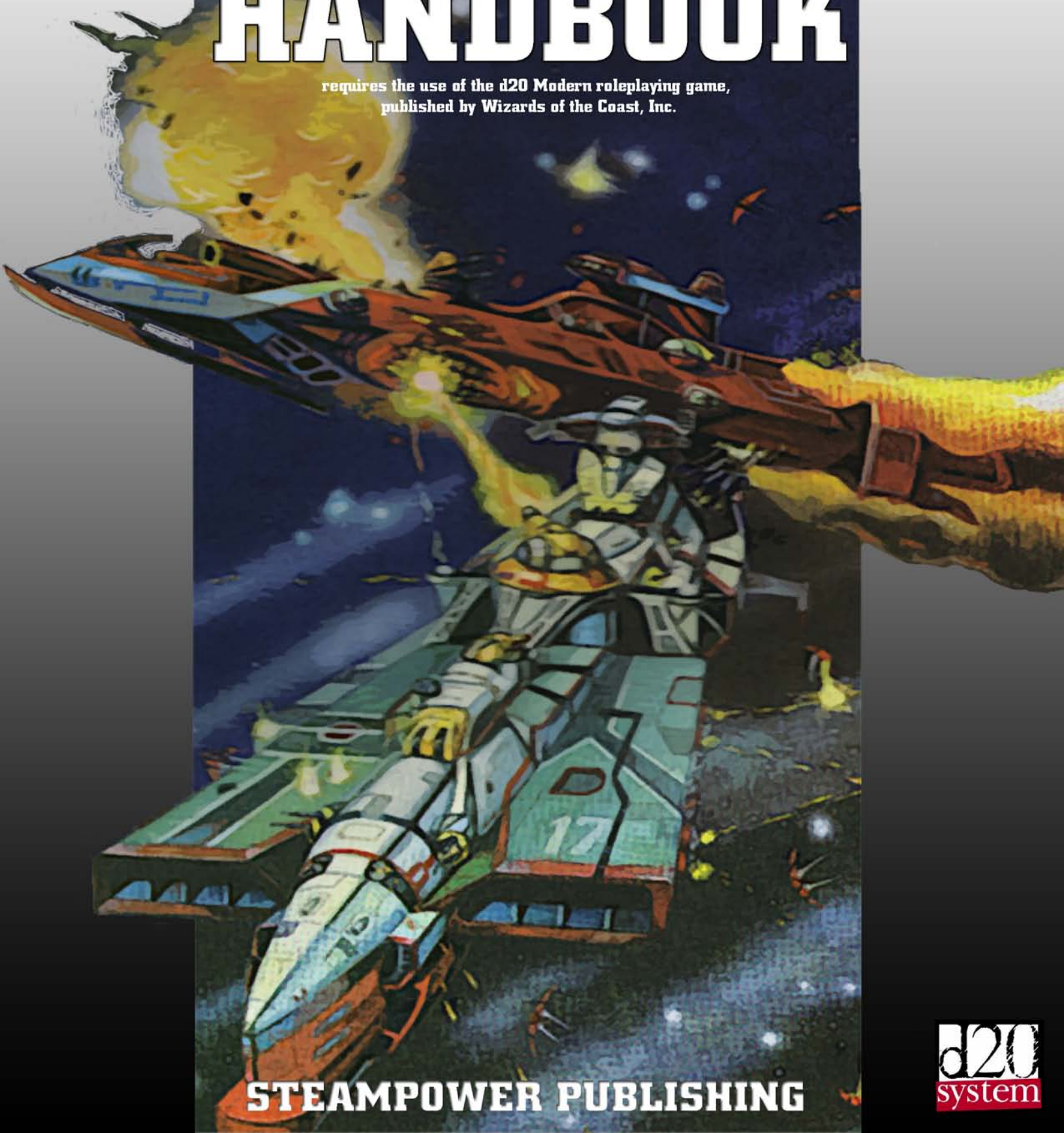# the future soldier's
BATTLEFIELD
HANDBOOK

requires the use of the d20 Modern roleplaying game,
published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

STEAMPOWER PUBLISHING

d20 system

the future soldier's

BATTLEFIELD
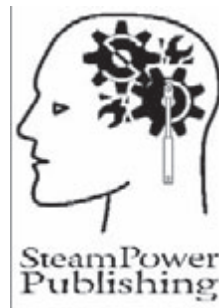
HANDBOOK

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Requires the use of the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game and the d20 Future supplement, published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

DESIGNATION OF OPEN CONTENT

All Commander's Orders boxouts and the entirety of chapters 3 and 7 are designated as open content, as per section 15 of the Open Gaming License.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Listen up, soldier!

This book might just save your life, so pay attention.

This handbook will provide you with an insight into the dangers and challenges you will face on any future battlefield, whether planetside or in the void of space; detail the roles of military and civilian personnel in a combat zone; offer suggestions and advice for surviving war; and act as a guide to many of the weapons, equipment and vehicles that you will encounter in battle.

Due to the Temporal Agreement of 3254 signed by all participating inter-temporal powers, this handbook is required to be compatible with all known Progress Level societies and technology. Information concerning more or less advanced militaries than your own should not be disregarded — information is what, soldier? Yes, power. Remember that!

This book is issued by the Ministry of War, in association with Steampower Publishing. It is provided in a flexible digital format for easy access and reference in the war zone. If you feel the need to have access to a print copy, durapaper can be provided for you to print it yourself, or a military issue sturdy handbook can be obtained from your local quartermaster.

Remember, soldier! Copying this book or passing it to unauthorised comrades may lead to it falling into enemy hands, and may be tantamount to treason. Treason is punishable by spacing. Do you want to be spaced, soldier? No? Good!

You are holding in your hands the single most important piece of kit you will ever be issued. Read it from cover to cover, pay attention to what it says, and keep it with you at all times.

General Andrew 'Tin Pot' Kenrick

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

Information presented in a box like this one should be disregarded or passed up the chain of command to your commanding officer. It is intended to provide additional advice and guidance to an officer when planning a war strategy or a combat simulation. This does not concern you, soldier. Move along.

THE FUTURE SOLDIER

perspex visor with HUD display

toughened plasteel helmet

bullet-proof plating over kevlar underlay

weapon-linked kevlar gauntlets

TacMil sniper rifle

OICW assault rifle

Falcon .45 sidearm

CHAPTER ONE: WAR WITHOUT END

War in the future is no less a brutal or tumultuous event than it has been throughout history. Whether manifesting as a small scale clash over a contested system or a sweeping conflict engulfing dozens of systems, war's effect on those involved is the same. War can change a person, a colony or an entire civilization overnight, destroying or overturning all that is familiar and replacing it with uncertainty and chaos. When faced with the oncoming tide of war, there are but two choices – flee or fight.

It should be noted that, as a soldier, your choices are reduced to one – obey your superior officer. You will fight or flee as commanded, soldier. Is that understood?

WAR IN THE INFORMATION AGE (PL5)

War in the Information Age is still fought between sizeable armies of professional soldiers. The command structure is far more present and hands-on than ever before, with computer displays and data feeds providing commanders with up to date information and soldiers with a constant stream of battlefield data.

Soldiers still use rudimentary projectile devices in battle and heavy support is provided by armored vehicles and tanks. Air support remains distinct from ground combat with helicopter gunships and bombers attacking from above.

Remote warfare is in its infancy, with scout drones used for reconnaissance and occasionally for delivering payloads. Cruise missiles fired from hundreds of miles away remain the weapon of choice for both opening engagements and precision strikes without the need for a messy invasion.

WAR IN THE FUSION AGE (PL6)

The Fusion Age sees the first use of creatures bred especially for use in war, with mutants and genetically enhanced strains harnessed as super soldiers. Towards the end of this age they are joined on the battlefields by cloned warriors created and raised as soldiers.

Weapon technology begins to advance beyond conventional projectile weapons for the first time, with military grade lasers making their appearance in war. Heavier weaponry begins to get smaller, tanks lighter and faster and all military vehicles become much longer ranged thanks to fusion reactors. The first mecha enter use by the military, although they remain clunky and cumbersome in comparison to the sleeker mechanized armor.

The first fumbling military encounters occur in space as humanity develops starship technology. Space warfare, however, remains infrequent and unsophisticated, much as early aerial combat once was. Orbital platforms such as satellite mounted lasers up the ante, allowing precision strikes against distant ground targets.

WAR IN THE GRAVITY AGE (PL7)

As the gravity age dawns, warfare becomes a more remote and distanced affair. Increasing use of robotics and artificial intelligence, as well as advances in personal defenses, reduces the danger to combatants.

Weaponry consists of a mixture of lasers, gravity harnessing technology such as rail guns, and plasma weapons. Hover vehicles become more commonplace, granting tanks a high degree of maneuverability and enabling mechanized armor to overcome the long-standing limitation of terrain. Where used, mecha become more advanced, evolving from lumbering weapon platforms to more agile models that pack almost as much of a punch as tanks. Wars among the stars are more common as space becomes a valuable asset, and thus a new arena for dominance.

War is coordinated from information hubs where live feeds from individual soldiers can be monitored and orders given swiftly as situations change. No soldier is ever alone in battle.

WAR IN THE ENERGY AGE (PL8)

Warfare in the Energy Age is a highly advanced affair. Miniaturized weaponry, personal force fields and symbiotic support drones, coupled with implanted communications arrays, turn every soldier into a walking command center.

Widespread use of force shields and access to advanced medical facilities reduce the danger to the individual soldier, and many governments turn to semi-ritualized melee combat to resolve disputes, rather than committing large amounts of resources to a costly war.

Starship combat is at its peak, with highly developed weaponry and largely automated starships. Ground armor shrinks in size as it too benefits from advances in miniaturization and artificial intelligence.

The closest many soldiers get to a battle in this age is the strategic command post where orders can be given to the multitude of computer controlled technology.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

INTRODUCING WAR

There are many ways in which to involve a group of characters in a war, some of them subtle, others less so. Perhaps the simplest is to have the war come to the characters – the planet they are living on is invaded or the space station they are visiting happens to be in the path of a marauding fleet.

Depending on the characters – and the campaign – it may be just as easy for the characters to go to war. Certainly in a campaign where the characters are all members of the military they may have little choice but to go to war – when the characters receive the orders to ship out, they will soon find themselves in the war zone.

Some characters may wish to go to war voluntarily – they may decide to enlist in the military after news of war breaks out. Others may have less patriotic aims and intend to make a profit from the war, fighting as mercenaries or supplying weapons and equipment to the highest bidder.

Simulations or scenarios involving extended combats where the players do little more than roll attack and damage should be avoided as it diminishes the impact of battle and reduces it to little more than number crunching.

INVOLVING CHARACTERS IN WAR

In some campaigns the war is a backdrop for the campaign, with the characters very much at the periphery of the battle. In others where the military operation is the focus, it is important to make characters feel as though they are deeply involved in the war. In a campaign where the war is very much at the center of the game, the actions of the characters need to have an impact on the progress and outcome of wartime events.

Perhaps the most straightforward way to achieve this is to have the broad flow of the larger war mirror the actions of the characters. For example, if the characters are having great success leading attacks against enemy fleets or raiding colonies, then the rest of their fleet will be experiencing similar success and the war will be going well. If, on the other hand, the characters have suffered a recent defeat defending a planet, then the rest of their forces will be suffering similar misfortune in the face of a renewed enemy offensive.

On a more personal level, the actions of the characters should shape the central focus of the war – important events occur at the instigation of the characters and the war very much revolves around them. Characters may lead a renewed offensive or a raid against a key objective. Nor do all actions have to be solely combat offensive. They might be instrumental in organizing the defense of a city from a surprise assault or find themselves assigned to interrogate a captured spy.

Of course, the level at which the characters interact with the war very much depends on who they are and what authority they have. Characters who are high ranking officers will interact with the war on a very different level than those who are soldiers. Officers are obviously more likely to take a leadership role, directing the strategy of their forces and initiating high level actions such as fleet movements or planetary assaults. Soldiers, on the other hand, will be given orders, but they too can play a decisive role at a more local level, initiating and carrying out missions.

These approaches minimize excess preparation and work in regards to the progress of the war, as well as ensuring that characters feel that they are playing a very real part in the conflict and that their actions mean something in a larger context.

Of course, the alternative approach is to carefully plan out how the war is to proceed, identifying the turning points at which the war can go one way or another, and perhaps even deciding the outcome in advance. . Such an approach is, obviously, a lot more work up front, and if not handled carefully can make the characters feel as if they are playing second fiddle to the larger war. It is important to ensure that the characters still feel a part of the war, and key events that the characters can participate in should be scripted. Conversely, it is important not to railroad the characters, making them feel as though they have no control over their actions, or as though they have no influence over the course of events. Achieving a balance is tricky, but important.

MILITARY CAMPAIGN TYPES

As a combatant, soldier, war will play a focal part in your life. However, not all wars are created equally. Since you may not be told upfront which campaign model your particular war is following, it is important that you are able to recognize the different military campaign types. Each will have a direct bearing on your role within the war.

Study these examples carefully. There will be a test later.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

NEW CAMPAIGN MODELS

You may wish for war to be the primary focus for your campaign, concentrating on battle and conflict far more than, say, diplomacy or exploration. A campaign centered on a war need not have the characters as military officers, or even focus exclusively on battle.

Instead a war campaign might have one or two sessions that take part in a conflict, while the rest focus on activities between battles, such as intelligence gathering or garnering support from other races. Just as no two wars are alike, the same can be said for war campaigns, and the ten new campaign types here present just a few of the myriad possibilities available.

TYPE I: LIFE ON THE FRONTLINE

"Have you heard? The new postings are up. I'm sorry, bud, but we've drawn the short straw – the 99th Mechanized Infantry are being deployed to the killing fields on Mars. Again."

SUMMARY
Heroic soldiers go to war on the battlefields of the future.

CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF
The Type I military campaign has the characters taking the roles of soldiers and officers within their military during a war. Characters may be dispatched to all manner of different worlds to fulfill a variety of duties, from scouting out a landing zone to leading the charge when battle is engaged.

Life on the frontline may be very brief. Being sent into battle is never going to raise a character's life expectancy, but the potential for excitement and adventure is great.

Characters may gain honor and renown through heroic actions in battle and may rise through the ranks until they have their own units – or even armies – at their command.

ROLE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL
Characters might find themselves as part of an invasion fleet, playing soldiers deploying into the thick of the fighting by dropship. They might play gung-ho air cavalry pilots who pilot drop ships and their escorts, or the crew of the heavy armor unit deployed alongside the soldiers. Characters could play fleet officers on board the starships used to deploy the ground forces, struggling to cope with the difficulties of transporting a thousand grunts to battle.

Conversely, characters could play the part of the defending forces on the receiving end of the invasion fleet. In this type of campaign the characters must be prepared for constant attack, occupying bunkers and trenches and keeping abreast of military intelligence.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS
Life on the Frontline conjures up scenes reminiscent of such historic sources as *Saving Private Ryan, Apocalypse Now* or *Starship Troopers*. Soldiers may go to war with highly advanced alien civilizations, primitive creatures or even rival nations of their own race, but beneath the surface one war is much the same as another.

PROGRESS LEVEL
Life on the Frontline can be set at any Progress Level. The higher the PL, the more technology will play apart in the soldier's lives. At lower levels this may simply mean better weaponry, whereas at higher levels a soldier's life may be protected by the use of robots or clones to fight instead. Or the characters may be the robots and clones out on the front line, in which case their existence will be as dangerous as ever.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS
Battle is an inevitable part of such a campaign and perhaps one session in every three or four should see the characters engaged in conflict in some way, whether they are part of a push on the front line, raiding on an enemy base or assigned to defend an important dignitary during a renewed offensive.

It may seem a little odd to suggest that only a third of sessions should directly involve the war, but it is important not to diminish the impact of the conflict. If every session involves the characters desperately fighting for their lives amidst a sea of soldiers, then the emotional impact is likely to be less. Of course, there is no reason for you not to string several such sessions together, but they should be balanced with time spent doing other things, even if they are no less dangerous or exciting.

For both sides – invaders and defenders – war may include long periods calm,

punctuated by bursts of frenzied activity as forces clash in small skirmishes or engage in open battle. The commanding officer should not skip over the lull between battles and should use this opportunity to move other aspects of his story arc along. Be sure to allow time for character exposition and development, interaction with other characters and involvement in plots and intrigue tangential to the conflict itself.

Not all aspects of a war campaign must occur on the battlefield. During a period of peace characters may be dispatched to convey top secret orders elsewhere on the front, or to fetch replacement parts for important equipment. They may find themselves with spare time on their base or with leave to spend far from the combat zone, during which they could become embroiled in any conceivable plot!

LOW LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

After a victorious battle the heroes are left behind to guard a vital supply dump – a seemingly simple and boring task. No sooner have their forces departed than the supply dump is attacked by an enemy raiding force. The heroes will have to defend the supply dump until reinforcements can return to relieve them.

MID LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The heroes are part of a force evacuating civilians out of an area in advance of artillery bombardment. They are still someway from being finished when the timetable is brought forwards. The enemy is closer than first thought and no time can be wasted beginning the barrage. The heroes must not only help the last civilians to escape, but must also get themselves to one of the final transports out of the area, all while dodging enemy patrols and fiery death from above.

HIGH LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The heroes have learned that an infamous enemy commander is holed up in a front-line bunker. Killing the commander would be a significant step towards victory; capturing him even more so. The heroes must launch an attack on the bunker and take the commander prisoner, cutting it off from the outside before the commander can escape or call for reinforcements.
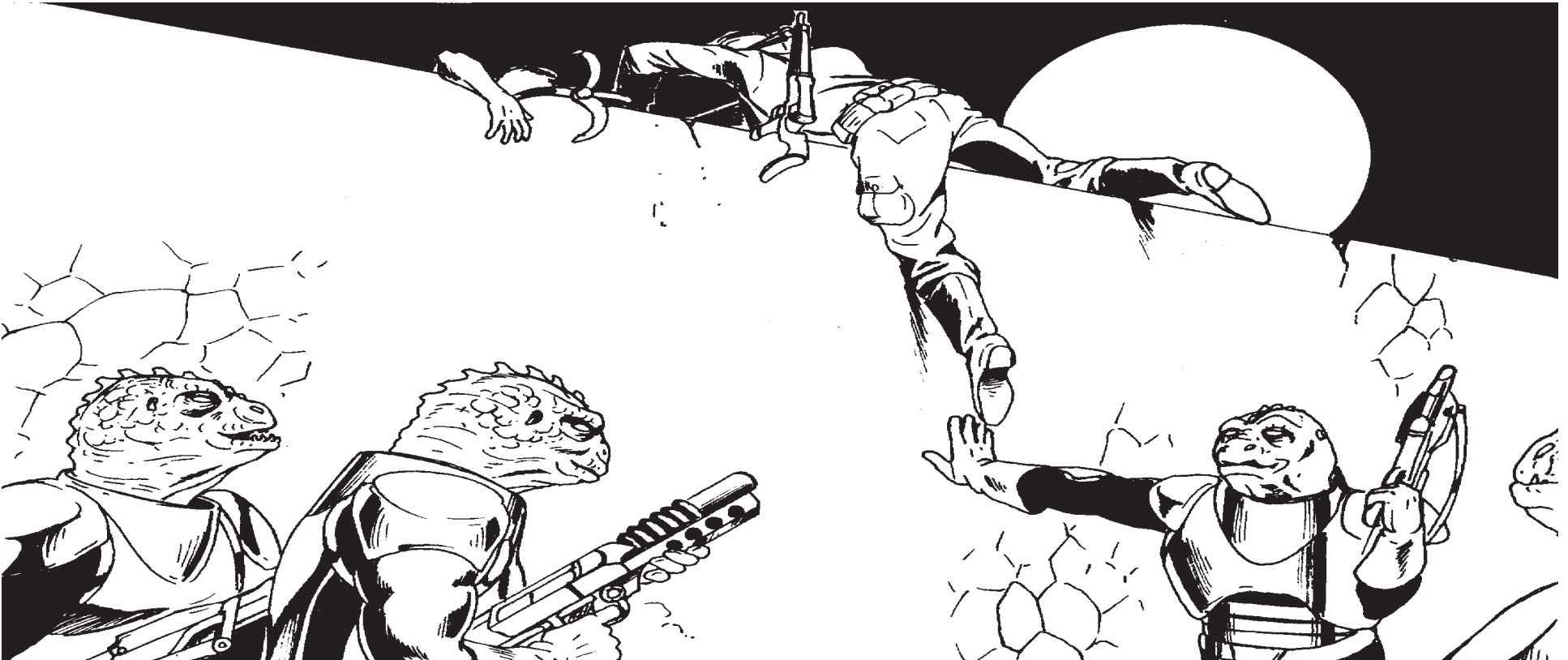
TYPE II: ALL YOUR BASE

"I never thought I'd say this – but I wish we'd get to see more of this war we keep hearing about in the news. If I'd wanted to watch vids all day I'd have become a student."

SUMMARY
Stationed on a lonely outpost or space station, the heroes face the challenges of military life, the occasional invasion and the ever present menace of boredom.

CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF
The Type II military campaign sees the characters as the personnel on or near a military base of some kind, be it a far flung outpost, a front line bunker or an orbital space station. Characters may have all manner of adventures both on and off base. War might be an ever present concern or it might be an inconvenience that occasionally sweeps by and drags the characters into the conflict.

ROLE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL
Characters may be soldiers stationed on a military base, either as a part of planetary defenses, protecting their own colonies from assault, or protecting the forward bases and supply dumps of their own attack forces.

Non-military characters may be civilian personnel contracted to the base to fulfill a specific role, or they may be living nearby and caught up in the activities of the base personnel.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS
All Your Base combines aspects from such historical documents as *MASH, Deep Space 9, Babylon 5* and *Buffalo Soldiers*. Soldiers may be stationed in the middle of a war zone, in which case the campaign may play very much like a Type I campaign. Alternately, soldiers may find themselves guarding a base far removed from the frontline, in which case the campaign may play much more like a civilian campaign.

PROGRESS LEVEL
All Your Base can be set at any Progress Level. The PL of the campaign will determine the nature of the base – a lower level PL may find the characters on a military base on their home planet, or a far flung base on another world where the limits of technology make communication and travel to and from the base an arduous task. Higher level PLs may involve bases as space stations guarding space lanes or remote colonies. The higher the PL, the less removed the characters will be from the rest of civilization, as advanced technology allows for rapid transportation and instant communication.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS
In this type of campaign there may be great lengths of time when there is little conflict and the characters should find adventure in the day to day activities of life on – and off – a military base.

Characters might interact with the locals and become involved with their affairs, or liaise with the local government and become embroiled in the associated politics and intrigue. There should be politics aplenty on the base itself, with inevitable struggles for power among the officers.

Military personnel might be regularly given orders and sent on missions, and at this time the commanding officer can take the opportunity to switch the campaign in another direction, allowing the characters to temporarily experience a different type of campaign.

Of course, war will eventually reach the characters and they will be expected to risk their lives to defend the base, the colonists, the supplies and whatever else they have been assigned to protect. This may be simply an enemy foray or a raid, and after the attackers have been defeated life may return to normal once again. Alternatively the attack could be a new phase of the war, as the enemy forces turn their attentions to the military base, or allied forces are forced to fall back, suddenly leaving the base exposed on the front line.

Such a turn of events will inevitably inject a sense of desperation and danger into the campaign as the characters are forced to constantly be alert and ready to fight the enemy, and to watch everything they have grown to care about be threatened with destruction.

LOW LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION
Friendly forces have 'acquired' a new base of operations from the enemy. The heroes are assigned to clearing out the base and preparing it for its new occupants, the rest of their battalion. However, the base is not as empty as it first appears. Along with the usual selection of booby traps and sabotaged equipment, they also have to contend with the dregs of the previous occupiers in the form of a crazed killer stalking its halls.

MID LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION
All is quiet in the war. The battlefront is many miles away and the most excitement the heroes get is when a company of soldiers ships in for a spell of leave. However, rumors abound that a spy has infiltrated the base and the heroes are assigned the unenviable task of rooting him out. And, as if finding a spy amidst a packed base full of unfamiliar faces wasn't tough enough, tensions are running high on the base as the newcomers let off more than a little steam.

HIGH LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

War is upon the base! In a daring strike, the enemy forces have pushed the battlefront back so far that the once secure base now teeters on the frontline. The base is fast becoming indefensible and the defending forces are ordered to evacuate immediately while ensuring the base does not fall into enemy hands. The heroes are the last out and are tasked with the job of preventing the enemy from taking it in one piece, by whatever means necessary.

TYPE III: COMMAND & CONTROL

"Sir, the Plathoni Regiments are moving towards New London. Governor Livingstone is on the comm link – he says he'd like to re-evaluate his previous rebellion."

SUMMARY

The heroes experience the challenges of command from within a war room.

CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF

Campaign Type I and II both have the characters directly involved in a conflict, fighting on the front lines of an army. However, not all war campaign types must involve direct combat. One campaign type that has the characters intimately involved in the war without actively fighting places them as the commanders and aides in a war room behind the front lines.

ROLE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL

Characters may be high ranking officers stationed safely within the war room to oversee the conflict. They could be strategists assigned to the war room where they must study enemy movements and plan the next phase of the battle. They may be intelligence analysts who spend their days listening to intercepted communications chatter and interpreting endless reconnaissance reports.

Characters also might not play high ranking personnel at all, perhaps starting off as low ranking guards and aides assigned to the war room, or civilian personnel assigned to the headquarters in a support role.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

Command & Control plays a lot like a straight *Dr Strangelove, the Hunt for Red October, Thirteen Days* and the later series of *Deep Space 9 and Babylon 5*. The protagonists in this type of campaign will rarely see the action directly, but will frequently be in communication with those that are in the thick of it. A Type III campaign can easily include many other types of campaign, especially Type II and Type IV, either by featuring elements and characters taken from each of them, or by switching alternately between the different campaign models.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

Characters may be involved in discussing strategies and planning tactics, as well as inspecting troops and consulting with intelligence officers. Characters may find themselves as diplomats, negotiating with the enemy to secure the release of prisoners or to agree upon a ceasefire. Intrigue and political maneuvering should be a regular occurrence in Type III campaign scenarios – at least as much as warfare.

Such a campaign can be shaken up by having the characters plunged directly into battle – their bunker could wind up on the front line as the enemy launches a surprise attack or their command ship could find itself alone in the face of an enemy strike force raiding far behind the front line.

As characters advance through the ranks of their military they may find themselves as the target for assassination attempts – both by enemy agents and by those dispatched by jealous 'allies.'

LOW LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The heroes are involved in a force wide training exercise and, as command staff personnel, the command center has been left entirely in their control while their superiors monitor their progress remotely. The heroes are tasked with coordinating the participating units and overseeing the grand strategy, as well as providing tactical support. But when the exercise starts to go badly wrong, the heroes suspect that this may be more than just a game.

MID LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The enemy has pushed the frontlines back and war is upon the command center. The headquarters must be defended at all costs or else the battle will be surely lost. The heroes are forced to choose between continuing to direct their forces even as the enemies enter the command center or evacuating the headquarters and commanding their forces while on the run. Either way, the war effort is very much in the hands of the heroes.

HIGH LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The war is at a stalemate and the enemy has agreed to discuss peace. The heroes, as high ranking members of the command structure, are tasked with securing a favorable outcome which will mean the end of hostilities. But a rogue enemy general plans to use the peace talks to lure out the heroes, capture them and launch a counteroffensive in their absence. The heroes must escape and somehow halt the renewed fighting before any chance of peace is lost forever.

TYPE IV: MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IS AN OXYMORON

"Many Antharansi died to get us these plans. Make sure the Coalition puts them to good use."

SUMMARY
The heroes are spies and assassins trying to bring the enemy army down from within.

CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF
A campaign type that involves the characters with the war without involving them in the front line battle casts the characters as members of military intelligence. Regardless of their assignments, the characters operate while hidden and unseen by enemy and ally alike, either going undercover to infiltrate the enemy or analyzing and acting on intelligence gained through other covert means.

ROLE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL
Characters may be undercover agents – spies or assassins sent to infiltrate the enemy or steal important secrets. They may play computer hackers trained to break into enemy technology systems and obtain encrypted plans. Characters could be counter espionage agents, working within the ranks of their own side to find enemy operatives before secrets are stolen or equipment is sabotaged.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS
Sabotage, James Bond, the Bourne Identity and *Splinter Cell* are all historical examples of a Type IV campaign in action. *Military Intelligence is an Oxymoron* is, in essence, a spy game or espionage thriller in the conventional sense, albeit one set within a war zone. The style and scope of play can change as regularly as required, veering anywhere between action and intrigue, sometimes in the course of a single mission.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS
Characters will be routinely given orders dispatching them on missions into the midst of the enemy or tasking them with specific information that their side wishes to obtain. Much of the time characters may be left to carry out missions as they wish, adopting whichever modus operandi suits them best. At other times their superiors may have their own vision as to how the mission is to be accomplished, and the characters will have to adapt accordingly.

