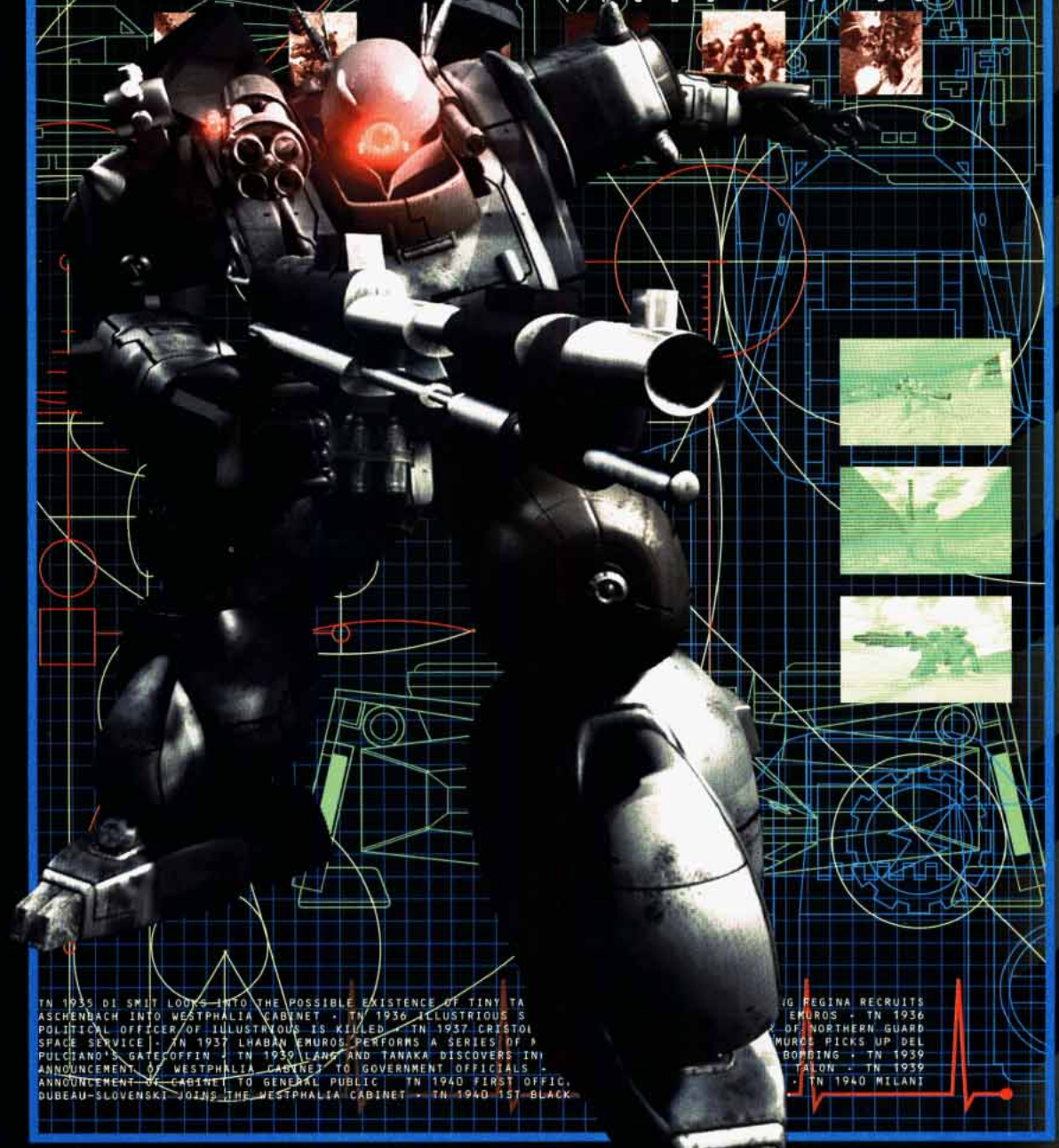
ACTIVISION® GAME COMPANION

DP9-059

BLACK TALON

FIELD GUIDE



MISSION TO CAPRICE

HEAVY GEAR® SOURCEBOOK

DREAM POD 9

ACTIVISION® GAME COMPANION

BLACK TALON

"Move it!" Vesping cried to the Liberati. "The path's clear!"

The engineers ran across the smoking field to the power relay. Within seconds, they had the generator off-line, and the lights surrounding the base went dark. As the Liberati troops ran away into the night once more, the generator relay blew in a mighty shower of sparks.

Like a trap-door spider released by the force of the blast, a Gear-like vehicle crawled out of an underground bunker, then two more. The flames reflected off their dark red hulls and the ominous black of their weapons, giving them the appearance of demons just escaped from the bowels of the earth.

"Here come the reserves!" Wallis hollered, as a new cluster of the massive machines came out of the base, firing at the retreating engineers. "Dammit — they've got Gears!"

"Gears?" cried Mailliaux. "How the heck can they have Gears? We invented them!"

Faced with the prospect of war with Earth again, the Terranovan leagues set aside their differences and created the Black Talon program, a mission to gather military intelligence on the lost colonies of Mankind. This book ties in with the Heavy Gear 2™ computer game from Activision®. In addition to a basic history of the Black Talon regiment, the Field Guide contains the game statistics of the vehicles that are likely to be encountered by Talon teams in their missions.

This sourcebook includes:

- A complete history of the Black Talon program;
- Full writeups for the 1st Black Talon;
- Descriptions and game stats for the special Talon vehicles, weapons and equipment;
- Descriptions and game stats for the combat vehicles of the CEF and Caprice;
- Sample campaign set-ups;
- New equipment.

HEAVY GEAR®

:1941

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MISSION TO CAPRICE

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HEAVY GEAR®

Black Talon Field Guide — Rebuilt from the Battleground Up

What do you do when you want the heroes to save an entire world, but cannot afford to change a complex storyline that has taken months and many books to painstakingly create, subplot by subplot? That was the dilemma that faced us and the design team assigned by Activision(r) to create the sequel to the first Heavy Gear computer game. Activision has established itself as a leader in the production of futuristic combat simulators, and in order to remain on top of a genre they helped create, they had to rise to the next level.

We already knew that we wanted to place the battles in a large variety of settings, even including outer space. The new software engine allowed this, and we all wanted to showcase the many different types of terrain it was capable of producing. But though the interaction with other colony worlds was already written in the overall Heavy Gear story arc, it was a bit too early to send armies to other planets.

In previous games of the genre, the players were part of a huge army taking part in a massive battle with opposing clans. Players liked it, but too often felt they had no impact over the universe. In one of HG2 director's Jack Mamais' previous mech games, the players were part of an elite team sent to recover crucial genetic material. Players responded most favorably to it, because they felt they had a personal stake over what was happening.

Jack thus proposed that we base the new game's story around a similar premise, that of a small elite covert action team sent on a highly dangerous mission. The elements then all came together. A recon mission to a distant enemy-held world, two very different planets, a evil plot to build a doomsday weapon — and all this fit neat inside the Heavy Gear world, allowing us to both fill the Activision(r)'s team's needs and our own.

And thus the Black Talon was born.

MISSION TO CAPRICE

DREAM POD 9

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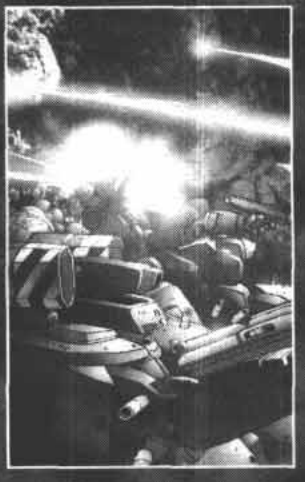
DEDICATION

TO THE SHADOW GUARD AND THE REST OF THE VISIONEERS



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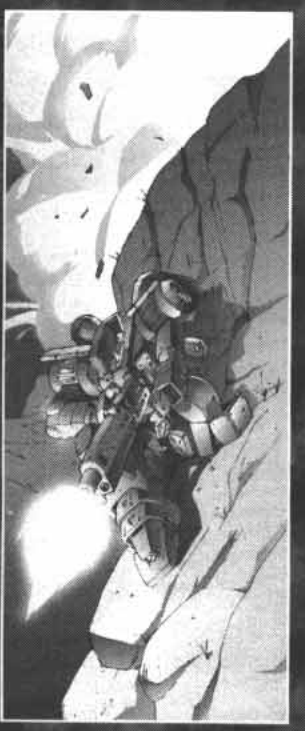

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Dream Pod 9 can also be reached through the Internet. Check the rec.games.mecha conference for support and information about Heavy Gear. You can also visit our World Wide Web page at http://www.dp9.com/

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INTRODUCTION

CONTACT

The streets of Port Oasis were deserted at this time of night, but Caporal Charles Davon was uneasy. His eyes darted from shadow to shadow, looking for that tell-tale sign of ... something. He wasn't sure, but he had the distinct impression that someone had been shadowing him for the past week or so.

His commline had been tapped as well, though he had discovered it only by pure luck, when he had a newer model terminal installed three days ago. No one could tell how long the bug had been there. The policeman, convinced the young pilot was under investigation by the SRID or one of the many Southern intelligence agencies, had told him to just forget about it, to lie low for a while. The fear was evident in the man's eyes, and that was enough to tell Davon to drop the issue. Nothing would be done.

A muffled noise in the alley he had just passed startled him, but he managed to keep his reactions under control. He kept on walking at the same pace, carefully watching for any reflective surface that might show him the approaching danger. The noise occured again, and Davon wheeled around, but this time it was accompanied by the growl of a dawg chasing a scurrying creature. Uneasy, Davon ducked into the first bar he saw and sat down at a corner table.

"What'll you have?" The waitress looked bored; it was the middle of the week, and the place was mostly empty.

"Give me just a cawfee." He threw some coins on the table.

"Yes, my prince." She was obviously annoyed at having to move for so little reward.

While he sipped his drink, Davon mentally reviewed the list of possibilities. He had no potentially incriminating friends; his family had always stayed away from politics. In fact, he himself preferred to keep away from politics as much as possible. Though he was a patriot, it always exasperated him to see how the leagues of the planet kept diving for one another's throats, while there were much more pressing matters to be resolved.

"I can't hide here all night," he mumbled to himself, and got up. As he did so, he glanced in the large mirror on the right wall and caught the eyes of a man — casually dressed, clean-shaven — in the reflection. He was in the street, doing his best to look as though he were studying the ad-board in front of the store. Davon shook his head and walked outside, feigning indifference. When he passed by the stranger, however, his right hand darted out and caught the man by the collar. Surprised by the unexpected movement, his opponent put up only token resistance as the pilot hauled him in to a nearby alley and locked his arm behind his back.

"Oww!" The man found himself face first into the wall.

Davon ignored the cry of pain. "You've been following me all night. Who are you? What do you want?"

"I'm to give you a message. Arg! Nothing more. Please!"

"I'm listening."

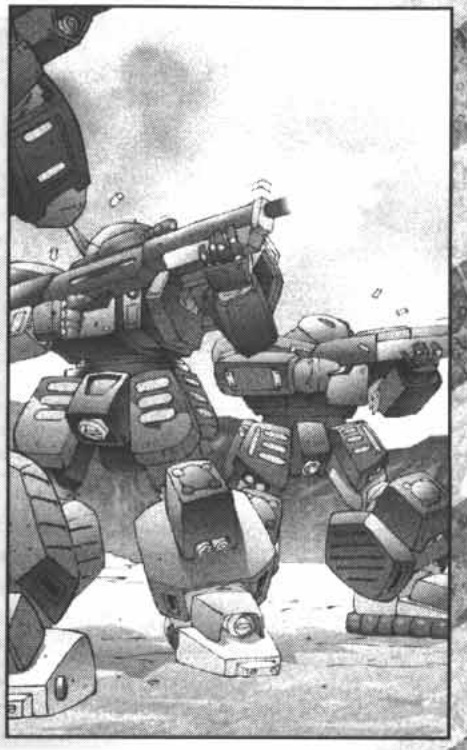
"You have attracted the attention of some well-placed people. They would like to meet with you to make you a proposal . . ."

"Who?" Davon decreased the pressure slightly. The man winced as his face scraped against the rough bricks.

"Hmrrr — no need to get rough, Caporal. I mean — well, I can't cause you harm, especially not at this time. I've been following you tonight, trying to find the best time to contact you without attracting the attention of some unsavory and very jealous people. . . I'm to tell you this: the Talons want you."

Defenders of Terra Nova - 1.1

The Terranovans had foolishly turned their attention away from Earth and had fallen once more into fratricidal squabbles when, on 2 Summer TN 1939, the city-state of Peace River was vaporized by an anti-matter device placed there by one or more NEC commandos. In an instant, the largest arms-manufacturer of Terra Nova became so much dust.



The brutal destruction of the neutral Badlands city-state of Peace River came as a complete shock to many. The Interpolar War was dying down slowly, victim of the weariness of the population and the tireless efforts of a few militant peacemakers. That an attack would come from enemies long thought gone seemed like a bad dream, yet the Terranovans were soon forced to face the evidence: the war was not over.

Faced with the prospect of battling an enemy that had previously proved both devious and unpredictable, a number of Terranovan politicians and military leaders reacted by forming a secret cross-league government of their own, which would later become public under the name of the Westphalia Cabinet. One of the first official acts of the Cabinet was to recommend the formation of a special elite reconnaissance team that would be sent off-world to evaluate the renewed threat of the New Earth Commonwealth (NEC), Earth's fascist and expansionist government. Their target would be Caprice, the Gate World — the most likely base of operations of the Colonial Expeditionary Force, the interstellar armed force of the NEC.

This operation, code-named Black Talon, was kept under tight wraps to prevent infiltrators from leaking word to their masters back on Caprice. Its goal was to gather detailed intelligence on CEF activities and resources in the Caprice system and, if possible, begin the struggle against Earth to ensure the future safety of Terra Nova. The Talons would start their mission by seeking out and destroying NEC installations uncovered on Terra Nova and then lead an intelligence gathering expedition to Caprice, the world that lies between Terra Nova and Earth via the Tannhauser Gate system.

Before other cities become targets, Terra Nova must strike back. The Black Talon team will be the vanguard in this long-awaited revenge.

Using the Field Guide - 1.1.1

This book serves several purposes. The first goal is to provide background information for those people who enjoyed the **Heavy Gear II** computer game and would like to learn more about the various individuals involved. Several Activision® liaisons have been working hand in hand with our own staffers to ensure continuity between both products, and to guarantee a seamless transition between the paper game and the computer game. As a result, if you have played (or are planning to play) **Heavy Gear II** on your computer, this book will give you more background details on the characters you have learned to love (or hate), as well as a wealth of information on the equipment from both sides of the struggle.

This product, aside from being a companion to the computer game, is also the perfect tool for a beginning Gamemaster to start a **Heavy Gear** campaign. The loose organization and great freedom of a Talon team is perfect to keep moderate control over the Player Characters' movements, and provides the GM with the perfect excuse to take the heroes where the story happens to be.

Content - 1.1.1

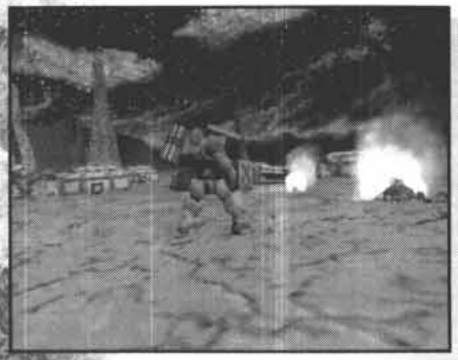
This sourcebook contains briefing information on both the Black Talon team and their mission. The first chapter contains a number of hooks and concepts that can be used as starting points for a new campaign (tactical or roleplaying) or as sub-plots for an already existing game.

The second chapter covers the Black Talon program itself, from its inception and current operations to its future. Information and intelligence has been gathered from diverse sources to compile background data on the history and current reality of the team. This document also includes profiles on the pilots and soldiers that formed the core of the first Talon field team, as well as data on the machines they used.

The third chapter covers the Terranovan forces that work most frequently with the Black Talon: the survivors of the Peace River destruction. The remaining Peace River Defense Force members are some of the most ardent supporters of the program, which they see as their best opportunity for revenge. The bulk of the chapter is made up of the descriptions of the various vehicles fielded by the PRDF and the machines they are developing for the future.

The known tactics and equipment of enemy forces are described in the fourth chapter, although all such data remains highly tentative; additional or more accurate information may be forthcoming as new intelligence is discovered. In addition to the descriptions and statistics of the war machines of Earth and Caprice, the chapter contains a brief overview of the current status of Caprice and the CEF forces stationed there. The book closes with a brief rule appendix.

1.1.1 - Using Black Talon in a Tactical Campaign



The background story of the Black Talon program can be used as the basis of several different tactical scenarios. There are many advantages and points of interest available for use when basing a scenario around the Talons and their operations.

The typical Talon op involves a fairly low number of vehicles, making such missions perfect for a game when time is short. It is important to note, though, that the Threat Value of the Talon machines is fairly high, meaning they will either have to face several times their number of opponents or battle highly skilled troopers. Most of the Talon teams are composed of Veteran or Elite crew, but fielding Qualified Talon pilots is acceptable for training missions.

The Talons also have very well defined missions, with unusual objectives — much more interesting than the usual "kill everything that moves" variation. The missions might also require the pilot to exit his vehicle in order to accomplish something such as picking up a data module, during which time he is very vulnerable, heightening the unmounted normal risk levels present in such a scenario (treat the pilot as a one-man infantry squad).

◆ On Terra Nova

The personnel of the Black Talon, both new recruits and old hands, have to spend a considerable amount of time in training to master the techniques required by their very delicate missions. Scenarios can be easily set up as training missions, with all kills and damages being simulated. This allows the Players to pit Black Talon against Black Talon, which would make for some very interesting combat runs.

Despite the realization that Earth still presents a threat to their world, not all Terranovans have accepted the alliance proposed by the Westphalia Cabinet. In addition to their normal duties, the Black Talon are sometimes deployed against rovers and other hostile forces to sharpen their skills and get them used to working as a team. In addition, the Talons are often used to flush out collaborators and CEF forces remaining in system, should they happen to be exposed.

It is expected that the CEF might try to do the same thing as the Westphalia Cabinet and send units deep into enemy territory — the surface of Terra Nova. The Black Talons, being a fast reaction elite unit, would likely be the first on the scene and thus the first line of defense against the invaders. It is expected that such interplanetary skirmishes will become more and more common over the next few cycles, as both sides attempt to undermine their adversaries.

◆ In Space

Thanks to the efforts of the Westphalia Cabinet and their near-complete control of the Terranovan space assets, the Black Talon is the primary armed force in the Helios system. If the Hope moonbase or the various space stations should be attacked, they would likely be called upon to provide assistance to the station's defenders.

Tactical battles of this type will require the **Tactical Space Support** sourcebook for best effect. Nonetheless, some very basic rules for Gear combat in a space environment are found on page 124 of this book.

◆ On Caprice

Scenarios can be set on the surface of Caprice. It matters little how the Terranovan forces got there, since it is outside the scope of the scenario; it is assumed that a shuttle, most likely a Fury-type vehicle, has dropped them off and flown out to a safe hiding place to await the outcome of the missions (Black Talon Command has learned their lesson from the first Talon team, whose transport was destroyed in the course of the mission).

The Caprician environment is more rugged than the one found on Terra Nova. With almost no vegetation to speak of or other soft cover present, this setting will make for very different (and deadly) battles. Combatants will have to rely on ground elevations and rough terrain to trap their opponents and avoid their attacks. The various terrain types of Caprice are similar to the Badlands, albeit somewhat more rugged. The numerous boulder fields can be easily simulated by using both Rough and Woodlands hexes, though in the later case the "woods" would be made of rock rather than vegetation. Some of the scenarios can be set in the highlands, where atmospheric pressure is low enough to require life support equipment for all the vehicles.

Game statistics for both CEF and Caprician vehicles can be found on page 94 and following of this book. The Caprician corporations also make extensive use of infantry and simple armored vehicles to defend their installations. These are similar to their TN counterparts in terms of training and capabilities, and thus the existing stats for troopers and APCs can be readily used to represent Caprician troops. the vat-grown GREL warriors are a special case: some basic rules for them are presented on page 125.

Using Black Talon in a Roleplaying Campaign - 1.1.1

The Black Talon program is virtually custom-made for a roleplaying campaign. Not only do they have access to neat equipment, the Talon teams are built around eclectic collections of individuals with varied skills and backgrounds. They also offer several advantages to the careful Gamemaster.

The Talon program is a perfect opportunity to give "toys" to the Player Characters, be they weapons, vehicles or new devices. Though they will be held accountable for the equipment, it is much easier to do this than to justify why a squad of rookie soldiers suddenly have access to the very latest Gear designs.

Making the Player Characters part of the Talon program also gives them two things that are highly appreciated by Players: liberty and mobility. The Talon teams, by their very nature, are given a large amount of leeway in the way they conduct their operations. As long as they are successful, high command will turn a blind eye to many infractions.

Since the Talons are the Terranovan equivalent to the CEF, they are frequently sent off to fight battles and fulfill objectives halfway across the globe or beyond, possibly to Caprice and the other colony worlds. This allows the Gamemaster to move the action to a new locale should the Players exhaust the possibilities of the place they are in at the moment.

◆ As an Ally

Having the Talons on your side is a very good thing, especially during battle. They are among the best pilots on the planet, and having them as back-ups, while not a guarantee of victory, certainly improves the odds. The Black Talons are used to fight desperate battles and are quite capable of holding more than their share of opponents.

Without falling into the usual trap of the "Deus Ex Machina," where unexpected reinforcement saves the Player Characters from a desperate situation, the arrival of the Talons on a given battlefield allows the Gamemaster to balance the situation if the Players should prove unexpectedly outmatched.

◆ As an Enem

The characters may well find themselves opposed to the Talons somewhere along the way. It might be the result of mistaken identities, or perhaps they are rivals trying to beat each other to some important goal. Whatever the situation, the Talons will be tenacious and extremely dangerous opponents, and the characters will have to be very careful about how they handle the situation.

The leader of the NGIS Badlands' operations, Colonel Sonya Gerti, has been recruited as an ally of the Westphalia Cabinet, primarily for her extensive connections and hatred toward the CEF. She might use some Talon teams, with or without their knowledge, to pursue her private goals of rounding up and killing the Earth collaborators still present on Terra Nova.

◆ As a Resource

The Talon team, due to their unorthodox origins, often include people with eclectic backgrounds and abilities. Most of them have friends and connections, and may come to help the Player Characters in times of need, either by supplying information, knowledge or, more rarely, something more tangible, like equipment.

The Talons are also directly linked to the Westphalia Cabinet, which can become an access route to the people in power. The team can easily get involved in politics, should they wish to.

◆ As a Plot Device

The Black Talon can be used as a source of plots for the campaign, even if they are not directly involved in the game themselves. The following are only a brief look at some of the possibilities. Gamemasters should feel free to adapt, modify or ignore any of these suggestions.

The Talons frequently go off planet for their missions; perhaps one of their shuttles has crashed in the desert, with its cargo of high tech Gears. Lots of people would be interested in retrieving it first. Or, the Talons might find themselves implicated in treason/sabotage, or be assigned to take out someone the PCs need to protect. Either way, they would come into contact — and conflict — with the PCs.

SKID ROW

Metal scraped against ferrocrete, an agonizing squeal piercing the air, matched only by the howl of dismay coming from inside the tech shed. The Elite prototypes whizzed by, swerving around and past each other in a pattern almost too complicated for the naked eye to follow.

Aschenbach leaned on the windowsill in the control tower and sighed to himself as he watched the giant machines dart around the giant ferrocrete obstacles placed haphazardly around the practice field. He punched up a screen, idly, watching the speed indicators jump wildly as the team went through the movement training exercise.

"I'm getting tired of these prototypes. We've got how long until the Dark series are ready, again?" He asked, glancing back over his shoulder. The tech behind him looked up from her screens and grinned.

"Exactly one day less than the answer you got yesterday, General. And no, asking isn't going to make things go faster." She made a few final entries, then saved her files. "These numbers will help, tho'. Thanks for the demonstration. The more data we get on the pilots, the faster we can calibrate their Nnets for ideal response times." She stood and joined him at the window. "That's a hell of a team you've got there."

He smiled slightly. "That's one way to put it."

The Gears continued to trace out their patterns around the field, every circuit executed faster and more precisely. One of the machines broke away from the pack suddenly, pulling its arms in and lifting one leg. The tech leaned forwards, her face betraying her confusion. ". . . the heck?"

Aschenbach's smile vanished abruptly, replaced by a dark scowl. "Sobec. What is he doing?"

Sobec's Gear waved up at the control booth as he extended his leg and did a ponderous approximation of an arabesque, alternating the power to his wheels and pulling into a vaguely ballet-like spin. He picked up speed, smoke beginning to filter out from the stressed core motors of the SMS wheels. Vesping screeched past him, his foot catching her behind the knees of her Gear.

"I don't believe this!" Vesping tumbled and caught herself on Kage's Dark Warrior's arm as it extended to grab her. Aschenbach flipped on the radio, the tech crew's yelling voices filling the small control room.

"Somebody stop him!"

"The motors are shorting!"

"Bloody idiot, that's what he is!"

"You reckless, foolish, Earth-loving Skag!!" Ah — Maillaux had entered the fray.

Sobec pulled out of his spin, slowing long enough to toss off an irreverent salute to the Gears clustered well out of the way. Maillaux began to move towards him, his arms extended and manipulators open. The younger man laughed, his voice coming over the radio for the first time. He stepped out of the way, gunning his engine and swerving around Maillaux's Gear. Sparks flew from his wheels as he fell into a skid, taking out a chunk of an obstacle. The massive Agamemnon Gear, unharmed and barely slowed down, barreled down the test range as Sobec's laughter continued to filter through the crackling radio. A trail of smoke followed him down the practice field, lingering in the air.

Vesping cried out in frustration, her Gear turning to face the third-story control room. "This is hopeless, General! We'll never start working together."

Aschenbach leaned his head on his hand, sighing to himself. "I'm afraid, Lieutenant, that we have no other choice."

History of the Black Talon Program - 2.1

Terra Nova, it seems, has always been struggling with Earth. Centuries ago, the planet was a lush world, ripe for colonization. When a native colonial culture began to emerge, it naturally existed in opposition to the Terran culture carried by government officials and new arrivals, who had not yet (or would not) assimilate the new behaviors and customs required to survive on the frontier of human colonial space. Though the fact was not widely publicized, Terra Nova was long considered by Earth to be an economic drain, and the colony was ultimately abandoned and left to its own devices.

Most of Terra Nova's population suddenly found themselves without any viable form of government. The period spanning from TN 1470 to TN 1540 was a chaotic time known as the Reconstruction. Times were hard and the inhabitants learned to rely on each other to survive and build a new life on Terra Nova. It was not easy: numerous small communities were starved out of existence, and larger communities often fell prey to civil unrest as different factions fought for control. A few decades later, the small homesteader villages and corporate communities had evolved into city-states, each a self-sufficient entity which provided the countryside around it with protection and a center for trade and technical expertise in return for the raw resources required by the city's industries. Ongoing conflicts prompted a number of city-states to band together, forming leagues for trading and mutual protection. By TN 1581, seven major leagues had been formed: three in the Arctic and four in the Antarctic.

In isolation, the new cultures developed to their full potential, becoming quite distinctive from the ones that spawned them. The colonies fought their own internal wars and built their own history, and generally went on with their existence. Most forgot all about Earth, so distant and seemingly uninterested; a dying world, many thought, spiraling into chaos.

The CEF Invasion - 2.1.1

By TN 1913, Terra Nova was in the final stages of a political phenomenon known as the "Judas Syndrome." Factions working on either side were selling out their own, and the two confederations were on a crash course towards a catastrophic world war. The militaries of both sides were at their peak in manpower, equipment and training. The entire planet had become a powderkeg, ready to be lit.

Unfortunately, centuries of isolation ended in TN 1913 with the sudden arrival of the Colonial Expeditionary Force. Earth had risen, phoenix-like, from its own ashes under the banner of the imperialist New Earth Commonwealth. It was determined to retake its colony worlds, and Terra Nova was its latest target. The planet's internal differences faded into insignificance when faced with the threat of imminent subjugation. Quickly, long-time enemies secured a truce to fight the Earthlings. The War of the Alliance had begun.

The war lasted for two and a half grueling years, blasting some sections of the planet back into wasteland. Earth unleashed its GRELs, hovertanks, bio-weapons and even detonated a few tactical nukes, and yet they lost due to unfamiliarity with terrain, inability to quickly re-supply and their own overconfidence. The invasion officially ended with the Treaty of Westphalia in TN 1917.

After four cycles of ceaseless struggle, the Terranovans had managed what many thought would be impossible: they repelled the invaders from their star system, sending the remnants of the once proud Earth fleet packing back through the Gate. When the last Earth Gateship fled back toward the occupied world of Caprice, all Terranovans sighed with relief. Many cities were in ruins, countless soldiers and civilians had died for this moment, it would take many cycles to rebuild, but they had won. The conflict with Earth was over, or so the population thought.

The Post-War Period - 2.1.2

Despite the rude lesson they had just learned, the governments of the former colony planet were still weary of one another. With Earth and its conquest fleet gone, they stationed ships and minefields around the Gate and went back to their pre-war preoccupations, that is, the subjugations of their enemies. The war had changed many things, however, among them the perceptions of several key people.

While the general population only heard about the efforts of the other leagues in the defense of the planet, the soldiers and officers who fought against the CEF side by side learned to appreciate one another. Though they had been poised to rip each other apart only a few short cycles ago, they now discovered they had much more in common than they originally thought, and many were reluctant to go back to their pre-war hatred, even when ordered to do so. The roots of what would eventually became the Wesphalia Cabinet date back to this period, as Kenichi Tanaka and Lang Regina, both high officers of the armed forces of the South and North, wrote back and forth about politics and their personal beliefs, despite being on opposed sides.

This period also lead to several technological developments that would be decisive later on in the defense of the planet. By TN 1935, Professor Di Smit, a renowned scientist specializing in Faster-Than-Light travel, began looking for tiny Tannhausers discontinuities, which could eventually be used as additional Gates in and out of the system. Unknown to her, the scientists of Earth had already discover them and how to use them for interstellar travel, and had begun sending infiltrators in the Terranovan system.

2.1.3 - The Interpolar War

In retrospect, it may have been foolish to think Earth would give up on its efforts after only one war, but the colonies were so used to isolation from the motherworld that its governments immediately jumped to that hopeful conclusion. They turned inward once more and old hatreds boiled up again, fueled by economic and nationalistic conflicts. Soon enough, the poles were at war with each other, North fighting South during the Interpolar War.

Not all were blinded to reality, however. Kenichi Tanaka, now the Lord Chancellor of the Eastern Sun Emirates, and Lang Regina, the Fort Henry Proconsul, had stayed in contact ever since the end of the War of the Alliance, despite their opposed allegiances. Both believed that external threats would come once more and arranged to secretly keep in touch, despite the risks of being discovered and condemned for treason. From the early days of TN 1936 onward, the two began a discrete campaign of recruitment to build a network of people dedicated to the defense of the planet as a whole. Lang's influence was especially precious, and she managed to convince many of the officers of the various Terranovan space fleets, who were the first to face the CEF in battle and had all seen firsthand the brutality of which the invaders were capable, to join her conspiracy.

The spacers were keeping an eye on all space-related development, and it was only a matter of time before Gawaïne Di Smit's work with micro-Gates came to the fore. When Cristobal Santiago was assigned the position of commander of the Northern Guard Space Service in the Spring of TN 1937, he took the opportunity to bring her along to test out her theories. A keen tactician, Cristobal had realized the potential of these spatial "back doors" and the dangers they posed. His hunch paid off handsomely on 23 Autumn 37, when the *Lhaban Emuros*, which was doing Gate detection tests, picked up the Gatecoffin of one Helene del Pulciano, a Liberati rebel from the neighboring colony world of Caprice. Her story confirmed Tanaka and Lang's worst fears (see [**Blood on the Wind** and **Return to Cat's Eye**) and only straightened their resolve.

2.1.4 - The Peace River Incident

Despite efforts by the conspirators to convince their governments of the seriousness of the situation, the Interpolar War went on. This was not facilitated by the personalities of the people involved: Lord Chancellor Kenichi Tanaka had a long history of strife with the leadership of the Southern Republic, and they adamantly refused to listen to him.

Bloody as any war that had preceded it, this struggle suddenly became pointless when Peace River was destroyed in an anti-matter detonation. By the middle of Summer 1939, Tanaka had managed to gather several crucial pieces of evidence that pointed to the culprit. On 18 Summer TN 1939, he confided his suspicions to Lang Regina.

Though most of the evidence pointed at the Badlands Revolutionary Force, Tanaka was reasonably certain that his people had uncovered evidence of New Earth Commonwealth involvement in the Peace River incident. Most of the data consisted of a series of pictures received from one of his contacts the very same afternoon. It was theorized for a while that those pictures were leaked by renowned information broker Nicosa Renault, but it is far more likely they came from within the BRF itself. The pictures showed a scruffy man first with Vallis Garrick, a Badlands rover chieftain, and later on with Sundra Gabriel, a BRF cell leader (since deceased). All indications pointed to this person being one of del Pulciano's fellow Gate travelers, and thus presumably a NEC agent.

Spurred on by their discoveries, Tanaka and Lang made the first step towards what they hoped would be the unification of Terra Nova on 29 Summer TN 1939, when they held a meeting to announce the existence of their web of contacts to specific officials from all of the planet's governments. Keeping the rest of their co-conspirators anonymous for security reasons, the two put themselves forwards as spokespeople for their group, which they later dubbed the Westphalia Cabinet after the famous treaty that concluded the War of the Alliance.

Terranovan Talon

The insignia of the Talon program was designed by Aschenbach himself during a meeting with the Westphalia Cabinet. It was quickly approved by the other members and used as a recognition symbol during the early days of the program.

The design holds several symbols, whose interaction is meant to convey the strength and mission of the Talons. The central motif is of course the Terranovan shield, the blue and red circle bisected by a yellow lightning bolt that symbolizes the Badlands and its troubles. The gear-like outer edge of the circle indicates the mechanized nature of the squad, while the powerful claws are the namesake of the team. The talons hold the shield high and proud, surrounding it against possible invaders (cynics and detractors of the project have of course indicated that the claws could also be crushing the planet, for all they know). Though the insignia is normally shown in color, a more discrete version exists, which is somewhat more stylized and done in black and silver.

The insignia is worn on the shoulders of the Talon pilot uniform and the breast pocket of the support staff's jumpsuit. It is also painted on the unit's vehicles, though some pilots prefer to have it removed or replaced by the black and silver version for additional discretion. Each Talon team also receives a flag with the insignia on it, but this is mostly reserved for ceremonial purposes.

Genesis of the Talons - 2.1.5

The announcement of the existence of the Cabinet came as an unpleasant surprise to many government heads, especially in the South. Lord Protector Jacques Molay in particular was shocked to see others succeed where he has failed so far, and while he publicly acknowledge the efforts of the Cabinet, he eagerly awaits the mistake that will allow him to displace them.

In the North, reactions were more muted. Old Winston Stark was glad to see that the Church-friendly forces of the NLC and UMF took a beating in the war, notably cooling the religious fervor that had gripped the Northern societies. Seeing the Cabinet as a way to extend the more conservative pragmatism he cherishes to the entire planet, Stark has been giving it his full public support and currently shields the organization from the efforts of its opponents. He feels the weight of his great age, however, and will likely try to influence Lang Regina to try and steer the Cabinet to his values before he dies.

The Cabinet proposed the formation of a specially-trained exploration group in a joint communiqué to the CNCS Inner Council and the Curia on 30 Summer, TN 1939. The group, known only by its code name, Black Talon, would be financed by all the leagues and used to gather information on the current activities of the CEF forces in outlying colonies (if any). Should a new invasion be in the work, Black Talon would form the core of a new unified Terranovan army. Though none of the political groups agreed to the latter function, they reluctantly funded the Black Talon nonetheless, figuring that at least their own troops were not being wasted on what many felt was a suicide recon mission.

The Westphalia Cabinet went public on 12 Autumn TN 1939. The evidence presented by Tanaka and Lang to the medias went a long way toward getting the general public's approval to what would otherwise has been seen as a dangerous group of traitors. NEC agents were evidently loose on the planet, and for all the average man knew, Terra Nova may well have been the only free planet in all of human space. Though few details on the Talon were available at the time, a number of riots in the last few days of Autumn 39, notably in Valeria, convinced the government that they had no choice but to supply at least a token effort or face all-out revolution from a terrified population who feared death from space.

The last part of the Talon program fell in place on 14 Spring TN 1940. During a private meeting with Paxton Arms' Acting CEO Milani DuBeau-Slovenski, Kenichi Tanaka secured the manpower and production facilities needed to produce the advanced combat vehicles the Talons would need to survive their mission. In exchange, DuBeau-Slovenski would be given a place on the Westphalia Cabinet, and the Peace River survivors would be given both financial help and protection.

The first Talon team was recruited during this time. An unconventional mix of people with broad-ranging abilities, they would be called to test out the worth of the program by venturing outside the Helios system — the first Terranovans to do so since the end of the St.-Vincent conflict.

The Proust Campaign - 2.1.6

It was believed that the CEF had at least one organized force still present on Terra Nova, which was in possession of additional anti-matter devices like the one used to destroy Peace River. Evidence pointed to connections with Colonel Proust and his fledging nation of supermen. This was an uncharacteristic move for Proust, who held the humans of Terra Nova and those of Earth in equal contempt. Given the serious losses his forces took in the battles against the Khayr ad-Din Army and other forces in the Badlands, revenge was his most likely motive. It is also possible that he went along with the operation in order to gain access to additional caches of CEF equipment for his troops, after which he would have betrayed his Earth allies.

The task of eliminating this threat was given to the 1st Black Talon as a baptism of fire and the ultimate test of their worth. In a series of missions in the Spring of TN 1940, the fledgling units, using a mix of older and prototype Gears, tracked down and eliminated the CEF-allied forces one by one, culminating with the destruction of a CEF base in the Arctic late in the cycle. Colonel Proust escaped capture, but his forces were entirely obliterated.

The Caprice Mission - 2.1.7

Once the immediate threat to Terra Nova had been neutralized, the Talons were deemed ready to begin the mission they had been training for all this time: to proceed to Caprice and gather intelligence on the NEC's forces there. A critical part of this enterprise was the establishment of ties with the Liberati rebels native to Caprice, which would be made simpler by the assignment of Helene del Pulciano, the Caprician visitor, to the unit as a liaison officer. She would pledge Terranovan aid to the Liberati in return for guides and reinforcements during the Talons' expedition.

The expedition left in the last days of TN 1940, having spent weeks in transit to join the Gateships stationed in deep space. Talon Command received only sporadic reports for the next half-cycle, and until the 1st Black Talon's triumphant return on 40 Summer TN 1941 (in a stolen shuttle, at that), still knew very little about the situation. The 1st Talon changed all this, and the data they brought back lent new impetus to the Black Talon program (see *Future of the Black Talon*, page 54).

2.2 - ORGANIZATION

When the Black Talon was formed, all the members of the Cabinet agreed that the new unit should not be placed under the command of any one existing armed service. Doing so would be to invite disaster as politicians and commanders tried to mold the Talon to fit their own needs rather than the ones of the program. The military leaders within the Cabinet also understood the necessity of giving more freedom to the unit than would be considered usual (or even prudent) for a typical military unit. These men and women stood a good chance of being cut off from both command and support for extended periods of time, and would thus have to be able to take care of themselves. Each team was thus made a entity of its own, with organic support and transport elements; each Talon squad would effectively be a tiny army of its own. For larger operations, Talon Command, a committee of the Cabinet, would directly supervise the various teams assigned to a given operation.

The teams that constitute the Black Talon are divided into two general and distinct groups, the Talon personnel themselves and the support crew that mans their transport vessels and maintains the equipment. Both are equally vital to the success of any given operation, and though the support crew tend to stay out of the spotlight, they are nonetheless treated very much as equals by the Talon pilots (despite some good-natured ribbing).

The Black Talon's combat arm is composed of some of the best pilots that Terra Nova has to offer. While not all of them are ace pilots, they are all bright and level-headed individuals, capable of getting themselves out of the most deadly situations by adapting their tactics and available resources. Likewise, the Talon's support services is comprised of the brightest and best technicians. While the Gear pilots are practicing tactics and marksmanship, the philosophy of "reuse, rebuild and recycle" is the Technical Service's mantra, and they excel at it.

2.2.1 - Fighting Unit

The Black Talon squadron is the central fighting element of the unit. It consists of between five and ten Gear-mounted pilots, with all recon and fire support duties being fulfilled by elements within the squadron itself. In contrast to the usual Terranovan policy of grouping similar vehicles together within a fighting unit to ease maintenance and resupply, the Talons' complex (and restrictive) mission profile means that most pilots will have a different machine, each suited to the role they will be called on to play within the force.

To ensure that each Talon team is able to work both independently and with other units in the field, a separate command structure has been put into place for the fighting arm (see page 19 for a diagram). Each team is a self-contained fighting unit built around a pyramidal command structure. The Talon leader reports directly to Talon Command through the team's communication assets (generally their transport vessel); Talon Command then coordinates between the various teams and any allied forces.

2.2.2 - Support Crew

The crew of the Talon's transport asset has faced recruiting requirements as tough as the pilots themselves, and represent some of the finer space crew available in the Helios system. They were recruited through the Space Service, and originate equally from the fleet of the Norlight Confederacy and the Southern Republic, with a few people from the smaller UMF and Dominion fleet. The spacers' *esprit de corps*, developed by the harsh environment they operate in, has greatly facilitated their integration into one team, despite their national rivalries.

Working in opposite order of Medical Services, the least damaged Gears are repaired first, with vehicles being cannibalized when they are too damaged to repair in an acceptable amount of time. Pilots were also given instruction in basic Gear field repair and maintenance, in order to give the technicians more time to work on more pressing issues (see *Training*, page 15).

2.2.3 - Ranks and Command Structure

Talon members keep the ranks they had earned in their previous assignments. It was proposed early on to create a new command structure especially for the program, but the proposal was turned down after resistance from the military, who felt that it would bring needless confusion for very few real field benefits.

The Black Talon, by its very nature, has a much looser structure than other elite military units. Its current assignment, far behind enemy lines, has forced the adoption of procedures that leave a lot of discretion to individual commanders and squad leaders. This loose structure sometimes causes friction within the teams, especially those coming from mixed backgrounds.

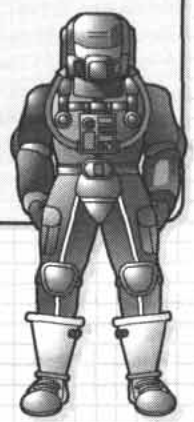
The field squadron is divided into two fireteams, coded Blue Team and Red Team. The number of Gears assigned to each fireteam depends on the amount of personnel assigned to a given mission: since the Talons' resources are extremely limited, they have been ordered to commit only the absolute minimum force necessary to the completion of the mission objectives.

Uniforms - 2.3

It was deemed necessary early on to equip the Talons with their own uniforms to foster a tighter group spirit and to avoid identification problems. There was also a need to standardize all suits to reduce the amount of supplies required, since all Terranovan armed forces have different uniforms and requirements. The final design chosen for the team is a black and red uniform that also doubles as a sealed combat suit, meeting the requirement of protection and recognition at the same time.

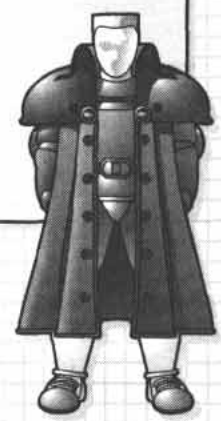
Combat Suit

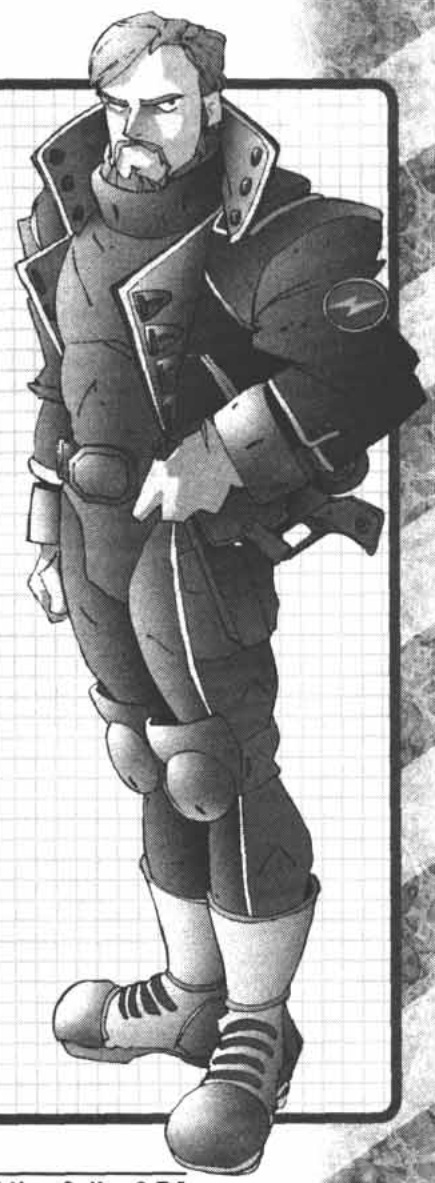
The main combat suit of the Talon pilots is composed of their fighting suit coupled with a heavy duty, sealed helmet with integrated HUD and life support system. Each suit and helmet set is customized to the needsof the wearer.



Dress Uniform

Though it is rarely used, a "dress uniform" has been created for the Black Talon crew. It consists of a body suit that follows the same black and red color pattern as the combat suit, worn with a black jacket with unit patches.





Mission Badge

Paxton Arms R&D Badge

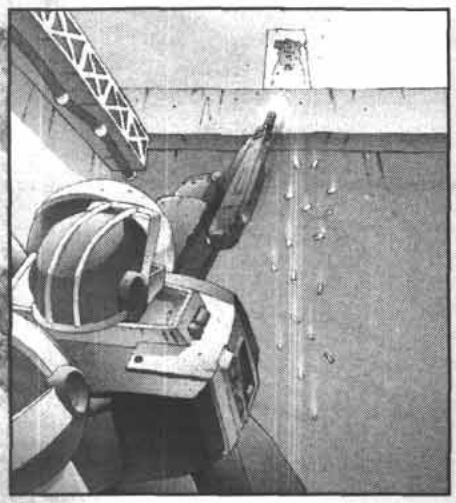
Fighting Suit - 2.3.1

The Black Talon fighting suit was developed specifically for the program. It is a marvel of engineering, designed to keep the pilot alive in the event of loss of pressure in the cockpit (for the anticipated space missions) and shield him against shrapnel and the elements.

The suit is made of several layers of strong composites and flexible mesh. Despite its complex construction, it remains fairly thin and flexible thanks to an ingenious design that varies the suit's thickness (which varies from one to five centimeters, depending on the location) according to the movement range needed. The garnment is sealed against environmental conditions and can serve as a lightweight pressure suit. The outer layer is extremely tear-resistant and can protect (somewhat) against small caliber weapons.

Each suit is tailored to its wearer from measurements taken from the nude subject by a laser scanning device. The inner layer must follow the contours of the skin exactly in order to hold the body together in low or no pressure environments. Due to the complex manufacturing processes required, the individual suits are extremely costly and remain the exclusive use of the Talon personnel.

2.4 - SELECTION AND TRAINING



The various Black Talon teams have been selected from among the various armies of Terra Nova. It is a truly international force, as befits its critical role in the struggle to maintain the collective freedom of the planet. Though old conflicts between the various leagues have manifested themselves between crewmates in the field, the desperate situation faced by Terra Nova ensures that no one will jeopardize the mission because of unwarranted prejudice.

Special care is taken to select exceptional people who will bring a considerable amount of skills and knowledge to the program and contribute to make the Talons one of the most deadly, if unconventional, fighting forces on the planet. Though they may not all be the best in their individual fields, the people of the Black Talon more than compensate with their flexibility, inventiveness and overall daring.

The Talon selection and training process is colored by one main element, speed. Unlike the more conventional Terranovan armed forces, where politics and influence play a large part in the choices made, the Cabinet does not have the luxury of time. Black Talon must be ready as soon as possible, before the enemy has a chance to strike again. Potential recruits are identified, contacted and transfered to their new posting in a matter of weeks, sometimes days. The training period is similarly short, a shortcut made possible only by the previous experience and the overall skills of the Talon recruits.

2.4.1 - Recruiting

Candidates are sought from all Terranovan armed forces, regardless of their allegiance. Officers connected to the program (either directly to the Talons or to the Cabinet) are charged with identifying people whose skills and dedications might make a worthwhile addition to the Talon family. No one can apply to the program — a candidate must be personally contacted in order to simply be invited for recruitment, and even then they are not guaranteed to make the cut (*though to date, no-one has failed to pass the Talons' entry tests*).

The Talon recruiters look for more than just pilots; in fact, they look for more than raw skills and experience. They need people who are resourceful and smart, and who can make the best of an unexpected situation. Once a team passes through a Gate, it is effectively on its own. They can't count on reinforcement or evacuation, and have to make do with whatever supplies they have brought with them or managed to acquire on-site.

Though it is rarely mentioned, the political beliefs of a potential recruit weighs substantially in the decision to invite them to join the team. The Talons look for people whose loyalty will be to the planet as a whole, not any one league. This ensures that national agendas will not override the goals set for a mission, which might endanger the rest of the team or even the program as a whole.

To make sure the unit will not be infiltrated, the Cabinet has tasked Colonel Gerti (see **Into the Badlands**, p. 40) to investigate each new member for possible past involvement with Earth and the CEF, a task she excels at thanks to her large network of contacts. Unknown to the rest of the Cabinet, however, is the fact that Gerti has been attempting to place more of her own people into the program, possibly to further her personal agenda of hunting down and exterminating all traces of the CEF on Terra Nova. While this poses no problem for the moment, it might change if a peace settlement is ever reached.

◆ Contact

Once a potential recruit has been identified, Talon Command sets up observers to sound out the person to get an idea of whether or not he is acceptable as a candidate. This process is much more open today than it was before. A few cycles ago, this phase was very dangerous, since a wrong choice could very well lead to the arrest of the recruiting officer on charge of treason. Nevertheless, the recruiters try to remain as discrete as possible, sometimes too much so: more than one recruit became justifiably worried when strange men showed up and started asking questions.

Once the potential recruit is deemed suitable, he is contacted and a meeting is set up in a public place. This is just the initial phase of contact, and very little is said. If he proves interested, the recruit is scheduled for a more formal interview, during which the Talon Command envoys will make the choice as to whether the candidate is acceptable or not. It is a credit to the Talon recruiters that all the pilots contacted so far have joined the operation.

Black Talon Minimum Recruiting Requirements

• AGI +1, PER +1, Pilot (Gear) 2, Gunnery (Gear) 2, higher Attibutes and Skills prefered
• At least one useful speciality at Level 3 (Mechanical, Electronic Warfare, etc.)
• At least five cycles service in armed forces (may be waved for exceptional skills)
• Commitment to Terra Nova as a whole

Training - 2.4.2

All Talon members are selected from armed forces and have previous military experience. They therefore do not need to go through the boot camp process, and are able to immediately begin the advanced tactics and intelligence courses required by their mission. Talon Command has prepared an entensive curriculum designed to bring the new pilots up to speed as fast as possible, since time may be of the essence. The discovery of mass destruction weaponry in the Caprice system by the 1st Black Talon has made everyone justifiably nervous, and the pressure to put more Talon teams together is felt throughout the organization.

Background

All Talon personnel, from the pilots to the base camp technicians, are given background courses on the Caprician system and the Colonial Expeditionary Force. This gives them the required knowledge to place their missions in the proper context and ensure that they will be able to identify and adequately respond to unforeseen changes in the local conditions.

Much of the information comes from war records and interviews with Helen Del Pulciano, and cover topics as diverses as local dialects and customs, known military organizations and tactics, and overall geography. All teammembers are required to study and memorize the known Caprice maps to adequately prepare for their missions. Once this part of the training is completed, all KNO and Notice Skills related to information about either Caprice or the CEF receive a +1 modifier to the die rolls.

Military

The Talon pilots receive additional instruction in small squad tactics to ensure they will perform at peak efficiency through the duration of the mission; since they are few in number, it is critical that every team members works effectively with his teammates to ensure a maximum use of the available tactical resources. This allows the Talons to operate in combat groups of only two vehicles, rather than the usual five.

In addition to the tactical training, the pilots attend courses on advanced gunnery and piloting to sharpen their existing skills. A notable emphasis is placed on stealth movement, a speciality rarely covered by most military forces (a 6-ton walking war machine is generally anything but discrete). By the time this part of the course is completed, all Talon pilots are capable of using hull down positions to increase their stealth (see page 126).

The pilots must also be taught effective zero-gee operations. Though most missions will take place on the surface of a colony world, it is always possible that combat may occur in space. The new pilots must learn to master the special zero-gee package developed for the Talon Gears and learn how to pilot their machines effectively under different types of gravity gradients. To this end, all new Talon teams do a short two-week stint at the Hope Moonbase; this is a relatively recent development, and in general use only since the return of the 1st Black Talon from Caprice. Once this part of the training program is completed, all Talon pilots receive the Space Pilot Skill at Level 1 (the program is too simple to grant improvements to an existing Skill).

Intelligence

Though they are not expected to engage in deep undercover activities, the Talons receive instructions in intelligence gathering. Colonel Gerti has developed a simple set of courses to teach the pilots the basic skills they may be called upon to use, including data gathering, interrogation (and resisting such) and encryption.

Once this part of the training program is completed, all Talon pilots receive the Interrogation, Notice and Security Skills at Level 1 (the program is too simple to grant improvements to existing Skills).

Mechanical

All Talon pilots receive a basic mechanical training, enough to maintain their Gears and weapons in fighting shape and do some basic repairs. This reduces the pressure on the technical support personnel and alows them to concentrate their efforts on more mission-critical objectives. Once this part of the training program is completed, all Talon pilots receive the Mechanics *or* the Electronics Skill at Level 1 (the program is too simple to grant improvements to an existing Skill).

Graduation

Despite the rather elitist status of the unit, graduation as a full-time Black Talon member is not always a prestigious event. Times are grim, and the Talons know their new postings is one made necessary by dire circumstances, not for their personal glory.

The "graduation" ceremony is very low-key and intimate, and closer to a night out on the town with friends than a military observance. Measurements for the uniform are taken toward the end of the training period, and the suit is formally awarded on the last day, before the unit receives its first assignment for the field training period.

2.4.3 - TRAINING FACILITIES

Various bases and facilities have been placed at the Talon's disposal for training purposes. The basic facilities are standard military training encampments, loaned to the Talons for basic practice by the various military forces of the planet. These includes movement test areas, where the pilots can get accustomed to new types of Gears, and firing ranges, where fire control systems can be calibrated and tested.

Most of the bases being loaned to the Talons are older facilities, some dating as far back as the St-Vincent War. Many are in disrepair and in need of upgrade, and all are located far from population centers. The Cabinet and the Talon Command have so far been unable to secure more modern facilities. Talon Command in particular is facing constant, if low-key, opposition from the upper echelons of the Terranovan armies, many of which feel unconfortable with the new unit and only give them what they need under the direct orders of their political masters.

◆ Movement Practice Facility

This is the simplest facility of all, and is found in all military bases and boot camps across the planet in one form or another. It is the first type of base camp a new Talon will be let loose in, so they can get some time practicing with the Gears they will be using from now on. This, of course, is an ideal situation; a training group equipped with basic Gears, modified to react somewhat like the Talon machines, has been put together more than once to make up for the low number of Dark-series vehicles being produced by the Black Talon Werks facilities in the Karaq Wastes.

In its simplest form, the standard Movement Practice Facility is nothing more than an expense of ferrocrete where pilots can practice maneuvers without fear of stepping onto something important or fragile. The more advanced facilities are long ferrocrete trenchs with numerous obstacles, each section designed to force the pilot to use one particular maneuver or sequence of maneuvers. Those are much more rare, however, and only two or three locations are open for use by the Talons. Pilots generally prefer the latter version because they can hold impromptu races when the officers are not looking (or at least, not officially).

◆ Firing Range

The firing ranges are another type of training facility that is quite common across the planet. These are little more than long corridors with automated target switching apparatus at one end and Gear parking spots at the other. Though most of the gunnery practices are done in simulators to save ammunition and wear on the vehicles, it is a common belief that it is always preferable to get the pilots get used to live ammo before they actually need to use it in the field.

Firing ranges generally use targets made out of scrap metal, endlessly recycled and restamped as new "victims" for the regiment. Most ranges have a small recycling plant nearby just for that purpose; others rely on regular shipments from nearby factories. Some better-equipped firing ranges have legions of inexpensive mass-produced target drones which are little more than a dumb autopilot computer chip driving a man-sized wheeled chassis. These can be adjusted to produce a sensor-output similar to that of a combat vehicle, so that the pilots can get used to tracking enemy units (it is interesting to note that target drones were used at least twice during the early weeks of the War of the Alliance to set up ambushes for enemy units).

Combat Missions

Simulated combat is useful to teach advanced tactics and get used to new types of vehicles, but only a real battlefield encounter can temper the knowledge learned into actual combat skills. General Aschenback was adamant that his crew get some experience before being sent out against the veteran troops of the CEF: all new Talon teams must perform a rotation on the front line before being sent off-planet on their first mission assignment.

The end of the Interpolar War did not mean the end of fighting everywhere on the planet, unfortunately. Pockets of resistance and hot spots still exist in remote locales, and numerous groups have used the opportunity given to them by the conflict to further their own agendas. In the North, groups of "patriots" have taken arms against what they believe to be the usurpation of power by the Westphalia Cabinet, while in the South people loyal to now-gone emirs or the Humanist Alliance continue their struggle. The Curia has taken the opportunity to kill two birds with one stone by requesting Talon assistance, removing the problem at no cost to their own armies.

Most of the battles, however, are fought against CEF bases on Terra Nova. A surprising number of them have been identified by the intelligence services of the various Terranovan leagues, and one can only suppose they are relatively recent, since it is unlikely they would have managed to completely escape detection for the many cycles since the end of the War of the Alliance.

Caprice Surface Training Area ◆

One of the first dedicated Talon training facilities to be established was the Caprice Surface Training Area, which is located deep in the Karaq Wastes. The CSTA was designed to allow the Talon pilots to practice moving and fighting on a surface area similar to taht of Caprice, to allow them to get a feel for the operation zones. Funding for this part of the project was supplied by the West Frontier Protectorate under the direction of Lang Regina, despite considerable grumblings by the leading clans. Rumors say that Lang was forced to make some political concessions to the Zucco faction in order to secure their support for the project, something which may have local repercussions later on.

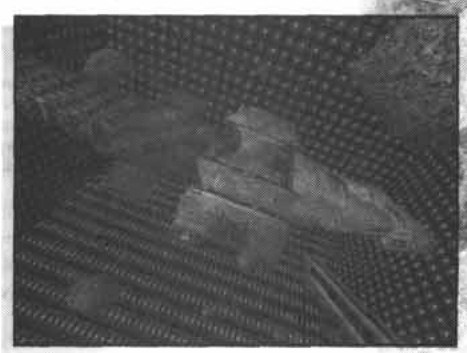
The CSTA is located in a rugged zone of the Badlands twenty kilometers east of the Talon Werks #3 field facility in the Karaq Wastes. It is adapted to look very much like what is known about Caprice's surface, though it is probably not as accurate as the real thing (much of the features came from historical records, and del Pulciano is suggestions). Built-up elements include domes, Maglev tracks and other surface installations, all fakes constructed with scrap metal and hastily painted to reproduce a typical CEF-controlled mining camp. The region has little to no water, and occasional seismic activity is simulated with blast charges. The Gears' control systems are recalibrated when operating here to simulate the small difference in gravity between the two planets, as well as the background electromagnetic activity. The final result, while not perfect, is convincing enough to adequatly prepare the pilots.

