

Clan Snord

History

The Snord clan has an interesting history covering the last century, much of it conflicting with itself. Here we will attempt to tell the most likely history, but are afraid that after all these decades it may be impossible to ever know fully what actually happened during the Third Succession War. It is known that the family first came to prominence in the form of Cranston Snord and his daughter Rhonda Snord. When Clan Wolf sent the Dragoons to scout the Inner Sphere he was one of the misfits they were happy to be rid of, even if he did demand that Rhonda be allowed to come as well. A fanatical collector of information about the Star League government, military, and any artifacts he could find, his nonconformist attitude had caused much friction in Clan Wolf. Some wonder why he never allowed himself to be made a bondsman of the Goliath Scorpions considering their similar obsession, but that obviously did not happen and he made a much greater impact on history than membership in that Clan would have allowed.

He and Jaime Wolf agreed that that he would be more valuable away from the Dragoons and Cranston used his battalion to attack a Liao outpost for the sole purpose of recovering a rare meerschaum pipe collection. That gave Jamie the excuse he needed to throw Cranston out publicly. It showed Cranston's MechWarriors abilities, gave birth to the many rumors of his eccentricities, and showed the Dragoons for the elite mercenary unit they were.

Cranston Snord took his daughter with him and they flew over much of the Inner Sphere, following rumors of Star League artifacts and spending their money on what proved to be fruitless searching. They arrived on Crossing in 3007 and in a legendary poker game he won his first private command. Some histories say 3002 but as this was before the Dragoons even arrived these are generally considered to be faulty, or perhaps focusing on other people with Cranston's name used because of his notoriety.

Amounting to only a handful of 'Mechs, fighters, and a rundown *Union*, the new command wasn't much to write home about, but it was enough for Cranston to pursue his mission of finding Star League bases that hadn't been raided by the Houses. Some histories say he began working for the Mariks first, and that after they betrayed him he went to work for the Lyrans. Some histories don't talk about the Mariks as employers, but do include the general distain for which Cranston Snord's Irregulars heaped on the Free Worlds League, and the numerous actions the League took against Cranston. Whatever the truth of the matter there, there seems to be little doubt that there was no love lost between them.

The Irregulars spent years hunting for any relics of the past, placing them in their museum on Clinton above the Star League Castle Brian they reportedly uncovered, and in 3017 many histories mention that Janos Marik himself ordered the museum raided and destroyed. Snord's reaction was the "Junk Yard Dog Affair", a raid deep into Marik space reportedly named after a song in Rhonda Snord's music collection. Considering

the many stories coming out of the Third Succession War, it is difficult to ascertain the full truth of these stories, but they suggest that the Irregulars attacked Nathan, a planet deep in League territory, to recapture much of their museum, and then jumped to the Marik family landhold of Holt and captured Jason Marik, third cousin to Janos Marik himself. The stories suggest that this action caused the confusion that allowed the Lyran Commonwealth to assault Oliver so easily, something that could have some basis in fact.

Whatever the truth of this matter, the Irregulars were soon rotated to duty against the Kuritans where reports of their strange actions in battle continued to mystify their enemies and fans alike. After a series of battles that impressed the Kuritans enough that some stories say they even tried to hire the Irregulars, the Irregulars reportedly negotiated an increase in pay and went back to the Marik border. They ended up on Phecda where they stopped yet another Marik assault and uncovered an ancient Star League *Colossus* DropShip. Though the Commonwealth took much of the salvage found there, Cranston may have kept numerous lostech away from them and smuggled it to Clinton.

During the Fourth Succession War, an assault on Volders in the Draconis Combine reportedly netted them numerous lostech weapons from a Star League complex, and they also fought on the Marik border on more than one planet if the histories are correct. After the war ended, they were commissioned by the Federated Commonwealth to search Outreach for Star League equipment and treasures. At the time, nobody realized they were working together or such an action never would have been allowed. After they reported their lack of ability to find anything, the world was turned over to the Dragoons and the rest as they say is history.

