Against the Bot Starter Guide
Created by CampaignAnon for use with MekHQ
Version 3.0

Changelog:

V3.0 Eighth published version (08/05/19): Total overhaul of prior versions to be new player friendly.

V3.01 Ninth published version (9/11/19): Updated link to Xotl's Random Allocation Tables.

V3.5 Tenth published version (9/01/20): Inclusion of new Command Center screen (C1)and Personne options (B5), plus update to Xotl's RATs link.

V3.6 Eleventh publish version (02/23/2021): Add instructions to load campaign presets (B), update Personnel Options (B5).

Nothing presented in this guide is official, and provided solely as a fan resource. Xotl's Random Allocation tables and NEA's Portrait Pack are linked here with their permission.

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Section 1: Against the Bot Overview

Against the Bot or AtB is a single player campaign system for MegaMek's simulation of BattleTech where a player can play out a suite of randomly generated missions in every era the game supports, though in some eras your options may be limited. To get the best experience from AtB as well as MegaMek, I highly recommend that you have at least a decent understanding of *Total Warfare (TW)* or the more recent *BattleMech Manual (BMM)*. Other rules from *Tactical Operations (TO), Strategic Operations (SO)* (Be sure to acquire this book's errata from bg.battletech.com/errata)*, TechManual (TM)* and *Interstellar Operations (IO)* are also used throughout the program. In addition, to understand how MekHQ (MHQ) handles repair and refit checks, I also direct you to read the **Maintenance, Repair, Salvage and Customization** chapter in *Strategic Operations.* Finally, depending on the Mercenary ruleset that you eventually choose as the basis of your game, please refer to the **Creating a Mercenary Unit** chapter in *Field Manual: Mercenaries, Revised (FMMr)* or the **Force Operations** chapter from *Campaign Operations (CO)*.

Section 2: Setting up the Game

A: Initial Startup

The first thing we'll need to do is launch MekHQ and select the **New Campaign** button, which will then bring up the following splash screen:
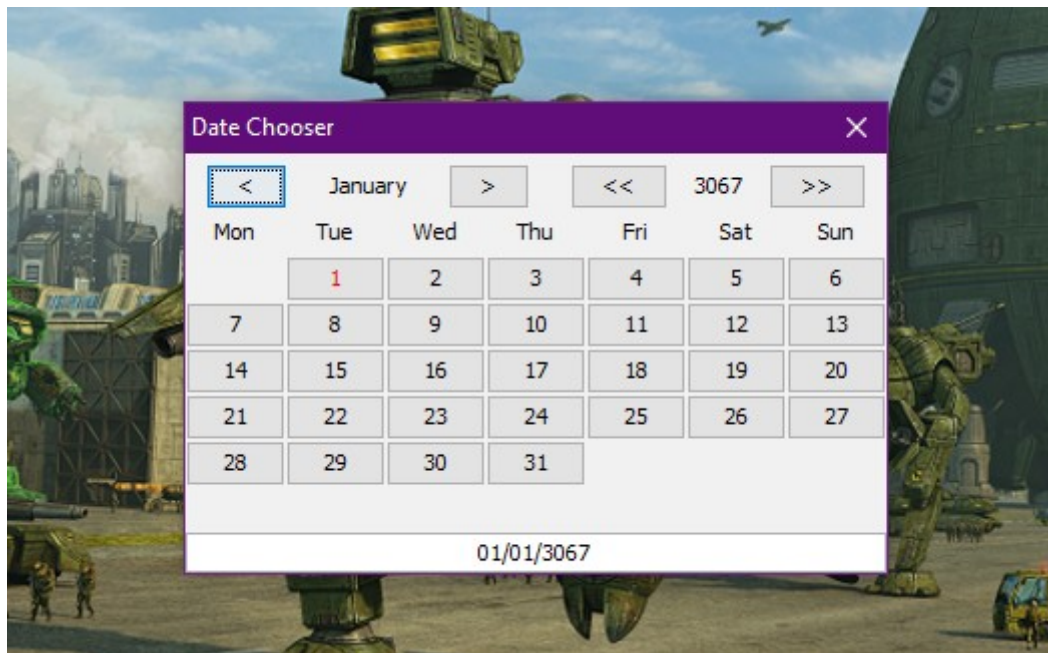
In the next section, I'll briefly summarize the available eras of play and offer some possible suggestions of when to play.

A1: Year, General Era overview

After we bring up the splash screen, we'll have to decide on a year. That part is pretty much up to you to decide when you want to play, but here is a basic breakdown of some of the "major" eras of the game. In each era, I will rate their possible ease of play in terms of campaign complexity from my point of view from Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced.

Star League Era: Current materials define the era as ranging from **2005** to **2780**, but for relative ease of play, you may want to set your game between the years of **2570-2780**. This time frame is the major height of the Star League itself as well as its downfall. Since AtB is relatively self contained, your only limitation here is your knowledge of this era. Recommendations for playing in this time period are relatively homogeneous forces you generate. Instead of a mixed lance of four chassis, roll up a single chassis and then add some variants to better represent the forces for the era. **Rating: Intermediate**

Succession Wars Era: Running from **2781** to **3049**, the Succession Wars era varies heavily in tone, though AtB doesn't particularly discriminate. From **2871** to **2864**, technology is still in place, and you

can keep your 'Mechs running with things like Double Heat Sinks or ER lasers. As the Inner Sphere slides back into barbarism, from **2865** to about **3020**, BattleMechs will be less advanced, and your fancy tools will burn out, but your foes will suffer the same way. After **3028** until **3049**, technology will rapidly advance, and you might start seeing advanced technology come back into play. **Rating: Early Years: Intermediate; Later Years: Beginner**

Clan Invasion Era: Encompassing the years **3050** to **3061**, the Clan Invasion is a time fraught with change. Depending on your choice of contract, playing in this era will either be a higher tech version of the Succession Wars, or a meat grinder against the Clans. If you can survive, the Clan Invasion is a time of plenty. **Rating: Intermediate for Inner Sphere contracts; Advanced for Clan fighting**

Civil War Era: 3062 to 3067. This small era has less of an impact on the average Against the Bot player, but a swell of contracts in the Chaos March between Independent Employers, the Word of Blake and the Allied Mercenary Command under the Wolf's Dragoons can be profitable, or a death knell. **Rating: Intermediate**

Jihad Era: Despite its great viciousness in canon material, the Jihad (**3068-3081**) of Against the Bot doesn't quite live up to the brutality of the setting itself, owing to the limited utility and deployment of WMDs. Your contracts here will be slightly more varied, as the confusing nature of the Jihad means you might go from fighting the Word to an uphill slog against the Capellans. **Rating: Intermediate**

Dark Age Era: This time period (**3081-3151+**) is likely to be a greater test than any other. Sure you've got Clan technology in spades, but so does everybody else. On the other hand, a lot of groups will probably end up using IndustrialMechs, so why not show that TractorMech what a Gauss slug looks like? **Rating: Advanced**

A2: Built In Presets and Creating your Own

Now that you've chosen a year (I picked 3055), the next splash screen will be the presets available within MekHQ. I've built a few to tinker with previously, but rather than go over it here in detail, in the next major section I'll go over the available options after selecting the **Official AtB Options** preset, and what rules I recommend changing as a new player

B: Campaign Options

There are 16 tabs in the **Campaign Options** window, each covering a different aspect of your prospective campaign. In the following major section, I plan to go over each tab in detail, and will be pointing out rules that need to be cross referenced in the appropriate product, with a page reference. If you find that a rule you're using doesn't suit your campaign, or you want to tinker with some of the values, you can always change them at any time. After making any changes, either hit the **"Confirm"** or **"Confirm and Save as Preset"** buttons. The former option will simply save the options for your game, while the latter will save those options for future campaigns.

If you would like to load presets from a file. Hit the *"Confirm"* button. Your new campaign will load.
Click *File->Import->Campaign Options from an xml file...*. This will load a saved campaign options file.
If you would like the options preset loaded from the guide, they are located in your install mekHQ directory within *"docs/AtB Stuff/Against_the_Bot_Starter_Guide_Presets.xml"*.
You may continue with this guide by clicking *File->Campaign Options*.

B1: General Tab

Our first tab is also in many ways the simplest, as we can see on the next page. I've already made some changes, so your screen will not match mine. Here you can Name the campaign you're playing, which for simplicity's sake I usually name after the Unit you create. You can also choose the Factions you can take contracts for, though the non mercenary factions may not always work depending on the version you play. Underneath the Faction drop down is the Unit Rating button and the associated Unit

Rating Method drop down, which uses the Reputation rules on Campaign Operations (starting on p.33) or the Mercenary Rating rules from Field Manual: Mercenaries, Revised(starting on page 153) to determine your mercenary unit's overall reputation. These rules do not exactly translate 1:1, so I generally advise that if you pick one method, you stick with it for the duration of the campaign. These two rating methods do influence the types of contracts, contract clauses and possible benefits that your unit can have. To that end, as always, I HIGHLY recommend that you familiarize yourself with the two rulebooks previously mentioned as well as the rules excel file found in the "docs" folder in your MHQ folder. After selecting the Unit Rating and Method, we can change the date if you have not already done so. At this time, you can also change your unit camouflage. I've selected an RWR unit because I like the scheme.
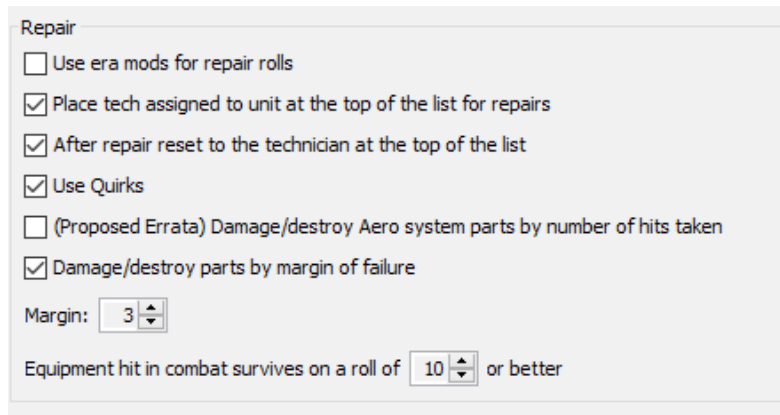
B2: Repair and Maintenance