Gomorrah City Mock-up Site ●

The second main Black Talon training facility is the Gomorrah City Mock-up Site (GCMS), located about twenty kilometers outside Azov in the Western Desert. A dusty plain has been converted into a landscape full of buildings and many large structures, all inspired by historical documents on Caprice. This facility has been financed by the Southern Republic, which was surprinsingly forthcoming with the money. Tanaka suspects ulterior motives on the part of the Curia, but has been unable to determine what they would gain from this. He is especially surprised by the support offered by DeRouen and Molay, since the two men have been long-time political opponents of his. The SRA did ask permission to use the facility occasionally, which might indicate they intend to eventually take the CEF matter into their own hands.

The GCMS has been built along similar lines to the general Caprice surface training area. Again, to save time and cost, the various buildings are hollow shells erected from scrap material, though they hide sophisticated sensor nets and pop-up targets to let the Talons practice with live ammunition. This facility will familiarize the pilots with which areas offer sufficient cover and the obstacles they may expect to face. The only shortcoming of the facility is its lack of vertical height compared to the actual Caprician city architecture, which would have been difficult to reproduce without building stronger (and thus more expensive) structures.

Zero Gravity Simulator Space Training Facility ◆



The most ambitious training facility, however, remains the Zero Gravity Simulator Space Training Facility in Smolensk. For various reasons (secrecy being perhaps the most crucial), it was not possible at first to send the team into space to practice in the actual environment. Thus, the Smolensk facility, which was already in existence for the NGSS cadets' basic introductory courses, was pressed into service. It is a large hangar-like structure (big enough for a blimp) with connected briefing room and repair facility. Large double doors at the southern end of the structure lead to the briefing area and the vehicle preparation zone. Revolving light tripods that begin color cycling when the facility is in use are located at each of the corners.

The room goes dark when the simulation begins, and the grid lines on the wall (which are actually a holo-projection system) are replaced with a star field. A Gear (or what looks like one) is mounted on a complex gimbals system in the center of the facility. When coupled with the visual and sensor feedback from the computer, the movement of the structure give the illusion that the Gear is actually floating in space. Various mock-ups of rocks and spacecraft can be hung nearby as the training session requires. All the objects are very obviously fake, since they are basically wood and scrap metal mock-ups of the real things. The spaceship model has a thruster pack mounted on the back, and there are four "turrets" located around the ship's hull. The paint scheme is very dull gray (certainly not hyper-realistic). If all elements are attached, the spacecraft assembly is large enough to take up at least 1/3 of the volume of the hangar.

2.5 - Black Talon Tactics

Most of the battlefield tactics used by the Talons had to be developed from scratch, since the tactical doctrines in which its constituent members had been trained did not always mesh correctly. This has caused a problem in a number of early operations, and required a lot of effort to fix so that the troops would be effective in the field.

General Aschenbach spent much of the early part of TN 1940 writing the tactical manual that the Talons would eventually use. Lang and Tanaka contributed observations, but both were much too taken by the political side of the operation to do more than suggest a few changes. Aschenbach's assistant, Lieutenant Anton Clancy, provided many additional insights. Clancy's previous assignment as an undercover agent for the NGIS, where he worked for six cycles with a number of rover groups and small units, proved valuable as a comparison base.

Since each Talon team is built around a very low number of fighting units (due to transport and other logistic restrictions), it is vital that all units work as one to maximize their firepower and effectiveness. This has led to the development of "pack tactics," where the Talon vehicles play off of each others' positions in order to strike while the victim is targeting someone else. This ensures that the Talons will take as little damage as possible while inflicting maximum damage, and the maneuver also meshes well with their overall "strike and fade" approach to warfare.

Some members have the unfortunate tendency to strike out on their own to chase down targets, a common trait among highly skilled and headstrong pilots. It is generally reluctantly tolerated because all Talon members are able to operate independently of one another, since communications between separate units can be slow or even impossible in battle due to enemy disruption.

2.5.1 - Offensive Doctrine

The Black Talon is a multi-league armed force tasked to recon enemy assets both on and off-world. Its general organization and doctrines are shaped around the tenet that it is not an offensive force and will most likely be facing the enemy far from friendly support. In practice, though, the Talons are often deployed in offensive campaigns to serve the needs and objectives of the mission. They must be prepared to fight an adversary who possesses orbital assets, high technology and weapons of mass destruction, and is quite likely to use them if need be.

Unlike other Terranovan armed forces, the Talon's vehicular assets are entirely made up of walker vehicles, in this case Gears. Gears have been selected because they provide maximum firepower and mobility for the lowest amount of manpower; their cross-terrain mobility also made them a significantly better choice than armored vehicles. The team has no organic air or artillery support arm, simply because they have no room to carry them. Close support is provided on an available basis by the Talon's transport vessel if needed, although this option means exposing the group's only mean of escape to enemy fire.

The Black Talon has to face opponents armed with sophisticated weaponry, including sizable modern armored combat forces, long range artillery and tactical air support, with very little strength of their own. Their opponents often have state-of- the-art command and control systems as well as extensive reconnaissance, intelligence, surveillance and target acquisition capabilities. The Talon's basic offensive doctrine is thus based upon the principle of hit-and-run attacks. In this type of deployment, all team members are operating simultaneously along a broad front, gathering military intelligence or attacking high payoff targets (such as command vehicles or support units) using close and long-range support fire, and then vanishing before enemy forces can respond. Field reconnaissance, electronic warfare support and other specialized functions are performed simultaneously by properly-equipped teammates.

2.5.2 - Defensive Doctrine

Due to their highly specialized mission profile, the Black Talon forces will rarely be placed in a position where they must defend something. Contingency plans have been put together nonetheless to cover all bases; potential aggressors may come from anywhere. Because of this, the Talon planners were forced to design procedures that would be able to deal with almost any kind of tactics or approach, regardless of the composition of the enemy forces.

The Talons cannot afford to throw away units in combat; they have too few trained personnel and vehicles for the mission as it is, and each and every vehicle and trooper is a vital asset. The entire defensive doctrine of the Talon is based around several strategies that slowly grind down the enemy's strength in order to reduce (and if possible, prevent) friendly casualties.

The defensive doctrine of the Black Talon is in many ways similar to their offensive one. It relies extensively on avoiding contact with the enemy until a superior attack position has been reached, then striking with all available firepower before vanishing again.

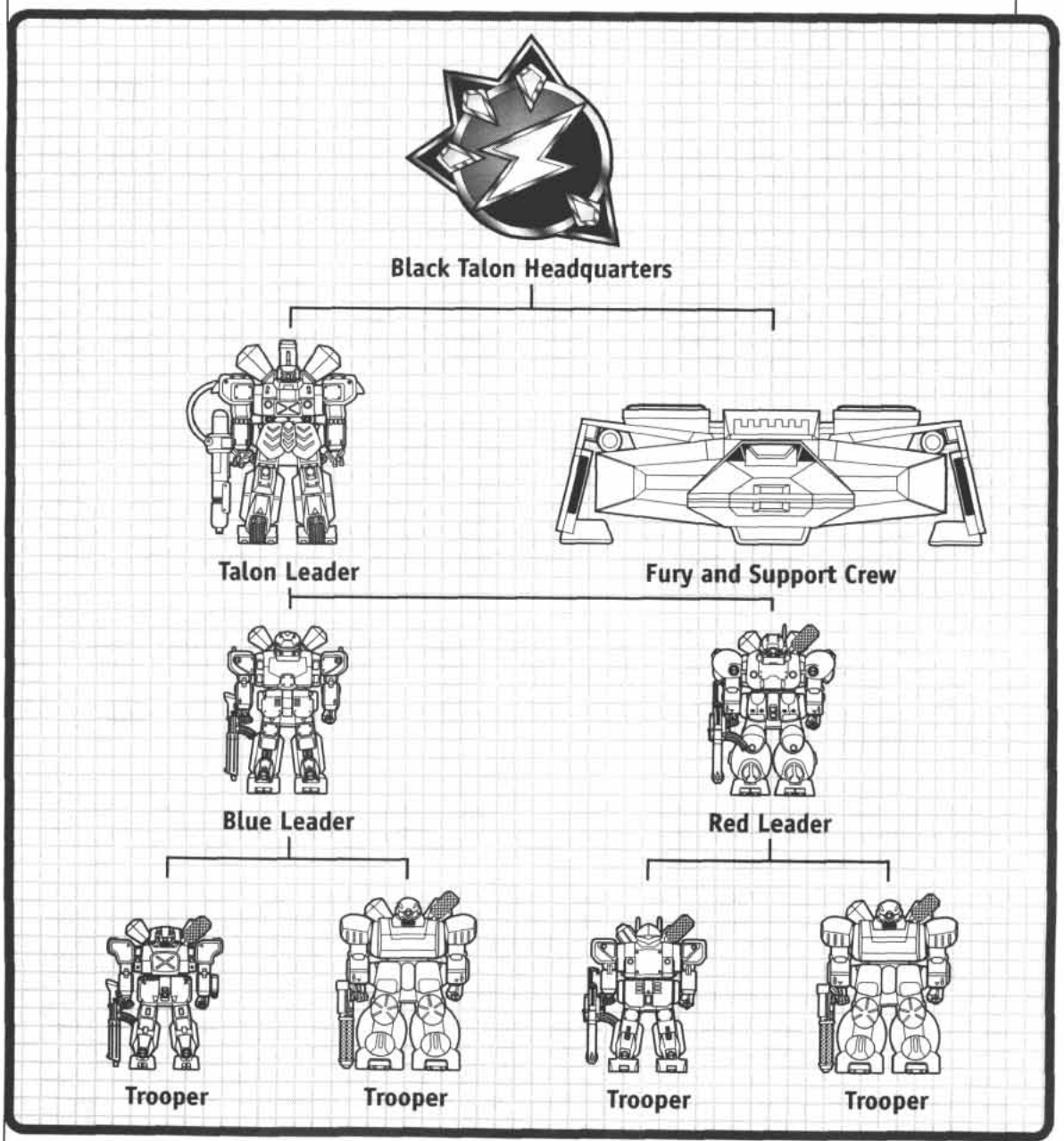
Battlefield Contingencies - 2.5.3

The Black Talon mission planners have prepared a number of set responses to the most common emergency battlefield situations. Most of these deal with either supply reduction or elimination, and loss of command and control.

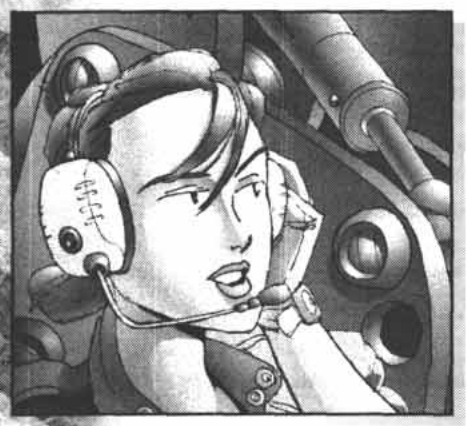
A strong chain of command is vital to ensure the continued efficiency of the troops. Talon protocols dictate a series of rules pertaining to this to safeguard the chain of command even in the face of horrendous losses. Should the commander be incapacitated (defined here as the loss of one or more of the following: crew ability to function, mobility, and communications), the second in command (usually the leader of Fire Team Red) will automatically take over and guide the squadron to a protected position.

Only when the Talon force has managed to elude the pursuers will an attempt to determine the status of the command unit be made. If unresponsive, temporary command is passed on to the designated second in command. Should he be taken out as well, command is transferred to the leader of Fire Team Blue. If he is taken out as well, the remaining vehicles will attempt to fall back to their transport and evacuate.

Black Talon Field Command Structure



2.6 - Support and Supplies



When it was determined that a force was necessary to be sent to Caprice and determine the intentions of the CEF, much thought went into what the logistical support requirements for an offplanet raiding force would be. Talon Command stressed maximum uptime for their Gears, as well as the ability for the force to "live off the land," by capturing and using CEF equipment.

The Black Talon has been created specifically as a low-profile, highly mobile strike force capable of undertaking missions deep within enemy territory. As such, they cannot rely on supply lines and reinforcements, and must therefore carry all they need with them. They can sometimes benefit from support in the field, either through local sympathizers or hostile acquisition, but as a safety measure they do not require it.

The long-range mission teams are expected to live off the land when possible. As the entire point of their missions is to gather information while not being detected, they must avoid contact with the enemy, which makes raiding for supplies an exceptionally risky choice of action. At the same time any attempts to provide supplies carry a risk of detection that might lead to heightened security and increased defensive patrols at the least.

2.6.1 - Field Camp

The Technical Support crew are tasked to establish a covert "patrol base" where all but the final Black Talon operations are to be carried out from. Engineering Grizzlies are used to construct basic Gear maintenance centers and a first aid station for the Medical Service, capable of providing advanced lifesaving support, though not full blown surgeries. Ammunition, food and repairs are provided at the patrol base, except for long range missions, where caches of consumables (fuel, ammunition) are to be pre-placed by allied forces (presumably Liberati in the case of the Caprice missions).

Caches are placed as far in advance of the mission as possible in order to avoid jeopardising the mission by getting unwanted attention or creating unusual traffic patterns. Caches may often require long missions of their own just to set up. They can be placed with friendly personnel in the operational area, but this brings a risk of detection. It is preferable to set up caches away from occupied areas. Caches must not contain any form of detectable telltale or homing device, instead they should be placed near recognisable landmarks at specified map references.

Usually caches are buried to protect them as well as prevent detection. Temporary caches that are only lightly camouflaged can be set up for the day of a mission to permit quick and easy access to needed supplies. Obviously, caches are no use for replacing broken parts or other specialised equipment, as they are intended purely to act as supply depots for basic needs.

A very quick way of delivering necessary supplies to mission teams is the replenishment run, a specialised form of mission in itself. The mission team moves away from their mission area while a supply patrol, convoy or boat moves to meet them. This ensure that the team receives its supplies and has the added advantage of giving the mission team a chance to relax a little as the supporting unit provides local and perimeter defence during the resupply.

Replenishment runs are as much psychological boosts for the mission teams as they are supply deliveries. Simply being able to talk to other people proves to the team that they are not working in a vacuum. A good replenishment run will even bring with it technical staff to provide necessary upgrades or repairs to damaged equipment.

2.6.2 - Transport

The core of the Talons' support resources is the Fury Intersystem Assault Shuttle, a large fusion-powered spacecraft capable of extended operations. The vehicle is fairly rugged and can use almost any working fluid as a reaction mass for its four propulsive fusion tubes. In addition, it carries enough workshops and spare parts to maintain the entire vehicle complement of a typical Talon team for several weeks, even in heavy combat conditions.

Mission teams carry all their basic needs with them. They cannot, however, be expected to carry enough to support them for more than a few weeks at the most. For long missions, motorised teams will usually have 25 to 50% of their transport vehicles dedicated to carrying supplies, while the other vehicles carry whatever supplies they can without jeopardising their ability to fight when needed. When travelling, the combat vehicles will protect the supply vehicles. When going into combat they will separate with the supply vehicles moving to the designated rendezvous point and setting up a defensive perimeter.

The main concern for Black Talon Command was to insure that there were enough repair parts to put the Gears back into action. Consequently, the majority of the Fury's cargo space was filled with parts and specialized ammunition. There was a heavy dependance on Liberati support to provide food, fuel and whatever scrap and ammunition they could provide. As the entire BT mission was considered a raid, it was expected that there be few protracted firefights. Indeed, BT Command expected only one or two "high intensity" battles. Months before the Fury took off, the Liberati had already begun caching food and fuel, since the Fury's cargo capacity was limited.

Combat Vehicles - 2.6.3

Talon Command understands the necessity of ensuring that its front line units never run out of ammunition, food, water and fuel, and it has set up detailed programs to deal with those basic needs. Highly trained quartermasters have at their disposal some of the finest and most diverse communication and managerial technologies available to do more with considerably less. The Talons may be stranded deep behind enemy lines, or perhaps stationed in a very inaccessible place such as a jungle or one of the space stations in the Helios system. Their supply officer always has a few tricks up his sleeves for use in these extraordinary situations.

The support crew forms the nerve center of the expedition, ensuring that requests are processed and inventory data is accurate and available at all times. Due to mass considerations, they are rarely assigned vehicles beyond a couple of Engineering Grizzlies (Gears are prefered because they are more versatile). Each Talon team has a chief quartermaster who oversees the overall operations. He is assisted by medical troops, maintenance staff, and supply and transportation personnel; the team is generally too small to justify an additional management layer.

The basic supplies and ordinances normally remain stored in the transport vehicles for the field operations, in case the Talons have to break camp suddenly. Before establishing a permanent supply outpost in potentially hostile territory, careful scouting is done to look for potential enemy forces and report any potential threat to the team.

Though the vehicles of the team need a large variety of supplies to keep working, the bulk of the cargo is made up of basic consumables such as water, food and fuel. While the military planners prefer to find the former on the march, it is not always available (especially not on the bone-dry surface of Caprice). Each pilot and crewman requires three meals a day in addition to several liters of water, both for drinking and sanitary purposes. Fresh food (acquired locally) is prefered but hard to find. Most of the fare is composed of spacetech-derived food, which, while somewhat on the tasteless side, is quite nutritious. For longer missions, field rations are carried by each pilot. While it is true that the rations are usually somewhat bland (a side effect of the advanced conservation and packaging techniques used to make them), most Talon pilots prefer them to the algae-derived food that constitute most of the Liberati's daily fare.

Combat Vehicles - 2.6.4

Since the Black Talon has only one load of supplies for the entire operation, everything that was placed on the Fury has to be considered absolutely necessary to the completion of the mission. Building upon the Heavy Gear's modular design, the Black Talon support forces modified the field Gears as much as possible to use "universal" parts. Weapons were also rechambered or modified to accept more standard ammunition, as well as field modification kits to rechamber weapons to accept any captured CEF ammunition. Specialty devices were kept to an absolute minimum, with preference for standardized designs that could share multiple components.

All Talon vehicles have been specifically modified by the Talon Werks to be highly modular and easy to maintain (see sidebar). Using systems derived from the rugged Hunter Gear, the Talon technicians have managed to create field variants of several powerful Gears that, despite their use of advanced stealth technologies and advanced combat systems, can still be resupplied, maintained and repaired using minimal tools and time.

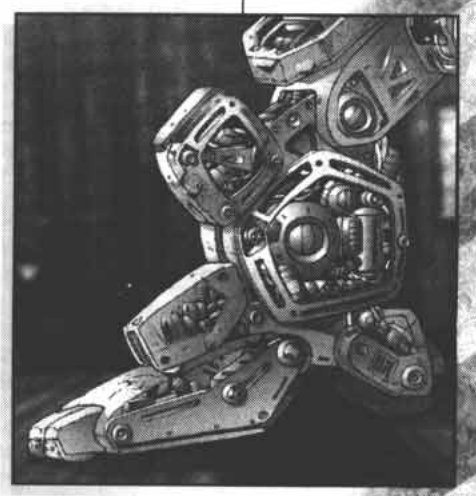
As a contingency in case supplies began to dwindle, certain Gears are identified as "mission critical," meaning that they would continue to be supported at the cost of cannibalizing or removing ammunition from other Gears. This priority is assigned by the individual unit commander based on the performances of his crew.

Easy to Modify

The special requirements and difficult conditions of the planned Caprice mission forced the Black Talon Werks to create vehicles that would actively support the team's efforts rather than being an hindrance. The team would likely be cut off from all active support and would be able to count only on themselves (possible support from established Liberati troops was not counted on as a precaution). The Talon fighting vehicles were thus built with this in mind.

All the machines were modified to be easily repaired by minimally trained crew (even pilots or Liberati troops if need be). This presented several problems, given that each of the Dark-series Gear is a high-performance machine, with the resulting high maintenance requirements. By adapting parts and engineering approaches from the very successful Hunter/Jäger series, the Talon Werks engineers succeeded in building systems that merely required regular maintenance rather than a "babysitting" schedule. While not as a good a originally hoped (the design team was hoping for a Hunter-like approach), it was the best they could do, given the high level of performance required of the Gears.

The support crew was made easier by the onboard field machineshops, which have in memory all the required templates for the main parts. Each machine is equipped with a powerful self-destruct mechanism to prevent information from falling into enemy hands. The Fury also carried lots of spare parts in its cargo holds, most of them suitable for use on all machines of the Dark series. Finally, all of the Talon's weapons were modified when possible to accept modular feed points for CEF ammunition and power couplings, which would allow them to use captured enemy supplies.



2.7 - Notable Personalities

The Black Talon program came about as the result of the efforts of the group of people brought together by Kenichi Tanaka and Lang Regina, who would come to be known as the Westphalia Cabinet. Despite the obvious need to unite against the burgeoning forces of the NEC, rivalries still loomed strong in many people's minds. No-one could agree on which force should be in charge of the delicate task of investigating the threat posed by the forces of Earth, and so they proposed that a new unit, with allegiance to the planet as a whole rather than any single part of it, would be the best solution. The Talon members were recruited from every League on the planet, a guesture that was not lost on the watching bureaucrats and warmongers.

The Cabinet members have since done their best to mask the rivalries and national frictions between the people that supply them with the tools they need to be successful. Some very careful diplomacy had to be employed, to ensure that long-held grudges would not explode into all-out warfare; any fractures within the Cabinet itself or among the various nominally-allied governments would only serve to damage the Talon team and hamper their ability to complete their assignments.

So far, they have managed to deal with any disputes arising from the conflict of the personalities involved, though some of the more important Cabinet members have problems that may have an influence on the big picture later on (Lang's faltering marriage, for example). Despite attempts by both parties to effect a reconciliation, Lang and her wife remain at odds, and Edden-Smythe has become one of the Cabinet's biggest detractors in recent times.

The Cabinet is in a very precarious position, despite strong popular support; they are continually walking a tightrope, especially when dealing with specific governmental bodies, making deals behind the scenes in order to secure the supplies they need. Unless they enjoy spectacular successes (which will bring its own set of problems, for it will make the Cabinet too powerful and thus a threat to the established power), and soon, the Cabinet will find itself deep in debt. It may well be that they will have to sacrifice themselves and their program at some point to ensure the safety of the planet.

The people introduced here are the cornerstones of the agency. Much more than just the founders, they are the ones whose tireless daily work has kept the whole operation running more or less smoothly. Should any of them be removed, either through intrigue or assassination, the Cabinet (and, to some extent, the whole of the Black Talon program) would suffer immensely; each of these people brings contacts and special abilities that would be very hard, if not impossible, to replace. Neither Di Smit and Brockenhaggen are at much risk, given their duty stations (deep space and a secret desert facilities, respectively), but Lang, Tanaka and Aschenbach are often called to travel to go about their business. Unsurprisingly, all are well-protected by bodyguards and elaborate safety measures.

2.7.1 - General Gervase Aschenbach

Gervase Aschenbach was born into one of the minor clans of the Western Frontier Protectorate, and joined the WFP Army at an early age. He fought under General Lang Regina at the decisive Battle of Baja during the War of the Alliance, and developed an enormous amount of respect for the skilled commander. Later on he became an instructor at the Western Military Academy in 1918, and remained there until 1935. Stern and with a strong sense of duty, he is extremely loyal to the project and to the North.

Recruited into the Westphalia Cabinet in TN 1936, he was assigned directly to the command of the Black Talon program upon their formation and promoted to General in TN 1939. A deliberate and thoughtful planner, he designed not only the Talon training program, but most of their tactics as well. He has never made an effort to be liked by his troops, but he is widely regarded as rough but fair, and a man to be avoided on the battlefield at all costs.

2.7.2 - Lang Regina

A hero of the war of the Alliance and the Proconsul of Fort Henry in the WFP, Lang Regina is not at all convinced that the Interpolar War is in the best interests of the North or Terra Nova. In cooperation with her Southern ally Kenichi Tanaka, she has been gathering allies for some time to prepare for the days after the war, all the while keeping her eyes trained on the skies, where the threat of Earth still looms.

She has been kept extremely busy over the past few cycles by her official duties as Proconsul and her unofficial and highly secretive ones as a co-conspirator. Though she makes a good show of hiding it, the strain of these responsibilities, especially in the wake of the Interpolar war, has taken its toll. The most visible effect is probably the near-failure of her marriage to Victoria Edden-Smythe. This has created additional opposition for the project within the CNCS government, directed by Edden-Smythe, and only the Talons' current success have ensured the continued support of the government of the North.

Kenichi Tanaka - 2.7.3

The Lord Chancellor of the ESE and a hero of the War of the Alliance, Tanaka shares his ally Lang Regina's doubts about the efficacy of and need for the Interpolar War. Having fought at the side of Northern soldiers, he cannot bring himself to support a war against their former allies. He believes in the honorable tradition of the South, but sees it being disregarded and all but drowned out by power-mongers like deRouen and Molay. Like Lang, Tanaka is gathering allies, including Aristide Lazarus, the head of the elite Special Intervention Unit.

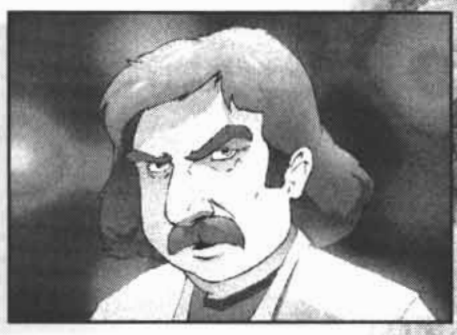
Tanaka has been spending much of his time and energy gathering resources finding support for the Talons. He does so with a wary mind and a careful eye towards the political machinations of his governmental counterparts, for he knows the powers-that-be in the South see the program as a possible threat and only tolerate it because it furthers their own goals. The moment he takes a wrong step, Molay will take the opportunity to remove him and take over, certainly for his own less-than-honorable purposes.

Gawaïne Di Smit - 2.7.4

A renowned Northern astrophysicist, Gawaïne Di Smit discovered, after years of painstaking work, the possible existence of micro-gates: very small Tannhauser anomalies that could link Terra Nova to new worlds beyond what have already been discovered. An admirer and ally of Proconsul Lang Regina, she has overseen tests aboard the Gateship *Lhaban Emuros* designed to detect these micro-gates. During one such test, witnesses saw one of these gates opening and helped to rescue the Caprician rebel and Liberati liaison Helene del Pulciano.

Though she is not a formal member of the Westphalia Cabinet, Di Smit has been placed in charge of overseeing the Gate program on which the Talons depend. Because of her importance to the Talon program as a whole, she has been kept out of the public eye; were she to be harmed or removed from the program, the Talons would effectively be stranded. The University has no record of her current whereabouts, a fact which may create future problems. Di Smit is unhappy about her anonymity in the face of this massive endeavor, but grudgingly accepts the necessity of her current position.

Dr. Brockenhaggen - 2.7.5



Dr. Emil Brockenhaggen is a personal friend of Miss Di Smit and the leader and principal engineer of the Black Talon Werks. Brockenhaggen was brought into the project early on by Di Smit, with the approval of the Cabinet members. To the University of Marathon council, and to the rest of the world, he is simply taking an extended leave of absence to recuperate from stress caused by the Interpolar War. In reality, though, Brockenhaggen was secretly moved to a base located in the Badlands, about a hundred kilometers west of the ruins of Peace River.

Though brilliant, Brokenhaggen suffers from an abrasive personality that has caused much friction within the Talon team. He refuses to accept any points of view but his own, and unfortunately for those who have to work with him, the fact that he is usually correct serves only to inflate his burgeoning megalomania. In particular, he has come into conflicts several times with the engineers of the Elite program who constitute much of the Werks' work force.

1st Black Talon - 2.7.6

The first team of the Black Talon program, referred to as the 1st Black Talon Squadron, was selected from the members of the various armies of Terra Nova. It was a truly international force, as befitted its critical role in beginning the operation that will help keep the planet free from outside forces. All pilots have been selected not only for their military skills but also for their ability to "think outside the box" and adapt to unforeseen situations. Many have special skills in addition to their training as warriors, such as small unit tactics, infiltration and demolition. The same desirable qualities, however, also mean that these pilots are hotshots and loners, and often have difficulties working within a highly structured military environment. Their diverse origins are not helping matters, and friction between the personalities occurs on a regular basis. Fortunately, the intense training regimen and a series of missions on Terra Nova itself have melded the squadron into a powerful force that has proved up to the difficult task given them.

The 1st Black Talon is made up of six people, with Helen Del Pulciano attached as the Liberati liaison. They are: Lieutenant Keiji Kage, PRDF; Lieutenant Boyden Wallis, NAF; Lieutenant Juno Vesping, NG; Sergeant Antoine Maillaux, SM; Sous-Caporal Morgausa Temple, MP; Soldat Leo Sobec, SRA. The team acquired additional members along the way, but these seven people formed the core of the unit.

1st Black Talon: Helene del Pulciano

Helene del Pulciano started the chain of events that would eventually lead to the formation of the Black Talon team. Originally from the neighboring colony world of Caprice, she stole an interstellar vehicle to come to Terra Nova to request help for the Liberati resistance movement on her home planet. Information on her background is sketchy, although she may have been one of the rare members of the Caprician corporate elite who refused to collaborate with the CEF when they returned to Caprice. She was too young to have been an executive at that time, it is more likely that her family resisted or that she has rebelled against both her parentage and the CEF; whatever the truth, she prefers not to talk about it. Del Pulciano will be the Talons' primary contact on Caprice among the Liberati partisans.

Profession

Del Pulciano's greatest contribution to the mission is her knowledge of Caprice, the CEF's forces there, and the Liberati. She has been the source of much of the information available to the Black Talon, and has helped develop the mission plan. She is extremely driven and has spent much of her time on Terra Nova trying to convince people of the threat posed by the forces of the New Earth Commonwealth.

Attitudes

Any psychological profiling of del Pulciano is extremely tentative, but there is likely to be some sort of cultural clash between del Pulciano and the Black Talon pilots. Indeed, they come from different worlds and she may be accustomed to a certain class of companions. Her time with the Liberati may have changed this, but that remains uncertain. She is likely very dedicated to her cause, and all Talon pilots should strive to make clear they are present to assist the Liberati cause, not to become another invading force.

Combat Reactions

Del Pulciano has never received any formal military training. She has been fighting with the Liberati guerrillas for several years, however, and so has acquired a great deal of field experience. She is at least competent with walker vehicles and so should be able to serve with the Black Talon once she goes through the training program. Her reactions under fire, however, remain to be determined.

Vital Statistics

Age:	33 year	Height:	168 cm	Weight:	60 kg	Hair:	Green	Eyes:	Black

Attributes

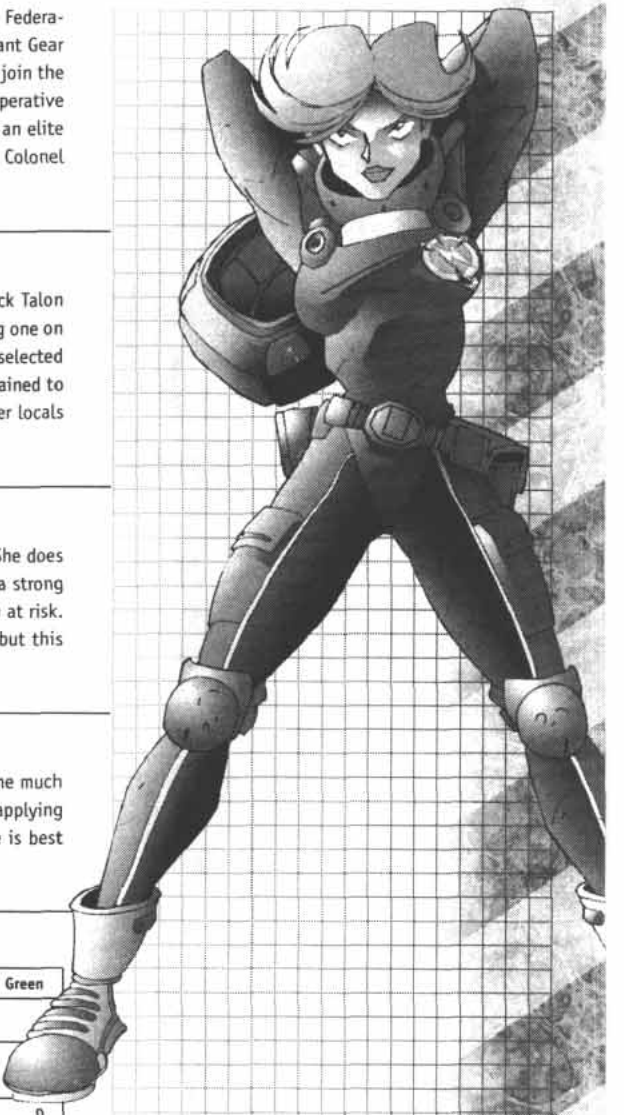
AGI	+1	APP	0	BLD	0	CRE	0	FIT	0
INF	+1	KNO	0	PER	+1	PSY	0	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	5	AD	3

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Business	1	0	Etiquette	1	+1	Hand-to-Hand	2	+1	Space Nav.	1	0
Combat Sense	1	+1	Foreign Language*2		0	Heavy Gear Pilot	2	+1	Space Pilot	1	0
Computer	2	0	Forgery	2	0	Mechanics	1	0	Strider Pilot	2	+1
Drive	1	+1	Gunnery (Gear)	2	+1	Small Arms	1	+1	Zero-G	2	+1
* (Liberati Slang)											

1st Black Talon: Lieutenant Juno Vesping

Lieutenant Juno Vesping is a native of the city-state of Rapid City in the United Mercantile Federation and served for a brief time in the corporate security service of Northco, the North's giant Gear manufacturer. After a corporate raid gone wrong, she decided to leave the private sector and join the military. She served with distinction in the Northern Guard Intelligence Service as both an operative and an analyst. Vesping left the intelligence service eight cycles ago to join the Cat's Paws, an elite commando Gear regiment in the Northern Guard. There she served with distinction under Colonel Stacey Diggs, who recommended her for this mission.



◆ Profession

Vesping, with over a decade of experience in covert operations, is a true asset to the Black Talon Squadron. She is a veteran of many spectacular commando raids with the Cat's Paws, including one on Port Oasis itself in TN 1938 that earned her the Guard's highest commendation. She has been selected as one of the fire team leaders for the 1st Black Talon, a role for which she is well-suited. Trained to interpret intelligence, she will be the best suited to interface closely with Liberati and other locals once on Caprice.

◆ Attitudes

Vesping is a surprisingly well-adjusted woman, given her background in covert operations. She does not suffer from any significant stress disorders or antisocial tendencies. Vesping does put a strong value on innocent life, however, and has twice in her career disobeyed orders that put them at risk. Both times she managed to find another solution (a testament to her creative thinking), but this could be a problem in a mission like the excursion to Caprice.

◆ Combat Reactions

Vesping's analytical mind is probably her best asset. She is cool under fire and provides some much needed stability to the team. She has a strong background in small unit tactics and excels at applying them in the field, though she has a tendency to be overprotective of her own troops. She is best paired with a pilot more prone to risk-taking, as that may offset her conservative patterns.

Vital Statistics

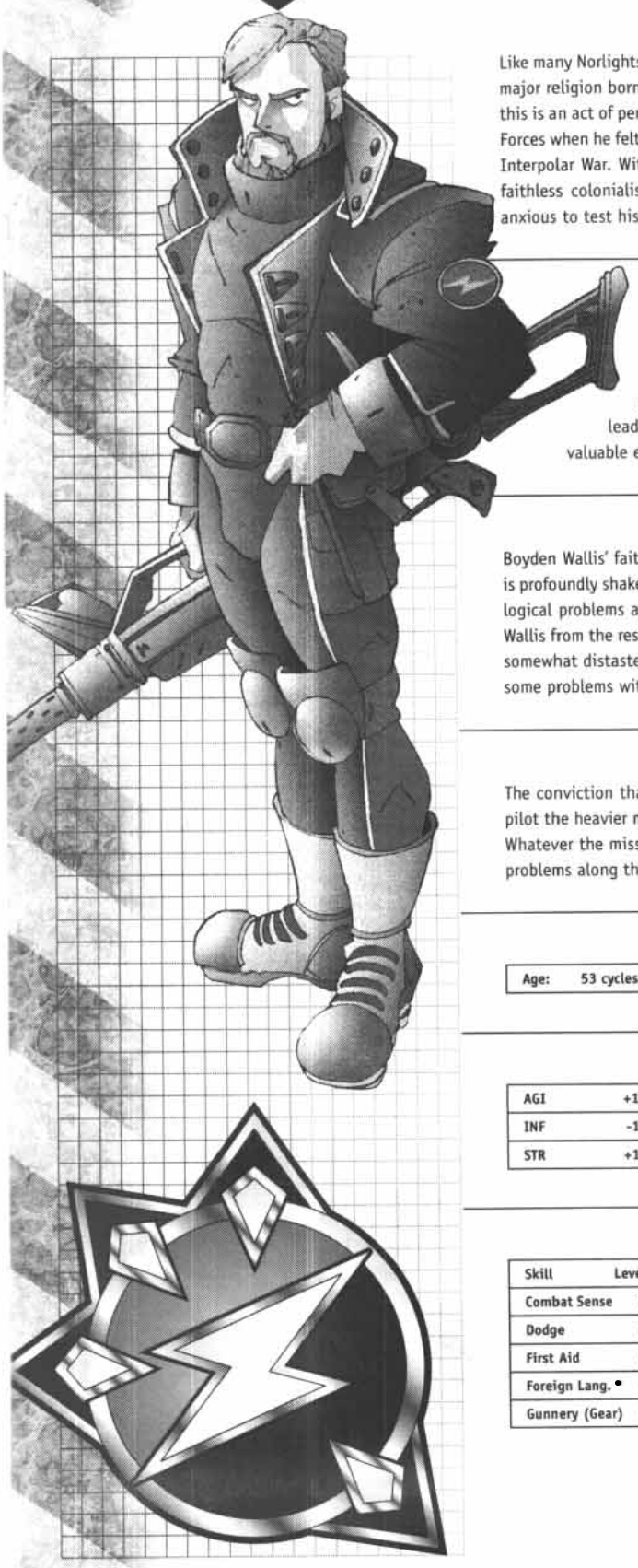
Age:	42 cycles	Height:	170 cm	Weight:	55 kg	Hair:	Red	Eyes:	Green

Attributes

AGI	+2	APP	+1	BLD	0	CRE	0	FIT	0
INF	0	KNO	+1	PER	+1	PSY	0	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	5	AD	4

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	+1	Gunnery (Gear)	2	+1	Leadership	3	0	Small Arms	2	+2
Computer	2	+1	Hand-to-Hand	2	+2	Mechanics	1	+1	Space Pilot	1	+2
Dodge	1	+2	Heavy Gear Pilot	3	+2	Melee	1	+2	Tactics	3	0
Electronics	2	+1	Interrogation	1	0	Notice	2	+1	Zero-G	1	+2
Forgery	2	0	Investigation	2	+1	Security	2	+1			



1st Black Talon: Lieutenant Boyden Wallis

Like many Norlights, Boyden Wallis is a man of faith. A devout follower of the Revisionist Church, the major religion born on Terra Nova, Wallis sees his military service as a spiritual obligation. For him, this is an act of peregrination, the Revisionist duty to better the world. He joined the Norlight Armed Forces when he felt the South was getting to be too dangerous and served with distinction during the Interpolar War. With the destruction of Peace River, he realized that the true enemy was Earth, a faithless colonialist empire bent on subjugating his church, his nation and his planet. Wallis is anxious to test his mettle against the "heathens" of the CEF.

Profession

Lieutenant Wallis is an experienced Gear pilot, having served with the 7th Norlight Gear Regiment (Red Crusaders) during some of the hardest fighting of the Interpolar War. His combat skills are excellent and he is not prone to hot-dogging, preferring instead tried-and-true methods and tactics. He served as a squad leader during an entire season while cut off from friendly forces, which gave him valuable experience for his responsibilities with the Black Talon.

Attitudes

Boyden Wallis' faith is his strongest psychological asset and his greatest weakness. Unless his faith is profoundly shaken - something unlikely to occur - Wallis should be virtually immune to any psychological problems and resist interrogation if he is captured. Unfortunately, his driving faith isolates Wallis from the rest of the Black Talon pilots. Indeed, fighting with those who don't share his faith is somewhat distasteful to him; conflict with the Southern pilots may be unavoidable. This may cause some problems with his subordinates in the group.

Combat Reactions

The conviction that the Gentle Prophet is on his side makes Wallis a fearless soldier. He prefers to pilot the heavier machines to allow him sufficient endurance to wade into the thick of the fighting. Whatever the mission, he will always volunteer to be first going in, last going out. This may cause problems along the way, since his men may not share the same disposition toward self-sacrifice.

Vital Statistics

Age:	53 cycles	Height:	183 cm	Weight:	90 kg	Hair:	Blond/Red	Eyes:	Blue

Attributes

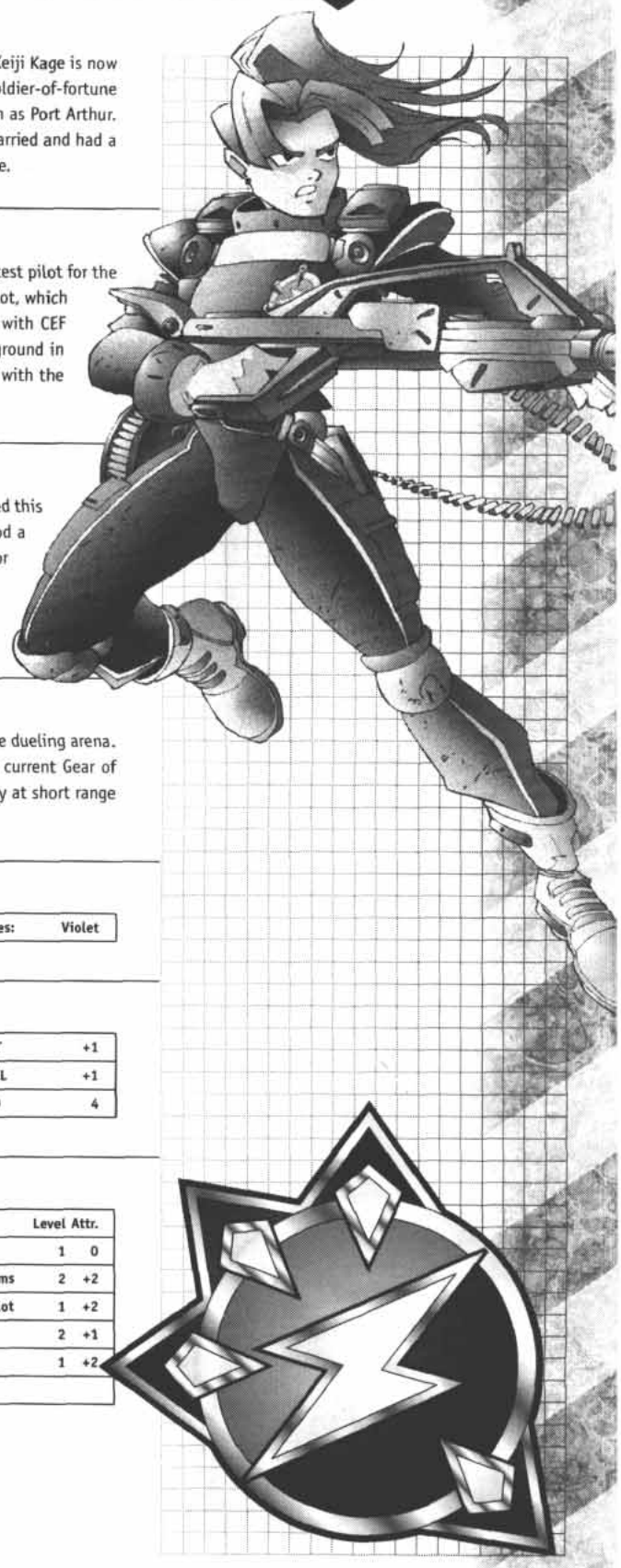
AGI	+1	APP	0	BLD	+1	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	-1	KNO	0	PER	+1	PSY	+1	WIL	+2
STR	+1	HEA	+1	STA	35	UD	5	AD	5

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	+1	Hand-to-Hand	2	+1	Melee	2	+1	Space Pilot	2	+1
Dodge	2	+1	Heavy Gear Pilot	3	+1	Notice	2	+1	Tactics	2	0
First Aid	2	0	Interrogation	1	0	Security	1	0	Zero-G	3	+1
Foreign Lang.*	2	0	Leadership	3	-1	Small Arms	2	+1			
Gunnery (Gear)	2	+1	Mechanics	1	0	* (Indo-Arabic)					

1st Black Talon: Lieutenant Keiji Kage

On assignment outside of Peace River when CEF saboteurs destroyed the city-state, Keiji Kage is now a man without a nation. Before the tragedy, he had served as a mercenary and a soldier-of-fortune across the Badlands, including in the community of abandoned Earth soldiers known as Port Arthur. Kage finally settled into the role of a Duelist in the Peace River Defense Force. He married and had a child, only to see them vaporized by the anti-matter device that destroyed his home.



Profession

Lieutenant Kage served as a Duelist for the Peace River Defense Force and then as a test pilot for the Paxton Arms Research and Development wing. This is a testament to his skills as a pilot, which are considerable. His time in Port Arthur has also given him a passing familiarity with CEF forces and tactics, a valuable skill in the mission ahead. Kage also has a basic background in mechanical maintenance and design, most of it from his experiences as a test pilot with the Elite program.

Attitudes

Part of Kage feels he should have died with his family at Peace River. He has channeled this guilt into anger and his participation in the strike against Caprice is in all likelihood a personal vendetta for him. This makes him very motivated, but it may cause behavior problems in the field when the professional facade he has built begins to crack. There can be little doubt, however, that he will be effective and driven in combat against CEF forces; the memories of his family give him little choice.

Combat Reactions

Kage is deadly, especially in one-on-one combat where the battlefield is closest to the dueling arena. He prefers Gears that are equipped with some form of close combat weaponry; his current Gear of choice is the Dark Warrior, which he helped develop. He will try to engage the enemy at short range whenever possible and dispatch them in hand-to-hand combat.

Vital Statistics

Age:	39 cycles	Height:	175 cm	Weight:	65 kg	Hair: Black/Violet	Eyes: Violet

Attributes

AGI	+2	APP	0	BLD	0	CRE	+1	FIT	+1
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	+2	PSY	-2	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	5	AD	4

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	2	+1	Electronic Warfare	2	+1	Leadership	2	0	Security	1	0
Combat Sense	2	+2	Gunnery (Gear)	3	+2	Mecha. Design	1	0	Small Arms	2	+2
Communications	2	0	Hand-to-Hand	2	+2	Mechanics	3	0	Space Pilot	1	+2
Dodge	2	+2	Heavy Gear Pilot	4	+2	Melee	1	+2	Tactics	2	+1
Drive	2	+2	H. G. Dueling	3	+2	Notice	2	+2	Zero-G	1	+2
Electronics	2	0	Interrogation	1	+1						

1st Black Talon: Srgt. Antoine Maillaux

Antoine Maillaux was born in Aquitaine, on the border of the Southern Republic, but quickly got into trouble with the local authorities and fled into the Badlands. He hooked up with rovers and smugglers and began the life of a rogue, serving briefly with the Peace River Army at the end of the War of the Alliance. Once Earth was defeated he became a full-time smuggler, making treks between Wounded Knee, Port Arthur, Hsi Tsang and other lawless towns. In TN 1936, when the Interpolar War exploded, Maillaux was operating on the Republican border and got drafted into the Southern MILICIA. Because of his skills and experience, he was assigned to the 11th Regiment (the Rapiers), an elite auxiliary to the Légion Noire. He served with distinction, but remained a rogue and wasted no opportunity to challenge authority.

Profession

Maillaux's training with the Légion Noire came to supplement the extensive skills he had already acquired as a smuggler and rover. A skilled pilot, he mostly excels at stealth and hit-and-run operations, which should come in handy in the mission ahead. He also has direct experience against CEF forces during the War of the Alliance, which gives him an edge in dealing with them.

Attitudes

Maillaux, despite his military service, is still a rogue at heart. He will follow orders, but rarely does so to the letter. He respects only those troops who have earned such treatment in his eyes. It will be critical to the mission's success that Maillaux consider all his team-mates worthwhile of his attention.

Combat Reactions

Strike the enemy and fade away is Maillaux's favorite tactic. He has a high appreciation for the combat vehicles developed for the Talon program, since they all incorporate some form of stealth system. He will often break out of formation and strike on his own, often coming in from a completely unexpected direction that will make the Talons' efforts much more effective.

Vital Statistics

Age:	56 cycles	Height:	176 cm	Weight:	80 kg	Hair:	n/a	Eyes:	Gray

Attributes

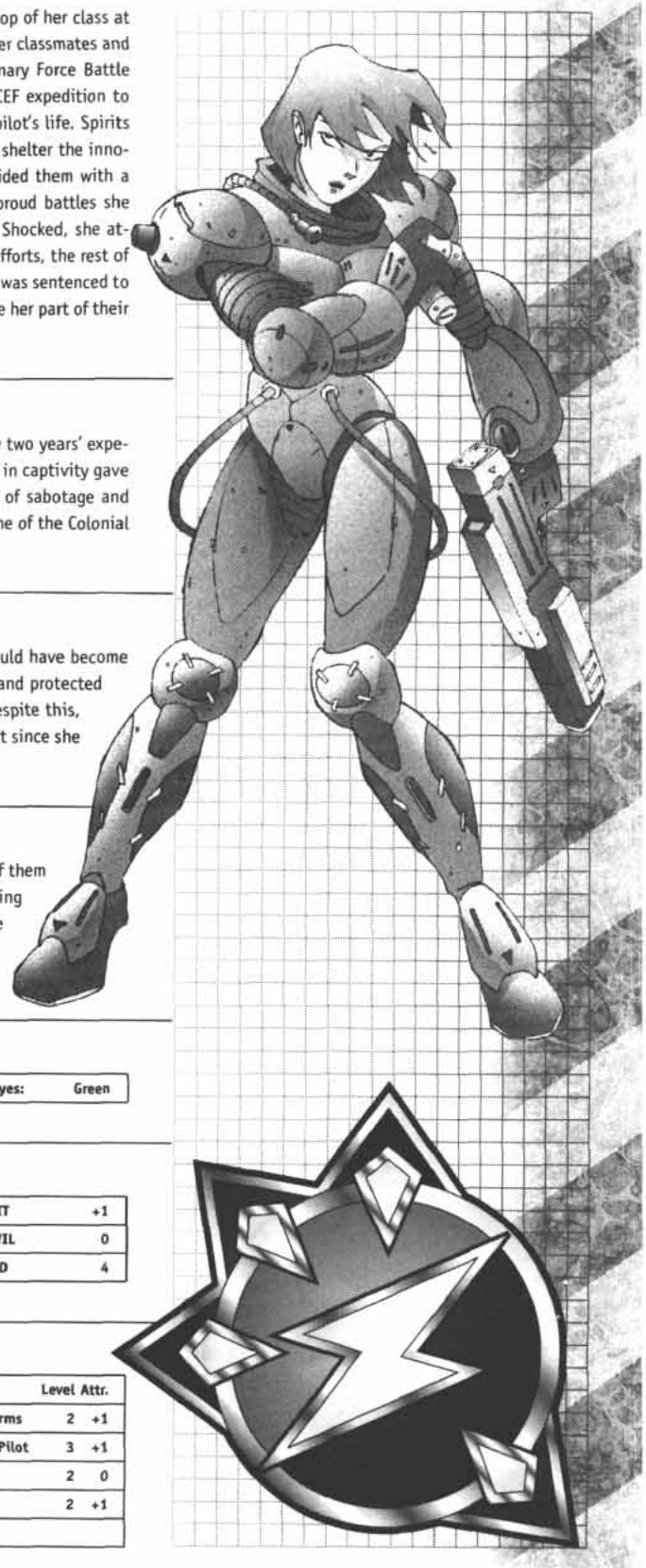
AGI	+1	APP	0	BLD	+1	CRE	+1	FIT	+1
INF	+1	KNO	0	PER	+2	PSY	0	WIL	+1
STR	+1	HEA	+1	STA	35	UD	5	AD	5

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Ambush	2	+1	Forgery	2	+1	Leadership	2	+1	Small Arms	3	+1
Business	1	0	Gambling	3	+2	Mechanics	2	0	Space Pilot	1	+1
Camouflage	1	+1	Gunnery (Gear)	3	+2	Melee	2	+1	Stealth	4	+1
Combat Sense	2	+2	Hand-to-Hand	2	+1	Notice	1	+2	Streetwise	3	+1
Dodge	2	+1	Heavy Gear Pilot	3	+1	Security	1	0	Tactics	2	+1
Electronic Warfare	2	+1	Interrogation	1	+1	Sleight-of-Hand	1	+1	Zero-G	1	+1
F. Language*	2	0	Intimidate	2	+1	* (U.French)					

1st Black Talon: Sergeant Carlie Pinter

Carlie Pinter was born into a family with a long martial history. Graduating at the top of her class at the academy, she soon came to be regarded as something of a piloting prodigy by her classmates and instructors. Upon graduation, she was assigned to the 102nd Colonial Expeditionary Force Battle Group. She was assigned to Commandant Avery McKenna. A veteran of the first CEF expedition to Terra Nova, McKenna's leadership and skill as a pilot and tactician saved many a pilot's life. Spirits were high amongst her comrades: they were here to protect NEC's interests and to shelter the innocent settlers from the ravages of rebellion, and the presence of the Liberati provided them with a clearly defined enemy. Pinter was in for a rude shock, however; instead of the proud battles she expected, she was ordered to commit atrocities to draw out the Liberati leaders. Shocked, she attacked McKenna as he was about to open fire on a defenseless crowd. Despite her efforts, the rest of her squad saved their leader and arrested a major Liberati officer named Petrus. She was sentenced to life imprisonment in Bastille Alpha, until the 1st Black Talon broke her out and made her part of their team.



◆ Profession

Carlie Pinter received extensive training in armored vehicle combat. She has nearly two years' experience with the hulking Caprician Combat Mounts, and has driven them all. Her time in captivity gave her contacts among the Liberati and she gained extensive theoretical knowledge of sabotage and guerrilla warfare from them - skills definitely opposite to the rigid military discipline of the Colonial Expeditionary Force.

◆ Attitudes

Carlie Pinter saw her illusions shattered on the fateful day of Petrus' arrest. She could have become bitter and cynical were it not for the help of Petrus, who took her under his wing and protected her from vengeful freedom fighters until she was accepted as one of their own. Despite this, she is sometimes homesick and misses her family, with whom she has had no contact since she went into prison.

◆ Combat Reactions

Pinter knows that she will have to fight her old comrades one day, and while some of them were bad enough for this not to bother her, she knows that others are just following orders. When possible, she will try to avoid killing. She knows, however, that the only way she'll ever be able to go home is by winning, and will take extreme measures if necessary.

Vital Statistics

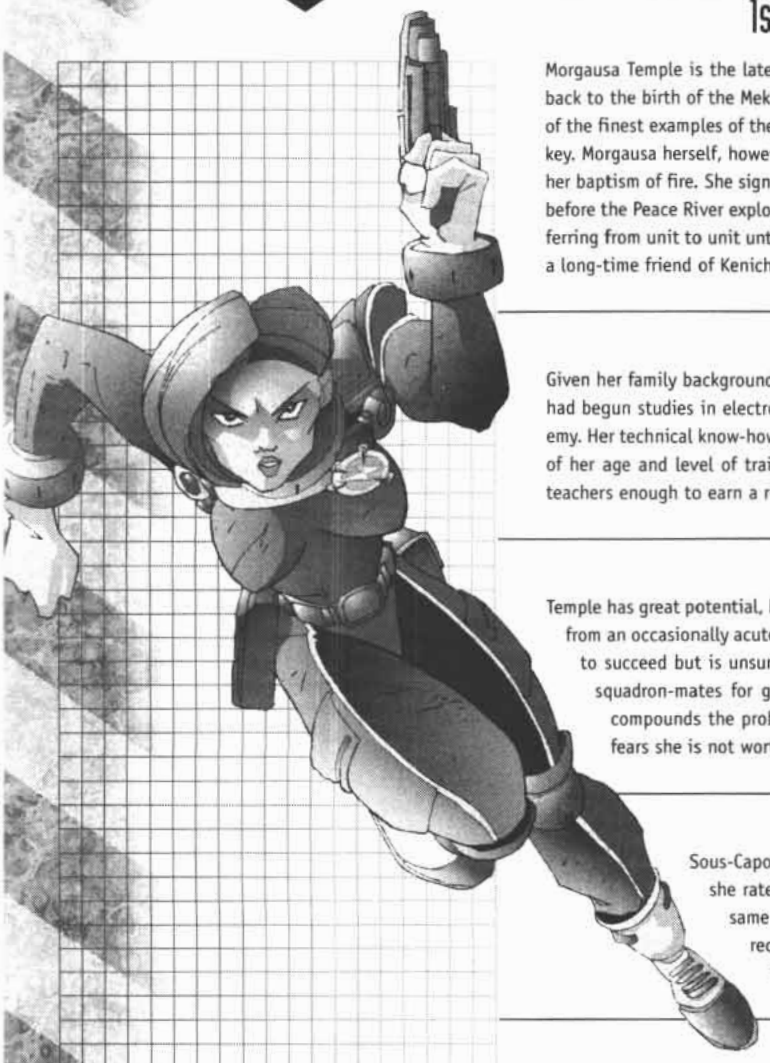
Age:	25 years	Height:	165 cm	Weight:	48 kg	Hair:	Blond	Eyes:	Green

Attributes

AGI	+1	APP	+1	BLD	-1	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	0	KNO	0	PER	+2	PSY	0	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	5	AD	4

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Bureaucracy	1	0	Drive	1	+1	Hand-to-Hand	2	+1	Small Arms	2	+1
Combat Sense	2	+2	Electronic Warfare	2	0	Heavy Gear Pilot	2	+1	Strider Pilot	3	+1
Communications	1	0	First Aid	2	0	Mechanics	2	0	Tactics	2	0
Demolition	1	0	F. Language *	3	0	Melee	1	+1	Zero-G	2	+1
Dodge	2	+1	Gunnery (Gear)	2	+2	* (Siberian)					



1st Black Talon: Sous-Caporal Morgausa Temple

Morgausa Temple is the latest inheritor of a long tradition of distinguished military service, going back to the birth of the Mekong Dominion. The Temple family has provided the Dominion with some of the finest examples of the Peacekeeper Corps, though they have always attempted to remain low-key. Morgausa herself, however, has not seen combat as of yet; the 1st Black Talon Squadron will be her baptism of fire. She signed up for duty as soon as she could, and finished her training mere days before the Peace River explosion. Since then, she has been awaiting a permanent assignment, transferring from unit to unit until her records attracted the attention of an old Peacekeeper commander, a long-time friend of Kenichi Tanaka.

Profession

Given her family background, Morgausa Temple seems to be a natural. Before she signed up, Temple had begun studies in electronics and mechanics; she completed some of that training in the Academy. Her technical know-how supplements her combat skills, which are surprisingly high for someone of her age and level of training. Her piloting skills are excellent and she impressed her academy teachers enough to earn a recommendation for special operations.

Attitudes

Temple has great potential, but has yet to be tested under fire. She is all too aware of this and suffers from an occasionally acute lack of self-confidence. Surrounded by hardened soldiers, she is anxious to succeed but is unsure how to do so. She will likely continually look to her commander and squadron-mates for guidance and orders. Unfortunately, her family's record of service only compounds the problem; indeed, she follows the Mekong practice of ancestor worship and fears she is not worthy of her heritage.

Combat Reactions

Sous-Caporal Temple may not have seen real combat prior to joining the unit, but she rates very high on all training tests. Whether she will constantly offer the same level of performance under actual fire remains to be seen. As long as she receives good support and strong leadership from her squadmates, however, she should perform just fine.

