

MERCS



GAME RULES

GAME DESIGN AND AUTHOR: BRIAN SHOTTON

ILLUSTRATION AND DESIGN: KEITH LOWE

DEDICATED TO /TG/

THIS IS ME GIVING
BACK FOR ALL THAT
YOU HAVE GIVEN
TO US ALL



MERCS



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WHO WE ARE!

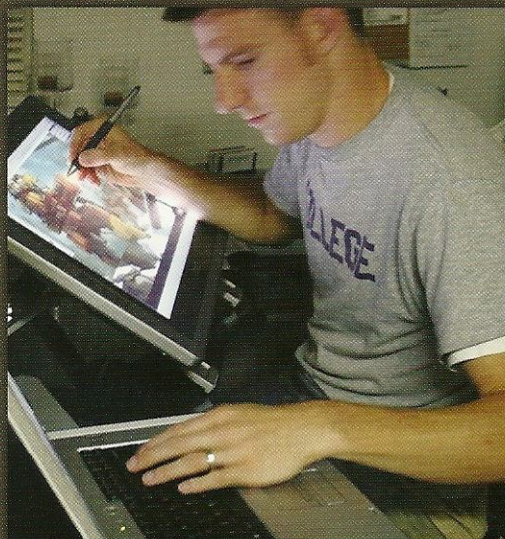
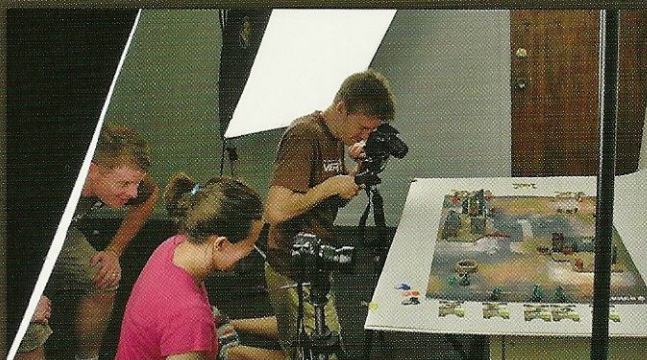
We are more than Keith and Brian.

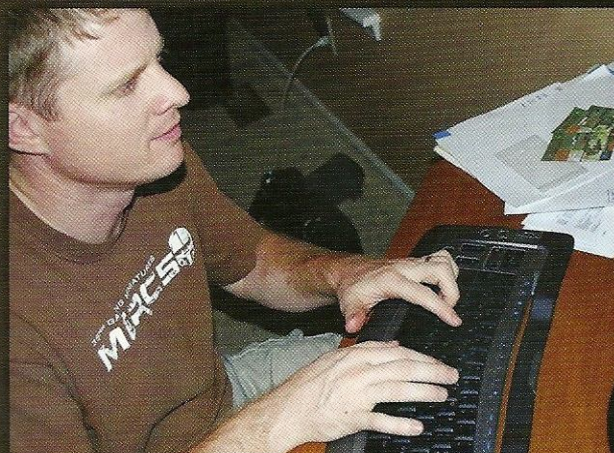
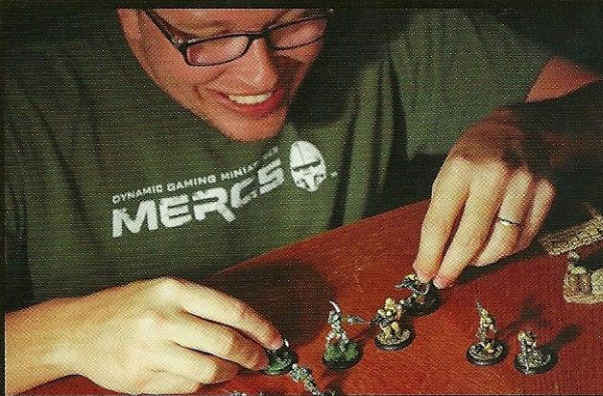
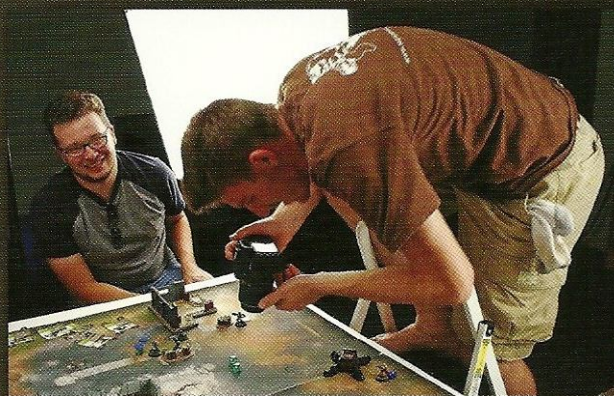
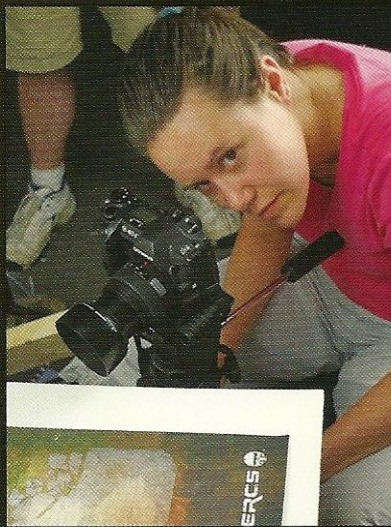
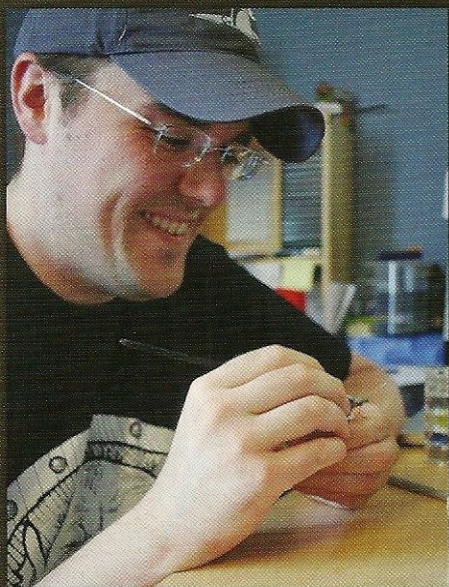
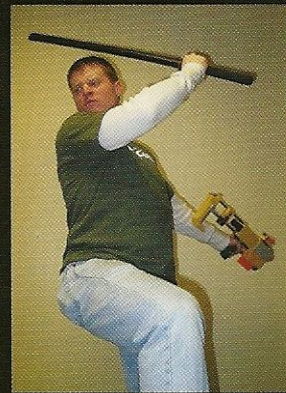
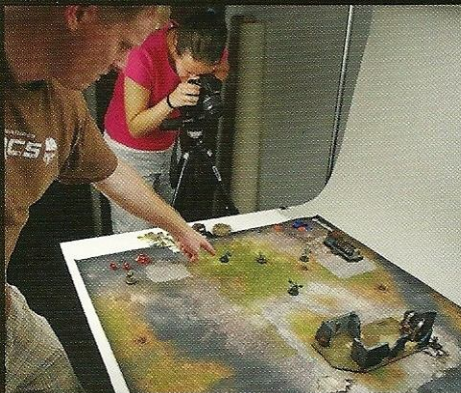
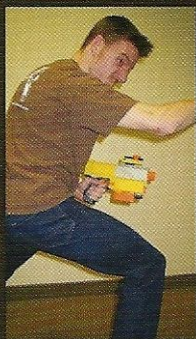
We are friends that sacrifice their time and talents to make MERCS better. We are spouses that have the patience and love to let us chase a dream. We are sculptors that give MERCS a face and quality that is beyond reproach. We are casters that mold amazing miniatures that shrink reality and make us giggle. We are photographers that imprison an occasion and make the moment history. We are website brainiacs that extend the reach of the individual to the world and make us community builders. We are painters that steal the breath and capture the eye. We are writers that build worlds and make the mind dance. We are artists that provide stunning visions and the spark of life. We play a game, and in so, doing become family.

When Keith and I think how it started, where it has gone, and how much people have sacrificed for us and for MERCS . . . well, it's more than a little humbling. We have been put into a wonderful position. Those standing shoulder to shoulder with us, do so because they believe in what we are doing--they believe in our vision.

To make the very best experience for gamers: through living art that speaks of a robust world with heroes and history, highly detailed dynamic miniatures, and products that sacrifice neither quality nor imagination. To make every gaming experience fun, well-thought out, balanced, and full of passion.

MERCS is much different then when it started four years ago. It will be much different when it matures years from now. But it will always be people with passion pursuing perfection.





MERCS

MERCS was designed with the idea that the game should work in a natural and realistic manner. It is logical in its associations and what it asks a player to do in order to create a fast, fun, and competitive game system—it doesn't leave a player questioning why something is happening.

MERCS isn't your typical tabletop game. A premium is placed on good, sound tactics. This is not a game where you can sit back and shoot each other from across the tabletop and hope to succeed. In far too many games, victory has more to do with what faction you play instead of how you play your faction. MERCS is very different.

First, learn to think tactically. Suppress and move. Maintain squad cohesiveness without offering a juicy grenade target.

Second, learn your MegaCon. Each MegaCon has intrinsic strengths. Learn them, then adapt the tactic you have learned to take advantage of what your faction has to offer.

Third, learn the lessons from the examples in this book. Firing Numbers (FNs) are set high; lower FN's are rewarded only for quality strategies that enable you to outmaneuver your opponent.

Combat begins and ends with movement. Everyone can shoot; survivors know when to shoot and when to move to a better position. If you learn to marry solid tactics with unit strength, then perhaps you can call yourself a MERCS player.



WORLD OF MERCS

HOW IT CAME TO BE...

Having been outmuscled and outmanned in the global market due to increasingly cheap foreign labor and obtuse government regulation, the United States of America slid from its once lofty position as the only world superpower. The age of consumer capitalism faded, and with it the States' glory days.

The rest of the world's flexibility led to a slow but steady shift in economic power to India, China, and the growing markets of South America and Africa.

Discontent with this cycle of change, American businesses petitioned congress in 2120 to change the laws governing consumer protection and fair trade — commonly referred to as monopolies.

In 2121, having swept into power on a platform of change—business reform and international trade tariffs—the President and Congress worked together created new legislation to govern monopoly litigation and mergers: Cooperative Investment — ColInvest.

The changes were gradual but successful. American corporations could once again compete with the world. The dollar grew in strength, and the States prospered.

Over the following 22 years, American corporations bought out, liquidated, merged, and otherwise acquired companies all over the world. Other countries soon followed suit, relaxing their own policies on multi-national corporations.



2121

To compete with the outsourcing of jobs, the U.S.A., falling in line with Europe and the far East, placed a moratorium on merger and monopoly litigation.



2150

The first corporate state was realized. The military was folded into the special securities division and given a new handle: MERCS (Military Economic Reconnaissance Counter Security)

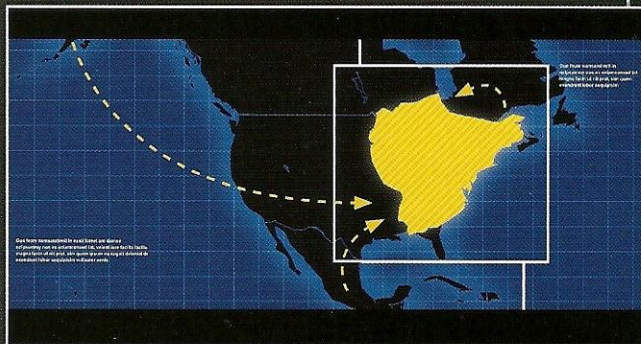
AD

During this twenty-two year span, corporate mergers formed multi-national mega-conglomerates, simply referred to as MegaCons. By the time the world's governments realized what was happening, it was too late. After all the mergers, 16 global corporations existed. The MegaCons rapidly took responsibility for non-traditional services; they spearheaded national security interests, assumed regional administration and local utilities, and issued company-endorsed financial notes until they were responsible for almost every facet of a person's daily life. Eventually, the world and everything in it came under the administration of one of the 16 MegaCons. Everything became a subsidiary of these 16 super corporations.

2123-2145

More governments began to officially merge their assets with corporations, until autonomous nations ceased to exist. These new corporate nations followed suit and created special securities divisions of their own.

2151-2154



Multi-national Global System mega-conglomerates (MegaCons) were created, and by the time the world's governments stopped to reign them in, it was too late. The companies were so intertwined with each other that the claim of national origin was always disputable when necessary.

After all the mergers, 16 MegaCons existed. The MegaCons rapidly took responsibility for non-traditional services. They spearheaded national security interests, assumed regional administration and local utilities, issued company-endorsed financial notes until they were responsible for almost every facet of a person's daily life. Their fingers were in all the pots; everything was a subsidiary of these 16 Global Systems.

In 2150, to further exert control over the world's energy supply, the energy super giant KemVar fused with the existing political nations of Brazil and Venezuela. The first corporate nation was realized. Civilians became worker-citizens, paper currency was eliminated; all income was derived from your salary, your purchasing power determined your professional standing. How you saw people and how people saw you was based upon your salary. The military was folded into a special securities division under the handle MERCS (Military Economic Reconnaissance Counter Security).



2155

In New York, District 12, a corporate rights litigation notice incited a near riot. MERCS were deployed for the first time. The result was overwhelming.

2156-2167

The remaining employees, technology and weapons form what was termed the "Lost Margin." Travel within these zones becomes extremely dangerous.

2156

Thursday, September 30: After an uneven fiscal year, seven Global Systems chose to lay off workers across the board, including their securities divisions. These layoffs weren't taken well, inciting riots and the breakdown of corporate control. MERCS, who were also affected by the cuts, refused to obey corporate memos and action items regarding security direction, resulting in the complete dissolution of five Global Systems.



2168

With the global market fluctuating due to uncertain risk assessments, MERCS became better equipped, financed, and trained. They began to take on corporate identities and philosophies.

The Global Corporate Court (GCC) was formed in April of this year to arbitrate the escalating conflicts and corporate espionage.

Major Conflicts: Seattle Seven, Panama Canal Occupation, Baker Square (Jamestown, South Africa), Pu Yong Riots, the Razing of Amsterdam



Quarterly earnings spiked. Dividends produced unprecedented yields. The executive board was overwhelmed by the possibilities and quickly moved to capitalize on their gains in unprecedented ways. KemVar became the world's largest supplier of energy and was able to invest even more money into energy development. Without government regulations to impede them, advances were staggering.

It didn't take the world long to notice; fearing their own obsolescence in world affairs, more governments merged their national assets with corporations. Over the following three years, one government after another quickly fell into line with the new Global System, abandoning independence for relevance. By 2154, autonomous nations ceased to exist.

MERCS' division size, money, and technology remained less than seven percent of total MegaCon expenditures in the early era of Global Systems. The naïve and uninformed believed that the time of violent global action was passed; the new battlefield was the courtroom.

In 2155, a corporate subsidiary of the CCC revolted. MERCS were sent in for the first time as a purely military force — the result was overwhelming. The subsidiary was contained, then collapsed. The loss of time and income was less than 1.2%. Almost overnight, CCC MERCS funding and recruitment increased tenfold.

On Thursday, September 30, 2156, after an uneven fiscal year, seven Global Systems chose to lay off workers from all sectors. The action resulted in riots and the breakdown of corporate control. In all cases, MERCS were ordered to regain control. This time the results were different. MERCS from these MegaCons had been part of the cutbacks, and refused to quell the violence. Moreover, while MERCS divisions had

received a large amount of investment capital, the MERCS themselves were still viewed as second-class worker-citizens and had no promotion incentive. Inaction on the part of their security divisions resulted in the complete dissolution of five Global Systems.

In the following years, September 30th was celebrated by the unaligned citizenry trying to remove the yoke of corporate control as Freedom Day. MegaCons openly referred to the day as D-Day — Dissolution Day.

These terminations rippled through the rest of the world. Everywhere, MERCS payment plans and promotion schemes were reevaluated. The global markets had suddenly become much more risky. MegaCons were not prepared for the growing demands of their own internal securities divisions.

This was exacerbated by guerilla actions of the disbanded Global Systems' workers and MERCS. The resulting employees, technology, and weapons formed what would be termed the "Lost Margin." Travel within these zones becomes extremely dangerous. These rogue bands of MERCS and citizens became the FCC.

With a growing external demand by the citizen-soldiers of the Lost Margin and internal fears of open revolt, MegaCon MERCS become better equipped, financed, trained, and promoted. They begin to take on corporate identities and philosophies.

In April of 2168, to make the ever-growing attacks by the guerilla militants illegal, and to provide a neutral system for the MegaCons to resolve their grievances, the Global Corporate Court was created. The GCC was made up of MERCS and MegaCon liaisons from all existing Global Systems.

AD

2169

Guerrilla-style incursions begin by the now organized Free Corporate Control (FCC) from the unoccupied Lost Margin.

Major Conflicts: Brussels' Holdings, Paris Initiative, Johnson's March (Sacramento, California), Guanabara Bay (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

2170

Kolkata Incursions: This ten-month initiative was designed by the the East India Company (EIC) to sweep into the Lost Margin in order to take back certain facilities left vacant. It was a catastrophic failure. The FCC was unexpectedly organized. They were MERCS trained and supplied by various Global Systems who felt it was not in their best interest to allow the facilities to merge with the EIC.

To ensure justice and help regulate the Mega Con's global affairs, the GCC was granted new judicial privileges, including an active investigation team and tactical police force.

In August of that same year, the GCC was tested for the first time. MERCS from EU, Inc. and USCR engaged in a massive, and very costly, conflict in Amsterdam. The local FCC House subtly manipulated the two MegaCons into a full-scale, open conflict within the city of Amsterdam. After realizing the subterfuge of the FCC Housemaster, both Cons engaged in a tactical find-and-kill hunt in the belly of the sprawling megalopolis. In a matter of days the historic city was reduced to piles of rubble clogging its once famous canals.

The GCC finally stepped in to stop the atrocities. Each MegaCon received a then record fine and was censured harshly. The USCR refused to comply with the GCC's mandate initially, but MERCS support from the world's MegaCons quickly reinforced the GCC as more than just a straw man.

The GCC was not without its detractors. In November of 2168, after posting unattractive fiscal earnings, KemVar invaded the Texico-owned Panama Canal. The swift strike and occupation of the valuable territory brought quick petition to the GCC from Texico. Influenced by KemVar money, the GCC refused to take the case.

Texico turned to the FCC, and, with assistance from their Black Ops squad, recovered the Canal. This was the first open, joint-operative negotiation between a House of the FCC and a world conglomerate. Conversely, when KemVar petitioned the GCC for restitution and damages from Texico's action, the GCC acquiesced and levied a fine against Texico for "negotiations with non-certified unregulated parties." Regardless of any fines, with the GCC's citation of the previously unrecognized FCC, they instantly became a major player in international policy.

The entirety of 2169 consisted of the FCC making major advancements on all fronts along the Lost Margin. Independent, yet interconnected, Houses of the FCC popped up seemingly out of nowhere. MegaCons found themselves on the defensive around the world.

FCC Black Ops forces, rumored to be supported by regulars from both Texico and los, continued to push back KemVar MERCS all the way to the steps of KemVar's corporate capital — Guanabara Bay. KemVar was rescued by Eclison Tavares Jorge Machado and his Caes de Guerra. Debate ensued about how much Eclison knew about the FCC operation.

Within EU, Inc's Paris holdings, FCC forces established a temporary House. Termed the Paris Initiative among the other Houses, the FCC managed to establish and hold, for a period of six months, a unique entity within the MegaCon's territory. During the period of occupation, the FCC disrupted and destroyed EU, Inc internal initiatives. Though EU, Inc claims their forces finally decimated the FCC usurpers, it was only after granting the FCC a three-month period of clemency. Despite EU, Inc's claims, it is widely whispered that the FCC brokered a deal with EU, Inc, and withdrew peacefully.

2170 saw a truly committed EIC venture into the Lost Margin in an effort to secure facilities left behind by the dissolution of HK-Holding Company. EIC's lagging R&D department sought to secure some of HK-Holding's unsecured tech as a result of their dissolution. The FCC was ready and unexpectedly organized. FCC House 9 purposefully used sparse and inept resistance along the approach to Hong Kong in order to draw out EIC's forces and present themselves as a deceptively weak opponent.

2171

Well-financed FCC forces attempt a hostile takeover of several Global Systems. This resulted in an enormous loss of resources to the targeted MegaCons, and the dissolution of two more Systems: Royal Holdings and the United Arab Emirates. Nine MegaCons remain.



The FCC sprung the next part of their trap in June of 2170. As the EIC forces approached downtown Hong Kong, FCC forces detonated Two International Finance Centre, completely crushing the front echelon of the EIC forces. In the ensuing chaos, FCC struck EIC leadership with targeted hit squads, followed by an overwhelming flank attack. Routed and reeling, the EIC retreated back to Kolkata.

Just one month removed from the massive death toll in Hong Kong, the FCC unleashed the next phase their plan. Using FCC long-term moles within EIC, the FCC hacked into the EIC database and uploaded Trojan-9, an adapting seeker virus that rendered the EIC's archaic MERCS battle-armor useless. The results were previously unfathomable. Hundreds of thousands of EIC MERCS and investors were slaughtered in the streets.

Only the GCC stepping in to investigate the origins of House 9's training, financial support, and stunning opposition to EIC's advance kept the FCC from wiping the EIC off the ledgers. Spurred by their benefactor's desire to appease GCC's investigators and avoid serious censure, the FCC quickly disappeared. The GCC's investigation uncovered major indiscretions involving Royal Holdings and UAE. Once again, the GCC cited the MegaCons for their use of non-certified, unregulated parties, while declaring the EIC's actions a lawfully sanctioned business acquisition. The EIC lobbied for substantial levies and compensation, which they received. The fallout within Royal Holdings and the United Arab Emirates forced upper management to change their direction, and weakened the MegaCons substantially, leaving them in no position to actively defend themselves from external hostile actions.

The wealthiest FCC Houses, 4 and 7, successfully dissolved two Global Systems: Royal Holdings and the United Arab Emirates. This brings the number of active systems to nine. A third house, House 9, tried and failed to dissolve the USCR. With House 9 forces driving deep within USCR territory, USCR turned to a new, ultra-heavy armored MERCS prototype. The United Soviet Corporate Republic's victory 80 miles outside Moscow, at Kolomna, is depicted in Ibratov's masterpiece, *The Bear's Last Breath*. The massive coordinated effort was a warning to the world's MegaCons to back and interact with the FCC at great risk.

The FCC Houses, though loosely connected and organized in similar ways, still acted independently of each other. Royal Holdings had miscalculated the ramifications of the system; a deal with House 9 against the EIC did not prevent retaliation from House 4. The FCC won in both cases. This new understanding was to be instrumental in the reorganization into today's modern MERCS force.

To combat the increasingly aggressive and effective FCC, the remaining 9 MegaCons (CCC, KemVar, USCR, sefadu, EU Inc., Ios, Texico, EIC, and Keizai Waza) met secretly, for the first and last time, on the Greek island of Monemvasia to discuss proliferation. Not much is known about how each Global System profited from the meeting, but what is clearly delineated from their gathering is the across-the-board spending initiatives to bolster MERCS numbers and technology, and to give the GCC more substantive powers for combating the FCC. The creation of the GCC Judges were a direct result of the Monemvasia meetings.

AD

2172

MERCS units are rapidly increased in size and pay. In the public's eye, this is not only acceptable but seen as necessary in order to defend their investments.

THE BEST FOR THE BEST!

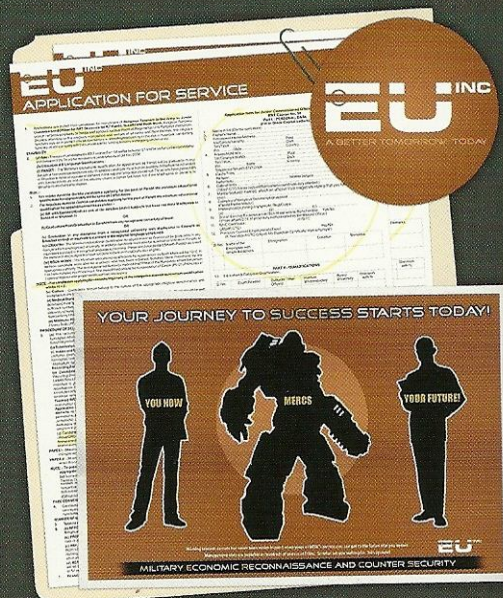
FULLY AUTOMATIC!
TITANIUM ALLOY!
SUPPORTS EXPLOSIVE ROUNDS!
MERCS TESTED AND APPROVED!



Hiring initiatives entice newcomers into the MERCS; service guarantees a management position. MERCS are often loaned to the FCC as Black Ops in order to combat competing MegaCon growth.

Major Conflicts: Boston Skirmishes, Kansas City Demarcation, Ankara Policing Action (Turkey), Lagos Conflict, Goryeo Secession

2173



The PR push was as massive as it was effective. In the public's eye, it became essential for the Systems to defend their investments and the worker-citizens. Hiring initiatives pushed all employees of age into MERCS volunteer programs. Service guaranteed management positions, which further increased spending and MERCS initiatives.

MERCS special forces were still secretly loaned out to the FCC Black Ops programs, but a set of protocols were created to deal with the ugly aspects of retaliation and friendly fire. To this end, the GCC created FCC liaison positions within each mega-conglomerate to regulate the hiring of MERCS for contract assignments.

With the newfound regulation controlling the FCC Houses, major battles drastically reduced in frequency, though skirmishes still sprung up on occasion. 2175 was a relatively peaceful year compared to the volatile years that preceded it.

The world seemed to have turned the corner, and MERCS were credited with stabilizing the world's economy. Then in February of 2174, the USCR attempted a hostile takeover of Keizai Waza. Surprisingly, the GCC refused to mobilize its police force. The battle raged until the CEO of the USCR, Victor Tsvetsov, was assassinated.

The GCC was called to investigate, but no evidence was found linking the assassination to Keizai Waza or the FCC. In protest, the USCR expelled the FCC liaison and sealed the GCC offices in all of its corporate territories.

In 2176, the GCC moved into the USCR branch in Amur, on the southern border of USCR corporate territory, without invitation and under the escort of its newly autonomous MERCS force. The GCC then reopened its embassy there. Met with worldwide protests, the Corporate Republic eventually relented and reopened 8 of the 18 GCC embassies.

The following half-decade was peppered with drawn out conflicts across the globe. The FCC had begun to infiltrate spies and official representatives within the Global System structure. The CCC fought a pitched battle, not with the FCC but with a rogue MERCS group in Detroit, for two years before voiding the whole branch in late 2179.

In 2180, KemVar initiated the Panama Project. While Texico was busy supporting the CCC's efforts to rid Indianapolis of FCC House 2, KemVar, using a much more stable and refined Active Camouflage system, reoccupied the Panama Canal with little bloodshed. Unconcerned with anything more than the Canal, KemVar immediately self-reported their transgressions to the GCC. The penalties levied against KemVar were substantial, but they were not forced to relinquish any property. Texico, left without their main source of equity, was deemed to be within five years of foreclosure unless they re-secure the Canal.

... 2183: the present.

2174

In February, the USCR attempted a hostile takeover of Keizai Waza using their new heavy armor MERCS. The campaign continued until the CEO of the USCR was assassinated. Despite heavy speculation, no evidence was found to link the killing to Keizai Waza, so the GCC was unable to pursue prosecution.



2175-2182

Major Conflicts: Detroit Conflict, Munich Massacre, Amur Escort (Russia), Panama Project (Reoccupation), Indianapolis Sweeps

2183

Present



AN UNPLANNED ACQUISITION

JENNIFER SIMS

Machado could feel the transport shudder beneath him as it slowed, readying for a vertical descent. The harsh vibrations traveled up through the metal floorboard and continued through the seat, grinding up his spine and rattling his teeth. The new ride may have been a lot quieter, but the upgraded Bat sure as hell wasn't any smoother. Able to take off and land on a dime, these small craft, unique to KemVar, served as the main means of transport for MERCS teams and other small groups of specialists. Though other MegaCons had similar VTOL craft, the Bats, named for their sleek black look and pointed wings, boasted a version of the Active Camouflage that made their teams even more of a terror in the field. Their only drawback was that you didn't need to see them coming; you could hear them half a mile away. The R&D teams had been working on them to make them more silent, like their namesake, and seemed to have succeeded in part. Since he and his team spent so much of their time in one, Machado would have been a lot happier if they could smooth out the ride as well.

found herself ferrying Machado's team more often than not, particularly in the last few months. She didn't mind. She knew it was at Machado's request, because he valued not only her skill but her loyalty. The Cães de Guerra tended to come home with everyone they left with, a trait any pilot liked to see. She trusted Machado, and the rest of the unit, as if they were family. In turn, they trusted her to get them in, and perhaps more importantly, to get them back home.

Like their ride, Machado and his War Dogs were just part of an experiment for this mission and it irked him. Even though the Assault Leader knew the testing was necessary, it seemed a waste of his team's time. KemVar was currently working on acquisitions in several arenas, and the Cães de Guerra could be better used in almost any of them. Sure, someone needed to test the tech in the field, but it was *soldados verdes* work at best. The suits were sending him a not so subtle message after his latest refusal to even negotiate for their offered promotion. They expected him to hold out for more credit or some other perk, but he gave them what they didn't expect—a flat out refusal. Some MERCS served their whole lives waiting for the chance to be promoted out of the field, but not him. The Cães de Guerra was *his team*, and when it was time for him to punch out it would be beside them, not pushing data in a corner office somewhere. That type of slow death might work for some, but out here, in the field with his team, he knew that he was making a difference for the people of KemVar.

Though the mission rankled, he had to admit that the new tech did show promise. Lacking the firepower and liquid equity of some of the other MegaCons, to gain tactical advantage KemVar turned to what it knew best—energy. By manipulating energy fields, KemVar had created a means of disguising their troops that went far beyond traditional methods. This Active Camouflage, or Integrated Reconnaissance System, in theory provided each soldier with the ability to blend into their environment, making them harder to spot, and therefore harder to hit. This was the theory anyway. In reality, the first few iterations of the tech were unreliable at best and fatally flawed at worst. Teams quickly learned, that though the AC might give them an advantage, it was best not to depend on it unless you had no choice.

Now, his team and the two others joining the OP were wearing armor that represented almost a decade of research into AC. The R&D boys had taken great pains to explain that this version would be different, more adaptable, more reliable, but whether that was truth or just spin remained to be seen. In lab tests it easily outperformed early versions of the tech, even under the most arduous circumstances. Lab tests were lab tests though, and the new AC needed to be extensively field tested before R&D would get the green light to upgrade the entire MegaCon's forces. This is why they were here. Get in, try it out in a few skirmishes, collect the data, and go home.

He rapped his fist against the back of the pilot's seat, "Hey Iz, you ever going to learn to drive this thing?" The pilot took the time to glance over her shoulder at the Assault Leader long enough to give him an evil smile as she banked sharply to the right, causing the entire team to give her dirty looks that she couldn't see.

"I'm working on it, *pai*." She straightened the craft back out before her playing ruined their approach, and began coaxing the Bat toward the designated LZ. Fifteen years of flying, the last ten of them for KemVar, meant that she could pretty much handle anything with wings. Though transport pilots weren't assigned a specific unit, Isabel Serrador had



Operating so closely to KemVar's northern holdings, Texico provided a convenient target and all intel pointed to this area being loosely guarded, despite its proximity to the Texico-held Panama Canal. Just as KemVar's stock had been rising, Texico had been on a long, downward slide for the last couple of decades. They provided the world market with little of value, their only important asset being the Canal. As it had been historically, shipping remained a vital means of moving goods. For the last two centuries the Panama Canal had been one of the most important shipping lanes in the world. Controlling the canal was a big part of what allowed Texico to remain a world player despite its waning market value. As long as Texico continued running the canal efficiently, it wasn't worth it for any other MegaCon to spend the resources to acquire and hold it, so Texico was mostly left alone.

Machado's thoughts were interrupted as Iz's voice came through his headset. "Two minutes." He nodded to the rest of his team and they began tightening gear, triple-checking weapons. They would be ready when they reached the coordinates. They always were.

He felt the hated vibrations shift, and the ever present noise of the Bat ratcheted up a pitch as their ride seemed to hover for a second and then descend. To Machado, it often looked like there couldn't possibly be enough room to land even the small Bat at their insertion point, but he had long ago learned to trust Iz. She was just as good at her job as he was at his.

As soon as the War Dogs hit the ground, Iz took off, leaving room in the small clearing for two more Bats to land in turn. Just like his team, the two teams they deposited immediately took up defensive positions around the perimeter as he signaled their two Assault Leaders to come to him. He hadn't known who else would be joining this OP until just before they left base, and he was pleased to see that both were units he had worked with before.

"Bia," Machado called, "Haven't they put you out to pasture yet, old woman?" Beatriz Mariana Branquini Santos, who had led her team for over a decade, glared at him with mock anger as she approached. Quite a glare it was too. Four years ago she lost her left eye at Bahia Blanca and had been fitted with a field prosthesis. It was designed to get a soldier back out into the field as quickly as possible and it worked well for that. She had since refused every effort by the company to replace it with one of the more attractive, newer models. Oddly, this seemed to earn her even more respect among the rank and file than her years of service had. Plus, the suits hated the look of her, which he knew pleased her just fine.

When she reached him, she slugged Machado in the shoulder a little bit harder than was playful. Her face broke into a broad grin, crinkling the jagged line of scar tissue that ran up the side of her face, disappearing underneath her shock of iron gray hair.

"And let you have all the fun playing with the new toys?" She cocked her head back to the third Assault Leader walking up behind her and raised her voice just enough to make sure the approaching figure could hear, "What's the plan? I'm sure the kid here is anxious to get started."

While certainly not as old as Santos or as experienced as Machado, Lucas Jatoba Araripe had been leading his unit for over two years now, and by all accounts his team had performed very well. At age twenty-six, the tall, slender man was the youngest team leader the KemVar had and he had quickly learned to deal with both the friendly teasing dished out by the older Assault Leaders like Santos, as well as the not so friendly attitudes of more resentful *camaradas*. After the hugely profitable Valdes OP it was rumored that he was on the fast track to management but Machado didn't think Araripe was the type to sit at a desk. At least, he hoped not. There was never any shortage of suits, but good men in the field were much more rare—good leaders, even more so.

As the younger man approached them he turned to Santos and started back in mock horror. "Jesus Bia, I thought regs required that you keep your helmet on at all times!" He ran a hand through his short-cropped dark hair. "I think looking at you just turned my hair as white as yours!"

Santos tried to level her worst scowl at him but couldn't help but laugh instead. "It might improve your looks, Lucas."

The younger man rolled his eyes at Santos and gave a nod of respect towards Machado. Though both Araripe and Santos commanded their own teams and were ostensibly of equal rank with the War Dogs' leader, they both knew he would be in charge of this OP.

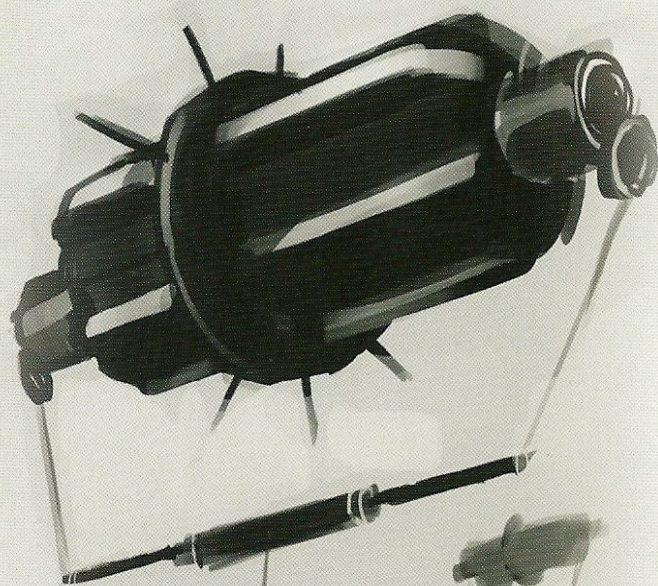
"It's good to see you both. If we've got to run around in the heat for the lab rats, I'm glad I've got good company." Getting down to the business at hand Machado began, "I've upped coordinates to each of you." The War Dogs' leader retrieved a flat round disk from one of the small packs at his belt and placed it on the damp tree stump in front of him. With a quickly entered command on his Indigo9, a topographical map of the surrounding area appeared in the air above the field projector. Every hill, structure, and road was clearly marked. "We've received no new information since the mission memo so I'll make this short."

He pointed to a spot to the northwest and said, "Lucas, I need your team here." He touched the indicated ridge and pulled his fingers apart, zooming in closer to show the small outpost he indicated. Araripe counted eight small red dots inside and between the buildings—heat signatures. "This intel is almost 48 hours old, so don't trust that their numbers haven't changed."

Grabbing the edge of the projection, he reverted it back to its original view, then zoomed in on a larger grouping of buildings to the southwest. "Bia, your objective is down here. As he expanded the view she could see the two long, low buildings along with a narrower two story building between them. Most likely this was an equipment depot. The long buildings could hold quite a few vehicles, probably serving most of Texico's needs in the area. "As you can see, these building are shielded, so this is all the info you get." He pointed to the few heat signatures visible outdoors. "Though it is unlikely that the few exterior guards are the only forces there."

After once again collapsing the view of the region, Machado expanded it on a section in the center. "My team is headed here. Though our sats couldn't get much through the shielding, this appears to be

Texico's largest outpost this side of the Canal Zone." At his gesture, the projection zoomed in further to display a closer look at a tight cluster of buildings. "We're going to breach the perimeter and take out their Fergies first." Like many semi-permanent or out-of-the-way camps, Texico used Ferguson Turbines to generate power from the constant wind available high in the atmosphere. These helium-filled, tethered turbines made it possible to keep an outpost up and running where no infrastructure was readily available. Though it wasn't new tech, Fergies weren't exactly cheap, and destroying them would hopefully take out most of the power in this area, and replacing them would make an impact on the bottom line of the ageing MegaCon this quarter.



"If I'm right, this should blind them and maybe even knock out their communications." With a touch, the view disappeared and Machado stuck the projector back into his pack. "My team's been briefed. I've sent this same intel to you. Brief your teams and be ready to move out in ten. Any questions?" When they both shook their heads, Machado looked at both Santos and Araripe in turn. "I'm sure I don't have to tell you this, but I'm going to say it anyway. I don't care what the lab rats say, this is untested tech we're wearing and should be treated as such. Use it, collect the data, but don't trust it." They both nodded and turned to opposite sides of the clearing, calling their teams together.

All three teams would move into position and wait until Machado gave the signal. Araripe's squad slipped out first, having the greatest distance to cover. A few minutes later, Santos and her team started off in the opposite direction.

After giving them a few minutes' start, Machado ordered the War Dogs to activate their AC. Already he could see a marked improvement in the tech. Instead of being intermittently indistinct, each of his four team members seemed to melt into the surrounding foliage. His eyes could almost catch their movements if they shifted position but standing still they were all but invisible to the naked eye. Putting on his helmet, he shifted the view to infrared and could clearly see their individual

heat signatures, and his Indigo9 faithfully showed their positions. But shifting back to normal view they were difficult to pick out even when he knew exactly where they were. Maybe this tech was everything R&D had been promising.

The rest of his team seemed to be just as hopeful. They moved around trying to watch each other, voicing their opinions. He heard Meruidae call from across the small clearing, "Hey Boss, I don't think we should waste the new tech on Ferreira. It may make him invisible, but any hostiles are going to hear his big ugly ass stomping around from a mile away."

The team's assault grenadier, Alejandro Meruidae, practically made a full-time job out of talking shit to his teammates, particularly to the War Dogs' heavy gunner, Vinícius Ferreira. Even out of his armor, Ferreira was a good deal bigger than the slighter Meruidae; in full gear the difference was even more apparent. The idea that Ferreira was loud and clumsy, though not true, was a constant meme of Meruidae's. For his part, Ferreira gave it right back. Though often amusing, there were times when their constant sniping could get annoying but for the most part Machado let them have at it.

Meruidae's laughter was cut short as Ferreira switched off his AC and appeared right behind him, giving the lie to his teammate's joke, "Maybe, but at least they won't smell me." The big man made overly dramatic sniffing motions towards the assault grenadier, wrinkling his nose in mock disgust.

Knowing this would go on all day if he let it, and that it was time to move out, Machado ordered his team to deactivate the AC for now. The new tech did take a lot of power and he saw no reason to stretch their reserves. They fell in and he signaled the War Dogs to begin moving toward their target. It was time to get to work.

It was rough going, the jungle cover was thick and several times they were forced to stop and cut their way through the dense growth. Though the trees kept the sun from beating down on them, heat seemed to rise from the ground, threatening to bake them inside their armor. Machado sent Avila, the team's Assassin, on ahead to scout for trouble. Armed with his Vorpul Energy Knife, he could silently cut through the dense vegetation as easily as he sliced through enemies. He was quiet and fast and, like the rest of the Cães de Guerra, he followed Machado's orders without question. He had an unnerving habit of appearing seemingly out of nowhere, often startling even his teammates, who should have been used to it by now. Machado knew that Avila had been eagerly looking forward to a revamped Active Camouflage, though with his natural speed and stealth, it seemed superfluous.

Machado suspected Avila's interest was primarily in hoping to finally sneak up on the team's Sniper, Silva. Though he seldom if ever mentioned it, for some time now the Assassin had been trying his best to startle Silva. He knew better than to try that crap with Machado and he long ago decided getting a rise out of Meruidae and Ferreira was too easy, but Silva was another matter.

Their Sniper was one of the best because she noticed everything. No one was better at distance recon than her, and when it came to hitting a target, KemVar had no one better. More than that, she seemed to be unflappable. Though she got along with her unit, she had little interest in making small talk or participating in the teasing that Ferreira and Meruidae heaped on each other. Machado had often noticed that she had no down time. She was always on mission, or waiting for the next one. She rarely joined them for drinks, had little interest in anything not related to her job, and as far as Machado knew, spent the majority of her time between missions at the range, honing her skill. If any other of his team members started acting like Silva, Machado would have been worried. With her, he knew that it was just who she was. Perhaps that was why she put up with, and maybe even enjoyed, Avila's little game. She most likely saw it as a challenge, job training.

Silva's voice interrupted Machado's thoughts, "Avila's back, boss."

He could almost hear the sigh from a disappointed Avila as he moved from the rear, past Silva, and reported, "The approach is clear. Besides the small road leading to the post, there are no other paths through the surrounding jungle. If there's anyone else out there, they are cutting their way through like us, and I didn't see any sign of that."

"Keep an eye out," Machado answered, "Though I doubt they are wasting assets out here."

About half a mile out, Machado instructed the War Dogs to activate their AC. All the intel they had said that Texico's resources had been stretched thin and he doubted they would encounter any patrols, let alone actual opposition, this far out. But they were here to give the new tech a workout. May as well start now. He sent Silva and Avila to scout the camp. Sat imagery was all well and good, but all the tech in the world couldn't trump current intel gathered on the ground. It didn't take long for them to return, confirming the basic layout of the camp.

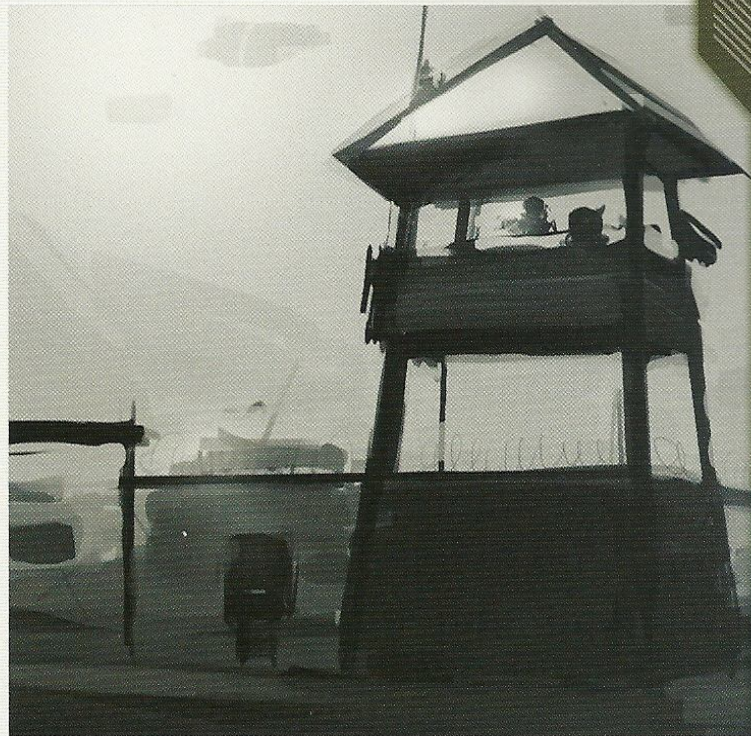
The team's Assassin returned first, "It's a pretty sad defense they've got there, boss." Avila shook his head as if he felt insulted by Texico's lack. "They've set up a standard perimeter fence, pretty old school. It looks to be set up for electric, got the boxes you'd expect at the right intervals, but whatever they're wired for, they aren't wasting the power on it. The gate's wide open and one of the guards is lounging against the fence itself."

Having rejoined the team as Avila was speaking, Silva nodded her agreement. "I saw much the same thing. There are a couple of Fergies not far inside the perimeter, towards the west. There's also a small ridge to the southwest of the camp that should give me a good vantage point on the guard towers."

Looking toward Silva, Machado said, "Set up and cover the towers." The Sniper nodded and he continued, "Radio when you're set. Once you're in position, the rest of us are going to go knock at the front door." Silva activated her AC and set off at a quick trot towards the overlooking hill.

As Silva moved toward her position, she took a closer look at her target. They might be undermanned now, but Texico hadn't been stupid when they set up this base. The surrounding jungle had been cut back, leaving

little to no cover within 300 meters of the perimeter. Of course, though it too had been cleared of brush, they hadn't bothered to raze the actual hill she was headed toward, which gave the only vantage point on the towers. As far as she was concerned, this was a fatal flaw.



With a touch, Silva adjusted the built-in sights in her helmet to get a closer look. Just as she thought, the foliage had been cleared right down to the rock, leaving no cover. Anyone on the hill would be a sitting duck to the men in the towers. Well, they were here to test out the new AC. Apparently she was going to get the chance to see how good it really was. Using their secure channel, she reported in, "Taking up position on the small hill to the southwest."

Machado answered, "Copy that."

To Machado, it was evident that the guards weren't very diligent, probably low-level hires more accustomed to keeping out the wildlife than repelling organized opposition. Two young men crouched on the ground, sharing a canteen, not even looking toward the outside of the fence, backs to the impending danger. Seemed a little unfair, almost like shooting fish in a barrel...almost. "Avila, you've got the right, I'll take the left guard." The Assassin nodded.

As Silva mounted the rocky incline she was glad that at least her ascent was covered by the hill itself. Once she neared the top she crawled forward on her elbows and knees. Though it looked like there was already some new growth, this close to the ground she could smell the reek of the chem fire used to take out the brush as blackened vegetation crunched to ash underneath her.

For this to work, the new AC was going to have to be perfect, but she saw no reason to push her luck more than necessary. With a well practiced motion, she placed her Gekitai on the bipod and sighted the guard in the farthest tower. "I'm in position." If her AC failed up here,

she would most likely be dead before she even realized it had glitched. Stamping down her almost overwhelming desire to seek cover, she concentrated on the target in her sights and slowed her breathing, finding calmness in the familiarity of her job. Like it or not, she had no choice but to trust the tech.

Having kept the first guard in her sights since gaining the position, Silva squeezed the trigger and was already shifting the Gekitai to draw a bead on the guard in the other tower before the first one slumped to the floor of the platform. In less time than it took to draw a breath, the guards were down. She didn't bother watching the second guard fall. She knew the shot was true. Quickly she swiveled her weapon to the center of the camp, looking for signs of alarm or other potential trouble. From her vantage point she could see Machado and Avila engaged with the men at the gate.

They had quickly covered the bare ground to the lounging guards. Nothing fancy needed here. As Avila made quick use of his blade to silence his target, the Assault Leader grabbed the left guard from behind, just as he was beginning to turn. Not giving him time to struggle, Machado placed his right arm up under the guard's chin and delivered a quick kick to the back of his knee. Quickly reversing his grip on the falling guard Machado dropped to one knee, pulling the choking guard back across his leg. The energy in his armor lent a bit of extra strength to the force of the fall, and he felt more than heard the neck snap against his arm. Once he was sure the target was dead, he let the body slump to the ground. With a well practiced motion he grabbed the back of the dead man's useless armor vest and quickly crossed the yard. He dropped the dead weight next to a set of steps leading into an old fashioned Quonset hut, Avila right behind with his own trophy. Silva reported her success as well. Four down without an alarm raised. He wasn't sure that the AC could be said to have helped with any of it, but it was a good start.

"Meruidae, move in and head for the Fergies." Ferreira, cover him. The larger man nodded and followed the Assault Trooper towards the generators. "Silva, you see anything else moving around here?"

The Sniper slowly swung her vision over the whole camp. "Nothing yet."

"Keep an eye out. Avila, head up the west side of the camp and circle around to the northeast. Once you are certain it's clear, meet me at the north side of the central structure." Without waiting for acknowledgement, Machado began to make his way north, into the heart of the camp. He expected to encounter at least some opposition, but there was no sign of even the minimal patrols he had expected. He crouched low in the shadow of a small shack near the central building and waited.

As Meruidae and Ferreira made their way deeper into the camp, the heavy gunner never stopped scanning the nearby area for any movement. As they neared the target, he spoke, "This place is seriously undermanned." To Meruidae, the big guy sounded uneasy.

Ferreira could practically hear the trooper shrug as he answered, "Good. Maybe we'll get home sooner." With a jerk of his head Meruidae started toward the generators.

"Why are you in such a hurry? Got a hot date?" Ferreira smiled at his own joke, knowing his teammate spent most of his free time reading any tech info he could get his hands on. It was part of what made him so good at his job, if a little boring.

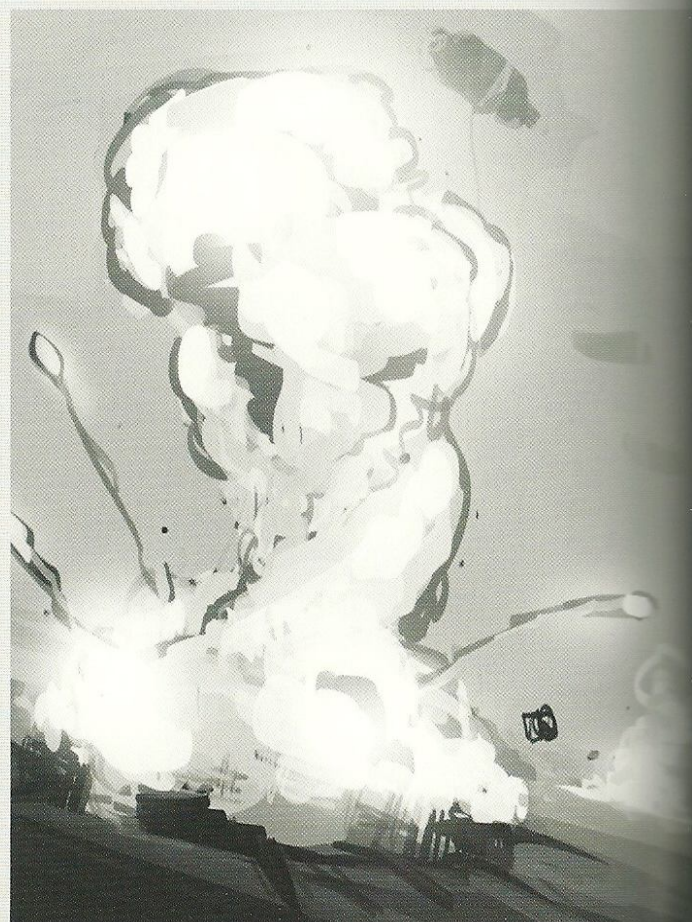
Reaching their goal, Meruidae responded, "Your mom gets real pissed if I keep her waiting."

