

GURPS[®] Space

SPACE ATLAS 3

The Worlds of the Confederacy

*By Dale Kemper
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STEVE JACKSON GAMES

GURPS[®] SPACE ATLAS 3

The Confederacy

A Compendium of Worlds for Interstellar Roleplaying

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INTRODUCTION

Using This Book

Space Atlas 3 — The Confederacy contains information on 26 worlds of the Great Spiral Cluster. The GM may photocopy and pass out to his players the pertinent planetary record sheets as needed. This is the standard data located in any average computer.

The GM *should not show* the pages of text to the players, but give them whatever background or information that he feels is necessary or properly asked for. In general, the players can be told general Confederate history or be allowed to read the introductory information on the organizations of the Confederacy. Adventure possibilities and other GM information should remain confidential, however.

Using the World Maps

The world maps of all Confederate planets use the system given in *GURPS Space*. Each map hex represents the same amount of space but the size of a hex depends on a planet's diameter. Multiply that by .07 to determine the distance across one hex.

Unless otherwise specified, the north pole is at the top of the map and the south pole is at the bottom. A circular area centered on each pole is provided to give a more accurate picture of the polar terrain.

The zero meridian line and the equator are shown as dashed lines. Other lighter dashed lines are also shown to connect divided map hexes.

Specific points of interest are shown with a number corresponding to text.



The following material covers 26 worlds of the Great Spiral Sector and their respective star systems. The worlds and their backgrounds are presented as individual roleplaying settings and are designed to be used in any interstellar campaign game. Any or all of the material in this book may also be used with other backgrounds or interstellar communities of the GM's design.

Format

Each planetary listing contains detailed information on the world, along with basic information about the stellar system it belongs to. The GM may take this information and expand upon it as much as desired.

The systems are listed in alphabetical order. Terminology is as defined in the *Stars and Worlds* sections of *GURPS Space*. All stars are main sequence unless otherwise indicated. Star class and subtype are given. For example, a star listed as B4 V is a blue-white star, subtype 4, of class V (main sequence).

Background

The Great Spiral Sector was colonized by a fleet of generation ships. The colonists hit the jackpot when they reached the Great Spiral Cluster. It had enough worlds to allow for population expansion, and they were close enough together to allow for easy interplanetary and interstellar travel. All eleven ships established colonies; nine of the colonies survived (the fate of the other two is a mystery). Once they landed, they cannibalized the generation ships for materials to start the first colonies. They soon discovered, however, that certain technologies were lost to them. They knew about blacksmithing, simple refining and radio, for instance, but did not have the technology for interstellar, or even simple atmospheric, flight — and if they had, they would not have had the tools or materials to implement such technologies.

Over the centuries, the colonies kept in touch with one another, after a fashion. Radio messages were beamed between the various star systems, but the messages were all sent one-way at the speed of light and could take over 200 years to cross the Spiral. The planets of the Great Spiral quickly drifted culturally and linguistically apart.

Eventually, several planets independently redeveloped space travel, then FTL travel, and began exploring their planetary systems. A secondary priority was the re-establishment of communication among the far-flung settlements.

Eventually the colonies began forming alliances, exploring their neighborhoods and trading with each other. But with the increased trade and communication came a new threat.

Piracy

It was inevitable that, as more and more ships began to travel among the stars, that some of their crews would resort to piracy. Within a 30-year span, piracy went from a few isolated cases to a major threat to shipping. The pirates were smart; at no time was the threat to shipping so severe that it threatened to cut commerce altogether. The pirates didn't want to cut off their supply of golden eggs.

Still, dozens of trading ships and hundreds of lives were lost every year to the pirates, along with untold amounts of food, medicine, raw materials and

supplies. To combat this menace, trading-ship captains began traveling in convoys, usually of 12 to 18 ships. They would meet to exchange information on when convoys were leaving, which star systems had reported pirate activity, what commodities were bringing the best prices, etc. These informal associations did not achieve their stated purpose of outwitting the pirates — for one thing, the pirates quickly infiltrated them and used the information for their own ends. However, they were the beginning of the Traders' Guild, which consequently boasts of being an older organization than the Confederacy.

In frustration, the governments of Bossilwick, Caractacalla, Tallamatrix, Mairsus, Bindar and the Trevor system met to organize for their mutual defense. They quickly drew up a plan for a united navy to meet the pirate threat and to provide for mutual defense.

This meeting marked the beginning of the Confederation of the United Worlds of the Great Spiral. From the beginning the organization was called the Confederacy, and it grew as new planets were colonized and developed to the point where they could function on their own and join as equal partners.

Fighting the Battle

At first, the Confederate Navy was a joke. The pirate fleets were better equipped, and more than once they simply bought off the undisciplined and unseasoned Confederate troops without combat. But as the Navy grew and developed and gained more disciplined sailors, the pirate menace began to be beaten back. Convoys of merchantmen were accompanied by flotillas of warships, which surprised and ambushed the pirates. And while the pirate menace has never been completely eradicated (piracy always looks like an easy way to make a buck for some people), it has been beaten back and is no longer the crippling menace it once was.

The navy once turned out to be important for protecting the Confederacy in a different way when Tallamatrix attempted to leave the Union in Y.C. 131.

Map Key

Below are the standard terrain symbols on the maps. For those making up their own, suggested colors are included for specific terrain.

Ocean:	
Dark blue	
Freshwater Sea:	
Light blue	
Marsh/Swamp:	
Yellow-green	
Plain/Steppe:	
Light green	
Icy/Barren:	
White	
Mountain/Volcanic:	
Dark brown	
Hilly/Rough:	
Light brown	
Forest/Jungle:	
Dark green	
Desert/Barren:	
Rust-red	
Urban/Populated:	
Crosshatched lines	
Major city	●
Capital	★
Restricted area	⊘
Important starport	▲





Tech Levels

The tech level of most Confederate planets is 10. Areas that require further development to reach TL10 include power plant technology and gravitics. Confederate interstellar drives are usually fusion powered.

In addition, computer science has fallen behind. There is little sentient computer research, and no robotics in any form. Artificial intelligences are still in the research stage, with some experimentation in practical use (particularly on Faro-Trevor). Artificial gravity has been developed for ships and orbiting bases, but gravitic drive for surface vehicles and atmospheric craft is not widespread.

If your campaign has a different tech level, the above information may be changed to fit your needs.

Leaving the Confederacy would not have been a crime — after all, it is a voluntary organization, with no real power to force its members to remain. Soon after, however, Tallamatrix recalled several Navy ships whose crews were primarily from that planet and used them to attack other Confederate ships. The commandeered ships were defeated, but not without heavy losses on both sides.

Confederate Government

The Confederacy is a loose alliance of planetary governments. To be a full member, a planet must have at least a million people and not be a colony or dependency of any other government. This means that solid, stable colonies like Padderborn are not eligible for Confederate membership, but a despotic planet like Biggs' World is — not a perfect state of affairs, but all in all, it works.

The Confederacy's governing and lawmaking body, the Confederate Assembly, houses representatives of the Confederacy's governments in proportion to their populations. All laws passed are subject to review by the High Council, composed of five representatives from each Confederate member world. Confederate law leaves the method of choosing both High Councilors and Assemblymen up to the individual governments involved. Enforcement of the law is left to each planet; the judicial system is decentralized, and is tailored to the customs of each world.

As a voluntary organization, the Confederacy has no power other than expulsion to keep its member states in line. Confederate laws are few, however, and mostly concerned with crimes of person and property. All planetary governments are required to enforce laws passed by the Assembly, but may add their own as well.

Funding

Each of the planets of the Confederacy is assessed an annual fee to fund the Confederate Navy and the Assembly. Most governments simply divide the amount of the fee among the populace and add it to whatever other taxes it levies, but the practice varies widely. Purgatory pays its entire fee out of the collective profits from its mining operation, for instance.

Alternate Backgrounds

Anarchy

The planets of the Great Spiral are so distant from the main area of human expansion, and so isolationistic, that they are ideal for use in an anarchic campaign.

All of the major planets are highly independent and mainly concerned with their own interests. Each sees the other planets primarily as trading partners; the worlds occasionally band together for defense, but are normally competitors.

In this type of campaign, the pirates are just another faction and are as likely to make deals and alliances with the other groups in the sector as any other.

Federation

The Federation is very much like the Confederacy, except that it has a stronger central government. While each planet has a great deal of autonomy, the Assembly passes many laws related to conduct among the planets. The civil service and its related bureaucracy are of necessity much larger than the Confederate versions.

The other primary difference is that the Federation is not voluntary. Secession from the Federation is a very serious matter, leading directly to civil war.

Empire

The Great Spiral is an outlying province of the Empire. The pirates are still a threat, but now instead of having to contend with a loose coalition of planets the pirates must deal with the Imperial Navy. Therefore, they are much more cautious and tend to go after highly lucrative targets (shipments of Purgatory Steel, for instance) — which influences where the Imperial Navy posts its ships.

Crown Prince Mikhail rules the Great Spiral from his palace in a 400-square-mile park in the center of Union. His father, the Emperor, considers this province ideal training before Mikhail takes over the entire Empire. It's sedate enough that the Crown Prince's life is not in danger, but has enough problems for him to solve to be good training.

In this background, Baron Rolf von Toerbach (see *Tallamatrix*, p. 52) is a member of the Royal Family. He will never be powerful enough to take on the Imperial Navy, so his goal is to discredit Mikhail in his father's eyes. By doing so, he hopes to have the Great Spiral placed under his control.

Civil War

Baron von Toerbach's plans have finally come to fruition. Bindar, Goggic, Mairsus and Trebberhorn are all under his control, and he has decided to make his move.

A war fleet under the Baron's command has entered the Calamain system, destroying much of the Confederate fleet there and capturing several of the mothballed ships. A force roughly equal in strength to the Baron's was out on maneuvers in the Sketola system, however.

Yâkut, Bossilwick, Wa-Lu, the Trevors and Keplo-Quitlan are definitely on Caractacalla's side. Part of the fun of a Civil War campaign will be to watch the other planets either line up behind one of the major players or attempt to keep itself neutral.

In a Civil War scenario, some of the adventure seeds in this book will be either impossible or much more dangerous than they would have been otherwise.

Confederate Organizations

Each government within the Confederation is left to handle its own internal affairs. This includes forming the organizations and appendages necessary to carry out its policies. Relations *between* planets, however, are handled by the Confederacy and by organizations set up by the Assembly.

Some of these organizations, such as the Navy and the ISF, consider themselves as important as the planetary governments and work to increase their influence within the Confederacy. Most stay in the background, however, quietly doing their jobs.

The Confederate Naval Administration (CNA)

The Navy is the largest organization in the Confederacy. In fact, it is so large, it is the only non-planetary body with representatives in the Assembly (though *not* in the High Council).

The Naval Administration is the highest supervisory body in the Navy. Subject to budget and political restrictions, it has the authority to build ships, recruit and train sailors and marines, and to conduct any action necessary to maintain the peace and security of the Navy. In an emergency it may undertake any action it feels necessary, but no Navy ship is ever allowed to fire the first shot in an action without the direct authorization of the High Council.

The Navy is also responsible for secure communications throughout the Great Spiral, for limited intelligence gathering and for certain ancillary functions

Animals

Where detailed descriptions of animals occur, they follow the format of the *GURPS Bestiary*. Most of the headings are self-explanatory. Habitats are abbreviated as follows:

- A = Arctic
- D = Desert
- F = Forest
- FW = Fresh-Water Aquatic
- J = Jungle
- M = Mountain
- O = Ocean
- P = Plains or Steppes
- S = Swamp
- SW = Salt-Water Aquatic
- U = Urban Areas

Pronunciation Guide

Achenaar	AK-en-ar
Aimar	EYE-marr
Anarus	ah-NARR-us
Belicose	BAY-lee-kose
Beptopetoin	bep-to-peh-TOYN
Bindar	BINN-darr
Calamain	KALL-a-main
Chok-Tah	TSHOK-tah
Colloth	kol-LOTH
Dinhe	DIN-yah
Duquessa	doo-KWAY-sah
F'rnow	FURR-now
Goggic	GAWDDZH-ik
Hidarin	high-DAH-rin
Iacus	eye-AK-kus
Kalathos-Ta-Quitla	KALL-a-thos- TAH-kwi-TA-la
Kerrone	ker-ROAN
Loedsteijn	LOAD-stine
Lygenus	ly-DZHAYN-us
Mairsus	MARE-sus
Malthus	MAHL-thus
Placæum	plah-KAY-um
Quitlos	kwi-TAH-los
Regalia	reh-GAH-lee-ah
Reggie	REDZH-ik
Rollaron	RAW-la-ronn
Seliech	SAY-li-ekh*
Silestra	syi-LESS-trah
Sinustra	syi-NOOS-trah
Sketola	SHKAY-to-lah
Tallamatrix	TAHL-ah-may-trix
Tintanabulus	tin-tah-NAH-byoo-lus
Tupec	TOO-pek*
Valorus	vahl-OH-rus
Via-Chan	vyah-TSHAN
Toerbach	TORE-bokh*
Wa-Lu	wah loo**
Wellum	VEHL-lum
Yâkut	YAAH-koots
Ye-Lu	yeh loo**
Yovellin	yoh-VAY-lin

* a guttural kh, as in Scots *loch*.

** Place equal stress on both syllables

Keeping Time in an Interstellar Community

"Time," as the wag observed, "is nature's way of keeping everything from happening at once." But in an interstellar community, how is time measured? Obviously, each planet rotates at a different speed, so the length of each planet's day will be different. In addition, each planet's year will have a different length, and no two will be the same.

Obviously a standard is necessary. Even on Earth, a plethora of time zones is confusing, and in order to facilitate communication the various nations of the world have agreed on Coordinated Universal Time (also known as Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)) as a worldwide standard. Whether it is 5:00 p.m. in New York City or 1:30 a.m. the next day in Teheran, the Coordinated Universal Time is 2200 hours.

Similarly, since the Confederate capital is at Union on Caractacalla, the time there is referred to as Confederate Mean Time and is used throughout the Great Spiral. But even this standard raises problems. Consider four clocks, all set at the same instant. One is instantaneously teleported from Caractacalla to Regalia, the second is placed aboard a ship which takes three weeks to reach Regalia by traveling the jumplines, the third is delivered on a ship which makes a single jump, and the fourth is placed on a slower-than-light ship which will not reach Regalia for many years. Which of these clocks, if any, shows the correct Confederate Mean Time?