Vital Statistics

Age:	28 cycles	Height:	158 cm	Weight:	42 kg	Hair:	Brown	Eyes:	Blue

Attributes

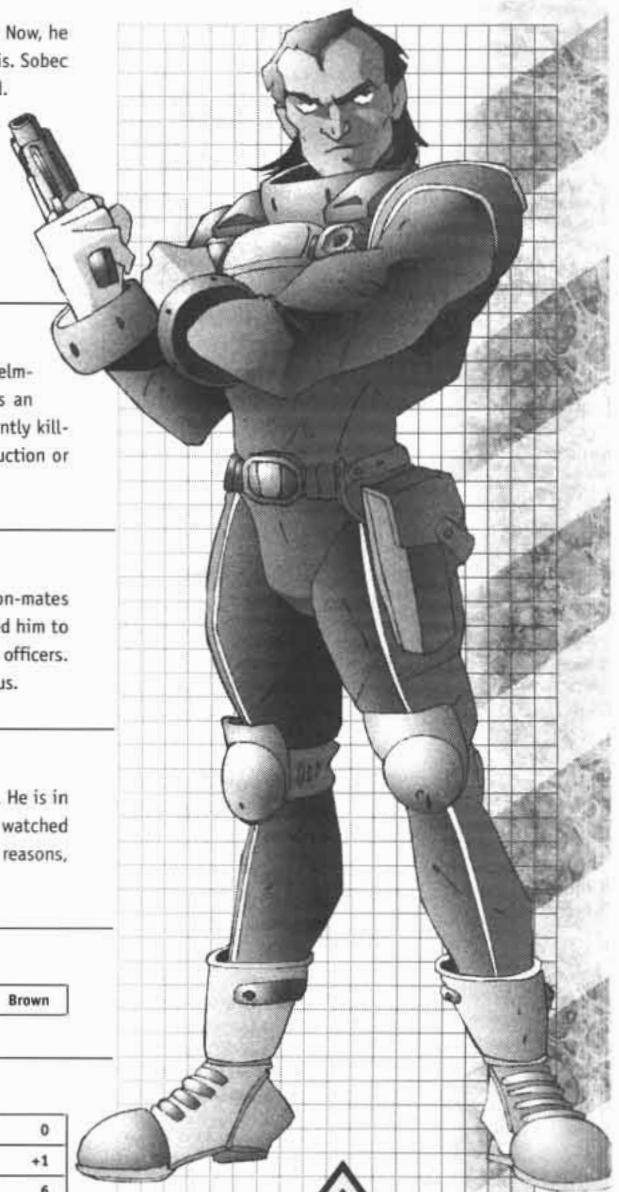
AGI	+2	APP	+1	BLD	-1	CRE	+1	FIT	0
INF	-1	KNO	+2	PER	+1	PSY	0	WIL	-1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	20	UD	4	AD	3

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	1	+1	Electronic Warfare	2	+1	Interrogation	1	+1	Small Arms	2	+2
Communications	2	+2	Gambling	1	+1	Mechanics	3	+2	Space Pilot	1	+2
Computer	2	+2	Gunnery (Gear)	2	+1	Notice	1	+1	Tinker	3	+1
Dodge	1	+2	Hand-to-Hand	1	+2	Physical Sciences	2	+2	Zero-G	2	+2
Electronics	3	+2	Heavy Gear Pilot	2	+2	Security	1	+2			

1st Black Talon: Soldat Leo Sobec

Leo Sobec was once a decorated pilot with the Southern Republic's Iron Defenders regiment. Now, he is known only as prisoner 03-645-62, freshly transferred from Labor Camp 27 near Siwa Oasis. Sobec committed grievous crimes while serving with the Iron Defenders and was court-martialed. The Southern Republic will say only that he was involved in the deaths of several fellow soldiers, and refuses to elaborate any further. Sobec underwent experimentation while at Labor Camp 27, reportedly designed to curb psychotic tendencies. The results and exact nature of this program are also unavailable to Talon Command. Sobec's inclusion in this mission is due mostly to his piloting skills and the fact that he is utterly expendable, which may come in useful at some point.



◆ Profession

Sobec's military record shows him to be an extremely skilled Gear pilot, able to face overwhelming odds and succeed. He excels at close combat in and out of a Gear and rarely leaves an opponent breathing. Incarceration has, if anything, added to Sobec's effectiveness, apparently killing off any last trace of remorse he might feel toward his enemies. Missions of total destruction or assassination are his specialty.

◆ Attitudes

Sobec is a potential time-bomb waiting to explode. He refuses to socialize with his squadron-mates and generally remains cold and almost unemotional. Talon Command has reluctantly assigned him to the 1st Black Talon, but have made sure he is constantly being watched by one of the team's officers. Most of the Talons treat him as they would an attack dawg: useful but potentially dangerous.

◆ Combat Reactions

In the field, Sobec attacks enemies (real or simulated) with a zeal that borders on insanity. He is in enough control to channel his raging hatred toward designated enemies, but he should be watched with the utmost attention. He will sometimes cause collateral damage for no discernible reasons, probably for his own amusement.

Vital Statistics

Age:	43 cycles	Height:	180 cm	Weight:	72 kg	Hair:	Black	Eyes:	Brown

Attributes

AGI	+1	APP	0	BLD	+1	CRE	0	FIT	0
INF	-2	KNO	0	PER	+2	PSY	-3	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	-1	STA	25	UD	5	AD	6

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Ambush	2	+1	F. Language*	3	0	Intimidate	2	+1	Stealth	3	+1
Athletics	2	0	Gambling	2	+2	Melee	3	+1	Streetwise	2	-2
Camouflage	2	0	Gunnery (Gear)	3	+2	Notice	1	+2	Survival	2	0
Combat Sense	3	+2	Hand-to-Hand	2	+1	Security	1	0	Swimming	2	0
Dodge	2	+1	Heavy Gear Pilot	3	+1	Small Arms	2	+1	Throwing	2	+1
Electronics	1	0	Interrogate	1	0	Space Pilot	1	+1	Zero-G	2	+1
* (U.French)											

2.8 - Black Talon Werks Weapon Program

It was soon made evident that the Talon program, in order to be successful, would need some very specialized tools to fulfill its missions. One could not expect to send a group of soldiers to Caprice with ordinary Gears and expect them to survive far from friendly support; the Gear is a powerful tool, but it remains a combat vehicle with its advantages and disadvantages. New Gears would have to be designed, and none of the Cabinet members trusted the polar manufacturers to deliver.

Black Talon Werks, a top secret team composed of some of the best minds in the field of weapon design, was thus gathered at an undisclosed location (actually, one of Paxton Arms Research and Development's old secret facility deep in the Karaq Wastes) to craft the tools that would be needed to explore the Caprice system. These included the Fury assault transport that took the team to Caprice, and a squad of high tech Gears.

2.8.1 - History

The vehicle design and manufacturing group known by the moniker of Black Talon Werks is probably the most secretive part of the entire Caprice reconnaissance project. With the exception of the Westphalia Cabinet members and a few trusted administrators, no one knew about its existence, not even most of the engineers and technicians working on the project itself (see *Secrecy*, page 33), until a few weeks after the return of the 1st Black Talon from Caprice.

The project originated from a meeting of the Westphalia Cabinet in the Summer of TN 1939, as they were going over the details of their proposal for a covert strike force that would be used to gather intelligence and perform raiding operations against CEF objectives. The original proposal was ambitious, with the Talon team being composed of a mixed company of Gears, VTOLs and armored vehicles for support. This would have required several transport ships along and the commitment of a Gateship to the mission. Clearly, the forces in presence were too large to avoid detection, but General Aschenbach was adamant that he could not guarantee the safety and efficiency of the team using less forces, unless the mission was one-way. The main conceptual obstacle was the fact that only standard vehicles were available, which lacked the strengths and endurance required by the mission unless used in large numbers.

It was one of Lord Chancellor Tanaka's assistants, Commandant Jacques Mammais, who supplied the solution. Mammais, a veteran Gear pilot, remembered a campaign he fought cycles ago when he was assigned to a Southern landship that faced a Northern battleforce for weeks in the Badlands. The Northerners were expert at modifying their vehicles for maximum efficiency, and they often bested a superior number of enemy units. Mammais thus proposed that elite technicians and designers be recruited to perfect a number of advanced Gear designs that would give the team the desired edge while keeping the number of units down to a manageable level.

◆ The Early Days

The start-up money was quietly diverted from the discretionary funds of the Cabinet. Both basic Gear chassis and discrete field facilities were no problem to secure through to the connections of Lang and Tanaka, though they had to set up elaborate cover stories to explain the new assignments. All that remained to do was to find someone to head the project.

It was Gawaine Di Smit who brought the answer. Though she remained in space, she maintained contact with the rest of the Cabinet through weekly updates. When appraised of the plan for a development team, she immediately recalled one Dr. Emil Brockenhaggen, a mechanical and electronic engineering professor that she met in the course of her work at the university. Though somewhat gruff, the man had become a good friend of Di Smit, and she highly recommended him for the position.

Brockenhaggen was approached in late TN 1939 to be the principal engineer of the Black Talon Werks. Much to the Cabinet's surprise, he not only agreed to join the project but left immediately for the fledgling Werks base. He simply announced to the bewildered university council that he was taking an extended leave of absence to recuperate from stress caused by the Interpolar War, and they had little choice but to let him go.

◆ The Dark Series

Brockenhaggen immediately set himself to work, parceling the project into several smaller development works that were spun off to other engineers. He selected a few Gear chassis for modifications, reasoning that it would be far simpler to modify rather than build from scratch. In early Summer TN 1940, Brockenhaggen and his crew were secretly moved to a base located in the Karaq Wastes, far from prying eyes. This small facility was originally a Paxton Arms field research outpost; Paxton's acting CEO, Milani DuBeau-Slovinsky, supplied it after joining the Cabinet on 14 Spring TN 1940. It was there that the Werks team produced what would become known as the Dark series.

Black Talon Gears - 2.8.2

Gears were selected early on as the primary combat vehicle for the Caprice mission. Though they lack the battlefield endurance of an armored unit such as tanks, no other type of vehicles offered a better mix of versatility, mobility and firepower. The Gears would be able to perform both recon and raiding missions, and they could still be used to perform engineering and maintenance duties back at the base. This would allow the Talons to bring along less than a dozen vehicles instead of a whole company with support division, and yet still accomplish much useful work.

All Black Talon Gears are derivative of existing models in order to save time and resources and keep to the schedule, but they have been extensively modified. Emission control systems and an advanced skin composite replace the ones already in place, drastically reducing the sensor signature of each machine. As many internal systems as possible were replaced with devices adapted or inspired from the Hunter Gear to reduce the maintenance requirements once in the field, despite the high performances of the machines. This newfound modularity allows the field techs to swap armament to suit the mission at hand, and possibly to use new weapon systems should the Talons come across them.

Game statistics for the new Dark-series Talon combat vehicles are found on page 40 and following. These remain fairly rare due to their high cost and the low production rate of the Black Talon Werks facility, and alternate, more common vehicles are sometimes used instead (see page 60). These are also modified by the Talon Werks technical crew.

Fury Transport - 2.8.3

Much as been said about the Fury elsewhere in this document (see page 52 for the full game statistics). The vessel is actually not a product of the Terranovan aerospace industry, but is heavily based on the Sleipnir space plane deployed by the CEF during the War of the Alliance. The Sleipnir was selected because practically no other existing Terranovan aerospace vehicle had the range and cargo capabilities required for the Caprice mission while still supporting the numerous stealth systems that would be installed on it. The Sleipnir, on the other hand, already had the rough shape required, and by adding another pair of fusion tubes, it would have the required power to both supply the needed (and very demanding) performance profile and lift the additional mass of the complex armored stealth skin that would be applied to it.

The acquisitions of the blueprints involved tense negotiations with the government of Port Arthur, who still field a number of these planes. Most of the development data, however, came from a crashed Sleipnir found in the Western Desert, which was acquired with great difficulty from a local rover group.

Equipment - 2.8.4

Due to the very special nature of the mission, the Talons would have to bring everything they would need with them, including supplies and personal equipment (at least, until — and if — they could secure local equivalents). The latter included things as diverse as food rations and firearms, all of which had to be specially chosen for maximum reliability and compactness. There would be little time to maintain and repair the vehicles once behind enemy lines, let alone the field stoves.

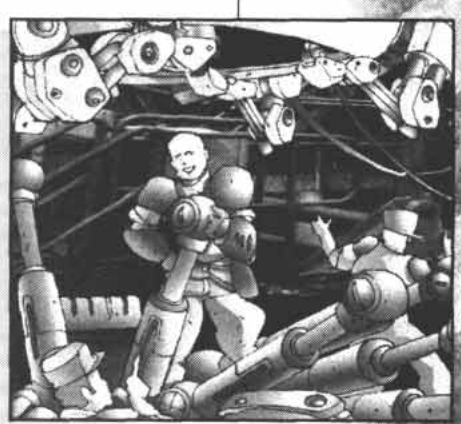
The most important pieces of personal equipment developed for the project are examined in depth on the next pages.

Secrecy

Keeping a tight lid over the project was of crucial importance to avoid tipping the Terranovan's hand to possible CEF infiltrators. Though it was later proven that the numbers of actual infiltrators was greatly overestimated, at the time the prospect of sabotage seemed very real. The Cabinet also wanted to make sure the various governments of the planet would not learn about it prematurely and attempt to interfere with it.

The engineering drawings and other supply requirements were carefully broken down into smaller, more easily-conceilable projects. Contracts, placed through front companies and personally connections, were sent to hundreds of high technology firms all over the planet. These would not be made aware of what they would be working on; they would simply be asked to produce, say, an actuator control valve capable of such and such performances, with mounting lugs of a pre-specified size.

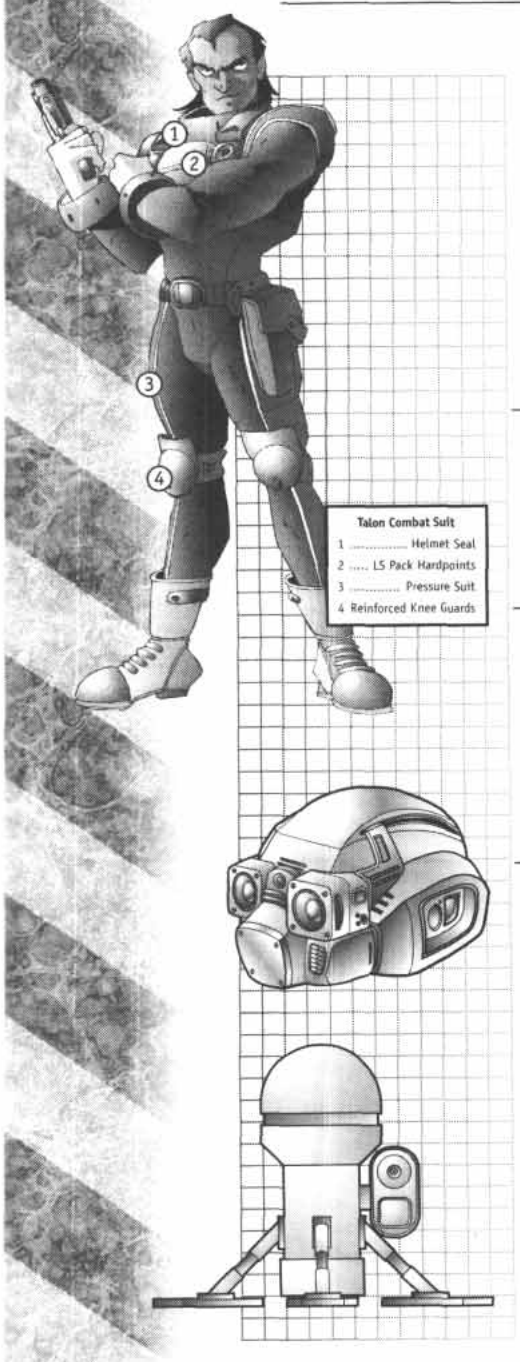
New chassis of several types of Gears were procured mainly through the connections of Lang and Tanaka themselves. Delivering them discretely to the research station — actually, a small camp well outside the perimeter, where the machines were taken in charge by the Talon Werks' technicians — proved to be an epic task in and out of itself.



2.8.5 - Personal Equipment

The Black Talon's particular mission profile requires more than just vehicles. A number of tools and devices were designed to help the Talons survive and communicate the information they would uncover along the way. To save time, much of the equipment was taken from existing military stores and used as is; the mission planners made sure to select only the most rugged examples they could find, since a friendly repair shop might be somewhat hard to find. Any piece of equipment used by the Talons is considered to be slightly tougher than the equivalent item in game terms; in general, this translates into an additional five points of Armor, when applicable, and halved maintenance requirements.

There were times, however, when existing material did not or could not meet the planners' exacting requirements. These items were designed by the Black Talon Werks specifically for the program and are not available anywhere else (though outfits like SRID would dearly like to get their hands on them). As a result, these items have no cost and no availability; they are, quite rightly, priceless.



Gear Pilot Suit

The pilot suit developed for the Talon program is a very complex skin-tight garnment design to protect the wearer against almost any kind of environment. They are probably the most complex and advanced survival suits ever made on the planet, and each one is custom cut to fit its wearer perfectly. The pilot suit is black with red trim. Rank insignias are worn on the right shoulder, with a unit patch attached to the left.

The suit is fully sealed against vacuum and is made of a self-sealing material that will repair a hole of up to 0.5 cm in diameter in one round. It offers good insulation against temperature differences, and will enable the wearer to comfortably withstand cold and hot conditions between plus or minus a hundred degrees celcius. The suit can resist moderate damage; it has an Armor rating of 20 against fire attacks, Armor 10 otherwise. When fully sealed with the helmet, the suit protects against Nuclear, Biological and Chemical contamination.

Life Support Pack

To minimize the danger of life support system failure, all Talon pilots have been issued a miniaturized life support pack to take into the cockpit with them. The small box holds compressed oxygen and powerful chemical scrubbers, along with the required pumps and power systems. The air and power reserve usually contains up to six hours of reserves.

Helmet

The helmet developed for the Black Talon is similar to the common Gear pilot helmet, with a few additional system. The neck ring has an hermetic seal that mates with the collar of the pilot suit, allowing the entire suit to be sealed against adverse elements. A small tank located at the back holds a five-minute oxygen reserve — enough to get to safety. A complex sensor/holoprojection system feeds the required sensor data to the pilot from a thin fiber optic plugged into the Gear's central computer. The helmet has an Armor rating of 20 and weight about a kilogram.

Laser Comm Transmitter

The transmitter was developed by the Talon Werks especially for use by the teams that will go on extended missions off planet. It enables them to communicate with Terra Nova by sending a powerful pulsed laser through an open Gate, the latter being kept open at a microscopic size to reduce power requirements from the ship. The heart of the transmitter is a powerful laser system, adapted from existing weapon equipment. It is capable of very fine pointing accuracy in order to target a Gate from a planet's surface; a set of active shock-absorber legs cancel vibrations and parasitic movement to reduce beam stray. The equipment can be broken down into four components of 150 kg each for transport and has an Armor of 5 (Personal Scale — the casing is tough, but the rest is not).

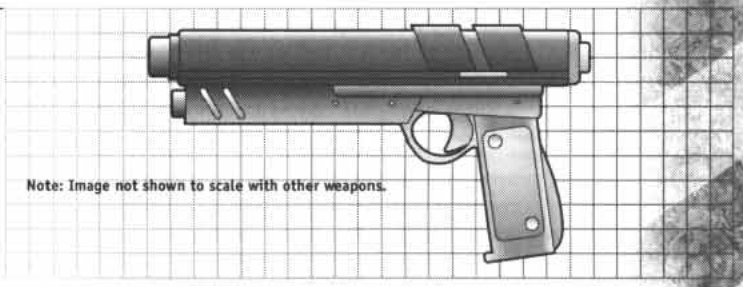
The transmitter is usable only 1d6 hours per day as the planet's rotation continuously bring it in and out of sight of the Gate. It requires an operator with a Communications Skill of at least Level 2 to function. Two tests vs. a Threshold of 8; the Margin of Failure (if any) of the first test is the length of time required to set up the system in hour (minimum one hour), the second the number of minutes required to transmit one line of text (again, a minimum of one minute). The system can be fired as a Light Laser Cannon with 2 shots per day and -2 Accuracy (the laser pointing system is very precise but cannot target rapidly-moving vehicles).

Personal Weapons - 2.8.6

The personal sidearms carried by Talon personnel are rugged and tough. They were all modified from existing firearms by the weaponsmiths recruited by the Black Talon Werks. Each of the following guns has a sealable action and large tolerances for maximum survivability. In addition, all can be rapidly modified to fire CEF ammunition if needed.

9mm Pistol

Weapon:	9mm Pistol
Accuracy:	0
Damage:	x18
Range (m):	5/10/20/40
ROF:	0
Clip:	20
Radius (m):	N/A

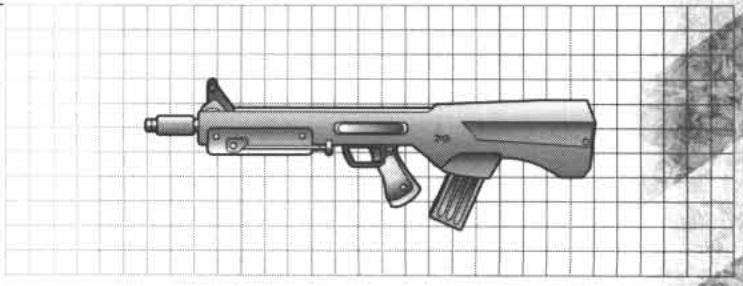


Note: Image not shown to scale with other weapons.

Reliable and inexpensive, the Talon 9mm handgun is part of the Black Talon's basic equipment; every Gear pilot carries one as a sidearm. It has a slightly better than average damage.

7mm Assault Rifle

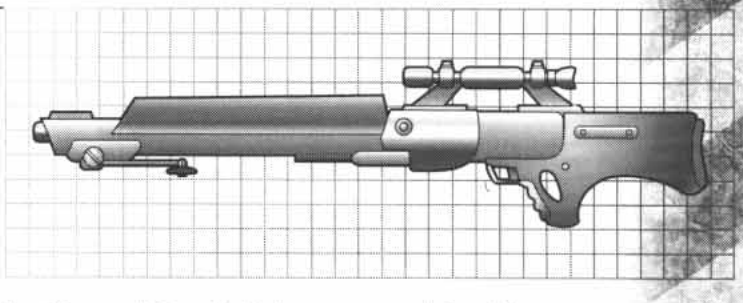
Weapon:	7mm Assault Rifle
Accuracy:	0
Damage:	x20
Range (m):	55/110/220/440
ROF:	+1
Clip:	30
Radius (m):	N/A



This rifle is simple and rugged, and is easily sealed against adverse environmental conditions. A special cockpit clip allows it to be stowed within the Gear.

9mm Heavy Rifle

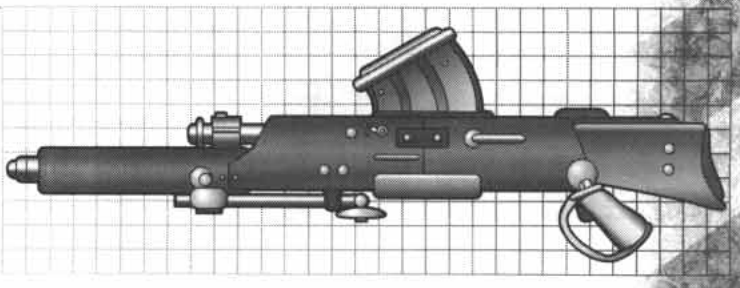
Weapon:	9mm Heavy Rifle
Accuracy:	0
Damage:	x30
Range (m):	60/120/240/480
ROF:	0
Clip:	15
Radius (m):	N/A



This is a light support weapons with good range and excellent penetration. It is generally issued to the base camp personel, since it is too bulky to store in the cockpit (external cargo nets break the stealth outline of the Talons' Gears).

Anti-Gear Rifle

Weapon:	Anti-Gear Rifle
Accuracy:	+1
Damage:	x80
Range (m):	150/300/600/1200
ROF:	0
Clip:	3
Radius (m):	N/A



The Anti-Gear Rifle is a powerful rocket-boosted cannon designed to take out light armored vehicles. It has been included in the Talons' inventory as a precaution, but it is too cumbersome for anything but special missions.

2.9 - Dark Series Gears

The Heavy Gears are one of the most significant advances in the field of military technology in the past millennia. Although combat walkers have been used as far back as the early third millennium, they were always cumbersome and not nearly discrete enough to survive the hi-tech battlefield, relegating them to support and engineering duties. This changed through the development of the Heavy Gear weapon system.

A Gear is a solid compromise between the infantryman's flexibility and the armored vehicle's resilience and firepower. It is in effect a one-man IFV (Infantry Fighting Vehicle) which protects the soldier and allows him to carry far more payload and armor than an ordinary soldier. Mass-produced Gears are cheap enough to form a major part of the modern army, where they fill a large variety of roles, such as scouting, cavalry and flanking duties, that take advantage of a Gear's peculiar strengths.

Gears are far more flexible than an equivalent-size armored unit, capable of crossing a large variety of terrains and engaging in activities as diverse as field engineering and cargo manipulation. They are also highly adaptable, capable of exchanging weaponry on the fly (as long as it is self-contained) and fighting in hand-to-hand combat. For this reason, Gears have been chosen as the primary weapon platform of the Black Talon program.

2.9.1 - Cockpit

All Gears carry one pilot in a cockpit located in the torso. Because of the space required by the machine's internal mechanisms, all Gear cockpits are renowned for their cramped conditions. A sturdy seat — often reminiscent of the ones found in fighter planes — occupies the center of the cockpit cavity. The space under and behind the seat is used for electronic equipment, which leaves no room for an ejection system.

The cockpits of the Talon machines have been modified to take into account the hostile conditions that will be faced during the mission. All joints were carefully covered to create a sealed pressure vessel, and a compact life support system, adapted from the rugged spacesuits used on the off-world bases, can maintain a breathable atmosphere for twelve hours. This is normally used only during transit, however; standard combat operations call for the cockpit pressure to be lowered to five kpa to avoid explosive blowout in case of a hit. All Talon pilots have been issued a personalized pressure suit and helmet ensemble to allow this (see page 34).

2.9.2- Control apparatus

The configuration of the instruments depends on the designers of the machine, but all are equipped with two joysticks and two foot pedals and a variety of engineering displays (combat information is presented through the helmet-mounted HUD — see below). Since buttons and readouts normally vary immensely, even between variants of the same type, the Talon Werks engineers retrofitted all "Dark" variants with a standardized display suite to facilitate training and maintenance in the field.

The joysticks are fairly complex models, sporting several thumb switches as well as finger-activated triggers. Combinations of switches, triggers and stick movements are converted into body motion routines called Macromoves (or simply "Macros") by the CPU, much like a 20th Century combat video game. Depending on the complexity of the Gear's current weapon payload and its agility, the joystick can be laden with gadgets and additional controls of all sorts.

2.9.3 - Information Display

Early Gear designs had holographic screens and HUDs to display battle information. Modern vehicles now use Virtual Reality technology instead. Mounting special laser-crystal screens inside a slightly enlarged helmet, the VR system feeds the pilot information treated by the CPU and its visual sub-processor. For all intents and purposes, the trooper can see as though the cockpit was open to the outside. The layout of the HUD has been carefully designed to ensure that the pilot have all the information they need at hand while not cluttering the main field of vision, which might impair combat performance.

Like the hardware display, the HUD of the Talon Gears was customized to facilitate repairs and training. Relevant tactical and battle readouts are superimposed over the landscape by order of priority, although this option can be modified or deactivated to reduce the visual clutter. Small movement indicators and ID tags enable the pilot to keep track of many targets and can even identify mission objectives and navigation waypoints. Ranges are indicated beside currently targeted items, as well as any other information currently available on them. A transparent radar display occupies the lower left section of the HUD, with weapon data located in the top right and engineering warnings on the lower center and right.

Central Processing Unit - 2.9.4

The "brain" of a Gear is the Central Processing Unit, or CPU for short. It is a small semi-transparent cube, with a 15 cm side, filled with an intricate network of molecular-sized neural network. This network is so complex it cannot be repaired if damaged, and must be replaced by a new unit. It is encased in a special shock-proof polymer or composite case which is normally installed under the pilot's seat. It can be easily removed by reaching under the seat and releasing the connections. The CPU's neural network is able to learn and establish new connection within itself. This allows non-linear logic processing as new parallel paths are created to handle computing tasks. This ability for "fuzzy," or open-ended, logic makes the CPU much better at handling the complex body motions of the humanoid Gear it controls than other "standard" neural network/computers.

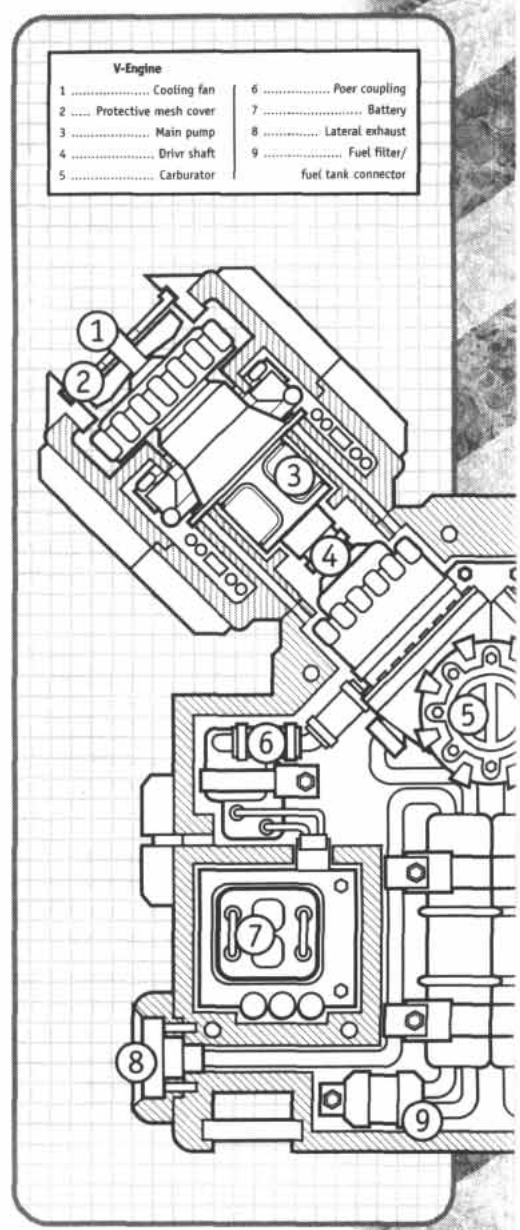
Although a percentage of the CPUs manufactured tend to acquire "behaviors" over time (both beneficial and detrimental), the ones used in the manufacture of the Dark series were specifically trained for stability and high performance. Given that the Talons would be far away from any supplier for the duration of the mission, it was deemed crucial that they not be given neural networks that could develop "erratic" behaviors and habits which could prove potentially dangerous to the mission.

Sensor system - 2.9.5

Gears mount a variety of sensor systems to allow the CPU to relate to its environment and help the pilot in battle. Since Gears are supposed to be inexpensive and easy to maintain, most designs mount only a minimal sensor package. In the case of the Talon vehicles, however, no expense was spared, just in case. The Dark series features modular sensor bays and hardpoints that allow a high degree of customization; incidentally, this also greatly facilitates repairs (if a particular sensor causes trouble, it can be replaced in minutes).

The primary sensor system is a small cluster of digital omnicameras, often placed together in what could pass as the Gear's head. The Dark series' basic hardwired sensor package uses only one main camera, relying on laser rangefinders and "dumb" stereoscopic cameras for range and depth measurements. Other types of sensors can be added to create a more dynamic picture of the battlefield for the pilot, especially in low visibility conditions; special mounting brackets and datalines are already in place to make this operation easier.

An advanced visual sub-processor databus manages the input from whatever systems are currently installed in the machine. The CPU then combines this information with that from the other sensory systems to maintain its balance and perform the actions required by the pilot.



Powerplant - 2.9.6

Almost all Gear designs rely on an advanced, very compact internal combustion engine called a V-engine for propulsion and power. The V-engine - so named because of its shape - is a twin drive, air-cooled powerplant with high efficiency and minimal moving parts. These qualities were highly sought by the Talon Werks engineers.

The core of the V-engine is a support axle made out of high-strength alloy. It is truly only a bent bar of metal, and is the strongest part of the engine. Two combustion chambers are slipped over this support axle. These chambers, due to their peculiar internal shape, serve as piston housing, distributor cap, lubrication system and cooling fan, all in one. The engine's disposition thus provides two drive shafts, each delivering equal horsepower. The end result is a fairly compact engine which is rugged, easy to manufacture and easy to repair. The small number of moving parts and the V-engine's capacity for using a variety of fuels makes it perfectly suited for Gears.

The advanced design of the V-engine enables it to use a wide range of fuel types. As long as the fuel employed is gaseous or liquid and is reasonably combustible, the engine will function (although at varying degrees of efficiency). Again, this made it well-suited to a guerrilla operation where the operatives may have to "live off the land," so to speak.

To ensure adequate power at all times, a small bank of high-temperature superconductive coils is also integrated in the backpack as a back-up power supply. The coils provide power in vacuum conditions where the airbreathing V-engine cannot function.

2.9.7 - Weapons

Gears are rarely designed with built-in weaponry. The humanoid shape, complete with grasping manipulators, makes the Gear a very versatile tool which support a variety of offensive systems. Nonetheless, it is an accepted practice to standardize a Gear's armament for ease of maintenance, going as far as altering the unit's identification code to reflect its different payload.

The typical Heavy Gear armament consists of one main weapon, usually hand-held in a rifle or pistol-like form. Rapid-firing, self-loading weapons are preferred. All Gears possess hardpoints on various parts of their body to accept additional equipment and armament. This often takes the form of either support items (smoke launchers, ECM generators, etc.) or a limited use, hard hitting weapon for a one-shot-kill capacity. This equipment can be simply bolted on, with control and power wiring being routed either through the armor or alongside it.

All Talon vehicles are equipped with six to eight hardpoint locations, four on the torso, two on the backpack and one in each of the machine's two manipulators. Special removable handles allow most of the guns to be mounted on a hardpoint or be hand-held, depending on the need of the mission; likewise, power packs and ammunition clips can be modified to fit the situation. The hardpoints can be easily modified to accept CEF parts should the team come across an enemy weapon cache.

The armament of the Talon vehicles has been planned from the beginning to easily changed, though each pilot has been asked to select a basic configuration to avoid filling the transport shuttle with a large number of useless (and heavy) weapons; these are the configurations whose stats are listed on page 41 and following.

2.9.8 - Armor and Outer Skin

The average Gear carries several centimeters of composite armor. This affords them the same general level of protection as an armored infantry fighting vehicle, which is more or less what the Heavy Gear is: a one-man IFV.

Gears use the same composite armor as all other war vehicles in the 62nd Century. Unfortunately, their humanoid shape, so useful for maneuverability and versatility, here plays against them. Because the limbs of the Gear must have flexibility, mobile armor plates are unavoidable. Some clearance is necessary, too, meaning that one cannot just heap on plates or simply add on thickness. All this reduces the potential stopping power of the material used for the armor, leaving weak points which can be exploited by a skilled gunner.

The armor of the Dark series vehicles is their primary mean of defense in more than one way. All Talon vehicles rely extensively on stealth technologies to avoid detection and carry out their missions in face on vastly superior odds. The outer layers of their armor panels are made out of advanced composite materials whose complex structure traps and dissipates most forms of electromagnetic radiation. The specialized baffles and sensor-defeating systems that cover the outer surface of all the Talon machines gives them a somewhat uniform appearance, with an overall dark violet-black paint scheme. Due to the peculiar characteristics of the outer covering, the skin of the Dar-series Gears seem to absorb ambient light, giving them an oddly sinister look.

2.9.9 - Secondary Movement System

Many Heavy Gears have more than one transmission system. This Secondary Movement System, or SMS for short, usually takes the form of wheels or treads placed under the feet of the machine. Although the basic concept may sound ridiculous, one cannot deny the immense increase in speed and efficiency, not to mention versatility, this brings to the Heavy Gear system.

Most often, the wheels (or treads) use small but powerful electric motors powered by the generator attached to one the V-engine's drive shaft. A special piece of software built into the CPU changes the equilibrium equations to handle high speed "skating" motions. This function can be retrofitted, but is usually less efficient than any built-in software. Because of the low ground clearance of the wheels, the SMS is only useful on flat, hard ground like packed sand or concrete. Some SMS have larger wheels which can be used over broken terrain, but the price of this increased versatility is a bigger, and thus more vulnerable, movement system.

The Dark series of Gears was also designed with vacuum operations in mind from the beginning, in case the Talons had to face hostile forces right after their arrival or in the mountains of Caprice, where the ambient pressure is extremely low. Pressurized cockpits became standard, and special hardpoints were designed into the limbs to attach small hypergolic chemical rocket engines for microgravity propulsion. As it happened, these could also act as jump jets with very little modification, adding to the Gear's mobility. Additional hardpoints in the feet and arms provided attachment points for molecular gripper soles and a rocket-propelled winch system, both of which would help save fuel during free fall operations and extend the vehicle's combat endurance.

Power Transmission - 2.9.10

Transmission is a catch-all term covering the various pistons and motors that move the machine around. All Heavy Gears use a combination of hydraulic and electrical power to move their limbs. Hydraulic systems can generate linear movement through the use of pistons and torsion movement through a modified circular piston called a rotor. Rotors can have a finite or infinite angular travel, and can reverse the movement simply by inverting the fluid supply. Gears use both types of actuators in their limbs to give them maximum movement ranges.

The hydraulic system is fed by one main pump attached to the engine by a computer-controlled gearbox to maximize efficiency. The second drive shaft of the engine is used for an electrical generator which powers booster pumps placed in the lower body. Much like in a human body, the main power lines and transmission feeds pass through a large bundle that occupies roughly the same space as a spinal cord. Valves, overflow reservoirs and heat exchangers are also part of the circuit, which is attached to the basic frame of the Gear.

The fluid used to transmit the motive power is a highly advanced polymer compound which is much better than oil for transmitting load. It is distributed throughout the Gear's body by feed lines made of duraplast, a composite plastic which can contain high pressures without bursting. The fluid system acts as a secondary shock-absorber, handling whatever residual shock is left once the main absorbers in the legs and lower torso have done their job. This allows the Gear to move and maneuver at great speed without jolting the pilot to death.

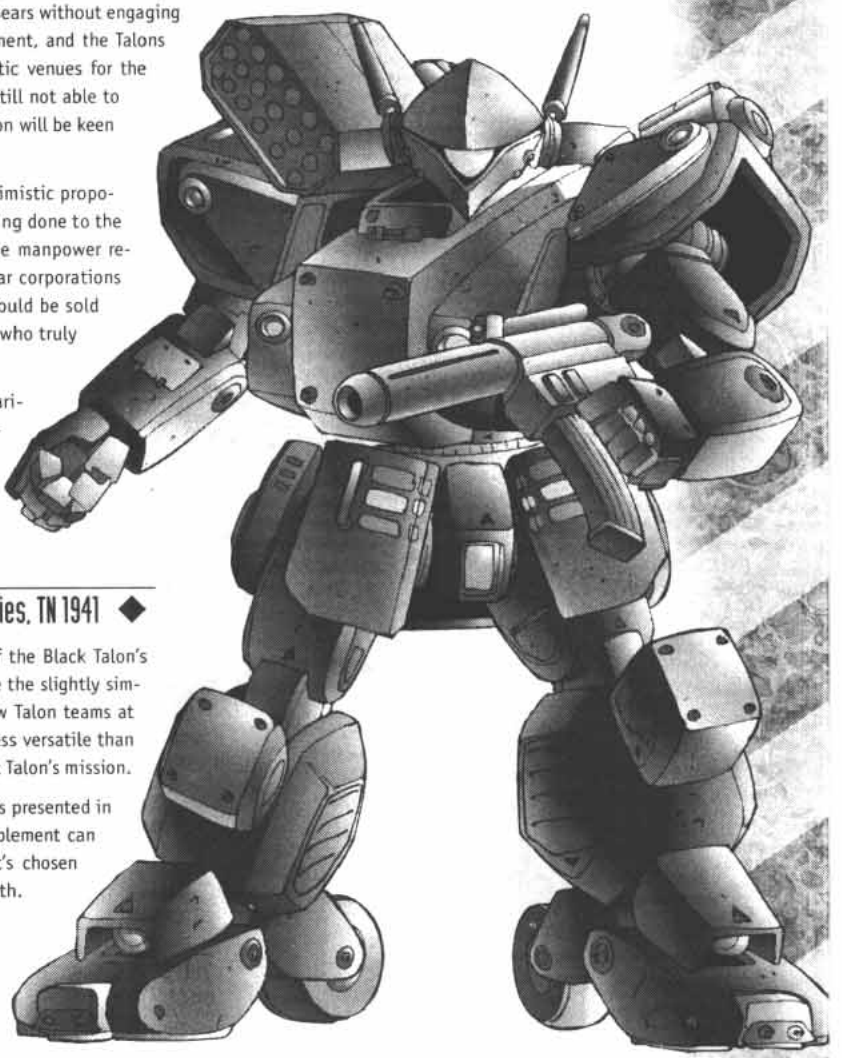
Future Developments - 2.9.11

The success of the 1st Black Talon's mission has centered a lot of attention on the small Gear design group. Needless to say, the Talon Werks are exceptionally proud of the performances of their creations. Not one to rest on their laurels, however, they immediately went back to work to improve the vehicles based on the feedback from the 1st's few surviving pilots.

It would be hard to further raise the performances of the various Gears without engaging in a complex and very costly campaign of research and development, and the Talons have thus decided to concentrate their efforts on more pragmatic venues for the moment. For example, the overtaxed Karaq Wastes facilities are still not able to supply more than a few new vehicles every season, and competition will be keen among the new Talon teams to get them.

So far, though, mass-producing the Dark series is at best an optimistic proposition. Regardless of the number of improvements and streamlining done to the designs, the Werks simply do not have the machine tools or the manpower required for it. The Cabinet is still reluctant to ask the various polar corporations for help, for they fear (justly) that production of the designs would be sold to the highest bidders — the polar armies — rather than those who truly need the vehicles.

The Werks may have to settle on creating slightly downrated variants to keep cost down and allow sufficient numbers to be produced. They are also interested in acquiring new designs, such as the Desert Viper and Water Viper (see pages 64-67), to give them "Dark" versions for deployment on Atlantis and the other colony worlds.



The Dark Series, TN 1941 ◆

The following pages contain descriptions and game statistics of the Black Talon's primary combat vehicles, the Dark series Gears. These models are the slightly simplified versions that have entered limited production for the new Talon teams at the Werks' factory. Though still very powerful, they are slightly less versatile than their brethren who fought the CEF forces on Caprice during the 1st Talon's mission.

In order to make the statistics immediately useful, each vehicle is presented in its base weapon payload configuration. The entire weapon complement can be taken off without much difficulty and replaced by the pilot's chosen armament, but those are the weapons the vehicle is delivered with.

Dark Cheetah

The swift Cheetah scout Gear was selected to perform the reconnaissance tasks of the mission. Its extensive sensor array and built-in electronic warfare suite make it well suited for this role. It will serve as the eyes and ears of the team once on the ground, but can also serve as a light skirmisher if it comes down to it. The basic Cheetah frame was substantially modified to incorporate additional armor and stealth equipment, but did not lose speed or agility. This can quickly change if too many weapon systems are loaded on the frame, so care must be chosen to ensure only critical devices are carried.

The overall speed of the vehicle match those of the Cheetah Mk2, though the amount of armor carried does not. The designers went for the "tried and battle tested" approach and used the proven CHAT/8 comm system and sensor array of the standard Cheetah rather than risk development problems with a more advanced system.

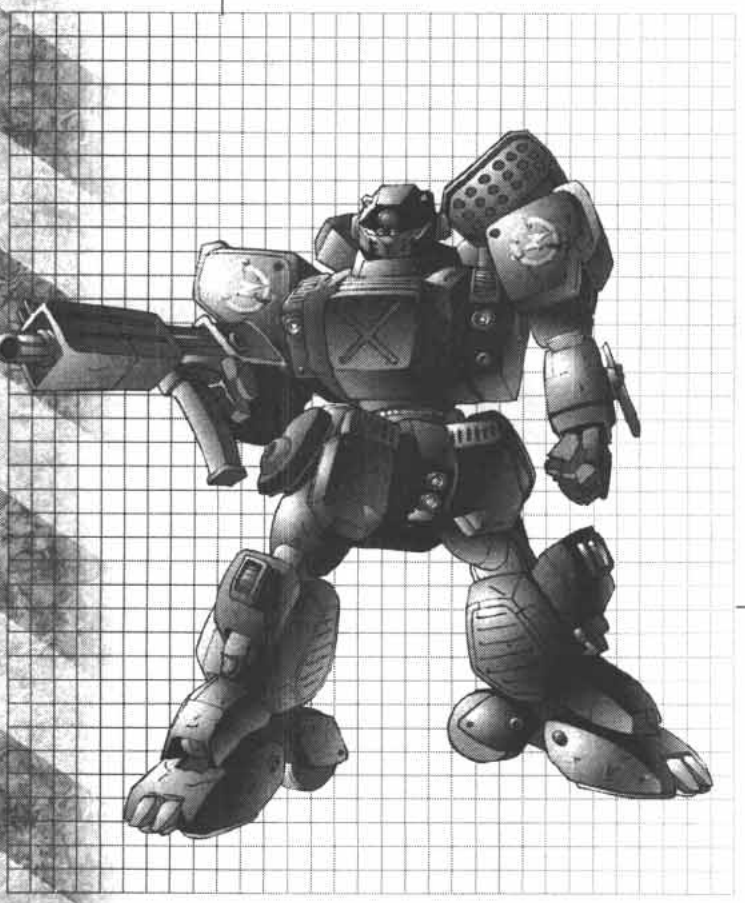
Like the other vehicles in the Dark-series, the Cheetah is equipped with a life support system. Such equipment has been made necessary by the unknown conditions the Talons will have to face during their missions. The life support system will also prove useful during operations on the surface of Caprice, where oxygen breathing apparatus is required due to the low ambient atmospheric pressure.

◆ Service Record

The Dark Cheetah is being used mostly as the team's eyes and hears, using its superior maneuverability and speed to make its way deep in enemy territory. It is the prefered vehicle for Talon teams that privilege a stealthy approach to their missions, and has proven to be widely popular assignment. More than once, a Dark Cheetah has used its all-terrain capabilities to lurk beneath cover with its Sensor Boom extended like a periscope, waiting for just the right moment to signal the rest of the Black Talons to initiate their surprise attack.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	1397	Offensive:	1006	Defensive:	882	Miscellaneous:	2302	Lemon Dice:	1



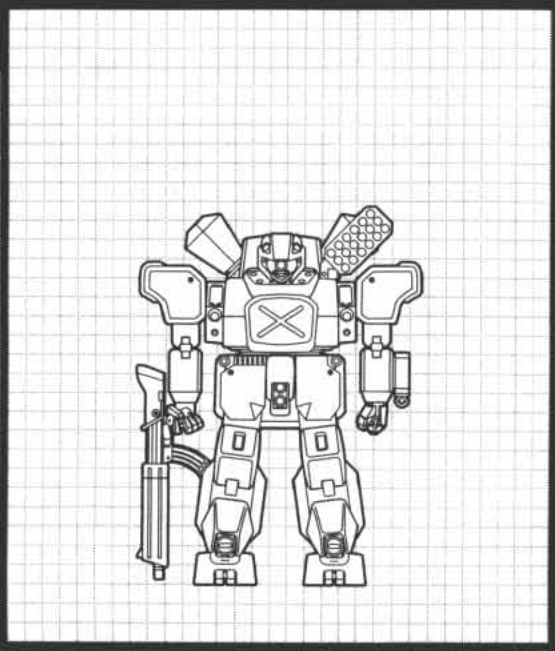
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Dark Cheetah
Production code:	n/a
Production Type:	Late Prototype
Cost:	12,805,834 marks/dinars
Manufacturer:	Black Talon Werks
Use:	Scout Gear
Height:	4.1 meters
Width:	3.3 meters
Average armor thickness:	20 mm
Armor material:	advanced composites
Standard operational weight:	5200 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walker (65 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (92 kph)
Deployment Range:	600 km
Sensor Range:	5 km
Communication Range:	25 km
Powerplant:	S-V850S V-engine
Horsepower:	450 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
6 x Weapon Hardpoints*	-
	*Stats at right reflect basic suggested payload

DARK CHEETAH



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	6
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	12
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	8
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	15
• MANEUVER:		+2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		600

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+2	5
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	25
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	10
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	20
• OVERKILL:	30

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 1397 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 12,805,834 marks

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Autocannon	LAC	Forward	2	4	8	16	0	x8	1	+2	-
Pack Gun	DPG	Forward	2	4	8	16	-1	x8	1	+2	-
Rocket Pod	LRP/32	Forward	1	2	4	8	-1	x12	1	+4	Indirect Fire
AP Grenade Launcher	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I, IF, AE=0
Vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
60	
30	
32	
6	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Hostile Environment Protection	-	All	
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can Punch	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first Crew hit	
Rugged Movement System	-	Absorbs first Movement hit	
Stealth	3	Add to Concealment	yes
Sniper System	-	LAC	
Tool Arm	1	Sensor Boom, Cannot Punch	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Annoyance	-	Cramped Cockpit, maximum pilot BLD is 0

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None - -		

HEAVY GEAR

Dark Warrior

The Dark Warrior is a modified version of the Warrior Elite, a Gear prototype created by Paxton Arms' ultra-secret advanced Gear development program. The Warrior Elite was to be the vanguard of a new generation of highly mobile Gears for Peace River's army, and only three prototypes are know to have escaped the city-state's destruction. The remaining vehicles were discreetly moved to the Talon Werks facility for study and modifications (the very first Dark Warriro, piloted by Lieutenant Keiji Kage, was actually one of the original prototype, albeit highly modified).

The Dark Warrior upgrade retains the Elite's agility and speed but features additional stealth and environmental protection equipment. All limbs and major systems have been reworked to incorporate as many modular attachments as possible to facilitate maintenance and modifications in the field. Though the Dark Warrior can potentially carry almost any combination of Gear-class weaponry, a prefered payload has evolved to take advantage of the Gear's inherent strengths.

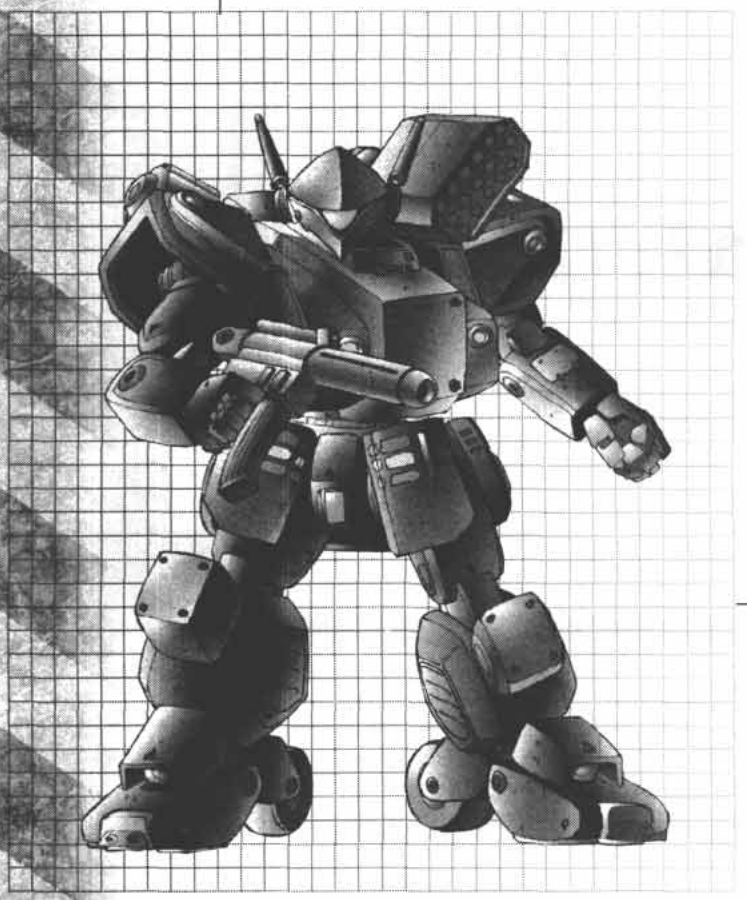
The modular weapon hardpoints allow a number of different weapon payloads to be carried, but a baseline configuration was retained for the Caprice mission. It includes the Elite's vibrorapier, at the request of Lt. Kage, and an unusual gatling laser cannon, which provides the unit with a high amount of firepower in regard to its size.

◆ Service Record

The Dark Warrior's combination of speed and brute force makes it a good all-around fighter. Though the production of the machine has proven somewhat difficult, given the low number of Warrior Elites in existence, it has quickly become a favorite with the Talon field commanders. They appreciate its versatility, which makes mission planning a lot easier.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	1607	Offensive:	1995	Defensive:	604	Miscellaneous:	2222	Lemon Dice:	1



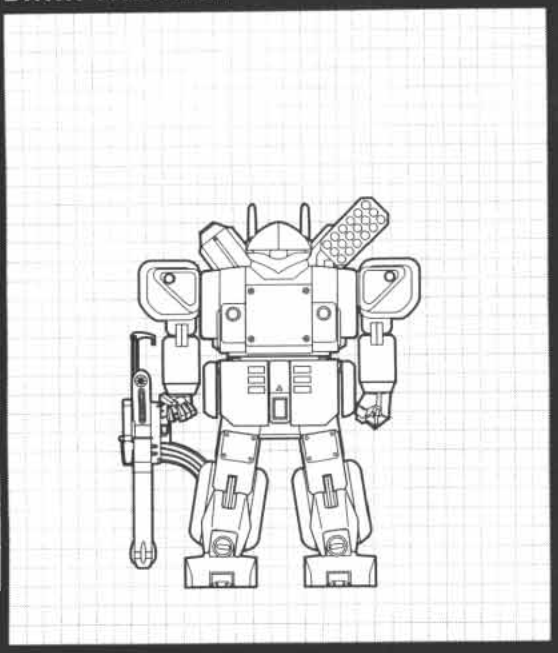
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Dark Warrior
Production code:	n/a
Production Type:	Late Prototype
Cost:	16,070,000 dollars
Manufacturer:	Black Talon Werks
Use:	Main Battle Gear
Height:	4.6 meters
Width:	3.2 meters
Average armor thickness:	50 mm
Armor material:	advanced composites
Standard operational weight:	6900 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walker (60 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (90 kph)
Deployment Range:	550 km
Sensor Range:	2 km
Communication Range:	10 km
Powerplant:	PV-650 V-engine
Horsepower:	650 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
6 x Weapon Hardpoints*	-
*Stats at right reflect basic suggested payload	

DARK WARRIOR



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	5
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	10
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	8
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	15
• MANEUVER:		+1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		500

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	2
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	16
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	32
• OVERKILL:	48

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 1607 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 16,070,000 dollars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Gatling Laser Rifle	HGLC	Forward	2	4	8	16	+1	x16	1	+1	-3RB
Rocket Pod	MRP/36	Forward	2	4	8	16	-1	x18	1	+4	Indirect Fire
Vibrorapier	VR	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x6	1	0	AP, Physical Attack
AP Grenade Launcher	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I, IF, AE=0

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
40	
36	
-	
6	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
ECM	3	Offensive Electronic Equipment	yes
Hostile Environment Protection	-	All	
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can Punch	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first Crew hit	
Rugged Movement System	-	Absorbs first Movement hit	
Stealth	3	Add to Concealment	yes

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Annoyance	-	Cramped Head Space in Cockpit

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None - -		

HEAVY GEAR

Dark Jaguar

The high performance Jaguar was high on the list of combat vehicles earnmarked for service in the Black Talon. Over the cycles, the versatile Gear had become the symbol of progress in the Northern military forces, and the design performed spectacularly in most of the battles it has ever been engaged in. Most of the modifications incorporated technology from other Northern stealth designs, such as the Panther, to save time. Numerous secondary systems were adapted from the time-proven Hunter to ensure easy of repair in the field.

The result performed well above expectations. While a jack-of-all-trade, the Dark Jaguar still offer significant performances across the board. Like its mass-produced brothers, it is very mobile and features an above average sensor suite for a line unit. This can prove helpful in confined environments, or if no dedicated scout unit is available to the team.

Like the other Talon vehicles, the Dark Jaguar uses a collection of weapon hardpoints instead of built-in armament to facilitate repairs and upgrades in the field. Nevertheless, prefered weapon loads have been designed for each machine; the Jaguar became the close support unit, carrying a pair of high-yield rocket pods to supply quick burst of firepower to get the team out of any given predicament. The vehicle's advanced fire control system does an excellent job of compensating for the rockets' inherent low accuracy, making them a valued addition to the team's arsenal.

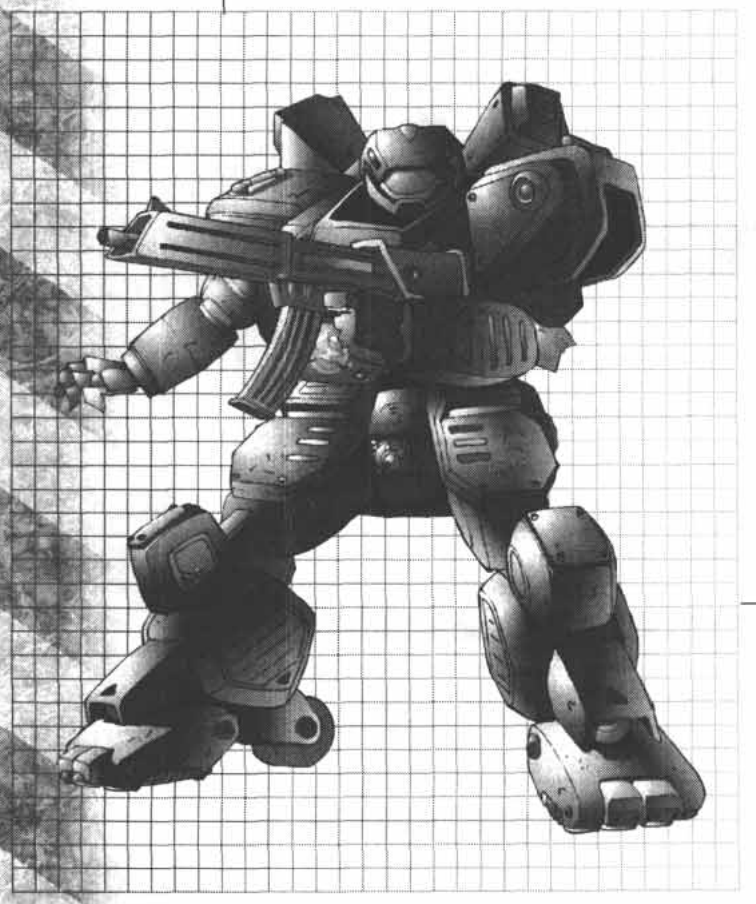
◆ Service Record

The dark Jaguar is probably the closest to a standard soldier unit for the Black Talon program. The Jaguar's high availability and proven track record have ported over to its commando version, which can fulfill several combat roles as required by the tactical situation.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	1769	Offensive:	2603	Defensive:	655	Miscellaneous:	2048	Lemon Dice:	1

Vehicle Specifications



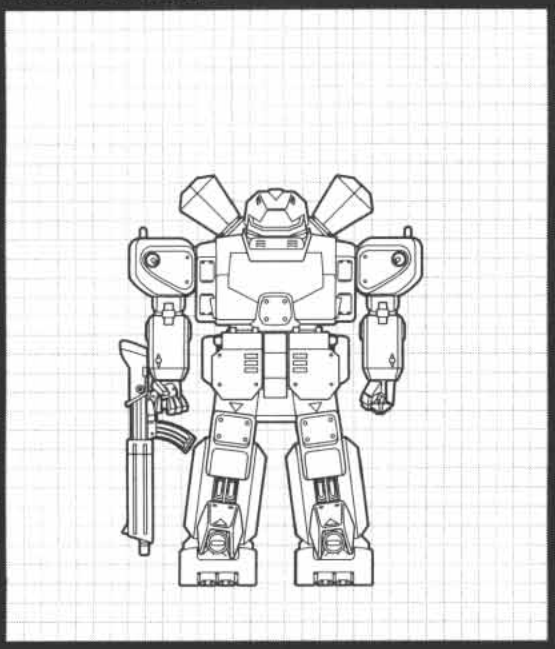
Code name:	Dark Jaguar
Production code:	n/a
Production Type:	Late Prototype
Cost:	17,690,000 marks
Manufacturer:	Black Talon Werks
Use:	Main Battle Gear
Height:	4.6 meters
Width:	3.4 meters
Average armor thickness:	51 mm
Armor material:	advanced composites
Standard operational weight:	7100 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walker (53 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (81 kph)
Deployment Range:	550 km
Sensor Range:	3 km
Communication Range:	15 km
Powerplant:	S-V1110S V-engine
Horsepower:	620 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
6 x Weapon Hardpoints*	-

*Stats at right reflect basic suggested payload

DARK JAGUAR



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	5
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	9
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	7
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	13
• MANEUVER:		+1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		500

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	3
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	15
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	18
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	36
• OVERKILL:	54

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 1769 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 17,690,000 marks

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Autocannon	MAC	Forward	3	6	12	24	0	x10	1	+1	-
Rocket Pods	MRP/36	Forward	2	4	8	16	-1	x18	2	+4	Indirect Fire
Vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
40	
36ea	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
HEAT-Resistant Armor	2	Add to Armor vs. HEAT Attacks	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	All	
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can Punch	
Reinforced Armor	2	Front	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first Crew hit	
Rugged Movement System	-	Absorbs first Movement hit	
Stealth	3	Add to Concealment	yes

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Annoyance	-	Cramped Head Space in Cockpit

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None - -		

HEAVY GEAR

Dark Mamba

The Southern Republic's Black Mamba design was already a cutting edge machine, and it was only natural that it be incorporated in the Black Talon program. Despite numerous early problems with the powertrain and the new modularized systems - not to mention Republican officials, who were extremely leery of releasing the stealth technology of their Snakeye Gear for adaptation - the current vehicle is an agile machine that should perform well. Much like the Warrior and Jaguar designs, the Mamba is not overly specialized and features improved performances across the board.