On the surface, the **Repair and Maintenance** tab is quite simple. However, this single tab can often be the difference between arriving at a contract with functional, intact BattleMechs and showing up with a pile of parts your incompetent technical staff have contrived to "fix." The first item on this tab in the **Repair** column is the **Use era mods for repair rolls** option. This uses the **Era Modifiers** table from **Strategic Operations** on page 170 of the printing I own. Simply put, this option makes it harder to keep your equipment in fighting trim during the darkest parts of the Succession Wars by adding an additional malus to repairs. I generally recommend this option be left off if you're new to the game, as the penalty can get quite sever. Next is the **Place tech assigned to unit at the top of the list for repairs**. Pretty self explanatory, the unit's tech will be your first choice to repair units with. There have been issues with this option not functioning, so it's up to you to use. Third in the **Repair** column, **After repair reset to the technician at the top of the list**. The **Use Quirks** option, next in the list, uses the Quirk rules from both *Strategic Operations* and the *BattleMech Manual*. In *SO*, these rules are on **page 193**, while in the *BMM*, they are on **page 82**. Fifth in the **Repair** list, **Damage/destroy Aero system parts by number of hits taken** is an optional rule that I have not extensively tested, but is fairly self explanatory. Finally, a two part rule, **Damage/destroy parts by margin of failure** means that if your technician is repairing or replacing equipment, and by default misses the check by 3 or more, the

components involved could be destroyed or damaged. I recommend leaving this one alone, though you can reduce the margin of failure or MoF to make repairs less nail biting. **Equipment hit in combat survives on a roll of [X] or better** means that when your units return from a mission, that MHQ will roll and see if equipment survives based on the **Target Number (TN)** that you set. I prefer to drop that roll down to 8 or 9, but we'll leave it as is for now. My options selected are below:
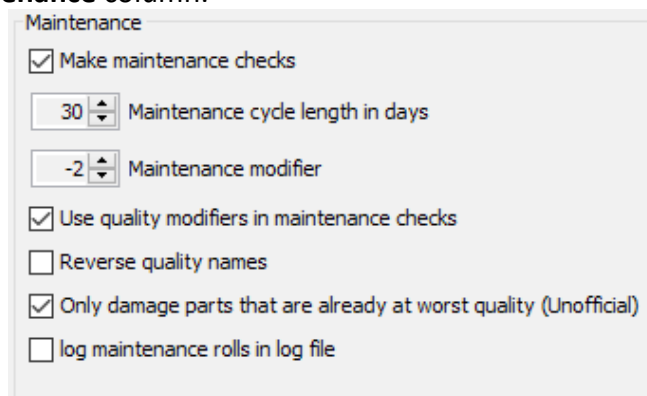

On the other side of the tab, in the **Maintenance** column, we have a set of options that directly affects the quality of your 'Mechs, as well as how well maintained they are. The very first option, **Make maintenance checks** means that after every cycle a check for every unit in your roster is made to determine how well your technician kept the unit in question maintained during that cycle. A failed check means that the part might degrade or even be destroyed. I recommend that you keep the default **Maintenance cycle in days** at 30, but lower the **Maintenance modifier** by 1 or even 2 until you become more familiar with the maintenance system. By default the **Use quality modifiers in maintenance checks** rule is on, and this means that the higher quality your units are, the more likely you can keep them well maintained. **Reverse quality names** is self explanatory. If you'd prefer the best quality to be A instead of F, there you go. **Only damage parts that are already at worst quality** is a godsend rule, where your techs are slightly less likely to turn your fancy high tech BattleMech into a pile of useless scrap as long as they're reasonably competent. The last option on the page, **log maintenance rolls in log file** is really only necessary if you want to go incredibly in depth with the maintenance system, and can be safely left off. The image below is how I might recommend a starting player set up the **Maintenance** column.

B3: Supplies and Acquisition

The next tab, **Supplies and Acquisition** determines how you can get your supplies, what skill is tied to getting those supplies, and how often you can do so. I'll split this tab in half and cover **Acquisition** and **Delivery**, which are easily covered. First under **Acquisition**, is how often you can make supply checks. I often set this to **2** days per check, while the standard option is once per day. This is because rather than the preset's limit of 2 **Acquisitions per day**, I usually set it to 10 items, allowing me more freedom to get supplies, just slightly less often. I'd recommend this angle to start. Next is the **Acquisition skill**. In previous versions of MHQ, due to how easy it was for Administrative personnel to gain experience, the relevant skill was almost meaningless. In the current version, the changes to experience game have made it so really, the choice is up to you. Since a new mercenary unit is unlikely to have someone with high **Scrounge** skill, I'll leave it as **Administration** for now. Aside from a reduction in the **Penalty for Clan Equipment** check to **2** I most often leave these options alone, as they fit fairly well. Pictured below are the settings for this example:
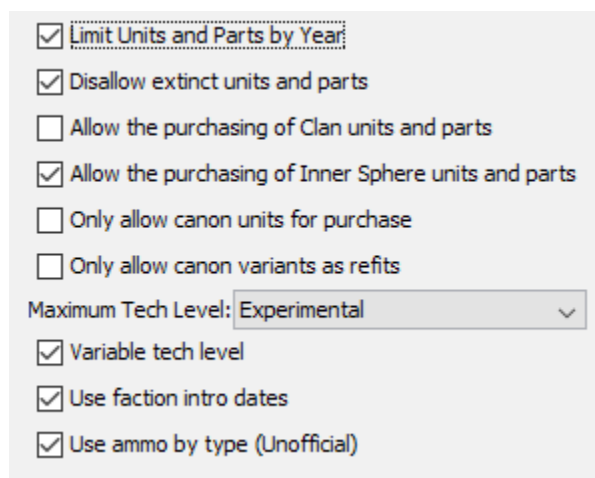
The lower half of the tab is where things get interesting. **Planetary Acquisition** upends the above section and makes it so that your mercenary unit now has to acquire supplies from the planet you're located on. This system definitely adds a new dimension to resupplying your unit, and I've often found I've had to carefully ration ammunition and armor on some planets. As a new player, I would recommend leaving this option off unless you really want a challenge, or feel that the above system is far too lenient. The only change to the default settings I make is to reduce the **Penalty for acquiring clan parts from non-Clan factions** to **3.**

B4: Tech Limits

While the **Tech Limits** tab is explained quite well by MekHQ's tooltips, I still want to take a moment to go over the options available on this tab. The **Limit Units and Parts by Year** option means that you're not going to get a sweet new Mad Cat in 3025, and is something I always leave on. **Disallow extinct units and parts** being off allows you to try and scrounge up an ER Large Laser or a Gauss Rifle in the early 3000s when those weapons were long since extinct, so as an option that's up to you, and I generally leave it off. By default it's on, so for now it will stay on. **Allow the purchasing of Clan/Inner Sphere units and parts** can define your campaign for you. Playing a Clan unit in the heart of the Clan Homeworlds in the late 2900s? Probably not going to be seeing a lot of Inner Sphere technology. On the other hand, a bunch of hard scrabble mercenaries in the Periphery aren't going to see a bit of Clan technology unless it's shooting at them. Next, the **Only allow canon units for purchase/refits** option is up to you. I have an almost comical number of variants and custom units, so this option is something I don't ever have on, but if you prefer a wholly canon experience, leave this on. Third in my overview is the **Maximum Tech Level** drop down menu. If you set this to **Standard** you're only going to see basic level units available, while dropping to **Introductory** means units right out of the Introductory Box Set and TRO: 3039. **Advanced** and **Experimental** options means things from *Tactical Operations* and *Interstellar Operations* can be acquired. The next two options, **Variable tech level** and **Use faction intro dates** are pretty clear from their tooltips, but simply mean that in the former case, as technology becomes more commonplace, that its Tech level will go down. So an ER Large Laser will be Experimental in the 3030s, but Standard in the 3050s. The **faction intro dates** changes part availability based on when a faction started using a given part. Finally, the **Use ammo by type** option rather simplifies ammunition tracking for missile launchers. Rather than having to keep track of LRM-5, -10, -15, and-20 ammo types, your warehouse will just pull from a total count of LRM missiles on a launcher by launcher basis. The warehouse will still show the multiple types however.

B5: Personnel

Previously somewhat barebones, the **Personnel** options have been heavily altered. MegaMek's developers have included what they call "BattleTech Sims" which will be covered in more detail later. First off, as your pilots become more skilled and thus more expensive BV wise, the Battle Generator will attempt to offset your BV by deploying a large amount of low BV units. To counteract this, turn on **Use Individual Initiative Bonus** together with the **Individual Initiative** option in MegaMek, so that the Bot will not spend forever on its turns.

I also turn on Track Time in Service and Track Time In Rank to add a little life to characters.

- ✔ Use Tactics Skill as Commander Initiative Bonus
- ✔ Use Individual Initiative Bonus
- ✔ Use Toughness
- ✔ Use Artillery Skill
- ✔ Allow Special Abilities
- ✔ Use Edge
- ☐ Use Edge for Non-Combat Personnel
- ✔ Allow Implants
- ✔ Use higher-precision skill level averaging
- ✔ Use Advanced Medical Rules (Unofficial)
- ✔ Use Dylan's Random XP (Unofficial)

        `1` Days to wait between healing checks by doctors

        `15` Days to wait for natural healing

        `1` Minimum number of hits for wounded crews and infantry

- ✔ Randomize the number of hits received by crews and infantry
- ✔ Tougher Healing
- ✔ Log Saver - Use Reassign instead of Remove/Assign
- ✔ Track Time In Service

        `Year(s)` ▼ Display format for Time in Service

- ✔ Track Time In Rank

        `Month(s) and Year(s)` ▼ Display format for Time in Rank

- ☐ Track Retirement Date
- ☐ Track Total Earnings

- ✔ Show Origin Faction

- ☐ Randomize Origin

Next we have the "BattleTech Sims" section, which covers things like marriage and procreation. Previously **Procreation** was a massive save bloat, and it still can be, so I recommend that first time players turn it off until you get used to how MekHQ works. Otherwise, these new options add a significant amount of fluffy detail available to your Mercenary company, and can certainly be useful for breathing life into what otherwise may be a lifeless backend for soldiers in the unit. Though it's off in these images, I do have **Use Random Marriages** on for amusement value alone.

Family Options

18 Minimum Marital Age

4 Minimum Mutual Ancestor Check Depth for Marriage to be Possible

☐ Log Marriage Name Changes

☑ Use Manual Marriages

☐ Use Random Marriages (Unofficial)

0.025 Percent Chance of a Fitting Person Finding a Spouse per Day

10 Age Range for Random Marriages

Random Marriage Surname Weights

10 No Change	5.5 Yours	5.5 Spouse
1 Spouse Yours	0.5 Both Spouse Yours	3 Spouse-Yours
2 Both Spouse-Yours	1 Yours Spouse	0.5 Both Yours Spouse
3 Yours-Spouse	2 Both Yours-Spouse	50 Male
16 Female		

☐ Use Random Same Sex Marriages (Unofficial)

0.002 Percent Chance of a Fitting Person Finding a Same Sex Spouse per Day

☐ Use Procreation (Unofficial)

0.05 Percent Chance of a Fitting Female Procreating per Day

☐ Use Procreation Without a Relationship (Unofficial)

0.005 Percent Chance of a Fitting Female Procreating per Day (No Relationship)

☐ Display True Due Date

☑ Log Conception and Birth in Personnel and Medical Logs

Mothers ▼ Baby Surname Style

☐ Determine Father at Birth instead of Conception

Parents, Siblings, and Children ▼ The Level of Relation to be Displayed in the Personnel Panel

☑ Keep Marital Name Upon Spouse Death

B6: Finances

The **Finances** tab is another tab that is fairly self explanatory, though I would highly recommend reading **FMMr's** relevant sections for a clearer grasp of how the various costs are determined. On this tab, the only major changes I usually make to the options are turning on the **Use Campaign Operations Peacetime Operating Costs** and the **Use the expanded spare parts modifiers** options. The former adds more tracking in terms of fluffier costs, while the latter makes changes to pricing on certain units. Other than those two options, I also modify the **Clan Tech Price Modifier** to a much higher value than default. Depending on the time frame, this value ranges from 4x **(3050 to 3055)**, 3x **(3055 to 3060)**, 2x **(3060 to 3066)** and 1.5x **(3067+)**. These values are for Inner Sphere factions, rather than Clan ones. I personally turn off **Pay for Repairs** unless the unit I've created is totally without any technical teams.

