

BATTLETECH™

OPERATIONAL TURNING POINTS

FRONT REACHES



MARSHALING COURAGE

**MARSHAL BASE BETA
CALDERA FIELDS, INDEPENDENCE
FRONC REACHES
15 JULY 3088**

The comm crackled to life. Static filled the hardline laid down the night before. The primitive technology had the benefit of being safe from the prying ears of the incoming pirates. "Calderon's Commando on your doorstep, boss."

Deputy Force Commander Marvel Dillon closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and held it. This was it. The time had come to meet his destiny. He tried to convince himself that the roiling in his belly was from missing breakfast, but the comforting lie wouldn't take hold. He twisted his head from side to side, relishing the loud cracks that sounded in his BattleMech cockpit. Reaching up, he pulled down the neurohelmet until it rested on his shoulders. He slowly blew out his held breath. He counted to ten as he regulated his breathing. His pistols dug into his thighs, Maria the right and Theresa the left, as he stretched and wriggled in his seat, getting his blood flowing properly again.

Then he opened his eyes. His *Marshal's* passive sensors showed a series of red indicators closing on his position. They were moving slowly, clearly cautious of the mines that the Colonial Marshals were famous for using. He smiled at the futility of their approach. Yes, there were mines, but just enough to guide them along the Marshals' preferred routes to the facility. Above all, though, the pirates could not be allowed to reach the TinStar building. It was amazing how small a structure was needed for limited manufacturing of battlesuits. Some of the equipment had been evacuated with the personnel, but not all of it. Losing it would severely curtail the effort to build new suits for the Marshals. But if the pirates did make it that far, suited troopers were ready and waiting within.

Dillon stretched out his right hand and flipped a toggle. "Acknowledged. Thunder, deploy and saturate after last enemy passes. Rumble, converge on my location in..." Dillon calculated in his mind how long he and his lance could hold out against the pirates, trying not to sound arrogant and praying he didn't overestimate. After all, the passive sensors didn't tell him the nature of his enemy, just their number and position. Just to be safe, he cut the time in half. "Five minutes." He figured he could hold out that long. In any case, he knew the Marshals he'd assembled into the Rumble group would start to move in before the first shot was fired. But a Marshal had to keep up appearances. No other MechWarrior would realistically believe he could hold out against such overwhelming odds for so long. Most BattleMech battles ended in seconds rather than minutes. Dillon smiled and nodded to himself. He closed the toggle and pressed a small button on the panel.

A tiny popping sound reached his ears. He couldn't see it, but he knew the hardline was falling to the floor of the barren warehouse. With the direct line cut, his comm system erupted with the faux recordings being broadcast within the emptied base. Those small touches were just the last part of the web of deception the Marshals had spun to lure the pirates to their doom. And Calderon's Commando had taken the bait.

Dillon's eyes flicked back to the sensor panel. The ancient caldera where the depot was situated had just a few passages big enough to admit BattleMechs. And only one of those was straight enough to make the approach quick and easy. The pirates were moving directly through it and would be in the caldera's heart momentarily.

Dillon knew the layout of the base down to the last meter of space between the various storage buildings and repair bays. The pirates would find ordnance in those structures all right, but only of the command-detonated variety.

The first pirate 'Mech was clearing the ancient geologic barrier. It sped across the base, clearly seeking enemies to identify and locate before the slower pirates arrived. Thankfully the base was well-prepared. Besides being spread out, the TechMarshals had built wire coils into the warehouses. These masked the nature of what was actually within. Still, if the pirates had any sophisticated scanning gear, they'd see the prepared gifts awaiting them despite the deception. And they could always rip open the buildings anyway.

The enemy indicators began moving with greater urgency. They piled into the base and formed a respectable rear guard deployment. Dillon nodded. Thunder detachment had acted. Thunder LRMs were a precious commodity in the Periphery, and Dillon had requisitioned every one he could lay his hands on for this operation. Every LRM-equipped 'Mech got a full ton of Thunders for saturating the clear passage with mines after the pirates had passed. The way the pirates had suddenly changed their approach told Dillon the first stage of the trap had been sprung. The pirates would be forced to exit via one of the twisting, confining trails to escape the base, unless they wanted to brave the tightly packed minefield barring the path they'd just used. Thunder would even now be rushing headlong to those other passages through the wall, moving to link up with Dillon before the pirates could take him out. Rumble would already be on the way, he knew.

The pirates were trapped in a false base filled with explosives. But the mines and booby traps were not the deadliest surprise waiting for them in the fake installation. No. That honor fell to Dillon himself. He'd been killing pirates for years, and they knew his name. They knew his reputation.

It was time to justify it. He slapped the stud that brought his *Marshal* from standby to full and active operation. The instrument panel sparkled to life, and his HUD glistened into existence. The battle computer started to ID the types of BattleMechs arrayed against him. The recon 'Mech speeding through the base was nearly to Dillon's position. He decided to give the *Spider* the greeting it deserved.

The time for planning and talking was over. It was time to act.

He burst through the thin façade of wall camouflaging him from their sensors. Coiled wires in the veneer sparked as they snapped and were trod underfoot. His arms came up as the *Spider* tried to skid to a halt. Dust kicked up in a spray as Dillon shrugged off the scraps of the feeble structure. The *Marshal's* arms came up, guns blazing.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the next in the series of *Turning Points* campaign books, designed to give players the opportunity to fight in some of the landmark conflicts of *BattleTech's* tumultuous history using the *Alpha Strike* ruleset.

The general information contained in the **Atlas** and **Combatants** sections give players the tools needed to fight an infinite number of engagements in the Fronc Reaches, while the **Tracks** detail some of the more pivotal battles between the pirates and defending Fronc Reaches forces. The Tracks section can also be used with stand-alone games set in the Jihad time frame.

The **Atlas** section presents a global overview and some quick facts about Fronc Reaches worlds visited in this campaign. Included in this section are terrain tables broken into various categories. These tables can be used as a random means to determine the maps used in the tracks or simply as a guide to the types of terrain found on the worlds. This section also contains a list of various additional terrain types, environments, and other rules that can be used to enhance the gameplay experience. All players should agree whether to use any or all of these features before play begins.

The **Combatants** section details the units that participated in the conflict and can be used by players who wish to add authenticity to their games. However, these forces are provided only as a guideline, and players are encouraged to use other forces at their option to attempt to rewrite history. This allows the players to pursue the tracks

with different forces as they desire. Players should feel free to balance the forces in each track as they see fit, whether by battle value, tonnage, total number of units, or whatever else suits them.

The **Tracks** section presents both *Mission* and *Touchpoint* tracks, allowing player groups to build full-fledged campaigns set during the events listed. A general guideline for how to begin fighting the historical campaign is included in **How to Use the Campaign**. Each *Mission* track is reusable, and the *Touchpoints* cover several key battles that occurred during the campaign and led directly to the climactic battle on Independence. For those playing the campaign, the events in each *Mission* or *Touchpoint* lead into the next, with damage carrying over. Players wishing to incorporate these tracks into their Chaos Campaign campaigns should use the Warchest Points (WP) listed in the brackets. Optional points are awarded only if the group achieves at least one Objective while using the listed option. Objective points are cumulative as they are achieved, unless otherwise noted.

The **Annex** section contains five official *Alpha Strike* cards. These include the MHL-6FR *Marshal* of the Colonial Marshals, the NSR-9J (Holt) *Nightstar* of Holt's Hilltoppers commander Chief George Holt, and the TinStar battle armor of the Colonial Marshals. Next are several unique pirate 'Mechs, including the PXH-3D (Jiemin) *Phoenix Hawk* of Shen-se Tian commander *Noyan* Qiangjun Jiemin and the MAD-7D (von Staskov) *Marauder* of Calderon's Commando commander Marshal Vrael von Staskov.

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Special Thanks: The Fronc Reaches and their elite Colonial Marshals are near and dear to me as the part of the *BattleTech* universe that most closely resembles a futuristic Old West. Who doesn't like the notion of an Old West gunslinger fighting it out with piratical desperadoes on a thirty-first-century battlefield? The Reaches and Marshals

were the subject of the first words I ever wrote for BT, so I wanted to tell a story of their most desperate hour, when it was do-or-die. I hope you like it.

For more information about the Fronc Reaches and the people and pirates who have lived and died there, please see *Field Manual: Periphery*, *Field Manual: Updates*, *Field Manual: 3085*, *Handbook: Major Periphery States (HBMPS)*, *Masters and Minions: The StarCorps Dossiers*, *Field Report: Periphery*, and *Objectives: Periphery*. Other references of use are *Alpha Strike (AS)*, *Alpha Strike Companion (ASC)*, *Combat Manual: Mercenaries (CM:MerCs)*, *Combat Manual: Kurita (CM:Kurita)*, *Spotlight On: Holt's Hilltoppers*, *Total Warfare (TW)*, *Tactical Operations (TO)*, and *Strategic Operations (SO)*. Some of the characters mentioned in this *Operational Turning Point* appeared in "The Marshal Way," a four-part story published on BattleCorps.com.

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STAR LEAGUE ERA



CLAN INVASION ERA



JIHAD ERA



SUCCESSION WARS ERA



CIVIL WAR ERA



DARK AGE ERA



ATLAS

INDEPENDENCE

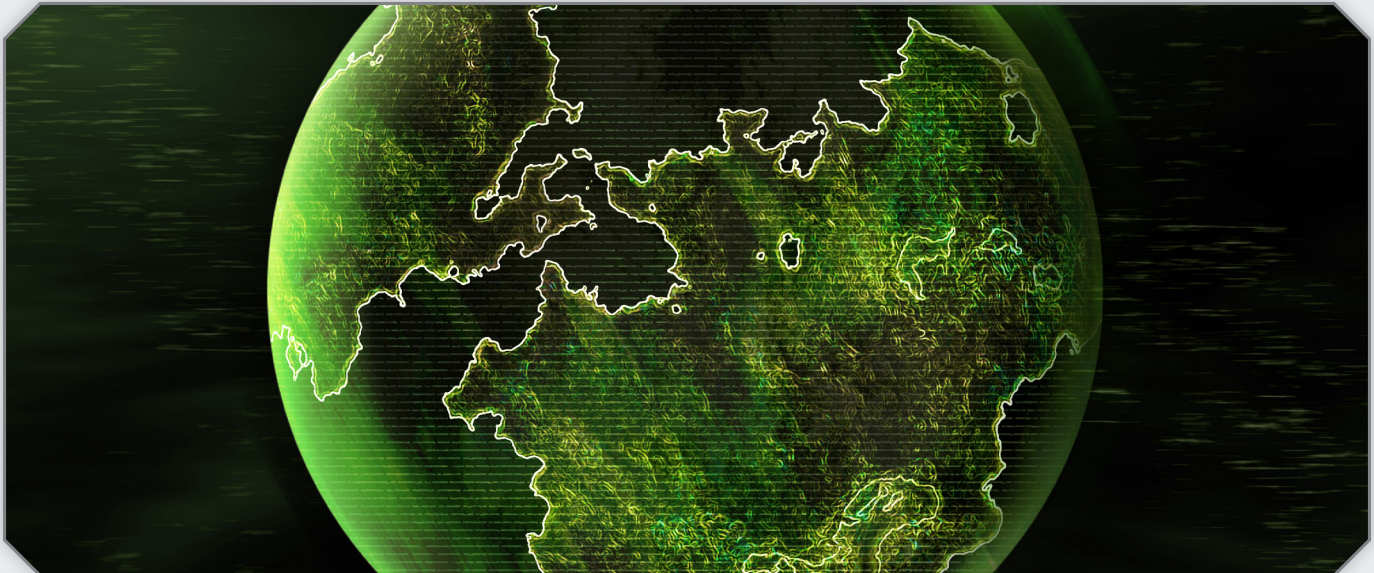
Elected Ruler: Governor Andrew Stanton MacFarlane
Star Type (Recharge Time): G4V (185 hours)
Position in System: 4
Time to Jump Point: 7.96 days
Number of Satellites: None
Surface Gravity: 0.98
Atm. Pressure: Standard (Breathable)
Equatorial Temperature: 29°C (Temperate)
Surface Water: 57 percent
Recharging Station: None
HPG Class Type: B
Highest Native Life: Mammal
Population: 74,759,600 (3088)
Socio-Industrial Levels: C-C-C-C-C

Independence is a large world with plentiful space and resources, though most are undeveloped. Entire cities of Inner Sphere expatriate enclaves have sprung up in the last decade, starting during the Jihad, spread across the continents of Merigo, Maltin, and Norton. Relations between these separate and often ideologically opposite populations requires constant intervention by the Colonial Marshals. The internal threats were so severe that Force Commander Dirk McEvans had the largest Marshal base outside Fronc constructed to allow for effective response to such crises as well as to outside threats. The base is located in an extinct caldera on the central continent of Maltin and houses noteworthy spare troop capacity. A number of technicians and engineers from Holt's Hilltoppers have set up shop there in a warehouse nicknamed "Hilltopper Engineering," which unchecked rumors insist is focused on building battlesuits for the Marshals. The usually operationally secure Marshals seem to have slipped up by letting this information into the open.

PORTLAND

Elected Ruler: Governor Katie Francis
Star Type (Recharge Time): K4V (195 hours)
Position in System: 4
Time to Jump Point: 4.31 days
Number of Satellites: 3 (Stone, Rogue, Upshur)
Surface Gravity: 1.01
Atm. Pressure: Standard (Breathable)
Equatorial Temperature: 30°C (Temperate)
Surface Water: 63 percent
Recharging Station: None
HPG Class Type: B
Highest Native Life: Reptile
Population: 129,866,000 (3088)
Socio-Industrial Levels: B-C-C-C-A

Portland was colonized centuries ago and has long been an agricultural breadbasket. The lack of major native predators and long human habitation make the world ideal for industrial levels of agriculture. Holt's Hilltoppers made the world their home recently and have revamped the world's defensive stance. A small village, aptly named Holt, sprang up near the Hilltoppers headquarters. The nascent Hilltopper Academy lies on the outskirts of the town and has already been forced to turn away applicants due to sheer volume. The three continents of Riverland, Medina, and Jacobs' Land are covered with farms and major spaceports, while the northern continent of Timberland remains largely undeveloped and draws significant tourism from hunters, hikers, and explorers. Jacobs' Land is the smallest of the four, and it is almost wholly owned by the Jacobs family; these farm barons defend their territory constantly from raiders and squatters. Two of Portland's moons are habitable, as well. Upshur is a frigid rock, while Rogue is a captured satellite with a retrograde orbit. Rogue has its own water-rich biosphere with many native plants and animals (up to birds) unique to the small world.



ATLAS

MCEVANS' SACRIFICE

Elected Ruler: Governor Vance Elder
Star Type (Recharge Time): G3V (184 hours)
Position in System: 3
Time to Jump Point: 8.53 days
Number of Satellites: 2 (Shaw, Southfield)
Surface Gravity: 1.09
Atm. Pressure: Standard (Breathable)
Equatorial Temperature: 32°C (Tropical)
Surface Water: 51 percent
Recharging Station: None
HPG Class Type: B
Highest Native Life: Mammal
Population: 33,419,800 (3088)
Socio-Industrial Levels: D-C-B-D-B

McEvans' Sacrifice was initially colonized by refugees from the Reunification War, but it was not until the New Colony Region was founded that it finally was recognized for more than simple agricultural potential. When significant and easily accessed ore deposits were discovered, the population swelled. This brought increased predation from pirates. Small-time mercenary commands abound around the mining camps and are paid well to fend off frequent pirate attacks. The large itinerant merc population has created small cottage industries for gambling and arena fighting. The semiannual tournaments of the best MechWarriors from each merc command have been broadcast throughout the Reaches. Sadly, the rigid scheduling of the event often allows pirates to time their raids for when the best opposition is otherwise occupied. Besides raids on precious metals from the mines, the raiders often capture slaves and steal agricultural goods. The Colonial Marshals, being above arena fighting, are usually the ones taking the blame for any successful raids. So many people have been kidnapped from this world, never to return, that the natives call themselves Sacrifices.

The world draws its name from the heroic effort of Angus McEvans. He single-handedly fought off a company of raiders in his *Banshee*, killing the pirate leader by crushing his 'Mech's head in a devastating melee. McEvans was grappling with another pirate when his ammunition exploded, killing him and the pirate, and breaking the raiders' morale and putting them to flight. His great-great-grandson is Dirk McEvans, the current commander of the Colonial Marshals. That a native of the world commands the Colonial Marshals only enhances the Sacrifices' bitterness toward the Marshals: they feel the Marshals regard them as little more than an afterthought in terms of defense priority.

ROCKWELLAWAN

Elected Ruler: Governor Abel Macias
Star Type (Recharge Time): K2V (193 hours)
Position in System: 2
Time to Jump Point: 4.85 days
Number of Satellites: 1 (Roth)
Surface Gravity: 0.96
Atm. Pressure: Standard (Breathable)
Equatorial Temperature: 30°C (Tropical)
Surface Water: 70 percent
Recharging Station: None
HPG Class Type: B
Highest Native Life: Avian
Population: 89,347,000 (3088)
Socio-Industrial Levels: C-C-A-C-B

Rockwellawan is a former Taurian world whose population maintains the fierce independence of their ancestors. Piracy decreased markedly during the Jihad after the Fronc Cuirassiers made the world their home. This is because the neighboring states, the Taurian Concordat and Magistracy of Canopus, were occupied with their roles in the Jihad and could not devote resources to pirate-hunting. However, once those nations were no longer focused on their enemies, they concentrated on the pirate threat. This forced the pirates to seek easier prey, which they found in the Fronc Reaches, and pirate attacks on Rockwellawan spiked. Pirates mainly prey on the valuable resources being mined on the three continents of Diamond, Facet, and Corundum, though three major raids have targeted the planetary capital of Carat, located on Diamond's east coast. Corundum is home to the Interstellar Agriculture Concerns factory in the industrial city of Kite on the edge of the world's glacial arctic zone. The Sentinelry Academy just finished construction outside Kite, mainly because IAC funded much of the construction and wanted it nearby to increase their profile and provide local defense. The first cadet class started training at the onset of the brief arctic summer. It is hoped instruction in the harsh conditions will harden the cadets and make them a more formidable addition to the Cuirassiers.

ATLAS

FRONC

Elected Ruler (Fronc Reaches): President Carver Trondel

Elected Ruler (Fronc): Governor Tinamarie Winslow

Star Type (Recharge Time): G4V (185 hours)

Position in System: 5

Time to Jump Point: 7.96 days

Number of Satellites: 3 (Orleans, Stafford, Oswaltt)

Surface Gravity: 1.00

Atm. Pressure: Standard (Breathable)

Equatorial Temperature: 35°C (Arid)

Surface Water: 41 percent

Recharging Station: None

HPG Class Type: B

Highest Native Life: Reptile

Population: 704,574,800 (3088)

Socio-Industrial Levels: C-C-C-C-C

Fronc's population swelled during and after the Jihad. Accepting refugees from the Inner Sphere and other Periphery nations placed a heavy burden on the government to ensure proper infrastructure was constructed to support the influx of new citizens. The capital of Freedom's Ring houses the planetary and national government facilities. The Marshalry Academy is on the edge of the capital, in the Marshaltown district, and trains cadets for the elite Colonial Marshals. The Colonial Tractors plant is in the oasis city of Aymys in the midst of the vast El Desierto Pintado.