The one main difference with the other Dark-series Gear is in the inherent stealthiness of the design, which was made possible by the extensive research already done for the Snakeye program. The design's low sensor signature makes it a particularly fiendish weapon to use under cover of darkness or cluttered terrain. The fragility of the outer armor cover greatly limit the combat options open to the pilot, but the vehicle' given its strength, should essentially never be operating out in the open where it will be at a decided disadvantage. The Dark Mamba is a true hit-n-fade striker and should always be deployed in such a fashion.

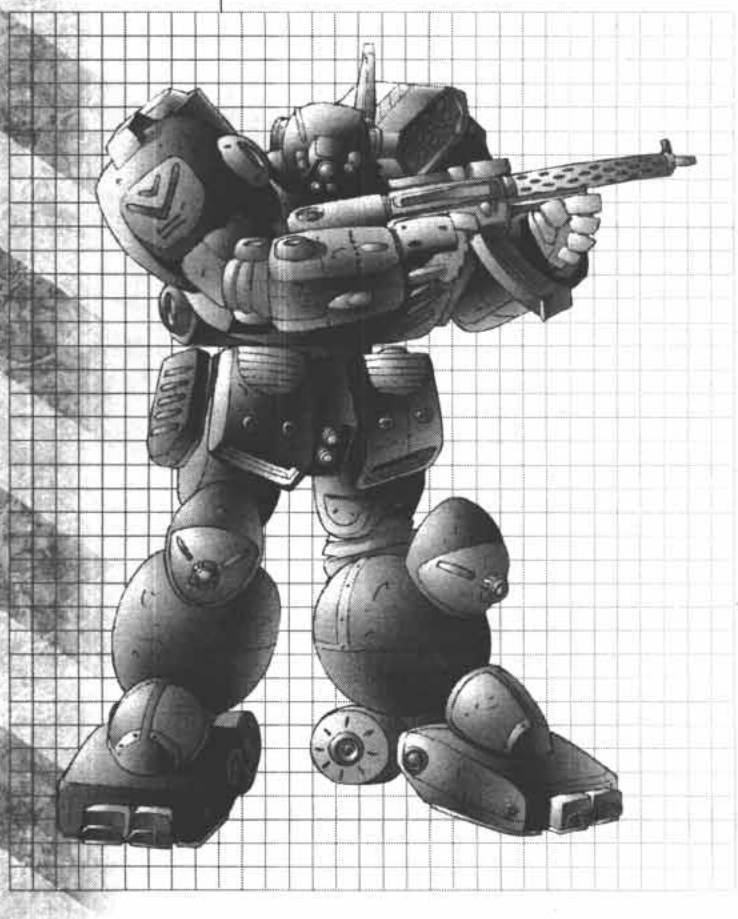
Like all Talon machines, the Dark Mamba relies on weapon hardpoints and can carry a large variety of weapons. Most of the time, however, the machine is equipped with a powerful bazooka and rocket pod combination for high punch at short range.

◆ Service Record

The integration of a sniper system in the Dark Mamba's fire control computer, coupled with the design's incredible stealth characteristics, has made it the squad's unofficial assassin vehicle. Though the system can be retrofitted to other Talon vehicles as needed (though at the cost of much efforts), only the Dark Mamba comes with it in the base configuration.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	1566	Offensive:	1570	Defensive:	619	Miscellaneous:	2508	Lemon Dice:	1



Vehicle Specifications

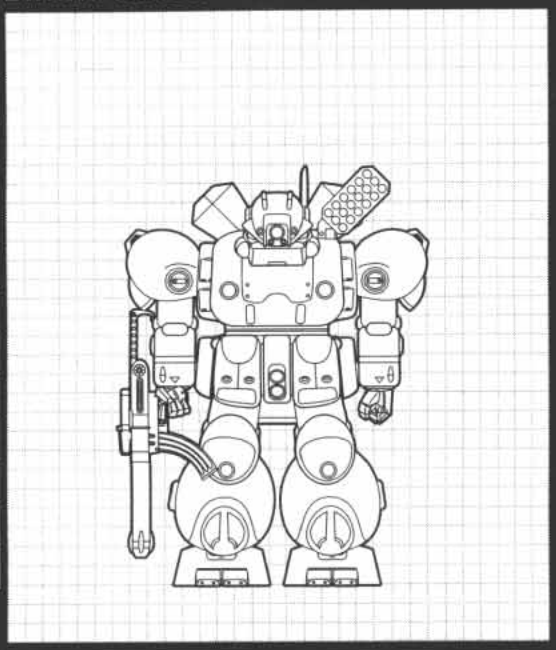
Code name:	Dark Mamba
Production code:	n/a
Production Type:	Late Prototype
Cost:	15,660,000 dinars
Manufacturer:	Black Talon Werks
Use:	Main Battle Gear
Height:	4.6 meters
Width:	3.5 meters
Average armor thickness:	56 mm
Armor material:	advanced composites
Standard operational weight:	6200 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walker (55 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (84 kph)
Deployment Range:	500 km
Sensor Range:	3 km
Communication Range:	12 km
Powerplant:	WV-930S V-engine
Horsepower:	630 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
6 x Weapon Hardpoints*	-

*Stats at right reflect basic suggested payload

DARK MAMBA



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 10 20 30 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	5
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	9
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	7
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	14
• MANEUVER:		+1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		500

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	2
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	21
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	42
• OVERKILL:	63

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 1566 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 15,660,000 dinars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Rapid-fire Bazooka	RFB	Forward	1	2	4	8	0	x14	1	+2	-
Rocket Pod	LRP/32	Forward	1	2	4	8	-1	x8	1	+4	Indirect Fire
AP Grenade Launcher	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I, IF, AE=0
AP Grenade Launcher	APGL	Fixed Rr.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I, IF, AE=0
Heavy Hand Grenades	HHG	Forward	0	0	0	0	-1	x20	-	0	-
Vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
60	
32	
6	
6	
6	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Hostile Environment Protection	-	All	
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can Punch	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first Crew hit	
Rugged Movement System	-	Absorbs first Movement hit	
Stealth	6	Add to Concealment	yes
Sniper System	-	RFB	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Exposed AUX Systems	-	AUX Damage is one step worse

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None - -		

HEAVY GEAR

Dark Cobra

The Dark Cobra has been created to fulfill the task of long range fire support in Talon combat squads. Its strong frame is capable of carrying multiple ballistic and missile systems, and while it is slightly slower than the other machines, its heavy armor will keep it safe during engagements. The armor means that the machine can also be used as a brawler, but its poor agility makes it a dangerous practice to engage in.

Much of the Gear's systems and general design approach comes from the Hooded Cobra design, which pioneered the use of the light laser cannon on an assault-class Gear. The lesson learned in the construction of that design were put to good use in the creation of the Dark Cobra, which suffered from far less development flaws than its older brethren.

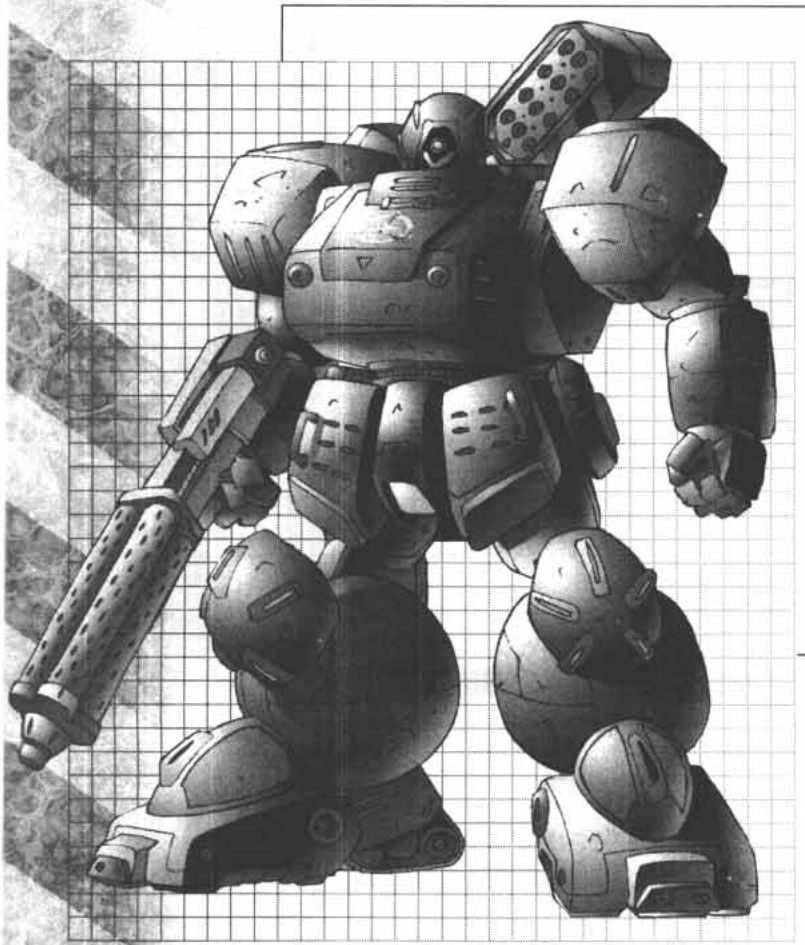
The rapid development of the design can also be explained by the fact that it is a relatively low technology vehicle among high tech wonders. The Dark Cobra's sensor and communication suite is only of average quality, since it was expected that other machines would take care of the scouting and forward observing duties (it is highly unlikely that a Talon team would be composed only of Cobras). Likewise, except for the EM-absorbing ablative skin of the hull, most of the inner mechanisms and armor plate configurations remain unchanged from the basic vehicle.

◆ Service Record

The Dark Cobra is found in few Talon teams, since many commanders have deemed it too heavy and over specialized for their needs. While the vehicle is indeed somewhat less mobile than the other Talon vehicles, it has performed admirably so far, its pilots using both the heavy armor and the long range weapons to pull victory from what seemed at first to be impossible odds.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	1643	Offensive:	1930	Defensive:	331	Miscellaneous:	2668	Lemon Dice:	1



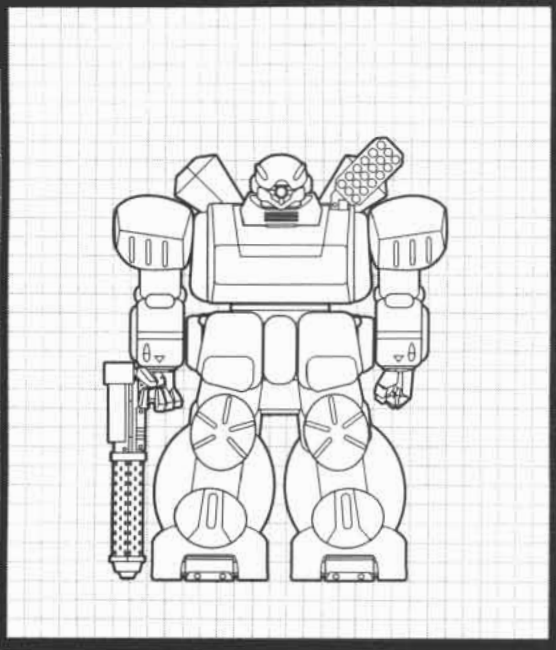
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Dark Cobra
Production code:	n/a
Production Type:	Late Prototype
Cost:	14,082,858 dinars
Manufacturer:	Black Talon Werks
Use:	Fire Support Gear
Height:	5.0 meters
Width:	4.0 meters
Average armor thickness:	90 mm
Armor material:	advanced composites
Standard operational weight:	8900 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walker (36 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (67 kph)
Deployment Range:	400 km
Sensor Range:	2 km
Communication Range:	10 km
Powerplant:	WV-1500S V-engine
Horsepower:	940 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
6 x Weapon Hardpoints*	-
	*Stats at right reflect basic suggested payload

DARK COBRA



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 10 20 30 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	3
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	6
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	6
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	11
• MANEUVER:		-1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		400

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	2
• COMMUNICATION:	0	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	21
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	42
• OVERKILL:	63

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 1643 • SIZE: 7 • COST: 14,082,858 dinars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Laser Rifle	LLC	Forward	5	10	20	40	+1	x16	1	0	-2RB
Rocket Pod	MRP/36	Forward	2	4	8	16	-1	x18	1	+4	Indirect Fire
Heavy Rocket Pod	HRP/24	Forward	3	6	12	24	-1	x20	1	+3	Indirect Fire
Autocannon	LAC	Fixed F.	2	4	8	16	0	x8	1	+2	-
AP Grenade Launcher	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I, IF, AE=0
Grenades	HG	Forward	0	0	0	0	-1	x15	-	0	Anti-Infantry
Vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
40	
36	
24	
120	
6	
3	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
HEAT-Resistant Armor	8	Add to Armor vs. HEAT Attacks	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	All	
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Manipulator Arm x 2	7	Can Punch	
Reinforced Armor	2	Front	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first Crew hit	
Rugged Movement System	-	Absorbs first Movement hit	
Stealth	2	Add to Concealment	yes
Sniper System	-	LLC	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None - -		

HEAVY GEAR

Dark Kodiak

The Black Talon Werks are working hard on adapting another series of machines to the mission specifications called for by Dr. Brokenhaggen and General Ascherbach. The Dark Kodiak was the last machine to come out of the workshop before the first mission to Caprice, and is one of the most sophisticated and brutal Gear designs ever created.

Whereas the other Talon machines are designed mainly for stealth, the Dark Kodiak is first and foremost a brawler. Its heavy armor, combined with an upgraded engine and transmission, were intended to supply the team with the means to fight their way out of the most desperate situation. The engineering precedents of the Kodiak and Kodiak Destroyer are evident in the Dark version, and it is probably the vehicle that has changed the least from one version to the other. Movement speeds and armor are at Kodiak Destroyer levels, and only the outer armor panels and exhaust systems received any significant alterations to reduce their sensor signature.

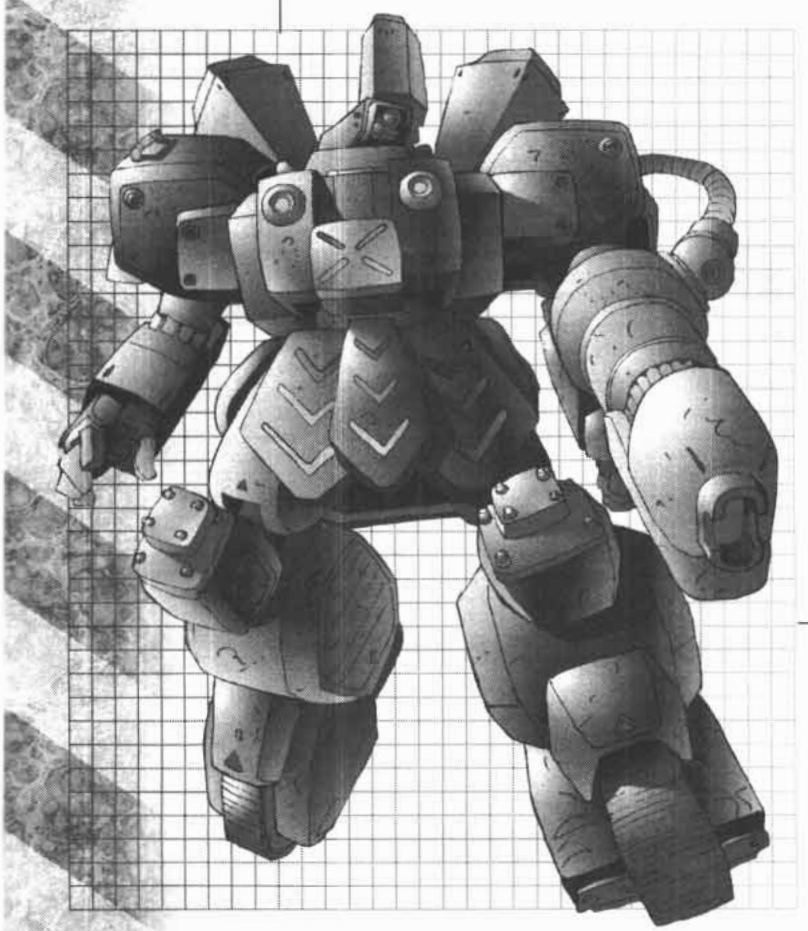
This Gear's development, despite the small extent of the changes to the basic Kodiak chassis, came in at an enormous price tag. Much of it can be attributed to the cost of the vehicle itself, which the Confederacy reluctantly provided to the Talon Werks. As a result, there are very few Dark Kodiaks in service, and no Talon team will ver have more than one.

Service Record

Though the Dark Kodiak is much slower than the other Talon machines, its extraordinary heavy armor, practically equal to that of a tank, made it a useful asset for missions involving brute force. For example, the 1st Black Talon fielded one to great success in the cramped tunnels below the CEF's vehicle factory at Paladin's Lots on Caprice.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	1948	Offensive:	2972	Defensive:	301	Miscellaneous:	2570	Lemon Dice:	1



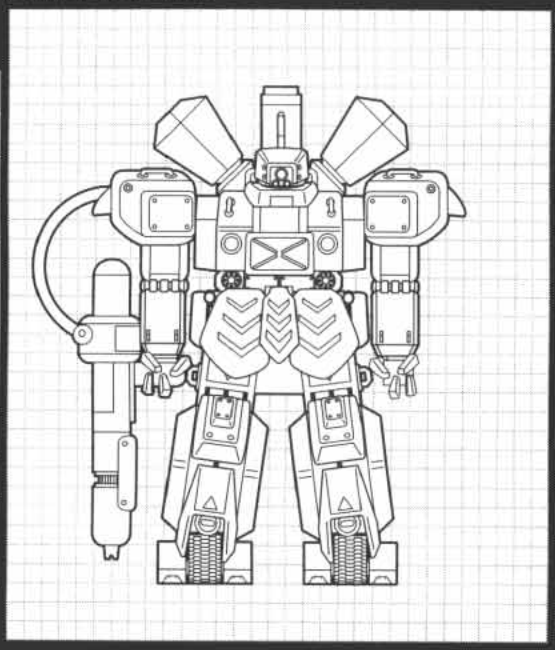
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Dark Kodiak
Production code:	n/a
Production Type:	Late Prototype
Cost:	16,697,143 marks
Manufacturer:	Black Talon Werks
Use:	Heavy Assault Gear
Height:	5.2 meters
Width:	3.9 meters
Average armor thickness:	80 mm
Armor material:	advanced composites
Standard operational weight:	10,200 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walker (37 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (59 kph)
Deployment Range:	400 km
Sensor Range:	2 km
Communication Range:	15 km
Powerplant:	S-V2202S V-engine
Horsepower:	1150 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
6 x Weapon Hardpoints*	-
	*Stats at right reflect basic suggested payload

DARK KODIAK



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	3
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	6
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	5
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	10
• MANEUVER:		-1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		400

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	2
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	15
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	20
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	40
• OVERKILL:	60

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 1948 • SIZE: 7 • COST: 16,697,143 marks

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Heavy Bazooka	HBZK	Forward	2	4	8	16	0	x25	1	0	-
Rocket Pod	MRP/36	Forward	2	4	8	16	-1	x18	1	+4	Indirect Fire
Heavy Machineguns	HMG	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	0	x4	2	+3	Anti-Infantry
Grenades	HG	Forward	0	0	0	0	-1	x15	-	0	Anti-Infantry
Heavy Hand Grenades	HHG	Forward	0	0	0	0	-1	x20	-	0	-
Vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
12	
36	
400ea	
3	
3	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
HEAT-Resistant Armor	3	Add to Armor vs. HEAT Attacks	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	All	
Life Support	-	Limited	
Manipulator Arm x 2	7	Can Punch	
Reinforced Armor	3	Front	
Reinforced Armor	1	Rear	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first Crew hit	
Rugged Movement System	-	Absorbs first Movement hit	
Stealth	2	Add to Concealment	
Sniper System	-	HBZK	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None - -		

HEAVY GEAR

FURY

The Fury Intersystem Assault Shuttle is the latest creation of the Terranovan shipyards. The fusion-powered spacecraft was already in the works prior to the Interpolar War, but only the needs of Operation Black Talon provided the impetus to complete the project. The Fury is designed to take a small detachment of Gears and armored vehicles from one planetary surface to another, passing through an interstellar Gate if necessary. The ship does not have its own Tannhauser Gate generator and must rely on a Gateship to initiate the sequence. Much of the craft's main hull and systems are derived from the CEF's Sleipnir-class space plane (see page 118).

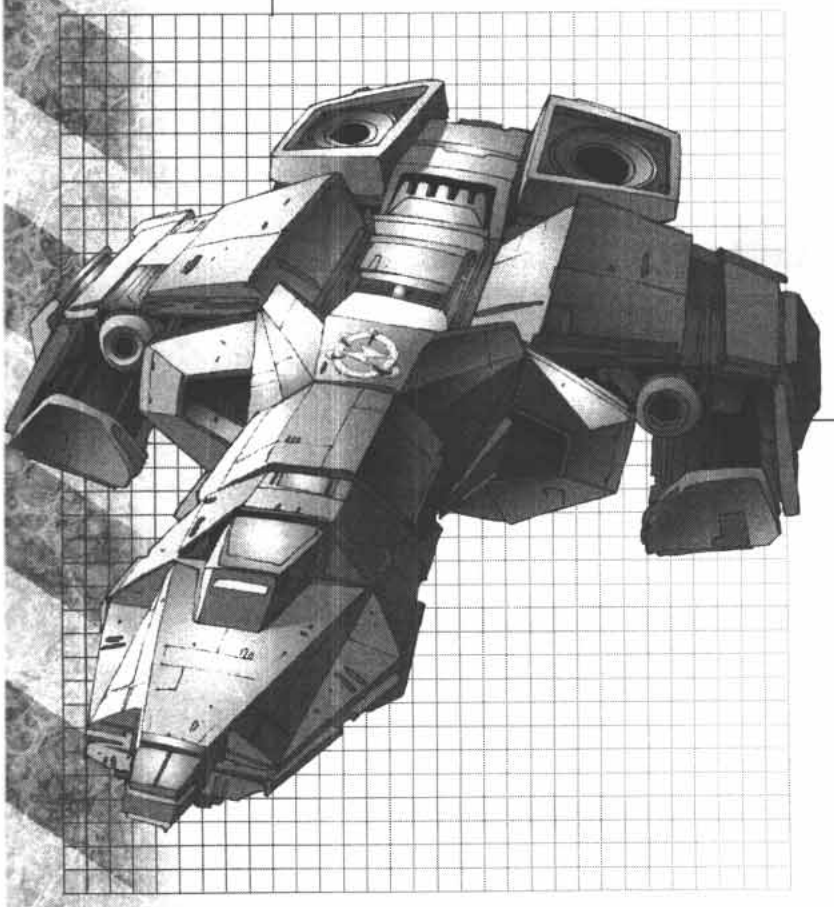
The hull of the Fury is fairly angular due to the numerous stealth surfaces built into the design. The underside of the main body is covered with high temperature cerametal composites to withstand re-entry, while the rest is clad in armor. Hatches on the side and rear of the ship allow easy egress from the main cargo bays. The Fury is propelled by four fusion tubes, all of modular design, that can use any high density fluid as reaction mass. Enough reserves are carried to fly from a planetary surface to a Gate and back. Operational securities on all fusion tubes are patched to main ops and may be deactivated by authorized personnel to cause the vessel to self-destruct. Though it is intended mostly as a combat transport, the Fury is quite capable of defending itself: large particle accelerators are mounted on either side of the main body, and the spacecraft also carries a number of guided missiles and laser turrets.

◆ Service Record

Only one complete Fury has been produced up to now, though several others are in the building stage. The Caprice mission was the ultimate test of the vehicle's ability to infiltrate an hostile environment, deliver its cargo of troops and bring them back safely. Although the vehicle itself was lost, the operation, and by extension the Fury design, was successful. The other vessels currently being assembled will be used on subsequent missions to make contact with other human colonies.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	10,936	Offensive:	12,979	Defensive:	4443	Miscellaneous:	15,386	Lemon Dice:	1



Vehicle Specifications

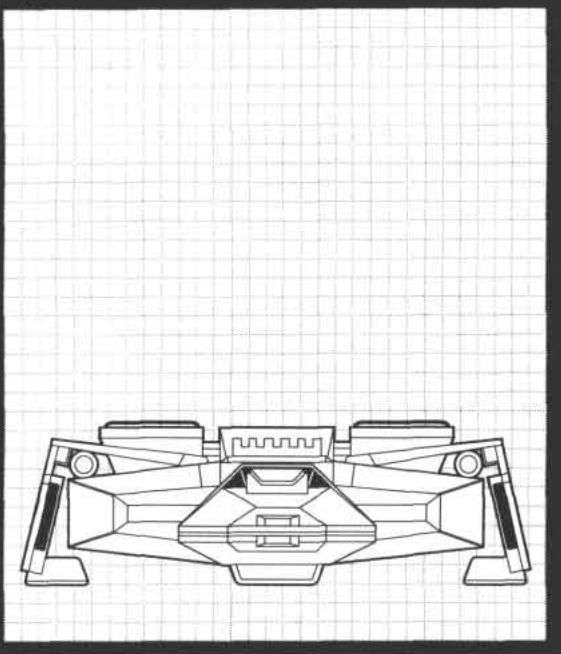
Name:	Fury
Origin:	Terra Nova
Manufacturer:	Hope Shipyards
Type:	Intersystem Assault Shuttle
Crew:	Pilot, Weapon Officer, Chief Engineer, 5 x Crewman
Length:	120.4 m
Width:	69.5 m
Height:	22.3 m
Empty Weight:	1800 tons
Loaded Weight:	4500 tons
Main Drive:	4 x Advanced Dynamics FT-9000 Fusion Tubes
Total Thrust:	4 x 3,000,000 kg

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
2 x IY-98 Particle Accelerator*	80ea
Assorted Guided Missiles*	8 missiles
Area Defense Laser Emitters x 12	40ea
Anti-Personnel Machineguns x 10	1000ea

*Adjustable to Mass Destruction for Space Combat

FURY



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 20 | 40 | 60 | 80

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	8
• BONUS ACTIONS:	3

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	S	20
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	S	40
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	F	8
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	F	16
• MANEUVER:		-2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		1000

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	4
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	30
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	80
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	160
• OVERKILL:	240

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 10,936 • SIZE: 22 • COST: 109,360,000 marks

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Particle Cannons	LPA	F. Forward	2	4	8	16	+1	x10	2	0	Mass Dest.*
Nuclear Missiles	ATM	Forward	3	6	12	24	+1	x25	1	0	G, Mass Dest.*
Laser Turrets	SLC	Turret	5	10	20	40	+1	x12	12	0	-1RB
Machine Guns	HMG	L/R	1	2	4	8	0	x4	5/5	+3	AI

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
80	
8	
40ea	
1000ea	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Autopilot	-	Acts as Level 1 pilot	yes
Backup Life Support	-	Absorbs first Life Support hit	
Cargo Bay (Enclosed) x 2	-	50x40x4 m; 8,000 m^3 each	
Crew Accomodations (Military)	-	12 people	
Ejection System	-	Lifepods for all	yes
Hostile Environment Protections	-	Desert, Extreme Cold, Vacuum, Radiation (4)	
Life Support	-	Full	yes
Reentry System	-	Permanent	yes
Stealth	3	Adds to Concealment	yes
Stratospheric Flight	-	-	
Vehicle Bay	12	Can hold 52 tons of vehicles	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Cannot Glide	-	No wing surface

NOTES

Double Towing Capacity while in Flight (combination of a Perk and an Annoyance Flaw)

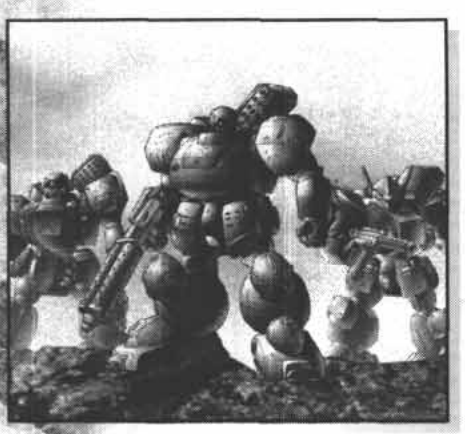
Max. Towing Capacity (in flight): 2400 tons

Reaction Mass: 24 tons of Hydrogen (1000 Burn Points); escape velocity requires about 250-300 BPs, depending on planetary gravity

*Mass Destruction: when in space, both LPA and ATM are Mass Destruction weaponry; TV is x50 (see Tech Manual 2)

HEAVY GEAR

2.10 - Future of the Black Talon



Despite its high casualty rate, the overall success of the 1st Black Talon's mission to the Caprice system has encouraged the Westphalia Cabinet to expand the scope of the program and turn it into Terra Nova's primary off-world armed force. The Cabinet, however, has learned the lesson from the failed Earth invasion of the War of the Alliance and knows well than Terra Nova does not presently have the resource to wage a full-blown interstellar war.

Modern space warfare is extremely deadly, as the CEF discovered. Large fleets of transport and combat vessels are extremely vulnerable to low tech countermeasures, and this makes a frontal attack a chancy proposition at best. The only viable alternative is the secret and gradual insertion of forces in the enemy-held system until sufficient reserves can be amassed to conduct a decisive strike.

The loose structure of the Talon teams makes them well-suited to this type of warfare, where very specialized, small units are secretly carried to their objectives, take it out, and come back — provided anyone survives the assault, of course. If beachheads can be established, a more conventional type of invasion can be envisaged. For the moment, however, Talon Command would be satisfied with merely slowing down the progress of the CEF until a better defense can be put together.

2.10.1 - The New Talons

The expedition of the 1st Black Talon to Caprice showed that a very real threat existed. Though most of the details about the mission remained classified to avoid alarming the general population, it was not possible anymore to deny that the Cabinet had been right all along. The government of Earth had indeed not only given up on its plans of conquest, but had learned from previous mistakes to emerge as a more deadly — and, more importantly, more insidious — adversary than the disposable troops the Terranovans had first fought twenty cycles ago.

The 1st Black Talon reported the existence of a significant number of Gateships and other spacecraft in the Caprice system, along with a number of shipyards and orbital installations. Given the obvious space superiority enjoyed by the Earth fleet, a direct assault would not be sensible, nor would it be possible given the current state of the Terranovan space fleets, which were largely ignored in the cycles since the end of the war and have yet to be fully rebuilt. In any event, the fleets would be tasked mostly with the protection of the planet, much like it did during the War of the Alliance, rather than any offensive role.

The only alternative was thus to find a way to redress the balance. Two possible solutions were open to the tactical planners of the Cabinet. One, additional allies would have to be sought. The Caprice system being almost completely under the control of the CEF leaves only the other colonies, many of which have not been contacted since the departure of Earth. Second, a number of guerrilla operations aimed at disrupting industrial productions and sabotaging existing forces could be implemented. Both are valid approaches, but additional manpower will be required if these tasks are to be accomplished within a useful timeline.

The Cabinet, after consultation with both the Inner Council of the CNCS and the Curia, has authorized to the formation of a hundred more Talon teams, to be numbered 2nd to 101st. Each team will be specifically customized for the mission profile it will most often perform, though all teams will retain a high degree of adaptability in their training, organization and equipment. Roughly half of the new units will be sent to the known human colonies to do some scouting and, if possible, make contact with any surviving governments; the rest will be assigned to search and destroy operations waged against factories, mines, space yards and other CEF production assets in the Caprice system. The timeframe for this is the next five cycles, though the first new Talons are expected to be assigned and sent on their way as early as the first season of TN 1942.

2.10.2 - Budget

This aggressive schedule will require a lot of resources, most of it devoted to preparing the ships and weapons needed. Three orbital workshops are in the process of being converted into shipyards to help build additional transport ships, most of them variants of the Fury-class shuttle. The government of Port Arthur has reluctantly agreed to provide transport to and from the installations with its space planes, though observers confirm that they are doing so only out of self-preservation and would rather be left out of the conflict entirely (which is probably not possible, given the Yakut Brotherhood's ambitions).

Most of the new money will comes from the defense budgets of the CNCS and AST. The CNCS Inner Council has allocated finances, with high opposition from the Norlights and the Mercantile Federation; the latters see the additional Talon teams as a waste of money, and would prefer to build up their own army instead. In the southern hemisphere, the Curia has also agreed to supply additional money to the program, though the Republican Prime Minister has added a number of conditions to the republican contribution (including constant progress reports and the right to send observers along the mission, among others).

Paxton Arms still secretly contributes, mostly in men and equipment; DuBeau-Slovenski wants the rest of Terra Nova (and, incidentaly, the NEC) to believe her forces weak and non-threatening, to keep Paxton out of the spotlight while it rebuilds its forces.

Equipment - 2.10.3

Due to budget and production restrictions, few Talon teams will be equipped with the Dark series of covert operation Gears and Fury transports from the start. Most will have to make do with more standard types of Gears (see page 60), suitably modified and adapted. As time goes by and production finally catches up, the older machines will be rotated out and replaced by the Dark-series vehicles. The low production levels of the Black Talon Werks' Karaq Wastes facility, however, means that unless a massive investment is made by someone, it is extremely unlikely that any but the best of the Talons will ever field the powerful Gears.

On the personal equipment side, however, the Talons have been fairly well supplied. The various Talon bases have amassed an impressive number of firearms, which are turned out by the caseload by the weaponsmiths of the Talon Werks. Production of the very specialized pilot suit is barely keeping up with the recruiting process. The helmets and life support packs have been subcontracted, and are in fairly good stock, as are the basic consumables (though the Talon quartermasters have discovered that they often get stuck with the material no one else wanted). Other than the Gears, the only piece of equipment in short order is the laser comm, of which there is never enough.

Missions - 2.10.4

The Black Talon will be tasked with a number of specific objectives in the cycles to come. While each team will receive detailed mission orders, all of them are expected to do their best to ensure that the objectives of the program come ever nearer to completion. All Talon teams continually seek to fulfill the following objectives.

Their first and foremost task is of course the continued harassment of CEF forces in both the Helios and Caprice systems, with a heavy emphasis on the former. Talon Command believe it very likely that the CEF has found additional micro-Gates and is continuing to send troops through to establish bases in the more remote corners of the planet. There is always a possibility that they will try to smuggle more mass destruction weaponry in system, but a repeat of the Peace River massacre is unlikely since it is too costly; the NEC wants to conquer the planet, not blast it back to the stone age. Based on further analysis, the Brimstone massdriver found and destroyed by the 1st Black Talon was hopefully only a terror weapon and more probably intended to clear space around the planet rather than pound it into submission.

Of almost equal importance, the attacks on high priority targets on Caprice will keep a number of teams quite busy over the next few cycles. They will be sent to destroy productions assets in the system to slow down the war effort of the NEC as much as they can. At the same time, they will conduct support operations for Liberati strikes aimed at freeing prisoners or acquiring important data.

Some of the teams will receive a more advanced training in the various intelligence and covert ops skills to become the Talon safety crew. These specialized units will be tasked with the interception of hostile scouting teams and other counter-intelligence ops, in and out of their vehicles. In a sense, these Talons will be closer to spies than commandos, though they will have access to the same type of equipment as their frontline brethren.

The last program objectives are much more long term, and correspondingly less importance has been placed on them. Eventually, the Talons will be increasingly ordered to perform scouting missions to determine the true extent of the interstellar Gate system. In doing so, they will hopefully regain contact with the people of the other human colonies, provided that civilization still exist on the worlds they will visit. Finally, they will be asked to renew contact prior to diplomatic overtures, possibly in view of either an alliance or, at worst, a non-aggression pack.

The last mission of the Black Talon is unofficial and rarely mentioned: they are the bodyguards of the Westphalia Cabinet, and will attempt to defend them against any threat, both from within or without.

Opposition

The Southern Republic has been most vocal in its criticism of the Talon program, often complaining that its best pilots are being stolen away and that the budget is badly administrated. Most intelligence analysts, however, know this is but a facade. The Republican authorities are secretly pleased that the best pilots and crews of other leagues are being sent off-world to fight, and that they now have a politically-correct outlet for getting rid of troublesome troopers. It is notable that practically no Southern pilot comes from the regular army, only the MILICIA.

The truth behind the matter, of course, is even more complex. Both DeRouen and Molay, after an initial period of reflection, have independently noted that the Westphalia Cabinet might make an excellent puppet to further their own personal aims; at worst, the Cabinet will do the dirty job of dealing with the outsiders, leaving them free to deal with the local political arena at this leisure. The lack of interest of the new Patriarch, too busy restoring order in his realm, and the Dominion corporations, who are taking advantage of the situation to open new trade negociations and trying to secure rights to off-world contacts, only makes the situation more interesting.

PICTURE PERFECT

At this time of the night, the hangar was deserted. Even the hard-working Talon Werks technicians, who usually kept late hours, had gone back to the barracks to try to catch a few precious hours of sleep. The row of Gears were standing at attention in the pools of light created by what few lamps remained open, their grayish-black skin seemingly drinking in the illumination from the space around them; power cables and datalines dangled from exposed maintenance ports. Coupled with the eerie silence of the place, the tentacle-festooned machines gave the motor pool a decidedly sinister look.

But not so to everyone. Lieutenant Keiji Kage, of the late Peace River Defense Force and ex-test pilot for Paxton Arms, closed the large door behind him against the chill of the Badlands' night. He stopped on the threshold of the hangar, taking a long look at the war machines that stood before him. He should have felt sorrow, felt anger at the mechanical monstrosities that had taken him away from his home when he was needed there the most, but now they were like old friends.

He had spent many hours here, throwing himself into his work, trying to forget the nightmares that made him wake up in a cold-sweat. These machines would be his tools for revenge. They would let him strike back at those who had robbed him of his home, of his loved ones. He carefully pulled out the worn picture from his uniform jacket to look at it again.

"Hello? Anyone here?" The voice reverberated in the empty facility. Lieutenant Juno Vesping, another member of the 1st Black Talon, appeared from behind her Gear, a log book in her hand.

"Lieutenant. I was not aware that you were here. The desk sergeant didn't tell me anyone was inside."

"I've been here for a while. I was going over some data about the last engine output logs for yesterday's test and. . . actually, what are *you* doing here, anyway?"

"Couldn't sleep. Might as well put the time to good use."

Vesping discreetly eyed the picture that was still dangling from the Paxton pilot's hand. She started to say something, then thought better of it. She fidgeted for a second with the log book.

"Well, I was almost done, anyway. I'm going to head for the mess hall and see if I can rustle up a cup of cawfee. You're welcome to join me if you want."

"No, thank you. Go ahead. I'll run some diagnostics here for a couple of hours."

"Keiji. . . Lieutenant. . . I know it's none of my business, but you should get some sleep. I've checked the duty logs: you've been here a lot lately." She looked him in the eye. "Maybe you should talk to Medical about this."

Kage put the picture back inside his jacket as casually as he could manage. "I'll be fine. You should worry more about our mission than about my sleeping conditions. Now, unless there is anything else you wish to discuss. . ."

"No." The hard line of her mouth belied her word, but she nonetheless moved toward the exit. "Good night, Lieutenant."

"Good night." Kage waited until she had secured the door and checked out with the guard sitting outside, then moved toward his machine. To others, the Dark Warrior might be intimidating. To his pilot, he was an old friend, his chance to make amends for past shortcomings. Kage climbed into the cockpit, but did not close the hatch.

He pulled out the picture and stared at it for a long time.

TERRANOVAN FORCES - 3.1

Nothing exists in a vacuum. The Black Talons are the vanguard of a deeply divided society that has known little but conflict for the past few centuries. They are operating as part of a complex military and political entity called Terra Nova, and although they may seem at time to be quite detached from the daily affairs of the planet, it is simply not the case.

Though the Talon teams have been formed specifically to perform deep reconnaissance missions in enemy-held off-world territories, they have been deployed against CEF advanced bases and other hostile concerns on Terra Nova itself. In the course of such missions, they have faced outsiders, rebels and Terranovan armed forces, and gained a large number of allies and enemies. The Talons are a force to be reckoned with, both in terms of prestige and actual power, and as such they are seen as a highly volatile pawn on the political chessboard of the planet. Many governments would have preferred to deal with the Earth menace by themselves rather than fund a group with shared allegiance which they do not quite control.

Since the Cabinet has given the go-ahead for the creation of a large number of additional Talon teams, some of the newer units have been forced to use older models of Gears, generally because the very expensive and rare "Dark" Gears were not available due to low production rates or budgets. Pages 60 to 63 shortly recap the background of each of these machines. A note indicates the more common modifications made to the basic chassis upon reception at the Black Talon Werks; usually, it consists of nothing more than installing some shielding and baffles to the equipment in order to make the Gear more discrete. "Deployment" indicates the relative frequency of the design within the Talon teams.

The Polar Confederations - 3.1.1

The shock of the destruction of one of Terra Nova's most powerful city-states has reverberated at all levels of Terranovan society. In the day following the attacks, panicked people were leaving their home in droves or stockpiling supplies, fearful that their city would be next. The various governments of the leagues had their hands full trying to keep the population calm and assess the actual extent of the damage to do more than damage control.

When the group that would become known as the Westphalia Cabinet announced itself, it took many by surprise. Some politicians had suspected the existence of such a group for a long time, but lacked the proofs needed to take direct action. The Cabinet's announcement was a stroke of genius, effectively providing the populace with the explanations they so dearly looked for and providing them with a clear plan for the future. The authorities openly went along, confirming that this was indeed the best for all concerned.

Behind the scenes, however, things were not as rosy. Some factions were openly calling for the heads of the traitors, notably among the leadership of the Northern Confederation. In the South, reactions were more muted. DeRouen and Molay, each on their own, came to the same conclusion: it would be far easier to let the Cabinet do all the work, and then reap the rewards later. Despite his deep personal distaste for the man, Molay couldn't help but admire the way Tanaka had managed to pull his operation together. The announcement was indeed remarkably timed: popular support is high, and those that have no need for it, such as Shirow and the surviving Humanist Alliance forces, have their own problems to deal with.

Paxton Arms - 3.1.2

Though the destruction of the city-state of Peace-River has dealt the company a crippling blow, it has failed to completely annihilate it. Paxton Arms executives had long foreseen the danger of putting all of one's eggs in the same basket and had made sure that a good portion of the corporation's assets, including most of its research and development laboratories, were located away from the main Peace River installations. At the time of the attack, an estimated 30 to 40% of the total assets of the corporation were found off-site, though the exact estimate is made difficult by the secrecy surrounding the inner workings of Paxton and the multiple facades and dummy companies they have set up to protect their holdings.

Under the iron hand of Acting CEO Milani DuBeau-Slovenski, the surviving Paxton Arms personnel have regrouped and consolidated their resources. With help provided by the polar confederations, under the watchful eye of the Westphalia Cabinet, small Paxton communities have popped up in the desert near the company installations. The PRDF troops that were not destroyed have been pulled back from their field postings and tasked with the protection of the fledgling towns.

Needless to say, the Paxton employees and their families are ardent supporters of the Black Talon program, and they have supplied the bulk of the manpower required to prepare for the first Caprice mission. The Black Talon Werks were built around a Paxton lab (see page 32 for more details), and many of the technicians and support personnel are survivors of the Peace River disaster. Their motivation to see the Talon program succeed is obviously high.

3.1.3 - NORTHERN MILITARY STATUS [TN 1940-1941]

The Northern Guard is the main military force of the Confederation of Northern City States (CNCS). Most of the Guard's units are contributed by the three member leagues of the CNCS, but the Guard also recruits and equips some units directly. The peacetime Guard is mainly focused on patrolling the dangerous Badlands, and contesting Southern influence in that region. During the recent Interpolar War (TN 1936-1939), all of the military forces of the North were integrated into the command structure of the Northern Guard. The Guard's commander-in-chief, Grand Marshal Victoria Edden-Smythe, assumed dictatorial powers over all of the CNCS.

During the Interpolar War the Guard spearheaded the Northern assaults on the South. Due to the duplicity of the Mekong Dominion, the Guard's attack was blunted and the war drifted into stalemate. By 1939, support for the war among both political leaders and the public was down, and peace talks were called. The subsequent destruction of Peace River, allegedly by NEC agents, focused the Guard's attention on a different enemy, Earth.

◆ Present Situation

The end of the Interpolar War has allowed the Northern Guard to rest and lick its wounds. All of its expeditionary forces were withdrawn from the AST, but certain forward bases were kept in the Badlands. Casualties and equipment losses were high in many units, and what was left of those units was pulled back to base. A few regiments were so devastated that the high command judged it was best to simply retire their names. On the other hand, the immediate needs of the war also forced the Guard to create new regiments with what few resources were available; some of these ad-hoc units distinguished themselves on the field of battle and later became permanent parts of the Guard.

The Northern Guard is less popular in the halls of power than it was before the conflict. Grand Marshal Edden-Smythe's failure to bring home a clear victory, as well as her very public separation from her popular wife, WFP Proconsul Lang Regina, has damaged her image in the eyes of politicians on the CNCS Inner Council and in the league governments. Since the state of war is over, civilian government has been reestablished, and along with it the squabblings that are the daily routine of government. The Grand Marshal has thus been forced to lobby elected officials for funds to rebuild her army, and she has been less successful than she hoped. Most of the blame falls on UMF Treasurer Solomon Davi, who has focused Northco's — the North's major Heavy Gear manufacturer — energies on resupplying the United Mercantile Federation Army first to ensure the safety of the league in case of a renewed war with Earth. The Northern Guard now finds itself competing for supplies with the other leagues' national armies.

The situation in the Northern Lights Confederation and Western Frontier Protectorate is, if anything, worse. In both leagues, the end of the war has brought about long delayed elections. The administration of NLC President Kathe Adjanni is facing a strong challenge from the Liberal Democratic party, which is critical of the President's handling of the conflict. Adjanni is trying to win votes by reemphasizing national pride and the rebuilding of the Norlight Armed Forces. NAF commander Marshal Pietr Paulk found unexpected support from the CNCS Chief Justice, Winston Stark, and has suddenly found himself in a strong position to demand more funding, even challenging the wishes of the Grand Marshal. In the Protectorate, the coming election of the three proconsuls, only the seat of Fort James Proconsul Ichijiro Hasegawa is considered vulnerable. As in the NLC, all the candidates for the seat have rallied around the league flag, forcing Hasegawa to step up his support for priorities at home.

While the Northern Guard as a whole is temporarily in a state of disfavor, the same is not true of the Northern Guard Space Service (NGSS). The clear and present danger of another invasion by the NEC and the widespread public support for the Westphalia Cabinet has created a situation in which most leaders agree that the space defenses must be strengthened. While during the Interpolar War the space service was neglected, now ambitious projects like the Fury Inter-system Assault Shuttle have received full funding, and recruits are flocking to the Guard's centers asking about the possibility of enrolling to serve off-world.

Young officers starting their careers with the Northern Guard are increasingly seeing the NGSS as a choice assignment, and as a result of all of this enthusiasm, the NGSS currently has access to more men and material than it can use. This is another area in which the Grand Marshal has lost influence: under reforms established before the Interpolar War, the NGSS should report directly to the Guard's high command, but in practice NGSS head General Cristobal is following the directions of the Westphalia Cabinet and the national leaders. The Grand Marshal has seen the writing on the wall, and for now has decided not to make an issue of this usurpation of her authority by, among others, her estranged wife.

Southern Military Status (TN 1940-1941) - 3.1.4

The Interpolar War gave the Southern MILICIA, the military force of the Alliance of Southern Territories, a chance to shine. Before the war, MILICIA forces had been bogged down in the quagmires of the civil war in the Eastern Sun Emirates and the restructuring of the Humanist Alliance, which had been devastated by a horrific plague that killed thousands. As soon as the North declared war, the MILICIA went from fighting dirty local wars to engaging the professional troops of the CNCS.

The conflict was long and hard, and many of the poorly trained and equipped MILICIA units were no match for their Northern opponents. But others, who used innovative tactics and bought into the motivational rhetoric of the political officers, were able to at least hold their own. Units cooperating with the SRA were often able to push the Northern Guard back and in a few cases actually took the war to the Northern leagues. The war showed the Southern Republic the need to keep strong defenses in the other leagues of the AST, and the MILICIA has thus received a small increase in funding.

Present Situation

Large numbers of enlisted recruits and conscripts have been found in the ESE and Mekong Dominion. The MILICIA has always used an abundance of cheap but effective vehicles, like the Jäger Gear and the Hun light tank, and the Southern Republic is making sure the Gear and cavalry regiments are resupplied with these weapons as soon as possible. While, as usual, the majority of the more expensive vehicles are going to the SRA, well-connected MILICIA units can arrange for a few of their own to staff elite cadres.

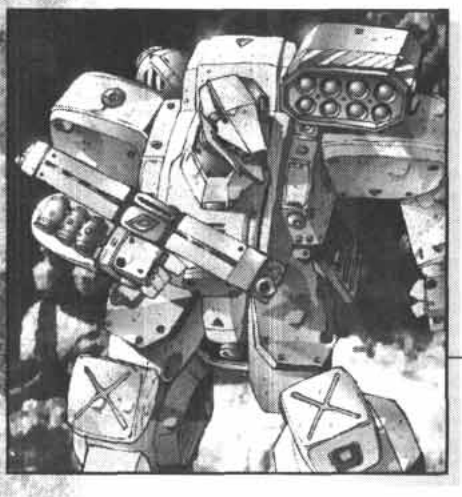
In the Southern Republic, the leaders of the Liberal Democratic Party, with Prime Minister Louis Philippe deRouen at the head, are taking credit for repulsing the Northern invasion. The domestic media has also glorified the role of the SRA, but many citizens are actually disappointed by their failure to conquer any Northern territory. The SRA is getting resupplied as quickly as the large military industry can produce more equipment, but many resources are now being diverted to the Space Defense Branch. The Prime Minister is publicly supporting the ESE Lord Chancellor's leadership in creating the Westphalia Cabinet to coordinate action against Earth, though many suspect he is merely doing so to keep attention away from his own activities. Unsurprisingly, other government officials and the members of the Curia have gotten the message, and have not spoken out against the Cabinet, although the same cannot be said of the opposition parties in the Estates-General.

The Humanist Alliance is slowly recovering from the war and the devastating plague of TN 1936. The league is now being directly ruled by Lord Chancellor Merydith DeMer and a staff of Republican bureaucrats, and the Southern Republic Intelligence Directorate (SRID) is working overtime to weed out persons who might support a restoration of the old regime. The chaos of the sickness of loved ones and the highly publicized medical aid from the rest of the AST has made the average person more willing to accept the new government, though a few protectors and members of the old Humanist intelligencia have gone underground and are waging a rather poor campaign (so far) to win back freedom for the Alliance. The Humanist Alliance Protection Force was of course disbanded: with many of its members possessing only specialized military skills, its veterans often find themselves unemployed and some of them have resorted to crime in order to feed themselves. Because of the return to the prewar borders built into the peace treaties, the city-state of Raleigh will soon be returned to the Alliance. While the Republic has made a show of forgiveness, most of those who fought against the "pacification" forces wisely fled to places like Port Arthur or Basal before the handover.

The Mekong Dominion valiantly defended its territory from the North during the war, though the Peacekeepers took a licking in the conflict against vengeful UMF forces. As a result, they have won more renown and have received permission to increase the size and quality of their military units. Perhaps due to the incompetent oversight of Lord Chancellor Etienne Durocher, many MILICIA units seem to take suggestions from the Mekong government in addition to orders from the AST hierarchy. On the other hand, the population is not ungrateful to the SRA for its help during the war and secession from the AST is not popular.

The Eastern Sun Emirates is recovering from the long civil war between the forces of the late Patriarch and those loyal to the new Patriarch, Nigel Shirow. With practically the entire aristocracy poisoned by the last ruler, Shirow has begun a purge of the military and sollicitor class to replace the current hierarchy with people loyal to him, though some of the purge victims with marketable skills have found employment with the AST and MILICIA. Given Lord Chancellor Tanaka's preoccupation with the Westphalia Cabinet, the SRID and Lord Protector Jacques Molay have used the opportunity to regain control of the local AST institutions. Molay is preparing for the day when the conflict with Shirow might have to be refought.

Cheetah



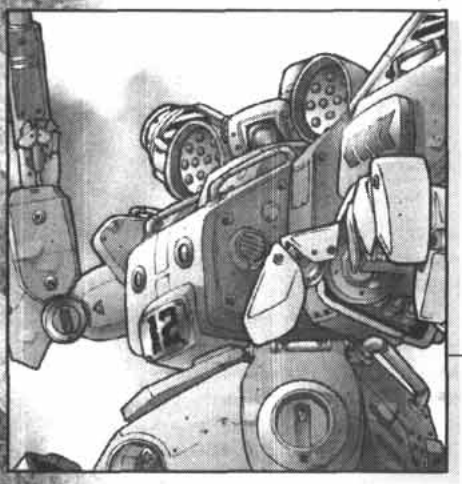
The Cheetah is the standard scout Gear of the Northern armies. Used in a number of diverse roles, it is most often found as the scout unit attached to a patrol of heavier Gears. In this capacity, it can use its superior speed and maneuverability to avoid the first salvo of attacks and continue to dodge the enemy's fire while relaying coordinates for the heavier weapons its squad-mates carry. It is also common for groups of Cheetahs to be sent on dedicated reconnaissance missions where the vehicle's small size helps prevent it from being seen.

In an alternate capacity that is seldom used, Cheetahs are sometimes sent as attack units against lightly guarded targets while the group's heavier machines are sent to eliminate nearby enemy forces, or as light mobile flankers. In this role, the Cheetah's standard pack gun is often replaced with a heavier weapon such as a light autocannon or a rapid-fire bazooka to increase its ability to cause significant damage.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**Add Stealth 2**
Deployment:	**Common**

Grizzly



The Grizzly is the standard fire-support walker unit found in Northern units. It carries assault weapons such as the heavy autocannon and medium rocket pod as well as a light artillery piece, such as the heavy guided mortar. Grizzlies are rarely deployed without an escort of some sort due to the low maneuverability of the machine which makes it an easy kill for fast machines that can run around behind it. A Grizzly that is caught alone by an enemy unit is still a dangerous opponent however, simply due to the amount of firepower it can bring to bear at once.

Standard doctrine places the Grizzly at the rear of its unit where it can use its mortar to add firepower while staying out of range of the enemy's return fire. To preserve these expensive machines, unit commanders are often assigned one of these in an attempt to both ensure the commander does his job effectively by staying out of combat, and by ensuring that, if the unit is forced to retreat, the Gear is piloted by one of the most skilled pilots in the force.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**Add Stealth 1, remove LSP**
Deployment:	**Common**

Hunter

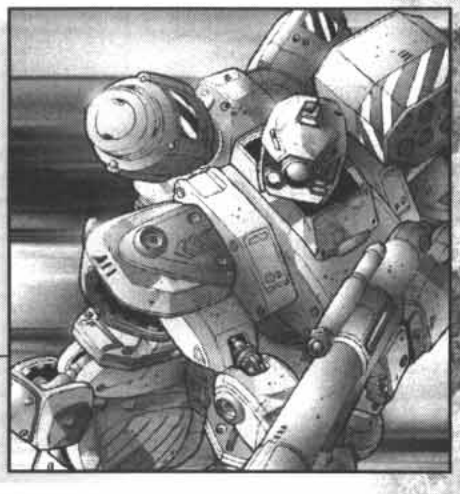
The Hunter is the workhorse of the CNCS's armies. Due to its modular design that allows for quick repairs, its low production cost and its varied weapons loadout, the Hunter is assigned to nearly all new pilots while they get the feel of using a walker in the field. These machines are fitted with a wide variety of weaponry to suit the task assigned at the time. Many pilots who are given the chance to pilot another Gear refuse to leave the familiarity which they have gained with the controls and thus, veteran pilots can also be found piloting these versatile machines.

In standard squads, the Hunter is often placed in the center of squadron formations where it can quickly react to the changing face of the battlefield around it, or at the front to take the first hit. The Hunter is used as the standard Talon training Gear and can be found in most operational units, though it is only rarely deployed in the field.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**Replace LAC by MAC w/40 shots**
Deployment:	**Rare**

Jaguar



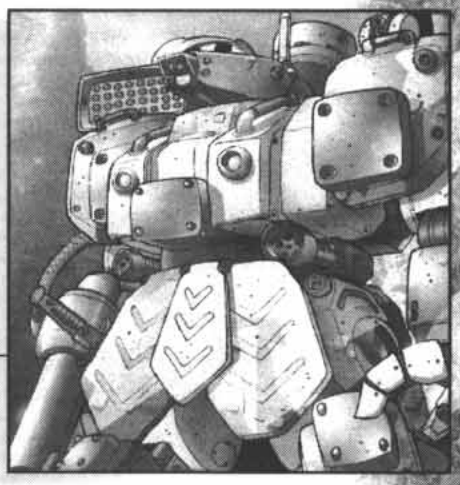
As the elite trooper Gear of the Northern forces, the Jaguar is assigned to pilots and missions that require a superior Gear to the Hunter. The pilots that are assigned to Jaguars usually have several cycles of experience under their belts and a wide variety of missions completed. The reason for the regular assignment of experienced pilots to these machines is purely fiscal; the Northern Guard cannot afford to lose many of these machines that cost twice as much as a Hunter while performing a similar operational role.

Jaguars are used more often in assault, defense and other actions of unusual importance to their commanders where the Hunter does not fit the bill. Even in these situations, however, it is common to find some Hunters in positions where Jaguars would probably do a better job. The Jaguar's standard main weapon is a medium autocannon, but it can easily be replaced with another rifle-mounted weapon or a bazooka. Jaguars are the most common second line Talon vehicles.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**Add Stealth 2**
Deployment:	**Common**

Kodiak



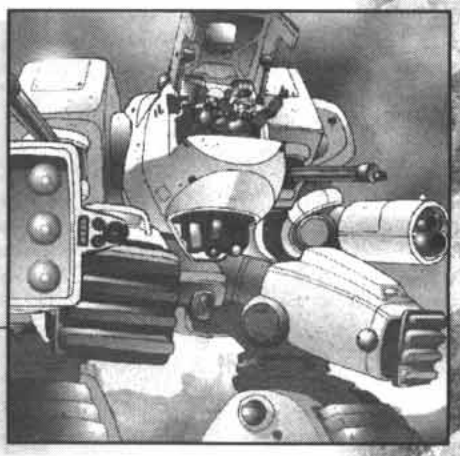
The Kodiak is a truly rare machine that is found only in units that are often in the public eye where they serve to boost the morale of the citizens or in units that are in need of a truly devastating assault walker that maintains the nimble movement of a Gear as opposed to the lumbering gait of a strider. The machine gained a reputation as an extremely efficient killer during the War of the Alliance, when it often served as a rallying point for Northern troops.

