

BATTLETECH

INSTANT ACTION



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INTRODUCTION

Instant Action is a supplement for *BattleTech: Total Warfare* intended to add depth and variety to pickup games of BattleTech. The core feature is the **Mission Matrix**, used to select scenarios. These scenarios can also be used in a *BattleTech: Mercenaries* campaign.

Note: This is not a complete game experience. A copy of the rules is required to use this supplement – either *Total Warfare* or the *BattleMech Manual*. You'll also need the standard game elements of mapsheets, record sheets, dice, and figures to represent units.

CREDITS

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Writing: Robert Anderson

Editing and Layout: Matt Hopper

Very special thanks to everyone who helped playtest! Read, distribute, and enjoy!

HOW TO USE THIS SUPPLEMENT

To use the Mission Matrix, each player privately chooses their agenda from the following list: **Confront, Hold, Recon, Destroy, or Salvage**. These agendas are your force's overall goal in the battle you're fighting and will determine the general tone of the scenario you play. Five of the scenarios are symmetrical, resulting when both players choose the same agenda. The rest are asymmetrical scenarios, which cast players in two separate roles based on their agenda choices.

For example, Bombing Run has the player who chose Destroy delivering a set of bombs to the player who chose Hold. Both players choose their agendas in secret and reveal them simultaneously.

Tip: When choosing agendas, you can simply cover a die with your hand, using the numbers on the table to determine which agenda you're representing. You could even randomly roll to determine an agenda if you want a surprise challenge. If so, reroll sixes to get a result between one and five.

MISSION MATRIX

	1-CONFRONT	2-HOLD	3-RECON	4-DESTROY	5-SALVAGE
1-CONFRONT	Circle of Equals	Capture and Control	Scanner Drop	Death before Dishonor	Take Intact
2-HOLD	Capture and Control	King of the Hill	Running Retreat	Bombing Run	One Man's Trash
3-RECON	Scanner Drop	Running Retreat	Scout Clash	High Risk Extraction	Analyze or Recover
4-DESTROY	Death before Dishonor	Bombing Run	High Risk Extraction	Hot Potato	Under No Circumstances
5-SALVAGE	Take Intact	One Man's Trash	Analyze or Recover	Under No Circumstances	Get The Goods

AGENDAS

The five Agendas are intended to reflect your force's goal in the strategy surrounding the battle.

You're picking the reason you're fighting, rather than picking your objective.

CONFRONT

Whether you're forcing the enemy off territory or trying to whittle them down, Confront is about engaging them directly. You might not simply be walking up to them – you could be laying in ambush, targeting a specific enemy commander, or trying to capture a valuable installation – but Confront is about facing the enemy head on.

HOLD

Hold is about keeping what you have and breaking the enemy while you do it, involving strategic choke points, important facilities, or valuable technology. You may or may not be playing static defense, but you'll at least be on the defensive, letting the enemy come to you.

RECON

Information is a weapon as deadly as any laser. Recon missions take advantage of that – battlefield searches to identify a target, planting a beacon to summon heavy artillery fire, or lightning strikes to capture an identified objective. Electronic gear such as active probes, TAGs, and NARC beacon launchers will come into their own in some Recon missions.

DESTROY

Keep it out of their hands at all costs. Destroy is focused on objective play, with an emphasis on objectives that you *don't* want to keep. Delivering bombs to a location, crushing other objectives underfoot, and otherwise wreaking havoc. Bring 'Mechs with heavy armor for reaching your destination, and hand actuators to carry hazardous cargo.

SALVAGE

We're here for the paycheck, people, not the politics. Salvage is critical on the battlefield, whether it's capturing parts of enemy 'Mechs to keep your own running or securing work sites for salvage crews. You can expect to be out to secure valuables – whether by searching for them, taking them off the enemy, or holding them against a push from hostiles. Bring 'Mechs with hand actuators – you'll want them.

SETUP

THE BATTLEFIELD

Instant Action missions are built around a battlefield consisting of two mapsheets, placed long-edge to long-edge to produce a 32 × 17 hex area. This is also the form factor of the current double-sided neoprene BattleMats, making one of these a suitable battlefield for Instant Action. Any pair of mapsheets or single BattleMat should be suitable for any scenario. Most scenarios will have one player choose the battlefield mapsheets while the other chooses the deployment zones.

BUILDING A FORCE

Instant Action scenarios are built around battles between even forces. Both players should agree on rules for building a force before the game begins, such as time period or era, number of units, and **Battle Value (BV)** limits. Instant Action recommends playing with forces of 6000 BV, three to six units per force, using technology through the Clan Invasion era – but this shouldn't limit you or your games.

