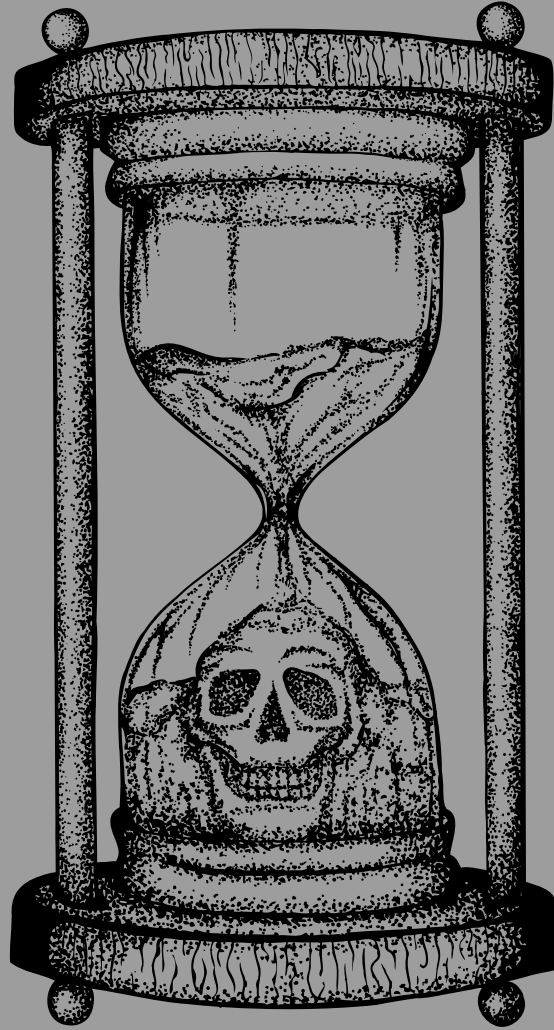


T-MINUS 80



A BATTLETECH SCENARIO



CONFLICT BACKGROUND

During the Word of Blake Jihad, basic humanity took a back seat to whatever cause the combatants of that dark time believed in. The Word of Blake opened the floodgates on scientific progress with little consideration to the consequences, rushing out technologies that were as deadly to their users as they were to their enemies, such as the direct neural interface system.

Helping this scientific progress was an entire army of scientists and spies, some forced to work under duress, others embracing to be able to work free of the morality that most other employers would force upon them. One scientist such as this was Dr. Weiyu Yeclaw. A brilliant mind focusing on the field of cybernetics and focusing on building true man-machine interfaces, she found Blakist funding and support for her research invaluable. Her benefactors found this co-operation to their benefit and moved Dr. Yeclaw to Blacksite 28, located on the supposedly dead planet of Lockdale.

Abandoned during the Amaris civil war following the deployment of multiple biological, chemical and nuclear devices, Lockdale was considered to be a dead world. However, with the passage of centuries, some life would return. It would not be worth the effort to re-colonize the world fully, but was the perfect location for a smaller test site for experiments that would be considered unsavory on a more populated location. Thus, Blacksite 28 was built in 3068.

BLACKSITE 28

On an already tainted world, testing new technologies could hardly make the planet any worse. With test subjects provided by the ongoing Jihad, Blacksite 28 was home to several experiments and new technologies, some of which could become a wunderwaffe for the Blakist forces.

Understandably, very little information of what was going on within the facility's walls leaked outside of Blacksite 28. Guarded by several stationary turrets and a Level II of the Word of Blake Militia, any prospective pirate raid or expeditionary house force could be repelled for long enough for researchers and the fruits of their labor to escape off-world.

However, no secret can remain so forever. Captured communications, painstakingly decrypted by Department of Military Intelligence operatives of the Federated Suns illuminated the situation on Lockdale. What the DMI uncovered was alarming, and plans for destroying the facility were soon put into motion.

A planetary assault would fail. A force large enough to take the facility fast enough would give the Blakists too much time to retreat before battle could be joined, and a force any smaller would be repelled or held back by the Militia defenders. With these considerations in mind, Operation Thunderstruck was set into motion in 3070.

OPERATION THUNDERSTRUCK

A small force would be deployed on-world, far enough from the location of Blacksite 28 and its defenders. Armed with a platform for firing cruise missiles, this force would then proceed to destroy the facility with a 'mech-sized projectile before detection, like a stroke of lightning, leaving the facility and its secrets destroyed in a smoking crater.

A simple and effective plan, AFFS forces set out in March of 3070. However, unknown to the commanding officer of the operation, the Ministry of Information, Intelligence and Operations had other plans for the facility.

DR. YECLAW'S DEFECTION

While Operation Thunderstruck was set into motion, high-ranking MIIO officers had established contact with Dr. Yeclaw. Whether she had grown a conscience or feared retribution in case the Jihad took a turn for the worse, she negotiated her safety, protection and future employment within the Federated Suns in return for putting her research into use for the good of House Davion.

However, MIIO couldn't risk the failure of Operation Thunderstruck by mounting a raid on the facility. A daring, nearly suicidal plan was then crafted.

The wealth of information and insight into Blakist technologies provided by the defecting scientist was considered worth the risk. A small 'mech force would attack the facility moments before the cruise missile's impact, acting as a diversion for a platoon of infantry to retrieve Dr. Yeclaw.

A hastily built stealth prototype of the ubiquitous Maxim hover APC was built for the mission, hopefully allowing for the safe retrieval of Dr. Yeclaw while the 'mechs kept the defenders preoccupied and destroyed the stationary defenses.

With the missile already burning towards its destination, the MIIO-employed 'mechs rush towards the station, alerting the patrolling Blakist Militia to engage...

"What do you suppose they've got in there?" Corporal Harrison asked, kicking his feet up onto the dashboard of his vehicle, watching the missile he had just launched shrink down to a speck of light. Somewhere, far out of his reach, someone was going to have a very bad day. He smiled at the thought.

"Frankly, buddy? I don't want to know. If they'd rather see it buried like this, they must have a good reason for it back in New Avalon." Private Sundholm replied, idly listening to the voices on the radio, confirming that the launch was successful. They'd be packing up and leaving soon. He was glad to be done with this dustbowl of a planet. "Wonder why they don't solve more wars like this, though?" he idly pondered.

