Battletech:
The Crescent Hawk's Inception

Battletech is a fast-paced, challenging game with a great storyline and plenty of things to do before you get anywhere near the finale. It was adapted from FASA's long-time bestselling paper and pencil RPG, which may explain why it is one of the most complex computer roleplaying games ever. The scenario unfolds on a futuristic world where soldiers operate huge robots called BattleMechs. Assuming the role of 18-year-old Jason Youngblood, a BattleMech warrior who must save his planet from destruction, you view the planet's cities and rural areas from a top-down perspective.

Unlike most RPGs, the story in *Battletech* is advanced with each encounter and with each area you explore, making the game somewhat more linear than your typical dungeon quest. But the game's most distinctive feature is its use of "emotive outtakes" — close-ups of characters' expressions, drawn in the Japanese Manga (comic book) style. This technique is also used to illustrate fiery explosions and other special effects. Rather than displaying numbers to show the amount of damage done to various parts of robots, *Battletech* employs colorful bar graphs.

In addition to being one of the first Infocom programs to take full advantage of the graphic capabilities of computers like the Amiga and IBM, *Battletech* also marked Infocom's move from puzzle-solving adventures like *Zork* into the exciting world of graphically rich roleplaying games. It is one of their best.

Type:
Science Fiction Roleplaying

Difficulty:
Novice

Systems:
MS-DOS (384K required, EGA/MCGA/VGA/ Tandy 16-color); Apple (128K required); C-64; Amiga; Atari ST (512K)

Company:
Infocom/Mediagenic

The Solution

Due to the simplicity of the cities and landscape, maps of the general area are not provided with this solution. A map of one key room is provided below.

The Citadel
Your main goal here is to learn how to operate the Mechs at the Training Center. This will take six lessons. Between each lesson, you can explore the surrounding compound. Time must pass between lessons, so here are some other things to do:
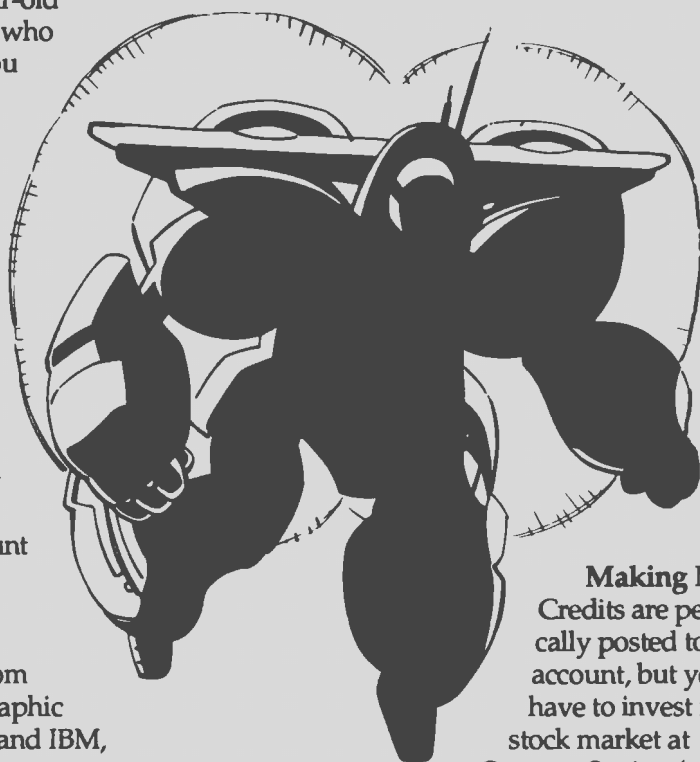
Making Money
Credits are periodically posted to your account, but you'll have to invest in the stock market at Comstar Station (one of the many buildings in the compound) to make enough to buy all the necessary gear. Only two stocks are worthwhile: Nashan Diversified (NasDiv) and Baker Pharmaceuticals (BakPhar). NasDiv is a steady performer — put all your credits in this stock and you should amass quite a fortune. BakPhar is a speculative stock that will make you rich in a short time, if your timing is right.

One strategy is to put most of your credits in NasDiv and a few in BakPhar. Save regularly and check the market often. When BakPhar starts going up, put all your credits in it; your money will usually double several times. It is essential to save the game whenever you get ahead, though, for BakPhar's value can drop to zero in no time! After investing, leave Comstar and go do something (explore, rest, visit the weapons shop, take a Train-

ing lesson...), returning frequently to assess your holdings. It takes a fairly long time to earn enough credits to pay for a serious weapon, good armor, and training, so you may have to just wander about the compound until your stocks go up!

