BATTLETEC #1

Welcome to the premier issue of Battle-Tec, a new online bimonthly periodical dedicated to the great game that is Battletech. Each month, I hope to bring you some useful articles, fun scenarios, and advice or debate. The best news? It's absolutely free! Some of the regular features you'll find herein are:

- Incoming! (Letters to the Editor)
- Battle-Talk (Forum)
- Mech of the Month (a detailed look at a specific mech)
- Writer's Corner (Submitted fiction)
- Small Unit Actions (short scenarios perfect for a night's game)
- CAMPAIGN CORNER (An ongoing series of scenarios from famous, or not-so-famous, battles)
- The 4th War (an old-tech battle set in the 4th Succession war era...varies in size)
- MERCENARIE'S STAR (A look at some merc units run by players)

And more! Hopefully we have some people out there who can find humor in mechs for some good cartoons....they don't have to draw them....just offer an idea or two. I'd also like to steal a little spot ideal (henceforth to be called Opening Shots) from another magazine, where players can relate their Battletech experiences, outside the normal Forum feature.

If you DO submit a scenario, please add a little background history on the side lines....it's always more fun to play a scenario we first read a little about. This opening issue will be a little light since there's not much of a reader population out there to provide letters for *'Incoming!',* or a proper *Battle-Talk* forum section, as of yet.

Each issue, I'll try to pass on a little info and maybe a little insight in this column. Since this periodical is for players, we need player support....send us articles, artwork, you name it...if it's about Battletech, we want hear from YOU!

OPENING SHOTS!

"*What's this game like?"* I said as I thumbed through Scott's collection of Battle Technology magazines. Scott's shelves were full on 5" plastic mechs that caught my eye, even though they were a dark, unpainted green. "It's cool. You pilot battlemechs in the future, and try to blow the hell out of each other…"

I was not really interested in the background of Battletech at the time, though I had purchased the 1st edition box years before while overseas. I never did read through that first set of rules because there were no war-gamers on my tiny air-station, just a few role-players I DM'd for.

I recognized ROBOTECH machines when I saw them, though. I had a few video tapes of Macross. Being an avid gamer, I pestered Scott to let me know when the next game was. He wasn't sure when they'd play again, but I happened to come into the dorm to visit, and saw Scott, our mutual friend, Jim, and a few others playing a game.

Scott told me his & Jim's merc unit was raiding House Kurita. (*"Kurita? Who are they?")*They let me in on the action that night, telling me to pick a mech from the 3025 tech readout. I thumbed through the pages, admiring Loose's artwork, and picked what I though looked like a bad-ass machine.

A DRN-1 Dragon mech. "*He looks tough as nails, and has a big gun for a right arm.* (To this day, I still think it looks like a powerful mech…maybe a light-end assault) *Is he a good battlemech?"* I should have been wary, when there was a brief silence. Scott eyed the picture. "*He's ok…he's fast…"*

Jim added that it was also a House Kurita mech, so I cheerfully sat down, paying little attention to the Demolisher sheet they also handed me as tank support. Well…needless to say, their elite Marauder, Crusader and Warhammer pilots began to beat my proverbial @ss.

Of course, the first novice thing I did was walk my mech out onto a hill overlooking the small town they were raiding, providing a perfect target for massed PPC and missile fire. In fact, I think it was maybe round two than my AC/5 ammo exploded, tumbling me off the hill.

I felt cheated. This machine they gave me was a pile of junk! And my pilot couldn't seem to scratch them. The most fun I had that night was finding out the size of my AC's on the Demolisher, and chasing Jim's Warhammer around a building perhaps four or five times, before his allies rescued him.

That was my first REAL introduction to Battletech, and after borrowing *The Rules of Warfare*, I

studied up. Never again was I going into battle unprepared. (or so I thought). That thorough whipping I endured set me on the path. I devoured the first novels…*Sword and Dagger, The Grey Death Legion* trilogy, and the new *Warrior: En'Gard*.

I had my revenge on Scott and Jim's unit soon after. And after I'd played a while as their ally against other players, there came The Clans…but a first encounter with 'THEM'….that's a tale for another day……

(Got a memorable first game you'd like to share? Drop me a line at jeffkwrb@iserv.net and I'll see it gets put here in *Opening Shots!* sometime in the future.)

BATTLE-TALK (A BATTLETECH FORUM)

To get things started right, I might as well as a few questions which are sure to spark responses:

Q: What's the best era of Battletech to play in, and why?