Such a campaign allows for a great variety of play styles and plots can be effectively driven by using a mission structure. One week the characters may find themselves infiltrating an enemy supply depot to plant a tracking device on a cache of weapons. The next they may be up to their necks in intrigue and politics hunting a traitor among the local diplomats.

Characters may be forced to spend a great deal of time undercover, living amidst the enemy forces incognito. Such an experience should be a fraught and tense one – they should be in constant fear of their cover being blown. At the same time the experience might allow you to portray the other side in the conflict sympathetically, illustrating their own reasons and motivations – the image the characters have been presented with back home is likely to be less than favorable – and the characters may begin to question their role in the conflict.

Characters might become indirectly involved with some of the key moments in the war, and personal success might lead to much greater victories – the theft of battle plans that allows a decisive victory to be won or the assassination of an enemy leader that triggers the surrender of the demoralized enemy. Of course, such successes will rarely be noted by any outside of the intelligence structure – a fact that might cause bitterness and resentment among the characters.

Likewise failure on the part of the characters might have much greater ramifications – the botched killing of a popular hero and his family might lead to bloody backlashes against their own civilians captured in war, or the characters' eagerness to steal a list of ship locations might lead to them unwittingly passing false information to their own fleet, setting them up in a trap.

LOW LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

There is a mole onboard an important starship, slowly but surely leaking vital information to the enemy. Friendly forces have tried to root out the enemy agent but with no luck. The heroes are to infiltrate one of their own starships and running a counter intelligence operation from the inside. Finding the mole may be the easy part – avoiding being exposed as a friendly agent or arrested as an enemy spy during the mission may be where the true challenge arises.

MID LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

Rumors abound that an infamous enemy scientist is working on a new superweapon in a remote laboratory. The heroes are tasked with sneaking into the lab and stealing the plans, evading the ships patrolling the system as well as the facility's guards. Once the plans have been acquired and the sinister scientist eliminated, the heroes will have to safely escape, not just from the conventional pursuers but also from enemy spies tasked with recapturing the information and killing all who saw it.

HIGH LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

A prominent member of the enemy command staff has signaled his intention to defect to friendly intelligence. The information he possesses would be invaluable to the cause, but the opposing forces would stop at nothing if they thought it had fallen into enemy hands. The heroes are to assist the general to defect, staging a fake assassination to cover it up. They'll need to find a suitable double to make it look convincing, right down to the DNA, but they're resourceful agents. Of course, if it all goes wrong the information the general has must still be obtained, even if it means hacking into his brain and downloading it onto disk.

TYPE V: MISSION IMPROBABLE

"I count 5 ... no, wait, 6 troopers. Oh, and a battle walker. Now this is where it gets fun!"

SUMMARY

As highly trained soldiers, the heroes are assigned the most dangerous and difficult tasks.

CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF

Somewhat related to the military intelligence campaign is the special ops campaign. The characters are elite soldiers sent by the military into hazardous situations to carry out seemingly impossible tasks. Sometimes the characters operate unseen by enemy forces, other times they strike in plain sight but with devastating effect.

ROLE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL

Characters might play commandos tasked with rescuing high profile prisoners of war or sabotaging enemy vessels. They might be a team of assassins sent to kill an enemy commander. They might be specially trained guerrilla fighters designed to be a thorn in the side of enemy invaders or they could be state sponsored terrorists, tasked with sowing as much chaos and destruction amidst the enemy population as possible to make them lose their taste for war.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

Historical documents such as the *A-Team, Where Eagles Dare, Band of Brothers* and *the Guns of Navarone* are all eminently suitable examples of *Mission Improbable* campaigns. Even at the beginning of this campaign, the characters are better equipped and trained than their typical foes, although they will almost always be outnumbered, if never outgunned. Action and intrigue will be mixed in equal measure throughout.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

As before, such a campaign type allows for a variety of styles and the mission structure allows a commander to tightly control the direction and pace of the campaign. Characters may be dispatched ahead of an invasion fleet to disable
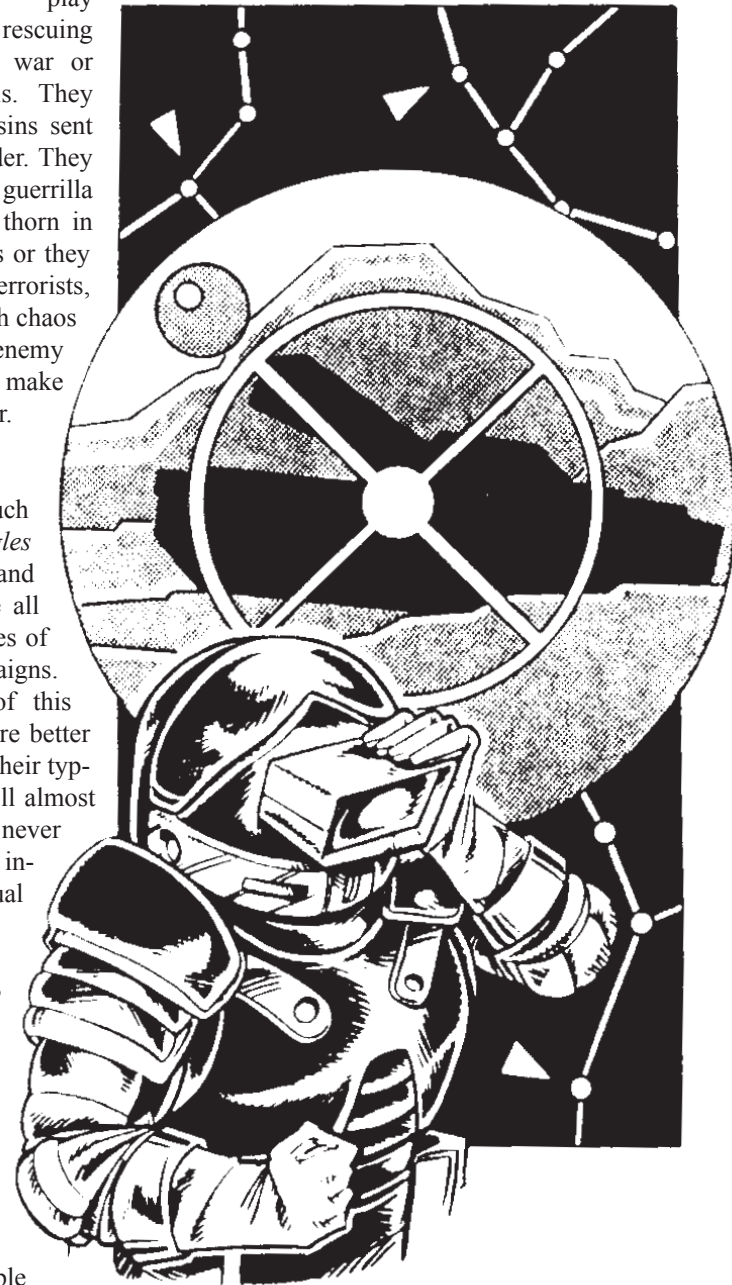
planetary defenses or to scout out possible landing zones. They might then be expected to accompany the invading force into battle or to cause havoc among the defenders. In such a situation the characters are likely to be extremely well supported and equipped, but this is not always the case.

Characters might also be the only attacking force, dispatched to accomplish a covert mission without substantial backup. They might be sent into the heart of the enemy fleet to destroy or steal a prototype vessel, or to kidnap an important officer. They may be sent to an enemy world to rescue prisoners of war or to disrupt the enemy war efforts by blowing up supply dumps and munitions factories.

In many respects this campaign resembles a Type I campaign – the characters are, after all, members of the military. Thus many of the ideas presented above are readily useable in a special ops campaign – shore leave between missions, involvement with local politicking and deployment for battle.

Although this campaign type typically has the characters as government-funded military operatives, this does not have to be the case. They could be the survivors of a now-forgotten mission denied and abandoned by their own government, continuing to fight independently – or even against their former allies. They could be state sponsored terrorists, indirectly funded by their government but acting on their own initiative. On a world occupied by enemy forces they could even be members of the local resistance, carrying out attacks against the invading forces.

LOW LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION
The enemy forces are dependant on regular shipments of ammunition and supplies from their power base to the front line. The shipments are carried out once a month by armored train and the train itself is too well guarded to hit directly. The one vulnerable spot along the entire route is a narrow bridge over a deep gorge. The heroes are assigned the mission of destroying the bridge as the train passes over. Timing is everything, and the heroes will have plenty to distract them, from wandering patrols to hostile locals to the train's guards themselves sent ahead to ensure the bridge remains secure.

MID LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION
The fleet is preparing to launch an assault on an enemy moon with a high level of strategic importance. The moon is relatively lightly guarded with the exception of a potent orbiting weapons platform capable of seriously damaging any approaching ships and keeping the fleet at bay until reinforcements can be summoned. The heroes must infiltrate the platform and 'repurpose' its weaponry to turn against any defending ships when attack is launched. Once the space station has been used to attack its former allies the heroes won't have long before the enemy try and get it back … or destroy it.

HIGH LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION
Military intelligence has acquired a dossier about a new prototype tank that is set to catapult the enemy ahead in the war if it enters production. Unfortunately the dossier contains insufficient information to allow friendly engineers to build their own version. It falls to the heroes to mount a daring raid on an enemy weapons factory, destroy any records of the project and steal the tank so that it can be reverse engineered. As if dealing with the elite guards and scientists weren't tough enough, the heroes haven't been told everything about the tank – it sports an advanced AI that isn't keen of the idea of being stolen.

TYPE VI: FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY

"We agreed 600 credits for taking the command post, this is barely half that. If you can't find us the difference I'm sure the enemy will pay us handsomely for delivering them their command post back."

SUMMARY
The heroes are mercenary soldiers hiring themselves out to the highest bidder.

CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF
Not all military campaigns see the characters as members of a national military force. Instead they might be soldiers for hire, fighting as mercenaries. Sometimes the characters simply serve as part of a troop, taking the place of regular soldiers. Other times they are used in specialized situations where their employer doesn't want to get his hands dirty.

ROLE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL
Characters may be mercenary soldiers and specialists fighting in a war for the highest bidder. They may be fighting alongside the regular military forces of a race, or they may be part of a privately financed military army hired to protect private interests. They may be deployed into battle ahead of regular troops to soften up the enemy army, they might be fighting without support or they may be included alongside the battle lines of a much larger army.

Some mercenary units have no regular employer, while others work for de facto agencies that specialize in supplying and hiring out mercenaries as required. Independent mercenary units or ships might travel the galaxy, plying hot spots for work. Of course, there are always those mercenaries who fight for the love of battle, whereas others fight purely and simply for profit. Some mercenaries fight for a higher cause, struggling to uphold certain principles such as freedom or justice without overt concern for profit. Understandably, such mercenaries are few and far between.

Characters could also be the minders or liaison officers assigned by their government to work with mercenary contingents. They might be simply expected to investigate mercenary troops and decide which should be hired, or they might play a more significant role and have to enter into negotiations with the mercenary leaders to arrange their hire.

Military attachés might be forced to accompany the mercenaries in operation, ensuring that they do as they are ordered and that they accurately receive orders from the chain of command. Such an assignment is rarely coveted – the undisciplined and near anarchic life of a mercenary jars somewhat with the strictly organized and regimented military life for most races.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

Notable historic sources such as the *Warrior's Apprentice* and the other volumes in *the Vorkosigan saga, the Seven Samurai, the Magnificent Seven* and the *Professionals* provide good examples of *For the Love of Money*. A Type VI campaign can play like any other type of campaign, depending on what the mercenaries are hired to do, which can vary from mission to mission.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

A Type VI may play out much as a Type I campaign – mercenaries are deployed at the behest of their employer, expected to fight and have large periods when nothing is happening. Mercenaries may be contracted to carry out a string of successive missions or they may be hired for a one shot mission. Sometimes a mercenary unit is hired not to bulk out the regular infantry, but to provide specialist skills and training that the employer's own army does not possess. Such mercenary units may not be hastily committed to battle, but may be held in reserve and dispatched to complete specific tasks.

The themes of a Type VI campaign boil down to money and war. How far are the characters prepared to go in their pursuit of one – or both? There are many interesting opportunities for internal conflict and roleplaying, with the characters wrestling with their moral code and conscience – if they possess them.

The character mercenaries will not be the only ones out for profit and they will inevitably find themselves at the whim of market forces. When the fighting comes to an end, what happens to the mercenaries? Perhaps it is in the characters' best interests to ensure the war does not stop, by whatever means necessary.

Mercenaries are highly dispensable and are often casually thrown into suicidal situations. They might well find themselves betrayed to the enemy they were fighting, abandoned in the midst of enemy lines and forced to fight their way out to seek revenge.

LOW LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

Both sides in the war are making use of a mercenary fleet and the situation is fast approaching deadlock. If the enemy mercenaries can be removed from the equation, then the war would become a whole lot simpler. The heroes are hired to persuade the enemy mercenaries to abandon their posts by speaking the only language they all understand – cash. The heroes must intercept and steal the enemy's pay chest before it reaches the mercenaries, again and again until a revolt is at hand. Of course, it will only be easy first time around …

MID LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

During a botched operation a friendly spy operating deep undercover in the enemy ranks has been captured … by allied forces. Rather than blow his cover by ordering his release, military intelligence hires the heroes to spring him from jail and ransom him back to the enemy, who still believe him to be on their side. Paranoia is high all around with no one entirely sure who is on which side, especially as suspicions arise that the spy may well have been turned during his time in the enemy military.

HIGH LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

After completing a dangerous mission deep in enemy territory the heroes are double crossed, abandoned by their employers to their fate. The heroes will have to use all the wits they can muster to escape in one piece, not to mention get their revenge on their treacherous employer, perhaps by claiming the bounty one enemy faction has placed on his head.

TYPE VII: GUNRUNNERS

"We deliver the goods, we get paid. If you're a little tight for cash I hear the Boothwoi Regents have posted a sizeable bounty on your head that might just make up for it."

SUMMARY

The 'heroes' are gunrunners and smugglers trying to make a profit from the war.

Note: Remember soldier! Gunrunning and weapon trading are illegal under the 76th Galactic Amendment. They are punishable by imprisonment and/or death. You don't want to be imprisoned and/or dead, do you, soldier? No? Good! The following campaign type is therefore included for simulation and intelligence purposes only, not as career advice.

CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF

Related to the Type VI campaign is a campaign that sees the characters as smugglers, weapon traders and gunrunners. On some levels, perhaps, such a campaign is even more

mercenary than a mercenary campaign – not only do the characters avoid battle itself, but they sell weapons and equipment to both sides in a war.

ROLE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL

The characters could be any type of entrepreneurial character, from a bold smuggler to a mercenary soldier to a greedy merchant. The characters are in it to make money from other peoples' war by whatever means they can.

Of course, such a campaign does not have to be quite so mercenary – characters could merely be posing as gunrunners, using it as a convenient cover for their role as spies, intelligence officers or Special Forces troopers. Characters could use their cover to infiltrate an enemy base or get close to an important dignitary.

Characters could be supporting the underdogs in a conflict, supplying weaponry to guerrilla fighters or rebel forces. While smuggling weapons to rebel forces they could be helping refugees to escape the war or sneaking rebel soldiers through enemy blockades.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

Gunrunners combines aspects of such historical documents as *Firefly, Kelly's Heroes, A Fistful of Dynamite* and *the Wild Bunch*. The Type VII campaign is one of the most unconventional types of campaign with the characters spending a lot of their time dodging both sides in the war in an attempt to turn a profit. It may be akin to a moral play in places, the characters inhabiting a world of grays where they have to make tough choices between what is right but costly and what is profitable, but wrong.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

A Type VII campaign might well feature war merely in the background, with the characters only occasionally directly interacting with it. They might spend most of their time in systems far from the front lines, taking advantage of opportunities the war has presented elsewhere, such as distracted security forces which allow them to conduct illicit trading or other shady activities.

Alternatively war might play an altogether more significant role, with the heroes darting back and forth across the front lines to engage in looting and salvage, not to mention weapons smuggling.

LOW LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The heroes are attempting to make contact with a new weapons buyer in an unfamiliar port. They must make contact and persuade the buyer to purchase their weapons. The buyers are easily spooked, however, and a rival gang of gunrunners is trying to win their business and put them off buying from the heroes. The heroes must not only seal the deal, but must also scare off their rivals … without resorting to open violence and bringing in the authorities.

MID LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The heroes are involved in a dangerous double cross with a powerful foe. The heroes want something their foe has, but the price is high and they are not prepared to pay it. They must trick their enemy into believing they have paid the price and then escape after

the exchange has been made but before the ruse is discovered. If their timing is off they could be left empty handed, or worse.

HIGH LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The heroes have acquired what they thought was a sophisticated new weapons system from a somewhat dubious contact and are trying to sell it on to the highest bidder. It quickly transpires that they have far more than they bargained for – a top secret super-weapon stolen from a government weapons laboratory days before. Getting rid of the weapon should be easy enough – the buyers are lining up to bid for it – but who is a genuine buyer and who is an undercover government agent? And do they really want such a dangerous weapon falling into someone else's hands?

TYPE VIII: GUERRILLAS IN THE MIDST

"The generators are beneath that compound. The guards change in 10 minutes time. When they begin to exit the compound, we hit them fast and we hit them hard, same as always."

SUMMARY

Brave guerrillas fight to defend their homeworld from invaders.

CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF

The characters are the beleaguered defenders trying to protect their homeland using guerrilla tactics against a vastly superior invasion force. Against overwhelming odds, the characters strike blow after blow against their oppressors until the tide of war can be turned in their favor.

ROLE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL

The characters might be the last remnants of their people's military, left without a formal command structure to fend for themselves and forced to adopt a cell-like organization. Characters might have formal guerrilla and survival training or they may be learning as they go.

Characters could be trained guerrilla fighters, Special Ops troops sent into enemy-held territory to wreak as much havoc as possible upon the occupying forces. Assuming the command structure is still intact, such troops might be able to call on support and reinforcements as needed.

Characters could be civilians forced to extraordinary lengths in a time of great adversity, left with no choice but to take up arms against the invaders or face extinction. What such a rag tag organization lacks in military expertise, training and equipment it more than makes up for in determination and courage.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

Historic sources such as Star *Wars, Blakes 7* and *Secret Army* all make good examples of a *Guerrillas in the Midst* campaign. Such a campaign sees the odds heavily stacked against the characters right from the start and, as the campaign progresses, the misery may continue to grow. In a lot of respects the Type VIII campaign functions a lot like a Type V campaign, albeit with little in the way of backup.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

As mentioned previously, this campaign type shares a lot in common with a Type V campaign, the exception being that the characters are permanently operating behind enemy lines and quite probably without any sort of command structure.

Characters are likely to spend a lot of time on the move or in hiding so as to avoid discovery and capture by the enemy. Very rarely should they find themselves somewhere that can truly be called safe and there should be a strong sense of uneasiness and tension throughout the campaign.

Characters might operate on a purely ad-hoc basis, striking out at the enemy whenever the opportunity arises, or they might have a master plan to win the war, carefully planning out their guerrilla campaign weeks or months in advance.

Depending on how they fare, the campaign could evolve in one of two ways. If their missions are a success, they should see the war turning in their favor, the enemy forced to draw back and go ever more on the defensive. Alternatively, things could start to go even more against them, as their organization is defeated on the battlefield and begins to crumble in the face of enemies both without and within.

LOW LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The heroes are tasked with acquiring weaponry for the campaign from a group of smugglers. The heroes should be rightly suspicious of the smugglers, as the weapons they are trying to sell are not exactly what they claim they are. The heroes must not only avoid enemy patrols but also a potential betrayal.

MID LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The guerrillas have their sights on a prison camp that is being used to hold many prominent members of the resistance. It would be a great boon for the guerrillas if they could free them, but the camp is well guarded from outside attack. The same cannot be said against attacks from the inside, for the guards are arrogant and complacent, believing the prisoners to be broken and weak. If the heroes can get inside the camp with some extra weaponry, then they stand a very real chance of succeeding at a prison breakout.

HIGH LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The enemy are preparing for a final strike against the guerrilla fighters, hoped to shatter any resistance once and for all. They intend to coordinate this strike from a series of command bunkers, each fulfilling a vital part in controlling the operation. The heroes are to mount a daring raid against one such bunker, coordinating with strike teams moving against other bunkers, overwhelming the defenders and seizing control for themselves. Once in control, it should be a simple matter to sow chaos in the enemy operation, causing it to fail. But will it be enough to swing the war in their favor, once and for all?

TYPE IX: A SKY FULL OF STARS

"Dammit captain! We can't hold this course any longer. If the laser beams don't kill us, the gravitational stress surely will!"

SUMMARY

The heroes are the crew of a starship sent to war.

CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF

The characters are the crew of a warship assigned to the front lines. The war takes the characters all over the galaxy, fighting in a variety of battles and situations.

ROLE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL

The characters may be any part of the starship's crew. Characters might be a member of the command staff, perhaps even the captain, issuing orders to their crew and directing the ship. They might be pilots, controlling the helm of the starship or flying one of its fighters. Or character could be one of the engineering crew, tasked with keeping the starship flying when all around them is falling apart.

Characters need not all be of the same occupational type, and indeed a mixture of roles makes for a well rounded and dynamic crew.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

Star Wars, certain parts of *Star Trek* and *Babylon 5,* and *Battlestar Galactica* are all good examples of a Type IX campaign. This campaign can contain a huge amount of variety, taking in huge swathes of the galaxy at a time, or it can be tightly focused around a single system or front in the war. In many respects *a Sky Full of Stars* campaign resembles a mix between a Type I and II campaign, albeit set on what is effectively a large, mobile base of operations.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

The sky is the limit with this type of campaign. Each mission can take in a different world, a different situation or a different style altogether. The campaign may revolve around the ship's interaction with external friends and foes as it travels from war zone to war zone.

Alternatively the campaign may be far more introverted, with the focus for the campaign being not so much the goings on beyond the hull of the ship, but those within. Such a campaign may see conflicts and intrigues arising between crew members and most of the scenarios taking place onboard the vessel, with the crew only occasionally venturing to interact with other planets or ships.

LOW LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The starship has docked at a resupply station and most of the crew is enjoying some much needed shore leave. While the heroes keep watch over the ship a team of enemy Special Forces agents sneaks aboard and steals the craft from under their noses! The heroes must reclaim the starship, defeat the enemy agents and return with the ship to fetch the rest of the crew.

MID LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The ship has been pulled from combat duty to transport a party of important dignitaries on a tour of the front lines. There is some resentment among the crew at having to miss the action on the front lines, until the dignitaries start to be killed one by one. The heroes must race against time to find the assassin before he kills again!

HIGH LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

A top secret message is handed to the heroes for delivery to a distant friendly garrison. The message is far too sensitive to run the risk of it being intercepted during transmission, so it is to be delivered in person by the heroes. When they arrive at their destination, however, they discover that the planet is under heavy assault by the enemy and the system is being blockaded. The heroes will have to devise a plan to get the message through at any cost.

TYPE X: LIVE FROM THE FRONTLINE

"This is Priscilla King reporting live from." BOOM! *"Tranquility Ridge. As you can see, the Angelfire forces are getting awfully…"* BANG! *"close now."*

SUMMARY

The heroes are journalists and reporters who will risk their lives in battle for the greatest prize of all – a prize-winning story!

CAMPAIGN IN BRIEF

One final campaign type has the characters deeply embroiled in the war, putting their lives in danger on the front lines and dodging plasma blasts and artillery shells to get close to the action. Yet this campaign type does not see characters actually fighting, but instead reporting on the progress of the war.

ROLE OF MILITARY PERSONNEL

Characters might be war correspondents, embedded with units on the front line or along with the crew onboard a warship. For war correspondents the dangers faced are as real as though they were a soldier, for they are expected to get as close to the action as possible to get the best story.

Characters will have to befriend the soldiers they live alongside, while ensuring that their coverage of the war remains as impartial as possible. Characters could all be reporters, perhaps from rival news networks or departments serving onboard the same ship or in the same force. There may be a friendly – or less so – rivalry between the correspondents embedded within a single unit, or between those in different units, perhaps mirroring the rivalry between the units themselves.

Characters could also be other members of the news team – cameramen and other technical crew, for when it is not appropriate for automated recording equipment to be deployed in battle. They could be guides, military attachés, press liaison officers and so forth.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

Welcome to Sarajevo, Moon Tiger and certain episodes of *Deep Space 9* all represent the *Live from the Frontline* campaign type. Characters are supposedly impartial observers to the war, reporting on what they see and rooting out exciting stories, all amidst the chaos of battle.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

A camera crew might not be legitimately reporting on the war. They could be from a pirate news corporation censored by their government, or perhaps they are attempting to gain an exclusive scoop on the machinery of warfare no government wishes to be exposed to the galactic humanity – brutalization of prisoners, genocide, massacres and so on. Characters reporting on a war in such manner will have to take even greater risks, without the backup provided by a military unit to call on if they get in trouble. They will have to infiltrate battle lines, lie in hiding on the battlefield or find a suitable vantage point to get the perfect shots.

An embedded press campaign can be readily run alongside many of the other campaign types mentioned above, with some of the characters as reporters or camera crew and the others as soldiers and officers. This could also work with the reporters based at the command headquarters for the campaign, jostling with other members of the press and dealing with the press officers who present the official line from the generals. Such a campaign will be a more low key affair, focusing on intrigue and political maneuvering – perhaps the characters could become embroiled in a conspiracy among the high ranking officers, or uncover evidence of alien infiltration.

LOW LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

During the height of battle the hunt for a good story gets the heroes into trouble, leading to them getting trapped all alone in very hostile territory. The heroes will have to use their ingenuity to escape from the battle and flee to safety, either by trying to persuade the

suspicious enemy commander that they mean no harm and should be given safe passage, or by sneaking through hostile lines – while carrying bulky and expensive recording equipment.

MID LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

During a relatively routine investigation the heroes stumble upon a startling discovery about a supposedly friendly unit. Perhaps they uncover evidence of prisoner abuse, drugs trafficking or even potential treachery. The heroes must get the story out, although there are those that want to censor them – permanently.

HIGH LEVEL MISSION SIMULATION

The heroes are chasing the ultimate story – an interview with an elusive general. The heroes must navigate the maze of rumors and half-truths as to his whereabouts, bypass his security and then coax an award winning interview out of him. And there's a bigger complication. The enemy is trying to assassinate the general and are setting the heroes up to find him and then to take the fall, either by planting explosives on them or infiltrating their news crew.
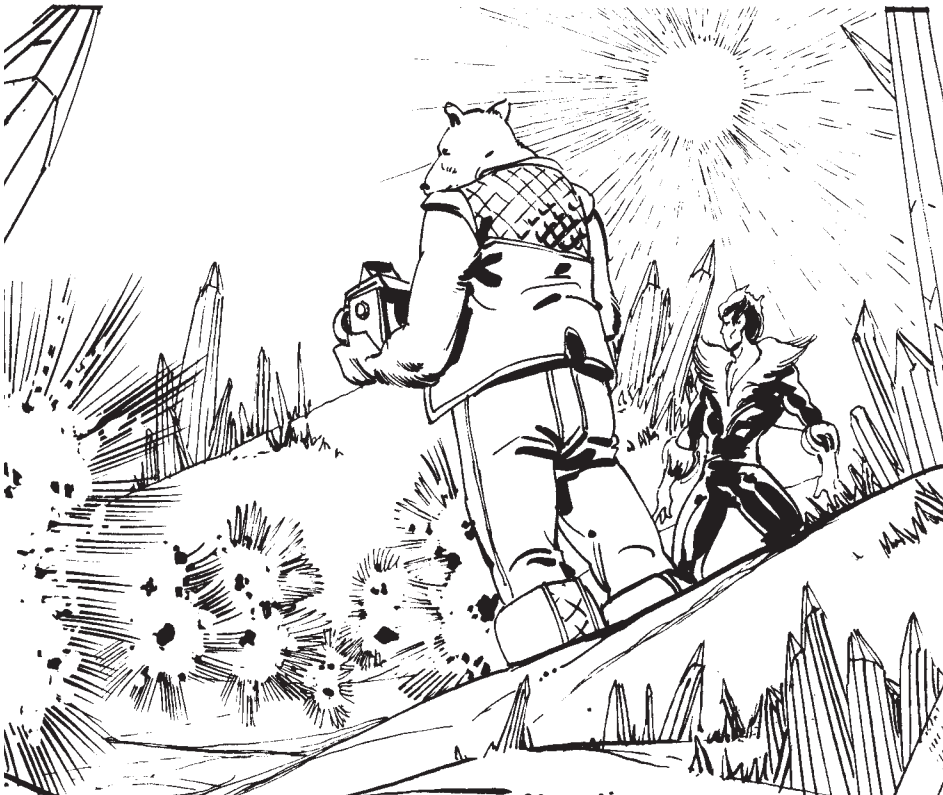
The life of a soldier or a crewman at war is not entirely spent fighting battles – far from it. Equally, it is not a life of comfort, and battle is never far from a soldier's thoughts. When not directly in battle, soldiers are often preparing for battle; being redeployed to a battle site elsewhere in the galaxy; or contemplating battles past, present, and future. Although battle is not the only aspect of a soldier's life, it certainly is a dominant feature.

