 Delta Dart LRM-20 rack

2 Hovertec SRM 6

1 Hovertec SRM 2

Manufacturer: Kressly Warworks

Primary Factory: Epsilon Eridani

Communications System: Angst Clear Channel 3

Targeting and Tracking System: Dwyerson Mark XII

Overview

A heavy tank with a punch, the Brutus has never been a staple of front-line forces despite its highly successful initial test runs in 2998. The Capellan High Command remained wary of the new design and relegated the Brutus to garrison and militia units, where it remained for decades.

When Hanse Davion's armies rolled over the Capellan Confederation during the Fourth Succession War, the new Federated Commonwealth captured large numbers of Brutus tanks. Impressed with their performance in combat, the new AFFC High Command pressed the tank into front-line service with its Regimental Combat Teams. The Brutus compared well with other famous heavy tanks such as the Von Luckner and the Manticore. The Brutus still plays a major role in garrison and militia forces, and it is seeing more combat in the Chaos March than anywhere in its history.

Capabilities

The Brutus has an impressive combination of long- and short-range firepower. Its two turret-mounted MaxiLase heavy lasers provide a solid punch, backed up by the turret-mounted LRM-20 rack. For short-range engagements, the Brutus can unload fourteen-missile volleys from the reliable Hovertec SRM racks located at the tank's front.

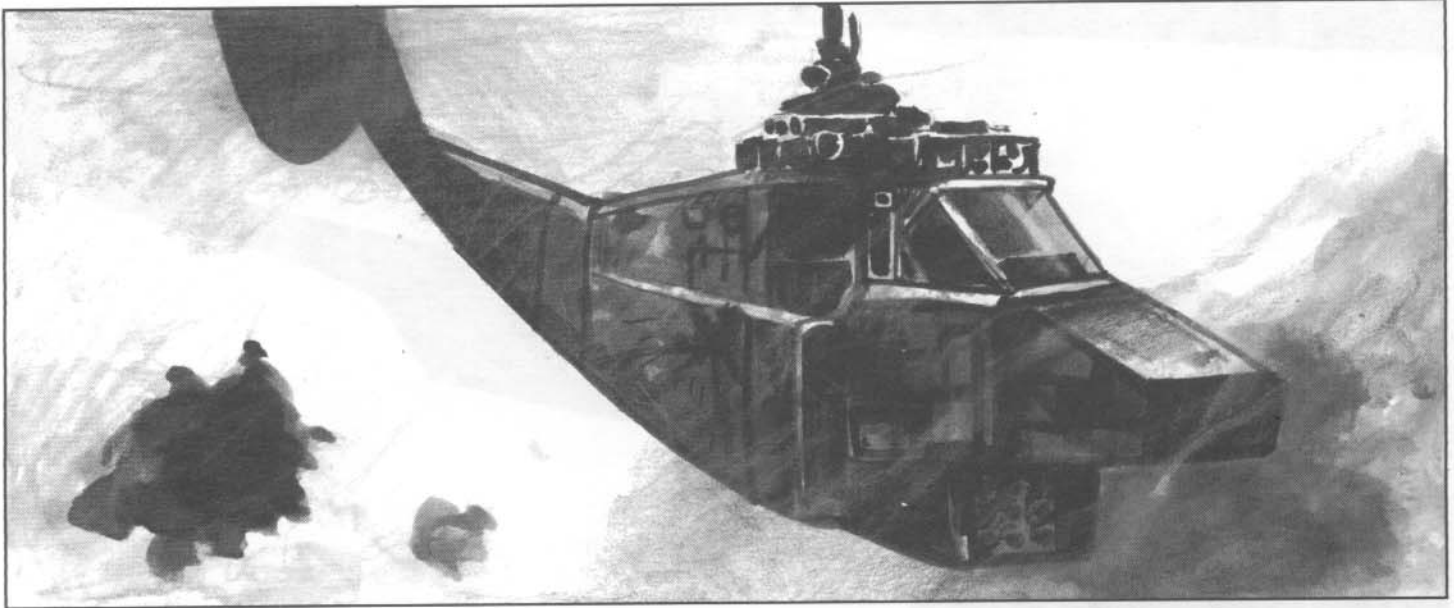
The Brutus has respectable armor protection and speed for its weight class. Though it has less armor than comparable models such as the Manticore, the Brutus compensates by offering more firepower.

Deployment

The Brutus appears in most RCTs in the Federated Commonwealth and the Lyran Alliance, and also serves as a garrison tank on border worlds. The tank also serves as a garrison vehicle in the Capellan Confederation, and has recently appeared more often in Capellan front-line units because of a dearth of other heavy fighting vehicles. Because most of the worlds in the Sarna March once belonged to the Confederation, the Brutus often shows up in forces belonging to minor nobles or other petty powers in the March. Kressly Warworks still produces the Brutus and willingly sells the tank to any buyer.

Variants

Kressly has produced a number of variants, most of which replace the heavy lasers with missile launchers. One variant replaces the LRM rack with a particle projector cannon, necessitating the removal of some of the SRM racks to accommodate the extra heat output.



CAVALRY ATTACK HELICOPTER

Mass: 25 tons

Chassis: Michaelson Swiftframe Class 30

Power Plant: Michaelson 110 Internal Combustion

Cruising Speed: 105 kph

Flank Speed: 153 kph

Armor: StarSlab 3

Armament: 1 Harpoon-6 SRM Rack, 3 Holly SRM Derringers

Manufacturer: Michaelson Heavy Industries

Primary Factory: Ruchbah

Communications System: Garret Supremesound

Targeting and Tracking System: Garret D2j

Overview

The Cavalry attack helicopter is one of several new VTOL designs from Michaelson Heavy Industries, and it is primarily suited for rapid assaults or relief efforts. Since its debut in 3054, the Cavalry has seen limited but effective use. The chopper played a vital part in the escape of more than a regiment of infantry from Clan Steel Viper forces when that Clan retook the world of Twycross; a lance of Cavalrys slowed the advance of the Viper 'Mechs long enough for the AFFC troopers to board their APCs and retreat.

Capabilities

The sleek Cavalry packs a deadly punch. Multiple SRM racks deliver a lethal barrage of missiles, and this speedy chopper can maneuver quickly enough to get the best shot and depart before the enemy can return fire. MechWarriors in the Chaos March have learned to fear lances of Cavalry copters because they often carry inferno rounds in their SRM launchers. A forest can quickly become a blazing funeral pyre for any 'Mech unlucky enough to get caught in the crossfire.

The Cavalry's critics note the chopper's limitations. With limited ammunition and no secondary weapons systems, the craft may become defenseless in an extended battle. Michaelson executives stress that the Cavalry is designed for brief hit-and-run engagements rather than as a front-line attack chopper, and that so far it has performed such missions flawlessly.

The Cavalry's armor protection is more than adequate for its one-man crew. Heavy armor layers on the nose of the craft allow it to take a hit from a Clan PPC and keep flying. As with most VTOLs, the Cavalry's rotor is its weakest point, but Michaelson has armored this vital piece of equipment as heavily as possible.

Deployment

The Cavalry is too new a design to have seen much use in the regular units of the AFFC. The Federated Commonwealth has purchased some, but most of the Cavalry's sales have been to nobles in the Draconis and Sarna Marches. On the fields of the Chaos March, the Cavalry is being used to its utmost effectiveness.

Variants

Michaelson offers one variant of the Cavalry, reducing its armor and adding another Holly SRM-2 rack. Interested buyers should balance the increased firepower against the VTOL's increased vulnerability to damage.



YELLOW JACKET GUNBOAT

Mass: 30 tons

Chassis: Michaelson Surroundframe Class 30

Power Plant: Michaelson-Omni 40 Internal Combustion

Cruising Speed: 64.8 kph

Flank Speed: 97.2 kph

Armor: StarSlab 3

Armament: 1 Poland Main Model C Gauss Rifle

Manufacturer: Michaelson Heavy Industries

Primary Factory: Ruchbah

Communications System: Garret Supremesound

Targeting and Tracking System: Garret D2j

Overview

The Yellow Jacket gunboat is Michaelson Industries' newest design. A deadly craft, the Yellow Jacket provides one of the most mobile fire-support platforms in existence. Though it carries only one weapon, the Yellow Jacket is capable of sustained fire. A lance of Yellow Jackets is one of the most lethal forces an enemy can face, and most Yellow Jackets are sold in lances to buyers. This new design has sparked interest in the Federated Commonwealth and the Lyran Alliance. Field tests being conducted in the Chaos March will prove the effectiveness of this chopper.

Capabilities

The Yellow Jacket is built around the Poland Model C Gauss rifle. This huge weapon, which makes up half the craft's weight, can hurl rounds at speeds up to Mach 2.2. The Yellow Jacket carries enough ammunition to remain on the field for extended sorties, wreaking havoc on enemy lines.

Though not as fast as most VTOLs, the Yellow Jacket still has far greater speed than most BattleMechs and OmniMechs. The Gauss rifle's long range combined with the Yellow Jacket's respectable speed keep the vehicle relatively safe, as does its heavy armor. Like the Cavalry, the Yellow Jacket can take a direct hit to its nose from a Clan PPC and keep flying.

Deployment

Sales for the Yellow Jacket started high and have continued to climb. Most of the early models went to garrison forces in the Sarna March, where they are still in use. The AFFC has also used the craft on the Clan border and achieved solid results, sparking more interest in the design around the Inner Sphere, but this interest has yet to materialize into major orders. Michaelson Heavy Industries frequently uses footage from skirmishes in the Chaos March to help close sales of the Yellow Jacket.

Variants

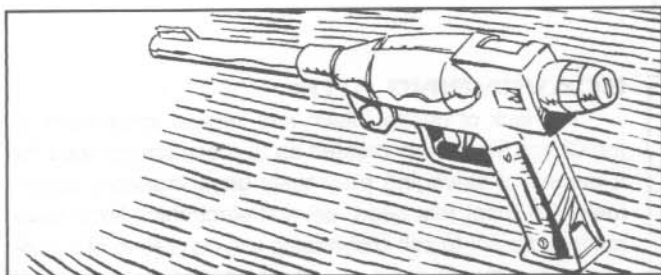
The single existing variant of the Yellow Jacket replaces almost a ton of armor with more ammunition for the Gauss rifle. Michaelson does not recommend this variant, but will supply it at customer request.

PERSONAL WEAPONS



STERNSNACHT "PYTHON" HEAVY PISTOL

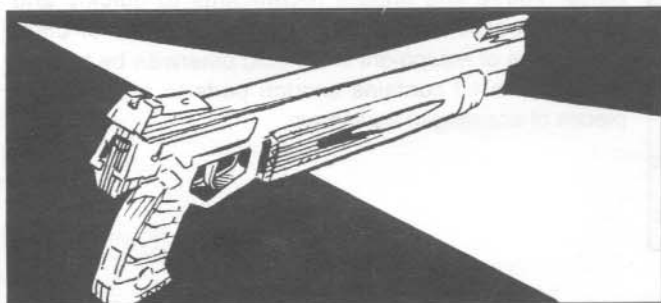
The smaller cousin of the Sternsnacht heavy pistol known as the Claymore, the Python has been around for years. Overshadowed by the larger and more powerful gun, the Python's sales lagged until several factors contributed to its recent and dramatic resurgence in the small-arms market. Fueled partly by its appearance as Ace Slater's weapon of choice in the hit holoshow *Warrior II* and partly by the Sternsnacht corporation's price reduction, plus the fact that they flooded the Chaos March market with it, this sidearm now outsells most others in the weapons bazaars on Epsilon Eridani. Though less powerful than the Claymore, the Python's greater range and larger ammunition clip make it a popular choice.



SUNBEAM "NOVA" LASER PISTOL

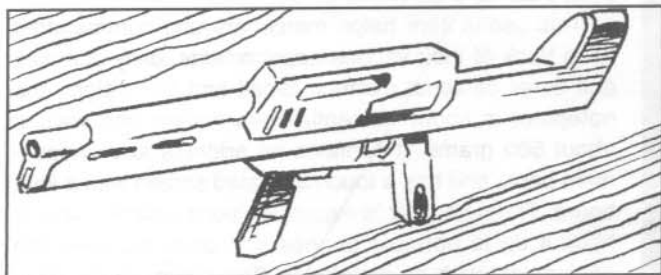
Famous for making heavy pistols that cause massive damage, Sunbeam has continued that tradition with the Nova, its latest entry in the laser pistol market. The deadly Nova can incapacitate or kill an opponent with a single shot. Developed specifically to take down Clan Elementals, the Nova has found a new market in the Chaos March.

Despite its lethality, the Nova has its critics. The laser pistol has only one slot available for power packs, limiting prolonged use and leading some disappointed buyers to call it "a two-shot wonder."



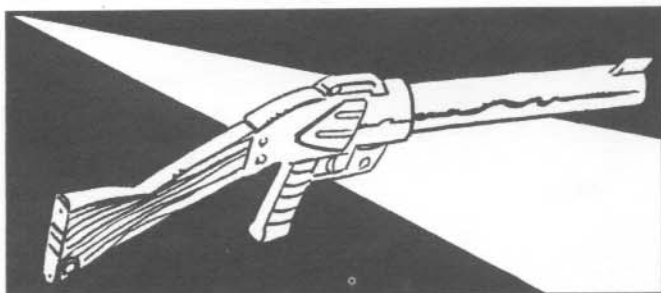
COVENTRY "HANDROCKET" GYROJET PISTOL

Coventry Arms has finally developed a usable gyrojet pistol, the first to hit the market since the height of the Star League era. The Coventry Handrocket pistol has a much longer and more accurate range than the standard, poor-quality jet pistols currently on the market, and its sleek design adds to its popularity. Coventry has made a killing with these weapons on numerous Chaos March worlds, including Sheratan and Bryant, and hopes to expand its share of the personal-weapons market by the end of the year.



EMPEROR AX-22 ASSAULT RIFLE

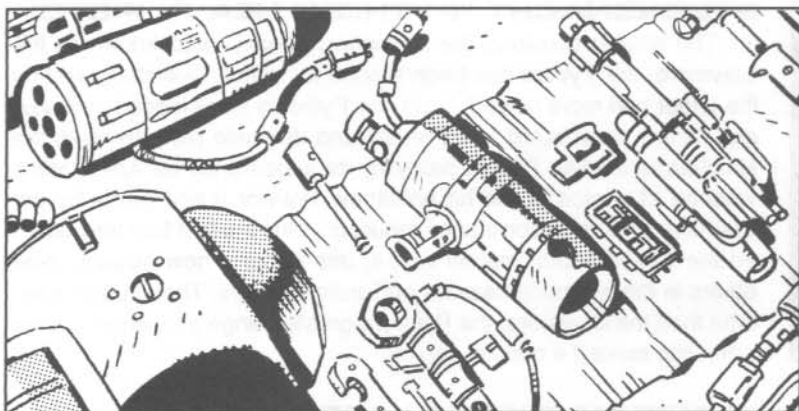
The Emperor Corporation has begun field-testing its new assault rifle in the Chaos March and has already received positive feedback from several quarters. The compact design has proved extremely reliable and accepts a wide range of add-ons. Such features have made the AX-22 a highly sought-after weapon in the Chaos March, and the design appears destined to become a standard weapon throughout the Inner Sphere.



KOREAN FARSHOT PORTABLE LRM LAUNCHER

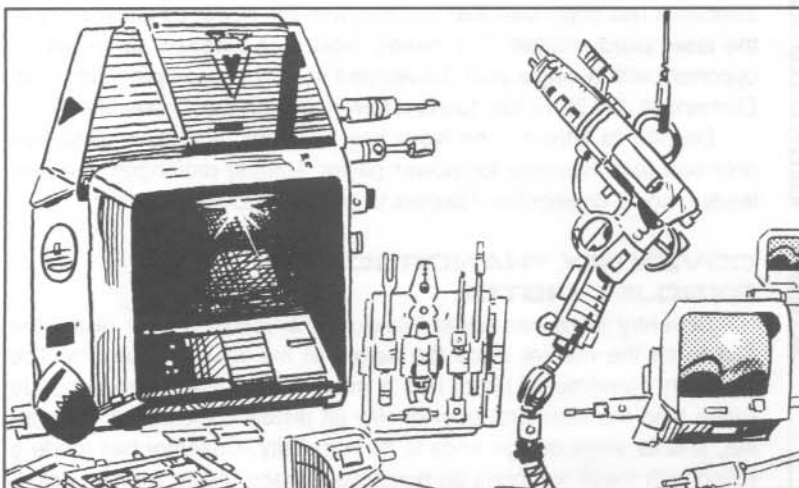
The Korean FarShot is a prototype man-pack LRM launcher. Basing the weapon on the standard personal SRM launcher, Korean designers retooled the launcher to fire rockets at much longer ranges, though with less punch. A recent market entry, the FarShot is difficult to obtain; Korean Enterprises in the Federated Commonwealth and Brooks Inc. of the Free Worlds League are the only manufacturers that make the launcher and its missiles.

MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT



BYPASS KITS

These kits allow technicians to perform various bypass operations when making quick, jury-rigged repairs to BattleMechs and vehicles. Each kit contains enough parts and gear for three successful bypasses of actuators, energy weapons, engines, and sensors. As replacement parts for 'Mechs and vehicles become scarcer in the Chaos March regions, the demand for these kits is rising.



SCAVENGING KITS

The lack of quality 'Mech and vehicle spare parts in the Chaos March has created an unprecedented need for a means of salvaging previously unsalvageable equipment. To meet this need, several electronics firms have recently begun to sell scavenging kits consisting of a variety of commonly used, inexpensive circuits and other parts. These kits enable technicians to quickly and cheaply reassemble badly damaged weapons or other vital pieces of equipment that would otherwise be beyond repair. Each kit contains enough parts to rebuild three pieces of scavenged equipment.



NOTEPUTER

This useful item helps mercenary unit commanders keep track of their various appointments, daily activities and other personal matters. Small and lightweight, the noteputer is about 15 centimeters square and weighs about 500 grams. It contains an address and appointment book, and has a touch-activated screen with a keyboard. The noteputer's expansion ports enable users to hook it up to portable phones and other transmission equipment, such as portafaxes. The noteputer can hold anywhere from 10 to 50 gigabytes of information and accepts numerous software applications such as language translator programs.



RULES

The **Rules** section contains five main subsections: **Campaigning in the Chaos March**; **Equipment Rules**, including statistics for the new vehicles described in the Merc Life section of the **Guide to the Chaos March (Guide)**; new **MechWarrior** rules; a brief guide to the planet **Outreach**; and a **Gamemaster Briefing**.

Campaigning in the Chaos March provides guidelines on selecting a type of campaign—**BattleTech**, **MechWarrior**, or “mixed”—and two methods for generating and running such campaigns. This section also provides guidelines for using the contracts presented in the **Guide** as the impetus or focus for campaigns.

The **Equipment Rules** section supplies **BattleTech** game rules for the weapons and other equipment described in the Merc Life section of the **Guide**. The rules for Salvaging, Jury-Rigging with Bypass Kits, Patchwork Armor and LRM Infantry are Level Three rules, and thus do not apply to tournament **BattleTech** play. Statistics for the new vehicles presented in the Merc Life section also appear here. The **MechWarrior Rules** section offers new advantages, Skill Packages, and archetypes for the **MechWarrior** game system.

The guide to the planet **Outreach** provides an overview of the planet and its history and offers useful details about the city of Harlech, the Hiring Hall, and people and places of interest to player characters. This information expands on the Outreach section presented in the **MechWarrior** adventure **Null Set**.

The **Gamemaster Briefing** is for the gamemaster's eyes only. This section provides inside information on the real political situation in the Chaos March, including the five Great Houses' true intentions toward this area of space, and reveals the unvarnished truth of the motivations prompting the actions of various factions and petty rulers.

As with other rules and guidelines presented in previous **FASA** products, feel free to modify or disregard these rules to best fit your campaign.

CAMPAIGNING IN THE CHAOS MARCH

The gamemaster must make two basic choices before designing and launching a campaign in the Chaos March. He must first decide on the type of campaign he wants to run, then choose a method to generate and run the campaign.

TYPES OF CAMPAIGNS

Gamemasters may choose to run **BattleTech**, **MechWarrior**, or “mixed” campaigns in the Chaos March. Generally, this choice dictates the pace and scale of the campaign, as well as the amount of roleplaying the player characters perform.

BattleTech Campaigns

BattleTech is basically a war game that involves two competing forces squaring off on the field of battle. **BattleTech** campaigns generally involve a series of such battles, with slight pauses to repair equipment or to negotiate or renegotiate contracts. Generally, the **BattleTech** campaign operates on a large scale, with forces ranging in size from companies to battalions, and involves very little roleplaying.

