MWL Documentation Documentation

Release 0.1

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Contents

Note: This is a work in progress. Be sure to use the search feature if you're looking for something specific.

Preface

Stuff.

Acknowledgements

This documentation resource is a collection of some excellent resources from both the Mekwars Legends forums and from various sources on the internet. These sources include:

- Spanish, the foundation author from which a lot of this work is sourced

- That Griffin dudes guy.

- Anyone which has written a guide on the MWL forums

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3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 About Mekwars: Legends

Welcome to Mekwars: Legends! Established by a bunch of nerds back in spring of 2009, Mekwars: Legends is an online Battletech Campaign beginning in the tumultuous year of 3067. A volunteer project, it is run by BattleTech fans for BattleTech fans. Enjoy!!!

3.1.2 About this Manual

This manual is meant to help you understand how this server works and prepare you before you get tossed into the water with the sharks. As you are probably new to the Mekwars: Legends Server there are a number of things you should pay attention to.

The metagame of planetary conquest and strategy is a very important part of the server life and the Faction communities. Some players put a lot of effort into this aspect of the game. Please consider this, before you rush headlong into battle. The results of your fights will impact on the strategic map, both positive and negative. You can do tremendous damage to your Faction – and all its other players - by unknowingly doing the wrong things, which could destroy the hard work of others.

Note: Note: Don't let this discourage you!

We (the players of Mekwars: Legends) realize that this isn't done with bad intentions. Nevertheless, we would truly appreciate that if you have any questions, ask one of the veterans before you go into battle. And keep asking those questions. All of us, your factionmates and opponents alike, want to get your feet planted on solid ground, so that you can eventually hold your own on this server.

- Ask! This server has a strong roster of experienced veterans that are more than willing to give you a hand or answer your questions. Most of them have been around for years and will very probably have an answer to your question.

- The MWL campaign is set up to reward fast, constant play, instead of multiple hour games where you snipe an entire lance with a Griffin.

- It's not uncommon for a player here to play half a dozen games a day. These are people that see the battlefield from multiple perspectives and a variety of strategies. These guys (and sometimes, ladies) can often have every unit ever produced, committed to memory – and they are waiting to pound on hapless victims!!!

- While taking your first steps you should build armies around 8,500 to 9,500 BV. In this bracket you will find plenty of games. As a new player your rating will give you a % advantage over more experienced players to

level the field a bit. It will also allow you to play your first games without fear of losing, or incurring the wrath of your faction mates.

- Expect every trick in the book or ever thought of! And make sure that you learn them yourself.

- Take your time. Don´t go for shortcuts – it's the surest way to ruin a promising situation and the rest of your day.

Learning the game will not only help your faction, but you'll also enjoy your games more. It's a fact that you won't enjoy your time in Mekwars: Legends if you keep losing battles and having bad experiences.

3.2 Experienced Battletech Players

For players familiar with tabletop Battletech but not using Total Warfare, and for those who have played tabletop but are new to Megamek, here are some suggestions from the perspective of a tabletop player starting out on Legends.

3.2.1 Basements

If you fall in buildings without receiving a damage report, you fell into a basement. The current version of Megamek is poor at communicating basement events. To get out of basements, activate the climb mode (hidden under 'more' in the movement tabs).

3.2.2 Sourceless damage

If in the shooting report a unit takes damage with no listed source, it is likely taking damage from a hidden unit using indirect fire. This damage can sometimes be seemingly attached to a different unit's firing reports, so read the entries carefully.

This can also happen if LOS to the firing unit is lost, as when the target mech's pilot is KO'd with no other units having LOS, or if the firing unit falls breaking LOS. Again, read your combat reports carefully.

3.2.3 Front loaded initiative

Legends clients use the front loaded initiative option. This means outnumbering the opponent has much less effect than under standard TW rules. Furthermore, infantry and battlearmor do their movement in a separate initiative track from other units. This has been done so that players cannot use BA as initiative sinks.

3.2.4 Vehicle damage tables

Vehicles do not suffer critical hits on location rolls of 8 from attacks on the side, nor do motive system damage rolls take attack direction into account. This means that presenting a vehicles side to the enemy is far less dangerous than under basic TW rules. Use this to rotate fresh armour to the enemy whenever possible.

3.2.5 Vehicle firing arcs

However, vehicle firing arcs are different than in TW. Mainly, the front and turret arcs are narrower, so familiarise yourself with these TacOps arcs to avoid being unable to take shots you planned for in the movement phase. Turrets can of course still pivot, but if locked or jammed, this applies to them as well. Jammed turrets can be cleared via a shooting phase button hidden under the 'more' button

3.2.6 Double Blind

The Legends server uses the double blind and sensor rules; they can be found in TacOps. Read them carefully to make sure you understand two things: 1: Visibility is only checked before and after a move, never during.2: prone mechs can hide behind lvl 1 hills and buildings. This means that units can sneak up on the enemy while moving mostly in the 'open'.