Soldiers are constantly subjected to levels of danger and stress that can all too easily break the mind and the spirit of even the hardest of men. The temptation to flee from battle and hide until the war is over has claimed many a soldier in the past and some weak souls have even been lured to aid the enemy, betraying their own people for personal gain.

Remember, soldier, that such thoughts are not acceptable. You may have such thoughts, but you will not succumb to them. Cowardice and treason are fit only for enemy dogs, and enemy dogs get put down.

The following are common examples of such rogue thoughts. Take careful note of each so you may discard them should they occur to you. Remember! Rogue thoughts are unpatriotic, so keep them where they belong – in the minds of the enemy.

DAY IN, DAY OUT

As a soldier you will spend only a small proportion of a war in the thick of the fighting. For every day spent in battle there are nine days spent preparing for an assault, repairing weapons and equipment, being redeployed to another theater of operations, undergoing training or other maintenance duties. Days can quite often wind up blurring into one another and devolving into monotony and boredom.

Boredom can be counteracted in a healthy manner – organized sports, such as zero-g football or ice soccer, can be an excellent way of blowing off steam without blowing things up. Most barracks are equipped with games stations where troopers can unwind by killing and maiming virtual bad guys, making a welcome change from killing and maiming actual bad guys.

Life is quite often spent in very close confines with comrades – whether in a bunkroom of a barracks in a garrison or an alien world, or in the claustrophobic quarters onboard a spacecraft. Tempers can fray and soldiers will often take many steps to relieve the boredom – mindless violence, gambling, drink and drugs being the most readily available. Rivalries can often form between units and jealousy can develop between soldiers within a unit. Enemies can be made, far closer and more dangerous than those the

soldiers are supposed to be fighting.

Such rivalries, when properly nurtured, can be good for a unit, leading to healthy competition between men. When they turn sour, however, they are to be rooted out quickly before they poison an entire garrison. Poisoning garrisons is not permitted under any circumstances.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

PREVENTING BOREDOM

War should remain an ever present concern for the characters, even during periods when they are not actively engaged in combat. The distant rumblings of orbital bombardment or artillery fire should often be heard and screeching air-raid sirens should effectively jolt a resting character into action.

War should never become mundane or ordinary. Characters may become accustomed to the daily routine between battles, and even to the battles themselves, but they should never become inured to the constantly killing or fighting. If the characters have a spark of humanity and compassion left in them they should still experience fear and anxiety before a battle and a modicum of guilt and remorse after killing an enemy.

COURAGE UNDER FIRE

Fighting in a pitched battle is quite unlike any other conflict or skirmish, with volleys of laser fire being rapidly exchanged between the two sides, thunderous artillery shelling enemy positions and the rumble of tanks crawling across the blasted field.

It is a nerve wracking experience – to hold your ground when the sounds of a tank can be heard not far away takes great courage. An inexperienced soldier who finds himself under artillery fire or aerial bombardment for the first time will be doing better than most to not run then and there.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

COURAGE UNDER FIRE

The Courage under Fire rules are intended to represent the trauma, stress and the overwhelming urge to panic and run away that is experienced over the course of a battle. Every soldier fights a constant war within as to whether to stay and fight or run away in the face of danger.

A Courage under Fire check is called for in specific situations where the morale of the character is shaken and his ability to continue to stand and fight is in question. A Will save is made (DC 10), modified depending on the circumstances. If the check is successful the character holds his ground and does not give in to fear. If the save is failed the character's nerve has also failed and he becomes shaken, frightened or panicked. A character remains in this state for the duration of the battle or until they have had some time away from combat to regain their nerves.

The commanding presence ability of the Field Officer advanced class enables troops to shrug off the effects of being shaken, frightened or panicked.

Shaken: If the soldier fails the check by 5 or less, he becomes shaken, incurring a -2 morale penalty to attack rolls, saves and checks. A shaken character that is made shaken again becomes frightened.

Frightened: If the soldier fails the check by 10 or less, he becomes frightened. Characters who are frightened are automatically shaken too, but in addition they flee from the source of their fear as quickly as they can, although they can choose the path of their flight. Once they are out of sight and hearing range of the source of their fear they may act as normal, although they will be forced to flee again should the source of their fear reappear. Characters unable to flee can still fight, although they remain shaken. A frightened character that is made frightened again becomes panicked.

Panicked: If the soldier fails the check by more than 10, he becomes panicked. Characters that are panicked are automatically shaken, but in addition, they run away from the source of their fear as quickly as they can. When running, they have a 50% chance to drop what they

are holding. Other than running away from the source, their path is random. They flee from all other dangers that confront them rather than facing those dangers. Panicked characters cower if they are prevented from fleeing.

The saving throw is modified as follows:

TABLE 2-1: COURAGE UNDER FIRE SAVING THROWS

SITUATION	MORALE BONUS TO SAVING THROW
Character behind cover	+2
Character in a bunker or similar defense	+5
Reinforcements expected	+2
Character in an undamaged vehicle	+2
Enemy outnumbered	+5
Character defending his home territory	+10

In battle under normal circumstances, a character does not need to make a Courage under Fire check, but one may be required when in a situation described below.

See Table 2-2 for the DC modifiers. Unless otherwise specified, the modifiers are cumulative.

Artillery Shelling: Artillery fire can be devastating to an infantryman in the open – as whistling shells and thunderous explosions grow ever nearer, few soldiers can hold their ground and not flee. A character that is targeted by artillery fire or is in a unit targeted by artillery fire or is in the vicinity of artillery shelling must make an immediate save.

Unit Casualties: All soldiers in a unit that have suffered casualties have their own morale shaken as their instinct for survival kicks in. A character in a unit that has had one or more of its men killed or reduced

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

COURAGE UNDER FIRE CONTINUED

to 0 or less hit points must make a save. A save must be made each time a unit suffers a casualty in battle. Note that although injuries to soldiers modify the DC of the check, on their own they do not call for a save.

Personal Wounds: The thoughts of a soldier seriously injured in battle immediately turn to survival. A character reduced to less than 50% hit points must make a save each time they incur a further wound. The DC modifiers for personal wounds are **not** cumulative.

Enemy Armor: To an infantryman out in the open, a tank is a terrible and frightening thing, often indestructible to their light arms. An enemy tank that approaches within 15ft of an unprotected infantryman forces a save, as does a tank that fires on an infantryman. A vehicle that an infantryman or his unit has already successfully damaged never forces a save.

Friendly Troops Fleeing: The sight of friendly countrymen deserting their posts and fleeing can leave a soldier bitter and frightened. A character that sees allied troops fleeing from the enemy must make a save.

Sniper Fire: Snipers are often deployed in a battle as much for their ability to shake the morale of the enemy as for actual killing. Snipers frighten their foes by attacking them from the shadows and allowing them little opportunity to defend themselves. A character who is fired at by a sniper, or who is in a unit fired at by a sniper must make a save.

Orbital Bombardment: It is a very brave or very foolhardy soldier who does not run for cover when confronted by an orbital barrage. A character who is in the radius of an orbital bombardment or who witnesses a bombardment nearby must make an immediate save.

TABLE 2-2: COURAGE UNDER FIRE SAVE DCs

SITUATION	DC
Artillery Shelling	
Character targeted directly	+10
Unit targeted	+5
Nearby artillery shelling +0.	+0
Unit Casualties	
Each soldier killed	+5
Each soldier disabled or dying	+2
Each soldier injured	+1
Personal Wounds	
Reduced to 50% or less hit points	+0
Reduced to 25% or less hit points	+2
Reduced to 10% or less hit points	+5
Disabled or dying	+10
Friendly Troops Fleeing	
Character has less than 5 allies within sight	+10
Fleeing allies from same unit	+5
Fleeing allies	+0
Sniper Fire	
Character targeted directly	+10
Unit targeted	+5
Sniper not spotted	+5
Orbital Bombardment	
Unit within orbital bombardment radius	+20
Orbital bombardment within sight	+10

BATTLE FATIGUE

Time constantly spent in battle eventually wears down the spirit and morale of even the hardiest of soldiers. Known as battle fatigue, this can quickly paralyze an entire unit or division after a period of intense fighting. Wily generals keep careful watch over their men, ensuring that their troops are constantly rotated away from the front to recuperate.

A character suffering from battle fatigue loses the will to fight, overcome by a great physical exhaustion and emotional weariness. They lose all sense of self and purpose and want nothing more than to rest. Resting is no way to win a war, soldier! Stop being a sissy and get back to fighting! Now!

DESERTION, DEFECTION AND GOING AWOL

For some the traumatic experiences of war and battle can prove to be too much. The constant dangers faced by a unit deployed to a war zone and the lack of any freedom or space can drive a soldier or crewman, whether raw recruit or hardened veteran, to throw the towel in and abandon his post.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

BATTLE FATIGUE

A soldier constantly in battle must make a Will save each day to avoid the effects of Battle Fatigue. The DC for the Will save is 5 + 1 for each day spent in battle, although other effects may increase the DC further. The DC modifiers listed below are cumulative.

TABLE 2-3: BATTLE FATIGUE SAVE DCs

EACH DAY ...	DC
Spent in battle	+1
Unit came under fire	+1
Character came under fire	+2
Unit came under artilllery fire	+2
One or more comrades were killed	+2
Five or more comrades were killed	+5
Character was injured	+5
Ten or more comrades were killed	+10

Failure indicates that the character succumbs to battle fatigue. While under the effects of battle fatigue a character gains d6 negative levels. A character with a negative level incurs a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks and saving throws for each negative level.

A character that has as many negative levels as class levels is reduced to a near catatonic or hysterical state, and is rendered incapable of carrying out any strenuous activity. Upon recovery the character may be left with longer lasting psychological effects such as shell shock.

The effects of battle fatigue can only be reduced through rest away from battle. For every week away from battle spent resting or relaxing, the character loses one negative level.

Such behavior is inappropriate for a combatant, soldier. Get used to danger and fighting, and stop thinking about quitting. The more you fight, the sooner you can all go home.

Some soldiers simply abandon their posts for a time with the intention of returning, going to ground in a nearby colony or going wild onboard a space station to let off steam. The most common occurrence of this occurs when a unit has shore leave after a long period in the field or on a tour of duty. At the end of shore leave, it is not unusual for some of the unit to simply not return for a few days.

Going AWOL – Away without Leave – is a military crime, and soldiers may have to face a court martial, but are unlikely to face any serious repercussions so long as they did not disappear for long. Going AWOL for longer periods, or being arrested and escorted back to the unit by military police, will have a heftier punishment – perhaps time in the brig or on punishment duties.

Desertion – leaving a post with no intention of returning – is another matter entirely. During wartime desertion is commonly punishable by execution by firing squad. Soldiers that desert rarely return without a fight, know that capture will almost certainly mean death. Some deserters simply try to return home or some other safe place far from the war, while others keep running and running.

Sometimes a character becomes disillusioned not only with the war itself, but with the ideals that they are supposedly fighting for. A character may find that he has more in common with his enemies than his allies, sharing their beliefs and world view. Defectors are highly prized by enemy forces and are actively sought after, as a single high ranking or important defector willing to betray their own government can easily help turn a war against his former comrades. One side in a war will often go out of its way to help one of its enemies defect if it has been forewarned of their intent, perhaps sending in Special Forces troopers to snatch him away (maybe making it look like a kidnapping) or arranging for a ship to pick him up from a rendezvous point.
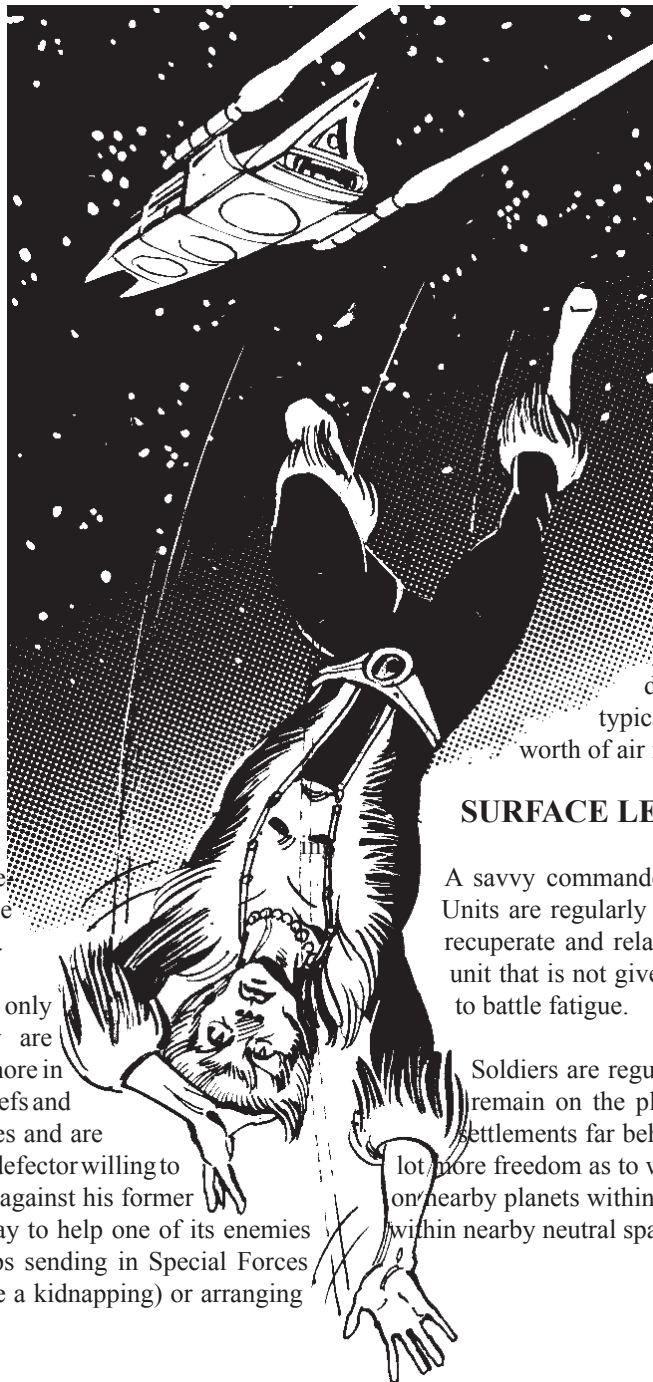
Although a defector will be much vaunted and paraded about, the side he has defected to will never truly trust him or allow him the freedoms he once enjoyed – after all, he has betrayed his own people once already. If caught by his former comrades, a defector will be swiftly and publicly executed in a particularly gruesome manner to act as a deterrent to others who may be contemplating similar acts. Many races favor spacing as the execution method of choice.

SPACING

Reserved for the most heinous of crimes – high treason, for example – spacing is a particularly gruesome and unpleasant method of capital punishment. The criminal is placed in an air lock which is then opened, sucking them into space and to their demise. A criminal executed by spacing does not die instantly, but instead dies a slow and agonizing death over the course of a minute or more.

The spaced victim suffers the effects of explosive decompression as the airlock is opened – the airlock door is typically a huge opening and there is rarely more than 6 seconds worth of air in an airlock.

SURFACE LEAVE

A savvy commander knows that his troops cannot fight forever without rest. Units are regularly rotated away from the front lines so that they have time to recuperate and relax, returning to the front fresh and ready for battle anew. A unit that is not given the opportunity to recuperate runs the risk of succumbing to battle fatigue.

Soldiers are regularly given surface leave. Ground forces are often forced to remain on the planet on which they have been stationed, but take leave in settlements far behind the battle lines. The crew of a spacecraft typically has a lot more freedom as to where they can take their surface leave. Often they take leave on nearby planets within the same system or are shipped to space stations or colonies within nearby neutral space.

SURFACE LEAVE

Surface leave provides ample roleplaying opportunities. A character suddenly let loose in a busy spaceport after the intensity of battle and war may find themselves a little lost or out of place or they may find themselves slipping back into civilian life rather too easily. Surface leave also provides the ideal opportunity to introduce a change of pace or theme into the game.

Aside from the roleplaying opportunities, surface leave allows a character to forestall the effects of battle fatigue. After spending time on surface leave the DC check for battle fatigue is returned to 5 and all accrued modifiers are reset.

INJURY AND DEATH

Of course, the greatest risk to a soldier in war does not come from fleeing from the enemy or being stuck in a cramped bunkroom with a dozen other soldiers. The greatest hazard to the health of a soldier comes from the other side: the enemy firing hails of plasma and laser and slugs in the direction of the soldier and his comrades. Injury in any circumstance is never pleasant, but in the middle of a battlefield it is even less so.

Most sides make use of combat medics to rush to the aid of injured soldiers, but there are never enough to cope with the demand. The weapons deployed in battle are capable of inflicting great amounts of damage to heavily armored vehicles, let alone unprotected infantrymen.

Troops injured in battle will be expected to fight on where able, until a lull in the battle enables their extraction. Indeed, they may have little choice but to carry on fighting or to fight their way away from the enemy lines to a suitable extraction point.

Battlefield hospitals are often set up to care for the injured – once a soldier is deemed fit for battle no time is wasted in sending him back to the frontlines. Only very rarely – and in the most extreme of circumstances – is a soldier discharged and sent home. More often a soldier may be rotated out of combat duty and reassigned to less strenuous tasks, such as guard patrol.

THE OTHER SIDE

Don't stare into their eyes for too long, soldier, in case they work their weird mind tricks on you, or shoot you while you're not paying attention. You fight them for a reason, and that reason is not just that you have been ordered to. You fight the enemy because they are the enemy, and irredeemably so. Shoot first. You can trouble yourself with questions and morals later.

As a soldier, soldier, you will spend a lot of your time staring across the battlefield at ugly, different looking creatures. Remember one thing – they mean to kill you just as surely as we mean you to kill them. No matter how many eyes or arms the enemy has, or how hairless or scaly their bodies are, most lifeforms respond in the same way to bullets and laser beams – they die. In galactic warfare it's either them or us, and the universe is only big enough for one warlike alien culture. Us.

PROPAGANDA

Propaganda readily distributed among soldiers portrays the enemy in the worst possible light, making much of their flaws and failings to justify the campaign against them. Such propaganda is distributed to ease the consciences of the soldiers expected to kill the hated enemy, and to reaffirm in their mind exactly why they are fighting.

In reality propaganda bears little relation to the truth, and it can come as a great surprise to a soldier to discover that the enemy they have been conditioned to hate is as much of a person as they are. The enemies are simple soldiers with feelings, desires, goals and motivations too, as well as an overwhelming desire to return home safely – even if that means killing their foes.

It can be fun to play with alien stereotypes at the expense of the PCs. Have the propaganda about the evil aliens drummed into them constantly by the media and their superiors, and then turn it on its head by having them coming face to face with one of the aliens and discovering that the truth is quite different.

Of course, there are those among the enemy that are true to the stereotype – although these may be few and far between.

DEPLOYMENT & REDEPLOYMENT

During a conflict, troops spend a great deal of time in transit, shipping between different battlegrounds or theaters of war. Sometimes they are redeployed elsewhere on the same planet, or in the same system. Other times troops will be reassigned to a battleground in an entirely different part of the galaxy.

When being deployed elsewhere on the same planet, troops will often be transported by large aircraft or surface hover-trains. When redeployment is elsewhere in the system or much further afield, surface forces will have to rely on the space fleet to transport them. Either way, redeployment is never comfortable, as hundreds or thousands of infantrymen are crammed into a confined space.

Use this time wisely, soldier. Unwind a little, train a little, and try not to dwell endlessly on the new theater of war that you're heading towards. After all, this might be the last break from war you get for a long while. So, cheer up. That's an order.
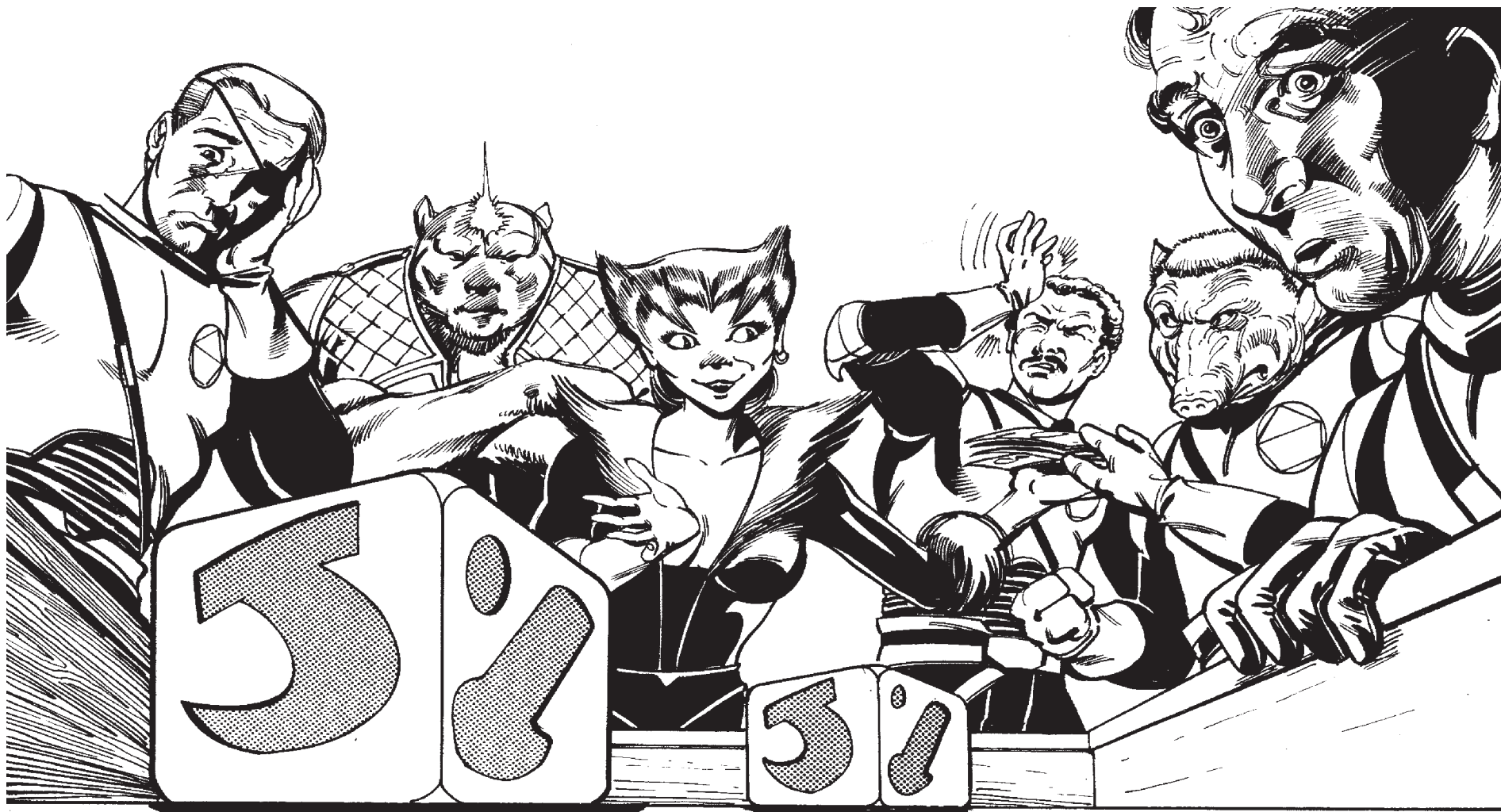
PSYCHICS AT WAR

In the right circumstances a psychic can be a soldier's best friend, bolstering their will and assailing their enemies with freaky powers. An enemy psychic, however, can be among the worst foes a soldier will face, tormenting them with nightmares and turning friend against friend.

The surest way of dealing with a psychic is a bullet to the back of the head, but there are times when this isn't feasible … especially when they're on your side. Failing that, make sure you keep a beady eye on them at all times, even when they're not there.

There are many advantages to be gained by using those with psychic powers during a war – the ability to second guess an enemy's strategy, to covertly pass information to or from undercover agents or to expose spies and traitors, not to mention the more powerful psychic powers possessed by some. Despite the advantages for doing so, few races are willing to put psychics in the front line. The constant mental screams of pain and death prevalent in a battle can quickly overwhelm a psychic, tipping him over the edge into madness and leaving him as a potential threat rather than an ally.

Instead psychics are often used in the war rooms and command centers of the military, their insight and prescience put to use around the planning table. Psychics are often used in an advisory capacity, recommending courses of action based on their own wisdom as well as subliminal thoughts detected from the commanders. Psychics may also be deployed as effective counter espionage agents, identifying tell-tale treacherous surface thoughts from officers serving in the base. Perhaps the capacity in which a psychic is most often used is as an interrogator, plucking battle plans and troop dispositions straight out of the mind of a captured soldier.

There are a few notable exceptions to this trend, however, especially when the class known as the battle mind receives military training. The unique combination of military training and telepathy lead to the creation of very capable soldiers with the mental discipline not only to filter out the thoughts of dying foes, but also to withstand the fear and panic that can cripple a lesser force. The ability to second guess a foe makes them unparalleled when fighting up close, although they gain great advantages elsewhere.
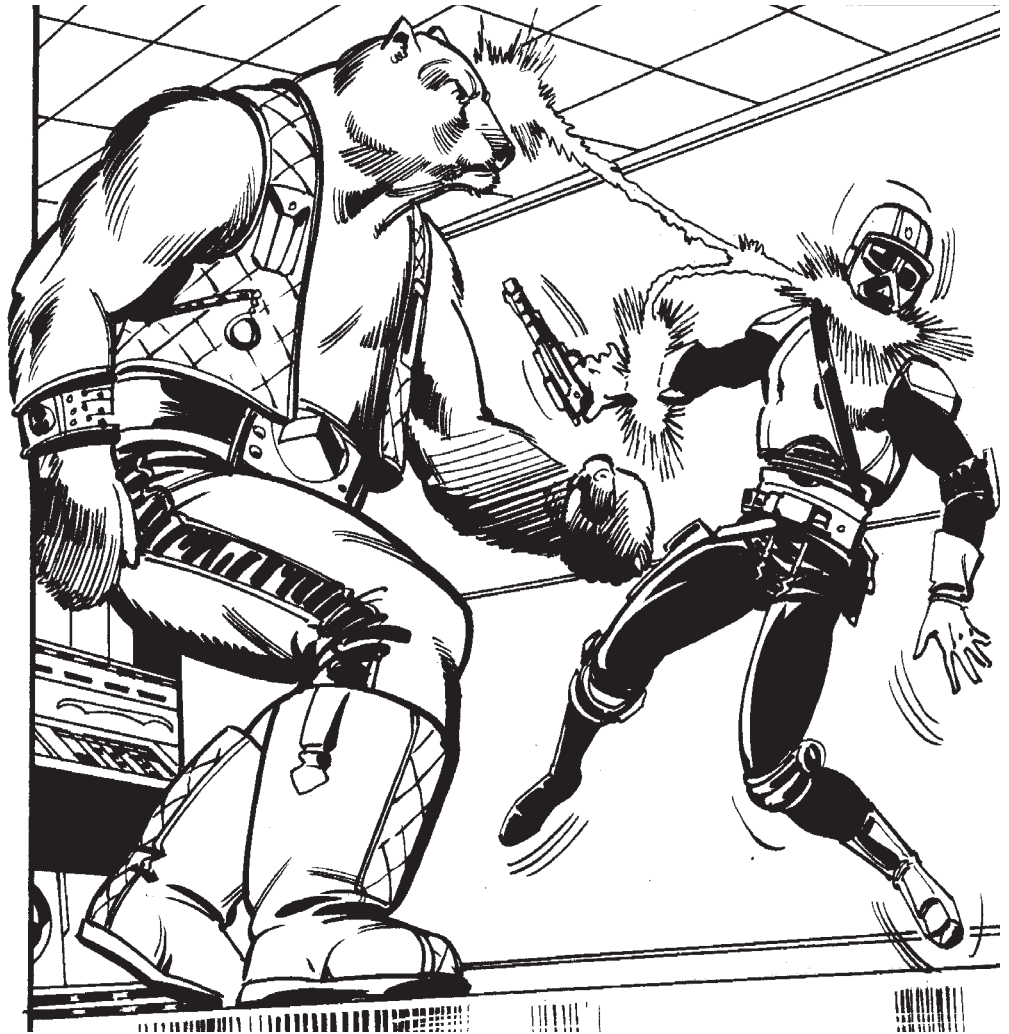
CHAPTER THREE: THE FUTURE SOLDIER

WAR VETERANS

The Galactic Star Battle. The Wars of the World. The Stars War. Such epic conflicts leave their mark on an entire generation, giving birth to enmities and friendships that will last a lifetime. Veterans returning home after such conflicts may be welcomed home as heroes, heaped with honor and praise by their fellow countrymen. Or they may be viewed with shame and disgust, particularly if they are veterans of a lost war.