MechWarrior Campaigns

MechWarrior, on the other hand, is primarily a roleplaying game. Players focus more on their individual characters, and the action takes place on a smaller scale. As a result, **MechWarrior** campaigns generally proceed at a slower pace. Player characters obtain contracts, travel to their destinations, fight battles, and interact with other characters along the way. Simply put, a **MechWarrior** campaign focuses much more on what happens before, after, and between the battles than a **BattleTech** campaign.

Mixed Campaigns

Because of their different focuses, the **BattleTech** and **MechWarrior** game systems complement each other quite well and can be used together to run a “mixed” campaign. Players can use **BattleTech** rules to wage battles, then switch to **MechWarrior** rules until the next engagement. The **BattleTech** rules allow players to wage battles with large forces, and the **MechWarrior** rules allow players to roleplay some rest and recreation, as well as contract negotiations and the like.

GENERATING A CAMPAIGN

The gamemaster may use one of two basic methods to generate and run a Chaos March campaign—the “campaign options” method or the “random generation” method. In the campaign-option method, the gamemaster begins by choosing one of the provided campaign options. These describe the scope of the campaign, the size of the players' unit, the unit's employer, the types of assignments the unit will perform, and the settings. Then the gamemaster fleshes out the details of the campaign by using the contracts provided in the **Guide** and background information provided in the **Gamemaster Briefing**.

In the random-generation method, the gamemaster uses dice rolls and various tables to determine the player unit's employer, assignments and the campaign settings. Choose the generation method that best suits your style of play from the following sections that describe each method, or use a combination of the two methods. The **Gamemaster Briefing**, beginning on p. 88, provides additional background information on the hidden power struggles taking place in the Chaos March. Use this information to flesh out the details of your campaigns.

CAMPAIGN OPTIONS

This section offers six different campaign options. The gamemaster may simply choose one of these options, then offer the players an appropriate contract(s) selected from those provided with the planet descriptions in the **Guide** section. Explanations of the contract format and background information are provided in **Contracts**, pp. 61–64. Alternately, gamemasters may create their own contracts based on the campaign option chosen and the background information provided in the **Gamemaster Briefing**, beginning on p. 88.

Small Mercenary

The Small Mercenary campaign involves a mercenary unit no larger than a company. The unit travels to Outreach to seek employment in the Chaos March from nearly any party that will hire them. Because the unit is small and probably inexperienced, it finds itself taking most of its jobs from various factions and petty rulers—these employers cannot afford larger and more experienced units. These contracts may enhance the unit's reputation, but the majority of these factions are tight on funds and can easily be overthrown, leaving the unit high and dry.

The Small Mercenary campaign option works well for gamemasters who want to run **MechWarrior** campaigns, because it involves small detail and extensive roleplaying. Player characters should comprise most of the unit members, with a few non-player characters to round out the group.

Large Mercenary

In the Large Mercenary campaign, the players belong to a battalion- or regiment-sized mercenary unit. Though the unit is inexperienced, its size commands attention and attracts the notice of the major powers involved in the Chaos March. The unit sees extensive combat because House leaders prefer to sacrifice mercenaries in their battle for control of the March rather than expend House troops.

The Large Mercenary campaign may prove demanding for both the players and gamemaster to run because larger merc units are often more difficult to manage than smaller units. The Large Mercenary campaign is best suited to **BattleTech** campaigns, as it provides fewer opportunities for roleplaying.

Small House

In the Small House campaign, the players' unit is a small unit from the army of a Great House or one of the smaller powers operating in the Chaos March. The unit avoids most of the supply and refit problems that mercenaries face, but the unit is considered a special-forces detachment and is sent on highly dangerous missions. Like the Small Mercenary campaign, the Small House campaign is well suited to **MechWarrior** campaigns.

Large House

The player characters are members or commanders of a large House unit in the Large House campaign. Though this unit can be accurately characterized as big and nasty, the unit often plays a supporting role to the mercenary troops slugging it

out on the front lines and jumping in only if things go bad. The unit is far from safe, however. Its large size attracts attention and the unit soon finds itself targeted by enemy forces in sneak attacks. Like the Large Mercenary campaign, the Large House campaign is well suited to **BattleTech** campaigns.

Merchant

In the Merchant campaign, the player characters are independent merchants conducting trade in the disputed regions of the Chaos March. The Merchant campaign contains just as many, if not more economic pitfalls as any mercenary-based campaign, and the action can get just as hot. Merchants that operate in the March carry their own defense—usually 'Mechs—and the characters serve as hired guns riding along in case of trouble.

The Merchant campaign can operate on any scale. The merchants may operate on one world, shopping their cargoes from city to city and forced to deal with the multiple factions struggling to control that planet, or they may own a DropShip and travel between worlds. In this case, they must contend with such threats as pirates and unfamiliar political powers. The Merchant campaign is well suited to **MechWarrior** campaigns.

Pirate

In the Pirate campaign, the player characters form a pirate unit that raids Chaos March worlds and loots what it can. The unit may be evil—capturing civilians and forcing them to work as slave labor—or they may simply raid to obtain the supplies they need for survival. Pirates may also be disreputable merchants, stealing someone else's goods and reselling them to an opposing force.

Most pirate bands hole up on some barely habitable world or deserted rock within the March. However, some lucky pirate units may find themselves in better standing, such as the various bandit groups that have taken up residence in the noble estates on Acamar.

A pirate's life is hard and dangerous. Insufficient supplies and the constant threat of retribution from an angered power can bring about the unit's demise at any time. However, crafty bandits can always hire themselves out as cut-rate mercenaries. Most pirate units own JumpShips and DropShips.

The Pirate campaign is equally well suited to **BattleTech** and **MechWarrior** campaigns.

RANDOM GENERATION

In the random-generation method, the gamemaster makes dice rolls and consults multiple tables to determine the number of contracts offered to the players' unit, the unit's employer, assignment/contract, and opposition. (Readers may recognize elements of this system from the **Mercenary's Handbook: 3055**.) Though the system was designed primarily to generate contracts and missions for mercenary units, it works just as well for other troops.

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Finding An Employer

To determine the player unit's employer, first determine how many contract offers the unit receives in a single month by rolling 2D6 and consulting the Contract Offers Table. Modify the result for Dragoon-rated units using the following formula: +3 for D-rated units, +2 for C-rated units, +3 for B-rated units, +1 for B-rated units, and +0 for A-rated units.

CONTRACT OFFERS TABLE

Roll (2D6)	Offers
2-4	1
5-6	2
7-9	3
10	4
11-12	5
13+	6

Next, determine the unit's potential employer by rolling 2D6 and consulting the Main Employer Table. If the roll produces a result of "Minor Power" or "Independent World," roll 2D6 again and consult the appropriate table. Background information on the various employers is provided in the **Guide** section, beginning on p. 8, and in the **Gamemaster Briefing**, p. 88.

MAIN EMPLOYER TABLE

Roll (2D6)	Employer
2-3	Federated Commonwealth
4	Lyrans Alliance
5-8	Minor Power
9-10	Free Worlds League
10-11	Capellan Confederation
12	Draconis Combine

MINOR POWER TABLE

Roll (2D6)	Employer
2	Saiph Triumvirate
3-4	Sarna Supremacy
5-6	Styk Commonality
7-8	Duchy of Small
9	Terracap Confederation
10-11	Independent World
12	Sirian Holds

INDEPENDENT WORLD TABLE*

Roll (3D6)	Employer
3-4	Caph
5	New Home
6	Bryant
7	Epsilon Indi
8	Sheratan
9	Carver V
10	Epsilon Eridani
11	Fletcher
12	Acamar
13	Hall
14-15	Elgin
16	Hsien
17	Arboris
18	Genoa

*Note: Determine the independent world, then consult the appropriate section in the **Guide** and the **Gamemaster Briefing** and choose a faction to serve as the player unit's employer.

Determining Assignments

After determining the player unit's employer, consult the associated Assignments Table and make the indicated dice rolls. For definitions of the various types of assignments listed in the tables, see **Assignments**, p. 62 in the **Contracts** section.

FREE WORLDS LEAGUE ASSIGNMENT TABLE

Roll (1D6)	Assignment
1	Garrison or Cadre duty
2	Defensive Campaign
3-4	Pirate Hunting
5	Objective Raid (into Chaos March)
6	Special Assignments (see Special Assignments Table)

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CAPELLAN CONFEDERATION ASSIGNMENT TABLE

Roll (2D6)	Assignment
2-3	Garrison Duty
4	Defensive Campaign
5	Objective Raid
6-7	Planetary Assault
8-9	Riot Duty
10	Guerrilla Warfare
11-12	Relief Duty

FEDERATED COMMONWEALTH ASSIGNMENT TABLE

Roll (2D6)	Assignment
2-3	Garrison Duty
4-5	Objective Raid
6	Defensive Campaign
7	Planetary Assault (into Chaos March)
8-9	Pirate Hunting
10-11	Guerrilla Warfare
12	Relief Duty

DRACONIS COMBINE ASSIGNMENT TABLE

Roll (2D6)	Assignment
1-2	Garrison Duty
3	Relief Duty
4	Objective Raid (into Chaos March)
5-6	Pirate Hunting

MINOR POWER ASSIGNMENT TABLE

Roll (1D6)	Assignment
1	Defensive Duty
2	Objective Raid
3	Recon Raid
4	Riot Duty
5	Special Assignment (see Special Assignment Table)
6	Planetary Assault

INDEPENDENT WORLD ASSIGNMENT TABLE

Roll (1D6)	Assignment
1-2	Objective Raid
3	Recon Raid
4	Defensive Duty
5-6	Assault

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT TABLE

Roll (1D6)	Assignment
1	Recon Raid
2-3	Guerrilla Warfare
4-5	Extraction Raid
6	Objective Raid (against major power or force)

Mission Specifics

After determining the basic mission profile, flesh out the contract with details. Consult the **Gamemaster Briefing** beginning on p. 88 for background information on the Chaos March worlds. Gamemasters who desire additional guidelines for creating missions may consult **Hot Spots** and **Mercenary's Handbook: 3055**. The following paragraphs offer guidelines for adapting those texts for use with games taking place in the Chaos March. See **Assignments**, p. 62, for the standard duration of various mission types.

Length of Contract and Payment: Guidelines for determining the length of contracts and payment appear on p. 106, **Mercenary's Handbook: 3055**. Use the following employer payment modifiers for the new employers presented here: Minor Power: x 1; Independent World: x 0.5

Support: Rules for determining support are presented on p. 107, **Mercenary's Handbook: 3055**. Apply the following modifications for Chaos March contracts. For Straight Support from a minor power, subtract 10 from the final result. For example, a C-rated unit rolls a 7 for a modified result of 8 (7 + 1 [for being a C-rated unit] = 8). The gamemaster then subtracts 10 from the result, yielding a final result of 55 percent (65 - 10) support. Units working for an independent world must subtract 20 from the final result. When determining battle-loss compensation, the gamemaster again subtracts 10 from the final result for any minor power and 20 from the final result for independent worlds.

Transport: If using the transport guidelines on pp. 107-108 of the **Mercenary's Handbook**, subtract 5 from the final result for any minor power employer and 15 from the final result for any independent world employer. Note that independent world employers do not compensate hired units for commercial transport.

Salvage Rights: When dealing with the smaller factions present in the Chaos March, units can reasonably expect to receive good salvage rights. Indeed, most smaller powers grant full salvage rights to compensate for the lack of support and/or transportation costs. However, the Great Houses and other major powers do not alter their salvage-rights policies for Chaos March contracts. Use the salvage rights guidelines on p. 108, **Mercenary's Handbook**, when determining salvage terms in contracts from these employers.

Command Rights: Command rights are one of the most important contract conditions to a hired unit. Smaller powers know this and often grant hired units independent command to compensate for low pay. When combined with full salvage,

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most commanders give favorable consideration to an independent-command contract, regardless of potential employer instability. Most of the Great Houses also grant independent command to hired units on assignments in the Chaos March because that policy allows the House militaries to move their valued officers to other fronts occupied by regular troops in need of leadership.

Opposition: The gamemaster may roll dice and consult the following tables to generate small opposition forces. These tables are unsuitable for creating large opposition forces, however, which must be designed by the gamemaster.

QUICK OPPOSITION TABLE

Roll (2D6)	Force
2-3	2 battalions of mechanized infantry
4-5	1 battalion of mechanized infantry and 1 company of medium armor
6-7	2 battalions of mechanized infantry and 1 company medium armor
8-9	1 company of light armor and 1 'Mech lance
10	2 'Mech lances and 1 battalion of mechanized infantry
11	3 'Mech lances
12	3 'Mech lances and one company of medium armor

INFANTRY TYPE TABLE (BY BATTALION)

Roll (1D6)	Type
1-2	Rifle
3	Machine Gun
4	Flamer
5	Laser
6	SRM

ARMOR TYPE TABLE (BY COMPANY)

Roll (1D6)	Type
1-2	Tracked
3-5	Wheeled
6	Hover

BATTLEMECH WEIGHT TABLE (BY LANCE)

Roll (1D6)	Weight
1-2	Light
3-4	Medium
5	Heavy
6	Assault

EXPERIENCE LEVEL (ALL TYPES)

Roll (1D6)	Experience
1-3	Green
4-5	Regular
6	Veteran



CONTRACTS

While players should feel free to create unique contracts for their game based on the information provided in this book and other **BattleTech** products, the **Guide to the Chaos March** offers numerous contracts that gamemasters may use to bind players to a single mission or an extended campaign. Most of these contracts appear near the description of the planet occupied by the employer or the opposition. Page 6 in the introduction to the **Guide** offers an easy reference to the available contracts by sorting them according to Type of Action.

If the gamemaster decides to use the contracts provided, he should simply choose an appropriate contract or contracts for his campaign, then consult the **Gamemaster Briefing** for additional background information on the employer and target world listed in the contract. The gamemaster can use the information on the hidden political situations of employers and target worlds provided in the **Briefing** to design random encounters during the mission. Rather than arranging for players to learn secret information through planned encounters, the gamemaster may also allow players to discover pertinent information about their mission through investigation or even casual conversations. Several gamemaster briefings also include specific information on the listed contracts, including opposition the hired unit is likely to face. Feel free to customize the opposition to suit your players' forces.

As soon as he feels prepared to run a campaign based on the chosen contract, the gamemaster may present the contract to his players by arranging for a representative of the employer to contact the unit. At this meeting, the players should receive a copy of the mission briefing so that they may negotiate the terms of the contract. The players also may sign a physical contract, if appropriate to the group's style of play.

The gamemaster also may allow the players to choose a contract from those provided. To give himself time to prepare that contract, the gamemaster can simply create obstacles to the unit's departure from Harlech; the easiest stall is for the contract employer's representative to be currently unavailable. While the players wait for a response on the mission they want to run, the gamemaster may run an "interim mission" for a contract he has prepared.

Further guidelines on using contracts appear in the **Mercenary's Handbook: 3055**, though that book is not required for running campaigns in the Chaos March.

The contracts in the **Guide** provide the following information.

Contract Number

The Hiring Hall uses this number to categorize and record each contract. The number includes the realm from which the contract originates, the date on which the contract was recorded, the numerical order in which the contract was recorded on that particular day, and a validating code number.

Dragoon Rating

Each mercenary unit registered with the Hiring Hall receives a rating from Wolf's Dragoons that gives potential

employers an idea of the unit's character and experience. The rating on the contract specifies the quality of unit the employer wants. The rating also provides both parties with a basis for negotiation. For example, if a unit has a lower rating than that specified on the contract, the employer may reduce the pay he is offering. Or if the unit has a higher rating, the employer may have to raise the pay offer to recruit the unit. Dragoon ratings are based on the familiar letter-grade system, with A being the highest rating and D the lowest. (The formula for calculating the Dragoon rating of a unit is listed on pp. 99–100 of **Mercenary's Handbook: 3055**. If this book is unavailable and the players' unit has not already been rated, simply disregard the Dragoon rating information.)

Employer

The employer represents the planetary body, government, corporation, faction, or individual offering the job.

Location

The location is the planet on which the action of the mission will take place.

Days to Jump Point

Days to Jump Point indicates the distance between the location planet and the JumpShip entry point in the planet's system. This distance is expressed in the number of days a DropShip must travel at normal acceleration from the JumpShip entry point to an orbital position around the planet.

Type of Action

Type of Action identifies the contract's mission as one of the fourteen following mission types: Garrison Duty, Cadre (Training) Duty, Recon Raid, Retainer, Pirate Hunting, Objective Raid, Planetary Assault, Diversionary Raid, Extraction Raid, Relief Duty, Defensive Campaign, Riot Duty, Security Duty, and Guerrilla Warfare. See **Assignments**, p. 62, for definitions of the mission types.

Length of Contract

The Length of Contract represents how long the unit must stay in action on the planet to fulfill the terms of the contract.

Unit Type

The Unit Type designation indicates the type of unit the employer wants for the job. This point can be negotiated. The players' unit should take care not to accept a mission beyond its capabilities, however. For example, an infantry unit negotiating for a job advertised as requiring BattleMechs would make a lot more money than with a standard infantry contract, but such a mission would likely prove suicidal.

Unit Size

Unit Size indicates the size of the unit the employer considers appropriate for the job. This point may also be negotiated, but the same precautions mentioned in the Unit Type section apply here.

Pay Rate

The pay rate describes the fee offered in the contract. (For a more comprehensive system of determining the pay offered in a contract, see p. 106, **Mercenary's Handbook: 3055**.)

Support

Support represents the amount of money that the employer will provide to cover the unit's technical support and battle damage costs. A unit listing under this heading represents any troop support the employer will provide for the hired unit.

Transport

The employer will cover this amount of the transportation cost to and from the mission location.

Salvage Rights

The Salvage Rights entry indicates how much battlefield salvage the employer intends to share with the unit.

Command

The Command information identifies who is in charge in the operation. "Independent" command rights means a hired unit is free to make its own battlefield decisions. "Integrated" command means the hired unit's commanders will have to share command with a commander designated by the employer.

Situation

The Situation section describes the current situation on the mission planet and the nature of the mission.

Objective

Objective describes the specific goal of the contract mission.

Contract

The Contract entry summarizes the terms of the contract.

Terrain

Terrain describes the landscape of the contract's location.

ASSIGNMENTS

The following mission types describe the fourteen most common assignments in mercenary contracts.

Garrison Duty

A unit on garrison duty protects a planet or part of a planet against possible incursions by unfriendly forces. Depending on the planet's size and proximity to enemy borders, garrison duty may entail various amounts of combat. Generally, only garrison forces stationed near hostile borders frequently come under fire. The Successor States garrison planets they identify as prime raiding targets, as well as relatively safe worlds, a practice that frees their regular troops to undertake military campaigns against enemy states.

Fees for garrison duty are lower than for most other assignments because of their relative lack of danger. Garrison-duty contracts typically run for a minimum of one year.

Cadre (Training) Duty

Typically, merc units are hired to train corporate security forces, local militias, or guerrilla groups. Corporate and militia training generally poses little hazard, and so pay is minimal. Training guerrillas may involve significant risk, however, and so pay can be quite high for such work. A few mercenary units, in particular the Kell Hounds and Wolf's Dragoons, train other mercenaries for a fee. These units offer the best training available in the Inner Sphere.

Generally, cadre-duty contracts run for a minimum of one year.

Recon Raid

Recon duty involves reconnoitering enemy positions and testing local defenses. A light mercenary recon force usually spends a few days to a few weeks on the surface of a planet, testing defenses and gathering information as a prelude to a full-scale invasion. To avoid capture or destruction, a recon unit must be small and fast. Recon units normally engage in combat only long enough to determine the enemy's willingness and ability to fight. Recon contracts normally provide good pay and plenty of autonomy for the hired unit, as most employers leave the method of accomplishing the assigned task to the discretion of the hired unit.

Recon raiding contracts generally run for a minimum of one month.

Retainer

A unit on retainer performs various missions at the whim and expense of its employer for the duration of the retainer contract. Many such contracts include a clause stipulating an additional 10 percent combat fee. Generally, retainer contracts run for a minimum of two years.

Pirate Hunting

Pirate activity has grown in the Chaos March, and many of the new Chaos March states as well as Inner Sphere powers who own or trade with planets in the March hire mercenary units to destroy pirates. Pirate-hunting contracts provide hired units with unparalleled autonomy and typically last a minimum of two months.