It is vital to learn how to find and cover your blind spots, and also how to exploit the ones the enemy has.There are more detailed guides to double blind available, but this is the big important thing to understand: just because you can't see the enemy, doesn't mean they didn't move through hexes you can see.

3.2.7 'Before initiative' actions

(ammo dumping, ECM/ECCM switches, turning off heatsinks etc) On the tabletop, these actions are usually declared before the initive dice are rolled but after the previous turn's heat phase. Megamek does not allow any user input in between the heat phase and the initiative roll. Any such actions can be done at any point at which you can right click -> view on one of your mechs. If you want to be able to take such actions after seeing the weapons fire report, you will need to ensure that there is a 'declare physical attacks' stage.

3.2.8 Backwards movement level changes

Backwards movement on Legends can be done up and down levels, but this requires a PSR. Don't overuse it, but be aware of the option, both for yourself and for the enemy

3.2.9 Heavy woods

Jumping into heavy woods now requires a PSR to avoid falling. This also affects BA but they will only suffer 0 damage when falling.

3.2.10 Enhanced AMS

AMS can reduce the cluster hit number below '2' and thus completely destroy enemy missile salvoes.

3.2.11 Floating critical hits

Critical hits caused by special location rolls (2 for mechs, 2 and 12 for vehicles) will not cause those critical hits in a fixed location but roll to see which location they affect. This means taking a critical hit in vital areas becomes less likely, but it also allows more different disastrous results to occur (eg leg or head severance). There is little that can be done about this, just keep in mind that just because your gauss rifle is in the arm, it is not safe from a Through Armor Critical (TAC).

3.2.12 Engine explosions

Legends uses the optional stackpoling rule. Engines destroyed too badly in one turn might explode for major damage to nearby units. Be aware of this risk when kicking badly damaged units on the ground.

3.2.13 Firing while prone

Legends allows firing while prone with one arm, instead of requiring two. Keep this in mind and don't dismiss mechs on the ground with one arm gone!

3.2.14 'Skip ineligible to act'

Legends uses the 'Skip units that cannot act in a phase' option to speed up gameplay. Remember that this means that units that have had all their weapons destroyed/disabled cannot act in the shooting phase anymore, not even to spot!

3.2.15 Rotary AC Jamming

On Legends, Rotary Autocannons will jam only on a 2, regardless of the settings. This means Rotary ACs will more likely be fired (and should be fired) at a higher rate.

3.3 Enrolling in the Campaign

3.3.1 Quick Overview

- Download client
- Create an account
- Register your name and create a password
- Defect to your faction of choice
- Speak to a staff member about your:
- Regimental or Cluster name
- Unit Focus

3.3.2 Client Download

The Mekwars Legends client can be downloaded from the website HERE.

The client requires you have java installed on your computer and you should make sure that your java version is relatively current.

3.3.3 Creating an account

After you have downloaded and unzipped the client and made sure java is installed, your next step will be to log in to the server. For Windows users, open the `startClient.bat` file or on linux: `java -jar MekWarsClient.jar`.

This will cause a login interface to pop up that should look something like:

If this is your first time logging in, leave the password field blank. For a username use whatever appropriate handle you wish, though once in the server you will eventually have your name changed to a faction appropriate name by a server admin.

Note: The campaign has a tradition of players adopting canon Regimental or Cluster names as player names.

Once you have logged in you will find yourself at a screen prompting you to "get started" after clicking on the prompt you will be asked to register your name and come up with a password. It is a good idea to make this password something you will easily remember as the retrieval process for an account with a forgotten password is very difficult.

After you have completed the registration process you will find yourself in "Boot Camp". Some servers require you to play a certain number of practice games or training missions before you can enter the campaign. We figure that if you have come this far you probably know how to play BattleTech and thus "Boot Camp" is simply a portal through which you choose your faction.

Note: If this is your first time playing Battletech, however, don't be discouraged. This guide was designed to help players of different skill levels improve their game - even players who have never played a single game of Battletech.

To choose the faction you wish to join simply click on the "Campaign" Tab at the top of your client and select "other" on the menu and then "defect" on the sub-menu. This will call up a pop-up menu that will allow you to select the available faction that you wish to defect to. After selecting a faction you will be prompted on your main screen, in red letters, to confirm that you actually want to defect to this faction. Once you confirm your selection, you'll have officially entered the campaign!

