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TOTAL WARFARE

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Colonel John Marik-Johns leads an assault against 'Emperor' Baranov's Fourth Tikonov Republican Guards on the contested world of Hall.

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Acknowledgements

To Herb Beas for helping to make the new core rulebooks possible by tackling the primary development of the Jihad sourcebooks and more and being an all-round excellent development assistant.

To the core group of people who, to one extent or another, have significantly contributed to keeping *BattleTech* not simply alive these last five years, but thriving once more: Ray Arrastia, Herb Beas, Loren Coleman, Warner Doles, David M. Stansel-Garner, Diane Piron-Gelman, Jason Hardy, Chris Hartford, Jason Knight, Chris Lewis, David McCulloch, Ben Rome, Matt Plog, Paul Sjardijn, Peter Smith, Scott Taylor, Christoffer Trossen, Øystein Tvedten, and Jason Vargas.

To David Stansel-Garner for being the primary vision behind the new re-branded graphic presentation of *BattleTech*.

To Eberhard von Massenbach who is always there to find the the obscure rules minutia and whose keeping the flame lit by Christoph Nick alive across the pond.

To Rob Boyle for constantly putting up with my endless demands and allowing me to go absolutely wild with the re-branding of *BattleTech*.

To all the Commandos…simply too many to name, but thanks for your commitment!

To Adam Jury and Ray Arrastia, who took on the assault lance at the last second to save our hides (we're even for *SR4*, Adam!)

To Franz Vohwinkel, Klaus Scherwinski and Chris Lewis for all the great *BattleTech* art over the years (and the years that will come) and for outdoing themselves this time around.

To Peter LaCasse for quickly generating the Random Assignment Tables found in the *Creating Scenarios* section.

To Ray Arrastia, Jason Hardy, Eberhard von Massenbach, Jason Schmetzer, Chris Smith, Andrew Timson, and Patrick Wynne for those last frantic, late night proof checks.

Playtesters/Proofers/Fact Checkers

The playtesters for any game line are a necessary component in the creation of a solid product. However, when tackling something on the scope of *Total Warfare*, which involves the melding of twenty years worth of rules into a unified whole that far exceeds it constitute parts (particular when set against the millions-of-words background of the vast scale of *BattleTech* history and continuity) their roles are not only greatly expanded, but become vital. A testament to the strength of the *BattleTech* community, their dedication knew no bounds: the product is far superior due to their significant contributions.

Joel Agee, Brian Alter, Ray Arrastia, Ron Barter, Terren "Tel Hazen" Bruce, Rick Casarez, Doug Davidhizar, Brent Dill, Benjamin Disher, John "Quentil" Dzieniszewski, Dave Fanjoy, David Ferguson, Thomas Ferrell, Bruce Ford, Eugen Fournes, John "AngelRipper" Frideres, Aaron "Bear" Gregory, Eric Hawkins, Glenn Hopkins, Ken Horner, John "Bleusman" Hudson, Darryl Hunt, Stephen "Blayde" King, Rod Klatt, Nadine Klatt, Michael "Konan" Koning, Peter LaCasse, Edward "Tenaka Fury" Lafferty, Mark Maestas, Eberhard "Rote Baron" von Massenbach, Brian McAuliffe, Tim McAuliffe, Mike Miller, Jeffrey "Fej" Morgan, Darrell "FlailingDeath" Myers, Lou "Nukeloader" Myers, Andrew Norris, Mike Pfister, Max "Medron Pryde" Prohaska, Ben Rome, Richard Sardiñas, Christopher K. Searls, Chris Sheldon, Alyson Sjardijn, Paul Sjardijn, Scott Stansbury, Joel "Septicemia" Steverson, Rob Strathmann, Terry Sweetapple, Dr. Geoff "97jedi" Swift, Lee Thoms, Roland Thigpen, Todd "BlueWeasel" Thrash, Andrew Timson, John Unchelenko, Chris Wheeler, Paul Wolf, Patrick Wynne; *Gravedigger Arms Limited*: James Humpula, Darlene Morgan, Aaron "Gravedigger" Pollyea, Jeff Skidmore, Charles "IronSphinx" Wilson; *The Singapore Longshoremen*: Jason Chodara, Leonard Conklin, Dan Eastwood, Tom Evans, Rick "Rick Steele" Remmer, Chris "Chungalo" Smith, Sam "Wasp" Snell, Jeremy Zuvich; *Seacoast BattleTech Society*: Debra Atkinson, David Baughman, James Bernard, Josh Carter, Alex Ellis, Korac MacArthur, Clayton Poland; *Steel City MechWarriors*: Rich Cencarik, Rich Darr, Brian Golightly, Dave Lang, Drew Martin.

