

AURORA

THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

TOURNAMENT GAMES FOR NEW PLAYERS
LIGHTNING STRIKE ADDITIONS
FICTION, FICTION, FICTION!
KITBASHING COOLNESS



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE
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SHADES IN THE NIGHT

From the Editor...

No, your eyes do not deceive you. It is July, and this is Issue 5.4, with 5.3 seemingly missing. Also the date for submission for issue 5.6 is listed as September 15th, with 5.5 also pulling a ninja disappearance. What gives?

In short, Aurora is switching to a quarterly schedule! This will make for some very odd numbering this year, but we'll be back on track next year with issues 1 through 4. Otherwise, the magazine will remain the fan's platform, publishing our submissions as you've come to know and love.*

"But but but," you ask, "what am I to do during those extra months without a new issue to savour?" A fine question. For starters, I would say head on over to the dp9 online forums and post your feedback about what you read in here, start a few good discussions, and let our contributors know the appreciation for their work. Likely most of us in the RPG or wargaming hobbies are creators of some sort (even if "all" we're doing is putting together our finest army) and we all know how much we love to get reactions from those we play against, use our material, or just glance on by. So pop on in and say what you think. You can find Aurora's own forum here:

<http://dp9forum.com/index.php?showforum=46>

Also, of course, is to go out and game, make stories, and create so that you too can have an article published and be eagerly checking the forum for praise. To that end I remind of the current Aurora challenge!

[Aurora Fiction Foray](#)

The invitation is out to take a slice in game-time and translate it onto the page in its full prose glory.

Plunge us into the action, the experience, the emotions and the elation (or defeat) of it all. Maybe this is Aurora's version of the National Novel Writer's Month, only lighter and shorter and without the deadline, or... well, ok, maybe only a little bit like the NANOWRIMO. Still as fun, though, and we'll get to share the experience of each other's awesome gaming moments.

I'll be posting a teaser thread on the forum to get the thoughts rolling...

Ok, now to take care of that * from above. Amazing to believe, but Aurora began five and a half years ago, a lifetime in web technology and development. The layout we use today was chosen at the time for its lightness in both visual style as well as (hopefully) its file size. Now, five years later, is it time for a graphical and graphic-layout update? I'll be posting a poll in the forum, so sound off there as well.

As we progress into the middle of the year exciting times are ahead.

Welcome to issue 5.4 of your Silhouette Magazine.

Game on,

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor

OFFICIAL-DP9

"Official" Dream Pod 9 rules, updates and materials can be found in the Gear Up magazine, available at DP9's store on RPGnow.com.

HOME BREW RULES

All material inside Aurora is fan submitted and are not regarded as official and do not change the games or the DP9 game-universes as written in the books. Aurora material may not be used in tournament or other official play and may differ from current or future books. Any Aurora rules or material should only be used if all players agree upon their inclusion before play.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Alexander Stockert (Smilodon UP on the forums) -- *Corporate Conflict - Part 1 & Corporate Conflict - Scenario*

Is amazed at how many words in the English language end in -ly, and how difficult it is to not abuse adjectives that end in -ly. Likewise, but, as a word, is far too common and keeping tense can cause one nightmares. And don't get him started on 'by', 'and', and 'the' ...

Brad Bellows (bradley.bellows@3web.net) -- *Lightning Tournament for Beginners*

A former nuclear engineer who now works with sewage; Brad lives in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada with his wife, three kids, mortgage and car loan. A fan of Heavy Gear and Jovian Chronicles since the days of Mekton and Mecha Press, he currently spends his spare time playtesting new tactics and building new and improved army lists for Heavy Gear Blitz!

Jason Dickerson (JDDWolf@yahoo.com) -- *From the Pod*

Jason is the Line Editor for Heavy Gear and has been an advocate of all things Heavy Gear since the first edition came out. He is also the founder and President of the Save the Asp Society (S.A.S) on the DP9 Forums.

John Bell (jakarnilson@magma.ca) -- *Alfie's Tanners & Jovian Koma*

He gets labeled a "walking-talking encyclopedia." He draws what goes through his mind. He builds what he can't afford. He walks what others would take a lift for. He'd probably trade in his bike for a real, working Ferret; but then again, who wouldn't?

Kevin Heide (savage_bastard9999@yahoo.ca) -- *Tank Updates 1940TN & Lightning Strike Additions*

Hello from the west coast!

Mike Webb (mew@alliance-games.com) -- *Rule of Cool Meets Blitz!*

Mike is the VP of Marketing and Customer Service for Alliance Game Distributors, which just sounds like a cool job!

Oliver Bollmann (auroramag@gmail.com) -- *Editor & Standing Tall*

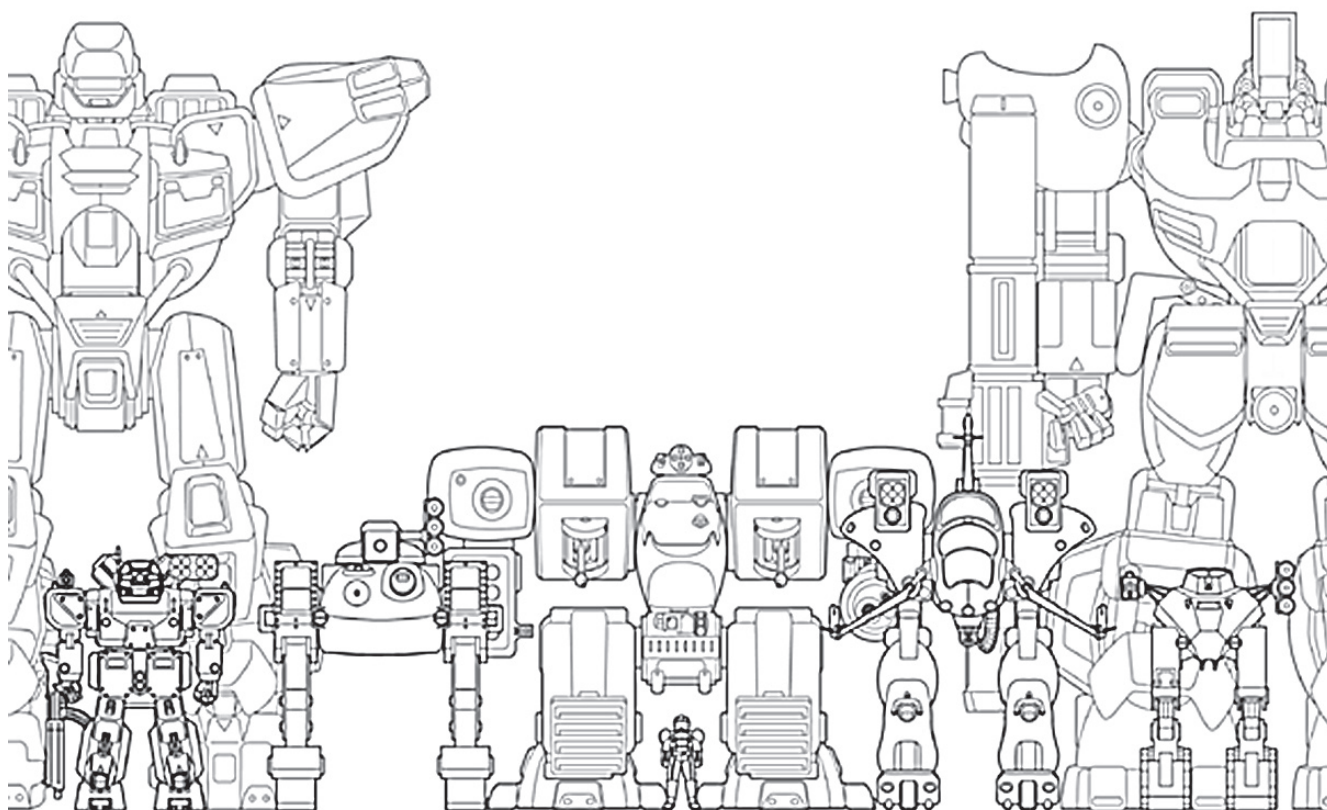
It all started in a hobby store one day twenty odd years ago with an odd box containing something called Top Secret. Since then games have just become a big part of his life. He's been in love with the DP9 universes since the first HG release and began his direct involvement with the Pod crew a couple of years ago. He also runs a gaming imprint *Kannik Studios at rpgnow*:

http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/index.php?manufacturers_id=291

FYI from the Editor: Yon Koma manga, a comic-strip format, generally consists of gag comic strips within four panels of equal size ordered from top to bottom, read right to left. (an FYI because I looked it up too... :)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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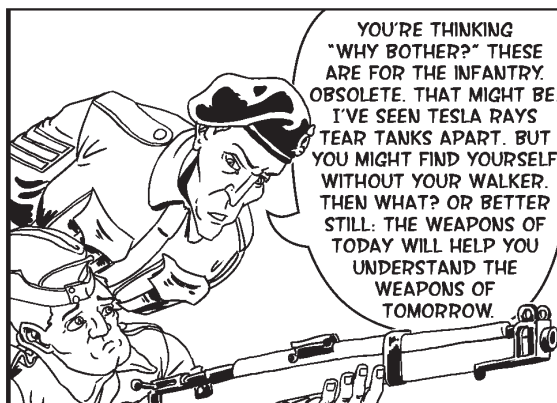
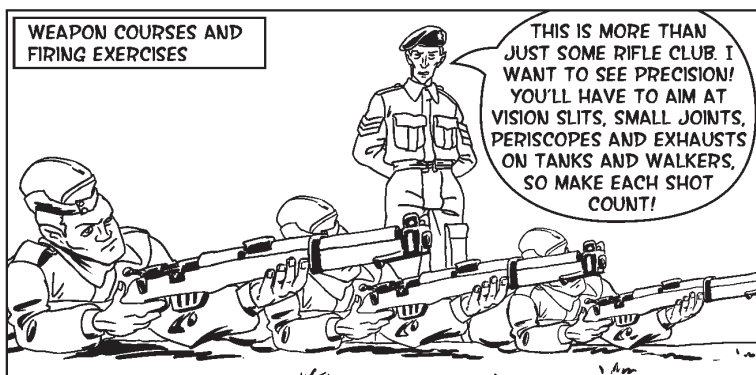
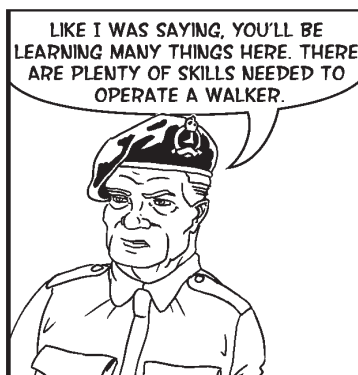
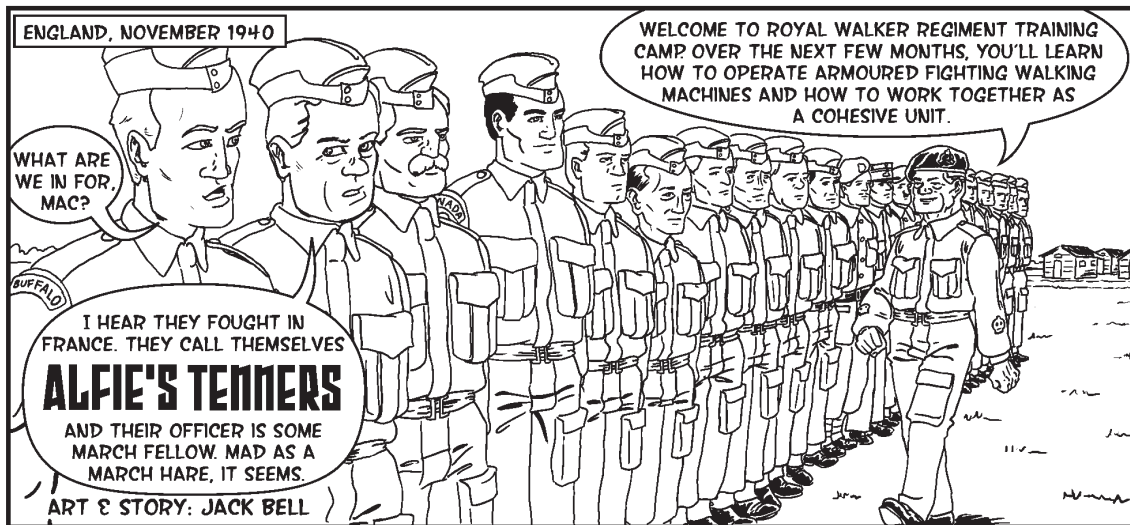
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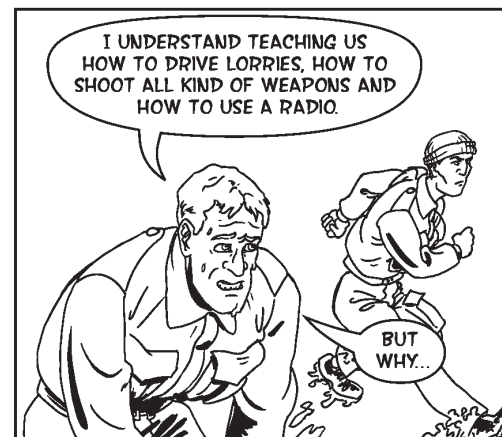
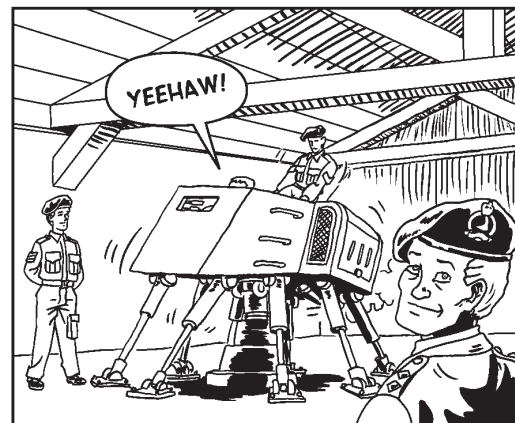
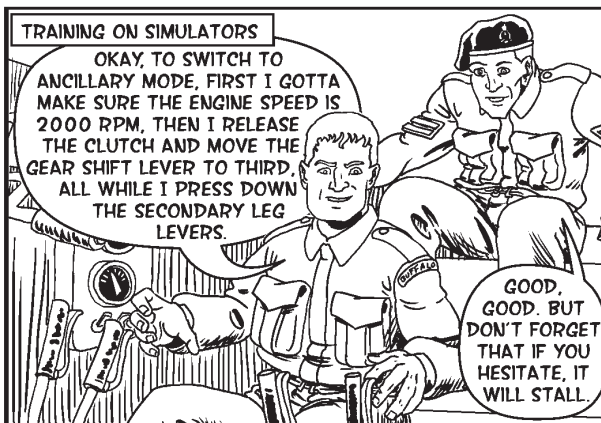
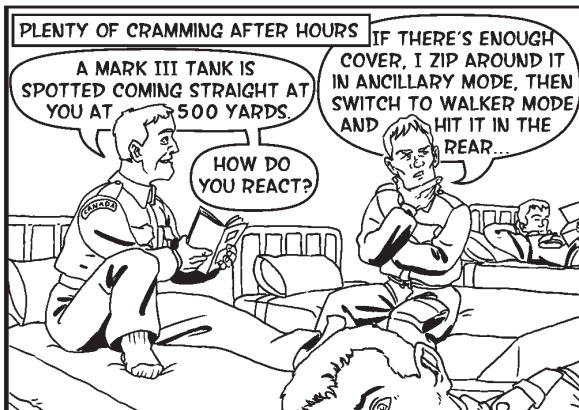
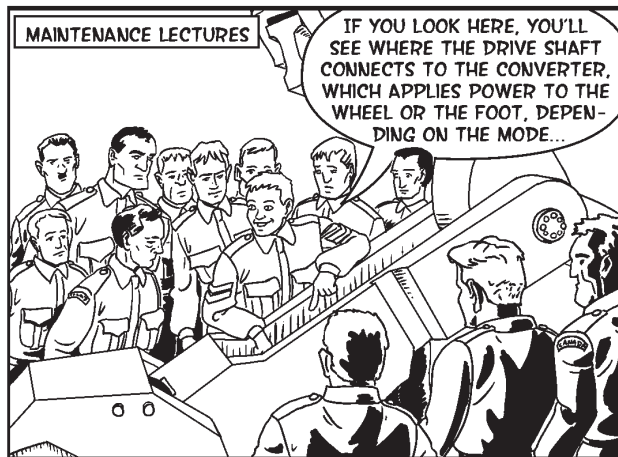
ALFIE'S TENNERS