Before Ferreira could think of a proper retort Machado came over the radio, "Cut the chatter you two."

The two guilty parties answered practically at the same time, "Yes, sir."

The camp boasted two Ferguson generators, though it looked like only one was in service at the time and the other one looked like it might collapse any second. "Keep us covered Ferreira." The large man nodded his assent as the trooper knelt down, laying charges at the base of each of the generators. Not only would they destroy the machinery on the ground, the explosions would untether the Fergies themselves, leaving them free to float where they would, eventually finding their way back down to earth, wrecked and unsalvageable.

With the shape the generators were in, it probably wouldn't take much to reduce them to scrap, but Meruidae didn't believe in being stingy with ordnance. As he set the final charge in place he signaled for Ferreira to follow him to a safe distance. "We're ready here, boss."



"Once the charges are blown, move to our position. Silva, pick off anyone who makes it past us. I don't want anyone raising an alarm. Prepare to go weapons free." After checking that Avila was in position at the back of the central building he opened a channel to the other two Assault Leaders. "Santos, Araripe, Status?"

"Good to go," answered Santos.

Araripe responded next, "We're in position."

With the charges in place and the other two teams ready to take their targets, Machado gave the word, "Now."

Though there were certainly other ways to wreck machinery, Meruidae preferred a good old fashioned explosion. This one didn't disappoint, as a bright orange fireball shot to the sky, reducing the generators to scrap. The team's demolitions expert couldn't help but smile at a job well done. He enjoyed the challenge that fixing things provided, but for sheer joy, nothing beat blowing shit up.

Moments after the charges blew, the front door of the main building flew open, and two guards armed with pistols stepped out. Machado made short work of them with his Capéval 9mm, and moved into the building. One of the remaining three Texico personnel fired at him but was panicked and the shot went wide. Machado took quick, careful aim and took out the two nearest foes as a final one slipped out the back.

As planned, Avila was waiting for this. The man was fearful, wildly waving his weapon around. In his mad rush down the stairs and thanks to the AC, he didn't even see the Assassin crouching nearby. As the Texico man started to move away, Avila stood up and calmly took aim, using his pistol to put an end to the runner. Hearing nothing from inside after the two short bursts of fire from the distinct sounding Capéval, the Assassin moved in.

The building was little more than an overgrown shed, long and low with a few folding tables and chairs scattered around. Near the front he could see three aging workstations with obsolete tech. On the ground lay two dead Texico troops. Fodder, by the look of them. The one near the front must have been in charge. He was the only one wearing body armor of any type, and it hadn't been enough to stop Machado's fire at such close range.

"I know rumor says that Texico's been running in the red, but I would have expected them to have more assets in place than what we've seen here." Avila said, looking at Machado.

Machado found it odd as well. The intel they had was solid, which means that all three targets originally housed a much larger contingent of troops, as little as two days ago. Given the rumors about Texico, downsizing wasn't completely unexpected, but this seemed a little extreme, even for a company desperate to turn a profit this quarter. He needed to find out what the other two teams had come up against.

"Araripe, what's your status?"

The younger man answered right away, "There's nothing here, Machado. Just a few empty buildings. Nothing worth taking and not even a single soft asset. I've got my team combing the nearby area, but it looks deserted."

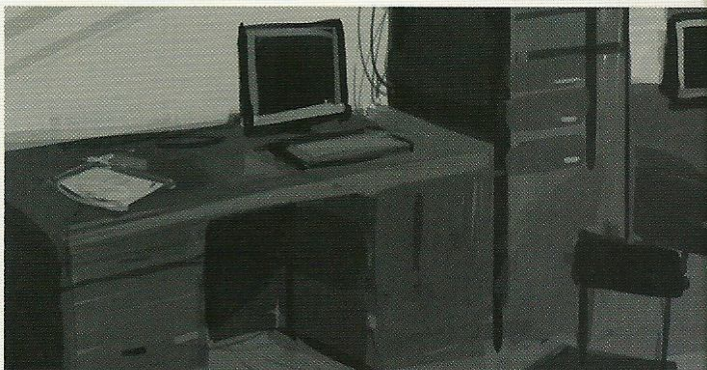
Machado found his report troubling. Their intel had said that the outpost was occupied a few days ago. "Santos, what do you see on your end?"

"Nothing much here either," she reported. "We neutralized the six targets present but there's much more hardware here than there should be if the site was being downsized. There's enough transport here for at least fifty troops, easy. Pretty disappointing, Jorge. You didn't need me over here at all, even the kid could have handled this!"

Not letting her teasing go unanswered, Araripe replied, "Was it too much for a woman of your age, Bia? You know you should be slowing down, we don't want you to fall and break a hip or something."

"Hold your positions until you hear from me." Machado clicked the channel off, leaving them to go to it. Given the recent intel HQ provided, what they found on the ground didn't make sense and it made him uneasy. Machado liked things to make sense.

"Silva, hold position and keep an eye out. Ferreira, Avila, set up a patrol around the center of camp. Meruidae, I've got a job for you." The team's Assault Trooper was a bit of a jack of all trades when it came to tech of any type. Not only was he a demolitions expert, his skill with tech in the field was invaluable. Meruidae's skill with data infiltration and retrieval paled in comparison to some of the experts at HQ, but he did pretty well with it in a pinch.



When the trooper, arrived Machado pointed toward the almost obsolete workstations, "Can you get any intel out of them?"

After sitting for a moment, Meruidae snorted, "Ferreira could have pulled this intel boss. You caught them with their dicks out. Two of the machines are still logged into the Texico system. While these jockeys surely didn't have high-level clearance, there is still plenty of basic intel here for the techs to sort through. I'm dumping it now; will need a few more minutes to finish up." He patted the small dump drive. "I found something interesting though. It looks like Texico's been pulling manpower from this whole area, leaving skeleton crews. Like I said,

these newbies didn't rate the clearance to get at actual OPFOR info, but it's clear that something is going on. I can try to pull more, but I'm likely to trigger some alarms if I start poking around too much."

Machado thought for a moment. "Don't risk it for now. I'm not sure how much useful intel we would get anyway. Can you see all the locations that have been downsized in the last 72 hours?"

Meruidae concentrated for a few minutes, entered a few quick commands, and pulled up a list to the display. Leaning over his shoulder, Machado looked it over carefully and began to smile. He pulled out the map projection of the area and gave it another look before calling on his comm, "Teams Two and Three, anything new to report?"

Araripe's voice came through first, "Nothing here. We've made several expanding patrols around the outpost but haven't encountered a single operative."

"Same here, Machado. Nothing new to report," Santos replied.

Machado nodded to himself, took another look at the map and smiled again. Coming to a decision, he spoke to all three teams. "Our mission was to give this new tech a real shakedown and it seems that Texico has disappointed us. However, I think we should do our best to come back with the data as we've been asked."

As their patrolling paths crossed, Ferreira looked at Avila questioningly, knowing the boss didn't give a shit about running lab rat errands. The Assassin shrugged as if to say he had no idea either and moved on.

Machado continued on the channel, "It seems that these three outposts aren't the only resources downsized in this area. Teams Two and Three, meet me at the coordinates I'm sending. I'll brief you there."

The War Dogs had served under Machado for long enough to recognize the tone of amusement in their leader's voice. It usually meant he had an idea of how to kick an enemy squarely in the balls. The last time the boss had an idea like that they had gotten into deep shit and barely made it out still breathing. Of course, they also got to blow up a lot of stuff. All in all, it seemed like a good trade-off.

"War Dogs, rendezvous north of the camp and be ready to move out."

When his team arrived, Machado gave them further instructions but remained vague on their final destination. They were to march about eight miles to the northwest to meet up with the other two teams. They scouted ahead and kept a close eye on the surrounding jungle but encountered no Texico forces, or locals. They soon emerged from the foliage into an overgrown clearing which looked like it may have once been a fuel depot. Rusting metal barrels and a small shack had been once but reclaimed by the jungle, but the vine-covered mound in the middle bore the telltale shape of an old fashioned fuel tank.

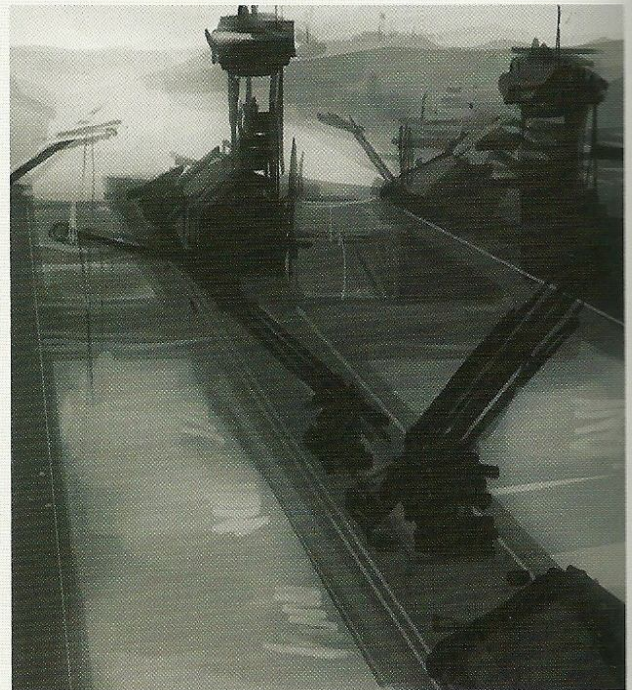
After a short wait, Araripe and Santos arrived with their units. Once again Machado pulled out his field projector, brought up a map of the region and began explaining his plan.

"The intel we pulled makes it pretty clear that Texico has pulled a lot of assets out of this region for activity in another arena. Though we don't have any info on where that might be, it means that they've left certain assets here more vulnerable. I think we should take the opportunity to hit them where it hurts."

Looking at the map, Araripe wondered, "What does Texico have that we could want? The shitty tech and transports we've seen aren't worth the trouble to haul home." Finally seeing exactly where Machado was pointing on the map, he raised his eyebrows and let out a low whistle. *He can't be serious*, he thought. The War Dogs had a reputation for going above and beyond, but this was crazy.

Seeing what he was getting at, Santos almost choked on the long drink she had just pulled from her reservoir. "Well, no one ever doubted that you had a set, Jorge." Happily jumping in with both feet, she said, "I know you've got a plan, so share. Just how do you plan on hitting the canal with only fifteen men?"

Looking at her and Araripe in turn, he answered, "Not hitting, taking!"



Smiling, Machado continued, "We don't need to take the whole damn thing; controlling one lock would do the trick. See here." He grabbed the digital image, zoomed in and rotated it to show a close view of the nearest lock. "This is the Paraíso lock. Framed on both sides by more significant outposts, it doesn't hold as large of a contingent as its neighbors even when fully manned, boasting only thirty men on the ground. With the soft asset reallocation, it looks like it's been reduced to half that."

Studying the layout before her, Santos said, "Ok, so easy enough to take it, but won't they just move troops in to oust us before we can really disrupt the flow of traffic?"

Araripe spoke up, getting into the plan, "If we go in quick and quiet without having to blow everything to hell, we should be able to use their own defenses against them. Should be doable, at least for a while."

Machado responded, "A while is all we need. We're just out to prove we can take control and hold it for a bit. I don't know what Texico is up to, and that's a problem for the suits, not us, but we can certainly twist their balls a bit while we're here. At the least, we give them a black eye that unsettles their stock and at the most they pull assets from whatever they're up to in order to retake the lock. Texico operates right in our backyard and it's a good idea to remind them who its neighbors are." He took another breath and looked to Santos and Araripe, "That being said, we already did what we came here to do and if either of you don't feel the gain is worth the risk, I won't make it an order."

Araripe was the first to answer grinning, "My team's in. We didn't even get to see any action yet. Wouldn't want to disappoint the lab rats by not bringing in enough data."

"Like you have to ask." Smiling, Santos slammed her helmet back on and signaled her team to come to her.

Leaving only a sentry from each team to keep an eye out, Machado gathered the rest of the teams to him and quickly explained his plan.

After they had been briefed, Silva moved with her two counterparts to take up position on the high ground to the northeast, overlooking the lock. What they could see confirmed their stolen intel. There were four stationary sentries, two on each side of the lock with guards at either end of the causeway and more patrolling above the lock itself. Ideally she would have liked to position herself closer to the targets on the far side, but since she couldn't very well swim across the canal unseen, this would have to do. From their vantage point, the southwest tower would be a difficult shot; the angle was beyond awkward, but nothing she hadn't done before. She claimed the far two targets as her own, leaving the closer two for the other teams' Snipers. Each set up their weapon and got into position, ready to fire when ordered. Waiting was second nature to all of them.

Getting to the single outer patrol guard wasn't providing much of a challenge for Avila. The Texico woman slowly meandered along her patrol, mind obviously not on her surroundings. Her hands rested on the weapon she carried, but she clearly didn't expect to have to use it. He'd shadowed her for the last fifteen minutes as she made her way up and down the service path. Watching her, he imagined her mind filled with hopes that her shift would end soon, weekend plans, and perhaps even a shopping list. Whatever it was that occupied her thoughts, it clearly wasn't her job.

Her route took her to within sight of the guards at the lock, making it necessary to eliminate the potential threat, and continued out to a small maintenance shed. Avila circled around her and waited behind the small building. He knew he wouldn't have long to wait.

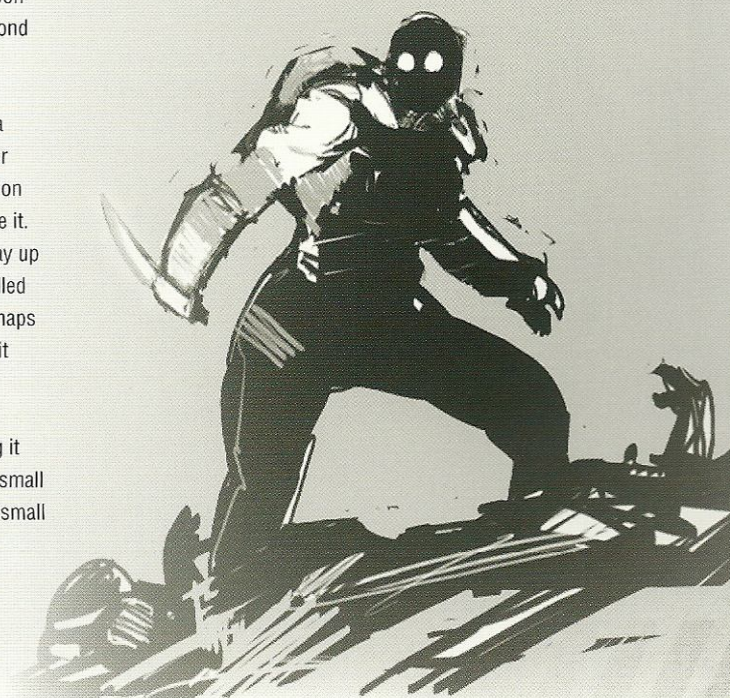
He heard her steps crunching on the gravel scattered across the path before he could see her; she was making no effort at stealth. He silently waited for her, as still as any natural predator, to reach the end of her path. As soon as her back was turned, he put all his effort into sprinting across the short space, charging toward her, blade at the ready.

He knew that he had made no sound, but something made her turn. Perhaps some millennia-old survival instinct, lodged deep in the hind brain, woke. Though her conscious mind was still focused on life's trivialities, it was no longer in charge. Her animal brain knew only that something was hunting her. Something with claws and teeth. In an instant she was no longer a guard on patrol. She no longer had weekend plans, shopping lists, or six more hours on her shift.

She was only prey.

She turned, weapon raised defensively, and he was on her. He drew back his knife to finish her before she could raise the alarm, and caught her gun across his face, hard. His faceguard protected him from any real damage, but it was enough to snap his head back. Good thing she didn't have the sense to shoot him. At this range his armor would have been little protection against even her handgun.

Before she could get her bearings and do just that, he brought his knife up, sliding across her arm and forcing her to drop the gun. Unlike a steel knife, Avila's Vorpall Energy Knife didn't drag or catch on metal, clothing, or flesh. Bringing his arm down, he slid it easily between the plates of her body armor, right below the navel and pulled up, splitting the plates in two, eviscerating the flesh underneath. She let out a surprised gasp and went to her knees as he extracted the knife. He sidestepped around her and grabbing the front edge of her helmet inserted the tip of the energy knife below her left ear, slicing cleanly until he reached the right. He always made certain his targets stayed down. Though he hadn't seen anyone else out this far, he still rolled her body off the path into the nearby foliage and signaled to Machado that it was safe to move in.



"Copy that. Come to our position." Machado was ready to begin. Though he knew Silva and her two counterparts were the best there was, the Assault Leader knew that it was unlikely they could take the troops at the lock by surprise as they did the outpost. The best he could reasonably hope for was that they could take out the guards in the towers to keep his teams from taking fire from above as they swept through the opposition on the ground. "Silva, the three of you are go."

Having long since lined up their shots, three fingers simultaneously squeezed triggers on Silva's order. She saw her target's head explode as he tumbled backwards just before she swiveled to cover the last tower. Confident in her weapon, Silva once again squeezed the trigger. Instead of the expected spray of blood and bone, nothing happened. Her faithful Gekitai had failed to fire. Looking through the sites on her helmet revealed the look of alarm on the last guard's face. "Shit!" He brought his own weapon up, scanning the area through the mounted sight. With the AC, he wouldn't be able to get a good look at them, but if he decided to just start firing in their direction, it wouldn't matter. It didn't take a genius to see that the attack had probably come from their position. In another second he would most likely figure this out himself, if she let him live that long.

The guard swiveled, finally coming to the smart conclusion. She didn't know what was wrong with her Gek, and the other two Snipers had already readjusted their own positions to cover their men at the gate. Quickly she slid the switch on the side, jamming it into the alternate position, and prayed it would fire this way.

She hadn't had much practice with the new repulsor tags, though she liked what she had seen. They were just one more piece of new tech to be field tested on this mission. When she fired, the weapon kicked a bit underneath her as it never did when firing normally, but having at least had the chance to fire some at the range, she was ready and compensated for it. Her aim was solid, hitting the man square in the chest. The force of the impact slammed him into the low wall but, as she expected, it wasn't enough to take him out.

She kept her vision trained on him as her well-practiced hands loaded another tag. Though he was crouched down where he fell, she could see him try to pull at the metal device stuck to his vest. Not being able to remove it, he started to climb to his feet as she fired another shot. Her shot seemed to go wide, firing the tag into the guard tower post. Thinking himself lucky, the guard raised his weapon to fire at her. She hoped he was a bad shot. As he lined up his shot she saw the tag in the center of his chest flash red as it synced with the one that had tagged the post. Suddenly, the guard was catapulted back, off his feet and over the waist-high wall of the guard tower. He seemed to hang for a second, a look of horror on his face, before plummeting downward to the concrete below. So much for the element of surprise.

"All four targets down, last one loud and messy, boss" Silva was already inspecting her weapon, trying to fix the jam. Not being able to quickly assess the problem, she loaded another Repulsor Tag and drew her 9mm to have at the ready.



Machado hadn't waited for Silva's report and had ordered the teams in as soon as he heard the "whoomp" of the repulsor shots. He wasn't sure if it was the sound of hostile fire or not, but either way, stealth was no longer an option. He hit the first guard with a short burst of the Capéval, avoiding the body armor and aiming for his unprotected head. The other guard was already on the ground, victim to one of the Snipers that had moved to cover them.

As the majority of the KemVar forces moved toward the lock control, Meruidae and Ferreira moved carefully along the left side, meaning to take out the shielding. The area was protected by a crude yet effective sat shield which screwed with their long-range communications and could even potentially disrupt their Active Camouflage.

Meruidae headed further into the lock area, with Ferreira a few steps behind. He kept the perimeter fence on his left. Most shields were hooked right into any outer perimeter setup. This let them be effective without being close enough to a control center to screw with the owner's tech. As he turned a corner, he found himself not twenty feet from an enemy who looked just as surprised as he was. The Texico man recovered first, firing at Meruidae as he dived and rolled to his right, meaning to get back behind the corner of the building. Meruidae wasn't sure if the short distance gave him away or if the Texico shielding was interfering with his AC, but either way, the guy definitely had no problem seeing him.

While the enemy's attention was focused on firing another shot at Meruidae, Ferreira stepped up, planted his feet and let loose with a controlled burst from his Orthrus. This Capéval Twin 260 Heavy Fire weapon was enough to take down the most heavily armored opponent. Unfortunately for him, the Texico man wasn't well armored. At close range like this, the Orthrus tore through the man, grinding him in two before he hit the ground. Ferreira spared a quick look to make sure he wasn't a threat before turning to check on Meruidae who was crouched nearby, weapon at the ready.

"No need to thank me; saving your ass is what..." The force of the shot knocked Ferreira off his feet, stopping the big man's bragging.

Meruidae was on his feet before Ferreira hit the ground. Standing over him, he faced the direction the shot had come from, seeing the enemy standing on the low roof of a nearby building. He could see that this foe was more heavily armored than the last. "Well, looky here. This one's got himself some armor. This calls for something special."

Meruidae didn't even try to hit the target with his Porcupine but instead pulled out a small round object from his pack. "Teh Segue" leech grenade was relatively new tech, but it was quickly becoming one of Meruidae's favorite toys. From what he could tell, from an ever so brief, secret, completely necessary but unsanctioned field dissection, the core of "teh Segue" housed a boring worm whose origin was a carefully kept trade secret. Wrapped in a synthetic metal cocoon, the creature inside becomes agitated as the grenade flies towards the enemy. Its outer covering of razor sharp magnetized spikes insures that it sticks to its intended target. Once stuck, the worm breaks free of its encasing and chews straight through to the now magnetized foe, boring its way through even the heaviest of armor, straight into the flesh underneath.

As Meruidae threw the nasty little surprise, the man dived to his right, making Meruidae's pitch hit him in front of the left shoulder instead of square in the chest. He saw the guy stumble to one knee with the force of the impact, glance over at the seemingly ineffective tag, and begin to rise.

Standing over Ferreira, Meruidae brought his Porcupine up, ready to fire at the enemy. Before it became necessary, he saw the expression on the man's face change from determination to horror. Forgetting his targets, he dropped his weapon and frantically tried to pull the leech tag off of his armor and Meruidae knew that his little friend was doing its work. A second later the man was brought to his knees, screaming, all thoughts of the invading force forgotten, replaced by mortal fear of a more personal invader.

Meruidae didn't bother finishing him off, but instead let his screams ring out over the buildings. Knowing he was no threat, he turned back to Ferreira at his feet. "You okay?"

"I think so, but my armor's froze up. That shot shorted something, I can barely move." Using his hands, he pulled himself up to lean against the fence and brought his weapons up, covering them from both directions in case the now fading screams brought trouble. His heavier armor meant he relied more heavily on the energy running through his suit to move than his teammates did. The big guy could move in a completely unpowered set of armor, but just barely. Without the tech, his protection made him a well armed sitting duck.

Meruidae took a look, and bringing out his ever present tool kit pulled off one of Ferreira's armor plates to get at the shielded power supply inside. Though its main function was to power the AC, KemVar utilized the energy provided in a multitude of ways. "The impact of the shot fried some of the wiring. Doesn't look too bad though, keep us covered and I can fix you up." The rest of the team liked to give Meruidae a hard time for all the stuff he constantly carried in his multiple packs but he always seemed to have what he needed when something broke, or needed blowing up. Ferreira made a mental note that if his friend could get him back on his feet, he wouldn't screw with him for at least a week, maybe.

"Try that." Ferreira moved his legs, quickly getting them back under himself and coming to his feet. He took a few steps in different directions before answering.

"Looks good." Despite the dented plating, everything seemed to be working.

"Good, try not to get shot again. There's a limit to even my talents and next time I'll just leave you to impersonate a big metal rock."

Ferreira demonstrated that the finer motor control of his suit hadn't been damaged by answering with a timeless gesture as they began making their way up the fence line again.

They didn't encounter any more opposition but they could hear the fighting in the distance. The shield tech wasn't the latest or greatest, but it was effective. Though he knew it was probably more complicated, to Ferreira it looked like Meruidae just snipped a couple of wires before signaling that he was done. Ferreira reported in, "Shield's down, boss."

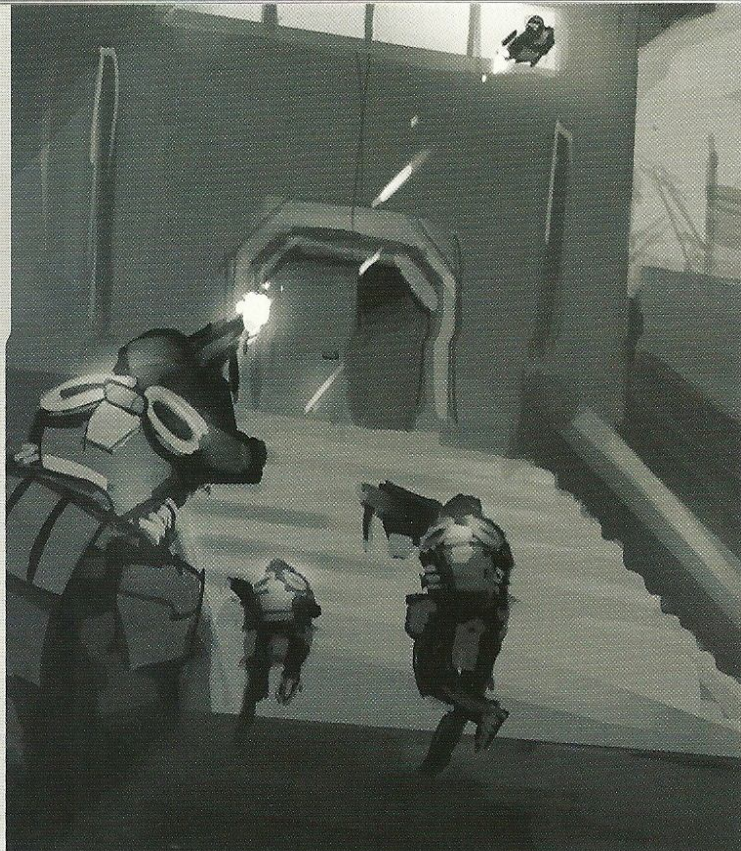
Ferreira's report was welcome news, but Machado was a bit busy at the moment. A few Texico defenders had them pinned down behind a low wall in front of the building housing the lock controls. "Acknowledged. Continue your circuit around the perimeter and take down any opposition you encounter."

While the remaining War Dogs and Santos's team kept the small group of defenders occupied, Machado sent Araripe's unit around to flank the group. Though they seemed determined, the troops here didn't expect even this basic tactic. Araripe swooped down on them, quickly eliminating the pocket of opposition.

Machado then sent Araripe's team across the causeway to sweep up the remnants on the other side of the lock. Covered by the Snipers, they made their way across without taking fire and quickly eliminated the remaining two guards, effectively holding that side. Their Sniper rejoined them, taking up a position in the now abandoned guard tower.

All that remained was to take the control building itself. The lock controls were housed in a tall building, accessible only by a set of concrete stairs leading up to the second story. The stairs were completely exposed to not only the exterior but also to the window of the control room itself. Instructing Avila and Santos' team to cover them, Machado and Santos prepared to mount the steps. So far, they hadn't seen anyone at the window, but it was a good bet that there were at least a few Texico workers, probably armed, manning the control room.

As they prepared to head for the steps, a figure appeared at the window and let out a short burst of fire. Before it could continue, one of Santos' men took careful aim at the shooter, and Machado saw him fall back with a short spray of blood. The two Assault Leaders sprinted toward the steps, making their way to the door. Machado didn't even try opening it but instead fired through it, concentrating his fire at the lock while Santos stood ready to fire at anyone who might appear at the window. He kicked it open, gun barrel coming first, preparing to take



out any remaining defenders. Inside, he saw only the man shot through the window and a woman who had been manning the controls—at least one of his shots had made it through the door to hit her.

He signaled for the rest of Santos's team to hold their position and continue covering the approach to the building while their Monkeywrench and Avila joined them.

Machado looked to the Monkeywrench and said, "We need to cause a traffic jam." The man examined the controls for a moment and pushed a few buttons. The machinery outside began to grumble as the walls of the lock began to close. Now, all they had to do was wait.

All teams soon reported that the area had been completely cleared of Texico personnel and that they now controlled it. He had Meruidae adjust the shielding so that it was tuned to KemVar energy signatures, effectively allowing them to communicate however they wished while creating a blind spot on this area as far as Texico was concerned.

The canal was heavily traveled and it didn't take long for traffic to back up. First questions and then threats came through the radio from the worried and irate ships' captains. Machado left them all unanswered.

With the shielding down and long-range communications back up, it wasn't long before HQ had questions as well. As usual, Machado had been given discretion to act as he saw fit, but the suits didn't have this in mind when they sent the teams out to test the AC. HQ wasn't happy, but they weren't really surprised either. The War Dogs strained at every leash ever fastened around their necks.

Machado explained his reasoning, and now that the deed was accomplished, HQ signed off on it. The suits would have disapproved of non-sanctioned aggression on the canal had it failed, but since Machado and his teams were successful, they grudgingly gave their approval,

instructing him to hold it for a day or so, just long enough to affect Texico's market share but not long enough to put their own assets at risk.

Technically, Machado knew that Texico could have filed a complaint with the GCC. Ostensibly, this guardian body functioned as a big brother of sorts, forcing the MegaCons to play nicely with each other for the most part and leveling sanctions and fines against any corps who violated the agreed upon rules. In reality, some MegaCons held more sway within the GCC than others, usually those whose stock was more valuable at the time. KemVar knew how to play the game and the GCC had no interest in sticking their nose in their business on Texico's behalf. Besides, the aging MegaCon's stock had been on the decline for decades and they had spent a lot of funds convincing the GCC that they could still run the Panama Canal. They weren't about to admit there was a problem if they didn't have to. Eventually they would have to move in force and do something about KemVar's coup, and that would screw with whatever else they had going on. That was enough of a victory for Machado and for KemVar management.

Machado expected Texico to make its move hours ago. It had been twelve hours since they had secured the lock, more than enough time for the rightful owners to return in force. Sat intel reported no major movement in the area. It looked like the other locks had buttoned up but nothing was moving toward them. The delay was making Machado uneasy. He wondered, where Texico had allocated its assets and what could be so important that they left their most valuable piece of property in the hands of a competitor.

His thoughts were interrupted by Ferreira's voice over the radio. "Boss, there's a guy at the gate here who wants to see you."

Maybe Texico wanted to deal. Though he would expect them to ask for a meeting with the higher-ups, it wasn't unheard of for some of the more old fashioned MegaCons to parley on the ground. "Who is it? Texico?"

"No, not them. Says his name is Zheng. He's FCC. Says he knows you. Came walking up, hands in the air. He's either very brave or very stupid."

Machado laughed, "Some of both. Bring him up, Ferreira." He wondered what Jonathan Zheng was doing here. Machado had once worked closely with him on a joint OP two years ago, but hadn't spoken with him since. He had heard that Zheng had been doing well for himself in House 6 though FCC guarded its secrets better than most MegaCons.

As Zheng entered, Machado stepped forward and offered his hand, "John, long time, no see."

The FCC operative shook Machado's offered hand, "Yes, it has been." Looking around the room and settling his gaze on Machado, he continued, "It's sad to see that you've gotten so old, Jorge. The man I knew would have taken the whole canal by now!"

Machado laughed and shrugged, "I'm glad to see you are well—I

thought for sure you'd be dead by now." Zheng smiled, "But I'm sure this isn't a social call." Without looking away from Zheng, Machado said to the remaining KemVar, "Give us the room."

Ferreira and the others quickly moved to obey. Once the room was clear, Machado continued, "Not that I'm not glad to see you but, as I said, I'm sure this is business." The visitor nodded as Machado leaned against a nearby desk and continued. "What is a man in your position doing here?"

Zheng shrugged, "You know how it is. We have many interests to see to and I was in the area."

Machado knew this was true, as far as it went. More than any other corp, the FCC's loose collection of Houses relied more heavily on liquid assets than the other big players. Though they could be deadly in the field, the FCC mainly dealt in less tangible power than military might. They always seemed to have their fingers in many, many pies and such sampling had served them well. Though one may not be able to guess their motivations, one could always trust their intel, and Machado trusted Zheng.

Machado asked, "So you know where Texico has moved its soft assets?"

Zheng nodded, "Yes, but it isn't relevant to KemVar holdings. Or at least, it wasn't."

His manner changed to one more formal, "You once did me and my House a favor and I am here to honor that debt to you and to KemVar." Sensing the change, Machado straightened. "You are aware of Texico's current standing in the world market, as well as los's areas of interest. Your little coup here has already had financial and political ramifications far beyond the inconvenience you are causing to the ships out there." He waved a hand dismissively toward the canal. "You've forced Texico and her allies into prematurely acting on a plan long in the works. You may have given them a black eye, but I'm afraid they plan to strike you in the heart."

The tension in the room ratcheted up at the threat. "As we speak Texico and los, supported by FCC House 9, are massing an attack on KemVar headquarters. Our intel suggests that the force they have gathered is sufficient to take a controlling interest since many of your own assets are working in other arenas. I don't have information on the specifics or I would share it, but make no mistake, they mean to take Guanabara Bay."

Machado swore, clenching his fists, but before he could ask for additional intel, Zheng continued.

"This information is given not only in repayment of a debt, but in good faith. A weakened KemVar is not in the best interest of my House, nor is a strengthened rival House. However, as I'm sure you understand, certain other internal operations we have in play would be jeopardized if it were known where this intel came from. I trust this will remain between us."

Machado gave him a solemn nod, "You have my word, and my thanks." The two men once again shook hands.

"I must go; there are other matters that require my attention. Good luck, Machado. Perhaps the next time we meet it will be under a liquid moon with *señoritas* in each arm and an endless bar tab."

Machado mustered a small smile, "I hope so, John. Thanks again."

As Zheng exited, the smile left his face to be replaced by a grim look as he yelled for Meruidae. As soon as the man stuck his head in the door, Machado ordered, "Contact Iz and the other pilots. We need transport out, now."

Recognizing the urgency in Machado's voice, the grenadier scrambled for his radio, "Where should I tell them to pick up?"

"Here. Tell them to come in hot and to shoot first and ask questions later if they see anything, *anything*, not us. The clearing out front is big enough for them to land one at a time. Tell them to hurry. He opened a channel of his own, "Santos, Araripe, get your Heavies out front with Ferreira. Have them set up to provide cover if necessary for the incoming Bats. Everyone else, regroup at the lock control; we're going home."

He closed the channel, avoiding the questions he knew would be incoming from the other two team leaders. There would be time to explain once they were all airborne. Hearing the first Bat approach, he exited the building, taking the stairs two at a time. Silently, he hoped they would be in time.



WHAT YOU NEED

To play any tabletop miniature game, you need stuff: dice, move templates, blast templates, tape measures, army lists, counters, army books, terrain, cases, a forklift...with some games, lots, and lots, and lots of stuff. MERCS tries to limit the stuff you need to a minimum. Having this rulebook is a good first step.

From the beginning, MERCS set out to create a game that can be played with all the traditional “luggage” that the table-top junkies crave. But we also wanted to have a game flexible enough that you could play it on any hard service with a minimum investment and still retain the core coolness of the game.

That does not mean we don't like terrain, and counters, and books, and dice, and all that other stuff. On the contrary, we love miniature gaming and everything that goes along with it. MERCS can be played on a 3D surface as easily as a 2D surface, and let's just face it—terrain and buildings are cool. We just tried to limit the need for it.

However, there are certain things MERCS can't do without.

MINIATURES

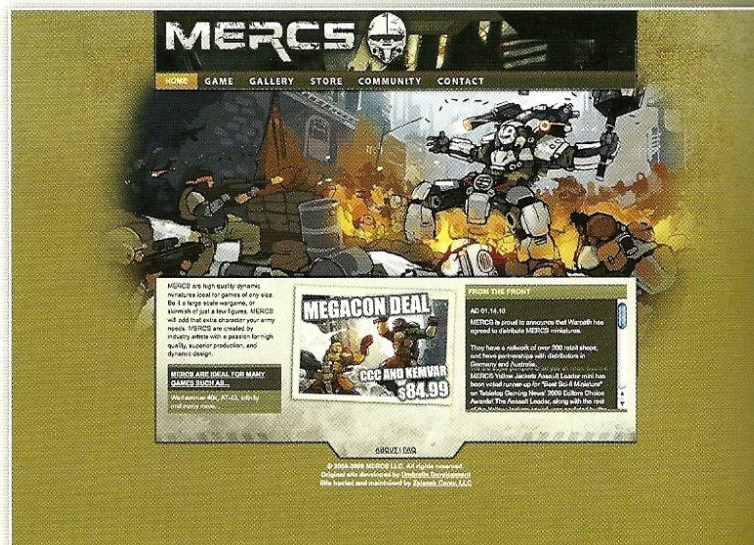
First and foremost, to play a tabletop miniatures game, you need—you guessed it—miniatures. Chances are, if you are reading this book, you know about MERCS miniatures. If not, well...

We are MERCS. We are dynamic, highly detailed, award-winning pewter miniatures. MERCS was originally, and will always be, detailed miniatures with a cool factor that is off the charts. The industry standard for 25 years, MERCS uses Mississinewa Miniatures to fabricate and produce our award-winning miniatures. Mississinewa Miniatures' mold process ensures our miniatures are clean with, no bubbles, little flash, and high, crisp detail. Miniatures are who we are.

If you are playing with a bunch of friends, at a minimum, you need one miniature from one of the four MegaCon global systems detailed in this book. If you are playing against a single opponent, you need five miniatures. These five figures are members of your MERCS MegaCon squad.

Our miniatures come in a variety of shapes, sizes, styles, and genders. Each is specifically designed to work with his or her respective MegaCon faction and MERCS game cards. Pages 92 through 143 detail all the miniatures within each faction.

Your local gaming store probably carries MERCS miniatures already. If they don't, tell them to. You can also find every miniature we make on our website, <www.mercsminis.com>. You can find everything you need there. We sell individual figures, complete squads, and even the complete collection of MegaCon miniatures.



CARDS

In our quest to eliminate the need for all the extra stuff, we came up with the MERCS card. Over the next 148 pages, you will discover all the ways the cards are used to innovate and speed up the MERCS tabletop game.

The card is used for:

- Rule Reference
- Unit Reference
- Modifier Reference
- Movement
- Range Measurement
- Firing Diagrams
- Blast Diagrams

- The card is a crib sheet for each and every unit in MERCS. Each figure represents a person with unique Personal Abilities, specialized weapons, and Corporate Identity. The cards reflect this and connect that soldier with the figure on the table.



CARD BREAKDOWN

The information on the card is grouped into five areas:

- The top of the card is home to all the things you need to know when you roll Initiative. If you don't know what Initiative is now, that's okay; it is discussed in greater detail later.
- The next section contains an illustration that mirrors the miniature to which the art corresponds to, the name of the trooper, some basic statistics, and his or her Blood.
- Middle-left is the armory. Primary weapons and secondary items, if the MERCS has them, are outlined here.
- The middle-right section is where special rules related to the Personal Abilities and Corporate Identities are listed.
- The bottom of the card provides essential armor information: Armor Rating and Armor Failure.

Around the edge of the card are four semi-circles. These circles are the same circumference as the 30mm bases on which MERCS figures sit. These circles are how the cards help MERCS measure movement and create diagrams.

When moving, the bottom half-circle is always the starting circle, or source circle. A Movement Point (MP) is equal to one shift of the miniature from the source circle to one of the upper circles, either the center or side circles—it doesn't matter which.

The top center circle represents the furthest a model can move with one MP. The side circles provide for subtle movement variations and are often helpful with the strategic placement of a model. There are also markers on both the left and right side of the cards that are used for movement in 3D terrain.

As a first-time player, every time you play you'll find a new way to use the cards, better understand what they can do, or discover a better way to utilize them.

You will find a comprehensive breakdown of each stat on the card at the beginning of the rules in the next chapter.



PLAYING AREA

The size of a MERCS battlefield can vary. We use a 2' x 3' 2D play mat at events and conventions, but many of our gamers play on a 3' x 3' square. MERCS recommends staying within these dimensions for your first couple of games.

The size of the board dictates the action of the game; if the board is too big you MERCS will take too long to engage the enemy.

The most important things for a MERCS playing area are obstacles: buildings, walls, bunkers, hills. MERCS is a skirmish game and requires terrain to obscure LOS and encourage action.

A good playing area allows both players to set up without granting Line of Sight to their opponents, if they want to do so. Furthermore, both sides should have options for traversing the landscapes of the battlefield. The play area should be filled with a balanced variety of terrain. Different obstacles, elevations, and battlefield elements make the game more dynamic. But be careful; you don't want to slow down the game because you didn't leave your MERCS anywhere to go.



MERCS recommends a setup similar to one of these two options for your first game. You will quickly realize what works and what doesn't.

SCALE

As more MERCS are added to a game, the playing area should grow to accommodate the scale. Games with three MegaCon factions should be played on no smaller than a 3' x 3' area. Likewise, games with two MegaCons and multiple players per side should be large enough to accommodate many hands and bodies.

If you are playing a game with 3D terrain, make sure you can reach the center of the table without bumping or knocking over the playing area.

The playing area should also be comfortable. A gaming table or kitchen table works well. MERCS doesn't require a lot of peripheral space, but it does need space for counters, dice rolling, etc.



SIZE

MERCS miniatures are categorized as 28mm heroic sci-fi miniatures. Terrain provided in the MERCS card packs are perfect starters in terms of scale and play.



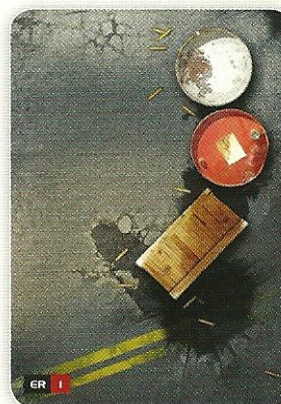
Scale courtesy of Mississinewa Miniatures (www.missminiatures.com)

Elevation Rating (ER) is how MERCS categorizes models and terrain by height. ER1 in MERCS is equal to 4 feet. Most miniatures are defined as ER2. This does not mean they are 8 feet tall, but rather that they are somewhere between 4 and 8 feet in height.

Three-dimensional terrain should be a similar scale, so Elevation Rating 3 is equal to the 2nd floor of a building, or as close as possible.

Elevation Rating is important when resolving some Personal Abilities, and when determining if a model is behind half cover or full cover during the game.

In a 2D game, if you are not using terrain provided in the MERCS card packs, players will need to assign ER numbers (using the same scale as above) to each piece of terrain in the playing area.



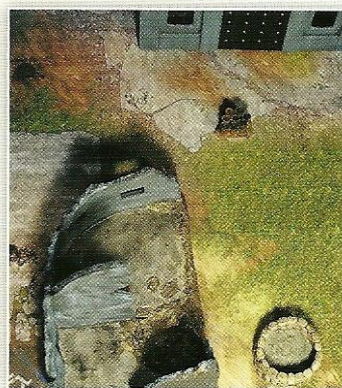
TERRAIN

Using the information outlined in the **Playing Area** and **Size** sections above, terrain placement should be based on the battlefield and should not give the advantage to a single player, unless the scenario requires it.

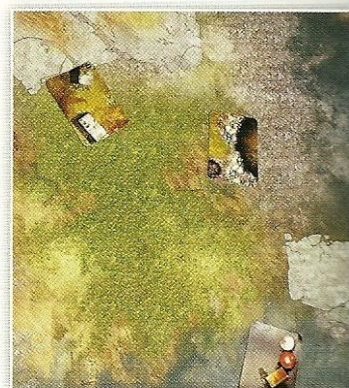
Once again, look at the sample playing area. Notice that each side has similar opportunities for movement, cover, and offense. That doesn't mean that the field of battle should be symmetrical. It merely means if one player has the advantage of elevation, the other player should have a trench providing cover to move across the battlefield unmolested.

It usually makes sense to determine what structure or object will rest in the middle of the table, be it a building or a hill, and then work around it for balance.

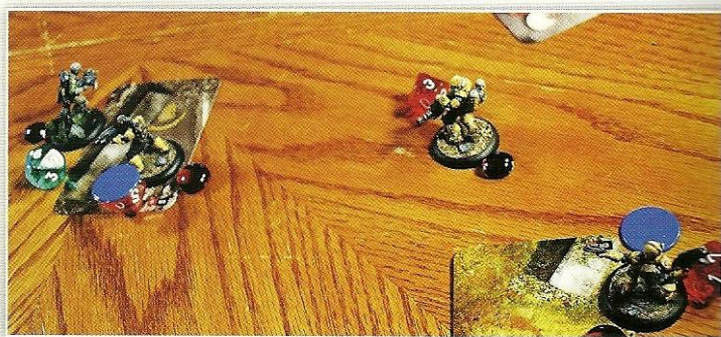
Placement can be a tandem process or, if you don't trust your opponent (and who would, really?), terrain can be placed in alternating turn order, based on rolling a d10 to begin. Terrain can also be placed according to scenario needs or to create a unique story for the battle, such as a CCC raid into KemVar territory, where the resident MegaCon is granted a home-field advantage with the terrain.



3D terrain



2D card terrain



MERCS card packs come with 4 to 6 pieces of terrain. All of these pieces can be used by any MegaCon, but some are provided only with specific MegaCon card packs. The USCR comes with an icy half-wall, while the FCC comes with piles of junk and debris.

You can also visit the MERCS website <www.mercsminis.com> for downloads of bigger terrain and even full battlefield kits based on our convention play mats.

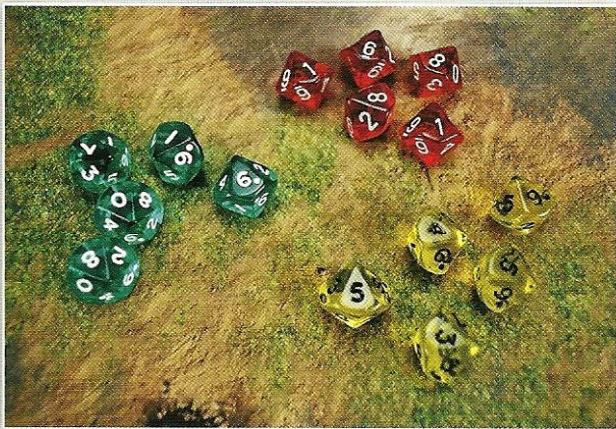


D10

Next to MERCS miniatures, the most important thing you will need are 10-sided dice. MERCS recommends using a unique d10 for each model. We also suggest, because it is cool, using dice that are the same color as your MegaCon paint job.

On some d10s, the ten is represented by a 0. The 0 should be read as 10 or a very high roll. There are no automatic successes or failures due to dice rolls in MERCS. However, there are automatic successes and failures in MERCS: when the number required by a roll is under 1 or over 10. In such cases, a player can't succeed or fail; a roll is not necessary.

In MERCS, success is always defined by rolling equal to or greater than the target number. This is not to say the statistical numbers are all high=good, low=bad. That is not the case; it varies, but the way a player reads or makes sense of any roll is the same.



COUNTERS

Counters are used to keep track of status effects, Blood, Bounding, etc. Almost anything can be used: gemstones, acrylic icons, pennies, bottle caps, miniatures from other games (okay, well maybe not those). Regardless of what you use, it is necessary to have at least 5 distinct counters. The more unique counters you have, for all the possible actions or status effects, the easier it is to interpret the battlefield.

REQUIRED:

- Blood
- Bounding
- Suppression
- Overwatch
- Armor Failure

OPTIONAL:

- CCM (Load & Aim)
- Anchored
- Ice Grenades
- Simultaneous Actions

Counters are placed either on the play area or on the card to represent an action or effect on that unit. An easy example is Blood. Every Blood a MERCS trooper suffers in damage should be marked as a counter on his or her card. That way, all players can tell quickly who is injured.

Some of the optional counters can be used for multiple things: Ice Grenades and Anchored can use the same counter, for instance. However, when you use single counters for multiple instances, make sure all players understand what they represent.



TEAM PLAY

When playing with multiple people, less is needed per person, but the setup is basically the same. Individuals only need a model, a card, and d10. The game will still require some terrain, a place to play, and some counters.

Depending upon how the teams are set up, a little extra space may be needed around the battlefield for the extra bodies. Likewise, because each individual will be rolling dice, a centrally located, fixed rolling area is a good idea.

Players should also be flexible and allow for brief team discussions before each round of action. This can be timed, in order to increase the feel of making quick decisions under fire. In general though, teams should be tolerant and flexible.

Same-team Simultaneous Actions should take a more official feel, with declaration and revealing of actions as if the participants were opponents.



FCC Black Ops in Kolkata: 2170 AD

GAME RULES

Now that you have what you need, it's time to figure out how all the parts and pieces work together. The MERCS rules are separated into two distinct groups: basic and advanced. If you are new to miniature gaming, you should read and play the basic rules a few times before venturing into the open water of the advanced rules. If you are an experienced player, you will have no trouble understanding any of the concepts covered.

The basics deal with everything you need to know to enjoy the game. It covers the Stats in greater detail: what they represent and how they are used. Each Phase of a turn is dissected with options, examples, and glorious full-color photos to help illustrate complicated concepts. All the essential roll modifiers are explained with a quick reference table on page 86. Finally, Simultaneous Actions are broken down into three easy to understand stages, then real game examples are used to show the Chain of Occurrence.

The advanced rules are entirely devoted to the three advanced actions a player may take on the battlefield: Bounding, Suppression, and Overwatch. Each is explored in detail with full-color photos and diagrams to clearly illustrate the tactical advantage of using the Advanced Combat Maneuvers (ACM). Also, Simultaneous Actions and the Chain of Occurrence are revisited with the advanced rules in mind.

How to Use this Section

This section has been written with you in mind. In it, you will find...

Headers that clearly separate ideas

THE PHASES

There are two phases in MERCS: **Initiative** and **Action**. This section covers the Initiative phase. As mentioned in the last chapter, it is easiest to have

INITIATIVE

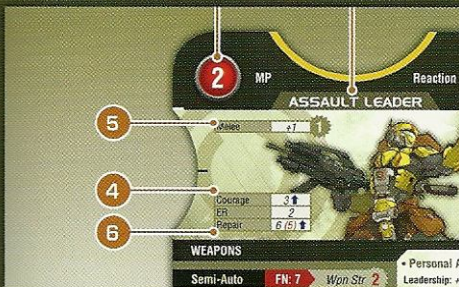
Anyone who has played any kind of tabletop game, be it role-playing or wargaming, knows what Initiative is. But just in case you haven't, Initiative is a roll of a die to determine player order. In MERCS, Initiative

Real game scenarios in italics

Keith's KemVar Sniper and his Demo each rolled an 8. Even though they are on the same team, Reaction must be checked to see who acts first. The Sniper has a Reaction of 5, and the Demo a 4. The KemVar AL acts first, followed by the Heavy Assault.

If both Reactions are the same, the result is a Simultaneous Action. These actions don't happen very often but are one of the things that make MERCS both unique and more realistic. Regardless of the fact, Simultaneous Actions are treated the same and are governed by a special rules covered on page ??.

Examples called out and labeled



A quick reference sidebar that summarizes each topic from the main body text.

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INITIATIVE

d10/MERCS = Initiative

- Consistent Assign Method

Initiative ties → Reaction

Initiative + Reaction ties = Simultaneous Action

Take the time to familiarize yourself with the rules first. Many questions have already been answered in detail within the body of the text. The sidebar is most useful as a quick reference for players already familiar with the game or who have already read through the rules.