And to all the players that fought through the endless delays to get on-line questions answered over the years; your questions generated numerous FAQs off of which much clarification came about in this book.

Additional Thanks

To the BattleTech Community who through thick and thin have supported the game and universe we all love, making this book possible.

Special Thanks

To Iron Wind Metals, who has staunchly supported *BattleTech* for long years, continues to do so and significantly donated to the cause of *Total Warfare*; to Fighting Pirannha Graphics for their support and contributions; finally to the artists from Camo Specs Online—specifically Ray Arrastia, Mike DuVal, Dave Fanjoy, Ross Hines, Steve Livingston, Mark Maestas and Lance Scarinci—for instantly taking on the scope of the mission, and giving their all to take the visuals of *BattleTech* to a whole new level.

Randall's Thanks and Dedication

Friends have always meant the world to me. While I add new friends that are as close as family as the years move on, I'm blessed to still stay in touch with friends from twenty years ago. While there are so many who have touched my life, when it comes to *BattleTech*, two in particular were there twenty years ago when I first pulled the cover off the *BattleTech* box set: Chad Dean and Tony Liddle. Thanks for all the years we've had and all the years to come

To my magnificent family and wife…there wouldn't be a *Total Warfare* without Tara's unflagging support.

Finally, this book is dedicated to Bryan Nystul: thanks for being a great sensei when my work in the industry began and for showing me the possibilities. I hope you find what you're looking for.

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Corrected Third Printing.
Second Printing by Catalyst Game Labs.

Published by Catalyst Game Labs,
an imprint of InMediaRes Productions, LLC
PMB 202 • 303 91st Ave NE • E502 • Lake Stevens, WA 98258

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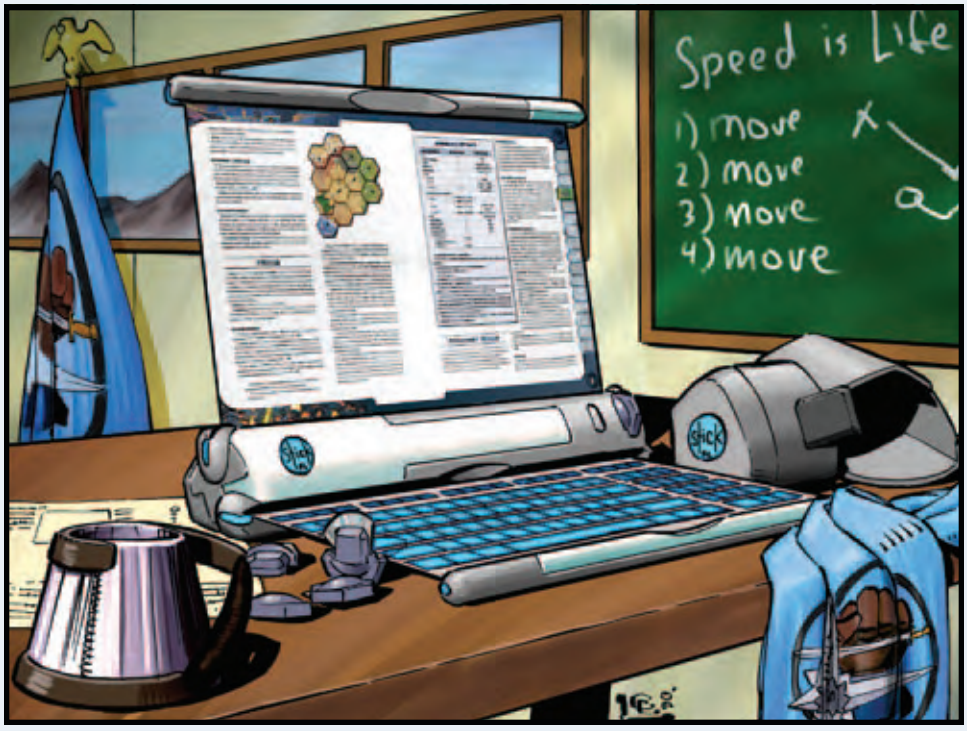