In times of peace, when new alliances are being forged, veteran soldiers may be an unwelcome reminder of times of strife, and governments can quickly distance themselves from heroes of wars long since passed.

No veteran returns from war unchanged. They may return home yearning for a peaceful life, sick to the stomach with fighting. Or they may have developed a thirst for battle and conflict. Some veterans return embittered and disillusioned with the government that sent them to war, sowing the seeds of dissent and opposition, either legitimately or less so. Some become charismatic politicians or generals, others dangerous rabble rousers. Most seek to put their past behind them, few revel in the haunting memories of war.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

VETERAN FEATS

Veteran Feats may be taken by any character that has fought in a war. A Veteran Feat represents the unique marks left on a survivor by war in the forms of skill bonuses, special abilities and relationships. Not all who have fought in a war are marked in the same way, and not all veterans of a campaign have a Veteran Feat.

Unlike a regular feat, a Veteran Feat has both bonuses and penalties associated with it, and may be taken for free without counting as a regular feat choice. A Veteran Feat may only be gained with the approval of the Games Master.

BATTLE HARDENED (VETERAN)
You have endured the trials of battle and are no longer fazed by war, but conversely have lost your sense of self-preservation and are prone to acts of rashness.

Prerequisite: Must be a war veteran

Benefit: You gain a +2 morale bonus to all saves made for Battle Fatigue or Courage under Fire, but suffer a -2 penalty to all other Wisdom based checks.

BATTLE SCARRED (VETERAN)
You still bear the horrible scars sustained in battle.

Prerequisite: Must have been reduced to 0 hit points during a battle

Benefit: You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Intimidate checks, but suffer a -2 penalty to all other Charisma based checks.

HATED ENEMY (VETERAN)
Your time spent fighting a particular enemy has left you bitter and angry, and you thirst for revenge against them.

Prerequisite: Must be a veteran of a war fought against your hated foe.

Benefit: Select a single faction as your hated foe. You gain a +1 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls when fighting your hated foe, as well as to Will saves to resist fear effects. However you are irrational with respect to your foe and are incapable of dealing with them in a non-violent manner. You incur a -2 circumstance penalty to all checks made when dealing with your foe in peaceful circumstances.

LONE SURVIVOR (VETERAN)

You were the only survivor from your unit following a bloody campaign, giving you a reputation as exceptionally lucky and a jinx to those around you.

Prerequisite: Must have been the only survivor in your party or unit at the end of a fight, battle or a war.

Benefit: You gain a +1 luck bonus to all saving throws, but other characters within 15ft incur a corresponding -1 penalty. You also suffer a -1 penalty to all Charisma checks when dealing with a character who knows about your reputation.

TWITCHY (VETERAN)

A lifetime waiting to be ambushed has left you permanently on edge.

Prerequisite: Must be a war veteran

Benefit: You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Initiative rolls and Reflex saves, but incur a -2 penalty to all checks that require a degree of patience or concentration on account of your infuriatingly restless nature. You are also likely to over-react, drawing a gun before a situation demands it or pulling the trigger too soon when waiting in ambush.

WAR CRIMINAL (VETERAN)

You are reviled and feared in equal measure among your foes for your actions during wartime.

Prerequisite: Must be a war veteran and have done some terrible deed against your foes, such as genocide, experimenting on prisoners or nuclear bombing a civilian colony.

Benefit: Foes who know of your reputation suffer a -1 morale penalty to attacks and saves made when fighting you, and you gain a +2 bonus to Intimidate checks. However, you incur a -2 penalty to all other Charisma based checks and you are wanted for war crimes by a single faction. The faction may go out of their way to capture and try you, send bounty hunters to bring you to justice, or members of the faction may attack you on sight.

WAR HERO (VETERAN)

You have gained a reputation for valor and honor in combat among your own people.

Prerequisite: Must be a war veteran

Benefit: You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Charisma checks when dealing with members of your own military who know of your reputation. You suffer a -2 Charisma penalty when dealing with members of the faction you fought during the war.

ADVANCED CLASSES

New Advanced Classes are presented below, soldier. Think of them as career guidance, in case you grow bored of lumping guns about the battlefield. Boredom is not an option, soldier. The Advanced Classes are presented in a standard format as agreed in the 3rd Logosphere Convention on the recording of career information. The numbers and coded descriptions have been declassified so as to help you make a sensible decision. Try not to get confused. See your commanding officer if you have any questions.

COMMANDO

Commandos are the elite of the elite; near mystical warriors trained to defuse an explosive scenario – such as a hostage situation or terrorist attack – with swift and decisive action. Commandos are trained to keep casualties to a minimum, mastering a variety of non-lethal techniques to assist in subduing a foe rather than killing them, in the shortest amount of time possible.

There are less than a handful of commandos in active service at one time in any given military, but any one of those warriors is worth a hundred ordinary soldiers in battle.

REQUIREMENTS
To qualify to become a Commando, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +15
Skills: Move Silently 18 ranks
Feats: Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skip Shot, Stealthy

CLASS INFORMATION
The following information pertains to the Commando advanced class:

HIT DIE
The Commando gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

CLASS SKILLS
The Commando's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidation (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex).

Skill points at each level: 5 + Int modifier (4 for non-humans)

CLASS FEATURES
All of the following are class features for the Commando advanced class:

Subdue Foe
The Commando is committed to life over death, even though he may be forced to resort to violence on occasions. When inflicting damage with a melee weapon, the Commando may choose whether he inflicts lethal or subdual damage. He may vary this from attack to attack with no penalty.

At 3rd level, the Commando this ability applies even with a ranged weapon, so long as the weapon is no larger than a rifle, and at 5th level, the ability extends to grenades and heavy weapons.

Marksman
The Commando is trained to be able to strike a foe who is behind fortifications or who has resorted to using a hostage for cover. A Commando may ignore a target's bonuses for

TABLE 3-1: THE COMMANDO

CLASS LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	DEFENSE BONUS	REPUTATION BONUS
1st	+1	+0	+1	+1	Subdue Foe	+1	+0
2nd	+2	+0	+2	+2	Armed & Ready	+1	+0
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+3	Marksman	+2	+1
4th	+4	+1	+4	+4	Ever Ready	+2	+1
5th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Appropriate Force	+3	+1

anything less than total cover, without incurring any penalty.

Armed and Ready

The Commando is always alert to danger and threats, and acts with superhuman speed. So long as the Commando has a weapon drawn, he gains a +4 circumstance bonus to Initiative checks.

Ever Ready

At 4th level, the bonus gained from Armed and Ready applies even when the Commando is unarmed.

Appropriate Force

At 5th level, the Commando is skilled at judging the damage he can inflict to a foe, ensuring that he uses the exact amount of force necessary to render a foe unconscious or as close to death as he desires. When the Commando inflicts damage to a foe that would reduce him to 0 or less hit points, the Commando may elect to do less damage and may choose how many hit points the target is left with between 0 and -9. The Commando may not do more damage with this ability than he inflicted, only less.

BATTLEFIELD TECHNICIAN

Perhaps one of the most dangerous combat jobs, it falls to the Battlefield Technician to maintain and repair damaged vehicles in the middle of a battle. The Battlefield Technician is expected to scurry backwards and forwards across a battlefield, typically while under fire from all sides, to carry out repairs to vehicles to enable them to remain in the fight.

The job of the Battlefield Technician is one constantly fraught with hazards, but it is essential to victory. The side that can keep more of its vehicles operational has the best chance of success, as the enemy vehicles break, are crippled and destroyed. Battlefield Technicians must also contend with making do with very little in the way of supplies and materials. In the middle of the battlefield there is likely to be a distinct lack of materials with which to perform repairs and Battlefield Technicians become very proficient at making a little go a very long way. Of course, often the most plentiful source of parts is other damaged or destroyed vehicles, and few in the galaxy – with the exception of dedicated scavengers – are quite so adept at stripping enemy vehicles for parts.

Despite their name, Battlefield Technicians are not restricted to the open battle – many spacecrafts carry a small complement of Battlefield Technicians specially trained to carry out emergency repairs while the ship is under fire. The task of a spacecraft technician is no less hazardous, for they may be forced to enter areas filled with leak-

ing coolant or with high doses of radiation, sections of the ship exposed to vacuum or containing blazing infernos.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Battlefield Technician, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Skills: Computer Use 6 ranks, Craft (any) 6 ranks, Repair 6 ranks
Feats: Combat Reflexes

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Battlefield Technician advanced class:

HIT DIE

The Battlefield Technician gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

CLASS SKILLS

The Battlefield Technician's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (electronic, mechanical, structural) (Int), Drive (Dex), Knowledge (any) (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (any) (Wis), Repair (Int).

Skill points at each level: 7 + Int modifier (6 for non-humans)

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features for the Battlefield Technician advanced class:

Battlefield Repairs

Some would say that Battlefield Technicians get an unhealthy kick out of repairing vehicles and equipment in the midst of a firefight. Certainly, a technician is at his most impressive when surrounded by exploding artillery shells and flashing plasma bursts. When in a battle, the technician gains a +1 circumstance bonus to Repair checks made to carry out a repair. This bonus increases by +1 at 3rd level and at every two technician levels thereafter.

Courage under Fire

The Battlefield Technician is adept at carrying out repairs under pressure, enabling him to keep working in situations where soldiers would have long since fled. When engaged in repairs, a Battlefield Technician may add his class level as a morale bonus to any Concentration checks or Will saves made to resist Courage under Fire.

Cannibalize Parts

A technician comes into his own when stripping one piece of equipment to repair another. If the technician has access to a piece of equipment, then he may destroy it (if it is not already destroyed) to grant himself either a one time +5 equipment bonus to the skill check to repair a vaguely similar piece of equipment, or an extra 5 hit points of damage repaired on a vehicle. Equipment cannibalized in this way becomes completely useless and may not be scavenged or cannibalized again. The exception to this is a normally indestructible item – the indestructibility may not be circumvented by a technician cannibalizing it!

Common sense or GM discretion is applicable when cannibalizing parts – a small piece of electrical equipment such as a communicator would be suitable for use repairing a damaged pistol, for example. A wooden staff would not.

Quick Repair

Battlefield Technicians are used to working to harsh time scales – when a war is raging all around, every hour a spacecraft is languishing in the repair dock is time not spent in action. A repair team led or coordinated by a Battlefield Technician may attempt to hurry the repairs. For every 5 points by which the DC is increased, the time taken to complete the repairs is halved. A Battlefield Technician may attempt to hurry a repair as much as he likes, reducing the repairs to a minimum repair time of 1 minute.

Jury-Rig

A Battlefield Technician is used to having make do with very little to carry out his repairs, making a badly damaged piece of equipment operational again – if only for a short time. A Battlefield Technician is even more adept at jury rigging an item than another engineer would be. Doing so reduces the Purchase DC of the equipment by 5 and the Repair Check by 10.

Sabotage

Not only is the Battlefield Technician good at making equipment work again, he can turn that skill around when necessary, ensuring that normally functioning equipment breaks down. At 6th level, the Battlefield Technician can sabotage an electrical or mechanical object so that it operates poorly. The Battlefield Technician must succeed on a Disable Device check (DC 20) to accomplish the downgrade, and sabotaging a mastercraft object is slightly harder (DC 20 + the mastercraft object's bonus feature). Noticing the Battlefield Technician's handiwork without first testing the sabotaged device requires a successful Search check (DC = the Battlefield Technician's Disable Device check result). Fixing the sabotaged item requires a successful Repair.

Improved Jury Rig

At 7th level, the technician's talent at jury-rigging increases, allowing him to jury rig ever more complicated devices. The Battlefield Technician can attempt to repair a vehicle or starship in this manner.

TABLE 3-2: THE BATTLEFIELD TECHNICIAN

| CLASS LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	DEFENSE BONUS	REPUTATION BONUS
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Battlefield Repairs +1	+0	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+2	Courage Under Fire	+1	+0
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+2	Battlefield Repairs +2, Cannibalize Parts	+1	+1
4th	+2	+1	+1	+3	Quick Repair	+1	+1
5th	+2	+2	+2	+3	Battlefield Repairs +3, Jury Rig	+2	+1
6th	+3	+2	+2	+4	Sabotage	+2	+2
7th	+3	+2	+2	+4	Battlefield Repairs +4, Improved Jury Rig	+2	+2
8th	+4	+3	+3	+5	Scuttle	+3	+2
9th	+4	+3	+3	+5	Battlefield Repairs +5, Good as New	+3	+3
10th	+5	+3	+3	+6	Beyond the Limit	+3	+3

A disabled spacecraft or vehicle can be jury-rigged back into use. To do so takes five minutes plus ten more per size category of the vessel beyond Huge. Jury-rigging a vehicle in this way has one of the following effects: repairs one-fifth of the vehicle's hit points, restores a single weapon system or brings a damaged subsystem back online. Each of a vehicle or starship's attributes is reduced by 1 for each such repair. A jury-rigged vehicle must be conventionally repaired in order to regain these values. Once jury-rigged, if a vehicle is subsequently disabled or destroyed, it is permanently destroyed and beyond any further repair.

Scuttle
At 8th level, the Battlefield Technician can sabotage a piece of equipment with explosive consequences. A skill check is made to sabotage the equipment as above, but when used the item explodes dealing 1d6 points of damage to the user. For every 5 points by which the Disable Device check is succeeded the damage is increased by 1d6 and the area of effect radius increased by 5ft.

Good as New
At 9th level, the technician has become a miracle worker with broken equipment, able to repair an item so that it is as good as new. The Battlefield Technician may attempt a Repair check on an item that would normally be beyond repair. To carry out such a repair, the technician must make a Repair skill check (DC 30). An item may only be repaired once in this manner, and any further damage destroys the item forever.
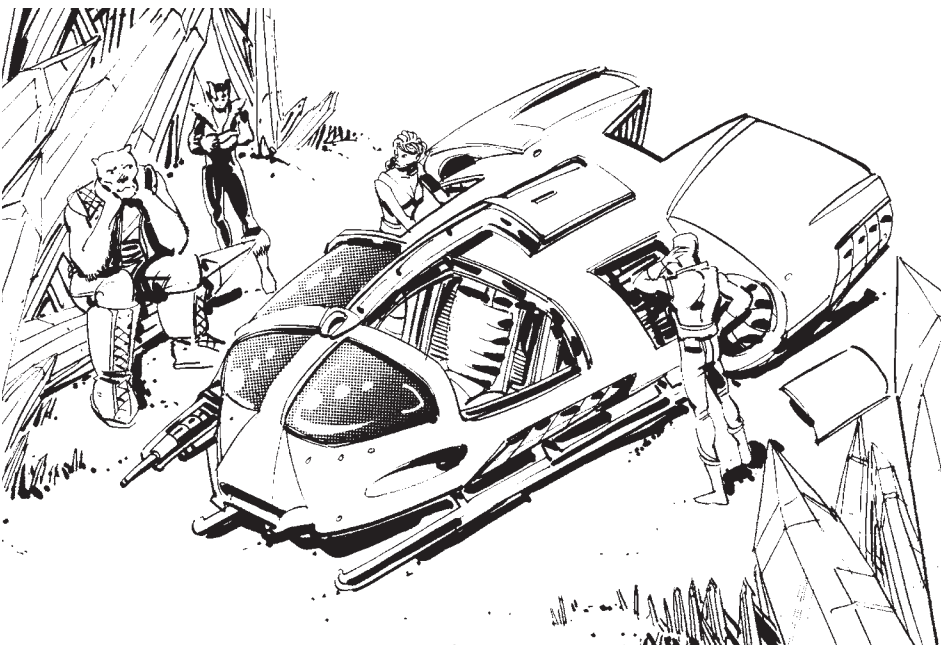
Beyond the Limit
At 10th level, a Battlefield Technician is able to get 110% out of a piece of equipment, a weapon or a vehicle that they are charged with the maintenance of. To take an item beyond the limit is a full round action, during which the Battlefield Technician must make a Repair skill check (DC 25).

- Weapon: A modified weapon gains a +1 equipment bonus to damage the next time it is fired, plus an additional +1 for every 5 points the skill check was passed by.
- Equipment: Modified equipment that provides a bonus of some sort has that bonus increased by +1 for round, plus an additional +1 for every 5 points the skill check was passed.
- Vehicle: A technician may push one system onboard a starship or vehicle beyond the limit, increasing one of the following: Initiative, Maneuver, Top Speed (in squares) or Defense. The chosen system gains a +1 equipment bonus for one round, plus an additional +1 for every 5 points the skill check was passed.

WARMASTER

Warmasters are spiteful monsters seeking to secure the survival of their own kind regardless of the cost to others. Indeed, it is preferable that another suffers or perishes so that an ally can survive – there is no compromise or middle ground in the mind of a Warmaster.

The Warmasters are masters of their trade, reveling in battle and pursuing death and destruction as though it is an art form. But the Warmasters are more than bloodthirsty generals – they excel at torture and cruelty, and many are accomplished scientists responsible for some of the most destructive weaponry ever developed.

REQUIREMENTS
To qualify to become a Warmaster, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5 or higher
Skills: Intimidate 8 ranks, Knowledge (any) 5 ranks, Treat Injury 5 ranks,
Feats: either Smart Plus OR Dedicated Plus, Ultra Immune System

CLASS INFORMATION
The following information pertains to the Warmaster advanced class:

HIT DIE
The Warmaster gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier

TABLE 3-3: THE WARMASTER

CLASS LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	DEFENSE BONUS	REPUTATION BONUS
1st	+1	+0	+0	+2	Inflict Pain	+1	+1
2nd	+2	+0	+0	+2	Feared and Reviled	+1	+1
3rd	+3	+1	+1	+2	Aspect of Warfare	+2	+1
4th	+4	+1	+1	+3	Sadomasochist	+2	+2
5th	+5	+2	+2	+3	Aspect of Warfare	+3	+2
6th	+6	+2	+2	+4	Legacy of Hatred	+3	+2
7th	+7	+2	+2	+4	Aspect of Warfare	+4	+3
8th	+8	+3	+3	+5	Master of Pain	+4	+3
9th	+9	+3	+3	+5	Master of Torture	+5	+3
10th	+10	+3	+3	+6	Master of War	+5	+4

CLASS SKILLS

The Warmaster's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (alien life, military, weaponry) (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Repair (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill points at each level: 7 + Int modifier (6 for non-humans)

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features for the Warmaster advanced class:

Inflict Pain

From 1st level, the Warmaster knows where to strike a foe to cause them the most injury and pain. The Warmaster may add half their class level to all damage rolls as a competence bonus.

Feared and Reviled

The reputation of a Warmaster precedes him, causing a mixture of fear and disgust in all who meet them. The Warmaster gains a morale bonus to Intimidate checks equal to half their class level.

Aspect of Warfare

At 3rd, 5th and 7th level, the Warmaster gains a greater understanding of the art of war. Each time he gets this ability he must select a single aspect of warfare from the following: battlefield tactics, space combat, ground combat, chemical warfare, biological warfare, or nuclear warfare. The Warmaster gains a +2 competence bonus to all skill checks made in relation to their chosen subject. The Warmaster may select the same aspect more than once, and the effects stack each time.

Sadomasochist

The Warmaster relishes suffering and anguish, including their own. As a move action, the Warmaster may deal a number of points of damage up to his class level to himself. For every point of damage inflicted in this way they may add a +1 morale bonus to their next damage roll.

Legacy of Hatred

Despised by all who know of them, Warmasters provoke violent responses from their foes and have learnt to use this to their advantage. In battle, all foes within 30ft who know of the Warmaster and their reputation are overcome with feelings of hatred and bloodlust, desiring nothing more than to beat the Warmaster to death. The foe must make a Will save with a DC equal to the Warmaster's character level or charge into melee combat at the first opportunity, abandoning ranged weaponry in favor of melee weapons. While in this bloodthirsty state, the foe suffers a -2 morale penalty to their attack rolls and Defense. A new Will save may be attempted each round to resist the Legacy of Hatred, and the effect lasts until a Will save is made – or one of the parties is dead.

Master of Pain

The Warmaster is skilled at inflicting unbearable levels of pain to an opponent, overloading their nervous system and incapacitating them. As a full attack in melee, the Warmaster may choose to forego all attacks and stun his opponent. Only one attack roll is made, at the Warmaster's highest base attack bonus. If successful the opponent must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ the Warmaster's character level + his Intelligence modifier) or be stunned for 1 round. A character who becomes stunned loses his Dexterity bonus, drops what he is holding, and can take no attack or move actions. In addition, the character takes a –2 penalty to Defense. The only damage inflicted by the Master of Pain ability is the bonus damage granted by the Inflict Pain ability.

Master of Torture

At 9th level, the Warmaster has taken torture and intimidation to new depths, manipulating the agony and suffering of their victim to achieve the maximum effect. When torturing a victim, the Warmaster may decide exactly how much damage is dealt with their weapon, instead of rolling damage normally. The amount of damage inflicted may be added to the Warmaster's Intimidate check as a morale bonus against the victim until their next action.

Master of War

At 10th level, the Warmaster has become an expert in making and using weapons of mass destruction. The Warmaster selects a single category from poisons, diseases and explosives. They rebonus to all checks made to identify, manufacture and In addition, all variable, numerical effects of such one-half, rounding down.

ceive a +2 circumstance use their chosen medium. (Cha), mediums are increased by Survival

MARINE

Marines are elite troops serving aboard a fleet's starships and are usually the first to see battle during a planetary invasion or boarding action. Marines are the cream of the crop, forging ahead of the main force to eliminate problematic foes, or to destroy or capture key locations. The marines receive the finest training and the best equipment, and typically receive the most accolades after a victory.

Although marines excel in fighting boarding actions, they train long and hard in a variety of combat situations. The marines are the first to be called in when a fleet has a dangerous or difficult situation.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Marine, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +10 or higher
Skills: Hide 10 ranks, Move Silently 10 ranks, Survival 10 ranks
Feats: Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus
Special: Must be a member of a Naval Special Forces regiment.

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Marine advanced class:

HIT DIE

The Marine gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

CLASS SKILLS

The Marine's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Drive (Dex), Hide (Dex), Intimidate Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Spot (Wis), (Wis) and Swim (Str) and Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill points at each level: 5 + Int modifier (4 for non-humans)

CLASS FEATURES
All of the following are class features for the Marine advanced class:

Advanced Weapons Training
Marines are highly trained in a wide variety of weaponry. At 1st level and every five levels thereafter, the Marine selects a weapon in which he already has Weapon Focus. When using that weapon, the Marine now gains a +1 circumstance bonus to attack and damage rolls. This bonus stacks with both Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization. Alternatively the Marine may instead take the Weapon Focus feat.

Explosives Expert
Marines are trained in the use of explosive devices, such as hand grenades and flash-bang grenades, to flush out enemies and soften up an area, and they are adept at placing a grenade exactly where is needed to have the maximum effect. The DC for all saving throws to avoid the effects of a grenade or explosive device used by a Marine is increased by an amount equal to his class level.

Boarding Specialist
At 2nd level, the Marine becomes an expert at boarding an enemy vessel, moving swiftly and silently through the corridors to seize his objective. When on an enemy vessel, the Marine gains a +1 morale bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Spot and Search checks. This bonus increases at 3rd level and every other level thereafter.

Sudden Strike
Marines are trained to strike swiftly and without compromise. When attacking from cover or concealment, a Marine gains a +2 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Overwhelming Force
At 7th level, a Marine attacks with so much force and determination that an enemy gains few advantages when holed up in a bunker or behind fortifications. A target attacked by a Marine has any cover bonuses less than total cover reduced by one step – nine tenths cover is reduced to three quarters cover, three quarters cover to half cover, and so on.

Shock Tactics
At 9th level, the Marine strikes fear into the hearts of his opponents, making it seem as though they are under assault from dozens of troops instead of a single soldier. Enemies within 30ft of a Marine incur a -2 morale penalty to attack, damage, defense and saving throws. This penalty is not cumulative if more than one Marine of 9th level of higher is within 30ft, but the radius increases by an additional 30ft for each Marine present, making an entire unit of Marines a particularly terrifying opponent.

TABLE 3-4: THE MARINE

CLASS LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	DEFENSE BONUS	REPUTATION BONUS
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Advanced Weapons Training, Explosives Expert	+1	+0
2nd	+2	+2	+0	+0	Boarding Specialist +1	+1	+0
3rd	+3	+2	+1	+1	Sudden Strike	+2	+0
4th	+4	+3	+1	+1	Boarding Specialist +2	+2	+0
5th	+5	+3	+2	+2	Advanced Weapons Training	+3	+1
6th	+6	+4	+2	+2	Boarding Specialist +3	+3	+1
7th	+7	+4	+2	+2	Overwhelming Force	+4	+1
8th	+8	+5	+3	+3	Boarding Specialist +4	+4	+1
9th	+9	+5	+3	+3	Shock Tactics	+5	+2
10th	+10	+6	+3	+3	Advanced Weapons Training, Boarding Specialist +5	+5	+2

FIGHTER ACE

The poster boys of every race's fleet and the heroes in every war, tales of Fighter Aces usually inspire another generation to enlist in the fleet. The Fighter Ace is a dogfighting veteran with few equals and a wing covered with kill counts. They excel at fighter combat, and few who dare take them on in battle live to tell the tale.

Famous Fighter Aces include: Raider-turned-hero during the War on Renvil, Mark 'Count Kill' Kendrick; daredevil pilot Vito Villara, hero of a thousand suicidal maneuvers; and the so-called 'Zen pilot' Kialar, who was said to meditate extensively before – and during – a battle to become one with his fighter.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Fighter Ace, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:
Skills: Computer Use 8 ranks, Pilot 13 ranks
Feats: Starship Battle Run, Starship Dodge, Starship Operation (Ultralight)

CLASS INFORMATION
The following information pertains to the Fighter Ace advanced class:

HIT DIE
The Fighter Ace gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

CLASS SKILLS
The Fighter Ace's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Computer Use (any) (Int), Concentration (Con), Drive (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (battles) (Int), Listen (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Skill points at each level: 5 + Int modifier (4 + Int modifier for nonhumans).

CLASS FEATURES
All of the following are class features for the Fighter Ace advanced class:

Favored Ship
The Fighter Ace would be less than useless without his trusty flying machine. Many Fighter Aces spend most of their careers carefully maintaining, repairing and upgrading the same machine over and over again, rather than taking a newer model. At 1st level, the Fighter Ace selects a specific fighter – space or atmospheric – to be their favored ship. So long as the Fighter Ace is piloting their favored ship, he gains a +1 circumstance bonus to Pilot checks, Technical checks, and attack and damage rolls for every two Fighter Ace class levels he possesses.

Many of the Fighter Ace special abilities are dependant on them being in their favored ship. When not in their favored ship, but in a fighter of the same class, the numerical bonus of all such abilities is halved. No bonus is gained when flying in any other class of ship.

To designate a new starship as his favored ship, a Fighter Ace must pilot it for at least a month.