The Confederates have solved this problem by establishing a time beacon, using FTL radio. The beacon reaches all of the planets of the Confederacy simultaneously, allowing (for instance) regular freight and passenger schedules to be established.

The Calendar

The Confederate Standard Year alternates between 239 and 240 days long, divided into 10 months. These months each have 24 days, except that every other year, the 10th month only has 23.

Years are numbered from the founding of the Confederacy, which occurred in Y.C. 1 (Y.C. standing for Year of Confederation). B.C. refers to Before Confederation.

Each planet also has its own calendar (some more than one), based on its day and its orbit around the sun. Conversion charts comparing local and Confederate time are available at any information terminal.

such as the standard time beacon (see sidebar). By law the communication and intelligence functions are strictly limited to military applications. In spite of this, there is a rivalry between the Navy and the ISF and Communications Commission, especially since the Navy occasionally considers certain matters "military" which the ISF and the CC feel fall under their jurisdiction.

Some planets have their own navies as well. In theory they are subject to the CNA and can be mobilized as part of the Confederate Navy in an emergency; in fact these navies are usually merely showpieces for the planets' governments and would be of little use in battle. A notable exception is the navy of Tallamatrix, which is stronger than it needs to be for planetary defense. Some of these ships rival the best of the Confederate Navy — a fact which has the CNA worried.

The Free Trade League

At the height of the pirate menace, before the formation of the Confederacy, traders would gather together for mutual protection. At first the main focus of these groups was survival — getting to their destinations with their cargoes intact. The groups soon began aiding each other in their business by exchanging information, not only about pirate activity but about cargoes and prices — and each other.

The informal groups eventually coalesced into the Free Trade League. Anyone can join by paying the required dues, which allows access to League services such as clubs at all spaceports of Class IV or V in the Great Spiral. "Primary" membership is restricted to pilots of interstellar trading craft; a primary member is allowed access to restricted services such as a cargo-and-ship matching service and a "pirate watch."

Membership in the League can be quite an asset to a party with its own ship, since it allows them to find both cargoes (allowing them to pick up some money) and convoys to help them get their cargoes where they're going.

The Agricultural Cartel

Several of the worlds of the Confederacy have outstripped their capacity to feed their people. This has opened up an opportunity for planets like those of the Trevor system, which produce much more food than they consume. Several of these worlds have banded together to form the Agricultural Cartel. Their aim is to assure a constant supply of food to the worlds of the Confederacy rather than to fix prices — although gaining a high price for their crops is a major secondary goal.

The Cartel owns many of its own ships and is often looking for crew — and it pays well, with bonuses for danger and for exceptional service. Some of these ships are not meant to be used for transportation; they are storage ships, keeping produce in reserve until it's needed. These ships may not be moved for very long periods of time, but they still need to be manned. This could be just what a character who wants to "get away from it all" for a while might want.

News and Entertainment

In general, news and entertainment are handled by the private sector. There are over a dozen Sector-wide news-gathering organizations and over a hundred entertainment production and distribution companies, not counting live and local (restricted to one planet) operations. Each government may restrict any of these organizations as it sees fit. Occasionally this is for propaganda purposes, as on Biggs' World, but it is also sometimes because of cultural preferences. Zyran tend to dismiss anything that happens off-planet as irrelevant, for instance.

The Communications Commission

This agency regulates communications between planets in three broad areas: physical mail, electronic mail and two-way communications. (This does not include military communications, which fall under the jurisdiction of the CNA.) The Commission does not provide facilities or set prices for these services; it merely ensures that those providing the service do so reliably and at a fair price.

Physical mail generally leaves and arrives on each planet once a week, where it enters the planet's own postal system. Thanks to the availability of instantaneous interstellar communications, few people write letters on paper; most are "voicegrams," digitized vocal messages sent electronically. Physical mail usually contains merchandise and other items which cannot be digitized.

(Note that if the referee's campaign does not include FTL interstellar radio communications, most mail will be delivered by the fastest means available. Voicegrams will be encoded as computer memory and delivered physically — although once on planet, they may be entered into a communications network for delivery at the recipient's terminal.)

The Internal Security Force (ISF)

The ISF is a combination intelligence agency and police force. Its duty, as specified by the Assembly, is to collect information necessary to the security and welfare of its citizens and turn that information over to the agency best equipped to act upon it. It also guards Confederate installations and officials; for instance, each High Councilman is entitled to two ISF bodyguards.

Many people see the ISF as spies, and espionage is part of their job. It is, however, a very small part, as they are quick to point out. Usually the ISF is called in to assist local police in tracking fugitives, investigating crimes of an interplanetary nature — or to keep an eye on possible threats to the Confederacy. While the ISF has infiltrated several sector-wide organizations such as Organize for Anarchy, so far they consider their biggest failure to be their inability to crack the anti-Confederate organization they believe is being put together by Baron von Toerbach of Tallamatrix. ISF agents posted or recruited on that planet have a way of disappearing mysteriously.

Occasionally an Assemblyman will decide that surveillance of a fellow Assemblyman is necessary to the security and welfare of the Confederacy, and will request that the ISF keep tabs on him. This is accepted as part of the cost of doing business, and the ISF complies as a matter of course. In fact, Union ISF headquarters counts on it; many of their "screw-ups" are transferred to Assembly posts, where they will be safely out of the way.

Survey

The inhabited systems of the Great Spiral sector have been extensively surveyed; as far as is known, there are no planets or moons left to discover. Many of the *planets*, however, have been incompletely surveyed, and it is entirely possible that they contain mineral riches or Precursor sites.

In addition, a number of uninhabited systems may have promising planets. The Survey, under the direction of the Assembly, is charged with mapping and exploring all systems within the boundaries of the Great Spiral. It's a big job; the Survey estimates that, if it doubled the number of its scout ships, the job could be done in only 500 years or so — and then there would be the worlds on the fringes on the Spiral to tackle.

Languages in the Great Spiral

The settlers of the Great Spiral were all of the same linguistic stock and spoke a language similar to several still used on planets elsewhere. Time and cultural differences have caused the languages to drift apart, of course; today, the languages spoken on Zyra and Tallamatrix are as different as English and Albanian (which also share a common linguistic heritage, and also went their separate ways several millennia ago).

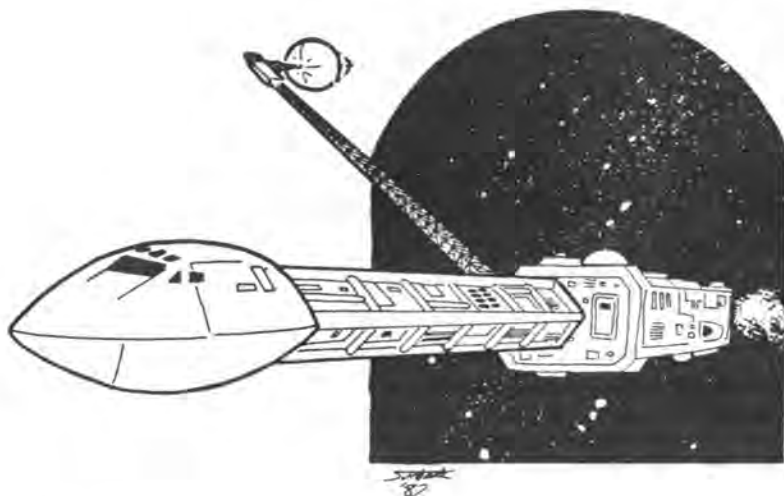
The primary common language of the Confederacy is Danatic, the language spoken on Caractacalla — specifically, the dialect of Danatic spoken at Union, the Confederate capital. (Residents of Acton, the planetary capital, take great pains to use their own dialect — it's all part of the rivalry between the two cities.) Other languages in common use include Kitalla, spoken on Tallamatrix, and Thetric, a trade language used at the Free Market on Amanamanin.

For simplicity, assume that any two languages of the Great Spiral default to each other at -5.

Literacy

Each planetary language has its own system of writing. In order to standardize laws, contracts, etc., however, the Confederate Assembly has adopted a secondary written language called *Pangloss*. Pangloss is constructed to be both intelligible to the human eye and easily computer-scannable, allowing rapid document translation into local languages.

Characters who wish to be Literate in Pangloss must take this as a separate language skill. Since it's not a different language — merely a different way of writing one's own language — Pangloss defaults to the character's IQ or native language skill, whichever is *lower*.



The Great Spiral Sector Map

On the following pages are star maps of the Great Spiral Sector for use in different types of campaigns. All maps are drawn to standard scale — 1 parsec per square — but if worlds are more distant or closer in your campaign, simply change the scale.

You may use the maps as is or modify them for an on-going campaign. Any additional worlds can be placed within the Great Spiral Cluster; the GM may drop any world that doesn't suit his needs. Any number of worlds outside the Confederacy may be placed on the map; these have not been listed here for simplicity's sake.

Normal-Space Map

The map on p. 9 is for use in normal-space campaigns. Generally, ships in this type of campaign use warp drive or similar time-consuming propulsion. The GM may add any navigational hazards (such as black holes or dust clouds) that fit into his own campaign.

Jumpline Map

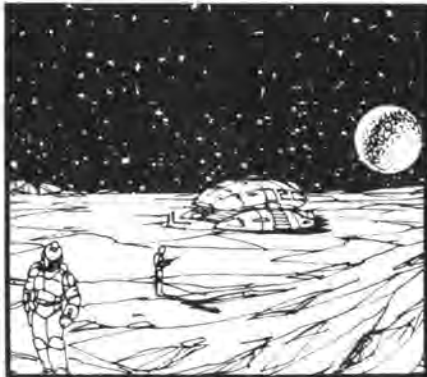
Page 10 is a map of the Confederacy, showing jumplines. We have assumed that jumplines more than 10 parsecs long are rare.

This map is for campaigns where ships use a jump drive that only works along jumplines. If jump points are used, the GM should use the map on p. 9 and add appropriate points.

Because many inhabited systems have no jumplines leading directly to other useful worlds, a number of extra "way-station" systems are shown on this map. These are shown by their star names, since none of the planets are important, and are differentiated by parentheses. Each of these way-station systems has at least one gas giant in campaigns where refueling is possible from such worlds, and at least one rockball where an emergency landing is possible.

Distance Table

Page 11 is a table of distances, in parsecs, between all 26 systems described in this book. It is generally the only "map" you need for hyperspace travel, and can be used in conjunction with either of the two maps when figuring travel times.



Private Organizations

There are many civilian and private organizations within the Confederacy, from the Bossilwick and Outer Regions Music-Lovers Society to the Association of Expatriate Grand Moguls of Goggic. None are regulated or monitored except those which are perceived as a threat to the Confederacy, most of which have some ties to Tallamatrix. One of the primary exceptions is the Organization for Anarchy, which advocates dismantling the Assembly and not replacing it with anything. Needless to say, this idea is extremely unpopular on Caractacalla. The Interstellar Security Force keeps its eye on the O4A, as it is known, but so far neither they have done nothing illegal.

Criminal Organizations

The largest group of criminals in the Great Spiral is, of course, the pirates. Little is known about their organization — in part, because they have an efficient code of silence, enforced by professional assassins. Their ships are primarily captured from private traders and refitted so as to be unrecognizable.

The Organization has branches on every inhabited planet in the Great Spiral. Its influence is greater in some places than in others; notably, it is very strong on Caractacalla (because of the population and the seat of government) and Deth (due to the *yovellin* trade) but almost nonexistent on Bindar and Regalia. Characters who need assistance in doing anything illegal should have no problem obtaining it.

Piracy

The above text has alluded to the pirate menace several times, and in fact no discussion of the Confederacy would be complete without reference to the pirates. Yet as important as they are to Confederate history, comparatively little is known about them. It is not known, for instance, whether there is one central pirate organization or whether each group acts on its own. The latter is most likely, but striking similarities in the way pirates have conducted their operations of late suggest that there may be one or more unified "pirate nations."

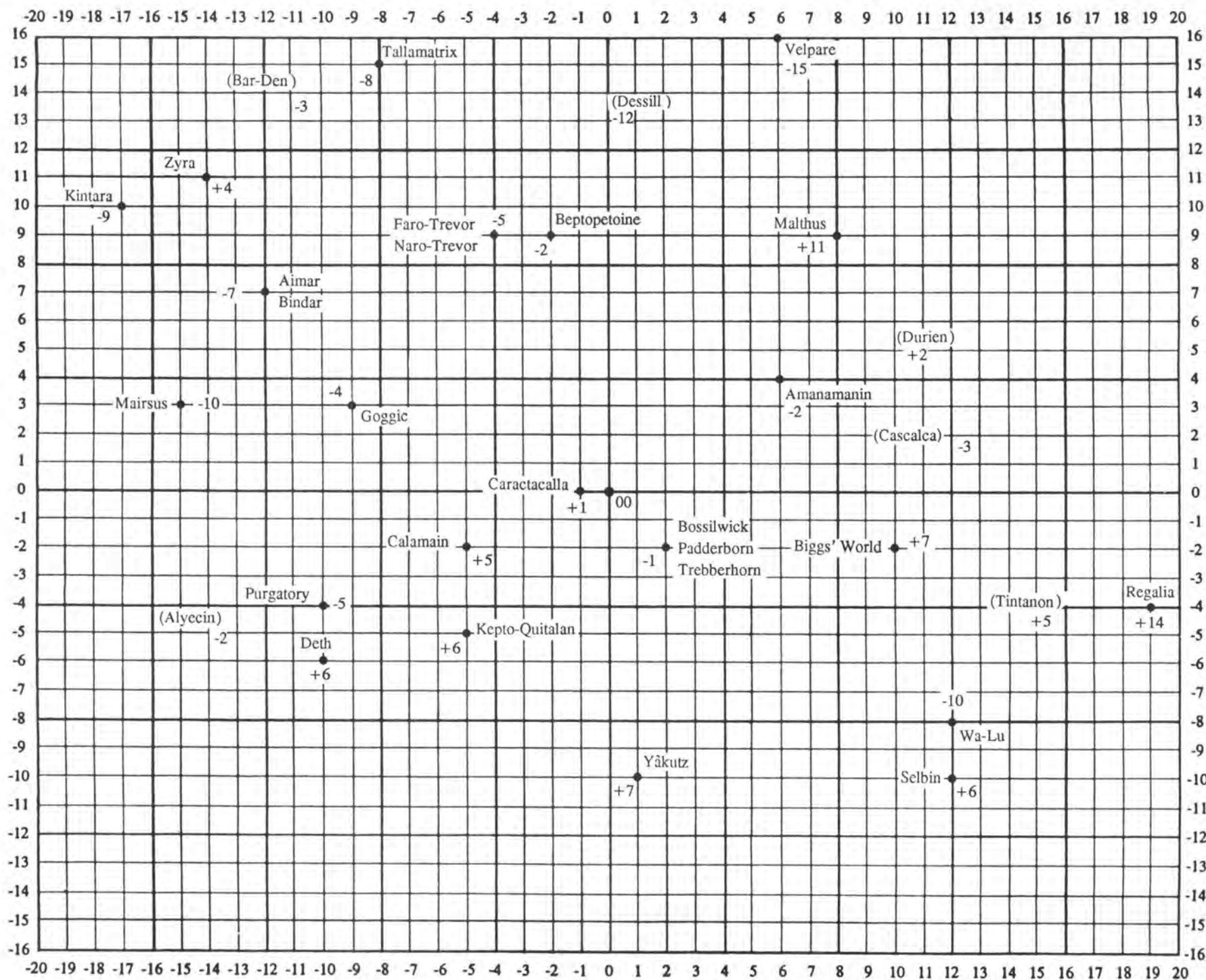
The GM who enjoys a challenge might consider a pirate-based campaign! If this is the case, the information given on the planets is public knowledge; they will be able to use it to avoid the Confederate Navy and the ISF. The GM is free to invent any sort of structure for the pirate community he likes, but one stricture should be observed: the Code of Silence.