"You didn't hear this from me..." Harrison leaned in, conspirationally. "But I heard from my buddy up at HQ, who's got a friend at MIIO, that the DMI rated this mission as 'suicidal' with a 20% chance of success..." He told his mortified friend before turning back to try and re-locate the missile burning away...

GAME INFORMATION

SCENARIO OBJECTIVES

The objective for the attacker is to extract Dr. Yeclaw from Blacksite 28 and visually confirm it's destruction once the Cruise Missile from Operation Thunderstruck hits.

To complete these objectives, Dr. Yeclaw must be alive and inside a player-controlled vehicle or 'mech at the end of turn 8. This also counts as completed if the unit containing Dr. Yeclaw has exited from the southern map edge by this time. Additionally, atleast one player-controlled unit must remain on the battlefield and have line-of-sight to the hexes that contained Blacksite 28 at the end of turn 8. If both of these conditions are met, the attacker wins the scenario.



On the dead world of Lockdale, the apex predator of the battlefield stalks in the shadow of Blacksite 28

FORCE CREATION

Forces for both sides should be built with units available in the year 3070.

It is recommended that the Attacker consist of one or two players, while the Defender's forces are controlled by the Gamemaster.

Attacker: The Attacker's force consists of two lances of units, Alpha and Bravo ('mechs are recommended). Alpha lance can be up to 8000BV. Bravo lance can be up to 6000 BV in value. Players are free to choose if their forces are Mercenaries, House units, etc.

Additionally, the player controlling Alpha lance gains control of the Experimental Stealth Maxim with a Gunnery value of 4 and a Piloting value of 4, inside of which is a Platoon of foot infantry (Gunnery 4). See the end of this document for the record sheet for the Maxim. These do not count against the 8000BV limit.

Alpha Lance should be built for the main assault on Blacksite 28. Bravo Lance should be able to support Alpha Lance and react to any developments on the battlefield.

Defender: The Defender's force consists of a Word of Blake Blakist level II up to 12,500BV in value, in addition to three static defense turrets. The defense turrets do not count against the BV limit.

SPECIAL RULES

Forced Retreat: The rules for Forced Retreat are not in effect for the Defender. For the attacker, once 50% of their force is crippled or destroyed, their crippled 'mechs are under the rules for Forced Retreat.

Tactical Operations: The scenario is designed to be played with the following special rules from Tactical Operations: Advanced Rules:

- Sprinting (p. 16)
- Careful Stand (p.20)
- Floating critical rule (p. 75)
- Active probes (p. 98)
- Autocannon optional fire modes (p. 98)
- ECM suites (p. 98-100)
- Machine gun rapid-fire mode (p. 100)
- Hot-loaded Missiles (p. 101)

Initiative Deck: The following rules from the Battletech Initiative Deck are also recommended:

- Unequal Number of Units (p.2-3)

Blacksite 28: Blacksite 28 is the building located in the top left corner of Mapsheet Oasis. Every hex has a CF of 80 and is considered Heavy. Hex 0303 contains a loading bay, and can be entered by ground vehicles without the normal penalties for entering a building hex.

RECOVERING DR. YECLAW

Dr. Yeclaw is located in hex 0303 within Blacksite 28. To recover her, there are two options, the Primary and Backup method.

Primary method: Have the Maxim unboard it's infantry platoon in hex 0303 to secure the area and locate Dr. Yeclaw. After boarding back up onto the Maxim on any turn afterwards, Dr. Yeclaw is considered to be carried by the Maxim as part of the infantry platoon.

Backup Method: If the Maxim is destroyed or rendered immobile, any 'mech unit in the Attacker's force can enter hex 0303 and order Dr. Yeclaw to enter their cockpit via their 'mechs external speakers. The 'mech needs to spend their next turn in hex 0303 but is allowed to spend MP turn around or stand up. After this, Dr. Yeclaw is considered to be carried in the 'mechs cockpit.

If the unit carrying Dr. Yeclaw is destroyed and she survives, treat her like an ejected pilot, who can be picked up following the rules for ejected pilots. See Tactical Operations: Advanced Rules (p. 164-165).

UNIT SPECIFIC RULES

Experimental Stealth Maxim: In addition to the normal rules following Stealth Armor, the Defender may not choose the Maxim as a target for attacks unless it is the closest unit to the attacking unit.

Defense Turrets: Treat the defense turrets as one-hex level 2 Medium buildings with a CF of 40. Each has two LB-X AC /5's with one ton of regular and one ton of cluster ammunition. They have a Gunnery of 5 and will always fire at the closest valid target. If their line of sight to the target passes through an enemy ECM field, add an additional +1 to hit modifier.

AREA OF OPERATIONS



DEPLOYMENT

Mapsheets used: The scenario uses mapsheets Oasis, Desert #3, Badlands #1 and Barren Lands #2, placed as pictured.

Attacker Deployment: Attacking units enter in on the first turn of the game from the South edge of the map. Alpha lance enters from Mapsheet Badlands #1. Bravo lance enters from Mapsheet Barren Lands #2, counting the first full hex they enter for movement point expenditure.

Defender Deployment: At least 50% of the Defender's units are placed within the top nine rows of either mapsheet Oasis or Desert #3, patrolling the area around Blacksite 28. Up to 50% of the Defender's units are hidden using Hidden Deployment rules anywhere within Mapsheet Oasis or Desert #3.

Turret defenses: The Defender places three turrets on the playing field in hexes 0209, 0815 and 1203 of Mapsheet: Oasis. See the previous page for the gameplay effect of the turrets.

END OF GAME

At the start of the Weapon Attack Phase on turn 8, hex 0303 of mapsheet Oasis will be struck with a Cruise Missile 120, the rules for which can be found in Interstellar Operations: Alternate Eras. This will destroy Blacksite 28 and replace it with Rubble. At the end of this turn, the demoralized Blakist forces will retreat, ending the game.



DR. WEIYU YECLAW

GUARDIAN LEVEL II

WORD OF BLAKE MILITIA - LOCKDALE TASK FORCE

While hardly able to fight against a concentrated assault, the Guardian Level II is more than a match for any incursion towards Blacksite 28, keeping it safe for the dropship stationed in orbit to swoop in, either joining in the defense to drive off any assailants in a withering hail of firepower or, should the enemy be too numerous, pull back the staff and research data from the facility while the Level II covers the retreat.