Maximum Thrust
At 2nd level, the Fighter Ace has learnt to coax that little bit more out of his ship, and to cope with the inherent increase in gees. When in his favored ship, the Fighter Ace may
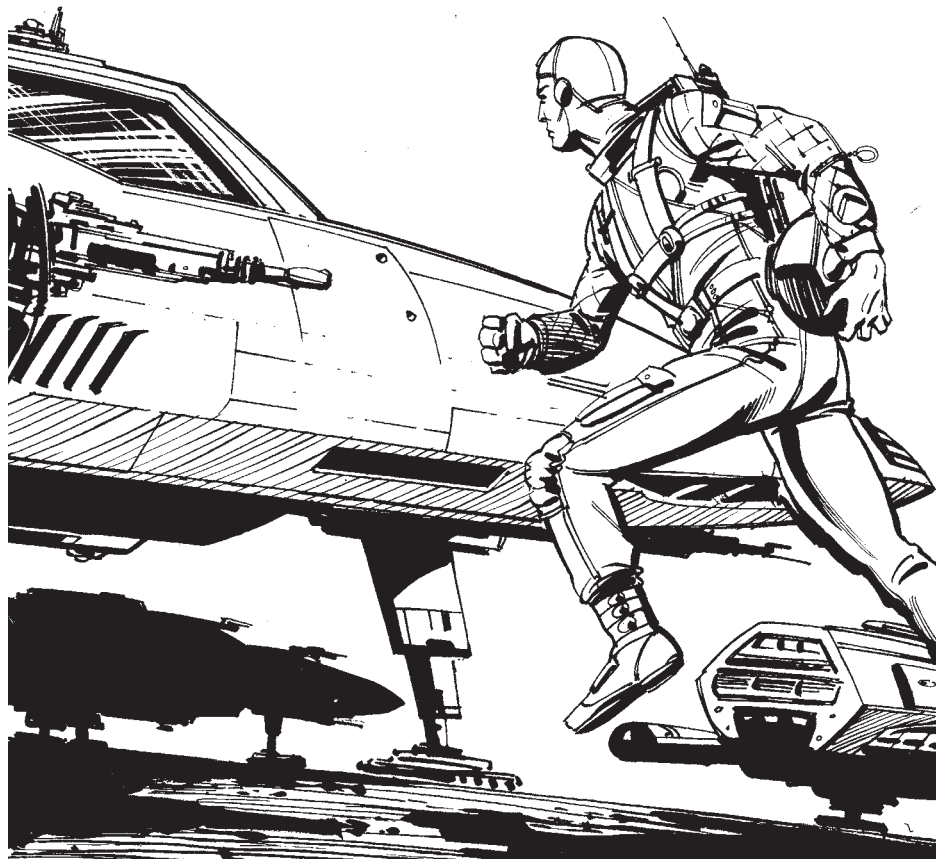
TABLE 3-5: THE FIGHTER ACE

CLASS LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	DEFENSE BONUS	REPUTATION BONUS
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Favored Ship	+3	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+0	Maximum Thrust	+4	+1
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+1	Trademark Maneuver	+4	+1
4th	+3	+1	+3	+1	Out of Nowhere	+5	+2
5th	+3	+2	+3	+2	Jink, Wing Commander	+5	+2
6th	+4	+2	+4	+2	Trademark Maneuver	+6	+2
7th	+5	+2	+4	+2	Quick Recovery	+5	+3
8th	+6	+3	+5	+3	Damage Roll	+7	+3
9th	+6	+3	+5	+3	Trademark Maneuver	+7	+3
10th	+7	+3	+6	+3	Blaze of Glory, Group Captain	+8	+4

make a maximum thrust as a move action. To do this he must make a Pilot check (DC 20) and if successful he moves as though surging forwards, moving at 4 times tactical speed.

Trademark Maneuver

As the Fighter Ace progresses in his career he develops a unique flying style with characteristic maneuvers that quickly identify him in a battle. At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Fighter Ace may select any of the below actions to be a trademark maneuver. Once per round the Fighter Ace may attempt a trademark maneuver. He must make a Pilot check (DC 20), and if he succeeds a full round action becomes a move action, and a move or attack action becomes a free action.

A Fighter Ace may use this ability even when not in his favored ship.

The following actions may be selected as a trademark maneuver:

Attack actions (become free actions): aid another, escape a grappling ship, feint, and total defense
Move actions (become free actions): jink, operate sensors, out of nowhere, ram, and send/jam a transmission
Full round actions (become move actions): jump to cruising speed, withdraw

Out of Nowhere

At 4th level, the Fighter Ace is able to strike seemingly from out of nowhere, positioning his craft to avoid the sensors of an enemy vessel or to blindside an enemy pilot. When in his favored ship, the Fighter Ace may attempt to come out of nowhere as a move action. The Fighter Ace makes a Pilot check (DC 15) and, if successful, any Sensor checks made to detect the craft are reduced by an amount equal to his character level.

Jink

To the untrained eye, the Fighter Ace flies erratically, zigzagging, looping and rolling all the while. Of course, this is all part of their skill, keeping an opponent from locking on to their craft or getting a clear shot. When in his favored ship, the Fighter Ace may make a jink as a move action. The Fighter Ace makes a Pilot check (DC 20) and, if successful. may add his class level to the Defense of his craft for one round.

Wing Commander

Although at their most confident when operating alone, the Fighter Ace appreciates the usefulness of wingmen to provide cover and run interference. At this stage in their career the Fighter Ace has been given a wing of ultralight fighters to command. A wing led by a Fighter Ace gains the advantage of the Fighter Ace's special abilities and bonuses. The maximum wing size is equal to half the Fighter Ace's class levels. A larger wing may not use the Fighter Ace's abilities except as noted in the main rules.

Quick Recovery

Fighter Aces possess almost super-human skills, but even they make mistakes – albeit rarely. The difference is that a Fighter Ace is able to recover from his mistakes much quicker, limiting their effects. Should a Fighter Ace become dazed, entangled, grappled, immobilized, shaken, stunned or suffer a mishap while piloting any ship, he may make a Pilot check (DC 25). A successful roll means that the Fighter Ace can recover from the adverse effects far more quickly than a regular pilot, halving the duration, rounding fractions down.

Damage Roll

The Fighter Ace may attempt to execute a damage roll to avoid the worst of a direct hit, causing a missile to explode nearby or a laser beam to glance off the hull. When in his favored ship, the Fighter Ace may make a damage roll as a move action. The Fighter Ace makes a Pilot check (DC 25) and, if successful, may add his class level to the Defense of his ship for the next attack that strikes it.

Blaze of Glory

When all is lost, many a Fighter Ace has chosen to go down fighting, ending it all in a blaze of glory and taking a good many foes with him. When in his favored ship, the Fighter Ace may decide to execute a blaze of glory as a move action. The blaze of glory is effectively a ramming maneuver against another vessel. The Fighter Ace makes a Pilot check as normal to execute the ram, but may add his class level to the check and, if successful, damage dealt is doubled. A Fighter Ace who successfully performs a blaze of glory is slain instantly, but will long be remembered as a great hero.

Group Captain

At 10th level, the Fighter Ace is promoted once again, gaining multiple wings of fighters to control, all of whom gain the benefit of the Fighter Ace's abilities. The maximum size of the Fighter Ace's group increases to ten.

FIGHTER ACES AND DOGFIGHTERS

The Fighter Ace is similar in concept to the Dogfighter advanced class, and it is entirely possible for a character to have levels in both. The special abilities and bonuses of both classes stack with, and complement, one another.

Just as a Dogfighter is an elite pilot, a Fighter Ace is an elite Dogfighter, making the most seasoned of pilots look fresh out of the naval academy. There are perhaps no more than two or three Fighter Aces in any one military, each a familiar face and celebrity within their culture.

WAR CORRESPONDENT

Although the reporters assigned to cover the galaxy's hot spots and war zones gripe about the cushy jobs back home, few would be willing to trade for a desk job. Few would admit it, but War Correspondents secretly enjoy the thrill and excitement of reporting from the middle of a battle, dodging laser beams and artillery shells to get the perfect shot.

War Correspondents face additional dangers in battle situations, for many races don't take too kindly to reporters sniffing about their lines and potentially compromising their plans. Similarly, during hostilities War Correspondents are often arrested and accused of spying for the enemy, and their data recordings seized

Despite the danger, War Correspondents are among some of the best at what they do. They are often trusted and respected by allied commanders to such an extent that they can have unprecedented levels of access, whether embedded onboard spacecraft or as part of a ground unit. War Correspondents are often invaluable in keeping the rest of the galaxy abreast of events, although some consider them to be mere propaganda tools.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a War Correspondent, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Skills: Concentration 8 ranks, Gather Information 8 ranks

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the War Correspondent advanced class:

HIT DIE

The War Correspondent gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

CLASS SKILLS

The War Correspondent's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (history, military) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).

Skill points at each level: 5 + Int modifier (4 + Int modifier for nonhumans).

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features for the War Correspondent advanced class:

TABLE 3-6: THE WAR CORRESPONDENT

CLASS LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	DEFENSE BONUS	REPUTATION BONUS
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Courage Under Fire	+1	+2
2nd	+0	+0	+2	+2	Out of Harm's Way	+1	+2
3rd	+1	+1	+3	+3	Low Profile Target	+2	+2
4th	+1	+1	+4	+4	Battle Intuition	+2	+3
5th	+1	+2	+5	+5	Avoid Trouble	+3	+3

Courage under Fire

The War Correspondent is trained to keep a straight face and a cool head, even as the most frantic of firefights erupt all around them. When in the middle of a battle, the War Correspondent adds his class level as a morale bonus to any Concentration checks or Will saves made to resist morale effects.

Out of Harm's Way

There is no better television than a War Correspondent reporting while a battle rages cinematically in the background. The War Correspondent is well versed at putting themselves in harm's way and yet surviving unscathed. Even when in the open, the correspondent counts as if they were in cover. The correspondent gains no additional benefit while in cover.

Low Profile Target

The War Correspondent might make high profile news, but when in the line of fire they know how to maintain a low profile. So long as an attacker has other potential targets available, he must succeed at a Will save (DC 10 + correspondent class levels) to target the correspondent. If the attacker has no such targets, he may target the correspondent freely.

Potential targets are targets that are as easy to hit and that the attacker can damage with his weapon – for example a sniper faced with a choice between shooting the War Correspondent or a tank could freely target the correspondent, as his rifle could not damage the tank. If the correspondent was standing next to an infantryman, then the sniper would be forced to pass a Will save to target the correspondent instead of the infantryman.

Battle Intuition

The War Correspondent has a nose for danger and trouble, and is an expert at positioning himself right in the heart of the action. When the character is in the midst of a battle or reporting on a war, the Games Master may call for a Gather Information check with a variable DC depending on the situation. Success indicates that the War Correspondent has a hunch that a story is about to occur or that he is in imminent danger. If the skill check is passed by 5 or more, the correspondent receives a rough sense of what is going to happen – he gains a hunch that the planet he is on is about to be bombed, or that the troop transporter he is reporting from is a target for enemy raiders.

Avoid Trouble

Although the War Correspondent has a knack for getting into trouble spots, they are also adept at getting out again – mostly in one piece. This ability functions alongside Battle Intuition. Any time that the character's Intuition warns them of immediate danger that can be realistically avoided – a nearby bomb blast or sniper fire perhaps – the Games Master may make a Reflex save (DC 20) for them in secret. If successful, the danger is avoided or lessened in some way – they duck out of the sniper's scope at the last minute or are shielded from the worst of the explosion.

MECHANIZED TROOPER

Tasked with rapidly deploying across a battlefield or hurrying to secure key positions, the mechanized trooper is well versed with fighting from the back of a speeding transport or quickly disembarking into the midst of a fire fight.

Mechanized troopers are the masters of the lightning strike and the dawn raid, swiftly attacking in a column of tanks and troop transporters.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Mechanized Trooper, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5
Feats: Surface Vehicle Operation (any appropriate)
Skills: Drive 5 ranks

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Mechanized Trooper advanced class:

HIT DIE

The Mechanized Trooper gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

CLASS SKILLS

The Mechanized Trooper's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Drive (Dex), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str) and Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill points at each level: 5 + Int modifier (4 for non-humans)

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features for the Mechanized Trooper advanced class:

Rapid Deployment

Upon reaching the deployment zone, Mechanized Troopers are trained to be on the ground and ready to fight within six seconds. A Mechanized Trooper may exit or embark a vehicle as a free action, allowing them to take a full round action or a further move action.

Mobile Warrior

Mechanized Troopers spend a lot of time being ferried about onboard vehicles and gain a natural affinity for carrying out tasks while mobile, even firing a weapon. The penalty for checks made from a moving vehicle are reduced as though the vehicle was traveling one speed category slower.

Defensive Deployment

The most dangerous time for any infantryman is in the seconds immediately following their exiting the troop transport. Mechanized Troopers are trained to minimize this danger, swiftly moving from the armored interior and into cover. For one round after exiting a vehicle, the Mechanized Trooper counts as being in one-quarter cover. If the Mechanized Trooper is in cover already, the cover counts as being one stage better.

Improved Mobile Warrior

By 3rd level, the Mechanized Trooper is as unfazed at attacking from the back of a moving vehicle as he is from a stationary position. The Mechanized Trooper suffers no speed penalties for firing from a moving vehicle.

Lightning Strike

Mechanized Troopers excel at swiftly exiting their vehicle directly into the middle of a fire fight. For one round after a Mechanized Trooper deploys from a vehicle, he gains a bonus equal to his class level to both attack and damage rolls.

Need for Speed

There comes a time when the Mechanized Trooper is better at firing from a fast moving vehicle than he is when standing still. The speed penalty becomes a speed bonus to attack rolls made by the Mechanized Trooper.

TABLE 3-7: THE MECHANIZED TROOPER

CLASS LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	DEFENSE BONUS	REPUTATION BONUS
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Mobile Warrior, Rapid Deployment	+1	+0
2nd	+2	+2	+0	+0	Defensive Deployment	+1	+0
3rd	+3	+2	+1	+1	Improved Mobile Warrior	+2	+0
4th	+4	+3	+1	+1	Lightning Strike	+2	+0
5th	+5	+3	+2	+2	Need for Speed	+3	+1

GUERRILLA FIGHTER

War can turn a once peaceful land of farmers into a resourceful, ruthless, and bloodthirsty people. Many a cocky marauding army has been destroyed in a bloody guerrilla campaign.

To the invaders, guerrilla fighters are ghosts, the vengeful spirits of the earth risen up to destroy the occupiers; but to the defenders, they are folk heroes. Guerilla fighters appear from the crowds, in prison camps or the alleyways of the cities, ambushing patrols, murdering prominent officers and sabotaging military equipment before melting away again. Guerrillas are often but one faction among the defending forces, but high profile and bloodthirsty attacks – nee massacres – often brings infamy and legend.

REQUIREMENTS
To qualify to become a Guerrilla Fighter, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +5
Feats: Oathbound, Track
Skills: Move Silently 4 ranks, Survival 8 ranks

CLASS INFORMATION
The following information pertains to the Guerrilla Fighter advanced class:

HIT DIE
The Guerrilla Fighter gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

CLASS SKILLS
The Guerrilla Fighter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (local, history, military, star systems), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Repair (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex).

Skill points at each level: 5 + Int modifier (4 for non-humans)

CLASS FEATURES
All of the following are class features for the Guerrilla Fighter advanced class:

Guerrilla Warfare
At 1st level, the Guerrilla Fighter dedicates himself to the cause, fixing in his mind who he is fighting and what he is fighting for. The Guerrilla Fighter should specify his home soil – where it is he is defending, be it a whole planet, a spaceship or a simple nation. He must also specify the enemy that he is pledged to drive from his home soil. The specifics of these are left to the GM's discretion, but they should be reasonably specific and not at all generic. "To free the planet of Qabal from the tyranny of the Dark Moon Alliance" would be acceptable, for example, whereas "to free the galaxy from generic evil" would not be.

Local Knowledge
Fighting to defend their home soil, Guerrilla Fighters are intimately familiar with every aspect of their homeland. When on home soil, the Guerrilla Fighter gains a bonus to all relevant Knowledge and Survival checks equal to their class level.

Hated Enemy
Guerrilla Fighters are sworn to cleanse their homeland from the taint of their foes, and excel at fighting their despised foes. The Guerrilla Fighter gains a +1 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls, Bluff, Disguise, Hide, Intimidate and Sense Motive checks made when fighting their chosen enemy. This bonus increases to +2 at 5th level and to +3 at 8th level.

Network of Contacts
As the Guerrilla Fighter advances in his career, he develops a network of contacts

TABLE 3-8: THE GUERRILLA FIGHTER

CLASS LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	DEFENSE BONUS	REPUTATION BONUS
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Guerrilla Warfare, Local Knowledge	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+2	Hated Enemy +1	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+2	Network of Contacts	+2	+1
4th	+3	+1	+1	+3	Alien Weapon Familiarity	+2	+1
5th	+3	+2	+2	+3	Hated Enemy +2	+3	+1
6th	+4	+2	+2	+4	Melt Away	+3	+2
7th	+5	+2	+2	+4	Feared by the Enemy	+4	+2
8th	+6	+3	+3	+5	Hated Enemy +3	+4	+2
9th	+6	+3	+3	+5	Improvised Enemy	+5	+3
10th	+7	+3	+3	+6	Beloved of the People	+5	+3

both within his organization and among the general populace. In order to tap into the Network of Contacts, there must be members of their culture present and the Guerrilla Fighter must first make a Reputation check. The check may be further modified at the Games Master's discretion, applying up to a +5 bonus or penalty if there is an especially large or small number of potential friends.

If successful the Guerrilla Fighter may request one of the following from his contacts:

• Pass a message to another member of the resistance.
• Obtain a single piece of information or a secret.
• Obtain an item of equipment or weaponry.
• Gain limited or temporary use of a vehicle.
• Gain access to a shelter or hiding place.

The request takes a variable amount of time depending on the request, but typically takes 24 hours. For every 5 points by which the check exceeds 15 the time taken is halved, to a minimum of 1 minute. The time taken remains at the discretion of the Games Master – some requests simply cannot be completed quickly.

If the check is failed, then either the Guerrilla Fighter fails to find one of his contacts, or the contact is not in a position to help at this time. If the check is failed by 10 or more, some mishap has befallen the Network or the Guerrilla Fighter – the supposed contact might turn out to be a double agent or an assassin sent to kill the Guerrilla Fighter; the

Network may have been exposed by enemy soldiers and many contacts killed; or the contacts might have carried out the request incorrectly, delivering the message to the wrong person or passing on false information to the Guerrilla Fighter.

The Guerrilla Fighter may attempt to use their Network of Contacts freely once every 24 hours. If the Guerrilla Fighter attempts to use the Network more frequently, the DC of the check is increased by 5 each time, increasing the risk that a mishap will occur and slowing the time taken for any requests to be completed.

Alien Weapon Familiarity
Often forced to steal the weapons from the grasp of their fallen enemies, guerrillas are intimately familiar with the workings of enemy weapons and equipment. At 4th level, the Guerrilla Fighter gains the Alien Weapons Proficiency feat.

Melt Away
The operatives of the resistance excel in striking from the midst of a group of civilians before melting away again into a crowd. When in a crowd of at least ten, the Guerrilla Fighter gains a +5 circumstance bonus to Hide and Disguise checks. This bonus increases by +1 for every five additional members of the crowd. This bonus is halved if less than half of the crowd is made up of friendly forces.

Feared by the Enemy
The mere mention of the Guerrilla Fighter and his exploits is enough to send a wave of

fear through the occupying forces. The resistance knows how to use this fear to their advantage, spreading rumors – some true, others less so – of their deeds to demoralize their enemy. To properly do this takes time to prepare: 1 hour per intended target. The Guerrilla Fighter may select a number of enemy targets equal to his class level, and he must at know the intended targets by sight – the Guerrilla Fighter could select the enemies from a regular patrol, sentry position or barracks as a target.

After the preparations have been made the targets must succeed at a Will save (DC 10 + character level) or incur a penalty to all attack, damage and skill checks equal to the Guerrilla Fighter's advanced class level for the next 24 hours.

Improvised Device

Guerrilla Fighters are often forced to scavenge for mechanical parts to maintain their weapons and devices, and as a result are skilled at converting one piece of equipment into another. The Guerrilla Fighter decides what item he wishes to manufacture, and the Games Master determines the amount of time and the equipment necessary to make it. The Guerrilla Fighter then makes a Repair check at a DC dependant on the complexity of the task and the materials to hand (typically DC25+). If successful the device works as normal, for a short time at least. The Guerrilla Fighter can make any simple devices, such as a radio, as well as somewhat more complex devices such as handheld weaponry and explosives.

Beloved of the People

At 10th level, the Guerrilla Fighter has become a great hero of the resistance, beloved by his people everywhere. His Network of Contacts becomes far more proactive and helpful, even to the point of taking up arms and assisting the Guerrilla Fighter in battle. Each time the Guerrilla Fighter requests help – and sometimes if he does not, should one of his contacts notice that he is in trouble – he can gain the assistance of 2d12 armed men and women from the local population, assuming there are sufficient allies that can help. This ability functions as a request from the Network of Contacts, and the time taken for the network to muster is determined by the success of the check – if in dire straits at least 1d6 allies can be mustered immediately. The Games Master should determine the levels and classes of the allies.

CHAPTER FOUR: WAR BETWEEN THE STARS

FIGHTING IN A SPACE BATTLE

Being part of a space combat is a terrifying experience for even the most battle hardened pilot or officer. A direct hit from any one of the arcing laser beams or volleys of energy traded during the battle can spell the end of a spaceship – and its entire crew. Most of the time there is little that much of the crew can do to directly influence the course of the battle and many confess to feelings of helplessness. Despite this, during a battle every crewman must give his all, for even the mightiest of spaceships can be defeated if it has a lackluster crew.

If combat in space is frightening for the crew of a ship, most of whom at least understand what is happening, imagine the confusion and panic for the passengers onboard – be they civilian travelers, diplomats or soldiers en route for a new posting. Few spaceships are equipped with portholes or readily accessible external viewers for non-crew members. During a battle, few of the passengers will be able to grasp what is going on outside, except for the screeching of alarms and the rumbling of impact against the hull.

Despite this, space battles are far from personal affairs. They are conducted between faceless enemies concealed within thousands of tons of metal. who trade laser beams and plasma bursts across the cold void of space. Sometimes even the battle itself is rendered down into shifting icons moving across a computer screen or sensor panel. In all likelihood the involved forces will never glimpse the face of their opponent, unless one side surrenders.

CREW POSITIONS

A spaceship is an extremely large and complex system and it is important that each and every man and woman aboard know their position and role, so that during a battle the ship can operate at maximum efficiency.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

HANDLING SPACE BATTLES

A space battle contains many opportunities for excitement and action, if handled carefully. Because of the nature of the conflict, it is easy for a character to wind up with little to do during a space battle. This is a situation that should be avoided at all cost – even if a character is not directly involved in the combat you should find a way to involve them some other way.

The character need not be firing guns or flying a fighter to be involved in a battle – they may be tending to the wounded, attempting to rescue trapped crewmen from a damaged section of the ship or racing against time to extract information from a dying prisoner.

By giving each character a distinct role to play onboard a starship, this ensures that each character will have a specific set of duties to perform over the course of a battle – and hopefully have the chance to contribute at regular intervals.

There is nothing to make a session more boring than a fight where only a small section of the players get to contribute whilst the others sit and watch helplessly onboard the starship.

The most common shipboard positions are detailed below – pay careful attention to them and identify which role you are best suited for. Any questions should be addressed to your superior officer before the battle begins.

COMMAND

At the head of a spaceship is the command crew, responsible for the leadership of the crew and the direction of their vessel.

While in a combat situation the command crew coordinates the activities of their crew, ordering the various sections into action as needed. All decisions in battle ultimately fall to the command crew and they are expected to step in and take over a position as necessary.

Suitable actions include aid another (or tactical expertise if a Field Officer) or assist more heavily pressed stations. The default action for the command crew should be aid another.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

The key skill for a command officer is Diplomacy. Most command officers have ranks in the Charismatic Hero or Dedicated Hero class, and many also have ranks in the Field Officer advanced class.

HELM

The helmsman is the pilot of the vessel, controlling the spaceship from his console. The helmsman may also be responsible for navigating the vessel, plotting a course, avoiding hazards and performing necessary calculations for faster than light travel. There may be a separate navigator, or one of the command or communication staff may take on this role.

During a battle the helmsman's job is particularly crucial, for he must align his ship so that his gunners have the best possible shot at their target, as well as evading enemy vessels and incoming fire.

Suitable actions include move at tactical speed, surge forward or grapple another ship. When the tables turn against the vessel the helmsman would do well to consider withdrawing or switching to total defense. The default action for the helmsman should be move at tactical speed and align the ship to attack.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

A helmsman requires both the Pilot skill and an appropriate Starship Operation feat. Most helmsmen have ranks in the Fast Hero class, although some may be Smart Heroes. Occasionally helmsmen take ranks in the Dogfighter advance class, although this is more suited to the pilots of small fighter craft.

ENGINEERING

The engineering division of the ship is responsible for the constant maintenance and repair of the entire spaceship – a huge task indeed. Engineering officers are expected to fulfill a wide range of duties and to possess a broad selection of skills.

In battle, a ship's engineers do not have the luxury of time to carry out their repairs – when their ship takes damage the survival of the ship requires it be fixed immediately. Life in a ship's damage crew is one of the most dangerous jobs onboard a vessel, for they are expected to work in the most hazardous areas of the ship, even still while it is under fire.

Suitable actions include damage control, repair broken systems and aid another. The default action for the engineer should be damage control.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

The key skill for an engineering officer is Repair. Most engineering officers have ranks in the Smart Hero class, as well as the Battlefield Technician (see p31), Engineer or Techie advanced classes.

COMMUNICATIONS

Perhaps the most crucial role onboard the ship, the communications officer not only conveys messages and orders around his own ship, but also between other ships of the fleet. The coordination of crew – and fleet – activities falls to the communications section.

In the midst of battle the communications officer's role is doubly important because the coordination of activities becomes even more vital. The communications officer is also responsible for the monitoring – and jamming – of communication among the enemy fleet, with the aim of gaining valuable intelligence and sowing seeds of chaos and confusion.

On some ships the communications officer may be responsible for taking on the role of the tactical officer.

Suitable actions include send or jam a transmission, communicate via comm. systems, operate sensors and aid another. The default action for a communications officer should be jam a transmission and monitor enemy communications.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

The key skill for a communications officer is Computer Use, although Diplomacy may be useful for dealing with other vessels. Most communications officers have ranks in the Charismatic Hero class, and many have ranks in the Field Officer or Negotiator advanced classes too.

TACTICAL

The tactical officer onboard the ship is responsible for monitoring the sensors and keeping aware of the positioning and activities of other ships and objects within range.

In battle the tactical officer must keep track of enemy vessels on his sensors and acquire target locks for the gunnery section to use when aiming their weapons. The tactical officer also works closely with the command section to outthink the enemy commanders.

On some spaceships the duties of the tactical officer may be spread between the command crew and the communications section.

Suitable actions include operate sensors, attack, and aid another. The default action for a tactical officer should be operate sensors and aid another.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

The key skills for a tactical officer are Computer Use, for using sensor equipment effectively, and Knowledge (tactics), for knowledge of battle tactics and strategy. Most tactical officers have ranks in the Smart Hero class, although some might have ranks in the Dedicated Hero class, and many have ranks in the Field Officer advanced class.
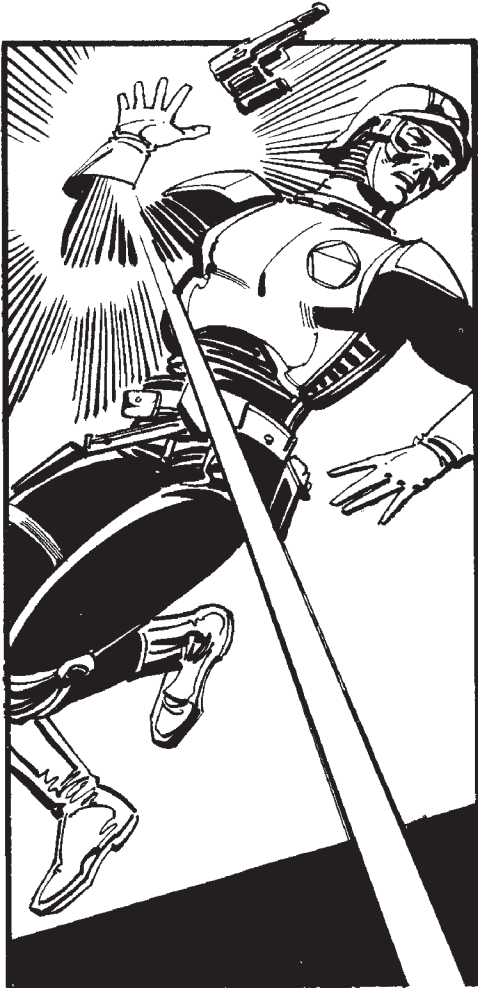
GUNNERY

The role of the gunnery section is a straightforward, yet vital, one. The gunners are in charge of the operation and firing of the ship's array of weaponry. The gunners must identify and destroy targets, as well as keeping in regular communication with the rest of the ship. Depending on the ship and the weapon, gunners may be required to reload or maintain their weapons.

In a battle the gunnery section is constantly kept busy with the relentless firing of the ship's weaponry. When a ship is not in combat the gunnery section may double up as members of other sections, such as engineering, or they may be expected to carry out maintenance on the ship's weapons.

Suitable actions include attack enemy vessels, make attacks of opportunity with point defense systems and operate sensors. The default action for a gunner should be attack enemy vessels.

PILOT

Many larger spaceships carry compliments of fighters launched to provide escort or to act as screens during a battle. The pilots of these fighters may be regular members of the crew in non-combat situations. In a battle, however, every pilot races to his fighter and is scrambled out into space.

Fighters may act independently of their mothership during the course of a battle, ranging around the battlefield hunting targets of opportunity. On the other hand they might be expected to fight in close coordination with the mothership, providing protection from other fighters or assisting the vessel against larger targets.

Suitable actions include attack an enemy ship, move at tactical speed or aid another ship. The default action for a pilot should be attack an enemy ship.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

The key skill for a pilot is Pilot. Most pilots have ranks in the Fast Hero class, and many have ranks in the Dogfighter or Fighter Ace advanced classes too.