Q: Should the Advanced Targeting Computer have been left out of the game?

Q: What are your feelings on the current Battle Value system, and what improvements would you make, if any?

Please limit your responses to three average paragraphs, maximum. That way , we can all get a say. Once the ball starts rolling, feel free to cover any topics you are interested in, here in *Battle-Talk*.

MECH OF THE MONTH

Mech of the Month will look at existing FASA printed mechs (including the different official variants from all eras, with the exception of MechForce Quarterly and other fanzines.) over and talk about their weaknesses strengths and any Optional House Rules the fluff text or mech image would suggest. We'll also apply a rating of 1-10 'Bullets' to gage the machine's effectiveness, as opposed to the BV or CV of FASA's system of value.

We open this first edition with a much-maligned mech, the infamous Rifleman .

RFL-3N: There are a lot of clunkers at the bottom of the mech scale, as most long-time players know, and the Rifleman is Duke of the Junk Heap, if not King. That Honor goes to another mech (not to be mentioned here as of yet). This over-gunned, under-cooled, 60-tonned monstrosity with armor like tissue never should

have walked out of the factory, right? Anyone posted to a Rifleman should curse his luck. (Or should he?).

True, at first glance, the Rifleman seems to have little going for it. However, this feeling is true only if the Rifleman is deployed in a situation where its strengths (what there are of them) cannot be exploited. The Rifleman was designed as a support mech, and thus its biggest asset is its ability to strike foes at range.

While it lacks the heat sinks to fire its two most powerful weapons, the large lasers, in tandem, it still maintains a descent damage profile out to 15 hex range with paired AC/5's and a large laser thrown in. That's a total of 18 damage, equal on average to any other heavy support mech in the Rifleman's stock weight class, with the exception of the Archer.

If you really want to push the envelope, you get a nice solid 26 damage potential for a whopping +8 to the heat scale, provided you're not yet up on the heat and you didn't move. The mech was also the first in fiction to pioneer the now-common arm-flip capability

Unfortunately, that's about all the Rifleman has to offer anyone. From there, it's all down-hill. The bane of this machine are fast light & medium mechs, capable of reaching the pathetic 2/4/2 armor the Rifleman sports on its backside. Even a small laser will likely penetrate a Rifleman's armor from behind.. An arm-flip brings about high heat weapons or those with a range penalty if you're in close to pummel the Rifleman.

So, the pilot either gets to fry his circuits with a pair of large lasers, go cool and hope for an AC hit or two, save his ammo and go with but one large laser shot, or take the range pens and fire the AC/+1 large laser combo. Another problem: In close, a Rifleman suffers from a weapons envelope that does not effectively overlap. Just as your medium lasers come to bear, your AC's start to suffer, leaving the mediums or a medium and a large to fire at the aggressor.

Possibly even worse, this machine packs a horrible 6 pts of head armor. Who the hell wants to sit behind that? A hit here from a PPC or an AC/10 , two VERY common 3025 tech weapons, will prove fatal. Let's also mention a complete lack of effective punching ability., due to missing arm actuators. So where does that leave us tactically?

TACTICS:

Pretty much cut and dried. Find a nice, preferably WELL-protected hill and snipe till you run out of ammo, your engine melts down, or someone realizes just what the hell your driving. If you MUST close and physically attack, end your movement with the enemy in your front arc (what the hell, pretty much always end it with the enemy in your front arc. Your pathetic back armor is almost like having no armor at all). NEVER take partial cover with a Rifleman, unless you're at long range, they ran and are green.

If you have to retreat, plan on leaving the battlefield at least a round before anyone can flank you for a shot at your back. So, terrain and mission permitting, pick a spot where you can walk backwards off the map if retreat you must. If you're playing a Level 1 tech only game based on BV, spend your points more wisely than investing them in a Rifleman…a J.Edger, Pegasus, or even a pair of Harasser hovercraft more than surpass this heavy mech in terms of battlefield dividends.

VARIANTS:

RFL-3C: Why the hell they never made the dual AC/10 Rifleman version of this machine the primary one, God only knows. This machine packs a ranged punch many a high-end heavy or assault mech would be proud of, and goes a good deal toward rectifying the weak back armor that is the rifleman's most lethal flaw (though it is still lightly armored for a heavy battlemech).