Led by the fanatical Phantom Adept Cain, a Manei Domini operative, the rest of the operatives are chosen from the WoB Militia units and sworn to secrecy about what they have seen about Blacksite 28. With access to the most advanced technology in the Inner Sphere, trained in using their Improved C3 network and with knowledge of the terrain, the Lockdale Task Force was the main reason for committing to the risky Operation Thunderstruck over a more conventional 'mech assault.

KING CRAB KGC-008

PHANTOM ADEPT TAU CAIN (4 / 5)

Adept Cain is a true believer in the Word of Blake and the betrayal of the ideals of the Star League by the Successor States have hurt him deeply. So deeply, that he cared little for the modifications he volunteered to undertake to better serve the Blakist cause. He has no desires, no motivation outside of serving the Master.

This means that for the Word of Blake, he is a reliable operative who won't complain even at a mission that some glory-seeking 'mechwarrriors would consider to be a punishment, despite it's vital importance. It also means he's the first in line to test out new designs, such as the KGC-008, utilizing some of the latest, best technologies that the Word has to offer for it's warriors.



CYBERNETIC ENHANCEMENTS

Adept Cain has the Artificial Pain Shunt, Cybernetic Vehicular Direct Neural Interface and Cybernetic Myomer Implants, Dermal Armor augmentations.

THUG THG-12E

ADEPT MORREN (4 / 5)

Nominally the second in command of the Level II, Adept Morren harbors great ambitions. The third son of a minor noble, there always was little hope of him getting anything from his family, but the Jihad has caused a great upset in the powers of the Inner Sphere. He hopes to capitalize on this opportunity, serving the Word of Blake and rising through the ranks, perhaps even being rewarded with a fiefdom of his own...

Or if it comes to that, offering his family's estates for the Master's forces to use. What his father or older brothers have to say about that matter to him little.

SHADOW HAWK SHD-11CS

ACOLYTE MATTOM (4 / 5)

Unlike most Solaris gladiators, Acolyte Mattom saw the Blakist invasion of Solaris VII as a career opportunity. Having seen some of their promotional propaganda, he made contact, offering up his services as both a showman and a warrior for the cause. The fact that he had become recently dispossessed and that debtors were on his case about repayments for his 'mech had nothing to do with this, surely.

Average as far as 'mechwarriors go, Acolyte Mattom has greatly enjoyed using the C3i technology of the Blakists. Shots that would have been near-impossible suddenly become easy, allowing for him to pull off showy maneuvers and actually succeed in them, just like he had always wanted to do on Solaris.

GALLEON GAL-103

ACOLYTE AKI (4 / 5)

A former mechanic, Acolyte Aki's continued interest on new technologies has led to his career shift. It is one thing to fix up and install machines and another altogether to use them yourself.

While not the most accomplished vehicle commander, Aki's exemplar use of the sensors and ECM suite of her vehicle have made her unit the winner in many a simulation, being able to pinpoint the enemy force without even being noticed before it is too late.

LRM CARRIER (WOB) #1

ACOLYTE AZAZEL (4 / 5)

Acolyte Azazel is getting rather tired of the monotonous routine of guarding the Blacksite. On a dead world, entertainment options are severely limited, and as her task consists of waiting in ambush if anyone is foolish enough to attack, she's bored out of her mind, listening to the same, tired jokes by the others in the vehicles crew. She's almost willing to volunteer for a VDNI augmentation just so she could have some peace and quiet!

LRM CARRIER (WOB) #2

ACOLYTE BOTTAS (4 / 5)

Having joined the Militia after he bought into the propaganda and falsified news of the Word, Acolyte Bottas honestly wishes he was assigned somewhere else. He tries to not let it show, but the heavy augmentations of Adept Cain unsettle him greatly. The Adept's overly zealous manner and habits do not help, either.



GUARDIAN LEVEL II, WORD OF BLAKE MILITIA

Phantom Adept Tau Cain studied the transmitted feed from the sentry guns. A single lance of attackers. Why? Was this an attempt of a recon-in-force mission or an opportunistic raid? He thought he saw movement in the edge of the cameras vision, but once he focused, there was nothing there. With a thought, he sent out an order for Acolyte Mattom to flank around and investigate.

The Dropship had already been called down, and evacuation was being prepared. Within five minutes, the facility could be emptied, the researchers and key data secured. The escape plan was well-planned and rehearsed. There would be some loss of research, of course, but that was acceptable. All he needed to do with his Level II was to delay the enemies until then.

He willed his 'mech down to a squat, feeling the cool water surround his body, less and less of the surface visible until he had fully submerged himself within the water near the facility. With the direct-neural interface, he felt as one with his King Crab, melding his own metallic, augmented body with the hundred-ton mass of one of the deadliest warmachines available to the Word of Blake. A chuckle emitted from the 'mechs speakers, raising some bubbles on the surface. The Heavy Guards would regret coming here.

BATTLE LANCE

DAVION HEAVY GUARDS

When the Federated Suns need to ensure victory, one unit they will call upon are the Heavy Guards. Originally bodyguards to the First Prince, they've been in the thick of it, scoring many a major victory for House Davion ever since the Second Succession War.

While not the traditional first choice for an operation done orchestrated by MIIO, there could be no other choice for this operation than a lance detached from this elite regiment. As professional as they come, the 'mech-warriors of the Heavy Guards understand that sometimes, it is better for them to shut up and follow orders, even if they are to assault a fortified, heavily guarded position that is about to be bombarded into a crater by another force on the same side. In this case, the old idiom of following their commanding officer into hell itself might not be that far off the mark.

BATTLEMASTER BLR-ID

LEFTENANT FRED BANNON (3 / 4)

Despite his initial dislike of the cloak-and-dagger nature surrounding this assignment, Lieutenant Bannon understands his duty as a soldier of the AFFS. While he'd prefer proper intel and a company of 'mechs instead of only his lance and some rag-tag band of mercs to assist, he'll do what must be done.