THE CARD

THE STATS

1. MOVEMENT POINTS (MP)

Movement Points are exactly what they sound like: the number of points determines the number of cards the miniature can move. Movement points are located in the upper left portion of the MERCS Game Card,

All movement is determined from the half-circle at the bottom of the card. Minis are then moved facing the same direction to any of the three smaller half-circles at the top of the card. Movement is explained in detail on page 40.

Two numbers represent MP: the base number and the modified number, which can be affected by terrain elements, special effects, Personal Abilities, Corporate Abilities, or similar game items. In many cases, MERCS will have only base MP, appearing in the large circle. When MP are modified by Personal Abilities, a second number appears in a smaller circle next to the larger circle. When present, the modified MP bubble should be used to determine actual movement.

2. REACTION

Reaction, along with the Initiative roll, helps determine Initiative order. The higher the Reaction value, the better the chance that the model will "win" a Simultaneous Action, which is described later in the Initiative section.

Reaction is also used as the defense number in melee combat. The higher the Reaction, the better the miniature is in hand-to-hand combat.

In general, Reaction represents the ability of the MERCS trooper to move freely on the battlefield and is modified heavily by armor type. The lower the number, the more restrictive the unit's armor.

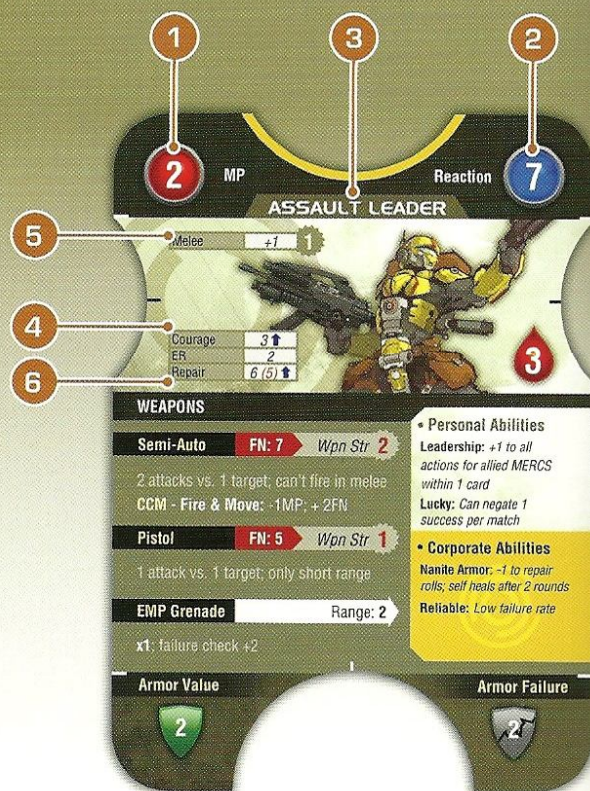
3. CLASS

This is a quick reference tool for determining what card goes with what miniature. It is supplemented with an image that matches the MERCS brand miniature.

MODIFIED STATS

In every instance on the cards, when a basic stat is constantly modified by a Personal Ability or Corporate character, the modified number appears next to the base number in a smaller circle, or parenthetical. In this way, the player doesn't need to wonder if the stat has already been altered.

In cases where the stat isn't modified unless certain criteria are met beforehand, all the affected stats and the ability are asterisked as a reminder to the player that the number can be modified.



4. COURAGE

The Courage stat is used when a MERCS unit is under fire and still must act. It is very important when playing with the Advanced Combat Maneuvers, such as the Suppression Combat Maneuver, which uses Courage as the target stat. The lower the Courage stat, the more willing the MERCS is to act when the stress of combat is overpowering. This may seem counter-intuitive, but in MERCS d10 rolls succeed when the die result is equal to or higher than the roll: low Firing Numbers, Courage, Repair, Armor Failure are all preferable.

THE ARROW ↑

All rolls in MERCS must be equal to or higher than the target number to succeed. The arrows near Courage and Repair are a subtle reminders that these numbers, however varied, still require a roll to be equal to or greater.

5. MELEE

Melee is a stat that can have either a plus sign and a number (+#) in the numerical cell or dashes (--). A plus in front of any number, even a 0, means that the MERCS trooper can engage in hand-to-hand combat (H2H). Units with dashes cannot engage in H2H.

The Melee stat is added to a d10 roll and compared against the target's Reaction to determine if the target is hit in hand-to-hand combat. The higher the modifier number, the more skilled the miniature is in hand-to-hand. The best H2H troops in MERCS have a +4. They are the best of the best, while a +1 represents a very well trained fighter.



6. REPAIR

Repair is used in any attempt to fix broken armor or disarm traps. Like Courage, there is a small arrow beside the base number indicating what you need to roll over the number to succeed. Also like Courage, the lower the number, the better your chance to succeed at Repair rolls.

7. BLOOD

The Blood stat is the exact number of damage needed to incapacitate the MERC'S miniature. The Blood stat is identified by the blood droplet on the card. All MERC'S units have a 3 Blood, unless modified by the Tough As They Come Personal Ability, which adds +1 Blood.

8. WEAPONS BOX

Everything you need to know about the damage the miniature can inflict is here. It is broken down between weapons and items. Any Firing Notes for a weapon or item belong only to the weapon or items under which the text falls.

- a. **Weapon Strength (Wpn Str)** = Helps determine if a weapon does damage.
- b. **Firing Number (FN)** = The base target number before any modifiers are applied.
- c. **Firing Notes** = Any special rules that might apply to the weapon.
- d. **Combat Class Maneuvers (CCM)** = Special actions a MERC'S can take.
- e. **Firing Diagram** = Special firing zones created with cards to determine who can be targetted.
- f. **Range** = The range, in cards, the weapon or item can be thrown, or used.

NOTE: Not all weapons can be thrown. This stat is typically used for grenades.



9. ARMOR VALUE

Armor Value measures how tough a MERC'S armor is. Armor Value is located in the shield, in the lower left hand corner of the card. This number is used, along with an attack's weapon strength, to determine penetration and possible Blood.

The higher this number, the better the armor a trooper has. The lowest Armor Value in the game is 1; the highest is 4.

10. ARMOR FAILURE

After a MERC'S is hit, the player whose MERC'S was hit makes an Armor Failure check to see if there is any system damage. In order to succeed, the number rolled must be equal to or greater than the MERC'S Armor Failure stat. The lower the number, the better built the armor is. But it is important to note that even the best armor still has a chance to fail.

11. PERSONAL ABILITIES (PA)

Each individual MERC'S possesses unique abilities that are as distinctive and varied as the MERC'S themselves. These Personal Abilities can really affect how each individual faces the challenges of battle — Personal Abilities are part of what makes MERC'S a unique and dynamic gaming system. A complete list of Personal Abilities, with brief explanations, is on page 87.

An abbreviated definition, as well as a crib sheet for any modifiers or actions the PA provides, is listed on the cards.

12. CORPORATE IDENTITY

These abilities are shared by each miniature within the corporate structure. Like PAs, the card deals briefly with the nature of the identity and what affect it has for the model and the game.

STAT INTERACTION

All of these stats interact with each other often. The key to the speed of the MERC'S game is the cards. They are used not only to measure movement but also as a quick reference cheat sheet for important game information.

The next section, Phases, explain how these stats begin to interrelate. How Reaction interacts with the Initiative roll to determine player order, and with the Melee modifier to resolve a melee hit. How Weapon FN is used with the list of combat modifiers on page 86 to determine a hit. And that hit, whether ranged or melee, in turn forces a comparison between the Strength of the weapon and the Armor Value.

THE SETUP

The previous chapter explained what a player needs in order to play MERCS. Now let's discuss how to set up the first game.

MERCS is a skirmish game intended to be played in a more confined area than massive army miniature games. MERCS units represent special five-person person security and reconnaissance forces suited to close quarter fighting; large battlefields are for tanks, air-to-ground weaponry, and air-to-air weaponry. To accurately reflect those close quarter conflicts on the tabletop, MERCS should be played in a 2' x 3' area.

MERCS Cards

2' x 3' Play Area

CHOOSING SQUAD MEMBERS

Most MERCS squads have six distinct troopers to choose from but can field only five members at a time. This means the player has to select his or her MERCS squad based upon play style, terrain, opposing faction, and fun. There are no right answers, but there are some restrictions when choosing your team. Players can field a particular MERCS soldier only one time. In other words, a CCC player cannot field two Incinerators, two Heavy Assaults, and an Assault Leader. Furthermore, players do not need to select an Assault Leader type character, even if leaving one out is an unwise choice.



Moreover, the locations that MERCS are often sent into are congested urban areas, so make sure there are some structures and cover on the battlefield. In particular, opposing squads of MERCS should not be able to draw line-of-sight to each other on the first turn, unless a scenario demands it. There should always be an option to have an unmolested first round of movement.

MERCS also works great on a 2' x 3' 2D play mat. It's what MERCS Minis uses to demonstrate games at gaming conventions. Refer to our play mat on page 30 for an example of a good initial layout.



Miniatures are placed in alternating order based on a single player setup roll. There are no restrictions on trooper placement, save one: the miniature must be within one card of the game area's edge. The player with the highest roll places one figure, then the other player, and so on until all ten MERCS have been placed. After placement, each player is allowed one, and only one, adjustment starting with the person with the lowest Initiative. The adjustment cannot be such that it forces another figure to relocate or move in any way. An adjustment move is not mandatory.

After setup is complete, the Initiative phase begins.

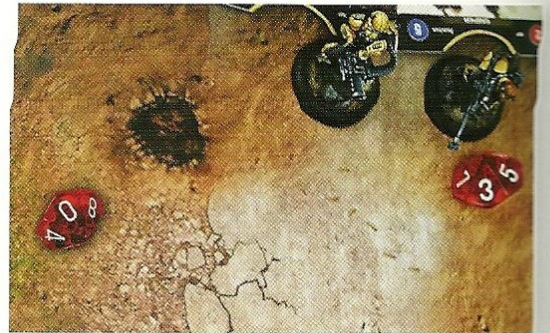
THE PHASES

There are two phases in MERCS gameplay: **Initiative** and **Action**. This is where the game takes place. Everything in MERCS uses a d10. It is the only die you need. As mentioned in the last chapter, it is easiest to have a unique d10 for each MERCS trooper.

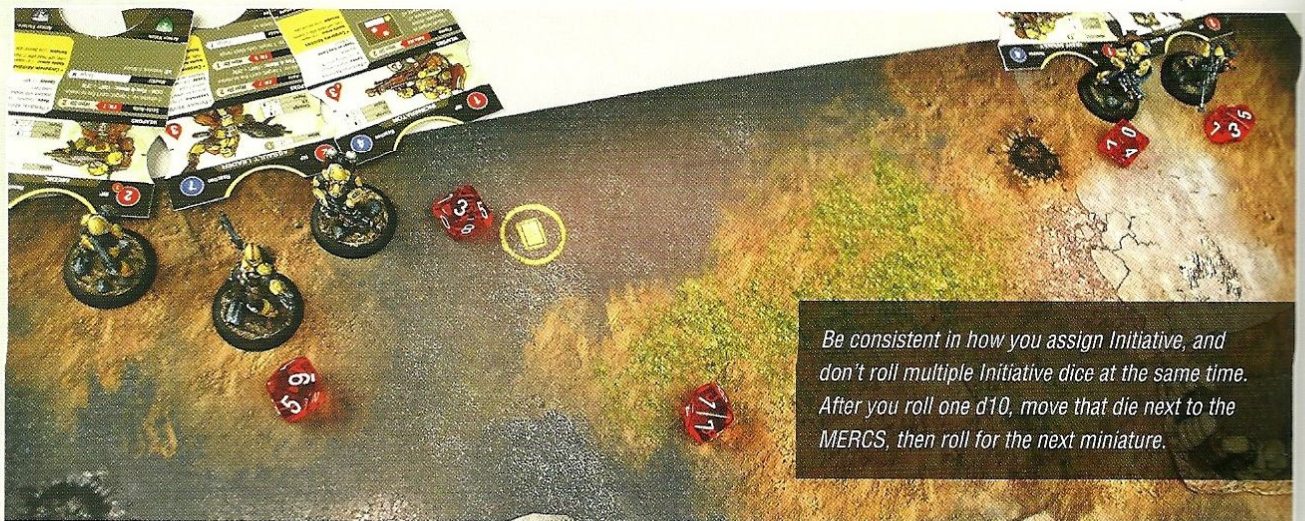
INITIATIVE

Anyone who has played any kind of tabletop game, be it role-playing or miniatures, knows what Initiative is. But just in case you haven't, Initiative is the practice of rolling a die to determine player order. In MERCS, Initiative is rolled for each mini on the battlefield. The roll determines when the mini gets to act. When two or more Initiative rolls match, the Reaction stat serves as the tie-breaker.

For the sake of fair play, it is important to remain consistent with how you roll Initiative. You can't roll all your dice at once and give the highest numbers to the minis that need it. We suggest you start with the leftmost miniature furthest onto the board and roll a d10. After you roll the die, place the result next to the figure. Then proceed to the next figure, working your way from the left to the right and from the front to the back, rolling a d10 for each mini. Repeat the process until all five miniatures have their Initiative roll.



The CCC Heavy Assault trooper rolls a 10. He will move very early in the round.



Be consistent in how you assign Initiative, and don't roll multiple Initiative dice at the same time. After you roll one d10, move that die next to the MERCS, then roll for the next miniature.

IN DEPTH

A Turn is from the first Initiative to the last regardless of faction.

A Round is from activation to activation of a specific MERCS model. In terms of penalties or effects that last rounds, it is important that you understand the it is at the end of the particular MERCS activation where these things are "cleared".

Brian and Keith have set up the table and are preparing for the first round of a MERCS game. Brian is fielding a CCC squad made up of the following miniatures, deployed on the table from left to right: Sniper, Heavy Assault, Incinerator, Assault Leader, and Medic. Keith is playing a KemVar squad and has selected the following miniatures, deployed on the table from left to right: the Heavy, Sniper, Leader, Demolition, and Assassin.

They both roll Initiative, working from the left to right, and because this is the start of the match, all the units are within one card of the table edge. Brian rolls a 5 and assigns it to his Sniper. Next, he rolls a 0 for his Heavy. He rolls a 3 for his Incinerator. A 9 for his Assault Leader. And finally, a 1 for the Medic. Keith rolls a 0, 8, 2, 8, and 4.



After all miniatures have been assigned an Initiative number, the Action phase begins. Actions take place from the highest (10) to the lowest (1). If any units, regardless of faction, have the same die result, refer to the Reaction stat to determine the order of action. Using the previous example, there were two tens rolled and two eights. The eights both belong to Keith's KemVar MERCS.



Keith's KemVar Sniper and his Demo each rolled an 8. Even though they are on the same team, Reaction must be checked to see who acts first. The Sniper has a Reaction of 5, and the Demo a 4. The KemVar AL acts first, followed by the Heavy Assault.

If both Reactions are the same, the result is a Simultaneous Action. These actions don't happen very often but are one of the things that make MERCS both unique and more realistic. Regardless of the faction, Simultaneous Actions are treated the same and are governed by a set of special rules covered on page 76.

INITIATIVE

d10/MERCS = Initiative

- **Consistent Assign Method**

Initiative ties → Reaction

Initiative + Reaction ties = Simultaneous Actions (SA)

ACTION

Within the Action phase many things can happen. Each player can choose one of three actions during his or her Action Phase: **Move**, **Combat**, or **Hold**. You don't have to decide what actions will take place for all your MERCS, only the mini whose turn it is. You are allowed 1 Move action or 1 Combat action, not both.

In broad terms, these actions are self-explanatory. Move is obviously an action that allows your unit to progress in some form across the battlefield. Combat means that you are attempting to perform an Action during combat: shoot your weapon, use a Medkit, Repair, perform a CCM. And Hold is a non-action; you do nothing.

As with all tabletop miniature games, the devil is in the details. How in fact will you move? Will your movement provide you a strategic advantage? Will your movement take you away from unit bonuses or weaken the unit collectively? Will your Firing Number be too high to even attempt an attack? Can you kill your enemy? If not, what are the chances of breaking their armor? If you kill an enemy, will you be able to heal your buddy? When should you Hold?

The lines between Actions are blurred by Combat Class Maneuvers and Personal Abilities. In cases where the text on the card appears to differ from the base rules, the card text always takes precedence. For example, some units have the Fire & Move Combat Maneuver. This allows them to both move and fire — while incurring penalties to both actions. Likewise, the KemVar Assassin's Charge Personal Ability allows him to perform an attack at the end of a Move if he ends the move within melee range of a target. In both cases, the card text takes precedence over the basic rules, which allow only one Move or one Combat action, not both.



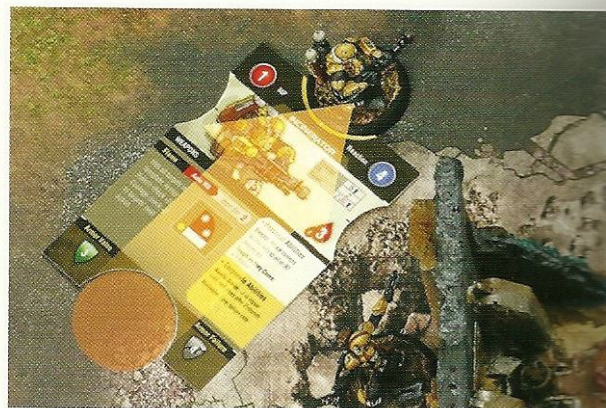
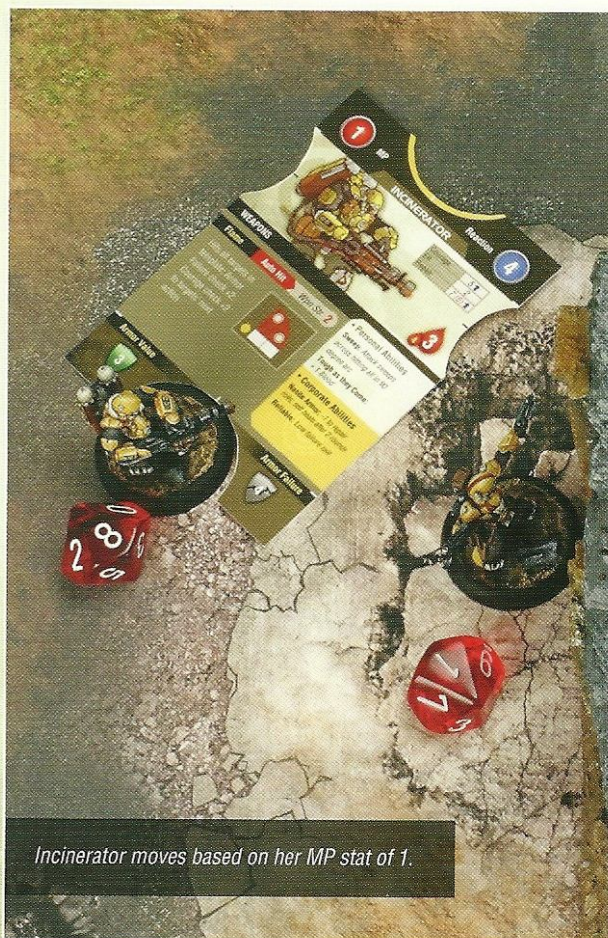
MOVE

All movement in MERCS is based around the cards. All the cards have the same distance between half-circles, so any card you choose to move with is fine. The figure can move a number of cards equivalent to his or her MP. There are some restrictions, however. While you can use less than the maximum number of MP you possess, if you use a MP you must Move the entire length of the card (Snapping to Cover can alter this). You cannot Move anywhere you want within the area of the card.

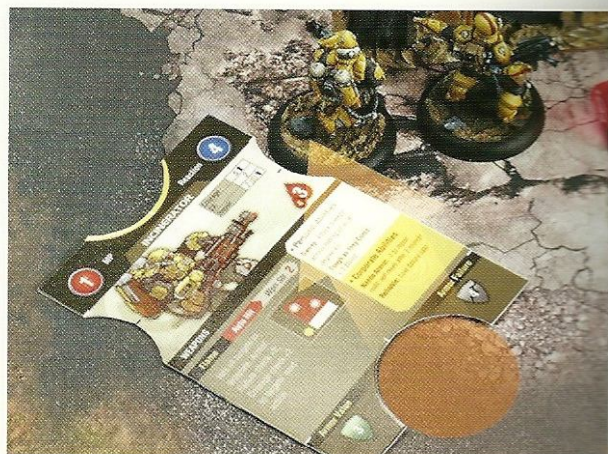
The unit begins its move in the larger half-circle located at the bottom of the card. It can then move to any of the smaller half-circles at the top of the card, but it must maintain its facing direction, within 90°. Any individual direction change greater than 90° requires the use of 1 MP. For this reason, it is a good idea to mark the front-facing direction on your MERCS miniatures.

It is possible, during the course of a movement, for those troopers who have multiple Movement Points to turn more than 90°. This would require less than 90° turns once during the first MP, then again during the second. Any turn greater than 90 degrees requires 1MP. This cost replicates a dynamically moving figure completely changing directions.

1



Incinerator moves to the top circle. This move costs 1 MP.



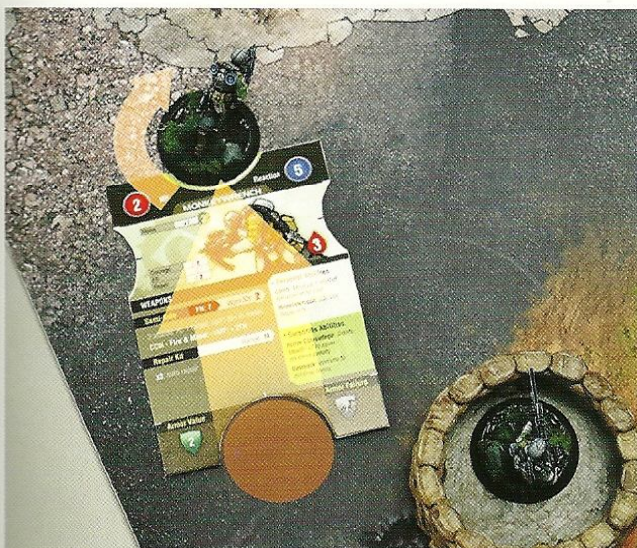
Incinerator moves to the right side circle. This move costs 1 MP.

90° TURN

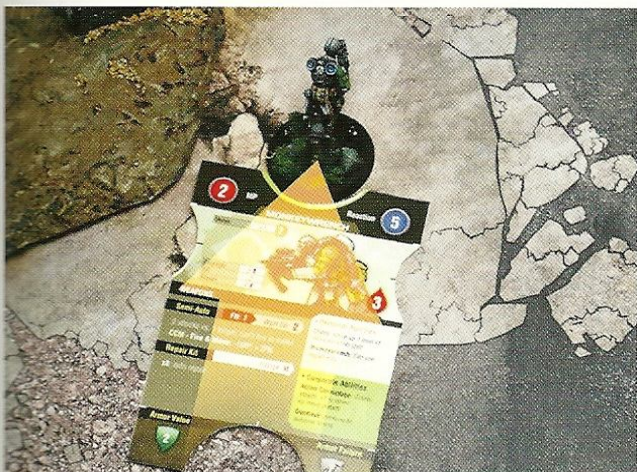
Figures are allowed one 90° turn per MP. The partial turn is allowed before or after the move, but not both.



KemVar Demo preparing to move on his Initiative of 7. He has 2 MP.



The Demo moves to the top circle on his first MP and turns 45 degrees to the right.



With his second MP, he hustles to the top circle again covering a fair bit of distance on his turn.

MOVE

Move = card based movement based off MP

Turn > 90° = 1 MP

1MP from bottom circle to top circle

1MP from bottom circle to side circle

<90degrees/MP = free

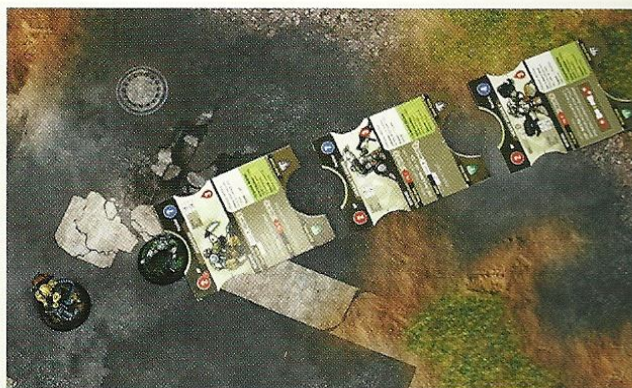
No pre-measurement allowed.

Brian's CCC Heavy Assault unit moves first with his 0 Initiative. The Heavy Assault unit has an MP of 1; it is slow but strong, so he isn't going to worry about damage at this point.

Brian lines up the card with the base of the Heavy Assault and chooses to move the figure to the top-left half-circle. He also chooses to turn the figure 25° to cover the door of a nearby industrial complex. The Heavy Assault's Move action is over.

If the Heavy Assault unit wanted to move a card length and turn more than 90° (a total of 2 MP), he wouldn't have been able to comply because the Heavy Assault only has 1 MP. However, he could use the Heavy's 1 MP to turn 180° in the same location.

You are not allowed to pre-measure your entire Move and then change your mind. If you are moving into melee or trying to get to cover and you don't end within the required one base length (30mm) of the target, then "It was a bad call, Ripley," and you're stuck. If you are within one base length, then you're okay, because you can make a hand-to-hand attack, or snap to cover.



The KemVar Assassin can't pre-measure an attack on the hapless CCC Heavy. He must declare the attack and then perform the action, even if he ends up short of the target.

MOVEMENT IN 2D TERRAIN

Let's track the movement of three CCC figures: the Leader (2 MP), Medic (3 MP), and Incinerator (1 MP).

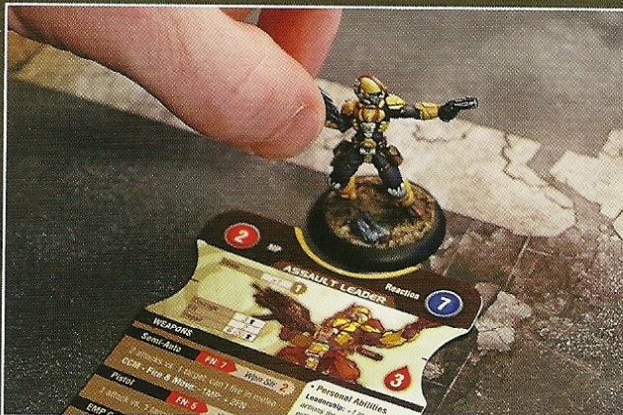


Let's move, fellas!



1 MP, 2 MP, and 3 MP.

This, of course, is straight movement. It would take a MERCS roughly three rounds to cross the entire battlefield. That MERCS would be alone and probably dead, but he or she could do it. Things change dramatically if the figures move to a side-circle, or move horizontally as opposed to vertically.

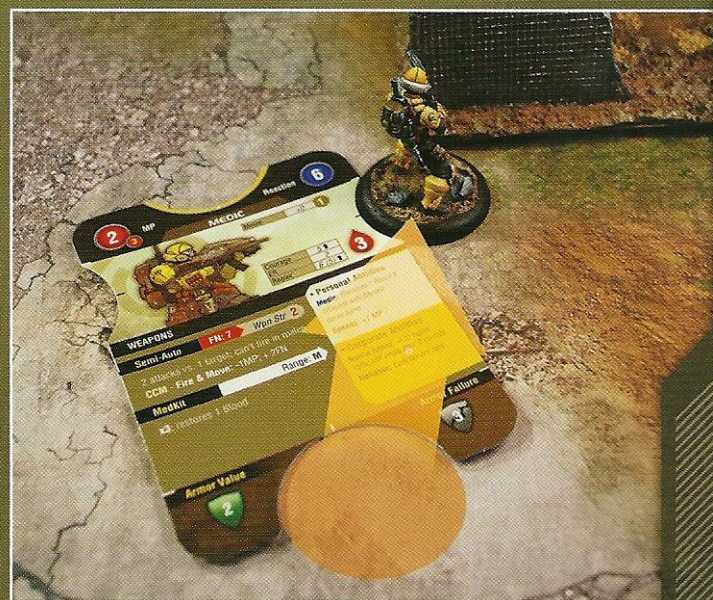




Let's spread out, fellas!



Turning with the first MP and with the second MP creates a very different firing arc.



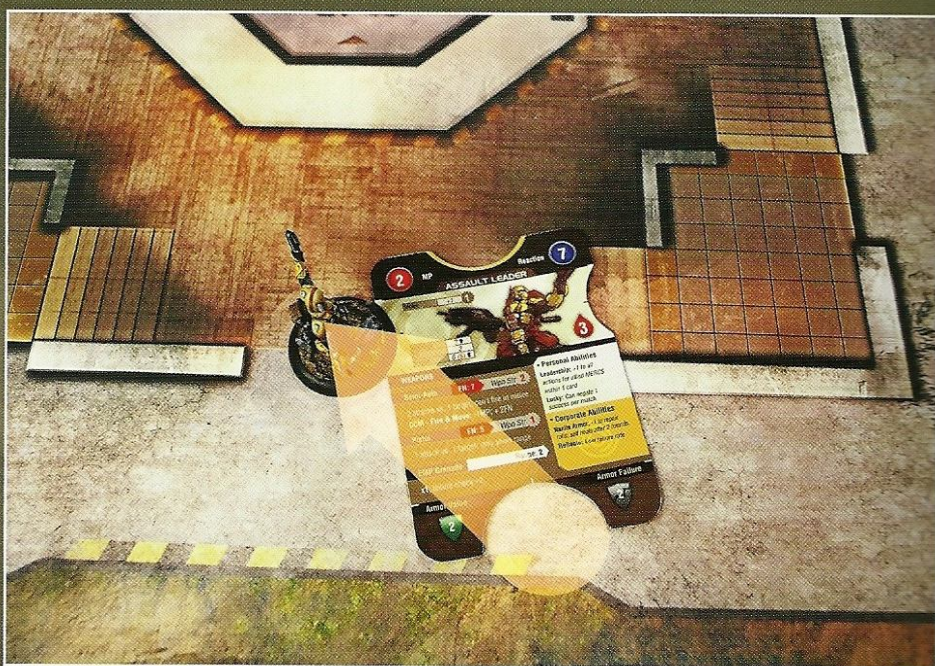
The difference between No Cover and Half Cover is moving to a side circle.

There are some rules with the cards that must be enforced. A player cannot move to a place he or she doesn't have line of sight to. And, unless a Personal Ability allows it, a MERCS cannot move through terrain. These two rules prevent a player from laying the card through 2D or 3D terrain and moving to a circle they couldn't have seen.

The scenario . . .



. . . no, no, no . . .



. . . that's better!

If you only need to move a small distance, you'll use the Snap to Cover mechanic. If there is a piece of cover (MERCS are armored and are considered cover), then a moving MERCS can snap to it if their movement takes them within one miniature base.



In this position, the Medic can't move to the right circle behind cover, because he would be moving through a building. But he can move to the center circle and if its within 1 base . . .



...Snap to Cover.



The Medic moves to heal the Incinerator.

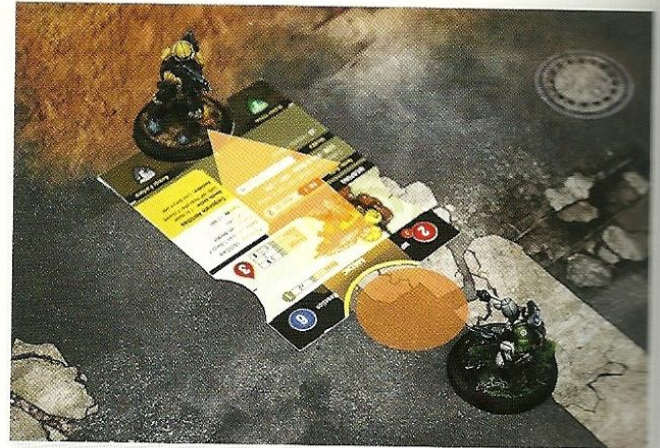


Snapping to Cover Achieves Success!

BACKPEDALING

MERCS can backpedal if they need to, but it is costly. Any Move where the card is placed in the rear 180° arc is considered a backpedal. Backpedaling is a cautious Move. It isn't a full-on sprint backwards but a measured retreat with weapon at the ready. It costs any miniature 2MP to backpedal. This means that some units can't backpedal at all.

Because backpedaling is a basic Move, a MERCS soldier can Bound with this Move. MERCS can also, if able, use the Move & Fire CCM. Likewise, S2C is also an option when backpedaling.



The CCC Medic is Speedy, giving him 3MP. He can Backpedal and use the CCM Move & Fire to make the Assassin pay for committing too early.

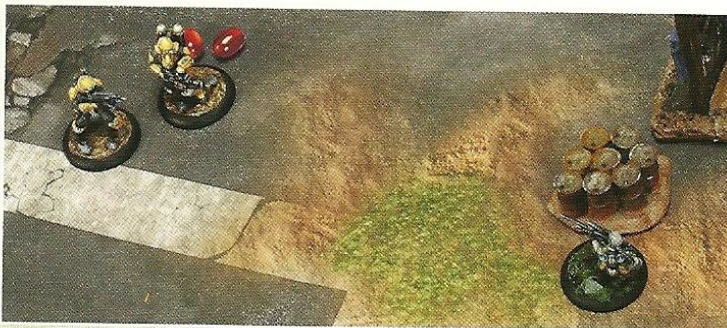
INVOLUNTARY MOVEMENT

There are occasions when models are forced to move against their will. Repulsor tags and concussive weapons are two examples. Any distances or directions will be covered in depth on the cards.

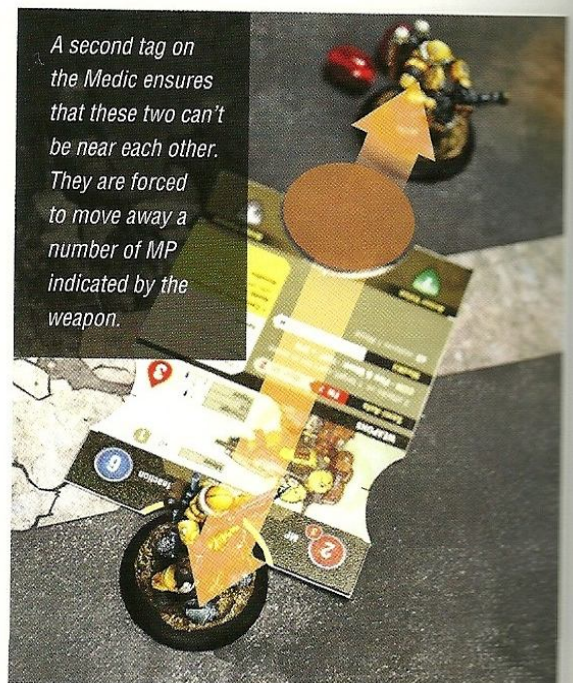
When affected by anything that forces involuntary movement, the movement is resolved immediately for all models. The involuntary movement applies to functioning and broken MERCS alike. Models are pushed directly back, as close to 180° away as possible, from the source of the effect. The person whose models are being affected make any changes.

Suppression does not stop Involuntary Movement — the model isn't moving through its own power or Courage, but rather it is being moved. Figures on Overwatch will still be able to apply fire if all conditions are met.

Because the movement is not voluntary, some special situations may arise. In certain cases, like targets affected by the USCR Ice Grenade, one or more models won't be able to move. In cases such as these, any models that can move must, and any that can't receive 1 Blood and an Armor Failure check. Additionally, targets could be forced into Falling situations. Falling is covered in the Elevation section.



The Incinerator, already Blooded and tagged with a Repulsor, could be healed next round if the Medic is allowed to remain near.



A second tag on the Medic ensures that these two can't be near each other. They are forced to move away a number of MP indicated by the weapon.

MOVEMENT IN 3D TERRAIN

Using the cards in 3D terrain functions the same as a 2D play mat, except for one minor adjustment. You still can't lay the card over terrain and move to a circle that is out of the model's Line of Sight, as was shown in the Forum's sidebar above. However there are other difficulties handling the card in 3D terrain. In certain cases with 3D terrain, the card cannot be manipulated to provide a clean measurement. This tends to occur around corners or in tight hallways.



The terrain is too close together to allow the card to lay flat.



Turn the card on its side. There are two white indicators on each side that allow for measurement in tight situations.

MOVE

Backpedaling = 2MP

- Bound friendly
- Free 90° turn
- Can Snap to Cover

Involuntary Movement

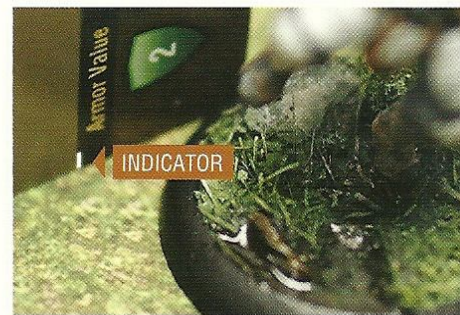
- MP based on weapon
- If cannot move away = 1 Blood + Armor Failure check
- Overwatch friendly

3D Movement

- Tip card
- White dashes on sides

The card is still used, but it is placed on its edge. At the top and bottom of the card are two white markers on each side that facilitate close-quarters movement with the cards. Set the card beside the figure base so the front of the base is lined up with the bottom marker. Then move the figure up so the back of the base lines up with the dash located in one of the side semi-circles.

As always, miniature direction changes of less than 90° are allowed, as is Snapping to Cover.



To better understand movement, it is necessary to understand **LOS**, **Cover**, **Elevation**, and **Position** modifiers. A list of all modifiers is provided in the table on page 86, but a more in-depth discussion follows.

LINE OF SIGHT (LOS)

MERCS' term for a miniature's ability to see his or her target is Line of Sight, or LOS. LOS extends 180° on each side of the miniature, and is restricted by that unit's ability to see the target at table-top level. The capacity to fire on a target, or attack a target in any way, is directly related to the miniatures' ability to see the target.

All models are assumed to occupy an area equal to their base, up to 1.5" high (generally their shoulder and head area). In effect, the target area is that of the miniature if it was standing upright and stationary. Due to the dynamic nature of the MERCS miniature poses, an easy check to determine if a target can be fired upon is the base. If you can see the base, then the target has religion — send him to his maker. Likewise, if you can see the poor fool's head peeking over a wall or hill, then put one between the eyes. No matter if it is the tiniest sliver or half the model, you can fire upon the miniature.



LOS AND 2D TERRAIN

LOS is trickier with 2D terrain, because you can "see" the models regardless of terrain. It is important to judge each situation based on an understanding that the flat structures have form — height, depth, length. You are checking LOS in terms of art rather than an object, but the questions remain the same: can the miniature see its target's base?

The biggest difficulty with LOS and 2D terrain is elevation. The solution is to assign an Elevation Rating (ER) for the obstacles and terrain features on your battlefield. This number, between 1 and 4, represents the height or depth of a terrain feature or obstacle.

When firing past an obstacle, the ER is compared against the ER of the target, listed on the model's card, in order to determine if the target has any cover bonuses due to elevated terrain.

Regardless of whether the change in elevation is up or down, the numbers are assigned based on the actual change in elevation. A foxhole and a half-wall both have an Elevation Rating of 1.

The Elevation Rating number is based on a simple scale: An ER of 1 equals 4 feet. Almost all MERCS fall into the same category: ER2. One exception is the USCR Behemoth's ER3. Simply stated, if the terrain's ER is equal to or greater than the model's ER number, the target cannot be seen or targeted. Conversely, if the model's ER and the terrain's ER are two apart, the model does not gain any bonuses provided by the terrain.



Remember, the methods for LOS are in fact the same for 2D and 3D; 2D leaves room for more interpretation and therefore more "discussions." You may have to reference the rules and work with abstract ideas a little more, but you should always err on the side of more carnage.

PREPARING TO ATTACK

Line of Sight (LOS) = 180° front arc

- Target area = base + 1.5"

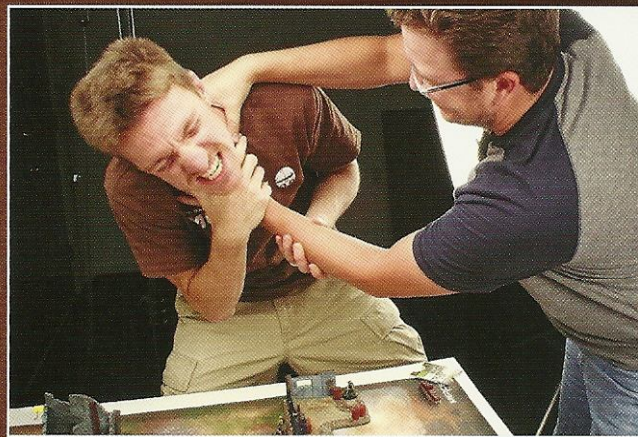
Elevation Rating (ER) unit of measurement ascending or descending.

- ER1 = 4'
- ER2 = 8'
- ER3 = 12'

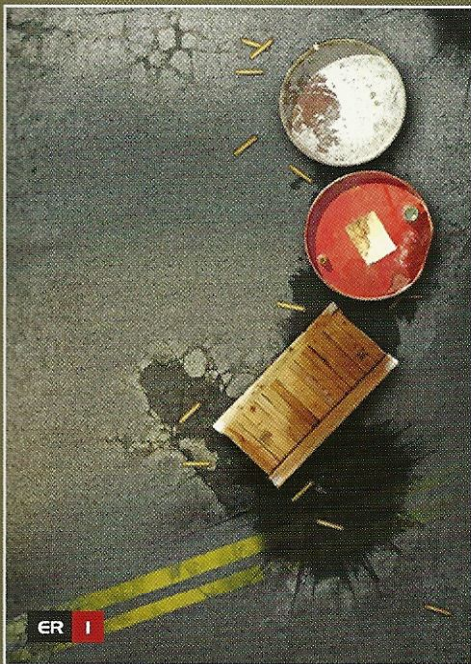
SAVE THE DEBATE FOR LATER

MERCS games are heavy on action. Any debate on the validity of a target should be decided in favor of action; even if that action results in you firing on an obstructed target. You can't change the target after discovering it is out of your LOS.

Likewise, if a rule is unclear during a game: scan the rulebook, make a quick educated decision, table the debate for the duration of the encounter, stick with the decision for the entirety of the combat, and then look up the rule and return to the discussion after the game has finished.



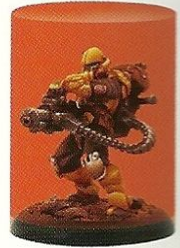
"He does NOT have LOS!!!"



COVER

Cover is defined as anything that provides an obstructed view of a target. In game terms, if anything obscures the Line of Sight (LOS) to a target, whether it provides an armor bonus or not, it is considered cover. Walls, hills, cars, corners, rubble, barrels, sandbags, even other MERCS are all considered cover if they limit LOS to the target. MERCS believes that the figures exist in a cylinder that fill the base to about 8 feet (or an inch and a half). In this cylinder they move and make the most of their environment.

There are three levels of cover: Full, Half, and No Cover. Full Cover means the target is not visible, but can still be fired upon. Full Cover modifies the FN +3. It is only used in special cases, as Full Cover denotes the target can't be seen which usually means the target cannot be attacked. Half Cover means the target is somewhat visible, and can be fired upon. The Half Cover modifier is +1 FN. It is important to note that Half Cover denotes anything from the target barely being visible to it barely being behind something. No Cover means the target is completely defenseless except for his or her Armor Value. No Cover modifies the FN -1: the target is easier to hit.

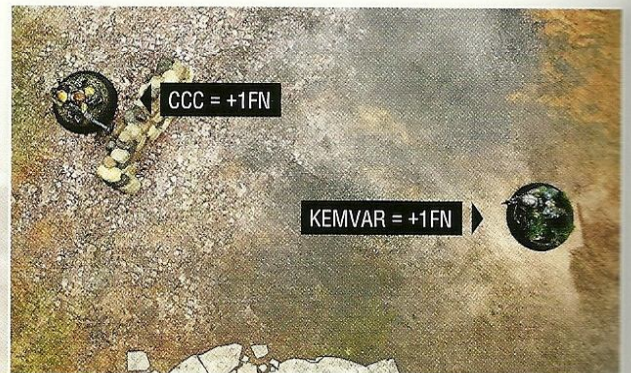


Full Cover	+3 FN
Half Cover	+1 FN
No Cover	-1 FN



ELEVATION AND COVER

Questions about Elevation and Cover come up often enough, that we thought it prudent to expand on this a bit. If the edge of the building is giving a MERCS cover, he is in Half Cover. If you can't see his ankles because his base restricts view, he is in the open. A person can't give themselves cover.



MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

Certainly half-walls and bunkered sandbags provide cover, but so do your own troopers. A very effective strategy is to closely follow a heavily armored trooper with the Medic, or Monkeywrench MERCS. They receive Half Cover bonuses and can instantly heal or repair the damaged MERCS.

No model's cover is ever lower than the No Cover -1 FN. Nor can the model's cover exceed Full Cover +3 FN. Cover does not stack.

There are situations where the level of cover is increased due to Corporate Identity, Personal Abilities, or firing template circumstances. In cases where cover is increased due to an ability, the card text takes precedent. In the case of KemVar Active Camouflage (AC), detailed information about the AC system is provided in this book on page 107, in addition to the card text.

KEMVAR ACTIVE CAMO (AC)

KemVar's biggest strength is their AC system. This provides them with permanent Stealth, without the MP penalty. Because of this, any cover they are behind acts like cover that is one level higher. Which means that as long as their armor is functioning, they are never caught in No Cover.



The firing template circumstance is discussed further on the next page, which will completely belabor the topic until your eyes glaze over. But simply put, in cases where a firing template clearly covers a target that is behind two or more half-covers **that completely eliminate LOS**, that target's cover gets upgraded to a Full Cover +3 FN modifier. This should be an extremely rare occurrence.

There are occasions where two miniatures fight **each other** in range combat over the same piece of cover or attempt to receive bonuses from the same piece of cover. In such cases, until one of the miniatures moves within one base of the cover, the cover provides bonuses to both MERCS. Once a miniature has moved within a base of the cover, that MERCS is the sole beneficiary of the cover modifier.

QUICK REFERENCE!

COVER

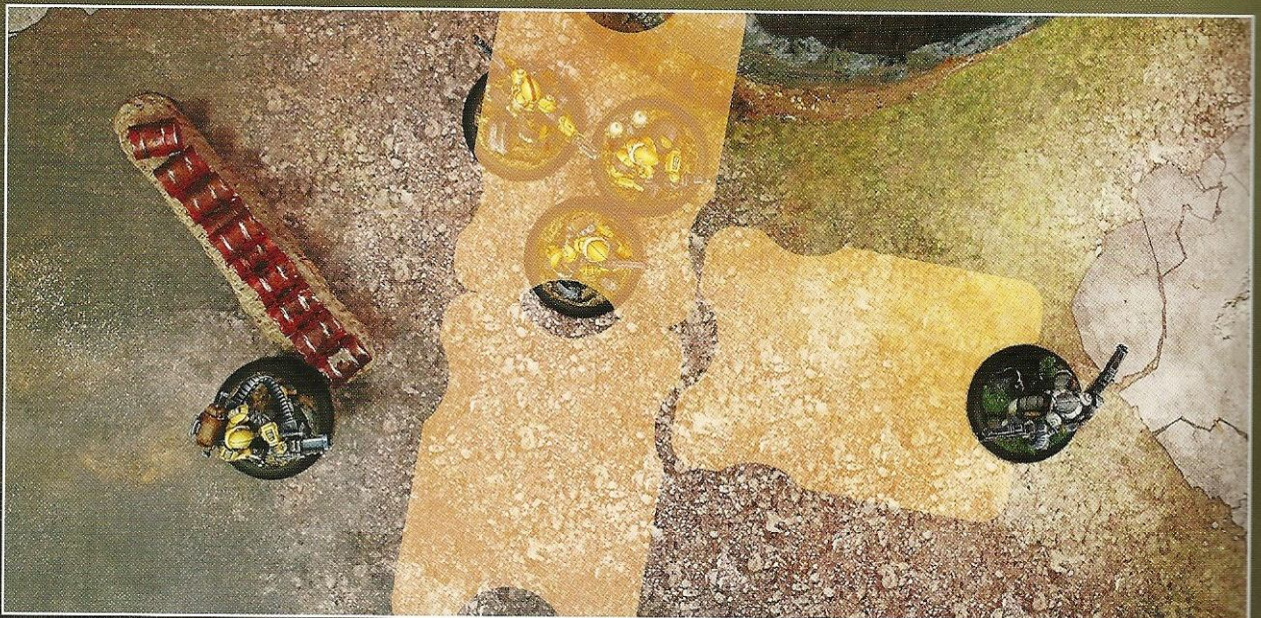
- Full Cover = +3 FN
- Half Cover = +1 FN
- No Cover = -1 FN (only in Ranged combat)

FULL COVER

In most game situations you can't fire at someone behind "true" Full Cover. The Full Cover bonus is there for two reasons, KemVar and Keizai Waza. KemVar receives Full Cover bonuses for being behind Half Cover, and Keizai Waza can reduce a level of cover. In the game you cannot fire at someone behind Full Cover, with the exception of Waza. You simply can't see the target. It is impossible.

However when attacking with a template weapon, if a target is behind another figure or figures so effectively that the target can't be seen but can still be targeted, the target receives Full Cover bonuses.

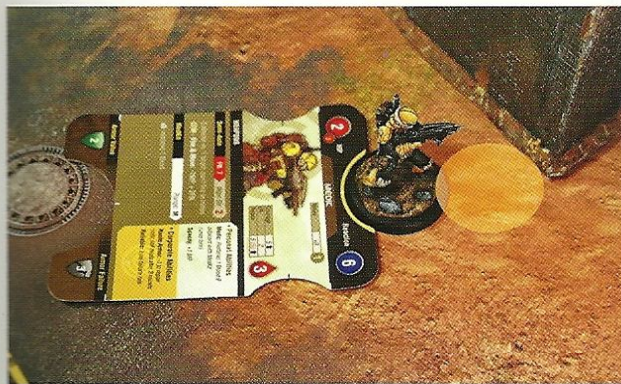
My Behemoth is on Overwatch with four people in his template. As they act I get shots on all of them. One is partially behind a wall and completely blocked by another figure. Because I can't see him but he is still in my firing template, the target gets Full Cover bonuses.



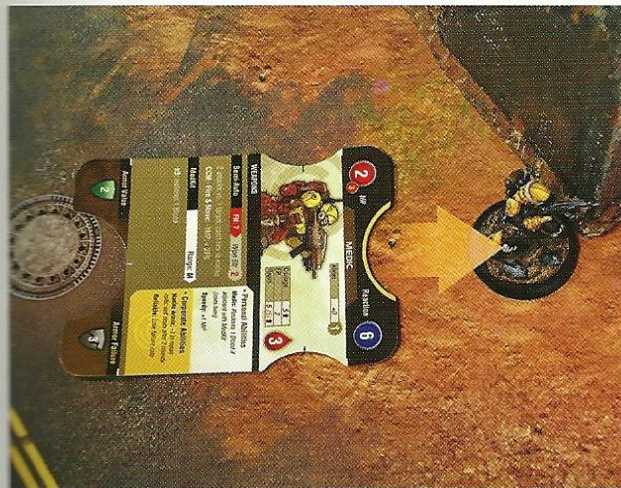
SNAP TO COVER (S2C)

If a figure is within a base length of cover, then that figure can snap, or quickly cross the empty distance, to that cover. This illustrates a trained soldier's ability to make it across the remaining distance, achieve his or her goal, and dive behind cover. When cover is a matter of life and death, you find a way to get across those last few feet!