JOHN BELL



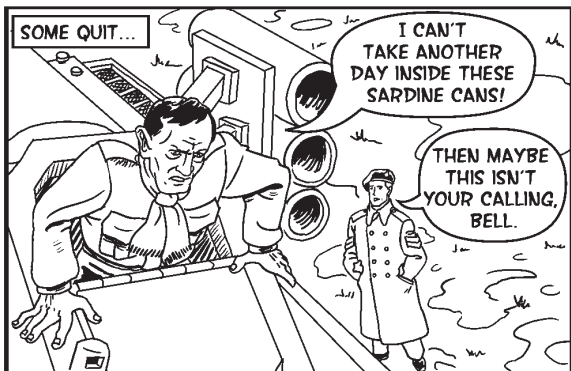
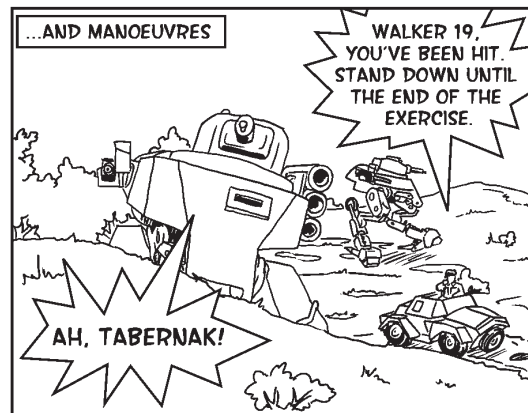
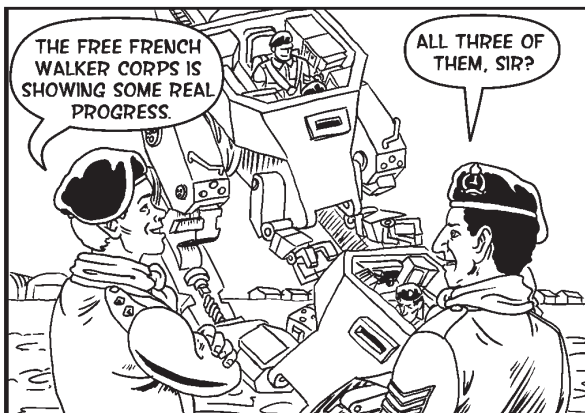
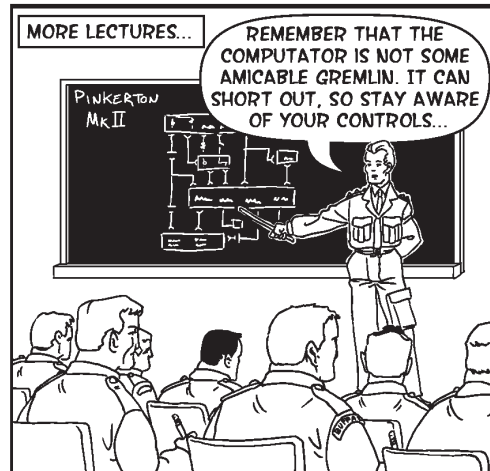
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ALFIE'S TENNERS



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ALFIE'S TENNERS



With the CEF making a Second Invasion attempt and Gears getting small upgrades, many Tank Engineers began to develop new weapon systems to strap to their tanks. The hope is that these new weapons would be enough to slow down the CEF Tanks and Infantry. Some Weapon swaps are to simply get the Tank built and in the field, while others are pure experimental designs or "let's try this weapon system!"

North Options

LIGHT TANK SQUAD

Options

- Any Tank except the Klemm Bandit Hunter can upgrade their Detect to 3 and Sensors to +1 for +5TV
- Any Bandit Hunter can swap their HRF for either a MAC (T, no reloads) for +5TV
- Any Jaxon can swap both HRP for four VLRP/128 (T, ROF6, no reloads, Linked) and Anti-Personnel Charges for -30TV
- Any Klemm Chaser can swap their LAC for two VLAC (T, no reloads, linked) for +5TV
- Any Tyburr can swap their LFG for 2 LGM (T, no reloads) for -25TV, the Mortars can be linked for +5TV or HFG (F, no reloads, Stabilizer) for +15TV

Veteran Options

- Any Bandit Hunter can swap their MRP for AGM (T, no reloads) for +20TV
- Any Bandit Hunter can swap their HRF for two MRF (T, no reloads, linked) for +10TV
- Any Bandit Hunter can have ECM (2) and Expose Aux for +0TV
- Any Jaxon can swap both HRP for two ABM (T, limited ammo 4) for -15TV or 2 AGM (T, no reloads) and TD (3) for +30TV
- Any Klemm Chaser can swap their MAAC for LAAC (T, no reloads, Sniper) for +5TV

HEAVY TANK SQUAD

Options

- Any Aller or Naval Support Aller can swap their HRG for two LRG (T, no reloads, Sniper, Linked) for -130TV
- Any Aller or Naval Support Aller can swap their LMGs for either: two HMGs for +5TV or Anti-Personnel Charges for +0TV
- Any Hardy Aller can swap their HAAC for two MAAC (T, no reloads, Linked) for +10TV
- Any Hardy Aller can swap their VHFG for HGL (T, reloads) for -185TV or two VHAC (T, reloads, linked) for -175TV

- Any Hardy Aller can swap their LMGs for either: APM (T, no reloads) for +0TV or Anti-Personnel Charges for +10TV

Veteran Options

- Any Aller can swap their HRG for a LPA (T, no reloads) for -100TV
- Any Aller can swap their LPLC for HPLC (T, no reloads, AA) for +10TV
- Any Hardy Aller can swap their VHFG for 2 LFG (T, reloads, linked) for -75TV
- Any Naval Support Aller can swap their HATM for ATM (T, no reloads) for -65TV

CAVALRY SQUAD

Options

- Any Badger can swap both LACs for one of the following: MAC and LMG both (T, no reloads) for +0TV or two VLRP/32 (T, ROF4, reloads) for +10TV
- Any Cavalry Badger can swap their MRPs for HRP/24 (T, ROF3, no reloads) for -25TV

Veteran Options

- Any Badger can swap both LACs for one of the following: HRF (T, no reloads) and reduce their Transport Perk to 1 Squad for +0TV or FGC and APM (T, no reloads) for +5TV
- Any Cavalry Badger can swap their MRPs for ATM (T, ammo 4) for +65TV

INFANTRY PLATOON

Options

- Any Badger can swap their LACs for MAC and LMG both (T, no reloads) for +0TV

Veteran Options

- Any Badger can swap their LACs for FGC and APM both (T, no reloads) for +5TV
- Any Cavalry Badger can swap their MRPs for HRP/24 (T, ROF3, no reloads) for -25TV

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TANK UPGRADES 1940TN

South Options

TANK CADRE

Options

- Any Hun can swap their MRP for a LGM (F, no reloads) for -5TV
- Any Hun can swap their HRF for two MAC (T, no reloads, linked) for +10TV
- Any Hun can swap their LLC for LAAC (T, no reloads) for -25TV
- Any Hun with VLRP can increase their Detect to 3 and Sensors to +1 for +5TV
- Any Hun can swap their VLRP for MRP/36 (T, ROF4, reloads) for +15TV
- Any Visigoth can swap their HFG for a VHFG (T, no reloads, Stabilizer) for +75TV
- One Visigoth can swap all Turreted Weapon for two HATM (T, limited Ammo 4) and TD (2) for +205TV
- Any Hetairoi can swap their VHAC for AGM (T, no reloads) for +30TV HAPF only
- Any Visigoth can be swapped for a HT-68 for -5TV HAPF only

Veteran Options

- Any Hun can swap their MRP for an AGM (F, no reloads, sniper) for +15TV
- Any Hun can swap their HRF for two MAAC (T, no reloads, Sniper) for +5TV
- Any Hun can swap their LLC for HGLC (T, no reloads, AA) for -10TV
- Any Hun can swap all their Weapons for two LPLC (T, no reloads, linked, AA) for +0TV
- Any Hun can swap their VLRP for either two AGMs (T, no reloads, Sniper) for +100TV or two ABMs (T, no reloads) for +45TV
- Any Visigoth can swap all Turreted Weapon for two HATM (T, limited Ammo 4) and TD (2) for +205TV
- Any Visigoth can swap their HFG for a HRG (T, no reloads) for +85TV
- Any Visigoth can swap both SCs for HPLC (T, no reloads) for +10TV or LPA (T, no reloads) for +105TV
- Any Visigoth can swap their LPLC for two AAM (T, no reloads) for +70TV
- Any Hetairoi can swap their VHAC for one of the following: LRG (T, no reloads) for +20TV or LPA (T, no reloads) for -5TV HAPF only
- Any HT-68 can swap their VHAC for HPLC (T, no reloads, sniper) for +20TV HAPF only

CAVALRY CADRE

Options

- Any Caiman can add two AGM (FF, limited ammo 2) for +20TV
- Any Caiman can swap their MAC for HPZF (T, no reloads) for +5TV
- One Caiman can remove all their Weapons for ECCM (1) and Sensor Boom for +10TV

Veteran Options

- Any Caiman can swap their MAC for 2 VLAC (T, no reloads, AA) for +0TV
- Any Recon Hun can swap their HRF for one of the following: AGM (T, no reloads) for +40TV or HGM (T, no reloads) for +25TV or ATM (T, limited ammo 4) for +110TV

INFANTRY PLATOON

Options

- Any Hittie can apply the Link Trait to any HMG with the same Fire Arc for +5TV
- Any Hittie can swap their HMG for Anti-Personnel Charges for -10TV
- The Hittie can swap their HFL for one of the following: FGC (T, no reloads) for +5TV or SC (F, no reloads) for +10TV

Veteran Options

- Any Hittie can swap their HFL for LAAC (T, no reloads) for -10TV
- Any Hittie can swap their HMG for VLRP/128 (T, ROF6, no reloads) for +5TV

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TANK UPGRADES 1940TN

Peace River Options

LIGHT TANKSTRIDER SQUAD

Options

- One Coyote can swap their LRG for LFG (T, no reloads) for +20TV or HGM (T, no reloads, Sniper) for +5TV
- Any Coyote can swap their MAAC for HAAC (T, no reloads) for +5TV

Veteran Options

- One Coyote can swap their LRG for LPLC (T, no reloads) for -10TV
- Any Coyote can swap their MAAC for LLC (T, no reloads, AA) for +20TV or AAM (T, limited ammo 4) for +115TV

SUPPORT TANKSTRIDER SQUAD

Options

- One Red Bull can swap their LFGs for 2 LRG (T, no reloads) for -40TV
- Any Red Bull can swap their MAAC for two LAAC (T, no reloads, linked) for -5TV
- Any Red Bull can swap their MAC for either: HPZF (F, no reloads, sniper) or HRF (F, no reloads, sniper) for +5TV

Veteran Options

- One Red Bull can swap their LFGs for 2 HLC (T, no reloads, sniper) for -30TV
- Any Red Bull can swap their MAAC for either: LPLC (T, no reloads, AA) for +20TV or AAM (T, no reloads) for +120TV
- Any Red Bull can swap their MAC for SC (F, no reloads) for +15TV

CAVALRY SQUAD

Options

- One Hoplite can remove all there Weapon and add a Sensor Boom, ECCM (2), and increase Comm to +2 for -5TV

Veteran Options

- Any Hoplite can swap their LRF for one of the following: two VLRF or two VLAC both (T, no reloads, linked) both for +0TV

Port Arthur Options

LIGHT HOVER TANK SQUAD

Options

- Any Prowler class Hover Tank can swap their HAC for one of the following: two MAC (T, no reloads, sniper, linked) or HRF (T, no reloads, sniper) both for +10TV
- One LHT-67 can be swapped for Hetairoi for -10TV

Veteran Options

- Any Prowler class Hover Tank can swap their HAC for VLFG (T, no reloads) for +20TV
- Any LHT-67 can be swapped for Hetairoi for -10TV
- Any Prowler class Hover Tank can add the Guided Trait to their MRP for +5TV

HEAVY HOVER TANK SQUAD

Options

- Any Predator class Hover Tank can swap their VHAC for SC (T, no reloads) for +0TV

Veteran Options

- Any Predator class Hover Tank can swap their VHAC for HPLC (T, no reloads, sniper) for +20TV or LFG (T, no reloads) for +25TV
- Any Predator class Hover Tank can swap their AGM and ATM for HATM (T, limited ammo 4) for +25TV

HOVER CAVALRY SQUAD

Options

- Any HPC-64 can swap their MAC for a LAC and LMG both (T, no reloads) for +0TV
- One HPC-64 can swap their MAC for MRF (T, no reloads) and Anti-personnel Charges for +15TV

Veteran Options

- Any HPC-64 can swap their MAC for a VLAC (T, no reloads, AA) for -5TV
- Any HPC-64 can swap their MAC for MRF (T, no reloads) and Anti-personnel Charges for +15TV



LIGHTNING

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE TOURNAMENT FOR BEGINNERS

BRAD BELLOWS

So you have shown a demo game or two to some of your fellow gamers and they're on the fence about getting into the Heavy Gear Blitz. Now what do you do? This revision of the popular Lightning Tournament format should give them a little more exposure to some of the different units available in the game and help them decide on a faction they might like.

A Review

It's been two years since I first published the Lightning Tournament Ruleset in Aurora 3.4. Since then, I've run this tournament several times and received a lot of feedback from the participants. The new players are always enthusiastic at the start of the tournament, but then can get confused and frustrated when exposed to rules that were not present in the demo they just played in. This version of the rules simplifies the objectives and removes some features that might cause rules confusion.

One of the other things I discovered is that new players take a lot longer to play a turn than more experienced players. Even completing 3 rounds is a challenge sometimes. This tournament allows for variable number of rounds and still come up with an overall winner for the tournament.