☑ Pay For Parts	3.00 ⇅	Clan tech price modifier
☐ Pay For Repairs		Value of used parts
☑ Pay For New Units	0.10 ⇅	A Quality
☑ Pay for personnel salaries	0.20 ⇅	B Quality
☑ Pay for overhead expenses	0.30 ⇅	C Quality
☑ Pay for unit maintenance	0.50 ⇅	D Quality
☑ Pay for Transportation	0.70 ⇅	E Quality
☑ Allow selling of units	0.90 ⇅	F Quality
☑ Allow selling of parts	0.33 ⇅	Value of damaged parts
☑ Pay for personnel recruitment	0.50 ⇅	Reimbursement % (as decimal) for cancelled orders
☑ Limit loan parameters by unit rating		
☑ Use percentage based maintenance costs (Unofficial)		
☐ Infantry Don't Count for Contract Pay		
☑ Use Campaign Operations Peacetime Operating Costs		
☑ Use the expanded spare parts modifiers (CO p14).		
☐ Breakdown peacetime costs to core costs.		

B7: Mercenary

This tab has two different options for contract pay. For a more difficult (and very fluff accurate) game, you may want to use the **FMMr** option of basing contract pay on the unit's payroll. For a somewhat more forgiving game, the **CO** rules will serve you fairly well. The default values for the percentages work out perfectly fine in this case. Finally, the lone checkbox on the page is for Battle Loss Compensation, or BLC, value. This is a percentage of the unit's price that an employer will reimburse the mercenary unit following a scenario for damage incurred. If you have higher Quality parts that will

sell for more on the market, then this option makes it so that the damaged parts are worth that value, rather than the default.

B8: Experience

This section has a very radical alteration in costs and total skill ups, so I'll briefly go over the top section. Overall, I recommend trimming some of the tasks needed to gain experience for techs, as well as doubling the XP for completing scenarios. These changes allow your pilots and techs to become better faster, especially with the rather high costs in XP as your unit goes up in skills. See below for how I've set the increases.

Next we come to the costs per rank of skill. Rather than the default 5(x4)/10/20/40/60/100 for **Combat Skills**, I've opted to reduce that to 5(x4)/10/20/40/60/80, to keep a relatively similar curve. 100 XP can take an incredibly long time, even with these more generous payouts. For **Technical and Medical Skills**, XP ranges have been changed to 0/5/10/10/20/40/50/60/80. This allows for 0 rated Doctors and Technicians, meaning there's less excitement involving lost parts and exacerbated injuries. Finally in this section, the **RPG Skills**, **Tactics**, **Strategy**, **Negotiation**, **Leadership**, and **Scrounge** have not gotten any changes to their overall costs.

B9: Skills

While this tab allows you to tinker with options relating to skill checks and levels, I don't recommend making any changes to this.

B10: Special Abilities

The first of the second page of tabs, the only changes I make to this are to change **Tactical Genius**, **Natural Aptitude: Gunnery**, and **Natural Aptitude: Piloting** to an **80** point XP cost. Yes by the character creation rules, these skills can only be acquired when the character is first generated, but fun is fun.

B11: Skill Randomization

In prior versions of MekHQ, it sometimes paid off to tinker with the options on this tab to get the kind of unit you wanted. After some experience with the way the **Skill Randomization** system works, it's down to personal preference. I haven't made any changes for this guide.

B12: Rank System
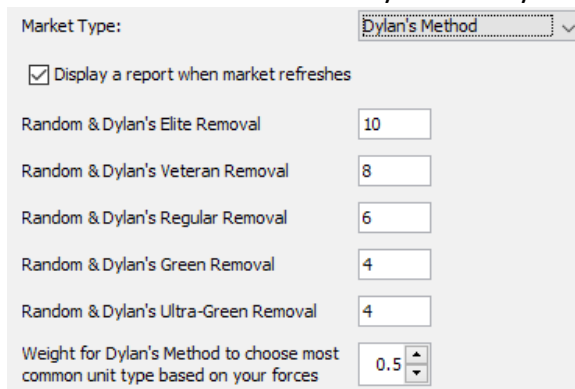
On this tab, you can change the names and grade equivalents that are in your command. By default in BattleTech, the vast majority of mercenary units retain the old **Star League** ranks, but you can use whatever rank system you prefer.

B13: Name and Portrait Generation

By default, MekHQ assigns Portraits only to MechWarriors. If you have portraits to use, either those found in the **Resources** section of this guide or from your own images, you can set all of the roles as generating portraits.

B14: Personnel Market

The Personnel Market panel is fairly simple to make changes to. To ensure that you have a healthy amount of recruits, I highly recommend changing the **Market Type** to "**Dylan's Method**." Other options generate a bare trickle of recruits, while this is the most generous. I'd also increase the **Weight** option to **.5** up from **.3** for a better distribution to units you already use.
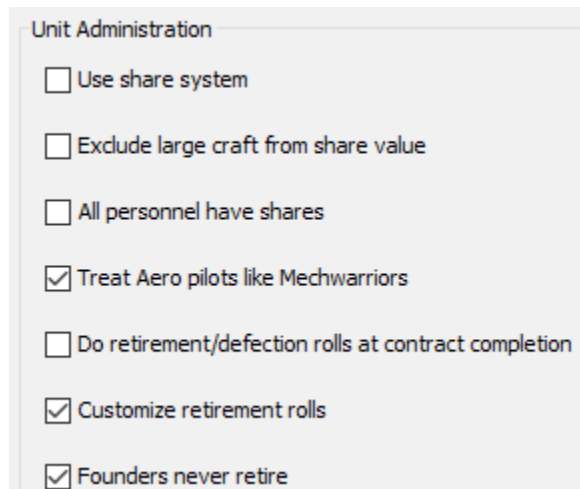
B15: Against the Bot

The most important tab to your overall experience with the Against the Bot system, I'm going to cover this in depth. To start off, the **Random Allocation Tables** or **RATs** available are up to personal preference. Earlier in the program's life span, selecting Era relevant **RATs** was critical to making sure your game had appropriate units. Now that the **RAT Generator** is far more robust, it's perfectly fine to leave that option selected.

Next, to actually be able to *play* Against the Bot, you will have to leave the **Use Against the Bot campaign rule** option checked. Moving down the left hand side of the tab, I would recommend leaving the **Skill Level** set to **Regular** until you're more comfortable with the game. Next, I'll go over options I recommend for **Unit Administration**. I generally turn off all three options involving **Shares** as I view Mercenary commands as akin to a military unit more than a business. Next, the three **Retirement** options are swapped around for beginner games. **Do retirement/defection rolls at contract completion** leads to brain drain incredibly fast, because unless you have a deep warchest to throw at your pilots, some of your best warriors are going to take the money and leave. **Customize retirement rolls** gives you the opportunity to cheat and make it impossible for your pilots to retire. I'd recommend this option for your first time through AtB only, so you can get experience with the system as a whole. **Founders never retire** simply lets you keep your original pilots until they die.

The next set of options are more general and self explanatory by the tooltips in the **Against the Bot** window, so I'll skip explaining them and just recommend to keep all but **Track unit fatigue** on. This option is murderous if you have a small unit, because a high number of battles can drive your unit to exhaustion. Realistic, but not as much fun.

Scrolling down on this tab, we come to two more sections, **Contract Operations** and **Scenarios**. **Contract Operations** is perfectly acceptable with minor tweaks. If you want to operate in a smaller area, then changing the **Contract Search Radius** to a smaller value (such as 400 or less LY) can do that. In this section, I do recommend deselecting **Merc company size limits, Restrict parts by mission,** and **Limit lance deployment by weight.** The first option merely penalizes you for having a force larger than

your Mercenary Rating can support, while the second makes acquiring replacement components more difficult. If you're comfortable adding that difficulty, by all means leave it on. The last option however, is a real ballbuster, and doesn't give you the opportunity to have an Assault Star or heavier Level II type unit. As for the rest of the option, leave them as AtB has them set for simplicity. As you become more familiar with the game's OpTempo, you can raise the intensity.

Under **Scenarios**, I would highly, *highly* recommend you turn off **Double Vehicles**, for your sanity if nothing else. While some vehicles are not very threatening, it's all fun and games until you get a dozen Saladin carriers on the field. Everything else is more or less balanced.
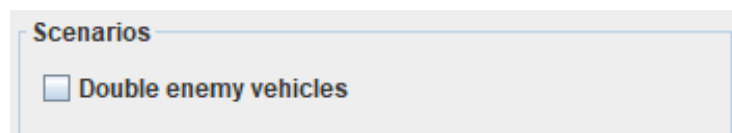
C: Creating a Mercenary Unit for AtB

For this section, I'm going to use elements from my own **Against the Bot Generator** found in the **Resources** section of this guide. Keep this handy while you read the guide if you have any questions. Once you have access to **Field Manual: Mercenaries Revised** and/or **Campaign Operations**, I'd recommend you create a unit or two using those rules to understand how they work.

C1: The Command Center

Before adding any forces and units, I want to go over the basic screen you'll see every time you launch your saved game with MekHQ. The **Command Center** tab has the **Daily Activity Log** showing Market updates, Maintenance checks, Repairs, and Procurement checks on the left. In the middle is the **Basic Unit Information** pane, with the **Procurement Information** section below that. On the right are a variety of report buttons that were previously on the **Overview** tab in older versions.
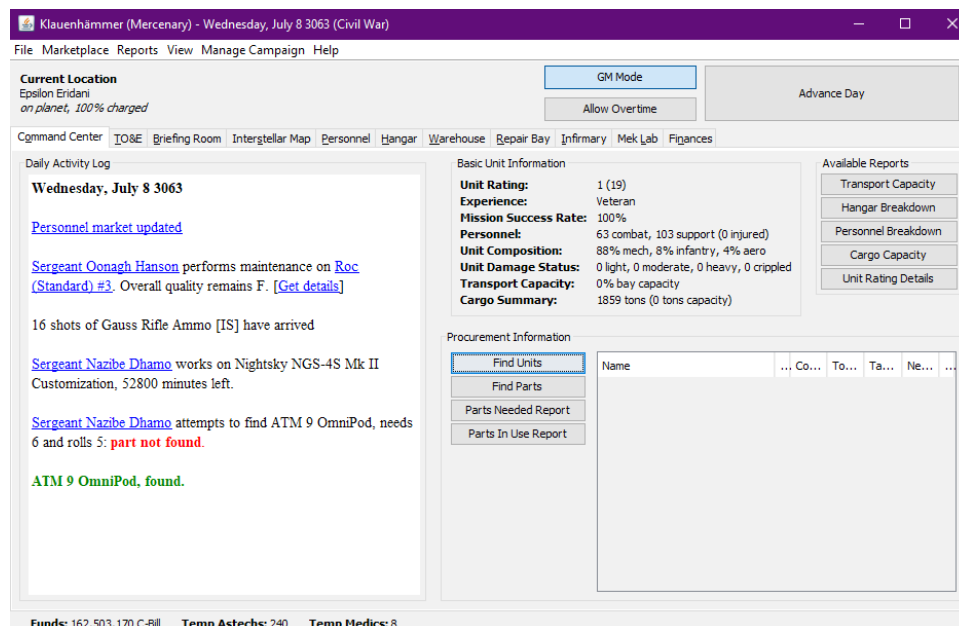
C2: Starter Funds and Unit Size

