SOLARIS:
THE REACHES

BATTLETECH

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SOLARIS: THE REACHES

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INTRODUCTION

Solaris City is the jewel of the Inner Sphere, a place of glitz and glamour. The city's MechWarrior matches attract some of the most talented MechWarriors of the Inner Sphere, as well as nobles who wish to rub elbows with the fighters and display their wealth through extravagant wagers and parties.

But the jewel has a dark side as well: the area called the Reaches. Here, on the outskirts of Solaris City, the bright lights of the Game World exist in stark contrast to impoverished refugee towns and seedy red-light districts. 'Mech arenas, tourist attractions and 'Mech-design shops stand side-by-side with decaying tenements. Gangs, renegade MechWarrior stables and those for whom the promise of Solaris has soured roam the streets, scratching out a living by whatever means—legal or illicit—they can. And so while the purses may be smaller and the lights not as bright in the Reaches, the competition—in and out of the arenas—is just as fierce and often deadlier than anywhere in the Inner Sphere.

—From *City on the Edge: The Solaris City Eclipse*, by Dr. Sigmund Wagner, NAIS Socioeconomic Department, 3055, NAIS Press Ltd.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Solaris: The Reaches provides new locations, 'Mech arenas, Archetypes, BattleMechs, and supplemental rules for **MechWarrior** campaigns set on Solaris VII, which was described and mapped in the boxed game **Solaris VII The Game World**. All these items can be easily modified for **MechWarrior** campaigns set in other locales as well. This product is designed for use with **MechWarrior, Second Edition, Solaris VII,** and **BattleTech** rules.

Solaris: The Reaches is divided into three main sections—**Introduction, Locations,** and **New Rules and Tech.**

The **Introduction** provides a brief explanation of the book's contents and some general directions on using them, as well as a **History** of the Reaches.

Locations contains five separate sections. **Gangs and Stables** provides descriptions of the various gangs and MechWarrior stables that reside in the Reaches. **Xolara, Burgton, Bracken Swamp,** and **Roland Fields** detail the various locales that make up the Reaches, and contain information on 'Mech arenas, tourist attractions, hotels, taverns and other points of interest within each locale.

New Rules and Tech contains five sections. **Roleplaying Rules** provides new or amended **MechWarrior** rules for the Reaches, including a new system for generating encounters with non-player characters (NPCs). The **Supplemental Dueling Rules** section details optional rules and Clan weapon statistics for use with the 'Mech Dueling Rules presented in the **Solaris VII Gamemaster's Book. New BattleMechs** provides three new BattleMech designs for use in the Reaches or in any **BattleTech** or **MechWarrior** game. **MechWarrior Archetypes** presents game information on three new **MechWarrior** archetypes for use in the Reaches. **Site Archetypes** presents generic **MechWarrior** game maps for the various sites described in **Locations**. These maps can also be used for other **MechWarrior** campaign locations as well.

A short story, **A Matter of Respect,** runs throughout various sections of the book. It is intended to give gamemasters and players a taste of life in Solaris' Reaches and might serve as the basis for a typical **MechWarrior** adventure.

HISTORY

—Excerpted from *City on the Edge: The Solaris City Eclipse*, by Dr. Sigmund Wagner, NAIS Socioeconomic Department, 3055, NAIS Press Ltd.

EARLY YEARS

In many respects, the history of Solaris VII and Solaris City proper mirrors the history of the Inner Sphere. During the prosperous Star League years, Solaris City and it's surrounding environs represented the pinnacle of a modern city. Through controlled urban design, the city achieved a balanced blend of residential and manufacturing areas, and Solaris' inhabitants enjoyed a high standard of living.

The rugged terrain surrounding the city provided an excellent testing ground for new 'Mechs, and many of the Inner Sphere's leading Battle-Mech production and design firms opened facilities in the outskirts of Solaris City. Soon, these firms were pitting their prototypes against each other as they vied for military contracts, a practice that eventually evolved into the epic 'Mech matches Solaris is famous for.

By the time of General Aleksandr Kerensky's Exodus, Solaris City, like many cities of the time, was already eroding in a slow spiral of entropy. The Free Worlds League, which held Solaris, became reluctant to spend the money needed to maintain Solaris VII, instead rushing headlong into the First Succession War with dreams of seizing control of the Star League for itself. In addition, the war drew many of the best MechWarriors away from Solaris' arenas, and the city's fortunes plummeted.

After Lyran forces captured several surrounding worlds, the Solarans—never closely aligned with House Marik to begin with—easily switched their allegiance to House Steiner. House Marik responded by cobbling together two reinforced 'Mech battalions from SLDF deserters, which met the Lyrans in a horrific battle in Bracken Swamp, outside Solaris City. The Commonwealth 'Mechs crushed the defenders, but in the process they also laid waste to one of the area's two freshwater treatment facilities and several small communities.

TRAGEDY STRIKES

Shamed by their forced retreat offworld, the Marik force used its aged *Essex* Class Destroyer, *Despiser,* to bombard Solaris City with tactical nuclear weapons in an effort to raze the site of their defeat. The attack has never been forgiven or forgotten on Solaris VII. Even at the time of this writing, the inhabitants of Solaris continue to commemorate the April 2, 2903 misjump that destroyed the *Despiser* and her crew. The bombardment missed the city proper by several kilometers, instead striking Solaris' northern suburbs. The attack set the entire area, known as Xolara, ablaze in a nuclear firestorm, killing much of its population and destroying many of its BattleMech construction facilities.

The attack consolidated support for the Lyrans among the population, and in 2904 Archon Elizabeth Steiner passed the Solaris Act, which established Solaris VII as a neutral world. Several small BattleMech firms attempted to rebuild their devastated facilities but found Xolara a deadly area to live or work in. Toxic wastes, combined with the radioactive residue of the attack, turned many of Xolara's neighborhoods into death zones. For several years Xolara remained totally abandoned, but eventually the poor of Solaris City proper moved in, setting up small squatting settlements among the ruins. Then several firms, bolstered by financial incentives from the Commonwealth, rebuilt their shops and facilities in Xolara. Some still exist there today.

REBIRTH

Peace prevailed on Solaris for several decades following the attack, and the Games resumed and grew in popularity and profit. This period of peace and growing prosperity was shattered in 2998, when elements of the Fourth Marik Militia—in direct violation of Solaran neutrality—landed on the planet, intent on crippling Solaris' 'Mech-repair facilities. Still stinging over losing Solaris to the Lyrans, House Marik sent a reinforced battalion of raiders into Solaris City's international zone. The raiders inflicted heavy damage on the repair facility there, before withdrawing into the area known as Roland Fields.

Gundar's Grenadiers, the Commonwealth's mercenary defenders on Solaris VII, swept in too late to save Solaris City proper but intercepted the raiders in Roland Fields. The ensuing battle lasted for five days, with the outnumbered Grenadiers making use of secret repair bases for supplies and rearming. The mercenaries crippled the Marik forces with hit-and-run attacks, and by the time the Marik force left Solaris, the mercenaries had whittled the unit down to under a dozen battered BattleMechs. Bitterly shamed by the loss, House Marik grew infuriated when each of the other House governments offered funds to rebuild the 'Mech repair facilities in Solaris City, which took heavy damage in the fighting.

Janos Marik eventually sought to revenge this disgrace in 3002, by attempting to seize control of Solaris VII. That operation proved a disaster for the Marik forces. Lyran Loki agents sabotaged one of the invading force's key DropShips near it's landing zone in the Bracken Swamp, cutting off an entire 'Mech battalion in the foreboding bayous, while other Lyran units easily isolated the remainder of the Marik forces. The raiders' aerospace fighter pilots found themselves ill-prepared for the heavy rains and dense fogs of central Grayland, and their bombing runs achieved little success. The Lyran's defense forces, meanwhile, gnawed away at the raiders' supply dumps.

Within three weeks of the initial attack, the Marik raid had proved an utter disaster, with the only real damage coming from two lances of Marik 'Mechs that made their way into Xolara and leveled several small factories that had been rebuilt there. Later, it became clear that this "successful" attack group had actually become lost and had literally stumbled into Xolara.

PEACE AT LAST

Following the end of the Fourth Succession War, the popularity of the games on Solaris surged as the matches on the Game World became an outlet for the simmering rivalries of the Great Houses. The new revenue allowed Solaris' Civic Council to resume rebuilding efforts in Xolara and bankroll improvement projects in the small towns and villages of Burgton as well.

At the same time, a lack of space in Solaris City proper fueled a building boom in the Reaches, leading to the renovation and construction of several small arenas in the area, which soon became a tourist attraction in its own right. Several BattleMech and vehicle manufacturers and designers also expanded or opened facilities in the Reaches during this period, providing a further boost to the area economy.

THE REACHES TODAY

The popularity of the Reaches' arenas has continued to grow during the past few decades, and many of the stadia, such as King of the Mountain, now receive near equal billing with the better-known arenas of Solaris City proper. Tourists unable to afford the admission prices at the larger arenas of the city proper often make the trek to the Reaches for a taste of combat, then rehash the matches in one of the bars or restaurants that have sprung up to serve the tourist trade. These developments, along with the area's long-established industrial tenants, provide the Reaches with a fairly robust economy.

Despite this prosperity, the Reaches retain the flavor of a "frontier town." The Great Houses, who rule Solaris City through their representatives on the Civic Council, have made no real attempts to exert any authority over these areas. Several smaller states such as the Periphery realms, the Bandit Kingdoms and remnants of the Free Rasalhague Republic briefly tried to establish their own sectors in the Reaches in imitation of the House zones in the city proper, but abandoned these efforts when the high costs of administering these areas became apparent. Now, the only real law in the Reaches is the one imposed by gangs and independent stables of MechWarriors. Washed-up MechWarriors, mercenaries, and others for whom the bright promise of Solaris City has dulled continue to flock to the area, eking out a living however they can. As a result, the Reaches have earned a reputation as a place where anything or any service can be had, for a price.

In recent years, the Reaches have also become a destination for thousands of refugees fleeing the Clan War. While many brought money, others came with little more than despair. Unable to find accommodations in the crowded districts of Solaris City proper, many have settled in the Reaches.

The Clans themselves view Solaris and the Games with disdain. Recent intelligence, however, indicates that some Clan outcasts have settled in the small Burgton village of Joppa. What this development may portend for Solaris and the Reaches remains unknown.

LOCATIONS

The following sections provide descriptions and game information for the gangs and MechWarrior stables of the Reaches and the different locales that make up the area.

Gangs and Stables, p. 8, contains descriptions of the area's gangs and MechWarrior stables. These can provide the basis for NPCs in **MechWarrior** campaigns set in the Reaches. Create game statistics for these NPCs by using one of the new Archetypes supplied in **MechWarrior Archetypes**, p. 64. Modify the Archetype to fit your game needs as necessary. For more information on using Archetypes to generate **MechWarrior** characters, see p.13, **MechWarrior, Second Edition**. The rivalries between the Reaches'

various gangs and stables can also serve as starting points for designing your own games and campaigns.

The **Xolara, Burgton, Bracken Swamp**, and **Roland Fields** sections describe 'Mech arenas, businesses, restaurants and other points of interest within each locale. These descriptions include game information for the 'Mech arenas. For game information on other sites detailed in these sections, consult the **Site Archetypes** printed on the back of the Reaches map. These **Site Archetypes** are generic game maps that provide game statistics for the various Reaches sites. These maps can also be modified for use in **MechWarrior** campaigns set elsewhere as well.

GANGS AND STABLES

The Reaches are home to a number of small to medium-sized, independent MechWarrior stables. These groups of warriors fight in the Reaches' arenas, forming a kind of "minor league" for the matches in Solaris City proper. Occasionally a MechWarrior from one of these stables rises to the "major league" arenas in the city proper.

The isolated nature of the Reaches has also attracted several gangs to the area. In some cases, these gangs are little more than loose bands of thugs. Others, however, comprise sophisticated criminal organizations. Many of these gang members are either old hands who have retired from Solaris City's Mafia or yakuza families, or young criminals aspiring to careers in these underworld organizations.

Each gang and stable is presented in a format that uses a number of categories to describe it. Some of these categories are self-explanatory. Others are defined below.

The **Colors/Badge** entry describes the color insignia registered by the stable or gang and, if applicable, the badge of arms or the graffiti "tag" used by the group to distinguish themselves.

The **'Mechs/Equipment** category provides information on the number of BattleMechs employed by the stable. In the case of a gang, this category describes the heavy equipment used by the gang.

The **Standard Contract** entry describes the average or standard monthly salary and the percentage of purses taken by the stable.

Warrior, a magazine catering to Solaran MechWarriors, publishes annual stable ratings that summarize the relative merit and stability of each stable. The **Rating** category provides the rating of the listed stable. A "AA" Rating denotes an excellent, all-around stable. MechWarriors can expect good contracts and generous treatment from a AA-rated stable, though contracts are sometimes

strictly enforced. An "A" Rating denotes a reliable stable, although occasional problems may arise because of equipment shortages or troublesome stablemasters. These problems are minor, however. A "B" Rating marks an average stable. B-rated stables offer contract terms that are fair, but not generous. A "B" stable is not usually on sure financial ground. A "C" Rating is given to below average stables. A difficult stablemaster, occasional charges of cheating, bad contract terms, or poor financial condition make such a stable a poor bet for long-term involvement, although some MechWarriors may have no other option. The "D" Rating is reserved for the worst stables. Proven cases of fraudulent contracts, dishonesty, cheating, bad financial conditions, or a particularly unpleasant stablemaster can earn a stable a "D" rating. The rating is generally reserved for smaller, fly-by-night operations; major stables rarely fall this far. But if they do, they rarely rise again.

All gangs and stables maintain several standard positions in their hierarchies. Gangs generally have a gang leader who oversees the group's entire operations, a warlord who supervises the gang's combat operations, and a "street eyes" man who gathers intelligence. Stables are headed by a stablemaster, and generally employ a senior tech responsible for maintaining the stable's 'Mechs and an instructor to keep the stable's MechWarriors in fighting trim. The **Personnel** category lists each gang's and stable's hierarchy.

The **Facilities/Turf** category describes the listed stable's 'Mech and training facilities. In the case of gangs, this category details the listed gang's operational base and other facilities it uses, such as safe houses.

The **Criminal Activities** entry describes the types of criminal activity the listed gang most frequently conducts.

THE DEAD

Gang Leader: Julia Delgado
Colors/Badge: The Dead favor black synthleather and tag their turf with a stylized hangman's noose.
'Mechs/Equipment: 5 hovercars, 1 truck, 8 motorcycles
Gang Members: 25
Personnel

Gang Leader: A former member of the Marik-affiliated Fitzhugh Stables, Julia Delgado was drummed out of that group for allegedly cheating in a MechWarrior match. Left bitter toward her former backers, Delgado fell in with a rough crowd in the Reaches and eventually established her own prostitution ring. This ring evolved into the Dead, a gang composed largely of other former MechWarriors.

Warlord: The Dead's warlord—Shiller "The Sword" Verril—spends most of his time patrolling Xolara's Amberton Quarter, ensuring that no other gangs encroach on the Dead's territory. His nickname "The Sword" comes from the broken sword he sports almost constantly—a weapon he allegedly appropriated from a noble who insulted Verril early in his criminal career.

Street Eyes: Kwang Chuini was born and raised in a family intimately involved in yakuza operations. About five years ago, his family was decimated in a mysterious hovercar crash. Chuini turned to the streets and eventually joined the Dead. He maintains wide and varied street contacts and is a reputed master of the martial arts. The Dead's warlord also harbors an intense hatred for the yakuza and anything related to them.

Facilities/Turf: The Dead maintain two small apartment buildings as operational bases. Both have old underground garages and reportedly feature multiple entrances and exits, most of which the gang keeps hidden and uses for emergencies only.

The group claims the whole of Xolara's Amberton Quarter as its turf.

Criminal Activity: The Dead do a thriving business extorting money from the prostitution rings that operate throughout the red-light district that occupies most of the Amberton Quarter. The few legitimate businesses that remain in the area also pay monthly "protection fees" to the gang.

Comments: One of the more well-known gangs of the Reaches, the Dead form a highly organized group that more closely resembles a polished business enterprise than a typical street gang. In addition to its businesslike efficiency, the gang is noted for its ruthless and deadly response to threats.

The Dead have successfully avoided attracting the attention of the Solaran authorities, but the group's success has piqued the interest of several of Solaris City's Mafia and yakuza families, who undoubtedly relish the thought of absorbing the Dead's extortion rackets into their own operations.

This interest, and the Dead's rejection of Mafia and yakuza offers, have fueled a recent rise in drive-by shootings and gun battles in the quarter's isolated streets. Ironically, some area residents have assisted the Dead in the defense of their turf, apparently preferring the gang's rule to that of the yakuza or Mafia. Recently the Dead have stepped up recruiting efforts, apparently to bolster their firepower.

HIGHWAYMEN

Gang Leader: Reggie "The Red" Philburn
Colors/Badge: The Highwaymen wear red arm bands, leg bands, and headbands. For robberies the gang members don red full-face masks.
'Mechs/Equipment: 10 hovercycles
Gang Members: 17
Personnel

Gang Leader/Warlord: Reggie "The Red" Philburn is a flamboyant, arrogant, self-styled Robin Hood, whose activities as a modern-day highwayman have made him something of a folk hero among the residents of the Reaches. Although his reputation has grown far faster than the amount of money his Highwaymen have stolen, Philburn has become a nagging irritant for local authorities.

Street Eyes: Karina Brayman spends much of her time working at the gallows, a Beal City bar. This job places her in an excellent position to perform her intelligence-gathering duties for the Highwaymen. As a barmaid, the svelte Karina can easily and unobtrusively learn the plans of wealthy travelers and the worth of any valuables they carry. Although her dual life engenders substantial danger, Karina always ensures she is amply compensated for the risks she takes.

Facilities/Turf: The Highwaymen operate out of a small house in the outskirts of Beal City. The group claims a large section of Bracken Swamp as its turf.

Criminal Activity: The Highwaymen survive by performing armed robberies. They have earned a reputation as "friendly" thieves by not harming or killing any of their victims, and from time to time they even allow a victim to keep some of his money and goods, rather than leave him penniless.

Comments: The Highwaymen usually strike at wealthy travelers on the deserted roads near Bracken Swamp. They usually lay an ambush, suggesting efficient and effective intelligence gathering. The group cuts off its victims' escape routes with hovercycles or makeshift roadblocks, then quickly (but politely) relieves the victim of his possessions before departing into the darkness of the swamp.

The gang's practice of preying on visiting nobles has concerned local authorities, and Solaran police frequently lay traps for the Highwaymen. So far Philburn and his band have eluded capture, however.

Apparently frustrated with their ineffectual attempts to capture "The Red," Solaran authorities have posted a sizable reward for Philburn's capture, and several MechWarriors are reportedly patrolling Bracken Swamp in search of the Highwaymen's leader.
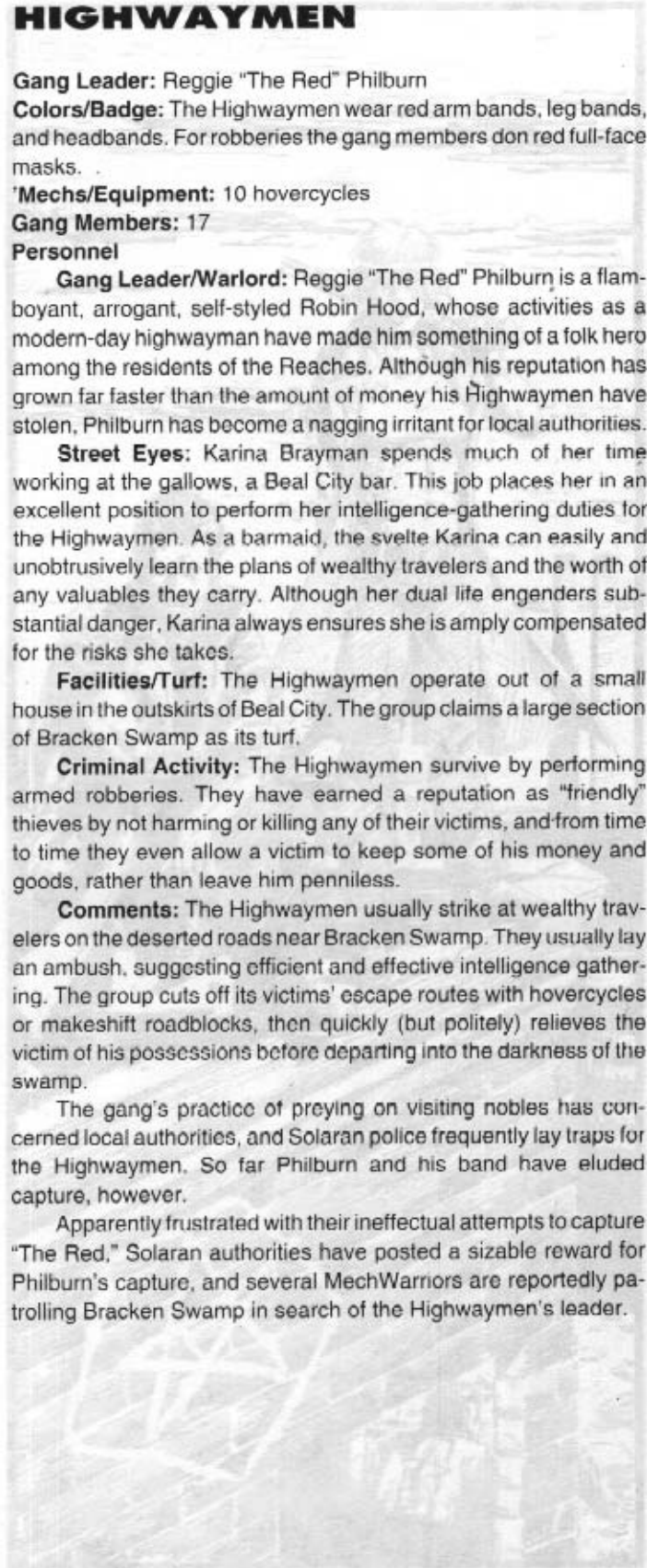
THE PENTASTARS

Gang Leader: Ramone Patterson

Colors/Badge: The Pentastars wear badges that consist of bright blue pentagrams or pentastars on oblong, silver backgrounds. The gang marks its turf with a star inside a pentagon, usually painted in white or blue.

'Mechs/Equipment: 3 hovercars, 4 motorcycles

Gang Members: 19

Personnel

Gang Leader: Ramone Patterson grew up in Burgton's North Pier, where the Pentastars recruited him at the tender age of 12. Frustrated at the lack of opportunities his impoverished upbringing provided, he found a new family in the Pentastars and has shown an almost suicidal loyalty to the gang. As he grew older, Patterson slashed his way to the top of the gang, and he now rules with an iron fist. Although he occasionally lets his emotions overpower his judgment, other members of the Pentastars have learned that questioning the orders of their quick-tempered, ruthless leader can prove deadly.

Warlord: Silvia Burin is a product of the rough-and-tumble environment of Xolara. Involved with gangs since age 14, Burin is considered a seasoned veteran at the age of 26. Her trademark silver headband and sawed-off shotgun command respect and fear throughout Burgton.

Facilities/Turf: The Pentastars base their operations in an abandoned factory in the northern Reaches. They prefer to operate north of Xolara, in an area of Burgton centered around Dowagiac.

Criminal Activity: The Pentastars are known for armed robberies and burglaries. They usually strike one residence per week and fence their own goods.

Comments: The Pentastars, like many of the gangs operating in the Reaches, are composed primarily of washed-up MechWarriors. Broke, down on their luck, or both, these MechWarriors turn to crime because they lack marketable skills. In the case of the Pentastars, most of the original gang members came from the former Burning Star Stables, which folded after its involvement in a match-fixing scandal was exposed.

The current Pentastars are much more violent than the founding members. The younger gang members are largely local recruits who grew up in the violent environment of Burgton. Though these members have made the gang more violent, their fierce loyalty has also made infiltrating the Pentastars difficult, if not impossible.

Recently the group attempted to rob the Den of the Dispossessed. The endeavor ended in utter failure when the bartender and several patrons opened fire on the would-be robbers rather than submit to their threats. The gun battle that followed left two Pentastars dead and prodded the usually slow Solaris police into action against the gang.

Several undercover officers have made unsuccessful attempts to penetrate the Pentastars and continue to tail the gang's members and stake out their headquarters. Although no formal arrests have been made, the increased police scrutiny has forced the Pentastars to curtail their criminal activities, resulting in a money crunch for the members.

A MATTER OF RESPECT: PART 1

Even on the rare clear day, only those who know its exact location can hope to find Vining Engineering and Salvage Team. The BattleMech designer's shop, located in the crumbling ruins of an abandoned manufacturing plant in Solaris' Reaches, is identified only by a tiny sign by the door that reads simply "VEST." Those who work at the half-buried BattleMech plant need no more conspicuous marker, and for others . . . well, sometimes one does not wish to be too conspicuous in the Reaches.

Passersby usually stroll right past the shop without giving it a second look, but today Dr. David C. Vining, VEST's founder, noticed a small crowd of people gathered near the old building as he arrived at work. As he drew closer, he spotted the object of their attention—a large, blasted-out section of wall near the old terminal entrance. The lawless zones around Solaris City suffered more than their share of thefts, and it seemed the local thugs had finally scored against VEST's security forces. When he spotted the 'Mech footprints leading down the street, however, Vining realized the gaping hole was definitely not the work of any local gang, and he vaulted through the hole, tearing his white engineering smock on the twisted edge of a door frame.

Relief washed over him at the sight of his staff, on their feet and moving through the smoke-filled air. Laser burns and melted ferrocrete—the telltale scars of a firefight—marred the walls and floor, but the prototype production line appeared intact. He turned toward the first 'Mech bay, and relief gave way to shock. The bay was empty. The broken myomer restraining harness dangled limply from the three-story array.

Spotting his chief engineer through the slowly clearing haze, Vining started toward him. "What in the name of holy hell happened here, Wally? I want a full damage assessment!"

Wallace Scott wiped sweat off his face, looking exhausted and furious at the same time. His left arm bore an angry, red burn. "That new tech, Robby France, took the *Sasquatch* on a test walk down the floor. But instead of returning it to Bay One, he opened up on us and burned his way out."

"*Damn* it," Vining swore under his breath. One crooked technician had cost him the SQS-TH-001 *Sasquatch*, a top-of-the-line prototype 'Mech that represented months of work and millions of C-bills. "*You* hired him, Wally. Now where'd he work last? I wanna know who backed that son of a bitch."

Wallace sighed. "Last I know of, he ran with a cooperative called the Vampires. I don't know much about them, but his other reference checked out." Somehow, he managed to shrug with only one shoulder. "I saw the little weasel with the Vampires' stablemaster a couple of days ago. I'd guess they're behind it."

Vining nodded in agreement. "As I remember, France is relatively new here. He hasn't been on Solaris long enough to make the kind of contacts who'd pay him to heist a valuable prototype. His friends are our most likely suspects."

Wallace glanced at the BattleMechs sitting at the end of the production line. "You wanna to go after him, Doc, just give the word. We could take him out with what we've got."

Following Wallace's gaze, Vining considered his options. Even in the newly assembled *Chameleon* 'Mechs, he and his engineering team could take down the *Sasquatch* if necessary. But even in the rough Reaches of Solaris, waging a BattleMech war in the streets would buy him more trouble than he cared for. Vining rubbed his chin thoughtfully, then turned to his head technician.

"Robby France and the Vampires must feel like the kings of the galaxy, stealing that prototype from under our noses. They've got a priceless piece of one-of-a-kind, free hardware, and probably can't wait to show it off. Take Nowak and Fuller and spread the word that we want a match against the Vampires' new BattleMech."

Wallace frowned. "Doc, Robby'll know it's us and smell a trap the minute we walk in. We'll have to offer cash stakes deeper than ComStar's coffers to lure the Vampires into a match against us. Why not hire some muscle and *steal* the *Sasquatch* back?"

"Too easy, Wally. If you stole a prototype 'Mech, you'd expect the owner to steal it back; so will they. Unless they're fools, they'll have the *Sasquatch* well-hidden and heavily guarded. Any attempt to take her will likely get our own personnel killed, and the Vampires will still have our 'Mech."

Scott nodded slowly. "Still, Doc, this'll cost us a lot."

"Use whatever funds you have to." Vining gave Scott a grim smile. "If we do this right, we can get the prototype back and sell a few hundred *Sasquatches* in the process. A good demonstration is the best way to market anything, and Gaffa's Ghost knows we can always use the money."

Scott nodded and started off, but Vining called him back. "About Robby France—you have some connections here in the Reaches, don't you, Wally?"

"I know some people who know some people," Scott replied carefully. "What exactly are you looking for?"

"France stole the *Sasquatch* from every VEST employee, Wally. We gave him a job and a place, and he stole from us. It's a matter of respect. We let Robby boy off the hook and we'll be visited by every two-bit punk looking for an easy score."

Scott blanched. "You want him killed?"

Still smiling his grim smile, Vining shook his head. "I'm tempted, but no. An arrogant son of a snake like France fears humiliation far worse than death. I want to take his *pride* away, just as he took ours."

"No problem," said Scott, feeling an unpleasant grin of his own spread across his face.

Vining clapped him on the shoulder. "Take care of Robby France and get us a match with the Vampires, Wally. I'll take care of the rest." He turned to the rest of the workers and called for attention. "Double up the shifts on the prototype line—time-and-a-half for everybody." Vining joined the rest of his employees, who surrounded a half-finished 'Mech moored on the production line. It was going to be a long night.

HOMBRES STABLE

Stablemaster: Cino Vincenti
Affiliation: None, but tendencies toward Marik
Colors/Badge: The head of a red bull impaling a crumpled BattleMech on one of its silver-tipped horns.
'Mechs: 8
MechWarriors: 9
Standard Contract: 20 percent, 850 C-bills/month
Rating: C
Personnel

Instructor: Before joining the Hombres, Constance Raba served in the Free Worlds League military as a company commander with the Andurien-based First Legion, Free World's Legionnaires. She served with distinction, most notably in border-world campaigns against mercenaries from the Magistracy of Canopus. Despite her impressive talents as a commander, Raba was demoted in rank twice for insubordination and rotated to non-combat duty. Frustrated with the military mentality, Raba left the First Legion and took up with the Hombres.

Facilities: The Hombres maintain their own stablehouse and a small practice field ten kilometers north of North Pier. Another stable originally owned the site, but was forced to sell the property when it went bankrupt. The Hombres favor combat in the nearby Scrapyard arena, where they have a strong following of fans. They also fight at King of the Mountain and the Gardens occasionally.

Comments: Stablemaster Cino Vincenti formed the Hombres only six months ago and has guided the stable's rapid rise through the Reaches arenas, bringing it up from a D to a C rating. A master showman, Vincenti has deftly generated publicity for his stable, making the Hombres a favorite with fans. He has styled his MechWarriors after the ancient Terran "cowboys," and the ten-gallon hats the stable members don for press conferences have made them a distinct and instantly recognizable group.

Vincenti recently scored a publicity coup after the stablemaster and several of his MechWarriors got into a barroom brawl with Dick Benson and a handful of the Vampires. Both of the stablemasters swore revenge. In a subsequent, highly publicized match in the Vampires' home arena, the Hombres defeated the rival stable. Vincenti delighted the crowd and enraged the defeated Vampires by donning western garb and riding his prize horse in front of the stands after the match, waving his hat and hollering.

The Hombres have not yet replied to the Vampires' request for a rematch, but most fight watchers expect the stable to accept the challenge and hand the Vampires another defeat. Currently, the Hombres are also scheduled to face the Wraiths in a tag-team match in the Scrapyard. Observers expect a large-scale slugfest.