Total Warfare (*TW*) has been carefully reworked from previous *BattleTech* rules (*BT*) editions to clarify confusing or contradictory information, folding in many years of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), play testing and game play. In addition, for the first time in well over a decade, all the various rules sets that directly affect *BattleTech* ground warfare—including aerospace rules covering units that can enter a planet's atmosphere—appear in a single volume, woven together to make sure that all rules function seamlessly with one another. *Total Warfare* also includes additional material to expand and enhance game play. Along with the rules of *BattleTech*, this book contains an easy-to-use scenario creation system, as well as a painting section that will have players quickly painting the plastic miniatures in the *BattleTech Introductory Box Set*, as well as priming them for the complete *BattleTech* line of metal miniatures from Iron Wind Metals.

This book contains a number of rules changes from previous editions. We feel confident that these are the most complete, clear and concise rules for *BattleTech* ever presented.

As noted in the back cover text of this book, unlike previous editions of the *BattleTech* rulebook, no construction rules appear in *Total Warfare*; those rules are in the *TechManual* (see *Core Rulebooks*, p. 10).

The rules in this book supersede all previously published rules, including the *BattleTech Manual*, the *BattleTech Compendium*, *BattleTech Compendium: The Rules of Warfare*, *BattleTech Master Rules* (standard and revised editions) and older editions of the *BattleTech* boxed set. Where applicable, these rules also supersede sections of various other rules expansions, including *AeroTech 2, Revised*; *Maximum Tech, Revised;* and so on. In other words, if a rule in *Total Warfare* directly conflicts with rules in a previously published rulebook or expansion, *Total Warfare* takes precedence.

To play *BattleTech*, players will need dice, maps and counters or miniatures to represent the BattleMechs and/or other units used by each side. All of these items can be found in the *BattleTech Introductory Box Set*, the recommended product for beginning *BattleTech* players. For more information about the availability and use of these items, see *Components*, page 20 of this book.

FICTION

Fiction has always played an important role in *BattleTech*, with more than eighty novels published to date (and well over a hundred sourcebooks) fleshing out and expanding the universe into its current, vibrant form.

BattleTech uses two different types of fiction to convey its story. "Story fiction" includes novels, novellas, short stories and so on; fiction that puts the reader inside the heads of the characters that populate the universe. "Sourcebook fiction"—which appears in the various *Handbooks*, *Historicals*, *Technical Readouts* and so on (see *BattleTech: More Than a Game*, p. 10)—presents story elements as though the reader were a character transplanted into the game universe, reading military documents, historical texts, secret security briefs, intercepted personal communications, local newspapers and so on. These two methods work hand-in-hand to bring the *BattleTech* universe to life.

Every *BattleTech* sourcebook published by Catalyst (or FanPro) includes a short story. In addition, www.battlecorps.com publishes numerous *BattleTech* stories every month that support product releases (sourcebooks and rulebooks), as well as the current Jihad story arc (see p. 11).

Because it hurls the players directly into the *BT* universe, *Total Warfare* includes more "story fiction" than any core rulebook

previously published for *BattleTech*. Twelve short stories offer a taste of the core factions with which players will come to associate, while conveying the theme of a given section of the rulebook; players can also use these stories to launch endless games and campaigns, whether set in the current Jihad era or in the rich history of *BattleTech*.

Finally, *A Time of War* (see p. 14) and *Military Organization* (see p. 34) provide two examples of the many different types of "sourcebook fiction" players will discover in the various sourcebooks published for *BattleTech*.

FICTION VS. RULES

It is important to note that fiction, though essential in making the game universe come alive, should never be construed as rules. While *BattleTech* fiction usually attempts to adhere to the aesthetics established by the rules, authors often use creative license to accomplish the needs of a given story.

To eliminate confusion in *Total Warfare* about which sections are fiction and which are rules, the fiction sections have a unique look. In addition, all fiction sections are italicized in the Table of Contents.

FICTION AND ART

From the moment of *BattleTech*'s inception, it was conceived as a visually intensive universe. Though the *Technical Readout* series is one of the better examples of the importance of art in conveying the universe to a reader, every sourcebook employs art to work hand-in-hand with the fiction to bring the universe to life: from a stunning cover to the smallest illustration buried on a last page.

Even the graphic layout of rulebooks and sourcebooks—the borders around the edges of a page, how the words are placed on the page and so on—are specifically designed to accentuate the universe.