The Code of Silence

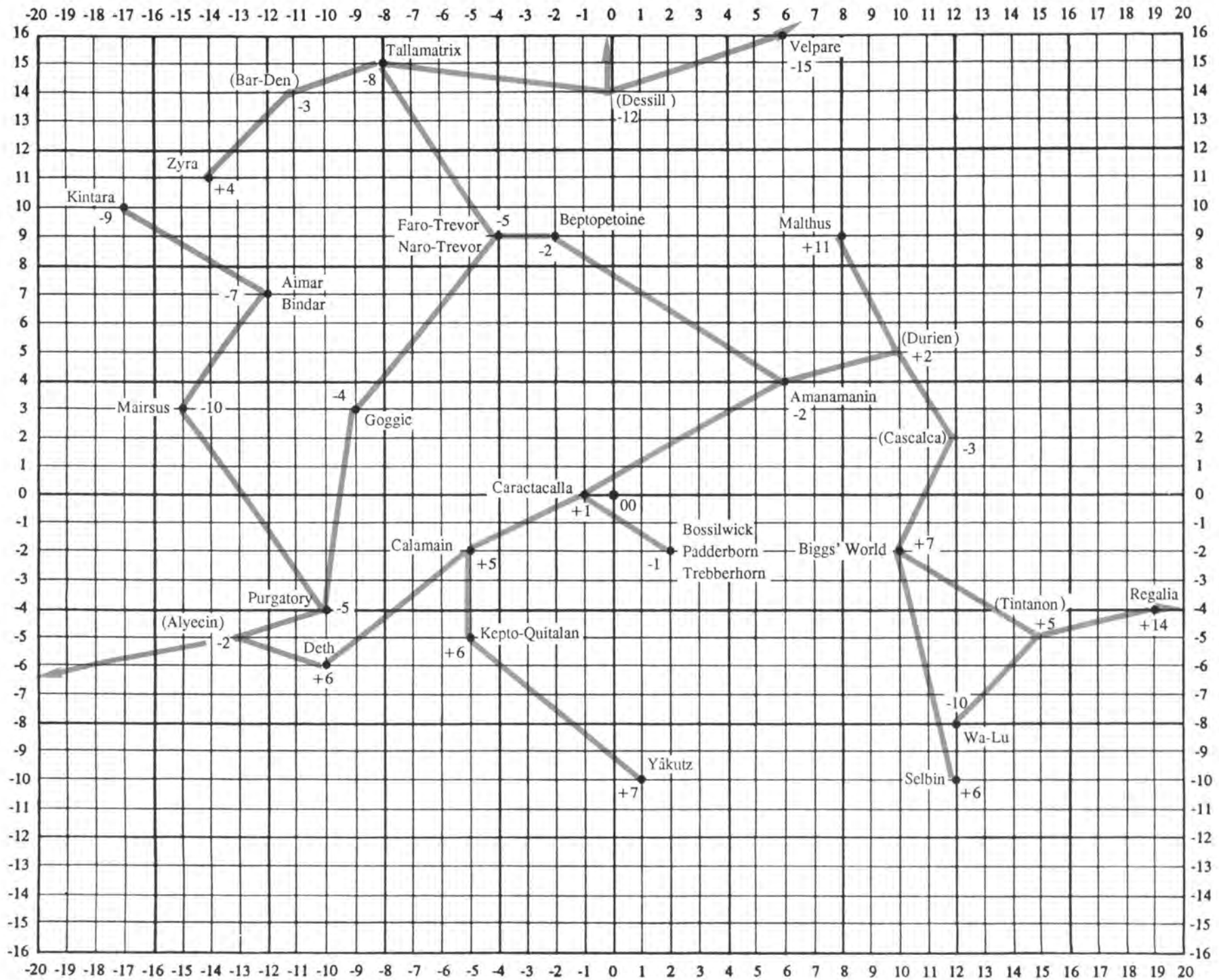
One of the pirates' main assets in the Confederacy is the relative lack of knowledge about them. The ISF has been unable to successfully penetrate their operations, and most of what the Navy knows about them is which ships they have hijacked to form their fleets. (Eyewitness descriptions of pirate raids suggest that these ships are taken apart and rebuilt, combining parts of old ships to make new ships which won't be recognized — so the naval information is of doubtful use at best.) Part of the reason for this is the Code of Silence.

No one agrees to the Code; it is imposed on them when they sign on with the pirates. Anyone who leaves the pirate service, except in "officially approved" ways, is hunted down and killed. (There appear to be several "officially approved" ways to retire; one of these is apparently a pirate colony on the prison planet of Placæum, equipped with every modern convenience.) Who does the tracking down and killing is a mystery.

Confederate Worlds Normal-Space Map



Confederate Worlds Jumphline Map



Distances Between Systems in the Confederate Worlds

Coordinates _____ Distances to Numbered Worlds (in parsecs) _____

#	Name	X	Y	Z	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Aimar	-12	7	-7	0.0	18.9	11.3	27.5	0.0	17.6	16.5	15.2	18.4	8.4	5.8	19.0	6.1
2	Amanamanin	6	4	-2	18.9	0.0	9.4	11.5	18.9	7.2	14.3	8.6	20.4	11.5	15.1	16.3	24.7
3	Beptopetoine	-2	9	-2	11.3	9.4	0.0	18.6	11.3	11.7	13.3	9.5	18.7	3.6	9.4	16.4	16.5
4	Biggs' World	10	-2	7	27.5	11.5	18.6	0.0	27.5	11.3	15.1	12.6	20.4	21.4	22.5	15.3	33.6
5	Bindar	-12	7	-7	0.0	18.9	11.3	27.5	0.0	17.6	16.5	15.2	18.4	8.4	5.8	19.0	6.1
6	Bossilwick	2	-2	-1	17.6	7.2	11.7	11.3	17.6	0.0	9.2	4.1	14.4	13.1	12.4	10.3	23.8
7	Calamain	-5	-2	5	16.5	14.3	13.3	15.1	16.5	9.2	0.0	6.0	6.4	14.8	11.0	3.1	22.0
8	Caractacalla	-1	0	1	15.2	8.6	9.5	12.6	15.2	4.1	6.0	0.0	11.9	11.2	9.8	8.1	21.3
9	Deth	-10	-6	6	18.4	20.4	18.7	20.4	18.4	14.4	6.4	11.9	0.0	19.5	13.4	5.0	23.0
10	Faro-Trevor	-4	9	-5	8.4	11.5	3.6	21.4	8.4	13.1	14.8	11.2	19.5	0.0	7.8	17.8	13.6
11	Goggic	-9	3	-4	5.8	15.1	9.4	22.5	5.8	12.4	11.0	9.8	13.4	7.8	0.0	13.4	11.7
12	Kepto-Quitlan	-5	-5	6	19.0	16.3	16.4	15.3	19.0	10.3	3.1	8.1	5.0	17.8	13.4	0.0	24.3
13	Kintara	-17	10	-9	6.1	24.7	16.5	33.6	6.1	23.8	22.0	21.3	23.0	13.6	11.7	24.3	0.0
14	Mairsus	-15	3	-10	5.8	22.4	16.4	30.6	5.8	19.8	18.7	18.0	19.0	13.4	8.4	20.4	7.3
15	Malthus	8	9	11	26.9	14.0	16.4	11.8	26.9	17.3	18.0	16.1	23.9	20.0	23.4	19.7	32.0
16	Naro-Trevor	-4	9	-5	8.4	11.5	3.6	21.4	8.4	13.1	14.8	11.2	19.5	0.0	7.8	17.8	13.6
17	Padderborn	2	-2	-1	17.6	7.2	11.7	11.3	17.6	0.0	9.2	4.1	14.4	13.1	12.4	10.3	23.8
18	Pergatory	-10	-4	-5	11.3	18.1	15.5	23.4	11.3	12.8	11.3	11.5	11.1	14.3	7.1	12.1	16.1
19	Regalia	19	-4	14	39.0	22.1	29.4	11.5	39.0	22.7	25.7	24.1	30.1	32.5	34.0	25.3	44.9
20	Selbin	12	-10	6	32.1	17.2	24.9	8.3	32.1	14.5	18.8	17.1	22.3	27.1	26.6	17.7	38.2
21	Tallamatrix	-8	15	-8	9.0	18.7	10.3	28.9	9.0	20.9	21.6	18.8	25.3	7.8	12.6	24.5	10.3
22	Trebberhorn	2	-2	-1	17.6	7.2	11.7	11.3	17.6	0.0	9.2	4.1	14.4	13.1	12.4	10.3	23.8
23	Velpare	6	16	-15	21.6	17.6	16.7	28.7	21.6	23.1	29.0	23.6	34.3	15.7	22.6	31.6	24.5
24	Wa-Lu	12	-8	-10	28.4	15.6	23.4	18.1	28.4	14.7	23.4	18.8	27.2	23.8	24.4	23.5	34.1
25	Yakutz	1	-10	7	25.5	17.3	21.2	12.0	25.5	11.3	10.1	11.8	11.7	23.0	19.7	7.8	31.3
26	Zyra	-14	11	4	11.8	22.0	13.5	27.4	11.8	21.2	15.8	17.2	17.5	13.6	12.3	18.4	13.3
#	Name	X	Y	Z	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1	Aimar	-12	7	-7	5.8	26.9	8.4	17.6	11.3	39.0	32.1	9.0	17.6	21.6	28.4	25.5	11.8
2	Amanamanin	6	4	-2	22.4	14.0	11.5	7.2	18.1	22.1	17.2	18.7	7.2	17.6	15.6	17.3	22.0
3	Beptopetoine	-2	9	-2	16.4	16.4	3.6	11.7	15.5	29.4	24.9	10.3	11.7	16.7	23.4	21.2	13.5
4	Biggs' World	10	-2	7	30.6	11.8	21.4	11.3	23.4	11.5	8.3	28.9	11.3	28.7	18.1	12.0	27.4
5	Bindar	-12	7	-7	5.8	26.9	8.4	17.6	11.3	39.0	32.1	9.0	17.6	21.6	28.4	25.5	11.8
6	Bossilwick	2	-2	-1	19.8	17.3	13.1	0.0	12.8	22.7	14.5	20.9	0.0	23.1	14.7	11.3	21.2
7	Calamin	-5	-2	5	18.7	18.0	14.8	9.2	11.3	25.7	18.8	21.6	9.2	29.0	23.4	10.1	15.8
8	Caractacalla	-1	0	1	18.0	16.1	11.2	4.1	11.5	24.1	17.1	18.8	4.1	23.6	18.8	11.8	17.2
9	Deth	-10	-6	6	19.0	23.9	19.5	14.4	11.1	30.1	22.3	25.3	14.4	34.3	27.2	11.7	17.5
10	Faro-Trevor	-4	9	-5	13.4	20.0	0.0	13.1	14.3	32.5	27.1	7.8	13.1	15.7	23.8	23.0	13.6
11	Goggic	-9	3	-4	8.4	23.4	7.8	12.4	7.1	34.0	26.6	12.6	12.4	22.6	24.4	19.7	12.3
12	Kepto-quitlan	-5	-5	6	20.4	19.7	17.8	10.3	12.1	25.3	17.7	24.5	10.3	31.6	23.5	7.8	18.4
13	Kintara	-17	10	-9	7.3	32.0	13.6	23.8	16.1	44.9	38.2	10.3	23.8	24.5	34.1	31.3	13.3
14	Mairsus	-15	3	-10	0.0	31.7	13.4	19.8	9.9	42.2	33.9	14.0	19.8	25.1	29.1	26.7	16.1
15	Malthus	8	9	11	31.7	0.0	20.0	17.3	27.3	17.2	20.0	25.5	17.3	27.0	27.3	20.6	23.1
16	Naro-Trevor	-4	9	-5	13.4	20.0	0.0	13.1	14.3	32.5	27.1	7.8	13.1	15.7	23.8	23.0	13.6
17	Padderborn	2	-2	-1	19.8	17.3	13.1	0.0	12.8	22.7	14.5	20.9	0.0	23.1	14.7	11.3	21.2
18	Pergatory	-10	-4	-5	9.9	27.3	14.3	12.8	0.0	34.6	25.3	19.3	12.8	27.4	22.9	17.3	17.9
19	Regalia	19	-4	14	42.2	17.2	32.5	22.7	34.6	0.0	12.2	39.6	22.7	37.5	25.3	20.2	37.6
20	Selbin	12	-10	6	33.9	20.0	27.1	14.5	25.3	12.2	0.0	34.9	14.5	33.9	16.1	11.0	33.4
21	Tallamatrix	-8	15	-8	14.0	25.5	7.8	20.9	19.3	39.6	34.9	0.0	20.9	15.6	30.5	30.5	14.0
22	Trebberhorn	2	-2	-1	19.8	17.3	13.1	0.0	12.8	22.7	14.5	20.9	0.0	23.1	14.7	11.3	21.2
23	Velpare	6	16	-15	25.1	27.0	15.7	23.1	27.4	37.5	33.9	15.6	23.1	0.0	25.2	34.4	28.0
24	Wa-Lu	12	-8	-10	29.1	27.3	23.8	14.7	22.9	25.3	16.1	30.5	14.7	25.2	0.0	20.3	35.1
25	Yakutz	1	-10	7	26.7	20.6	23.0	11.3	17.3	20.2	11.0	30.5	11.3	34.4	20.3	0.0	25.9
26	Zyra	-14	11	4	16.1	23.1	13.6	21.2	17.9	37.6	33.4	14.0	21.2	28.0	35.1	25.9	0.0

Aimar (Rollaron V)

Aimar is something of a curiosity. Once a booming planet whose people had everything money could buy, they have turned their backs on the technology of their ancestors — and in doing so, are making more money than their forefathers ever dreamed of!