For example, players wanting to a game set during the Succession Wars might agree to units available during 3028, up to four units per force, and a total budget of 4500 BV. In contrast, another group of players might want a Company against a Clan Nova with units available in 3067, up to 12 units per force, and a total budget of 15000 BV.

Bear in mind that Instant Action scenarios are written to accommodate smaller engagements – roughly four units per side – and that higher numbers might skew scenarios by increasing the size of the battlefield, etc.

Additionally, Instant Action is fully capable of combined arms play and supports 'Mechs, Protomechs, Combat Vehicles (including VTOLs), Infantry, and Battle Armor.

The recommended force size, 6000 BV with three to six units, corresponds to a **Scale 2** game as described in *BattleTech: Mercenaries*. However, **Scale 1** games, consisting of around 3000 BV and played on a single mapsheet with one to three units per side, are more approachable for new players – and also match the default starting scale in the *Mercenaries Chaos Campaign*. Each Instant Action scenario includes a brief guide for modifying scale.

GAME CONCEPTS

Instant Action introduces a few unique concepts: **Objectives** and **Analyzing**, which are explained in further detail below.

OBJECTIVES

More often than not, you'll find yourself fighting over some valuable, crucial object, rather than simply destroying the enemy. These are referred to as **Objectives** and can be anything from crates of Germanium to 'Mech-sized satchel charges, represented with the following rules depending on the carrying unit type:

'Mechs with two functional hand actuators may carry one objective without any issue – carrying such an objective doesn't interfere with firing weapons mounted in its arms, as it can pass the objective from one hand to the other. Alternatively, a 'Mech with two functional hand actuators may carry two objectives but may not fire any arm-mounted weapons while doing so. If a 'Mech has one functioning hand actuator, it may carry an objective but may not fire any weapons located in that arm. If a 'Mech has no functioning hand actuators, the objective is magnetically clamped to it, straining the gyro. A 'Mech carrying an objective without any functioning hand actuators suffers a –1 penalty to its Walking MP. If a 'Mech holding an objective loses a hand actuator,

it immediately drops the objective in the hex in front of it. This occurs even if the 'Mech still has another hand actuator.

Units that end their movement phase in the same hex as an objective can pick it up immediately. If a 'Mech carrying an objective falls, it drops the objective in the hex in front of it. Objectives never suffer damage and can't be destroyed unless specified by the mission brief.

If any unit sprints or spends Jumping MP while carrying an objective, it drops the objective in the first hex it enters by doing so.

Any time a unit's Walking/Cruising Movement Points (MP) are affected by carrying Objectives, ensure that the Running/Flanking/Sprinting MP are recalculated accordingly.

Ground combat vehicles with wheeled or tracked movement use tow cables to drag objectives, suffering the same -1 Cruising MP penalty as 'Mechs without hand actuators. Hover vehicles can also drag objectives, but their Cruising MP is halved. Any time a ground vehicle is damaged and rolls on the Motive Hits Table, even if the result does not indicate a Motive Hit, the vehicle immediately drops the Objective in the hex behind it.

VTOLs can carry Objectives with tow cables suspended beneath them, but they may not use Flanking MP while doing so. Any successful attack against VTOLs causes them to drop the Objective in the hex directly in front of them.

Bipedal Protomechs can carry Objectives if they are not armed with a Main Gun but may not use Jumping MP or make any attacks. Additionally, their Walking MP is halved. Any hit causes a Protomech to immediately drop the Objective into the hex directly in front of them. Quadrupedal Protomechs and Protomechs armed with Main Guns may not carry Objectives.

Bipedal Battle Armor squads with at least three troopers can carry an Objective together but may not make any attacks while doing so and can also only use 1 Walking MP per turn (no Jumping, UMU, or

VTOL MP). If the squad is reduced to two troopers, they immediately drop the Objective in any adjacent hex on the same or lower level. Mechanized infantry platoons can carry Objectives but suffer -1 MP. Other conventional Infantry and quadrupedal Battle Armor may not carry Objectives.

Any battle armor unit which enters any transport immediately drops an Objective in the transport's hex. The transport can then immediately pick up the objective.

Any unit equipped with a Lift Hoist may carry an additional Objective for each Lift Hoist without MP penalty.

Battlefield Support Asset units use the same rules as above - check the unit's Asset card for its movement type (e.g., "t" for tracked, "h" for hover, "w" for wheeled). Any time an Asset makes a Destroy Check, it drops any Objective in the hex immediately behind it.

Units may not directly "hand-off" objectives to other units - an objective must be dropped and then picked up according to the rules above.