Other stories include the fight with Waco's Rangers in 3032 in which some say Cranston could have executed Waco himself. That doing so could have saved many lives in later years is a sad commentary on the human condition. We know that Cranston suffered a heart attack in 3034 and that Rhonda took over, and there are continued stories about her having captured some ComStar BattleMechs in 3037, but many historians suggest that they may have been BattleMechs originally shipped in from the Clans or uncovered in any of the various depots the Irregulars found. They fought the Dragon during the War of 3039 as well, though few stories outside Rhonda's transmission of "loud music" are known.

The period of peace that followed has little in the way of rumors, but hard fact has been found for them after 3050. The Clans recalled all members of the Dragoons, including Rhonda and Cranston Snord, but they declined to recognize the recall. Instead they decided to actively fight against the Clans and went out in search of Camelot Command, an old Star League base in the Dark Nebula that had been rumored about for centuries. Recent information pointed to an outpost on Apollo that might have the information they needed so they convinced the Federated Commonwealth to allow them to raid the Clans.

They arrived on Apollo in 3051 and defeated a Jade Falcon star in a Trial of Possession for the outpost. When asked who defeated them, Rhonda told them Clan Snord. It is a name that has stuck with them ever since. The Irregulars then jumped into the Dark

Nebula to coordinates found in the outpost's records, and discovered Camelot Command. The Jade Falcons followed, and after a hard fought Trial of Possession Snord's Irregulars had defended their claim to the outpost.

By 3053 the Federated Commonwealth, along with Dragoon and Clan Snord support, had repaired Camelot Command's dry docks and factories to the point that they could repair spaceships, fighters, and BattleMechs, but it would not be until 3062, as the flames of the Civil War were beginning to burn, that the complex could begin constructing new ships. Rather than bring in the resources to build a standard *Fox*-class corvette though, the Irregulars used Camelot Command's existing systems to draw up an upgrade for the ancient Star League *Vincent*s that the outpost already knew how to work with. It proved easier than upgrading it to work with modern designs and by 3065 the first new *Vincent*, the *Cranston Snord*, exited the construction dock. The *Cranston Snord* came into action at just the right time, helping Clan Snord push back the Jade Falcon Epsilon Galaxy that attempted to take Camelot Command in 3066, and non-stop production of those ships, now known as *Cranston*-class destroyers, has continued to this day.

The Jihad first hit Clan Snord in 3068 when a small Word of Blake force tried to take Camelot Command from them. Led by two *Essex*-class destroyers, the Word force attempted to burn hard to the depot but were met in orbit by two of the new *Vincent*s, the *Cranston Snord* and the *Jake Walmar*, and a heavy fusillade of naval-grade autocannon fire from the planetoid. Nothing survived to land and Rhonda kept the *Vincent*s around Camelot Command to defend it from future attacks. But the Word of Blake didn't send another assault, obviously happy enough at having bottled up a potential enemy.

Rhonda did authorize raids to be sent into Jade Falcon territory, but limited them to small actions that would not leave Camelot Command vulnerable to counterattack. Those raids did keep Falcon attention away from Lyran and Tamar space though, and are generally considered to be partially responsible for the continued existence of the Blackstone Authority and Tamar. As the years went by, the Jade Falcon incursion continued to drive into Lyran and Tamar space though, and the Irregulars began to hit them harder, raiding for "priceless artifacts" as far rimward as Goat Path in hopes that they could tie up Falcon reserves further.

Then the Hell's Horses began to invade Clan Wolf space in late 3070 and Clan Snord began preparing for a new fight. A third *Vincent* came out of Camelot Command's dry dock in 3071, but Clan Snord found it difficult to crew the ship during the fires of the Jihad. Forced to pull crewmembers from the other two ships, and to make extensive use of Clan bondsmen and of improved automation, the three WarShips were soon fully online, if limited in ability to leave Camelot Command for any extended periods due to maintenance issues. The death of Khan Vlad Ward in August signaled a new phase in the Hell's Horses incursion and Clan Snord began to prepare for the new phase to hit them as they continued slowly ramping up their raids frequency against the Falcons.

