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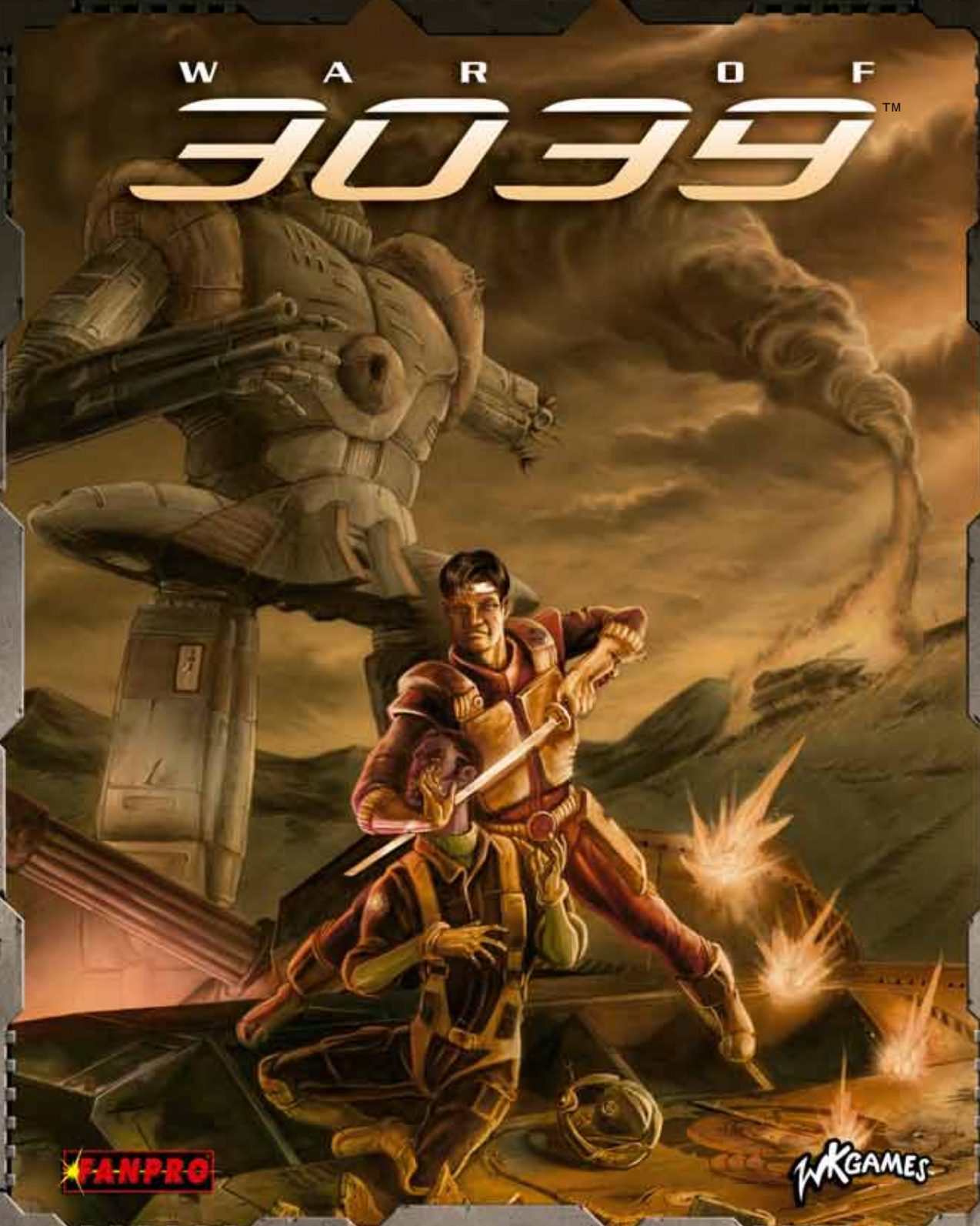
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BATTLETECH

HISTORICAL

W A R O F

3039™



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Acknowledgements

To the authors of the *20 Year Update* (Jim Musser, Donna Ippolito and Boy F.

Petersen, Jr.), the various *Field Manual* authors (you know who you are) and in particular Robert Charrette for the novel *Heir to the Dragon*, for building the framework off of which the War of 3039 could be fully fleshed out.

Special Thanks

To the Fact Checkers, who were shanghaied from their work on the *Handbook* series to work on this book: Paul Bowman, Peter La Casse, Mike Miller, Ben "Ghost Bear" Rome, Chris "Chinless" Wheeler; as well as additional comments by Daniel Ball, Herbert Beas, Randall N. Bills, Warner Doles, Paul Sjardijn and Øystein Tvedten. To the ever helpful proof checkers: Peter La Casse, Rich Cencarik, Mike Miller, David McCulloch, Ben Rome, Paul Sjardijn and Øystein Tvedten.

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Version 1.0, February 2005, based on first printing.

Published by FanPro LLC • 1608 N. Milwaukee • Suite 1005 • Chicago, IL 60647

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THE HARDER THEY FALL

Orbital Assault Trajectory, Telos IV
Dieron Military District, Draconis Combine
13 August 3039

The rocking of the falling 'Mech made *Chu-i* James Fujimori feel queasy, the fifteen-meter ceramic ovoid continuing to oscillate after its drogue chute deployed and yanked it upright. Now high in the atmosphere, the temperature inside the pod began to fall and Fujimori no longer expected to be burned to a crisp.

"Hell of a way to gain my jump wings," he muttered as he fought nausea. He hadn't suffered space sickness on the transport and had refused the tablets offered by the medical orderly prior to the jump. Now he understood why the more experienced troops had sniggered at his bravado. His stomach heaved again as his inner ear reported wild oscillations while his eyes disagreed. *Only another thirty seconds. Please, only another thirty seconds!* He counted them down.

Almost perfectly on cue, his neurohelmeted head slammed forward, the sudden deceleration more than his scrawny neck muscles could support. The restraint fitted to his couch kept Fujimori from slamming headfirst into his command console, but didn't keep him from mashing his face against the inner facing of the fragile helmet. He tasted blood, either from biting his lip or from his injured nose. He'd have to wait until he was on the ground to check.

The deceleration faded, or at least his perception of it, and the cockpit instrumentation signaled a perfect deployment of the main chute. The pod was now sub-sonic, a far cry from the almost 20,000 kph it had been traveling when it punched into Telos' upper atmosphere. Fujimori counted a dozen seconds under his breath. He reached twenty-five and his stomach lurched again as the plummeting drop-pod passed 10km altitude and the back-shell disengaged from the cocoon, freeing the ceramic egg from its parachute harness. The floor seemed to fall away. Rather than being pressed down on the couch, he returned to freefall. This time Fujimori barely managed to lift the visor before he fouled his faceplate with vomit. The stomach spasms stopped, but now the stench assailed his sore nose. Something else to deal with on the ground.

The cocoon began to spin, propelled in part by the back-shell release and accelerated by small pyrotechnic charges in anticipation of the final stage of separation. In carefully choreographed sequence, additional charges detonated throughout the ceramic casing, some in solid blocks and others in linear arrangements. The artificial eggshell splintered and cracked, sloughing off into the thickening air, thrown away from the valuable cargo by centrifugal force. No longer protected from the buffeting of the wind by its aerodynamic

cocoon, the *Panther* began to shudder violently, its controlled spin threatening to turn into an uncontrolled tumble. Fujimori wrenched the humanoid body around into the traditional parachutist's pose and slowly drew its legs down so that the in-built jump jets could slow its descent. Without the jets, this last phase was going to be very swift and end messily. He needed to concentrate on the movement controls and the attitude indicators. One wrong move or ill-timed distraction could make the difference between life and death. He needed another twenty seconds, fifteen, ten ...

The proximity alert sounded. Fujimori's attention snapped to the small drop-radar. With the pilot no longer focusing on posture and attitude, the 'Mech began to tumble.

"Kuso," he swore, as much at his own incompetence as at the inbound fighter that lit up the Threat Warning Indicator. For a moment panic gripped him, followed by steely calm. All thoughts of the Dieron Regulars' assault landing at Triumph Spaceport left his mind. *The Way of the Samurai may be death but I'm not going to die here*, he thought.

A dot appeared on the horizon and then, almost faster than his eyes could register, closed the gap with the falling 'Mech. In his brief glimpse of the flying machine Fujimori recognized it as a *Sparrowhawk*, presumably one of the Avalon Hussars. Its speed carried it flashing past, spitting fire as it went. The jammers and noisemakers concealed in the cocoon shards drew some of its fire, but one laser beam struck the *Panther* high in the torso. The shot scored a long rent in the armor but failed to breach its protective layers. The impact accelerated the 'Mech's tumble.

The Threat Warning Indicator remained on. Fujimori knew what that meant. The falling *Panther* was still the Davion fighter's target, the *Sparrowhawk*'s tracking radar maintaining a lock on the vulnerable descending 'Mech. Fujimori realized he'd been lucky. The pod shards had protected him from the brunt of the attack, but on a second pass they would be a lot farther from the *Panther* and the 'Mech would be much more vulnerable. He fought to maintain control of the falling machine, swearing at the sluggish controls while pulling, pushing and kicking with all his might. The tumbling machine slowed, but Fujimori winced as he caught sight of his attacker's contrails. At first they were heading away, but then they looped up and over before heading back toward him, an arrow pointed at his heart.

I'm dead, he thought. *How do I get out of this?*

He rolled the *Panther* on its side and pointed his particle cannon at the approaching streak. His bolt of man-made lightning missed the approaching fighter by dozens of meters. *Last chance*, he thought desperately as he aimed again. His finger tightened on the trigger as tracer fire lanced out across the *Sparrowhawk*'s path. The Davion fighter pulled up and rolled, now more prey than hunter. A second fighter passed briefly

into Fujimori's field of vision, this time a sleek *Samurai* in Dieron Regulars colors. It pulled up sharply too, its contrails entwining with those of the Davion fighter.

Fujimori in his *Panther* continued to fall. He became suddenly, crashingly aware of the ground rushing up to meet him. Twisting desperately he aligned his 'Mech's body with its feet downward. Then he stamped hard on the jump pedals. The *Panther's* jets roared to life, slowing the descent. The 'Mech continued to spin. From the corner of his eye he could see the spaceport complex and beyond it the city, some dozen kilometers distant, but he didn't have time to make a course correction. He would need every ounce of skill to survive the landing, let alone worry about *where* he came down.

He arched the 'Mech's body again, seeking to control the spin, all the while maintaining pressure on the jet triggers. Air speed bled off. An impact now would still be fatal, but at least he wouldn't leave a smear across the landscape. An alert sounded as his altimeter recognized 500 meters. Only seconds remained of the descent. Fujimori triggered the booster pack strapped to the *Panther's* back. Solid rocket motors cut in, further slowing the plunging 'Mech. The altimeter warning rose in pitch to a scream. Fujimori began to pray.

Namu Amida Butsu. O Amida, I take refuge in you.

There was a bone-shaking blow as the thirty-five ton 'Mech touched down, its actuators struggling to absorb the impact. Artificial bones and muscles creaked ominously and sensors flashed for attention. Yet the 'Mech remained intact, legs bending to absorb the stress. One knee grazed the ground, tearing a jagged rent in the turf, and the *Panther* fell forward. Fujimori's right hand shot out. The sensor mesh built into his gloves recognized the action and produced a near-perfect mimicry with the *Panther's* own right arm. The massive hand dug into the turf but the machine remained upright. Fujimori breathed heavily for what seemed like hours but was probably only half a minute, then triggered the command macro that stood the 'Mech upright once more. Dirt clung to the leg and hand that had braced the unsteady machine, but those were minor concerns now.

Pulling the *Panther* fully erect, Fujimori gave the 'Mech's throttle a shove and the humanoid machine took a step forward. He spun the massive war machine so that he could observe his immediate surroundings. Scorched grass marked his landing site, some of it still burning from the rocket booster strapped to his back. He reached up to the overhead console and armed a pair of switches before opening the cover over a third. He pressed it. Dull detonations sounded in his cockpit as small pyrotechnic charges detonated and separated the smoking rocket backpack from the 'Mech. He stepped forward again, clear of the straps and cables, and then turned toward his objective, now lost beyond the horizon but clearly identifiable by the rising plume of smoke.

Time to join this war, he thought, and bring the Dragon's vengeance to his enemies. Fujimori advanced the throttle and the 'Mech accelerated into a long-legged lope that would quickly eat up the kilometers.

The Davion teki won't know what hit them.

INTRODUCTION

Victor,

You may wish to circulate this treatise among your troops. I have not corrected any of General Caradoc Trevena's misconceptions about the participants or their motivations—I'm sure you can understand why—but even as it stands, it provides a comprehensive overview of the War of 3039 and certainly avoids the political bias of Misha Auburn. I have always liked Misha and her father, but neither of them has ever let go of their Steiner roots. Trevena has generally managed to balance his heritage with an unbiased view of events. He doesn't put your mother and father on a pedestal, nor does he paint Theodore as the bogeyman—a portrayal unfortunately prevalent in contemporary AFFS and LCAF accounts. He looks at the facts, not the image, and understands why the war happened the way it did and what we can learn from it.

Trevena used the DCMS, LCAF and AFFS archives to build his picture of the conflict, providing unparalleled insights into the actions on both sides. Where he errs is in the interpretation of material that remains classified, and also in seeking to examine the motivations of the participants. As regards the latter, he can do little more than make educated guesses, though his "wild stabs in the dark" are often more insightful than those of thirty-year veterans in the Lyran military—in particular some of those buffoons now seeking to ingratiate themselves with young Peter.

One thing is worth noting. Trevena portrays your great-aunt Nondi in a favorable light that is at odds with current perceptions of her. He depicts her as a strong and insightful leader, moody but competent—a far cry from the caricature put about during her regency. She and I never got on particularly well—childhood rivalries and all that—but I did respect her accomplishments and abilities. It is refreshing to see a report that does her justice and stands as a testament to a fine General of the Armies.

I commend the manuscript to your hands. Take it to Tharkad and the Star League conference and share it with Hohiro and his colleagues. I should see you there, but I admit my new garden here is most distracting. You should visit me soon and I will tell you tales of this place and its distinguished visitors that will prove valuable in your present role.

—Anastasius Focht,
Mimir House, Fort Odin,
Dromini IV, Lyran Alliance

AUTHOR'S NOTES: BUILDING A WAR

Okay, so we're late. Writing the *Historical: War of 3039* turned into a mammoth undertaking for all concerned and forced a succession of overruns and delays, some because of outside factors but mainly caused by the sheer scale of the project. Originally planned as a compact 70,000-word book, this volume grew considerably to do the tale justice, finally coming in at around 125,000 words.

The War of 3039 has long been a specter of the *BattleTech* universe, a testament to Theodore Kurita's determination to save his realm and a demonstration of Hanse Davion's fallibility. That being said, despite how large the war loomed in the setting, surprisingly little information existed about it—a section in the 20 Year Update, several chapters in the novel *Heir to the Dragon* and a scattering of references in Field Manuals, scenario packs and sourcebooks that had to be systematically pieced together. On more than one occasion, the authors or fact checkers uncovered a buried reference that necessitated the rewriting of text and/or redrawing of maps.

Assembling this information was a formidable task requiring the writers to comb almost the entire range of *BattleTech* sourcebooks and novels in order to make the story we tell fit as closely as possible the established facts. That being said, undoubtedly some of the information presented here deviates from an existing source. In some cases this may be a genuine mistake (for which we will blame Caradoc Trevena), but often the authors were presented with contradictory information and had to either pick one option (or at least rationalize it) or attempt to synthesize a new all-encompassing version. Have our endeavors succeeded? Only you, the readers, can judge. We have attempted to give you a comprehensive insight into the War of 3039, including its origins and after-effects, and we hope we've managed to set a solid benchmark for future *Historical* books.

Classic BattleTech Historical: War of 3039 is the first of a new range of products that explores the major—and so far little-detailed—conflicts in the past of the *BattleTech* universe. Each book of the *Historical* series is part sourcebook and part campaign pack, describing in detail the background and major events of the conflicts as well as providing tools relevant to players who wish to recreate battles of the historical era in question. The War of 3039 has two distinct sections, the sourcebook and the rules annex, each of which is subdivided into smaller sections.

The sourcebook opens with *How Things Came to Pass*, describing the war's background along with the plans and alliances made by the combatants prior to the outbreak of war. *Wave One* covers the conflict between April and mid-July of 3039, including major attacks by the LCAF and AFFS as well as counter-raids by the DCMS and exploitation attacks by the Free Worlds League. *Shadow Wars* examines the less well-known aspects of the conflict, involving Special Forces, the media and communications. *Wave Two and Counterattack* describes DCMS efforts to liberate worlds seized by the LCAF and AFFS, as well as Theodore Kurita's audacious counter-invasion of the Draconis March. *Aftermath* provides information on the war's conclusion and immediate aftereffects in each of the participating states, including the rapprochement between Takashi and Theodore Kurita in the Combine and the decision to merge the LCAF and AFFS into a single fighting force. The *Deployment Tables* show the initial positions of the major units involved in the conflict and their principal movements prior to and during the war.

The *Rules Annex* includes a diverse range of items designed to aid players who wish to recreate the War of 3039 in their own games. *Prototypes and Development Dead Ends* contains experimental technologies that first saw light in that conflict, and *Unit Assignment Tables* shows which units were fielded by each combatant. *Inner Sphere in Flames: War of 3039 Annex* provides the information required to replay the War of 3039 using the Inner Sphere in Flames strategic rules found in the *Combat Operations* sourcebook.

As a stylistic consideration, all named military operations in this volume appear in upper case. For example, the AFFC assault on the Capellan Confederation in 3028 appears as Operation RAT, while Operation GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG designates the LCAF attacks against the Draconis Combine in that same conflict. Operation's WINTERSCHNEE (Commonwealth Thrust), STURMHAMMER (Dieron Thrust), GAHERIS (Benjamin Thrust) and LAUNCELOT (Galedon Thrust) represent the allied offensives into the Combine in 3039 and Operation OROCHI indicates the DCMS counteroffensive.

HOW THINGS CAME TO PASS

"The best-laid plans of mice and men go oft astray."

—John Steinbeck

"You'd trust a nation of shopkeepers to organize an operation of this scale? I wouldn't trust them with a picnic."

—Anonymous infantryman, Fourth Crucis Lancers

The origins of the War of 3039, as the Steiner-Davion invasion of the Draconis Combine has come to be known, lie roughly twenty years earlier with a seemingly innocuous series of events. In 3020, Archon Katrina Steiner issued her now-infamous "Peace Proposal" which, though little more than self-serving politics, led to an ongoing dialogue between the then-Lyran Commonwealth and the Federated Suns. These discussions culminated in 3022 with the signing of a treaty that would shape Inner Sphere politics for decades to come. Ostensibly, the agreement facilitated scientific and military exchanges, but secret clauses called for political and dynastic union between the two states. These provisions were kept under wraps until 3027, when the Draconis Combine attempted to kidnap Melissa Steiner in the famed Silver Eagle incident. In the aftermath of that failed attack, the Archon announced that the young Archon-Designate was to marry Prince Hanse Davion the following summer, with their children to inherit power over both states.

A series of military exercises—Operations GALAHAD and THOR—involving LCAF and AFFS troops had been ongoing since 3026, and it was widely expected that eventually the two militaries would be unleashed on their common enemy, the Draconis Combine. However, as each year passed without any attacks, complacency settled over the rivals of this fledgling alliance. The leaders of the remaining Successor States assumed they would see no major action during the summer of 3028, the highlight of which was to be Hanse and Melissa's wedding. How wrong they were.

As his wedding present to his new bride, Hanse Davion gave her the Capellan Confederation, marking his "gift" by launching the massed AFFS at the Liao state (Operation RAT). Meanwhile, the LCAF, still in its advanced positions after Operation THOR, invaded the Draconis Combine (Operation GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG) to draw DCMS forces away from the Federated Suns while their allies dealt with the Confederation. Subsequently known as the Fourth Succession War, this conflict cost the Capellan Confederation almost half its worlds, while the Combine lost more than fifty to the Lyran Commonwealth. Souring the situation for the alliance, though far less so than might have been the case had Takashi Kurita not been obsessed with crushing the mercenary unit Wolf's Dragoons, was the loss of fifteen Davion worlds to the Combine as DCMS forces exploited the Federated Suns' weaknesses.

That the alliance did not focus its efforts on the Draconis Combine initially confounded many observers, but after the war it became clear that Operation RAT, the Davion assault on the Capellan Confederation, was partly in response to various gambits attempted by the Capellan Chancellor earlier in the decade. That the allied Lyran and FedSuns forces would eventually turn their attentions to the Combine was never in doubt. If nothing else, Hanse Davion would want to recover worlds lost to the DCMS, though first the Suns military would need to catch its breath after years of effort and the realm would need time to digest the worlds it had absorbed from the Draconis Combine, Capellan Confederation and Free Worlds League, as well as the "independent" worlds of the Tikonov Free Republic that had recently seceded from the Confederation. Because this process would take several years, no one expected a resumption of war until 3033 or 3034.

As usual in the Inner Sphere, however, political reality would interfere with the best-laid plans of Hanse the Fox, and the new Federated Commonwealth's rivals and enemies would not stand idly by.

THE RISE OF TEDDY K

Targeted by Lyran forces in the Fourth Succession War, Theodore Kurita—heir to the Combine throne—evaded capture and led the DCMS to its few victories on the Steiner front, most notably defeating the invasion of Vega. Recognizing that seizing the initiative was critical to victory, Theodore led a counter-invasion of the Commonwealth that could have severely damaged the Lyran war machine had not LIC agents identified his Operation CONTAGION and launched spoiling attacks, including the sabotage of the Combine fleet over Dromini VI. These counter-assaults cost the lives of hundreds of Lyran warriors, including the Archon's cousin, Frederick Steiner, but stalled Kurita's operations and prompted him to withdraw.

Despite facing considerable political opposition from the DCMS hierarchy, Theodore's success in the war prompted his father to name him *Gunji-no-Kanrei*, Deputy for Military Affairs. This new post—a de facto supreme warlord for the Combine reporting to the Coordinator—would oversee the rebuilding and updating of the Combine military. Theodore planned to use the Genyosha and Ryuken regiments as the model for his revised military, focusing on a more broad-based and flexible armed forces than the DCMS had previously favored. Coordinator

UNITY AND DISUNITY

April 12, 3030 saw the birth of Melissa Steiner-Davion and Hanse Davion's first child, appropriately named Victor. This youth—the first of five children—would one day rule the unified Lyran Commonwealth and Federated Suns, the so-called Federated Commonwealth. The years after the Fourth Succession War saw considerable political and economic integration between the two realms, but at the time of the War of 3039 there were still two distinct militaries, each with its own command and support structures. Not until the 3040s would the militaries come together as the Armed Forces of the Federated Commonwealth (AFFC), and full political union would not occur until Melissa Steiner-Davion's assassination in 3055—a unity that ironically would last a mere two years before internal politics tore the realm apart and set it on the road to civil war.

INSIDER INFORMATION

The coincidence that ComStar should seek an alliance with the Combine just when Theodore most needed its support—and that Theodore managed to predict Primus Waterley's needs and demands—has led many observers to suggest that either the ISF or the O5P had placed an agent deep inside ComStar. Indeed, Theodore's ability to defuse ComStar's anger after the creation of the Free Rasalhague Republic—the Combine retained a number of worlds that subsequently formed the Alshain Military District in contravention of the pact with ComStar—suggests a level of insight that could only have come from within the Order. The Combine has never acknowledged such an agent, though House Kurita's actions in the aftermath of the Clan Invasion—most notably in stalling Waterley's Operation SCORPION—lend credence to such a suggestion. The identity of the operative, assuming one existed, has never been made clear.

Some suspect then-Precentor Martial Anastasius Focht of being Theodore's agent, and it is true that the two commanders have shown a degree of comradeship that suggests a relationship spanning decades. However, as ComStar did not have a military force in 3030 when the initial contacts began, this proposal is unlikely. Even less likely is that Waterley herself—or her successor as Precentor Dieron, and eventually as Primus, Sharilar Mori—was secretly an ISF operative. No evidence exists for such speculation, save that both Waterley and Mori were born in the Combine, and those who support such ideas also tend to believe that Aleksandr Kerensky was in league with Stefan Amaris in attempting to seize control of the Terran Hegemony. More believable and likely is that some member of a precentor's staff—most likely on Luthien or Dieron, though possibly on Terra—was suborned by one of the Combine intelligence agencies. The truth will likely never be known.

up. The Skye secessionists had lost a figurehead when Duke Aldo Lestrade died during the Fourth Succession War, but former Archon Alessandro Steiner—deposed some years earlier by Katrina Steiner—prompted his protégé Duke Ryan Steiner to assume the leadership of the separatist movement. Within weeks of Rasalhague's birth as a nation, pro-independence demonstrations occurred throughout Skye. Commonwealth garrison troops, many of whom were of FedSuns origin, overreacted to the demonstrations. Their harsh crackdown played into Duke Ryan's hands, allowing him to bolster his own position at the expense of Hanse Davion and Katrina Steiner. The need to maintain order at home (and to redeploy troops to calm the rising tensions) also significantly delayed Hanse Davion's plans to attack the Draconis Combine. The extra few years bought by this insurrection likely made the difference between defeat and victory for the DCMS when Hanse Davion finally launched his long-expected Combine invasion. Despite the loss of its Rasalhague worlds and the casualties of the Ronin War, Theodore Kurita believed that price a fair one to preserve his nation.

Takashi had little intention of granting the new *Gunji-no-Kanrei* any real powers, however, and ordered Theodore's "pet units" dispersed throughout the Combine military. This action had a result opposite to what the Coordinator intended—instead of spiking the *Kanrei*'s plans, it spread the new units' flexible ideology throughout the Combine.

The Fourth Succession War effectively shattered the Concord of Kapteyn that had bound the Combine in a shaky alliance with the Free Worlds League and the Capellan Confederation against Houses Steiner and Davion. Janos Marik, Captain-General of the Free Worlds League, was distracted by internal disputes and Capellan Chancellor Maximillian Liao was spiraling down into madness after his realm's near-dismemberment by the AFFS. Theodore knew his nation could not stand alone and set about finding new allies inside and outside the Combine. The first approach came from a thoroughly unexpected quarter.

Even before the Fourth Succession War formally ended, the new Primus of ComStar—former Precentor Dieron Myndo Waterley—made overtures to Theodore. She offered to provide the struggling DCMS with advanced 'Mechs and equipment, ostensibly as part of a garrison force deployed at Combine HPG stations. The price of such support was perhaps more than Theodore was prepared to pay—independence for the Rasalhague Military District.

INDEPENDENCE FEVER

Theodore was unprepared to take unilateral action on the Rasalhague issue, but when Haakon Magnusson declared himself Prince of the Free Rasalhague Republic on 13 March 3034, the *Kanrei* signed off on the agreement that not only created a buffer state between the Combine and the Commonwealth, but also forced the Steiners to give up many of the worlds they had seized in the Fourth Succession War. The extent of Rasalhague's political claims—granted by the Tharkad government as well as the Combine—would cause considerable friction between the Duke of Tamar and the Archon. Unfortunately, it also caused friction within the Combine's political and military hierarchy. Theodore had hoped that creating a buffer state—a deal sweetened by the equipment from ComStar—would be worth the internal troubles sparked by that action. The former Rasalhague Military District worlds retained by the Combine would form a new military district, Alshain, which would also incorporate ten worlds from the Buckminster Prefecture.

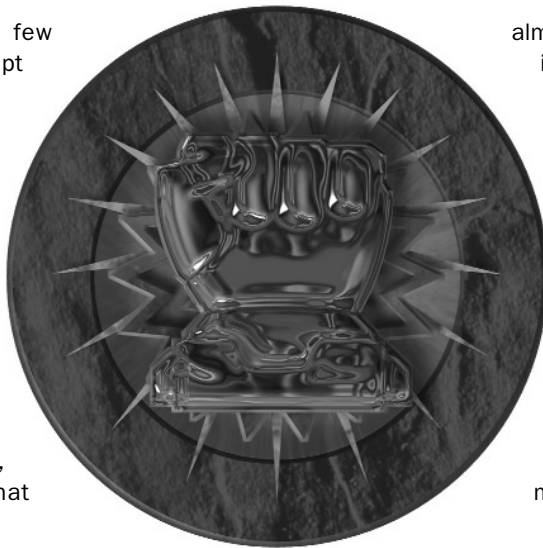
The conflict that followed became known as the Ronin War when a number of DCMS units sought to destroy the nascent FRR. Led by Marcus Kurita, Theodore's cousin, these renegades assaulted the new nation but were opposed by the DCMS, mercenaries and forces loyal to Free Rasalhague. The fighting further weakened the DCMS and cost it considerably in men and materiel, but also gave the *Kanrei* an opportunity to purge the military of disloyal elements and those resistant to change. Furthermore, the assassination of Marcus Kurita—ostensibly by the Lyrans, but widely believed to be the work of the ISF—removed a political rival of the ruling branch of the Kurita family.

The creation of the FRR also heightened tensions in the Lyran Commonwealth, an effect seemingly planned by Theodore and ComStar. In addition to the province of Tamar's disaffection with the Tharkad government, the loss of Lyran worlds to the new republic exacerbated the longstanding desire for independence in the province of Skye—an industrial stronghold, and not a region the Lyran nation would willingly give



As the 3030s marched on, few doubted that renewed war would erupt between the FedSuns-Lyrans alliance and the Draconis Combine. The anticipated assault was a military imperative for the alliance and another step toward dominating the Inner Sphere. Political pressure also played a role, with Duke Aaron Sandoval of the FedSuns' Draconis March constantly calling on Prince Hanse to deal with House Davion's ancestral enemy. Duke Sandoval opposed the alliance with the Lyrans, and Hanse Davion believed that renewed war with the Combine might persuade the duke to throw his weight behind the Prince's other plans.

Hampering those plans, however, was the Prince's ongoing conflict with ComStar. Though the powerful communications agency had facilitated the FedCom Alliance, they had little desire to see one nation dominate the Inner Sphere, and for much of the Fourth Succession War had placed the Federated Suns under communications interdict. Officially, ComStar took this action in reprisal for attacks on the Sarna HPG (also used to justify ComStar's militarization in the 3030s), but a postwar investigation by the FedSuns intelligence agency, the MIIO, exonerated the AFFS of any wrongdoing and suggested that some other party (most likely ComStar itself) had staged the Sarna incident to rationalize the interdict. An attack on the New Avalon Institute of Science by the Liao Death Commandos as the war drew to a close likewise raised suspicions among the Davion intelligence community. That same unit had targeted the valuable JumpShip facilities on the planet Kathil



almost simultaneously, and the physics of interstellar transport made it impossible for a unit to be in two places at once.

The paucity of evidence proving that the NAIS attack was truly the work of the Death Commandos suggested that the unit targeting the NAIS was most likely a doppelganger formation made to look like the elite Liao troops, but in reality sponsored by another power. Few groups had the knowledge and resources to carry out such a deception, but one stood out in Prince Hanse's mind. Had ComStar attempted to destroy the Helm memory core, recently acquired by the NAIS facility, or had they learned of the secret communications research underway there? Whatever the cause, relations between the alliance member-states and ComStar cooled markedly after the war, in particular following Myndo Waterley's ascension as Primus. Soon afterward, the MIIO and the LIC found themselves embroiled in a shadow conflict with ROM, ComStar's intelligence service, that cost thousands of lives and hampered the alliance's intelligence gathering capabilities. The damage done there would prove a major disadvantage in 3039.

Even before the formation of the FRR and the Ronin War, Theodore Kurita had sought to broaden the DCMS' resources and had made an alliance with the yakuza gangs that dominated the Combine's criminal underworld. The purges of the DCMS leadership in the wake of the Ronin War removed the major opponents of allowing such undesirables to serve in the military, and Theodore used the yakuza to create a series of new irregular units that bolstered the Dragon's strength. Formed in utmost secrecy, these so-called Ghost Regiments provided the Combine with a concealed reserve which, though it did not overtly deter Davion aggression, ultimately gave the *Kanrei* a means of taking the war back to the enemy. Theodore also

encouraged commanders to promote soldiers on the grounds of ability and potential, rather than by gender or social standing. Consequently, the number of women holding prominent posts in the DCMS rose substantially, though the installation of a female warlord would not occur until after the Clan Invasion.

“I WILL FIGHT NO MORE FOREVER”

15 March 3039 is perhaps the most significant date in the recent history of the Federated Commonwealth. It saw the birth of Yvonne Steiner-Davion, fifth and final child of Melissa Steiner and Hanse Davion, who would one day serve as regent of the Federated Suns. More significantly, it saw the abdication of Katrina Steiner in favor of her daughter. This act reflected Melissa’s increased political stature in the Lyran Commonwealth and also the balance of power in the FedCom alliance.

Officially, Katrina chose the date of her abdication to coincide with the birth of her latest grandchild and to give the Archon some time to spend with her daughter and grandchildren. The illness that would claim her life in 3040 may have prompted Katrina’s decision, but more cynical commentators cite the event’s proximity to the onset of the War of 3039. At the signing of the peace treaty that ended the Fourth Succession War, Katrina had made it clear that she was tired of warfare, quoting Joseph Nez Perce’s famous statement of a thousand years earlier. For her to oversee renewed war would have made Katrina a hypocrite, and some have suggested that her resignation in March—just as LCAF and AFFS units were moving to their jump-off points and some were already en route to their Combine targets—was a deliberate effort to sidestep such accusations. That Katrina Steiner has remained one of the most beloved archons, exceeded in popularity only by her daughter, is testament to her political acumen in handing over leadership on the eve of invasion.

Even before Archon Melissa left the world of Liao with her new daughter, she had confirmed the orders given to the LCAF high command and committed the Commonwealth to war with the Combine. The die was cast and the troops moving, and neither the new Archon nor her husband had reason to suspect the result would be any less decisive than the conflict launched eleven years earlier on their wedding day. However, the FedSuns-Lyran alliance no longer had the advantage of surprise or a monopoly on determination. This new round of conflict was long expected, and the enemy had had a decade to prepare his defenses.

THE WAR OF 3039

“Euphoria after victory is dangerous. But what’s even worse is arrogance. You stop thinking and learning.”

—Uri Gil, Israeli fighter pilot, Six-Day War

“The Dracs rolled over in Götterdämmerung. We’ll give them a good kicking this time too.”

—Hauptmann-General Kathleen Heany

The War of 3039 was intended as the knockout blow that would ensure Steiner-Davion hegemony over the Inner Sphere, leaving the twin capitals of Tharkad and New Avalon as undisputed masters of human-occupied space. With the Capellan Confederation already shattered, this assault—ten years in the planning—would remove the one remaining obstacle to the alliance’s dominance, leaving them free to deal with the remaining major power, the fractious Free Worlds League, at their convenience.

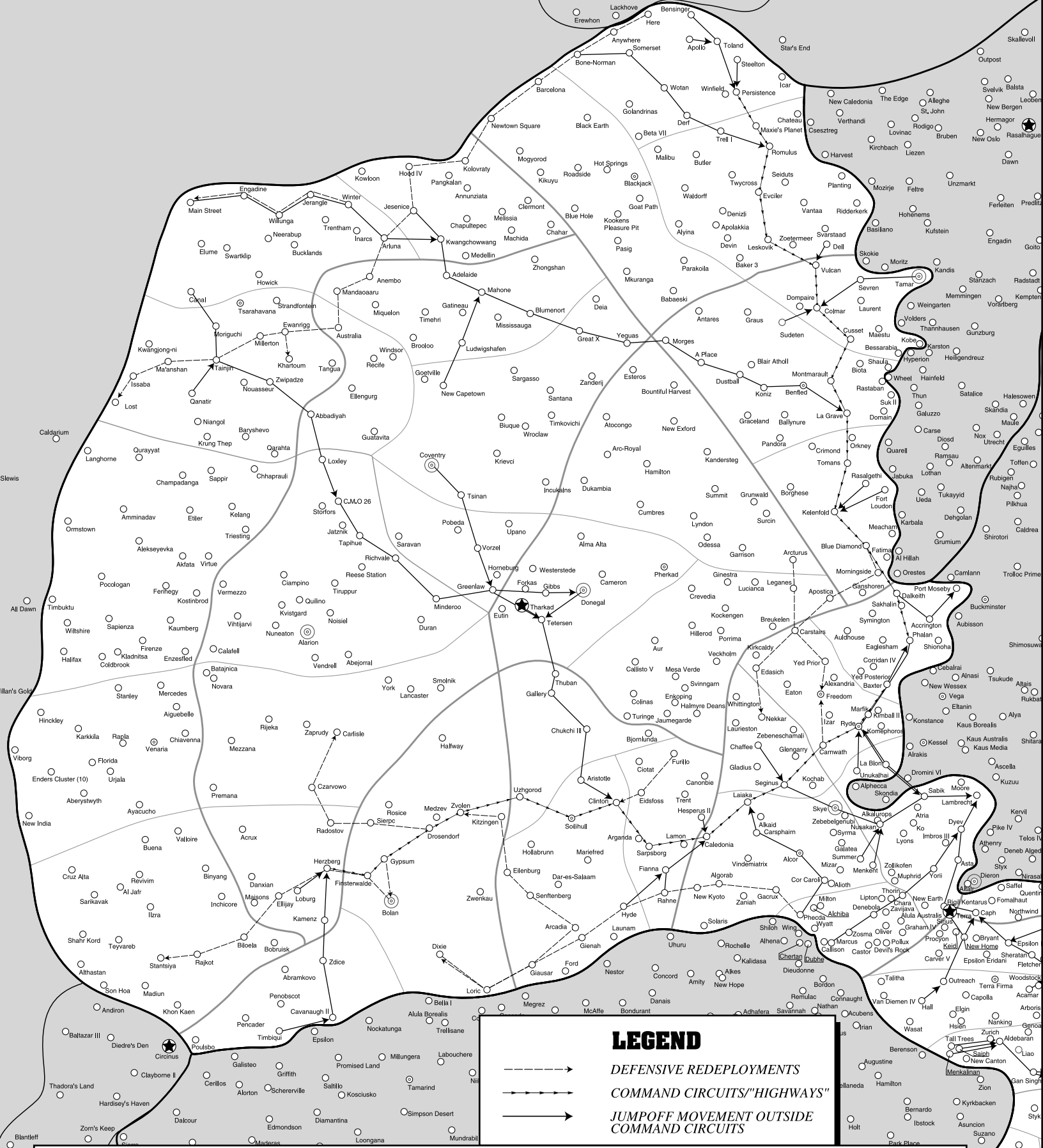
ALLIED PREPARATIONS

Unlike the surprise assault of the Fourth Succession War, there was no concealing the impending, massive Steiner-Davion attack on the Draconis Combine. The enemy knew the assault was coming, and so the allied forces could be a little more overt in their preparations than they had been in the 3028-3030 conflict. Despite the lack of strategic surprise, neither the Prince nor the Archon wished to sacrifice tactical surprise. To that end, both militaries continued their annual exercises, varying the times of their drills and their locations to confuse

PIRATES AND PRINCES

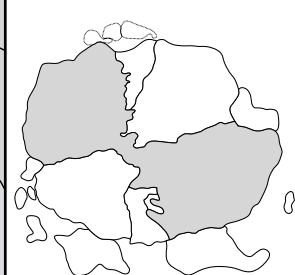
Theodore’s most controversial decision was the appointment of Michi Noketsuna as Warlord of Dieron in the wake of the Ronin War. A former aide to Minobu Tetsuhara, commander of the Ryuken in the conflict against Wolf’s Dragoons that occurred immediately before the Fourth Succession War, Noketsuna had forsaken his DCMS post to pursue a vendetta against rogue Warlord Grieg Samsonov. His campaign to offset the dishonor inflicted by Samsonov on his former master, Minobu Tetsuhara, prompted Noketsuna to adopt the guise of The Bounty Hunter, and in this role his path crossed Theodore’s as the *Kanrei* sought allies to rebuild the DCMS. Despite the objections of Theodore’s advisors, Noketsuna became one of the *Kanrei*’s closest associates, standing shoulder to shoulder with him in his efforts to sway the yakuza to his cause.

Noketsuna’s rival for the Dieron posting was Dexter Kingsley, who served at the time under Warlord Vasily Cherenkoff. Cherenkoff went rogue during the Ronin War and was brought down when Kingsley betrayed him. This action crippled the rebel forces, but Kingsley did it in an effort to advance his own position rather than from loyalty to the *Kanrei*. Theodore had little desire to promote such a self-serving individual to command of a military district and instead chose to install someone he knew had little desire for such power. Noketsuna, he believed, would command because the Combine needed him. The “old pirate” was not a popular choice with career DCMS officers but his combat and command skills, developed in his years with the original Ryuken, were beyond question.



LEGEND

- > DEFENSIVE REDEPLOYMENTS
- ==> COMMAND CIRCUITS/"HIGHWAYS"
- > JUMPOFF MOVEMENT OUTSIDE COMMAND CIRCUITS



LYRAN COMMONWEALTH JUMPOFF MOVEMENTS

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LEGEND

30 LIGHT YEARS

120 LIGHT YEARS OR 26.8 PARSECS

MAXIMUM JUMP: APPROXIMATELY 30 LIGHT YEARS

Coreward

Anti-spinward

Spinward

Rimward

observers. Operation GALAHAD '32 took place in the Draconis March, while FORGER '33 took place in the Sarna March. FORTITUDE '34 was scheduled to take place in the Isle of Skye, but the political repercussions of the Skye Revolt led to the cancellation of that year's exercises while tempers cooled. The exercises resumed the following year.

One innovation put in place by the allied powers to ease military cooperation was a series of JumpShip command circuits, designed to speed the movement of people and materiel by passing them from vessel to vessel rather than waiting the week or so required for a JumpShip to recharge between 30-light year hops. A semi-permanent command circuit had linked Tharkad and New Avalon since before the Fourth Succession War, and this core route slowly expanded to include side spurs that served regional capitals and key worlds. Ostensibly to speed the political integration of the "liberated" worlds of the Sarna March and to facilitate trade—indeed, for much of their existence the command circuit routes were used to move goods and passengers—this network of JumpShip "highways" allowed the swift redeployment of troops throughout the two realms without needing to militarize large portions of the merchant marine, as had been required during the Fourth Succession War. Not only did this improve the flexibility of the AFFS and the LCAF, but it also kept the economic impact of any future war to a minimum, a lesson Hanse and Melissa had learned the hard way after the Fourth Succession War pushed their respective economies into recession.

The attack on the Draconis Combine was originally scheduled for 3035, giving the FedCom militaries time to rebuild after the Fourth War and to absorb tactical and strategic lessons learned in that intense conflict. However, the Skye Revolt and a succession of political and economic concerns led to the war's postponement several times. The LCAF and AFFS used the delays to further hone their plans, carrying out numerous simulations and exercises to maximize their offensive force and minimize vulnerability to DCMS counter-actions. In particular, they focused on multi-regiment engagements—a signature of the Fourth Succession War—and spent considerable time honing their fighting doctrine. Officers of units scheduled to fight together became familiar with their fellow units' histories, traditions and capabilities via a series of exchange programs. Because many assaults would depend on a mix of LCAF and AFFS forces, this coordination would prove vital.

Another lesson learned from the Fourth War was the establishment of substantial supply caches to allow participating units to drive home their attacks without pausing to resupply. A decade's worth of preparation ensured that vast stockpiles of ammunition and consumables were available at each of the jump-off worlds, and each assault unit would be accompanied by logistics transports that could bring in new 'Mechs, ammo and personnel, allowing the assault units to remain at peak fighting efficiency. This strategy would be essential in an invasion plan that called for high-tempo operations to keep the DCMS on the defensive rather than staging counter-assaults. A core group of veteran and elite units would spearhead the FedCom assault, constantly driving forward, rather than the typical deployment pattern of two waves of troops leapfrogging each other. This tactic minimized the number of units required for each wave (and maximized the number of worlds the allies could hit), but left the invaders with little depth and minimal reserves. This drawback would return to haunt the FedCom during the war.

In addition to training and planning, the allied powers spent vast sums of money to improve their battlefield technology and maximize their combat edge. New weapons and armor developed by the NAIS using the Helm memory core were employed for the first time in this conflict, considerably extending the range and firepower of the attackers. The allied forces did not suspect Theodore's secret deal with ComStar, which had given the DCMS similar technology not composed of erratic prototypes and experimental configurations. The FedCom also believed it had an advantage in communications, deploying portable "black box" fax machines with each invasion HQ and using these to coordinate actions rather than relying on the questionable services of ComStar. Unfortunately for the allies, the system had fallen into Combine hands during the Fourth Succession War, and so the DCMS could eavesdrop on many "secure" communiqués (for more details on communications, see the *Secret Whispers: Black Box Technology* sidebar on p. 67). The degree to which allied communications were compromised never became clear during the 3039 conflict, though after the war the LIC and MIIO suspected the Combine had access to privileged information and so made radical changes to FedCom encryption. Not until the midst of the Clan Invasion did the full extent to which the black box network had been penetrated become clear, along with ComStar's perfidy.

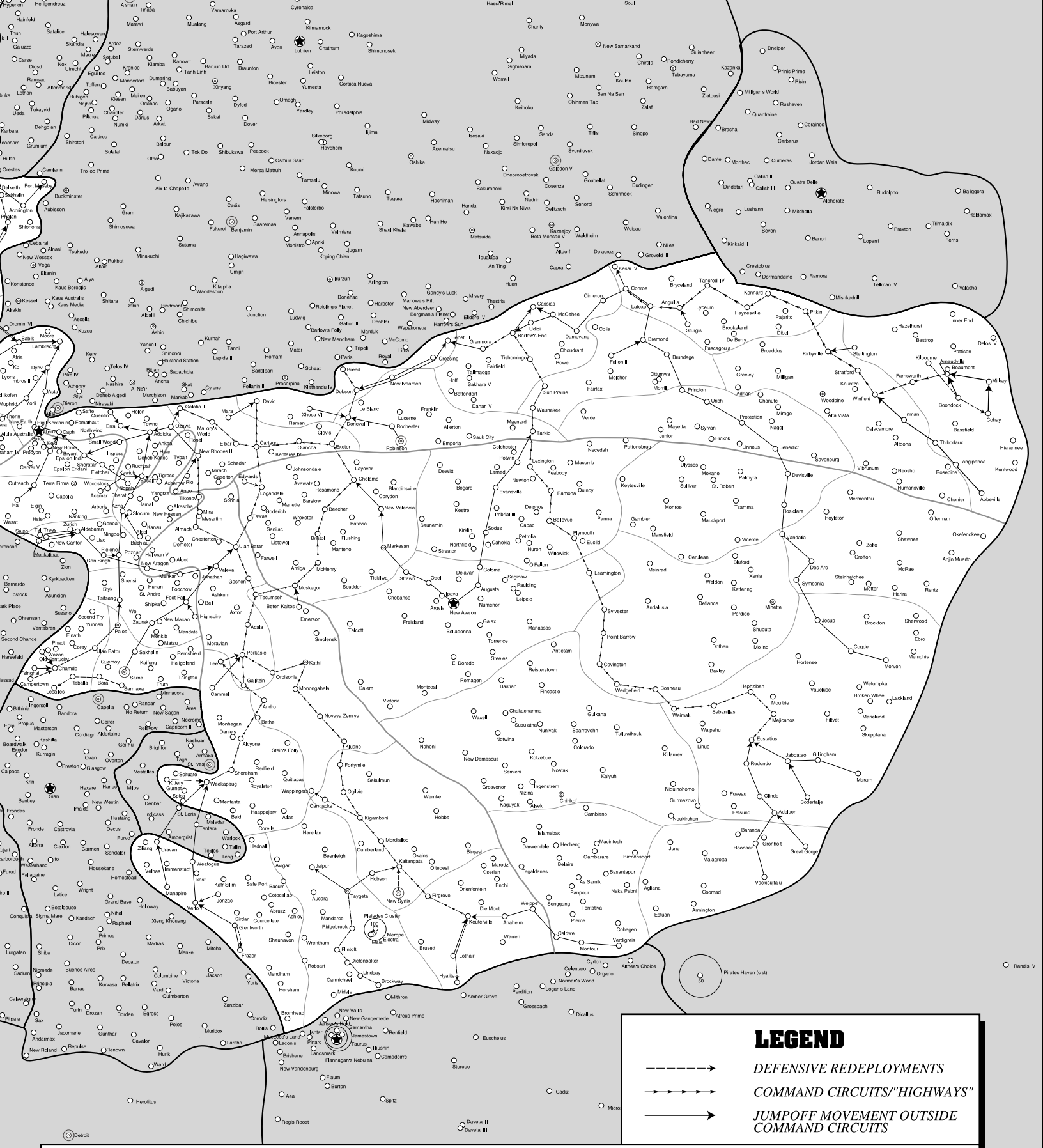
THIEVES AND PATRIOTS

On 2 April 3039, Lieutenant Adrian Robertson left the military command center on Robinson and started the ten-kilometer drive back to his home. En route, he stopped at the KidsWorld department store to pick up a new toy for his six-year-old daughter, locking his briefing papers and personal computer—which contained details of the forthcoming war—in the trunk of his groundcar. He was in the store for six minutes, but by the time he emerged into the late afternoon sunshine, his vehicle and its contents had been stolen.

A massive police and MIIO operation followed, based on the possibility that this apparent vehicle theft was an ISF operation. Duke Aaron Sandoval authorized the closure of Robinson's spaceports for almost 24 hours and approved a "technical glitch" in Robinson City's telecommunications grid to limit remote access to the ComStar HPG and contain any leaks. Despite his best efforts, however, news began to circulate in the city, both of the security operation underway and of the loss of valuable military secrets.

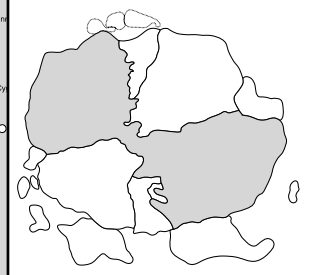
Around 3 p.m. on April 3, almost exactly 24 hours after the theft, the Robinson City PD received an anonymous call stating that the groundcar was in a car park in the city center. Agents rushed to the scene, where they found and secured the vehicle. The lock on Robertson's briefcase had been forced but the contents remained intact—the damaged case had been secured with three chains and padlocks. An additional sheet of paper was included, bearing the following statement: "I may be a thief, but I am a patriot too. I return this to you, together with my assurance that I have not copied or passed on the information it contains."

The identity of the man the Robinson press subsequently dubbed the "Patriotic Thief" has never been established.



LEGEND

- DEFENSIVE REDEPLOYMENTS
- COMMAND CIRCUITS/"HIGHWAYS"
- JUMPOFF MOVEMENT OUTSIDE COMMAND CIRCUITS



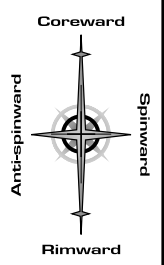
**FEDERATED SUNS
JUMPOFF MOVEMENTS**

© 3067 COMSTAR CARTOGRAPHIC CORPS

LEGEND



MAXIMUM JUMP: APPROXIMATELY 30 LIGHT YEARS



DCMS PREPARATIONS

Had Hanse Davion immediately turned his forces against the DCMS after the Fourth Succession War, in 3031 or 3032, there is little chance that the DCMS would have prevailed. Though Theodore Kurita had made alliances with ComStar to secure advanced technology in building his new military, the equipment was scarce and trained personnel even scarcer. The constant delays suffered by the LCAF and the AFFS gave Theodore time to recruit personnel and train them, both to handle the new equipment and to accept the new doctrines necessary to resist the invaders.

Theodore and his core supporters could only guess as to the FedCom's intended targets and so had to formulate their strategy around a flexible response to whatever the enemy threw at them. Theodore knew that any attempt to directly oppose the invaders would likely shatter the DCMS—an assumption supported by subsequent wargaming—and so his planning and training centered on delaying actions, which would force the invaders to spend more time and effort attaining their objectives and allow the Combine military to react appropriately. This, Theodore realized, was the only way to direct the DCMS efficiently against the technical and numerical superiority of the AFFS and LCAF.

He also realized that making alliance assaults more costly than expected might be insufficient. To ensure victory, he would have to convince Hanse Davion and his generals that the whole premise of their war was flawed, forcing them to question their information and assumptions about the strength and effective-

ness of the DCMS. The new *Yurei* (Ghost) units created through Theodore's alliance with the yakuza provided one strand of this deception, and the technology garnered from ComStar was another. These alone were not enough, however, and so Theodore designed Operation OROCHI, an audacious gambit upon which the defense of the Combine hinged.

RANK AND FILE

At the outset of the war, the LCAF and AFFS remained distinct military entities, each with their own rank systems, organization and procedures. The alliance had brought the two militaries closer together—they used many common 'Mech and vehicle designs and broadly similar tactics—but ten years of cooperation had not yet integrated their rank systems or command structures. For much of the 3039 conflict, this lack of complete coordination was a minor issue, as many assaults involved either LCAF or AFFS troops but not both. However, where units from both militaries worked together, a degree of command confusion (and in some cases, outright conflict) hampered allied operations.

To better understand the command structures of the three principal militaries involved in the War of 3039, the following table shows the equivalency of ranks between the AFFS, LCAF and DCMS. The table also depicts the ranks of the Armed Forces of the Federated Commonwealth (established in response to the command confusion of the 3039 War) to facilitate comparisons with unit structures during the Clan Invasion and later conflicts.

	Federated Suns	Lyran Commonwealth	Federated Commonwealth	Draconis Combine
ENLISTED RANKS				
E1	Recruit	Recruit	Recruit	<i>Hojuhei</i> (Recruit)
E2	Private	Private	Private	<i>Heishi</i> (Private)
E3	Private, First Class	Private, First Class	—	<i>Gunjin</i> (Lance Corporal)
E4	Corporal	Corporal	Corporal	<i>Go-cho</i> (Corporal)
E5	—	Senior Corporal	—	—
E6	Sergeant	Sergeant	Sergeant	<i>Gunsho</i> (Sergeant)
E7	—	Staff Sergeant	—	<i>Shujin</i> (Master Sergeant)
E8	Sergeant-Major	Sergeant Major	Sergeant Major	<i>Kashira</i> (Talon Sergeant)
E9	—	Staff Sergeant Major	—	<i>Sho-ko</i> (Sergeant Major)
E10	Command Sergeant-Major	Senior Sergeant Major	Command Sgt. Major	—
OFFICERS				
O1	Subaltern	Leutnant	—	—
O2	Leftenant	First Leutnant	Leftenant	<i>Chu-i</i> (Lieutenant)
O3	Captain	Hauptmann	Hauptmann	<i>Tai-i</i> (Captain)
O4	Major	Kommandant	Kommandant	<i>Sho-sa</i> (Major)
O5	—	Hauptmann-Kommandant	—	—
O6	Leftenant Colonel	Leutnant-Colonel	Leftenant Colonel	<i>Chu-sa</i> (Lt. Colonel)
O7	Colonel	Colonel	Leftenant General	<i>Tai-sa</i> (Colonel)
O8	Leftenant General	—	—	—
O9	Major General	Leutnant-General	Hauptmann General	<i>Sho-sho</i> (Brigadier-General)
O10	General	Hauptmann-General	Marshal	—
O11	Marshal	Kommandant-General	—	<i>Tai-sho</i> (General)
O12	Field Marshal	General	Field Marshal	<i>Tai-shu</i> (Warlord)
O13	Marshal of the Armies	General of the Armies	Marshal of the Armies	<i>Gunji-no-Kanrei</i>
O14	First Prince	Archon	Archon-Prince	Coordinator

PERSONALITIES

The following individuals played pivotal roles in the War of 3039.



FIRST PRINCE HANSE DAVION

Little remains to be said about Hanse Davion, a pivotal and polarizing figure in the Inner Sphere. Some see him as the savior of the Federated Suns. Others, mostly his enemies, view him as the Devil incarnate: the Great Satan. No matter what people thought of him, in truth Hanse Davion was precisely the leader his people needed. The second son of Prince Andrew Davion, Hanse had a great deal of latitude in the education he sought. While his elder brother, Ian, was trained from an early age to succeed as First Prince, Hanse could pursue his own interests to a certain extent, and largely escaped the pressures faced by his elder brother.

Before reaching his teenage years, Hanse proved to all that he could easily navigate New Avalon's Byzantine political cir-

cuits and that he was a natural leader. He also had a penchant for unconventional thinking, something that marked his entire career. After graduating with honors from the Albion Military Academy, he entered the AFFS and quickly worked his way up the ranks, proving himself more than the son of a former First Prince and the brother of second. A skilled MechWarrior and leader, he had earned the trust of his men, traits that, along with his political acumen, allowed him to survive his assignment to the Capellan March in 3011.

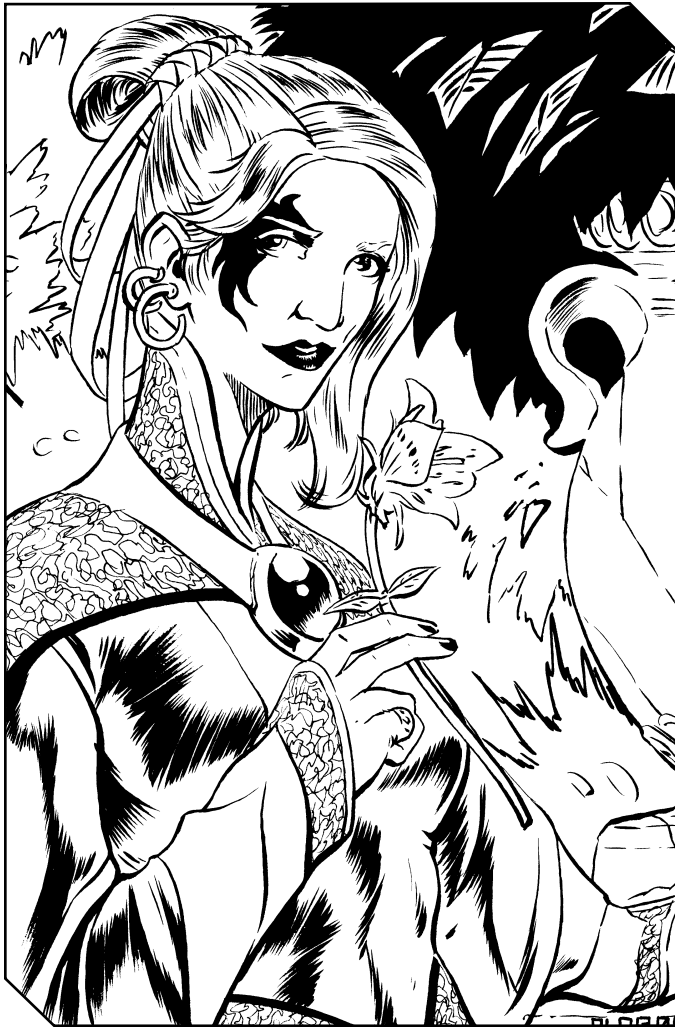
When Ian Davion died on Mallory's World in 3013, the weight of the entire Federated Suns fell on Hanse Davion's shoulders. He quickly adapted to his new position and guided his nation through the final years of the Third Succession War. At the same time, he dealt with the machinations of Duke Michael Hasek-Davion and numerous assassination attempts, including one jointly planned by Michael Hasek-Davion and Chancellor Maximilian Liao that could have left a Capellan-trained look-alike on the throne.

Throughout all these events, Hanse Davion thrived. He built alliances among those who otherwise would have opposed him, and in his most far-sighted move, signed the Federated-Commonwealth Alliance document with Lyran Archon Katrina Steiner. This act led to his marriage to Melissa Steiner in 3028 and the resulting Fourth Succession War, which brought with it a new era in strategic combat. In as much as Hanse Davion was reviled for his invasion of the Capellan Confederation, military historians almost universally consider he and his generals as the fathers of modern warfare.

Though he had his sights set on the Draconis Combine, matters forced him to hold off for almost a decade. The Andurian War of Secession and the resulting Canopian-Andurian Alliance kept his eyes on the Confederation for a time. Several years later, the Ronin Wars fractured the DCMS, but external factors once again saved the Combine, in this case a significant rebellion in the Skye region of the Lyran Commonwealth.

The time was ripe in 3039, and under Prince Hanse's leadership the AFFS and LCAF jointly planned and executed one of the largest single military operations since the 28th century. During this war, like every other major operation he oversaw, Hanse's insight and his drive to succeed at all costs brought success after success to his troops. Even his decision to end the invasion in light of Theodore Kurita's own gamble can be reconciled as the correct move—after decades of using his own illogical and risky tactics, he recognized better than anyone else that when two forces of chaos clash, the outcome is favorable for neither side.

Though he considered the War of 3039 something of a personal failure, he never allowed it to get the best of him. He directed the union of the AFFS and LCAF into the AFFC in 3042 and continued to build the Federated Commonwealth alliance throughout the 3040s. He died of a heart attack in 3052 after leading the Federated Commonwealth through the Clan Invasion.



ARCHON MELISSA STEINER

Born in 3010 to Archon Katrina Steiner and Arthur Luvon, Melissa Steiner displayed a precocious talent for winning people's hearts. Highly intelligent and well educated, her upbringing in the Tharkad Court groomed the young Melissa to rule, but the political landscape of the Commonwealth would be radically reshaped before she could take power. In 3022, Archon Katrina signed a pact with Hanse Davion of the Federated Suns, a provision of which was the amalgamation of the two realms via a political marriage between Prince Hanse Davion and Archon-Designate Melissa. Only twelve years old, Melissa was intrigued by the prospect and consented. The marriage was to take place in 3028 after Melissa reached her majority.

This secret provision almost foundered in 3027 when the Genyosha captured Melissa Steiner en route to New Avalon incognito aboard the *Silver Eagle* to meet her future husband. The Kell Hounds, under Melissa's cousin Patrick Kell, staged a daring rescue mission to Styx that liberated the Archon-designate, but cost the lives of Kell and several of his troops. As Patrick Kell lay dying, Melissa revealed her betrothal to him. A

few months later the marriage became public knowledge, and the leaders of the Inner Sphere were invited to Terra in August 3028 to celebrate the nuptials.

The wedding of Hanse Davion and Melissa Steiner was a spectacular affair, but is best remembered for the groom's wedding gift to his bride: the Capellan Confederation. Launching the Fourth Succession War on his wedding day has variously been called a cynical ploy and a political masterstroke, but the results of the conflict speak for themselves. Officially, Melissa returned to Tharkad after the ceremony, but in truth she joined her husband on New Avalon. Her role on Tharkad was assumed by a double, Jeanna Clay, who died in a Skye-sponsored assassination attempt in 3029 (saving Archon Katrina in the process). The incident demonstrated vulnerabilities in the Lyran leadership's personal protection details and prompted the LIC toward an almost paranoid fascination with protecting their charges. Melissa and Hanse's first child, Victor, was born on 12 April 3030, followed by Katherine (16 November 3032), Peter (2 February 3035) and Arthur (14 July 3037). Their fifth child, Yvonne, was born on 15 March 3039—the same day Melissa became Archon after her mother retired.

Among Melissa's greatest strengths was her understanding of her own weaknesses. A consummate politician and administrator, her skills exceeded her husband's on both counts, but despite qualifying as a jump infantry officer and learning 'Mech piloting at the Nagelring, she acknowledged that her grasp of military matters lagged behind that of Hanse Davion and his advisors (in particular, Nondi Steiner), to whom she delegated much of the military decision-making. Though she gave formal approval for LCAF participation in the War of 3039, the Archon did not directly participate in its planning and execution.

After the peace accords, Melissa was a driving force behind Lyran-FedSuns unification and became the heart of the nascent Federated Commonwealth, which she ruled jointly with her husband until his death in 3052 and then in conjunction with her son, Victor. Ironically, the realm she had come to love would not legally exist until her death in 3055 at the hands of an assassin's bomb. Victor Steiner-Davion succeeded her as the first (and only) Archon-Prince of the united but short-lived Federated Commonwealth.

ARCHON-EMERITUS KATRINA STEINER

Born in 2976, Katrina Elizabeth Steiner never expected to rule the Lyran Commonwealth. A sickly but precocious child, she overcame hardships to become one of the Commonwealth's youngest 'Mech pilots and a formidable officer. Graduating from the Nagelring in 2994, she served in a variety of units before rising to command of the Tenth Lyran Guard in 2996. Her military career included the defense of the Defiance facility on Hesperus during House Marik's campaign of 2997 (the Tenth Battle of Hesperus), and in 3001 she transferred to command of the prestigious Second Royal Guards on Tharkad, where she remained until 3004. At age 28 she became the youngest general officer in the LCAF, playing a vital role in the Strategy and Tactics Division.



However, Katrina's meteoric success and growing political influence gave her uncle, Archon Alessandro Steiner, good reason to fear her, and in early 3005 she disappeared while on an inspection tour of Poulso. Historians have never fully chronicled Katrina's actions during her yearlong "exile", but some rumors link her to tales of the Red Corsair that were prevalent in the Periphery during the same period. One known fact is Katrina's discovery—together with her future husband, Arthur Luvon, and his cousin Morgan Kell—of the "black box" communications devices that would become so pivotal during and after the Fourth Succession War, though unlocking the secret of these machines would take many years.

Returning to the Commonwealth in 3006, Katrina began a political campaign to unseat her weak uncle that concluded with his resignation in July of the next year. As Archon, Katrina steadily undid the damage Alessandro had inflicted on the Lyrans and began seeking ways to bring the Succession Wars to a close. Though a warrior by training, she had little desire to see her people wracked by warfare, and in 3020 she issued a peace proposal to the leaders of the other Successor States. Only Hanse

Davion of the Federated Suns gave a creditable reply, and Katrina soon entered negotiations with the Prince that eventually united their two states through the Prince's marriage to her daughter Melissa. Those events in turn gave rise to the Fourth Succession War and its codicil, the War of 3039.

Though wildly successful, the Fourth Succession War erased what little taste Katrina still retained for war. Hanse Davion pressed for further assaults on the Draconis Combine, but Katrina curbed his enthusiasm and gained time for her realm to rebuild and recover from the Fourth Succession War before launching the next conflict. Political difficulties in the Commonwealth made the original plans for a 3035 invasion of the Combine impossible, but revisions for the conflict's commencement in 3039 seemed to make possible Katrina Steiner's visions of eventual peace throughout the Inner Sphere. Unfortunately, fate intervened.

Katrina had suffered from cancer since 3037, and in December of 3038 she learned her condition was terminal. With roughly a year to live, she chose to spend that time with her daughter and grandchildren. She announced her abdication in favor of Melissa Steiner-Davion, who succeeded as Archon while Katrina took the title of Archon-Emeritus. The elder Archon continued to serve as military and political advisor to her daughter during the War of 3039, but by the end of the year she was frail and in great discomfort. Archon Katrina Steiner died in her sleep on 4 January 3040, days before the signing of the Exeter Accords that ended the 3039 conflict.

COORDINATOR TAKASHI KURITA

No single individual in recent history embodies the character and spirit of the Draconis Combine's "Old Guard" more than Coordinator Takashi Kurita. Firstborn son of Coordinator Hohiro Kurita, Takashi was brought up in the old ways of Kurita nobles. From an early age he was taught to respect the samurai traditions of his forebears and to believe that the strength of the Combine culture rested in the five pillars of that tradition. To him, the Pillar of Gold—representing the leadership of the Combine, with the Coordinator its ultimate ruler—held the greatest responsibility, and it would be his *giri*—honor-bound duty—to ensure the continued survival of the nation.

Unlike past Coordinators, Takashi did not gain power by happenstance of birth. His father rode him and his brother hard, commanding those who taught them to show them no leniency and instead to treat them even more severely than they would normal students, almost to the point of capricious cruelty. Takashi survived these lessons and even excelled at them, graduating with honors from the Sun Zhang Military Academy and earning his promotion to *chui*.

Not until Takashi proved himself during his early military career did his father allow him to take the next step forward by giving him command of the *Otomo*, the Kurita household guard. Already adept from his childhood years at maneuvering through the royal palace's myriad alliances and political channels, Takashi soon forged his own bonds among the Combine's elite. Perhaps the most significant of these was his close relationship with his



old friend, Subhash Indrahara, whom he would ultimately appoint ISF director.

Takashi Kurita became Coordinator of the Draconis Combine on 3 February 3004, after his father was assassinated. He immediately ordered a purge of the DCMS and the Combine government the likes of which had not been seen in centuries. That first act characterized Takashi Kurita's tenure as Coordinator of the Draconis Combine—brutal and intolerant of any except those who showed the most loyalty and expended the greatest effort. He quickly became the Combine's most powerful Coordinator, entirely through the respect he fostered within the DCMS and his close relationship to ISF Director Indrahara. Takashi ruled with an iron fist tempered by the samurai's bushido code, but he also remained open to new alliances and concepts that could help the Combine prosper.

Until 3028.

The feud between Coordinator Takashi Kurita and Wolf's Dragoons commander Jaime Wolf is well known throughout the Inner Sphere, as is Takashi's "Death to Mercenaries" order. From that point on, Takashi Kurita seemed to descend into paranoia that gripped him to the end. More and more, he played his senior

generals and advisors against each other. He also tried to prevent his son, Theodore, from attaining a position of authority, fearing Theodore might use it to oppose or topple him. By the 3030s, Takashi Kurita had lost his edge and became a reactionary leader, resulting in an ongoing power struggle in the DCMS. The constant disputes forced Theodore and his staunchest ally, ISF Director Indrahara, to work behind the scenes to maintain the Dragon's strength.

Takashi Kurita survived the War of 3039 and the Clan invasion of his homeworld of Luthien, but as a shell of the man he had once been. He died in his sleep on Luthien on 14 May, 3054. *[Consistent rumors claim that Takashi did not die in his sleep, but was forced to commit seppuku. These stories have never been substantiated. —Editor]*

GUNJI-NO-KANREI THEODORE KURITA

The childhood and formative years of Theodore Kurita have been the topic of scores of tell-all books and tri-vid biopics, but for all the "facts" told by these tales, they contain



little verifiable truth. Among the few confirmed facts is Theodore's birth on 1 July, 2997, to Takashi and Jasmine Kurita. He would be their only child. He spent most of his early life in the Imperial Palace on Luthien and ultimately attended the Sun Zhang Military Academy and Wisdom of the Dragon. The Combine heir graduated with high honors from both of those prestigious schools—first in his class at Wisdom of the Dragon—and by all accounts was one of the most promising students ever to attend them.

Yet Theodore also had a rebellious streak that kept him and his father estranged for most of their lives. While Takashi demanded the same standards of his son that his own father had demanded of him, Theodore lashed out at Takashi's draconian methods. His disdain for the traditions of his household apparently led him to carousing and to eschew the societal customs of Combine nobility by wearing his hair long and growing a moustache.

Beneath this outward contempt for his father and the cosmetic traditions Takashi Kurita held so dear, Theodore was devoted to his family and to the nation they led. He also had an undisputable flair for martial sciences, though the unconventional tactics he often advocated on the battlefield were considered close to heresy within the tradition-bound circles of the DCMS. More than a few biographers have noted that in nature and attitudes he more closely resembled Hanse Davion than his own father. These same qualities most likely allowed him to lead the Draconis Combine Mustered Soldiery to the victory it claimed in the War of 3039.

Theodore Kurita's early assignments betrayed the low level of respect Takashi held for his own son. After surviving an assassination attempt perpetrated by Rasalhagian secessionists, Takashi sent Theodore to the Benjamin Military District, but Theodore never lasted long in any assignment. Before ending up in the Legions of Vega in 3025, he served in twelve different regiments and even in short-lived postings to the Benjamin and Dieron military district headquarters.

As commander of the Legions of Vega, Theodore seemingly matured into an outstanding leader and general. He ably led the Legions throughout the Fourth Succession War and took virtual command of the entire Dieron Military District. These actions won him the Katana Cluster and the Order of the Dragon, and ultimately the posting of *Gunji-no-Kanrei*, Deputy for Military Affairs. Though Coordinator Takashi hoped to keep a tight leash on his son by promoting him to that position, Theodore turned the tables on his father and used his newfound rank to forge alliances and rebuild a military able to stand up against the "Steiner-Davion juggernaut."

Sometime in 3030, Theodore brokered a deal through which ComStar provided considerable military equipment to the DCMS in return for Theodore's support for the formation of the Free Rasalhague Republic. He also sought out the leaders of the yakuza and gained their support for the reforms he intended to impose on the DCMS. Between making these deals and the outbreak of the War of 3039, Theodore built twelve Ghost BattleMech regiments and saw to the rebuilding of the rest of the Combine military. Even the Ronin War, in which some of his most senior commanders went rogue and which destroyed several regiments of troops, did not stop Theodore's modernization efforts.

If anything, the Ronin War aided him in "cleaning house" and ridding the DCMS of those in the strongest position to oppose him.

Theodore continues to reform the DCMS and the Combine, though these revolutions have not come without a price. Groups like the Black Dragon have rabidly opposed Theodore's reforms since the beginning, and even though it took the Clan Invasion to gain them a vocal following, they remain a festering wound in Combine society.

Theodore's firstborn son, Hohiro, carries on his father's goals of reforming the Combine military. At the end of the Combine-Bear War bear, Tomoe Sakade, whom Theodore secretly married in 3019 and whom he ultimately appointed as Warlord of the Pesht Military District, committed *seppuku* in 3063. Likewise, Theodore's youngest child, Minobu, was given to Clan Nova Cat as an ambassador of peace. His last child with Tomoe Sakade, Omiko Kurita, died at the hands of an assassin in 3064. He has one other known child, Franklin Sakamoto, a bastard who has renounced all claim to the throne and commands the *Otomo* infantry.

GENERAL NONDI STEINER

The second child of Lisa Steiner and Alexandr Weldon, Nondi Steiner was driven to compete with her older sister Katrina for



much of her life. When Katrina Steiner began training to pilot a BattleMech at age twelve, Nondi began at age eleven. When Katrina undertook a prestigious career in the LCAF, Nondi did likewise. Only her romance with and subsequent marriage to Jack Milby, a Gallery businessman, derailed Nondi's competition with her sister, as her three children—Lisa, Ivan and Richard—took up much of her time in the first decade of the 31st century. When Katrina seized the Archonship in 3007, Nondi was furious, but efforts to turn her against Katrina failed when she realized that their sibling rivalry concealed a deep bond of love and trust.

Nondi renewed her focus on her military career, rising to the rank of general and becoming Margrave of Tamar during the Fourth Succession War. That conflict demonstrated her leadership skills and instinctive grasp of grand strategy and made her a natural choice to head the LCAF's preparations for the War of 3039, reporting directly to the General of the Armies. Her requests to retire fell on deaf ears, with the high command and the Archon judging her too valuable to let go. The succession of her niece, Melissa, gave Nondi some pause for thought, but she soon realized that the world of politics and government held no attraction for her. As she demonstrated two decades later in her regency over the Lyran state, Nondi was not a skilled politician or administrator. Her contempt for those who enjoyed such pursuits—especially the Estates General—was barely concealed, exceeded only by her distaste for the Draconis Combine.

General Steiner planned both the Commonwealth and Dieron thrusts, and opted to take personal command of the drive to Vega and beyond (the Commonwealth Thrust, also known as Operation WINTERSCHNEE). After capturing Vega, the general established her forward command post on that world. In a now-infamous incident, DEST strike teams hit the Vega command center, incapacitating the general and prompting her evacuation. By the time Nondi had recovered sufficiently to resume control over the LCAF, the old-school methods of her subordinates had undermined the Commonwealth Thrust and she could only salvage what remained of the operation.

The failure of the War of 3039 preyed on General Steiner's mind after the conflict ended, and even her promotion to head of the AFFC's Lyran State Command did little to alleviate her self-doubt. In the late 3040s she once again sought to retire to her estates on Gallery. The apocalyptic invasion of the Clans ended such thoughts and brought Nondi's situation into sharp focus. She battled in vain to save her nation and people, and though the soldier in her appreciated House Davion's martial skills, she nonetheless felt the "Davion military" could have done more to aid the FedCom's Lyran half. When Katherine Steiner-Davion took the Lyran state out of the Federated Commonwealth in 3057, Nondi Steiner stood at her side. General Steiner would serve as General of the Armies of the Lyran Alliance for the next decade, also standing as regent for protracted periods.

Nondi Steiner died defending Tharkad against forces loyal to Peter Steiner-Davion in the summer of 3067, once again piloting her BattleMech in combat. She was 86 and had been a MechWarrior for 74 years.



FIELD MARSHAL RAN FELSNER

In the annals of military history, the name Ran Felsner is little more than a footnote. Less than quarter-century after his retirement, he has already been virtually forgotten by the nation he fought his entire adult life to protect. Yet while his name is overshadowed by individuals like Ardan Sortek, William "Wet Willie" Kossacks and even Caradoc Trevena, Ran Felsner was almost single-handedly responsible for the successes of the AFFS and the AFFC for two decades. At the same time, Felsner never sought personal glory or celebrity. A supremely confident general of extraordinary ability, he never tried to ride his laurels to fame and fortune. That quality, more than any other, allowed him to rise to such prominence in the AFFS and then the AFFC.

Ran Felsner was born to parents of relatively modest means on the world of Lexington in 2976. Like many of that world's young people, he spent his formative years as a lumberjack, but ultimately the call of duty brought him to enlist in the AFFS in 2991. By 2994 he had distinguished himself in battle enough to earn an appointment to the Robinson Battle Academy. After graduating four years later, he received a billet within the command group of the Seventeenth Avalon Hussars

RCT, an assignment that allowed him to display his skill and daring while showing him the realities of battlefield command.

Those hard truths came home to him just a few years later, during a 3001 strike on New Mendham, when the destruction of two Hussars DropShips killed all of the RCT's regimental commanders. Only a major at the time, Felsner took command and organized an orderly withdrawal, preventing the defending Kurita forces from wiping out the entire Seventeenth. For that act, he was awarded the Medal Excalibur and promoted to command of the Alcyone CMM. In this position Felsner truly came into his own. In the wake of his leading a successful (though unauthorized) invasion of a Capellan world, Prince Hanse Davion brought him to New Avalon to take command of the Davion Heavy Guards. Ultimately, the Prince promoted Felsner to field marshal and gave him complete command of the Davion Brigade of Guards—more than a hundred regiments of 'Mechs, fighters, tanks and troops.

Felsner was far more than just commander of the Davion Brigade, however. He also served as the Prince's closest military advisor and mentor to the Prince's closest friend, Ardan Sortek. He led the strategy sessions that ultimately resulted in the plan for Operation RAT, the invasion of the Capellan Confederation in the Fourth Succession War. After the war, he led the effort to bring the AFFS and the LCAF closer together. In 3035, he turned down the opportunity to become the Prince's Champion—a posting that would have forced him deeper into a life of political intrigue—and instead continued working behind the scenes. He led the discussions among officers of the AFFS High Command that produced the plans for Operations LAUNCELOT and GAHERIS, and further coordinated AFFS efforts with the Lyrans during the War of 3039.

During that conflict, he remained close to Prince Hanse Davion and Archon Melissa Steiner-Davion in the Fox's Den, constantly monitoring the war's progress and doing what he could to aid his commanders in the battlefield. He was the one who forwarded Prince Hanse's recall orders and who took responsibility for the failure of the Combine invasion; while he never publicly confirmed this, ample evidence exists that he strongly urged Prince Hanse to continue combat operations against the Combine and vocally objected to the recall.

Following the war, he worked hard to bring the united Armed Forces of the Federated Commonwealth into existence. When the AFFC finally came into being in 3042, he was named the first Marshal of the Armies. He initially attempted to pass up this promotion, but he possessed the unique qualification of being accepted by both sides of the new integrated military. He was without peer in the AFFS and well-respected in the LCAF, thanks to a joint operation in 3022 on Rigil Kentarus for which he was awarded the McKennsy Hammer, one of the most prestigious Lyran decorations. Felsner retired from military service in early 3049 but continued to serve his nation on and off at the behest of old friends such as Ardan Sortek, James Sandoval and Jackson Davion, until his death in 3061.



FIELD MARCHAL VANESSA BISLA

Born to a merchant family on Tamar in 2987, Vanessa Bisla's education was intended to further her father's mercantile ambitions. However, while undertaking her National Service shortly after the ascension of Katrina Steiner, she discovered a natural aptitude for command and a love of the martial life. Over her family's objections she abandoned her business ethics degree at the University of Tamar in favor of a commission in the LCAF. She fought in numerous campaigns against the Draconis Combine and the Free Worlds League, but her most notable battlefield role came as a battalion commander of the Twenty-Fourth Lyran Guards during the Thirteenth Battle of Hesperus in 3019. She led the bitter fighting against Wolf's Dragoons in the so-called "River of Swords" campaign but was severely injured when her *Warhammer* fell to withering mercenary fire. Bisla lost an arm and a leg, both of which she subsequently replaced with bionics.

Though they enabled her to live a normal life, the prostheses were insufficient to let her resume her role as a MechWarrior, and so she threw herself into the administration of her unit. By 3027 she commanded the Twenty-fourth's 'Mech regiment, freeing up her superior—Orpheus Thomas—to command the newly formed RCT. Bisla oversaw operations against Sabik during the Fourth

Succession War and was rewarded for her contribution to the campaign by a promotion to the LCAF's Strategy and Tactics Division. There, Lieutenant-General Bisla played a central role in planning the campaign against the Draconis Combine.

She likewise served as an important liaison with the Armed Forces of the Federated Suns (AFFS) and spent considerable time on New Avalon, where she established a home. Married but estranged from her husband, she sparked a minor scandal when she embarked on a public affair with a mid-ranking AFFS officer, but the completion of her divorce and marriage to the officer silenced all but the most vocal critics. Bisla's subsequent secondment to the AFFS—expedited by the dual nationality granted by her marriage—allowed her to build a strong rapport with the Davion military. When the LCAF high command sought a commander for the Dieron Thrust, which would involve troops from both FedCom nations as well as many mercenaries, Bisla was a natural choice. Supported by Nondi Steiner, with whom she had built strong ties over the years, she found herself installed on Caph in command of the largest concentration of military force since the Fourth Succession War.

After the War of 3039, Bisla was exonerated of any wrongdoing in the conflict and retained her rank, serving in the Draconis March. Her installation as commander of the Robinson Operational Area (the Coreward Operations Area of the Draconis March) in 3043 gave her command over four-fifths of the border with the Draconis Combine. This made her the second most powerful military officer in the March after Field Marshal James Sandoval, and she played a considerable role in tempering her superior's actions. Unfortunately, her Steiner heritage counted against her during the FedCom Civil War. Though she retained her position, she has since struggled to build a rapport with the new Duke, Tancred Sandoval.

FIELD MARSHAL ARDAN SORTEK

Most people outside of the Royal Court on New Avalon and the AFFS high command see Ardan Sortek as a royal hanger-on who gained his rank and position through patronage—his father was an officer in the First Davion Guards who saved the life of Prince Andrew Davion, while Ardan himself was Hanse Davion's close childhood friend. However, the personnel records of this quietly competent officer tell a different story. Sortek distinguished himself at the Albion Military Academy and graduated with the rank of Lieutenant, receiving a position in the Seventeenth Avalon Hussars. His own skills and accomplishments earned him the Medal Excalibur and command of the Davion Heavy Guards 'Mech regiment, all before the age of thirty-two.

He earned two Diamond Sunbursts shortly thereafter, one for preventing a Capellan-trained Hanse Davion look-alike from assuming the throne on New Avalon and another after the Fourth Succession War for his service as Administrator of the Tikonov Free Republic. Sortek then returned to active duty in the AFFS, serving as first deputy commanding general of the Davion Heavy Guards before receiving his marshal's baton and taking command of the entire RCT in 3033. Fate cut that assignment short two years later, however, when Field Marshal Yvonne Davion, a distant



cousin to Hanse Davion and also the Prince's Champion, died in her office in the redoubt known as the Fox's Den. Prince Hanse initially offered the position to Field Marshal Ran Felsner, but the elder officer declined, wishing instead to continue as commander of the Davion Brigade of Guards. Felsner immediately recommended Sortek, and further secured the unanimous recommendation of the AFFS high command for his talented subordinate.

Sortek had been one of Hanse Davion's closest advisors ever since the two old friends had reached their majority, but with such visible support the Prince could finally recognize Sortek's contribution officially through this prestigious posting. In his capacity as Prince's Champion, Sortek brought together senior officers from the AFFS and the LCAF, and began to craft a strategy that would ultimately result in the plan for the invasion of the Draconis Combine. That conceptual plan is still studied in depth at the Federation War College.

In the years since the War of 3039, in which he personally commanded the Galedon Thrust, Sortek's contributions have been no less significant. He played a major role in the formation of the unified AFFC, took charge of the Crucis March Regional Command and served as senior ambassador for Prince Hanse Davion. Sortek personally headed the effort to get units, person-

nel, supplies and replacement equipment to the front during the Clan Invasion. His final actions for Prince and country were to organize and lead the allied effort during the FedCom Civil War. He died in battle outside Avalon City on 20 April, 3067.

A reserved individual among a sea of fellow officers who sought to stand out in any way they could, Sortek was often underestimated by those who opposed him. He was wholly devoted to Hanse Davion and his family, and possessed principles rarely found in combat commanders. Those who served with him loved him because they knew they could count on him. Sortek also possessed an outstanding strategic mind; he could develop a winning battle plan as easily as he could organize complex logistics to supply an entire army in the field. A proud family man as well, he and his wife Cadent had six children: Adriaan, Valisa, Terias, Meschach, Brittan and Katriel. All of them went on to have successful careers in the AFFC or the Federated Suns government.

For all his achievements, Field Marshal Ardan Sortek is principally remembered for two things: being the puppet master who pulled the strings for Hanse Davion in the short-lived Tikonov Free Republic, and being the childhood friend of Prince Hanse who gave everything to bring his old friend's firstborn son back to New Avalon. His memory lives on in the AFFS, however.

FIELD MARSHAL DUKE JAMES SANDOVAL

The firstborn son of Field Marshal Aaron Sandoval, Duke of Robinson and commander of the Draconis March Regional Command, James Dassert Sandoval was destined for greatness from the moment of his birth. The "Old Duke" left nothing to chance in the upbringing of his children. He himself had escaped the stifling halls of Castle Robinson at an early age and returned a better man for it, though he would have returned in a casket had luck not intervened. Consequently, Duke Aaron gave James and his siblings every possible opportunity, but made them earn everything they received.

James and his brother David both entered the Robinson Battle Academy at age sixteen, James in 3010 and David in 3013, and graduated as AFFS lieutenants. James Sandoval's early career in the Robinson Rangers earned him the notice of officers outside his father's Draconis March command, including Prince Hanse Davion, who gave the young Sandoval a chance to prove himself in the Second Davion Guards. James Sandoval came to the Second Guards a colonel and served in a number of positions that culminated in interim command of the entire RCT when its former commander stepped down amid a widespread financial scandal. By the time he left the unit, he had risen to the rank of major general. From there he attended the prestigious Federation War College while serving as a senior instructor at the NAIS College of Military Science, giving him the final grooming he needed to advance to the highest levels of command in the AFFS.

He had avoided relying on his father in any way up to this point, but when command of the Coreward Combat Theater in the Draconis March opened up, he accepted the posting, know-



ing it would lead him to even higher command rank in the AFFS. That came in 3028 when Prince Hanse Davion recruited the young general to oversee the formation of the First FedCom RCT and then the entire Federated Commonwealth Corps.

Duke Aaron Sandoval convinced James to move his headquarters to Robinson in 3034, whereupon the "Old Duke" abdicated in his favor (though James would not inherit the title Duke of Robinson until Aaron's death in 3048). At the same time, Aaron promoted James to the rank of AFFS marshal. Three years later, Aaron Sandoval retired altogether from the AFFS, leaving James in command of the entire Draconis March.

Even though James Sandoval inherited his position from his father, Prince Hanse Davion did not hesitate to name him as commander of the Benjamin Thrust. He had earned it not only by birthright, but also through his service to the Federated Suns. A conscientious commander, James Sandoval understood that there was more to life than a pathological hatred of the Draconis Combine and service to the throne on Robinson. Though late in life he grew to oppose any alliances or normalized relations with the Combine, some evidence indicates he espoused such positions only in public and that he launched an invasion of the Combine during the FedCom Civil War solely to prevent the

Draconis March from erupting in the same internecine fighting that had engulfed much of the rest of the Federated Suns.

In any event, the last years of his career ended in a certain disgrace when he was relieved of command by his son Tancred on 7 October, 3065. He died in Castle Robinson on 4 March, 3066. He lay in state for almost a year and a half, during which more than a million citizens of the Federated Suns and countless military officers—including, if rumors can be believed, some from the DCMS—came to pay him final homage.



TAI-SHU MICHU NOKETSUNA

Born in 2998 on Luthien, Michi Noketsuna's upbringing drummed into him the martial code of bushido and the sense of honor and duty expected of Combine warriors. Attending the Sun Zhang Academy, he proved adept at the martial life and was selected for MechWarrior training, graduating in 3021. Unfortunately, his lowly birth and lack of a patron limited *Tai-i* Noketsuna's opportunities, and he was assigned to work with the Professional Soldierly Liaison. Here he met Minobu Tetsuhara, PSL to Wolf's Dragoons, whom he served as an aide.

Like his superior, Noketsuna came to respect the mercenaries and was horrified by the chain of events that set the Dragoons on a collision course with the Dragon. Assigned to the Ryuken, Noketsuna fought on Misery, commanding a company throughout the bitter campaign until he was badly injured and his 'Mech destroyed in a vain attempt to safeguard *Tai-sho* Tetsuhara. Having lost one eye and with his arm broken, Noketsuna could not serve as *kaishaku-nin* for his sensei, but did provide the pistol Jaime Wolf used in that role. He chose not to follow that path himself, rejecting both an offer to join the Dragoons and one to continue serving the DCMS in favor of hunting down those whose greed and arrogance had triggered the Hephaestus atrocity and the bloody carnage on Misery. *[Though never confirmed, persistent rumors link Noketsuna with Alice Sumner, a second-generation Dragoon with whom he is alleged to have had a relationship for four years, ever since their meeting at the Dragoons' Reunion Day celebrations on Hephaestus in 3024. Sumner, a Lieutenant in Branson's Company of Alpha Regiment, died on Misery, and her loss would have given added personal impetus to Noketsuna's subsequent vendetta against Grieg Samsonov and Takashi Kurita. —Editor]*

Noketsuna forsook the DCMS in mid-3028 before the outbreak of the Fourth Succession War and hunted down the rogue Warlord Grieg Samsonov and his associates (after Samsonov fled Takashi Kurita's order for his execution). This chase led Noketsuna to briefly adopt the persona of the Bounty Hunter, whom he had encountered during the war, and also brought him into contact with Theodore Kurita in 3030 when the path of his quarry intersected the Kurita heir's efforts to prepare for a renewal of war. Noketsuna became one of Theodore's close confidants, a stark counterbalance to the secretive and manipulative Ninyu Kerai. When the Ronin War of 3034 left the Dieron Military District without a warlord, Theodore appointed Noketsuna to the post. This move surprised everyone, including the new *tai-shu*, who nonetheless pledged to serve until the Combine was safe from its enemies. *Kanrei* Theodore felt that traditional DCMS soldiering could not prevail in the beleaguered district and counted on his new-made warlord to forge a new approach. Though widely accused of being a pirate (in particular by Kerai and DCMS traditionalists), Noketsuna quickly won the respect of his troops and readied his district for war.

After the War of 3039, *Tai-shu* Noketsuna remained in command of Dieron at the insistence of the *Kanrei*. Following the Clan Invasion, he sought to resume his vendetta, resigning the post of Warlord of Dieron in 3054. Takashi Kurita's death—apparently natural, but alleged in some quarters to be *seppuku*—denied Noketsuna his full vengeance, but he reached a degree of rapprochement with the old Coordinator as the two fought side by side against ISF assassins. Michi Noketsuna subsequently accepted a position in Wolf's Dragoons, first offered in 3028, and played a significant role in the Dragoons Civil War. He presently serves in the Wolf's Dragoons' WolfNet and the Allied Mercenary Command.

WAVE ONE

“Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more.”

—Henry V, William Shakespeare

“Careful with those breaching charges.”

—Hauptmann Josephine Leery, LCAF, during the assault on Kessel’s Simla Zenith Recharge Station

By the start of 3039, everything was in place for the combined Steiner-Davion assault on the Draconis Combine. The Engineers Corps of the LCAF and AFFS had signed off on plans, laid in supplies and established jump-off cantonments. Unlike the Fourth Succession War, there was no lulling the enemy into a false sense of security—both sides knew the war was coming—and so stealth was not a major issue. The allies still hoped for tactical surprise, however, and exploited the commercial-military command circuits they had assembled over the previous decade to move troops swiftly from the interior to jump-off positions in March of 3039.

The Steiner-Davion alliance could simply have invaded the Combine, but to placate the politicians of both realms (and, to a lesser extent, international opinion), they sought a pretext to justify the incursions. The one eventually seized on was the brutal suppression of protests on several former Davion worlds absorbed into the Combine, over which New Avalon still claimed jurisdiction. Contemporary reports glossed over the fact that the protests were instigated by the allies (and subsequently backed by armed might). Hanse Davion had his *casus belli*, and on April 15 he announced that “steps must be taken to deal with the Kurita tyranny.” Initial reports of the conflict did not disclose that the first LCAF and AFFS units were en route before Prince Hanse’s speech, though both civil and military intelligence hinted at the timetable being pursued by the allies.

The initial troops who fought what would become known as the War of 3039 jumped into their target systems on April 16, some to the zenith and nadir points of their target systems and many others to transient pirate points near the targeted worlds that allowed them to land troops almost immediately. Some of these initial assaults hit Combine military formations, while others sought to capture strategic objectives. In a number of cases, the invaders bypassed Combine border garrisons in favor of deeper strikes intended to isolate the garrison worlds from reinforcements and to block any counterassaults while second-wave troops crushed any pockets of resistance.

The hammer-blow of the assaults against the worlds of Vega, An Ting and New Mendham, though long predicted, nonetheless came as a shock to the DCMS, who could do little to counter the scale and size of the four invasion thrusts. Not including mercenary units already sent in to support the insurrections on former Davion planets, eight worlds were targeted in this opening phase, almost half of which lay in the Dieron Military District. Militia commanders found themselves on their own against proficient and well-equipped invaders, and many chose not to significantly oppose the occupation of their worlds. Planets with front-line garrisons showed concerted resistance,

but it was often uncoordinated and frequently hampered by rivalries between DCMS ‘Mech forces and native garrison troops. This disarray allowed for impressive initial allied gains in the face of ineffectual DCMS counterattacks.

Matters worsened for the defenders in late April with a second phase of assaults against thirteen additional worlds—among them Altai, Nashira and Thestria—that expanded the allied area of control and vastly increased the number of Combine planets under attack. Once again, the Dieron district bore the brunt of the assault, with two-thirds of the new targets falling within its borders. Urgent calls went out for reinforcements to shore up the district’s failing defenses, but Warlord Noketsuna knew that in the short term he was on his own against the Steiner-Davion juggernaut. Any thought of shifting troops from other districts to aid the defense of Dieron died on May 12, when a third phase of assaults hit six worlds mainly in the Galedon and Benjamin districts. By the end of the first month of the conflict, some thirty-four Combine worlds had been seized or were under attack and the DCMS had targeted only a handful of Steiner and Davion worlds for reprisal raids.

By the end of May 3039, the entire Combine military command was in chaos. The massive scope of the invasion overwhelmed the Combine’s ability to mount a rapid and orderly response. Worse, civilian and military transport lanes were clogged—civilians were fleeing the border, while the DCMS was doing its best to get combat units and supplies swiftly up to the front. The DCMS also suffered from the well-documented difference of opinion between senior officers who supported Coordinator Takashi Kurita’s traditionalist viewpoints and those who advocated the military reforms of their *Gunji-no-Kanrei*. Not only were DCMS command circuits clogged with more requests for support and assistance than the military could fill, but units in a position to help halt the invasion received conflicting orders. Maintaining command integrity became Theodore Kurita’s major objective throughout May and into early June as he sought to blunt the FedCom offensive and regain the initiative. In Dieron, Michi Noketsuna and his aide Ninyu Kerai enacted a number of plans already agreed upon with the *Kanrei*, but in the Galedon and Benjamin districts *Kanrei* Theodore faced an uphill struggle.