MAPSHEETS

The following tables represent the categories of terrain that can be found on the battlefields in the Fronc Reaches. While *Alpha Strike* encourages players to utilize terrain tables rather than mapsheets, many players prefer to use pre-printed mapsheets. Players using mapsheets may either select a map from the appropriate table or randomly determine which map to use, unless otherwise specified. Note also that the various MapPacks may be used to alter the terrain of individual mapsheets as players deem appropriate. MS = *Map Set*, MSC = *Map Set Compilation*, BT = *BattleTech Introductory Box Set*. Players using terrain should use the Terrain Table as a guideline for setting up terrain appropriate to the world their battle is taking place on. Note: in *Alpha Strike*, measurements are given in inches. Convert to centimeters by multiplying the number of inches by 2.5 (see p. 7, AS).

OPTIONAL RULES

If all players agree, the following particular effects may be used to add specific aspects to the battles played out in the Fronc Reaches.

Base Terrain Types

- Gravel Piles (see p. 65, AS)
- Heavy Industrial Zone (see p. 65, AS)
- Planted Fields (see p. 66, AS)
- Sheer Cliffs (see p. 39, TO)
- Tundra (see p. 67, AS)

Terrain Modifications

- Deep Snow (see p. 64, AS)
- Ice (see p. 65, AS)

Terrain Conditions

- Electromagnetic Interference (see p. 93, AS)

Weather Conditions

- Hail (see p. 95, AS)
- Full Moon Night (see p. 95, AS)
- Moonless Night (see p. 95, AS)
- Rain (see p. 95, AS)
- Snow (see p. 95, AS)

ATLAS

TERRAIN TABLES

FRONC

NOTE: MAY USE HEAVY INDUSTRIAL ZONE (SEE P. 65, AS).

DESERT TERRAIN	Result	Map
	1	Desert Hills (BT, MS2, MSC1)
	2	Moonscape #1 (MS5, MSC1)
	3	Open Terrain #2 (MS5, MSC1)
	4	Desert Mountain #1 (MS3, MSC1)
	5	City Ruins (MS2, MSC1)
	6	Desert Sinkhole #1 (MS3, MSC1)

FRONC

URBAN*	Result	Map
	1	Desert Hills (BT, MS2, MSC1)
	2	City (Downtown) (MS6, MSC2)
	3	CityTech Map* (MS2, MSC1)
	4	City (Residential) (MS6, MSC2)
	5	City (Suburbs) (MS6, MSC2)
	6	City Street Grid/Park* #1 (MS4, MSC1)

*Place Medium and Heavy buildings of varying heights in non-paved terrain/hexes.

MCEVANS' SACRIFICE

NOTE: MAY USE GRAVEL PILES (SEE P. 65, AS), PLANTED FIELDS (SEE P. 66, AS), AND RAIN (SEE P. 95, AS) TERRAIN MODIFICATIONS.

URBAN*	Result	Map
	1	Open Terrain #1 (MS5, MSC2)
	2	City Street Grid/Park* #2 (MS4, MSC1)
	3	City Street Grid/Park* #1 (MS4, MSC1)
	4	BattleTech (BT, MS2, MSC1)
	5	City (Hills/Residential)* #2 (MS3, MSC1)
	6	Scattered Woods (MS2, MSC2)

*Place Light and Medium buildings of varying heights in non-paved terrain/hexes.

PORTLAND

SPACEPORT	Result	Map
	1	City (Skyscraper) (MS6, MSC2)
	2	Military Base #1 (MS7)
	3	City (Hills/Residential)* #2 (MS3, MSC1)
	4	Drop Port #1 (MS7)
	5	Drop Port #2 (MS7)
	6	Military Base #2 (MS7)

*Place Medium, Heavy, and Hardened buildings of varying heights in non-paved terrain/hexes.

ROCKWELLAWAN

NOTE: MAY USE ICE (SEE P. 65, AS), HAIL (SEE P. 95, AS), SNOW (SEE P. 95, AS), AND TUNDRA (SEE P. 67, AS) TERRAIN MODIFICATIONS.

ARCTIC*	Result	Map
	1	Large Lakes #1 (MS4, MSC1)
	2	Rolling Hills #1 (MS3, MSC1)
	3	Lake Area (MS2, MSC1)
	4	Mountain Lake (MS2, MSC1)
	5	Large Lakes #2 (MS4, MSC1)
	6	BattleTech (BT, MS2, MSC1)

*Use Ice for all water terrain/hexes.

INDEPENDENCE

NOTE: MAY USE SHEER CLIFFS (SEE P. 39, TO) AND ELECTROMAGNETIC INTERFERENCE (SEE P. 93, AS) TERRAIN MODIFICATIONS.

VOLCANIC	Result	Map
	1	Desert Hills (BT, MS2, MSC1)
	2	Moonscape #1 (MS5, MSC1)
	3	Moonscape #2 (MS5, MSC1)
	4	Scattered Woods (MS2, MSC2)
	5	Open Terrain #2 (MS5, MSC1)
	6	Desert Sinkhole #2 (MS3, MSC1)

DO NOT OPEN

5

of 1

RANDOM ASSIGNMENT TABLE

FRONC REACHES, 3088

LIGHT VEHICLES			HEAVY VEHICLES		
1D6	Pirate	Fronc Reaches	1D6	Pirate	Fronc Reaches
1	Galleon Light Tank [30]	Tamerlane Strike Sled [20]	1	Brutus Assault Tank [75]	LRM Carrier [60]
2	Scorpion Light Tank [25]	Plainsman Medium Hovertank [35]	2	Zhukov Heavy Tank [75]	Brutus Assault Tank [75]
3	Hunter Light Support Tank [35]	Striker Light Tank [35]	3	LRM Carrier [60]	Pike Support Vehicle [60]
4	J. Edgar Light Hover Tank [25]	Harasser Missile Platform [25]	4	SRM Carrier [60]	Po Heavy Tank [60]
5	Striker Light Tank [35]	Tamerlane Strike Sled [20]	5	Manticore Heavy Tank [60]	Zhukov Heavy Tank [75]
6	Harasser Missile Platform [25]	Saladin Assault Hover Tank [35]	6	Bulldog Medium Tank [60]	SRM Carrier [60]

MEDIUM VEHICLES			ASSAULT VEHICLES		
1D6	Pirate	Fronc Reaches	1D6	Pirate	Fronc Reaches
1	Condor Heavy Hover Tank [50]	Hetzer Wheeled Assault Gun [40]	1	Schrek PPC Carrier [80]	Rhino Fire Support Tank [80]
2	Drillson Heavy Hover Tank [50]	Vedette Medium Tank [50]	2	Ontos Heavy Tank [95]	JES II Strategic Missile Carrier [95]
3	Light SRM Carrier [40]	Hetzer Wheeled Assault Gun [40]	3	Schrek AC Carrier [80]	Partisan Heavy Tank [80]
4	Vedette Medium Tank [50]	Vedette Medium Tank [50]	4	Demolisher Heavy Tank [80]	Demolisher Heavy Tank [80]
5	Myrmidon Medium Tank [40]	Hetzer Wheeled Assault Gun [40]	5	Heavy LRM Carrier [80]	Behemoth Heavy Tank [100]
6	Chaparral Missile Artillery Tank [50]	Vedette Medium Tank [50]	6	Partisan Heavy Tank [80]	Schrek PPC Carrier [80]

AEROSPACE FIGHTERS		
1D6	Pirate	Fronc Reaches
1	EGL-R6 Eagle [75]	TR-16 Transgressor [75]
2	CHP-W5 Chippewa [90]	CMT-3T Troika [65]
3	SL-21 Sholagar [35]	SB-27b Sabre [25]
4	TR-7 Thrush [25]	CSR-V20 Corsair [50]
5	CSR-V20 Corsair [50]	TR-10 Transit [50]
6	STU-K15 Stuka [100]	CHP-W10 Chippewa [90]

LIGHT 'MECHS			MEDIUM 'MECHS		
2D6	Pirate	Fronc Reaches	2D6	Pirate	Fronc Reaches
2	LDT-X3 Brigand [25]	WLF-1 Wolfhound [35]	2	WVR-6M Wolverine [55]	ASN-99 Assassin [40]
3	LCT-5M Locust [20]	UM-R63 UrbanMech [30]	3	HBK-5H Hunchback [50]	MHL-6MC Marshal [55]
4	STG-5R Stinger [20]	LCT-5V Locust [20]	4	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	TR-1 Wraith [55]
5	WSP-3L Wasp [20]	ABS-3T Anubis [30]	5	PXH-1D Phoenix Hawk [45]	CN9-AH Centurion [50]
6	LDT-X1 Brigand [25]	ABS-3L Anubis [30]	6	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	MHL-2L Marshal [55]
7	JVN-10N Javelin [30]	ABS-3MC Anubis [30]	7	SHD-3H Shadow Hawk [55]	MHL-X1 Marshal [55]
8	LDT-1 Brigand [25]	ABS-3R Anubis [30]	8	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	MHL-X1 Marshal [55]
9	COM-4H Commando [25]	WSP-3L Wasp [20]	9	CNS-5M Cronus [55]	PXH-5L Phoenix Hawk [45]
10	LDT-X2 Brigand [25]	STG-6L Stinger [20]	10	WTH-1H Whitworth [40]	VND-4L Vindicator [45]
11	SDR-5K Spider [30]	UM-R80 UrbanMech [30]	11	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]	MHL-6FR Marshal [55]
12	FS9-P Firestarter [35]	RVN-4LC Raven [35]	12	MHL-X1 Marshal [55]	TR-2 Wraith [55]

HEAVY 'MECHS			ASSAULT 'MECHS		
2D6	Pirate	Fronc Reaches	2D6	Pirate	Fronc Reaches
2	CPLT-H2 Catapult [65]	KSC-5MC Koschei [65]	2	GOL-2H Goliath [80]	PLG-3Z Pillager [100]
3	ARC-8M Archer [70]	MAD-6L Marauder [75]	3	AWS-9M Awesome [80]	AS7-S Atlas [100]
4	GHR-5J Grasshopper [70]	TDR-9M Thunderbolt [65]	4	AS7-D Atlas [100]	STC-2C Striker [80]
5	MAD-3R Marauder [75]	ARC-8M Archer [70]	5	CGR-2A2 Charger [80]	STK-5M Stalker [85]
6	TDR-7SE Thunderbolt [65]	MAD-3D Marauder [75]	6	BLR-3M BattleMaster [85]	AWS-9M Awesome [80]
7	OSR-4C Ostroc [60]	GAL-2GLS Gallowglas [70]	7	STK-3F Stalker [85]	LGB-7V Longbow [85]
8	ARC-4M Archer [70]	THR-1L Thunder [70]	8	CP-11-H Cyclops [90]	MR-V2 Cerberus [95]
9	TDR-9M Thunderbolt [65]	WMH-8D Warhammer [70]	9	AWS-8Q Awesome [80]	Y-H10G Yu Huang [90]
10	ON1-M Orion [75]	RFL-5M Rifleman [60]	10	VTR-9K Victor [80]	LGB-12C Longbow [85]
11	WHM-8D Warhammer [70]	MAD-5L Marauder [75]	11	ZEU-9S Zeus [80]	AS7-K Atlas [100]
12	OTL-5D Otsol [60]	CTF-3L Cataphract [70]	12	MAD-4H Marauder II [100]	VTR-10L Victor [80]

DO NOT OPEN

5

PERIPHERY PIRATE PLAGUE

The Jihad was relatively quiet for the Fronc Reaches. While their neighbors were embroiled in the devastating war, the Reaches remained a safe haven due to a lack of ancestral enemies (in the case of the Taurians) and tempting targets (in the case of the Canopians). While refugees from neighboring and other nations flooded in, pirates focused their efforts elsewhere. Not only were the pickings richer in other nations, the defenders were hopelessly distracted with their ongoing wars to defend properly against mere commerce type raiding.

That changed soon after the Blakists' war ended. Peace between the Concordat and the Federated Suns, such as it was, allowed the beleaguered Taurian Defense Force to redeploy their forces to defend factories and critical infrastructure from piracy. Likewise, the Magistracy Armed Forces sprung back to form remarkably fast after the Jihad, wiping out the nascent piracy within their borders and sending the raiders back to seeking easier prey. Pirates once more focused on the less-defended Fronc Reaches.

The Colonial Marshals quickly became one of the premier Periphery military commands. Their utter intolerance for piracy instilled fear in smaller bands, especially as the truth of Marshals executing captured pirates became widespread. The philosophy of not building prisons to house pirates demanded immediate punishment. The Marshals' refrain of "Thou shalt not suffer a pirate to live" simply motivated pirates raiding the Reaches to show no mercy to their victims. After a number of devastating raids cost the lives of several thousand noncombatants in cities on Rockwellawan, Spencer, and Cygnus, it became clear that simply defending against pirate raids was no longer a viable means of safeguarding the populace. A bolder strategy was needed.

The Reaches began suffering more frequent and higher-intensity pirate raids than ever before. Massive pirate formations attacked, overwhelming the elite Marshals and leaving ruins in their wake. These raids began to occur with uncanny timing, even when multiple pirate bands were involved. The most senior Marshals suspected collusion or alliance between the pirates instead of the infighting that was once so common. This suspicion was confirmed when several members of the Brigands were captured after an audacious daytime raid on Fronc.

The leader of the raiding Brigands force had extensive knowledge of the loose agreement they had entered into with three other major pirate bands. Essentially, they agreed not to compete with each other for targets in the Reaches. To avoid embarrassing overlaps, they had devised a rotating schedule of when each band would raid a specific world. Foolishly believing his knowledge would save his life, the Brigand revealed everything he knew, including the timing of the next set of simultaneous raids. Without enough time to meet three separate raids at once, Force Commander Dirk McEvans took the advice of one of his most trusted advisors, Deputy Force Commander Marvel Dillon, who proposed luring the pirates to the secondary Marshals base on Independence. This would require trickery on the part of the various defenders, but with luck, one of the pirate bands would take the bait and launch a raid in hopes of evading

the notice of their erstwhile partners. Then the Marshals could meet the raiders with appropriate force.

Carrying out the defense against the pirates and accomplishing the deceit fell to the local defenders. On Portland, this duty fell to Holt's Hilltoppers, which easily outclassed the Shen-se Tian pirate band. Unfortunately, only one Hilltoppers battalion was on Portland at the time. Still, they received the message of the impending raid with their typical cool professionalism. Chief Holt ordered his 'Mech battalion into concealment near the capital to surprise the incoming pirates. As the pirates closed on Portland's meager militia defenders, the Hilltoppers ambushed them. The tide quickly turned against the raiders, but their ruthless Mongol tactics enabled them to break free of the trap. While Holt had hoped to destroy the pirates outright, he purposely allowed them to make off with a small amount of loot. Concealed within were documents detailing the supposed destination of the precious supplies: a secret factory being constructed on Independence.

On McEvans' Sacrifice, things went much worse. The small complement of Marshals held their ground, refusing to retreat from the Abominari no matter how badly outnumbered. Once the Marshals were overwhelmed, the planetary militia had no realistic chance of defending. The militia fled, leaving the now-evacuated gem district to be despoiled. The pirates collected their loot and left the world, never finding the clues that would have led them to Independence. However, even their pirate brethren were unaware that the Abominari resided on Independence, in a secret base in another extinct caldera near the Marshals' base. The Abominari would find their home grounds the site of a terrific conflict for a prize they didn't even know existed.

Rockwellawan had a good portion of the First Fronc Cuirassiers and the cadets from the Sentinelry Academy to rely upon for defense, but no one expected the entirety of the Calderon's Commando to arrive for a mere raid. Instead, the Commando had it in their mind to make future raids easier. They intended to make off with loot from the Interstellar Agriculture plant but only while the bulk of their force attacked the Cuirassiers' base and the recently completed academy. Their success was appalling. The base was destroyed and the academy leveled, mainly because Colonel Hudsenn had deployed most of his force to the factory. There the defenders were more successful, repelling the raid while allowing the raiders to acquire the documents that would lure them to Independence. The cost was terribly high, and the academy would not be rebuilt for years. Further complicating matters was the capture of many Colonial Marshal BattleMechs, as the pirates were known for using them to deceive defenders into lowering their guard.

In the Independence system, the Marshals were prepared. The bulk of the force waited in two DropShips at the midway points between the world and the primary jump points. As soon as Calderon's Commando arrived and began their burn in from the nadir jump point, the Marshals acted. The force closest to the raiders' JumpShip accelerated outward and passed the enemy en route. They docked and assumed control of the JumpShip,

PERIPHERY PIRATE PLAGUE



ensuring the pirates could not leave the system. The Marshals on the other side of the system raced for the planet, hoping to get there before the Commando. The Commando landed in the wilderness while the Marshals landed at the nearest spaceport and hurried to intercept the invaders. The militia bravely tried to slow the Commando advance, but they were swept aside as the pirates consolidated their landing zone. In the chaos of incipient battle, no one noticed a second JumpShip arrive at the zenith jump point. Shen-se Tian had arrived uncontested and burned in to Independence as the battle between the Marshals and the Commando began.

On the planet's surface, Dillon and his command lance waited in the base, hidden inside warehouses. Dillon disliked the idea of playing the bait, but someone had to keep the pirates' attention while the Marshals returning from space closed the trap behind the pirates. He had to hold off the pirates with just his command lance, but the ground was prepared well with traps to make the job easier. No one counted on a combat drop by Shen-se Tian though.

As the battle with the Commando swung in the Marshals' favor and the Commando was retreating, Shen-se Tian arrived. With most of the traps expended, the newly arrived pirates devastated the defenders. This allowed the Commando to regroup and return to the battle.

The scale of the battle did not escape the notice of the Abominari, who detected the arriving DropShips of their fellow pirates. They went in force to investigate. Seeing the Marshals teetering on the brink of defeat, the Abominari happily joined in, hoping to eliminate as many defenders as possible. But everyone had forgotten the complement of Marshals that attacked the Commando JumpShip. After dealing with the pirate crew, the Marshals discovered that the JumpShip had lithium-fusion batteries. The capturing crew quickly jumped away while the Marshals' DropShip burned back for the planet.

Knowing that time was of the essence, they executed their own desperate combat drop.

The tide finally turned back in the Marshals' favor. Losses were horrendous, but the unprepared Abominari were put to flight not just from the battle but from the world. They abandoned their base under heavy Marshal pursuit and fled to Herotitus while they recovered. Eventually they left for tempting targets in and near the Filtvelt Coalition. Calderon's Commando managed to retreat in fairly good order. Their DropShips were intact and they boarded quickly. They knew their JumpShip was captured, but they also knew that Shen-se Tian had arrived on one and had lost more than half their number. The Shen-se Tian fled to their DropShips, which were grounded near the Commando's. Realizing the Commando DropShips had them outnumbered and outgunned, they offered the Commando a ride to avoid being stranded or worse. Vrabel von Staskov accepted the offer and avoided a fight over control of the Shen-se Tian JumpShip.

The Marshals failed to stop the pirates' retreat. However, both Shen-se Tian and Calderon's Commando were mauled. Thanks to the databanks on the captured JumpShip, the Marshals discovered the Commando's base. The pirates abandoned their base after hastily clearing out as much as they could before the Marshals arrived. They moved to a new base between the Calderon Protectorate and the Taurian Concordat. Shen-se Tian, without other pirates to share the focus of the Reaches' defenders, decided their much-depleted force would also be better served with a new location. They moved on to Tortuga Prime, setting up shop in one of that world's lesser cities. Their glory days were over for the foreseeable future.

The Marshals were also hard hit by the Battle of Independence. Deputy Commander Dillon suffered severe neurological injuries and was comatose for a week and hospitalized for months before returning to duty. He was placed in command of a new quick-reaction force that utilized the captured pirate JumpShip.

PERSONALITIES.....