That new phase reared its ugly head in March of 3072 when the Hell's Horses arrived, supported by three Steel Viper WarShips, in the Persistence system and began to take it

from the Jade Falcon garrison. Rhonda quickly authorized an assault on the Horses and ordered the *Cranston Snord*, *Jake Walmar*, and *Shalimar Windall* to support the move. The three *Vincent*s engaged the *Essex*-class *Martial Legacy*, and *Lola III*-class *Snake Pit* and *Anaconda*, flooding them with fighters and marine-filled small craft. The Irregulars captured all three Steel Viper WarShips but the *Shalimar Windall* exploded with all hands trying to keep them away from the Irregular DropShips. Then the Irregulars landed, fought a Trial of Possession for Persistence, and defeated both the Jade Falcon and Hell's Horses troops on world. They allowed the surviving warriors hegira but kept the bondsmen as they returned to the Dark Nebula for repairs.

After that, Clan Snord began to slowly fight Trials of Possessions not simply for ancient artifacts in the area but for territory in the systems near the Dark Nebula. They remained careful not to expand too quickly, but the decision to build a layered defense network around Camelot Command had been made. Their mission was to own everything within one jump of the old installation. The collapse of the Melissa Theater in the Lyran Alliance nearly doomed the Tamar Pact, and Clan Snord as well as both the Jade Falcons and the Hell's Horses would be able to hammer them from both directions.

January of 3073 however brought what many think is the last contact any Clan has had with the Clan Homeworlds. A small Goliath Scorpion fleet, covered in the scars of battle and led by Loremaster Kyrie Ben-Shimon, jumped into the Dark Nebula with a Hell's Horses fleet behind them. Clan Snord supported the Scorpions with the *Cranston Snord*, *Jake Walmar*, and the *Lola III*-class *Janos Marik* and *Katrina Steiner*. Once the *Snake Pit* and the *Anaconda*, those two ships were renamed in honor of the two former Successor Lords that Cranston Snord admired the most, one has his nemesis, the other as his supporter. The four WarShips and Camelot Command forced the Hell's Horses back out of the Nebula and cemented good relations with the Goliath Scorpions. Information we have suggests that the fleet held the last remaining Goliath Scorpions, carrying with them the irreplaceable treasures of the museum of Roche and the tombs of Strana Mechty. Rhonda, obviously recognizing the worth of what they hauled, offered the use of Camelot Command's repair facilities and the Scorpions gladly accepted, their ships worn down by a year of hasty flight.

The Scorpions in return offered to use what ground forces remained to them, mainly the remains of Gamma Galaxy and the bits and pieces of other Galaxies that had come with them, to support increased raids against the Hell's Horses. That allowed the Irregulars to hit the Jade Falcons harder and is often credited as one reason for the decision of the Jade Falcons to abandon their assault on Tamar to hold off both Clan Snord and the Hell's Horses.

Throughout 3073, the Jade Falcons hammered the combined Snord and Scorpion forces hard, winning back numerous enclaves on surrounding worlds, but Falcon's attention was split between them and the Hell's Horses. Clan Snord held on despite heavy losses but as 3073 came to an end their casualties were mounting and their hold loosening. It was only a matter of time before they lost everything, especially since the Hell's Horses and their

allies had begun to hit the Jade Falcons and Clan Snord harder than before after being pushed back by the Wolves.

It was in 3074 though that Clan Snord found its presence solidified and entrenched. As the *Shalimar Windall II* came out of Camelot Command's yard for final testing, the new Wolves under Khan Phelan Kell assaulted the Jade Falcons and pulled their attention away from Clan Snord. Given the chance to drive forward into Jade Falcon space alongside the Wolves, both naval stars went to work protecting the ground forces against the Horses and the Falcons.

By 3075, the fighting had generally slipped away as the Wolves, Falcons, and Horses began to sit back and rebuild. Clan Snord had picked up everything they were interested in holding and didn't want to expand further for fear of diluting their forces and was happy for the cooling off. Since then, the area in and around their territory has been the constant target of raids, but full-scale war has been averted. The most important loss was that of Somerset in 3090 to a number of Falcon trials, but Clan Snord has been attempting to return it since then, launching numerous raids that have caused its ownership to fluctuate. It is currently in Falcon hands but the locals seem to not notice it much and simply wait for the next raid that may or may not bring a new flag with it. There is also numerous pirate raids on Clan Snord territory and their navy and ground forces often jump out to "teach the pirates a lesson or three."

