

BATTLECHAT

DOG YEARS

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Well, I really wanted to get this out earlier but it seems several dog years have been crammed into a few weeks; just so many plates and not enough arms to keep them all spinning. Course, hard to believe that this is BattleChat number thirty!...very cool to look back and see where we've come and where we're going.

So I was truly hoping that *Technical Readout: 3057, Revised* would be in stores when I wrote this, but as far as I can tell, it is done printing and shipping to the distributors this week, so it should hit store shelves next week.

I just heard that the blue lines (pre-final printing press sheets that allow us to try and catch any final egregious errors) for *AeroTech 2, Revised* has been reviewed and approved, so you'll see this book in May. *A Guide to Covert Ops...* is heading to the printers tomorrow!

MapPack: Solaris VII has finished primary layout and is about ready to have a secondary layout, which will be sent to the proof checkers. Layout has begun working on the maps, but as any of you who own those maps know...well, let's just say they were not the best in laying down the grids and marking them appropriately. As such, we want to make sure the maps are as usable as possible (taking the same steps as we did for all the maps in *Map Set Compilation 1*), so its quickly become a big headache. However, I'm really excited about this product and can't wait to play on some of the *Solaris: The Reaches* maps that actually have all the terrain labeled!

Mercenaries Supplemental just went to art for layout; all the art and logos are in and of course we just posted the great cover art by Doug Chaffee as a preview. I'd like to give a giant kudos to both Fighting Pirannha Graphics and the people associated with CamoSpecs.com. I came up with a wacky idea (of course late in the game), to include a color section of photos showing off the camo schemes of all the units in the book through great painted miniatures (which would include the decals for the logos) and everyone has come through under an insane deadline with flying colors; also have to thank Rob (my boss) for letting me add 'another' color section to a book, in a year already filled with color sections.

War of 3039 will be heading to art next week; the rules section is currently being looked at by the play test group. Though there is no color section for this book, it will end up being a huge book, with a pile of very cool, never-before-seen or detailed information on this era. Looking forward to this first in the *Historical* series.

Now to some hard parts. As you know from my previous BattleChats, we've been training two new layout guys. This will really solve issues of delayed products in the schedule...but only after they are up and running strong. Until then, of course, there is a learning curve and that has caused delays (as you all know from when products are currently releasing). What this means is that we suddenly were going to have six products releasing across three months, which is just impossible. Additionally, the Vehicle Support Rules for *Combat Equipment* are proving to be a tough nut to crack and get right. As such, in order to alleviate the schedule and to provide additionally play testing time so we get those rules right, *Combat Equipment* is now scheduled for a September release.

The interior color section for *Handbook: House Steiner* has been assigned—expecting to see sketches any day now—and once again have to thank Rob for allowing me to go hog-wild on this color section; can't wait to see it myself, not to mention getting your feedback on it. The final draft of the book (including comments from the fact checkers on play testers) is just about done and the entire book should be heading to the editor the first week of May.

Okay, I think that just about covers everything for this month. Now back to generating some final content before launch for BattleCorps this morning...

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