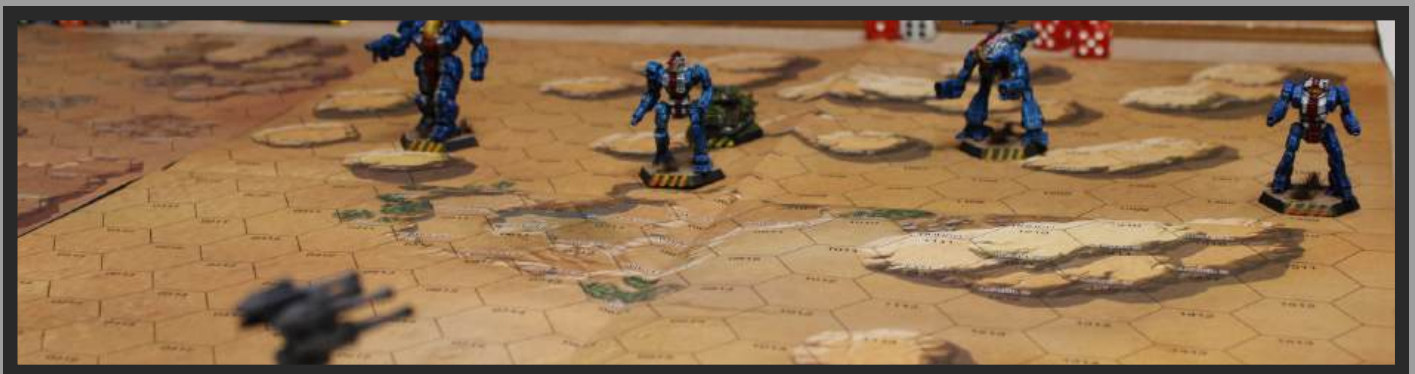
Driving fear into the hearts of enemies of House Davion, Bannon's Battlemaster has charged through enemy lines more times than he cares to remember. With luck, this time won't be any different.

MARAUDER MAD-5D

SERGEANT RAE FORREST (3 / 4)

Sergeant Forrest has been fighting in the Chaos March ever after the Clan Invasion. Against Liao forces, against pirates and against upstart lords from minor realms forgotten to history. Now, she fights against the religious fanatics of the Word of Blake.

Depressed that the promises of Comstar as the guardians of technology turned out to be false and the atrocities committed during the Jihad,, she keeps fighting as it is the only thing she knows to do at this point.



The automated sensors of the Blakist turrets notice the approaching Davion 'mech force...

CENTURION CN9-D

PFC OSSIAN GRAVES (3 / 4)

For PFC Graves, the reason for participating in this operation is personal. A native to Kawich, word of losing that system to the Blakists last year hurt him deeply. He has sworn to avenge those lost in the war.

He hasn't admitted it to anyone, but he couldn't care less whether or not the scientist survives. She just wants to see the facility go up in flames up close.

ENFORCER ENF-5D

PRIVATE JACK HARRISON (3 / 4)

Private Harrison considers his posting in the Heavy Guards to be the pinnacle of military achievement, and rightfully so. While not officer material, his skills as a 'mechwarrior have been thoroughly tested in the fires of the Blakist Jihad.

Replacing a lost veteran in the lance and piloting his Enforcer, Hannison hopes to prove himself worthy of the honor of the unit and the legacy 'mech left for him.

MAXIM HOVER APC - EXPERIMENTAL STEALTH VARIANT

AGENT ANGELICA FROST (4 / 5)

A field agent with an excellent record and plenty of experience in hovercraft operation, Agent Frost is in charge of extracting Dr. Yeclaw from the facility. At her disposal is a hand-picked platoon of commandos, who have drilled this extraction into perfection. She just hopes that the promises about the capabilities of the re-engineered Liao stealth armor are true and not just there for marketing purposes...



BATTLE LANCE, DAVION HEAVY GUARDS

CAVALRY LANCE

MARNON'S MAULERS MERCENARY COMPANY

Marnon's Maulers aren't a well-known Mercenary Company, which is fine by them. MIIO knows who they are, and they prefer hiring a unit that knows how to keep a low profile. Their low profile also means that the company is a safe haven for those down on their luck, on the run or needing a shot at redemption. Often, the best 'mechwarriors have run into trouble elsewhere, but the Maulers welcome them among their ranks.

Led by the somewhat eccentric Captain Ellis Marnon, the mercenary has devised a system of training as pairs rather than lances, each training until they can pull off even the most complicated maneuvers with their pair and trusting them with their life. So far, this method has not failed to turn even the most rebellious pirate into a 'mechwarrior worthy of fighting alongside the rest of the company.

FLASHMAN FLS-8K

CAPTAIN ELLIS MARNON (4 / 4)

A savvy individual, Captain Marnon figured that on the flooded mercenary market, he'd go for the road less traveled, taking the contracts too hot to be handled via official channels. Originally this meant jobs little better than piracy, but once he finally got a legitimate contract with MIIO, he cultivated the relationship with his employer, ensuring that the Maulers would be a go-to for the Davion's intelligence agency before they'd even need to post the contract offer publicly.

Some doubt that a no-name mercenary like him could find success doing this. To these doubters, he points out that he's piloting a refurbished Star-league era vintage Flashman and somehow always seems to be 'on the list' to whatever social occasion might be occurring on the world he's on.

WOLVERINE WVR-6R

LIEUTENANT 'OLD MAN' PIAM (3 / 5)

Lieutenant Piam climbed into the cockpit of his Wolverine as a fresh recruit in the AFFS during the third Succession War, and has been plying the trade of a 'mechwarrior since. While getting on in years just like his 'mech, the wealth of experience he brings to the Maulers is much appreciated by those serving with him. His aim is just as good as it was back then, and beating the 'old man' in a simulator duel is considered a major achievement amongst 'mechwarriors of the company.

His Wolverine still has some of it's original parts left, but has been rebuilt over a dozen times. Piam started his career in that 'mech and has sworn to end it in it as well. Some wonder how that hasn't happened already.

SHADOW HAWK SHD-5S

MECHWARRIOR BURANSON HAYES (4 / 4)

A fan of the advancing technology and rediscovery of old ones, Mechwarrior Hayes pilots the Maulers most advanced 'mech, the Shadow Hawk 5S "Scout"-model, fixing most of the weaknesses of the venerable platform for a 'mech that's perfect for scouting and electronic warfare.

Knowing that his enemy this time is the Word of Blake has him excited at the prospect of salvaging some advanced technology, pitting his advanced electronics and skills at sensor manipulation against the Blakists yet worried that his skills might not be enough to keep his lancemates safe.