TOURNAMENT REDESIGN

One thing I discovered was that including infantry really slowed down new players, so I found it easiest to simply disallow them in the tournament. There is enough variety in army construction options that it is still pretty easy to fit two combat groups into each army. Having no combined models also meant fewer bases, which sped up the combat group activations.

I also discovered that the Lightning tournament worked on a variety of map sizes. At CanGames 2011, I had players battling it out on two 3'x4' boards, a 18"x22" demo board, and my own 2.25'x3.25' blitz board that I made specifically for tournaments like this. The players on the large boards tended to fire from across the board at each other, while the smaller boards favoured closing to combat range to duke it out. I still feel a 2'x3' map is the ideal size for this sort of tournament. Terrain should be generalized so as not to favour one army over another (such as the Capricians owning canyon map set-ups).

I also revised the armies so that they more closely resembled the flavour of the faction they represented. The new armies provide the prospective new player a sense of the faction esthetic that might influence later purchases. All the armies I created are legal, but I ignored the Priority Levels and Support Points and simply gave new players 3 Command Points each, explaining their use prior to the start of the tournament.

As for the number of rounds in the tournament, 2 to 3 rounds is standard, but now I simply have players rotate to the boards to the left and right to speed up transitions between rounds.

So here are the following revisions to the rules.

MAKE IT A BRAWL!

The main thing that beginning players want to do is blow things up. Therefore, the best scenario for everyone to be playing is a Straight Up Brawl with the following modifications:

- Terrain: Try and use as much solid terrain as possible to avoid concealment questions from new players, but not spaced too close together so that there are a lot of sightlines.
- Table Effects: Don't use table effects or unusual events as that will just confuse new players.
- Deployment: Any opposing sides, and must be within 6-8" of a board edge.
- Objectives: Victory points are scored per opposing model destroyed or critically damaged:

For each Gear/Frame/Mount/Armiger	1 Point
For each Tank/Heavy Mount/Strider	2 Points
For each N-KIDU/Golem	½ Point
If model was also the Army Commander	1 Bonus Point
If opponent's entire army is destroyed or critically damaged	1 Bonus Point

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT FOR BEGINNERS

The Beginner's Lightning Tournament Base Rules

1.0. A tournament will consist of as many players as there are maps and armies available, with at least 1 Convener/Assistant per 8 players to judge the event. The Organizers should have at least four pre-generated armies available and allow players to bring their own armies, so long as a copy of their army list (preferably generated in Gear Garage) is supplied and verified ahead of time by the organizer. If more than one player wants the same army, then the Organizer will decide by a random method who gets the army, and the other players will have to accept their second choice.

1.1. Prior to the start of the tournament, the organizers should spend 15 to 20 minutes provide a brief overview of the important rules, including Movement Modes and Speeds, Cover, Active Detection, Forward Observation, Direct and Indirect Fire, damage resolution, and Command Points. There will be no Electronic Warfare or concealment rules used in the tournament. Experienced players are expected to help new players if they have any questions during the game. If the experienced player does not know, they will call on the Organizer for the answer.

2.0. Player generated armies must have no more than 2 combat groups equaling 360TV, built at any Priority Level from 1 to 4. Players with 1 Combat Group can choose to divide it into sub-squads before each game. Infantry is not allowed.

2.1. Player generated armies with support options must be reviewed by the tournament Organizers prior to the start of the tournament for legality.

2.2. Support points are not used in this tournament, and each army is supplied with 3 Command Points, regardless of the Army Commander's Leadership Skill. Command Points are replenished after every round in the tournament.

3.0. Each map will be 24"x36" with terrain laid out by the tournament Organizers. There are no Table Effects or Unusual Events. Deployment is limited to within 6-8" of each player's home edge. Organizers should set time before the start of the tournament for players to familiarize themselves with the conditions and objectives on each board.

4.0. Each round will be 60 to 75 minutes long consisting of three phases:

4.1. Assignment Phase (5 Minutes) - Players are paired off with opponents by the Organizers and assigned to a table. Upon Organizer announcement of the start of the round, Players set up their combat groups and then roll for initiative to start the game.

4.2. Game Phase (45 to 60 minutes) - This is how long the game is expected to last. Judges will announce the start of the round, the halfway point, and 5 minutes remaining. If at the end of the round some games haven't ended yet, the Organizer will call time and all play will stop.

4.2.1. Speedy play is expected. Players may notify the Organizers if they feel a player is deliberately slowing the game down. If a player is judged by the Organizers to be deliberately slowing the game down, they shall be given a verbal warning. On the second offence, they will forfeit the round and their opponent will be awarded full points.

4.3. Resolution Phase (10 minutes) – After the Organizer calls time, the Players will finish their current turn, tally their kill score and report their results to the Organizer. Players reorganize their forces and prepare for the next round.

5.0. There will be 3 rounds per tournament. Each round will pair players with a similar number of points, with no player allowed to play the same opponent twice. Set-up is as follows:

5.0.1. Players are randomly paired off by the Organizer.

5.0.2. The Organizer then assigns the pairs to the various maps being used for the games.

5.0.3. For subsequent rounds, One player moves clockwise to the next board while the other player moves counterclockwise to another board.

5.0.4. As an alternative, pair players with similar kill scores together a map neither of them have played, if possible. If Playing on a new map for both is not possible, then make sure that players play on the opposite side of the board they previously played. This takes a little more organizing, but you are more likely to get the better players playing each other and reduce the likelihood of ties.

5.1. If there are an odd number of players, then set up as above, but have the winning player with the lowest VP total play the losing player with the highest VP total. If there are only 4 players in a tournament, then simply set up a round-robin format, moving the players between different boards as shown above. In the case of an odd number of players, the Judge could either get a volunteer to fill in for a missing player, play the missing spot himself (realizing that he will need to adjudicate and interrupt his game), or give the odd player a bye.

5.2. After all rounds are completed; the Organizer will total the number of kills for each player from each round. The winner is the player who has the most number of kills. In the case of a tie, have the two players roll a die to determine the winner. The winner should receive a prize of some sort, preferably a DP9 tournament certificate. Depending on the number of entrants, the runner-up should also receive a lesser prize. Contact DP9 via e-mail prior to the tournament for possible prizes or approach them if they come to your convention.

5.3. These rules should allow a tournament to be completed within 2-8 hours, depending on how much time the Organizer wants to run the Tournament at the gaming convention.

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LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT FOR BEGINNERS

Materials Required

Since this tournament is designed to entice new players, the Organizer must have reference materials and some armies available. With the release of the Field Manual, the Heavy Gear Blitz Quick Start Rules available from the website aren't quite as useful. However, Gear Garage is an excellent program that can be used to printout datacards for each pre-generated army that include the Field manual weapon ranges. The armies aren't too difficult to build, since most Organizers should be able to build two 360TV armies from their own forces. For example, you could easily build two Lightning Tournament forces from a 750TV army. The Organizer should also have several measuring tapes, dice, damage and movement tokens, and pencils available.

When army building, try to create armies that match the character of the faction they represent. The HAPF tend towards striders and tanks, with only a few high-tech gears. The WFPA tends to field whatever is cheapest to buy and repair. The Earth Forces have Hovertanks. One of the reasons for having pre-generated armies is to attract new players to a faction with their look. Use as few vehicles as possible as well, with simple set-ups. The focus should be on the gears, but players also like to have a big model or two that they can rally their troops around. Try to keep the factions flavourful.

If you are not sure of what models to add to which Factions, here is a list of armies that I've created for new players who have just learned the rules and are trying to figure out how to use the combat groups:

Humanist Alliance Force

2 CGs, 4 Units, 8 Actions, 8 points

Strider Cadre (2 Sagittarius) (180) <Veteran>

Options:

- Add Naga (+170)
- Swap 2 Naga for Sagittarius (-200)
- Swap 1 Sagittarius VLRPs for linked LPLCs (+20)
- Swap 1 Sagittarius VLRPs for linked ABMs (+0)
- Add Level 3 Leadership to Sagittarius (+10)
- Sagittarius is Army Commander 180 TV

Tank Cadre (2 Hun) (180)

Options:

- None. 180 TV

Tactics:

The Sagittarians provides EW and heavy supporting fire while the Tank Cadre assaults. Remember that the entire force is amphibious!

Peacekeeper Force

2 CGs, 8 Units, 8 Actions, 8 points

MP Cadre (Black Mamba MP, 3 Iguana MP) (205) <Veteran, SWAT>

Options:

- Swap BM MP FCG for LAAC (+5)
- Swap Iguana MP FGC for LAC + 3xHHGs (+0)
- Add VibroKatana to LAC Iguana MP (+5)
- BM MP is Army Leader 215 TV

GP Cadre (Anolis R, Sidewinder, 2 SD Jäger) (160)

Options:

- Swap Lead Jäger for Iguana for Anolis R (+0)
- Swap Jäger for Sidewinder (+5)
- Swap 2 Jäger for SD Jäger (-30)
- Swap LAC for LBZK on SD Jäger (+5)
- Swap LAC to MAC on SD Jäger (+5) 145 TV

Tactics:

Use the MP units as close assault, while the GP Squad softens up opponents.

SRA Force – 2 CGs, 5 Units, 6 Actions, 6 points

Strike Cadre (2 BM, 1 Black Adder, 1 Sidewinder) (240) <Veteran, Assault Troops>

Options:

- Swap Jäger for Sidewinder (+5)
- Swap Jäger for Black Adder (+15)
- Swap 2 Black Mamba MAC/LRP for HGLCs (-10)
- Add TankHunter Upgrade to Black Adder SC (+10)
- Cadre is Assault Troops <Add CS to each Gear> (+0)
- Lead Black Mamba is Army Commander 260 TV

Strider Cadre (Command Naga) (180)

Options:

- Swap Naga for Command Naga (-40)
- Swap Command Naga ATMs for AGMs (-40)
- Swap MAC for HFL (+0) 100 TV

Tactics:

Use the Strike force for close assault while the Command Naga provides EW and Indirect Fire Support.

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Southern MILICIA Force – 2 CGs, 6 Units, 9 Actions, 8 points

Tank Cadre (Blitz Visigoth, Hun) (180)

Options:

- Swap Hun for Visigoth (+135)
- Swap Visigoth HFG for 2xSC + AP Charges (-90)
- Swap Hun weapons for snipered VLRP/128 (-35) 190 TV

Recon Cadre (Iguana, 2 Basilisk, SD Jäger) (260)

Options:

- Swap 2 Iguana for Basilisk (-60)
- Swap Iguana for Stripped Down Jager (-35)
- Swap Iguana TD/LRP for ECM3/ECCM3 (-10)
- Add Satellite Uplink and exposed Aux to Iguana (+5)
- Add Level 2 Leadership to Iguana (+10)
- Iguana is Army Commander 170 TV

Tactics:

Use the Recon Cadre to spot, detect, and cover the flanks for the Tank Cadre as the tanks move in for close assault.

NAF Force – 2 CGs, 6 Units, 7 Actions, 7 points

Recon Squad (Jaguar, 2 SD Hunter, Ferret, Wild Ferret) (345) <Veteran>

Options:

- Swap 2 Cheetah for SD Hunter (-80)
- Swap 2 Cheetah for Ferret (-60)
- Swap Ferret for Wild Ferret (-5)
- Swap Wild Ferret DPG for LRF (+0)
- Swap Ferret DPG/TD for LBZK (-5)
- Swap Jaguar MAC for HRF (+0)
- Add Level 3 Defense to all but Wild Ferret (+20) 215 TV

Strider Squad (Mammoth) (180)

Options:

- Swap Mammoth ATM for HGL (-45)
- Add Tankhunter upgrade to the SC (+10)
- Mammoth is Army Commander 145 TV

Tactics:

Use the Mammoth's HGL to stun opponents and THI SC to take them down quickly, and exploit with the Recon Squad.

UMFA Force – 2 CGs, 6 Units, 6 Actions, 6 points

Fire Support Squad (HeadHunter, 2 Jaguar, 2 Grizzly) (295) <Veteran>

Options:

- Swap 2 Grizzly HGM/MRP for ATMs (-30)
- Swap 2 Hunter for Jaguar (+40)
- Swap 2 Jaguar MAC for MBZK (+20)
- Headhunter is Army Commander 325 TV

Field Gun Section (Field Gun) (35)

Options:

- None. 35 TV

Tactics:

Leave the Field Gun in a position where it can direct fire, and move the FS Squad into assault. Obliterate opponents with ATMs and MBZKs.

WFPA Force – 2 CGs, 6 Units, 8 Actions, 7 points

Dragoon Squad (Jaguar, 2 Mad Dog R, SD Hunter, Bobcat) (305) <Veteran>

Options:

- Swap Rabid Grizzly for Jaguar (-30)
- Swap 2 Hunter for Jaguar for Mad Dog R (+0)
- Add Dogfire upgrade to 2 Mad Dog R (+0)
- Swap Cheetah for Bobcat (-15)
- Swap Bobcat LRP for HPZ (+0)
- Swap Cheetah for Stripped Down Hunter (-40)
- Swap Jaguar LRP for AGM (+10)
- Add Level 3 Att/Def to all (+50)
- Jaguar is Army Commander 280 TV

Light Tank Squad (Bandit Hunter Klemm) (160)

Options:

- Swap Klemm for BH Klemm (-80) 80 TV

Tactics:

Use the BH Klemm to harass the enemy while the Dragoon squad does the heavy hitting.

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PRDF Force – 2 CGs, 5 Units, 6 Actions, 6 points

Support Tankstrider Squad (Red Bull MkII) (170)

Options:

- None 170 TV

Anti-Rover Squad (Skirmisher, 3 Pit Bull) (130) <Veteran>

Options:

- Swap Pit Bull for Skirmisher (+15)
- Swap Pit Bull LAC for FGC + 3 HG (+5)
- Swap 2 Pit Bull LAC for RFB (+10)
- Swap Skirmisher LRP for ECCM(2) (+0)
- Skirmisher becomes Army Commander (+30) 190 TV

Tactics:

Use the AR Squad to screen the Red Bull while it blows away enemy opposition.

Black Talon Force – 2 CGs, 4 Units, 6 Actions, 5 points

Primary Insertion Team (Dark Skirmisher, 2 Dark Jaguar) (240)

Options:

- Swap Dark Jaguar HRF for MAC/FGC (+5)
- Dark Skirmisher is Army Commander 245 TV

Mobile Ordinance Element (Dark Naga) (120)

Options:

- Swap MAC for LPA (+0)
- Swap 1 HRP for LGL (-5) 115 TV

Tactics:

Have the PIT harass the enemy, while the Dark Naga assaults.

Utopian Force – 2 CGs, 10 Units, 10 Actions, 6 points

Armiger Recce Troupe (2 RE-101, 4 N-KIDU[R]) (260)

Options:

- Swap 4 LRFs for LAC (+0) 260 TV

SIN Cluster (4 N-KIDU [T]) (120)

Options:

- Swap 4 VLACs for LAC (-20) 100 TV

Tactics:

Use the SIN to dart in and out and swarm the enemy with the [T]s while the RE-101s snipe and use EW from the rear.

