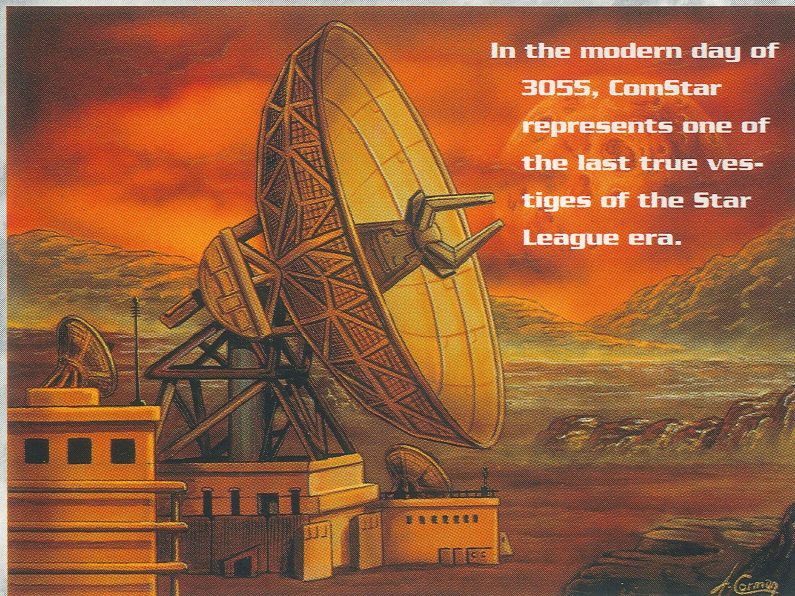


ComStar for the Modern-Day MechWarrior

ComStar is one of the most enigmatic forces operating within the Inner Sphere, and certainly one of the most dangerous. Developed in 2785 by Jerome Blake from the Department of Communications of the original Star League, ComStar maintains a stranglehold on communication via devices known as hyperpulse generators, or HPGs. HPGs are located on almost every planet throughout the Inner Sphere, and only from these devices can information be sent through the void of space, many times faster than the speed of light. This is technology from the Star League era, rare and irreplaceable. Few other avenues of communication exist in the **BattleTech** universe of 3055. Equally irreplaceable are the skills to operate HPGs, so ComStar wields immense power. Every faction in the Inner Sphere requires communication, and almost all are willing to deal with ComStar to get it.

In the modern day of 3055, ComStar represents one of the last true vestiges of the Star League era. With this status, however, has come a neo-Dark Age mentality inside ComStar itself; pursuit of skill and knowledge has been replaced with crypto-religious pomp and circumstance. All of



In the modern day of 3055, ComStar represents one of the last true vestiges of the Star League era.

ILLUSTRATION AUDREY CORMAN

Com-Star's activities are shrouded in rites and rituals, mainly stemming from Jerome Blake's successor, Conrad Toyama. Such rituals not only give an eerie mystique to the workings of ComStar, but also hide the true technological abilities of ComStar from the prying eyes of the Houses of the Inner Sphere. The Houses of the Inner Sphere do not have the skills and technology to maintain HPG tech and so are forced to yield to ComStar's ritualistic nature.

ComStar totes a banner of neutrality in

the conflicts that rage within the Inner Sphere, and its stated goal has been the protection and salvation of humanity from the ravages of the Successor Wars. Recently, however, neutrality has not been enough. ComStar defeated the Clans at the Battle of Tukayyid, halting their advance to Terra for fifteen years. Playing the other side of the cosmic fence, ComStar simultaneously launched Operation Scorpion, an unsuccessful move to seize control of the worlds of the Inner Sphere, whether occupied by House or Clan. The ensuing chaos caused a schism within ComStar, splitting it into a "reformed" faction and the religiously militant Word of Blake sect, currently in exile in the Free Worlds League.

You may be asking yourself, "What does this mean to me, the MechWarrior?" Good question! With the release of *Mercenaries*, you could face agents of ComStar on the field of battle, as they can be played by any Inner Sphere player. "To know your ally is to know your enemy," a great MechWarrior once said, and in that spirit we take a look at some of the key modern-day ComStar elite you may encounter.

— Sharon F. Carnes

COMSTAR ELITE

Anastasius Focht

Title: Precentor Martial, ComStar
Accomplishments: Orchestrator of the Tukayyid accords, leader of the Com Guard forces at Tukayyid, grand co-reformer of ComStar

The Card: Focht can untap an Inner Sphere 'Mech while tapping a Clan 'Mech, or vice versa. This has potentially dangerous ramifications in Inner Sphere-Clan battles if Focht is on the wrong side of the political fence.

Sharilar Mori

Title: Precentor Dieron, ComStar
Accomplishments: Grand co-reformer of ComStar,

leader of the new ComStar

The Card: Mori's opponent gets -1 initiative while she's in play, essentially negating Tactics and severely hampering the opponent's battles.

Myndo Waterly

Title: Primus, ComStar (retired)
Accomplishments: Orchestrator of Operation Scorpion, "retired" for the benefit of ComStar

The Card: Waterly's attempt to seize control of the Inner Sphere is reflected in her ability to tap an opponent's cards that provide the Politics Resource and prevent them from untapping during the next untap phase—all for the cost of one of your own resources.

