

# Warriors wanted!

**H**ad enough of fighting for king and country? Sick of being told what to do and who to kill, and hanging your butt out on the line every day just so some career-climbing general can reap the benefits of your hard work? Do you think you can measure up in the big leagues, and carve your name into the history books for all time? Well, bud, now its time to put up or shut up, because not everyone is cut out for the rough and tumble life of today's mercenary! War's a dangerous business, and for the professional soldier, survival ain't as simple as coming out of the firefight alive!



**Classic BattleTech Field Manual: Mercenaries, Revised** provides an in depth look at modern mercenary operations, including where to go for the best contracts and most active battlegrounds. Over sixty of the Inner Sphere's best-known mercenary commands are profiled here including histories, officers, and favorite tactics. Special rules enable you to bring each of these famous outfits to life in your own Classic BattleTech campaigns, while updated rules provide players with detailed instructions for creating and running their own mercenary commands both on and off the field. Compatible with both the Classic BattleTech board game and the Classic BattleTech RPG system, Classic BattleTech Field Manual: Mercenaries, Revised lets you finally prove once and for all if you have what it takes to find fame and fortune as a real mercenary!

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FOR USE WITH  
CLASSIC  
**BATTLETECH & BATTLETECH RPG**

FIELD MANUAL:

# MERCENARIES

REVISED

Sample file

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## PARTING SHOTS

The piercing wail of missile alarms preceded the incoming hail of high-explosive munitions by only a fraction of a second. As the pounding blasts tore even more precious Starshield armor away from his DRG-5K *Grand Dragon*, Major Shinto Kubusaka, the 60-ton BattleMech's most precious component, felt himself thrown to one side, straining the limits of his five-point harness. Wincing as the pain from a bruised rib lanced through him, he clenched his controls tighter, fighting the inertia of his own motion and the force of almost two dozen warhead explosions. He forced the 'Mech to turn left, presenting fresher armor—and the muzzle of a Lord's Light 2 particle cannon—to his tormentor.

The crosshairs flashed gold and a single pull of his trigger sent a stream of man-made lightning into the lighter *Cobra*, spearing the 'Mech through the chest. Kubusaka allowed himself a grim smile as fire and smoke poured from the wound. The *Cobra* stumbled back a bit, its gait impaired by a partially fused gyro. But the mercenary's smile died as he caught sight of a brilliant flash far to his left. He turned in time to see the flaming wreckage of one of his own *Victors* crashing to the ground, the victim of two Lyran heavyweights.

"Christ Almighty!" an outraged voice rang out, one Kubusaka immediately recognized as that of Lieutenant Jonas Deoring. "Command, Support! I lost Heller! Repeat, Heller is down! No ejection! They're murdering us, here!"

*Damn it!* Kubusaka cursed inwardly. It wasn't supposed to be like this! It was supposed to be a simple objective, a smash-and-run, a parting shot between nobles who now had to accept that the FedCom Civil War was over. Nobody mentioned that the LAAFers would have fortified the position with almost a full mixed battalion. And now, to make matters worse, his subordinates were starting to panic.

Not good for a first mission. Not good at all.

Kubusaka dialed Deoring's channel even as he worked his *Grand Dragon* into a backward march, sending another bolt from his PPC after the Lyran *Cobra* and cursing as the shot missed high. This time, the *Cobra's* reply came with support from a nearby *Falconer*. Another brace of missiles rocked his machine, and the jarring crash of a gauss rifle slug, shattering armor just above its left knee, nearly toppled it.

"Support, this is Command," he barked, grinding his teeth as he fought the *Dragon's* temptation to fall. "Close ranks and fall back by three hundred. Keep calm, or so help me, I'll shoot you myself!"

Switching to the tactical command frequency without waiting for Deoring's reply, Kubusaka spared only a second to take stock of the situation. In all, a full company of mostly fresh Lyran 'Mechs—counting the wounded *Cobra*—still remained in play, forming a wall of metal that his abbreviated and badly mauled company simply could not break. Somewhere beyond them, scattered on the hillside in unrecoverable ruins, lay two of his *Corsair* fighters, shot down by a resistance far more determined

than he had anticipated. Just beyond that, the objective—a series of low buildings supposedly housing supplies of "limited military value"—remained untouched, protected by a second company of 'Mechs and armor.

Kubusaka's men were already down by three machines, and they'd never even come close.

*Too much*, he decided.

"Attention all Intellectuals, this is the Brain," he snapped. "DropShip ETA is—" he glanced at the chronometer on his HUD—"three zero minutes and counting. Begin fallback! I say again: Mission is a bust. Alpha Lance, begin fallback to dust-off site immediately! Command and Support will cover!"

"Retreat!?" came another voice, respectful yet challenging at the same time. "Sir, you cannot—!"

"That's affirmative, Command Two!" Kubusaka shot back; Tae Kwon Kocheke made an excellent exec, but he'd yet to shake that sense of invulnerability that seemed to infect all young Mechwarriors. "You know the score as well as I."

The Lyran *Falconer*, stepping to the fore, opened up with its PPC and gauss rifle, both of which tore into Kubusaka's *Grand Dragon* with enough force to shatter or liquefy over a ton and a half of armor. Even as he fought the controls to stay upright, Kubusaka could feel the cockpit temperature rising. Red panic lights on his command panel told the full story. *Engine breach!* *Damn it!*

"I have him!" Kocheke announced, lighting the sky with crimson and azure beams of coherent light and a spread of missiles from his *Thunderbolt's* shoulder launcher.

All of Kocheke's weapons found the Lyran machine, burning and blasting away armor weakened earlier in the fight, but Kubusaka was not sure if a laser or a missile eventually struck the *Falconer's* gauss rifle. The Lyran 'Mech stumbled backward under the explosion as ruptured capacitors left its entire right arm a mangled stump, then crashed to the ground—down, if only for the moment.

"Command One, are you alright?"

"Affirmative, Command Two," Kubusaka replied, watching his heat scale gradually crawl back into the yellow band. "Continue withdrawal. Mission is a bust."

This time, the reluctance in Kocheke's voice was much less noticeable. "Copy, Command One. Fall back; I will cover."

As Kocheke's voice relayed the withdrawal orders on the tactical channel, Kubusaka nodded—more to himself than his exec—and turned his *Grand Dragon* back toward landing zone, and the inbound DropShip still invisible even to his BattleMech's sensors. This mission was over, for better or worse. Now would come the time to pay the dues and look for more work, even as the foolishness of the Civil War sputtered out. Paying dues, making repairs, and burying the dead—those were always hard. As for finding more work, Kubusaka knew that would be no problem at all.

Something would come up.

Something always did.