Caprice Force – 2 CGs, 5 Units, 6 Actions, 6 points

Patrol Squad (2 Bashan, 2 Aphek) (170) <Veteran>

Options:

- Swap 2 Bashan HMG for ECM2/ECCM2 (+0)
- Add Comm +2 to Lead Bashan (+5)
- Add Level 3 Leadership to Lead Bashan (+10)
- Add TD to other Bashan (+5)
- Add Stealth to TD Bashan (+5)
- Swap Aphek HMG for VLAC (+0)
- Swap Aphek HMG for APM (+0) 195 TV

Heavy Mount Squad (Ammon) (115)

Options:

- Swap HRPs for ATM (+50) 165 TV

Tactics:

Use the Bashans to spot for the Ammon's ATMs while the Apheks close in on the Targets.

CEF Force – 1 CGs, 3 Units, 6 Actions, 6 points

Light Hovortank Squad (LHT-71, 2 LHT-67) (230)

Options:

- Add LHT-71 (+115)
- Swap 2 x LHT-71 for LHT-67 (-60)
- Add AP Charges to LHT-67s (+10)
- Upgrade LHT-71 LPA to LLC (+15)
- Add GREs to LHT-71 (+30)
- Lead LHT-67 is Army Commander (+20) 360 TV

Tactics:

Use the Hovortanks' superior manoeuvrability to concentrate at will. Divide into 2 sub-squads to negate the combat group disparity.

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Eden Rebel Force – 2 CGs, 12 Units, 12 Actions, 6 points

Beta Squad (Marshall, 5 Man at Arms) (100)

Options:

- Add 2 Man at Arms (+50)
- Swap Man at Arms MRF for HFL (+0)
- Swap Man at Arms MRF for LGL (+5)
- Increase Marshal to Level 2 Leadership (+10)
- Increase Marshal to Level 2 EW (+5)
- Make Marshal Army Commander (+15) 185TV

Alpha Squad (2 Marshall, 4 Constable) (55) <Veteran>

Options:

- Swap Add 2 Constable (+20)
- Swap Constable for Marshal (+10)
- Swap 2 Constable VLAC for MFL (+0)
- Swap 2 Constable VLAC for LGL (+20)
- Add Level 3 Att/Def to all (+60)
- Increase Lead Marshal to Level 2 Leadership (+10) 175TV

Tactics:

Have the Beta Squad support from the rear while the Alpha Advances on the bounce, jumping from cover to cover. Just pray that you don't run into heavy armour.

Conclusions

Based on my Convention experiences and talking with the players, I think this is a simple tournament that anyone with minimal Blitz experience can play in. The lightning tournament rules allow players with small numbers of units to participate in a tournament and test their skills against other players. So go out there and get your friends and local gaming stores to play Blitz using this tournament format!



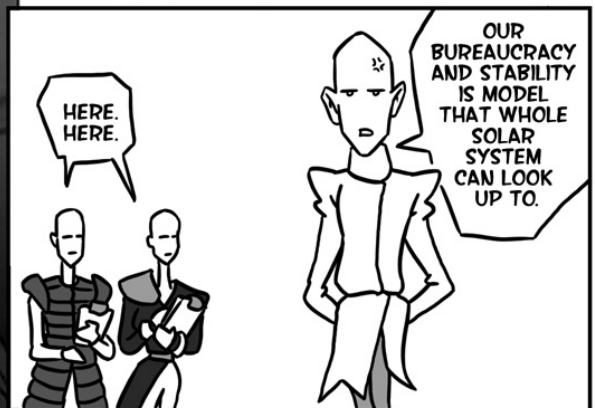
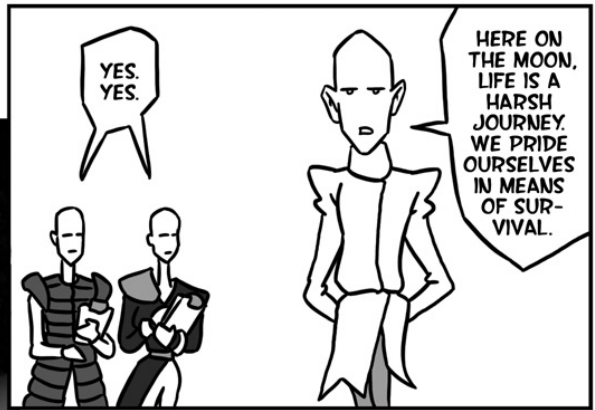
CLOSE FIRE SUPPORT

JOVIAN KOMA

JOHN BELL



SERIOUS SELENITE SEQUENCE...



“Engage people with what they expect; it is what they are able to discern and confirms their projections. It settles them into predictable patterns of response, occupying their minds while you wait for the extraordinary moment — that which they cannot anticipate.” - Sun-Tzu, Ancient Earth

Bastion Iron

**Western Quinn Range, United Mercantile Federation
Downing Front, Terra Nova**

**TN 38 Summer 1950 (Wednesday, 12 August 6144 CE)
00:00 Hours Local (+7 Hours TN Universal Time)**

A dulled, persistent buzzing penetrated into the hazy fog of exhausted slumber. Wrapping the quilted synthetic cover tighter about himself the sleeper attempted to gain another few moments of blissful unconsciousness by tightening into a cocoon. Except the buzzing gave no respite, adding shakes and a few mild blows into the mix until the shrouded form acknowledged the message of waking, a sotto voce “Move your butt Corporal, company briefing at oh one hundred hours. Wake your pal.” Mission fulfilled the CQ watch stander moved further along the double height racks spread through the arch-roofed barracks room, using a blue-filtered penlight to check names scrawled on strips of tape against the glowing display of a palm reader. Tonal cadences of far off machinery and distant human conversations accompanied the full return to consciousness. Soft humming fans overhead drew excess moisture away while ducting brought in warmth and fresh air underlain with the scents of war vehicles in large numbers - fuel, oils, propellants, and ozone.

Cognizant, Stephen hissed in a deep breath and bit back a few choice words, then eased a crick in his neck while limbering his fingers through hand clenching. Growing up in the ultra-competitive society of the Mercantile Federation had taught him the value of silence. While an occasional outburst might be acceptable depending on locale and company most of the time it could lead to disciplinary action. Do it enough and doors would close on what were termed ‘opportunities’, or even result in a loss of position. Yet those were just the facts of life and no different for adults and children alike. Besides, the barracks’ red hued night illumination hadn’t shifted to yellow tinged day and no alert bells were blaring so at least some lucky brethren were getting more rack-time and it would be unfair to wake them. Sitting up with care for the low overhead created by the rack above, he balled a fist and rocked the upper aerofoam mat from beneath to rouse it’s occupant. “C’mon Jacob, time to motivate and all that.”

Once satisfied with Heln’s wakefulness he donned shower sandals, grabbed a towel, and padded into the Personal, blinking against the sudden full light as he went about his ablutions. Field hygiene and readiness were sacrosanct, ensured today by a duty Med tech with dark ringed eyes checking out each pilot as they filtered in. After testing pupil dilation and temperature the tech stuck a stim-patch against his carotid, followed by the cool hissing of a vitamin injection into his bicep before moving on to another soldier, all without saying a word. Grimacing at the increasing metallic taste in the back of his throat Stephen rubbed an astringent depilatory patch over his face then ripped open the foil bag of a pre-moistened scrubbing cloth. At least in this facility the stock was impregnated with moderate juniper oils rather than the cloying citrus or nutty types which made for a long day in a hot Gear. Washed as clean as he was going to get he finished off with talc and deodorant powder. With waste disposed of in the incinerator chute he dodged a few late risers on the way back to his assigned locker, one amongst numerous free standing closets of dented blue-gray composite set between the rows of bunks and away from the spraycreted rock walls.

He performed a quick series of stretches and deep knee bends in front of the open faced wardrobe before hanging his pilot suit on the provided hook. Inspecting the ultra-tight outer weave and slick inner lining bottom to top for any tears or punctures took only a few moments even in the night-lit barracks. The high necked royal blue garment covered a wearer from ankle to wrist, was gas- and chemical-proof, could stop low to mid velocity fragments, and featured a comfort enhancing layer that circulated cooling liquids. It was also stiff, heavy, and uncomfortable to wear while doing most anything besides sitting in a Gear’s piloting couch. A colorful heater-shaped sunflower and thistle First Federation Armored Division patch with a plain tan and green Fourth Gear Brigade rocker adorned the right shoulder, counterpointed by the plain shield-shaped Fifth Heavy Gear Regiment patch with it’s trio of blue-gray peaks against a green sky on the left shoulder. Vertical separated gold and blue League roundel on the left breast, white name tape stenciled with ‘Oghlan’ to the right, triangular rank tabs at the collar. All in order. Donning a fresh sweat wicking under layer preceded shrugging into the unyielding suit, sealing seals, and adjusting tabs and tapes to a bearable tightness. Boots clasped and gloves secured completed the dressing ritual. Everything else would be drawn later in the ready room. After a quick glance around to see who was or wasn’t observing he dug out a small, flat container from a pocket and swallowed two Loperamide tablets dry. Dosing yourself to regulate metabolic functions was frowned upon but wasn’t a breaking of any official regulations either,

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and just made good sense. While every Gear and pilot suit featured a relief tube answering the other call of nature could be problematical. Discomfort from a bound-up gut could be handled. Desperate need in the wrong moment could get you killed. So could excessive worry about looming events outside his control, a fact he reminded himself of with time running short.

Checking his timepiece revealed he had about thirty-five minutes to brave the mess hall before briefing began. Stephen straightened and rolled his bedding, once-overed his boots with a rag, and left the barracks at a swift walk through an atrium's doubled set of black-out curtains. He joined a growing stream of soldiers in the main corridor, jogging up the steep stairs and ramps to a higher level. Bypassing the first and second of four large eating halls serviced by the same kitchen, the third proved to be not yet filled to capacity. Chow lines in this fortress dug into old mining tunnels were no frills self-service, two long islands of deep pans with drink dispensers and high standing platform tables with no chairs to encourage fast eating. Palletized gravity racks at the end of each island held assorted self-heating box meals with hand lettered signs noting which regiments should draw how many meals for the coming day. As usual the selection had been worked over even at this early hour, soldiers with more rank or better connections not having to trust to lottery for a favored or edible choice. Stephen chose two somewhat palatable meals from the remaining selections and carried them with his tray to a free table near the exit. Back to the occupants surrounding the adjacent eating space he ignored their vapid conversation about everyday goings on which had little to do with the current state of conflict.

Focused on his meal he wolfed down small buttery griddle cakes and began spooning up a wheat based mush, an unfortunate choice that became an instant lump in his chest. Deep gulps from a glass of juice did little to remove the lump like sensation, so he stabbed up a few chunks of melon. In the throes of this culinary excursion it began to dawn on him that this table wasn't filling up despite the proximity of an exit and the vacuum had reached a noticeable level of discomfort. A glance over his shoulder revealed the youngish mixed gender group to be clerks, a type of administrative worker that proliferated in a military force run as a profit based national corporation. He knew then why an area of space surrounded that table - they were Casualty and Death Benefits recorders. A visit from their civil service counterparts meant you faced a lifetime of permanent disability or a loved one was dead, but the paperwork was not yet in order nor finalized. Like when your father had died, and they were ever so sorry but could you take a moment from your bereavement to complete these forms? His food lost all taste, and he had also lost any

interest in finishing so it was no calamity. Stephen kept his countenance impassive as possible until he could ditch his tray and egress the mess hall.

By now the sting of loss should have worn away yet he suspected the haunted look on his mother's face when the recorders showed up hours before the city police to be a burden that would never fade. One dead middle-aged, middle-runged corporate employee, fatal stroke during a lunch. Comments burned forever into his psyche, recalled with a clarity as if it were moments ago. Such a tragedy. Sign there and imprint here for entitlement of insurance and earned retirement assets. Do you desire the cost of funeral arrangements to be deducted from benefits or handled by a third party? Have we handled ourselves with due gravity and completeness? Mother had been a good corporate employee, holding in the grief and rage, far better than he suspected he would have under those circumstances. She had soon after made the smart choice, leveraging the grim windfall along with selling off her own stock and retirement options to ensure his older brother and sister went on to the right higher education that led to better lives. For Stephen, even had there been enough extra his own lackluster schooling performance left only a military option, training followed by almost four grueling cycles spent in a Badlands infantry regiment. Still, she had managed to come through for him as well, contacts leading to Gear piloting and a posting back to Lyonesse in a prestigious, and well paying, division.

Stephen did not blame the Federation's system for his father's death, that was just how things were - Worse than some other Leagues, better than most. Where he did blame the corporate culture was for the time together as a family it had forever robbed from all of them, remembering the worn down look in his parent's eyes after long days of work topped by peer pressured high obligatory after-hours social gatherings. Even in the First Armored one couldn't get away from the expectation that pay would be spent on drink and entertainment with other pilots off-duty for the sake of conformance. He played along, and internalized how much every mark thus spent bothered him, money lost to triviality rather than providing for his last sibling. His younger sister might not make it into the best of schools but neither would she wind-up enduring a lifetime of pounding sand alongside her brother. A solemn promise he had made to himself, no matter the personal cost.

Life had been looking up however during the past two cycles. Unlike a harsh service tour in the Badlands there was less chance in the alpine regions around Lake Tristan that some commander who was an officer only through legalized ransom and family connections would get everyone killed. That was before ten days ago however, when everything changed.

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Armies and allies of the New Earth Commonwealth had once again landed on Terra Nova after almost thirty days of space borne conflict. His home, and everywhere else, had become front line territory in a fight with little or no quarter where the only acceptable outcome for either side was victory.

00:56 Hours

His company's designated briefing room had just started to fill with less than ten minutes until the scheduled meeting time. And like the general purpose mess halls this was a standing room only space with tiered steps spanning the width of two adjacent walls. No furnishings aside from a small podium and a glass topped compnet interface obstructed the smoothed basalt floor. One wall was set aside for a holo display field that would echo anything called up on the interface, at the moment showing only a test pattern. Erasable boards broke up the dark orange spraycrete on the entrance wall, marked off into sections to display the current status of every war machine and pilot assigned to Gold Company, the second unit of the Fifth Heavy Gear Regiment. Operations specialists wearing short range wireless headsets and data gloves milled in purposeful patterns from board to board, ensuring up to the minute information while this room was in use.

Muttered conversations ceased as a few last stragglers preceded Captain Garl and Colonel Days' entry, and "Attention!" was called. Garl had been expected, the regimental commander had not. As commander of Gold Company Herik Garl was unexceptional, not disliked so much as held in low regard. A short, slight man, the swarthy Captain had so far committed no major blunders in this war thanks to a solid core of experienced Rangers and Colonel Day's overwatch. The Captain had few genuine ill-wishers amongst his command as most considered it only bad timing that the present Earth invasion had prevented his climb up the ranks to an agreeable, and somewhat less dangerous to others, staff position. That a higher ranking officer had appeared this morning either meant the company was in for a bad mission or the commander wanted to buck them up and take in their emotional state firsthand.