On arrival to your chosen faction, you should promptly speak to a campaign moderator (designated by the a * symbol net to their name), or a campaign administrator (designated by a @ symbol next to their name. You will need to speak to one of these before you can proceed further in the campaign. They will ask you to choose an appropriate canon Regiment, Division or Cluster to represent. They will also be able to set your chosen unit focus, which will allow you to proceed with the next step.

This is a requirement for participating in the campaign.

Note: Once the staff member has assigned your Regimental or Cluster name, you will use that name to login next time.

3.4 The Military Campaign

The Military Campaign, also called a mini-campaign or MC, is central to your day to day life on Legends. It simulates your unit's deployment and engagements between refitting.

While this means that each game you play is part of your MC, the games you play do not represent an entire battle - just think of them as the turning points of each battle, where the tide could turn for either side.

3.4.1 A typical MC

- Pull units from Quartermaster
- Purchase and assign pilots to units
- Construction of armies
- Battle/Play games until you get a reward point
- Spend reward point to begin a new MC

3.4.2 Pulling units from the Quartermaster

In your Headquarters tab, you should see an overview of your current hangar - which should be empty at the start. To the top right, you should see a field that will list your current

- Influence (flu)
- Reward Points (RP)
- Techs

Influence: at the start of your first MC, before you pull any units, you should have 1000 Influence. These points allow you to purchase new equipment, at the cost of 1 flu per unit.

Reward Points: every battle you fight, every game you play, the total BV you use will be counted and will be shown as your Hangar BV Used. Once you have used up 85% of your total Hangar BV, you will get a Reward Point. That RP can then be exchanged for 1000 flu, which then also ends your MC.

Techs: Each unit you purchase or salvage requires a certain number of techs to maintain them. Units that are not maintained cannot be assigned to armies or used in battles.

At the start, you should have 682 techs. As you purchase units, techs will be automatically assigned to them. The number of free techs you have represents how many more are available to maintain additional units.

The Quartermaster tab represents your faction's Quartermaster, from whom you get your assigned units. You can choose what class of unit to purchase, but the QM will assign the specific units to you randomly.

For example, depending on your chosen faction, if you choose to pull a light mech, you may get a Locust, Wasp or even a Wolfhound.

As you pull units from the Quartermaster, remember that you will not be able to pull units again until you have used up 85% of your total Hangar BV. Read the army construction rules carefully so that you will be able to create enough legal rmies to meet this total.

Things to think about while pulling units:

- Rules for army composition (legality)
- Available models and designs (available through the Quartermaster tab)
- Your opponents available on the strategic map (Map tab)
- Unit mix
- Your personal play style

3.5 The Quartermaster

Factions control planets, some planets have factories. Factories produce units.

The Quartermaster (QM), is your interface to purchase units from what is available to your faction.

3.5.1 Pulling Units

As Mekwars Legends does not have a purchasing system, purchasing units is referred to as 'pulling'.

Click on the Quartermaster tab on the MWL client. You will note a long list of units and their factories. To pull a unit, click the 'Buy' button. You can then select what type of unit you wish to purchase.

The unit you purchase is random, however it is influenced by the factory and variant weights which you'll also see in the Quartermaster detail section.

After purchasing a unit, the unit will appear in your hangar. If you purchased a Mek, you'll also need to hire a pilot. You do this
menu. Note that other unit types (vehicles and battle armor), already come with an able crew.

For more information on managing pilots, see **'legendsGameplay/pilots'_**.

3.6 Pilots

3.6.1 Hiring Pilots

After you purchased your units you will need to man your machines. Vehicles and BA come equipped with pilots, but Battlemechs don't. To purchase pilots click on the Campaign tab, select Personnel, then Pilots and then Hire Pilots. For every weight class you can buy a maximum of 5 pilots in one go, so you will have to repeat the process until you bought enough pilots for all your mechs.

Make sure that you buy exactly as many pilots as mechs! Then you buy exactly 5 more of each weight class. The rationale behind this is that your pilots will gain experience in battle and develop new skills. While this is in general positive it also has its downside. Leveled pilots like 4/4, 3/4, etc. raise the BV of the unit they are assigned to by roughly 20-25% for each point their skill is below 4/5, so 25% for a 4/4 pilot and up to 50% for a 3/4 pilot. On special occasions this makes sense, but in general you should stick to the regular 4/5 pilots. The reason is simple, if you equip your mechs with leveled pilots you will pay a higher BV for them, resulting in less units per army, which in turn will get you outnumbered (As usually happens to Clan or WoB Shadow Division players). So think twice whether you want to keep or use a leveled pilot.