When used in combat situations, the incredible firepower that one of these monsters carries allows it to decimate any combat unit that mistakes it for a common Grizzly. The anti-Gear missile rack located behind the head of the machine and the particle accelerator it holds in its massive paws can quickly make mince meat of its enemies at any range short of artillery's. A backup array of rockets, grenades and bullets conserves its main weapons' ammunition. Kodiaks are also often fielded with heavy bazookas, giving them awesome firepower.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**None**
Deployment:	**Uncommon**

Mammoth



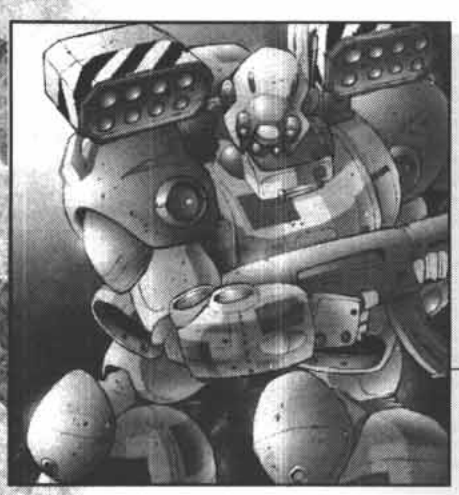
The distinctive look of the Mammoth ensures that the few people who survive a fight with one help to spread the reputation that the machine has earned. Capable of obliterating any other machine short of a landship, the Mammoth carries enough firepower to demolish the average city block. If not for the poor dodging ability of the slow machine, this strider would have little to fear from any other ground vehicle until it ran short of missile ammunition.

In the field, the Mammoth is deployed well behind the main force where it can fire its missiles using the target designators of the unit it is supporting. The medium autocannon and snub cannon it carries can dish out yet more punishment and force its opponents to dive for cover until help arrives. Despite these impressive capabilities, the high mass and slow speed of the vehicle makes it poorly suited to the Black Talon's assignments, though it sometimes come in useful for special missions.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**None**
Deployment:	**Special Missions Only**

Black Mamba



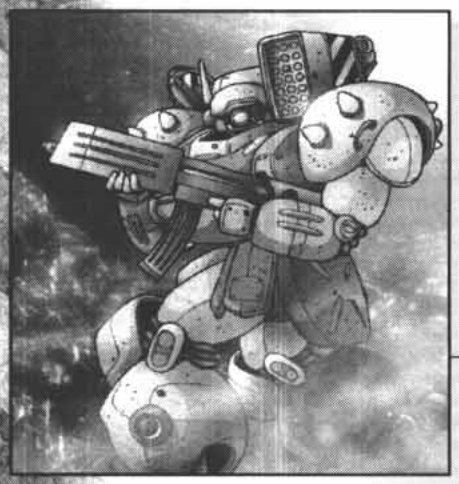
The Black Mamba has been widely distributed among units that have influencial commanders who can pull some strings for their troops. Black Mambas are also seen among some units that have high-profile assignments, such as the home guard of some cities and some of the border patrol battalions that see significant action against rovers. Commanders of less prestigious units and units stationed at backwater posts have just begun to recieve these machines for their soldiers.

Black Mambas are typically assigned to long-time veterans of the army or to pilots who know the right strings to pull. These machines are sometimes deployed as the punch of a general purpose cadre where they are placed alongside Jägers. In this capacity, they often perform such duties as routine patrols or light attacks. More often, the Black Mamba is seen as part of an assault cadre to provide escort for heavier machines such as Spitting Cobras. Along with his opposite number, the Northern Jaguar, the Black Mamba serves in great number in the Black Talon.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**Add Stealth 2**
Deployment:	**Common**

Iguana



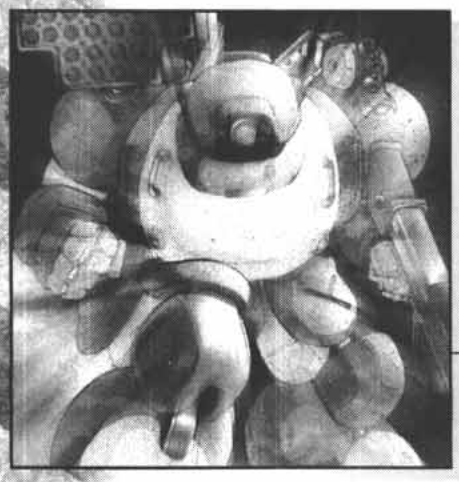
Iguanas are the most common scouting Gears in the Southern forces; the machine suits its role well combining small size and high mobility. The Iguana also serves well in the capacity of forward observer where the target designator it carries can mark targets for friendly artillery to decimate. Iguanas, while relatively common, are used sparingly by most commanders because their light armor leaves the pilot vulnerable to heavy firepower.

When placed in a unit that is not dedicated to a scouting mission, the Iguana is usually found at the front of a cadre equipped with indirect fire weapons. The Iguana uses its quickness to get close enough to acurately call coordinates to its mates who launch flights of rockets while suffering from little danger themselves. Because of this role, Iguana pilots tend to be very skilled at avoiding incoming attacks. Iguanas are fairly rare among the ranks of the Black Talon, possibly because commanders prefer their men to train on the Cheetah, whose Dark version they will use later.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**Add Stealth 2**
Deployment:	**Uncommon**

Jäger



The Jäger is the old standby of the Southern military and has been used since the original designs to the Hunter machine could be obtained and examined. While it is not a particularly tough machine by the standards of today's technology, it is a well-rounded vehicle that can hold its own in a fight against other general purpose Gears.

The Jäger is often used as a training machine for recruits and few pilots regret the time they spent learning in the cockpit. Jägers are assigned the jobs that none of the other machines in a cadre are suited for — which is not to say that the Jäger is neccessarily more suited to it than those others. Inexpensive to produce and present in large numbers throughout the Southern Hemishpere, Jägers are considered relatively expendable by many Southern commanders and most pilots are only too happy to be reassigned. Like the Hunter, the Jäger serves as the basic Talon training vehicle, often in the "agressor" role.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**Replace LAC by MAC w/40 shots**
Deployment:	**Rare**

King Cobra

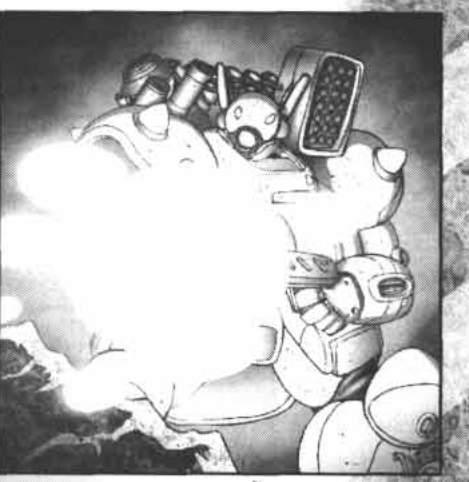
The King Cobra has been called the most powerful Gear ever produced and its extremely heavy array of weapons ensures that few dispute the fact too strongly. Equipped with enough offensive systems to load down two lesser machines, the King Cobra was designed with the sole purpose of hunting down Earther hover tanks. Frighteningly efficient at its task, there are surprisingly few pilots willing to take the controls of one of these machines; enemy forces have made it common practice to call heavy artillery and air support strikes down upon any King Cobra that dares to shows up on a battlefield.

On the rare occaision that one of these machines shows itself on the field, it is typically assigned the unenviable task of charging straight into enemy formations and annihilating whatever happens to cross its line of fire. It is also used as a fire support machine if a less expensive model is not readily available. King Cobras are sometimes used as alternative to the Dark Cobra in new Talon units.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**Remove LSP**
Deployment:	**Rare**

Spitting Cobra



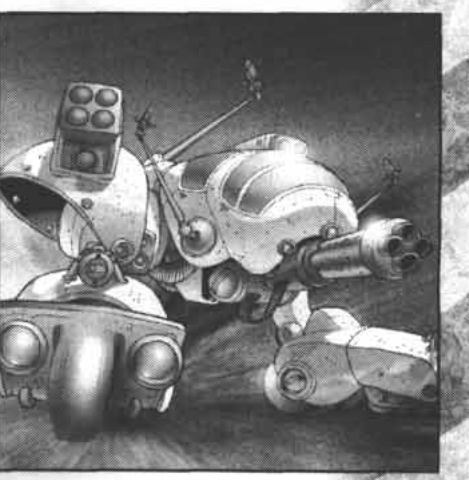
The Spitting Cobra is the Heavy Gear commonly assigned to the fire support position in an assault cadre and is also the most common unit paraded through areas in need of pacification. Spitting Cobras are the machine of preference for most Southern pilots due to the lower than average frequency of use in the field and the thicker armor that surrounds the pilot when actually on the field. Duelists and other soldiers who seek great personal honor will often shun this machine because it usually sees very little action.

In most cadre formations, the Spitting Cobra will be found at the back waiting for target coordinates for its guided mortar. There are a few cadre commanders that choose to lead by example in this machine, but such practice is generally frowned upon by supply officers and commanders who see this as a wasteful use of an expensive machine. Possibly for the same reasons, the machine is fairly rare among the Talons.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**Add Stealth 1, remove LSP**
Deployment:	**Uncommon**

Naga



The most common strider in Southern forces is the Naga. Used as a heavy assault unit and equipped with deadly anti-tank missiles, the Naga is an ungainly-looking machine. The limited supply of missiles it carries is the strider's biggest drawback and it is rarely posted to a position where it cannot recieve quick rearmament. This would normally make it a poor choice for use by the Black Talons, but the strider has revealed itself useful for some types of missions.

When deployed in the field, Nagas are usually incorporated as part of a cadre that is assigned hunter-killer or heavy assault duties. In these roles, it is most often deployed with Gears that carry target designators which scout ahead for enemies and then "paint" their target for the Naga's missiles to destroy. In desperate situations, the Naga will engage enemies with its medium autocannon, but such actions usually occur when an enemy has foolishly charged up close to the Naga and none of the Naga's escorts are near enough to engage it.

Black Talon Assignment

Talon Modifications:	**Remove LSP**
Deployment:	**Rare**

OACS-02M/SU Desert Viper II

The Desert Viper was built as a no-nonsense machine, using a general configuration similar to that of the Razorback, a Northern heavy assault Gear that had a powerful influence on Southern designers. Somewhat smaller, the Southern Gear also featured a characteristically rounded shape and a turret-like head module allowing for an excellent field of vision. The Desert Viper was among the first machines to enter service along-side the Territorial Arms Jäger.

The second-generation Viper was a heavily reworked machine. The sensor cluster was simpler and the secondary movement system was removed to make room for new leg braces and shock-absorbers designed to solve the weakness problem. At first, this seemed unwise, as the modification caused a slight overheating problem due to the reduced internal room in the legs. The machine was mostly used in broken terrain, however, and its reinforced legs proved to be a good trade-off.

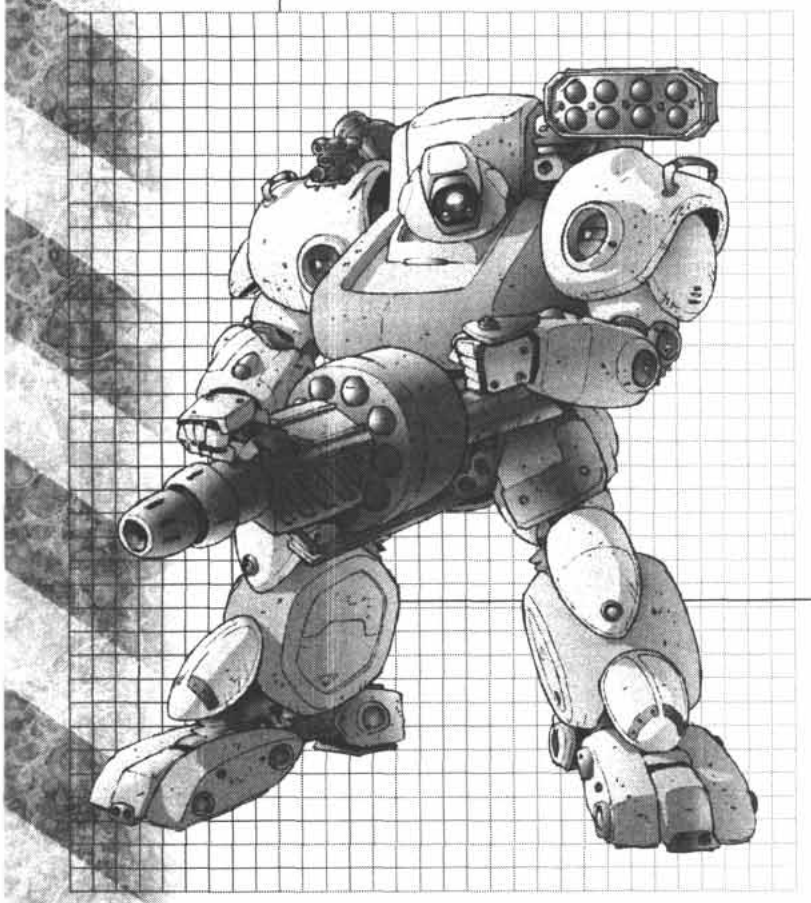
Although never as reliable as the Jäger, from the time of its release in TN 1803 through the TN 1840s, the Desert Viper Mark II remained one of the mainstays of the Southern forces. The Viper wields powerful weapons, most notably a TA HGL-70 grenade launcher and a FSRP-36 rocket pod, both capable of facing heavily armored targets.

◆ Service Record

The combination of offensive power, good maneuverability and excellent armor made the Gear an immediate candidate for the interim Talon Gear program. The absence of a wheeled movement system places the Viper at a serious disadvantage on even terrain, but its shock absorbers and large feet give it great stability and endurance on difficult ground; the Viper is thus the Gear of choice for the Talon teams that will be sent to mountain-heavy worlds like Jotenheim. The Talon Werks is hard at work removing the machine's flaws.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	530	Offensive:	1113	Defensive:	261	Miscellaneous:	217	Lemon Dice:	3



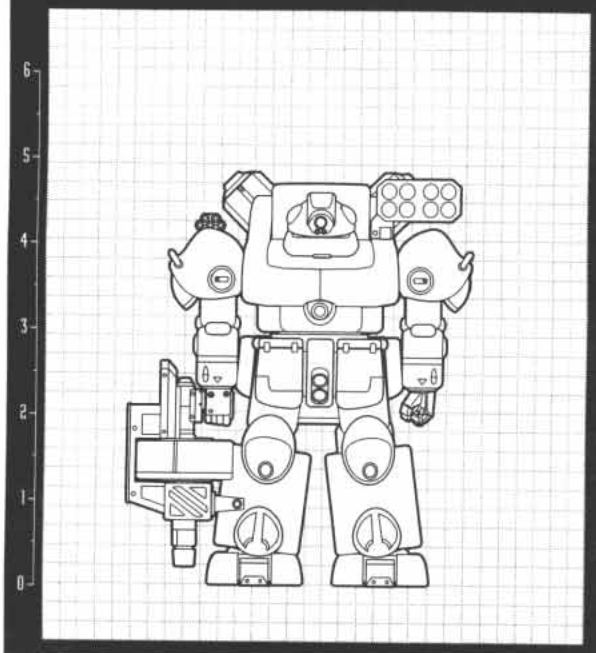
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Desert Viper II
Production code:	OACS-02M/SU
Production type:	Mass Production
Cost:	353,333 dinars
Manufacturer:	Mandeers Heavy Industries
Use:	*broken terrain Gear*
Height:	4.7 meters
Width:	3.5 meters
Average armor thickness:	51 mm
Armor material:	molecular steel alloys
Standard operational weight:	7120 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (43 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	n/a
Deployment Range:	475 km
Sensor Range:	60 hexes/3 km
Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Powerplant:	WC-760J V-engine
Horsepower:	590 Hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
TA HGL-70 Launcher	20 grenades
FSRP-36 Rocket Pod	18 rockets
HLB-16 AP Launcher	6 grenades
HG-2 Hand Grenade	1 grenade

DESERT VIPER



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 10 20 30 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	4
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	7
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	-	-
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	-	-
• MANEUVER:		0
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		500

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	3
• COMMUNICATION:	0	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	16
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	32
• OVERKILL:	48

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 530 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 353,333 dinars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
HGL-70 Grenade Launcher	HGL	Forward	2	4	8	16	-1	x20	1	+1	Indirect Fire
FSRP-36 Rocket Pod	MRP/18	Forward	2	4	8	16	-1	x18	1	+3	Indirect Fire
HLB-16 AP Launcher	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I, IF, AE=0
HG2 Hand Grenade	HG	Forward	0	0	0	0	-1	x15	-	0	Anti-Infantry

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
20	
18	
6	
3	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Improved Off-road	-	Terrain MP Costs at -1	
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can Punch	
Reinforced Armor	2	Front	
Rugged Movement System	-	Absorbs first Movement hit	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Defective Active Sensors	-	Active Sensors "blink' on a roll of 2
Large Sensor Profile	1	Subtract from Concealement
Overheating	-	Suffer Light Damage if too active

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None - -		

HEAVY GEAR

OACS-02/AQ-STL WATER VIPER SILENT RUNNING

In TN 1932, New Bajan engineers from Chindo-Sladge Industries, working in cooperation with Mandeers, designed the South's first underwater stealth Gear, dubbed the Water Viper Silent Running. Mandeers sold the Viper SR to a number of groups, including the Republican Army's Légion Noire and some units of the Humanist Alliance Protection Force.

The machine is most amazing for its stealth coating, consisting of layers of thermal and sound insulating polymers covered in a sheath of radar-absorbent material (RAM); this skin provides excellent "silent running" capabilities underwater (defeating sonar and other methods of detection) and on dry land. The Water Viper Silent Running is further equipped with an ECM pod and its turbines are retrofitted to reduce cavitation.

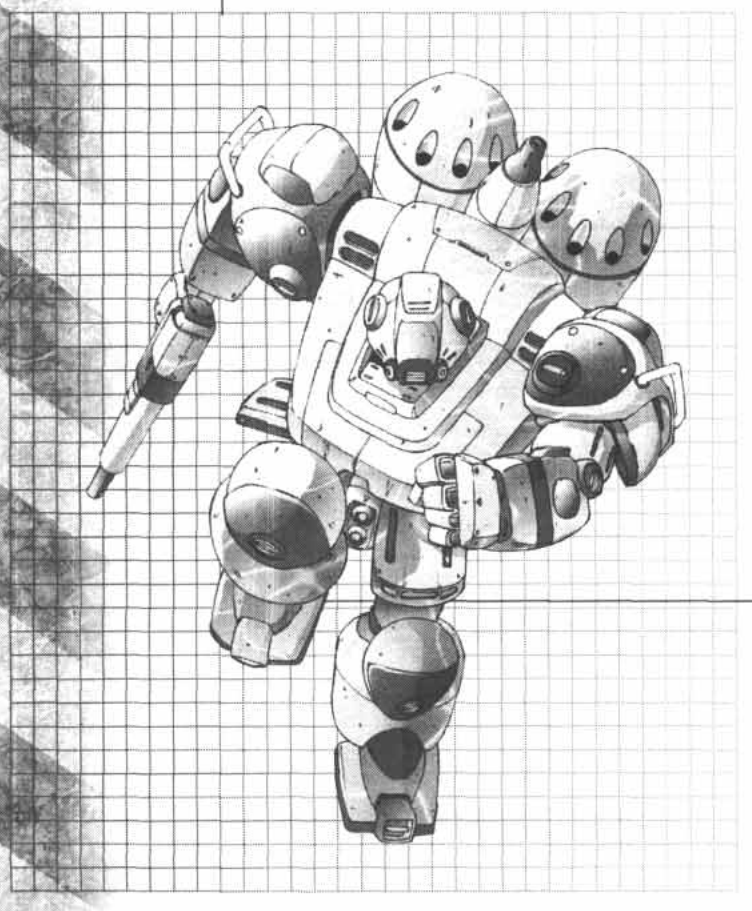
The Viper SR also packs a significant punch, most obviously a pair of twin SRWI Requin-72 torpedo racks mounted over its insulated engine casing, and a spike gun attached to the left arm for close range combat. The hand-held fragmentation cannon is useful as an all-around weapon, notably against lightly armored targets such as divers and assault boats.

◆ Service Record

Like all stealth vehicles, the Viper SR's operational record is classified, but several are known to serve with both the Légion and the Republican Army's Marine Corps. New Baja is assumed to have a significant number of Viper SRs as well, but the protectorate keeps any details under very tight wraps. Some AST officials have expressed alarm at this, but New Baja has never used them offensively — at least, not officially. The Water Viper SR has received good reviews from the Southern troops who have used it, and the machine is a current favorite for inclusion in the Black Talon's arsenal for missions to water-rich world like Eden or Atlantis.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	871	Offensive:	1470	Defensive:	303	Miscellaneous:	841	Lemon Dice:	2



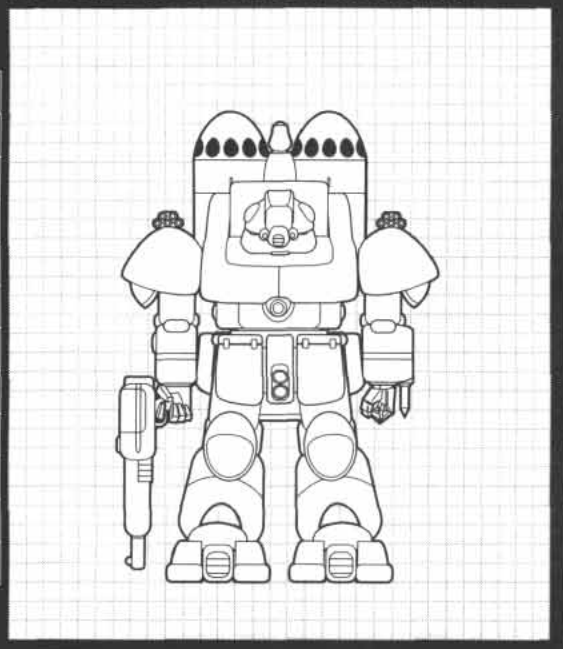
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Water Viper Silent Running
Production code:	OACS-02M/AQ-STL
Production type:	Limited Production
Cost:	2,903,333 dinars
Manufacturer:	Mandeers Heavy Industries/Chindo-Sladge Industries
Use:	water environment stealth Gear
Height:	4.7 meters
Width:	3.4 meters
Average armor thickness:	81 mm
Armor material:	classified
Standard operational weight:	7320 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (43 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Submarine (39 kph)
Deployment Range:	475 km
Sensor Range:	60 hexes/3 km (100 hexes/5 km underwater)
Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Powerplant:	batteries w/ gas turbine
Horsepower:	570 Hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Garan M2U Cannon	20 rounds
SRWI Requin-72 Torpedo Launcher x 2	32 torps each
HLB-16U AP Launcher	6 grenades
Powered Spike Gun	5 charges
VU-12 Vibromachete	-

WATER VIPER SILENT RUNNING



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	4
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	7
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	S	4
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	S	7
• MANEUVER:		0
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		475

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	3
• COMMUNICATION:	0	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	16
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	32
• OVERKILL:	48

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 871 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 2,903,333 dinars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Frag Cannon	FGC	Forward	1	2	4	8	+1	x7	1	0	AI, Frag
Torpedo Pods	LRP/32	Forward	1	2	4	8	-1	x12	2	+4	Indirect Fire, UW
Grenade Launcher	APGL	Fixed Rr.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I, IF, AE=0
Powered Spike	SKG	Forward	0	0	0	0	-1	x12	1	0	-
Vibromachete	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
20	
32ea	
6	
5	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Aquatic Sensors	5	Dual-purpose, 5 km underwater range	
ECM	2	Offensive Electronics	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Underwater	
Life Support	-	Limited	
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can Punch	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first Crew hit	
Smoke Launchers	-	Front, 10 shots	
Stealth	3	Add to Concealment	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Annoyance	-	Stealth reduced to Rating 1 out of water
Decreased Maneuver	2	Submarine movement
Difficult to Modify	-	-2 to repair and modify rolls

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

HAMMER ASSAULT SHUTTLE

The Hammer assault shuttle is a transatmospheric assault vehicle capable of transporting two complete squadrons of Gears (or two heavy tanks) halfway across the planet. It is fairly representative of the type of shuttle vehicles deployed by the Terranovan armies, though it is more heavily armed than most.

The Hammer was designed by Virgo Aerospace, a manufacturer of spacecraft instruments located in the Norlight Confederacy, with offices in all the major city-states. Though they are not as well-known as corporations like Northco and Applefish, Virgo has been the main supplier for the Northern space fleet since the mid-17th century. The Hammer answered a call for submissions by the NAF, who were asking for a fast transport vessel capable of taking troops halfway across the planet or to low orbit.

The vehicle is made up of two main sections, which are connected together by a long "neck." The forward section contains the crew quarters and the sensor and electronic equipment. Small canard winglets are attached to either side to provide increased control during atmospheric flight. The rear section holds the flight systems, armament and the main vehicle bay. Two fusion tubes, backed up by plasma thrusters, supply thrust; the vehicle has sufficient reaction mass tankage to reach orbit if needed.

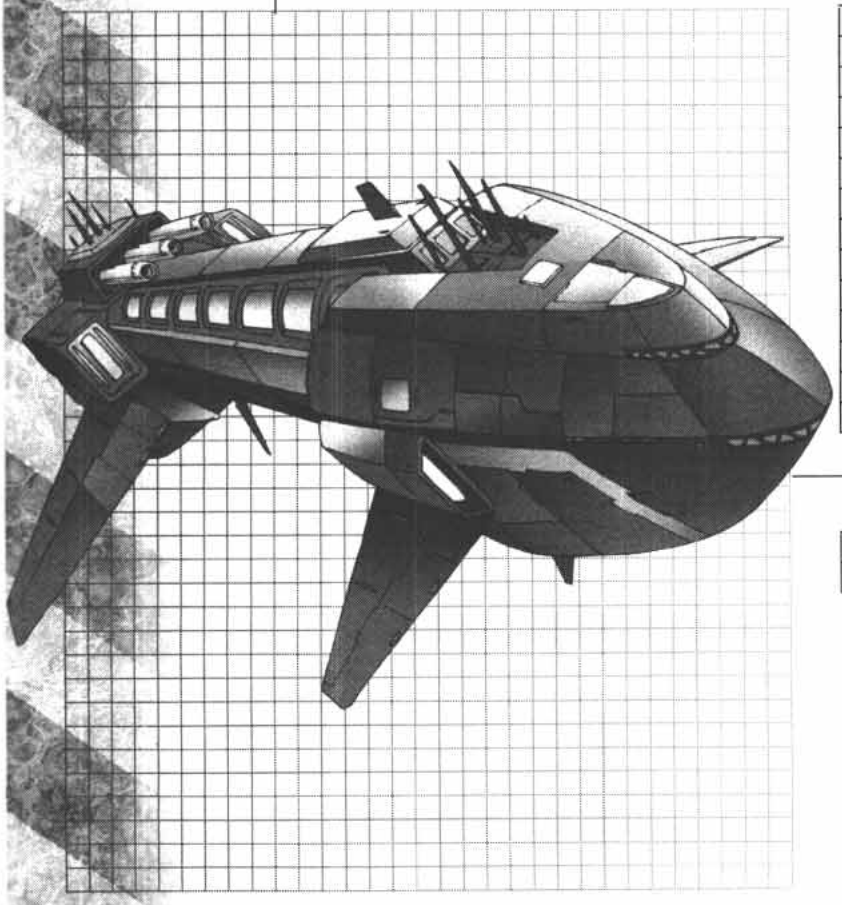
Service Record

The very first versions of the Hammer spacecraft, dating back more than three centuries, were much more rugged and had lower performances. They were instantly recognizable by their flat snub nose, which gave them poor aerodynamics but very tough protection against weapon fire when on an assault run. The newer version is more streamlined, taking advantage of the new armor materials developed for Gears and combat vehicles. Both are still in service, though the earlier model is slowly being phased out.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	5718	Offensive:	2967	Defensive:	2095	Miscellaneous:	12092	Lemon Dice:	2

Vehicle Specifications

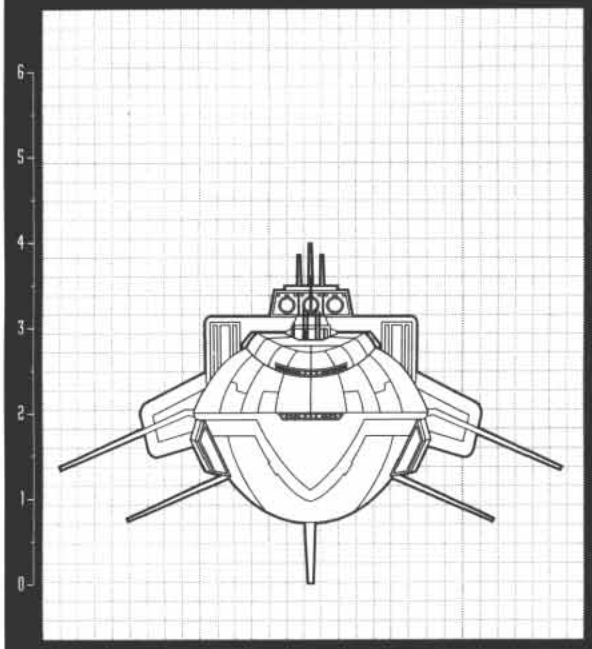


Name:	Hammer
Origin:	Norlight Confederacy
Production code:	n/a
Production Type:	Mass production
Manufacturer:	Virgo Aerospace
Type:	Assault Shuttle
Crew:	Pilot, Weapon Officer, Chief Engineer
Length:	90 m
Width:	50 m
Height:	18 m
Empty Weight:	1000 tons
Loaded Weight:	2000 tons
Main Drive:	2 x Advanced Dynamics FT-6900 Fusion Tubes
Total Thrust:	2 x 2,000,000 kg

Weapons Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
3 x Westmore R6 Railgun	200 rounds ea.

HAMMER



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 50 | 100 | 150 | 200

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	2
• BONUS ACTIONS:	1

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	S	10
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	S	20
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	F	10
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	F	20
• MANEUVER:		-2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		800

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	2
• COMMUNICATION:	0	20
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	60
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	120
• OVERKILL:	180

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 5718 • SIZE: 22 • COST: 2,859,000 marks

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Railgun Turret	LRG	Forward	5	10	20	40	0	x14	3	+2	-

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
200ea	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Autopilot	-	Acts as Level 1 pilot	yes
Backup Life Support	-	Absorbs first LS hit	
Cargo Bay	-	5,000 m^3	
Ejection System	-	Lifepods for all	yes
HEP	-	Desert, Extreme Cold, Vacuum, Radiation(2)	
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Reentry System	-	Permanent	yes
Stratospheric Flight	-	-	
Vehicle Bay	15	Can hold 100 tons of vehicles	
Weapon Links	-	Railguns	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Large Sensor Profile	3	Easier to detect
Reduced Maneuver	1	Space Mode

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

3.2 - THE PAXTON FORCES

Before the destruction of their home city-state, Paxton Arms was known as the greatest weapon producer on the planet. Though their large underground factories manufactured primarily individual weapons and ammunitions, as well as vehicular-grade systems, the company did maintain a small Gear production chain. Though not as glamorous as other sectors of the company, the Gear works created a number of designs over the year that went on to form the basis of more than one Badlands militia. The Warrior series, in particular, is widely distributed, and its numerous system parallels with the more common Hunter and Jäger Gears have only contributed to its longevity.

The last Paxton CEO, Gerald Simosa, was a shrewd man, and he had foreseen the dangers that his city-state faced in case of war. Though most people figured all of the Paxton factories were located in the rocky mesa that housed the city, many of them were actually distributed in facilities hidden in the desert. These factories, along with their staff, survived the attack. The former Executive Officer, Milani DuBeau-Slovenski, was quick to contact them and put in place an alternate network to ensure the continuity of the corporation. As a result, she was able to offer a significant degree of help to the fledgling Black Talon, who needed vehicles, facilities and personnel. Much of the vehicular expertise of the Talon program, in fact, came from a secret research group within Paxton Arms Research & Development (PARD): the Elite team.

3.2.1 - The Elite Program

A few cycles before he perished in the explosion that tore the city-state apart, Simosa authorized the creation of an ultra-secret weapon development program known only to a handful of people within the company. With the steadily growing tensions between the polar nations of the CNCS and AST, a future conflict was inevitable. The effects of this coming conflict would undoubtedly have dire consequences for all who happened to be lying in the path of the two massive armies, mainly those city-states located within the region of Terra Nova that would undoubtedly become the battlefield for this inevitable war - the Badlands. On 12 Autumn TN 1935, not long after the assassination of Reverend Thor Hutchison, Simosa called four of his best designers to his office. In a six-hour meeting, the basic elements of the program were set down; its purpose was to produce a series of Gears which could match both their Northern and Southern counterparts, but even more importantly, to do so even when outnumbered. Peace River never had a large standing army, and the scattered PRDF would likely face long odds should it be called to defend the city. It was also hoped that the products of the Elite program, once announced to the world at large, would serve as a deterrent to both marauding polar forces and bandits hoping to take advantage of the chaos of war.

The Elite program, as it came to be known, was exiled to a number of hidden field research bases located in the desert wastelands. A week after the fateful Autumn 12 meeting, convoys started moving the required equipment to outlying facilities. Very few knew of its existence and purpose beyond the Paxton top officers and the researchers heading the division; not even PARD was made aware of it.

By TN 1938, the first of the Elite project, a souped-up version of the Warrior-series Gear, was undergoing tests in the desert under the cover of night and in bad weather conditions. Later testimonies of teammembers indicate that at least one Southern patrol was eliminated to a man after stumbling on one of the vehicles during a sortie, and the bodies of other witnesses may well be buried under the Karaq Wastes.

Encouraged by the success of these initial prototypes, Simosa authorized additional funding, resources and an extended research and development team. Plans were made for three additional Gear designs that would be called to fulfill a wide range of mission requirements. To aid in the additional load that the Elite Program would now bear, new engineers and other critical personnel were recruited, many of them from outside the city-state. The complete secrecy of the Elite program, once a mere security precaution, became a critical element: much of the recruited personnel came from the top ranks of both the Northern and Southern Gear design communities, neither of which appreciated the "defection" of some of their brightest minds. Northco Security Chief Rozam in particular has been investing serious time and money into finding out more about the Paxton program.

Paradoxically, it was this secrecy and exile that saved the Elite researchers and facilities from destruction and allowed Paxton to cling to life past TN 1939. Simosa may have had advance warning of the attack, or at least suspected that something would happen sooner or later: by the mid-30s, the much-vauted Peace River neutrality was effectively a thing of the past.

Karaq Wastes PARD Facilities - 3.2.2

Most of the Elite program has been housed in one of PARD's lesser known facilities in the depth of the Karaq Wastes. Hidden within a particularly inhospitable section of the Wastes, the mostly underground base is subject to a local micro-climate that imposes frequent and vicious dust storms as air masses collide and create turbulences. This, of course, provides just the type of cover required to discreetly conduct tests and bring in the needed supplies.

Access to the facilities is by elevators leading to sub-surface, Gear-sized access ramps, which are covered by thick hydraulic-actuated hatches. These are located just beneath the surface; before they open, powerful air jets clear them of sand. The hatch is quickly covered up again by the near constant wind.

The facilities' inner walls are built from high-strength composites designed to reduce the risk of being detected by sub-surface imaging techniques. Pumps move coolant fluid to heatsinks located hundreds of meters away to regulate the inner temperature; power is supplied by a geo-thermal setup.

A full complement of technical personnel and security forces, numbering almost a hundred people total, is housed on site in spartan but adequate quarters. The extensive subterranean facilities have limited Gear testing and manufacturing capabilities thanks to a number of automated machine tools; though very versatile, the equipment has only ever been intended for making prototypes and has no mass-production capabilities. Now that the Elite has been placed under the egides of the Black Talon Werks, Talon Command has been trying for the past cycle to secure additional equipment in order to bolster the base's production.

Current Forces - 3.2.3

Most of Paxton's energy is currently centered on restructuring and rebuilding. The shock and loss about the destruction of Peace River have passed over the last two cycles, often to be replaced by rage and anger. The Riverans have used these feelings to consolidate their community, and have constantly refused offers of refuge from foreign groups. Milani DuBeau-Slovenski, as highest surviving corporate officer, has taken over as Acting CEO of the corporation. There has been no opportunity to call together a board meeting to confirm her in the duty, but most could not imagine anyone else in the position.

At least three regiments of PRDF forces are remain available, most of them called back from their field posting across the Protectorate (which now effectively exist only on paper). These have been deployed discreetly to protect the remaining Paxton Arms interest, including a number of factories capable of churning out a limited number of Gears and VTOLs (see **Tactical Air Support** for more details). The sales of these vehicles to panicked towns have brought some much needed wealth (a number of people now refuse to buy from Paxton, however, fearing repercussions from the CEF).

DuBeau-Slovenski is a strong backer of the Black Talon program. Her people have supplied much of the early expertise needed for the project, which is precisely why Tanaka recruited her into the Cabinet. In exchange for her collaboration and the resources of the Elite program, Tanaka has agreed to supply funds and resources to help the Peace River survivors reorganize themselves. He has also agreed to assign some Talon teams to missions deemed important for the protection of Paxton (within some limits). Aschenbach voluntarily went along with the idea, hoping to use these missions as a way to temper the new teams before they get sent to off-world assignments.

Paxton Vehicles - 3.2.4

The following pages showcase the various Gear types that have been developed by Paxton Arms since the creation of the company's Gear production division. Some of them have been in production for a long time, such as the Warrior series. Other designs, including the Elite prototypes (Perseus, Warrior Elite, Myrmidon and Agamemnon) are still in the prototype stage, and are likely to remain as such for a long time unless additional production resources can be found.

PA-01 Warrior

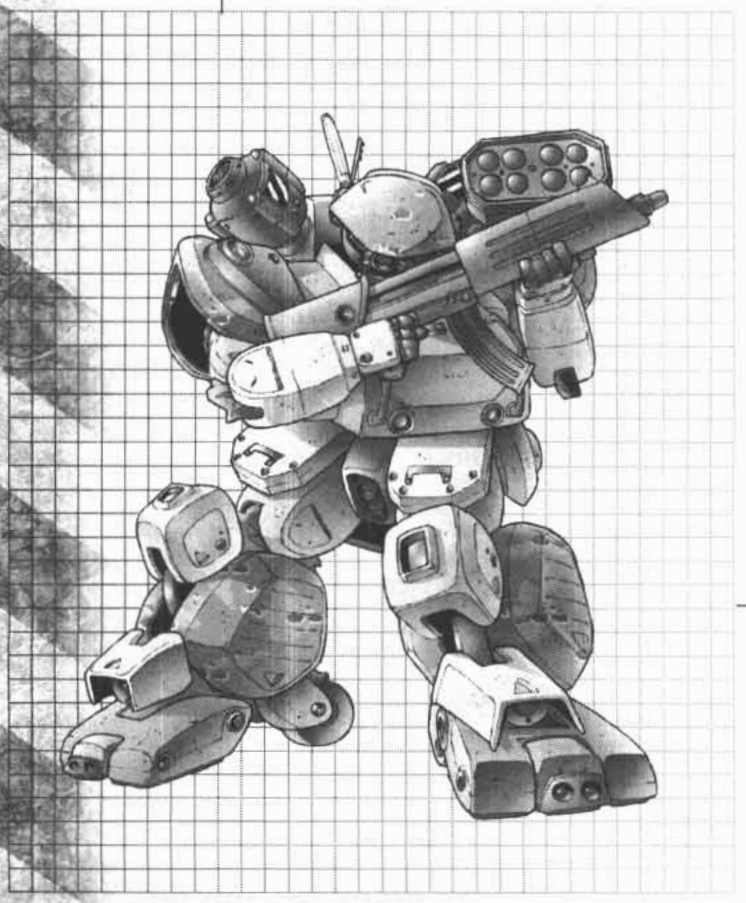
Paxton Arms has always been the major weapons supplier in the Badlands. The corporation's only setback was its tardiness in entering the Gear market. Paxton's research and development division had a very hard time duplicating the required neural net and, by the time the new Warrior rolled off the Peace River #2 production line in TN 1802, Northco and Territorial Arms had already cornered the military Gear market. There have long been rumors that polar agents used dirty tricks to keep Paxton out of Gear production. The Warrior is based on the original Hunter design since Paxton did not want to spend research money "reinventing the wheel." The Warrior was conceived with both the terrain and the market of the Badlands in mind, so it incorporates special features that make it more efficient in the harsh conditions that prevail in this region. All joints are covered with thick cloth to protect them against the dust that would otherwise chew up the delicate bearings in no time. The engine is equipped with dust filters and a special cooling system, which also serves as the cockpit's air conditioning. A small 1-liter cooler placed behind the pilot's seat contains fresh water. Another notable feature is the basic ECM package installed in the head, used primarily to defeat rovers' unsophisticated sensor arrays.

Service Record

Since its introduction to the public, the Warrior has served mainly in Paxton's own forces and in various Badlands militias. In this role it developed a reputation as a reliable alternative to the Hunter or Jäger general purpose trooper Gears. The Mark I was replaced in many places by the Mark II and Mark III Warriors introduced in the early 1900s. The changes between these models were relatively minor except for the addition of a ECM pod. Most Mark I's have been retrofitted with the ECM pod as well, and most pilots still refer to their Mark IIs or IIIs just as "Warriors." The only polar market that has been successfully penetrated by the Warrior is the Eastern Sun Emirates. Several emirs have entered deals with Paxton and equipped their militias with Badlander Gears.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	413	Offensive:	450	Defensive:	301	Miscellaneous:	488	Lemon Dice:	2



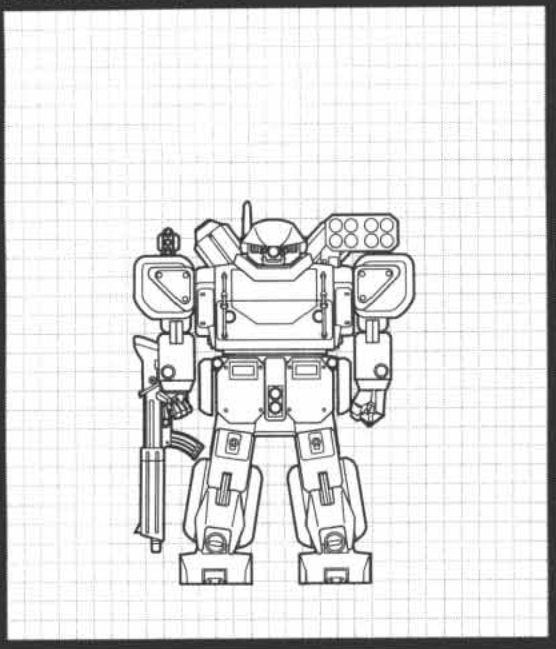
Vehicle Specification

Code name:	Warrior
Production code:	PA-01
Production Type:	Limited Production
Cost:	963,667 marks/dinars (481,833 dollars)
Manufacturer:	Paxton Industries
Use:	soldier Gear
Height:	4.3 meters
Width:	3.0 meters
Average armor thickness:	45 mm
Armor material:	durasheet w/glazing
Standard operational weight:	6642 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (43 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (73 kph)
Deployment Range:	550 km
Sensor Range:	60 hexes/3 km
Communication Range:	240 hexes/12km
Powerplant:	PMW-V470 V-engine
Horsepower:	470 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
PR-25 20 mm autocannon	60 rounds
Paxton RP-109S 52 mm rocket pod	24 rockets
Paxton APGL-78 grenade launcher	6 grenades
Paxton M9 Grenades	3 grenades
Paxton VK-6 vibroknife	-

WARRIOR PA-01



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	4
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	7
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	6
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	12
• MANEUVER:		0
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		550

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	3
• COMMUNICATION:	0	12
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	15
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	30
• OVERKILL:	45

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 413 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 963,667 marks/dinars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
PR-25 20mm autocannon	LAC	Forward	2	4	8	16	0	x8	1	+2	-
RP-109S rocket pod	LRP/24	Forward	1	2	4	8	-1	x12	1	+3	Indirect Fire
APGL-78 launcher	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	AI, IF, AEO
M9 Grenades	HG	Forward	0	0	0	0	-1	x15	1	0	Anti-Infantry
VK-9 vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	-

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
60	
24	
6	
3	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Easy to Modify	-	+2 on Repair and Modify rolls	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Manipulator Arm x2	6	Can punch	
ECM	1	Offensive electronic warfare equipment	Yes

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Annoyance	-	Cramped head room

HEAVY GEAR

PA-04 Warrior IV

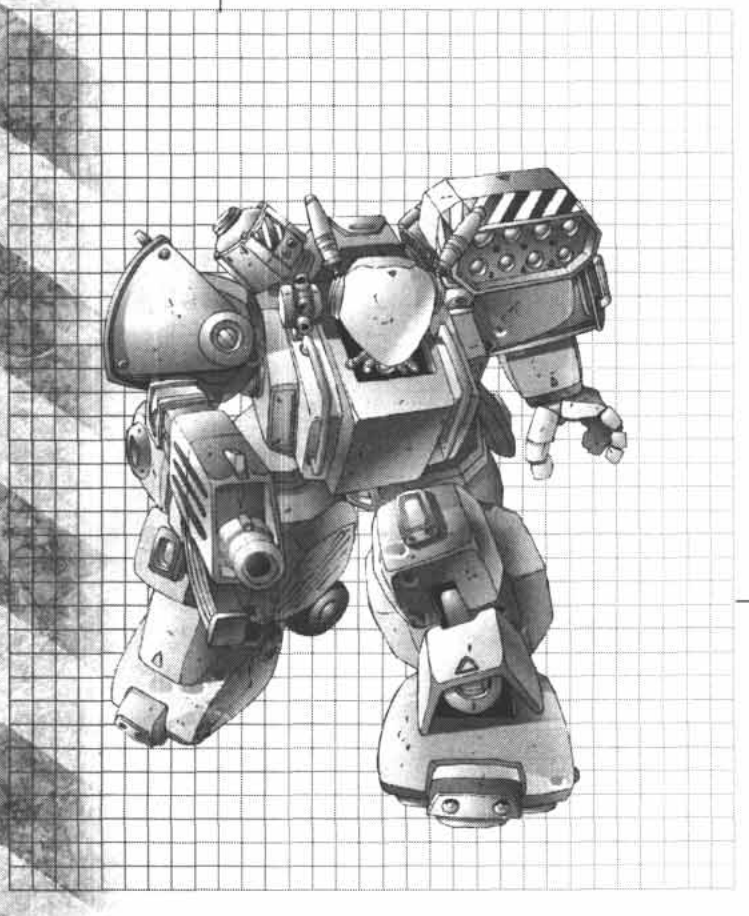
The successor to the Warrior general purpose trooper Gear, the Warrior IV was designed to compete with modern commando units like the Northco Jaguar and the Territorial Arms Black Mamba. Unlike the first generation of the Warrior — which was for the most part a copy of the Hunter — the Warrior IV is its own machine. The Warrior IV was designed to provide a combination of speed and protection that is virtually unparalleled on the modern battlefield. Able to attain speeds matching a scout machine like the Northern Cheetah, it carries enough armor to shrug off many light to medium weapons. Paxton designers did have to sacrifice desired maneuverability improvements to have both speed and armor, however. The offensive profile of the Warrior IV is almost identical to its predecessor, although the light RP-109 rocket pod is replaced by a more powerful RP-110, allowing the Gear to assault heavier targets. The frame is reinforced for airdropping, a modification long requested by the air-mobile Peace River Defense Force. Unlike either the Jaguar or Black Mamba, the Warrior IV also brings electronic warfare capabilities to the field, with an augmented ECM pod.

◆ Service Record

Introduced in TN 1922, the Warrior IV has not seen any major conflict yet. It has, however, become a standard part of the Peace River Defense Force and seen a fair amount of action in that capacity. The PRDF has faced down rovers and polar forces across the Western Desert and Karaq Wastes since the War of the Alliance and the cutting-edge Gear has performed well in these duties. Until the recent withdrawal of PRDF assets from the eastern extremity of the Western Desert, confrontations with the hovertanks of the Arthurian Corps were also common. The Warrior IV stands up well to these Terran forces, using its electronic warfare equipment to blind the enemy. The Warrior IV has not been a sales success as of yet, however. Only in limited production, it is an expense few Badlanders can afford.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	700	Offensive:	1317	Defensive:	401	Miscellaneous:	383	Lemon Dice:	2



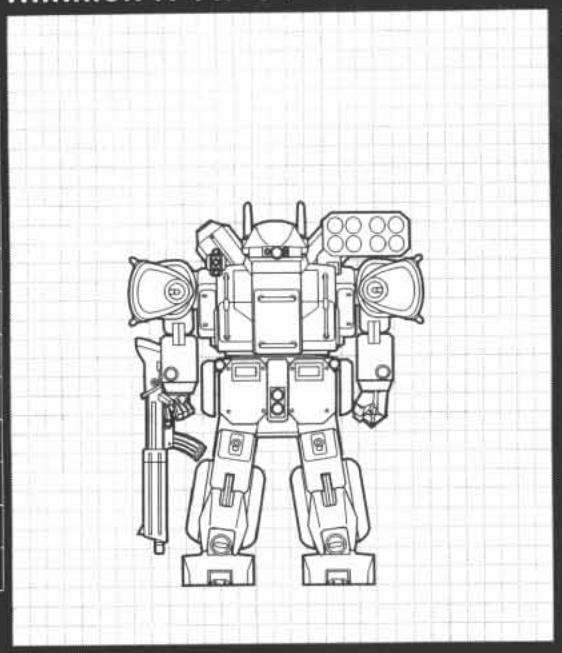
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Warrior Mark IV
Production code:	PA-04
Production Type:	Limited Production
Cost:	2,100,000 marks/dinars (1,050,000 dollars)
Manufacturer:	Paxton Industries
Use:	soldier/commando Gear
Height:	4.4 meters
Width:	3.1 meters
Average armor thickness:	56 mm
Armor material:	durasheet w/glazing
Standard operational weight:	6761 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (52 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (83 kph)
Deployment Range:	550 km
Sensor Range:	60 hexes/3 km
Communication Range:	240 hexes/12 km
Powerplant:	PMW-V520 V-engine
Horsepower:	520 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
PR-25 20 mm autocannon	60 rounds
Paxton RP-110 60 mm rocket pod	18 rockets
Paxton APGL-78 grenade launcher	6 grenades
Paxton M9 Grenades	3 grenades
Paxton VK-6 vibroknife	-

WARRIOR IV PA-04



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 10 20 30 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	5
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	9
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	7
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	14
• MANEUVER:		0
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		550

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	3
• COMMUNICATION:	0	12
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	17
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	34
• OVERKILL:	51

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 700 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 2,100,000 dollars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
PR-25 20mm autocannon	LAC	Forward	2	4	8	16	0	x8	1	+2	-
RP-110 rocket pod	MRP/18	Forward	2	4	8	16	-1	x18	1	+2	Indirect Fire
APGL-78 launcher	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	AI, IF, AEO
M9 Grenades	HG	Forward	0	0	0	0	-1	x15	1	0	Anti-Infantry
VK-9 vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	-

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
60	
18	
6	
3	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Airdroppable	-	Can be airdropped	
ECM	2	Offensive electronic warfare equipment	Yes
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Manipulator Arm x2	6	Can punch	
Ram Plate	-	Front arc	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

PA-EX01 Warrior Elite

The Warrior Elite was the first of a new generation of Gears born from one of the most secret of Paxton Arms' research and development projects: the Elite Program. Its purpose was to produce a series of Gears which could match both their Northern and Southern counterparts, but more importantly, to be able to do so when out numbered. It was hoped that the products of the Elite Program would serve as a deterrent to marauding polar forces and bandits hoping to take advantage of the chaos of the Interpolar War.

The Warrior Elite was the first of this programs' children, the flagship Gear of the next generation of Paxton Arms combat vehicles. The Elite has been designed to perform both commando and duelist roles and to exceed the performance capabilities of both the Jaguar and Mamba designs of the Northern and Southern forces.

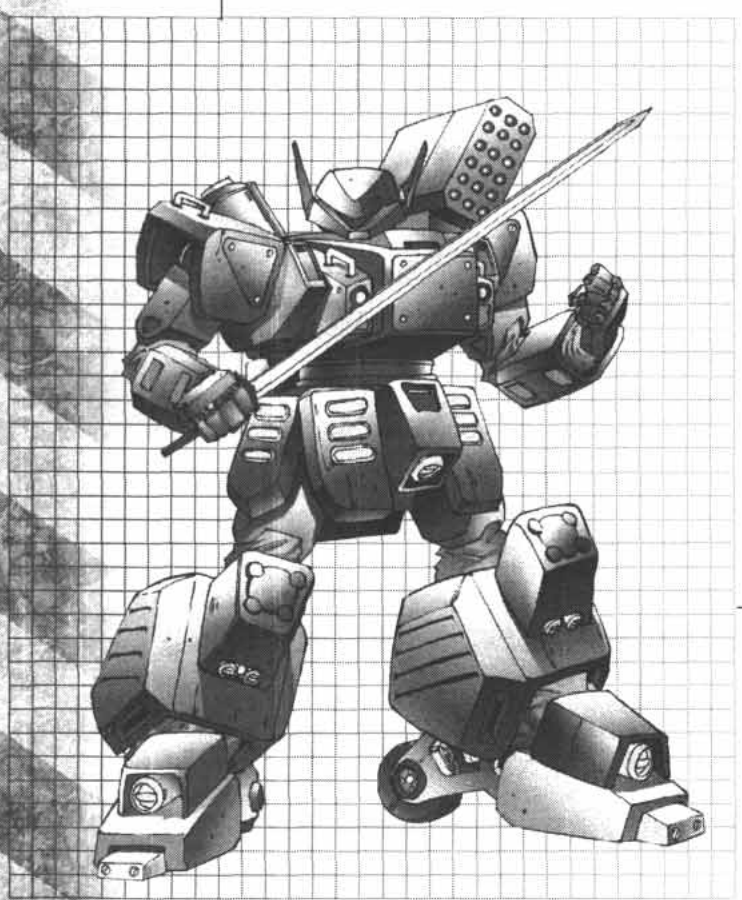
At the time of Peace River's destruction, the Warrior Elite had reached a late prototypical stage and was undergoing final trials deep within the Karaq Wastes. The last prototype (the third prototype built) used an advanced actuator design that allowed it to attain a degree of maneuverability approaching that of the Cheetah design. In addition, the Elite was said to have been equipped with advanced control systems able to perform feats of agility and speed equal to none.

◆ Service Record

To date, the Elite has not joined the surviving PRDF's arsenal; in fact, all queries about the Warrior Elite and its existence have been ignored by Paxton Arms officials. Their official stance on the Elite Program as a whole has been a firm "no comment," though it is obvious to trained observers that Elite has probably served as a base for the Black Talon Werks (no other explanation accounts for how the Werks developed their new machines so fast).

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	776	Offensive:	1004	Defensive:	1028	Miscellaneous:	296	Lemon Dice:	1



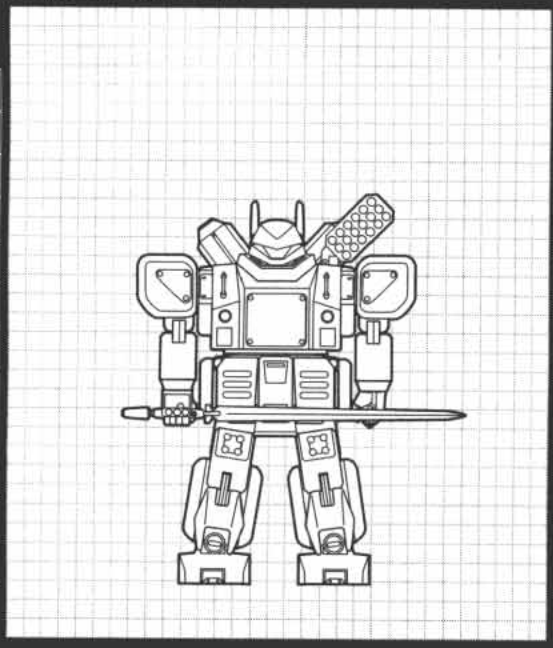
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Warrior Elite
Production code:	PA-EX01
Production Type:	Tested Prototype
Cost:	115,350,000 dollars
Manufacturer:	PARD Elite Program
Use:	Commando Gear
Height:	4.6 meters
Width:	3.1 meters
Average armor thickness:	54 mm
Armor material:	Durasheet w/laminated composite
Standard operational weight:	6900 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (60 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (90 kph)
Deployment Range:	400 km
Sensor Range:	40 hexes/2 km
Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Powerplant:	PARD Ex/RD1000
Horsepower:	990 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Medium Autocannon	70 shots
Light Rocket Pack	32 rockets
Vibrorapier	-

WARRIOR ELITE



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	5
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	10
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	8
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	15
• MANEUVER:		+2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		400

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	2
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	14
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	28
• OVERKILL:	42

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 776 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 115,350,000 dollars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Autocannon	MAC	Forward	3	6	12	24	0	x10	1	+1	-
Rocket Pod	LRP/32	Forward	1	2	4	8	-1	x12	1	+4	Indirect Fire
Vibrorapier	VR	Forward	0	0	0	0	+1	x6	1	0	AP

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
60	
32	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
ECM	3	Offensive Electronic Equipment	
Emergency Medical	-	Cancel one Crew stun	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can Punch	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

PA-POC-03 Pit Bull

The Pit Bull is one of Paxton's success stories in the Gear market. Essentially a redesign of the Warrior for police and urban control use, it has found its way into many police forces on both poles and across the Badlands. The Pit Bull was designed with the Peace Officer Corps in mind and reflects their needs. The Pit Bull features improved suspension and lighter armor as compared to the Warrior, giving it increased maneuverability when in walker mode. Large high speed tires give it dramatic ground speed when using secondary movement, although its maneuverability is not as great. Good electronics and an ECM pod allow the Pit Bull to use advanced surveillance and electronic warfare techniques to deal with criminals, such as monitoring their communications and jamming their systems. The weapon payload is centered on anti-personnel arms like twin light grenade launchers and a torso-mounted machinegun. These systems are generally loaded with stun or gas grenades and rubber bullets, but they can accept standard ammunition. The Pit Bull also wields the Warrior's autocannon, to be used against vehicles or as a deterrent.