Colonel Days was Garl's opposite, a consummate professional he was also one of the few officers in the Division who had seen war during the previous Earth invasion near forty cycles

ago and subsequent Interpolar conflicts. He topped his junior officer by only a few centimeters yet carried off his lack of height with a stocky forthright build and booming voice. A loud "At ease. Good morning Sawtooths," opened the briefing using the Fifts nickname and Days continued on without waiting for a reply. "Captain Garl has permitted me to address you today so I can convey my personal thanks and let you see me in person as more than just a voice over the airwaves. It makes me proud to see in your eyes the same fire our soldiers showed last time the Earthers came knocking in the night, and I trust you all to do your utmost to send them running yet again or leave them lying broken in the field."

"I know many of you have heard rumors Lyonesse was hit bad yesterday and that you have concerns for friends, family, or financial advisors depending on your personal leanings. Of course, I'm not supposed to fill you in on strategic matters in case of capture but I will anyways since the enemy already knows what I'm about to tell you." Pausing for a grim roll of laughter, Days keyed up a projection of the Lake Tristan region bordered along the north by the Western Quinn range and along the south by a northwestern spur of the Downing Range, with the Federation capital set on the extreme southwestern shore. Echoed on the larger display his lightpen drew out arrows of movement and defensive lines of known forces. "CEF two Korp backed by first Korp is still intent on busting into the capital but they haven't yet penetrated into artillery range. As you already know the multi-divisional hover strike back on the twenty-ninth caught the Fourth NorGuard Armored by surprise. Although in hindsight we should have expected them to use the lake to flank any blockers along the Maglev no one figured they would risk so large a force over water, but then we also didn't expect them to land all over Terra Nova in such strength in the first place. Those two Korp hover formations took a drubbing when the Fourth pulled back through our own Division's lines and so far no further attacks on that scale have occurred. They could take a direct stab at the capital across the lake but would lack much anything in the way of supplies and of course the NorGuarders are still there alongside our own First Division's Armored Brigade, backed by the entire Federation Seventh Infantry Division plus the mustered local Territorial Companies and city garrison."

Stabbing a point along the lake's southern shore, "We've lost control of this maglev section but it was not captured in a usable



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condition by any means. And remnants of the Fifth NorGuard Infantry have to be considered, they lost better than half their equipment and took over a third of their strength in casualties during the CEF breakout from Zihl Flats yet retreated in good order to the upper Downing Range. A stand up fight may be out of the question but they can still harass and interdict convoys or patrols sent west along the plains between Lake Tristan and the mountains while giving early warning of large troop movements. From their observations and what aerial recon got through before Second Armored had to pull back best guess is the Earth forces landed with at least a week of ready supplies but limited maintenance assets. Seems like they intended to overwhelm us in one blow and that didn't happen. They still want Lyonesse and are using some old strategy from last invasion, building pre-fab fortifications dropped from orbit along their lines of communications to move supplies and maintenance depots closer to our defenses for when they jump off again. Beyond that we have no clear idea what kind of activity is going on at the initial landing site in the salt flats. But the CEF and their allies must be running close to the edge given the tempo they've been operating at, ten days of combat by our clocks means two full weeks have passed for them."

Days stepped away from the compnet table to look his troopers in the face, "What all this means to us here from First Armored is that they haven't come this way hard. Yet. Division command has both infantry brigades in a mutual supporting deployment east of here with our Fourth and the Third Gear brigades as mobile reserves to block any attacks towards the capital from the northern shore. Neither two Korps nor first Korps can outflank through Byerst Plain without exposing their own flanks and supply lines to us or forces from Rapid City and we know they aren't going to go away. In a day or two at least one Border Division will come up out of the Marathon Basin as further reinforcements plus whatever elements Marathon and Baton Rouge can spare that isn't already headed to Canterbury. Now, despite what the CEF has thrown at us so far they haven't come in full force since the first few days, just kept on a heavy pressure until they find a weakness to exploit. Their blowers can't come through these mountains in mass. At some point their Frames and GRELS will. I cannot stress that enough, don't let your guard down." Chin raised and spine straight with hands at the small of his back the Colonel intoned the regimental motto, "Every pebble holds an avalanche," repeated back by the gathered men and women in sonorous tones that reverberated from the rock walls. Both a warning to the incautious pilot and a mortal promise to their enemies. Nodding at the response he finished with a sincere, "Good shooting" and stepped back to allow his junior officer to conclude the briefing.

Garl's fast and reedy "Alright Gold Company, down to business," was the sole acknowledgment of his own command followed by the map holo zooming in on the southwestern slopes of the Quinn Range and filling with new icons. "The Hogbacks are on maintenance stand down today," referring to the Fifths' sister unit in the Brigade, the Ninth Heavy Gear, "and our regiment will be operating as independent deployed companies for the first portion of this morning. Gold is tasked with escorting Strider artillery sections from Iron to an assembly area where they will be met by infantry guides for deployment to plotted firing positions. This movement will commence no later than zero two hundred and gives us seventy minutes before morning twilight begins. Route recon has indicated maintaining flank security will be impossible, and as of midnight was still clear of hostile contacts. Beta Section will be on point, Support leading, Recon with the main body, and Alpha trailing. After the artillery disperses the company will break into sections and move into these positions for infantry support during stand-to until after zero five three zero. Full light will be at zero five hundred, lasting until thirty-one hundred hours. Standard EMCON plan will be in effect. Third Gear Brigade will be near the infantry pockets in strength, and have orders not to open fire without interrogating IFF, but Gold leaders can authorize weapons free upon visual confirmation after stand-to."

Glowing route markers replaced fixed defensive boxes. "Provided no attacks occur around dawn top off fuel and begin your patrol sweeps when released. I know this had been planned for full sections but Division and high command is worried we aren't seeing scouts and probes by Earth forces in the numbers they expected. To counter possible infiltration and consolidation behind our lines Gold will patrol by squadrons in our designated zone, as will Red and Green companies. Blue Company will stay formed in sections and come to the aid of any element as needed. EW coverage will be minimal spread out, and Squadron commanders are authorized to adjust patrol vectors to make sure laser signals can be bounced through any relay as needed. Unless a significant force is encountered artillery support is on hold to maintain their hides. Aerial assets are likewise unavailable and reserved for attacks targeting the main defensive positions."

"Patrol routine and rest halts are by leader discretion, return after dusk no later than thirty-three hundred. Evening twilight will end at thirty-two fifty hours. Your other tasking for the day is to expand the laser comm relay chains and passive sensor net. It seems the coverage isn't good enough yet with all the magnetite and hematite deposits in this region, so plant them as indicated by your uploaded tactical maps. Secure comms are the same freqs as previous shifted to use cipher Bravo one, and our net signs effective zero zero hundred through

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CORPORATE CONFLICT - PART 1

thirty-six hundred are Company - Plank, Alpha - Wager, Beta - Cape, Support - Metro, and Recon - Jig." After the Captain had finished rattling off the random, unrelated identifier words that could not be confused over the radio with military information he paused as if expecting questions although it was more probable a mental checklist was being consulted. During the lull Colonel Days did an admirable job of not fidgeting or displaying any significant looks. Trying to regain a bit of gravity after the hush Garl ended with a ringing "Attention! Section commanders, take charge of your pilots and prep your Gears. Dismissed."

The deluge of information had lasted a bare twenty minutes, and the soldiers of Gold Company congested the exit after Days and Garl left the room. Breaking up into smaller groups the pilots strode upward through the Medical and Supply levels, spraycrete insulation giving way to bare rock coated with thick white polymer paint for maximum lighting effect in the hangars. A marked temperature drop passed almost unnoticed by the men and women clad in heavy piloting suits while combat support and combat service personnel went about their tasks in this zone wearing layered uniforms. While surface day temperatures in the Quinn range hovered near twenty-five degrees at this altitude and time of cycle the Gear bays fashioned under a hundred or more meters of basalt and granite maintained a cool thirteen Celsius.

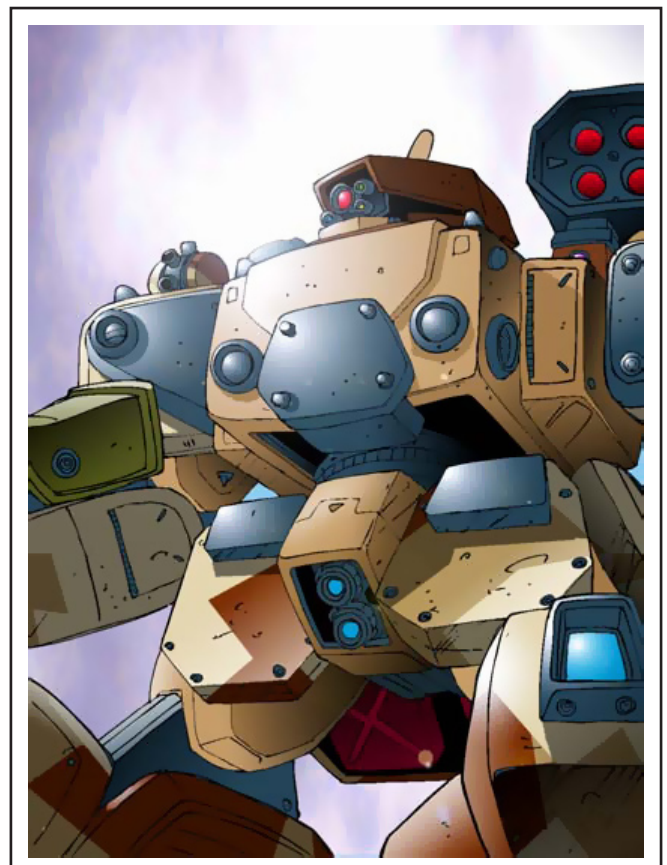
No matter how many times Stephen took in the sight of a Gear hangar it never failed to astonish. Immobile anthropomorphic engines of Armageddon on parade blocky with ceramic and metal hides, each capable of devastating agility under the right touch in spite of massing six to ten metric tons. More than two full companies of the looming four plus meter vehicles stood ranked in maintenance scaffolds, arranged in rows of thirty with space against the long walls for disassembly and intensive repairs. Substantial components pendulated in minute arcs from clinking tackle attached to overhanging framework, directing slow patterns of interlocked shadows across the elastic treated rock floor. Overworked ventilation systems labored to exchange the hangar air while keeping fumes and airborne debris from penetrating deeper into the underground complex.

Scores of technicians on spider lines and mobile staging performed checks and repairs, generating a jolting visual and auditory dissonance. Several Gears stood shrouded by interlocked matting leaking a blinding white nimbus, guarded by junior mechanics wielding fire extinguishers and buckets of sand. Specialists attended defaced machines, filling scars with quick setting epoxies that cured to a metallic hardness or replacing entire Durasheet plates and casings, finishing the

repairs with coats of red-brown primer. Small forklifts driven by personnel in red coveralls wove careful paths through the organized chaos, joining crews in similar garb who attended specific machines one at a time in a precise choreograph before leaving the hangar to refill their stock of ordnance from nearby magazines. Firefighters in silvered suits accompanied teams wearing deep purple shirts who guided motorized carts to fuel ready Gears away from the other work crews.

Despite the previous long days of combat the regiment had not so far paid a heavy butcher's bill, leaving few gaps amongst faces or racked war machines. Armored vehicles were repaired according to the same principles of triage applied to living soldiers - least damaged, first fixed. That more than a handful of Gears laid out in pieces on reclined platforms were swarming with mechanics spoke to the current circumstances where every machine not destroyed outright yet still capable of being repaired was needed in the field regardless of the cost in labor.

Near each entry of the vaulted hangar bay vertical slabs of construction composites had been glued together to partition off open roofed part storage, office space, and what were termed ready rooms even though each bore little resemblance to their names regarding level of furnishings and support equipment.



READYING FOR ACTION

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CORPORATE CONFLICT - PART 1

Ready rooms in particular comprised only tiers of old transit station lockers separated by waist high benches, the ranks of faded metal cabinets in all likelihood either purchased by the mark pinching armed forces corporation at a substantial savings during some civic renovation or else acquired by engineer units on loan to municipal concerns getting paid to haul them away as scrap. Although any graffiti had long faded away or been painted over on some past date the inevitable local comedian had removed the mark rate per day signs from the end of each bank, substituting 'Only sous accepted, please. Thank you, the Management' placards.

Using the small key he had been issued when the Fifth deployed to this complex Stephen removed his equipment from the narrow locker, claiming a space on the bench for his gear. Most critical was the twenty-five centimeter cube of tough polymer shielding the dense circuitry of an optical neural net, the central brain of a Heavy Gear. Inserted beneath a Gear's pilot seat the block of interlinked networks was capable of learning not only the patterns of a specific machine type but of the pilot as well, overcoming weaknesses and anticipating input to increase reaction time and coordination, and so complex it could not be repaired or duplicated. Losing the ONNet meant starting from scratch with a new system. Damage in the field meant a Gear was restricted to only the most basic of movements, little more than a tall, slow, and clumsy target.

Everything else was also the handiwork of a machine society, produced with cunning artifice to reduce size and weight yet adding to a considerable bulk when taken in sum. The woven synthetic harness sported numerous pockets for smaller items while holding together the ceramic plates of an armored vest, and featured attachment points to secure oneself into the pilot couch. His weighty helmet possessed a rugged armored exterior shielding delicate electronics, faceplate bulky with a combination breathing mask and the liquid filled lenses of a retinal holo-projector. With the helmet linked into a Gear's sensor array the displayed view would manifest as if he were the machine itself, a visual trickery confusing to the mind that some pilots never managed to isolate themselves from when damage occurred to their vehicle.

Aiming at the roof through where a ceiling should have been, he cleared and function checked his personal weapon. Vehicular regiments of the First Armored had swapped from pistols and sub-machine guns to compact assault rifles only a few seasons ago. While lacking the range of weapons he had used during his cycles as an infantryman the twelve millimeter carbine delivered several times the terminal energy and had comparable accuracy out to four hundred meters, more than

adequate for dismounted use in the less open sightlines of the Terra Novan highlands. Accompanied by half a dozen twenty-five round clips of short, fat telescoped cartridges the rifle nestled into a slim padded case designed to fit in the limited cockpit volume of a Gear.

Upon first reporting to the regiment he had been surprised at the amount of authorized personal weaponry and regular dismounted exercises compared to operations at the Gear academy, with some pilots going so far as to attach equipment containers to their Gears for carrying anything up to anti-gear rifles and forty-five millimeter rocket launchers, until it was made clear that his background as a foot-slogger was why he had been accepted into the brigade regardless of favors and connections. Members of the Fifth and Ninth HG regiments, along with their counterparts in Third Gear Brigade and First Division as a whole, emphasized irregular and mountain warfare every bit as much as training in conventional mechanized combat. One beneficial side effect to that philosophy was dilettantes such as Captain Garl tended to be few and far between.

Each pilot left his or her key on small numbered hooks across squared boards fixed to the exit side wall as they finished, a simple system to show who had checked out equipment from their lockers and who had not yet done so. Vest adjusted and other gear in hand Stephen strode across the ranked machines to his assigned Hunter, Yoke two-one-six, racked next to Jacob Heln's own Hunter Yoke two-one-five, both identical in almost every detail and altered loadout. As the North's longest serving workhorse machine, Hunters could be modified in minimal time for most mission parameters and tended to be the Gears altered to fit a unit's deployment or tactical strategy. This pair sported add-on armor plates that increased protection across the frontal arc and replaced the standard hand-held automatic cannon with an intermediate ranged grenade launcher capable of direct or indirect fire. Secured to a modular hardpoint on the upper left torso an armored box contained launch tubes filled with sleeved quadruple clusters of folding fin rockets, one of the most common armaments carried by Gears. Cylinders of timed high explosives rode one hip plate, capable of being hurled or dropped as the situation demanded. In place of the cerametal bladed vibro-knife they each had self-powered chain swords, intended more for light engineer tasks than usage as weapons.