The AFFS and LCAF continued to take full advantage of the confusion within the Draconis Combine. They had almost complete freedom of action along the border, and they could likely have struck deep into the heart of the Combine with little fear of immediate reprisals. Operations were progressing mostly as planned, with relatively few surprises or unexpected blows. The strain of prosecuting the invasion was just beginning to show



within the Federated Suns and the Lyran Commonwealth, but no more so than either realm had experienced during any other major military operation. True hardship would not set in for a few months yet, and already leaders in both realms were receiving an overwhelmingly positive response from their people toward the invasion. Both nations had experienced centuries of losses to the Combine, and now it was time for payback. As the orders for the final attacks of Wave One were passed down from New Avalon and Tharkad, the Steiner and Davion militaries made preparations for the start of Wave Two in July.

COMMONWEALTH THRUST

"Nothing except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won."

—Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington.

"Damn straight."

—General Caesar Steiner after the Second Battle for Kessel

Of the four axes of advance, only one was launched wholly from within Lyran territory—the thrust aimed at isolating the Dieron Military District from the rest of the Combine so that a joint Lyran-FedSuns task force could then occupy and reduce Dieron, widening the corridor between the Combine and the Commonwealth. This blocking force, commanded by General Nondi Steiner, bore the official designation of Operation WINTERSCHNEE (Winter Snow), but quickly became known as the Commonwealth Thrust. Its first-wave targets were the vital capital worlds of the Kessel and Vega prefectures, as well as one world in Algedi Prefecture. Meanwhile the Al Nair and Ashio prefectures came under attack in Operation STURMHAMMER (Storm Hammer), the so-called Dieron Thrust (see p. 33).

The first wave of the Commonwealth Thrust targeted six worlds (Alnasi, Alrakis, Altais, Kessel, Konstance and Vega) whose conquest and subjugation was scheduled to take three months. At that point a second wave that dealt principally with the Algedi Prefecture would complete the isolation of Dieron, linking up with the Dieron Thrust and the FedSuns' drive toward Benjamin. Expecting considerable resistance, the LCAF command was pleased with the progress of the attacks, each of which ended according to the timetable, paving the way for the ambitious second and third waves. Unfortunately, fate—and Theodore's revamped DCMS—refused to cooperate with the Archon's plans.

ALNASI (APRIL-MAY)

Alnasi was one of the first worlds targeted in the war. Its minor garrison force belied the importance of its location astride the main communication route from Buckminster, making it a valuable acquisition for the alliance. Controlling Alnasi would limit DCMS attempts to reinforce Vega and would also deprive the Combine of Alnasi's mineral riches.

The First Argyle Lancers and the Twenty-sixth Lyran Guard received orders to occupy Alnasi and to deal with its conventional garrison, which LIC estimates placed at four armor companies,

eight infantry regiments and a company of 'Mechs. This force, though sizable, posed no real threat to the invaders. General Woodruff Patterson, commanding the assault, knew enough not to be overconfident and planned a lightning attack intended to minimize the garrison's few advantages. He chose to arrive at a non-standard jump point, exploiting the proximity of a pirate point only two days' travel from Alnasi rather than contend with the 17-day run in from the planet's zenith or nadir jump points. The invasion flotilla gathered at Phalan and made the jump to Alnasi on April 15, their swift transport DropShips dashing in-system protected by a cloud of fighters and attack DropShips.

As expected, the defenders were caught flat-footed. Faced with overwhelming force, the world's industrial space stations surrendered without a fight, and a brief demonstration of firepower likewise convinced the orbiting military facilities to stand down. Alnasi's ground forces were less obliging, though they could do little to oppose the allied landing.

Pathfinders from the Twenty-sixth Lyran Guard secured the landing zone with an orbital drop, meeting little resistance as they secured the airport at the mining town of Viro that would serve as their base of operations for the drive against the capital of Gantarius. The DCMS 'Mech company on-planet was the Combine's only hope of damaging the invaders, but any attempt to directly deploy the grossly outnumbered unit against the invaders was doomed to failure. Instead, *Tai-i* Stephen Dauphin ordered his command to go to ground. Over the next few days the DCMS troops staged a guerrilla war against the invaders' supply lines, striking from concealment and the cover of night to destroy supply caches and vulnerable convoys that shipped the food, ammunition and equipment required by the Lyran Guard and Argyle Lancers for their offensive against the planetary infantry and armor forces. Dauphin's raids slowed the allied offensive but could only postpone the inevitable. On April 25, eight days after the landing, the allied forces completed their encirclement of Gantarius and called on the city's defenders to surrender. Alnasi became a military protectorate of the Lyran Commonwealth, though running Dauphin's company to ground would take the allied forces until mid-May, at which point the world was judged secure. The Lyran Guard and Argyle Lancers then set about winning over the local population and digging in against the unlikely possibility of a DCMS counterattack.

ALRAKIS (APRIL)

Though Alrakis was an important industrial world, the LCAF considered it little more than a stepping-stone to Kessel and worlds deeper in the Dieron district, as well as essential to isolating the Alphecca-Dromini VI salient (which the LCAF planned to reduce in Wave Two). Two units—the Twenty-third Arcturan Guards and the Fifth Donegal Guards—were assigned to neutralize the planet's defenders. Because the allied command did not consider Alrakis a primary invasion target, they chose not to assign the operation a full complement of support units or transport assets. Instead, the Twenty-third would land first under the command of Lieutenant-General Jacqueline Fincher to pin down and hopefully shatter the garrison, the Eleventh Legion

of Vega. That unit's ties to Theodore Kurita—the regiment's commander during the Fourth Succession War—made it a prestigious target, if not overly significant militarily. Follow-up landings by the Fifth Donegal Guards would take place two weeks later (though the Donegal Guards' command company landed with the Arcturan Guards in the initial assault).

On 16 April, an Arcturan battalion dropping from orbit in ablative cocoons caught Alrakis' defenders unprepared. The combination of shock and aggression dislodged the Vega 'Mech troops from their barracks in short order despite the Combine unit's numerical superiority. Almost immediately, the remainder of the Twenty-third landed on the shores of Lake Carantha and secured the Alrakan capital, Sigmundrac. Efforts by the Legion of Vega to regain the initiative during the following week resulted in bloody carnage, with more than a company of DCMS 'Mechs and a battalion of infantry falling to Lyran troops. Sensing their opponent's weakness, the Arcturan Guards switched to the offensive and harried the Legion along the shores of the lake, pushing them back toward the Caradhradene Mountains, where they would be trapped and crushed. Sensing his predicament, *Tai-sa* Esau Olivares ordered his orbiting DropShips to land and evacuate his force. A commander of steely nerve and impressive resourcefulness, Olivares had fought alongside the *Kanrei* on Marfik in the Fourth Succession War, commanding the rearguard action that allowed Theodore to escape that Lyran assault. By April 24, 3039, the last Vegan troops were boosting for their waiting JumpShips. The LCAF cancelled its plans to bring the Fifth Donegal to Alrakis, deeming the Arcturan RCT more than sufficient for pacification duties. The Donegal officers remained on-planet until May 5, at which point they rejoined their troops waiting on Ryde in hopes of being included in the forthcoming second wave.

ALTAIS (APRIL-JUNE)

The deepest attack of Wave One saw the Eighth Donegal Guard, nicknamed the Mud Wrestlers, spearhead an assault against heavily volcanic Altai, a world vital to the regional economy and a key stepping-stone for the planned second and third waves of assaults, as well as essential for blocking reinforcements sent to oppose the Commonwealth Thrust. The LCAF had conflicting reports about the DCMS troops defending the world. Officially, no line units were stationed there, but unofficial reports suggested two different regiments had been seen on world. The Eighth Donegal Guard was bolstered by two mercenary forces, the First Dragonslayers and the Gray Death Legion, even as the LCAF unit was boarding its DropShips. The Guard commander, General Justin Kovachs, retained overall control of the operation.

The rumors about the defenders of Altai were quickly confirmed. Two of the *Kanrei*'s new units, the First and Second Ghost Regiments, were on-world and moved to oppose the LCAF invasion. Kovachs split his force to deal with the threat, ordering the Gray Death Legion to seize two vital spaceports at Willas and New Ross while the Guards moved against the capital city of Gaines. The First Ghost Regiment held the spaceports, while

the Second Ghost defended the city. The Dragonslayers remained in orbit as a reserve.

The Mud Wrestlers' campaign began well, with their first troops landing on April 27. After orbital recon identified the Second Ghost HQ about twenty kilometers west of Gaines, Kovachs opted for a daring opening gambit—a high-altitude drop by his first battalion against the Ghost HQ—while the remainder of the RCT landed at an LZ secured by Baker Battalion. The Baker assault team went in first, drawing off many of the Ghosts before the Able company drop, which caught the DCMS forces out of position and ill-prepared. Kovachs' coup-de-main assault shattered the Ghost command structure and scattered a substantial part of the Combine regiment. Unfortunately for the LCAF regiment, the yakuza warriors of the Second Ghost had a strong independent streak and were not wholly reliant on their commanders. Though the Second Ghost proved unable to block the Mud Wrestlers' advance, their warriors ensured that the Lyran troops paid a steep price. A series of pinprick attacks against the Lyran behemoth slowed the campaign and delayed Kovachs' victory by several weeks. However, at the end of the day the Ghosts faced a full RCT. If the mercenaries did their part, the campaign's outcome was never in doubt.

The Gray Death Legion landed on Altai two days after the Donegal Guard, assigned to secure the spaceports at Willas and New Ross. Colonel Grayson Carlyle opted to split his force and attack both targets simultaneously. Carlyle commanded the attack on Willas while his acting executive officer, Davis McCall, led the assault on New Ross. Carlyle's combat drop against Willas went smoothly—the city was open and undefended—but McCall's unit faced considerable problems when most of his force of light and medium 'Mechs missed the intended drop zone as a result of faulty drop-guidance equipment. With a number of his troops missing in New Ross and facing a major counter-offensive by the First Ghost Regiment, Major McCall pulled his forces into a tight defensive perimeter within the spaceport's cargo handling area. His detachment beat back three Combine assaults before the conflict settled into long-range sniping between the two forces. McCall knew, however, that time was not on his side. The longer he waited, the more reinforcements the Ghosts could call up. A Caledonian by heritage and nature, he chose to act as his ancestors would have. He attacked, engaging the Ghosts in bitter hand-to-hand combat. Initially the mercenary assault pushed the DCMS forces back, but in short order the Combine's numerical and technical superiority began to tell and McCall's force was in grave danger of being overrun. The unit owed its salvation to one of the Gray Death Legion's famous battlefield miracles—Colonel Carlyle made a 150-kilometer forced march and smashed into the unsuspecting Ghosts, forcing them to withdraw.

Halfway across the planet, as he prepared to invade Gaines, General Kovachs received news of the Gray Death victory and ordered the mercenaries to continue their pursuit of the DCMS forces. Talking via satellite relay, Kovachs inquired about the Legion's status, and when Carlyle expressed confidence in his unit's abilities, Kovachs announced that he would call the

RIDING A PALE HORSE

The Gray Death Legion achieved fame with its exploits on Helm and its subsequent accomplishments in the Fourth Succession War. The War of 3039 has seen this elite mercenary unit in action once more. Our correspondent, Nathalie Myers, accompanied them to Altas and brings this report.

Myers: I'm here on the outskirts of New Ross with Legion officer Davis McCall. Major McCall, can you tell me what happened here?

McCall: It were a reet mess, lassie. It all gaed ta bugry when t' beacon fritzed and me and the lads and lasses were chucked all o'er the toon. We wuz skittering all o'er the toon like Caledonian flitter.

Myers: So it was a confused landing?

McCall: Aye, more chappit tatties than rumm-
ledethump. Wee Andy's haed his heed
knocked off in't first seconds but ah winnae let
summet like dat gae me doon and wasnae dis-
jaskit. Ah cracked the Sassenach that battered
wee Andy and gae him a kickin' before gannin'
back tae the sodger lads, rallyin' them for a
counterattack.

Myers: You weren't going to stay on the defensive?

McCall: Ahm nae bampot, lassie. I ken the
need tae kick 'em Snakes in t' bollocks—par-
don my French—while they're nae ready. Those
bogles were gae'n themsels organized so yis
had tae act.

Myers: Did it work?

McCall: Well, lassie, there ye hae a gid
question. Ah dinnae 'spect 'em tae bugger off
but they're hard scunners and gae as gid as
they got.

Myers: What was your thought when you
realized that? Were you afraid for your life?

McCall: I'd be touched if ah wasnae worried,
but I'm nae eejit. We werenae feenisht yet,
particular if wis helt till Gray show'd up.

Myers: You expected Colonel Carlyle to
rescue you?

McCall: Nae, lassie, but he hae a knack o'
turnin' up when he's needed, ye ken?
[Colonel Carlyle arrives and whispers briefly to
McCall]

McCall: Sure Gray, no problem. I'll be right
over once I'm finished here.

—Donegal Broadcasting Corporation bulletin,
11 May 3039

Dragonslayers down to aid the siege of Gaines. Carlyle acknowledged his orders to harry the First Ghosts, pursuing them to the town of Carlingford and then—against his better judgment but after direct orders from Kovachs—attacking the DCMS unit's DropShips as they sought to flee. Scarcely a third of the First Ghost made it off-world, and the unit would spend many years rebuilding.

At Gaines, attacks by the Second Ghost continued, but backing from the Dragonslayers meant the Kurita unit could do little to prevent an LCAF victory. Nonetheless, the Second Ghost posed Kovachs and his troops a considerable challenge. It took several weeks of negotiation and small-scale combat to bring the campaign to a close, during which time all the participants saw their combat effectiveness seriously degraded. On May 16, the planetary government surrendered and the Second Ghost broke contact with the Donegal Guards, fighting a guerrilla war against the occupiers until June 13, when they managed to rendezvous with their DropShips and escape.

KESSEL (APRIL-JUNE)

Long disputed by the Lyran Commonwealth and Draconis Combine, Kessel fell into Kurita hands after the collapse of the Star League, and its recapture remained a strategic objective of the LCAF. Though wildly successful, Lyran efforts in the Fourth Succession War stopped short of liberating Kessel. The Combine made this crime-ridden world a prefecture capital in 2875, and its industrial and political importance made it a key Lyran target in 3039.

The first blows of the War of 3039 fell on Kessel on April 15, half a day before the official start of the conflict. LCAF marines concealed aboard a Lyran merchantman stormed Simla Station, the recharge installation at the zenith jump point. The well-executed assault succeeded despite the DCMS' stringent security measures. In less than twenty minutes the invaders controlled the facility and its deep-space sensors, capturing the command center before a warning could be sent to the waiting planet. The planetary garrison, headed by the Twelfth Sun Zhang Cadre, was thus unaware of the attack fleet that materialized in-system early on April 16.

Spearheaded by the unorthodox Second Donegal Guards, the Lyran invasion force made a high-G approach to Kessel, landing on April 19 after a brief clash with orbiting DCMS forces. The attackers quickly moved to secure key military and governmental sites. Their opponents, the cadets of the Twelfth Sun Zhang, stood little chance against two attacking RCTs and an independent 'Mech regiment, but nonetheless staged a spirited defense of the capital city, Sverdlovsk. Their inexperience became their downfall when they allowed themselves to be lured out of position by the Fourth Skye Rangers, commanded by newly promoted William Harrison von Frisch, who pretended to retreat in disarray after assaulting the Sun Zhang fortifications. Once out of their revetments, the DCMS troops were easy pickings for the Rangers and the fast 'Mechs of the Second Donegal Guards. In the bloody clashes that took place overnight on April 20-21, the DCMS cadre lost almost a full battalion to the invaders' advanced munitions. The remainder broke contact with the LCAF troops and rendezvoused with their DropShips in the poisoned wilderness of the Novgorod continent, appearing to boost for orbit and a pirate point where a JumpShip remained ready for just such an eventuality. Clashes continued with some of the local militia for several weeks. On April 27, Leutnant-General Caesar Steiner, leader of the Second Donegal RCT and overall commander of the Kessel operation, took command of the world as military governor until its civil bureaucracy could be integrated with that of the Commonwealth. Steiner was careful not to declare outright victory, a fortuitous decision as civil disobedience and minor acts of sabotage were commonplace throughout May and June. Various of these actions cost the lives of more than two dozen Lyran troops and an equal number of "resistance fighters." General Steiner fully expected this phase of the occupation—Kessel was well-known for its unruly citizenry—but even he did not predict the extent to which the resistance permeated society, nor the firestorm unleashed on the planet.

KONSTANCE (APRIL-JULY)

Assaulting Konstance posed a major problem for the allied command, which assigned the Point Barrow Lancers (Fourth Crucis), Fourth Lyran Regulars (“Tropic Lightning”) and the mercenary unit Mobile Fire to deal with the light Twenty-second Dieron Regulars. The DCMS unit was not expected to be a major military obstacle, but the planet’s environment and geography—a CO₂-laden atmosphere and four major continents—posed unique problems for the invaders. To ensure their dominance, the invasion fleet would strike simultaneously at the continents of Perragea and Epigaus, seizing the spaceports and major cities to prevent the swift Dieron Regulars from escaping off-world or calling for help. However, as Helmuth Von Moltke presciently observed a thousand years earlier, no plan survives contact with the enemy (or with allies, for that matter).

The invasion fleet jumped into the Konstance system on April 28, two weeks after the initial invasion operations. The Konstance force had been scheduled to jump with the Phase A strikes on April 14-16, but a JumpShip problem and the need to coordinate LCAF, AFFS and mercenary troops led to a last-minute hold on the attack orders. Consequently, the planetary garrison was fully alert when the main flotilla arrived at the nadir jump point and brushed aside the weak security cordon to begin its five-day passage across the star system. Meanwhile, a second smaller detachment of vessels arrived at the zenith jump point and secured the handful of DCMS vessels holding station there. The Twenty-second Dieron were now stranded on Konstance with no choice but to face the invaders. *Sho-sho* Tatyana Sobiroff knew that any direct confrontation would be little better than a death sentence for her command, and so chose to make life difficult for the invaders and give the Dieron troops the best chance of surviving until reinforcements could arrive.

Task Force Charity, comprising the Fourth Crucis Lancers and several auxiliary units, landed on the southern continent of Perragea and moved to isolate the planetary capital, Ishtalia. The Combine offered slight resistance, with only a company of ‘Mechs and a battalion each of armor and infantry opposing the Lancers’ ‘Mech regiment and infantry and armor brigades. Indeed, the Battle of Ishtalia lasted only sixteen minutes as the garrison force staged a pro-forma defense of the city and then surrendered honorably. The Combine unit’s surrender caught Major General Charles Duncan off-guard. He had expected a bitter fight for the planetary capital, and became suspicious of the defenders’ motives. Fearing treachery, he ordered the three thousand DCMS troops interned in a hastily erected POW camp until the intelligence services could interview them and either release them on parole or repatriate them to the Combine. To Duncan’s chagrin, none of the captives were willing to provide intelligence about the rest of the Dieron Regulars, whom he presumed would face off against the other allied task force.

Leutnant-General Michael Bradbury, commander of LCAF Task Force Hope, landed with the Fourth Lyran Regulars and Mobile Fire. Their LZ was forty kilometers west of Epigaus’ main port city, Lazarus Bay. Unlike their AFFS companions, the

LCAF troops found their approach to the city contested by a substantial and well dug-in DCMS force. Conventional armor predominated among this opposition, but at least a battalion of ‘Mechs identified as belonging to the Dieron Regulars staged a series of stinging attacks against the Lyran flanks. The equally swift Tropic Lightning engaged the Dieron Regulars with a succession of fast counter-raids, turning the flanks of Task Force Hope into an ever-shifting and high-speed battlefield. Combat losses were slight but the high tempo of operations caused a number of mechanical breakdowns and faster-than-expected consumption of spare parts. Nonetheless, the campaign to secure Lazarus Bay ran broadly to the invaders’ schedule and by May 21 the city and its valuable port facilities were in allied hands. Despite facing a much bigger foe than their associates in Task Force Charity, General Bradbury’s troops captured only six hundred DCMS personnel. The remainder either went to ground or escaped in commandeered transport subs, making their way to the sparsely inhabited equatorial continents of Juranias and Tiburia.

The exact number of surviving DCMS forces was not clear to the allied commanders and so they began a series of reconnaissance and strike operations against the jungle-covered continents. Some clashes with DCMS troops ensued, but for the most part these missions went off without a hitch. By mid-June the occupation was classified as a “police action” rather than a full-fledged military campaign. Nonetheless, the threat of the Dieron Regulars remained and neither task force relaxed its vigilance. Unfortunately, a completely new set of conflicts would soon engulf the occupiers from an unexpected quarter.

On 10 June, faults were discovered in a batch of CO₂ filters intended for use by the infantry of Task Force Hope. Though not a life-threatening situation, it did force the Lyran troops to circumscribe their operations, eking out their limited supply of filters until new materials could be shipped from supply caches in the Commonwealth. Initially, the LCAF troopers had thought to share the supplies of their AFFS colleagues, but minor differences between the two armies’ respirators made the systems incompatible. Though the snafu clearly stemmed from an administrative error, a rumor began to circulate among the LCAF troops that their AFFS cohorts had refused to share their supplies. Looking back on the conflict, it seems likely that ISF Metsuke operatives on Konstance aided such rumors, though no record exists of such activities.

The filter shortage had a substantial impact on the morale of the allied troops, out of proportion to the minor physical inconvenience. On the heels of this incident came an escalating series of strikes by the Dieron forces, including a number against Perragea and Epigaus, that sapped men and materiel. The allied troops faced an opponent they could not easily hunt down, who appeared to strike with impunity from transport submersibles that operated beyond allied reach.

Adding insult to injury, Generals Duncan and Bradbury, though initially willing to cooperate, found themselves locked in a series of disputes as to the prosecution of the “police action” against the Dieron troops. Bradbury felt that as the senior Lyran



officer present, in an LCAF theatre on a world that was to become part of the Lyran state, he should have seniority. In stark contrast, Duncan believed that his years of experience and his position at the head of an RCT gave him the best claim to command. Prior to July 12, the friction between these two commanders was held in check by the high command. After that date, the ISF assault on General Nondi Steiner's Vega HQ in effected decapitated the Commonwealth Thrust and allowed the tensions between the two officers to spiral out of control.

VEGA (APRIL-JUNE)

The site of the LCAF's few reversals in the Fourth Succession War, Vega was a military and political objective of the Commonwealth Thrust. The LIC identified two defending units, the Fourteenth Legion of Vega and elements of the Fifth Amphigean Light Assault Group. The high command assigned the Third Lyran Guard (the "Eversworded Third") and Third Davion Guard to deal with the former, and the mercenary Snord's Irregulars, First Grave Walkers and Seventeenth Recon (Camacho's Caballeros) to deal with the Amphigeans. The LCAF designated the assaults Task Force Snow and Task Force Blizzard respectively.

The mercenary forces of Task Force Blizzard were the first to land on Vega, grounding on 19 April and quickly seizing control of the Nasew spaceport in a lightning assault that overran the small detachment of infantry and armor assigned to protect the facility. The Grave Walkers and Caballeros quickly moved to block any DCMS counter-offensive against Nasew, control of which was essential to keep the invaders supplied, and beat back several probes by the Fifth Amphigeans. However, the Amphigeans' third battalion, commanded by *Chu-sa* Fengo Olesko, proved a major thorn in Task Force Blizzard's side. Snord's Irregulars, hitherto serving as a battalion-strength reserve, were dispatched to hunt down the raiders.

On April 30, the Irregulars—equipped with mysteriously acquired, advanced technology—engaged Olesko's battalion near New Egypt. During the battle that followed in the Bandli Wastes, the Irregulars used their technology and erratic battlefield tactics to good effect, bombarding the troops of the Fifth with Arrow IV artillery missiles and exploiting their vastly superior heat dissipation systems. The Irregulars struck hard, shattering *Chu-sa* Olesko's command within forty minutes. Olesko ended up strapped unconscious in the hold of a med-evac chopper. Her unit held out for another week, but on May 6 the Amphigeans abandoned their posts and boosted for orbit, declaring Vega lost to the enemy.

The Fourteenth Legion of Vega, still dug in around the capital of Neucason, was less willing to concede defeat. Veterans of the Battle for Vega in the Fourth Succession War (as were the Third Lyran Guard), the Vegans had no intention of abandoning their planet, and prepared for a long siege. *Sho-sho* Christine Nordica, however, recognized that the circumstances of this assault were far less favorable to the Fourteenth than they had been during the Succession War. The Fourteenth possessed half its prior troop strength—during the earlier conflict, the Second Legion of Vega had helped the Fourteenth defend the

capital—and faced twice the number of opponents. Furthermore, the Eversworded Third was no longer commanded by Nordica's old flame, Patrick Finnan, who had been promoted to General Nondi Steiner's staff. The new commander of the Third Davion Guard, Marshal Herbert Hobaugh, was an accomplished commander with an impressive record in the Fourth Succession War and unlikely to fall prey to the military indecision that had cost the allies control of Vega in 3028.

For six weeks, the Fourteenth resisted the Lyran siege, but after the Fifth Amphigeans' flight all three mercenary commands were brought to bear on the Fourteenth's position. The mercenary troops shielded the House units from DCMS raids out of the Great Desert of Tears, the only successful DCMS operations in the conflict. With that distraction removed, the Third Lyran focused its full strength on Neucason. By the third week in June, the DCMS unit found its situation untenable. Despite the bloody nose they'd given the Commonwealth troops, Nordica decided that a relief force, if one arrived, would come too late to save her troops. Reluctantly, she chose to abandon Vega. On 19 June, the first Fourteenth Legion DropShips lifted for orbit and were allowed to depart the system. LCAF forces occupied Neucason on June 21 and five days later declared the world secure.

On 5 July, General Nondi Steiner established her forward command post in Neucason's government complex, a testament to the confidence she place in the operation's achievements and future success. Indeed, so confident of planetary security was General Steiner that on 3 July she authorized the Third Lyran Guard's redeployment from Vega to Port Moresby, where they could repair and rearm before a scheduled third-wave offensive against Buckminster. Likewise, she approved the withdrawal of the Caballeros to Marfik, from which they would take part in an ultimately abandoned liberation of Alphecca. Finally, on 11 June she reassigned Marshal Herbert Hobaugh to her command staff to help execute Wave Two and plan waves Three and Four. Hobaugh's executive officer, James Seymour, was brevetted to command of the RCT pending confirmation of his promotion by the Archon. These decisions ultimately proved fateful, and in some cases, fatal.

DIERON THRUST

"The art of war is simple enough. Find out where your enemy is. Get at him as soon as you can. Strike him as hard as you can, and keep moving."

—Ulysses S. Grant

"So we hit farming colonies and water worlds before parking our butts. Can anyone tell me what's wrong with this picture?"

—Former Leutnant Isabelle Michaels, Fifth FedCom RCT

Like Operation WINTERSCHNEE, the thrust into the belly of Dieron—Operation STURMHAMMER—fell under the authority of the LCAF, though compared with the coreward assault a much smaller proportion of the troops employed were LCAF line units. Instead, mercenaries and newly constituted FedCom troops took up the slack, along with AFFS troops. Of the eighteen regi-

ments employed in this second Lyran offensive, half were mercenaries and only three were LCAF line units, with equal numbers of AFFS and FedCom forces.

In many regards, the Dieron Thrust was a preparatory operation designed to isolate pockets of DCMS resistance (in particular on Al Na'ir and Dieron) and to prevent reinforcements and supplies from reaching those worlds targeted in the second and third waves. The LCAF and AFFS expected little significant resistance—of the target worlds, only Ancha boasted a front-line unit—but the invaders did expect DCMS counterattacks and were ordered to establish defenses against such reprisals. Having weathered the expected "divine wind" counterassault, they could then serve as springboards for second- and third-wave attacks against Al Na'ir, Ashio, Nirasaki and Murchison (Wave Two) and Altair, Deneb Algedi, Dieron and Styx (Wave Three). That the allies could take their Wave One objectives was never in doubt. The question then became, could they hold those gains?

ANCHA (APRIL-JUNE)

The units sent to neutralize Ancha faced twin opponents: the First Shin Legion, comprised of expatriate Capellans who had fled the Confederation after the Fourth Succession War, and the planet's hostile ecosystem. DeMaestri's Sluggers of the Fighting Urukhai mercenaries landed first on Ancha on April 28, making a combat drop onto the Normandy continent about fifty kilometers west of the planetary capital. The defenders, a mixed force of garrison troops and the First Shin Legion, immediately engaged the interlopers, believing that swift and decisive action could shatter the mercenary regiment before it could recover from the drop. *Sho-sho* Richard Fujimoto intended the Shin Legion to pin down the mercenary unit while his own three armor and six infantry regiments encircled and crushed the invaders. In planning this strategy, however, he made the fatal mistake of assuming the Urukhai were alone in invading Ancha.

Within minutes of the first clashes between the Shin Legion and the mercenary forces, reports began pouring into the DCMS command center of new entry tracks appearing above the capital, New Summit. The Legion and its planetary garrison escorts desperately tried to disengage but found that the mercenaries, though outnumbered, were unwilling to shrink from a fight. The Legion therefore remained bogged down against DeMaestri's Sluggers when the first 'Mechs of the Sixth FedCom RCT under the command of Hauptmann-General Isabella Rahn slammed into their rear and flanks. Rahn, the overall invasion commander, ordered her troops to surround and crush the DCMS force.

Sho-sho Fujimoto staged a desperate attempt to break out but knew his infantry and armor stood little chance of outrunning the invaders. Only the Shin Legion had any real hope of breaking through, let alone escaping. To give the Legion 'Mechs the best chance of breaking free of the trap, he ordered his armor and infantry to attack, leading this suicidal assault on the FedCom RCT positions personally from the turret of his command tank. Though ultimately a bloody and futile effort, this bold gambit did cause sufficient confusion for four companies of the Shin Legion

to punch through the encircling forces and flee into the wilderness. With Fujimoto dead, morale among the remaining garrison forces collapsed and they promptly surrendered. By the morning of April 29 the main military resistance on Ancha had been neutralized and the allies were well on their way to seizing control of the planet's political and military infrastructure.

Hunting down the Shin Legion would prove more problematic. After escaping the invaders' trap, they made their way to one of several military facilities that dotted Normandy to rest and refit. Many of Normandy's inhabitants were more than willing to provide the Legion troops with food and shelter. Over the weeks and months that followed, as the Urukhai sought to run down the escaped 'Mechs and the Sixth FedCom took up garrison positions, the Shin Legion slowly faded from view. A small core continued a guerrilla war against the occupiers, staging lightning strikes against allied installations and the convoys through which the allied troops obtained anti-viral preparations necessary to survive the planet's hostile biosphere. Most of the Shin Legion survivors, however, disappeared from view in anticipation of a counter-invasion.

ATHENRY (APRIL-MAY)

Military planners initially overlooked water-covered Athenry as a military objective, but the need to isolate Dieron and prevent a breakout of troops from the beleaguered district capital or any reinforcement of the fortress world led the high command to order the capture of the volcanic world. They assigned two regiments of the Blue Star Irregulars to the occupation, the 1894th Light Horse and the Twenty-first Rim Worlds regiment, who were deemed more than sufficient to pacify the planet's archipelagos.

The swift Light Horse landed in the uplands of Lisbon in the Espalar Island Chain on April 20, four days after arriving in-system, and quickly moved to occupy the capital of New Senna. They received a muted but civil reception, with the garrison forces surrendering after token resistance. Within a week the LCAF had installed a Lyran military administrator in Athenry House, the seat of the planetary governors. At first the local people kept their Lyran mercenary conquerors at arms' length, but by mid-May the citizens of Athenry had begun to change their minds. The Blue Star Irregulars had committed none of the atrocities commonly attributed to mercenaries by the Combine media, and the unit clearly demonstrated its willingness to submit to the judicial process by handing over Corporal Aliz Nicholayova to the New Senna PD after a drunken brawl left a civilian dead. After that incident, the population began to accept the occupiers as just another garrison. Rumors continued to circulate (most likely originating with ISF cells still operating on the world) and various incidents that may well have been staged took place across the Espalar Chain, but the negative political effects remained minor. The Light Horse continued to build its rapport with the natives and to prepare for any DCMS counter-action.

The Rim Worlds regiment was less sedentary than its sibling, sending detachments to the cities of the Zubeckis and Larsen island chains as well as patrolling the steamy Wandessa Chain near the equator. In Wandessa the Twenty-first fought its

one notable engagement, when a battalion of militia hover armor decided to engage a company of the mercenary unit near the ruins of Port Laois on May 9. Staging a series of strike-and-fade attacks from the deep waters off the coast, the militia sought to keep the mercenaries off balance. Unfortunately, the militia hadn't counted on the speed with which the Twenty-first's aerospace fighters could converge on their position. Rather than remaining safe from the Rim Worlds 'Mechs, they found themselves devoid of cover and easy prey for the mercenary air squadrons. The shuttle bombing devastated the militia formation; of almost forty tanks that began the engagement, only two made it back to shore. The battle made clear that while the Irregulars were more than happy to cooperate with Athenry's defenders in keeping the peace, they would meet military opposition with overwhelming force.

BIHAM (APRIL-JUNE)

Biham's Tiberius gas-mining facility made it a natural objective for the allied assault, providing them with a forward base at which they could resupply their massive invasion flotillas with reaction mass. Biham itself was also a valuable industrial prize, and so the high command dispatched two units to secure the system for the Steiner-Davions. The Eighth Crucis Lancers (the Islamabad Lancers) had orders to secure Biham itself, appearing in-system on April 26 and landing four days later. Meanwhile, Laurel's Legion, together with a detachment of LCAF marines and combat engineers, had the job of securing the Tiberius platforms.

The landings on Biham went off smoothly with only scattered resistance (almost entirely with small arms) as the Lancers moved to take charge of government installations in Siang and at key petrochemical plants across the planet. Executives at Yohsimatsu Chemicals, Biham's largest employer and owner of the Tiberius gas mine, protested the occupation of their facilities and the seizure of their assets, but their complaints faded after Marshal Charles Swaine gave assurances that the corporation would be fully recompensed for any materials requisitioned by the war effort and that the LCAF and AFFS would likewise make good any physical damage their occupation inflicted on corporate property.

Laurel's Legion faced a more challenging task in securing the Tiberius complex. Though massive and more than large enough to accommodate 'Mechs, the slowly rotating complex sustained only 0.2 Gs and was a tricky (and fragile) environment for the mercenaries' operation. Fortunately, the Legion had practiced for several weeks at the at the Federated Suns' Galax facility, and the marines who accompanied them each had at least five years' experience at zero- and low-g operations. The Legion 'Mechs moved to secure the main structures of the complex, often simply by walking along the structure's hull using magnetic clamps attached to the 'Mech's foot assemblies, while the engineers moved through the narrow corridors. Most of the civilian defenders surrendered without a fight, but several members of the security detachment barricaded themselves in the command center and threatened to overload the station's power plant. The LCAF marines stormed this improvised HQ



before the guards could make good their threat. Sixteen marines died in that assault, along with thirty-six security guards and eleven civilian personnel.

DIERON (APRIL-JUNE)

The heart of the Dieron Military District and site of a former Star League command center, the isolation and reduction of Dieron was a key FedCom objective. Though allied military forces did not hit Dieron directly in the early days of the war, *Kanrei* Theodore Kurita anticipated attacks against the district capital. He also knew that Dieron's survival was essential to saving the Combine. On April 29, *Kanrei* Theodore and the Coordinator ordered Warlord Noketsuna to hold Dieron at all costs. In effect, Dieron and its surrounding worlds would become an anvil against which the invaders would dash themselves to pieces.

Noketsuna knew that simply waiting for the inevitable attacks would play into enemy hands, allowing the Steiner-Davion forces to destroy Dieron's DCMS defenders. To regain the initiative, he released several regiments to stage localized counterattacks and to strike into the narrow Terran Corridor of worlds that linked the Lyran Commonwealth and the Federated Suns. These attacks had little chance of inflicting serious damage against the allied invasion, but they would force the Steiner

and Davion militaries to assign troops to counter the raids. In many ways, *Tai-shu* Noketsuna's actions were a small-scale precursor of Theodore's Operation OROCHI. (For more details of these raids, see pp. 111-119.)

Warlord Noketsuna also activated a series of contingency plans developed since the Fourth Succession War that relied less on massed military might and more on special forces and agents living on worlds that had been or were about to be occupied by the enemy. These individuals formed guerrilla movements and rendered unusable key installations vital to the invaders. Civil disobedience and passive resistance also played a role; many members of planetary governments and no small number of local businesses refused to work with the invaders, or "cooperated" with the occupiers in a manner that proved more hindrance than help. These combined actions made governance of the seized territories as great a challenge as seizing the worlds. Under cover of this civil chaos, selected ISF teams moved into position to unleash hell on their enemies, moving to chosen target worlds and making contact with local operatives. This preparation phase took six to eight weeks, during which Dieron and the other Combine worlds would have to resist the invaders.

As a corollary to these covert operations, Noketsuna and his ISF associates—most notably Ninyu Kerai, adopted son of

PIRATE TALES

Do you want this man [image] defending your homes? The so-called Warlord of Dieron is nothing but a DESERTER, MURDERER, THIEF and PIRATE. He attained power by ASSASSINATING his rivals, namely Grieg Samsonov of Galedon, whose HEAD HE CUT OFF [Image] during his time as a BOUNTY HUNTER [image] and gave as a present to a convent on Awano. he also ASSASSINATED Dexter Kingsley, the LOYAL AND RIGHTFUL warlord of Dieron, whom Noketsuna murdered to clear his path to power after the Ronin War. Noketsuna even TRIED TO KILL THE KANREI but showed his complete LACK OF LOYALTY AND HONOR when he was bribed into working for Theodore instead. The pirate Noketsuna continues to consort with THIEVES, EXTORTIONISTS AND BLACKMAILERS [image] and favors them over loyal sons of the Dragon. Even overlooking his LACK OF COMMAND EXPERIENCE AND VENDETTA AGAINST THE DRAGON, Noketsuna's ties to the YAKUZA and to the TREACHEROUS WOLF'S DRAGOONS mean we cannot tolerate this PIRATE AND MURDERER as arbiter of life and death for those living on Dieron. We respectfully request that the Coordinator install a FAIR AND HONEST leader for the LOYAL PEOPLE OF DIERON rather than the disgrace who currently resides at the Dragon's Roost.

—"Information" leaflet circulating in the slums of Dieron shortly before the outbreak of war

notorious ISF director Subhash Indrahar—took numerous actions to limit Steiner and Davion intelligence-gathering. Known agents were seized or eliminated amid vigorous efforts to unmask and counter LIC and MIIO operations. With aid from the yakuza and other allies (allegedly including ComStar, whose complicity in hindering spies' use of the HPG net delayed or misrouted their messages), this shadow conflict did much to bolster the DCMS war effort.

On May 3, the Shinazuma barracks on Dieron came under rocket fire from civilian vehicles that had been parked in nearby industrial districts. Almost simultaneously several missiles targeted the Dragon's Roost command center on Tatsuyama Mountain. Neither attack inflicted significant damage—indeed, the attack against Dragon's Roost missed the main complex, thanks to a combination of ECM and anti-missile systems—but these actions demonstrated the presence of enemy forces on-world. (Conrad Telling's 3044 book, "Into the Dragon's Teeth", revealed the attackers as a pair of Loki teams, only three members of which would ultimately escape the Combine; the rest were either killed or missing in action.) The Shinazuma attack (and a dozen more throughout May) inflicted a substantial psychological wound on Dieron's population that the LCAF hoped to exploit later in the conflict, demonstrating the vulnerability of their supposedly secure planet and preparing the ground for the fall of Fortress Dieron.

As Ninyu Kerai's operatives readied for action against the invaders, the LCAF enacted the next phase in its plans to isolate Dieron. Aping the crippling of the DCMS invasion fleet at Dromini VI in the Fourth Succession War, the LIC used merchant traffic to infiltrate agents into the DCMS fleet and staged a series of sabotage attacks designed to limit the Combine's ability to move troops into and out of the Dieron system. The Lyran operatives damaged jump initiators and blew helium seals, though the Combine's security measures limited the saboteurs' success to three JumpShips. The attempted sabotage therefore had no appreciable impact on Combine Admiralty operations in the Dieron system.

Of greater significance was the attempt to capture or cripple the planet's zenith defense and recharge stations, interpreted by the DCMS as a prelude to invasion. Disguised as the crew of a merchant vessel, several companies of Lyran Marines assaulted the recently restored *Olympus*-class station on June 10 and came perilously close to seizing the command deck before being repulsed. The attack on the zenith station *Bastion*, occurring on June 13, was less easy to counter, involving several pieces of space debris nudged into orbits that would lead them to collide with

the station. Such attacks would not destroy the structure, but if successful, would likely prompt station personnel to abandon it while repairs were made. Fortunately for the DCMS, upgraded sensors on the *Bastion* (courtesy of the Combine's own copy of the Helm memory core) detected the inbound projectiles and destroyed them while they were still many kilometers away.

LCAF records show that no immediate orders existed for invading the Dieron system, but had the operations against the fleet and stations been effective, plans existed to dispatch the Thirty-third Avalon Hussars, the Davion Assault Guards and almost all of Wolf's Dragoons (stationed on Caph), as well as the Seventeenth Donegal from Lyons and the Third Royal, then forward-deployed to Freedom. These units would have invaded and crushed the district capital whenever an opportunity presented itself in the first or second assault waves, or as part of the scheduled Wave Three. In the end, the military strike on Dieron never took place, but the allies had by no means abandoned their attempts to control the world.

HALSTEAD STATION (APRIL-MAY)

One of the most hostile worlds inhabited by humankind, Halstead Station is best known as the objective of the 3012 raid led by Hanse Davion to "liberate" a cache of Star League records and research materials that became the core of the NAIS. Of little intrinsic value, despite the presence of numerous mining colonies on its surface, Halstead Station was nonetheless an important objective for the Dieron Thrust, serving as a way station for the planned Wave Two assaults deeper into the Combine. Furthermore, control of Halstead Station would allow the allies to establish a buffer zone between the border worlds they had leapfrogged and any counterattacking forces. With units at Halstead Station blocking the movement of DCMS reinforcements from the interior, the LCAF and AFFS troops could reduce pockets of resistance on worlds such as Al Na'ir almost at will.

The Fifth FedCom RCT spearheaded the assault, their first offensive assignment since the unit's formation two years earlier. In some regards, the Fifth got an easy assignment to rebuild their confidence—just after its formation, the unit had suffered a tragic DropShip acci-

dent on Tsitang that cost a third of its BattleMech strength, followed by a bloody FWLM raid six weeks later. The allied high command felt that giving the Fifth a soft objective like icy Halstead Station would enable the RCT to take its rightful place among the pride of the Steiner-Davion alliance. The generals were not, however, entirely convinced of the RCT's battle-readiness and assigned the mercenary Roman's Bar Hounds, part of the Fighting Urukhai, as an auxiliary unit.

The mercenary troops spearheaded the landing on April 30 and handily overwhelmed the small garrison force at Halstead City. When the FedCom RCT landed the next day, the troops had little to do besides mop up, though soldiers of the Fifth FedCom did have brief confrontations with irregular troops (most likely miners) in the hinterlands. By May 5, the FedCom considered Halstead Station secure and the Fifth began building defenses against an anticipated DCMS counterattack, laying out elaborate earthworks and bunkers intended to slow any advance on their HQ. At the same time, officers of the AFFS Quartermaster Corps began assembling several fortified supply caches intended to provision the Wave Two and Wave Three attacks. Colonel Randy Roman of the Bar Hounds questioned the relative positions of the fortifications and the supply caches, but General Nial Slattery of the Fifth FedCom waved off the mercenary commander's concerns. That decision would come back to haunt him in the months that followed.

KERVIL (APRIL-JUNE)

Anchoring the coreward end of the Lyran Commonwealth's thrust into the Al Na'ir Prefecture, control over storm-wracked Kervil would complete the isolation of Dieron and its surrounding worlds. Though the invaders expected little resistance on the water world, Kervil would likely bear the brunt of DCMS efforts to liberate Dieron, and so the high command appointed two of the most accomplished LCAF regiments—the Seventh Donegal Guard and the Seventeenth Skye Rangers—to Kervil's conquest and defense. Neither were RCTs, though the Seventh Donegal worked in conjunction with several infantry and armor units. The units' relative lack of combined arms reduced their overall firepower but allowed them considerable freedom of movement, essential in Kervil's islands and shallows.

Under its new commander, Daniel Voss-Steiner, the Seventh Donegal grounded on 19 April after a high-G approach and moved to seize the planetary capital of Iron City and its environs. Voss-Steiner had commanded the Sixth Lyran Guard since 3019, but took over the Seventh only six months before the outbreak of war. The newness of his command proved no drawback to the Seventh's fighting skills; Iron City capitulated after a brief fight. The process of securing off-shore installations in the northern hemisphere was more time-consuming, and not until mid-May did the Seventh and its auxiliary infantry and hovercraft feel secure in their new home.

Meanwhile, the Seventeenth Skye Rangers seized Kervil's orbital installations and then moved to occupy the southern hemisphere. The security troops they left at the orbital refineries initially kept busy disarming DCMS security forces and deal-

ing with acts of sabotage. Then, on May 20, a little over a month since the occupation began, LIC agents made a shocking discovery in the refineries. What they had initially identified as zero-g refining equipment turned out to be manufacturing equipment for sophisticated alloys that rivaled those used during the Star League era. LIC agents isolated samples of this material and shipped it back to the Commonwealth for study. On June 13, military scientist Michael Collins briefed the Archon and the First Prince, as well as senior military officials, on the discovery. The alloy was similar to materials being experimented on at the NAIS and had clearly been produced—in some quantity, if records were to be believed—at the Kervil installation. This light but strong material was superior to anything the allies had so far managed to mass-produce; if the DCMS was genuinely using it on a large scale, then MIO and LIC analyses of the DCMS' capabilities were wrong. Unfortunately, neither intelligence agency possessed additional evidence to support the hypothesis of advanced weapons and materials programs in the Combine (though many believed the DCMS had a copy of the Helm memory core). The meeting was recessed pending further investigation and scheduled to reconvene on July 13.

NASHIRA (MAY-JUNE)

Made famous by the battles on Wei and Palos in the Fourth Succession War, Colonel Mitch Nelson led Delta Regiment of the Twelfth Vegan Rangers onto Nashira on 1 May, the first allied forces to target the world since the Kell Hounds' raid against the Genyosha HQ during the Fourth Succession War. The Genyosha no longer called Nashira home, but its defenders had a fearsome reputation and the mercenaries expected to have a fight on their hands. With that in mind, the First FedCom RCT was also assigned to the assault, in theory as the superior unit but in practice allowing the battle-hardened Deltas to determine much of the strategy. Marshal Mira Tran, commanding the First FedCom, dismissed the threat posed by Nashira's defenders and felt that Nelson's call for an orbital drop against Logan City was expensive and risky. However, she was more than willing to allow the mercenaries to take risks provided they did not hamper her troops' operations. Tran's executive officer, Lieutenant General Vonda de Greer, preferred to follow Colonel Nelson's lead but had little choice about acquiescing to her superior.

The Vegan Rangers landed about twenty kilometers west of Logan City, their first battalion staging an orbit-to-surface drop in advance of the DropShip landings. A regiment of infantry and a battalion of armor from the planetary garrison quickly engaged these advance troops, though neither posed a major threat to the Rangers' BattleMech battalion. Had the DCMS units been able to catch the mercenary troops while off-loading, the situation could have been much worse. It quickly became so for the FedCom RCT, landing fifty kilometers further south.

The DropShips of the First FedCom grounded on May 5 without first securing their LZ outside the spaceport city of Ogawa, their overconfident marshal believing her troops could handle anything the defenders of Ogawa could throw at them. Tran grossly underestimated the determination of the Nashiran

defenders, who in addition to conventional tactics, booby-trapped buildings and drove vehicles packed with explosives on kamikaze missions against the new arrivals. The fury of the assault on her position rocked Marshal Tran back on her heels. While she vacillated about how to proceed, her troops were being gunned down as they attempted to leave their transports. Securing Ogawa Port took five days and cost the First FedCom eight BattleMechs, twenty-six tanks and 211 infantry troopers. Losses among the defenders remain unknown. Tran soon found herself on a DropShip back to the First FedCom's jump-off world of Errai for "consultations" with her superiors. She never returned. Lieutenant General de Greer received a field promotion to command of the RCT, charged with rebuilding the unit and completing the pacification of Nashira as well as establishing defenses against a possible DCMS counteroffensive.

Guerrilla attacks typified the combat encounters faced by the Vegan Rangers and the First FedCom throughout the rest of May and June, reaching their peak on May 21 with the occupation of Logan City. None of the attacks posed a major threat to the allied units, but the steady attrition of sniping and bomb attacks eroded the troops' morale. By early July, with their "easy liberation" of Nashira looking like a protracted and bloody occupation, the troops had begun to despair. Surely the situation could not get any worse.

PIKE IV (MAY-JUNE)

The third of the worlds targeted from the Lyons Thumb, arid and windswept Pike IV was far from ideal as a colony, but prospered nonetheless because of its mineral wealth. Its location in the "neck" between the Lyon's Thumb and the Terran Corridor made it a prime target for invasion, but Pike IV's climate—and the high concentration of on-planet IndustrialMechs used to circumvent it—made the planet a particularly thorny military objective. In theory, any of the thousands of LoaderMechs or MiningMechs could be converted into jury-rigged fighting machines—hardly a match for a well-piloted BattleMech, but in sufficient numbers even such Frankenstein machines could inflict grievous damage on the occupiers.

The Thirtieth Lyran Guard RCT—nicknamed the Walking Hellfire—spearheaded the assault on May 12. General Vincent Tanner commanded from the cockpit of his *Charger*, modified with state-of-the-art communications equipment. Accompanying the Walking Hellfire were Hanson's Roughriders, led for one last campaign before his retirement by Colonel Gerhard Hansen. The Lyran Guards' Alpha and Beta battalions staged a combat drop to secure the landing zones, but storm winds over the LZ scattered almost half the landing troops and nearly a company perished after falling into rough terrain. Sufficient troops reached the landing sites to secure them before the DropShips landed, but the last stragglers didn't make it back to HQ until almost three days after first planetfall.

Most of the Lyran RCT grounded in the uplands, where they needed no specialized life-support equipment. They quickly moved to encircle Stratopolis and call for its surrender. Two battalions of native armor opposed the invaders, but stood little

chance against the cutting-edge equipment of the Lyran Guard. When the Pike Militia lost almost a company of medium tanks and only damaged two Lyran tanks in exchange, their CO opted to withdraw into the city. The highland city's leaders were leery of surrendering their territory to the invaders, but upon hearing of events in the lowlands, they decided that short-term cooperation was key to their survival.

Though they lived in more vulnerable settlements than their highland cousins, the lowlanders had little desire to come under the sway of the Lyran Commonwealth (though they had little more love for the Combine). They opted to fight the incursions by Hanson's Roughriders and elements of the Lyran Guards' 'Mech regiment. Sabotage against the invaders' supplies and life-support gear thankfully resulted in only a handful of casualties, most of whom were evacuated to the uplands. However, as the Lyran force pushed toward the lowland capital of Rolfshire in early June, direct attacks became more prevalent and militarized IndustrialMechs began to appear. The FedCom forces' superior BattleMechs swatted down these machines when they turned up in ones and twos, but arrayed outside the city the invaders encountered an ad-hoc regiment of rigged-up IndustrialMechs, whose pilots called themselves the Pike Defenders. Despite being outnumbered and outclassed, the larger quantity of local 'Mechs still posed a considerable risk to the invading task force. General Tanner ordered his BattleMechs to pull back, instead calling in artillery fire and ground-attack missions by his orbiting fighters. In less than fifteen minutes, what little discipline the Pike Defenders had was in tatters and General Tanner's troops could pick off the stragglers before occupying Rolfshire. The damage inflicted on the ad-hoc regiment intimidated the inhabitants of Pike into accepting the occupation, but did little to win them over to the Lyran cause.

SADACHBIA (APRIL-JUNE)

The landings on Sadachbia were almost an anticlimax for the Eighth Deneb Light Cavalry, who together with Redfield's Renegades had been warned of a new DCMS regiment deployed to the world. Rumors of a new 'Mech force on Sadachbia prompted the Eighth Deneb and the Renegades to approach the planetary capital with caution. After the garrison and government surrendered without a shot being fired, the invading units remained alert for reports of unusual 'Mech activity, in particular from the arid badlands around Dharma and Shoquelle. Paranoia took hold, quietly at first and later en masse, as Lyran troops began to suspect the natives (and each other) of plotting imaginary attacks.

That no hard evidence existed of a Combine 'Mech force did not stop Lyran troops from accepting stories of this "ghost regiment" as fact, particularly in light of other tales of new DCMS regiments faced by allied troops elsewhere. Upon hearing the rumors on Sadachbia, local ISF agents set about shaping their own stories to complement those developing naturally. When the MIO began to suspect the Combine was using psychological warfare against FedCom units, the battlefield for Sadachbia became the hearts and minds of the occupying garrison troops as well as the resident population. Captain Edward Redfield, son of regimental commander Tyrell Redfield

and the mercenary unit's intelligence officer, summed up the situation perfectly when he wished for an enemy on Sadachbia he could shoot at: "The problem with ghosts is, you can't kill them." Events would soon grant his wish.

TELOS IV (APRIL-JUNE)

With a population ever wary of outsiders, including the Combine government, Telos IV was expected to be difficult to occupy. The allied high command, however, considered control of the world essential to complete the isolation of Dieron. The Twenty-second Avalon Hussars and Gamma Regiment of the Twelfth Vegan Rangers arrived in-system on April 28 and immediately began high-g burns toward the planet. En route, invasion commander General Aileen Lugo broadcast to Telos IV's inhabitants that the AFFS troops were coming to "liberate" the planet from Combine oppression. Unfortunately for the invading troops, Theodore Kurita's social reforms in the late 3030s had done much to counteract the population's antipathy toward Luthien. Though the people of Telos would not truly accept their place in the Combine for many years, the days were long gone when the natives could be counted on to join any anti-Kurita action.

Receiving a terse response to her communiqué, Lugo prepared her troops to fight their way onto the planet after her flotilla smashed through its weak orbital defenses. The opposition that met the AFFS troops after their landings near Triumph was patchy and ineffectual, the DCMS having invested little in armaments for the natives of this rebellious world. By May 5 Telos was in allied hands and a military governor had been installed to oversee its assimilation. The Hussars and Rangers expected to be relieved of policing duties in the planet's urban centers within a few days of their arrival, but a bureaucratic foul-up delayed the military police and infantry intended to garrison Telos IV—those forces would not arrive until the end of June. The two front-line combat units thus found themselves thrust into peacekeeping duties for which they were ill-suited—Mechs and tanks make poor crowd-control tools—and the targets of guerrilla attacks, mostly with improvised weapons.

For the most part, however, Telosian resistance to the occupation was less confrontational and more insidious. Shopkeepers switched into the near-incomprehensible local dialect when allied troops approached and routinely ignored, shortchanged and gave poor service to allied soldiers and civilian personnel. At first the incidents looked like the actions of a few disaffected locals, but after several weeks it became apparent that almost all the Telosians had chosen to shun the AFFS troops. The allies suspected ISF manipulation (never confirmed or denied), but General Lugo and Colonel Connie Desantis of the Vegan Rangers believed it simply reflected typical Telosian disdain of foreigners. Despite minimal losses and less-than-strenuous conditions, it was clearly going to be a long occupation.

BENJAMIN THRUST

"There is no avoiding war; it can only be postponed to the advantage of others."

—Niccolo Machiavelli

"May the dear Lord have mercy upon those unfortunate enough to get in our way, because we won't!"

—Lieutenant General Sharon Zardetto

While the conquest of the Dieron District was the war's primary stated goal, the AFFS thrust into the Benjamin Military District was no less essential. Not only was this sector of the invasion likely to keep significant Combine reserves from flooding the Dieron District, but if the initial assaults managed to overwhelm the DCMS as some analysts had predicted, the units that pushed into the Benjamin District could aid in isolating Dieron even further or could drive straight to Benjamin and even beyond.

The import of this operation was not lost on Field Marshal James Sandoval. Though some criticized Prince Hanse Davion for assigning this political appointee to command

CHASING GHOSTS

29 May 3039, 09:62 Local

Someone or something took Coburg. He was on guard duty near the southwestern perimeter last night but this morning he was gone. There was no sign of a struggle—no blood, no disturbed ground or broken vegetation. Just his footprints, back and forth along his patrol route. They ended suddenly, as if he'd vanished into thin air. There's no way he could've been taken out—no scorching or blast damage you'd expect of a heavy weapon and no remains from smaller-caliber fire. He's just gone. Have Snake patrols developed some way of covering their tracks and sneaking into our lines? I've heard of their Cat Assassins. Maybe there's a regiment of them hunting us, Snake ninja-killers waiting to murder us in our sleep.

1 June 3039, 01:19 Local

They found Coburg's body today, stuffed into a crevice. No sign of what killed him, let alone what took him. Benett of Three-Company said he'd heard there were no visible wounds, just a look on Coburg's face like he'd been scared to death.

1 June 3039, 19:52 Local

Official verdict is strangulation, though I can't see how a five-year vet like Coburg allowed someone to sneak up and garrote him. It must be those cat ninja.

3 June 3039, 25:15 Local

Another soldier has disappeared—Silas of Two-Company. Vanished into thin air just like Coburg, this time while on R&R. Another victim of whoever's hunting us?

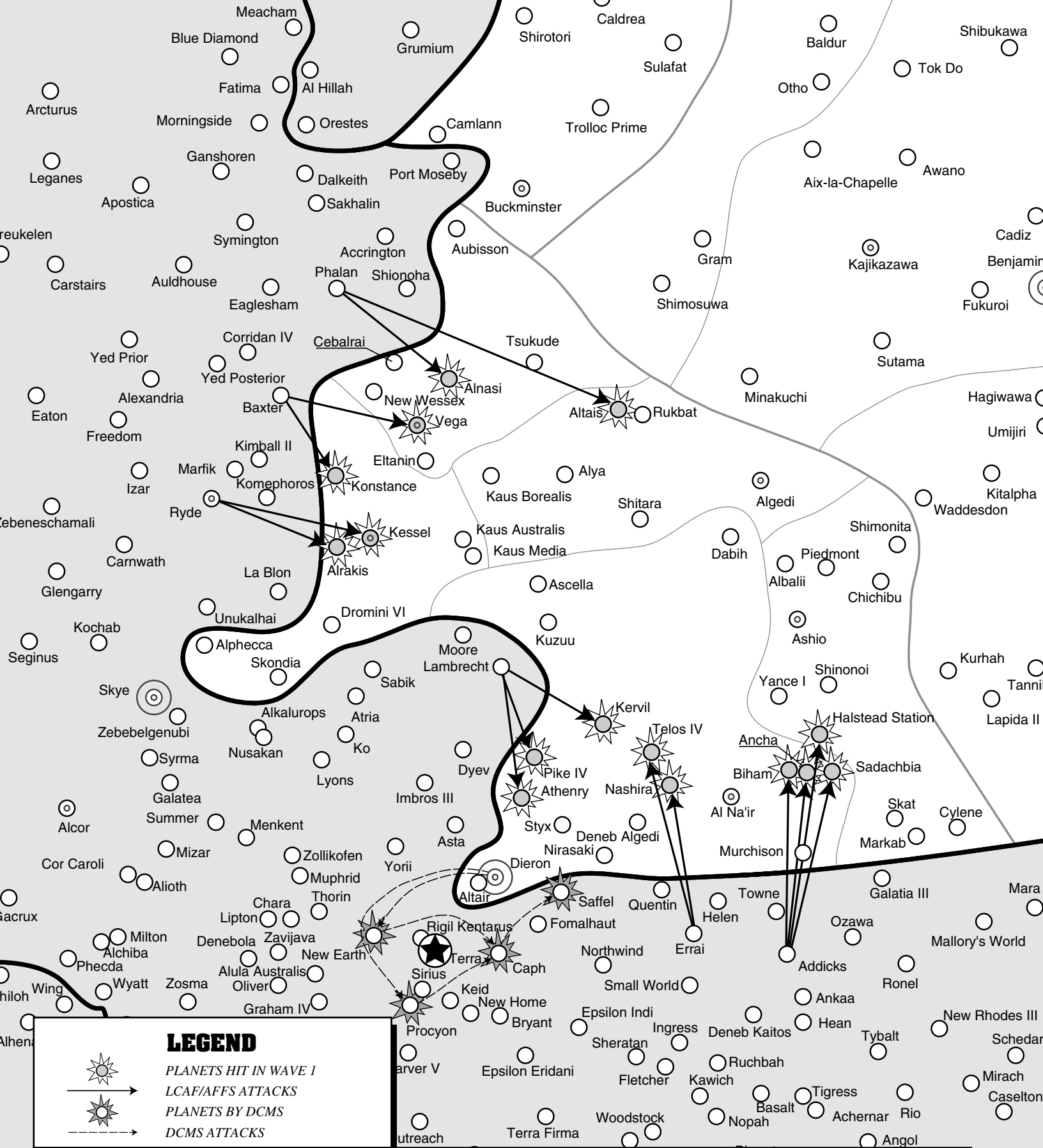
4 June 3039, 03:42 Local

They found Silas' body behind a bordello on the edge of town. Scuttlebutt says he was executed by a single shot to the head and had a dragon symbol carved into his chest. Masterson says he probably fell afoul of the local Yaks while having some "fun" in the cathouse, but I can't see the Snake "businessmen" wanting to start a war with the Light Cav. No, this is a message to us from the Ghosts.





6 June 3039, 06:11 Local

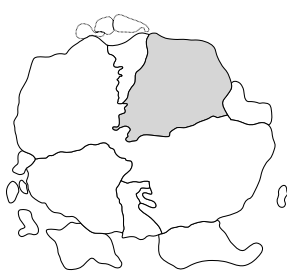
I'm off to patrol the eastern sector in about ten minutes, part of a six-man stick sent to check

Continued on p. 41



LEGEND

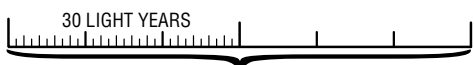
-  PLANETS HIT IN WAVE I
-  LCAF/AFFS ATTACKS
-  PLANETS BY DCMS
-  DCMS ATTACKS



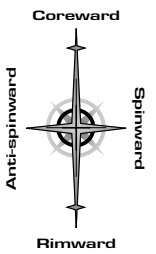
**WAVE I
COMMONWEALTH/DIERON THRUST
and INITIAL DCMS ATTACKS**

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LEGEND



MAXIMUM JUMP: APPROXIMATELY 30 LIGHT YEARS



Coreward
Spinward
Rimward
Anti-spinward

the Benjamin Thrust—known as Operation GAHERIS—Sandoval served as the military commander of the entire Draconis March and had proven himself capable of rising above the petty rhetoric that had stereotyped Sandoval leaders throughout history.

Field Marshal Sandoval knew what was expected of him, and his field commanders in turn knew what he expected of them. In fact, he brought every single senior RCT, brigade and regimental commander together in his family home of Castle Robinson before the invasion began, giving them a chance to meet face-to-face. The meeting gave Sandoval an opportunity to make last-minute changes to the GAHERIS plan based on the commanders' personalities and suggestions. Operation GAHERIS was highly successful, with the sole exception of the mercenary action on Harrow's Sun. For Sandoval and his generals, the first phase of the invasion went stunningly well.

FELLANIN II (APRIL-JULY)

One of Field Marshal Sandoval's more questionable choices was assigning the Eridani Light Horse to Fellanin II. The pairing of the Seventy-first Light Horse and Twenty-first Striker regiments represented a powerful combination, but Fellanin II was occupied by the Fourth Proserpina Hussars, a veteran unit well known for its skill on the battlefield. The Light Horse could certainly handle the Fourth Hussars, but members of the AFFS high command wondered whether the mercenaries could complete the conquest of Fellanin II and still be ready for a second-wave attack on Homam. Marshal Sandoval gave the mercenaries an additional support brigade consisting of two mechanized infantry regiments backed up by an armored regiment, and assigned responsibility for the entire Fellanin II operation to General William Petersen, commander of the Seventy-first Light Horse.

General Petersen's assault force arrived in the Fellanin system on 24 April and hit the world six days later. The Fourth Hussars, placed on alert when the first AFFS troops crossed the border, were prepared for the assault. The mercenaries landed and immediately took possession of Perdition and Bender's Hope, two moderate-sized cities that provided the invaders with an initial base of operations close to several primary goals. Next they moved against Fort Drummin. General Petersen used heavy armor intermixed with four companies of 'Mechs to cover his flanks while he advanced headlong on the fort.

The Fourth Proserpina Hussars held on for several hours, which allowed them to withdraw their supplies before falling back to secondary positions. *Tai-sa* Jiro Takada hoped to trick the Eridani Light Horse into pursuing them, but General Petersen allowed the Hussars to retreat to Gomand unopposed. The mercenaries advanced straight on, only this time General Petersen sent the Seventh Striker Battalion of the Twenty-first Striker Regiment on a long flanking march. As soon as the main Light Horse body made contact with the city's defenders to the west of Gomand, Major Ariana Winston attacked with her Seventh Strikers from the northeast, holding key bridges across the Alba and Ithos rivers. Meanwhile, Light Horse fighters brutalized what DCMS ground formations they could see as AFFS infantry streamed into the city and secured it block by block. It didn't take long for *Tai-sa* Takada to recognize that he and his troops had little chance of holding the strategically unimportant city, and so he ordered another withdrawal. But with bridges to the east and south damaged or destroyed by Light Horse fighters, the DCMS troops had only one avenue of escape—straight through Major Winston's battalion. The Seventh Striker held as long as it could, but with Combine ground forces hammering them from the front and Hussars 'Mechs jumping the rivers and harassing their flanks, they ultimately gave ground and allowed Takada to leave the city.

Takada continued to retreat for the next twelve days, giving ground before the Light Horse and stretching their lines of communication while he assembled the bulk of his regiment, along with supporting militia forces, in and around the city of Lucéré. General Petersen knew what Takada was doing from aerial observation and held off the main attack for several days, instead using his 'Mechs to probe for weaknesses in the defensive line. In the meantime, *Tai-sa* Takada took advantage of poor weather to move his artillery and two combined-arms battalions into position for a surprise attack. He sprung the attack on 21 May, striking not at the Eridani force but at their DropShips and the bulk of their aerospace squadrons. Artillery pounded the airbase at Pourant, to which the DropShips and fighter squadrons had moved four days earlier, while Combine 'Mechs and tanks streamed in from hidden positions to the south. At the same time, Takada launched a spoiling attack from Lucéré, preventing General Petersen from dispatching any significant reinforcements to Pourant.

Pilots and flight crews desperately tried to take off in the firestorm while AFFS armor and artillery, along with several Light Horse combined-arms companies, valiantly sought to counter the Combine strike. At the same time, the Light Horse troops outside Lucéré literally fought for their lives as they tried to disengage the Eleventh and Seventeenth recon battalions. Ultimately, many of General Petersen's DropShips managed to take off, though his fighters did not. The Seventh Recon took hours to disengage, and by the time they reached Pourant the fight was over. Takada's forces had faded back, at the loss of much of their artillery and a battalion's worth of other equipment. Light Horse losses were worse: three DropShips and more than a full wing of fighters were destroyed or disabled, two battalions of AFFS conventional troops were wiped out and a battalion of Light Horse 'Mechs were wrecked. Perhaps the worst loss was Colonel Jamal Fallehy, commander of the Twenty-first Striker.

Tai-sa Takada did not let up. He launched another attack that night, striking at the still-reeling Light Horse main force and pushing them into retreat. Takada's Hussars pursued like madmen, firing at everything that moved. His third battalion shadowed the merce-

out some farmsteads. It'll make a change from guard duty, that's for sure. A chance for honest-to-goodness soldiering rather than this spook-hunting we've been lumbered with.

6 June 3039, 18:22 Local

[Journal closed on authority of Colonel W. P. Myers. Entries to be transmitted to Private Seville's next-of-kin.]

—Journal of PFC Janine Seville, Eighth Deneb Light Cavalry

KLATHANDU THROWS OFF COMBINE CHAINS

Yesterday, Marshal Winston Vaskursian, along with the rest of the Federated Suns, received a welcome bit of news: the people of Klathandu IV overthrew their Kurita-imposed government and received the men and women of the AFFS as their liberators. Of course, this turn of events only came after a promise from the Combine governor that the citizens of the world would fight to their last breath.

“We knew from intelligence reports that the people of Klathandu IV were, at best, neutral toward the Luthien government,” said Lieutenant General Carrie Tan, spokeswoman for Marshal Vaskursian, “so we took that announcement with a grain of salt.” Vaskursian’s soldiers were nevertheless prepared for a bloody fight, street by street and building by building if necessary. “We were ready to deal with the Dracs any way they wanted it. They’d involved their civilians before, and if they were going to do that here, too, we were prepared to end the fighting with as few civilian losses as possible. Thankfully, we didn’t have to worry about that.”

The people of Klathandu had been eagerly anticipating the invasion for years. As soon as the members of the world’s civilian advisory council heard the generous terms [that Marshal Vaskursian] offered and Governor [Hishashi] Kodama’s reply, they acted immediately.

Kori Trenn, president of the civilian Klathandu Federation, put it best. “We knew war would devastate our planet. There was no way that [the people of Klathandu IV] could possibly survive [an invasion]. So we removed Kodama and his puppets from the equation.”

This was by no means the first time that a planet’s native people took their fate into their own hands in this war, and it certainly won’t be the last, but it was good news for both the soldiers of the [invasion force]... and the people of Klathandu IV.

—Excerpt from an article by Meshach Guren, published in the 20 May 3039 issue of the *Robinson Banner*

naries’ retreat to the north, while the other two battalions attempted to infiltrate the Eridani lines. Unfortunately for the Hussars, Major Edwin Amis stepped up to the plate and brought some order to the retreat. Amis took command of the Twenty-first Striker and organized a rearguard action that put an end to the Hussars’ infiltrations and ultimately stopped their pursuit. The Light Horse retreated some two hundred kilometers that night, but as soon as they stopped for the night they quickly regained their composure and began planning a new assault.

The next day, Amis led the Twenty-first Striker in an attack that stopped the Proserpina Hussars in their tracks. Over the next two weeks, the two sides traded blows back and forth, until Takada began to suffer unaffordable losses and once again retreated in the face of the Light Horse’s superior numbers. For the rest of June, he led General Petersen on a running battle that ultimately ended at Fort Jinjiro, though only after Takada’s forces evicted the AFFS troops that had taken position there in early June. From the fort, *Tai-sa* Takada’s force could command a wide battlefield, or if necessary fight a lengthy holding action.

Takada and his Hussars were not content to fight a defensive campaign, and struck out whenever possible with their more maneuverable medium ‘Mechs. In the end, however, they could not hope to stand up to the pounding the Light Horse could deliver. Takada attempted sweeping maneuvers in three separate instances to isolate and destroy Light Horse battalions, but the mercenaries always managed to close their own lines to prevent the worst. When Takada attempted a fourth sweep on 18 July, General Petersen sent newly promoted Colonel Amis and the Twenty-first Striker deep into Fort Jinjiro, shattering the Combine lines.

This final battle for Fort Jinjiro lasted the better part of four days. At its conclusion, the fort was virtually leveled, more than a hundred ‘Mechs from both sides lay damaged beyond repair or destroyed, and the Combine force was finished. The few survivors faded into the wilderness during the night of 21-22 July. All that remained was the wrap-up, though General Petersen maintained a heavy schedule of patrols just in case.

KLATHANDU IV (MAY)

Klathandu IV was a poorly defended border world that represented no more than a stepping stone to further operations in later invasion waves. The world was sparsely populated, only select regions possessed any arable lands and little existed in the way of industry. Planetary defense consisted of a few lances of BattleMechs, mostly privately owned, and a citizens’ brigade.

With no significant opposition, Marshal Winston Vaskursian of the Seventh Crucis Lancers contacted the planet’s leaders before touching down on Klathandu IV in an effort to prevent any damage to the world’s fragile infrastructure. Like most Combine bureaucrats, Governor Hishashi Kodama refused Vaskursian’s terms and vowed that his people would stand against the invasion force to a man. The people of Klathandu IV had a different opinion, however. Klathandu Federation President Kori Trenn contacted Marshal Vaskursian an hour later and agreed to his terms. She also offered to turn over Governor Kodama and his senior staff, whom she had arrested minutes earlier, to the marshal.

By the time the Seventh Crucis Lancers and Second New Ivaarsen Chasseurs landed on the world, Marshal Vaskursian and President Trenn had agreed on the specifics of the occupation and eventual transfer of Klathandu IV into the Federated Suns. The people of Klathandu IV continued on with their lives largely unaffected,

while the invasion force landed and “stretched their legs” before making preparations for their next move.

MARDUK (MAY-JULY)

Field Marshal James Sandoval considered Marduk the ultimate target of the first invasion wave. An important agricultural and industrial world lost to the Combine in the Fourth Succession War, Marduk was a jewel Sandoval wanted to retake for his people in the Draconis March. Beyond the politics of it, Marduk was home to several major military contractors, including Victory Industries, and

could help supply the Federated Suns' push deeper into the Combine. The world was lightly defended by a single battalion of 'Mechs detached from the Sixth Benjamin Regulars, along with several regiments of conventional troops and vehicles reinforced by a similar number of militia units.

Field Marshal Sandoval personally led the assault on Marduk, bringing the First Robinson Rangers, the Tenth Deneb Light Cavalry RCT and the Ninety-third Mechanized Brigade with him. The first elements of his assault force landed on 17 May just outside the planetary capital of New Pontiac and immediately struck into the city to decapitate Marduk's military and civilian command and control. Ranking DCMS officer *Tai-sa* Connor Aiku sent alert orders to Marduk's defenders before Sandoval landed, and the DCMS forces on-world were already preparing for the invasion. However, only the DCMS conventional forces were in position to oppose the incoming FedSuns troops.

A full wing of Combine aerospace fighters intercepted Sandoval's invasion force, and a few made it through the heavy AFFS air cover to strike at the landing DropShips. A pair of Combine pilots made suicide runs that destroyed two Robinson Rangers *Union*-class vessels in the air, while an *Overlord* DropShip made an emergency landing a hundred kilometers away from the designated landing zone. (This ship was deemed irreparable; its gutted hulk remains outside the town of Kurvil.) Three more AFFS ships landed with serious damage.

Rather than throwing the invasion off-track, the air battle only intensified the AFFS troops' resolve to take the world, and quickly. They struck New Pontiac fast and hard, pushing through the city with their BattleMechs, supported by tanks and infantry, in less than a day. The two regiments of DCMS regular infantry and armor stationed just outside of the city at Fort Ea did their best to hold back the attackers, but they were outgunned and could not match the ferocity of Sandoval's troops. The invasion force captured or destroyed most of these two regiments, forcing what was left well away from the city and into the Tillerbee Jungle—location of Victory Industries.

The Victory Industries complex was the field marshal's next target, but instead of striking at the plant, he pushed his forces slowly through the jungle, ensuring they would not fall prey to ambushes and waiting for the rest of the invasion force to arrive on-world. The Ninety-third Mechanized Brigade finally made land-fall on 25 May, allowing Sandoval to finally strike Victory Industries two days later.

The Battle of Tillerbee Jungle lasted nearly two weeks. While DCMS officers were unable to assign much in the way of reinforcements to the garrison stationed at Victory industries, the manufacturing facility's several layers of installed defenses slowed the invaders' approach enough for artillery stationed at the plant to ravage them. The heavy jungle foliage kept AFFS fighters from doing much to affect the outcome of the battle, along with the Combine troops' use of the facility itself for cover. The invading aerospace units were reduced to dropping tens of thousands of tons of bombs to help clear paths through the jungle.

Sandoval's troops got held up at the complex's two inner-most defensive lines for more than a week, but a bold strike by



the Tenth Deneb opened a hole through which the rest of the AFFS troops quickly poured. After that, the battle was virtually over. On 11 June, Sandoval stationed a battalion of Deneb Light Cavalry 'Mechs within the Victory compound and directed a full infantry regiment from the Ninety-third Mechanized to secure the facility from any remaining defenders or saboteurs.

This victory enabled Sandoval to refocus his energies on the rest of Marduk and what was left of the planetary garrison. He hadn't yet seen much of the Sixth Benjamin Regulars, but once he struck into the heart of the Tiller continent, he finally found the bulk of the planet's defenders. A Tenth Deneb scout company was annihilated as DCMS combined-arms battalions struck hard at the advancing invasion force, then faded away before the Robinson Rangers or the Tenth Deneb could counterattack.

In response, Sandoval spread his forces over a broad front and made a strong advance. Unhindered by terrain or worries about damaging infrastructure, the AFFS fighter squadrons exacted a heavy toll on the Combine defenders while Sandoval's troops continually pushed them back. On 14 June the Benjamin Regulars staged an ambush on the Manschemman Dune Field that nearly caught Sandoval, but Robinson Rangers MechWarriors rallied to defend their commander as the rest of the AFFS advance moved in. That battle, originally designed to slow the AFFS advance, quickly sucked in the majority of the armed forces on Marduk and lasted two full days. By dusk on 16 June, the remnants of nearly three Combine regiments lay scattered across the desert, signaling the end of organized resistance on Marduk.

Field Marshal Sandoval's troops spent the rest of June and most of July eliminating pockets of resistance while drawing heavily from Victory Industries and other manufacturing concerns to regain their full strength.

MATAR (APRIL-JULY)

Like many other worlds targeted in the first wave of the invasion, Matar held little strategic value and no significant garrison. Instead, it was considered a perfect jump-off point for future assault waves. From Matar, AFFS forces could reach two potential targets—Iurzun, a relatively well-protected prefecture capital whose falling would likely send a shock through the Combine, and Proserpina, a Combine prefecture capital and significant industrial world.

Major General Andrew Cunningham, the younger brother of Duke Xerxes Cunningham of Kestrel, led the Matar invasion at the head of the First Kestrel Grenadiers, while Colonel Andrew Redburn and his First Kathil Uhlans, reinforced by two regiments of mechanized airborne infantry, rounded out the invasion force. The two units, both of which had recently been built up by the AFFS, trained extensively together—and against each other—at the Robinson Combat Training Center for almost a year before taking position on David for the jump-off.

These two units were well prepared, at least in theory, for a combat drop onto Matar. They bypassed the planetary capital, New Goland, in favor of the heavily populated and industrialized

Tri-City Region of Capricia-Inness-Tellein. Colonel Redburn and his Uhlans dropped into the middle of these cities, while the Grenadiers dropped at strategic points outside them. Unfortunately, one of the Grenadiers' DropShips lined up over the wrong point and dropped a whole battalion almost a hundred kilometers off-target. Likewise, a number of lances from each unit were scattered throughout the drop zones, leading to initial confusion on the part of invaders and residents alike. To make matters worse, the Uhlans' attached airborne infantry jumped into their landing zones, within and outside the cities, before the assault force gained aerospace superiority and established an airborne communications net over the region.

The two militia squadrons of conventional fighters based in the Tri-City Region made life difficult for the invaders, though only briefly. Far worse were the improvised measures taken by the locals to jam communications. Every single commercial broadcast station and wireless communications company, along with hundreds of private stations within the region, began transmitting a Combine propaganda feed across the communications spectrum. FedSuns companies dropped throughout the tri-cities had a clear communications range of a scant few kilometers in an urban region almost sixty kilometers across.

Balancing this run of bad luck was the intricately detailed operations plan, crafted by Colonel Redburn to deal with almost every possible contingency (though not, as Redburn himself acknowledged, a near-complete communications blackout). FedSuns troops took objective after objective, seizing airfields, government buildings, police and militia armories, major media outlets (though few recognized what the broadcast transmitters were doing) and significant traffic intersections, effectively shutting the tri-cities down. The invasion force retained the ability to communicate with its hovering DropShips via laser and microwave, though messages had to be relayed from one unit to another through overburdened comm staffs on several ships, resulting in dozens of misrouted and incorrect messages within the first three hours alone.

As Colonel Redburn began to realize his situation, and having determined which of the airfields were in FedSuns hands, he immediately ordered the rest of the invasion force to land. He also issued a single code word—Lampighter—which indicated that his troops should cut all power to the tri-cities. It took nearly four hours, but one by one entire sections of the cities went dark. Emergency power kept many of the transmitters running, but soon enough infantry and armor platoons and companies, directed by Colonel Redburn, took possession of the major sites and shut down the broadcast interference. The battle, if it could be called that, lasted a total of 28 hours, after which time the tri-cities were in FedSuns possession. Resistance remained strong, however, and would not only trouble the invaders for the rest of the war, but also prevent the invasion force from ever truly controlling the region.

The remainder of the world proved just as frustrating to subdue. Matar had what was generously considered a regiment of militia armor, but also a population near-fanatically loyal to the Combine, including many who enjoyed hunting the world's plen-

tiful wildlife—and had the firepower to do so. Major General Cunningham was forced to request the Twenty-third Federation Primary Relief Infantry Brigade—a force six regiments strong—to aid in the suppression of Matar. Even their arrival did not bring victory, however. With its inhabitants seemingly willing to resist to the end, Matar never truly succumbed to the invading force. General Cunningham and Colonel Redburn instead contented themselves with taking possession of the most critical targets, which they accomplished by the 30th of June, intending to turn the world over to occupation forces for final reduction. Of course, in light of the Combine counterattack, that turnover never happened.

NEW MENDHAM (APRIL-JULY)

At first glance, New Mendham looked like yet another poorly defended world that would serve as a stepping-stone into the heart of the Draconis Combine. While planning for its invasion, Field Marshal Ran Felsner, commander of the Davion Brigade of Guards and destined to become the first Federated Commonwealth Marshal of the Armies, impressed his subordinate, Marshal Jonathan Riffenberg, with the planet's potential for danger. Three times during the Succession Wars, including an incident almost four decades earlier involving then-Major Ran Felsner, attempted assaults on New Mendham ended in near-disaster for the AFFS. Of course, the previous tragedies could be chocked up to poor planning and lack of communication by the invasion commanders. Marshal Riffenberg was not about to make those mistakes.

Riffenberg commanded a force that consisted of the Davion Light Guards and the First Chisholm's Raiders, a unit recently rebuilt following action against the Combine in the Fourth Succession War. In fact, the Raiders had been virtually destroyed, and despite its relatively new equipment, had only passed initial combat trials two years earlier to rejoin the active AFFS rolls. Given the unit's history, everyone from Prince Hanse Davion on down to Marshal Riffenberg believed the Raiders would more than make up for their green status in sheer ferocity against the Draconis Combine.

The assault on New Mendham went nearly by the book. The invasion force appeared in-system on 11 April and burned in unopposed. Upon entering orbit, they launched fighters before landing and took to the field on the 16th. Marshal Riffenberg advanced cautiously, with his scout elements engaging several scattered lances of light 'Mechs in the first days of the invasion. He knew that two conventional DCMS regiments had pulled off New Mendham to reinforce Galtor III almost a year earlier, and intelligence indicated the world had little else to defend it, but Marshal Riffenberg took no chances. Eventually, the combined Guards-Raiders force crushed two combined-arms militia battalions on the border of Greggville and Breiton provinces before moving against secondary targets. By the middle of May, the task force had taken its main objectives and was slowly expanding out to reinforce AFFS command of the world. Unfortunately, the careful pace of this expansion would ultimately cost them the world some months hence.

SADALBARI (APRIL-MAY)

Long before the AFFS and LCAF generals began planning for the invasion, their respective governments dispatched agents to scores of potential target worlds to determine their defending forces and the disposition of their populations, along with other factors such as the presence of major industry or military logistics depots that could help support continued action within the Draconis Combine. Sadalbari was well known as home to the Second Shin Legion, along with a host of conventional forces. Field Marshal James Sandoval and his operations staff knew, however, that the world of Proserpina was among the ultimate goals of the Benjamin Thrust. If the allied forces were to take that important world, they first had to cut off all avenues of DCMS support. Sadalbari therefore landed on the list of worlds to be struck in the first wave of the invasion.

Field Marshal Sandoval assigned the Fifth Davion Guards and the newly formed Third FedCom RCT to Sadalbari, giving command of the assault force to Marshal Vernon Cunningham, whose assistance had been critical in helping Sandoval form the FedCom Corps. Marshal Cunningham certainly had the superior force, even though the Third FedCom had yet to prove itself in battle. Rather than rely on his greater numbers, however, Cunningham devised a battle plan that called for a risky opening move to hopefully cripple the DCMS garrison.

After a 1-gee burn-in, Marshal Cunningham's fighters destroyed key nodes in the worldwide communication net and directly struck the Xantal and Origian military reservations, sowing confusion among the Combine defenders. The bulk of the invasion force seemingly landed in the plains near the Origian Reservation, a massive military base outside Sadalbari's capital of Solus City, while two regiments of AFFS jump infantry supported by a reinforced battalion of reconnaissance 'Mechs performed a nighttime combat drop on the Xantal Reservation.

The latter move caught the Xantal garrison completely by surprise. AFFS Infantry swarmed over the base while the invading 'Mechs took up strategic positions to prevent significant DCMS mobilization. Some of the garrison troops were on alert and moved to block the invaders long enough to allow the rest of the DCMS troops to organize and mount a counterattack. Running fights broke out at four different locations, but Marshal Cunningham's infantry continued to advance on their objectives—they overran barracks and hangars, startling thousands of Combine soldiers and MechWarriors. Many of those troops were taken prisoner, though just as many assaulted the invaders with fists or whatever came to hand. Some successfully escaped into the night. Most who tangled with the AFFS infantrymen were cut down, however. More importantly, the AFFS infantry captured hangars full of 'Mechs, fighters and tanks, preventing their enemies from fielding those vehicles against them.

Marshal Cunningham's forces achieved complete surprise at Xantal, but the battle was not decided until the marshal landed armor and mechanized infantry there four hours later. Some of the Combine soldiers chose to make an ultimately unsuccessful final stand, while others escaped. By midday, most of Xantal was in AFFS hands, along with several thousand prison-

ers, almost two hundred tanks, APCs and other armored vehicles, and two companies of medium 'Mechs.

The battle for Origian, on the other hand, did not proceed quite as planned. The bulk of Marshal Cunningham's forces had landed there, but they also spread out to take Origian and Solus City at the same time. Unfortunately for them, Major General Thomas Davion, commanding the assault on Origian, waited to strike until the all of his forces had formed up after coming off of their DropShips. This pause gave the Combine defenders, including a battalion from the Second Shin Legion and several DCMS combined-arms regiments, time to mobilize and form a line of defense. It took Marshal Cunningham to get the assault moving, only to run headlong into the defenders, who rebuffed the attack.

By the time Major General Davion organized a second assault, pushing 'Mechs and tanks around the supposed sides of the Combine defensive line, the DCMS force had fallen back to a secondary line. Once again the defenders put up heavy resistance, holding Davion's group at bay for the rest of that night and the better part of the next day. That action gave the Combine troops time to pull out of the Origian Reservation. The last elements of the Combine rearguard pulled off the line at 1800 local time on 16 April—twenty hours after the assault force had landed—burning or destroying everything they had to leave behind.

Rather than pursue them, Major General Davion consolidated his hold over Origian and gave his troops a chance to rest and refit. Marshal Cunningham was, by all accounts, furious and ordered Davion to immediately pursue the retreating DCMS force. Only Davion's distant relation to the FedSuns ruling family and the successes enjoyed by Major General Anya Tam in Solus City kept Cunningham from sacking Thomas Davion. The retreating DCMS force had to cover nearly eight hundred kilometers before it could reach another military base of any significance, but it remained nearly three regiments strong, including a regiment of heavy armor and a 'Mech battalion. The defending units were also picking up volunteers—militia members and civilians—at every city and town where they stopped along the way to grab needed fuel and supplies. Fortunately for the invaders, these necessary stops slowed the DCMS forces down, squandering their one-day head start on General Davion.

The AFFS had strategic aerospace superiority over Sadalbari, but the retreating Combine units had a large screening force of assault VTOLs and conventional fighters to call on, along with a strong anti-aircraft detachment. That, combined with several days of marginal weather and the continued resistance of Combine units across the planet, kept the bulk of the invasion force's fighters from interfering.

Major General Davion advanced behind the retreating Combine force, while Major General Tam finished up in Solus City and Lieutenant General Dane Cooper solidified AFFS control over the Xantal region. Davion had the bulk of the AFFS 'Mechs on-world—a full regiment from the Fifth Guards and Third FedCom—and a powerful armor force, yet he chose a cautious plan of action that merely kept pressure on the enemy rather than attempting a mass assault to destroy them.

After a week of this, Marshal Cunningham and *Tai-sa* Victor Coale, commander of the Second Shin Legion, realized almost simultaneously that Major General Davion would never mount a significant attack. On the 26th, Cunningham arrived with several of his key staff officers at Davion's field HQ on the Amber Plain and had Davion call together his regimental commanders. At this point *Tai-sa* Coale counterattacked with almost everything he had. His aviation companies hooked around the flanks of Davion's force, dropping a battalion of infantry in the rear lines before harassing the enemy's lines of communication. They also attacked Davion's command post, disrupting command and control within the entire force. Within an hour, Coale had pushed a mixed battalion through the lines and overrun the command post, taking prisoner four AFFS general officers—including Davion and Cunningham—along with a host of key staff.

Major Jack Roberts, commanding the force's First 'Mech battalion, arrived at the command post too late. His 'Mechs drove back the attacking battalion, but the battle was far from won. As the 'Mech regiment's operations officer, Roberts had the command codes for the entire force. He ordered a withdrawal, ceding the battlefield—and victory—to *Tai-sa* Coale.

Major General Anya Tam was now the senior officer on-world. As soon as he had extracted the assault force from the ambush, Roberts reported the situation to her and briefed her on a plan he had devised during the retreat—a plan he hoped would allow the AFFS to retake the initiative. The Combine forces had not pursued the retreating AFFS 'Mechs, and so had lost their opportunity to destroy them. Major Roberts hoped to turn that oversight into a deadly advantage. Major General Tam approved the plan's concept, but placed several serious restrictions on Roberts, whom she temporarily field-promoted to lieutenant colonel.

Roberts still held the upper hand in manpower and firepower, a fact both sides realized. Even though he was under orders only to strike at *Tai-sa* Coale's force and make them retreat, Roberts pushed strong and hard with his armor and heavy 'Mechs. He held nothing back except the fastest units he had, which he sent out on the left flank to strike into the DCMS rear areas. They had orders to destroy the aviation staging areas, if possible, and also hit supply and fuel convoys. Roberts himself stayed close to the front with two companies of quick heavy and medium 'Mechs, looking for openings in the Combine line. He found just such an opening in a motorized infantry battalion supported by a handful of tanks, and immediately took advantage of it.

Ignoring his own flanks, he pushed into the gap with his 'Mechs, plus every tank, APC and infantryman he could muster. While the rest of his troops fought to split the enemy force, he pushed deep with his two 'Mech companies, ignoring almost everything in his path and using what little fighter cover he had to clear the way to Coale's command post. Roberts and his 'Mechs destroyed or disabled every Combine 'Mech and vehicle they found before taking up positions around the command post. They then held their ground for two hours while the Combine force disintegrated into panic around them, beating back attack after attack until their own forces could advance to relieve them.

The Battle of the Amber Plain lasted almost two days, with neither side getting much of a chance to rest. At the end of the fight, the Combine force—having left almost a third of its vehicles and personnel behind—was in retreat. *Tai-sa* Coale and a few of his staff escaped amid the confusion, and Major General Davion was nowhere to be found (it was later discovered he had been whisked away and eventually transported off-planet), but Roberts' troops freed Marshall Cunningham. Instead of demoting Roberts for exceeding his orders, as Major General Tam initially demanded, Cunningham awarded him the Federated Suns Star (as it was then called) and promoted him to colonel, giving him permanent command of the demi-brigade he had led to victory.

Action during the rest of the month proved far less decisive. After ten days of pursuit, during which Major General Tam transferred another mechanized regiment to Colonel Roberts' force, *Tai-sa* Coale finally linked up with the survivors of the Xantal assault and another three regiments of mixed DCMS and militia forces, including the remainder of his Second Shin Legion. Twice more Colonel Roberts attempted a strong flanking maneuver, but Coale continued to give ground, allowing his forces to trade shots only long enough to sate their appetites for combat. Ultimately, he withdrew behind the Kotiate Range in early May, closing the mountain passes behind him with weapons fire. He took up position in Salas County just as the late fall rains turned to snow and brought temporary peace to the region.

Colonel Roberts attempted several attacks despite the bad weather and terrain, though with little success. His enemy was dug in behind a mountain range and had gained a base of operations at an old military airbase and the remains of a Castle Brian, which the Sadalbari people were now using to protect fuel and food reserves. The heavy winter storm season would last for some time yet, giving Marshal Cunningham the chance to cement his control of the world. In late June, the 151st Regiment of the Eridani Light Horse arrived on-world, primarily to stage for a follow-up assault on Homam, and took part in a few clean-up actions. More than anything, though no one knew it at the time, this break in battle gave the DCMS the opportunity to later retake Sadalbari.

MERCENARY-SUPPORTED ACTIONS

"Strategy is the art of making use of time and space."

—Napoleon Bonaparte

"The mercenary is a powerful and essential individual. On the surface he may only seek his thirty pieces of silver, but beneath that shallow exterior is a warrior through-and-through. The true mercenary values honor above all, and he has a long memory for those who would cross him or sully his reputation."

—Commanding General Aleksandr Kerensky

The plan of action for the destruction of the Draconis Combine called for more than a mass invasion along a wide border. In fact, it started out small, involving a handful of planets and a few mercenary commands. These attacks were launched before Prince Hanse Davion gave the orders to begin the invasion proper, though the word "attack" does not properly describe the action on these seven worlds. Indeed, the operations involving these worlds began long before the invasion was to start, with the insertion of special forces teams on each planet in mid-3038. These teams had orders to find existing dissident groups, assist in recruiting additional anti-Combine insurgents, and train them for action. Then, as the AFFS and LCAF launched the full invasion of the Combine, mercenary units were dispatched to aid these insurgents in taking over their homeworlds.

The ultimate goal of these attacks was, of course, to take control of the target worlds for the Federated Suns, though operationally they were intended to help draw the DCMS' attention away from the invasion's true objectives. Prince Hanse Davion and his advisors hoped that Coordinator Takashi Kurita would take the bait of these backhanded attacks on oft-contested Galtor III and other nearby worlds, hopefully drawing forces away from other, more important target planets.

PROFILE: MAJOR JACK ROBERTS

Famed commanding general of the Twentieth Avalon Hussars and recently promoted to command of the Kathil PDZ, Marshal Jack Roberts was a major in the Third FedCom RCT at the outset of the War of 3039. A twelve-year veteran of the AFFS, he briefly saw action in the Fourth Succession War while serving in the Second New Ivaarsen Chasseurs, and later a few raids as he bounced from post to post in the Capellan March. He had yet to distinguish himself, however, which is likely why he ended up in the Third FedCom.

His hitherto undistinguished service changed with the Battle of the Amber Plain. Though pundits alternately argue that Roberts either acted rashly or did nothing original, the battle was exactly what the AFFS troops on Sadalbari needed. Roberts turned a savage loss that could have easily resulted in the AFFS' expulsion from the world into a powerful victory, and in doing so reenergized his comrades. More than that, he crafted his winning battle plan on the move, having studied the terrain and conditions only briefly.

That one action jump-started Roberts' career. Though many senior AFFS generals branded him a renegade and a loose cannon, others, not least among them Field Marshal Ran Felsner and Field Marshal James Sandoval, took notice. His actions on Sadalbari ultimately earned him the Diamond Sunburst, membership in the Knights of the Federated Suns and promotion to lieutenant general. More than that, Roberts and his Sakhara Academy classmate Colonel (now Field Marshal) Kilian Reason represented a new generation of Federated Suns generals—individuals who practiced the arts of mass maneuver and combat, unhindered by tactical and strategic doctrines believed inviolate up through the Third Succession War.