MARVEL DILLON

Rank: Deputy Force Commander (Colonial Marshals)

Born: 3044 (44 in 3088)

Marvel Dillon was born on Fronc before the New Colony Region was founded. His skills as a MechWarrior were discovered in 3060. Recruiters from the Canopian Institute of War were visiting the worlds of the NCR to find natives to fill the ranks of the Colonial Marshals. After he delivered the highest scores in the candidate pool, he left his farming family for Canopus.

It was at the CIW that Dillon met Dirk McEvans. The older McEvans was cadet commander of Dillon's assigned company. McEvans completed his training and returned to the NCR while Dillon succeeded him despite being only a second-year cadet. The standards he set remained the top marks for any Colonial Marshal cadet until the CIW was destroyed during the Jihad and construction of the Marshalry Academy began on Fronc.

The Reaches achieved independence while Dillon was away. He never forgave the Magistracy Intelligence Ministry for subjecting him and his fellow Reaches natives to interrogations during and after the crisis that led to the death of Sherman Maltin and Protector Jeffrey Calderon. Once he began his Marshal career, he supported all measures to expel Canopian influence from the Reaches, earning him equal enmity from all Canopian nationals he dealt with.

As the best of the Marshals under Force Commander McEvans, Dillon was promoted despite his diplomatic missteps. He was assigned to Independence in 3087, tasked with establishing and commanding a secondary base for the Marshals.

Skill: Elite (2)

BattleMech: *Marshal MHL-6FR*

Skirmisher, BM, Size: 2, MV: 8"/12"j, TMM: 1, S/M/L: 4/3/-, OV0, A/S 6/3, Specials: ENE, PV 33 (47)

Special Pilot Abilities: Combat Intuition (see p. 52, ASC) and Hot Dog (see p. 54, ASC).



VRABEL VON STASKOV

Rank: Marshal (Calderon's Commando)

Born: 3038 (50 in 3088)

Vrabel von Staskov was born on Sterope and became a fourth-generation member of the planetary militia. His skills caught the attention of the Red Chasseurs after he played a large part in repelling a pirate raid in 3057. His new career in the Chasseurs brought him to the New Colony Region to defend the new territories from pirates and other raiders.

Von Staskov learned to hate the NCR settlers, but he reserved special hatred for those who'd lived there before the NCR was established. The misguided ingrates, as he saw them, should have appreciated the civilizing influence and generosity of the Taurian people in sending funds, resources, and equipment to make the backwater worlds not just livable but tolerable. Instead their insistence that the Taurians and Canopians "get off their worlds" infuriated him.

The last straw was when the rebellious leaders of the NCR abducted the rulers of their parent nations, resulting in the death of the Taurian Concordat's leader, Protector Jeffrey Calderon. Calderon's death devastated von Staskov, but he found the resulting schism of the Concordat unforgivable. He owed more allegiance to the faction that formed the Calderon Protectorate, but he chose to follow his commander, Brigadier Stewart Bogdanovich-Calderon into self-imposed exile. They brought most of their Chasseurs battalion with them and chose the name Calderon's Commando in honor of their lost, lamented, and much-loved leader, who was a distant cousin to their commander.

Operating out of the Fronc Reaches, they joyfully preyed upon those who caused the downfall of their nation. Simple economics motivated them to raid more lucrative targets in the Magistracy and Concordat while the Jihad raged. When the war ended and defenses firmed up, they refocused on the Reaches, where they were based, but they found the prospects much more difficult. Losses mounted, and their fortunes waned. Marshal Bogdanovich-Calderon was killed by Colonial Marshals on Spencer in 3086. It was only through von Staskov's charisma that the Commando held together. During the two years he has commanded the pirate group, its numbers have swelled, making them once more the primary pirate threat in the Reaches.

Skill: Elite (2)

BattleMech: *Marauder MAD-7D* (von Staskov)

Brawler, BM, Size: 2, MV: 8"j, TMM: 2, S/M/L: 4/4/2, OV0, A/S: 8/4, Specials: TSM, CASE, PV 42 (58)

Special Pilot Abilities: Dodge (only if no weapons were fired that turn) and Demoralizer (see p. 52, ASC).

COMBATANTS.....

This section lists the combat units active in the Fronc Reaches. The Experience Level indicates which column to roll on when using the *Random Skills Table* (see p. 273, *TW*) for the combatants.

RAT shows which Random Assignment Tables (see Fronc Reaches, 3088 RAT, pg. 7) to roll units from if randomly determining a force. To build a unit (if not using a player-defined unit from a campaign), use the *Unit Generation* rules (see p. 264, *TW*). For the faction tables to roll from, locate the RAT entry for each combatant (pirate forces may roll on the Periphery and/or Mercenary tables if using RATs from other sources).

If not using the included Fronc Reaches, 3088 RAT, choose a variant specific to the force/nation involved to give a specific flavor to the forces used. None of the combatants have access to the most advanced technology. All forces on both sides should limit their selection to variants that have been in production for several years, to represent the lack of both large-scale manufacturing and prestige in this region of space. Variants dating to 3067 or earlier are recommended.

RAT Sources: *Field Manual: Periphery (FMP)*, *Field Manual: Updates (FMU)*, *Field Manual: 3085 (FM3085)*, *Field Manual: Mercenaries (Revised) (FMMr)*, *Field Manual: Federated Suns (FMFS)*, *Field Manual: Capellan Confederation (FMCC)*

Unit Abilities are special game rules that apply to that unit in combat. Keep in mind these rules are optional, and all players should agree to their use before gameplay begins. The *Notes* section gives in-universe details on the unit to help give players a "feel" for the command during the battles in the Fronc Reaches.

COLONIAL MARSHALS [FRONC REACHES]

CO: Force Commander Dirk McEvans

RAT: Fronc Reaches, Periphery, *FMP*, *FMU*, *FM3085*

Notes: The Colonial Marshals are one of the most-respected and best-quality military commands in the Periphery. They were founded when the Reaches was still the New Colony Region. The Marshals do more than offer military protection. They are also the sole legal arm of the Fronc Reaches. There are no judges or jails or executioners or lawyers; there are only Marshals. They adjudicate everything from spats between neighbors to apprehending and punishing murderers. Punishment is usually meted out based on the crime, but heinous crimes, including piracy, are punished instantly by execution. Above all, the Marshals operate only within the borders of the Fronc Reaches and are prohibited from venturing into any other nation's territory. Thus they are fanatical in their efforts to cripple and destroy enemy transportation elements. The rank structure is different from other military commands. They are led by the Force Commander, who appoints one or more Deputy Force Commanders as desired or required. Each world in the Fronc Reaches has a Planetary Marshal and Deputy Planetary Marshal who oversee the Marshals on that planet. Otherwise, there is no distinction between Marshals in terms of seniority aside from time in service; instead, when they assemble in various size formations, the Marshals usually defer to whomever has the greatest skill for the current mission. Cooperation and responding to need, rather than obeying orders, governs their

actions in combat situations. The Marshalry Academy, located on the northern edge of Freedom's Ring on Fronc, is continuously improving its facilities. Graduates are not always accorded a BattleMech, due to shortages. MechWarriors not assigned a 'Mech are not called Dispossessed; instead they are called Dismounted Marshals. The AeroMarshal Wing patrols the skies and spaceways in the Reaches. TechMarshals specialize in repair of everything from city power plants to BattleMech fusion engines. The newest addition to the Marshals is the TinStar Brigade. This battlesuit force relies mostly on the oldest battlesuits generally available on the interstellar market. However, one-third of the force is composed of TinStar battlesuits, built at a secret, small-scale assembly shop on Independence. The Colonial Marshals' emblem is a metal star-shield of an ancient Terran marshal surrounded by a constellation of stars. It is always displayed prominently on the upper left torso of 'Mechs, on the left wing of fighters, and on the left side of tanks; the emblem is usually placed over a black patch. The Marshals paint their vehicles and fighters in appropriate camouflage, while 'Mechs use patterns of black, brown, and white reminiscent of Terran paint horses.

Experience Level: Elite

Unit Composition: 1 reinforced 'Mech regiment, 1 aerospace fighter wing, 1 battlesuit infantry company

Special Rules: When acting as the Defender, any Marshals force receives 1D6 / 2 (round up) platoons of Hetzers or Vedettes for every full lance of BattleMechs they field (partial lances do not gain this benefit); these vehicle crews are equally divided between Green (5) and Regular (4) skill; these tanks count toward force size, PV/BV, or other means of choosing opposing forces. If acting as Defender on any Fronc Reaches world, the Marshals may deploy 2D6 standard minefields prior to the start of play. When enemy DropShips or JumpShips are on the playing area, Marshals and AeroMarshals gain a -1 to-hit modifier for all attacks against these units. The Colonial Marshals have a very loose command structure and are equally effective operating as individuals or in larger formations; thus, they need designate no commander to employ Special Command Abilities, and do not lose any Special Command Abilities in the event that a scenario requires a commander be designated for a particular battle.

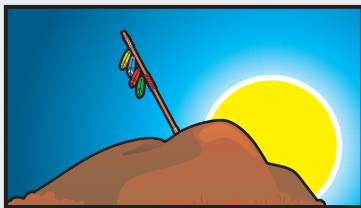
Special Command Abilities: Enemy Specialization (Pirates) (see p. 48, *ASC*), *Esprit de Corps* (see p. 91, *CM:Mercs*), Flexible Command (see p. 85, *CM:Kurita*), and Tactical Specialization (Defense) (see p. 48, *ASC*).



COMBATANTS.....

HOLT'S HILLTOPPERS
[FRONC REACHES]

CO: Chief George Holt
RAT: Mercenary,
 Periphery, *FMMr*, *FMU*,
FMFS, *FMCC*



Notes: The Hilltoppers' collective code of honor can see grudges last decades. This was illustrated when Carnivore Battalion savaged Harloc's Raiders post-Jihad to avenge a defeat suffered during the conquest of the St. Ives Compact. In late 3067, the command was hired by the Fronc Reaches. Holt, an ethnic Amerindian, warrants the rank of colonel, but the only rank he acknowledges is chief, considering the command his tribe. Holt is in his sixth decade, and his generosity on Portland, including funding civil projects from schools to roads to hospitals, has some calling for him to run for governor in 3090. Holt founded WarPaint Inc. just before the Jihad. Now headquartered in Stark Grove, an eastern suburb of the capital Cooperton, WarPaint supplies high quality military paints. Hilltopper Academy, a small training center for the command, is expanding. The Portland militia trains there and has already shown significant skill improvements. Holt hires out one battalion (the Field Service Battalion, or FSB) to a secondary employer. The three battalions rotate as FSB for a year at a time. This prevents the entire command being caught in one place. The FSB commander usually takes the temporary surname Holt. Thus, Major Abigail Warren was known as Abigail Holt while leading the FSB post-Jihad; subordinates referred to her as "the Holt." Carnivore is the current FSB, under contract to the Filtvelt Coalition. Champion Battalion is on Cygnus training in the arctic city Isen Svanur. Only Chief Battalion is on Portland in 3088. Each company has devised its own combat specialty.

The Hilltoppers split their heavy fighter wing into squadrons of two three-fighter flights, in addition to a command flight attached to Chief Lance. One squadron is attached to each BattleMech battalion. The Hilltoppers' vehicles exclusively protect their transport assets and dependents; one company of vehicles is attached to each 'Mech battalion. The battle armor company (three platoons of four squads each) operates either in conjunction with 'Mechs or independently for scouting and other purposes. The Hilltoppers paint their units in a quartered scheme, with black on lower left and upper right, and the battalion color on opposite quarters: red for Chief, yellow for Champion, blue for Carnivore, green for support elements. Post-Jihad, the Hilltoppers' insignia is a mountain backlit by a yellow sun; an Amerindian war spear is stuck into the mountaintop. There are four feathers on the black spear, the top one being the applicable battalion color above the other three.

Experience Level: Elite

Unit Composition: 1 'Mech regiment, 1 aerospace fighter wing, 1 vehicle battalion, 1 battlesuit infantry company

Special Rules: Chief Lance is the Hilltopper command lance, and may attach itself to any company, bringing Command Flight with it. If Chief Lance is included in a force, the force adds the Tactical Adjustments Special Command Ability (see p. 91,

CM:Mercs) to the abilities the company to which it's attached may select. Units in Apache and Cree Companies may replace any formation-granted Special Pilot Ability with a cost of 2+ with Combat Intuition (see p. 52, *ASC*) or Speed Demon (see p. 56, *ASC*), respectively. Once per battle, hidden units from Blackfoot Company may make a non-Point Blank Attack during the Weapon Attack Phase; after resolving the attack, the opposing player rolls 2D6. On a result of 10+, the Hidden Unit remains hidden, otherwise it is revealed.

Special Command Abilities: Ground Attack Specialization (see p. 47, *ASC*), Hit and Run (see p. 91, *CM:Mercs*), Tactical Adjustments (see *Special Rules*), and Tactical Experts (Hidden Units) (see p. 91, *CM:Mercs*).

FIRST FRONC CUIRASSIERS
[FRONC REACHES]

CO: Colonel Derek Hudson
RAT: Fronc Reaches, *FMP*, *FMU*,
FM3085

Notes: Formerly the disreputable Derek's Devils mercenary command, the First Cuirassiers was the first component of the Fronc Reaches Sentinels brigade. While the Marshals are primarily focused on defending the locals and administering the law, the Cuirassiers are the actual military force for the Reaches. While the Marshals must remain within the nation's borders as a defensive deterrent, it falls to the Cuirassiers to travel outside in order to respond to raids from other nations or pursue pirate forces. The Cuirassiers are very tentative on such operations, considering the responsibility they carry. While they might achieve their objectives if they were as reckless as the Marshals in combat, they must balance that with the possibility that their actions could incur a terrible response from the Reaches's much larger neighbors. Thus they normally refrain from landing on foreign soil, often only appearing in-system before returning home. It prevents improving their skills but also preserves them and their nation from retribution. First Fronc Cuirassiers units are painted black with dark gray lining, with individual panels outlined in fiery orange. The unit symbol is an ace of spades, which is prominently displayed. Many pilots and MechWarriors embellish the symbol, such as adding more cards behind the ace. Cuirassiers MechWarriors sometimes adorn their 'Mechs with kanji symbols.

Experience Level: Regular

Unit Composition: 1 'Mech regiment, 1 aerospace fighter wing, 2 vehicle regiments, 1 infantry regiment

Special Rules: The tanks of the First Fronc Armor may be placed as Hidden Units when they are the Defender on any Reaches world, even if the scenario does not otherwise allow for it.

Special Command Abilities: Regional Specialization (Fronc Reaches) (see p. 85, *CM:Kurita*), and Zone of Control (see p. 46, *ASC*).



COMBATANTS.....

**CALDERON'S COMMANDO
[PIRATE]****CO:** Marshal Vrabel von Staskov**RAT:** Pirate, Periphery, *FMP, FMU, FM3085*

Notes: Calderon's Commando is the ultimate destination for various disaffected troops from both the Taurian Concordat and the Calderon Protectorate. The pirate band was founded by Brigadier Stewart Bogdanovich-Calderon, a distant relative of the Concordat's former ruling family, in protest of the events that culminated in the Protectorate secession. He took the rank Marshal despite the pirate band being much smaller than a corps, intending for his followers to grow to that size eventually. The Commando prospered during the Jihad. The chaos made for easy pickings on the worlds of their former nation, especially when aided by sympathetic locals who were handsomely rewarded for their cooperation. Post-Jihad, though, the Commando fell on hard times as the Concordat was less distracted by Federated Suns bogeymen. The death of Marshal Bogdanovich-Calderon in 3086 would have ended the unit's existence but for the rallying cry of Vrabel von Staskov. His charisma and zeal not only kept the troops in line but brought in a number of quality Taurian and Calderonian troops to the Commando, despite its piratical nature. The Commando's warriors have very strong loyalty to their direct commanders, sometimes compromising their battlefield performance when a subcommander is killed. They have recovered their numbers and greatly improved their skills in numerous raids against tough targets. This has netted them excellent equipment, making them a terrible thorn in the side of all Periphery governments. Most troubling is their deployment of captured equipment painted in enemy colors, used to trick defenders into lowering their guard for a surprise attack from a supposed ally. They use standard TDF rank structure and unit organization (see pp. 114–115, *HB:MPS*). They paint their units flat khaki with black highlights. Their unit insignia is a silver flail on a red-framed shield. The shield's field is divided party per bend sinister, with the upper left field khaki and the lower right black.

Experience Level: Veteran**Unit Composition:** 1 reinforced 'Mech regiment, 1 vehicle battalion, 1 aerospace fighter wing, 2 battlesuit infantry platoons

Special Rules: All Calderon's Commando units of Veteran (3) skill or better may swap any of the Special Pilot Abilities granted by a formation with one of the following: Heavy Lifter (see p. 53, *ASC*), Slugger (see p. 56, *ASC*), Terrain Master (Drag Racer) (see p. 57, *ASC*). In any turn when Marshal von Staskov is part of the Commando force, all BattleMechs and aerospace fighters may choose to add 1 to their Heat (takes effect in End Phase) to increase Movement by 2 inches and increase the range of all weapon attacks by 4 inches.

Prior to battle, the Commando's player must designate the commander of each lance or similar unit in the battle. If a lance commander is killed, on the next turn the members of that unit may not fire, and move as if under Forced Withdrawal. The player



must designate a new lance commander at the end of that turn, and the remaining lance members may act normally the next turn. When fighting as the Attacker in the Taurian Concordat, Calderon Protectorate, or Fronc Reaches: lance, company, and battalion commanders, or command squad of battlesuit infantry, gain a -1 to-hit modifier for weapon attacks.

Special Command Abilities: Enemy Specialization (Periphery Militaries) (see p. 48, *ASC*), False Flag (see p. 91, *CM:Mercs*), and Tactical Specialization (Attack) (see p. 48, *ASC*).

SHEN-SE TIAN [PIRATE]**CO:** Noyan Qiangjun Jiemin**RAT:** Pirate, Periphery, *FMP, FMU, FM3085*

Notes: Shen-se Tian, aka the Dark Days Band, rebounded quickly after the Jihad. Whether due to a change in demographics or simply the new leadership of Qiangjun Jiemin, the command underwent an organizational upheaval. They now use a sort of Mongol organization with five 'Mechs making up an *arban*, three *arbans* a *zun*, and three *zuns* a *mingan*. They currently have one BattleMech *mingan* plus a command *arban* called a *kesh*, two *arbans* of aerospace fighters, and two *zuns* of vehicles. An *arav* commands an *arban*, a *zut* commands a *zun*, and a *darga* commands a *mingan*. The *noyan* commands the band and leads the *kesh*.



Each MechWarrior is personally responsible for their BattleMech, as are crews for their vehicles, and thus they are all excellent technicians. The band's raids throughout the Fronc Reaches markedly increased beginning in 3086, but the Colonial Marshals have failed to capture anyone to interrogate. Instead, the pirates choose suicide, often taking Marshals with them. Even so, the attacks on the Reaches are less extreme than those in the Concordat and Magistracy, possibly to avoid raising greater ire from the Reaches' defenders.

Shen-se Tian specializes in mobile combat. The warriors have exhibited a number of specialized tactics in their many raids. They usually spare civilians in the Reaches but have little qualms about causing suffering in other nations. They sometimes employ a tactic called *karash*, in which they herd captive civilians ahead of their advance to inhibit the defenders. Either the *karash* breaks the target defenses for them or the defenders kill their own people to stop the pirates, allowing the pirates to fire without restraint either way. Shen-se Tian paints its 'Mechs and vehicles tan with green trim. The unit emblem is a green-scaled man-dragon hybrid with bloody barbels, showing its toothy maw. The figure is set on an ivory field outlined in red.