For *Total Warfare*, the graphic design concept is that of a computer interface. Specifically speaking, it is a computer from House Steiner's (see *A Time of War*, p. 14) Nagelring; one of their premier military academies (for more information on House Steiner and specifically on the Nagelring, players should check out *Handbook: House Steiner*).

To further cement this concept directly into a reader's mind, the art at the beginning of this section shows the very Nagelring military computer represented "in universe" by the text and layout of this rulebook.

Note that as with fiction, players should never construe art as rules. In a similar vein, while the diagrams used throughout this book are rules, players should note that the graphic icons within each diagram only represent specific unit types ('Mechs, vehicles, infantry and so on). As such, players should not be confused by a specific unit image (such as the *Mad Cat* for the 'Mech) used in an example, when its game stats do not mirror the example.

3-D TERRAIN VS. PAPER MAPS

BattleTech at its core is a board game; players move pieces on a hex-grid mapsheet. Unlike tabletop miniatures games, which use three-dimensional (3-D) terrain and rulers to approximate movement and combat, the core *BattleTech* game rules use specific, codified movement and combat ranges within a mapsheet's hex grid.

Nevertheless, any game system that uses three-dimensional miniatures (such as the complete line of *BattleTech* miniatures sold by Iron Wind Metals; see p. 12) looks better when played on 3-D terrain—hence the photos in this rulebook. Three-dimensional terrain also enhances the feel of the game. When using 3-D terrain, however, players should note that *BattleTech* requires hex-grids.

While the *BattleTech Introductory Box Set*, *Total Warfare* and other rulebooks all require the playing area (whether mapsheets or 3-D terrain) to be a hex grid, some players may wish to learn how to play *BattleTech* as a table-top miniatures game (using rulers and without the hex grid on 3-D terrain). Players can visit www.classicbattletech.com to download a free conversion rules set—*BattleTech Miniatures Rules*—covering the differences between the two types of play.

Standard vs. Advanced Rules

The rules presented in *Total Warfare* are considered the standard rules of *BattleTech*. They represent all tournament-appropriate rules: the "big" *BattleTech* tournaments run directly by Catalyst Game Labs at the Origins International Games Expo®, any Gen Con Game Fair® and many other conventions all use the rules presented in *Total Warfare*.

Advanced rules—as found in *Tactical Operations*, *Strategic Operations* (see *Core Rulebooks*, at right) and so on—provide more depth for virtually every aspect of play. However, the additional complexity makes such rules inappropriate for tournament play.

RULE LEVELS

Previously, *BattleTech* split its rules into levels. However, with the introduction of several new units and their construction systems (notably IndustrialMechs and Support Vehicles), the lines between the levels became blurred. The current rules are simply classified as standard or tournament and advanced or non-tournament, as appropriate.

Reader Response

We hope this product will help you better enjoy your *BattleTech* games. If you have questions or comments about *BattleTech* or any other Catalyst Game Labs (or FanPro/FASA) product, please write to Catalyst Game Labs, PMB 202, 303 91st Ave NE, E502, Lake Stevens, WA 98258, or send an e-mail to precentor_martial@classicbattletech.com. While we read all correspondence, we simply do not have the time to indulge in the luxury of writing detailed answers to general questions. To make it easier for us to answer you quickly, provide us with multiple-choice questions or phrase your query so that we can answer yes or no. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your letter for our reply.

Alternatively, players can visit the forums at classicbattletech.com where they can post reviews of products, ask rules and universe questions and more (see classicbattletech.com, p. 13).

BattleTech: More Than a Game

BattleTech is much more than a board game as presented in the *BattleTech Introductory Box Set*. Vibrant, strong and still growing after twenty years, the fictional universe and the valiant struggles of its dynamic human characters, set against a far-future battlefield, has endeared it to millions of fans and will continue to do so into the future.

To convey the universe to the *BattleTech* community (as well as demonstrate how players can take that universe and integrate it into the game system), Catalyst publishes several different lines of rulebooks, sourcebooks, campaign packs and so on. While not an all-inclusive list, the following provides an overview of the primary series of products published by Catalyst (or FanPro) for *BattleTech*.