Roberts continued to distinguish himself after the War of 3039. He served twice in the Fox's Den and on the General Staff, briefly commanded the First Federated Suns Armored Cavalry and served as deputy commander of the First Davion Guards before taking command of the Twentieth Avalon Hussars in 3047. His record since, of course, is well known.

These actions did cause some controversy within the DCMS. Coordinator Kurita ordered significant forces to counter AFFS actions on these seven planets, an order that would have denuded the Benjamin Military District of some of the defenders that ultimately repulsed the AFFS invasion. Shortly thereafter, the Coordinator gave a number of other conflicting orders that would have crippled the DCMS had *Gunji-no-Kanrei* Theodore Kurita not intervened.

The mercenary-supported rebellions succeeded at various levels. In one case, the planetary garrison, supported by the majority of the people, was more than sufficient to put down the insurgency. In others, the local people hated the Combine so much that the rebellions succeeded beyond hope. And then there was the world of Harrow's Sun, where the unexpected reassignment of the Ryuken-yon quickly put an end to any prospect of a serious revolt.

BERGMAN'S PLANET (MARCH)

Situated along the anti-spinward edge of the Galedon Thrust, Bergman's Planet, along with Harrow's Sun and New Aberdeen, was chosen in an attempt to draw off forces that might otherwise help defend the Galedon Military District. Additionally, the Combine had only just taken Bergman's Planet in the Fourth Succession War, and the allied high commands knew the world boasted a vocal anti-Combine movement.

When AFFS special forces arrived on Bergman's Planet, they discovered that the resistance could call upon several thousand armed underground militiamen. Almost all of these had at least rudimentary training, thanks in part to a widespread interest in *CombatMan*, a game that allows anyone interested to take part in realistic combat with simulated weapons. Additionally, some old-timers were AFFS veterans and had passed on valuable knowledge to younger militiamen. The Special Forces personnel had only to provide a little guidance and plan the underground militia's strikes.

Lindon's Battalion landed on 10 March to a virtual parade in the city of New Palermo. The resistance had already made its move and toppled the Combine governor. Likewise, Special Forces attacks crippled the planetary militia, allowing the insurgents to easily take control of the world. Lindon's Battalion deployed to quickly crush what pro-Combine forces took to the field, completing the conquest of Bergman's Planet by 16 March. Ironically, though Bergman's Planet was the first world to fall in the War of 3039, its loss was among the last that became known to the DCMS High Command because of the planet's pro-Davion (or at least anti-Kurita) bent.

GALTOR III (FEBRUARY-MARCH)

To many outside the AFFS high command, Galtor III appeared to be Prince Hanse Davion's ultimate goal in these mercenary-supported actions. The prince had set a huge trap for the Draconis Combine on that world in the last years of the Third Succession War and had devoted considerable resources to the planet in an effort to win a great victory against Takashi Kurita. To many in the AFFS and DCMS, Galtor III was a symbol of the Fox's cunning and

might. *[New Avalon Press published an in-depth study of this action in The Galtor Campaign; this book is currently out of print, but does present some insights for those who can find it. —Ed.]*

By all accounts, however, the mercenary action on Galtor III during the War of 3039 was never anything more than yet another elaborate ruse. It stung that the Combine had taken back the world during the Fourth Succession War, but only because Prince Hanse had been unable to fully defend the Draconis March. The prince suspected Takashi Kurita might not share his indifference toward possibly losing Galtor III, and made sure any action on the world would draw the Coordinator's attention.

The AFFS assigned a 150-man Special Forces team to Galtor III, along with hundreds of other Davion military intelligence agents and supporting personnel. These troops easily made contact with Galtorian partisans and immediately began operations against Combine interests, striking at military barracks and political offices ten months before the first 'Mechs landed. In response, the DCMS reassigned several regular army regiments from garrisons on nearby worlds to Galtor III, easing the burden on AFFS regiments assigned to the invasion's first wave.

By early 3039, five conventional DCMS regiments had been moved to Galtor III to deal with the threat there. Governor Hiroshi Tuu ultimately placed the world under martial law, a move that forced the DCMS troops into a regular schedule of patrols. Special forces and rebel commanders immediately scaled back operations, lulling the Combine troops into a false sense of security.

That ended on 26 February when Clifton's Rangers landed at the head of two regiments of "mercenary" mechanized infantry—all AFFS volunteers removed from the active rolls and employed through shell companies. Rebels struck every DCMS barracks on the world while the fake mercenary forces attacked and quickly overcame those few DCMS units able to mobilize. Confusion reigned within the Combine's Galtor command long enough for Special Forces teams to sneak into Governor Tuu's fortress in New Derry and take many officers and civilian leaders prisoner. Governor Tuu, two senior DCMS colonels and scores of lesser officers were killed in the process, leaving a power vacuum on the world.

The next two weeks saw the systematic elimination of the DCMS threat to Galtor III. Bereft of their leadership, Combine units either attacked in suicidal charges, inflicting as much damage as possible, or retreated into encampments that were ultimately crushed by the mercenary 'Mechs of Clifton's Rangers. Except for a few remote holdouts, the entire world was pacified by the end of March. When Coordinator Kurita learned this, he issued orders that drew defenders from other nearby worlds, easing the AFFS' first wave even more. Meanwhile, Galtor's new defenders dug in and prepared for the inevitable counterattack.

HARROW'S SUN (MARCH)

The partisan campaign for Harrow's Sun was supposed to be a relatively simple affair. Agents inserted a year earlier had made contact with underground anti-Combine groups and had provided them with equipment and training. They had also

planned a number of complex operations that would allow the underground, with the assistance of Miller's Marauders, to take on the regular DCMS troops stationed on the planet and to readily tie up any reinforcements sent to put down the rebellion. Unfortunately, Davion military intelligence failed to discover the critical fact that the Ryuken-yon was scheduled to take up station on the world in early 3039.

Because of this oversight, it came as a complete shock when DropShips bearing the Ryuken regiment landed in February. At first, the resistance leaders held their ground, hoping the Ryuken would only remain on-world long enough to draw supplies and rest its MechWarriors. When it became clear that the unit was preparing for a long-term deployment, the resistance acted immediately, hoping to catch the veteran Combine MechWarriors off-guard before they were dug in.

The first blows sowed confusion across the planet, but after five days of random "terrorist" strikes on various government and military targets, police forces and planetary militia units successfully placed a protective net over likely targets and began to strike back at the insurgents. By the time Miller's Marauders landed on 17 March, DCMS infantry battalions, supported by some armor, as well as Ryuken 'Mech companies, had cornered resistance groups in three different locations around the planet. The addition of the veteran mercenaries to the mix allowed the resistance their first true victories, but even then the resistance did not have the wherewithal to stand up to the Combine forces. Instead it went back underground to wage a short-lived guerrilla war. The mercenaries' DropShips were forced to retreat from the world, stranding Miller's Marauders on Harrow's Sun.

LIMA (MARCH)

Like the other worlds involved in mercenary-supported actions, Lima was once part of the Federated Suns but fell to the Draconis Combine during the Fourth Succession War. Along with McComb and Royal, Lima was one of the first worlds struck prior to the official start of the 3039 war, a move that Prince Hanse Davion hoped would either draw forces away from other targeted worlds or convince the DCMS high command that any further enemy actions were aimed at border worlds.

Sitting on the border of the Combine and the Draconis March, Lima and its people still had close ties to the Federated Suns, with a good percentage of the population steadfastly anti-Combine. Because of that, the AFFS high command knew it faced an easy fight for the world—aside from a handful of Combine supporters, the rest of the population only wanted to be allowed to live their lives (an attitude shared by most border-world inhabitants).

The one hitch in the plan came when Simonson's Cutthroats were delayed almost three weeks by drive problems on their JumpShip. Rather than wait for the Cutthroats' 'Mech reinforcements, special forces teams launched their attacks, quickly neutralizing much of the Combine government. Some significant militia units escaped the initial strikes and took to the field, ultimately taking control of the industrial Kijmegen Province. Once Simonson's Cutthroats landed on-planet, however, the few battalions of militia infantry proved no match for the mercenaries and quickly folded.



MCCOMB (MARCH-JULY)

Unlike many of the other worlds struck by mercenaries in the opening shots of the war, McComb proved quite a challenge, especially considering the rabid anti-Combine movement long present on that planet. In fact, it was precisely because of that movement that the DCMS assigned regular army infantry and armor forces to garrison the world.

The Combine defenders were at a disadvantage, however. After a decade of fending off highly organized terrorist attacks, they had become specialists in urban policing and rooting out small groups of heavily armed fighters from wilderness hideouts. They were prepared for a coordinated attack in three dozen cities across the planet by rebel groups, but wholly unprepared to deal with the battalion of Martian Cuirassiers BattleMechs assigned to strike the world. Military bases at Goundam and Kati'i fell quickly to just two lances of 'Mechs each, supported by masses of local freedom fighters. Likewise, freedom fighters secured the capital of Makorou with little effort.

After the first few days, the DCMS forces organized and began to put up a concerted fight. DCMS units were still scattered across the world, but neither side had the obvious upper hand—the skies remained virtually uncontested, and unless the mercenaries could place a company of 'Mechs in a position to challenge them, the DCMS could still defeat any serious threat the freedom fighters posed.

The fight for McComb turned into sheer brinksmanship, with some cities changing hands a dozen times in the first two months. The mercenaries deployed so that a company of striker 'Mechs, supported by a handful of special forces troops and two rag-tag battalions of motorized infantry, were always in the field. Though taxing, this tactic kept the pressure on the Combine defenders, and the AFFS-supported freedom fighters slowly began to gain ground. The DCMS troops twice attempted daring maneuvers that could have dealt a serious blow to the attackers, but ultimately found out that even light and medium 'Mechs out-classed what armor they could field. Thereafter, the Kurita units fought a conservative defense, confident that the DCMS would eventually send them reinforcements.

NEW ABERDEEN (MARCH-JULY)

Like Bergman's Planet and Harrow's Sun, New Aberdeen was a relatively recent Combine acquisition and still had significant anti-Kurita factions among its population. On the other hand, the world's governor was something of an oddity. A retired DCMS *Sho-sho*, Yosuki Yamada wanted to promote harmony on his world. He had opened his own military academy of sorts and was building up local industry using contacts among the DCMS and its military suppliers. AFFS special forces troops had little trouble finding citizens willing to stand up against Yamada and the Combine, but they knew they would have problems with those who supported the governor.

The mercenary unit Cunningham's Commandos was assigned to aid the uprising. The unit had spent time on New Aberdeen previously, serving briefly in Governor Yamada's personal employ several years earlier when he was having trouble

with pirates and rogue Combine warriors. As soon as the mercenaries landed, the struggle for New Aberdeen began. Insurgents assisted by special forces stormed government buildings in fifteen cities, with mercenary 'Mech lances taking up positions in the most important locales. Governor Yamada was captured within an hour but taken into protective custody by the mercenaries after a group of insurgents threatened to execute him and any other Combine-installed officials.

The struggle for New Aberdeen did not end with Yamada's capture. Citizens and militia troops on both sides of the fight continued on in a low-level guerrilla war that lasted for months.

ROYAL (MARCH-APRIL)

The underground on Royal had long been supported by the Stephenson family, not only because Royal was a single jump away from their home on New Ivaarsen, but also because Royal and its people had once been part of Duke Paul Stephenson's landhold. When Prince Hanse Davion forbade Duke Paul to dispatch his New Ivaarsen Chasseurs regiments to retake Royal after the Fourth Succession War, the duke nevertheless sent what aid he could to the world. In addition to food, medications and spare parts for those who refused to deal with the Combine, the duke's help also included quasi-military operations to smuggle selected individuals off-world or to engage in piracy and limited strikes against Combine interests.

When Prince Hanse informed Duke Stephenson of the impending invasion of Royal, the duke secretly gathered a force to ensure that the world fell to the AFFS. Even as the New Ivaarsen Chasseurs received orders that would put them in place for action in the war, Duke Paul recruited MechWarriors from both regiments to form a volunteer battalion. He likewise put together a regiment of volunteers from New Ivaarsen's militia. Finally, he dispatched his son Leto, an AFFS colonel, to accompany Fuchida's Fusiliers as that unit's liaison officer. The AFFS high command had assigned the Fusiliers to support the Royal action. Just before the Fusiliers jumped, Leto Stephenson signaled his father, who dispatched his volunteers almost immediately.

As soon as the volunteers arrived on-planet, Colonel Leto Stephenson assumed direct command of the Royal invasion. Resistance leaders had already learned through back channels that their duke's son was leading the invasion; they broadcast that fact across the world just as the first strikes were launched. This news brought a significant percentage of Royal's population directly into the fight, defiantly standing against the three conventional DCMS regiments on their world. When Leto Stephenson was captured after leading the attack on the Combine headquarters in Port Sibut, Royal's citizens rallied together and quickly overran his captors, even though it cost more than five hundred civilian lives.

The fight for Royal was brief, little more than a footnote in history books, but it was significant nonetheless. In those five weeks of combat, the ordinary citizens of Royal truly won the war on their world. They made it almost impossible for the Combine troops to operate effectively, giving the New Ivaarsen Volunteers and Leto Stephenson the chance to soundly crush their opponents.

GALEDON THRUST

"The secret of war lies in communications."

—Napoleon Bonaparte

"The key to victory is a simple recipe: one part perspiration and two parts intrepidity. The only problem is clearly communicating that fact to your people."

—Tai-sho Gabriel Nuri

Of the invasion's four major component operations, Operation LAUNCELOT—the AFFS strike into the Galedon Military District—received the least support and had the least ambitious goals. Yet the officer given command of this operation was the one person in the AFFS whom Prince Hanse Davion trusted implicitly. This apparent dichotomy has confounded historians for years, though most agree that the Galedon Thrust was little more than an elaborate red herring designed to draw Takashi Kurita's attention away from Dieron. On the other hand, declassified reports from the LCAF and AFFS indicate that they had authorized a far stronger force than the seventeen 'Mech regiments ultimately given to Field Marshal Ardan Sortek.

Questions about the true intent of Operation LAUNCELOT aside, Sortek commanded a massive force more than capable of sweeping aside any resistance the DCMS could put up within the Galedon region (at least initially). And while Sortek could not call on the same depth of forces fielded by the other invasion commanders, he could draw on a number of different march militia RCTs within the Draconis and Crucis Marches to provide additional manpower if necessary. Likewise, he and Field Marshal Sandoval had alternate plans in place that would allow either commander to quickly transfer units to the other.

In short, Sortek possessed a powerful military force that could grow or shrink as the needs of the invasion required. Though Luthien was only a distant target, the path to the Combine capital was the shortest through the Galedon Military District, as well as the least defended. That fact likely weighed heavily on Theodore Kurita when he learned that Ardan Sortek was personally leading the strike into Galedon, and especially after he learned of the strike's overwhelming success.

Sortek's forces struck only six worlds, but all the assaults achieved some success, and most within short order. The AFFS road to Luthien appeared unchallenged.

AN TING (APRIL-JUNE)

The AFFS high command had long considered An Ting a prize world, an integral link in the Combine's defense network within the Galedon Military District. Though rarely garrisoned by a line 'Mech regiment, the DCMS commonly rotated conventional units through An Ting for training and garrison duties. Additionally, as home to the An Ting Legion, the AFFS knew that many Legion MechWarriors would spend their leave on the planet, while entire companies and even battalions occasionally received temporary assignment there.

An Ting remained relatively untouched by the First Succession War, but not the Second Succession War. That latter conflict reduced the once-prosperous world to a barely self-sufficient rock, its vast farmlands scarred by battle and its heavy industry destroyed by precision strikes. By 3039, An Ting had rebuilt somewhat and was again producing agricultural and other simple exports for the Draconis Combine.

At the head of the First Davion Guards and the Seventeenth Avalon Hussars, Field Marshal Ardan Sortek led the assault on An Ting. Though analyses from the AFFS Department of Military Intelligence (DMI) indicated the world was relatively lightly defended and had no permanent BattleMech garrison, Sortek chose to attack with the full invasion force in order to better reach the eventual goal of this push—the prefecture capital of Matsuida. Sortek hoped that an assault by two of the AFFS' strongest and most experienced RCTs would quickly crush An Ting's defenders and allow him to better prepare and coordinate a Wave Three invasion of Matsuida.

ROYAL BACKLASH

To many, the action on Royal is interesting not because of the nature of the fight, but because of the legal warfare that went on behind the scenes long after the war ended. Fuchida's Fusiliers lodged more than a dozen formal complaints against Colonel Stephenson, alleging that he overstepped his authority and later gave orders that forced the mercenaries to take the brunt of combat losses, yet assigned the bulk of the battlefield salvage to his Volunteers. These complaints disappeared into the AFFS bureaucracy in due order, prompting the mercenaries to file civil suits against the Stephenson family. These, too, faded into the FedSuns bureaucracy, though records exist of several large payouts from New Ivaarsen-based concerns to the mercenary unit in the mid-3040s.

While the Fusiliers sought redress for what they saw as willful disregard for their well-being, they received a serious pounding in the press. Prominent Royal citizens, including the new planetary governor, Brittany Young—a woman widowed when the Combine took the planet at the end of the Fourth Succession War and who lost her only children during her homeworld's liberation—charged the mercenaries with cowardice. Citing example after example of instances where the Fusiliers either held back in the face of determined opposition or outright refused to follow attack orders given to them, these citizens found a wide audience throughout the Draconis March.

Trying Fuchida's Fusiliers in the court of public opinion, the citizens of Royal won hands down. The mercenaries soon found they were unwelcome anywhere near Royal and New Ivaarsen, to say nothing of Robinson. In fact, when every other mercenary unit involved in the war proper received personal visits from Field Marshal Sandoval or another member of the AFFS high command, the Fusiliers received only a note of thanks from Field Marshal Ardan Sortek. In addition, they had to be reassigned because no world in the Draconis March wanted them. Upon their return to Udibi eight years later, they were greeted with open hostility, which undoubtedly made their choice to go rogue during the Clan War much easier.

Preparation for the invasion had begun months earlier with the insertion of several DMI special forces teams. These teams identified and gathered intelligence on defending DCMS forces, and likewise scouted out military supply dumps and other significant infrastructure that could support operations in later assault waves. When the first elements of the invasion force reached the An Ting system, they had a significant leg up on the world's defenders. Four First Davion Guards DropShips, on two separate JumpShips, entered the system on 11 April and made standard burns into An Ting via commercial routes. Two landed immediately at the Tule Mod spaceport, while the other two entered parking orbits above the world. Shortly afterward, the spaceborne DropShips loosed a wing of fighters, along with electronic warfare aircraft that disrupted communications across the planet. At the same time, mixed units rolled out of the grounded DropShips and quickly secured the spaceport before pushing into the city. An hour later, the rest of the invasion force jumped into the system and began burning in to An Ting.

Hindered by communications disruptions caused by the Davion Guards, as well as infrastructure attacks made by the on-planet DMI teams, planetary militia and DCMS garrisons were slow to mobilize against the invaders. The planetary capital of Tule Mod fell quickly amid the chaos, with the two remaining DropShips in orbit dropping infantry and light armor outside of the city to link up with the Davion Guards already present.

Until the rest of the invasion force reached the planet, however, the Guards were hard pressed to maintain their hold on the capital city. Within a day, conventional DCMS units on-world converged on Tule Mod with three regiments of armor and mechanized infantry, while across An Ting militia units continued to mobilize. The Guards kept a tight lid on Tule Mod, using their fighter squadrons to equalize the odds. An April 19 attack made under cover of an early-morning storm by a reinforced company of An Ting Legion 'Mechs whose pilots were present on leave, along with two heavy battalions of armor and mechanized infantry, made serious headway into the city, but the Guards closed the hole in their lines and boxed up the Combine forces in the suburb of Shioko. By the time the rest of the invasion force landed, all of Tule Mod was in the Guards' hands.

Field Marshal Sortek's forces grounded in three different locations, from which they struck out to destroy the world's defenders. A mixed brigade landed to the south of Tule Mod, cutting off the DCMS troops in the area from their easiest escape route. Fast hover and mechanized infantry battalions from the Seventeenth Avalon Hussars quickly surrounded the conventional Combine regiments and moved in with a mixed combat command of heavy armor and BattleMechs. The Combine forces attempted three breakthroughs during the two-day battle, but each time were rebuffed by heavy FedSuns air and artillery strikes. Finally, the Combine troops withdrew, first to Turen and then to Cerant City, converging upon *Sho-sho* Hikaru Dyson—commander of the planetary garrison—and his command element. From there they made one last break-out attempt and seemingly succeeded in pushing through the

Second Battalion, 445th Recon Regiment, only to find themselves surrounded. Dyson's force crumbled in short order, with Marshal A.J. Christopher's Seventeenth Hussars taking five thousand prisoners (in addition to more than two thousand DCMS troops killed in action).

The rest of An Ting's defenders folded shortly thereafter, though an unknown quantity went underground and began to fight a guerrilla war against Field Marshal Sortek's forces. While Sortek's troops methodically hunted down the last enemy troopers, the Field Marshal and his command staff constructed a command center in Tule Mod. Meanwhile, AFFS quartermasters scoured the world for useable materiel as thousands of tons of supplies began to stream in for use in later waves.

CAPRA (MAY)

Like many of the planets targeted in the first wave, Capra was a low-priority border world with little in the way of a permanent garrison. General Goran Yuu led his First Crucis Lancers RCT, reinforced by the First Albion Training Cadre, to a world ill-prepared for an invasion on any scale, let alone one prosecuted by a full AFFS RCT. *Tai-sa* Angus Yatabi, commander of DCMS and militia forces on Capra, had requested additional support from his superiors on Kaznejov as soon as word spread of a massive AFFS push across the border, but that request was lost amid the chaos in the Combine. To defend his world, Yatabi had a mere handful of militia battalions, most of them infantry.

Of course, Capra was little more than a rock in space with a few scattered mining colonies. The largest settlement, New Cassandra, served as the seat of government and the heart of industry. Once the invaders landed on 18 May, their 'Mechs surrounded the city and took up select positions within it while heavily armed and armored infantrymen rooted out every pocket of resistance. From there, the AFFS forces pacified every mining settlement and trading town on Capra, taking prisoner every individual who resisted, but leaving the rest of the citizens to go about their business. By 27 May, General Yuu reported the world completely pacified and under his control. He then began to prepare for his force's next target, a Wave Two strike at Beta Mensae V.

DELACRUZ (MAY-JULY)

Field Marshal Ardan Sortek's staff made a number of interesting choices in planning for the invasion of Delacruz. On paper, at least, the world had a strong permanent garrison, led by the Eighth Sword of Light. Sortek's people nonetheless included the Third Lyran Regulars in the invasion force—the only Lyran 'Mech unit assigned to the AFFS in the exchange to which both militaries had agreed prior to the start of the war.

Critics of "Prince Hanse's war" have cited scores of problems the AFFS and LCAF never could have hoped to overcome in their invasion of the Draconis Combine, but the vast majority are meaningless—including the supposed "fact" that the AFFS sorely overestimated its ability to take Delacruz. Though apparently a strongly defended planet, the reality was very different. The Eighth Sword of Light had responsibility for patrolling a wide area of the border, and most of the unit was typically off-world. Additionally,

Delacruz was an interstellar trading crossroads, with routes heading deep into the Combine, the Federated Suns and the Outworlds Alliance in the Periphery. To protect the trade routes, two of the infantry regiments assigned to the world formed a security detail that was split between three space stations and two spaceports on the planet's surface. The rest of the units permanently stationed on Delacruz were basic militia and stored their equipment in one of two military reservations. The only real threats were the squadron of DropShips that regularly patrolled the system and the two wings of aerospace fighters assigned to them.

Knowing that Delacruz was a trading hub, the invasion force used that fact to its advantage. Even though the Delacruz operation came two months after word of the first invasions spread throughout the Combine, the system was still bustling with trading vessels. JumpShips came and went at irregular intervals while at any one time there might be dozens of DropShips arriving at or departing from the system's jump points. Amid all the traffic, it was easy for several unmarked AFFS DropShips to make their way to the world unsuspected. More ships arrived nine days later to bring in forces that would strike at the zenith and nadir space stations.

Marshal Edward Valos launched his coordinated assault on 19 May, landing on the world with a combined-arms combat unit from his Forty-second Avalon Hussars, while special forces strike teams led boarding actions on the three space stations. On Delacruz, the fight was brief and brutal. Valos had his RCT's own two wings of aerospace fighters—launched from civilian cargo haulers jury-rigged to carry them—to cover his action on the ground, a strategy that served him better than he expected. Only one of the Eighth Sword of Light's four battalions was on-world, supported by a regiment of regular DCMS armor and a brigade of infantry in transit between deployments. Valos' fighters maintained aerospace superiority for the rest of the initial day of combat, keeping the marshal and his troops secure long enough for the rest of the invasion force to enter the system and land.

Valos had brought with him two additional fighter wings, assigning one to each of the two jump points. From those positions, they kept order as best they could while AFFS troops took control of the recharge stations. A squadron of DCMS fighters was also stationed at each point, however, leading to a certain amount of chaos as DropShip crews tried to flee the dogfight and JumpShips began to jump anywhere they could, with or without DropShips in tow. After the first hour of fighting, the chaos outside the stations subsided. Inside, however, matters were very different. Combine security troops valiantly fought the special forces assault groups, while civilians and merchant marines either got in the way or attempted—most without success—to aid one side or the other.

The Combine security forces put up a much stronger defense than anyone had expected, but the AFFS special forces teams outclassed them in every respect. The "victory or death" attitude of many Combine personnel prompted a disaster on the zenith recharge station, the *Admiral Horusho Kensai*; where overzealous and committed crewmen tried to blow up

the station rather than let it fall into Hanse Davion's hands. Thankfully, they failed, but they did manage to destroy the engineering compartments, reactor, batteries and related systems, and to do enough secondary damage that 60 percent of the other compartments were either exposed directly to space or lost pressure. More than five hundred civilians died (various reports put the number at 527, 535 or 572), along with more than a hundred Combine soldiers; all of the AFFS troops involved wore pressurized combat suits, and only four died in the explosion. Ultimately, the station was abandoned and destroyed. The assaults on the other two stations went much better, at least for the inhabitants and the invaders. The nadir station and the station in Delacruz orbit both eventually fell to Marshal Valos' forces, though not without significant damage to critical systems. Likewise, Valos' own naval detachments neutralized the DCMS DropShip patrol group at the cost of four DropShips, three Combine and one AFFS. Valos' troops captured the other two Combine DropShips.

The battle on Delacruz itself in many ways mirrored the fight for Kensai station. Marshal Valos had the upper hand, especially after the bulk of his invasion force arrived at a pirate point near the world late on 19 May, but the defenders were skilled and determined. Furthermore, because Delacruz is 95 percent water-covered, the close confines of the battlefield favored the defenders. Despite these advantages, Valos' fighters took out Delacruz's fighter garrison within the first few hours, and the bulk of the Eighth Sword of Light's Second Battalion likewise fell to Valos' forces as soon as his Hussars and the Third Lyran Regulars had formed up and struck out.

The planet's two military bases fell within four days, but the conventional DCMS troops managed to survive for a while longer. The rough and mountainous landscape made armor just about useless except in fixed defensive positions, but on foot the three surviving regular DCMS infantry regiments proved difficult to fight. They put up heavy resistance, and destroyed whatever they were forced to leave behind lest their foes use it against them. Marshal Valos had time on his side, however (or so he believed at the time—his invasion force was not scheduled to continue its advance into the Combine until Wave Three). He took control of the military bases and the spaceports within the first two weeks before concentrating on the Combine units left in the field. He and his troops then spent the next three months cleaning up the world, right up until Theodore Kurita's counterattack.

ELIDERE IV (APRIL)

Another world taken by the Combine during the Fourth Succession War, Elidere IV had almost no permanent garrison at the outset of the invasion, though the Combine government had placed a significant number of "reeducation and retraining specialists" on the world. The population was understandably under significant pressure, but the AFFS high command laid odds that as soon as their 'Mechs landed, the people would jump at the chance to throw off the Combine shackles.



HOW DO YOU LOSE A DROPSHIP?

The question of what happened to the *Fortress*-class DropShip *Paymon's Staff* is still asked among select groups of fortune hunters, deep-space salvage crews and feature tri-vid directors, even after almost three decades. The accident the ship suffered en route to Elidere IV was serious but certainly repairable. The ship's engineers unfortunately required replacement parts for the reactor and engines that they did not carry onboard, and with no active life support, the passengers and crew could not remain. Captain Rowe Viis therefore ordered the ship abandoned. When the parts were finally delivered, the *Paymon's Staff* was not where it was supposed to be.

Most people assume that the ship should have crashed into Elidere IV, or it fell into the system's primary, or simply continued on in its course. But as any DropShip navigator knows, matters aren't that simple. The DropShip was moving at such a velocity that it intersected Elidere IV's orbit well ahead of the rest of the invasion

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April 30 was the day of truth, when the first elements of the invasion force made planetfall. Though the First Ceti Hussars RCT, backed by the mercenary Screaming Eagles regiment, was considered strong enough to handle just about any threat that might show itself, that force could not afford to be bogged down with a lengthy battle. Elidere IV was only a stop for the Ceti Hussars, whose ultimate goal was Matsuida by way of Misery. The high command hoped that the Hussars could complete the conquest of Elidere IV and still have time to rest and refit before jumping to Misery in July or August, during the second wave.

The conquest of Elidere IV did not go quite according to plan, though the end result was the same. Navigators on the Screaming Eagles' main JumpShip accidentally plotted the wrong coordinates, sending the bulk of the mercenaries to an uninhabited system designated as a secondary rallying point for the invasion force. Marshal Patrick Meldon, thinking the mercenary JumpShip was lost or destroyed, continued on with the invasion, though an accident during transit left his DropShip powerless and drifting in space. When engineers on the ancient *Fortress* could not repair the damage, Meldon had to divert a number of other DropShips to dock with his ship so that he could offload equipment, supplies and personnel. A mixed company of 'Mechs and vehicles had to be left behind, along with almost a hundred tons of miscellaneous cargo. The relocated assault troops had to endure a greater than 2-G deceleration to reach Elidere, while the *Fortress*-class command DropShip missed the world entirely and continued on into deep space.

When the assault force finally reached its target, Combat Command Charlie—the only sub-command that had no DropShips involved in Marshal

Meldon's rescue—became responsible for the opening moves. Jasos City, Elidere City, Sempa Bay and Tik were the primary targets, and all fell within hours. After a day of unloading and light maneuvers, the rest of the Ceti Hussars continued with their mission, rapidly making their way across the planet and ultimately claiming victory after eleven days. While the people of Elidere IV did not “throw off their shackles” en masse, the invaders found far more support than opposition within the population, especially when it came to rounding up the Combine “reeducation and retraining specialists.”

With the conquest over, Marshal Meldon could focus on the battles to come, as well as solving some of the mysteries of the assault. Two days after Meldon declared victory, the Screaming Eagles arrived in-system, ending speculation about what had happened to them. The *Fortress* was never found, even after Meldon's DropShips spent weeks and thousands of tons of fuel searching.

HUAN (APRIL)

Like many other worlds targeted during the first wave of this war, Huan had no particular strategic or economic value; it was merely one of dozens of border worlds targeted during the Succession Wars merely because of its location. With no significant DCMS garrison and a relatively minor planetary militia, the world's defenders posed little threat to an attack force. In fact, Huan itself, with its often unpredictable geologic and seismic activity, posed a greater challenge to invading forces. That same geologic activity created fertile tracts of farmland amid otherwise desolate rocky landscapes suitable only for strip mining.

Huan had a relatively large colonial population, but it grew relatively little during the Succession Wars. The planet supported a major mining and refining industry and supplied many of the Combine's largest corporations with copious amounts of ores. Agricultural output kept the world self-sufficient, if only barely, and Huan even exported a few choice delicacies as luxury items. Its cities were mainly clustered near the tracts of arable land, though the few industrial centers were positioned deep in the wastelands to minimize the risk of polluting the farmlands.

With little to fear on-world, Field Marshal Sortek assigned the First and Second Dismal Disinherited to Huan, confident that the mercenaries could easily handle the operation before moving on to their next target. The mercenaries entered the system on 5 April and landed less than a week later, along the way capturing half a dozen commercial DropShips heavily laden with ores bound for the interior of the Combine. Taking the captured ships in tow, the mercenaries entered orbit and immediately deployed to secure the world's primary spaceports.

Even with days to prepare, the Huan militia put up little concerted resistance. They grouped motorized infantry in the cities and fought an unsuccessful holding action in Shaotin and the capital city of Sellan. The mercenaries' conventional regiments, reinforced by two AFFS infantry regiments, easily overran the militia troops and secured the cities before the 'Mech regiments set out into the wilderness to take Qoreth, Blington and Tokeii, the three largest industrial cities. In these battles as well, the Huan militia's light tanks and armored vehicles proved unable to resist the mercenaries.

Within ten days, the world of Huan had fallen. Militia commander *Tai-sa* Renato Kiriti and Governor Shia Trembaline, both captured on Day Two of the invasion, refused to order the militia to stand down. Huan's Council of Citizens, however, was far more businesslike. Its members recognized Federated Suns control of the world, accepting AFFS Lieutenant General James White as military governor. As soon as the Council announced Huan's new allegiance, resistance fighters turned themselves in (or were turned in by their fellow citizens) en masse. The AFFS infantry regiments were redeployed as military police and garrison troops days later, and the planetary constabulary returned to service shortly thereafter. Within two weeks of the mercenaries'

force—as well as the planet itself—and continued on into deep space.

Marshal Patrick Meldon sent almost his entire transport group on a search mission, which also included a team of navigators consulting with three top astrophysicists at the NAIS in an attempt to more accurately project the ship's course through the system. After weeks, however, the searchers found no trace of the *Paymon's Staff*. JumpShips jumped into deep space outside the system proper at various points and sent DropShips in different directions in an attempt to find the missing ship by sheer luck, but to no avail.

So what happened? The most common, and logical, theory involves a covert salvage operation. Advocates of this theory point to the fact that neither active RADAR nor LIDAR sensors picked up the ship, that scanning through hyperspectral and multispectral imaging devices showed nothing, and that the DropShip's IFF transponder, one of the few devices onboard that still had power, never returned a signal. Furthermore, the celestial mechanics of the Elidere system could only have affected the ship's course within a relatively small angle, and that “slice” of deep space was exhaustively scanned.

On the other hand, in order to salvage the ship, the *Paymon's Staff* or an attached DropShip would have had to make a 1-g burn over the course of four days (or a higher-g burn over fewer days) to slow the ship enough to dock with a JumpShip. The plasma stream that would have resulted from such a burn was never detected, nor did any search method sense the presence of a JumpShip. In addition, it is almost certain that the DMI or MIIO would have discovered the appearance of a “new” *Fortress* in the DropShip fleets of other Inner Sphere realms or Periphery nations.

Other theories advanced are far less believable. Some claim the DropShip was destroyed by a comet or some other celestial body traveling outside the system while a few even claim that a small black hole swooping past the system could have swallowed the ship. Either instance would have left some trace, however, in debris and residual radiation or in an impact on the orbital mechanics of the Elidere system. Then there are the dozens of ghost stories and other tales of supernatural involvement, the theories that involve a wormhole to a new universe, and even the occasional conspiracy theory that the fabled Minnesota Tribe, the New Vandenburg White Wings or even Clinton's Cutthroats—or a combination of all three—stole the ship using hyper-advanced technologies they developed in long-lost

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Star League research centers deep in the Periphery. The 3047 tri-vid feature *The Phelidere Project* was loosely based on these theories.

So what really happened to the *Paymon's Staff*? No one knows. Famed tri-vid director Jameson Hamilton spent three years, along with millions of C-bills, trying to definitively answer that question, but to no avail. Likewise, almost every salvage crew working in the past thirty years has dreamed of finding the ship, but few rocks have remained unturned. Unless someone discovers the clue that will finally unlock the mystery, we will never know the answer.

THE BUSINESS OF INVASION

NANCY DENNIS: So you're saying that, after seizing thirteen DropShips full of assorted supplies, our troops passed up warehouses with thousands of tons of processed ores in favor of clearing outdated personal weapons out of a few militia armories?

ROBERT MIDDEN: You're looking at it the wrong way, Nancy. What you have to understand is, in wartime, our troops can do what they need to in order to survive and hurt the enemy. By the fifth of May, Huan had capitulated and was under our control. We could have raided the storehouses, but it would have been like cleaning all the equipment out of your studios here for no good reason.

DENNIS: But we had conquered the planet. Don't the spoils go to the victor?

MIDDEN: Sure. In this case, we got Huan, and we got it with... [checks notes] less than fifty killed in action. Once the Council [of Citizens] capitulated, the world became a protectorate of the Federated Suns. To have taken from the citizens of Huan would have been robbing our own people. That's not exactly a good way to start a relationship. Plus, it's illegal.

DENNIS: Then what about the DropShips?

MIDDEN: Those were seized in the initial assault on the world. And... Well, let me put it this way. FedSuns law distinguishes between "enemy state property" and "civilian property." We didn't actually seize the DropShips; we seized the property inside them because that belonged to the Draconis Combine. Plus, we had to prevent ships from leaving the system to maintain operational security, but that's a little different... Anyway, in the end, our troops seized supplies, refined ore, foodstuffs and other materiel that in some way, shape or form belonged to the Combine or entities of the Combine.

landing, it was business as usual on Huan, with merely a different flag hoisted over government buildings.

THESTRIA (MAY-JULY)

To many, Thestia is an unremarkable world notable only as the location where Wolf's Dragoons suffered one of its earliest defeats. As the Third Succession War wound down, the AFFS made one last push at the Combine along a wide front, including the First Chisholm's Raiders' strike at the Dragoons on Thestia. Though the Raiders ultimately pulled out of Thestia, they did considerable damage to the Dragoons, and AFFS generals called the operation a resounding success.

With units from both sides of that particular fight now in the employ of the AFFS, mission planners had quite an edge. Though nearly fifteen years had passed since the Dragoons were on the world, they nonetheless provided largely accurate intelligence about it, including information on a DCMS forward supply depot hidden deep within the Luuren Pei mountain range and several military bases still used by the planetary garrison. Mercenary colonels Timothy and Brenda Nels were thus well briefed by AFFS and Dragoons officers before they and their two regiments of Dioscuri were dispatched to the world.

Thestia had a relatively strong conventional garrison, but only a handful of ancient militia BattleMechs. Nevertheless, *Tai-sa* Bimi T'senga put up a strong resistance. He and his troops began to fortify their positions as soon as news of AFFS invasions began to filter throughout the Combine, and they also planned a number of potentially deadly surprises for any aggressor. Unfortunately for them, they did not foresee their opposition possessing almost as detailed knowledge of Thestia as they did.

As soon as ground stations detected the inbound mercenary DropShips on 2 May, *Tai-sa* T'senga alerted his troops and prepared for an assault on the capital city of Rashōmon. The mercenaries bypassed that city, however, instead striking far more critical targets. Colonel Timothy Nels landed with his Castor regiment near the important industrial city of Gresham, while his sister Brenda struck with her Pollux regiment at the cities of Buzen, Caprica and Golen. The first two of these served as major transportation crossroads that also warehoused much of the world's agricultural output, while Golen was the gateway to the Luuren Pei range, important as the garrison's logistics base and also as a rich source of ores. Within hours of landing, the mercenaries had a stranglehold on Thestia.

The battle for Thestia was far from over, however. Despite living on the border between Combine and Federated Suns space, the people remained staunchly loyal to the Coordinator and opposed the mercenaries in whatever way they could. To consolidate AFFS control, the mercenaries drew on additional support from two regiments of AFFS infantry that took up position in the captured cities, allowing the Dioscuri to operate freely elsewhere.

Rather than strike at the garrison's head, the two mercenary regiments attacked outposts, smaller cities and minor military installations, slowly cutting T'senga off from his remaining base of support. DCMS and militia defenders put up tough fights; at Aono they nearly destroyed two companies of Castor 'Mechs after cutting them off from their main body, while at Challott their prepared defenses—deep minefields covered by well-armed pillboxes and hidden bunkers—forced Colonel Brenda Nels to break off the attack three times before she dispatched teams of jumping 'Mechs to make a headlong advance on the city, breaking through only after suffering heavy casualties.

By mid-July, the mercenaries and their supporting AFFS troops had control of most of the world. They had pacified the continents of Aja and Yeroppe, while bypassing the virtually uninhabitable Antilles Major and Minor. That left

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Botonny and its wide frontier with Aja. *Tai-sa* T'senga set up a deep defensive line along that border, though he knew full well the mercenaries could use their DropShips to easily bypass any section of this "Maginot line". In an effort to counter that strategy, he kept in reserve two battalions of combined regular and militia infantry that could quickly be delivered by aircraft, along with another motorized infantry battalion equipped with fast hovercraft. He knew his troops could not hold out indefinitely, but they only had to continue the fight until reinforcements could arrive.

The MechWarriors of the Dioscuri were not about to let that happen. On 24 July, after a week of rest and refit, they launched a major assault into Botonny. Rather than methodically destroying every bastion of resistance, as they had done elsewhere on the planet, they surged forward along a relatively narrow front at full speed, using fast cavalry companies for bounding overwatch along their flanks while their main combat battalions leapfrogged along the line of march, obliterating everything that stood in their path. The Dioscuri only halted for a few hours at a time, bringing their DropShips up for additional security and repairs as needed. T'senga's forces tried valiantly to surround and destroy the mercenaries, but the 'Mechs' mobility and heavy armor gave them the edge, especially over infantry formations forced to use a large number of civilian trucks and transports to keep up.

It took the mercenaries less than five days to move the 1,200 kilometers to Rashōmon. When they reached the city, they bowled straight through its prepared defenses, suffering significant damage in the process but dealing out worse to the defenders. The battle for the city lasted less than a day, and at the end the Dioscuri claimed control of Thestia. Scattered companies of DCMS regulars and planetary militia remained a threat for quite some time, but the main battle was over, giving the mercenaries the time to rest and repair while AFFS civil affairs teams worked to form a planetary government friendly to the Federated Suns.

OTHER WAVE ONE ACTIONS

"Close his eyes; his work is done.

What to him is friend or foe,

Rise of moon or set of sun,

Hand of man or kiss of woman?"

—George Henry Broker, Dirge for a Soldier

"A quick strike, in and out, and another bloody nose for the FedRats."

—Major Arthur Rivernider, Ninth Marik Militia, before the invasion of Phact

While the four thrusts into the Draconis Combine were the main conflicts of the War of 3039's initial phase, they were far from the only military actions to take place. The Federated Suns and the Lyran Commonwealth both staged secondary actions in support of their main offensives, and several enemy realms exploited the allied states' distraction to stage operations of their own. Had they occurred during the Fourth Succession War, these raids and invasions might have resulted from some grand plan to draw off Steiner-Davion forces, but hopes of any such coordinated resistance died with the Concord of Kapteyn and the dismemberment of the Capellan Confederation. The conflicts that did erupt arose purely from selfish motives, though each battle that hinted at some grand alliance drew allied troops away from the Combine invasion. In the initial phases, forces from the Free Worlds League—battle-hardened and on high alert after their decade-long civil war in and around the province of Andurien—carried out these attacks. Likewise, the Combine staged several raids designed to put Steiner-Davion forces on the defensive. By year's end, the success of these

DENNIS: Entities of the Combine?

MIDDEN: Oh, sorry. Corporations or significant organizations that are native to and wholly contained within the Draconis Combine. Uhh... Luthien Armor Works, for example. I know this sounds a little Byzantine, but we have to send teams with every invasion force whose only job is to determine what is and is not "enemy state property." In this case, they had to figure out what had been purchased by Combine companies and individuals and what was still awaiting purchase. And then there's property owned by multi-state organizations—a term that basically means mega-corps, like StarCorps Industries or General Motors. Now that gets into some truly strange legalese that I won't even try to explain, mainly because I don't understand it myself.

DENNIS: So, basically, we get to take anything that belongs, in this case, to the Draconis Combine and to its citizens and corporations, but we can't touch anything else? I remember something about a "Ransom of the Conquered" from the Succession Wars.

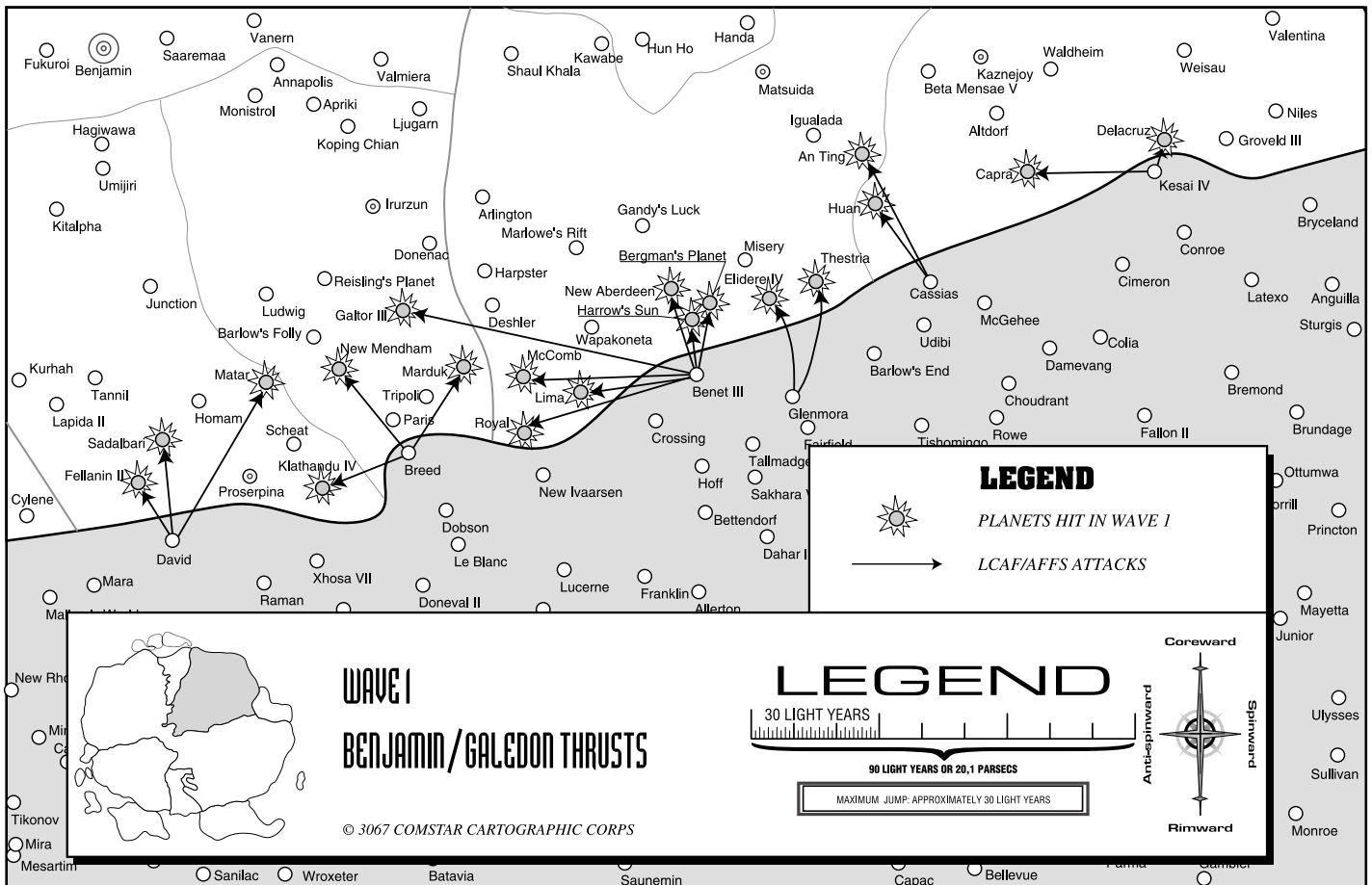
MIDDEN: There is that. Some time after a world becomes a protectorate, but before it is officially absorbed into the Federated Suns, the world's government must pay a tax to the government, along with a fee to the duke who'll have responsibility for the world. Of course, it's not like in the past when this fee was designed to punish a world's people. Now, depending on a world's population, its gross domestic product and about a thousand other factors, we could end up owing them money <sic>! And that's actually not as far from the truth as you might think... The Ministry of Ways and Means has measures in place to help ensure economic growth and to really bring the world into the FedSuns. One of the first things to happen is that the government encourages FedSuns corporations to purchase raw materials from recently absorbed worlds. Or to invest in them in some way. After all, most of those border worlds have changed hands more than once in the past couple of centuries. A change of governments is bad enough for them. We're not there to rape and pillage. We're there to incorporate them into the Federated Suns.

DENNIS: Hmm. Okay. Then how is it we can invade worlds, like Marduk last year, and just take whatever we can get our hands on?

MIDDEN: Oh, well, that's different. That's a raid...

—Interview with Robert Midden, Deputy Minister for Ways and Means, Draconis March, 7 June 3039

WAVE ONE



actions would prompt the Capellan Confederation to join in as well (see p. 122), thereby drawing all the major Inner Sphere nations into the conflict.

LYRAN OPERATIONS

Though mostly focused on the thrusts into the Combine, the Lyrans knew it had to do more to keep the DCMS off-balance, and in particular to pin down troops from the Alshain and Pesht military districts. To that end, the LCAF employed several mercenary units to stage a series of raids across the neutral Free Rasalhague Republic in the hope (vain, as it happened) effort to keep nearby DCMS troops from redeploying elsewhere.

The most audacious of these attacks was carried out by the Killer Bees, who set off on 12 March, almost a month before the main assaults began. The Bees hit Polcenigo on April 17, Luzerne on April 29, Marshdale on 18 May and Teniente on June 6. They inflicted moderate damage on the conventional garrisons they encountered and took only slight losses. The highlight of their campaign was the capture of an *Invader*-class JumpShip by their special-forces infantry at Polcenigo. The mercenaries relied heavily on LIC intelligence to steer clear of major DCMS troop concentrations, encounters with any one of which could have brought their advance to a crashing halt. Rather than serve as a major military force, the Bees' job was to instill fear

in the DCMS and the Combine citizenry, particularly as their invasion path led toward the district capital of Pesht.

Military experts have questioned the value of this incursion in recent years, but few contest the fact that the redeployment of Alshain troops to secure Pesht and Luthien prevented their use against the allied invaders. Some commentators suggest that the DCMS made these redeployments simply to free up more proficient troops, such as the First and Seventh Sword of Light, for Theodore Kurita's counterattack. DCMS records for the era remain sealed and so cannot shed light on the Combine military's plans. Recently opened FRR archives on Tukayyid reveal a series of debates in the Riksdag and diplomatic protests from the Elected Prince to the Archon regarding the Lyran's violation of the Free Rasalhague Republic's neutrality.

The LCAF eventually abandoned its distraction operations and recalled the Killer Bees, who had struck Caripare on June 27. The mercenary unit remained on that world when the DCMS launched its counteroffensive. Even during their withdrawal from Caripare, however, the Bees continued to strike at Combine "targets of opportunity" on Itabaiana (19 July), Soverzene (2 August) and Courcheval (16 August). Crossing back into the Republic on August 29, the Bees triggered a second round of diplomatic protests from the FRR, which the LCAF sidestepped by claiming that their contract with the mercenaries had expired



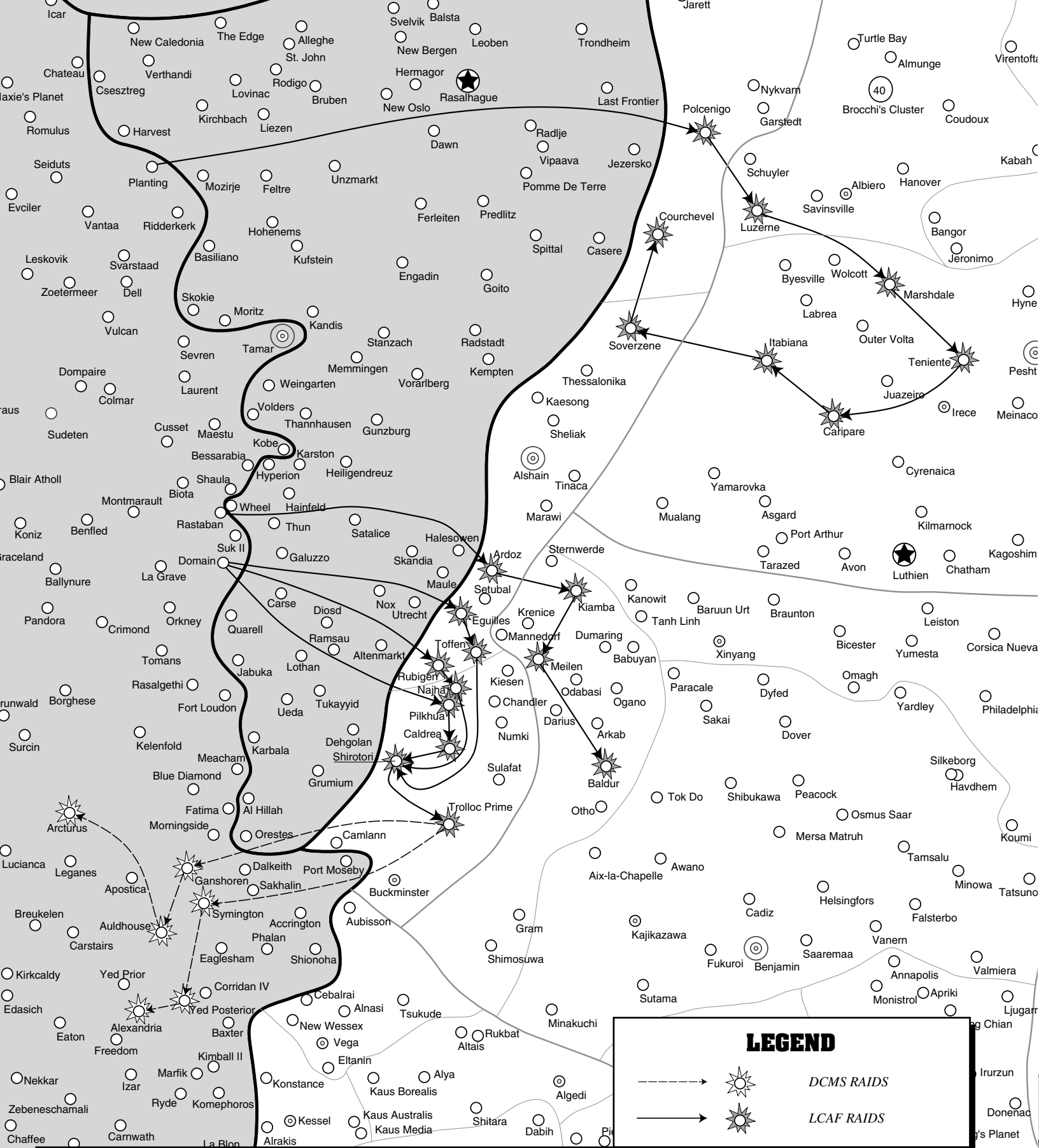
a day earlier. Behind the scenes, the Lyran high command authorized substantial performance-related payments to the mercenary unit, which they paid when the Killer Bees arrived back at Tamar in late September.

Complementing the Killer Bees' operation was the twin-pronged thrust by the Knights of St. Cameron that struck across the FRR from the mercenaries' bases on Domain and Rastaban. The First Knights struck at Ardoz (19 April), Kiamba (2 May), Mellen (19 May) and Baldur (3 June). The last assault ran into surprisingly stiff resistance, given the absence of front-line troops on Baldur, and although the First Knights succeeded in their objectives, they had to petition the LCAF high command for recall to the Commonwealth before the DCMS counterattack. The Second Knights' assault was more audacious, splitting the regiment into battalion-sized raiding parties that struck at a broad swathe of worlds between Eguilles and Caldrea before reforming for a regimental-sized strike on Shirotori on May 19. This assault succeeded in its mission to pin down the Fifth Alshain Regulars. A second assault on Trolloc Prime, aimed at pinning down the Eleventh Alshain before the intended Wave Two assault on Buckminster, took place on 17 June. This time, however, rather than sparring with the DCMS troops, the Knights found a near-empty base and overran it in short order. The rea-

son for this became apparent when rumors emerged of the Eleventh Alshain's raids into Commonwealth space (see below). In mid-July the Knights prepared to leave Trolloc Prime for their ultimate objective, Buckminster, where they would serve as pathfinders. The attack orders never came; instead, both regiments of Knights were summoned to Port Moseby on 29 June to stave off the DCMS counterattack.

DCMS OPERATIONS

The DCMS had numerous contingency plans in place to counter Lyran moves. Almost as soon as the first invaders crossed the border, the DCMS high command enacted several of these plans to bring troops from the unthreatened Combine interior to positions where they could counterattack or oppose further conquests. To some extent, missions like those of the Killer Bees and the Knights of St. Cameron (together with no small number of Loki operatives) shaped the movement of DCMS reinforcements, but in general the DCMS ignored such pinpricks and chose instead to focus on the big picture. Nonetheless, the DCMS undertook its own raids into the Lyran Commonwealth and the Federated Suns, hoping to draw off troops slated for future assaults and perhaps to capture LCAF and AFFS supply caches. These raids were a taste of what was to come for the allied invasion.



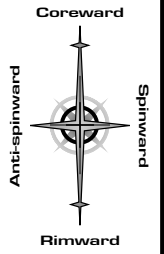
LYRAN COMMONWEALTH and DRACONIS COMBINE RAIDS

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LEGEND



MAXIMUM JUMP: APPROXIMATELY 30 LIGHT YEARS



The most famous of these counter-raids were launched from Dieron by the Ryuken against worlds in the Terran Corridor (see below), but no less important were attacks like those by the Fourth Arkab Legion and the Eleventh Alshain Regulars. Both of these units struck from Trolloc Prime—the Fourth Arkab at Ganshoren, Auldhouse and Arcturus, threatening the supply lines of the Commonwealth Thrust, and the Eleventh Alshain at Symington, Yed Posterior and Alexandria. These attacks inflicted little material damage, but forced the LCAF to expend considerable resources securing its supply lines and hunting down the raiders. Furthermore, the DCMS units' presence in the Commonwealth raised fears about the war's success that would be exploited to their fullest extent in Operation OROCHI.

Terran Corridor Operations

There is little doubt that the DCMS was overmatched and overwhelmed by the sheer scale of the invasion, a fact confirmed by the "Hold at All Costs" order issued by Coordinator Takashi Kurita in April. The senior Combine leadership was stunned, if only briefly, into giving an order that all but admitted defeat. Even as the *Kanrei* was frenetically assembling a coordinated plan to deal with the invasion, however, the newly appointed commander of the Dieron District had his troops on the move to blunt any further combined AFFS/LCAF attacks.

Tai-shu Michi Noketsuna was not the typical Combine officer, nor were the commanders of the Ryuken regiments to whose formation he had been so integral. These officers saw the best chance of a defense involving a generous interpretation of the Coordinator's orders, along with more than a bit of nerve. Long before the DCMS launched its deep raids into the Lyran Commonwealth or embarked on Operation OROCHI, Noketsuna sent his two Dieron-based Ryuken regiments on a raiding mission into the Terran Corridor. With luck, their hit-and-run strikes would convince Hanse Davion and Melissa Steiner to hold off any further thrusts into Dieron.

The attacks on the four targeted worlds surprised the allied commanders. The strike on Caph nearly proved disastrous for the Ryuken, but their attacks on New Earth, Procyon and especially Saffel were extremely successful.

Caph (June)

Caph was the third world targeted by the Ryuken. An important crossroads for trade between the Federated Suns and the Lyran Commonwealth, Caph had also long served as an integral link in the Federated Suns' defense of the Terran Corridor. Typically, the AFFS stationed one of its regimental combat teams to garrison the planet. DCMS intelligence had placed the Third Crucis Lancers on Caph long before the war began, but in the frenzy caused by the initial invasions, information that several more units had apparently passed through Caph in late 3038 and early 3039 did not make it to Noketsuna and his senior officers. Consequently, when *Tai-sa* Ysabeau Johnson, commanding the Ryuken-ni, and *Tai-sa* Noritake Kansa, commanding the Ryuken-san, landed outside the city of Aswan, they had no idea that two additional RCTs—the Davion Assault Guards and the Thirty-third Avalon Hussars—were on the other side of the planet. Along with these units were Wolf's Dragoons, still re-forming after their losses on Misery a decade earlier.

The two Ryuken regiments struck the Aswan Military Reservation, the huge military base outside the capital city, from two directions, initially overwhelming the defending Third Crucis Lancers. Three hours into the battle, however, the Ryuken spotted dozens of DropShips inbound to their location. An Assault Guards brigade and almost all of Wolf's Dragoons, roughly ten battalions of 'Mechs, surrounded and trapped the Ryuken. The fight lasted for several days as both sides vied for advantage, until *Tai-sa* Kansa led two combined Ryuken battalions in a bold assault on the AFFS staging base hidden on Brunnel, a continent rendered all but inhabitable centuries before. The Hussars were based there, but their movements were limited by the radioactive wastelands. The Ryuken braved this dangerous environment to

HEALING THE RIFT

The War of 3039 saw Wolf's Dragoons returning to their first active service since the Fourth Succession War. Nearly wiped out in that conflict and despite a decade of rebuilding, the Dragoons were still far from full strength by the time Prince Hanse Davion was ready to invade the Draconis Combine. Four Dragoons regiments were stationed on Caph, along with Zeta Battalion, but the unit barely numbered ten battalions of 'Mechs; many would not be listed as fully reconstituted until several years later. In fact, Colonel Jaime Wolf was more than a little reluctant to commit his Dragoons to the war effort. Only a significant paycheck and a promise to serve as the vanguard of the eventual assault on Dieron—and Luthien, if the invasion made it that far—convinced Wolf otherwise.

That the Ryuken encountered the Dragoons on Caph was an irony unequalled during the war. Noketsuna and his generals could not have known that Prince Hanse had placed the bulk of the force that would ultimately assault Dieron on Caph. Stationed in a base hidden in a radioactive wasteland, the Dragoons and their AFFS comrades were secured well away from prying Combine eyes.

The appearance of the Ryuken regiments unleashed a massive wave of emotions in the Dragoons and the Combine soldiers. Old hatreds surfaced among the relatively few Misery survivors from both sides who remained in active service. The newer recruits, however, ultimately proved the most hate-filled. Not having served on Misery, they did not suspect the true architects of that debacle who deserved to be the target of their bitterness, and they wondered why the veterans just as often turned away from an opposing 'Mech as savaged it.

The fight on Caph proved cathartic, with many more machines destroyed than lives lost. In the aftermath, the Dragoons and the Ryuken realized they could live on, simultaneously if not in harmony.

In the end, though the battle for Caph was little more than a footnote in history, it enabled Jaime Wolf and his mercenaries to finally put Misery behind them—without having to lead the invasion of Luthien.



inflict heavy damage on the Hussars' base and facilities. This daring move gave the entire Ryuken force the breathing room it needed to pull out of Caph, hurt but not mortally wounded.

New Earth (May)

The first target of Noketsuna's proactive defense was New Earth. Not surprisingly, the world was under-defended, with only planetary militia and the mostly mercenary security forces of the New Earth Trading Company able to resist the Combine attackers. *Tai-sa* Johnson and her Ryuken-*ni* made quick work of the NETC garrison and took charge of the factory. Though the NETC primarily manufactured combat vehicles, its warehouses contained thousands of tons of weapons, ammunition and armor—all supplies being consumed from Dieron's stores at an alarming rate. Johnson immediately directed her support forces to take anything and everything they could while she attacked every viable military target on the world, all but destroying New Earth's militia in just four days of intensive operations. In the process, the Ryuken captured a number of DropShips, which they used to transport the almost forty thousand tons of supplies they had "liberated" from NETC and the militia's armories.

They left as quickly as they had come, just before the Hsien Hotheads—dispatched by the LCAF high command from their garrison on Thorin—entered the system. The mercenaries remained there for the rest of the war.

Procyon (May)

The Ryuken-san jumped with its sister regiment to New Earth directly from Dieron, but proceeded on to Procyon as soon as its JumpShips had recharged their drives. *Tai-sa* Kansa spent more time on this world than Johnson did on New Earth, though not because this world boasted an important target. By all accounts *Tai-sa* Kansa was looking for more of a fight than the world's militia could give him. The Fifth Lyran Regulars gave him precisely what he wanted, landing some two weeks behind the Ryuken-san on 18 May. Kansa outfought and outclassed the Fifth Regulars in every way, taking a battalion of 'Mechs from them after a disastrous clash outside the town of Kreigen.

Kansa was forced to break off the attack when *Tai-sa* Johnson arrived in the Procyon system just a few days later. The Ryuken-san lifted off the world on 24 May, ultimately bound for Caph.

Saffel (June)

Saffel was the fourth and last world targeted in Noketsuna's Terran Corridor raids. The Ryuken-*ni* and the Ryuken-san had barely escaped from the inadvertent trap on Caph, but were nonetheless ready to face whatever defenders Saffel might hold. Instead of a large garrison or even a powerful militia force, however, they found Saffel nearly undefended. The two Ryuken regiments easily took command of the world from its two regiments of volunteer militia, but once they reported their accomplishment to *Tai-shu* Noketsuna, he ordered them to remain on the world and claim it for the Dragon. The *Kanrei* had already authorized Operation OROCHI;

the counterattack was under way, and the two Ryuken regiments' efforts became the first successes of that operation.

FREE WORLDS LEAGUE OPERATIONS

When the War of 3039 began, the Free Worlds League was in the final stages of its own civil war to bring secessionist Andurien back into the realm. That bloody ten-year conflict helped foster a sense of pride and nationalism in many League units, one facet of which was a desire to revenge the Free Worlds League's embarrassment in the Fourth Succession War. Concerted efforts by the Free Worlds League Military would not take place until the later stages of the 3039 conflict, most notably the attacks by the Marik Militia and the Free Worlds Guard on Hsien, Callison, Marcus and Hall, as well as the Gryphons' raids against Alioth and Cor Caroli (see p. 120). Wave One, however, saw some small-scale skirmishes.

In a rare intelligence coup, SAFE alerted the FWLM to the withdrawal of the LCAF garrison on Menkalinen shortly before the outbreak of war. Even as the first allied troops began assaulting Combine worlds, the FWL government on Atreus ordered its own forces into action to liberate Menkalinen, lost to the FedSuns-Commonwealth alliance in the Fourth Succession War. The Fifteenth and Thirtieth Marik Militias were assigned to the operation, which they achieved in only six days, almost walking into the positions abandoned by the Eridani Light Horse several weeks earlier. On May 5, the Eagle flag of the League flew above Menkalinen once more.

More audacious were the series of assaults mounted by the Second Oriente Hussars against the Sarna March, the so-called "Phact Finding" mission. Targeting Old Kentucky, Chamdo and Raballa, all of which were vulnerable after the withdrawal of their front-line garrisons to bolster the war effort, the incursion originally went well. However, the raid by the Hussars' light Beta Battalion against Phact itself on 19 June quickly turned sour as the Fifteenth Arcturan Guard (whom SAFE had reported as relocated to the Terran Corridor) remained on-world and moved to crush the incursion with brutal efficiency. The mission leader, Force Commander Arthur Rivernider, had to stage a mobile campaign behind enemy lines for almost three weeks before he could break contact with the Arcturan troops and escape. Surprisingly, the Hussars took only light damage and withdrew in good order on July 10.

The most surprising raid made by the FWLM during this phase of the conflict took place on July 12, just as the second wave was scheduled to commence. Deployed to aid the escape of the Second Oriente, should they need it, the Ninth Marik Militia sat in its transports awaiting the call to war. When news reached them that the Hussars had escaped Phact on their own, the Ninth expected to stand down. Instead, Colonel Simpson Eisner launched the regiment against Capella, staging a "raid in force" against the regional capital. Blandford's Grenadiers, the force assigned to defend the Capellan Commonality seat of government, were caught flat-footed and mounted a two-day token defense against the incursion. Having made their mark, the Marik Militia withdrew in good order, proud to have "tweaked the nose" of the Capellan enemy.

SHADOW WARS

BLACK CATS

Within the Draconis Combine, rumors abound of a secret organization of hired assassins known as the Spirit Cats, or Nekakami. Though often blamed for acts of espionage, sabotage and murder in which they were not involved (Nekakami agents “sign” their operations with an origami cat), their fearsome reputation is well deserved. With ties to the shinobi (more commonly known as ninja) of ancient Terra, the Nekakami stand apart from Combine society, distrusted by the ISF and the nobles, but anyone seeking to dispose of an enemy nonetheless covets their services. Some suggest that Theodore Kurita came into contact with the Spirit Cats during the Fourth Succession War and ultimately entered a pact with them during the 3030s.

Many historians suspect that the Nekakami—together with yakuza operatives—played a significant role in information-gathering for House Kurita during the War of 3039 and that the Spirit Cats undertook several dangerous and highly secretive operations outside Combine borders. Little conclusive evidence exists, but Nekakami spies allegedly operated on New Avalon during the conflict, relaying intelligence to Luthien via mundane contacts. Nekakami agents definitely operated on Tharkad, their presence affirmed on July 12 when former Archon Katrina Steiner discovered an origami cat on her daughter’s throne. Rumors that the ailing Katrina panicked after the discovery have been overplayed in the media, but the find did prompt a security lockdown and investigation into how a Spirit Cat had not only managed to infiltrate the Triad and the Royal Court, but also sneak past the BattleMech sentries in the throne room. The paper cat sent a message to Katrina: we can reach you and we can reach your daughter. Guards on Archon Melissa and her children (in particular nine-year old Victor and six-year old Katherine) were tripled. Katrina refused any increase in her protection detail, a contributing factor in the popular conspiracy theory alleging Combine involvement in Katrina’s death in 3040 (see p. 17).

“War to the knife, and the knife to the hilt.”

—General Nathan Bedford Forrest, Confederate States of America

“Some call us terrorists, others murderers and assassins. I prefer ‘those who do what we must’.”

—Chu-i Michitaka Nomeru (ISF)

Though the military offensives of the War of 3039 received the most publicity, they were far from the only battles fought across the Inner Sphere. Irregular troops took the conflict far beyond its accepted battlefields while media campaigns argued the war’s causes and justifications (and the truth of various conflicts) back and forth. Communications played a vital role as well, both in the allies’ well-founded mistrust of ComStar and their erroneous belief in the security of their “black box” communication devices.

While each of these individual elements played only a small role in the massive conflict, together they served to confuse the battlefield and to change—at least in their enemies’ perceptions—the relative strengths of the combatants. This element of the war, much of which remains clouded in secrecy almost three decades later, was essential to Theodore Kurita’s strategy.

THE IRREGULAR WAR

Spies and Special Forces played a vital role for all the participants in the War of 3039, but for none more so than the DCMS. Working hand in hand with the ISF and O5P (and ComStar, according to rumor) eventually enabled the DCMS to tip the military balance back in its favor. The Lyran Commonwealth and Federated Suns also made extensive use of such elements, as an adjunct to their military operations and as part of a larger war effort to distract their enemies.

THE ISF WAR

From the outset, irregular operations were central to the War of 3039. The Combine used ISF (Internal Security Force)-sponsored revolts on several occupied worlds to slow the invaders, forcing them to dedicate considerable resources to policing and security, a task for which few of the invasion troops were well suited. In addition to tying up allied troops, these confrontations fostered hostility between occupier and inhabitant that became a self-perpetuating cycle of violence and confrontation. Everything from peaceful protests and marches for basic rights to sniper attacks and car bombs became tools for these ISF-sponsored insurgents, eroding the invaders’ morale while inflaming nationalism among the citizens of occupied planets. To some extent, the ISF operations were only marginally significant in military terms, but their impact on morale and the media cannot be overstated. On some worlds the ISF sought to provoke harsh allied reprisals, details of which they could leak to the press to sully the allies’ reputation (see *The Media Conflict*, p. 64).

ISF agents and DEST troops also undertook a number of militarily significant operations. They targeted command personnel and supply dumps on many worlds, hampering the allies’ ability to operate. In the early months of the war these efforts were deliberately uncoordinated, leading the allied high commands to believe that the DCMS and ISF were both struggling to face the challenge. In fact, the seemingly disorganized ISF operations were merely a ruse to lull the occupiers of Combine worlds into a false sense of security. In July 3039, ISF efforts organized by Ninyu Kerai in the Dieron Military District entered a sudden and devas-



THE ROM WAR

Though ComStar witnessed the treaty between the Lyran Commonwealth and Federated Suns and hosted the marriage of Hanse Davion and Melissa Steiner, neither the Archon nor the First Prince had any reason to trust the interstellar communications agency. The pragmatism of both states was at odds with the religious trappings of the ComStar Order, and their efforts at scientific rediscovery placed them squarely against the agenda of the ComStar-controlled Terran government. The Steiner family had long suspected ComStar's hand in the slaying of key scientists working for the Commonwealth, and circumstantial evidence also linked the order to the Combine's efforts to kidnap Melissa Steiner in 3027. The destruction of the Sarna HPG station in the Fourth Succession War—falsely blamed on AFFS forces and used as pretext for a communications interdiction and the subsequent posting of Com Guards troops in the Federated Suns—set Hanse Davion on a collision course with ComStar, exacerbated by the “death commando” attack on NAIS in 3029. House Davion suspected ROM agents in that assault, though ComStar involvement has never been proven.

In 3034, it became clear that the DCMS had access to intelligence that only could have come from ComStar. This revelation prompted Hanse Davion to initiate Operation Flush, a hidden conflict that pitted the MIIO against ROM. Davion sought to prove ComStar's neutrality a sham and to rid himself of ROM agents operating within the Federated Suns. Over the next ten years, until Operation Flush finally wound down in 3044, more than four hundred operatives of both agencies would die and hundreds more would be unmasked or interned, together with numerous innocent bystanders. Both parties planted false information in an effort to trace their opponents' networks, and the resulting confusion sucked up considerable resources from the ComStar and FedSuns agencies. Though it played little direct role in the War of 3039, this ultimately futile shadow conflict clearly distracted the MIIO from its war efforts. At its peak, Operation Flush involved a quarter of the MIIO's counterintelligence directorate, leaving the agency vulnerable to ISF operations. No one knows whether the war would have gone differently had MIIO and ROM not been in the midst of their own conflict, but “the ROM war” is widely cited as a contributing factor in the Combine's eventual victory.

tating new phase with a spectacular operation that likely changed the course of the war. Certainly it forced the allies to review their preconceived notions of the Combine's plans.

July 12 began normally for the LCAF command staff on Vega, even though General Nondi Steiner was to announce the launch of Wave Two of the Commonwealth Thrust into the coreward prefectures of the Dieron Military District. As the general and her staff gathered, DEST troopers struck at the conference while ISF agents across the planet sabotaged key military and communications facilities. Staging a daring parachute landing atop Vega's government center, a detachment of DEST troops fought their way into the complex while a second team rappelled down the outside of the buildings. The former group met stiff resistance, but as expected, drew the full attention of the Lyran security forces. The second group largely escaped notice until they burst into the briefing room, shooting General Steiner and many of her senior officers. Though site security swiftly neutralized the DEST teams, the attack essentially decapitated the Commonwealth Thrust. Even more fortuitously for the Combine, most of the few uninjured officers were “old school” LCAF, resistant to the Davion-sponsored military reforms that had allowed the LCAF to perform so well in the Fourth Succession War. Most significant among these survivors was Kathleen Heany, who became de facto commander of the Commonwealth Thrust and the defense of Vega. She immediately reverted to type, returning to the “bigger and better” frontal-assault tactics that had been the LCAF's Achilles heel prior to the Fourth Succession War. From that moment on, the LCAF's participation in the War of 3039 was in jeopardy. The Lyran advance would stall and put the Commonwealth in grave danger of losing the gains already made.

THE LIC AND MIIO WAR

The LIC (Lyran Intelligence Corps) and the MIIO (Ministry of Information and Intelligence Organization) played a vital role in the allied war effort, gathering intelligence on target worlds and DCMS troop movements. The two agencies bolstered intelligence-gathering teams on worlds such as Luthien and New Samarkand; the teams communicated with their handlers back in the Commonwealth or Federated Suns via coded HPG messages or, in more sensitive cases, through messages hand-carried out of the Combine through the Free Rasalhague Republic. At this point, ComStar had become embroiled in a low-level conflict with the Lyran Commonwealth and the Federated Suns, and so neither realm wished to entrust sensitive communications to the HPG network. Loki and Rabid Fox teams also played a more direct role in the conflict, epitomized by their activities on Dieron designed to sow paranoia among the planet's defenders. These high-level operatives also engaged in wetwork when necessary; they engineered the assassination of Duke van Mitre on Buckminster, causing political chaos on that Wave Two target world as the duke's successors jostled for position. In addition, the MIIO stirred up revolts on numerous border worlds and sent mercenary forces to “aid the freedom fighters” on the targeted planets.

Postwar analysis of LIC and MIIO operations has cast doubt on their effectiveness, but must be regarded in the context of their failure to predict the scale of the DCMS counterattack and Theodore's willingness to leave much of the Combine vulnerable to enemy action while pursuing his military counterstroke. During the war, the Dieron missions and those elsewhere in the Combine sowed real fear and confusion that the allies could have exploited had their intelligence agencies not been distracted or had they known the true strength of the DCMS. In many regards, the War of 3039 was a conflict of wills rather than armies, pitting Theodore Kurita's audacity against Hanse Davion's drive and

determination. Both leaders relied on their intelligence agencies, but Theodore was playing the game with full knowledge of his own and his enemies' strengths and weaknesses, while Hanse Davion remained semi-blind because of intelligence failures and ComStar's covert intervention in the DCMS' favor.

THE MEDIA CONFLICT

The AFFS and the LCAF allowed reporters to accompany their invasion troops and send back coverage—approved by military authorities—of the war as it progressed. Other networks chose to operate independently of the AFFS and LCAF in order to sidestep military censors. The various networks competed to break news of the latest invasions and battles, with these rivalries often spilling over into the reporters' own relationships. On Vega, teams from Donegal Broadcasting Corporation (DBC) and the Alarion News Network (ANN) waged an escalating series of actions to scoop each other that eventually left two Donegal reporters hospitalized after efforts to outdo their rivals led to their groundcar being fired on by an LCAF BattleMech for failing to heed a military checkpoint. After this incident, General Nondi Steiner sought to limit media activities on her worlds, licensing only a select number of approved reporters to accompany her forces and leaving the remainder (mostly foreign agencies such as Irian Media Interstellar) to fend for themselves.

The initial successes of the war played extremely well throughout the Federated Suns and the Lyran Commonwealth. Even in the Free Worlds League, the only state hostile to the allied forces that also boasted a free media, the public was glued to war coverage, most likely as an escape from the League's internal conflicts (the war against Andurien was then in its final stages). Propaganda and national security shaped the coverage in the Federated Suns and Lyran Commonwealth (and even in the FWL), but with one notable exception the allied reporting was generally fair and accurate up until the start of the DCMS counterattack. Indeed, in mid-May a public row erupted between the DBC and the authorities on Tharkad when the LCAF sought to block several reports that the military saw as prejudicial to their operations. In the end, General Nondi Steiner's media licensing—granting approved broadcasters greater access in exchange for a “considered” release of news to safeguard troops in the field—negated the DBC complaints but also provided the framework the allies would use to rein in much of the media after July.

Some media agencies on both sides were little more than propaganda tools, spouting patriotic rhetoric and uncritically reporting the “successes” of their home nation. Both the allies and the Combine were guilty of this to some degree, but the Federated Suns' *Rénard Reportage* became the focus of considerable media attention by independent broadcasters like IMI for their excessively jingoistic and factually incorrect reporting (IMI field journalist James Shaw famously stated that the *Rénard* tag-line, “True reporting, equitable and unbiased” contained one accurate word—and”). Other agencies whom the New Avalon authorities accused of bias or an “anti-war agenda”, such as IMI (and even DBC on some occasions) were in reality largely impartial, their only crime the reporting of events the authorities wanted kept under wraps or making critical analyses of allied aims and performance.

In the Capellan Confederation (and to a lesser extent, the Draconis Combine), where a free press was an alien concept, reportage on the conflict painted the LCAF and AFFS forces as baby-eating barbarians set on crushing the freedom-loving Combine troops. To an outsider, the extent to which the Capellan media downplayed initial allied successes (stating that the invaders were butchered and Combine forces victorious on worlds where no such thing had occurred) is incomprehensible and even amusing, but raised on diet of state-con-

SECRET WHISPERS: BLACK BOX TECHNOLOGY

One of the deepest secrets shared by Tharkad and New Avalon after the signing of the Steiner-Davion treaty—a secret well kept from ComStar—was the sharing of so-called black box technology. These communication devices, discovered during Archon Katrina's brief exile in the Periphery, had long been the focus of covert scientific research by the Lyran state. The alliance with the Federated Suns allowed the Archon and the First Prince to bring the formidable might of the NAIS to bear in comprehending and replicating these valuable devices. Their exact origin remains clouded in mystery, but they are believed to have been part of experiments in FTL communications dating to the late 26th century, and may have been abandoned with the adoption of the HPG system in the first decades of the 27th century during the reign of First Lord Nicholas Cameron. To SLDF researchers, this slower and less sophisticated technology looked like a dead end, despite being more portable than an HPG—the typical black box weighs little more than a large briefcase without its 'Mech-sized power source. To the LCAF and their allies, the black box was a godsend.

In November 3027, the Department of Military Communications (in conjunction with the NAIS) demonstrated the effectiveness of the black boxes for interstellar communications. Over the next few months, more than sixty additional devices were assembled and distributed to key military units and command centers, allowing the AFFS and LCAF to sidestep ComStar (whom neither Archon Katrina nor Prince Hanse trusted). The Fourth Succession War proved the value of the machines. Though cruder than HPG transmissions—initially only able to send simple images like the fax machines of old Terra, hence their nickname of “fax machines”—the technology built into the black boxes was more than sufficient to communicate military orders.

To safeguard against the technology falling into enemy hands, each black box (officially known as a K-series transmitter) was equipped with a tracking device and a self-destruct charge. The LIC and the MIIO kept a close watch on the devices, accounting for their movements. Several devices were lost in the Fourth Succession War, but given the security measures taken to ensure their destruction, the allies had no reason to suspect that one such machine had fallen into the hands of the Draconis Combine.

Continued on p. 68

The allies did not wholly neglect their communications security in the 3039 war. Since 3030 they had routinely encrypted black box communications in case an enemy managed to circumvent their security measures, but this effort was lackluster and not always followed stringently. These lapses allowed the Combine to break the allied codes and read their “secure” communications. The allied militaries redoubled efforts to protect black box transmissions after the War of 3039, when it became apparent that some of the devices had fallen into enemy hands. The Combine finally revealed its possession of the black boxes in 3051.

Unlike HPGs, which transmit a burst message instantaneously to a target fifty light-years away, a black box radiates a signal that propagates outward from the transmitter at a steady rate as “ripples” in the fabric of hyperspace (a phenomenon that Star League technicians believed might interfere with KF drives or HPG transmitters, which prompted the SLDF to abandon the technology). Messages sent by the original black boxes discovered by Katrina Steiner, Arthur Luvon and Morgan Kell (referred to as the K-0 series) traveled roughly ten light-years per day and had a maximum range of approximately a hundred light-years. The content of each data packet was limited to two hundred kilobytes of images and/or data, a limit that remained for much of the device’s service life. The K-1 production models used during the Fourth Succession War (and subsequently stolen by the Combine) sent messages at a speed of roughly 25 light-years per day and had a maximum range of approximately two hundred light years. The K-1A series introduced by the LCAF and the AFFC before the War of 3039 extended the range of the devices to about 450 light-years, but offered no improvement in speed. The K-2 series (introduced in 3042) had a speed of about fifty light-years a day and also featured hardware encryption intended to limit DCMS eavesdropping. The K-4, introduced in 3048, marks a revolution in black box technology, increasing operating speed to around a hundred light-years per day and extending operational ranges to around six hundred light-years. The K-4 can also send data packets several megabytes in length, increasing its effectiveness, though it remains far inferior to HPGs and their terabyte capabilities. Specifications of the K-5 and K-6 black boxes remain classified, though experts suspect that both devices can transmit a message to any point in the Inner Sphere within a week.

trolled information, Capellan citizens had no reason to doubt what they were being told. Indeed, the main problem facing the Capellan broadcasters was dealing with the DCMS’ eventual success, having already painted the Kurita forces as “victorious.”

Only one agency portrayed itself as a neutral arbiter of news in the conflict: the ComStar news service that would become INN after the secularization of the order, during the Second Star League in the 3060s. The Commonwealth and FedSuns were fully aware of the lie inherent in ComStar’s vaunted neutrality, but could do little to impede the ComStar broadcasts without risking interdictions, something they were unwilling to do even given the preponderance of black box technology among their armed forces. In the end, the allies had no choice but to accept ComStar’s reporting of their newsworthy actions (which the ISF and DCMS monitored closely, one rumor suggesting that the Kanrei was never far from a ComStar news feed) while lodging complaints that DCMS and other enemy actions received little or no coverage.

COMMUNICATIONS

Since the early 27th century, the HPG network has provided humankind’s only means of interstellar communication. Ostensibly neutral in the Succession Wars, ComStar has stood as guardians of the network ever since the Kerensky Exodus, transmitting messages for anyone prepared to pay their fees. By the 3030s, however, it had become apparent to many—among them the LCAF and the AFFS—that ComStar’s neutrality was a sham. The LCAF and AFFS continued to use the ComStar network for routine traffic, but coordinated much of the War of 3039 via the slower but independent black box network first employed in the Fourth Succession War.

No conclusive evidence exists that ComStar interfered with LCAF or AFFS communications during the War of 3039 (despite the ongoing Operation Flush), but events suggest that some intelligence reports were delayed or misrouted, limiting their usefulness to the allies. It also seems likely that ComStar shared communications intelligence with the Combine, though again no hard evidence exists of any such collusion. The prospect of such perfidy by ComStar did not worry the allies, as they sent the bulk of their sensitive communications via black box and thereby rendered them immune to eavesdropping, at least early in the conflict. The assumption that this immunity still existed, based on the perceived effectiveness of security measures around the black boxes during the Fourth Succession War, ultimately became the allies’ undoing.

In reality, the Combine had salvaged a single black box during the Fourth Succession War. The exact source of this device is unclear, though it most likely came from Vega or Buckminster, where the Third Lyran Guards and Twentieth Arcturan Guard respectively reported their black box systems destroyed. Unknown to anyone else until well after the War of 3039, the O5P reverse-engineered the captured device. By the time war erupted anew, a series of listening stations were routinely intercepting and decrypting LCAF and AFFS black box communiqués. Together with preferential HPG rates offered to the Combine during the 3039 conflict (a deal that came to light after ComStar’s secularization and increasing openness in the 3050s), *Kanrei* Theodore Kurita had an advantage in communications and intelligence that went a long way toward countering his enemies’ martial strength.

WAVE TWO AND COUNTERATTACK

"The value of a partisan's work is not measured by the amount of property destroyed, or the number of men killed or captured, but the number he keeps watching."

—John Singleton Mosby (aka the "Gray Ghost"), Confederate States of America

"Winning is important, yes, but not as important as simply fighting."

—Sho-sho Jonathan Fujimoto, Commander, Fifth Sword of Light

The second wave of the War of 3039 was intended to expand the area of space under allied dominion and to consolidate existing gains, absorbing a number of the worlds bypassed in the initial assaults. Key objectives like Dieron would be further reduced, though the LCAF and AFFS planned to wait until the third wave before reducing that particular keystone of the DCMS defense. Theodore Kurita, however, had other ideas. Even as the allies drew breath to resume their invasion, the *Kanrei* unleashed his counteroffensive. The most spectacular element of this was the DEST's attempt to decapitate LCAF leadership of the Commonwealth Thrust. After General Nondi Steiner was grievously injured in the Combine attack on her HQ, command of the invasion thrust passed to her unimaginative subordinates, who played into Theodore's hands. Elsewhere, spoiling attacks took place to forestall further allied advances. On many worlds the DCMS launched full-scale counter-assaults, often in conjunction with intelligence service operatives and ISF-sponsored insurrections.

In the Commonwealth Thrust, the ascendancy of Kathleen Heany as theater commander prompted a swift and devastating reversion to "old school" tactics, a reliance on weight and firepower rather than skill and finesse. The LCAF troops under Heany's command quickly lost the initiative and found themselves on the defensive. Closer to Dieron, Field Marshal Vanessa Bisla too found her worlds under assault. The DCMS fought an even more devastating counteroffensive in this region than against the LCAF's Vega-based forces, incorporating several Sword of Light regiments and the Genyosha. Field Marshal Bisla voluntarily abandoned some of the worlds she had seized in favor of others, in order to minimize territorial losses and save her troop formations. The Dieron Thrust eventually achieved roughly half of its Wave Two objectives, but at the cost of all of its gains in the initial wave.

In Galedon and Benjamin, the AFFS found the going little better than their Lyran allies. Field Marshals James Sandoval and Ardan Sortek launched attacks on many of their Wave Two targets, but the Combine counterattack took them by surprise and temporarily stunned them into inaction. The Galedon and Benjamin campaigns never recovered from that blow. The loss of initiative cost the AFFS forces horribly, though Prince Hanse Davion's trepidation cost them even more. Uncertain of the extent of the Combine's reserves, he ordered a temporary hold on Wave Two operations that left entire regiments and RCTs stranded in space, while Theodore Kurita's under-strength DCMS continued to fight to regain every meter of lost territory. That halt in the invasion ended the war, though it would take five more months to sort out the mess.

COMMONWEALTH THRUST

"Half a league, half a league, half a league onward,

All in the Valley of Death rode the six hundred"

—Alfred Lord Tennyson, Charge of the Light Brigade

"A frontal assault on the enemy? Oh, very inspired."

—Brevet-Marshal James Seymour, Third Davion Guards, Vega

Having faced more substantial resistance than the incursion into Dieron, the Commonwealth Thrust fully expected to bear the brunt of the DCMS counteroffensive. However, while military force played a prominent role in the Kurita counterattack, psychology and special operations were vital elements of the DCMS operations. The Vega Strike (see p. 64) was central to the offensive against Operation WINTERSCHNEE, breaking the unified command under General Nondi Steiner into a series of isolated islands of occupation against which the DCMS could act as it saw fit.

WAVE 2 OBJECTIVES

Commonwealth Thrust

Algedi, Alphecca, Alya, Dromini IV, Kaus Borealis, Kaus Media, Shitara, Skondia, Tsukude

Dieron Thrust

Al Na'ir, Ashio, Cylene, Markab, Murchison, Nirasaki, Shinonoi, Skat, Yance 1

Benjamin Thrust

Homam, Irurzun, Ludwig, Reisling's Planet

Galedon Thrust

Beta Mensae V, Iqualada, Misery, Waldheim

WAVE 3 OBJECTIVES

Commonwealth Thrust

Aubisson, Buckminster, Cebalrai, Dabih, Gram, Kaus Australis, Minakuchi, New Wessex, Rukbat, Shimosuwa

Dieron Thrust

Albali, Altair, Ascella, Chichibu, Deneb Algedi, Dieron, Kuzuu, Piedmont, Shimonita, Styx, Waddesdon

Benjamin Thrust

Junction, Proserpina, Tannil, Umijiri, Waddesdon

Galedon Thrust

Hun Ho, Kaznejov, Matsuida

ALNASI (JULY-AUGUST)

As Theodore Kurita unleashed his decisive counterblow against Vega, he also moved to assault the enemy-held worlds governing the approach to the prefecture capital. Though uncharted systems were sufficient to facilitate the Second Legion's surprise attack on Vega, a more secure supply route would be required to hold the objective.

On 22 July the Kurita assault force jumped into the same pirate point used by the allied invaders three months earlier. This counter-assault force comprised the Sixth Alshain Regulars and the First Sun Zhang Cadre. Had the planet's defenders been at full strength, such a relatively weak force would have had little chance of dislodging them, but the *Kanrei's* plans used several factors to multiply the relative strength of his troops. The low-level guerrilla campaign staged by Alnasi's planetary garrison never fully ended, and a combination of sabotage and civil disobedience further hampered the Commonwealth's efforts to extend their power on Alnasi. The LCAF enjoyed qualitative superiority, but LCAF troops could not be everywhere, and ultimately the Lyran military found itself reacting to DCMS and ISF actions rather than pushing its own agenda. This situation, marginal for the first months of the occupation, worsened when the Argyle Lancers were pulled off Alnasi in preparation for the second invasion wave, leaving the infantry-heavy Twenty-sixth Lyran Guard as the planet's only occupation force.

The downscaling of the occupying units, together with several intelligence failures that left key Combine and ISF agents operating on the world, created a series of circumstances that undermined the LCAF position, though that would not become apparent until the Kurita counterattack. The experienced Twenty-sixth should have been able to hold off the Alshain Regulars and Sun Zhang Cadre with little problem, but on Alnasi they were on unfamiliar ground and faced a hostile population. The unit also faced severe supply problems.

The first contact between counter-invaders and occupiers came in high orbit as the Twenty-sixth's aerospace support wing struck at the inbound DCMS 'Mech carriers and infantry transports. The fighter attacks failed to destroy any of the transports, though two suffered enough structural damage to make re-entry difficult, requiring them to transfer their cargo to other vessels for the landing. DCMS fighters and assault DropShips eventually repulsed the Lyran attack. Bloodied, the Lyran fighters withdrew to the surface to protect the Guards' installations and their limited supply caches. The unit had expected to serve as a garrison, and had not come prepared to defend against a DCMS counteroffensive.

On July 24, the Alshain Regulars grounded some 250 kilometers west of Gantarius. The Twenty-sixth immediately launched a battalion-scale assault on the LZ, Beta battalion's medium and heavy 'Mechs and armor screened by the lighter units of the Sigma Lightning Company—the latter a feature of the Guards since the Fourth Succession War. Though far from confident of victory, the Guards were stunned by the ferocity of the Regulars' offensive, in particular the reach and stopping power of several 'Mech designs unfamiliar to the LCAF. The bat-

tle for the LZ lasted scarcely thirty minutes before Major Zaubel of the Twenty-sixth decided to cut her losses and pull back to the main defensive position. That single half-hour had cost the battalion almost two lances of 'Mechs.

The DCMS forces quickly sent out scout lances of light and medium 'Mechs, keeping their main strength within a few kilometers of the LZ. Almost overnight, they assembled a small city of supplies and support facilities. A Lyran air raid damaged the Sun Zhang HQ, but failed to injure any senior officers. When the Lyrans attempted a second raid early on July 26, they met formidable anti-aircraft defenses, and only one lance from the Guard squadron returned to Gantarius.