ANALYZING

Several scenarios, particularly from the Recon agenda, require units to **Analyze** other units and thereby acquire signals intelligence. All units have sensors and electronic warfare systems capable of analyzing targets over time, but certain pieces of equipment can enhance analyzing ability. Units can Analyze by the following means:

- End two consecutive turns within two hexes of the target
- If equipped with any active probe type, end two consecutive turns within probe range of the target
- Hit the target with TAG three times
- Hit the target with a NARC beacon twice
- Sever a target's limb and pick up that limb or occupy the limb's hex at the end of the scenario

When affected by hostile ECM, the above means take any unit one additional turn to complete as the ECM scrambles the target's signal profile.

Conventional Infantry, Battle Armor infantry, and Industrial units not intended for combat, may not normally Analyze. Industrial units with no fire control system or basic fire control systems cannot Analyze targets at all; only Industrial units with advanced fire control systems may Analyze. Infantry units may only Analyze a unit if: they end two consecutive turns in the same hex as the target; are equipped with an active probe, TAG, battle armor C³ system, or remote sensor dispenser; or they possess the Improved Sensors quirk.

CRIPPLING DAMAGE AND FORCED WITHDRAWAL

In addition to the above unique concepts, Instant Action also incorporates Crippling Damage and Forced Withdrawal (for 'Mechs, see *BattleMech Manual*, page 81; for all units, see *Total Warfare*, page 258). If a unit receives Crippling Damage and is placed into Forced Withdrawal, it must use (at a minimum) Walking or Cruising MP to move as far as possible towards its home map edge; Crippled units under Forced Withdrawal do not need to use Running/Flanking, Sprinting, or Jumping movement.

ROLL OFF

When Instant Action calls for a **Roll Off**, both players roll 2d6, rerolling ties, until a higher result wins.

CENTER OF THE MAP

Several scenarios call for players to identify the center of the map. In the fairly common case that the center is actually on the exact line between two hexes, the player who sets up the map chooses which will be counted as the center for this scenario.

MISSIONS

CIRCLE OF EQUALS

[CONFRONT VS CONFRONT]

Type: Meeting Engagement

"Attention! This is Star Colonel Aisa Thastus of the Jade Falcons. I claim these islands in the name of Khan Marthe Pryde. I bring to this Trial of Possession a full Binary of 'Mechs."

"This is Spectre One, commander. I refute your claim to this territory. I bring two Lances of warriors to end this struggle."

"Two Lances against two Stars of Jade Falcons? You underestimate us!"

"Do you wish to rebid your positions, Star Colonel?"

"Neg! You will suffer for your insolence!"

"Well bargained and done. Come and get me!"

MISSION BRIEF

This is the simplest mission type, a stand-up fight. During setup, both players Roll Off, with the winner setting up the battlefield. The other player determines their home map edge first, with the opponent assuming the opposite edge.

During Turn One, both forces move onto the battlefield from their respective home map edges.

VICTORY

The last player to have active units on the field wins. If both forces are reduced to zero active units on the same turn, the result is a draw.

SCALE 1

No modifications.

CAPTURE AND CONTROL

[CONFRONT VS HOLD]

Type: Assault, Defend, Pushback

“Let them cross the river. Once they do, push them back – hard as you can. Shock and awe will do the real work. They still don’t know we’re here. Final checks, everyone. Boot up, and let’s bag some kills.”

MISSION BRIEF

The Confront player storms a position the Hold player defends.

The Hold player sets up the battlefield, then identifies the central hex and the two hexes equidistant between the center and the short map edges. These three hexes are the Control Zones. If one of these zones is in water of Depth 2 or greater, or on an elevation higher than Level 3, move it the shortest possible distance to have it not be in Depth 2 water or Level 3 height.

The Confront player chooses one of the long map edges to be their home edge. The Hold player takes the other edge.

The Hold player sets up their units anywhere in the quarter of the map closest to their map edge. The Confront player moves their units onto the map from their edge during the first movement phase.

The Hold player begins play in control of all three control zones. Each time a unit ends a turn in a control zone, that player takes control of the zone until the opponent takes control of it. If both players have units in a control zone, the player with more tonnage in the zone takes control of it. If players have equal tonnage in a control zone, the Confront player controls it.

VICTORY

The game ends at the end of Turn Seven. The player who controls more control zones is the winner.

SCALE 1

The game ends at the end of Turn Five rather than Turn Seven.

SCANNER DROP

[CONFRONT VS RECON]

Type: Recon, Flank, Retreat

“The good news is the Mark 23 beacons are a lot stealthier than the last model. Once they’ve been planted, if the enemy doesn’t keep perfect track of them, they’ll never find them, and we’ll get perfect target data. Bad news? We can’t deploy them by air. One guess who’s been picked to place them.”

MISSION BRIEF

The Recon force has been sent to deploy artillery homing beacons to prepare for a later offensive and wandered right into an unscheduled patrol from the Confront force. The Confront player’s goal is to force the Recon units to retreat or destroy them.