By keeping a supply of regular pilots you reserve yourself the choice of swapping those 'overprized/overbv'ed' pilots and keep your army BV competitive.

3.6.2 Pilot Assignment

The most effective pilots in regard to cost/efficiency are the regular 4/5 pilots. When you hire Pilots these will be the standard pilots. You should always strive to get the 5 extra pilots per weight class to maintain a good pilot pool. Only if a mech would benefit from improved PSR rolls (like a fast spotter or backstabber that needs to stay upright, or TSM mech) should you consider using 4/4 pilots.

Make sure that you use all pilots with extra skills that are still 4/5 to raise the average skill level of your pilot pool and to prepare for the eventuality of your pilots leveling. If you have to use 4/4 or 3/4 pilots for whatever reason, it would be beneficial if they had acquired other skills also. Especially valuable are the Maneuvering Ace (MA) and Melee Specialist (MS) skills.

Pilots that have improved gunnery like 3/4 or the rare 3/5 makes good sense in machines that have strong long distance weaponry. Albeit beware into which mech you put it. Some mechs are already quite expensive and when adding a veteran pilot the cost might be excessive. Look for mechs that have long range power, but are cheap to get the best cost-effect ratio. E.g. don't put your 3/4 pilot in a Cestus-3S (1910 BV), but rather in a Archer or Maelstrom (around 1650 BV) which have comparable range firepower (better range brackets than a HPPC) and/or speed.

One of the few other reasons to use 4/4 pilots is to utilize their edge skill that comes automatic with the rise in skill level. You can use edge to protect mechs that are important to your battle plan or coincide the edge with the desired improved piloting skill for mechs that carry a Heavy Gauss Rifle (HGR), or will engage in physical combat (TSM). The edge skill will give you one reroll for KO rolls, HD hits or critical hits and improve the survivability of the unit.

3.6.3 Exceptional Pilots

Some pilots have additional skills like "Melee Specialist" or "Maneuvering Ace" that predestine them to pilot a fast and/or close combat mech; the typical example being a TSM mech like the Nightsky-6T. If the purpose of a mech is

to close for physical combat, it makes sense to put a 4/4 pilot into it, to ensure that he actually hits his target and stays upright (passing PSRs) to sustain its mobility and survivability. The raised BV cost is well worth the investment.

3.7 Building Armies

Now let us assume that you bought the units as listed on the **'shopping list'_**. Before you build your armies you have to select the camo for your units.

Now you should start building your armies, to do so enter your HQ tab and click 'Create New Army'. You can now add units to that army by either right clicking on an empty slot in the army and select a unit from the drop down menu (see. below), or by dragging and dropping the unit into an army slot.
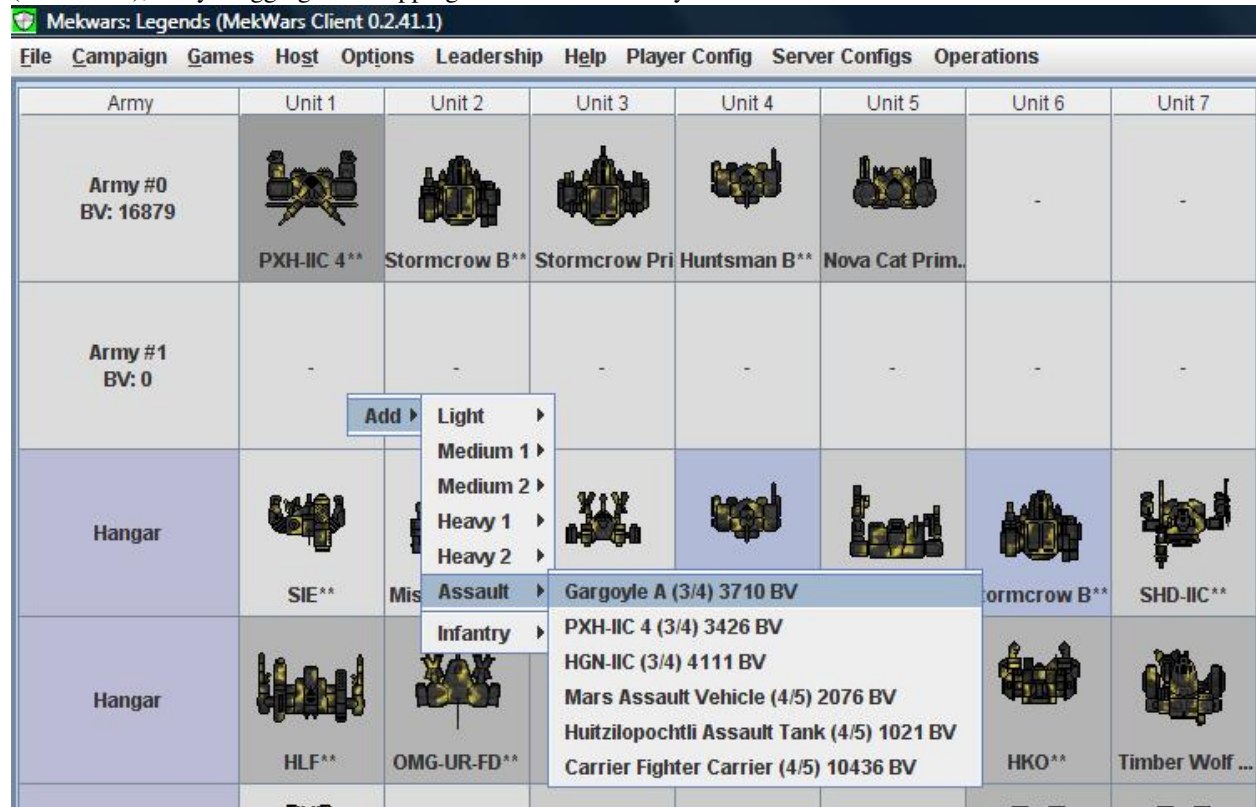
3.7.1 The Commander