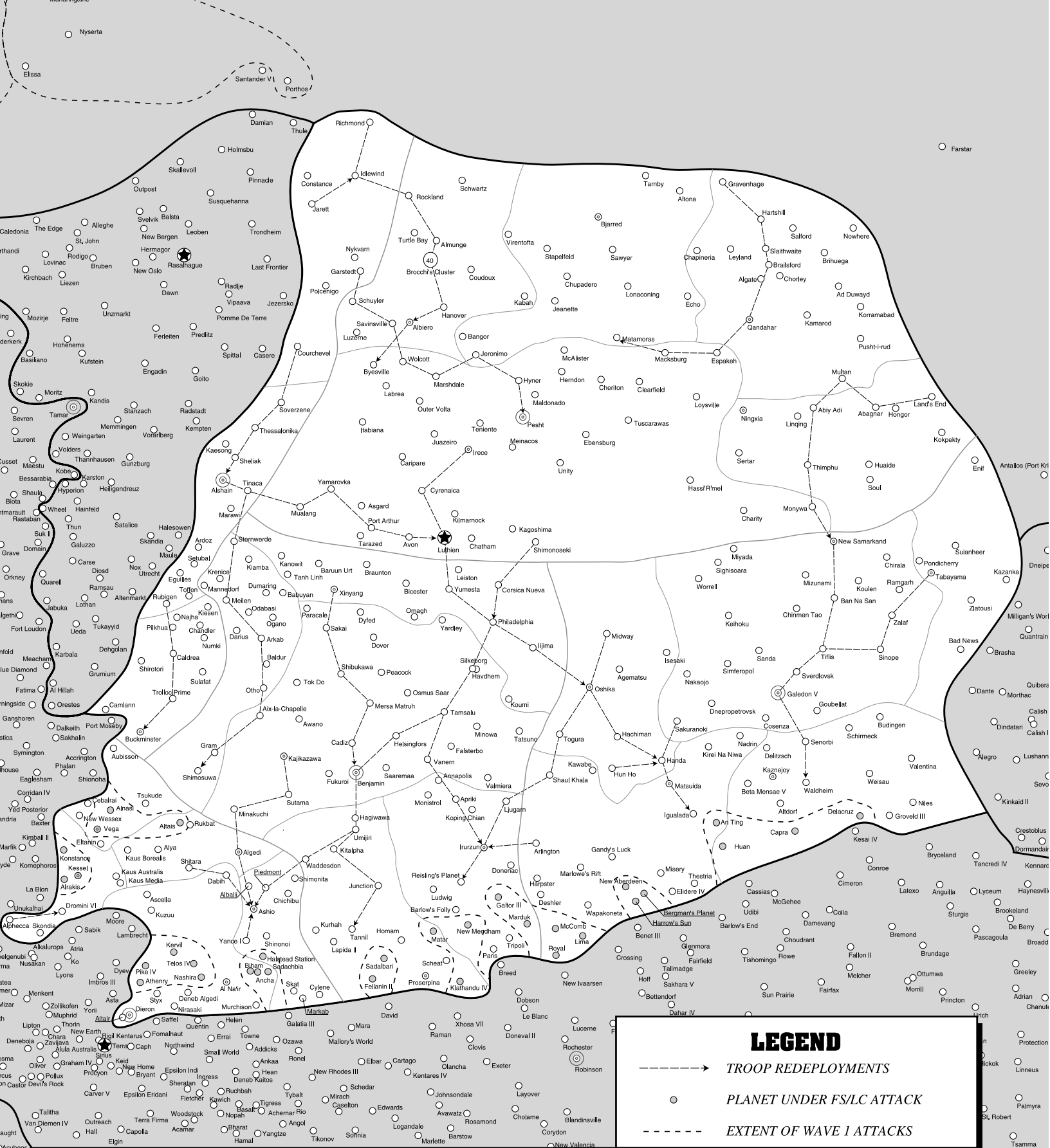
On the morning of July 29, the Alshain Regulars launched a series of probes against the LCAF defenses from the west, quickly identifying strong points and defensive lines. Thirty minutes after the Alshain assault began, as the defenders pushed back against the incursions, the Sun Zhang Cadre attacked the capital city from the northeast, having staged a forced march overnight. Unfortunately, the Cadre lost the element of surprise when they stumbled on an LCAF patrol that radioed in details of the encounter before being overrun. The Sun Zhang 'Mechs then ran headlong into a hastily repositioned LCAF armor battalion that sniped at the attackers from the cover of the industrial suburbs. Despite this turnabout, the Sun Zhang probe successfully distracted the Lyran defenders, who also faced an increasingly antagonistic local population. The Sun Zhang Cadre took formidable casualties, but their pressure forced the Lyrans to give ground, and by the end of July 30 General Woodruff Patterson ordered his blocking force to abandon their positions and withdraw deeper into the city.

The main assault by the Sixth Alshain pressed the Twenty-sixth Lyran Guard hard, but the unit and its Regimental Combat Team managed to throw back five successive Combine assaults. Militarily, the Guard might have held out for several months, but General Patterson also faced increased opposition from the locals, who in association with Ninyu Kerai's ISF operatives staged a series of irregular actions against the Steiner RCT. Bombings and rocket attacks became increasingly prevalent in the first week of August. On August 5, a suicide attack by a truck bomber killed General Patterson and twenty-six of his troops. Bereft of its leader and many senior officers, the Twenty-sixth was in grave danger of collapsing in disarray. Two days later, the senior surviving officer, Colonel Joy Corelli (whose de facto command of the RCT would be confirmed by the LCAF after the war) ordered the RCT to abandon Gantarius and the planet. The last LCAF DropShip boosted for orbit from Alnasi on August 11. The DCMS, exhausted by their endeavors, let the enemy force escape unmolested.

ALRAKIS (JULY-AUGUST)

May and June were peaceful for the Steiner forces on Alrakis, only a handful of sniper attacks against isolated guards interrupting an otherwise uneventful posting. July likewise began calmly, and the Arcturan troops let themselves relax into their garrison duties. Many felt uncomfortable on the high-G world, but availed themselves of the refreshments, entertain-





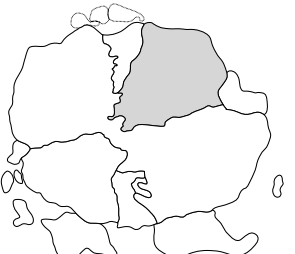
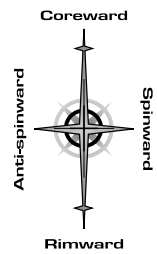
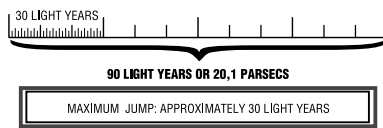
LEGEND

- > TROOP REDEPLOYMENTS
- PLANET UNDER FS/LC ATTACK
- - - - - EXTENT OF WAVE 1 ATTACKS

**DRACONIS COMBINE
COUNTERATTACK MOVEMENTS**

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LEGEND



ment and “companionship” available in the mining communities to which many were assigned as guards or liaisons to the local (and surprisingly cooperative) militia garrison forces. Those who voiced concerns that the occupation seemed to be going too well were reminded of the LCAF’s glorious success in the Fourth Succession War. Events, however, would soon prove them right.

On July 12, as the LCAF command council met on Vega to authorize the second invasion wave, the Eleventh Legion of Vega returned to Alrakis in the company of the Eighth Alshain Regulars, making a daring traverse of the Commonwealth and occupied territories via uninhabited worlds near Shionoha. Arriving at a pirate point to avoid the twenty-day run-in from the standard arrival points, the Combine counterassault initially went undetected by the Arcturan defenders, thanks to a collaborator in the Alrakis Space Control Directorate who interfered with the planetary sensors. On July 14, as the Alrakans celebrated one of many local festivals with fireworks and parties, the counterassault began. Many of the Lyran troops were enjoying the festivities and were unprepared to meet the DCMS assault. The Lyran unit’s vessels in orbit detected the inbound attackers a day out from the planet, and even with just a day’s warning, the Arcturan Guard should have managed to sober up and prepare their defenses. They would not be allowed that time, however.

At the height of the festival planetside, several Alrakan militia units moved against their erstwhile Arcturan associates. Numerous Lyran troopers were imprisoned without a struggle, caught off-guard by their former allies or else in their cups. Buoyed by their success, the Alrakan turncoats became overconfident and attempted to move against the LCAF troops in the city of Sigmundrac. Here, however, the Lyran commanders had maintained rigid discipline and their units met the natives’ efforts to neutralize the Guard with deadly force. Firefights erupted across the capital, but the Alrakan troops soon found the tables turned and became prisoners themselves.

The Alrakan insurrection failed to retake the planet, but it nonetheless served its military purpose, weakening the Lyran occupation force and hampering its efforts to defend the planet. Furthermore, the distraction allowed the Legion of Vega and the Alshain Regulars to land uncontested. The DCMS regiments quickly moved against Sigmundrac, but were too late to support the militia insurrection in the city, arriving in the vicinity just as the Lyran troops crushed the last pockets of resistance. The young commander of the Alshain Regulars, *Tai-sa* Remy Doulton, wanted to immediately assault the Lyran positions, but the more experienced Olivares called for restraint, giving the rebellious militia units time to join up with the liberating forces and form a counterbalance for what remained of the Lyran RCT. Though motivated by loyalty to the *Kanrei* and the Combine, Olivares also desired a measure of revenge against the LCAF for his internment during the Fourth Succession War. More than simply retaking Alrakis, he wanted to embarrass the commander of what he termed the “Elsie” forces.

DCMS troops encircled Sigmundrac in short order, but even with the militia, lacked enough numbers to completely blockade of the city. The odds of simply out-waiting the Arcturans were

slim, particularly as the Combine forces did not want to use artillery or air power to dislodge the dug-in defenders. Olivares was loath even to storm the city because of the likely collateral damage, and so he set about exploiting local knowledge to pry loose the LCAF forces.

On July 23, Olivares finished his plan and ordered his troops into action. The assault began quietly as small teams of troops infiltrated the city through sewers and aquifers, avoiding the Arcturan patrols and sensors placed to prevent such an occurrence. Making their way directly under the building being used as the Lyran command post, these troops planted several command-detonated explosives and then made their escape into the city streets.

Late that evening, Olivares ordered his troops to advance to within 250 meters of Sigmundrac, where they traded long-range (and largely ineffectual) fire with the defenders. To the occupiers’ surprise, Olivares broadcast directly to the Lyran commander, calling on her in a typically colorful manner to surrender. As the *Tai-sa* expected, General Jacqueline Fincher refused, to which Olivares replied, “No problem, ladies. It’s your funeral.” He then detonated the explosives installed earlier in the day. The ensuing blast collapsed the command building into the sewers, with minimal collateral damage. This strike decapitated the Guards’ command structure. General Fincher, together with six of her officers, was eventually dug from the rubble by Combine engineers and spent months recuperating before being repatriated to the Commonwealth after the war’s end. Twenty-three other officers and support staff died in the blast.

As explosions shattered the Lyran command complex, the entire Vega ‘Mech regiment pushed into the city along a narrow axis, seeking to isolate the Guards’ positions from the spaceport. Lieutenant-Colonel Nadine Killson, commander of Able Battalion of the Arcturan ‘Mech regiment and the most senior officer to survive the command center blast (by dint of being in the field in her *Zeus*), realized the danger the Vegan thrust posed and moved to counter it, while attempting to manage the overall Arcturan defense—an immense learning curve for such a young officer. The two forces clashed in an industrial sector on the fringes of the spaceport, a locale that minimized civilian casualties. Killson’s force had only a third as many ‘Mechs as her opponent, the remainder being committed to blocking the Alshain Regulars. Instead, she relied on infantry and armor. The resulting bloody, close-quarters engagement cost both sides dearly as Lyran infantry staged daring but often futile assaults on the Vega ‘Mechs. The Guards’ tanks inflicted grievous damage on the Vegans with point-blank ambushes in the industrial complex and several ramming attacks.

By dawn on July 24, both forces were badly bloodied. The Legion of Vega had lost almost two companies and the Arcturans had lost half the forces deployed to safeguard the spaceport. Olivares chose to withdraw his force, ceding the spaceport approaches to the Lyrans. He knew that unlike Killson’s troops, his ‘Mechs could be repaired and rearmed with ease, and he also had a whole fresh regiment to throw into the fray. Killson realized how untenable her position was rapidly

becoming, and late in the afternoon she ordered her forces to abandon downtown Sigmundrac and withdraw to the spaceport complex. In effect, she ceded control of the capital—and thus Alrakis—to the DCMS but retained a readily defensible beachhead from which she could strike should supplies and reinforcements be forthcoming.

They weren't.

With the Lyran Commonwealth and Federated Suns facing a general counterattack from the DCMS, and with the high command in disarray after strikes against Vega, military authorities chose to hold forces like the Fifth Donegal—assigned to Alrakis but never deployed there—in reserve against further attacks. On Alrakis, the LCAF and DCMS forces staged probes and raids for the next three weeks, but to all intents the campaign was over. On August 13, as news filtered through of the rout on An Ting and the disaster on Vega, the Twenty-third Arcturan received orders to abandon Alrakis.

ALTAIS (NOVEMBER)

Unlike many of the worlds seized by the Steiner-Davion offensive, the DCMS made no concerted effort to retake Altai despite its economic and strategic importance. The *Kanrei* believed, rightly, that once his military isolated Altai, the LCAF would be unable to maintain control. In late October, the Altai taskforce received its recall orders. Fortunately, sufficient JumpShips had remained at Altai to evacuate the entire expeditionary force, though conditions on the DropShips were cramped. The flotilla also had to jump into systems that had fallen once more in hostile hands, and consequently clashed several times with Combine aerospace forces. Only at Tsukude did the flotilla face a significant challenge, losing an armor transport and two squadrons of fighters. On 19 November, the fleet jumped to Phalan and safety, their six-month adventure finally over for no gain, but at a cost of thousands of dead on both sides. The official record that the campaign “bogged down” at Gaines as a result of the Second Ghosts' attacks would blight the career of General Justin Kovachs and lead to his retirement in 3044.

KESSEL (JULY-DECEMBER)

Theodore Kurita's alliance with the yakuza of the Combine allowed him to build the Ghost Regiments that served the DCMS so well during the 3039 conflict. It also gave worlds like Kessel, where the yakuza were a major underworld force, ready-made resistance movements whose members worked with the DCMS and the ISF thanks to negotiations between the *Kanrei* and *kuro-maku* Piotr Hitsu. The *Shiroi Tora* (white tiger) yakuza of Kessel could easily have made the occupiers' lives hell, but were ordered to stay their hand until the plans laid by *Kanrei* Theodore and *Tai-shu* Noketsuna came to fruition. On 29 June, ISF agents made contact with Oyabun Imasao Müller of the *Shiroi Tora* and set in motion the contingency plans agreed upon with *kuromaku* Hitsu.

On 12 July, as part of a simultaneous offensive against the LCAF, the yakuza struck at the invaders with their full strength, sniping at patrols and planting bombs as well as staging numerous acts of sabotage. On the first day alone, one hundred and

six LCAF soldiers were killed or wounded, twenty-six of those when yakuza sabotaged the atmospheric processors for their barrack block. This sudden offensive threw General Caesar Steiner's plans into disarray—he had planned to deal with an insurgency, but now faced a full-fledged guerrilla war in which the entire planet's population seemed arrayed against his relatively small force. A small but dedicated proportion of Kessel's people remained loyal to the Lyran Commonwealth, in particular groups like the Kessel Freedom Fighters, who had long campaigned for Kessel's return to its original owners. Unfortunately for General Steiner, the KFF responded badly to the yakuza insurrection and began a series of bloody reprisals (aided and abetted, according to rumor, by elements of the Eleventh Lyran Regulars) that threatened to escalate out of control. To make matters worse, reports began to filter in of 'Mech strikes against LCAF garrison forces, particularly those stationed at the strategic Diverse Optics plant. Steiner and the LIC were initially bemused as to how such a 'Mech force could have bypassed their security cordon and landed on Kessel. Then it dawned on them: the enemy 'Mechs had never left. The raiders were the supposedly inexperienced Second Sun Zhang Cadre, who had loaded sufficient ballast onto their fleeing DropShips to make their acceleration profiles match those of fully loaded transports. And if the Sun Zhang had secretly stayed on Kessel, hiding their presence for two months, they surely expected reinforcements.

On July 16, Caesar Steiner's fears became reality when a Combine flotilla forced its way past the light Lyran aerospace cordon and into Kessel's orbit. Signals intercepts identified one of the inbound units as the infamous Second Sword of Light (The Steel Dragon), one of the Combine's most prestigious units that had gained notoriety across the Inner Sphere for its participation in the Kentares Massacre. Together with its auxiliaries, the Steel Dragon posed a major threat to the Lyran occupation, particularly in light of the ongoing *Shiroi Tora* insurrection and the risk to the civilian life-support infrastructure, essential for Kessel's more than two billion inhabitants to survive the tainted atmosphere. Fearing for his troops and the civilians, the Lyran commander chose not to defend the capital city of Sverdlovsk, instead assembling his forces around the spaceport complex on the southern continent of Gershtad and evacuating as many non-combatants as he could. He announced his intentions to the Sword of Light commander and challenged the incoming DCMS forces to meet him at the spaceport.

The DCMS relief units grounded at Sverdlovsk on July 26 and spent several days securing the capital before moving against the Lyrans, which gave General Steiner an opportunity to organize his defenses. His Second Donegal Guard, backed by the Eleventh Lyran Regulars and Fourth Skye Rangers, would face off against the Second Sword of Light, the Twelfth Sun Zhang and the Fifth Sun Zhang, giving the LCAF troops a marginal numerical advantage (the Steel Dragon's extra 'Mech battalion went a long way toward nullifying the extra armor and infantry of the Lyran force). Steiner also hoped for a qualitative advantage in pitting his three line units against the DCMS line regiment and two cadre units. However, he knew Theodore Kurita had long

anticipated the invasion of 3039 and so dared not judge the Combine's defenders purely on their paper records.

The battle began on July 29 when the Sword of Light staged a sub-orbital hop in their DropShips, landing on Gershtad's northern coast and establishing a beachhead into which men and material flooded over the next two days. Donegal Guard probes against the landing zone suggested that the Kurita commander was committing his full strength to the campaign, accepting the challenge laid down by General Steiner. Kessel's hostile atmosphere limited the effectiveness of the Lyran infantry (who would play a defensive role during the conflict that followed) and placed their mostly ICE armor at a significant disadvantage. This battle would ultimately be decided by 'Mechs.

On August 1, the Sword of Light left their cantonment and marched toward the Lyran units dug in on the Western Heights. The Sworders charged into a volley of fire from the Lyran Regulars and Skye Rangers, but the devastating missile volleys so effective during the initial invasion were notably less so this time—in the interim, the DCMS units had developed and were using a jammer for the Listen-Kill missiles employed by the LCAF. Furthermore, some of the Combine troops appeared to be using a variant of the LK missiles themselves, against which the Lyran troops had little defense. The Sworders and their Sun Zhang auxiliaries pressed the Skye Rangers and Lyran Regulars hard, using their weight of numbers to push back the opposition. The Second Donegal, serving as a mobile reserve, dispatched several companies to shore up the LCAF line but kept two full battalions ready to pounce on any DCMS weakness.

On 9 August, after just over a week of sparring, the Skye Rangers began to fall back from their positions, compromising the right flank of the Lyran line. Having suffered the Rangers' deceptions before, the Twelfth Sun Zhang Cadre approached the now-abandoned Lyran positions cautiously. The Fifth Sun Zhang, lacking their sibling regiment's prior experience, were less restrained. Despite *Tai-sa* von Nielsburg's orders, they charged headlong in pursuit of their fleeing prey. The swift Second Donegal slammed into the side of the unsuspecting Sun Zhang unit and quickly turned its flank, forcing the DCMS troops on the defensive. Had that been the extent of their troubles, the Fifth Sun Zhang might have fought their way free, but the Rangers stopped their false flight and turned on the DCMS unit with bloody vengeance. Scarcely two companies of the Fifth Sun Zhang escaped the trap and returned to their lines, where they joined the Twelfth for the remainder of the campaign. This victory came at a price for the Lyran force, with almost a battalion of 'Mechs and armor lost across both units.

The Lyran focus on crushing the Fifth Sun Zhang left the Eleventh Lyran Regulars somewhat isolated. In an effort to reduce pressure on the beleaguered Fifth, the Second Sword of Light increased their attack tempo on the Regulars, making their position untenable. When Colonel Vincent Tambor called for assistance, General Steiner ordered the Eleventh to hold its position until the end of the day, by which point its companion regiments would be done with the DCMS cadets. Reluctantly, Tambor obeyed and his regiment stood toe-to-toe with the Steel Dragon. The large

and experienced Sword of Light regiment, whose troopers excelled at open-field operations, brutalized the lighter Lyran force. Artillery and air strikes shattered the Regulars' formation and the unit wavered and broke. An old-style warrior but a staunch supporter of *Kanrei* Theodore, *Tai-sho* Goshi Tengwan personally led his troops' final assault on the Lyran position, closing to within fifty meters of the regimental HQ before the assault stalled in the face of a daring counter-assault by the Regulars and elements of the Second Donegal under the personal command of Caesar Steiner. The sudden and vicious arrival of the Lyran reinforcements rocked the Steel Dragon and forced them to reconsider their options. They could crush what remained of the Eleventh, but doing so would leave them perilously vulnerable to the returning Second Donegal and Fourth Skye Rangers, who were posed to encircle and reduce the Sword of Light. Tengwan ordered his troops to withdraw, ceding the battlefield to the Lyrans, but left a single company to serve as rearguard. None of these survived the ensuing clashes.

August 10 marked the last major contact between the Combine and Lyran forces, but clashes continued between the two armies over the next six weeks, with neither force able to secure a decisive advantage in what became a war of maneuver and pin-prick attacks—a stark contrast to the initial skirmishes between the two units. Unfortunately for the LCAF troops, ISF agents struck at the main Lyran ammunitions depot on September 3. The resultant explosion caused little loss of life or damage to the invaders' force, but placed serious limits on their operations. General Steiner called on the high command for reinforcements and resupply, but neither was forthcoming. Rather than commit resources to the offensives on captured worlds, the generals on Tharkad instead chose to focus their efforts on defensive operations. Caesar Steiner realized there was little hope of victory or even holding out against a renewed Combine offensive, and on October 5 announced his intention to withdraw from Kessel. Bloodied and exhausted, his subordinate officers concurred. The evacuations began two days later.

Though the last of General Steiner's units withdrew on October 9, fighting on Kessel continued until December as the Kessel Freedom Fighters and the *Shiroi Tora* continued their tit-for-tat conflict. By year's end, when it became apparent that the LCAF forces would not return to Kessel, the KFF scaled back their operations and life on Kessel slowly drifted back to the way it had been prior to the invasion.

KONSTANCE (AUGUST-NOVEMBER)

The DCMS counteroffensive initially seemed to bypass Konstance with no more than a minor increase in raids by the Twenty-second Dieron. Generals Bradbury and Duncan, respectively commanding LCAF and AFFS units, continued to pester the allied high command for reinforcements and naval vessels to hunt down the guerrillas, but after the Vega Strike it rapidly became apparent that they could expect no such aid. The Battle for Konstance remained locked in a stalemate, partly of *Sho-sho* Sobiroff's making and partly a consequence of command conflicts. All that changed on August 19 when a new unit, the Third Dieron Regulars, entered the equation.

Jumping into a pirate point from their base on Kaus Australis, the new arrivals made a lightning assault on the city of Epigaus by staging a daring orbit-to-surface drop to within ten kilometers of Lazarus Bay. Though often dismissed for their political orthodoxy, the Third Regulars were accomplished fighters driven onward by their desire to expel the invaders from Combine territory and to avenge themselves on the Lyrans after their bloody clash with the Kell Hounds on Lyons in the Fourth Succession War. Despite being grossly outnumbered, *Tai-sho* James Kurenai deployed his forces to attack the city. Arrayed to the south of Lazarus Bay, the Third Dieron unleashed a ferocious artillery barrage on the LCAF positions, giving them the options of being pulverized in their defenses or coming out to fight on the DCMS' terms. Though lighter than their opponents, the Lyran troops had the numerical advantage and swiftly moved to engage the Dieron force, hoping to use their superior speed to close the distance and outmaneuver the Combine troops. This risky strategy very nearly paid off, as many of the DCMS troops were preparing to assault the city rather than bracing to repel a ferocious counterattack.

Two battalions of the Fourth Lyran Regulars drove toward the DCMS HQ, also the site of its main artillery batteries. Had this advance gone unchecked, it would have delivered a knock-out blow to the Combine counter-assault, dooming efforts to liberate Konstance. As they approached within a kilometer of the DCMS position, however, the Lyran Regulars suddenly shifted their line of advance to avoid the earthworks hastily dug to protect the Combine infantry. Acting almost instinctively, *Tai-sho* Kurenai led his command company forward, slamming into the flank of the Lyran assault force as they maneuvered around the obstacles. The speed and ferocity of this attack rocked the LCAF formation, whose lead elements reported to their command that they were under assault by at least a battalion of heavy 'Mechs. Faced with the prospect of losing a large proportion of his force, Leutenant-General Bradbury ordered his troops to withdraw, leaving behind almost a company of their companions. *Tai-sho* Kurenai's force lost only a lance, though every surviving 'Mech in the company was badly damaged. To this day, almost thirty years after the War of 3039 ended, the Fourth Lyran Regulars refuse to accept that Kurenai's force routed a formation six times its size.

Retreating to Lazarus Bay, the Fourth Lyran Regulars could in theory have held out indefinitely (or at least until their supplies ran low), but the arrival of the surviving Twenty-second Dieron gave the Combine forces the material boost they needed to prevail. On September 3, elements of the Third Dieron, supported by probes from the Twenty-Second Dieron, breached the outer Lyran defenses and began to push into Lazarus Bay. The fighting was brutal, taking place at ranges under a hundred meters and resulting in widespread collateral damage. The urban warfare experience of the DCMS troops quickly took its toll as the Dieron units drove ever deeper into the city. Among the Lyran forces, only the Third Division of Mobile Fire was adept at city fighting, inflicting grievous damage on Kurenai's force and prompting him to slow his advance. Unfortunately, Mobile Fire's success cost

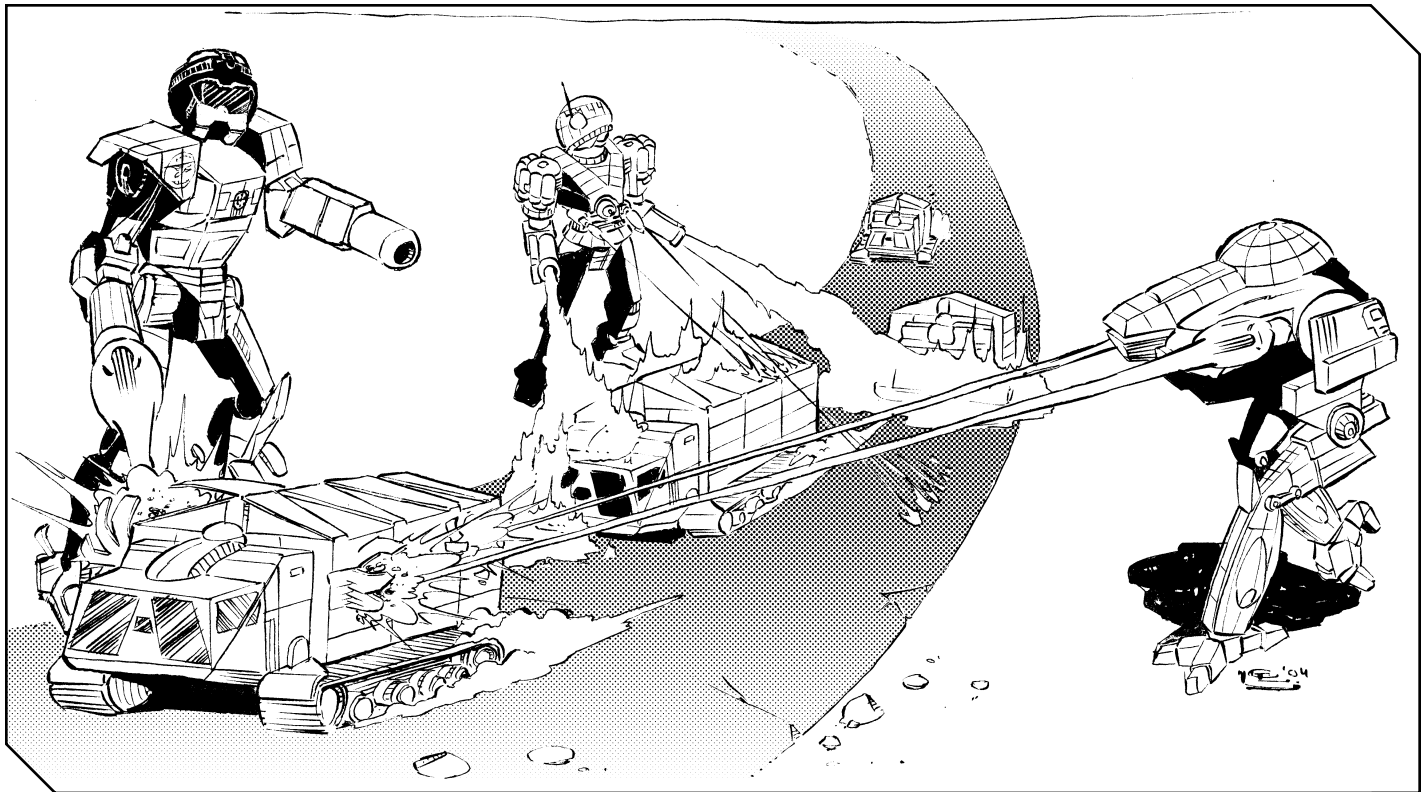
the life of Quinten Moore, leaving command of the merc unit in the hands of his executive officer, Fred Laurencin. By the evening of September 5, Leutenant-General Bradbury realized that the LCAF position was untenable and ordered a withdrawal to his force's DropShips at the port facility. Rather than making a sub-orbital flight to the city of Ishtalia, the Lyran forces boosted into orbit and their waiting JumpShips. General Bradbury, bitter that the Fourth Crucis Lancers under Major General Duncan's command had not come to his aid, characterized the situation on Konstance as unsalvageable and said it was his duty to save what remained of his troops.

In Ishtalia, Major General Charles Duncan was stunned by the Lyran troops' flight. Advanced jammers employed by the DCMS during the counterattack had kept him from receiving any communiqués from them, and so he had no warning of the true situation on the other side of the planet. He believed that even alone, his troops could hold off the combined might of the Third Dieron and Twenty-Second Dieron Regulars. The Lancers' armor, artillery and aerospace strength certainly worked in their favor, but their paucity of infantry left them vulnerable in an urban environment. Furthermore, after the brutal devastation inflicted on Lazarus Bay, neither General Duncan nor *Tai-sho* Kurenai, now coordinating closely with *Sho-sho* Sobiroff, wished for a brutal street-to-street engagement in the capital. The result was a siege that lasted for almost six weeks, characterized by sporadic artillery duels and raids. It rapidly became apparent that the Dieron troops lacked the strength to dislodge the fresh Crucis Lancers, but neither did the AFFS unit have the firepower to overwhelm their opponents or stage a successful breakout.

In late October, General Duncan received the AFFS recall order via his RCT's top-secret fax machines. Within an hour, his communications technicians made contact with the Third Dieron HQ to organize a cease-fire. Two days later Duncan met with Kurenai. The generals exchanged pleasantries and complimented one another on their performance in the conflict. Each agreed that they could do the other considerable harm and that the outcome of the campaign was unclear. Kurenai said further bloodshed would be a waste, and with more delays favoring the DCMS position as campaigns elsewhere in the Combine came to a conclusion, freeing up reinforcements, the *Tai-sho* offered to allow Duncan and his troops to withdraw with their honor intact. The AFFS general accepted and the last Crucis Lancers withdrew on 12 November.

VEGA (JULY-AUGUST)

On July 12, Operation WINTERSCHNEE commanders gathered on Vega in anticipation of orders to launch Wave Two of their offensive. The bloody outcome of that meeting is described elsewhere (see p. 64). In addition to the disarray in which it left the LCAF high command, the Vega Strike threw planetary defenses into chaos. While the DEST attacked the Lyran HQ, ISF agents targeted the local communications net, making it impossible to coordinate defenses on a planetary scale. Instead, defending units would be forced to meet any threat individually, coordinating local defenses via short-range communications.



Fortunately for the Lyran troops, the jamming failed to conceal the arrival of the Second Legion of Vega, which arrived at a pirate point and began landing operations late on July 12. Lyran armor moved to block the Legion's landing but lacked the firepower or resilience to contest the determined DCMS force. Snord's Irregulars moved in to aid the beleaguered conventional forces, but were too small to oppose the Legion directly. Instead, Colonel Rhonda Snord deployed her force in company-size and smaller detachments, tasking each battle group with striking the Kurita unit's vulnerable supply lines and rear areas. Unfortunately for the Irregulars, the Second Legion's strength had been bolstered by elements of the returning Fourteenth Legion, and the battle between the DCMS and the mercenary forces turned into two weeks of bloody skirmishing. The key confrontation between the two sides came in late July when the Irregulars and the Legion clashed in the Carrier Highlands. The mercenaries escaped that bloodbath solely through the sudden intervention of their aerospace forces. Exhausted and battered, the Irregulars remained in the line until July 31 and then withdrew, ceding the battlefield to the Second Legion.

Colonel Snord had hoped to make a tactical redeployment to link up with the other Lyran defenders but found that the remainder of the Fourteenth Legion had returned to Vega accompanied by the Second Dieron Regulars. This gave the DCMS and Lyran forces rough parity in strength, but the allied troops remained hamstrung by their communication difficulties (compounded by ongoing ISF terror attacks). Furthermore, the wounding of General Nondi Steiner on July 12 left command of

Vega and Operation WINTERSCHNEE in the hands of the arrogant Hauptmann-General Kathleen Heany. A staunch "old school" commander, Heany refused to heed Brevet-Marshal James Seymour's suggestions to stage a mobile defense and chose instead to throw her full strength against the invaders in a frontal assault. In stark contrast, *Tai-sa* Jerome Tishilar of the Second Dieron was a staunch supporter of *Kanrei* Theodore Kurita's military reforms and his troops easily outmaneuvered Heany's clumsy efforts to slow their advance. By August 2, the DCMS forces were within range of Neucason, and only a series of spoiling attacks by the Third Davion Guards prevented their assaulting the city. The arrival of the First Grave Walkers a day later caused the Second Dieron some concern, but the mercenaries were pushed back by a determined Fourteenth Legion.

Also on 3 August, Colonel Snord realized the futility of her efforts to link up with the remaining allied forces, seeing as the best part of two 'Mech regiments and twenty conventional units stood in her way. The Irregulars broke contact with the Second Legion of Vega and rendezvoused with their DropShips. Colonel Snord initially intended to stage a sub-orbital hop to Neucason, but using the DropShips' powerful transmitters, she was able to contact Hauptmann-General Heany, who ordered the Irregulars to jump back into the Commonwealth and get in touch with the LCAF high command. Vega's HPG had suffered mysterious "mechanical problems" for much of the previous month, and Hauptmann Heany's own black box had been destroyed in the ISF strike. The Grave Walkers also chose to evacuate Vega, departing on August 9. Two days later, all three DCMS units

THE CAPH HUB

The Terran Corridor world of Caph played a pivotal role in the War of 3039, though it escaped the bloody battles that marked most of the conflicts. The allied militaries had stockpiled massive amounts of equipment on Caph to provision the Dieron Thrust, and many allied troops likewise gathered on the planet to block any attempted breakout by the DCMS on Dieron and in anticipation of the Wave Three assault on the regional capital. At the height of the conflict, eight regiments waited on Caph—a near-fatal surprise to the Ryuken regiments that raided the world late in Wave One (see p. 61)—including most of the mercenary Wolf's Dragoons. As Wave Two was first delayed and then put on indefinite hold, many of these units were released to counter opportunist attacks by the Free Worlds League.

Caph also served as headquarters for Field Marshal Vanessa Bisla, the LCAF-trained commander of the Dieron Thrust, and was thus a prime target for ISF operations in anticipation of the Kanrei's counterattack. However, unlike captured Vega, where Nondi Steiner established her forward command post, few pro-Kurita operatives existed on Caph to aid in ISF infiltration. In fact, the planet's war-ravaged landscape and close-knit population presented major obstacles to ISF operations.

Bisla had established her command post in the planet's second city, New Derry, rather than the capital of Aswan—a decision that further isolated the military hierarchy from contact with the planet's civil government and further reduced opportunities for infiltration. The LIC and the MIIO nonetheless remained vigilant and exposed a number of Kurita agents. The problems caused by these operatives, however, were minimal when compared to the trouble instigated by the planetary ruler, Duke Ban Gustafson. The duke took exception to what he deemed the military's interference in his commercial affairs, in particular the allies' appropriation of space-traffic control for the duration of the military buildup and war, as well as their decision to inspect all civilian DropShips bound to or from Caph. The pre-war situation quickly reasserted itself after the conclusion of hostilities, but tensions between the Gustafsons and the Lyran command would color future relations between the LCAF and the planetary nobles.

focused their attentions on the Third Davion Guards and launched a sustained assault that continued night and day until August 14. Showing a rare flash of insight, Heany issued orders to withdraw late on August 14, and by August 16 Vega was back in DCMS hands.

Heany subsequently blamed underperformance by the mercenary units for her loss of Vega, but an MRBC board of inquiry exonerated the Irregulars and the First Grave Walkers of any wrongdoing.

DIERON THRUST

"My friend, you would not tell with some high zest

To children ardent for some desperate glory

The old lie: Dulce et decorum est

Pro patria mori"

—Wilfred Owen, Dulce et Decorum Est

"Whoever said it was 'sweet and fitting to die for one's country' ought to be taken out and shot."

—Major Donald Trent, Fifth FedCom RCT

The Dieron Thrust successfully isolated the capital of the Dieron Military District from the worlds under its jurisdiction. Because prefecture authorities oversaw routine operations, and because Dieron's ability to communicate with the rest of the Combine via ComStar remained largely unaffected despite the allied blockade, the Dieron Thrust was a mere inconvenience in terms of administration, but adopting a fixed defensive position would ultimately be detrimental to Warlord Noketsuna's forces as they slowly consumed stockpiles and could only replace some of them locally. Coordinator's Directive 3039/132, issued on 21 April and countersigned by the *Kanrei*, ordered Noketsuna to hold Dieron and its attendant worlds at all costs. Noketsuna had already interpreted the directive liberally by dispatching the Ryuken to raid into the Lyran-Federated Suns Terran Corridor. As the war entered a new phase, dictated by circumstances and Theodore Kurita, Noketsuna weakened Dieron's defenses further in order to play his own part in the counteroffensive.

A lesser commander might have followed orders exactly, never gambling, but the old pirate of Dieron knew when to fold and when to double-down. If the allied blockade of Dieron remained in place, Noketsuna's command was doomed, but by taking part in the counterattack he could give the Steiner and Davion troops a nasty surprise and extricate his command from the jaws of the enemy pincer move. Of course, Noketsuna's gamble—and that of Theodore Kurita—could easily have gone wrong. The Warlord of Dieron stripped troops from worlds that were likely to be Wave Two and Wave Three targets—Altair, Cylene, Ashio and Dieron itself—but Noketsuna assumed that if they couldn't stop the Steiner-Davion juggernaut at this point, the troops would simply be destroyed piecemeal.

Noketsuna never deluded himself that the July counteroffensive would be decisive, and the months of fighting that followed on many worlds proved his judgment correct. However, it gave the Combine troops breathing room and forced the Steiner-Davion troops on the defensive. Henceforth, the DCMS would set the pace of the conflict and take the initiative.

ANCHA (JULY-SEPTEMBER)

The guerrilla conflict between the Shin Legion and the Fighting Urukhai continued throughout June and early July and had become almost routine by the eve of the ISF strike at the high command on Vega. The ISF plan instigated by Ninyu Kerai called for increased civil disobedience on all occupied worlds, and Ancha was no exception. At almost the same moment that DEST troops struck at Nondi Steiner on Vega, a massive car bomb exploded on Ancha in the city of New Summit,

damaging the allied administrative complex and triggering a massive security operation.

As members of the Sixth FedCom renewed their policing actions against the civilian population, the Shin Legion resumed its attacks on the Urukhai, this time with increased vigor and full strength. BattleMechs that had remained hidden since the initial allied landings suddenly burst back onto the scene, striking in one- or two-Mech units in areas deemed “secure” by the occupying force. The allies found themselves forced to deal with hundreds of bush-fire conflicts, stretching their manpower to the breaking point.

On July 19, the allies’ situation became even more tenuous when the proficient and experienced Eighteenth Dieron Regulars, previously stationed on Altair, jumped in-system at a pirate point and immediately staged landings in Eastern Normandy. Boggled down with the Shin Legion, the Urukhai were in no position to contest the landing. Meanwhile, the Sixth FedCom was in the wrong place and too busy policing the planet. Only a few attacks by the Sixth’s air wing opposed the Regulars’ landing, and were easily deflected by the DCMS unit’s fighter screen. With just a brief interlude to organize after planetfall, the Regulars immediately launched operations against the allied force. Alpha and Beta battalions under the direct command of *Sho-Sho* James Aren maneuvered themselves between the two allied units, while Gamma Battalion staged a series of swift assaults on the Urukhai positions, keeping them off-balance and giving the Shin Legion time to extricate itself and link up with the Dieron command. The next week saw a succession of minor clashes between the DCMS and allied forces, but no major confrontations had taken place by the first week of August.

On August 8, a company-sized raiding force from the Urukhai found itself isolated by a DCMS battalion and had to fight its way clear. Colonel DeMaestri of the Fighting Urukhai committed extra troops to aid the exfiltration of his soldiers, and *Sho-sho* Aren did likewise. By the early morning of 9 August, two battalions from each side were locked in bitter conflict around the industrial town of Newark. Neither side had sought a major engagement, but they nonetheless found themselves in one. What had started as a five-hour “raid in force” turned into a three-week siege that left much of the city in ruins and all the participants bloodied.

Newark cost the Shin Legion most of its remaining strength—only a company remained functional at the end of that battle—and the Eighteenth Dieron had lost a full battalion. The allies had fared no better. DeMaestri’s sluggers had lost almost half their strength, surviving only thanks to the intervention of ‘Mechs and armor from the Sixth FedCom RCT. In early September, the RCT remained the largest military force on Ancha, but with most of its infantry tied down controlling civil unrest in New Summit and elsewhere, the Sixth’s numerical superiority existed mainly on paper.

On September 19, New Summit itself came under air and artillery attack for the first time. The allied air defenses wrought a horrendous toll on the DCMS fighters, but the Kurita assault

succeeded in its main objective, instilling fear in the hearts of the FedCom troops. That the attack destroyed large quantities of allied stores was an added bonus, though that paled into insignificance compared to the daring raid by *Chu-sa* Basil Itemji (who would eventually rise to command the Dieron unit). Leading a handpicked company, Itemji fought his way into the city and reached the principal medical center. Seizing control of the facility and beating back several FedCom counterattacks, the DCMS unit threatened to stop the supply of anti-viral agents to the occupiers unless they withdrew. The Sixth had stockpiles of the valuable medicine, but knew that every effort to retake the facility risked damaging it beyond repair, and that their supplies would eventually run out if they could not recapture the medical center intact. Initially, the Sixth’s commander refused to comply with the Combine demand that her troops abandon Ancha, but as news began to circulate of disastrous reversals elsewhere in the Dieron campaign that threatened to isolate the captured world, she opted to cut her losses and withdraw. The last Lyran transports boosted from Ancha on September 26.

ATHENRY (JULY-DECEMBER)

Athenry had fallen to the allies with only one major battle, but the planet’s new rulers did not allow the relative ease of their occupation to hamper plans for Athenry’s defense. In many regards the planet’s geography worked in their favor—they could establish a series of strong redoubts, each of which would have to be stormed by any force seeking to control Athenry. Opposing troops would need to land from the sea or air, in both cases exposing themselves to withering defensive fire. Unfortunately, the Blue Star Irregulars lacked skill at this type of warfare, in particular the fast troops of the 1894th Light Horse who instead deployed around the city of New Senna as a rapid-reaction force.

The arrival of a DCMS counter-assault force on 14 July was hardly unexpected, but its composition and origins came as an unpleasant surprise. Jumping from the prefecture capital of Ashio, ironically a Wave Two target, the Twelfth and Twenty-seventh Dieron Regulars were far from elite, but they were determined to crush the invaders. *Sho-sho* Yawatono Kurita, a distant cousin of the Combine’s ruling family, did not have Theodore Kurita’s military insight or command presence, but was well regarded by his troops, many of whom saw him as a “mascot” for the units. Actual command frequently fell to the Regulars’ executive officer, *Chu-sa* Andrew Monett. The regiments believed that having a Kurita as their *de jure* commander, even a fop like Yawatono, meant good luck in the field.

Initially, however, the DCMS’ units’ luck did not hold. The Irregulars contested the Dieron regiments’ run in-system, harassing their DropShips for much of the way to the planet and forcing two vessels too badly hurt for reentry to transfer their cargo to less damaged ships. Adding insult to injury, one of these overcrowded transports—a battered *Excalibur*—suffered drive problems on its descent to Athenry and ditched in the Hoboken Sea. Few of the crew or passengers died in the water landing, but water damage wrecked the DropShip and most of its cargo of tanks.

The Dieron troops spent their first week on Athenry regrouping and reorganizing. Equipped with blue-water naval vessels, including hydrofoils and submarines, they soon began isolating and reducing allied positions in the Larsen Island Chain. The Blue Star 'Mechs could do little against such assaults, and so the allied infantry—supported by mercenary aerospace fighters—bore the brunt. Shore bombardments shattered most infantry positions, but in some cases the DCMS troops only claimed the islands after bitter hand-to-hand fighting. Nonetheless, by the start of September the Combine commanders felt confident enough to extend their “liberation campaign” to the Wandessa and Zubeckis island chains, while staging air raids against allied positions in the Espalars and in particular against the troops dug in on the Lisbon Heights.

Inexorably the Dieron troops advanced, leapfrogging from island to island and exploiting their dominance of the oceans. Though clashes in the Wandessa Chain continued, October 6 saw the first landings in the Espalar archipelago that were quickly contested by the Irregulars' 1894th Light Horse. Bitter clashes erupted round the beachhead at Hauk Point, with DCMS naval weaponry ranged against the determined mercenary 'Mechs. The engagement proved inconclusive, with the DCMS force unable to stage a breakout and the allies lacking the strength to push the invaders into the sea. Air power played a significant role on both sides, offensively and in transporting supplies and personnel. On October 11, the DCMS forces attempted a second breakout but were repulsed with heavy losses on both sides. An attempt on October 15 likewise failed.

By the start of November, the combatants were locked in a war of attrition, their strategic positions stalemated. Even Yawatono Kurita appreciated the predicament, and in a vain effort to break the deadlock, ordered a second landing at Myne Down roughly eighty kilometers from the initial beachhead. This assault, which began on November 8, placed the mercenary forces in a difficult situation. In order to counter the second DCMS landing, they needed to pull troops from the existing cordon, undermining its effectiveness. If they did not, troops from the new beachhead could attack their flanks and rear areas. For two days the mercenary and DCMS troops clashed in a confused melee, but as night fell on November 10, Colonel Jean-Louis Edison pulled his troops back, ceding the coastal strip to the DCMS and retreating to the Agilar Pass that controlled the approaches to New Senna.

Lead forces of the Twenty-seventh Dieron clashed with the 1894th Light Horse and the dug in Twenty-first Rim Worlds Regiment on November 11, but their efforts to force the pass were quickly and harshly rebuffed by the mercenaries. The DCMS troops pulled back and consolidated control over their end of the pass, giving their support troops and equipment a chance to catch up with the lead units. Sporadic artillery bombardments of fortifications in the pass began almost immediately and quickly increased in tempo, turning into a protracted artillery (and counter-battery) campaign that the LCAF high command later nicknamed the “materialschlact” (the munitions offensive) after the prelude to the World War I Somme

Campaign of 1916. Thankfully, what followed bore little resemblance to that bloody historical debacle. The entire battle for Athenry cost around six thousand lives, as opposed to the twenty thousand killed and thirty-seven thousand injured in one army alone on the *first day* of the Somme battle a thousand years earlier. The ten-day bombardment did, however, reduce the Agilar Pass to a ruined mess akin to a moonscape. At first the allied defenders weathered the firestorm, but on the third day they withdrew to the far end of the pass, lodging in the ski resort of Kolos. In the days that followed, the slopes would become the principal battleground for control of New Senna.

The mountainous terrain prevented massive battles as the Dieron Regulars pushed across the ruined Agilar Pass toward the Senna Basin. Instead, the combatants fought a series of lance- and company-sized engagements. On 23 November, the exhausted Twenty-seventh Dieron dislodged the last of the Blue Star Irregulars from Kolos and looked down on its ultimate objective, New Senna. Clearing the remaining Irregulars from the vicinity of the village took another three days, but by the end of November the Dieron Regulars were poised to begin their last push.

Having fought continuously for more than three months, both sides were exhausted and paused for almost a week to consolidate their positions. Alex Duff-Gordon, commander of the Blue Star Irregulars, realized his position was tenuous but knew the LCAF wanted to retain at least some gains in the Dieron district, of which Athenry was one of the few. He also knew, however, that although he could force the Kurita troops to fight in the city—which might take them a month to clear—such tactics would impose a high cost in civilian lives. On December 4, General Duff-Gordon opened negotiations with his DCMS opposite number and they quickly agreed on surrender terms. By 10 December, the last of the Irregulars had departed from Athenry, a decision ultimately supported by General Nondi Steiner if not particularly popular in the LCAF high command.

BIHAM (JULY-SEPTEMBER)

By mid-July, the occupation of Biham was going smoothly and the entire system had come under allied control. Local corporate interests cooperated fully with the Eighth Crucis (Islamabad) Lancers and Laurel's Legion, seeing no reason that the planet's change of ownership should interfere with their commercial pursuits. Having been installed by the Combine, the civil authorities were less willing to deal with the occupiers, but Marshal Swaine's political acumen allowed him to sway the administrators to his cause. He permitted the vast majority to remain in place, reporting to him as military governor rather than to the Combine authorities. Though professing loyalty to Luthien, many of Biham's pragmatic people came to sympathize with the charismatic Swaine. Indeed, the ISF identified Swaine's presence as central to the success of the Biham occupation and enacted measures to neutralize him.

On June 26, the allied command center came under mortar attack as Swaine chaired a meeting of his deputies, and on July 2 the Marshal's cavalcade came under small-arms fire. Security services had anticipated such reprisals, and the LIC and MIIO

staged a series of operations to neutralize the ISF-sponsored guerrilla threat. Neither intelligence agency, however, predicted the extent to which ISF agents would endanger their own people, in particular those seen as “collaborators” with the occupiers.

On July 13, as Marshal Swaine attended a meeting with local business leaders, a massive bomb destroyed the wing where the meeting was taking place. Amazingly, Swaine survived, though he would be hospitalized for several weeks. Twenty-six others died and almost a hundred were injured. After the war, the ISF denied responsibility for this atrocity, but its timing and sophistication leaves little doubt about their complicity, particularly given the arrival in-system of DCMS military forces later that same day. These units, the Fifth and Sixth Ghost Regiments, were completely unknown to the allied intelligence staff, and so the allied forces on the planet had little choice but to fall back on generic tactics for dealing with regular DCMS units. Unfortunately, the Ghost Regiments were not regular units by any stretch of the imagination,

Commanded by *Tai-sa* André Lantau (though the allied intelligence community would not learn his identity until the Clan Invasion), the Fifth Ghost was a yakuza regiment. Its members were staunch believers in gathering intelligence and using it to shape their battle plans. The other Ghost Regiment, the Sixth Ghost under *Tai-sa* Katherine Oltion (also not identified by the Intelligence Secretariat until the 3050s), was similarly unusual—its members were women drawn from the lower segment of Combine society (the *eta* and *hinin* castes), neither of which had traditionally been represented in the DCMS. Both units contained capable warriors, but lacked experience in large-unit operations. This lack of cohesion prevented the Ghost Regiments from delivering a knockout blow to the Islamabad Lancers and Laurel’s Legion, but that did not discourage the DCMS troops from attacking the occupiers soon after landing on July 19.

The Ghost Regiments had clashed briefly with the AFFS force during their run in-system, but the command confusion left by the bombing worked in the counter-invaders’ favor and so they sustained only light casualties. Their landings in southwestern Hoshina went unopposed, with the Eighth Crucis Lancers slow to move against the incursion. The Fifth Ghost quickly made contact with ISF and other intelligence sources and began laying plans to counter and contain the AFFS unit. Meanwhile, Oltion’s Sixth Ghost staged a series of swift raids and assaults against Lancer positions designed to keep them off-balance and to gather information on their positions and tactics. The DCMS force initially bypassed Laurel’s Legion, ensconced in the Tiberius Orbital Station, but Colonel Constance Laurel made several requests to the muddled AFFS commanders to allow her unit to leave Tiberius and contribute to Biham’s defense. Confident of his own troops’ ability and dismissive of the mercenary Legion because of its former ties to House Liao and its all-female roster, the acting commander of the Crucis Lancers denied Colonel Laurel’s request.

The DCMS regiments built their strategy on their own strengths and their opponents’ weaknesses. They staged dozens of company-sized attacks against allied targets all across Hoshina, and also on the polar continent of Borellas and on temperate Quang-tze. The Ghost Regiments lived up to their



BLOOD AND SACRIFICE

[Voice ID Captain Basil Hamel]: What's the *Achilles'* status?

[Voice ID Navigation Officer Lisa McMurray]: Approaching on vector 320-by-36, looping around the *Triumph*.

[Voice ID Captain Basil Hamel]: Hit her again.

[Voice ID Weapons Operator Kanako Mobil]: Firing.

[Weapons cycle]

[Voice ID Weapons Operator Kanako Mobil]: Solid hit.

[Voice ID Sensor Operator James Sakura]: She's venting badly but her drive is still up.

[Voice ID Captain Basil Hamel]: Nail her again. Once she's dead in the water, we can go for the transports.

[Weapons cycle]

[Voice ID Sensor Operator James Sakura]: Got her. She's pretty much done for now—she's popping escape pods.

[Sensors pick up micro-beacons]

[Voice ID Sensor Operator James Sakura]: Aspect shift on the *Achilles!* She's vectoring toward us!

[Voice ID Captain Basil Hamel]: Evade, evade!

[Voice ID Pilot Rica Zanza]: Come on, you sow!

[Drive and maneuvering systems redline. Proximity alarm triggers.]

[Voice ID Captain Basil Hamel]: Brace for impact!

[Impact sounds and multiple system alerts]

[Voice ID Captain Basil Hamel]: Report!

[Voice ID Pilot Rica Zanza]: Attitude control is gone, sir.

[Voice ID Systems Officer Thomas Laurey]: Multiple hull breaches on decks three through six. Structural collapse imminent. Reactor containment unstable, too. She's not going to hold, sir!

[Voice ID Captain Basil Hamel on PA]: Abandon ship. Abandon sh—

[Breakup sounds for 23 seconds]

—Last seconds of the bridge log recovered from the black box recorder of the *Hideyoshi*

instantly, scattering debris over a wide area. The Lyran Commonwealth denied all responsibility for the vessel, but the Combine claimed to have found evidence of LCAF and LIC involvement among the crash debris. Archon Melissa Steiner-Davion refuted these claims and accused the Coordinator and the Warlord of Dieron of attempting to cover up their own mistakes, “seeking to blame the Commonwealth for their paranoid murder of innocent civilians” (as she stated in an address to the Commonwealth in late August). The truth of the matter is unresolved, and the “Dieron Incident” remains a bone of contention between the two states even in the current era of rapprochement.

phantom name, striking one target and fading from view, then hitting another objective a thousand kilometers away just a few hours later. Reacting to these strikes often fell to low-ranking officers—captains and in some cases, lieutenants—whose actions were disjointed and uncoordinated. Attempts to organize a cohesive defensive strategy were hampered by the disarray of the Lancers' command structure after the assassination attempt against Marshal Swaine, and also by the sheer speed of the Ghost attacks. By the time news of the assaults reached Siang, the DCMS forces were already withdrawing, and AFFS counter-moves struck at nonexistent targets.

On August 6, acting Lancers commander Colonel Michael Tigh ordered his troops to form a defensive perimeter around the capital, in effect ceding control of Hoshina except for a tract one hundred kilometers in diameter to the Combine. This move regained command integrity for the AFFS troops and allowed them to counter Ghost raids, but it laid bare their inability to control the entire planet. The Ghost units had essentially cowed their opponents and were well on the way to retaking Biham, commencing artillery and air bombardment of the Davion defenses around the capital two days later. The only question was how high the price of victory would run for both sides.

Hope had begun to fade for the AFFS troops, but the scales tilted dramatically back in their favor late in the afternoon of August 9. Ignoring orders to the contrary, Colonel Laurel abandoned her position on Tiberius Orbital, leaving a skeleton guard detail to control the valuable facility. Dropping behind the Ghost lines, Laurel's Legion turned the tables on the DCMS troops, stinging them with hit-and-fade tactics similar to those they had used against the Lancers. Only battalion-sized, Laurel's command was little match for the Ghost Regiments, but nonetheless forced two battalions of the Sixth Ghost to withdraw from their siege operations. Had the Crucis Lancers counterattacked at this point, the combined allied-mercenary operation might have swept away the DCMS force. Unfortunately the ongoing dispute between the commanders of the Lancers and the Legion hampered efforts to coordinate. Some Lancers units did stage a push on the DCMS lines, but their efforts were half-hearted and unfocused. Beset by a much larger force, Laurel's Legion found itself in a difficult position. On August 27, the mercenaries abandoned Biham, fighting their way though the orbiting DCMS pickets with the *Achilles*-class attack DropShip *Veracity* and ramming the Combine's *Hideyoshi* in the confused melee. The Crucis Lancers, though arguably in a position to hold on for weeks if not months, opted to abandon the planet on September 4, jumping instead to Murchison (see p. 97).

The dispute between Laurel's Legion and the Eighth Crucis Lancers rumbled on for several months, with Tigh accusing the mercenaries of abandoning their posts. An internal AFFS investigation revealed, however, that the Legion had disobeyed orders in support of the Lancers, who had failed to exploit the opening provided by the mercenary troops. Indeed, Tigh narrowly avoided censure for failing to coordinate with the Lancers, only maintaining his posting because of his success at Murchison.

DIERON (JULY)

On July 21, a merchant DropShip on approach to Newbury Spaceport reported an in-flight emergency and veered toward the military landing field at Tatsuyama Mountain, site of the Dragon's Roost. The vessel failed to heed repeated calls by the military flight controller to change its vector, and ten kilometers away from the mountain the DropShip came under fire from the Star League-era weapon batteries that protected the fortress. The big guns destroyed the *Monarch*-class vessel

HALSTEAD STATION (AUGUST)

Frigid Halstead Station fell easily to the Fifth FedCom RCT and the mercenaries of the Fighting Urukhai. Though prepared for a counterattack, the allied units—in particular the inexperienced Fifth—had not anticipated the scale and nature of Theodore Kurita's counter-blow. When news of the attack on Vega and the general DCMS counter-offensive reached Halstead Station, the allied units went on heightened alert, but when no DCMS assault had occurred by early August, the Fifth stood down from its maximum defensive posture. Consequently, the unit was unready when a Combine Flotilla jumped into a transitory pirate point barely five hours out from Halstead Station. By the time unit commanders issued alert orders and recalled its troops from furlough, the planet's orbital defenses were already under assault by DCMS troops. Worse, these attackers were not regional troops from Dieron, but a pair of near-legendary Sword of Light regiments hitherto stationed on Luthien.

The First Sword of Light (nicknamed the Ivory Dragon) under *Tai-sho* Ano Rentoshi systematically reduced the orbital defenses and then staged a daring landing scarcely twenty kilometers from Halstead. Elements of the Fifth FedCom moved against the landing sites, but were repulsed in short order by the Swords, whose Fourth Battalion had landed in drop pods to secure the LZ in advance of their comrades. The Sword of Light immediately began aggressive probes against the FedCom positions, which the defending troops had heavily fortified in the months prior to the counterassault. The Ivory Dragon launched a series of strikes on the allies but made little headway against them. The inexperienced Fifth, pleased to have held off one of the Combine's premier units, did not realize that *Tai-sho* Rentoshi merely sought to pin them down.

With the Fifth FedCom solidly engaged against the Sixth Sword, the Seventh Sword of Light (the Teak Dragon) dropped into the allied rear area amid the AFFS stockpiles. Almost a dozen 'Mechs from the Seventh were lost in the orbit-to-surface drop, but many of the remainder were equipped with advanced technology that more than made up for the losses. The second DCMS regiment immediately attacked the rear of the allied RCT, whose troops became the filling in a bloody sandwich.

The bold assault shattered the Fifth FedCom. More than a battalion of troops under the command of Major Donald Trent deserted from the collapsing RCT, fought their way to the unit's DropShips, and then fled to the Free Rasalhague Republic, where they formed the mercenary Black Outlaws. The remaining troops of the Fifth fought for their lives against the vastly superior Sword of Light regiments. Only a dramatic assault on the First Sword's flank by the Fighting Urukhai allowed elements of the RCT to escape. By mid-August, Halstead Station was firmly back in Combine hands.

KERVIL (AUGUST)

It is an irony of war that the DCMS chose to sidestep well-defended Kervil, which could have held out for at least six months against a Combine army, and instead targeted its neighbors, Pike IV, Kelos IV and Athenry. Initially, Kervil's defenders held fast, but

when extent of the DCMS counterattack became clear, Field Marshal Vanessa Bisla cut orders for Kervil's regiments to move in support of their beleaguered colleagues. The Seventeenth Skye Rangers went to Pike IV and the Seventh Donegal Guards to Nashira, the Guards' last DropShip boosting for Nashira's jump point on August 2. The DCMS reoccupied Kervil in December.

The abandonment of Kervil became one of the most contentious "losses" of the war, particularly in the Isle of Skye, where some leveled accusations that Field Marshal Bisla had made her decision so that Skye would not gain from the conflict. Strategically, however, it was clear that the marshal saw no advantage in holding the world if doing so cost her the troops needed elsewhere to counter the DCMS assault. She had intended to extricate her units from the DCMS trap and focus their efforts where they would do the most good. The relatively unimaginative Bisla had the bad luck to face *Tai-shu* Michi Noketsuna, whose unorthodox tactics were exactly what the DCMS needed.

NASHIRA (JULY-NOVEMBER)

By mid-July, the allied occupation force on Nashira—the Twelfth Vegan Rangers' Delta Regiment and the First FedCom RCT—were engaged in a bloody "police action" to bring order to the planet. Almost everything that could go wrong had—the locals consistently engaged in passive (and not-so-passive) resistance, the planetary government refused to cooperate fully with the allied military commanders, and expected occupation troops were late in arriving. The world had become the front-line soldier's worst nightmare, policing a hostile population in an urban environment.

On 19 July, the First Genyosha (previously stationed on Shitara) jumped into the Nashira system, followed two days later by its twin (whose troops had been forward-deployed to Ashio in support of Dieron, had it faced attack in the later phases of the first invasion wave). Both units had a natural affinity for Nashira, their erstwhile home, and felt obliged to liberate it from the Steiner-Davion oppressors. Though outnumbered by the occupiers, the Genyosha had skill and determination on its side, and commanding officer Narimasa Asano had no qualms about sending his troops against the invaders. Their honor demanded it.

As Melissa Steiner's wedding gift to her husband, and after serving under the command of a Sandoval during the Fourth Succession War, the First FedCom boasted top-of-the-line equipment, none of it more than a dozen years old. However, the FedCom 'Mechs and vehicles lacked the advanced technology of the Genyosha. The DCMS unit could shoot farther and hit harder than its FedCom rivals, and Genyosha 'Mechs could dissipate heat faster and could sustain greater punishment. These technological advantages, though important, paled next to the sheer skill and experience of the elite Kurita warriors. Founded by Yoronaga Kurita, the Genyosha were accomplished thinkers as well as fighters, and always approached the battlefield with a critical eye. Their return to Nashira was no exception. On July 22, the First Genyosha landed on Copenwald and set about establishing dominance. The Second Genyosha monitored the constant stream of battle reports, and after studying the per-

formance of the defenders, chose to “go for the jugular” rather than stage a similar campaign on Katiasha.

Leftenant General de Greer of the First FedCom had spent her months as military governor well, establishing numerous fortified positions and caches across Nashira intended as bases for the pacification of the planet. These bases instead served as redoubts against the vengeful Genyosha. Unfortunately for the Vegan Rangers and the First FedCom, their efforts to suppress the ongoing insurrection left small detachments scattered across the planet, and the speed of the Genyosha assault left many such units isolated. Several emplacements on the southern Copenwald continent, situated to control the planet’s mineral wealth, staged a valiant but futile resistance against the Genyosha onslaught. Most could do little more than slow the attackers down, though by doing so they hoped to give their northern companions time to regroup and prepare.

Realizing that speed and aggression were the key to victory, the Second Genyosha under *Tai-sa* Jürgen Miyabe staged a daring avalanche drop on the Logan City spaceport, landing inside the First FedCom’s defensive perimeter. A chaotic engagement ensued, with both sides coming under attack from unexpected directions. The conflict in the spaceport lasted almost twelve hours, but by the end of July 25 the DCMS held the upper hand and the FedCom survivors abandoned the complex in favor of Logan City itself. Miyabe sent his second battalion in pursuit of the withdrawing troops, but probing attacks against the urban center revealed a dug-in and well-prepared force. Miyabe’s coup-de-main attack had secured the Genyosha a foothold, but had not won them the battle.

Tai-sa Miyabe did not relish attacking the well-defended city and so he held fast in the spaceport complex, building up his own defenses while staging probing attacks for weaknesses against allied positions. His superior, Narimasa Asano, concurred with Miyabe’s caution and dispatched his own Third Battalion to bolster the spaceport force while the remainder of the First Genyosha dealt with allied resistance in and around the industrial city of New Anaheim. By August 8, the situation was well in hand and Asano dispatched a second battalion to Logan City. Though facing a considerable challenge and greatly outnumbered, Asano believed his elite forces would prevail in short order, and that by the end of the month Nashira would once more be under the Combine’s authority. On Caph, Field Marshal Vanessa Bisla disagreed

August 9 began well for the DCMS troops, with a series of successful early morning attacks by the Genyosha and some ISF-equipped irregulars dislodging a Vegan Rangers’ detachment from one of Logan City’s industrial suburbs. However, the allied force put up stiff resistance and slowed the Genyosha advance. As Asano prepared to lead a second thrust, news arrived from the DCMS vessels in orbit of new ships arriving at the zenith jump-point. The Seventh Donegal Guards, who had abandoned Kervil a week earlier, had arrived to bolster the allied force. These experienced troops and their savvy leaders posed a grave threat to the Genyosha, who pushed hard against the Logan City defenses but quickly realized they could not complete their conquest of the city

before the allied reinforcements landed. Rather than get caught between two allied forces, Narimasa Asano ordered his troops to abandon the Logan City spaceport on August 10.

Hopes of a swift victory by either side faded rapidly. Nashira devolved into a battle of wits and subtle moves between two skilled commanders, Narimasa Asano and Daniel Voss-Steiner. The added strength of the Donegal Guards allowed the allies to adopt a more aggressive stance and to retake lost territory, but the Genyosha commander ensured that he, rather than his Lyran opponent, retained the initiative. What followed was a six-week campaign of raids and counter-raids as the proficient and technologically advanced Genyosha pitted their strength against the more numerous but embattled allied regiments. The allies controlled Logan City and recaptured many of the mining installations on Copenwald, but as soon as they captured one complex, they found the Genyosha had denied them another. Spurred on by the Genyosha raiders’ success, the ongoing civil disturbances escalated throughout September and reached fever pitch in the second week of October. For the most part, militia attacks against the allies were pinpricks, but sapped their resources in security details and counter-operations. The chemical attack at Raven Ridge (see *Pandora’s Box*, p. 85) proved the exception to the rule, resulting in a massive loss of allied lives and prompting assaults by the Genyosha against the militia bases. In the wake of Raven Ridge, both sides became disenchanted with the conflict and the tempo of battle for Nashira cooled markedly. The rest of October saw only a handful of clashes between the opposing forces.

Though willing to heed the recall order issued in October, many of the allied troops deployed on Nashira saw their withdrawal as a betrayal of those who had sacrificed their lives earlier in the campaign. Voss-Steiner made it clear, however, that he in no way held the Genyosha responsible for Raven Ridge. In fact, he praised their decisive action in crushing the terrorists and aiding the allied victims. The withdrawal from Nashira remained a bitter pill for many in the LCAF for years to come, especially in light of after-action analysis that suggested ISF involvement in the Raven Ridge incident.

PIKE IV (JULY-NOVEMBER)

The brutal destruction of the Pike Defenders cowed most of the population on Pike IV, though it did little to win the people over to the Lyran cause. Rumors of atrocities and the ill-treatment of prisoners followed the one-sided engagement and led to enormous local resentment. The ISF played a key role in this war of words, shaping and encouraging the rumors and using them to foster resistance among the occupied population. LIC counter-operations were only marginally successful, with that agency’s resources overstretched by the scale of the campaign and the ongoing intelligence conflict with ComStar. None of Pike IV’s inhabitants had any love for the occupiers, but mutual distrust between highlanders and lowlanders hampered efforts to establish coordinated resistance. Unlike their highlander cousins, the lowlanders had no love for the Combine either, and once honor was satisfied by brief clashes with Lyran troops, the

situation in the lowlands returned to something like normality after the occupation of Rolfschire.

Ironically, the highlanders, whose military resistance to the occupation was half-hearted at best, would pose the greatest problems for the allies in terms of vocal criticism and civil disturbance. By late June, almost three-quarters of the allied troops were deployed in the highlands to maintain order, with Hansen's Roughriders being the main force committed to the lowlands. Though sniping and sabotage were commonplace, allied casualties on Pike were surprisingly light until the arrival of a DCMS counter-invasion force on July 19.

Comprised of the Twenty-fourth Dieron Regulars and the Fifth Sword of Light (the Gold Dragon), the Kurita force was a mixed bunch. The Dieron troops were inexperienced, generally serving as security or cannon fodder. The Fifth Sword of Light, on the other hand, had a fearsome reputation solidified on Northwind and Nusakan during the Fourth Succession War. Staunch believers in "the end justifies the means," the elite Fifth Sword could be counted on to use every dirty trick in the book to ensure victory.

Rather than splitting his forces, the Sword of Light's commander, *Sho-sho* Jonathan Fujimoto, chose to focus his initial efforts on equatorial Karasia. A deadly game of cat-and-mouse erupted between Hansen's Roughriders and the Gold Dragon regiment, the mercenaries realizing that even their skill and experience could not meet the challenge of the elite and well-equipped Sworders. For just over two weeks after the landings on July 28, Colonel Hansen avoided significant confrontations with the DCMS force, but on August 13 Fujimoto cornered a mercenary battalion in the mining settlement of Mercator with all four of his own battalions. The mercenaries hoped the urban environment would discourage the Combine regiment, but the Gold Dragon was well versed in urban combat. The Fifth Sword pressed into the city much faster than the allied troops expected, inflicting grievous damage on the mercenaries (as well as considerable collateral damage) before fighting their way clear. Less than half of Hansen's battalion escaped to rendezvous with the rest of the mercenaries, and most of the surviving units were badly damaged. The mercenaries swiftly withdrew to the highlands. The assault on Mercator demonstrated the strength of the Sword of Light, but also reinforced the lowlanders' poor opinion of the Combine.

By August 20, Karasia was solidly under the Sword of Light's control. They left the Dieron Regulars' third battalion as a garrison force while the main contingents of both DCMS units moved against the allied positions. Unfortunately for the Gold Dragon, their cat-and-mouse feints with the Roughriders had given the allies sufficient time to reinforce their positions. In addition, the Seventeenth Skye Rangers had relocated to Pike IV from Kervil. After blasting past the DCMS orbital pickets five days earlier, the Rangers were entrenched around Stratopolis when the DCMS assault began.

Hoping to repeat the success of Mercator, Fujimoto sent his second battalion under *Chu-sa* Hohiro Tatsuma on a deep raid into the allied line, aiming to demonstrate the Sworders' strength and courage. Tatsuma expected a tough fight, but the sheer ferocity of the LCAF defense astounded him, with infantry "mugging" many of his lighter 'Mechs as they passed by. After scarcely ninety minutes, Tatsuma broke off the incursion and withdrew to the Sworders' lines. For all their strength and experience, the Fifth Sword would not succeed in storming Stratopolis.

A localized highlander insurrection, orchestrated by the ISF to coincide with Tatsuma's assault, fizzled, and by the end of August the LCAF was back on the offensive. The lines between the two forces eventually stabilized about three hundred kilometers south of the capital in mid-September, the vulnerable allied supply chain hampering further expansion on the ground. Allied aerospace fighters faced no such restrictions, however, and the combined aerial might of the Thirtieth Lyran and

PANDORA'S BOX

PFC Williams: Never trust a snake. One minute he claims to be honorable and the next he releases a chemical weapon in your midst.

Interviewer: Kurita troops instigated the terror-weapon attack?

PFC Williams: They stood to gain from it, eliminating our garrison in one fell stroke.

Interviewer: Did you actually see members of the DCMS release the agent?

PFC Williams: Not personally. I was in the command center.

Interviewer: So it could have been terrorists, as the Genyosha claimed?

PFC Williams: They're just covering their backs. The Snake commander realized he'd gone too far and sent in troops to kill his own people as a smokescreen, making themselves out to be as much victims of circumstance as we are.

Interviewer: You don't believe the DCMS were as horrified as they claim?

PFC Williams: Remember a little place called Kentares? Raven Ridge is small fry compared to that, but the Combine obviously believes in brutal terror tactics. How about Hephaestus Station in the prelude to the Fourth Succession War? Or Northwind? You want to tell me the Combine's above such tactics when almost two hundred of my friends and comrades will never see their loved ones again?

Interviewer: And the Genyosha medical assistance after the battle? Was it acceptable? Did they treat you well?

PFC Williams: I was one of the lucky ones. I only had to undergo decontamination, if you call stripping in front of dozens of Snake troops and then being showered down decon. Their docs were fine, very solicitous, though I guess you can put that down to a guilty conscience. I would've waited for a checkup with our own quacks, but these guys were supposed to be specialists.

Interviewer: The Genyosha had a hazardous materials team on standby?

PFC Williams: They said they were just regimental medics, but they had all this HazMat gear that our guys don't. Not exactly standard-issue kit.

Interviewer: In the LCAF or the AFFS, perhaps not, but I understand the DCMS prepares for such eventualities at a regimental level.

PFC Williams: Whatever. It strikes me as suspicious that they had trained guys in the area, though.

—Extracts from an interview with PFC Rachel Williams (First FedCom RCT) after the Raven Ridge incident

Seventeenth Skye made short work of the DCMS aerospace force. With aerospace superiority assured, they began near-constant sorties against the Sworder positions, mixing strategic attacks against DCMS supply, command and communication facilities with close air support and ground attacks. The Sword of Light, though far from defeated, was slowly being ground down. As October progressed, an eventual LCAF victory seemed assured.

General Tanner of the LCAF greeted the October recall orders with disbelief, convinced that it was only a matter of time before he ejected the DCMS troops and regained full control over Pike IV. His views found some support in the high command, but Field Marshal Bisla realized that the withdrawal of troops from other worlds would free up additional DCMS resources and there was no guarantee of continued Lyran dominance on Pike. Though mauled by Tanner's forces, the Fifth Sword and Twenty-Fourth Dieron remained combat-effective, and if reinforced, could endanger the allied RCTs. On November 6, Hansen's Roughriders' contract lapsed and the mercenaries withdrew from the battlefield. Deprived of their aid, General Tanner realized the precariousness of his situation and ordered his command to relocate to Dyev, a task they completed with minimal DCMS interference over the next ten days.

Immediately after the war, Fujimoto, feeling that his regiment's poor performance on Pike was a stain on his honor, petitioned the Coordinator for permission to commit seppuku. Though the *Kanrei* opposed such a move, which would cost him an excellent officer, he chose not to intervene. *Chu-sa* Tatsuma served as Fujimoto's second in the ceremony and ascended to command of the unit. He presided over the difficult task of rebuilding, which would not be completed for many years.

SADACHBIA (JULY-DECEMBER)

The combination of psychological warfare and terrorist operations on Sadachbia had left the Eighth Deneb Light Cavalry and the mercenary Redfield's Renegades at a low ebb. The DCMS knew it had to maintain the pressure, but lacked the resources to stage a significant counteroffensive against the world. The ISF argued, however, that the Combine merely required sufficient force to keep the allies off-balance while the DCMS deal with other worlds.

In a calculated gamble, the Ninth Dieron Regulars under *Tai-sa* Lisa Montgomery withdrew from Cylene and traveled to Sadachbia. This troop shift condemned the Ninth's former garrison world to allied occupation (see p. 97), but the *Kanrei* considered this an acceptable trade for regaining the heart of the Dieron district. A faulty JumpShip stalled the Ninth's original offensive, planned for July 23, but on 1 August the Regulars blasted past the Eighth Cavalry pickets and staged a combat landing on the continent of Grangi. Montgomery's force could not hope to prevail against even a demoralized Deneb RCT and its mercenary allies, but the Regulars could add to the chaos, staging hit-and-run attacks against allied positions and supply convoys throughout August and well into September.

On September 19 the first substantial battle between the Regulars and the Eighth Deneb took place on the outskirts of

the spaceport city of Kamalabad. A Dieron 'Mech battalion clashed with an allied combined-arms force of similar size, and though the DCMS unit forced the Cavalry to withdraw after six hours of bloody fighting, it in turn was trapped by allied reinforcements. The Dieron unit established a strong defensive perimeter, and a two-week siege ensued as the Eighth Deneb sought to eject them while the remainder of the Regulars sought to lift the siege. Montgomery faced a difficult choice. She could abandon her trapped battalion, sacrificing part of her force to save the whole, or she could concentrate her force and throw away her advantages of mobility and surprise. This typically Kurita paradox pitted honor against duty. Which was stronger, loyalty to the Combine or to her troops?

After much soul-searching, Montgomery chose the former (and ultimately atoned for the stain on her honor in the traditional manner after the end of the campaign). On October 4, the allies overran the last DCMS position at Kamalabad. The Dieron troops had sold themselves dearly, taking a substantial number of Deneb and mercenary soldiers with them, but their loss inflicted a major psychological wound on the Regulars. Some attempted to avoid combat, while others took ever-greater risks. Both reactions hampered the Regulars' combat effectiveness. When the Eighth Deneb sought to leave Sadachbia after the recall orders at the end of October, their DCMS opponents finally threw off their funk and renewed their attacks on allied positions, making it very difficult for the Eighth Deneb to disengage. Garrison troops were pinned down all over Sadachbia and had to be extricated one by one, a process that took several weeks as the outlying forces were brought into the steadily shrinking allied zone of control. The last allied DropShip departed Sadachbia on December 11, and later that day the Dieron Regulars occupied Jalna'ir. Two days later, Montgomery took her own life to atone for her lost battalion. She was succeeded by the jovial but inexperienced Mao Sheng-Jo, whose incompetence destroyed the unit when they faced the Nova Cats a dozen years later.

TELOS IV (JULY-OCTOBER)

The arrival of the Second Benjamin Regulars changed the conflict on Telos IV from a cold war of disdain and snubs to a hot one of bullets and bombs. The arrival of the Kajikazawa-based unit caught the defenders off-guard; the allied war books contained only minimal details about the Second Benjamin, whom no one expected to be a factor in the conflict until the third or fourth invasion waves. The Second faced minimal resistance during their run in-system from the nadir jump point, but the allied orbital defenses were considerably more robust. Fighters from the Avalon Hussars wrought considerable damage on the DCMS transports before they could disgorge their cargo. The fighters also destroyed several dozen drop cocoons as they plummeted through the atmosphere, but more than two battalions of Combine 'Mechs reached the ground and secured a landing zone for their infantry and armor despite concerted efforts by the Avalon Hussars and Vegan Rangers to overrun their position. By July 20, the whole Second Benjamin battle group was on the ground about a hun-

dred kilometers west of Triumph, and though heavily outnumbered they posed a grave threat to the allied position.

The allied forces continued to press the Second Benjamin's defenses and by late July had committed almost their full strength to the operation that nonetheless made slow progress. *Sho-sho* Tartikoff's spirited defense demonstrated the leadership abilities that would eventually secure him a prefectural command as he drew the Avalon Hussars and Vegan Rangers further from Triumph, trading ground and troops for time he needed to execute his orders. On August 13, with the main battle lines roughly two hundred kilometers from the capital, the jaws of the DCMS trap closed.

The Forty-first Dieron Regulars, who had arrived a week earlier and were waiting behind Sadib, Telos' solitary moon, staged a rapid approach and landing. Despite their inexperience, the Dieron troops had practiced long and hard for this assault. They captured the planetary capital in a daring coup-de-main landing, overwhelming the small allied garrison in less than five hours of fighting. The Hussars and Rangers found themselves suddenly cut off from their DropShips (which had been seized by the daring Dieron assault) and many of their supplies. The allied planetary command center also fell in the attack, though General Aileen Lugo of the Avalon Hussars and Colonel Connie Desantis of the Vegan Rangers were both absent at their forward command centers. The operation cost the green Forty-first dearly, with almost a third of the regiment rendered inoperable by allied attacks or damage sustained during landing operations. Nonetheless, they had delivered what they expected to be a knockout blow to the invaders, though they had not counted on the determination of the allies.

Immediately after the capture of the Triumph spaceport complex, *Sho-sho* Tartikoff began a series of counterattacks against allied positions and also broadcast calls for the stranded units to surrender. He received a short and disrespectful response from General Lugo, who made it abundantly clear that the allied force would not simply give up. Instead, the Hussars and the Rangers accelerated the tempo of operations against the Combine troops. A flanking attack by the Vegan Rangers forced the Benjamins to give ground and provided the Avalon Hussars with an opportunity to disengage and turn their attentions toward the Dieron Regulars. The battle for Telos quickly turned into two campaigns, one involving the Vegan Rangers' Gamma Regiment and the Second Benjamin Regulars, and the other the Twenty-second Avalon Hussars and the Forty-first Dieron. Neither would be resolved quickly.

The Rangers' campaign was designed to contain Tartikoff's troops and prevent them from supporting the beleaguered Dieron Regulars. Both units staged aggressive moves intended to keep the other off-balance, but major confrontations were few and far between. By late August this war of maneuver had yielded little concrete result, though in preventing a link-up between the Dieron and Benjamin Regulars, Connie Desantis had effectively done what was asked of her.

The Avalon Hussars took a much more direct approach in a series of frontal assaults on the Dieron positions that quickly overran elements of the inexperienced DCMS regiment. Unfortunately for General Lugo, radical elements of the Telosian population joined the fight on the DCMS side, and so in addition to the green Dieron troops she found herself engaged against several hundred irregulars who struck from hiding and then faded back into the city. The Dieron Regulars lacked the prize crews to remove the captured DropShips from the spaceport, but managed to turn their guns on their erstwhile owners as they sought to recover the vessels. The battle for the spaceport became a bloody war of attrition as the Hussars fought to regain control of their transports while inflicting minimal damage on them. The allies took disproportionately high losses during the campaign, but by the end of August they had reduced the last pockets of resistance in the spaceport and regained control of all except two of their DropShips, both of which had been destroyed in the fighting.

The campaign cost the Hussars dearly. Almost half their troops were dead or injured and much of their equipment damaged. They still outnumbered the Dieron Regulars, but lacked the ammunition and equipment to make repairs—though unable

A CRIME OF BUREAUCRACY

Fomalhaut wasn't the only world abandoned by the FedSuns (or even the Lyran Commonwealth) during the War of 3039, but after the war it became the most famous, or more appropriately the most infamous.

The world owed its significance to its location in the Terran Corridor, which made it an interstellar trade crossroads and a strategic military holding. Because of that, the AFFS had stationed an elite RCT on the world for as long as the FedSuns claimed it. The Second Davion Guards had most recently defended the planet, since before the end of the Third Succession War.

Unfortunately, the Second Guards had been sent elsewhere when the Combine struck back and took Fomalhaut in 3039. Worse, at least for the members of the Second Guards, the Federated Suns leadership seemingly turned its back on the planet, refusing to authorize a military operation to take Fomalhaut back. To the career politicians and bureaucrats in the AFFS and the FedSuns government, the loss of Fomalhaut was the cost of doing business, and the planet itself was just another write-off.

To the Second Davion Guards, Fomalhaut was home. The unit had not pulled out of the world; it had simply mobilized to take part in an invasion. The Second left behind a significant stockpile of supplies, spare parts and ammunition, along with all of their repair garages, training facilities and offices. They also left behind far more significant hostages to fortune: their families and friends. The AFFS could replace the facilities and other materiel—such things were never the issue, despite what the bureaucrats implied later. The people, however, were by far a different matter. Hundreds of thousands of relatives, dependents and friends of serving Davion Guardsmen lived on Fomalhaut, and a large percentage of retirees from the unit chose to remain among the close-knit community they had built there. The AFFS' decision to abandon Fomalhaut left all of them cut off behind enemy lines.

Consequently, Fomalhaut became the one world in the Inner Sphere with the most severe insurgent problem. With so many ex-AFFS personnel on the planet, the occupying Combine forces had an almost impossible time putting down rebel activity. The Combine troops did not balk at killing civilians, but rarely dispatched one

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without seeing one of their own injured or killed. At the same time, the Second Guards RCT nearly went rogue. Only a surprise Capellan attack on Addicks kept them from immediately taking Fomalhaut back. In December of 3039, they took up station on Caph, and a month later they launched the first of a long string of unauthorized raids on their former homeworld.

Field Marshal Vanessa Bisla initially attempted to end these raids by bringing the RCT's senior leadership up on charges, but Field Marshal James Sandoval summarily dismissed them. He and Field Marshal Ran Felsner apparently gave the RCT considerable covert assistance, including deflecting bureaucratic moves to block the unit's activities. Simultaneously, Field Marshal Ardan Sortek began back-door negotiations with *Kanrei* Theodore Kurita to arrange for the return of POWs as well as family and "political dissidents"—the friends and veterans who were causing so much damage.

By mid-3041, hundreds of thousands of individuals from the few recently conquered planets left their occupied homeworlds and returned to their home nations—among them the "rebels" of Fomalhaut. While that did not end the efforts of the Second Davion Guards—or the Twenty-Second Avalon Hussars in attempting to liberate their home planet of Quentin, or the Ninth Dieron Regulars' efforts to retake Cylene—it did much to quell rebellions on those worlds.

Twenty-odd years later, the Fomalhaut disaster is well remembered by the members of the Second Guards, though Hauptmann-General William Kossacks has done much in his dozen years as unit commander to heal those festering wounds. Field Marshal Bisla continued to feel the fallout of her minor involvement for years, but those who suffered most were a handful of career bureaucrats in the AFFS high command and FedSuns government. Four general officers and three additional senior officers were cashiered from the service, while five more civilian bureaucrats saw their careers end. Three ultimately died at the hands of vengeful Second Guards veterans, the latest just two years ago.

—From *The Culture That Doesn't Forget*, Dr. Andrea Paliwoda, ComStar Archives, 3060

to steal the DropShips, the DCMS troops had "liberated" the supplies they carried. General Lugo petitioned for resupply, but when Field Marshal Bisla informed her of the difficulty in doing so, the general had to choose between abandoning the world or risking everything on a last gamble to recapture supplies from the DCMS. Lugo preferred the latter, but she had her own troops and the Vegan Rangers to consider. On September 22, Lugo ordered her troops aboard their DropShips, which promptly staged a sub-orbital hop to rendezvous with the Rangers. The last allied troops withdrew from Telos IV on 2 October. Though Marshal Bisla concurred with Lugo's decision, doubts would plague the general for the rest of her career.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIONS

Confusion was the operational word in July of 3039 on all three sides of the fight. Differing degrees of confusion in the AFFS, LCAF and DCMS hampered the operations of each nation and their militaries. Reports coming in from all fronts overwhelmed the three militaries' intelligence services as they all attempted to respond promptly and decisively to enemy moves. In some cases, the lack of reports was even more troublesome than an overabundance of intelligence, as inaccurate as most of it may have been.

Nevertheless, as July began, the AFFS and LCAF gave the orders to proceed with Wave Two. The allied senior commanders simply did not see enough evidence of a serious Combine counter-offensive to postpone the next assault wave. Sufficient evidence would present itself before long and lead to the ultimate cancellation of Wave Two, but not until a number of units had gotten under way or even reached their target worlds.

Altair (July)

The Second Davion Guards RCT had already prepared to move in late June, so when it received orders in early July to strike, the entire unit left Fomalhaut and was soon well on the way to destroying the Altair Militia, the only defenders on Altair after the Eighteenth Dieron Regulars left to strike at Ancha. Marshal Rudy Pinada of the Second interpreted his orders with wide latitude, and had all but taken command of the planet when supplementary orders came for his unit to return to the Federated Suns. Marshal Pinada contacted Field Marshal Bisla for confirmation, especially in light of his unit's successes on Altair, adding that he could easily stage additional spoiling attacks "behind" Dieron or even on that important world. Bisla confirmed the orders for the Second Guards to leave Altair and routed them to Addicks via Caph, bypassing Fomalhaut—though without informing them that the Combine had already taken that world, a mistake that caused years of trouble with the Second Guards.

BENJAMIN THRUST

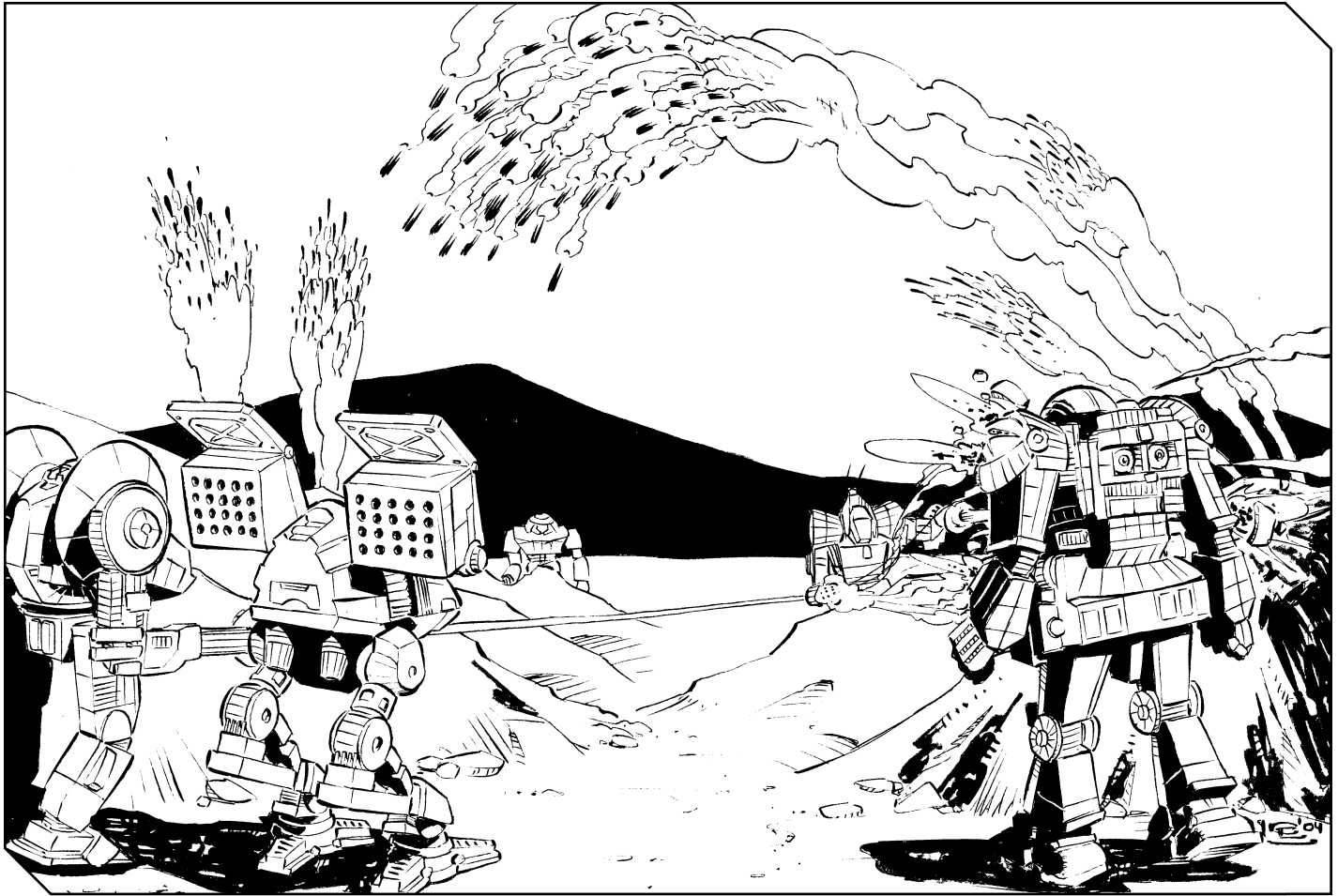
"In the absence of orders, go find something and kill it."

—Field Marshal Erwin Rommel

"There are many who profess to understand the basic tenets of combat and yet who have never once set foot upon a battlefield. They will tell you exactly what you did wrong, touting this principle or that and quoting Sun-Tzu as if his words were from God himself. But anyone who's actually led men into battle knows this one, basic truth: always keep on the move, pushing forward with everything you have as fast as you can. Even if sometimes that happens to be in the opposite direction from the enemy."

—Terran Hegemony Field Marshal Mears Coblitz, as quoted by Tai-sho Hideki Grauman

Many in the DCMS saw Field Marshal James Sandoval's assault into the Benjamin Military District as destined to fail. Of course, most of those who thought so were long-time Combine officers who subscribed to the belief that their nation would overcome the "Davion invaders" simply because their citizens and their soldiers possessed the stronger will. They also believed that Sandoval and his troops were acting solely out of



hatred for the Combine and revenge for perceived injustices over the years. While the latter belief was at least rooted in truth, *Kanrei* Theodore Kurita and his advisors knew their comrades were largely mistaken. If the Draconis Combine were to survive, its military would have to do more than sit back and let the AFFS and LCAF come to them. “Hold at all costs” orders would only lose them men and worlds. They needed to do something more.

That realization led to strong counterattacks across the entire border shared with the Federated Suns and the Lyran Commonwealth. Along the Benjamin frontier, the *Kanrei* made a concerted push, moving non-traditional units such as four Ghost Regiments and the Amphigean Light Assault Groups right to the front line, and even bringing in additional support from the Galedon Military District to aid in the effort. Likewise, a number of Benjamin units were sent to fortify the Dieron district. *Kanrei* Kurita’s personal interest in the fight for the Benjamin district ultimately took him into the Federated Suns and won the war for the Draconis Combine.

FELLANIN II (AUGUST-SEPTEMBER)

Up to this point in the war, events on Fellanin II had followed a typically linear path, with two regiments of the Eridani Light Horse striking the world and ultimately crushing its defenders.

August changed that, however, bringing surprises for both sides.

General William Petersen received orders to proceed with his Wave Two assault on 11 July 3039, just as he and his Eridani Light Horse were making their final assaults on Fort Jinjiro. As soon as his mercenaries managed to reduce the DCMS pocket within that position, he directed the Twenty-First Striker to immediately prepare to leave the planet. A few days later, however, Petersen received follow-on orders to hold, which proved doubly frustrating to the mercenaries as the 151st Light Horse Regiment had been in-system for several weeks waiting to link up with the Twenty-First Striker and continue on to Homam. Petersen contacted Field Marshal Sandoval via HPG to verify the orders, and shortly thereafter received confirmation. Within that message was authorization for Petersen to “use [his] discretion [in carrying out] the objectives given the ELH at the outset of the operation.” Petersen took that to mean he had implicit orders to carry out the assault on Homam, and so he ordered the Twenty-First Striker to continue preparations to leave. The two ELH regiments finally left the system on 12 August.

That move, reported up the chain of command in the AFFS and the DCMS, triggered a series of events that nearly destroyed the Seventy-First Light Horse Regiment. New Avalon

BUREAUCRACY AND A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE

In the Eridani Light Horse's more than three and a half centuries of history, we have survived the worst that humanity could possibly throw at us—from the decline of the Star League to the war against Amaris to the Succession Wars. We've tempted fate and looked death in the face. Some of us lived to tell the tale, but many more—far too many more—have fallen on the fields of blood. We are warriors, however, and though our way of life is dangerous, we also know that were it not for individuals like us, life and liberty would not exist in the Inner Sphere.

We have come to expect loss. We do not relish it, but neither do we shy away from it. It is a constant that we must accept, just as we realize our DropShips can only carry so many supplies. We affect what variables we can, and plan for the best and the worst.

We expect nothing less than the best from our own. Our rank-and-file know their leaders will put forth their absolute best effort to give them the chance to win the battles they fight, and those soldiers, pilots and MechWarriors consequently give their all because they know the fate of the Eridani Light Horse rests on their shoulders. Likewise, our soldiers, pilots and MechWarriors do not tolerate mediocrity in their own ranks. Those who do not willingly give their all do not last long in the Light Horse.