Objective Raid

Objective raids most often involve destroying a certain enemy installation, parcel of land, piece of equipment, and so on. Other raids involve the recovery of stolen goods or stealing goods for an employer. Because these assignments entail attacks against strategic targets in enemy territory, they can be quite hazardous. As a result, these quick-and-dirty missions are among the riskiest and highest-paying contracts offered to mercenaries.

Normally, objective-raid contracts last no longer than two months.

Planetary Assault

These high-risk operations involve capturing target worlds heavily defended by entrenched enemy forces. Because few mercenary units are large enough to take a planet single-handedly, mercenaries most often serve as support troops for the House regulars who bear the brunt of combat. The high risks involved in this kind of heavy combat duty make planetary-assault contracts extremely lucrative. Because planetary assaults can last for months, most units place their technical support in protected base camps on the target planet's surface to complete necessary repairs between skirmishes.

Planetary-assault contracts run for a minimum of four months.

Diversionsary Raid

Sometimes called suicide runs, diversionary raids involve drawing off as many enemy forces as possible from the true objective of an assault. These missions pose several hazards to hired units. First, most employers pave the way for diversionary raids by feeding the enemy misinformation designed to portray the diversion as the real attack, and so defending forces often react ferociously to the raiding troops. Also, some employers tell mercenary units that the diversionary raid is actually part of a major assault. As a result, a hired unit may make an all-out attack, believing support is close at hand.

Generally, diversionary-raid contracts run for a minimum of one month.

Extraction Raid

Similar to the more common objective raid, most extraction raids involve removing something or someone from the possession of a government or individual and delivering it to the unit's employer. Though kidnapping does not constitute an extraction raid, freeing political or military prisoners does. Extraction raids may also involve collecting deep-cover agents from a certain planet or stealing technological secrets.

Extraction raids may be open or covert and may take place over any length of time. Pay varies depending on the complexity of the job, but most extractions pay well. Typically, extraction-raid contracts run for a minimum of three months.

Relief Duty

Most planetary-assault forces bring an abundance of troops to assure victory through sheer numbers. As a result, defensive forces often need enormous amounts of support, including relief forces. Because most relief contracts are offered only after an employer realizes that its forces cannot handle the attackers alone, mercenary units hired to relieve beleaguered regulars can negotiate excellent terms.

Relief duty poses various risks, however. For example, attackers often control all approaches to the besieged planet, making landing and deployment difficult for relief troops. And coordinating operations with local commanders can be extremely difficult—by the time the relief force arrives, the local forces are usually no longer in a position to offer much help.

As with most risky missions, high pay balances the hazards. Relief-duty contracts run for a minimum of two months.

Defensive Campaign

Employers often hire mercenaries to defend their worlds or assets from anticipated attacks or theft. Generally, such defensive missions require hired units to engage the enemy, either in several small skirmishes or major battles, and slow them down until relief forces arrive to aid the defense. The defending mercenary units can usually choose the terrain of the battlefield, which greatly increases their chances of victory.

Defensive campaigns offer good pay and substantial benefits in some cases. Defensive-campaign contracts generally run for a minimum of three months.

Riot Duty

Most mercenaries consider riot duty the worst of all possible assignments, and many units simply refuse it if possible. This aversion stems from the fact that most riot missions involve using force against civilian populations who disagree with their world's ruling faction or its policies. However, cash-strapped outfits often have little choice about the work they accept, and so employers can always find a unit willing to perform the duty. Riot duty can become quite dangerous as well, if the rioting factions are well-armed and -trained terrorists supported by an enemy power. Hired units must contend with the threat of bombings, assassinations, and other non-battlefield attacks. Many employers also stipulate that a rebellious city or area must take as little physical damage as possible, often forcing mercs to leave their 'Mechs and pursue terrorists on foot.

Riot-duty contracts rarely pay well and last a minimum of three months.

Security Duty

Security duty involves protecting a specific person, object, piece of information, or valued asset from anticipated attack or theft. Corporations frequently hire mercs for security, deeming it more prudent to pay mercenaries than spend money and time training replacements for in-house troops. Despite the very real risk of combat, security assignments generally pay poorly.

The minimum contract for security duty runs for four months.

Guerrilla Warfare

Arguably the most difficult and dangerous mission type, guerrilla-warfare duty involves dropping onto a world and harassing its defending units for as long as possible by destroying supply bases, capturing military shipments, making terrorist attacks on enemy bases, and performing other acts of aggression. Guerrilla units often operate without support from their employer, which provides the hired unit with nearly complete autonomy but also denies the unit any additional aid. In most cases the entire unit, including techs and support personnel, lands on the target planet—which puts the entire unit at risk if things go sour.

Guerrilla-warfare duty can also involve recruiting and training fighters from the local population, as in cadre duty, then leading them in a revolt. The constant threat of exposure makes these recruitment and training missions even more dangerous

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than standard guerrilla operations. And because the guerrillas usually do not possess their own BattleMechs, the hired unit's MechWarriors usually bear the brunt of the fighting. An employer hiring a unit for such duty does so only for good reason and normally has the money to make the job worth the unit's while. These missions offer the highest pay of any assignment, along with numerous benefits.

Guerrilla-warfare contracts run for a minimum of six months.

EQUIPMENT RULES

The following section provides Level Three game rules for the weapons, personal equipment, and 'Mech bypass kits presented in the Merc Life part of the **Guide**. The special Availability and Price rules reflect the difficulty of tracking down and purchasing these prototypical designs.

AVAILABILITY AND PRICE

Because of the scarcity of the weapons and equipment presented here, player characters must make Scrounge Rolls to locate these items. Modify these rolls with the appropriate Availability Modifiers listed in the Personal Weapons Table and the Equipment Table.

Once a player character successfully locates an item or weapon, the gamemaster determines the asking price for the item by multiplying the base price of the item by a Price Multiplier. Base prices and appropriate Price Multiplier ranges are listed with each item in the Personal Weapons Table and Equipment Table. The gamemaster chooses the Price Multiplier, but for purposes of game balance it should fall within the supplied range.

PERSONAL WEAPONS TABLE

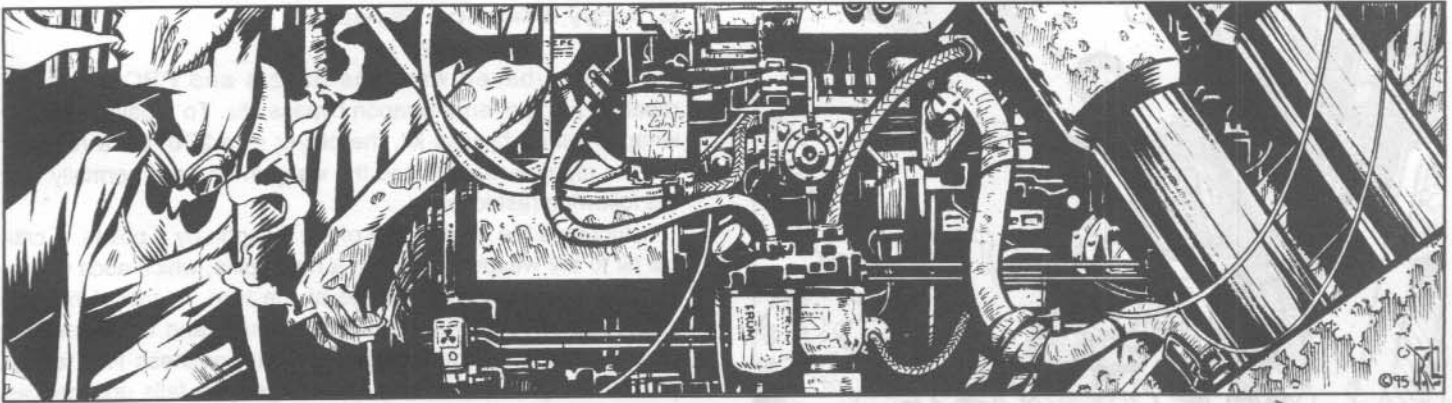
Weapon Type	Skill Class	Damage	Short	Range Med	Long	Ammo
Sternsnacht "Python"						
Heavy Pistol	Sm Arms	3D6 + 1	1-3	4-7	8-11	12 (clip)
Sunbeam "Nova"						
Laser Pistol	Sm Arms	6D6 + 4	1-2	3-4	5	Pwr Use: 10
Coventry "Handrocket"						
Gyrojet Pistol	Sm Arms	3D6	1-3	4-6	7-11	5 (clip)
Imperator Assault Rifle	Sm Arms	3D6	1-7	8-15	16-32	15 (clip)
Corean "FarShot" Portable LRM Launcher*	Support Wpns	3D6 + 3	1-36	37-84	85-126	1
*The LRM launcher is specifically designed to be used against distant targets. The rockets are launched in an arcing indirect path, which makes it difficult to hit close targets. To account for this difficulty, reverse the to-hit modifiers for short and medium range—the launcher suffers no to-hit penalty at medium range, but a +2 penalty at short range. Apply the standard +4 modifier for long range.						

Weapon Type	Tech Level/ Availability	Availability Modifier	Base Price (in C-bills)	Price Multiplier	Reload Cost (in C-bills)
Sternsnacht "Python" Heavy Pistol	(1/B)	-3	125	1-2	4
Sunbeam "Nova" Laser Pistol	(3/B)	+1	1,250	1.5-3	N/A
Coventry "Handrocket" Gyrojet Pistol	(2/B)	+1	250	1-2.3	5
Imperator Assault Rifle	(2/A)	+1	200	1-1.5	3
"FarShot" Portable LRM Launcher	(3/D)	+3	2,000	2-3	1,500

EQUIPMENT TABLE

Item	Tech Level/ Availability	Availability Modifier	Base Price	Price Multiplier
Bypass Kits				
Actuator Bypass Kit	(3/B)	-1	10,000	1-2
Energy Weapon Kit	(3/B)	-2	8,000	1-1.5
Engine Bypass Kit	(3/B)	-1	12,000	1-2
Sensor Bypass Kit	(3/B)	+1	15,000	1.5-2.5
Salvage Kit*	(3/B)	+1	4,000	2-3
Noteputer	(2/B)	+1	500	2-4
*See Salvaging , p. 65.				

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SALVAGING

Under normal circumstances, BattleMechs that have suffered extensive damage cannot be salvaged. The current scarcity of 'Mechs and spare parts, however, has prompted 'Mech manufacturers to produce scavenging kits (see *Merc Life*, p. 54 in the **Guide**) that enable techs to rescue parts of 'Mechs previously considered damaged beyond repair.

A tech using such a kit may salvage parts from a 'Mech that has lost all its internal structure to weapons fire or physical attacks by making a successful Technician ('Mech) (9) Roll. Successful rolls enable a player to salvage parts from the 'Mech regardless of the amount of damage to the 'Mech's internal structure. This special salvage rule does not apply to engines or 'Mech locations that are destroyed by ammunition or engine/fuel explosions, or to the life support system, sensors, cockpit, or any equipment listed under Other Equipment on the Weapons and Equipment Table, pp. 104–106 in the **Compendium**.

Repairing Salvaged Parts

Salvaged parts must be repaired before they can be used. Make Repair Rolls per the Repair Difficulty Table, p. 95, **BattleTech Compendium: The Rules of Warfare**. For the purposes of determining difficulty, consider all of the item's critical slots destroyed. Apply a +2 modifier to all target numbers. If the roll succeeds, the repaired part works. Only complete repairs are possible. If the player rolls a partial repair result, the salvaged part is destroyed.

Using a Repaired Item

Repaired items are particularly vulnerable to breakdowns. Use the following guidelines to determine if and when a repaired, salvaged part fails. If a salvaged part breaks down, the player may attempt to salvage it again using the salvaging rules.

Actuator: When a unit uses a salvaged hand or arm actuator, including such actions as punching, pushing, charging, clubbing, and picking up objects, the actuator may break down. A salvaged leg or foot actuator will break down only if the 'Mech runs or jumps. Immediately after using a salvaged actuator, the player rolls 2D6. On a result of 11+, the actuator breaks down and is considered destroyed.

Gyro: A unit using a salvaged gyro must add +1 to all Piloting Skill Rolls. Every time the unit falls or jumps, the player must roll 2D6. On a result of 11+, the gyro breaks down and is considered destroyed.

Heat Sink: A salvaged heat sink may break down if the 'Mech overheats. If the 'Mech's heat level is higher than 1 on the Heat Scale in the End Phase, roll 2D6. If the result is equal to or less than the 'Mech's current heat level, a salvaged heat sink burns out. That heat sink is considered destroyed, but the 'Mech's heat level remains the same.

Jump Jet: Every time a 'Mech using salvaged jump jets jumps, roll 2D6. If the result is equal to or less than the distance (in hexes) the unit was jumping, all salvaged jets in the 'Mech burn out, causing it to crash to the ground. The burned-out jets are considered destroyed and the pilot must make two Piloting Skill Rolls.

If the first roll fails, the 'Mech misses its target hex. Roll 1D6 and consult the Scatter Diagram (p. 79, **BattleTech Compendium: The Rules of Warfare**) to determine which of the six hexes adjacent to the target hex the 'Mech actually lands in. If a unit already occupies the hex in which the 'Mech lands, resolve the landing as though the jumping 'Mech had executed a death from above attack.

If the pilot fails the second piloting roll, the 'Mech falls. To determine falling damage, consider the BattleMech to have fallen a number of levels equal to the distance (in hexes) the 'Mech jumped.

Weapon: If a 'Mech makes a To-Hit Roll of 2 using a salvaged weapon, the weapon will break down. Resolve the attack normally, but the weapon is considered destroyed from that point on.

JURY-RIGGING WITH BYPASS KITS

Bypass kits may be used to repair leg and arm actuators, energy weapons, engines and sensors. The appropriate kit must be used for each repair, and only one repair may be made with each kit. Prices for bypass kits are listed in the Equipment Table, p. 64. The quick-fix repairs made possible by bypass kits are not very safe but enable a damaged BattleMech to return to the battlefield very quickly.



Leg Actuators

Repair Time: 75 minutes

To replace a damaged leg actuator with a leg-actuator bypass kit, the player must roll 2D6. On a result of 8+, the replacement succeeds and the 'Mech may move normally with the following restrictions:

Reduce the 'Mech's Running MP by 1. A successful charging or kicking attack by the 'Mech automatically destroys the actuator bypass. A critical hit to the bypass automatically causes the 'Mech to fall and otherwise has the same effect as a critical hit to that location. Whenever the 'Mech makes a jump, the controlling player must roll 2D6. If the result is 7+, the impact of landing destroys the bypass. Bypass penalties to movement are cumulative, except that a unit's Running MP cannot be reduced below its Walking MP.

No more than two leg actuators on the same leg may be replaced with leg-actuator bypass kits. Leg-actuator bypass kits may not be used to replace damaged hip actuators.

Arm Actuators

Repair Time: 75 minutes

To replace a damaged arm actuator with an arm-actuator bypass kit, the player must roll 2D6. On a result of 8+, the replacement succeeds and the 'Mech may use the arm normally with the following restrictions:

A successful punching or charging attack by the repaired 'Mech destroys the bypass, as does any attempt to lift an object heavier than a MechWarrior. A critical hit to a shoulder-actuator bypass causes the affected arm to hang useless by the 'Mech's side, and any weapons mounted on the arm may not be fired.

No more than two arm actuators on the same arm may be replaced with arm-actuator bypass kits.

Energy Weapon Bypass

Repair Time: 90 minutes

Energy-based weapons (lasers and PPCs) may be repaired using energy-weapon bypass kits. To repair an energy weapon with a bypass kit, the player rolls 2D6. On a result of 7+, the repair succeeds and the weapon be used normally with the following restrictions:

Increase the heat output of the weapon by 2 points. A critical hit to the weapon results in a heat spike, which adds 6 Heat Points during the Heat Phase of the turn. A critical hit also causes an electrical surge in the cockpit, and the controlling player must immediately make a Consciousness Roll for the pilot. If the pilot is currently undamaged, he falls unconscious on a result of 2, but recovers automatically in the End Phase of the next turn.

If the 'Mech falls, the player must roll 2D6 for each bypass-repaired weapon. On a result of 7+, the weapon is destroyed and causes a heat spike, which creates 6 Heat Points during the Heat Phase of the turn.

Engine Bypass

Repair Time: 150 minutes

An engine bypass kit enables a 'Mech to operate with a damaged fusion engine by rerouting the engine exhaust vents to the outside of the 'Mech. To install an engine bypass kit, the player rolls 2D6. A result of 8+ means the repair succeeds and the 'Mech may operate normally with the following restrictions:

The 'Mech loses half its armor (rounding up) on each rear torso location. For attackers rolling on the Determining Critical Hits Table for successful attacks against the 'Mech's rear, a result of 6-9 inflicts 1 critical hit. Apply all other results normally. A critical hit to the engine results in a heat spike of 10 Heat Points for that turn only, in addition to the normal effects of the loss of shielding.

If using the Level Three sensor rules (p. 45, **Tactical Handbook**), units using thermographic sensors modify the to-hit number by -2 when firing at a unit with a bypassed engine.

Sensor Bypass

Repair Time: 45 minutes

If both a BattleMech's sensors have taken critical hits, a technician may replace the sensors with a sensor bypass kit. The controlling player rolls 2D6. A result of 6+ gives the 'Mech normal sensor operations with the following restrictions:

The sensor bypass occupies only one critical hit slot; consider the second slot a Roll Again result. The sensors can target only one opponent at a time. The sensors can aim only one weapon without penalty; apply +2 modifiers to to-hit rolls for all additional weapons (this restriction does not affect Streak SRMs). The sensor bypass system operates only in the visible light spectrum. The unit suffers a night combat modifier of +3 and cannot use the Level Three sensor modes offered in the **Tactical Handbook**.

PATCHWORK ARMOR

Normally, battlefield units that carry ferro-fibrous armor cannot use standard armor and vice versa. The scarcity of armor in the Chaos March, however, has prompted techs to devise methods that circumvent this restriction. Techs can fit standard armor to locations that carry primarily ferro-fibrous armor by rolling 2D6 for each armor replacement attempt. A result of 7+ means the replacement succeeds and the armor functions normally.

A result of 7+ also successfully fits ferro-fibrous armor to locations that carry primarily standard armor, but the location must include at least 4 available critical slots (2 available slots if fitting Clan ferro-fibrous armor to the location), regardless of the amount of armor being replaced. The amount of ferro-fibrous being added may not exceed 50 percent of the available armor space, rounding up.

A WHM-6R Warhammer has taken 10 points of damage to the standard armor on its right arm. The Warhammer's tech has only ferro-fibrous armor available to replace the destroyed armor. The arm location contains 4 available critical slots, and so the replacement is possible. However, the ferro-fibrous may only be used to replace 5 points of armor ($10 \times .5 = 5$).

To replace any type of armor with the special types of armor described in the **Tactical Handbook**, use the rules for replacing standard armor with ferro-fibrous. The special effects of these unique armor types do not work when the armor is used as patchwork.

LRM INFANTRY

In response to conditions in the Chaos March, weapons manufacturers have begun producing portable LRM launchers for infantry platoons. LRM launchers are not as potent as infantry SRM launchers, but they provide infantry units with greater striking range without decreasing their mobility. Infantry LRM launchers are ineffective at close ranges, however.

Unique game statistics for LRM infantry are provided below. Unless specified otherwise, LRM-equipped infantry are subject to the same rules as other types of infantry. (When using **BattleTroops** rules, LRM-equipped platoons require 4 launchers per squad.)

LRM INFANTRY TABLE

Type	MP	Number of Men	Maximum Damage*
Foot LRM	1	28	7
Motorized LRM	3	28	7
Jump LRM	3	21	6

*Use the Rifle Platoon Damage Row on the Infantry Record Sheet.



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BASE TO-HIT TABLE

Range in Hexes	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
To-Hit Number	12	10	8	6	4	4	4	6	6	6	8	8	9

VEHICLE STATISTICS

The following section provides BattleTech game statistics for the new vehicles described in Merc Life, p. 48 of the **Guide**.