STARSHIP ACTIONS

In battle it's not all about who has the biggest guns or the fastest starship. The victor is often the commander who out-thinks and out-maneuvers his opponent. In case you can't think for yourself, the brightest boffins at StratCom have devised the following maneuvers to help give the foe a good seeing to.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

NEW STARSHIP ACTIONS

BLINDSIDE

As a move action the pilot maneuvers his ship into a position so that his target cannot see or shoot him. The vehicles must be within one square of one another, and the blindsiding vehicle must be the same size or smaller. The character makes a Pilot check, opposed by Pilot check by the pilot of the opposing vessel. If the character is successful, they may choose one of the enemy ship's weapons – until the character's next action his ship cannot be targeted by that weapon.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

There is no single key skill for a gunner, for they instead rely on their Base Attack Bonus. The Repair skill may be useful for repairing and maintaining weaponry. Most gunners have ranks in the Fast Hero class, and some may have ranks in the Soldier or Techie advanced classes.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

BOARDING

With great finesse and daring, the pilot positions his ship close enough to an enemy vessel to begin boarding with docking clamps and boarding claws. To successfully board the target the starship must first enter the target's square; then the starship's pilot must succeed at a Pilot check (the DC depends on the size and Defense of the target being grabbed). If the check succeeds, the starship successfully deploys its boarding procedures, boring through the hull or bursting open airlocks. The two ships continue to occupy the same space until the boarding systems release their hold. The grappling ship cannot move as long as it wishes to remain latched and moves in concert with the grappled ship. Neither ship can attack the other so long as the two ships are grappled.

As an attack action the grappled starship can free itself from a grabbing ship by succeeding at an opposed Pilot check. Each ship adds a special grapple bonus on its check based on its size: Huge +8, Gargantuan +12, Colossal +16. A ship may only attempt to free itself once per round.

A starship using a boarding system to latch onto another ship can release them as a free action, although boarding troops may take longer to withdraw to their ship.

TABLE 4-1: BOARDING PILOT CHECK DCS

SIZE OF TARGET	PILOT CHECK DC
Colossal	5 + target's Defense
Gargantuan	10 + target's Defense
Huge	15 + target's Defense
Large	20 + target's Defense
Medium-size	25 + target's Defense
Small	30 + target's Defense

COORDINATE FLEET

Two or more characters onboard separate vessels may attempt to coordinate the activities of their ships as a full round action, maneuvering together or training their fire upon the same target. A single DC 20 Diplomacy check is made, although each additional crewman may aid the other. If successful, each ship involved gains a +2 circumstance bonus to attack and damage rolls on its next turn.

ELECTRONIC COUNTERMEASURES

As a standard action, a character may use an array of electronic countermeasures to enhance the stealth of his vessel, baffling enemy sensors and masking their own signature. The character makes a Computer Use check. For every 5 points by which the check exceeds 10, anyone attempting to detect the vessel incurs a -1 penalty to do so. This penalty lasts for one round.

INTERCEPT COMMUNICATION

As a standard action, characters with access to communications equipment may attempt to intercept the communications of another vessel. The DC for the Computer Use check is 20 or the result of the enemy counterpart's Computer Use check, whichever is higher. If successful, the character may listen in to the enemy communication onboard the target vessel until the interception is noticed and prevented. An opposing communication officer may not realize communications are being intercepted. Communications that have been scrambled must be unscrambled with a separate check.

LAUNCH VESSEL

As a full round action, a character with access to a command console may launch one or more vessels from the hangars aboard his ship. A character may launch a single ultralight craft from a ready hangar or launch bay in a single round. No check is necessary to launch ultralight craft at this rate. If the character wishes to launch multiple ultralight craft they must make a Computer Use check – for every 5 points by which the check exceeds 10 one additional ultralight craft may be launched.

Dedicated carrier craft may have increased launching capacity, typically able to launch an entire wing at once, instead of a single craft at a time. When onboard such a vessel, the launch vessel action allows a character to launch the same number of craft again with a successful check.

STARSHIP DAMAGE

In the midst of a battle, damage inflicted to a spacecraft that may not have any noticeable impact on the functioning of the ship can pose a fatal hazard to the crew. Tiny hull breaches, while not affecting the structural integrity of the ship, can swiftly depressurize an area or make its atmosphere unbreathable. Damaged electronic systems can spark swift-burning fires that can horribly burn a crewman before the fire control systems are triggered. Even the slightest damage to a ship's propulsion system can result in the leakage of hazardous chemicals or high levels of radiation.

A critical hit to a starship only makes matters worse, often resulting in horrendous casualties amongst the crew as core systems explode and a ship begins to break apart.

Crew should pay attention to the emergency information signs posted throughout a spaceship and identify where the nearest exits. Safety is your responsibility, crewman.
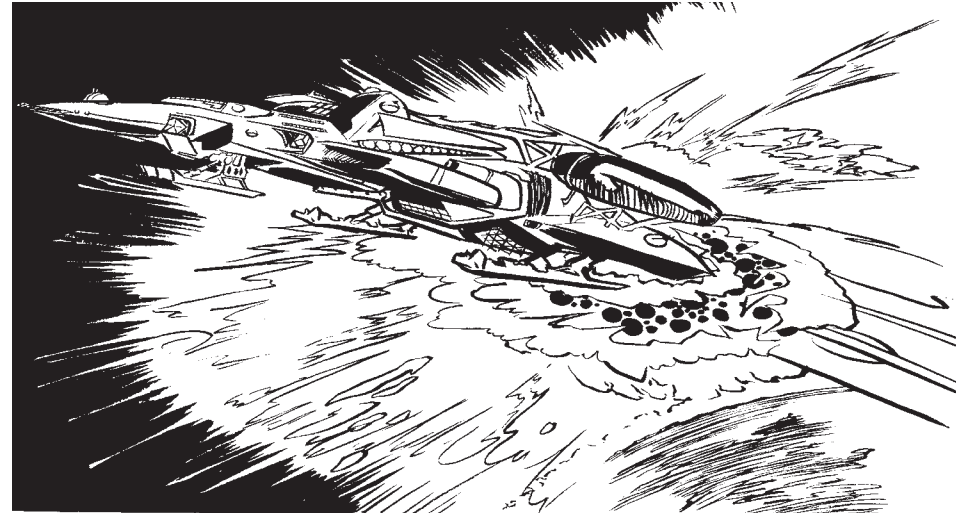
COMMANDER'S ORDERS

SECONDARY DAMAGE EFFECTS

To represent the effects of spacecraft damage in a more detailed manner appropriate for challenging characters, the following rules can be used. Note that the rules for ship damage remain the same and these rules need only be used if you wish to play out a battle from the point of view of one or more characters.

Each time a spacecraft sustains damage the Games Master should secretly roll 1d100 to determine whether any secondary damage has occurred that may affect the crew.

TABLE 4-2: CHANCE OF SECONDARY DAMAGE

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL HP REMAINING	CHANCE OF SECONDARY DAMAGE	MODIFIER TO SECONDARY DAMAGE ROLL
75-100%	5%	+0
50-75%	25%	+0
25-50%	50%	+5
0-25%	75%	+10

If the roll indicates that the ship has sustained secondary damage, the Games Master should secretly roll 1d20, applying any modifiers listed above. The area affected by the secondary damage may be determined randomly, or chosen as appropriate by the Games Master. Similarly it is left to the Games Master's discretion as to the extent of the secondary damage; it may only affect a single room or corridor, it might affect an entire deck, or it might be ship wide.

Characters may be oblivious to the secondary damage until one of the crew reports in – or perhaps fails to do so – or one of the characters stumbles upon it themselves.

The secondary damage rules are intended for light ships or bigger. Many of the effects are simply not applicable on a small vessel. With a little discretion, however, a lot of of the effects can still be used on smaller craft, although their impact will be greatly heightened in a more confined space.

Likewise the rules are intended for use with space going vehicles; atmospheric and surface vehicles generally lack the size for the

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

secondary damage effects to be applicable. If you wish to use the rules for other vehicles, discretion and common sense is advised. A hull breach, for example, is hardly a problem in a tank, but may be more of a cause for concern in a cargo aircraft.

Air Leak: A small tear in the atmospheric seals or a faulty recycling unit has led to the depletion of air in an area of the ship. Crewmen operating without breathing apparatus in this part of the ship suffer the effects of a thin atmosphere.

Atmospheric failure: The atmospheric controls, including life support systems such as the temperature regulators and oxygen recyclers, have failed, causing problems for the crew.

In areas where the atmospheric controls have failed, the temperature steadily rises or falls, depending on how close to a star the ship is. In-system the temperature steadily rises and after an hour becomes equivalent to a hot climate. In the further reaches of a solar system and beyond the temperature steadily falls and after an hour becomes equivalent to a cold climate.

In addition to temperature changes, the air in such an area steadily becomes unbreathable. Without recycling, the air in a sealed section of the ship is breathable by a single character for 6 hours. After this time, the character begins to suffocate. If there is more than one character in the area, the time the breathable air will last is divided among the number of characters.

Protective gear is required to operate safely in such areas.

Sections of the ship that are open to areas with functioning atmospheric controls do not suffer the above effects, as the temperature can dissipate elsewhere and recycled air can mix with the stale air, although it is never comfortable in such areas.

Atmospheric Fluctuations: The atmospheric controls are not working properly, causing the temperature to fluctuate and the air to become stale. Every ten minutes a d6 roll should be made: On a roll of a 1-2 the temperature in the area increases by a couple of degrees, on a roll of a 3-4 the temperature remains the same and on a roll of a 5-6 the

TABLE 4-3: SECONDARY DAMAGE

D20	EFFECT
1	Auxiliary Lighting
2	Internal Door Malfunction
3	Blocked Passageway
4	Computer Malfunction
5	Elevator Damage
6	External Door Malfunction
7	Internal Sensor Malfunction
8	Escape Pod Malfunction
9	Hull Breach, Fine
10	Air Leak
11	Atmospheric fluctuations
12	Gravity fluctuations
13	Shifting Payload
14	Choking Fumes
15	Hull Breach, Diminutive
19	Controls Damage
17	Power fluctuations
18	Gravity failure
19	Computer Failure
20	Hull Breach, Tiny
21	Coolant Leak
22	Damaged Electrics
23	Fire
24	Gravity malfunction
25	Hull Breach, Small
26	Atmospheric failure
27	Structural Collapse
28	Power failure
29	Radiation Leak
30	Hull Breach, Medium

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

SECONDARY DAMAGE EFFECTS CONTINUED

temperature remains the same and on a roll of a 5-6 the temperature decreases by a couple of degrees. Atmospheric fluctuations should rarely pose a hazard to the crew, although they certainly make life uncomfortable for those in the affected areas.

Protective gear is required to operate safely in such areas.

Auxiliary Lighting: The lighting system has failed and the auxiliary lighting activated, bathing the ship in a harsh red glow. Characters unused to operating in auxiliary lighting incur a -2 penalty to Spot and Search checks until they become accustomed to the light in an hour.

Artificial lighting or night vision goggles are required to operate normally in such areas.

Blocked Passageway: A section of corridor has been blocked by emergency bulkheads or collapsed walls and ceilings. This has no additional effect, except to trap characters in one area or to force them to find another route around.

Choking Fumes: Part of the ship has been filled with thick smoke caused by a fire or leak. Any character in the fumes cannot breathe and begins to suffocate.

Protective gear is required to operate safely in such areas.

Computer Failure: The computer system has failed, preventing access to many systems. Computer Use Skill checks attempted in this area will automatically fail unless the character has a computer independent from the primary system. Other systems may also be affected, such as weapons controls and sensor systems. Even if not affected, these systems must now be directly accessed or operated.

Computer Malfunction: The computer system has developed a glitch, causing it to misinterpret instructions or to activate and deactivate systems seemingly at random. Any Computer Use Skill checks attempted in this area incur a -4 equipment penalty. Instructions given to the computer have a 50% chance of being misinterpreted and some

other action initiated instead.

Controls Damage: A specific control system has been damaged and cannot be used. Possible systems include but are not limited to a weapon control system, a communication array or a sensor panel.

Coolant Leak: A pipe containing toxic coolant has ruptured, flooding an area with escaping coolant gas or liquid. The coolant inflicts 1d6 points of cold damage per round, ignoring armor, and is also toxic as follows.

TABLE 4-4: COOLANT LEAK

POISON	TYPE	SAVE DC	INITIAL DAMAGE	SECONDARY DAMAGE
Coolant	Inhaled	15	1d3 Con	1d3 Con

Protective gear is required to operate safely in such areas.

Damaged Electrics: Electrical wiring has been sundered, causing sparks and making nearby metal objects live. Anyone unprotected in the area takes 3d6 points of electrical damage per round, ignoring armor.

Some form of insulation, such as a space suit, is required to operate in such an area.

Elevator Damage: One or more of the elevators has been damaged, halting between floors and trapping crew within. Crew stuck in an elevator must climb out of the emergency hatch and onto the roof, and then climb up or down the shaft to the closest floor. There may be added danger caused by fire or smoke in the elevator shaft, or other active elevators.

Escape Pod Malfunction: The system that controls the escape pods has been damaged, either triggering the launch of some of the escape pods or fusing the system and preventing their launch. Roll 1d6: 1-3 indicates that some of the ship's escape pods have been jettisoned.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

4-6 indicates that the system has been damaged, preventing the pods from being launched when needed. Roll a percentile dice to determine the proportion of escape pods affected. This may not cause the crew an problem until the damage to the ship reaches a critical level and they find themselves unable to escape.

External Door Malfunction: Several of the ship's external hatches – be they maintenance hatches, hangar doors or airlocks–have malfunctioned, locking either open or closed. Roll randomly to determine which doors are affected and whether they are open or closed. Open hatches can cause problems such as decompression and air loss, while closed hatches prevent the launching or docking of fighters and shuttles.

Fire: Damage to the ship has started a fire somewhere onboard that threatens to spread unless put out. The fire is only one square in size at first, but doubles in size every round until extinguished. Anyone in the area is at risk of smoke inhalation, not to mention catching on fire. The automatic fire extinguishers aboard a ship trigger within 2d10 rounds, putting out a fire that is huge or smaller. Of course, onboard a heavily damaged ship, the fire extinguishers may also have been damaged.

Gravity Fluctuation: The artificial gravity system has been damaged and is behaving erratically. Every ten minutes a d6 roll should be made to check the current gravity in this area. A roll of a 1-2 indicates that the area currently has low gravity; a roll of a 3-4 indicates that the gravity is currently normal; and a 5-6 indicates that the area currently has high gravity. This result should be re-rolled if the ship does not have artificial gravity.

Gravity Malfunction: The artificial gravity system has been badly damaged and has gone haywire. The change between the gravity in this area and an adjacent, functioning area should be sudden and very disconcerting. Roll 1d8 to determine the effect of the artificial gravity system: A roll of a 1-3 low gravity; 4 normal gravity, but in a different direction to usual; 5-7 high gravity; and a roll of an 8 indicates that there is zero gravity in this area. This result should be re-rolled if the ship does not have artificial gravity.

Gravity Failure: The artificial gravity system has failed, plunging an area into zero gravity.

Hull Breach, various sizes: A tear in the side of the hull threatens to decompress an area of the spacecraft. The hull breach is diminutive in size. With a hull breach there is the added possibility that it can expand in size over the course of the battle, ruptured by the forces acting on the hull from inside the ship. Each time a roll is made on this table 1d6 should be rolled – a roll of a 1 or 2 indicates that the breach has increased in size, so long as there is still air left to be sucked through the hole. If there is nothing left to be sucked through the breach then it will not expand in size any further.

Protective gear is required to safely operate in an area of vacuum, although this offers no protection against being sucked into space.

Internal Door Malfunction: The electrical systems that control the interior doors have been damaged, causing several doors to malfunction. Some doors may be locked open, others closed, while still others open and close of their own accord. Doors shipwide might be affected, or the malfunction could be restricted to one or two doors. This may not pose a significant problem for the crew, although it could lead to characters becoming trapped in parts of the vessel or finding themselves unable to access a key area of the ship except via an unpractical route (such as via the air ducts). However, some doors might react violently in the case of a malfunction, crushing unfortunate passers by and causing 2d6 points of crushing damage if a Reflex save (DC 10) is failed.

Internal Sensor Malfunction: The system that normally monitors the interior of the spacecraft for all manner of things – such as intruders, damage and fires – is malfunctioning. The internal sensors may simply not be working, meaning that damage goes unnoticed and fires spread freely. Alternatively they may be throwing up anomalous and false readings, triggering fire extinguishers or intruder alerts, or dispatching damage repair crews where there is no damage.

Power Failure: Part – or all – of the spacecraft's power system has failed, causing countless subsystems to fail as well. Many ships have auxiliary power systems that kick in to keep essential systems

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

SECONDARY DAMAGE EFFECTS CONTINUED

operational, but these do not come close to powering every affected system. Unfortunately, one crewman's opinion of an essential system differs from that of another – try telling a character stuck in an elevator that the elevators are not essential in a battle.

There is also the possibility that the auxiliary system might become damaged during a battle or might fail when suddenly forced into action. Power failure can replicate many of the other additional damage conditions, such as atmospheric failure, computer failure and gravity fluctuations.

Power Fluctuations: A damaged power source that keeps intermittently failing can cause more problems than a generator that stays damaged and out of action. Some systems do not respond well to repeatedly switching off and on, and a cascade of further malfunctions may follow. Power fluctuations occur every 1d10 minutes, switching on or off as appropriate. To avoid the hassle, many engineers simply override the primary power and activate the auxiliary power source instead, although this is a less than ideal solution.

Radiation Leak: Damage to the ship's reactor or power source can lead to a radiation leak, posing a great risk to all unprotected personnel nearby. The radiation source is highly radioactive in strength.

Protective gear is required to operate safely in such areas.

Shifting Payload: Damage to a cargo or loading bay can cause some of the ship's payload to violently shift about. The payload could comprise cargo pods, maintenance bots, shuttlecraft, fighters, missiles or mines. The damage might simply have caused the payload to shift within the bay, or it may have caused actual damage or destruction. With crates full of soil samples, this may not be a cause for concern. But when the payload in question is a bay full of nuclear mines, there may be more of a panic. A greater hazard arises when there are crewmen within the cargo bay, for they run the risk of being crushed to death by large objects sliding quickly about.

Structural Collapse: A section of interior collapses, potentially crushing unfortunate crewmembers in the area or blocking access to a particular part of the ship. Characters in the area of the collapse take 4d6 points of crushing damage, halved with a successful Reflex save (DC 15). In addition to the damage, collapses can cause problems such as blocking access or creating gaping holes between decks.

REPAIRING SECONDARY DAMAGE

In a battle, secondary damage is often the least of an engineer's problems–hence the name. Indeed, in a particularly intense war a harassed spacecraft can–and often does–continue onward with many of its subsystems inoperative or damaged.

Whenever a repair is carried out on the starship, a single secondary damage effect may be also repaired at no extra cost or time. Of course, an engineer sometimes has the time to repair secondary damage but not primary damage. Repaired on its own, secondary damage requires a Repair check (DC 15) and takes 5 hours. An engineer can attempt to jury-rig a secondary system as with any other damaged system.

DELIBERATELY CAUSING SECONDARY DAMAGE

There are times when it is desirable to inflict secondary damage to a spacecraft, disabling various key systems. It is next to impossible for another spacecraft to deliberately inflict specific secondary damage to a ship.

It is far more feasible, if not much easier, for a saboteur onboard a spacecraft to disable or damage a system and cause secondary damage. A Knowledge (technology) check (DC 20) is required to dentify the required system and the best way to sabotage it, although further checks may be required to actually disable the system and inflict the secondary damage.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

CRITICAL HITS AND CREWMEMBERS

Compared to secondary damage, critical hits are an altogether more dangerous prospect to the crew of a spacecraft. When a ship sustains a critical hit the effects are almost certainly felt throughout the ship. Each time a critical hit is incurred a roll should also be made on the secondary damage table or a suitably appropriate effect related to the area of the critical hit chosen.

Normal/severe critical hit: Critical hits to the superstructure of a ship lead to the interior of the vessel itself becoming a danger to the crew – collapsed bulkheads, floors and ceilings, and twisted pieces of metal litter the interior. Characters onboard a ship that sustains critical damage to its superstructure must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or take 3d6 points of crushing damage.

Movement within a vessel that has sustained such damage becomes increasingly more difficult. Characters attempting to run or charge within such a ship must make a Reflex save (DC 10) or trip and fall.

Damage to the superstructure is also likely to result in huge rents on the exterior of the ship. Such hull breaches may be of any size, but are typically huge and larger.

Secondary damage that is likely to accompany critical superstructure damage includes door malfunctions, elevator damage, hull breaches, structural collapse and damaged electrics.

Crew Casualties: Even the smallest amount of damage to a starship can prove catastrophic for its crew. In addition to the challenges of operating short-handed, crew casualties can have a horrendous impact on crew morale.

A Courage under Fire check is appropriate for crew members who have comrades slain by a critical hit.

Damaged Comm System: Physically separated from their crewmates by metal bulkheads and superstructure, or from the rest of the fleet by thousands of miles of cold vacuum, a starship's comm system plays a vital role in keeping a fleet functioning as a coherent fighting force.

Damage to a comm system can not only prevent a fleet from operating properly during a battle, but can also prevent a crew from receiving orders and information, both from within the ship and from without.

A Courage under Fire check may be appropriate for those crew cut off from the rest of the ship, or in some cases for the entire crew if communication with the fleet is impossible.

Secondary damage that is likely to accompany critical comm system damage includes auxiliary lighting, computer failure, computer malfunction, controls damage, damaged electrics, internal sensor malfunction, power failure and power fluctuations.

Damaged/Destroyed Defense System: Nothing can leave a starship quite as vulnerable as a hit that knocks out its primary defense systems, leaving the vessel exposed to the horribly powerful weaponry being blasted about by the enemy fleet.

Damage to shields can result in hostile ordnance punching its way into the ship itself. If damage control systems are knocked out, the ship's engineering teams may find their work much more dangerous, perhaps resulting in them having to undertake a spacewalk to repair critical external damage normally repaired by the automated system. As well, damage to radiation shields can leave a crew exposed to high levels of radiation.

Secondary damage that is likely to accompany critical defense systems damage includes air leaks, blocked passageways, escape pod malfunctions, external door malfunctions, fires, hull breaches (any size), radiation leaks, shifting payloads and structural collapses.

Damaged Engines: Damage to a spacecraft's engine or power plant can easily result in catastrophic chain reactions that cause massive damage throughout the ship. In the worst case scenario, such damage can blow a spaceship apart. Perhaps the greatest hazard caused by damage to a power plant is the risk of the leakage of radioactive or toxic substances.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

CRITICAL HITS AND CREWMEMBERS CONTINUED

Damage to the power plant often results in massive radiation leaks throughout a ship, swiftly causing unfortunate crewmen closest to the leak to weaken and die. The entire section containing the power plant is likely to be affected, causing radiation sickness in all who remain in the area.

Critical damage to a ship's engine is likely to result in further fires or explosions. For every level of critical damage, there is a 20% cumulative chance of a fire breaking out or an explosion occurring somewhere in the engine section. Fires may spread normally if not extinguished. Explosions deal 3d6 points of damage with a 15ft radius area of effect. A reflex save (DC 15) may be rolled for half damage.

Secondary damage that is likely to accompany critical engine damage includes coolant leaks, radiation leaks, fires, widespread power failures and other related effects.

Damaged Sensors: Damage inflicted to sensor systems is likely to go unnoticed by the majority of the crew, except those among the command staff, tactical officers and communications officers. Critical damage to sensors affects both internal and external sensors, making it difficult to detect hazards and threats to the ship from any angle. Sensory systems affected include the collision detection systems, fire detectors and intruder alert systems, leaving the crew effectively blinded to any possible threats.

Damage to the sensors can lead to additional, indirect effects. Fires that have been started elsewhere on the ship may spread uncontrollably as the detection system fails to trigger the extinguishers, and the flow of damage reports may cease as the monitoring system stops processing data. The crew of a ship may be unaware of critical damage inflicted elsewhere or the true extent of a problem.

Secondary damage that is likely to accompany critical sensor damage includes electrical damage, fires and internal sensor malfunctions.

Damaged Targeting System: Damage inflicted to the ship's targeting system can leave its gunnery section wrestling with their own weapons, struggling to find targets and gain locks. Gunners may also be deprived of data stream updates on damage caused to a target, causing them to attack targets that no longer exist or that have become a low priority.

Secondary damage that is likely to accompany critical targeting system damage includes electrical damage, fires and internal sensor malfunctions.

Damaged/Destroyed Weapons: For the most part damage to weapons systems is unlikely to affect the majority of the crew directly. However, indirect danger is increased as the ship will be less able to defend itself. Gunners and loaders may be directly injured by damage to their weapon, injured by exploding control systems or sucked out through rents torn in the side of the vessel. More widespread damage can be caused by exploding or leaking ammunition or power supplies, as well as misfiring weaponry – a damaged particle beam, if not properly aligned, can readily tear a hole through most of the weapon's own ship, for example.

Critical damage to a weapon automatically deals 3d6 points of fire damage to all gunners and loaders near the weapon at the time. Gunners controlling the weapon remotely suffer no damage. A reflex save (DC 10) may be made for half damage.

There is a 25% chance that associated ammunition or power sources will also be damaged. Damaged explosives, such as missiles, explode causing damage as though they had struck a target. Damaged power sources leak radiation or toxic chemicals, causing radiation sickness or coolant poisoning (see above) in a 30ft radius.

A critically damaged weapon that attempts to fire and misses has a 10% chance per damage level of misfiring, inflicting damage on the ship itself – possibly the interior – instead of the target vessel. The focusing crystals for a laser beam may be fractured, causing the beam to slice in unintended directions; the missile firing system may have been fused, causing it to detonate inside the ship; or the magnetic containment field for a plasma weapon may have become weakened, causing plasma to vent into the spacecraft instead.

Secondary damage that is likely to accompany critical weapon damage includes coolant leaks, electrical damage, fires and radiation leaks.

CHAPTER FIVE: BATTLE ON THE PLANETS

FIGHTING IN A SURFACE BATTLE

To soldiers used to the subtleties and finesse of a dogfight or a battle between spaceships, the raw aggression and blunt impact between opposing armies engaging in a ground battle comes as something of a surprise. Where a space battle can be a clinical affair with ships trading fire with a faceless and distant enemy and much of the action viewed as computerized representations, a ground battle is a far more personal experience. During a ground battle most of the fighting will be conducted in close quarters, in all likelihood against an all-too-real and visible foe.

Ground battles continue to be fought much as they always have been – armies essentially consist of rifle-bearing skirmishers, light support vehicles and heavily armored tanks. Further support is often provided by long range artillery, atmospheric fighters and gunships. Variations occur in different time periods – advanced societies may utilize armies of robot drones or cloned soldiers, for example, or mecha in place of tanks – but the basics remain the same.

To a soldier – dogface, grunt, jarhead or whatever derogatory term is applied to them – the battlefield is fraught with danger. A foot soldier is highly exposed and vulnerable – he has only his body armor to protect him from enemy fire and only his rifle with which to fire back. Conversely, however, a soldier's destiny is his own to direct – he is not at the whim of forces beyond his control as is the crewman of a spaceship.

UNUSUAL GROUND CONFLICTS

URBAN WARFARE

Not all battles take place on the open field – far from it. Many conflicts spill into the cramped confines of an urban environment. Urban warfare is fundamentally different from open warfare.

The cramped jumble of buildings found in most cities provide cover and hiding places for troops, allowing forces to be on top of one another before they realize it. Rooftops and windows provide plenty of positions from which snipers can fire unseen, and alleyways and sewers provide ready escape routes. Beware the sniper, soldier! A bullet hurts twice as much when you don't see it coming. Trust me.

In the city, vehicles have little room to maneuver and are in constant danger of being attacked without the opportunity to spot their attacker and return fire or evade. In urban warfare the maneuverability and speed of a vehicle become less important than sheer durability – a vehicle that can withstand a lot of damage is at the greatest advantage.