As players encounter *BattleTech* sourcebooks and rulebooks beyond this rulebook, they will encounter books that bear the title "*BattleTech*" and others that bear the title "*Classic BattleTech*." What's the difference? *BattleTech* was originally published by FASA Corporation. When FASA Corporation closed its doors the *BattleTech* property was purchased by WizKids LLC, who licensed the rights to continue to produce books in the same vein as FASA Corporation to FanPro LLC. WizKids leapt the timeline forward to create *MechWarrior: Dark Age,* a collectible miniatures game set 65 years into *BattleTech's* future. To help ensure there was no brand confusion, the word "Classic" was added to the *BattleTech* title, though the game and its fictional setting remained the same. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of *BattleTech*, Catalyst Game Labs, the current publisher of *BattleTech*, has secured the rights to revert "*Classic BattleTech*" to "*BattleTech*." However, regardless of what title a book bears, it's all *BattleTech*!

CORE RULEBOOKS

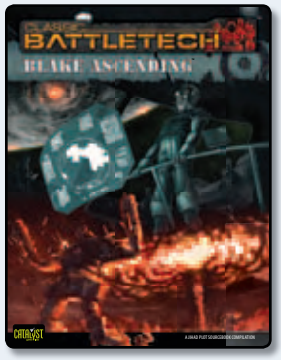
Following the introduction to the game through the *BattleTech Introductory Box Set*, the core rulebooks are the foundation of game play (and the universe) for the various aspects of *BattleTech*. *Total Warfare* is the first in this new series of core rulebooks, delivering a breadth and a visual presentation never before achieved, while *TechManual* (construction rules for the various units found in *Total Warfare*) is the second in this series. These two core rulebooks are followed by four more core rulebooks, which act as the bedrock for any type of game players may wish to undertake: *Tactical Operations* (advanced rules, equipment and units, including construction rules, for planetary conquests), *Strategic Operations* (advanced rules and units, including construction rules, for system conquests and campaigns) *A Time of War: The BattleTech RPG* (a complete game system for role-playing) and *Interstellar Operations* (a rules framework for building and running any type of force through everything from small-scale campaigns to multiwar clashes between stellar empires).

TECHNICAL READOUTS

The ultimate guidebooks to the weaponry and war machines of the 31st century, *BattleTech* technical readouts describe the BattleMechs, Combat Vehicles, Support Vehicles, aerospace fighters, DropShips, WarShips, infantry and more of the *BattleTech* universe. Each fully illustrated entry in these reference books contains complete *BattleTech* game statistics.

Pre-filled record sheets for the various units found in the technical readouts are published separately (see *Record Sheets*).

THE JIHAD



BattleTech has always been a dynamic universe with progressing storylines that shake things up, uniting and shattering factions, developing characters into beloved (or despised) icons that wage a valiant struggle or die a glorious death. Such events breathe life not only into the fiction players read, but the games they play.

The current universe-shaking storyline is the Word of Blake's Jihad, begun in 2005 with the publication of *Dawn of the Jihad* and *Jihad Hot Spots: 3070* (currently in print as a combined volume, *Blake Ascending*). Look for future Jihad books that will continue to shock, amaze and entertain for years to come.

HANDBOOKS

The *The Inner Sphere At a Glance* book in the *BattleTech Introductory Box Set* provides a taste of the Great Houses of the Inner Sphere. Each House represents a fully fleshed-out star-spanning realm, with its own history, cultural identity, fighting style and so on. Each volume in the series is filled with the essential histories, politics, culture and industry that makes up the Great Houses as well as other factions, such as the wild frontiers of the Periphery; the books include rules for personal equipment, creatures, campaign ideas and more for *BattleTech* and *A Time of War: The BattleTech RPG*.

HISTORICALS

The Historical series delves into the pivotal wars of the Inner Sphere's thousand-year history, with important personalities, maps of individual attack waves and regiment listings, along with a campaign framework that allows players to enact every aspect of each of these important events.

War of 3039, Brush Wars and *Operation Klondike* are currently available. More such sourcebooks will appear in the future, allowing players to explore the historical wars that have shaped every faction to date.

HEXPACKS

The *BattleTech Introductory Box Set* contains two playing mapsheets, each with a different map printed on either side. Once players begin using the maps, they'll quickly find that one of the easiest ways to make an already played scenario fresh and new is to play it on a different map. In addition, the style of a playing map (mountain, forest, city and so on) can reinforce the flavor of a given scenario or campaign.

HexPacks are the easiest way to expand a player's terrain options. Each contains one mapsheet with a different map printed on either side. Additionally, each HexPack includes numerous punch-out-and-use hex templates that allow players to quickly and easily modify pre-existing mapsheets from scenario to scenario.