In common with almost all of Fifth Regiment's war machines the Hunters were finished in a scheme designed to blend into rock and horizon. Glossed slate gray on feet and lower legs topped by pale green upper legs and lower torso, finished with light sand across shoulders, arms, and hull surface,

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color bands blended together at slight angles. Other Gears, such as the two Strike Cheetahs in Stephen's own squadron, added dappled spots of light gray or ocher. Along with the usual armed forces serial number in small black characters, regimental insignias, and League roundels other specific markings decorated his vehicle. First was the company identifier, a capital 'Y' designated Yoke, in red bordered yellow paint to denote the machine belonged to Gold, under the red-yellow-green-blue system for combat companies in a regiment. Numerals at half the height in light gray followed yoke, two-one-six indicating his machine to be from Gold's second section, first squadron, and that he was sixth member of that particular group. Last were bands of very light yellow that wrapped both forearms of the company's Gears, matched behind by vertical stripes on each armored fuel tank. Single thick bands denoted Alpha Section, narrow over thick Beta, paired thick Support, and thick narrow thick Recon.

Six Gears in one squadron was unusual after the turn of the century had led to a less manpower intensive five Gear formation to better meet the demands of near constant conflict. Yet it was not an uncommon practice in more experienced regiments who found the utility of the extra machine in command and fire support teams invaluable. Corporal Wiley Collins' Bobcat was an older model most pilots found uncomfortable to jockey given the lying down cockpit layout, foremost amongst other unconventional quirks. It was also the only dedicated scout machine in Beta Section, valued for stability and speed over rough ground, a laser target designator, and electronics gear almost the match of base Cheetah models. Collins took jibes about himself and his antique machine with easy humor, known to revenge bad sports or repeated offenders with a particular brand of practical jokes. He was paired with the section commander, Senior Ranger Ahti Trake, who piloted a Tiger, another older machine valued for ruggedness and exceptional gunnery control.

Gathered around the older blond haired man with his flattened face and squared jaw, sixteen pilots waited to receive more detailed instructions for the planned movement. "I'll keep this simple. Nothing in the plans today calls for anything we haven't trained on. We'll be leading the company and artillery right off, so watch for my signals and keep alert for Morganas or other infiltrated hostiles en route to the assembly area, and on our way to the front lines in section. If anything changes I'll pass word through squadron leaders or inform everyone at the fuel point later on before we break up. Any questions? ... Right, mount up," closed the Section brief and pilots dispersed to start their Gears.

Inserted into a horizontal space beneath the Hunter's pilot seat, the ONNet was secured by twin clips then covered by a hinged plate. Power systems came to standby, neural net running tests as Stephen performed a walk-around to verify ammunition load, fuel, and that external stores were secure. Seated in the chest cavity he turned over the engine, ringed cylinders in each top mounted armored engine drum cycling through exhaust, intake, or ignition in sequence using no moving parts to thrust either end of the angled drive shaft and convert rotary power into hydraulic motivation pressure. While the Gear warmed up he donned a smooth napped fireproof hood and used hook and loop tabs to get a comfortable fit around throat, brow, and chin. Bulky helmet settled and strapped, he raised the visor to secure the face mask and attached multi-conduit supply hoses to each side. Tongue switches checked for function, filtered air came through, and small tubes dispensed from internal reservoirs - water from the right and fortified protein paste from the left.

Area verified clear of hindrance by a mechanic ground spotter he tested the arm and hand range of motion, then dropped the retinal visor to run through a sensor check, at very low power in the crowded hangar. Hatch closed on hissing struts and the sensor assembly surrounded his own helmeted head. Rotation checked and he waited in the rack until the spotter's signal cleared him to join a line of Gears moving towards an exit. Heln was right ahead, preceded by Barstow's Strike Cheetah who in turn was behind Ranger Kitrik's own Strike. Taking a left in the large tunnel connecting other hangars he followed in line and entered a darkened stretch set-up to test night vision systems and small infrared formation lights attached to the back of legs, forearms, and engines. When no one reported any problems the Tiger started into an uphill tunnel waving an arm overhead in a circular pattern to signal 'assemble', leading through sections of straight tunnel in full darkness offset back and forth by short portions at right angles until flickering stars and terrain falling away at steep angles disclosed they were outside the fortress.

To be continued... next issue, the conflict flares!

(Get a sneak peak in the scenario that follows)

(Date conversions via Banzaidyne Helios [http://classic-web.archive.org/web/20091026234825/geocities.com/banzaidyne2/hg2ed/dateconverter_tn.html], by Jason English)

“Every pebble holds an avalanche.” - motto of the UMFA’s 5th Heavy Gear Regiment. A warning to incautious pilots and a mortal promise to enemies.

Downing Front TN 38 Summer 1950 26:39 Hours

With the ground invasion ten days old forces of the New Earth Commonwealth continued spreading out from a beachhead in the Zihl Salt Flats, fighting to take the United Mercantile Federation capital of Lyonnesse. Terra Novan divisions gathered along the southern shores of Lake Tristan opposed CEF II Korp in a series of delaying actions and pitched battles that kept the raiders away from the city.

To overcome the deadlock CEF I Korp started advancing units through the rugged northern lake shore to assault Lyonnesse from the more open western flank. Defending the Quinn Range slopes were mountain warfare units from the Federation’s 1st Armored Division, two infantry brigades reinforced by two Gear brigades. Twelve thousand soldiers and twelve hundred Gears faced upwards of thirty thousand GREL and FLAIL infantry, two thousand hover tanks, and seven thousand Frames.

In the evening a patrolling squadron of ‘Sawtooths’ from 5th HG Regiment detected a CEF I Korp patrol traveling east along a river valley. After destroying a pair of light tanks by hasty ambush the Federation troopers moved west to engage the trailing Frames and GRELS.

MAP TYPE

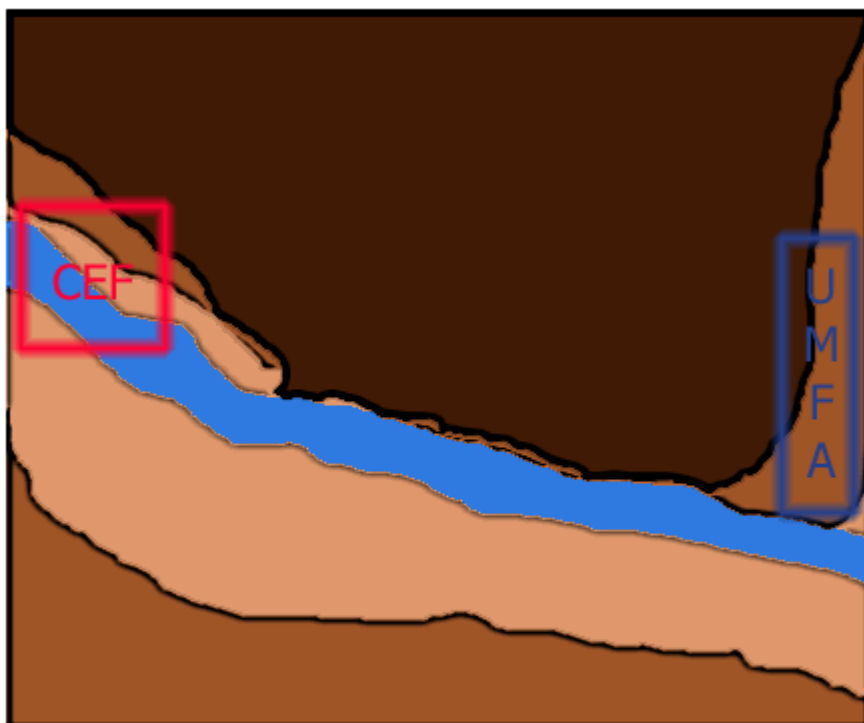
Use map 1 to plan the board, shown at right.

SET-UP

- The skirmish is fought in full daylight, with no Support Points available to either side.
- There is no fixed board size for this encounter.
- Elevation +0 is the river, which counts as Shallow Water.
- The board should have no more than a third of the area as clear, open Terrain, not including the river.
- Prepare the remaining board with stands of Dense & Very Dense trees, areas of Rough Ground, and outcrops of Impassable rock for cover.
- Given the large amount of terrain and concealment players may want to play for longer than five turns.

DEPLOYMENT

- UMF Gears begin the game at Walker Top Speed heading West from their zone.
- CEF Frames may begin the game either at Hover Combat Speed over the river or at Walker Top Speed if deployed north of the river. Facing is to the East.
- The GREL squad may begin the game mounted at Hover Combat Speed over the river or dismounted at Top Speed if deployed north of the river.



■ Elevation +0
■ Elevation +2

Elevation +1 ■
Elevation +3 ■

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CORPORATE CONFLICT – SCENARIO

FORCE COMPOSITION

The UMFA Dragoon Squad is built as a non-standard combat group using the same TV limitations with minor cost adjustments.

Defenders are First Squadron of Beta Section, from Gold Company of the 5th Heavy Gear Regiment, part of UMFA 1st Armored Division's 4th Gear Brigade:

UMFA Army Roster; 400 TV

Priority Level 3, SPs [n/a], Base Cmd Points [4]

Veteran Dragoon Squadron (Specialist)
[Army Command Group]

Command Element

1. **Senior Ranger Ahti Trake, Tiger** - [3/4/1/3], CGL, ArmyCmdr, 90TV; MAC (R), APGL (FF, LA:6), HG (LA:3), V.Axe (Melee), APM (FF), HPZF (LA:4).
2. **Corporal Wiley Collins, Bobcat** - [2/2/1/0], 50TV; LRF (R), LRP/24 (FF), HG (LA:4), VB (Melee).

Fireteam One

1. **Ranger Helene Kitrik, Strike Cheetah** - [2/3/1/0], 70TV; RFB (R), DPG, VB (Melee).
2. **Senior Corp. Rowland Barstow, Strike Cheetah** - [2/3/1/0], 70TV; RFB (R), DPG, VB (Melee).

Fireteam Two

1. **Senior Corp. Jacob Heln, Hunter** - [2/2/1/0], 60TV; LGL (R), LRP/24 (FF), APGL (FF, LA:6), HG (LA:3), Ch.Sword (Melee). Field Armor (+Sturdy)
2. **Corporal Stephen Oghlan, Hunter** - [2/2/1/0], 60TV; LGL (R), LRP/24 (FF), APGL (FF, LA:6), HG (LA:3), Ch.Sword (Melee). Field Armor (+Sturdy)

Attackers are 3rd Patrol of 51 Troop with a 1st Patrol GREL squad, from I ('I') Company of the 2652nd Reconnaissance Group, 652nd Brigade, attached to CEF I Korp's 13th Division.

CEF Army roster; 390 [of 670] TV

Priority Level 1, SPs [n/a], Base Cmd Points [3].

Interdiction Frame Squad (Auxiliary)
[Army Command Group]

1. **Senior Sergeant Rika van der Merwe, CF6-16** - [2/2/2/2], CGL, ArmyCmdr, 80TV; HGLC. Command Mission Pack.
2. **Corporal Pergi Zirik, F6-16** - [2/2/1/0], 55TV; HGLC, ABM (F, LA:3), HG (LA:3). Mobility Mission Pack.
3. **BF2-21** - [3/3/2/0], 75TV; HGLC. AP charges. Defensive Mission Pack.
4. **BF2-21** - [3/3/2/0], 75TV; HGLC. AP charges. Defensive Mission Pack.
5. **Senior Corporal Oxana Denova, HPC-64 Hover APC** - [2/2/1/1], 55TV; SLC. — GREL Infantry Squad - [3/3/3/3], 50TV; Assault Rifles, Rocket Launcher.

MISSION

- UMF objectives are Survive [2 OP] and Wipe Them Out [2 OP].
- CEF objectives are Recon [2 OP] and Wipe Them Out [2 OP].
- It is recommended for the Recon objective at least one CEF unit survive the encounter for those VP to apply.



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VARIATIONS

- Add back the ambushed light hover tanks to the CEF roster:

2nd Patrol of 51 Troop, from I ('I') Company of the 2652nd Reconnaissance Group

Veteran Light Hovertank Squad (Core) 280TV

1. **Junior Sergeant Major Arkadi Rovski, LHT-71** - [3/2/2/2], CGL, 140TV; LPA (T), MRP/18 (T). AP charges.
2. **Sergeant Nergui Laruk, LHT-71** - [3/2/2/0], 135TV; LPA (T), MRP/18 (T). AP charges.

Both LHTs may begin the game at Hover Combat Speed over the river in advance of the other CEF models, facing Southeast.

- Replace the LHT squad with a FLAILs infantry group using 275TV, allowing the UMF Gears [4] SP worth of artillery support. FLAILs may begin the game at Hover Combat Speed over the river, facing Southeast.
- Duplicate the original encounter on a larger board using map 2 (shown below) and the same terrain set-up. UMF Gears begin the game infiltrated, 6" to 12" from the tanks on the +1 or +2 elevations, and have initiative the first turn. Place both LHTs at Hover Combat Speed facing East in the marked box.

- Game the encounter on a larger board using map 2 (shown below left) and the same terrain set-up, with all three Patrols of 51 Troop. The Command HPC-64 is Army Commander and CEF Base Cmd Points [5]. The CEF force becomes 1,120TV with some non-standard upgrades.

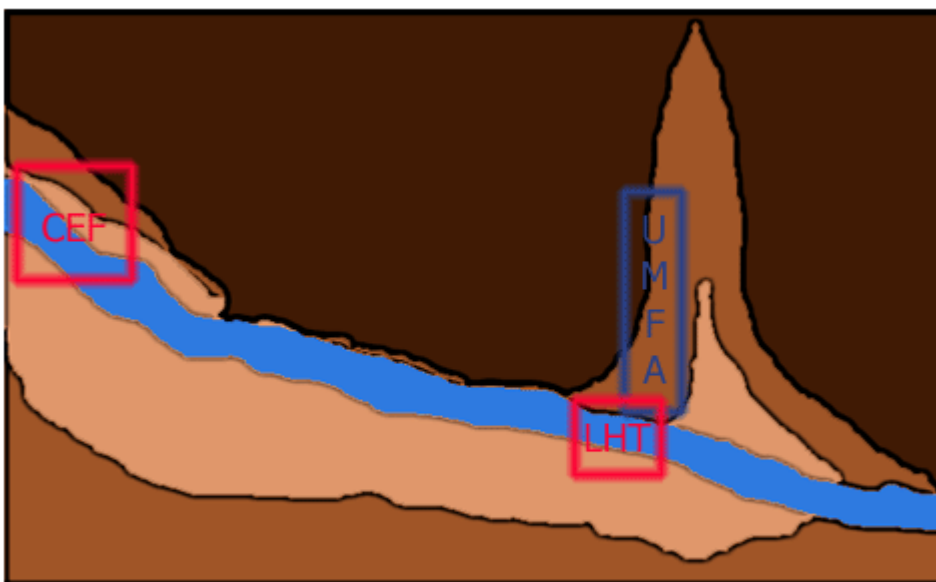
LHTs begin the game at Hover Combat Speed facing East in the marked box. Frames, less the GRELS and their hover carrier, may begin the game either at Hover Combat Speed over the river or at Walker Top Speed if deployed north of the river. Facing is to the East. First Patrol begins the game as a Guaranteed Reserve (pg. 43, GU 2 Errata) with a Turn 2 or 3 deployment. When deployed they may begin the game at Hover Combat Speed over the river facing East.