It also does away with the minimum range problems the smaller AC saddled you with. If you simply HAVE to have a Rifleman in your force (hell, they just look…cool….) then take this baby. In fact, this machine can give any of the stock heavies of 3025 a run for their money. One draw back is the ammo, but for most purposes, the ammo should last the average length of a small game, say, 9-12 rounds. Best of all, you have maximum head cover.

RFL-4D (PPC): The PPC Rifleman is another matter. This one seems to bridge the gap between the waste of parts that is the RFL-3N, and the dual AC Rifleman. While a fair support mech for raiders, the six extra heat-sinks added means the PPC Rifleman will have a lackluster performance and will still suffer the close in penalties of the RFL-3N.

RFL-5M: The new Rifleman makes an fair addition to any fire support lance, correcting all the major flaws (except the physical attack ability and one other noted below) the old RFL-3N suffered, and increases the strengths of the old mech considerably. Perhaps the only trouble spots on this bird are insufficient ammo for a sustained burst of Ultra AC/5 (as well as the jamming problem of the '2' on the 'To Hit' roll) at the double fire rate. The XL, at least in this instance, is an effective trade-off.

Unfortunately, lack of sufficient head armor drops this machine's overall rating one point. New equipment is nice...that old Achilles' Heel in the forehead ain't.

RFL-5D: The best overall Rifleman, this one is a superior support mech, improving the head armor (though still not the optimum, at least PPC's and AC/10's are survivable). It also packs typical back armor for a heavy class mech, which is to say it's leaps and bounds over the other Riflemen in this department.

The only drawbacks are poor physical attacks and an XL engine, but the paired ERPPC make this mech worthy of respect by any battlefield unit. The PPC give the 5D a bite that reaches farther than an Archer, and outclasses most any other support mech in close where it can bring its large lasers coupled with a pair of mediums to bear. A well designed mech.

HOUSE RULES:

The fluff text for the RFL-3N names anti-aircraft as the major role for this mech, achieving this with a top-notch targeting system. To simulate the advanced tracking system, I recommend the Rifleman suffer no penalties from engaging multiple (secondary) battlefield targets. Furthermore, the pattern of fire the Rifleman employs vs. aircraft might allow the Rifleman's AC's to be treated as cluster rounds, as per the LB5-X AC, including the 1 pt hit locations/spread effect that LBX AC enjoy.

OVERALL RATINGS* (OUT OF A POSSIBLE 10):

RFL-3N	=	2
RFL-3C	=	5
RFL-3D (PPC)	=	3
RFL-5M	=	5
RFL-5D	=	6

[*Note that this rating is based on an over-all comparison of mechs from a similar tech era. A RFL-5M would rate an '8' if it was used (perhaps from a SL cache) in 3025. Also bear in mind that the rating applies to mechs of roughly the same weight class. A '6' rated mech of heavy design might or might not be a match for a '6' rated medium mech. The number rating from this gazette is not meant to replace BV, but to provide the reader with some feel of how the mech stacks up when comparing its inherent strengths and weaknesses.]

WRITER'S CORNER:

None as of yet

SMALL UNIT ACTIONS:

"Urban Mechs at High Noon"

SITUATION:
Minlang City, Tikonov
September 27, 3029

Captain Wu-Fung strolled his URL-1L Urban-Mech through the streets of Minlang on yet another security check. He turned his mech to gaze one more time

into the thick forests on the small town's edge. True, the Crusis Lancers had already made planet-fall, but they were far from here attacking the capitol . There was little chance the Davions would send anything Wu's way, which was probably a blessing from his ancestors, as his Urban Defense Militia unit was composed of 4 of the boxy little *Urbanmech*s.

Wu keyed his command channel, hailing the others of his lance from their hidden positions. "All units report." He ordered, trying to keep a sternness in his voice. His troops had been in their positions for over 4 days, and while they were a fine group of soldiers, even the most devoted man or woman can become lethargic after many long watches. "Chang reporting. East section secure. I inspected a villager's cart a minute ago as he passed, but everything appears normal here."

"Mechwarrior Fuchima reporting. The North section is- " "BREAK-BREAK-BREAK. Captain, this is Mechwarrior Ninshang! My M.A.D. just lit up , sir! I have a large metallic mass heading this way, most likely a mech." Wu's heart leaped, both in surprise and foreboding.