Because of this, the entire Light Horse felt the betrayal on Fellanin. Our brothers and sisters died solely because of the ignorance of a politician—someone who never once had to place his own fate in the hands of others. Our trust was betrayed, and many of us paid the ultimate price. We can no longer tolerate such mediocrity among those responsible for our lives. We will no longer accept anything but the highest integrity from those who would command us!

—General William Petersen, 9 November 3039, in a letter to First Prince Hanse Davion

Neither of the units that accompanied him—the Seventh Crucis Lancers and the Second New Ivaarsen Chasseurs—was scheduled to participate in Wave Two assaults, and would not be needed until the high command decided on a Wave Three invasion of Proserpina. Unit personnel could therefore devote their time and energy to forging a relationship with Klathandu's citizens. Initial reports from Marshal Vaskursian indicated success in this endeavor, though later events would prove those reports false.

Vaskursian and his troops redoubled their efforts as soon as they learned of the Combine counterattacks, while constructing what fortifications they could in expectation of an eventual DCMS strike on the world. At that point, the people of Klathandu began resisting assimilation. Though happy to help strengthen their homeworld's infrastructure, they refused to aid in construction and bolstering of fortifications and other military facilities, whether or not those facilities lay within their home cities.

heard about the ELH's move first, and a mid-level deputy issued a stern disciplinary message to General Petersen, criticizing him for abandoning Fellanin and pursuing an unauthorized mission. Field Marshal Sandoval received a copy of the reprimand, and knowing that the Seventy-First still held Fellanin II, indicated to Petersen that he should continue to operate under his own discretion. Then intelligence officers on New Avalon learned that the Combine's Second Arkab Legion was being routed to Fellanin II. When the mid-level deputy learned this, in conjunction with the heavy resistance the AFFS was experiencing across the front, he issued orders to the conventional AFFS brigade on Fellanin II to withdraw from the world. He assumed, wrongly, that all of the ELH regiments had moved on to Homam.

The 2854th Mechanized Brigade Heavy (Provisional) departed Fellanin II on 16 August, leaving only the Seventy-first Light Horse to deal with continued resistance on the planet as well as with the Second Arkab Legion. The in-system arrival of the Second Arkab on 23 August came as a complete surprise to the Seventy-first, whose intelligence briefings were being directed to Homam. Worse still, the commander of the Second Arkab, *Tai-sa* Marissa Groh, had communicated with surviving DCMS elements on the world and ordered them to launch a coordinated attack on all ELH positions just before the Arkab Legion grounded.

That left Colonel Cleveland Alfieri and his Seventy-first Light Horse in an untenable situation. The remnants of the Fourth Proserpina Hussars, less than a battalion of 'Mechs reinforced by nearly two battalions of conventional troops—primarily infantry piled on to any vehicle they could get their hands on—struck Fort Jinjiro, pinning the mercenaries down long enough for *Tai-sa* Groh to strike with her Arkab Legion. Colonel Alfieri's mercenaries occupied a defensible position, but were still recovering from losses experienced throughout the fight for Fellanin. The Combine attackers refused to let up. *Tai-sa* Groh pushed the attack continuously for five straight days, drawing in nearly another two regiments of conventional troops recruited from among the planet's population.

Alfieri's mercenaries held out for four days, but on the evening of 2 September, Groh pushed a battalion of her own infantry into Fort Jinjiro. That move forced Alfieri to take some of his troops off the line of battle, weakening it enough for Groh to push even more troops into the fort before daybreak. The new push nearly spelled the end of the Seventy-first Light Horse. Colonel Alfieri ordered his regiment to retreat to their DropShips, but in the confusion the regiment lost more than a battalion of soldiers and equipment. *Tai-sa* Groh did not let up in her attack until the mercenaries had left the planet, preventing Alfieri from rescuing MechWarriors and other ELH personnel whose positions had been overrun.

The Seventy-first left Fellanin II on 3 September. In February of 3040, several dozen ELH POWs were repatriated, though not all of those reported lost or captured on Fellanin II were returned.

KLATHANDU IV (AUGUST-OCTOBER)

In a tragic irony of circumstances, Klathandu IV, a world claimed by the Federated Suns in an almost bloodless transfer of control during Wave One, hosted one of the bloodiest battles of the entire war during the Kurita counterattack. As soon as he landed on the world in mid-May, Marshal Winston Vaskursian began working with the people of Klathandu IV to bring the world into the Federated Suns.

Then the Combine struck back. *Tai-sa* Samuel Nelson led a task force consisting of the Third Benjamin Regulars, the Second Galedon Regulars and two additional regiments of conventional troops to Klathandu IV. They landed on 4 August, after spending several weeks hidden in the Irurzun system to see if any of Vaskursian's troops left Klathandu to take part in Wave Two operations. *Tai-sa* Nelson's forces made planetfall on the plains of Pere Caplais and struck swiftly at Pere Urcuin, an important industrial city and major agricultural transportation crossroads. Nelson's quick assault with more than two regiments of mixed forces drove Vaskursian's two scant battalions out of the city. That victory gave the Combine forces a base of operations from which to continue their operations on the world, which they did with passion.

From sub-commands scattered across Klathandu, Vaskursian managed to detail several reconnaissance companies to keep track of Nelson's movements. For his part, Nelson pursued a relatively conservative strategy, methodically moving from one target to the next and striking each with overwhelming force. After a week of this, Vaskursian and his operations staff had a good handle on their opponents. The marshal ordered his garrisons to withdraw if faced by an overpowering attack, while at the same time he organized two mixed brigades to take the fight to Nelson.

Vaskursian struck back on August 21. Moving two provisional brigades into the field starting on August 17, along with two additional mixed battalions to act as a quick-response force, he waited for Nelson to mount his next attack. When Nelson struck Therisk, Vaskursian launched his own counter-attack. The marshal reinforced Therisk with his quick-response battalions and struck at the flanks of the Combine assault force. Vaskursian's provisional brigades shocked Nelson's troops, driving them away from Therisk. From that point, the two forces sparred fiercely. Vaskursian held the upper hand, fielding almost twice Nelson's troop strength on the planet, though Nelson's Combine soldiers and MechWarriors were better motivated.

For the next month and a half, Marshal Vaskursian and *Tai-sa* Nelson battled each other, while the people of Klathandu IV did their best to keep the fighting away from their cities and farmlands. Unfortunately, Nelson's MechWarriors and soldiers were more than willing to prosecute the fight anywhere on the world, which became more of a problem as the battle for Klathandu IV wore on. Marshal Vaskursian rotated his troops on a regular basis, giving them the chance to rest, while Nelson lacked the same opportunity. His warriors were exhausted and frustrated by the middle of September and started taking more chances.

The lines of battle did not move much one way or another. Vaskursian knew by this point that the invasion of the Combine was not going as planned and that he was unlikely to receive reinforcements anytime soon, and so he pursued a conservative battle plan. Despite having the advantage in numbers, he fought a defensive campaign, letting terrain and his enemy's frustrations do as much damage as his own troops were inflicting. That plan proved a winning strategy as

September came to a close and Nelson's forces began to make suicidal charges when faced with untenable situations. These charges inflicted heavy damage on the AFFS forces, but they brought even worse losses to the Combine soldiers' own rapidly thinning ranks. Worse still for Nelson and his troops, more often than not Vaskursian's units held the battlefields, preventing the Combine warriors from salvaging their damaged equipment.

By the beginning of October, Nelson's forces were all but finished. Of more than eight regiments, he had less than nine mixed battalions left. His fighter wings could barely put up more than ten fighters at any one time, and his supply situation had become critical. Vaskursian began to push harder, driving the proud but exhausted Combine warriors ahead of his own columns. That drive lasted six days and ended at Pere Urcuin, where Nelson prepared to make his last stand. It took Vaskursian another two days to advance additional troops and prepare for the final assault, which he launched in the early morning of 11 October.

After three days, Nelson was still barely holding out. Pere Urcuin was in flames, and dozens of burned-out tanks and BattleMechs littered the edges of the city. The DCMS troops had drawn into a small defensive ring, savaged by Vaskursian's fighters and artillery.

In the midst of the assault, Marshal Vaskursian received a dispatch from New Avalon ordering him to return to the Federated Suns. The orders stunned the marshal and his command staff, but the accompanying intelligence reports demonstrated beyond doubt that the invasion of the Combine had failed. Vaskursian's forces broke off the attack on 14 October and pulled off Klathandu fifteen days later, leaving *Tai-sa* Nelson and his two understrength regiments—less than a quarter of the forces he had led to the world—in command of Klathandu IV.

MARDUK (AUGUST-OCTOBER)

Field Marshal James Sandoval took command of Marduk in late June and spent most of the next month and a half destroying small pockets of resistance while his units repaired and refitted. They took their time about this, having roughly three months of scheduled rest and refit time on Marduk. The troops had no Wave Two targets, and instead had orders to hold the planet against any Combine counterattack. This "down" time was doubly important to Sandoval, as it offered him the chance to assemble reports from his field commanders assigned to other Benjamin Thrust invasions and to issue supplementary orders. What he saw in these reports encouraged him. For the most part, the invasion was going well and the line units sitting on the planets of Breed and David were ready for action. Sandoval authorized the Wave Two "go" orders and transmitted them via the black-box network starting on 3 July.

When Sandoval began to receive reports of heavy Combine resistance a little over a week later, he was not overly concerned. In fact, he was surprised it had taken so long for the DCMS to mount a strong defense. Even when the Sixth Benjamin

and Eighth Galedon Regulars arrived in the Marduk system, Sandoval had few qualms about the progress of the invasion, though this counterattack demanded most of his attention.

Sho-sho Shurin Goros received command of the Marduk invasion from *Gunji-no-Kanrei* Theodore Kurita in orders dispatched to Goros, who led the Sixth Benjamin Regulars, and to *Tai-sa* Homai Lu, commander of the Eighth Galedon Regulars. Despite those orders, as well as personal messages to both senior DCMS officers exhorting them to work together to drive Sandoval from the planet, the DCMS effort on Marduk ran into problems from the beginning—not the least of which was the DCMS' inferior numbers.

Tai-sa Lu and her Eighth Galedon Regulars, normally stationed on Deshler, reached Marduk first, landing on 1 August. Goros and the Sixth Benjamin Regulars arrived three days behind, leaving Lu in temporary command of the situation. She landed more than a thousand kilometers away from New Pontiac and the Victory Industries complex in the Tillerbee Jungle. The Eighth Galedon readily took the cities of Lomen and Wurmensburg and set up a wide perimeter, giving the DCMS a secure landing zone and base of operations. When Goros finally reached the planet, she ordered her entire invasion force to conduct a risky combat drop just thirty kilometers away from New Pontiac, which quickly brought them into contact with Field Marshal Sandoval's forces.

Even with the additional infantry and armor regiments assigned to them, the Combine units did not outnumber Sandoval's own task force, which made that first battle on 6 August bloody and difficult. Sandoval had an edge in equipment, fielding more and heavier tanks than his opponents, but the DCMS troops were better motivated. Their willingness to sacrifice their lives for the Dragon, however, ultimately undermined their combat strength. This "victory-or-death" mindset often prompted suicidal charges that caused more damage to the DCMS forces than to Sandoval's. Even worse for the Combine attackers, their commanding officers often battled each other behind the scenes, leading to friction and confusion. Consequently, much like the battle for Klathandu IV, the fight for Marduk rapidly descended into a slugfest.

Field Marshal Sandoval concentrated his forces on the Tiller Continent in New Pontiac, the heavily industrial city of Deshler and the Victory Industries complex. He gave orders to hold those three primary targets above all other objectives, along with supplementary orders to harry the Combine forces as much as possible in an effort to prevent them from mounting any overwhelming attacks. For the most part, Sandoval's plan succeeded, though more from the actions of the Combine officers than from AFFS assaults.

Sho-sho Goros and *Tai-sa* Lu constantly argued behind the scenes, even as their troops bogged down against the enemy. Lu advocated a conservative approach to the liberation of Marduk, knowing that the DCMS lacked a strong enough task force to destroy Sandoval's troops outright and that reinforcements would soon become available. Goros, on the other hand, had devised an extremely aggressive strategy to shock the AFFS

and force them off-world, albeit with heavy Combine casualties. The two officers had multiple run-ins during the first two weeks on Marduk, which gave Field Marshal Sandoval openings that he fully exploited.

The Tenth Deneb Light Cavalry was Sandoval's raiding force, striking fast and hard at the DCMS formations and then fading away, all while Goros concentrated her troops on New Pontiac. By the middle of August, New Pontiac's suburbs lay in ruins, along with most of Stanton, the small city to which Goros' forces had retreated after failing to secure New Pontiac in their initial assault. This stalemate continued throughout the rest of August and well into September.

On September 23, Goros launched yet another attack on New Pontiac and reached deep into the city with the help of supporters and militia soldiers driven underground when Sandoval's forces took command of the world. A spoiling attack by the Tenth Deneb, supported by Sandoval's own First Robinson Rangers, drove Goros' forces all the way back to Stanton and beyond. Sandoval immediately provided Lieutenant General Jameston Gaston, commander of the Tenth Deneb, with a mixed "harassing" brigade to aid in his pursuit. He likewise gave Gaston complete tactical command of a full fighter wing and tasked half his remaining fighters to support the Tenth Deneb as it chased the Combine units.

The pursuit lasted four straight days, during which Goros lost tremendous amounts of equipment in rearguard holding actions and to a never-ending aerial assault. Not until the retreating DCMS force reached Fort Stroum, a city built on the ruins of a Succession Wars-era military compound, was Goros able to turn around and rebuff the Light Cavalry's attacks. The battle for Fort Stroum continued for two more days as *Tai-sa* Lu attempted to secure the city and create a fortified base and *Sho-sho* Goros actively battled Gaston's force in and around the city.

The tables had clearly turned, and Sandoval kept Gaston in the field to maintain pressure on the city while he led additional troops into the field to finish off *Sho-sho* Goros and her forces. They reached Fort Stroum on 2 September and struck a day later. Much like the fight for New Pontiac, however, the battle quickly degenerated into a stalemate. On 8 September, two additional DCMS combined-arms regiments landed in Fort Stroum after breaking through Sandoval's heavy fighter blanket. These reinforcements, however, proved insufficient. Goros attempted three breakouts over the next two weeks, but was beaten back each time.

Sandoval soon left the siege of Fort Stroum to General Theodore Perry and his Tenth Deneb subordinates. While Perry and Gaston continued the stalemate, Sandoval turned his attention to other events of the war. AFFS units had already begun to pull off the front lines, and the field marshal dispatched personal messages to his battlefield commanders exhorting them to stand fast in the face of the Combine counterattack.

Twice more *Sho-sho* Goros received reinforcements, but neither proved enough to dislodge Sandoval's task force. In fact, time and fate did more to win Marduk back for the Combine than the DCMS could. On 6 October, Sandoval received

a message from New Avalon recalling all combat units from the Draconis Combine. The marshal was devastated, and only ordered his troops to prepare for withdrawal after exchanging several messages with Prince Hanse Davion. Before finally leaving Marduk a week later, he instructed his supply personnel to take everything of value from Victory Industries, as well as the other factories in New Pontiac, Deshler and five more major cities. They left with billions of C-bills' worth of booty, crippling Marduk's industry for the better part of the next year and forcing the Combine to pour money into the world's economy to prevent its economic collapse. Combine military and government-sponsored engineers spent almost four years on Marduk repairing the extensive damage done to the world's infrastructure.

The last of Sandoval's DropShips lifted off on 13 October, leaving Goros and her decimated task force in de facto command of the world. It would be more than a year, however, before the world's people began to accept actual Combine governance again.

MATAR (SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER)

By the end of July, Major General Cunningham was noticeably concerned by reports from other worlds targeted in the first invasion wave. The DCMS was counterattacking in greater force and across a wider front than anyone had thought possible, fielding entire regiments with new and Star League-era BattleMech designs that were taking a toll on the allegedly invincible AFFS. Cunningham had yet to see a Combine counterassault against Matar, though twice in late July large convoys of JumpShips transited through the system. The waiting game posed its own problems for the general, along with active opposition from Matar's citizens.

As the weeks rolled past, Cunningham and several of his senior officers grew more and more uneasy. They had initially received orders to prepare for a Wave Two assault on Reisling's Planet—which would ultimately have led to a strike on Irurzun—but a follow-on dispatch from New Avalon soon countermanded those orders. Major General Cabrian Pintelo, commanding the Twenty-third Federation Primary Relief Infantry Brigade, believed that the four brigades of AFFS troops on the world could more than handle anything the Combine could throw at them. Colonel Redburn, for his part, was caught in the middle. Field Marshal Duke Morgan Hasek-Davion made sure his old friend Redburn received as much intelligence as could be transmitted, so Redburn knew precisely the AFFS forces would face when the DCMS finally hit Matar.

The DCMS finally arrived on 20 September when *Tai-sa* Aron Kirzak led the Eleventh and Twelfth Ghost regiments to Matar all the way from Midway. Halfway through their journey, the Eleventh Ghost suffered a serious loss when the *Merchant*-class JumpShip *Kagu-Zuchi*, carrying two DropShips, was lost in a jump accident that obliterated all three ships. After reporting the tragedy to Luthien and *Kanrei* Kurita, Kirzak continued the assault on Matar.

Just like the initial AFFS strike, *Tai-sa* Kirzak focused his first moves on the Tri-Cities of Capricia-Inness-Tellein. Major General Cunningham had numeric superiority, but his forces were spread among multiple significant objectives. Cunningham kept Redburn's First Kathil Uhlans as a strategic reserve, which allowed him to strike Kirzak within hours of the DCMS landing. Cunningham also had three mixed regiments in the Tri-Cities, with which he faced Kirzak's own two 'Mech regiments along with almost four more regiments of conventional forces. Kirzak therefore had local superiority, despite losing valuable troops during the journey to Matar.

The Combine commander did not strike immediately at the heart of the cities, but instead took command of three municipal airports, dropping his 'Mechs, vehicles and infantry into the most populous sectors of Capricia and Tellein. Mobs of grateful Combine citizens swarmed the incoming troops, desperate to thank the soldiers for coming to liberate them from the "Davionists." Ironically, the crowds held up Kirzak's troops enough to allow Cunningham to mount a counterattack that prevented the Eleventh and Twelfth Ghost from linking up. Unfortunately, that battle also laid waste to a wide swath of the urban area, killing thousands and setting a fire that would take a week to extinguish.

PLAYING FOR THE HIGHEST STAKES

It's been ten years since we launched the invasion, and even today no one is saying we couldn't have taken the Draconis Combine. We had the forces and we had the plan. And after we'd launched the first waves, it was obvious we had the initiative. There was no way Takashi Kurita could bring enough to the table to even hope to win.

Of course, we didn't expect him to send in a ringer.

We had entire rooms of intelligence reports and personality profiles on Theodore Kurita. We knew the man apparently better than his own father did. We even had agents in the Combine government who kept tabs on the Coordinator's son. But no one, no one, ever once believed that Theodore Kurita could wrest control of the DCMS from his father and successfully lead the Combine military to victory over the combined might of the Federated Suns and the Lyran Commonwealth.

We were wrong. But even after we knew he had taken personal control of the DCMS, we still underestimated him. And he made us pay for that.

He didn't play like a typical Kurita. He didn't center his strategies around your typical samurai honor-and-death mindset. Frankly, he took more of a cue from us than anything the Combine had ever done. Some of my closest advisors even told me, after all was said and done, that Theodore Kurita played me just like I would have played me. I didn't much like that theory then, but it's obvious now they were right.

Theodore started out with the short stack, but he had a few cards up his sleeve and won some hands. Those Ghost Regiments and his ISF strikes on our senior officers in the Dieron district shocked us, shocked me. So when we got to that last hand, even though I had pocket kings, there was an ace on the table and he bluffed me into thinking he had another one in his hand.

I blinked, and he got me.

—First Prince Hanse Davion, *Personal Recollections*, New Avalon Press, 3050

PROFILE: TAI-SA ARON KIRZAK

The formation of the Ghost Regiments proved an unmitigated success for Theodore Kurita and his new vision of the DCMS in the post-Fourth Succession War era. The Ghost units surprised the AFFS with their mere appearance and further shocked the entire Inner Sphere with their extensive use of lostech, including never-before-seen and Star League-era BattleMech designs. Their actions in the War of 3039 proved to all the strategic genius of Theodore Kurita and those visionaries who supported his changes.

Despite the victories the Ghosts handed the Draconis Combine, many in the DCMS continued to regard the MechWarriors and officers assigned to those units as criminals and malcontents, little better than the infamous Chain Gangs organized by Coordinator Jinjiro Kurita in the 29th century. Until the post-Clan War era, relatively few Ghost officers were promoted from their regiments to higher command, even with Theodore Kurita leading the DCMS.

Aron Kirzak was one of the few who managed to succeed despite discrimination by the elite in the DCMS. His record before and during the War of 3039 showed that he had the kind of strategic mind the Combine desperately needed, yet years went by before he received a promotion. He finally received promotion to *Sho-sho* in 3045, but even that was little more than a perfunctory posting to the administrative staff in the headquarters of the Pesht Military District.

Two years later, the *Kanrei's* wife, *Tai-sho* Tomoe Sakade, brought Kirzak into the headquarters staff of the Kagoshima Prefecture, ultimately assigning him as her deputy. In that position, he had direct responsibility for the defense of the entire prefecture, including the world of Luthien. Many saw this assignment as a calculated insult to DCMS traditionalists, including Coordinator Takashi. Nevertheless, Kirzak distinguished himself further by serving as a close advisor to *Kanrei* Kurita and his wife. When *Tai-sho* Sakade took charge of the entire Pesht Military District, Kirzak quietly accepted promotion to command of the newly redesignated Pesht Prefecture, a position he still occupies.

When Redburn entered the battle several hours later, the fight took on a decidedly different quality. He struck at the Twelfth Ghost, calling them out into the hills and forests outside the city in an effort to keep the civilian population from suffering any more than necessary. The two forces traded hit-and-run strikes for more than two weeks, while Cunningham slugged it out with the Eleventh Ghost in block-by-block fighting. The urban street battles ultimately decided the fate of the Tri-Cities. As Cunningham and his troops ravaged more and more of the city, greater numbers of the inhabitants picked up whatever weapons they could find and aided Kirzak's fight against the AFFS invaders. Cunningham pulled out of the Tri-Cities on 6 October, withdrawing to Dnorr and Ko Trit.

Kirzak spent three more days in the Tri-Cities, offering what relief his troops could provide, before setting out to strike once more at Cunningham. Redburn remained in the field to slow Kirzak's advance, but the DCMS commander jumped a demi-brigade past Redburn with a sub-orbital burn of the bulk of his DropShip group. That move left Cunningham under siege and Redburn temporarily cut off from his supply lines. Redburn's Uhlans had mobility on their side, however, and continued to strike at Kirzak's flanks, easing somewhat the assault on Cunningham.

Meanwhile, Major General Pintelo pulled companies and battalions from the regiments of the Twenty-third Brigade and formed a provisional brigade of three combined-arms regiments. He finally sent them into the field on 14 October, a day after Cunningham received orders to pull off Matar. Pintelo himself led the brigade in an attack on the Tri-Cities, hoping to draw the Ghost Regiments away from Cunningham. Instead, Pintelo's attack once again turned the Tri-Cities into a desperate battleground. Kirzak continued to prosecute the battle against Cunningham, preventing the general from arranging for withdrawal from the planet.

The fight continued for several more weeks until spring came, bringing with it weeks of pouring rain that bogged everything down so that even BattleMechs had serious difficulty moving. Kirzak pulled back from Dnorr and Ko Trit, slowly withdrawing to the Tri-Cities to keep his 'Mechs supplied. At the same time, Major General Pintelo pulled out of the Tri-Cities, covered by Redburn. Kirzak and Pintelo clashed briefly when their advance elements came into contact, but quickly broke off the engagement. Now Cunningham had sufficient time to organize his forces for a mass withdrawal.

Over the next twenty-five days, Cunningham withdrew his forces from the various cities they occupied. The majority of his AFFS task force left Matar on 4 December, though several battalions had to wait for six more days before the weather cleared enough for them to take off.

NEW MENDHAM (JULY-OCTOBER)

For the assault on New Mendham, *Kanrei* Kurita chose the First and Second Amphigean Light Assault Groups, stationed on the nearby world of Reisling's Planet. They struck New Mendham on 12 July, attacking full force and with seemingly little regard for their own safety—at least at first. They initially threw Marshal Riffenberg off-balance, though the Davion Light Guards readily adjusted to the Amphigeans' highly mobile battle plan. The AFFS forces were spread across the planet, especially the First Chisholm's Raiders, who ultimately became the backbone of Riffenberg's defense. This far-flung deployment forced the AFFS commanders to react much more to their enemies than usual. Additionally, because Riffenberg had pursued such a conservative strategy in taking command of the world, his troops were still busy pacifying many regions, giving the Amphigean MechWarriors under the command of *Sho-sho* Hideki Grauman a number of friendly areas from which to base their attacks.

Faced with a veteran opponent whose units had similar capabilities to his own Amphigean LAGs, Grauman altered his battle plans somewhat. The Davion Light Guards were just as fast and maneuverable as his own 'Mechs, so he enlisted the help of New Mendham's "true patriots," as he called them, to tie down Riffenberg's highly mobile forces. That plan worked to near-perfection for three weeks, as Riffenberg's MechWarriors



and soldiers did their best to prevent undue civilian casualties while Grauman's troops raised havoc with the AFFS forces across the planet and gained significant territory.

Ultimately, Marshal Riffenberg let Colonel Gregory Sykes loose with a reinforced mixed combat command of volunteers. Sykes waged a campaign of terror—though not in the traditional sense—against the Combine forces and the civilians supporting them. He struck randomly at a variety of targets worldwide, including military complexes and their infrastructure—specifically, communications, power and transportation lines. He also struck at major communications outlets, from broadcast radio and tri-vid stations to news organizations, all the while keeping civilian casualties to a minimum. His goals were to enforce an information blackout on the people of New Mendham and to bring about a general panic. He succeeded in both.

Sho-sho Grauman had to devote more resources to calming New Mendham's population than he wanted to or could readily afford at this point in the campaign, giving Riffenberg enough breathing room to strike back hard at the Amphigean Light Assault Groups. Riffenberg finally did so on 11 August. The attack was not nearly as decisive as the marshal had hoped, however, and ultimately became the first in a long series

of inconclusive battles between the two sides. Against Riffenberg's superior numbers and firepower, Grauman's troops pitted their maneuverability on the battlefield. Rarely could Major General Arisota Neece and her First Chisholm's Raiders bring any weight to bear against Grauman. Neece's MechWarriors and soldiers were too inexperienced; they either fled when faced with a strong opponent or could not move fast enough to capitalize on their own successes. Neece took a leaf from Colonel Sykes' book and tried to form a provisional combat command under Lieutenant Colonel Trevor Cartmann, but the unit had few successes.

Despite these setbacks, Riffenberg still had two highly mobile regiments in the field to harry the Amphigeans. He began to win—or at least force to a stalemate—more and more small engagements. Overall, however, the battle for New Mendham was not going well for the AFFS. Despite the superiority of his forces, Riffenberg had yet to inflict the kind of damage necessary for victory, and the Chisholm's Raiders in particular were sustaining horrible losses. As August turned into September, Riffenberg realized he could not expect any reinforcements. Nevertheless, he and his troops continued to resist Grauman's counterattack until they received orders in

PROFILE: TAI-SA VICTOR COALE AND HISHU STONARA

From the moment Victor Coale and Hishu Stonara met during the campaign for Sadalbari, the careers of these two DCMS officers were linked. The two men could not have come from more different backgrounds—Coale was born to a noble family, while Stonara was little more than a street urchin—but they developed a close friendship despite clashing time and again during operations on Sadalbari.

Initially, the two Combine officers were wary of each other. Though the Shin Legions were known for their unconventional tactics, their MechWarriors had adopted the Combine as their home, becoming vocal proponents of the samurai culture, and thus were overtly contemptuous of the yakuza who made up the Ghost Regiments. For their part, the Ghost MechWarriors saw the Shin Legions as traitors to their own culture.

The two officers traded verbal barbs over the tactical nets, but once they met face to face, they put aside their differences and formulated a strategy that ultimately drove the AFFS from Sadalbari. During this time, the two forged a deep respect for each other that eventually developed into a long-lasting friendship. While they rarely agreed on specifics and often vehemently argued contradictory points of view, they shared similar basic principles. Despite the divergence of their tactical and strategic views, their arguments actually allowed them to develop winning operation plans.

Following the end of the war, the two officers went their own ways. In 3042, however, Coale was promoted to Deputy Commander of the Kajikazawa Prefecture, and he brought Stonara onto the staff as Assistant Deputy for Plans and Operations. Six years later Coale received command of the region, in turn making Stonara his deputy. The two served together for another decade before Coale became the Benjamin Military District Strategy and Operations Director, one of four district strategy counselors to the Kanrei and Coordinator. Stonara moved up to become Prefecture Commander, and even now—three decades after the two officers first met—*Tai-sho* Hishu Stonara remains Coale's closest advisor.

retreat. Worse, the Third FedCom had abandoned three DropShips in its withdrawal from Origian. When Cunningham's task force began lifting off four days later, he made one attempt to destroy the three lost DropShips. That attack failed, and the AFFS force left the system eleven days later.

mid-October to abandon the assault. They left New Mendham on 22 October with little to show for their time there other than a lesson they already knew—a well-led and well-equipped light force can have a significant impact on a much stronger opponent.

SADALBARI (JULY-OCTOBER)

By the beginning of July, Marshal Vernon Cunningham had done just about everything he could to secure the world of Sadalbari, yet significant Combine military units still lurked in mountainous Salas County. Severe winter weather, along with the blockage of several strategically important passes, prevented Cunningham from pushing through the Kotiate Range and striking at *Tai-sa* Victor Coale's forces. To dislodge Coale and the surviving elements of his Second Shin Legion, Cunningham resorted to infiltrating Special Forces teams and small groups of volunteers into Salas County and engaging in acts of sabotage and terror against the DCMS defenders.

Cunningham was forced to redirect his energies in late July when the Seventh and Eighth Ghost regiments arrived in-system. Grounding on 19 July, they struck Solus City en masse, pushing the Third FedCom out of its garrisons in the city and following them to the Origian Military Reservation. The battle stagnated there as the Third FedCom fell back behind their prepared defenses and called for additional support from the Fifth Davion Guards. Cunningham dispatched Colonel Jack Roberts with a demi-brigade to relieve the assault on Major General Anya Tam's position in Origian.

That move prevented the Ghost Regiments from taking command of Origian, though only temporarily. On 26 July, *Tai-sa* Coale struck Origian in a surprise sub-orbital assault; a move that cost both sides dearly but ultimately forced the AFFS out of the Origian Military Reservation. Cunningham erupted in fury at his intelligence section's failure to warn him that Coale could potentially make such a strike, and at the actions of his field commanders at Origian. The only senior officer spared Cunningham's wrath was Colonel Roberts, who rallied his brigade in an attempt to counter Coale's surprise move. When that failed, Roberts led the rearguard actions that prevented the Ghost Regiments from overtaking the Third FedCom.

The Ghosts, under the command of *Tai-sa* Hishu Stonara, continued to push hard, all but destroying the bulk of Roberts' demi-brigade and then resuming their assault with Major General Tam and the Third FedCom. Cunningham tried to send Tam reinforcements, but after two days, the Third FedCom disintegrated as a combat force. Stonara continued on to strike at the Fifth Davion Guards, while Coale fought whatever FedCom sub-commands he could hunt down.

Cunningham brought the bulk of the Fifth Davion Guards into the field to face the Ghost Regiments, hoping that his officers could bring what remained of the Third FedCom back together in the meantime. He replaced Major General Tam with Lieutenant General Dane Cooper and tasked Cooper and Roberts with regrouping and reorganizing the broken RCT.

The two officers finally re-formed the Third FedCom, but by then it was too little, too late. The Third had lost a great deal of equipment and the Ghost Regiments, with their lostech weapons and new 'Mech designs, took their toll on the Fifth Davion Guards. Cunningham ordered the entire AFFS force to fall back to the Xantal Military Reservation on 30 August, where they regrouped and formed a defensive ring. They were short on vehicles, and after several weeks of heavy combat plus the loss of Origian to the DCMS, were also growing short on supplies. Cunningham knew he could hold out in Xantal almost indefinitely, and though furious at the situation, he had no choice but to wait for reinforcements.

Of course, reinforcements never came. Instead, Cunningham received orders on 14 October instructing him to withdraw from the world. That news did not sit well with the marshal, but with no reinforcements on the way, he had no choice but to

OTHER ACTIONS

Not nearly as many AFFS units jumped off on Wave Two assaults deeper into the Benjamin Military District as in other thrusts. Units involved in Wave One operations had fewer follow-on targets assigned to them than in the other thrusts, and each target designated for the Wave Two invasion lay two or more jumps away from the worlds where the invasion forces had gathered. As a result, though the AFFS ordered assaults on Homam and Irurzun, the troops were recalled before any substantive operations occurred (Homam saw some minor combat).

On the other hand, Field Marshal Sandoval recognized that several wholly undefended Combine border worlds could easily be taken by units sitting idle in the wake of the “hold” order placed on Wave Two operations. He chose to target these worlds with units stationed on David in mid-August, even as orders from New Avalon authorizing withdrawal from Wave One targets were going to units in the field. Ironically, Sandoval’s actions resulted in more than half the Federated Suns’ gains during the entire war.

Cylene (August)

Of the four worlds specifically targeted by Field Marshal Sandoval’s “mini-invasion” in August, Cylene caused the most worry. Davion military intelligence knew that the Ninth Dieron Regulars were permanently stationed on the world, but once the DCMS began to mobilize in response to the combined FedSuns/Lyran invasion, intelligence lost track of the unit. Field Marshal Sandoval knew a strike at the world was a calculated risk, but considering what was happening on all invasion fronts, he also knew that the AFFS—as well as the LCAF—needed some victories, and he was determined to provide them.

Because of the danger posed by the Ninth Dieron Regulars’ possible presence on the world, Field Marshal Sandoval dispatched the Fourth Davion Guards to the planet. He gave them specific orders to abandon the assault if faced with anything resembling equivalent forces, and instead fight a holding action to keep those Combine troops out of the war as long as possible.

As it turns out, the Ninth Dieron had already departed Cylene for a counterattack on Sadachbia by the time the Fourth Davion Guards reached the world. Significant support personnel and militia troops remained, but they were no match for the elite Fourth Guards RCT. Marshal Eugene Drivers struck the Ninth Dieron’s two primary bases in a simultaneous assault that destroyed what few supporting forces the Regulars had left behind. From there he moved against the world’s capital and likewise crushed the backbone of the world’s militia. It took Drivers and his Fourth Davion Guards nine more weeks of intensive operations to pacify the rest of the world, especially as the citizens and militia commanders on Cylene had prepared defensive networks months before when word of the invasion first spread. By the time AFFS forces began to withdraw from the Draconis Combine en masse, Cylene was firmly under Federated Suns control.

Markab (August-September)

AFFS troops bypassed Markab during Wave One because invasion planners believed that once the first two waves were in

full swing, the world’s leaders would willingly submit to FedSuns rule or a token force could take command of the planet. In light of the struggle the AFFS and LCAF faced in Wave Two, however, Markab’s population remained divided in their outlook. Some thought the Federated Suns would make huge gains in Combine territory, while others believed Coordinator Takashi Kurita would never let the “Davionists” keep hold of Combine worlds. These contradictory points of view led to a struggle for dominance between several different vocal groups that were very much in the minority, but whose members nonetheless trapped the majority of the population in their political (and sometimes physical) battles.

The arrival of the Fifth Syrtis Fusiliers on 30 August, unsurprisingly, put an end to the petty bickering. Even though this battle was the Fifth Fusiliers’ first test since their rebuilding, the Capellan March natives accounted well for themselves, perhaps better than even a Draconis March-native unit could have. Markab’s moderately strong and highly motivated militia gave the Fusiliers several tough fights, but General Solomon Hasek and his troops found themselves doing more crowd control and other police actions than anything else—with most of those actions involving groups of vocal anti-Davion activists. In fact, many have speculated that Markab would have been the site of the biggest massacre since Kentares IV had the Robinson Rangers been assigned to the world.

It took the Fusiliers months before they could claim victory, and even then only the support assignment of the 207th Federation Primary Relief Brigade gave the Fusiliers enough infantry to maintain martial law across the world. Markab was ultimately absorbed by the Federated Suns before the end of the year.

Murchison (September)

When he made the decision to pull the Eighth Crucis Lancers off of Biham (see p. 80), Marshal Swaine had already been in unofficial contact with Field Marshal Sandoval and knew he was targeting border worlds in the Dieron Military District. He also realized that Sandoval lacked enough nearby free ‘Mech units to take all four target worlds, at least without denuding the Draconis March’s border defenses to the point that *Kanrei* Kurita might make another successful deep strike into the Federated Suns. Instead of returning to Addicks or another Federated Suns border world, Marshal Swaine chose to mount an assault on Murchison. (That he had not received specific authorization from Field Marshal Vanessa Bisla certainly weighed on his mind, as recounted in numerous interviews with and tell-alls by his staff officers. On the other hand, he *did* have the blessing of the commander of the Draconis March Regional Command, a situation that turned ugly not long after the war.)

He struck Murchison fast and hard, inserting two mixed battalions into a pirate point hours away from the world while the rest of the RCT transited normally. Swaine caught the Murchison militia off-guard with that move, and once the entire RCT reached the world, he broke it into four demi-brigades and ranged across the planet, quickly and decisively dealing with all opposition. The Murchison planetary government capitulated

CHAINS OF COMMAND

The War of 3039 was wracked with serious leadership problems and tragic ironies on all sides of the struggle. One incident that often raises the most eyebrows is the behind-the-scenes struggle between Field Marshals James Sandoval and Vanessa Bisla. Almost all official documents concerning this dispute remain classified, even after almost three decades, though most of the story can be put together based on the memories and notes of those serving closest to the two commanders.

Field Marshal Bisla was infuriated that Field Marshal Sandoval had issued orders to units under her command, and she conveyed her displeasure to the AFFS high command. She stated bluntly that Sandoval had seriously overstepped his bounds; the four worlds he targeted lay within her theater's boundaries, and both the Eighth Crucis Lancers and Twelfth Deneb Light Cavalry were under her direct command. Because of that, only the high command could give them different orders. By all accounts, she spent over an hour stating her grievances, charging Sandoval with grandstanding and trying to be the "hero of the war" at her expense.

For his part, Field Marshal Sandoval made a simple case. As commander of the Draconis March, he had the authority to issue orders to any unit assigned to a world in that region. Moreover, it was his duty to protect and advance the interests of the Federated Suns. He simply recognized a weakness and took advantage of it.

The high command accepted Sandoval's reasoning and backed his decisions, but Bisla did not let the matter end there. For years she quietly did what she could to hamper the careers of Charles Swaine and Joseph Goff, the two officers under her command who had followed Sandoval's orders. Of course, Sandoval had more influence than Bisla, and after she was placed under his direct command, he easily blunted her efforts.

Ultimately, Field Marshal Bisla recognized that her career was more important than her feud. While she and Sandoval never had a truly close command relationship, they managed to work together. Nevertheless, this remains one of the dark tales of the war.

after just seventeen days, though resistance partisans continued the fight underground for three more years, hoping the Combine would return to the world to free them from "Davion repression."

More lasting than the Murchison Underground was the fallout from Marshal Swaine's decision to assault the planet (see *Chains of Command*, at left).

Skat (September)

The invasion of Skat, like that of Murchison, caused a furor within the AFFS high command. Field Marshal Sandoval had requested full Draconis March deployment information from his staff on Robinson in early August, and acting as Director of the Draconis March Regional Command, ordered the Twelfth Deneb Light Cavalry—then stationed on Galatia III—to take the world of Skat.

The Twelfth DLC, reinforced by two additional fighter wings and three regiments of light armor and mechanized infantry, landed on 6 September. The powerful fighter force ultimately won the invasion. Skat's few major cities were widely scattered across the planet, positioned near oases and other significant sources of water on the cold and arid world. Air transport was the primary method of trade, and with Lieutenant General Joseph Goff's fighters and DropShips commanding the skies, life on Skat quickly ground to a halt. Many cities capitulated almost immediately, especially after Goff positioned a full regiment outside city limits. Three cities continued to hold out, yet Goff did not immediately send his troops into them. Instead he enacted blockades that prevented anything from coming in or getting out. Several months later, the three cities capitulated and the Skat militia disarmed. Goff had captured Skat with minimal loss of life, earning himself and his senior staff commendations for their efforts.

As with Murchison, fallout resulted, less from the specifics of the operation than from Field Marshal Sandoval's orders to the Twelfth DLC.

Homam (August-September)

General William Petersen left the Fellain II system with the Eridani Light Horse's Twenty-First Striker and 151st Light Horse in early August after receiving personal permission from Field Marshal Sandoval to continue with Wave Two operations. One day before they entered Homam's orbit, the units received conflicting orders from New Avalon to hold all Wave Two operations. When they reached the planet on 24 August, Petersen placed most of his DropShips in a variety of parking orbits that would allow them to intercept any ships attempting to leave or reach Homam. He also landed approximately two battalions of mixed forces on the planet, a move that the AFFS high command later categorized as a "reconnaissance in force" and thus not a technical violation of orders. Petersen rotated mixed battalions through the operation every few days, giving his troops combat experience and the chance to get their "land legs" under them again. The world lay virtually undefended, and Petersen's "reconnaissance" forces ranged across the planet for three weeks before the general finally received direct orders to withdraw to David. The Eridani Light Horse left the Homam system on 7 September, having virtually destroyed the world's defending forces, but showing nothing else for the effort.

MERCENARY-SUPPORTED ACTIONS

"Win with ability, not with numbers."

—Field Marshal Prince Aleksandr V. Suvorov

"Keep your feet on the ground, a spare magazine in your pocket, watch your buddy's back and never, ever give anything but your all!"

—First Prince Andrew Davion

By all accounts, operations on the seven worlds targeted for mercenary-supported revolutions generally succeeded. The high command chose most of these worlds because they had pro-Davion undergrounds or were under-defended. Except for Harrow's Sun, where

Davion military intelligence failed to discover the Ryuken-yon, the mercenary actions went well. Every one of the targeted worlds save for Harrow's Sun came under Federated Suns control. Moreover, the assaults successfully deflected the attention of the Combine's senior generals long enough for the real invasion to begin.

Like many good things, however, the conquest of these worlds came at a much higher price than originally expected. Once the DCMS recovered from the initial shock of the invasion, it struck back with a vengeance. To most soldiers and MechWarriors in the DCMS, the mere fact that Davion and Steiner troops had the gall to land on Combine worlds demanded retribution without mercy. *Kanrei* Kurita directed them to strike at every world targeted by the FedSuns/Lyran invasion, and the DCMS did so in force—up to a point.

Of the seven worlds targeted by the AFFS for mercenary-supported revolutions, the DCMS counterattacked on only two. The unexpected presence of the Ryuken-yon spoiled mercenary operations on a third, and the AFFS high command ordered withdrawal from a fourth world. As to the remaining three, the DCMS was already overextended by its incursion into the Draconis March. It lacked sufficient numbers to hit the remaining planets until much later in the year, by which time both sides had begun to fortify their few gains.

Tensions ran high on all seven worlds as word of the Combine counteroffensive spread up and down the front. After the counterattacks began, the mercenaries watched the skies for signs of incoming opposition, and even units that remained unopposed continued to be apprehensive until they received reinforcements.

When all was said and done, these mercenary actions were among the most successful operations in the war, capturing three of the seven worlds gained by the Federated Suns.

BERGMAN'S PLANET (AUGUST-SEPTEMBER)

The DCMS did not learn of the fall of Bergman's Planet for some time, but when the world's leaders ceased sending the periodic updates provided by all Combine planetary governors, *Tai-shu* Kester Hsiun Chi ordered a reconnaissance force from the Twenty-First Galedon Regulars to the planet. That force landed on 8 August and reported the presence of mercenary forces, along with a strong insurgency. That news triggered the mobilization of the rest of the Twenty-First Regulars, which arrived on 5 September.

In the meantime, the Galedon Regulars reconnaissance force and Lindon's Battalion fought a campaign of raids and light engagement, always remaining on the move and never committing full-force to a single battle. Both sides called on significant support from the world's citizenry, which allowed their commanders to keep tabs on each other without risking their own 'Mechs. The mercenaries had AFFS Special Forces on hand, whom they used to full advantage. A special-forces strike on 23 August nearly killed the entire Galedon Regulars officer corps, while a second on 1 September destroyed a

field encampment and cost the Galedon Regulars a company of MechWarriors.

When the rest of the regiment arrived, however, the nature of the fight changed significantly. *Tai-sa* Rai Githor approached the problem of a planet full of insurgents supported by mercenary BattleMechs with a heavy hand and a proactive strategy. He first took command of the world's capital city, flooding New Palermo with BattleMechs, infantry and armor and installing a new planetary governor before conducting a door-to-door search of every building in the city. He took a significant number of prisoners from New Palermo alone, and during the next several weeks took thousands more as his troops scoured the planet. Lindon's Battalion did what they could to stop the Galedon Regulars, but at best could only pick off small units that became separated from the main body.

The mercenaries attempted one massive assault, targeting the makeshift internment camps that held political prisoners. By freeing the captives, they hoped to rally the world's people behind them. The mercenaries also realized that the camps could be a trap, which they were. The Galedon Regulars savaged Lindon's Battalion, and though Special Forces operatives managed to free 2,500 prisoners from one camp, the teams—along with three hundred armed civilians—were cut down and every single prisoner returned within a week. Lindon's Battalion pulled off of Bergman's Planet shortly thereafter, ceding it to the superior Combine forces.

GALTOR III (3041 AND 3042)

Whether or not Hanse Davion's ruse of attacking Galtor III early in the war actually worked remains controversial for the chroniclers of history. Evidence suggests that Takashi Kurita nearly exploded in uncontrollable rage when he found out that the Federated Suns had targeted Galtor. On the other hand, not a single DCMS unit was dispatched to the world once the Combine became embroiled in the War of 3039, until long after the war was over. Some speculate that *Gunji-no-Kanrei* Theodore Kurita specifically countermanded his father's orders to assault the planet in force, though no one has yet come forward with evidence that either Kurita issued any such instructions to any DCMS units.

In any event, while dozens of DCMS line BattleMech regiments made a mad dash to the Combine's Lyran and FedSuns borders, not a single additional unit landed on Galtor III. The world's civilian population had been steadily cleansing itself of Combine supporters and governmental influence since March, and had even begun to form a militia, so when word of a Combine counterattack reached Galtor, the mercenaries on-world were concerned but not overly alarmed. Throughout August and September, however, updates from the AFFS high command made Clifton's Rangers increasingly nervous. Nevertheless, the Rangers and the volunteers who had accompanied them to the world stood fast. Even when orders arrived in mid-October instructing all embattled AFFS forces to withdraw from the Draconis Combine, the mercenaries stayed put.

THE LAST BATTLE

The War of 3039 ended on 19 January 3040, the date the principal combatants signed the Exeter Accords. Neither side had ever officially declared war, nor did representatives from the combatant realms sign any armistice agreement or other official peace document. To all intents and purposes, the war ended when the last DCMS unit crossed back over into Combine territory and the last AFFS/LCAF units returned to their side of the border. This “official end date” completely ignores the complexities of several worlds changing hands, but that is a topic for a different work.

As the saying goes, however, there is an exception to every rule. The exception to the end of the War of 3039 lies in the actions that took place on Galtor III from 3040 through 3042. Some might find the events of post-war Galtor III hysterical if they were not so tragic, while to others the Galtor campaign represents an incredible story of perseverance amplified by the corruption and malevolence of the Successor States. Individuals on both sides regularly laud the courage and sacrifice shown so poignantly by the people of Galtor, while decrying the other side’s government and military.

During the last half of 3039, rampant confusion reigned in the militaries of all three nations involved in the war. Intelligence reports flew back and forth from the front to various regional and national headquarters, as did deployment orders, battle plans, status reports and scores of other official military communications. No single headquarters—not the Fox’s Den on New Avalon, nor the ISF headquarters on Luthien, nor any other command center—had anything resembling a full picture of the war. Deployments changed on a daily basis, and local commanders had to execute considerable personal initiative if they hoped to remain alive.

In short, no one knew much of anything. When Prince Hanse Davion finally pulled the plug on the invasion, he did so as much out of frustration as out of fear of the Combine military’s capabilities. He issued recall orders starting on 5 October, instructing all units nominally inside the Draconis Combine to withdraw from captured worlds and return to the Federated Suns (or Lyran Alliance). As that order passed through several layers of bureaucracy and levels of command in the AFFS, it—or at least the version sent to Galtor III—was

Continued on p.

In fact, while the DCMS consolidated its hold over worlds retaken from the AFFS and LCAF, they left Galtor III alone. Clifton’s Rangers worked closely with Galtor’s people during that time, struggling to construct defenses and form an armed militia that could substantially aid in the defense of the planet. They worked feverishly, often around the clock, and even began a drive to transport those unable to fight into the Federated Suns.

Ironically, the Combine gave them more time than they needed. Not until mid-3040 did the DCMS turn its attention back to Galtor III, taking back the world only after assigning three line ‘Mech regiments plus supporting forces and many months to that task (for a brief look at this mini-campaign, see *The Last Battle*, at left).

HARROW’S SUN (JULY)

The officers of Miller’s Marauders knew they were in for a potentially disastrous fight when they landed on Harrow’s Sun, but they soldiered on despite the presence of the Ryuken-yon, knowing that the fates of AFFS Special Forces personnel and anti-Combine groups on the planet lay in their hands. In May, however, the Ryuken launched an attack that forced Major Grissom Miller’s DropShip group to leave the world, temporarily stranding the mercenary troops.

Miller went on the defensive, hoping to hold out for as long as possible, but the Ryuken continued to push hard and backed the mercenaries into a corner. That strategy allowed the freedom fighters and Special Forces groups to keep fighting, but Miller knew it would ultimately prove fatal to his Marauders. In early June, he led the Marauders in an incredibly risky operation, attacking the Ryuken headlong from hidden positions in the Brodaen Badlands. Though the assault cost the Marauders almost half their numbers, it stalled the Ryuken long enough for the Marauders to pull off the world.

That left a contingent of AFFS Special Forces troops, along with the large anti-Combine underground they had recruited and trained, to oppose some of the best-trained soldiers in the DCMS. The Ryuken continued to fight the insurgents for the next month, until *Tai-shu* Kester Hsiun Chi arrived on-world with three regiments of heavily armed infantry, including a regiment of military police. *Tai-shu* Chi left the world with the Ryuken-yon for An Ting soon afterward, trusting Harrow’s Sun to the infantry. Within two months, Harrow’s Sun was mostly pacified, though “Davionist” terror attacks continued for almost four years.

Many of the special forces left behind when Miller’s Marauders fled the planet eventually made their way back to the Federated Suns, though almost fifty gave their lives resisting Combine efforts to control the world. In pacifying Harrow’s Sun, the DCMS military governor initially imprisoned tens of thousands of citizens and ordered the execution of more than seven hundred suspected terrorists. Yet after enacting these draconian measures in late 3039, the DCMS occupation force experienced its worst backlash and endured four more years of intensified guerrilla activity.

LIMA

The mercenary campaign to take control of Lima proved the least costly of any of the seven targeted worlds. Federated Suns Civil Assistance teams began to arrive on-world in late June, and by the end of the war regular trade was already flowing into and out of the Lima system. Simonson’s Cutthroats spent several months preparing for the worst during the Combine’s counterattack in July, August and September, though the DCMS ultimately never struck at Lima aside from light raids in 3043 and 3046. Lima returned to the Federated Suns with little difficulty and almost no loss of life.

MCCOMB

Tensions remained high on McComb throughout the third quarter of 3039 and well into the fourth quarter. A significant portion of the population, as well as the remnants of the Combine-trained militia, continued to be a thorn in the side of the

Martian Cuirassiers and the insurgent forces they supported. The Combine loyalists held the advantage in manpower, but the mercenaries fielded the only BattleMechs left on the world and thus held the military edge.

BattleMechs notwithstanding, it took almost six months of intensive operations to put down most of the planet's militant pro-Combine activity. During that time, the mercenaries found themselves not only fighting a conventional war against a guerrilla opponent, but also facing possible counterattack. Starting in August, they began to receive additional supplies and civilian relief workers from Robinson, which went a long way toward winning over the world's population. Not until the Special Forces team assigned to McComb captured the recognized heads of the pro-Combine underground in October, however, did the frequency and intensity of the guerrilla strikes decrease. By December, the chief Civil Assistance Advisor, the head Federated Suns bureaucrat stationed on the world, declared McComb pacified and began officially bringing the planet into the Federated Suns. The Martian Cuirassiers remained on the world for another two years, assisting the planet's new military governor in destroying the remaining pro-Combine rebel cells and training the planet's militia.

NEW ABERDEEN (AUGUST-DECEMBER)

Cunningham's Commandos got caught between two passionate groups of New Aberdeen citizens—those who supported Combine rule and those who vehemently opposed it. The fighting between these factions became so brutal that the mercenaries distanced themselves from it rather than be drawn into a conflict where they might have to fire on unarmed civilians. By July, New Aberdeen had gone up like a powderkeg. Cities were literally burning while the two sides fought over territory like rival street gangs. Thousands had died already, and the death toll would only keep going up unless someone or something put an end to the violence. Productivity on the world had dropped to almost nothing; those who did not take up arms on one side or the other were too scared to leave their houses and go to work. Even the arrival of the Twelfth Galedon Regulars had little effect on the fighting.

It did, however, inspire a solution.

Retired *Sho-sho* Yosuki Yamada, serving as New Aberdeen's military and civilian governor, convinced the leader of Cunningham's Commandos to meet his counterpart in the Twelfth Galedon Regulars. The mercenary leader recognized that he and his MechWarriors could not hope to hold off the Regulars for any length of time, while the commander of the Regulars knew he would need as much help as possible to calm emotions on the planet. The Regulars might chafe at the thought of working side by side with AFFS-backed mercenaries, but *Sho-sho* Yamada was calling the shots.

On 17 August, the joint Combine-mercenary force embarked on a peacekeeping mission. City by city, they disarmed entire populations, imprisoning the worst offenders on both sides of the fight and forming a police force to maintain the peace in conjunction with the Galedon Regulars' infantry. After a week of this, many of the people fighting each other across the planet laid down their arms and resumed their regular lives, especially once they realized that the mercenaries and the DCMS were working together to end the violence. The joint peacekeeping force spent the next three months hunting down the diehards and ending the carnage.

Cunningham's Commandos left New Aberdeen in early December, and though initially charged with aiding the enemy, were acquitted after a communiqué from Yamada reached the AFFS high command.

ROYAL

The celebrated conflict between Fuchida's Fusiliers and the Stephenson family, which lasted right up until the mercenaries went rogue during the Clan War, ended up as a bigger story than the actual invasion of Royal. The people of Royal saw Colonel Leto Stephenson, son of Duke Paul Stephenson of New Ivaarsen, as their liberator and hero, and all but enshrined the man. While this response led to greater resentment

altered to read, "...withdraw immediately [from your assigned world] if faced with significant armed opposition from the DCMS...".

Specific supplemental orders were issued to every unit involved in action across the Combine border, but amid the chaos in the various levels of command, some units never got those directives. One such unit was the Eridani Light Horse's Seventy-First Striker (see *Fellanin II*, p. 89). Another was Clifton's Rangers. On Galtor III, Clifton's Rangers and their volunteers persevered. They continued to assist the people of Galtor III in dismantling the political, economic and military structures erected by the Combine over the past decade, and building in their stead institutions more friendly to the Federated Suns.

Not until late in 3040 did the AFFS high command realize that status reports were still coming in from Galtor III. By then, the AFFS and DCMS were both fortifying their borders against further incursions, which made it impossible for the FedSuns to provide significant support to Galtor without triggering the war all over again. Prince Hanse Davion and Duke Aaron Sandoval agreed, however, that they had to help the people of Galtor as much as they could (though Duke Sandoval vehemently argued for a renewed invasion deep into the Combine at the planet Benjamin). That aid consisted primarily of logistical assistance and transport of volunteers into and refugees out of the Galtor system, operated through unpopulated systems that the AFFS apparently used to stage reconnaissance raids into the Combine. Soon, at least four FedSuns JumpShips were cycling through the Galtor system every week, bringing in needed supplies and leaving with Galtorian citizens and products, the latter destined for trade in the FedSuns.

Trade with Galtor lasted this way for several months, but eventually the Combine found out. Specifically, the Combine government realized Galtor had "fallen off the scope." Additionally, as the interstellar transport lines began to reopen inside the Combine and civilian traffic to move, merchants started to report unusual happenings in the Galtor system.

It took until May before the Combine managed to send bureaucratic scouts to the world, and another three months before the DCMS put together a military expedition when the bureaucrats failed to report back. The mercenaries and the Galtor Militia took care of that

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expedition, along with the two companies of 'Mechs sent to investigate the disappearance of the second expedition.

In late October, yet another an expeditionary force—this time from the Third Benjamin Regulars—made the trek from Irurzun. Galtor's defenders could not summarily destroy this force, but they inflicted heavy losses. The Regulars retreated, but that fight ultimately sealed Galtor's fate.

Up to this point, the Federated Suns could quietly support Galtor, which allowed Clifton's Rangers to remain on-planet. Officers representing Prince Hanse Davion and Kanrei Theodore Kurita had begun secret negotiations for the return of POWs, however, and the AFFS high command felt that any further FedSuns support of Galtor might summarily end those negotiations. When they ordered the Rangers and all other AFFS personnel to withdraw, the Rangers officially broke their contract and accepted a new one from the Galtor Parliament. Most of the unit's supplemental volunteers likewise chose to remain behind.

In December, the DCMS committed the bulk of the Third Benjamin Regulars, as well as the First and Second Amphigean Light Assault Groups, to take back Galtor III. The campaign lasted for fifteen months. At its end, the Combine forces had suffered heavily, but Clifton's Rangers and the Galtor Militia had been obliterated. Civilian casualties numbered in the tens of thousands, and the resulting anti-Kurita fury forced the Combine to keep the world under martial law for almost fifteen years. But the planet once again lay in Combine hands by mid-3042, almost a year and a half after the official end of the 3039 war.

—Excerpted from *Crimes and Treason, A Look at the Successor Lords*, Free Rasalhague Press, 3050

and he was troubled by his troops' failure to completely suppress the fighting on the planet. While the main body of DCMS forces on-world had folded by May, in mid-July Sortek's troops were still dealing with insurgents as well as the remnants of the Combine units that had gone underground. Those forces conducted terrorist attacks that targeted AFFS personnel and civilians assisting them, though they rarely took to the field in a stand-up fight.

Field Marshal Sortek used on-world Special Forces teams to track down and neutralize insurgent cells, but after three months they apparently had not even made a dent. Attacks against the AFFS troops still occurred on a daily basis across the planet, and citizen groups still aided the insurgents. Worse, morale among the AFFS forces was beginning to bottom out. Troops traveled only in relatively large groups and were quick to respond to rebel action with deadly force.

At the end of July, matters got even worse. *Tai-sa* Dechan Fraser led the Ryuken-roku to the world, landing on 24 July. Like almost every aspect of Theodore Kurita's plan to repel the invading forces, the An Ting operation was risky. Fraser's Ryuken-roku had been defending Misery, which remained in danger; yet a certain level of risk was necessary for the *Kanrei's* plans to succeed. Fraser landed the bulk of his troops at an airfield outside Horan and quickly moved to strike at Field Marshal Sortek's forces in the city of Cerant.

toward the Stephensons among the Fusiliers, it made the Federated Suns' efforts to form a new government and resume trade with the world much easier.

GALEDON THRUST

"In the case of a state that is seeking not conquest but the maintenance of its security, the aim is fulfilled if the threat is removed—if the enemy is led to abandon his purpose."

—Sir Basil H. Liddel-Hart

"In matters of personal honor and duty, the needs of the nation must always take precedence over the needs of the individual. Even if that individual is the Coordinator."

—Coordinator Theodore Kurita, 15 December 3063

The assault on the Dieron Military District may have posed the greatest threat to the Draconis Combine, but the deep strikes into Benjamin and Galedon had the potential to be just as dangerous. Once detailed and accurate reports from the Galedon front reached Coordinator Takashi Kurita on Luthien and *Gunji-no-Kanrei* Theodore Kurita as he moved across the Combine, it became clear that Field Marshal Ardan Sortek was perhaps the most dangerous of the AFFS and LCAF officers leading the various thrusts. Though Combine intelligence still did not know how many AFFS units were assigned to Operation LAUNCELOT, the fact that Prince Hanse Davion's closest friend and right-hand man was leading this invasion greatly concerned analysts and field commanders. They felt the Prince would not waste this most valuable officer on a mere diversionary assault.

Sortek's presence forced the DCMS to route a sizable number of front-line 'Mech regiments to the Galedon Military District. Some have argued that the troops sent to defend Galedon could have been used to better effect on other fronts, but the majority of these units were pulled from the Periphery borders of the Galedon and Pesht military districts. Had those units gone instead to Benjamin or Dieron, they likely would have arrived too late to be of any use. Their appearance on the Galedon front shocked Field Marshal Sortek and his troops, and in conjunction with similar heavy assaults on every front, led Prince Hanse Davion to issue a general recall.

AN TING (JULY-AUGUST)

An Ting represented a difficult objective for both the Combine and the Federated Suns. An otherwise unimportant border world with few natural resources, its significance lay in the battles previously fought there and the regiments of troops honored by bearing the planet's name. Yet these very reasons made DCMS troops willing to die there in battle against their ancient enemy, House Davion, and similarly prompted the AFFS to target An Ting in Wave One.

From a purely strategic standpoint, Field Marshal Sortek knew that An Ting would be an important link in the supply chain supporting an eventual strike on Galedon V,

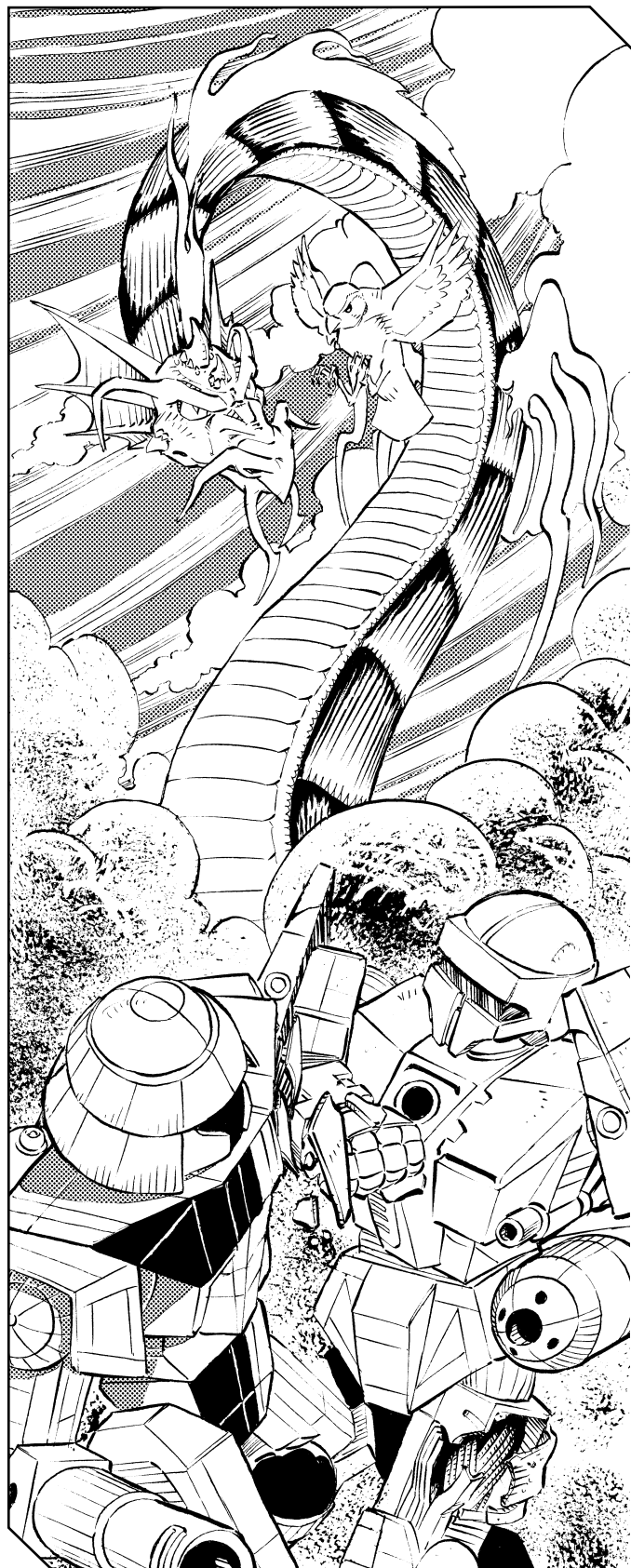
The Ryuken aerospace forces immediately claimed local air superiority and kept it throughout the operation, ejecting a combined-arms command of the Seventeenth Avalon Hussars from Cerant in short order and gaining a solid base of operations on the world.

As soon as word spread that the Ryuken had landed on An Ting, rebel groups across the planet increased the number and severity of their attacks against AFFS troops, further destabilizing Field Marshal Sortek's tenuous grip on the world. Rather than give up on An Ting, Sortek organized an assault on Cerant that he hoped would drive the Ryuken from the planet. His force of four mixed combat commands landed in West Cerant County on 28 July, but despite Sortek's numerical advantage, his troops were tired and had low morale. The Ryuken, on the other hand, were among the best troops in the DCMS and would not stop until they won back the world or were destroyed.

At first, the lines of battle were well-defined. Sortek himself led the attack, which rolled over the Ryuken's initial landing zones in Horan and closed in on Cerant on the first day before a Ryuken armor counterattack threatened to cut off the leading AFFS battalions in Clarkstown. Twice more over the next three days Sortek attempted to break through to Cerant, but each time the Ryuken rebuffed Sortek's attacks. When Sortek brought forward additional aerospace squadrons to help cover further strikes, *Tai-sa* Fraser dispatched a small force to Tule Mod. With the assistance of resistance fighters in that city, he assaulted the POW camp Sortek had set up at the nearby Tule Mod Military Reservation. Though the Ryuken force paid dearly for the assault, the AFFS troops stationed at Tule Mod could not prevent thousands of Combine POWs from streaming out of the camp.

Despite this blow, Field Marshal Sortek and his forces did not give up. AFFS troops in and around Tule Mod hunted down escaped POWs and struck back at whatever rebel groups they could find, while Sortek kept up the pressure on *Tai-sa* Fraser. Fraser knew he had only to last a few more days, however, until *Tai-shu* Kester Hsiun Chi, Warlord of the Galedon Military District, reached An Ting with the Ryuken-yon and several more regiments of conventional troops. With that knowledge in hand, Fraser allowed the lines of battle to slowly creep back toward Cerant.

By the time Chi landed with the first of his reinforcements on 9 August, the battle around Cerant had decimated both sides, opening large holes in the lines of battle. Sortek himself, while traveling behind his own lines, was accosted by a mixed company of Combine forces. Meanwhile, elements from the 121st Federation Scout Regiment made their way into Cerant and destroyed several key communications posts. For the next two days, Sortek and Fraser battled furiously, but when more and more Combine reinforcements poured onto the world, Sortek knew he could no longer hold fast. His own troops' morale was at an all-time low and his supply situation had begun to reach a critical point, while Fraser's forces were fielding new BattleMech designs and 'Mechs not seen since the days of the Star League.



UNDERGROUND MEMORIES

They don't have any idea how close they were to ending resistance on An Ting. The Rabid Foxes were damn good at what they did. We couldn't use normal communications because they had all the lines tapped. And who knows what kind of satellites they put up?

We could have set up a real cell structure, but that would have required somehow gathering all the leaders together at once without tipping off the Feds, plus having the time to do it—two things those SOBs weren't about to give us. Even worse, we had to do this under the wire while making up the rules as we went along—we were soldiers, after all, not trained guerrillas.

We didn't do so bad, all things considered. But the Rabid Foxes trained all their lives for this. They don't know how many times we called off an attack because they were on the prowl or because we were afraid they got one of us. And they did get plenty of us. There's no way to know for sure, but some estimates say they tortured more than a hundred of us "rebels" to death while trying to get information. And every time they captured one of us, five more died in the process and we lost at least another ten in follow-on raids.

That's how they almost got the "command council." We were meeting in a warehouse when all of a sudden five guys in black body armor rappelled down from the ceiling and started shooting the place up. We barely got out of there with our lives. Twice after that, they hit our safe houses just after we'd left...

They did get a couple of our council members in early July, and in two hellish weeks after that we lost literally hundreds of men and most of our supplies. If the Ryuken hadn't turned up, we couldn't have lasted much longer...

—*Tai-i* Gregory Matsuida, from an article first published in the *New Galedon Journal*

Hussars, ultimately pushing through them and opening a hole through which he ran a full combat command. While his heavy armor kept the hole open and prevented Czabo from moving reinforcements in from the north, he struck out to the south around the Hussars' flanks and hit the Combine troops from the rear.

Though outstanding raiders, the Hussars could not shift to the defensive as quickly as they needed to, and so Miller's maneuver scattered them. Reports from both sides vary wildly in numbers, but even conservative estimates indicate Miller's troops destroyed at least a battalion of the Hussars' 'Mechs, capturing seventeen of them. With the Hussars regiment broken up, Miller swung back around to the north to deal with the Fifth Galedon Regulars. The Galedon MechWarriors were in their element amid the rough and rocky terrain, and did not break. The battle continued for three more days, with Miller and Czabo battling hard to gain and keep the initiative. Miller was technically outnumbered, but Czabo refused to bring her conventional forces into the fight, convinced that her 'Mechs alone

By 11 August, Field Marshal Sortek finally concluded that he could no longer hold An Ting. He ordered his troops to withdraw only after Fraser mounted yet another attack, this one with his entire force. It took a week to pull out of An Ting, but apart from a handful of incidents, the Combine forces did not prevent Sortek and his troops from leaving. Sortek returned to Cassias with his units, while *Tai-sa* Fraser and *Tai-shu* Chi set out to cover the Combine's borders.

CAPRA (JULY-OCTOBER)

The initial invasion of Capra had proceeded so much ahead of schedule that by the beginning of July, General Goran Yuu and his troops were ready for their second-wave strike on Beta Mensae V. They expected that world to be as much of a pushover as Capra had been. Yuu was still awaiting an occupation brigade when he received orders on 13 July to go with the second wave. He left two 'Mech battalions, one each from the First Crucis Lancers and the First Albion Training Cadre, along with two combined-arms combat commands, to maintain security on Capra and ordered the rest of his forces to board their DropShips.

Yuu's assault force took off on 15 July. Two days later, a number of JumpShips arrived in the Capra system at both jump points, sending more than a dozen unidentified DropShips toward the planet. General Yuu only knew about the ships at the nadir point, where his own JumpShips were holding, and chose to continue with his Wave Two assault rather than turn any of his DropShips around to reinforce the garrison he had left behind. His DropShips passed the unidentified vessels a little more than two days later. Intelligence officers identified two as belonging to the Third Proserpina Hussars, and promptly passed on that information to Major General Grissom Miller, CO of the First Crucis Lancers Armored Regiment and commander of the AFFS forces defending Capra.

Yuu and his forces left the Capra system on 23 July, though before his ships jumped out, he sent the Second Crucis Lancers Aerospace Wing and a battalion of volunteer infantrymen to secure the nadir jump point and assist Major General Miller if necessary. Before the Combine JumpShips could quick-charge their K-F drives and jump away, the AFFS volunteers assaulted them under cover of the Lancers' fighters, which easily took down the Combine ships' fighter defense. Three hours later, more than a hundred volunteers were dead, but the survivors had taken command of the three Combine JumpShips. The Lancers fighters remained at the jump point to protect them.

The next day, the Third Proserpina Hussars and the Fifth Galedon Regulars landed on Capra—the Third via the nadir jump point and the Fifth via the zenith point. *Sho-sho* Miyako Czabo, Chief of Staff for the Galedon Military District and commander of the DCMS forces assigned to retake the world, took the time to size up her opponent. She sent out reconnaissance lances to probe Miller's defenses while she organized her troops and began to encircle her enemies.

Major General Miller, based in New Cassandra, did not wait for the next shoe to fall, however. He took the fight to *Sho-sho* Czabo in an attempt to claim the initiative and keep damage to New Cassandra to a minimum. He had integrated his two 'Mech battalions, putting Albion cadets alongside veteran Crucis Lancers MechWarriors in an effort to ensure that the Albion battalion did not disintegrate in battle. Miller struck out to the east of the city in a sector occupied by the Third Proserpina

could easily finish off what she called Miller's "pitiful force"—a choice that kept the field more or less even.

Meanwhile, Miller dispatched four companies of fast armor and hovercraft, supported by two companies of fast 'Mechs, to harry the Proserpina Hussars. The harriers' job was to prevent the DCMS units from re-forming and to pick off stragglers. This "hunting trip" lasted for more than a week, though once the heavy fighting between the Galedon Regulars and Miller's main force died down, most of the Hussars managed to slip back to their own lines.

The harrying attacks put a strain on Czabo, and Miller knew it. He also still held New Cassandra and had taken a great deal of salvage from the battlefields outside the city, enabling his eight total battalions to remain near full strength despite their losses. Czabo, by contrast, had effectively lost more than a third of her BattleMechs and a quarter of her armor. Miller knew he still faced a force much stronger than his own, so he went on the offensive once more in hopes of evening the odds. Again he struck headlong at the DCMS formations, sending his fast tanks and 'Mechs on raiding missions. This time they hit the Galedon Regulars' DropShips while the bulk of Czabo's forces were occupied on the front. The raid did some damage, but more importantly it forced the ships to take off and retreat to an airfield outside of Kirit, some two hundred kilometers distant. Czabo attempted to remain in the fight, but she ultimately called a general retreat. Rather than pursue, Miller again picked off stragglers, capturing almost two battalions of infantry that could not get away in time.

This battle, which lasted from August 6 to 7, marked a turning point in the campaign for Capra. *Sho-sho* Czabo could not easily or effectively fight a long-distance war against Major General Miller as long as she lacked a secure landing zone closer to New Cassandra. Likewise, Miller was not about to attack Czabo across that distance with the forces at his disposal, especially as he still expected an AFFS occupation force to arrive shortly. Both generals contented themselves with probing attacks and raids, turning the battle for Capra into a war of scouts.

That state of affairs lasted for more than two months before Major General Miller finally received orders on 15 October to withdraw from Capra and return to Kesai IV. He waited two more days before leaving the world in order to win one last little victory over Czabo. He made his retreat preparations look like a massive assault drop, prompting Czabo to send out more recon patrols. He then sent a small detachment equipped with captured Combine machines into Kirit and stole the Fifth Galedon Regulars' banner. (The original banner given the unit by Shiro Kurita in 2304 had long since been retired, but its pole held the regimental banner.) Miller and his forces lifted off Capra the next day and left the system on 17 October in possession of the banner, three Proserpina Hussars JumpShips and dozens of 'Mechs and tanks.

DELACRUZ (AUGUST-SEPTEMBER)

During the first invasion wave, operations in the Delacruz system drew a starkly negative reaction from human rights groups across the Inner Sphere, primarily because of the tragedy on the *Admiral Horusho Kensai* recharge and trading station. The invasion of the planet, however, went as expected. The fighting was fierce, amplified by the restrictive confines of the world's few major populated land masses. Of course, Marshal Edward Valos' invasion force had only a fraction of the Eighth Sword of Light to deal with. The rest of the regiment was off-world, and Valos had no illusions that those MechWarriors would allow him and his troops to keep Delacruz. While he secured the planet, his logistics personnel stripped everything they could from the Sword of Light's supply dumps. Their next attack was not scheduled until Wave Three, so the AFFS unit fortified its positions and prepared for an eventual assault by the rest of the Eighth Sword of Light.

When the expected attack had not come by the end of July, Marshal Valos began to worry. He had heard that the DCMS was counterattacking in much greater force than anticipated, with equipment never before seen on the battlefield. Based on those reports, he made preparations to quickly move his entire force, to reinforce a particular sector on Delacruz or to pull out entirely. Unfortunately, those preparations made him far more willing to pull off the world than he should have been.

IT'S ALL ABOUT ATTITUDE

We were outnumbered, outgunned and by all accounts outmotivated, but by God I made Miyako Czabo my bitch.

The problem with her was, she wasn't a real strategist. Tactically she was sound in her thinking, but like just about every other Drac general at that time, she was too caught up in the classic "samurai" doctrines of war. She didn't really pay attention to anything Teddy K was preaching at the time. Had one of his apostles been in charge, the battle for Capra would have gone very differently.

So I guess I can praise the Lord for little miracles. And maybe I shouldn't have been quite so cocky.

No, I take that back. It was all part of the image, the attitude. Half my MechWarriors were cadets, and Czabo outnumbered me 3-to-1 in 'Mechs and around 2-to-1 in tanks and infantry. But she didn't take the initiative when she had the chance. Her mistake, and I made her pay for it. There's a lot the generals of yore can teach us, but the one I like best is Patton. "Take 'em by the nose and kick 'em in the ass," he used to say. That's as true today as it was 1,100 years ago. It means you don't give up, ever. I had the initiative and I damn sure kept it...

In retrospect, the "banner raid" was a tactical mistake. I've taken heat for it over the years, and rightly so. It could have backfired. I could have lost men because of a dumb prank. The recall left a bad taste in my mouth, and I needed one last victory. But it worked. And, yes, we did have to burn out at 2 gees...

We actually got three banners and a guidon. I gave one banner each to the First Albion and First Crucis. I brought the Shiro banner with me to the Fox's Den in 3047, and it's still there. The guidon, though... That's hanging on my office wall...

—Field Marshal Grissom Miller (ret.),
excerpted from *Tales of a Field Marshal*, New Avalon Press 3055

The rest of the Eighth Sword of Light finally arrived on 3 August. *Tai-sa* Logan Kekelinov also brought reinforcements for his Sword of Light MechWarriors; *Sho-sho* Jophet Pati, commanding the entire counterattack force, led the Second and Fourth An Ting Legions to the system. The entire DCMS force arrived at the nadir jump point, where Marshal Valos had positioned his transport group along with two full wings of fighters following the tragedy at the nadir recharge station. That fact alone kept his JumpShip group safe. Both sides scrambled fighters as soon as the Combine JumpShips materialized, and a two-hour dogfight broke out that ultimately ended in a stalemate. The Combine DropShips burned toward Delacruz unhindered, while the AFFS JumpShips remained parked with no damage. *Sho-sho* Pati's forces initially attempted to seize the nadir station in a lightning raid not unlike the one the AFFS had successfully used three months earlier, but one of the assault shuttles was destroyed and two more damaged severely enough that the marines aboard turned the shuttles around.

The tide of battle went differently when Pati's counter-invasion force reached Delacruz. Most of the world's population lived on two major land masses, archipelagos formed during a period of severe tectonic activity. Throughout these archipelagos, separated by thousands of kilometers of ocean, sit a handful of large islands devoted almost exclusively to agriculture, while the smaller islands house the world's people. The two big cities, Zuiba and the capital of Delilah, along with Delacruz's two military bases, each entirely occupy moderate-sized islands, with the spaceports built out over the ocean. This arrangement allowed Valos to easily fortify his few occupied positions, but it also provided the arriving Combine forces with numerous places to land unopposed.

Aided by officers who had served on Delacruz for years, Pati dropped her nine battalions of 'Mechs and their two regiments of supporting forces on the main agricultural land masses and immediately fortified her positions. She then launched a daring maneuver; two Eighth Sword of Light battalions, along with two of her own An Ting battalions, embarked their DropShips and appeared to launch a surprise air assault on Delilah. Instead, two more battalions of An Ting 'Mechs made a treacherous underwater approach on Goi-pa, the island home of the planet's primary military installation. The Combine units lost eleven 'Mechs along the way, but as soon as they broke out of the water, the DropShips in the air changed course and dropped four more battalions of 'Mechs right on top of Goi-pa.

That move stunned Marshal Valos and his troops, but none more than the Third Lyran Regulars, who had primary responsibility for Goi-pa. The Regulars initially held the An Ting Legion 'Mechs at the waterline, but after four more 'Mech battalions dropped down on them, they rapidly lost cohesion. Hauptmann-Kommandant Fey Nichols, the senior surviving officer, ordered a general retreat to Delilah after just an hour of battle. From that point on, the fight for Delacruz was over.

Sho-sho Pati continued to jump from island to island for the next three weeks, driving out every one of Valos' garrisons with relative ease. By the last week in August, Marshal Valos held

only Delilah and the military installation on the island of Thune. He was surrounded by Pati's forces, and even though he still had superiority in numbers, he had already lost the morale battle, especially in light of orders from Field Marshal Sortek to retreat if unable to hold. When Pati attacked Thune on 3 September, Marshal Valos issued the final orders to withdraw from Delacruz. By the first week in September, the entire system was back in the hands of the Draconis Combine.

ELIDERE IV (JULY-AUGUST)

Apart from the bad luck that initially plagued Marshal Patrick Meldon's assault force, the invasion of Elidere IV was accomplished in short order and with comparatively few casualties. Marshal Meldon's First Ceti Hussars were scheduled to take part in a Wave Two invasion of Misery, and so he began preparations for that assault as soon as Elidere was secured. The First Screaming Eagles, by contrast, were assigned as an alternate for the eventual assault on Matsuida, and would not be needed until Wave Three at the very least. The AFFS did not have enough conventional units to occupy all the worlds struck in the first wave, and so the Screaming Eagles got the job on Elidere IV.

Marshal Meldon received orders on 11 July to strike Misery, and his Ceti Hussars began lifting off the next day. Naturally, when unidentified JumpShips bearing enough unmarked military DropShips to carry two BattleMech regiments and supporting units entered the Elidere system on 26 July, Screaming Eagles Colonel Walther Hokala was understandably nervous. By the time they landed on 5 August, after what seemed like a leisurely burn-in to the planet and with no contact whatsoever, Colonel Hokala and his mercenaries were almost frantic, especially after receiving reports of strong DCMS counterattacks up and down the front. The newcomers turned out to be two Ghost Regiments (later identified as the Ninth and Tenth Ghost), equipped with a large number of 'Mechs last fielded by the armies of the Star League. Painted a "ghost white" color and decorated only with the insignia of the Draconis Combine, these 'Mechs were a complete mystery to Hokala and his MechWarriors.

The first engagement on Elidere IV occurred in the plains outside Jasos City. Colonel Hokala had drafted dozens of possible battle plans in the ten almost-sleepless nights since the Ghost Regiments arrived in-system, but once he saw what he was up against, he knew he and his men had little hope of retaining control of the world. Nevertheless, they made the attempt.

Hokala chose a risky plan, but reasoned that since his troops were outnumbered and outgunned, luck was the only thing he might have on his side. Once the battle was engaged, Hokala's troops attempted to blanket the battlefield in a thick smokescreen, giving them enough cover to move a fast demi-battalion into the Ghosts' flanks and crush one entire wing before the Ghosts could adapt. Unfortunately, the Ghosts began to pepper the Eagles with weapons fire well outside standard ranges, startling the mercenary MechWarriors. When the Eagles moved into long-range missile distance, the Ghosts further surprised them by shooting down many of their barrages, leaving significant holes in the smokescreen and allowing the Combine

MechWarriors to crush the mercenary flanking attack and send the rest of the Eagles into retreat.

After losing almost half his command in less than half an hour, Colonel Hokala signaled his willingness to surrender and withdraw. The Ghost MechWarriors stopped firing and held their ground at the edge of the city, while their commander raised the arm of his *Hatamoto-chi* into the air. Hokala sent out transports to pick up stranded and ejected MechWarriors, but when he attempted to send out salvage recovery units, the Ghosts destroyed the lead vehicle. Colonel Hokala got the message and left the world as soon as he could load his surviving 'Mechs onto their DropShips, making the first engagement also the last.

HUAN (AUGUST-SEPTEMBER)

The Second Dismal Disinherited, commanded by Colonel Neamiah Stockl and reinforced by a free regiment of AFFS infantry, began setting up garrison fortifications on Huan in May, after Lieutenant General James White had finalized negotiations with the planet's civilian government to turn control of the world over to the Federated Suns. General Raul Coburn and the First Disinherited aided as best they could, but focused their energies on preparing for their Wave Two assault on Iqualada, which would pave the way for a Wave Three assault on Matsuida. When the orders to proceed with Wave Two assignments came on 12 July, the First left the world, entrusting the safety of Huan to the Second Disinherited.

Shortly thereafter, Colonel Stockl began receiving reports of DCMS counterattacks along the entire border. He continued to build up fortifications on Huan, knowing that the rest of the Disinherited would return to the Federated Suns through the Huan system should they be driven back from Iqualada. Stockl expected the worst, so when the Thirty-Second Galedon Regulars arrived in-system on 7 August, he continued to prepare for more attackers, possibly including one of the unknown regiments that had turned up elsewhere.

Reality hit on 17 August, when the Thirty-Second began its descent onto Huan. Stockl struck the Regulars hard with everything he could muster, turning the landing zone into a killing field. His fighters exacted a heavy price on the Regulars, destroying one DropShip in the air and damaging many more, preventing the Regulars from deploying immediately. The Disinherited fighters paid dearly; eleven were blown out of the air and four more damaged so heavily that they had to make emergency landings (and could not fly afterward). The aerospace pilots tied up the Regulars long enough for Stockl to reach the LZ with his ground forces.

The resultant fighting was brutal, with both sides losing more than half their fighting strength in a single day. The Galedon Regulars took far worse losses, however, and when Stockl broke off the fight, they could not prevent his salvage teams from scouring the battlefield for repairable equipment. The Second Dismal Disinherited pulled back to the city of Qoreth to lick their own serious wounds and prepare for a second assault. They launched it five days later, and once more both sides suffered serious damage.

Colonel Stockl attempted one more time at the end of the month to dislodge and destroy the Galedon Regulars, this time relying more heavily on the infantry to infiltrate the Regulars' base and wreak havoc. The infantry succeeded in burning down the Regulars' field "tent city" and sabotaging a few repair bays, but at the cost of five companies, captured by the Regulars' surviving armor. Worse, after three major battles, both sides were running low on stores. The war on Huan soon turned into a low-level conflict while Colonel Stockl and his counterpart, *Tai-sa* Grieg Jaekel, conserved their energies.

The balance suddenly swung toward the Combine when the Second Night Stalkers arrived on 20 September. Stockl collapsed his lines and took up a defensive stature near Sellan, barely weathering the Night Stalkers' assaults before General Coburn, recalled from Iqualada, returned to Huan leading the First and Third Disinherited. Coburn dropped two 'Mech regiments and two strengthened conventional regiments almost on top of the Galedon Regulars and Night Stalkers. Like the first meeting of the Regulars and the Second Disinherited, this battle was bloody and costly, but it put Jaekel and *Tai-sa* Tadaki Johiro on the run and left Coburn's troops with several hundred POWs.

That engagement was the last on Huan, however. POW interrogations indicated that *Tai-shu* Kester Hsiun Chi had dispatched the Ryuken-yon from An Ting to aid in the reconquest of Huan. That knowledge, coupled with the recall orders issued from New Avalon, sealed the Disinheriteds' fate. General Coburn, in consultation with Lieutenant General White, ordered his mercenaries and all AFFS troops on the planet to return to the Federated Suns. Before they left, however, Colonel Stockl met with *Tai-sa* Jaekel. After a brief tea ceremony in which Jaekel saluted the skill and courage of Stockl and his troops, the two exchanged POWs. The Disinheriteds left the world the next day, 25 September.

THESTRIA (AUGUST-SEPTEMBER)

Like many of the other units involved in the first wave, the Pollux regiment of the Dioscuri was scheduled to take part in Wave Two of the invasion. Unfortunately, when the orders to go reached Thestria on 11 July, both Dioscuri regiments were deeply involved in pacifying the world. Field Marshal Sortek recognized ahead of time that some units would likely slip behind schedule, and so he ordered the Third Dismal Disinherited to take the place of the Pollux regiment in the assault on Iqualada. Once the Dioscuri had pacified Thestria, Pollux was immediately routed to Cassias, where they became part of Sortek's strategic reserve.

Unfortunately for Colonel Timothy Nels and his Castor regiment, Pollux left the system just two days before the Sixteenth Galedon Regulars arrived. The Combine regiment landed on 9 August, drawing the mercenaries back into a bloody fight for the world. Despite the zeal of *Tai-sa* Leonard Kobayashi's troops, the mercenaries and their supporting forces rebuffed every one of the Galedon Regulars' attacks, inflicting heavy damage in the process. Kobayashi, a lifelong supporter of Coordinator Takashi Kurita and a diehard opponent of Theodore Kurita's military reforms, nevertheless continued to push the attacks.

DUTY AND HONOR: A PRICE TOO HIGH?

“The actions and motivations surrounding the final battle for Thestria in late August of 3039 provide a clear example of the revolution going on in the DCMS at this time.

“Here we had an ‘old school’ commander in *Tai-sa* Leonard Kobayashi, a career MechWarrior and graduate of the Wisdom of the Dragon school, and *Tai-sa* Henry Sobiroff, a commoner who found a prosperous life in the DCMS thanks to the reforms forwarded by Theodore Kurita. Both were successful officers who had proved their loyalty to the Combine as well as their skill in leading men into battle, and were rewarded with command of one of the Dragon’s line BattleMech regiments.

“So what happened? Imagine two immense weather fronts meeting, or perhaps the coming together of enough fissile material to induce critical mass. An explosion was inevitable...

“Why didn’t it happen more often? On Thestria, the conditions were just right. You had two commanders who were polar opposites. For the most part, *Kanrei* Theodore Kurita kept those kinds of commanders apart, but he couldn’t do it everywhere. He had to hope his commanders’ desire to do what was best for the Dragon would outweigh their desire for personal honor. That didn’t happen on Thestria, and the Sixteenth Galedon Regulars paid the price...

“Even though Kobayashi committed *seppuku*, it was still seven years before the *Kanrei* authorized the full rebuilding of the Sixteenth Galedon Regulars regiment. During that time, the Sixteenth existed as a ‘regiment’ of forty-one ‘Mechs. That treatment sent a message to all the *Kanrei*’s MechWarriors, a message they got loud and clear—for the most part...

“Sobiroff is an interesting officer. The fact that *Kanrei* Kurita commended him for... minimizing damage to Thestria and ultimately promoted him speaks volumes about what the *Kanrei* was looking for in his battlefield commanders....

—Demi-Precentor Thame Venters, excerpted from a lecture at the Royal Sandhurst Military Academy, 14 May 3053

Tai-sa Kobayashi knew that the First Proserpina Hussars were on their way to Thestria. They had been delayed on Hun Ho while they waited for JumpShip transport, but Kobayashi intended to eject the “mere mercenaries” from Thestria before the Hussars showed up. When his MechWarriors failed to accomplish that, he focused his samurai on inflicting as much harm as they could, regardless of the damage they themselves sustained. “We will land the killing blow when our comrades arrive,” he exhorted his warriors, and boasted that they would make good their losses from the “booty of these [Davion mercenary] scum.”

When the First Proserpina Hussars, under the command of *Tai-sa* Henry Sobiroff, finally arrived in orbit on 25 August, matters looked extremely dark for Colonel Nels. Things got worse when the Hussars dropped their entire complement into Rashōmon and struck hard at the mercenaries’ flanks. Kobayashi and his Sixteenth Regulars immediately made a full-strength push into the city, cutting a swathe of destruction through Thestria’s capital, in direct contrast to the Hussars, who were careful to do as little damage as possible. Until the final battle early the next day, that difference in collateral damage was Nels’ only clue to the problems between the two Combine units’ commanders.

Kobayashi was a traditionalist while Sobiroff was one of Theodore Kurita’s earliest converts to the reformist gospel, and so Kobayashi refused to submit to Sobiroff’s command. He argued that orders from the *Gunji-no-Kanrei* placing the Hussars’ leader in overall command of operations on Thestria were illegal, and that as senior officer appointed by Coordinator Takashi Kurita, he should be in command. This dispute spilled over into the two units and kept them from coordinating their attacks against the Dioscuri, allowing Colonel Nels to maneuver and limit damage to his forces.

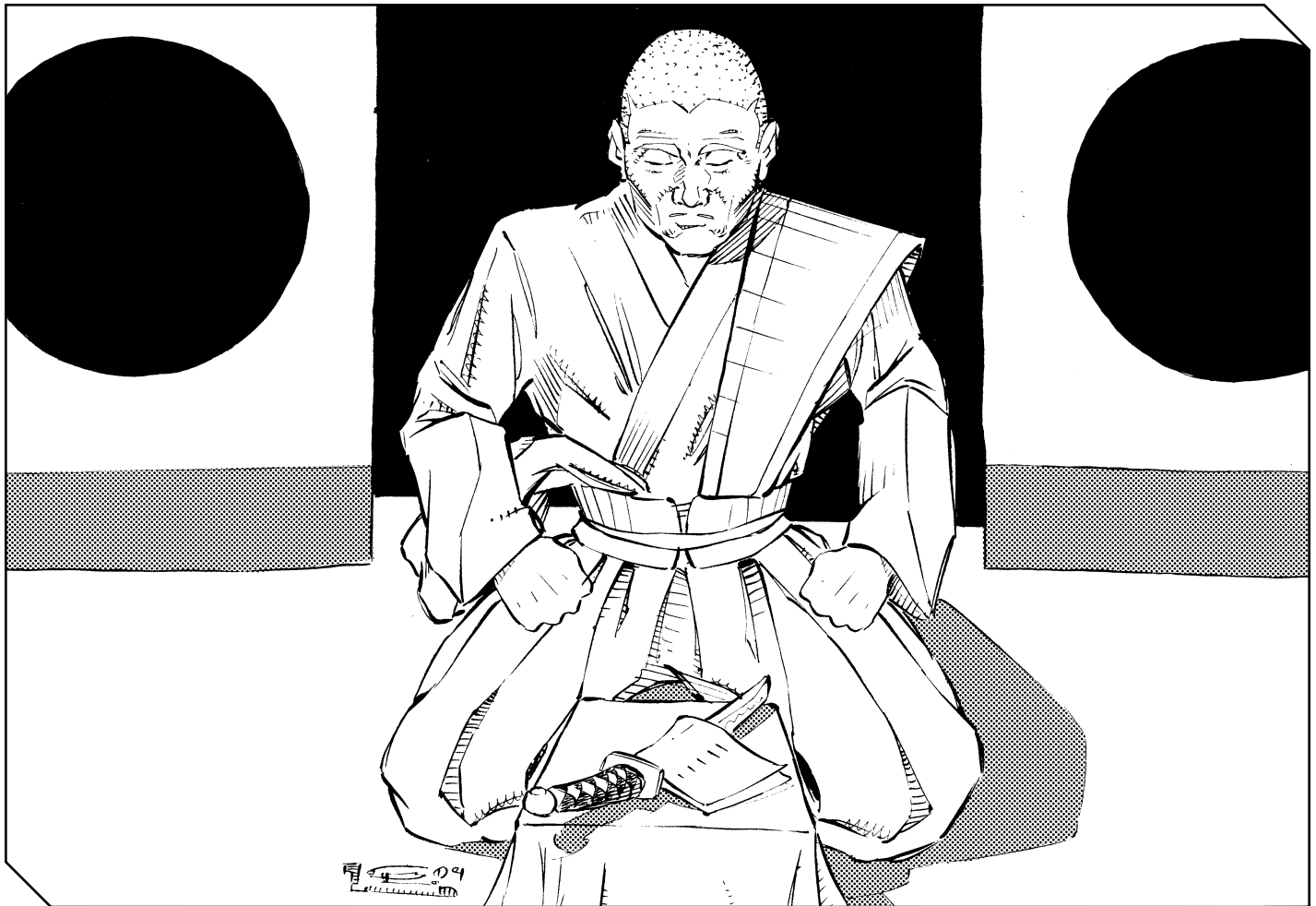
By the next morning, however, luck had seemingly run out for the mercenaries. Caught between the two Combine forces, Colonel Nels’ troops prepared for their final stand. Then *Tai-sa* Sobiroff offered them the opportunity to retreat from the world on standard terms, something the Dioscuri had never imagined possible in light of Takashi Kurita’s decade-old “Death to Mercenaries” order. Colonel Nels immediately accepted. A livid Kobayashi ordered his battalion of MechWarriors into a suicidal charge that he hoped would snap Sobiroff out of his delusion, but instead Sobiroff and his troops stood on the sidelines as the mercenaries wiped out the Sixteenth’s last operational ‘Mechs. Sobiroff took his ransom out of the salvage left behind by the Sixteenth Regulars, gifting the mercenaries with the rest.