The Confront player begins by setting up the battlefield. The Recon player chooses a home map edge, while the Confront player’s home is the opposite edge. Identify the following points on the map:

- The center of the map
- The highest elevation on the map
- The lowest elevation on the map (If any depths below 0 are present, including water)
- One “point of interest” on the map agreed on by both players (such as an important building, unique terrain feature, or some other focal point)
- The first location in which a unit is destroyed during the battle (this will obviously be identified during the battle itself)
- A secret location chosen by the recon player (who writes down the hex number or an unambiguous description of the location). The Confront player doesn’t know this location until it’s used, but it must be at least ten hexes from the Recon player’s map edge and at least six hexes from any other objective

In cases where multiple hexes are tied for highest and lowest elevation, players should agree on which hex should be treated as the highest and lowest. These should ideally be spread out from other points.

The Recon units move onto the board from their map edge during Turn One. Half of the Confront units move onto the board from their map edge during Turn One, while the other half move in from either of the edges neither player owns, Confront player’s choice.

The Recon units use the Forced Withdrawal rules. At the end of any turn, a Recon unit which is not withdrawing may plant a beacon in any of the above points. Afterwards, Confront units may destroy these beacons by not moving while in them (this requires them to move into the hex, then hold still in the following turn). A Recon unit may later plant a replacement beacon in the same hex as a destroyed beacon. If a Recon unit is equipped with Remote Sensor Dispensers, it may drop a beacon at any time during its movement, rather than at the end of its movement. If a Recon unit is equipped with a NARC launcher, its NARC beacons may be fired at the ground and count as sensor beacons for this purpose.

VICTORY

The game ends at the end of Turn Seven. If there are beacons in at least half of the hexes listed above, the Recon player wins. Otherwise, the Confront player wins.

SCALE 1

The “point of interest” and “secret location” hexes are not used.

DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR

[CONFRONT VS DESTROY]

Type: Assault, Breakthrough

"I'd rather see our standard tattered or burned than in the hands of a pirate. Move to intercept. I don't care how many of them you have to kill. I don't care how many of you come back alive. Do not let them get away with our colors. This is for the honor of the flag."

MISSION BRIEF

The Confront force has captured some crucial component of the Destroy player's honor – a copy of the Remembrance, a regimental standard, or an important aristocratic pilot. The Confront player's objective is to escape the battlefield with this item, while the Destroy player's goal is to destroy the objective to keep it out of enemy hands. The Destroy player's units can destroy the objective. To do so, a unit must pick up the objective and then spend no MP in the following turn. If it still holds the objective at the end of that turn, it is destroyed.

The Destroy player sets up the battlefield. The Confront player begins by choosing a short map edge to be their home edge. The opposite edge is the Destroy player's edge. The Confront player then secretly chooses one of their units to start carrying an objective. Their goal is to deliver the objective to the Destroy player's map edge.

The Confront player sets up their units within eight hexes of their own map edge. Then the Destroy player sets up half their units within three hexes of the Confront player's map edge. The other half of their units will move onto the map during Turn One, starting from either of the long map edges and at least five hexes from any of the Confront player's units. After these units move onto the map, the Confront player reveals which unit was chosen to carry the objective.

While carrying the objective, no unit may spend more than 7 MP, or more than 4 MP if jumping or using VTOL movement.

VICTORY

The Confront player wins if a unit carries the objective off the Destroy player's map edge. The Destroy player wins by destroying the objective. If neither player has won by the end of Turn Eight, the game is a draw.

SCALE 1

The game ends at the end of Turn Six instead of Turn Eight.

TAKE INTACT

[CONFRONT VS SALVAGE]

Type: Flank, Pushback

"Will you look at the specs on that bad boy. Everyone see them? That armor, those lasers...you know, I've been feeling the urge for a new ride. Not a scratch on it, everyone. Kill the rest, but we're taking this one home."

MISSION BRIEF

The Confront player must inflict some damage with their most valuable unit and then get it out, while the Salvage player wants to capture it.

The Confront player sets up the battlefield. The Salvage player chooses one map edge to be their home edge. The Confront player's home edge is the opposite map edge. Both players' units will move onto the map during Turn One.

The Confront player chooses one of their 'Mech or vehicle units to be the Prize. This unit should be the most powerful unit in the Confront player's force, the most technologically advanced, or the force commander's ride. All successful attacks against the Prize automatically roll on either the 'Mech Kick Location Table or Vehicle Hit Location Table – Sides (Defender chooses which side if the attack is equal distance from both sides, such as from the direct front). Note that this means that if the Prize has partial cover, attacks against it will have no effect. Attacks which inflict no damage, such as NARC beacons, use the table they would normally use.