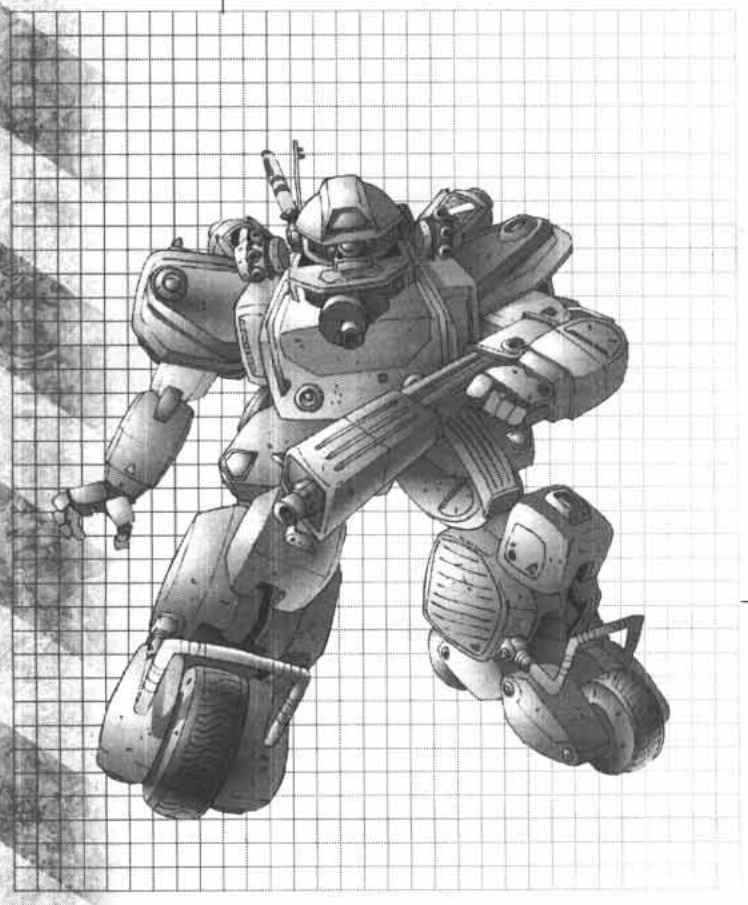
◆ Service Record

The Pit Bull has served very well since its introduction in the TN 1870s. The Peace Officer Corps' SWOS division uses it almost exclusively and it has been sold to many other militias and police forces. The Pit Bull was widely retrofitted into a combat machine during the War of the Alliance and served with distinction in the Peace river Army. From there it spread to many rover gangs and smuggling rings and it is now not uncommon to see police and criminal forces squaring off, each with Pit Bulls of their own. Like the Warrior, the Pit Bull has undergone several refits and the current model is actually the Pit Bull Mark III. The changes have been relatively minor, however. The first involved an electronics upgrade, while the second replaced the standard PMW-V470 V-engine with a slightly more powerful version, the PMW-V480.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	322	Offensive:	258	Defensive:	366	Miscellaneous:	342	Lemon Dice:	3

Vehicle Specifications

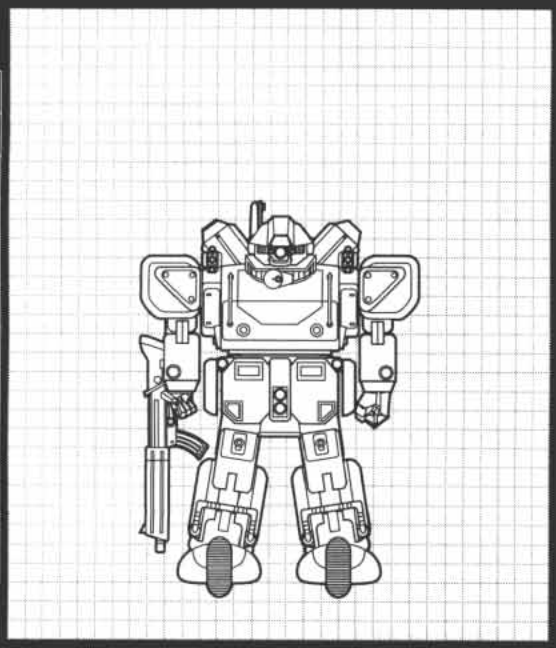


Code name:	Pit Bull
Production code:	PA-POC-03
Production Type:	Mass Production
Cost:	187,833 marks/dinars (93,917 dollars)
Manufacturer:	Paxton Industries
Use:	police Gear
Height:	4.3 meters
Width:	3.0 meters
Average armor thickness:	39 mm
Armor material:	durasheet w/glazing
Standard operational weight:	5900 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (45 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (88 kph)
Deployment Range:	400 km
Sensor Range:	60 hexes/3 km
Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Powerplant:	PMW-V480 V-engine
Horsepower:	480 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
PR-25 20 mm autocannon	60 rounds
Paxton LM-18 machinegun	200 rubber bullets
Paxton APGL-79 grenade launcher	12 stun grenades
Paxton APGL-79 grenade launcher	12 stun grenades
Paxton VK-6 vibroknife	-

PIT BULL PA-POC-03



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 10 20 30 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	G	4
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	G	8
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	W	8
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	W	15
• MANEUVER:		+1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		400

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	3
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	12
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	24
• OVERKILL:	36

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 322 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 187,833 marks/dinars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
PR-25 20mm autocannon	LAC	Forward	2	4	8	16	0	x8	1	+2	-
LM-13 machinegun	LMG	Forward	1	2	4	8	0	x3	1	+4	Anti-Infantry
APGL-79 launcher	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	AI, IF, AEO
APGL-79 launcher	APGL	Fixed R.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	AI, IF, AEO
VK-9 vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	-

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
60	
200 NL	
12 NL	
12 NL	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Backup Sensors	-	Absorbs first "Sensor" hit	
ECM	1	Offensive electronic warfare equipment	Yes
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can punch	
Searchlight	-	Fixed Forward, 100 meter range	Yes
Urban Friendly	-	-	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Decreased Maneuverability	1	Reduce Maneuver for Ground movement

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Annoyance	-	Cramped head space

HEAVY GEAR

PA-02LG/ST-01C Stalker

With the polar forces deploying increasingly more sophisticated reconnaissance and stealth Gears, the PRDF High Command became concerned that their current crop of recon Gears would not be up to the task of penetrating enemy areas of operation and reporting back to base. In the Summer of TN 1927 the High Command ordered a new series of stealth/recon vehicles to be built for the PRDF. In the Winter of TN 1930, Paxton Arms rolled out the first prototype of the Stalker.

The first Stalkers were fitted with protype radar absorbing durasheet armor, which was not retained on the main production version. Similarly, the prototype Gear was fitted with a newly developed gas turbine engine, while the production models have a modified Thorson S-V950X series V-engine, which is less efficient than the gas turbine but provides more power and simpler maintenance. Engineers at Thorson equipped the X series engines with a heat suppression system that vents the hot exhaust through a series of cooling baffles built into the top of the pack, reducing the Gear's signature by 90% but proving too costly for the advantage confered.

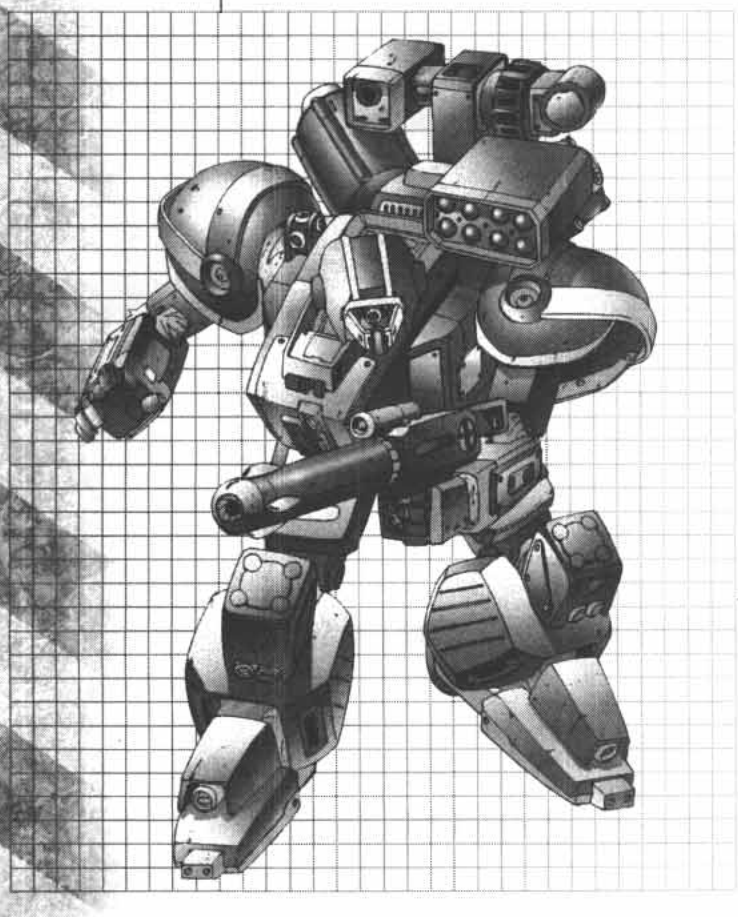
The Stalker's weapon complement, while not overly impressive, is more than adequate for the Gear's mission. A Riley Arms Medium Autocannon and Paxton Arms Medium Rocket Launcher are the Stalkers primary weapons, while an APGL round out the armament.

Service Record

The PRDF took delivery of its first Stalker in the Spring of TN 1932; since then, Paxton Arms has built just over one hundred of the Gear. While some have been deployed in front line regiments, most were never fielded. During Autumn TN 1931, PRDF High Command asked for volunteers to be part of a new unit. Neither the purpose or the composition of the unit has ever been revealed, but some polar military Intel divisions speculate that the PRDF has been training a black ops commandoes.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	516	Offensive:	499	Defensive:	369	Miscellaneous:	679	Lemon Dice:	2



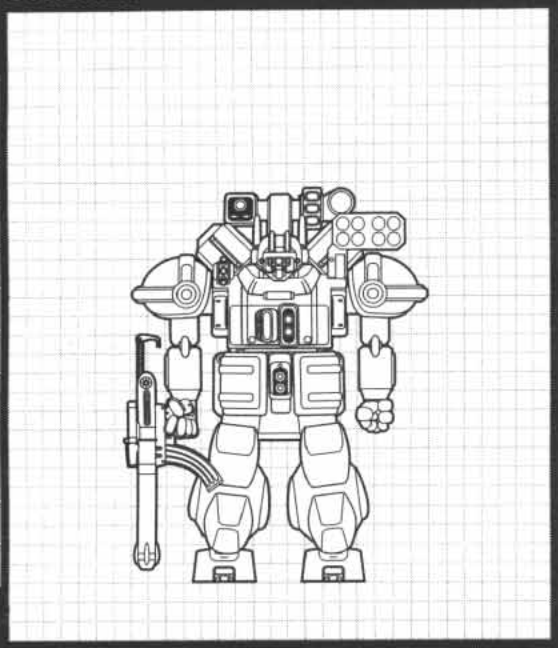
Vehicle Specification

Code Name:	Stalker
Production Code:	PA-02LG/ST-01C
Production Type:	Limited Production
Cost:	1,402,667 dollars
Manufacturer:	Paxton Arms
Use:	Recon Gear
Height:	4.0 meters
Width:	3.1 meters
Average Armor Thickness:	82 mm
Armor Material:	Durasheet
Standard Operating Weight:	6,275 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (48 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (84 kph)
Deployment Range:	500 km
Sensor Range:	80 hexes/4km
Communications Range:	75 hexes/15km
Powerplant:	S-V950X V-Engine
Horsepower:	500 hp

Weapons Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Riley Arms GM-12A Medium Auto Cannon	30 shells
Paxton Arms Thunderbolt 9 Launcher	9 missiles
Paxton Arms APGL	6 rounds

STALKER



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	4
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	8
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	7
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	14
• MANEUVER:		+1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		500

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	4
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	15
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	12
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	24
• OVERKILL:	36

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 516 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 1,376,000 marks

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Autocannon	MAC	Forward	3	6	12	24	0	x10	1	+1	-
Rocket Pod	LRP/32	Forward	1	2	4	8	-1	x12	1	+3	Indirect Fire
Paxton Arms APGL	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I, IF, AE=0
Vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
30	
32	
6	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
ECM	2	Offensive Electronics	yes
ECCM	3	Defensive Electronics	yes
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can Punch	
Satellite Uplink	-	Patch into orbital communications	yes

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Annoyance	-	Cramped Cockpit; max pilot BLD is 0
Exposed Aux Systems	-	Damage to AUX is one step worse

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

PA-01HG/GP/01A Crusader Mk. IV

First developed in the early 1800s to compete with the CNCS's Grizzly and the AST's Cobra, the Crusader rolled off Paxton Industries' production lines in Summer TN 1814. Not as powerful as either of its counterparts, it was shunned by most of Paxtons customers. Moving quickly, the R&D department set out to fix the long laundry list of problems, but most of the early Crusaders ended up in second line or city militia units.

Over the next sixty cycles, Paxton issued more updated refit kits to improve the Crusader's performance. In a desperate attempt to save the Gear, Henrick Langsdorff, lead engineer for the R&D department pleaded with the board to give his department one last chance to improve the Crusader. Working night and day, the design team started from scratch and entirely redesigned the Crusader. In Autumn TN 1873, Paxton introduced the revamped Crusader Mk. IV; from the start, many military commanders were impressed by the new Gear's performance and weapons. Orders for the new Crusader rose steadily as word spread.

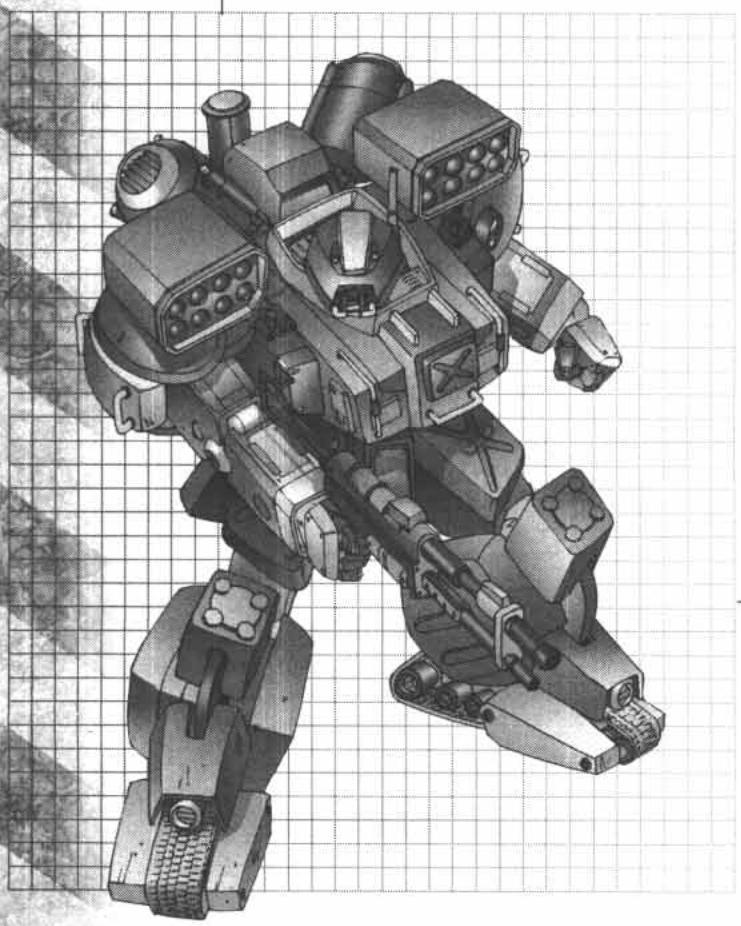
Just before the destruction of its city-state, Paxton Arms was rumored to be working on a Crusader Mk. V: preliminary reports stated that the new model would have had better armor protection, a new fire control system and a more powerful engine. A working prototype was supposedly ready by Spring TN 1934.

◆ Service Record

The Crusader was used by both polar forces and Peace River armies during the War of the Alliance. During the sieges of Forts James and Fort Henry, Western Protectorate units used the city fighter variant of the Crusader with great efficiency to clear out stubborn pockets of resistance. Nowaday, the machine is found mostly within the surviving PRDF regiments and some second line units.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	916	Offensive:	2333	Defensive:	267	Miscellaneous:	148	Lemon Dice:	3



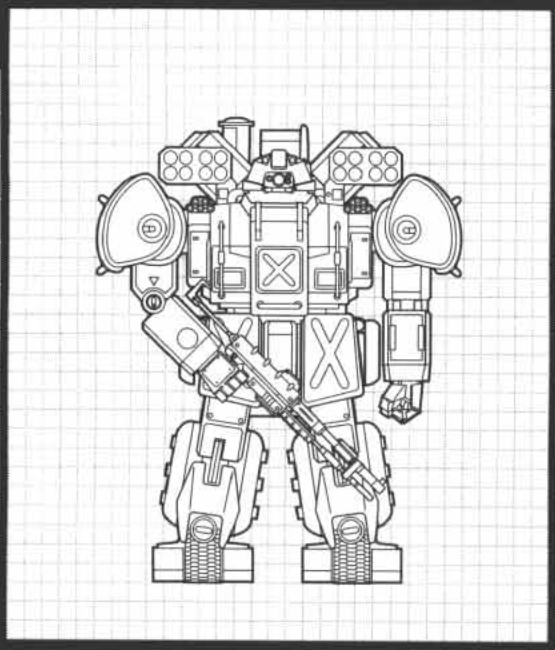
Vehicle Specifications

Code Name:	Crusader Mk. IV
Production Code:	PA-01HG/GP/01A
Production Type:	Mass Production
Cost:	654,285 dollars
Manufacturer:	Paxton Arms
Use:	General Purpose/Fire Support
Height:	5.2 meters
Width:	3.6 meters
Average Armor Thickness:	72 mm
Armor Material:	Durasheet w/alloy
Standard Operational Weight:	9,567 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (30 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (60 kph)
Deployment Range:	400 km
Sensor Range:	40 hexs/2 km
Communications Range:	200 hexees / 10 km
Powerplant:	S-V2140X V-Engine
Horsepower:	910 HP

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Paxton Arms PR-50A Heavy Autocannon	40 shells
2x Paxton Arms GM-36 Rocket Pods	36 rockets each
Riley Arms TD-76 Mortar Unit	20 shells
2x Paxton APGL-78 Grenade Launchers	6 grenades each
Paxton VA-4 Vibroax	-

CRUSADER



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	3
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	5
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	5
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	10
• MANEUVER:		-1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		400

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	2
• COMMUNICATION:	0	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	19
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	38
• OVERKILL:	57

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 916 • SIZE: 7 • COST: 654,285 dollars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
PR-50A Heavy Autocannon	HAC	Forward	3	6	12	24	0	x12	1	+1	
GM-36 Rocket Pod	MRP/36	Forward	2	4	8	16	-1	x18	1	+4	Indirect Fire
APGL-78 Grenade Launcher	APGL	Forward	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I., IF, AE=0
TD-76 Mortar Unit	HGM	Forward	5	10	20	40	-1	x20	1	0	Guided, IF, MR 5
VA-4 Vibroax	VA	Forward	0	0	0	0	-1	X10	1	0	Armor Crushing

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
40	
36ea	
6ea	
20	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Ammo/Fuel Containment	-	Subtract 2 from "Ammo/Fuel" hit rolls	
ECM	1	Jam enemy sensors and communications	Yes
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Manipulator Arms x 2	7	Can Punch	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorb first "Crew" damage	
Weapon Link	-	Links MRP, fire both with one action	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Large Sensor Profile	1	Easier to detect — Subtract 2 from concealment vs. sensors
Vulnerable to Haywire	-	Haywire weapons get 3 damage rolls

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

PA-PX07 Perseus

The Perseus was one of the latest designs to originate from the depths of the Paxton Karaq Wastes Research and Development facility. Meant to serve in a multi-role scout/harasser capacity, the Perseus's primary mission would be to detect any large force heading towards Peace River, perform hit and run attacks along their entire advance, and to continue to do so in their rear once the enemy force had reached their destination.

The chief engineer of the Perseus team, Dan Olivier, made the decision to equip the vehicle with a highly experimental SMS design that had been a work-in-progress since the War of the Alliance. This hover SMS proved to be rather temperamental and difficult to control, and it required a lot of efforts to be made viable. This increased speed and mobility did come at a cost: in order to stabilize the H-SMS system, the torque generated by the Perseus's leg actuators had to be increased while in this mode, resulting in a considerable loss of maneuverability. The amazing speed provided to the Gear, however, was decided to be a fair enough tradeoff for this loss in agility.

The rest of the Perseus's systems, though not as radical (or problematic) as the Gears H-SMS's hoverskirts, are no less impressive. To aid in its role as a scout, the Perseus was given a basic stealth coating similar to that found on the Southern Chameleon design, as well as improved sensors and communications systems. For its role of harasser, the Perseus was equipped with an advanced sniper rifle developed by PARD's Arsenal division. A target designation system is carried so that the Gear can perform the task of spotter.

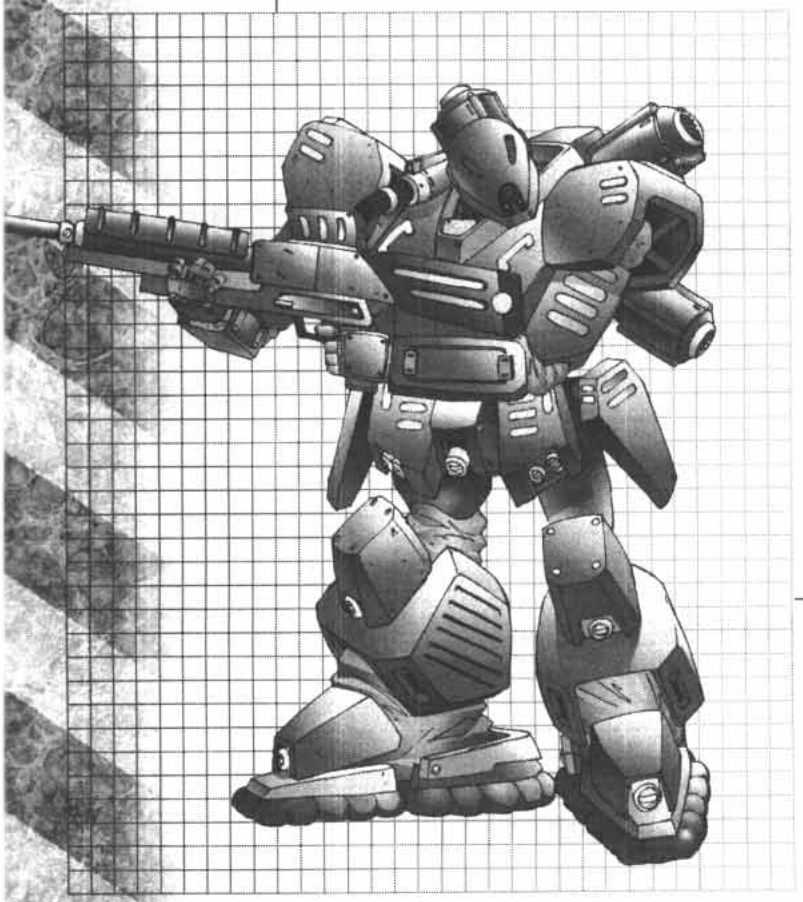
◆ Service Record

Of all the vehicles born of the Elite program, the least is knownn of this prototype and its track record. The Perseus' main claim to fame is its current owner, well-known PARD test pilot Katherine "Kat" MacLeod.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	579	Offensive:	451	Defensive:	995	Miscellaneous:	291	Lemon Dice:	1

Vehicle Specifications

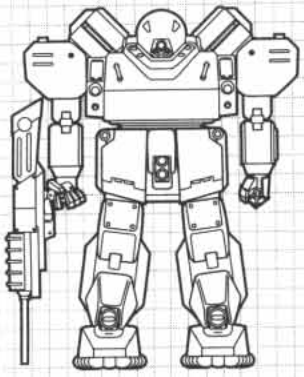


Code name:	Perseus
Production code:	PA-PX07
Production Type:	Testbed Prototype
Cost:	77,200,000 dollars
Manufacturer:	PARD Elite Program
Use:	Scout/Harasser Gear
Height:	4.1 meters
Width:	2.9 meters
Average armor thickness:	25 mm
Armor material:	Durasheet w/Composites
Standard operational weight:	5600 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (66 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Hover (120 kph)
Deployment Range:	250 km
Sensor Range:	80 hexes/4 km
Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Powerplant:	2 x Perseus R100 V-engine
Horsepower:	2 x 450 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Medium Rifle	40 rounds
Light Machine Gun (optional)	200 rounds
Vibroblade	-

PERSEUS



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	6
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	11
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	H	10
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	H	20
• MANEUVER:		+2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		250

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+2	4
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	10
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	20
• OVERKILL:	30

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 579 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 77,200,000 marks

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Medium Rifle	MRF	Forward	3	6	12	24	0	x10	1	0	-
Vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
40	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Underwater	
Improved Off-road Capability	-	Hover system	
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can Punch	
Sniper System	-	Medium Rifle; +1 Acc. at Long and Extreme ranges	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Reduced Maneuver	3	Hover mode

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

PA-MX01 Myrmidon

With the success of the initial prototypes of the Warrior Elite came additional funding, resources and an extended research and development profile. The extended profile called for the research and development of four additional Gear designs to fill a wide range of mission requirements. The first of these, meant to fill the role of heavy assault Gear, was given the name Myrmidon.

The Myrmidon's primary function is to act as a multipurpose heavy weapons platform for the defense of Peace River. The Myrmidon prototype was armed with a 45 mm drum-fed Banshee heavy autocannon, a prototype design itself. The main gun was supplemented by a light field mortar to allow the Myrmidon to perform in a limited fire support capacity, as well as medium rockets and twin linked autocannons for close defense. In addition to heavy armor and reinforcement for the pilot, the entire crew compartment was moved towards the rear of the chassis and away from the head assembly, a design choice similar to the venerable Black Adders of the South.

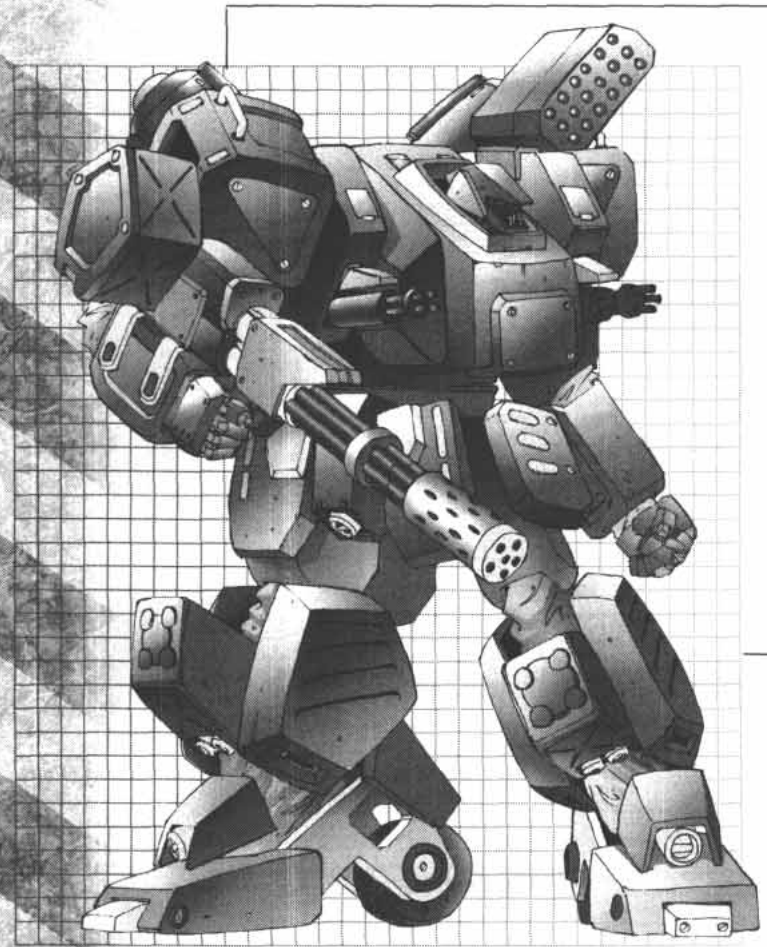
The Myrmidon has been brought to a late prototype stage in record time due to the efforts of engineers Bohnet, Leblanc and the rest of the Myrmidon design team. At present, two versions of this late stage prototype have been produced. Due to the death of one of the Myrmidon team's pilots, however, only one of the prototypes has been undergoing trials.

◆ Service Record

In a number of trials, the Myrmidon design has proven itself to be a competent all-around fighter, its design allowing it to take a considerable amount of damage while safeguarding the pilot. More telling, however, will be how well the design functions in real combat. There has been some concern regarding the inclusion of the remaining Myrmidon's pilot in field operations: Unit 2's pilot, Sean O'Mara, may find his judgment clouded by a need for vengeance.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	702	Offensive:	1169	Defensive:	463	Miscellaneous:	472	Lemon Dice:	1



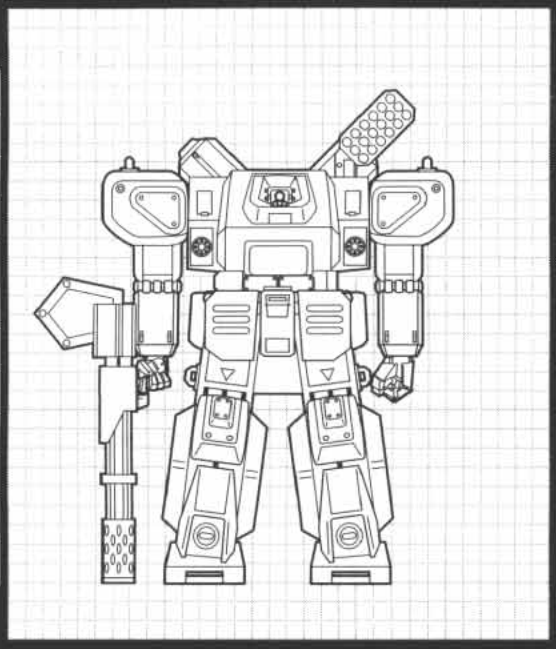
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Myrmidon
Production code:	PA-MX01
Production Type:	Late Prototype
Cost:	90,257,143 dollars
Manufacturer:	PARD Elite Program
Use:	Assault Gear
Height:	5.0 meters
Width:	3.8 meters
Average Armor Thickness:	80 mm
Armor Material:	Durasheet w/composites
Standard Operational Weight:	9015kg
Primary-Top Speed:	Walk (42 kph)
Secondary-Top Speed:	Ground (66 kph)
Deployment:	400km
Sensor Range:	40 hexes/2 km
Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Powerplant:	RD340 V-engine
Horsepower:	780 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Banshee Heavy Autocannon	80 bursts
20 mm Autocannon x 2	60 rounds each
71 mm Rocket Pack	36 rockets
AP Grenade Launcher	6 shells
Vibroblade	-

MYMIDON



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	4
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	7
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	6
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	11
• MANEUVER:		0
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		400

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	2
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	20
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	40
• OVERKILL:	60

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 702 • SIZE: 7 • COST: 90,257,143 dollars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Banshee Autocannon	VHAC	Forward	3	6	12	24	0	x15	1	+1	-
Torso Autocannons	LAC	Fixed F.	2	4	8	16	0	x8	2	+2	Linked
Rocket Pod	MRP/36	Forward	2	4	8	16	-1	x18	1	+4	Indirect Fire
APGL-78 launcher	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	AI, IF, AE0
Vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
80	
60ea	
36	
6	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Emergency Medical	-	Cancel one Crew Stun	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Manipulator Arm x 2	7	Can Punch	
Reinforced Chassis	-	Absorbs first Structure hit	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first Crew hit	
Weapon Link	-	Torso Autocannons	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Large Sensor Profile	1	Easier to detect

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

PA-AX01 Agamemnon

If war were to break out between the North and South, repercussions upon the Badlands would be unavoidable. Seeing the tension build between the polar powers, the probability of conflict became a foregone conclusion. In preparation, Peace River and Paxton Arms began vehicle research and development in earnest.

L. Derek Evans, regarded by many to be a Gear design prodigy, was assigned to lead the Agamemnon team. Within three seasons, the first of the Agamemnon prototypes had been built. The armor necessary to meet the design's required specifications was too heavy, and so Jean Robertson developed a special composite material for the design which proved lighter and more resilient than the armor used on the other Elite designs. Unfortunately the cost and labor involved in manufacturing the new composite prevent the replacement of the armor on the other designs with the Robertson composite until a more efficient manufacturing process is devised.

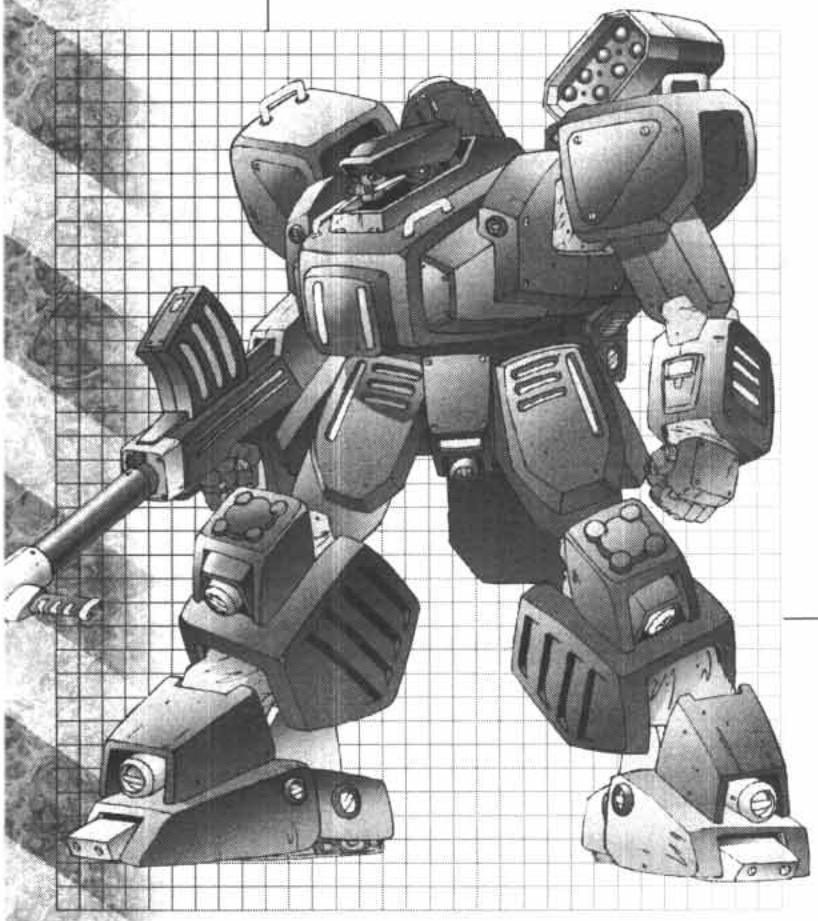
Weapons systems expert Jesse Lloyde was assigned the task of testing and in some cases, designing from scratch, the weapons for the Agamemnon that would best serve it in its intended role. The primary weapon is a Thunderclap II field gun, a clip-fed affair capable of direct as well as indirect fire. It is backed by a rocket pack for supplementary firepower, a light field mortar on the backpack to lay down covering fire and a vibroknife, in case things became most dire.

Service Record

At the time of Peace River's destruction, the Agamemnon was at an early prototype stage. Even then, though, the PA-AX01 showed great promise, and its design team is determined to make the design worthy of the heroic deeds that will be required of its pilots in the future, should the vehicle be chosen to go into mass production.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	704	Offensive:	1419	Defensive:	331	Miscellaneous:	360	Lemon Dice:	1



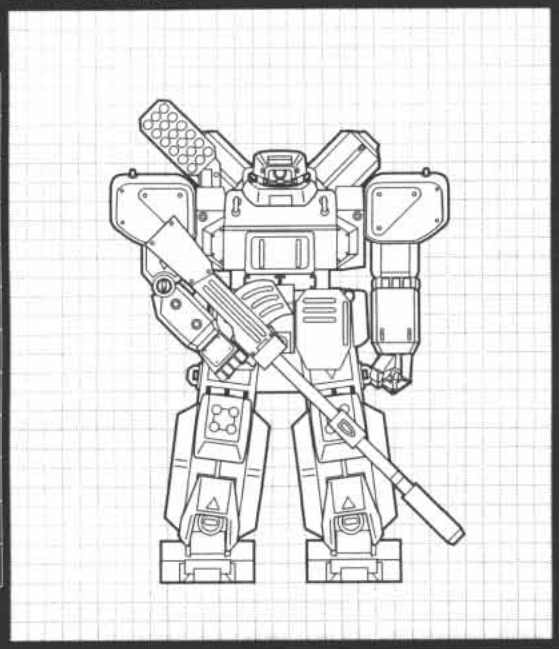
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Agamemnon
Production code:	PA-AX01
Production Type:	Testbed Prototype
Cost:	90,514,286 dollars
Manufacturer:	PARD Elite Program
Use:	Heavy Interdiction
Height:	5.2 meters
Width:	3.8 meters
Average armor thickness:	85 mm
Armor material:	Robertson Composites
Standard operational weight:	10,240 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (36 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (66 kph)
Deployment Range:	400 km
Sensor Range:	40 hexes/3 km
Communication Range:	300 hexes/15 km
Powerplant:	RD2000A
Horsepower:	980 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Thunderclap II Field Gun	12 rounds
50 mm Rocket Pod	32 rockets
Light Field Mortar	20 shells
Vibroblade	-

AGAMEMNON



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	3
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	6
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	6
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	11
• MANEUVER:		-1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		400

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	2
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	21
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	42
• OVERKILL:	63

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 704 • SIZE: 7 • COST: 90,514,286 dollars

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Thunderclap II Field Gun	VLFG	Forward	5	10	20	40	-1	x20	1	0	Indirect Fire
Rocket Pod	LRP/32	Forward	1	2	4	8	-1	x12	1	+3	Indirect Fire
Light Field Mortar	LFM	Forward	4	8	16	32	-1	x15	1	0	Ind. Fire, AEO, MR4
Vibroknife	VB	Forward	0	0	0	0	0	x8	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
12	
32	
20	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Emergency Medical	-	Cancel one Crew stun	
HEAT-Resistant Armor	3	Add to Armor vs. HEAT attacks	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Manipulator Arm x 2	7	Can Punch	
Reinforced Armor	2	Front	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first Crew hit	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Large Sensor Profile	1	Easier to detect

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

RED DEVILS

The Mt. Giovanni CEF base was only eight kilometers away, cradled in an outcropping of volcanic rock. The geo-thermal screen that supplied power to the structure made it hard to scan, and laser fences encircled the installation like coiled snakes. The Talons counted fourteen defense turrets in the vicinity, hoping they hadn't missed any. The security made Bastille Alpha look like a walk-through, and Mailliaux muttered words to that effect.

"Most of the defenses are power-based, not mechanical," said Vesping, lowering her binoculars. "It seems to me that if we take down the generator, we're in."

• * *

From the look of the base, they had received no warning; only a few guards patrolled the power relay. Quietly, the Liberati engineers waited in the underbrush for the Talons to clear a path. The black Gears moved out of the shadow, showering the hapless defenders with brilliant blasts of energy. Within minutes, the generator was secured.

"Move it!" Vesping cried to the Liberati. "The path's clear!"

The engineers ran across the smoking field to the power relay. Within seconds, they had the generator off-line and the lights surrounding the base went dark. Some flickered on and off as back-up generators whirred to life and the engineers shut them down. Working hastily, they secured the demolition charges. As they ran away into the night once more, the generator relay blew in a mighty shower of sparks.

Like a trap-door spider released by the force of the blast, a Gear-like vehicle crawled out of an underground bunker, then two more. The flames reflected off their dark red hulls and the ominous black sheen of their weapons, giving them the appearance of demons just escaped from the bowels of the earth.

"Here come the reserves!" Wallis hollered, as a new cluster of the massive machines came out of the base, firing at the retreating engineers. "They've got Gears!"

"Gears?" said Mailliaux. "How the heck can they have Gears? We invented them!" Up until now, the Talons had only seen hovertanks and Combat Mounts.

"Follow me!" Wallis ordered. Not far from the base, a fairly narrow stream of lava had made its way down from the crater of Mt. Giovanni. The Talon Gears stopped dead to a man when they saw what was ahead of them.

"What's the idea here?" asked Vesping. "Suicide?"

"This is so perfect," said Pinter. "You want us to jump it?"

"I haven't seen any evidence that these guys have jump jets," Wallis said. "Good thing we had them installed for this mission. This is the only way I know of to lose them."

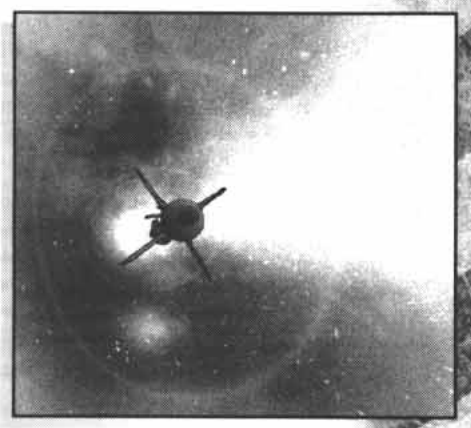
"This is crazy," snorted Mailliaux. "I'm going to find another way around."

"You're going to jump, Sergent Mailliaux," Wallis said. "That's an order." And with that, his Gear took a few steps back, fired up its jump jets, and leapt across the lava. The rest of the team looked on with awe as Wallis managed to crash-land his massive Kodiak on the other side. "I think I melted my heat exchanger."

Pinter, laughing, was the next to leap over (and, as usual, she made a show of it, spreading her Gear's arms like she was performing a swan dive. Sobek, Vesping, and Kage soon followed. Finally, Mailliaux, grumbling the entire time, cleared the lava river. Wallis ushered the squad into the rocky outcroppings just as the CEF walkers skidded to a halt on the other side of the stream. They checked the lava, and started firing at the rapidly retreating Talons. None of them looked eager to even attempt the same stunt.

ENEMIES AND ALLIES - 4.1

Before the arrival of Helene del Pulciano and the subsequent 1st Black Talon's mission to Caprice, little was known about the current state of the Gate World. Communications and starship traffic between the two former colonies had been all but abandoned not long after the St. Vincent War, and the few ships that did cross over often never came back. Terranovan authorities soon assumed a disaster of some kind, or a new isolationist government similar to that of Earth, and left it at that: there were plenty of problems to deal with at home first.



The situation became somewhat clearer during the war of the Alliance. Fragments of military intelligence as well as captured equipment suggested that the colony planet had already been taken over by the Colonial Expeditionary Force, and Terranovan military analysts concurred with this assessment. Indeed, Caprice's position as the nexus of the known interstellar Gate system made it an obvious primary military target. There was not enough data, however, to determine whether Caprice had been the victim of conquest or had willingly collaborated with the invader.

The truth, as it often is, was in between the two. Del Pulciano painted a broad picture of a world bowing to their conquerors under the threat of violence, with a strong undercurrent of hidden resistance.

Dynamics of Interstellar Warfare- 4.1.1

The main problem with battles of this scale is supply lines. The necessary materials are difficult to transport covertly, and are very vulnerable to enemy attack. Transporting materials from an orbiting resupply vessel to troops on the planet's surface is almost impossible when the enemy has similar space-faring capabilities — any increase in activity is certain to be spotted and terminated. Maintaining continuity of command and any degree of fire support from an orbiting vessel is also a task of uncommon difficulty. Ships must stay in low orbit if they are to contribute anything of value to the ground battles; ability to target specific sites is greatly reduced once the ship is above the atmosphere to any degree. The problem remains, of course, that if the ship can see the enemy, the enemy can also see — and target — the ship! A vessel must resign itself to playing a game of cat-and-mouse, ducking back out into high orbit to shake enemy locks, while still attempting to maintain targeting on vital targets on the ground.

Interstellar combat is quick and nasty, with whoever gets the first good shot off claiming an almost unshakable advantage. To paraphrase from a popular book, the successful starship captain will have to develop an "assassin's mentality," where dirty tricks are the norm. Spacecraft mount large yield weapons that are just about impossible to shield against. No amount of armor will be able to withstand being hit by kinetic kill weapons traveling at a few dozen miles a second, or a contact nuclear explosion.

Current and Future Developments ◆

Lang Regina and the other military leaders of Terra Nova are aware that they do not have the resources or the numbers to fight a knock-down-drag-out space war with the CEF. It was easier for them to fight a defensive war on their home turf and eventually turn it into an offensive one, but entering an interstellar war while just coming out of the Interpolar War, with the planet's military forces hopelessly depleted, would be suicide. Instead, a guerrilla campaign has been planned along with the Liberati on Caprice, while Terra Nova takes the valuable time to build up their space fleets and space-based defenses. The CEF will probably try the same thing, with hidden bases on TN, the activation of long-term sleeper agents, and the covert infiltration of CEF soldiers to conduct harassment/destabilization/espionage campaigns, with the goal of "preparing" Terra Nova for a future full-scale assault.

A massive space-mapping campaign will probably be instituted by the space forces of both sides, looking for micro-Gates where the CEF could slip in antimatter bombs, agents and such into Terranovan space. Once new microGates have been found, TN can take the initiative to mine them or otherwise create some kind of fixed defensive system that would make crossing the Gates extremely unattractive.

It appears that that the CEF is turning to more "remote" methods to making Terra Nova submit, including the (now defunct) Brimstone massdriver. This will probably be the colonies' biggest defensive problem, as the CEF can launch an attack at any time. Defensive measures will depend on the distance from Gates that are large enough to drive an asteroid through. Possible defenses include placing semi-independent drones with neural nets, armed with medium yield nuclear devices, near these Gates in an effort to blast incoming asteroids and hostile vessels. Of course, if Terra Nova manages to send through a Fury loaded with Gears every time the Gates open up and disable the Gateships on the other side, eventually the CEF will have to rethink their strategy (especially if every time they open the Gate, they lose a ship).

It is going to be difficult for Terra Nova to take the offensive, and one cannot win a defensive war. To break the stalemate, Terra Nova will have to create more Talon teams and send them through the Gates, traveling to the other known colonies to enlist their aid, much like del Pulciano did for Caprice. While Terra Nova can probably defend itself in the short and mid-term, without the ability to take the fight to the enemy, it will eventually be overrun through exhaustion.

4.2 - Overview of Caprice Situation

By late 6096, the New Eurasian Commonwealth (NEC) had gained the upper hand in the war that raged across planet Earth. In the span of the next five years, the NEC united the planet and renamed itself the New Earth Commonwealth. Led by an expansionist neo-fascist government, the vat-grown army that finally secured the ailing planet had nothing better to do than pick a fight elsewhere. This would give the people a common enemy to blame for their misery and avoid the need to decommission a huge standing army of combat veterans. There was also the possibility that resources could be taken from their conquests, accelerating the post-war rebuilding process.

Over a decade was spent recommissioning and refitting the mothballed Concordat Gateship fleet. The ships, crammed with many thousands of supersoldiers and combat vehicles, left the solar system in 6116 to carry out the first part of the colonial conquest plan: the surprise invasion of Caprice. Unaware of the situation on the home world, the former colony was woefully unprepared for Earth's return. While the majority of the corporate government which controlled Caprice opted to collaborate, a few patriotic members formed partisan groups and began an underground guerrilla war. Eleven months later, the final embers of local resistance had been crushed (or so the CEF believed), and plans for the invasion of the remaining colonies were being laid. Caprice, now equipped with GREL production facilities, was to serve as a staging base for the invasions. Their first target of the second invasion wave was Terra Nova.

For the past thirty cycles, Caprice has thus become a staging ground and industrial resource center for the invaders, allowing them to send forces to the other colony worlds with ease. Caprice is not fully secure, however. For centuries, groups of ragtag rebels known as Liberati have fought off the corporate order from hiding places on the barren surface. Since the invasion, the Liberati have become global freedom fighters, leading the struggle to free Caprice from the NEC invaders. They are a well-hidden group, but their disconnection and disorganization has left them without the united strength necessary to reconquer the planet. The Liberati turned to Terra Nova for aid, but remain wary of the Terranovans' final motives. They do not want to replace one set of masters with another.

4.2.1 - The Caprice System

Caprice is known as the Gateworld because its system contains Tannhauser Gates that lead, directly or indirectly, to all other colony worlds and to Earth itself. It was the first target of the CEF and is still held by the invaders to this day. Caprice will surely be the key to any lasting victory against Earth.

The planet itself is on a highly elliptical orbit around its sun, Loki, and is largely devoid of native life. Most of the planet is barren rock, with only a thin atmosphere. These wastelands are rich in mineral deposits, however, and dotted with mining camps and other industrial sites. Many of these are used as bases of operation by the Caprician rebels, while others are CEF strongpoints.

The planet's major geological feature is the massive Cat's Eye Trench, a huge canyon that cuts across the globe like a huge wound. The canyon is so deep that the atmospheric pressure near its lowest level is thick enough to support human life, though just barely. Over the centuries, the trench has become a massive urban and industrial sprawl known as the city of Gomorrah. Anything and everything is possible in Gomorrah.

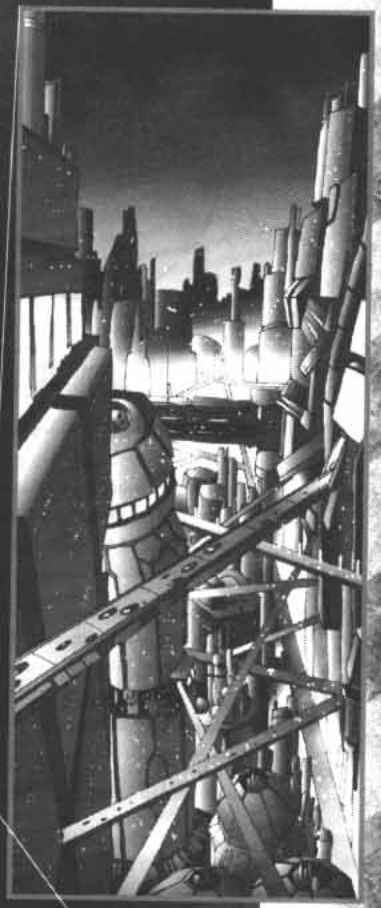
The mega-city is home to the many huge corporations that rule Caprice. It was these mercantile houses that betrayed their world and allied with the CEF when it launched its attack decades ago, mostly out of self-preservation. Seduced by the possibility of endless profit, some corporate heads have sold off their future and their world, though others have taken secret measures to ensure that the planet would one day be free again.

Present Day

Just before the 1st Black Talon left Caprice, they arranged for the Liberati troops to keep beaming regular intelligence updates to the Terranovans' Gate, in case the 1st would be unable to secure transportation back to the Helios system. Though they did eventually succeed in commandeering a Gate shuttle to come home (destroying the Brimstone massdriver along the way), the Liberati have used the opportunity to keep beaming data, just to maintain the momentum of the new cooperation between the two planets.

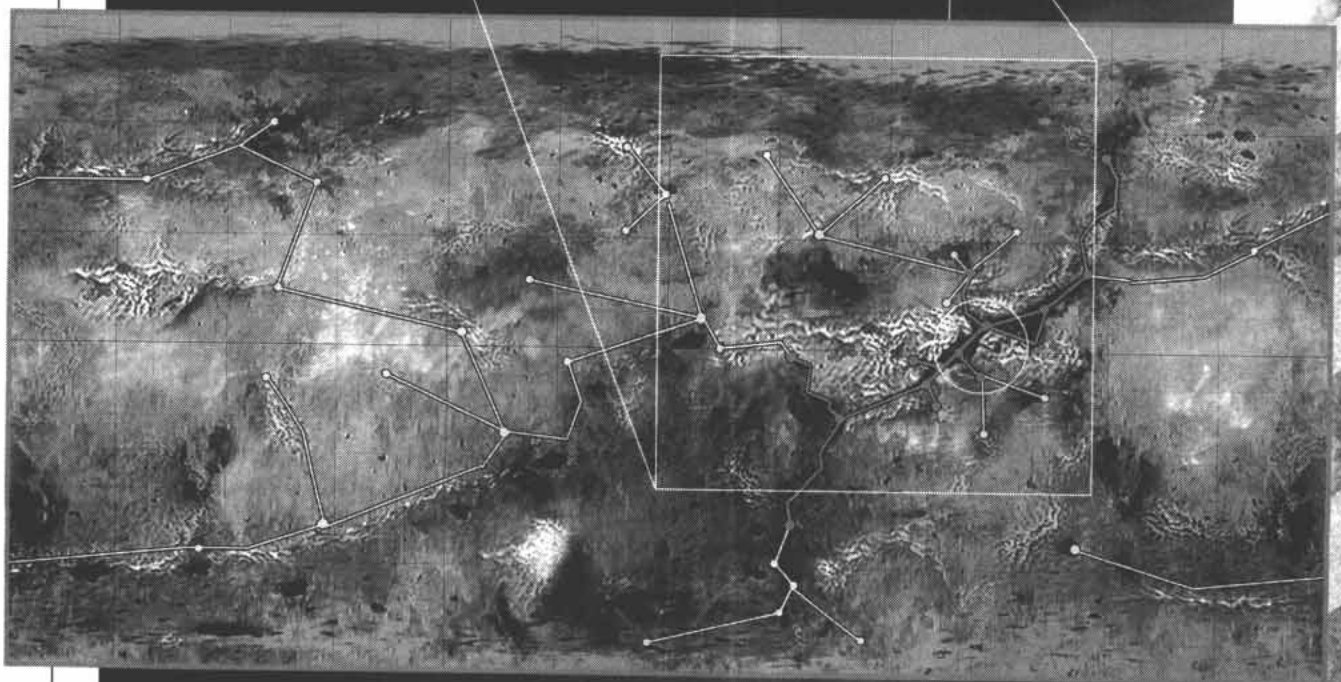
The transmissions ceased abruptly just hours after the Talons' return. The last images received showed some very worrisome developments indeed. CEF troop landers (codename "Tarantula") were seen coming down from the fleet in orbit, probably to bring additional garrison forces. GREL troopers were being deployed in the street along with numerous hovertanks and battle transports.

Intelligence analysts assume that the Talons' strike has been more successful than originally planned, and the hornets are now buzzing angrily around the nest. It is hoped that the break in communication is only due to safety measures being taken by the Liberati forces near the Gomorrah area, and does not signal a more unpleasant fate for Terranova's newest allies.

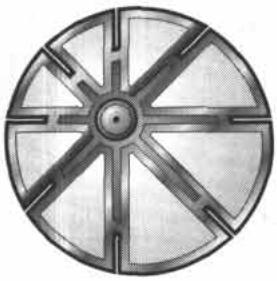


Cats Eye Trench

Most of the population of the planet is concentrated in the deep trench known as Cat's Eye, where the atmospheric pressure is high enough to allow breathing without mechanical assistance. Not surprisingly, the majority of the CEF forces present on Caprice are stationed in and around this area.



4.3 - OVERVIEW OF CAPRICIAN FORCES



Caprice never was a highly militarized planet. The harshness of life on its barren surface and in the seedy bowels of its mega-city sapped most of the energy and aggression of its people, and beyond a few conflicts here and there, the history of the former colony is, at the macro-societal level, fairly peaceful.

This does not mean that conflict was nonexistent, however, Corporations waged their own miniature wars both on the surface and in the streets of the city for control of resources and means of production, or to acquire new territories. Most of these skirmishes were fought by regular troops, armed with personal weapons and light armored transport vehicles. Heavy artillery created too much collateral damage for the taste of the profit-minded corporate decision-makers, and thus their production and deployment were severely restricted.

4.3.1 - Corporate Security Forces

Most of the peacekeeping duties were originally fulfilled by separate and individual Corporate Security Forces. Each corporation, large or small, boasted a small army whose size and equipment was generally commensurate with the wealth of their patrons. These men and women patrolled the installations and neighborhoods that were under the jurisdiction of the company, dealing with local crimes and disturbances as best they could. Each corporation had its own set of laws and punishments, and it was not unheard of for criminals to take desperate measures to cross over into the territory controlled by the more lenient groups in order to avoid a most unpleasant fate.

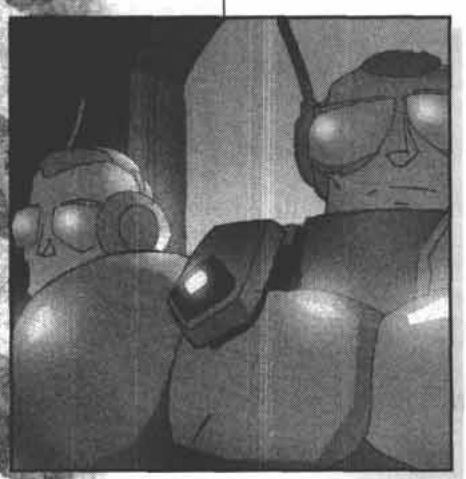
When the CEF came to Caprice, the various security forces were already in the process of merging and consolidating their troops into one unified group. The standardization of equipment, judicial and punishment practices would bring about substantial savings in time and personnel. Though a consensus on the city-wide law system was long to reach and eve longer to perfect, a unified law enforcement agency emerged soon afterward. The consolidation did not bring much improvement in their brutal methods, however, and the populace soon took the habit of calling them Corp-Serfs, a nickname that has stuck.

◆ Corporate Armies

For the corporations, the real war is not over territory, but over resources and technology. As a result, they have never found it necessary to gather large number of conventional forces, though some of the security teams deployed in the years after the break from Earth were small armies in their own rights. There are no "corporate armies" per se, only security forces. The safety of the planet as a whole was ensured by the orbital weapon platforms, though the CEF showed that even those offered only token protection against a dedicated militarized invader.

While the CEF and Liberati prepare for a fight, the corporations are playing industrial warfare with one another. Their conflict is overshadowed by the military presence of the NEC on their world, but that is how both sides like it. The corporations know that they will control whomever emerges victorious on the battlefield, or at the very least profit from their presence. After all, it is only business.

GRELs and the Corporations



The CEF high command was keenly interested to discover that, while there were no local equivalent to their genegineered troops, an impressive body of knowledge and skills regarding genetic developments was found in the laboratories of the Caprician biomedical companies. Though many corporations had experimented — secretly or openly — with genetic manipulations and advanced prosthesis, they were nevertheless very surprised by the existence of the artificial human trooper known as GRELs.

The NEC originally planned on canceling further genome research and diverting available funds to "high-kill" projects, such as mass destruction weapons. The corporations, however, convinced Earth the problem was not with GRELs specifically, as much as with the current models. The GRELs were raised to be cannon-fodder, and unfortunately, they were psychologically ingrained with that notion as well. This created a race of suicidal and, often, unimaginative soldiers. On the new battlefield, blind loyalty and hard programming were not sufficient anymore.

After consultation with their superiors back on Earth, the CEF officers incorporated some of the labs within their own command structure. The NEC contracted Elite Labs to build the next generation of super-soldiers through the SLEDGE program (Second-Line Elite Division GREL Experiments). SLEDGEs will be smaller, quicker and better trained in their field. Very little information is currently available beyond this, however, and are thus a high priority target for the Liberati intelligence efforts.

Combat Mounts - 4.3.2

Like all Earth-colonized worlds, Caprice received a large number of construction vehicles to help tame the landscape of the new colony. Many of these used a walker movement system to cope with the rugged land until roads could be built for more conventional tracked and wheeled units.

The harsh nature of the Caprician environment soon made it necessary to evolve new, better adapted designs. The new machines sported armor to resist rock falls and the occasional dust storms, and powerful manipulators to move equipment and tools about. When the turbulent times of the post-colonial period came, it was a relatively easy matter to attach weapons to them and transform them into full-fledged combat machines, much like the Terranovans did with their own machines.

Unlike the Terranovans, who have worked most often with the Hardhat series, almost all of the early walkers on Caprice were four and six-legged designs, more stable than the humanoid Hardhat and less prone to accident. Their enclosed bodies were also easier to keep pressurized, which was a must when working in the highlands of the planet. Though two-legged designs would later appear as vehicle designers gained assurance, the multi-legged platform remained as the preferred vehicle layout since then.