Experience Level: Elite**Unit Composition:** 1 'Mech *mingan*, 2 aerospace fighter *arbans*, 2 vehicle *zuns* (see *Notes*)

Special Rules: When the rules of a particular battle require retreat from a specific map edge, every Shen-se Tian unit may attempt to retreat from any other map edge instead. Beginning on Turn 8, each unit may roll 2D6 when positioned along a map edge at the beginning of any turn. A roll of 9+ means they

COMBATANTS.....

can exit via that edge without being considered captured or destroyed, but must exit immediately (before engaging in any attacks). Each unit may only make this attempt once per battle. Excellent technical skills allow Shen-se Tian to halve the time required for reloading, replacing armor, or repairing damaged components.

Shen-se Tian uses a variation of Off-Map Movement (see p. 45, ASC) for envelopment tactics. In any battle, one entire *arban* (or surviving portion thereof) may move off-map via any map edge, save the enemy's home edge, during the Movement Phase. The entire *arban* must exit and reenter the map in the same turn; all units must exit and enter within 2 inches of one another. The enveloping group must remain off the map at least two turns before it can reenter. The group can reenter during the Movement Phase of any turn after the second off-map turn. They do not count toward the number of units on the map that turn, and all the units must move at the same time. The player controlling Shen-se Tian automatically wins Initiative the turn after the enveloping force returns to the map.

Special Command Abilities: Combat Drop Specialists (see p. 91, *CM:Mercs*), Off-Map Movement (see *Special Rules*), No Surrender (any unit that is rendered immobile through critical damage but is not destroyed will explode at the controlling player's option at any time starting the turn after being rendered immobile; explosion inflicts unit's original short-range damage, even if reduced by critical damage, to all units within 4 inches; unit is destroyed by this action).

ABOMINARI [PIRATE]

CO: *Sar* of the Host Zebulun James

RAT: Pirate, Periphery, *FMP*, *FMU*, *FM3085*

Notes: The Abominari's origins are unknown. They are fond of broadcasting nonsensical mashed-up passages of scripture while their troops despoil and plunder. Their rickety DropShips and JumpShip belie the excellent condition of their equipment. They operate nominally under combined arms, with each of their seven subcommands often operating independently of the rest. The Lying Tongue, the Bloody Hands, and the Scheming Hearts are the three 'Mech companies, specializing respectively in flanking attacks, frontal assaults, and ambush tactics; *Sar* of the Host Zebulun James leads a command lance that integrates with any of his seven subcommands as he pleases. The Haughty Eyes is the aerospace element, consisting of three squadrons of six fighters in addition to the JumpShip and three DropShips. Mischievous Feet and False Witnesses are two vehicle demi-battalions. The former specializes in recon and guerilla operations while the latter is expert in diversionary tactics and preparing traps. Brotherly Strife is a mixed infantry battalion, composed of one company of various battle armor platoons, one company of motorized infantry, and one company of jump infantry. Each of the seven subcommands is commanded by a *sar*, answering to *Sar* of the Host Zebulun James. 'Mech lances, vehicle platoons,



fighter squadrons, and infantry companies are led by a *rosh*. Infantry platoons are led by a *shal*. The Abominari uses a standard flat gray paint scheme for all unit types. Their insignia is a winking demon's head. It appears on the shoulder or right side/wing of all units. 'Mech *rosches* and *sars* often paint a tarnished halo on the head, with torn batwings on the rear torso.

Experience Level: Veteran

Unit Composition: 1 'Mech battalion, 1 aerospace fighter company, 1 vehicle battalion, 1 infantry battalion

Special Rules: The Abominari gains a +1 Initiative bonus for battles where at least two of the seven subcommands (see *Notes*) are present. MechWarriors in *Sar* of the Host Zebulun James's command lance are elite and choose any Special Pilot Ability from any source with a point value of 2 or less; no ability may be taken more than twice (this replaces the Bonus Ability for Command Lances. See p.153, ASC). All other MechWarriors may replace any formation-granted Special Pilot Ability with Demoralizer (see p. 52, ASC). The Bloody Hands Company rolls on the Assault 'Mech RAT for all units. MechWarriors in the Bloody Hands Company must replace any formation-granted Special Pilot Ability with Melee Specialist (see p. 54, ASC). The Haughty Eyes pilots may replace any formation-granted Special Pilot Ability with either Ride the Wash (see p. 55, ASC) or Shaky Stick (see p. 56, ASC). The Mischievous Feet units may replace any formation-granted Special Pilot Ability with Speed Demon (see p. 56, ASC).

Special Command Abilities: Tactical Specialization (Attack) (see p. 48, ASC), Tactical Specialization (Combined Arms) (see p. 85, *CM:Kurita*), Focus (Demoralizer) (see p. 52, ASC). In addition, the Abominari may select from the following Special Command Abilities as long as units from the listed subcommand are present in the force: Off-Map Movement (Lying Tongue Company) (see p. 45, ASC), Camouflage (False Witnesses) (see p. 91, *CM:Mercs*), Rapid Strike (Scheming Hearts) (see p. 91, *CM:Mercs*), Melee Specialist (Bloody Hands Company) (see p. 54, ASC), Ride the Wash (Haughty Eyes) (see p. 55, ASC), Speed Demon (Mischievous Feet) (see p. 56, ASC).

THE BRIGANDS [PIRATE]

CO: Boss Alfred Fort

RAT: Pirate, Periphery, *FMP*, *FMU*, *FM308*

Notes: The 'Mech-only Brigands are a loose pirate command. Members join by buying their membership. Those who pay more gain higher rank in addition to tribute paid from those of lower rank. Each member must have his or her own BattleMech, with maintenance and ammunition paid for from the loot they bring in, *after* they pay tribute from the take. The Brigands number about a regiment in total but rarely operate more than a company at a time. The few times they have operated in larger formations, they exhibited poor unit cohesion. The Brigands will often hire out portions of their number to other groups needing enforcers or raiders, usually as part of a debt repayment from the leader of that group of Brigands. The Brigands are indiscriminate in their activities, ranging from slaving to plunder to robbery to ransom-kidnapping to extortion. The exact location of their base is unknown, but it is somewhere on Herotitus. Conflicts

HOW TO USE THE CAMPAIGN.....

with other pirate bands pushed their operations closer to Fronc post-Jihad. It is unknown whether the Brigands use actual ranks, though various media outlets have assigned classic organized crime ranks to the command. A boss runs the organization, collecting tribute from the *bastones*, roughly equivalent to battalion commanders. A *capo* leads a roughly company-sized force, while a *soldato* leads a lance. Nonranking members of the Brigands are simply called associates. The Brigands use no insignia or paint scheme, though the unit's MechWarriors paint a large red sash from right shoulder to left hip over whatever color scheme they prefer.

Experience Level: Regular

Unit Composition: 1 'Mech regiment

Special Rules: The Brigands must always secretly note the commander of each lance before battle begins. If the lance commander is killed, the controlling player must roll 2D6 for each MechWarrior in that lance. Any roll result of 5 or lower indicates that MechWarrior is under Forced Withdrawal, even if a higher-ranking commander is present in the battle. In the End Phase of the following turn, any commanders of other lances may attempt to rally all affected MechWarriors who remain on the map; roll 2D6 as noted above. Whenever the Brigands field more than one company (three lances or portion thereof) of 'Mechs in battle, they apply a -2 penalty to the Initiative roll.

Special Command Abilities: Focus (Demoralizer) (see p. 52, ASC) and Tactical Specialization (Attack) (see p. 48, ASC).

HOW TO USE THIS CAMPAIGN

This campaign is designed to be played with a minimum of two players—one player uses Pirate forces while the other plays the opposing Fronc Reaches force. More players are welcome to participate—groups with a large number of players may decide to have a single person serve as gamemaster (GM) to spearhead Track setups and address any rules questions that arise during the course of gameplay.

Players are welcome to supplement or expand on the rules listed with those from *Total Warfare (TW)*, *Tactical Operations (TO)*, *Strategic Operations (SO)*, *Alpha Strike (AS)*, or *Alpha Strike Companion (ASC)*. An ideal example is using advanced weather and environment rules from *TO* or *SO*. If using additional rules not presented in this product, all players must agree to their use. Any questions that arise from using those rules should be decided either by group consensus or by a neutral GM. As a last resort, players may simply roll the dice to settle an issue.

To give an idea on how this campaign system can be run, the following example is provided.

THE SETUP: PIRATES

Campaign Rules

Players using Pirates for this campaign have access to all of the units listed on their faction's Random Assignment Tables (see p. 7). However, if a player force is already constructed (for example, a rogue mercenary command or pirate band) the Pirate force may use those initial units and then use the RATs for repair or expansion. Because there are multiple pirate bands in the Fronc Reaches, it is recommended to have multiple players controlling their own pirate bands, especially for the

climactic encounters between multiple commands in the final touchpoints of the campaign.

Players may begin the campaign with one of the following tracks: Diversion, Patrol Ambush, or Touchpoint: Too Bold by Far. When determining Opposing Forces, the rolling player may choose from the Fronc Reaches RATs (see p. 7).

THE SETUP: FRONC REACHES

Campaign Rules

Players using Fronc Reaches forces for this campaign have access to all of the units listed on the Fronc Reaches RATs (see p. 7). However, if the player unit is already constructed (for example, a mercenary command or Periphery pirate-hunting force) the Fronc Reaches force may use those initial units and then use the RATs for repair or expansion. Because there are multiple units defending the Fronc Reaches, it is recommended to have multiple players controlling their own commands, especially for the climactic encounters between multiple commands in the final Touchpoints of the campaign.

Players may begin the campaign with one of the following tracks: Pursuit, Flank, or Touchpoint: Too Bold by Far. When determining Opposing Forces, the rolling player should choose from the Pirate RATs (see p. 7).

RUNNING YOUR GAMES

While players and GMs are free to design and play these tracks (and the campaign as a whole) however they wish, a basic method may be played to give players some feel for the actual events of the Fronc Reaches campaign. The suggestions enumerated in the Setups above offer one way to launch player groups into the campaign; certainly enterprising GMs and players can find their own ways in. The Next Track section of each track offers suggestions of where to take the player groups after they've finished that Track. The Mission tracks may be combined, replayed, or skipped in any order the players wish: since they represent experiences rather than specific engagements, there will be little repetition.

Players are recommended to proceed through the Touchpoints in the order presented to complete the overall campaign, especially if a single pirate force is being used rather than the multiple pirate commands operating in the Fronc Reaches at the time. One option for a single large player force is for the player to split the force into smaller parts to attack multiple worlds separately, similar to the multiple pirate bands coordinating attacks on multiple worlds. Another option is for the Pirate player to create multiple forces representing the pirate bands operating in the Fronc Reaches, and deploy them to whichever planet(s) suit the player's preferences. Likewise the Fronc Reaches player can shuffle the known defending units among the planets in question, or replace them with the player's own custom command instead.

In the event that only a single pirate band is in use by the Pirate player, the confluence of multiple pirate bands in a given track might require some GM attention. In this case, the GM might create and control an independent Pirate force to serve in those tracks.

JOIN THE CAUSE



M. Lee

MISSION: DIVERSION

Pirates always seek an advantage. Even if it means attacking civilian areas to draw away defenders from their true objective...

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Urban, or roll from the appropriate table (see p. 6) for the world the player's force is currently on. If using mapsheets, the Defender chooses two mapsheets and arranges them in any legal configuration. The Attacker chooses a home edge. The opposite map edge is the Defender's home edge.

The Defender places 6 buildings (Medium, CF 15, 2" height) within 10 inches of Defender's home edge.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Any

The Attacker is a portion of the player group's force; units should be Light and Medium units. The Attacker's forces enter via the Attacker's home edge on Turn 1. Attacking units may only exit via home edge; exiting via any other edge for any reason counts as unit destruction.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Any

The Defender is equal to 100 percent of the Attacker's force, composed only of Light and Medium units. If rolling units randomly, the Defender should roll for units before the Attacker chooses units. The Defender's force enters the map via Defender's home edge on Turn 1D6 + 2.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 200

Optional Bonus:

+100 Reinforcements: Enemy receives reinforcements equal to the starting forces. Reinforcements enter on Turn 6.

+200 Loot: One of the buildings contains valuables (Defender assigns numbers 1-6 to each building, then rolls 1D6 secretly to determine which contains the loot). Ending a turn adjacent to the building will reveal this. Loot can be taken by any 'Mech (see *External Cargo* rules, p. 29, ASC). Loot must be carried off via home edge.

OBJECTIVES

1. Keep Them Occupied (Attacker only): Attacker must keep at least one unit active on the battlefield for 2D6 + 6 turns *after* the Defender enters the map. **[200; also, enemy units used in this battle are unavailable for next Touchpoint]**

2. Eliminate the Opposition: Cripple or destroy enemy units. **[100 per unit; destroyed units subtract from available force in next Touchpoint]**

3. Protect the Innocent (Defender only): Defender must prevent destruction of buildings. **[50 per building that remains standing]**

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Forced Withdrawal

Both sides are operating under *Forced Withdrawal* (see p. 27, AS).

NEXT TRACK

Pursuit, Flank, or the next Touchpoint (*Too Bold by Far* if none have been taken previously).

DO NOT OPEN

5 of 1

MISSION: PATROL AMBUSH

The tedium of regular patrol routes often belies the reason they were put in place to begin with: Pirates generally target specific objectives. And if the defenders happen to be patrolling when they arrive...

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Any terrain appropriate to the world the player group is currently on.

If using mapsheets, the Defender places the mapsheets in any legal configuration and chooses one edge as the Defender's home edge. The Attacker's home edge is the opposite edge.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Any

The Attacker is a portion of the player's force and should equal 125 percent of the Defender's force; 25 percent of the Attacker's force should be placed during Game Setup. The remainder should be placed as *Hidden Units* (see p. 102, AS).

Defender

Recommended Forces: Any

The Defender begins the game with all units on the battlefield. All units must be within 12 inches of the Attacker's home map edge. The Defender should deploy their units after the Attacker places all non-hidden units.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 150

Optional Bonuses:

+100 Night Combat: Nighttime has always been ideal for ambushes (see *Other Conditions*, p. 95, AS).

+50 Surprised!: The Attacker rolls Initiative with a +3 modifier for the first two turns.

OBJECTIVES

1. Keep it Quiet (Attacker Only). Prevent all of Defender's units from exiting via Defender's home edge. [100]

2. Sound the Alarm (Defender Only). Exit at least one unit via home edge. [100]

3. Target Acquired. Destroy at least 50 percent of the enemy's force. [200]

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Forced Withdrawal

Both sides are operating under *Forced Withdrawal* (see p. 27, AS).

NEXT TRACK

Pursuit, Flank, or the next Touchpoint (*Too Bold by Far* if none have been taken previously).

MISSION: PURSUIT

They run and run and lead us astray!
Make certain none of them get away!

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Any terrain appropriate to the world the player group is currently on. The Defender chooses a home edge. The opposite edge is the Attacker's home edge.

If using mapsheets, the Defender chooses two mapsheets and arranges them with their short edges touching. Defender chooses one short edge as a home edge. The opposite edge is the Attacker's home edge.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Any

The Attacker's force is a portion of the player's force. Half of the Attacker's units (rounding up) enter from Attacker's home edge on Turn 1. The remaining units enter via Attacker's home edge on Turn 3.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Any

The Defender is equal to 100 percent of the Attacker's force. The Defender's force may deploy anywhere within 10 inches of the Attacker's home edge.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 200

Optional Bonuses:

+100 Making Do: Double the size of the enemy force.

+100 Of All the Luck: Choose one of the following: Heavy Fog, Torrential Downpour, or Blizzard (see *Other Conditions*, p. 95, A5), as appropriate to the world the player's group is on.

OBJECTIVES

Bring Them down! (Attacker Only) Prevent at least half of the Defender's units (rounding up) from exiting via the Defender's home edge [250]

Wipe Them Out! (Attacker Only) Cripple or destroy all of the Defending force [250]

Save Yourselves! (Defender Only) Exit at least half of the Defender's units (rounding up) via the Defender's home edge [500]

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Commander

Designate one unit on each side as a commanding unit. If either of these units is destroyed, that side suffers a -2 to all subsequent Initiative rolls.

NEXT TRACK

Flank or the next Touchpoint (*Too Bold by Far*, if none have been taken previously).

DO NOT OPEN

5 of 1

MISSION: FLANK

They think they've made good their escape, but every good commander has a contingency plan. Time to hit them from an unexpected quarter...

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Any terrain appropriate to the world the player group is currently on. If using mapsheets, the Defender chooses two mapsheets and arranges them with their long edges touching. Defender chooses one edge as home edge. The opposite edge is the Attacker's home edge.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Any

The Attacker is a portion of the player's force and should equal 125 percent of the Defender's force. Attacker's force enters via either non-home edge on Turn 1. Attacker must designate one unit as commander.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Any

The Defender begins the game with all units on the battlefield. All units must be placed within 10 inches of Attacker's home edge. Defender must designate one unit as commander.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 150

Optional Bonuses:

+150 Bad Intel: Double the size of the enemy force.

+100 Rough Riding: Apply one Advanced Terrain type appropriate to the planet where the mission occurs (see pp. 64-70, AS).

OBJECTIVES

1. Clear Out (Defender Only)! Exit at least half of force off Defender's home edge. [100]

2. Cut 'Em Down to Size (Attacker Only). Cripple or destroy at least half of Defender's force. [100]

3. Primary Target. Destroy or cripple the enemy commander. [100]

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Forced Withdrawal

Both sides are operating under *Forced Withdrawal* (see p. 27, AS).

NEXT TRACK

Pursuit or the next Touchpoint (*Too Bold by Far*, if none have been taken previously).



TOUCHPOINT: TOO BOLD BY FAR.

SITUATION

Colonial Tractors Factory
Ayms, Fronc
Fronc Reaches
1 July 3088

An unidentified DropShip arrives at a pirate point close to Fronc and sends raiders down in a flash raid. They skip the major cities, including Freedom's Ring, and target the Colonial Tractors factory in Ayms. Only corporate security and the factory's militia detachment stand in their way. The grim-faced Reaches militia calls for assistance as they dig in. In Freedom's Ring, the call is relayed to Force Commander Dirk McEvans. He was preparing to leave Fronc that night. Instead he immediately departs for his DropShip on standby on the tarmac, taking with him all the Marshals close at hand.

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Urban, Desert

Arrange two maps with their short edges touching; one should be desert terrain while the other is urban terrain showing the city edge. Place the factory on the Urban map, at the far side from the Desert map. The factory is a 4" height, Heavy (CF 30) building; only infantry may enter the factory without damaging it. Place at least 12 buildings throughout the Urban map. Place two DropShip landing pads within 12 inches of the factory; the circular landing pads occupy at least 6 inches (if using mapsheets: a single hex and the six surrounding it). Attacker's home edge is the edge farthest from the factory. Defender's home edge is the edge closest to the factory.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: The Brigands

Attacker consists of one company of pirate BattleMechs and one *Union*-class DropShip (see *Special Rules*). Attacker enters from home edge on Turn 1. Attacker must designate the *capo* commanding the company and the two *soldatos* leading the second and third lances.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Fronc Militia, Colonial Tractors Corporate Security, Colonial Marshals

Defender consists of one company (two platoons Laser, one platoon SRM) of planetary militia with Veteran (3) skill, one Jump Laser platoon with Elite (2) skill, one platoon of two Vedette tanks and two Hetzer tanks with Regular (4) skill, and corporate security (one platoon of Hetzer tanks with Green (5) skill). All militia and corporate security units deploy within 16 inches of factory. Defender also consists of 1+1D6 Colonial Marshals, led by Force Commander Dirk McEvans, who arrive on turn 1D6+5 (see *Special Rules*). Defender must designate which unit is McEvans. McEvans has Heroic (1) Skill.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 600

Optional Bonuses

+200 Heavy Raid. Double the starting number of enemy ground units.