"Chang or Lovington, can you confirm?" he barked. Sgt. Jessica Lovington replied almost immediately. "Yes sir, vibration denotes one mech, sir. Getting weight estimate now.…Christ….", she hissed, "Sir…it's an *Atlas*." Wu's heart nearly leaped out of his mouth at the words. If that most-feared assault mech was an enemy, he and his lance were almost certainly going to see their ancestors much sooner than any of them wanted to.

After a tense moment, Wu addressed his warriors. "Alright. No response on coded channels and the IFF transponder's giving us a No-Joy. Get ready for action, people. Remember, he's only one mech, and he doesn't know where you guys are. By now, he's locked me, but he won't waste his ammo at this range, and I'm sure as hell not popping my head out for a look-see. Stay put, and I'll try and lure him to you. Jess, you'll have the best shot at taking him out fast, with your AC/20. Make it count, people, or we get buried in this stink-hole of a town."

GAME SETUP:

Lay out a single Battletech map with the blank side showing up. The long sides of the map are West and East. The Defender places 10 light, 10 medium, and 5 heavy buildings anywhere on the map on the map. All buildings have maximum CF for their class. 5 light, 5 medium and 2 heavy buildings are level 2 in height. Place 4 light woods hexes grouped together, representing a small park, in the center of the map. The Defender sets up first anywhere (with the exception of the Captain, see below), on the map at least 5 hexes from the north edge. All defenders but the captain may use Hidden Unit rules. The Captain may start anywhere on the map, within 5 hex's of the southern edge.

ATTACKER:

The Attacker enters the north map edge on turn one. The *Atlas*, piloted by Corporal Mick Kilpatrick, was part of a 7th Crusis Lancers combat drop from very high altitude. His *Atlas* suffered a pod release malfunction, finally being jettisoned from the drop-ship well after the rest of his battalion had dropped. To compile the bad luck, the mech's powerful communications suite has malfunctioned, and Kilpatrick is totally lost. He has stumbled on Minlang totally by accident, but intends to use any communications he can find in the Liao town to contact the rest of the lancers.

Corporal Mick Kilpatrick (G:3/P:4) AS7-D *Atlas*

Total Modified BV: 1,744

The *Atlas* pilot can only win a decisive, and only if he destroys or drives off all the Liao mechs and still survives. Any other result is a loss for the Davion mechwarrior.

DEFENDER:

Elements of a Sarna militia unit are stationed at Minlang City, protecting a possible staging area for any Liao units forced to retreat.   The lance is composed entirely of *Urbanmech*s, though two are the 'L' variant.

Capt. Wu-Fung   (G:4/P:5) UM-R60L *Urbanmech*
Sgt. Lovington   (G:2/P:3) UM-R60L *Urbanmech*
MW Ninshang   (G:3/P:4) UM-R60 *Urbanmech*
MW Chang   (G:4/P:5) UM-R60 *Urbanmech*

Total Modified BV: 1,986

The Defender wins a decisive victory if he destroys the Lancer mech and still has two functioning mechs (i.e. can still fight). He wins a marginal victory if he loses 3 or 4 mechs and still destroys the *Atlas*. Any other result is a loss.

OTHER OPTIONS:

If you feel the *Urbanmech*s, despite their numerical advantage, just can't effectively face the *Atlas*, roll six 5pt. Damage clusters spread randomly on the front chart of the *Atlas*. This represents damage the Liao air assets scored on Kilpatrick's mech as he dropped through the fierce air battle that raged over Tikonov. Ignore any possible crits this random damage might generate, regardless if due to a '2' hit location or from a lucky set of rolls that result in complete armor loss and internal hits to a location.

Likewise, if the *Atlas* pilot gets beat consistently, try running the fight with UM-R60 *Urbanmech*s only, or eliminate one of the *Urbanmech*s from the setup entirely.

CAMPAIGN CORNER:

This section of Battle-Tec will sport some 2-3 issue long campaigns. This issue, we follow the exploits of a mercenary unit known as Black Halo. Historically, the unit known as Black Halo was a mercenary company that fought a desperate campaign of hide and seek with Clan Steel Viper on the world of Jabuka. The unit was employed by Katrina Steiner to make a raid on a Steel Viper research complex and to obtain information about the clans in general, but more specifically, to capture a sample of a new armor type the Vipers were reportedly testing.

The radiation belt the planet passed through every 60 days provided perfect camouflage for the *Leopard* and *Union* class drop-ships as the Halos burned in toward Jabuka. A second *Union* remained docked to the *Invader*-class jump-ship at the pirate point. This *Union* carried a company of heavy vehicles the mercenaries intended to use as a reserve if things got really desperate.