Weapons, Armor, and Other Gear
The Inferno never runs out of ammo and rarely misses, so stay around until you can afford one (though you *can* get by with less firepower). Weapon shops are found throughout Pacifica, and you can also salvage weapons after combat. Armor shops can be found in many towns. Buy the best armor you can afford. Get a MedKit (sold at any of several hospitals) and a Mapper (at the video store in Starport and in a few other towns). Later on, get your Mechs modified at a Mech-It Lube's Speed Shop, and you'll become almost invincible.

Skills
The Citadel is the *only* place to get combat training. Spend your credits to become proficient in as many skills as you can, *especially* the skill pertaining to the weapon you're packing. Mech Repair and Medical Training skills may be purchased at any Mechit-Lube or Hospital, and there are several throughout the region you will explore.

The Invasion, Starport, and the Jail
On the sixth or seventh training mission, you'll suddenly face real opponents — the Kuritans — who have invaded the compound. You've got to escape to Starport, a neutral city northeast of the starting point. If lucky, you'll escape with a Mech. There are two ways to do so: Choose a Locust for your final mission, then head west when the force field around the training grounds disappears and get out of town; or use a Chameleon and, as soon as you're attacked, walk back into the building you just left. When the walls come down, exit west out of the city. (Some people report being unsuccessful using either method. If you encounter difficulties, you can get Mechs at several other points.)

Starport
From the Citadel, head northeast to Starport. Save often, if you decide to obtain money and equipment by fighting attackers. To reduce the number of enemy attacks inside, immediately find the Clothing Store and get rid of your uniform. Check your stocks at Comstar and reinvest if you want. Then visit the Inaugural Hall to learn about the Inauguration. At this point you might want to try to earn credits by fighting at the Arena, but think carefully if you're using a rental Mech — repairs can be costly and may even exceed your 250-credit payoff.

Rex Pearce and the Crescent Hawks
Later that night, you'll meet Rex Pearce, an ally, at the Inaugural Hall. Save the game before entering the hall, since you might get killed when you leave with him. Rex gives you a box from your father and says he's got a new Commando Mech that Princess Katrina left him.

A member of the Crescent Hawks, Rex says your mission is to round up other Hawks, find a secret cache of spare Mech parts hidden by your father, and signal Katrina to return to Pacifica for the parts and your team. But the enemy will attack before you can look at the holocard in the box (which is necessary to locate the cache), and the card is damaged. If you survive, you can roam about Starport gathering gear, earning credits and skills, having Rex's Commando modified at the Speed Shop, and so on.

The Jail and the Undercover Agent
Go a bit north and east to a small town with a jail and hospital. Save right away, for you may meet an ally who turns out to be an undercover agent. If you're having trouble getting people to talk, or if services like Mechit-Lube are always closed, you've got an agent in your party. Put him outside on foot and get into a few battles. He'll either be killed by the enemy or by Rex. If you don't have your own Mech, steal one from the Jail's parking garage.

Finding the Other Hawks, Dr. Tellhim, and the Cache
There are two ways to view the information on the damaged holocard. The easiest and quickest is to return to the destroyed Citadel and go to your barracks. There you'll find a holocard viewer which will allow you to see most of the message. The other way to view the holocard is to go to the town at coordinates X-60, Y-40 on the map included with the game. In this town southwest of Starport, find the Mayor's house. Pick the lock, enter, and use the Mayor's holocard viewer. You'll learn that you must find Dr. Tellhim at his hut in the opsuixftu. (His hut won't appear on the map unless you view the holocard.) Tellhim will tell you where to find the cache.

Head opsuixftu, exploring the various towns. You need to pick up two more Crescent Hawks — a doctor and a tech. Find the doctor by visiting hospitals, checking the records, and talking to people