BLIZZARD HOVER TRANSPORT

Type: **Blizzard Hover Transport**

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Movement Type: Hover

Tonnage: 25

Equipment		Mass
Internal Structure:		2.5
Engine:	95	6
Type:	ICE	
Cruising MP:	9	
Flank MP:	13	
Heat Sinks:	0	0
Control Equipment:		1.5
Lift Equipment:		2.5
Power Amplifier:		0
Turret:		0.5
Armor Factor:	48	3
	Armor Value	
Front	10	
R/L Side	10/10	
Rear	9	
Turret	9	

Weapons and Ammo Location		Tonnage
LRM-5	Turret	2
Ammo (LRM) 24	Body	1
Infantry	Body	6

BRUTUS ASSAULT TANK

Type: **Brutus Assault Tank**

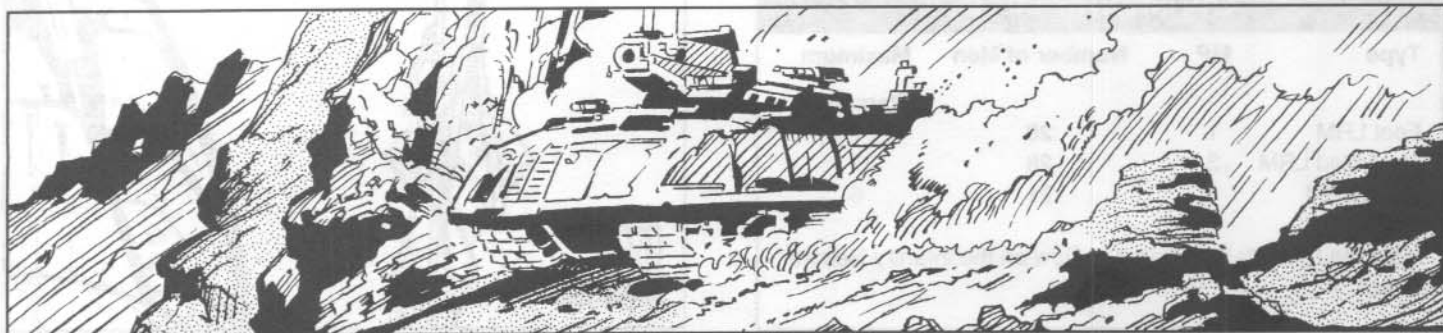
Technology Base: Inner Sphere

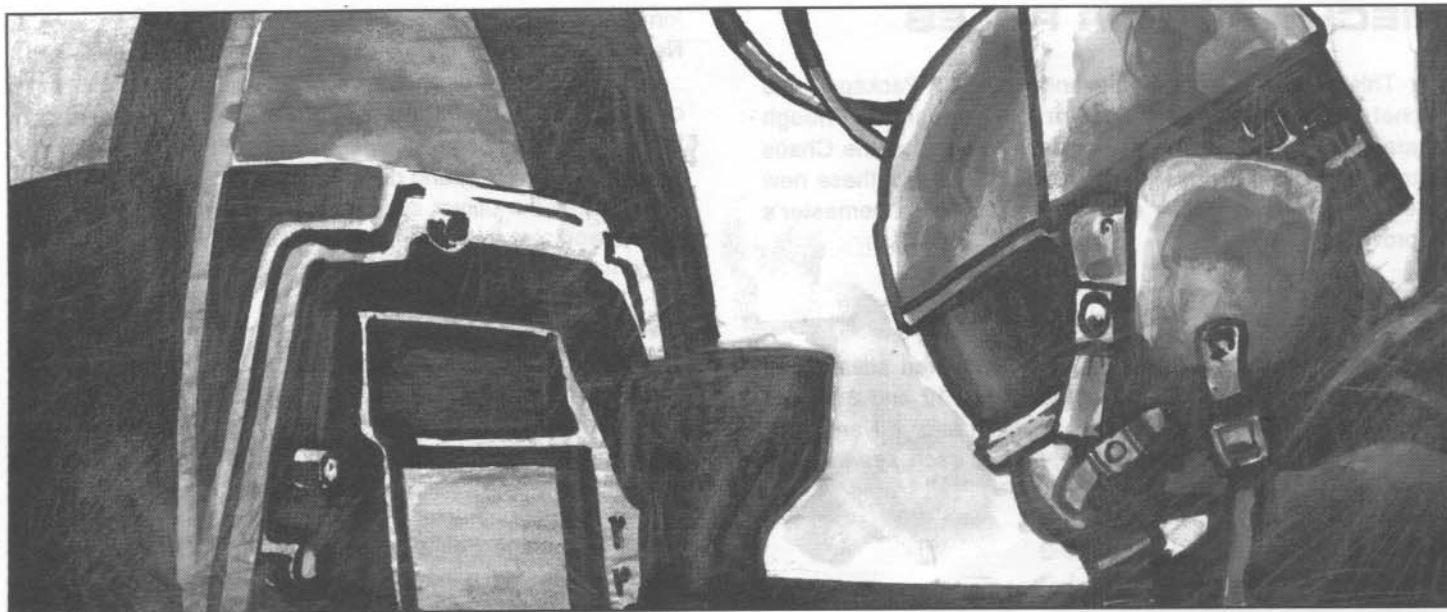
Movement Type: Tracked

Tonnage: 75

Equipment		Mass
Internal Structure:		7.5
Engine:	225	15
Type:	Fusion	
Cruising MP:	3	
Flank MP:	5	
Heat Sinks:	16	6
Control Equipment:		4
Lift Equipment:		0
Power Amplifier:		0
Turret:		2
Armor Factor:	136	8.5
	Armor Value	
Front	34	
R/L Side	27/27	
Rear	21	
Turret	27	

Weapons and Ammo Location		Tonnage
Large Laser	Turret	5
Large Laser	Turret	5
LRM-20	Turret	10
Ammo (LRM) 18	Body	3
SRM-6	Front	3
SRM-6	Front	3
Ammo (SRM-6) 15	Body	1
SRM-2	Front	1
Ammo (SRM-2)	Body	1





CAVALRY ATTACK HELICOPTER

Type: **Cavalry Attack Helicopter**

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Movement Type: VTOL

Tonnage: 25

Equipment		Mass
Internal Structure:		2.5
Engine:	110	7
Type:	ICE	
Cruising MP:	10	
Flank MP:	15	
Heat Sinks:	0	0
Control Equipment:		1.5
Lift Equipment:		2.5
Power Amplifier:		0
Armor Factor:	56	3.5

	Armor Value
Front	20
R/L Side	13/13
Rear	8
Rotor	2

Weapons and Ammo Location		Tonnage
SRM-6	Front	3
Ammo (SRM-6) 15	Body	1
SRM-2	Front	1
SRM-2	Front	1
SRM-2	Front	1
Ammo (SRM-2) 50	Body	1

YELLOW JACKET GUNBOAT

Type: **Yellow Jacket Gunboat**

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Movement Type: VTOL

Tonnage: 30

Equipment		Mass
Internal Structure:		3
Engine:	40	2
Type:	ICE	
Cruising MP:	6	
Flank MP:	9	
Heat Sinks:	0	0
Control Equipment:		1.5
Lift Equipment:		3
Power Amplifier:		0
Armor Factor:	56	3.5

	Armor Value
Front	20
R/L Side	13/13
Rear	8
Rotor	2

Weapons and Ammo Location		Tonnage
Gauss Rifle	Front	15
Ammo (Gauss) 16	Body	2

MECHWARRIOR RULES

This section offers new advantages, Skill Packages and archetypes for use with **MechWarrior** campaigns. Though characters living or working in or passing through the Chaos March may find these additions particularly useful, these new rules can be used in any campaign with the gamemaster's approval.

ADVANTAGES

The Contact, DropShip and Well-Connected advantages function exactly like those presented on pp. 12 and 21–22 of **MechWarrior, Second Edition**. The cost of each advantage is listed below, followed by a description of each advantage's game effects.

Contact	1–3
DropShip	1–3
Well-Connected	1–3

CONTACT

The Contact advantage provides a player character with an ally or acquaintance who can supply information and aid—a contact. The player character purchasing the advantage determines the identity of his contact, subject to gamemaster approval. The gamemaster determines the cost of the advantage, based on the following guidelines.

A 1-point contact has no power and limited influence but possesses a great deal of knowledge about his or her specific field. Normally, this knowledge is limited to the events and history of a specific world or region of space. Examples of 1-point contacts include scientists, merchants and the ubiquitous bartender.

A 2-point contact has a small measure of power and influence in a limited area. This contact can provide information that would be unavailable to most people, including sensitive and secret data. Players must make appropriate skill rolls, however, to convince their contact to divulge this kind of information. Common 2-point contacts include minor nobles, low-ranking military officers and merchant guild leaders.

A 3-point contact wields considerable power and influence and might be able to help the character and his team in significant ways. Unfortunately, such powerful contacts may be too busy to speak to the player characters when they need him, and the contact may be unable to provide certain types of aid due to political or financial considerations. Still, the benefits of having a connection this high nearly always outweigh the drawbacks. Common 3-point contacts include planetary rulers, aides to House Lords, and high-ranking military officers.

A Note about Contacts

Gamemasters should not allow contacts to become simply spigots of information that players can turn on and off at will. Contacts should be fully developed characters with their own desires, goals and motivations, and players should have to per-

form some roleplaying or perform appropriate skill rolls, such as Negotiation or Protocol, to gain information from them.

The gamemaster should consider whether or not a player character's contacts "fit" with the player character's personality. For example, a former-criminal-turned-mercenary character is not likely to have a grand duke as a contact, regardless of how many points the player spends. The players and gamemaster should work out these considerations together. As always, the gamemaster's decision is final, but should be fair as well.

DROPSHIP

The DropShip advantage enables player characters to own and command DropShips. A character who wants to purchase this advantage must choose Priority 4 for BattleMech during Step 1 of character design. The DropShip is taken in place of an assault BattleMech or aerospace fighter.

The player character must then spend the necessary number of Advantage Points to obtain a DropShip of the desired weight range. Within the purchased weight range, the character may choose any type of DropShip the gamemaster will approve. For a good selection of available DropShips, see **Technical Readout: 3057**. The player also may create his own DropShip, but it must meet gamemaster approval before being put into use.

DROPSHIP WEIGHT TABLE

Points Spent	DropShip Weight
1	0–3,000 tons
2	3,001–9,000 tons
3	9,001–16,000 tons

Simply beginning the game with a DropShip does not mean the player characters own their DropShips outright. To determine how much debt a player character owes on his DropShip, roll 2D6. Add to the result the number of points the player spent in choosing the DropShip weight, then consult the DropShip Debt Table.

DROPSHIP DEBT TABLE

Roll	Debt Due
2–5	One-fourth total cost
6–10	One-third total cost
11–12+	One-half total cost

DropShip Type

Civilian and military DropShips offer both advantages and disadvantages. Civilian DropShips enjoy access to nearly any port of call in the Inner Sphere because they represent little threat to local authorities. However, a civilian DropShip's lack of weapons also leaves it vulnerable to attacks from pirate and military vessels.

Military DropShips offer much better defenses against any would-be attackers, and their weapons often prove decisive in battle. However, most planets restrict military DropShips to cer-

tain ports and keep them under tight security. Further, most locals do not trust people who arrive in strange military DropShips.

WELL-CONNECTED

A Well-Connected character possesses a large number of friends, enemies and acquaintances.

The cost of this advantage is based on the size of the area where the character has potential contacts. The player character must choose the specific area when purchasing the advantage.

For 1 point, the character may use this advantage on a single important world—such as New Avalon or Solaris VII—or within a small state such as the St. Ives Compact or the Saiph Triumverate.

Two points makes the character well-connected within a large state, such as the Free Worlds League or the Outworlds Alliance.

For 3 points, the character is well-connected throughout the Inner Sphere.

To use this advantage, the well-connected player character must spend 2D6 hours looking for a contact. At the end of this period, the character must make a Streetwise Skill Roll (for criminal or underworld contacts), Scrounge Skill Roll (for merchant or technical contacts), or Protocol Skill Roll (for most other contacts). If the roll is unsuccessful, the player character does not find a contact. A successful roll provides the character with a contact appropriate to his needs. If the skill roll result is a 2, the character has not only failed to find a suitable contact, but has run afoul of an old enemy. The exact consequences of such a mishap are up to the gamemaster.

The contact obtained through the use of this advantage functions in the same way as one purchased through the Contacts advantage. The contact may only be used for the duration of the current session.

A Well-Connected character may make a limited number of attempts to locate a contact per game session. This number is equal to the number of Advantage Points spent to purchase the Well-Connected advantage. In all cases, only one attempt to find a contact can be made per day.

SKILL PACKAGES

In **MechWarrior, Second Edition**, and other **BattleTech** sourcebooks, Skill Packages are offered as a means of giving characters a specific set of skills at a slightly reduced cost in points. Most of the time, these packages are only available to characters that attended a university or academy in the Inner Sphere. Though none of the newly formed governments in the Chaos March have such facilities at the present time, the March does provide ways for some characters to obtain loosely formalized training. Note that these packages should only be available to player characters from the Chaos March. As with other Skill Packages, players may use any extra Skill Points to increase their levels in any of their character's skills.

MECHWARRIOR PACKAGE

13 PTS

Skill	Level
Gunnery/Mech	2
Leadership	1
Piloting/Mech	2
Small Arms	2
Survival	1
Tech/Mech	1
Unarmed Combat	2

INFANTRY PACKAGE

15 PTS

Skill	Level
Blade	1
Drive	1
Medtech	1
Quickdraw	1
Small Arms	3
Stealth	2
Support Weapons	1
Survival	1
Unarmed Combat	2

GUERRILLA FIGHTER PACKAGE

19 PTS

Skill	Level
Blade	1
Demolitions	1
Disguise	1
Impersonation	1
Medtech	1
Perception	2
Scrounge	1
Security Systems	1
Small Arms	2
Stealth	2
Survival	2
Tracking	1
Unarmed Combat	2

ARCHETYPES

The archetypes presented here are peculiar to the Chaos March, but others like them can be found in any region of space dominated by political, social and economic upheaval. Most of these individuals are rough and hardy survivors determined to make their living in the war-torn worlds of this contested region. For guidelines on creating characters using archetypes, see p. 13, **MechWarrior, Second Edition**.



MARCH TRADER

Some individuals believe that making a profit is more important than anything, regardless of the risks involved. The March trader is one such person. Determined to profit from the constantly changing situation surrounding him, the March trader takes chances that other traders would scorn as too high for the potential profit. The March trader feels confident that no government would dare attack him, however, because he is their life-line to the outside world. Though the March trader makes a good living, like every other captain he must pay for his transport. Someone else owns at least half of his DropShip, and that person does not like late payments.

Attributes

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

Characteristics

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

Advantages

DropShip (2 pts)

Skills

Administration	1	(7+)
Appraisal	1	(7+)
Communications/Conventional	1	(7+)
Gunnery/Spacecraft	1	(8+)
Negotiation	2	(6+)
Piloting/Spacecraft	2	(7+)
Scrounge	1	(7+)
Small Arms	1	(8+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-bills

Equipment

Noteputer
Pistol (w/ 3 extra clips)

DropShip Type: Civilian (3,001 to 9,000 tons)

GUERRILLA FIGHTER

The guerrilla fighter is one of millions of warriors who have taken up arms against the governments on their homeworlds and the Great Houses backing those governments. She fights to liberate her people from the "yoke of oppression" and works with her comrades to "establish a better tomorrow." Whether the revolutionary government espoused by the guerrilla fighter will in turn become an oppressor remains uncertain.

The guerrilla fighter is young, eager and somewhat blind to the big picture. She looks at her newfound power as a way to promote her ideals. By and large, the guerrilla fighter and those like her do not deserve their reputation for cruelty and evil.

This archetype may also be used for pro-Davion counter-revolutionaries.

Attributes

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

Characteristics

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

Advantages

Extra Edge (1 pt)
Sixth Sense

Skills

Guerrilla Fighter Package

Blade	1	(6+)
Demolitions	1	(9+)
Disguise	1	(9+)
Drive	1	(6+)
Impersonation	1	(9+)
Medtech	1	(9+)
Perception	2	(8+)
Scrounge	1	(9+)
Security Systems	1	(9+)
Small Arms	3	(4+)
Stealth	2	(5+)
Survival	2	(8+)
Tracking	1	(9+)
Unarmed Combat	2	(5+)
Special Interest/Philosophies of Leader	1	(9+)

Edge: 2

Assets: None

Equipment

Armored Vest
SMG (w/2 extra clips)





WAYWARD MECHWARRIOR

The wayward MechWarrior is a wanderer. He somehow survived when the rest of his former merc unit was destroyed, and now he wanders the worlds of the Chaos March, searching for an employer. He hopes to return eventually to Outreach, where he may be lucky enough to hook up with another unit and find more gainful employment.

Attributes

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

Characteristics

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

Advantages

Contact (1 pt)

Skills

Basic Academy Package:
(BattleMech Pilot MOS)

Gunnery/Mech	3	(5+)
Medtech	1	(8+)
Negotiation	1	(9+)
Perception	1	(8+)
Piloting/Mech	3	(5+)
Scrounge	1	(9+)
Small Arms	2	(6+)
Tech/Mech	1	(8+)
Unarmed Combat	2	(6+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-bills

Equipment

Armored Vest
Basic Field Kit
Medkit
Personal Communicator
Pistol (w/3 extra clips)
Pump Shotgun (w/20 rounds)

BattleMech: Heavy

BROKER

The broker travels back and forth across the Chaos March, seeking employers in need of mercenary units. While most merc units travel to Outreach to research and negotiate contracts, the broker caters to those smaller units that can't afford to travel to the Mercenary's Star or whose reputations prevent them from doing so. The broker maintains extensive contacts throughout the Chaos March and can easily find a job for the unit he's working for. The legality of the job doesn't matter to the broker, as long as he gets paid.

Attributes

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

Characteristics

Athletic	12+
Physical	10+
Mental	8+
Social	7+

Advantages

Well-Connected (3.pts)

Skills

Administration	1	(7+)
Appraisal	1	(7+)
Bureaucracy	2	(5+)
Computer	1	(7+)
Gambling	1	(7+)
Negotiation	3	(4+)
Perception	1	(7+)
Protocol	2	(5+)
Scrounge	2	(5+)
Small Arms	2	(8+)
Streetwise	1	(6+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 500 C-bills

Equipment

- Several changes of clothes (both street and formal attire)
- Noteputer
- Personal Communicator
- Sternsnacht Heavy Pistol (w/5 extra clips)



OUTREACH

The following section describes the culture, history, people, and current status of Outreach, the so-called Mercenary's Star. Located in the center of the Chaos March, Outreach makes an ideal starting point and base of operations for **MechWarrior** or **BattleTech** campaigns in the March.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Outreach was settled in the twenty-second century by Terran colonists attracted by the planet's warm climate, wide open spaces, large tracts of arable land, and abundant natural resources. Within decades, the planet had become well-known for its agricultural exports, but Outreach would gain even greater fame as the site of the Star League Martial Olympiads, which were first held on the planet in 2704. Pitting the Inner Sphere's finest MechWarriors against each other in non lethal tests of battlefield skill, the Olympiads quickly became one of the most popular sporting events of the Inner Sphere. Soon a myriad of stadiums, training grounds, hotels and vast tourist complexes appeared on Outreach to accommodate the Olympiad contestants and the ever-growing crowds that came to watch the spectacle.

The planet's fortunes turned, however, when the Star League collapsed toward the end of the century. With the end of the Olympiads, tourists no longer flocked to Outreach. As a result, many inhabitants lost their livelihoods and emigrated from the planet. In 2786, the planet was captured by the Capellan Confederation, which would hold the world for some two hundred years. During this time, the neglect and steady decay of Outreach's sprawling cities continued. Outreach next changed hands in 3028, when Federated Commonwealth forces captured the world during the Fourth Succession War. After that war, Prince Hanse Davion granted the planet to a group of war-weary mercenaries called Wolf's Dragoons—a decision that would lead to the rejuvenation of Outreach.

The Dragoons, under the leadership of Colonel Jaime Wolf, immediately began to rebuild Outreach's capital, Harlech. The Dragoons built training facilities, renovated factories, and invited the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission to establish permanent headquarters on Outreach. Within a few years, mercenaries and employers from across the Inner Sphere gathered to do business. Very quickly, support industries, such as weapons dealers and 'Mech manufacturers, began to open shop in Harlech and the surrounding area. By the time of the Clan invasion, Wolf's Dragoons had transformed the declining planet into the center of the mercenary trade in the Inner Sphere.

Today, Outreach remains an oasis of stability in the Chaos March, largely due to the planet's prosperity, its ample defenses, and the competent rule of the Dragoons.

OUTREACH AT A GLANCE

Outreach's land mass is comprised of vast twin continents that cover approximately 30 percent of the planet's surface. Romulus contains nearly all of Outreach's cities and commercial enterprises. The continent is home to such large cities as An Numsan and New Wyatt—which contain the offices of numerous Lyran, Marik, and Capellan corporations—as well as the planetary capital of Harlech, along Lake Kearney's western shore. A mountain range known as the Ridge bisects the continent, and small farms and rolling hills typify the countryside outside of the cities.