After debarking its cargo, the *Union* class drop-ship *'Cold Hell'* and *Leopard 'Winter's Dead'* would hide on one of the three small moons that orbited the planet, ready to retrieve the Black Halos when they received the call. The entire operation was calculated to the last minute, as the mechs would be unable to contact their ticket home for the 17 days the planet passed through the radiation belt.

Unfortunately, the drop-ships that carried the 'Halo mechs planet-side was destroyed after being jumped by a large number of Viper air assets as the drop-ships cleared orbit. The abnormally large swarm of fighters was apparently on a mass training maneuver for a series of war-games ordered by the bored Viper garrison commander. On the plus side (if there was one for Black Halo) the *Union* took down the last Steel Viper fighter before it exploded. With the radiation belt blocking all transmissions, Black Halo continued on with its mission.

SITUATION:
Supply Station 12, Jabuka,
Steel Viper Space
August 2, 3059

"Prowler Lance, report." Dash Bowie's tight beam transmission speared through white noise of the radiation belt, linking his mech temporarily with Sgt. Sinclair's *Wolfhound* where it crouched down at the lip of the hill. Less than a second later, the *Falconer*'s new " " comm and tracking suite grabbed the return beam. "Got a

company of old I.S. models, Major. Mostly heavies and mediums…definitely doable."

'Excellent', Dash thought. *'If we do this right, we'll hit the garrison flat-footed and have those warehouses checked out before they know what hit them.'* Dash keyed the close command circuit. At this range, the Black Halo commander was pretty sure only the intended ears would get the message. "Ok, people. We got a company of battlemechs sitting up there in the middle of the warehouses. Higgy says they look like old refitted stuff…*Riflemen* and *Archer*s, and a few mediums. It's going to be hell to talk once the shooting starts, so follow your lance leader's cue and hit the same targets. I don't want to see anyone listening, if they CAN listen, to that Clan crap about honor dueling. Hit your targets with a knockout punch, and we can get the hell out of here, pronto."

Sgt. Sinclair's voice cut in. "Uh, Major…there's some activity starting over there. If we're gonna do this thing, we better get moving." Dash let confidence infuse his voice. "You heard the man, people. Show time! Form up and hit them, Halos!"

Dash swung his *Falconer* up from its crouched position and thundered up the slope, followed by his command. When he crested the hill, he could see Sinclair's light lance, *Wolfhound* in the lead, already converging on the edge of the nearest warehouse. He brought the *Falconer* into a full speed run, watching the meters tick off on his H.U.D. range indicator. He dropped his crosshair onto an as-yet immobile *Archer* in the middle of the Clan formation.

When the 'pipper' in the center blinked into solid gold, he brushed the gauss rifle firing stud at the same time as he squeezed the ERPPC trigger, sending out death at the clan machine in the form of hardened steel and flashing lightning …

GAME SETUP:
Lay out 6 battle tech maps in 3 rows, long edge to long edge in each row. The center two should use the old space port maps, if available, or turn both center maps over to their blank sides if the space-port map is not available. Each outer row should include maps with small hills and scattered trees (no thick forests or large lake maps). Place six level on buildings in two rows of 3 each on each of the center two maps. These represent the warehouses Halo is here to investigate.

ATTACKER:
The attacker is the *Black Halo* mercenaries, a reinforced company of 16 3050-3055 era battlemechs. Each mech may enter from ANY side at the beginning of Turn #1. The attacker may choose from any level 2 ammo types for his mech's weapons, but once chosen, that battlemech cannot use a different type in any of the other scenarios

that follow this one. This series is intended to be a challenge, and there is no chance for the mercenaries to reload in any of the other two scenarios.