Previous companies (FanPro and FASA Corporation) published a host of paper mapsheets for *BattleTech,* which may still be found in some stores. While the thinness of those paper mapsheets compared to the *Introductory Box Set* and HexPacks thick mapsheets may be a little disconcerting, they are 18" x 22" mapsheets and the hex sizes are identical; they can all be used interchangeably without issue.

RECORD SHEETS

While players can use the blank record sheets found in *TechManual* to fill out any number of units, pre-filled record sheets (such as those found in the *BattleTech Introductory Box Set*) allow players to jump directly into the action.

A selection of print Record Sheet books are available, containing the primary variants found within the corresponding Technical Readout. Additionally, players can order various pre-filled, PDF record sheet books from battlecorps.com/catalog. This includes unabridged PDF versions of the print Record Sheet books, but they differ in that they contain all variants found within the corresponding Technical Readout.

E-PUBLICATIONS

Beyond the printed source material for *BattleTech*, a host of electronic publications further expands the universe in a host of directions, available at battlecorps.com/catalog. From out-of-print vintage products now available in PDF format, to brand new PDF-only series such as Experimental Technical Readouts, Turning Points and Field Reports, to classic *BattleTech* novels now available in epub format for use on any electronic reader: a galaxy of electrons is available to explore!

WHERE TO ORDER

Visit your local game store to purchase the item you're looking for; if they do not have an item, order it through them (feel free to let the store know about www.CatalystGameLabs.com, where they can find a complete list of distributors used by Catalyst Game Labs).

BATTLETECH ERAS

The *BattleTech* universe is a living, vibrant entity that grows each year as more sourcebooks and fiction are published. A dynamic universe, its setting and characters evolve over time within a highly detailed continuity framework, bringing everything to life in a way a static game universe cannot match.

However, the same dynamic energy that makes *BattleTech* so compelling can also make it confusing, with so many sourcebooks published over the years. As people encounter *BattleTech*, get hooked and start to obtain sourcebooks, they need to know where a particular sourcebook is best used along the *BattleTech* timeline.

To help quickly and easily convey the timeline of the *BattleTech* universe—and to allow a player to easily "plug in" a given sourcebook—we've divided *BattleTech* into five major eras. (For those that own the *BattleTech Introductory Box Set*, the year dates in parentheses following each era's title correspond to the maps found in the Inner Sphere at a Glance sourcebook.)

STAR LEAGUE (2570)

Ian Cameron, ruler of the Terran Hegemony, concludes decades of tireless effort with the creation of the Star League, a political and military alliance between all Great Houses and the Hegemony. Star League armed forces immediately launch the Reunification War, forcing the Periphery realms to join. For the next two centuries, humanity experiences a golden age across the thousand light-years of human-occupied space known as the Inner Sphere. It also sees thecreation of the most powerful military in human history.

SUCCESSION WARS (3025, 3030, 3040)

Every last member of First Lord Richard Cameron's family is killed during a coup launched by Stefan Amaris. Following the thirteen-year war to unseat him, the rulers of each of the five Great Houses disband the Star League. General Aleksandr Kerensky departs with eighty percent of the Star League Defense Force beyond known space and the Inner Sphere collapses into centuries of warfare known as the Succession Wars that will eventually result in a massive loss of technology across most worlds.

CLAN INVAS ION (3052, 3057)

A mysterious invading force strikes the coreward region of the Inner Sphere. The invaders, called the Clans, are descendants of Kerensky's SLDF troops, forged into a society dedicated to becoming the greatest fighting force in history. With vastly superior technology and warriors, the Clans conquer world after world. Eventually this outside threat will forge a new Star League, something hundreds of years of warfare failed to accomplish. In addition, the Clans will act as a catalyst for a technological renaissance.

CIVIL WAR (3062, 3067)

The Clan threat is eventually lessened with the complete destruction of a Clan. With that massive external threat apparently neutralized, internal conflicts explode around the Inner Sphere. House Liao conquers its former Commonality, the St. Ives Compact; a rebellion of military units belonging to House Kurita sparks a war with their powerful border enemy, Clan Ghost Bear; the fabulously powerful Federated Commonwealth of House Steiner and House Davion collapses into five long years of bitter civil war.