Per the Generator, every unit starts with a 5 million C-bill slush fund, a Commander, and does not have to pay for initial units or pilots. A quick roll of a single D6 gives me a 4, which equates to 2 Lances of units on the **Starting Size** table. For simplicity, I've forgone checking what type of unit each lance is, and decided on 2 'Mech lances which equates to 8 'Mechs. If using the **Campaign Operations** or **Field Manual: Mercenaries Revised** rules, then those sourcebooks have the materials needed to fully generate a force. Before going any further, make sure to turn on **GM Mode** at the top right. Next, briefly jump over to the **Finances** tab and hit **Add Funds (GM)**. Next, change the drop down menu from **Miscellaneous** to **Starting Capital** and enter in the starting 5 Million C-Bills, as below. The **Finances** tab will be covered more in depth in a later section, but for now, let's go to adding Pilots.
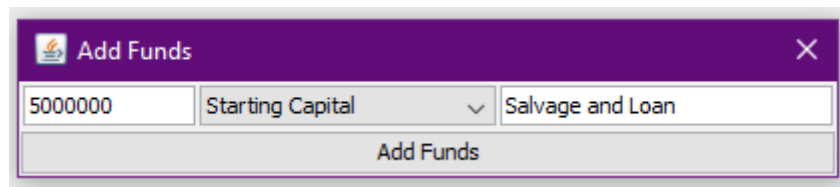
C3: Pilot Creation

Let's start adding pilots at this point. I generally prefer to start with the Commander of the unit. To add or outright hire a MechWarrior (or any other role), first click the **Marketplace** drop down menu and select **Hire**. From here, you can select any available job to hire for.
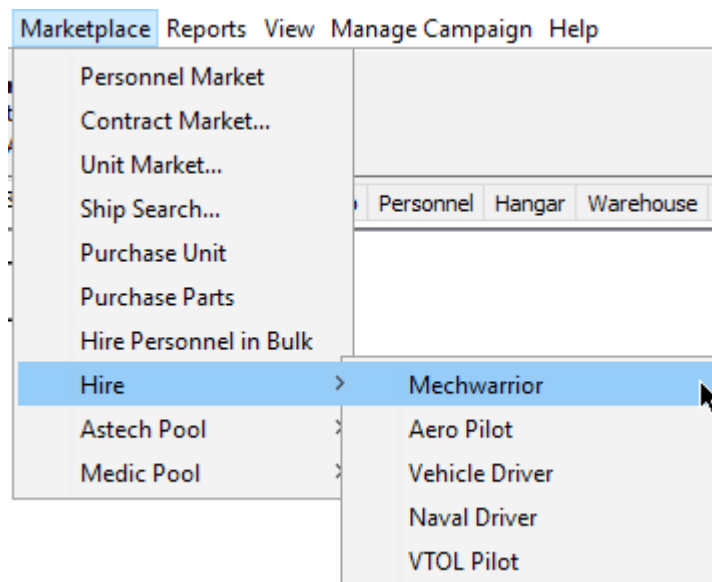
Now that I've selected for a MechWarrior, a screen will pop up as below. For a Commander, this pilot has pretty good stats, and already has a rank in Tactics.

In this sub menu are several options. Since we have **GM Mode** on, we can choose to **Regenerate** the character or you can select **Edit Statistics** allowing you to tweak information about the character. There is also a drop down menu to change our soldier's rank. For now, let's just change the rank for our Commander to Captain, and hit **Add (GM)**. This will hire the pilot without charging the hiring cost. A new pilot will be generated automatically, and I'm going to set this pilot as a Lieutenant SG to be the unit's executive officer and the leader of the second lance. After that, generate 6 more pilots and assign them to the rank of sergeant, making sure to set that rank drop down each time. Remember to hit **Add (GM)** to avoid paying the hiring cost! If you want to make changes to any of the pilots you hire, the **Edit Statistics** screen allows you to alter the character's age, Origin Faction, Callsign, Skills and Special Abilities.

C4: Non combatant requirements

Now that we have combat personnel for our unit, we need to hire the support personnel to keep them functional. Every BattleMech in your force should ideally have its own Mech Tech, so for this example, I'll repeat the previous step using Mech Tech in place of Mechwarrior and use **Add (GM)** to augment my force with 8 Mech Techs. I generally prefer to hire my Technicians as corporals, with a sergeant as their nominal NCO.

Next, we'll need to hire medical personnel. Generally, I prefer to hire only a single doctor per company of combat units. If your unit employs vehicles or infantry, you're more likely going to want as many as three or four per company, but for this example, we'll stick with just one Doctor. As before, we'll use the Hire screen for this, making our Doctor a Lieutenant JG.

After hiring both Mech Techs and a Doctor, we now need to give them the support teams required by rules, consisting of Astechs and Medics respectively. Now, you can hire every member of these teams individually, but to bring every team to strength, you need 6 Astechs per Technician of any specialty, and 4 medics per Doctor. That's going to bloat up your personnel roster pretty quickly. For simplicity's sake, on the **Marketplace** drop down menu are two submenus for the **Astech Pool** and **Medic Pool**. In both of these options are an option to **Bring all the Teams to Full Strength**. Go ahead and select that,

and just be aware that each time you hire a Technician or Doctor that the pool is not automatically increased.
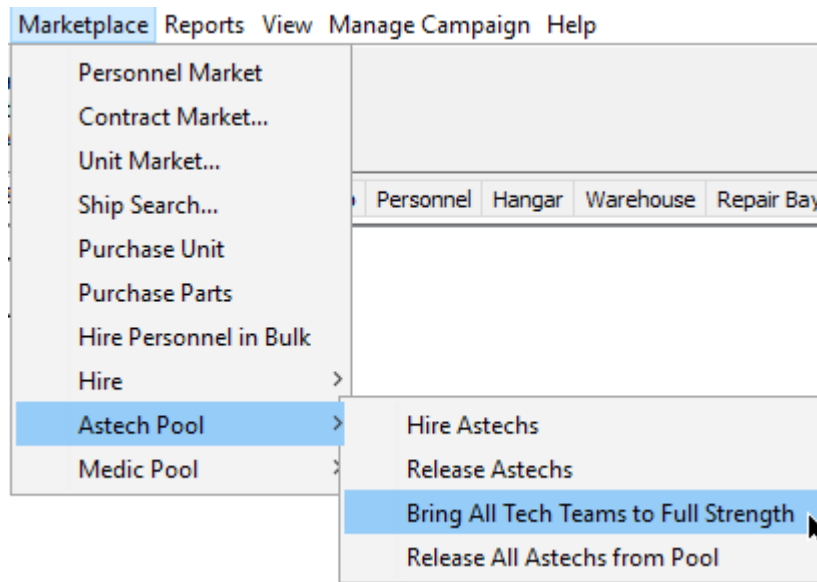
Finally for noncombat personnel, we need to hire Administrators. **Campaign Operations** and **MekHQ** differ on the totals of Administrators needed, so we'll split the difference and just go with 2 of each of the four types, set to Sergeants.

C5: Generating 'Mech roster

Now that we have the people, we need the hardware. There are two methods to quickly generate a set of units for your **MekHQ** campaign to use. The first is built into the game itself, under the **Manage Campaign** drop down menu. Clicking on **Show GM Tools Dialog** will bring a dialog containing a Die Roller and a RAT Roller.
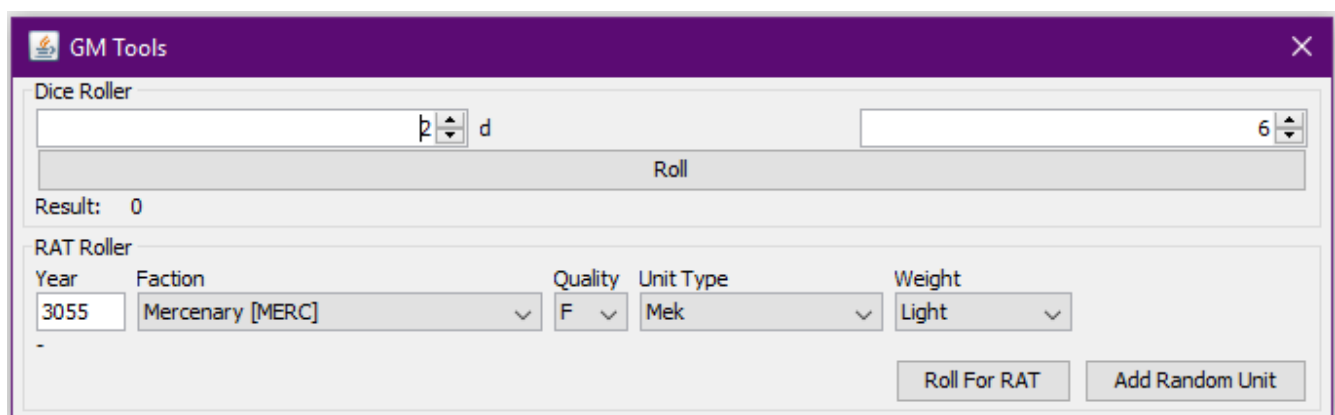
This RAT Roller has a few issues. For one thing, it can only generate one unit at a time, and even then, it can only generate a unit that you can't actually review to see what its loadout is without having another instance of **MekHQ** or a record sheet open.

The other option available to you as a player is one that BattleTech has used for a long time, namely rolling on the Random Allocation Tables yourself and going from there. Any RAT will do, though I'm partial to Xotl's **Random Assignment & Rarity Tables** (found in **Resources** as well) for a quick AtB force, since it covers a fairly large swathe of time at a glance. Other RATs are found in official products such as various **Field Manuals**, **Total Warfare**, and assorted **Historicals**. For now though, I'm going to use Xotl's tables for canon units only, and generate 8 'Mechs, 2 of them Heavy, 4 Mediums and 2 Lights.

Once your 'Mechs are selected, you've got to add them to your force. Since this guide assumes you're using the **AtB Generator** these initial 8 'Mechs are added for free. To do that, hit the **Marketplace** button, then **Purchase Unit**, as below.
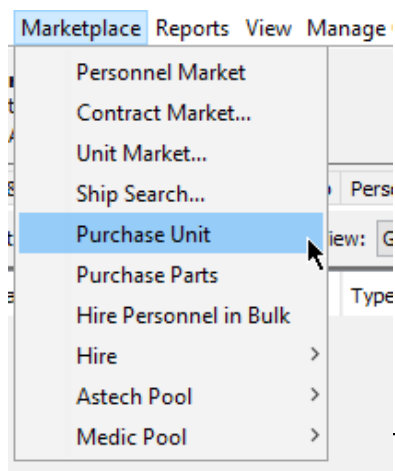
This will then bring up the **Choose Unit** window. My first rolled Mech is a Caesar CES-3R. It's available for purchase on a Target Number of 6+, but since this is a founding unit, we'll just hit **Add (GM)**. Do this for the rest of your 'Mechs, as adding a unit in this fashion does not close the window.