VALKYRIE VLK-0D3

MECHWARRIOR KIA CUNNINGHAM (4 / 4)

Kia Cunningham has heard every single joke about getting Killed In Action. At first it was annoying, but as the numbers of missions she safely returned from, it started to become endearing and her friends in the company are always ready to celebrate the announcement that Kia's not KIA.

Helping her achieve this goal is her new Valkyrie. It's previous Blakist owner shot her last 'mech out from under her before being forced to eject, himself, so it made perfect sense for her to salvage and refurbish the Valkyrie for her own use. So far, she's been enjoying the increased mobility over her previous Centurion.



CAVALRY LANCE, MARNON'S MAULERS

BATTLE REPORT

A MAD DASH TOWARDS DEATH

Before gameplay began, the two Blakist LRM carriers hid themselves in mapsheet Desert #3 in hexes #0405 and 0210, offering them perfect firing spots once the Davion forces closed in. Adept Cain's King Crab was also hidden, hull down within the surface of the Oasis in hex #0605.

The initial turns had very little maneuvering from the Attackers, mainly focused on closing in the distance to the facility as fast as possible. The Davion Centurion shielding the Maxim, flanked by the Battlemaster and Marauder whilst the Davion enforcer swung wide on the western flank. Focusing more on speed than fighting, the Davion forces mostly took pot shots at the stationary defense turrets, which returned fire, scoring only minor damage on the Centurion's armor.

To the east, the mercenary Maulers used their superior mobility to overtake the Davion forces, moving to engage any hidden Blakists before they could move in to face the Davion lance, heedless of any possible ambush to themselves. The decision paid out in the end as only a lone Shadow Hawk took pot shots at them.



His fears confirmed, Acolyte Mattom spots an entire mercenary Lance rapidly approaching from the eastern flank, with only his Shadow Hawk between them and the hidden LRM carriers...

THE HEAVY GUARD FALTERS

On turn 3, the Blakist forces sprung the first part of their ambush. The Davion Centurion came close enough for the first WoB LRM Carrier to reveal itself. With no ECM in play from the Heavy Guard, the LRM carrier was able to bring the full weight of its weapons to bear, cracking open the armor of the Centurion in both of its side torsos and right leg like an eggshell with 56 missiles on target as well as several laser hits from the Galleon. The rest of the Blakist forces brought their firepower to bear on lieutenant Bannon's Battlemaster. Both 'mechs were knocked off their feet, with only a single defense turret from the Blakist side being destroyed. As PFC Graves struggled to right his Centurion, he managed to touch off the ammunition storage of his 'mech. While the CASE saved his life, it did not save his 'mech.

The Mercenaries were left out-of-position, the Blakist machine hidden by the hill it had deployed by whilst Acolyte Mattom shifted to engage the Davion forces, rather than face the entire lance on his own.

With first blood scored on both sides, two of the Blakist units were still hidden. The Maxim was forced to divert itself towards the east and the protection of the Enforcer as its escort had blown up...



Acolyte Azazel's ambushing LRM carrier takes out the Davion enforcer almost single-handedly, unaware of the 'mech lance about to crash down on her position from the west.



While terribly out-of-position on turn 3, the Maulers execute a perfect flanking maneuver on turn 4 to force the Blakists to re-deploy their more mobile assets in defense of the vulnerable LRM carriers, buying the heavy weapon platforms several turns during which to pound the Davion 'mechs to scrap.



THE MAULERS EARN THEIR PAYCHECK

On turn 4, The Mercenary lance swung around to engage the Blakists, forcing the remaining LRM carrier out of hiding so that it would have at least one turn of fire before being too close to the mercenary 'mechs, forcing the Blakist Shadow Hawk and Galleon to cover the vulnerable fire support vehicles. A lucky missile from the merc Valkyrie blew the engine out from the freshly revealed LRM carrier while the 'Old Man' inflicted heavy motive damage on the Galleon, leaving them easy prey for the next turns.

On the other side of the battlefield, adept Cain made his move, the King Crab rising from the depths to surprise the flanking Enforcer... Only to submerge under water again, failing its piloting check. Perhaps it was in the nature of the Crab-like 'mech to want to stay hidden in the water. The Enforcer could easily dispatch the second sentry turret, clearing the way for the Maxim to follow.

While the lighter Blakist elements did negligible damage to the mercenaries, the LRM carriers attacked the heavy Davion machines once more. Bannon's Battlemaster was once again ravaged by nearly a hundred LRMs, but thankfully, with the mercenary Shadow Hawk in position, some of their Artemis-guided missiles lost their lock. With only the Blakist Thug in range, Lieutenant Bannon and Sergeant Forrest savaged the Wobbie, but its armor still held.

With turn 5, the Blakist defense was thrown into disarray by the Mercenaries, the agile 'mechs easily maneuvering around the vehicles and the lone Shadow Hawk. Mechwarrior Hayes was able to use his ECM suite to cut the Blakist LRM carriers from the C3i network, buying precious time for the heavy Davion machines going against the Blakist Thug and King Crab, finally emerging from within the oasis.

Adept Cain failed to penetrate the Davion Marauders armor, however. And in a moment of glory, the flanking Enforcer's LB-10X AC hit home, its spread of shells hitting the battlemech's right knee joint with a critical hit, bringing the massive machine crashing down once again with a destroyed upper leg actuator. Two hits to the head were celebrated at first by the Davion 'mechwarrior, only to realize that the pilots augmentations meant that the 'mechwarrior would not die unless his cockpit was destroyed.

"Piam! That Galleon's the source of the counter-jamming! Don't let it get away!" Mechwarrior Hayes yelled, his lasers cutting the LRM carrier's tracks like they were rubber bands, immobilizing the vehicle. He pushed all power he could to his Guardian ECM, satisfied to see several missiles from the other carrier's salvo go haywire, flying off into the distance harmlessly.

He winced as he saw the rest of the salvo hit home, though. Messing with the electronics of the missiles could only do so much, he thought, watching the captain's Flashman menacingly aim its array of laser weaponry at the now-helpless machine...



The Mercenaries descend upon the Blakist vehicle forces, buying House Davion time to attack the heavy Blakist 'mechs. With 30 seconds left on the clock, the Maxim finally nears it's destination.