JIHAD (3067, CURRENT)

Following the Federated Commonwealth Civil War, the leaders of the Great Houses meet and disband the new StarLeague, declaring it a sham. The pseudo-religious Word of Blake—a splinter group of ComStar, the protectors and controllers of interstellar communication—launch the Jihad: an interstellar war that will ultimately pit every faction against each other and even against themselves, as weapons of mass destruction are used for the first time in centuries while new and frightening technologies are likewise unleashed.

DARK AGE (3132+)

Under the guidance of Devlin Stone, the Republic of the Sphere is born at the heart of the Inner Sphere following the Jihad. One of the more extensive periods of peace begins to break out as the 32nd century dawns. The factions, to one degree or another, embrace disarmament and the massive armies of the Succession Wars begin to fade. However, in 3132 eighty percent of interstellar communications collapses, throwing the universe into chaos. Wars almost immediately erupt and the factions begin rebuilding their armies.

SOURCEBOOKS

As Catalyst Game Labs continues to publish new *BattleTech* products (and reprint previously published products), easy reference logos—corresponding to those above—will be printed directly on their back covers. This will allow retailers and players alike to know at a glance what eras are covered by a given product. For additional ease of reference, era logos will also appear on product's sell sheet, on-line products page and so on.

If a Catalyst Game Labs *BattleTech* product does not contain an era logo, then it is considered a core rulebook or supplement to be used across all eras, such as the *Introductory Box Set, Total Warfare* and so on.

OTHER AVENUES

From the moment of *BattleTech*'s inception, it proved flexible and dynamic enough to spawn a host of related products and services that provide additional support to the gaming community. Below are just a few of the most important.

IRON WIND METALS

Iron Wind Metals produces a complete line of metal miniatures for almost any type of *BattleTech* play; all the miniatures shown in this book are part of that line. As players have discovered for years, assembling and painting miniatures is a joy unto itself. The feel of a weighted, beautifully painted miniature provides a whole new level of play experience.

For more information, visit www.ironwindmetals.com.

Ral Partha Europe

For players in Europe (and other appropriate countries outside the United States), *BattleTech* miniatures support is provided by Ral Partha Europe.

For more information visit www.ralparthaeurope.co.uk.

BATTLECORPS

BattleCorps.com is the premiere online fiction source for *BattleTech*. Developed by InMediaRes Productions, LLC, to actively support the *BattleTech* community, their BattleShop offers everything from poster maps to PDF sourcebooks to miniatures to software, and players can order the paper product direct as well. BattleCorps is a one-stop shop for any fan of the *BattleTech*/*MechWarrior* universe. The site's subscription-based services take the *BattleTech* experience to a whole new level, featuring a stable of authors from national best sellers to great new talent, new art, unique product previews, faction-specific message boards, moderated chats with authors and developers, and more.

For more information, visit www.battlecorps.com.

CATALYST DEMO TEAMS

The Catalyst Demo Team is the group of fans that work directly with retailers worldwide to help promote the *BattleTech* game system and universe. Whether running games at conventions or at local retail stores, Catalyst Demo Teams help the gaming community stay in touch through worldwide events and tournaments, as well as supporting local retailers. Visit the Catalyst Demo Teams website to find whether a local retailer in your area is a "Firebase" and how *you* can become a Catalyst Demo Teams member.

For more information, visit www.catalystdemos.com.

CLASSICBATTLETECH.COM

This is the official website for *BattleTech*, where players can get the lowdown on what's happening in the *BattleTech* universe, be the first to preview new products, download exclusive *BattleTech* files, exchange ideas with other fans from around the world and more!

For more information, visit www.classicbattletech.com.

CAMO SPECS ONLINE

Camo Specs Online is the official source for the camo specs of the *BattleTech* universe. See more than 600 different schemes already represented, with frequent updates; talk directly to the artists; view never-before-seen canon schemes; submit your own art and become a CSO artist!

For more information, visit www.camospecs.com.

FIGHTING PIRANNHA GRAPHICS

Fighting Piranha Graphics ships high quality, *BattleTech* waterslide decals worldwide, with more than 600 Clan, House, Periphery and mercenary insignias already available. They'll even take original artwork and create custom decal sheets!

For more information, visit fightingpirannhagraphics.com.

VIRTUAL WORLD ENTERTAINMENT

Test-drive a 'Mech in adrenalin-pumping, full-tilt computer game action as you face off against seven other pilots in the world's most sophisticated civilian combat simulator.

For more information, visit www.mechjock.com.