Mecha are especially favored for urban warfare, for they combine much of the maneuverability of a trooper with the armor of a tank.
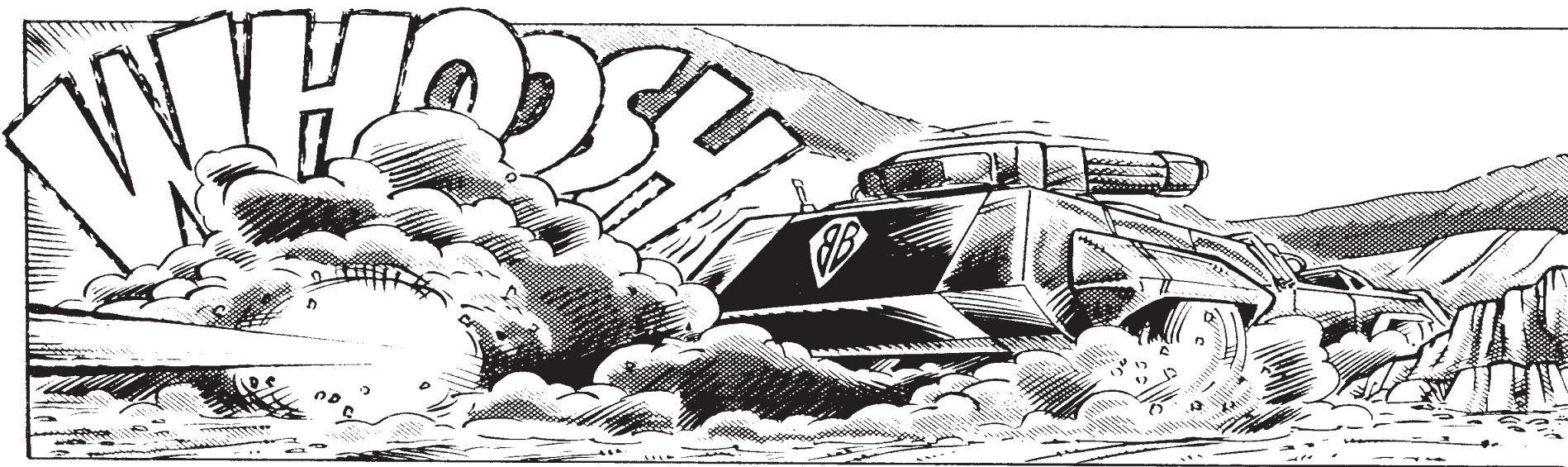
RIOTS

Similar to urban warfare only superficially, a riot situation poses its own unique set of challenges. The main difference is that normally – although not always – the security forces are looking to subdue and capture the rioters, rather than slay them. Likewise there is often a disparity between the use of force – one side may be ready to use lethal force whereas the other may be keen to minimize casualties and use non-lethal techniques. One half of the combatants – the rioters – are likely to be untrained and poorly armed civilians, but that does not make them any less dangerous in a mob situation.

The key to handling a successful riot is to not let sentimentality or ethics get in the way of security. If danger rears its ugly head you must be prepared to respond with a commensurate level of force to counter the threat, no matter how harmless the foe appears.

GUERRILLA WARFARE

Wars fought between forces of vastly differing sizes and capabilities can all too often result in a massacre for the smaller or less well-equipped side. Therefore a force that is outnumbered or outgunned has little option but to avoid direct confrontation and begin a guerrilla campaign against the enemy. Sometimes this is the first option – many cultures excel at guerrilla warfare and the landscape of some planets lends itself to that type of combat – and other times it is a desperate last ditch move to prevent defeat.

Guerrillas always attack an enemy on their own terms, not those of their opponents. They set traps and lie in ambush, launch sneak attacks and raids, and excel at hit and run tactics. Guerrilla fighters almost always know the landscape and battlefields far better than their opponent, for they are usually natives defending their homeland. When guerrillas engage the enemy it is always where and when they choose – if the conditions are not stacked in their favor and the enemy look to have the upper hand, they will quietly withdraw.

An enemy faced with guerrillas has little that he can do to soundly defeat them. Because of their elusive nature, he can rarely bring his superior military might to bear on his enemy and is forced onto the defensive at every turn. Properly defeating a force of guerrillas relies upon winning the hearts and minds of the local population, recruiting local guides and scouts to take the war to the guerrillas and deploying fast moving and lightly armed skirmishers. Effectively, he must begin employing guerrilla tactics as well.

The biggest advantage that guerrilla fighters have over their foes is that they very often have little to lose–they are usually the last line of defense against an enemy and are left with little resources save for their own lives to defeat their foes. Mounting casualties, the weight of attrition and a faceless enemy that cannot be fought has ended the dreams of conquest for many a commander.

As a soldier in the field, a guerrilla war is the last thing you want to get yourself into. Remember, soldier, the only good engagement is one where you can look an opponent in the eye, shake his hand, salute his flag and then blow him away with a good clean shot. Shooting your enemy in the back or blowing him up when he's not looking is neither big nor clever. That being said, resorting to sneaky and underhand tactics is a damn sight bigger and clever than getting yourself killed by a larger force, so use such techniques at your discretion.

BOARDING ACTIONS

Although not strictly ground combat, boarding actions have more in common with ground actions than with most other spaceship actions. A boarding action is often a brutal and bloody affair and the attackers must fight for every single inch of the enemy

vessel they take. Matters are complicated by the close quarters that such actions are fought in – the narrow corridors of a ship's interior – and the extreme advantage of home ground possessed by the defender.

Because of the nature of a boarding action – many small squads entering a vessel from the scattered points at which their boarding pods have made contact with the spaceship – it is difficult for the attackers to launch a concerted and focused attack. Therefore the primary concern of attacking squads is to group up with one another and establish a beachhead – a defensible point on the enemy vessel from which they can launch an assault further into the vessel.

Of course, while a boarding action is taking place the enemy vessel is likely to remain under fire from the boarding side's own ships, and boarders need to be mindful of the dangers posed by moving about onboard a damaged vessel. Boarding troops must also remain aware of the damage they can themselves inflict to the vessel by weapons fire damaging interior systems. When using weaponry, boarders must be careful to limit the damage they can cause to their surroundings – slug projectile weapons and explosive devices are far too hazardous onboard a spaceship unless the aim is to bring the superstructure of the ship crashing down on top of the boarding party. For this reason boarding parties and shipboard security forces often use melee weapons to avoid unnecessary collateral damage.

NEW SKILL USE: JUMP (RAPPEL)

Specially trained troopers – typically members of the Special Forces – can rapidly deploy from the side of a hovering aircraft by rappelling down ropes and right into the midst of combat or onto the roof of a building. Special Forces from PL 5 or 6 cultures make use of fitted harnesses and ropes, whereas more advanced cultures use gravitic devices such as grappling tethers to slow their descent.

COMMANDER'S ORDERS

The same check is used regardless of the exact rappelling method used.

An infantryman may rappel any distance as a free action with a successful Jump check (DC equal to the distance rappelled). Failure indicates that the distance is still covered, but as a move action. If the check is failed by 10 or more then the rappel is unsuccessful and the trooper falls, taking falling damage as normal.

FIGHTING IN A PLANETARY ASSAULT

A planetary assault combines many different aspects of warfare. First, there are battles in space between the invading fleet, the defending ships and orbital defenses; daring planetary drops aboard assault shuttles, dodging incoming anti-aircraft fire. Then come the atmospheric dogfights between the aircraft of the invaders escorting their assaulting troops to the deployment zone and the defending fighters scrambling from their bases to prevent troops from landing. And finally there is the assault on the surface between the planetary garrison and the invading troops pouring from their transports and shuttles to overwhelm the defenders. And, if the ship-to-ship and hand-to-hand battles weren't deadly enough, often a planetary assault is accompanied by a devastating orbital barrage of missiles and mass cannons that can quickly level a city to rubble and destroy hundreds of thousands of civilians and troops.

With each stage of an assault the stakes are upped over and over again. A planetary assault brings with it the most intense and desperate fighting, as the defenders have little choice but to lay down their lives defending their planet.
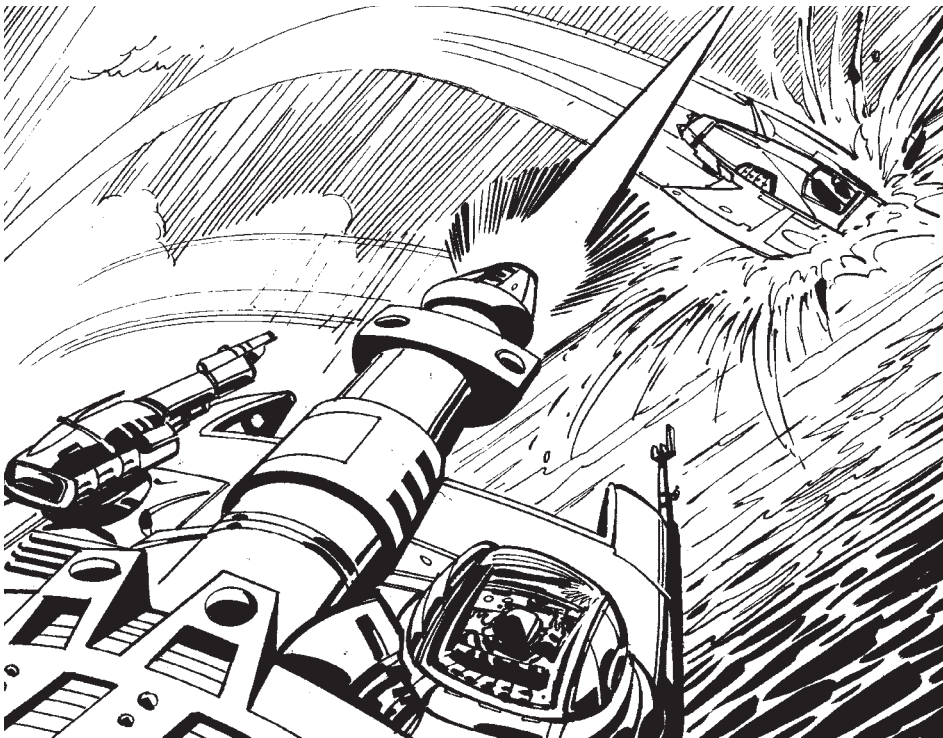
ORBITAL ATTACK

For the crew of a spaceship there may be little difference between planetary assault and fighting a regular space battle, with the exception that any vaguely significant planet will be defended by potent orbital defenses such as satellite arrays and minefields. Spacecraft might conduct a planetary barrage prior to the deployment of troops to deal with these defenses, or enter as low an orbit as possible to deploy ground forces via shuttles and drop ships.

Fighter pilots may need to enter the planet's atmosphere, accompanying drop ships and providing them with an escort to the deployment zone. Fighter craft may have to engage enemy fighters or target ground defenses prior to troop deployment.

PLANETARY LANDING

Most fighters can fly in both atmosphere and space, and such fighter pilots must be prepared to fill a variety of roles during a planetary assault. Some militaries make use of dedicated space and atmospheric fighters. Such forces must use dedicated insertion ships to deploy atmospheric fighters from space into a planet's atmosphere where ground bases and airstrips have yet to be established.

Perhaps the most daring of all pilots are those who guide the assault shuttles and troop transports from ships in orbit to the deployment zone and back again. Such pilots may be expected to provide covering fire as they deploy their troops, or clear a landing zone as they approach. They may be required to remain on the ground for several minutes while any vehicles are unloaded – tense times for a pilot as the maneuverability of his shuttle is reduced to nil and he is rendered a sitting duck.

GROUND ASSAULT

A planetary assault can be an especially traumatic experience for the troops involved. Infantrymen are tightly packed into assault shuttles and drop ships and sent hurtling planetwards, all the while avoiding anti-aircraft fire and fighters scrambled to ensure that they never reach their drop zones. Once deployed, they may immediately find themselves under attack from the surface and the air, and will have precious little time to establish a beachhead.

Vehicle crews are often deployed with their tanks in the same drop as infantry. Although not ideal, most vehicles can be dropped into battle ready to fight, their crews able to get them unloaded and fully operational within a ten or so minutes. Some vehicles take longer, others less time – many cultures prefer to drop light armor and support vehicles

that can be battle ready within minutes of landing, saving the heavier armor until a beachhead has been established.

Individually, the surface and space components of a planetary assault play out much as they would alone – it is in the interaction between the two that provides a planetary assault with its unique challenges.

THE PROBLEM WITH ORBITAL BOMBARDMENT

Starship weaponry is powerful and long ranged enough to blast across vast distances in space and punch a hole through a heavily armored vessel. So when fighting in a planetary assault why don't they just turn their weapons against the surface? Why the need for dedicated orbital weaponry?

Well it's rather simple, soldier. Let me do the math for you. Low orbit is typically 125 miles above a planet's surface, or 660000ft. As even the longest ranged beam weapon has a maximum range of 100000ft, a starship in orbit firing at a target on the surface will find the power of its weapons dissipated long before it strikes the target. Even a projectile weapon with a theoretically unlimited range will find the distance so hopelessly long that any chance of hitting the target is so small as to be a waste.

For a starship to have an impact against a ground target it must either enter the atmosphere of the planet – something few starships will do casually – or be equipped with dedicated orbital weaponry designed for use against surface targets.

A starship capable of entering an atmosphere low enough to make it worthwhile firing at the surface may do so with the regular range increment penalty. A starship weapon is far from precise, affecting a 500 square foot and causing injury and damage to all within the blast area as normal.

Orbital weaponry is designed to be far more precise and suffers no such range increment penalties when firing at a surface target. The blast radius is typically much smaller too. For more details about orbital weaponry, see Chapter Seven.

CHAPTER SEVEN: MACHINERY OF WAR

Well, soldier, this is it. This is the good stuff. Here is where we let you loose in the arsenal of war and you get to play with some nice new toys. This isn't for fun, however. Pay careful attention to each of the gadgets and gizmos listed below, along with their vital statistics and operational notes. Learn their strengths and their weaknesses and use them in battle to your advantage.

Remember soldier, it's not the weapon but the wielder that is important in war. A good soldier should be able to take apart an enemy army with a stick and some stones, if he so chooses. Try it some day.

WEAPONS

SL-32 SHURIKEN CRUISE MISSILE (PL5)
The SL-32 Shuriken missile gained favor during a series of late PL5 engagements dominated by long range strikes used to destroy strategic targets. The shuriken can be guided by remote control, aided by onboard sensors and video feeds, but more commonly it is programmed with a selection of preset targets and coordinates.

The Shuriken can be launched from any sizeable vehicle, aircraft or ship and has an exceptionally long range. Due to the precision guidance onboard the cruise missile, it does not incur a range increment. The listed range increment is its maximum range.

MND-530 TACTICAL NUKE (PL6)
Perhaps one of the most horrifyingly compact weapons ever devised is the Miniaturized
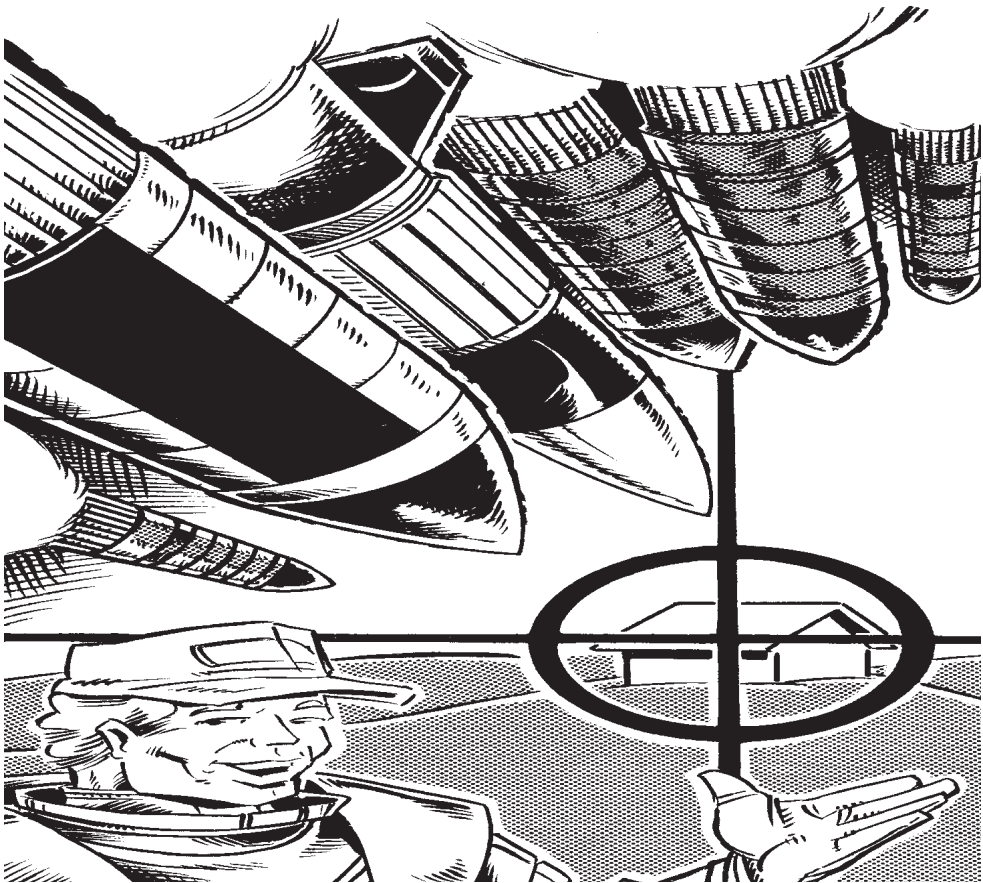
TABLE 7-1: FUTURE WEAPONS

WEAPON	DMG	CRITICAL	DMG TYPE	RANGE INCREMENT	RATE OF FIRE	MAGAZINE	SIZE	WEIGHT	PURCHASE DC	RESTRICTION	PL
530R Nuclear Rifle	20d8	-	Energy	150ft	1	1 int.	Large	60lb.	40	Mil (+3)	6

TABLE 7-2: FUTURE EXPLOSIVES

WEAPON	DMG	CRITICAL	DMG TYPE	BURST RADIUS	REFLEX DC	RANGE INCREMENT	SIZE	WEIGHT	PURCHASE DC	RESTRICTION	PL
SL-32 Shuriken Cruise Missile	6d12	-	Ballistic	20ft	17	1000miles[1]	Huge	2000lb.	25[2]	Mil (+3)	5
MND-530	20d8	-	Energy	100ft	20	-	Medium	50lb.	40	Mil (+3)	6

1 indicates maximum range, not range increment.
2 includes launch system.

Nuclear Device, or tactical nuke. Combining the destructiveness of a nuclear weapon with the limited blast of a conventional explosive, the MND can be fired as an artillery shell, planted by hand like a charge or dropped from an aircraft.

The MND-530 has a blast radius of 100ft. Survivors of the initial explosion are exposed to enormous levels of radiation – the area is immediately severely irradiated. Every 100 feet beyond the burst radius the radiation severity is reduced by one stage.

530R NUCLEAR RIFLE (PL6)

The 530R nuclear rifle is a shoulder-mounted rocket launcher designed for use as a launch mechanism for the MND-530 tactical nuke. The nuclear rifle is relatively light, but the weight of the tactical nuke reduces its portability.

EQUIPMENT

COMMAND FEED (PL7)

A piece of software that integrates with a soldier's HUD and sensors, relaying a two way feed between the soldier and a command post. Operators at the command post use the combined feeds from a unit, along with sensory data and intelligence from other sources, to get a highly detailed view of the battle and then channel this information back to the soldiers on the ground as required.

An operator using a command feed may perform the aid other action remotely on soldiers at the other end.

Purchase DC: 15 (for complete system at both ends)
Restrictions: none

2020 HAWKEYE PERSONAL SATELLITE (PL8)

A relatively new technology, the 2020 Hawkeye is a 'personal satellite,' a remote controlled aerial drone that flies high above a battlefield. The Hawkeye is linked to a single soldier via a neural computer link allowing the soldier to see everything that the drone does, as well as to direct it to reconnoiter as required.

The Hawkeye provides the soldier with a 360 degree field of vision, drastically reducing an enemy's opportunity to get the jump on him. The Hawkeye grants the soldier a +4 equipment bonus to spot checks, as well as drastically increasing his field of vision. So long as the 2020 is operational and the soldier mobile, he cannot become flat-footed or flanked.

Purchase DC: 18
Restrictions: none

STARSHIPS

BOARDING POD (PL6)

Many navies make use of boarding pods to deploy elite troops onboard enemy space-ships. A boarding pod is a very short-range vessel fired directly at a hostile ship and piloted either remotely from the mothership, or by a targeting computer or pilot on board the pod. When the pod makes contact with the target spaceship, boarding claws or docking clamps lock the vessels together and powerful explosives or cutting lasers slice through the hull, allowing the marines inside to enter the ship.

Some boarding pods are designed to carry only one or two men, allowing spies or saboteurs to infiltrate a vessel undetected. Other pods carry entire squadrons of soldiers, allowing a force to swiftly overcome the spaceship's crew and eliminate it from the battle, or turn it against its own side.

In order to initiate boarding procedures, the pilot of a boarding pod must first attempt a boarding maneuver, as detailed in Chapter Four.

Type: Ultralight	**Size:** Gargantuan (–4 size)
Subtype: Boarding Pod	**Tactical Speed:** 3000ft (6 sq,)
Defense: 19	**Length:** 45 feet
Flat-footed Defense: 13	**Weight:** 40000lbs
Autopilot Defense: 10	**Targeting System Bonus:** -
Hardness: 20	**Crew:** 1 (trained +4)
Hit Dice: 6d20 (120 hp)	**Passenger Capacity:** 10
Initiative Modifier: +8	**Cargo Capacity:** 22000 lb.
Pilot's Class Bonus: +7	**Grapple Modifier:** +8
Pilot's Dex Modifier: +6	**Base Purchase DC:** 42
Gunner's Attack Bonus: -	**Restriction:** Military (+3)

Attack: none
Attack of Opportunity: none
Standard PL6 Design Specs
Armor: polymeric
Defense Systems: Improved autopilot system
Sensors: class III sensor array
Communications: laser transceiver, radio transceiver
Weapons: none
Grappling Systems: docking clamps

ASSAULT SHUTTLE (PL6)

More bloodthirsty cultures relish the opportunity to board an enemy spaceship and engage the crew in brutal melee. At the first opportunity in battle flotillas of assault shuttles swarm towards their foes at high speed, ramming them and allowing the unit of warriors inside to board.

An assault shuttle is a crudely designed vessel, comprising a very heavily armored nosecone and a powerful, if short ranged engine. An assault shuttle is piloted by one of the warriors inside who needs to do little more than line the shuttle up with an enemy ship and engage the thrusters. The assault shuttle relies on the force of impact to punch a hole in the side of the enemy vessel, while and a well protected interior to ensures its passengers survive the journey.

Type: Ultralight	Size: Gargantuan (–4 size)
Subtype: Assault Shuttle	Tactical Speed: 3500ft (7 sq,)
Defense: 11	Length: 60 feet
Flat-footed Defense: 9	Weight: 35000lb.
Autopilot Defense: 10	Targeting System Bonus: -
Hardness: 20*	Crew: 1 (trained +4)
Hit Dice: 8d20 (160 hp)	Passenger Capacity: 20
Initiative Modifier: +8	Cargo Capacity: 22000 lbs
Pilot's Class Bonus: +3	Grapple Modifier: +8
Pilot's Dex Modifier: +2	Base Purchase DC: 52
Gunner's Attack Bonus: -	Restriction: Military (+3)

Attacks: none
Attacks of opportunity: none

Standard PL6 Design Specs
Engines: ion engines, thrusters
Armor: polymeric
Defense Systems: Improved autopilot system
Sensors: class II sensor array
Communications: laser transceiver, radio transceiver
Weapons: none
Grappling Systems: docking clamps

*The hardness of the Assault Shuttle is doubled when colliding with another vehicle. If the shuttle rams another ship and deals at least 10 points of damage, it counts as having successfully grappled the ship, creating a hole large enough for its troops to begin boarding.

PIRATE BOARDING SHUTTLE (PL6)

When engaging in piracy, space brigands make use of lumbering boarding shuttles to gain access to the interior of a disabled vessel. These shuttles are based on the hulls of old galactic troop transports, their sizeable troop compartments converted into large cargo holds able to carry stolen goods back to the mothership. Boarding shuttles are neither swift enough nor maneuverable enough to board a moving ship, so they must rely on other pirate ships to disable the target vessel first.

When the boarding shuttle has clamped onto the target, powerful drills bore holes through the side of the ship to allowing the thirty-strong boarding party to board and swiftly remove of as much booty as possible. The boarding process is entirely destructive to the hapless vessel, and the stricken ship is likely to lose structural integrity soon after the boarding shuttle has detached.

Type: Ultralight	Size: Gargantuan (–4 size)
Subtype: Assault Shuttle	Tactical Speed: 3500ft (7 sq,)
Defense: 11	Length: 75 feet
Flat-footed Defense: 9	Weight: 220000lb.
Autopilot Defense: 10	Targeting System Bonus: -
Hardness: 20	Crew: 1 (trained +4)
Hit Dice: 6d20 (120 hp)	Passenger Capacity: 30
Initiative Modifier: +8	Cargo Capacity: 100 tons
Pilot's Class Bonus: +3	Grapple Modifier: +8
Pilot's Dex Modifier: +2	Base Purchase DC: 52
Gunner's Attack Bonus: -	Restriction: Restricted (+2)

Attacks: none
Attacks of opportunity: none

Standard PL6 Design Specs
Engines: ion engines, thrusters
Armor: polymeric
Defense Systems: Improved autopilot system

MACHINERY OF WAR

Sensors: class I sensor array
Communications: laser transceiver, radio transceiver
Weapons: none
Grappling Systems: docking clamps*

*The docking clamps employed by the boarding shuttle are actually powerful drills that tear through the side of the ship, inflicting 10+2d6 points of damage each round they remain in action. The damage inflicted generally causes the ship to lose structural integrity after the shuttle has departed, causing an automatic critical hit to the superstructure of the ship.

STARSHIP SENSORS

MINESWEEPER SUITE (PL7)
In addition to extra ablative armor or shielding, a vessel outfitted as a minesweeper boasts a large electronics suite designed to prevent a mine from detonating. Dampener fields suppress the trigger mechanisms of nearby mines and pinpoint sensors enable the location – and remote deactivation – of a mine. Minesweeping is not a fast process and a vessel that tries to hurry the procedure is just as likely to trigger the minefield as it is to disable it.

Use of the minesweeper suite requires a successful Computer Use check by the operator for each square of mines to be deactivated. The DC for this check is determined by the mine. To clear a square of mines takes a number of minutes equal to the DC of the check. The process may be hurried – the DC of the check increases by 2 for every minute the time is reduced by. Failure of the check by 10 or more indicates a catastrophic failure resulting in the minefield detonating as normal.

A ship equipped with a minesweeper suite gains a +10 enhancement bonus to sensor checks and has the sensor range doubled when detecting mines. As well, its weapons gain a +4 equipment bonus to hit when targeting mines. Checks made to detect a ship with a minesweeper suite gain a +5 bonus due to the increased electronic noise produced by the equipment. The electronic noise is produced even when the suite is not in use and cannot be voluntarily suppressed.

GRAPPLING SYSTEMS

BOARDING CLAWS (PL6)
Some older vessels make use of telescopic arms to latch on to enemy vessels and bore through their hull, allowing the deployment of large quantities of troops quickly onto an enemy vessel. They are rarely used in modern warfare as few commanders wish to lock their ship so closely to an enemy vessel. The pilot of a ship armed with boarding claws must complete a boarding maneuver, as detailed in Chapter Four.

Success leads to each boarding claw clamping on to the enemy vessel and boring a hole into its interior, allowing troops to freely enter as though the two ships were one. Note that because the docking mechanism is purely mechanical, boarding claws can be used to latch on to non-metallic hulls or ships using advanced armor. Once attached it takes 5 rounds to detach and retract boarding claws. Only Colossal or larger sized ships are big enough to use boarding claws.

Purchase DC: 12 + one-half the base purchase DC of the starship
Restriction: restricted (+2)

DOCKING CLAMPS (PL6)
Docking clamps are simply powerful magnetic clamps designed to firmly attach an assault shuttle or breaching pod to the exterior of an enemy starship. Docking clamps are also equipped with a docking mechanism comprised of cutting lasers and a rudimentary airlock to allow entrance to the attached ship. A ship that completes a boarding maneuver against a target vessel latches on to it, its cutting lasers affording entrance in 2 rounds. Docking clamps may not be used against a non-metallic hull. Once attached it takes 1 round to detach again. Only Gargantuan or smaller size ships may be equipped with docking clamps.

Purchase DC: 10 + one-half the base purchase DC of the starship
Restriction: restricted (+2)

ORBITAL WEAPONRY

STARFIRE SATELLITE LASER PLATFORM (PL6)

The first orbital weaponry was launched to protect Earth against possible asteroid or meteor collision. Satellite stations comprising powerful lasers were controlled from the surface and aimed at any objects that posed a danger. It did not take long before an orbital weapon was turned earthwards and used against a ground target – at first by a terrorist hacker, but soon afterwards deliberately in a military engagement.

The reign of orbital weaponry heavily destabilized ground warfare and it was not long before starships mounting nascent space weaponry were used to routinely sweep them from orbit. Nonetheless, in their brief dominance they were exceedingly potent.