Command Lance:
Major Dash Bowie (G:1/P:2),   FLC-8R *Falconer*
Lt. Rent Redsworth (G:2/P:3),   KGC-001 *King Crab*
MW Omar Panayotus (G:2/P:3), ARC-4M *Archer*
MW Carrie Brown   (G:2/P:4),   PPR-5S *Salamander*

Shock Lance:
Lt. Wrendel Popinjay (G:1/P:2), TDR-7M *Thunderbolt*
Sgt. Kathy Creel (G:3/P:4),   BRZ-A3 *Berserker*
MW Brad Becker (G:2/P:3),   WHM-7S *Warhammer*
MW Are Shambula (G:3/P:3),   MAD-5S *Marauder*

Skirmish Lance:
Lt. Abner Chin (G:1/P:3),   WVR-7D *Wolverine*
Sgt. 'Greenie' Gasglow (G:2/P:3), SHD-5M *Shadowhawk*
MW Tu'Phang (G:2/P:3),   CN9-D *Centurion*
MW Erin Nightengale (G:2/P:3), HBK-4G *Hunchback* *

(*Erin has declined to upgrade her HBK to the new stats found in TRO:3050*)

Recon Lance:
Sgt. Jeff Sinclair (G:2/P:3),   WLF-2 *Wolfhound*
MW 'Babs' Perria (G:3/P:4),   BH-K305 *Battle Hawk*
MW John Zanmanov (G:2/P:3), PXH-3M *Phoenix Hawk*
MW Ivan Krakow (G:1/P:3),   VLK-QD *Valkyrie*

DEFENDER:
        The defenders are elements of the 43rd PGC of Clan Steel Viper. These warriors pilot captured, field-refit Inner Sphere mechs. They represent the 'bad-guy' Inner-Sphere aggressor unit (some clan higher-up decided that the worst mechwarriors in the garrison should take the honourless roll of the Inner Sphere 'barbarians'). The garrison has only just come on alert as part of the war-games, and 8 of their 12 mechs are on stand-by status, requiring a full round to power up. Thus, only four Viper mechs are able to move or fire the two rounds of the scenario.
        The other eight mechs stand in 2 rows of 4, each mech with a hex between itself and the nearest ally, in the centre of the warehouses. These eight mechs may be targeted as immobile or shutdown battlemechs as per the same rules in the BMR. Mechs with a * near their name are patrolling the camp, and may start anywhere 7+ hexs away from the main clan force.
        These warriors are driving second-rate machines, inferior even to regular 3050 era Inner-Sphere mechs, and they know it. Despite the fact that Steel Viper is know for its rigid adherence to Clan rules of engagement, the Viper

player is free to engage in wolf-pack tactics <u>as soon as he loses his first mech</u> (play testing showed that this will most likely happen right away. on the first round).
        Furthermore, because the garrison does not know Inner Sphere raiders are attacking, those mechs able to move on round 1 will suffer a -2 penalty to initiative for the first round, before they realise the weapons hitting them are set to full power.

Command Lance
Star Capt.Menlo (G:3/P:4) AS7-D(C) *Atlas*
MW Leeks (G:4/P:5)   MAD-3R(C) *Marauder*
MW Shema (G:4/P:4)   WHM-6R(C) *Warhammer*
MW Rychter (G:3/P:5)   TDR-5S(C)*Thunderbolt*

Support Lance
St.Comm. Epo (G:3/P:5)   ARC-2R(C) *Archer*
MW Jie (G:4/P:5)   ARC-2R(C) *Archer*
MW Kuma (G:4/P:5)   RFL-3N(C) *Rifleman*
MW Uma (G:4/P:6)   RFL-3N(C) *Rifleman*

Attack Lance
St. Comm. Hinks (G:3/P:4) SHD-2H(C) *Shadowhawk*
MW Konar (G:4/P:5)   SHD-2H(C) *Shadowhawk*
MW Epi (G:4/P:5)   GFN-1N(C) *Griffin*
MW Leeks (G:4/P:5)   WVR-6R(C) *Wolverine*

All of the above mechs are clan weapons field modifications refits (long time players may remember several of these models first appeared in *The Battle for Twycross*.) and most are several tons underweight. Note that all of these mechs use single heat sinks.

Here are the refits for players missing that scenario pack, as well as the *Griffin* and *Wolverine*, which did not appear there:

Atlas: Replace the AC/20 with Ultra AC/20, make the SRM a Streak SRM-6, add *Swarm* munitions to the LRM 20.

Marauder: Replace the AC/5 with clan Ultra AC/5. Replace the PPCs with clan large pulse lasers. Make the medium lasers clan ER-mediums.

Archer: Add *Swarm* ammunition to LRMS, which are also clan-make. Make all lasers clan ER-Mediums.

Warhammer: Replace PPC's with clan large pulse lasers. Make the SRM-6 a clan Streak SRM-6, make all lasers clan ER versions.