The Salvage player's units may not attack the Prize if any other Confront unit is closer to the attacking unit and is possible to hit and not prone, as the other units are acting to draw fire off the Prize. The Confront player's units also use forced withdrawal.

VICTORY

The scenario ends at the end of Turn Eight.

If the Prize has been destroyed, immobilized, has lost a leg, or has had its MP reduced to 0, the Salvage player is the winner. If the Prize has inflicted critical hits on at least two enemy units or destroyed at least one enemy unit and then has withdrawn from the battlefield, the Confront player is the winner.

If neither player has achieved the above conditions, the result is a draw.

SCALE 1

The game ends at the end of Turn Six instead of Turn Eight.

KING OF THE HILL

[HOLD VS HOLD]

Type: Meeting Engagement

“Key terrain, my ass. The commander and his social general pals just want to have a picnic overlooking the valley, and the enemy happens to be obstructing the view.”

MISSION BRIEF

Both players fight for control of the territory in the center of the map.

Players Roll Off. The winner sets up the battlefield, while the loser chooses one map edge to be their map edge – their opponent takes the opposite edge.

Identify the central hex. This hex and the six hexes immediately adjacent to it are the Control Zone. Both players use the Forced Withdrawal rules, but units in the Control Zone never withdraw.

Both players’ units move onto the board during Turn One.

At the end of each turn, each player gains Victory Points for each unit in the control zone. Infantry and Battle Armor units do not contribute Victory Points. The number of Victory Points gained is determined by the unit’s starting Walk/Cruise speed. Units with Walk/Cruise MP of 5 or higher grant two Victory Points, while units with Walk/Cruise MP of 4 or lower grant three Victory Points.

VICTORY

The game ends at the end of Turn Ten, or when all units have been destroyed or are retreating, whichever comes first. The player with the most Victory Points is the winner, and in the case of a tie the game is a draw.

SCALE 1

The game ends at the end of Turn Eight instead of Turn Ten.

RUNNING RETREAT

[HOLD VS RECON]

Type: Pursuit, Retreat

“Hey, lieutenant? I’m seeing something on the sensors, got a weird ping on the radar, and— CONTACT! Fusion engine startup, woah, those are big signatures. We need to get out of here, no— CONTACT! Another engine, starting up behind it! We need to push through!”

MISSION BRIEF

The Recon force has been caught on the way home by a patrol from the Hold player and has to cross the map to return to base.

First, the Hold player sets up the battlefield. Half of their units, rounding down, are set up with the Hidden Unit rules - write down their position now. Then the Recon player chooses one short map edge to be their Escape Zone. If the Recon units are subject to Forced Withdrawal, they will withdraw towards the Escape Zone. During the first turn, the Recon force moves onto the battlefield from the map edge opposite the Escape Zone, while the Hold force’s units which aren’t hidden move onto the battlefield from the Escape Zone.

The Hold player’s hidden units are revealed at the end of turn four, if they haven’t been already.

Recon units may Analyze the Hold units. Once they have Analyzed at least two thirds of the enemy’s units, they may start escaping.

VICTORY

Once the Recon player has Analyzed at least two-thirds of the enemy’s units, they may leave the battle by moving off the Escape Zone. The game ends when all Recon units have either left the map, been destroyed, or been immobilized. The Hold player wins if they have destroyed or immobilized half or more of the Recon force, while the Recon player wins if more than half of their units have moved off the board edge.

SCALE 1

The Recon player only needs to Analyze at least half the Hold player’s units instead of two-thirds.

BOMBING RUN

[HOLD VS DESTROY]

Type: Breakthrough, Defend

"You take a standard shipping container, cram it with as much Class-E ordnance as it can hold, rig up a simple fuse, then coat the whole thing with grease. Now when a 'Mech throws it, it should stick, hence, 'sticky bomb.' Think of a better way to knock the engines off a dropship, I'm all ears."

MISSION BRIEF

The Destroy player is trying to deliver a set of bombs to the Hold player's edge, while the Hold player works to intercept them.

First, the Hold player sets up the battlefield. Then the Destroy player chooses one short map edge to be their home edge – the Hold player receives the other edge.

Up to four Destroy units start the game carrying Objectives – if the Destroy player has less than four, and the rules are followed, one can carry multiple objectives. These objectives are improvised 'Mech-scale satchel charges. The Destroy player can detonate any of the objectives freely at the end of any phase.

If an objective detonates, it deals 200 area of effect (AE) damage, allocated in blocks of 20, to every unit in the same hex, and 20 AE damage allocated in blocks of 5 to every unit in the six adjacent hexes.

The Hold player's units start the game set up within four hexes of their map edge. The Destroy player's units move on from their map edge during Turn One.