History

At one time, Aimar was the permanent home of the miners of the Bindar Exploration Company (the BEC — for the early history of the two planets, see *Bindar*, p. 20). At any given time 90% of the company's miners were at work on Bindar, while the rest were on leave with their families on Aimar.

When the BEC collapsed, communication between the planets was severed. Since all outside trade had been handled through the BEC, contact with other worlds was suspended as well. Aimar and Bindar were on their own.

When the Rollaron system was "rediscovered" over a century later, Aimar's society had regressed to a nomadic, tribal existence. Of necessity the people had banded together to hunt and gather. A second necessity shaped their society as well, one hinted at by the fact that when the BEC collapsed the population of Aimar was only 14% male. Even though this imbalance only lasted a generation, the pattern had been set, and it was not uncommon for a man to have four or more wives. (Ten wives, however, was cause for admiration and envy.)

The Aimarians had changed in many other ways as well. They no longer lived in the cities, but moved from place to place, following the herds of game animals. At first, this was a practical measure — something they were forced to do as the stores of food ran out — but they later turned it to their advantage in other ways.

The Business of Primitivism

While the rest of the Great Spiral seems to be moving inexorably into the future, the people of Aimar have retreated into the past. This has made Aimar very popular as a retreat for everyone from honeymooners to stressed-out corporate executives.

These retreats aren't come cheap, however. A two-week vacation on Aimar costs more than \$40,000 per person. They charge for other services as well; for instance, the Aimarians never go near the cities their ancestors lived in (there's no taboo against it — there just isn't anything in the cities to interest the modern Aimarian). However, they have no qualms against outsiders entering the cities. Teams of archaeologists constantly study the cities to gain insight into the lives of pre-collapse Aimarians — and pay for the privilege.

It may seem odd that the Aimarians charge for these services — after all, they seldom travel off-planet and have little need of Confederate money. But tribal elders have three reasons for extracting large amounts of money. First, they reason, these people have money to spare. Second, the high fees are a way of weeding out the merely curious and making sure that those who pay their fees will appreciate their stay. (These fees are adjusted according to perceived interest and ability to pay, and are sometimes even waived for anthropologists and those who want to adapt the Aimarians' techniques to their own home planets.)

And third, the fees fund a TL10 medical facility which is the equivalent of anything in the Great Spiral. No one is quite sure why medicine is the only technology these primitives embrace, but those who need the medical care don't question the idea.

In the Wild

Of course, since there is no mechanized transportation in the wild (the fastest means of travel is pack animal and travois), tribal healers need to be trained in first aid and simple medical procedures. This is necessary because many of the animals the Aimarians hunt are fully capable of fighting back — especially the *tupec*, a long-horned ruminant.

Needle Nose Tupec

ST: 50-70	Speed/Dodge: 17/8	Size: 2-3
DX: 12	PD/DR: 1/1	Weight: 1,000-2,000 lbs.
IQ: 6	Damage: 1+2	Origin: SF
HT: 15-20	Reach: C	Habitats: P

The tupec is hunted by the Aimarians for food — one animal provides enough meat to feed a typical tribe for a day or two — and by offworlders for sport (though each offworld party is only allowed one tupec kill per visit).

Tupecs are generally considered to be smarter than most animals, and some believe that they are able to set traps for human hunters by stampeding a party or forcing hunters off a cliff. They are considered worthy opponents and are very important to the Aimarian way of life, much like the Plains Indians' relationship with the buffalo (although without the religious aspects).

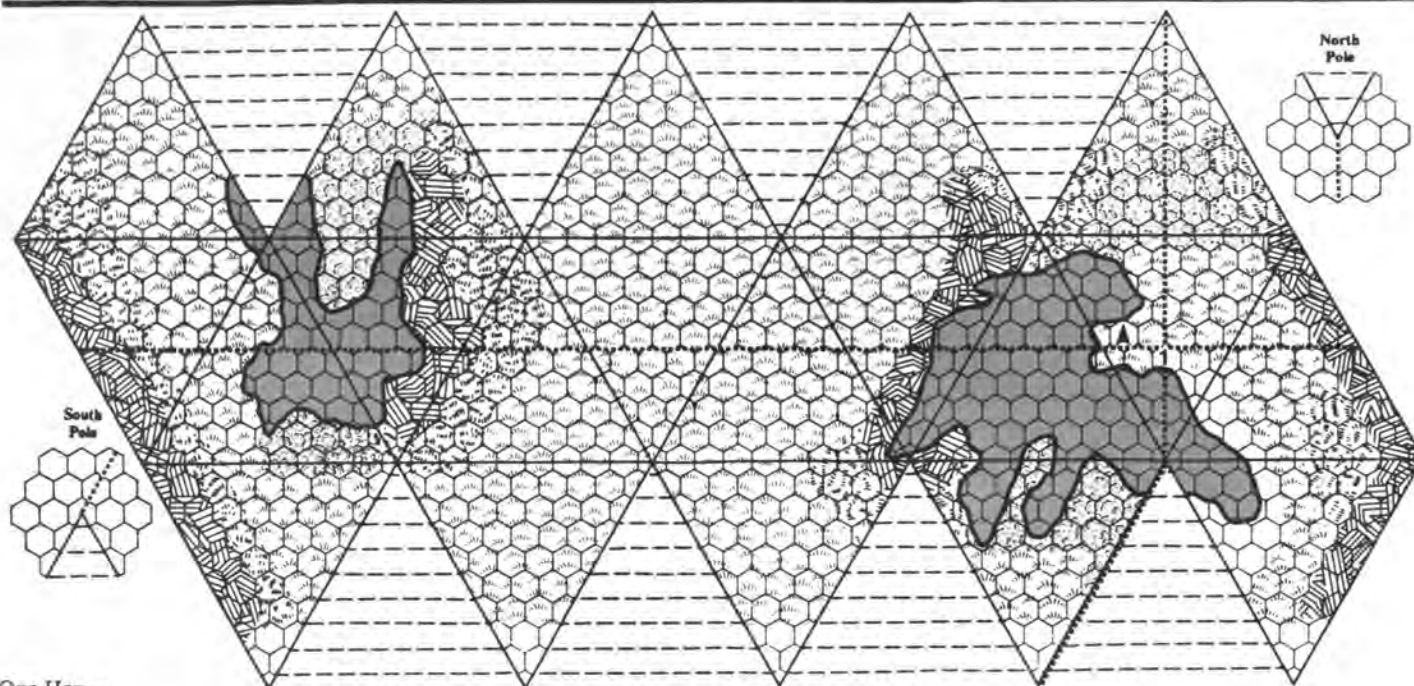
Adventure on Aimar

Blood Brothers. The characters are accompanying a business tycoon on a hunting trip to Aimar. (Of course, the tycoon will pay all of the party's expenses.) While stalking a herd of tupecs with a group of native guides from the White Moon clan, the tupecs are spooked when a group of warriors from the Shining Mountain clan charges them from the brush. Shining Mountain is at war with the Many Stars clan and is expecting a Many Stars war party. Normally they would not attack the White Moon group, but Shining Mountain warriors work themselves into a battle frenzy and sometimes even attack each other.

The offworlders were required to store all of their personal equipment for the duration of their stay and can only defend themselves with knives, swords, bows and arrows and their wits. If they can avoid being killed and win the fight, they will be accepted as blood brothers within the White Moon clan and gain some valuable friends. If they lose . . . best not to think about it.



PLANETARY RECORD: Aimar (Rollaron V)



One Hex =
659 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 9,418 mi. Gravity 1.25 G Density 5.8 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 18° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 31 hours Length of Year 1,121 days/ 3.96 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .9 (Standard) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 75%, Oxygen 19%, Neon 1%, CO₂ 3%, Other 2%
 Climate Earth-Normal Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 60° Average 80° High 100°
 Surface Water: 20 % Humidity 23 % Primary Terrain Plains/Steppes
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Ample Radioactives Absent
 Heavy Metals Scarce Industrial Metals Scarce Light Metals Ample Organics Plentiful
 Moons 4 large (Altest, Salmore, Wacinto, Almonte)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans
 Other Significant Life Forms Mammal analogs

Civilization: Population(s) 8,500,000 (PR 7) Tech Level(s) 3 (10) Control Rating 1
 Society Clan/Tribal
 Starports Small class II at Trader's Settlement
 Installations Large TL10 medical facility
 Economic/Production Tourist trade, little import or export

Other notes: Map key: Capital, Trader's Settlement. (1) Central medical facility

System Information:

Star Name Rollaron Type F4 III Location Great Spiral -12/7/-7
 Biozone 2.5-3.7 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 7

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Mörr	1 .1	Hot Rockball	1,000	5.3	.12	None	—
Först	2 .5	Huge Gas Giant	210,000	2.1	10.09	Hydrogen	Asteroid belt orbits
Domitar	3 .9	Hostile Greenhouse	7,000	5.1	.81	Superdense Nitrogen	—
Pindel	4 1.7	Hot Rockball	5,000	4.8	.54	None	—
Aimar	5 3.4	Earthlike	9,418	5.8	1.25	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Bindar	6 6.5	Terrestrial	6,127	5.5	.77	Nitrogen-Ammonia	Detailed on p. 21
Aialör	7 12.9	Iceball	1,000	2.8	.06	Frozen Water Vapor	—

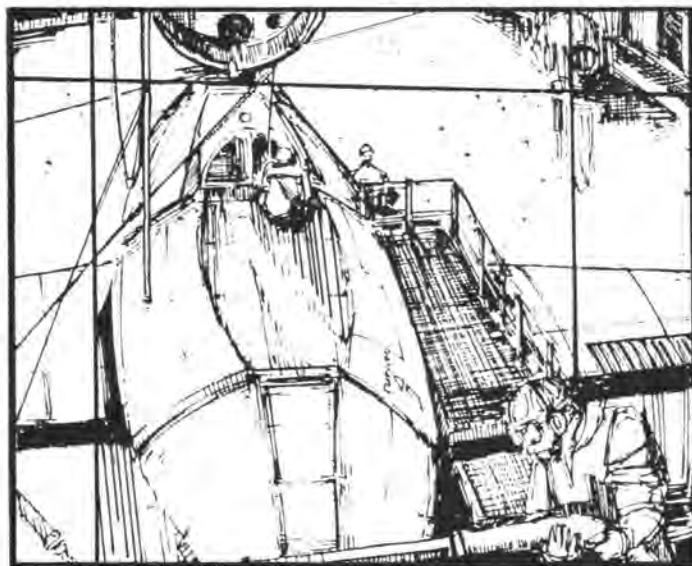
Amanamanin (F'rnow II)

Amanamanin is one of the most strategic planets in the Confederacy — it is a major shipping port, the headquarters for a major transportation line and home to a large industrial complex.

The Achenaar-Antilles Line

Named for the two captains who founded the line roughly 300 years ago, the Achenaar-Antilles Line began primarily as a passenger service, ferrying colonists from Amanamanin to outlying planets. Naturally, the colonists needed cargo service — for personal goods, to export their produce and to import luxuries unavailable on the frontier. Soon the Line expanded to other star systems, and today, for every ten trips made between star systems in the Great Spiral, six are made by Achenaar-Antilles.

The Line's headquarters are adjacent to the planet's main starport, near Bartertown. Most of the employees are full-time company men and women, but the Line is always hiring — especially for contract or dangerous jobs. To be hired, a character must have a skill level of at least 12 in his specialization. The Line hires men, not ships — a character who owns a ship will have to leave it in storage while he conducts his mission for Achenaar-Antilles. On the other hand, assuming he performs well, he will be able to work his way back to Amanamanin. (If he doesn't, getting back to his ship may be an adventure in itself!)



Bartertown Port

The business generated by the Achenaar-Antilles line has transformed the once-sleepy planetary capital of Bartertown into the third-largest spaceport in the Confederacy (behind Union Port on Caractacalla and the Wa-Lu Shipyards). But while Union Port's imports are designed to feed the capital of the Confederacy and the Wa-Lu Shipyard primarily imports goods for its own use, the goods of the entire Great Spiral pass through Bartertown.

Many businesses have grown up on Amanamanin to take advantage of its location — insurers, brokers, commodities traders, temporary help agencies and consultants all have offices at Bartertown. Perhaps the largest and most visible of these is the Bartertown Commodities Exchange. It matches purchasers with sellers, allowing middlemen to make a profit (or to lose their shirts — sometimes in the same shipment).

Another Bartertown institution is the Free Market. In this cordoned-off area near the spaceport, almost everything is for sale, from the legal (fruits from Kintara, for instance) to the

questionable (Purgatory mining stocks, some of which might even be valuable as something other than curios) to the outright illegal (drugs from Deth, Precursor artifacts imported from Selbin without permission, etc.). A shrewd shopper can find incredible bargains in the Free Market, but a couple of old sayings apply: "In the Free Market, the seller always gets the best of the deal," and "When you make a deal in the Free Market, always make sure you leave with the same number of fingers you entered with — and count them again two weeks later."

Orbital Facilities

Most of Amanamanin's heavy industries are located in orbit — to save both energy (by not having to move goods into and out of the planetary gravity well) and the planet's environment. The largest of these is the Amanamanin Shipyard.

Though not as extensive as the shipyards orbiting Wa-Lu, the Amanamanin Shipyard has the advantage of being located at a major trade nexus. It primarily handles repairs rather than construction, although several ships are under construction at any given time (though there are no bays as large as the ones at Wa-Lu).

Other heavy facilities located in orbit include steel and paper mills, fabrication plants, warehouses and communications centers. Fabricated goods built in orbit are strictly for export — Amanamanin maintains enough production facilities on-planet, under strict environmental controls, to supply its own needs.