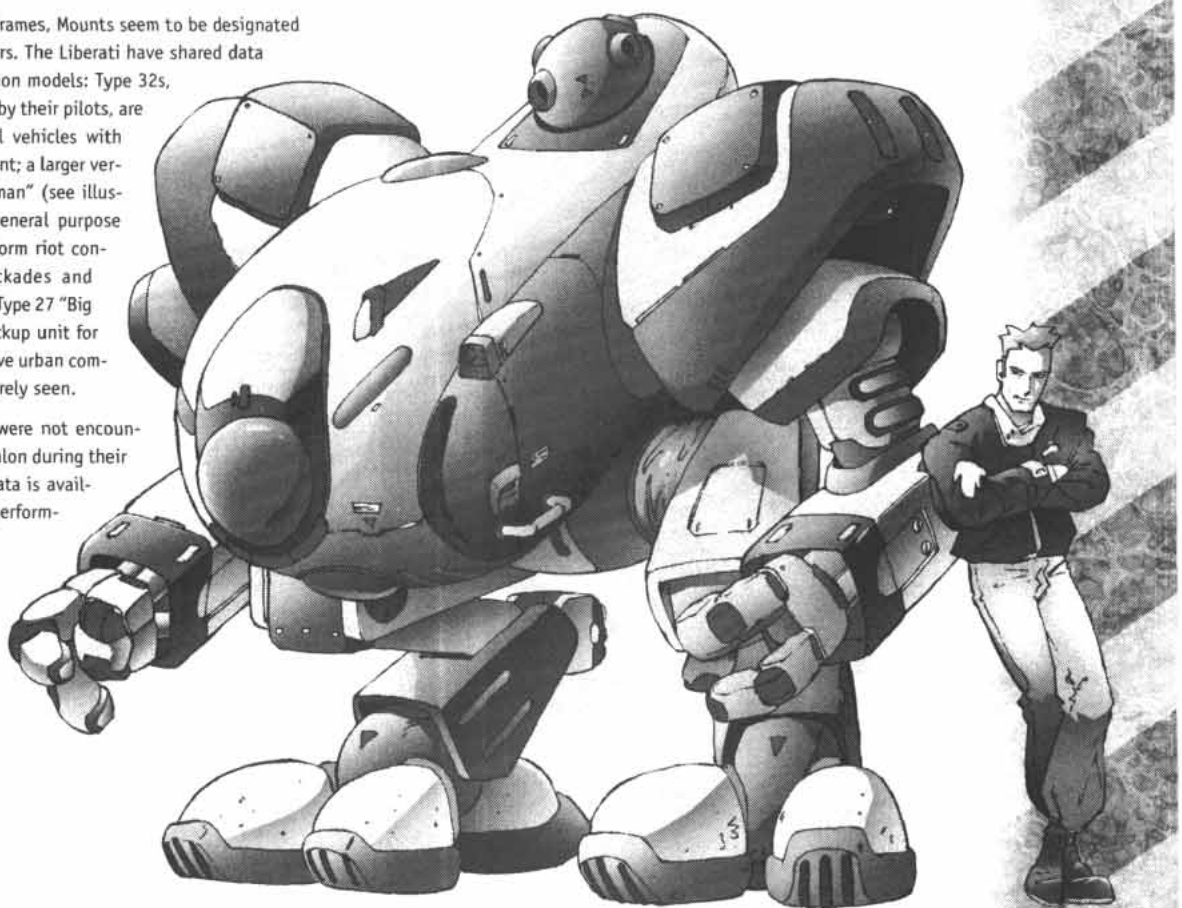
Urban Combat Mounts ◆

The tight confines of the streets of Gomorrah, coupled with the pitiful state of the pavement in many crime-infested sectors of the old city, brought about the creation of a very specialized type of patrol and combat vehicle. The Urban Combat Mounts are derived from the armored legged vehicles developed for the surface, but were made much smaller to fit the chaotic urban environment of the Caprician world-city. Mounts are used by Caprician corporate police forces to patrol their sectors and maintain order.

The Urban Combat Mounts are one-man, two-legged walkers propelled by battery packs and a back-mounted gas turbine. They differ significantly from Frames and Gears in both design and purpose: whereas Frames are more humanoid, Urban Combat Mounts are closer to capsules with legs, arms and weaponry. They look like squat humanoids without necks — what passes as the head is set directly on the back of the huge shoulders and merges into the chest. They are not very fast or agile, but they can go practically anywhere thanks to their complex suspension. They are fairly well armored for their size, and are practically impervious to personal weapons, which are usually the most that a rioter can lay his hands on.

As for the CEF's Battle Frames, Mounts seem to be designated simply by model numbers. The Liberati have shared data files on the most common models: Type 32s, nicknamed "Little Boy" by their pilots, are simple, everyday patrol vehicles with little armor and armament; a larger version, the Type 55 "Fatman" (see illustration) is a sturdier general purpose model designed to perform riot control or establish blockades and defense perimeters. The Type 27 "Big Guy" mostly acts as backup unit for heavy rescues or intensive urban combat situations, but is rarely seen.

Urban Combat Mounts were not encountered by the 1st Black Talon during their mission, and so little data is available on their combat performances for the moment.



BA'ALIM

The Ba'alim Combat Mount is an adaptation of the Moab unit, and both share similar main body and powerplant design. The Ba'alim, however, has only two legs, built around a digitigrade stance that makes it easier to absorb the shock of running and jumping at high speed. It acts as a highly mobile strike platform, running forward to hit the enemy with a concentrated and highly accurate barrage of firepower.

The crew of two (one pilot and one system engineer) sits in two separate compartments placed midway along the sloped hull. Banks of monitors supply an excellent view of the surroundings, though this makes the machines extremely dependent on its sensor array. The cockpits are both pressurized, though the life support system has very little built-in redundancy.

The main body has two sturdy weapon hardpoints, one on either side. These are generally occupied by twin heavy rocket pods, intended to blast the target into oblivion at short and medium range or pummel it with indirect fire from hard-to-reach places (which the machine has little difficulty reaching, thanks to its powerful drive train).

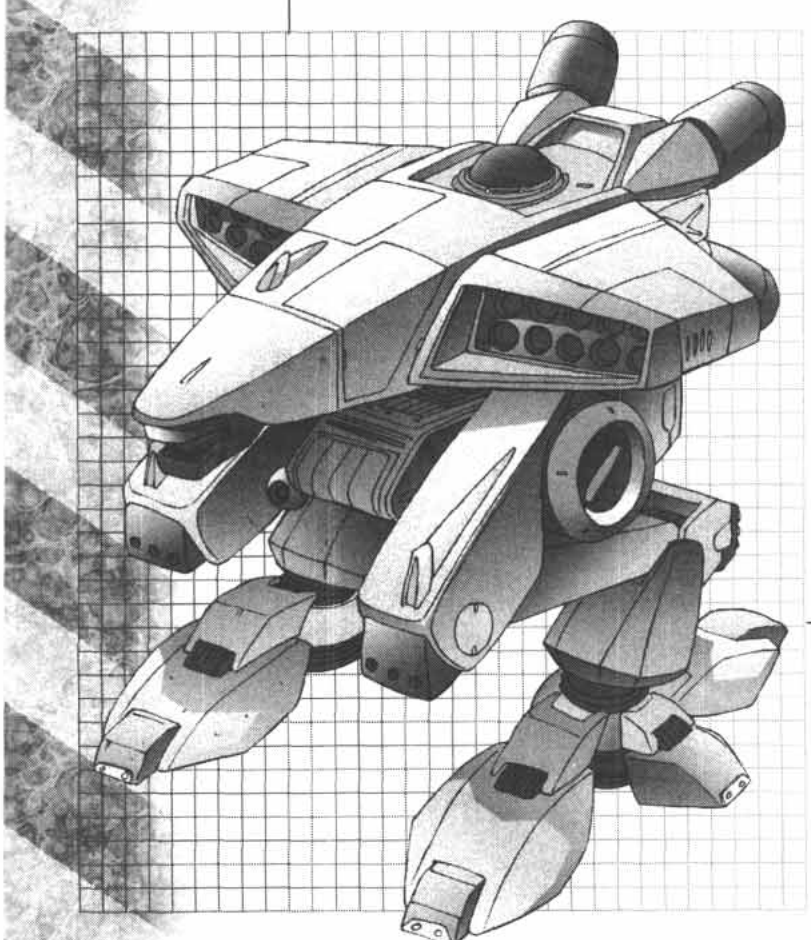
◆ Service Record

The Ba'alim (and numerous similar vehicles) were originally developed for use as engineering and mining vehicles for the remote outposts of the Caprician surface. It was a relatively simple matter to equip them with weaponry to make them into dedicated combat vehicles, since they already had sensors and armor. The Ba'alim has been in service for almost a century and is fielded by just under half the corporations. Most of them are deployed in mining camps and the outskirts of Gomorrha, where their off-road abilities and speed are most useful.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	947	Offensive:	2585	Defensive:	152	Miscellaneous:	103	Lemon Dice:	2

Vehicle Specifications

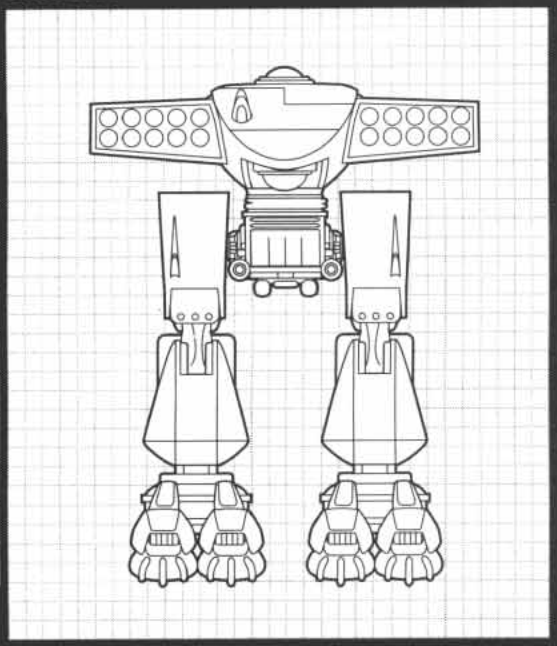


Code name:	Ba'alim
Production code:	-
Production Type:	*Limited Production*
Cost:	2,367,500 credits
Manufacturer:	Various corporations
Use:	Mobile Strike Combat Mount
Height:	7.2 meters
Width:	4 meters
Average armor thickness:	48 mm
Armor material:	Composite laminates w/ceramite
Standard operational weight:	15,000 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (60 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	n/a
Deployment Range:	300 km
Sensor Range:	40 hexes/2 km
Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Powerplant:	2 x V-engine
Horsepower:	2 x 900 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Rocket Delivery System	2 x 24 rockets
AP Grenade Launcher	6 bursts

BAALIM



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	2
• BONUS ACTIONS:	1

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	5
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	10
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	-	-
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	-	-
• MANEUVER:		-2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		300

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	2
• COMMUNICATION:	0	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	17
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	34
• OVERKILL:	51

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 947 • SIZE: 8 • COST: 2,367,500 credits

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Rocket Pod	HRP/24	Forward	3	6	12	24	-1	x20	2	+3	Indirect Fire
Grenade Launcher	APGL	Fixed F.	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I, IF, AE=0

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
24ea	
6	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Backup Sensors	-	Absorbs first Sensor hit	
HEAT-Resistant Armor	8	Adds to Armor vs. HEAT attacks	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Extreme Cold	
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Urban Friendly	-	-	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Large Sensor Profile	2	Subtract from Concealment
Sensor Dependent	-	Must rely on Sensors

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

MOAB

The Moab is an almost perfect example of Caprician walker vehicle engineering. It is a four-legged walker vehicle powered by twin V-engines located at the rear of the main hull. The latter sits on a universal turreted mount, to which a hip block is attached. Four powerful legs come out of the block, two on each side, which give the vehicle a somewhat insect-like appearance. The long legs are segmented for maximum mobility and equipped with claw-like feet for traction on the tough Caprician surface.

The sloped hull holds two crew stations, placed one behind the other and slightly off-center. Both cockpits are protected by heavy armor plates and are fully pressurized for operations anywhere on the surface, though the internal reserves are limited to a few hours. Sensor blisters placed all around the vehicle provide the crew with a detailed view of the outside world.

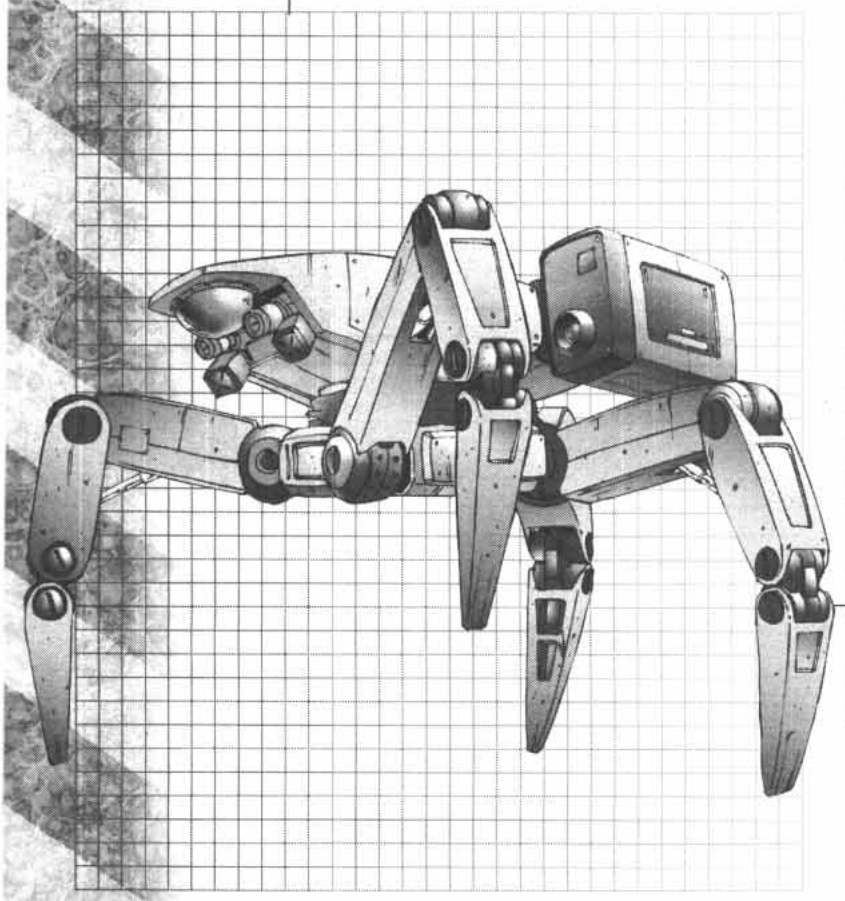
The vehicle's firepower is provided by a pair of weapon pods attached to either side of the main body. To reduce maintenance requirements and augment the machine's versatility, the pods are completely self-contained and can be readily exchanged between vehicles. Most of the Moabs observed so far have been equipped with twin laser cannons, often slaved to a single fire control computer, but railgun-armed walkers have been reported as well.

Service Record

This type of vehicle is mainly deployed in the wastelands outside the Cat's Eye trench, primarily around corporate mining outposts where they serve (with typical Caprician pragmatism) as both security and emergency engineering vehicles. Liberati scouts report that crane and A-frames attachments have sometimes been adapted to the weapon pod hardpoints for just this purpose, though no such vehicle has been reported by the Talon teams yet.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	772	Offensive:	1824	Defensive:	204	Miscellaneous:	287	Lemon Dice:	2



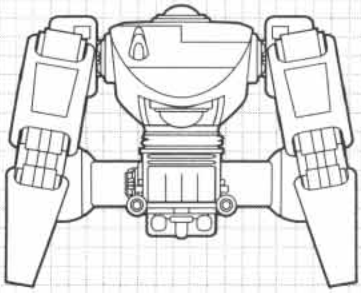
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Ammon
Production code:	-
Production Type:	Limited Production
Cost:	1,544,000 credits
Manufacturer:	Various corporations
Use:	All-Terrain Combat Mount
Height:	6.9 meters
Width:	9.8 meters
Average armor thickness:	62 mm
Armor material:	Composite laminates w/ceramite
Standard operational weight:	21,000 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (50 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	n/a
Deployment Range:	400 km
Sensor Range:	40 hexes/2 km
Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Powerplant:	2 x gas turbine
Horsepower:	2 x 1200 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Weapon Hardpoint x 2	-

MOAB



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 10 20 30 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	2
• BONUS ACTIONS:	1

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	4
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	8
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	-	-
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	-	-
• MANEUVER:		-2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		400

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	2
• COMMUNICATION:	0	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	20
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	40
• OVERKILL:	60

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 772 • SIZE: 9 • COST: 1,544,000 credits

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Gatling Laser	HGLC	Forward	2	4	8	16	+1	x16	2	+1	-3RB, Linked

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
100ea	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Backup Sensors	-	Absorbs first Sensor hit	
HEAT-Resistant Armor	6	Adds to Armor vs. HEAT attacks	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Extreme Cold	
Improved Off-road	-	Walker; -1 MP Cost	
Life Support	-	Limited	
Weapon Link	-	Link both HGLC	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Large Sensor Profile	1	Subtract from Concealment
Sensor Dependent	-	Must rely on Sensors

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

AMMON

The Ammon is almost identical to its Moab brother, except for the leg design and other minor system differences. Whereas the Moab is intended for the tough surfaces of the planet's wastelands, the Ammon has been designed to operate near or inside corporate installations. The claw-like feet, damaging to ferrocrete and of little use on sand and other soft surfaces, have been replaced with large grooved tires that allows the vehicle to use the city's well-developed road system to move about rapidly.

Power is supplied by a pair of high efficiency gas turbines placed in the rear section of the main hull. The entire powerplant section appears to de detachable, probably to facilitate maintenance and repair. This would also facilitate upgrades, such as the twin-V-engine configuration seen on the Ba'alim (which presumably can be used by the Ammon as well).

Like the Moab, the Ammon has a pair of hardpoints placed on either side of the hull. These are presumably controlled by the second crewman, letting the pilot concentrate on steering the ungainly walker. Most of the Ammons observed so far by the Black Talon have been equipped with a pair of laser cannons, though a few reports indicate that a field variant replaces them with cluster of guided missiles or autocannons. It is reasonable to assume that several weapon payload configurations exist, and all Talon crew should be wary whenever Ammons are spotted on the battlefield.

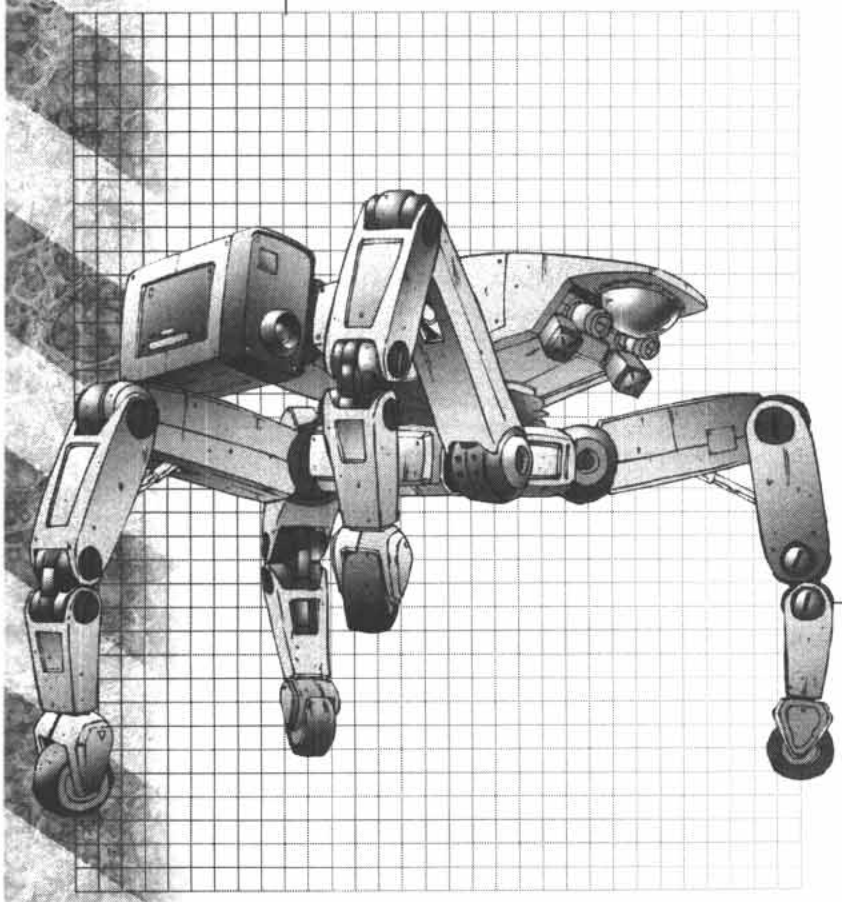
Service Record

The Ammon is found in virtually all the corporate security forces, though their overall numbers are somewhat lower than the wasteland version. They are generally used to provide heavy fire support and reinforcement to the smaller security walkers that form the bulk of the corporate installations' security contingent.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	732	Offensive:	1824	Defensive:	246	Miscellaneous:	126	Lemon Dice:	2

Vehicle Specifications

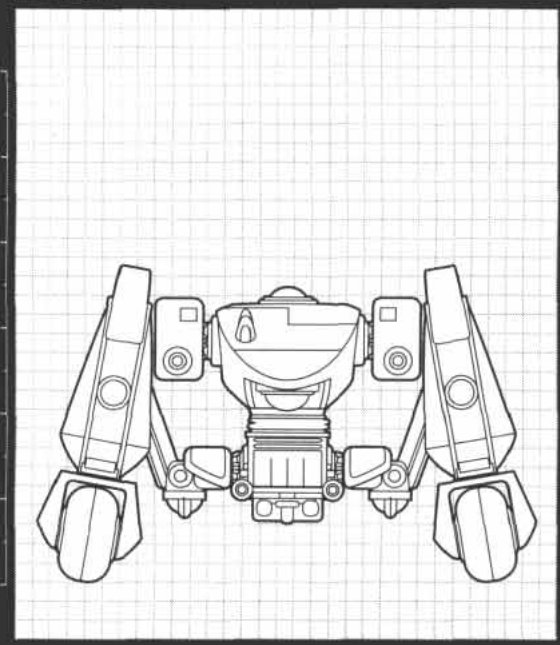


Code name:	Moab
Production code:	-
Production Type:	Limited Production
Cost:	1,464,000 credits
Manufacturer:	Various corporations
Use:	Urban Combat Mount
Height:	7.1 meters
Width:	9.8 meters
Average armor thickness:	62 mm
Armor material:	Composite laminates w/ceramite
Standard operational weight:	21,000 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (50 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (70 kph)
Deployment Range:	400 km
Sensor Range:	40 hexes/2 km
Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Powerplant:	2 x gas turbine
Horsepower:	2 x 1200 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
2 x Heavy Weapon Hardpoint	-

AMMON



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 10 20 30 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	2
• BONUS ACTIONS:	1

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	4
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	8
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	6
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	12
• MANEUVER:		-2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		400

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	2
• COMMUNICATION:	0	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	20
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	40
• OVERKILL:	60

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 732 • SIZE: 9 • COST: 1,464,000 credits

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Gatling Laser	HGLC	Forward	2	4	8	16	+1	x16	2	+1	-3RB, Linked

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
100	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Backup Sensors	-	Absorbs first Sensor hit	
HEAT-Resistant Armor	6	Adds to Armor vs. HEAT attacks	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Extreme Cold	
Life Support	-	Limited	
Urban Friendly	-	-	
Weapon Link	-	Link both HGLC	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Large Sensor Profile	1	Subtract from Concealment
Sensor Dependent	-	Must rely on Sensors

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

AMALEK APC

All corporations use Armored Personnel Carriers to move their security troops around their installations, and the designs are often very similar to one another. Many of these vehicles were co-opted by the invading Earth forces for their own use, and some have also fallen into Liberati hands over the decades.

The Amalek is typical of the model currently favored by the corporations. It is a sturdy vehicle capable of operating both in the city and in the wasteland, thanks to its high ground clearance and powerful transmission system. Each wheel is mounted on an independent articulated arm that allows the driver to optimize the suspension for the terrain; the arm's mechanisms are rugged and based on early walker technology, and share many similarities with Gear motive systems.

The vehicle's main hull is divided into two compartments, one for the driver at the front and another, capable of holding twelve troopers and their equipment, at the back.The extra space came in useful when dealing with the powerful Mordred-series GREL, who are usually carried in group of ten. Wide doors at the back and the sides ensure a fast exit, which the driver usually facilitates by lowering the entire vehicle as close to the ground as possible.

◆ Service Record

Amalek armored personnel carriers are used as jacks-of-all-trades by the Caprician security forces, and they are frequently seen in the streets and outskirts of Gomorrah. In addition to their combat duties, they have been used as ad-hoc command centers and transports. Since the CEF conquest, the Earth forces have coopted a number of these vehicles for their use, finding them more useful and less resource-hungry than their standard hover personnel carrier.

Game Statistics

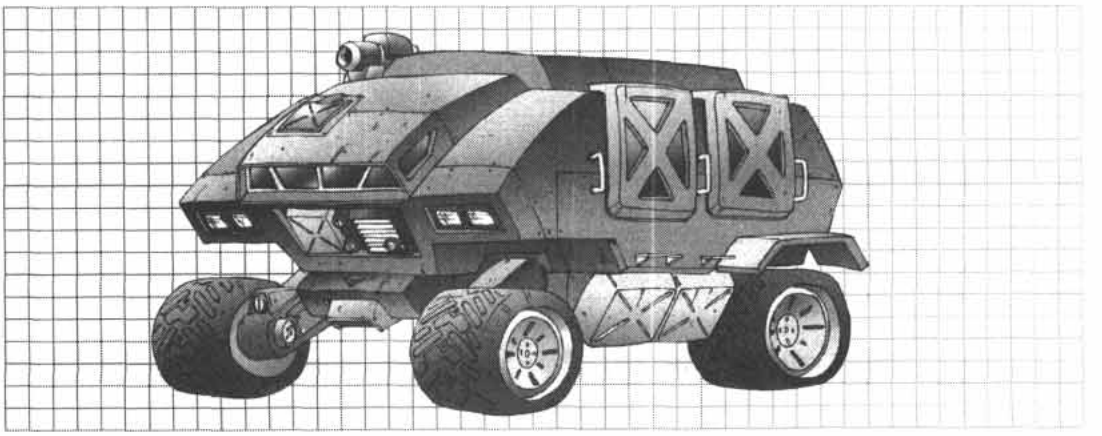
Threat Value:	166	Offensive:	58	Defensive:	93	Miscellaneous:	346	Lemon Dice:	3

Vehicle Specifications

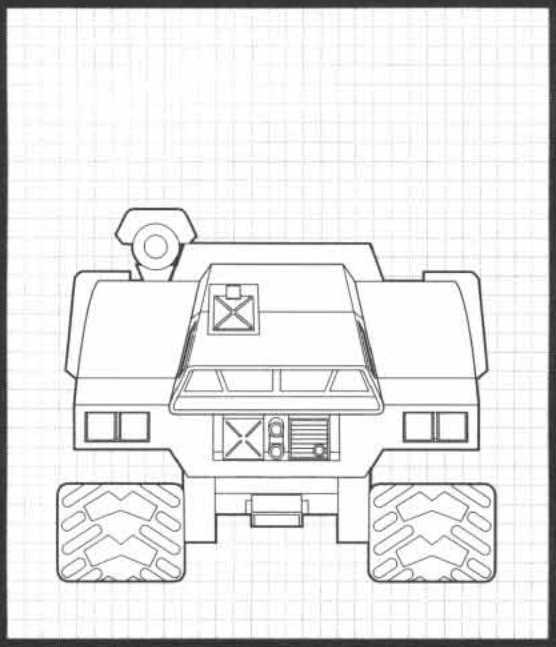
Code name:	Amalek	Armor material:	Laminated composites
Production code:	-	Standard operational weight:	5900 kg
Production Type:	Mass Production	Primary Movement Mode:	Ground (100 kph)
Cost:	69,167 credits	Secondary Movement Mode:	n/a
Manufacturer:	Various Corporations	Deployment Range:	400 km
Use:	Armored Personnel Carrier	Sensor Range:	40 hexes/2 km
Height:	2.9 meters	Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Length:	5.8 meters	Powerplant:	2 x Gas Turbine
Average armor thickness:	35 mm	Horsepower:	2 x 400 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload	Name	Ammunition Payload
Automatic Grenade Launcher	20 bursts	-	-



AMALEK APC



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 166 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 69,167 credits

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	G	9
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	G	17
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	-	-
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	-	-
• MANEUVER:		-2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		400

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	2
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	13
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	26
• OVERKILL:	39

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Grenade Launcher	APGL	Turret	1	2	4	8	-1	x3	1	0	Anti-I, IF, AE=0
Chassis Reinforcement	CR	Fixed F.	0	0	0	0	0	+1	1	0	-

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
20	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Gun Ports	-	One-third of passengers (four ports, two on each side)	
Emergency Medical	-	Absorbs one Crew Stun	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Extreme Cold	
Large Doors	-	No action cost to exit	
Passenger Seating	-	12 troopers (or 10 GRELs)	
Reinforced Crew Compartment	-	Absorbs first Crew hit	
Searchlight	1	Fixed Forward, 50 m	
Urban Friendly	-	-	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

MULE UTILITY TRANSPORT

The rugged nature of the Caprician landscape forced the adoption early on of several tough transport vehicles, most of them tracked, to move people and equipment between installations. These vehicles have evolved little since the first colonization of the planet, and are widespread among all the faction.

The Mule, as it is often referred to, is a sturdy half-track vehicle used to ferry personnel and equipment across the surface between the mining camps. The truck's frame has twin tracks and large wheels attached to a heavy-duty suspension to absorbs the shock of cross-country travel. The tracks are placed underneath the main cargo area for extra support. The powerful transmission allows it to haul a respectable amount of material across a considerable distance. The twin high-temp ceramic gas turbines, buried in the main body under the cab, can burn almost any type of fuel and convert them to power. The vehicle is powered by four electric engines connected to banks of superconducting batteries, which the turbines constantly recharge. The turbines can also be used for extra power if need be.

The truck comes with a simple radio and navigation system, coupled with basic low-light sensors for night driving. It is adequate for day-to-day use, but its range and quality are drastically reduced whenever the vehicle enters combat conditions. The vehicle can seat one driver plus two passengers confortably, and features a small rest area behind the main cab.

◆ Service Record

A typical all-purpose transport vehicle, the Mule is a simple and rugged design which can take a lot of abuse. The Mule is the Liberati's most popular vehicle, and is found in almost every group. The Liberati use them to discreetly move troops and supplies, since the common appearance of this type of vehicle generally attracts little attention.

Game Statistics

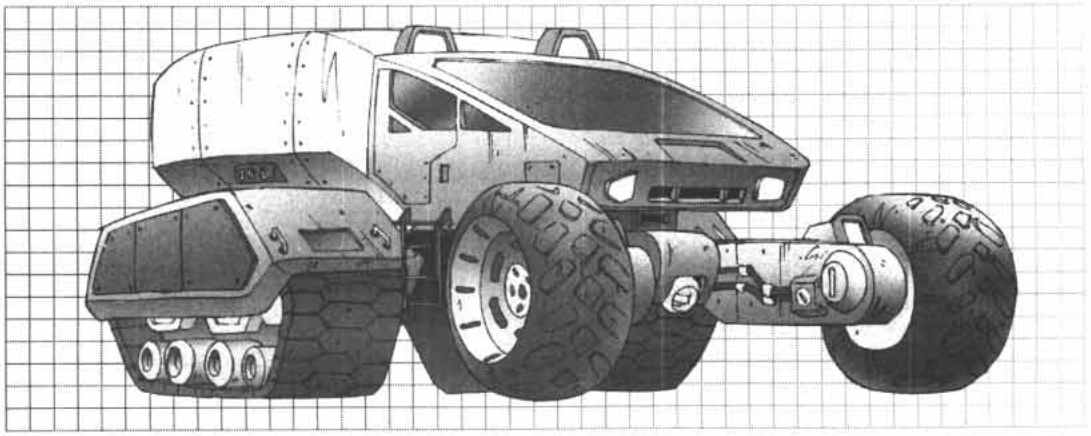
Threat Value:	175	Offensive:	0	Defensive:	29	Miscellaneous:	495	Lemon Dice:	3

Vehicle Specifications

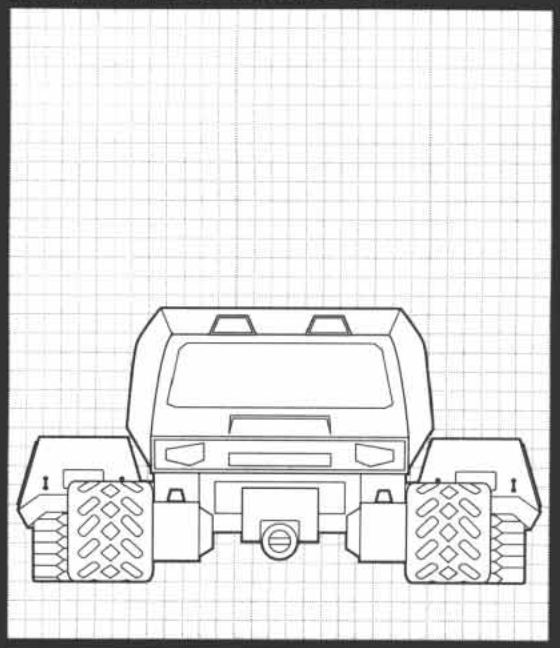
Code name:	Mule	Armor material:	Metal Alloy
Production code:	-	Standard operational weight:	5800 kg
Production Type:	Mass Production	Primary Movement Mode:	Ground (80 kph)
Cost:	56,250 credits	Secondary Movement Mode:	n/a
Manufacturer:	Various corporations	Deployment Range:	700 km
Use:	Utility Transport	Sensor Range:	40 hexes/2 km
Height:	5.3 meters	Communication Range:	400 hexes/20 km
Length:	10 meters	Powerplant:	2 x Gas Turbine
Average armor thickness:	5 mm	Horsepower:	2 x 850 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload	Name	Ammunition Payload
None	-	-	-



MULE UTILITY TRANSPORT



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 10 20 30 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	G	7
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	G	13
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	-	-
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	-	-
• MANEUVER:		-3
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		700

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	-2	2
• COMMUNICATION:	-2	20
• FIRE CONTROL:		-2

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	8
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	16
• OVERKILL:	24

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 135 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 56,250 credits

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Cargo Bay	-	6 x 4 x 3 m; 72 m³	
Crew Accomodations (Military)	-	1 person	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Extreme Cold	
High Towing Capacity	-	Double	
Improved Off-road	-	-1MP Cost	
Life Support	-	Limited	
Passenger Seating	-	2 persons	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Exposed FireCon System	-	FireCon damage is one step worse
Exposed Movement System	-	Movement damage is one step worse
Fragile Chassis	-	Structure hits are one step worse
Large Sensor Profile	1	Easier to detect

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

MITZRAIM VTOL

Vectored thrust aerodynes are as agile as helicopters, but tend to be sturdier and can achieve higher speeds. The vehicle type relies on powerful turbofans driven by turbines or heavy-duty electric motors powered by onboard batteries or generators. Much of the thrust is derived from the high volume of air moved by the turbofan's high RPM/low torque rotors, which reduces (or even eliminates, in some designs) the need for additional gas combustion. This makes them ideally suited for urban operations, since their exhaust, while powerful, is not hot enough to burn. The VTOLs are also more compact than helicopters, which makes them better suited for operation in the tight confines of the Caprician city.

The corporations of Caprice field a number of these vehicles to keep an eye on their territory. The Mitzraim VTOL is a small but powerful aerodyne that is used by corporate security (and now CEF forces as well) for surveillance, recon and light support duties. A battle-tested, reliable model, the Mitzraim is both fast and maneuverable, using its four independently-articulated thruster pods for propulsion and maneuver (two smaller pods are fixed to either side of the fuselage to supply additional lift). The crew sits at the front under a large polarized canopy. The original design was unarmed, though a few carried machineguns and anti-riot weapons. When the CEF took over, they modified the Mitzraim to carry a laser cannon in a belly turret and added a pair of launch racks for guided missiles.

◆ Service Record

It is used extensively to patrol the periphery, mainly for aerial protection, but also for counter-insurgency and anti-bandit operations. In the past decades, it has seen an increasing amount of combat versus the scattered Liberati rebels, especially since the arrival of the CEF, who co-opted a number of these vehicles for their own use.

Game Statistics

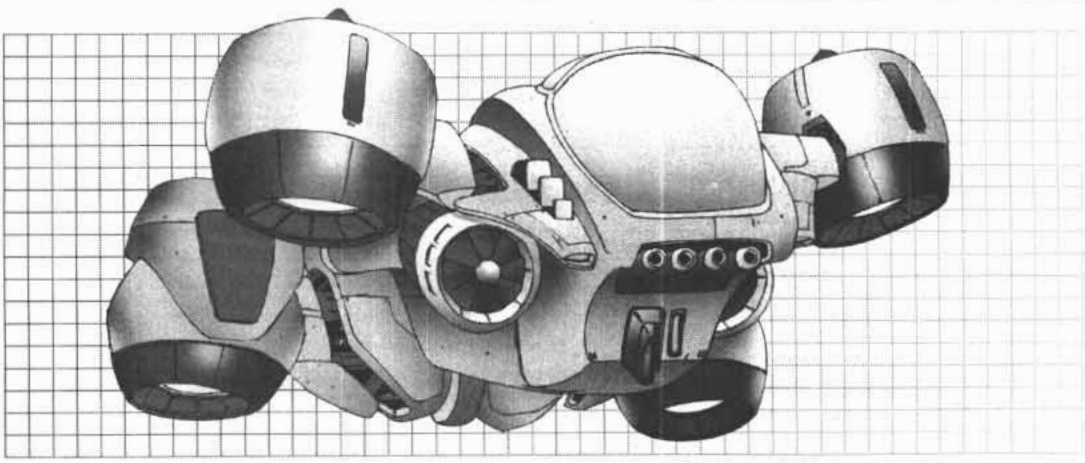
Threat Value:	698	Offensive:	1157	Defensive:	200	Miscellaneous:	735	Lemon Dice:	3

Vehicle Specifications

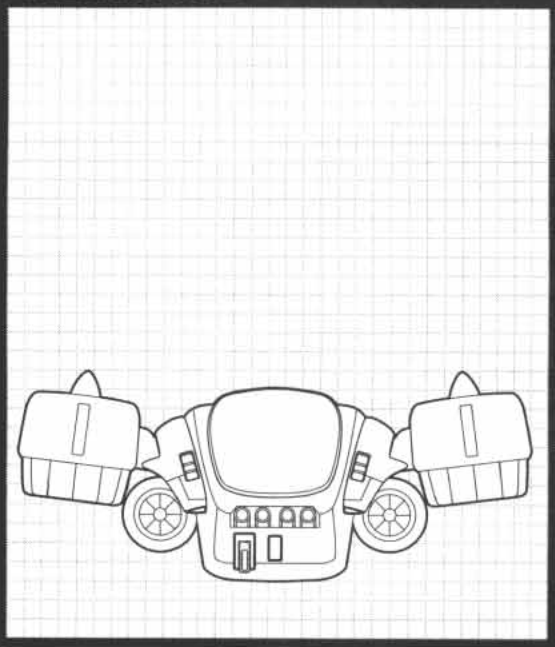
Code name:	Mitzraim VTOL	Armor material:	Composites
Production code:	-	Standard operational weight:	2600 kg
Production Type:	Mass Production	Primary Movement Mode:	Flight (400 kph)
Cost:	644, 400 credits	Secondary Movement Mode:	Ground (taxying)
Manufacturer:	Various corporations	Deployment Range:	450 km
Use:	Surveillance/Light Assault	Sensor Range:	40 hexes/2 km
Height:	2.3 meters	Communication Range:	200 hexes/10 km
Length:	5.5 meters	Powerplant:	4 x Self-enclosed Turbofans
Average armor thickness:	15 mm	Horsepower:	4 x 2000 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload	Name	Ammunition Payload
Retractable Laser Turret	40 shots	Missile Hardpoints	2 anti-vehicle guided missiles



MITZRAIM VTOL



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	2
• BONUS ACTIONS:	1

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	F	6
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	F	12
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	G	0
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	G	0
• MANEUVER:		+1
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		450

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	2
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	10
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	20
• OVERKILL:	30

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 698 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 644, 400 credits

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Laser Turret	HGLC	Turret	2	4	8	16	+1	x16	1	+1	-3RB
Missiles	AGM	Forward	3	6	12	24	+1	x15	1	0	Guided

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
40	
2	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Autopilot	-	Act as Level 1 pilot	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Extreme Cold	
Loudspeakers	-	Standard	
NOE Flyer	-	Can fly at Level 0	
Searchlight	2	Swivel, 100 meters	
Target Designator	3	Used to target Guided weapons	
Urban Friendly	-	-	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Cannot Glide	-	No wing surface
Large Sensor Profile	1	Easier to detect
Maximum Ceiling	6	6,000 meters maximum

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

4.4 - OVERVIEW OF THE EARTH FORCES

All available data on the New Earth Commonwealth and its military wing, the Colonial Expeditionary Force, has been compiled from intelligence gathered during the War of the Alliance, in Port Arthur and from Caprician allies. It should be considered reliable but not infallible, since the CEF has likely modified its approach to warfare in the cycles since its defeat.

The New Earth Commonwealth was originally the New Eurasian Commonwealth, the political power that emerged victorious from the Third World War on Earth. All reports point to the NEC being an extremely totalitarian power, dominated by a political organism known simply as "the Party." Whether this party is the political wing of the military or an ideological conclave that controls the army is largely immaterial at this stage, though it appears to be both. Either way, the NEC is fully committed to re-establishing Earth's dominion over the colony worlds and is prepared to use force to do so.

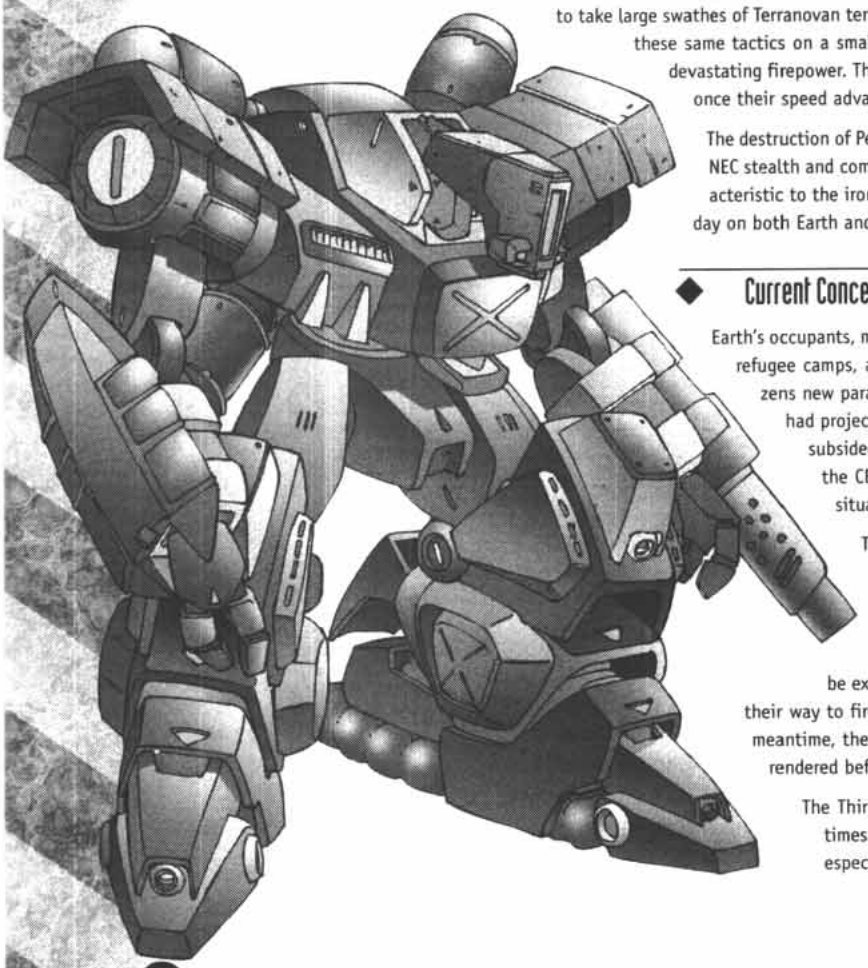
4.4.1 - The Colonial Expeditionary Force

The NEC's instrument in this conquest is the Colonial Expeditionary Force, a huge armed force sent from Earth. The CEF seems to be made up of a combination of veterans of the Third World War and large numbers of vat-grown supersoldiers known as GRELs. The CEF is equipped with many advanced weapon systems, most prominently assault hovertanks armed with particle accelerators and other advanced weapon systems.

When the CEF invaded Terra Nova, they landed a sizable force, and launched a multiprong assault. While numerically inferior, they had a huge technological advantage in both their hovertanks and GRELs. One hindering factor for the CEF is that they were fighting a war of conquest. They couldn't afford to destroy the resources on Terra Nova simply to make a point, but could do it to a limited fashion. This limitation on weapons of mass destruction was the CEF's biggest hindrance.

The CEF is a rapid invasion force, designed to be able to hit hard and fast on a wide variety of terrain types. The course of the War of the Alliance is a testament to this fact: the CEF arrived en masse and was able to take large swathes of Terranovan territory before being bogged down. The CEF is likely to employ these same tactics on a smaller scale in the future, employing rapid assaults backed by devastating firepower. They are very dangerous when on the offensive, but fare poorly once their speed advantage is taken away from them.

The destruction of Peace River provides troubling proof of the effectiveness of the NEC stealth and commando operations. These are subtle forms of warfare uncharacteristic to the iron hammer of the CEF; new strategies may be the order of the day on both Earth and Caprice.



◆ Current Concerns

Earth's occupants, many of whom still live in bombed-out city husks or in massive refugee camps, are growing dangerously restless. The NEC promised its citizens new paradisiac homes on colonial worlds, but not as quickly as they had projected. Now that the initial euphoria of the post-war period has subsided, people are complaining once more. The NEC is pressuring the CEF central command to earn some quick victories before the situation at home degenerates once more.

The political pressure is only adding to the frustration levels of the forces present on Caprice. The CEF Third Fleet, which was the primary Caprice invasion force and is now stationed in the Loki system as Earth's first line of defense, have not seen any action in over a decade (since they first arrived, to be exact). They have watched other CEF fleets cross the system on their way to firezones to take their designated worlds, or die trying. In the meantime, the Third's assignment is to babysit a cowardly planet that surrendered before the first shot was even fired.

The Third Fleet is desperately eager for some action, any action. In times to come, they are going to be more trigger happy than most, especially after the humiliating visit of the 1st Black Talon.

CEF Organization - 4.4.2

The CEF's major design consideration, being tasked for interstellar conquest, is the "Getting There" part of the equation. There is only a finite amount of volume/mass payload space available aboard the ships of the fleet, and what is taken must perform to very high standards to be worth the investment. The CEF thus needs to get the maximum amount of capability from any given embarked unit regardless of its type, be it infantry, armor, artillery, and aerospace support.

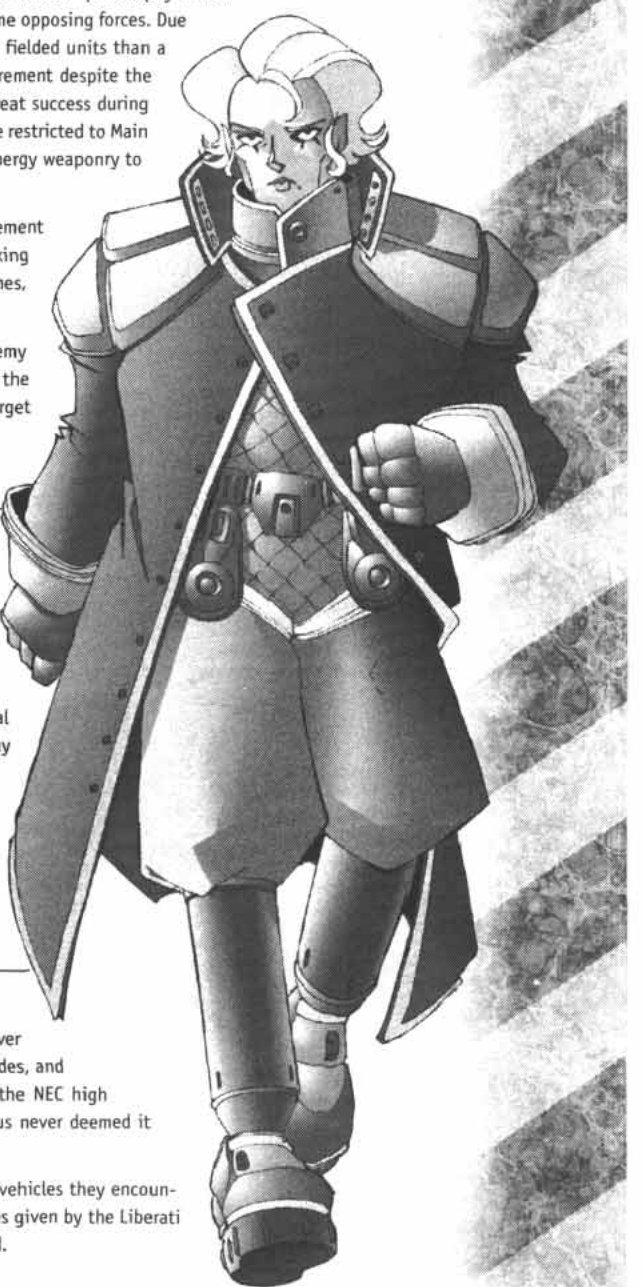
CEF regiments are smaller than their Terranovan equivalents, because of both the aforementioned transport problem and their very heavy logistical burden in term of fuel, spare parts and maintenance crew. Though fielding only two-third of the number of combat vehicles of a Terranovan armor regiment, the requirements for a CEF hovertank regiment are actually higher. Despite this numerical inferiority, CEF formations are usually able to concentrate their firepower effectively against weak points in the enemy lien and leverage their advantages in both lethality and mobility when dealing with more conventional armored troops.

◆ Armor Groups

CEF armored regiments, specifically their hovertank groups, are based on a "lighter yet harder" philosophy which attempts to combine high firepower with greater mobility to rapidly and decisively overcome opposing forces. Due to the special nature and logistical needs of hovertanks, each CEF armor group has fewer fielded units than a comparable conventional regiment, yet still has an equally large logistical support requirement despite the smaller numbers. This translate into a number of fire policies that were exploited with great success during the War of the Alliance. For example, use of the rare and expensive guided missiles was to be restricted to Main Battle Tank-class and other hardened targets, while lighter vehicles had be engaged by energy weaponry to conserve the limited supplies of non-reusable ammunition.

The CEF's preferred tactical deployment usually centers around one of two basic engagement methods. In the first, all hovertanks overrun the enemy position at high speed while making evasive maneuvers to get past any potential ambush/kill zones. Once behind the enemy lines, the hovertanks wheel about and counterattack from the enemy's unprepared rear.

In the second, the squadron would break into paired-tank teams to flank and pincer the enemy such that enemy armor units would have to expose their rear or flank to one member of the pair. When facing heavy armor, the hovertanks in the frontal arc typically employ their target designators rather than firing their missiles to ensure that their pair-mate has the best chance of getting a one-shot kill.



◆ Lightning Wars

The CEF has equipment that moves faster and hits harder than almost anything their opponents can field. Their patrol radius, however, is (at least by Terranovan military standards) pitifully small. Since most of their vehicles have a combat endurance of only a few hours, they cannot venture out much further than 50 or 100 kilometers when on patrol. When this is compared to the 200-250 km effective deployment radius of most Terranovan vehicles, a serious tactical weakness becomes readily apparent: this operational radius is further than the distance the CEF can reasonably expect to advance in a single day without severe logistical problems, allowing the attackers to readily escape retaliation and effectively giving them control of the battlefield.

The continued lack of field endurance exhibited in CEF designs may mean that the Earth army still has not learned their lesson. It may well prove to be their downfall should a serious offensive movement get going on Caprice between the Liberati and the NEC, especially if the former are backed by other colony worlds.

◆ Identifications and Names

The Colonial Expeditionary Force, perhaps because of its semi-expendable nature, has never given names to its equipment. All vehicle designs are identified with number and letter codes, and sometimes an unofficial nickname given by the officers in charge. Officially, however, the NEC high command viewed the CEF vehicles as mere tools, just like its vat-grown warriors, and thus never deemed it important to assign them descriptive names.

The Terranovans, however, had no such compulsion, and attributed codenames to all CEF vehicles they encountered, often based on their appearance and performances in the field. These, and the names given by the Liberati to the local equipment, is being used nowadays whenever a vehicle needs to be identified.

CEF HT-68 HOVERTANH

The mainstay of the Colonial Expeditionary Force, the HT-68 is a tank chassis mounted on two powerful turbofans similar to those used on VTOL-capable jets. Brief bursts from its engines allow it to jump over obstacles it cannot cross using the air-cushion ground effect alone. This gives it unprecedented mobility over all types of ground, a definite plus for the invading Earth army. The hovertank is designed to strike hard and strike fast, exploiting weaknesses in the enemy's defense at a moment's notice.

Despite its imposing size (it is slightly larger than a standard-tracked main battle tank), the HT-68 is relatively light to save as much wear and tear as possible on the lift fans. It is built out of ultra-light alloys, ceramites, and other costly space-produced materials; only the NEC can viably afford an army of such vehicles. The thrust generated by the vehicle's turbofans is channeled through articulated nozzles placed around the hull of the tank, making it more maneuverable than standard ground-effect vehicles. The control surfaces and exhausts are exposed to hostile fire, especially the two large airflow controllers, which constitute the vehicle's main weakness.

A turret-mounted particle accelerator is the primary armament. Missile racks holding anti-armor guided missiles can be mounted on the sides of the turret, firing on targets designated by forward observers, troops on the ground or drones.

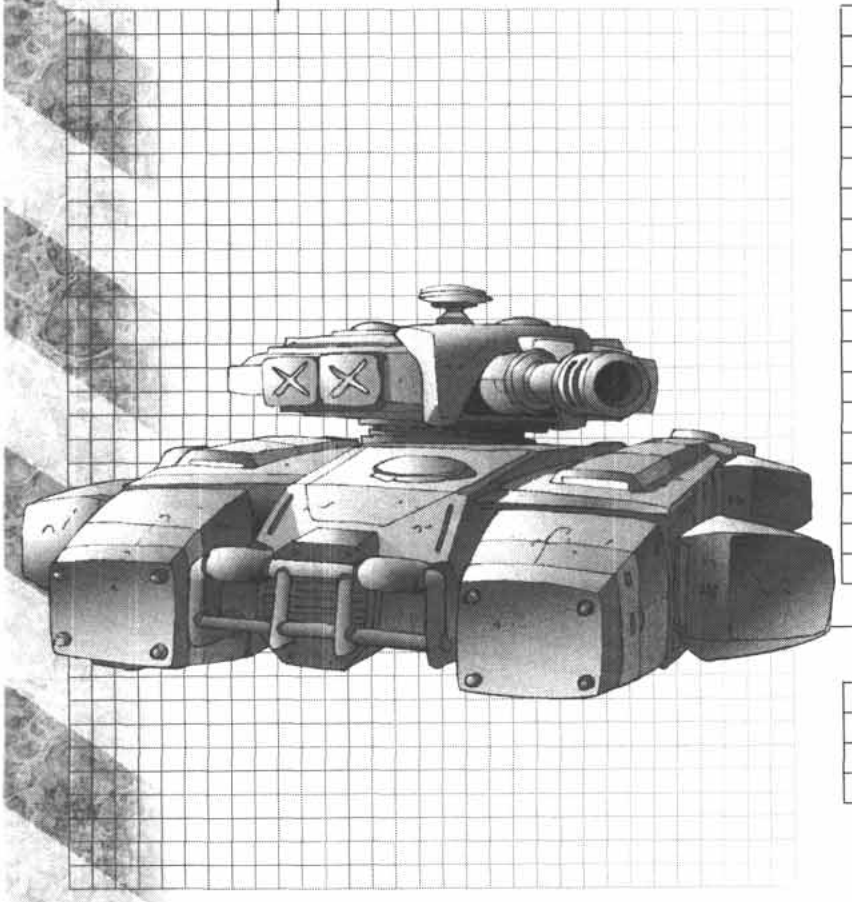
◆ Service Record

When Earth attempted to invade Terra Nova in TN 1913, the local forces were confronted by hovertanks for the first time. The HT-68s were used as shock troops and assault vehicles, leaving the task of pacifying the conquered areas to the troops that followed them. When the CEF retreated in disarray, most of the vehicles were scuttled or flown back to the landing ships. Only a few of these hovertanks were left behind by the invasion forces. They are now either in museums or with independent local forces such as the Port Arthur army.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	3417	Offensive:	7293	Defensive:	736	Miscellaneous:	2221	Lemon Dice:	1

Vehicle Specifications

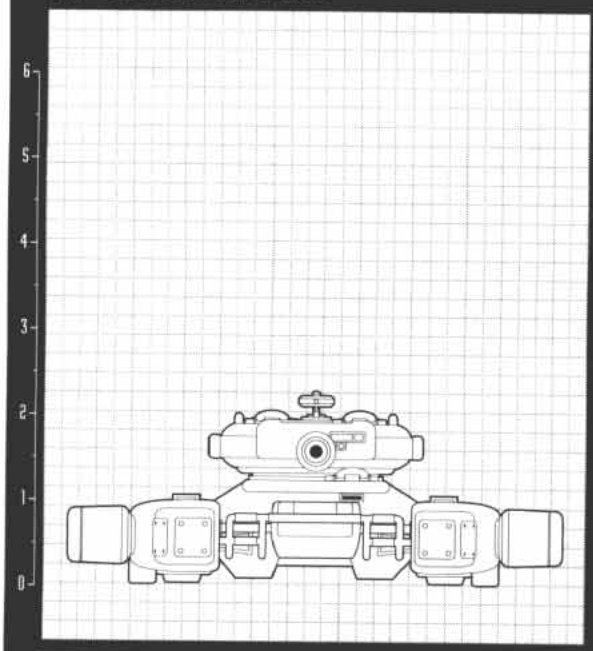


Code Name:	Predator Hovertank
Production Code:	HT-68
Production Type:	Mass Production
Cost:	unknown
Manufacturer:	Colonial Expeditionary Force
Use:	Heavy Assault Hovertank
Height:	3.6 meters
Length:	10.4 meters
Width:	8.0 meters
Average Armor Thickness:	85 mm
Armor Material:	Ceramite/Composite
Standard Operational Weight:	45,000 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Hover (140 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Jump Jets (100 x 50 meters)
Deployment Range:	200 km (600 km w/ Fuel Efficient)
Sensor Range:	100 hexes/5 km
Communication Range:	600 hexes/30 km
Powerplant:	2x Turbofans w/Superconductors and Fuel Cells
Horsepower:	2 x 2000 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
40 MW Particle Cannon	60 shots
Guided Missile Delivery System	8 Missiles
Crash Guard	n/a

HT-68 HOVERTANK



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 10 20 30 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	3
• BONUS ACTIONS:	2

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	H	12
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	H	23
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	-	-
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	-	-
• MANEUVER:		-2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		200

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	4
• COMMUNICATION:	2	30
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	36
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	72
• OVERKILL:	108

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 3417 • SIZE: 12 • COST: N/A

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Particle Cannon	LPA	Turret	2	4	8	16	+1	x10	1	0	Haywire, -1RB
Guided Missiles	ATM	Forward	3	6	12	24	+1	x25	1	0	Guided
Crash Guard	CR	F. Forward	0	0	0	0	0	+1	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
60	
8	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Advanced Controls	-	+1 Action (already incorporated in Bonus Action above)	
Advanced Neural Network	-	-	
Airdroppable	-	-	
Backup Sensors	-	Absorbs first Sensor hit	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Jump Jets	2	Allow jumps of up to 100 m	yes
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Sniper System	-	HPA	
Target Designator	3	+2 Bonus for Guided Weapons	yes
Urban Friendly	-	-	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Difficult to Modify	-	-2 to Repairs and Modify tests
Large Sensor Profile	3	Easier to detect
Sensor Dependent	-	Requires operational sensors to function
Weak Point	8	Movement
Weak Point	8	AUX Systems

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

CEF HT-72 HOVERTANK

The HT-72 is believed to be the combat vehicle that will replace the HT-68 in the ranks of the Colonial Expeditionary Force. A few of these vehicles had been sighted during the War of the Alliance, presumably test models or the field deployment of the very first units delivered by the conquered factories of Caprice. Though it uses the same basic technology, the HT-72 is much different, visually, than the HT-68: its hull is more compact and streamlined, and its turret longer and thinner.

The HT-72 is a much more advanced combat craft than the older HT-68 model. Its turbines are stronger, allowing the vehicle to lift additional armor mass, jump higher and attain higher speeds overall. The exhaust is distributed through six main articulated vents located around the lower hull. The HT-72 suffers from the same problem as the HT-68, however, in that its control surfaces and exhausts are exposed to hostile fire. It also has smaller airflow controllers, which makes it somewhat less maneuverable at higher speeds.

The newer hovertank is based around the same type of armament as its older sibling. A turret-mounted particle accelerator constitutes the main offensive power, using charged particles to disable either by the impact or by the electric surge generated by it. Missile racks holding anti-armor guided missiles are mounted on the rear of the turret, opening up to fire vertically.