Snap to Cover is a very fluid game mechanic in MERCS. It does not constitute a Move action, so it doesn't limit your ability to fire at a target. A model can only S2C once in any given string of events, but it can take place before, in the middle of, or after any given Action. Often, this means snapping around a corner to fire on a target down a hallway or corridor. But it could just as easily be used to fire down a hallway then snap around the corner for cover.



S2C at the end of a Move. Almost there . . .



... Snap to Cover with a 45° turn because it is during a Move.

COVER

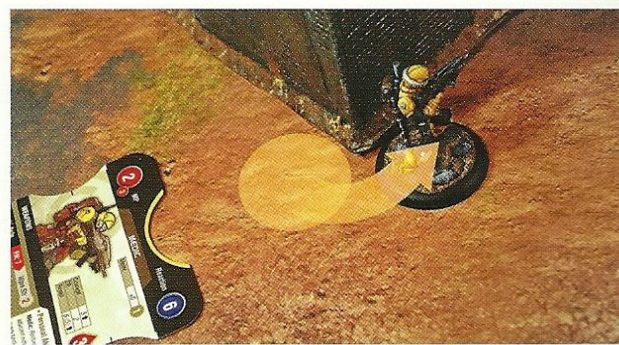
Snap to Cover (S2C) = 1x per string of events; not defined as a Move.

- Free jump up to 1 base length to reach cover

Because Snap to Cover is not defined as a Move, MERCS can still drag themselves to cover if their armor has failed. The rule for snapping to cover that is within a base length still applies, however. This allows for some interesting battle situations where, if stuck in the open with broken armor, a fellow MERCS can provide the cover needed for the damaged MERCS to Snap to Cover, and hopefully get the damaged trooper to safety.



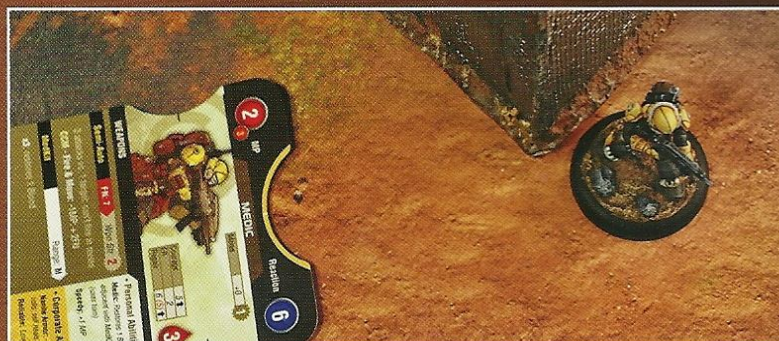
During the next round, the AL can snap around the corner and fire with no penalty, because S2C does not constitute a move.



He S2C around the corner and fires without the Fire & Move penalty.

S2C + 90° = MOVE

If a figure Snaps to Cover and uses the free 90° turn, even if no MP is used, the miniature is considered to have moved. The 90° turn is only available if the player Moves.



Keith's KemVar Heavy Assault and AL both move on 9. The AL has a Reaction of 7, while the Heavy's Reaction is 4; the AL acts first.

Keith looks at the table and realizes that he can fire on Brian's CCC Leader. Knowing the FN might end up too high, he takes the risk anyway. There are no modifiers for elevation or range. Unfortunately, there is a half-wall (ER1) between the shooter and the target. This means Brian's CCC AL is considered to be in Half Cover. The Half Cover modifier of +1 is added to the base FN of 7 for the AL, resulting in a target Firing Number of 8. Keith rolls a 1 and a 7. Luckily for Brian, both shots miss. If the target hadn't had the +1 for Half Cover, he would have been hit.

Keith decides to move his Heavy towards a sand-bag bunker. Unlike other Heavies, he is less armored and has two MP. Halfway to the Bunker, Keith realizes he's not going to make it. Unfortunately, he can't change his Action and ends up two base lengths away from the cover — in the open and out of luck.

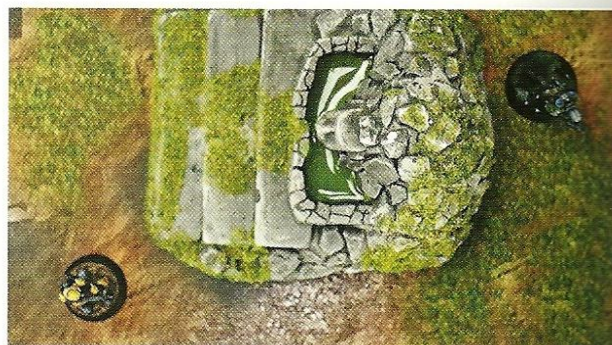
Brian's CCC Incinerator is next. She is slow, having only 1 MP. Brian decides to keep her with the miniature she is next to — the Heavy Assault. She moves 1 card, then Snaps to Cover on the other side of the Heavy.

OBSTACLES

There is a difference between cover and obstacles. Cover is a barrier through which a target may be attacked.

Obstacles are barriers that prevent even an opportunity to attack. Elevated terrain that completely hides the target is an obstacle, or an interior structure that prevents Line of Sight is an obstacle.

Obstacles also block area-of-effect damage to figures beyond the barrier. This includes grenades, flamethrowers, or any effect that could harm the model on the other side of the blocking obstacle.



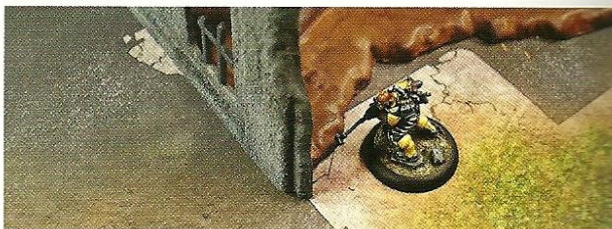
The KemVar Assault trooper is behind an obstacle, so cannot be targeted in any way, not even with a grenade.

ELEVATION

Elevated terrain, be it natural or man-made, modifies the FN. Targets taking fire from a superior elevated position are easier to hit. Conversely, drawing fire on a trooper from an inferior depressed position increases the difficulty of the shot.

Low Ground	+1FN
High Ground	-1 FN

Climbing into and out of elevated terrain is more complicated than merely moving the full length of a card. Because terrain in a tabletop game rarely slopes (and in the case of our terrain cards and play mats, it's flat), the MERCS miniature must use an entire MP to elevate or descend one level. In order to Move up or down a terrain level, the miniature must move flush to the elevation change, then stop, before using another MP to ascend or descend. The miniature does not have to move a full card length when moving flush to an elevation change. More importantly, the MERCS trooper cannot move into or past an elevation or depression that exceeds the total number of Base Movement Points it possesses.



Once the miniature is flush with the terrain change, it requires 1 MP to ascend or descend a level.

If the MERCS trooper has 2 MP, it can never ascend higher than two stories above or below its current elevation its elevation at the beginning of the game via climbing. This rule has nothing to do with the number of changes in a given Move; it has to do with the sum. MERCS armor is heavy and cumbersome. The heavier the MERCS armor, the slower the MERCS, and the less likely it would be to climb. Manmade structures, slopes, or stairs that help with climbing or descending allow the MERCS to ignore the climbing limitation, as do certain Personal Abilities.



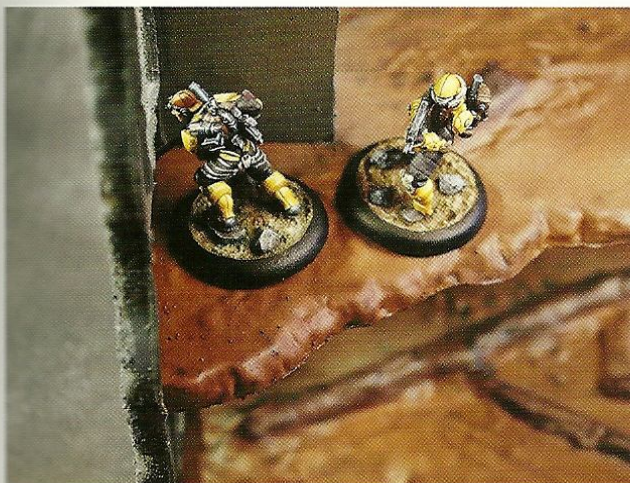
The CCC Sniper has just ascended one level of elevation. He can still make his free 90 degree direction change and Snap to Cover.

FALLING

A MERCS trooper can unwillingly be forced over an edge and into a falling action. This usually occurs in unique situations, such as the use of KemVar Repulsor Tags or concussive weapons. When a model is forced to fall, the model takes 1 Blood of damage for every Elevation Rating above his or her Armor Rating — an Armor Failure check is also required.

Consider an example in which a CCC Sniper perched on the second floor of a building (ER3; roughly 12 feet high) gets forced over the edge. The ER3 is compared to the Sniper's AR of 1. The Sniper takes 2 Blood and makes an Armor Failure check.

If a figure willingly chooses to take a swan dive off a balcony, it is a fall. All rules apply.



The CCC Medic, already tagged by the KemVar Sniper, has come to heal his CCC squadmate. The KemVar Sniper need only tag the CCC Sniper with a Repulsor tag to cause them both to fall.

COVER

Obstacles = Prevent an opportunity to attack

ELEVATION

Climb = 1 MP to ascend or descend

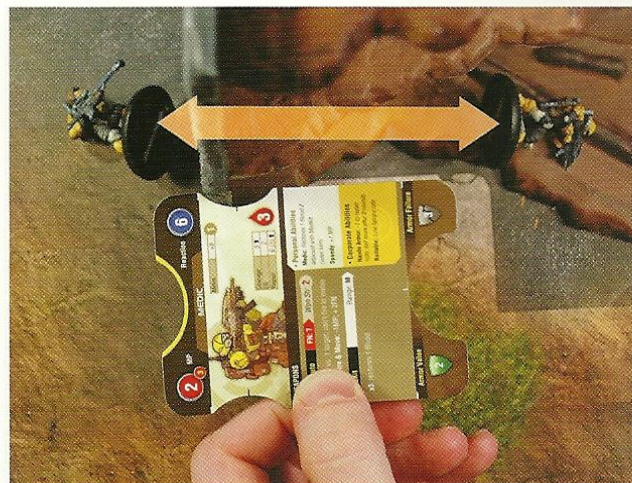
- Maximum change in elevation can never exceed total MP

Firing from:

- High Ground = -1FN
- Low Ground = +1FN

Falling = 1 Blood/ER above Armor Rating

- If Blooded, then Armor Failure check



The Sniper and Medic are instantly forced to move one complete card length in opposite directions. This causes them both to fall and suffer the Blood and Armor Failure checks.



POSITION

Positional modifiers are determined by the position of the shooter in relation to the target. It is important to realize that orientation to the target is more than just a clear LOS. There are two major positional modifiers: **Flank** and **Rear**. There is also the encounter-specific modifier **Ambush**, but it occurs only in selected scenarios and, as such, is covered there.

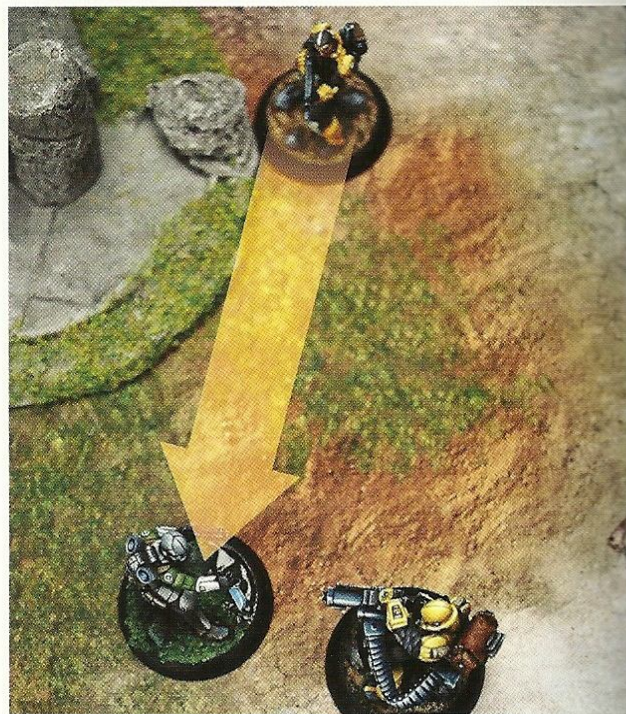
Flank	-1 FN and +1 Weapon Strength (only if target is engaged and has clear LOS)
Rear	-2 FN and +2 Weapon Strength

Rear attacks are self explanatory and easy to measure. If the model attacking is in the 90° rear quadrant of the target, the attack is considered to be an attack from the Rear.



Rear attack!

A Flank attack is trickier. For an attack from the side to be considered a Flank attack, and thus receive the bonuses to hit and damage, the target must be engaged with a miniature in H2H. Furthermore, the assailant must clearly be attacking from the 90° side quadrant and have a clear Line of Sight. Moreover, attacks from the side do not constitute a Flank attack if the target is granted any cover bonuses (this does not include the KemVar Corporate Stealth Ability). For example, if the target is engaged on the same side the attack is coming from, then the target is in Half Cover and does not suffer from a Flank attack.



The Assassin is engaged in H2H by the Heavy, so the CCC Assault receives the Flank attack bonuses.



The CCC does not get Flank attack bonuses because the KemVar Assassin is not engaged in H2H.



Only the Assassin gets Flank bonuses here. The Leader, though clearly to the side, does not get the Flank bonus because the Incinerator is behind the Assassin, thus in Half Cover

SPECIAL MOVEMENT MODIFIERS

STEALTH

Stealth is granted through the Personal Ability Stealth, or a Corporate Ability like KemVar's Active Camouflage. While both offer a similar bonus, the KemVar AC system increases the level of existing cover while the Personal Ability does not.

If the unit has Stealth, then he or she moves at a reduced speed but is granted the Half Cover modifier. KemVar's camouflage is not capped at the Half Cover bonus; the Caes da Guerra receive a bonus tier of cover added onto their existing cover, capping out at Full Cover.

Stealth	-1 MP, grants Half Cover
Active Camouflage	Increases existing cover one level, cap = Full Cover

FIRING AT A MOVING TARGET

Firing at a Moving Target is a special movement modifier that only occurs only during a Simultaneous Action. It is explained in more detail in the Simultaneous Actions section, but because it is based on movement, the modifier is provided in the table below. **Remember, the only time this modifier comes into play is during a Simultaneous Action.**

Firing at Moving Target	+1 FN
-------------------------	-------

QUICK REFERENCE!

POSITION

Position

- Flank = -1 FN and +1 Wpn Strength if target is engaged and attacker has clear LOS
- Rear = -2 FN and +2 Wpn Strength

SPECIAL MOVE

Stealth = -1 MP, capped Half Cover

Active Camouflage = Increases existing cover one level, cap = Full Cover

- No Cover → Half-cover → Full Cover

Firing at Moving Target = +1FN

- Only during a Simultaneous Action



COMBAT

The core of any tabletop miniature game is the combat—MERCS is no different. MERCS combat is streamlined: quick to act and quick to resolve. Using the modifiers discussed previously in the **Move** action (and on page 86), and **Combat Maneuvers** (discussed below), the MERCS trooper only needs to add or subtract the total modifier to his or her existing Firing Number (FN).

Semi-Auto

FN: 7

Wpn Str 2

A MERCS' FN is located on its card. Next to it is the Weapon Strength. On many weapons, there will be more FN modifiers here, or abbreviated text that reminds the player of certain weapon uses. The number in the burst is the Weapon Strength, be it ranged or H2H. These numbers and any modifiers are direct representations of the weapon's ability to do damage to an opponent. They do not change.

If the card does not have text for a particular Combat Maneuver, then that model does not possess the ability to perform that action. Fire & Move is a good example; it is a standard Combat Class Maneuver for the Assault Trooper. CCC and KemVar have this CCM, but USCR doesn't.

THE ROLL

All rolls in MERCS must be equal to or higher than the target number in order to succeed.

As with MP and the other personal stats, if a modifier is applying bonuses to the weapon's stats or abilities because of Personal Abilities or Corporate Identity, it appears next to the base number in parenthesis. In this way, a player has both the base number and the modified number, which is important in certain cases. Generally, the number referenced will be the already modified number in the parenthetical.

Wpn Str 2³

RANGED COMBAT

The technology to kill people may have increased significantly by the year 2183, but the methods of delivering that life-threatening technology haven't. Guns clearly remain the best tool to fight wars.

Ranged Combat is any combat other than H2H. Pistols, rifles, turrets, grenades: they are all forms of Ranged Combat. On the card, each of these weapons has specific information that explains how they work, and visual cues that you can use to quickly determine what numbers are important.

First, each weapon visually identifies any firing modes with a FN, and it provides an abbreviated descriptor to make sure the weapon is fired correctly. Second, the Weapon Strength of each weapon is provided. Third, if any special rules are associated with the weapon, they are mentioned here. This includes diagrams and any extra effects. Finally, if the MERCS trooper is eligible for any Combat Class Maneuvers, it is listed here along with any related modifiers.

New weapons are being invented all the time, so this list is by no means exhaustive, but it does provide you with a foundation of knowledge regarding post-global systems warfare. MERCS guns are broken into various sub-classes. These sub-classes help determine the **Weapon Strength** as well as a **Firing Mode**.

RANGED WEAPON STRENGTH

A weapon's Ranged Strength is the number from 1 to 4 located in a burst on a MERCS' card. This is not the weapon's damage or how many Blood it inflicts. Rather, this number is used in conjunction with Armor Value to determine Blood damage. It can be affected by positional modifiers or Personal Abilities. Weapon Strengths tend to remain constant across all weapons of the same class with very few exceptions.

Wpn Str 2

WPN STR	CATEGORY	TYPE
1	Light	Pistols
2	Assault	Assault Rifles, Single-Action Rifles
2	Flamethrower	Flamethrowers, Incendiary Grenades
3	Impact	Shotguns, Shrapnel Grenades
3	Heavy	Heavy Assault Rifles, Turrets
4	Long-Range Kill	High-Velocity Sniper Rifles

The numbers aren't a measure of pure weapon strength, but are a cross between weapon strength and the number of rounds in the air. A single sniper round or 15 rounds from an assault rifle tend to have the same end result. Very few weapons can outright kill a MERCS soldier; a lot of technology in MERCS armor keeps injured and bleeding soldiers alive. The MERCS armor is designed to seal wounds to limit blood loss and extend the combat functionality of even the most injured MERCS. Every weapon, regardless of strength, can cause malfunctions or errors in even the best armor.

COMBAT

Combat = d10/attack

Ranged Combat-any combat not hand-to-hand

FIRING MODES

There are eight common firing modes. Their strength may vary, along with any CCMs, but the base FN (if applicable) will always be consistent among each type of firing mode.

TYPE	EFFECT	FIRING NUMBER
Single	1 attack vs. 1 target	FN5
Burst	2 attacks vs. 1 target	FN7
Full	3 attacks vs. all targets in firing zone*	FN8
Scatter	1 attack vs. all in template (2 Blood/hit)	FN5
Fire	1 auto-hit vs. all targets in firing zone	Auto-hit
Grenade	1 attack vs. all targets in blast zone	FN5 or Auto-hit depending on grenade type
Medkit	Heals 1 Blood on 1 target 1 time/round	NA
Wrench	Repairs 1 target 1 time/round	NA

*KemVar's split template gets 2/template.

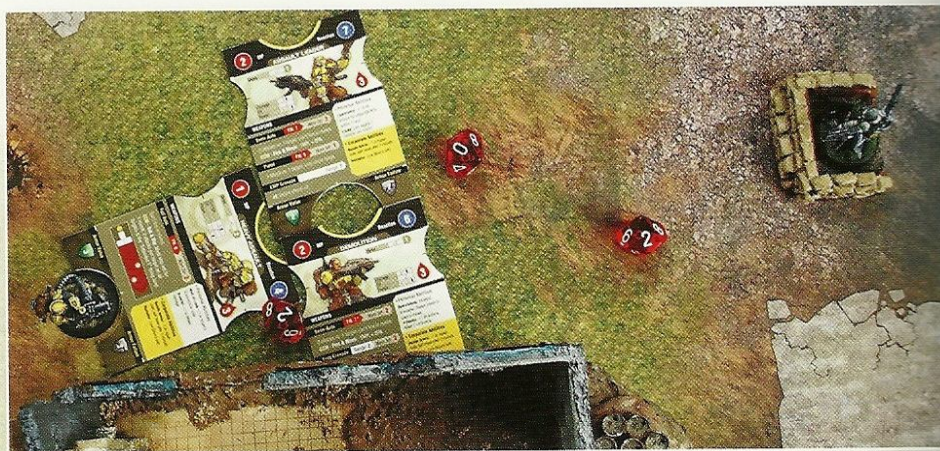
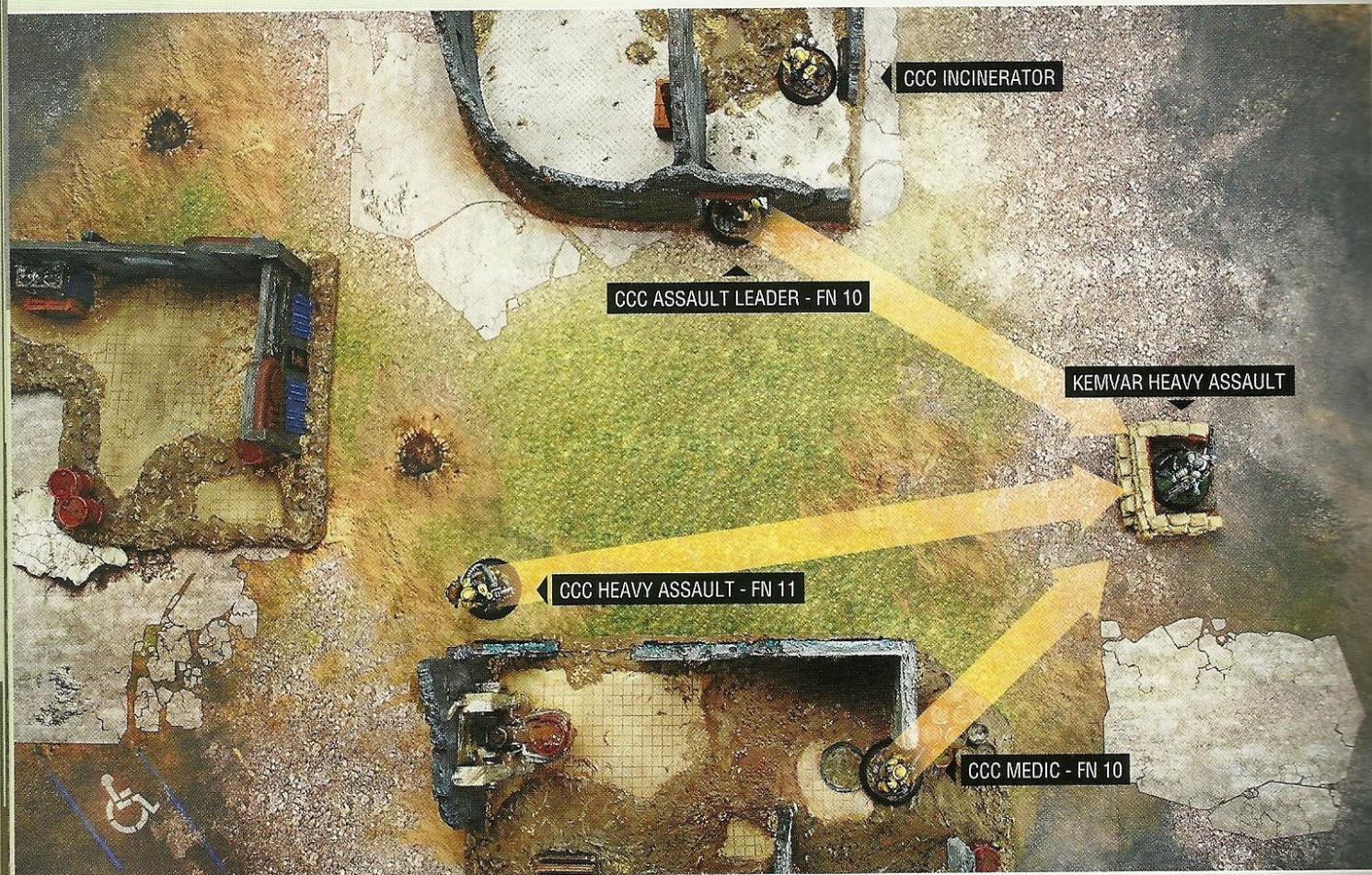


THE FIRING NUMBER (FN)

The FN is based on your MERCS' weapon. The modifiers for the firing modes are pre-loaded: you don't have to do any math. All ranged combat starts with this number, and is then modified by movement, cover, range, elevation, and position.

Page 86 of this book lists all the modifiers, as does the first card of any MERCS card pack. There is no limit to the number of modifiers that may affect the base Firing Number.

During your first few games, slow down, pay special attention to what is affecting the Firing Number, and take the time required to apply the modifiers correctly. Much to their detriment, novice players generally fail to capitalize on terrain bonuses and forget Personal Ability modifiers, such as Leadership, Heroic, and Eagle-eye. Beginners also tend to overuse CCMs, such as Fire & Move, making difficult shots harder than they need to be. This is exacerbated by the relatively easy learning curve of defensive modifiers; cover is easy to see and even easier to use.



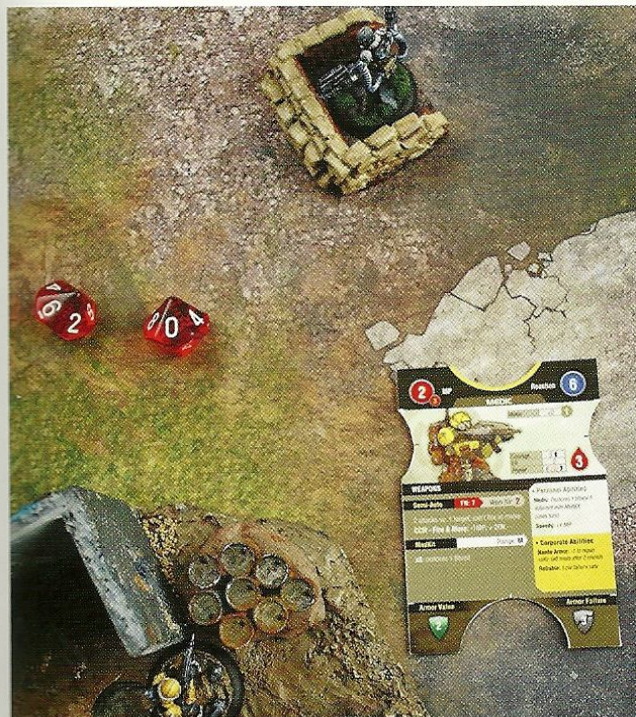
CCC Heavy with FN 8 + 3 Full Cover (Half Cover + KemVar AC) = needs 11 to hit. If the roll cannot succeed, it is an automatic failure. Likewise, if the roll cannot fail, it is an auto-success.

FIRING NUMBER (FN)

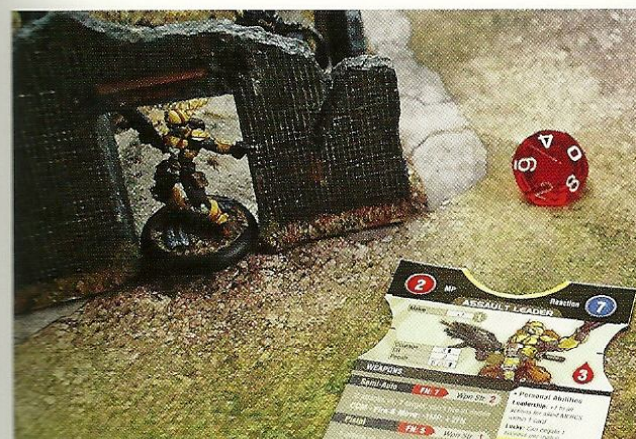
$$\text{FN} \pm \text{Modifier(s)} = \text{target number}$$



KemVar Heavy with FN 8 + 1 Half-cover = needs a 9 to hit. A 10 and a 2: one hit!



CCC Medic with FN 7 + 3 (Half Cover + KemVar AC) = needs 10 to hit. A 6 and 10: one hit!



By the time the CCC Leader attacks, the KemVar trooper may still have Full Cover, or if he Bobbied (failed) his Armor Failure check, may have only Half Cover.

As players gain experience they more readily recognize the value of offensive modifiers such as Leadership and elevation, but still struggle with gaining the positional modifiers that can devastate their opponents. Games begin to flow more steadily with occasional Advanced Maneuvers being utilized. Firing Numbers are more manageable, leading to exciting games that begin to play much faster. Conversely, advanced player's games slow down slightly with each game offering multiple momentum swings and harsh punishment for mistakes. Shots that hit become a normal occurrence and full-auto weapons are extremely dangerous; able to kill a model in one round of fire.

After you determine your modified FN, roll a d10. If you roll equal to or over the FN then you hit. If you roll under the FN, you miss. If the FN is greater than 10, a roll is not necessary, you cannot hit the target. If the FN is below 1, you cannot miss (this can happen in hand-to-hand).

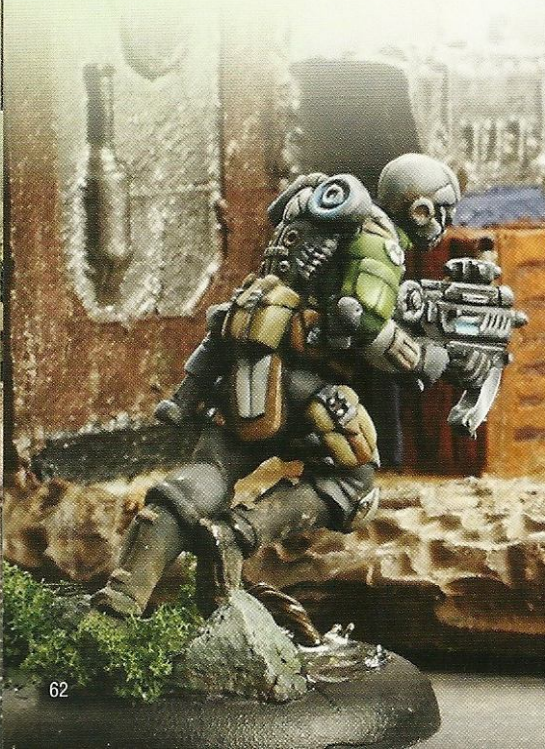


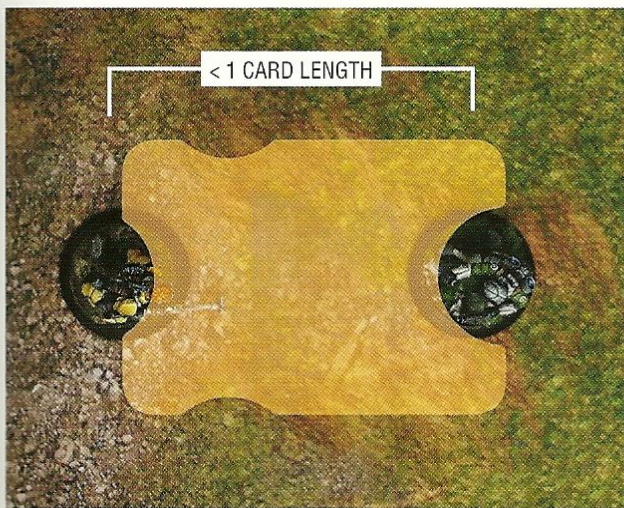


RANGE (DISTANCE)

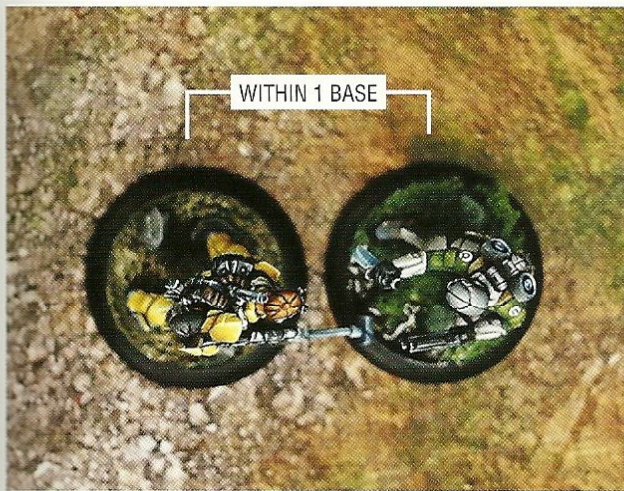
Due to the advanced weaponry of the MERCS age, Range is an easy discussion. There are three ranges: **Melee**, **Short**, and **Long**. There is only one Firing Number modifier based on Range, but it is a very important - Short range.

Range is important because it affects certain weapon's utility.





Short Range



Hand-to-Hand (Melee) Range

Within one base of a target, or Melee range, a MERCS trooper may only use Short Range weapons or their H2H ability to attack other models. Miniatures that are Engaged (see Melee Combat below) with another model in H2H can fire out of melee combat at another target within LOS. This is the only time Long Range weapons (Assault Rifles, Sniper Rifles, Heavy Machine Guns) can be used while the shooter is Engaged. You can also drop grenades, but must suffer the effects if they detonate at your feet.

Almost all ranged weapons are allowed when attacking opponents within Short Range, plus the attacker receives a bonus of -2 to his or her FN. There is only one weapon limitation; the Long Range Kill weapon, or Sniper rifle, cannot be used at Short Range.

Long range is similar to Melee, in that it offers no FN modifiers but several weapon limitations. No weapon with only Short Range capabilities (Pistols) can be used to attack targets at Long Range.

Melee	1 miniature base	No assault or LRK weapons
Short	< 1 card	-2 FN; no LRK weapons (Sniper Rifles)
Long	> 1 card	No short Range weapons (Pistols)

ACTION

Range Modifiers

Short Range is <1 card

Long Range is > 1 card

Melee within 1 base



FIRING DIAGRAMS

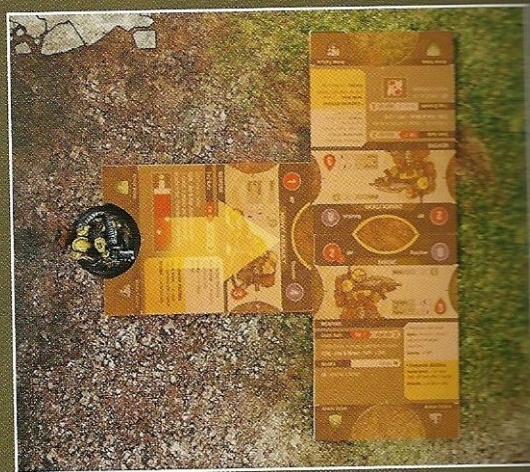
Some weapons have special firing diagrams. These diagrams are **always** located on the card. They are represented by a semi-transparent red swath extending out from a card or pattern of cards. The cards, in addition to providing a measurement for moving, also supply a way to illustrate a weapon's area of damage and replace the need for additional templates.

All firing diagrams, unless stated otherwise, are assumed to have a vertical range equal to one card. Furthermore, walls and obstacles prevent damage to those hidden by the barriers. Cover can also prevent models from taking Blood if the cover completely hides the potential target.

THE BASIC "T"

The most common diagram used is called the "T" diagram. In cases that utilize this diagram, create a replica of the "T" with cards. Pay special attention to the number of vertical and horizontal cards when setting up the initial "T."

Weapons - Shotguns



THE EXTENDED "T"

Begin with the basic "T." When the preliminary setup is done, visually extend the edges of the "T" to determine which miniatures are within the firing zone. As with all cases in MERCS, err on the side of more carnage, and don't get bogged down in arguments.

Weapons - Most Full-Auto Weapons



THE SPLIT "T"

The setup is the same as the basic "T," except that the double horizontal is replaced with a single card centered over the vertical card. But like its bigger extended cousin, the edges are visually extended and carnage ensues.

Weapons - Optional KemVar Full-Auto Weapon



90° ARC

This firing diagram begins with two cards set vertically end to end, sweeping a full 90° quadrant from the center of the model to the left or right. As with all firing diagrams, any targets, friend or foe, caught in the firing zone are subject to the weapon's attack.

Unlike other firing diagram, the 90° Arc isn't tied to a weapon, but rather the Personal Ability Sweep.



BLAST CIRCLE

Arrange two cards parallel to one another with the source circles at opposite ends (so the cards are flipped head-to-toe, toe-to-head). Slide the cards toward each other until the side circles are even. Using the joined side circles as the blast focal point, the cards can be spun or turned to create the circular blast firing diagram.

Weapons - Most Grenades



In all cases with firing diagrams, the user can arrange them to maximum effectiveness. Although unique to KemVar and circumstantially rare, in cases where the template may be split, the player can choose to use only one template. Conversely, templates can never be abbreviated, shortened, or used to a lesser effect.

GRENADES

There are many different types of grenades, but only a few inflict actual Blood damage. Most don't even have an FN, because they affect all targets (friend or foe) in the blast area. Like all weapons, grenades are given a Strength stat. Unlike other weapons, grenades also have a throw range icon, and a limited number of uses.

Frag Grenade Range: 2 Wpn Str 3

Shrapnel	Inflicts Blood based on Wpn Str 3
EMP	Forces Armor Failure check at +2 penalty
Ice	Incapacitates targets for 3 rounds (can be mitigated by flamethrower attack)
Acid	Permanently reduces Armor Value by 1 level
Incendiary	Inflicts Blood with a Wpn Str 2 and forces Suppression check at +2
Toxic Gas	Targets effected automatically have an Initiative 2 next round (can be prevented by Gas Masks and mitigated by Adrenaline Shots)
Worm	FN 5; single target attack that ignores armor and inflicts 1 Blood damage



All figures are being hit by the CCC's Shrapnel Grenade

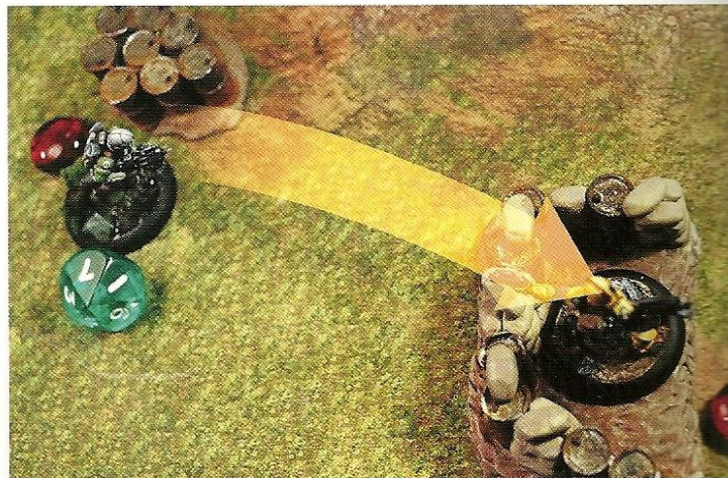
Any units inside the blast zone, even a tiny bit, are considered to have been hit by the grenade. Depending on the range, place a thrown counter at the landing spot, then center the two-card blast circle over the counter. The template may be turned in any direction to check for impact.

After hits are determined, follow the standard damage check procedures: comparing Weapon Strength to Armor Value to resolve Blood damage. Be sure to include any armor bonuses from cover, which would still apply, even though the LOS penalties do not.

KEMVAR'S WORM GRENADE

KemVar's special grenade—"Teh Sugue" boring worm grenade—is a unique weapon in the world of MERCS. It does not explode in an area of effect, but instead must latch onto a target. It is a single-target attack that ignores armor rating. For this reason, it must hit the target, so it has a FN. It should be treated like any other ranged attack weapon in terms of modifiers, except that its range is limited to the throwing ability of the wielder (in most cases two). The range is the number printed in the arrow icon next to the grenade.

If the target is hit, no Strength-to-Armor comparison is necessary. The worm inside the grenade bores through the armor, rendering any Armor Value useless — the target automatically takes 1 Blood damage and still needs to check Armor Failure.



The worm grenade requires the thrower to hit a specific target. Because of this, the attacker must calculate a FN as he would if he were firing a ranged weapon.

SHOOTING YOUR OWN MODELS

In MERCS, allies can get caught in the line of fire, so think carefully when firing certain weapons. Any weapon, or model that uses a weapon with one of the above firing diagrams, can injure, incapacitate, cause Armor Failures, or kill. All allies caught in the firing diagram of the attacks are treated like any other target; calculate modifiers (including Personal Abilities) and roll to hit. You might have some explaining to do in that post-action report: "But Sarge, he was just standing there talking to them—I'm sure he was selling company secrets."

You cannot shoot yourself or your squad mates with rifles, pistols, LRK rifles, or KemVar Repulsor Tags. Sorry, game-breaker.

ACTION

Firing Diagrams

Grenade Diagram

- **Shrapnel** = inflicts Blood damage based on Wpn Str
- **EMP** = forces Armor Failure check at +2 penalty
- **Ice** = incapacitates
- **Acid** = permanently reduces Armor Value by 1 level
- **Incendiary** = inflicts Blood damage based on Wpn Str and forces Suppression check at +2
- **Worm** = inflict 1 Blood damage; ignores armor

Shooting Your Own Models





MELEE COMBAT

If two units are within one base length of each other and at least one of them possesses the Melee ability, they are considered to be Engaged in hand-to-hand combat. H2H works slightly different than Ranged combat, but the damage is calculated the same way.

Not all units are able to participate in hand-to-hand combat. In order to make a hand-to-hand attack a MERCS soldier must have a number in the Melee stat numerical cell. Even if this number is 0, that MERCS trooper can make H2H attacks. This number represents the MERCS' training or proficiency in fisticuffs. If there are double dashes (--) in the unit's Melee bonus box, he or she cannot make a hand-to-hand attack.

In Melee, the attacker's FN is equivalent to the target's Reaction. If there are any **positional modifiers** to the FN, the Reaction is affected. In this way, MERCS is able to simulate the fact that heavily armored troops are less agile and unable to dodge a quick physical strike.

$$\text{FN} = \text{Reaction}$$

After the Reaction is modified, the attacker checks for any unique modifiers like Personal Ability modifiers or Cover modifiers due to Stealth (i.e., KemVar's AC system). These modifiers affect the attacker's FN. MERCS has made secondary notations in all tables that clarify the modifier in terms of Melee. If for some reason we missed some, be realistic in terms of the plus or minus of the modifier. An advantage for the defender shouldn't make the target easier to hit.

Once the target number is established, the attacker rolls a d10 and adds his or her Melee bonus. If the result meets or exceeds the FN, the target is hit. Like all combat, Blood damage and Armor checks are resolved at the time the attack is made.

$$\text{d10} + \# \geq \text{FN}$$

Combat Class Maneuvers like Fire & Move do not carry over to hand-to-hand combat. It isn't named attack and move. So in most cases models must move into Melee range one round, and hope for initiative or that the target remains in combat.

Like all rules, this provides an opportunity for exceptions. The KemVar Assassin's Charge PA allows for an attack after a normal move, with bonus Blood damage. This allows the Assassin a unique chance to break into the enemy and cause massive havoc. Even the Assassin has limitations, however. See the KemVar Assassin section for further explanation.

MELEE WEAPON STRENGTH

A melee weapon's strength is located in a burst next to the word Wpn Str. This number is used in conjunction with Armor Value to determine Blood damage. It can be modified by Positional modifiers or Personal Abilities. Exclusively H2H weapons tend to have greater melee strength, while a ranged weapon's melee effectiveness is usually limited to blunt force.

$$\text{Melee} + 1 = 1$$

ARMOR VALUE

Located in the lower left hand portion of the card in a green Shield is the Armor Value. This number is used along with Weapon Strength to determine Blood. Armor Value is a static number. The maximum Armor Value a MERCS trooper can have is 4.



The formula for damage is fairly straightforward: if the Weapon Strength is equal to or greater than the Armor Value, then 1 Blood is done. The amount of Blood damage is **not** based upon the difference between the weapon strength and the Armor Value, but rather the number of attacks that hit the target or the type of attack. The difference between a 9mm and a .38 is minimal, but the difference between four 9mm rounds and one .38 is quite a bit.

$$\text{Wpn Str } 2 \geq \text{Shield} = 1$$

Unless stated otherwise on the card (like the Assassin's Charge), an attacker can only cause 1 blood damage per attack. An attacker's opportunity to inflict more Blood damage is a result of to the amount of attacks they make: the more dice rolled the better the chance to cause Blood damage.

In most cases it is not possible to kill an unwounded model in one single attack; rather, a target will need two or more attacks worth of damage to be killed. The exception is the Heavy's full-auto attack which can cause 3 or even 4 Blood depending on the faction, because they roll 3 or more dice. If each die is a successful hit and the Weapon Strength is equal to or greater than the Armor Value then the target is most likely dead.



BLOOD

Blood is the unit of measurement in MERCS that determines the amount of life left in a unit. MERCS usually have 3 Blood, unless that particular miniature has a Personal Ability such as "Tough As They Come," which grants +1 Blood.

The Blood icon is printed on the card but it moves around depending upon character card layout. The value is always placed in the drop of blood symbol and is easily readable. You can keep track of Blood on a piece of paper, by placing counters directly on the cards, or by placing counters with the miniature. Any method works, just be consistent and keep track of what you are doing.



MEDKITS

There is only one way to recover lost Blood, and that is the use of a Medkit. Medics are the only unit trained for battlefield triage, and not all MegaCon MERCS squads utilize the services of a Medic.

The Medic is typically an extremely high value target for your opponent, make sure that you don't miss the opportunities to use every one of his Medkits.

To use a Medkit, the MERCS must be within one base of the target and use his or her action for that round.



CCC Medic positions to heal the Incinerator

QUICK REFERENCE!

MELEE

$d10 + \text{Melee skill} > \text{Reaction} = \text{success}$

Some MERCS cannot participate in melee combat.
Melee Skill must be a number.

Blooded

- $\text{Wpn Str}/\text{H2H Str} < \text{equal to or greater than} > < \text{Armor Value Icon} > = < \text{Blood Icon with no number} >$

Armor Value = armor level is number in shield

Blood = Blood level is number in shield

Armor Value

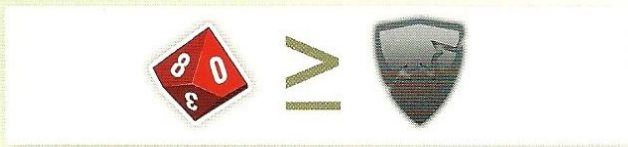
- $\text{Wpn Str} \geq \text{Armor Value} = \text{Blood}$

Blood

- Medkits are the only way to recover lost Blood

ARMOR FAILURE

Regardless of Blood damage, if a MERCS is hit, he or she must make an Armor Failure check. The roll is relatively simple, roll equal to or over the modified (if applicable) Armor Failure number.



If the result is a success, the MERCS armor continues to work flawlessly — nothing happens. However, if the roll ends in failure a couple things happen: First, that MERCS moves at -2MP, starting the action after the armor failure. Second, his or her Armor Value is reduced by 1. **Armor Failures do not stack.** If a target is hit by multiple attacks, and one causes an Armor Failure, there is no need to check for further Armor Failures. Moreover, the penalties assigned to Armor Failures do not take place until after that attack's barrage ends, so the bullets in the same attack are not checked against the lower Armor Value.

REPAIRING

There are two ways to get a MERCS moving again once his or her armor has failed: the Repair skill and Repair kits. If the Repair roll succeeds or a Repair kit is used, the MERCS is immediately returned to normal functionality: their full movement and Armor Value are restored. They can even move that round if their Initiative hasn't come up.

The Repair skill is assigned a number on the card which determines the success or failure of that MERCS' attempt to Repair armor, either their's or their comrades'. The Repair roll, like all rolls, must be equal to or greater than the target number. This roll can be modified by Personal Abilities like Leadership, or Heroic.

Repair kits work just like Medkits. Only Monkeywrench MERCS have the skill to use Repair kits. Like Medics, Monkeywrenches must be within one base length of the target and use his or her action for that round.



The KemVar Monkeywrench successfully repairs the Assassin!

Regardless of their armor's operational status, a MERCS soldier is always able to use his or her weapon. Armor Failure limits mobility and defense, not a MERCS' ability to attack. Combat Class Maneuvers such as Set & Rip are still functional. Abilities that are integrated in the armor will cease to function if the armor fails, such as KemVar's Active Camouflage system.

After a couple of rounds of movement and combat with no real damage, Keith and Brian are in prime striking range. Each has multiple threatening minis, and are preparing for the first major conflict of the skirmish.

Keith's KemVar Heavy and Monkeywrench move early in the round. The Heavy uses his action to Set, this is the first part of his Personal Combat Maneuver Set & Rip. Keith's Wrench opens fire on Brian's CCC Medic who is out in no-man's land behind Half Cover.

ARMOR FAILURE

d10 ≥ Armor Failure

- Fail= -2 MP, -1 Armor Value until Repaired

Repair

- d10 + any modifiers <equal or greater> than Repair skill
- Repair kits= auto repair

The Monkeywrench has a FN of 7 when firing his Capéval SP130 Porcupine assault rifle. Because it is a burst fire weapon, he will roll 2 attacks on Brian's Medic at the same FN. He has not moved. He is not elevated. He has no special positioning modifiers. His target is in Half-cover though, so there is a +1 penalty. The final FN is 8. Keith rolls a d10 twice with a result of 9 and 0 (10). Two hits, ouch! The weapon's strength of 2 is compared to the CCC unit's Armor Value of 2. Unfortunately, for Brian, the strength equals the Armor Value so it does 2 Blood. Moreover, Brian also has to make 2 Armor Failure checks. If he hadn't taken Blood damage, an Armor Failure check would still be required in addition to any damage. As it is, he took damage and has to check his armor. Even units that have inferior strength weapons can have an effect on the battlefield.

The CCC make some damn fine armor: the Medic's Armor Failure value is 3. In other circumstance there might be armor check modifiers, but in this case Brian's Medic needs to roll equal or over a 3, twice. Brian rolls a 3 and a 7. Close, but still functional.

Brian's Sniper is next. He has LOS on Keith's Assault-Leader and Heavy. Brian gambles that his Incinerator, which moves before Keith's AL, can deal with the situation long enough for his CCC Medic to beat a hasty retreat. He also fears Keith's KemVar Heavy being able to control the entire middle of the battlefield with his split fire heavy guns, so the sniper fires at the KemVar Heavy Assault.

The single action McDunlin Systems LRK .50cal has a base Firing Number of 5. There are no movement penalties. He is elevated one level for a -1FN to his shot. The target is facing him, so there are no positional modifiers. Standing out in the open would normally provide the attacker with a -1 bonus to an attacker's Firing Number, but the target in this case is KemVar. The Heavy's Active Camouflage system provides him with Half Cover, even when in the open for a +2 FN penalty. The final FN is 6 (5-1+2). Not leaving anything to chance, Brian decides he can't risk missing and uses the Sniper's Personal Ability, Crackshot. It automatically grants 1 success per match. It is a one-time, one-shot success.



COMBAT CLASS MANEUVERS (CCM)

CCM are maneuvers associated with a particular class. Sometimes they are a necessary action for the class to function, while other times they are bonus skills the class can attempt if they choose to.

FIRE & MOVE

This is optional CCM is an assault based ability that allows an assault trooper the option of moving and firing. There is no specific order associated with this CCM, so a MERCS can do either first followed by the other. The bonus is obviously the capacity to Fire & Move. The drawbacks are the penalty modifiers applied to both facets of the CCM.

The MP of the Assault MERCS is reduced by 1. In most cases that limits the movement of the miniature to a single card. Furthermore, the FN is increased by 2. This makes most shots very difficult. Make certain to use Fire & move wisely, overuse can really decrease your effectiveness.

There are additional rules for Fire & Move in the Simultaneous Actions section on page 78.

Fire & Move	-1 MP, +2 FN	can perform in either order
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The KemVar Demo prepares to Fire & Move.



