

new C³ option, which allows a group of 'Mechs to use each other as spotters, firing at targets as if all were at optimal range. In game terms, this means that every 'Mech with C³ gets +2 attack when it's in a group with at least one other C³ 'Mech—basically, you want to use either a lot of C³ 'Mechs or none at all. It's a pretty cool new dynamic, especially once you get the big guns' out (Glenn Elliott's eyes still glaze over whenever I mention the Sunder). The deck in the sidebar is an example of what you might do with a C³ horde, though there's also a C³ Retrofit card that lets you throw in some ringers if you want to.

So, the latest BattleTech expansion should have no problem healing the inner child in all you 'Mech jockeys out there—after all, it was specifically designed to. With new and better Pilots to underscore the warm, human side of 'Mech combat, Terrain cards to raise your environmental awareness, and the new C³ option that encourages your 'Mechs to play nicely with each other through coordinated team efforts, I can't think of a better way to honor and nurture your opponents while you annihilate their Stockpiles and rub their faces in the dirt. ®

The kinder, gentler Tom Wylie put down his healing crystals and aromatherapy oils long enough to write this article for The Duelist.

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"C³ and C-Ya Later"

A MECHWARRIOR DECK

Resources (24)

9 Assembly
5 Munitions
7 Tactics
2 ComStar Support
1 Repair Facility

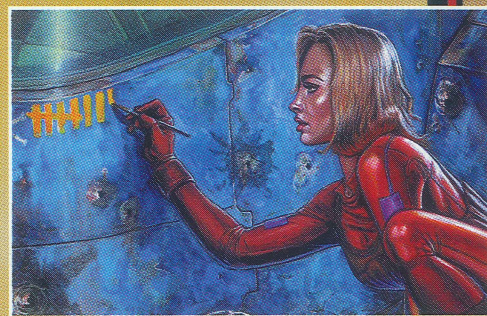
Mechs (24)

4 Avatar AV1-OC*
4 Blackjack BJ2-OB*
4 Firestarter FS9-OD*
4 Naginata NG-C3A*
4 Owens OW-1*
4 Sunder SD1-OB*

Support Cards (12)

1 Black Market Connections
1 Defensive Formation
2 Long-Range Targeting System
1 Missile Spotter
1 NARC Retrofit*
1 Overrun
2 Owens OW-1D*
(yes, this counts as a support card in this deck)
1 Retrofitted Missile System
2 Risky Combat Jump

* MechWarrior card



THE PRIMARY GOAL of the deck is, obviously, to get a huge C³ network going. While C³ 'Mechs are vulnerable in isolation, when linked together they create a net that is far more powerful than the individual elements. Avatars and Sunders serve as the backbone of the deck, while the Naginatas are missile boats that can also carve up anything blocking them. The Owens and the Firestarters run interference, making it more difficult for your opponent to pick on your slow 'Mechs, and the Firestarter's ECM makes it even more annoying to attack or block. Finally, the Blackjacks give you something to do if you aren't drawing all your assets early in the game, and are relatively difficult for your opponent to mess with.

The secondary goal of the deck is to pound your opponent's Stockpile, whether you're blocked or not. Every 'Mech in the deck (other than the Owens, which are mostly there as support) has long-range ability (can do damage to the target even if blocked) or missiles, so most of your attacks will involve firing over the blockers' heads. You'll often find yourself with a spare point of attack (or two, or three) that can be directed to the Stockpile as well. Thus, even if your opponent is able to regularly block your attacks, you'll still be picking away at his or her Stockpile for most of the game.

The support cards are almost all focused on this secondary goal. You have two Owens OW-1Ds, a NARC Retrofit, and a Missile Spotter to boost your missile 'Mechs (though these often won't be useful until you get a Naginata out). The Owens OW-1Ds are not listed with the 'Mech cards since they really are meant as support, not to run around in play for a long time. The Long-Range Targeting Systems are mainly for the Owens, as they have neither long-range damage nor Missile, but can enhance anything that seems appropriate, given the game situation. For example, a Blackjack has a base attack of 3, C³, and 2 long-range damage built in; if you give it an LRTS, it can do a total of 4 long-range damage even when attacking alone! The other support cards are just solid, all-purpose utility cards that are useful in almost every deck. —T.W.