The Starfire is just one example of an orbital weapons platform, lying dormant in a low orbit until activated by a remote signal. When activated the bud-like satellite opens up, its great mirrored petals blossoming outwards. Seven small lasers are reflected and amplified into a single tightly focused beam that can strike a target on the ground with ease. The Starfire is highly precise, but slow to position, taking up to an hour to position above a target. The laser beam can be precise enough to hit a target less than 10ft square – such as a car – but usually has a burst radius of 50ft.

The Starfire laser is sometimes fitted to starships and used during planetary bombardment.

Type: Ultralight	Size: Colossal (–8 size)
Subtype: Satellite	Tactical Speed: 3000 (6 sq,)
Defense: 6	Length: 100 feet
Flat-footed Defense: 6	Weight: 1 ton
Autopilot Defense: 6	Targeting System Bonus: +3
Hardness: 20	Crew: -
Hit Dice: 16d20 (320 hp)	Passenger Capacity: -
Initiative Modifier: +4	Cargo Capacity: -
Pilot's Class Bonus: -	Grapple Modifier: +8

Pilot's Dex Modifier: -	Base Purchase DC: 28
Gunner's Attack Bonus: +6	Restriction: Military (+3)

Attacks: orbital laser +1 ranged (10d8)
Attacks of opportunity: none
Standard PL6 Design Specs
Engines: thrusters
Armor: polymeric
Defense Systems: autopilot system, targeting system
Sensors: class III sensor array
Communications: laser transceiver, radio transceiver
Weapons: Starfire orbital laser
Grappling Systems: none

MILLENNIA BLOCKADE STATION (PL7)

During the mass expansion into space untold millions of far flung worlds were colonized, far outstripping their planet's ability to defend them in any meaningful way. Many fleets are able to defend their larger colonies, but cannot spare the ships to defend smaller, relatively insignificant worlds. Loathe to leave such worlds completely defenseless, Millennia Blockade Stations are deployed to dissuade pirates and other petty attackers of opportunity. Blockade Stations are gargantuan automated satellites armed with particle beams to automatically target and attack hostile vessels that approach the planet.

Attacks: 2 Particle Beams +3 ranged (12d8)
Attacks of opportunity: point defense system +3 ranged (1d12x10)

Type: Ultralight	Size: Gargantuan (–4 size)
Subtype: Space Station	Tactical Speed: 3000 (6 sq,)
Defense: 10	Length: 65 feet
Flat-footed Defense: 10	Weight: 220000lb.
Autopilot Defense: 10	Targeting System Bonus: +4
Hardness: 30	Crew: -

TABLE 7-3: ORBITAL WEAPONRY

WEAPON	DMG	CRITICAL	DMG TYPE	BURST RADIUS	REFLEX DC	MAXIMUM RANGE	MINIMUM SHIP SIZE	PURCHASE DC	RESTRICTION	PL
Starfire Orbital Laser	10d8 (45)	20	Energy	50ft	25	1 million ft.	Colossal	38	Mil (+3)	6

Hit Dice: 6d20 (120 hp)	Passenger Capacity: -
Initiative Modifier: +4	Cargo Capacity: 100 tons
Pilot's Class Bonus: -	Grapple Modifier: +12
Pilot's Dex Modifier: -	Base Purchase DC: 52
Gunner's Attack Bonus: +3	Restriction: Restricted (+2)

Standard PL7 Design Specs
Engines: thrusters
Armor: cerametal
Defense Systems: Improved autopilot system, point defense system
Sensors: class V sensor array, improved targeting system
Communications: drivesat comm array, mass transceiver
Weapons: 2 Particle Beams
Grappling Systems: none

VEHICLES

RQ13 BLUE MOON SCOUT DRONE (PL5)

The RQ13 is a robotic aircraft used mainly as a long-ranged reconnaissance vehicle, controlled from a distant command post. The Blue Moon is used to conduct extensive scouting of an area prior to attack or during an assault, providing live aerial footage of a location with no risk to its controllers.

The RQ13 has no crew. It is a vehicle with the following robot accessories: AV transmitter, remote control unit and integrated satellite uplink (treat as integrated cell phone). The Blue Moon is 5 squares wide (including wings; fuselage is 1 square wide) and 4 squares long.

The RQ13 can be fitted with an M-53 Firestar rocket launcher and used to attack ground targets.

AMBASSADOR ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER (PL6)

The Ambassador is a reinforced APC based on the design of the EU2A1 Mendez APC and designed to transport visiting dignitaries or high ranking officers while in hostile territory. The Ambassador can comfortably accommodate the dignitary and up to 9 additional passengers, usually bodyguards, advisors and other staff. The Ambassador is only lightly armed, but very heavily armored to protect its passengers.

A variant of the Ambassador – the Menhir – exists, outfitted as a command car with communications equipment and sensor arrays to enable a general to command his troops from the thick of the action. A Menhir grants crew a +4 equipment bonus to any computer use checks.
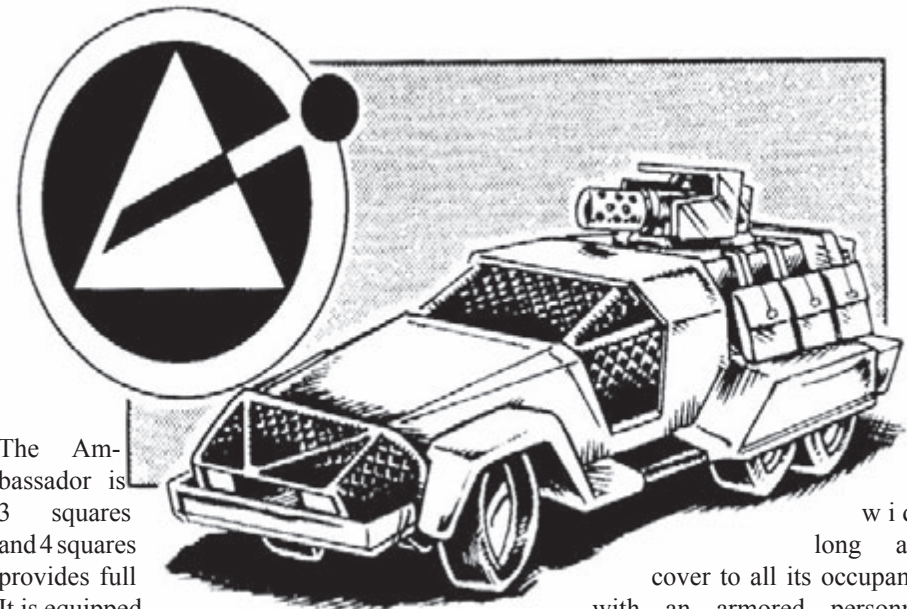
The Ambassador is 3 squares wide and 4 squares long and provides full cover to all its occupants. It is equipped with an armored personnel compartment. The vehicle has 2 top-side hatches located directly above each crew position and a large door in the back for its passengers to disembark through.

The Ambassador APC has a twin thunder machine gun mounted above the gunner's hatch.

B7 BRAJA ASSAULT TRANSPORT (PL6)

The Braja is a fast insertion, aerial transport designed to get a team of Special Forces troops in or out of a combat zone as quickly and stealthily as possible. The Braja is equipped with a variety of electronic countermeasures and painted with a sensor-reflective coating to reduce its electronic profile. The primary advantage of a Braja is its side access doors and rappel harnesses, enabling a Special Forces team to deploy without the Braja ever landing.

The Braja has two flight modes: fixed-wing and flex-wing. In fixed-wing mode the craft is very fast, with speeds akin to a jetfighter. In flex-wing mode the craft is much slower, but can hover in place or land on any flat space at least the size of the Braja. Switching modes requires a full-round action, but can only be accomplished if the vehicle is moving no faster than 200 squares.

The B7 Braja has a crew of 2 – a pilot and a gunner – and can carry up to 12 fully armed troops and their gear. It has a single crew hatch in the cockpit for use by crewmembers, a rear access ramp, and a side access door on either side of the fuselage. Each of the side

MACHINERY OF WAR

TABLE 7-4: FUTURE VEHICLES

VEHICLE	CREW	PASS	CARGO	INIT	MANEUVER	TOP SPEED	DEFENSE	HARD	HP	SIZE	PURCHASE DC	RESTRICTION	PL
RQ13 Blue Moon Scout Drone	0	0	450lb.	-1	-1	1320 (132)	8	5	23	L	40[1]	Mil (+3)	5
Ambassador APC	2	10	500lb.	-1	-1	95 (9)	6	15	56	G	42	Mil (+3)	6
Braja Assault Transport[2]	2	12	2000lb.	-4/-3	-4/-2	1600/250 (160/25)	6	5	46	G	50	Mil (+3)	6
OR73 Orion Tank	3	0	425lb.	-2	-2	95 (9)	6	15	58	G	48	Mil (+3)	6
B113 Grey Phantom Stealth Bomber	2	0	500lb.	-4	-4	1320 (132)	6	5	48	G	52	Mil (+3)	6
SIG-32J Black Shadow Stealth Tank	2	0	350lb.	-1	-1	100 (10)	6	10	56	G	42	Mil (+3)	6
Olympus Aerial Platform	500	250	125000 tons	-4	-4	500 (50)	2	30	250	C	72[1]	Mil (+3)	7
SPP Firestorm Ground Assault Vehicle	3	0	500lb.	-4	-4	740 (74)	6	10	52	G	48	Mil (+3)	7
AL3 Bearcub Pocket Tank	0	1	150lb.	-1	+0	150 (15)	8	10	32	L	42	Mil (+3)	8
G1-11 Ghost Orbital Transport	2	36	100 tons	-4	-4	950 (95)	6	5	56	G	42	Mil (+3)	8
TVS Scorpion Tank	0	0	350 lb.	+0	-2	20 (2)	6	30	68	G	52	Mil (+3)	8

1 The vehicle's purchase DC does not include weaponry

2 Some attributes are presented in two forms – the number before the slash indicates the attribute in fixed wing mode and the number after in flex wing mode.

doors is fitted with rappel harnesses for use by the passengers.

The B7 is 9 squares wide (including wings in fixed-wing mode; fuselage is 3 squares wide) and 12 squares long. It provides three-quarters cover to crew and passengers (one-quarter cover to passengers if the side doors are open).

The B7 is painted with sensor absorbent materials, as described under stealth technology. It is armed with a twin thunder machine gun operated by the gunner.

OR-73 ORION TANK (PL6)

The Orion Syndicate's first foray into military technology remains its most successful, and ever since the OR-73 entered production, the OS has been struggling to repeat its success. The OR-73 Orion main battletank saw a great deal of use due to its heavy armor and weaponry, coupled with a good deal more maneuverability and speed than an equivalent sized tank.

The Orion is crewed by a driver, a gunner and a commander. It has three top hatches, one above the driver and two on the turret. It takes a full round action to enter the tank, but it is fully operational by the next round. The OR-73 is 3 squares wide by 4 squares long. The tank provides full cover to all its crew.

TABLE 7-5: FUTURE VEHICLE WEAPONS

WEAPON	DMG	CRITICAL	DMG TYPE	RANGE INCREMENT	RATE OF FIRE	MAGAZINE	SIZE	WEIGHT	PURCHASE DC	RESTRICTION	PL
M53 Firestar Rocket Launcher	10d6	20	Fire	-	Single	6 int.	Huge	35lb.	24	Mil (+3)	5
Twin Thunder Machine Gun	2d10	20	Ballistic	100ft	A	Linked	Huge	42lb.	22	Mil (+3)	5
Chrysanthemum Laser Array	16d6	-	Fire	-	Single	1 int.	Huge	50lb.	26	Mil (+3)	6
Mini-Grenade Launcher	Var.	20	Var.	70ft	Single	1 int.	Med.	4lb.	20	Mil (+3)	6
M21 Comet Rocket Launcher	8d6	20	Fire	75ft	S, A	-	Huge	40lb.	22	Mil (+3)	6
M70 EMP Rocket Launcher	10d6	20	Elec.	-	Single	6 int.	Huge	35lb.	25	Mil (+3)	6
M75 Cricket Rocket Launcher	10d6	-	Sonic	-	Single	6 int.	Huge	35lb.	25	Mil (+3)	6
NKP Puma Pop-Up Turret	8d6	20	Fire	75ft	Single	-	Large	20lb.	23	Mil (+3)	6
T95 Cavalcade Chain Gun	7d6	20	Ballistic	60ft	S, A	Linked	Huge	185lb.	21	Mil (+3)	6
XRAM Laser-Guided Bomb	12d6	-	Sonic	-	Single	1 int.	Large	100lb.	18 (each)	Mil (+3)	6
Typhoon 240 Laser Cannon	10d6	20	Fire	100ft	Single	-	Huge	80lb.	25	Mil (+3)	6
M300 Rhino Mass Cannon	8d12	20	Ballistic	100ft	Single	-	Huge	65lb.	29	Mil (+3)	7
Disintegrator	3d8	20	Energy	30ft	Single	10 box	Large	6lb.	23	Mil (+3)	8
Sonic Beam	2d6	20	Sonic	40ft	Single	50 box	Med.	3lb.	18	Lic (+1)	8
LT5 Longshot Mass Driver	15d6	20	Ballistic	120ft	Single	10 box	Huge	90lb.	24	Mil (+3)	8

The Orion sports a turret mounted Typhoon 240 laser cannon, supplemented by a hull mounted T-95 cavalcade chain gun. The turret also has a mini grenade launcher.

B113 GREY PHANTOM STEALTH BOMBER (PL6)
The B113 Grey Phantom is a long ranged stealth aircraft designed to enter heavily defended airspace unseen, deliver its payload and escape unharmed – usually before the bombs hit the ground. The Grey Phantom achieves this with a subtly angular superstructure made from a sensor absorbent polymer.

MACHINERY OF WAR

The B113 has a crew of 2 pilots. It has a single access hatch above the cockpit, and a loading hatch under the fuselage. It provides three-quarters cover to crew and passengers. It is 30 squares wide (including wings; fuselage is 2 squares wide) and 12 squares long.

When fully loaded, the B113 carries 36 XRAM bombs, 18 M-75 Cricket rockets and 6 M-70 EMP rockets. The Grey Phantom is built from sensor absorbent materials, as described under Stealth Technology.

SIG-32J BLACK SHADOW STEALTH TANK (PL6)

The SIG-32J Black Shadow was the first mainstream tank to incorporate stealth technology, featuring a matt black angled hull to prevent detection by enemy sensors. The Black Shadow is lightly armored and designed for mobility, but packs a heavy enough punch to make its mark on the battlefield.

The crew consists of one driver and one gunner. The vehicle has two topside hatches, one above each crew position. The Black Shadow is 3 squares wide and 3 squares long. The tank provides full cover to all its crew.

The SIG-32J has a single M21 Comet Autolaser in the hull and a pair of sponsons, each mounting an NKP Puma Pop-Up turret. To reduce its profile, the Black Shadow has no turret, relying on superior maneuverability to bring its weapon to bear on targets. The SIG-32J is built in a sensor deflecting shape, as described under Stealth Technology.

OLYMPUS AERIAL PLATFORM (PL7)

Once, ocean battles were supported from nearby fleets launching sorties of aircraft and missiles. Today the place of seaborne carriers has been taken by behemoths of the sky known as aerial platforms. One example of these aerial platforms is the Olympus class, a flying carrier and command post, capable of flying thousands of feet above a battlezone to provide aerial support. The Olympus carries dozens of wings of aircraft and countless swarms of battledrones that are launched into combat and recovered for refueling onboard.

The crew consists of 500, including officers, aircrew and maintenance crew. It can carry an additional 250 passengers, typically marines or other soldiers deployed into battle. The Olympus can carry up to 48 aircraft and 100 battledrones. It is 100 squares wide and 300 squares long.

SPP FIRESTORM GROUND ASSAULT AIRCRAFT (PL7)

Deployed from high altitude aerial platforms or local military airships, the SPP Firestorm is a potent ground assault aircraft designed to support infantry during an attack or to soften an enemy up in preparation for a new assault. The Firestorm has straight stubby wings designed for optimum maneuverability at low altitudes, as well as reducing the length of landing zone required. The aircraft is exceptionally hardy, built to withstand a great deal of fire as it strafes a target.

The Firestorm has a crew of 1 pilot and 2 gunners. It is 10 squares wide (including wings; fuselage is 2 squares wide) and 10 squares long. It provides three-quarters cover to crew and passengers.

The SPP has an underslung gunnery station referred to as its turret, where the gunners sit and gain a clear view of the battlefield. The Firestorm is armed with a pair of T-95 chain guns, a Tsunami 480 plasma cannon and 6 M-75 Cricket rockets.

AL3 BEARCUB POCKET TANK (PL8)

Once a revolutionary design, the AL3 Bearcub is now the latest of the so called 'pocket tanks' – tanks that are little more than the size of a car. The Bearcub has a robotic brain allowing it to operate independently, but it also has room (just) for a single crewman who can override the computer if required and take direct control.

The tank has four insectile limbs that each end in a wheel, enabling the vehicle to roll along at speed on flat surfaces, or walk slowly over rough terrain. The Bearcub is often used to support Special Forces troops operating where normal armor cannot.

The Bearcub usually has a crew of zero, but can carry a crew of 1. It is a vehicle with the following robot accessories: robotic brain, class VII sensor system, intelligence and wisdom upgrades, skill progit (typically knowledge (tactics), integrated videophone, and AV transmitter. It is two squares wide and two squares long.

The AL3 has twin linked disintegrators mounted on each side and a swivel mounted sonic beam mounted in its hull.

TVS SCORPION TANK (PL8)

The TVS Scorpion is the mainstay heavy armor of many PL8 militaries, combining the armor of a tank, the power of a mecha and the automation of a robot. The Scorpion resembles just that – a gargantuan metal scorpion with eight legs supporting a segmented body teeming with weaponry. The scorpion's pincers are a pair of versatile gripping arms used to crush targets or move obstacles out of the way. The tail section is the tank's turret and communications array.

The TVS has a crew of zero. It is a vehicle with the following robot accessories: robotic brain, class IX sensor system, skill progit (typically knowledge (tactics), intelligence and wisdom upgrades, integrated video phone, and self-repair unit. The Scorpion is 4 squares wide and 8 squares long (including the tail section).

The TVS has a LT-5 Longshot Mass Driver mounted in its tail turret, with a Tsunami 480 plasma cannon and a pair of M-300 Rhino mass cannons mounted on its hull.

G1-11 GHOST ORBITAL TRANSPORT (PL8)

The Ghost Orbital Transport is the primary method used by the fleets of the Energy Age to deploy troops during a planetary assault. The Ghost has limited space capabilities enabling it to be deployed from the edge of space and enter the atmosphere before gliding to its landing zone.

The Ghost is designed to carry large numbers of troops discretely to a drop zone, camouflaged by active sensor cancellation technology and often surprising the defenders as an otherwise unnoticed drop ship lands in front of them.

The Ghost resembles nothing more than a gargantuan crystalline manta ray, its carefully sculpted hull causing it to blend in with the background sky as it silently flies towards the ground. When the Ghost has reached the drop zone it has no need to properly land as its engines are capable of hovering in a stationary position.

The G1-11 is 35 squares wide (including wingspan, due to the Ghost being almost entirely 'wing') and 25 squares long. It provides three-quarters cover to crew and passengers. It has a crew of 2 – 1 gunner and 1 pilot – and can carry up to 36 passengers or 18 passengers and 9 pocket tanks.

The G1-11 is equipped with a Chrysanthemum laser array that is often triggered as the transport lands amidst an enemy formation, scorching any nearby targets and leaving them in disarray while the passengers disembark and launch into the fray.

VEHICLE GEAR

Unless specified it is assumed that each Progress Level from PL5 onwards has an up-to-date version of the gear below.

ARMORED PASSENGER COMPARTMENT

The interior of the vehicle is especially well armored to protect valuable cargo or important passengers. The protection afforded is such that passengers have a chance of surviving the destruction of the vehicle. For every five points of damage taken by the vehicle, each unit within takes only one point. If the vehicle is destroyed each passenger takes 2d6 points of damage. A reflex save (DC 12) results in half damage. An armored passenger compartment may not be combined with gun slits.

Purchase DC: 14
Restriction: none

GUN SLITS

Some vehicles are designed to act as mobile fighting platforms for squadrons of infantry. A vehicle fitted with gun slits has its Hardness reduced by 1, but half of all passengers may fire from the inside of the vehicle, gaining the benefits of cover while doing so. Troops firing from a moving vehicle incur a penalty depending on the speed of the vehicle.

Purchase DC: 10
Restriction: military (+3)

HANDHOLDS

The vehicle is fitted with handrails and safety fittings to allow infantry to ride on the outside of the vehicle. One-quarter of any troops mounted in a troop transport may fire their weapons in any given direction (front, rear, left, right). Troops firing from a moving vehicle suffer a -1 penalty to-hit, in addition to the normal speed penalty. Infantry mounted in this way suffer the effects of any hits to the tank itself. Infantry riding on a vehicle in this manner may dismount as a free action, or mount as a move-equivalent action.

Purchase DC: 10
Restriction: none

RAPPEL HARNESSES

The vehicle is outfitted with specially designed harnesses to enable the rapid deployment of troops. A vehicle must be stationary or moving slowly in order to deploy troops in this manner. If the vehicle is moving, rappelling troops incur double the normal speed penalty to their Jump checks.

Purchase DC: 12
Restriction: none

ROBOTIC BRAIN

The vehicle has been fitted with a robotic brain, effectively transforming it into a robot. In lower progress levels the brain might allow the vehicle to be remote controlled, whereas at higher progress levels the vehicle might be autonomous or even self-aware.

A vehicle equipped with a robotic brain may also have robotic sensors, skill software, feat software, ability upgrades (mental abilities only) and robot accessories.

Purchase DC: 15
Restriction: none

STEALTH TECHNOLOGY

A variety of methods have been developed over the ages to make a vehicle harder to detect, from sensor deflecting shapes to reactive camouflage.

Sensor deflecting shapes rely on the surface of the vehicle being angled in such a way that sensors such as radar are deflected and register as detecting a much smaller or differently shaped object than they normally would. Sensor deflection only stops the vehicle from being detected by sensors – the vehicle appears as normal visually.

Sensor absorbent material is designed so that sensor beams that strike it are absorbed and not reflected back towards the sensor, preventing it from detecting the vehicle. Sensor absorbent material only stops the vehicle from being detected by sensors – the vehicle appears as normal visually.

Active sensor cancellation technology uses advanced computer algorithms to detect incoming sensors and then project back a different frequency or sensor reading, canceling out the sensors or giving a different reading altogether. Active sensor cancellation technology may be programmed so that the vehicle appears to a sensor as anything that the operator wishes it to, such as a civilian vehicle or a much larger tank. Active sensor cancellation has no effect on visual identification.

Reactive camouflage is the pinnacle of stealth technology, using cloaking technology and optical arrays to make the vehicle appear as something different – or disappear altogether. Reactive camouflage works against both sensor and visual detection.

A vehicle equipped with stealth technology increases the DC to detect the vehicle by the amount listed below.

Purchase DC: see table
Restriction: military (+3)

TABLE 7-6: STEALTH TECHNOLOGY

STEALTH TECHNOLOGY	SPOT DC	SENSOR DC	PL	PURCHASE DC
Sensor Deflecting Shape	-	+4	5	20
Sensor Absorbent Material	-	+6	6	24
Active Sensor Cancellation	-	+10	7	28
Reactive Camouflage	+10	+8	8	32

THERMAL SIGHTS

Modifications to vehicle sensors and weapons sights can enable a gunner to spot targets even in complete darkness. The sights grant the crew of the vehicle darkvision, albeit with a -2 penalty to Spot checks made with them due to their relative imprecision. In hot climates, thermal sights work less effectively, increasing the penalty to -4 or higher.

Purchase DC: 15
Restriction: none

TROOP TRANSPORT

The interior of the vehicle has been outfitted to carry one or more units of troops in relative safety, offering protection from all but the most direct hits. Troops carried within a troop transport may not fire unless the vehicle is also fitted with gun slits (see above). For every two points of damage taken by the vehicle, each unit within takes only one point. If the vehicle is destroyed each passenger takes 3d6 points of damage. A reflex save (DC 12) results in half damage. Troops may enter or exit a troop transport as a move-equivalent action.

Some aquatic vehicles carry troops. Troops cannot deploy directly ashore from them – instead they must use shuttle craft or small boats. Amphibious vehicles have no such problem and may deploy troops and vehicles directly ashore.

Purchase DC: 12
Restriction: none
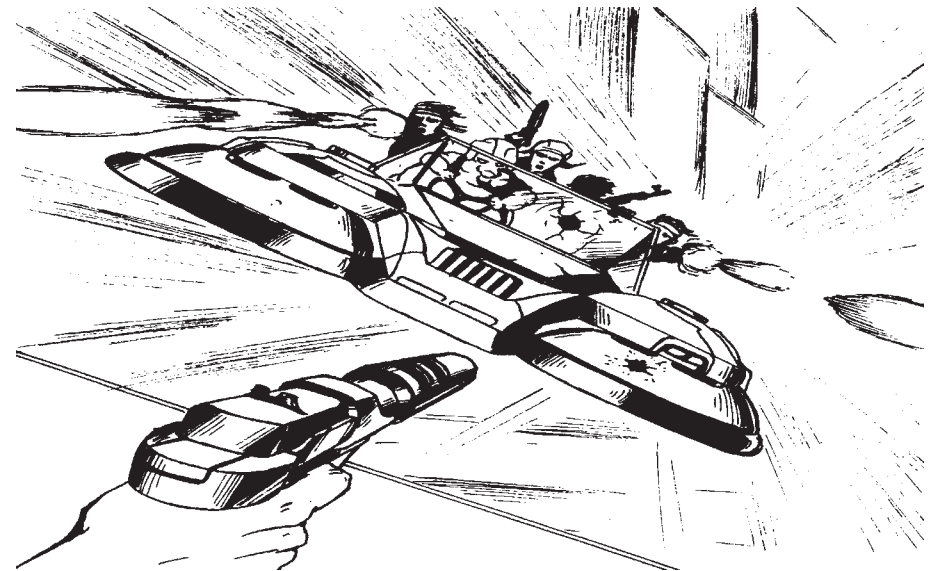
TUSK (TANK URBAN SURVIVAL KIT)

Urban warfare has traditionally been the worst environment for a tank to operate in. The TUSK is a series of modifications made to an armored vehicle to compensate for the low maneuverability and possibility of attack from close range.

A vehicle equipped with a TUSK gains a +4 equipment bonus to Defense against all attacks made from within 60ft of the vehicle, but applies a -2 penalty to Drive/Pilot checks due to the increased weight of the vehicle.

Purchase DC: 15 + vehicle's hardness.
Restriction: none

ROBOTS

DQ1 WASP BATTLEDRONE (PL7)

The DQ1 Wasp is an autonomous, aerial hunter/seeker droid deployed in swarms from aerial platforms hovering far above a battle zone. Individually a Wasp needs regular orders from a command center, but when operating in a swarm their computers network together to form a clustered intelligence capable of reacting to rapidly changing situations in battle.

The DQ1 resembles a squat missile with a pair of sweeping fins on either side. Sensors and weaponry cluster around the nose of the drone and most of its body is taken up by its engine and power source.

Purchase DC: 37
Restriction: Military (+3)

Battledrone: CR 2; Medium-size construct; HD 1d10+10; hp 15; Mas —; Init +7 (+1 Dex, +2 equipment); Spd 60 ft. fly (poor); Defense 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; BAB +0; Grp +0; Atk +2 melee (1d2+2 probe) or +2 ranged (3d10 plasma rifle) or +1 ranged (mini-rocket launcher with EMP rocket); FS 5 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., acid resistance 10, cold resistance 10, electricity resistance 10, energy resistance 10, fire resistance 10, network cluster; AL varies; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 14, Dex 12, Con —, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills: Knowledge (tactics) +4, Listen +2, Navigate +6, Spot +10, Search +10
Feats: Weapon Focus (plasma rifle)
Equipment: Plasma rifle with 1 box of ammunition and a mini-rocket launcher with 5 internally loaded EMP rockets.

The "Wasp" battledrone has the following systems and accessories:
Frame: Bioreplica
Locomotion: Thruster (speed enhanced)
Manipulators: Probe
Armor: Neovulcanium armor
Sensors: Class VII sensor system.
Skill Software: (included above) Skill progit – Knowledge (tactics) 8 ranks, Spot 8 ranks
Feat Software: (included above) Weapon Focus (plasma rifle)
Ability Upgrade: Dexterity Upgrade (+2)
Accessories: inertial inhibitor, integrated video phone, survivor array, weapon mount (2)

Network Cluster: When two or more DQ1 Wasps operate within 30ft of one another the computers network together to improve their Intelligence. For every additional drone within 30ft of another drone the Intelligence of the swarm increases by +2, to a maximum of 20.

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COMMANDER'S ORDERS

TABLES

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