Choose Unit

Unit Type:	Mek
Weight Class:	Heavy
Search:	Caesar

Advanced Search   Clear

Model	Chassis	Weight	BV	Year	Price
CES-3R	Caesar	70.0	1578	3049	13,424,67...
CES-3Ra	Caesar	70.0	1770	3050	13,458,67...

Caesar CES-3R
Base Tech Level: Standard (IS)

Level	Era
Experimental	–
Advanced	–
Standard	3049+

Tech Rating: E/X-F-E-D

Weight: 70 tons
BV: 1,578
Cost: 13,424,673 C-bills
Source: TRO 3050 – Clan Invasion
Role: Brawler

Movement: 4/6
Engine: 280 XL
Double Heat Sinks: 16 [32]
Gyro: Standard Gyro

Internal: 107
Armor: 168/217

	Internal	Armor
Head	3	9
Center Torso	22	26
Center Torso (rear)		7
Right Torso	15	15
Right Torso (rear)		6

Buy (TN: 6+)   Add (GM)   Close

C6: Assign Pilots and Techs to 'Mechs, 'Mechs to Forces

Now that we have our 8 'Mechs, we need to assign our pilots and technicians to them. Let's start with the Mech pilots, then move on to Techs. Head over to the **Personnel** tab and change the **Personnel Type** to **Combat Personnel** to narrow down to just our MechWarriors. Next, right click your intended pilot and select the **Assign to Unit** and **As Pilot** options, finally selecting the unit you want your pilot to be in, as in the image below.

Personnel Type: Combat Personnel ∨	View: General ∨	☐ Group by Unit		

Rank	Name		Skill Level	Role	Unit Assignment
Captain	Glen White	**Change Rank** ›		Mechwarrior	-
Lieutenant SG	Mark Mats			Mechwarrior	-
Sergeant	Pavol Sedi	**Change Rank System** ›		Mechwarrior	-
Sergeant	Sybil Kui			Mechwarrior	-
Sergeant	Oliver van	**Change Status** ›		Mechwarrior	-
Sergeant	Max Papa	**Imprison**		Mechwarrior	-
Sergeant	Louis Farle			Mechwarrior	-
Sergeant	Michail Ors	Free		Mechwarrior	-

Change Primary Role ›
Change Secondary Role ›
Set Salary...

Assign to Unit ›	As Pilot ›	Caesar CES-3R
Choose Spouse (Mate) ›	None	Thunderbolt TDR-9S
Award ›		Lynx LNX-9Q
Spend XP ›		Enfield END-6Q
Set Edge Triggers ›		Phoenix Hawk PXH-1
Special Flags... ›		Centurion CN9-D3
Randomize Portrait(s)		Commando COM-5S
Change Portrait...		Hollander BZK-F3

Technicians are assigned in the exact same manner, just make sure to swap to **Support Personnel**.

Shawn Turnock		Veteran	Mech Tech	-	None
Luiza Codes	**Change Rank** ›	Tech		-	None
Lu-fang Eng		Tech		-	None
Mattias Petersen	**Change Rank System** ›	Tech		-	None
Shannon Oddy	**Change Status** ›	Tech		-	None
Sami Torgersen	**Imprison**	Tech		-	None
Kellyanne Oconoc		Tech		-	None
Zahida Khanum	Free	Tech		-	None

Change Primary Role ›
Change Secondary Role ›
Set Salary...

Assign to Unit ›	As Tech ›	Caesar CES-3R (75 minutes/day)
Choose Spouse (Mate) ›	None	Thunderbolt TDR-9S (75 minutes/day)
Award ›		Lynx LNX-9Q (60 minutes/day)
Spend XP ›		Enfield END-6Q (60 minutes/day)
Set Edge Triggers ›		Phoenix Hawk PXH-1 (60 minutes/day)
Special Flags... ›		Centurion CN9-D3 (60 minutes/day)
Randomize Portrait(s)		Commando COM-5S (45 minutes/day)
Change Portrait...		Hollander BZK-F3 (45 minutes/day)

Finally in this section, we're on to adding our newly crewed 'Mechs to forces. The **TO&E** Tab contains a visual breakdown of the full organization of combat units in the unit. Just adding all 8 'Mechs to this top level of the organization is untidy, and also makes it difficult to alternate forces in combat. Plus once you start growing as a force it becomes unwieldy. To that end, we're going to add some Sub Forces. First, right click the **My Campaign** force, pictured below, and review your options. Here you can change the force's name and description, as well as add a Sub-Force among other options.
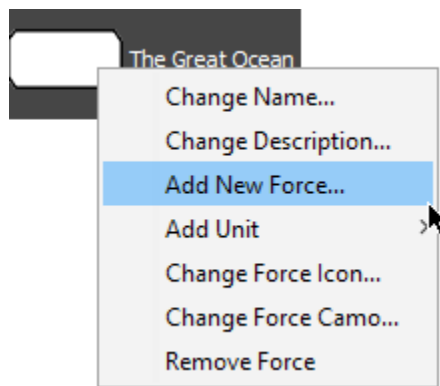
I've already changed the top level force's name, so now I'm going to add a sub force called "Command Lance." After adding that sub-force, double click on the top level one to reveal its sub-force. Next, as before right click the Command Lance, and now hit **Add Unit**, then **Mek**, and as I've done below, **Heavy** and finally select our first mech, the **Caesar**. I'm going to do this for 3 more 'Mechs, then create another sub-force called "Strike Lance" and add the remaining 4 'Mechs, with the Lieutenant first.
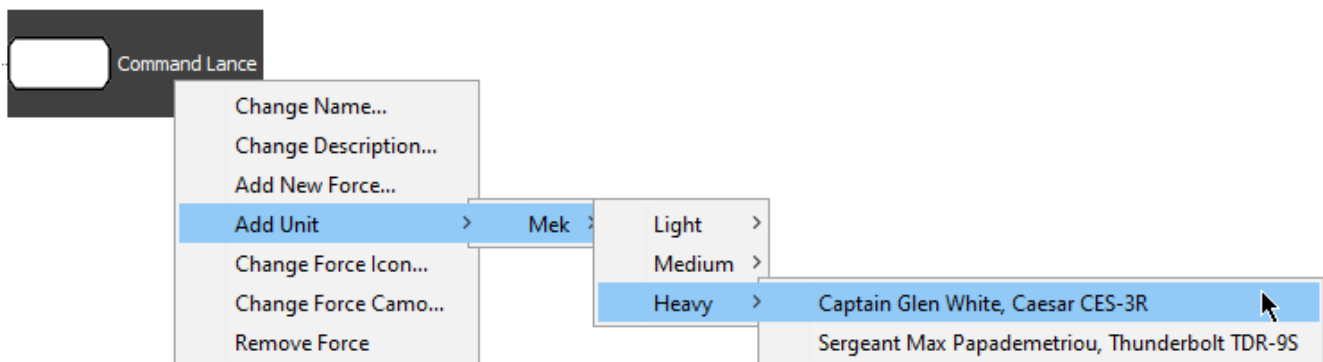
You can experiment with changing for Force Icons to create ones that more closely match **Strategic Operations** force icons, but that's somewhat beyond the scope of this section. For now, we have an effective force of two lances, ready for contracts.

C7: The Warehouse

Now that our **TO&E** is arranged, we need to worry about the **Warehouse** and its contents of supplies for repairs and reloads. Under **Campaign Operations**, these parts are paid for, but for simplicity's sake your first time through the program, it might be easier to do a somewhat cheat option and go ahead and add 10 tons of armor, split between any armor types you use, so in my case 5 tons of Ferro Fibrous and 5 of standard armor. Next, two tons of ammunition for all weapons used by the unit. This gives you a little bit of leeway on ammunition and armor, but the rest you'll need to purchase yourself.

C8: Finances

Now that we've got armor and munitions squared away, it's on to **Finances**. For now, the only Finance record the unit has is our **Starting Capital** of 5 Million C-Bills. Once we get going however, it's possible to end up in a position where the unit will need a loan to stay afloat. To do so on the **Finances** tab,

there is a **Get Loan** button. I wouldn't recommend starting the game with a loan unless you're sure you can pay it off and quickly. I've never needed to take a loan for anything either in AtB or in real life, so I can't really give advice on how this process works beyond keeping ahead of your payments.

D: Starting the First Contract

We're on the first step to victory, fast cars and deep pockets, or defeat, insolvency and armed creditors. So now we need to get started on contracts and how they work.

D1: Contract Generation

Before attempting to generate any contracts, make sure to have **GM Mode** on still. As per my **AtB Generator**, you should generate up to 5 contracts including any that were previously created by **MekHQ** itself. To do so, we'll need to open the **Contract Market** under the **Marketplace** menu. Once you do so, you will see the screen below:
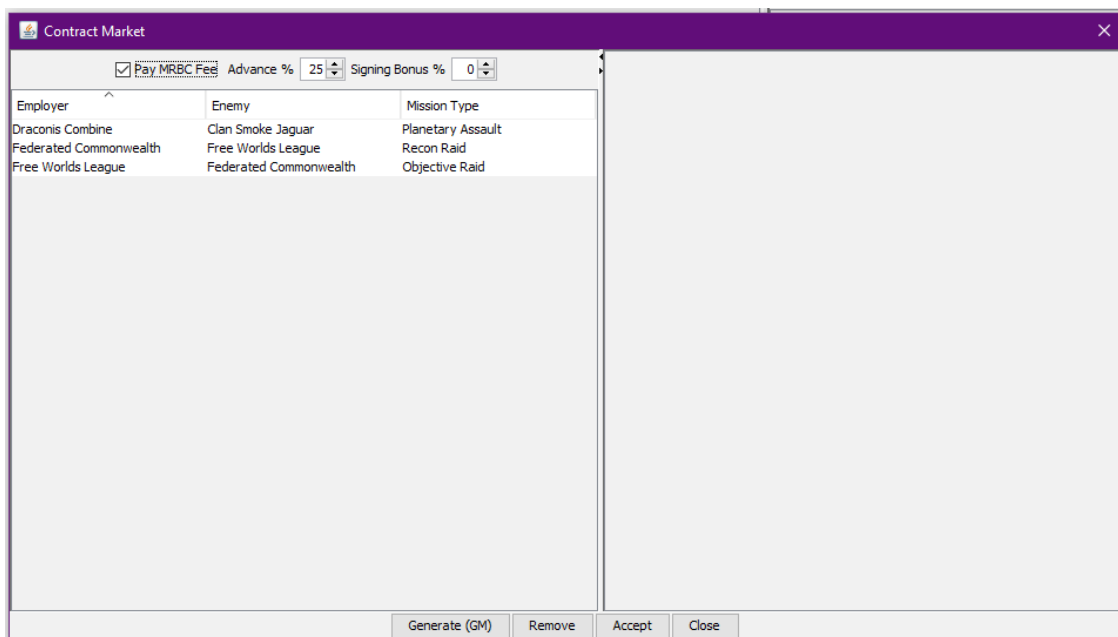
There's only 3 contracts here, so make sure to hit **Generate (GM)** to add 2 more for a total of five contracts. Once you have 5 contracts, it's time to review the important parts of every contract. First, review the **Employer** and the **Enemy**. Though the former isn't as important in the wider scheme of Against the Bot, the latter most assuredly is. As a small scale mercenary unit, or a first time player, avoid fighting any of the Clan factions until you're sure you're capable of defeating an opposing force that deals vastly more damage than your own. Next is the **Mission Type**. Unfortunately the definitions for these types are not in **Campaign Operations**, but instead are found in either **Field Manual: Mercenaries, Revised** or the **A Time of War Companion**. Several Mission Types are not represented in AtB, such as Terrorism and Assassination.