More common than these large trials and raids however is the numerous smaller trials that both the Irregulars and the Goliath Scorpions engage in. It is common to see Seekers wondering the Human Sphere, surrounded by a retinue of bondsmen and other followers, as they hunt for relics of the Star League or anything else that catches their fancy. Recently for instance, a Seeker on Small World found a very old set of dishes reportedly used by the House Lords during Star League conferences. We understand he was captured by planetary security but was released the next morning by order of Duchess Small and was allowed to take the dishware with him. What the Duchess gained from that is unknown, but the Seeker in question noted that the negotiations were "engaging, satisfactory, and productive for all concerned."

As the century turns, Clan Snord is most known around the Human Sphere for the museums they run on Clinton and Winfield, as well as the numerous small traveling museums that ply the stars with Seekers, all of them open to visitors who are willing to pay. Clan Snord is also the last bastion of calm before traders and travelers jump out into the pirate-ridden chaos of The Barrens and the Chainelane Isles and small WarShips traveling through Clan Snord space are common. Most contact with other nations comes in the form of Seekers though, as they journey the stars in search of the past.

Military

The *Cranston*-class destroyer and the *Scorpion*-class escort frigate dominate the Clan Snord and Goliath Scorpion navy, while the various Omnifighters built on Camelot Command support them at all times. The *Union* and *Broadsword* DropShips built on

Camelot command come in numerous configurations from fighter to BattleMech to armor to infantry carriers. Even cargo ships are common and such ships are often seen throughout the Human Sphere with a Seeker on board.

The ground forces are limited to only two main-line Galaxies, the Snord's Irregulars and the Goliath Scorpion Cave Dwellers which are filled with OmniMechs built on Camelot Command as well as the handful of remaining old Clan units. The rest of their ground forces are spread out throughout Clan Snord space, and the rest of the Human Sphere in the form of Seekers. Nobody knows exactly how many Seekers there are, but estimates have placed them at anywhere from one cluster to five Galaxies worth of troops if they were to ever assemble in one place.

Most Seekers pilot the *Fire Scorpion* BattleMech, nearly always decorated with long-lost emblems and heraldry that make them walking museums. More showcase of a Seeker's ability in finding antiques than war machine, few nations in the Human Sphere so much as blink when they see one walk off a *Broadsword* DropShip that is similarly decorated. The *Broadswords* themselves are often museums in their own right because of all the antiquities they carry with them at all times. Many Seekers make a living by simply showing these traveling displays to the locals while they are hunting down more bits and pieces to collect.

Because of their eccentric living standards and solo fighting styles, most doubt the Seekers would make a potent force even assembled. Those who dispute that point to the action in 3095 when a full trinary of Seekers assembled on Antallos to avenge the death of one of their number there. They swiftly commenced to dismantle the entire power structure of the noble who ordered the Seeker's death and left him penniless. A fate many said was worse than death for a man that had gained as many enemies as he had.

Alpha Naval Star

Potemkin-class Prometheus

Volga-class Andromeda

Carrack-class Colerane

Essex-class Orpheus and Martial Legacy

Beta Naval Star

Cranston-class Cranston Snord, Jake Walmar, and Shalimar Windall II

Lola III-class Janos Marik and Katrina Steiner

Cranston-class WarShips constructed – Cranston Snord (3065), Jake Walmar (3068), Shalimar Windall (3071 – destroyed 3072), Shalimar Windall II (3074), Samuel Sneeade (3077), Kyrie Ben-Shimon (3080), John Malvinson (3083), Terry Malvinson (3086), Winston Nearon (3089), Bright Thomlinson (3092), Melvin McFinney (3095), Marcos Shake (3098), Victoria Rose (completion scheduled in 3101)

Ground Forces

Alpha Galaxy (Snord's Irregulars)