HUNTSMEN STABLE

Stablemaster: Matthew Alder
Affiliation: Uncertain
Colors/Badge: A green banner with a diagonal crimson slash across its surface.
'Mechs: 10
MechWarriors: 12
Standard Contract: 25 percent, 1,000 C-bills/month
Rating: B+
Personnel

Instructor: Sabon Yeager, the Huntsmen's young drillmaster/instructor, remains largely a mystery. She has never discussed her background or the origin of the horrible burn scars on her right arm. The statuesque Sabon trains her charges with a regimen of harsh discipline.

Master of Assassins: Many locals believe the stable's master of assassins, Dirk Reaver, is a renegade Clan Elemental. Although he is not a MechWarrior, the giant of a man oversees security for the Huntsmen, a task he performs ruthlessly. Reaver shadows Matthew Alder almost constantly and has reportedly saved the stablemaster's life on several occasions.

Facilities: The Huntsmen maintain private sleeping quarters in an old manor house in Joppa. They store their 'Mechs in a recently rebuilt barn on the manor grounds, only bringing them out for practice sessions in Roland Fields or for matches.

Comments: The Huntsmen remain a mystery to fight commentators. When the stable first appeared three years ago, the Huntsmen's garb—green hunting jerkins—elicited scorn from local media commentators. One reviewer for the *Solaran Spectator* even referred to them as "Matthew and his Merry Men." The impressive successes of these unknowns silenced such critics, however, and have earned the Huntsmen respectable stature and a fierce reputation in a remarkably short time. Many believe the stable will soon be the equal of any major Solaris City stable.

MechWarriors who have fought against the Huntsmen also note the stable's predilection for fighting to the death. In most Solaran matches, MechWarriors usually spare the lives of defeated opponents. The Huntsmen, however, seem to relish killing their vanquished foes, giving the stable one of the highest kill ratios in any Solaran 'Mech league.

No records exist of the stable or its MechWarriors prior to their appearance on Solaris VII, which has added to the Huntsmen's mystique. Several media reps and private operatives have attempted to learn the group's origins, only to disappear or wind up floating face-down in the Solaris River.

BANSHEES STABLE

Stablemaster: Burton Rothroc
Affiliation: Steiner, tendencies toward the Free Rasalhague Republic
Colors/Badge: A vicious bee with a prominent, forward-pointing laser/stinger on a red circle.
'Mechs: 15
MechWarriors: 22
Standard Contract: 30 percent, 600 C-bills/month
Rating: B–
Personnel

Senior Tech: The only daughter of owner and stablemaster Burton Rothroc, Lizzie Rothroc is known throughout Burgton and the Reaches as a crackerjack 'Mech tech. A graduate of the Blackjack military academy, she served in the Federated Commonwealth's Twelfth Star Guards. Shortly after the unit's defeat at the hands of Clan Jade Falcon on Steelton in 3050—a defeat that decimated the Twelfth—Rothroc retired from active duty and joined her father's stable.

Facilities: The Banshees do not own a formal stablehouse but maintain a residence in Kalamazoo. The stable stores its 'Mechs in a small industrial building outside the village proper. The Banshees practice in the heavily secluded hills that surround Bracken Swamp.

Comments: The Banshees are composed almost entirely of retired veterans of the Clan War. Most are affiliated with former Lyran Commonwealth units or traditional Commonwealth mercenary units. A handful of the stable's MechWarriors are refugees from the decimated Free Rasalhague Republic. Beorn Van Kampen, former company commander of the Leskovik Militia—a unit crushed during the invasion by Clan Jade Falcon—leads these warriors.

The Banshees are well known in the Reaches' arenas for their heated rivalry with the Huntsmen. A recent tag-team match between the two stables resulted in a stunning loss for the stable and claimed the life of Karmon Rothroc, the son of stablemaster Burton Rothroc. Young Rothroc's death cemented the Banshees' hatred for the Huntsmen, who have sworn to destroy the Banshees for their audacity and foolhardiness in pursuing the rivalry.

Lately, the Banshees have been bumping heads with a number of other minor-league stables as well. A drive for publicity has motivated most of these incidents, but several subsequent grudge matches have taken a serious toll on the stable. Recently, the Banshees came across a lance of Wraiths during a training exercise in Bracken Swamp. After exchanging taunts, the two sides squared up. In the resulting fight, the Banshees' Van Kampen lost his right hand to an errant missile. Several stable members also confronted a handful of MechWarriors from the Hombres stable in a local tavern recently, further fueling the Banshees' growing reputation as a contentious stable.

The Banshees' have also been plagued by rumors that the stable is a refuge for Clan War deserters. The arrest of a deserter fighting for the stable gave birth to these rumors, and a Federated Commonwealth investigation of the stable further fueled them. The resulting controversy and the Banshees' loss to the Huntsmen have lowered the stable's rating.

VAMPIRES STABLE

Stablemaster: Dick Benson
Affiliation: None, but tendencies toward Steiner and Davion
Colors/Badge: White vampire fangs, trimmed in dripping red blood.
'Mechs: 10
MechWarriors: 14
Standard Contract: 25 percent, 800 C-bills/month
Rating: C–. The Vampires have begun stooping to thievery and cheating to make ends meet recently. As a result, *Warrior* magazine is expected to lower the stable's rating to a D or lower in it's next annual ratings.
Personnel

Senior Tech: Annis McKaffry, a former leftenant with the Federated Commonwealth, heads the Vampires' 'Mech-repair and -modification crews. His service with the Tenth Lyran Guards on Skondia prior to the Clan invasion helped land him a job on Solaris VII, but after several failures in 'Mechs he worked on—including one that cost the life of a MechWarrior employed by Silver Dragon Stables—he was forced to take a job with the Vampires. The Silver Dragons reportedly harbor a strong grudge against McKaffry and have a contract out on his life.

Instructor: Velma Jankara, a former MechWarrior with House Kurita's elite Second Sword of Light, recently took over as instructor for the Vampires. She retired from active duty after battle injuries left her severely crippled. Although Jankara is only able to get out of her wheelchair for a few hours every day, she still pilots a BattleMech like a skilled and finely honed MechWarrior. With the Vampires' financial difficulties growing, occasionally Jankara has even stepped into the arenas herself to provide a victory for the stable.

Facilities: The Vampires have a small 'Mech-repair shop in Xolara. Small stables have used the shop for centuries, but the decline of these groups has placed the facility in dire economic straits. As a result, the shop is gradually deteriorating.

Comments: The Vampires enjoyed a steady rise in status and purses for almost two years, only to fall into a string of losses that cost the stable a great deal of it's profits and some of its most talented MechWarriors. As the stable's revenues slid, so did its scruples. In an infamous incident in 3054, the Vampires were caught tampering with their opponents' ammunition in their only match in the Davion arena. The Solaris Council banned the stable from the primary arenas in the city proper, forcing the Vampires to move their stablehouse to Xolara.

The Vampires' troubles have continued, with authorities arresting several of the stable's MechWarriors for stealing from local merchants. And a Solaran 'Mech design firm also accused the Vampires of stealing a prototype BattleMech recently. At present, only one arena—King of the Mountain—will host Vampire matches.

WRAITHS STABLE

Stablemaster: Joshua Ling
Affiliation: Liao, with some leanings toward Kurita
Colors/Badge: A white shield emblazoned with a shadowy wraith wielding a golden sword.
'Mechs: 5
MechWarriors: 7
Standard Contract: 35 percent, 500 C-bills/month
Rating: D+
Personnel

Senior Tech: The Wraith's quiet senior tech, Francois Chi, admits to being raised in the Capellan Confederation and having served the Confederation military during the Forth Succession War, but virtually nothing else is known about his career before he joined the Wraiths. Today Chi is very old and slow moving, but he enjoys a reputation as an expert on BattleMech technology. Other stables pay top dollar to send their techs for training with Chi, who is widely respected even in the major-league stables. Why he remains with the Wraiths continues to puzzle observers.

Instructor: Gomez Long served as a battalion leader with the First Andurien Lancers during the Andurien rebellion against House Marik. Long narrowly escaped death when the Free Worlds' counterattack nearly destroyed the unit, and he fled to Solaris VII. He then managed to reach the ranks of Solaris' top 20 MechWarriors while fighting for Bromley Stables, before suffering a disabling injury to his right arm. Since then, Long has made his living as an instructor, finding a home with the Wraiths a year ago.

Facilities: The Wraiths operate from a former sewage pumping station just outside Rowe. The facility has been extensively overhauled and is now a reinforced bunker capable of housing the entire stable and their 'Mechs.

The Wraiths usually practice in Roland Fields or the murky bayous of Bracken Swamp.

Comments: The Wraiths generated excitement throughout Solaris with a stunning string of victories following their formation in 3053. Bolstered by the talents of Francois Chi and several powerful MechWarriors, the stable seemed poised to break the top 20. The Wraiths had even begun scheduling matches in the arenas of the city proper when the *Solaran Spectator* reported that the stable had rigged some of its matches by sabotaging their opponents' BattleMechs. Few stables or cooperatives became willing to take matches against the Wraiths. Those that did attributed their subsequent losses to Wraith sabotage, further fueling the rumors of cheating.

Actually, the Wraiths themselves were the victims of a jealous rival—the Silver Dragons. Apparently, the Dragons feared the upstart stable would threaten the positions of their MechWarriors in the top 20 and paid a *Spectator* reporter to plant the false story. When the Wraith's stablemaster, Joshua Ling, learned the truth, he struck back in true Capellan style. Ling simply bought off several of their top MechWarriors, paying them to join his stable. The Wraiths gained MechWarriors that enhanced the stable's reputation and winnings while the Silver Dragons saw their reputation and winnings plummet. Although many of these warriors have since left the

Wraiths, a pair of ex-Silver Dragons—the Kino brothers—remain with the stable.

Currently the Wraiths fight matches in a number of arenas in the Reaches, but they favor the Scrapyard and the Gardens for their matches.

XOLARA

Original Solaris City Map

1.	SOLARIS PRISION	12.	SHATNER'S SCRAP
2.	BEAUMONT GENERAL HOSPITAL	13.	O'NEAL'S
3.	SOLARIS POLICE SUBSTATION	14.	MATANI'S 'MECHS
4.	THE WYNINGHAM	15.	THE HOLIDAY MEMORIAL GARDEN
5.	COMPANY ARMS	16.	FRR HALL OF HONOR
6.	THE BISMARK	17.	OGS PRODUCTIONS
7.	KING OF THE MOUNTAIN ARENA	18.	RANDAL'S
8.	BALOO'S MUSEUM	19.	THE GRIM STRETCH
9.	THE DEN OF THE DISPOSSESSED	20.	SOURTHERN BANK AND TRUST
10.	THE HARTFORD GARDENS	21.	THE STAR HEIGHTS
11.	VEST	22.	THE SPECTATOR BUILDING

At the time of the Star League, Xolara formed the heart of Solaris City's industrial zone. Vast industrial parks and 'Mech facilities filled the area. The collapse of the Star League, however, triggered a spiral of decay in Xolara. The Marik nuclear bombardment in 2903 struck a death blow to the area, leveling entire neighborhoods and destroying what had once been a model of modern urban planning.

Amid the barren ruins left by that tragedy, new life eventually began to emerge. Rebuilding efforts restored the area's infrastructure, and soon Xolara's refurbished arenas began attracting tourists and their money, which in turn attracted new businesses to the area. Soon, Xolara's original residents—'Mech design and production firms—returned, setting up offices and small manufacturing facilities in the shattered ruins of the war-ravaged locale.

While some areas of Xolara have been rebuilt and have experienced economic booms, others remain marred by the scars of the past 300 years. In these areas, gangs and thugs live among the ruins, their activities unchecked by authorities.

CITY ADMINISTRATION

BEAUMUNT GENERAL HOSPITAL (X–1)

Built after the Succession Wars, Beaumunt General Hospital is one of Xolara's brightest lights. Although it only has 300 beds, Beaumunt has proved an important revenue source for the local economy.

Named after Dr. Hugo Beaumunt, a pioneering researcher in bionic-implant rejection, the hospital specializes in implant surgery and cancer treatment. The facility consists of several small buildings connected by enclosed walkways and is located on an eight-acre campus of forested, rolling hills.

Recently, Beaumunt's chief of staff, Dr. Lorain Velblud, has begun petitioning the Solaris city government for funds to expand the facility. Velblud's request seems destined to fail, however, as the hospital is under fire for allegedly selling body parts in violation of government transplant guidelines. Some news media reports

have even accused Beaumunt of selling entire bodies to offworld buyers for experimentation. Additional allegations that Beaumunt has been the site of bizarre experiments involving cybernetic combat implantations and captured Clan genetic-breeding technology have also surfaced recently. Several alleged witnesses to these experiments have disappeared or died under mysterious circumstances, further fueling the controversy surrounding the hospital.

SOLARIS POLICE SUBSTATION (X–2)

Solaris City Police Chief Theo Clarke set up this small stationhouse in Xolara to bring a new age of law enforcement to the area. Clarke did so at the request of the Civic Council, which in turn was responding to pressure from promoters in the city proper, who feared that stories of violent crime in Xolara might quell tourism in Solaris City itself.

The effort at policing Xolara has actually created negative publicity rather than reducing it, however. In the summer of 3053, for example, a member of the now-defunct Terminators gang was arrested. When police brought the arrestee to the substation, an all-out riot ensued. Ten police officers were killed and another dozen wounded in the rampage, which also produced countless acts of violence and looting.

Chief Clarke responded by implementing strict curfews and heavy-handed crackdowns on all gang and organized-crime activities in Xolara. As a result, the neighborhoods around the substation have begun to brace for another wave of gang violence in retaliation for the police actions.

SOLARIS PRISON (X–3)

The four-story Solaris Prison was built in 2732 as a medium-grade security facility. Ironically, the prison survived the Marik nuclear attack, which destroyed most of the surrounding buildings.

For the past century, the prison has served as a convenient dumping ground where the Civic Council can hide its crime problem. Rather than maintaining a prison in the central city districts, the council has found Xolara a convenient place to hold prisoners, far from the eyes of tourists and reporters. Publicly, the council downplays the crime problem in Xolara and the city proper, but Solaris Prison is always filled.

A former Federated Commonwealth officer, Lucas Lorenzo, took control of the facility when the previous warden resigned amid allegations he had "rented" prisoners to local businesses as a form of slave labor. Although Lorenzo is an unsavory character, most observers believe he is more honest than his predecessors, or at least better at concealing his wrongdoings.

The facility itself, known locally as the "Rats' Den," is in ill-repair and plagued by overcrowding. The area's gangs smuggle weapons and drugs into the prison freely, and prison breaks occur about twice per year.

NEIGHBORHOODS

AMBERTON QUARTER (X–4)

Xolara's red-light district, Amberton Quarter, lies far from the area's tourist-traveled thoroughfares. Once a thriving residential community, the Quarter's decaying residences now house dozens of brothels and seedy nightclubs, and streetwalkers have become a common sight along its dark streets and dank alleys. Few tourists ever venture into the Quarter to sample the wares, however, and the area's prostitution operations have never yielded enough profits to attract Mafia or yakuza attention.

KEEGO HARBORTON (X–5)

The Keego Harborton neighborhood evolved out of the growth of Solaris City. Its residents maintain a slightly lower standard of living than their counterparts in the city proper, but otherwise it mirrors many of the city's residential neighborhoods. The most affluent area of the Harborton district lies along the banks of the Solaris River. Property values drop as one travels away from the river banks.

NORTHERN HEIGHTS (X–6)

Nestled in the foothills of Solaris City, the Northern Heights were largely spared in the Marik nuclear attack. Then, during the reconstruction of Xolara in the following decades, new shopping districts and several small arenas were built in the area, further enhancing its economic prospects. Now the neighborhood enjoys a position as one of Xolara's most-visited tourist areas. As a result, the Solaris police maintain a much more visible presence in the Northern Heights than in other Xolaran neighborhoods.

THE ZONES (X–7)

Hard-hit by the Marik nuclear strike, the Zones takes its name from the numerous radiation hot spots, or hazard zones, left in the wake of that catastrophe. Over the years the area has become habitable again, although radioactive residue continues to present a danger in some isolated locations. Redevelopment in the Zones has occurred unevenly. As a result, some areas remain virtually lawless, home to squatter families and roving gangs. Traveling in these parts of the Zones is strongly discouraged. Other parts of the Zones, however, have seen the return of industrial and engineering firms. Some of these companies, which include several small 'Mech shops, have even built facilities on the ruins of Xolara's former industrial tenants. Although a few of these firms have already earned strong reputations, the majority are still waiting for the right break.

HOTELS

THE BISMARK (X–8)

Once a posh luxury hotel, centuries of neglect have transformed the Bismark into a semi-vacant deathtrap. The hotel's incredibly low rates have lured the dregs of the Reaches' society, transforming the Bismark into a virtual eight-story slum. Managers

change weekly at the hotel, usually after embezzling whatever money they can or dying in a tenant brawl or gun battle in the halls of the old building.

At one time or another, every House intelligence organization has used the Bismark as a base for operations on Solaris VII. The hotel most likely attracts these organizations because of its position over the remains of Solaris City's old main sewage branch. Many who venture into the subterranean network of tunnels formed by the sewer system, however, are never heard from again.

CAMPRAY ARMS (X-9)

Although the Campray Arms would be considered only a two-star establishment by the standards of Solaris City's hotels, the Campray offers the most posh accommodations available in the Northern Heights. The hotel boasts an arena-viewing lounge that allows patrons to select trivid feeds from any of the Solaris City arenas as well as the nearby King of the Mountain arena.

The Campray is owned by a corporation based in the Draconis Combine, and is managed by Kim Yantril. Although Ms. Yantril maintains high standards for the guests, she also reportedly caters to some unsavory characters, such as the yakuza members who frequently meet in the hotel bar. Yantril adamantly denies any connections to illegal operations, but she always reserves several suites in the name of Otoko no Ko Peterson, a yakuza warlord. Rumors identify Yantril as an ISF agent, planted in the Reaches long ago.

THE WYNINGHAM (X-10)

The Wyningham was built during the peak of the Star League era. The Marik nuclear attack, however, devastated the luxury hotel. The family owners, the Wyninghams, rebuilt the landmark under the assumption that other area business owners would rebuild—a development that never occurred. As a result, the Wyningham never regained its customer base and the family lost most of its investment. Today the Wyningham retains little of the old-world charm it once possessed. Over the past century it fell into disrepair, and now the so-called "Gateway to the Zones" is a haven for the Northern Heights' poor. One of the Wyninghams, Turtin Wyningham, still manages the once graceful palace, but hard times have reduced the family to selling the hotel's handcrafted ornamentation to pay their debts.

ENTERTAINMENT

BALOO'S MUSEUM (X-11)

Perhaps the most shameless tourist trap in Xolara (if not all of Solaris VII), Baloo's Museum of the Unique and Indescribable contains a cornucopia of bizarre exhibits. Cameron Junglo manages this "museum," which is actually little more than a freak show of bogus artifacts and oddities gathered from across the Inner Sphere. Attractions include Samos, the Wolf Boy (the youth is allegedly the result of a Clan experiment that combined wolf and human genetic material), and Yakama, the Indestructible Woman. Assistants repeatedly strike Yakama with swords and daggers, but she somehow manages to survive each attack to perform an exotic

dance at the end of her routine. Baloo's also boasts the skeletal remains of alleged mermaids recovered from Terra, artifacts from an ancient UFO cockpit, and an alleged genetic sample taken from General Aleksandr Kerensky during his years with the SLDF.

Baloo's also features a fully stocked bar and a circuslike performance area where sideshow-type exhibits perform for patrons. Each show is expensive, the drinks are watered down, and local pickpockets and muggers target the patrons, yet Baloo's consistently draws tourists and thrill-seekers.

DEN OF THE DISPOSSESSED (X-12)

Commonly known as the Den, this underground bar and discotheque attracts a clientele of washed-up MechWarriors and others living on the edge of society. Charred pieces of BattleMech armor line the walls, below the flags of forgotten stables. Converted 'Mech cockpits serve as booths. The building itself lies in the ruins of an old factory, and rumors hold that tunnels extend from hidden panels behind the bar to escape exits and secret rooms in the old factory's sub-basement.

Any service can be purchased in the Den. Mercenary recruiters, assassins, corporate spies, saboteurs, and rogue intelligence operators are only a few of the types rumored to hawk their services in the bar. Ramos Lei, a former MechWarrior of the Capellan Confederation, currently owns the Den. Ramos' wife, Francesca, tends bar. Some say Ramos Lei played an important role in the Andurien rebellion, but he denies fighting for any government other than the Confederation.

POINTS OF INTEREST

FRR HALL OF HONOR (X-13)

The near total collapse of the Free Rasalhague Republic during the Clan invasion forced many civilians and military members to refuges across the Inner Sphere, including Solaris. The FRR (Free Rasalhague Republic) Hall of Honor was funded by several such refugees, who wished to memorialize the heroes of the Free Rasalhague movement and the Clan invasion. Several exhibits display images and artifacts from the battlefields of the Clan invasion, often glossing over the true history of the campaigns waged in defense of the young realm. The museum also contains several exhibits of captured Clan Elemental battle armor and BattleMech equipment. And every week the museum presents special plays staged by refugees to illustrate the sacrifices of the Republic's "valiant freedom fighters."

Museum curator Untur Vols has used the proceeds from the Hall of Honor to fund several mercenary companies that are currently training in Roland Fields. Many believe Vols will launch an all-out attack into Clan space with his Solaris recruits soon.

MEMORIAL GARDEN (X-14)

During the massive rebuilding effort in Xolara that followed the Succession Wars, the Civic Council authorized the construction of this walking garden to commemorate those who died in the Marik nuclear attack on Solaris City. The park features statues of several

famous Lyran war heroes, and for a short time many tourists and locals considered a stroll through the garden a pleasant diversion.

The recent rise of gang activity in Xolara, however, has turned the Memorial Gardens into a dangerous place once the sun begins to set. Under the cover of darkness, skirmishing gangs transform the paths of the garden into fire zones. Several gangs claim the garden as their turf and are more than willing to defend it.

OGS PRODUCTIONS (X–15)

OGS Productions is a trivid production company based in a factory refitted to serve as a trivid studio. OGS' founders—Oscar Drayton, Geraldine Fitz, and Simon Freely—began by making commercials for local clients. After years of barely breaking even, OGS hit the proverbial jackpot with a series called *The Sterling Hawks*. This trivid serial follows the fortunes of an up-and-coming stable on Solaris VII, and often features cameos by famous MechWarriors. The series stars several young unknowns who have developed an incredible following among teenage girls. The Sterling Hawks is marketed throughout the Federated Commonwealth and in the past year has become the third most popular trivid in the realm, enriching its creators.

OGS' sudden influx of profits has had a dark side, however, attracting the attention of local organized-crime figures intent on extorting a portion of OGS' royalties. In the winter of 3054, this interest manifested itself in a drive-by shooting that wounded Oscar Drayton. The would-be assassin proved to have ties to a local yakuza family, but died under mysterious circumstances before he could be questioned further.

Since this incident, the OGS staff has found itself under constant harassment. Their sets have been sabotaged, and their actors have received anonymous threats as well. These threats have had little effect on OGS, which has continued on, making more money than ever before. The company's new fall production schedule includes a program titled *The Scarlet Bands*, which follows the exploits of a stable of young female MechWarriors.

RANDAL'S (X–16)

BattleMechs may be the kings of the arenas, but a good pulse-laser pistol is king of the Reaches. Although weapons can be bought virtually anywhere in Xolara for the right price, the locals turn to Randal's for legitimate purchases or special weaponry needs.

Owner Raymond Randal IV personally oversees the shop, which features unique weapons custom-tailored on the premises. Randal specializes in tracking scopes and flash suppressors, and prides himself on his ability to supply customers with any type of personal weapon they might desire. According to several local gangs, Randal has even been able to supply a limited number of Clan-manufactured weapons. Randal denies having any contacts within the Clan occupation zone, although he prominently displays an Elemental helmet in the window of his fortresslike storefront.

HARTFORD GARDENS (X–17)

Location: Amberton Quarter, Xolara
Class: 4
Owner: Jimmie Hartford
Manager: Jimmie Hartford
Terrain: Forest
Seating Capacity: 8,000
Seating: Box seating (1,000), general seating (7,000)
Admission Prices (C-bills): Box seating, 48; General seating, 12

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

The Hartford Gardens arena began its life as part of the lush estate of the Hartford family, owners of a manufacturing firm that supplied BattleMech parts to the SLDF. Originally, the estate garden contained exotic flora collected from throughout the Inner Sphere. Beautiful stone walls surrounded the massive garden to keep out the curious and the uninvited.

The fall of the Star League, however, brought hard economic times for Hartford Industries, and soon the family's estate and gardens began to fall into disrepair. The mansion became covered with vines, and the neglected gardens grew thick and heavy. The ponds, considered at one time the centerpieces of the estate, became murky mud holes. Those who knew the Hartford family feared that the once beautiful estate would eventually be abandoned and left to rot.

Jimmie Hartford, the 78-year old resident of the mansion and heir to the Hartford estate, saw hope in the gloom, though. He took the last of the family's money and used it to convert the gardens into a Class 4 BattleMech arena. Brush was cleared in some areas, while others were left natural to add to the killing zones. Several bunkers were constructed along the old garden wall for spectators, and box seats were placed on elevated platforms at the narrow ends of the arena, where they commanded a better view of combat in the tight corners and brush of the arena. Jimmie Hartford also used some of Hartford Industries' own technology to add to the "thrills" of the newly christened Gardens—specially designed mines that fire missiles or lasers at passing 'Mechs.

The attendance at the Gardens has been steady but not overwhelming. Word of the arena has begun to spread among the tourists, however, and Jimmie Hartford feels that very soon he will be selling out the arena.

CAPABILITIES

A number of open areas dominate the Garden's battlefield. Low, rolling hills and several old decorative walls, part of the original architecture of the estate, punctuate these areas and provide partial cover.

The Garden also features several pools. Originally carp ponds, these pools have been dredged and deepened. In one recent match, a member of the Huntsmen nearly died when he was ambushed by an opponent who had lowered her 'Mech into one of these pools and placed it in a low-power mode to avoid detection.
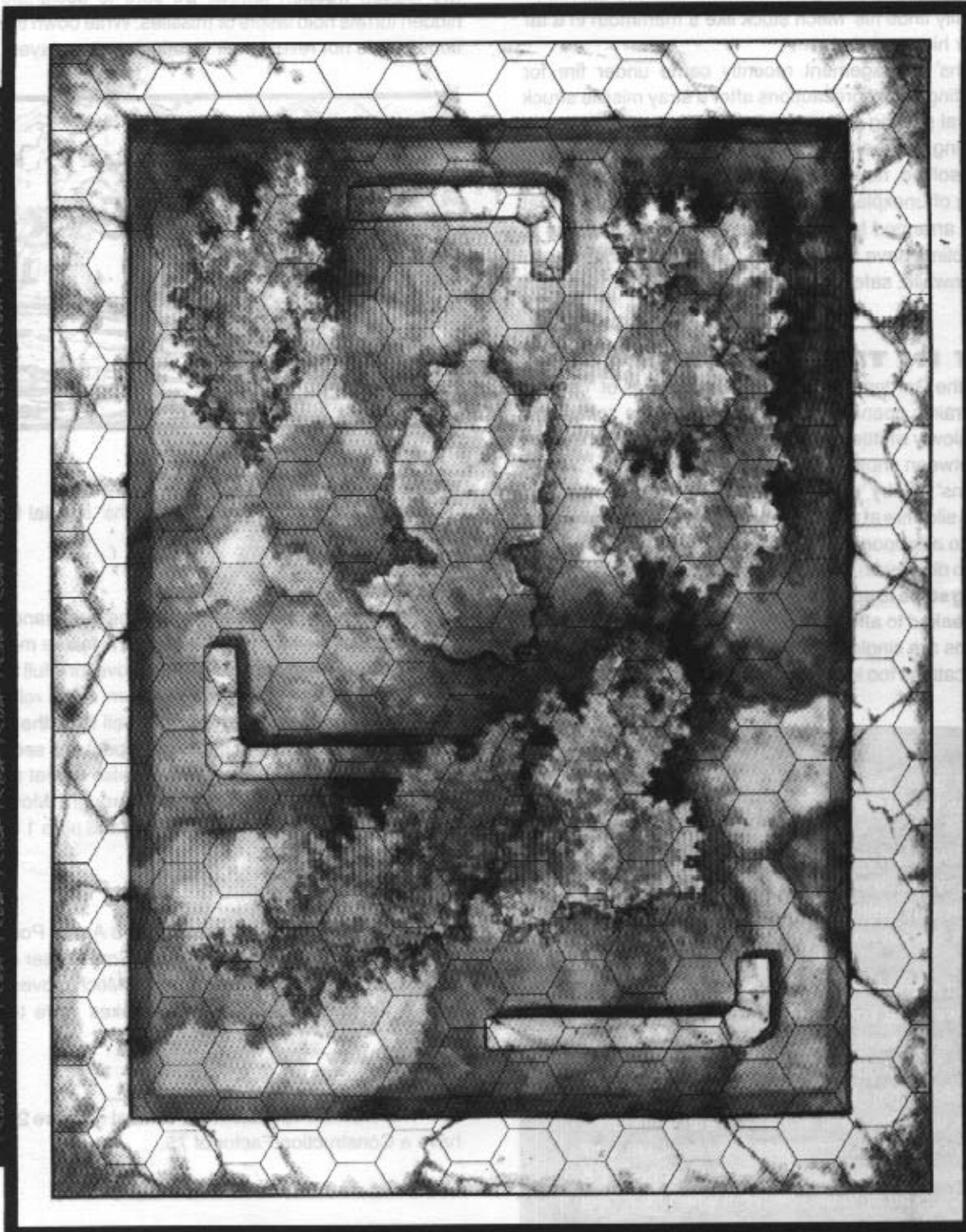
HARTFORD GARDENS

In the past few months the Gardens staff has added a new feature—"quicksand." This patch of chemically altered water and dirt particles is easily concealed under the abundant brush. A MechWarrior unfortunate enough to stumble into the six-meter deep patch usually finds his 'Mech stuck like a mammoth in a tar pit, easy prey for his opponent.

The Gardens' management recently came under fire for allegedly neglecting safety precautions after a stray missile struck one of the general seating bleachers, instantly killing two spectators and wounding another five. Several threats of legal action mysteriously dissolved, however, when the potential plaintiffs fell victim to a string of unexplained accidents. Rumors contend that Jimmie Hartford arranged for the "accidents," and the families of several of the victims have hired private investigators to look into the deaths. Meanwhile, safety procedures at the Gardens remain unchanged.

COMBAT IN THE GARDENS

Matches in the Gardens generally become games of "cat and mouse." The terrain's open spaces produce large fire zones and allow 'Mechs to slowly whittle away at each other, hiding behind the natural cover between shots.

The Gardens' booby traps of alternating vibrabombs and hidden weapons silos fire at random, and so they theoretically pose an equal threat to all opponents. Frequently, MechWarriors in the Gardens seem to display an uncanny knowledge of their locations, however, leading some to speculate that their "secret" placements are sometimes leaked to affect the outcome of matches. Because these booby traps are single-shot devices, MechWarriors usually discover their locations too late to disable them with weapons fire.

> "You've gotta be kidding me. You've never heard about my matches at the Gardens? What kind of a reporter *are* you?
>
> "You know, I *am* something of a legend at that arena. Remember my match with Stanley "The Steamer" Shultz last year? The guy claimed to be piloting a Clan *Thunderbolt*. Thunder-bucket was more like it. He was all hype and no firepower.
>
> "I played with him for the better part of fifteen minutes. Bottom line was that I got him angry, stupid, and running hot all at the same time. I call that my recipe for success. He thought he'd cool off quickly in one of the pools, but he didn't know about that little patch of quicksand. Stupid old Stanley sunk up to his waist actuator in that artificial crud.
>
> "Your viewers will remember the result I'm sure. I really didn't want to kill him, but it just sort of happened, Kip. My PPC was locked onto his chest but when he moved it hit his cockpit. Stanley didn't "Steam" anymore . . ."
>
> —From an interview with MechWarrior Lorri Bent, *Solaris Fight News*, November 6, 3055

MAP SET-UP

Before the start of the match, the gamemaster designates a 3-hex area to serve as the quicksand pit, as well as two hexes for the two hidden weapon turrets. Be sure to designate whether the hidden turrets hold lasers or missiles. Write down the hex designations but do not reveal their locations to the players.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Game information for the Gardens' special features is provided below.