1st Patrol of 51 Troop, from I ('I') Company of the 2652nd Reconnaissance Group

CEF GREL Infantry Platoon (Core)
[Army Command Group] 555TV

1. **Lieutenant Wekesa Cale, Command HPC-64 Hover APC** - [2/3/2/3], CGL, ArmyCmdr, 105TV; SLC. — GREL Infantry Squad [3/3/3/0], 50TV; Assault rifles, Grenade Rifle.
2. **HPC-64 Hover APC** - [3/3/2/2], 95TV; SLC. GREL crew. — GREL Infantry Squad [3/3/3/0], 50TV; Assault rifles, Grenade Rifle.
3. **Senior Corporal Oxana Denova, HPC-64 Hover APC** - [2/2/1/1], 55TV; SLC. — GREL Infantry Squad - [3/3/3/0], 50TV; Assault rifles, Rocket Launcher.
4. **HPC-64 Hover APC** - [3/3/2/2], 95TV; SLC. GREL crew. — GREL Infantry Squad - [3/3/3/0], 55TV; Assault rifles, Light Mortar.

UMF Gears begin the game infiltrated, 6" to 12" from the tanks on the +1 or +2 elevations, and have initiative the first turn. They are allowed [4] SP worth of artillery support, with the option of changing their Survive objective to Escape! [3 OP] once the CEF 1st Patrol deploys.



Blue Elevation +0
Brown Elevation +2

Elevation +1
Dark Brown Elevation +3

2

Thanks to Ice Raptor for scenario input & critique. And damn it, he was right! xD

Looking through the Lightning Strike material, I found Mercury Guild Security Corps Fleet listing. This always kind a bothered me. This fleet list had two problems: one that it didn't represent Mercury Armed Forces (which is what should have been in the book) and two that the fleet list is truly representative of the Merchant Guild Security Corps.

I doubt the MAF is going to lend the MGSCF a battleship for convoy escort. The main purpose of the Guild Security Corps is the protection the convoy and its goods, not against other solar nations but against pirates that are out there. So I did a bit of trimming and produced what the Merchant Guild Security Corps Fleet should look like, with more Cargo ships and less warships.

Then I focused on Mercury Armed Forces, taking what was in Lightning Strike and modifying it a bit. Following the naming conventions for Mercury, the ships which are usually given an angelic rank name and exo-armours are given demonic lord names. This gives a simple explanation of why the various Exo-Armour and Ships were renamed the way they were. This is mostly due to modification to their hull to protect against the intense sun radiation and heat.

With those done, I began wondering about pirates in space, whom, like the Security Corps, should fare poorly in an engagement versus a true navy. The Pirate and Security Corps fleets do have their place and can make for more and great scenario games than simply true military games. This could be the same for Titan but I'll hold off on Titan as it's a really small faction in the fluff.

Then to round it off are Venus civilian versions of the Satrap and Shan-Yu as Venus is all about saying, "no we don't have large warships". Even though Venus ships are supposed to look like their civilian counterparts their civilian counterparts seem missing. The two that are hidden the most in this fashion are the Shan-Yu and Satrap.

Modification for Lightning Strike: Mercury

Both use Moral and Group Definition rules from Lightning Strike Companion.

MERCHANT GUILD SECURITY CORPS FLEET

Guild Fleet Types

- Transit Fleet are composed of Solar Sail or Magsail Ship only
- Dispatch Fleets are composed of non Solar/Magsail ships
- All Cargo Ships halve their TV for building a Fleet
- **Line Ships:** Can have two Erel, Bricriu, Inari Q-Ships for every five Support ships
- **Carrier:** Can have two Inari Q-Ship Carrier for every five Support Ships
- **Heavy Ships:** Can have one Hachiman Destroyer or Ophanim/Seraphim Q-Barge for every ten Support Ships
- **Support Ships:** Can have any of the following: Ophanim/Seraphim, Caravan, Inari, or Ebiiru Ships
- **Basic Units:** Can have any of the following: Hellhounds, Falconers, Apollo, Hoplite, and Agares
- **Command Units:** Can have one Hector and an additional for every 5 Basic Units
- **Special-Duty Units:** Can have one Brimstone, Explorer or Defender for every three Basic Units
- **Elite Units:** Can have one Bael or Vindicator for every ten Basic Units

Equipment Availability

Common

- **Standard Units:** Melee Weapons, Ablative Armour, Shields, EW Pod, Booster Pack, Vernier Module, Sentry Pod, Anti-Missile System, Snoopy Pod
- **Exo-Suits:** Booster Pack, Shields, Toolkits
- **Ships:** EW Rig, Repair Bots, Diogenes System, Decoy Pod

Restricted

- **Standard Units:** All Drone Racks, Battle Arms, Beam Cannon, Swarms, All Missiles, HARM, Assault Railgun, Target Designator
- **Exo-Suits:** Claymores, Target Designator
- **Ships:** Heat-Resistant Armour, Target Designator

Experimental

- Executor Co-pilot

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LIGHTNING STRIKE ADDITIONS

Q-SHIPS

- **Inari Q-Ships:** Use the Q-Ship rules in the Lightning Strike Companion for these ships. Carriers trade the Cargo Point not for weapon but for Mars Exo-Crates.
- **Ophanim and Seraphim Q-Barges:** Can have Mars Small Modules at a cost of 15 Cargo Points and only 25% of their Cargo units can be converted to weapons, another 25% can be converted to Mars Exo-Crates.

MERCURY ARMED FORCES

- **Line Ships:** Can have any number of Swords: Erel, Throne, or Elohim
- **Carrier:** Can have one Malakhim for every 5 Line Ships taken
- **Heavy Ships:** Can have one Nephilim or Cherubim for every 3 Line Ship taken, can take any Erel, Throne, Cherubim or Elohim Wing for each Basic Unit of that name taken
- **Support Ships:** Can have any Ophanim and can have one Angelica for every ten Line Ships to a max of 3 Angelicas
- **Basic Units:** Can have any number of the following pair: Brimstone, Lilith, Hellhound, and Agares
- **Command Units:** Can take a pair of Astaroth or Command Bael for every ten Basic Unit Pair
- **Special-Duty Units:** Can have a pair of Asmodeus or Mammon for every five Basic Unit Pair
- **Elite Units:** Can have a pair of Bael for every two Special Duty Pair

Equipment Availability

Common

- **Standard Units:** Swarms, All Missiles, HARM, Assault Railgun, Melee Weapons, Target Designator, Ablative Armour, Shields, EW Pod, Booster Pack, Vernier Module, Sentry Pod
- **Exo-Suits:** Booster Pack, Claymore, Shields, Target Designator
- **Ships:** Diogenes System, Heat-Resistant Armour, Decoy Pod

Restricted

- **Standard Units:** All Drone Racks, Anti-Missile System, Battle Arms, Snoopy Pod, Beam Cannon
- **Exo-Suits:** Toolkit
- **Ships:** EW Rig, Repair Bots, Target Designator

Experimental

- Advanced Fire Control, Executor Co-pilot

Note: use the Erel Wing component for all Ship Wing components, The Ship in Brackets is the actual profile of the Ship Sword component and weapons of ship.

MERCURY SHIPS

Mercury has developed a varying number of Ships based on the performance of other nations Ships. These ships perform as well as the ships they came from but with one minor change, all of these ships have Magsail components known as Wings. This tow's the actual ship which is referred to as a Sword; this allows Mercury Armed Forces to use Ophanim to transport equipment and personnel to their Belt Colonies and Stations at a reduced cost.

- Erel Corvette
- Throne Frigate (Corsair Frigate)
- Cherubim Cruiser (Chieftain Escort Cruiser)
- Elohim Destroyer (Athena Destroyer)
- Malakhim Carrier (Birmingham Assault Carrier)
- Nephilim Battleship
- Angelica Fleet Support Ship (Detroit Fleet Support Ship)

Note: Chieftain loses their Venus Perk, Stealth and replaces their CMM with a Drone Bay I-II (Rate 2, Reload 2) for -10TV.

MERCURY EXO-ARMOUR

Like Mercury's Ships the Exo-Armour the MAF is fielding is licensed designs that the MAF felt would be beneficial to them. Thou these Exo-Armour designs need to be modified to deal with the Sun Heat and Radiation. These minor modifications allowed the MAF to label these designs under a different name and Patent the Modification process and shape. MAF is currently looking over other Exo-Armour Designs to apply this technique to.

- HA-101 Brimstone
- HA-102 Bael
- HA-103 Lilith (Explorer)
- HA-104 Asmodeus (Defender)
- HA-105 Astaroth (Hector)
- HA-106 Mammon (Vindicator)

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

LIGHTNING STRIKE ADDITIONS

Modification for Lightning Strike: Pirates

PIRATE FLEETS

- **Line Ships:** Can have one of these for every 2 Support Ships: Inari Q-Ship, Ebiiru Q-Ship
- **Carrier:** Can have one number of Intrepid Transports
- **Heavy Ships:** Can have one of the following for every 2 Line Ships: Bricriu, or Thunderbolt
- **Support Ships:** Can have any number of Caravan, Inari, or Ebiiru Ships
- **Basic Units:** Apollo, Hoplite, Minotaur, Hellhound, Wraith, Barracuda, or Lancer
- **Command Units:** Mentor
- **Special-Duty Units:** Syreen, Hector
- **Elite Units:** Explorer, Sensei

Equipment Availability

Common

- **Standard Units:** Melee Weapons, Ablative Armour, Shields, Booster Pack, Vernier Module
- **Exo-Suits:** Booster Pack, Claymore, Shields
- **Ships:** Diogenes System, Decoy Pod

Restricted

- **Standard Units:** All Drone Racks, Anti-Missile System, Battle Arms, Beam Cannon
- **Exo-Suits:** Toolkit, Target Designator
- **Ships:** EW Rig, Repair Bots, Target Designator

Experimental

- Advanced Fire Control

Modification for Lightning Strike: Venus

VENUS FLEETS

In Support Ships add Satrap Cargo Ship and Shan-Yu Cargo Ship to the list of ship allowed

CIVILIAN CVNA SHIPS

Satrap Cargo Ship 60TV

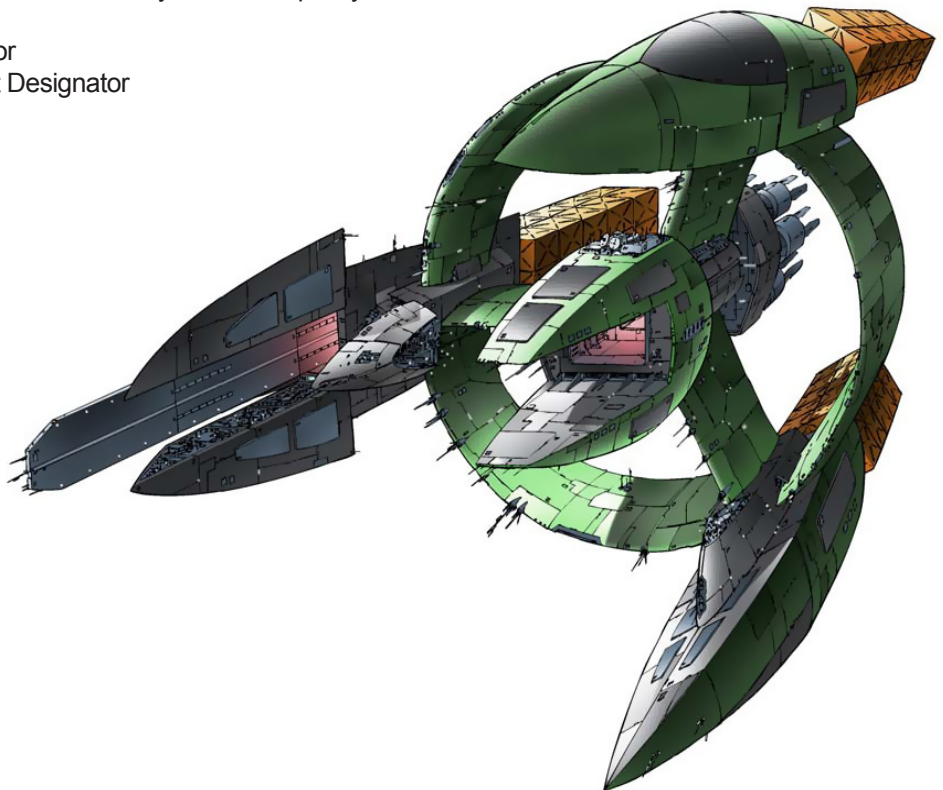
Use the Satrap Transport Carrier with the following modifications:

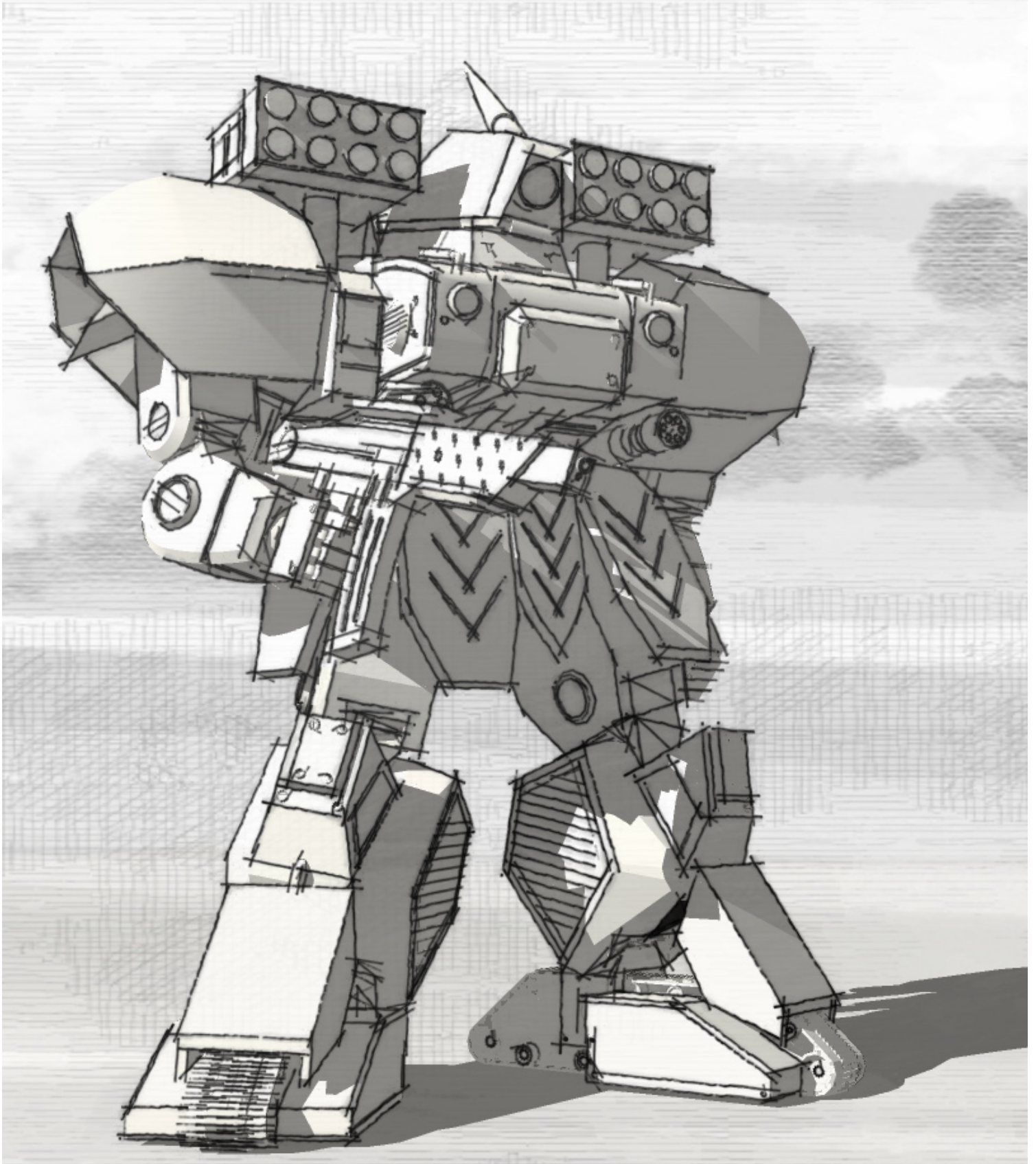
Remove CMMs, Missile Bay, and Drones. Reduce Hull, Drive, and Hanger armour to 12/24/36, Add 3 Cargo locations with 25 Cargo Units to each. Note: Hanger no longer has Cats in their notes and Bays are reduced to 6, Ship Vehicle Capacity is 12, location 4 Cargo is increased to 75.