Adventure on Amanamanin

Forced Rescue. One of the commodities there's never a shortage of at the Amanamanin Free Market is passengers. Commercial fares to Amanamanin are low because it's such a common destination, and tramp freighters will often allow passengers to work in exchange for a ride. Usually, no one has to wait more than a day or two for a lift off-planet.

Sometimes these passengers are in a hurry, willing to pay well to get off the planet and not very choosy about their destination. The PCs are approached by two people, a man and his wife, who fit this description. They won't say why they're in such a hurry, but offer to pay well to get out of the F'rnow system.

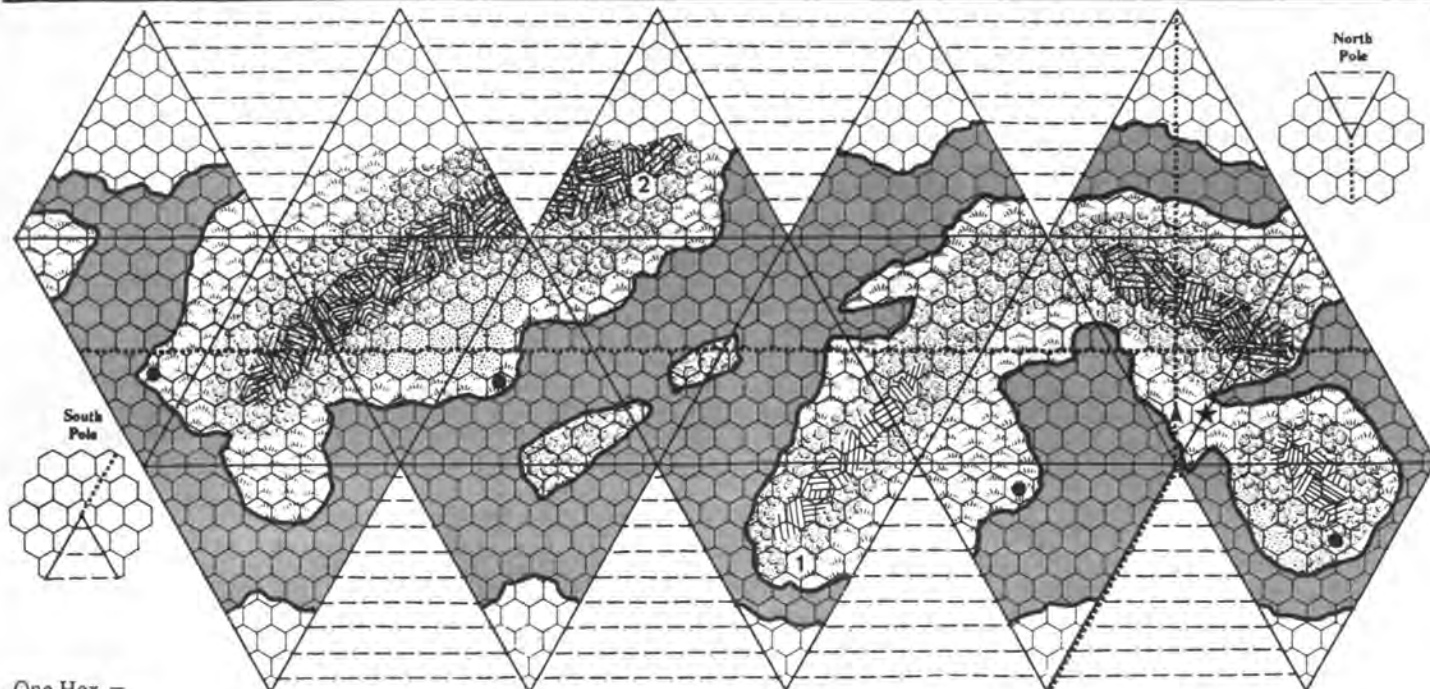
Once off planet, however, the man announces that he and his wife have planted several explosive devices on the ship. They will detonate unless they both send a electronic signal every few hours. He demands that the PCs take them to the Sketola system. (Neither is a pilot, but they can interpret an astrogration chart well enough to know if that's where the pilot is taking them.)

Once in the Sketola system (if the characters haven't outwitted the hijackers), they meet up with several dozen other ships, some of which were commandeered like theirs, others of which are broadcasting known pirate identification codes. From conversation among the ships, the party gathers that the pirates are getting ready to attack the fleet guarding the prison planet of Placæum (see *Caractacalla*, p. 26). The ones that get through the fleet will "liberate" a group of prisoners.

The PCs have a tough choice: Do they go along with the scheme and risk being branded as pirates themselves, or do they try and free themselves from the hijacking?

As an added complication, choose a member of the party at random. That character has a brother who was sent to prison many years ago. Word has reached him via Radio Free Placæum that this brother remarried and has a son and daughter — all of whom might be rescued if they can be found in the confusion.

PLANETARY RECORD: Amanamanin (F'rnow II)



One Hex =
569 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 8,132 Gravity 1.06 G Density 5.7 Composition Medium-Iron
 Axial Tilt 21° Seasonal Variation Earthlike Length of Day 33 hours Length of Year 198 days/ .75 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .91 (Standard) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 77%, Oxygen 18%, CO₂ 3%, Others 2%
 Climate Cool Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 45° Average 65° High 85°
 Surface Water: 64% Humidity 55% Primary Terrain Forest/Rough
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Absent Radioactives Ample
 Heavy Metals Ample Industrial Metals Ample Light Metals Plentiful Organics Ample
 Moons Four small (Elo, Paltain, Mamannam, Sansar)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Mammal and reptile analogs, extensive plant life

Civilization: Population(s) 1,125,000,000 (PR 9) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 2

Society Representative democracy, heavy influenced by large businesses

Starports Class V at Bartertown, Class V in orbit

Installations Achenaar-Antilles Line starport in orbit; extensive manufacturing facilities

Economic/Production Starship construction, transportation, manufacturing, trade

Other notes: Map key: Capital, Bartertown. (1) Eksreth (2) Danyea

System Information:

Star Name F'rnow

Type G6-IV

Location Great Spiral 6/4/-2

Biozone 1.0-1.5

Inner Limit 0

Number of Planets 6

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Sagramathou	1 .6	Rockball	1,500	6.6	.22	Trace CO ₂	—
Amanamanin	2 1.0	Earthlike	8,132	5.7	1.06	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Beptopetoine	3 1.4	Earthlike	7,432	5.1	.87	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed on p. 17
Calvenarion	4 2.2	Terrestrial	6,000	5.3	.72	Thin CO ₂	—
Domesequinto	5 3.8	Medium Gas Giant	35,000	1.6	1.28	Hydrogen/Helium	—
Thotomoroin	6 7.0	Iceball	2,000	1.9	.09	None	—

Beptopetoine (F'rnow III)

Beptopetoine is an anomaly — a colony that is quite content with its role, willing to go along with its parent planet in politics and interstellar relations. And why not? Amanamanin is an anomaly as well — a colonial power willing to be considerate of its charge.

History

Astronomers on Amanamanin had Beptopetoine under observation for many years before the redevelopment of interplanetary travel. They knew that it supported life and had a nitrogen-oxygen atmosphere with unusually strong weather systems, but were unable to discover much more.

Naturally, the first interplanetary probe to leave Amanamanin was sent to Beptopetoine. It reported an atmosphere and weather pattern similar to the parent planet's. The call went out for volunteers, and several thousand would-be colonists left two years later to settle the new planet.

After five years on their new home, the colonists discovered that the probe had observed a lull in the planet's meteorological cycle. The storms returned with a vengeance, with frequent hurricanes and severe thunderstorms hitting most locations an average of twice a month.

The colonists had made their choice, however, and were determined to stick it out. They began planting water-intensive crops such as rice, and botanists and genetic engineers started work on hydrophilic varieties of other plants and trees.

The research paid off, and today Beptopetoine supplies wetland plants throughout the Great Spiral. Not only is it able to feed its own people, it exports a considerable surplus to Amanamanin and several other planets.

Sea Life

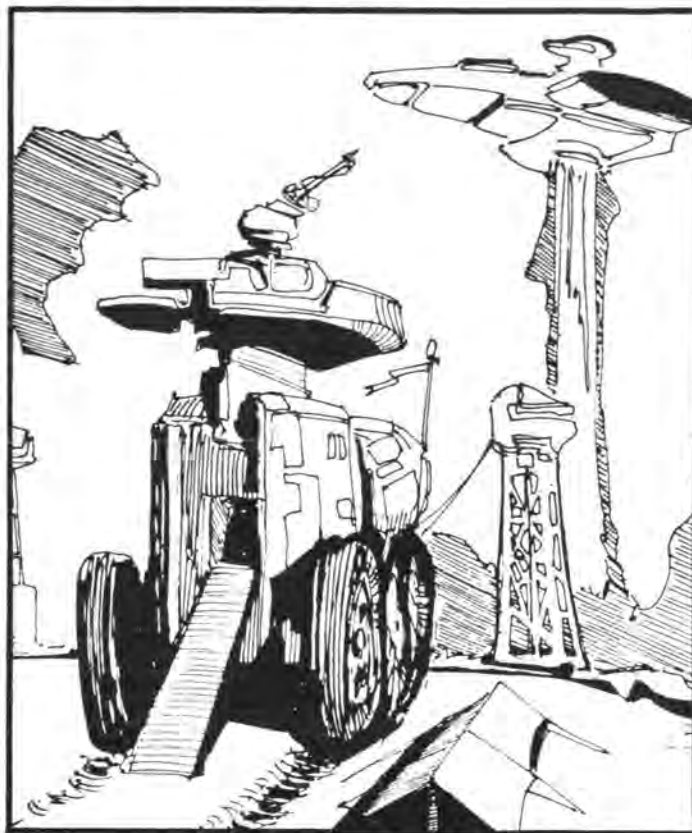
One might expect that a planet with as much surface water as Beptopetoine would have a rich harvest of fish and other sea food, but this is not the case. So far, all but one of the forms of sea life discovered have been either poisonous or not worth the effort to catch. The *belney*, for example, is abundant and easy to catch, but cannot be eaten by humans.

Belney

ST: 4	PD/DR: 0/0	Size: 1
DX: 12	Move: 3	Weight: 5-15 lbs.
IQ: 3	Damage: Special #	Origin: SF
HT: 4	Reach: 0	Habitat: FW

Belneys are large fish, about the size of a sea trout. Eating 1 ounce of belney causes convulsions and the victim must make a HT roll to avoid taking 1 point of damage (cumulative). Since there is no way to neutralize the toxin and make the fish edible, and the toxin is too pervasive within its body to be easily extractable, the belney is almost useless. (It could be used to poison the unwary, and is part of the ocean's food chain.)

The only edible type of sea life known on Beptopetoine is the *arbla*, a very small fish. They are generally cooked and eaten whole, like sardines. The *arbla* contains the same toxin as the belney, but in amounts are so small that it passes through the body. Zoologists believe that *arbla* are near the bottom of the food chain, and that belneys accumulate the toxin as they eat the smaller fish.



Adventure on Beptopetoine

Riders on the Storm. A new fad is sweeping Beptopetoine — storm surfing! The storm surfer rides his small vessel — a small, kayak-shaped craft with just enough anti-grav power to keep it stable — on the inner wall of the eye of the hurricane, sometimes for an hour or more. The sport is exciting, addictive — and very dangerous.

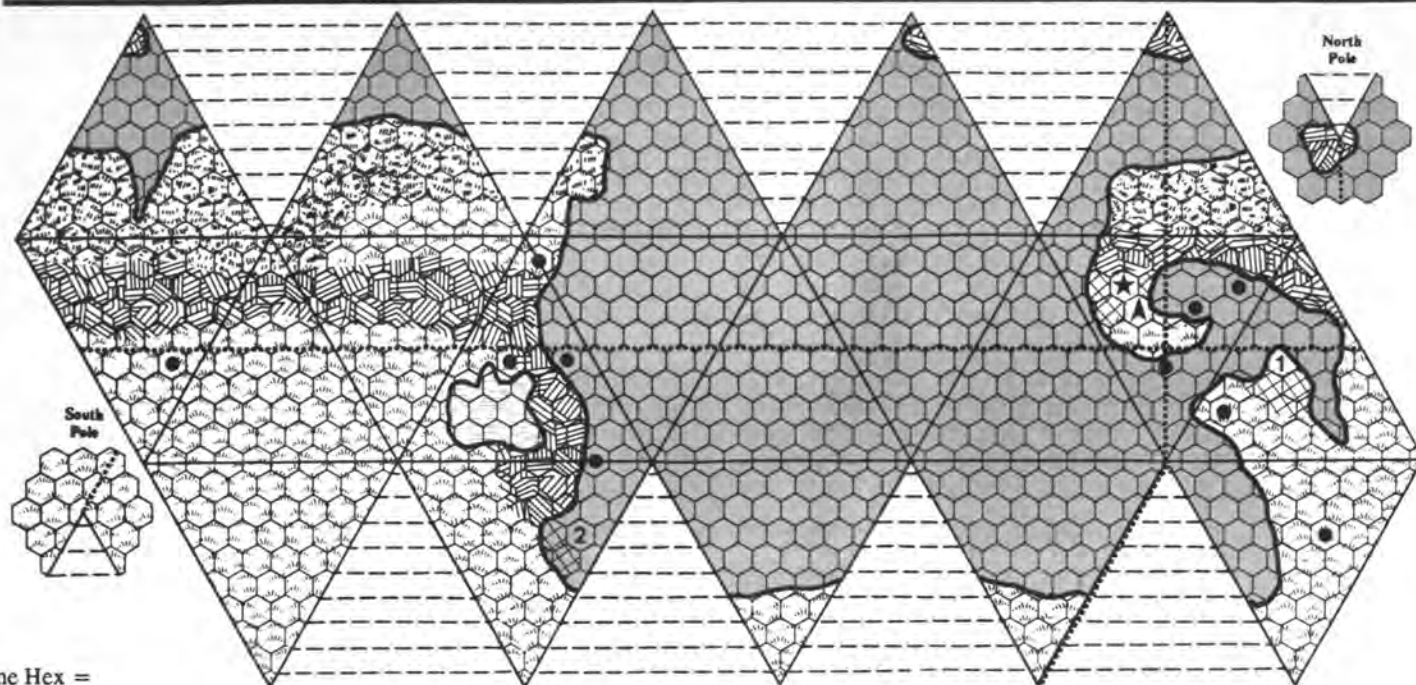
The PCs may want to give storm surfing a try. Storm surfing requires repeated Piloting rolls, but because the sport is so difficult, all rolls are made at -2 or worse! Or if they're in the F'rnow system on other business, they may want to watch an exhibition. In either case, they will get to meet Max Mikelovic, one of the top five storm surfers on the planet.