D2: Contract Overview, Forces and Time

In this case, the chosen Mission is an Objective Raid for the Federated Commonwealth against the Capellan Confederation. Picture below is a small portion of **Mission Overview**. I've already changed the name to fit a pattern of [Planet] [Mission Type] if I ever need to refer back to it.

Contract Name	Necromo Objective Raid
Employer:	Federated Commonwealth
Enemy:	Capellan Confederation
Mission Type:	Objective Raid

Next, we need to review the **Force Ratings** of the Ally and Enemy AI. In this mission, as seen below, the **Ally** force has a Regular skill while the **Enemy** force is Green. Both share a **Quality Rating** of D, which means that they have lower quality rating. Quality Rating ranges from F (the lowest) to A (the highest).

Ally Rating:	Regular/D
Enemy Rating:	Green/D

The Contract's **Start Date** and **Length** are covered below. In this case, the Contract begins on August 29th 3055, and will run for a total of four months. Note that it is possible for a contract to be extended with an Emergency Clause during times of extreme need by certain factions. This is covered more in depth in the **Official AtB TT Rules** file included with **MekHQ**.

Start Date:	08/29/3055
Contract length (months):	4

D3: Contract Rights and Lance Requirements

Just below the time frame, we have a list of **Contract Rights** such as **Overhead Compensation** or the money an employer pays the mercenary for incidental costs like food or lodging during a contract.

Next is who has **Command Rights**, which fall into one of these four categories: **Integrated**, **House**, **Liaison**, and **Independent**. These are ranked in this list by how restrictive they are.

After **Command Rights** comes **Salvage Rights**, which also fall into four categories, sorted by how much salvage the mercenary receives: **Full**, **Shared**, **Exchange** and **None**. Shared is displayed in MekHQ by a percentage of salvage.

Our last **Contract Right**, **Support Rights** are defined by being either **Straight Support** or **Battle Loss Compensation** (or **BLC**). Simply put, **Straight Support** means that the employer will pay a portion of the mercenary unit's normal costs, while **Battle Loss Compensation** means that the employer will only pay for equipment actually damaged in battle. Depending on the contract type, both of these **Support Rights** can turn out to be incredibly profitable for the mercenary unit in question. Pictured below are

what these types are on the **Mission Overview.** All of these **Contract Rights** are covered in **FMMr** or the **A Time of War Companion.**

Finally in this section are the **Required Lances**. To avoid a contract breach the Mercenary Force must meet this minimum at all times during the course of the contract.

Overhead Compensation:	Full
Command Rights:	House
Transport Terms:	100%
Salvage Rights:	60%
Straight Support:	80%
Battle Loss Compensation:	0%
Required Lances:	1 Lance(s)

D4: Money, Money, Money

The final portion of the **Mission Overview** dialog is the breakdown of how much profit and expenses that the contract will entail. This isn't a guarantee of total profit, just how much **MekHQ** estimates that you'll make. Selling salvage could easily increase your overall profits, just as needing to replace several BattleMechs could break your unit.

Overhead Compensation:	Full
Command Rights:	House
Transport Terms:	100%
Salvage Rights:	60%
Straight Support:	80%
Battle Loss Compensation:	0%
Required Lances:	1 Lance(s)

D5: Editing the Mission

If at any point you want to make changes to the **Mission**, it's possible to do so on the **Briefing Room** tab. Here you can edit the Bot's camouflage, the mission type, ally and enemy ratings and other options.

D6: Transit Times and You!

Now that we've actually chosen a contract, what the hell do we do now? We need to get to the planet our contract is on! The first thing we need to do is go over to the **Interstellar Map** tab of **MekHQ**. From here, in the text box next to **Find Planet**, we'll need to enter our target planet's name. Type it in and hit Enter. Your screen should have jumped right over to the target planet, as below.
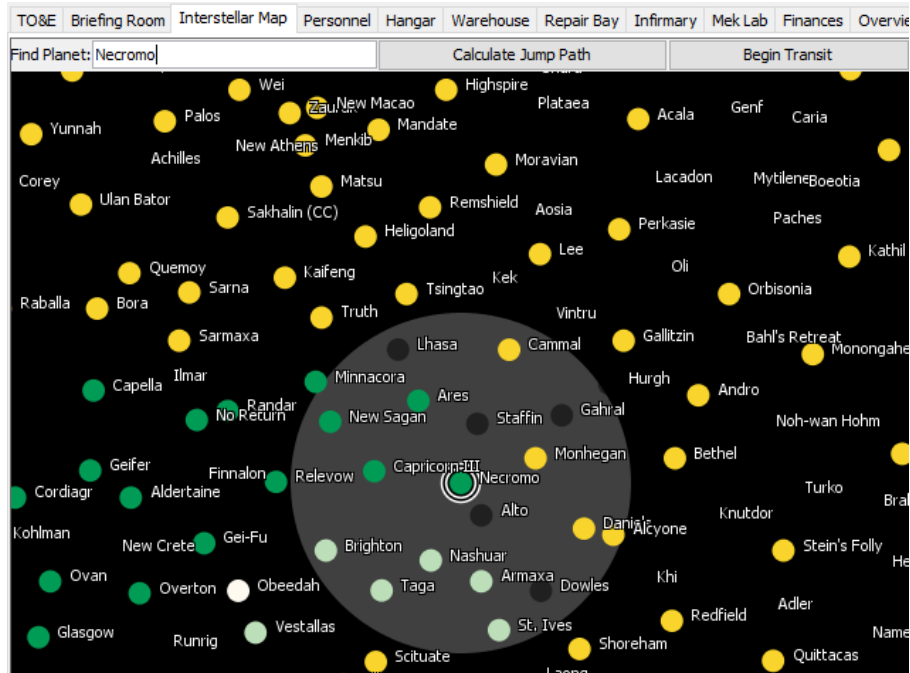
So now that we've got our target planet selected, we need to hit **Calculate Jump Path**. This will create a jump path to our target planet. Once that's done, hit **Begin Transit** and we're on our way to the contract! Every time you hit advance day, your unit moves closer to the contract's location. It is distinctly possible that the initial contract date will change due to transit times. This is okay, don't panic.
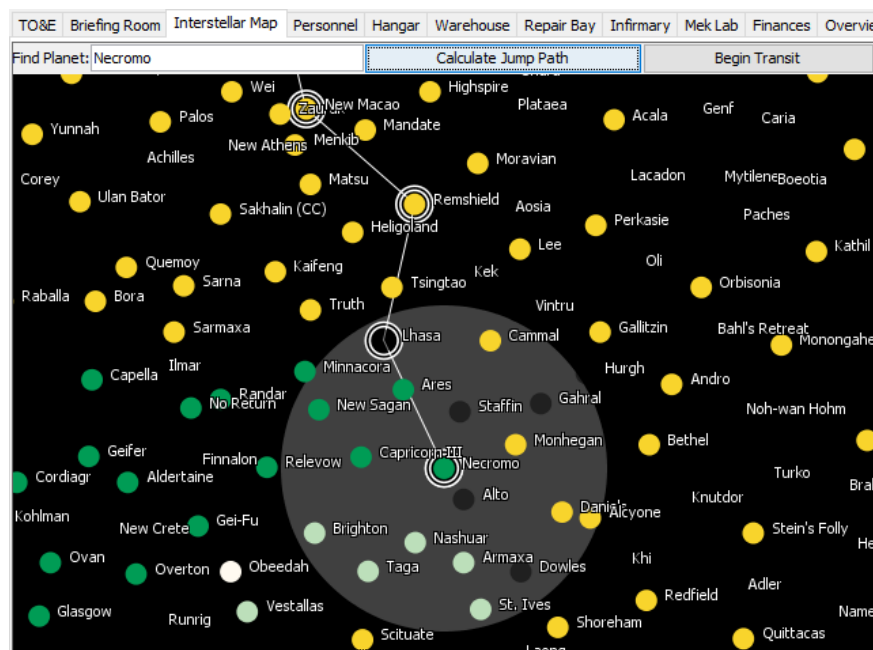
E: The First Battle

Now that we've reached our target planet and the date matches the **Contract Start Date** (I arrived on September 7th, the Contract's revised start date was not until September 17th), it's time to explain the **Lance Requirements** from above. By default, every contract will require one of four roles for lances: **Fight**, **Defend**, **Scout** and **Training**, and once the **Contract Start Date** has been reached, the requirements will be shown and able to be filled on the **Briefing Room** tab under **Deployment Requirements**, an example of which is below.

Deployment Requirements					
Contract	Total	Fight	Defend	Scout	Training
Necromo Objective Raid	1			1	

Maximum Deployed Units: 3

Current Assignments			
Force	Wt	Mission	Role
Strike Lance, The Great Ocean	M	Necromo Objecti...	Fight
Command Lance, The Great Ocean	H	Necromo Objecti...	Scout

E1: Scenario Generation

On some contracts, it's possible for the game to not generate scenarios immediately when you arrive. Don't fret, the game *will* generate those scenarios, just not right away. My example game didn't generate a scenario for me to perform until October 7th, for a mission on October 9th despite landing September 17th. The scenario I first received is pictured below.