Quicksand

Any player whose 'Mech enters the quicksand pit must make a Piloting Skill Roll with a +3 modifier. A failure means the 'Mech becomes stuck in the pit and cannot move for 1 full turn. The player may repeat the roll during the next turn. If the roll succeeds, the 'Mech is free to leave the hex. If the roll fails, the 'Mech remains stuck for the remainder of the turn. Repeat this sequence until the 'Mech escapes the pit. Players must also repeat the roll for each quicksand hex their 'Mechs pass through. Moving through a quicksand hex costs 4 MP. The quicksand pit is 1 level (6 meters) deep.

Hidden Turrets

The hidden weapon turrets have 3 Armor Points each. Each turret may be equipped with either a Small Laser or a single-shot SRM 4. A turret weapon fires when a 'Mech moves in an adjacent hex. A turret is destroyed when it takes more than 3 Damage Points.

Walls

The old walls in the arena's combat area are 2 levels high and have a Construction Factor of 75.

KING OF THE MOUNTAIN (X-18)

Location: Northern Heights, Xolara
Class: 6
Owner: Baxter Industries Inc.
Manager: Gundar Baxter
Terrain: Industrial/Urban
Seating Capacity: 15,000
Seating: Box seats (direct viewing, located on four towers surrounding the mountain; capacity 2,000), general seating (direct viewing from encased bunkers at the edge of the mountain, capacity 13,000)
Admission Prices (C-bills): Box seats, 60; General seating, 15

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

King of the Mountain is one of the largest, most distinctive, and deadliest arenas in the Reaches. Visible for several kilometers, the Mountain outdraws all other tourist attractions in Xolara.

This Class 6 arena was built in the middle of a massive crater formed by the Marik nuclear strike. Nearly thirty meters deep at the center, the crater became a dump for radioactive and other toxic wastes during the clean-up operations that followed the bombardment. The locals continued to use the crater as a dump following the clean-up operation, and soon tons of debris and waste filled the hole. Within four decades a mound of debris more than six stories high stood in the crater.

In 3001, a local construction firm owner and entrepreneur, Rufus J. Tilman, saw a way to convert the unsightly mountain of waste debris into a profit-making venture. After purchasing the site for a pittance, Tilman used his firm to begin converting the area into a 'Mech arena. Tilman had several small plateaus in the crater hardened to support BattleMechs, and his men packed and compressed the debris mound into a stout "mountain" that could be scaled by a 'Mech. Later, they cut ridges into the mountain to create irregular lines of sight. For viewing, Tilman built four towers of box seating and positioned them around the mountain. His workers installed lighting systems on the towers for night matches and bunker seating along the foot of the mountain. Many considered Tilman's efforts an expensive waste at the time, but the plucky businessman had the last laugh when the arena opened in 3008 and observers immediately acknowledged it as one of the Reaches' premier fight venues.

CAPABILITIES

The Mountain's sides look deceptively easy to climb. They contain a number of handholds, such as old beams and concrete supports that jut out of the mound, but many of these are unstable or unable to support the weight of a BattleMech. Other areas of the mountain are not compacted well and make for slow climbing.

The Mountain also features several plateaus at various heights, which can lull a MechWarrior into a false sense of security. Those who pause on these plateaus often find themselves targeted from above or below. Ridge lines in the mountain block sight lines and add to the hazards of combat in the arena.

In the past two years, the Mountain's current owner, Gundar Baxter, has begun adding some variety to the landscape by planting vibrabombs in the sides of the mountain or in the murky waters of the moatlike basin that surrounds it. These surprises have caught many MechWarriors unprepared.

COMBAT IN KING OF THE MOUNTAIN

Matches in King of The Mountain are usually decided by which MechWarrior can control the mountaintop. Both contestants begin at the outside edges of the moat that surrounds the mountain. After crossing the moat's semi-toxic waters, they begin the upward climb, finding more opportunities to fire on their opponents as they near the summit. Sometimes MechWarriors make lateral runs around the mountain to try to find an opening on their opponent's flank. More often than not, combat takes place at the higher elevations of the mountain.

BattleMechs that are damaged or caught off balance usually slide down several stories of broken debris and dirt before coming to rest. The fall alone can cripple even the best arena fighter, and generally leaves a contestant exposed to fire.

"I've fought in all of the minor arenas and even a couple of the biggies. King of the Mountain is always a major pain.

"You've gotta juggle a lot in your head in that arena. It's not just you versus your opponent—it's you versus him AND the damn hill itself. Two of the times I've fought there I nearly got plastered from side hits when my opponent crept up along the mountain and surprised me.

"Another time I found myself sitting on one of those plateaus and just opening up pointblank at a guy—messy stuff. The funny part was that neither of us expected the other to be there. We stumbled on each other and both opened up. I was lucky. That guy lost his footing and fell down the hillside, cockpit-first.

"Tonight's match is different, though. The Vampires are up-and-coming, if not a little sleazy. Tonight will be—interesting. Yup, interesting's the word."

—From an interview with MechWarrior Lorri Bent, *Solaris Fight News*, November 6, 3055

MAP SET-UP

Before the start of play, the gamemaster rolls 1D6 to determine how many vibrabombs are hidden in the arena. The vibrabombs are set for 1D6 x 10 tons (see p. 61, **BattleTech Compendium**, for more on vibrabombs). Designate hexes for the vibrabombs and
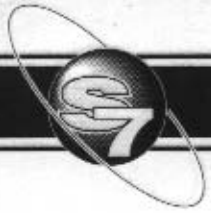
KING OF THE MOUNTAIN

KING OF THE MOUNTAIN

write down the hex numbers, but do not reveal the locations to the players.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Game information for the Mountain's special features follows.

Ridge Lines

The ridge lines shown on the arena map block line-of-sight and fire. Treat all Ridge hexes as Level 3 for movement purposes.

Moat

The "moat" that surrounds the Mountain is Depth 2 water. Any MechWarrior who is exposed to the semi-toxic water in it takes 1D6 –3 Damage Points.

Vibrabombs

Anywhere from 1 to 6 vibrabombs may be buried along the Mountain for any given match. See p. 61, **BattleTech Compendium**, for information on determining the characteristics and damage caused by vibrabombs.

A MATTER OF RESPECT: PART 2

"King of the Mountain?" Wallace Scott scowled across the table at Dick Benson, the Vampires' stablemaster. Benson grinned in reply. Silently, Wallace cursed himself for having expected any better. The Vampires were nothing more than liars and thieves; two of their pilots had been arrested for cheating, and the whole stable had been banned from every stadium in Solaris City. An outfit like that could only fight in a minor-league Reaches arena, a hellhole like the Mountain. Scott knew the arena. It bore the grisly distinction of having one of the highest body counts of any arena on the planet. Though he knew it was wasted effort, Wallace tried one last time to drive a better bargain. "For the fees we're putting up for this match, I'd prefer some place more civilized."

Benson's smile grew only wider. "It's a free planet, friend. You and your lackeys can take your business elsewhere if you want." He pulled a toothpick out of his pocket and scraped at his front teeth with it. "King of the Mountain or nothin', bud. Now how bad do you want that *Sasquatch*?"

Wallace Scott glanced over his shoulder at his comrades, then turned back to Benson. "All right. You agree to fight the match with the VEST prototype 'Mech you stole—"

"Appropriated," Benson interrupted with a smirk.

"'Appropriated,'" Scott repeated through gritted teeth.

"Agreed." Benson chewed his toothpick and winked at Scott. "She's a beaut' of a piece o'work."

Without thinking, Scott wrapped his hand around the butt of his pulse laser pistol. Watching the move, the stablemaster snickered. Scott took a deep breath and forced himself to let go of the weapon. If he drew it, he'd shoot, and they might all regret that.

"See you in four days, tinkerer-man," Benson said through a deliberate yawn. "Oh, and thank your staff for building me and my crew such a fine piece of hardware."

Not trusting himself to reply, Wallace stepped out of the Vampires' den into the raging downpour outside. After walking silently by his side for a few meters, Mike Nowak leaned toward the head technician. "Setting up this match was pretty strange, even for Doc. I still say we should've hired some local muscle and taken the *Sasquatch*."

Scott shook his head. Despite the cold rain dripping down the back of his neck, away from Dick Benson he felt almost cheerful. "Mike, I've been with Vining since the Clan invasion. Strange or not, I'd trust him with my life. He'll get the *Sasquatch* back. Just watch . . ."

'MECH TECH

MATANI'S 'MECHS (X-19)

Although Matani's 'Mechs lacks the reputation of VEST or O'Neal's, most experts believe this eight-man 'Mech-engineering firm will one day rival its competitors. The firm is the brainchild of Matani, a refugee from the remains of the Free Rasalhague Republic. Matani, who refuses to reveal his last name, began the firm with only a handful of C-bills.

After securing work space in an abandoned, centuries-old factory, Matani and his staff began their first job—modifying BattleMechs for the Hangmen Cooperative. Although the 'Mech engineers had only scavenged parts and equipment to work with, the three 'Mechs they modified have proved to be top contenders. The Hangmen's string of successes with the 'Mechs soon attracted several other minor stables and cooperatives to Matani's, and the firm has been working steadily since.

Matani has made no secret of his small stockpile of Clan spare parts, mostly heat sinks and pulse lasers. Matani's security guards thus far have fended off three robbery attempts aimed at this stockpile, each with a loss of life.

O'NEAL'S BATTLEMECHS (X-20)

O'Neal's is another young, but highly respected BattleMech design firm. The ten-person operation customizes or builds BattleMechs from scratch under the direction of Andrea O'Neal.

Headquartered in an old warehouse on the Solaris River, the firm recently attracted attention when it received several large purchases from unknown contacts in the Draconis Combine. These shipments arrived under very tight security, with the firm going to the extraordinary length of shipping them via the Solaris River rather than moving them through the city streets. Some believe the shipment contained imported Clan technology that O'Neal's plans to incorporate in its arena-'Mech designs, but no evidence has substantiated these rumors.

Recently, Andrea O'Neal has also announced her intention to sponsor a new stable for testing new equipment and designs. No formal announcement has been made yet, but a number of dispossessed MechWarriors have been seen in and around her shop.

SHATNER'S SCRAP AND COLLECTIBLES (X-21)

For nearly 150 years, Anton Shatner's family has earned a living by salvaging 'Mech parts from the arenas of the Reaches. Despite the ravages of time and the slow death of the surrounding neighborhood, the family business—Shatner's Scrap and Collectibles—continues to thrive. Most recently Anton Shatner, the current head of the firm, landed a contract with King of the Mountain for all of their salvage not reserved for victorious MechWarriors.

Shatner's huge scrapyard is a virtual BattleMech graveyard, strewn with 'Mech parts and remains. Most of the parts are from unique arena 'Mechs, and some reportedly date back to the Star League. Anton, however, generally assigns the latter very high

prices and closely guards them in his private warehouse at the center of the scrapyard.

The scrapyard, unlike any other on Solaris, also contains a large number of antique vehicles and tanks, left over from the days when the SLDF and its vendors tested their equipment on the Game World.

Shatner maintains high security even by Xolaran standards. Ten trained guard dogs and two armed guards equipped with industrial exoskeletons patrol the scrapyard at all times.

VEST (X-22)

Vining Engineering and Salvage Team, more commonly known as VEST, is one of the premier BattleMech design and engineering firms in the entire Inner Sphere. Founded by engineering genius and former NAIS graduate Dr. David C. Vining, the small firm operates from a sophisticated, state-of-the-art facility in Xolara.

The VEST compound boasts a BattleMech prototype manufacturing facility, two design labs, several weapons-testing chambers, and electronics labs. The facility employs 50 neighborhood residents, who reportedly are very loyal to their rather eccentric boss.

Many observers attribute VEST's success to the willingness of Dr. Vining and his design team to travel to front-line worlds during the Clan War. These trips provided the team with invaluable firsthand observations of Clan technology in action. The team even managed to obtain some captured Clan tech, according to unconfirmed reports. Shortly after these trips, VEST 'Mechs began displaying vast design improvements.

MISCELLANEOUS

THE GRIM STRETCH (X-23)

The Grim Stretch is a mass graveyard that contains an unknown number of victims from the Marik nuclear bombardment that decimated Xolara. Most of the unidentified fatalities originally were buried in mass graves in this large field, and their survivors later erected several thousand tombstones and shrines at the site to commemorate their loved ones.

The Stretch remains sacred to local residents. Several firms were accused of illegally dumping toxic wastes in the area a few years ago, and soon afterward the executives responsible for the dumping mysteriously died. Today, tourists visit the site to lay flowers or wreaths at the ancient wrought iron gates of the main entrance.

SOUTHERN BANK AND TRUST (X-24)

A group of Solaran investors formed the Southern Bank and Trust shortly after the Forth Succession War to help finance the reconstruction of Xolara following the Marik nuclear attack. Today, the bank has become something of an armed fortress, as would-be robbers target the facility almost constantly. Between four and twelve heavily armed security guards patrol the bank at all times, and the nearby police substation remains on constant standby to assist the bank security team in repelling robbery attempts.
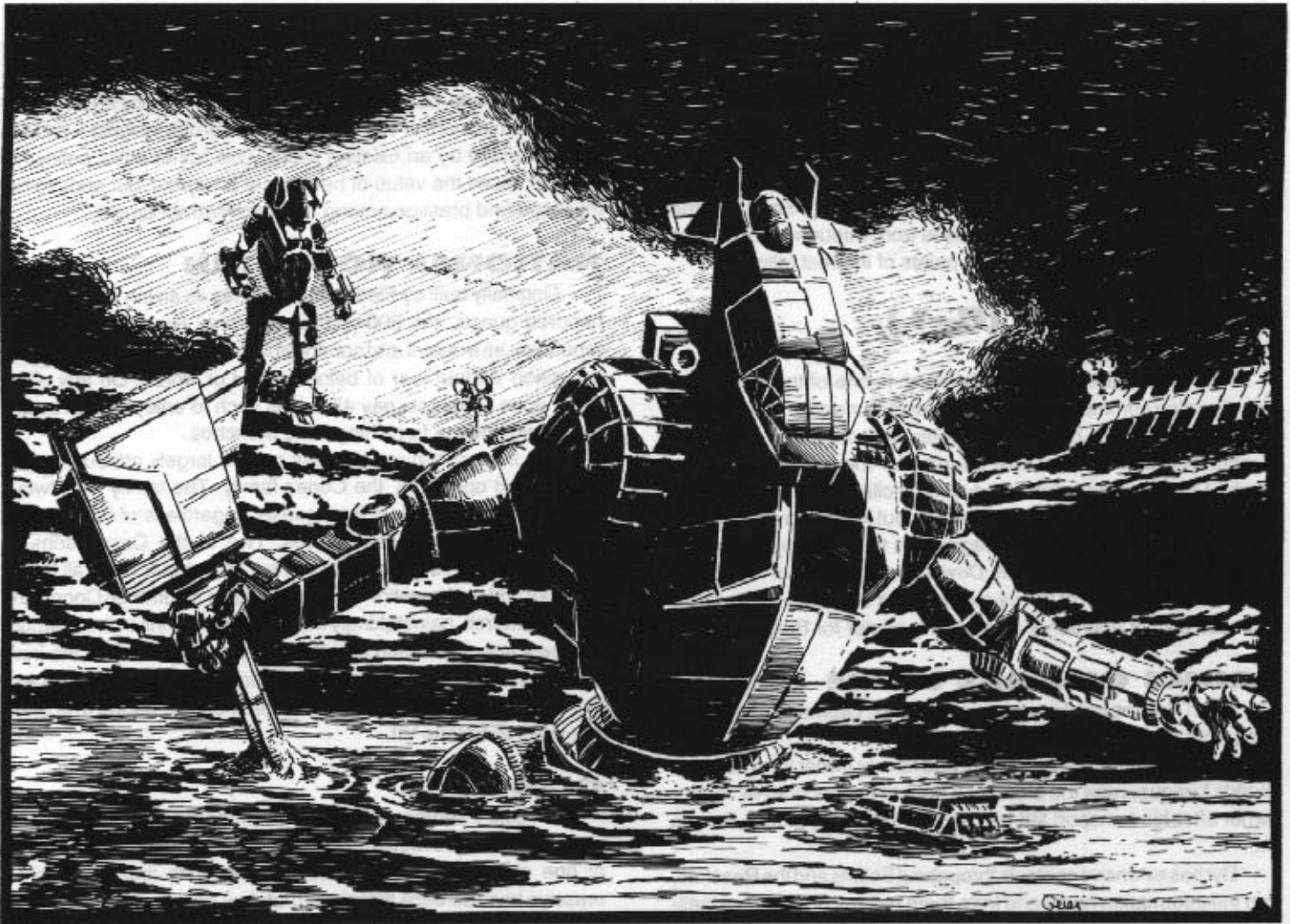
The current bank president, Beaver Krane, spends most of his time worrying about the increasing number of defaulting loans that Southern has endured since the economic upset caused by the Clan invasion.

STAR HEIGHTS (X-25)

A privately owned club, Star Heights caters to a handful of wealthy Xolarans and others seeking an alternative to the clubs and restaurants of Solaris City proper. The club is located in a sleek, leaning tower in the Northern Heights neighborhood. A restaurant on the top floor provides an excellent view of the King of the Mountain arena.

Several members of the Solaris Civic Council are rumored to belong to the club, but the membership roster remains a closely guarded secret, as do the contents of the meetings that take place in the club. Members reportedly pay more than 20,000 C-bills in annual fees, and others are not admitted without an invitation from a member.

Barbara Byrd, the rumored twin sister of Loucynda Byrd of the Civic Council, owns and operates the Star Heights. Other than the club owner's striking resemblance to the council member, however, no evidence exists of a family connection between the two.

SPECTATOR BUILDING (X-26)

The four-story Spectator Building houses the *Solaran Spectator*, a newspaper that covers the arenas of Xolara, Burgton, and the surrounding areas. The *Spectator* rates and ranks everything connected with the 'Mech matches of the Reaches. A bad review of an arena or a stable can easily become a death blow for the unfortunate subject, because fans, insiders, and bookies all follow the *Spectator*. Despite the considerable power this provides the news organization, its writers and editors remain relatively free from outside influences, largely because of the efforts of publisher Sam Gunn. A twenty-year veteran of the fight scene, Gunn is considered an insider's expert on the Games. Gunn pays his agents and reporters well, apparently to make them less susceptible to "gifts" from stables and cooperatives seeking favorable rankings and reviews from the *Spectator*. He also has been known to hire spies to ensure that no one on his staff accepts bribes from story subjects.

BURGTON

Burgton comprises a number of small villages spread out beyond the sprawl of Solaris City and Xolara. These communities contain minor arenas and other tourist sites, as well as a few 'Mech design firms. Gangs are generally free to operate as they wish here, because Burgton lacks its own police station. For the same reason, the area also attracts fugitives from throughout Solaris. A description of each village and its points of interest follow.

DOWAGIAC (B-1)

With a population of 950, Dowagiac is one of the larger and older Burgton communities. The town was founded during Solaris' heyday as a 'Mech production center and originally contained corporate-sponsored, low-cost housing for the employees of the nearby Fleetham Industries production facility and their families.

Although the carefully planned layout of the town remains apparent, the fall of the Star League and the resulting economic decline of the area have left Dowagiac a series of run-down tenements. A handful of family-owned firms comprise Dowagiac's business district and serve as a trading center for Burgton.

DRUMS GENERAL STORE

Much like ancient Terran general stores, Drums stocks everything from foodstuffs to survival supplies.

Wayne Dyr, a portly older man and former trader from the Free Worlds League, runs the store. Dyr bought Drums from its former owner after his transport left him behind, stranding him on Solaris VII.

Dyr has extensive contacts throughout Solaris and the Reaches, and the information he gleans from them has become his bestselling commodity. Dyr is even rumored to have close friends on the Civic Council, although no council member has ever been known to venture out as far as Dowagiac.

For the right price, Dyr will happily provide the most recent gossip on happenings on Solaris VII. The more money paid, the more specific the information Dyr offers. He is always suspicious of new customers, however, and usually demands a hefty fee from them. Those who argue the price or press the matter too loudly usually find themselves looking down the business end of one of the laser rifles he stores under his counter.

KRISTA'S PARLOR

For more than 20 years, proprietor Angela Kristoferson has catered to MechWarriors who wish to tattoo themselves with their stable insignias and wealthy tourists who desire a permanent reminder of their visit to Solaris. Her storefront tattoo shop, Krista's Parlor, is known throughout the Reaches and Solaris City proper for its work. Kristoferson's tattoos can be seen in any bar or stablehouse on Solaris VII, and Solarans consider them some of the best and safest one can obtain on the Game World.

Kristoferson, however, only accepts clients who can afford her prices—a minimum of 100 C-bills for a small unit insignia—and are recommended by an existing client. This rather elitist policy not only increases the value of her unique art works, but adds to her mystique and prestige among the MechWarrior crowd.

NATIONAL HOUSE INN

Originally built by Fleetham Industries as an inn for their more honored guests, the 300-year-old National House Inn enjoys a reputation as a quaint and comfortable "safe house," where guests can sleep without fear of being robbed or worse. On any given night, up to 50 guests pay 45 C-bills each to enjoy the inn's well-preserved antique furnishings and brunches.

The inn's continued success can be largely attributed to its owners and operators, the Conez family. The family will always take any steps to protect their guests, regardless of their clients' backgrounds or reckless natures. Two of the Conez sons or daughters are on security duty in the lobby or outside at all times. All shoot first and question trespassers later. Drummen Conez, the family patriarch, painstakingly maintains the old inn in the splendor of a past age. Drummen and his family usually sleep in the inn's Kerensky Suite, unless they are hosting a very influential guest. General Kerensky purportedly slept in the suite during one of his few visits to Solaris VII.

O'TOOLE'S

O'Toole's serves as Dowagiac's primary source of entertainment. This bar and restaurant is located in the recessed basement of one of the larger converted housing units and features six massive trivid screens that show matches from the various arenas in the Reaches. Because O'Toole's rarely covers matches in Solaris City proper, it attracts few tourists. Its outstanding selection of local cuisine and homemade wines, however, have drawn local residents for years and have turned the establishment into an informal meeting place for the community.

Owner and proprietor Donald O'Toole II inherited the bar when an irate customer shot his father. As a youth, Donald aspired to a MechWarrior career but failed miserably. He still holds a soft spot for MechWarriors, however, and usually provides free drinks to any who stop in.

RYDER'S MODIFICATIONS

More than two decades ago a former House Liao tech named Merril Ryder created a stable on Solaris. Ryder's Raiders managed to place several MechWarriors in the top 20, only to fall in disgrace amid charges it had fixed matches for wealthy bettors. Now, all that remains of this once mighty stable is a 'Mech garage known as Ryder's Modifications.

The garage's aged, decrepit appearance belies the popularity of the shop among Solaris' MechWarriors, however, who turn to Ryder for their concealed weaponry needs. For twice the cost of a small weapon, he will hide the weapon on a 'Mech, usually

A MATTER OF RESPECT: PART 3

Robby France tipped back his beer bottle and drained the last of the dark ale. Lowering the bottle, he looked around the inside of the dark tavern and sneered at the clientele. His fellow drinkers, many of them the dregs of Solaran society, ignored him.

"Time to settle up, France," said the bartender. From his tone, it was more than a suggestion.

Robby pulled a fresh C-bill out of his pocket and passed it over the bar. "My money's as good as anybody's."

The bartender held up the bill, wrinkling it slightly as if to test its authenticity. "So it is—this time. Somebody die and leave you something, Bobby boy?"

Robby smirked. "I've been doing a little moonlighting." He slid off the bar stool, turned toward the door and staggered out into the rainy night. Behind him, the bartender nodded to four men at the table in the back of the bar.

Robby managed to reach the alley next to the bar, intent on relieving his straining bladder, when he first saw them. As Robby struggled with his fly, one of the men walked up and pushed him into the nearby wall. "Hey, what in the name of—"

"You Robby France?" someone asked.

"You want my money?" Robby asked as he tried to see his assailants in the darkness and drizzle. He attempted a laugh, but it sounded more like a hiccup. "You can have it. I'll give it to you." He tried to see past them, to plot an escape route, but the four figures had him surrounded.

"Just answer," another voice demanded. "Are you France?"

"I'm France. What do you want?" Through an alcoholic haze, Robby felt the first stirrings of fear.

The figure closest to Robby drew a short club from his pants. Behind him, the others produced clubs and blackjacks. Robby wanted desperately to run, but his fear froze him in place. He pressed hard against the wall, as if it could protect him.

"Dr. Vining sends you a message, Robby," the thug with the club said. As he spoke, he smacked the club against the palm of his hand.

At the mention of the doctor's name, Robby cringed. "Hey, that was business. I owed the Vampires—they made me steal the 'Mech. It was their idea. I didn't want to do it." He realized he was babbling, but he couldn't stop. "Don't hurt me. I'll help you steal it back—just please, don't hurt me." His voice wavered and broke as he saw their eyes. Even through the dark and the rain, he saw a look that chilled him. They meant to kill him, he was sure of it. He blinked up at them like a dazed rabbit, too frightened to plead any more.

He heard the club whistle toward his head then a sharp blow rocked him. Another followed, and another, and another. He crumpled in a heap at the base of the wall and let the darkness take him.

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removing armor and placing false armor over the weapon. By keeping the weapon powered down, a MechWarrior can use it to spring a nasty surprise on an opponent. Similarly, Ryder can also add additional heat sinks that can provide a MechWarrior with an edge that can spell the difference between glory and defeat.

Some of the more popular fighting stables, such as Fitzhugh Stables and DeLon Stables, have recently made use of Ryder's unique services. Although Ryder keeps his clients' secrets well buried, he reportedly fitted two *Whitworths* with hidden pulse lasers for the Fitzhugh Stables recently. Both parties have refused to comment on the rumor.

IRON FIST CLUB

This private tavern is home to a quasi-military, political group known as the Iron Fists. Composed entirely of veterans of the Lyran Commonwealth Armed Forces, the Iron Fists believe a generation of Steiners have abandoned the Commonwealth and sold out to the Federated Suns, and they support an all-out civil war to return sovereignty to the former Lyran Commonwealth.

Under the leadership of Talon Gar, a former MechWarrior with the Tenth Lyran Guards, the Iron Fists have purchased a lance of battered old arena 'Mechs and rebuilt them. According to Gar and her followers, this is only their first step in creating a private military for the inevitable civil war that will free the Lyran Commonwealth. The organization has also begun to bet and win heavily in matches in the Steiner Arena, raising concerns they may be raising money to fund an entire company of 'Mechs and warriors. As a result of these activities, both the Davion MIIO and the Lyran Intelligence Corps have the group under surveillance.

NORTH PIER (B-2)

For years North Pier was known only as the site of Solaris City's waste dump. The conversion of that dump into a 'Mech

arena, however, brought money to the area and triggered its economic rebirth. Now the area enjoys a small but steady stream of visitors who come to watch the 'Mech matches, view the centuries-old North Bridge and tour the picturesque Anchor Bay Brewery.

North Pier has recently experienced some tensions, however, with the arrival of hundreds of refugees from the former Rasalhague Republic. The arrival of these newcomers, along with Lyrans fleeing the Clan onslaught, has caused a rise in ethnic hatreds. Now most travelers to North Pier are warned to avoid the Pier at night if they hail from outside the Commonwealth.

ANCHOR BAY BREWERY

Owned and operated by the Cantor family for the past two centuries, the Anchor Bay Brewery has seen its profits rise continually for years. The brewery's most popular beer, Anchor Original, has achieved wide popularity in Solaris City and offworld as well. Anchor's other products, Solaran Dark and Anchor Lite, are well known on Solaris itself but only beginning to appear offworld.

Although most businesses in the Reaches would fear mob interest as a result of such success, the Cantor family has found that the loyalty of their employees (nearly everyone in North Pier) provides ample protection against mob muscling. In one recent instance, a self-proclaimed yakuza leader attempted to extort money from the Cantors and instead found himself beaten by a gang of locals. None were ever tried.

AVERY'S ON THE WATER

This 200-year-old hotel overlooks the Solaris River and would be considered a medium-quality hotel if it were transplanted into Solaris City proper. Each room of the old hotel is named after a combatant in the Solaris circuits, while especially noteworthy MechWarriors are honored with suites named after them. The most expensive suites, the Hirsch Suite and the Noton Suite, cost more than 200 C-bills per night. Both suites command excellent views of

the Solaris River and feature direct-line trivid coverage of matches in the Scrapyard and Davion Arena.

The Avery recently unveiled its new casino, which has already become a prime tourist destination of the Reaches. According to rumors, the casino operation is backed by yakuza or Mafia elements.

THE CABIN

MechWarriors from throughout Solaris flock to this unassuming tavern located in the shadow of Avery's. Outside of the tavern a battered sign reads "If You Ain't a Mech Jockey, You Ain't Getting Served Here," and the staff strictly enforces this MechWarriors-only policy, providing MechWarriors with a haven from pesky wannabes.

The interior of the Cabin is rough to say the least, and bears the scars of countless brawls. The tavern also contains several back rooms, which owner Ulton Farkhan usually reserves for private stable meetings. Farkhan himself is the target of periodic assassination attempts in the tavern, apparently inspired by his reputed membership in a Liao terrorist organization before he set up business in North Pier.

The Cabin has recently become a hot spot for mercenary units seeking recruits from Solaris' MechWarrior ranks. None of the big-name units have sent recruiters, but many smaller units that cannot afford the trip to Outreach have begun holding special recruitment nights to meet and possibly hire MechWarriors from the Burgton arenas.