The continent of Remus is the private hold of Wolf's Dragoons. Reportedly, the continent contains Dragoon training and repair facilities. However, access to Remus is highly restricted and very few non-Dragoons have ever set foot on it. As a result, little is known about this arid desert continent which the Dragoons call the "Outback."

The winding Argosyan Sea covers the remainder of the planet's surface. The Argosyan is the only major body of water that exists on Outreach, and its salty depths are home to some of the most exotic marine life in the Inner Sphere.

HARLECH: PORT OF CALL

The city of Harlech is the oldest city on Outreach. The city's first inhabitants—fishermen who harvested the bounty of Lake Kearney—began settling the site shortly after the first colonists landed on Outreach. The waters of Lake Kearney—Outreach's largest freshwater lake—enabled the residents of Harlech to cultivate various imported species of fish from other worlds, leading to the growth of lucrative marine industries in the lakefront city. In turn, these cities fueled the growth of Harlech.

Once Harlech became the home of the Star League Olympiads, the city quickly turned into a boomtown. Numerous establishments opened to serve the needs of the tourists who came for the games, and investors and developers descended on the city. Within a few years, the city had become the largest and most prestigious place on Outreach and the surrounding sector.

Like the fortunes of Outreach itself, the fortunes of Harlech plummeted when the Star League collapsed. The loss of the Olympiads devastated Harlech's economy, and nearly all of the city's residents migrated to the countryside or offplanet. The few residents who stayed again turned to fishing the waters of Lake Kearney, but no one could stop the steady decline of the city. Harlech's fortunes turned again, however, when Wolf's Dragoons took control of the planet following the Fourth Succession War.

The Dragoons chose to make Harlech the capital of their newly adopted homeworld, and wasted no time in their rebuild-

ing efforts. Criminals were either driven out of the city or arrested, streets were repaved and buildings renovated. In short, the re-sculpted city was designed solely to cater to the needs and requirements of mercenaries. Less than twenty years after the Dragoons' arrival, Harlech had become a thriving city once again.

GEOGRAPHY

Harlech lies between Lake Kearney to the east and the Ridge to the west. These natural barriers have caused Harlech to expand to the north and south and isolate Harlech somewhat from the rest of the world. The Dragoons seem to welcome the latter consequence, however, as it simplifies governance by containing most activity within the city's limits.

GOVERNMENT AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Technically, Wolf's Dragoons rule Outreach under the terms of martial law. However, the Dragoons generally give civilian district administrators autonomy to handle the daily tasks of governing. Only in rare instances does Commander Wolf override the orders of a district administrator.

The planet's police force is also independent of the Dragoons. Many police officers are captured Clan Elementals who failed to test into the Dragoon ranks, and these officers do an excellent job of deterring most serious crimes by their mere presence. The planet's court system falls under the jurisdiction of the district administrators, and the system's judges dispense justice swiftly and fairly. They show little, if any, bias in favor of the Dragoons or any other group or individuals. This impartiality often surprises mercenaries who find themselves vindicated by the system even though they may be involved in a dispute with a Dragoon.

Outreach's relaxed weapon laws are the single most distinguishing feature of the Dragoon legal system. Numerous people—mostly mercenaries and military personnel—wear sidearms in Harlech. The practice is not as common among civilians, however, and in the upper-class sections of the city the practice is often frowned on. Despite the large number of weapons in circulation—or perhaps because of it—dangerous street crime is common in certain parts of Harlech. The most dangerous section of the city is Temptown, located in Harlech's southwestern quarter. Police patrol the area heavily, but the numerous criminals and street thugs of the neighborhood still can present a lethal threat to visitors.

CULTURAL COMPOSITION

Harlech is truly a cosmopolitan city. It lacks the cultural enclaves of other large metropolitan areas such as Solaris City, and people from all over the Inner Sphere rub shoulders in every part of the city. In fact, many observers have noted the irony of a planet devoted to the industry of war spawning a city of such peace and unity.

Although Harlech's population contains a good number of mercenaries and potential employers, the majority of the city's



residents work in industries that serve the mercenary industry. BattleMech technicians, medical personnel, outfitters, and many others are employed in support of the mercenary trade. Many mercenaries make homes for their families on the planet as well, which further contributes to the diversity of Harlech's population.

The University of Outreach is another major employer in Harlech and one of the city's premier cultural institutions. The university is rapidly becoming one of the top centers for advanced learning in the Terran Corridor, and its technical and science programs are already ranked among the best in the Inner Sphere.

THE HIRING HALL

The Hiring Hall represents the heart of Harlech and is located, appropriately enough, in the center of the city, along Cameron Road. The massive hexagonal structure once served as the site of the opening and closing ceremonies of the Star League Martial Olympiads and still retains much of its ancient grandeur. Today, the remodeled complex contains offices for various mercenary groups, hiring agencies, and employers, as well as conference rooms, restaurants, and specialty shops. A large open area near the center of the hall provides a space where arms merchants, weapon and vehicle manufacturers, and 'Mech designers can display and demonstrate their new products.

However, the most well-known feature of the Hiring Hall remains the numerous job boards. These electronic bulletin boards list all the latest contract offerings from employers and enable mercenary units to bid on them electronically as they appear. All the contracts listed on these boards have been certified by the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission as legitimate employment offers.

Directly outside the Hiring Hall is an area that the locals have nicknamed the Field. This area contains several unofficial, unsanctioned job boards. The Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission does not certify the contracts offered on these boards and will not mediate any disputes arising from them. Furthermore, none of these contracts can help a unit improve its reputation or Dragoons rating. Although the Dragoons officially disapprove of these job boards, they have made no efforts to close them down. Apparently, the contracts offered on the so-called blackboards often represent the only hope of employment for older or struggling mercenary units.

Be aware that even the simple act of obtaining a contract can provide a bit of adventure here, as competition for the best contracts can become quite intense among the various mercenary groups—and many of these battle-hardened warriors won't hesitate to employ underhanded means to get what they want. Physical intimidation, sabotage, blackmail—contract-hungry mercs may resort to any of these if the stakes are high enough.

COST OF LIVING

At first glance, the cost of living in Harlech seems quite high. But fortunately for the struggling mercenary, most items

and services can be obtained at affordable prices by purchasing them through unofficial channels. However, unlicensed vendors often sell inferior products or services or engage in unethical or illegal practices, so bargain hunters should beware.

In most areas of Harlech, such necessary items as food and shelter may seem obscenely expensive. By traveling to the markets in the city's lower-class neighborhoods, such as the South Sticks or Inland South, however, mercenaries can obtain these items at considerable savings. And determined buyers can locate bargains on other items as well. Weapons and other military equipment, for example, are often highly priced, especially if purchased from the various registered arms dealers that fill the Hiring Hall. However, numerous unregistered arms dealers also roam the Hiring Hall and frequent the mercenary bars, offering lower-priced goods. Prospective buyers should beware, however, because these unregistered arms dealers often sell lower-quality or stolen goods. And the Dragoon courts show little mercy for owners of illegal or unregistered weapons.

BattleMech storage and repairs may present another considerable expense for mercenaries. The Harlech DropPort charges steep prices for use of its facilities, and the 'Mech-repair companies that operate out of the port often charge thousands of C-bills for even the most minor work. Generally, commercial 'Mech-storage facilities offer excellent security, but most of them charge 500 C-bills and up to store a single 'Mech. However, a resourceful mercenary can locate adequate storage facilities for well under that price.

According to recent rumors, several merchants now offer Clan technology at reasonable prices. These rumors appear to be totally untrue. Though the Dragoons possess Clan technology and the knowledge needed to produce it, they are bound by an agreement with the Great Houses not to provide any Clan technology to mercenary units. Apparently, this measure is designed to keep the deadly technology out of the hands of disreputable units or manufacturers.

The C-bill is the standard currency of Harlech. All of Outreach's major banks and the planet's ComStar facility offer exchange rates for any stable currency of a Great House. A few institutions accept Periphery currency as well, but only at unfavorable exchange rates. For a number of years, the FedCom kroner was widely used in Harlech, but the dissolution of the Sarna March and the resulting drop in the currency's value have ended this practice.

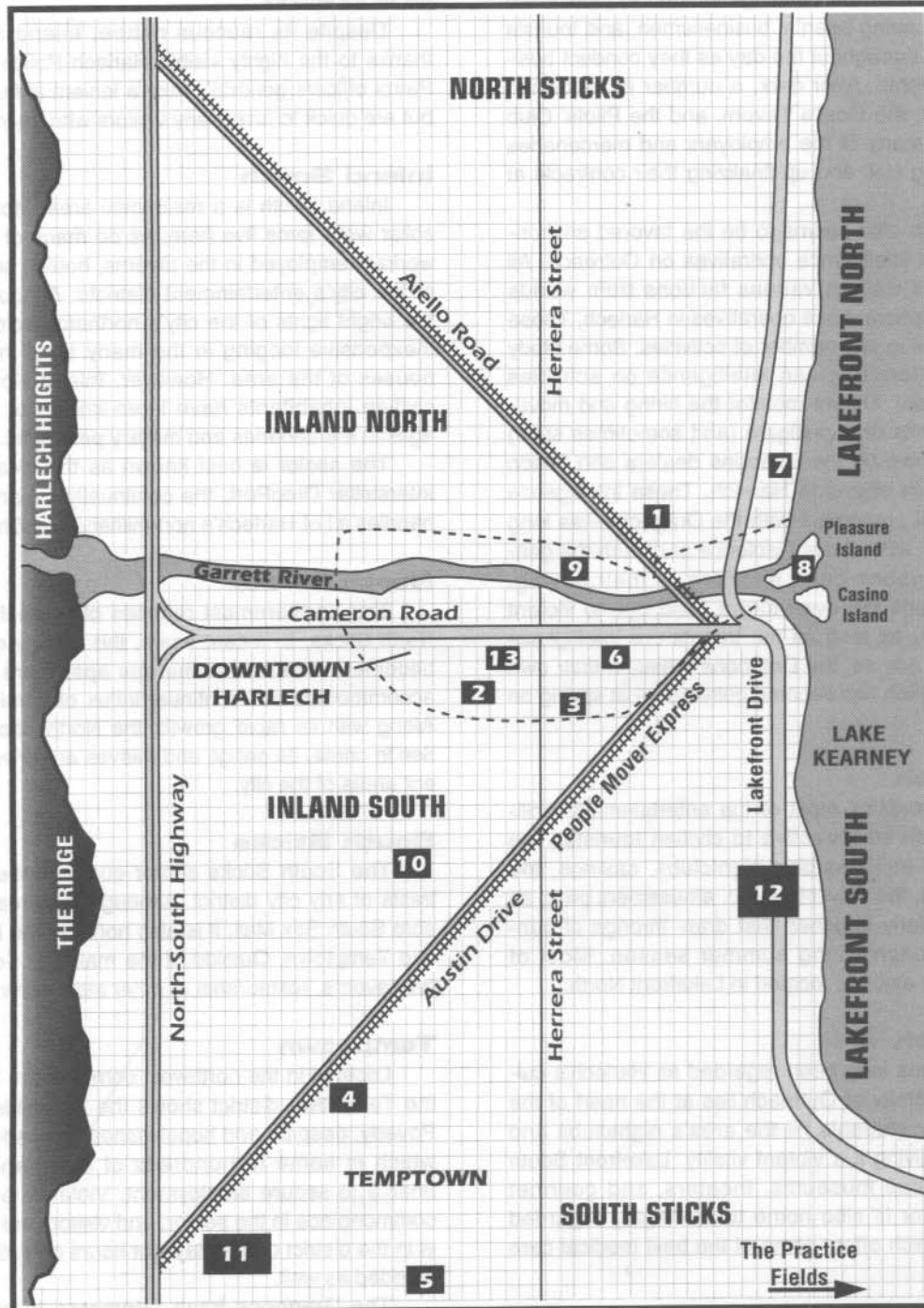
SECTORS

Eight distinct sectors, each with its own unique traits, comprise the city of Harlech. These sectors are Downtown Harlech, Lakefront North, Lakefront South, Inland North, Inland South, North Sticks, South Sticks, and Temptown. The sectors include a wide range of socioeconomic classes, and visitors may notice abrupt changes in living conditions within a few short blocks.

Downtown Harlech

Downtown Harlech is a primarily commercial zone located

HARLECH



- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Beaters | 5 Harlech Penitentiary | 8 Outreach Ground | 11 South Sticks Mall |
| 2 ComStar Compound | 6 Hiring Hall | 9 Phil's | 12 University of Outreach |
| 3 The Goat | 7 Multiplex Mall | 10 Red's Glare | 13 Wolf Hall |
| 4 Harlech Interplanetary DropPort | | | |

along the northern and southern shores of the Garrett River, the waterway that bisects the city. The ComStar compound, the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission's Hiring Hall, and the massive Wolf Hall complex—the Dragoons' headquarters on Romulus—are some of the buildings located in Downtown Harlech. Mercenaries, hiring agents, businessmen, and tourists fill the sector's streets throughout the day as they conduct business or take in the sights. After dark, a number of renowned taverns such as Phil's, the Goat's Tavern, and the Pilots' Club draw visitors. In fact, many of the employers and mercenaries who meet at the Hiring Hall end up finalizing their contracts at these establishments.

Downtown Harlech also seems to be the favored environment of the numerous intelligence operatives on Outreach. All the Great Houses, as well as various factions from worlds throughout the Inner Sphere, have operatives in Harlech. These operatives may engage in any number of activities. Some study the latest contract offers to glean intelligence on activities around the Inner Sphere. Others monitor the hiring and movement of mercenary units or investigate (and sometimes steal) the latest designs shown by the weapons dealers and 'Mech designers who maintain offices in Harlech. These intelligence operatives have a tacit agreement with the Dragoons—as long as they do not perform acts of overt violence or disturb the general peace, the Dragoons don't interfere in their spying. Generally, the Dragoons will even turn a blind eye to violent intelligence operations, as long as the targets are intelligence operatives as well. Of course, the Dragoons maintain their own intelligence agency, which has become quite adept at spying on the spies.

Lakefront North

Lakefront North contains most of the entertainment facilities that make Harlech so attractive to civilian tourists. The entertainment district includes chic nightclubs, casinos, the massive Multiplex Mall, the Adventure Inc. amusement park, as well as clean and orderly beaches that draw throngs of sunbathers during Outreach's long summer season. Most of Harlech's luxury hotels also are located in Lakefront North.

Lakefront South

Lakefront South has long been regarded as Harlech's cultural center. The University of Outreach lies at the heart of the sector, and University students fill the area's nightclubs and amusement centers, giving it a vibrant vitality. Lakefront South also contains numerous museums, theaters, and gourmet restaurants. The sector is also home to the highly regarded University Hospital, which offers some of the best medical care in the Terran Corridor.

Inland North

Inland North has gained a reputation as Harlech's "party central." The sector contains numerous nightclubs and bars crowded with mercenaries, students and tourists looking for a place to relax. Even the walkways of Inland North become par-

ties, as locals set up ad hoc bars on the sector's street corners. Various venues offer a wide range of musical entertainment from some of the newest acts in the Inner Sphere. Parking in the area is scarce, however, and garage owners charge high prices for spaces.

Despite its raucous nature, Inland North is fairly safe, thanks to the highly visible Harlech Police patrols in the area. Patrol officers generally take a lenient attitude toward imbibers but are quick to arrest any visitors who become violent.

Inland South

Inland South is a residential area. Most of the city's blue-collar work force live here, as do many of the service-industry workers employed in the taverns, hotels, and tourist attractions of the city's entertainment districts. Although the sector lacks the bright lights of the city's northern sectors, visitors can find inexpensive lodging in the many small hotels and boarding houses of the area. However, Inland North's predominantly civilian inhabitants have been known to discriminate subtly against mercenaries and military personnel.

The sector is best known as the location of the Harlech Interstellar DropPort, the continually expanding spaceport that handles all of Harlech's non-military DropShip traffic.

North Sticks

The northernmost reaches of Harlech are known as the North Sticks. In recent years, this rapidly developing area has become the site of numerous apartment complexes built to accommodate the continual influx of immigrants to Outreach. Along with its rapid growth, the North Sticks has also seen a rise in crime, as gangs and thieves are driven out of more affluent areas of the city.

South Sticks

The South Sticks sector contains the most glaring contrasts of any city district. Although the area contains the multi-acre South Stix Mall, it is also home to the Harlech Penitentiary and Temptown. Outside of the mall, the South Sticks contains few taverns, restaurants or other attractions to draw visitors.

Temptown

Located in the northwest corner of the South Sticks sector, the Temptown district shows the dark side of mercenary life. Poverty, despair, and hopelessness pervade this makeshift city, which is home to hundreds of down-and-out mercenaries unable to secure employment. Violence and street crime are commonplace in the sector, and visitors are encouraged to travel in the district during daylight hours only. Sidearms are recommended as well.

The Dragoons have attempted to control Temptown's growth by constructing low-income housing, creating borders for the town, and offering civilian jobs to Temptown residents. These efforts have achieved some success, but life remains unchanged for large numbers of Temptown inhabitants.

However, mercenaries or soldiers in search of information

may wish to visit the sector, because many sector residents possess secrets that others wish to keep hidden. Still others come to the area to hide from former employers or governmental authorities.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Player characters may gather information, indulge in rest and relaxation, or follow any number of other pursuits at the following places.

Beaters

The club called Beaters is located in the Inland North district. Reputedly the loudest nightspot in the city, Beaters rocks nightly with live bands and the occasional big-name act. Surprisingly, large numbers of Dragoons have begun to flock to this bar to unwind in recent months. As Beaters does not fit the profile of a typical Dragoons' tavern, the presence of these patrons remains a mystery.

Casino Island

Casino Island is the largest gambling venue within a seventy-light-year radius. Owned and operated by multimillionaire Mickey Wu, Casino Island offers almost every form of gambling known to man. The games in the various casinos are wild and furious—and surprisingly honest, thanks to the effective police forces of Wu and Outreach, which have kept the casinos free of the influence of organized crime.

ComStar Compound

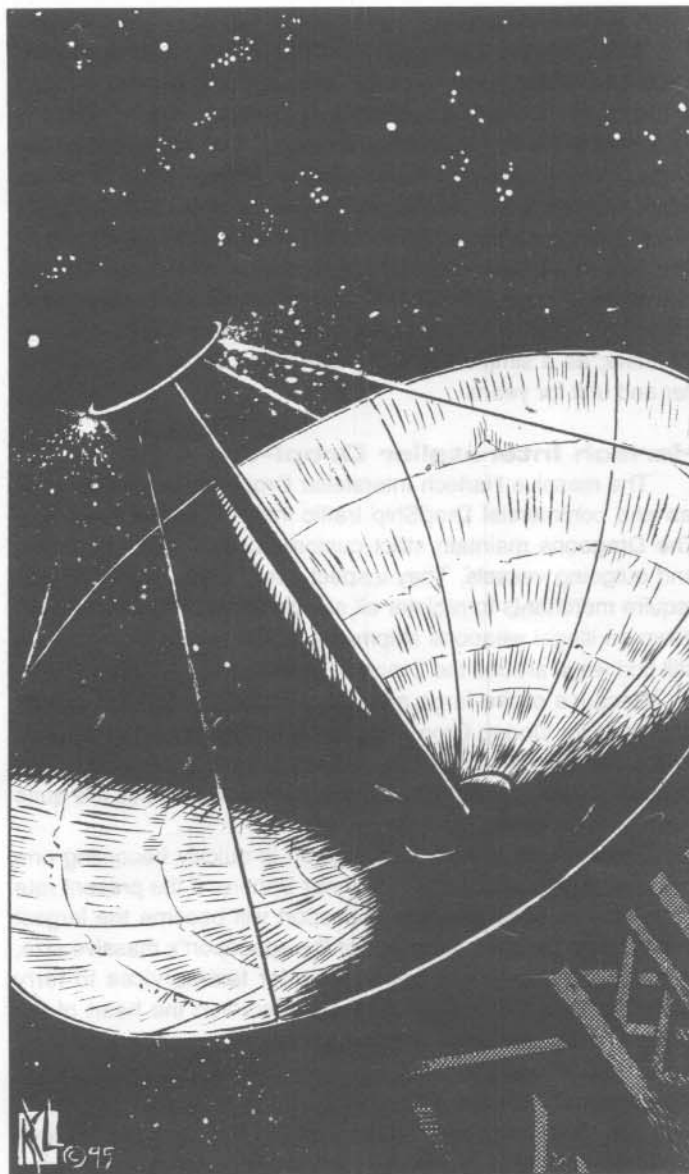
Harlech's ComStar offices are located in the ComStar Compound in the downtown sector of the city. ComStar also maintains branch offices at Harlech's DropPort and at the Hiring Hall. The actual transmission dish for the planet's HPG station is located north of the city and is guarded closely. ComStar upgraded the facility to Class A in 3039 and has remained on good terms with Wolf's Dragoons since the mercenary group assumed control of Outreach.