Probe (Attacker)
Status: Pending

☐ Command Lance, The Great Ocean

🟨 Federated Commonwealth *Allied* Start: W BV: 781

🟨 Capellan Confederation *Enemy* Start: E BV: 6472

🟨 Capellan Confederation (Local Forces) *Enemy* Start: CTR BV: 327

Scenario Type:	Probe (Attacker)
Deployed Unit:	Command Lance, The Great Ocean
Terrain:	☐ Light Urban
Map:	☐ Town-mining
Map Size:	☐ 30x10
Light:	☐ Daylight
Weather:	☐ Clear
Wind:	Calm
Fog:	Heavy Fog
Gravity:	1.03
Player Start:	W

[1 Reroll Remaining]

```
Victory Conditions:
Must destroy 1/4 of enemy forces and while having less
than 1/4 of your own forces destroyed.


Observations:
Winner controls the battlefield after the battle.
```

E2: Preparing to Drop

Now that we've got a mission, it's time to go over the various components of the **Briefing.** First, let's go over the **Forces** involved. This mission has initially selected my Command Lance consisting of a Caesar, Thunderbolt, Enfield and Centurion. Added to that is a single FedCom Mech, a Commando, versus the Capellan defenders. These forces are pictured below. I'm fairly confident of my chances on this fight.


```
Federated Commonwealth Allied Start: W BV: 781
    Chase Markussen (2/5), Commando COM-1D
Capellan Confederation Enemy Start: E BV: 6472
    Caimile Ayodele (4/7), Hunchback HBK-4G
    Sue Lynch (4/6), Trebuchet TBT-5N
    Jin Ukurugenzi (4/6), Vulcan VL-2T
    Hayley Broom (3/6), Whitworth WTH-1
    Cami Pennycuick (4/5), Vedette Medium Tank (Liao)
    Louise Chio (3/5), Vedette Medium Tank (Liao)
    Amadi Mun (4/4), Hetzer Wheeled Assault Gun (Standard)
    Dianna Tseng (4/5), Drillson Heavy Hover Tank (SRM)
Capellan Confederation (Local Forces) Enemy Start: CTR BV: 327
    Rita Rwabugini (4/5), Rocket Launcher/3 Turret (Single)
    Zhen-bang Liu (5/5), Sniper Artillery Turret (Single)
    James Magallanes (5/7), MG Turret (Triple)
    Nokki Dazai (4/5), Mechanized Hover Platoon (MG)
    Maia Habibulaev (3/5), Foot Platoon (Rifle)
    Afeefa bin Husayn (3/5), Mechanized Tracked Platoon (Rifle)
```

If I was not confident of my chances, I do have the option of using my second lance as reinforcements. To do so, let's go back to the **TO&E** tab. Once there, on first glance, you'll notice that the Command Lance is highlighted in Dark Gray, indicating its **Deployed** status. To deploy the other lance on this mission, right click the second lance, and hover over **Deploy Force**, the contract you're on, and finally the mission. This does not lock the lance in, so you can change your mind and shuffle forces around, or even swap the first lance out and use only the second lance!
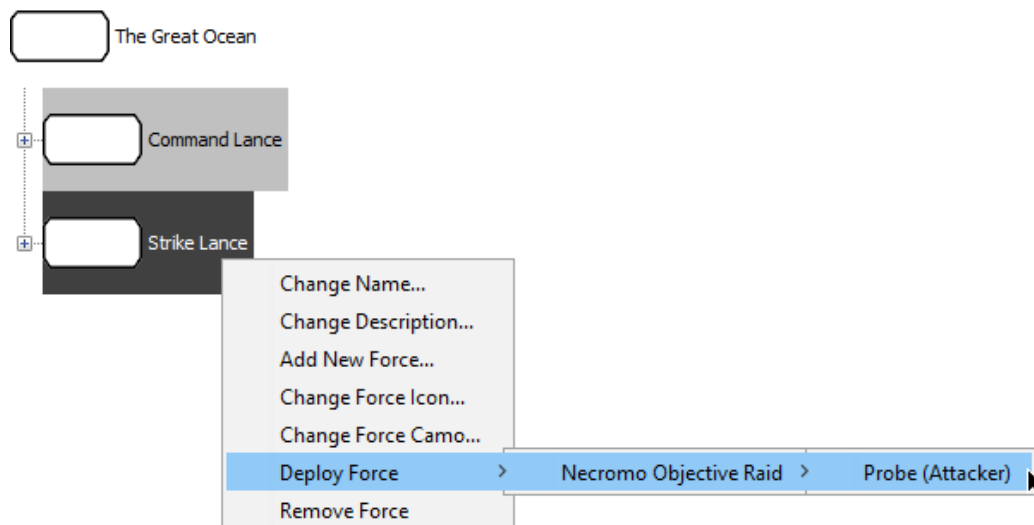
E3: Battlefield Conditions

After the forces involved come the **Battlefield Conditions**. These are the **Map, Map Size, Light Level** and **Weather**. If your Lance leader has points in the **Tactics** skill, it is possible to reroll these conditions, though rerolls are not always favorable. With regards to **Light Level**, if you are going to play with this option, I would highly recommend going into the **MegaMek Options** under **File** and checking the option called **(Unofficial) No Movement penalty for night/fog** under **Advanced Ground Movement**, or else scenarios will take forever because your movement is cut to near nothing. Additionally, do not bring vehicles or infantry to Tornado **Weather** conditions unless you're not particularly attached to them.

Terrain:	☐ Light Urban
Map:	☐ Town-mining
Map Size:	☐ 30x10
Light:	☐ Daylight
Weather:	☐ Clear
Wind:	Calm
Fog:	Heavy Fog
Gravity:	1.03
Player Start:	W

E4: The MegaMek Interface

Once your force is ready for combat, it's time to hit the **Start Game** button on the **Briefing Room** screen. **MekHQ** launches its own internal MegaMek client to run games with. As for actually explaining how MegaMek works, this unfortunately is something I don't have the page space to explain, and so this guide makes the assumption that you have some familiarity with **MegaMek** on its own. Some tips for playing **AtB** are helpful however. First, make sure to set the **Victory Condition** to match the requirements for the scenario in question (in this case 25%). Next, while its not as vital at this scale, I would highly recommend turning on **Individual Initiative** under **RPG Related** rules. This is because the more units the bot has to make decisions for, the longer (and longer) its turns can take. **Individual Initiative** forces both sides to move only one unit at a time, rather than having a choice of any of its total force. Also, while it isn't supported by the rules for some of these missions, if your Force does not all move at the same rate, you may start the game with them deploying on vastly different turns. I recommend tossing that, and editing your units to all start on the first turn.

E5: Post Battle Screen

After the hue and cry of battle, we come to the **Post Battle Screen**. First, you'll get a popup for **Control of the Battlefield**. This is based off of the **Observations** in the Mission Briefing. This Probe mission states I control the field if I won.

Next comes the **Unit Status** window. This first page allows you to view the damage each of your deployed 'Mechs have sustained in the engagement, as well as if any of them were totally destroyed in the battle and are unable to be salvaged.

The screen below shows I haven't taken any losses.

The next window is the **Allied Unit Status** screen, which for me was blank for whatever reason, so we'll skip ahead to **Pilot Status**, which shows if your pilots have taken any hits or are MIA or KIA.

After this is your salvage screen. By all rights, you can only claim units that have not escaped from the field, so salvage is often shot to pieces.

The next to last two pages are the **Capture Personnel Status** screen, which shows any possible prisoners you've captured for ransom using the rules from the **AtB Rules Document**, and the **Assign Kills** screen, which allows you to note who got which kill in the game. Finally we come to the **Preview** screen, which allows you to fill out an After Action Report for fluff purposes, but for most AtB campaigns, is likely redundant. If you lost the battle, this will be marked as a defeat.

With that, you've successfully (or not) completed your first **Against the Bot** engagement!

F: Repairs and Customization

Your 'Mechs have a surprising amount of durability, but every battle is going to wear them down. Here I'll cover how to perform repairs and go over the types of customization possible.

F1: Location, Location, Location

After combat, your surviving 'Mechs will be placed back on to the roster with whatever battle damage they received. Depending on the contract type, these 'Mechs will be in one of three sites: **In the Field**, **Field Workshop** or **Transport Bay**. These sites have variable difficulties, with Transport Bay having no difficulties, while **Field Workshop** and **In the Field** have a +1 and +2 difficulty modifier for repairs done in those locations. Assuming you own your own DropShip or are on Cadre Duty or similar, I would

recommend that you set all of your 'Mechs as being in a **Transport Bay**, while those without a DropShip would likely be at a **Field Workshop**. **Maintenance Facilities** and **Factories** should be all but unattainable unless your units is actually posted to a world with a factory or a Mercenary Hiring Hall.

F2: Repair types and difficulties

In my estimation, there are four types of repairs or replacements. These are, in order of least to most difficult: **Reloads**, **Armor**, **Component** and **Structural**. Reloads are standardized at 15 minutes, and are an automatic success, while Armor repairs are 5 minutes per point lost. Component repairs vary by the component damaged, and Structural repairs differ based on how much of the location was damaged.

Aside from those, you can also **Salvage** a damaged unit by right clicking the unit in question in the **Repair Bay** tab. This option allows you to remove parts that cannot be repaired so that they can be replaced.

F3: Extra Time and Overtime

In the process of repairs, you may run into a repair that need more time than your technician normally has allotted. There are two methods of gaining that extra time. One option is to turn on the **Allow Overtime** option next to the **Advance Day** button. This adds an additional 240 Minutes to a Technician's work day, but using that time imposes an additional difficulty modifier to repair checks. The other option is to change a repair to use **Extra Time**. By right clicking on the component needing repair, you can go from x1 to x4 the amount of time needed to perform repairs. This lowers the TN for the repair at the expense of a tech being focused solely on that repair.
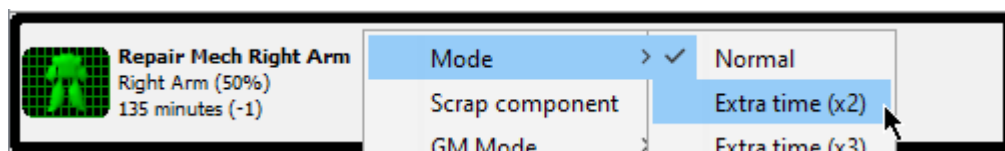
F4: Refits and Custom Builds

Last on our tour of repairs and fiddling with BattleMechs are two ways to change your 'Mech's loadout. Both options are accessed by right clicking the unit in question and selecting the **Customize** option. A refit kit is a standardized rebuild into any existing variant of the same chassis, which can get unwieldy if you eventually develop a full list of custom designs. The other option is to tinker with the design with **MekHQ's** built in **MekLab** which gives you the full by the minute breakdown of what your changes will cost in parts and time.

G: Contract Completion

The day has finally arrived, and your grueling death march into bankruptcy is over. It's the last day of your contract, and you have a positive score. What do you do now?

G1: Riding Off Into the Sunset (Victory optional)

To complete a contract, either for defeat (through special conditions like losing a **Base Defense** scenario, or having a negative contract score) or victory, you have to select the **Complete Mission** button on the **Briefing Room** screen.
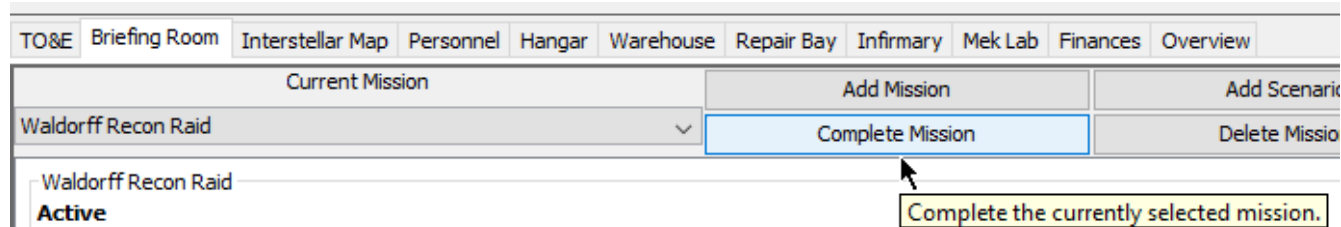
Unless your contract is extended through an Emergency Clause, that's it. Victory (or defeat) is yours! Pat yourself on the back, and marvel over the fat stack of cash you earned or burned, and move on to bloodier pastures.