The Commander is assigned on a lance level (canon unit). This means that you get 1 Commander for 1 lance of mechs, or 2 Commanders for two lances of mechs. If you field more than one lance, but less than two you still receive only one CMDR. Same applies to mixed formations. You should make sure that your Commander is placed in a mech that ensures a high survivability. If you lose your +2 initiative bonus you are suffering a serious handicap.

Note: The number of Commanders that you can field can be influenced by your focus.

If you have multiple mechs available to fill the Commander position make sure that he has the maximum possible survival potential: e.g.

- Sniper before Brawler
- fast and/or jumpy over slow

- standard engine over light engine over XL engine

- energy based over ammunition based or Gauss equipped.

3.7.2 Army BV Modifiers

There are a couple of things that can raise the BV of the armies you assemble:

- C3 networks

- Clan tech

- Leveled pilots

- TAG

3.7.3 Building an Army - Key points

When choosing the units for each army, make sure that you:

- Fill all roles

- Stay around 9.500 BV

- Check Legality (50% rule)

- Have a battleplan/philosophy

While you add units that might fit the roles the overall army composition (army comp) might turn out inferior due to the lack of proper units/designs at your disposal. To correct that problem swap units from one army to another and check them for feasibility. At this point it is strongly recommended that you show your army to your more experienced faction mates. To do so right click on the army name (Army #1) in the Hangar and select "Show to Faction". It will paste the contents of that army into the Faction HPG and your faction mates can give you advice. You should do this for every army (3-4 at a time) every Military Campaign! You will also note other players including the very experienced ones doing this before they go into battle to make sure they haven´t overlooked something.

To get the right mix and balance remember these points:

- Do not mix multiple high BV units into one army! It will result in a lack of material. You *will* get overwhelmed by a superior number of inferior units. Add these special units as an extra to an average army to balance it out. E.g. a captured heavy Clan mech with a veteran pilot will cost you approximately 3-4.000 BV. Adding one to a sub-par army will result in a protective shielding of your new toy, while giving the army an edge it would have lacked otherwise.

- Use reconnaissance in each army. To take advantage of the Line of sight (LOS) use (if available and appropriate) Beagle Active Probes (BAP), VTOLs and jumping mechs to building roofs or hills (hint: make sure that you don not expose yourself to be shot down!). Try to keep one of either in each army. What that means to you is, if you can manage to hide your force, except the VTOL, you can maneuver into position and completely ambush your opponent. Knowing where your opponent is, while he doesn´t know where you are assures victory.

- Build your army around a philosophy. Anticipate what your game plan would be. Do not build one "uber-army" at the cost of having 2 trash armies! It means that you will definitely loose more battles than you win.

- BV efficiency is key. Put the right pilots in the right mechs and don't count on finesse tech like C3.

- C3. One master/hitter and one spotter. Period.

- Get your armies reviewed. Once you have built your armies using the available units in your hangar you should sit back and review them. Tinker around with swapping individual units for a better range or movement composition of the army, swap pilots to enhance the BV ratio, double check on autoeject and ammo, etc. etc. etc. When you have done this and are sure that you and your forces are ready for action, show your armies to

your faction mates to have a review. While you have composed your armies to the best of your knowledge and ability you might have missed an important detail.

Note: Use your faction mates´ experience to improve your army building!

Indices and tables

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