Shan-Yu Cargo Ship 70TV

Use the Shan-Yu Battlecruiser with the following modifications:

Remove CMMs, Missile Bay, P. Beam, and Drones. Reduce Hull, Drive, and Hanger armour to 15/30/45, Add 4 Cargo locations with 75 Cargo Units to each. Note: Hanger no longer has Cats in their notes and Bays are reduced to 6, Ship Vehicle Capacity is 12.





Heavy Gear Blitz is an engaging miniatures game. One of the main appeals to players is the fast-paced nature of the battles. Between the turn limits and the Objectives in the core Blitz rules, most games see a flurry of fast and furious tactical action. Maneuver, area denial, lots of combat, electronic warfare - all of this makes Blitz a favorite for many players.

But fitting the battles of Terra Nova onto a Blitz battlefield called for some sacrifices from earlier fluff. Terra Nova as a world has been being built on for many years, and the depth of information available about the militaries of Terra Nova (or fighting to subjugate it) extends beyond the game table. Earlier supplements included a great many assets that simply don't fit into a Blitz game. Large artillery pieces were statted out in books like Tactical Field Support. Many of these represent fun and challenging miniature projects, but don't have a proper place on the battlefield currently.

Blitz does, however, include them in the abstract. Who's to say that when your WFP army calls in an Artillery Strike that there isn't a Damocles a few clicks behind the battlefield proper that is lobbing shells your direction? Or perhaps the SRA command allocated an Ostrogoth detachment in response to your request for Arty support. Instead of just rolling dice and saying that the shells came from somewhere, why not let your enemy look into the face of that which killed them? It's an opportunity to kitbash some of the amazing gears and tanks that Dream Pod 9 has come up with over the years, and to show that not only can you crush your enemies and see them driven before you, but you can do it with STYLE!

As a player since Heavy Gear was a card game back in the 90's, your humble author's favorite Strider was and shall ever remain the noble Damocles. Mammoths are intimidating and all, but nothing says "you will die" quite like a Mammoth chassis with a Northco KLG-675 Howitzer for a hat. And so, with intimidation in mind and desiring a source for those off board arty strikes, I set out to build a Damocles for the table.

I know a lot of folks fear scratchbuilding. That's why I like going the Industrial Lights and Magic route - you know, the guys that made Star Wars? One of the things that made the X-Wings and TIE Fighters so believable was the detail - and so much of that detail came from... existing models. If a bunch of guys in the 70's can kitbash cars, speedboats, and World War II tanks and make the iconic X-Wing, I think I can find the bits to make a Damocles.

In fact, it's pretty easy, as far as kitbashing goes!

I started with a stock Mammoth model from DP-9, and a 1/144 Mörser Karl-Gerät 040 model from Trumpeter.



The gun was the perfect size for the Howitzer. But I did want to make it look a little less obvious. So, I built the mount with the gun inverted, and trimmed off the "coathanger" truss and elevation mechanism. I also trimmed the mounting brackets down to fit in the space on the head of the Mammoth.

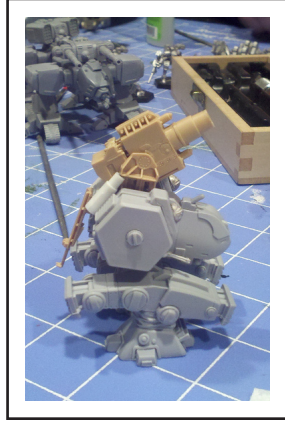
Gluing it to the head was simple, but it was missing something. While sketching out some options for a hydraulic-looking mount to elevate the gun, I had to change the lead on my pencil. ..



Sometimes the best ideas come to you from unexpected places!

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE RULE OF COOL MEETS BLITZ!

I test fit them with some Blue poster tack, and voila, instant hydraulics!



Since the Mammoth's arms are missing from the Damocles, I needed something to cover their absence. I took the easy path and rather than sculpting some nubbins and gizmos, I sawed off the detail from one of the Mammoth arms, and drilled out the arm mount on the shoulder piece to fit it. That and a few drilled rivet holes on the side, and the shoulder no longer looked empty.

A little paint, some details, some decals, and no longer are my enemies crushed by a nameless, faceless Artillery Roll. No, they are killed by Loki - bringer of Fire and Mischief.



Sometimes "kitbash" turns into a cut of a knife and a drop of glue - or in my case installing a magnet or two. That was the case with my quest for the elusive Stinger.

The Stinger was another favorite - basically a Camel truck with a big missile rack on the bed. Not intended to be a front-line combatant, it would sit back a few kilometers from the battle and fire artillery rockets into the main field of combat. Sort of like an Artillery Strike. It is an easy build, to boot.

I originally intended to grab some rocket packs from a Sagittarius or another rocket pack and scratch build a mount, but looking my bits box, I found some old Mechwarrior™ miniatures - including a Towed Arrow IV array - which had the perfect missile box, complete with hydraulic lifts.

Cutting it off the base, drilling a mount in the Camel and dropping in magnets took less than 5 minutes. Near instant Arty marker.



Looking ahead, I need some artillery for my MILICIA as well. I'm looking at the Ostrogoth (a Hun variant with an artillery gun) and Vandal (a Visigoth variant with 2 giant Hellbringer Artillery Missiles). Oh, and there ARE some fluff variants of the CEF/PAK Heavy Hovortanks to be built as well.

Looking around the bits box, there's lots of inspiration... So, what are YOU going to build?

Find all the latest official Pod material in the latest issue of Gear Up!

ISSUE 3

GEAR UP

THE OFFICIAL DREAM POD 9 MAGAZINE

HHT-90 OVERLOAD HOVERTANK
EXCLUSIVE SCULPTOR INTERVIEW

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AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Article Guidelines

The Aurora Magazine focuses on the worlds created by Dream Pod 9. As such, we are primarily interested in, but not limited to, articles dealing with SilCore and Blitz rules (variants, additions, explorations of the rules) and on fiction, mechanized designs, equipment and the like that draw on established DP9 universes. This does not mean, however, that articles that are generic in nature or that do not deal with unique or original material, only that the focus is on exploring Silhouette and it's attendant universes.

Any article that is a promotion piece for another product, be it an excerpt or a lead-in to another product, must be clearly defined as such within the article body.

No articles will be accepted that use another's Intellectual Property or Copyrighted material without an included signed permission to use said material.

Fiction may be a one-off or serial based, as desired. Please note that long works of fiction may be split into multiple pieces over multiple issues for length reasons; if you are writing a long story it is best to indicate breaks in the story (chapters, for example) that allow us to chose the best point to split the story, if necessary. In keeping with the nature of the magazine we ask that fiction be accompanied by Silhouette CORE or Blitz! rules detail of some kind, be it stats for characters or equipment in the story, game scenarios, mechanized designs, new rules or explanations of how to simulate aspects of the story using the Silhouette/Blitz rules. This is not a hard requirement, and you may request that another contributor be asked to create the rules support based on your story.

Aurora is also looking for original artwork. Art may be used to accompany the article and/or for the cover of the APA. Please see below for copyright information regarding images.

Submission Guidelines

All work for Aurora should be submitted in an .rtf (Rich Text Format) file. The text within should be in Arial 10pt font, and single-spaced. Hard returns should be used only to separate paragraphs (with a double hard return) or with bullet points and list items. Do not indent paragraphs. You may use italics, boldface or bullets where deemed necessary.

Tables may be included in the submission. Preferably, tables should be created with minimal lines between cells, instead using background colour and/or cell spacing for clarity. Tables may also be included in courier-font/fixed-formatting. Identify these kind of tables with the following: <<<Table>>>

The article's title should be clearly noted at the beginning of the file, followed by a short (less than 75 words) introductory text. This introductory text can either be a synopsis, a quote, story, etc. It will be used at the beginning of the article to 'set the stage'.

The file should end with the Author's name(s), contact information (if desired) and a short bio (optional). This information will be placed on a Contributing Author's page in the magazine.

Please spell check and proofread your article. English or American spellings may be used as desired.

Photos, drawings or images should be accompanied by photo credits as well as a brief description/caption for each photo (optional). Indicate within your article where the images are to be included like so: <<<Image_Filename.ext>>>. Images should be sent at a maximum of 150dpi for greyscale or colour images, 300dpi for black & white images (1-bit). Given the size of a page, images should be no larger than 7 by 7 inches (18 by 18 cm). If we need a higher resolution image, we will contact you. Images should be compressed with an appropriate method; please check the quality of your images before sending. If by including images the submission would grow over 2 megabytes in size, please place the images on an Internet-accessible server where we will download them (don't forget to tell us where they are located).

Copyright Guidelines

Quotes or information that are attributable to other sources are permissible in appropriate quantities, and should be identified/cited (including page numbers), preferably within the article. Be sure that each quote is written exactly as it appears in the original source.

If you wish to include photos/drawings/images with your article, please provide the photo credits (artist/photographer/illustrator and subject if applicable). You may only submit images for which you have obtained permission to include in your article.

All articles and images used by Aurora remain in the copyright of the original submitters. You, as the author, must consent to release the article for publication by Aurora, with the knowledge that Aurora will not provide any compensation other than what has been listed above, and that Aurora, as an online magazine, will be downloaded by third-parties in a PDF format. All work for Aurora is volunteer-based. Should DP9 decide at a later time to compile and sell articles within a contract will be negotiated with the author at that time.

The End Print

Please send all submissions to the following email address:

auroramag@gmail.com

Thank you everyone for your interest, and we look forward to seeing your submissions soon!

Deadline for Submissions for Issue #5.6: September 15th 2011

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ARTICLE SUGGESTIONS

Historical Articles

Under this broad category are pieces meant primarily for illuminating or detailing something within the game universe. This can be truly historical in nature (describing history), detailing a region, the language, customs, architecture, technical systems, corporations, social structure, music, and more, to name a few. Articles may either be written from a neutral point of view (impartial observer from above) or written 'in character', that is, in the manner such information may be presented if it were available in the game world. See the Historical Accuracy note, below (especially important for this category).

Fiction

Any story (narrative with characters) that takes place within the established DP9 game worlds falls under this category. See the Historical Accuracy note, below, and also see the submission guidelines for further requirements.

Modules

Also known as adventures, a written collection of plot, character, and location details used by the gamemaster to manage the plot or story in the DP9 RPGs. All manner of modules are open for submission, from espionage to social to military to a combination of all three. Module submissions must be detailed enough for the GM to run the entire adventure, including descriptions and dispositions (where applicable) of major NPCs, locations, accessories and story/plot. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Scenarios

These are the tactical equivalent of modules, an encounter between two (or more) factions set up for combat. A complete scenario will detail the background of the encounter (the why), the forces engaged (the who – what physical units at a minimum, regiment and designations to go the full way), the map and terrain (the where) the victory conditions (the how) and any special rules or conditions (the what). Scenarios should be designed to be balanced for each side, either via the types/numbers of units or through special circumstances or conditions. If the scenario is not balanced this must be mentioned in the background. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Note: Historical Accuracy

Aurora is committed to accuracy within the established DP9 worlds. All articles that take place 'within' the game world should be checked for its accuracy within the established timeline, faction dispositions, available equipment, etc. Submitted articles will be run by the game world historians, so check your work! You may, however, submit your article clearly marked as "Alternate History" and if published the article too will bear this mark. Be sure, if you submit this way, to provide in the background all that is necessary to describe what has changed.

Designs

New mechanical designs/vehicles/ships for use in the DP9 worlds. Designs must be legal and use either the latest SilCore rules (including all errata and the FAQ) or Blitz rules. Please indicate which design rules were used. Mechanical designs should fill a void that is not already covered by another unit. Background and a description must be included with the design, while artwork is optional and preferred. See the Historical Accuracy note, above.

Artwork

Aurora accepts all artwork for consideration, no matter the media type (rendering, sketch, painting, etc) within the rules set herein. Miniature photographs will also be accepted (dioramas encouraged!). Artwork must relate to an established DP9 universe and be easily identified as such. Artwork with nudity, racial undertones, sexism or sex will not be considered. See the submission guidelines on how to submit images.

House Rules

Original rules for the Silhouette/Blitz! system and modifications to existing rules. All rules submittals must include an explanation of the rule's purpose, the rules themselves clearly written, and an example of the rule in play.

Note: Blitz! Rules

House Rules covering existing Blitz! Rules will be limited. New Rules covering areas of the game not explicitly contained in the existing rules (as found in the Blitz! line of books) may be submitted freely. House Rules that modify or replace the written Blitz! ruleset (as found in the Blitz! line of books) will be forwarded to the line developer for review and comment. They will then contact you if the idea may proceed forward. Note that this applies only to the Blitz! line -- rules may be freely submitted for any other SilCore game.

Tactics

Have you won countless battles? Have a strategy you would like to share? Write a tactics article. Usually this type of article will be in a step-by-step (or turn by turn) format to illustrate the tactic. An introduction and conclusion is required to create a complete package and to convey to the reader where the tactic is applicable and how it came about.

Miniatures/Modeling

Any article on preparing miniatures, painting, terrain making, sculpting, foliage techniques, etc will be accepted. Photographs and/or diagrams are strongly encouraged.