KRAMER'S PARTS AND MACHINERY

Wayne Kramer specializes in the repair and modification of Class 1 and Class 2 arena 'Mechs, but will also modify smaller BattleMechs with concealed weapons, additional heat sinks, or altered weapon configurations. Although local MechWarriors gen-

Legend:
▲ = RESIDENCES
□ = BUSINESS/COMMERCAIL
▨ = INDUSTRIAL

DOWAGIAC

NATIONAL HOUSE INN
O'TOOLE'S
DRUMS
KRISTA'S
RYDER'S
IRON FIST CLUB

NORTH PIER

THE WASTELANDS
SOLARIS RIVER
NORTH BRIDGE
AVERY'S
RAKKER'S
ANCHOR BAY BREWERY
THE CABIN
KRAMERS
SCRAPYARD
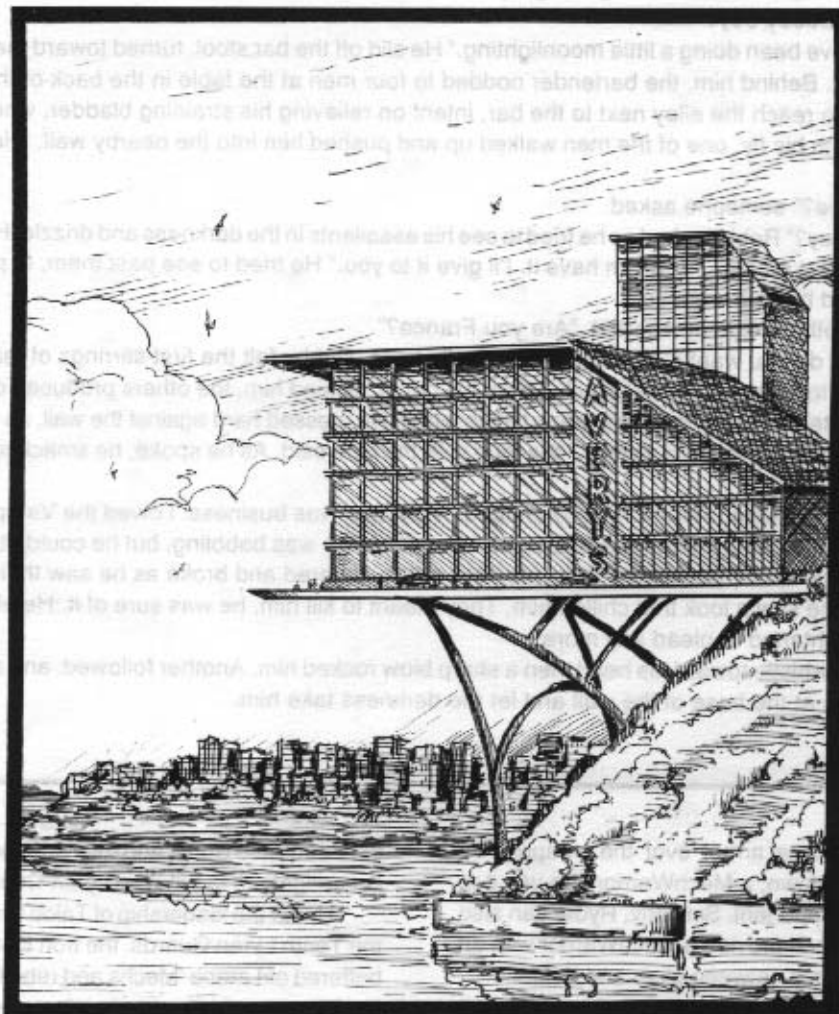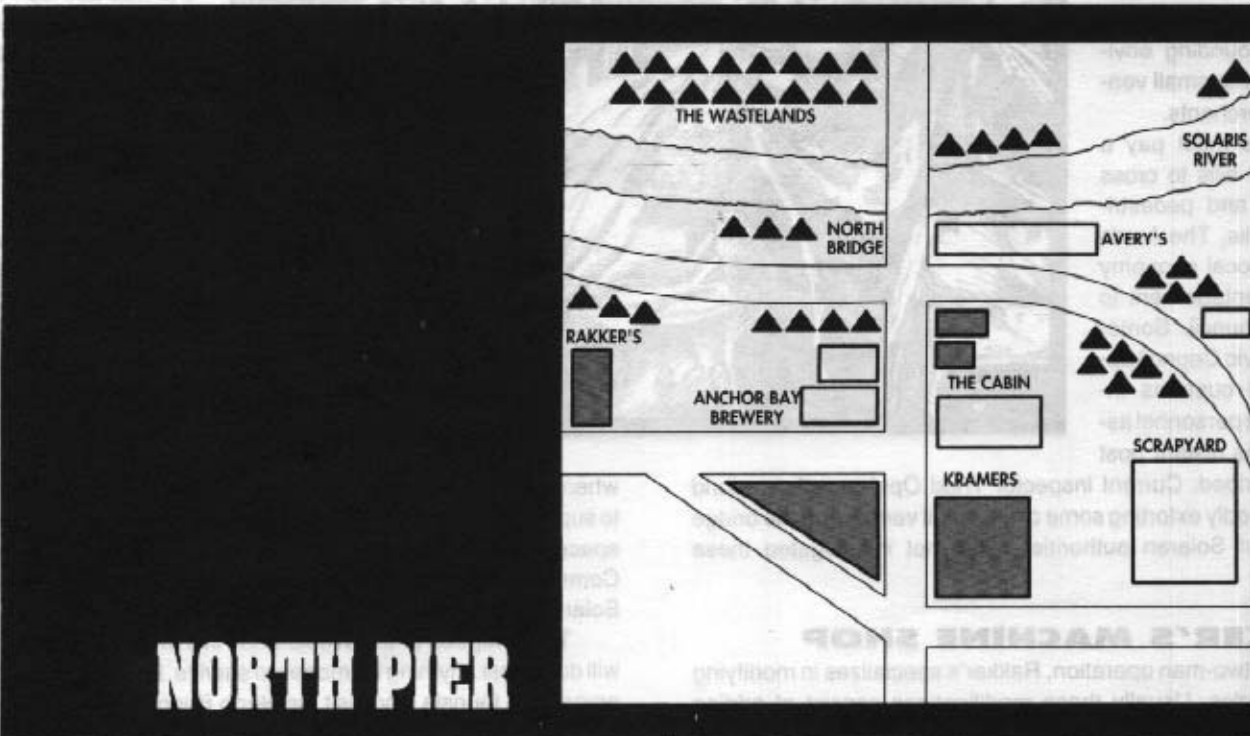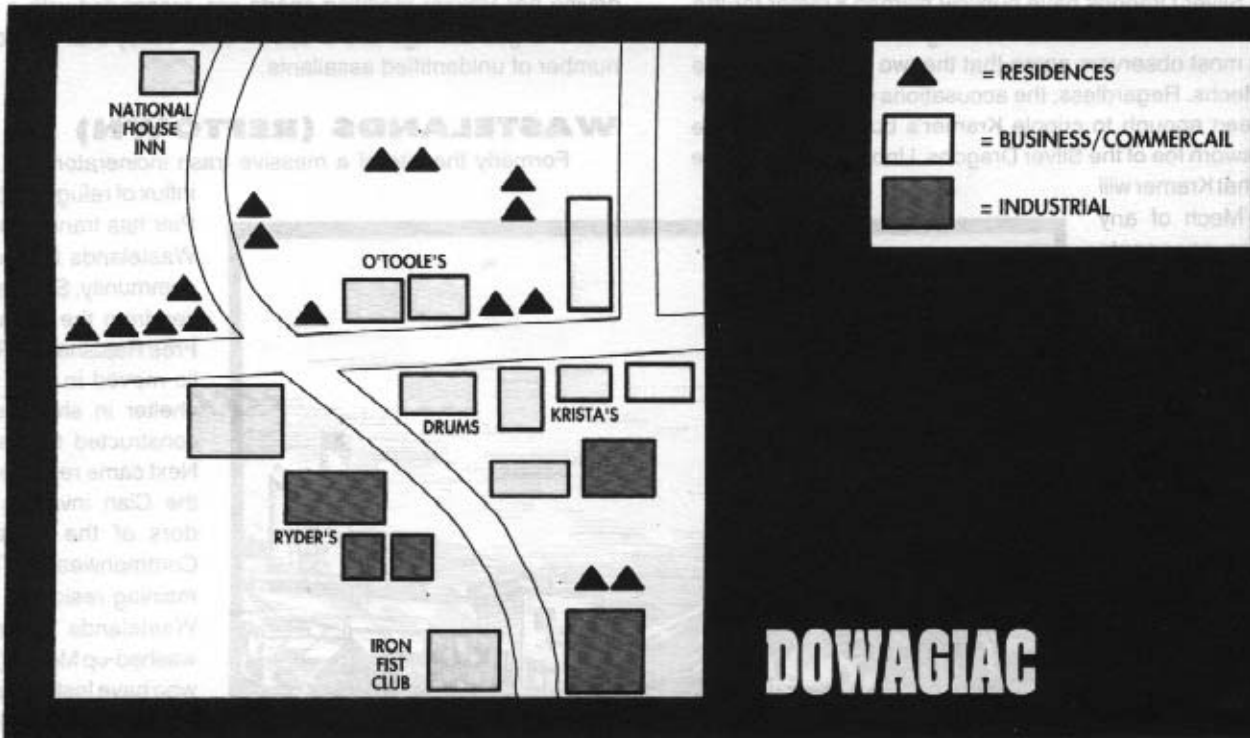
erally acknowledge Kramer as a competent and skilled technician, he has recently come under criticism from the Silver Dragon Stables following the defeat of two Kramer-modified Silver Dragon 'Mechs. The Silver Dragons have publicly blamed Kramer for the defeat of the two 'Mechs and the resulting deaths of their pilots, even though most observers agree that the two pilots caused the loss of the 'Mechs. Regardless, the accusations of poor workmanship have been enough to cripple Kramer's business and have made him a sworn foe of the Silver Dragons. Unofficial word on the street holds that Kramer will modify the 'Mech of any Silver Dragon opponents free of charge—as long as they win their matches.

NORTH BRIDGE

Crossings over the Solaris River become few and far between once a person ventures outside Solaris City proper. The North Bridge crossing represents the farthest one outside of the city and helps connect the isolated Burgton communities. Originally constructed during the peak of the Star League, today the Bridge and its surrounding environs bustle with small vendors and merchants.

Vehicles must pay a toll of five C-bills to cross the bridge, and pedestrians, .5 C-bills. The funds go into the local economy with a percentage sent to the Civic Council. Sometimes the Civic Council appoints local customs inspectors, but personnel assigned to this distant post are easily bribed. Current inspector Thad Opel, a rather rotund man, is allegedly extorting some of the small vendors on the bridge property, but Solaran authorities have not investigated these charges.

RAKKER'S MACHINE SHOP

A small two-man operation, Rakker's specializes in modifying ground vehicles. Usually these modifications consist of adding armored plating and weaponry to local limos, hovercars, and other ground vehicles.

Owner Danny Rakker enjoys a thriving business, due largely to the word-of-mouth advertising that followed an unsuccessful attack on Civic Council member Loucynda Byrd. Byrd, who was driving her Rakker-modified sports car, responded with a three-machine gun barrage and a Streak SRM volley that destroyed a number of unidentified assailants.

WASTELANDS (REFTOWN)

Formerly the site of a massive trash incinerator, the recent influx of refugees to North Pier has transformed the Wastelands into a small community. Several families from the devastated Free Rasalhague Republic moved in first, taking shelter in shanties they constructed themselves. Next came refugees from the Clan invasion corridors of the Federated Commonwealth. The remaining residents of the Wastelands are mostly washed-up MechWarriors who have lost virtually everything in the Games. The small community's shanties and lean-tos are centered around the old incinerator, which has been converted into a soup kitchen and community center.

A refugee from the Tamar Pact, Ralf Holm, became the community's de facto leader after arranging a piped-in drinking water supply and electricity for the small community. Holm claims to have fought beside Duke Selvin Kelswa of Tamar when the Wolf Clan destroyed Tamar City, but no evidence exists to support this claim. In fact, several of the families from Rasalhague space hint that Holm may not even be a citizen of the Federated Commonwealth, but rather one of their own people, hiding on Solaris for his own reasons.
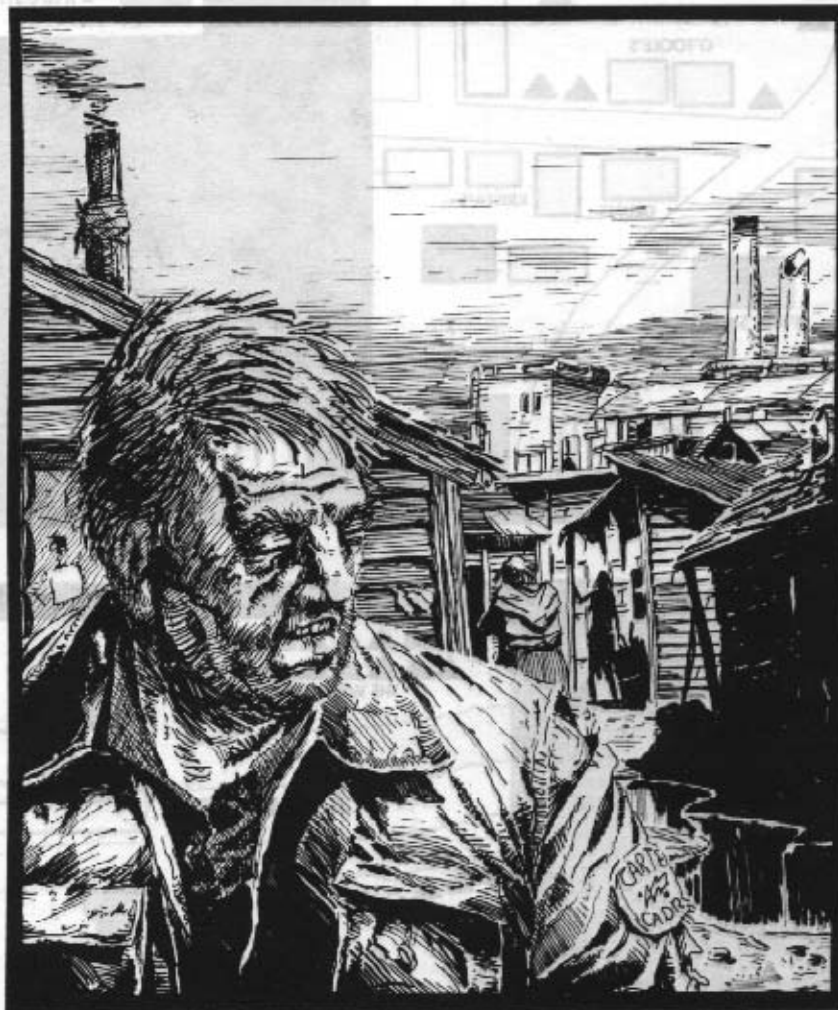
The refugees of the Wastelands live in extreme poverty and will do almost anything for money to survive. Many even panhandle among the tourists who visit the North Bridge. Like the gypsies of ancient Terra, these refugees are seen as devious and untrustworthy by many Solarans.

SCRAPYARD

Location: North Pier, Burgton
Class: 5
Owners: Tammy Fae and Bagera Rowsh
Manager: Tammy Fae Rowsh
Terrain: Industrial
Seating Capacity: 6,000
Seating: Box seating (1,000), general seating (5,000)
Admission Price (C-bills): Box seating, 51; General seating, 17

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

Solaris City generates a large amount of trash and debris. The larger pieces of industrial refuse are shipped on barges to North Pier for disposal, as they have been for centuries. The remainder had been dumped into a vast, eerie stretch of land known as the Scrapyard.

Ten years ago the city began using a new dump, prompting two former MechWarriors—twins Tammy Fae and Bagera Rowsh—to invest their earnings into converting the Scrapyard into an arena. Two years later, half of the massive garbage dump had been transformed into a deadly 'Mech arena.

The Rowshes ingeniously used the industrial waste and debris on the site to create a hazardous maze of killing zones that includes pits of toxic chemicals and acids. Narrow fire corridors and a constantly changing terrain of urban industrial hazards keep the Yard a menacing locale for 'Mech combat.

Eight arching towers lean slightly over the outer arena wall. Box seats are located on the highest two decks of the towers, while general seating occupies the remaining decks. Banks of lights along the tower supports allow for dramatic night matches.

CAPABILITIES

Thick embankments of waste and discarded industrial parts, capped with layers of dirt, form the Scrapyard's maze. Cutting and laser burning gives these walls sharply defined shapes, but they are so thick that they easily block sensors, turning the Yard into a "grope-and-shoot" arena. In some areas, the passages between walls are so tight and have so many protruding metal supports that they can block or trap a BattleMech if not properly navigated. Skilled MechWarriors often use these narrow passages to negate the advantages of an opponent's superior 'Mech.

Several pools of toxic waste and acid, remnants of the Scrapyard's origins, make the southern portion of the arena particularly dangerous. The noxious contents of these pools can quickly dissolve any 'Mech that stumbles into one—along with its unlucky pilot. Four MechWarriors have died in these pools in recent years, and most inexperienced MechWarriors simply stay away from the arena's southern end rather than risk a fatal piloting error. The Rowshes frequently disguise the acid pits with a thin metal framework as well, a practice that has directly caused two deaths in the arena.

COMBAT IN THE SCRAPYARD

Fighting in the Scrapyard can prove a prolonged, grueling affair, because the maze layout often confuses even those MechWarriors who fight regularly in the arena. Matches frequently turn into long periods of stalking, interspersed with sudden series of quick, close-range strikes. The layout is particularly suited for laying ambushes, which often decide a match.

Recently, several parts of the vast maze have been opened up to facilitate the use of long-range weapons. Becoming boxed in at the wrong end of one of the resulting fire corridors generally proves fatal.

BattleMechs begin matches from randomly assigned positions in the arena's six entry gates. Tammy Fae Rowsh reportedly rolls a die to determine these positions. Occasionally, opponents find themselves in direct lines of fire when a match begins, often at pointblank range. Opponents' starting positions remain hidden from MechWarriors until matches begin.

> "I've fought three times in the Yard.
>
> "Everything seems to happen fast and at pointblank range. In my first match there, I turned a corner and was only fifteen meters from my opponent's rear. Needless to say, he was down and out in Beaumunt Hospital for ten weeks after that mistake.
>
> "You also have to stay away from the south side of the arena unless you know what you're doing. During my second match in the Yard, I got a little ahead of myself and damn near melted off my legs in one of those blasted acid pits. One thing about those Rowsh girls, they know how to entertain. The fans eat that acid stuff up ya know."
>
> —From an interview with MechWarrior Lorri Bent, *Solaris Fight News*, November 6, 3055

MAP SET-UP

Before the start of play, the gamemaster designates the locations of 1D6 – 2 acid pits. Write down the information but keep it secret from the players. Place the pits anywhere in the southern end of the arena. Each pit occupies 1D6 – 3 hexes.

To determine the starting positions of the 'Mechs, the gamemaster rolls 1D6 for each player. The results determine from which of the six arena gates the players start the match. If the result is the same for both players, they begin in adjacent hexes.

SPECIAL FEATURES

The Scrapyard contains the following special features.

Acid Pits

Any BattleMech traveling through an acid pit automatically takes 4D6 Damage Points to its legs for each turn it remains in the pit. Any player whose 'Mech enters an acid pit must also make a Piloting Skill Roll. If the roll fails, the 'Mech falls. Make separate 4D6 rolls for each section of the fallen 'Mech to determine how much damage it takes. Acid does not reduce a 'Mech's internal heat like water. In fact, it generates 3 Heat Points per turn in any section of the 'Mech exposed to it. Each acid pit is 1 level (6 meters) deep.

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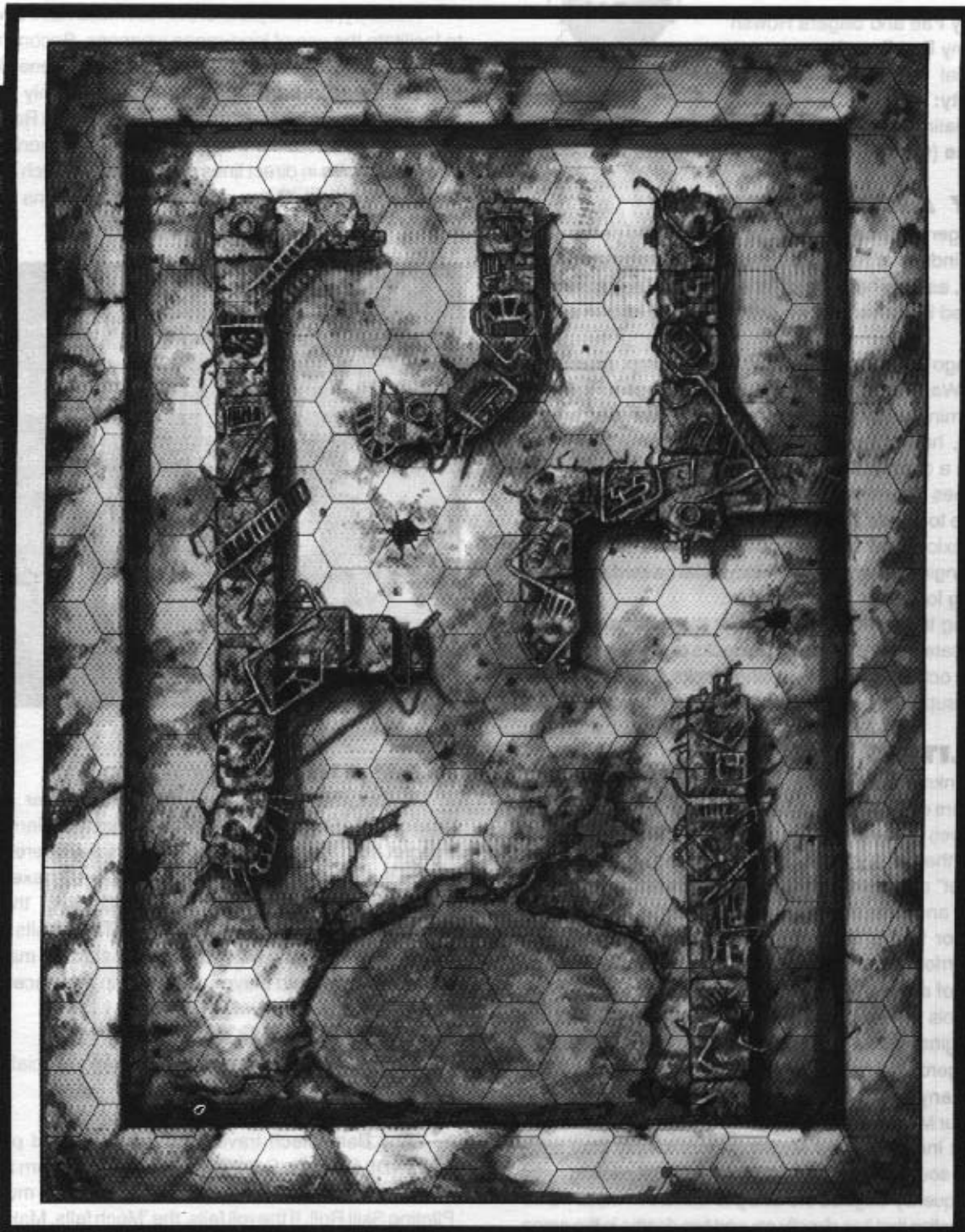
S C R A P Y A R D

Embankment Walls

The walls in the arena combat area have a Construction Factor of 120 and are 2 levels tall.

Obstructions

When a 'Mech moves within LOS of one the hexes marked with an "S," the player rolls 1D6. A result of either 1 or 6 means that the hex is obstructed, and an obstruction marker is placed on the hex. On a roll of 2 to 5, the blank side of any counter is placed on the hex to show that it is unobstructed and that the obstruction roll was made.

80mm artillery round for the Armstrong cannon that discharges inferno propellant. For submerged combat, the firm has created missiles that act like torpedoes, more than doubling their standard range. Barrymore's shaped-charge warheads, which provide enormous penetration power, and ECM-jamming rounds are also highly prized among Solaris' MechWarriors.

Although many of these munitions are too unstable for military applications, their benefits usually far outweigh their risks in Solaran arenas.

CROSSROADS INN

This small rooming house has operated for decades and has thrived under the influx of Joppa's recent immigrants. Many of the inn's guests in the past year bear small tattoos of green falcons and vipers. These secretive guests draw almost constant attention from the various intelligence agency operatives in Joppa.

HUNTSMEN STABLEHOUSE

The Huntsmen are one of the more successful MechWarrior stables operating in the Reaches' arenas. Their trademark green uniforms and BattleMechs, and their mysterious origins have spawned numerous local legends.

The stable maintains headquarters in a deserted manor house it has converted into a BattleMech repair facility. Numerous security devices protect the building from intruders. To defeat these systems, a player character must make a successful Security Systems Skill Roll, applying a –2 modifier to the base target number for the roll. The Huntsmen themselves live in a section of the house remodeled into dormitory-style rooms. The stable practices in a large field that adjoins the house and extends several kilometers into the countryside.

MOON BEAMS BAR AND GRILL

Moon Beams Bar and Grill is one of the few eateries in Joppa patronized by both locals and visitors. Moon Beams has been a fixture in the neighborhood for more than 100 years, but only recently came under the ownership of a mysterious man named Drake. A quiet and withdrawn individual, Drake tolerates no violence in his establishment. Any customer who draws a weapon or throws a punch finds himself facing the hulking bartender, Drew, who doubles as the bar's bouncer. Fights are understandably rare in the bar, but when they do occur the combatants usually do their battling behind the closed doors of a back room, which is off-limits to visitors.

Like other recent arrivals to Joppa, Drake and Drew have become subjects of speculation for Solaran travelers and tourists. Both men, however, seem unwilling to discuss their pasts.

JOPPA (B–3)

The small village of Joppa presents something of a mystery. Up until three years ago, Joppa comprised little more than a wayside bar and a munitions works. Since then, it has grown into a small community of secretive residents with strange mannerisms. The Reaches are filled with rumors and speculation about the weird people of Joppa who speak without using contractions. Many believe these people hail from Clan space, most likely outcasts or fugitives of some sort. Their stilted speech and the presence of several large individuals who fit media descriptions of Clan Elementals seem to support this idea.

These rumors have attracted scrutiny from the intelligence agencies of the Inner Sphere, but none of those organizations have managed to penetrate the wall of secrecy that seems to surround Joppa. ComStar and even the renegade Word of Blake have also sent intelligence operatives to Joppa to keep tabs on these strangers. But the Federated Commonwealth intelligence agencies seem most interested in Joppa.

BARRYMORE MUNITIONS WORKS

Any MechWarrior who has been on Solaris for more than three months has heard of the Barrymore Munitions Works. A local business that was operating long before the arrival of the mysterious offworlders, the Barrymore Works is noted for making custom missile and artillery rounds for specialized arena combat. Barrymore also maintains a firing range in Roland Fields.

Although Barrymore's custom rounds command astronomical prices, the unique nature of these munitions keep them in high demand. Among Barrymore's more noted creations is a special

Although both visitors and locals patronize Moon Beams, they rarely mix. Visitors find themselves herded to tables near the doors, while the locals congregate near the dark back of the bar.

SHRINT'S LOANS

Burgton native Devron Shrint serves Joppa as a private loan institution. His Shrint's Loans will provide individuals with short-term loans of up to 30,000 C-bills, although the astronomical interest rates he charges have prompted many locals to label him a loan shark.

Indeed, several who have failed to meet their payments have "disappeared," but police investigations have failed to turn up any solid evidence that links Shrint to these disappearances. Despite the dangers of borrowing money from Shrint, residents of the Reaches who need loans continue turning to him, most likely because they have few alternatives.

KALAMAZOO (B-4)

Of all of the Burgton settlements, Kalamazoo is one of the more violent areas that a MechWarrior is likely to visit. The village originally began forming three and a half centuries ago, as residents came to the area to cater to tourists visiting the crash site of the Star League-era DropShip *Trident*.

During the past two centuries Kalamazoo has degenerated into a den of cutthroats and killers, an unofficial "assassins court" for Solaris VII. Several gangs operate in Kalamazoo and their members haunt the bars and establishments of this small village, soliciting assassination work.

Amid these activities, the locals operate several small 'Mech arenas, which are really nothing more than open fields outfitted with grandstands for spectators.

ANSPACH BAR AND GRILL

At first sight, the Anspach Bar and Grill seems like a typical local tavern. Patrons sit at several small tables, sipping watered-down drinks under the dim lights and discuss the day's events.

The real action at the Anspach, however, occurs in the establishment's back rooms. For the right price (1D6 x 5 C-bills) visitors gain admittance to these rooms, which form a marketplace for Kalamazoo's assassins. Although their prices are high and some of their skills are questionable, anyone willing to pay the price (3D6 x 1000 C-bills, plus expenses) can usually contract an assassin to kill someone.

Although some of these assassins are "minor-leaguers" attempting to break into this deadly cottage industry, most are wanted throughout the Inner Sphere for heinous crimes. Some are former mercenaries, while others are retired or renegade intelligence operatives or simply cold-blooded killers. All are suspicious of strangers and take an immediate dislike to anyone who asks too many questions, even though law enforcement authorities have never arrested anyone in the Anspach.

BARNARD'S EMPORIUM AND ANTIQUES

Nicknamed "The Barnyard" for it's rather unorganized and haphazard decor, this old warehouse serves as a combination antique shop and museum. Furnishings and collectibles from across the Inner Sphere fill the massive emporium, all collected under the supervision of proprietor Stanley Gram. According to rumors, Gram's associates have even made several significant sales to Snord's Irregulars during the past three years. These accounts have boosted Barnard's business, but Gram's use of his allegedly vast profits remains a mystery. Word on the streets of Kalamazoo, however, has him looking to finance a new stable.

Barnard's specializes in architectural antiquities, furnishings and artifacts from the proud palaces and mansions that once graced Solaris. Of these, Gram's most prized piece is a marble staircase that was originally imported from Terra for use in the now destroyed stable mansion of the Red Wings Stable.

GRAWN CEMETERY

Grawn Cemetery occupies a small plateau just beyond Toyama Monastery. The charred remains of four *Stingers* mark the corners of the cemetery, silently standing watch over what is commonly known throughout the Reaches as the "MechWarriors' Graveyard."

For more than three centuries the Grawn family has maintained the cemetery as a final resting place for forgotten MechWarriors. Whenever a MechWarrior dies in one of Solaris' arenas without burial arrangements or anyone willing to claim his body, the Grawns take the corpse and intern it at their cemetery.

The Grawns usually fashion markers and headstones from parts of the fallen warrior's 'Mech. These markers, along with the foreboding 'Mech guards that stand watch over the dead, give the cemetery the eerie feel of a battlefield. Funding for the cemetery comes largely from the handful of tourists who visit the site and leave donations in the small box at the gate.

PIERCE'S CLOTHIERS

Ankara Pierce operates one of the very few quality tailor shops outside the city proper. His two-man operation, Pierce's Clothiers, even attracts some of the wealthier residents of Solaris City, who travel to his small shop for their special sartorial needs.

A suit designed by Ankara Pierce can cost anywhere from 400 to 1,000 C-bills, but the fine craftsmanship and detailing of these suits justify these high prices. For an additional 300 C-bills, Pierce will modify the suit to hide gun holsters, knife sheaths, or even fit it with bulletproof material.

TOYAMA MONASTERY

Toyama Monastery occupies the site of an old Buddhist monastery abandoned during the First Succession War. Over the centuries, the site's buildings were converted into apartments and stores, all of which failed. The neglected buildings and grounds had fallen into a severe state of disrepair until several Word of Blake members arrived two years ago and began to restore the old monastery.