there. Get him a MedKit, and you'll recover faster from wounds. The Tech can be found by visiting the Mechit-Lubes and asking to Talk and Apprentice. Get him additional Tech training so he can scavenge spare parts from any enemy Mechs you destroy, thus earning money as well as simplifying repairs to your own Mechs.
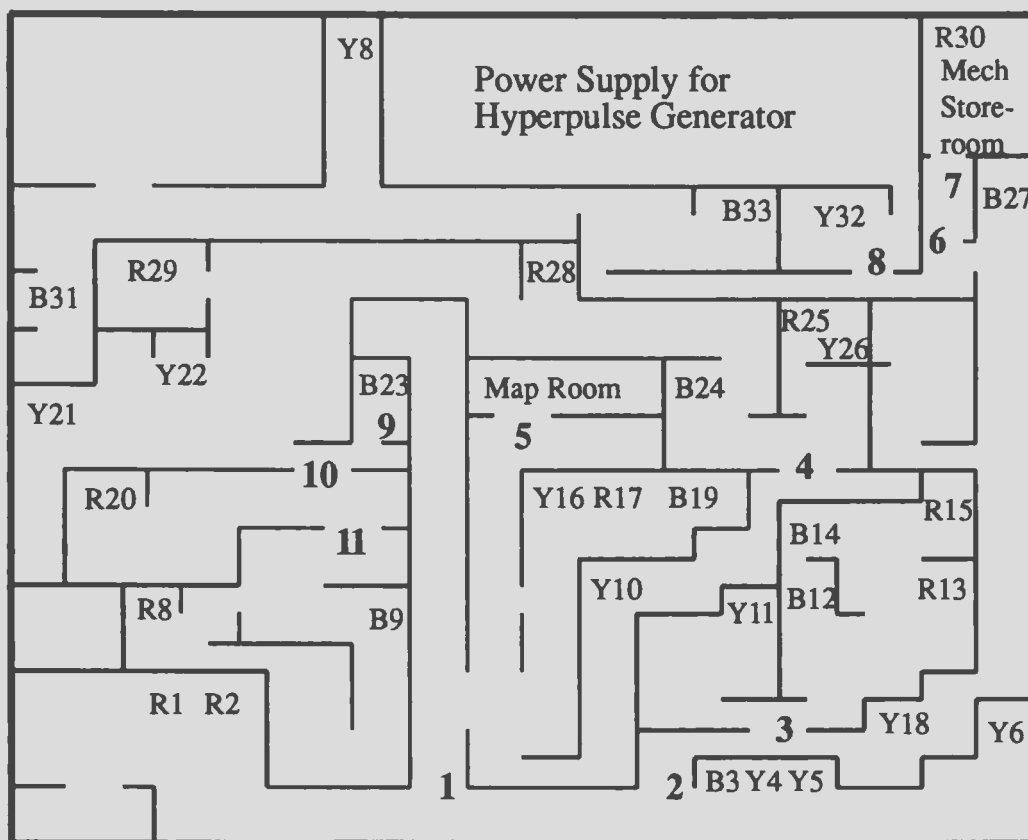
Tellhim is in a building located near the xbufs, near sector uijsuz-tjy/gpstiz x gpsuz-ojof/uxfouz on the map. With the proper crew and gear, you'll pass his tests and he'll tell you that the cache is on an jtmboe to the fpvuifbtu (uijsuz-ojof/tjyuz x gjguz-gjwf/tjyuz). Go there and enter the cave.

The Computer Terminals
The cave is a maze full of locked doors and computer terminals. You have a keycard that must be imprinted with a different Red number, Blue number, and Yellow number to open each door.

Each computer throughout the complex has its own color-coded number that can imprint your keycard, and each computer's code can be used only once. You must open eleven different doors to get to the Map Room and the Power Transmitter. See the map for location of the computer terminals; see Map Key for the codes.

After you open door E, you'll be in the Map Room and must activate a combination of planets to get the password (Qftiu, Cfokbnjo, Tlzf, Tvnnfs, Szfstpo, Lbuijm, Bdifsobs). Activate the planets by touching them all, then walk over to the control panel on the west wall for your password. Leave the Map Room, go back through the maze to the upper control rooms, and turn on the transmitter to call Katrina (you do this by walking into the panels).

Y8	Power Supply for Hyperpulse Generator

R30 Mech Storeroom

B33 Y32

7 B27

8 6

R28

R29

B31

Y22

Y21

B23

9

R25

Y26

Map Room

B24

5

10

R20

4

Y16 R17 B19

R15

B14

11

Y10

R13

R8

B9

Y11 B12

R1 R2

3 Y18 Y6

1

2 B3 Y4 Y5

Map Key: BattleTech

1:	R15, Y11, B14	4:	R13, Y4, B31
2:	R1, Y5, B3	5:	R30, Y32, B23
3:	R2, Y18, B7	6:	R25, Y10, B33
		7:	R8, Y21, B9

8:	R28, Y16, B24
9:	R20, Y22, B27
10:	R29, Y6, B12
11:	R17, Y26, B19

The Quest Buster's CODE

Use this table to decode clues. To make this process more convenient, photocopy it and place it beside the coded sections.

b = a	i = h	p = o	w = v
c = b	j = i	q = p	x = w
d = c	k = j	r = q	y = x
e = d	l = k	s = r	z = y
f = e	m = l	t = s	a = z
g = f	n = m	u = t	
h = g	o = n	v = u	