

# REVIEW THE TROOPS

For five long years the Inner Sphere has known war on a scale not seen in centuries, with the militaries of literally every faction involved in combat to one extent or another. Now, as relative peace appears to be settling over the Inner Sphere, a review of the military forces of the BattleTech universe are in order.

*Classic BattleTech Field Manual: Update* updates all ten Field Manuals, including a history section that will bridge the gap between where the appropriate Field Manual left off and the current year of 3067, as well as a complete and current TO&E for all factions. Updated random 'Mech assignment tables for all factions are also included.

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# FIELD MANUAL: UPDATES



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## FIELD MANUAL: UPDATES

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## GLORY MARCH

Commander Asia Bannor of Raventhir's Iron Hand waited for 0612 local time precisely—every second crucial to today's maneuvers—then throttled her bold redesign of the *Phoenix Hawk* into a forward run. The long-legged BattleMech stomped down the hillside where the Magistracy officer had waited since oh-dark-thirty the previous night. Behind her a column of fire and smoke rose toward the heavens, casting the *P-Hawk*'s shadow across rugged, rocky terrain. The ground shook beneath her feet. Not enough to throw her off balance. Just enough for her to feel the explosion. Asia stomped hard on both steering pedals, lighting off jump jets and launching her forty-five tons of metal and mayhem into the air, over a small rise, then soaring out over the assembled ranks of Capellan Confederation troops.

Why Sun-Tzu Liao, Chancellor of the mighty Confederation, had chosen infantry support for this part of the operation did not matter to the Magistracy officer. Asia only worried about her small part in today's maneuvers.

That, and the alarms that abruptly wailed the threat of multiple targeting locks.

Data-tags flashed over her HUD, attaching intel to a sudden cluster of threat icons. *Mad Cat*. *Behemoth*. *Vedettes*. *Elementals* and *ProtoMechs*. The wide valley was suddenly alive with men and 'Mechs on the move. Asia Bannor blinked hard as lasers criss-crossed right in front of the apex of her jump, burning scarlet and orange ribbons of light back toward the Outworld Alliance position on her wide-right flank and the Ghost Bears wide-left. Nearer, on her immediate right and left, answering volleys lit up from the Diamond Sharks and Federated Suns.

Falling back toward Tukayyid, Asia found her mark below and her first target on the far side of the dusty, desert valley: a Draconis Combine *No-Dachi*, sword upraised in challenge. She hit with knees bent and one last burst of vented plasma to take up the shock. Hit, and stuck, murmuring a slow ten-count to herself.

The Capellan infantry spread out and forward on either side of her position, volley-firing pale emerald darts from their modified laser rifles, one man waving the Confederation flag above their position like some long-ago herald. Asia levered her right arm up and forward and pulled into a long blast from her BattleMech's extended-range laser.

The ruby-bright beam cut just above the *No-Dachi*'s left shoulder. *Tai-i* Bledsoe did not duck away. Instead the samurai slashed his 'Mech-sized katana down into the beam. Rather than a burst of smoke and splatter of molten metal as a normal laser would react to such a tactic, the prism-coated sword shattered the laser beam into a thousand, winking sparks and a fan of beams.

Missiles blossomed overhead in a field of fiery chrysanthemums. Tracers shot up, flared, and died. "Ten," Asia whispered

aloud, throttling into a fast walk and steering a serpentine trail across the valley floor as she wove between Capellan infantry and Diamond Shark Sylphs—careful of that FedSun Goblin!—and closing, always closing, with the Combine-led ranks.

Half the military units were lost behind a burr-ridge that cut the valley in two, but—there!—there was the Nova Cat ensign tucked behind the serpent standard of House Kurita, and infantry carrying the Free Worlds League eagle marching up with Blakist armor to join ranks with the Dragon. Leading the different force-conglomerations came her *Phoenix Hawk* and Bledsoe's *No-Dachi*. Where she shot, his specially-treated sword burst apart the weakened beam. When he returned laser fire, she took to the air again in a series of short, graceful hops to evade.

Until her final jump, which landed her point-blank against the *No-Dachi*, staring through the ferroglass mask of her cockpit straight into the ferroglass eyes of his.

Over the rise came a Clan Wolf *Mad Cat* and a Jade Falcon *Night Gyr*, leading the other half of the assembled forces. Lyran tanks and their Fenrir assault troops trailed out to one side, a mix of Concordat and Rasalhague armor to the other. Behind them marched wave after wave of Com Guard infantry, Hegemony armor and the mercenary delegation from Outreach.

"Nine...eight...seven..."

The Falcon MechWarrior had won calling honor in a series of coin tosses. Asia Bannor kept up her own silent count, and so was not off-mark when the Clanner fast-counted the final three steps. She paused for the extra half-second, then pointed all her weapons into the air and triggered repeating blasts that speared scarlet energy overhead. Her *P-Hawk* was half a beat behind the other three BattleMechs, but right on time as its low-powered beam splashed off of a fury of Shiva aerospace fighters cutting through the red-laced sky overhead. Dawn broke over the far horizon just as the finale of DropShips—led by the Diamond Sharks, the League and the Outworlds Alliance—thundered by in a low-pass display that shook the desert valley, the assembled troops, and likely any bystanders up on the ridgeline or filling any of a dozen nearby towns.

Precentor Martial Victor Steiner-Davion's voice paraded over all comm channels. "I declare this Martial Olympiad OPEN!"

And because it was what every faction waited to hear, he immediately addressed the position of honors. "With an efficiency rating of 99.35 percent, Captain Asia Bannor, of Raventhir's Iron Hand, will lead the glory march."

That half-second had made all the difference. Warmth flushed along the back of Asia's neck as she turned her *Phoenix Hawk* toward the valley's head, striking a slow pace that every foot soldier could match. "With pleasure," she responded.

And behind her, every faction gathered in parade as the armies of the entire Inner Sphere struck out on the march...