JOPPA

SHRINT'S LOANS

MOON BEAMS

CROSSROADS
INN

BARRYMORE'S MUNITIONS

HUNTSMAN'S STABLEHOUSE

▲ = RESIDENCES

■ = BUSINESS/COMMERCAIL

■ = INDUSTRIAL

WARNER
ACADEMY

ANSPACH
BAR & GRILL

GROWN CEMETARY

BARNARD'S ANTIQUES

SLS TRIDENT WRECK

PIERCE'S
CLOTHIERS

TOMAYA
MONASTARY
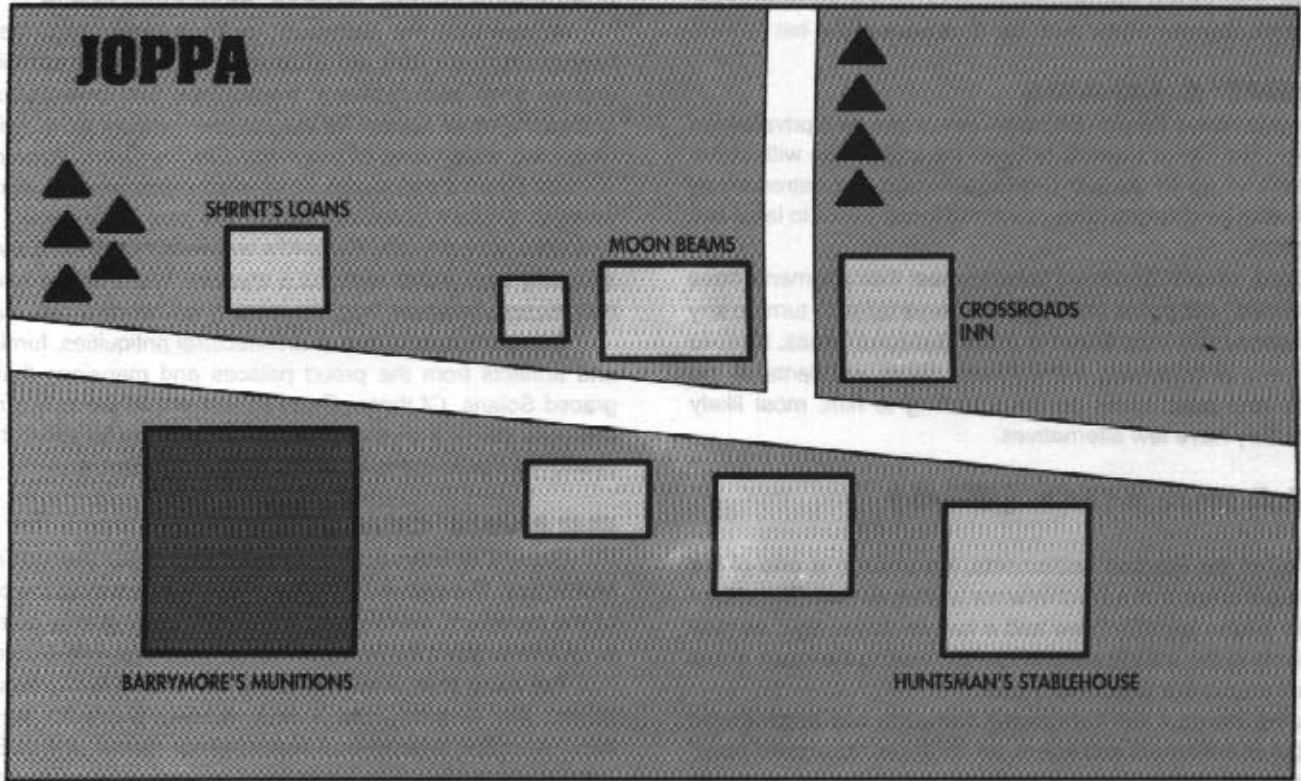
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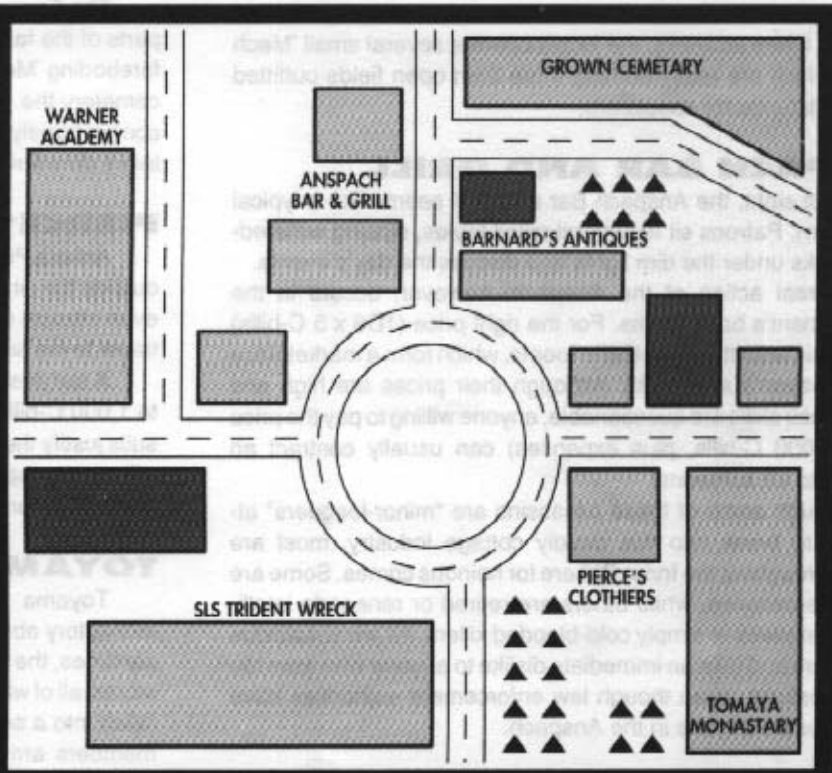
Now two dozen Word of Blake members live at Toyama Monastery, which is named after Primus Conrad Toyama, the devoted follower of Jerome Blake. Precentor Judith Vincents oversees the monastery. The precentor personally interviews outsiders who express a desire to join the Word of Blake and gain admittance to the monastery's holy grounds. No others are allowed to enter, a policy Vincents strictly enforces. For those who press the issue, Vincents conceals a pistol beneath her robes.

The locals view the monastery's new residents with a mix of fear and curiosity. Recently, some in the area have begun to speculate that the monastery is part of a Word of Blake plan to field a MechWarrior stable in the Reaches arenas. Precentor Vincents has refused to comment on these speculations.

WARNER MECHWARRIOR ACADEMY

The Warner MechWarrior Academy occupies the grounds of an old apartment complex and nearby factory. A far cry from the Great Houses' military academies, the Warner school thrives by assuaging the egos of the numerous MechWarrior wannabees who flock to Solaris.

Former second-rate arena fighter and con man Clease Vanderholf runs the academy, and usually at least six students are enrolled in his 16-week combat course at any given time. Vanderholf commonly boasts that more than 500 "MechWarriors" have graduated from the academy in its 25-year history. He rarely, however, acknowledges that a mere handful are still alive.

The Warner Academy students train in four *Chameleons*. All are in rather shoddy condition, because Vanderholf pockets all the profits from the academy rather than channeling them back into the school. Local newspapers periodically run exposés of Vanderholf and occasionally a family grieving over the loss of a son or daughter who trained at the academy posts a reward for the con man's head. Nevertheless, Vanderholf seems undeterred.

WRECK OF THE SLS TRIDENT

The crash site of the SLS *Trident*, a Star League-era DropShip, is probably Kalamazoo's most famous tourist attraction. The entire crew and all the passengers aboard the Overlord Class DropShip died when the *Trident* crashed as it approached the Solaris City spaceport, and soon curious visitors became a regular sight at the scene. Kalamazoo itself was born when her first residents settled in to cater to these tourists.

Over the years, the *Trident* eventually lost its gleam as an attraction. Vines and brush grew over the ship's burned-out hull, and the locals nearly forgot the *Trident* entirely. Then, a young woman named Darryl Sabe took ownership of this rather morbid tourist attraction. A former contender on the Solaris fight circuit, Sabe used her savings to fashion a small club inside the *Trident's* remodeled hull. Membership is by invitation only at the exclusive establishment, and the elite of the Reaches reportedly pay thousands of C-bills in membership fees for the privilege of belonging to the club.

Sabe reportedly longs to return to the 'Mech arenas, and some believe she is using the club to recruit MechWarriors for a new stable. So far no club members have commented on these rumors.

BRACKEN SWAMP

The swamplands outside Burgton have always been a sparsely populated region of Solaris. During the Star League era, the swamp contained a massive sewage-treatment plant, capable of meeting the needs of nearby Solaris City and Xolara. The plant was one of the most sophisticated ever constructed in the Inner Sphere at the time and served as a model for later plants. The tunnels connecting Solaris City and Xolara to the plant represented a stunning feat of engineering and took decades to complete. When operational, the facility could purify more than four million gallons of waste water daily.

The loss of technological expertise during the Succession Wars spelled the end of the waste treatment facility, as Solaran engineers lost the knowledge needed to maintain the massive technological marvel. Eventually the plant fell into disrepair. About 80 years ago the facility was rescued from oblivion when its owners converted it into an underwater arena.

Today Bracken Swamp supports only the arena and a few small communities of fugitives, who make a meager living by farming or selling "appropriated" goods. Aside from those visiting the 'Mech arena, very few outsiders venture into Bracken Swamp.

BEAL CITY (BS-1)

Founded more than 40 years ago by Kassandra Van Beal, Beal City lies deep in Bracken Swamp, hidden by the area's dense flora and near constant mists. All of the village's buildings rest on stilts sunk into the shallow swampland of the area, and Beal's residents travel to and fro via rope bridges and small boats. The forbidding terrain provides a natural barrier to anyone trying to reach the village, undoubtedly a feature that attracted the pirates who were Beal's first residents. Even today, the majority of Beal's

inhabitants are fugitives from Solaran or Federated Commonwealth authorities. These locals carefully scrutinize all strangers who visit the village, constantly alert for the foolhardy bounty hunters who periodically visit.

Recently, Beal City has gained additional notoriety as the reputed hideout of Reggie "The Red" Philburn. This modern-day Robin Hood and his band rob the occasional wealthy traveler foolish enough to travel alone in the swamp or on the empty highways of nearby Burgton. Solaran authorities have repeatedly tried to capture Reggie, but the masked highwayman always seems to disappear into the swamp mists just when his pursuers have him cornered. Attempts to capture Reggie have been further hampered by the rapidly growing number of "Reds" crowding area taverns, all eager to recount their exploits for the benefit of young female patrons.

THE GALLOWS

The three nooses painted on the outside of this bar serve as a constant reminder of the three criminals who were apprehended and hanged at the site 15 years ago. Today, the Gallows remains a popular watering hole for the residents of Beal City. The rare visitor who attempts to enter is usually politely asked to leave by proprietor Amos Zegler. Those who refuse find themselves facing the barrels of at least a dozen guns and lasers.

Oddly enough, the Gallows regulars do not fight much among themselves, apparently wary of attracting attention from outside authorities. When police do make an infrequent appearance, they find very few patrons, thanks to a number of secret panels, trap doors, and hidden floor compartments.

But perhaps the most interesting feature of the Gallows is the diverse collection of hats and helmets that cover the wall behind the bar. According to local lore, all the items were "donated" by bounty hunters who tried to apprehend their subjects in the tavern.

MACKEY'S SWAMPCRAFT AND STORE

Edward Jullian-Mackey runs his combination boat dock and general store from a small storefront. In addition, Jullian-Mackey operates a shuttle boat service, offering transportation into and out of Bracken Swamp for an average price of three C-bills per customer.

Although the transportation fee seems quite reasonable, Jullian-Mackey is notorious for bringing in a load of spectators destined for the Pool, then experiencing a "breakdown" with his craft. His passengers then find themselves stranded in the swamp, forced to buy food from Mackey's at astronomical prices. More than a few MechWarriors have tried to "straighten out" Edward, who now heavily arms himself at all times.

RUGGERS' OUTRIGGERS

Ruggers' motto is, "The best place to buy wilderness survival gear is in the wilderness," hence its location in Beal City. The store

stocks new and used survival supplies. Expendable goods and dehydrated food comprise most of the new goods for sale, but the store's main attraction is used gear, which usually sells for half the market price. The shopper patient enough to search through the scattered mounds of old tents, dufflebags and backpacks may even find Star League-era equipment. Proprietor Kraig Ruggers also buys used gear—usually at one-fourth of its full market price.

Ruggers himself presents something of a mystery. Many claim he is a former MechWarrior from the old Federated Suns. More recent rumors, however, identify him as a former ComStar precentor who broke ranks with the Order several years ago and fled to Solaris VII to hide.

TANYA'S PLACE

Tatiana Ford's brothel, located just outside Beal City, is known throughout the Reaches and Solaris City. Ford's reputation for dealing straight and her discretion, as well as the beauty of her "employees," draw wealthy tourists, visiting dignitaries, and even famous MechWarriors to her establishment. Understandably, Ford fiercely maintains the decorum of her establishment, and anyone who disturbs the "dignity" of Tanya's Place finds himself set on by 1D6 attack dogs.

Tanya herself is something of a local celebrity. Besides running one of the most popular businesses in Beal City, she generously invests much of her money into the community, making her popular with the Solaran government and the locals.

VARGUS' FORTUNES

Louanda Vargus opened her fortune-telling parlor in Beal City six years ago and has developed a long list of clients. Many MechWarriors, seeking that elusive advantage, willingly pay 55 C-bills for a session with Vargus, who has an uncanny knack for accurately predicting future events. Many of the prominent stables consider themselves Vargus' patrons, and her shop remains one of the few reasons residents of Solaris City make the trek to Beal City.

Vargus sports a white patch over the socket of a missing eye, the result of a customer unhappy with her prediction of his short future. Rumors persist that she killed the man and keeps his remains in her small home, but Louanda denies this accusation.

ROWE (BS-2)

Rowe's economy largely consists of one enterprise—the Pool. Appropriately, the small village takes its name from Rowe Jullian, the Pool's creator.

Despite the financial success of the Pool, the village itself remains far from prosperous. The arena and its supporting businesses employ only a handful of families, and the swampy terrain of the area has attracted no other employers.

As a result, most villagers live in relative squalor. Like Beal City, this rural community lacks police and fire protection and other municipal services provided in more developed areas. The villagers live in houses set on high stilts anchored in the marshy ground, and small boats form their sole means of transportation.

The huge tunnels connecting the old sewage facility and Solaris City are visible from Rowe, and some are even rumored to be intact. The tunnels begin traveling underground a short distance from the village, however, and few people seem willing to venture into their dark depths.

LARZELLIER COMMUNICATIONS

Leticia Larzellier runs this five-person, satellite-communications operation. The firm holds a ten-year contract with the Jullian family—the owners of the Pool—to broadcast matches from the underwater 'Mech arena.

Recently, tensions between Vandrake Jullian and Larzellier have grown, largely because of Jullian's covert attempts to drive Larzellier and her group out of business. Jullian would like to see the firm fail because it also owns the only private electric generator in Rowe. Jullian currently contracts electrical service from Larzellier to power the arena, but would much prefer to own the generator himself. He plans to achieve this end by using his contacts to drive Larzellier out of businesses, then "helping" her by purchasing the generator.

THE SARATOGA

As the only bar/restaurant in Rowe, the Saratoga can command high prices. The owner, Silvia Jullian, claims that the cost of shipping ale to the remote village creates the exorbitant prices. The truth is that Silvia, like all members of the Jullian family, is greedy.

The Saratoga lies virtually empty during the week, except on match nights. On weekends, a handful of locals can usually be found inside, having dinner. Few locals are foolish enough to wager at the blackjack table or roulette wheel in the back of the bar, however. Most know that these games are rigged, but few will tempt the wrath of the Jullians by warning visitors.

SNORKEL'S

One of the few businesses in Rowe not controlled by the Jullians, Snorkel's modifies BattleMechs for underwater combat. This repair and modification shop looks somewhat shoddy, but head tech Ramses Bond always finds a way to get the job done, even with the facility's limited equipment.

Bond most frequently finds himself fitting 'Mech cockpits with automatic cockpit-breach systems. These systems weigh 1 ton apiece and occupy 1 critical slot in a 'Mech's head. In the event of a cockpit breach, this system automatically provides a flow of compressed air to the MechWarrior via a modified neurohelmet. A small charge blasts out the cockpit windows and automatic seals keep the cockpit controls functional for 15 minutes. Most MechWarriors also wear self-inflating life vests, which allow them to evacuate a damaged 'Mech and float to the water's surface. Bond charges 4,000 C-bills for installing the system and will disable the 'Mech's standard cockpit ejection system at no extra cost.

Snorkel's also reconfigures weapons and installs weight redistribution systems that improve a 'Mech's underwater handling characteristics.

THE POOL (BS-3)

Location: Rowe, Bracken Swamp
Class: 5+
Owner: Vandrake Jullian
Manager: Estelle Jullian
Terrain: Underwater
Seating Capacity: 1,100
Seating: Box seating (900); general seating (200)
Admission Prices (C-bills): Box Seating, 40; General seating, 9

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

The Pool is a 'Mech arena submerged in the retention pool of a former sewage treatment facility. A few bleachers above the surface of the water and a handful of prime seats located behind blast-proof glass under the water's surface comprise its seating. Submerged trivid cameras transmit images of the matches to a wide range of bars and hotels in Burgton and Solaris City.

The current owner of the Pool, Vandrake Jullian, inherited the arena from his parents. The Jullian family constructed the arena about 80 years ago and has run it since. Because the Pool is the life blood of Rowe, the tiny village next to the arena, the villagers treat the family like royalty. And Vandrake, in particular, does not hesitate to use the power this allegiance gives him.

The rarity of underwater 'Mech combat has made the Pool a popular venue with both MechWarriors and spectators. It provides MechWarriors an opportunity to practice submerged-combat skills, and spectators enjoy the novelty of the fighting environment. Although the limited seating capacity of the Pool initially restricted the profit potential of the arena, the installation of submerged trivid cameras has largely offset this limitation.

The reinforced ferrocrete construction of the Pool makes it virtually impervious to a 'Mech's weapons, unless, of course, a MechWarrior attempts to intentionally damage the structure. Usually stray missiles or torpedoes, lasers, and PPC fire only mar the Pool's armor-plated retaining walls. Occasionally a wall is breached, however, and the results can be tragic. Ten years ago, for example, a *Thunderbolt* accidentally punched through the reinforced glass at one of the box seat sections. The section flooded in a matter of seconds and several spectators drowned.

At present, arena manager Estelle Jullian plans to add an additional 500 bleacher seats at surface level to take advantage of increased interest in matches at the Pool.

CAPABILITIES

Large stones and construction blocks form the rugged bottom of the Pool, 40 meters below surface level. In some places, the stones form piles large enough to conceal a BattleMech.

Because of the nature of the arena, vibrabombs are never used in the Pool. Jump jets are prohibited as well, because their discharge obscures viewing. The jump jet restriction limits the maneuvers of some lighter 'Mechs.

COMBAT IN THE POOL

Combat in the Pool is especially risky for even the most experienced MechWarrior, because any cockpit breach can cause a MechWarrior to drown within seconds. Occasionally weapons fire will create a hairline fracture that remains undetected until water pressure causes the break to open unexpectedly. For this reason, MechWarriors almost always carry emergency breathing gear when competing in the Pool.

Contenders are lowered into opposite ends of the Pool to begin bouts. Ferrocrete obstruction mounds that block LOS are placed throughout the Pool to provide cover. The rugged bottom also contains rubble that produces uneven and loose footing. Coupled with the resistance of the water, this condition makes high-speed chase or rapid movement virtually impossible.

Water does provide excellent cooling properties, however, and 'Mechs competing in the Pool rarely experience the overheating problems common in other arenas.

> "I'm sure that your fans know I've made the Pool one of my standard choices for combat.
>
> "When I was in the Grave Walkers I got the chance to fight a battle underwater. Things change there. Even the best MechWarrior on land has to adapt. I've seen a number of top contenders—better than I was at the time—get wasted when they go underwater. Things they count on just don't work the same down there.
>
> "Learning to fight under the sea is obviously pretty hot stuff. Word on the street is that several of the academies are sending their students to the Pool this next year to practice. These little newbees really won't stand a chance against seasoned arena jockeys like myself. Still, your viewers are gonna really like the trivid of those fights—if they ever happen, of course."
>
> —From an interview with Richard "Hammerhead" Chow, *Solaris Fight News*, 3055

MAP SET-UP

The Pool requires no special map set-up. Matches begin with both players at opposite ends of the Pool, already submerged.

SPECIAL FEATURES

The Pool contains the following special features.

Debris Mounds

The debris mounds shown on the map block LOS. Each mound is also covered with Rubble, which carries a movement cost of 2 MP per hex. Moving on Rubble also requires a successful Piloting Skill Roll to prevent falling. Treat the debris mounds as Depth 3 water.

THE POOL

THE POOL
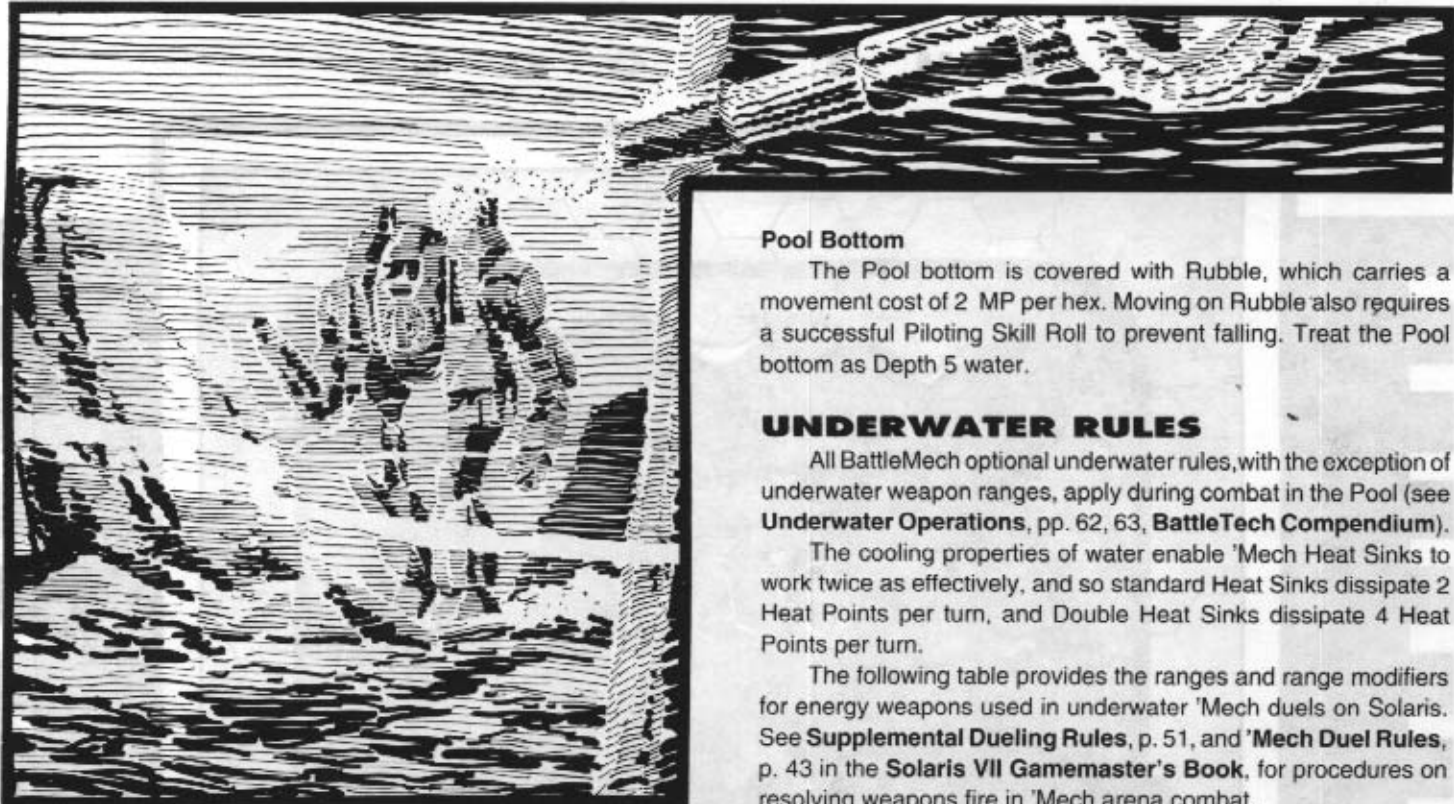
Pool Bottom

The Pool bottom is covered with Rubble, which carries a movement cost of 2 MP per hex. Moving on Rubble also requires a successful Piloting Skill Roll to prevent falling. Treat the Pool bottom as Depth 5 water.

UNDERWATER RULES

All BattleMech optional underwater rules, with the exception of underwater weapon ranges, apply during combat in the Pool (see **Underwater Operations**, pp. 62, 63, **BattleTech Compendium**).

The cooling properties of water enable 'Mech Heat Sinks to work twice as effectively, and so standard Heat Sinks dissipate 2 Heat Points per turn, and Double Heat Sinks dissipate 4 Heat Points per turn.

The following table provides the ranges and range modifiers for energy weapons used in underwater 'Mech duels on Solaris. See **Supplemental Dueling Rules**, p. 51, and **'Mech Duel Rules**, p. 43 in the **Solaris VII Gamemaster's Book**, for procedures on resolving weapons fire in 'Mech arena combat.

UNDERWATER RANGE TABLE

	Minimum Range	[+0]	[+1]	[+2]	[+3]	[+4]	[+5]
Inner Sphere							
ER Large Laser	0	1–6	7–14	15–25	26–36	39–44	45–48
ER PPC	0	1–8	9–18	19–30	31–42	43–54	55–64
Large Laser	0	1–6	7–14	15–20	21–26	27–32	33–36
Medium Laser	0	1–4	5–10	11–14	15–18	19–22	23–24
Small Laser	0	1–2	3–4	5–6	7–8	NA	NA
PPC	12	1–8	9–18	19–24	25–30	31–36	37–40
Pulse Large Laser	0	1–4	5–10	11–16	17–22	23–26	27–28
Pulse Medium Laser	0	1–4	5–8	9–10	11–12	13–14	15–16
Pulse Small Laser	0	1–2	3–4	5–6	7–8	NA	NA
Clan							
ER Large Laser	0	1–10	11–22	23–32	33–42	43–54	55–64
ER Medium Laser	0	1–6	7–14	15–22	23–30	31–36	37–40
ER Small Laser	0	1–2	3–4	5–6	7–8	9–12	13–16
ER PPC	0	1–8	9–18	19–30	31–42	43–54	55–64
Pulse Large Laser	0	1–8	9–18	19–30	31–42	43–50	51–56
Pulse Medium Laser	0	1–6	7–14	15–18	19–22	23–28	29–32
Pulse Small Laser	0	1–2	3–4	5–6	7–8	9–12	13–16

A MATTER OF RESPECT: PART 4

Wallace Scott moved slowly along the narrow pathway toward the Pool, a minor arena buried in the Bracken Swamp. Swamp air, humid and pungent, hovered around him like a wet bath towel. It stunk of dead animals and rotting plants. Wallace hated the trip to the swamplands, but the Doc had told him to come.

He reached the Pool and paid the nine C-bill cover charge. One thing about the Pool, it never had a line. Fight fans interested in watching an underwater match tended to do so via trivid, in the comfort of their bars or hotel rooms back in Solaris City. But Wallace Scott hadn't come to the Pool to watch two BattleMechs pound each other under the deep waters of the old sewage plant. Scott had come on serious business.

He made his way to the back rooms. The smell of the air gradually changed from mildew to sweat, the odor of a locker room. Following the directions that Vining had given him, he stopped at a chipped, red door. After knocking three times, he walked into the room.

He saw Lorri Bent right away. A petite blonde, she wore her hair cropped close; several small spots were shaved to accommodate neurohelmet contacts. He watched as she slipped off her cooling vest, revealing a pair of denim shorts and a sweat-soaked white T-shirt. A holster strapped to her thigh held a small pistol.

"You Scott?" she asked, pulling on a loose-fitting silk robe.

Scott nodded. "You got my message?"

Lorri walked to a table and picked up a hairbrush. "VEST lost a prototype to a thief from the Vampires. You've set up a match with the stolen 'Mech as the booty, and you want me as your MechWarrior."

"That's the gist of it," said Scott, trying not to sound too impressed. Her no-nonsense manner squared with her sterling arena record, and the pistol confirmed her reputation as a tough fighter. "The fight goes down next week, at the Mountain. VEST will pay you 55,000 C-bills for a successful fight, more than you'd usually make in one of the minor arenas. For this match, we'll also provide you with a 'Mech prototype identical to the one the Vampires stole, as well as a list of the design's weak spots."

Lorri smiled. "Show me some stats on this prototype. Before I take your offer, I'd like to see what kind of ride I'd be taking into battle."

"Fair enough." Pleased with her professional response, Scott pulled out a blueprint and carefully unrolled it on the table. Bent leaned over the print for a full ten minutes. Then she carefully rerolled the blueprint and handed it back to Scott. "If I accept your contract, when do I get to try out this new piece of hardware?"

"Two days before the match. That's the best our crew can do on such short notice."

"That's tight. And in this business, tightness has a price. I want another 10K, with 5K of that up front."

"Up front? You must be out of your mind!"

Bent stood up. Wallace noticed that she topped him by a couple of inches. "Under normal circumstances, I'd agree with you. But the grapevine here in the Reaches says two other MechWarriors have already turned down your offer because the 'Mech you want them to pilot is an unknown quantity. And you know the Vampires are practicing with their new toy every day, learning how to squeeze every possible advantage out of it. Frankly, Mr. Scott, you need me more than I need you. I have a perfect record against the Vampires—eight victories in the past two years. I know how their MechWarriors fight, and you know that about me or you wouldn't have offered me the contract.

"So do I get the raise, or do you start training to pilot a BattleMech? Your call."

Though Scott didn't want to hear it, he knew she was right. "You have a deal Ms. Bent. Doctor Vining will probably dock my pay for the next decade, but if you're as good in the arena as you are around the bargaining table, I want you on my side."

ROLAND FIELDS

The sparsely populated area known as Roland Fields is located northeast of Burgton. During the Star League era, the rolling hills and treeless plains were a wildlife preserve that attracted hundreds of thousands of tourists annually. As Solaris' fortunes dropped following the fall of the Star League, the preserve fell into neglect.

Roland Fields soon caught on as a testing location where stables and 'Mech-design firms could put their machines through their paces. The isolated hills proved an ideal place for MechWarriors to practice their skills and for designers to test their prototypes, far from the prying eyes of competitors. Now, design firms maintain designated testing fields in the area and post snipers to thwart spies and trespassers. Many stables still pilot their 'Mechs out to unclaimed areas for practices and also use the location when they wish to settle private scores with rivals.

BARRYMORE RANGE (RF-1)

Barrymore Munitions of Joppa maintains this public Battle-Mech and vehicle firing range north of the Solaris River in Roland Fields.

For 200 C-bills per hour, patrons can test their skills on armored, 'Mech-sized targets that roll along tracks set among a series of low hills. Unexploded shells and missiles litter much of the range, because the danger of collecting them far outweighs the benefits.

Barrymore Munitions tests its products at its own private facility located south of the public range.

SOLARIS ARMS TEST FIELD (RF-2)

An old chain-link fence marks off the 64 square-kilometer field where Solaris Arms tests its BattleMech prototypes. Steep hills line the field's perimeter, where armed security teams and guard dogs patrol for spies from competing 'Mech shops. In addition, two BattleMechs patrol the grounds, with orders to shoot first and ask questions later.

These security measures may seem excessive, but the recent attempted theft of the firm's *Copperhead* prototype by a test pilot shows they are justified. If not for the actions of the security team's guard BattleMechs, the attempt would have succeeded.

MUD PIT (RF-3)

Location: Roland Fields
Class: 5
Owner: Rana Kafi
Manager: Leon Frey
Terrain: Mud
Seating Capacity: 900
Seating: General seating
Admission Price (C-bills): 17 C-bills

The Mud Pit consists of a former gravel pit, cut into the sides of several hills. The pit catches the frequent rainfall of the area, which transforms it into a small lake of mud. Most MechWarriors find the terrain nearly impossible to move through, let alone battle in, but many relish the challenge.

Most of the matches at the Pit are fought for small purses, and as a result, the more experienced MechWarriors seldom fight at the arena. The muddy terrain also seems to strip away the glamour of 'Mech combat, another reason image-conscious veterans avoid the Pit.

Rana Kafi, a Kurita MechWarrior who arrived on Solaris VII after the Clan invasion, owns and operates the Mud Pit. Kafi and her trademark golden *Shadowhawk* had enjoyed a noteworthy climb in the Solaris VII rankings until an injury forced her early retirement. Kafi used her winnings to purchase an abandoned gravel pit in Roland Fields. Many scoffed when she installed bleachers and lights along the pit's steep banks and declared the Mud Pit open for 'Mech matches, but the steady stream of tourists drawn to the arena have made Kafi look like a genius. Now she is reportedly negotiating a contract with Larzellier Communications to broadcast matches from her arena.

Several gangs have targeted Kafi in drive-by shootings recently, apparently because of her Combine origins. She now employs 24-hour bodyguards.

CAPABILITIES

The Mud Pit is approximately 100 meters deep and has a diameter of roughly 200 meters. Bleachers and lights ring the outer rim of the pit.

The mire of mud and water along the lower sides and bottom of the Mud Pit dramatically hinder the movement of BattleMechs. Between matches, arena staff lower special earth-moving equipment into the Pit and stir the muddy mix to regulate its consistency. Accounts of entire 'Mechs disappearing into the goo are merely tall tales, although 'Mechs commonly sink up to their knee actuators.