Nels and the Dioscuri, along with the AFFS conventional forces assigned to Thestria, left the world on 1 September with better equipment than when they started the operation. *Tai-sa* Kobayashi and several of his senior officers committed *seppuku* to atone for their loss.

OTHER ACTIONS

After the “go” orders for Wave Two operations went out via the black-box network starting on 3 July (to be received by combat units on or about 12 July), several units jumped deeper into the Draconis Combine and prepared to assault their next objectives. Less than two weeks later, the Fox’s Den on New Avalon issued orders to hold any further operations. These orders went out via HPG to the four senior officers directing the various invasion thrusts and to units stationed on the thirteen staging worlds, but it took far longer for the hold orders to reach units deep in Combine territory via black box—in most cases just as the units were reaching their target worlds or had already made landfall.

Combat commanders were obviously upset by the new orders, not only because they could no longer pursue their objectives, but also because of the timing. With several units forced into a “holding pattern” in their assigned systems, the defenders of the target worlds had even more time to prepare and call in reinforcements. Ultimately, every invading unit received recall orders, making moot even the miniscule gains of the second wave.



Beta Mensae V (July-August)

General Goran Yuu, commanding the First Crucis Lancers and the First Albion Cadre, received orders to hold three days into a recharge layover in the Altdorf system, though a technical glitch made those orders unreadable. By the time Field Marshal Sortek's staff re-sent them, Yuu and his strike force were already in the Beta Mensae system, but had not yet begun their burn in to the world. They sat at the nadir jump point for almost a month, watching the planet's garrison nervously build up its defenses, before orders came to return to the Federated Suns. Rather than route Yuu's task force back through Capra, Field Marshal Sortek sent them to raid Kaznejov in an effort to distract the DCMS from continued strikes into the Draconis March.

Igualada (July-August)

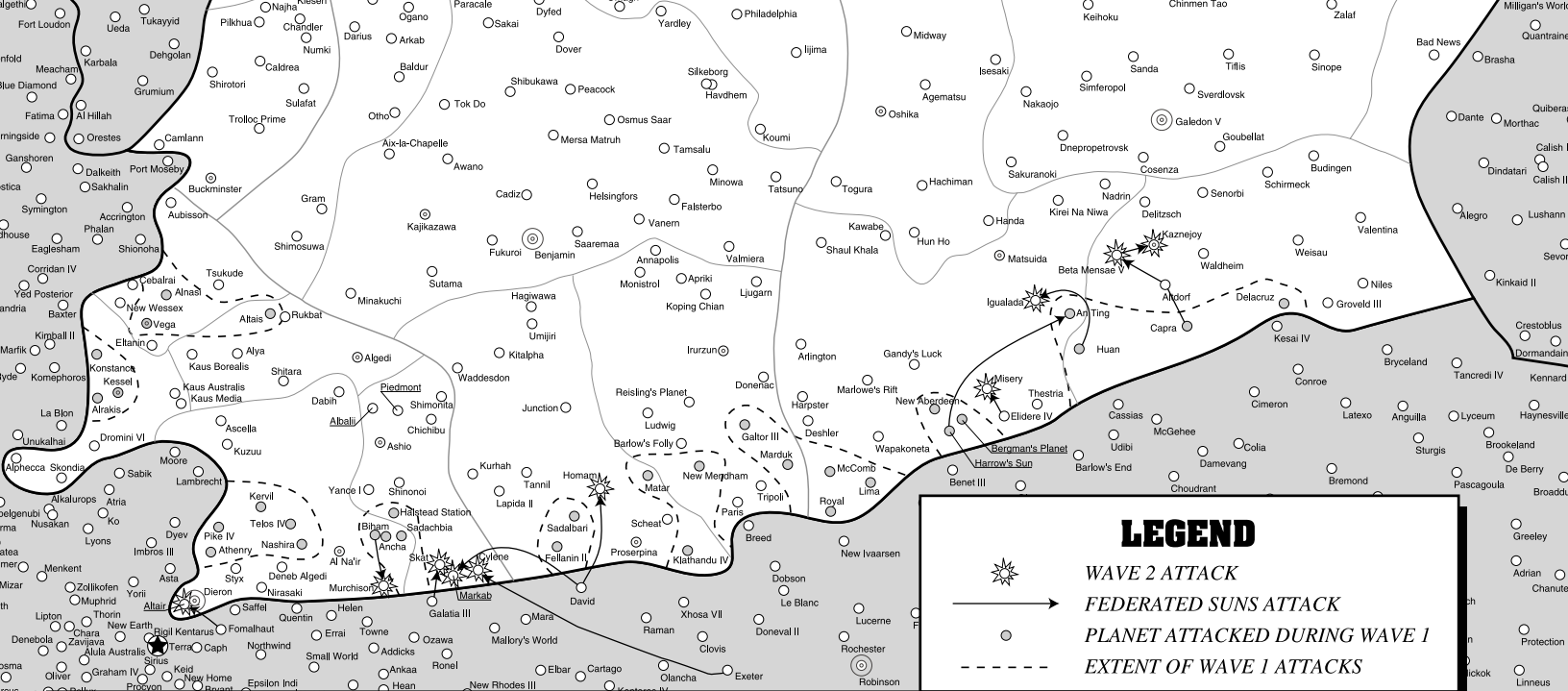
General Raul Coburn, commanding the First and Third Dismal Disinherited, received orders from New Avalon to hold on 25 July. By then, his mercenaries were already on Igualada and engaged with the planetary militia. Rather than put the operation and his men in jeopardy—and give the militia the chance to regroup and call in reinforcements—General Coburn continued with the inva-

sion and quickly crushed the militia's five light battalions. After less than a week of fighting, Coburn declared victory in a dispatch to New Avalon and began preparing the planet for an occupation force. Just a few weeks later, Coburn received a message from New Avalon ordering the Disinheriteds off Igualada and back to Cassias. Coburn replied that his mercenaries could hold the world indefinitely or could continue on to Matsuida to relieve pressure on other Galedon Thrust worlds, but a faxed reply nine days later told him in no uncertain terms to evacuate Igualada and return to the Federated Suns.

The Disinheriteds returned through the Huan system, relieving their Second Regiment from a heavy DCMS counterassault. That move garnered Coburn a reprimand from New Avalon, though once he learned the entire story, Field Marshal Sortek removed it and instead complimented the entire unit for their service to the Federated Suns. He later arranged personal meetings with Prince Hanse Davion and Field Marshal James Sandoval to smooth over the incident.

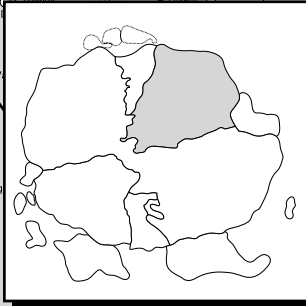
Kaznejov (August-September)

General Goran Yuu entered the Kaznejov system early on 26 August. After his fighter squadrons cleared the zenith jump point,



LEGEND

- WAVE 2 ATTACK
- FEDERATED SUNS ATTACK
- PLANET ATTACKED DURING WAVE 1
- EXTENT OF WAVE 1 ATTACKS



WAVE 2 ATTACKS

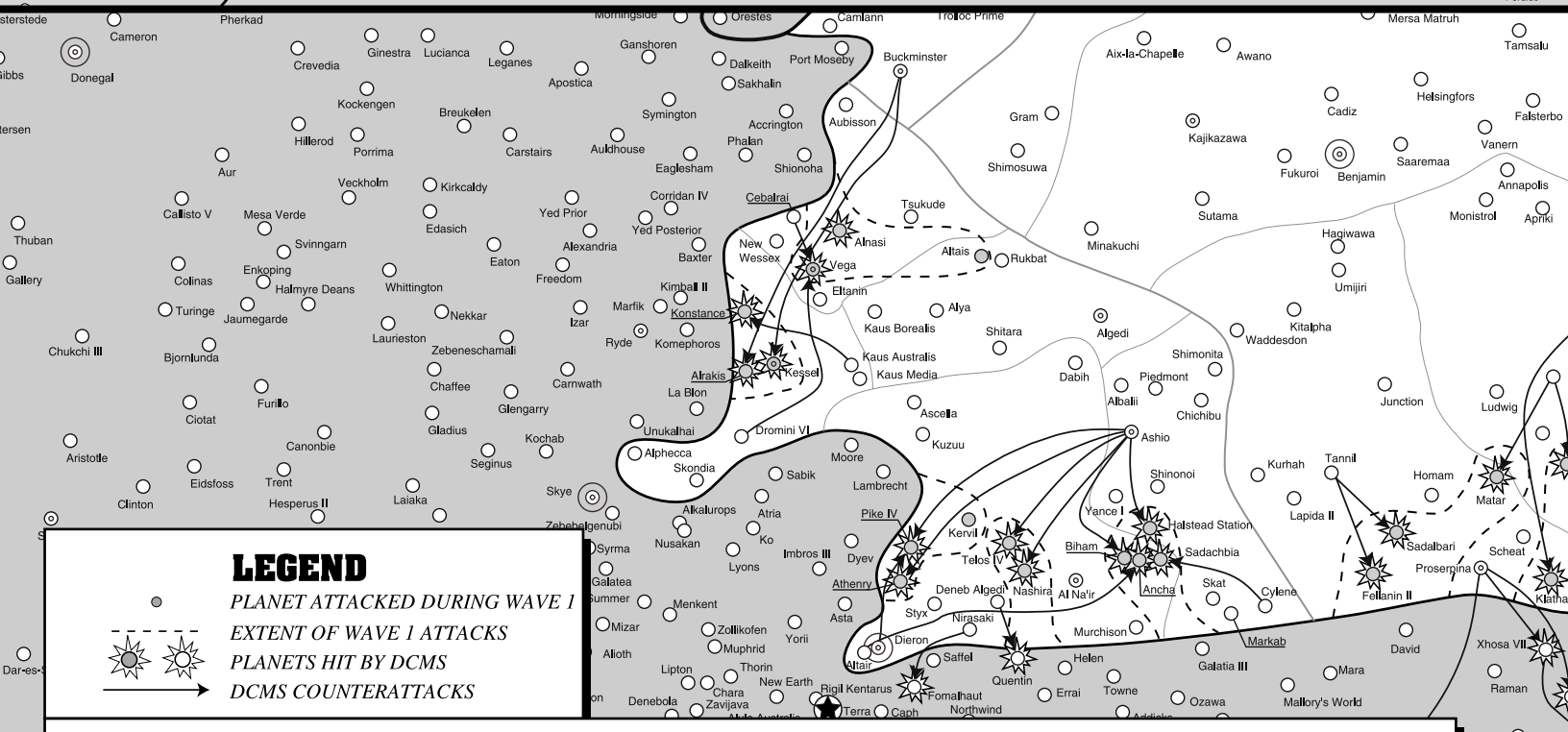
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LEGEND

30 LIGHT YEARS

90 LIGHT YEARS OR 20.1 PARSECS

MAXIMUM JUMP: APPROXIMATELY 30 LIGHT YEARS



LEGEND

- PLANET ATTACKED DURING WAVE 1
- EXTENT OF WAVE 1 ATTACKS
- PLANETS HIT BY DCMS
- DCMS COUNTERATTACKS

DCMS COUNTERATTACK

DIERON THRUST

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LEGEND

30 LIGHT YEARS

90 LIGHT YEARS OR 20.1 PARSECS

MAXIMUM JUMP: APPROXIMATELY 30 LIGHT YEARS



he dispatched three mixed regiments from his First Crucis Lancers and the First Albion Cadre to the capital world of the Kaznejov Prefecture. Faced with the Seventeenth Galedon Regulars, the AFFS troops fought hit-and-run attacks for two weeks, frustrating the Combine defenders and doing what damage they could to the military infrastructure before they left. History records this as a relatively minor action, but Yuu's forces did manage to destroy the prefecture headquarters and kill *Tai-sho* Fatima Kori, the Kaznejov Prefecture commander, which ultimately allowed Major General Miller to hold out on Capra for so long. General Yuu and his forces returned to the Federated Suns via the Waldheim and Delacruz systems, another move aimed at confusing DCMS intelligence efforts.

Misery (July-August)

The Second Screaming Eagles were dispatched in early July from Glenmora to take part in the assault on Misery. They made the jump to the Elidere system, meeting up with Marshal Patrick Meldon and his First Ceti Hussars before continuing on to their target. In one of the war's many coincidences, the Eagles entered the Misery system hours after *Tai-sa* Dechan Fraser and the Ryuken-roku had left on their way to An Ting. Before Marshal Meldon's task force could reach Misery, however, they were ordered to hold. The task force continued on to the planet and entered parking orbit, where it sat for almost three weeks before being recalled to Glenmora.

DCMS COUNTER-INVASION

"L'audace, l'audace, toujours l'audace!"

(Translation: "Audacity, audacity, always audacity!")

—Frederick the Great

"All I need is a full magazine and a fifth of scotch. Oh, and would a couple of tac-nukes be out of the question?"

—Commodore William "Wet Willie" Kossacks

Hundreds of senior officers from the AFFS and LCAF spent more than a year formulating battle plans for the invasion of the Draconis Combine. They planned for the worst as well as for the best—in fact, two teams of planners spent all their time trying to think of every eventuality. Not surprisingly, those teams prepared contingency plans that dealt with a concerted DCMS counterattack, including the appearance of never-before-seen line regiments and assaults deep into the Federated Suns and Lyran Commonwealth. No one, however, expected the Combine to have constructed as many as twenty new BattleMech regiments—including the twelve so-called Ghost Regiments—and to counterattack in such overwhelming force.

Operation OROCHI combined precisely those two elements. *Kanrei* Theodore Kurita knew that the combined might of the Lyran and FedSuns militaries could easily overrun his DCMS, which likely would have happened had his father's orders been followed to the letter. So instead of embarking on a defensive campaign that at best would stop the AFFS/LCAF coalition in its tracks—resulting in the loss of dozens of worlds—*Kanrei* Kurita

went on the offensive, putting almost the entire DCMS on the move to strike in force at the invading coalition.

That the DCMS could deploy so many line regiments in such a brief time was nothing short of miraculous (though the Combine later paid the price for this audacious stroke). The mass appearance of most of the DCMS along the Lyran and Federated Suns borders shocked coalition commanders and worried the leaders of the two allied militaries, but had that been the only move by the DCMS, the invasion would have continued. The AFFS and the LCAF had significant reserves, especially in the Terran Corridor, where a push into the Dieron Military District with a dozen more BattleMech regiments and RCTs was scheduled for Waves Two and Three.

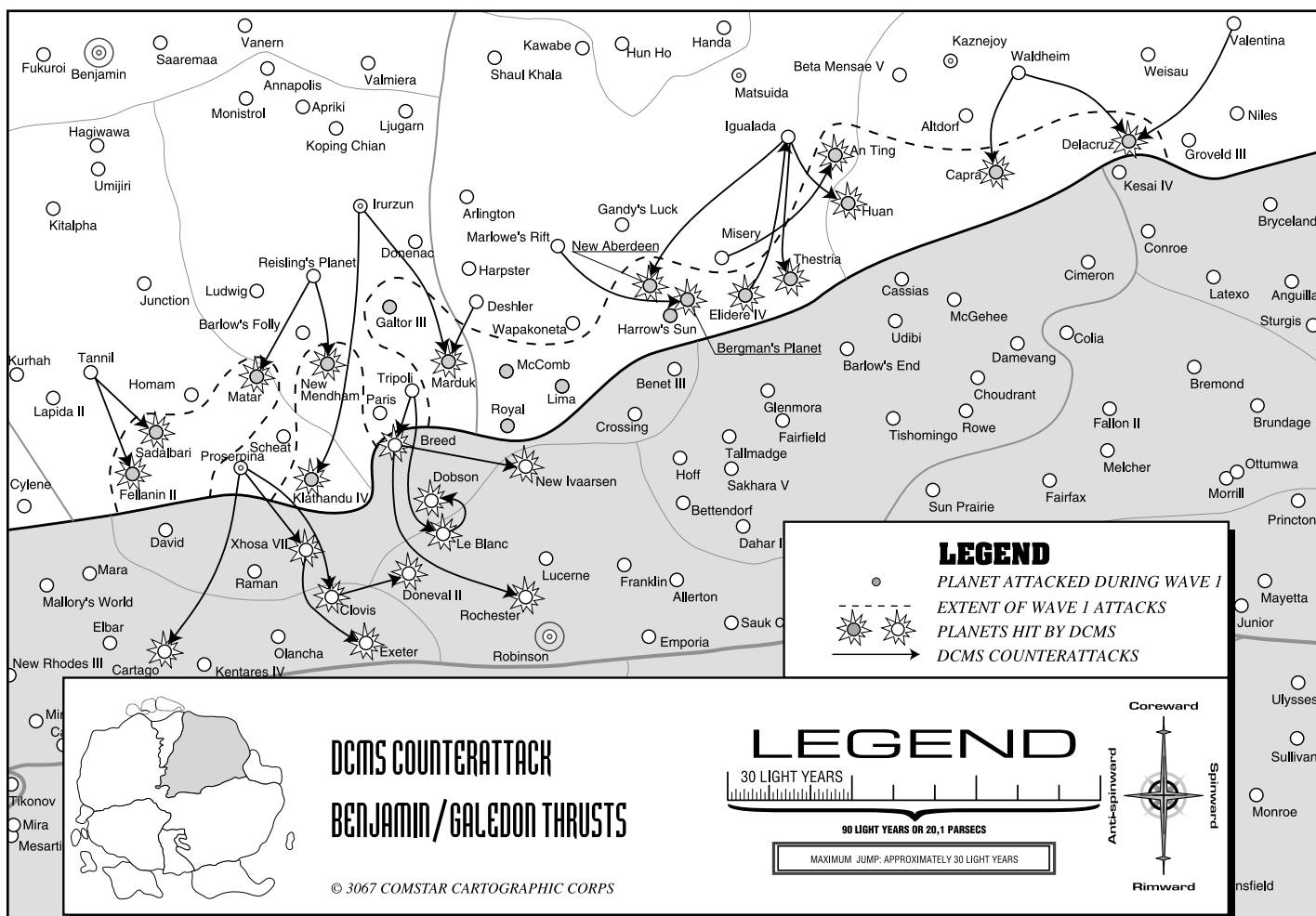
Kanrei Kurita knew his enemy, however. He had studied every significant decision Prince Hanse Davion had made since assuming the throne on New Avalon. What he discovered disheartened him, for while Prince Hanse was willing to take significant risks, he also usually backed the riskiest operations with contingency plans that would allow him to claim at least a minor victory. The only weakness Theodore Kurita could find was that Hanse Davion had never been challenged on anything resembling an even footing.

The *Gunji-no-Kanrei* therefore embarked on a bold but potentially disastrous course of action. He knew he had to convince Prince Hanse that the DCMS was bigger and more powerful than it appeared. If he failed, the Combine would fall to its ancient enemies. Fortunately, he succeeded beyond anyone's wildest dreams.

The counter-invasion of the Federated Suns ultimately targeted ten worlds. For the most part, these were hit-and-run strikes carried out by battalion-sized 'Mech formations, designed to make the AFFS believe that one or more Combine regiments were raiding each world for supplies as they drove straight toward Robinson. At its core, Operation OROCHI was a classic bluff. It required Prince Hanse and his senior generals to ignore their own common-sense judgment that what they were seeing was impossible, that the Combine could not possibly have a dozen 'Mech regiments to send on a counter-invasion and yet still retain enough troops to defend its own borders. The operation also relied on the ability of the OROCHI units—just ten battalions of DCMS MechWarriors, supported by a handful of mercenary companies—to be in several places at once *and* to convince the opposing militias and regular army units that their attackers were much larger than they really were.

The Combine warriors pulled it off, at least long enough to have the desired effect. The counter-invasion, coupled with strategic ISF-backed strikes on key officers, stunned the coalition commanders. Prince Hanse, unsure of the DCMS' true size and strength, issued a general recall, an act that saved the Draconis Combine. Once he finally realized the scope of *Kanrei* Kurita's bluff, it was too late to turn the invading armies around again. The window of opportunity was closed, the Combine spared disaster, and Hanse Davion well and truly outfoxed.

WAVE TWO AND COUNTERATTACK



BREED (JULY-NOVEMBER)

Breed was the first Federated Suns world struck in the Combine counterattack, though the DCMS launched raids into the Lyran Commonwealth's Sarna region, Tamar Pact and Federation of Skye prior to the Breed operation. Like Caph, Breed was a primary AFFS staging world. At the beginning of July, three RCTs and two additional 'Mech regiments, along with a significant complement of supporting units, were on Breed awaiting orders to proceed with their Wave Two assignments. Unlike the near-disastrous strike on Caph, however, *Kanrei* Theodore made sure that the bulk of the world's defenders had left on their Wave Two assignments before releasing the Third and Fourth Ghost Regiments for their combined assault on the planet.

In fact, Kurita nearly ordered the Ghosts to bypass Breed and hit their next target worlds, but word reached him in early July that all three RCTs assigned to Breed had left it. He immediately ordered the strike, hoping to time the Breed operation as close to the assault on Le Blanc as possible. The Ghost task force, having waited for orders in the Tripoli system, entered the Breed system the next day, hitting the world four days later on July 15.

Breed was far from undefended when the Ghosts attacked, but neither the First NAIS Cadre nor the Second Robinson

Rangers were considered elite AFFS troops. Even though the Fourth Ghost was down by one battalion (see *Le Blanc*, p. 112), the fight was still relatively equal. In fact, given the Combine units' new 'Mech designs and lostech, the balance tilted slightly toward the Ghost Regiments.

Significant conventional AFFS forces remained on Breed, though the vast majority lacked their own transports. With the bulk of the world's defenders unable to swiftly travel any great distance, the Ghosts, under the command of *Tai-sho* Karl Gramenov, fought a mobile hit-and-run campaign. They landed, struck a military base or encampment and then moved off before the AFFS could counter in force. The Ghosts also reorganized their battalions before landing, selectively pulling 'Mechs to form provisional companies and battalions. By continuing to reorganize their forces and keeping their DropShips burning into and out of the system, they made the world's defenders believe they were facing more than three regiments of Combine 'Mechs.

Breed's military governor, General Conroy Baden-Powell, was understandably concerned, but also believed that the forces assigned to his world could deal with the threat. The commanders of his two 'Mech regiments, on the other hand,

were nonplussed, especially as the Ghost Regiments seemed to field a much heavier force. Nevertheless, when General Baden-Powell ordered them to take the offensive, they did.

The first two engagements ended in stalemate, thanks mostly to the quick reaction of Breed's conventional forces. The outcome of third major battle, however, went very differently. *Tai-sho* Gramenov struck the Hebroun Military Complex, hoping to liberate a few dozen tons of supplies from its warehouses. Instead, he captured thousands of tons of ammunition and replacement parts, and nearly routed the two AFFS 'Mech units on the site. The FedSuns units attempted to fight a stand-up battle, which turned out to be their undoing. They deployed their 'Mechs in a wide line, using conventional armor and infantry to fill the holes between companies and battalions. Unfortunately, that meant giving up most of their mobility, which the opposition used to its own advantage. *Tai-sho* Gramenov had once commanded the Amphigean Light Assault Groups, and he moved the heavy 'Mech battalions of the Ghost Regiments around as if they were Amphigean light raiders. His troops pierced the AFFS line and took up position inside the complex. When the FedSuns forces turned to converge on the Ghosts, a provisional regiment struck from their flanks, scattering the defenders long enough for Gramenov to load up three DropShips of supplies before the AFFS could re-form for battle.

That dust-off cost the Robinson Rangers far more than a battlefield defeat. They also lost almost a quarter of their fighting power, which prompted a serious plunge in morale. By the third week of the Breed fight, the Rangers were all but useless and the NAIS Cadre little better. General Baden-Powell ordered them to travel to Robinson, where they could refit and return with reinforcements. Meanwhile, the general would defend Breed with the conventional forces at his disposal. A number of MechWarriors—mostly instructors and other veterans—from the Rangers and the NAIS Cadre chose to remain behind, however.

The bulk of the AFFS 'Mech units pulled out on 30 July, bound for Robinson. The Ghosts fought hard for the next eight days, at which time the Fourth Ghost pulled out, its two on-planet battalions each targeting a different world. That left just a regiment of Ghost 'Mechs on Breed to do the job of two regiments. They did not disappoint.

By staying on the move, the Ghosts made General Baden-Powell believe that significant DCMS forces remained on-world. Instead of attempting to hunt them down, Baden-Powell deployed his astounding ten regiments of conventional troops to defend the planet's key cities and bases, relying on the five companies of Cadre and Regulars 'Mechs that had remained behind to strike back when possible.

In what can only be called the biggest joke in the entire war, the situation remained this way for three months. The Ghosts continuously raided, taking what supplies they could and always moving to prevent the defenders from learning just how weak they were. They inflicted some damage in each strike, but never let themselves get bogged down in a stand-up fight. Breed's defenders came close to ending the charade on three separate occasions, but the Ghosts' luck held out until Field Marshal Sandoval landed on 1 November with the First and Second Robinson Rangers. Less than three days later, the remaining Ghosts pulled off Breed, preventing Sandoval from claiming the absolute victory he and his Rangers so desperately wanted.

CARTAGO (SEPTEMBER)

Cartago was not included in the original list of targets *Kanrei* Theodore approved for Operation OROCHI, but as the counter-invasion progressed, it became obvious that Prince Hanse Davion was not yet willing to end the war. Theodore's war planners likewise were not willing to give up just yet. They suggested that a wider base of targets might convince the FedSuns Prince that New Avalon was the counter-offensive's ultimate goal and force him to call off his own invasion. The assault on Cartago did not quite have that effect, but it did help prompt Hanse Davion to ultimately recall his units from the Combine.

PASSING SHIPS AND ARMCHAIR GENERALS

"[The Breed operation] was a cluster-flop of titanic proportions." So Corben Diedrich, retired *hauptmann* of the LCAF, wrote in Chapter 18 of his book, *The Lunacy Perpetrated*. Unfortunately, many uninformed "armchair generals" agree with him, and more than a few have similar thoughts about the entire War of 3039. With such judgments, they are only putting their own ignorance on display for everyone to see.

Setting aside any discussion of whether the war was "just" or not, one has to look at the information available to the leaders of all three nations involved to decide whether they made strategically correct decisions. It's easy enough to say, "There's no way the Combine could have survived if Hanse Davion had just ordered the Second Wave strikes." But people who say that have the benefit of 20/20 hindsight. Can anyone honestly claim they would have done anything different—that is, anyone with a milliliter of credibility?

The fight for Breed brought to light a number of situations that could have led either side to make greater gains had they just taken a bit more initiative. Yes, had General Baden-Powell pushed a little harder, he likely would have forced the Ghosts off Breed. Likewise, had he not told the high command he could continue to hold out indefinitely, he likely would have received reinforcements long before the end of October....

But those aren't even the worst case that resulted from Breed. Three AFFS RCTs—the Fifteenth Deneb Light Cavalry and the Second and Third Ceti Hussars—left in July, bound for the largely undefended world of Irurzun. Yet they received orders to halt before they reached that system, and sat idle for weeks before being recalled to defend Robinson against a predicted DCMS strike that never materialized. Yes, those three RCTs could have taken Irurzun easily, or Marduk, or could even have destroyed the Combine incursion force, but that's not the point.

The point is, with so much on the line and without the benefit of omniscience, the decisions made were the correct ones. For better or worse.

—Lieutenant General Jennifer Durrett, *The Real Truth*, New Avalon Press, 3059

THE PRICE OF AUDACITY

Operation OROCHI was incredibly audacious and potentially disastrous for the Draconis Combine, but no one recognized the true depth of the danger until it was all over. The price the Combine paid was much higher than any had expected.

In mid-3039 the DCMS found it was quickly running short on needed ammunition and replacement parts, and also had to recruit heavily to make up for combat losses. Even more significant, the DCMS did not have nearly enough JumpShips or DropShips to mobilize almost its full military strength. Theodore Kurita had to nationalize the Combine's entire merchant marine to get the transport capacity he needed to fight the war. That meant curtailing shipments of all but the most critical food, medicine and technical parts until well after the war's end.

Though this exercise of raw power was absolutely necessary for the survival of the Combine, the repercussions nearly ripped the realm apart. Food sat rotting in warehouses on dozens of worlds while less prosperous colonies were forced to survive on meager reserves. Fuel and water shipments almost completely dried up. The prices of many goods skyrocketed, but manufacturers and distributors found themselves unable to cash in until the war was over, at which time they suffered when the glut finally hit the market.

Worse, the owners of the countless DropShips and JumpShips dragooned into service were paid little or nothing for their year of efforts, forcing many independent and even a few national operators out of business. That, coupled with the fact that the Combine's peripheral regions were almost denuded of JumpShips when the counterattack began, prevented life in the Combine from returning to normal for years.

The military effort to save the Combine essentially crashed the realm's economy. In fact, it never fully recovered—just as the rebound was beginning to take hold, the Clans appeared on the scene. Nevertheless, the Combine survived the war. Barely.

One significant problem with targeting Cartago was the fact that the DCMS lacked any extra 'Mech units it could send to strike the world. The majority of the Combine military had already been mobilized to respond to the "Davion aggression". Other than the Ghost and Ryuken regiments already involved in Operation OROCHI, along with what mercenary units *Tai-sa* Tomoe Sakade could hire on Le Blanc, the only uncommitted units anywhere close to Cartago were those assigned to defend Proserpina. And though Theodore Kurita had instructed his generals to "damn the defensive lines" and mobilize everything along the front, even he did not dare leave the important world of Proserpina unprotected.

The *Kanrei* therefore authorized the Ninth Benjamin Regulars—the only 'Mech unit remaining on Proserpina—to detach a battalion for a strike at Cartago. *Chu-sa* Hohijo Bradbury had no shortage of volunteers, and the battalion left Proserpina in late August, grounding on 21 September. Just as on Breed, these Combine MechWarriors remained on the move and often reorganized, making Cartago's defenders believe they faced an entire DCMS 'Mech regiment. The planet's defenders consisted of three conventional infantry and light armor regiments left behind when the Clovis DMM redeployed in response to the Ryuken strike on Clovis. *Chu-sa* Bradbury's 'Mechs struck whatever military targets they could find, stealing enough consumable supplies to keep a full regiment fighting for a month. They likewise hit significant communications, industrial and commercial targets before leaving the planet a week later.

The frantic battle reports from Cartago's people, along with unconfirmed sightings of Combine ships in the Johnsondale and Barstow systems, were enough to convince the AFFS high command that the DCMS could be following a second attack axis aimed at New Avalon. In reality, with their job done, Bradbury's volunteers returned to Proserpina.

CLOVIS (AUGUST-SEPTEMBER)

Clovis was the target of the Ryuken-go's First Battalion. While the *Kanrei* personally led the assaults on Xhosa VII and then Exeter, *Tai-sa* Angel Ochoa led her regiment's efforts on Clovis. Clovis was under-defended, considering its status as the titular homeworld of a March Militia RCT. The Clovis Draconis March Militia had been headquartered on Cartago for decades, however, and split its forces between Cartago, Clovis and Kentares IV, the capital of the PDZ. In fact, the garrison assigned to Clovis was little more than a training cadre for the DMM's conventional forces, so even though the world was technically defended by six regiments, the actual strength came to barely half that.

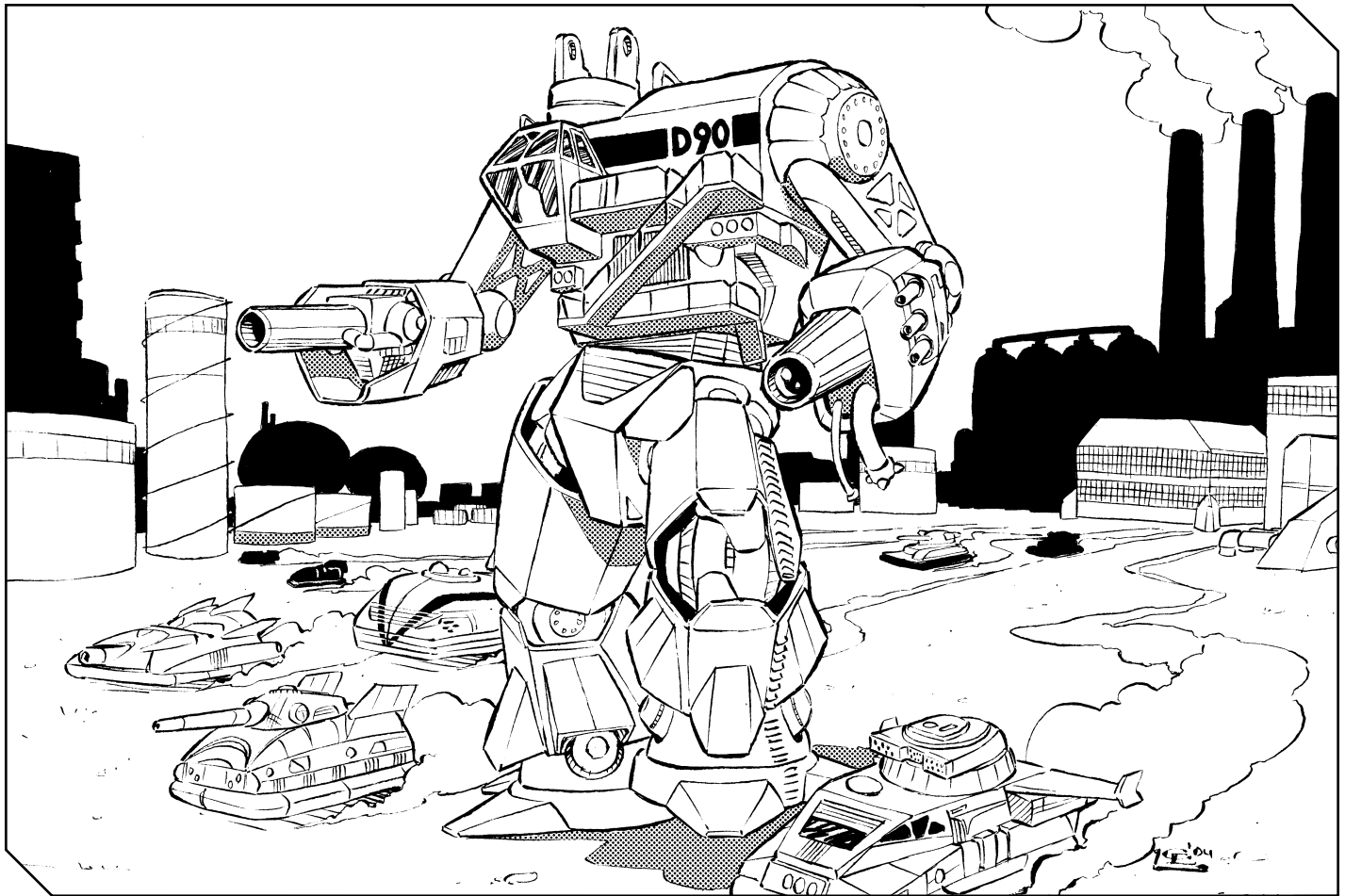
Tai-sa Ochoa landed on 11 August and proceeded to target the March Militia's training facilities, armories and barracks, quickly throwing the defenders into panic. By their second week on the planet, the Ryuken had nearly free run of Clovis. They spent another eleven days on the world, stealing supplies and concentrating on destroying every known March Militia facility. Upon receiving word that the Clovis DMM on Cartago had mobilized, they left Clovis for their next target of Doneval II (see p. 115).

When the DMM mixed brigade finally reached Clovis in the last week of August, they found plenty of cleanup work to do. Every member of the DMM aided in the rebuilding effort, which prevented them from responding to the Ninth Benjamin Regulars' assault on Cartago in a timely fashion—a fact that ate at the DMM for decades.

DOBSON (SEPTEMBER)

Except for New Ivaarsen and Le Blanc, the strike on Dobson was the most precarious of the Operation OROCHI attacks. Many of the worlds targeted had relatively strong military garrisons, but only Dobson and New Ivaarsen were home to significant 'Mech forces. The Second Chisholm's Raiders served as a "feeder" unit for the First Raiders, as well as being a full BattleMech regiment that represented a significant threat to any forces assigned to take the world.

The strength of the opposition prompted the *Kanrei* to choose one of the combined mercenary/Ghost battalions formed on Le Blanc (see p. 117) for the Dobson campaign. In fact, it appeared as if the strike on Dobson was designed to keep the Second



Chisholm's Raiders from redeploying to counter additional Combine moves, though no official evidence has ever surfaced to support that inference.

The Ghost strike on Dobson was tragically brief for the Combine MechWarriors and their hired guns. They struck in early September and attempted to fight a mobile campaign to convince the Chisholm's Raiders that they were a much larger force. However, the mercenaries recruited on Le Blanc had not had much time to work closely with the Ghost MechWarriors, and so coordination between the two forces often broke down.

Colonel Kilian Reason, recently installed as the Second Raiders' commander, almost immediately recognized his enemies' weakness, but had just taken over as commander in July and was still getting to know his regiment's capabilities. He had no choice but to face the crucible of battle, however. Reason had come to the Raiders from the Tenth Deneb Light Cavalry, and brought with him maneuvering tactics that his battalion commanders could barely comprehend. That alone allowed the Ghosts to survive on Dobson for as long as they did.

Colonel Reason had to lead from the front in order to show his MechWarriors their true capabilities. Taking direct command of the heaviest and least maneuverable battalion in his regiment, he astounded the enemy and his own officers alike with

what managed to accomplish. He initially struck the Ghosts through a mountain pass thought impossible to cross, destroying more than a company in the first hour and forcing the Combine battle group into retreat. Reason pushed hard for three more days, keeping pace with the Ghosts as they leapfrogged their DropShips in an attempt to rest long enough to load up and retreat from the world. The Raiders' leader never gave them that chance, and they had to make a final stand at Port Angel, near the world's southern pole. The two forces fought amid the mountains and deep snow in a battle that nearly destroyed both battalions. The Ghosts ultimately retreated over an ice floe several meters thick, but with a number of weak points and cracks. One Combine DropShip fell through the ice after landing, taking with it several 'Mechs. Several more 'Mechs from both sides were similarly lost when some MechWarriors took to targeting the ice instead of their enemies.

Colonel Reason quickly recalled his battalion's survivors rather than let them be swallowed by the icy waters. The Ghosts retreated shortly thereafter.

DONEVAL II (SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER)

After leaving Clovis, *Tai-sa* Angel Ochoa and her Ryuken-go's first battalion immediately headed to Doneval II, a

sparsely populated world with a healthy agrarian industry. The world's all-volunteer militia fielded a significant force of fast combat hovercraft and two battalions of Grommets converted to mount heavy weapons.

Tai-sa Ochoa landed on the southern continent of Roche Foinn and took command of an old mining complex. From there, the Ryuken-go launched attacks on the planet's largest settlements, hoping to knock out the few command and control facilities that existed on Doneval II. The planet's decentralized society made that impossible, however. The militia did not even store its combat vehicles, weapons and munitions in centralized armories. The world's population was so small that the militia "officers" were trusted to safeguard the equipment assigned to their units, especially as a number of the vehicles and all of the AgroMechs used by the militia doubled as farm equipment.

It took the Doneval Militia one day to mobilize, but they lacked the ability to rapidly respond to a strike on any corner of their world. After two weeks the Ryuken significantly cut back on their raids, instead focusing on turning the mining complex they had captured into a base capable of supporting a large invasion force. This ruse helped foster the illusion that several Combine regiments were gathering on the planet.

It took the militia several weeks, but they finally managed to gather the bulk of their forces on Roche Foinn. Surprisingly, Ochoa and her MechWarriors did not detect the militia force until it was less than a hundred kilometers away from their temporary base. The Ryuken struck out to meet the farmers' assault, confident they could quickly and easily dispatch the militia. For the most part, they did so. The AgroMech and hover formations proved unexpectedly difficult to dispatch, but the Ryuken BattleMechs laid waste to most of the Doneval Militia. Only a few independent companies of hover vehicles managed to skirt the battle and strike at the Ryuken base, encountering just two lances of patrolling 'Mechs along with technical and support personnel. Ochoa detached a company of her 'Mechs to secure the base, which they did in short order.

The Doneval Militia retreated that same day, having lost almost three quarters of their vehicles and AgroMechs. Ochoa made a few retaliatory strikes to punish the militia, though with the planet's few military and governmental targets already destroyed, she was running short of viable objectives. She did, however, extort enough surplus food to feed a force of up to ten regiments for six months.

The Fifteenth Deneb Light Cavalry arrived in late October. Having been prevented from striking Irurzun and instead recalled to Robinson to defend it against a potential attack, the Fifteenth's MechWarriors and soldiers were more than ready for a fight. They intended to remove the Combine threat to Doneval II with their very first move, dropping most of their 'Mech regiment right on top of the Ryuken-go's makeshift base and grounding the RCT's armor just outside it.

The Fifteenth Deneb immediately overcame the Ryuken warriors, who tried to retreat back to their DropShips only to run into a Deneb screening force. Ochoa's troops fought hard, but were nearly overcome yet again before stray shots ignited a

temporary grain silo close to the landing field. The resulting explosion caused enough of a distraction for most of the Ryuken to escape. Only one captured Ryuken MechWarrior survived, and only because she was unconscious in her 'Mech. The rest committed suicide rather than fall into AFFS hands.

EXETER (SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER)

For *Kanrei* Theodore Kurita, Exeter was the final stop in Operation OROCHI. He knew that if Prince Hanse Davion did not fall for his bluff by the time his forces reached Exeter, the entire operation would fail. Moreover, if the *Kanrei's* troops penetrated any deeper into the Federated Suns, he would risk the AFFS closing his escape route behind him. (Though never publicly verified, many observers have long suspected that the DCMS maintained listening posts in several uninhabited systems just a jump away from the Combine border; throughout Operation OROCHI, Theodore Kurita made sure all of his invading units remained within sixty light-years of the border, giving them the chance to use one of these systems if necessary.)

Kurita and the Ryuken-go's second battalion landed at Exeter's primary spaceport, a man-made island complex constructed during the heyday of the Star League. Rather than land with guns blazing, they came in flying a pair of ancient *Mules*, masquerading as freelance cargo haulers. In fact, they spent their first three days on-world purchasing supplies and looking for transport contracts. While they did so, the rest of the unit's DropShips came in—enough to carry a full regiment of troops.

The night before those DropShips entered orbit, the *Kanrei* attacked, taking complete charge of the spaceport along with most of Chyron, the largest city on the planet. The veritable fleet of DropShips that landed later that day were mostly empty, but easily simulated the arrival of a full regiment. Theodore Kurita continued his assault, largely neutralizing Exeter's militia after just a week of operations.

That gave him the opportunity to raid the many warehouses in Chyron, Exeter's major transportation hub. Even after the First NAIS Cadre arrived from Robinson in late September, Kurita continued to operate with a free hand—though the First Cadre had the advantage in maneuverability, Kurita and the Ryuken were much more aggressive. It took the arrival of the Fourth Davion Guards in early October to convince the *Kanrei* it was time to withdraw.

Marshal Eugene Drivers was not satisfied with allowing the Combine troops to leave, however. As soon as the Guards landed, the Ryuken pulled back to Chyron and the island spaceport. Drivers moved into Chyron and prepared to assault the spaceport across the thin bridges that linked it to the city. Before striking, he sent a two-company force of volunteers, commanded by Captain Wendy Adams, underwater to hit the island spaceport from the seaside. All but three of these MechWarriors made it to land. As soon as Adams' 'Mechs emerged from the water, Drivers sent his hovercraft over the waves as his 'Mechs began the five-kilometer trek across the connecting bridges.

The *Kanrei* made a fighting withdrawal back to his DropShips. He was nearly shot out of his 'Mech, but his

MechWarriors forced him into the command DropShip and held the line until he could get safely away. Two of the Ryuken's DropShips, along with three they had commandeered on the ground, never made it off the tarmac. The *Kanrei* escaped, along with most of his battalion and eighteen thousand tons of supplies taken from Chyron.

LE BLANC (JULY-SEPTEMBER)

Of the individual planetary assaults planned as a part of Operation OROCHI, the strike on Le Blanc was perhaps the most important. It was also one of the riskiest. Instead of landing normally in their DropShips, the Ghost battalion assigned to the world under the command of *Tai-sa* Tomoe Sakade infiltrated Le Blanc through various means. Then as now, Le Blanc was an "open world" that served as an important trade hub and was home to several popular mercenary hiring halls (though those hiring halls have lost considerable prestige and popularity since the coming of the Clans). *Sho-sa* Homan Chokei brought a company onto the world disguised as a mercenary unit looking for employment, while two more companies of 'Mechs were shipped to Le Blanc disassembled as part of a major shipment of industrial and agricultural 'Mechs.

Le Blanc was also the headquarters of the Robinson DMM. That particular March Militia was forward-deployed across four worlds, but a significant force remained on Le Blanc, primarily stationed outside Port Paix at Fort Mason. Those DMM forces represented the greatest threat to Sakade, and she knew she would have to neutralize them first.

The Robinson DMM was not the only objective in striking Le Blanc, however, or even the most important. *Kanrei* Kurita knew he lacked enough forces to threaten the Draconis March and still *repel* the coalition invaders. He needed help, and there was plenty available on Le Blanc—namely, legions of unemployed mercenary units looking for assignments. *Sho-sa* Chokei made contact with quite a few mercenary commanders in June, before his company and other elements of the Fourth Ghost were rushed to Proserpina as the extent of the invasion became clear. He was therefore able to inform *Tai-sa* Sakade upon her arrival which were the best candidates for the Ghost battalion's needs.

Surprisingly enough to Sakade, negotiations with the mercenaries were cordial and easy, undoubtedly aided by the fact that she paid them up front in cash or commodities (including germanium). She bought the services of almost three battalions of troops—less than she had hoped, but enough to accomplish the mission—and immediately dressed them to look like the rest of the Third and Fourth Ghost regiments. On 6 July, the Ghost and many of the mercenaries struck Fort Mason, taking command after a lengthy battle that put what was left of the three Robinson DMM regiments on the run.

Sakade remained on Le Blanc for most of the rest of the month before breaking the combined Ghost-mercenary regiment into four battalion-sized battle groups, three fronted by a Ghost company. *Sho-sa* Chokei remained behind on Le Blanc with two battle groups while Sakade led the other two deeper into the Draconis March. One battle group attacked Dobson, while Sakade personally led the strike on New Ivaarsen (see p. 118).

Chokei had nearly the run of Le Blanc despite the departure of so many Combine troops. Le Blanc's population, content to live their own lives so long as they were left alone, did not interfere with the progress of the fight, making the DMM's defense of the world even more difficult. It took the arrival of the Second Ceti Hussars RCT, redeployed from Robinson after that important world was secured against possible invasion, to retake Le Blanc. Commodore William Kossacks, commander of the Hussars' air group, used his fighters and many of the RCT's combat DropShips in an aerial assault against the Combine forces. After the first day, it was obvious to Kossacks and RCT commander General Hobart Rader just how small a force Chokei had at his disposal. The Ceti Hussars attacked with all their might, shocking most of the mercenaries with the strength of their air group and the effectiveness of their mixed companies. Ultimately, most of the mercenaries surrendered rather than be destroyed, though one merc company fled the planet. *Sho-sa* Chokei's company died to the man.

MERCENARIES AND THE COMBINE?

Was it a little strange working for the Draconis Combine when we all knew that the "Death to Mercenaries" order was still in full force? Sure. Right up until that Combine wench drove up with a chest full of cold, hard C-bills!

Listen, some folks drone on endlessly about the romance of being a mercenary, following your own dreams, living by the code of interstellar chivalry and the rest of that shit. You can be damn sure they never had to keep a dozen rust-buckets working that were ancient when Kerensky was still around! This isn't about a code of ethics, or doing what's "right," or any of that other crap. It's about staying alive, and if that means taking money from the Draconis Combine, then that's what we do.

Of course, that doesn't mean we didn't have some deep-down twinges. All but three of my guys were born in the Federated Suns and started their careers in the AFFS, so it's as much a home as any of us have had. Then again, we all got cashiered out of the service for one stupid reason or another. And we'd been without a contract for months. Everyone, and I mean everyone, knew there was something up in early '39, but we never got a contract out of it, even when the shit started to hit the fan. It took the damn Draconis Combine, a nation that hates mercenaries more than the Free Rasalhague Republic does—if that's even possible—to give us a job.

Did we like it? Not really. Did we have a choice? Well, sure. We could starve and let our 'Mechs go to hell or take a job that paid cash, up front. Enough cash to keep us solvent for a year and give us enough left over to get off that rock. The decision took about two seconds. Did we take the job?

Hell, yes!

—Captain Ezra Yabin, *Confessions and Diatribes*, Outreach Institute, 3052

NEW IVAARSEN (AUGUST-OCTOBER)

The *Kanrei* and his wife both realized that targeting New Ivaarsen was a huge risk, perhaps too huge. Not only was the world defended by a strong militia and a line BattleMech unit, but the First New Ivaarsen Chasseurs harbored a well-known hatred of the Draconis Combine, a remnant from the days when the Combine controlled the planet. Theodore Kurita and Tomoe Sakade both knew that a highly motivated enemy is often more dangerous than an enemy who is merely stronger, and the Chasseurs would be both. Worse, the invasion of New Ivaarsen was predicated on the success of the Le Blanc operation, meaning that the Chasseurs would likely be well prepared for an enemy encroachment. Nevertheless, Operation OROCHI depended on convincing Prince Hanse Davion, Field Marshal Sandoval and the rest of the AFFS high command that the Combine was attacking in strength, and the only way to do that was to sufficiently threaten Robinson. Unfortunately for the *Kanrei*, New Ivaarsen was the front door to any assault on Robinson, and so he had no choice but to strike the world.

The entire success of OROCHI rested on the ability of the forces assigned to New Ivaarsen to convince the Chasseurs that the DCMS invasion of their world was genuine. The *Kanrei* therefore entrusted command of this vital operation to *Tai-sa* Tomoe Sakade. She left Le Blanc with a battalion of combined Ghost MechWarriors and mercenaries, but met the first battalion of the Fourth Ghost Regiment in the New Ivaarsen system before striking at the planet itself.

The moment the Combine troops landed on New Ivaarsen, the world's population erupted in outrage and panic. Word of the overall Combine counterassault had already reached the people of the Draconis March—try as he might, Duke Paul Stephenson had not succeeded in suppressing news of the attacks on Breed and Le Blanc. That panic played right into the hands of *Tai-sa* Sakade, who hit smaller cities and other secondary targets on New Ivaarsen just to promote more panic and unrest on the planet.

After two successful weeks of such strikes, she then turned her attention toward more important military targets. While most of these primary military installations were well defended, their garrisons were overwhelmed with aiding in police efforts, crowd control and the like. Only the Chasseurs were exempt from such duty, leading to a grand game of chess on a planetary level played between the two opposing commanders.

The Ghosts directly engaged the Chasseurs only a handful of times during the entire campaign, in tough and decisive battles. Despite cries to the contrary from New Ivaarsen's people—especially from the politicians and other influential individuals—Duke Paul Stephenson and Major-General Reginald Stephenson, commander of the Chasseurs, refused to scatter individual lances and companies to defend high-priority objectives, instead allowing the regiment to react in significant force to Sakade's moves.

For the first month, General Stephenson did not know just how big the Ghosts were, but after an engagement outside Bluthe in which the Chasseurs nearly caught Sakade with only her mixed mercenary/Ghost battle group, he began to have his doubts. The Ghosts seemed to use sizable enough transport for

two entire 'Mech regiments, but after-action numbers reported by the Major-General's intelligence staff never added up. The Chasseurs attempted to set a trap for Sakade, but after three failures they came across the Ghosts by sheer happenstance outside of Fort Bormen. The resulting battle saw the Ghosts retreating, leaving almost half their 'Mechs on the battlefield.

Sakade and her Ghosts continued to soldier on, but the losses they experienced eventually became too severe. By the middle of October, less than six weeks after landing on the world, Sakade knew her troops could not continue. Even with the Chasseurs relentlessly hounding them, they held out for almost two more weeks before Sakade finally ordered a withdrawal. By the end, the two battalions of 'Mechs had been reduced to barely two companies, but they had done the job their *Kanrei* ordered them to accomplish.

ROCHESTER (AUGUST-OCTOBER)

The strike on Rochester had one purpose: to cow the AFFS high command into believing that the Combine was making a serious advance toward Robinson, capital of the Draconis March and the Sandovals' ancestral home. Though Star League-era technology had once made Rochester a lush and fertile world, the Succession Wars left it barren and lifeless. The only people remaining on the world were researchers looking to reverse the devastation of the First Succession War and miners exploiting the planet's few resources. The only defenders the world could claim were territorial constables and the mining concerns' security forces. Even the spaceport consisted of little more than an expanse of ferrocrete, a mere corner of the once-majestic spaceport that had fallen into ruin over the previous three centuries.

In fact, the term "strike" barely applies to Combine operations on the world. After leaving Breed in early August (see p. 112), the Second Battalion of the Fourth Ghost Regiment landed on Rochester and immediately took command of the spaceport. They made a few additional reconnaissance raids against other settlements to disable communications arrays and space-traffic control monitoring systems. These strikes ensured that only the Ghost Regiment could monitor what else was going on in the system, allowing them to easily trick the people of Rochester into believing they were setting up a major forward base capable of supporting a multi-regiment assault on Robinson.

This news, in conjunction with all the other sketchy intelligence reports describing Combine operations in the Draconis March, convinced the high command to recall all forces that had been awaiting orders to launch their Wave Two attacks. The most significant of these was the recall of the task force assigned to take Irurzun (see *Passing Ships and Armchair Generals*, p. 113). All three RCTs in that task force immediately made the trek to Robinson, though ultimately they were redeployed to deal with the Combine incursion into the Draconis March.

The Third Ceti Hussars RCT landed on Rochester in the last week of October, expecting to face a massive Combine invasion force. Indeed, they were under orders to delay the expected DCMS task force at all costs, as it would likely take months more before enough reinforcements could arrive from the

Crucis March. The Hussars were surprised to find only a battalion of 'Mechs on the world. They made quick work of the Ghosts, who retreated after putting up only light resistance.

The Ghosts' mission had succeeded beyond Theodore Kurita's fondest hopes. The gambit had paid off, and within mere weeks the few regiments assigned to Operation OROCHI retreated back across the Combine border.

XHOSA VII (AUGUST-NOVEMBER)

Kanrei Kurita himself led the assault on Xhosa VII, taking the Ryuken-go across the Combine/FedSuns border in late July and hitting Xhosa on 3 August. He did not take the entire Ryuken-go with him, however; one battalion continued on to Clovis (see p. 114), while the third battalion remained on its JumpShip, ready to respond wherever it was needed. The *Kanrei* struck hard, initially grounding just outside Ginti and taking control of the warehouses in that city. Normally home to the Davion Light Guards, Ginti had a relatively small garrison, but housed a great deal of the Light Guards' materiel and supplies. The Ryuken suffered heavy casualties, but they made off with almost more booty than they could carry, allowing them to operate for months.

The *Kanrei* spent most of the rest of August on Xhosa VII, striking target after target. He eventually brought in the final Ryuken battalion, making the world's defenders believe a second regiment had come in to finish the job, so to speak. The two Ryuken battalions worked in concert and individually, further confusing Xhosa's militia, but primarily targeted the bases and facilities normally occupied by the Light Guards.

On 26 August, the *Kanrei* left the world and made his way to Exeter, while the third Ryuken battalion continued their own raids on Xhosa. Surprisingly, not until early November did the AFFS finally send significant forces to oppose the Ryuken; a "free" regiment of conventional armor landed in early September, but half the regiment fell prey to a surprise coordinated Ryuken air and ground strike. Marshal Winston Vaskursian, having led the Seventh Crucis Lancers and Second New Ivaarsen Chasseurs away from Klathandu, grounded and deployed his forces to counter the reported two enemy BattleMech regiments on the planet. His aerial reconnaissance soon told him that his enemy was barely battalion-strength, however, and he immediately sent as much as he could against them. Less than an hour of battle sent the Ryuken packing; they lifted off under heavy fire, losing one DropShip and more than a company of 'Mechs.

The Ryuken got away with thousands of tons of supplies, tempering the victory. The Ryuken battalion returned to the Combine as heroes, their job done well.

OTHER WAVE TWO ACTIONS

"Older men declare war. But it is youth that must fight and die."
—Herbert Hoover

"Train your young boys well, because otherwise they won't get past this old woman."
—Natasha Kerensky

After the DEST strike on Vega, the complexion of the war changed markedly, with the Combine seizing the initiative and the allied forces adopting a defensive position. Raiding by the LCAF and AFFS dwindled to almost nothing as the allied militaries refocused their resources on propping up flagging offensives and bolstering defensive lines against expected incursions and counterattacks. The notable exception was the explosion of hostilities between the Federated Suns and the Capellan Confederation that led to a series of reprisal raids by Capellan March units.

COMBINE OPERATIONS

For the Combine, raiding became central to the prosecution of the conflict. In addition to counterattacking many of the worlds targeted by the invaders, the DCMS launched a massive counter-invasion of the Draconis March, dubbed Operation OROCHI by the *Kanrei*. Though ostensibly a drive on Robinson intended to convince Prince Hanse Davion that the DCMS was stronger than it looked, Operation OROCHI was in truth a collection of raids-in-force intended to look impressive but with little actual strength. Focused on the center of the Galedon-Benjamin front, Theodore's counter-invasion (see pp. 111-119) did little to relieve pressures on the Dieron front, at least in the short term. At the same time, intelligence received by *Tai-shu* Noketsuna on Dieron indicated that more of Field Marshal Vanessa Bisla's forces were moving out from their Terran Corridor bases. That prompted the *Tai-shu* to order additional "reconnaissance in force" movements into the region, continuing the raiding begun during the first wave.

Fomalhaut (July)

Tai-shu Noketsuna's intelligence officers knew that the Second Davion Guards had called Fomalhaut home for decades and that they would likely put up a defense vigorous enough to shortly repulse anything but a dedicated multi-regiment invasion force. On the other hand, the DCMS had thus far only reported four of the seven Davion Brigade of Guards RCTs as participants in the war, and Noketsuna knew that every one of those elite units would occupy an important role in the invasion. A strike on Fomalhaut and the Second Guards would likely result in heavy losses and a retreat for any unit given that assignment, but Noketsuna thought it a fair price to pay if it could prevent the Second Guards from participating in the larger conflict.

Ironically, by the time the Thirty-Sixth Dieron Regulars reached Fomalhaut, the Second Davion Guards had already landed on Altair. The Guards did not leave their homeworld wholly undefended; the Fomalhaut militia boasted five regiments and often engaged in wargames with the Second Guards. On the other hand, the militia had only a handful of BattleMechs, and though its infantry was well-versed in anti-'Mech tactics, it ultimately could not stand up to the Regulars' heavy machines.

Instead of a quick hit-and-run strike, the Thirty-Sixth remained on the world until well after the war was over, continuing to put down rebel cells and aiding the Coordinator in absorbing Fomalhaut into the Combine. The Regulars eventually faced the Second Davion Guards on the battlefield, though

not at times or places of their own choosing (see *A Crime of Bureaucracy*, p. 87).

Quentin (July)

Many of the officers at *Tai-shu* Noketsuna's Dieron HQ saw the choice of Quentin for the second major raid in July as a considerable risk, but the warlord himself believed that, like the attack on Fomalhaut, it was worth the potential gains. Quentin was normally home to the Twenty-Second Avalon Hussars, but reliable reports had already placed the bulk of that unit on Telos IV. Furthermore, the world was an important strategic target lost to the Combine long ago during the Succession Wars. Independence Weaponry, one of the FedSuns' most prominent military suppliers, was located on Quentin, and if the DCMS could capture even some of its production, the extra materiel would go a long way toward easing the war's burden on the Combine.

As expected, the greatest concentration of Quentin's defenders was in the so-called Steel Valley, a massive region between two mountain ranges that holds the majority of the world's heavy industry. The recently formed Fortieth Dieron Regulars had a particularly difficult time penetrating the valley's defenses and pushing into the Independence Weaponry plant. In addition to planetary garrison troops, Independence employees fielded five companies of *Jagermechs*, *Marauders*, *Victors* and *Atlases* against the invading force. The Regulars used their aerospace wings to reduce and cripple their opponents, but the Independence *Jagermechs* took a heavy toll before the Regulars finally broke through the plant's perimeter and ended the resistance.

The Fortieth Regulars remained primarily in the Steel Valley for several months, repairing their 'Mechs and taking what they could from various industrial facilities. When the Avalon Hussars did not return to the world, Noketsuna reinforced the Fortieth Dieron with additional conventional forces, allowing them to ultimately pacify the entire planet.

FREE WORLDS LEAGUE OPERATIONS

Encouraged by the moderate successes of their first-wave assaults, the FWLM petitioned for—and received—permission to attack six worlds in the Lyran Commonwealth and Sarna March with a view to capturing (or in several cases, recapturing) them for the League. On none did they expect to encounter substantial resistance, and as only two had been part of the Commonwealth for more than a decade, the League military did not expect a significant counterattack. However, they did not count on the DCMS counter-offensive and the resulting postponement of the allies' Wave Two attacks, which freed up LCAF and AFFS forces to move against the League incursions.

Hsien (July-August)

The first incursion came against Hsien, launched by the Third Free Worlds Guards on July 9 and hitting the target on July 16, just before news broke of the DCMS counter-offensive. Originally part of the Capellan Confederation that had seceded with Pavel Ridzik during the Fourth Succession War, Hsien was an uneasy part of the Sarna March, and the FWLM generals

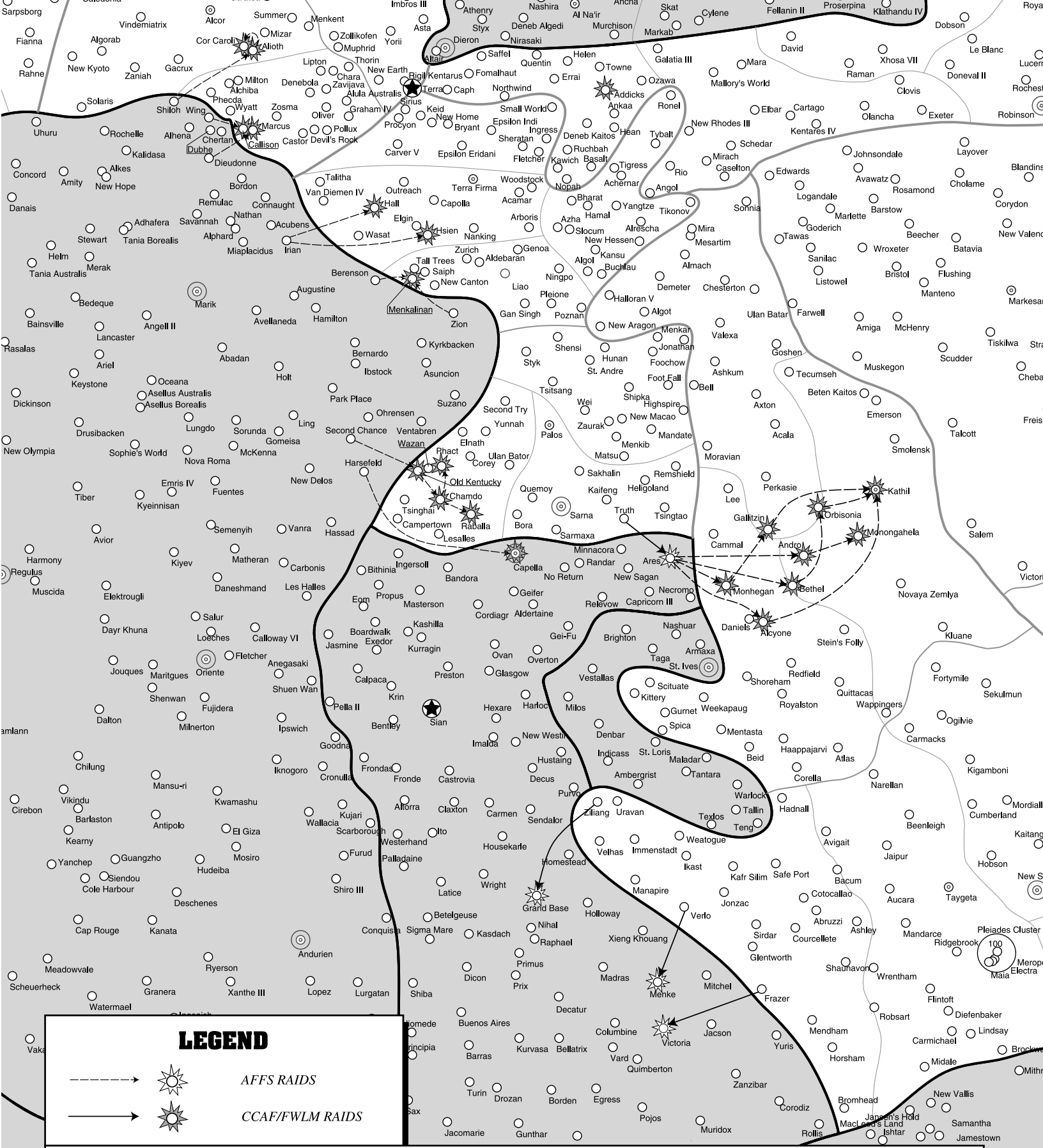
expected its people to welcome liberation. Unfortunately, the planetary noble, Baron Alder Montong III, considered the FWL worse than the Steiner-Davion alliance. He rejected the Third's attempt at swift and easy integration into the League and instead called on his people to stage civil protests against the occupation. The League forces quickly moved to surround Government House and the baron's residence, but found their way blocked by crowds gathered to protest their presence. It took more than six hours to disperse the mobs, and more than three dozen people were injured. The Third Free Worlds Guards arrested Baron Montong and took him to the military compound on the fringes of the city, at which point the trouble really began.

Never in good health, the stress of the invasion and occupation seriously taxed the baron. On the first night of his imprisonment he suffered a heart attack and died before the Marik troops realized he was ill. The next day, news of the baron's death circulated across Hsien, accompanied by rumors that the FWL troops had murdered him to ease their seizure of the planet. The mud stuck, and civil disobedience soon flared into guerrilla action. By early August, the Guards found themselves hard pressed to deal with the civil situation, especially since promised garrison troops were still at their base on Oriente and would not arrive until at least September. When news reached the League unit's commander that two regiments of Wolf's Dragoons had jumped into Hsien's zenith point after returning from their advance positions on Caph, he decided discretion was the better part of valor and abandoned the world on 9 August, taking care to head for the nadir jump point. Louis Montong V succeeded his father as baron and welcomed the Dragoons as liberators.

Alioth and Cor Caroli (July-September)

The Silver Hawks' Gryphons regiment was released to raid into the Lyran Commonwealth on July 10 and struck their first target, Alioth, six days later. Arriving at a pirate point, the raiders quickly attacked the verdant world, seizing its capital city of Warrinzer and calling on the local government to pay a levy for the raiders to move on. Unaware that forces were moving from the Dieron theater to counter such incursions, the authorities met the Gryphons' demands. True to their word, the Gryphons boosted from Alioth as soon as the last of their booty (prized sun guava) was loaded aboard their DropShips. However, rather than returning to the Free Worlds League, the regiment immediately assaulted neighboring Cor Caroli.

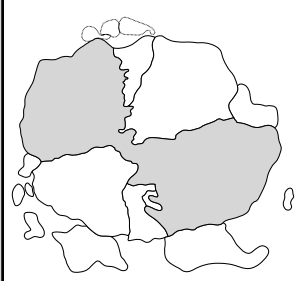
The complex stellar mechanics of the binary star system allowed the Marik raiders to jump into a pirate point within six hours of the target and they had landed before most of the defenders realized their world was under attack. A few clashes took place with local militia armor, but these quickly died away after the raiders occupied the capital, Corriolas. Unlike the extortion leveled on Alioth, the Gryphons' occupation of mineral-rich Cor Caroli threatened to become a protracted affair, though the Silver Hawks troops showed little desire to annex the world. Local authorities became increasingly anxious as the Gryphons' stay lengthened, particularly as the troops began establishing



LEGEND

----->  *AFFS RAIDS*

----->  *CCAF/FWLM RAIDS*



LIAO and MARIK RAIDS
AFFS COUNTERRAIDS

© 3067 COMSTAR CARTOGRAPHIC CORPS


LEGEND

30 LIGHT YEARS

90 LIGHT YEARS OR 20.1 PARSECS

MAXIMUM JUMP: APPROXIMATELY 30 LIGHT YEARS

Coreward
 Spinward
 Rimward
 Anti-spinward



defensive positions against a hypothetical counter-invasion. By early September, Carolian nerves were at breaking point and the Caroli Mining Consortium offered the Hawks a substantial “incentive” to leave before a counter-invasion and urban warfare devastated their valuable installations. The Gryphons were only too happy to oblige.

Callison (August)

In the second attempt at occupation and the first liberation of a former Free Worlds League world, the Thirty-first Marik Militia landed on Callison on August 11, occupying its major cities with minimal opposition. Public response to the FWLM landings was muted, but over the week that followed, people began to believe that the League had indeed begun liberating the worlds lost to it in the Fourth Succession War. The AFFS, however, was not about to let Captain-General Thomas Marik of the League exploit their weakness. The high command released one of the units held at Caph, the Davion Assault Guards, to teach the FWLM the error of their ways.

The Marik Militia had little warning of the counterassault, but even if they had, it seems unlikely they would have abandoned Callison despite the odds against them. The Marik Militia was poorly equipped and trained, having served as a garrison unit for much of the Fourth Succession War and the Andurien conflict. They faced a battle-hardened RCT whose reputation made even the most capable combatants think twice. Admiring the Thirty-first's resolve, the Davion Assault Guards agreed to meet the Marik unit outside the city of Fallosha, the objective of many raids by both sides during the succession Wars. The clash between the two units lasted slightly more than thirty minutes, at the end of which the FWL unit had lost almost two companies and the Assault Guards just over a lance. After disengaging, the AFFS commanding general offered his opponents the chance to withdraw. Feeling that honor had been satisfied, the Thirty-first Militia did so. Unfortunately, they laid themselves open to charges of abandoning a League world (no matter that they had only reoccupied it ten days earlier), with some extremists suggesting they should have fought to the last trooper against the AFFS forces.

Marcus (September-October)

Like Callison, Marcus was a former League world seized by the Lyran Commonwealth in the closing days of the Fourth Succession War. Marcus' mineral wealth made it an attractive prize despite its bleak environment and the LCAF had frequently raided it in the past. The Twenty-fifth Marik Militia was not a raiding force, but instead intended to liberate the world and return it to FWL control. The Militia expected a fight when they arrived on September 9, but were shocked by the strength of opposition they encountered. Unfortunately for the Twenty-fifth, the Third Crucis Lancers had been relocated from Caph, and so the Marik unit's “undefended” objective was garrisoned by a full-strength and experienced RCT. Even had the apathetic locals wanted to throw off the Commonwealth yoke, the planetary garrison was highly unlikely to side with the incoming Marik Militia unit. The Twenty-fifth found itself grossly outnumbered and out-

classed, and upon realizing their predicament, sought to extricate themselves. Unfortunately for the Militia, the Third Crucis had little intention of letting them escape. Instead, the Lancers made them an object lesson for the FWLM. The Marik troops fought a bitter four-week holding action against AFFS ground forces after repeated Crucis air attacks forced the League unit's DropShips to flee. By the time the Militia DropShips managed to rendezvous with their ground forces on October 8, scarcely half the troops remained alive to be evacuated.

Hall (December)

The last world targeted by the FWLM in December of 3039, as the War of 3039 ground to a halt, the Eighteenth Marik Militia assault on Hall was a poorly considered operation which, though initially victorious, had little prospect of long-term success against an allied force largely extracted from the morass of the Combine conflict. Ironically, the counterattack on Hall came not from an allied military unit, but from the mercenary Black Widow Battalion on nearby Outreach.

The Eighteenth Marik Militia landed on Hall on 12 December and quickly moved to win the hearts and minds of the local inhabitants. They did not expect a counterattack until the New Year, and so the Militia settled down to a Christmas of food, drink and fraternization. They had not expected the Wolf's Dragoons unit to hit them on Christmas Eve while most of the Marik soldiers were enjoying the festivities. Natasha Kerensky's force captured the Militia's third battalion with scarcely a shot fired; the Militia was armed only with energy weapons, their ammunition loads having been removed as a safety precaution during the Christmas celebrations. Kerensky then challenged Colonel Jerome Merz for control of Hall, betting her entire battalion against his remaining two. Believing that his troops could deal with a single mercenary battalion, Merz accepted the challenge.

Unfortunately, the Marik commander underestimated the size and capabilities of the Dragoon unit, whose reinforced battalion of forty-five 'Mechs has since become familiar to anyone who has faced the Clans. Merz likewise underestimated the deviousness of the Black Widow, who handily smashed first one Militia battalion and then the other. Only two companies of the Eighteenth Marik Militia survived to withdraw from Hall, when Natasha Kerensky decided she preferred to send Merz home with his shattered command than to claim them as salvage. The victory was chalked up to the Black Widow's burgeoning legend. As observers have pointed out numerous times since the Clan invasion, few appreciated the military refinements of the Black Widow Battalion, or the significance of its unusual structure. Nowadays, however, Hall is acknowledge as the first time a Clan Cluster-style force publicly engaged and defeated a larger Stat League-configured regiment.

In one war, the methods of the next were already being tested.

CAPELLAN OPERATIONS

Members of the Capellan Strategios more than welcomed news of the so-called Davion invasion of the Draconis

Combine. The long years of war against the Magistracy of Canopus and their allied Andurien secessionists had left the Capellan Confederation Armed Forces even weaker than it had been following the Fourth Succession War, and by 3039 Chancellor Romano Liao was rapidly sinking into the mania that had consumed her father. The Capellan leader often had no concept of reality, but many of her senior colonels did, and they had few illusions that their realm could survive another war with Hanse Davion. Many believed that, with the AFFS and LCAF concentrating their efforts on the Draconis Combine, the Federated Suns had made itself vulnerable, especially in the Capellan March. After all, Hanse Davion would have to virtually strip his defenses from that region if he really wanted to hand Takashi Kurita a stinging defeat. Given this reality, senior CCAF commanders began to plan their own incursion into the Federated Suns.

This planned assault fell far short of a full-fledged invasion, as the CCAF remained far too weak to consider such a possibility. More than anything, the Capellan Strategios intended the incursion as a morale-building exercise. The CCAF had recently driven the Canopians from Capellan territory, but that victory was tempered by the fact that it took five years to achieve. The CCAF needed an unmistakable triumph that could proclaim to the entire human-occupied Inner Sphere the Confederation's rebirth as a military power. The mighty Federated Suns, distracted by its war with the Combine, provided the perfect target.

The senior CCAF leaders remained wary of their Chancellor's possible reaction, however. They feared she would either fly into a rage at their presumption and cancel the operation or embrace the idea of punishing Hanse Davion to the point of ordering the entire CCAF to invade the Federated Suns. Either way, their own lives would be at risk, and they were not willing to stick their own necks out quite so far.

They were, however, more than willing to put someone else's neck on the line. Colonel Archibald McCarron of the mercenary unit McCarron's Armored Cavalry had long advocated taking a more aggressive stance with the Federated Suns. Moreover, he and his mercenaries had complained of wasting away in the post-Canopian War years. Finally, McCarron was one of the few officers who had remained in the good graces of the Liao family since coming to the Confederation more than four decades earlier. All these factors made McCarron's Armored Cavalry—nicknamed "The Big Mac"—the perfect choice to undertake such a risky endeavor.

Ultimately, the "Mac Attack" into the Federated Suns cost more than it gained in materiel, but the morale boost it brought to the CCAF more than made up for the physical losses. Of course, the "facts" as spun by the Confederation—and the Big Mac's official unit history—bore only passing resemblance to what actually happened, trumpeting the courage and skill of the mercenaries, who were said to have won every battle they fought against the AFFS. These glowing reports left out the AFFS' retaliatory strikes deep into Confederation space. The Big Mac returned to the Capellan Confederation as heroes, and Chancellor Romano Liao personally decorated Archie McCarron and Colonel Marcus Barton

for their bravery. Following the Mac Attack, the Capellan military quickly turned itself around and began the long road to rebuilding.

THE MAC ATTACK

Neither Colonel Archibald McCarron nor his regimental commanders found much comfort in the post-Fourth Succession War era. The Chancellor was becoming more and more paranoid. Every report of her capriciousness and the brutality visited on the Capellan people by her minions rankled and frightened the Cavalry. While first Maximilian and now Romano Liao had left the merc unit mostly to its own devices, McCarron and his officers knew that situation would not last forever. She had already lashed out at many of her other trusted military leaders, frequently without apparent provocation. The Armored Cavalry welcomed any hope of battle as a way of keeping out from under Chancellor Liao's evil eye.

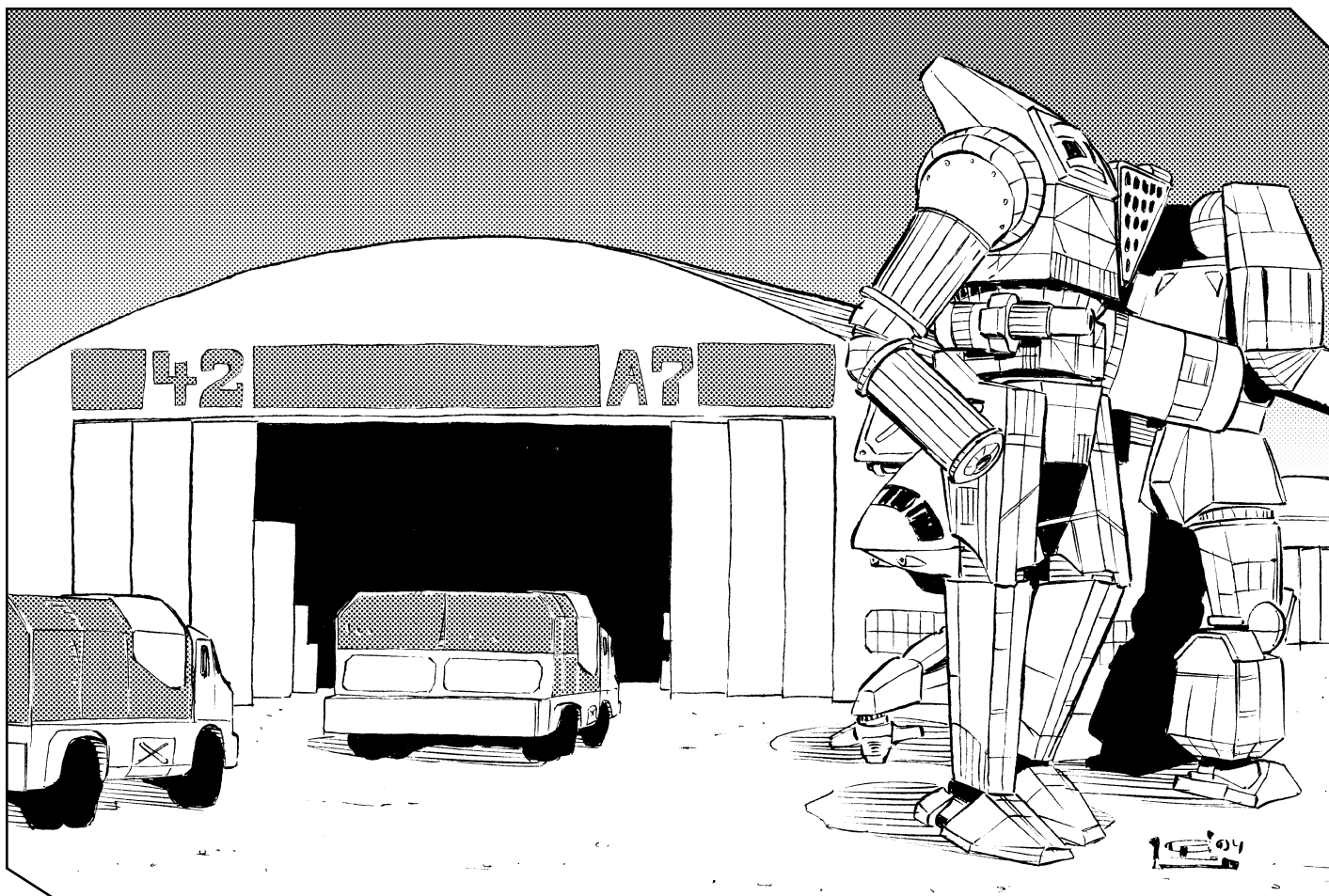
Archie McCarron received a surprise visit from three CCAF senior colonels on Menke in May of 3039, and reacted with amazement when they suggested he undertake a major incursion into Davion space. The intelligence reports they had brought, however, soon won McCarron over. He immediately ordered his first four regiments to relocate to Ares, with himself at their head. McCarron's fifth regiment remained on the St. Ives border to prevent that nascent nation from taking action against the Confederation, while the newly formed sixth regiment continued training on Menke.

He sent his regimental commanders the overall plan while en route, and by the time he landed in early July, they had already made their own detailed battle plans and prepared their troops for the invasion. The Armored Cavalry jumped off less than a week later, targeting nine Federated Suns worlds—including the key factory world of Kathil—over the next several months. Before hitting their first FedSuns worlds, they jumped into an uninhabited system near Armamax in the St. Ives Compact, in hopes of tricking Davion intelligence into believing the Compact had something to do with the invasion.

Provoking an interstellar incident between the FedSuns and the Compact was not the Big Mac's primary goal, however, nor was taking and holding planets. The Cavalry was interested in hit-and-run raids, striking fast and taking what they could before moving on to the next target. In fact, their strategy initially caused some confusion within the AFFS as units were dispatched to intercept and destroy the Big Mac. As soon as it became obvious that Kathil was the Mac's target, Duke Morgan Hasek-Davion dispatched his own counter-invasion force and set a trap for the mercenary unit on Kathil.

Archie McCarron recalled the bulk of his soldiers when he learned of an assault on their homeworld of Menke, but he authorized Colonel Marcus Barton to continue to operate behind enemy lines as he saw fit. That ultimately led to the unexpected and nearly disastrous strike on Addicks, but the Big Mac's withdrawal from the Federated Suns ended the AFFS counterstrike.

McCarron's Armored Cavalry suffered greatly from this bold move. Their base on Menke was essentially destroyed, along with their sixth regiment, and all four regiments involved in the incur-



sion lost warriors and equipment, though none as badly as Barton's Regiment. Yet the victories they brought the Capellan Confederation once again made them heroes in the eyes of the Capellan people.

Alcyone (July)

Alcyone was the first target of Archie McCarron's strike into the Federated Suns. It was also the most questionable from a strategic standpoint, as the headquarters of the Alcyone PDZ and the homeworld of the Alcyone Capellan March Militia. If McCarron had meant to keep his military expedition "below the radar" as long as possible, Alcyone was just about the worst target he could have picked. The planet's defenders bore responsibility for a portion of the Capellan border and were undoubtedly watching closely for any sign of Capellan military activity.

However, Archie McCarron did not care about keeping his attacks a secret. Quite the opposite—he wanted the entire AFFS to know what his mercenary regiments could do. He struck Alcyone specifically because a major March Militia made its home base there. As an important military headquarters, Alcyone surely held large warehouses full of materiel and supplies that the Big Mac and the CCAF could use. And so McCarron assigned Colonel Marcus Barton and his Second Armored Cavalry to the strike.

Barton surprised the CMM and maintained the initiative throughout his week on the world. Rather than directly attack the CMM, he focused on striking various logistical and industrial targets and made a point of breaking off from any engagement where he did not field the overwhelming advantage in manpower and firepower. During that week, Barton's mercenaries managed to steal more than a thousand tons of supplies from an outlying planetary militia armory. They also severely damaged the Alcyone Interstellar Spaceport and Dockyards, destroying countless cargo containers full of hundreds of millions of C-bills' worth of food and civilian industrial products.

The regiment lifted off Alcyone just hours after attacking the spaceport, bound ultimately for Kathil. By then, reports of similar attacks on Monhegan and Bethel had already reached PDZ commander General Dain Voss on Alcyone. He immediately dispatched almost half the CMM to track down the Big Mac, and ordered the First Kittery Borderers to do the same. Neither unit, however, managed to intercept any McCarron's regiments until they reached Kathil.

Addicks (November)

Colonel Marcus Barton's attack on Addicks could have come straight out of a holovid. It was bold and completely unexpected,

and Barton's MechWarriors were seriously outnumbered and outgunned. Unlike holo-videos, however, Barton's mercenary MechWarriors did not overcome their enemies and win the day.

Even under normal circumstances, Addicks would have been a tough nut to crack. The command center of the Addicks PDZ, the planet served as a significant AFFS transit point for units, supplies and personnel. With the AFFS on a wartime footing, Addicks became an important staging point for units destined to participate in the invasion of the Draconis Combine. When Barton landed on 10 November, after a month and a half of posing as a merchant delivering military cargo to the world, he discovered it was literally crawling with AFFS troops. At least two full RCTs, several regiments of mercenary BattleMechs and more than twenty conventional regiments were on-planet and more were en route.

Initially, Barton found it easy to conceal his 'Mechs in the multitude of different units and replacements on Addicks—with appropriate paint jobs for the 'Mechs and forged orders, courtesy of the blanks provided to him by Colonel McCarron's contacts in the Strategios. He and a handful of his officers reconnoitered the world for several days before coming up with an appropriate battle plan, which they launched on the evening of November 14. Not particularly inventive or elegant, the plan involved damaging FedSuns property, which was all Barton wanted to do. He painted his 'Mechs to look like elements of the Second Davion Guards and the Eighth Crucis Lancers, units both present on Addicks, and at 0100 local time they set out on a rampage through the spaceport, destroying everything in their path. The Addicks DMM had primary responsibility for planetary security, but the Second Davion Guards were assisting them in St. Randall. That initially led to some confusion—especially as almost none of the defenders activated their IFF systems until well after the battle began—but after almost three hours, the commanders of the DMM and the Second Guards had a handle on the situation and were beginning to box in the unidentified rogue 'Mechs.

Barton and his MechWarriors continued the fight for another half an hour, then made a break for their DropShips. Most of them made it, save for a company that remained behind to block the approaching FedSuns 'Mechs. That rearguard was destroyed just as the DropShips lifted off. Two full fighter wings took to the skies to prevent the mercenaries from escaping. Barton launched his own fighters, but lost most of them in the rabid dogfight, along with a Second MAC *Union*. The survivors burned out at 3 gees, heading for their JumpShips at a pirate point near the second planet in the system.

The Armored Cavalry ultimately escaped Addicks, but at a high cost. Of the two 'Mech battalions that followed Barton to Addicks, the mercenary colonel departed the planet with twenty-one functional 'Mechs and thirty-three MechWarriors. He also lost eleven fighters and a *Union*-class DropShip. Worse, because his JumpShips had to quick-charge their K-F drives to escape the Addicks system, the drive on one vessel burned out. It took several harrowing months of relaying the unit's DropShips through the Sarna March to get back to Capellan space, but when Barton and his men finally returned to Menke, they were greeted as

heroes. After all, only heroes could have pulled off such a "stunning victory" as they had delivered on Addicks.

Andro (August)

The fourth of the Big Mac's nine raids struck Andro on 7 August. By this time, word of the previous strikes on Alcyone, Bethel and Monhegan had reached Marshal Bergen Richmond on Kathil, who immediately issued an advisory to worlds in the Coreward Combat Theater warning them of the potential for attack. So when the Fourth McCarron's Armored Cavalry—nicknamed Carhart's Demons for its commander, Colonel Nicholas Carhart—landed on the world, the Andro Militia had already put out the order to mobilize.

The militia, with its conventional units, was no match for an entire BattleMech regiment. Nevertheless, the militia put up a far stronger fight than the mercenaries had expected, inflicting relatively heavy damage on the second and third battalions before the Demons wiped them out. That process took nearly a week, giving Colonel Carhart and his troops little time to raid the rest of the planet. In fact, the militia's strong defense nearly forced them to set back their timetable just to allow enough time to scour the battlefields for salvageable equipment. As it was, the regiment barely made it off Andro on 14 August, and even then had to endure two days of 2-G acceleration to make it to Monongahela on time.

Bethel (July)

Bethel was the third world targeted by Colonel Archie McCarron's incursion. Like many of the other planets struck by the Big Mac, Bethel was unimportant except for the role it played in the Capellan Confederation's downfall during in the Fourth Succession War. Supposedly home to a secret research facility that had developed triple-strength myomer, Bethel became the target of a Capellan raid to steal this allegedly vital new technology. In fact, the myomer was a fake that ultimately crippled the CCAF forces on the Confederation capital world of Sian.

The First MAC, the Nightriders, descended on Bethel on the evening of 30 July. They struck out immediately, taking command of the capital city that same night. The Bethel Militia swiftly began mobilizing and attempted to drive out the mercenaries the next day, but they had nowhere near enough strength to do so. Worse still, the Nightriders allowed the fight to spread to the streets of Bethel City. The battle that day killed more than four hundred and set fires that burned for days longer, displacing tens of thousands.

The militia was still attempting to mobilize its full roster, while the Nightriders seemingly controlled the skies and had complete freedom of movement on the ground. They struck every major city on the planet, inflicting as much damage as they could. Thousands died during these assaults, and though Nightrider officers would later claim they were not specifically targeting Bethel's civilian inhabitants, they were clearly attacking objectives of dubious military value.

By the end of their eight days on Bethel, the Nightriders had left twelve major cities in flames or just beginning to assess the damage, the militia had been destroyed or scattered, and

Bethel's power grid was on the verge of collapse. The Nightriders left Bethel behind on the morning of 7 August, having taken nothing and delivered death and destruction. Orbisonia was their next target.

Gallitzin (August)

Gallitzin was a natural target for the Big Mac's attacks—just a few years earlier, it had nearly fallen to a pro-Capellan government in a civil conflict that lasted more than a year. Only the intervention of the mercenary Cunningham's Commandos had prevented the planet from dropping into the Confederation's grasp, but even after two years of hard work, pro-Capellan insurgent groups continued to plague the world. Given the facts on the ground, Gallitzin made a logical fifth target.

Colonel Archie McCarron knew of the rebel groups still on the planet, and used his contacts in the Strategios to inform them that help was on the way. The Third McCarron's Armored Cavalry—the Wild Ones—landed on 13 August amid a beleaguered population. The militia had begun to mobilize, but numerous insurgents within its own ranks included several in leadership positions. That, coupled with terrorist bombings and kidnappings carried out before the Wild Ones entered the Gallitzin system, touched off another civil war on the world.

The arrival of the Wild Ones only added fuel to the fire. The mercenaries targeted government buildings, utility services, communications facilities and other key infrastructure, effectively dropping a blackout over the entire planet. They took what they wanted from the militia armories and the spaceports and left the mess behind.

As with previous worlds struck by the Big Mac, the Wild Ones spent a single week on Gallitzin, though the damage they caused reverberated for years to come. It would take the Federated Suns two years to repair the destruction wreaked by the rebels and the Third MAC, and the AFFS eight years to finally drive the last of the rebel groups underground. (These pro-Capellan insurgents resurfaced during the Clan War, again during Operation Guererro in 3057, and once more during the FedCom Civil War, though never again at the same strength they displayed during the 3030s and 3040s.) Having left Gallitzin smoldering, the Wild Ones rushed to Kathil, hoping to join the action on that important world.

Kathil (September)

Kathil was the ultimate goal of Archie McCarron's deep raid into the Federated Suns. A world about which epic stories and grand operas are written, it sat as the crown jewel of the Hasek family's Capellan March. A seat of political and military power, serving as the home to the March's Coreward Combat Theater, it also formed an integral part of the Federated Suns' military-industrial backbone. Without the factories on Kathil, the AFFS could not be the mighty power it was.

McCarron knew his mercenaries could not hope to take and hold this vital world. It undoubtedly had a strong garrison force, including significant numbers of BattleMechs, and neither Duke Morgan Hasek-Davion nor Prince Hanse Davion would ever let its secrets fall into Capellan hands no matter what the cost.

However, an objective raid accomplished by a strong BattleMech contingent might succeed in inflicting heavy damage.

Barton's Regiment landed on Kathil first, grounding on 2 September, and was immediately greeted by the Eighth Syrtis Fusiliers RCT, along with a full conventional AFFS brigade. The opposition did not overly concern Barton, however. The AFFS troops had to defend the entire planet, while he and his mercenaries could strike at will. Furthermore, he knew he had assistance coming. He did not suspect, however, that Marshal Bergen Richmond had set a trap for the Capellan mercenary unit.

For the first several days, Barton and the Eighth Fusiliers traded mostly ranged shots as they sized each other up. As soon as Barton learned that the First and Third MAC were in-system, he began to up the ante. The Fusiliers countered his every move, but did not directly oppose the Armored Cavalry until the First and Third MAC landed. Once the rest of the mercs were on the ground, Marshal Richmond sprung her trap. The Alcyone CMM and the First Kittery Borderers had landed on Kathil in August after coming in at a pirate point, and were waiting for the Big Mac to show up.

The sheer size of Marshal Richmond's ground force shocked Barton and his comrades. They held out for a few more days, but ultimately had to concede that they were overmatched. They left the world on 10 September, claiming at least a small victory after raiding several outlying military posts and making off with more than three thousand tons of materiel.

For most of the mercs, this campaign marked the end of the invasion. They returned to the Capellan Confederation on orders from Archie McCarron, though Barton was not satisfied with the situation. He led two of his regiment's battalions to strike Addicks, in the most audacious—and arguably foolish—attack of the entire war.

Monhegan (July)

In striking Monhegan, Archie McCarron missed out on the supply cache the Fifth Syrtis Fusiliers undoubtedly left behind when they departed the world of Cammal half a year earlier to take up position on the Draconis March border world of David. On the other hand, when he planned the operation and chose the targets, Colonel McCarron made sure that none of his regiments would be more than one jump away from the assistance of at least two other MAC units, and Cammal lay outside that range.

Though the planet Monhegan—McCarron's second target—held little of strategic value, the world was on the way to Kathil. McCarron assigned the Monhegan raid to the Wild Ones, who proceeded to crush the Monhegan Militia in just three days of fighting. That left four more days for the regiment to steal what they could. They found few military supplies, but did manage to loot almost two thousand barrels of fine aged wines and other alcohol from Spraacher, a mountain city that had made a name for itself centuries earlier through the outstanding vineyards and distilleries that occupied the surrounding hills and valleys. McCarron gifted several hundred barrels of wine and spirits to the Chancellor and members of the Strategios, and sold several hundred more; the rest, just under half the take, remained in the unit and lasted the

Big Mac less than four years, though the wine cellar Archie built after the operation still supplies his successor today.

The Wild Ones departed Monhegan on 31 July, exactly seven days after landing, and began the journey to their next target: Gallitzin.

Monongahela (August)

On the surface, Monongahela looked like another poor target—a world with a moderate-sized population, basic modern industry and a healthy ranching business. The planet was also a forward-deployment base for the Kathil Capellan March Militia prior to the Fourth Succession War, however, and it still held relatively large military warehouses. Better still, the Monongahela Militia was sorely understaffed and under-equipped. The chance to appropriate whatever materiel might be left in the warehouses made the potential cost worth the risk.

McCarron entrusted this seventh target to Carhart's Demons. Upon landing, Colonel Nicholas Carhart and his Fourth MAC immediately began searching for the old CMM storehouses. Like lostech prospectors straight out of the holovids, Carhart's Demons scoured the land, unearthing and unsealing bunkers left untouched for more than a decade. The mercenaries encountered the militia only twice, and both times left no survivors. Like clockwork, they left a week after they had arrived, having scavenged 247 tons of miscellaneous weapons, spare parts, armor and rations from the bunkers.