After firing two shots at the CCC Sniper, the Demo tucks into the broken foundry out of harm's way.



SET & RIP

Set & Rip is linked with the Heavy Assault class and is mandatory if the Heavy intends to fire his or her primary weapon. Because their guns can sling so much ammo, producing enormous amounts of force, the Heavy Assault soldier must stay stationary for 1 round to "set" himself with ground anchors. Once set the unit can unleash hell in a 180 degree forward arc. Any movement, be it Snap to Cover or the free 90 degree turn requires the model to reset.

Armor Failure does not limit a heavy gunner's ability to Set, nor does Armor Failure require a model to reset. Becoming incapacitated through an Ice Grenade or similar action can prevent a figure from taking a Set action but does not force a Set model to reset.



Here comes the pain . . .

COMBAT CLASS MANEUVERS (CCM)

Fire & Move = -1MP, +2 FN

- Can perform in either order
- PA can reduce penalties

Set & Rip = must stay stationary 1 round before firing

- PA can reduce penalties

The strength of the attack is 4. Nothing in the game can ever have armor greater than 4, so it automatically does 1 Blood damage. It also forces Keith to roll for Armor Failure. KemVar's armor is much more unpredictable. The AC system is highly advanced and can't take too much damage. Keith rolls a 4 against an Armor Failure of 7. The Heavy Assault's armor is now broken. It can be Repaired, but until it is, he can't move (the -2 MP penalty reduces his base 2 MP to 0) and has his Armor Value reduced by 1.

There are three MERCS left to act this round: Keith's Assassin, followed by Brian's Incinerator, and then Keith's AL.

Keith is left with an important decision: when to strike with the Assassin. It is a powerful mini, but using him too early in the skirmish could be disastrous. He decides to throw caution to the wind, and try to break Brian's line now. The Assassin rushes forward to attack Brian's Incinerator in hand-to-hand combat. He measures out the movement, and is able to attack the Incinerator from the Rear. The Assassin has a Melee stat of +3 and his Vorpal energy knife normally has a Weapon Strength of 2. However, because he is attacking at the end of a movement, Keith can utilize the





Assassin's Charge ability. This adds +1 to the Weapon Strength for a total of 3, and has the added bonus of inflicting 2 Blood instead of just 1.

The Assassin also receives the Rear positional bonus: -2 FN and +2 Weapon Strength. The bonus to the FN in Melee directly affects the target's Reaction. The target's Reaction is the attacker's FN in Melee combat. So, in this case, the Incinerator's Reaction of 4 is modified by the -2 FN Positional bonus, for a final target number of 2. Because the Assassin is so efficient in H2H combat (the +3 Melee bonus), there is no chance for Keith to miss the attack. He smiles at Brian as he puts the dice down.

Brian's CCC Incinerator takes 2 Blood damage, and must roll her Armor Failure. The Incinerator has a lower Armor Failure than the average CCC, due to the volatile systems involved in projecting napalm death, but it's still pretty good at 4. This time however, Brian's roll is modified by Keith's Assassin's energy knife's +1 to Armor Failure check. Brian has to roll equal to or over a 5, or his Incinerator is in real trouble — he rolls a 1! Things aren't looking good for the Yellow Jackets.

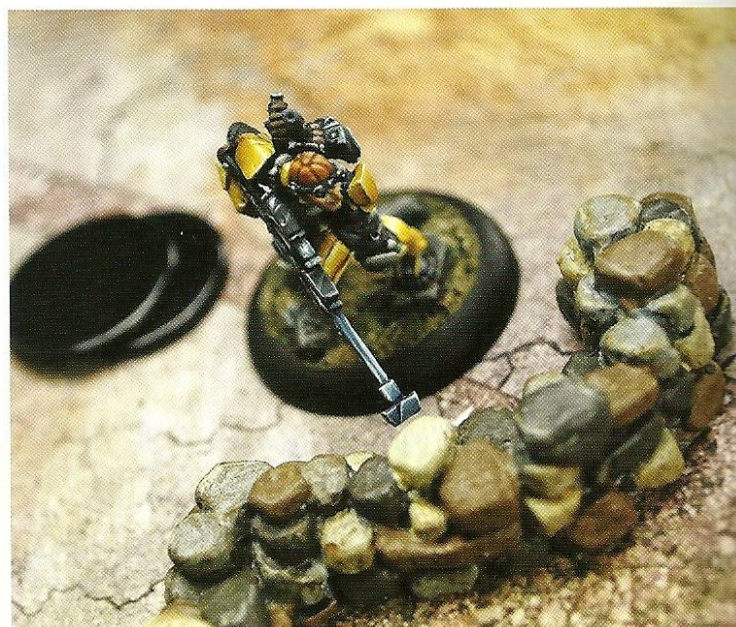
Unable to move [-2MP penalty compared to the Incinerator's 1 MP], or even turn around to face the Assassin (turning

LOAD & AIM

Load & Aim is also a mandatory CCM for the Sniper class. The lethality and precision associated with Long Range Kill (LRK) weapons require the bullet to be chambered and any imperfections eliminated before firing. The downtime between shots averages 2 rounds of combat, although some elite MERCS have reduced this time.

After the downtime price is paid, the Sniper has a computer tooled round ready to fire. The near perfect round flies faster, straighter and further, which is represented in the high Weapon Strength of LRK weapons. During the downtime, Snipers can move, interact with objects, and even fire secondary weapons. If a Sniper unit does not have the Load & Aim CCM attached to their weapon, then they are not subject to the Load & Aim penalty.

Load & Aim	2 round between shots
-----------------------	-----------------------



HOLD

The Hold action means the unit will not perform an action this turn, but gets a +2 to the next round's Initiative. He is sacrificing activity this round for a chance at an early action next round. Place a counter near the figure and when you roll Initiative next round, change the result by +2. It is customary and respectable to notify your opponent when you are doing this.

Initiative results can never end above 10. In such cases where the Hold modifier would send the Initiative above 10, the final result is 10.

LOAD OR AIM

Likewise, the Load action or the Aim action requires the model to take a round between actions. Unlike Load & Aim, Load refers to only the Load portion, while Aim refers only to the Aim segment.

In some cases with the Load CCM, the unit must notify all players what type of ammo they are using next. Moreover, the choices of ammo are limited, so taking advantage of what ammo you have loaded is important in achieving the maximum potential of the troopers.

Load	1 round between shots
Aim	1 round between shots

around costs 1 MP], the Incinerator can choose to either attack the KemVar Assault Leader, who is most likely out of range, or try to repair. The Repair check has a low probability for success and, just eyeballing the distance, Brian thinks the Incinerator may be able to hit Keith's AL. . he decides to attack!

The Incinerator has a very specific firing diagram located on her card. Anyone within the arc of fire takes damage and is considered Suppressed. Brian lays out the cards in the direction of Keith's KemVar AL. He is a base short: the Incinerator only manages to cook a lot of grass and makes a couple earthworms uncomfortable. Keith's Assault Leader is last this round. He decides to use the Fire & Move Combat Class Maneuver. The target is the CCC Incinerator. Keith is hoping that by moving he is able set up an attack on the CCC Medic for next round and avoid the Half-Cover penalty and Armor bonus.

The Fire & Move CCM carries with it a -1MP penalty and a +2 FN penalty. Keith's AL movement of 2 is reduced to 1. He moves as far as he can, then fires on the Incinerator. He has moved which carries a +2 FN penalty. He is not elevated, but he is considered to be in a Flank position because the Incinerator is engaged by the Assassin. This grants a -1 FN bonus and +1 to weapon strength. Finally, the Incinerator is considered to have No Cover for another -1 FN bonus. The final FN is 7 (base FN 7+2-1-1). Keith rolls a 2 and a 7. One hit.

CCM

Load & Aim = 2 rounds between shots

Load = 1 rnd between shots

Aim = 1 rnd between shots

- Can act (Repair, use secondary weapon) or Move between shots
- PA can reduce penalties

HOLD

Hold = A primary action that allows the MERCS to do nothing in a given turn, but provides +2 to the next round's Initiative.

- Initiative cap is 10.
- Does not stack.

The Assault Leader's Capéval 9mm Light Machine Gun has 2 Weapon Strength normally, but in this case has a 3 Weapon Strength due to the Flank attack. Compared to the Incinerator's broken armor value of 2, he takes 1 Blood damage. This brings his total Blood damage taken to 3; this would normally kill most MERCS, but the Incinerator is as Tough as They Come so she has 1 Blood left.

Brian needs to move quickly in the next round, he needs high Initiative rolls and to rally his troops for a counter-attack on the Assassin and Heavy Assault, which now constitute relatively easy open battlefield targets. But Keith clearly holds the advantage after that round.



SIMULTANEOUS ACTIONS (SA)

Initiative in MERCS is a dynamic event. Momentum is fickle and changes often during the course of a combat. More importantly, things often happen on the battlefield at the same time. To account for this MERCS has Simultaneous Actions.

If during the Initiative phase two or more MERCS roll the same Initiative and they share the same Reaction, even if those units are on the same team, a SA occurs.

The first thing that occurs is the Declaration. In the Declaration, the opposing MERCS declare at the same time what type of Action they are using: Move, Combat, or Hold. This can be done with counters, written words, or anything that allows a concurrent reveal of the actions so that one player isn't at a disadvantage. If both players are performing the same Action, a further Declaration phase is necessary where they reveal who is moving, which MERCS is attacking, or and who the target is.



7

The CCC Assault Leader and KemVar Assault Leader have both rolled 3's. They also have the same Reaction number of 7. In this scenario a Simultaneous action occurs.



WE'RE ON THE SAME SIDE!

Certain liberties may be taken with same team Simultaneous Actions. The need for counters in the Declaration phase can be set aside. However, clearly stated actions cannot. It is not fair to keep an action secret until you see the result of the first action.

When figuring out what happens in an SA, it is important to remember a couple of basic guidelines. Suppression can cancel any action, even Simultaneous Actions. Overwatch takes place before the action, but doesn't prevent it in most cases. Look to the ACM Chain of Occurrence table on page 80 to sort things out.



Using the first example of Initiative, Brian's CCC Medic rolled a 7, as did Keith's KemVar Demolition MERCs. They both have Reactions of 6. In this case their actions take place simultaneously.

During the Action Phase, Keith and Brian both announce their action, but no specifics. Keith announces he will fire. Brian announces he will move. Next, both announce their intentions. In this case, Keith wants to fire at the MERCs Brian happens to be moving — the CCC Medic. Brian begins his movement. At the half-way point rounded down (in this case 1 MP), Brian ceases moving and Keith fires at his target, applying all modifiers to the roll.

Keith's Demo opens fire on Brian's moving Medic. Keith's base Firing Number (FN) is 7. Brian has No Cover for a -1 FN, but is considered to be moving for a +1 FN. There are no Terrain or Range modifiers. Luckily, the unit attacking is within one card of the Assault-Leader giving him a -1 to his FN, for a final FN of 6.

$$7-1+1-1=6$$

The KemVar MERCs fires granting him 2 attacks vs. 1 target. Keith opens fire rolling an 8 and 6, both hits. This is gonna hurt. Comparing the weapon strength, 2, versus Brian's Medic's Armor Value, 2, the Strength is equal to the Armor Value and causes Blood Damage. The Medic loses 2 Blood, leaving him with only 1 Blood left.

SIMULTANEOUS ACTIONS (SA)

If Initiative and Reaction are the same, then SA occurs:

- Must declare actions at the same time.
- If both actions are an attack, then players must reveal targets at the same time.

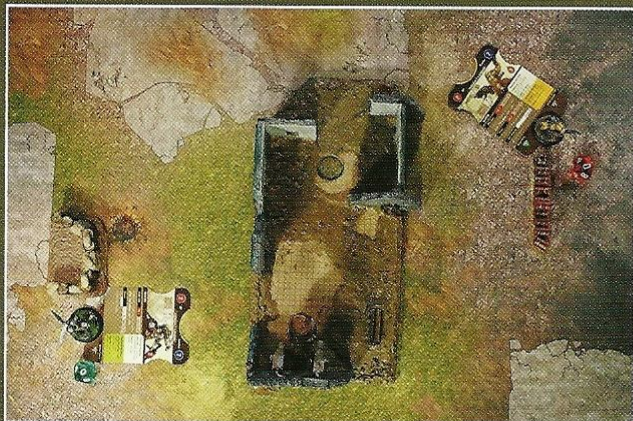
Refer to the Chain of Occurrence when using Advanced Combat Manuevers: Suppression and Overwatch.

The AM must also check to see if his MERCs suit is still functioning. Brian rolls against his Armor Failure Rating of 3. He rolls a 10 and a 1. The vaunted CCC armor fails. The Medic is in real trouble. He finishes the remainder of his movement without penalty, moving the final 1 MP and Snaps to Cover behind a burned out car. Starting next round, the Medic will move at -2 MP and suffer from a -1 Armor Rating.



MOVE AND MOVE:

Players move their MERCS. If he or she is suppressed, no action takes place. If he or she is under an Overwatch, all attacks and all results are resolved completely before performing the movement. If he or she is the target of an attack, the target is considered to be Moving. Any LOS modifiers are applied at the new position on the battle field. If they are killed they die where they were shot. If their Armor fails, they finish their movement, then starting with the next round they receive the -2 MP penalty for broken armor.



The two leaders have Simultaneous Actions. They both declare a Move. If anything would effect either of their moves they would need to consult the Chain of Occurrence.



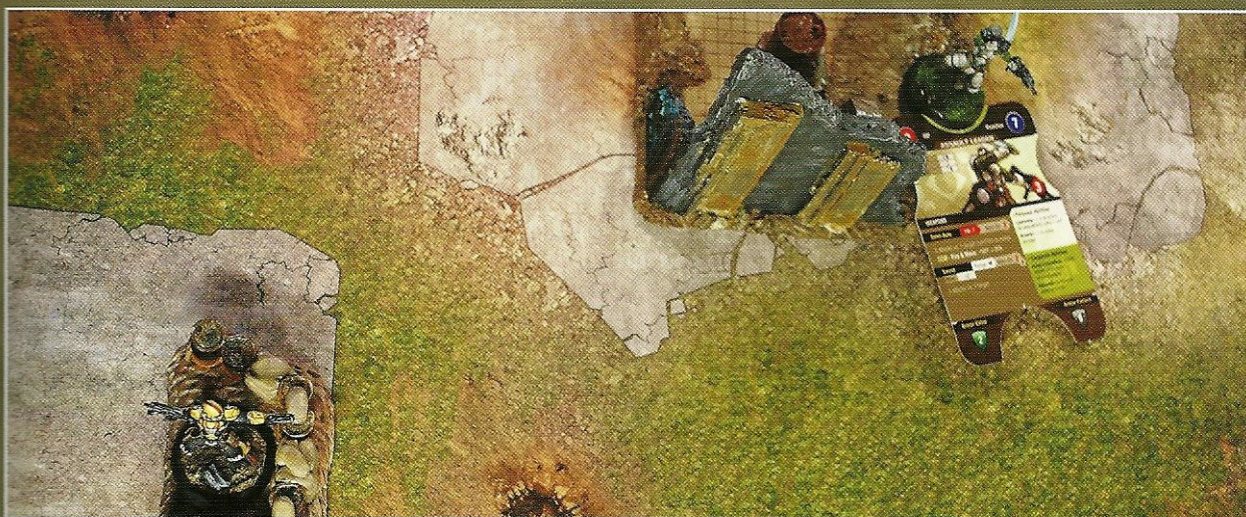
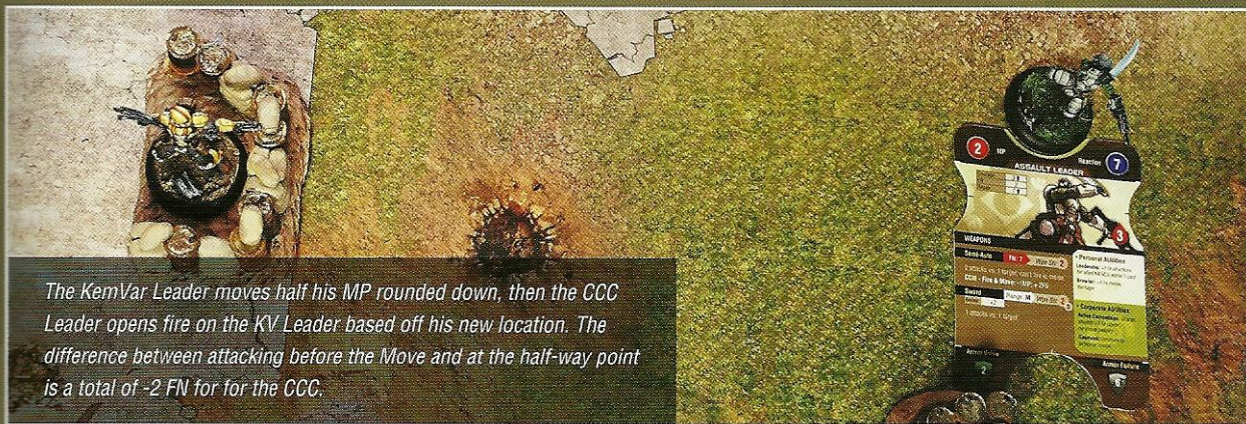
Both players move their miniatures at the same time. The CCC Leader is going around the north side of the building. The KemVar Leader goes inside.

MOVE AND FIRE:

This action is subject to Advanced Combat Maneuvers such as Suppression and/or Overwatch if the movement started in a field of fire. If they are suppressed, they are forced to stay in their starting position. Because Suppression happens first in the Chain of Occurrence, this could change the FN drastically. If they are under an Overwatch, all attacks and all results are resolved completely before starting their movement. The moving player moves his or her MERCS half their movement, rounded down, and then check for Combat Actions. If they are the target of an attack, the target is considered to be Moving. If they are killed they die where they were shot. If their Armor fails, they finish their movement, and then starting with the next round they receive the -2 MP penalty for broken armor.



The CCC Leader declares an attack on the KemVar Leader, who is moving.

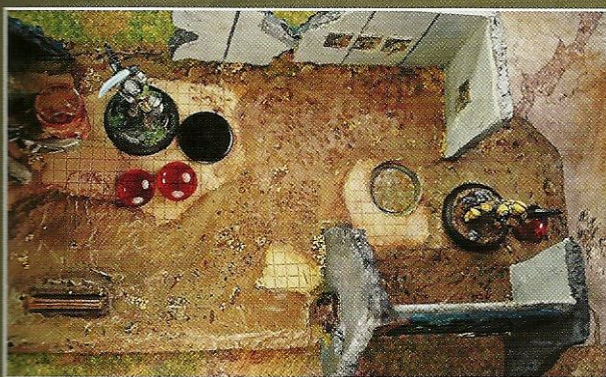


FIRE AND FIRE:

If both parties are firing, their actions take place at the same time. Even if one or both MERCS are killed, their combat action results still take place. Even in the case of Overwatch, if the Overwatch action kills the acting MERCS, their action still takes place.



The two Leaders declare they are attacking each other. Let's get it on!



After one round, the KV Leader has taken 2 Blood and his armor is broken. The CCC has taken 1 Blood.



Another SA! They attack each other again. They both kill each other. Amazing!

ADVANCED COMBAT MANEUVERS (ACM)

Once you have played the basic game enough and you have a good grasp of what is happening, consider adding ACMs to the mix. They can be added one at a time for the trepidatious. The suggested order of introduction is **Bounding**, **Overwatch**, and then **Suppression**.

Regardless of how they are added to the game, the Advanced Combat Maneuvers add a completely new dimension to MERCS battles. They have very specific rules, though none are too terribly complicated. There is, however, an order in which they take place when they are in play. This is called the **Chain of Occurrence**; it dictates which ACM has precedence over the battlefield in relation to any actions taking place.

CHAIN OF OCCURRENCE:

1. Suppression
2. Overwatch
3. Action

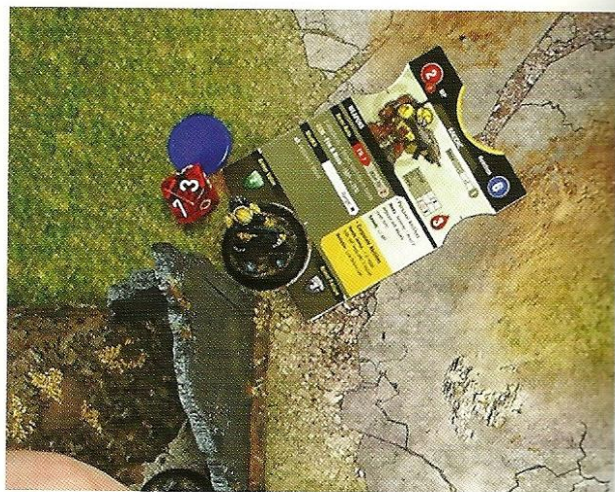
BOUNDING

Bounding is the act of attaching, or initiating, a miniature's move to a **later** figure's action, called the Bounding Target. Bounding is a movement based advanced maneuver. It constitutes a move only; the Bounding MERCS's action **cannot** be combined with the Fire & Move CCM. The Bounding target must be a unit on your team that has yet to move. You can never Bound with an enemy or with a model that has already acted in the round.

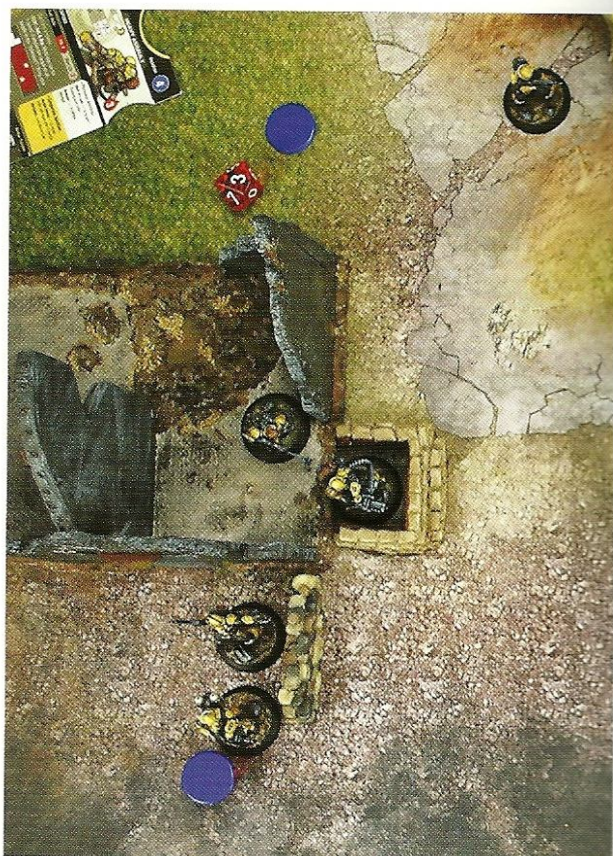
Bounding represents the act of communicating to your teammates what you intend to do and acting without hesitation when the Bounding target moves as well. In effect it is a coordinated move between two or more units on the battlefield, overwhelming your opponent with choices and possible fronts of attack.

On the table, it allows your models to move quickly across the table and to act as a group; as opposed to individuals. When you first start using the Bounding ACM, you will most likely be using it in your first or second turns. As you become more familiar with MERCS you will find it an effective maneuver in all phases of the game.

Bounding MERCS are granted one additional movement point, but can only move immediately after the Bounding Target moves or acts. The Bounding Target may execute basic Move and Combat actions, including CCMs. The Bounding Target cannot perform Actions that are time sensitive: Suppression, Overwatch, and Hold.



The CCC Medic is the Bounded target, and makes his move first.

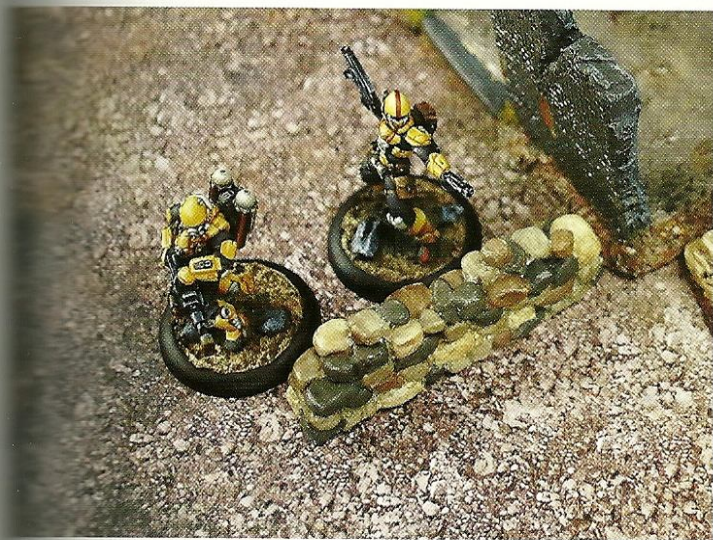


The CCC Incinerator elects to Bound with the CCC Medic. The counter is laid upon the dice, indicating that she is postponing her initiative until her bounded target has completed his move.

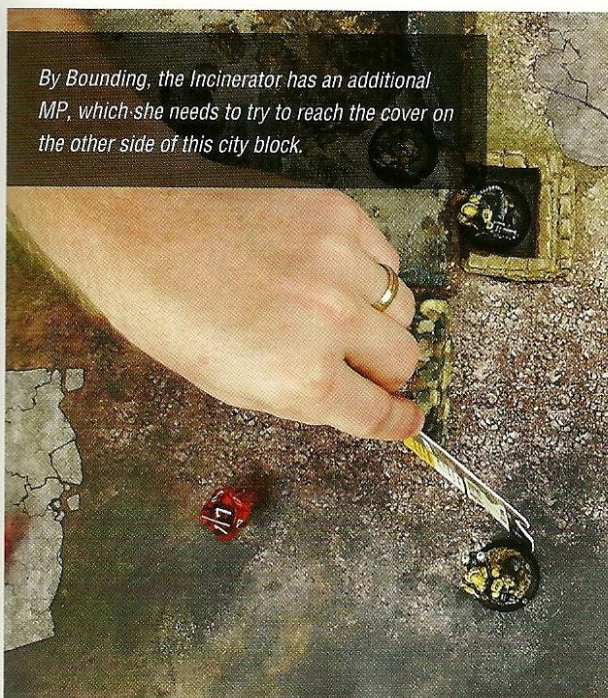
Only Personal Abilities that are labeled as Bounding friendly work with Bounding. The PA Stealth, while only a Move action, is not Bounding friendly. The same is true for the KemVar Assassin's Charge ability; it cannot participate in a Bounding move and then attack at the end of the movement. On the other hand, the FCC's Debris Crawl is Bounding friendly. This means the units can use both Debris Crawl and bounding at the same time. **Any action that is combined with Bounding must be declared when the Bounding ACM is declared.**

Bounding	+1 MP	Can only move
----------	-------	---------------

The Bounding ACM is tracked using counters or cards. Bounding is limited by the Initiative roll. The Bounding action must take place in the round it is declared and it is impossible to perform a Bounding action off of a MERCS that has already completed their action.



After the Medic has finished, all targets Bounding with the Medic act in their original Initiative order.



By Bounding, the Incinerator has an additional MP, which she needs to try to reach the cover on the other side of this city block.

ADVANCED COMBAT MANEUVERS (ACM)

Chain of Occurrence

- 1. Suppression
- 2. Overwatch
- 3. Original Action

Bounding = +1 MP; acts in Initiative order after the Bounding target

COUNTERS OR CARDS

To track Bounding, you can designate one counter as the Bounding counter, and then place the counter near any miniature performing the Bounding action. Place another counter near the Bounding Target to remind yourself that there is a Bounding action attached to the miniature.

Alternatively, you can place the Bounding unit's card under the target's card. This also has the added benefit of keeping those units Bounding in the correct order.

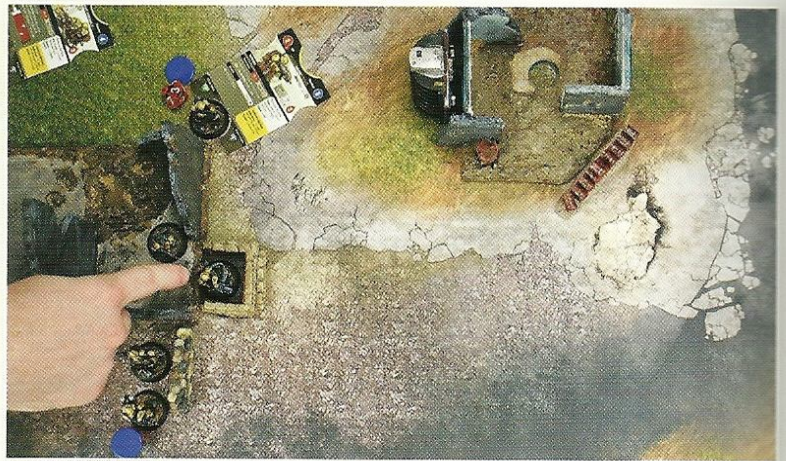


Completed move.

The acting unit declares a Bounding ACM, and then declares the Bounding target. There is no limit to the amount of Bounding maneuvers that may be attached to a target. Once the Bounding target has acted, the first model that declared a Bounding action may act at +1 MP. If subsequent minis are moving based on the actions of one target, those actions are taken in the original Initiative order.

SUPPRESSION

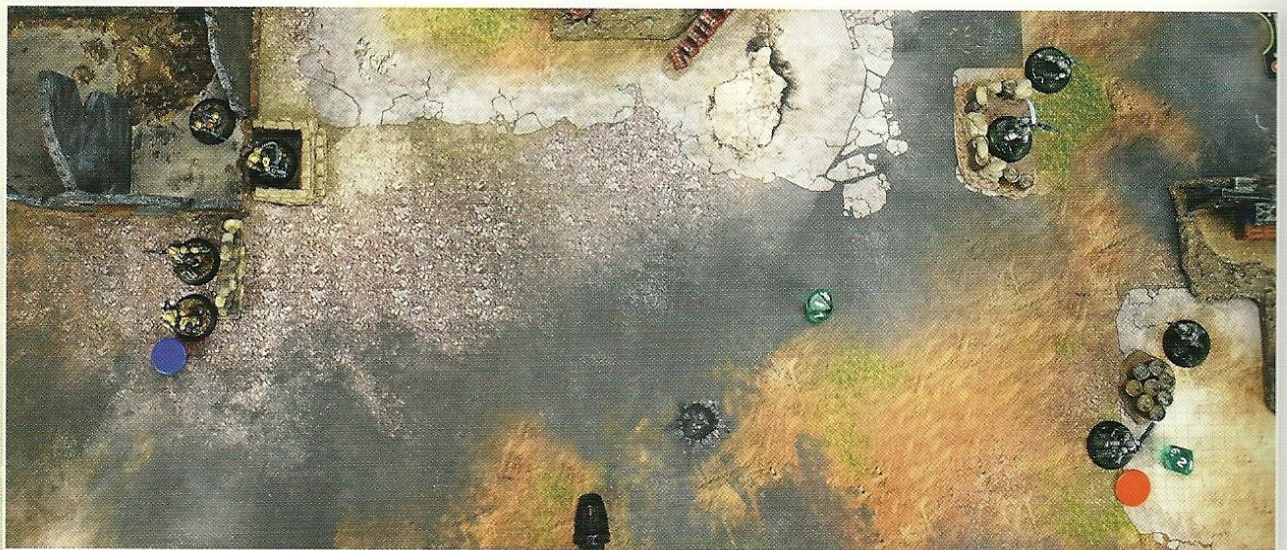
The act of keeping a unit under fire, unable to act, is Suppression. It is a Combat ACM, and interacts with the Courage stat for skill checks. It is important to note that Suppression does not require a roll of any kind for the suppressor, nor does it inflict damage. It only makes actions more difficult to perform, or impossible if the Courage check is failed. In effect, the suppressor is flinging lead all over the battle field trying to keep the opponent stationary. Suppression carries over from Initiative to Initiative, so any actions that take place during that turn or the next, until the suppressor acts again, can be suppressed, if the target visible. Visibility is important: **an action cannot be suppressed if it can't be seen at the start of the action through a Line of Sight check.**



Similar to the Bounding scenario, but with the CCC Heavy providing Suppression support.



The KemVar Heavy on the other side of the battle field is on Overwatch. In the Chain of Occurrence, Suppression happens before Overwatch. If the KemVar Heavy is not suppressed, the Overwatch could decimate the CCC MERCs: having a chance to hit the CCC Incinerator, CCC Assault Leader, possibly the CCC Heavy and CCC Sniper with one reaction.



Because the CCC Heavy has Wall of Lead, the Suppression is even more formidable. The KemVar Overwatch doesn't take place because he fails his Courage check. Whew, that was a close one!

ACM

Suppression = Courage check; $d10 > \text{Courage} + \text{modifiers (Leadership, Heroic)}$

- Must be able to see the start of the action to Suppress
- Non-lethal

If the Courage check fails: the action does not take place; that miniature's turn is over.

If the Courage check passes: the action takes place with a penalty of 1. Any actions receive a +1 penalty on the roll. Any Move is at -1MP.

All weapons without the Load & Aim, Load, or Aim CCM can be used for Suppression.

Suppression

Courage check +
1/extra Suppressor

Further modified by
Personal and Corporate
Identity

Once declared, the suppressor fires before the movement or action of all visible targets (180° in front) from the end of the MERCS' turn to the start of their next turn. Targets must pass a Courage check to act while suffering a +1 difficulty modifier for each MERCS suppressor beyond the initial suppressing MERCS. If the Courage check fails, the target is suppressed and cannot act. If the Courage check succeeds, the MERCS performs the stated action at a +1 negative penalty, regardless of the action. This includes Movement Points, if the action was to move. Abilities like Wall of Lead add to, or "stack", with any other Courage check modifiers.

Not all weapons can be used for Suppression. Any weapon that has Load, Aim, or Load & Aim attached to it cannot be used for Suppression.

It is important to clarify that Suppression carries over until the start of the suppressor's next turn. So a target could, if the Initiatives aligned correctly, suppress a target, or targets, twice in a single Suppression action. This is true not only for the Suppression ACM but also for a weapon that forces a Courage check, like the CCC Incinerator's Flamethrower. For such weapons, the Courage check is a result of the Suppression action with the weapon. In such cases the entry for the weapon on the card will indicate the necessary Courage check and will be labeled with Suppress.



The Incinerator completes her move unscathed.



OVERWATCH

As the only damaging ACM, Overwatch is fundamentally important to master if you hope to compete in games using ACMs. Overwatch is the act of firing for damage on any model that attempts to perform an action. It is an action that affects the state of play, like Suppression. It does not prevent a target's original action from taking place. It instead seeks to punish the action with lethal force.

Overwatch should be treated like a Simultaneous Action in terms of how the original action and Overwatch take place.

Overwatch, like Suppression carries over from Initiative to Initiative, so any visible actions that take place during that turn or the next, until the overwatching mini acts again, will bring the pain. Also like Suppression, an action cannot be under Overwatch if it can't be seen at the start of the action through a Line of Sight check.

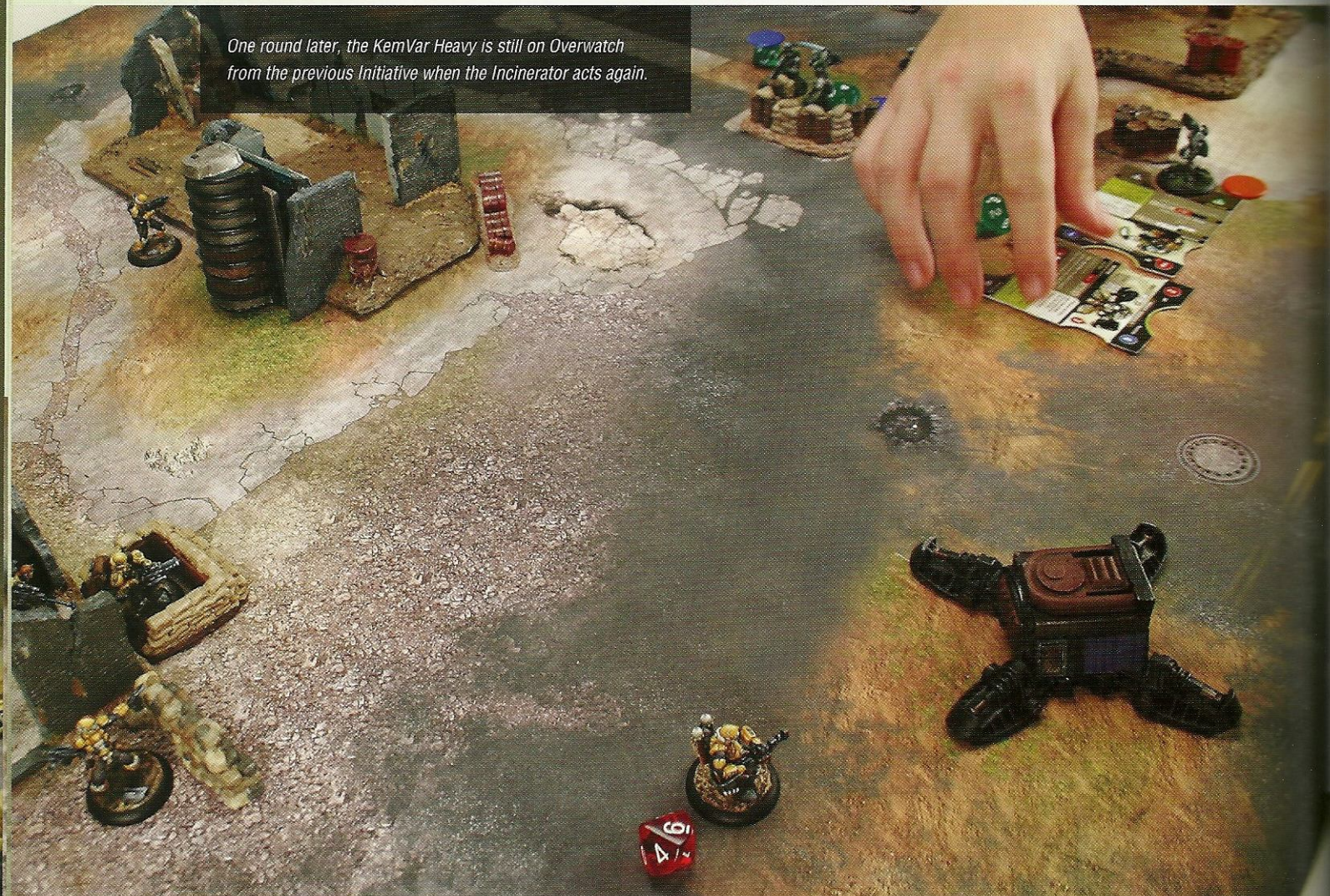
Weapons that can Overwatch and use firing diagrams are extremely lethal. For every Overwatch reaction, the diagram is used to attack. This means that for every Overwatch reaction, multiple targets can be hit.

Offensively, try to go into Overwatch when you can target groups of your opponent's MERCS with one template weapon. The results are devastating.

If the KemVar Heavy's Initiative is low next round, he will still be in Overwatch for all actions that take place in his LOS.



One round later, the KemVar Heavy is still on Overwatch from the previous Initiative when the Incinerator acts again.



A MERCS on Overwatch fires on any visible targets (180° in front) when they declare a movement or action; from the end of their turn to the start of their next turn. Overwatch results should be treated like Simultaneous Actions in terms of results (78). That is to say, the Overwatch result does not prevent the original action from taking place — both results are considered to happen concurrently.

Like Suppression, there are limitations to what weapons can be used for Overwatch. All semi-auto and full auto weapons can be used for Overwatch. The KemVar Heavy chooses to combine his firing diagram providing him with four attacks on the CCC Incinerator. Three hits! Wow! Good thing the Incinerator has +1 Blood from the Tough as They Come PA. Regardless, she is in bad shape. In fact, the only limitation to Overwatch is weapons with the CCMs Load, Aim, and Load & Aim. Because weapons of this nature require a period of time to activate, these weapons cannot be used on Overwatch, even if the penalty for the Load or Load & Aim action is eliminated through Personal Abilities or Corporate identities. **Any weapon that has Load, Aim, or Load & Aim attached to it cannot be used for Overwatch.**

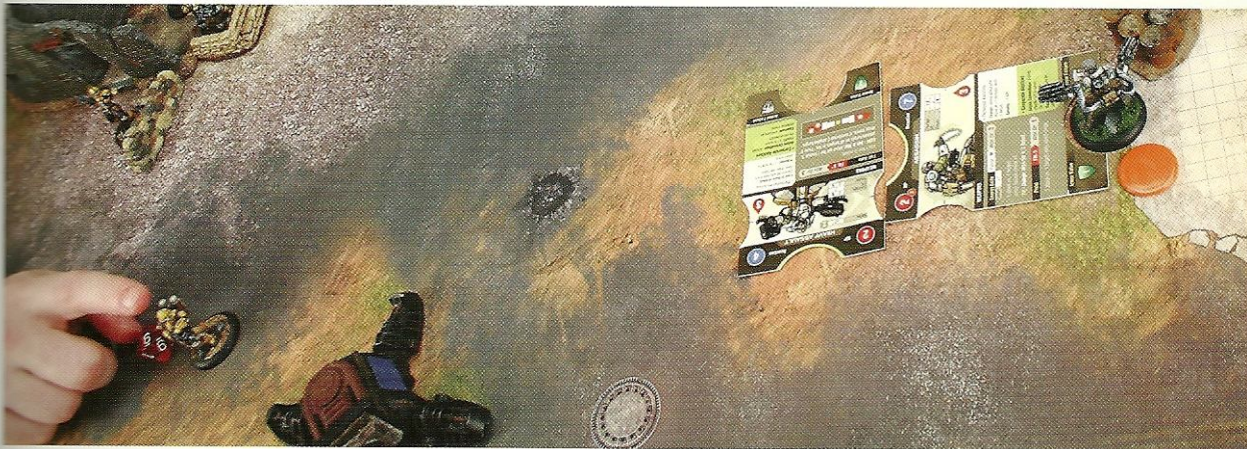
ACM

Overwatch = must fire as a reaction to every action witnessed

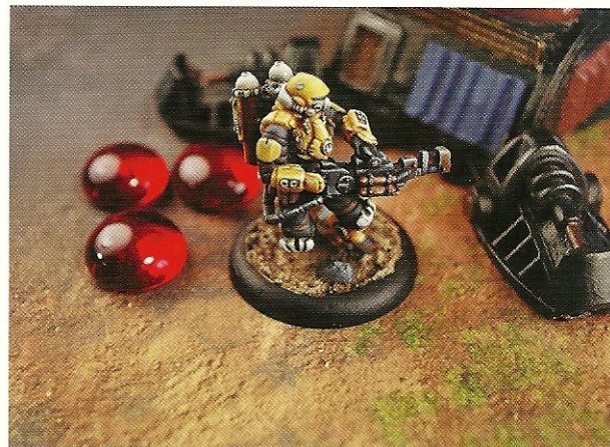
- Must be able to see the start of the action to Overwatch
- Lethal
- Friendly fire is possible

All weapons without the Load & Aim, Load, or Aim CCM can be used to Overwatch.

Weapons with firing diagrams effect all targets in the template per reaction.




Because of the flexibility of the KemVar Heavy's firing diagram, he can choose which "T" template to use. However, he must direct the Overwatch reaction to the acting mini. In this case, he can't separate his firing reaction based off the CCC Incinerator's Move to fire upon the Incinerator and the CCC Assault Leader.



The learning curve for MERCS can be steep. ACMs should never be used in games with beginners. Likewise, MERCS has a wonderful website with a great community that can answer any and all questions you might have.

Have a good time. Welcome to the cause!

FN MODIFIER TABLE

 d10/attack = FN + Modifiers				
NAME	TYPE	RANGE MODIFIER	MELEE MODIFIER	SPECIAL RULES
Melee	Range	-	See Melee Stat	1 base length; no long range weapons
Short	Range	-2 FN	NA	1 card length; no LRK weapons
Long	Range	-	NA	>1 card, no short range weapons
High Ground (attacker has)	Elevation	-1 FN	+1 to roll	non-standard climbs
Low Ground (attacker has)	Elevation	+1 FN	-1 to roll	non-standard climbs
Flank	Positional	-1 FN, +1 Wpn Str	-1 Reaction, +1 Wpn Str	target engaged, attack from side
Rear	Positional	-2 FN, +2 Wpn Str	-2 Reaction, +2 Wpn Str	attack from rear
Moving Target	Movement	+1 FN	-1 to roll	Simultaneous Action
Stealth	Movement	-1 MP, +1 FN	-1 to roll	KemVar AC stacks with cover
Fire & Move	CCM	-1 MP, +2 FN	-	can perform in either order
Set & Rip	CCM	-	-	no activity for 1 rnd, reset after movement
Load & Aim	CCM	-2 FN	-	2 rnds between shots
No Cover	LOS	-1 FN	-	-
Half-cover	LOS	+1 FN	-1 to roll	-
Full Cover	LOS	+3 FN	-	-
Suppression	Advanced Combat Manuever (ACM)	+1 FN	-1 to roll	failed Courage check= no attack; successful Courage check= modified attack

PERSONAL ABILITIES

Changing with each new recruit, Personal Abilities help make each MERCS unique. As with Weapons, this list is far from complete, but as it is it can provide a quick reference for rival MegaCon abilities.

NAME	DESCRIPTION	USE
Blind Fire	Can fire 1 Elevation Rating higher than self	-
Brawler	+1 to Melee Strength damage	-
Charge	Melee attack after movement has +1 damage	-
Climb	MERCS can ascend and descend one level for free.	-
Crack Shot	Can score 1 auto-hit per encounter	1/game
Demolitions	Multiple grenades; can disarm mines	-
Eagle Eye	-1 to FN	-
Heavy	No Set required in Set & Rip	-
Heroic	+1 to actions when alone	full length of a card
Last Stand	If this MERCS is the last remaining MERCS from his squad, he gets two attacks	Only if conditions are met
Leadership	Affects all rolls when Leader is near, +1 to all actions for MERCS other than the Leader.	full length of a card
Lucky	Can negate one success per encounter	1/game
Marksman	Only 1 round to Load & Fire	-
Medic	Restores 1 Blood if adjacent with MedKit	Takes 1 Action
Monkey Wrench	Restores usability to a down MERCS with a Repair Kit	Takes 1 Action
Move Your Ass	When user does damage can make an immediate move	-
No One Left Behind	Can drag a model whose armor has failed up to half its MP	-
Pet	Functions in short range	-
Quick	Always acts first and negates Simultaneous Actions in the case of a tied Initiative.	-
Repel	MERCS can descend 2 levels with 1 MP	-
Speedy	+1 MP	-
Stealth	-1 MP but is considered to be in Half Cover	-
Strong Arm	Throw +1 card	-
Sure-Footed	No move penalty to Fire & Move	-
Tough-as-they come	+1 Blood	-
Wall of Lead	May use weapon to suppress +1 Courage check; stacks with Suppression	-
Whirlwind of Death	2 Melee attacks/round on one target	-
You Want Some	After Killing Shot, get another action (can chain)	-

ADVANCED RULES WRITEUP

Tom and Kenny have just set up a MERCS skirmish and are preparing to take their first actions. They have agreed to play using all of the Advanced Combat Maneuvers. Neither faction has LOS on each other, so both will be making multiple Bounding maneuvers the first turn. Tom, playing CCC, rolls 3 (Medic), 4 (Sniper), 4 (Demo), 7 (Heavy), and 9 (AL). Kenny, playing KemVar, rolls 1 (Sniper), 4 (Assassin), 7 (AL), 8 (Monkeywrench), and 0 (Demo).

Kenny declares a Bounding Action, and adds that all of his units will be Bound to the Sniper's action at 1. Even though there are multiple Simultaneous Actions from the Initiative rolls, because no Combat actions can take place the first round, due to terrain LOS, and because Tom was also going to Bound all of his units to his AM, Tom agrees to abbreviate the first round.

Both players mark the Bounding targets, and then Tom starts moving first, because his Bounding target, the Medic, moves on a 3. The Medic moves his 2 MP, then all of Tom's units, starting with the AL move their base movement +1 MP. After Tom finishes his actions, Kenny takes over on his Sniper's Initiative of 1. The Sniper moves her complete MP, and then the rest of the KemVar MERCS spring into action.

Now deep in the game, Tom's CCC Medic and Demo are in perfect position to suppress Kenny's KemVar Sniper, while Tom's CCC Assault Leader flanks the sniper to get around a half-wall.

Tom's Medic acts on an Initiative 6. Unfortunately his Assault Demo acts on an Initiative 2. Kenny's Sniper acts on an Initiative 5. The Medic uses the Suppression ACM. All targets that start a move or action in front of her position, within a 180° arc and that she can see, will be fired upon. Kenny's Sniper chooses to fire at the Demo beside the Medic. Before he fires, the Medic who was using the Suppression ACM lets loose. Suppression does not do damage; it merely tries to prevent the targets from performing their stated action.

Kenny's KemVar Sniper must now roll over her Courage number, with a negative + 1 modifier to her Courage per person participating in the Suppression, or she won't act. The Sniper has Courage 6. Kenny rolls a 3 — a failure — the Sniper stays behind cover and does not attempt to shoot.

Tom's Assault Demo, on his Initiative 2, also performs the Suppression ACM. If the Demo had acted before the Sniper and also participated in the Suppression, the





Courage check would have been a 7 [6 + 1 (Medic and Demo Suppressing)]. Kenny's KemVar Assault Leader realizes his Sniper's position will soon be overrun and decides to act. With Tom's Medic and Demo using Suppression, and Tom's Assault Leader advancing on his Sniper's position, Kenny moves his Assault Leader into the Line of Sight of Tom's Medic, Demo, and Assault Leader. Because this movement was started outside the Suppression LOS he incurs no Courage check to move into position. It is a risky maneuver, but he is desperate.

During the next round of Initiatives, Kenny's AL gets lucky and rolls a 0 (10). He moves first, and announces that his AL is going on Overwatch. This allows him to fire on any moving or acting targets that he can see (check Line of Sight) in a 180° arc in front of his position. Tom does not let Kenny's actions distract him from his goal and continues his assault on the Sniper's position with his AL. Because Tom's AL is in the Overwatch field of Kenny's Assault Leader, he may be fired upon and possibly injured. However, Kenny's Assault Leader might not get a single shot off due to the Suppression of Tom's Medic and Demo.

The Chain of Occurrence is Suppression, then Overwatch, then original action.

Tom's CCC AL performs the Fire & Move CCM to get into position and fire upon the KemVar Sniper. This action is under an Overwatch. The first thing that happens, per the Chain of Occurrence, is the Suppression. Tom's Medic and Demo try to suppress Kenny's Assault Leader's Overwatch action. He has a Courage of 3, modified by a negative + 1 for the two MERCS using Suppression, for a final target number of 4. If he succeeds he can fire his Overwatch action at Tom's moving Assault Leader with a +1 FN penalty. If he fails, he does not act, forfeiting his turn. He rolls a 5 and succeeds. Overwatch is similar to Simultaneous Actions in terms of function. Tom's Assault Leader moves 1 MP (2 MP - 1 MP per the CCM move penalty), then Kenny's Overwatch action takes place. When

Tom's Assault Leader fires at the Sniper, the results of his action still occur regardless of the end result of the Overwatch action. In other words, if Tom's Assault Leader dies as a result of the Overwatch action, his attack still takes place.

Kenny's Assault Leader's Overwatch action consists of firing his primary weapon at Tom's moving Assault Leader. Two shots, with a Firing Number of 7: the base FN of 7 - 1 for no cover + 1 for firing at a moving target. He rolls two dice, a 4 and an 8, getting one hit. Kenny's Assault Leader's primary weapon is strength 2 vs. Tom's Assault Leader's Armor Value of 2. Tom's Assault Leader takes one Blood and checks against Armor Failure. He rolls a 7 and passes the test.