Recently Rana Kafi purchased a stockpile of vibrabombs, which the staff occasionally buries in the Pit.

COMBAT IN THE MUD PIT

Matches begin with opponents at opposite sides of the Pit. Any hidden vibrabombs are deactivated to allow them to descend the Pit's sides. Thirty meters down, a fire mark informs the two MechWarriors they can open fire without endangering the spectators along the Pit's rim. The Pit's slippery sides, however, usually send 'Mechs sliding to the bottom of the arena moments after a match begins.

The thick mud forces MechWarriors to concentrate on movement as much as weapons fire. Attempting to run through the muck usually fails, causing a 'Mech to tumble. Commonly, both contestants reach the bottom, stand, and fire away until one or the other is incapacitated or destroyed. Because the Pit lacks blocking terrain, matches are marked by long barrages of fire that delight spectators.

MechWarriors often seek an advantage by seizing a position in one of the few pools of standing water. The cooling properties of the water allow a 'Mech to vent heat faster, and thus, fire its weapons more frequently.

The typical short-range slugfest in the Pit lasts only a matter of minutes. Arena staff use heavy cranes to remove 'Mechs from the Pit after matches.

MAP SET-UP

Before the start of play, the gamemaster rolls 2D6 to determine the number of vibrabombs planted in the Pit for a given match. Then designate the locations of the vibrabombs. Write down the hex locations but do not reveal them to the players. The bombs are set for 1D6 x 10 tons (see p. 61, **BattleTech Compendium**, for more information on vibrabombs).

SPECIAL FEATURES

The Mud Pit contains the following special features.

Vibrabombs

Between 2 and 12 vibrabombs may be hidden in the Pit for any given match. See p. 61, BattleTech Compendium, for procedures on the detonation and damage caused by vibrabombs.

Pools of Water

Treat the pools of standing water shown on the map as Depth 0 water. Moving through Depth 0 water costs 1 MP per hex.

Terrain Restrictions

Jumping is not possible in the Pit, and all other movement modes cost twice their normal MP. See p.15, **BattleTech Compendium**, for a listing of movement costs.

PART 5: DRESS REHEARSAL

Lorri Bent settled into the seat of the *Sasquatch* II and adjusted her neurohelmet as Scott's team rolled away the gantry. From the cockpit she could see the rolling outlines of the Roland Fields. On the other side of those hilly fields, two VEST *Chameleons* waited to take her on in a game of electronic tag.

As she hit the power-up button, the *Sasquatch's* security system intoned, "VEST—Better 'Mechs for Better Warriors." Chuckling to herself, Lorri moved her right hand in the proper pattern. VEST's technicians had already input her voiceprint, so she tried it as well. "Greater glory for those with greater firepower," she said, and was rewarded with the green light denoting full power levels.

"This is Squash-One to Tin Man; ready to roll when you are, Doctor."

Vining's voice came through clearly on the channel. "Lorri, we've configured the two *Chameleons* to show up as different 'Mechs on your targeting computer. Run her through her paces and let us know what you think."

She walked the *Sasquatch* forward toward the largest rolling hill, moving slowly and constantly checking her horizon for motion sensor signals. Her targeting computer picked up a rapidly closing 'Mech off to her right. Lorri pivoted and rechecked her target interlock circuits. The battle had begun.

Though her eyes saw a standard *Chameleon* BattleMech running along her flank, the computer flagged it as a new WRW-LF-004 *Werewolf*. Its let loose with its Martell pulse laser as she jumped the *Sasquatch* over it, and her computer recorded a hit on one leg. As she landed, the *Werewolf* fired a volley of SRMs in her direction. The *Sasquatch's* anti-missile cannon chewed up all of the incoming warheads save one, which the computer simulation recorded as a hit on her arm.

"Not enough to mar the paint," she muttered to herself as she raised her own weapons to respond. Leveling her Gauss rifle, she fired a shot at the *Werewolf*. The simulated hit tore into her opponent's right knee, shredding off all of its armor. The *Werewolf* retaliated with another volley of particle cannon fire which struck the *Sasquatch's* left arm and torso. Lorri's machine shook slightly under the impact of the simulated hits, reminding her of the grim reality behind this game. In a few short days, she would take the *Sasquatch* into combat against a real BattleMech, staking her life on the outcome.

Switching tactics, Lorri ignited her jump jets and leaped straight for the mock *Werewolf*. Her sudden advance made the reconfigured *Chameleon's* laser ineffective. The *Chameleon's* pilot fired off several machine gun bursts and SRM volleys as the *Sasquatch* landed, but these inflicted only minor damage on the 'Mech. In a classic arena combat maneuver, Lorri kicked the pseudo-*Werewolf's* right leg, cutting myomer fiber and crushing its knee. The massive machine pivoted in an attempt to face and fire at her, then fell.

Before she could savor her victory, a volley of SRMs slammed into her 'Mech's back and vaporized what armor she had left. Lorri turned to face the other *Chameleon*, kicking her *Sasquatch* into a full run. Her newest enemy, she noted, was configured as a CPR-HD-002 *Copperhead*, a 'Mech designed for arena combat by Solaris Arms. As the *Copperhead* prepared another volley of SRMs, Lorri brought her anti-missile system on-line. It easily chewed up half of the incoming missiles; the rest peppered her *Sasquatch*. Lorri cut loose with one of the *Sasquatch's* four Martells, and her computer showed a string of hits on her opponent. Pressing her advantage, she leveled her Gauss rifle and fired it, in tandem with a second wave of laser fire. The simulated heat level in her 'Mech's cockpit soared, but she ignored it.

As the *Copperhead* turned to flee from Lorri's deadly hail of fire, the Gauss rifle slug struck it square in the back, rupturing its engine. Laser fire melted away the *Copperhead's* gyro and set off its ammunition stores, causing a huge, simulated explosion. The mock *Copperhead's* pilot punched out, ending the simulated battle.

Settling back in her cockpit couch, Lorri opened the *Sasquatch's* comm channel. "You've built a nice piece of hardware, Vining."

"Thank you, Ms. Bent. Any thoughts about the match?"

"With equal machines, the victory goes to the most skilled pilot. I'm betting they'll put their top MechWarrior in the ring against me; I'd call the odds about fifty-fifty."

"I may be able to change those odds. We modified the weapons array on your *Sasquatch*; it has a few weapons that the stolen prototype doesn't. The Vampires won't be expecting that. Shall we run through a scenario pitting you against the machine you'll be facing?"

"Ready when you are," said Lorri, and shut down the comm channel.

M U D   P I T

NEW RULES AND TECH
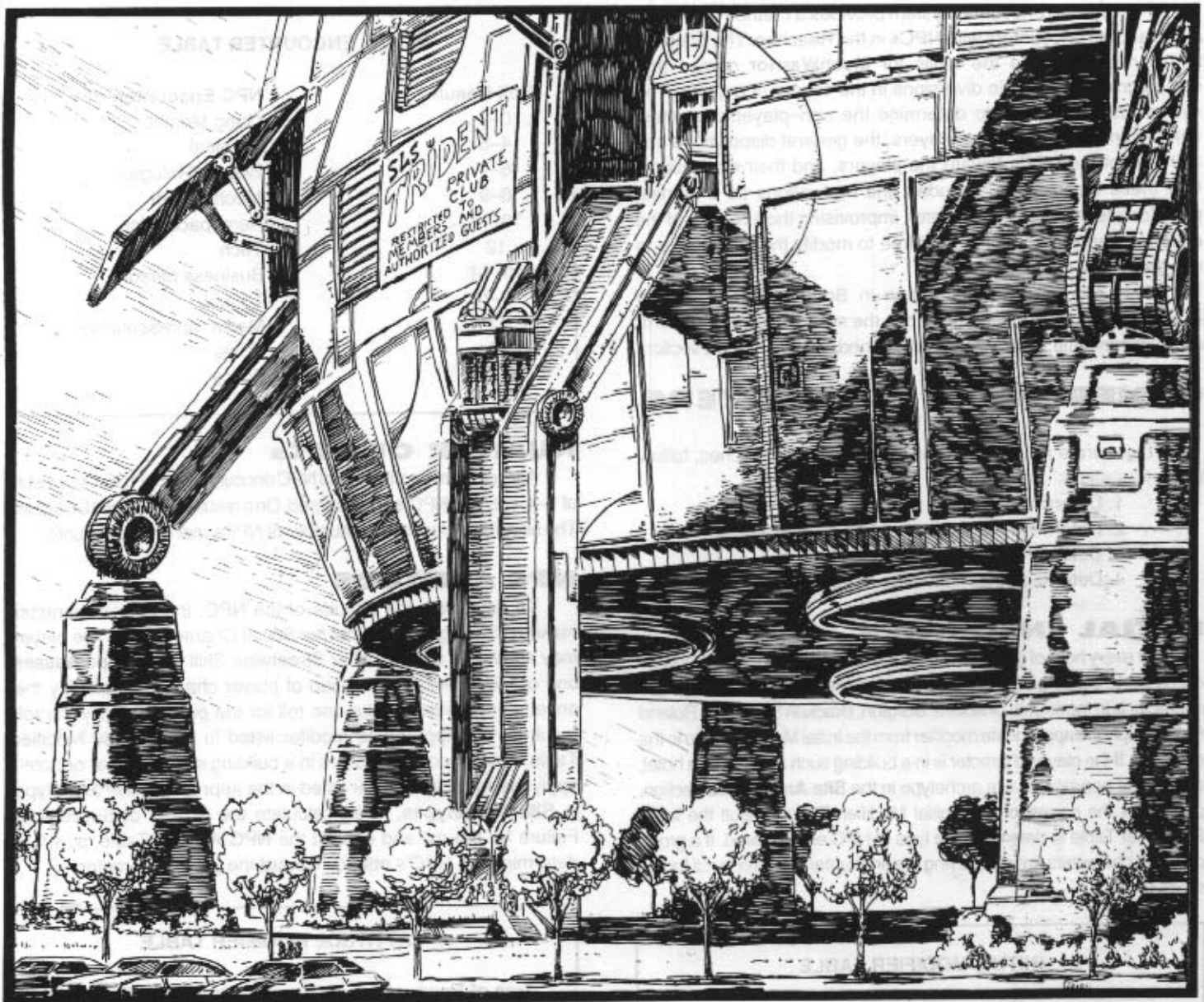
The following section contains five parts—**Roleplaying Rules**, **Supplemental Dueling Rules**, **New BattleMechs**, **MechWarrior Archetypes**, and **Site Archetypes**.

Roleplaying Rules presents a new system for generating encounters with NPCs during **MechWarrior** campaigns on Solaris. The system enables players to generate random encounters with NPCs, which in turn can be used as a launching point for games or campaigns or as diversions. The system can be modified easily for use in campaigns set elsewhere as well. This section also includes an explanation of the ratings used to describe the types of 'Mechs an arena can accommodate. Each arena description contained in **Solaris: The Reaches** includes one of these ratings.

Supplemental Dueling Rules provides optional rules to supplement the 'Mech Dueling Rules in the **Solaris VII Gamesmaster's Book**. Players can use these rules to enhance combat in the Reaches' arenas. This section also contains game statistics for using Clan weapons in arena combat.

New BattleMechs presents descriptions and game information on three new BattleMechs. **MechWarrior Archetypes** provides descriptions and game statistics for three new **MechWarrior** Archetypes designed for campaigns set in the Reaches. **Site Archetypes** provides generic **MechWarrior** game maps for the various sites described in **Locations**. These maps can also be used for other **Mechwarrior** campaign locations.

ROLEPLAYING RULES

The following encounter system provides a method for generating random encounters with NPCs in the Reaches. The encounters can be used as the basis for **MechWarrior** games and campaigns, or as simple diversions in the course of a game. The system uses dice rolls to determine the non–player characters (NPCs) encountered by the players, the general dispositions and attitudes of the NPCs toward the players, and their motivations. Use these dispositions, attitudes and motivations as a starting point for roleplaying the encounter, improvising the specifics of the encounter as you go along. Feel free to modify the encounters to suit the needs of your game.

Each 'Mech arena description in **Solaris: The Reaches** includes a class rating that describes the size of 'Mechs the arena can accommodate. These ratings are defined at the end of this section.

GENERATING ENCOUNTERS

To generate random NPC encounters in the Reaches, follow these four steps:

1. Determine the initial encounter.
2. Determine the number of NPCs encountered.
3. Determine the attitude of the NPCs.
4. Determine the motivation of the NPCs.

INITIAL ENCOUNTER

For every hour of game time that passes while the player character is in a public building or space, the gamemaster rolls 3D6. If the player character is in the streets of Xolara, Burgton, Bracken Swamp or Roland Fields, apply the appropriate modifier from the Initial Modifier Table to the roll result. If the player character is in a building such as a bar or a hotel, consult the appropriate site archetype in the **Site Archetypes** section, p. 68, for the corresponding Initial Modifier. Then consult the Initial Encounter Table to determine the type of NPC encountered. If a group of player characters are roleplaying the encounter, make one roll for the entire group.

INITIAL ENCOUNTER TABLE

Roll Result	NPC Encountered
0–3	Gang Member
4–5	Criminal
6–7	Beggar/Refugee
8–9	MechWarrior
10–11	Aerospace Pilot
12	Tech
13–14	Business person
15–16	Tourist
17	Media representative
18	Noble
19+	Police

NUMBER OF NPCs

After determining the type of NPC encountered, roll 1D6. On a result of 1–4, only one NPC is encountered. On a result of 5 or 6, roll 1D6 again. The second roll result is the number of NPCs met in the encounter.

NPC ATTITUDE

To determine the attitude of the NPC, the player character makes a Saving Roll against his Social Characteristic. The player may substitute a Protocol or Streetwise Skill roll if he possesses one of those skills. (If a group of player characters roleplay the encounter together, make one roll for the group.) Modify the roll result by the appropriate modifer listed in the Attitude Modifier Table. If the encounter occurs in a building such as a bar or hotel, apply the Attitude Modifier listed in the appropriate site archetype in **Site Archetypes**. Then calculate the Margin of Success or Failure for the roll and consult the NPC Attitude Table, p. 49, to determine the NPC's attitude toward the player character.

INITIAL MODIFIER TABLE

Area of Encounter	Initial Modifier
Amberton Quarter	+3
Beal City	–2
Dowagiac	+1
Joppa	–2
Kalamazoo	–2
Keego Harborton	–2
Northern Reaches	0
North Pier	0
Roland Fields	0
Rowe	–3
The Zones	+5

ATTITUDE MODIFIER TABLE

Area of Encounter	Attitude Modifier
Amberton Quarter	–2
Beal City	–1
Dowagiac	0
Joppa	–3
Kalamazoo	–2
Keego Harborton	+1
Northern Reaches	0
North Pier	0
Roland Fields	0
Rowe	–1
The Zones	–3

NPC ATTITUDE TABLE

Margin of Success/ Failure	Attitude
−3 or lower	Outwardly Hostile and Belligerent
−2 to 0	Confrontational
1 to 3	Passive
4 to 5	Friendly
6 +	Fleeing

MOTIVATION MODIFIER TABLE

NPC Encountered	Modifier
Aerospace Pilot	0
Beggar/Refugee	−2
Business person	+1
Criminal	−3
Gang Member	−3
MechWarrior	0
Media person	−2
Noble	+2
Police	+3
Tech	0
Tourist	0

Attitude Table Key

Outwardly Hostile and Belligerent NPCs are angry at the player character for some reason. They rush toward him and make no effort to hide the aggression clearly etched on their faces.

Confrontational NPCs hold no grudges against the player character but do try to provoke him into some sort of action. The NPCs may do this with verbal taunts or physical actions, such as shoving or tripping the player character.

Passive NPCs may not even notice the player character or may consciously avoid any contact with him.

Friendly NPCs openly and warmly approach the player character with the clear intention of providing aid, assistance, or information.

Fleeing NPCs turn and run at the sight of the player character in a very blatant attempt to avoid him for some reason.

NPC MOTIVATION

After determining the attitude of the NPC, roll 1D6 to determine the motivation behind the NPC's attitude. If a group of player characters is roleplaying the encounter, make one roll for the entire group. Modify the roll result by the appropriate modifier in the Motivation Modifier Table, then consult the NPC Motivation Table, p. 50, to determine the motivation of the NPC encountered.

Galen is walking through the streets of Joppa, and the gamemaster rolls 3D6 for an encounter. He rolls a 15, which produces a modified roll result of 13 (−2 modifier for Joppa, per the Initial Modifier Table). Consulting the Initial Encounter Table, the gamemaster determines that Galen has encountered a Business person. The gamemaster then rolls 1D6 to determine how many business people Galen encounters. The roll produces a 3, meaning Galen has met one Business person.

Next, Galen makes a roll against his Social Characteristic of 6 to determine the attitude of the Business person. He rolls a 7 and applies a −3 modifier to the result after consulting the Attitude Modifier Table. The modified roll result produces a Margin of Failure of −2. The gamemaster checks the NPC Attitude Table and learns that Galen has encountered a Confrontational Business person.

The gamemaster now rolls 1D6 to determine the Business person's motivation for the encounter. He rolls a 6 and applies a +1 modifier after consulting the Motivation Modifier Table, for a modified result of 7. Then the gamemaster checks the NPC Motivation Table, which shows the Confrontational Business person believes Galen is trying to "start some trouble" (law breaking, fighting, insulting innocent NPCs) and is trying to dissuade Galen from doing so.

NPC MOTIVATION TABLE

Outwardly Hostile and Belligerent NPCs

Roll	Motivation
1–2	The NPC believes, rightly or wrongly, that the player character has cheated him in a prior business dealing or military affair.
3	The NPC believes the player character has stolen something from him in the past.
4	The NPC believes the player character has lied to him or slandered him in the past.
5–6	The NPC believes the player character is withholding an item or information that the NPC requires immediately.

Confrontational NPCs

Roll	Motivation
1–2	The NPC is looking for a fight and the player character has just become an unwitting target.
3	The player character has inadvertently insulted the NPC, who is trying to determine whether the insult was intentional or accidental.
4	The NPC is simply being boisterous and looking for a good time. But if the player character responds roughly, the NPC will not hesitate to fight.
5–6	The NPC believes that the player character is trying to "start some trouble" (law breaking, fighting, insulting innocent NPCs) and attempts to dissuade him from such activity —with force if necessary.

Passive or Friendly NPCs

Roll	Motivation
1–2	The NPC merely wants to ask the player character for information or directions.
3	The NPC wants to ask the player character for assistance with some menial task, such as lifting or moving objects.
4	The NPC is working for a group that has hired him to provide any assistance the player character requires. The NPC follows the player character until approached and asked about his behavior. The NPC will not offer information about his employer.
5–6	The NPC simply wants to help the player character and offers friendly advice or information that is pertinent to the adventure or campaign.

Fleeing NPCs

Roll	Motivation
1–2	The NPC falsely believes the player character is pursuing him and flees to protect himself.
3	The NPC owes the player character money or goods (or merely believes he does) and is unable to repay the debt.
4	The NPC has lied to or about the player characters in the past (or mistakenly believes he has) and fears retribution.
5–6	The NPC has betrayed or wronged the player character in a past business deal or military affair and fears retribution.

ARENA RATING SYSTEM

The Reaches boast several BattleMech arenas, which are described along with their locales in the **Xolara, Burgton, Bracken Swamp,** and **Roland Fields** sections. Most of these arenas serve as training grounds for MechWarriors aspiring to matches in the more prestigious arenas in Solaris City proper. Many are little more than open fields or quarries, with protective glass walls set in front of spectator benches. Regardless of its configuration, each arena is assigned a class rating based loosely on the size of 'Mech its facilities can accommodate. Each arena description in **Solaris: The Reaches** includes one of these ratings, which are defined in the following table.

An arena accommodates the class of 'Mech described in its rating, as well as those described in lower ratings. A Class 3 arena, for example, can accommodate Medium and Light 'Mechs, as well as exoskeletons. Occasionally , however, an arena will host fights of classes it it not rated for, provided that no higher–rated arenas object.

ARENA CLASSIFICATIONS

Class	'Mech Type
1	Exoskeleton
2	Light (up to 39 tons)
3	Medium (40 – 59 tons)
4	Heavy (60 – 79 tons)
5	Assault (80 – 100 tons)
6+	Open (No weight restriction)

SUPPLEMENTAL DUELING RULES

This section provides optional rules and Clan weapon game statistics for use with 'Mech Duel Rules in the **Solaris VII Gamemaster's Book**. These rules offer players and gamemasters additional options for resolving and roleplaying arena and individual-scale combat on Solaris VII. The 'Mech dueling system presented in the **Solaris VII Gamemaster's Handbook** uses rules from both **BattleTech** and **MechWarrior, Second Edition**. Players should be familiar with those rules before attempting to use the 'Mech dueling system and the supplemental rules provided here.

OPTIONAL COMBAT RULES

The following rules are designed to give the skills of individual MechWarriors a greater effect on the outcome of 'Mech matches. The Optional Critical Hit Table provides the player character with greater control over his BattleMech during small-scale fights, reflecting the importance of individual skill and talent in 'Mech duels.

INITIATIVE

Instead of relying on a single 2D6 roll to determine Initiative per the standard **MechWarrior** rules, players may determine Initiative by making an opposed Tactics/Arena Skill Roll. The player who achieves the highest margin of success on his Opposed Skill Roll has Initiative for the turn.

TACTICS SKILL MODIFIER

To reflect the importance of tactical skills and the ability to make correct, split-second decisions in the dueling arena, a player character may apply his Tactics Skill level as a modifier to all combat skill rolls he makes in the course of a match. For example, a player character with a Tactics Skill Level of 2 may apply a –2 modifier to all to-hit rolls made against an opponent. Apply the modifier to physical 'Mech attacks such as punching, clubbing, and kicking as well.

STRATEGY SKILL

To reflect the importance of overall strategic planning in arena combat, players may make an Opposed Skill Roll at the start of each turn using their respective Strategy Skills. Regardless of his Initiative, the player who achieves the lower margin of success must declare where he intends to move his BattleMech for the next two turns. If the player is using multiple 'Mechs, he need only declare the movement of one 'Mech, reflecting the difficulty of anticipating moves by more than one opponent.

OPTIONAL CRITICAL HIT TABLE

The Optional Critical Hit Table integrates the **BattleTech** critical hit procedure (pp. 28–30, **BattleTech Compendium**) into the 'Mech Duel Rules presented in the **Solaris VII Gamemaster's Book**. The table is designed to provide the attacking player more control over the damage critical hits inflict on his opponent's machine. If desired, players may also use this table in standard **BattleTech** games.

Whenever an attacker inflicts a critical hit, the defender should consult the Critical Hit Table on his Record Sheet for the appropriate location per standard **BattleTech** rules. The defending player then rolls dice for each critical hit and consults the Critical Hit Table to determine exactly what damage the critical hit inflicted.

Each weapon and other piece of equipment fills at least one slot (a critical hit location) on the Critical Hit Table. If a player rolls a slot for which there is no component, or a slot marked Ferro-Fibrous Armor, Endo Steel, or CASE, he consults the Optional Critical Hits Table. He then rolls the number of dice specified for the hit location and consults the table for the damage caused by the critical hit. If all the slots in a given location have already taken critical hits, the critical hit transfers to the next location specified by the Damage Transfer Diagram on the Record Sheet per standard **BattleTech** rules. If the dice rolls indicate damage to Jump Jets on a BattleMech that lacks them, simply transfer the damage to the next applicable component listed on the Critical Hit Table. Duplicate optional critical hits inflict no damage.

OPTIONAL CRITICAL HIT TABLE

ARM

Roll (1D6)	Result
1–2	Weapon Insulation Damage
3	Joint Lock
4	Myomer Power Disruption
5	Weapon Fire Control Jammed
6	Weapon Power Disruption

LEG

Roll (2D6)	Result
2	Joint Lock
3–4	Jump Jet Misfire
5–6	Myomer Power Disruption
7–10	Jump Jet Propellant Explosion, Heat Sink Control Failure
11	Knee Jerk
12	Frame Integrity Compromised

HEAD

Roll (1D6)	Result
1	Computer System Damaged
2	Neurohelmet Feedback
3	Sensor Overload
4–5	Ejection System Destroyed
6	Sensor Imaging Damaged

TORSO

Roll (2D6)	Result
2	Engine Surge
3	Jump Jet Misfire, Weapon Insulation Damage
4	Jump Jet Propellant Explosion
5	Ammo Jam
6	Accidental Engine Shut Off
7	Frame Integrity Compromised
8–9	Gyro Revving
10	Weapon Fire Control Jammed
11	Weapon Power Disruption
12	Heat Sink Control Failure

Table Key

Accidental Engine Shut Off prevents the affected 'Mech from moving or firing during the 3 full turns required to restart the engine.

Ammo Jam applies to torso locations only. The attacking player chooses a weapon on the affected 'Mech, which jams for 3D6 turns. The jammed weapon may fire one volley normally, using ammunition previously loaded, but cannot reload or fire again. If no ammo is stored in the affected 'Mech's torso, transfer the damage to the appropriate hit location per standard **BattleTech** rules.

Computer System Damaged applies to head locations only. The affected 'Mech must add a +2 modifier to all to-hit rolls when firing for the remainder of the match.

Ejection System Destroyed applies to head locations only. This damage prevents a MechWarrior from ejecting or punching out of his 'Mech.

Engine Surge causes the affected 'Mech's engine to run harder and channels additional power to all weapons systems for 3D6 turns. During that time, all the 'Mech's weapons generate twice their normal heat. For each weapon fired, the affected player rolls 1D6. On a result of 1, the fired weapon overloads and self-destructs. Treat such weapons as destroyed for the remainder of the game.

Frame Integrity Compromised applies to leg and torso locations. If the 'Mech's leg frame is affected, the player must roll 1D6 when kicking or running. On a result of 1–2, the leg collapses and is treated as blown off for the duration of the game. If the 'Mech's torso is affected, the player must roll 2D6 when jumping, charging, running, or making physical attacks for the remainder of the game. On a result of 2–3, the damaged frame collapses, doing an additional 4D6 points of damage to the BattleMech.

Gyro Revving throws the affected 'Mech off balance for 2D6 turns. If the 'Mech attempts any movement, the player must make a Piloting Skill Roll with a +3 modifier to keep the 'Mech upright. If the roll fails, the 'Mech falls down. In addition, gyro revving adds a +1 modifier to all to-hit rolls when firing weapons.

Heat Sink Control Failure applies to leg and torso locations. To determine the extent of heat sink failure, the defending player rolls 1D6 during the Heat Phase of every turn following the critical hit. A roll of 1–4 indicates that all heat sinks in the affected leg or torso cannot vent heat for that turn.

Joint Lock renders one actuator in the target BattleMech's shoulder, elbow, hip, or knee inoperable for 1D6 turns. During this time weapons on the affected arm or leg cannot be used. In addition, the arm cannot be used for punching and the leg cannot be used for kicking, running, or walking. Any attempt to use the leg in the ways listed above forces the player to make a Piloting Skill Roll with a +2 modifier. If the roll fails, the BattleMech falls.

Jump Jet Misfire accidentally triggers the target 'Mech's jump jets. To keep the 'Mech from falling down, the player must make a successful Piloting Skill Roll.

Jump Jet Propellant Explosion inflicts an additional 1D6 points of Internal Structure Damage to the leg or torso of the target 'Mech.

Knee Jerk damages the affected leg's myomer control systems, causing it to kick intermittently. The affected 'Mech cannot run for the remainder of the match. When landing after any jump, the player must add a +2 modifier to the necessary Piloting Skill Roll to keep the 'Mech upright.

Myomer Power Disruption damages power circuits in the target 'Mech's arm or leg myomer, causing it to operate intermittently. If a player wishes to use the damaged limb to punch, kick, or fire a weapon, he must roll 1D6. For arm locations, a roll of 1 means the player cannot use the arm for that turn only. He must repeat the roll during each turn he wishes to use the arm. For leg locations, a roll of 1 means the leg fails. Treat the leg as if destroyed per standard **BattleTech** rules. If the player has rolled a 1 and loses the use of the arm or leg, all shots, punches, and/or kicks declared build up heat but automatically miss their targets.

Neurohelmet Feedback generates a surge in the neurohelmet, preventing the affected BattleMech from moving or firing any weapons for 1D6 turns.

Sensor Imaging Damaged prevents the affected 'Mech from using its targeting sensors to engage multiple targets for the remainder of the game. Though the player can still engage multiple targets by overriding the system and targeting manually, the to-hit rolls for these shots receive a +2 modifier.

Sensor Overload causes a 'Mech's sensor control system to work intermittently. In every turn following the critical hit, the player rolls 2D6. On a result of 2–3, he must add a +2 modifier to all to-hit rolls made in that turn.

Weapon Fire Control Jammed applies to arm and torso locations. The attacker chooses a weapon in the target 'Mech, which jams in a firing position for 2D6 turns. This weapon generates heat normally, but automatically misses its target. If the weapon uses ammunition, levels of ammunition are depleted per normal combat rules.

Weapon Insulation Damage applies to arm and torso locations. The attacker chooses the weapon that suffers the damage. The weapon generates double the normal heat for the remainder of the game.

Weapon Power Disruption damages a 'Mech's triggering system. The attacking player chooses one of the 'Mech's weapons. For every subsequent turn, the defending player rolls 1D6. On a result of 1–2, the weapon cannot fire that turn.

A MATTER OF RESPECT: PART 6

The King of the Mountain arena loomed against the night sky, a monolith of death. Entering the arena, Lorri Bent couldn't quite repress a shiver. She had fought here before, but tonight felt different. This battle would cost her more than prestige if she lost. She'd beaten the Vampires so often in the past, they couldn't help but play this fight as a grudge match. Her life was well and truly on the line; she couldn't afford to lose.

Refusing to dwell on her fears, Lorri forced herself to plan strategy. She could tackle the Mountain in a couple of ways, with any number of slight tactical variations. Choosing the high-ground approach entailed running through the moat and moving up the mountain quickly, grabbing the top before the enemy reached it and raining down fire from the height. Or she could choose the riskier option, moving laterally around the base of the mountain to catch her opponent's flank exposed. She decided to reserve judgment until she met her opponent.

The announcer's voice crackled over the *Sasquatch's* comm channel. "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the King of the Mountain!" An artificial applause track cut in under his voice. "Tonight's your lucky night—ringside seats at a no-holds-barred grudge match, slugged out to the bitter end between two 'Mechs the Solaris fight circuit has never seen before!

"At the south end of the arena, piloting a custom Class-5 BattleMech, the stablemaster of the Vampires and seven-time victor in this arena, Dick 'The Blade' Benson!" Cheers from the audience mixed with the canned applause. "His challenger is a four-time champion at the Mountain, piloting an identical—the Iron Lady herself, Lorri Bent!"

Benson's voice echoing over the open comm channel drowned out Lorri's round of applause. "You don't stand a bloody chance, Bent. VEST threw your 'Mech together at the last minute; I'm sitting in their only operational proto. If you think you can match my speed and firepower, think again. That bucket of bolts'll break down the minute you try anything. Punch out now, little girl, before I burn you!"

Though she'd expected this kind of arrogant, pre-match patter, it momentarily jolted Lorri. Some of what he said rang too true for comfort. Still, she knew her own worth as a MechWarrior—and Vining had equipped her BattleMech with a few surprises. Confidence renewed, Lorri smiled to herself and thumbed open her comm channel. "I usually only fight *real* MechWarriors, Benson, but just this once I'll lower my standards." She took a deep breath and set the hook. "You want to prove how hot you are, I'll see you at the top of the Mountain. We'll finish this conversation up there—assuming you've got the guts to square off against me."

Benson growled over the comm channel. "I'll see you, all right—on the Mountain or in hell!"