+400 Torrential Downpour. A rare, unseasonable storm arrives (see p. 95, AS).

OBJECTIVES

1. Secure a Landing Zone! Attacker must clear a 4-inch radius of enemies from the edge of a landing pad *before* Turn 6; Defender must keep at least one unit within 4 inches of a landing pad *through* Turn 5. [300]

2. Secure the Hetzers. Attacker must capture Hetzers and load them onto DropShip; Defender must prevent this. [100 per Hetzer (6 possible)]

3. High Value Target. Capture or kill the enemy BattleMech commander. [500]

4. Protect the Factory. Both sides must limit damage to the factory. [-10 per point of damage inflicted to factory]

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Forced Withdrawal

Both sides are operating under *Forced Withdrawal* rules (see p. 27, AS) unless negated by special unit rules. Note that the Colonial Marshals are immune to Forced Withdrawal.

Heavy Industrial Zone

See p. 65, AS.

Combat Drop

The Colonial Marshals arrive via low-altitude combat drop. Use the rules for *Dropping Troops* (see pp. 90-91, AS). The combat drop delivers them to the Desert map.

Hetzers

The factory contains six completed Hetzers. The Attacker has six squads of infantry able to crew a Hetzer with Veteran skills. A squad may enter the factory building (limited by stacking rules) to steal a Hetzer. The squad must announce its intention in the End Phase of the prior turn before it can steal the Hetzer. The squad may take no other actions during the turn it is stealing the Hetzer. No dice roll is required. If the squad successfully steals the Hetzer, it appears on the map at the start of the next turn in the factory hex, as an Attacker unit at which point it may move and fire as normal. The Hetzers must be driven onto the Attacker's DropShip and the DropShip must successfully lift off for the Objective points to be awarded.

TOUCHPOINT: TOO BOLD BY FAR.

Pirate DropShip

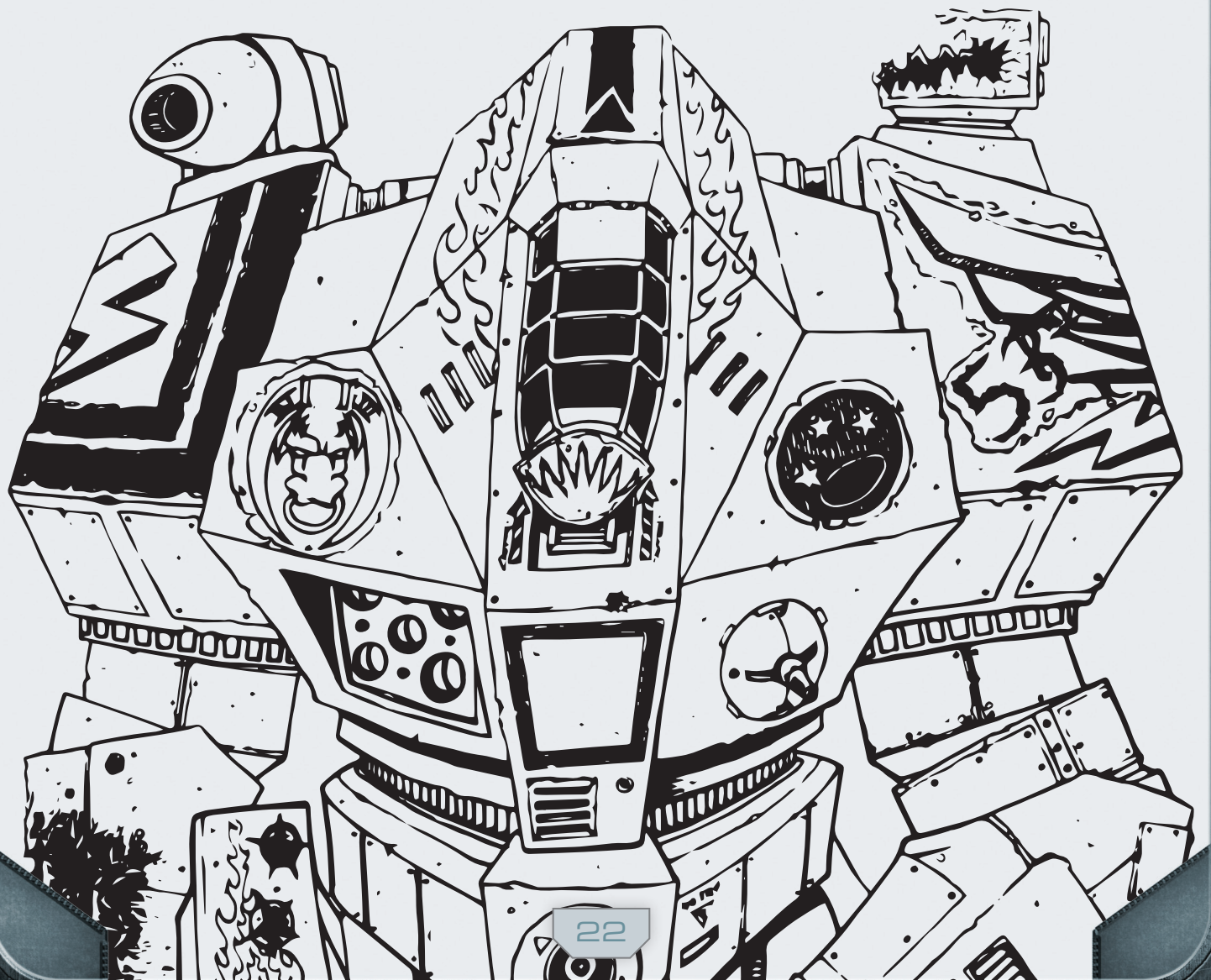
The *Union* DropShip begins the track off-map at low altitude; on the Urban map, it may only land (see pp. 71–72, AS) at one of the two landing pads. The DropShip carries six squads of Veteran rifle infantry. To land, the Attacker must establish control over one of the landing pads before the end of Turn 5. Control is established by eliminating any Defender presence within 4 inches of the landing pad. If this is the case in any End Phase of Turns 1–5, the objective is met and the DropShip lands the next turn. If this objective is not met, the DropShip must land on the Desert map after detecting the incoming Marshal DropShip. The pirate DropShip is in poor repair. Roll 1D6 before the track begins. On a roll of 2–5, reduce all Damage Values to one-third (round up) of their original values. Also, reduce armor by half (round up). All ammunition-based weapons may each fire only two shots total for the track. The cargo bay has been modified to carry up to six medium vehicles.

AFTERMATH

The raid was going very well for the pirates, thanks to the surprise onslaught after arriving at a pirate point. The appearance of Force Commander Dirk McEvans changed the tide of the battle. His complete disregard for his own safety in order to stop the pirates, while somehow managing to protect the surroundings and Reaches citizens, inspired the small Marshals force that rallied to the defense. The capture and interrogation of one of the pirates paid dividends. The prisoner revealed that the pirate bands in the Reaches had formed a loose coalition to oppose the exterminate-on-sight policy of the Marshals. This raid was just the first of many, which would be coordinated in time but spread across the Reaches, and this high-ranking pirate knew which worlds would be hit next. After the pirate was executed, McEvans began hastily planning the defense of three worlds against simultaneous raids with the spread-out Colonial Marshals force...

NEXT TRACK

Pursuit, Flank, or the next Touchpoint.



TOUCHPOINT: ELIMINATING FUTURE OPPOSITION.

SITUATION

*Sentinelry Academy
Kite, Rockwellawan
Fronc Reaches
9 July 3088*

The First Fronc Cuirassiers knew that Calderon's Commando was coming to raid their homeworld. They reinforced the defenders of the Interstellar Agriculture Concerns factory in the city of Kite. Protecting the valuable minerals and other mining products has placed most of their force in Carat. Sure enough, the Commando sent a force against the IAC site, occupying the bulk of the defenders. But the real attack is actually taking place on the other side of the city. No one expected the small, recently completed Sentinelry Academy would be targeted. The cadets and their instructors are left to repel the attack, hoping they can hold out long enough for the Cuirassiers to traverse the city and save them.

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Urban, Arctic

Arrange three maps for this battle. One outer map should be Arctic, while the opposite side should be Urban. The central map should be Arctic, but with buildings on the Urban edge of the map. The Defender's home edge is the Urban edge. Fill all open terrain with buildings. Places ten buildings on the inner map near the Urban map's edge to represent the academy. Four of these buildings are 6" height, Hardened (CF 50); two are 4" height, Hardened (CF 50) 'Mech bays; two are 4" height Medium (CF 15) dormitories; and two are 2" height Medium (CF 15) vehicle repair bays.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Calderon's Commando

The Attacker has three 'Mech companies available to use for this track. Only one may start the battle on the map (placed along the Attacker's home edge). The second may enter on Turn 3+1D6, and the third on Turn 3+2D6; units enter via Attacker's home edge.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Sentinelry Academy Cadre, Colonial Marshals, First Fronc Cuirassiers

The Defender begins the battle deployed on the map. Cadre units must be placed within 12 inches of any academy building. The Cadre consists of one lance of 'Mechs, one platoon of Vedette tanks, two platoons of laser infantry, and one squad of Inner Sphere Standard battlesuit troopers (all with Regular (4) skills). A small force of Colonial Marshals is based at the academy as instructors. They have one lance of 'Mechs and two squads of battlesuit infantry (one squad IS Standard, the other TinStar). The Marshals 'Mechs begin in one of the 'Mech bays. The First Fronc Cuirassiers have one company of BattleMechs that enters via Defender's home edge on Turn 6+2D6. Roll 1D6 for each Cuirassiers 'Mech: on result of 1-4, apply 1 point of damage to the rear; on a result of 5-6, apply 2 points of damage to the rear; roll locations randomly, ignoring any potential critical hits and rerolling all head hits. None of the defenders had time to prepare for this battle, so none may be placed as Hidden Units.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 600

Optional Bonuses

- +100 **Ice.** Lingering ice covers the battlefield. (See p. 65, AS)
- +200 **Deep Snow.** Summer might have started, but winter was harsh and long. (See p. 64, AS)
- +300 **Blizzard.** Winter doesn't want to ease its grip. (see p. 95, AS)
- +150 **Hail.** A hailstorm compounds the weather issues. (see p. 95, AS)

OBJECTIVES

1. **Destroy/Protect the Academy.** Attacker must destroy the academy buildings (no points for partial destruction); Defender must protect the buildings. [**100 per building destroyed (Attacker) or saved (Defender)**]
2. **Easy Prey.** Attacker must eliminate the Academy Cadre. [**50 per Cadre unit destroyed/crippled (Attacker) or escaped/survived (Defender)**]
3. **Capture Materiel.** Both sides appreciate good salvage. [**100 per captured unit**] (See *Special Rules*.)

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Forced Withdrawal

Both sides are operating under *Forced Withdrawal* rules (see p. 27, AS). Note that the Colonial Marshals are immune to Forced Withdrawal.

Salvage

The Attacker does not plan to remain on Rockwellawan a moment longer than necessary. They can only salvage a unit by dragging it off the map (see below). The Defender can only salvage units that fall on the field and remain there after the Attacker leaves the map. If the Attacker succeeds in destroying or crippling all the Defender's units, then the Defender gets no salvage. If any of Defender's units are forced off any map edge other than Defender's home edge, those units are also considered captured and salvaged by the Attacker.

TOUCHPOINT: ELIMINATING FUTURE OPPOSITION.

Dragging Salvage

The Attacker intends to carry off all salvageable materiel from the battle. Any unit that falls may be dragged off the map. Dragging requires two Attacker units (Players with access to Technical Readouts or Record Sheets for the 'Mechs in question should limit the dragging to 'Mechs built with at least one hand actuator. Otherwise, only unit types BM or IM are able to participate in dragging). They must end a turn adjacent to the downed unit. In the End Phase, the Attacker must declare that the two units will drag the downed Defender unit in the next turn. The Commando MechWarriors are very skilled at such operations, so no Skill roll or any other roll is required. They may not make any weapon or physical attacks in a turn when they dragged a unit. Units may be dragged at the following rate:

Tank/'Mech weight class	Dragging rate (inches/turn)
Light	8
Medium	6
Heavy	4
Assault	2

If either Attacker unit has Triple Strength Myomer, add 2 to the dragging rate. Subtract 2 from the dragging rate if either dragging unit has lost MPs due to critical damage (doubled to 4 if both have such damage). If the unit being dragged is only crippled (such as a unit with two gyro hits or no legs, but which is still operational), subtract 2 from the dragging rate. If the unit is not crippled but has an unconscious MechWarrior, the dragging rates remain as shown, but if/when the MechWarrior regains consciousness, a successful Skill roll with a +4 modifier is required to break free from the dragging units.

To be captured, the unit must be dragged off the map via any edge except the Defender's home edge. The dragging units may not reenter the map after dragging a unit off.

AFTERMATH

While the Cuirassiers were defending the factory from a single company, the other three companies of the Commando battalion were laying waste to the academy. The Cuirassiers arrived in time to prevent the entire district from being leveled, but the academy was a total loss. Far worse was the absence of downed friendlies. The Commandos carried off the crippled and damaged 'Mechs and tanks before the Cuirassiers arrived. The one spot of good luck was that a small contingent from the other Commando battalion hit the Cuirassiers base in Carat. The defenders there allowed the raiders to make off with the falsified documents revealing the presence and nature of the installation on Independence. This was not a comfort to those who had lost their comrades to the enemy.

NEXT TRACK

Diversion, Pursuit, or the next Touchpoint.



DO NOT OPEN

5

OFF

TOUCHPOINT: MONGOLS AND AMERINDIANS.

SITUATION

*Lovejoy Spaceport
Cooperton, Portland
Fronc Reaches
9 July 3088*

Shen-se Tian landed uncontested and rampaged through the outskirts of Cooperton, the planetary capital. They captured most of the militia infantry and forced them ahead of their advance. As they neared the spaceport, where warehouses filled with processed ore, precious foodstuffs, and various consumer products waited to be emptied onto DropShips, they were ambushed by Chief Battalion of Holt's Hilltoppers. The Hilltoppers had to choose between annihilating the pirates outright or saving the lives of their new fellow citizens forced into the fore of the pirate formation.

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Urban

Place buildings throughout the map. Also place one landing pad (see *Too Bold by Far* track) on each map. Place three 2" height, Medium buildings (CF15) within 4 inches of each landing pad. These are warehouses filled with various goods (one with food, one with minerals, one with refined metals); see *Special Rules* regarding the contents of the warehouses. If using mapsheets, arrange two maps with their long edges touching. (If either side

allocates more than one company/*zun* to this battle, add one map for every additional company/*zun* or portion thereof.) The Defender chooses a home edge; the Attacker's home edge is the opposite edge.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Shen-se Tian

Attacker's units enter via Attacker's home edge on Turn 1. The entire Shen-se Tian force is available for this battle, but at least one 'Mech *zun* must be used. The Attacker must announce the size of the Shen-se Tian force before play begins. If no aerospace units are chosen, then both sides' fighters are assumed to be protecting grounded DropShips. Attackers must return loot to their DropShips, which are grounded just off Attacker's home edge. See unit description (pp. 14-15).

Defender

Recommended Forces: Holt's Hilltoppers (Chief Battalion)

The entirety of Chief Battalion's 'Mechs and infantry may be available for this battle, but the size of the force depends upon the size of the Attacker's force. For simplicity's sake, if the Attacker brings one *arban*, the Defender gets one lance; if one *zun*, one company; if the whole *mingan*, then the whole battalion. Because of the size disparity (one *arban* being five 'Mechs and one lance four 'Mechs), the Hilltoppers add a platoon of battlesuit infantry to each company. Each platoon is four squads/Stars of four/five troopers. Squads are IS Standard (Laser) suits, Stars are Elementals (Laser). Defender must deploy within 16 inches of home edge, but may start with *Hidden Units* (see p. 102, AS); see unit description (p. 12).

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 500

Optional Bonuses

+300 Inferior Roads. The roads in Cooperton are not suited to BattleMech combat (see *Special Rules*).

+200 Night Raiders! The pirates arrived at night. Use *Night* rules (see p. 95, AS).

OBJECTIVES

1. Loot. Attacker must escape with as much loot as possible; Defender must limit amount of loot stolen. **[100 per warehouse of loot]**



TOUCHPOINT: MONGOLS AND AMERINDIANS.

2. Count Coup (Defender Only). Defender must cripple or destroy enemy units via physical attack. [100 per unit]

3. Collect Trophies (Attacker Only). Attacker must salvage a destroyed/crippled enemy unit (see *Special Rules* in *Touchpoint: Eliminating Future Opposition*, p. 24). [100 per trophy]

4. Make Them Pay. Destroy/cripple/force withdrawal of more units than the enemy. [300]

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

FORCED WITHDRAWAL

Both sides are operating under *Forced Withdrawal* rules (see p. 27, AS).

Warehouses

The warehouses contain 3 tons of cargo that may be carried off by a BattleMech using the External Cargo rules (see p. 29, ASC). The cargo is packed for shipping and must be carried by a single 'Mech. Any hit to the carrying unit forces a Skill roll to avoid dropping the loot. Any loot that is dropped is ruined and scores for neither side.

In addition, one of the warehouses contains documents that the Defender *wants* the Attacker to steal. These are the documents detailing the location and nature of the base on

Independence. The Defender secretly chooses before play begins which warehouse contains the documents as part of the packaged loot. If the Attacker escapes with this loot, both sides achieve the objective for that warehouse.

Poor Roads

The rapid expansion of Portland has not been perfectly orchestrated. Most of the roads in the capital are subpar. For any Heavy or Assault 'Mech on pavement, roll 2D6. On a roll of 9+ the terrain gives way and the 'Mech falls into a depth-2 hole and takes standard falling damage. Only one roll is made per 2-inch section of pavement, so if the ground does not give way the first time, then it never will. Make the same collapse roll for any bridges, even if the CF is sufficient to support the BattleMech in question.

AFTERMATH

Holt had hoped to destroy the pirates outright, but he was forced to allow them to make off with a small amount of loot in order to spare the militia. Concealed within the loot were documents detailing the supposed destination of the precious supplies: a secret factory being constructed on Independence.

NEXT TRACK

Pursuit, Flank, or the next Touchpoint.

TOUCHPOINT: POINTLESS SACRIFICE

SITUATION

Gem District Elias
Caribou Call, McEvans' Sacrifice
Fronc Reaches
 9 July 3088

On McEvans' Sacrifice, things do not look good. A large pirate force just landed outside the gem district in Caribou Call. The small complement of Marshals is determined to hold their ground as always, refusing to retreat from pirates no matter how badly outnumbered. If they are overwhelmed, the militia has no realistic chance of defending.