Bloodied but not damaged beyond repair, Tom's AL fires on the KemVar Sniper. Tom successfully removed the half-wall from the equation, but still must deal with the KemVar's AC stealth system. Two shots, with a FN of 10: the base FN 7 + 2 for Fire & Move + 1 for the KemVar Active Stealth. He rolls a 4 and a 9 — both misses.

Tom's Medic continues to use Suppression, but the Demo fires at Kenny's Assault Leader. This action is also in the Overwatch of Kenny's Assault Leader, but Tom's Medic is still suppressing so a Courage check must be made. This time, the target number is a 3: the AL's base Courage (only the Medic is using Suppression now). Kenny fails the roll with a 2. Because he is being suppressed, he can't Overwatch the Demo's action. The Assault Demo fires freely against a FN of 6 (7 - 1 for no cover). He rolls a 9 and 10 — wow!

Kenny can't afford to lose his Assault Leader; he uses his Lucky ability, negating one success. He only loses 1 Blood and makes an Armor Failure Check. Regardless of the Armor Failure result, because broken armor does not effect a MERCS ability to attack, he can remain on Overwatch.



Free Corporate Control incursions: 2169 AD

MEGACONS AND NON-ALIGNED FACTIONS



CCC



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STATUS: Megacon

FOUNDED: 2153

CONTINENT: North America

HEADQUARTERS: Chicago

LAT/LONG: 41 51 00 N / 087 39 00 W

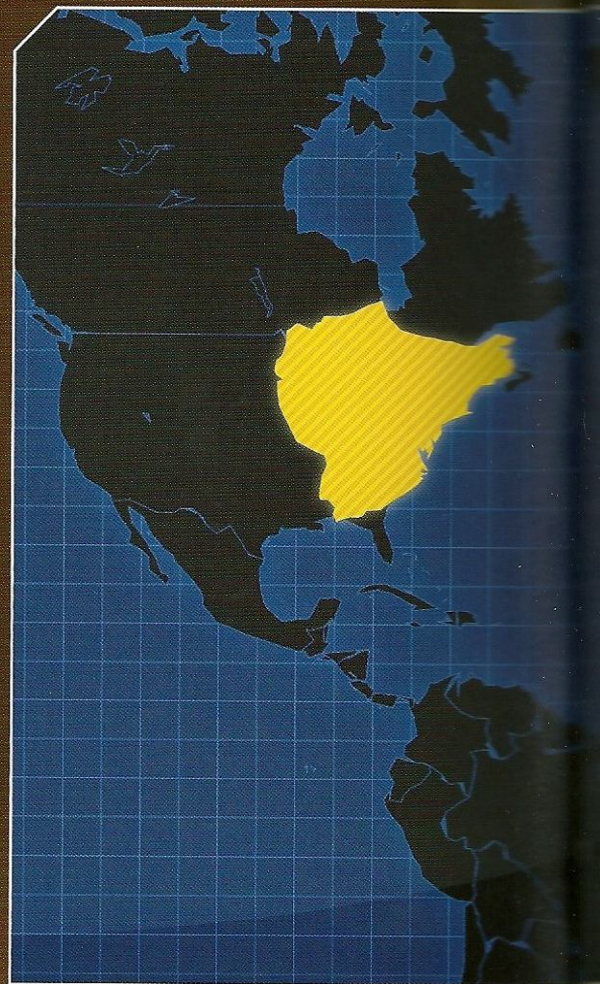
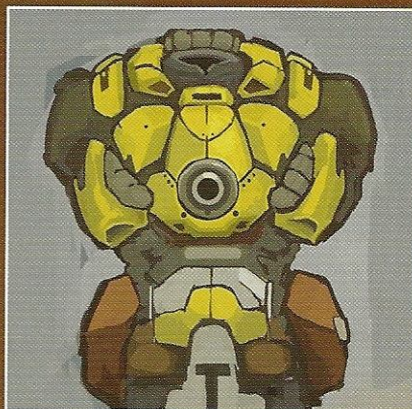
PRIMARY RESOURCE: Flexible Steel

HISTORY

Originally a merger of Chicago-Cincinnati-Cleveland Holdings, CCC became the most dominate MegaCon on the East Coast. CCC now stands for Commercial Corporate Continuity. Its holdings extend from mid Quebec over to Chicago (including all of Lake Superior), following the Mississippi down to New Orleans, over to Charlotte, and then up the East Coast to Halifax. It specializes in steel compounds.

CCC became a powerhouse MegaCon when Molecule Triptych, a division of CCC discovered a new process to harden steel: Anamorphous Molecular Manipulation (AMM). With AMM, CCC was able to manufacture flexible steel. Flexible steel allowed them to produce cheap and efficient stamped molds that provided greater material strength. This new material was the key in creating lighter armor with fewer seams and weapons for their MERCS, the Yellow Jackets. The CCC are almost unapproachable in their ability to produce cheap, high-quality MERCS armor; at present, no other conglomerate has been able to reverse engineer AMM.

CCC subcontract and barter arms deals for materials one generation less than that of their own elite Yellow Jackets. Currently, CCC elite MERCS sport nanite-infused, flexible steel armor. Their weaponry is less state-of-the-art, but formidable none-the-less; using diamond laced counter-weighted casings of various sizes. These elite troops are formidably equipped foes, but lack the training of some of the other MegaCon's MERCS. In the end, what they lack in training is more than made up for by the world's finest armor.



CORPORATE CHARACTER

CCC's strength as a corporation resides in its understanding of steel alloys, and its unique process of molecular manipulation. If the secrets of the AMM process were ever stolen, the CCC would quickly find itself displaced from its present position of power among the Global Systems.

It is the AMM process that gives the Yellow Jackets their resilience on the battlefield. Molecule Triptych, the division within CCC in charge of armor design and steel manipulation has created nanotech-infused steel; referred to internally as X26. This state-of-the-art process gives the MERCS armor that the Yellow Jackets sport extremely high reliability with active combat failures at less than 6.34%. In the combat zone, this directly results in CCC armor having a 60% lower failure rating when compared to other MegaCon's standard armor.

OVERVIEW



Their technological dominance is further improved by nanite infusion, which allows the armor to regenerate, or self-heal. Within seconds of catastrophic combat suit failure, the Yellow Jackets' armor begins an automated assessment and repair algorithm which ensures that stranded MERCS, often in dire circumstances, will return to full combat functionality within 90 seconds.

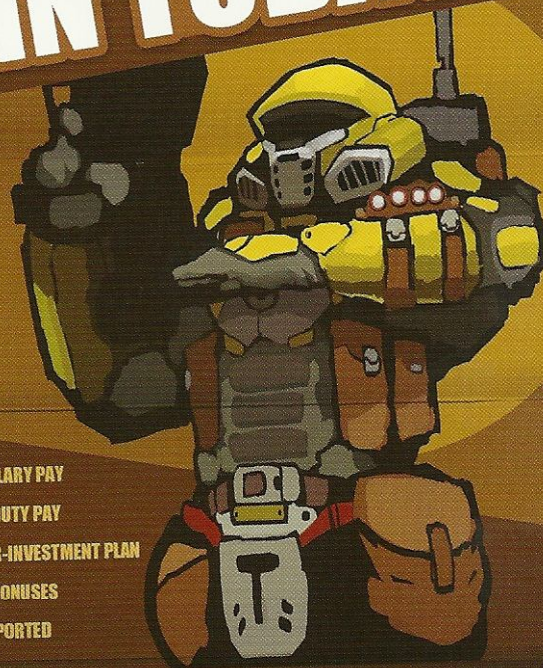
The Yellow Jackets bend but don't break philosophy, coupled with their strong squad tactics derived from well informed and instructed MERCS, makes them the most versatile MERCS units from any Global System. But CCC executive officers often point to the impressive fact that they can do it all with a minimal operating budget compared to other MegaCons as the real reason that CCC is the leading Global System in the world.

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FIELD EXPERIENCE

NEW YORK DISTRICT 12 UPRISING

Though none of the existing Yellow Jackets were commissioned at this time, this remains the most important Yellow Jackets activation in the history of the CCC, if not the history of MERCS. This action represents the first activation of any modern MERCS squad in the post Global System era.

The rioters had driven back standard police and had taken the entirety of CCC New York's District 12. Unwilling to use full tactical military to quell the CCC worker-citizens, Brad Chambers, then head of the MERCS project, suggested a field beta-test for his fledgling Yellow Jackets. The results were overwhelming. In six hours the Yellow Jackets had taken back the district with minimal collateral damage to CCC assets, and the complete eradication of the offending element.

The results in New York were all the proof CCC needed. The MERCS program was fast tracked and its funding increased. The rest of the world quickly followed in creating their own MERCS programs.

THE RAZING OF AMSTERDAM

Loaned to FCC House 2 Black Ops, the Yellow Jackets played an integral part in escalating the conflict between EU, Inc and USCR in Amsterdam through the bombing of the USCR controlled Centraal Station. After the two MegaCons began full scale hostilities, the Yellow Jackets, having fulfilled the contractual duties, were pulled from the fire zone.

Wanting to see the EU and USCR weakened but not dissolved, the CCC Board of Directors provided the warring MegaCons proof that House 2, with the assistance of various Black Ops from Keizai Waza were behind the bombing.



Nanite Armor self repairs at the end of two activations of the broken armored MERCS whether the unit spends Actions to Repair or not.

CCC IN GAME

When it comes to play style, the CCC is a bend but don't break combat force. They are able to meet force with force, be it in a ranged fire fight or in hand-to-hand. Their low armor failure means you don't have to fear weapons with inferior strength to armor ratios.

This is especially true for the Incinerator and the Heavy Assault. These two heavy armor MERCS should act as the foundation for any strategy, since they tend to be high profile target choices for the opposition. Knowing what to do with the two heavies will determine the assault class MERCS positioning and overall effectiveness.

It is very important not to over pursue and out-distance you heavy and sniper support. Use Bounding techniques early to get your heavies into position, and use a staggered Suppression progression through your assault force to provide a cover fire escort.

Be careful with the Sniper. He is a very powerful combat troop, but he is also highly susceptible to automatic fire. Pick you target's carefully, targeting for armor failure even more so than kills. Don't forget to utilize the Sniper's Stealth Personal Ability; it often is the difference between one-and-done and a Sniper that is fully engaged for the duration of the combat.



Indianapolis Sweeps: 2176 AD

Having received intel of a growing FCC pocket in Indianapolis, the CCC moved to investigate, sweep, and purge. After six weeks of fighting through heavy pockets of resistance, the underlying FCC infrastructure collapsed. This resulted in the capture of upwards of 200 suspected FCC sympathizers who faced trial at battlefield tribunals, televised for the world from Monument Circle in downtown Indianapolis. CCC argued effectively that the FCC was attempting to establish a temporary House within CCC much like it had done in Paris. Most were executed, those that admitted guilt were imprisoned under CCC contractual right 611.21b, "through heinous action had forfeited their rights as CCC citizens, and by contract were reclassified as material property that CCC could deal with as it saw fit."

THE YELLOW JACKETS

The CCC's elite MERCS unit is the Yellow Jackets. They are comprised of the most highly trained and specialized troopers in North America. Combined, the Yellow Jackets have seen engagements around the world, including portions of the Lost Margin.



ASSAULT LEADER

SQUAD

Yellow Jackets

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Danny Williams
- **CLASS:** Assault-Leader
- **BLOOD TYPE:** B
- **HEIGHT:** 181cm
- **WEIGHT:** 82 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Atlanta

KIT PROFILE:

- DC4500 "Diamond Cutter"
- GL20, 10mm Auto "Stopper" Ammo
- MGA-8P 30mm Cannon

FORMAL RESUME:

- Kansas City Demarcation
- Boston Skirmishes
- The Razing of Amsterdam
- Lagos Conflict
- Amur Escort

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Leadership:** +1 to all actions for allied MERCS within 1 card
- **Lucky:** Can negate 1 success per match

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Nanite Armor:** -1 to repair rolls; self heals after 2 rounds
- **Reliable:** Low failure rate

DC4500

Called the "Diamond Cutter" because of the diamond laced rounds it expels at 685 rounds per minute, the DC4500 is computer balanced and programmed to auto-site when connected to a CCC Yellow Jacket MERCS. A combination of gas and liquid cooling keeps the DC4500 series



assault rifle free of most battlefield problems. The DC4500 also takes advantage of an above average magazine size and computer assisted gyro stabilization.



ON THE TABLE

The Assault Leader (AL) keeps everything together and has some surprises in store for any battlefield opposition. The AL's primary benefit to the team is his Leadership Personal Ability. In effect, any friendly MERCS mini within one card length of the Assault Leader is granted a +1 to any and all rolls (except for MERCS with the Heroic Personal Ability).

He has the primary weapon and Fire & Move Combat Class Maneuver. His secondary weapon is an EMP grenade, which uses the standard two card radius diagram. It is a powerful momentum turner, and should be used to render the greatest number of the Opposition Force (OPFOR) helpless.

With a high reaction the AL is also a formidable melee foe. Though his damage is relatively small, his reaction makes him hard to hit and the reliable CCC armor rarely fails.

Last, but certainly not least, is the Assault Leader's Lucky ability. The ability can instantly negate one successful action that targeted him. This is the most often overlooked ability in the game and can deflate the opposing player if used unexpectedly.



Bio:

Dan has been with CCC for fifteen years. Possessing excellent "front-line" negotiation experience, he has been a member of the Yellow Jackets through many of its most storied incursions. He was promoted to Assault Leader after completing the CE 240: Primary Leadership Development Curriculum.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- Leadership is measured by the full length of a card. It does not help (modify) Heroic models.
- Lucky only refers to the Leader model.
- EMP grenades don't do damage, but instead force a negatively modified Armor Failure roll for all in the firing diagram.



MEDIC

SQUAD

Yellow Jackets

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Jim Finch
- **CLASS:** Assault/Medic/Grenadier
- **BLOOD TYPE:** AB+
- **HEIGHT:** 180cm
- **WEIGHT:** 84 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Indianapolis

KIT PROFILE:

- DC4500 "Diamond Cutter"
- H.264 Medkit
- Delta-Joker Series PEDs (Personal Explosive Device)
- MGA-8P 30mm Cannon

FORMAL RESUME:

- Amur Escort
- Indianapolis Sweeps
- Detroit Conflict of 2175

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Medic:** Restores 1 Blood if adjacent with MedKit (uses turn)
- **Speedy:** +1 MP

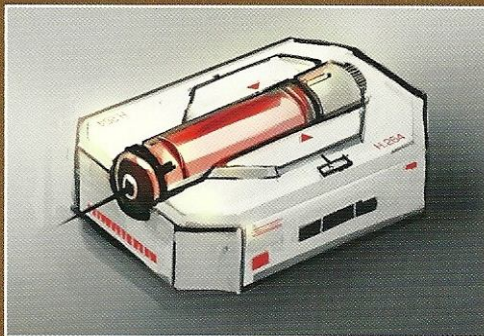
CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Nanite Armor:** -1 to repair rolls; self heals after 2 rounds
- **Reliable:** Low failure rate

H.264 MEDKIT

The H.264 is a fast acting, quick recovery nanotech infused cocktail of various pain-management medications and Phencyclidine. The nanites quickly begin to dissolve any foreign materials in the

body, reconstruct passages for blood flow, and reattach ripped muscular tissue. The Phencyclidine works as an anesthetic agent to block the pain of the nanotech recovery and help persuade the MERCS trooper they aren't injured, thus propelling them back into action.



ON THE TABLE

Assault troopers are the meat and potatoes of any MERCS force. The CCC Assault Trooper can specialize as a Medic (AM) or Demo (AD). You will find that both are extremely valuable and are the toughest choice when determining who to leave out from your five man squad.. Both troopers carry the standard CCC assault rifle and still have the Fire & Move Combat Class Maneuver.

The AM is extremely valuable if you are expecting serious damage. The Medic ability allows the CCC Medic to use Medkits, which restore 1 Blood a round, if the Medic is within a base length of the injured soldier.

The 1 extra movement point from the AM's Speedy ability also comes in handy when choosing a Bounding target, as his standard movement is already quite far.

The AD's ability to inflict high damage to multiple opponents through shrapnel grenades makes him a must when facing heavily armored opponents, such as the USCR. And his Heroic Personal Ability makes him an easy choice to stand apart from the Assault Leader.



Bio:

Jim, like any assault trooper, is highly adaptable. Assault MERCS are the backbone of all MERCS units, with no exceptions. Able to fill the many secondary needs of the

Yellow Jackets, Jim can act as a combat medic if equipped with the H.262 Field Medical Kit, but can also offer support though the use of grenades and other PEDs. His primary weapon is the DC4500 series assault rifle, affectionately known as a "Diamond Cutter" because it uses diamond laced, counter-weighted rounds.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

MEDIC

- The Medic need not be facing the target model to heal. Moreover, the Medic can be anywhere within a base of the target model to use the MedKit.

DEMOLITION

- The frag grenades of the Demolition hits all targets in the diagram at WpnStr 3. There is no need to roll a FN to hit.
- Heroic is measured by the full length of a card. It effects all rolls and can be tracked easily by the asterisks on the card.



SNIPER

SQUAD

Yellow Jackets

VITAL STATS:

- NAME: Vital Ramirez
- CLASS: Sniper
- BLOOD TYPE: A
- HEIGHT: 180 cm
- WEIGHT: 72 kilos
- BIRTHPLACE: Detroit

KIT PROFILE:

- McDunlin .50cal LRK Rifle, Mark 14
- GL20, Firing 10mm Auto "Stopper" Ammo

FORMAL RESUME:

- Amur Escort
- Kansas City Demarcation
- Detroit Conflict of 2175

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Crackshot:** Can score 1 success per match
- **Stealth:** -1 MP; considered to have half-cover

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Nanite Armor:** -1 to repair rolls; self heals after 2 rounds
- **Reliable:** Low failure rate

MCDUNLIN .50CAL

This long range kill (LRK) rifle is a showstopper. Easily able to propel a round 3000 meters, the McDunlin Systems rifle uses controlled plasma bursts to launch projectiles at 4234 feet per second. The Mark 14 has the capability to "dust," or vaporize, unprotected human tissue on impact. Because of the natural imperfections in ammo, and the massive force used when the LRK fires a round, each bullet is analyzed inside the chamber to calculate and compensate for imperfections, in order to ensure the most accurate shot possible. The unfortunate side effect is the long down time between shots.

GL20

The GL20 is a short range pistol that provides moderate stopping power with decent accuracy. It accepts multiple types of ammo, is water proof, and is inexpensive to manufacture. The GL20 is the standard small armament of the Yellow Jackets.



ON THE TABLE

How much use you get out of your Sniper tends to be a primary indicator on which side gets the victory. This Yellow Jacket packs quite a punch, doing the maximum damage in the game. This extreme power is offset by the Load & Aim CCM.

The ability of a CCC MERCS commander to keep the Sniper alive during the two rounds of loading is vital to overall success. To this end, the Yellow Jacket Sniper has the Personal Ability, Stealth; which allows him to move with reduced MP, but receive half-cover.

The most important trick to using the Sniper is knowing when to utilize his Crack Shot Personal Ability. This is an extremely important ability. Try to not blow it early, but save it for the OPFOR miniature with the most potential to harm you (i.e., Berserker, Assassin, Behemoth).



Bio:

Ramirez is an exceptional marksman, with the ability to quickly and efficiently remove threats from the battlefield at unprecedented distances. He is a constant team player both on the battlefield and off. His outgoing nature contradicts the stereotypical Sniper. His relationships with his teammates helps rather than hinders his battlefield performance.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- Crackshot can only be used once per encounter.
- Stealth of the Sniper is a choice. It isn't a persistent effect. He can choose whether to Move in Stealth or normally.
- Load & Fire only refers to the LRK weapon of the Sniper. During the two rounds of between LRK shots, the Sniper can Move or fire his pistol. Load & Aim is finished at the end of two activations of the Sniper.



HEAVY ASSAULT

SQUAD

Yellow Jackets

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Ricard Jackson
- **CLASS:** Heavy Assault
- **BLOOD TYPE:** O
- **HEIGHT:** 186 cm
- **WEIGHT:** 93 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** New York

KIT PROFILE:

- "The Jackhammer" FSS

FORMAL RESUME:

- Detroit Conflict of 2175
- Kansas City Demarcation
- Amur Escort

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

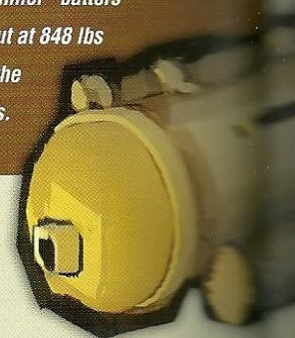
- **Wall of Lead:** +1 to target's Suppression rolls
- **Brawler:** +1 to Melee damage

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Nanite Armor:** -1 to repair rolls; self heals after 2 rounds
- **Reliable:** Low failure rate

"THE JACKHAMMER" FSS

A heavy machine gun, "The Jackhammer" is categorized as a Field Suppression System (FSS). It is able to fire a staggering 1700 rounds per minute. It is highly inaccurate, but the sheer amount of bullets in the air prevents most enemy activity. The rate of fire comes at a price; "The Jackhammer" batters the operator with 250 lbs of force after just 3 seconds of fully automatic fire; capping out at 848 lbs of force. This, coupled with its weight (47 pounds - 112 with pack and belt feed) force the trooper to stay in one place and "set" his armor into the ground with 10 cm foot cleats.



ON THE TABLE

The Heavy Assault is just that, heavy; this also means he is slow. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that it takes him one complete round to set, as required by the Set & Rip Combat Class Maneuver. It would be simple to deduce that he is not worth fielding, but he is. His Armor Rating alone makes him a formidable opponent for most factions. Moreover, the amount of damage he can inflict on multiple opponents is staggering.

The key is to set him with a wide arc of visibility early, ideally behind half-cover. The higher armor value allows him to completely control wide areas of the battlefield with Suppression. The Wall of Lead Personal Ability stacks on top of the suppressing fire modifier for some good ol'fashion area lockdown.

Try not to move him once he is set. Doing so restricts the Heavy's usability and hamstring the rest of your squad if they are on escort duty.

Don't underestimate the Heavy in melee. There's no doubt that Kem-Var and sefadu will employ melee tactics to hammer down the Heavy Assault. While he is easy to hit, he packs quite a wallop in return. Don't be afraid to go toe-to-toe with a melee unit if they are weak.

Bio:

Ricard is the brains of the Yellow Jackets squad. Out of his armor he is an amicable fellow with no real issues. He lives a clean life with his wife Jennifer and daughter Bronwyn. He views his MERCS duty as a job, nothing more, nothing less. It is how he provides for his one true love—his family.



FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- Wall of Lead refers to the Courage stat. The person being Suppressed must roll over their Courage + 1 for Wall of Lead and any subsequent Suppressors.
- Set & Rip requires the Heavy to not Move for one round. The Heavy is Set at the end of one activation. If he is forced to Move involuntarily, he must reSet.
- The extended T diagram of the Heavy is not restricted by elevation. If the targets find themselves within the firing diagram regardless of the difference in levels they could be hit.

INCINERATOR

SQUAD

Yellow Jackets

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Kat Silvestri
- **CLASS:** Incinerator
- **BLOOD TYPE:** O
- **HEIGHT:** 188cm
- **WEIGHT:** 102 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Pittsburgh

KIT PROFILE:

- Broward Flame Propellant System (FPS), Mark IV
- GL20, Firing 10mm Auto "Stopper" Ammo

FORMAL RESUME:

- No Major Experience

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Sweep:** Attack sweeps across hitting all in 90 degree arc
- **Tough as they Come:** + 1 Blood

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Nanite Armor:** -1 to repair rolls; self heals after 2 rounds
- **Reliable:** Low failure rate

BROWARD FPS

The Mark IV uses patented Propanic gel to create a fire that burns at close to 3000° C. In air, the flame has the appearance of molten metal; with excess propellant dripping off the core stream like molten iron. The propellant's solid nature provides the operator with a higher degree of accuracy and control than previous Broward systems. The GCC has yet to make a ruling on numerous petitions for the immediate ban of the Mark IV.



ON THE TABLE

The Incinerator is the real indicator of a CCC commander's skill level. No other unit is as difficult to position, and no other unit can cause as much chaos, as the Incinerator. She keeps the CCC advantage of a high Armor Value, but is limited by the range of her weapon. Typically this means she is quickly engaged and overwhelmed in melee combat. Proper positioning and support really help the Incinerator come into her own.

If your strategy is slow to develop, try not to use Bounding with the Incinerator. Instead, move her to take advantage of her range. Try to put her and other high profile targets out ahead of the Yellow Jackets as choice targets. Force the OPFOR to choose early and make them pay dearly for whatever choice they make.

The Incinerator's FPS is extremely powerful. Make sure that anyone caught in the flame arc makes Courage checks to act on their next turn. This weapon feature can easily be overlooked, and make the Incinerator seem like dead weight.

The extra Blood provided by Tough as They Come can be vital in getting a sweeping attack on a group of the oppositions figures. This extra bit of cushion can tie even more attacks to the Incinerator, giving your other MERCS a chance to turn a potential defeat into a narrow victory.

Bio:

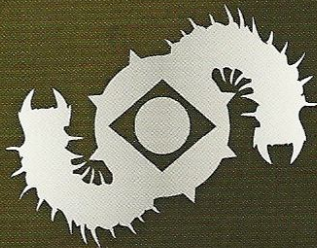
Incinerators have short life spans; Kat hopes to be the exception to the rule. Formidable and intimidating in combat, Kat is just as focused and frosty back in the real world. Her dream is to climb the corporate ladder three rungs at a time stepping over anyone that dares get in her way.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- The Incinerator must sweep her attack per the Sweep PA.
- The template is two full card lengths. You do not need to insert the Incinerator's base in a moving circle.
- There is no FN when using Flame. Targets within the firing diagram take a Wpn Str 2 attack, and must make modified Armor Failure checks. In addition, the targets' next actions (whether that round or next) must pass a Courage check suffering all ramifications of failure or success.



KEMVAR



STATUS: Megacon

FOUNDED: 2150

CONTINENT: North America

HEADQUARTERS: Rio de Janeiro

LAT/LONG: 22 53 00 S / 043 17 00 W

PRIMARY RESOURCE: Energy

HISTORY

KemVar started as Kemet of Brazil and Varlen of Venezuela. These two competing energy superpowers realized that if they wanted to dominate the world market they would have to put their territorial bickering aside and combine forces. The result was KemVar, which quickly inserted itself into the world markets with bold and daring moves. KemVar was the first MegaCon to merge with a territorial government—capturing even more of the market place. Other mega-conglomerates suffered under an antiquated rule set that limited their ability to compete with this new government based corporation.

KemVar's military strength lies in their ability to manipulate fields of energy to produce Active Camouflage (AC). Every KemVar MERC is outfitted with the AC 2.7 Integrated Recognizance System (IRS). This system envelops the MERCS soldier in a reflective energy field that replicates the environment around the MERC, making them harder to see and harder to hit. Obviously, using this cutting edge technology comes at a price. The depth of the AC 2.7 IRS's integration means that the KemVar suits suffer from a lack of reliability; which forced the MegaCon to use small group tactics more often than their rivals.

KemVar overcomes its apparent lack of manpower, and the unreliability of their MERCS armor by specializing in small group deployment and tactics. They commission each MERCS unit together to create trust and a team-oriented environment. They are without equal when it comes to understanding and adapting to each other's actions. MegaCons often avoid skirmishes with KemVar because their gains rarely exceed the cost.



OVERVIEW

CORPORATE CHARACTER

The clear leader in energy creation, conservation, and manipulation, KemVar is aggressive and unrelenting in their pursuit of being the globe's sole supplier of energy. They are a small mega-conglomerate, but circumstances and self-preservation have enabled them to forge a powerful presence in the present global structure.

Lacking the personnel power of MegaCons like the EIC and sefadu, or the money of the older corporations like EU, Inc. and USCR, KemVar began manipulating energy fields. The goal was to create an energy barrier that would enable their MERCS to survive on the battlefield. What they stumbled upon instead was the Active Camouflage system.

AC 1.0 was utterly unusable, but it changed KemVar from being a reactive and defensive tactical and developmental mindset, to an aggressive, first strike philosophy pursuing the immediate termination of prolonged hostilities due to bold, ruthless combat initiatives. In the following years KemVar instituted a draft intended to stabilize the number of new recruits coming in. The recruits are commissioned

together, formed into MERCS units before introductory training, and remain intact throughout their commission. The first of these was the Cães de Guerra, Portuguese for Dogs of War.

The AC 2.7 iteration is KemVar's finest achievement and is worn by the elite Cães de Guerra. They terrorize battlefields worldwide with their active stealth capabilities. Very aggressive, yet versatile, the War Dogs can extend an engagement with at-range firepower, or move in for close quarters combat. Every War Dog has the ability to inflict damage from varying ranges.

KemVar is currently locked in an ongoing engagement with Texico. For the second time, KemVar is attempting to take the Panama Canal from the Texas-Mexican Global System. Their future plans for the canal remain a mystery.



FIELD EXPERIENCE

PANAMA CANAL OCCUPATION

This was intended to be a field test of the new AC system. The results were so impressive that Eclison, superseding original orders from the KemVar Board of Trustees, pushed deep into Texico territory, disrupting the flow of goods through the Panama Canal. Texico forces were able to rescue the canal after los counterattacked Guanabara Bay.

GUANABARA BAY (RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL)

The Cães de Guerra, having spearheaded the assault on the Panama Canal, intercepted communications from Texico to los urging an attack on Guanabara Bay. Realizing such an attack would be catastrophic to KemVar, Eclison secretly withdrew the elite force to defend the bay from attack.

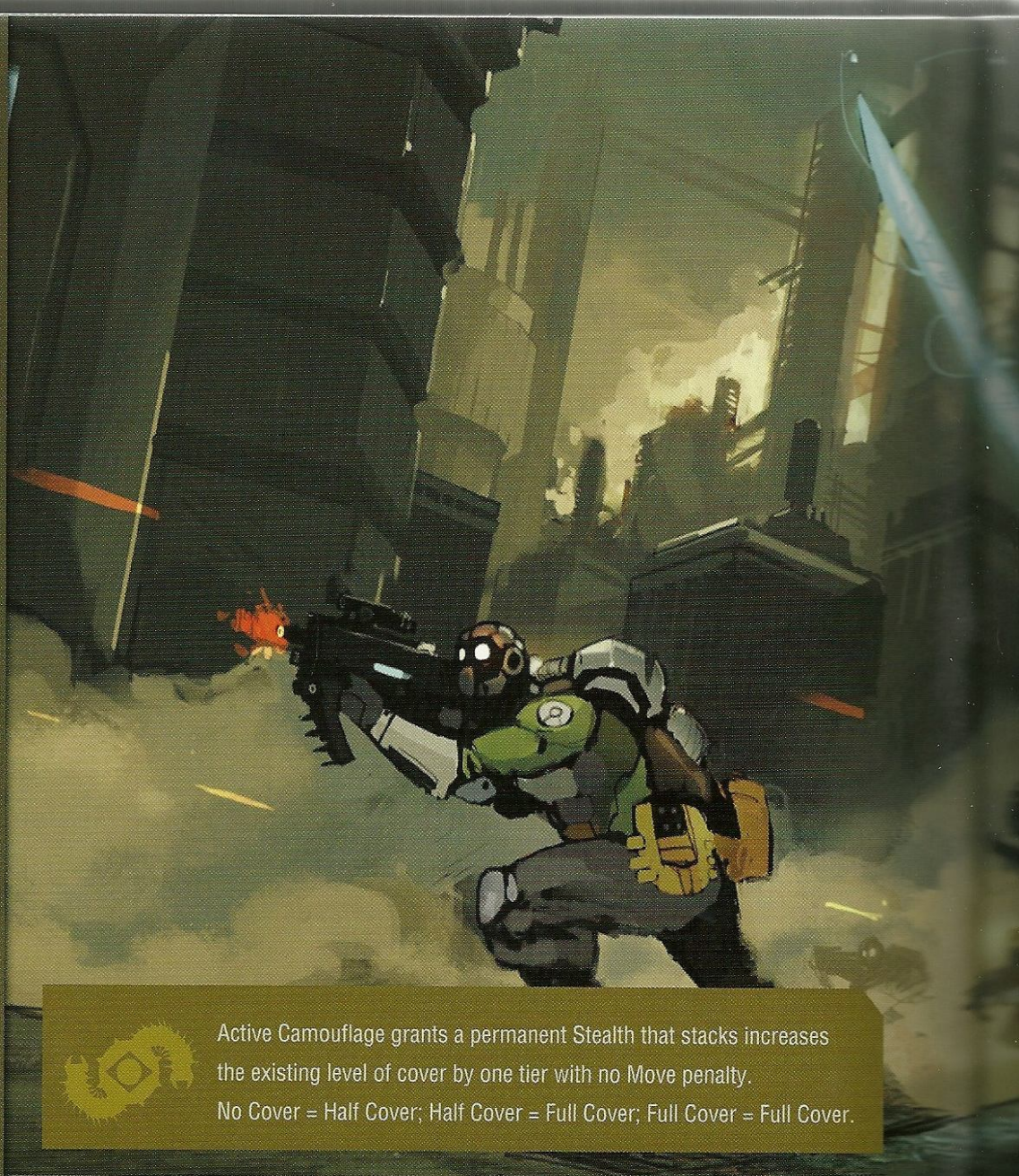
The defense of the bay was a success for the Cães de Guerra two times over. Firstly, they systematically wiped out los' invading forces. Secondly, Eclison became the national savior.

FCC BLACK OPS IN KOLKATA

In an effort to weaken Eclison's hold on the hearts of the worker-citizens at home, the Board of Trustees approved the loan of the War Dogs to the FCC's efforts preventing the spread of the EIC into Kolkata. They were, of course, victorious, and Eclison returned a bigger hero than before. Even more surprising was the sword he returned with, a gift from the FCC for services rendered. It would become the symbol of his promise to protect the worker-citizens of KemVar from "any and all."

PANAMA PROJECT

Presently, Eclison and his Dogs of War are fighting Texico, attempting to retake the Panama Canal that had been taken by KemVar once before. The KemVar Board of Trustees has "blessed" the endeavor, though it is widely rumored their hands were forced by Eclison's refusal to leave his command for management.



Active Camouflage grants a permanent Stealth that stacks increases the existing level of cover by one tier with no Move penalty.

No Cover = Half Cover; Half Cover = Full Cover; Full Cover = Full Cover.

KEMVAR IN GAME

KemVar is a flexible fighting force. They are able to trade fire with opposition, but are also able to inflict heavy damage in melee. Their Active Camouflage enables them some security, even when in the open. If placed behind decent cover, they quickly become untouchable without their opponents wasting turns searching for better positioning.

It is very important that any melee charge be substantial enough to kill at least one unit, preferably the most important target. This is often the Heavy Assault or specialty unit from the opposing MegaCon. Remember to use the Bounding ACM wisely throughout the match, not just at the beginning.

Don't neglect the Sniper. If used wisely, she can really cause issues with the support Assault troopers and their intended targets. Their inability to heal or repair, and the time wasted in travel, more than make up for her lack of stopping power; if you keep her alive.

Last, but not least, is the worm grenade. Take advantage of this unique weapon to kill targets wearing heavy armor. Since it ignores all armor, these are perfect targets. The realization that the Demo can damage their units easily often leads to a tactical panic and unsupported retreat. This just so happens to be an ideal time for a melee push.



THE CÃES DE GUERRA

KemVar's most decorated MERCS unit is the Cães de Guerra. Amazingly, this unit has remained intact from its inception. Much of the credit for its success falls to its Assault Leader, Eclison Tavares Jorge Machado. He has become a hero to the worker-citizens of KemVar. He has been offered multiple promotions to management; which he has turned down without negotiation or discussion. It is unclear how this has affected his relationship with the Board.



ASSAULT LEADER

SQUAD

Cães de Guerra

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Eclison Tavares Jorge Machado
- **CLASS:** Assault-Leader
- **BLOOD TYPE:** A-
- **HEIGHT:** 184cm
- **WEIGHT:** 80 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Rio de Janeiro

KIT PROFILE:

- Capéval 9mm Light Machine Gun
- 60cm Sword-Trabalhador Coração
- Indigo9 Field Logistics Computer

FORMAL RESUME:

- Panama Canal Occupation
- Guanabara Bay (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
- Panama Project

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Leadership:** +1 to all actions for allied MERCS within 1 card
- **Brawler:** +1 to melee damage

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Active Camouflage:** Grants stealth: +1 to cover, no move penalty
- **Gasmask:** Immune to airborne toxins

TRABALHADOR CORAÇÃO

The sword is a personal weapon of Jorge's. It is unknown where it came from exactly, but the result is a beautifully efficient weapon. It is rumored to have been a gift of an FCC house. He named it "the worker's heart". It is made of dynamic steel, enhanced with vibration nano-technology to enable



ease of cut. Jorge is very proficient with the sword, but reserves it for adversaries who have earned his respect.

ON THE TABLE

Like all Assault Leaders, the KemVar AL has the Leadership ability. In effect, any friendly MERCS mini within one card length of the Assault Leader is granted a +1 to any and all rolls (except for MERCS with the Heroic Personal Ability).

He has the standard semi-auto Weapon Strength and Firing Number (FN). In conjunction with the KemVar Active Camouflage, the Fire & Move Combat Class Maneuver is quite effective, because the AC systems prevent KemVar from ever being subject to No Cover penalties.

With a high reaction, the Brawler Personal Ability, and his devastating sword, this AL is a formidable melee foe. Although you should resist the urge to send him into melee combat by himself, as doing so removes the benefit of Leadership. If he is forced into hand-to-hand, or the entire unit is geared toward melee combat, he is extremely proficient at leading the assault and is effective both hitting and damaging.



FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- Leadership is measured by the full length of a card. It does not help (modify) Heroic models.
- Only the Assassin can enter hand-to-hand and attack. All others must Move into range, then attack the following round.
- Brawler's +1 refers to Wpn Str.

Bio:

Eclison Tavares Jorge Machado is a national hero. His leadership coincides with the rise of KemVar, and in many worker-citizen's minds, KemVar's success is tied to him. Jorge has done nothing to dissuade the popular opinion, which worries the Trustees. His soldiers follow his orders alone, without question.



MONKEYWRENCH

SQUAD

Cães de Guerra

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Alejandro Meruidae
- **CLASS:** Monkeywrench/Demolition
- **BLOOD TYPE:** O+
- **HEIGHT:** 179cm
- **WEIGHT:** 79 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Barcelona

KIT PROFILE:

- Capéval SP130 Porcupine
- U2 Field Repair Utility Kit
- "Teh Sague" Worm Grenade
- MGA-8P 30mm Cannon

FORMAL RESUME:

- Panama Canal Occupation
- Guanabara Bay (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
- Panama Project

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

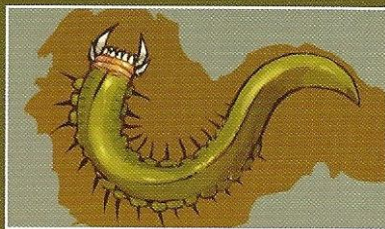
- **Climb:** Move up 1 level of elevation at no cost
- **Monkeywrench:** Can use Repair Kits

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Active Camouflage:** Grants stealth: +1 to cover, no move penalty
- **Gasmask:** Immune to airborne toxins

WORM GRENADE

"Teh Sague" is a brutally efficient weapon blending nature and technology. The core of the grenade is a boring leech, or worm, of unknown origin. Kept inside a synthetic metal cocoon, which is in turn housed inside a kinetically unstable shell adorned with razor sharp spikes, the worm is agitated to a state of aggression during flight. The unbalanced grenade wobbles in air producing an



electron build up, which in turn magnetizes and charges the spikes allowing the grenade to attach or penetrate any MERCS' armor after it has been thrown. Once attached, the worm bores through the shell of the grenade towards the source of its agitation — the now complete magnetic connection — burrowing into the soldier.



ON THE TABLE

Effective, both at range and in melee, the KemVar Assault Trooper can specialize in demolitions or repair. Both are valuable in their own right. Both carry standard assault rifles, and retain the Fire & Move CCM. Fire & Move used in conjunction with Active Camouflage is an extremely effective way to keep your opponent on his or her heels.

The KemVar Demo wields the unique worm grenade. This grenade doesn't use a firing diagram like other exploding grenades, but instead uses a FN like most ranged attacks. The Demotion's range is enhanced by his Strong Arm Personal Ability which grants him +1 range, on top of the basic two card lengths when throwing.

The Monkeywrench can easily become the most important mini on the table if your KemVar MERCS armor begins to fail. The Wrench can use Repair Kits because of his Monkeywrench Personal Ability. A Repair Kit allows the MERCS unit to restore broken MERCS armor to working status if used within one base length. The Sure-Footed Personal Ability helps ensure the Monkeywrench can reach the unit quickly, and possibly do some damage on the way.



Bio:

Alejandro is trained in the basic Capéval assault rifle and the boring worm grenade. Of more importance to his fellow Dogs of War is his ability to keep them working with the U2 Field Repair Utility Kit. Because the AC I.R.S. is so unstable, it can lead to worse-than-average failure in the field.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

MONKEYWRENCH

- Climb allows a Move up or down of 1 floor (12 feet = ER 3) at no cost. This is still considered a Move and it only refers ascending or descending, not both. It can be used to "vault" over terrain if used in conjunction with more MP.
- The Monkeywrench need not be facing the target model to repair. Moreover, the Monkeywrench can be anywhere within a base of the target model to use the Repair Kit.

DEMOLITION

- The Worm grenade does not use a diagrams. The Demo must hit a target with the base FN 5 modified by any and all range modifiers. It only effects one target.



HEAVY ASSAULT

SQUAD

Cães de Guerra

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Vinicius Ferreira
- **CLASS:** Heavy Assault
- **BLOOD TYPE:** O-
- **HEIGHT:** 182cm
- **WEIGHT:** 84 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** São Paulo

KIT PROFILE:

- Capéval Twin260 Heavy Fire "Orthrus"

FORMAL RESUME:

- Panama Canal Occupation
- Guanabara Bay (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
- Panama Project

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Eyes in Back of Head:** Cannot be attacked from Rear; treat like Flank
- **Heroic:** +1 to actions when alone

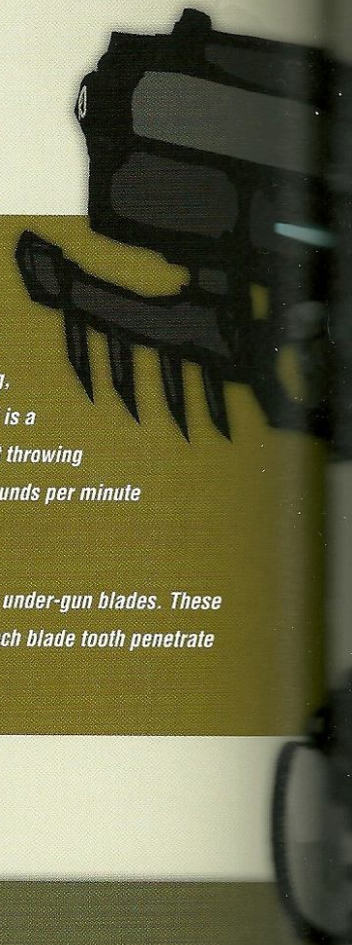
CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Active Camouflage:** Grants stealth: +1 to cover, no move penalty
- **Gasmask:** Immune to airborne toxins

TWIN260 "ORTHRUS"

The Orthrus is named after the two-headed mythological hound of Herakles labor and uses twin heavy-firing, modified 130, having multiple heavy-firing, modified "Porcupines" that are fed from the same ammo trough. The effect is a lighter weapon with greater versatility that still retains the punch and bullet throwing effect of a heavy assault weapon. The multiple firing arcs can output 700 rounds per minute each, for a destructive total of 1400 rounds per minute.

Like all KemVar Capéval assault weapons, the Twin260s are equipped with under-gun blades. These are used to disturbing effect at close range. The micro-serrated edges of each blade tooth penetrate and then break off, causing the maximum amount of damage.



ON THE TABLE

With only a 2 Armor Rating, this Heavy Assault is more vulnerable to damage than other MegaCons' Heavies. But his flexibility more than makes up for any short comings. The KemVar Heavy has the same damage output as other Heavies, but can split its damage between two separate "T" firing zones.

He comes with the Heroic Personal Ability, so he should be by himself often. This, coupled with the Tough As They Come Personal Ability, makes him a fearsome miniature indeed. The extra Blood ensures that he is always a tough kill and will soak up more of your opponent's resources than they might be inclined to think. This often leads to fast moving counter attack opportunities, especially for the melee shock troops of KemVar. On the other hand, with the Overwatch Corporate Ability you can make a more tactical assault and approach slowly, keeping any adversaries locked down.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- If attacked in the rear arc, the attack is treated like a Flank attack in reference to the bonuses to FN and Wpn Str.
- Heroic is measured by the full length of a card. It effects all rolls and can be tracked easily by the asterisks on the card.



Bio:

Vinícius is a thoughtful and gentle man. He believes in Jorge, and in KemVar. He believes in the truth of his actions, which makes the violence acceptable, if not completely condonable. What he lacks in "bang-for-the-buck" he makes up in speed and versatility.

- Set & Rip requires the Heavy to not Move for one round. The Heavy is Set at the end of one activation. If he is forced to Move involuntarily, he must reSet.
- The KemVar Heavy can split his firing diagram into two separate directions. The must stay inside the front 180 degree LOS area, but can be placed anywhere within this area. They can remain two diagrams or combined into one with more chances to hit.
- The split T diagram of the Heavy is not restricted by elevation. If the targets find themselves within the firing diagram regardless of the difference in levels they could be hit.



SNIPER

SQUAD

Cães de Guerra

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Mariana Silva
- **CLASS:** Sniper
- **BLOOD TYPE:** A+
- **HEIGHT:** 181cm
- **WEIGHT:** 75 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Belém

KIT PROFILE:

- Sakano TRG-32 "Gekitai" Sniper Rifle
- Capéval 9mm HV Pistol

FORMAL RESUME:

- Panama Canal Occupation
- Guanabara Bay (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
- Panama Project

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Marksman:** Takes only 1 round between Load & Aim
- **Quick:** Always acts first; negates Simultaneous Actions

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Active Camouflage:** Grants stealth: +1 to cover, no move penalty
- **Gasmask:** Immune to airborne toxins

TRG-32 "GEKITAI"

Purchased from Keizai Waza, the "Gekitai" sniper rifle comes with two standard modes. The first is the most basic: it is a rifle. Not very powerful, the TRG-32 is still accurate at ranges of up to 2000 meters. The second mode fires repulsor tags.



These tags adhere to MERCS armor and prevent any tagged personnel from approaching one another.



ON THE TABLE

The KemVar Sniper isn't nearly as powerful of a force on the table as other snipers. In fact, new players tends to make her the mini that is left behind when creating a KemVar force. However, that's often a mistake; she can be a formidable opponent if used wisely. Her Quick Personal Ability keeps her out of Simultaneous Actions, and her Marksman Personal Ability reduces the Load time on the rifle to only one round.

Her effectiveness comes down to how efficiently you utilize the repulsor feature of her rifle. Your primary target should be a Medic or a Monkeywrench. Tagging these minis, then tagging their targets in later rounds helps to keep damaged MERCS from recovering.

A good secondary target would be the Assault Leader. This tactic is slower to develop and requires you to tag anyone that the AL would normally be positioned close to on the table, but it can pay off. Because the +1 granted by Leadership tends to come into play often with well commanded forces, denying them that bonus can have a dramatic impact on results.

Bio:

Mariana emulates her weapon; she remains distant and deadly. She believes she can commune with the rifle; that through its constant presence and obsessive maintenance she can wield it as an extension of her own body. A quick thinker in combat, she is able to use repulsor tags while the rifle is reloading and calibrating making her more valuable on the battlefield with little downtime.



FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- Quick allows the Sniper to break all Simultaneous Actions in favor of herself.
- Load & Fire only refers to the LRK weapon of the Sniper. During the one rounds of between LRK shots, the Sniper can Move, fire Repulsor Tags, or fire her pistol. Load & Aim is finished at the end of one activation of the Sniper.
- Repulsor Tags are not handicapped by the Load & Fire CCM. You can fire a tag every round if you wish.
- Tagged targets must stay one full card length away from each other for the remainder of the combat.
- The tags cannot be removed by Repair.



ASSASSIN

SQUAD

Cães de Guerra

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Anton Avila
- **CLASS:** Covert Ops
- **BLOOD TYPE:** O+
- **HEIGHT:** 174cm
- **WEIGHT:** 72 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Maracaibo

KIT PROFILE:

- 18cm Vorpall Energy Knife
- Capéval 9mm HV Pistol

FORMAL RESUME:

- Panama Canal Occupation
- Guanabara Bay (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
- Panama Project

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Charge:** Melee attack after move at +1 damage; does 2 Blood
- **Speedy:** +1 MP

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Active Camouflage:** Grants stealth: +1 to cover, no move penalty
- **Gasmask:** Immune to airborne toxins

VORPAL ENERGY KNIFE

Eighteen centimeters of filtered tachyon energy, the knife is a controlled energy experiment with a hilt. Tachyons are drawn to the hilt of the knife, and forced into each other creating a reaction. The Cherenkov radiation left behind by the tachyon incident causes the blade to glow, but really it is an aftereffect of the true nature of the blade. The tachyons present, are able to slice through metal, tissue, and bone with ease bringing truth to the fictional term vorpal.



ON THE TABLE

The amount of damage the Assassin inflicts is often a barometer for how well you command your KemVar MERCS. He is fragile, but deadly. The decision on when to spring the Assassin is generally a difficult one. Because he is Speedy, and good when Bounding, he can close the distance to a target easily.

If you try to strike with him too early, he will be left on his own and is as good as dead. Even in this case, he tends to disrupt enough of your opponent's actions that he can be effective; if your other KemVar MERCS are ready. If you go too late, you waste one of the most powerful KemVar miniatures and, in effect, have asked your KemVar force to fight a 5 vs. 4 battle.

The key to the Assassin is his ability to Charge. This allows an attack at the end of a move and adds +1 Blood damage. The damage alone can hurt all but the most hardy MERCS, but it also increases the chance their armor might fail. If the armor does fail, the Assassin should, in most cases, move onto a fresh target leaving the damaged mini to the Assault troopers. He cannot leave melee combat to attack the same target he just left. You can, on the other hand, leave combat with one model to Charge another. This kind of tactic can really bother an opponent if they aren't ready.

Bio:

Anton is a killer. Without emotion or anima he performs his duties for Eclison, and Eclison only. He owes his life to the man, but is ambivalent towards the company. Trained to use the recently developed AC 2.9 series MERCS armor; he is granted distinct advantages when closing into melee. And once there, he has the means to ruthlessly incapacitate the stoutest of foes.



FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- Because of Charge, unlike other MERCS, the Assassin can attack the same round he moves into H2H range. Charge happens at the end of a Move in terms of declarations for SAs, so the Assassin can declare
- Move and attack whomever he wishes.
- Charge increases the Wpn Str of the knife to 4 and does 2 Blood. If the Assassin attacks in H2H normally, he does 1 Blood at Wpn Str 3.
- Don't forget the +1 modified Armor Failure check of the knife.



USCR CCKP



USCR is a registered trademark of the United Social Corporate Republic. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

STATUS: Megacon

FOUNDED: 2154

CONTINENT: Northern Eurasia

HEADQUARTERS: Moscow

LAT/LONG: 55 45 00 N / 037 42 00 E

PRIMARY RESOURCE: Manufacturing

HISTORY

USCR's reach is long. Possessing the widest variety of assets in terms on land and natural resources, USCR is clearly the most national of the corporate nations. They operate much less like a business and more like a government. The trappings and regalia of the past intertwine with the realities of the present. Their holdings stretch from Moscow over the Bering Sea into the Yukon Territory in the east, from the traditional northern border of the old USSR to the Amur River in the south.