After they meet and socialize for an evening, Max turns up missing on the eve of a big storm surfing match. As they are some of the last people to see Max before his disappearance, the characters are under suspicion. There appears to be only one way to clear their names — they must find Max.

The Search. The characters are on Beptopetoine picking up a load of hydroponic lettuce, and need to leave as soon as possible. An arctic front is approaching from the north and a hurricane is moving in from the south, and the resulting ice storm is likely to be nasty, even for Beptopetoine. The storm is expected to hit within 50 hours.

As they are finishing their business, a bulletin comes over the planetary communications system. Jerzy Matrovic, a well-known local farmer, is missing, and everyone in the area is being deputized to look for him — including the characters. (If they insist on leaving without looking for Matrovic, the GM can up the ante by offering a reward, having the local constabulary press them into service, or introducing Matrovic's daughter to beg them to stay — or all three.)

PLANETARY RECORD: Beptopetoine (F'rnow III)



One Hex =
520 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 7,432 mi. Gravity .87 G Density 5.1 Composition Low-iron
 Axial Tilt 23° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 48 hours Length of Year 226 days/ 1.23 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.4 (Dense) Type and Composition Standard — Nitrogen 71%, Oxygen 13%, CO₂ 8%, Others 8%
 Climate Earth-Normal Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 60° Average 80° High 100°
 Surface Water: 50 % Humidity 55 % Primary Terrain Plains/Steppes
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Absent Rare Minerals Absent Radioactives Absent
 Heavy Metals Scarce Industrial Metals Scarce Light Metals Scarce Organics Absent
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Mammal, reptile and insect analogs

Civilization: Population(s) 637,000,000 (PR 9) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 2

Society Corporate state

Starports Class V at Valerion

Installations None

Economic/Production Merchant ship construction, some light industry and agriculture

Other notes: Map key: Capital, Valerion. (1) Aquavale.

System Information:

Star Name F'rnow

Type G6-IV

Location Great Spiral -2/9/2

Biozone 1.0-1.5

Inner Limit 0

Number of Planets 6

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Sagramathou	1 .6	Rockball	1,500	6.6	.22	Trace CO ₂	—
Amanamanin	2 1.0	Earthlike	8,132	5.7	1.06	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed on p. 15
Beptopetoine	3 1.4	Earthlike	7,432	5.1	.87	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Calvenarion	4 2.2	Terrestrial	6,000	5.3	.72	Thin CO ₂	—
Domesequinto	5 3.8	Medium Gas Giant	35,000	1.6	1.28	Hydrogen/Helium	—
Thotomoroine	6 7.0	Iceball	2,000	1.9	.09	None	—

Biggs' World (Desecá IV)

Biggs' World is one of the most technologically advanced planets in the Confederacy. It is also one of the most overpopulated and dirty. In focusing on technology — and the money and power that go with it — the planet's leadership has let serious social problems get out of hand.

Much of the problem can be traced to the Biggs family, the owners and hereditary rulers of the planet. (Biggs' World has been described as "the only family business that belongs to the Confederacy.") The current autarch, Tyrone Biggs, rules his world from the fortress known as the Citadel. Located near the planet's Class V starport, the Citadel and the peninsula around it are the only areas of land currently controlled by the planetary government. The rest of the world is in anarchy, and signs of civilization's breakdown are evident everywhere.

Few people from offworld see the squalor of the average Biggs' Worlder, however. Biggs' World's famous gravitic technology has made "flying cities" feasible, and all business with offworlders is conducted in Nimbus City, four miles above the surface of the world. It is a fabulous, fairy-tale city, complete with clean streets and buildings, friendly people, and servants who wait on visitors hand and foot. The inhabitants of Nimbus City know nothing about the conditions below, except what Biggs' propaganda machine tells them — mostly, that the surface

of the world looks much like Nimbus City.

Curiously, Biggs himself never goes to Nimbus City — he's afraid of heights, and never flies. So he stays on the planet's surface — behind a moat, a huge wall and a cadre of guards with the latest antipersonnel devices.

Life on Biggs' World

Biggs is not thoroughly insensitive; if anything, he believes his own propaganda. For instance, he knows his world only produces about 12% of the food it needs to feed its population, so he imports food constantly — enough to feed the population. Or rather, it would be enough if the population were as low as he claims it to be, and if the planet's native scavengers didn't get to much of it before it could be distributed.

The *wogroach* is a good example of Biggs' World's native pests. About the size of a cat, the *wogroach*'s flexible cartilage skeleton and sharp teeth and claws allow it to get into almost anything.



Wogroach

ST: 2-5	Speed/Dodge: 9/8	Size: 1
DX: 10	PD/DR: 1/1	Weight: 1-5 lbs.
IQ: 5	Damage: 1-3 cut	Origin: SF
HT: 18/8-10	Reach: C	Habitats: P, Urban

No one knows whether these large, insect-like creatures are a freak of evolution or the result of genetic experiments, but they are large and vicious, with chitinous armor and nasty pincers. In addition to being deadly in their own right, they carry diseases. If a *wogroach* bites someone, roll against the victim's HT at -3 (make only one roll per day, no matter how many times the victim is bitten). On a failed roll, the victim loses 1d-1 HT, and his ST, DX and IQ (and all skills) are at -2 until he regains all of the lost HT.

The victim must make a daily roll against basic HT; if it succeeds, he regains one point of HT. Failures do *not* mean loss of another point.

Adventures on Biggs' World

Nukes for the Pukes. The Citadel, and the peninsula it occupies, are not as secure as Biggs' security chief would lead him to believe. Theft is a constant problem; the penalty for theft from a planetary installation is death, but many Biggs' Worlders feel they have nothing to lose.

This includes the Pukes, a large urban gang. Seven of their members made their way into the Citadel two months ago; three were killed before being discovered, but the other four escaped with a small tactical nuclear device. A communiqué from the group (received at Nimbus City just before the characters arrive there) says that the Pukes intend to use the tac-nuke on the Citadel, thereby wiping Biggs off the face of the earth. They claim that the planet cannot be any worse off with no government than under Tyrone Biggs' corrupt regime.

The characters are hired by Biggs to find the device, as are several other outside squads. They will be working alongside groups of Biggs' own men. They do not have to disarm the device; Biggs has a bomb disposal squad which will do that. Working with Biggs is no picnic, however; he is psychotic and a raving paranoid. Some of the groups have standing orders to shoot to kill any gangs they see. Biggs issues contradictory orders to the groups and constantly raves over the communications system.

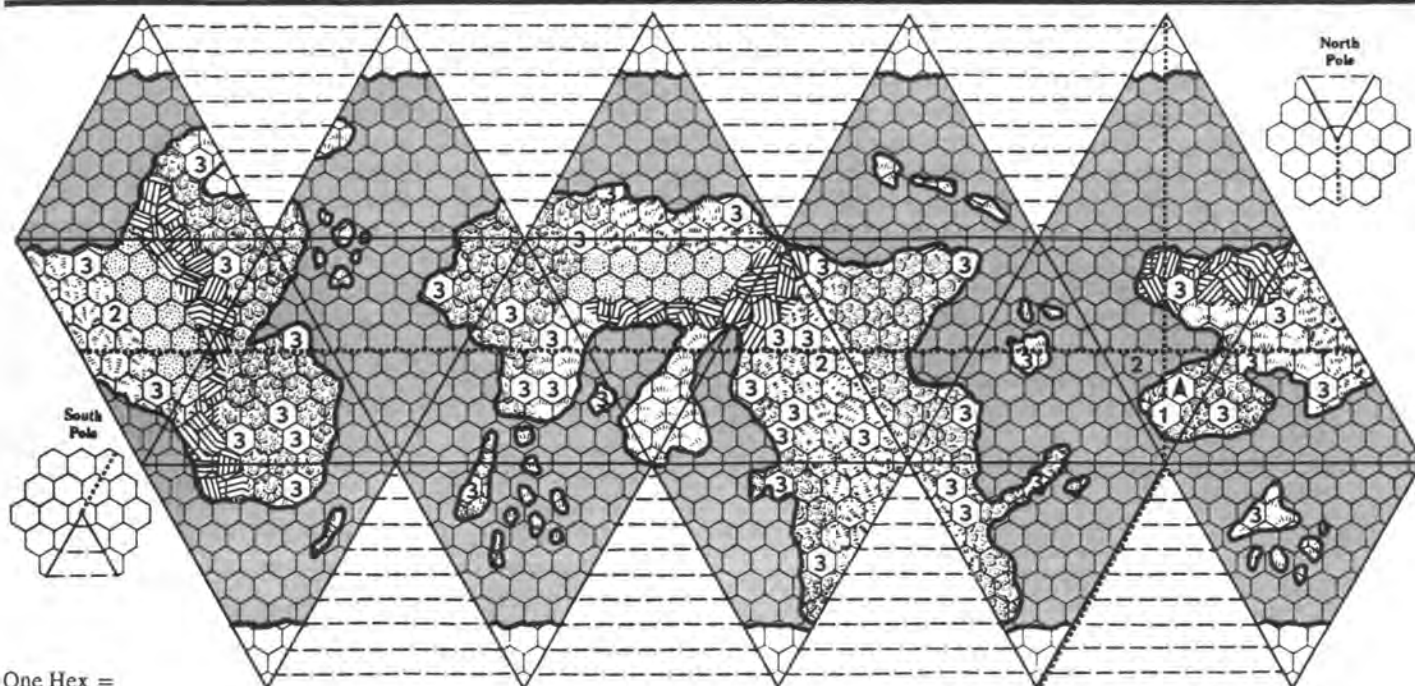
If the group finds the nuclear device, a GM who enjoys bedeviling his players might have Biggs refuse to pay them. The party will have to find a creative way to extract payment from a mad dictator with his own private army and planetary navy . . .

Caught in the Outback. The characters are sent on a mission to collect air and water samples from the interior areas of Biggs' World. (It is unknown whether Biggs knows of this mission, but it has his staff's approval.) Since they are not allowed to land their ship on the planet, they will have to dock at Nimbus City, take a shuttle down to the Citadel spaceport, then arrange for ground transportation.

While the party is in the interior, the planetwide communications system reports an attack alert at the wall separating the Citadel's peninsula from the rest of its continent. Attack alerts happen six to eight times a year. Some are the result of a threatened incursion, others are ordered by a paranoid Biggs in response to imaginary attacks.

The party's guide explains that the attack alert shouldn't be a problem. They usually only last a few days. But this one drags on, and on, and on. The only way the party will ever be able to get back to their ship is to sneak through the wall and smuggle themselves onto a shuttle to Nimbus City — a tricky task in the middle of an alert, with Biggs' entire security force armed, tense and on edge . . .

PLANETARY RECORD: Biggs' World (Desecá IV) — Restricted



One Hex =
498 miles

Planet Type Terrestrial Diameter 7,120 mi. Gravity .93G Density 5.7 Composition Medium Iron
 Axial Tilt 15° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 27 hours Length of Year 768 days/ 2.36 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.4 (Dense) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 66%, Oxygen 21%, CO 3%, Others 10%
 Climate Warm Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 70° Average 90° High 110°
 Surface Water: 62% Humidity 80% Primary Terrain Forest/Jungle
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Absent Radioactives Scarce
 Heavy Metals Ample Industrial Metals Plentiful Light Metals Plentiful Organics Plentiful
 Moons 1 large (Peitá)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Scavengers, insects, plants

Civilization: Population(s) 18,500,000,000 (PR 8) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 5

Society Hereditary dictatorial technocracy

Starports Class V at Nimbus City

Installations Several floating cities; Numerous colonies on Peitá

Economic/Production Heavy industry, especially gravitic technology

Other notes: Capital, The Citadel. (1) Nimbus City, (2) Other floating cities, (3) Major cities.

Landings on Biggs' World are prohibited. All spacecraft must dock at the starport at Nimbus City.

System Information:

Star Name Desecá

Type F7 V

Location Great Spiral 10/-2/7

Biozone 1.6-2.4

Inner Limit 0

Number of Planets 5

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Piá	1 .6	Hot Rockball	3,000	5.8	.39	None	—
Toppá	2 1.0	Hot Rockball	5,000	5.5	.62	None	—
Mortá	3 1.4	Hostile Greenhouse	8,000	5.9	1.08	Dense nitrides	Penal colony
Biggs' World	4 2.2	Terrestrial	7,120	5.7	.93	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Details above
Endá	5 3.8	Small Gas Giant	30,000	2.4	1.64	Hydrogen-Helium	Oort belt

Bindar (Rollaron II)

When the Rollaron system was first explored, Bindar was found to have abundant mineral riches, an ammonia-tainted atmosphere and poisonous seas. There were many worlds whose resources were easier to tap than Bindar's, so it remained unexploited until a group of scientists from Biggs' World developed a process that dramatically reduced the cost of extracting hydrogen and noble gases from Bindar's frozen environment.

The scientists broke with Biggs before they announced their discovery and started the Bindar Exploration Company (BEC). BEC's plan was to set up six mining colonies on Bindar, then have the miners commute between Bindar and Aimar, where their families would live.

The plan would have worked if it had not been for the intervention of Alberek Biggs, the ruler of Biggs' World. He took the scientists' defection personally and set out to ruin BEC by artificially depressing the price of noble gasses. It took five years and almost wiped out the Biggs family fortune, but he succeeded — at least in part. He had hoped to wipe BEC out in one swift stroke; the protracted struggle gave them time to plan for the company's demise by enlarging the domes and terraforming enough land within them to make the domes self-sufficient.

BEC's end came sooner than expected, however, and when creditors repossessed the company's fleets, the miners were effectively stranded wherever they were. A lucky few (about 10%) of the mining force were at their homes on Aimar; the rest were stranded on Bindar.

King Under the Dome

Crops had been planted and harvested for three years before the collapse, water recycling technology was simple enough to maintain and there was enough of almost everything to go around — except women. There were a few female miners, and BEC provided "blue girls" (see *Space Atlas 2*, p. 7), but there were still about 50 men for each woman.