Gamma Galaxy (The Cave Dwellers)

Factories

Camelot Command – *Fire Scorpion* BattleMech; *Flashman*, *Highlander*, *Mercury*, and *Sentinel* OmniMechs; *Ahab*, *Rogue*, and *Trident* Omnifighters; *Broadsword* and *Union-C* DropShips; *Cranston* (Vincent) destroyer, *Scorpion* escort frigate

Persistence – Persistence Munitions, Inc – Fury and Lightning omnitanks; Cyrano omnichopper

Systems

Apollo – The capital of the old Rim Worlds Republic, it was colonized by a bandit running from the known worlds because it was on the other side of the Dark Nebula. In a mere hundred years, it had blossomed into the capital of a powerful interstellar realm, and five hundred years after its formation proved the death of the Star League. Now controlled by Clan Snord, it is often the target of Jade Falcon, Hell's Horses, and pirate raids, making it a near-constant battleground.

Camelot Command (Dark Nebula) – Hidden deep in the Dark Nebula in a red dwarf system, Camelot Command is an old Star League dry dock base and serves as the capital of the modern Clan Snord. Heavily outfitted with capital and standard weapons and built inside a small planetoid, it has weathered hundreds of years in the nebula and dozens of attacks from the Jade Falcons, Hell's Horses, and pirates. Capable of building WarShips, DropShips, AeroSpace fighters, and even BattleMechs in recent years, it is the heart of Clan Snord power and is heavily defended by at least a cluster and a naval trinary at all times. It is also home to the primary Clan Snord and Goliath Scorpion museums.

Clinton – Situated between the modern Lyran Commonwealth and the Federation of Skye, Clinton is the homeworld of the Snord's Irregulars and they maintain a trinary of OmniMechs there at all times, in addition to a militia capable of handling raids. The Snord Antiquities Museum is well known to MechWarriors and historians for its vast array of Star League antiquities, but its underground Castle Brian is not so well known. Clinton maintains strict neutrality, allowing any forces to travel through the system or to land for R&R and has not disputed the Lyran claim that it is a part of the Commonwealth. When Commonwealth forces are on Clinton, they are a part of the Commonwealth and life continues as normal. When Commonwealth forces are not on Clinton, little changes for the life of those living on the world.

Derf – The city of Hollis is the headquarters of Vickers Mining. The major mining firm in Clan Snord space, Vickers has operations on more than 50 worlds, moons and asteroids in and around the Dark Nebula. They specialize in the extraction of rare minerals, have an impeccable safety record, and are defended against Jade Falcon and Hell's Horses raids by at least one cluster at all times.

Persistence – During the mid 2600's this once barren and inhospitable world was made habitable by the development of advanced water purification units, technology developed during the good years of the Star League. Though it suffered during the Succession Wars it never completely died out, its Persistence Munitions, Inc and Nicholas Electronics factories being considered important enough to net what few replacement parts the Lyran nation could afford to find and give it. During the Clan Invasion, the charismatic Nichole Dandersin led the militia to a victory against the Falcons and then scattered into the hills when the Clan regrouped and defeated them. The militia held out as a minor distraction to the Clans until Rhonda's Irregulars hit the world. The militia eagerly helped the Irregulars and the world quickly became a willing member of Clan Snord.

Steelton – A cool, icy world, its mines are often raided by pirates and Hell's Horses units.

Winfield – A small agricultural planet, it has a long, calm growing season and a warm atmosphere that makes the planet ideal for all manner of crops. Its industries make extensive use of the two shallow oceans to grow many varieties of aquatic life and a Nicholas Electronics factory give it a high level of computer technology. Named after the noble family that still rules it, Winfield is a stable world that seems able to fight Jade Falcon and Hell's Horses raids with minimal support from the Snord military. Both the Goliath Scorpions and Clan Snord maintain museums here that are open for visitors to visit.

Wotan – The city of Olso is the headquarters of Wotan Mining systems, which manufactures tunneling and excavation machinery. Much of what they make has built-in discernment programs and is therefore capable of unsupervised operations. Often the target of Jade Falcon raids, it is heavily defended at all times.