When a Destroy unit carrying an objective reaches the Hold player's home edge, they may plant it, putting it just off the board (possibly in a half hex) and then participating in the rest of the battle. The satchel charge is no longer part of the game and cannot be interfered with further.

VICTORY

The game ends at the end of Turn Seven. If the Destroy player has delivered at least three objectives to the Hold player's map edge, they win, while the Hold player wins if they delivered less than three.

SCALE 1

Only two Destroy units start the game carrying Objectives instead of four, and the Destroy player wins if two Objectives have been delivered to the battlefield.

ONE MAN'S TRASH

[HOLD VS SALVAGE]

Type: Objective Raid, Strike

"You know, I'm pretty sure I saw this on Solaris VII once..."

MISSION BRIEF

The Salvage player is trying to Analyze a set of scrap piles to recover a data core, while the Hold player tries to stop them.

First, the Hold player sets up the battlefield. The Hold player then places six Scrap markers on the board, at least three hexes from any map edge and from each other. The Salvage player then chooses their home map edge, and the Hold player takes the opposite map edge.

The Hold player's forces start the game set up within four hexes of their map edge. The Salvage player's forces move onto the board during Turn One. The Hold player's forces use Forced Withdrawal.

One of the scrap tokens contains the data core, and the Salvage player's objective is to capture the data core. To identify the data core, the Salvage player must Analyze scrap tokens. After a scrap token has been Analyzed, remove it. After three scrap tokens have been Analyzed, randomly determine which of the other three has the data core. Once the data core has been identified, remove all remaining scrap tokens and place an objective in the data core's hex.

VICTORY

The game ends at the end of Turn Eight. The Salvage player wins if one of their units is holding the data core at the end of the game. Otherwise, the Hold player wins.

SCALE 1

Only four scrap markers are set up instead of six, and the data core is identified after two have been Analyzed. The game ends at the end of Turn Six instead of Turn Eight.

SCOUT CLASH

[RECON VS RECON]

Type: Meeting Engagement, Recon, Flank, Pursuit

"I don't care who you are, back in the world. You give away our position one more time, I'll bleed you. Real quiet like. Leave you here. Got that?"

MISSION BRIEF

Two teams of scouts under emissions control have wandered into each other at point blank range, and a firefight over recovering data breaks out.

Players Roll Off and the winner sets up the battlefield. Place a Data Node in the center of the map. Then, starting with the loser of the Roll Off, players take turns placing Data Nodes in other hexes. Each must be at least four hexes from any map edge and from any other Data Node. Continue until six Data Nodes have been placed and numbered 1 through 6.

Neither player has a home edge in this scenario. Instead, after placing all Data Nodes, both players secretly write down the hexes their units start in, choosing any hex at least two hexes away from a Data Node. Players then reveal their choices simultaneously. If two players choose identical hexes, the unit belonging to the player who won the initial roll off is displaced into an adjacent hex. Afterwards, the battle begins.

The Data Nodes can be Analyzed. Whenever a unit Analyzes a Data Node, note down the number of the Data Node it Analyzed. Units that have Analyzed at least one Data Node can retreat off any map edge.

VICTORY

The game ends at the end of Turn Six. Once the game ends, both players note down which units they own which either retreated or are still on the map and able to move at least two hexes per turn. For each unique data Node Analyzed among these units, players receive one Victory Point. For example, if a player had two units, one had Analyzed Node 1, and one had Analyzed Node 1, 2, and 3, they would receive three Victory Points, as duplicates of the same Node aren't valuable. The player with the most Victory Points wins, and the game is a draw in case of a tie.

SCALE 1

Only four data nodes are placed instead of six.

HIGH RISK EXTRACTION

[RECON VS DESTROY]

Type: Strike, Recon

“Sir, you know as well as I do what’s going to happen to them if we leave them out here. There’s not going to be a trial, there’s not going to be a jury. They’re going to take them out behind the chemical sheds and put one round each in the backs of their heads.”

MISSION BRIEF

The Recon player must rescue a team of hidden spies before the Destroy player can kill them.

The Destroy player sets up the battlefield, then secretly writes down six hexes which contain agents. Each agent must be at least four hexes from each other and from any map edge, may not be in water, and may only be in hexes between height 0 and 3. After the Destroy player has chosen the Spies’ locations, the Recon player chooses any map edge to be their starting edge – the Destroy player takes the opposite.

Recon units begin set up in any hex within three hexes of their map edge. Destroy units will move onto the map during Turn One.