ComStar also operates the Harlech Commnet, Outreach's intraplanetary communications network. A tribute to the organization's mastery of communication technology, the Commnet is one of the most sophisticated and user-friendly in existence. ComStar also maintains a highly sophisticated computer network that easily interfaces with the telecommunications grid. This system offers standard features such as message boards and provides users with easy access to the University of Outreach's library system and the public ComStar archives on Terra.

The ComStar Compound also houses the equipment and support staff of MercNet, the online database for mercenary units operated by the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission.

Float

The Float is the most popular of the many ad hoc sidewalk taverns that operate nightly in the Inland North sector. This roving bar features dance music and some of the most exotic drinks in the Inner Sphere. But for mercenaries, the Float's



biggest attractions are the illegal arms dealers and hiring agents that frequent the tavern. These individuals are constantly watching for a rough-and-tumble unit in need of new equipment or a contract for a discreet mission.

The Goat's Tavern

The small greasy spoon known as the Goat's Tavern has become a favorite haunt of mercenaries who frequent the Hiring Hall. Located directly across from the Hall, the Goat, as it is more commonly known, makes the best cheeseburgers on Outreach. The tavern offers a unique and relaxed atmosphere where most mercenaries can let down their guards for awhile. The place has become so successful that the Goat's owner, George Stanopolis, has opened a new restaurant—the Goat's Tree in Inland North. The Goat's Tree attracts large numbers of tourists, but the original Goat remains largely the province of mercenaries.

Harlech Heights

The upper-crust neighborhood of Harlech Heights, located along the western edge of the Inland North sector, houses some of the richest occupants of Harlech. Here, wealthy Harlechiens live in massive homes situated on the slopes of the Ridge, looking down on the city below. Private security forces provide ample protection to the residents of Harlech Heights, which include corporate executives, entertainment megastars, and the most elite mercenary leaders. Unit commanders instructed to meet with a client in the Heights know they are in for a very lucrative contract offer but must watch their steps and manners, as a simple slight or insult could doom the commander and unit for years.

Harlech Interstellar DropPort

The massive Harlech Interstellar DropPort handles all civilian and commercial DropShip traffic into and out of Outreach. The Dragoons maintain strict customs control of all incoming and outgoing vessels. They inspect every craft thoroughly and require merchants to register all salable items. This helps to cut down on illegal weapons shipments, but resourceful smugglers still find ways around the Dragoon security net.

Because of the large amount of traffic through the spaceport, fees for storing DropShips in the facility can be quite high. The Dragoons also offer top-notch technical assistance for DropShip repairs and maintenance, but these services are quite expensive as well.

The Harlech Interstellar DropPort is quickly becoming one of the largest spaceports in the Inner Sphere. If the present rate of expansion continues, the spaceport will become the largest in existence by 3065. Because of the spaceport's massive size, numerous independent operators offer taxi services to ferry passengers and DropShip crew members into the heart of the city in shuttles and small maglev vehicles.

Outreach Grand

The Outreach Grand is the jewel in the crown of Harlech multimillionaire Mickey Wu. The Grand is a luxury five-star resort located on Pleasure Island, along the shore of Lake Kearney. The huge building offers spacious and expensive rooms, and an attentive staff that caters to all of a guest's needs.

Phil's

Located in Downtown Harlech near the Wolf Hall complex, Phil's is one of the most popular mercenary bars in Harlech. The bar's owner, Phil, tends bar personally and is an excellent source of inside information on all the large mercenary units—including the Dragoons. Patrons who treat him right can often gain access to this information by offering new information in return.

According to rumor, Phil is a former member of the Eridani Light Horse. Phil himself is reluctant to talk about his past, and only his closest friends know if such rumors contain any truth.

The Pilots' Club

The Pilots' Club is a high-toned tavern located in the Hiring Hall complex. Mercenaries and employers often hammer out the final details of contracts in this chic and extremely expensive club. Both the security and the dress code are quite strict in the Pilots' Club, and Elemental bouncers keep a close eye on all patrons to ensure that both are maintained. As stated, prices here are quite high—a single ale costs seven C-bills.

Pleasure Island

The nightclub haven of Pleasure Island is connected to Casino Island by a foot bridge, and both islands lie just off the shore of Lake Kearney. A fee of fifteen C-bills allows entry to the numerous clubs, bars and holocenters on the island. Each establishment caters to a specific taste, and even the most discriminating hedonist can find something here. Mickey Wu owns Pleasure Island and all of its entertainment establishments. Some illegal activity occurs on Pleasure Island, but nothing too dangerous.

The Practice Fields

The Practice Fields lie southeast of the city. The various fields provide a wide range of terrain where mercenaries may test their skills against each other or other mercenary units. Dragoon judges and technicians monitor practice matches on the fields and regularly record the events for later review. During scored combat sessions or matches, Dragoon techs power down the weapons on all 'Mechs and vehicles, fit the machines with sensors, and link each to the Dragoon simulator system. No physical combat is allowed. After using the fields, many mercenaries praise the Dragoon simulator system as the best they have ever used.

The fields are always in high demand, and so units that wish to train at the facilities must schedule sessions several days in advance.

Red's Glare

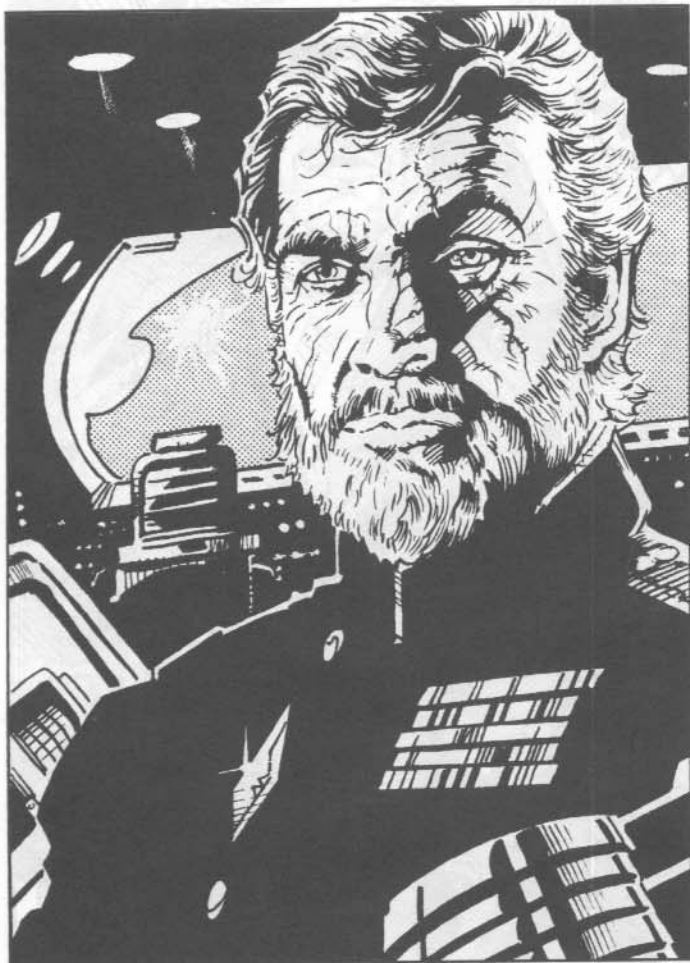
Red's Glare is the only club in the Inland South sector that caters to mercenaries. Residents of nearby Temptown comprise the majority of the Glare's clientele, which has given the place a reputation as a rough place. Red's Glare is the place for anyone looking to hire cheap and strong street muscle.

University of Outreach

The University of Outreach campus occupies several acres in the Lakefront South sector. Rebuilt and refurnished by Wolf's Dragoons, the university is earning a reputation as one of the best centers for learning in the Inner Sphere. The University School of Medicine is second only to the medical school at the NAIS, and the College of Law turns out some of the best justices and lawyers in the Federated Commonwealth. But the true pride of the university is its School of Engineering. Corporations and mercenary units from across the Inner Sphere come to Outreach to recruit graduates of the engineering school.

PERSONALITIES

The following people may serve as useful contacts or powerful opposition for player characters, or may simply touch their lives while on Outreach.



Commander Jaime Wolf

As the commander of Wolf's Dragoons, Jaime Wolf is the most powerful man on Outreach. Now in his late 70s, the Dragoons co-founder leaves day-to-day governing to General Maeve Wolf, but he alone remains the ultimate authority.

Wolf, a freebirth Clan MechWarrior, first came to the Inner Sphere in 3005, as co-commander of the Dragoons along with his brother, Joshua. The Dragoons—a Clan reconnaissance unit—then proceeded to serve as mercenaries with all of the Great Houses, earning a reputation as some of the most skilled MechWarriors of the Inner Sphere. During the same time, Jaime Wolf became known as one of the most effective military strategists who had ever lived. Decades of service in the Inner Sphere prompted Wolf to reassess the nations of the Inner Sphere, and by the end of the Third Succession War the commander severed his unit's Clan ties. Later, Wolf earned the gratitude of the entire Inner Sphere by warning its rulers of the impending Clan threat and training Inner Sphere military leaders in anti-Clan tactics.

As the most renowned mercenary of all time, Wolf has first-hand knowledge of the mercenary's lot in life. As a result, he respects honorable mercenaries as few other leaders do. Player characters who demonstrate honor and honesty to Wolf may receive any number of favors from this important man. A recommendation from Wolf can lead to a plum contract within minutes, and he often keeps a protective eye out for his friends. Wolf is also the only permanent member of the Mercenary Review and Bonding Commission who has served as a mercenary, and he can be a valuable ally to merc units who find themselves involved in disputes before the board. But not all mercenaries can expect help from Wolf. He finds few things more despicable than a dishonest or dishonorable mercenary unit.



Precentor Mark Bremmer

Mark Bremmer is the head of the ComStar facility on Outreach. A down-to-earth individual, Bremmer leads by allowing his followers to do whatever is necessary to get the job done, only stepping in when the situation warrants his brand of leadership. Bremmer is a tough man, both physically and mentally, and knows that ComStar's reputation is on the line every day in Harlech, particularly in light of the ComStar/Word of Blake schism.

Bremmer is on good terms with Jaime Wolf and most of the authorities of Harlech. His security measures at the ComStar facilities might seem extreme, but Bremmer believes they are necessary, as he has developed a paranoia over the growing strength of the Word of Blake.

Bremmer can aid player characters who wish to use ComStar's HPG facilities. He is a "hands-on" administrator and regularly monitors the messages sent through the facility. If a group of player characters earn his trust, he may provide subtle warnings of any dangers that come to his attention. Bremmer is a principled man, however, and will not directly disclose the contents of transmissions.



Reyda Johnston

Reyda Johnston is one of Harlech's most well-known hiring agents. As an agent, she brings a unit commander together with a client and does all she can to ensure that negotiations run smoothly. Like most hiring agents, Johnston's fee depends on the pay that the unit receives, and so she attempts to land units the best contracts she can find. For this service, she charges the standard 5 percent of the total contract pay.

Although Johnston has no military experience, her bargaining experience cannot be matched. She is always ready to shake a hand or throw a companionable arm around a shoulder. And given the lucrative nature of the business, Johnston will do almost anything to land a contract. (Note that Johnston is a bit of a mercenary "groupie" and will work a bit harder for mercenaries who cultivate her friendship.)

Johnston has an office in the Hiring Hall and regularly frequents the nightspots of the Inland North sector.



Duncan Mao

Duncan Mao is one of the best-known arms merchants in Harlech. The Capellan is a colorful character with a shady past, but he can provide player characters with a variety of weapons and equipment manufactured by firms throughout the Inner Sphere—provided the player characters have the C-bills to pay for their purchases. Mao maintains an office and showroom in the Hiring Hall, but he is rarely there himself, as he likes to personally obtain his wares and supervise their transport back to Outreach.

For years rumors have persisted that Mao is actually a Maskirovka agent or the criminal mastermind behind the illegal dealings of the Capellan company called Closehold Firms. Although Mao has had dealings with the company, his actual relationship with the concern remains unknown.



Johnny DuBonnet

Johnny DuBonnet is an example of what Harlech residents call a "scrounger." Scruffy and weaselly looking, scroungers earn their livings by supplying anything to anyone, from information to hard-to-find items. And of the many scroungers that frequent Harlech's grungier sectors, DuBonnet—"DB" as he is known on the streets—is acknowledged as one of the best.

Like most other scroungers, DuBonnet has quick, darting eyes, and he rarely sits still. He dresses in nondescript clothing, which makes him virtually invisible to the casual observer, and he is constantly alert to the conversations around him.

Player characters who wish to hire DB simply need to mention their desire to a few bartenders. DuBonnet invariably finds the would-be client in a day or two if he is interested in working for them.



Major Shelley Holings

Shelley Holings is one of the many city administrators who runs the daily activities in Harlech. A former Dragoon, Holings likes to rub shoulders with mercenaries in Harlech's nightspots. In fact, she is frequently arrested by Harlech police for instigating barroom brawls. While these activities have earned her a favorable reputation in merc circles, the other administrators consider her somewhat suspect as a result. Still, she is quite competent and likely to remain in her post for several years.

Holings is a gregarious woman with high-ranking friends in the Dragons, Wolfnet and the Hiring Hall. Because of her extensive contacts, Holings can be an excellent source of information on Dragoon politics and the activities of intelligence operatives on Outreach, as well as employment contracts.



Wanda Worthington

Wanda Worthington tends bar in the Outreach Grand's tony lounge, a favored watering hole of Harlech's wealthy visitors. A natural talker with a winning personality and holo-star good looks, both male and female patrons tend to open up to her after a few drinks. As a result, Worthington can be an invaluable source of information on the goings-on of high society on Outreach and the surrounding planetary sectors, as well as developments in the royal Houses of the Inner Sphere powers. Lately, Worthington has also become the confidant of several rulers recently deposed from their Chaos March worlds. Apparently, many of these individuals have chosen to spend their exiles in Harlech, and at least a few of them are plotting their returns to power.

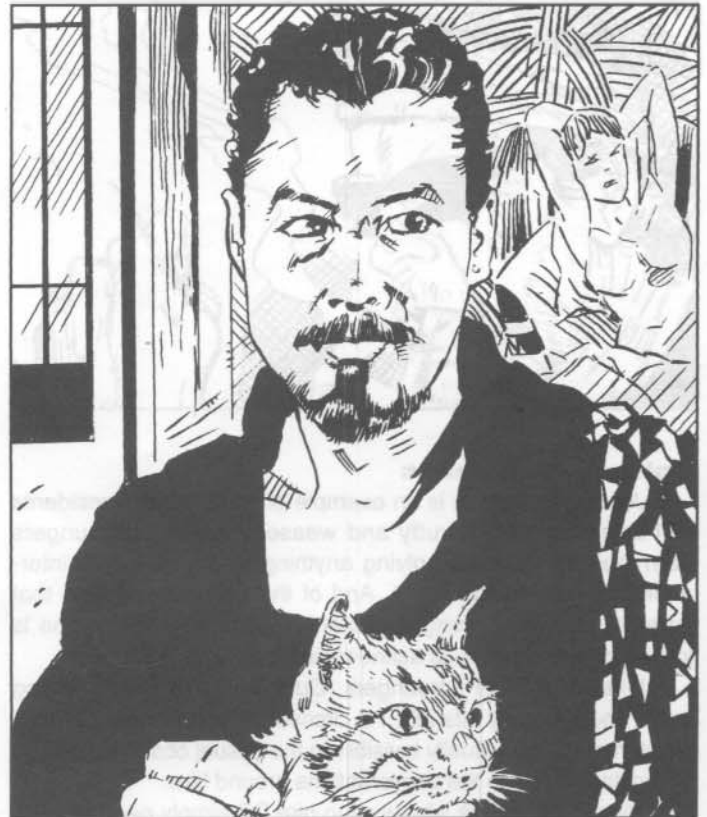
Mercenaries who tip generously can learn all about these plots from Worthington.



Dr. Rebekka Turlington

A product of the University of Outreach medical school, Dr. Rebekka Turlington is rapidly earning a reputation as a creative, dedicated, and well-trained doctor. Like many of her colleagues on Outreach, Turlington is a caring soul who is truly committed to nurturing her patients back to health. Turlington is on the staff of the University Hospital and maintains a small clinic in the Lakefront South sector.

Turlington comes from a mercenary family that settled on Outreach, and so she has a soft spot for mercenaries. She can provide nearly any type of medical services.



Mickey Wu

One of the richest men in Harlech (some would say the richest), Mickey Wu amassed a fortune during the building boom that occurred on Outreach shortly after the Dragoons came to the planet. Wu's fortune grew after he reinvested much of his money into new projects, and he now owns virtually all the properties on Casino Island and Pleasure Island—as well as the islands themselves. Wu also holds stakes in countless other properties and businesses in Harlech.

Wu's background remains largely a mystery. Little is known about him, other than the fact that he was originally from the Draconis Combine. Persistent rumors maintain Wu is involved with the yakuza, but Wu denies these rumors. Regardless of his background or the legitimacy of his business dealings, all agree that Wu is an arrogant, vengeful, and petty man who lacks the most basic human social skills. He views almost everyone as an inferior, and treats others with disdain. (Oddly enough, he seems to display a fawning deference to artists, however. Wu fancies himself a cultured art connoisseur, but his homes and clubs are decorated with some of the most vulgar and poorly executed works in the Inner Sphere—all proudly displayed in lavish, gilded frames.)

Lately, Wu has decided to take advantage of the chaos on surrounding planets. He has been hiring mercenary units to help him obtain manufacturing facilities on other worlds, but he can quickly turn on his employees. In addition, he is quite stingy with those in his hire. He has been known to offer mercenaries generous fees, only to find ways to avoid paying anything.

GAMEMASTER BRIEFING

The following text provides gamemaster information on the various political factions active in the Chaos March, the overall economic situation the player characters will face, and individual briefings for each contract given in the **Guide** section. The contract briefings are identified by contract number and arranged in the same order as they were presented in the **Guide**. These briefings provide the rest of the information needed to complete the mission, including everything the employer is not telling the unit and the opposing forces the unit must defeat (when appropriate).

In each contract briefing, **Behind the Scenes** describes all the events and information that the employer does not want the characters to know. This information, often crucial to the unit's survival, may only be discovered if the characters perform intelligence or reconnaissance operations before leaving on the mission. **Opposition** describes the unit's opponent(s) on each world. The gamemaster should run an appropriate configuration of the specified unit when one is supplied, keeping in mind the strength of the players' unit and other relevant conditions.

Though the contracts work best when presented to the players and then run by a gamemaster or referee, they can also be used in player-only games. In this case, the player(s) controlling the mercenary unit accepting the contract should have only the contract information presented in the **Guide to the Chaos March**. The opposing side also has access to this information as well as to the information in the gamemaster briefing.

FACTION RUNDOWN

This section gives all the behind-the-scenes information on the various powers struggling for survival in the Chaos March. This important information should be kept secret from the players. The gamemaster can use this background information to help shape the direction of his campaign, using it to create a progression of events around which to build the player characters' mission(s). Alternatively, the gamemaster may use this information as a background element to give his campaign depth. The predictions and options for future events presented here can help the gamemaster create news events and minor subplots that may influence or even dictate the actions of the characters or their unit.

The following section describes the current attitudes of the Successor States toward the events in the so-called Chaos March. This section also reveals the true conditions under which most of the minor powers and selected independent worlds fight to survive. The gamemaster may also create a unique fate for any of these worlds, and should feel free to design a current political and economic situation for Chaos March worlds not listed here. Keep in mind that the high level of political instability on most of these worlds will prevent any one faction from easily rising to prominence in the near future.

FEDERATED COMMONWEALTH

Despite this realm's excellent track record as a fair employer, most mercs now feel that Federated Commonwealth job offers stand on shaky ground. Many commanders view the breakup of the Federated Commonwealth as a bad sign; though the split offers the potential of more employment, no unit wants to be on the losing side when Archon Prince Victor confronts his sister. Despite its current difficulties, however, the Federated Commonwealth still treats its mercenaries fairly and offers sound pay, good support, and a wide variety of assignments.