Instead of continuing on to Kathil, however, the Demons began the trek back to the Confederation. Colonel Archie McCarron ordered them home as soon as he learned the extent of the damage the AFFS was doing to the unit's homeworld of Menke.

Orbisonia (August)

The sixth world to feel the sting of McCarron's Armored Cavalry was Orbisonia. The Nightriders pushed hard to make it to the planet as quickly as they could, enduring a 2-G burn-in to the world. Despite lacking anything of strategic value, Orbisonia held a dark distinction in the Capellan military as the place where Chancellor Ilsa Liao died in 2828. Since that time, the CCAF had almost superstitiously avoided the world. The Nightriders, however, had no such qualms.

They attempted the same lightning strike that had worked so well on Bethel, but they had not accounted for the AFFS' 4212th Tactical Fighter Wing or the two wings of conventional fighters flown by the Orbisonia Militia. The Nightriders' own fighters were overwhelmed, and the mercenaries had to fight hard just to secure a landing zone. The FedSuns fighters continued to bomb and strafe them for two straight days, preventing the mercenaries from breaking out to even attempt a strike on one of their opponents' airbases.

By the third day, the Nightriders realized they could never strike out without the cover of severe weather or an act of God, neither of which were likely. The mercenaries pulled out later that day, apparently the victims of the same bad karma that befell Chancellor Ilsa Liao more than two centuries earlier.

Their appetite for battle not sated, the Nightriders immediately made for Kathil.

COUNTERING THE BIG MAC

Archie McCarron's raids into the Capellan March came as a surprise to Duke Morgan Hasek-Davion and his regional commanders, but they were not wholly unexpected. Hasek-Davion and his uncle, Prince Hanse Davion, knew just how dangerously unpredictable the Confederation and its Chancellors were. So while the high command devoted most of its energies in 3038 to preparing for the invasion of the Draconis Combine, Duke Hasek-Davion and his own staff devised a number of plans to deal with several likely aggressive moves by their Capellan neighbors.

That the Capellans dared target Kathil came as a shock to almost everyone on Duke Hasek-Davion's staff, given that the planet lay so deep within the Federated Suns. Regional commanders had expected aggression against the St. Ives Compact or border raids along the Sirdar PDZ, or even a strike on Sarna, though that theater lay outside Hasek-Davion's area of responsibility. Still, when the Capellan assault came, Hasek-Davion responded in force.

While Marshal Bergen Richmond dealt with McCarron's invasion in the Coreward Combat Theater, Hasek-Davion authorized CASE JULIET, a retaliatory strike against the Confederation's rimward region. He originally targeted three worlds, including the Big Mac's homeworld of Menke, though Menke made it onto the list purely by coincidence. Of course, once Hasek-Davion determined that McCarron's Armored Cavalry was prosecuting the invasion of the FedSuns, CASE JULIET made the most sense of all the available plans. Hasek-Davion's forces struck Grand Base, Menke and Victoria. At the same time, General Roman Steiner, commander of the Sarna March, targeted the world of Ares after consulting with Hasek-Davion and members of the AFFS high command.

All four worlds were priority military targets. Two—Ares and Grand Base—held some of the Confederation's few remaining factories capable of producing 'Mechs, while new facilities were being built on the other two worlds. All four were also considered extremely risky targets, but Duke Hasek-Davion and General Steiner knew that a simultaneous strike on all four planets would send the message loud and clear to the Chancellor.

The battles were bloody, and Hasek-Davion had to commit most of his reserves to the campaign. The rest, consisting primarily of the Lexington Combat Group, he moved into the Sirdar PDZ as a precaution and a warning to the Capellans. The Capellan Confederation swiftly backed off from its strike into the Federated Suns. Hasek-Davion's strikes also demonstrated to the CCAF some of its greatest weaknesses, but that price was small indeed if it prevented a larger Capellan incursion into Federated Suns space.

Ares (August-September)

It was ironic that Colonel Archibald McCarron chose Ares as the staging point for his strike into the Federated Suns. Named after the Greek god of war, Ares was far better known as the site of the long-ago peace talks that led to the famed Ares

Conventions. At the same time, this world of peace was also home to one of the Capellan Confederation's BattleMech factories, a dichotomy of purpose that has haunted Ares for centuries.

General Roman Steiner targeted the planet as much because of its military significance as because Colonel McCarron's regiments used it to stage their own incursion. LCAF Hauptmann-General Gerd Stromberg led the Second FedCom RCT to Ares in early August and quickly overpowered and destroyed the defending first battalion of the Fifteenth Dracon. The world had more defenders, including local security forces for Bergan Industries and Earthwerks, Ltd., but these likewise proved unable to fend off the Second FedCom.

Stromberg struck Bergan Industries and Earthwerks simultaneously, taking the two factories with only moderate difficulty. It was the Quicksell plant near Bergan—and the two battalions of heavy armor in its self-defense force—that caused the most difficulty for Stromberg's troops. The general and his combined Lyran and FedSuns force held on to the factory locations, including the industrial parks surrounding them, while battalion-sized mixed groups spread out across the world to counter the Ares Militia.

Eighteen days after the Second FedCom landed, the rest of the Fifteenth Dracon descended on Ares, but even three more understrength 'Mech battalions could not dislodge the FedCom RCT. Stromberg kept secure perimeters around the factories, though he also held a mixed combat command available to strike at the Dracon. Two and a half weeks later, Kingston's Legionnaires arrived on-world, adding more Capellan 'Mechs to the mix.

Initially Stromberg chose to hold out against the Capellans, but after rebuffing two strong advances against the Earthwerks plant, he decided to pull out. He could hope to accomplish little more on the world. His troops had already seized two *Union* and two *Overlord* DropShips from Earthwerks, along with dozens of 'Mechs and tanks from Bergan Industries and Quicksell, plus several thousand tons of miscellaneous equipment. Additionally, they had disabled the factories, preventing them from producing any military equipment for months. The Second FedCom RCT pulled off the world on 12 September, their assignment complete.

Grand Base (August-September)

Of the three worlds targeted by Duke Hasek-Davion, Grand Base was perhaps the riskiest. The best-defended of the chosen planets, it was home to the fabled Death Commandos. The duke assigned his most capable unit to this dangerous assault—the First FedSuns Armored Cavalry, supported by the mercenary Ninth Illician Rangers, two additional mechanized regiments, two free aerospace wings and a full MI-6 special forces team from Davion military intelligence.

As expected, the assault force, under the command of Major General Todd Revons, met heavy resistance. A battalion each of House Fujita and the Death Commandos, along with five conventional militia regiments, were the world's permanent defenders. In addition, some mixed battalions of corporate security forces guarded the Earthwerks, Ltd. manufacturing plant, along with seven companies of BattleMechs hailing from units throughout

the CCAF that had come to Grand Base for repair and refit (though less than half of those were anywhere near combat-ready).

The opposing forces were nearly equal in size and capability, a fact both sides recognized almost immediately, which left the fate of Grand Base up to the individual combat leaders. Revons began the Grand Base operation by inserting the MI-6 team onto the world ten days before his task force landed. That gave the operatives time to reconnoiter the world and report back, though a number were discovered and killed. Still, the team gave Revons the information he needed to prosecute the battle.

Before reaching Grand Base, the AFFS task force had to make it past the system's defenses. Revons' forces lost two DropShips, but their four fighter wings and multiple assault ships left the bulk of the defense force in pieces. Before Revons' troops grounded, he tasked his fighters and assault ships to cripple or destroy every major military airbase on the planet. As soon as most of the bases were neutralized, the task force landed outside Bragga, the city closest to the Earthwerks, Ltd. plant, and took command of the nearby spaceport.

Revons used a two-pronged advance—one commanded by Revons' deputy, Lieutenant Colonel Rudolph Chapman, and the other by Illician Lancers Colonel Heather Drum—to move on the Earthwerks plant, but found his strikes blunted by the heavy defensive ring the Capellans had erected around the facility. Over the next several days, Revons noticed a problem within the Capellan command structure. The Death Commandos continuously pressed their own attacks, conventional and unconventional, against the AFFS troops, and though the senior Death Commando officer apparently had command over the entire operation, the leaders of the other Capellan forces seemed far less willing to remain on the offensive. In addition, the various Capellan units clearly had trouble coordinating their actions.

Revons used these observations to his best advantage, drawing the Death Commandos out and then pounding the other units, strung out between the plant and Bragga, with his aerospace forces. During three weeks of fighting, the Capellans did the most damage in covert Death Commandos strikes, though they likewise prevented Revons from taking the plant. For his part, Revons focused on hurting his enemies rather than penetrating their lines to take command of the factory. By the end of their time on the world, Revons' forces had destroyed nearly half the Capellan defenders and left the rest in such a state of disrepair that it took years for them to rebuild and repair.

Revons and his troops returned to the Sirdar PDZ and once again took up their positions along the Capellan border. They all eventually received personal visits from Duke Hasek-Davion, who doled out scores of awards to unit members. Likewise, the Capellan forces that helped defend Grand Base all received citations from the Chancellor, who lauded them for their contribution to the "victory over the Davion dogs."

Menke (August-September)

When Duke Hasek-Davion and his officers began planning for potential preemptive or retaliatory strikes into the Capellan Confederation, no one knew Archibald McCarron's mercenaries

would be wholly responsible for the incursion into the Federated Suns. Upon discovering that the Big Mac was behind the invasion, however, the duke made sure to target Menke. Otherwise, he feared, the mercenaries might not be suitably motivated to cut off their own raids.

The Menke operation was the most important of the CASE JULIET attacks, and many criticized the duke for giving it to General Panos Fujikawa, commander of the mercenary Illician Lancers. That the mercenaries had valiantly and honorably served the Federated Suns for two centuries apparently did not matter in some quarters, but the duke knew the Lancers' worth and gave them an additional mixed brigade from the Sirdar CMM.

The strike force landed near Johenessburg, a medium-sized city less than a hundred kilometers from the Big Mac's main base at Fort McCarron, which lay just outside the city of Gamala. Though MAC fighters harried the invasion force throughout their burn-in to the world and fought hard to prevent the enemy from landing, the FedSuns fighters and DropShips put up a powerful defensive screen. The fighting cost the AFFS task force more than half its fighters before it even made planetfall, a loss that haunted General Fujikawa throughout the operation.

While McCarron's Armored Cavalry had a slight edge in aerospace power over the combined mercenary-CMM force, General Fujikawa had more 'Mechs on the ground than the Capellan mercenaries, a reality he hammered home in short order. The Armored Cavalry had one 'Mech regiment on the world—the recently formed Sixth MAC, Baxter's Brawlers, under the command of Colonel Marcus Baxter—along with a relatively strong militia force. Unfortunately, the arrogant Colonel Baxter did not order the militia to fully mobilize until his opponents had already landed, which cost him dearly when Fujikawa struck Fort McCarron.

Fujikawa knew Baxter's regiment was not battle-tested, and though many Cavalry veterans were on the unit's rolls, they included just as many trainees who had never experienced combat. In the Sixth's first engagement, they did nothing but give ground and nearly broke twice, though Baxter somehow managed to maintain unit cohesion. They fell back into the fort, leaving the CMM to place them under siege and allowing Fujikawa's Fifty-Ninth Striker regiment to drive into Gamala. Fujikawa's forces promptly took control of facilities in the city that belonged to MTC, Inc.—the trading corporation Archie McCarron had set up several years earlier to help supply his unit.

That act drove Baxter's MechWarriors into a frenzy. They struck out from Fort McCarron and hit the Fifty-Ninth Strikers' rear, but the Illician mercenaries were more skilled and agile than the Sixth MAC. They sloughed off the attack and turned, pinning Baxter's MechWarriors between them and the CMM. The arrival of the Armored Cavalry's fighter squadrons broke up the battle, but only after significant damage to the MTC shipping yards and warehouses.

Fujikawa concentrated his efforts on Fort McCarron after that, though two weeks of clear weather made his 'Mechs and

tanks vulnerable to the Sixth's air strikes. As soon as heavy rains began to blanket the region, however, Fujikawa struck in force once again. Even the appearance of the planet's militia could not stop the AFFS troops, who barreled through the conventional forces like a vibroblade through paper to strike hard at Baxter's 'Mechs. In those two days of severe weather, Fujikawa destroyed the Sixth MAC and laid waste to their base. The AFFS task force plundered what they could while the weather held out and destroyed much of the rest.

General Fujikawa fully intended to remain on Menke for much longer, but on 23 August the first battalion of House LuSann landed and struck from his flank. Worse, the weather was clearing, and AFFS intelligence informed him that more CCAF units were on the way. Fujikawa pulled off Menke two days later.

Davion military intelligence later learned that the strike on Menke cost the Big Mac heavily. It took years to fix their supply problems, the 'Mech factory would not resume operations for more than a decade, and the Sixth MAC never gained combat-ready status (though a provisional battalion remained on the rolls until 3049, even participating in the MAC's famed assault on Marlette in 3044). Of course, the Capellan Confederation never let those facts become public, and as a cover threw Colonel McCarron and his mercenaries a celebration unlike anything seen in decades after Barton's Regiment returned from their "victory" on Addicks.

Victoria (August-September)

To Victoria, Duke Hasek-Davion assigned the Fourth and Twenty-First Illician Rangers, two more regiments of the Illician Lancers mercenary unit. Setting out from the Fourth Rangers' temporary base on Frazer, the two Lancers regiments landed on Victoria essentially unopposed. The planet's severe weather provided most of its defense—the bulk of Victoria's important facilities lay within domed structures or were built underground to protect them from the storms that regularly battered the surface. Local security forces were generally the only armed defense required on this inhospitable world.

The mercenaries had a mission to accomplish, however, and Victoria's environment did not deter them. They easily found the Trellis Electronics plant and the 'Mech factory under construction, taking charge of them with little difficulty. The planet had little else to offer until House LuSann's second battalion arrived, which at least gave the mercenaries an opponent to fight. Not long afterward, House Dai Da Chi landed on Victoria, adding to the planet's defenders. By the end of their fourth week on Victoria, however, the Lancers had done just about all they could without destroying the factories outright.

The Lancers pulled out on 15 September, having set back the Confederation's engineers for years in constructing the targeted factories. The Confederation nonetheless called the Victoria action an epic victory for the CCAF. As the newsfeeds put it, "Houses LuSann and Dai Da Chi defeated a Davion force three times their number, once again demonstrating to all the superiority of the Capellan soldier."

AFTERMATH

“The war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan’s advantage.”

—Emperor Hirohito announcing Japan’s surrender in World War II

“The operation to neutralize the threat of the Draconis Combine has developed contrary to our predications and with the assault by DCMS troops into the Draconis March we must suspend further offensive operations until said threat can be neutralized.”

—Prince Hanse Davion’s Recall Order

The recall order of October did not end the War of 3039, but it did acknowledge the prevailing situation, that the LCAF and AFFS would pull back to defend their own territory rather than pushing onward and risking further defeat at the hands of the Combine. Officially the order only postponed further incursions into Combine space, but it was widely accepted that the loss of forward momentum had effectively ended the allied offensive.

Victory remained within the allies’ grasp, but achieving it would require the Prince and the Archon to gamble with the fate of their nations on the weakness of the DCMS. The counter-assaults against occupied worlds and the counter-invasion toward Robinson suggested that the Combine military was far from as weak as believed, though many analysts thought these strikes might be a front intended to deliberately over-inflate the Dragon’s military capability and intimidate the allies. They claimed the DCMS operations represented the Combine’s full military strength, and that protracted operations would quickly exhaust the Kurita troops and leave the Combine ripe for conquest. According to this view, the allies needed only to weather the storm—perhaps by committing Wave Two troops to shoring up the Wave One gains—and then press onward once the Dragon had spent itself. That viewpoint assumed, however, that the DCMS was genuinely at its limits, and given the advanced technology demonstrated by the DCMS and the evidence from Kessel of advanced-tech manufacturing, neither the LIC nor the MIIO could confirm that assertion. Though hawks in the AFFS—particularly Duke James Sandoval—called for continuing the conflict, doing so risked drawing the allies into a protracted and bloody war for which they had little stomach. As Theodore Kurita had hoped, the allies backed down. The Fox and the Dragon had squared off, but Hanse Davion blinked first.

The Exeter Accords of 19 January 3040, signed by minor functionaries of the Federated Suns, Lyran Commonwealth and Draconis Combine and witnessed by ComStar’s

Precentor Dieron Sharilar Mori, officially ended the conflict. Unfortunately, the absence of major figures from the signing ceremony robbed the treaty of public recognition (and even of legitimacy in some quarters), and few non-governmental personnel paid the document much heed. The accords acknowledged the suspension of hostilities, at least for the present. Theodore Kurita and Hanse Davion stepped back from the brink of war, though a succession of border clashes would color their relationship over the next decade. Only the Clan Invasion led to a genuine rapprochement between the Combine and the FedSuns (and a fatal souring in the Steiner-Davion alliance).

AFTERSHOCKS

Though some clashes would run into the first quarter of 3040, the bulk of the fighting in the War of 3039 ended by December of that year, and January 3040 saw a reduction in military and political tensions. One last burst of frenetic activity did occur, however, before the war came to a formal close.

On January 4, Archon-Emeritus Katrina Steiner died peacefully in her sleep. The cause of death was natural, but some members of the Estates General nonetheless claimed that ISF agents had murdered the Lyran Commonwealth’s beloved former ruler and demanded “immediate and comprehensive retribution” against the Combine. Archon Melissa Steiner-Davion, who knew the truth of her mother’s illness, blocked calls for a resumption of the war and found her decision supported by almost all the LCAF high command, most notably General Nondi Steiner (who mourned her sister’s death, but knew the cost of a return to war). The pro-war campaigners forced the matter to a vote on 16 January, but the measure was defeated. The LCAF and the entire Commonwealth backed away from war and instead prepared to bury Katrina Steiner along with the numerous Lyran troops who had fallen in the conflict.

In the Federated Suns, the loss of Fomalhaut, Saffel and Quentin counteracted the gains of Murchison, Markab, Skat, Cylene, Lima, McComb and Royal, and left Field Marshal James Sandoval furious at the New Avalon government. In conjunction with his father, Duke Aaron Sandoval, the field marshal pressured the First Prince to continue the war, but faced with troubles on the Capellan and Free Worlds borders, the AFFS had no intention of continuing the 3039 conflict into the New Year. The alliance had gained four worlds, a number far short of the projected gains of forty to fifty planets. Throughout much of the Federated Suns, the AFFS and the general population breathed a sigh of relief as



INNER SPHERE - 3040

Federated Commonwealth - Lyran Commonwealth

- Tamar March**
 1) Blackjack Operational Area
 2) Benfled Operational Area
- Periphery March**
 3) Tsarahavana Operational Area
 4) Venaria Operational Area
- Donegal March**
 5) Coventry Operational Area
 6) Alarion Operational Area
 7) Pherkad Operational Area
- Tamarind March**
 8) Bolan Operational Area
 9) Soilihull Operational Area
- Skye March**
 10) Ryde Operational Area
 11) Alcor Operational Area
- Sarna March**
 12) Terra Firma Operational Area
 13) Palos Operational Area

Federated Commonwealth - Federated Suns

- Draconis March**
 14) Robinson Operational Area
 15) Woodbine Operational Area
- Capellan March**
 16) Kathil Operational Area
 17) Taygetta Operational Area
- Crucis March**
 18) Markesan Operational Area
 19) Chirikof Operational Area
 20) Minnette Operational Area

Draconis Combine

- Pesht Military District**
 1) Kagoshima Prefecture
 2) Albiero Prefecture
 3) Bjarred Prefecture
 4) Qandahar Prefecture
 5) Ningxia Prefecture
- Dieron Military District**
 6) Kessel Prefecture
 7) Vega Prefecture
 8) Algedi Prefecture
 9) Ashio Prefecture
 10) Al Na'ir Prefecture
- Alshain Military District**
 11) Buckminster Prefecture
 12) Rubigen Prefecture
 13) Garstedt Prefecture
- Benjamin Military District**
 14) Baldur Prefecture
 15) Xinyang Prefecture
 16) Kajikazawa Prefecture
 17) Proserpina Prefecture
 18) Iruzun Prefecture
- Galedon Military District**
 19) Oshika Prefecture
 20) Matsuida Prefecture
 21) New Samarkand Prefecture
 22) Kaznejev Prefecture
 23) Tabayama Prefecture

Free Worlds League

- 1) Marik Commonwealth
- 2) Principality of Regulus
- 3) Duchy of Oriente
- 4) Duchy of Andurien
- 5) Duchy of Graham-Marik
- 6) Stewart Commonality
- 7) The Protectorate
- 8) Duchy of Orloff
- 9) Regular Free States
- 10) Principality of Gibson
- 11) Mosiro Archipelago
- 12) Abbey District
- 13) Duchy of Tamarind
- 14) Zion Province
- 15) Ohren Province
- 16) Rim Commonality
- 17) Silver Hawk Coalition

Capellan Confederation

- 1) Capellan Commonality
- 2) Sian Commonality

St. Ives Compact

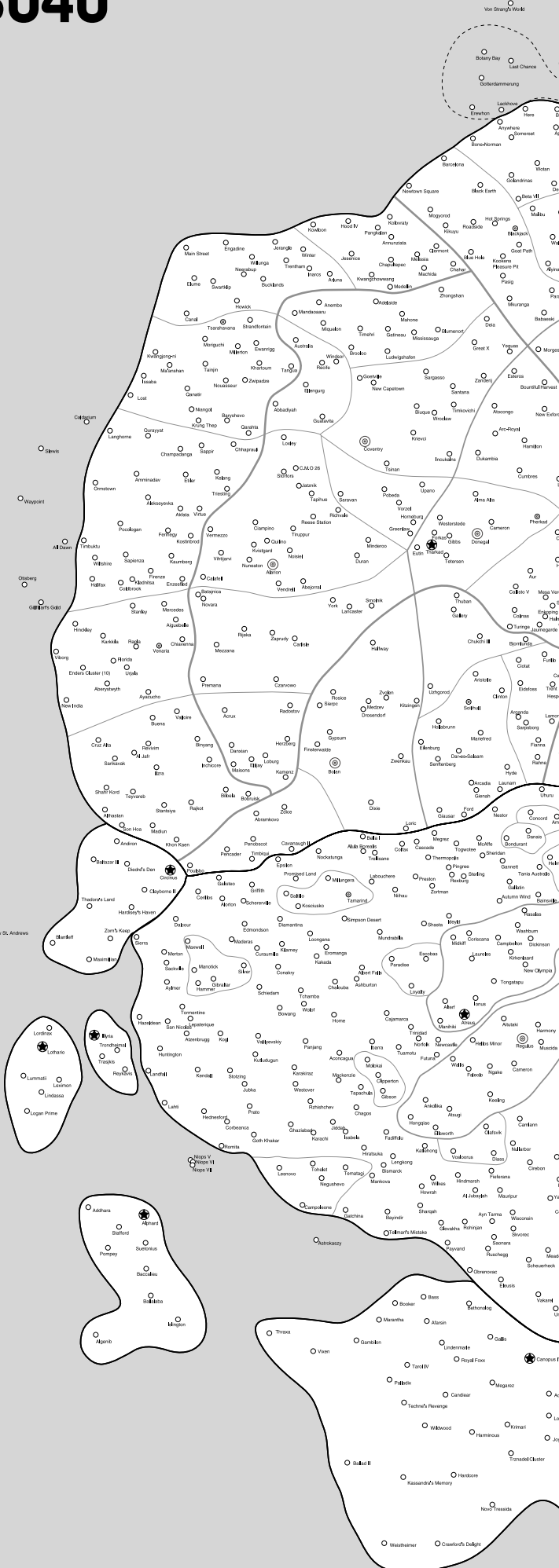
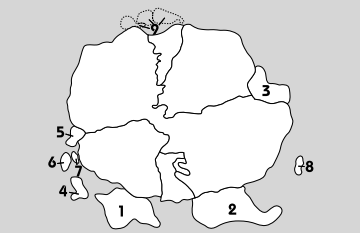
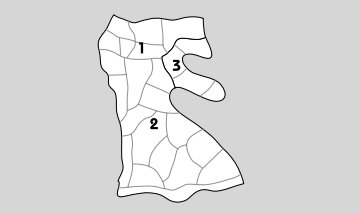
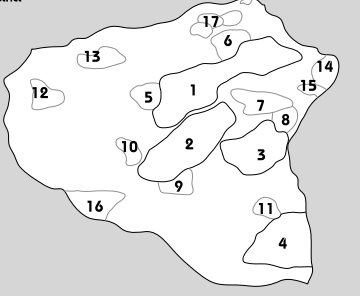
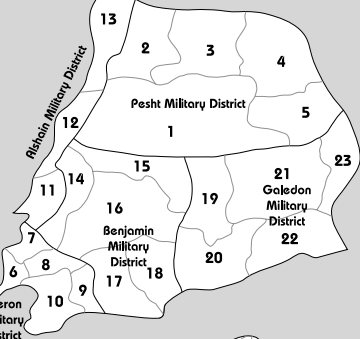
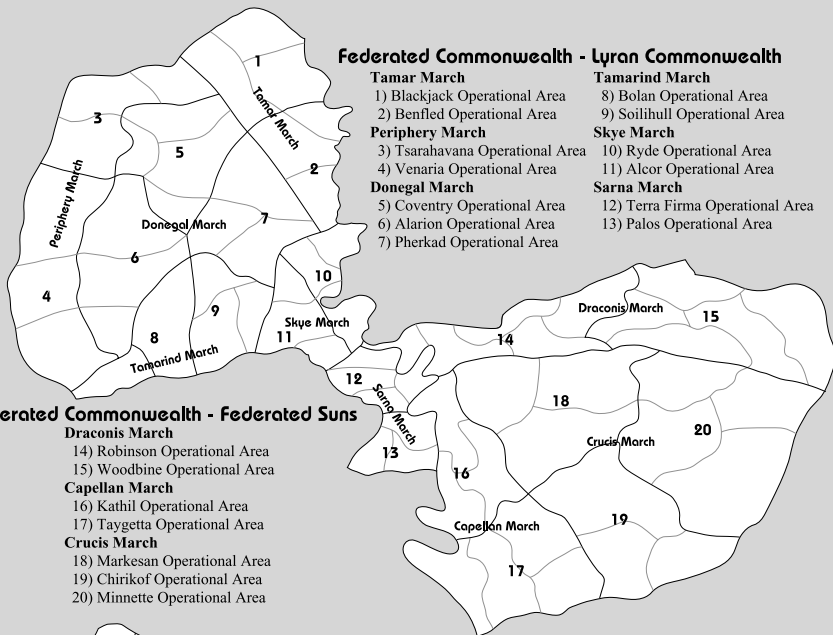
- 3) St. Ives Commonality

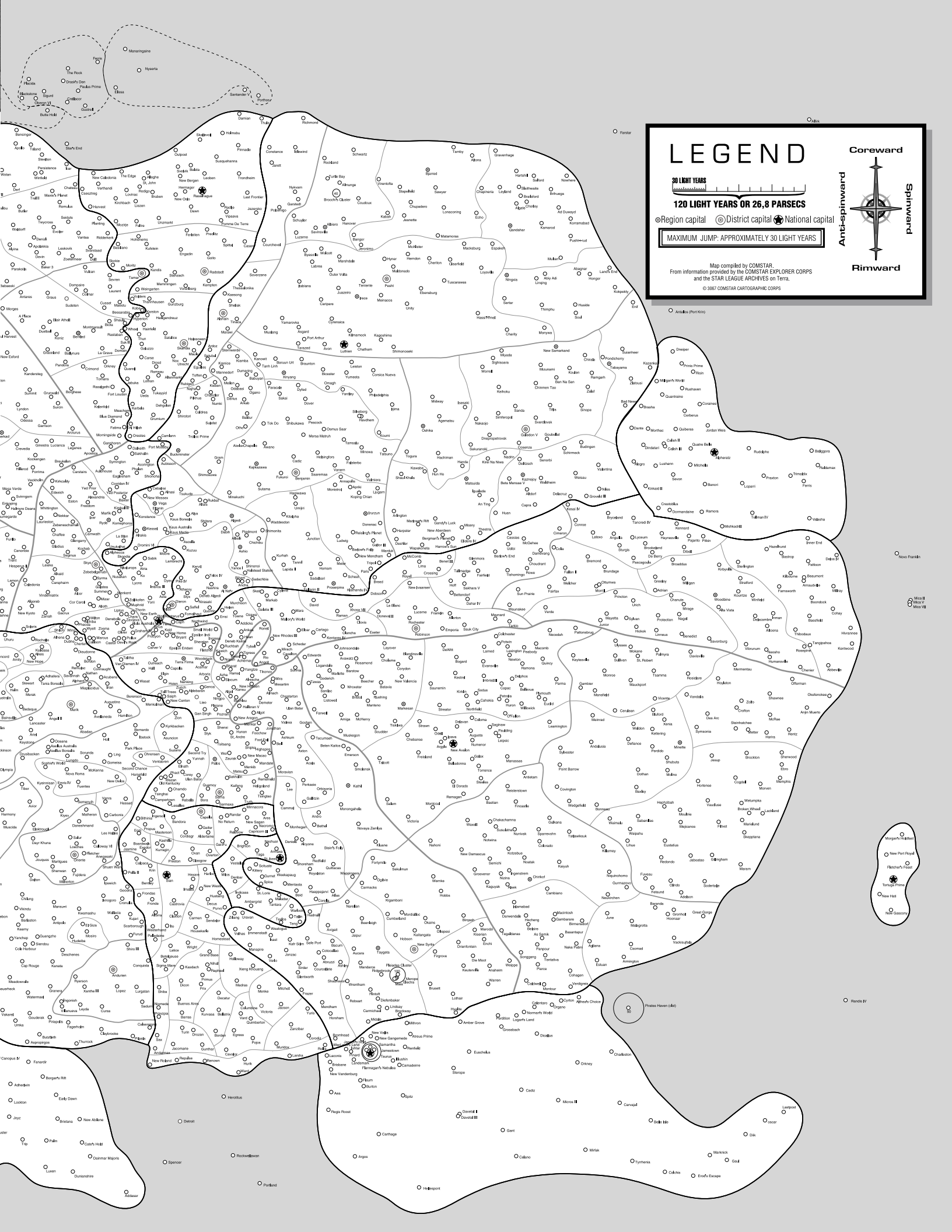
Free Rasalhague Republic

- 1) Rasalhague Province
- 2) Radstadt Province
- 3) Skandia Province

The Periphery

- 1) Magistracy of Canopus
- 2) Taurian Concordat
- 3) Outworlds Alliance
- 4) Marian Hegemony
- 5) Circinus Federation
- 6) Lothian League
- 7) Illyrian Palatinate
- 8) Tortuga Dominions
- 9) Bandit Kingdoms





LEGEND

30 LIGHT YEARS
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150 160 170 180 190 200 210 220 230 240 250 260 270 280 290 300 310 320 330 340 350 360 370 380 390 400 410 420 430 440 450 460 470 480 490 500 510 520 530 540 550 560 570 580 590 600 610 620 630 640 650 660 670 680 690 700 710 720 730 740 750 760 770 780 790 800 810 820 830 840 850 860 870 880 890 900 910 920 930 940 950 960 970 980 990 1000

120 LIGHT YEARS OR 26,8 PARSECS

⊙ Region capital ⊙ District capital ⊙ National capital

MAXIMUM JUMP: APPROXIMATELY 30 LIGHT YEARS



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⊙ Antilia (Port Kira)

the war ended, but in the Draconis March tempers remained frayed and tensions ran high. The conflict with the Combine might be on hold, but would not be forgotten.

The most significant but least known events took place in the Draconis Combine in the immediate aftermath of the conflict. Even before the last fighting ended between the Combine and the allies, rumors began to circulate that Theodore Kurita had staged a coup on Luthien, deposing his father with the aid of the yakuza and the ISF. The exact sequence of events remains unclear, but it appeared that a well meaning, over-ambitious oyabun sought to ingratiate himself with the *Kanrei* by clearing Theodore's path to the throne. Theodore Kurita allegedly intervened to halt the coup, and the yakuza atoned for their presumption. On 10 January 3039, Takashi and Theodore appeared together to scotch the coup rumors and to reaffirm their joint commitment to the Combine.

REPERCUSSIONS: THE COMBINE

The War of 3039 brought about a number of changes in the Inner Sphere, though the direction of these developments was much different from that predicted before the outbreak of the conflict.

The most significant change was a boost to the Combine's image. The Fourth Succession War, in which the Combine lost more than fifty worlds to the supposedly inferior LCAF, had led many analysts to suggest that the Combine was doomed and that it was only a matter of time before the Steiner-Davion alliance crippled House Kurita as they had House Liao. The defeats of 3028-3030 remained a stain on the honor of the DCMS for more than a decade, but during the eight-month conflict in 3039 the DCMS demonstrated renewed strength and vigor not only to the rest of the Inner Sphere, but to themselves. This sense of pride, similar to the Xin Sheng movement that would arise in the Capellan Confederation during the 3050s and 60s, buoyed the Combine throughout the 3040s and only ended with the Clan Invasion.

Their bluff-turned-victory in the War of 3039 also instilled renewed confidence in the DCMS leadership. During the Fourth Succession War, Takashi Kurita's single-minded obsession with Wolf's Dragoons clearly hampered DCMS' efforts to exploit AFFS weaknesses as the Federated Suns

shattered the Capellan Confederation. The War of 3039 demonstrated the combined power of the *Kanrei* and the Coordinator, Theodore controlling the military and Takashi the politics and economics of state. Theodore played the role of dutiful son well and Takashi reciprocated by accepting his son's family. Though still cool, their relationship greatly improved in the years following the war and would remain businesslike until Takashi's death in 3054.

REPERCUSSIONS: THE ALLIES

Though sharing many traits that made them the most likely allies of all the Successor States, the Lyran Commonwealth and the Federated Suns remained distinct nations with their own politics, economics and militaries. The War of 3039 highlighted the problems posed by these differences, particularly in military equipment and chains of command. Consequently, the two realms established the Armed Forces of the Federated Commonwealth (AFFC) in early 3041 as a "parent organization" for the LCAF and AFFS, and over the next few years the two militaries were harmonized into a cohesive whole. Rather than distinct militaries, the allied realms created two State Commands—one for the Lyran Commonwealth and one for the Federated Suns—that exercised authority over all troops in their areas of responsibility, regardless of each unit's national origin. This structure eliminated the command confusion that plagued the War of 3039 (most notably in the Dieron Military District) while avoiding over-centralization. The intelligence communities of both realms likewise came together under the auspices of the Intelligence Secretariat, which served as coordinator and facilitator for the disparate agencies within its remit.

True political union between the allies remained a long way off, however. As a legal entity, the Federated Commonwealth only existed between 3055 and 3057, though the War of 3039 gave birth to it and by the time of the Clan Invasion (3049-3052), the super-state existed in practice (if not in the eyes of interstellar law). Creating the sense of a unified people, however, would be more problematic. Tensions between the realms would manifest numerous times before the secession of the Lyran state (as the Lyran Alliance) in 3057 and the bloody Federated Commonwealth Civil War (3062-3067).

DEPLOYMENT TABLE

The following table lists the movements and assignments made by each BattleMech unit involved in the War of 3039, where it fought and its status at the end of the battle. The table is divided into six sections, each related to one of the major military powers involved in the war: the Armed Forces of the Federated Suns (AFFS), Lyran Commonwealth Armed Forces (LCAF), Draconis Combine Mustered Soldiery (DCMS), Capellan Confederation Armed Forces (CCAF), Free Worlds League Military (FWLM) and Allied Mercenary Forces. The final section refers to mercenary units employed by the Federated Suns or the Lyran Commonwealth; mercenary units employed by other nations are listed along with that nation's regular units. All of the BattleMech units fielded by the AFFS, LCAF and DCMS—including mercenary units—appear on this table; of units belonging to the CCAF and FWLM, only those that took part in military actions during the War of 3039 (whether against each other or another nation) are listed.

The movements shown on this table are based on approximate time frames. "Pre-War" indicates where the unit was stationed in 3038 before redeployment. "Jump-Off" indicates the world to which the unit was assigned just prior to the invasion (units scheduled to take an active part in the war were assigned to a handful of staging worlds, while others were shuffled around to provide full border coverage). "Wave 1" indicates worlds targeted in Wave One of the invasion, which took place approximately from March through June of 3039. "Counterattack" indicates worlds targeted by the DCMS in its reprisal, including strategic movements within its borders to cover other border regions, as well as Wave Two assaults carried out by the Allied forces, all of which took place approximately between July and September of 3039. "Wave 2" indicates continuing battles in the DCMS counterattack and the Allied Wave Two, as well as raids carried out by other nations, all of which took place approximately between October and December of 3039. Finally, "Post-War" indicates the permanent garrison assignments received by each unit following the war. Quite a few of these moves took many months to complete, though by the end of 3040, all but a handful of the units appearing in the table had arrived on-station.

Some units list the names of multiple worlds per wave. Names that appear on different lines or are separated by a slash ("/") indicate that the unit traveled to all of those worlds within that invasion wave. Some units deployed sub-commands to various worlds, which are indicated as follows: (x Btn) represents that number of battalions, (x Rgt) that number of regiments, (x CC) that number of combat commands and (x Bde) that number of brigades.

Battle damage appears in [brackets]. [L] represents light damage and indicates losses of up to ten percent of the unit's combat strength. [M] represents moderate losses, up to twenty-five percent of combat strength; [H] refers to heavy casualties, up to forty percent combat strength; [S] represents serious casualties, up to sixty percent combat strength; [D] means the unit effectively lost its ability to function in combat, having sustained more than sixty percent damage.

The symbol <W> means the unit effectively eliminated opposition on the world—by destroying it, forcing it underground or because the opposition retreated from the planet. The symbol <S> means the unit surrendered to its opposition, and <R> means the unit retreated from the world.

World names shown in *italics* indicate that the corresponding unit participated in raids on those worlds, as opposed to full-fledged invasions. These raids typically lasted a week or two and were designed to tie up opposing forces and/or to steal an enemy's supplies. Total damage sustained for the entire raiding operation (usually two or more worlds) appears after the name of the last world struck.

Note: The battle damage indicators on this table take into account complete losses (dead personnel and destroyed equipment) as well as "returnable" casualties (injured personnel and equipment that can be repaired). In most cases, after several weeks of rest and repairs, a unit that sustained moderate or even heavy losses could easily reduce its effective battle damage to light (L). Likewise, units shown as destroyed were not literally destroyed, merely reduced in strength to the point where they could no longer function as an independent command; most were absorbed into other friendly units for the duration of the campaign. Following the war, almost all of these "destroyed" units rebuilt and returned to active duty.

Unit	Exp. Level	Loyalty	Equip. Rating	Pre-War (3038)	Jump-Off (Jan.)	Wave 1 (Mar.-Jun.)	Counterattack (July-Sept.)	Wave 2 (Oct.-Dec.)	Post-War (3040)
ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERATED SUNS									
Unaffiliated									
1st Aragon Borderers	Vet	Rel	B	New Aragon	—	—	—	—	New Aragon
1st Argyle Lancers	Vet	Rel	C	Unukalhai	Phalan	Alnasi [L]<W>	Phalan	—	Unukalhai
1st Capellan Dragoons	Reg	Ques	C	Talon/Wernke	—	—	—	—	Horsham
1st FedSuns Armored Cav.	Elite	Fan	A	Ziliang	—	—	Grand Base [H]<R>	Ziliang	Ziliang
1st Kestrel Grenadiers	Elite	Fan	A	Mara	David	Matar [L]<W>	Matar [M]	Matar [S]<R>/David	Markab
1st Kittery Borderers	Reg	Rel	C	Kittery	Lee	—	Kathil [M]<W>	Kittery	Kittery
1st Kathil Uhlans	Reg	Fan	B	Kathil	David	Matar [L]<W>	Matar [M]	Matar [D]<R>/David	Kathil
Avalon Hussars									
11th Avalon Hussars RCT	Reg	Rel	A	Kesai IV	—	—	—	—	Kesai IV
17th Avalon Hussars RCT	Reg	Rel	A	Cassias	Cassias	An Ting [M]<W>	An Ting [S]<R>	Cassias	Cassias
20th Avalon Hussars RCT	Vet	Fan	A	Freedom	—	—	—	—	Truth
22nd Avalon Hussars RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Quentin	Errai	Telos IV [L]<W>	Telos IV [M]	Telos IV [H]<R>/Errai	Carse
33rd Avalon Hussars RCT	Vet	Fan	B	Nopah	Caph	Caph [L]<W>	—	—	Tikonov
39th Avalon Hussars RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Qanatir	Freedom	—	—	—	Newtown Square
41st Avalon Hussars RCT	Rel	Rel	A	David	David	—	—	—	David
42nd Avalon Hussars RCT	Reg	Rel	A	Fallon II	Kesai IV	Delacruz [L]<W>	Delacruz [M]<R>	Kesai IV	Fallon II

DEPLOYMENT TABLE

Unit	Exp. Level	Loyalty	Equip. Rating	Pre-War (3038)	Jump-Off (Jan.)	Wave 1 (Mar.-Jun.)	Counterattack (July-Sept.)	Wave 2 (Oct.-Dec.)	Post-War (3040)
Chisholm's Raiders									
1st Chisholm's Raiders RCT	Vet	Ques	B	Breed	Breed	New Mendham [L]<W>	New Mendham [H]	New Mendham [D]<R>	Breed
2nd Chisholm's Raiders	Grn	Rel	B	Dobson	—	—	Dobson [M]<W>	—	Dobson
Ceti Hussars									
1st Ceti Hussars RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Glenmora	Glenmora	Elidere IV [L]<W>	Misery/Glenmora	—	Glenmora
2nd Ceti Hussars RCT	Vet	Rel	B	Uravan	Breed	—	Irurzun/Robinson	Le Blanc [L]<W>	Uravan
3rd Ceti Hussars RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Manapire	Breed	—	Irurzun/Robinson	Rochester [L]<W>	Manapire
Crucis Lancers									
1st Crucis Lancers RCT	Reg	Fan	A	Tancredi IV	Kesai IV	Capra <W>	<i>Beta Mensae/Kaznejev/Waldheim/Delacruz [M]/Capra (2CC) [M]<R></i>	Kesai IV	Tancredi IV
2nd Crucis Lancers RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Tikonov	Galatia III	—	—	—	Tikonov
3rd Crucis Lancers RCT	Elite	Rel	A	Caph	Caph	Caph [L]<W>	Marcus [M]	Marcus [M]<W>	Sarna
4th Crucis Lancers RCT	Vet	Rel	B	Chaffee	Baxter	Konstance [L]<W>	Konstance [M]	Konstance [M]<W>	Giausar
5th Crucis Lancers RCT	Vet	Fan	A	Kathil	Addicks	—	—	Addicks <W>	Kathil
6th Crucis Lancers RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Loburg	Freedom	—	—	—	Loburg
7th Crucis Lancers RCT	Elite	Fan	A	Weekapaug	Breed	Klathandu IV <W>	Klathandu IV [M]	Klathandu IV [M]<R>/Xhosa VII [M]<W>	Weekapaug
8th Crucis Lancers RCT	Reg	Rel	A	New Rhodes III	Addicks	Biham <W>	Biham [M]<R>/Murchison [M]<W>	Addicks [L]<W>	New Rhodes III
Davion Guards									
Davion Assault Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Frazer	Caph	Caph [L]<W>	Callison [L]<W>	—	Frazer
Davion Heavy Guards RCT	Elite	Fan	A	New Avalon	Galatia III	—	—	—	New Avalon
Davion Light Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Xhosa VII	Breed	New Mendham [L]<W>	New Mendham [M]	New Mendham [M]<R>/Breed	Groveld III
1st Davion Guards RCT	Elite	Fan	A	New Avalon	Cassias	An Ting [L]<W>	An Ting [M]<R>	Cassias	New Avalon
2nd Davion Guards RCT	Vet	Fan	A	Fomalhaut	—	—	—	Altair [L]<R>	Caph
3rd Davion Guards RCT	Vet	Fan	B	Hesperus II	Baxter	Vega [L]<W>	Vega [H]<R>	Addicks [L]<W>	Hesperus II
4th Davion Guards RCT	Elite	Fan	A	Edwards	David	—	Cylene [L]<W>	Baxter	Deshler
5th Davion Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	B	Lee	David	Sadalbari [M]<W>	Sadalbari [H]	Exeter [L]<W>	Lee
Deneb Light Cavalry									
4th DLC RCT	Reg	Rel	A	Alcor	Freedom	—	—	—	Dalkeith
5th DLC RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Nanking	—	—	—	—	Murchison
8th DLC RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Angol	Addicks	Sadachbia <W>	Sadachbia [L]	Sadachbia [H]<R>/Addicks	Breed
10th DLC RCT	Vet	Rel	B	Crossing	Breed	Marduk [M]<W>	Marduk [M]	Marduk [H]<R>/Robinson	Crossing
12th DLC RCT	Reg	Rel	C	Galatia III	Galatia III	—	Skat [L]<W>	—	Skat
15th DLC RCT	Reg	Rel	C	Verlo	Breed	—	Irurzun/Robinson	Doneval II [L]<W>	Verlo
FedCom Corps									
1st FedCom RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Gan Singh	Errai	Nashira [L]<W>	Nashira [M]	Nashira [H]<R>/Errai	Gan Singh
2nd FedCom RCT	Reg	Rel	A	Truth	—	—	Ares [M]<R>	Truth	Hsien
3rd FedCom RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Sarna	David	Sadalbari [H]<W>	Sadalbari [S]	Sadalbari [D]<R>/David	Sarna
4th FedCom RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Highspire	Errai	—	—	—	Highspire
5th FedCom RCT	Grn	Rel	C	Tsitang	Addicks	Halstead Station <W>	Halstead Station [D]<R>	Addicks	Tsitang
6th FedCom RCT	Reg	Rel	C	Ozawa	Addicks	Ancha [M]<W>	Ancha [M]	Ancha [M]<R>/Addicks	Small World
New Ivaarsen Chasseurs									
1st New Ivaarsen Chasseurs	Elite	Fan	B	New Ivaarsen	—	—	New Ivaarsen [L]	New Ivaarsen [M]<W>	New Ivaarsen
2nd New Ivaarsen Chasseurs	Reg	Fan	B	New Valencia	Breed	Klathandu IV <W>	Klathandu IV [M]	Klathandu IV [M]<R>/Xhosa VII [M]<W>	New Valencia
Robinson Rangers									
1st Robinson Rangers RCT	Vet	Fan	B	Robinson	Breed	Marduk [M]<W>	Marduk [M]	Marduk [M]<R>/Breed [M]<W>	Robinson
2nd Robinson Rangers	Reg	Rel	B	Breed	—	—	Breed [H]<R>/Robinson/Breed (1 Btn) [M]	Breed [H]<W>	Phecda III
Syrtis Fusiliers									
5th Syrtis Fusiliers RCT	Grn	Rel	A	Cammal	David	—	Markab [M]<W>	—	Cammal
6th Syrtis Fusiliers RCT	Elite	Rel	B	New Syrtis	Wappingers	—	—	—	New Syrtis
8th Syrtis Fusiliers RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Lothair	Kathil	—	Kathil [L]<W>	—	Lothair
Capellan March Militia									
Alcyone CMM	Reg	Rel	C	Alcyone	—	—	Alcyone [L]<W>/Kathil [L]<W>	Alcyone	Alcyone
New Syrtis CMM	Grn	Rel	B	New Syrtis	—	—	—	—	New Syrtis
Ridgebrook CMM	Grn	Rel	C	Ridgebrook	—	—	—	—	Ridgebrook
Sirdar CMM	Reg	Rel	C	Sirdar	—	—	Menke (1CC)[H]<R>	Sirdar	Sirdar
Valexia CMM	Reg	Rel	C	Valexia	—	—	—	—	Valexia
Warren CMM	Grn	Rel	C	Warren	—	—	—	—	Warren
Crucis March Militia									
Anjin Muerto CrMM	Reg	Rel	C	Anjin Muerto	—	—	—	—	Anjin Muerto
Islamabad CrMM	Grn	Rel	C	Islamabad	—	—	—	—	Islamabad
Kestrel CrMM	Reg	Rel	C	Kestrel	—	—	—	—	Kestrel
Malagrotta CrMM	Grn	Ques	C	Malagrotta	—	—	—	—	Malagrotta
Marlette CrMM	Reg	Rel	C	Marlette	—	—	—	—	Marlette
New Avalon CrMM	Reg	Rel	B	New Avalon	—	—	—	—	New Avalon
Remagen CrMM	Reg	Rel	C	Nunivak	—	—	—	—	Nunivak
Tsamma CrMM	Reg	Rel	C	Tsamma	—	—	—	—	Tsamma
Draconis March Militia									
Addicks DMM	Reg	Rel	B	Addicks	—	—	—	Addicks <W>	Addicks
Bremond DMM	Reg	Rel	C	Bremond	—	—	—	—	Bremond
Bryceland DMM	Reg	Rel	C	Bryceland	—	—	—	—	Bryceland
Clovis DMM	Grn	Rel	C	Cartago	—	—	Clovis (1 Bde)	—	Cartago

DEPLOYMENT TABLE

Unit	Exp. Level	Loyalty	Equip. Rating	Pre-War (3038)	Jump-Off (Jan.)	Wave 1 (Mar.-Jun.)	Counterattack (July-Sept.)	Wave 2 (Oct.-Dec.)	Post-War (3040)
Dahar DMM	Reg	Rel	C	Tishmingo	—	—	—	—	Tishmingo
Kilbourne DMM	Grn	Rel	C	Kilbourne	Cohay	—	Kilbourne	—	Kilbourne
Mayetta DMM	Grn	Rel	C	Mayetta	—	—	—	—	Mayetta
Milligan DMM	Grn	Rel	C	Milligan	—	—	—	—	Milligan
Raman DMM	Grn	Rel	C	Raman	—	—	—	—	Raman
Robinson DMM	Grn	Rel	B	Le Blanc	—	—	Le Blanc (1CC) [M]<W>	—	Le Blanc
Training Battalions & Cadres									
<i>Albion Military Academy Cadre</i>									
1st Albion Training Cadre	Grn	Fan	B	Morven	Kesai IV	Capra<W>	Beta Mensae/Kaznejev/Waldheim/Delacruz [M]/Capra (1Btn)[M]<R>	Kesai IV	Morven
2nd Albion Training Cadre	Grn	Fan	B	Enchi	—	—	—	—	Enchi
<i>NAIS CMS Cadre</i>									
1st NAIS Cadet Cadre	Grn	Fan	B	Exeter	Robinson	—	Exeter [L]	Exeter [M]<W>	Exeter
2nd NAIS Cadet Cadre	Grn	Fan	B	Beten Kaitos	Breed	—	Breed [S]<R>/Robinson	—	Beten Kaitos
3rd NAIS Cadet Cadre	Grn	Fan	B	Tarkio	Glennmora	—	—	—	Tarkio
1st Brockton Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	Brockton	—	—	—	—	Brockton
1st Bell Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	Bell	—	—	—	—	Bell
1st Conroe Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	Conroe	—	—	—	—	Conroe
Goshen War College Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	B	Goshen	—	—	—	—	Goshen
Kilbourne Acad. Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	Kilbourne	—	—	—	—	Kilbourne
1st Kittery Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	Kittery	—	—	—	—	Kittery
Point Barrow Acad. Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	Point Barrow	—	—	—	—	Point Barrow
Robinson Bat. Acad. Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	Robinson	—	—	—	—	Robinson
Sakhara Acad. Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	B	Sakhara V	—	—	—	—	Sakhara V
Filtvelt Acad. Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	Filtvelt	—	—	—	—	Filtvelt
LYRAN COMMONWEALTH ARMED FORCES									
Arcturan Guards									
8th Arcturan Guards	Grn	Rel	B	Here	Khartoum	—	—	—	Here
11th Arcturan Guards	Grn	Rel	B	Timbuktu	—	—	—	—	Timbuktu
15th Arcturan Guards RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Phact	—	Phact [M]<W>	—	—	Phact
17th Arcturan Guards RCT	Reg	Rel	A	Wyatt	—	—	—	—	Wyatt
19th Arcturan Guards	Grn	Ques	B	Rasalgethi	—	—	—	—	Rasalgethi
20th Arcturan Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Port Moseby	—	—	—	—	Aubisson
23rd Arcturan Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Arcturus	Ryde	Alrakis [L]<W>	Alrakis [M]<R>	Arcturus	Talcott
24th Arcturan Guards	Reg	Rel	C	Dell	Port Moseby	—	—	—	Dell
25th Arcturan Guards RCT	Reg	Rel	A	Severn	—	—	—	—	Severn
Donegal Guards									
2nd Donegal Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Hyde	Ryde	Kessel [L]<W>	Kessel [M]	Kessel [M]<R>/Ryde	Hyde
3rd Donegal Guards RCT	Elite	Rel	A	Styk	—	—	—	—	Styk
4th Donegal Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	B	Chateau	—	—	—	—	Chateau
5th Donegal Guards RCT	Grn	Rel	C	Phecda III	Ryde	Alrakis <W>	Ryde	—	Helen
6th Donegal Guards RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Denebola V	—	—	—	—	Cavanaugh II
7th Donegal Guards	Reg	Rel	B	Rahne	Lambrecht	Kervil [L]<W>	Kervil <R>	Nashira [M]<R>/Lambrecht	Rahne
8th Donegal Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Gallery	Phalan	Altai [M]<W>	—	Phalan	Gallery
10th Donegal Guards	Reg	Rel	C	Main Street	Port Moseby	—	—	—	Main Street
11th Donegal Guards RCT	Grn	Ques	A	New Capetown	Nekkar	—	—	—	New Capetown
12th Donegal Guards	Grn	Rel	C	Trell I	Edasich	—	—	—	Trell I
13th Donegal Guards RCT	Grn	Rel	B	Furillo	Bolan	—	—	—	Meacham
14th Donegal Guards RCT	Reg	Rel	A	CMO 26	Donegal	—	—	—	CMO 26
17th Donegal Guards RCT	Reg	Ques	B	Lyons	—	—	—	—	Jaipur
Lyran Guards									
1st Lyran Guards	Vet	Rel	A	Maestu	—	—	—	—	Maestu
3rd Lyran Guards RCT	Vet	Fan	A	Tharkad	Baxter	Vega [L]<W>	Port Moseby	—	Gan Singh
5th Lyran Guards RCT	Grn	Rel	C	Skye	—	—	—	—	Cylene
6th Lyran Guards RCT	Elite	Rel	A	Althastan	—	—	—	—	Althastan
10th Lyran Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Meachem	—	—	—	—	Alkalurops
11th Lyran Guards	Elite	Rel	A	Dalkeith	—	—	—	—	Callison
14th Lyran Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	B	Ford	—	—	—	—	Ford
15th Lyran Guards RCT	Elite	Fan	B	Hesperus II	—	—	—	—	Hesperus II
19th Lyran Guards	Vet	Rel	B	Baxter	—	—	—	—	Baxter
24th Lyran Guards RCT	Grn	Fan	A	Donegal	Sabik	—	—	—	Donegal
26th Lyran Guards RCT	Vet	Rel	A	Tamar	Phalan	Alnasi [L]<W>	Alnasi [M]<R>	Phalan	Tamar
30th Lyran Guards	Reg	Rel	C	New Home	Lambrecht	Pike IV [L]<W>	Pike IV [M]	Pike IV [H]<R>/Lambrecht	Icar
32nd Lyran Guards RCT	Grn	Rel	B	Solaris VII	—	—	—	—	Solaris VII
36th Lyran Guards RCT	Reg	Rel	B	Cavanaugh II	Lambrecht	—	—	—	Tsingtao
Lyran Regulars									
1st Lyran Regulars	Vet	Rel	A	Ridderkirk	—	—	—	—	Ridderkirk
3rd Lyran Regulars	Reg	Rel	B	Planting	Kesai IV	Delacruz [M]<W>	Delacruz [D]<R>	Kesai IV	Errai
4th Lyran Regulars	Reg	Rel	B	Menkent	Baxter	Konstance [L]<W>	Konstance [H]<R>	Baxter	Menkent
5th Lyran Regulars	Reg	Rel	A	Graham IV	—	Procyon [H]<W>	—	—	Graham IV
7th Lyran Regulars	Grn	Rel	C	Loric	—	—	—	—	Loric
8th Lyran Regulars	Grn	Rel	B	New India	—	—	—	—	New India
9th Lyran Regulars	Grn	Rel	B	Cavanaugh II	—	—	—	—	Main Street
10th Lyran Regulars	Reg	Rel	B	Timbiqui	Ryde	—	—	—	Timbiqui
11th Lyran Regulars	Grn	Rel	C	Sabik	Ryde	Kessel [L]<W>	Kessel [H]	Kessel [D]<R>/Ryde	Australia
15th Lyran Regulars	Reg	Rel	B	Hood IV	Port Moseby	—	—	—	Hood IV

DEPLOYMENT TABLE

Unit	Exp. Level	Loyalty	Equip. Rating	Pre-War (3038)	Jump-Off (Jan.)	Wave 1 (Mar.-Jun.)	Counterattack (July-Sept.)	Wave 2 (Oct.-Dec.)	Post-War (3040)
Royal Guards									
1st Royal Guards RCT	Reg	Fan	A	Tharkad	—	—	—	—	Tharkad
2nd Royal Guards RCT	Reg	Fan	A	Tharkad	—	—	—	—	Tharkad
3rd Royal Guards RCT	Elite	Fan	A	Coventry	Freedom	—	—	—	Port Moseby
Skye Rangers									
4th Skye Rangers RCT	Elite	Ques	A	Ryde	Ryde	Kessel [L]<W>	Kessel [H]	Kessel [H]<R>/Ryde	Kornephoros
10th Skye Rangers	Vet	Ques	C	Zaniah	—	—	—	—	Zaniah
17th Skye Rangers	Elite	Ques	C	Summer	Lambrecht	Kervil [L]<W>	Kervil <R>	Pike IV [M]<R>/Lambrecht	Barcelona
22nd Skye Rangers	Grn	Ques	B	Fatima	—	—	—	—	Engadine
Tikonov Republican Guard									
1st Republican	Reg	Ques	B	Talitha	—	—	—	—	Talitha
2nd Republican	Reg	Ques	C	Wasat	—	—	—	—	Wasat
3rd Republican	Reg	Ques	C	Van Diemen IV	—	—	—	—	Van Diemen IV
4th Republican	Grn	Ques	B	Carver V	—	—	—	—	Hall
5th Republican	Grn	Ques	C	Elgin	—	—	—	—	Elgin
Sarna March Militia									
Achernar SMM	Grn	Ques	C	Achernar	—	—	—	—	Achernar
Epsilon Eridani SMM	Grn	Ques	C	Epsilon Eridani	—	—	—	—	Epsilon Eridani
Liao SMM	Grn	Ques	C	Liao	—	—	—	—	Liao
Wei SMM	Grn	Ques	C	Wei	—	—	—	—	Wei
Regional Militias and Other Units									
Coventry DPM	Grn	Rel	C	Coventry	—	—	—	—	Coventry
Furillo TPM	Grn	Ques	C	Furillo	—	—	—	—	Furillo
Winfield's Brigade (2 Btn)	Elite	Rel	C	Winfield	—	—	—	—	Winfield
Training Units									
Blackjack Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	B	Blackjack	—	—	—	—	Blackjack
Buena War College Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	B	Buena	—	—	—	—	Buena
Pandora College Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	Pandora	—	—	—	—	Pandora
Royal New Capetown Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	New Capetown	—	—	—	—	New Capetown
Sarna Martial Acad. Tr. Grp.	Grn	Ques	C	Sarna	—	—	—	—	Sarna
Somerset Acad. Tr. Btn.	Grn	Rel	C	Somerset	—	—	—	—	Somerset
Tamar War College Tr. Btn.	Grn	Ques	C	Tamar	—	—	—	—	Tamar
Tikonov Martial Acad. Tr. Grp.	Grn	Ques	C	Tikonov	—	—	—	—	Tikonov
DRACONIS COMBINE MUSTERED SOLDIERY									
Alshain Regulars									
1st Alshain Regulars	Reg	Ques	B	Richmond	—	—	Alberio	—	Richmond
2nd Alshain Regulars	Reg	Ques	C	Soverzene	—	—	Luthien	—	Soverzene
3rd Alshain Regulars	Reg	Ques	B	Garstedt	—	—	Pesht	—	Garstedt
4th Alshain Regulars	Vet	Ques	B	Rubigen	—	—	Buckminster	—	Rubigen
5th Alshain Regulars	Reg	Ques	C	Shirotori	—	Shirotori [L]<W>	—	—	Shirotori
6th Alshain Regulars	Reg	Ques	C	Alshain	—	—	Alnasi [M]<W>	—	Alshain
7th Alshain Regulars	Vet	Ques	B	Buckminster	—	—	Kuzuu	—	Buckminster
8th Alshain Regulars	Vet	Ques	B	Buckminster	—	—	Alrakis [M]<W>	—	Buckminster
9th Alshain Regulars	Grn	Rel	C	Jarett	—	—	Byesville	—	Jarett
10th Alshain Regulars	Grn	Ques	C	Courchevel	—	—	Alshain	—	Courchevel
11th Alshain Regulars	Grn	Ques	C	Trolloc Prime	—	—	Symington/Yed-Posterior/Alexandria [H]	Trolloc Prime	Trolloc Prime
Benjamin Regulars									
2nd Benjamin Regulars	Reg	Ques	B	Kajikazawa	—	—	Telos IV [H]	Telos IV [S]<W>	Kajikazawa
3rd Benjamin Regulars	Reg	Ques	B	Irurzun	—	—	Klathandu IV [H]	Klathandu IV [D]<W>	Irurzun
6th Benjamin Regulars	Grn	Rel	B	Irurzun	—	Marduk (1 Btn)[D]	Marduk [H]	Marduk [D]<W>	Marduk
9th Benjamin Regulars	Vet	Rel	C	Proserpina	—	—	Cartago (1 Btn) [M]<R>	Proserpina	Proserpina
11th Benjamin Regulars	Reg	Ques	C	Tripoli	—	—	—	—	Paris
15th Benjamin Regulars	Grn	Rel	B	Xinyang	—	—	Benjamin	—	Xinyang
17th Benjamin Regulars	Vet	Rel	A	Benjamin	—	—	Ashio	—	Benjamin
Dieron Regulars									
2nd Dieron Regulars	Vet	Ques	A	Cebalrai	—	—	Vega [H]<W>	—	Cebalrai
3rd Dieron Regulars	Reg	Rel	B	Kaus Australis	—	—	Konstance [M]	Konstance [H]<W>	Konstance
8th Dieron Regulars	Vet	Ques	B	Al Na'ir	—	—	—	—	Saffel
9th Dieron Regulars	Reg	Rel	C	Cylene	—	—	Sadachbia [H]	Sadachbia [D]<W>	Sadachbia
12th Dieron Regulars	Grn	Ques	B	Ashio	—	—	Athenry [H]	Athenry [S]<W>	Ashio
15th Dieron Regulars	Reg	Rel	B	Al Na'ir	—	—	—	—	Al Na'ir
18th Dieron Regulars	Elite	Rel	A	Altair	—	—	Ancha [H]	Ancha [S]<W>	Altair
22nd Dieron Regulars	Vet	Ques	A	Konstance	—	Konstance [M]	Konstance [H]	Konstance [H]<W>	Dyev
24th Dieron Regulars	Grn	Rel	B	Algedi	—	—	Pike IV [H]	Pike IV [S]<W>	Algedi
27th Dieron Regulars	Reg	Rel	B	Ashio	—	—	Athenry [M]	Athenry [H]<W>	Ashio
36th Dieron Regulars	Reg	Ques	B	Nirasaki	—	—	Fomalhaut [M]<W>	—	Fomalhaut
40th Dieron Regulars	Grn	Ques	C	Deneb Algedi	—	—	Quentin [S]<W>	—	Quentin
41st Dieron Regulars	Grn	Ques	C	Yance I	—	—	Telos IV [H]	Telos IV [D]<W>	Deneb Algedi
Galedon Regulars									
2nd Galedon Regulars	Grn	Rel	C	Arlington	—	—	Klathandu IV [H]	Klathandu IV [D]<W>	Wapakoneta
5th Galedon Regulars	Vet	Rel	B	New Samarkand	—	—	Capra [H]<W>	—	New Samarkand
8th Galedon Regulars	Vet	Rel	B	Deshler	—	—	Marduk [M]	Marduk [H]<W>	Deshler
12th Galedon Regulars	Grn	Rel	B	Matsuida	—	—	New Aberdeen [M]	New Aberdeen [M]<W>	Matsuida
16th Galedon Regulars	Reg	Rel	B	Oshika	—	—	Thestria [D]<W>	—	Oshika
17th Galedon Regulars	Grn	Fan	B	Kaznejov	—	—	Kaznejov [M]<W>	—	Kaznejov
19th Galedon Regulars	Reg	Ques	C	Bad News	—	—	—	—	Bad News
21st Galedon Regulars	Reg	Ques	B	Marlowe's Rift	—	—	Bergman's Planet [M]<W>	—	Bergman's Planet
31st Galedon Regulars	Grn	Ques	B	Tabayama	—	—	Galedon	—	Capra
32nd Galedon Regulars	Grn	Ques	C	Sakuranoki	—	—	Huan [D]<W>	—	Huan

DEPLOYMENT TABLE

Unit	Exp. Level	Loyalty	Equip. Rating	Pre-War (3038)	Jump-Off (Jan.)	Wave 1 (Mar.-Jun.)	Counterattack (July-Sept.)	Wave 2 (Oct.-Dec.)	Post-War (3040)
Pesht Regulars									
3rd Pesht Regulars	Reg	Rel	B	Pesht	—	—	Oshika	—	Pesht
4th Pesht Regulars	Grn	Rel	B	Tarnby	—	—	—	—	Tarnby
6th Pesht Regulars	Grn	Rel	B	Nowhere	—	—	—	—	Nowhere
7th Pesht Regulars	Grn	Rel	C	Land's End	—	—	New Samarkand	—	Land's End
9th Pesht Regulars	Grn	Ques	B	Schwartz	—	—	—	—	Schwartz
10th Pesht Regulars	Grn	Rel	C	Gravenhage	—	—	Matamoras	—	Gravenhage
11th Pesht Regulars	Grn	Ques	C	Irece	—	—	Irurzun	—	Itabaiana
Genyosha									
1st Genyosha	Elite	Ques	A*	Shitara	—	—	Nashira [H]	Nashira [S]<W>	Shitara
2nd Genyosha	Elite	Ques	A*	Ashio	—	—	Nashira [M]	Nashira [H]<W>	Moore
Sword of Light									
1st Sword of Light	Vet	Fan	A	Luthien	—	—	Halstead Station [H]<W>	—	Luthien
2nd Sword of Light	Elite	Fan	A	Buckminster	—	—	Kessel [H]	Kessel [H]<W>	Baldur
5th Sword of Light	Elite	Fan	B	Dieron	—	—	Pike IV [M]	Pike IV [H]<W>	Dieron
7th Sword of Light	Vet	Fan	A	Luthien	—	—	Halstead Station [H]<W>	—	Luthien
8th Sword of Light	Reg	Fan	A	Delacruz	—	Delacruz (1 Btn) [D]	Delacruz [H]<W>	—	Delacruz
Sun Zhang									
1st Sun Zhang Cadre	Grn	Fan	B	Tinaca	—	—	Alnasi [S]<W>	—	Tinaca
5th Sun Zhang Cadre	Grn	Fan	B	Caldrea	—	—	Kessel [H]	Kessel [S]<W>	Caldrea
9th Sun Zhang Cadre	Grn	Rel	C	Dieron	—	—	—	—	Dieron
12th Sun Zhang Cadre	Grn	Fan	C	Kessel	—	Kessel [H]	Kessel [S]	Kessel [D]<W>	Kessel
House Guard									
Otomo	Elite	Fan	A	Luthien	—	—	—	—	Luthien
Amphigean LAG									
1st Amphigean LAG	Vet	Ques	A	Riesling's Planet	—	—	New Mendham [M]	New Mendham [H]<W>	Riesling's Planet
2nd Amphigean LAG	Vet	Ques	B	Riesling's Planet	—	—	New Mendham [M]	New Mendham [S]<W>	Riesling's Planet
5th Amphigean LAG	Reg	Fan	C	New Wessex	—	Vega (2 Btn) [S]<R>	New Wessex	—	New Wessex
An Ting Legions									
2nd An Ting Legion	Reg	Fan	B	Galedon V	—	—	Delacruz [M]<W>	—	Galedon V
4th An Ting Legion	Reg	Rel	B	Valentina	—	—	Delacruz [M]<W>	—	Valentina
Arkab Legions									
2nd Arkab Legion	Vet	Rel	B	Tannil	—	—	Fellanin II [H]<W>	—	Tannil
4th Arkab Legion	Reg	Rel	B	Trolloc Prime	—	—	Gaushoren/Auldhouse/ Arcturus [M]	Trolloc Prime	Camlann
6th Arkab Legion	Reg	Rel	C	Arkab	—	—	—	—	Arkab
Night Stalkers									
McGavin's Regiment	Vet	Ques	B	Matamoras	—	—	Huan [H]<W>	—	Matamoras
Proserpina Hussars									
1st Proserpina Hussars	Vet	Rel	A	Hun Ho	—	—	Thestria [L]<W>	—	Thestria
3rd Proserpina Hussars	Elite	Fan	A	Galedon V	—	—	Capra [S]<W>	—	Galedon V
4th Proserpina Hussars	Vet	Fan	B	Fellanin II	—	Fellanin II [D]	Fellanin II [D]<W>	—	Scheat
Shin Legions									
1st Shin Legion	Vet	Rel	B	Ancha	—	Ancha [H]<R>/Al Na'ir	Ancha [S]	Ancha [D]<W>	Ancha
2nd Shin Legion	Reg	Rel	C	Sadalbari	—	Sadalbari [H]	Sadalbari [S]	Sadalbari [D]<W>	Sadalbari
Ghost Regiments									
1st Ghost	Vet	Ques	A*	Shimosuwa	—	Altai [D]<R>	Rukbat	—	Benjamin
2nd Ghost	Reg	Ques	A*	Shimosuwa	—	Altai [H]<R>	Rukbat	—	Benjamin
3rd Ghost	Reg	Ques	A*	Osmus Saar	—	—	Breed [H]	Breed [D]<R>	Osmus Saar
1st Battalion	Reg	Ques	A*	Osmus Saar	—	—	Breed [M]	Breed [H]<R>	Osmus Saar
2nd Battalion	Reg	Ques	A*	Osmus Saar	—	—	Breed [D]	Breed [D]<R>	Osmus Saar
3rd Battalion	Reg	Ques	A*	Osmus Saar	—	—	Breed [M]/New Ivaarsen [M]	New Ivaarsen [D]<R>	Osmus Saar
4th Ghost	Grn	Ques	A*	Osmus Saar	—	—	Breed [M]/Rochester [M]	Rochester [H]<R>	Osmus Saar
1st Battalion	Grn	Ques	A*	Osmus Saar	—	—	Le Blanc [L]/Dobson [M]/ New Ivaarsen [M]	New Ivaarsen [D]<R>	Osmus Saar
2nd Battalion	Grn	Ques	A*	Osmus Saar	—	—	Biham [M]<W>	—	Shimonoseki
3rd Battalion	Grn	Ques	A*	Osmus Saar	—	—	Biham [S]<W>	—	Shimonoseki
5th Ghost	Reg	Ques	A*	Shimonoseki	—	—	Sadalbari [M]	Sadalbari [M]<W>	Umijiri
6th Ghost	Grn	Ques	A*	Shimonoseki	—	—	Sadalbari [H]	Sadalbari [S]<W>	Umijiri
7th Ghost	Vet	Ques	A*	Umijiri	—	—	Elidere IV [L]<W>	—	Hachiman
8th Ghost	Grn	Ques	A*	Umijiri	—	—	Elidere IV [L]<W>	—	Hachiman
9th Ghost	Reg	Ques	A*	Hachiman	—	—	Matar [H]	Matar [D]<W>	Midway
10th Ghost	Reg	Ques	A*	Hachiman	—	—	Matar [M]	Matar [H]<W>	Midway
11th Ghost	Grn	Ques	A*	Midway	—	—	—	—	Midway
12th Ghost	Vet	Ques	A*	Midway	—	—	—	—	Midway
Legions of Vega									
2nd Legion of Vega	Reg	Ques	B	Alphecca	—	—	Vega [S]<W>	—	Vega
11th Legion of Vega	Reg	Ques	C	Alrakis	—	Alrakis [M]<R>/ Dromini VI	Alrakis [H]<W>	—	Alrakis
14th Legion of Vega	Reg	Ques	C	Vega	—	Vega [H]<R> Eltanin	Vega [D]<W>	—	Turtle Bay
Ryuken									
Ryuken-ni	Vet	Ques	A*	Dieron	—	—	New Earth/Caph [H]/ Saffel <W>	—	Quentin
Ryuken-san	Vet	Ques	A*	Dieron	—	—	Procyon/Caph [S]/Saffel <W>	—	Niles
Ryuken-yon	Vet	Ques	A*	Harrow's Sun	—	Harrow's Sun [M]<W>	An Ting [M]<W>	Huan	Harrow's Sun
Ryuken-go	Reg	Ques	A*	Proserpina	—	—	Clovis [L]<R>	Doneval II [S]<R>	Fellanin II
1st Battalion	Reg	Ques	A*	Proserpina	—	—	Xhosa VII [M]/Exeter [M]	Exeter [H]<R>	Fellanin II
2nd Battalion	Reg	Ques	A*	Proserpina	—	—	Xhosa VII [M]	Xhosa VII [S]<R>	Fellanin II
3rd Battalion	Reg	Ques	A*	Proserpina	—	—	An Ting [S]<W>	—	Misery
Ryuken-roku	Vet	Ques	A*	Misery	—	—	—	—	Misery

DEPLOYMENT TABLE

Unit	Exp. Level	Loyalty	Equip. Rating	Pre-War (3038)	Jump-Off (Jan.)	Wave 1 (Mar.-Jun.)	Counterattack (July-Sept.)	Wave 2 (Oct.-Dec.)	Post-War (3040)
CAPELLAN CONFEDERATION ARMED FORCES									
Blandford's Grenadiers	Vet	Fan	C	Capella	—	—	Capella [H]<W>	—	Capella
Death Commandos									
1st Battalion	Elite	Fan	A	Grand Base	—	—	Grand Base [S]<W>	—	Grand Base
15th Dragon									
1st Battalion	Reg	Rel	B	Ares	—	—	Ares [D]<W>	—	Ares
2nd Battalion	Reg	Rel	B	Necromo	—	—	Ares [M]<W>	—	Ares
3rd Battalion	Grn	Rel	B	Capricorn III	—	—	Ares [S]<W>	—	Ares
4th Battalion	Grn	Rel	B	New Sagan	—	—	Ares [D]<W>	—	Ares
House Dai Da Chi									
1st Battalion	Vet	Rel	A	Drozan	—	—	Victoria [M]<W>	—	Drozan
2nd Battalion	Vet	Rel	A	Drozan	—	—	Victoria [S]<W>	—	Drozan
House Fujita									
1st Battalion	Vet	Rel	B	Grand Base	—	—	Grand Base [D]<W>	—	Grand Base
2nd Battalion	Grn	Rel	B	Holloway	—	—	Grand Base	—	Grand Base
House LuSann									
1st Battalion	Grn	Rel	B	Mitchel	—	—	Menke [S]<W>	—	Mitchel
2nd Battalion	Grn	Rel	B	Jacson	—	—	Victoria [L]<W>	—	Jackson
Kingston's Legionnaires	Reg	Rel	C	Minnacora/Randar/ No Return	—	—	Ares [M]	—	Minnacora/Randar/ No Return
<i>McCarron's Armored Cavalry</i>									
Nightriders	Reg	Fan	A	Hustaing	—	—	Bethel/Orbisonia/ Kathil [M]	—	Hustaing
Barton's Regiment	Elite	Fan	A	Harloc	—	—	Alcyone/Kathil [M] Addicks (2 Btn)[D]	—	Menke
The Wild Ones	Reg	Rel	A	Overton	—	—	Monhegan/Gallitzin/ Kathil [H]	—	Overton
Carhart's Demons	Vet	Fan	A	Gei-Fu	—	—	Andro/Monongahela [M]	—	Gei-Fu
Granger's Renegades	Vet	Fan	A	Relevow	—	—	—	—	Relevow
Baxter's Brawlers	Grn	Fan	A	Menke	—	—	Menke [D]<W>	—	Menke
FREE WORLDS LEAGUE MILITARY									
3rd Free Worlds Guards	Vet	Fan	C	Irian	—	—	Hsien [L]<R>	Irian	Irian
9th Marik Militia	Reg	Rel	B	Harsefeld	—	—	Capella [H]<R>	Harsefeld	Harsefeld
13th Marik Militia	Vet	Rel	C	Zion	—	Menkalinen [M]<W>	—	—	Menkalinen
15th Marik Militia	Reg	Rel	A	Berenson	—	Menkalinen [M]<W>	—	—	Berenson
18th Marik Militia	Reg	Rel	C	Irian	—	—	—	Hall [D]<R>	Irian
25th Marik Militia	Reg	Rel	C	Wing	—	—	Marcus [H]	Marcus [S]<R>	Wing
31st Marik Militia	Reg	Fan	B	Dieudonne	—	—	Callison [M]<R>	Dieudonne	Dieudonne
2nd Oriente Hussars	Vet	Rel	A	Second Chance	—	Old Kentucky/Chamdo/ Raballa/Phact [L]<R>	Second Chance	—	Second Chance
Silver Hawks' Gryphons	Vet	Rel	A	Shiloh	—	—	Alioth/Cor Caroli	Shiloh	Shiloh
ALLIED MERCENARY FORCES									
Always Faithful	Reg	Rel	A	Dixie	Carlisle	—	—	—	Left LCAF employ
The Bad Dream	Vet	Rel	A	Newtown Square	—	—	—	—	Newtown Square
Blackhearts	Reg	Rel	B	Anywhere	Lost	—	—	—	Left LCAF employ
<i>Blue Star Irregulars</i>									
1894th Light Horse	Vet	Rel	A	Rasalgethi	Lambrecht	Athenry <W>	Athenry [M]	Athenry [H]<R>/ Lambrecht	Rasalgethi
Avatars of Painful Death	Vet	Rel	A	Tomans	Lambrecht	—	—	—	Tomans
21st Rim Worlds	Reg	Rel	A	Ft. Loudon	Lambrecht	Athenry [L]<W>	Athenry [M]	Athenry [H]<R>/ Lambrecht	Ft. Loudon
Camacho's Caballeros	Reg	Rel	B	Marfik	Marfik	Vega [M]<W>	Marfik	—	Marfik
Clifton's Rangers (1 Btn)	Grn	Ques	C	Abbeville	Benet III	Galtor [M]<W>	—	—	Galtor [D]
Cunningham's Commandos	Reg	Rel	A	Novaya Zemlya	Benet III	New Aberdeen [L]<W>	New Aberdeen [M]	New Aberdeen [M]<R>	Novaya Zemlya
<i>The Dioscuri</i>									
Castor	Reg	Rel	A	Vackisujfalu	Glenmora	Thestria [M]<W>	Thestria [M]<R>	—	Vackisujfalu
Pollux	Reg	Rel	A	Great Gorge	Glenmora	Thestria [M]<W>	Cassias	—	Great Gorge
<i>Dismal Disinherited</i>									
1st Dismal Disinherited	Vet	Rel	A	Millray	Cassias	Huan [L]<W>	Igalada <W/R>/ Huan [M]<R>	Cassias	Millray
2nd Dismal Disinherited	Reg	Rel	B	Cohay	Cassias	Huan [L]<W>	Huan [S]<R>	Cassias	Cohay
3rd Dismal Disinherited	Grn	Rel	B	Boondock	Cassias	—	Igalada <W/R>/ Huan [H]<R>	Cassias	Boondock
Dragon's Breath	Reg	Rel	C	Winter	Main Street	—	—	—	Winter
Dragonslayers	Reg	Rel	C	Odessa	Phalan	Altai [M]<W>	—	Phalan	Odessa
<i>Eridani Light Horse</i>									
21st Light Horse	Vet	Rel	A	Saiph	David	Fellanin II [M]<W>	—	Fellanin II [D]<R>/David	Saiph
21st Striker	Vet	Rel	A	Tall Trees	David	Fellanin II [H]<W>	—	Homam [L]<R>/David	Tall Trees
151st Horse	Elite	Rel	A	Menkalinen	David	—	—	Homam [L]<R>/David	Menkalinen
<i>The Fighting Urukhai</i>									
8th Striker	Vet	Rel	B	Verdigreis	Addicks	—	—	Cylene	Verdigreis
Roman's Bar Hounds	Reg	Rel	B	Caldwell	Addicks	Halstead Station <W>-Halstead Station [H]<R>	Addicks	Addicks	Caldwell
DeMaestri's Sluggers	Reg	Rel	B	Montour	Addicks	Ancha [M]<W>	Ancha [S]	Ancha [D]<R>/Addicks	Montour
The Filthy Lucre	Reg	Ques	C	Bolan	Stantsiya	—	—	—	—
Fuchida's Fusiliers (1 Btn)	Reg	Ques	B	Udibi	Benet III	Royal [M]<W>	—	—	Udibi
<i>Grave Walkers</i>									
1st Grave Walkers	Reg	Rel	B	Bone-Norman	Baxter	Vega [M]<W>	Vega [H]<R>	Baxter	Bone-Norman
2nd Grave Walkers	Reg	Rel	B	Apollo	Baxter	—	—	—	Apollo
Gray Death Legion	Elite	Fan	A	Sudeten	Phalan	Altai [H]<W>	—	Phalan	Sudeten

DEPLOYMENT TABLE

Unit	Exp. Level	Loyalty	Equip. Rating	Pre-War (3038)	Jump-Off (Jan.)	Wave 1 (Mar.-Jun.)	Counterattack (July-Sept.)	Wave 2 (Oct.-Dec.)	Post-War (3040)
The Green Machine	Grn	Ques	C	Kowloon	—	—	—	—	Kowloon
Greenburg's Godzillas	Vet	Rel	C	Sterlington	Kesai IV	—	—	—	Sterlington
Gregg's Long Striders	Grn	Ques	C	Launam	—	—	—	—	Launam
Grim Determination	Reg	Rel	B	Sarmaxa	Lesalles	—	—	—	Sarmaxa
Hansen's Roughriders	Vet	Rel	A	Algol	Lambrech	Pike IV [L]<W>	Pike IV [H]	Pike IV [S]<R>/Lambrech	Algol
Harlock's Warriors	Reg	Rel	B	Phecda	Dixie	—	—	—	Phecda
Hermann's Hermits	Reg	Ques	C	Fatima	—	—	—	—	Fatima
The Hsien Hotheads	Reg	Rel	C	Thorin	—	New Earth	—	—	Shionha
<i>Illician Lancers</i>									
59th Strike	Vet	Rel	B	Jonzac	Verlo	—	Menke [H]<R>	Verlo	Jonzac
21st Rangers	Reg	Rel	A	Mendham	—	—	Victoria [M]<R>	Mendham	Mendham
4th Rangers	Reg	Rel	B	Glentworth	Frazer	—	Victoria [M]<R>	Frazer	Glentworth
9th Rangers	Grn	Rel	B	Immenstadt	—	—	Grand Base [H]<R>	Immenstadt	Immenstadt
<i>Kell Hounds</i>									
1st Kell Hounds	Elite	Fan	A	Summer	—	—	—	Robinson	Summer
Killer Bees	Reg	Rel	C	Planting	—	Polcenigo/Luzerne/Marshdale/Teniente/Itabaiana/Soverzene/Courchevel [H]	Planting	Planting	—
Kingston Caballeros	Reg	Ques	B	Poulsbo	—	—	—	—	Left LCAF employ
<i>Knights of St. Cameron</i>									
1st Knights	Grn	Rel	A	Rastaban	—	Ardoz/Kiamba/Mellen/Baldur [M]	Rastaban	Rastaban	—
2nd Knights									
Alpha Battalion	Grn	Rel	A	Domain	—	Eguilles/Toffen/Shirotori/Trolloc Prime [M]	—	Domain	Domain
Beta Battalion	Grn	Rel	A	Domain	—	Rubigen/Najha/Shirotori/Trolloc Prime [D]	—	Domain	Domain
Gamma Battalion	Grn	Rel	A	Domain	—	Piikhua/Caldrea/Shirotori/Trolloc Prime [M]	—	Domain	Domain
Laurel's Legion	Reg	Rel	C	Tigress	Addicks	Biham <W>	Biham [H]<R>	Addicks	Tigress
<i>Lexington Combat Group (3 Rgt)</i>									
32nd Recon	Vet	Rel	B	Lindsay	Hyaite	—	—	—	Lindsay
Marie's Golden Hammers	Reg	Rel	A	Midale	—	—	Mendham	Midale	Midale
Frederic's Gazelles	Reg	Rel	A	Brockway	Jaipur	—	Glentworth	Jaipur	Brockway
London's Battalion	Vet	Rel	B	Kennard	Benet III	Bergman's Planet <W>	Bergman's Planet [S]<R>	Benet III	Kennard
Markson's Marauders	Reg	Rel	B	Estuan	—	—	—	—	Estuan
Martian Cuirassiers (1 Btn)	Grn	Ques	C	McGehee	Benet III	McComb [M]<W>	—	—	McComb
McGee's Cutthroats	Reg	Rel	C	Sturgis	Benet III	Lima [L]<W>	—	—	Lima
Miller's Marauders (2 Btn)	Vet	Rel	A	Bremond	Benet III	Harrow's Sun [S]<R>	Benet III	—	Left AFFS employ
Mobile Fire	Reg	Rel	A	Canal	Baxter	Konstance [L]<W>	Konstance [M]<R>	Baxter	Son Hoa
<i>Narhal's Raiders</i>									
1st Narhal's Raiders	Reg	Rel	B	Imbros III	—	—	—	—	Imbros III
2nd Narhal's Raiders	Reg	Rel	B	Yorii	—	—	—	—	Yorii
New Hessen Armored Scouts	Reg	Ques	C	New Hessen	—	—	—	—	New Hessen
<i>Northwind Highlanders</i>									
MacLeod's Highlanders	Vet	Rel	A	Northwind	—	—	—	—	Northwind
Stirling's Fusiliers	Vet	Rel	A	Northwind	—	—	—	—	Errai
2nd Kearny Highlanders	Vet	Rel	A	Northwind	—	—	—	—	Northwind
1st Kearny Highlanders	Vet	Rel	A	Northwind	—	—	—	—	Northwind
Redfield Renegades	Vet	Rel	C	Acamar	Addicks	Sadachbia <W>	Sadachbia [L] Addicks	Sadachbia [H]<R>/	Left AFFS employ
Snord's Irregulars	Vet	Fan	A	Clinton	Baxter	Vega [M]<W>	Vega [H]<R>	Baxter	Clinton
<i>Screaming Eagles</i>									
1st Screaming Eagles	Reg	Rel	B	Maram	Glenmora	Elidere IV <W>	Elidere IV [S]<R>	Glenmora	Maram
2nd Screaming Eagles	Reg	Rel	B	Sodertalje	Glenmora	—	Misery/Glenmora	—	Sodertalje
Simonson's Cutthroats	Vet	Ques	C	Barlow's End	—	—	—	—	Barlow's End
Team Banzai	Elite	Fan	A	New Avalon	—	—	—	—	New Avalon
<i>12th Star Guards</i>									
1st Regiment	Vet	Rel	B	Steelton	Phalan	—	—	—	Steelton
2nd Regiment	Reg	Rel	A	Toland	Phalan	—	—	—	Toland
3rd Regiment	Vet	Rel	A	Icar	—	—	—	—	Icar
7th Regiment	Grn	Rel	B	Bensinger	Phalan	—	—	—	Bensinger
<i>12th Vegan Rangers</i>									
Alpha	Elite	Rel	A	Campertown	Errai	—	—	—	Campertown
Beta	Vet	Rel	A	Tsinghai	Errai	—	—	—	Tsinghai
Gamma	Vet	Rel	B	Old Kentucky	Errai	Telos IV [L]<W>	Telos IV [M]	Telos IV [H]<R>/Errai	Old Kentucky
Delta	Reg	Rel	C	Chamdo	Errai	Nashira [L]<W>	Nashira [H]	Nashira [H]<R>/Errai	Chamdo
<i>Wolf's Dragoons</i>									
Alpha	Vet	Fan	A	Outreach	Caph	Caph [M]<W>	Hsien	—	Outreach
Beta	Vet	Fan	A	Outreach	Outreach	—	—	—	Outreach
Gamma Provisional	Vet	Fan	A	Outreach	Caph	Caph [H]<W>	—	—	Outreach
Delta Provisional	Reg	Fan	A	Outreach	Caph	Caph [H]<W>	Hsien	—	Outreach
Epsilon Provisional	Vet	Fan	A	Outreach	Caph	Caph [M]<W>	—	—	Outreach
Zeta Battalion Provisional	Elite	Fan	A	Outreach	Caph	Caph [M]<W>	—	—	Outreach
Black Widow Battalion	Elite	Fan	A	Hall	Outreach	—	—	Hall [M]<W>	Outreach
Wylie's Coyotes	Vet	Rel	C	Marcus	Lambrech	—	—	—	Marcus

RULES ANNEX

The information presented in this section can be used to create scenarios for *Classic BattleTech*, *AeroTech*, *BattleForce* or *Classic BattleTech RPG* games set in the War of 3039.

Players should possess the core rulebooks for each type of game system they wish to play—*BattleTech Master Rules, Revised (BMR)*; *AeroTech 2, Revised (AT2)*; *BattleForce 2 (BF2)*; and the *Classic BattleTech RPG (CBT: RPG)*; also known as *MechWarrior Third Edition*, all published by FASA Corporation and/or FanPro, LLC—in addition to any other add-on products they may want to use. Complete record sheets for all BattleMechs, vehicles and aerospace craft that players can use to recreate War of 3039 scenarios appear in *Classic BattleTech Record Sheets: 3025 & 3026*, *3050* and *AeroTech 2: Record Sheets* (all published by FASA Corporation and/or FanPro, LLC). Illustrations and game statistics for most of these units appear in the various *BattleTech Technical Readouts* (published by FASA Corporation and/or FanPro, LLC.) In addition, *Combat Operations* (published by FanPro, LLC) contains *BattleTech Strategic Game: The Inner Sphere in Flames* rules, for use with *The Inner Sphere in Flames: War of 3039 Annex* beginning on p. 153. For those interested in running *Classic BattleTech RPG* games, the *Classic BattleTech Companion* (published by FanPro, LLC) includes details of factions, life paths and skills that can apply to War of 3039-era campaigns with minimal adaptation.

Finally, players and gamemasters may use *HeavyMetal Pro*, *HeavyMetal Vee*, *HeavyMetal Lite* and *HeavyMetal Plus* software packages (available from RCW Enterprises) to print their own *BattleTech* and *BattleForce* record sheets. The *HeavyMetal Aero* package allows players to print their own *AeroTech* record sheets.

As always, the following rules supplement existing rules. They add variety to and enhance game play, but should not give unfair advantage, and so gamemasters and players should all agree on any supplemental rules before using them in play. Similarly, players should feel free to modify any rule that

ADVANCED COMPONENTS: 3039 TABLE

State	Scarcity (Cost Multiplier)	Minimum Rating	Max Per Lance
<i>Federated Suns/Lyran Commonwealth</i>			
Double Heat Sink	x5	A	9
LB-10-X (X)	x5	A	1
UAC/5 (X)	x5	A	1
CASE	x2	B	2
ECM	x2	B	1
Endo Steel (X)	x3	A	2
Ferro-Fibrous Armor (X)	x3	B	2
Gauss Rifle (X)	x4	A	1
ER Large Laser (X)	x5	B	1
Medium Pulse Laser (X)	x5	B	1
NARC	x3	A	1
TAG	x3	A	0.5
TSM	x1.5	C	2
<i>Draconis Combine</i>			
Double Heat Sink	x7	A	5
Active Probe	x2	A	1
CASE	x2	B	2
ECM	x2	A	1
Endo Steel (X)	x3	B	2
Ferro-Fibrous Armor (X)	x3	B	2
ER Large Laser (X)	x4	A	2
Medium Pulse Laser (X)	x4	A	2
NARC	x3	A	1
TAG	x4	A	1
<i>Free Worlds League</i>			
CASE	x3	B	1
ECM	x2.5	A	1
NARC	x4	A	0.5
TAG	x3	A	1
<i>Capellan Confederation</i>			
Double Heat Sink	x6	A	7
CASE	x2	A	2
TSM	x2	B	1

seems inappropriate for their campaign and/or for the era. All of these rules are considered Level 3 rules and may not be used in tournament play.

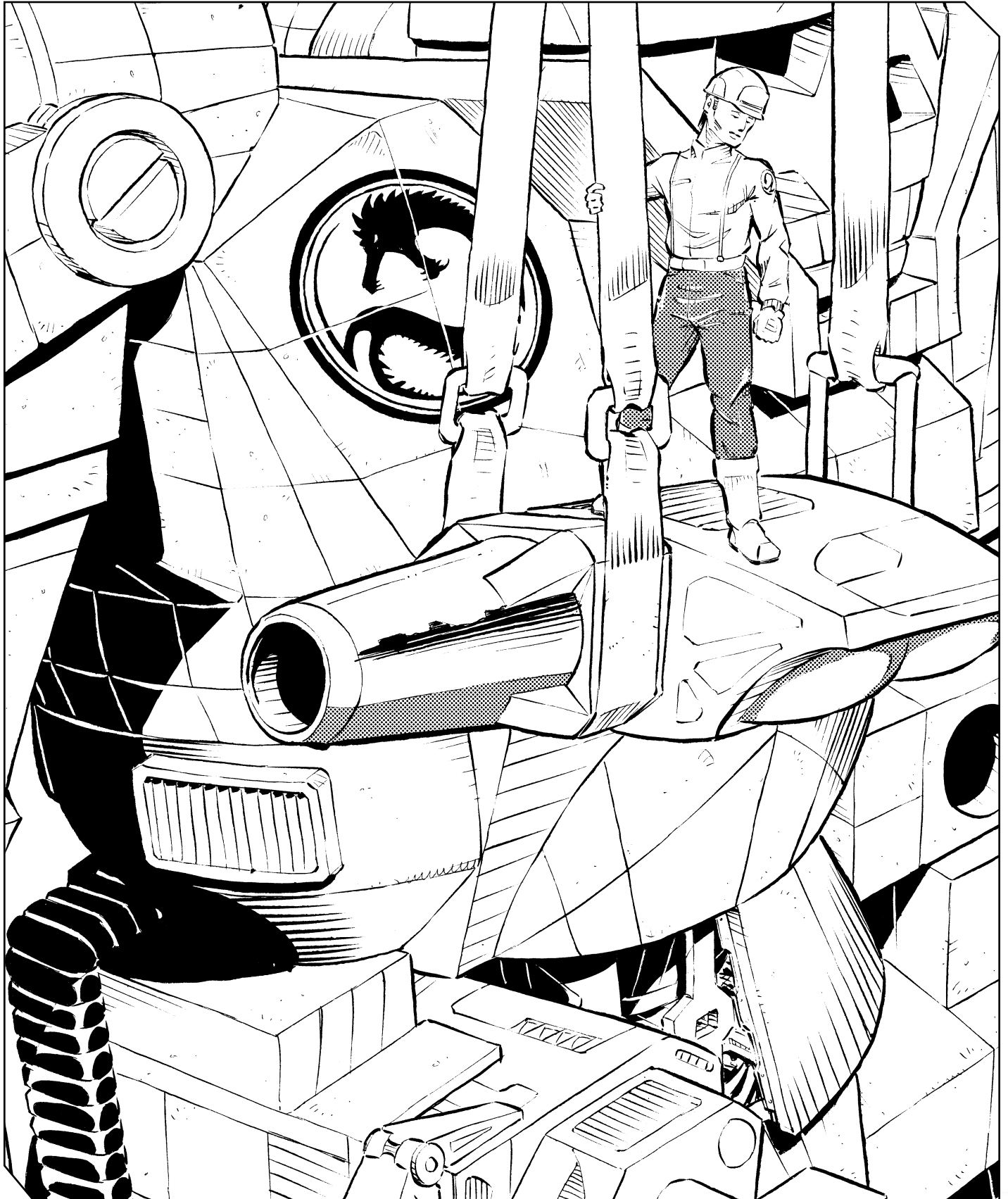
Terminology: The following section uses the term *unit* as it is used in the *BMR*, to refer to a single battlefield unit such as a 'Mech or vehicle. *Force* denotes a large combat formation such as a regiment.