Dr. Yeclaw screamed and hit the floor as the Maxim crashed through a closed hangar door. Before it had even slowed to a halt, the Davion commandos rushed outwards in a hail of bullets, taking out the few militia guards of the facility and what other workers had been there. Shakily, she got up. She knew they would all have died anyway, but somehow, seeing such destruction up close did not sit well with her. Later, when she had time, she might have time to realize that this was the world she was helping create with her work, but right now, she held her hands up as one soldier approached. "Dr. Yeclaw?" he asked from behind his faceplate, leaving his expression unreadable.

"Ye-" she began to answer but was not given the time to do so, roughly grabbed by a shoulder and ushered out of the hangar and practically thrown into the infantry bay at it's back, the soldiers covering their retreat with grenades down the hallways leading to the hangar bay. In less than thirty seconds, she was on her way to escape certain death.

SECURING THE PACKAGE

With less than 30 seconds on the clock, the Maxim finally sped into the hangar, disgorging it's commando crew to secure the area and pick Dr. Yeclaw up. The closest Blakist 'mech, Cain's King Crab, could only get up and try to face it's tormentor, but could not do so before it had jumped behind him, the mercenary Shadow Hawk joining in but failing to penetrate the rear armor of the Assault 'mech. Rather than pay attention to it's tinier tormentors, the Blakist 'mech joined in on savaging the heavy Davion machines, finally bringing the Battlemaster down with heavy focused fire from itself and the two LRM carriers while the Thug dueled the Davion Marauder, which was rapidly overheating as it tried to score a killing blow.

The Mercenary lance was moving on to destroy the Blakist LRM carriers, but despite their thin armor and immobile status, the mercenaries took until the end of turn seven to destroy them and the Galleon, crushing armor from all over without managing to focus fire on one side of each vehicle. A lucky medium laser from the Valkyrie blew LRM carrier #2's ammo storage, while Marnon's Flashman's medium lasers worked through the left side of Carrier #1. The Blakist Shadow Hawk tried to stop this destruction but failed to inflict significant damage on any of the mercenary 'mechs.

The Galleon had tried to escape 'Old Man' Piam's Wolverine, but was immobilized. It did bring it's ECCM system closer, however. In an attempt of helping out the vehicle, Adept Morren's Thug turned his attention to the aging 'mech on turn 7, it's ER PPCs cutting one of it's legs clean off at the hip, which left him open for the Davion Marauder to blow it's Left Torso off before succumbing to massed LRM fire.

The mercenary Shadow Hawk and Davion Enforcer kept using their superior mobility to dance around the King Crab's heavy weaponry, keeping it occupied while the Maxim turned around, collecting the infantry back up with Dr. Yeclaw in tow, preparing to gun the engine...

The cool, modest warning by the Battlemech's onboard computer was laughable in the face of the cloud of missiles flying towards her 'mech, each an arrow of light striking her 'mech with explosive force. She leaned in, letting the impacts keep her from falling forward in a reckless maneuver.

Bannon had gone down moments earlier, the limbs of his Battlemaster barely hanging on to the nearly non-existent center of the 'mech. At least Bannon would live, though there was hardly anything left to salvage of his 'mech. Now, the LRM carriers attention was on her, and she was surprised that Bannon had stood for as long as he had. The onboard computer struggled to keep up with the sheer amount of damage indicators dancing on her 'mechs display. It was hardly a fair duel with the Blakist Thug, like this. Her heat was redlining, the Thug kicking her 'mechs right leg as she tried to juke past it's SRM salvoes. The armor still held. Barely.

With the kind of skill that had got her a position in the Heavy Guard, she used the kick's momentum to her advantage, allowing it to spin her 'mech around. Gyro screaming to keep her 'mech upright she backpedaled, raising her 'mechs arms up for a devastating alpha strike before the Thug could turn around. PPCs smashed through the vulnerable rear armor of the 'mech, leaving holes for the Marauders lasers to exploit as the Thug's left torso exploded outwards, sliced clean off. She kept firing, leaning into the constant missile fire to keep herself upright, her hip actuator locking up, leg actuator's losing control, engine coughing as missiles pounded it's shielding. Finally, the combination of heat and damage cooked off her SSRM ammo supply, her engine shutting down, yet her 'mech still stood, arms locked outwards in defiance.



Sergeant Forrest maneuvers her Marauder to protect her CO, but is too late. Maneuvering behind the Thug, she manages to blow it's Left Torso clean off before her 'mech is finally destroyed.



Adept Cain fails to keep the Enforcer in his sights, but helps take down the Davion Battlemaster, instead. Meanwhile, the LRM carriers are finally brought down by the Mercenaries, despite the Thug and Shadow Hawk's best attempts of taking some of the pressure for themselves.



T-MINUS ZERO

With the Blakist LRM carriers destroyed, the mercenaries moved forwards, aiming to destroy the Wobbie Shadow Hawk before it could join it's companions. Piam's Wolverine, unable to join, vented his frustration into the rear armor of the Galleon, destroying it. The Blakist Thug moved to assist his beleaguered leader, but failed to drive the mercenary 'mechs off with it's remaining two weapons systems.

Moving at maximum speed, the Maxim escaped from the facility, seconds before the impact of the cruise missile. The Davion Enforcer mere feet away from the edge of the blast zone, avoiding damage to his 'mech.

With the Blakists demoralized by their headquarters suddenly ceasing to exist and Dr. Yeclaw secured in the Maxim, both sides made a hasty retreat from the battlefield rather than risk their lives continuing to fight in a pointless engagement. The Federated Suns had achieved their objectives with the loss of three Battlmechs and no casualties.



Behind the low hill, the Maxim easily evades the remaining Blakists, who are more focused on the sudden, earth-shaking destruction of Blacksite 28 than the APC. Not wanting to keep trying their luck against the two assault 'mechs, the attackers disengage before the Blakist dropship arrives.