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Urban

The Defender places buildings of various types and sizes throughout the map. The Defender secretly designates 3 Light/Medium buildings (see p. 84, AS) per map as concealed storage sites. If using mapsheets, arrange a minimum of two mapsheets with their long edges touching. The Defender chooses a home edge; the Attacker's home edge is the opposite edge.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: The Abominari

The Attacker may choose any one of the three Abominari BattleMech companies (see unit description, p. 14) and any non-'Mech subcommand for this battle. The Attacker enters via home edge on Turn 1. The Attacker must designate the *sars* and *roses* commanding the company/demi-battalion and lances, including which is the overall commander.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Colonial Marshals, McEvans Militia

The Defender consists of one lance of Colonial Marshal BattleMechs and two squads of battlesuit infantry (one TinStar, the other Trinity; see unit description, p. 11). The McEvans Militia consists of one company of tanks (two platoons of Hetzers, one Green, one Regular; one platoon of Vedettes, Regular), three platoons Veteran infantry (one Laser, one SRM, one LRM), and one platoon of Elite Laser infantry. Half the militia force may start the battle as *Hidden Units* (see p. 102, AS). All Defender units must deploy within 20 inches of their home edge. The Defender must designate all lance and company commanders, including which Marshal is the overall commander.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 500

Optional Bonuses

+500 How Many? Double the size of the enemy force.

+200 What Sensors? Heavy metals used in construction foul sensors. Use *Electromagnetic Interference* rules (see p. 93, AS).

OBJECTIVES

1. Commanders. Kill or cripple the enemy commander. [300]

2. Subcommanders. Kill or cripple the enemy subcommanders. [100 per subunit commander]

3. Loot. Attacker must make off with loot; Defender must prevent loot being taken. [100 per building's worth of loot]

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Forced Withdrawal

The Attacker and the McEvans Militia are operating under *Forced Withdrawal* rules (see p. 27, AS). The Colonial Marshals are immune to *Forced Withdrawal* and will fight to the death rather than retreat.

Loot

The loot is housed in unmarked buildings. The Attacker may scan a building to detect the presence of loot by declaring intent to scan in the End Phase, then remaining motionless (i.e., not moving or changing facing) and not making any weapon or physical attacks in the subsequent turn. Such a unit may scan all buildings within 6 inches in this manner. For units with an Active Probe, double this range. The storage buildings contain 3 tons of cargo that may be carried off by a BattleMech using the *External Cargo* rules (see p. 29, ASC). The cargo is packed for shipping and must be carried by a single 'Mech. Any hit to the carrying unit forces a Skill roll to avoid dropping the loot. Any loot that is dropped is ruined cannot be picked up again (such dropped loot scores for the Defender).

AFTERMATH

The Abominari wiped out the Marshals and drove off the cowardly militia. They took their time and laid waste to unimportant buildings while blaring their insane mash-ups of Biblical passages. They finally found the loot they wanted, collected it, and left the world. They never found the documents detailing the base on Independence. However, no one knew that the Abominari were headed there anyway, as their home base was hidden in another extinct caldera near the Marshals' own base.

NEXT TRACK

Flank, Patrol Ambush, or the next Touchpoint.

TOUCHPOINT: WHOSE IDEA WAS THIS ANYWAY?

[Author's Note: The Marshals have a total of 2 battalions of 'Mechs, plus a command lance, for the remainder of the tracks in this Turning Point. The Marshals player should generate the two battalions and split them up. The Pirate player randomly determines which of the two battalions is carrying out the JumpShip attack. The other battalion is the one returning to the planet and arriving at the same time as Calderon's Commando. The command lance is Marshal Dillon's at the Marshal base.]

SITUATION

*Commando Landing Zone
Caldera Fields, Independence
Fronc Reaches
15 July 3088*

Calderon's Commando was burning in at high-gee, waiting for the incoming DropShip to attack. Instead, it sped past them for their JumpShip. Marshal von Staskov realized the futility of trying to turn about and return to save it, so he ordered his DropShips to continue on. Figuring out how to get off Independence would have to wait. Besides, if the Marshals were busy with a space assault, fewer would be waiting on the surface. As they breached atmosphere, they detected another Marshals DropShip doing the same. He plans to exact from them and the civilians a cost worthy of his JumpShip. The rest will sort itself out later. The Commando is disembarking and organizing units to ferret out the Marshal base when a pack of tanks speeds in from the west.

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Desert

The Attacker chooses a home edge. The opposite edge is the Defender's home edge. The Defender places DropShips sufficient to carry the Defender's force along the Defender's home edge. In addition, use the *Sheer Cliffs* rules (see p. 39, *TO*) for the non-home edges and for 3D6 2-inch sections of the playing surface (players alternate designating these after home edges are chosen).

If using mapsheets, arrange two maps with their short edges touching. The Attacker chooses a short edge as their home edge; the opposite edge is the Defender's home edge.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Independence Militia

The militia has two companies of tanks (each with one platoon of Regular, Veteran, and Elite skills). The Attacker enters from their home edge on Turn 1.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Calderon's Commando

Calderon's Commando arrives directly from Rockwellawan. Their force should represent the losses and salvage they took in the *Eliminating Future Opposition* track. If that track was not played, reduce the total force size by one-fourth (round down) and reduce armor by the same amount on all units. Allocate 2D6 of the Commando force as using captured Colonial Marshal equipment disguised as loyal Marshals. The Defender is exiting DropShips when the Attacker's forces arrive. At the start of the track, there are 1D6 lances of 'Mechs offloaded; these must be the lightest lances of the Commando force and are placed on the map before Turn 1. Lances must be assembled such that members are at most 4 inches from one another and within 16 inches of the nearest DropShip. Attacker's remaining units may exit the DropShips during the battle according to the *Carrying Units* rules (see p. 89–91, *TW*), fastest units first. The DropShips have sustained 50 percent armor damage at the start of play.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 500

Optional Bonuses

+300 Overwhelmed. Double the starting size of the enemy.
+250 Can You See Them? Heavy metal ores in the region foul sensors. Use *Electromagnetic Interference* rules (see p. 93, *AS*).

OBJECTIVES

1. Destroy/Save the DropShips. Attacker must cripple or destroy DropShips; Defender must ensure DropShips remain operational and able to lift off. **[200 per DropShip]**

2. Kill All You Can! All enemies deserve to die. **[50 per unit crippled/destroyed]**

3. Time is Critical! Defender seeks to delay the Attacker for at least 10+1D6 turns. **[100 per turn less than that (Defender) or more than that (Attacker) when the battle ends]**

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Forced Withdrawal

The Attacker is operating under *Forced Withdrawal* rules (see p. 27, *AS*). The Defender has no place to retreat to as their DropShips are on the map.

AFTERMATH

The Independence Militia was brave and gave their all. Unfortunately, the merciless Calderon's Commando took everything they had and gave back even more. The militia complement of tanks was wiped out entirely. The Commando then took their time to regroup and started to move out toward the site their fighters had identified as the likely base. A detachment was left in reserve to guard the DropShips. Marshal von Staskov was certain they would not be needed.

NEXT TRACK

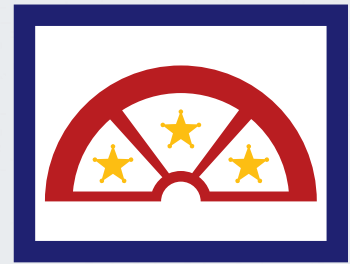
Diversion, Flank, or the next Touchpoint.

TOUCHPOINT: RUNNIN' AND GUNNIN' .

SITUATION

Luna Plain
Caldera Fields, Independence
Fronc Reaches
15 July 3088

The returning battalion of Marshals sends its fastest company of 'Mechs to try intercepting the incoming Commando force, which is much larger than expected. Because only a skeleton crew is at the base lying in wait, the pirates must be delayed as long as possible. The interception force is almost entirely light 'Mechs, but they count some of the most modern and best-maintained equipment in the Marshals. The pirates cannot let such potential salvage escape. Also, they know that engaging the skirmishers away from the base will divide the defenders into smaller groups, more easily dealt with. The main body of the Commando continues onward, while some of their own fast elements pursue the speedy Marshals.



GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Desert

The Defender chooses one edge as their home edge, with opposite edge being the Attacker's home edge. The Defender deploys along the Attacker's home edge before Turn 1. The Attacker enters via their home edge on Turn 1.

If using mapsheets, arrange two maps with their long edges touching.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Calderon's Commando

Attacker consists of 1D6 divided by 2 (round up) lances of Calderon's Commando 'Mechs. The lowest allowable Movement of these units is 10 inches. The Attacker must maintain a presence on the map as long as the Defender has any 'Mech(s) on the map.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Colonial Marshals

The Defender consists of one company (twelve light 'Mechs) of Colonial Marshals. While the Marshals are known not to retreat from battle (especially against pirates), in this case, their objective is to lead away part of the Commando's force to temporarily relieve the meager base defense.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 500

Optional Bonuses

+100 Sheer Cliffs. See *Game Setup* for *Whose Idea Was This* Anyway track, p. 28.

+200 Rain. A freak rain shower hits the area (see *Heavy Rain*, p. 95, AS).

+100 EMI. Heavy metal ores in the region foul sensors. Use *Electromagnetic Interference* rules (see p. 93, AS).

OBJECTIVES

1. Time is Critical (Attacker Only)! Attacker must destroy/cripple/force off the map Defender's force before Turn 12. [100 per turn before 12]

2. Slow Them Down (Defender Only)! Defender must prevent Attacker's force from exiting via Defender's home edge before Turn 12. [100 per turn after 12]

3. Reap the Rewards (Attacker Only). Cripple (not destroy) Defender's 'Mechs for later salvage. [100 per crippled 'Mech]

4. Hold Firm (Defender Only). Defender must destroy/cripple or force withdrawal of Attacker's 'Mechs. [100 per 'Mech]

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Forced Withdrawal

The Attacker is operating under *Forced Withdrawal* rules (see p. 27, AS).

Salvage

Any disabled 'Mech *must* be salvaged by the Attacker (unless all of Attacker's 'Mechs are destroyed). For every 'Mech that might be salvaged, the Attacker must allocate one 'Mech to drag the salvageable 'Mech back to the DropShips. Any Attacker unit engaged in such salvage efforts may not take part in any other battle(s) on Independence. They are considered already on board their DropShip(s) for later tracks. See the *Dragging Salvage* special rule in the *Eliminating Future Opposition* track, p. 24.

AFTERMATH

It was a minor inconvenience at best. The slashing attack only diverted the pirates' own recon elements, leading to a running battle in the plains northwest of the objective. The pirates realized they were simply being led away from their goal when the Marshals moved only fast enough to stay out of range without actually disengaging. The rest of Calderon's Commando continued to the base unimpeded save for wading through the minefields they had come to expect from the Marshals. Losses were minimal as they closed in on their target.

NEXT TRACK

Flank or the next Touchpoint.

TOUCHPOINT: FEW STOOD AGAINST MANY

[Author's Note: The next three tracks all take place one after another in the same battlefield, and thus use the same map, game setup, and special rules. The condition of buildings and combat units at the end of one track is their condition at the start of the subsequent track.]

SITUATION

Marshal Base Beta
Caldera Fields, Independence
Fronc Reaches
 15 July 3088

Deputy Force Commander Marvel Dillon waited alone in an empty warehouse as the pirates arrived at the base. The rest of the Marshals could have joined Dillon and his command lance inside the caldera to defend the site, but Dillon had given them other orders. After the pirates entered the easiest passage into the base, the Marshals saturated the area behind them with Thunder-LRM minefields. The pirates realized they were cut off from their convenient exit. They would have to use twisting and difficult passages to exit the base, unless they chanced the mined ground behind them. But coming up those twisty passages even now were the non-*LRM*-equipped Marshals. Dillon and his lance only had to hold out a short time. But in the thirty-first century, minutes might as well be days when a lance is defending against more than a battalion. With a smile, Dillon prepared to break cover and spring his ambush like a pebble threatening to halt an avalanche.

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Desert, Urban

If using terrain, the game table should be divided equally between open Desert terrain on one half and Urban on the other.

If using mapsheets, arrange four maps 2 x 2; one should be open Desert terrain while the other should be Urban.

The Defender chooses one edge of the playing surface as their home edge; the Attacker's home edge is the opposite edge.

The Defender chooses a 4-inch portion (two adjacent hexes, if using mapsheets) on Attacker's home edge. The Attacker's 'Mechs may enter through this section of home edge starting on Turn 1. The Defender also picks two non-adjacent 2-inch spaces on each of the other three map edges to indicate the passage by which the Defender's 'Mechs may enter and by which the Attacker's 'Mechs may retreat without entering the Thunder minefields. The rest of every edge is impassable due to the tall, sheer, unclimbable walls of the caldera. The Defender places 3D6 + 12 buildings (4" height, Medium, CF 15) throughout the map. The Defender secretly assigns one building as the battlesuit manufacturing building and some buildings as storehouses of ammunition or explosives (see *Special Rules*). All buildings should be identical in outward appearance.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Calderon's Commando

Marshal Vrabel von Staskov has the entire Commando force available for this track, minus the 'Mechs used in the *Runnin' and Gunnin'* track and minus the 2D6 units in captured Colonial Marshal equipment (see *Whose Idea Was This Anyway?* Track, p. 28, and see *Special Rules* below). The Commando may enter the map two lances per turn starting in Turn 1. The 'Mechs from *Runnin' and Gunnin'* that are not involved in salvage efforts may begin to enter this battle one lance at a time starting on Turn (6 + the number of turns played in the *Runnin' and Gunnin'* track). If that track was not played, subtract from the Commando force

1D6 divided by 2 (round up) lances of 'Mechs with Move of 10+. Half of these units are available to enter the battle starting on Turn 12 + 1D6; reduce the armor by half (round up).

For all Attacker units, roll 2D6. For all results of 9+, reduce armor by 2 to represent damage taken from minefields en route to the base.

The Attacker must designate one unit as Marshal von Staskov.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Colonial Marshals

The Defender initially consists of the command lance of Deputy Force Commander Marvel Dillon and four squads of TinStar battlesuit infantry. These units begin the track as *Hidden Units* (see p. 102, AS). The TinStar squads are hidden in the TinStar manufacturing building. All non-*LRM*-equipped Marshal 'Mechs may begin to enter the map via the 2-inch paths (see *Game Setup*) on Turn 5 + (1D6 divided by 2, rounded up). All *LRM*-equipped Marshal 'Mechs may begin to enter via the 2-inch paths on Turn 15; all *LRM*-equipped 'Mechs must allocate half their *LRM* ammo to Thunder *LRMs*, which has been emptied prior to entering the map. Regardless of *LRM* carrying status, the Defender rolls 1D6 at the start of each turn beginning with turn 5 + 1D6; this is the number of reinforcing units that may enter that turn.

The Defender must designate one unit as Deputy Force Commander Dillon.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 1000

Optional Bonuses

+200 Obstacles. The ongoing construction has left 2D6 + 6 mounds of gravel throughout Marshal Base Beta. The Defender places all Gravel Piles (see p. 65, AS).

+200 Jammed! The sensor jamming from the buildings fouls other systems as well. Use the *Electromagnetic Interference* rules (see p. 93, AS).

+500 Power Plant. The Defender places one building

TOUCHPOINT: FEW STOOD AGAINST MANY

(2" height, Hardened, CF 50) on the map edge opposite the Attacker's home edge. This is the power plant that supplies the power to Marshal Base Beta, including the sensor spoofing of the other buildings. If destroyed, the power plant explodes, inflicting 15 damage to units up to 2 inches away, 10 to units 4 inches away, 5 to units 6 inches away. The explosion also generates an EMP that shuts down any BattleMech on the map that fails a Skill roll with a +4 penalty. Restarting requires a Skill roll with a +5 modifier.

OBJECTIVES

1. Cut Off the Head... Each side must destroy (not merely cripple) the enemy commander's BattleMech. **[500, doubled if the commander is killed as a result]**

2. ...And the Rest Will Follow. Destroy (not merely cripple) at least half of enemy's units. **[1000]**

3. TinStars. Attacker must carry off a squad (4) of TinStar battlesuits; Defender must prevent this. **[500]**

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Forced Withdrawal

The Attacker is operating under *Forced Withdrawal* rules (see p. 27, AS). The Defender will not retreat.

Traps

The Defender has placed a number of traps throughout the base. These include 2D6 command-detonated minefields (see p. 103, AS) able to be triggered by any member of the Marshal command lance with LOS to the minefield. There are also 2D6 conventional minefields (see p. 102, AS). Buildings containing ammunition or explosives (see *Buildings* below) will explode if their CF is reduced to 5 or below, or if any unit other than infantry enters them by any means.

Buildings

The Marshals lined the walls of all buildings with wires carrying high currents to distort sensors; this allows a Hidden Unit in a building to remain such if desired, even if an enemy unit moves adjacent to it. The Defender must secretly assign six buildings as storehouses: three of ammunition and three of explosives; other buildings are either empty or contain Hidden Units. The Attacker's 'Mechs may scan the interior of one building per turn, using the following method (regardless of whether the unit has an active probe). The 'Mech must end its turn adjacent to the building to be scanned and it must declare the intention to scan that building the following turn. It may not move (including changing facing or falling due to damage) or make any attacks the following turn. At the end of that turn, the Defender must reveal the building's contents. In addition, there are four additional squads of TinStar battlesuits in the manufacturing building that may be salvaged; these may be picked up by adjacent BattleMechs with hands and carried off at any time by any 'Mech per the External Cargo rules (see p. 29, ASC).

Sensors

The Marshals placed sensors throughout the buildings. These allow the Marshals to use targeting data from the buildings in the same manner as though in a C³ network. Any Defender targeting an Attacker unit in its weapons range may calculate its To-Hit number as though it were standing in any building instead of its actual location. There is no penalty or additional modifier to the To-Hit roll. Note that this benefit is lost for any building whose CF is reduced to 5 or less.



TOUCHPOINT: FEW STOOD AGAINST MANY

Trickery

The Commando units in captured Colonial Marshal equipment are entering the map via the same passages as the non-LRM-equipped Colonial Marshals. As long as the Attacker still has units left to enter in this manner, when the Defender announces that a unit will enter via one of the three passages, both players must assign a specific unit that will enter next via each passage. That turn, whenever each player intends to use the same passage, the players roll opposed 2D6, rerolling ties. Whichever player rolls higher brings on his unit, while the other must wait another turn (and make the same opposed roll if another enemy unit is attempting to enter via that passage) to try to bring on that unit. Note that players must set aside such a unit when the roll is lost. That unit may only attempt to enter via the same map edge, and no other units from that player may enter via that edge until that unit is cleared. If the Attacker's last unit has entered via the passages, this rule is no longer in effect. This special rule is only in effect for this track, not for any subsequent track.

Morale

When the second set of Colonial Marshals reinforcements begins to arrive (on Turn 15), Calderon's Commando must make a morale check to remain in the battle. First, compare the number of active, non-crippled units (units under Forced Withdrawal are considered crippled) for the Attacker and the number of such units for the Defender at the start of each turn. Roll $2D6 + 4$ (when Attacker outnumbered Defender) or $2D6 - 4$ (when Defender outnumbered Attacker). If Dillon has been killed, add 2 to the result. Similarly, subtract 2 if von Staskov has been killed.

If the modified result is 9+, the Attacker may continue the battle. If the result is 8 or less, the entire Attacker force is considered to be routed: all units flee toward nearest exit route at full Move +2 and may not make any attacks. The track ends when the last Attacker unit exits the map or is destroyed/crippled; or if the last Defender unit is destroyed/crippled.

Loot

Any Attacker unit that exits the map carrying one or more TinStar battlesuits or other loot may not take part in any other battle(s) on Independence. They are considered already on board their DropShip(s) for later tracks.

AFTERMATH

It was almost mythical. Dillon stood alone and fought off one pirate after another. As the bulk of Calderon's Commando made its way into the base, Dillon's command lance broke cover and launched its own attacks. As the heavier and slower Commando units arrived, Dillon's command lance was whittled down. Soon, Dillon found himself alone against the enemy. Using cunning and skill, he stayed alive and chiseled away at the Commandos at the same time. Then the Marshal reinforcements arrived. The tide turned almost instantly. While the pirates still outnumbered the Marshals, quality outshone quantity. The pirates began to break and slip away through the cracks in the caldera wall. Dillon ordered pursuit to keep the pirates from regrouping or escaping back to their DropShips when things suddenly got much worse.