EQUIPMENT RATINGS TABLE

Rating	Description	Example
A*	Highest; some lostech	First Genyosha
A	Top Priority	Davion Heavy Guards
B	Good	Eighth Arcturan Guards
C	Poor	Sixth Arkab Legion

PROTOTYPES AND DEVELOPMENTAL DEAD ENDS

The War of 3039 offers a wide range of opportunities for *Classic BattleTech* players. The last of the large-scale Inner Sphere wars, it was fought predominantly with Level One tech-



nology but also saw the first use of recovered Star League (Level Two) technology on the battlefield. The following rules describe the new technologies used exclusively in the War of 3039 and also the experimental systems employed by the participants during the development of the armaments and defensive equipment that would come to the fore in the 3050s.

When choosing 'Mechs and vehicles for use in the War of 3039, or modifying existing designs, all units must conform to Level One rules (except for Level Two units on any Assignment Table found in these rules) as presented in the *Classic BattleTech* box set (for example, no Level Two weapons and equipment). However, the allies and the DCMS were experimenting with new systems and thus may use limited quantities of advanced or prototype technologies. The Advanced Component Table lists the Level Two technologies available to each power and their relative scarcity (as a cost multiplier). Some systems are considered experimental, denoted by an (X) after the name; these technologies are more fully explained in the *Prototype Systems* section below. Likewise, some systems tested by the combatants in the War of 3039 were subsequently abandoned or rendered obsolete by other advances (as happened with Listen-Kill Missiles).

Equipment Rating: The weapons and equipment in this section were assigned to forces in the War of 3039 based on each force's status, with elite and/or well-connected forces receiving access to such equipment exclusively or earlier than veteran and regular forces. A force's equipment rating reflects this distribution pattern (see *Equipment Ratings Table*, below). The letter A refers to an elite force with excellent connections, B to a veteran force and C to regular forces. One final rating, A*, applies to certain elite DCMS forces and indicates exceptionally swift access to the best technology available. (For more information, see *Assigning DCMS Forces*, p. 146.)

Availability Restrictions: Much of the new equipment has a minimum Equipment Rating, indicated by the *Minimum Rating* column on the *Advanced Components: 3039 Table*, meaning that only forces with that rating or better can use it. These minimum ratings may differ from realm to realm. For example, ECM has a B-rating in the Federated Suns, which means that FedSuns forces with an A or B rating can use it. In the Draconis Combine, by contrast, ECM has a minimum A rating, limiting its use to the best-equipped, A-rated forces.

Additionally, a maximum number applies to each technology that a force can employ, indicated by the *Max Per Lance* column. Where a lance can use more than one of an item, the items may be in a single 'Mech or vehicle or can be distributed among several 'Mechs or vehicles. Where a fraction appears under Max Per Lance—as with TAG in the Federated Suns/Lyran Alliance—a force must contain enough lances to make up 1 before they can use that technology.

LISTEN-KILL MISSILES

The late 3030s saw intense competition in the field of weapons development. One of the earliest and simplest systems employed by the allies was the Listen-Kill missile seeker-head, placed on short- and long-range missiles to improve accuracy.

Though less effective than its successors (Listen-Kill was extremely vulnerable to jamming), the system provided the allies with a decisive edge in the early weeks of the War of 3039. The Draconis Combine eventually replicated this technology and turned it against the LCAF and AFFS, prompting countermeasures that negated the system's advantages within a few years.

Game Rules

Listen-Kill warheads are missile munitions (see p. 141, *BMR*) and unless specifically stated otherwise, can be used in any size LRM or SRM launcher.

Listen-Kill missile munitions cost 1.1x the normal SRM or LRM cost of the appropriate launcher size, and grant the attacker +1 on all To-Hit rolls from a missile launcher so equipped. Attacks against targets protected by ECM (either directly or because the missiles must pass through an ECM "bubble") do not gain this +1 bonus.

In addition, jamming kits employed by the DCMS beginning in the summer of 3039 slowly negate the to-hit advantage of the Listen-Kill system. From 1 July 3039, A-rated DCMS forces are immune to Listen-Kill attacks. The same jamming technology becomes available to lesser forces in the following months; B-rated forces may use it starting on 1 August, C-rated forces from 1 September and so on. AFFS and LCAF forces are not equipped with appropriate jamming pods until January 3040, and so cannot employ countermeasures for battles that occur before that date.

All LCAF and AFFS forces may use Listen-Kill missile munitions from the start of the war. A-rated forces in the DCMS may use Listen-Kill after 1 July 3039, and the munitions become more widely available in subsequent months (usable by B-rated forces from 1 August, by C-rated from 1 September and so on, in the same manner as jamming pods).

Clans: Listen-Kill missiles do not work against units built with Clan technology

Equipment: Listen-Kill missiles cannot be combined with any other type of equipment or weapons (Artemis, Narc, other missile submunitions and so on).

PROTOTYPE SYSTEMS

The following systems were employed by one or more factions involved in the War of 3039. Players should keep in mind that prototype versions lack many of the refinements of the final product (as described in the *BMR*) or suffer from side effects.

For purposes of *Classic BattleTech* games, all of the following weapons and equipment are considered Level 3.

Double Heat Sinks (Freezers)

Unlike many technologies fielded during the War of 3039, the rediscovered Star League-era double heat sinks were not extracted from the Helm Memory Core. Instead, Davion scientists first debuted an experimental double heat sink during the battle for Hoff, in 3022. In 3030, toward the end of the Fourth Succession War, the St. Ives Compact fielded several BJ-3 *Blackjacks* that showcased double heat sinks; a supposed case of simultaneous development, but more likely a result of corporate espionage.

Though ComStar scrupulously stripped advanced technologies from 'Mechs delivered to the Draconis Combine, such technologies, including double heat sinks, fell into DCMS hands. By the War of 3039, several factions had access to the still-experimental technology, but on a limited basis. Not until 3041, after the war ended, did Dr. Jorge Belasco of the NAIS, working on information from the Helm Memory Core, solve the final issues that allowed mass production to begin.

This equipment functions per the standard *Double Heat Sink* rules (see p. 138, *BMR*), with the following exceptions:

- Double heat sinks cannot be mounted in the engine.
- Double heat sinks may be combined with single heat sinks on a 'Mech.

Ultra Autocannon (UAC/P)

A prototype version of the Ultra Autocannon 5, the UAC/P saw limited use with elite AFFS and LCAF forces during the conflict. This weapon functions per the standard *Ultra Autocannon* rules (see p. 133, *BMR*) with the following exceptions:

- The UAC/P requires one additional critical slot.
- When firing at a normal rate (single shot), the weapon jams on a to-hit result of 2.
- When firing at a double rate, the weapon jams on a to-hit result of 2, 3 or 4.

LB 10-X (LB-X-P)

As with the UAC/P, a prototype of the LB 10-X underwent testing in the War of 3039. This weapon functions per standard *LB-X Autocannon* rules (see p. 132, *BMR*) with the following exceptions:

- The LB-X-P requires one additional critical slot.
- Apply a -1 modifier (to a minimum of 2) when rolling on the Missile Hits Table to determine the number of hits from cluster munitions.
- On a to-hit result of 2, the weapon jams per the *Ultra Autocannon* rules (see p. 133, *BMR*).

Gauss Rifle (Gauss-X)

Test versions of the standard gauss rifles (codenamed Gauss-X) saw limited use with LCAF and AFFS forces in the last months of the war. This weapon functions per standard *Gauss Rifle* rules (see p. 137, *BMR*) with the following exceptions:

- The Gauss-X requires one additional critical slot.
- On a to-hit result of 2, the weapon jams per the *Ultra Autocannon* rules (see p. 133, *BMR*).

ER and Pulse Lasers (ER-LL-P and MPL-P)

Advanced laser technologies were among the first to be mastered by the combatants, but testing was still underway during the War of 3039. The AFFS and LCAF both deployed experimental versions of the ER Large Laser (ER-LL-P) and Medium Pulse Laser (MPL-P). This weapon functions per the standard *Laser* rules (see p. 138-139, *BMR*) with the following exceptions:

- All attacks with the ER-LL-P suffer a +1 to-hit modifier.
- All attacks with the ER-LL-P and MPL-P generate 1D6 heat in addition to that normally associated with the weapon.

Missile Sub-munitions

Most missile munitions are not yet available during the War of 3039, except for the Listen-Kill system and Anti-TSM gas shells. Anti-TSM gas shells function as normal SRMs and LRMs, save that only half (round up) the normal number of missiles strike the target. (To resolve a strike with these munitions, roll normally and then modify the number of missiles: a result of 20 becomes 10, 15 becomes 8, and so on.)

Any TSM-equipped unit (only in pre-3050 scenarios) struck with Anti-TSM missiles suffers an additional automatic critical hit if it sustains any critical hits (regardless of location) in the same round as the successful missile attack; the automatic critical hit is randomly determined.

Anti-TSM missiles cost double the normal amount for SRMs or LRMs.

Construction Materials

All sides have access to ferro-fibrous armor and endo-steel internal structure in the War of 3039, but neither technology had yet achieved the functionality of their Star League equivalents. This equipment functions per the standard *Endo-Steel Internal Structure* and *Ferro-Fibrous Armor* rules (see p. 137, *BMR*) with the following exceptions:

- Each requires two additional critical slots (that is, sixteen).

FORCE-SPECIFIC ABILITIES

Each Inner Sphere military or mercenary combat command possesses certain specialties and skills based on its experience and the abilities of its commanders. While it is beyond the scope of this sourcebook to offer this information in depth for each of the forces that participated in the War of 3039, the details for most of them appears in the *Field Manual* series of sourcebooks. By using such force-specific abilities, players can enhance their tabletop *BattleTech* games with the flavor of specific combat commands.

If a force is not covered in one of the above sources, the players should agree before the game begins on the special abilities that will apply to each force. The Great House militaries are all covered in the various *Field Manuals*, along with many of the mercenary commands involved in the war; players can use this information to generate their own force-specific rules that will fit the aesthetic of a given faction.

Note: The *Field Manual* series dates from 3058 to 3067, and so the force-specific rules from those sourcebooks reflect compositions and abilities that apply after the War of 3039—in fact, after the Clan Wars for many. Players should therefore feel free to modify those rules to better reflect a force's capabilities during the War of 3039. However, all players must agree to any such rules changes before using them in a given scenario.

UNIT ASSIGNMENT TABLES

This section provides rules and tables that players can use to quickly generate forces for games and scenarios set during the War of 3039. The following *Random Unit Generation* tables provide selections of 'Mechs, vehicles, aerospace fighters and DropShips

**RANDOM 'MECH ASSIGNMENT TABLE:
DRACONIS COMBINE SPECIAL**

2D6	Light (20-35 tons)	Medium (40-55 tons)	Heavy (60-75 tons)	Assault (80-100 tons)
2	MON-67 Mongoose [25]	CRB-20 Crab [50]	FLS-8K Flashman [75]	HTM-27U Hatamoto-Hi [80]
3	THE-N Thorn [20]	CRB-20 Crab [50]	GLT-3N Guillotine [70]	KGC-000 King Crab [100]
4	MON-67 Mongoose [25]	STN-3M Sentinel [40]	CHP-1N Champion [60]	HTM-27V Hatamoto-Kaze [80]
5	HER-1S Hermes [30]	CRB-20 Crab [50]	BL-6-KNT Black Knight [75]	HGN-732 Highlander [90]
6	HER-1S Hermes [30]	KTO-20 Kintaro [55]	GLT-4L Guillotine [70]	CGR-1A9 Charger [80]
7	THE-N Thorn [20]	WVE-5N Wyvern [45]	CHP-1N Champion [60]	HTM-27T Hatamoto-Chi [80]
8	HER-1S Hermes [30]	STN-3K Sentinel [40]	FLS-8K Flashman [75]	CRK-5003-2 Katana [85]
9	HSR-300-D Hussar [30]	STN-3M Sentinel [40]	LNC25-01 Lancelot [60]	HTM-27W Hatamoto-Ku [80]
10	THE-N Thorn [20]	KTO-20 Kintaro [55]	EXT-4D Exterminator [65]	THG-11E Thug [80]
11	HSR-200-D Hussar [30]	WVE-5N Wyvern [45]	DRG-5N Dragon [60]	HTM-27Y Hatamoto-Mizo [80]
12	MON-66 Mongoose [25]	WVE-5N Wyvern [45]	LNC25-01 Lancelot [60]	MAL-1R Mauler [80]

most commonly found in the armies of the five Great Houses in the 3039 era, and replace those presented in the *Field Manual* series.

The 'Mech, vehicle and aerospace unit assignment tables in this section can be used alone or as an expansion to the *Creating Scenarios* rules starting on page 103 of the *BMR* (the aerospace tables are updates and expansions for the tables found in *AT2*, beginning on p. 94). Likewise, players can use them to supplement the Assignment Tables starting on page 90 in *CBT: RPG*. The *Random Unit Assignment* tables in this book are designed to determine the composition of any Inner Sphere military force set in the 3039 era; players should not use the tables the various *Field Manuals*, as many of the units listed in those tables did not come into use until 3050 or later. When using the tables in this section to create mercenary regiments, refer to the *Random Unit Assignment* table of the faction employing the mercenary force.

ASSIGNING UNITS

After determining the weight classes of the units in each force (see p. 108, *BMR*) and the faction to be played, consult the appropriate *Random Unit Assignment* table to determine specific unit designs.

To use the table, the players must first set the equipment ratings for the forces in the scenario. The *Deployment Table*, starting on p. 135, contains an Equipment Rating column that lists a rating of A, B or C for each force on that table, corresponding to the columns on the *Random Unit Assignment* table for that force's specific faction. This rating represents a force's access to advanced or upgraded technology as well as the force's relationship with its own military command (which determines how easily it can obtain equipment and supplies).

Alternatively, players may simply set an equipment rating for their forces, with a B rating considered average, or may each roll 1D6 to determine their force's rating. A result of 1 provides an A rating, a result of 2-3 a B rating and 4-6 a C rating. Using similar equipment ratings for both sides increases the likelihood of an evenly matched battle. Players should also keep in mind that an equipment rating often averages out over the entire force. For example, a B-rated company may

include an A-rated lance, a B lance and a C lance.

After determining the equipment rating, roll 2D6 and consult the appropriate ratings column on the *Random Unit Assignment* tables to find the specific 'Mech, vehicle or aerospace unit.

Assigning DCMS Forces

A limited number of Draconis Combine forces are equipped with BattleMechs that employ lostech, thanks to Theodore Kurita's agreement with ComStar. The A* equipment rating indicates forces that field this advanced technology. When randomly determining

lance composition, the controlling player should use the *Random Unit Assignment Table: Draconis Combine* (see p. 148). When generating A* lances, he may choose to consult the *Random 'Mech Assignment Table: Draconis Combine Special* (see above) to determine a portion of each lance. In this case, the controlling player should roll 1D6 before randomly determining any particular lance's composition. On a result of 1-5, he may roll once per lance on the *Draconis Combine Special* table, while a 6 allows him to roll twice per lance. For the rest of the lance, the player must use the normal Draconis Combine assignment table. The controlling player may do this for every A* lance he intends to field.

Players should generate A-, B- and C-rated forces as indicated in the *BMR*.

Assigning Units in Classic BattleTech RPG

Players can also use the random assignment tables in this section to assign the starting 'Mech, vehicle or aerospace fighter for a new *CBT: RPG* character. In this case, use these tables instead of the standard tables on pp. 90-94 in *CBT: RPG*. Base the character's equipment rating (or status) on the character's current force (or the force with which he last served).

If the character has not served in a regiment, he has a C rating (Status 2). Increase the rating by one level for every two of the following that the character possesses: Land Grant, Title, an appropriate Contact, Well-Connected, Social Standing of 7 or higher, or a Tour of Duty (only one Tour of Duty Path counts toward this total). Decrease the rating by one level for every two of the following: Bad Reputation, Poverty, Owns Vehicle or Ne'er-Do-Well (Life Path). The rating cannot increase above A or decrease below C.

ASSIGNING PILOTS

Once the players have determined their units, they should assign pilots to each. The players may use the Random Experience Level Table and the Random Skills Table (Expanded), found on p. 114 of the *BMR*.

If playing elements from a specific force, consult the *Deployment Table* (see p. 135). Each force on that table is rated

RANDOM UNIT ASSIGNMENT TABLE: CAPELLAN CONFEDERATION

Light Units (20 to 35 tons)

2D6	Equipment Rating		
	A	B	C
2	LCT-1E Locust [20]	UM-R60L UrbanMech [30]	OTT-7J Ostscout [35]
3	OTT-7J Ostscout [35]	SDR-5V Spider [30]	SDR-5V Spider [30]
4	UM-R60L UrbanMech [30]	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	FS9-H Firestarter [35]
5	STG-3G Stinger [20]	UM-R60 UrbanMech [30]	UM-R60 UrbanMech [30]
6	FS9-H Firestarter [35]	LCT-1V Locust [20]	STG-3R Stinger [20]
7	WSP-1L Wasp [20]	WSP-1L Wasp [20]	LCT-1V Locust [20]
8	LCT-3V Locust [20]	STG-3R Stinger [20]	WSP-1A Wasp [20]
9	STG-3R Stinger [20]	FS9-H Firestarter [35]	JR7-D Jenner [35]
10	SDR-5V Spider [30]	STG-3G Stinger [20]	JVN-10N Javelin [30]
11	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	SDR-5V Spider [30]	SDR-5V Spider [30]
12	FS9-H Firestarter [35]	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	M CY-98 Mercury [20]

Vehicles

J. Edgar [25]^H
 Galleon [30]^T
 Skulker [20]^W
 Saracen [35]^H
 Scorpion [25]^T
 Pegasus [35]^H
 Harasser [25]^H
 Galleon [30]^T
 Peregrine [30]^V
 Striker [35]^W
 Warrior [21]^V

Aerospace Fighters (20-45 Tons)

Sabre [25]
 Sabre [25]
 Sabre [25]
 Sabre [25]
 TR-7 Thrush [25]
 TR-7 Thrush [25]
 TR-7 Thrush [25]
 Centurion [30]
 Centurion [30]
 Centurion [30]
 Centurion [30]

Medium Units (40 to 55 tons)

2D6	Equipment Rating		
	A	B	C
2	BJ-3 Blackjack [45]	CDA-3C Cicada [40]	CLNT-2-3T Clint [40]
3	HBK-4J Hunchback [50]	WTH-1 Whitworth [40]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]
4	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]	VND-1R Vindicator [45]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]
5	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]
6	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	BJ-1 Blackjack [45]	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]
7	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	VND-1R Vindicator [45]
8	VND-1R Vindicator [45]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	BJ-1 Blackjack [45]
9	VND-1R Vindicator [45]	VND-1R Vindicator [45]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]
10	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]	WTH-1 Whitworth [40]
11	BJ-1 Blackjack [45]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	WTH-1 Whitworth [40]
12	CRS-3M Cronus [55]	CDA-2B Cicada [40]	VL-2T Vulcan [40]

Vehicles

Drillson [50]^H
 Drillson [50]^H
 Maxim [50]^H
 Hetzer [40]^W
 Vedette [50]^T
 Vedette [50]^T
 Hetzer [40]^W
 Maxim [50]^H
 Vedette (Liao Variant) [50]^T
 Condor [50]^H
 Condor [50]^H

Aerospace Fighters (50-70 Tons)

Lightning [50]
 Lightning [50]
 TR-11 Transit [50]
 TR-10 Transit [60]
 TR-11 Transit [50]
 TR-10 Transit [50]
 HCT-213 Hellcat [60]
 HCT-213 Hellcat [60]
 Lighting [50]
 HCT-213 Hellcat [60]
 TR-10 Transit [50]

Heavy Units (60 to 75 tons)

2D6	Equipment Rating		
	A	B	C
2	OSR-2L Ostroc [60]	CTF-1X Cataphract [70]	ON1-K Orion [75]
3	CPLT-C4 Catapult [65]	ON1-K Orion [75]	OSR-2C Ostroc [60]
4	CTF-2X Cataphract [70]	GHR-5H Grasshopper [70]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]
5	CRD-3L Crusader [65]	MAD-3L Marauder [75]	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]
6	ARC-2R Archer [70]	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	ARC-2R Archer [70]
7	WHM-6L Warhammer [70]	CPLT-C1 Catapult [65]	CPLT-C1 Catapult [65]
8	MAD-3L Marauder [75]	ARC-2R Archer [70]	MAD-3R Marauder [75]
9	CPLT-C1 Catapult [65]	WHM-6L Warhammer [70]	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]
10	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	CRD-3L Crusader [65]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]
11	CPLT-A1 Catapult [65]	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	JM6-S JagerMech [65]
12	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	JM6-S JagerMech [65]	GHR-5H Grasshopper [70]

Vehicles

Pike [60]^T
 Patton [65]^T
 LRM Carrier [60]^T
 Manticore [60]^T
 Bulldog [60]^T
 SRM Carrier [60]^T
 Po [60]^T
 Zhukov [75]^T
 Po [60]^T
 Pike [60]^T
 Rommel [65]^T

Aerospace Fighters (75-100 Tons)

Thunderbird [100]
 Thunderbird [100]
 TR-13A Transgressor [75]
 TR-14 Transgressor [75]
 Eagle [75]
 TR-13 Transgressor [75]
 TR-13 Transgressor [75]
 Eagle [75]
 Thunderbird [100]
 TR-14 Transgressor [75]
 Thunderbird [100]

Assault Units (80 to 100 tons)

2D6	Equipment Rating		
	A	B	C
2	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	CGR-1A5 Charger [80]	AS7-D Atlas [100]
3	GOL-1H Goliath [80] ^Q	AS7-D Atlas [100]	GOL-1H Goliath [80] ^Q
4	AS7-D Atlas [100]	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	BNC-3E Banshee [95]
5	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	CGR-1L Charger [80]	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]
6	CP 10-Z Cyclops [90]	STK-3F Stalker [85]	CGR-1A1 Charger [80]
7	VTR-9B Victor [80]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	VTR-9B Victor [80]
8	CGR-1L Charger [80]	CP 10-Z Cyclops [90]	STK-3F Stalker [85]
9	STK-4N Stalker [85]	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	CP-10-Z Cyclops [90]
10	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	CRK-5003-0 Crockett [85]	AWS-8V Awesome [80]
11	CGR-1A5 Charger [80]	GOL-1H Goliath [80] ^Q	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]
12	AS7-D Atlas [100]	AWS-8V Awesome [80]	AS7-D Atlas [100]

Vehicles

Behemoth [100]^T
 Partisan [80]^T
 Demolisher [80]^T
 Ontos [95]^T
 Schrek [80]^T
 Ontos [95]^T
 Partisan [80]^T
 Partisan [80]^T
 Behemoth [100]^T
 Demolisher [80]^T
 Behemoth [100]^T

DropShips

Overlord^S
 Leopard CV^A
 Condor^A
 Overlord^S
 Triumph^A
 Union^S
 Seeker^S
 Excalibur^S
 Avenger^A
 Leopard^A
 Intruder^S

^QQuad, ^AAerodyne, ^HHover, ^SSpheroid, ^TTracked, ^VVtol, ^WWheeled

RULES ANNEX

RANDOM UNIT ASSIGNMENT TABLE: DRACONIS COMBINE

Light Units (20 to 35 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C	Vehicles	Aerospace Fighters (20-45 Tons)
2	HSR-300-D Hussar [30]	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	OTT-7J Ostscout [35]	Plainsman [35] ^H	Centurion [30]	
3	MCY-98 Mercury [20]	JR7-F Jenner [35]	FS9-H Firestarter [35]	Peregrine [30] ^V	Centurion [30]	
4	SDR-5K Spider [30]	STG-3G Stinger [20]	SDR-5V Spider [30]	Galleon [30] ^T	Sabre [25]	
5	STG-3G Stinger [20]	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	STG-3R Stinger [20]	Hunter [35] ^T	SL-21 Sholagar [35]	
6	PNT-9R Panther [35]	FS9-H Firestarter [35]	JR7-D Jenner [35]	Saladin [35] ^H	SL-21L Sholagar [35]	
7	JR7-D Jenner [35]	JR7-D Jenner [35]	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	Saracen [35] ^H	SL-21 Sholagar [35]	
8	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	PNT-9R Panther [35]	PNT-9R Panther [35]	J. Edgar [25] ^H	Centurion [30]	
9	LCT-3V Locust [20]	WSP-1K Wasp [20]	LCT-1V Locust [20]	Pegasus [35] ^H	Sabre [25]	
10	JR7-F Jenner [35]	SDR-5K Spider [30]	PNT-9R Panther [35]	Scorpion [25] ^T	SPR-H5K Sparrowhawk [35]	
11	WSP-1K Wasp [20]	LCT-3V Locust [20]	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	Skulker [20] ^W	SPR-H5K Sparrowhawk [35]	
12	MON-67 Mongoose [25]	LCT-1E Locust [20]	MON-67 Mongoose [25]	Warrior H-7 [21] ^V	Sabre [25]	

Medium Units (40 to 55 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C	Vehicles	Aerospace Fighters (50-70 Tons)
2	CRB-20 Crab [50]	VL-2T Vulcan [40]	CDA-2A Cicada [40]	Maxim [50] ^H	IRN-SD1 Ironsides [65]	
3	WVE-6N Wyvern [45]	HBK-4J Hunchback [50]	VL-2T Vulcan [40]	Hetzer [40] ^W	CSR-V12 Corsair [50]	
4	TBT-7K Trebuchet [50]	PXH-1K Phoenix Hawk [45]	WTH-1 Whitworth [40]	Hetzer [40] ^W	Lightning [50]	
5	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	Drillson [50] ^H	Lightning [50]	
6	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	Maxim [50] ^H	LCF-R16K Lucifer II [65]	
7	PXH-1K Phoenix Hawk [45]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	Vedette [50] ^T	SL-17 Shilone [65]	
8	SHD-2K Shadow Hawk [55]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	Hetzer [40] ^W	SL-17AC Shilone [65]	
9	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	TBT-5N Trebuchet [50]	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]	Condor [50] ^H	Hellcat [60]	
10	CN9-A Centurion [50]	WTH-1 Whitworth [40]	DV-6M Dervish [55]	Vedette [50] ^T	CSR-V12 Corsair [50]	
11	WVR-6K Wolverine [55]	HBK-4P Hunchback [50]	SCP-1N Scorpion [55] ^Q	Hetzer [40] ^W	SL-17 Shilone [65]	
12	KTO-18 Kintaro [55]	HER-4K Hermes III [40]	ASN-21 Assassin [40]	Maxim [50] ^H	HCT-213B Hellcat II [50]	

Heavy Units (60 to 75 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C	Vehicles	Aerospace Fighters (75-100 Tons)
2	LNC25-02 Lancelot [60]	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	CPLT-K2 Catapult [65]	Von Luckner [75] ^T	HMR-HD Hammerhead [75]	
3	CHP-2N Champion [60]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	OSR-2C Ostroc [60]	Rommel [70] ^T	SL-15B Slayer [80]	
4	QKD-4G Quickdraw [60]	WHM-6K Warhammer [70]	QKD-4G Quickdraw [60]	Bulldog [60] ^T	F-100 Riever [100]	
5	CRD-3K Crusader [65]	DRG-1N Dragon [60]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	Manticore [60] ^T	Eagle [75]	
6	DRG-1G Grand Dragon [60]	ARC-2R Archer [70]	DRG-1N Dragon [60]	Po [60] ^T	CHP-W5 Chippewa [90]	
7	WHM-6K Warhammer [70]	ON1-K Orion [75]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	LRM Carrier [60] ^T	SL-15 Slayer [80]	
8	ARC-2K Archer [70]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	ARC-2R Archer [70]	SRM Carrier [60] ^T	SL-15A Slayer [80]	
9	ON1-K Orion [75]	DRG-1G Grand Dragon [60]	ON1-K Orion [75]	Bulldog [60] ^T	Eagle [75]	
10	MAD-3R Marauder [75]	QKD-4G Quickdraw [60]	GHR-5H Grasshopper [70]	Patton [70] ^T	Thunderbird [100]	
11	CPLT-K2 Catapult [65]	CRD-3K Crusader [65]	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	Pike [60] ^T	AHB-443 Ahab [90]	
12	GLT-4L Guillotine [70]	GHR-5N Grasshopper [70]	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	Von Luckner [75] ^T	SL-15C Slayer [80]	

Assault Units (80 to 100 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C	Vehicles	DropShips
2	LGB-7Q Longbow [85]	CP-10-Q Cyclops [90]	AS7-D Atlas [100]	Demolisher [80] ^T	Achilles ^A	
3	CRK-5003-0 Crockett [85]	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	GOL-1H Goliath [80] ^Q	SturmFeur [85] ^T	Condor ^A	
4	AWS-8T Awesome [80]	CP 10-Z Cyclops [90]	STK-3F Stalker [85]	Schrek [80] ^T	Leopard ^A	
5	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	Partisan [80] ^T	Triumph ^A	
6	STK-3F Stalker [85]	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	CGR-1A1 Charger [80]	Demolisher [80] ^T	Leopard CV ^A	
7	AS7-D Atlas [100]	AS7-D Atlas [100]	AS7-D Atlas [100]	Ontos [95] ^T	Union ^S	
8	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	Behemoth [100] ^T	Intruder ^S	
9	THG-10E Thug [80]	AWS-8T Awesome [80]	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	Schrek [80] ^T	Overlord ^S	
10	CP-10-Q Cyclops [90]	STK-3F Stalker [85]	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	Partisan [80] ^T	Excalibur ^S	
11	STK-4N Stalker [85]	STK-3H Stalker [85]	CP-10-Z Cyclops [90]	Behemoth [100] ^T	Vengeance ^A	
12	VTR-9B Victor [100]	GOL-1H Goliath [80] ^Q	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	SturmFeur [85] ^T	Achilles ^A	

QQuad, ^AAerodyne, ^HHover, ^SSpheroid, ^TTracked, ^VVTOL, ^WWheeled

RANDOM UNIT ASSIGNMENT TABLE: FEDERATED SUNS

Light Units (20 to 35 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C
2	OTT-7J Ostscout [35]	WLF-1 Wolfhound [35]	OTT-7J Ostscout [35]	
3	WLF-1 Wolfhound [35]	HNT-151 Hornet [20]	SDR-5V Spider [30]	
4	VLK-QA Valkyrie [35]	VLK-QA Valkyrie [35]	COM-2D Commando [25]	
5	LCT-3V Locust [20]	FS9-H Firestarter [35]	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	
6	STG-3G Stinger [20]	WSP-1D Wasp [20]	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	
7	JVN-10F Javelin [30]	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	VLK-QA Valkyrie [35]	
8	FS9-H Firestarter [35]	STG-3G Stinger [20]	STG-3R Stinger [20]	
9	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	COM-2D Commando [25]	LCT-1V Locust [20]	
10	LCT-1E Locust [20]	JVN-10F Javelin [30]	FS9-H Firestarter [35]	
11	JR7-D Jenner [35]	LCT-1M Locust [20]	VLK-QA Valkyrie [35]	
12	VLK-QF Valkyrie [35]	JR7-D Jenner [35]	JR7-D Jenner [35]	

Vehicles

Warrior [21] ^V
Warrior [21] ^V
Saladin [35] ^H
Packrat [20] ^W
Hunter [35] ^T
Striker [35] ^W
Pegasus [35] ^H
J. Edgar [25] ^H
Galleon [30] ^T
Saracen [35] ^H
Scimitar [35] ^H

Aerospace Fighters

(20-45 Tons)
Centurion [30]
TR-7 Thrush [25]
SYD-Z1 Seydlitz [20]
SYD-Z1 Seydlitz [20]
SPR-H5 Sparrowhawk [30]
SPR-H5 Sparrowhawk [30]
Centurion [30]
Sabre [25]
Sabre [25]
SPR-H8 Sparrowhawk [30]
Centurion [30]

Medium Units (40 to 55 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C
2	TBT-5N Trebuchet [50]	ASN-101 Assassin [40]	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]	
3	DV-6M Dervish [55]	WTH-1S Whitworth [40]	TBT-5N Trebuchet [50]	
4	SHD-2D Shadow Hawk [55]	VL-5T Vulcan [40]	WTH-1 Whitworth [40]	
5	CN9-A Centurion [50]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	
6	ENF-4R Enforcer [50]	CN9-A Centurion [50]	ENF-4R Enforcer [50]	
7	PXH-1D Phoenix Hawk [45]	ENF-4R Enforcer [50]	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	
8	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	PXH-1D Phoenix Hawk [45]	CN9-A Centurion [50]	
9	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]	SHD-2D Shadow Hawk [55]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	
10	CN9-AH Centurion [50]	BJ-1DB Blackjack [45]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	
11	BJ-3 Blackjack [45]	BJ-1DC Blackjack [45]	BJ-1 Blackjack [45]	
12	HBK-4P Hunchback [50]	ASN-21 Assassin [40]	VL-2T Vulcan [40]	

Vehicles

Hetzer [40] ^W
Condor [50] ^H
Goblin [45] ^T
Maxim [50] ^H
Drillson [50] ^H
Goblin [45] ^T
Condor [50] ^H
Vedette [50] ^T
Drillson [50] ^H
Hetzer [40] ^W
Drillson [50] ^H

Aerospace Fighters

(50-70 Tons)
TR-10 Transit [50]
TR-10 Transit [50]
F-90 Stingray [60]
CSR-V20 Corsair [50]
Lightning [50]
CSR-V12 Corsair [50]
Hellcat [60]
LCF-R15 Lucifer [65]
Lightning [50]
Lightning [50]
LCF-R20 Lucifer [65]

Heavy Units (60 to 75 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C
2	OTL-4F Ostsol [60]	RFL-4D Rifleman [60]	ON1-K Orion [75]	
3	ARC-2R Archer [70]	JM6-A JagerMech [65]	OTL-4D Ostsol [60]	
4	JM6-A JagerMech [65]	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	JM6-S JagerMech [65]	
5	RFL-3C Rifleman [60]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	
6	CRD-3D Crusader [65]	ARC-2R Archer [70]	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	
7	MAD-3D Marauder [75]	MAD-3D Marauder [75]	MAD-3R Marauder [75]	
8	WHM-6D Warhammer [70]	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	
9	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	CRD-3D Crusader [65]	ARC-2R Archer [70]	
10	GHR-5N Grasshopper [70]	JM6-S JagerMech [65]	GHR-5H Grasshopper [70]	
11	RFL-4D Rifleman [60]	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	
12	EXT-4A Exterminator [65]	WHM-6D Warhammer [70]	CHP-2N Champion [60]	

Vehicles

Von Luckner [75] ^T
Rommel [65] ^T
SRM Carrier [60] ^T
Bulldog [60] ^T
Patton [65] ^T
Manticore [60] ^T
Rommel [65] ^T
Po [60] ^T
LRM Carrier [60] ^T
Brutus [75] ^T
Pike [60] ^T

Aerospace Fighters

(75-100 Tons)
CHP-W10 Chippewa [90]
CHP-W10 Chippewa [90]
STU-K15 Stuka [100]
Thunderbird [100]
Eagle [75]
STU-K5 Stuka [100]
STU-K10 Stuka [100]
Eagle [75]
Eagle [75]
Thunderbird [100]
Eagle [75]

Assault Units (80 to 100 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C
2	STK-3F Stalker [85]	BNC-3S Banshee [95]	LGB-7Q Longbow [85]	
3	VTR-9A1 Victor [80]	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	
4	LGB-7Q Longbow [85]	CP-10-Z Cyclops [90]	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	
5	STK-3H Stalker [85]	STK-3F Stalker [85]	CP-10-Z Cyclops [90]	
6	VTR-9B Victor [80]	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	
7	BLR-1D BattleMaster [85]	AS7-D Atlas [100]	AS7-D Atlas [100]	
8	AS7-D Atlas [100]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	STK-3F Stalker [85]	
9	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	LGB-7Q Longbow [85]	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	
10	BNC-3S Banshee [95]	BLR-1D BattleMaster [85]	CGR-1A1 Charger [80]	
11	CP-10-Z Cyclops [90]	STK-3H Stalker [85]	LGB-7Q Longbow [85]	
12	KGC-0000 King Crab [80]	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	GOL-1H Goliath [80] ^Q	

Vehicles

Schrek [80] ^T
Behemoth [100] ^T
Partisan [80] ^T
Ontos [95] ^T
Behemoth [100] ^T
Partisan [80] ^T
Demolisher [80] ^T
Ontos [95] ^T
Schrek [80] ^T
Behemoth [100] ^T
Schrek [80] ^T

DropShips

Achilles ^A
Intruder ^S
Seeker ^S
Overlord ^S
Avenger ^A
Union ^S
Leopard ^A
Gazelle ^A
Leopard CV ^A
Triumph ^A
Fortress ^S

QQuad, ^AAerodyne, ^HHover, ^SSpheroid, ^TTracked, ^VVTOL, ^WWheeled

RANDOM UNIT ASSIGNMENT TABLE: FREE WORLDS LEAGUE

Light Units (20 to 35 tons)

2D6	A
2	JVN-10N Javelin [30]
3	OTT-7J Ostscout [35]
4	WSP-1A Wasp [20]
5	SDR-5V Spider [30]
6	FS9-H Firestarter [35]
7	STG-3G Stinger [20]
8	LCT-3V Locust [20]
9	SDR-5V Spider [30]
10	FS9-H Firestarter [35]
11	LCT-1E Locust [20]
12	HER-1A Hermes [30]

Equipment Rating

B
OTT-7J Ostscout [35]
UM-R60 UrbanMech [30]
FS9-H Firestarter [35]
STG-3G Stinger [20]
LCT-3V Locust [20]
FS9-H Firestarter [35]
WSP-1A Wasp [20]
FS9-H Firestarter [35]
SDR-5V Spider [30]
LCT-3V Locust [20]
PNT-9R Panther [35]

C

JVN-10N Javelin [30]
LCT-1E Locust [20]
UM-R60 UrbanMech [30]
SDR-5V Spider [30]
WSP-1A Wasp [20]
STG-3R Stinger [20]
LCT-1V Locust [20]
FS9-H Firestarter [35]
JR7-D Jenner [35]
OTT-7J Ostscout [35]
JR7-D Jenner [35]

Vehicles

Peregrine [30] ^V
Striker [35] ^W
J. Edgar [25] ^H
Plainsman [35] ^H
Saracen [35] ^H
Harasser [25] ^H
Scimitar [35] ^H
Pegasus [35] ^H
Galleon [30] ^T
Saladin [35] ^H
Warrior [20] ^V

Aerospace Fighters (20-45 Tons)

SYF-Z1 Seydlitz [20]
Centurion [30]
SYD-Z1 Seydlitz [20]
Centurion [30]
F-10 Cheetah [25]
F-10 Cheetah [25]
Sabre [25]
F-12-S Cheetah [25]
TR-7 Thrush [25]
F-11-S Cheetah [25]
Sabre [25]

Medium Units (40 to 55 tons)

2D6	A
2	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]
3	CNS-3M Cronus [55]
4	HBK-4N Hunchback [50]
5	HER-2M Hermes II [40]
6	GRF-1N Griffin [55]
7	WVR-6M Wolverine [55]
8	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]
9	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]
10	SCP-1N Scorpion [55] ^Q
11	DV-6M Dervish [55]
12	HBK-4P Hunchback [50]

Equipment Rating

B
SCP-1N Scorpion [55] ^Q
TBT-5J Trebuchet [50]
CDA-2A Cicada [40]
DV-6M Dervish [55]
SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]
PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]
GRF-1N Griffin [55]
HER-2M Hermes II [40]
VL-2T Vulcan [40]
HER-2S Hermes II [40]
WVR-6R Wolverine [55]

C

ASN-21 Assassin [40]
TBT-5N Trebuchet [50]
CN9-A Centurion [50]
SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]
GRF-1N Griffin [55]
WVR-6R Wolverine [55]
PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]
HER-2S Hermes II [40]
HBK-4G Hunchback [50]
CDA-2A Cicada [40]
SCP-1N Scorpion [55] ^Q

Vehicles

Hetzer [40] ^W
Hetzer [40] ^W
Hetzer [40] ^W
Drillson [50] ^H
Maxim [50] ^H
Vedette [50] ^T
Hetzer [40] ^W
Condor [50] ^H
Maxim [50] ^H
Drillson [50] ^H
Condor [50] ^H

Aerospace Fighters (50-70 Tons)

CSR-V12M Corsair [50]
CSR-V12M Corsair [50]
HCT-213 Hellcat [60]
HCT-213 Hellcat [60]
TR-10 Transit [50]
Lightning [50]
Lightning [50]
Lightning [50]
F-90 Stingray [60]
TR-11 Transit [50]

Heavy Units (60 to 75 tons)

2D6	A
2	CRD-3R Crusader [65]
3	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]
4	MAD-3M Marauder [75]
5	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]
6	QKD-4G Quickdraw [60]
7	ON1-K Orion [75]
8	ARC-2R Archer [70]
9	GHR-5H Grasshopper [70]
10	MAD-3R Marauder [75]
11	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]
12	OSR-2M Ostroc [60]

Equipment Rating

B
OSR-2C Ostroc [60]
OSR-2M Ostroc [60]
GHR-5H Grasshopper [70]
TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]
MAD-3M Marauder [75]
ARC-2R Archer [70]
ON1-K Orion [75]
QKD-4G Quickdraw [60]
RFL-3N Rifleman [60]
CRD-3R Crusader [65]
ON1-VA Orion [75]

C

GHR-5H Grasshopper [70]
CRD-3R Crusader [65]
RFL-3N Rifleman [60]
QKD-4G Quickdraw [60]
ON1-K Orion [75]
ARC-2R Archer [70]
TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]
WHM-6R Warhammer [70]
MAD-3R Marauder [75]
ON1-VA Orion [75]
OSR-2C Ostroc [60]

Vehicles

Rommel [65] ^T
Patton [65] ^T
Po [60] ^T
Manticore [60] ^T
Pike [60] ^T
LRM Carrier [60] ^T
SRM Carrier [60] ^T
Bulldog [60] ^T
Zhukov [75] ^T
Von Luckner [75] ^T
Pike [60] ^T

Aerospace Fighters (75-100 Tons)

TR-14 Transgressor [75]
CHP-W5 Chippewa [90]
CHP-W5 Chippewa [90]
Eagle [75]
Eagle [75]
F-100 Riever [100]
F-100A Riever [100]
Thunderbird [100]
F-100B Riever [100]
Thunderbird [100]
Thunderbird [100]

Assault Units (80 to 100 tons)

2D6	A
2	BNC-3Q Banshee [95]
3	AS7-D Atlas [100]
4	BNC-3M Banshee [95]
5	STK-3H Stalker [85]
6	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]
7	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]
8	STK-3F Stalker [85]
9	AWS-8V Awesome [80]
10	GOL-1H Goliath [80] ^Q
11	AS7-D Atlas [100]
12	VTR-9B Victor [80]

Equipment Rating

B
BNC-3Q Banshee [95]
AWS-8R Awesome [80]
CP 10-Z Cyclops [90]
BNC-3M Banshee [95]
VTR-9B Victor [80]
STK-3F Stalker [85]
AWS-8Q Awesome [80]
STK-4N Stalker [85]
AS7-D Atlas [100]
AWS-8T Awesome [80]
STK-3H Stalker [85]

C

AS7-D Atlas [100]
CP 10-Z Cyclops [90]
VTR-9B Victor [80]
BNC-3E Banshee [95]
STK-3F Stalker [85]
AWS-8Q Awesome [80]
GOL-1H Goliath [80] ^Q
CGR-1A1 Charger [80]
THG-10E Thug [80]
BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]
AS7-D Atlas [100]

Vehicles

Partisan [80] ^T
Behemoth [100] ^T
Schrek [80] ^T
Partisan [80] ^T
Demolisher [80] ^T
Ontos [95] ^T
Schrek [80] ^T
Ontos [95] ^T
Partisan [80] ^T
Behemoth [100] ^T
Partisan [80] ^T

DropShips

Mammoth ^S
Overlord ^S
Intruder ^S
Fury ^A
Leopard ^A
Union ^S
Leopard CV ^A
Condor ^A
Gazelle ^A
Vengeance ^A
Seeker ^S

^QQuad, ^AAerodyne, ^HHover, ^SSpheroid, ^TTracked, ^VVTOL, ^WWheeled

RANDOM UNIT ASSIGNMENT TABLE: LYRAN COMMONWEALTH

Light Units (20 to 35 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C	Vehicles	Aerospace Fighters (20-45 Tons)
2	OTT-7J Ostscout [35]	OTT-7J Ostscout [35]	OTT-7J Ostscout [35]	SDR-5V Spider [30]	Warrior [21] ^V	F-10 Cheetah [25]
3	FS9-H Firestarter [30]	WLF-1 Wolfhound [35]	WLF-1 Wolfhound [35]	FS9-M Firestarter [35]	Warrior [21] ^V	F-10 Cheetah [25]
4	WLF-1 Wolfhound [35]	FS9-H Firestarter [30]	FS9-H Firestarter [30]	STG-3G Stinger [20]	Pegasus [35] ^H	SYD-Z1 Seydlitz [20]
5	COM-2D Commando [25]	LCT-1V Locust [20]	LCT-1V Locust [20]	FS9-H Firestarter [30]	Hunter [35] ^T	Sabre [25]
6	STG-3G Stinger [20]	COM-2D Commando [25]	COM-2D Commando [25]	STG-3R Stinger [20]	Saladin [25] ^H	SYD-Z2 Seydlitz [20]
7	COM-3A Commando [25]	STG-3G Stinger [20]	STG-3G Stinger [20]	COM-2D Commando [25]	Striker [35] ^W	SYD-Z2 Seydlitz [20]
8	LCT-1S Locust [20]	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	LCT-1V Locust [20]	J. Edgar [25] ^H	Centurion [30]
9	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	Scorpion [25] ^T	SL-21 Sholagar [35]
10	FS9-M Firestarter [35]	LCT-1S Locust [20]	LCT-1S Locust [20]	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	Skulker [20] ^W	SYD-Z1 Seydlitz [20]
11	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	COM-3A Commando [25]	COM-3A Commando [25]	FS9-H Firestarter [30]	Galleon [30] ^T	SYD-Z3 Seydlitz [20]
12	LCT-3V Locust [20]	FS9-M Firestarter [35]	FS9-M Firestarter [35]	OTT-7J Ostscout [35]	Pegasus [35] ^H	SPR-H8 Sparrowhawk [30]

Medium Units (40 to 55 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C	Vehicles	Aerospace Fighters (50-70 Tons)
2	HBK-4P Hunchback [50]	STK-3K Sentinel [40]	STK-3K Sentinel [40]	CDA-2A Cicada [40]	Goblin [45] ^T	F-90S Stingray [60]
3	TBT-5S Trebuchet [50]	VL-5T Vulcan [40]	VL-5T Vulcan [40]	DV-6M Dervish [55]	Condor [50] ^H	HCT-213 Hellcat [60]
4	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	TBT-5S Trebuchet [50]	TBT-5S Trebuchet [50]	WTH-1 Whitworth [40]	Vedette [50] ^T	HCT-213 Hellcat [60]
5	KTO-18 Kintaro [55]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	CN9-AL Centurion [50]	Goblin [45] ^T	LCF-R20 Lucifer [65]
6	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	GRF-1S Griffin [55]	GRF-1S Griffin [55]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	Drillson [50] ^H	LCF-R20 Lucifer [65]
7	HCT-3F Hatchetman [45]	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	Vedette [50] ^T	LCF-R15 Lucifer [65]
8	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	HCT-3F Hatchetman [45]	HCT-3F Hatchetman [45]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	Maxim [50] ^H	CSR-V12 Corsair [50]
9	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	Condor [50] ^H	Lightning [50]
10	CN9-A Centurion [50]	DV-6M Dervish [55]	DV-6M Dervish [55]	TBT-5N Trebuchet [50]	Drillson [50] ^H	CSR-V20 Corsair [50]
11	HBK-4SP Hunchback [50]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]	Condor [50] ^H	CSR-V20 Corsair [50]
12	TBT-5N Trebuchet [50]	HBK-4SP Hunchback [50]	HBK-4SP Hunchback [50]	CLNT-2-3T Clint [40]	Drillson [50] ^H	Lightning [50]

Heavy Units (60 to 75 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C	Vehicles	Aerospace Fighters (75-100 Tons)
2	OSR-3C Ostroc [60]	OTL-4F Ostsol [60]	OTL-4F Ostsol [60]	QKD-4G Quickdraw [60]	Pike [60] ^T	Eagle [75]
3	FLS-7K Flashman [75]	QKD-4G Quickdraw [60]	QKD-4G Quickdraw [60]	TDR-5SS Thunderbolt [65]	Manticore [60] ^T	F-100 Riever [100]
4	GHR-5N Grasshopper [70]	ON1-K Orion [75]	ON1-K Orion [75]	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	LRM Carrier [60] ^T	F-100 Riever [100]
5	ARC-2S Archer [70]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	ARC-2R Archer [70]	SRM Carrier [60] ^T	Eagle [75]
6	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	ARC-2S Archer [70]	ARC-2S Archer [70]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	Patton [65] ^T	CHP-W5 Chippewa [90]
7	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	Manticore [60] ^T	CHP-W5 Chippewa [90]
8	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	MAD-3R Marauder [75]	MAD-3R Marauder [75]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	Rommel [65] ^T	STU-K5 Stuka [100]
9	MAD-3R Marauder [75]	GHR-5H Grasshopper [70]	GHR-5H Grasshopper [70]	MAD-3R Marauder [75]	Rommel [65] ^T	Thunderbird [100]
10	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	GHR-5H Grasshopper [70]	Bulldog [60] ^T	STU-K5 Stuka [100]
11	QKD-4G Quickdraw [60]	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	RFL-3N Rifleman [60]	ON1-K Orion [75]	Brutus [75] ^T	SL-15 Slayer [80]
12	OTL-4F Ostsol [60]	GHR-5N Grasshopper [70]	GHR-5N Grasshopper [70]	OTL-4D Ostsol [60]	Po [60] ^T	SL-15 Slayer [80]

Assault Units (80 to 100 tons)

2D6	A	Equipment Rating	B	C	Vehicles	DropShips
2	AWS-8T Awesome [80]	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	GOL-1H Goliath [80] ^Q	Partisan [80] ^T	Triumph ^A
3	BLR-1S BattleMaster [85]	ZEU-6T Zeus [80]	ZEU-6T Zeus [80]	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	Schrek [80] ^T	Intruder ^S
4	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	CGR-1A1 Charger [80]	Schrek [80] ^T	Excalibur ^S
5	VTR-9S Victor [80]	ZEU-6S Zeus [80]	ZEU-6S Zeus [80]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	Partisan [80] ^T	Leopard CVA ^A
6	ZEU-6S Zeus [80]	STK-3F Stalker [85]	STK-3F Stalker [85]	AS7-D Atlas [100]	Demolisher [80] ^T	Seeker ^S
7	AS7-D Atlas [100]	AS7-D Atlas [100]	AS7-D Atlas [100]	ZEU-6S Zeus [80]	Ontos [95] ^T	Union ^S
8	STK-3F Stalker [85]	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	STK-3F Stalker [85]	SturmFeur [85] ^T	Leopard ^A
9	BNC-3S Banshee [95]	CP 10-Z Cyclops [90]	CP 10-Z Cyclops [90]	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	Demolisher [80] ^T	Overlord ^S
10	ZEU-6T Zeus [80]	BNC-3S Banshee [95]	BNC-3S Banshee [95]	CP 10-Z Cyclops [90]	SturmFeur [85] ^T	Avenger ^A
11	BLR-1G BattleMaster [85]	BLR-1S BattleMaster [85]	BLR-1S BattleMaster [85]	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	Partisan [80] ^T	Condor ^A
12	VTR-9B Victor [80]	VTR-9S Victor [80]	VTR-9S Victor [80]	AS7-D Atlas [100]	Behemoth [100] ^T	Fortress ^S

^QQuad, ^AAerodyne, ^HHover, ^SSpheroid, ^TTracked, ^VVTOL, ^WWheeled

Elite, Veteran, Regular or Green. If playing an Elite force, the controlling player should add a +4 modifier to the Random Experience Level roll and a +2 modifier to the Random Skill roll. If playing a Veteran force, add +2 to the Experience roll and +1 to the Skill roll. If playing a Regular force, apply no modifiers, and if playing a Green force, subtract -2 from the Experience roll and -1 from the Skill roll.

BATTLEFORCE 2 COMMAND LISTS

Following are new command lists for use with the *BattleForce 2* game, reflecting the unique combat styles of each nation involved in the War of 3039 as well as the specific circumstances in which their forces fought. These replace the command lists on pp. 30-31 of *BF2*. The Draconis Combine, Federated Suns and Lyran Commonwealth each have two lists, labeled Jan.-July or Aug.-Dec.; these dates indicate the time frame during the war when each list comes into effect. Players should use the first set of forces for battles that take place between January and July of 3039, and the second in battles that take place after July. For battles of indeterminate dates, players should agree prior to game play on which lists to use.

Draconis Combine Command List

Jan.-July

- 1 Alpha Strike!
- 2 Charge!
- 3 Charge!
- 4 Death from Above
- 5 Evasive Action
- 6 Evasive Action
- 7 Fall Back!
- 8 Fall Back!
- 9 Hello, HQ?
- 10 Hello, HQ?

Draconis Combine Command List

Aug.-Dec.

- 1 Alpha Strike!
- 2 Ambush
- 3 Ambush
- 4 Careful Aim
- 5 Charge!
- 6 Charge!
- 7 Doubletime March
- 8 Hello, HQ?
- 9 Luck of the Fox
- 10 Stand and Shoot

Federated Suns Command List

Jan.-July

- 1 Alpha Strike!
- 2 Ambush
- 3 Ambush
- 4 Careful Aim
- 5 Doubletime March

- 6 Hello, HQ?
- 7 Jam Transmission
- 8 Jam Transmission
- 9 Luck of the Fox
- 10 Luck of the Fox

Federated Suns Command List

Aug.-Dec.

- 1 Alpha Strike!
- 2 Careful Aim
- 3 Doubletime March
- 4 Evasive Action
- 5 Evasive Action
- 6 Fall Back!
- 7 Fall Back!
- 8 Hello, HQ?
- 9 Hello, HQ?
- 10 Luck of the Fox

Lyran Commonwealth Command List

Jan.-July

- 1 Alpha Strike!
- 2 Alpha Strike!
- 3 Ambush
- 4 Careful Aim
- 5 Doubletime March
- 6 Doubletime March
- 7 Hello, HQ?
- 8 Jam Transmission
- 9 Jam Transmission
- 10 Luck of the Fox

Lyran Commonwealth Command List

Aug.-Dec.

- 1 Alpha Strike!
- 2 Charge!
- 3 Evasive Action
- 4 Evasive Action
- 5 Fall Back!
- 6 Fall Back!
- 7 Hello, HQ?
- 8 Hello, HQ?
- 9 Hello, HQ?
- 10 Stand and Shoot

Capellan Confederation Command List

- 1 Alpha Strike!
- 2 Careful Aim
- 3 Charge!
- 4 Charge!
- 5 Death from Above
- 6 Evasive Action
- 7 Fall Back!
- 8 Hello, HQ?
- 9 Hello, HQ?
- 10 Jam Transmission

Free Worlds League Command List

- 1 Alpha Strike!
- 2 Careful Aim
- 3 Careful Aim
- 4 Charge!
- 5 Doubletime March
- 6 Evasive Action
- 7 Fall Back!
- 8 Hello, HQ?
- 9 Jam Transmission
- 10 Stand and Shoot

THE INNER SPHERE IN FLAMES: WAR OF 3039 ANNEX

Though it drew in three of the Successor States, the War of 3039 fell short of becoming a full-blown Succession War, thanks largely to its limited scope and duration. It therefore makes an ideal conflict for the *BattleTech Strategic Game: The Inner Sphere in Flames* rules in the *Combat Operations* sourcebook. The following pages provide players with the information they need to recreate the War of 3039, including details about forces, leaders, technology, supply caches and factories, as well as special rules to reflect the unique nature of the conflict.

SPECIAL RULES

The following special rules apply to *The Inner Sphere in Flames (ISIF)* games set during the War of 3039.

Scenario Limits

Using the standard one-month scale, *ISIF* games based around the War of 3039 last 10 turns (April 3039 to January 3040), at which point the players determine victory according to the *Victory Conditions* (see p. 154). Players may, however, opt to allow the game to run beyond this end date, tracking victory points but otherwise letting the game continue open-ended. The game ends automatically at the end of any turn where enemy forces hold Luthien, Tharkad or New Avalon.

Communications

The Federated Suns and Lyran Commonwealth relied on FAX communications rather than ComStar's HPG network to propagate

their orders during the War of 3039. Such orders travel up to 750 light-years in a month and can thus reach any intended target within an *ISIF* turn. However, the slight delay in

RAIDER EXPERIENCE: 3039 TABLE

Roll	Experience
1	Green (AIR/GND x 0.8, LD 2)
2	Regular (AIR/GND x1.0, LD 3)
3	Regular (AIR/GND x1.0, LD 3)
4	Veteran (AIR/GND x1.5, LD 4)
5	Veteran (AIR/GND x1.5, LD 4)
6	Elite (AIR/GND x2.0, LD 5)

RANDOM FORCES: 3039 TABLE

Roll	AFFS	DCMS	LCAF	FWLM	CCAF	Other
1	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
2	Light	Light	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
3	Medium	Medium	Heavy	Medium	Medium	Medium
4	Heavy	Medium	Heavy	Medium	Heavy	Heavy
5	Heavy	Heavy	Assault	Heavy	Heavy	Heavy
6	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault	Assault

receiving such orders hampers coordination. To reflect this drawback, any combat involving forces from more than one world (see p. 102, *Combat Operations*), where at least one force received orders via FAX, should reduce the combatant forces' Uncoordinated Values by 1 (to a minimum of 1).

Additionally, the DCMS' ability to eavesdrop on allied FAX communications gives them an edge in combat. At the start of each turn, the DCMS player should roll 1D6. The result is a number of points the player can use to increase rolls made for DCMS forces (or to apply penalties to rolls for allied troops). For example, a result of 4 gives the DCMS player a pool of 4 points he can use to help his own troops or hinder allied operations. Once a point is spent, it is no longer available. The DCMS player loses any points unused at the end of the turn.

RP and Construction

Nations may build forces in War of 3039 *ISIF* games but do not have access to the full range of units and tech-

SUPPLY DEPOTS: 3039 TABLE

State	RP
<i>Federated Suns</i>	
Benet III	100
Breed	100
Caph	250
Cassias	100
Errai	150
Kesai IV	150
Mallory's World	200
New Avalon	400
New Syrtis	350
Robinson	350
<i>Lyran Commonwealth</i>	
Bolan	200
Donegal	150
Lambrecht	100
Nusakan	150
Phalan	150
Port Moseby	200
Ryde	150
Sarna	200
Skye	250
Tamar	200
Tharkad	250
<i>Tikonov</i>	200
<i>Draconis Combine</i>	
Alshain	200
Dieron	400
Benjamin	350
Buckminster	250
Galedon	350
Luthien	300
New Samarkand	200
Pesht	200

**TECHNOLOGY:
3039 TABLE**

State	Points
<i>Federated Suns</i>	
CommTech	300
BattleTech	150
IndustryTech	100
<i>Lyran Commonwealth</i>	
CommTech	300
BattleTech	150
IndustryTech	100
<i>Draconis Combine</i>	
CommTech	300
BattleTech	150
IndustryTech	100

Era Table (see p. 86, *Combat Operations*) to determine the total number of worlds (and RP) available to each nation.

Neutral Powers

The War of 3039 principally involves the Draconis Combine, Federated Suns and Lyran Commonwealth, but the Free Worlds League and Capellan Confederation both played minor roles. This sourcebook does not provide for including those two nations as full-fledged factions in the game, but the following rules allow players to incorporate them as minor (or gamemaster-controlled) participants.

In the Order-Writing Phase of each turn there is a 75 percent chance that the FWL and the Capellan Confederation will stage raids into the Lyran Commonwealth or the Federated Suns. The Lyran and Federated Suns players may reduce this possibility by spending RP; 1 RP reduces the chance of raids by the League or the Confederation in the next turn by 5 percent. The chance of a raid may not fall below 25 percent and players must pay for reductions for each minor power individually (for example, a 25-percent reduction aimed at the FWLM does not reduce the chance of CCAF attacks). However, more than one power can pay to reduce the chance of raids.

Starting in the second turn, roll percentile dice at the start of the Order-Writing Phase for the FWLM and CCAF to determine whether raiding occurs. If the roll result is equal to or lower than the target value, a raid takes place. Roll 1D6 to determine the number of 'Mech battalions that take part in the operation. Determine the weight class of each battalion using the *Random Forces: 3039 Table* (below), cross-referencing a 1D6 roll result with the column for the appropriate military. Make a second 1D6 roll to determine the experience level of the raiders. Determine the strengths of these battalions using the Merc/Other column of the *Regimental Components: 3039 Table* (see p. 155). Any forces so generated are under the control of the DCMS player for that turn

nologies. Only the formations indicated in the *Regimental Components* table may be built; the RP costs for each appear on the table.

Use the 3040 column of the *Major Factories Table* (see pp. 90-91, *Combat Operations*) to determine the capability of factory worlds during the War of 3039 and the number of construction lines available to each power. Use the 3030 column of the *Faction Resources by*

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:
3039 TABLE**

Situation	Victory Points
<i>All Powers</i>	
Per enemy standard world captured	1
Per enemy regional capital captured	5
Per enemy capital captured	10
Per enemy leader killed/captured	(LD rating x 2)
Per 1,000 points of enemy forces destroyed	1
Per standard world lost	-1
Per regional capital lost	-5
Capital lost	-20
Per leader killed/lost	-(LD rating x 2)
<i>Draconis Combine</i>	
Per game turn played	5

and may be used to attack any world within 60 light-years of their homeland (FWLM forces can attack Lyran or Federated Suns worlds within 60 light-years of League space, while CCAF forces can attack worlds within 60 light-years of the Confederation). The player can assign multiple battalions to attack a single world, combining their strengths. At the end of the turn, roll 1D6 for each battalion of CCAF or FWLM raiders. On a result of 1-3, the raiding force withdraws to its parent nation. On a result of 4-6, the force remains in play and can attack other worlds.

Raiding battalions do not expend supplies or suffer any supply effects. Raiding forces cannot be repaired, nor may they capture worlds.

Supplies

Each power in War of 3039 *ISIF* games has a number of pre-positioned supply caches. The location and size of each appears in the *Supply Depots: 3039 Table*.

VICTORY LEVELS: 3039 TABLE

Victory Points	Victory Level
-100 or less	Decisive Defeat
-100 to -51	Major Defeat
-50 to -26	Minor Defeat
-25 to + 25	Draw
26-50	Minor Victory
51-100	Major Victory
101+	Decisive Victory

Technology

No powers may spend RP on new technologies in *ISIF* games set during the War of 3039, but they do gain full benefits of their technology levels as outlined on p. 99 of *Combat Operations*.

Victory Conditions

Each of the three main participants in the War of 3039 tracks victory independently, making it possible for more than one (or none of them) to achieve victory. Each faction gains Victory Points in four areas: capture of worlds, capture/killing of personalities, destruction of military forces and (in the case of the DCMS) survival, as indicated in the *Victory Conditions: 3039 Table*. Some areas (such as the destruction of enemy forces) should be tracked continuously throughout the game. Others (such as the capture of worlds) count only if victory conditions are met at the time Victory Points are counted (at the end of Turn 10 in most games). Cross-reference the number of points with the level on the *Victory Levels: 3039 Table* to determine the level of victory or defeat.

FORCE COMPOSITIONS

The battalions, regiments and RCTs that take part in the War of 3039 comprise a number of different elements—'Mech and armor battalions, artillery companies and infantry regiments—that together form whole forces as outlined in the *Force Composition: 3039 Table* below. The *Inner Sphere in Flames Forces Table* lists the air and ground strengths of the main forces belonging to the combatants, as well as the LD rating of each force's commander and the force's XP (experience) rating. Where additional forces are required (either at the start of the game or built during play), players may assemble them using the *Regimental Components: 3039 Table*, which also lists the total RP cost to build sub-forces. Follow the rules on p. 100 of *Combat Operations* to determine the starting XP and LD values for the force, as well as its SP needs and supply stockpiles.

FORCE LISTINGS

The following tables provide details of the main forces taking part in the War of 3039. Forces not listed here may be determined using the *Regimental Components: 3039 Table* above. SP ratings for each force appear as X/Y, where X is its SP requirement and Y its starting SP stockpiles.

REGIMENTAL COMPONENTS: 3039 TABLE

	LCAF			AFFS			DCMS			Merc/Other		
	Air	Gnd	RP	Air	Gnd	RP	Air	Gnd	RP	Air	Gnd	RP
Light 'Mech Btn.	30	120	1.8	40	140	2.6	30	140	2.3	30	120	1.8
Med. 'Mech Btn.	40	190	4.6	40	180	3.6	40	220	4.6	40	180	3.6
Heavy 'Mech Btn.	50	230	7.5	40	220	6.1	50	260	8	40	210	6.6
Assault 'Mech Btn.	50	270	8.5	50	230	7.5	50	300	10	50	230	7.5
Light Armor Btn.	0	40	0.8	0	30	0.6	0	40	0.65	0	30	0.6
Med. Armor Btn.	0	70	1.5	0	60	1.2	0	75	1.3	0	60	1.3
Heavy Armor Btn.	0	100	2.6	0	90	2.1	0	110	2.5	0	80	1.8
Assault Armor Btn.	0	120	3.6	0	100	2.6	0	125	4.2	0	100	2.6
Leg Infantry Reg.	0	27	0.9	0	27	0.9	0	27	0.9	0	27	0.9
Mech Infantry Reg.	0	48	1.2	0	48	1.2	0	58	1.25	0	48	1.2
Motor Infantry Reg.	0	41	1.1	0	41	1.1	0	51	1.15	0	41	1.1
Jump Infantry Reg.	60	27	1.5	60	27	1.5	60	27	1.5	60	27	1.5
Artillery Comp.	0	23	0.5	0	23	0.5	0	23	0.5	0	23	0.5
Air Wing	130	0	2.2	120	0	1.9	125	0	1.7	120	0	1.9

FORCE COMPOSITION: 3039 TABLE

Type	Composition
Regiment ('Mech/Armor)	3 battalions
Reinforced Regiment ('Mech/Armor)	4–5 battalions
Front-line RCT	1 'Mech regiment, 3 vehicle regiments, 5 infantry regiments, 1 artillery battalion
March Militia RCT	1 'Mech regiment, 2 vehicle regiments, 5 infantry regiments, 1 artillery company

THE INNER SPHERE IN FLAMES FORCES TABLE

ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERATED SUNS

FORCE	LOCATION	AIR	GND	SP	LD	XP
Unaffiliated						
1st Aragon Borderers	New Aragon	80	420	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
1st Argyle Lancers	Phalan	240	500	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
1st Capellan Dragoons	Talon/Werneke	120	620	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
1st FedSuns Armored Cavalry	Ziliang	120	460	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
1st Kestrel Grenadiers	David	80	420	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
1st Kittery Borderers	Lee	120	500	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
1st Kathil Uhlans	David	120	500	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Avalon Hussars						
11th Avalon Hussars RCT	Kesai IV	310	1506	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
17th Avalon Hussars RCT	Cassias	270	1348	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
20th Avalon Hussars RCT	Freedom	270	1466	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
22nd Avalon Hussars RCT	Errai	320	1606	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
33rd Avalon Hussars RCT	Caph	320	1629	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
39th Avalon Hussars RCT	Freedom	150	1267	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
41st Avalon Hussars RCT	David	510	1421	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
42nd Avalon Hussars RCT	Kesai IV	360	2,077	3/18	3	REG/6 (x1)
Chisholm's Raiders						
1st Chisholm's Raiders RCT	Breed	120	1,087	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
2nd Chisholm's Raiders	Dobson	120	1,060	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Ceti Hussars						
1st Ceti Hussars RCT	Glenmora	270	1,289	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
2nd Ceti Hussars RCT	Breed	270	1,446	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
3rd Ceti Hussars RCT	Breed	240	1,307	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Crucis Lancers						
1st Crucis Lancers RCT	Kesai IV	270	1,365	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
2nd Crucis Lancers RCT	Galatia III	270	1,446	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
3rd Crucis Lancers RCT	Caph	310	1,640	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
4th Crucis Lancers RCT	Baxter	250	1,453	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
5th Crucis Lancers RCT	Addicks	120	1,339	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
6th Crucis Lancers RCT	Freedom	270	1,429	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
7th Crucis Lancers RCT	Breed	300	1,450	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
8th Crucis Lancers RCT	Addicks	270	1,416	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Davion Guards						
Davion Assault Guards RCT	Caph	280	1,624	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Davion Heavy Guards RCT	Galatia III	270	1,530	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
Davion Light Guards RCT	Breed	270	1,200	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
1st Davion Guards RCT	Cassias	240	1,293	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
2nd Davion Guards RCT	Fomalhaut	270	1,392	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
3rd Davion Guards RCT	Baxter	270	1,142	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
4th Davion Guards RCT	David	270	1,114	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
5th Davion Guards RCT	David	240	1,394	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Deneb Light Cavalry						
4th DLC RCT	Freedom	310	943	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
5th DLC RCT	Nanking	300	893	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
8th DLC RCT	Addicks	180	853	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
10th DLC RCT	Breed	180	893	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
12th DLC RCT	Galatia III	180	813	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
15th DLC RCT	Breed	220	1,113	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)

RULES ANNEX

FORCE	LOCATION	AIR	GND	SP	LD	XP
FedCom Corps						
1st FedCom RCT	Errai	270	1,229	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
2nd FedCom RCT	Truth	240	1,310	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
3rd FedCom RCT	David	270	1,249	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
4th FedCom RCT	Errai	270	1,390	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
5th FedCom RCT	Addicks	250	1,353	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
6th FedCom RCT	Addicks	270	1,464	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
New Ivaarsen Chasseurs						
1st New Ivaarsen Chasseurs	New Ivaarsen	360	580	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
2nd New Ivaarsen Chasseurs	Breed	170	810	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Robinson Rangers						
1st Robinson Rangers	Breed	120	540	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
2nd Robinson Rangers	Breed	120	540	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Syrtis Fusiliers						
5th Syrtis Fusiliers RCT	David	270	1,486	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
6th Syrtis Fusiliers RCT	Wappingers	270	1,359	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
8th Syrtis Fusiliers RCT	Kathil	270	1,284	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Capellan March Militia						
Alcyone CMM	Alcyone	150	1,183	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
New Syrtis CMM	New Syrtis	120	1,101	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Ridgebrook CMM	Ridgebrook	120	1,114	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Sirdar CMM	Sirdar	150	1,073	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Valexia CMM	Valexia	150	1,261	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Warren CMM	Warren	130	1,164	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Crucis March Militia						
Anjin Muerto CrMM	Anjin Muerto	150	1,190	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Islamabad CrMM	Islamabad	130	1,094	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Kestrel CrMM	Kestrel	120	1,131	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Malagrotta CrMM	Malagrotta	150	1,201	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Marlette CrMM	Marlette	120	1,061	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
New Avalon CrMM	New Avalon	120	1,131	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Remagen CrMM	Nunivak	150	1,073	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Tsamma CrMM	Tsamma	120	1,091	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Draconis March Militia						
Addicks DMM	Addicks	120	1,101	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Bremond DMM	Bremond	120	1,189	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Bryceland DMM	Bryceland	120	1,064	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Clovis DMM	Cartago	120	1,063	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Dahar DMM	Tishomingo	120	1,094	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Kilbourne DMM	Cohay	150	1,070	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Mayetta DMM	Mayetta	120	1,121	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Milligan DMM	Milligan	120	1,204	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Raman DMM	Raman	120	891	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Robinson DMM	Le Blanc	120	1,050	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Albion Military Academy Cadre						
1st Albion Training Cadre	Kesai IV	120	500	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
2nd Albion Training Cadre	Enchi	130	630	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
NAIS CMS Cadre						
1st NAIS Cadet Cadre	Robinson	120	460	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
2nd NAIS Cadet Cadre	Breed	120	540	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
3rd NAIS Cadet Cadre	Glenmora	130	670	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Training Battalions & Cadres						
1st Brockton Tr. Btn.	Brockton	40	140	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
1st Bell Tr. Btn.	Bell	40	180	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)

RULES ANNEX

FORCE	LOCATION	AIR	GND	SP	LD	XP
1st Conroe Tr. Btn.	Conroe	40	140	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Goshen War College Tr. Btn.	Goshen	40	180	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Kilbourne Academy Tr. Btn.	Kilbourne	40	180	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
1st Kittery Tr. Btn.	Kittery	40	220	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Point Barrow Academy Tr. Btn.	Point Barrow	40	220	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Robinson Battle Academy Tr. Btn.	Robinson	40	180	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Sakhara Academy Tr. Btn.	Sakhara V	40	220	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Filtvelt Academy Tr. Btn.	Filtvelt	40	180	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Other AFFS Forces						
Planetary Garrison (PUG)	N/A	150	646	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)

LYRAN COMMONWEALTH ARMED FORCES

Arcturan Guards

8th Arcturan Guards	Khartoum	150	730	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
11th Arcturan Guards	Timbuktu	110	500	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
15th Arcturan Guards RCT	Phact	330	1,599	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
17th Arcturan Guards RCT	Wyatt	330	1,649	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
19th Arcturan Guards	Rasalgethi	140	690	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
20th Arcturan Guards RCT	Port Moseby	260	1,580	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
23rd Arcturan Guards RCT	Ryde	270	1,533	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
24th Arcturan Guards	Port Moseby	150	730	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
25th Arcturan Guards RCT	Severn	230	1,473	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)

Donegal Guards

2nd Donegal Guards RCT	Ryde	260	1,370	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
3rd Donegal Guards RCT	Styk	270	1,603	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
4th Donegal Guards RCT	Chateau	310	1,459	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
5th Donegal Guards RCT	Ryde	270	1,710	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
6th Donegal Guards RCT	Denebola V	340	1,809	3/18	3	REG/6 (x1)
7th Donegal Guards	Lambrecht	100	430	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
8th Donegal Guards RCT	Phalan	270	1,654	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
10th Donegal Guards	Port Moseby	130	610	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
11th Donegal Guards RCT	Nekkar	250	1,430	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
12th Donegal Guards	Edasich	130	610	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
13th Donegal Guards RCT	Bolan	270	1,630	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
14th Donegal Guards RCT	Donegal	250	1,483	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
17th Donegal Guards RCT	Lyons	320	1,589	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)

Lyran Guards

1st Lyran Guards	Maestu	150	730	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
3rd Lyran Guards RCT	Baxter	320	1,579	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
5th Lyran Guards RCT	Skye	260	1,513	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
6th Lyran Guards RCT	Althastan	310	1,479	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
10th Lyran Guards RCT	Meachem	260	1,540	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
11th Lyran Guards	Dalkeith	140	690	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
14th Lyran Guards RCT	Ford	260	1,540	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
15th Lyran Guards RCT	Hesperus II	260	1,520	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
19th Lyran Guard	Baxter	140	730	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
24th Lyran Guard RCT	Sabik	260	1,492	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
26th Lyran Guards RCT	Phalan	330	1,707	3/18	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
30th Lyran Guards	Lambrecht	140	690	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
32nd Lyran Guards RCT	Solaris	250	1,443	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
36th Lyran Guards RCT	Lambrecht	270	1,630	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)

Lyran Regulars

1st Lyran Regulars	Ridderkirk	130	610	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
3rd Lyran Regulars	Kesai IV	130	610	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)

RULES ANNEX

FORCE	LOCATION	AIR	GND	SP	LD	XP
4th Lyran Regulars	Baxter	130	610	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
5th Lyran Regulars	Graham IV	140	690	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
7th Lyran Regulars	Loric	140	650	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
8th Lyran Regulars	New India	130	610	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
9th Lyran Regulars	Cavanaugh II	120	580	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
10th Lyran Regulars	Ryde	130	610	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
11th Lyran Regulars	Ryde	140	690	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
15th Lyran Regulars	Port Moseby	130	620	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Royal Guards						
1st Royal Guards RCT	Tharkad	410	1,822	3/18	3	REG/6 (x1)
2nd Royal Guards RCT	Tharkad	270	1,717	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
3rd Royal Guards RCT	Freedom	370	1,752	3/18	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
Skye Rangers						
4th Skye Rangers RCT	Ryde	320	1,573	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
10th Skye Rangers	Zaniah	140	690	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
17th Skye Rangers	Lambrecht	130	650	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
22nd Skye Rangers	Fatima	130	580	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Tikonov Republican Guard						
1st Republican	Talitha	110	540	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
2nd Republican	Wasat	130	650	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
3rd Republican	Van Diemen IV	110	540	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
4th Republican	Carver V	120	610	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
5th Republican	Elgin	140	720	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Donegal March Militia						
Alarion DMM	Not Formed					
Carlisle DMM	Not Formed					
Coventry DMM	Coventry	210	1,400	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Periphery March						
Alekseyevka PMM	Not Formed					
Chahar PMM	Not Formed					
Florida PMM	Not Formed					
Neerabup PMM	Not Formed					
Qanatir PMM	Not Formed					
Teyvareb PMM	Not Formed					
Sarna March Militia						
Achernar SMM	Achernar	130	1,271	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Corey SMM	Not Formed					
Epsilon Eridani SMM	Epsilon Eridani	140	1,288	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Kaifeng SMM	Not Formed					
Liao SMM	Liao	140	1,351	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Nanking SMM	Not Formed					
Wei SMM	Wei	190	1,207	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Skye March Militia						
Accrington SMM	Accrington	140	1,334	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Alexandria SMM	Not Formed					
Denebola SMM	Not Formed					
Gacrux SMM	Not Formed					
Lyons SMM	Not Formed					
Nekkar SMM	Not Formed					
Tamar March Militia						
Hot Springs TMM	Not Formed					
Kelenfold TMM	Not Formed					
Koniz TMM	Not Formed					
Laurent TMM	Not Formed					

RULES ANNEX

FORCE	LOCATION	AIR	GND	SP	LD	XP
Twycross TMM	Not Formed					
Wotan TMM	Not Formed					
Tamarind March						
Furillo TMM	Furillo	190	1,290	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Dar-es-Salaam TMM	Dar-es-Salaam	200	1,226	2/12	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Dixie TMM	Not Formed					
Penobscot TMM	Not Formed					
Training Forces						
Blackjack Tr. Btn.	Blackjack	40	190	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Buena War College Tr. Btn.	Buena	50	230	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Pandora College Tr. Btn.	Pandora	40	190	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Royal New Capetown Tr. Btn.	New Capetown	40	190	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Sarna Martial Academy Tr. Grp.	Sarna	40	190	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Somerset Academy Tr. Btn.	Somerset	40	190	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Tamar War College Tr. Btn.	Tamar	50	230	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Tikonov Martial Academy Tr. Grp.	Tikonov	40	190	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Other LACF Forces						
Winfield's Brigade (2 Btn.)	Winfield	90	420	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
Planetary Garrison	N/A	190	728	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)

DRACONIS COMBINE MUSTERED SOLDIERY

Alshain Regulars

1st Alshain Regulars	Richmond	110	580	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
2nd Alshain Regulars	Soverzene	130	700	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
3rd Alshain Regulars	Garstedt	120	660	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
4th Alshain Regulars	Rubigen	130	700	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
5th Alshain Regulars	Shirotori	110	540	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
6th Alshain Regulars	Alshain	100	500	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
7th Alshain Regulars	Buckminster	110	580	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
8th Alshain Regulars	Buckminster	120	660	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
9th Alshain Regulars	Jarett	120	620	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
10th Alshain Regulars	Courchevel	130	660	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
11th Alshain Regulars	Trolloc Prime	110	540	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)

Benjamin Regulars

2nd Benjamin Regulars	Kajikazawa	100	500	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
3rd Benjamin Regulars	Irurzun	130	700	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
6th Benjamin Regulars	Irurzun	100	500	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
9th Benjamin Regulars	Proserpina	110	580	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
11th Benjamin Regulars	Tripoli	100	500	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
15th Benjamin Regulars	Xinyang	120	660	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
17th Benjamin Regulars	Benjamin	140	809	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)

Dieron Regulars

2nd Dieron Regulars	Cebalrai	100	500	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
3rd Dieron Regulars	Kaus Australis	110	580	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
8th Dieron Regulars	Al Na'ir	120	660	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
9th Dieron Regulars	Cylene	140	740	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
12th Dieron Regulars	Ashio	110	580	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
15th Dieron Regulars	Al Na'ir	150	860	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
18th Dieron Regulars	Altair	140	780	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
22nd Dieron Regulars	Konstance	100	500	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
24th Dieron Regulars	Algedi	140	740	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
27th Dieron Regulars	Ashio	130	700	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
36th Dieron Regulars	Nirasaki	120	730	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
40th Dieron Regulars	Deneb Algedi	140	740	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
41st Dieron Regulars	Yance I	120	620	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)

RULES ANNEX

FORCE	LOCATION	AIR	GND	SP	LD	XP
Galedon Regulars						
2nd Galedon Regulars	Arlington	100	500	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
5th Galedon Regulars	New Samarkand	120	660	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
8th Galedon Regulars	Deshler	130	700	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
12th Galedon Regulars	Matsuida	110	620	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
16th Galedon Regulars	Oshika	130	700	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
17th Galedon Regulars	Kaznejov	140	780	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
19th Galedon Regulars	Bad News	150	820	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
21st Galedon Regulars	Marlowe's Rift	120	660	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
31st Galedon Regulars	Tabayama	120	660	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
32nd Galedon Regulars	Sakuranoki	140	740	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Pesht Regulars						
3rd Pesht Regulars	Pesht	90	420	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
4th Pesht Regulars	Tarnby	110	580	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
6th Pesht Regulars	Nowhere	140	780	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
7th Pesht Regulars	Land's End	110	540	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
9th Pesht Regulars	Schwartz	140	815	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
10th Pesht Regulars	Gravenhage	140	820	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
11th Pesht Regulars	Irece	120	660	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Genyosha						
1st Genyosha	Shitara	120	660	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
2nd Genyosha	Ashio	130	700	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Sword of Light						
1st Sword of Light	Luthien	180	1,000	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
2nd Sword of Light	Buckminster	180	960	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
5th Sword of Light	Dieron	170	880	2/12	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
7th Sword of Light	Luthien	150	800	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
8th Sword of Light	Delacruz	180	1,040	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Sun Zhang						
1st Sun Zhang Cadre	Tinaca	110	580	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
5th Sun Zhang Cadre	Caldrea	90	420	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
9th Sun Zhang Cadre	Dieron	140	740	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
12th Sun Zhang Cadre	Kessel	130	660	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
House Guard						
Otomo	Luthien	120	620	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
Amphigean LAG						
1st Amphigean LAG	Riesling's Planet	130	723	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
2nd Amphigean LAG	Riesling's Planet	130	700	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
5th Amphigean LAG	New Wessex	110	580	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
An Ting Legions						
2nd An Ting Legion	Galedon V	120	660	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
4th An Ting Legion	Valentina	120	620	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Arkab Legions						
2nd Arkab Legion	Tannil	110	580	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
4th Arkab Legion	Trolloc Prime	100	500	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
6th Arkab Legion	Arkab	120	620	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Night Stalkers						
2nd Night Stalkers	Matamoras	90	420	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Proserpina Hussars						
1st Proserpina Hussars	Hun Ho	170	920	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
3rd Proserpina Hussars	Galedon V	235	580	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
4th Proserpina Hussars	Fellanin II	130	700	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Shin Legions						
1st Shin Legion	Ancha	130	700	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
2nd Shin Legion	Sadalbari	120	620	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)

RULES ANNEX

FORCE	LOCATION	AIR	GND	SP	LD	XP
Ghost Regiments						
1st Ghost	Shimosuwa	130	660	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
2nd Ghost	Shimosuwa	100	500	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
3rd Ghost	Osmus Saar	120	620	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
4th Ghost	Osmus Saar	140	740	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
5th Ghost	Shimonoseki	120	660	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
6th Ghost	Shimonoseki	130	700	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
7th Ghost	Umijiri	110	540	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
8th Ghost	Umijiri	120	620	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
9th Ghost	Hachiman	110	580	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
10th Ghost	Hachiman	120	660	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
11th Ghost	Midway	130	700	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
12th Ghost	Midway	120	620	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Legions of Vega						
2nd Legion of Vega	Alphecca	120	660	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
11th Legion of Vega	Alrakis	130	700	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
14th Legion of Vega	Vega	100	500	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Ryuken						
Ryuken-ni	Dieron	130	700	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Ryuken-san	Dieron	120	620	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Ryuken-yon	Harrow's Sun	140	780	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Ryuken-go	Proserpina	130	660	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Ryuken-roku	Misery	140	740	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Other DCMS Forces						
Planetary Garrison	N/A	155	675	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)

CAPELLAN CONFEDERATION ARMED FORCES

Blandford's Grenadiers	Capella	110	510	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Death Commandos	Grand Base	40	190	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
15th Dracon	Areas/Necromo	150	690	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
House Dai Da Chi	Drozan	80	360	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
House Fujita	Grand Base/Holloway	70	300	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
House LuSann	Mitchel/Jackson	80	360	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Kingston Legionnaires	Minnacora/Randar/ No Return	110	510	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>McCarron's Armored Cavalry</i>						
Nightriders	Hustaing	120	570	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Barton's Regiment	Harloc	120	510	1/6	3	EL/31 (x2.0+)
The Wild Ones	Overton	110	540	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Carhart's Demons	Gei-Fu	110	570	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Granger's Renegades	Relevow	120	660	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Baxter's Brawlers	Menke	110	480	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)

FREE WORLDS LEAGUE MILITARY

3rd Free Worlds Guards	Irian	120	570	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
9th Marik Militia	Haresfield	110	510	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
13th Marik Militia	Zion	110	540	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
15th Marik Militia	Berenson	110	510	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
18th Marik Militia	Irian	120	600	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
25th Marik Militia	Wing	110	510	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
31st Marik Militia	Dieudonne	120	540	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
2nd Oriente Hussars	Second Chance	100	420	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Silver Hawks (Gryphons)	Shiloh	120	600	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)

MERCENARY FORCES (LCAF OR AFFS EMPLOY)

FORCE	LOCATION	AIR	GND	SP	LD	XP
Always Faithful	Carlisle	120	648	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
The Bad Dream	Newtown Square	120	630	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Blackhearts	Lost	110	510	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>Blue Star Irregulars</i>						
1894th Light Horse	Lambrecht	110	721	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Avatars of Painful Death	Lambrecht	120	761	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
21st Rim Worlds	Lambrecht	110	781	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Camacho's Caballeros (1 Btn.)	Marfik	40	210	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Clifton's Rangers (1 Btn.)	Benet III	30	120	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Cunningham's Commandos	Benet III	120	570	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>The Dioscuri</i>						
The Dioscuri (Castor)	Glenmora	150	597	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
The Dioscuri (Pollux)	Glenmora	110	537	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>Dismal Disinherited</i>						
1st Dismal Disinherited	Cassias	110	558	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
2nd Dismal Disinherited	Cassias	120	597	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
3rd Dismal Disinherited	Cassias	110	521	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Dragon's Breath	Main Street	120	690	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>Dragonslayers</i>						
1st Dragonslayers	Phalan	120	600	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
2nd Dragonslayers	Phalan	110	560	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>Eridani Light Horse</i>						
71st Light Horse	David	140	677	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
21st Striker	David	140	687	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
151st Horse	David	130	617	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
<i>The Fighting Urukhai</i>						
8th Striker	Addicks	130	650	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Roman's Bar Hounds	Addicks	120	630	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
DeMaestri's Sluggers	Addicks	130	650	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
The Filthy Lucre	Stantsiya	120	560	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Fuchida's Fusiliers (1 Btn.)	Benet III	40	180	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>Grave Walkers</i>						
1st Grave Walkers	Baxter	120	787	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
2nd Grave Walkers	Baxter	120	767	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Gray Death Legion	Phalan	80	390	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
The Green Machine	Kowloon	120	600	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Greenburg's Godzillas	Kesai IV	130	620	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Gregg's Long Striders	Launam	110	521	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Grim Determination	Lesalles	160	1,030	2/12	3	REG/6 (x1)
Hansen's Roughriders	Lambrecht	120	765	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Harlock's Warriors	Dixie	150	567	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Hermann's Hermits	Fatima	120	530	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
The Hsien Hotheads	Thorin	110	725	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>Illician Lancers</i>						
59th Strike	Verlo	110	558	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
21st Rangers	Mendham	110	528	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
4th Rangers	Frazer	120	618	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
9th Rangers	Immenstadt	100	461	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Kell Hounds	Summer	80	387	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
Killer Bees	Planting	120	600	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Kingston Caballeros	Poulsbo	120	570	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)

RULES ANNEX

FORCE	LOCATION	AIR	GND	SP	LD	XP
<i>Knights of St. Cameron</i>						
1st Knights of St. Cameron	Rastaban	110	510	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
2nd Knights of St. Cameron	Domain	110	480	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Laurel's Legion	Addicks	120	570	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>Lexington Combat Group</i>						
32nd Recon	Hyaite	110	784	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Marie's Golden Hammers	Midale	130	838	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Frederic's Gazelles	Jaipur	120	758	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Lindon's Battalion	Benet III	40	180	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Markson Marauders	Estuan	100	420	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Martian Cuirassiers (1 Btn.)	Benet III	40	210	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
Miller's Marauders (2 Btn.)	Benet III	130	890	2/12	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Mobile Fire	Baxter	100	567	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>Narhal's Raiders</i>						
1st Regiment	Imbros III	120	750	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
2nd Regiment	Yorii	130	860	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
New Hessen Armored Scouts	New Hessen	110	480	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
<i>Northwind Highlanders</i>						
MacLeod's Highlanders	Northwind	120	600	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Stirling's Fusiliers	Northwind	130	620	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
2nd Kearny Highlanders	Northwind	120	600	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
1st Kearny Highlanders	Northwind	130	620	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Redfield Renegades	Addicks	120	690	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Rhonda's Irregulars	Baxter	120	570	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
<i>Screaming Eagles</i>						
1st Screaming Eagles	Glenmora	130	870	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
2nd Screaming Eagles	Glenmora	130	850	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Simonson's Cutthroats	Benet III	110	480	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Team Banzai	New Avalon	120	530	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
<i>12th Star Guards</i>						
1st Regiment	Phalan	110	728	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
2nd Regiment	Phalan	110	678	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
3rd Regiment	Icar	120	798	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
7th Regiment	Phalan	110	728	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
<i>12th Vegan Rangers</i>						
Alpha	Errai	120	660	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Beta	Errai	130	840	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Gamma	Errai	130	650	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Delta	Errai	120	653	1/6	2	GRN/1 (x0.8)
<i>Wolf's Dragoons</i>						
Alpha	Caph	110	650	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Beta	Outreach	110	600	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Gamma Provisional	Caph	110	570	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Delta Provisional	Caph	70	300	1/6	3	REG/6 (x1)
Epsilon Provisional	Caph	70	300	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)
Zeta Battalion Provisional	Caph	50	230	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
Black Widow Battalion	Outreach	40	210	1/6	5	EL/31 (x2.0+)
Wylie's Coyotes	Lambrecht	150	474	1/6	4	VET/16 (x1.5)

LEADERS AND FACTIONS

The following leaders and factions exist during the War of 3039. The Federated Suns and Lyran Commonwealth are allied during this conflict, as are the Draconis Combine and ComStar. Only factions of the Federated Suns, Lyran Commonwealth and Draconis Combine track popularity during the War of 3039.

POLITICAL LEADERS AND FACTIONS: 3039 TABLE

Leader	Faction	LD
<i>Federated Suns</i>		
Hanse Davion	Federated Suns Government (Pop. 100)	8
James Sandoval	Draconis March/Benjamin Thrust Command (Pop. 50)	5
Ardan Sortek	Galedon Thrust Command (Pop. 50)	5
Morgan Hasek-Davion	Capellan March (Pop. 50)	6
Candace Liao	St. Ives Compact Command (Pop. 50)	5
<i>Lyran Commonwealth</i>		
Melissa Steiner-Davion	Lyran Commonwealth Government (Pop. 100)	4
Katrina Steiner	Lyran Commonwealth (Pop. 50)	6
Nondi Steiner	Commonwealth Thrust Command (Pop. 50)	5
Vanessa Bisla	Dieron Thrust Command (Pop. 50)	5
Roman Steiner	Sarna March Command (Pop. 50)	4
Ryan Steiner	Skye Separatist Movement (Hostile) (Pop. 50)	3
<i>Draconis Combine</i>		
Takashi Kurita	Draconis Combine Government (Pop. 100)	4
Theodore Kurita	Draconis Combine Military (Pop. 50)	6
Michi Noketsuna	Dieron Command (Pop. 50)	5
<i>Others</i>		
Myndo Waterley	ComStar Command	3
Anastasius Focht	ComStar Military	9
Romano Liao	Capellan Confederation Command	3
Thomas Marik	Free Worlds League Command	5
Haakon Magnusson	Free Rasalhague Command	3

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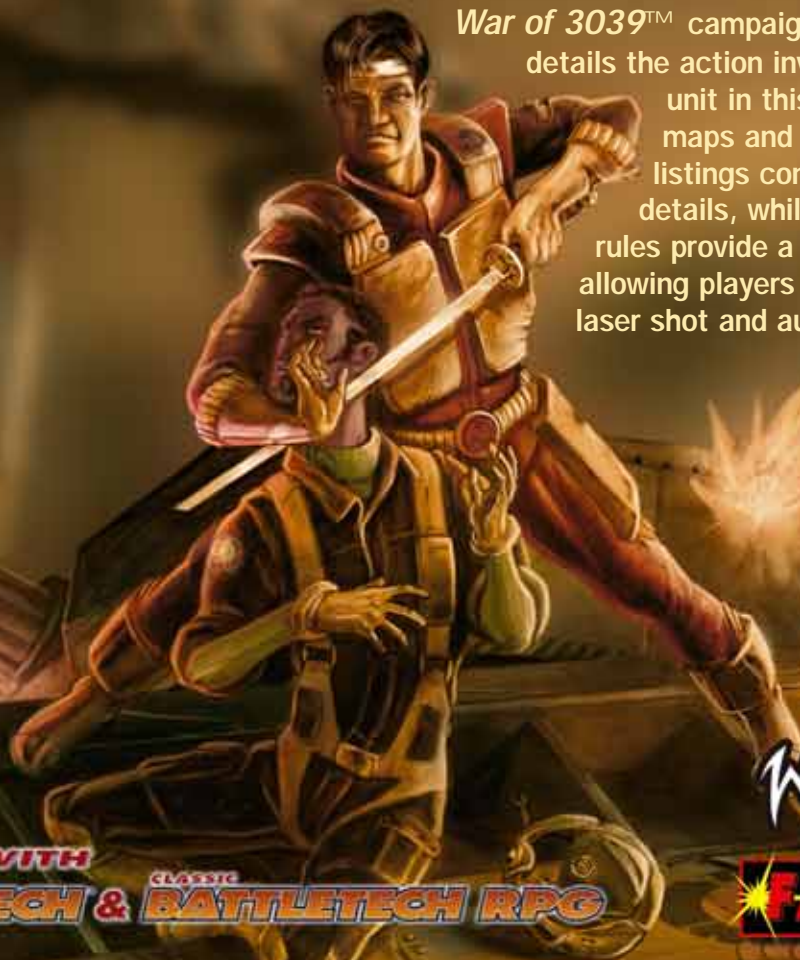


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