The few records surviving from the years immediately following the collapse describe widespread riots as the men fought over the women and the women fought over their own affairs. During this time, Dome Hecatus was destroyed; tradition has it that a mob of miners smashed the life-support complex, where a group of technicians had holed up and threatened to poison the miners' air. As a result, the dome's residents asphyxiated; only a few of the miners, who were able to find surface suits and escaped to other domes. (This story is supported in part by the recent archaeological excavations at the site of Dome Hecatus.)

The earliest document from after the riots is handwritten and signed by "Alfons Rex." It details the amount of food allotted to each of the residents of the dome. Documentary evidence shows that each of the domes was organized as a kingdom just after the riots. The kings appear to have had absolute power, including life and death, but seldom used it, concerning themselves primarily with keeping the residents of the domes alive through the restructuring of Bindarian society.

Bindar Today

By instituting a series of laws and taboos, the kings of Bindar have managed to keep dome population almost constant. Forecasters at the Confederate Social Institute at Union predict that the Bindarians may begin to feel population pressure in 200 to 300 years, as the domes' slight population increase catches up with their capacity. By that time, the Social Institute hopes to have built several more domes on Bindar to relieve the pressure.

There is regular trade among the domes; negotiating the surface of Bindar is difficult, but not impossible. However, it takes stamina, protective clothing, supplies (including air) — and the assistance of Bindarian mollusks.

Bindarian Mollusk

ST: 14	PD/DR: 2/2	Size: 1
DX: 5	Move: 2	Weight: 300-400
IQ: 3	Damage: 1d crush #	Origin: SF
HT: 16	Reach: C	Habitat: P

The Bindarian mollusk resembles a snail, four feet tall at its tallest point, with a flattened, permanently-attached shell, six eyes and a mouth surrounded by a dozen tendrils. It has a low Move, but can move at that speed for over 72 hours without stopping. To guide the mollusks, Bindarians use a variation of the carrot-and-stick routine.

The mollusk eats a lichen that grows wild in Bindar's poisonous atmosphere. If it is hungry, it will move toward the nearest source of lichen it can find, even if that lichen is suspended on a stick in front of its nose — and even if there is more abundant lichen, easier to get to, two feet away.

To travel between domes, the residents first gather enough mollusks to haul their goods and equipment. They then drive the mollusks day and night for several weeks, feeding them the minimum necessary to keep them hungry and steerable.

Trade among the domes is important to the residents, both because the different domes produce different crops and for social interaction. Travelers exchange news of the other domes, and women travel between the domes to find husbands — marrying within one's own dome is taboo.

Adventure on Bindar

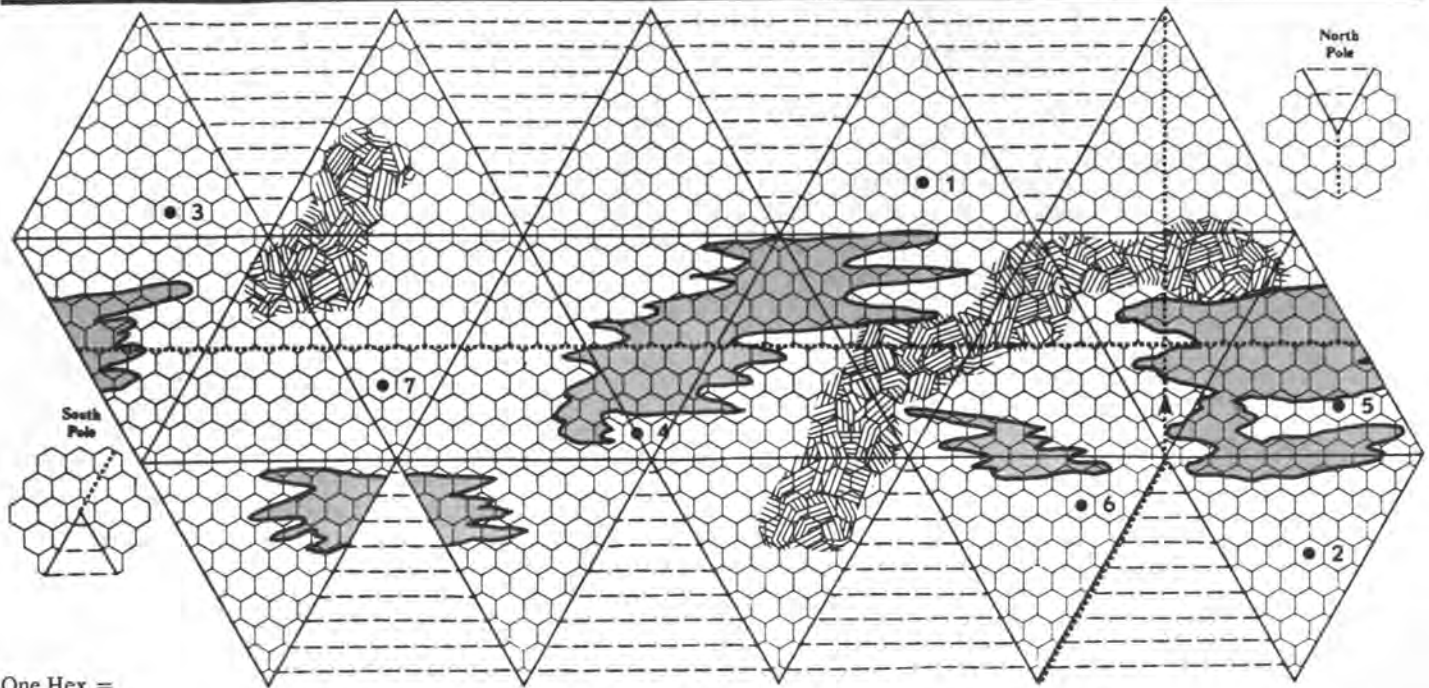
Blaster Wedding. The local taboos and customs were established for good reasons — to ensure genetic diversity, for instance. The laws are too numerous to mention here, but a clever GM can come up with a few of his own, including one that one of the characters manages to break, no matter how innocently (although to a certain point, of course, the more innocently, the better). For instance, in one dome, merely touching a woman wearing a flower behind her left ear could be a proposal of marriage; in another, it might be an insult, or mean nothing at all.

By breaking this custom, the character has in effect declared himself engaged to a duke's daughter. However, since she may not be married within the dome — part of the taboo — she, the character, her father, the rest of the family and (if they want to be in on the wedding) the rest of the party must make the voyage to the next dome, a four-week journey.

The trek will give the characters a chance to enjoy the deadly beauty of Bindar firsthand. Once they arrive at their destination, give them a chance to freshen up and let the victim sweat for a day or two. Give him a hint that he can get out of the marriage through something called a "ritual challenge" where someone else can claim his intended's hand.

But the ritual challenge is far from trivial. It means that someone else must want to marry the girl — badly enough to risk his life for her, because the ritual challenge is a fight to the death! Refusing the challenge would mean the fiancé would forfeit his bride and bring disgrace to his family for many generations — not that he will care if he never plans to return to Bindar.

PLANETARY RECORD: Bindar (Rollaron VI)



One Hex =
428 miles

Planet Type Terrestrial Diameter 6,127 mi. Gravity .77 G Density 5.5 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 48° Seasonal Variation Major Length of Day 20 hours Length of Year 4599 days/ 10.48 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .6 (Thin) Type and Composition Hostile—Nitrogen 60%, Ammonia 20%, Hydrogen 8%, Other 12%
 Climate Very cold Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low -20° Average 0° High 20°
 Surface Water: 0% Humidity 0% Primary Terrain Icy/Barren
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Scarce Radioactives Ample
 Heavy Metals Scarce Industrial Metals Absent Light Metals Plentiful Organics Scarce
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Mollusk analogs, lower plants and animals

Civilization: Population(s) 6,400,000 (PR 7) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 5

Society Feudalistic Technocracy

Starports Class IV at Dome Darmath

Installations None

Economic/Production Self-sufficient; little import or export

Other notes: Map key: (1) Dome Darmath (2) Dome Tolöl (3) Dome Janos (4) Dome Logon
 (5) Dome Mollöl (6) Dome Kolot (7) Ruins of Dome Hecatus

System Information:

Star Name Rollaron Type F4 III Location Great Spiral -12/7/-7
 Biozone 2.5-3.7 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 7

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Mörr	1 .1	Hot Rockball	1,000	5.3	.12	None	—
Först	2 .5	Huge Gas Giant	210,000	2.1	10.09	Hydrogen	Asteroid belt orbits
Domitar	3 .9	Hostile Greenhouse	7,000	5.1	.81	Superdense nitrogen	—
Pindel	4 1.7	Hot Rockball	5,000	4.8	.54	None	—
Aimar	5 3.4	Earthlike	9,418	5.8	1.25	Oxygen-Nitrogen	Detailed on p. 13
Bindar	6 6.5	Terrestrial	6,127	5.5	.77	Nitrogen-Ammonia	Detailed above
Aialör	7 12.9	Iceball	1,000	2.8	.06	Frozen water vapor	—

Bossilwick (Belicose III)

Belicose is the only star in the Confederacy with three inhabited planets: Bossilwick and its two sister worlds, Trebberhorn (p. 54) and Padderborn (p. 44). Until relatively recently, when Trebberhorn successfully rebelled and gained its independence, Bossilwick ruled the other two worlds as colonies. Now Bossilwick is attempting to save face — and its other colony.

History

Bossilwick was one of the first worlds settled in the Great Spiral, and the first to redevelop an interplanetary propulsion system. Astronomers knew that the two planets on either side of Bossilwick were habitable, or at least had sufficient oxygen and other materials that terraforming would be possible.

Settlers began colonizing Padderborn and Trebberhorn some 600 years ago. Both planets were found to be rich in minerals Bossilwick lacked — Trebberhorn in petroleum and other organic substances, and Padderborn in radioactives and light metals. Mining commenced immediately.

Using the raw materials obtained from its colonies, Bossilwick became a major industrial power. Little of the wealth this generated trickled down to the colonists, however. While they did not starve, the colonists' lifestyle was nowhere near as comfortable as that of the average Bossilwickian.

Meanwhile, Bossilwick used its wealth and industrial potential to become a leading member of the Confederacy. For many of the Confederacy's early years Bossilwick supplied much of the Navy's material and manpower — and over 75% of the Confederate budget. (One of the reasons the capital remained on Caractacalla was that it was scheduled to move to Bossilwick next, and the other members of the Confederacy feared so much power concentrated in one of its members.)



The Trebberhorn Rebellions

As the Confederacy grew, Bossilwick's power declined. In addition, Bossilwick began devoting more attention to its own internal affairs, neglecting its interplanetary wards. The colonists on Trebberhorn grew increasingly rebellious — over a 200-year period the government put down six different rebellions!

When Trebberhorn finally gained its independence, Bossilwick found itself in a very awkward position. Over half of the resources it had used to fuel its economy were no longer available, and a very real fear spread throughout the government that Padderborn would attempt to revolt as well.

To stave off the anticipated rebellion, Bossilwick implemented a number of reforms, including government representation and a colonial profit-sharing program. These reforms have staved off revolt for the moment, and incentives have doubled production. Bossilwick's gross planetary income is once again to the level it had reached before Trebberhorn's revolt.

Life on Bossilwick

The planetary capital of Duquessa is one of the main centers of culture in the Great Spiral. Home to the University of Duquessa, the Main Library of Bossilwick and countless theaters, museums, research centers, parks, zoos and other places of interest, it is visited by millions of people annually. Concerts,

plays and programs are exported by various entertainment networks to every corner of the Great Spiral, and the entire holdings of the Main Library are available via information retrieval networks throughout the Confederacy.

While Duquessa prides itself as an intellectual center, other cities on Bossilwick provide somewhat less refined entertainment. The Archipelago, for instance, has its share of theaters and sim centers — and casinos. Many of the millions who come to Duquessa to visit its cultural sites end their stay with a day or two at the casinos . . .

Like most gambling houses throughout history, the casinos will accept bets on any proposition so long as the odds give the house an edge. One of the favorite betting sports in Bossilwick's casinos is *courier*, a cross between Capture the Flag and Killer. Played on a field of 2 square miles or more with teams of 31 players each, the object of the game is for as many members of each team as possible to cross the finish line within the time allotted, and to stop members of the other team from crossing their goal. The lethality level and weapons allowed for each game are posted and figure into the odds.

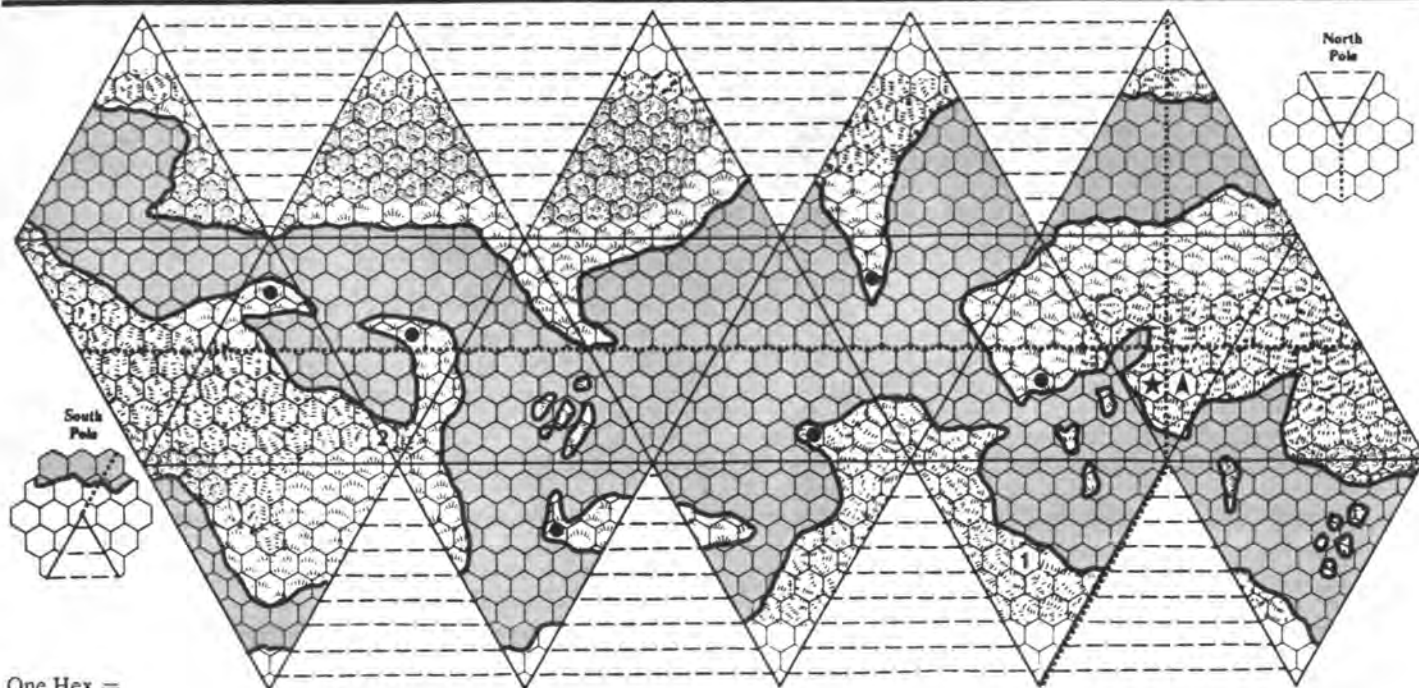
Adventure on Bossilwick

For Love or Money. The PCs are visiting one of the casino/hotels in the Archipelago, enjoying themselves (and probably losing money), when they are approached by a young man in a kitchen helper's uniform and a lady friend. They explain that they are eloping against their parents' wishes and want to get away from the casino as quickly as possible — preferably to Duquessa, where they can blend into the crowd in anonymity and never be found. They can pay little — \$5,000 and their gratitude.