The Recon player locates Agents in the exact same manner as finding a unit with the hidden unit rules. The Destroy player is responsible for tracking their locations and revealing them to the Recon player when appropriate. To represent the agents having encrypted emergency beacons, any Recon unit which doesn’t have an active probe receives an active probe with a three-hex range. Once a Recon unit has located an agent, it is treated as an objective. The Destroy player, who knows where the agents are, has the goal of killing them. If a Destroy unit begins its turn in the same hex as a revealed agent and does not move, the agent is killed. Infantry, Battle Armor, and Protomech units kill an agent simply by beginning their turn in the same hex – their smaller size makes them better able to hunt down and kill a hiding person.

VICTORY

The game ends in a Recon victory when the Recon player has removed three agents from the map, or a Destroy victory when the Destroy player has killed four agents, whichever comes first.

SCALE 1

The Destroy player only chooses four hexes to contain agents instead of six. The Recon player wins by removing two Agents before the Destroy player kills three.

ANALYZE OR RECOVER

[RECON VS SALVAGE]

Type: Recon, Objective Raid

“Now, according to our prisoner, they’re here because of an ancient conspiracy that left centuries old data cores with near magical powers scattered across the sphere in a map leading to the location of an ancient ‘Mech with a ‘lava gun’, and that’s obviously bullshit, so we need to grab some intel on what’s really going on...”

MISSION BRIEF

Possession is nine tenths of the law – but uploading your claim matters too. The Recon player must Analyze all six objectives before the Salvage player runs away with four.

The Salvage player sets up the map. Starting with the Recon player, players take turns placing six objectives on the map. Each must be at least six hexes from any map edge and at least three hexes from another objective. Then the Recon player picks any map edge to be the shared starting edge for *both* players. Both players’ units will move onto the map from this edge during Turn One.

The recon player can Analyze objectives in this scenario. Neither side can pick up objectives until Turn Four begins. Once a Salvage unit has picked up an objective, it can leave the game by any map edge but cannot return.

VICTORY

The game ends when the Recon player has Analyzed all six objectives, or the Salvage player has left the board with four, whichever comes first. If the Recon player Analyzed six objectives, they win, while if the Salvage player left with four, they win. Otherwise, the game ends at the end of Turn Nine, in which case if the Recon player has Analyzed at least five objectives, they win, and the Salvage player wins if they have left with at least three. Otherwise, the game is a draw.

SCALE 1

Only four Objectives are set up instead of six. The Recon player must Analyze all four before the Salvage player leaves with two.

HOT POTATO

[DESTROY VS DESTROY]

Type: Meeting Engagement

"TICK, TICK, TICK, TICK, TICK..."

MISSION BRIEF

Somebody set us up the bomb! Both players wrestle over a bomb that might detonate at any time.

Players roll off. The winner sets up the battlefield. Place an objective in the center of the map. Starting with the loser of the roll off, players set up their units anywhere on the map five hexes or further away from the objective and three hexes away from any other unit. If players have unequal numbers of units, group them like you will for activating them with initiative.

VTOL units may not pick up the objective, and units may not deliberately set the objective down in this scenario. The objective can instead be transferred to another unit by making any type of physical attack except a kick or death from above. After the first time the objective has been transferred to another unit, it activates. At the end of each turn in which the objective is activated and has *not* transferred from one unit to another, roll 1d6. On a 4, 5, or 6, the objective explodes, immediately destroying the unit carrying it, inflicting 200 AE damage in clusters of 20 on every other unit in the hex, and inflicting 20 AE damage in clusters of 5 on every unit in every adjacent hex.

VICTORY

At the end of Turn Six, if the objective hasn't exploded, it immediately explodes. The owner of the unit holding the objective loses, and the other player is the winner.

If the owner of the unit holding the objective has destroyed every enemy unit, they safely disarm the bomb and win. If the bomb never activated, the game is a draw.

SCALE 1

No modifications.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES

[DESTROY VS SALVAGE]

Type: Objective Raid, Strike, Breakthrough

"Anybody can get the goods. The hard part's getting away."

"Uh-huh."

"You plan a good enough getaway, you could steal Fort Cameron."

"Fort Cameron's gone."

"What did I tell you?"

MISSION BRIEF

The Destroy player must keep the objectives out of enemy hands, while the Salvage player must carry them away.

The Salvage player sets up the battlefield, and the Destroy player chooses one map edge to be their starting edge, while the Salvage player takes the other. Starting with the Salvage player, players take turns placing objectives until there are five on the map. Each objective must be placed exactly equidistant between the two players' starting edges, at least five hexes from any map edge, and at least three hexes from any other objective.

During Turn One, both players' units walk onto the board from their starting edge.

VICTORY

The Destroy player can destroy objectives by having a unit begin its move in the same hex as the objective and not move. Once an objective is destroyed, it is permanently removed from play. Once they've picked up an objective, the Salvage player's units can leave the board along any map edge, drop off their objectives, and return in the following movement phase by moving on from the same hex they left by. Once an objective has been dropped off, it is permanently removed from play.