END RESULTS

BEGIN TALLY

MARNON'S MAULERS

FLASHMAN FLS-8K - DAMAGED

Right Leg damaged
Center Torso damaged
Approx. 40% of armor remaining

WOLVERINE WVR-6R - DAMAGED

Left Leg blown off
Left Torso damaged
SRM 6 damaged
Mechwarrior lightly injured
Approx. 30% of armor remaining

SHADOW HAWK SHD-5S - COMBAT READY

No internal damage
Approx. 60% armor remaining

VALKYRIE VLK-0D3 - COMBAT READY

No internal damage
No armor damage



DAVION HEAVY GUARDS

BATTLEMASTER BLR-ID - DESTROYED

Center Torso destroyed
Right Torso destroyed
Right Arm heavily damaged
Approx. 15% of armor remaining

MARAUDER MAD-5D - SALVAGEABLE

Left Arm damaged
Left Torso destroyed
Left leg damaged
Mechwarrior moderately injured
XL engine shut down
Approx. 10% of armor remaining

CENTURION CN9-D - SALVAGEABLE

Left Arm destroyed
Left Torso damaged
Right Torso destroyed
Right Arm blown off
XL engine shut down
Mechwarrior injured

ENFORCER ENF-5D - COMBAT READY

No internal damage
Approx. 80% of armor remaining

The initial impact of the cruise missile pierced through the south wall of the facility, penetrating deep before it's 'mech-sized payload exploded. The innards of the building were destroyed in an instant, the roof blown apart and the basement crushed under the pressure wave. The empty husk of the building was still for mere seconds before it shuddered, collapsing into the crater within itself the explosion had caused. There were no survivors.

WORD OF BLAKE

KING CRAB KGC-008 - DAMAGED

Right Torso damaged
Center Torso damaged
Right Upper Leg Actuator destroyed
Jump Jet destroyed
Approx. 70% of armor remaining

THUG THG-12E - DAMAGED

Left arm Blown off
Left Torso destroyed
SRM 6 damaged
Mechwarrior lightly injured
Approx. 40% of armor remaining

SHADOW HAWK SHD-IICS - DAMAGED

Left Arm heavily damaged
Left Shoulder destroyed
ER Medium Laser destroyed
Left Leg damaged
Right Torso damaged
Mechwarrior injured
Approx. 20% of armor remaining

GALLEON GAL-103 - DESTROYED

ER Medium Laser destroyed
Rear structure destroyed
Immobilized
Approx. 50% of armor remaining

LRM CARRIER (WOB) #1 - DESTROYED

Left structure destroyed
Immobilized
Approx. 35% of armor remaining

LRM CARRIER (WOB) #2 - DESTROYED

Ammo Explosion
Nothing remaining

END TALLY

AFTERMATH

With Dr. Yeclaw secured, the mission was deemed a success by MIIO. Having succeeded, it was easy to convince the DMI officers annoyed at this surprise operation that it had been the right call. With Yeclaw's knowledge of Blakist technology and especially cybernetics, several key technological advances could be accelerated by Davion scientists... Even if some doubted the ethics of rescuing a war criminal from rightful retribution, there was no arguing with results.

Due to the nature of the operation, no glory would be had by the Heavy Guard nor the mercenaries, but such was a soldier's lot sometimes. The mercenaries got a hefty paycheck and suffered no losses, which was all they could have wished for, honestly. The 'mechwarriors of the Heavy Guard would get replacement 'mechs and be sent out on their next assignment soon enough, the raid on Blacksite 28 just one of many conflicts the Davion elite unit had won.

As for the Blakists, it would be a long time before they'd find out about the purpose of the confusing raid, the loss of Blacksite 28 and it's personnel making it nearly impossible to find out what the Davion forces had been after before Dr. Yeclaw resurfaced, some years later.

While the Militia tankers had been slain, the 'mechwarriors of the Word of Blake swore to take revenge on their defeat as they retreated off-world...

MAJOR DAVION VICTORY

Adept Cain nearly lost his footing for the third time as the ground itself shook, torn apart by the massive explosion not two hundred meters from his position. Battering the armored shell of his 'mech were bits of concrete and rubble. A desk shattered to splinters against his cockpit as he tried to make sense of what had happened. There had been a vehicle with the invading 'mechs. He was certain of it, but it had eluded his 'mechs sensors. Had it been carrying enough explosives to cause such destruction?

He felt several more impacts on his mechanical body but no pain. Willing his enormous body to turn, carefully minding his injured right leg, he swung his weapons around towards the 'mechs attacking his rear. His first shot missed and before he could bring the full force of his weapons to bear, his opponents were escaping with long, bounding leaps, making it difficult to hit them. Thankfully, this meant he was no longer under fire, either.

"Adept Tau Cain, I can't get a lock on the vehicle. It's escaping. What do we do?" the Thug's pilot asked, confirming that there was, indeed, a vehicle present. They'd have to carefully go over their BattleROMs for more information.

"Fall back to the pickup point Delta. Pick up any survivors from the vehicles, this area might be irradiated." he glanced towards the crater that had been Blacksite 28. "There's nothing left to salvage from the facility. The Davion's got what they wanted." he cursed under his breath and set his 'mech to a careful limp away from the site of his failure.

MAXIM - STEALTH VARIANT

With the advent of vehicular stealth armor, pioneered by the scientists of the Capellan Confederation, it was only a matter of time before it would become re-engineered and experimentally deployed by the other Successor States as well.

Even with the resources available to MIIO, however, the idea of building a new platform solely for testing the technology was out of the question, thus using the well-known and reliable Maxim chassis. Using the infantry carrier as a base due to its fusion engine, most of the bay space meant for carrying infantry was instead filled up with ECM equipment and the necessary heat sinks to keep it operating the stealth field around the vehicle.

These changes necessitated downgrading the Streak SRM 6 into an Streak SRM 4 and removing the TAG system to make room. The total tonnage of armor was increased slightly to ensure a comparable level of protection to the infantry carrier variant.

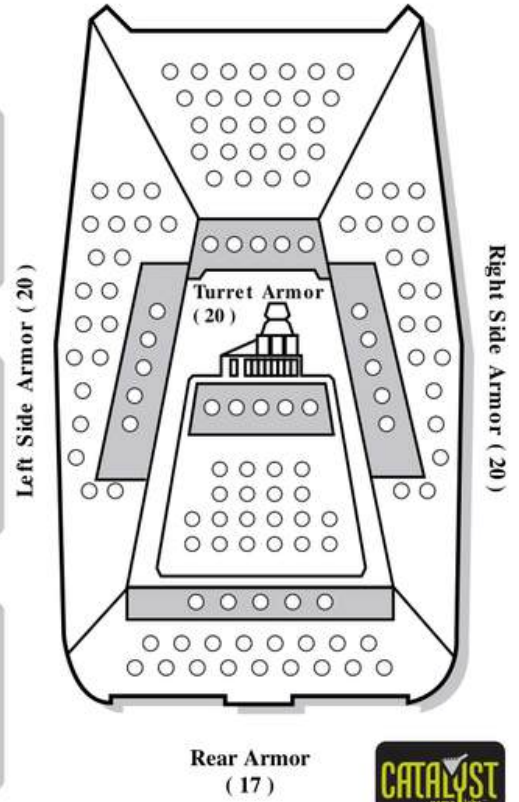
While the so-called 'Stealth maxim' proved its worth on the Lockdale operation, it was ultimately scrapped and never reached past the prototype stage. The main issue was that operating the stealth armor for longer than several minutes, the heat bleed from the heat sinks located within the converted infantry bays would become unbearable for armored soldiers within the remaining bays.