Unlike the United States in the 2120s, USCR didn't lose itself among the many large corporations that sought power. However, they did adapt. They recognized the need to be flexible within the government structures of the past. This allowed them to bring the full power of a singular government into a business merger. This corporate identity serves the citizen-workers of the USCR well, and reveals the true strength of the United Social Corporate Republic. They are a paradox. They collectively have more freedom than any MegaCon presently existing, yet are one by choice.

Their simple company mantra, "We were. Are. Will always be" is as compelling as it is true. In 2168, with the forming of the GCC, a move that the USCR deemed a threat to national-corporate independence, they began to secretly ramp up the testing and manufacture of a ultra-heavy armored MERCS. This line of thinking proved to be fortuitous in the face of the growing FCC threat. When the FCC marched on Moscow in 2171, the worker-citizens of USCR took up arms to slow the progress of the better armed FCC House 9. The resulting delay allowed USCR to finish the Behemoth 202 prototype which almost single-handedly drove back the FCC march.



CORPORATE CHARACTER

A throwback among the MegaCons, USCR is stubborn. The move slowly to decisions as only a global system that is more national than corporation can. Many of its peers view this as a weakness of the old system, and refuse to deal with the USCR on any time-sensitive projects. However, their sloth may also be one of their greatest strengths. Not swayed by a passing fad, their business style is built on a solid foundation; market fluctuations and world turmoil rarely effect USCR consistent profitability.

Their patience and strength is mirrored in their MERCS. Discounting the Behemoth, most USCR MERCS wear very strong armor. To minimize any speed disadvantage, USCR MERCS are outfitted with many different tools to neutralize the movement of the opposing force.

OVERVIEW



Be it the DM 690 Ice Gel Grenade or the Jarmann Ω2174 Combat Anchor Tool, commonly referred to as Omega CAT, the purpose of many secondary USCR kits is to incapacitate the enemy.

These hamstrung soldiers offer easy targets to the massive twin turbine powered Swarm-buster 30mm T-230 chain guns of the mighty Behemoth; they also offer less of a threat to an overconfident pilot. The Behemoth also wields an impressive 3 ton combat hammer. Used as an instrument for both awe and function, **МОЛОТ** is a national symbol. The hammer is said to be the first hammer used by Kir Petrovič. In battle, **МОЛОТ** is never lost. If the Behemoth is defeated, an act that has only happened three times in over 500 incursions, the hammer must by corporate mandate be recovered.



The neighboring FCC House 9 and Kaizei Waza are clearly the most reoccurring trouble that faces USCR. USCR's recently assassinated Commissar has forced a drawback of sorts, but speculation continues on when and where USCR will hammer next.

FIELD EXPERIENCE

KOLOMNA'S STAND

In 2171 a large contingent of members from the powerful FCC House 9 overran USCR fortifications along the southern border in a planned attempt to dissolve the Global System. Unprepared, USCR troops fought bravely but eventually fell back to Voronezh.

In Voronezh, USCR made a desperate stand against the overwhelming numbers of House 9, who were clearly supplemented by several groups of Black Ops. They were able to delay House 9 only temporarily. When it became clear that USCR was on the verge of slipping into history, the worker-citizens rose up and fought the FCC from Tambov to Kolomna.

From a forgotten prototype MERCS lab near Kolomna, drove Kir Petrović in the Behemoth 202. Petrović stood in the heart of Kolomna and waited. The forces of House 9 came towards him singing foreign songs and laughing as they killed the worker-citizens of his beloved country. When they finally fired their guns and grenades, Kir stood stalwart, steady as a rock. Songs were replaced by cries of horror and death as the Behemoth slowly but steadily moved towards the FCC members killing everything in its path. Unrelentingly, Housemaster Ebrahim Sayyad refused to move around the cumbersome Behemoth, which might have even still secured a victory for House 9, but instead drove his troops towards the Behemoth. They broke upon the 202 like water on rock. The stone stood in Kolomna in August of 2171.

Kolomna's Stand: 2171 AD



Intimidate comes into effect any time the opponent of USCR needs to make a Courage check, even if that check is self-inflicted.

Wpn Str 1 weapons require no armor failure check. However, Wpn Str 1 modified up would require the standard check.

USCR IN GAME

Don't over extend. USCR is a slow steady burn. Trap and pin players, then take them out with focused fire. Overextended USCR miniatures are highly susceptible to melee attacks. Their high armor ratings ensures you don't have to fear inferior strength weapons, but any hand-to-hand strength becomes significantly more dangerous from the back or if engaged on the flank.

With that said, USCR is extremely adept at laying down some very damaging fire very quickly. USCR MERCS cannot use the Move & Fire combat maneuver. Be deliberate with your moves; maintain a model on model redundancy to lock down with Suppression any attempted assault.

Don't underestimate the Sniper's anchor gun. He is an extremely potent model that can continually keep two enemy figs occupied. His Lucky and Crackshot Personal Abilities are a rare combination that can be a momentum changer if used at the right time.

USCR's Behemoth takes the place of the traditional Heavy Assault unit in most MERCS squads. This creates a difficult choice on who to bring. Both versions of the Assault Trooper: the Medic and Monkeywrench are strong units. Let the opposition help illuminate your decision. Opponents that field an Armor Failure squad practically force your hand. Keep the Wrench close to your Behemoth and Leader to keep them active.



Скала

The oldest most revered MERCS squad in USCR is Скала. Home to the mighty Behemoth, Скала represent the most elite MERCS soldiers in the Corporate Republic. Specifically designed around the Behemoth, Fedor Vladimir Medvedov's unit is a powerhouse of control and function. Fedor's MERCS have led the USCR back from the brink of destruction at the hands of the FCC a mere twelve year ago, to an ascending powerhouse in the region. So great is the respect for Medvedov within the USCR that he is rumored to be on a short list for Corporate Commissar.



COMMISSAR (ASSAULT LEADER)

SQUAD

Скала

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Fedor Vladimir Medvedov
- **CLASS:** Assault-Leader
- **BLOOD TYPE:** O-
- **HEIGHT:** 191cm
- **WEIGHT:** 96 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** St. Petersburg

KIT PROFILE:

- AK-217S Assault Rifle
- Sibir K15 w/DM 690 Ice Gel Grenade

FORMAL RESUME:

- the Razing of Amsterdam
- Amur Escort

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Leadership:** +1 to all actions for allied MERCS within 1 card
- **Demolitions:** Multiple Grenades; Repair check to disarm mines

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Dense:** Str 1 weapons require no armor check
- **Intimidate:** +1 to any opponent Courage checks

DM 690

The DM 690 Ice Grenade delivery system is a very capable little weapon. This single-shot, breech-loaded hand weapon is commissioned for Commissars only. The maximum effective range against a fire team sized target is 330 meters. The icing gel is an epoxy slush of liquid



nitrogen and a form of corn syrup. Upon contact the slush rapidly freezes anything it comes into contact with.



ON THE TABLE

It is vitally important the Commissar slows down the opposition. He is a very strong miniature in his own right, but controlling the battle and funneling units to the Behemoth is the primary role of all USCR MERCS.

As with all Assault Leaders, any MERCS mini within one card of him is granted a +1 to any and all actions (except for those who are Heroic). It is wise to keep the Commissar close enough to the Behemoth that within one round of movement the Leadership bonus can be provided for lower FNs.

Because all USCR lack the Fire & Move CCM, it is important to make good decisions early. Don't overextend, but get into strong positions early for Advanced Combat Maneuvers. Suppression becomes quite strong with USCR's Intimidate. Use it to lock down large portions of the battle field.

The Commissar's secondary item, the Ice Grenade, is a really powerful tool to setup the slower Behemoth for some devastating passes with his twin T-230s. Keeping the enemy in the same place for three rounds is crippling.



Bio:

Medvedov is a brilliant tactician and a student of what he calls "tactical war". Though technically only a FIDE Master in chess, Medvedov studies all the Grandmasters' championship games. In fact, Fedor often refers to his MERCS as chess pieces.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- Leadership is measured by the full length of a card. It does not help (modify) Heroic models.
- Ice grenades use the standard grenade diagram. They have no Wpn Str, so do no damage. They restrict all actions of 3 rounds of activation of the effected models.
- Targets in ice can be targeted and damaged by opposing or friendly MERCS.
- The CCC Incinerator can remove the Ice effect by targeting those effected in the 90 degree arc of her Flame attack.



MONKEYWRENCH

SQUAD

Скала

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Sergei Demidovsky
- **CLASS:** Assault/Assault-Medic/Assault-Monkeywrench/Assault-Boomer
- **BLOOD TYPE:** O
- **HEIGHT:** 182cm
- **WEIGHT:** 81 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Grozny

KIT PROFILE:

- AK-217S Assault Rifle
- H.264 Medkit
- Repair Kit

FORMAL RESUME:

- No Formal Experience

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Monkeywrench:** x3 Repair Kit
- **Move Your Ass:** After inflicting Blood 1 Move action at 1MP

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Dense:** Str 1 weapons require no armor check
- **Intimidate:** +1 to any opponent Courage checks

AK-217S

The AK-217S is a fantastically uncomplicated weapon. Without size or weight as a hindrance, the 217S is fitted with extra stability compensators and an advanced coolant gel sleeve. It is a large weapon befitting the Скала's impressive size. It fires 450 rounds per minute with an accurate



effective range of 1000 meters.

ON THE TABLE

The USCR Assault troopers are possibly the most important units on the table for the USCR player. Unlike other MegaCons, the USCR **must** field two Assault-types. How well these Assault troopers are played will determine whether you win or lose.

The AM is extremely valuable if you are expecting serious damage. The Medic ability allows the MERCS unit to use Medkits which restore 1 Blood/round if within a base of the injured soldier.

It is vitally important to keep your USCR heavy hitters working. The Monkeywrench is a very good choice for battles involving the CCC. Their EMP, area of effect grenade attacks, and Weapon Strength 4 sniper rifle means they can effectively break USCR armor.

The Booster is an assault-type unique to the USCR (at least for now). The Adrenaline Injections increase the effectiveness of the USCR target for two rounds. Be careful to only use them when the target unit is going to see action.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

MEDIC:

- The Medic need not be facing the target model to heal. Moreover, the Medic can be anywhere within a base of the target model to use the MedKit.

MONKEYWRENCH:

- The Monkeywrench need not be facing the target model to repair. Moreover, the Monkeywrench can be anywhere within a base of the target model to use the Repair Kit.
- The bonus Move provided by Move Your Ass is not Bound friendly.



Bio:

Sergei is an increasingly popular USCR actor. He plays pivotal populist roles in USCR recruitment programs and, ironically, played the role of the first Kir Petrović in the recent USCR propaganda film, The Stone Bear. Because of this, he is often mistaken for a Behemoth pilot.

BOOSTER:

- Martyr allows the Booster to absorb all the Blood that the grenade would have done. Figure out the total Blood (friend or foe) the grenade would have done, then assign all the Blood damage to the Booster. If the Booster is still alive, Move the Booster to the impact point of the grenade. The Booster is allowed to choose whether he does this or not.
- The Booster need not be facing the target model to use Adrenaline. Moreover, the Booster can be anywhere within a base of the target model to use Adrenaline.
- Adrenaline "buffs" the target for 2 complete round of activation. It wears off at the end of the 2 activation of the boosted MERCS.



SNIPER

SQUAD

Скани

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Daniil Sidorov
- **CLASS:** Sniper
- **BLOOD TYPE:** O
- **HEIGHT:** 181 cm
- **WEIGHT:** 80 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Pevek

KIT PROFILE:

- Jarmann Q2174 Combat Anchor Tool (Omega CAT)
- Makarov ME

FORMAL RESUME:

- Kolmna's Stand

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Lucky:** Can negate 1 success per match
- **Crackshot:** Can score 1 success per encounter

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Dense:** Str 1 weapons require no armor check
- **Intimidate:** +1 to any opponent Courage checks

JARMANN Q2174

Developed by the same Norwegian weapons company that developed the similar Jarmann M28 converted harpoon rifle, the Omega CAT is a surprisingly accurate and effect open field weapon. Doing little damage against modern armor, the Jarmann fires 250 feet of black coated galvanized aircraft cable. The cable has a minimum breaking strength of 7000 lbs, while the black coat masks



the cable from sight, sound, and electronic imaging radar making finding and dislodging the anchor very difficult and time consuming.



ON THE TABLE

Unlike other "snipers", the USCR Sniper isn't limited in any way by the firing ability of his weapon. The Jarmann isn't altogether powerful, but it can be fired every round without Load or Aim penalties. Once hit by an anchor, the hit target has a total of 1MP to move in any direction. Anchor effects don't stack.

The Sniper has a powerful combination of Personal Abilities that grant him an automatic success and his opponent an automatic failure. If used wisely, the Sniper can force a major momentum swing. Crackshot is a lifesaver vs. the KemVar, particularly the Assassin.

The Sniper and Medic create a strong team on the battle field. Keep the Sniper under Half Cover with a large Line of Sight area to fire into, while the Medic is out of sight behind him ready to heal him at a moments notice.

Bio:

Daniil is a follower. There is nothing inherent about him that makes him incapable of making a command decision: he is brave, and modestly intelligent. Even if the order is clearly a mistake, Daniil will follow orders. He would rather face the outcome of a bad decision than make one himself.



FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- Lucky only refers to the Sniper model.
- Crackshot can only be used once per encounter.
- The Anchor gun pins the target in place. The target need not take Blood to be anchored, only hit. The target is allowed 1MP after being hit, then must remain in place until the anchor is cleared with a Repair check. Repair Kits do not clear anchors. The target anchored can still attack.



BEHEMOTH

SQUAD

Скала

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Kir Petrović
- **CLASS:** Behemoth
- **BLOOD TYPE:** A+
- **HEIGHT:** 176 cm
- **WEIGHT:** 82 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Moscow

KIT PROFILE:

- Twin Turbine-powered Swarm-buster 30mm T-230 chain guns
- the МОЛОТ

FORMAL RESUME:

- Kolmna's Stand
- Amur Escort

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Heavy:** Doesn't need to "Set"
- **Speedy:** +1 MP

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Dense:** Str 1 weapons require no armor check
- **Intimidate:** +1 to any opponent Courage checks

30MM T-230 CHAIN GUN

These sight-directed Gatling style guns are each capable of firing 1100 rounds per minute in synchronicity. Miniature liquid cooling cylinders keep the barrels well below the warp temperature of 500 degree Celsius. With a capacity of 9000 rounds of ammunition, the



Behemoth is capable of sustaining fire for a battle-tested, lead-filled 4 minutes. Unlike the average heavy gunner, the Behemoth's massive weight keeps the oppressive 1200 lbs of force in check allowing the operator to fire without Setting.



ON THE TABLE

The Behemoth is a Heavy Assault MERCS on steroids. Everything that makes the Heavy a scary miniature is amplified here.

Sporting the highest Armor Value in the game, the Behemoth needn't worry too much about cover. In fact, it tends to only slow him down. Try to stay in the open with multiple fields of fire. Because the Behemoth doesn't need to Set, he is free to take advantage of a changing battle. There are very few weapons that can hurt the Behemoth straight up. Most other MegaCons must utilize tactics to neutralize the Behemoths fantastic Armor Value. Learn what these tactics are and you will be a very formidable USCR player.

Don't underestimate the big guy in H2H. He won't dodge much in the way of a melee attack, but he can give as good as he gets.

His Speedy PA is the only thing that allows him to Move. If this gets countered or, in the case of FCC Black Ops, the PA doesn't count, the Behemoth is next to useless.



Bio:

As with all Behemoth operators, Kir Petrović is named after the first Behemoth operator. This name change takes place after the operator passes secret OMON testing. So rigorous is the testing that to fail means to die. Identified by the tattoo of the hammer moving up the back of the neck onto a shaved head, Behemoth operators are instant celebrities within the corporate nation.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- The Behemoth doesn't need to Set. All rules referring to involuntary movement does not affect the Behemoth.
- If the Behemoth loses his PA Speedy, he can't Move.
- The extended T diagram of the Heavy is not restricted by elevation. If the targets find themselves within the firing diagram regardless of the difference in levels they could be hit.



FCC



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STATUS: FCC (House 9)

FOUNDED: 2161

CONTINENT: Northern Eurasia

HEADQUARTERS: Ostrov

LAT/LONG: 48 00 00 N / 017 36 00 E

PRIMARY RESOURCE: Terrorism

HISTORY

FCC stands for Free Corporate Control. Consisting of numerous rogue groups of individuals, the FCC's numbers are hard to census. Eleven distinct Houses are known to exist. Dwelling within the Lost Margin, the Houses' leadership is hard to plumb. It appears to fall to what they term a Housemaster. Beyond this, not much is known.

Their goal is clear: to dissolve each and every Global System. Their Black Ops program is the key to this endeavor. Unofficially official, the Black Ops program receives what the FCC terms "guests" to resist the spreading of a targeted MegaCon. Oftentimes these guests are MERCS loaned out to a FCC House from and competing Con. This Plausible Deniability is what fuels the FCC and keeps the Houses awash in money and tech. This system of loaning and deniability is short on gain, long on consequences, as the MegaCons provide the means that make the FCC stronger.

Each House works independently from each other, but are loosely woven together through a semi-annual gathering. Even less is known about what happens at these meetings. Each Housemaster represents his or her House at a council, but if there is a singular leader no one knows.

The only official position recognized by the GCC is the FCC Liaison. Each assigned liaison is subscribed to a Mega-Conglomerate. These positions are supposed to decrease hostilities between local Houses and their Global Systems, which they, in fact, do. They at the same time provide the door to other non-local Houses and the Black Ops.



THE LOST MARGIN

Termed by the MegaCons, the Lost Margin is the area of land that circumvents the globe that the giant corporations have had to abandon. The FCC Houses make this area their homes. Life within the Lost Margin varies. Some Houses live relatively free lives with very little violence.

The closer a House exists to a MegaCon the more frayed the FCC existence. These Houses are the front lines, and are often little more than an organized guerilla camp. Many such camp may exist along a border under a single House.

The Lost Margin is quite dangerous for any Global System's worker-citizens. MERCS escorts are mandatory for travel in the Lost Margin. Skirmishes between MegaCon aligned forces and FCC House volunteers are so frequent they rarely count as news.

OVERVIEW

HOUSE NAMING CONVENTIONS

Every House has different naming conventions. All FCC Housemembers have relatives and acquaintances still within Global Systems. Because of this, the name changes are necessary. Many are simply not know, but a few are: House 9 for instance takes their names from movie and television actors. House 4 uses cartoon characters. House 2 uses reoccurring numbers that denotes a definite hierarchy. While the mysterious House 12, the highest House, is rumored to use the names of Saints.



FIELD EXPERIENCE

KOLMNA'S STAND

Thought at one point to be the greatest FCC victory, Kolmna's Stand turned into a battle with the most FCC casualties ever in a single battle. Poor leadership resulted in tens of thousands of House 9 dead at the feet of the USCR Behemoth. The set back resulted in a change of Housemaster and the complete pullback of House 9 for many years.

THE RAZING OF AMSTERDAM

Cleverly orchestrated by 2-One, Housemaster of FCC House 2, in conjunction with the CCC, the FCC was able to escalate a fairly innocuous incident into a full scale conflict. The result was the complete destruction of Amsterdam, which was at the time thought to be the home of House 2.

AMUR ESCORT

Technically not an FCC operation, the FCC were invited, along with many of the world's MegaCons, to participate in the GCC confederation to reopen its offices and reinstate the FCC Liaisons within USCR. Their initial attempt was in the southernmost regions at Amur, far from any major military strength.

The potential military showdown, instead turned into a parade of sorts. The GCC Judges, CCC Yellow Jackets, KemVar Cães de Guerra, EU, Inc VIII Legion, Keizai Waza Shinsengumi, and FCC House 9. With no real military force to thwart the reopening, the GCC alliance occupied Amur for 37 days while negotiations between the USCR and GCC were held. In the end, no real fighting took place. USCR acquiesced, and reopened eight of the original eighteen GCC embassies.

FCC IN GAME

The FCC force is interesting to play. Victory doesn't solely rest on your Black Ops guest choice, but a poor selection all but insures defeat. You have to really weigh the strength and weaknesses of your opponent and choose wisely. The FCC is not a good faction to play if you are completely new to the game. Your ignorance of the MegaCon's members makes choosing the Black Ops member very difficult. Moreover, that same ignorance will make it impossible to select the guest who will help you the most.

The checks and balances inherently provided by the Black Ops ability quickly limits some of the more flashy choices. Yes, you can take the USCR Behemoth but without the use of his Personal Ability Speedy, he can't move. You will find similar limitations on all the MegaCon's unique members. However, any Sniper will always be a welcomed member to the FCC. Likewise, Assault Leaders with their intrinsic value are strong choices.

Don't sell the FCC short. The Housemaster is exceedingly strong, but admittedly unpredictable. Both Assault choices are more than a match for their corporate brothers. FCC players will quickly see the overall value in the Boomer. His unique blend of armaments and Personal Abilities tend to make him a target of high importance on the battle field.

Without any equivocation, the most valuable members of any FCC squad is the Liaison. He has precious few offensive capabilities, but don't underestimate his ability to inflict harm on a target: his shield allows him to survive surprisingly well. Keep him behind cover, and near your core group of troopers. Keeping him alive is vital for the Black Ops guest's ability to function effectively.

DEBRIS CRAWL

Debris Crawl is a Bound friendly, Move ability that allows the miniature to Move across a distance without being seen. It has a cumulative penalty of -1 MP. All FCC MERCS have this ability, but Black Ops guests do not.

This Move can be stopped by Suppression, or effected by Overwatch in specific situations. If the FCC Movement Points plus Bounding minus the penalty is one, then Overwatch will hit the FCC MERCS before they have "disappeared" into the debris. If the final MP are 2 or more, then the FCC member takes no fire, because he or she will be one card into a Debris Crawl when the Overwatch takes place.

BLACK OPS

The bizarre crossover of FCC and MegaCon is the Black Ops groups within each FCC House. Any MegaCon, through their Liaison contact, can off MERCS support to any FCC House. The negotiation only takes place with that House's leader. Because of FCC's fractured structures of leadership often Houses goals conflict with one another.



Debris Crawl functions like a teleport, but is a Move. The FCC moves through the debris and comes out on the other side. The “middle” of the Move is hidden. Debris crawl exists to escape the effects of Suppression and Overwatch. **However, any action that starts in the vision of Suppression or Overwatch is subject to a check.** With Overwatch, the MP rounded down (minus the debris crawl penalty) becomes important, because if the attack comes while they are using Debris Crawl the target can't be seen.

You can have more than one Black Ops guest (even guests from different MegaCons), but guests cannot fight against their own MegaCon.

HOUSEMASTER

SQUAD

House 9

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Greta Garbo
- **CLASS:** Housemaster
- **BLOOD TYPE:** O+
- **HEIGHT:** 175cm
- **WEIGHT:** 75 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Samarqand, Uzbekistan

KIT PROFILE:

- Modified Gustav m/420 "Cheesesaw"
- "Bouncing Bobby" X-65 Caltrop Trap

FORMAL RESUME:

- the Razing of Amsterdam

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Leadership:** +1 to all actions for allied MERCS within 1 card
- **Sweep:** Attack sweeps across hitting all in 90 degree arc

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Black Ops:** Other Con members can be used as FCC
- **Debris Crawl:** Teleport with no failure chance, -1 MP, Bound friendly

GUSTAV M/420

Greta's primary weapon was nicknamed the Cheesesaw by mistake, but the name stuck. This heavily modified m/420 has been rigged to fire lower-velocity large-diameter shaped-charged belt-fed ammo. Originally much heavier and bulkier, very little remains of the anti-armor Gustav.



ON THE TABLE

A FCC Housemaster functions like an Assault Leader. They have the Leadership skill and tend to be one of the more powerful units in the squad.

FCC tends to be a mixed bag. The modified nature of their equipment means many have some real punch, but it also means there is a drawback of some sort. In the Housemaster's case, her weapon is capable of doing some serious damage—true carnage.

The Sweep PA assists her ability to do damage on a grand scale. All targets, friend or foe, in the 90° arc receive 2 attacks. The 90° works the same as the CCC Incinerator. It starts in the center and works to one side or the other. Unlike the Incinerator, the range is not limited to two cards. Like all rifles, her primary weapon fires at an unlimited distance within the arc.

The X-65 Caltrop trap is an area control device. It has a range of 2 and should be used to funnel the opponent into an area that you already have covered. It can be used to attack a singular unit; locking them down in the card area.



Bio:

Born Nila Podkopayeva, Greta transferred over from House 2 after the Kolmna debacle. Tasked with rebuilding House 9, she has excelled by all accounts. She has proven herself in the field and the home as a true Housemaster. Nila is very private, trusting very few even in her own House.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- The Housemaster must sweep her attack per the Sweep PA. Unlike, the Incinerator's Sweep, the Housemaster's weapon doesn't have a maximum range. The Sweep in this case is much larger of an area.
- Leadership is measured by the full length of a card. It does not help (modify) Heroic models.
- The Caltraps functions like a frag grenade in terms of the throw. However, it can be targeted at an individual. In this case, the base FN is 5, plus or minus any modifiers.

PACK RAT

SQUAD

House 9

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Ed Asner
- **CLASS:** Housemember/Chem Engineer
- **BLOOD TYPE:** B+
- **HEIGHT:** 182cm
- **WEIGHT:** 81 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Budapest, Hungary

KIT PROFILE:

- Burney SMRC
- Toxin Grenade
- Bayonet

FORMAL RESUME:

- No Formal Experience

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Pack Rat:** Extra equipment
- **Integrate:** Utilizes both Medic and Monkeywrench loadouts (x2)

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Black Ops:** Other Con members can be used as FCC
- **Debris Crawl:** Teleport with no failure chance, -1 MP, Bound friendly

BURNEY VARC

VARC stands for Variable Ammo Recoilless Chamber. All FCC Housemembers start with the Burney as a base then add various pieces and parts to their individual tastes or kit requirements. As a base weapon the Burney is an amazingly reliable weapon that remains functional even if it isn't cleaned consistently.



ON THE TABLE

Housemembers are typical assault troopers. They have the Move & Fire CCM, and are hardy, and well equipped for most anything. The straight Housemember kit is outfitted with the Bayonet for a strong balance of range and hand-to-hand. His Personal Abilities are first strike in nature and can really put an opponent back on his or her heels.

The Pack Rat is the FCC's answer to both the Medic and the Monkeywrench. Through his Pack Rat PA he is able to carry two MedKits and two Repair Kits. He is a very handy member of House 9 and should be selected to take part in every game.

Unique to the FCC is the Chem Engineer. His load out is debuf and damage in nature; meaning that his attacks effect the stats of your opponent. While his Speedy PA allows him to transverse large swaths of the battle field without even being seen. He and the Boomer will be early targets of the OPFOR.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

PACK RAT:

- The Pack Rat need not be facing the target model to heal or repair. Moreover, the Pack Rat can be anywhere within a base of the target model to use the MedKit and/or Repair Kit.

CHEM ENGINEER:

- She'll Hold Together allows the Chem Engineer to reroll every Armor Failure check one time. If at any time the armor breaks, the PA doesn't allow you to rerolls the fail next round nor is it available on Repair checks.

Bio:

Ed's real name is Jozsef Andor. Andor hates it almost as much as he hates USCR. Andor lost two brothers to USCR: one at Kolmna and the other in a routine skirmish. Andor plays the Kaval, and as a boy, birthed by stories about the old world from the elders, dreamed of being a musician. As he got older, he realized that world was long dead but he remembers his dreams in his playing.



- The Irradiated Ammo debuff cannot be removed by the Medic. It lasts until the end of the match. It does not stack. The effects only become active if Blood is drawn.
- The Toxin Grenade forces any within the diagram, friend or foe, to have Initiative of 2 the next round. This could cause an enormous Simultaneous Action.

HOUSEMEMBER:

- You must ignore the first Blood taken in a match with Just a Flesh Wound. You do not have a choice of which wound to ignore.
- Vault allows the Housemember to Move up, over, and down an ER 1 object (ER 1 = 4 feet).

BOOMER

SQUAD

House 9

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Vince Vaughn
- **CLASS:** Grenadier
- **BLOOD TYPE:** O+
- **HEIGHT:** 185cm
- **WEIGHT:** 110 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Istanbul, Turkey

KIT PROFILE:

- HK MGL "Thumper"
- MX-36 Mod-Taser

FORMAL RESUME:

- Kolmna's Stand

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Lucky:** Can negate 1 success per match
- **Grenadier:** Unlimited grenades; declare type before firing

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Black Ops:** Other Con members can be used as FCC
- **Debris Crawl:** Teleport with no failure chance, -1 MP, Bound friendly

HK MGL

Filling the gap between the hand grenade and the mortar, the "Thumper" Multiple Grenade Launcher is a raucous beast of a weapon. The HK has an effective range of 400m. It has a standard rate of fire of 2 rounds/sec through its 8 round belt fed dynamic inertia system, but does take a little time to change over grenade belts.

MX-36

Vince's MX-36 has been further modified to provide an even larger jolt. It only has one charge, but will put a MERCS down for a short time. Only used as a last resort in melee range, this modified taser hurts Vince as well as the target.



ON THE TABLE

The Boomer is a very powerful figure. He **will** be the primary target in every skirmish. His ability to Move & Fire, coupled with the grenade template, means he can deal copious amounts of damage to multiple people with a low FN.

The carnage is not limited to the enemy, however. Grenades are an equal opportunity killer. If your opponent tries to get among your own troops, cease fire. The Boomer can win the match for your opponent if you are not careful.

As devastating as the Boomer is at Range, he has a clear weakness at short and melee range. His Mod-Taser is like putting a band-aid on an amputee. It will keep him alive for a few seconds, but you better have some help coming.



Bio:

Born in Turkey, Gokor Demir, is a jovial fella. He is a wise man, and the soul of House 9. He has no aspirations. He enjoys being free and the pleasures that go with it. He loves food, especially Boti Kabab Masala. He will fight until the day he dies for the freedoms he enjoys.

FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- Lucky only refers to the Boomer model.
- The Boomer always has Frag grenades. All factions up to this point have a unique grenade type. CCC=EMP, USCR= Ice, KemVar=Worm. The Boomer gets the equivalent grenade type that Black Ops is present.
- The Mod-Taser must be fired in melee range. The FN is modified by target and situation. It draws Blood on both the target and the Boomer. The Armor Failure check and possible armor loss effects only the target.

LIAISON

SQUAD

House 9

VITAL STATS:

- **NAME:** Ali Hashem
- **CLASS:** Diplomat
- **BLOOD TYPE:** A+
- **HEIGHT:** 170 cm
- **WEIGHT:** 80 kilos
- **BIRTHPLACE:** Tabriz, Iran

KIT PROFILE:

- Zypad TS-80 Wrist Computer
- Vz 61 Mak-Scorpion
- LDHF Sonic Barrier

FORMAL RESUME:

- Amur Escort

PERSONAL ABILITIES:

- **Contact:** Allows Black Ops to use Corp abilities
- **Communicator:** Grants 1 extra Action for a teammate per match

CORPORATE ABILITIES:

- **Black Ops:** Other Con members can be used as FCC
- **Debris Crawl:** Teleport with no failure chance, -1 MP, Bound friendly

LDHF BARRIER

When in the field, Liaisons carry a Low Decibel High Frequency sonic barrier backpack. This bubble of sound extends out in a ten foot radius around the wearer. The persistent sound waves make incoming rounds less stable, resulting in less accurate shots. Other than the obvious effect on ranged attacks, the LDHF Barrier is virtually unnoticeable. The only evidence that it is functioning is a slight shimmer as it contacts solid surfaces.

ON THE TABLE

The Liaison is a surprisingly strong figure on the battlefield. He is unable to attack at long range, but at short range he can be a factor. He is also quite hard to hit so he doesn't need to turtle up and hide.

He is not required for the FCC to have a Black Ops guest, but is required if that Black Ops MERCS intends to use their Corporate Abilities. If you intend to use Black Ops, the Liaison should be a member of your squad. Guests aren't nearly as formidable without their corporate strengths. The minute the Liaison is killed in battle, Black Ops lose their Corporate advantages. As an aside, Black Ops guests cannot fight against their own MegaCon.

One of the most important abilities the Liaison has is Communicator. It allows 1 teammate to take 1 extra action in a round once per match. This extra action is an instantaneous action and cannot be part of a Simultaneous Action. It can't be used to Bound, and it is subject to Suppression and Overwatch.

Bio:

Liaisons, unlike other FCC members, are not allowed to change their names. Ali Hashem is the FCC Liaison for the USCR in Amur. He is alone most of the time. He is a modestly accomplished painter. Though well-versed in modern technology, he chooses to paint landscapes with oil and canvas. Like most Liaisons, they are never fully accepted by neither the MegaCon nor the FCC House they are assigned to.



FOCUS ON THE KIT:

- You don't need a Liaison to have a Black Ops guest. But the guest won't have their CAs if the Liaison isn't present. No Black Ops guest can use their PAs.
- The extra action per the Communicator PA can be used to grant one other MERC (not himself) 1 extra action 1 time per game. Besides the basic action it provides, it speeds up CCMs with round based penalties (Load & Aim, Set & Rip).
- The LDHF modifies only Ranged Attacks. This modifier persists even when the Liaison's armor fails.

SCENARIOS

Scenarios should be fun, offer unique experiences that a basic game doesn't provide, and add to the lore. MERCS hopes the following scenarios frustrate and entertain you. The following scenarios are the tip of the iceberg.

MERCS loves scenarios. We want you to create your own and share them on our website. A basic scenario takes place on our standard 2' x 3' play area. They have specific goals. Visit our website's forums for more community-created scenarios supplied by MERCS players like you, or post your own.





INTO THE FIRE!

PURGE THE EGGS

CCC has sent in the Yellow Jackets to destroy a harvest of KemVar worm eggs. If they succeed, then KemVar will have a limited supply of their deadly "*Teh Sugue*." Something as simple as this could hurt KemVar's profit. KemVar has a continual presence around the eggs, but during harvest season they bring in the more experienced MERCS to protect this precious biological weapon.

PLAYERS: CCC VS. KEMVAR



Yellow Jackets: Assault Leader, Incinerator, Heavy, Demolition, Medic



Cães de Guerra: Assault Leader, Demolition, Monkeywrench, Assassin, Sniper



Victory: The Yellow Jackets win if the Incinerator is able to ignite two worm hatcheries or if they kill the Cães de Guerra.

Defeat: The Cães de Guerra win if they are able to kill the Incinerator.

DEBRIEFING

"The cursed eggs of the KemVar are grown in the cool, moist, shady areas. The odd thing is they do not live outside the eggs if they are birthed in artificial environments. They must be raised in the wild. Intel suggests the ruins of old Maracaibo on the shores of the lake with the same name is an ideal birthing location.

Your job is to sweep the area around Lake Maracaibo. Search for egg fields. Destroy any you find. It is a smash and burn mission, boys. Get in. Do your job. And get out.

We've had reports that Eclison Machado is in the area with his MERCS. They are the best KemVar has, but then again, you are our best. Let's teach them a lesson.

Good luck."

KEMVAR STARTING ZONE

1 STORY BUILDING

EGG HATCHERY (FLOOR 1)

BUNKER

BARRELS

HALF WALL

1 STORY BUILDING

EGG HATCHERY (FLOOR 1)

HALF WALL

2 STORY BUILDING

EGG HATCHERY (FLOOR 2)

HALF WALL

HALF WALL

1 STORY BUILDING

CCC STARTING ZONE

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

SURVIVE

The USCR has set up an ambush in the Lost Margin for some CCC far from home. As long as the CCC isn't able to send a message to the Board, USCR has plausible deniability. They need to hit them fast and hard, and make sure no one survives long enough to open a com-link.

PLAYERS: USCR VS. CCC



Yellow Jackets: Assault Leader, Sniper, Incinerator, Demolition, Medic



Скала: Assault Leader, Behemoth, Medic, Booster, Monkeywrench



Victory: The **Скала** win if they are able to defeat the CCC in six rounds or less.

Defeat: The Yellow Jackets win if they are able to survive seven rounds or if they kill the USCR.



DEBRIEFING

"The yellow fools think they can breach our Margin. We will find out what their foundation is made from. Hit them hard and fast. They must not be allowed to send any message home. Our culpability in this attack can be deflected if their leaders are ignorant.

Protocol suggests they will maintain radio silence, until it is clear their cause is lost. It will take them one minute for them to open communication and send a message. We cannot allow this to happen."

SPECIAL RULES

Ambush: The attackers cannot be seen until they attack. Their first round of attacks receives bonuses to FN and Wpn Str: -2 FN, +2 Wpn Str. After the first round of attacks, they are visible. The bonuses only apply to attacks in the round they are revealed.



FIRE STATION EPSILON

SECURE THE ENCRYPTION SERVER

House 9 has arranged for one of the USCR encryption servers to be displaced during transit. If the FCC can get a hold of the server, the amount of information they could sell to other MegaCons would finance the House for years to come. Not to mention the cost of R&D that USCR would need to spend to re-code their assets.

PLAYERS: FCC VS. USCR



FCC: Housemaster, Boomer, Chem Engineer, Pack Rat, Housemember, Liaison, 1 Black Ops guest (non-USCR)



Скала: Assault Leader, Behemoth, Medic, Booster, Monkeywrench, Sniper



Victory: The FCC win if they are able to capture the encryption server or kill 4 USCR.

Defeat: The **Скала** win if they are able to plant the explosives charge (capture) on the server, or kill 5 FCC.



DEBRIEFING

"This is it kids. We've been waiting for this a long time. It's not gonna be easy. The Eternal Stone will be there—as will the Behemoth. This is our chance to bring this House back from the brink. To make the other Houses sit up and take notice. To get some payback. To show the world the stone can break.

There is a computer server out there spitting out gold, just waiting for someone to claim it. The Russians want to destroy it. We want to secure it and gather any and all information we can. Succeed and go down in history. Fail and become history."

SPECIAL RULES

Capture: Place two cards face down underneath the object able to be captured. If three living MERCS from one side end the round on the cards, the object is captured. Opposing MERCS in the capturing zone cancel each other out.



SHADOWWALKER

GET OUT WITH THE INTEL

KemVar sent in the Assassin to surreptitiously acquire proof of a Black Ops deal. Having found and downloaded the data on a jumpdrive, he must now escape the compound. The extraction zone is on the far side of the compound.

PLAYERS: KEMVAR VS. FCC



Cães de Guerra: Assassin

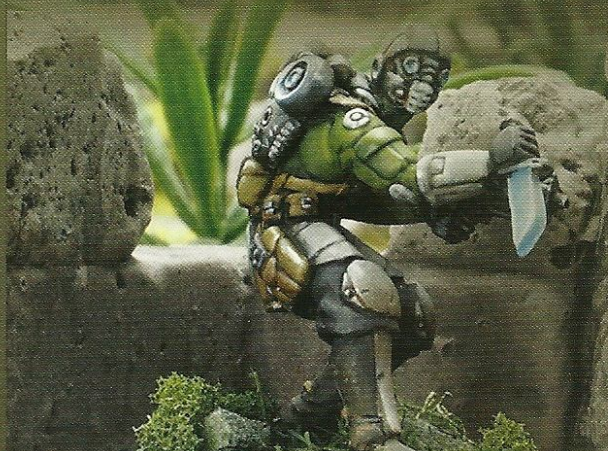


FCC: Housemember, Pack Rat, Boomer



Victory: The KemVar wins if the Assassin makes it to the extraction zone, or he kills all the FCC.

Defeat: The FCC wins if they kill the Assassin.



DEBRIEFING

"They think they can catch me.

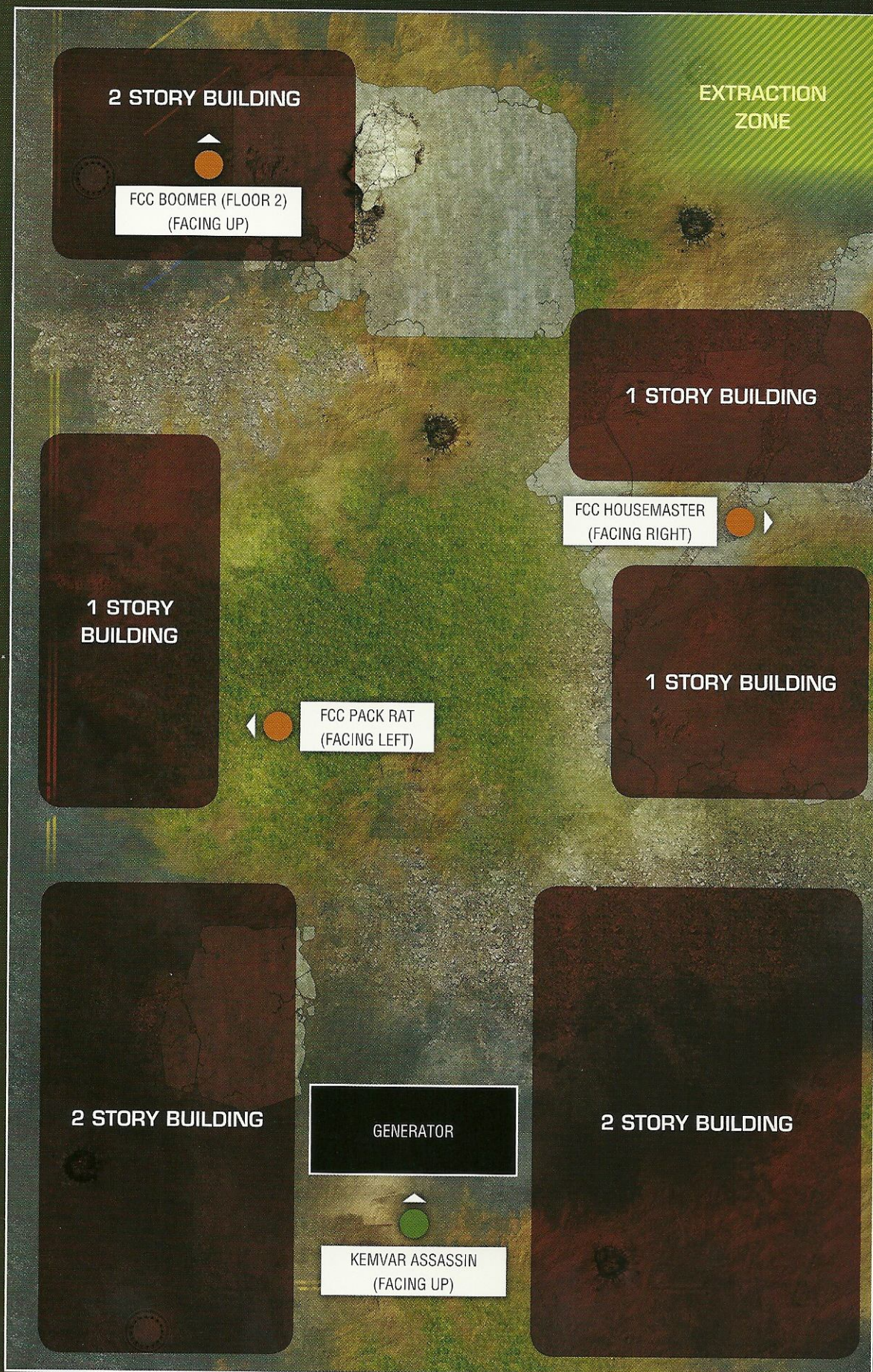
Can they grasp the night? Can they keep the faith in the darkness? I will flow around them like a whisper. Stalk them, patient as death.

I am the shadow."

SPECIAL RULES

Shadowstalking: A MERCS is considered to be in the Shadows, and therefore not seen. At the end of each round, the Shadowstalking MERCS rolls vs. Reaction of the closest Patrol to see if he is spotted. If the Patrol is facing the Shadowstalker, then the Reaction is modified by +2. If the Patrol is to the left or right of the Shadowstalker, then the Reaction is modified by -1. If the Patrol is facing away from the Shadowstalker, then the Reaction is modified by -3.

Patrol: At the beginning of every round the miniature turns 90 degrees clockwise. Patrolling MERCS go live if shots are fired, or if a Shadowstalking MERCS is revealed.



PROJECT ASCENSION

DESTROY THE PROTOTYPE

A new MERCS class prototype is being tested. It is rumored to be an enormous jump in MERCS technology, but the cost is so prohibitive that if it fails, it is unlikely to be built again. If the test is successful, and the new prototype is put into production, the arms race might actually be won. It must fail at all cost.

PLAYERS: ALL MEGACONS



Attacker: The attacking player is seeking to destroy the Über-MERC. The attacking player receives a full squad of MERCS (5).



Defender: The defending player selects one trooper to receive the Über-MERC bonuses in the special rules below. The defending player fields three MERCS from his squad.



Victory: The attacker wins if the Über-MERC is destroyed.

Defeat: The defender wins if they destroy the attacking force.



DEBRIEFING

This scenario is completely customizable by the players.