G2: The Next Contract

What to do for your next contract? Well, in canon, after every contract, many mercenaries return to Outreach or Galatea to get new contracts and hobnob with the rest of their kind as well get technical expertise and training from the Wolf's Dragoons (On Outreach). Unless you're looking for a REAL LIVE BATTLETECH MERCENARY EXPERIENCE, skip all that and just launch your next contract from the **Contract Market**. Though if you're looking for refit savings from being in a Maintenance Facility or Factory, then you might want to hoof it back to Outreach or Galatea.

Section 3: Extras

H: Additional Items

In this section, I've placed rules and items that don't really fit within the wider guide, but can be incredibly helpful for players as a resource. This can be added to in the future, so updates are always possible.

H1: Planetary Conquest

It's possible to change the faction ownership of planets beyond what canon dictates. If you feel like you want to alter the timeline through your AtB campaign's actions, here's how. Firstly, I recommend that you limit these types of changes to **Planetary Assault** mission types, otherwise every smash and grab raid would change the flag flying overhead. To make these changes, we'll need to go to the **Interstellar Map** tab. Enter in the planet whose ownership you want to change, and right click it. Next, mouse down to the **GM Mode** option, and select **Edit planetary events for [Planet]** as in the image below.
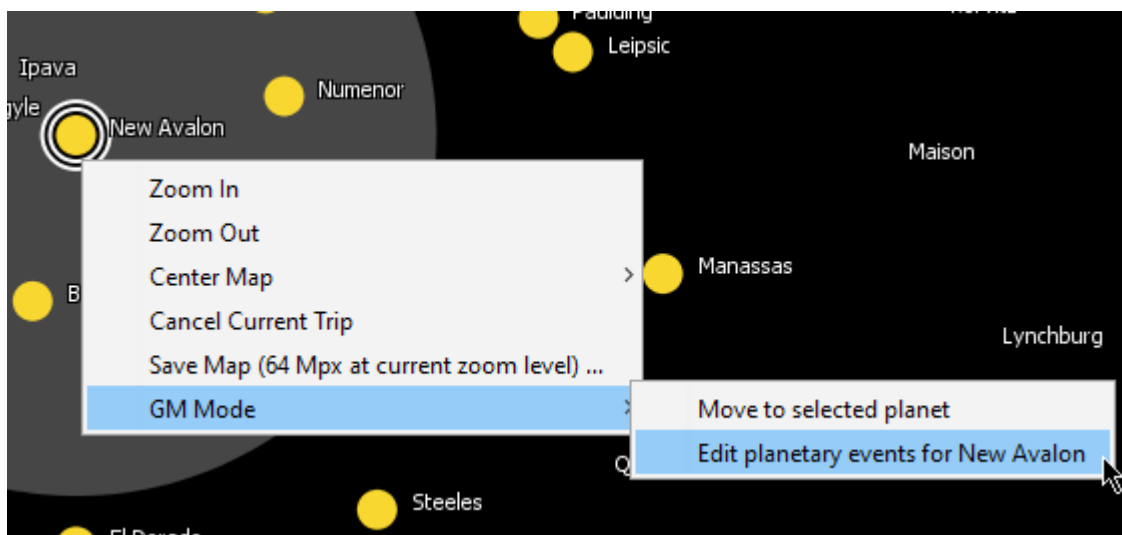
Once you do so, the **Edit Planetary History** window will open. To change who owns the planet, click the **Faction List** button in the center of its line, like the below image, and choose whichever faction you like. It's time for ComStar to bring enlightenment to the people of New Avalon, I think.

Once you've selected the Faction you want to take control, just click the **Save** button and bask in the glory.

H2: Custom Quirk Rules

With the release of the BattleMech Manual and the TRO: 3145 series, most, if not all BattleMech chassis now have quirks assigned to them for use. There are some examples currently not yet implemented in MegaMek, but present currently (These are **Barrel Fist**, **Directional Torso Mount**, **Fine Manipulators**, **Good Reputation**, **Nimble Jumper**, **Rugged**, **Ubiquitous** and **Slow Traverse**). MegaMek has now added the majority of the Quirks from these sources to their applicable units.

However, if you want to apply quirks that design does not normally have, such as **Combat Computer** or **Improved Targeting**, there aren't really any rules in Strategic Operations for adding them beyond point balancing, which can be hard to make sense of, since you're unlikely to want negative quirks. To that end, I have a dual C-Bill/Tech check method that allows for quirks to be added to designs. This section is still in development, so it may change between versions.

First, you'll need to pay a C-Bill cost for the modification. For individual weapon quirks (these are **Accurate Weapon**, **Fast Reload**, **Improved Cooling Jacket**, and **Jettison-Capable Weapon**), the cost is 50,000 C-Bills per point of damage the weapon deals, with a modifier of 1.5x for Clan components. This would be expressed as (50,000 x Weapon Damage). For example, if you wanted to add both **Accurate Weapon** and **Improved Cooling Jacket** to a Medium Laser (5 damage), both Quirk modifications would cost 250,000 C-bills apiece, for a total of 500,000-C-Bills. The same modifications to a Clan ER Medium Laser (7 damage) would be 525,000 C-Bills apiece, for a total of 1,050,000 C-Bills.

If you wish, for whatever reason, to make C-bill costs for modifications more expensive, you can add a multiplier that increases the C-Bill cost per quirk. So the first quirk would be at 1x, while the second would be 2x and so on.

After paying the C-Bill cost, you'll next need to make an associated Tech roll. If you're working on a 'Mech, this would be the 'Mech Tech skill. A Vehicle would need a Vehicle Tech roll and so on. This roll is made at the Tech's skill + 4, with an additional modifier of +2 for Clan technology. Using a Veteran Tech with 5+ skill to modify the Medium Laser from earlier, they would need to roll a 9 (5+4) or better to successfully complete the modification. If the same tech was working on a Clan ER Medium Laser, they would to instead roll an 11 (5+4+2) or better.

The rules for adding chassis wide Quirks follow the same rules, though their costs are different. These costs are listed below:

Anti-Aircraft Targeting: 4 million C-Bills

Barrel Fist: 1.5 Million C-Bills per limb modified

Battle Computer: 6 Million C-Bills

Battle Fists: 3 Million C-Bills

Combat Computer: 8 Million C-Bills

Cowl: 3.5 Million C-Bills

Directional Torso Mount: 6 Million C-Bills

Distracting: 1 Million C-Bills

Extended Torso Twist: 5 Million C-Bills

Fine Manipulators: 1 Million C-Bills

Hyper Extending Actuators: 2 Million C-Bills

Improved Communications: 2.5 Million C-Bills

Improved Life Support: 2 Million C-Bills

Improved Sensors: 3 Million C-Bills

Improved Targeting: 6, 8, and 10 million C-Bills per range band for Short, Medium and Long

Multi-Trac: 4 Million C-Bills

Protected Actuators: 3 Million C-Bills

Rumble Seat: 500,000 C-Bills

Searchlight: 50,000 C-Bills

Stabilized Weapons: 2.5 Million per weapon, or 10 million per limb

Variable Range Targeting: 5 Million C-Bills

Vestigial Hands: 500,000 C-Bills

Omitted from this list are some quirks that cannot be purchased for a Chassis, and are intrinsic to their design. These quirks are:

Command Mech

Compact Mech

Easy to Maintain

Easy to Pilot

Good Reputation

Modular Weapons

Narrow/Low Profile

Nimble Jumper

Overhead Arms

Reinforced Legs

Rugged

Ubiquitous

Unfortunately, it's possible to fail a Quirk Modification roll. In the event of such a thing happening, the weapon or chassis immediately gains 1 negative quirk that cannot be removed. For Weapon modifications, roll 1d6 and consult the following list:

1: **Inaccurate Weapon**

2: **Exposed Weapon Linkage**

3: **EM Interference**

4: **Poor Cooling Jacket**

5: **No Cooling Jacket**

6: **Nonfunctional**

Regardless of the roll, you can spend a point of Edge (if the Tech has any), to reduce the roll by 1.

For **Chassis Modifications**, the failed modification is more complex, though some have an obvious 1-1 connection.

Anti-Aircraft Targeting and **Battle Computer**: **Sensor Ghosts**. Additionally, AA Targeting may also suffer the effects of **Poor Targeting**, as detailed below.

Combat Computer: Cooling System Flaws

Cowl: **Cramped Cockpit**, **Difficult Ejection**, **No Ejection System**, **Poor Life Support** and **Weak Head Armor**. Roll 1d6, using **Cramped Cockpit** as 1 and **No Ejection System** as 6.

Extended Torso Twist: Roll 1d6. On 5-6, apply **No Torso Twist**.

Fast Reload: **Ammunition Feed Problem** and **Static Ammo Feed**. Flip a coin, and apply heads or tails.

Improved Targeting and **Variable Range Targeting**: Apply **Poor Targeting** to the appropriate range band, or roll 1d6 and divide by three for **Variable Range Targeting**, with (1-2) applying to short range, (3-4) to Medium and (5-6) to Long.

Reinforced Actuators: **Weak Actuators** or **Hard to Pilot**

Some Negative Quirks are, like their positive counterparts, intrinsic to the design itself. These are:

Bad Reputation

Illegal Design

Non-Standard Parts

Obsolete

Oversized

Prototype

Weak Legs

H3: Resources

Due to BattleTech's age and MegaMek's popularity, a number of fan resources have come about to give players more tools to use for their games. In this section, I'll go over a variety of useful resources for Against the Bot, from others as well as myself.

Xotl's 3028-3057 Random Assignment & Rarity Tables

This is an incredibly handy RAT for generating forces for the earlier periods of play, giving you forces that are fairly well grounded in canon sources for Mech distribution for play in the **Star League, Succession Wars** and **Early Clan Invasion** eras.

These tables can be found in a single source at the following dropbox link:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/fbyk0lqcul4r90b/3028-3057%20Random%20Assignment%20%26%20Rarity%20Tables%2010.52.pdf?dl=0

Not-Entirely-Anon's Portrait Pack

A fairly prolific contributor to /btg/ among other places in the wider BattleTech community, NEA has graciously allowed a link to his portrait pack to be included in this guide.

www.mediafire.com/file/c181wsgm6r8y6it/portraits.rar

Anon's Portrait Pack

Another portrait pack made available to /btg/, this pack does contain copies of the original portraits already in MekHQ. For now, this pack will be left in the guide unless the creator comes forward and asks me to remove it.

https://mega.nz/#F!W8k3DADS!DZspXeSMrzP2fqALvBclSw

MegaMek's Official Resources

Located at the bottom of the official downloads page are a number of camouflage schemes, portrait packs and links to more of the same.

https://megamek.org/downloads

CampaignAnon's Against the Bot Generator

A fairly quick and dirty way to generate a force for AtB if I'm not in the mood to go through the proper steps of generating a mercenary unit through **FMMr** or **CamOps**.

http://www.mediafire.com/file/kjdgd3rf8xi2oje/Against_the_Bot_Generator.png/file

CampaignAnon's Customs

I make and play with a LOT of custom designs. Some of them are fairly sane, other involve things like creating 40+ configurations of the *Perseus* OmniMech. I've also requested quite a few customs from players I faced off against in the old MekWars leagues from years ago. I'm making a portion of my customs available here as a resource because I already do so for /btg/ events.

http://www.mediafire.com/file/xt7l5y1qp062ehx/CampaignAnon%2527s_Customs.7z/file