BATTLETECH™

HOVER VEHICLE RECORD SHEET

ARMOR DIAGRAM

Vehicular Stealth Front Armor (27)



VEHICLE DATA

Type: Maxim - Experimental Stealth variant
 Movement Points: **Tonnage:** 50
 Cruising: 8 **Tech Base:** Inner Sphere
 Flanking: 12 **Rules Level:** Standard
 Movement Type: Hover
 Engine Type: Fusion

Weapons & Equipment Inventory

Qty	Type	Loc	Dmg	Min	Sht	Med	Lng
1	ECM Suite (Guardian)	BD	[E]	—	—	—	6
2	ER Medium Laser	TU	5 [DE]	—	4	8	12
1	Streak SRM 4	TU	2/Msl [M,C]	—	3	6	9

Ammo: (Streak SRM 4) 25
 Features Infantry Bay (3 tons)

BV: 808



CREW DATA

Crew: _____
 Gunnery Skill: _____ Driving Skill: _____
 Commander Hit +1 **Driver Hit** +2
Modifier to all skill rolls Modifier to Driving skill rolls

CRITICAL DAMAGE

Turret Locked Engine Hit
 Sensor Hits +1 +2 +3 D
 Motive System Hits +1 +2 +3
 Stabilizers
 Front Left Right
 Rear Turret

NOTES

GROUND COMBAT VEHICLE HIT LOCATION

	ATTACK DIRECTION		
	FRONT	REAR	SIDES
2*	Front (critical)	Rear (critical)	Side (critical)
3	Front†	Rear†	Side†
4	Front†	Rear†	Side†
5	Right Side†	Left Side†	Front†
6	Front	Rear	Side
7	Front	Rear	Side
8	Front	Rear	Side (critical)*
9	Left Side†	Right Side†	Rear†
10	Turret	Turret	Turret
11	Turret	Turret	Turret
12*	Turret (critical)	Turret (critical)	Turret (critical)

* A result of 2 or 12 (or an 8 if the attack strikes the side) may inflict a critical hit on the vehicle. For each result of 2 or 12 (or 8 for side attacks), apply damage normally to the armor in that section. The attacking player then automatically rolls once on the Ground Combat Vehicle Critical Hits Table below (see Combat, p. 192, in *Total Warfare* for more information).

A result of 12 on the Ground Combat Vehicles Hit Location Table may inflict critical hit against the turret; if the vehicle has no turret, a 12 indicates the chance of a critical hit on the side corresponding to the attack direction.

† The vehicle may suffer motive system damage even if its armor remains intact. Apply damage normally to the armor in that section, but the attacking player also rolls once on the Motive System Damage Table at right (see Combat, p. 192, in *Total Warfare* for more information).

§ Side hits strike the side as indicated by the attack direction. For example, if an attack hits the right side, all Side results strike the right side armor. If the vehicle has no turret, a turret hit strikes the armor on the side attacked.

MOTIVE SYSTEM DAMAGE TABLE

2D6 ROLL	EFFECT*
2-5	No Effect
6-7	Minor damage; +1 modifier to all Driving Skill Rolls
8-9	Moderate damage; -1 Cruising MP, +2 modifier to all Driving Skill Rolls
10-11	Heavy damage; only half Cruising MP (round fractions up), +3 modifier to all Driving Skill Rolls
12	Major damage; no movement for the rest of the game. Vehicle is immobile.

Attack Direction Modifier:	Vehicle Type Modifier:
Hit from rear	Tracked, Naval
Hit from the sides	Wheeled
	Hovercraft, Hydrofoil
	WiGE

*All movement and Driving Skill Roll penalties are cumulative. However, each Driving Skill Roll modifier can only be applied once. For example, if a roll of 6-7 is made for a vehicle, inflicting a +1 modifier, that is the only time that particular +1 can be applied; a subsequent roll of 6-7 has no additional effect. This means the maximum Driving Skill Roll modifier that can be inflicted from the Motive System Damage Table is +6. If a unit's Cruising MP is reduced to 0, it cannot move for the rest of the game, but is not considered an immobile target. In addition, all motive system damage takes effect at the end of the phase in which the damage occurred. For example, if two units are attacking the same Combat Vehicle during the Weapon Attack Phase and the first unit inflicts motive system damage and rolls a 12, the -4 immobile target modifier would not apply for the second unit. However, the -4 modifier would take effect during the Physical Attack Phase. If a hover vehicle is rendered immobile while over a Depth 1 or deeper water hex, it sinks and is destroyed.

GROUND COMBAT VEHICLE CRITICALS TABLE

	LOCATION HIT			
	FRONT	SIDE	REAR	TURRET
2-5	No Critical Hit	No Critical Hit	No Critical Hit	No Critical Hit
6	Driver Hit	Cargo/Infantry Hit	Weapon Malfunction	Stabilizer
7	Weapon Malfunction	Weapon Malfunction	Cargo/Infantry Hit	Turret Jam
8	Stabilizer	Crew Stunned	Stabilizer	Weapon Malfunction
9	Sensors	Stabilizer	Weapon Destroyed	Turret Locks
10	Commander Hit	Weapon Destroyed	Engine Hit	Weapon Destroyed
11	Weapon Destroyed	Engine Hit	Ammunition**	Ammunition**
12	Crew Killed	Fuel Tank*	Fuel Tank*	Turret Blown Off

*If Combat Vehicle has ICE engine only. If Combat Vehicle has a fusion engine, treat this result as Engine Hit.

** If Combat Vehicle carries no ammunition, treat this result as Weapon Destroyed.