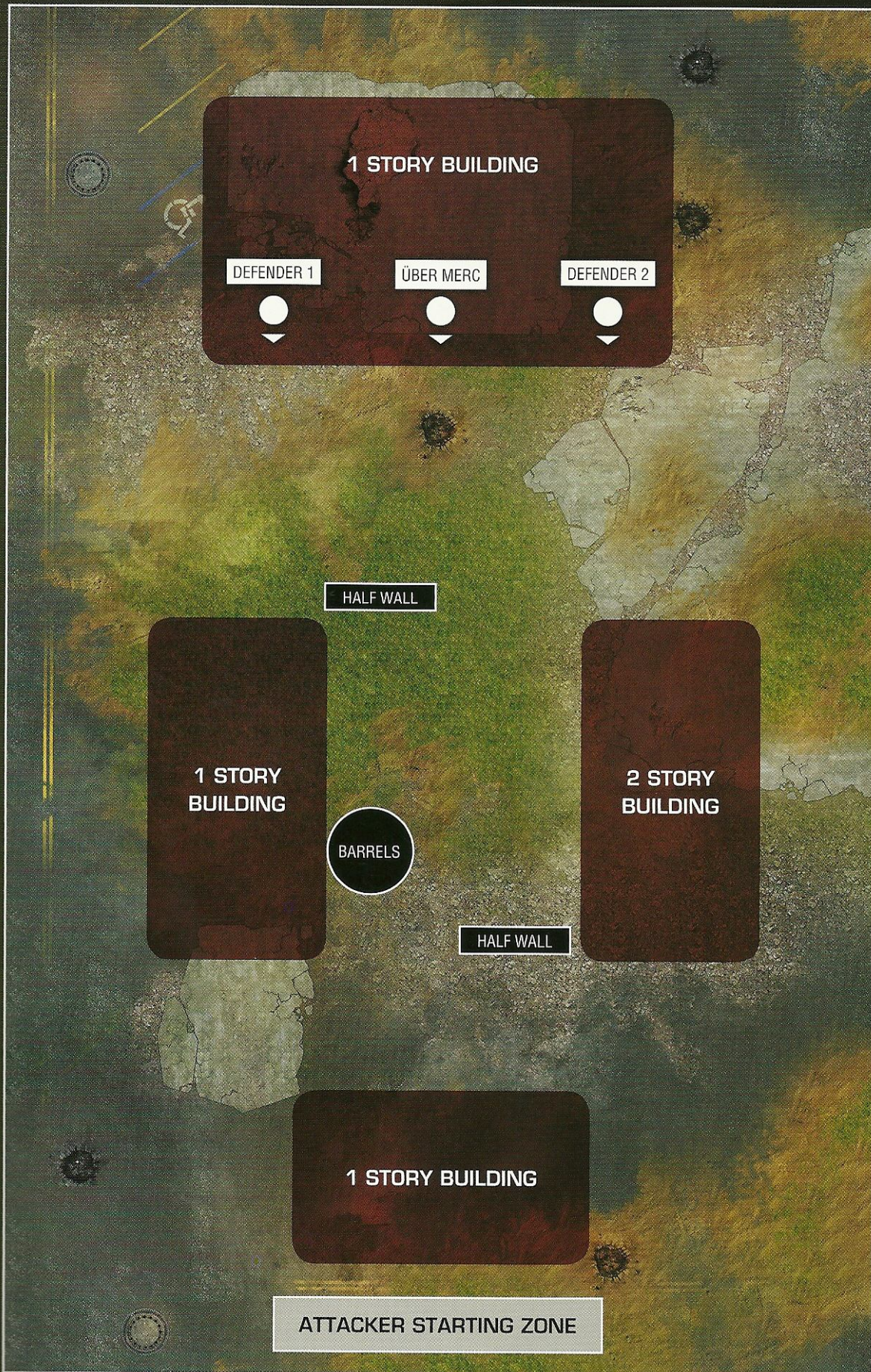
SPECIAL RULES: ÜBER-MERC BONUS

CCC: Zero Variable Targeting: -1 FN; Fire & Move: No penalties; Nanite Armor: -1 Repair, self Repair after 1 round, +1 Blood every 2 rounds

KemVar: Energized Melee Weapon: +1 Blood; Armor Failure -2; Zero Variable Targeting: -1 FN; Fire & Move: No penalties

USCR: +1MP; +2 Reaction; Armor Failure -1; Zero Variable Targeting: -1 FN; Fire & Move: -1 MP, +1 FN

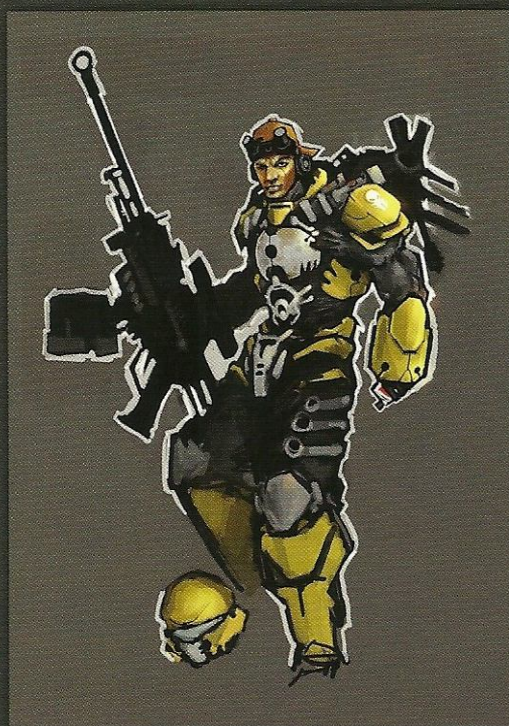
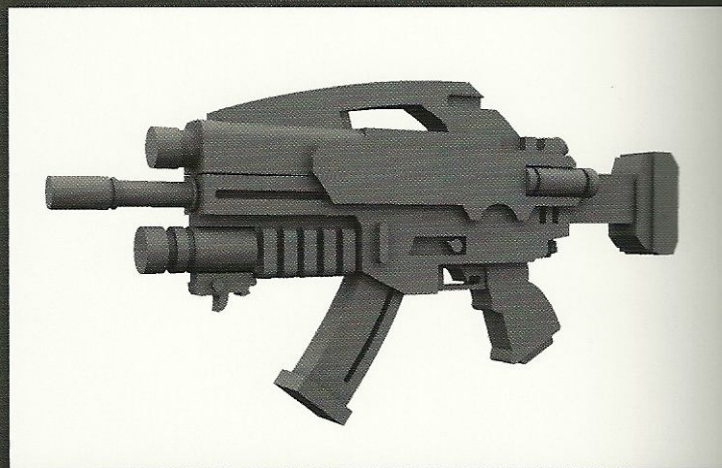
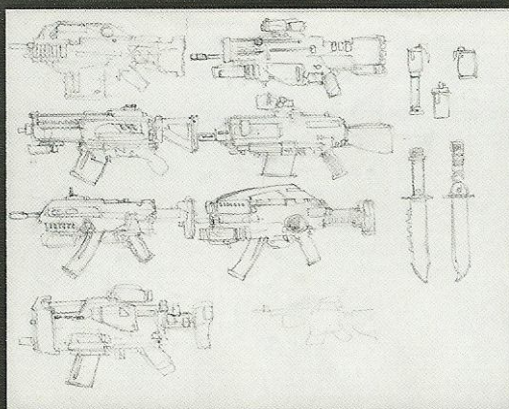
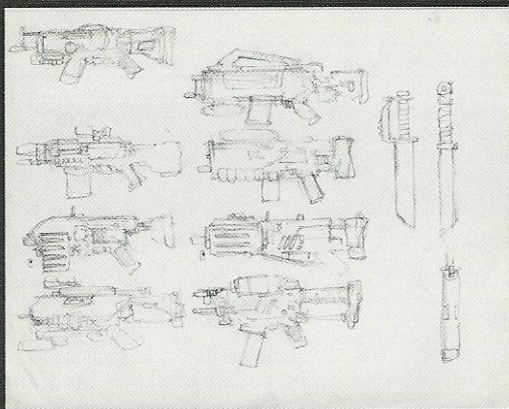
FCC: Armor Failure -1; Zero Variable Targeting: -1 FN; Attacks coming at the end of a Debris Crawl get Ambush bonuses (Ambush: -2 FN, +2 Wpn Str)

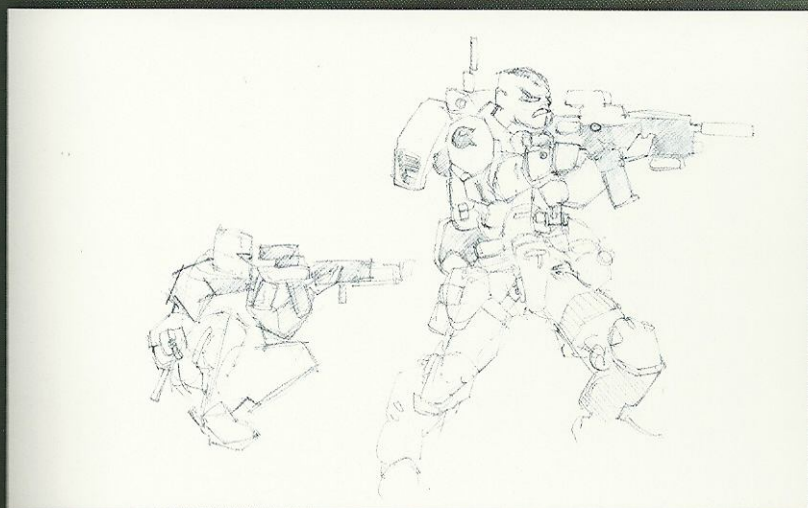
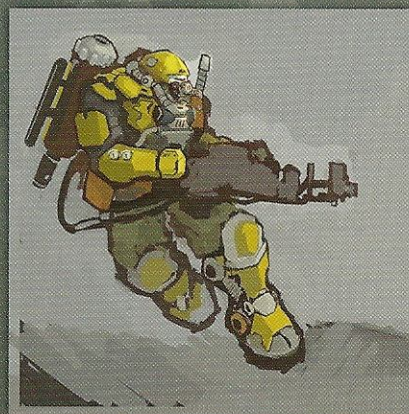


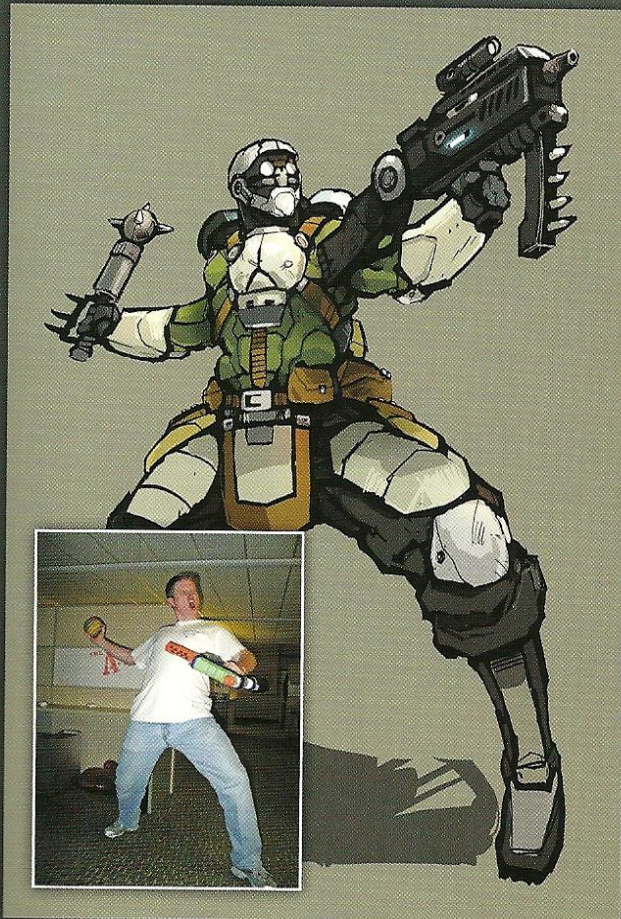
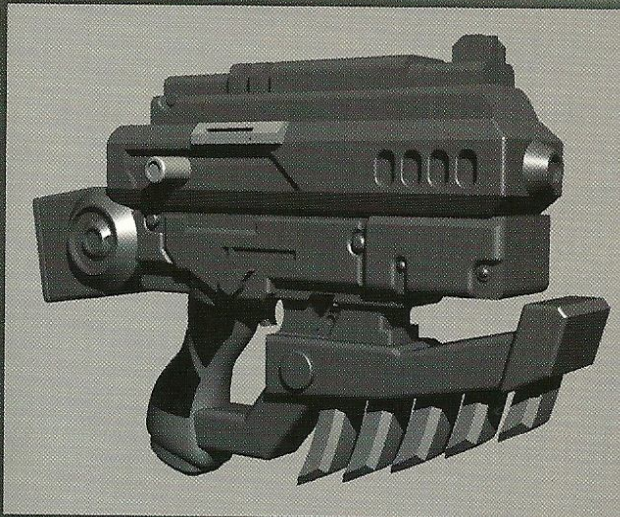
MAKING A MINI

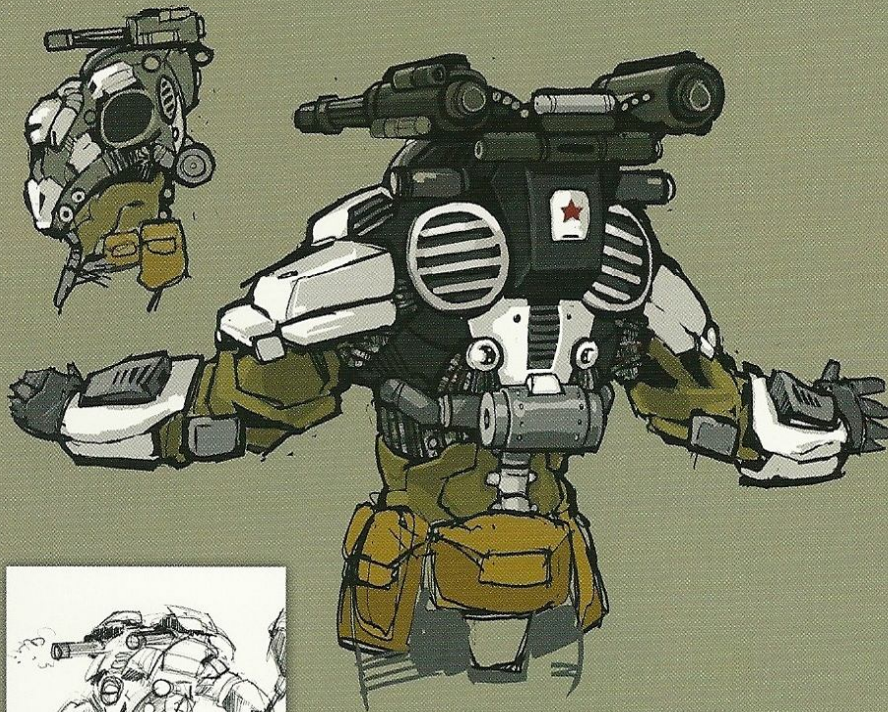
The following pages contain artwork, sculpts, and photographs that were used in the creation of the CCC, KemVar, USCR, and FCC. The creation of every MegaCon is an in-depth process, so we thought it would be fun to share a little of that process with you.

Many of these sketches are quite old. Some have never seen light outside of the dingy bags and notebooks they were kept in.









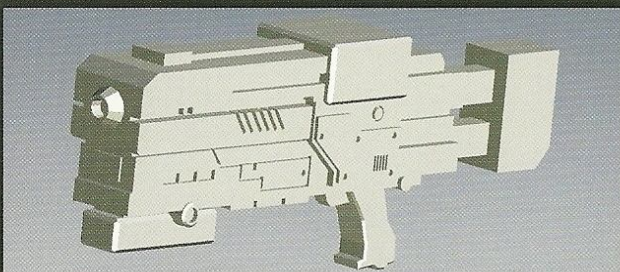
GRENADE
LAUNCHER



SNIPER



USCR RIFLE



DYNAMIC GAMING MINIATURES

MERCS



50_{mm}

FIGURE SCALE CHART

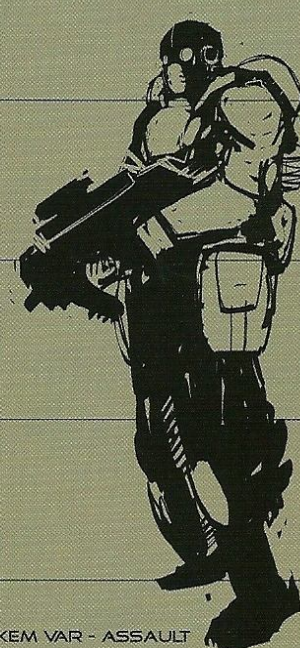
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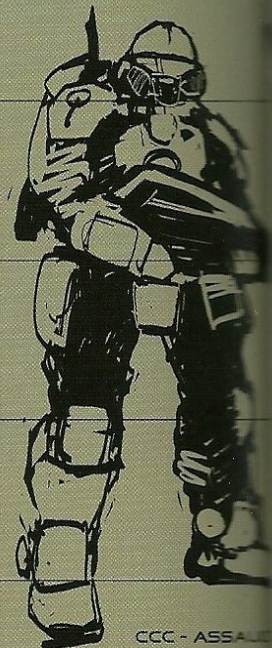
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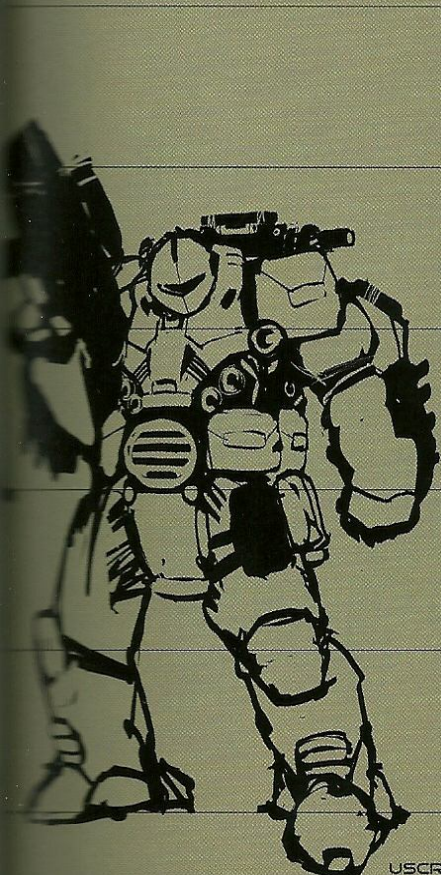
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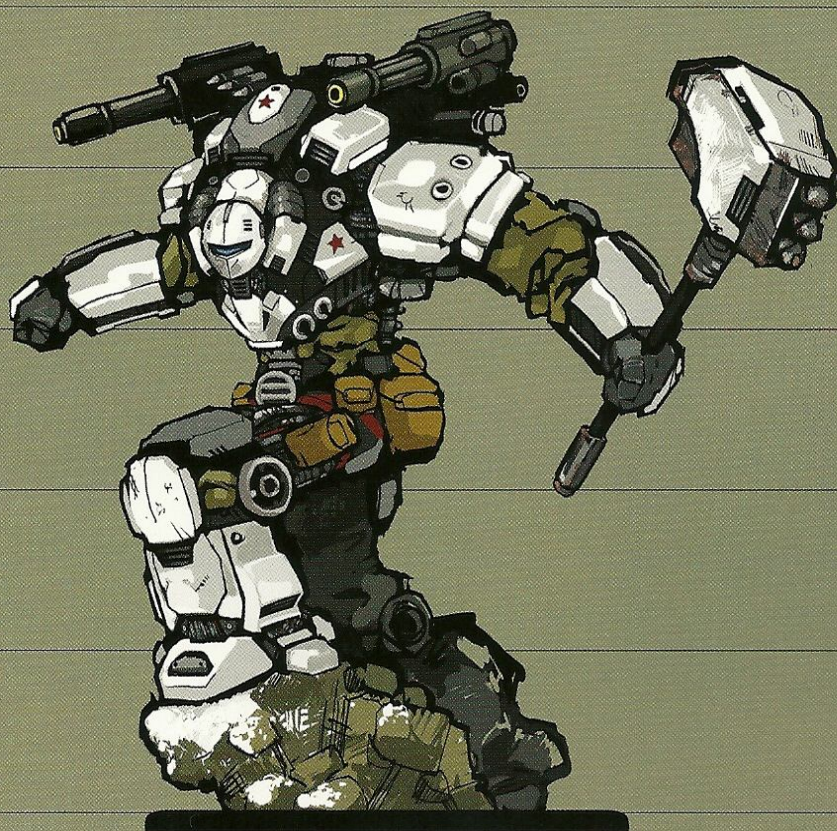
KEM VAR - ASSAULT



CCC - ASSAULT

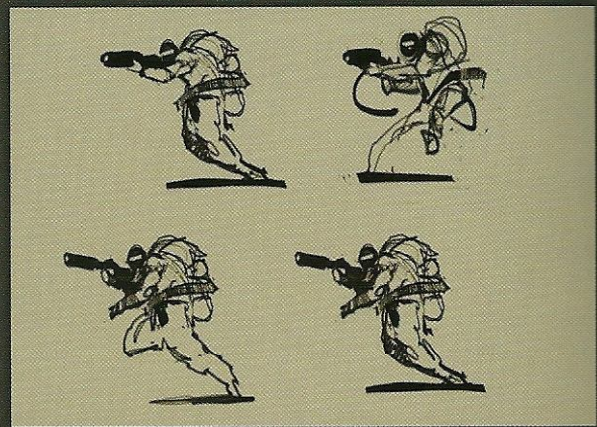
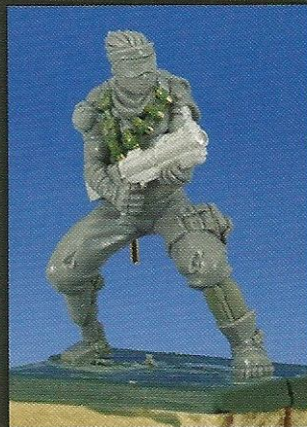


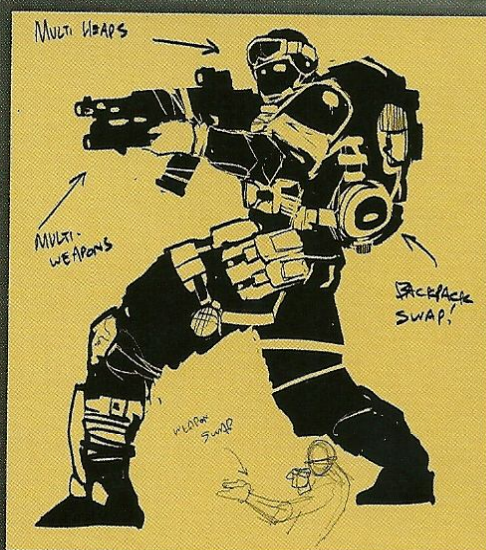
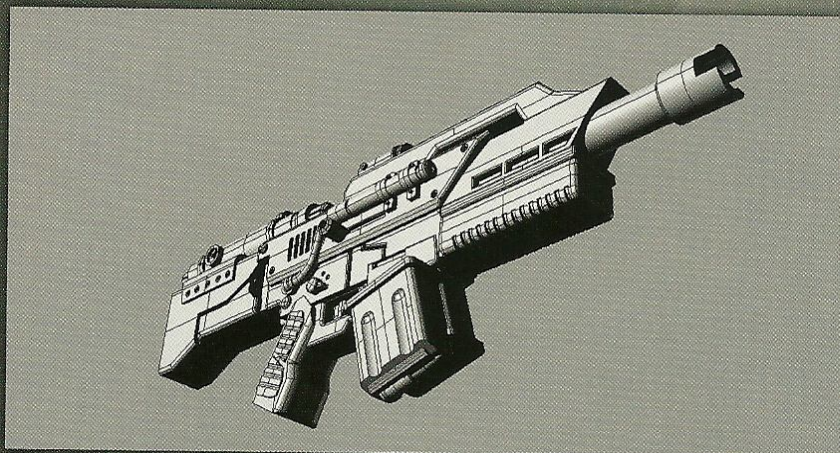
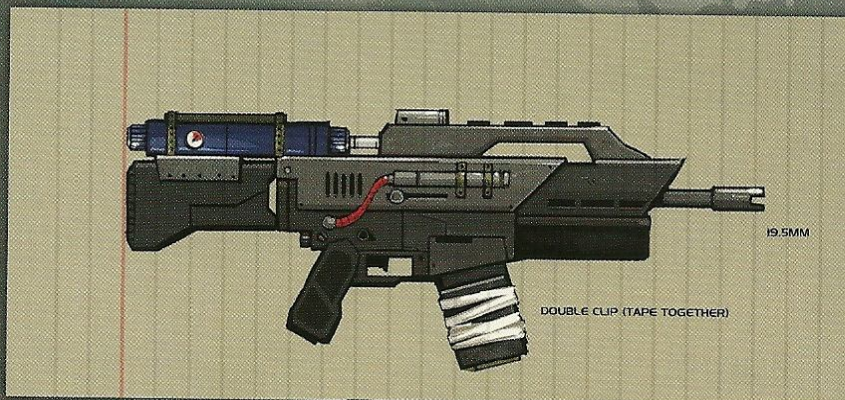
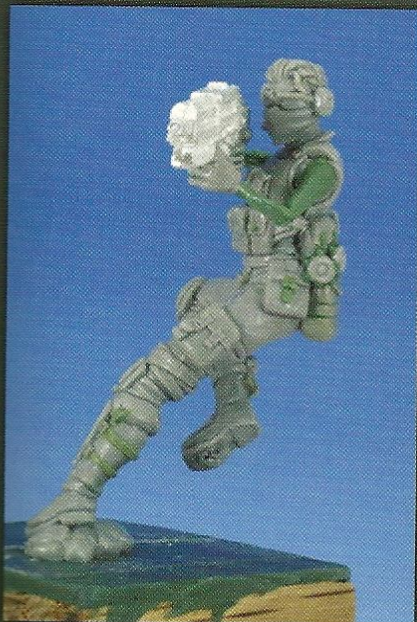
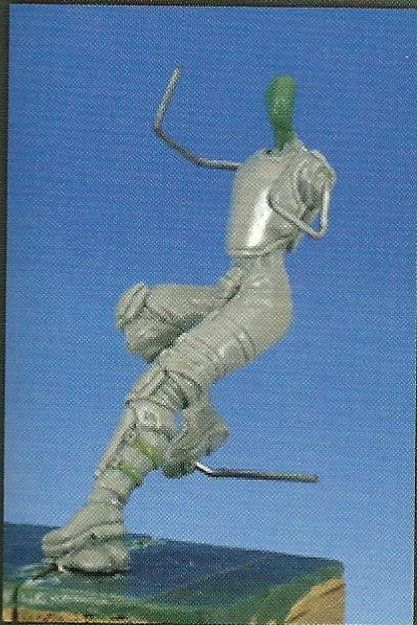
USCR - ASSAULT



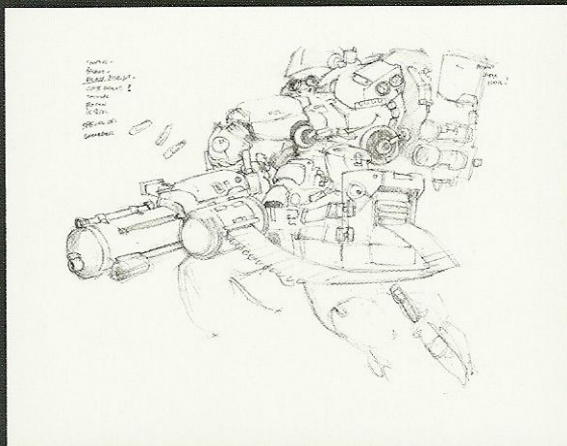
USCR - BEHEMOTH

FCC
PACK RAT





DESIGNING THE HEAVY

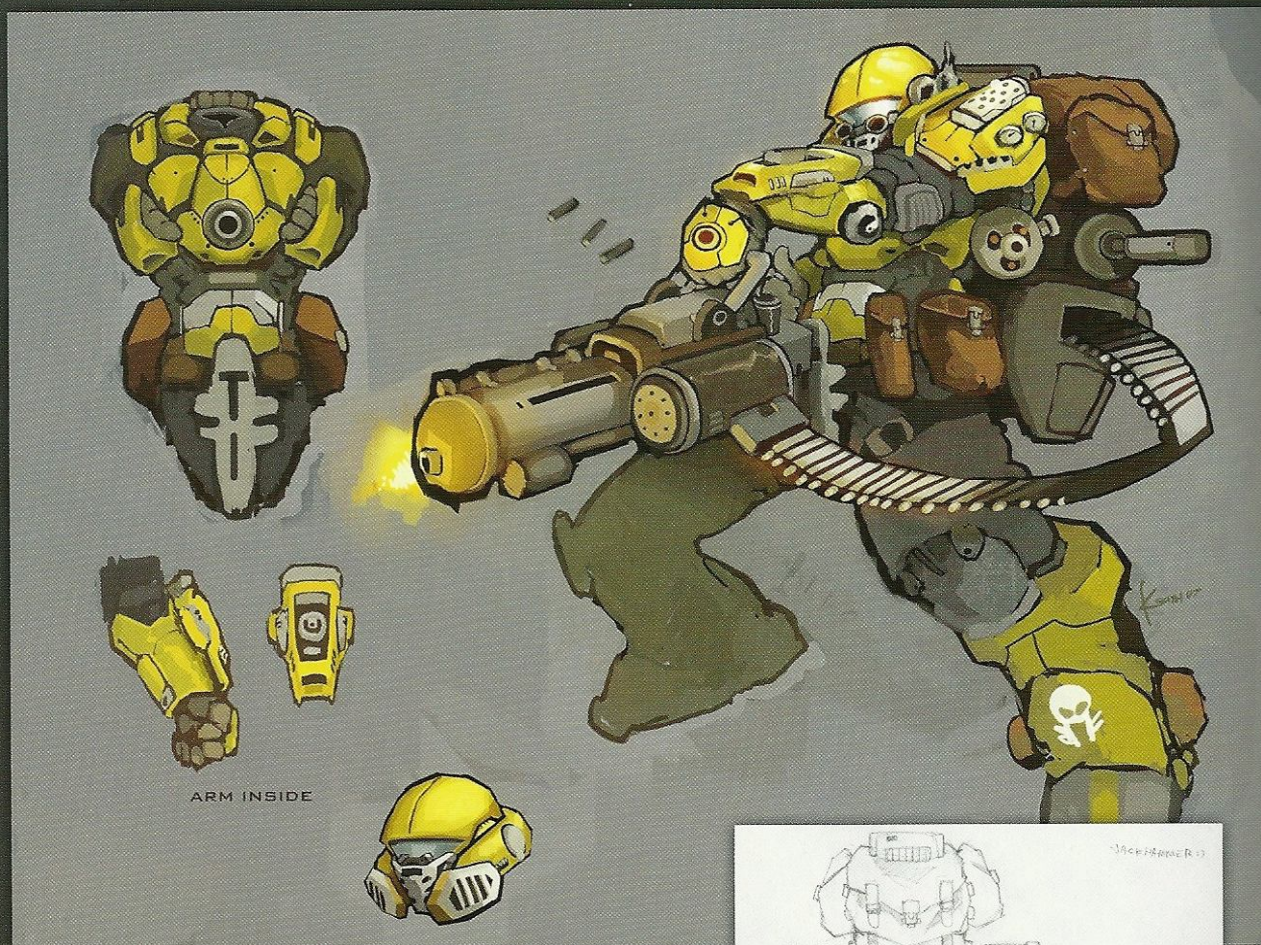


In the initial concept phase, we try to iron out the basics and ask some simple questions about the character: What Megacon is the guy with? What is their role in the squad? How can we make these figs look different from the others, but still make sense in the universe. What will make this guy really look cool!?

The character is changing quickly at this stage, and things are being tweaked until you figure out what works. I use traditional pencil and paper to hash things out, but if I'm feeling really gutsy I just jump onto the computer and go from there.

Sometimes Brian will give me some very open-ended direction based on the game's needs like, "This guy should have shoulder guns and a hammer."

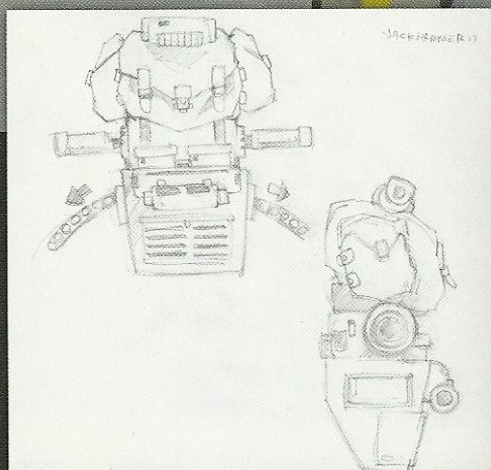
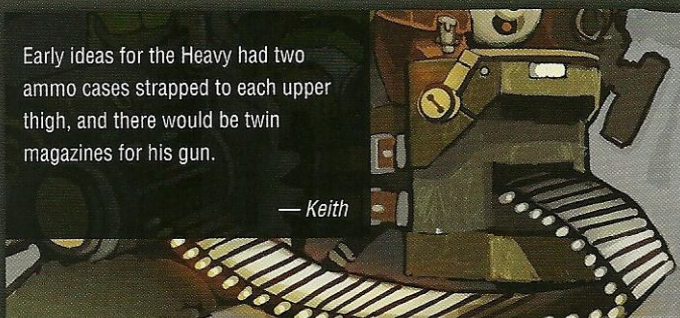
— Keith



ARM INSIDE

Early ideas for the Heavy had two ammo cases strapped to each upper thigh, and there would be twin magazines for his gun.

— Keith



Taking a concept from paper to putty always presents an interesting set of challenges. Retaining the dynamic pose, while still making the sculpt viable for casting, is the most important part.

Once we figure this out, the figure is sculpted using a variety of techniques. These include traditional putty pushing, fitting brass tubes and other found objects as well as utilizing precast pieces—such as the Yellow Jackets core helmet—to ensure that all figures in the squad have a consistent look.

— Tom



The most important point of this miniature is the yellow colour. This colour represents the union of all the army.

I used these colours:

- color base: bubonic brown
- light 1: yellow
- light 2: ice yellow
- light point : white
- shadows: vermin brown, hull red

The other important part is the metal. When I painted the metal I used the "No Metallic Metal" technique. Essentially, I paint metallic parts with paints that aren't metallic. It's important to make strong contrasts between lights and shadows.

I used these colours:

- color base: military blue + dark prussian blue
- light 1: ice yellow
- lights points: white
- shadow: dark prussian blue + black

— Angel

FAQ

SETUP

Q *What is the point of moving around on the battlefield? In my first game, my opponent and I just stayed behind good cover and fired at each other.*

A I wonder what kind of battlefield set up you had. Is there any section of the field that blocks LOS. Notice the map we play on in this book. There is a gigantic building in the center. In fact, depending on the set up, you can't do anything at the beginning but move. There are three battlefields we test on; there is a large obstruction somewhere in the field of battle on each map. If you have a bunch of half-cover walls in your play area, but each side can see each other from the jump, I can imagine KemVar whupping CCC, and the USCR clubbing KemVar. At least that is how it should play out.

Q *What are the sizes of the battlefields used in MERCS?*

A We play on a 3 x 2 ft area, but 3 x 3 would be fine. It should allow for more movement around the perimeter.

Q *When a figure has a modifier on their card (-1 FN, or -1 repair, etc.), is it already figured into the existing values on the card?*

A There is a base number followed by another number within parentheses or a small circle. The second number is the modified value. For example, someone with Speedy would have a value shown in the graphic provided.

Q *What are the rules for selecting units? I have been selecting five per side, without duplicates. Is this right? Can you have duplicates? (i.e. two CCC Assault-Demo)*

A You must select 5 units without duplicates. In effect, you have to leave one behind.

Q *When setting up my MERCS at the beginning of the game what are the rules for placement of the individual minis?*

A At the beginning of the game you can either decide to roll to see who places first or you can just agree. Once it's decided who places first, alternate placing minis on your respective sides of the map within one card length from the edge. After all minis are placed, each player is allowed to adjust a single mini to compensate for your opponent's placement.



INITIATIVE

Q When I roll Initiative, what result provides the fastest action? Is it a 10 or a 1?

A A higher result moves first. You may want to get the highest Initiative if you want to move first, so a 10 would be your target number. (On many d10s this is a "0" on the die.) In some situations, you may want your opponent to move before you to be forced to check his actions. In this case, you could bind with a team member with a lower Initiative to delay your action!

Q Does it matter in which order we roll Initiative?

A It doesn't matter in which order you roll Initiative as long as you are consistent throughout the entire game. This keeps both players honest. An example would be to always roll Initiatives starting with your guy on the furthest left side and moving to each closest one to the right until finished.

MOVE

Q Do I have to move a full card length every time I move?

A No. A 90 degree adjustment is considered a Move. If you Move with a card, you can choose which circle to move to.

Q Can a unit Snap to Cover even if he is already in cover?

A Yes.

Q Are there any terrain effects (other than climbing)? What about walls? Can they be "jumped" over?

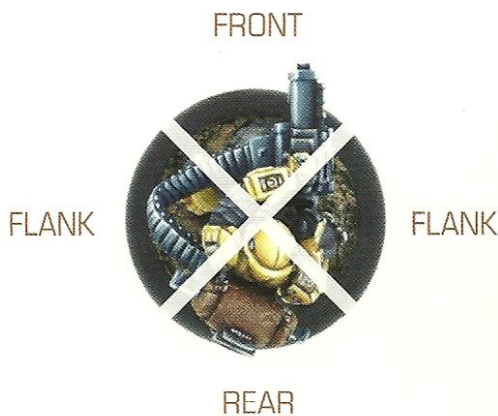
A Not with any of the current factions' Personal Abilities. The Personal Ability "Vault" allows MERCS to vault over cover.

Q Can you Suppress/Overwatch/throw grenades and Move in one turn, with Fire & Move for example?

A No. Fire & Move is specifically for firing your weapon in regular mode.

Q Where precisely are a model's flank and rear located?

A Place an imaginary X on the base where the front is center front. It isn't precise. Remember MERCS is about Action, so err on the side of more damage. Also, Flank attacks only get the bonus if the target is engaged in melee. Rear attacks always get their bonus.



RANGE

Q First off, should it really be as hard as it is to hit someone? My friend and I consistently found ourselves with FN's of 8 or higher. The Heavy units rarely hit anything at all and just absorb bullets. Is there a reason for the base FN's to be so high? Did you intend for it to be so hard to hit?

A The answer to these questions is "Yes and No." The base FN's are intended to be quite high. Believe it or not, it is very hard to kill people on the battlefield (which is why deaths in an infantry-only fight number in the 10s and not 100s). To be clear, this game is more about who has the best tactics than it is about who rolled best. This is addressed in the modifiers. If you look at them, they grant stacking bonuses to reward good play.

On the other hand, if you both are firing at each other across the battlefield behind cover, your FN will always be high. (To touch on another common question, KemVar's armor will always seem overpowered.) Now, I am not suggesting that this is what you did, but certain battlefield layouts could clearly benefit one faction over another. During playtesting, FNs were often in the 6-7 range. It's rare, but it's happened that a Heavy FN dropped to 5. That doesn't mean that the 9-10 range doesn't occur, but it is something that is modified through movement and abilities.

If I lowered the FN across the board, you will see more lethal combat, but the need for carefully-thought-out tactics goes out the window window. (This would also make the KemVar's already strong armor nearly impossible to penetrate.)

Things to keep in mind regarding the FN:

- 1. Leadership rocks the party. Not only is it often overlooked, but it's not limited by LOS.
- 2. The Heroic ability is the same as Leadership. Keep Heroic units away from other members of their squad.
- 3. Eagle-eye, Crackshot, Lucky, & Stealth. These are life savers! If you forget them you are severely limiting your side's strength.
- 4. Many situations provide huge bonuses to hit. Elevation, short range, attacks from the rear, and flank all provide advantages.
- 5. Fire & Move is a cool Combat Maneuver, but abusing it may ruin you.

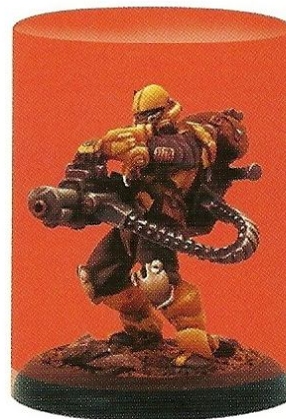
Examples:

FN7 + Fire & Move (FN2) + Half Cover (FN1) = FN10

FN7 + Half Cover (FN1) - Leadership or Heroic (FN1) - Elevation (FN1) = FN6

Q How do you figure out if you have LOS to a target behind cover? If I see his weapon, can I shoot at him or do I need to see some of his body behind the cover?

A To "see" your target (and have LOS), you need only see a portion of the base. You don't need to see the whole model. The model is considered to exist in a cylinder above the base with a height of an inch and a half (two inches for the Behemoth). Even if a sliver of the base is visible, it is considered half cover and you can fire.



Q Could you provide another example on how to achieve low FNs? I'm still having trouble getting them down.

A Sure thing! Here are some examples on how to reduce your FN.

- FN5 Sniper - No Cover (FN1) - Leadership (FN1) = FN3
- FN5 Sniper + Full Cover (FN3) = FN8; For someone in Full Cover, this is an extraordinarily low FN.
- FN5 + Full Cover (FN3) - Leadership (FN1) - Elevated (FN1) = FN6
- FN7 USCR Medic - No Cover (FN1) - Leadership (FN1) - Eagle-eye (FN1) - Elevated (FN1) = 2 Shots at FN3
- FN7 USCR Medic + Full Cover (FN3) - Eagle-eye (FN1) = 2 shots at FN9; Again, this is a low number for someone behind Full Cover.
- FN5 KemVar Worm Grenade + Half Cover (FN1) - Leadership (FN1) = FN5 at Range 3; Note: The Worm Grenade must attach to a target to hit and would need an FN of 5.
- FN8 Heavy + Full Cover (FN3) - Leadership (FN1) = 3 shots at FN10 on every single target in the extended template! Once again, this is on a target behind Full Cover. Note that the FN changes per target in the template--including yours.
- FN8 KemVar Heavy - Heroic (FN1) - No Cover (FN1) = 2 or 4 shots at FN6; The number of shots depends on whether the template is split at FN6 on every single target in the extended template. Note: The FN changes per target in the template--including yours! Subtract FN1 for Elevation and suddenly he's firing at FN5.

When facing KemVar who hide behind cover, the CCC should own them. The KemVar's true strength is their mobility and their ability to never receive the No Cover reduction until their armor breaks.

DIAGRAMS

Q If my Heavy unit's template is also firing into my units, do my units incur damage?

A It depends. Any template attack can hit friendly units. However, the attacker can adjust the template and fire where they'd like. If the template hits enemies while narrowly missing your units, that's a good shot. Remember, MERCS fire in their front 180 degree arc. As examples, the Heavy and Incinerator have more possibilities when setting up their template attacks.

Q The two side-by-side cards which form the grenade blast template are placed after the two-card range, right? So, isn't the effective range is three cards?

A The center of the two-card template indicates the range of the throw.

Q If an enemy unit is behind a wall and my MERCS can't see him, could I still throw a grenade past the corner of a building (still in my LOS) to hit him with the blast template?

A No. MERCS are trained not to randomly throw grenades at targets that they are unable to verify.

Q When using the Sweep PA, can I set the firing area at any 90 degree angle in the front firing arc?

A No. You must start the Sweep attack from the front and sweep either left or right 90 degrees.

MELEE

Q 1. Are there any penalties or effects for leaving combat?

A No. However, an important element to note is that a mini can't leave melee and enter back into melee with the same target. For example, the Assassin can't Charge, Break Away, and then Charge the same target. Also, Assassins can't attack at the end of a Bounding maneuver.

Q Can you fire a semi-auto or full auto weapon in melee?

A You can't fire at the target with whom you're engaged in melee. You can, however, fire at a different target provided they're not in melee with your unit. Theoretically, your unit could drop a grenade at their feet to damage your enemy combatant in melee, but your unit would also incur the damage. Short range weapons, like pistols or flamethrowers, are usable in melee.

TACTICS

Q Why would I use Overwatch with my Heavy unit? The FNs are really high and it seems very unlikely that he can do much good covering an area.

A The Heavy would get to fire on each and every person in the template every time someone acted in the template's range. It could turn out that he would get 9 to 12 shots on each unit in the template. Even with an FN of 8, 9, or 10, the potential to damage the enemy units with the sheer volume of bullets may be worth it. Besides, it creates an environment where your opponent MUST deal with the Heavy.

Q The KemVar armor seems so powerful. When a KemVar MERC is in cover (which is most of the time) the +3 to hit penalty means even the Sniper and Assault Trooper have severe difficulty hitting, and the Heavy units physically can never hit them. (How do you roll an 11 on a d10?) Again, what is your experience with this?

KemVar armor is quite powerful. To begin, it should be a lucky shot if you hit a unit behind Full Cover; that includes KemVar behind Half Cover. Full Cover on the battlefield is equated with complete protection.

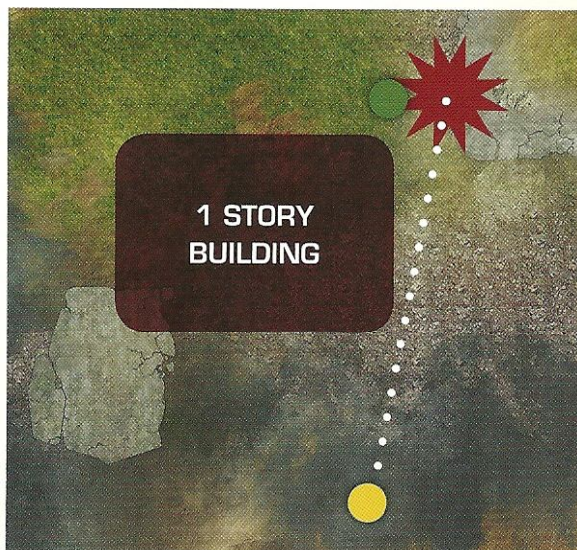
The solution is to not get into a firefight with anyone behind Full Cover. Go around, circumvent, use the tools and abilities at your disposal to even the playing field. KemVar armor provides their units with a gigantic bonus, but it breaks with incredible ease. Without their armor, they don't get the Active Camouflage bonus. Armor checks are required every time a target gets hit, regardless of Blood damage. This is quite important.

As a specific example, if you used the CCC, they are uniquely equipped to handle KemVar's FN escalation issue. The Leader's EMP grenade almost guarantees one or multiple KemVar armor breaks, and it doesn't require a FN. You don't throw the grenade at a target, you throw it to a spot. If you are within range, it hits automatically. Likewise, the Demo's grenades are a non-FN, instant, 3-weapon-strength strike—and he has three of them! That will Blood every single KemVar and cause armor checks as well. And don't forget, it causes armor checks as well. Finally, but most importantly, the Incinerator is a monster vs. KemVar. He has an auto-hit, strength 2 weapon, that hits everything in a 90 degree arc, forces a modified armor check, AND forces them to make a Courage check to act on their next action. The Incinerator would also receive weapon strength bonuses from rear attacks. Be careful though, the Incinerator does damage ally units in the arc.

Q Since units must move at least one card, how can a unit peek around a corner to shoot? The example from our game is as follows. A CCC Assault Trooper is a half inch from the corner of the building, taking cover behind it. How could he, without running into the open, move just enough to peek around the corner and shoot the KemVar Leader?

A He can't. One option is to snap to cover to the corner if it's within one base. The other option is to back up and lob a grenade. This could cause an Armor Break and, depending on how Initiative plays out, it may allow a follow up with a Move & Fire chance. Assuming the target doesn't have cover, we have the following FN. FN7 + Move (FN2) - No Cover (FN1) - Heroic (FN1) = 2 shots at FN7. Or, you could just lob another grenade and force them to react.

As a side note, you may consider backing off if it's the Medic. They're more valuable as support units. You may choose to leave him there to occupy the opposing player's Leader while your units attempt to take advantage of a squad without their Leadership bonus.



Q After playing a few USCR vs. KemVar battles, it seems that the KemVar win is inevitable. Their speed and mobility allow them to run circles around the slower USCR while winning any ties in Initiative. In one game, the Assassin single-handedly killed four out of five USCR units by running behind them while they were tied up with the rest of the KemVar squad. Is there any way for the USCR to counteract the KemVar speed and that brutal Assassin?

A Prepare the Sniper for a Crackshot on the Assassin. It hits automatically and slows the Assassin to only 1 MP after being hit. In addition, it inflicts damage and could break his armor! Ice grenades hurt KemVar badly because they are also auto hit and have a big range. The result for those unlucky enough to be hit is three rounds of being immobilized. You can hurt people in ICE. Also, USCR is in bad shape if it gets too separated. Prudent use of Ice Grenades vs. KemVar is a big deal. Another thing to keep in mind is that KemVar don't have any group damage weapons like CCC. While facing KemVar, grouping won't be as dangerous as when facing other squads with template or multi-target weapons.

MERCS

Q *I don't see Weapon Damage anywhere on the cards. Is Weapon Strength supposed to represent this? Also how many wounds do the weapons cause?*

A Yes, DMG is Weapon Strength on the cards. This is the number that's compared to the Armor Rating. The number in the Blood drop represents the number of wounds. For example, the Assassin's Charge ability has a Wpn Str of 2 and inflicts 2 wounds (or Blood).

To clarify the mechanic, each hit equal to or higher than the target's Armor Value inflicts one Blood. So, if your Assault Leader hits twice with his semi-automatic weapon, he would inflict 2 Blood on a target of 2 Armor or less. Also, these two hits would each require a Armor Failure checks, even if he didn't Blood the target.

Q *My CCC Heavy is terrible at killing enemy units. It seems I miss most of the time when firing at targets with the addition of having to set one round in advance. How am I supposed to compete with the enemy moving and firing and getting out of my LOS?*

A The CCC Heavy is the weakest unit in CCC if you play with the basic rules. The truth about fully automatic weapons is this--they suck. Truly, if you are using them to hit a single target, good luck. That target lives 9 times out of 10. But, if you use the Heavy weapons the way they are supposed to be used, then things start to change both for the Heavy and for your understanding of the game. Heavy weapons are meant to lock down areas, and supply covering fire for assault troopers. The Heavy becomes more of a force on the battlefield when you start using Suppression, which he excels at, and Overwatch. A Heavy with good position on the enemy and in Overwatch will, at the least, throw a wrench into your opposition's plans. It takes effort to achieve a position like that, but it happens. For example, a Heavy in an elevated position can completely lock down the middle of the battlefield. The opposing squad must then choose between high-risk maneuvers in the firing range and being forced into moving in the remaining avenues on the battlefield, where the Heavy's squad is waiting. Heavy's aren't there to kill, as much as control, just like in real combat.

Q *Can a Heavy set and Overwatch and Suppress in the same turn?*

A No.

Q *It seems like Load and Aim makes the Sniper extremely weak. Why must Snipers wait so long between shots? Is there anything else they can do while reloading?*

A The Sniper is a strong unit. They would be too powerful if allowed to unleash their full damage every round. However, there is plenty to do with the Snipers while they're loading.

Here's an example with the CCC Sniper. The Stealth ability allows him to easily move between shots while loading. An elevated Sniper near a Leader has a FN of 3. Snipers are trained to fire, move, set up, fire... Even with the two-round Load and Aim penalty as a check and balance, the 4 Wpn Str weapon can be devastating. Don't forget the Crackshot ability! Blowing this early may not pay off. Use it on the most dangerous unit (like an Assassin). With the Auto Hit, it could cause an Armor Fail and would probably kill the target.

Another example is the KemVar Sniper. It also has a two-round Load and Aim penalty, but the Marksman ability reduces this to a single round. He can fire repulsor tags between shots. While not unloading completely with the full fire, a Bullet, Repulsor Tag, Bullet, Repulsor Tag pattern means that he has no downtime.

The KemVar Sniper also has 2 rnds of waiting but his Marksman ability reduces that time to 1 rnd, and he can fire repulsor tags between shots. The KemVar Sniper is can fire a damaging bullet, then fire a repulsor tag, then fire a bullets. He literally has no downtime.

The USCR doesn't have to wait all. It isn't a sniper gun.

A Sniper can move while the gun is loading.

Q *Can you clarify the USCR's Anchor Gun and, also, can multiple shots stack?*

A A target that is successfully shot with an anchor can only move 1 MP from the spot where it was hit. They have a 1 MP at that point and, no, shots can't stack.

Q *The Incinerator has +2 Courage when using her flamethrower. Does the target roll a Courage check immediately? If so, what are the effects?*

A The target rolls a Courage check on their next action to see if it can act, even if that action is in the next round. The target would need to roll equal to, or over their Courage + 2. If the Courage check fails, the unit cannot act that round.

Q *Does a Leader benefit from his own Leadership bonus?*

A No.

MISC.

Q *Can you repair Repulsor Tags and/or Ice Grenades to remove the effects?*

A Heh, now you are touching on the cool stuff. You cannot Repair Repulsor Tags, but the Incinerator can free a frozen unit by using her flamethrower on them.

Q *What purpose does KemVar's gas mask rule have? While KemVar is plenty strong without it, I can't seem to find any time where it would be useful...*

A This will play a part in future MegaCon releases...

Q *A repair roll does count as a unit's entire turn, correct?*

A Yes. It also counts as an Action in terms of Suppression, Overwatch, and Bounding.

CREDITS

BOOK AUTHOR

Brian Shotton

ILLUSTRATION & DESIGN

Keith Lowe

GAME DESIGN & LORE

Brian Shotton

LEAD TESTER & #1 KEMVAR FANBOY

Kenny Sims

FICTION AUTHOR & TERRAIN PAINTER

Jennifer Sims

MINIATURE DESIGN

Keith Lowe

SCULPTORS

Tom Mason

Bobby Jackson

3-D MODELER

Mark Mondragon

MINIATURE PAINTER

Angel “;)” Gildarez

PHOTOGRAPHY

Joanna Lowe

TECH EDITOR

Brian “U.S. Male” Bates

EDITORS

Tim “Fitzy” Fitzpatrick

Christian Sumner

BETA TESTERS

Luke “Angus Khan” Addison

Mat “Maple” Jeremy

Brian “U.S. Male” Bates

WEBSITE PROGRAMMING

Chris Zelenak

MINIATURE PRODUCTION

Mississinewa Miniatures

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BRIAN SHOTTON

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Keith. He is my friend. A word I don't use lightly. I can count on one hand that is missing two fingers the people I call friend. We met five years ago at our job orientation. We did our first book together. I read scripture at his wedding. Two years ago, he inquired if I could make a ruleset based on MERCS which at the time was his art and Tom's figs. If I am here, typing out my acknowledgments, it is because of you. And like you, I consider MERCS a success already. Thank you.

I have known Kenny for 33 years. He is my oldest friend. He is my best friend. We grew up playing RPGs, and tabletop games. It is because of Kenny that this game is so balanced. He and I have played countless games of MERCS. We will play countless more. We have been through just about everything two people can go through. Success or failure, I can count on a Kennyism to carry me to the other side. There is no one I would rather see at the top of this hill than you, Fallbacker.

Jennifer is a wonderful writer. I so desperately want MERCS to blow up so we can read the rest of the MERCS fiction she was kind enough to write. She is also becoming a very good miniatures painter. This book could not have been what it is, if it weren't for you. You are awesome.

I love the pictures in this book. Joanna is a fantastic photographer. Both for your contributions to this book, and for sacrificing so much of yours and Keith's time together so he can pursue this dream, I thank you.

My kids love what I do. My son, Orion, is ten years old and absolutely loves the idea of MERCS. He and my daughter, Meris, wear both the t-shirts and the dog tags. I smile every time they pray that daddy and MERCS do good. I love you. No better kids can a father hope to have.

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Finally, a big thank you to all the people who play the game: I hope you like it, and I hope you tell as many people as you are able.

SPECIAL THANKS

The amazing city terrain is created by JR Miniatures. We highly recommend their 28mm SciFi setting. You can find their terrain at www.jrminiatures.net.

The outdoor ruins were supplied by Rose from Castle Comics in Lafayette.

This book wouldn't be nearly as cool without the photo studio graciously made available by MEGA Brand in Lafayette.

KEITH LOWE

Thank you so much to...

Christ my king. This is for him. He has allowed me to create a book like this, and work with some of my closest friends in process. It is beyond my comprehension—my brain explodes with coolness. Thank you Lord, for the people you have placed in my life, the path you have put me on, the gifts you have given me, and opportunity to create something special. All glory and honor goes to you.

Joanna, my lovely wife. Right now she is sleeping on the couch even as I write this. How often this happens, because she won't leave my side. There have been so many long hours and evenings. Truly there is no way I would have been able to do MERCS without her endless patience, and support. She stood by me in making tough decisions, listening to me rejoice when things were going great, and my groanings when things were down. She even even shot the wonderful photography you see within the pages of this book. I'm so grateful for a woman like her. You're amazing baby!

Tom, the most inspiring sculptor I know, and good friend. We attended college together and studied art there. It was his desire to sculpt one drawing of a sniper that led to the origin of MERCS. That piece of art could have just as easily stayed in my sketchbook forever. Now it has grown into something more. Tom, your talent is already incredible and you're only getting better.

Brian: a friend, a co-worker, a teacher, a mentor, and a brother. At times many of these things at once. MERCS has come this far because of his commitment and leadership ability. Brian, you had the courage (and perhaps craziness) to jump on board this listless ship and give it a rudder. It really needed one. Your gifts of creative ideas and writing are awesome, and you're wife and children an inspiration. So much of this success is thanks to you.

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Chris Zelenak, for his time, abilities, and friendship. Your super geeky tech knowledge is a wonder; thank you for your hard work in making the MERCS website amazing, and for always asking the question, "How is MERCS going?"

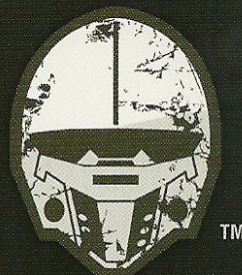
The MERCS open beta crew: Brian B., Andy, Mat. Thank you for your time, hard work, and excitement in helping Brian to perfect a great game. Oh, and thanks for keeping things nice and crazy on the forums!

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Family, friends, co-workers, and everyone on the MERCS forums who has supported and encouraged us along the way.

MERCS



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