NEXT TRACK

The next Touchpoint.

TOUCHPOINT: A MARSHAL'S DUTY NEVER ENDS.

SITUATION

Marshal Base Beta
Caldera Fields, Independence
Fronc Reaches
 15 July 3088

Deputy Force Commander Marvel Dillon and his Colonial Marshals finally have the momentum. Calderon's Commando has been whipped and is in flight. Now is the time to end the pirate menace once and for all. Unfortunately, a *zun* of the Shen-se Tian surprises the Marshals by dropping into their midst before they could mount a pursuit. Once more, they are facing a merciless enemy in unforgiving conditions, but now they are already battered.

GAME SETUP

See the *Few Stood Against Many* track, p. 31, for game setup. The condition of buildings is the state they were in at the conclusion of that track. If that track was not played, reduce the CF of all buildings by half (round up), and half of each type of minefield has been detonated.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Shen-se Tian

The Attacker consists of one *zun* of Shen-se Tian pirate 'Mechs plus *Noyan* Qiangjun Jiemin's *kesh*. They enter the map on Turn 1 via high-altitude combat drop. Use the rules for *Dropping Troops* (see p. 90, AS). The Attacker must designate one unit as *Noyan* Qiangjun Jiemin.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Colonial Marshals

The Defender consists of all Colonial Marshals from the *Few Stood Against Many* track, p. 31. Any units that had not entered the map before that track ended may continue to enter the map starting on Turn 1 of this track per the method in *Few Stood Against Many*. The condition of Defender's units is the state they were in at the conclusion of that track; if Dillon was killed, then Defender must designate another unit as the Colonial Marshals' commander.

If *Few Stood Against Many* was not played, then the Colonial Marshal force consists of Dillon, plus two lances of Colonial Marshals; reduce the armor on all 'Mechs by half (round up) (In *Total Warfare* games, Defender should also apply 2 pilot hits to each MechWarrior), and place the TinStar battlesuits as Hidden Units in perfect condition; the Defender's BattleMechs are placed on the map alternately by the Attacker and Defender, with at least 6 inches between units, to represent the disorder present from the recent battle with Calderon's Commando. The Defender must designate one unit as Dillon.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 1000

Optional Bonuses

+500 Wind Blows. A windstorm (Force 3) breaks out as the Attacker lands in the base (see p. 94, AS).

+250 Nightfall. Night falls just as the Attacker executes its combat drop (see *Dusk or Dawn*, p. 95, AS).

OBJECTIVES

1. Cut Off the Head... Each side must destroy (not merely cripple) the enemy commander's BattleMech. **[500, doubled if the commander is killed as a result]**

2. ...And the Rest Will Follow. Destroy (not merely cripple) at least half of enemy's units. **[1000]**

3. Loot. Attacker must escape with as much loot as possible; Defender must limit amount of loot stolen. **[100 per warehouse of loot]**

SPECIAL RULES

See the *Few Stood Against Many* track, pp. 31-32, for special rules in effect for this track. In addition, this track runs until one side or the other is reduced to half (round up) its starting force from this track; this includes Attacker units that collect loot and depart the map. Once one side is reduced to half its force, the next track, *Marshals from the Sky*, begins.

AFTERMATH

Despite the surprising arrival of undamaged enemies after the long battle with the Calderon's Commando, Dillon rallied his remaining Marshals and stopped the Shen-se Tian's momentum cold. They were about to deliver the *coup de grace* when Calderon's Commando reappeared. The pirates' sensors showed they were not being pursued, so Marshal von Staskov rallied his surviving troops. Realizing their condition was much better than previously recognized, they returned to finish what they had started.

NEXT TRACK

The next Touchpoint.

TOUCHPOINT: MARSHALS FROM THE SKY

SITUATION

Marshal Base Beta
Caldera Fields, Independence
Fronc Reaches
16 July 3088

Calderon's Commando had been routed. When no pursuit materialized, Marshal von Staskov rallied his troops. A third had been lost, but those who remained were still in fighting condition. Further flight was unthinkable. They turned around and made their way back through the tight confines of the tunnels. Expecting to surprise the battered Colonial Marshals by reappearing, the Commando is surprised to find another pirate group engaged with the defenders. Never one to miss an opportunity, von Staskov leads the charge back into the fray. But his returning force is not the only surprise this battle will bring.

GAME SETUP

See the *Few Stood Against Many* track, p. 31, for game setup. The condition of buildings is the state they were in at the conclusion of the *A Marshal's Duty Never Ends* track. If those tracks were not played, reduce the CF of all buildings to 0; all the minefields have been detonated.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Shen-se Tian, Calderon's Commando, the Abominari

The Attacker consists of all surviving Shen-se Tian and Calderon's Commando units from the *Few Stood Against Many* and *A Marshal's Duty Never Ends* tracks, in the condition they were in when those tracks ended (and in the same positions for Shen-se Tian units). The Attacker must designate units for Marshal von Staskov and *Noyan Jiemin* if they survived the earlier tracks; if not, the Attacker must designate replacement commanders. Note that units that departed the map either under Forced Withdrawal or carrying loot are not eligible to return.

If the *Few Stood Against Many* and *A Marshal's Duty Never Ends* tracks were not played, then each force gets half the force listed in those tracks (round down); reduce the armor on all 'Mechs by half (round down). The Attacker must designate units for Marshal von Staskov and *Noyan Jiemin*. Shen-se Tian units are placed on the map at least 12 inches from any map edge. Calderon's Commando units enter via the tunnel passages (the main entrance is still blocked by Thunder LRMs) on Turn 1.

Further, the Abominari finally arrive to investigate the fireworks they've been seeing from their base. The Lying Tongue, the Bloody Hands, and the Scheming Hearts 'Mech companies, plus *Sar* of the Host Zebulun James' command lance, begin to arrive (one lance from each company per turn via a separate edge from the other companies); the command lance may enter with any of these companies) starting in the same turn that the Colonial Marshals begin to arrive via combat drop. Reduce the armor on each Abominari 'Mech by one-third (round up).

Defender

Recommended Forces: Colonial Marshals

The Defender consists of all surviving Colonial Marshals from the *A Marshal's Duty Never Ends* track. The condition of Defender's units is the state they were in at the conclusion

of that track; if Dillon was killed, then the Defender must designate another unit as the Colonial Marshals' commander. If that track was not played, then the Colonial Marshal force consists of Dillon and one lance of Colonial Marshals; reduce the armor on all 'Mechs by two-thirds (round up) (In *Total Warfare* games, Defender should also apply 3 pilot hits to each MechWarrior), reduce the armor of the TinStar battlesuits by half. All units must be placed on the map with 10 or fewer inches separating each other. The Defender must designate one unit as Dillon. In addition, starting on Turn 1D6 + 3, the second battalion of Colonial Marshals (see NOTE for *Whose Idea Was This Anyway?* track, p. 28) begins to arrive via combat drop at the rate of 1D6 divided by 2 (round up) lances per turn; use the rules for *Dropping Troops* (see p. 90, AS).

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 2000

Optional Bonuses

+500 DropShips. All sides call in their DropShips for relief. Spheroid DropShips begin to arrive on Turn 8 (one per faction) and land on the map (see pp. 70–73, AS). Two DropShips per side (one per pirate group, two for the Marshals) may be called in. The Calderon's Commando DropShip should be one from the *Whose Idea Was This Anyway?* track (p. 28); if played, use the DropShip's condition from the end of that track. If that track was not played, reduce armor by one-fourth (round up) in each location and eliminate half of each weapon type from each arc (round up) due to damage sustained in that earlier battle.

+250 Dark of Night. Battle takes place in the Moonless Night of Independence (see p. 95, AS).

OBJECTIVES

1. Enough is Enough. Kill the enemy. [100 per destroyed unit, 1000 bonus for destroying all of one enemy group]

2. Control the Base. Eliminate the enemy (via destruction or forcing off the map) from the base. [1000]

SPECIAL RULES

See the *Few Stood Against Many* and *A Marshal's Duty Never Ends* tracks (pp. 31 and 33, respectively), for special rules in effect for this track. In addition, this track runs until one side or the other is destroyed or driven off the map. Other special rules for this track include:

TOUCHPOINT: MARSHALS FROM THE SKY

No Honor Among Pirates

Whenever one pirate 'Mech has LOS to a 'Mech from another pirate band with a better To-Hit Number than against any Colonial Marshal, then the pirate must be fired on instead. For this condition to end (meaning the pirates target only the Colonial Marshals and not each other), the Attacking player(s) must roll 2D6 with a result of 10+. This roll must be made every turn such an opportunity presents itself. If either pirate commander succeeds in this roll, then an agreement has been reached between those two bands, and they will not to fight each other for the duration of this battle.

Retreat

If the Shen-se Tian or Calderon's Commando is reduced to half the numbers they start this track with, the remaining members of that force immediately begin to retreat off the map as though under Forced Withdrawal (see p. 27, AS). After one pirate group does this, the other follows suit the turn after the last of the first command has exited the map. The Abominari will stay and fight since Independence is their home base. If the *DropShips* optional bonus is being used, then these pirate bands may attempt to board their own DropShip to escape.

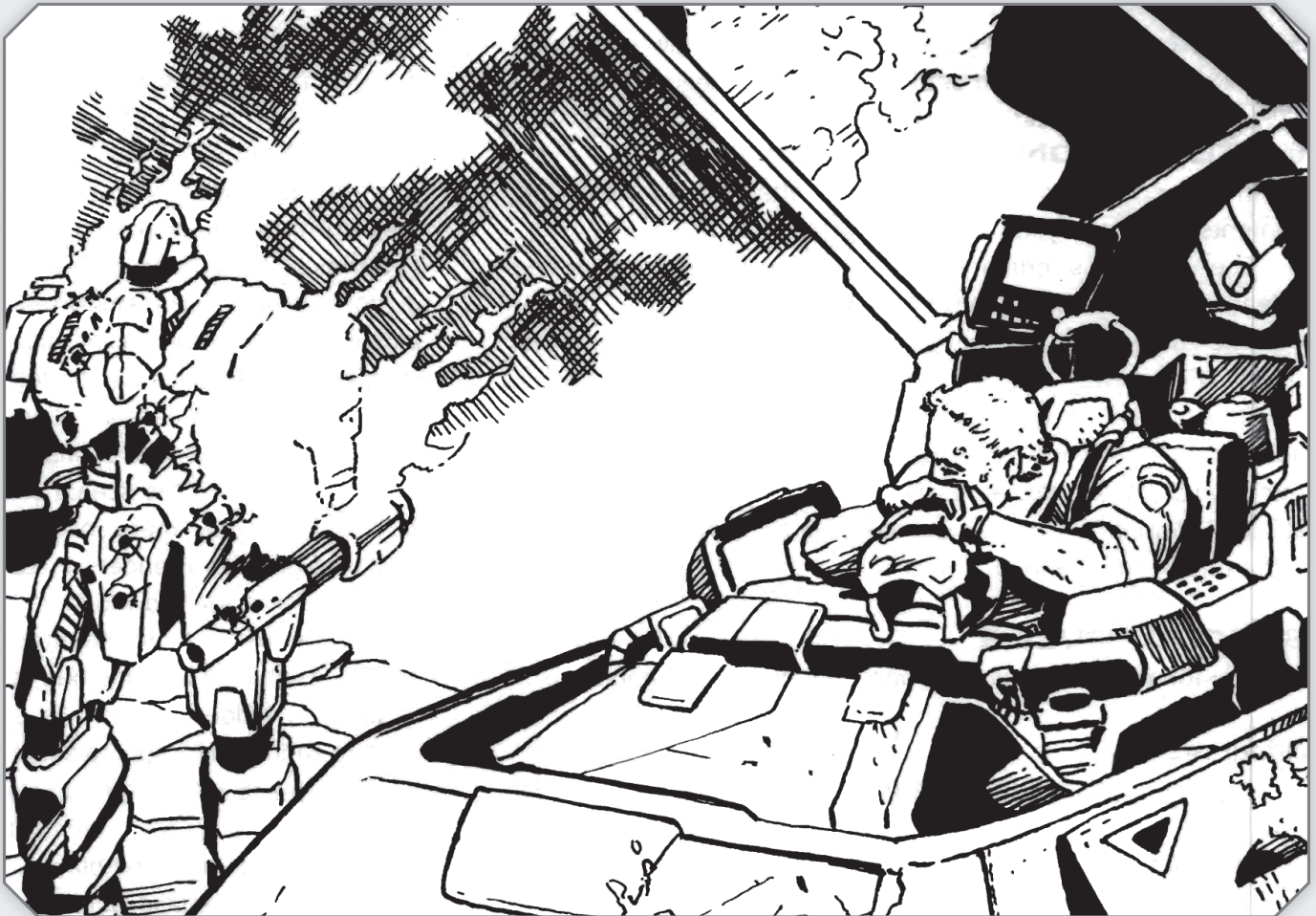
Any such units (and the DropShip) are unavailable for the next track, *Enough is Enough*.

AFTERMATH

The surprise arrival of the Colonial Marshals' second battalion turned the tide for good. Fresh enemies with fanatical bent were beyond the capabilities of the mauled pirates. Then the Abominari surprised everyone with their arrival. The Abominari lasted longer than the others, being fresher, but as the other pirates fled, the Abominari were left alone and shredded. Those few who fled were tracked to their base, and the Abominari lifted off Independence with losses greater than 90 percent. Marshal Dillon was piloting one of the five surviving Colonial Marshal 'Mechs still standing from the original battle with the Commando, though that was more through force of will than as a sign of combat effectiveness. He ordered the new arrivals to mount a pursuit of the fleeing pirates. As soon as they passed out of sight, Dillon lapsed into a coma.

NEXT TRACK

Pursuit, Flank, or the next Touchpoint.



TOUCHPOINT: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

SITUATION

Commando Landing Zone
Caldera Fields, Independence
Fronc Reaches
16 July 3088

The surviving members of the Abominari, Calderon's Commando, and Shen-se Tian chose the better part of valor. The Abominari quickly disappeared into the labyrinthine passages of the Caldera Plains, Marshals close on their heels. Now the Shen-se Tian and Calderon's Commando face annihilation from the pursuing Marshals. With only one JumpShip between them, they are racing for their DropShips, which are grounded near each other. They agree to cooperate until they reach safe territory, since their opportunistic attacks on one another instead of against the Colonial Marshals brought them to this point in the first place.

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: Desert

See the *Whose Idea Was This Anyway?* track, p. 28, for game setup.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Colonial Marshals

The Defender consists of all surviving members of the combat-dropped battalion of Colonial Marshals from the *Marshals from the Sky* track, p. 34. The condition of Attacker's units is the state they were in at the conclusion of that track. Defender must designate one unit as the Colonial Marshals' commander.

If *Marshals from the Sky* was not played, then the Attacker's force consists of two companies of Colonial Marshals; reduce the armor on all 'Mechs by one-third (round up). The Attacker enters via home edge on Turn 1.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Calderon's Commando, Shen-se Tian

The Defender consists of all surviving members of the *Marshals from the Sky* track that successfully escaped the map. The condition of the Defender's units is the state they were in at the conclusion of that track. Designate one unit each for *Noyan Jiemin* and *Marshal von Staskov*. If either pirate commander was killed in previous tracks, the Defender must designate replacement commanders. If *Marshals from the Sky* was not played, then the Defender consists of one *arban* of Shen-se Tian 'Mechs and two companies of Calderon's Commando 'Mechs. Reduce the armor of all Defender 'Mechs by two-thirds (round up). Further, the Defender places DropShips for Calderon's Commando (in the state they were in at the end of the *Whose Idea Was This Anyway?* track) and for Shen-se Tian within 2 inches of the Defender's home edge.

If *Whose Idea Was This Anyway?* was not played, reduce the armor of the Commando DropShips by half and eliminate half of each weapon type from each arc (round up) due to damage sustained in that earlier battle. If the Optional Bonus *DropShips* was used in the *Marshals from the Sky* track, remove one DropShip from each pirate force for this track.

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 500

Optional Bonuses

+200 Sandpaper Skies. A sandstorm hits the area (see p. 62, *TO*).

+250 Daybreak. The sun begins to rise just as the pirates get visual on their DropShips (see *Dusk or Dawn*, p. 95, *AS*).

OBJECTIVES

1. Escape [Defender Only]! Defender's units must board DropShips. [100 per unit]

2. Stop Them [Attacker Only]! Attacker must kill or cripple Defender's units before they can board their DropShips. [100 per unit]

3. DropShips. Defender must not lose any DropShips; Attacker must prevent DropShips from escaping. [500 per DropShip that escapes (Defender) or is destroyed/disabled (Attacker)]

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

No Honor Among Pirates

See *Marshals from the Sky* track, p. 35. This rule only applies if no agreement was reached in the *Marshals from the Sky* track, and it may end via the same means.

DropShips

Defender's DropShips are prepared to lift off. Each pirate force's DropShip(s) will lift off (see pp. 71–72, *AS*) in the End Phase of Turn 1D6 + 5; roll 1D6 + 5 for each pirate force before Turn 1. Retreating units must embark their DropShips before this departure takes place (see p. 63, *AS*) or they will be left behind.

AFTERMATH

The routed pirates slipped the Colonial Marshal noose. Many were left ruined along the path to their DropShips, but too many made it to the protective umbrella of the DropShips' weaponry for the Colonial Marshals' liking. Rather than allow the pirates to escape that they might rebuild, the Marshals called in their own DropShips to intercept. Those few pirates whose 'Mechs were downed found themselves rounded up and summarily executed.

NEXT TRACK

Pursuit, Flank, or the next Touchpoint.

TOUCHPOINT: SUFFER NOT THE PIRATES TO LIVE

SITUATION

*High Altitude
Independence
Fronc Reaches
16 July 3088*

The pirate DropShips are fleeing for the Shen-se Tian JumpShip when sensors pick up incoming Colonial Marshal DropShips. A battle breaks out as the Marshals' DropShips engage the pirate DropShips before they can break orbit.

GAME SETUP

Recommended Terrain: High Altitude Map

Defender chooses a home edge. Attacker's home edge is the opposite edge.

Attacker

Recommended Forces: Colonial Marshals

The Attacker's force consists of two *Overlord*-class DropShips. They enter the map via Attacker's home edge on Turn 1 traveling at maximum Move. DropShips are in the condition they were in at the end of the *Marshals from the Sky* track, if the *DropShips* optional bonus was used.

If *Marshals from the Sky* was not played (or that optional bonus not used), then reduce the armor by one-third (round down), and eliminate one-fourth of each weapon type per arc (round down), for both DropShips.

Defender

Recommended Forces: Calderon's Commando, Shen-se Tian, the Abominari

The Defender consists of two Calderon's Commando DropShips (*Overlord*-class), two Shen-se Tian DropShips (*Union*-class), and two Abominari DropShips (*Union*-class). All begin on the map on Attacker's home edge traveling at maximum Move. DropShips are in the condition they ended the *Marshals from the Sky* and *Enough is Enough* tracks (see pp. 34 and 36 respectively).

If *Marshals from the Sky* and *Enough is Enough* were not played, then reduce armor from the Calderon's Commando DropShips by two-thirds (round up), and eliminate two-thirds of each weapon type per arc (round up). Reduce the Shen-se Tian DropShips in the same manner, but only by one-third (round up), and for the Abominari DropShips by half (round up).