LYRAN ALLIANCE

Mercenaries consider the Alliance to be an unknown quantity. Archon Katrina Steiner-Davion remains largely untested as a leader, and many people see her as power hungry, two reasons that make many commanders leery of entering the Archon's employ. Many mercs, however, are delighted that Archon Katrina seems to offer so many fat contracts with relatively low risk. Most of these units have conveniently forgotten that the Steiners are businessmen at heart, and thus often become a mercenary unit's toughest opponent.

Most assignments offered by the Alliance involve garrison or security duty, because Archon Katrina's public position as a peacemaker allows her to do little else.

FREE WORLDS LEAGUE

The Free Worlds League is currently the largest employer of mercenaries in the Inner Sphere. The League's current position of strength in the Inner Sphere has made it more attractive to the many merc commanders who previously shied away from League contracts because of the realm's seemingly inherent instability. Currently, the League is using most of its mercs to hold the worlds it retook from the Federated Commonwealth until regular forces can be shifted to those planets.

Thomas Marik's posture of non-aggression toward the Lyran Alliance, as well as his partnership with the Capellan Confederation, has secured most of his borders. The only missions the League assigns within the Chaos March are garrison duty and pirate hunting; the steady increase in pirate raids in the March has made the latter particularly important. The Free Worlds League is currently uninterested in additional conquest of the Chaos March, though that may change.

CAPELLAN CONFEDERATION

The Confederation desperately needs mercenary troops for various types of missions. Chancellor Sun-Tzu Liao's invasion force shattered the Sarna March, but he needs more troops to finish the job he started. The Capellan state also needs units to beef up its borders with the Federated Commonwealth and the newly independent states of the Chaos March, particularly the Sarna Supremacy.

DRACONIS COMBINE

The Combine continues to hire mercenaries for secret missions. However, the formation of the Lyran Alliance has destabilized a portion of the Combine's border with the Federated Commonwealth, forcing Coordinator Theodore Kurita to hire mercenary units to help protect this area of Combine space. Almost all of these assignments involve garrison and defensive duty. Recent rumors suggest that the Combine wishes to keep things stirred up in the Chaos March and has hired small units to make surgical strikes and keep the balance of power shifting, but these rumors remain unproven.

SARNA SUPREMACY

Governor Montog-Chandler formed the Sarna Supremacy with important aid from several key officers in the Sarna Martial Academy and the Kaifeng SMM. These officers and the governor are all scions of the aristocratic families that once ruled Sarna, and they saw the Liao invasion as their chance for independence. These leaders began setting the groundwork for their plan shortly after the start of the Clan invasion by modifying the Grim Determination's contract, so that their official employer became the planetary government of Sarna rather than the Federated Commonwealth. The Sarna Supremacy is currently the most stable of the new alliances in the Chaos March, but also faces some of the most serious problems. Virtually surrounded by a hostile Capellan Confederation and tied to the economy of the Federated Commonwealth, many of its citizens consider the Supremacy to exist in name only.

Undaunted by these problems, Governor Montog-Chandler has big dreams for her newborn realm. She has already implemented a deal with the Federated Commonwealth that grants that Successor State most-favored-nation trade status in exchange for 25 percent of the output of the Tengen Aerospace factory on Sarna. The Supremacy has also allowed FedCom troops to use its worlds as staging areas and for shore leave, and agreed to expand its fledgling empire only by taking those planets from the Capellan Confederation that did not change hands to the Commonwealth during the Fourth Succession War. In return for these concessions, the Commonwealth has agreed to help build up the Supremacy's fledgling independent economy.

The Sarna Supremacy needs mercenaries to augment its armed forces and keep its worlds safe from Liao attack. The Supremacy also has dreams of expansion and is building up its troops for the task. Mercenary units employed in the Supremacy report that the government deals fairly with its hired troops, granting them the respect they deserve. The people of the Supremacy love their newfound freedom, even as their economic attachment to the Federated Commonwealth makes them question its reality; they feel that a stronger military can only help them assert their independence.

Governor Chandler plans to expand her realm in the near future, perhaps by the end of the year; as soon as she manages to hire two regiments of additional troops, she plans to invade the Confederation worlds of Sarmaxa and Randar. The Supremacy intends to honor most of its agreements with the

Federated Commonwealth, but is willing to push the envelope by heavily raiding such prosperous worlds as Bora and Ulan Bator that have recently changed hands from the Commonwealth to the Capellan Confederation. Assignments in the Supremacy range from defensive duty to objective and recon raids.

Friction is beginning to develop between the Supremacy's military leaders and Governor Montog-Chandler, who is no longer willing to serve as a mere figurehead. Some observers believe the rising dissension could lead to civil disturbances on Supremacy planets, which would allow either Capellan or Federated Commonwealth troops to intervene.

STYK COMMONALITY

Despite its precarious position between the Free Worlds League and the Capellan Confederation, the Styk Commonality has a good chance of remaining a viable state. The separatist forces that overthrew the pro-Liao rebels are well-funded by Richard Humphreys, fifth son of the deceased Duchess Catherine Humphreys of Andurien. The Humphreys family has taken advantage of events in the Chaos March to stir up additional trouble, supporting planets and alliances that are most likely to cause problems for Thomas Marik and Sun-Tzu Liao. As hereditary rulers of the Duchy of Andurien, the Humphreys family is bitterly opposed to the alliance between the League and the Confederation and will do whatever they can to unravel it.

The Commonality's lack of regular forces is a problem that will continue to plague the alliance for some years. The Styk Academy of War, currently under construction, will be delayed indefinitely due to a lack of adequate instructors and other factors; therefore, the Commonality cannot expect to train soldiers except to serve in infantry units. In addition, to gain a badly needed influx of cash, the Tao Mechworks factory on Styk pledged 100 percent of its production to the Federated Commonwealth for the next two decades. However, Archon Prince Victor is considering granting the Commonality a percentage of this yearly production in exchange for an oath of fealty and a promise that the Commonality government will hire troops to harass nearby Liao-held worlds. Like the Sarna Supremacy, the Styk Commonality highly regards its mercenary forces and pays them their due. Not interested in conquest for the present, the Commonality government uses its hired soliders to protect its borders and guarantee the safety of its mercantile fleet. Most assignments offered by the Commonality are defensive, though sometimes the Commonality government sends mercenary troops to accompany commercial trading vessels.

The Commonality government has begun trading with the troubled Saiph Triumvirate and the worlds of the League's Zion province. It refuses to trade with the Capellan Confederation, but also does not intend to mount direct aggression against that House. For the immediate future, the Commonality plans to keep a low profile and wait to see how events shape up in the Chaos March.

Depending on the gamemaster's choice, the government of the Styk Commonality may be receiving covert aid from Thomas Marik, Victor Davion, or both. Both leaders benefit by denying Sun-Tzu Liao access to the Tao Mechworks on Styk, and the Commonality also serves as a buffer between the Capellan Confederation and the Free Worlds League. Both leaders may also be attempting to deny Katrina Steiner-Davion an opportunity to ally with the Commonality worlds. Thomas Marik would prefer to aid the Commonality covertly to avoid jeopardizing his strategic alliance with Sun-Tzu Liao, and Victor would choose the same course because his limited supply of JumpShips does not permit him to aid the Commonality openly. The gamemaster may also decide that Marik or Davion agents have infiltrated and/or taken control of pro-Liao rebel movements on the planets Styk and Gan Singh, as Sun-Tzu's Zhazheng de guang guerrillas wield little influence following the rebellions on the planets.

SAIPH TRIUMVIRATE

Despite the claims of the Triumvirate's leaders, their grip on this fledgling state is decidedly shaky. Fighting continues on New Canton, Saiph, and Tall Trees, and substantial portions of each planet remain contested. On New Canton, Liao supporters still control a few spaceports and a vital island chain linking the planet's two continents. On Saiph and Tall Trees, Triumvirate governments control major cities and spaceports but little else. Without the money and 'Mechs supplied by Duke Balatine, neither of these planetary governments could keep what control they have.

Repeated attacks against the governments of Saiph and Tall Trees by pro-Liao guerrillas make it increasingly unlikely that the Saiph Triumvirate will survive the year unless Duke Balatine succeeds in his grab for power. Though the duke originally supported a collective government from all three Triumvirate worlds, he now plans to reconquer both Saiph and Tall Trees and place them under his exclusive control. To accomplish this goal, the Duke has been secretly hiring mercenary forces to supplement his army. He plans to launch his attack on Saiph as soon as it falls to the Liao rebels; once his forces have subdued that world, he will press on to Tall Trees whether its government has fallen or not.

The Capellan Confederation covets the Triumvirate worlds and funnels plentiful supplies to pro-Liao rebel forces in the hope that the rebels will topple the Triumvirate government. Unfortunately for his plans, however, the Capellan Chancellor has forgotten about a small band of rebels on Saiph supported by the Free Worlds League province of Zion. Saiph once belonged to Zion, and that province's leaders intend to seize the opportunity provided by the current events in the Chaos March to regain Saiph by supporting a rebel group willing to fall in line with their goal. Zion is a rich province, and its leaders can afford to funnel supplies and weapons to its client rebels indefinitely.

The Triumvirate government's instability and lack of direction make it difficult for mercenary units to discern and follow a chain of command, and so the Triumvirate is not considered a

good employer. Most assignments from the Saiph Triumvirate involve riot and security duty, in addition to raids and offensive actions against still-viable opposition factions on Saiph and Tall Trees. The Triumvirate lacks the strength to attack or raid neighboring realms.

The immediate future of the Saiph Triumvirate is up for grabs, and the gamemaster has free rein in deciding what will happen to this tiny realm. The struggle for control of the Triumvirate will most likely continue for some time, as Duke Balatine, the Confederation, and the Zion province battle each other to the limits of their resources. Some observers have speculated that Archon Katrina Steiner-Davion is giving covert aid to Duke Balatine, but no evidence exists to support such claims.

TERRACAP CONFEDERATION

Like the Saiph Triumvirate, the Terracap Confederation is struggling to survive. Aside from FedCom operatives stirring up a certain amount of trouble on Terra Firma, Terracap faces no particularly strong outside threat, but it may succumb to a thorny internal problem.

The Terra Firma government is run by the bullies and thugs of the Fist of Mokal. When the separatists on Terra Firma first allied with the Fist, they believed they could use the mercenaries to gain power and then persuade them to leave. Instead, the mercenaries took control of the planet. The supposed request from Capolla for the mercenaries' aid was simply a pretext to assume control of that planet. Initially, the war-weary inhabitants of Terra Firma and Capolla welcomed the military regime, thankful for its successful efforts to restore order. That sentiment began changing, however, soon after the military government announced a state of emergency and revoked essentially all private rights. Faced with the task of rebuilding the entire infrastructure on both planets, the new government began drafting citizens into work brigades. On Capolla, the government also took control of nearly all of that planet's ore mines. These actions, as well as severe shortages of food and other basic necessities, have led some Liao and FedCom loyalists to set aside their mutual distrust and begin waging a joint guerrilla war against the military government. The government has reacted by rounding up hundreds of suspected guerrilla sympathizers and creating paramilitary death squads to assassinate its critics.

Capolla's leaders have finally had enough; they have pooled their limited resources and are hiring mercenaries to destroy the Fist of Mokal 'Mech company stationed on their world. The Capollan government is also preparing for probable retaliation by Terra Firma if they manage to accomplish their goal. Desperate to remain free, the Capollan government is considering opening negotiations with the Federated Commonwealth in the hopes that the presence of Federated Commonwealth troops will guarantee the planet's safety.

The Terracap Federation hires few mercenaries, and only units desperate for work take Terracap contracts. Any unit with better choices available will avoid having to deal with the Terracap government's instability and the probability of incur-

ring the wrath of the Fist of Mokai for poaching on their turf. Units hired by the Terracap Confederation can expect to see all sorts of problems, from absent supplies to conflicting orders to aggression from the Fist of Mokai. Assignments from the Terracap Confederation vary wildly, and often turn into different missions virtually overnight. This state of affairs is ripe for contract disputes that can easily turn violent.

Within six months, the Capollan government will have enough troops to crush the company of Fist 'Mechs and free up the mines. When the remaining Fist of Mokai forces travel to Capolla to wipe out the government, they will walk into numerous traps laid by the Capollans to stop them. Unable to complete their task, the Mokai will return to Terra Firma. Capolla will enjoy brief freedom, but pirate attacks and raids by Mokai forces will soon topple the Capollan government and reduce the world to anarchy.

SIRIAN HOLDS

Publicly, no one knows for certain what happened or is happening on the worlds of Sirius and Procyon, though the truth may eventually come to light. Certain interesting facts have turned up, among them the existence of a 'Mech factory built on Procyon during the days of the Star League. This factory developed new 'Mech designs and experimental weapons systems, but was believed destroyed sometime during the Amaris occupation or the Succession Wars. A facility was also built on Sirius during the Star League era, its resources believed to be dedicated to intensive research into jump drive technology. It too was believed destroyed during the Amaris crisis, but no proof of its destruction has ever been offered.

According to official records, no mercenary unit has been employed by the Sirian Holds since the tiny state's founding. No one knows, however, whether or not any units have signed unofficial contracts. Similarly, no one has been able to find out what conditions are like in this region.

In reality, Sirius and Procyon have fallen under the sway of Alisendar Gyrn, a member of an ancient Sirian trading family and a former ComStar acolyte. During the past few years, the charismatic Gyrn became increasingly delusional, believing himself to be the reincarnation of Jerome Blake. In preparation for his holy mission, Gyrn spent several years quietly building up a group of devoted followers in Sirian and Procyene society. When the Marik-Liao invasion threw the Sarna March into chaos, Gyrn announced to his followers that the time had come to realize Blake's vision. His followers immediately seized the HPG stations and broadcast facilities on Sirius and Procyon, simultaneously neutralizing the two small mercenary companies protecting the planets. Assassins killed several key officers in Jo's Fourth Cavalry and Boodelay's Backup, and infiltrators in both units' local support staffs sabotaged the mercs' JumpShips and other equipment. When Gyrn ordered the mercs' supplies cut off, many in both units tried but failed to depose him. Survivors fled into the wilderness on both worlds.

Having dealt with the opposition, Gyrn's followers announced to the stunned populations of Sirius and Procyon

that they were now members of an independent state, free of the oppressive rule of the Great Houses. They said nothing of Gyrn's "divinity," and so most people accepted the change in leadership with little protest. Before too long, however, word began to spread of how Gyrn dealt with the mercenary garrisons and that he controlled the HPG stations. This news stirred up the population, and their indignant protests showed signs of flaring into revolt when Gyrn announced the need to "purify" Sirius and Procyon by destroying all modern technology. Shortly after his proclamation, groups of Gyrn's followers began rounding up dissidents, intellectuals, technicians, and many others, ostensibly to begin their re-education. These unfortunates are actually taken to the killing fields outside the capital cities of Sirius and Procyon and slaughtered, lest they threaten Gyrn's power.

DUCHY OF SMALL

Duke Blake Small has great plans for his tiny realm, and will go to some lengths to ensure that it survives and prospers. The duke hopes to expand his duchy enough to make it a major power in the Terran Corridor, and has plans to invade and conquer the worlds of Fletcher, Sheratan and Epsilon Indi. Once he accomplishes this, he hopes to move on to Bryant and New Home within two years. The duke realizes, however, that the independent-minded world of Ingress may decide at any time to pull out of the duchy. Because Ingress's strong economy is vital to the survival of the duchy, Duke Small will take any measures necessary to keep this from happening.

The union of Small World and Ingress is hardly harmonious. The duke sent nearly half his 'Mech force to Ingress to propose the alliance, and that show of strength more than anything else convinced the leaders of Ingress to join the duchy. Recently, a group of prominent Ingressians sent envoys to Atreus and New Avalon to request aid in freeing their planet from the duke's rule. Believing that Ingress benefits very little from membership in the duchy, they want some type of protectorate status under a Great House. No one has yet criticized the duchy too vocally, however; half the duke's 'Mech force currently garrisons Ingress and easily outguns Ingress's conventionally armed forces.

Most mercs give the Duchy of Small a fair grade as an employer because the duke offers good money to attract solid forces. However, he is slowly gaining a reputation for abandoning or sacrificing merc units that do not perform well on missions, regardless of the circumstances or the length of the contract. Though no unit has yet brought formal charges against the duke, ugly rumors about him have caused a few units to pass up offers from this small state. The duchy usually employs mercs to undertake objective or recon raids for supplies and other salvage; the duke does not fear his neighbors, and will attack any neighboring realm that has what he wants. Duke Small is hiring large numbers of mercenaries to aid him in his conquests, and plans to continue hiring until he has captured all the worlds he wants at the moment. He is also finalizing purchases of more 'Mechs and vehicles to round out his regular

forces. Within a year, the duke plans to launch invasions of Fletcher and Sheratan, and will move on to Epsilon Indi once those worlds are secured.

Ingress will remain with the Duchy of Small for at least a year, but are determined to make their break once their Ingress Legions have gained advanced training from the duke's forces and the various treaties with the Great Houses have been concluded.

INDEPENDENT WORLDS

The numerous independent worlds in the Chaos March will remain so for at least a year. Though power struggles on and around them will continue, no major force will emerge with any substantial power base on any independent world except for the planet Hall. Because so many individual powers and factions are fighting on the various worlds of the Chaos March, it is virtually impossible to categorize them all. Employment with most of these forces is risky at best; many of these factions are poor and have limited resources, and most regard mercenaries with contempt and suspicion despite the fact that they need hired troops to win a battle or a war. Mercenary units will find dealing with these powers as varied and unpredictable as the universe itself.

Hall

Yuri and Nikoli Ridzik, twin sons of the famed Capellan general Pavel Ridzik, used their extensive network of contacts to raise a small army when the Sarna March began to collapse. The Ridzik brothers took their force to Hall, where they kept it hidden from the prying eyes of Emperor Baranov. By the end of 3058, the two brothers will have a force strong enough to challenge the self-styled emperor.

Led by Nikoli, the Ridzik army will conquer and overthrow Emperor Baranov and other rival factions on Hall and establish the world as the new capital of the reborn Tikonov Free Republic. With Hall firmly in their grasp, the Ridzik brothers plan to gather more troops so that they can invade the nearby worlds of Elgin, Hsien and possibly Tall Trees. Both Yuri and Nikoli have their father's gift for military strategy and will put it to excellent use in the field. They are determined to make their new Republic permanent, and will not trade their independence for alliance with any Successor State.

ECONOMICS

The military and political upheaval created by the Marik-Liao invasion of the Sarna March has caused serious economic upheaval as well. Where once the Federated Commonwealth's kroner was accepted throughout the region and sometimes even preferred over C-bills, many worlds in the Chaos March no longer acknowledge its value, terming it "as worthless as the government that prints it." Even the presence of strong pro-FedCom elements on various March worlds has done little to make the common people accept the kroner as easily as they once did. Because neither the Free Worlds League nor the Capellan Confederation has kept a strong grip

on any of the contested planets and systems in the March, the validity of their currencies is also often in doubt. Even the venerable C-bill has taken a beating in the Chaos March because of the ongoing warfare between ComStar and the Word of Blake. Adding to the problem, many of the HPG stations on March worlds that were once under ComStar's control have either fallen to the Word of Blake or are still in dispute between the two factions. HPG stations on contested planets make few, if any, offworld transmissions, deepening the isolation of those worlds. This isolation makes unfettered trade backed by a universally accepted currency virtually impossible.

To deal with their economic troubles, various leaders have begun issuing their own currencies against whatever vital resources they possess, thereby giving their money some off-world credibility. However, many of the powers in the March are not completely stable, and so their currencies are relatively weak. Most leaders also accept House scrip or C-bills, but at ruinous exchange rates. Some of the March's new governments have chosen to back one of the major House currencies; the Federated Commonwealth is the biggest beneficiary of this approach, because it binds the worlds of the Chaos March to the Commonwealth economically.

Some rulers have opted for a barter system, ignoring the chaos of currency entirely. Though this option makes for a certain economic stability and brings in the merchants, it can lead to sometimes violent altercations with those who feel they are not getting a fair deal. Most of the traders operating in the March prefer the barter system despite this risk, as it gives them tangible assets and full cargo holds.

Those realms that can afford to do so conduct business using precious metals. A few realms have been begun minting gold and platinum coins whose value is stable enough that they can be used in other states. A few smaller powers have resorted to other precious items as a measure of currency. The newly formed state of Moetonla, which comprises most of the northern continent on the planet Sheratan, issues half-liter containers of pure water as currency, though Moetonla's ruler has promised to replace the water bottles with a smaller and less bulky form of currency once the situation on Sheratan stabilizes.