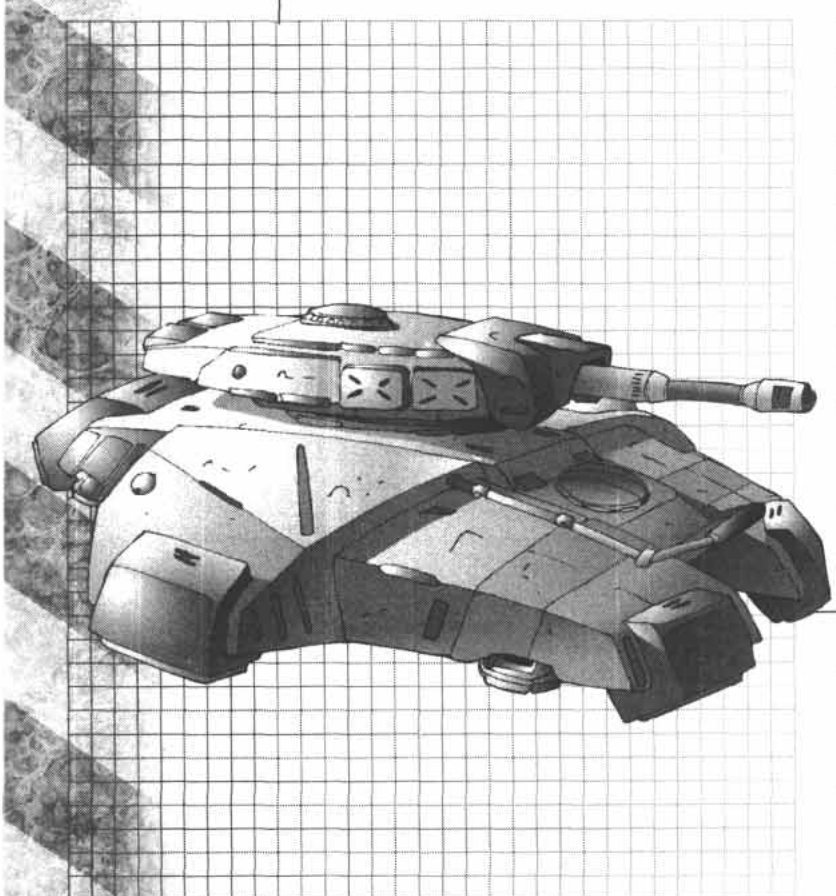
Service Record

The Colonial Expeditionary Force deployed a few HT-72s during the War of the Alliance. It is believed that the hovertank is now the New Earth Commonwealth's mainstay fighting vehicle, and that the few that were deployed on Terra Nova were sent to round out the "old war stock" used by the invasion fleet. Their performances might be slightly different based on the atmosphere and gravity of the world(s) they will be operating in, and such an assignment might have been part of the ultimate field tests.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	3715	Offensive:	7402	Defensive:	756	Miscellaneous:	2986	Lemon Dice:	2

Vehicle Specifications

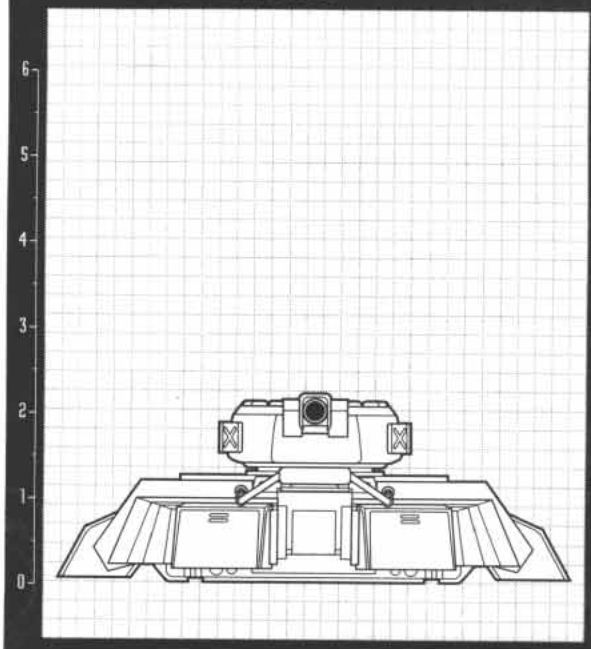


Code Name:	Lead Sled
Production Code:	HT-72
Production Type:	*Mass Production*
Cost:	Unknown
Manufacturer:	Colonial Expeditionary Force
Use:	All Terrain Combat Vehicle
Length:	11.0 meters
Width:	8.0 meters
Average Armor Thickness:	90 mm
Armor Material:	Alloy w/Ceramite
Standard Operational Weight:	46,000 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Hover (140 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Jump Jets (100 x 50 meters)
Deployment Range:	200 km (600 km w/ Fuel Efficient)
Sensor Range:	100 hexes/5 km
Communication Range:	600 hexes/30 km
Powerplant:	2x Turbofans w/Superconductors and Fuel Cells
Horsepower:	2000 hp

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
60 MW Particle Cannon	60 shots
Missile Delivery System	10 missiles
Crash Guard	-

HT-72 HOVERTANK



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	2
• BONUS ACTIONS:	2

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	H	13
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	H	25
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	-	-
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	-	-
• MANEUVER:		-2
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		200

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	4
• COMMUNICATION:	2	30
• FIRE CONTROL:		+1

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	36
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	72
• OVERKILL:	108

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 3745 • SIZE: 12 • COST: unknown

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Particle Cannon	HPA	Turret	2	4	8	16	+1	x10	1	0	Haywire, -1RB
Missiles	ABM	Turret	3	6	12	24	+1	x25	1	0	Guided, AE1
Missiles	ATM	Fixed F.	3	6	12	24	+1	x25	1	0	Guided
Crash Guard	CR	Fixed F.	0	0	0	0	0	+1	1	0	Physical Attack

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
60	
4	
6	
-	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Advanced Controls	-	+1 Action (already incorporated in Bonus Action above)	
Advanced Neural Network	-	-	
Airdroppable	-	-	
Anti-Personnel Charges	1	30 shots	yes
Backup Sensors	-	Absorbs first Sensor hit	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Jump Jets	2	Allow jumps of up to 100 m	yes
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Sniper System	-	HPA	
Target Designator	3	+2 Bonus for Guided Weapons	yes
Urban Friendly	-	-	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Difficult to Modify	-	-2 to Repairs and Modify tests
Large Sensor Profile	2	Easier to detect
Sensor Dependent	-	Requires operational sensors to function
Weak Point	6	Movement
Weak Point	6	AUX Systems

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

CEF BATTLE FRAME

When the CEF fleet retreated from the Helios system, they carried several captured Gears with them, along with crates full of documents, spare parts and other items found at deserted firebases. Terranovan military analysts have long expected the CEF to analyze these, but until the Black Talons encountered the Battle Frame on Caprice, no one expected the Earth forces to try and build Gears of their own.

The Battle Frame, so named because it is little more than a frame to carry weapons to battle, has the same general layout as a Terranovan Gear: hydraulic power systems, internal combustion engine, neural net-equipped cockpit in the torso. The Frame is somewhat lighter and less solid, presumably because the CEF cannot yet match the Terranovans' long expertise with rugged walker systems. The Frame, however, enjoys a much higher power-to-mass ratio due to the Terrans' experience with ceramic engines and power systems; this is also reflected in the hover systems, presumably using a scaled-down version of the lift turbines of the CEF hovertanks.

None of the Frames observed had any built-in weapons; all offensive armament is carried on shoulder and forearm hardpoints, and consists almost exclusively of energy weaponry and guided missiles. Field reports do mention that projectile weaponry, mostly in rifle form, has also been deployed from time to time.

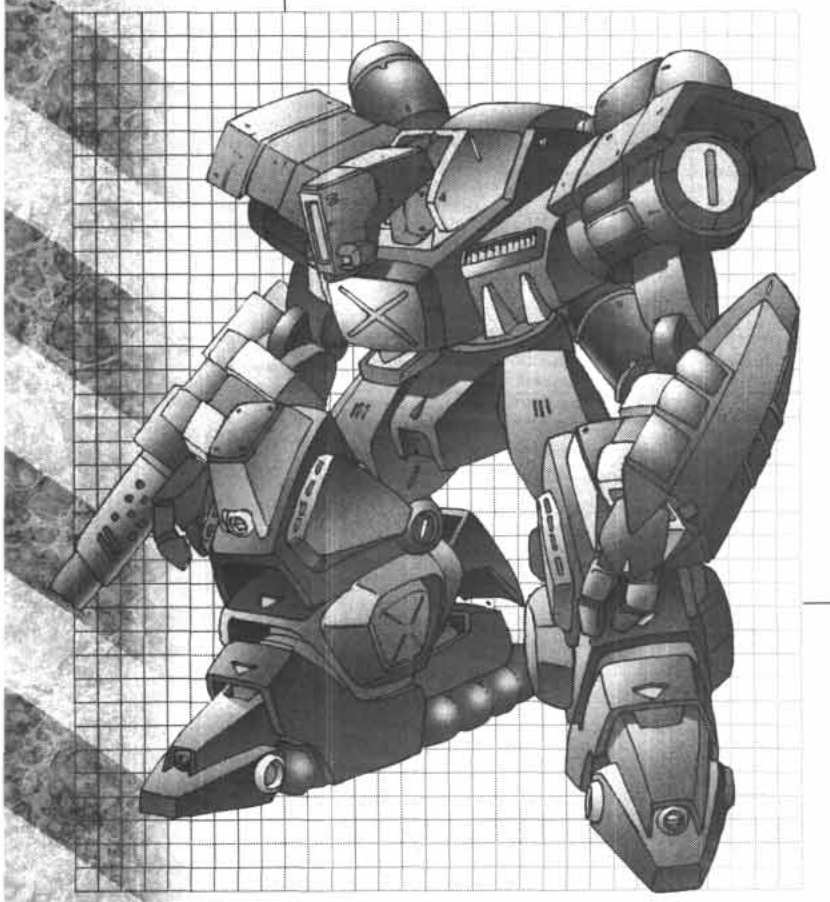
◆ Service Record

The Frames are a relatively new development, and little is known about their service record at the time. It is known that the Earth scientists have developed five different types, apparently in an effort to find the best possible combination of weapons, mobility and protection. The one shown here is the "Heavy" version, which is the best documented so far. Hard data on the Light, Medium, Assault and Space variants is high on the list of priority of the Black Talon's intelligence gathering efforts.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	760	Offensive:	1420	Defensive:	350	Miscellaneous:	510	Lemon Dice:	2

Vehicle Specifications

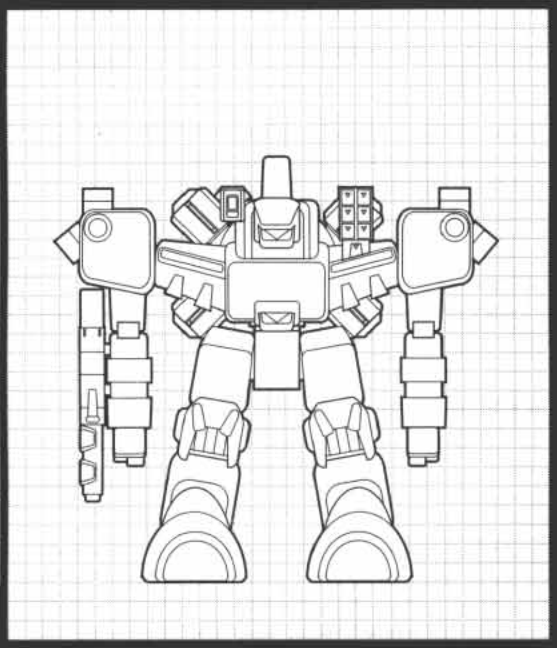


Code name:	Battle Frame
Production code:	n/a
Production Type:	Early Production
Cost:	1,140,000 credits (est.)
Manufacturer:	Colonial Expeditionary Force
Use:	Trooper Gear
Height:	4.6 meters
Width:	3.5 meters
Average armor thickness:	36 mm
Armor material:	Ceramite and composites
Standard operational weight:	6200 kg
Primary Movement Mode:	Walk (50 kph)
Secondary Movement Mode:	Hover (120 kph)
Deployment Range:	200 km
Sensor Range:	40 hexes/2 km
Communication Range:	400 hexes/20 km
Powerplant:	2 x V-Engine
Horsepower:	2 x 750 hp (est.)

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Laser Cannon	20 shots
Missile Delivery System	6 guided missiles

BATTLE FRAME



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 10 20 30 40

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	1
• BONUS ACTIONS:	0

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	W	4
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	W	8
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	H	10
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	H	20
• MANEUVER:		0
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		200

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	2
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	10
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	13
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	26
• OVERKILL:	39

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 760 • SIZE: 6 • COST: 1,140,000 credits (est.)

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Laser Cannon	LLC	Forward	5	10	20	40	+1	x16	1	0	-1RB
Missile Pod	AGM	Forward	3	6	12	24	+1	x15	1	0	Guided
Hand Grenade	HG	Forward	0	0	0	0	-1	x15	-	0	Anti-Infantry

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
20	
6	
3	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Advanced Controls	-	+1 Action (already incorporated in Bonus Action above)	
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert	
Manipulator Arm x 2	6	Can Punch	
Reinforced Armor	4	Front	
Target Designator	3	+2 Bonus for Guided Weapons	yes

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Difficult to Modify	-	-2 to Repair and Modify rolls
Reduced Maneuver	2	Hover Mode

DEFECTS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
None	-	-

HEAVY GEAR

CEF TARANTULA ASSAULT LANDER

CEF forces have used a large variety of spacecraft in attacking Terra Nova, and they retired with many of them still intact. Foremost among them is the AC-56 assault lander, code-name "Tarantula." The nickname comes from the multiple cargo clamps that line the belly of the vehicle and allow it to be fitted with a variety of mission specific modules — though only the transport version is well documented, since none of neither the tanker or gunship examples are known to have survived the War of the Alliance and remained on Terra Nova.

The craft derives its entire lift and electrical power from a pair of fusion powerplants located in its "wings," one per side. The vehicle has only minimal heat shielding, and relies instead on the shockwaves created by its plasma exhausts to shield itself during atmospheric reentry. The powerful thrusters can be fed either from atmospheric vents or the onboard reaction mass reserve, massively extending the range of the vehicle even when fully loaded.

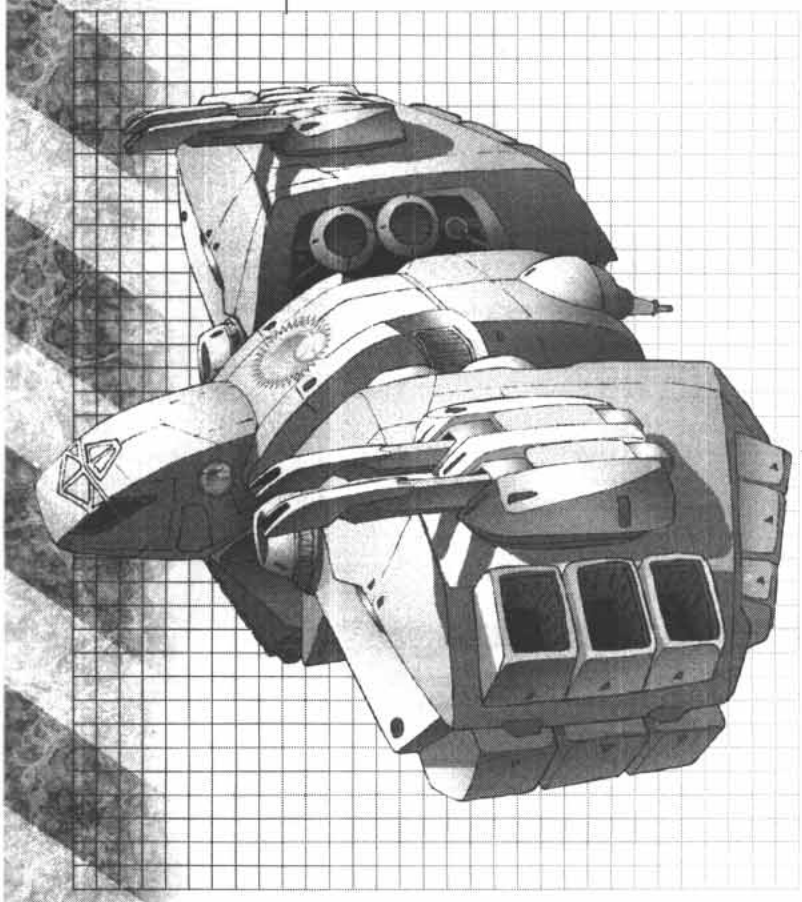
A pair of light railgun turrets are mounted on the craft's upper hull for defensive and fire support purposes; a laser anti-missile turret covers the rear arc, compensating for the craft's low agility.

Service Record

According to what little data is available to Terranovan military intelligence, the Tarantula was developed by the New Eurasian Commonwealth during World War III. The design later led to the CEF's Sleipnir-class space plane, and the analysts believe that more variants and derived vessels may also be in use. The fusion-powered spacecraft is likely still deployed on Caprice to transport troops across vast distances. The appearance of a Tarantula in the sky above a battlefield invariably means reinforcements are on the way.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	4583	**Offensive:**	5886	**Defensive:**	1845	**Miscellaneous:**	6017	**Lemon Dice:**	2



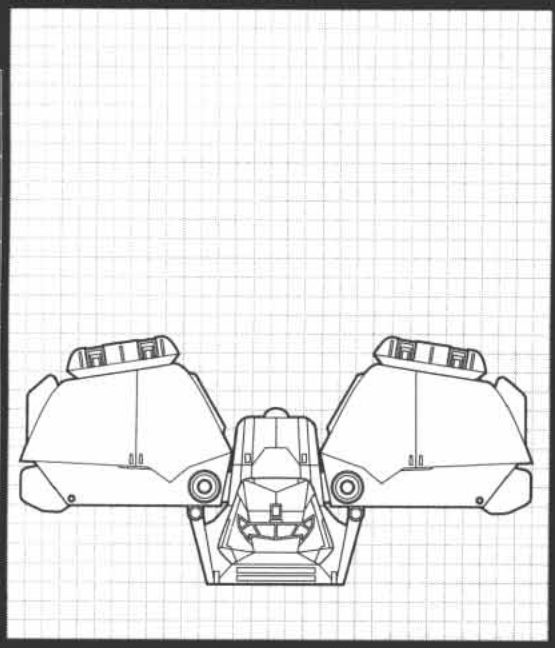
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Tarantula
Production code:	AC-56
Production Type:	Limited Production
Cost:	3,541,410 credits
Manufacturer:	Colonial Expeditionary Force
Use:	Assault Troop Lander
Length:	50 m
Width:	90 m
Height:	18 m
Empty Weight:	1100 tons
Loaded Weight:	2340 tons
Main Drive:	2 x Fusion Tubes
Total Thrust:	2 x 2,000,000 kg

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
4 x Light Railguns	200 rounds each

TARENTULA LANDER



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 20 | 40 | 60 | 80

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	4
• BONUS ACTIONS:	2

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	S	15
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	S	30
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	F	10
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	F	20
• MANEUVER:		-3
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		800

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	0	4
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	25
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	60
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	120
• OVERKILL:	180

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 4583 • SIZE: 44 • COST: 3,541,410 credits

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Railgun Turret	LRG	Forward	5	10	20	40	0	x14	2	+2	Mass Dest.*
Railgun Turret	LRG	Forward	5	10	20	40	0	x14	2	+2	Mass Dest.*

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
200ea	
200ea	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Anti-Missile System	2	30 shots	
Autopilot	-	Acts as Level 1 pilot	yes
Backup Life Support	-	Absorbs first LS hit	
Cargo Bay Space (Enclosed)	-	8,000 m³	
Ejection System	-	Lifepods for all	yes
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert, Extreme Cold, Vacuum, Radiation (3)	
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Reentry System	-	Permanent	yes
Stratospheric Flight	-	-	
Vehicle Bay	20	Can hold 230 tons of vehicles (usually 4 x Hovertanks)	
Weapon Links	-	Railguns, linked in pairs	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Cannot Glide	-	No wing surface
Reduced Maneuver	1	Flight Mode
Large Sensor Profile	4	Easy to detect

NOTES

VTOL (Stall Speed 0); Double Towing Capacity while in Flight (combination of a Perk and an Annoyance Flaw)

Max. Towing Capacity (in flight): 1200 tons

Reaction Mass: 12 tons of Hydrogen (500 Burn Points); escape velocity requires about 250-300 BPs, depending on planetary gravity

*Mass Destruction: when in space, LRGs are Mass Destruction weaponry; TV is x50 (see Tech Manual 2)

HEAVY GEAR

CEF SLEIPNIR SHUTTLE

The Sleipnir is a fast deployment shuttle capable of taking a small number of units down from orbit and back up again. The CEF used it mostly to ferry important personnel and supplies down to the surface and between base camps. Like the Tarentula, the Sleipnir was given its name by the Terranovan high command; the CEF identifies it only as "AT-33 Deployment Craft."

The sleek lines of the space plane are broken only by its outboard lift fan housings, which also act as the main landing pads. Two fusion tubes, housed in a pair of streamlined pods placed at the rear of the hull, supply the craft with a maximum thrust of two gees at full power. The large onboard reaction mass reserve is sufficient to reach orbit from the ground without assistance.

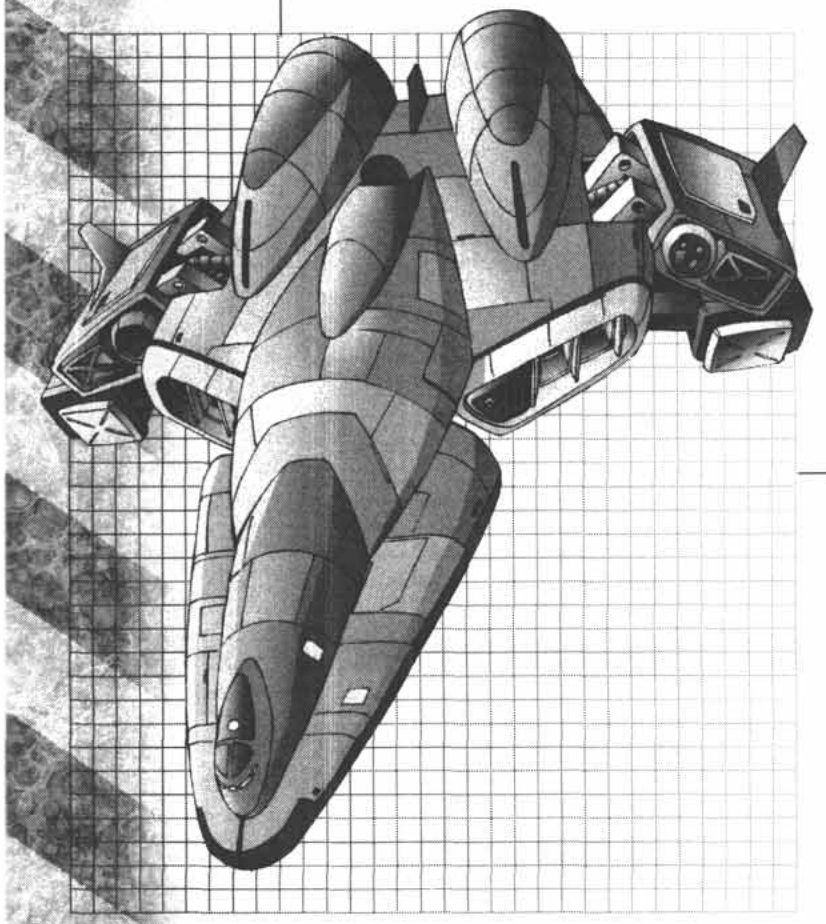
Though the Sleipnir has never be designed as a pure combat vessel, it is capable of carrying and deploying a small number of vehicles from a ventral bay. The main hatch is located at the rear of the craft, well under the exhaust. Daring pilots have been know to perform "bombing runs," whereas hovertanks are dropped from a low flying Sleipnir using drag chutes and not much else. Port Arthur's infamous hovertank group is an expert at this dangerous airdropping technique. Colonel Arthur dislikes it, but the fact remains that an hovertank is easier to replace than a space plane — the least time the latter has to remain in the hot zone, the better.

◆ Service Record

The Colonial Expeditionary Force fielded a somewhat low number of Sleipnirs during the War of the Alliance, possibly as few as fifty. This can be explained by the fact that Sleipnirs are poor assault vehicles and are intended more for the transport of officers and other VIPs, whose numbers are low in the GREL-heavy CEF. Interestingly, the Sleipnir is still in service with the forces of Port Arthur, and captured models served as the basis for the Black Talon Werks' highly successful Fury-class shuttle.

Game Statistics

Threat Value:	7202	Offensive:	9916	Defensive:	2270	Miscellaneous:	9418	Lemon Dice:	2



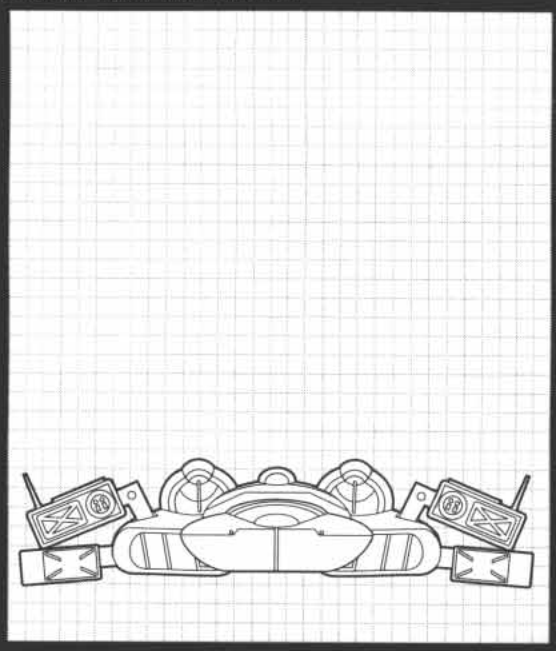
Vehicle Specifications

Code name:	Sleipnir
Production code:	AT-33
Production Type:	Limited Production
Cost:	6,219,910 credits
Manufacturer:	Colonial Expeditionary Force
Use:	Personnel Transport
Length:	118 meters
Width:	78 meters
Armor material:	Composites w/ceramite
Empty Weight:	1300 tons
Loaded Weight:	2100 tons
Main Drive:	2 x Fusion Tubes
Total Thrust:	2 x 2,000,000 kg

Weapon Payload

Name	Ammunition Payload
Area Defense Laser Emitters x 12	40ea
Anti-Personnel Machineguns x 8	1000ea

SLEIPNIR SHUTTLE



ARMOR DAMAGE

0 | 20 | 40 | 60 | 80

CREW INFORMATION

- PILOT NAME:
- RANK:
- SQUADRON:
- AFFILIATION:

PILOT (LV/AT): GUNNERY (LV/AT): ELEC. WAR. (LV/AT):

CREW DATA

VEHICLE CREW

• CREW:	4
• BONUS ACTIONS:	2

CREW DAMAGE

VEHICLE CREW

CREW •
BONUS ACTIONS •

SYSTEMS DATA

MOVEMENT

• PRIMARY COMBAT SPD:	S	10
• PRIMARY TOP SPD:	S	20
• SECONDARY COMBAT SPD:	F	15
• SECONDARY TOP SPD:	F	30
• MANEUVER:		-3
• DEPLOYMENT RANGE:		800

ELECTRONICS

• SENSORS:	+1	4
• COMMUNICATION:	+1	30
• FIRE CONTROL:		0

ARMOR

• LIGHT DAMAGE:	70
• HEAVY DAMAGE:	140
• OVERKILL:	210

SYSTEMS DAMAGE

MOVEMENT

COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
COMBAT SPD •
TOP SPD •
MANEUVER •
FUEL SPENT •

ELECTRONICS

SENSORS •
COMM •
FIRE CONTROL •

ARMOR

LIGHT DAMAGE •
HEAVY DAMAGE •
OVERKILL •

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

• THREAT VALUE: 7202 • SIZE: 44 • COST: 6,219,910 credits

WEAPONS

NAME	CODE	FIRE ARC	S	M	L	EX	Acc	Dam	Qty	ROF	Special
Laser Turrets	SLC	Turret	5	10	20	40	+1	x12	12	0	-1RB
Machine Guns	HMG	L/R	1	2	4	8	0	x4	4/4	+3	AI

AMMO

FULL	LEFT
40ea	
1000ea	

WEAPONS

WEAPON 01 •
WEAPON 02 •
WEAPON 03 •
WEAPON 04 •
WEAPON 05 •
WEAPON 06 •
WEAPON 07 •
WEAPON 08 •
WEAPON 09 •
WEAPON 10 •

PERKS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT	AUX
Autopilot	-	Acts as Level 1 pilot	yes
Backup Life Support	-	Absorbs first Life Support hit	
2 x Cargo Bay (Enclosed)	-	8,000 m³ each	
Ejection System	-	Lifepods for all	yes
Hostile Environment Protection	-	Desert, Extreme Cold, Vacuum, Radiation (4)	
Life Support	-	Limited	yes
Reentry System	-	Permanent	yes
Stratospheric Flight	-	-	
Vehicle Bay	20	Can hold 230 tons of vehicles	

PERKS

PERK 01 •
PERK 02 •
PERK 03 •
PERK 04 •
PERK 05 •
PERK 06 •
PERK 07 •
PERK 08 •
PERK 09 •
PERK 10 •
PERK 11 •

FLAWS

NAME	RATING	GAME EFFECT
Cannot Glide	-	No wing surface

NOTES

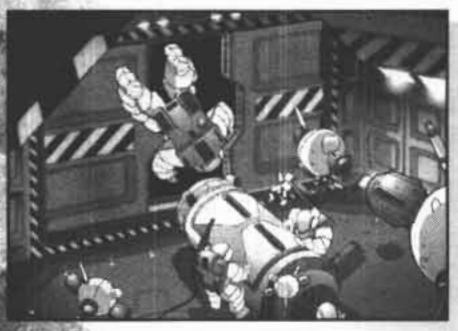
VTOL (Stall Speed 0); Double Towing Capacity while in Flight (combination of a Perk and an Annoyance Flaw)

Max. Towing Capacity (in flight): 2400 tons

Reaction Mass: 14.4 tons of Hydrogen (600 Burn Points); escape velocity requires about 250-300 BPs, depending on planetary gravity

HEAVY GEAR

5.1 - Rules Introduction



Though the Black Talon have not been created to serve as Terra Nova's space force, their training, equipments and the fact that they have to travel to distant planets to accomplish their objectives mean they have more experience dealing with the space enviroment than most of the soldiers on the planet. The following pages contain simple rules that apply to characters operating in space, covering topics as diverse as air pressure and radiation. Though these rules are somewhat simplified for speed of play, they should prove to be enough for most games. If more detailed rules are desired, Players and Gamemasters are referred to the **Tactical Space Support** supplement, which covers space travel and combat in the **Heavy Gear** universe.

For the purpose of this manual, "space combat" refers solely to battles between vehicles on the surface of ships and space stations. Ship-to-ship combat, along with specialized rules such as orbital fire support, will be covered in the **Tactical Space Support** supplement.

5.2 - Atmosphere

The contents and pressure of the artificial atmosphere are crucial in space — if either is improperly monitored and controlled, people can and will die. Obviously, lack of oxygen is detrimental to the continuation of human life. There can be several causes of oxygen deficiency: an excess of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, defective air reserves or decompression. If the air supply is compromised, characters suffer as their body tries to make do with insufficient resources.

◆ Oxygen

If the atmosphere degrades due to lack of clean air, characters will suffer from physical and mental penalties. This rule assumes a normal oxygen content of 20%; penalties start ten minutes after fresh oxygen is last supplied. Characters are -1 to all mental Attributes (CRE, INF, KNO, PER, PSY, WIL) as their concentration decreases due to lack of oxygen; these drop at a rate of -1 per two minutes. All characters in the location affected must make a Fitness roll against a Threshold of four to avoid unconsciousness, with a penalty equal to the mental Attribute penalty. Twenty minutes after fresh oxygen is last introduced, the character automatically loses consciousness. A random mental Attribute drops by one every turn. If any of them reaches -5, the character dies.

◆ Pressure

Pressure loss means that although the atmosphere has the proper oxygen content, there is not enough of it or not enough pressure to force the oxygen into the bloodstream. Loss of pressure can come from several sources, from a faulty regulator to a leak or hole in the hull of the spacecraft. The Atmosphere Loss table shows the average amount of time it takes for the pressure to completely degrade in a given location. At each stage of decompression (three-quarter pressure, half, quarter), all characters in the location must make a Fitness roll to avoid unconsciousness, with a penalty of -1 to the roll for each stage of degradation. They also suffer from the effect of lack of oxygen (-1 to all Mental Attributes per stage). If the pressure drops to a quarter normal or less, the character suffers the same effects as if there were no oxygen, according to the *Oxygen* section.

There are two ways to lose pressure: slowly, through a leak, and all at once, through explosive decompression. The latter is much more dangerous as the body does not have time to adjust and often reacts very badly (see *Exposure to Vacuum*, next page).

The table below gives Armor ratings and volumes for typical locations; these can be modified by the Gamemaster by up to 50%, depending on the situation. The Armor rating shows how many damage points the walls have (Personal Damage Scale). If the Armor is exceeded by the damage received, a one-centimeter hole is made (for simplicity, assume the hole is roughly square). The dimension increases by one centimeter for every additional time the Armor is exceeded by (for example, 35 points of damage, applied to an Armor 10 wall, will cause a 3 centimeter wide hole, or 9 cm^2). This rule can also be applied to spacecraft and spacesuits.

Atmosphere Loss

Hole/Location	Airlock	Room	Hangar	Colony
Leak-Sized (1 cm^2)	1 day	4 days	12 days	300 years
Fist-Sized (100 cm^2)	2 turns	8 turns	24 turns	100 years
Man-Sized (1 m^2)	1 turn	4 turns	12 turns	20 years
Vehicle-Sized (100 m^2)	Instant	2 turns	8 turns	1 day
Ship-Sized (1000 m^2)	Instant	Instant	1 turn	1 hour

Hole is the approximate size of the air evacuation duct or hole; **Location** is the approximate comparative volume of the pressurized area.

Pressurized Area Information

Location	Wall Armor	Door Armor	Bulkhead Armor	Volume (m^3)
Airlock	15	15	20	20
Room	15	10	25	200
Hangar	20	20	40	5000

Exposure to Vacuum

Exposure to the vacuum of space does not kill instantly. An unprotected human being can survive up to three minutes before his brain dies from oxygen starvation, though there are some severe side effects from other sources.

First, the lack of pressure on the body will cause any internal gases to try and escape. Capillaries close to the skin will burst, resulting in one giant bruise across the entire body. If the person tries to hold his breath, severe damage will result to the lung and inner body membranes (automatic Deep Wound). If possible, it is better to try and hyperventilate to charge the blood with oxygen, then exhale as vacuum is entered.

The second major side effect comes from the temperature. Space is cold, except where a space body can provide heat. A person exposed to vacuum will thus be roasted on the sunward side while freezing on the other. In general, burns will be the least of a survivor's worries, but a Flesh wound is generally the result of more than one minute of direct space exposure.

For game purposes, a character can remain conscious for a number of 6-second turns equal to twelve plus his Fitness Attribute. After this period is elapsed, the character automatically loses consciousness. A random mental Attribute drops by one every turn. If any of them reaches -5, the character dies.

5.3 - Gravity

What is casually referred to as gravity is in fact a constant acceleration applied to the body by the gravitational field of a large mass. There is no practical difference between the acceleration provided by a gravity field and other types of accelerations. Gravity is easily simulated in space by firing thrusters or rotating a living section, thereby creating centrifuge acceleration.

The following rules apply to zero-gee conditions, which should more accurately be called free-fall. Indeed, all objects in a solar system are subject to the gravitic pull of the star, and only the orbital speed prevents them from falling on its surface. Everything is, in effect, perpetually falling.

Space Adaptation Syndrome

Space Adaptation Syndrome (SAS) is the inability of the body to reconcile the various sensory signals received while freefalling. There is no way to predict who will be affected and for how long, though certain exercises and chemical compounds have been developed to help the transition. When the character first enters micro-gravity conditions, two die are rolled. If he has received either motion training or drugs, add a +1 to the die roll (+2 if both are used). On a five or more, the character is immune to the SAS effects. Otherwise, he suffers from an action penalty equal to five minus the roll of the dice. A HEA roll versus five is made at the end of every day to see if the character recovers. Once recovered, the character is fine and gains a +1 to the roll the next time he enters microgravity.

Moving in Low Gravity and Free Fall

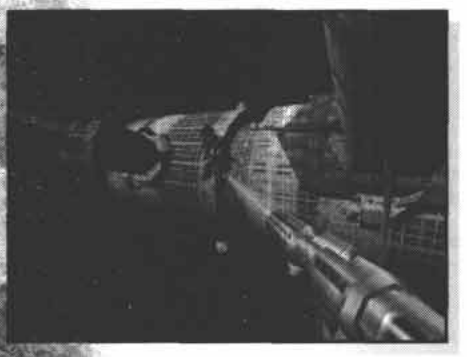
Movement under low gravity conditions (between 1 and 0.1 gee) is similar to standard movement. The exception is that the person will be able to take much greater leaps and will have a harder time controlling the direction of the movement due to the reduced traction. A penalty of -1 is applied to all movement-related Agility tests. Movement rates are divided by the local gravity (in gee). Falling damage is multiplied by the local gravity (in gee). Thus, an average person (FIT 0, no Athletic Skill) would be able to jog up to (12 ÷ 0.16 =) 75 meters per round on Earth's Moon (0.16 g), though he would do so in great bounding leaps and would have trouble controlling his direction. Should he fall, though, he would receive only one sixth of the normal falling damage.

Moving in free fall is a completely different experience than moving under gravity. Masses in space keep their inertia at all times, meaning that no effort need be expended to move except when changing direction or velocity. The speed that can be reached by a person is directly related to the strength: the stronger the person, the greater the initial impulsion can be. Obviously, characters can chose to move slower, if so wished. If pushing objects, or carrying them, multiply speed by basic body mass, then divide by new mass. One must not forget that action equals reaction of equal value: if pushing off another person, both will float away.

Free Fall Movement Speed

• Maximum Speed (meter/second) = ((Mstr x 4)/Mbld) squared
• Mstr is the maximum mass lifted by the character in one gee; Mbld is the character's body mass.

Collisions



Since there is no way to change direction or velocity without some kind of reaction, inexperienced freefallers often collide with objects in their path, powerless to prevent the collision. This can result in bruises, contusions, broken bones or even death. Two dice are rolled and the result multiplied by the speed, in meter/second, of impact: this is the damage taken. If the impact is head first, add ten to the die roll. A conscious person may attempt to soften the reception: the character must roll a Zero-G Movement Skill test. The number rolled is subtracted from the speed for the purpose of damage calculations. If the number rolled is equal to or greater than the actual speed, the person *"lands" unharmed*. If the roll fumbles, the person hits head first and takes the extra damage. If the character does not manage to land, he will rebound from the collision and float away with half his pre-collision speed.

Base damage assumes that a moderately solid surface will be impacted. Unusually hard surfaces, such as armor, can double the effective speed for damage and rebound speed purposes. Soft surfaces such as water halve the effective speed. Special crash pads or nets can divide the collision speed by up to ten to twenty times (Gamemaster's decision).

Combat

Personal combat in space is mostly hand-to-hand. The limited confines of many habitats mean there is little room to use ranged weapons. Moreover, the extreme danger caused by straight shots hitting the life supporting bulkheads and recycling systems is too great to ignore. Close combat follows the normal rules, except that any hit will cause the combatants to fly apart unless they are braced. Use the movement rules to calculate kickback speeds, remembering that both combatants are pushed in opposite directions.

Ranged weapon fire is possible, though the recoil must be taken into account by the firer. Recoil will push back the user (unless he is braced) with a speed equal to 0.001 meter/second per point of Damage Multiplier, applied *opposite* the firing direction.

Gravity and Health

The human body has been designed to function under gravity, and while removing the latter does confer some short-term benefits, complications will occur in the long run. Bone decalcification, where the calcium literally "oozes" out of the skeleton, occurs after a few weeks of zero-gravity. Compounds to help fix calcium into the bones alleviate the problem when taken with calcium supplements. Loss of muscle tone is a more common and serious problem. Regular exercise sessions, electrical muscle stimulators or visits to a centrifuge are required to prevent it.

In game terms, one point of FIT is lost in the first month spent without maintenance. Another is lost after two months, another at four months, and so on, doubling the interval every time. At least two hours per day of vigorous exercise are required to avoid this effect, increasing by one hour every three months spent in free fall until it reaches six hours per day. One point of BLD is lost per two points of FIT, and both HEA and STR are recalculated to take any losses into account.

5.4 - Radiation

If only for the nearest star, every character is constantly subjected to subatomic bombardment — radiation — though temporary and permanent damage is rare. Such circumstances usually involve nuclear power (reactors, plants, bombs) or space travel (cosmic rays, solar flares, etc.). The results are usually pretty ugly, even though it often takes a few days or weeks before the silent killer completes its work. Like the rest of the game system, the following radiation rules are a compromise between simplicity and realism; some scientific accuracy has been set aside to make them more playable.

Rads

One rad (Roentgen Absorbed Dose) is the effect of one roentgen — the standard unit for measuring radiation — on a living organism. Absorbed rads are cumulative: a tally of the character's current irradiation level must be kept. These rads are included in effect calculation until they are eliminated by the organism, which can take quite some time. Every week, a character can purge a number of rads equal to the amount given by a Health roll, as long as he was not further exposed to radiation during that period. A character can never fully purge them out and will always retain a number of rads equal to one-tenth the largest number ever accumulated.

The following table gives sample rad contamination values from various sources. The values are either absolute numbers, for one-shot radiation bursts, or rates, for prolonged exposure.

Sample Radiation Levels

1-kiloton air burst at 1 km	100 rads
1-megaton air burst at 2 km	6,000 rads
1-megaton air burst at 10 km	500 rads
1-megaton air burst at 25 km	100 rads
Neutron bomb air burst at 3 km	500 rads
Fallout at ground zero, 1-megaton ground burst	
after 1 hour	1d6 rads/minute
after 2 hours	1d3 rads/minute
after 6 hours	1d6 x 5 rads/hour
after 1 day	1d6 rads/hour
Nuclear Reactor Meltdown	1d6 x 10 rads/minute
Solar Flare	1d6 x 5 rads/minute
Background Cosmic Rays	1d6 x 0.001 rads/hour

Protective Equipment

Lead and NBC suits protect against radiation and radioactive fallout. Anti-radiation suits are given a Radiation Shielding Factor (RSF) in rads/hour. This amount is subtracted from individual bursts or from hourly rad rates for prolonged exposure. This value is divided by 60 to get the protection in rad per minute.

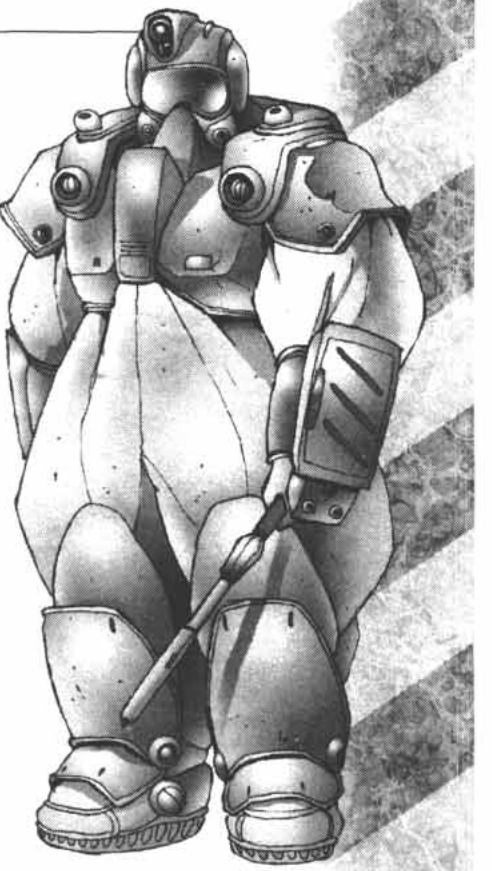
Protection can also be derived from a large mass, which will absorb most of the energy of the radiation. Water is one of the best radiation shield there is, but other inert material, such as rock, also provides respectable protection if there is enough of it. Non-shielded vehicles provide a minimum amount of protection equal to their Armor Rating squared, in millirads (0.001 rad) per minute. Buildings, constructs and large natural objects follow the same formula, but double their Structure points before squaring.

In addition, many vehicles are shielded to absorb or deflect incoming radiation. This is noted as HEP: Radiation in their statistics. The rad protection level, in rads/hour, is equal to ten to the power of the Rating of the system (e.g., a Rating 3 system would give 10^3 rads/hour of protection).

Radiation Protection

Type	RSF
NBC Suit	5 rads/hour
Space Suit (any type)	5 rads/hour
Rad Suit	10 rads/hour
Water (one centimeter)	Equivalent to 25 Structure points
Rock (one centimeter)	Equivalent to 15 Structure points
Metal (one centimeter)*	Equivalent to 15 Structure points

*Secondary cascade effects can occur in metal; if the total RSF is lower than half the incoming rads, it is ignored and the rads are doubled.



Radiation Tests

The first time a character's accumulated rads exceed 50, or at any time the character receives at least 1 rad thereafter, secretly roll HEA against a Threshold set by the Irradiation Table. Do not roll more than once a day and do not apply more than one effect at a time (pick the worst). The Gamemaster should not tell the Player the result of the roll, but rather describe the symptoms as they manifest themselves. Note that the values on the table are higher than most studies have shown, to both increase character survivability and take into account the fact that irradiation may be irregular, thus lowering the overall effects.

If the character succeeds, he is totally unaffected by the radiation, though his level of accumulated rads stays the same. Failed rolls have a variety of effects, as detailed below. On a fumbled roll, apply the corresponding Fumble effect as dictated by the table, *then* the normal failure effects. Make a further Health roll in the case of a fumble: the result gives the number of minutes before the effect takes place.

Irradiation Table

Rads	Threshold	Fumble effect	Rads	Threshold	Fumble effect
50-99	6	None	600-699	12	Deep Wound
100-199	7	Flesh Wound	700-799	13	Deep Wound
200-299	8	Flesh Wound	800-899	14	Deep Wound
300-399	9	Flesh Wound	900-999	15	Deep+Flesh Wounds
400-499	10	Flesh Wound	1000-1099	16	Deep+Flesh Wounds
500-599	11	Deep Wound	1100+	17	Death

◆ Radiation Effects

Short-Term Effects: a roll failed by 1 to 4 produces mild radiation sickness. Symptoms will appear in a number of hours equal to the result of a Health roll by the character. He will be fatigued and nauseous, incurring a action penalty equal to the Margin of Failure. The penalty drops by one every 12 hours. Later complications are possible; see *Long Term Effects* for more details.

A Margin of Failure between 5 and 7 will have effects similar to those of a mild radiation illness, with a penalty of -4. Secondary symptoms will appear after a number of days equal to the Health roll: lingering fatigue, muscle pain, loss of hair. The character will be at -1 to all activity, except HEA rolls which are at -2. The character must make a daily HEA roll vs. 4 to recover. Success means that the character completely recovers in 10 days, minus his or her System Shock rating (minimum of 1). A fumble will inflict a Flesh wound. A Margin of Failure of 8 or 9 is similar, except that the secondary symptoms are more severe. The general action penalty is -2, -3 for HEA rolls. A failure on the daily recovery roll will inflict a Flesh wound, a Deep wound if fumbled.

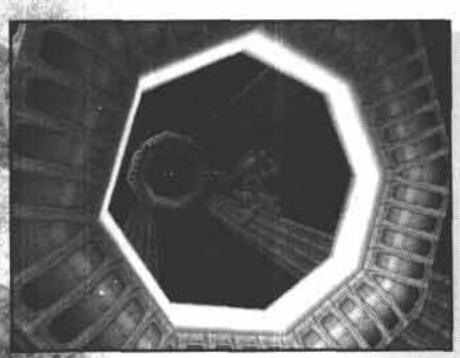
A roll failed by 10 to 14 gives results similar to those detailed above, but graver still: the action penalty is -3, -4 for HEA rolls. A failed recovery roll delivers a Deep wound, while a fumble means death. On a successful result roll again, with no penalties: a second success means that the character miraculously recovered, as explained above. A roll failed by 15 or more kills the character in a number of hours equal to a HEA roll.

Long Term Effects: the effects of radiation on human DNA are very subtle and it can take years before the full effects manifest themselves. Unpleasant legacies of radiation effects, such as cancer, sterility or offspring mutations, are left to the Gamemaster to use as plot devices. The GM may decide to have a character who suffered from radiation sickness make a yearly HEA roll against half the highest Margin of Failure he ever had in resisting the effects of radiation, rounded up. Failure means that the character has contracted a life-threatening cancer — which may or may not be detectable and treatable, depending on the timeframe.

◆ Treating Radiation Sickness

Depending on the campaign's setting, it may or may not be possible to treat characters suffering from radiation poisoning. If treatment is available, it will come in two steps: recovery from the sickness proper, and accelerated purging of accumulated rads. Depending on the technology used, a +1 to +4 bonus can be added on the recovery roll, and the purging rate may be multiplied by a factor of 2 to 8. If the character receives regular check-ups, the recovery bonus is applied for Long-Term Effects' HEA rolls. Once again, depending on the location, the treatment may range from relatively cheap and commonly available to extremely expensive and rare.

5.6 - SPACE COMBAT



For the purpose of this manual, "space combat" refers solely to battles between vehicles on the surface of moons, space ships and space stations. Infantryman and walker vehicles can operate on anyof the above; other types of vehicles can only work on moons (Ground vehicles) or do not work at all (Hover, Naval, Flyer). Ship-to-ship combat, along with specialized rules such as orbital fire support, will be covered in the **Tactical Space Support** supplement.

Vehicles which have the "Hostile Environment Protection: Vacuum" Perk can freely operate in space and other airless environments such as the various moons and planets of the Helios system. The Perk seals all the openings and replaces the various oils and lubricants with vacuum-proof versions, as well as ensuring that the powerplant can function effectively.

Vehicles without the Perk cannot operate in space at all. In fact, every hour the crew must make a Mechanical Test; if failed, the vehicle takes a random Light Damage effect as fluids boil away, mechanisms undergo vacuum-welding and parts melt or freeze up.

Infantry can operate in the vacuum of space, provided they are equipped with space suits. These give a penalty of -1 to all action; if an infantryman takes damage, the entire row of damage points is filled in as the suit loses integrity (if the trooper isn't killed, he will be too busy to be a threat anyway).

Battles on Hulls - 5.6.1

All Black Talon walker vehicles can be equipped with special soles that contain a molecular grip plate. This advanced compound adheres to any plane surface when a current of a specific frequency and intensity is passed through it; it is essentially a very sophisticated memory plastic. It allows the Gears to walk on the hull of a spacecraft as if it was the ground, enabling the pilots to conduct assaults on enemy ships without having to worry about vectors and reaction mass. The cost for this equipment is included in the HEP: Vacuum Perk for simplicity.

The current is selectively cut to allow the feet to detach for taking steps, but the Gear can be wretched loose by a hard impact or through the voluntary action of the pilot. If a Gear pilot has to make a Piloting test following an attack and fails, the Gear flies off instead of falling down. For simplicity's sake, a speed equal to the MoF, opposite the direction of the attacker, is assumed. If the Gear has Jump Jets or a Grapple, the pilot can use those to get back on the surface or move about. Jump jets allow the pilot to modify his "flight" speed by one for every point of Rating, in any direction.

HULL-DOWN POSITIONS - 5.7

Hull-down refers to a classic battlefield position where only the turret of an armored vehicle is exposed to enemy fire, the hull itself being protected by a natural or man-made obstacle such as a ridge or a low wall. This drastically reduces the chances of being hit while not impeding the attacker's own fire. Obviously, other vehicle types can also use hull-down positions, including walkers. These simply squat or lie down behind cover.

Because of the large ground scale chosen for the tactical game (50 meters per hex), it is not always possible to exactly put a unit behind a ridge or other land feature since these are not readily apparent on the map. Instead, a somewhat abstract system is used: by spending MPs, a vehicle can entrench itself behind hard cover almost anywhere. It is assumed that there are terrain features suitable in the hex for such a move. The MP cost (which is listed in the Hull-Down Table, below) represents the fact that the unit must move out of its way, find suitable cover, slow down and otherwise park itself into the hull-down position. Some terrain types offer less protection than others, and this is reflected in the MP cost — it is always easier and faster to find a suitable defensive position in broken terrain or in a city than on open ground.

The *Hull-Down Table* below lists the various costs and protection factors assigned to each terrain type. The values listed apply equally to the tactical and Skirmish scale rules. "Covers" shows the system(s) that are hidden behind the obstacle when the vehicle is in hull-down position with weapons at the ready (the numbers listed in the table refer to the die roll numbers on the System Damage table). If the vehicle's commander so chooses, the vehicle can hide completely, covering all locations, but is then unable to fire anything but indirect fire weaponry.

Rather than applying a modifier to hit the now smaller silhouette of the vehicle, the attack is made normally; if a hidden system is rolled on the System Damage Table, the obstacle absorbs part of the damage first. "Protection" gives the amount of damage points subtracted from the attack if it hits the cover instead of the vehicle. If the damage is reduced to zero, there is no further effect on the target vehicle. To prevent unnecessary bookkeeping, the protection afforded by the cover remains constant and does not ablate under fire. Aimed attacks are not possible against hull-down vehicles.

Infantry is assumed to always look for possible "hull-down" positions, hence the natural -2 modifier on all attacks against them. They may still use the protection afforded by revetments and foxholes, but may not claim any damage reduction from other "hull-down" positions. Aircraft may not use the Hull-Down rules except for VTOLs (aircraft with Stall Speed of zero).

Hull-Down Table

Terrain Type	MP Cost	Covers	Protection
Clear	n/a	n/a	none
Rough	+2	2 to 4	15
Sand	+3	3 to 4	10
Woodland	+2	2 to 4	15
Jungle	+1	2 to 6	20
Swamp	+1	2 to 6	10
Water*	+3	2 to 6	5
Urban	+2	2 to 6	15
Dense Urban	+1	2 to 6	20
Elevation change**	+1	2 to 6	15

* Water only produces hull-down effects if the vehicle is capable of immersing itself completely (the vehicle must have the Submarine movement type).

**It is assumed that the vehicle is located at the edge of the elevation level.

5.7.1 - Effect on Sensor Signatures

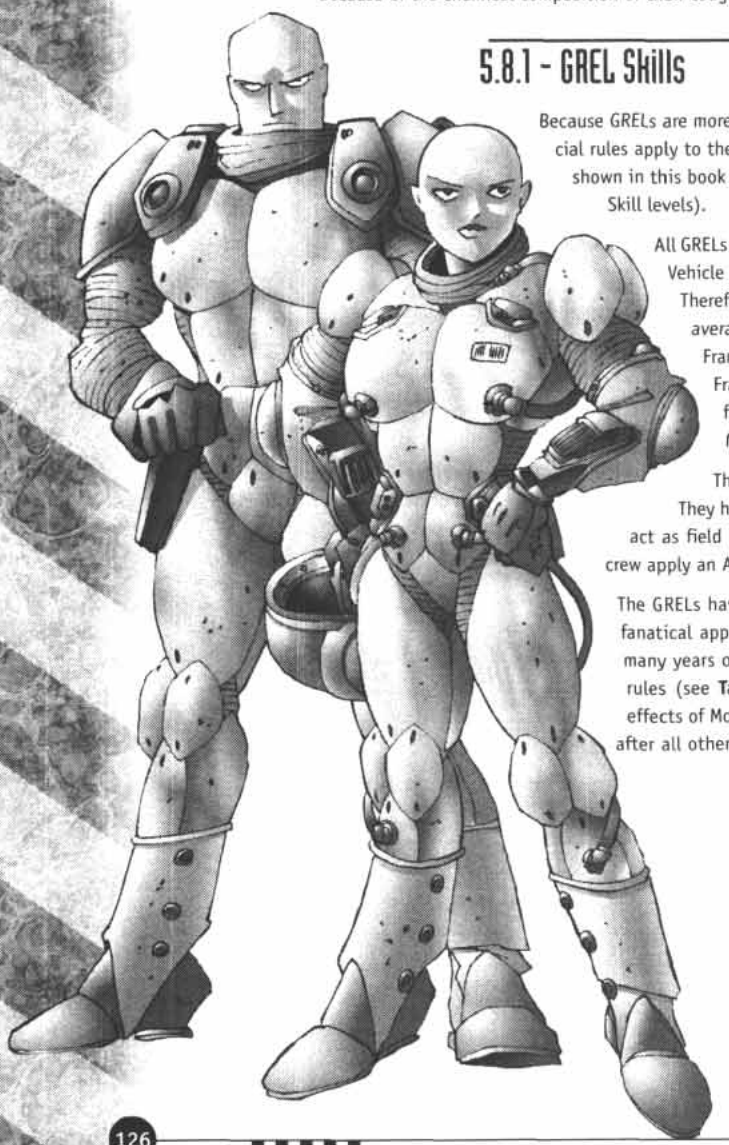
Vehicles in hull-down position tend to be harder to detect, since much of the energy they are emitting is absorbed or obscured by the ground and the obstacles the vehicle is using as cover. Things like infrared energy from exhaust rising up, however, means that the actual benefit is minimal enough to be glossed over in the course of normal play.

If the vehicle is equipped with advanced stealth system, however, the difference becomes notable. If a vehicle is equipped with the Stealth Perk, a bonus equal to the Rating of the Perk divided by two, rounded down, is applied to the vehicle while in a Hull-Down position. Should the hull-down vehicle be at a higher elevation than the detector, round the Rating up instead.

5.8 - GREL CREW

The bulk of the fighting force that the New Earth Commonwealth sent to Terra Nova was composed of GRELs (Genetically Recombined Experimental Legionnaires), vat-grown humans designed to be the ultimate soldiers. GRELs were designed as soldiers first and specialists second, and were powerhouses in their own right. All were very skilled in their own field of specialty and capable of incredible feats; Terranovan troopers, however, soon realized that while the technical executions were often flawless, it was easy to discern a pattern in their action and thus often catch them flat-footed — if the trooper lived long enough.

A total of eight classes of GRELs were involved in the War of the Alliance: all individuals within these classes are made from the same DNA template and are thus physically identical. GRELs within a class have the same basic personalities and abilities, although environmental factors have lead to a certain amount of individuality in their rank. They are typically large and powerfully built (some classes more than others), with little body fat. GRELs have no body hair whatsoever, as their absence requires no maintenance in the field. Because of the chemical composition of their tough skin, they have a very slight purplish tint.



5.8.1 - GREL Skills

Because GRELs are more like biological machines than modified humans, a certain number of special rules apply to them. These should be used when GREL crews are operating the CEF vehicles shown in this book (if human crews operate the vehicles, use the regular crew costs based on Skill levels).

All GRELs crew have a specialty, whether it be in piloting, gunnery or something else. Vehicle crews are put together in order to maximize the capabilities of the vehicle. Therefore, though each individual crewman has a different specialty, they can be averaged into a single crew rating. Vehicles with only one crew, such as Battle Frames, have specially-trained pilots that are more versatile; for example, the Frames are piloted by Minerva-Vb GRELs, which have additional cortical modifications and extra training to give them better gunnery aptitudes (standard Minervas are poor gunners but skilled pilots).

The Cost Multiplier of a GREL crew is x2.25, just like a human Veteran crew. They have Level 2 in Piloting, Gunnery and Electronic Warfare; Jan-equipped crew act as field leaders and replace Electronic Warfare with the Leadership Skill. All GREL crew apply an Attribute modifier of +2 to all their dice rolls.

The GRELs have little regard for their own existence at first, and many have a highly fanatical approach to warfare. They will sacrifice themselves if needed, and it takes many years of independent living for them to break the habit. If the optional Morale rules (see **Tactical Field Support**, p.42) are used, GREL units are immune to the effects of Morale; this gives them an additional Threat Value multiplier of 1.5, applied after all other cost multipliers.

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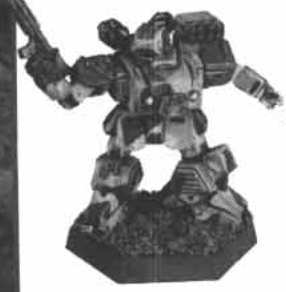

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