WARCHEST

Track Cost: 500

Optional Bonuses

+500 Gun Jam! Weaponry issues limit DropShips to half their remaining firepower.

+500 Dogfight. Each side deploys aerospace fighters to engage the enemy. The Marshals deploy two squadrons (twelve fighters total); Shen-se Tian deploys one *arban* (five fighters); Calderon's Commando deploys one squadron (six fighters); the Abominari deploys two fighters (the rest having been lost on the ground or deployed elsewhere when this battle occurred).

Fighters begin the battle adjacent to their DropShips, matching their speed.

OBJECTIVES

1. Escape [Defender Only]. Exit DropShips via home edge. [500 per DropShip safely exited]

2. Destroy [Attacker Only]! Attacker must destroy Defender's DropShips. [500 per DropShip destroyed]

SPECIAL RULES

The following rules are in effect for this track:

Forced Withdrawal

The Defender begins the track under *Forced Withdrawal* rules (see p. 27, AS).

AFTERMATH

The pirates were mauled, but the cost was steep in Colonial Marshal lives. Of the two battalions that began the operation, less than one could be assembled from what survived. This set back the Marshal buildup until the Marshaly Academy could replace the losses. However, copious salvage ensured BattleMechs were waiting for those new graduates. The battlesuit factory, having been removed prior to the battle, was relocated to a more remote location on Independence where the new Marshal Base Beta was constructed. A decade passed before it was able to produce sufficient materiel to equip the desired TinStar Brigade. These forces were deployed by company to Fronc Reaches worlds, under the direct command of each world's Planetary Command Marshal.

Calderon's Commando lost a JumpShip and found themselves ransomed to their fellows as payment to the Shen-se Tian. Marshal Vrabel von Staskov survived the defeat, but his men turned against him once the final toll was accounted. Two-thirds of their force had been left behind, and everyone knew how the Marshals treated captive pirates. They strung von Staskov up in their base, leaving his remains behind as the Commando relocated to the no man's land between the Calderon Protectorate and Taurian Concordat. Their few survivors made do with the one remaining JumpShip, not needing another until their numbers had recovered somewhat several years later.

Noyan Jiemin was killed when the Marshals combat dropped into the base, but his successor, *Noyan* Qinson Ming, assumed command immediately. The Dark Days Band quit their Fronc Reaches base and departed for the Tortuga Dominion. It was six years before they recovered their numbers, though their quality had degraded without Jiemin's firm hand in control.

The Abominari never returned to Independence. When the few survivors of Independence escaped and linked up with their comrades (who were raiding the Taurian Concordat when the battle occurred), the force amounted to less than one-third of its former strength. The survivors limped away to Herotitus and eventually moved on to safer hunting grounds near the Filtvelt Coalition, raiding that nation and the Federated Suns's Periphery worlds for the next five decades.

BATTLETECH™

BATTLEMECH RECORD SHEET

'MECH DATA

Type: **Nightstar NSR-9J (Holt)**

Movement Points:

Walking: 3 [4]
Running: 5 [6]
Jumping: 3

Tonnage: 95

Tech Base: Mixed

Rules Level: Experimental

Weapons & Equipment Inventory

Qty	Type	Loc	Ht	Dmg	Min	Sht	Med	Lng
1	ER Small Laser [Clan]	HD	2	5 [DE]	—	2	4	6
1	Angel ECM Suite	RT	—	[E]	—	—	—	—
1	ER PPC [Clan]	RT	15	15 [DE]	—	7	14	23
1	Large Pulse Laser [Clan]	LT	10	10 [P]	—	6	14	20
1	Gauss Rifle [Clan]	RA	1	15 [DB,X]	2	7	15	22
1	Gauss Rifle [Clan]	LA	1	15 [DB,X]	2	7	15	22

Ammo: [Gauss] 32

BV: 3,433

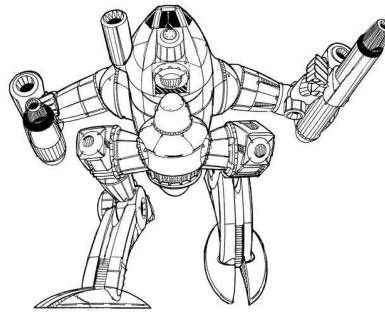


WARRIOR DATA

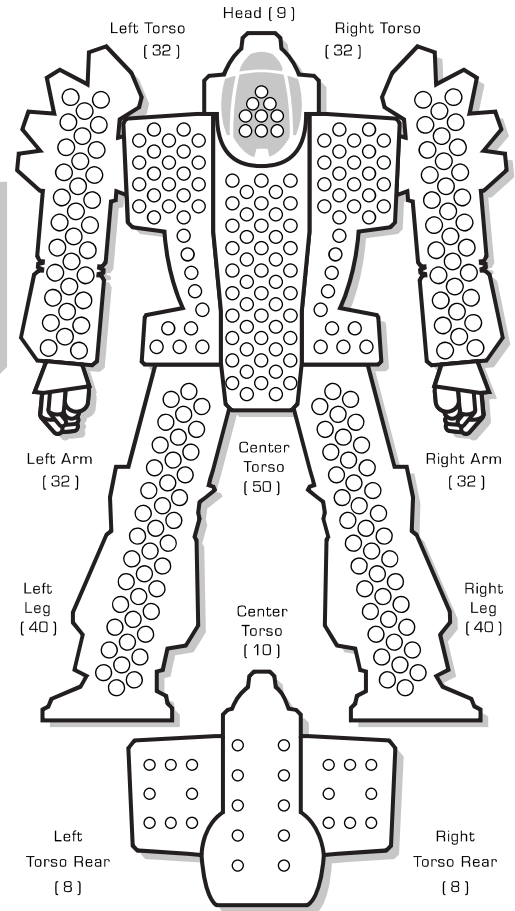
Name: _____

Gunnery Skill: _____ Piloting Skill: _____

Hits Taken	1	2	3	4	5	6
Consciousness #	3	5	7	10	11	Dead



ARMOR DIAGRAM



CRITICAL HIT TABLE

Left Arm

- Shoulder
- Upper Arm Actuator
- Lower Arm Actuator
- Hand Actuator
- Gauss Rifle [Clan]
- Gauss Rifle [Clan]

- Gauss Rifle [Clan]
- Gauss Rifle [Clan]
- Gauss Rifle [Clan]
- Gauss Rifle [Clan]
- Ammo (Gauss) 8
- Ammo (Gauss) 8

Left Torso

- XL Fusion Engine
- XL Fusion Engine
- XL Fusion Engine
- Double Heat Sink
- Double Heat Sink
- Double Heat Sink

- Double Heat Sink
- Double Heat Sink
- Double Heat Sink
- Jump Jet
- Large Pulse Laser [Clan]
- Large Pulse Laser [Clan]

Left Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Triple-Strength Myomer
- Triple-Strength Myomer

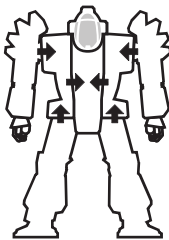
Head

- Life Support
- Sensors
- Cockpit
- ER Small Laser [Clan]
- Sensors
- Life Support

Center Torso

- XL Fusion Engine
 - XL Fusion Engine
 - XL Fusion Engine
 - Gyro
 - Gyro
 - Gyro
- Gyro
 - XL Fusion Engine
 - XL Fusion Engine
 - XL Fusion Engine
 - Jump Jet
 - Triple-Strength Myomer

Engine Hits ○○○○
Gyro Hits ○○
Sensor Hits ○○
Life Support ○



Damage Transfer Diagram

Right Arm

- Shoulder
- Upper Arm Actuator
- Lower Arm Actuator
- Hand Actuator
- Gauss Rifle [Clan]
- Gauss Rifle [Clan]

- Gauss Rifle [Clan]
- Gauss Rifle [Clan]
- Gauss Rifle [Clan]
- Gauss Rifle [Clan]
- Ammo (Gauss) 8
- Ammo (Gauss) 8

Right Torso

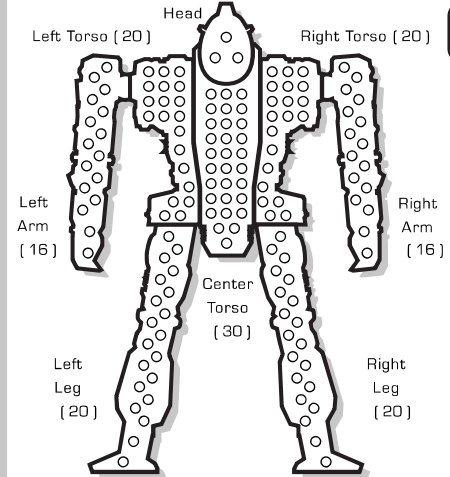
- XL Fusion Engine
- XL Fusion Engine
- XL Fusion Engine
- Double Heat Sink
- Double Heat Sink
- Double Heat Sink

- Jump Jet
- ER PPC [Clan]
- ER PPC [Clan]
- Angel ECM Suite
- Angel ECM Suite
- Triple-Strength Myomer

Right Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Triple-Strength Myomer
- Triple-Strength Myomer

INTERNAL STRUCTURE DIAGRAM



HEAT DATA

Heat Level*	Effects	Double Heat Sinks: 14 [28]
30	Shutdown	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
28	Ammo Exp. avoid on 8+	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
26	Shutdown, avoid on 10+	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
25	-5 Movement Points	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
24	+4 Modifier to Fire	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
23	Ammo Exp. avoid on 6+	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
22	Shutdown, avoid on 8+	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
20	-4 Movement Points	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
19	Ammo Exp. avoid on 4+	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
18	Shutdown, avoid on 6+	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
17	+3 Modifier to Fire	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
15	-3 Movement Points	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
14	Shutdown, avoid on 4+	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
13	+2 Modifier to Fire	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
10	-2 Movement Points	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
8	+1 Modifier to Fire	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
5	-1 Movement Points	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

Heat Scale

Heat Level	Overflow
30*	
29	
28*	
27	
26*	
25*	
24*	
23*	
22*	
21	
20*	
19*	
18*	
17*	
16	
15*	
14*	
13*	
12	
11	
10*	
9	
8*	
7	
6	
5*	
4	
3	
2	
1	
0	

BATTLETECH™



BATTLE ARMOR RECORD SHEET

BATTLE ARMOR: SQUAD 1

Type: TinStar Battlearmor (Standard) Era: Dark Age
 Gunnery Skill: _____ Anti-Mech Skill: _____
 Ground MP: 3
Weapons & Equip. Dmg Min Sht Med Lng
 BA Manipulators [Manipulator (Basic)] (2) [E] — — — —
 Gauss Rifle [Magshot] 2 [DB] — 3 6 9
 Magnetic Clamps [BA] (Body) [E] — — — —
 Support: PPC 2 [DE] — 2 5 7

1 ○○○○○○○○○○
 2 ○○○○○○○○○○
 3 ○○○○○○○○○○
 4 ○○○○○○○○○○

Mechanized: Swarm: Leg: AP:

BV: 382/74

BATTLE ARMOR: SQUAD 2

Type: TinStar Battlearmor (Standard) Era: Dark Age
 Gunnery Skill: _____ Anti-Mech Skill: _____
 Ground MP: 3
Weapons & Equip. Dmg Min Sht Med Lng
 BA Manipulators [Manipulator (Basic)] (2) [E] — — — —
 Gauss Rifle [Magshot] 2 [DB] — 3 6 9
 Magnetic Clamps [BA] (Body) [E] — — — —
 Support: PPC 2 [DE] — 2 5 7

1 ○○○○○○○○○○
 2 ○○○○○○○○○○
 3 ○○○○○○○○○○
 4 ○○○○○○○○○○

Mechanized: Swarm: Leg: AP:

BV: 382/74

BATTLE ARMOR: SQUAD 3

Type: TinStar Battlearmor (Standard) Era: Dark Age
 Gunnery Skill: _____ Anti-Mech Skill: _____
 Ground MP: 3
Weapons & Equip. Dmg Min Sht Med Lng
 BA Manipulators [Manipulator (Basic)] (2) [E] — — — —
 Gauss Rifle [Magshot] 2 [DB] — 3 6 9
 Magnetic Clamps [BA] (Body) [E] — — — —
 Support: PPC 2 [DE] — 2 5 7

1 ○○○○○○○○○○
 2 ○○○○○○○○○○
 3 ○○○○○○○○○○
 4 ○○○○○○○○○○

Mechanized: Swarm: Leg: AP:

BV: 382/74

BATTLE ARMOR: SQUAD 4

Type: TinStar Battlearmor (Standard) Era: Dark Age
 Gunnery Skill: _____ Anti-Mech Skill: _____
 Ground MP: 3
Weapons & Equip. Dmg Min Sht Med Lng
 BA Manipulators [Manipulator (Basic)] (2) [E] — — — —
 Gauss Rifle [Magshot] 2 [DB] — 3 6 9
 Magnetic Clamps [BA] (Body) [E] — — — —
 Support: PPC 2 [DE] — 2 5 7

1 ○○○○○○○○○○
 2 ○○○○○○○○○○
 3 ○○○○○○○○○○
 4 ○○○○○○○○○○

Mechanized: Swarm: Leg: AP:

BV: 382/74

BATTLE ARMOR: SQUAD 5

Type: TinStar Battlearmor (Standard) Era: Dark Age
 Gunnery Skill: _____ Anti-Mech Skill: _____
 Ground MP: 3
Weapons & Equip. Dmg Min Sht Med Lng
 BA Manipulators [Manipulator (Basic)] (2) [E] — — — —
 Gauss Rifle [Magshot] 2 [DB] — 3 6 9
 Magnetic Clamps [BA] (Body) [E] — — — —
 Support: PPC 2 [DE] — 2 5 7

1 ○○○○○○○○○○
 2 ○○○○○○○○○○
 3 ○○○○○○○○○○
 4 ○○○○○○○○○○

Mechanized: Swarm: Leg: AP:

BV: 382/74

LEG ATTACKS TABLE

BATTLE ARMOR TROOPERS ACTIVE	BASE TO-HIT MODIFIER
4-6	0
3	+2
2	+5
1	+7

SWARM ATTACKS TABLE

BATTLE ARMOR TROOPERS ACTIVE	BASE TO-HIT MODIFIER
4-6	+2
1-3	+5

SWARM ATTACK MODIFIERS TABLE

ATTACKING ENEMY BATTLE ARMOR TROOPERS ACTIVE	FRIENDLY MECHANIZED BATTLE ARMOR TROOPERS ACTIVE	1	2	3	4	5	6
6		+0	+0	+0	+0	+1	+2
5		+0	+0	+0	+1	+2	+3
4		+0	+0	+1	+2	+3	+4
3		+0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
2		+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
1		+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7

BATTLE ARMOR EQUIPMENT

Claws with magnets -1

SITUATION *

'Mech prone -2
 'Mech or vehicle immobile -4
 Vehicle -2

*Modifiers are cumulative

SWARM ATTACKS HIT LOCATION TABLE

2D6 ROLL	BIPEDAL LOCATION	FOUR-LEGGED LOCATION
2	Head	Head
3	Rear Center Torso	Front Right Torso
4	Rear Right Torso	Rear Center Torso
5	Front Right Torso	Rear Right Torso
6	Right Arm	Front Right Torso
7	Front Center Torso	Front Center Torso
8	Left Arm	Front Left Torso
9	Front Left Torso	Rear Left Torso
10	Rear Left Torso	Rear Center Torso
11	Rear Center Torso	Front Left Torso
12	Head	Head

TRANSPORT POSITIONS TABLE

TROOPER NUMBER	'MECH LOCATION	VEHICLE LOCATION
1	Right Torso	Right Side
2	Left Torso	Right Side
3	Right Torso (rear)	Left Side
4	Left Torso (rear)	Left Side
5	Center Torso (rear)	Rear
6	Center Torso	Rear

TROOPER NUMBER	LARGE SUPPORT VEHICLE LOCATION *
1	Right Side (Unit 1/Unit 2)
2	Right Side (Unit 1/Unit 2)
3	Left Side (Unit 1/Unit 2)
4	Left Side (Unit 1/Unit 2)
5	Rear (Unit 1/Unit 2)
6	Rear (Unit 1/Unit 2)



*Unit 1 and Unit 2 represent two battle armor units

MAD-7D (von Staskov)

MARAUDER

PV: 40

TP: **BM** SZ: 3 TMM: 1 MV: 8"j
ROLE: **Brawler** SKILL:

DAMAGE S (+0) M (+2) L (+4)
4 4 2

OV: 0 | HEAT SCALE 1 2 3 S

A: ○○○○○○○○
S: ●●●●

SPECIAL: CASE



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CRITICAL HITS
ENGINE ○+1 Heat/Firing Weapons
FIRE CONTROL ○○○○+2 To-Hit Each
MP ○○○○½ MV Each
WEAPONS ○○○○-1 Damage Each

ALPHA STRIKE STATS



MHL-6FR MARSHAL

PV: 30

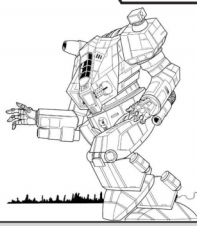
TP: **BM** SZ: 2 TMM: 1 MV: 8"/12"j
ROLE: **Skirmisher** SKILL:

DAMAGE S (+0) M (+2) L (+4)
4 3 0

OV: 0 | HEAT SCALE 1 2 3 S

A: ○○○○○○
S: ●●●

SPECIAL: ENE



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CRITICAL HITS
ENGINE ○+1 Heat/Firing Weapons
FIRE CONTROL ○○○○+2 To-Hit Each
MP ○○○○½ MV Each
WEAPONS ○○○○-1 Damage Each

ALPHA STRIKE STATS



NSR-9J (Holt) NIGHTSTAR

PV: 60

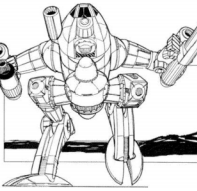
TP: **BM** SZ: 4 TMM: 1 MV: 6"j
ROLE: **Sniper** SKILL:

DAMAGE S (+0) M (+2) L (+4)
6 7 6

OV: 0 | HEAT SCALE 1 2 3 S

A: ○○○○○○○○○○
S: ●●●●

SPECIAL: AECM, TSM



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CRITICAL HITS
ENGINE ○+1 Heat/Firing Weapons
FIRE CONTROL ○○○○+2 To-Hit Each
MP ○○○○½ MV Each
WEAPONS ○○○○-1 Damage Each

ALPHA STRIKE STATS



PXH-3D (Jiemin) PHOENIX HAWK

PV: 34

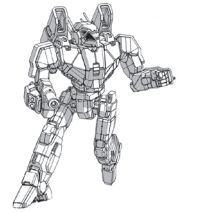
TP: **BM** SZ: 2 TMM: 3 MV: 14"j
ROLE: **Skirmisher** SKILL:

DAMAGE S (+0) M (+2) L (+4)
2 2 0

OV: 0 | HEAT SCALE 1 2 3 S

A: ○○○○○○
S: ●●

SPECIAL: ENE



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CRITICAL HITS
ENGINE ○+1 Heat/Firing Weapons
FIRE CONTROL ○○○○+2 To-Hit Each
MP ○○○○½ MV Each
WEAPONS ○○○○-1 Damage Each

ALPHA STRIKE STATS



(Standard) TINSTAR BATTLE ARMOR

PV: 14

TP: **BA** SZ: 1 TMM: 1 MV: 6"f
ROLE: SKILL:

DAMAGE S (+0) M (+2) L (+4)
2 2 0

A: ○
S: ●●

SPECIAL: AM, CAR4, MEC, XMEC

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ALPHA STRIKE STATS