COST OF LIVING

Because of the wildly varying economies on each world and the instability of most currencies in the Chaos March, prices for items like food, clothing and shelter fluctuate dramatically. Characters can expect to pay different amounts of money for items on any world they visit in the Chaos March, even on the more stable planets. For example, on the world of Epsilon Eridani a simple pistol can cost anywhere from 20 to 400 C-bills, though this particular fluctuation is due to cutthroat competition between merchants rather than a poor economy.

CONTRACT BRIEFINGS

CONTRACT SC 58991-001-2

Employer: Styk Commonality

Target: Shensi

Behind the Scenes

Though the Commonality has adequate forces with which to defend itself, its forces are running low on materiel. The Commonality learned of the equipment/ammunition cache from its spies on Shensi, who informed the Commonality government that the large cache contained several thousand tons of ammunition, armor, and spare parts for 'Mechs and vehicles. The cache is located in a bunker buried deep inside a large woods.

Opposition

The cache bunker is defended by a battalion of mechanized, laser-equipped infantry, which includes two platoons of anti-'Mech infantry. Two fixed gun turrets, each equipped with two large lasers, protect the site as well. The green Second Battalion of Kamakura's Hussars garrisons the planet Shensi itself, spread out in dual lance groupings among the planet's population centers.

CONTRACT SC 58991-001-9

Employer: Styk Commonality

Target: Pleione

Behind the Scenes

Minister Haller desires to make Pleione a part of the Commonality simply because he is a native of that world. The Commonality government is unaware of his actions, but would undoubtedly cancel Haller's plans if they learned of them. Pleione offers very little strategic value, and invading and capturing the planet would make an enemy of the Capellan Confederation—a development the fledgling state can ill afford. In fact, the Commonality government will discover Haller's activities two months after a hired unit begins its contract. The government immediately will remove Haller from power, thus leaving the unit stranded on Pleione.

The guerrilla forces on Pleione are green troops roughly a regiment strong. They possess a small supply of conventional arms, but have little else in their favor other than a fierce desire for independence.

Opposition

The world of Pleione is defended by the First Battalion of Kamakura's Hussars, reinforced by three regiments of mechanized infantry.

CONTRACT CC 58322-002-7

Employer: Capellan Confederation

Target: New Canton

Behind the Scenes

The Liaoist guerrillas have lost ground steadily since the duke's forces began fighting them. The island of Holt—the largest in the chain—is their only real stronghold, and Balatine has been relentless in his attempts to dislodge the guerrillas from the island and destroy them. Currently, the count is marshaling forces to launch a determined strike to throw the rebels off of Holt for good. Balatine has been hiring commando units and hover-based cavalry units to launch the initial thrust, while 'Mech forces would slowly advance for the kill.

The guerrillas are not without hope, however. In secret, the pro-Liao forces have planted a substantial number of floating mines and other deterrents to slow or even stop such an assault. The guerrillas have also hidden numerous Sniper artillery pieces on the island. The guerrilla's defenses include two regiments of mixed infantry and a company of heavy hover tanks.

Opposition

The Count's invasion force consists of a battalion of 'Mechs, mostly mercenary. Balatine also has raised an infantry contingent of nearly three regiments, which would be available to aid in an invasion. The Count hopes to have a battalion of hover tanks on his side as well when the invasion begins.

CONTRACT ST 58991-008-3

Employer: Saiph Trumvirate

Target: Saiph

Behind the Scenes

The situation on Saiph is truly treacherous. Trumvirate troops hold nominal control of the planet's cities, but at least ten different ethnic armies control different areas of the countryside. The terrain outside of Saiph's cities is ill-suited to 'Mech warfare, and so the government troops have made little effort to pursue these unsanctioned armies. Additionally, the guerrillas shell the two spaceports almost continuously, leading to frequent shortages of materiel and food on the planet.

Opposition

Saiph's ethnic armies range in size from a few platoons to battalions. Although these fighters possess only conventional weaponry, they are highly skilled guerrilla soldiers well-versed in anti-'Mech tactics.

CONTRACT CC 58323-002-8

Employer: Capellan Confederation

Target: Capolla

Behind the Scenes

Generally, guerrilla warfare contracts are equated with hazardous duty, and this particular mission is no exception. The Fist of Mokai is the real power behind the Terracap

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Confederation, and these ruthless individuals have instituted a totalitarian regime on Capolla and nearby Terra Firma. Should any mercenaries fall into the hands of governmental authorities, they can expect to be tortured rather than executed.

However, the brutal actions of the government have prompted many of the pro-Liao rebels and FedCom loyalists who had previously fought each other to join together to fight the government. These freedom fighters are garnering growing support among the refugee cities hidden in the old mines and jungles of Capolla. Unfortunately, many of the rebel leaders still mistrust one another, and the Fist of Mokal has informants within the movement.

Opposition

A company of 'Mechs from the Fist of Mokal serves as Capolla's primary defense. This company is reinforced by a regiment of home guard infantry, backed up with two medium tank lances. These forces will increase over the months as the Capollan government hires mercenaries to augment its forces. See Contract TF 58991-004-6 for more information on the situation on Capolla.

CONTRACT TF 58991-004-6

Employer: Terracap Confederation

Target: Capolla

Behind the Scenes

Ostensibly, Capolla is governed by the civilian leaders of the Terracap Confederation. The Fist of Mokal remains the true power behind the Confederation, however, and their rule has garnered little popular support. In fact, the totalitarian regime has begun to alienate much of Capolla's population through its heavy-handed tactics. Many of Capolla's rulers have begun to take covert action against the military government, and those few still loyal to the Fist of Mokal are increasingly dependent on their military's strong arm to maintain control of Capolla.

Hired units will be used to protect Capolla's sole operational spaceport, as well as the government-controlled cities. This will enable units from the Fist of Mokal to escalate its war against dissidents and the rebels allied against it. Depending on the success of those operations, the Capollan government may pressure hired units to aid Fist of Mokal units in its dirty work.

Opposition

Hired units may face attacks from up to twenty conventionally armed guerrilla units ranging in size from two to ten individuals. They may face a Liao-hired mercenary company (see Contract CC 58323-002-8, p. 20 in the Guide and above) as well. And depending on public reaction to the Capollan government's repressive tactics, hired units may eventually become the targets of angry mobs numbering in the hundreds.

CONTRACT IND 58900-002-3

Employer: Atticks Enterprises, Acamar

Target: Sheratan

Behind the Scenes

Until recently, Atticks Enterprises belonged to the Shen family of Acamar. When the Shen family and Acamar's other nobles overthrew the government, many of them moved to the capital city of Kalskag to take control and were killed when the Tiger Sharks attacked. The destruction of the Shen family left the family estates and holdings up for grabs. As the Sarna March continued its slide into anarchy, small pirate bands made their way to Acamar, discovered the abandoned mansions of the dead nobility, and took up residence.

A group of mercs-turned-pirates known as Death's Holiday became the de facto owners of Atticks Enterprises when they took over the Shen estates. The pirate band regards the company as a good source of supplemental income, but the scarcity of supplies on Acamar has made it difficult for them to feed themselves and their employees. Working through the Atticks board of directors, the pirates are hiring mercs to "retrieve supplies" from the Hollingsworth Agrifoods warehouses on Sheratan. Technically, Atticks does not own Hollingsworth, but the pirates know that vast amounts of food stores are located on Hollingsworth land and are determined to use them for their own support.

This contract may turn out to be quite dangerous for the player characters. Nearly every major power operating in the Chaos March—including Wolf's Dragoons—considers piracy illegal, and will take steps to stamp it out wherever they find it despite the chaotic conditions in the region. If the unit's actions are discovered, the characters may find themselves blackballed by the Dragoons or hunted down by the Federated Commonwealth, Capellan Confederation, or another major government.

Opposition

The planet Sheratan has no stable government. Instead, numerous factions on the world each control a small scrap of land. Various citizens groups that have sprung up within the city of Daggaknott frequently clash in an effort to gain central control over the city. Hollingsworth Agrifoods remains a viable company, but the chaos on Sheratan prompted Hollingsworth's board of directors to hire armed protection in the form of a small conventional company with infantry to keep their compound secure. The company is made up of tanks of mixed class and weight, and most of its infantry is equipped with motorized machine guns.

CONTRACT IND 58722-005-4

Employer: New Home Provisional Government

Target: Bryant

Behind the Scenes

Though the New Home Provisional Government sincerely wishes to rid itself of the pirates operating from the planet Bryant, certain individuals within that government strongly suspect that the pirates' success rate can be attributed to Star League-era equipment that they assume the pirates discovered in one of

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Bryant's long-abandoned cities. Eager to gain a decisive edge in the struggle against the FedCom loyalists fighting to win control of New Home, the government has instructed its liaison to retain the merc unit hired to disrupt the pirates after it completes that mission and send them on a treasure hunt through the ruins of the Star League cities that dot Bryant's surface.

Opposition

The unit's initial opposition will consist of all or part of the Bryant Regulars, a mixed regiment of regular troops. The mercs may face the less organized resistance of Bryant's ordinary citizens when they begin rooting around in the Star League rubble.

CONTRACT IND 58976-012-3

Employer: Lindon's Battalion

Target: Caph

Behind the Scenes

The mission to help free prisoners from Crenton is only the beginning for the hired unit. Once the characters' unit arrives on Caph, they will be offered a second contract to help a Lindon's Battalion strike team infiltrate Aswan and free that unit's DropShips. The Draconis Combine has agreed to pay the unit hired for this purpose, meaning that the characters are nominally working for Lindon's Battalion but being paid by House Kurita.

The contract to rescue the DropShips involves creating a diversion to distract the Stealthy Tiger 'Mechs stationed at the spaceport, which will allow the strike team to enter and retake the DropShips. The characters' unit can hitch a ride with the DropShips back to the city of Cimmeron.

Opposition

A lance of 'Mechs and several platoons of infantry defends Crenton. An entire company of Tigers 'Mechs guards the Aswan spaceport.

CONTRACT IND 58996-011-5

Employer: Duke Pierre Benton, Epsilon Eridani

Target: Epsilon Eridani

Behind the Scenes

Though most of Epsilon Eridani is stable, bandit activity has been slowly rising over the past few months. Outlying towns and villages infected with independence fever have obtained weapons and even a few scattered 'Mechs and have launched sporadic attacks in defiance of the planetary government. They have so far confined themselves to small-scale assaults on caravans and other supply convoys, but the threat could easily escalate. Duke Benton may initially order the hired unit to escort a caravan, then have them send out patrols to uncover the rebels. This second type of mission may involve splitting the unit into small, mobile groups.

The duke will make it clear to the characters that rebel groups must be destroyed when found. He regards direct and immediate elimination of the threat as the best way to bring stability to his planet.

Opposition

The largest group of rebels call themselves the Coalition. They do not seek to overthrow the government; they simply want independence for their string of towns along the southern coast of the northern continent. The Coalition has recently acquired a small and somewhat disreputable mercenary lance to augment their four regiments of irregular infantry. The Coalition also possess several small wheeled and hover tanks.

CONTRACT IND 58900-001-5

Employer: Dylan Bangus

Target: Hamal

Behind the Scenes

Hamal's only major city, Califa Hamal, is located near the equator, where the temperature sometimes climbs as high as the freezing point. Numerous small towns spread north and south from Califa Hamal, but most of the planet's population are nomadic tribesmen.

One of these nomadic tribes, led by Clinton DeFallay, has discovered vast amounts of oil in a small valley far north of Califa Hamal. This major find could put Hamal on the map, but DeFallay wants to keep for himself the money and power that the oil will bring. To accomplish this, he has made a deal with the notorious underworld baron Dylan Bangus for weapons and equipment to throw off the FedCom occupation forces. Having few ready funds, DeFallay has paid for this equipment with human lives.

The second half of the characters' mission will be to transport DeFallay's human cargo back to Epsilon Eridani for Bangus. This job may cause a serious moral dilemma for the characters, forcing them to make a difficult choice. If they choose not to honor their contract, Bangus will make them regret it. The characters also risk drawing the wrath of the Ham-gtze Irregulars, a militia force of residents of Califa Hamal and the neighboring city of Yangtze. This unit fiercely defends its barren world and despises the nomads that roam Hamal's surface. They may easily transfer that disdain to the characters when they discover for whom the merc unit is working.

Opposition

The Ham-gtze Irregulars are a full regiment, but only a battalion is stationed on Hamal. The battalion is mostly conventional, with two lances of 'Mechs and the rest primarily hover tanks. All of the Irregulars' vehicles represent 3025 technology.

CONTRACT IND 58996-012-9

Employer: Duke Benson Abraham

Target: Epsilon Indi

Behind the Scenes

The duke is facing serious pressure to accept leadership from surviving members of the Zhazheng de guang, but he refuses to give in. Duke Abraham's citizens army has been bolstered by a recent offer from several ISF agents to aid the duke in his struggle to remain in control; with the agents' help, the

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army has already successfully defended several small villages in the Poration Oasis region. The duke does his best to keep the ISF agents' true identity a secret, and so will attempt to keep the player characters out of these villages.

A mediocre military commander, the duke often makes misjudgments and bad calls. The characters might easily be sent on a poorly planned mission and forced to face all the resulting problems.

Opposition

The gamemaster should read the entry on Epsilon Indi, p. 36 of **Guide to the Chaos March**, for information regarding the Capellan-supported guerrillas and the Langendorf Lancers.

CONTRACT IND 58803-008-3

Employer: Count Dane Lonely

Target: Fletcher

Behind the Scenes

Fearing that the Free Worlds League may discover the crates, which contain drugs and other contraband such as certain entertainment programs and electronic devices slated for shipment to the Capellan Confederation, Count Lonely wants them back in his hands as soon as possible. Slocum is now considered part of the Confederation, so the crates contain enough evidence to implicate the count on criminal charges. Under normal circumstances he would leave the goods where they are and count on his agents to protect them, but he believes that the new coziness between the Free Worlds League and the Capellan Confederation may spell the end of his empire.

Count Lonely runs numerous illegal operations from Port Moseby to Sarna, making fat profits off all of them. He has numerous lackeys on Fletcher, who will be awaiting the characters' arrival. These contacts will help the characters find the warehouse in which the contraband goods are stored and remove them from the premises.

Opposition

Fletcher had only a light Federated Commonwealth garrison when the most recent fighting began, and Prince Victor did not send additional troops to oppose the Liao actions. The planetary government has pledged its own forces to defend the world; the gamemaster may treat this force as a Medium Planetary Garrison (see p. 19, **Hot Spots**) or use as the defending force a maximum of two companies of 'Mechs with accompanying vehicles and infantry.

CONTRACT FWL 58722-002-3

Employer: Free Worlds League

Target: Hall

Behind the Scenes

The hired unit will begin as planetary defenders, but Count McNally will soon order them to act as an attack force. The contract is worded to appear otherwise, but the League is

actually agreeing to supply the count with troops in exchange for his promise to join the Free Worlds League once Hall has been pacified. The count has backed his promise by granting League merchants the lowest possible prices for all agricultural exports.

Depending on the integrity of the unit hired, Count McNally may or may not grant generous salvage rights. He will grant better rights to units that perform well. The count hopes to crush the scattered rebel forces of the former Fourth Republican before challenging Emperor Baranov's forces.

Opposition

See the entry on Hall, p. 39 of the **Guide to the Chaos March**, for information about the world and its current factions.

CONTRACT DS 58991-010-4

Employer: Duke Blake Small

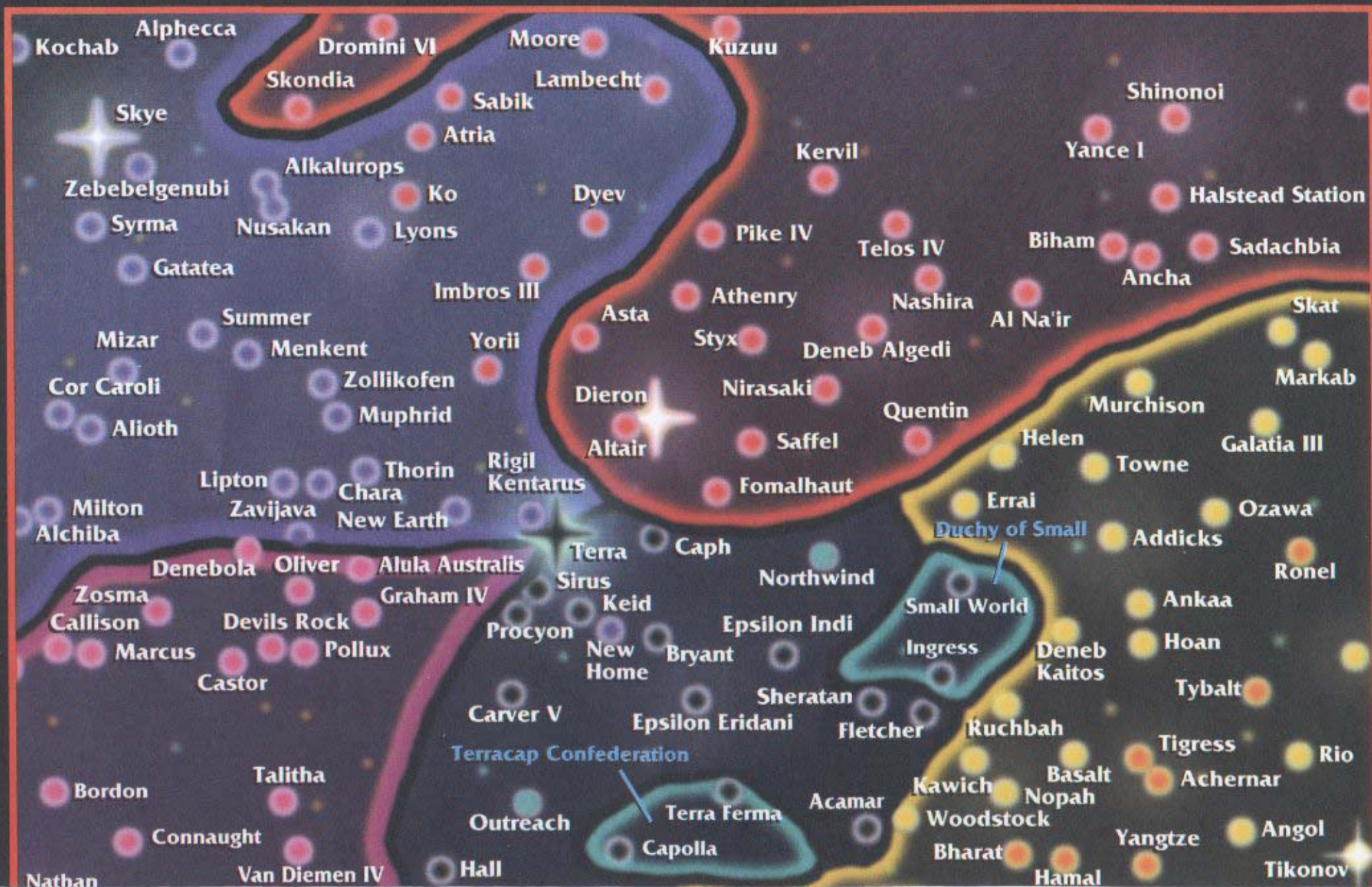
Target: Sheratan

Behind the Scenes

The power-hungry duke wants to see his infant realm grow quickly, but his intense desire for expansion has not clouded his judgment. Duke Small has planned his assault conservatively, having previously obtained limited intelligence about Sheratan's status. He hopes to establish a control zone on Sheratan from which his troops can gradually spread their conquest. If the invasion of Sheratan is a success, the duke will invade the planet Fletcher within a few more months. Though inclined to be autocratic at times, the duke is a more or less reasonable man who listens to his advisers before making important decisions.

Opposition

Sheratan is in a state of near anarchy, and so the opposition varies in size, strength and capability. The gamemaster should read the entry on Sheratan, p. 46 of the **Guide to the Chaos March**, for more information. In addition to possible enemies listed in the **Guide**, the characters may face opposition from members of the Ingress Legions, who will be reluctant to follow any orders that may lead to heavy casualties. The world of Ingress plans to pull out of the duchy soon and does not want to lose too many of its forces before doing so.



MAP KEY

SCALE

30 LIGHT-YEARS

COMBINE
PEACEKEEPERS

TIKONOV REACHES

CAPELLAN
CONFEDERATION

DRACONIS
COMBINE

FEDERATED
COMMONWEALTH

FREE WORLDS
LEAGUE

LYRAN ALLIANCE

INDEPENDENT
TERRITORIES

DISPUTED
(STRONG CAPELLAN
INFLUENCE)

DISPUTED
(CHAOS MARCH)



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