Lorri shut off the channel. Benson had swallowed the bait like a hungry fish taking a worm on a hook. Just as she'd planned, Dick Benson would run up the Mountain rather than taking the side route. She could plan the rest of her strategy from her absolute knowledge of his. Lorri walked the *Sasquatch* into the dark waters of the moat at the base of the Mountain.

Lorri struggled to keep the *Sasquatch* upright as it negotiated the precarious footing on the mountainside. She headed for a small plateau

hidden halfway up the slope, trying to get Benson in sight before he figured out where she'd gone. As her massive 'Mech lumbered across the last ridgeline, she saw the stolen *Sasquatch* striding up to the top of the Mountain. Reaching the plateau, Lorri positioned herself and took careful aim at her opponent. She held her fire, waiting for him to reach the flat top of the Mountain. He took the final step and stood silhouetted against the bright lights of the arena. Lorri watched as Benson's BattleMech aimed its guns down the far side of the huge hill, looking for her. Before he could realize his mistake and turn around, Lorri fired, sending a silver slug from her Gauss rifle into the rear of Benson's right torso.

The projectile slammed into the 'Mech and sent it staggering out of sight down the far side of the Mountain. Lorri gritted her teeth and charged toward the mountaintop. She'd played the element of surprise as best she could; the rest of the fight depended on her skills and a trick or two hidden in her 'Mech's communications system. Though Lorri preferred to rely on her skills as a MechWarrior, Vining's smoke and mirrors might give her a needed edge.

Lorri took nearly three minutes to reach the top of the Mountain. Checking her rear and flanks, her *Sasquatch*'s sensors located Benson's 'Mech on a plateau near the moat that surrounded the Mountain. The machine had rolled to a stop on the dirt embankment, where Benson was frantically trying to right the 'Mech. Spotting Lorri from his half-prone position, Benson fired wildly up the Mountain. A volley of SRMs raced up the hillside, only to meet a hail of bullets from the second 'Mech's anti-missile system. Half the volley exploded in mid-flight; the rest sprayed across the *Sasquatch*'s legs, ripping up armor and rocking the machine. Gauss rifle fire whizzed past Lorri's cockpit, missing it by inches.

Lorri aimed an answering SRM volley at her prone foe. The short-range missiles tore into the enemy 'Mech's chest and legs as Benson's *Sasquatch* lurched to its feet. Plumes of smoke and fire rose from the battered 'Mech where the missiles hit, making it look like a practice shooting dummy. Benson's anti-missile system apparently had a few problems; every shell Lorri fired had struck its mark. Her sensors showed a massive heat build-up in the enemy *Sasquatch*, and Lorri assumed her Gauss rifle shot had ripped into the machine's engine casing. If she kept pounding at it, she could win this match within minutes.

As the temperature rose in her own cockpit, Lorri leveled her Gauss rifle toward her opponent. Just as she fired, Benson's rifle blasted at her. His shot struck her *Sasquatch* square in the chest, and the massive machine lurched upward and backward, slamming Lorri's head into the back of the command couch. A string of red lights danced across the cockpit display, showing that the attack had ripped off half of her center torso's rear armor. Another hit could set off ammunition stores or a fusion reactor, ending the battle in a spectacular explosion. Shaking her head to clear it, Lorri made a snap decision. Instead of triggering her targeting interlock circuits to fire another Gauss rifle round, she opened a commlink to Benson. "Nice touch, little man. Had enough yet?"

Just as she'd hoped, Benson opened his commlink. "You're dead, pretty girl. Even if I let you survive this match, the rest of my stable will break you in half. Do you understand me? Nobody crosses Dick Benson and the Vampires and lives to tell about it!" As he finished speaking, he fired off another SRM salvo. Lorri met it with a wall of anti-missile fire. A single warhead penetrated the hail of bullets, striking her *Sasquatch*'s right arm at the elbow.

"Have it your way, Dicky Boy. By your book, I'm dead either way. Guess a fair fight doesn't matter any more." Lorri pressed a small red button next to her comm switch, watching her sensors.

On the sensor screens, Benson's *Sasquatch* suddenly lost all power. Vining's trick had worked perfectly; he had imprinted Lorri's commlink with a command that ordered Benson's computer to shut down the fusion reactor. Benson couldn't power up in less than a minute and a half, giving Lorri a vital window of opportunity. Benson's 'Mech stood frozen on the plateau below her, a perfect target.

Bringing all her weapons to bear, Lorri fired, sending waves of heat rippling through her cockpit. A deadly shower of missiles, pulse laser beams, and Gauss rifle fire engulfed Benson's paralyzed 'Mech. It reeled under the explosions and fell backward on the plateau, like a soldier cut down by a hail of bullets. Checking her sensors, Lorri saw that Benson's cockpit had miraculously survived the inferno. One last time, she opened a commlink to the battered enemy *Sasquatch*.

"You've got battery power, so I know you can hear me, Dicky Boy. Listen up good. Vining gave me this little surprise just to ruin your day. You figured this for a straight match—but you figured wrong. The Doc just wanted to tell you something. You mess with him, with VEST, with me or anybody else, and we'll personally put a stake through your stupid little Vampire hearts."

"You're dead, Bent! Dead!" Benson shot back, but his voice had a ragged edge. Lorri wanted to laugh at his empty threats.

"And you, little man, are lucky to end up hospitalized instead of on a mortuary slab." Aware that her 'Mech's heat levels had dropped, Lorri triggered the *Sasquatch*'s jump jets and arced through the air. She knew he could see her rising nearly 50 meters above him. She hoped the sight terrified him.

At just the right moment, Lorri cut back power and dropped her *Sasquatch* down onto Benson's like a pile driver. The fall crippled her own 'Mech, but reduced Benson's to a heap of scrap. Her overheated machine sizzled as it slid into the cool water of the moat at the foot of the Mountain. The crowd cheered her flashy "death-from-above" attack—real cheers this time, not recordings. Lorri barely heard them. Stunned by the impact of her fall, she closed her eyes and drifted into unconsciousness.

CLAN WEAPONS

After their resounding defeat on Tukayyid at the hands of ComStar's Com Guard in 3052, the Clans sent emissaries to several Inner Sphere worlds, including Solaris VII. They found the initial reports on Solaris so shocking to accepted Clan notions of honor that trueborn Clan MechWarriors have since shunned the Game World. In general, the Clans despise Solaris VII as a decadent planet populated by dishonorable people who have no right to call themselves MechWarriors.

Despite Solaris' apparent lack of Clan MechWarriors, Clan weapons salvaged from battles or brought by refugees fleeing the invaders have begun appearing on the Game World. Offering enormous technological advances over Inner Sphere weapons, Clan equipment usually sells at astronomical prices. However, most MechWarriors lucky enough to get their hands on Clan weapons believe them worth any cost, because they can accurately fire at longer ranges with less delay between shots than Inner Sphere weapons. They also run cooler, making them less likely to cook off ammunition or fail because of a burnt-out component. The following Clan Weapons Table provides game statistics for using various Clan weapons in Solaran arenas. See 'Mech Duel Rules in the **Solaris VII Gamemaster's Book** for rules on resolving duel-weapons fire.

CLAN WEAPONS TABLE

Type	Ht	Dm	Mn	DI	[+0]	[+1]	[+2]	[+3]	[+4]	[+5]
Energy Weapons										
ER Large Laser	48	10	—	2	1–16	17–30	31–50	51–68	69–86	87–104
ER Medium Laser	20	7	—	1	1–10	11–20	21–30	31–40	41–50	51–60
ER Small Laser	8	5	—	0	1–4	5–8	9–12	13–20	21–24	25–28
ER PPC	60	15	—	2	1–14	15–28	29–46	47–63	64–80	81–97
Flamer	12	2	—	1	1–2	3–4	5–6	7–8	9–10	11–12
Large Pulse Laser	40	10	—	2	1–12	13–28	29–40	41–52	53–64	65–76
Medium Pulse Laser	16	7	—	1	1–8	9–16	17–24	25–32	33–40	41–48
Small Pulse Laser	8	3	—	1	1–4	5–8	9–12	13–17	18–22	23–27
Flamer (Vehicle)	12	2	—	1	1–2	3–4	5–6	7–8	9–10	11–12
Ballistic Weapons										
Anti-Missile System	4	*	—	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gauss Rifle	4	15	8	2	1–14	15–30	31–44	45–58	59–72	73–86
LB 2-X AC	4	2	16	0	1–20	21–40	41–60	61–80	81–100	101–120
LB 5-X AC	4	5	12	0	1–16	17–30	31–48	49–62	63–76	77–90
LB 10-X AC	8	10	—	0	1–12	13–24	25–36	37–48	49–60	61–72
LB 20-X AC	24	20	—	1	1–8	9–16	17–24	25–32	33–40	41–48
Machine Gun	0	2	—	0	1–2	3–4	5–6	7–8	9–10	11–12
Ultra AC/2	4	2	8	0	1–18	19–36	37–52	53–70	7–88	89–106
Ultra AC/5	4	5	—	0	1–14	15–28	29–42	43–56	57–70	71–84
Ultra AC/10	12	10	—	1	1–12	13–24	25–36	37–48	49–60	61–72
Ultra AC/20	28	20	—	2	1–8	9–16	17–24	25–32	33–40	41–48
Missile Weapons										
LRM 5	8	1/missile	—	1	1–14	15–28	29–42	43–56	57–70	71–84
LRM 10	16	1/missile	—	1	1–14	15–28	29–42	43–56	57–70	71–84
LRM 15	20	1/missile	—	1	1–14	15–28	29–42	43–56	57–70	71–84
LRM 20	24	1/missile	—	1	1–14	15–28	29–42	43–56	57–70	71–84
Narc Missile Beacon	0	NA	NA	1	1–6	7–12	13–18	19–24	25–30	31–36
SRM 2	8	2/missile	—	0	1–6	7–12	13–18	19–24	25–30	31–36
SRM 4	12	2/missile	—	0	1–6	7–12	13–18	19–24	25–30	31–36
SRM 6	16	2/missile	—	0	1–6	7–12	13–18	19–24	25–30	31–36
Streak SRM 2	8	**	—	0	1–8	9–16	17–24	25–32	33–40	41–48
Streak SRM 4	12	**	—	0	1–8	9–16	17–24	25–32	33–40	41–48
Streak SRM 6	16	**	—	0	1–8	9–16	17–24	25–32	33–40	41–48

*2D6 incoming missiles destroyed; 1D6 x 2 anti-missile ammunition spent. See p. 117, **BattleTech Compendium**, for further rules.

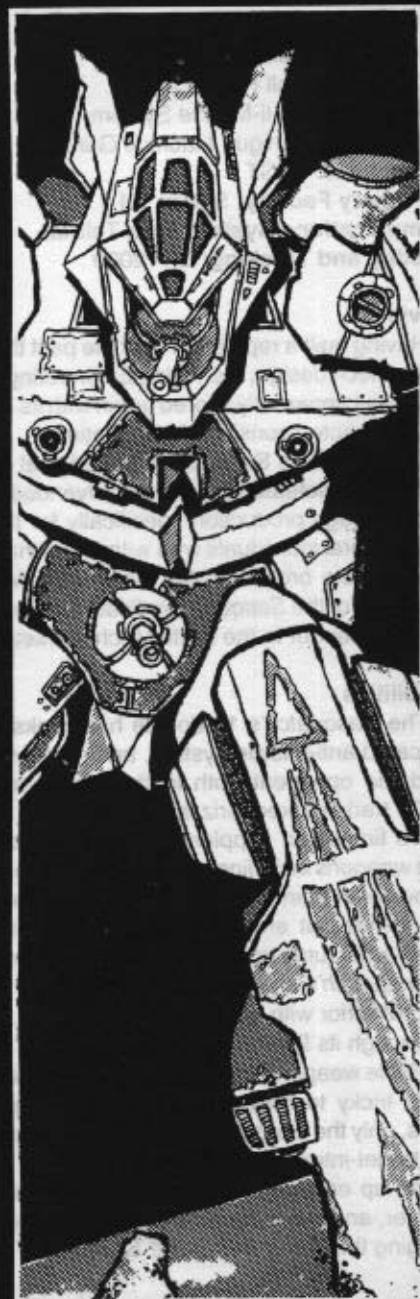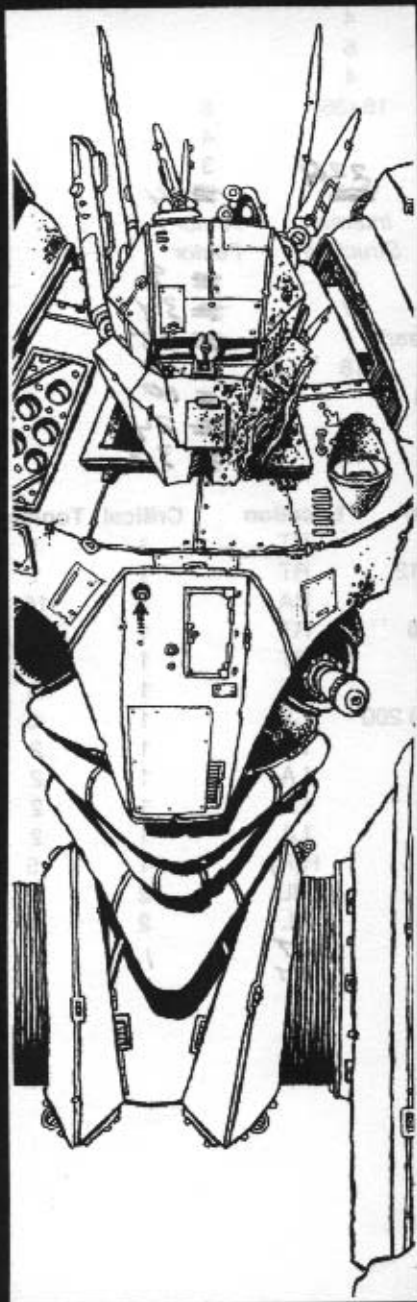**2/missile; see p. 121, **BattleTech Compendium**.

Ht = Heat points
Dm = Damage
Mn = Minimum range
DI = Delay

NEW BATTLEMECHS

SQS-TH-001 SASQUATCH

Mass: 85 tons
Chassis: VEST 101 Bravo
Power Plant: VOX 340 XL
Cruising Speed: 43.2 kph
Maximum Speed: 63.8 kph
Jump Jets: Rawlings 80
    Jump Capacity: 120 m
Armor: StarSlab
Armament:
    1 Exostar Small Laser
    1 Grizzard Model 200 Gauss Rifle
    4 Martell Medium Pulse Lasers
    2 Martell Small Pulse Lasers
    1 McArthur Anti-Missile System
    2 Voelkers Minigun Machine Guns
Manufacturer: VEST
    Primary Factory: Solaris VII
Communications System: Irian TelStar
Targeting and Tracking: O/P 2000

Overview

Having built a reputation over the past three years as a leader in BattleMech design, the Vining Engineering and Salvage Team's (VEST) has apparently scored again with its *Sasquatch*, which has already attracted considerable attention.

The Vampires Stable stole the original *Sasquatch* prototype, only to see it defeated by a more advanced prototype that VEST rushed through production specifically for the task. According to rumor, several individuals who witnessed that match have already placed sizable orders for the *Sasquatch*. VEST's glowing sales projections for the *Sasquatch* indicate the company's confidence in its new contender in the BattleMech market.

Capabilities

The *Sasquatch's* 18 double heat sinks, jump capability, sophisticated anti-missile system, and massive firepower make it a formidable opponent both in the arena and on the battlefield. VEST's trademarked Grizzard Gauss Rifle forms the core of the 'Mech's firepower, supplemented by several short- to medium-range weapons including a quad of Martell medium lasers. Though less powerful than the Martells, the head-mounted Exostar small laser dishes out enough firepower to stall an attack while the MechWarrior turns to face a rear assault. Designed to blend in with the *Sasquatch's* antenna array, the Exostar should provide many a MechWarrior with an unpleasant surprise.

Though its firepower is impressive, the heat generated by its formidable weapons array makes the *Sasquatch's* target-interlock circuits tricky to configure. Of all the weapons this BattleMech carries, only the Gauss rifle generates low heat. Improperly configured target-interlock circuits can make a *Sasquatch* run hot, building up enough heat to eventually interfere with operations. However, any experienced MechWarrior should have no problem managing this weakness in the *Sasquatch*.

Deployment

Though designed primarily for arena combat, the *Sasquatch's* impressive firepower has sparked considerable interest among potential buyers outside of Solaris. Those buyers are said to include the Word of Blake, which intends to supplement its growing BattleMech forces with VEST's latest model.

Type: SQS-TH-001 Sasquatch

Equipment		Mass
Internal Structure		8.5
Engine:	VOX 340 XL	13.5
Walking MP:	4	
Running MP:	6	
Jumping MP:	4	
Heat Sinks:	18 (36)	8
Gyro:		4
Cockpit:		3
Armor Factor:	224	14

	Internal Structure	Armor Factor
Head	3	9
Center Torso	27	34
Center Torso (Rear)		15
R/L Torso	18	20
R/L Torso (Rear)		10
R/L Arm	15	24
R/L Leg	18	30

Weapons and Ammo	Location	Critical	Tonnage
Anti-Missile System	RT	1	.5
Ammo (Anti-Missile) 12	RT	1	1
Gauss Rifle	RA	7	15
Ammo (Gauss Rifle) 8	RT	1	1
Machine Gun	RT	1	.5
Machine Gun	LT	1	.5
Ammo (Machine Gun) 200	CT	1	.5
Medium Pulse Laser	LA	1	2
Medium Pulse Laser	LA	1	2
Medium Pulse Laser	LA	1	2
Medium Pulse Laser	LA	1	2
Small Laser	H(R)	1	.5
Jump Jets	RL	2	2
Jump Jets	LL	2	2
Small Pulse Laser	LT	1	1
Small Pulse Laser	LT	1	1
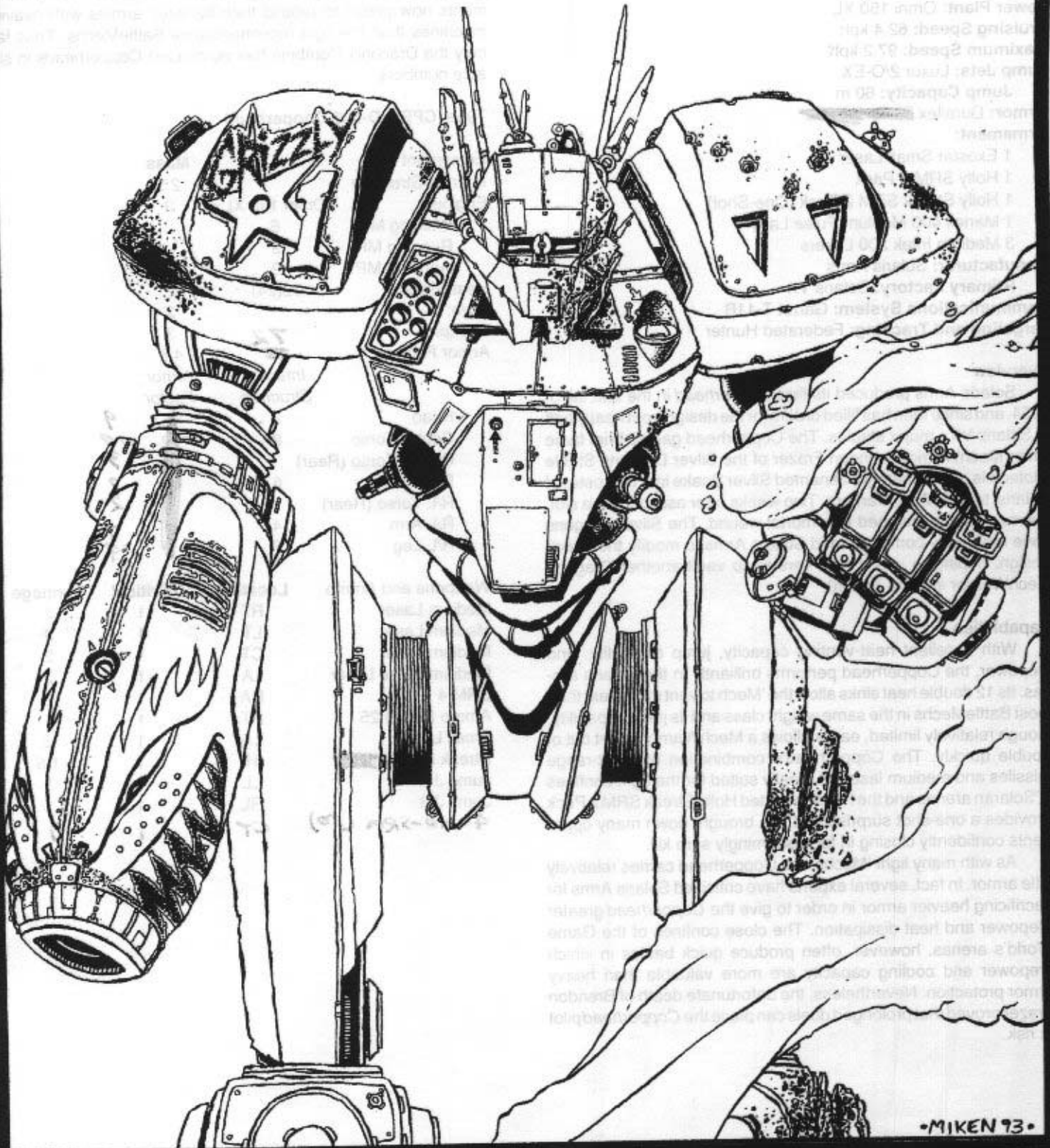
CPR-HD-002 COPPERHEAD

Mass: 30 tons
Chassis: Castelli 211CTC
Power Plant: Omni 150 XL
Cruising Speed: 62.4 kph
Maximum Speed: 97.2 kph
Jump Jets: Luxor 2/Q-EX
 Jump Capacity: 60 m
Armor: Durallex
Armament:
 1 Exostar Small Laser
 1 Holly SRM 4 Pack
 1 Holly Streak SRM 2 Pack (One-Shot)
 1 Martell 400 Medium Pulse Laser
 3 Medium Intek 200 Lasers
Manufacturer: Solaris Arms
 Primary Factory: Solaris VII
Communications System: Garret T-11B
Targeting and Tracking: Federated Hunter

Overview

Solaris Arms produced its first *Copperhead* in the late fall of 3054, and since then has filled orders for the design from nearly half of Solaris VII's major stables. The Copperhead gained brief fame when MechWarrior Brendon Frazer of the Silver Dragons Stable piloted his affectionately nicknamed Silver Snake into the roster of Solaris' top 20 MechWarriors. Two weeks after assuming the slot, however, he succumbed to a mortal wound. The Silver Dragons have reportedly commissioned Solaris Arms to modify the 'Mech design, hoping to use a new version to vault another Dragons MechWarrior into the Top 20.

Capabilities

With excellent heat-venting capacity, jump capability, and firepower, the Copperhead performs brilliantly in the Solaris arenas. Its 12 double heat sinks allow the 'Mech to vent more heat than most BattleMechs in the same weight class and its jump capability, though relatively limited, easily allows a MechWarrior to get out of trouble quickly. The Copperhead's combination of short-range missiles and medium lasers is ideally suited for the tight confines of Solaran arenas and the head-mounted Holly Streak SRM 2 Pack provides a one-shot surprise that has brought down many opponents confidently closing in for a seemingly sure kill.

As with many light 'Mechs, the Copperhead carries relatively little armor. In fact, several experts have criticized Solaris Arms for sacrificing heavier armor in order to give the *Copperhead* greater firepower and heat dissipation. The close confines of the Game World's arenas, however, often produce quick battles in which firepower and cooling capacity are more valuable than heavy armor protection. Nevertheless, the unfortunate death of Brendon Frazer proved that prolonged duels can place the *Copperhead* pilot at risk.

Deployment

The Clan invasion dramatically diminished the role of the light BattleMech in the Inner Sphere arsenal. Facing the punishing power of Clan OmniMech weapons, the Successor State governments now prefer to rebuild their battered armies with heavier machines than the light reconnaissance BattleMechs. Thus far, only the Draconis Combine has purchased *Copperhead*s in sizable numbers.

Type: **CPR-HD-002 Copperhead**

Equipment		**Mass**	
Internal Structure		2.5	
Engine:	Omni 150 XL	3	
Walking MP:	6		
Running MP:	9		
Jumping MP:	2		
Heat Sinks:	12(24)	2	
Gyro:		2	
Cockpit:		3	
Armor Factor:	72	4.5	
	Internal	*Armor*	
	Structure	*Factor*	
Head	3	9	
Center Torso	8	10	
Center Torso (Rear)		3	
R/L Torso	6	7	
R/L Torso (Rear)		2	
R/L Arm	4	7	
R/L Leg	6	9	

Weapons and Ammo	Location	Critical	Tonnage
Medium Laser	RT	1	2
Medium Laser	LT	1	2
Medium Laser	CT	1	2
Medium Pulse Laser	LA	1	2
SRM 4	RA	1	2
Ammo (SRM) 25	RT	1	1
Small Laser	LA	1	.5
Streak SRM 2	H	1	1.5
Jump Jet	LL	1	1
Jump Jet	RL	1	1
Ammo (SRM) 50	CT	1	1

MIKEN
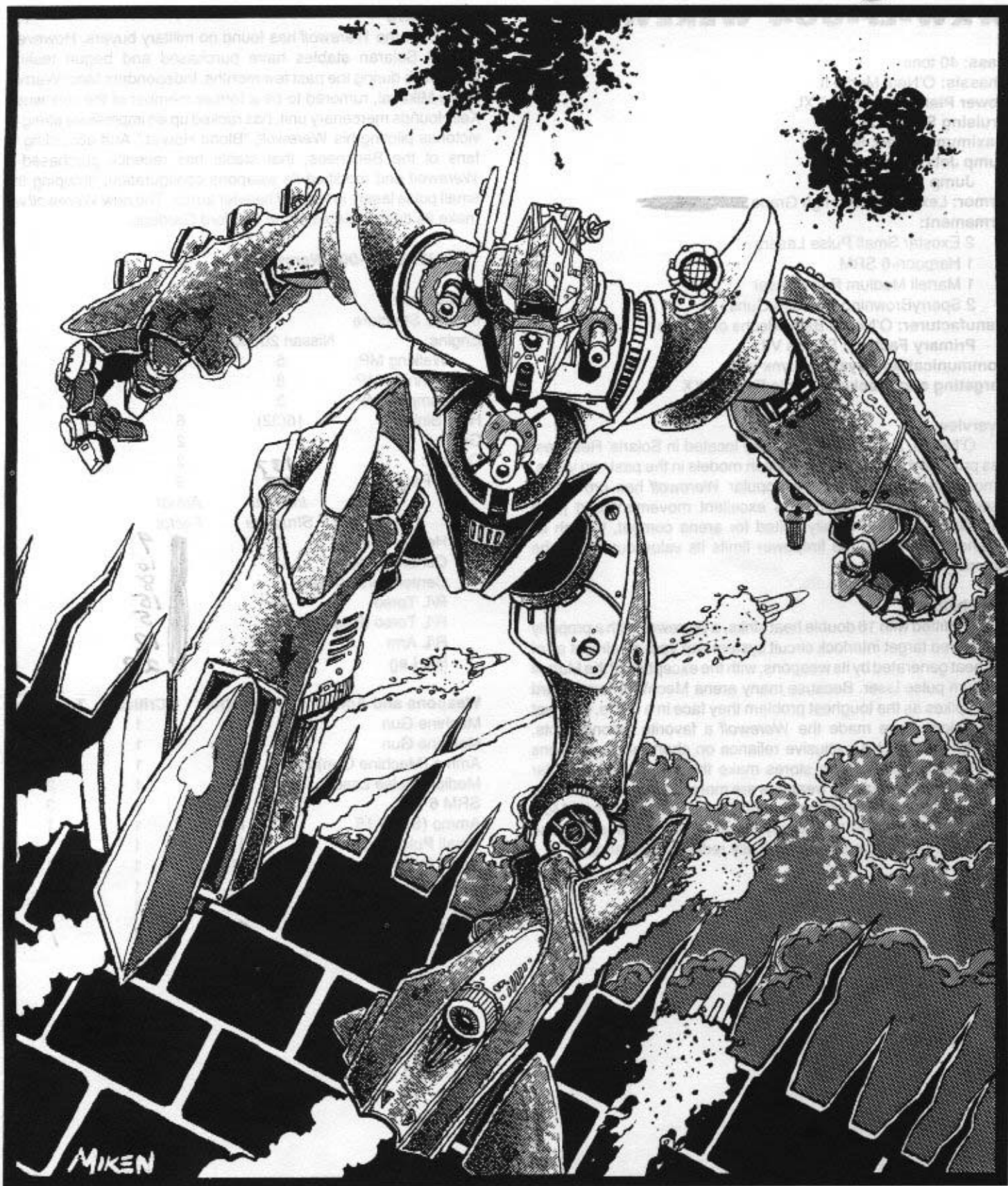
WRW-LF-004 WEREWOLF

Mass: 40 tons
Chassis: O'Neal Model II
Power Plant: Nissan 200 XL
Cruising Speed: 54 kph
Maximum Speed: 86.4 kph
Jump Jets: Rawlings 75
   Jump Capacity: 90 m
Armor: Lexington Ltd. High Grade
Armament:
   2 Exostar Small Pulse Lasers
   1 Harpoon-6 SRM
   1 Martell Medium Pulse Laser
   2 SperryBrowning Machine Guns
Manufacturer: O'Neal's BattleMechs of Solaris
   Primary Factory: Solaris VII
Communications System: Lynx-shur
Targeting and Tracking: Eagle Eye 400XX

Overview

O'Neal's, a major 'Mech factory located in Solaris' Reaches, has produced several leading 'Mech models in the past two years. Among medium 'Mechs, the popular Werewolf has proved an especially effective design. Its excellent movement and jump capabilities make it ideally suited for arena combat, though its reliance on short-range firepower limits its value outside of the Solaris games.

Capabilities

Outfitted with 16 double heat sinks, a Werewolf with a properly configured target interlock circuit system can vent off almost all of the heat generated by its weapons, with the exception of the Martell medium pulse laser. Because many arena MechWarriors regard heat spikes as the toughest problem they face in a battle, the heat sinks alone have made the Werewolf a favorite among pilots. Though the 'Mech's exclusive reliance on short-range weapons and its small ammunition stores make the Werewolf unpopular outside of the arenas, its weapons are more than adequate for the fast-moving, close-in fighting common to the Solaran arenas. Most Werewolf pilots favor the Scrapyard or Ishiyama arenas, whose particularly tight quarters dramatically reduce firing ranges.

Deployment

So far the Werewolf has found no military buyers. However, several Solaran stables have purchased and begun testing Werewolfs during the past few months. Independent MechWarrior Itsura Mikasai, rumored to be a former member of the renowned Kell Hounds mercenary unit, has racked up an impressive string of victories piloting his Werewolf, "Blood Hound." And according to fans of the Banshees, that stable has recently purchased a Werewolf and modified its weapons configuration, dropping the small pulse lasers in favor of heavier armor. The new Werewolf will make its dueling debut at the Hartford Gardens.