The game ends at the end of Turn Eight, or once all objectives have been removed from play, whichever comes first. The Salvage player wins if they have dropped off at least three objectives, while the Destroy player wins if they have destroyed at least three.

SCALE 1

The game ends at the end of Turn Six instead of Turn Eight.

GET THE GOODS

[SALVAGE VS SALVAGE]

Type: Meeting Engagement, Objective Raid

"Alright everyone, we're low on parts. Command says they'll pay big money for any spare parts we can grab. And I know just the place to grab them. See that nice, shiny lance of enemy 'Mechs across the field? That's our payday."

MISSION BRIEF

Desperate for parts and supplies, both players fight to capture enemy components.

Players roll off, and the player who wins the roll off sets up the battlefield, then the player who lost chooses their map edge. The other player takes the opposite edge. Both players use the Forced Withdrawal rules in this scenario.

Begin by placing an objective in the center of the board. Each time a non-'Mech unit or a section of a 'Mech is destroyed, place a new objective in the hex it was destroyed in. These objectives are valuable components that need to be carried off the map. Units carrying objectives may leave the map via any map edge and, provided they are not in Forced Withdrawal, return to the game from the same hex they left via in the following movement phase. When a unit leaves the board carrying an objective, its owner gains one Victory Point, and the objective is removed from play.

VICTORY

The game ends at the end of Turn Eight, or after all units have been destroyed or forced to withdraw, whichever comes first. The player with the most Victory Points is the winner, and a tie leads to a draw.

SCALE 1

No modifications.

MERCENARY CAMPAIGN INTEGRATION

While Instant Action is intended for pickup games, it can also be used in the **Mercenary Chaos Campaign** introduced in *BattleTech: Mercenaries*. There are two methods detailed below:

The first method is to substitute Instant Action scenarios for the Tracks used in a Mercenary Chaos Campaign. Each Instant Action scenario has a Type which shares the name of the Tracks it can replace. For example, Bombing Run is a Breakthrough-type scenario, so it can replace the Breakthrough track. Determining the role for each player can occasionally require interpretation – as long as players agree, it should be easy.

TYPE	SCENARIO
Assault	Capture and Control, Death Before Dishonor
Breakthrough	Death Before Dishonor, Bombing Run, Under No Circumstances
Defend	Bombing Run, Capture and Control
Flank	Scanner Drop, Take Intact
Meeting Engagement	Circle of Equals, King of the Hill, Scout Clash, Hot Potato, Get The Goods
Objective Raid	One Man's Trash, Under No Circumstances, Analyze or Recover, Get The Goods
Pursuit	Running Retreat, Scout Clash
Pushback	Capture and Control, Take Intact
Recon	Analyze or Recover, Scout Clash, Scanner Drop
Retreat	Scanner Drop, Running Retreat

In the second method, players can take on one of the following contracts, which can be played in any *BattleTech: Mercenaries* campaign. Use the random contract generation tables to determine the contract's Employer and System (see *Hot Spots: Hinterlands*, page 132). Instant Action supplies the scenarios used in the contracts. For all elements of the campaign besides scenario selection, follow the rules in *BattleTech: Mercenaries* or *Hot Spots: Hinterlands*.

Each contract progresses at one track per month and can be played against any other contract with the Type of Action: Instant. Do not roll on a Command Complications table; instead, the Command Rights in a *BattleTech: Mercenaries* campaign determine your possible Agenda choices:

Independent: With Independent rights, your company may choose any Agenda freely.

Liaison: With Liaison rights, roll 1d6 before each track. The corresponding Agenda may not be chosen, as the employer's liaison has taken it off the table for this engagement. Results of 6 have no effect.

House: With House rights, roll 2d6 before each track. The corresponding agendas may not be chosen, except in the case of doubles, in which case the corresponding agenda *must* be chosen. Results of 6 have no effect.

Integrated: With Integrated rights, roll 1d6 before each track. On a 1–5, you must choose the corresponding agenda, while on a 6 you may select the agenda of your choice.

Contract Name	Open Warfare	Line Duty	Detached Service
Location	[Various]	[Various]	[Various]
Employer	[Various]	[Various]	[Various]
Length of Action	3 Months	3 Months	3 Months
Type of Action	Instant	Instant	Instant
Base Pay	100% [7]	100% [7]	90% [6]
Support	Straight/40% [3]	Battle/30% [9]	Straight/60% [4]
Transportation	25% [6]	75% [8]	0% [5]
Salvage Rights	50% [8]	20% [5]	80% [11]
Command Rights	Liaison [8]	Integrated [3]	Independent [11]