Thunderbolt: Replace large laser with clan large pulse laser. Replace LRM with clan LRM. Replace all LT medium lasers with a clan ER-large laser. Remove SRM-

23 and ammo. Replace LA mg's with a clan ER-med and 2 clan ER-small lasers.

Rifleman: Replace AC's with clan LB5-X AC. Replace large lasers withclan large pulse lasers. Replace medium lasers with clan ER-mediums.

Shadowhawk: Make all LRM ammo *Swarm* ammo. Replace the SRM-2 with a clan Streak SRM-2. Replace the AC/5 with an LB5-X clan AC. Make the medium laser a clan ER-medium.

Wolverine: Replace AC/5 with clan LB5-X AC. Make the SRM-6 into a clan Streak SRM-6. Change the medium laser into a clan ER-medium.

Griffin: Change the PPC into a clan large pulse laser. All LRM ammo is now *Swarm* ammo.

Next issue: Battle #2. The Black Halos fight to gain control of the hyper-pulse generator.

THE FOURTH WAR:

During the Ronin Wars of 3034, there were a few battles that gained notoriety, and more than a few that remain obscure. The planet Quarrel was a hotly contested base for the rogue Kurita lords who were trying to resist Rasaulhaug independence. The veteran 5th Rasaulhaug Regulars ("Crushers of Insurrection"), a light unit, remained loyal to their Kurita masters, and kept Quarrel tightly under control from their near-by home-world of Jabuka. When the Lyran High Command realized this, they diverted the 16th Lyran Guards, a regular medium unit, to assist the rightful government in its struggle for freedom.

Unfortunately, the ruling families of Quarrel were more determined than ever to exert their own manifest destiny, and warned off as well as rejected any outside assistance in its internal struggles. The "Green Machine' , as the untested Quarrel militia unit was called, would battles all comers, Kurita OR Lyran. As the 5th RR advanced on the town of Gladsheim, intending to make an example of the Green Machine, the 16th Lyran Guards performed a brilliant combat drop, despite the warnings the Green machine issued the Steiner unit.

The Lyrans were under orders to secure Gladsheim at all cost, until relieved by another Lyran unit en-rout. Thus, as strange and unfortunate set of circumstances led to a street-to-street battle between three opposing forces, all bent on the city's capture….

NOTE: Most of the following lances were generated using the 3025 charts found in the long out-of-print *HOT SPOTS* books, according to each House's preferred chart. The numbers following each mech are gunnery/piloting skills.

16th Lyran Guards (*13, 810 Adjusted BV*)

Command lance (4, 819 BV):
MAD-3R Marauder (3/4)
GRS-5 Grasshopper (3/4)
TDR-4R Thunderbolt (4/6)
CPT- Catapult (4/6)

Attack Lance (3, 700 BV):
WVR-6R Wolverine (4/5)
HCT-3F Hatchetman (4/4)
GRF-1S Griffin (4/6)
SHD-2H Shadowhawk (4/5)

Pursuit Lance (3, 345 BV):
ASN-101 Assassin (3/5)
TBT-5N Trebuchet (4/5)
SHD-2H Shadowhawk (4/5)
SHD-2H Shadowhawk (4/5)

Vehicle Lance* (1, 946 BV):
Hunter Scout Tank (4/5)
Hunter Scout Tank (4/5)
Rommel Heavy Tank (4/5)
Rommel Heavy Tank (4/5)

(* this lance may not drop but comes in on the Steiner side of the map on turn 1)

5th Rasaulhaug Regulars (*11, 536 Adjusted BV*)
Command Lance (4, 443BV):
AS7-D Atlas (3/4)
DRG-1G Grand Dragon (4/5)
HBK-4G Hunchback (4/5)
HBK-4G Hunchback (4/5)

Medium Lance (3, 223 BV):
WVR-6K Wolverine (4/5)
PHX-1K Phoenix Hawk (4/5)
PNT-9R Panther (3/5)
PNT-9R Panther (4/6)

Support Lance (3, 870 BV):
TBT-7K Trebuchet (4/5)
BLR-1R Battlemaster (3/4)
CPLT-2K Catapult (4/5)
JR7-D Jenner (4/5)

The Green Machine (*8, 788 Adjusted BV*)
Command Lance (2, 194 BV):
SDR-5V Spider (3/4)
STR-3G Stinger (3/4)
WSP-1A Wasp (4/5)
JR7-F Jenner (4/5)

1st Combined Arms Company:

1st Lance (*1, 480 BV*)
Harasser Missile Platform (4/6)
Harasser Missile Platform (4/6)
Pegasus Scout Tank (4/6)
Pegasus Scout Tank (4/6)

2nd Lance (*1, 588 BV*)
Saladine (4/6)
Saladine (4/6)
J. Edger Light Hover Tank (4/6)
J. Edger Light Hover Tank (4/6)

3rd Lance (*594 BV*)
Foot Platoon, Rifle
Foot Platoon, Rifle
Goblin Light Tank (4/6)
Goblin Light Tank (4/6)

2nd Combined Arms Company

1st Lance (*822 BV*)
Bulldog Medium Tank (4/6)
Bulldog Medium Tank (4/6)
Foot Platoon, SRM
Foot Platoon, SRM

2nd Lance (*634 BV*)
Scorpion Light Tank (4/6)
Scorpion Light Tank (4/6)
Galleon Light Tank (4/6)
Galleon Light Tank (4/6)

3rd Lance (*1, 476 BV*)
Hetzer Wheeled Assault Gun (4/6)
Hetzer Wheeled Assault Gun (4/6)
Hetzer Wheeled Assault Gun (4/6)
Hetzer Wheeled Assault Gun (4/6)

GAME SETUP:

Lay out 6 battletech maps in two rows of 3, long edge to long edge. The middle two maps should be placed upside down with blank sides showing. Place 50 buildings randomly on the map, consisting of 20 light, 15 medium, 10 heavy and five hardened structures. Half the buildings of each type are level 2 in height. The other 4 maps may be of any type the players choose. Originally, we had rolling hills on both ends. There should be no maps with elevations higher than 5, however.

The Rasaulhaug player may place up to half his tracked and wheeled vehicles, and ALL of his infantry units in hidden positions, if he so wishes. The rest of the Rasaulhaug militia may enter the north or south sides of the board at any

point (the short sides of the rectangle of maps represent north and south). The Kurita player enters the Western edge of the maps on Turn 1. The Steiner player may enter from the Eastern edge of the map or may perform a combat drop (all mechs of a lance must drop if any do), or any combination of the two. Steiner vehicles and infantry may not drop, and enter the East edge on turn one (infantry may be mounted before entering, if the Steiner player so wishs)

VICTORY CONDITIONS:

The last surviving unit is the winner. If a time limit is desired, 15 turns would be reasonable, with the following point system used to determine victory:

Enemy foot platoon destroyed: +1 pt.
Enemy Non-Mech vehicle destroyed:+2 pts.
Enemy Mech destroyed: +3 pts.

If playing with the Forced-Withdrawal rules, assign the same score, -1 pt, for each machine forced to retreat. (Infantry are worth no points if forced to retreat, as there are plenty of guerillas- in-the-making on Quarrel.

TRIVIA:

This battle was originally played with a damaged Lyran Battalion (diverted from R&R) supported by a light vehicle company and 2 companies of foot soldiers. The Kurita unit was a veteran, lighter battalion, and Rasaulhaug had a vehicle battalion supported by a light mech company. This version, in the interest of an at least FINISHABLE battle, uses considerably less forces. All units are 3025 quality, though any alternate ammo may be used, such as infernos for SRM-2 launchers (which were used a great deal in the original game).

We used the forced withdrawal rules from the Day of Heroes scenario pack, modified in that if at least one half of all forces from one side were forced to retreat, all forces from that side followed in a general retreat for the day. to speed things up, we used whole vehicle lance movement, even though it did lessen non-mech unit's tactical values. In addition, any mechs, infantry or vehicles that made it off the board automatically fell under the protective guns of their drop-ships 9or into hidden mine shaft bases, in the case of the rebels).

As this was the Green Machine's planet, each day of battle brought a chance to receive reinforcements (a d6 vs. the day/turn #, less than equaling reinforcements arrived. On a 1d6 roll, 1-3 were 3 foot platoons, 4-5 was a vehicle lane, and a 6 was a random weight mech lance).

In addition, each 'round' (day) of battle was followed by an 8 hour repair period for all sides. There were many other home rules used. We allowed 'winning' side for the round to garrison the city and hide units and place up to 5 mine hexes. In addition, it took 8 hours to get a disabled machine off the field, and then it was eligible for normal repair rolls.

There were also no replacement pilots available, so only dispossessed warriors were allowed to use any repaired mechs.

MERCENARIE'S STAR:

The Dirty Dozen.