Type: **WRW-LF-004 Werewolf**

Equipment		Mass
Internal Structure		4
Engine:	Nissan 200 XL	5
Walking MP:	5	
Running MP:	8	
Jumping MP:	3	
Heat Sinks:	16(32)	6
Gyro:		2
Cockpit:		3
Armor Factor:	137	9

	Internal Structure	Armor Factor
Head	3	9
Center Torso	12	16
Center Torso (Rear)		8
R/L Torso	10	15
R/L Torso (Rear)		5
R/L Arm	6	12
R/L Leg	10	20

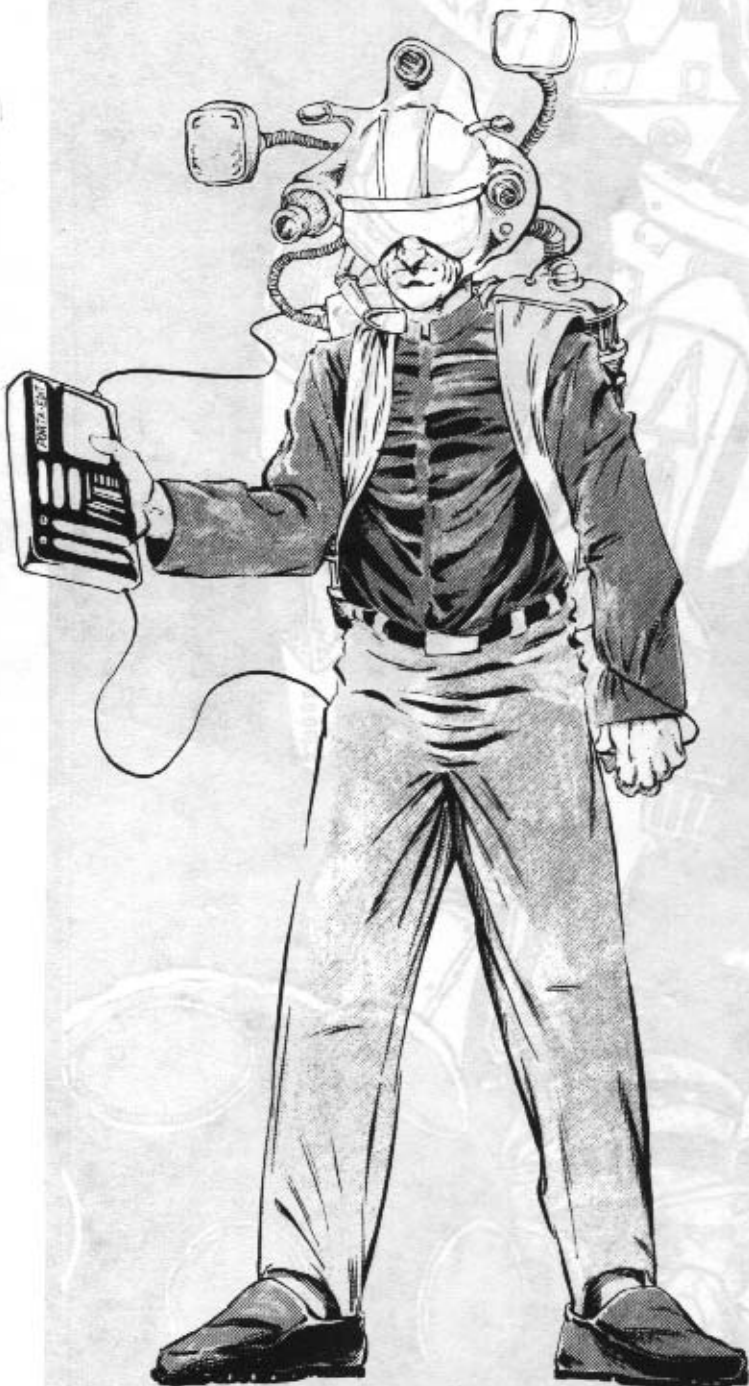| Weapons and Ammo	Location	Critical	Tonnage
Machine Gun	H	1	.5
Machine Gun	CT	1	.5
Ammo (Machine Gun) 200	RT	1	.5
Medium Pulse Laser	LA	1	2
SRM 6	RA	2	3
Ammo (SRM) 15	RT	1	1
Small Pulse Laser	LT	1	1
Small Pulse Laser	RT	1	1
Jump Jet	RL	1	1
Jump Jet	LL	1	1
Jump Jet	CT	1	1

MECHWARRIOR ARCHETYPES

The following Archetypes are specially designed for **MechWarrior** campaigns set in the Reaches. Players may use them as the basis for creating their characters, or they can serve as a basis for NPCs. For more information on using Archetypes to generate characters, see **Archetype System**, p. 31, **MechWarrior, Second Edition**.

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE

The wide popularity of Solaris VII's 'Mech matches—and the large amounts of money and corruption the Games have spawned—make the planet an irresistible draw for ambitious reporters from throughout the Inner Sphere.

Many Solarans, however, view these reporters, or media reps as they are more commonly called, with contempt. The media reps poke, prod, and probe the Game World to see what makes it tick and eagerly follow the plentiful intrigue on Solaris VII in hopes of finding the kind of "big story" that can make a young rep's career. Their exposés of plots and sabotage among the 'Mech stables, as well as the unscrupulous methods they often employ—methods fueled by the intense competition among media reps—have made them targets of disdain and frequent violence from local authorities, corrupt police and other officials, mobs, gangs, stables, cooperatives—just about everyone. In the kill-or-be-killed world of the Reaches, a reporter's life is measured in months, not years.

Attributes			Characteristics	
BLD	3	(9+)	Athletic	10+
REF	5	(7+)	Physical	8+
INT	5	(7+)	Mental	7+
LRN	6	(6+)	Social	8+
CHA	5	(7+)		

Advantages
Sixth Sense
Well-Equipped (1 pt)

Skills

Alternate Identity	2	(5+)
Bureaucracy	1	(7+)
Computer	1	(6+)
Impersonation	2	(6+)
Interrogation	4	(4+)
Running	1	(9+)
Seduction	3	(5+)
Stealth	2	(6+)
Tracking	2	(5+)
Unarmed Combat	1	(9+)

Edge: 1

Assets: 4000 C-bills

Equipment
  Disguise Kit
  Microcommunicator

GANG MEMBER

Gangs rule many areas of Solaris' Reaches, such as the Zones. The gangs themselves govern, collect taxes (of sorts), and administer these areas of the city, which the city government has long neglected.

Gang members range from hardened street killers to crafty business people who eagerly seize the opportunities that arise around them. And because of the large amounts of money that pass through Solaris VII, such opportunities abound.

Attributes

BLD	4	(8+)
REF	3	(9+)
INT	5	(7+)
LRN	6	(6+)
CHA	5	(7+)

Characteristics

Athletic	11+
Physical	10+
Mental	7+
Social	8+

Advantages
Sixth Sense

Skills

Blade	3	(8+)
Drive	1	(9+)
Impersonation	1	(7+)
Interrogation	2	(6+)
Seduction	1	(7+)
Stealth	1	(9+)
Streetwise	4	(4+)
Throwing Weapons	2	(8+)
Unarmed Combat	5	(6+)

Edge: 2

Assets: 2,000 C-bills

Equipment
Hold-Out Pistol
Knife
Vibro Lockpick Kit

WASHED-UP MECHWARRIOR

The fame of a MechWarrior champion can be very fleeting, as many on Solaris VII will testify. One minute a MechWarrior can be living in the luxury of a noble, only to be out on the street the following week.

The Reaches teem with washed-up MechWarriors, men and women whose talents could have made them champions but who lost their shots at the brass ring through bad luck or treachery. Left without stables and BattleMechs, these dispossessed MechWarriors scrape by with any job they can find, waiting for the opportunity to once again pilot a 'Mech under the bright lights of an arena.

Attributes
BLD	4	(8+)
REF	6	(6+)
INT	3	(9+)
LRN	6	(6+)
CHA	4	(8+)

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

Advantages
None

Skills
Gunnery/'Mech	4	(5+)
Leadership	1	(10+)
Piloting/'Mech	2	(7+)
Small Arms	1	(8+)
Strategy	1	(8+)
Streetwise	3	(8+)
Tactics	2	(7+)
Unarmed Combat	3	(5+)

Edge: 1

Assets: None

Equipment
Hold-Out Pistol
MechWarrior Coolant Suit

BattleMech: None

A MATTER OF RESPECT: PART 7

With what little strength she had, Lorri Bent forced her eyes open and found herself staring at the white walls of a hospital room. She tried to move and winced. Every muscle hurt, even the ones she didn't know she had.

"Lie back and relax, Lorri," a familiar voice said. "You've got heat flash and a concussion; you shouldn't try moving yet."

"I'm alive," she said dazedly, as Wallace Scott moved into her field of vision.

"Yup, you're alive. You gave the fans one hell of a show."

"The 'Mech?" she asked softly.

"Both *Sasquatch*'s are pretty screwed up. We can salvage yours, though, if we scrap our first prototype for parts."

Memories of the match trickled back to her. "And Benson?"

Scott frowned. "He's alive, but pretty messed up. Your 'Mech crushed the lower part of his cockpit and flattened his legs. I doubt he'll ever pilot a BattleMech again."

Lorri wasn't sure how to take the news. Whether she'd killed or crippled their leader, the other Vampires would surely come after her for revenge. Somehow, she didn't like to think about that possibility.

"Who won?" she asked.

Scott laughed. "No contest. The judges awarded you and VEST the victory, hands down. Doctor Vining appreciated your performance—so much that he wants to offer you a permanent contract with VEST."

"Contract?"

"As a test pilot. You'd never have to take on dirtballs like Benson again, and you'd be putting your skills to good use for us. We need a MechWarrior like you under our roof."

Lorri considered the offer. She loved the thrill of combat, but she was tired of living hand to mouth. A real job, with real hours might make a nice change for a while. And somehow, after this last fight, she didn't feel like going it alone any more. She held out a hand toward Scott; he clasped it, and they gently shook hands. "Done deal," she muttered and drifted off to sleep, wondering what a steady job felt like.

SITE ARCHETYPES

The following site archetypes are designed for use with **MechWarrior, Second Edition** rules. The site archetypes provide the physical layout of typical buildings in the Reaches. For specific locations not listed in the examples listed with each site Archetype, simply use the Archetype that best describes the physical layout of the location.

Each site archetype also includes encounter modifiers for use with the encounter generator system presented in **Roleplaying Rules**, p. 48.

BAR TYPES 1 AND 2

The numerous bars of the Reaches often serve as focal points for their communities. These establishments can be excellent sources of adventure or important information for player characters.

All bars in the Reaches contain some sort of booth seating along the outer walls. Most also include a kitchen that serves a limited menu. Larger bars (Type 1) feature back rooms to provide privacy for patrons.
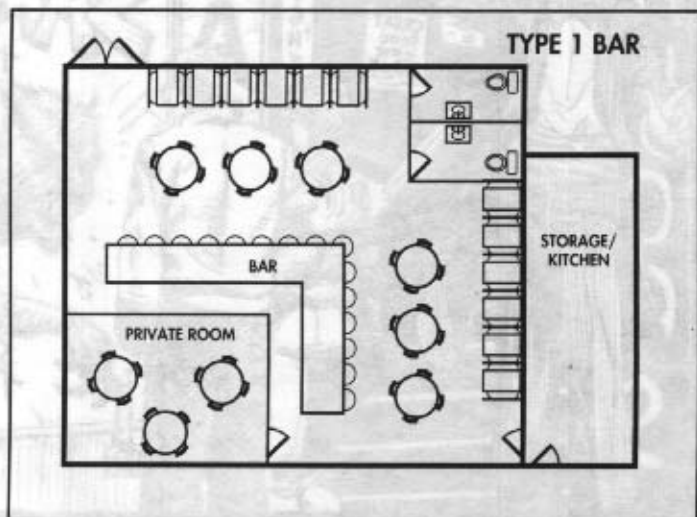
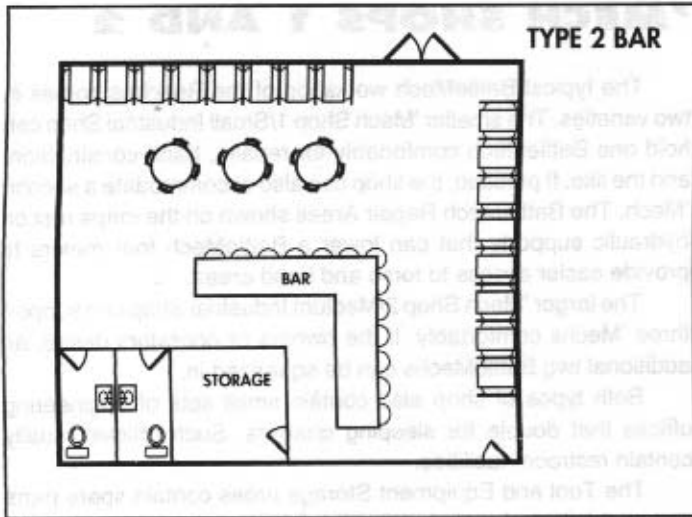## TYPE 1 BAR EXAMPLES
The Cabin
Den of the Dispossessed
Moon Beams

TYPE 2 BAR EXAMPLES
Anspach Bar and Grill
The Gallows
O'Toole's

ENCOUNTER MODIFIERS
Initial Modifier: –2
Attitude Modifier: –2

TYPE 2 BAR

HOTEL/APARTMENT BUILDING

The typical hotel or apartment building in the Reaches is one to ten floors tall. The first floor always contains the main lobby or foyer. The map provided shows a typical hotel layout. If using the map for an apartment building, treat the Private Meeting Rooms and Entertainment Area as Standard Rooms.

This site archetype can also represent a prison. Simply treat the Private Meeting Rooms and Entertainment Area as common areas where prisoners gather, such as mess halls. Treat the Standard Rooms as holding cells and the Elevator as an open staircase.

The site archetype can also represent a hospital. Simply treat the Meeting and Entertainment Rooms as operating rooms. The Standard Rooms become patient rooms. A typical hospital contains three floors of operating rooms and seven floors of patient rooms.
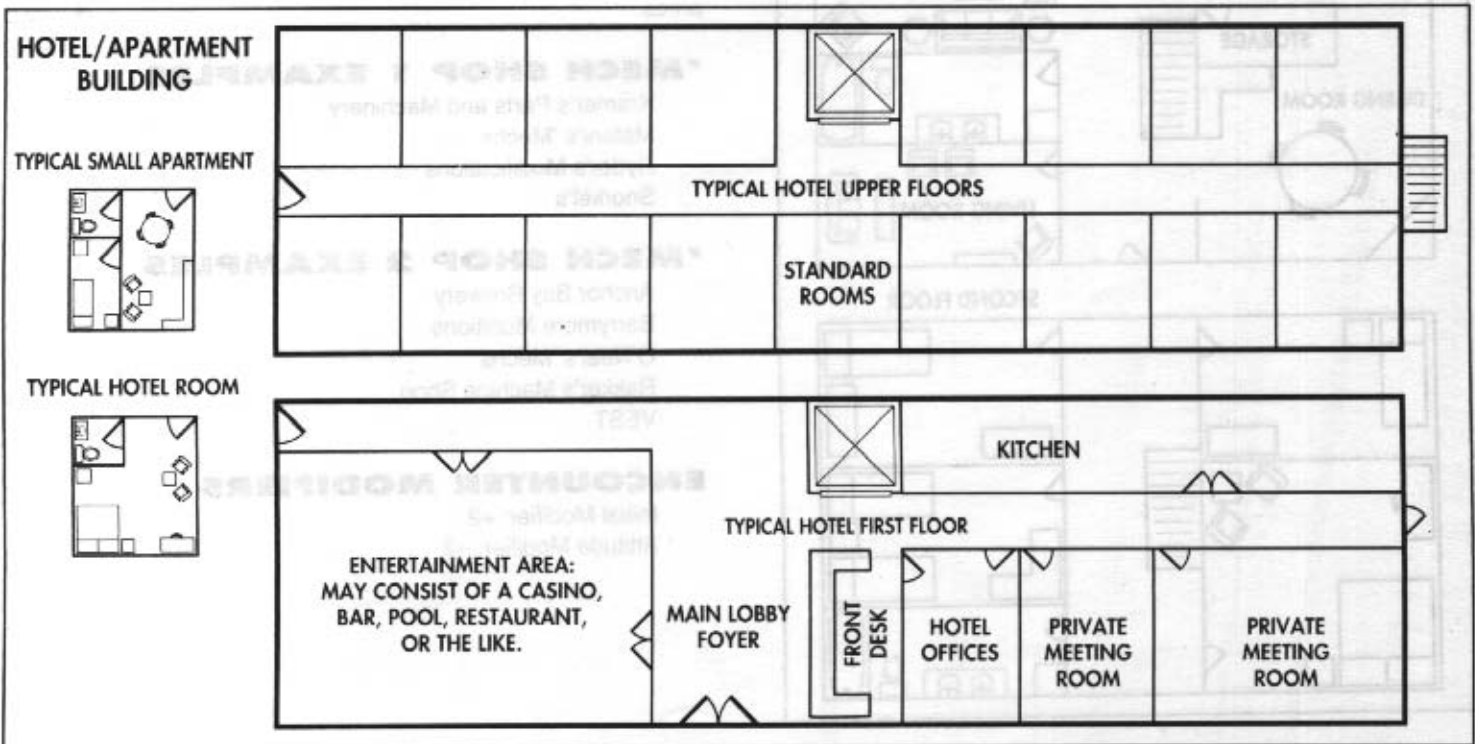
Use this standard apartment site archetype for any large residential structures in the Burgton communities. The site archetype can also represent any large building, such as an office complex. Simply use the Standard Rooms for offices and the first-floor Entertainment Area as a cafeteria.

HOTEL/APARTMENT BUILDING EXAMPLES

Avery's on the Water (2 floors)
Beaumunt General Hospital (15 floors)
The Bismark (5 floors)
Toyama Monastery (3 floors)
Campray Arms (8 floors)
Solaris Prison (11 floors)
The Spectator Building (6 floors)
Star Heights (29 floors)
Warner MechWarrior Academy (2 floors)
The Wyningham (10 floors)

ENCOUNTER MODIFIERS

Initial Modifier: +1
Attitude Modifier: 0

HOTEL/APARTMENT BUILDING

TYPICAL SMALL APARTMENT

TYPICAL HOTEL ROOM

TYPICAL HOTEL UPPER FLOORS

STANDARD ROOMS

KITCHEN

TYPICAL HOTEL FIRST FLOOR

ENTERTAINMENT AREA: MAY CONSIST OF A CASINO, BAR, POOL, RESTAURANT, OR THE LIKE.

MAIN LOBBY FOYER

FRONT DESK

HOTEL OFFICES

PRIVATE MEETING ROOM

PRIVATE MEETING ROOM

INN/HOUSE

Inns are a common sight in the Reaches, and can provide player characters with "safe ports" where they can regroup and take stock of their situations.

An inn usually consists of three floors. The second and third floors are laid out identically. The size of several bedrooms may be reduced to allow for more bedrooms than those shown on the map. Innkeepers usually use the Living Room for their own quarters and convert the Family Room into a common area.
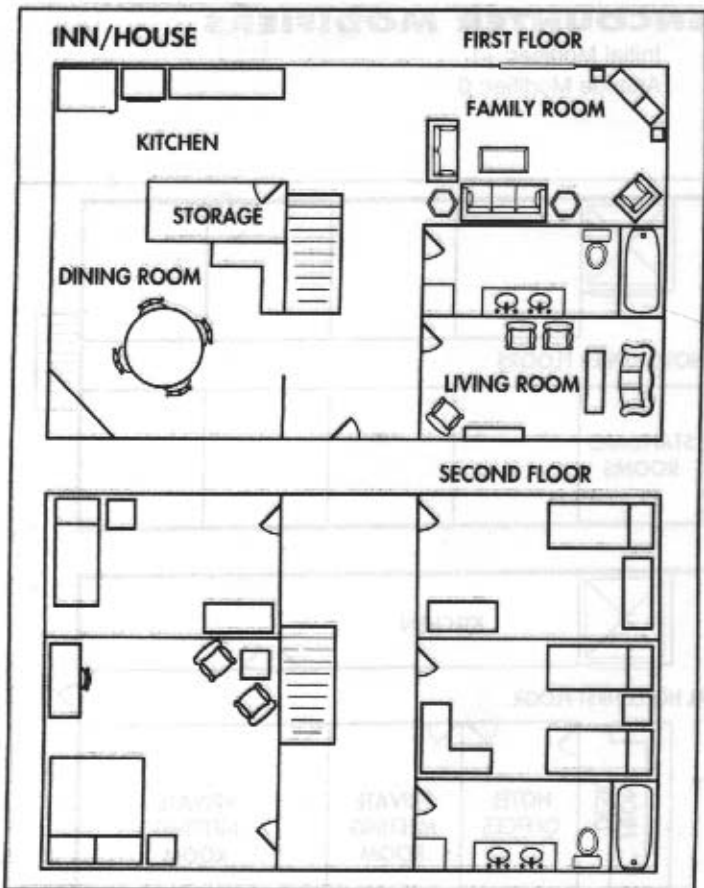
A typical house in the Reaches has four large bedrooms and two bathrooms. The first floor contains a formal Dining Room, Kitchen, Living and Family Rooms. Bedrooms usually occupy the second floor.

INN/HOUSE EXAMPLES

Crossroads Inn
Huntsmen's Stablehouse
Iron Fist Club
National House Inn
Tanya's Place

ENCOUNTER MODIFIERS

Initial Modifier: –1
Attitude Modifier: 0

'MECH SHOPS 1 AND 2

The typical BattleMech workshop of the Reaches comes in two varieties. The smaller 'Mech Shop 1/Small Industrial Shop can hold one BattleMech comfortably for repairs, hand construction, and the like. If pressed, the shop can also accommodate a second 'Mech. The BattleMech Repair Areas shown on the maps rest on hydraulic supports that can lower a BattleMech four meters to provide easier access to torso and head areas.

The larger 'Mech Shop 2/Medium Industrial Shop can support three 'Mechs comfortably. If the owners or operators desire, an additional two BattleMechs can be squeezed in.

Both types of shop also contain small sets of engineering offices that double for sleeping quarters. Such offices usually contain restroom facilities.

The Tool and Equipment Storage areas contain spare parts and sophisticated tools needed for BattleMech repairs, and are usually protected by some type of security system.

Each type of shop also has a gantry/crane system mounted on the ceiling. These systems can hoist and position large 'Mech limbs or armor plating. All such cranes have a 35-ton lifting capacity.

'Mech Shop 2 facilities contain storage rooms for munitions such as autocannon rounds and missiles. These Reinforced Munitions Storage rooms feature double-walled, blast-proof construction (treat as a Hardened Building). Although this type of construction does not prevent destruction in the case of an accident, it does minimize damage to the shop should the munitions detonate accidentally.

Both of these site archetypes can also represent any other kind of small manufacturing or machine shop. Simply treat the BattleMech Repair Areas as parts-assembly or manufacturing areas.
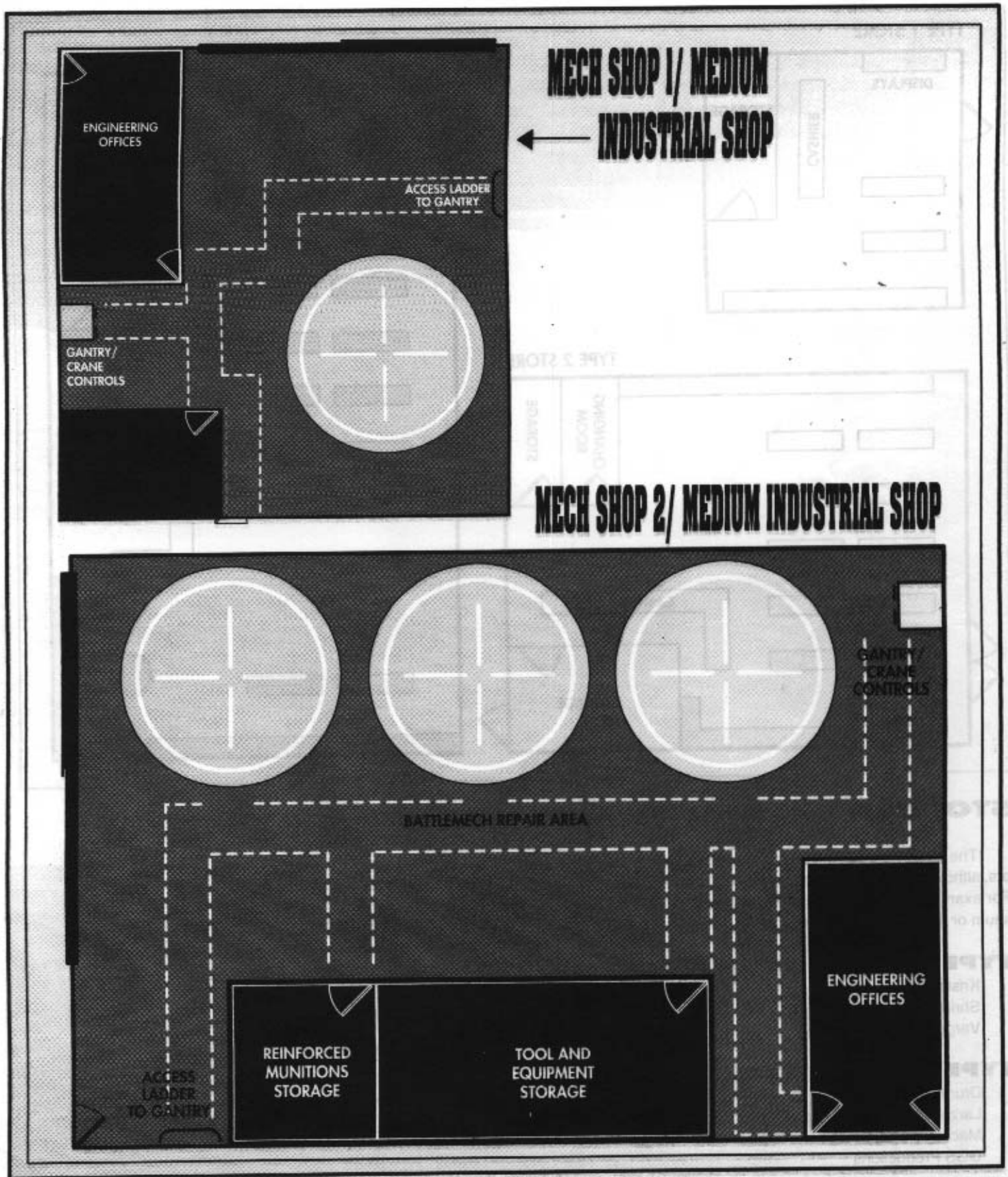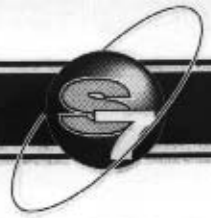
'MECH SHOP 1 EXAMPLES

Kramer's Parts and Machinery
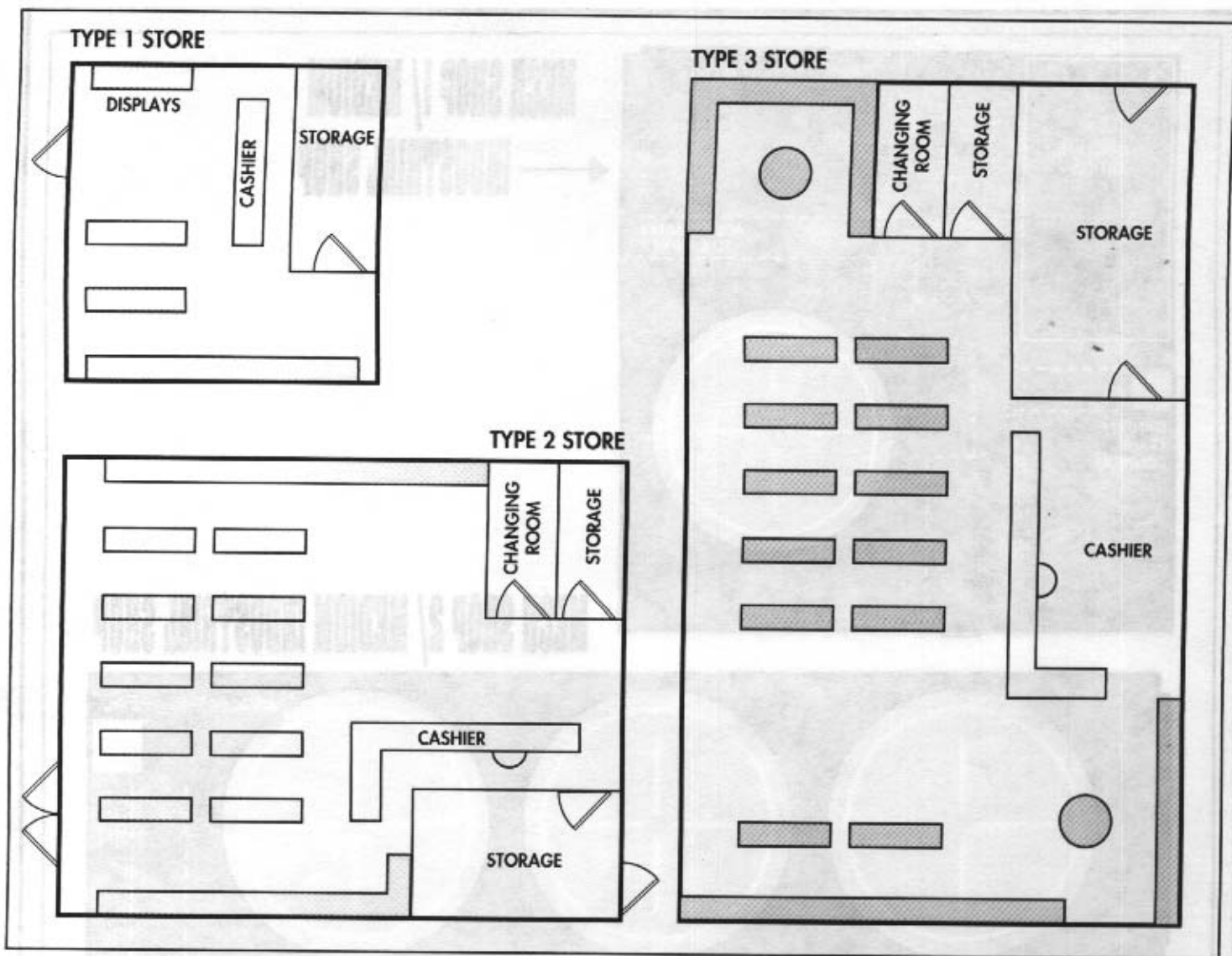Matani's 'Mechs
Ryder's Modifications
Snorkel's

'MECH SHOP 2 EXAMPLES

Anchor Bay Brewery
Barrymore Munitions
O'Neal's 'Mechs
Rakker's Machine Shop
VEST

ENCOUNTER MODIFIERS

Initial Modifier: +2
Attitude Modifier: –2

MECH SHOP I/ MEDIUM INDUSTRIAL SHOP

ENGINEERING OFFICES

ACCESS LADDER TO GANTRY

GANTRY/ CRANE CONTROLS

MECH SHOP 2/ MEDIUM INDUSTRIAL SHOP

GANTRY/ CRANE CONTROLS

BATTLEMECH REPAIR AREA

ENGINEERING OFFICES

ACCESS LADDER TO GANTRY

REINFORCED MUNITIONS STORAGE

TOOL AND EQUIPMENT STORAGE

TYPE 1 STORE

DISPLAYS
CASHIER
STORAGE

TYPE 2 STORE

CHANGING ROOM
STORAGE
CASHIER
STORAGE

TYPE 3 STORE

CHANGING ROOM
STORAGE
STORAGE
CASHIER

STORES 1, 2, AND 3

The three store archetypes represent retail-type merchandisers, although all the layouts can represent a variety of businesses. For example, the Displays can represent exhibits in Baloo's Museum or the FRR Hall of Honor.

TYPE 1 STORE EXAMPLES

Krista's Parlor
Shrint's Loans
Vargus' Fortunes

TYPE 2 STORE EXAMPLES

Drums General Store
Larzellier Communications
Mackey's Swampcraft and Stores
OGS Productions

Pierce's Clothiers
Randal's Arms
Ruggers Outriggers
Solaris Police Substation

TYPE 3 STORE EXAMPLES

Baloo's Museum of the Unique and Indescribable
Barnard's Emporium and Antiques
FRR Hall of Honor
Southern Bank and Trust

ENCOUNTER MODIFIERS

Initial Modifier: +3
Attitude Modifier: +1