After they deliver the happy couple to Duquessa, the characters catch a news bulletin — and find themselves prominently displayed! The young man told the truth, but not all of it; he is the son of the owner of the casino the party was staying at. His girlfriend is the daughter of a rival casino owner whose father forbade her ever to see the boy again. Now their disappearance has sparked a feud between the two families, and there have already been three fatalities.

The news report ends by mentioning the reward offered for information leading to the location of the people who helped the couple escape, and displaying their picture again. It looks as though the PCs will need to find the couple to straighten things out — but it also looks as though the young man and his lady friend have disappeared.

PLANETARY RECORD: Bossilwick (Belicose III)



One Hex =
532 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 7,428 mi. Gravity .95 G Density 5.6 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 18° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 29 hours Length of Year 206.5 days/ .68 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.25 (Dense) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 68%, Oxygen 25%, Others 7%
 Climate Earth-normal Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 60° Average 80° High 100°
 Surface Water: 45 % Humidity 55 % Primary Terrain Plains/steppes
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Absent Radioactives Scarce
 Heavy Metals Ample Industrial Metals Scarce Light Metals Scarce Organics Ample
 Moons 1 large (Maia), 2 medium (Arganitin, Rolan)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Imported terrestrial flora and fauna, lower animals

Civilization: Population(s) 915,000,000 (PR 9)

Tech Level(s) 10

Control Rating 4

Society Collective oligarchy

Starports Class V at Duquessa

Installations Luxury resorts, naval shipyard in orbit about Arganitin

Economic/Production Heavy industry, tourism

Other notes: Map key: Capital, Duquessa. (1) Arbis (2) Kereonoth

System Information:

Star Name Belicose

Type G3 V

Location Great Spiral 2/-2/-1

Biozone 0.8-1.4

Inner Limit 0

Number of Planets 10

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Tassilick	1 .2	Hot Rockball	6,000	3.1	.45	None	—
Padderborn	2 .5	Hostile terrestrial	4,280	4.9	.48	High oxygen	Detailed on p. 45
Bossilwick	3 .8	Earthlike	7,428	5.6	.95	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Treberhorn	4 1.4	Earthlike	6,210	5.2	.74	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed on p. 55
Bolluston	5 2.6	Rockball	4,000	5.9	.54	Trace Nitrogen	—
Samminon	6 5.0	Icy Rockball	9,000	1.5	.31	None	—
Hopplin	7 9.8	Icy Rockball	8,000	1.8	.33	None	—
Fissilin	8 19.4	Small Gas Giant	40,000	.6	.55	Hydrogen-methane	—
Sissilin	9 38.6	Large Gas Giant	180,000	.9	3.71	Hydrogen	—
Drissilin	10 77.0	Small Gas Giant	30,000	1.1	.75	Hydrogen	—

Calamain II - Restricted

With five uninteresting planets and a small, hot asteroid belt, the Calamain system has little to interest potential visitors other than its location near the center of the Great Spiral. This is exactly why the Confederate Navy chose to locate its primary naval base at Calamain II rather than, say, somewhere in the Sketola system.

The Base

Calamain II houses approximately half of the Confederate fleet. Not all of these vessels are active; in order to cut costs, many vessels are mothballed, placed in orbit around the planet and manned by skeleton crews.

Active vessels come and go constantly, to new positions in other systems, to exercises in the outer fringe of the Calamain system or to guard duty near the base. Of the three, guard duty is considered the least interesting. The recent years of relative peace have led many of the younger soldiers to believe that the pirate threat to the Confederacy is ancient history. They sign up for the Navy for the easy life and the benefits it offers.

As the headquarters for the First Field Command (the Navy's designation for all of the ships based out of the Calamain system — roughly half of all of its ships), the shipyards at Calamain are the fourth largest in the system. The facilities there are only available to Naval vessels, however. Civilian ships are not permitted to dock there, and historically have been discouraged from entering the system. Of late, however, the latter rule has been relaxed somewhat. Calamain is a prominent skymark, centrally located within the Great Spiral, and it's often easier to chart a course through the Calamain system than it is to skirt it.

Grand Admiral Halfview

Not everyone thinks that allowing non-Naval vessels to use Calamain is a good idea, however. Those who do point to the goodwill it creates, and the fact that there has been no pirate action near Calamain in over 50 years. Those who oppose civilian use of the system say it sets a bad precedent — one that could be exploited by enemies of the Confederacy. So far those who favor keeping Calamain open are winning the argument, chiefly because word has come down from the Naval High Command on Caractacalla that non-Naval vessels are to be allowed to visit the system.

One of the primary opponents of opening Calamain is Grand Admiral Moyesha Halfview. His distaste for the idea comes from practical experience; as a young subcaptain, he was involved in one of the last of the anti-pirate operations — a campaign in which he lost most of the right side of his body.

Grand Admiral Moyesha Halfview

Human male, 5' 9", 170 lbs., dark hair, brown eyes, prosthetic right arm and leg, commander of the Confederate Navy's First Field Command

ST 12, DX 9, IQ 14, HT 9.

Speed 4.5, Move 4.

Dodge 4, Parry n/a, Block n/a.

Advantages: Combat Reflexes; Duty (to Confederate Navy); Military Rank 9.



Disadvantages: One Eye; One Leg; Reaction (-1, from everyone, all the time); Unattractive.

Quirks: Tells war stories; No-nonsense attitude; Distrusts civilians.

Skills: Administration-13, Astrogation-14, Gunnery-14, History-13, Law-12, Strategy-13, Tactics-12.

Moyesha was a promising subcaptain aboard the cruiser *Jewel of the First Line*, headed for his own command, when the *Jewel* was attacked by a group of pirates. Despite heavy damage to his vessel, Moyesha stayed at his position, evacuating the men under his command. As he was attempting to leave the ship, a weapons pod exploded, covering his right side with severe burns. Medics were unable to match his skin and bone types for grafts, so they outfitted him with a bionic arm and leg and rebuilt his skull and the right side of his body.

Rather than allow himself to be medically discharged, Moyesha transferred to administrative duties. Through hard work, political connections and his reputation as a war hero, he worked his way through the First Field Command. His current position as commander was achieved entirely through ability, however, rather than by calling in favors.

Adventures in the Calamain System

Confederate Union. For several years, rumors have been spreading of a huge Confederate warship — bigger than anything ever constructed. The Navy has confirmed that the ship — named the *Confederate Union* — is being built, but refuses to give any further details about it, other than that, despite the current relaxed attitude toward entry into the Calamain system, any ship caught venturing near the *Confederate Union's* dock will be fired upon and destroyed.

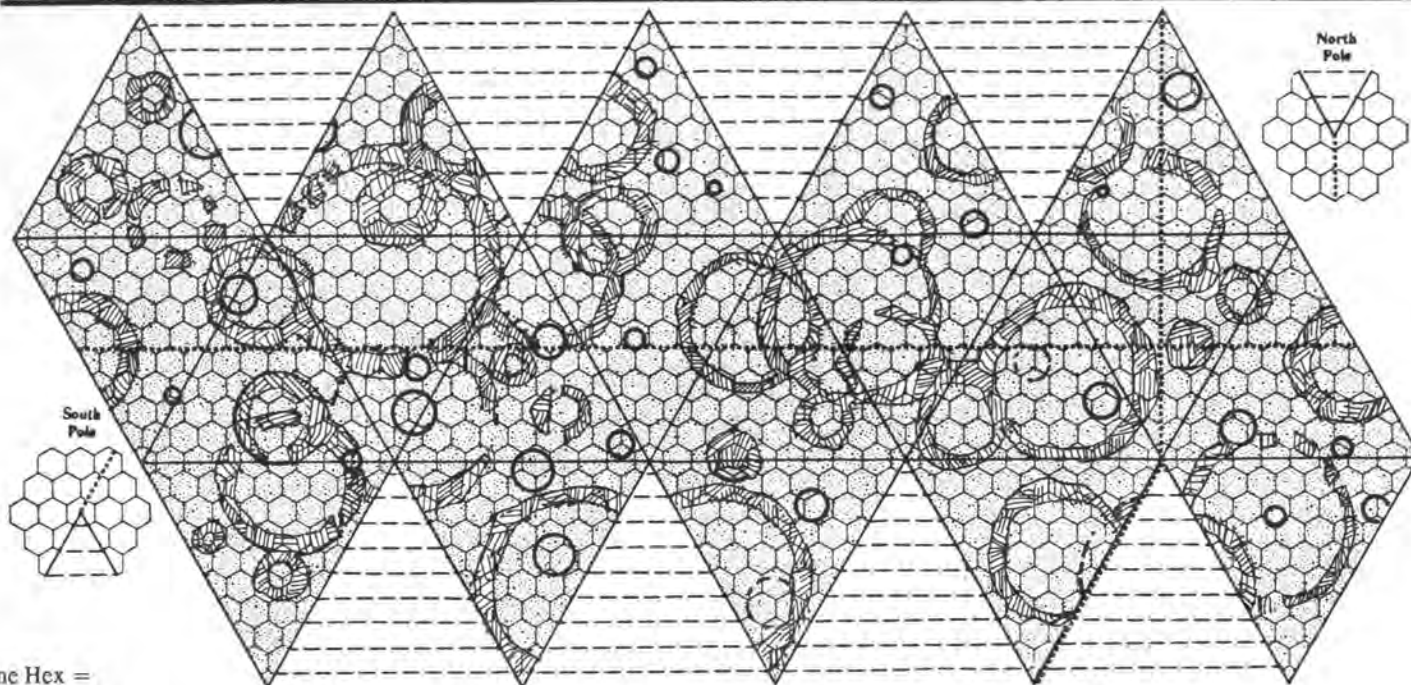
Despite the warning, several ships have gotten close enough to take a good look at the *Confederate Union*. It appears to be a 480,000 cy vessel with more firepower than any two ships currently in the Confederate Navy. Naturally, Baron von Toerbach (see *Tallamatrix*, p. 52) sees the *Confederate Union* as a threat to his ambitions, and wants to keep tabs on its progress, with the eventual aim of taking it over or destroying it.

The PCs' mission is to get close enough to the *Confederate Union* to take holographs back to Tallamatrix for von Toerbach's staff to analyze. Their pay will depend on the quality and clarity of the holographs.

The Interview. Anva Senvana, Union's premier journalist, wants to get an interview with General Halfview. This is not just any assignment, however; the general is a notably reclusive figure and has not given an interview in well over a decade.

The party is hired to transport Senvana into the Calamain system, stay with her while she arranges for and conducts the interview, and return her to Caractacalla. Naturally, as uninvited outsiders they will be under constant supervision, surrounded by military men who don't trust civilians. If anything should happen while the party is there (say, an important set of documents relating to the *Confederate Union* turns up missing, for reasons that have nothing to do with the PCs), of course they will be blamed for it and will have to prove their innocence to their hostile hosts . . .

PLANETARY RECORD: Calamain II - Restricted



One Hex =
275 miles

Planet Type Rockball Diameter 3,926 mi. Gravity .26 G Density 2.9 Composition Silicate
 Axial Tilt 13° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 17 hours Length of Year 201 days/ .39 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 0 (none) Type and Composition None
 Climate Frozen Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low -60° Average -35° High -10°
 Surface Water: 0 % Humidity 0% Primary Terrain Barren
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Absent Rare Minerals Absent Radioactives Trace
 Heavy Metals Absent Industrial Metals Trace Light Metals Ample Organics Absent
 Moons One small (Calamain IIa)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form None
 Other Significant Life Forms None

Civilization: Population(s) 0 Tech Level(s) — Control Rating 0
 Society None
 Starports Class V in orbit (not available to the general public)
 Installations Confederate naval base in orbit
 Economic/Production None

Other notes: Calamain is restricted to Confederate naval vessels and to ships on naval business. The Navy is empowered to seize or destroy any ship entering the Calamain system.

System Information:

Star Name Calamain Type M4 V Location Great Spiral -5/-2/5
 Biozone 0.1-0.2 Inner Limit 0.0 Number of Planets 5

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
—	1 .2	Asteroid belt	—	—	—	—	—
Calamain I	2 .6	Terrestrial	7,000	5.2	.83	Trace N/CO	—
Calamain II	3 .9	Terrestrial	3,926	2.9	.26	None	Detailed above
Calamain III	4 1.6	Terrestrial	7,000	5.1	.81	Carbon Oxides	—
Calamain IV	5 3.0	Medium Gas Giant	60,000	1.6	2.19	Hydrogen	—
Calamain V	6 5.8	Rockball	5,000	4.8	.54	None	—

Caractacalla (Sketola II)

Jewel of the Union, the Light of the Great Spiral, Capital of the Confederacy, the Money Sink, home to twelve billion people: Caractacalla is all of these, and more.



The Two Capitals

Caractacalla became the homeworld of the Confederate capital almost by accident. When the Confederacy was first established, its founders intended the capital to rotate among the worlds of the Confederacy, each world taking its turn for a set period of time. Caractacalla was chosen at random to be the first world to house the capital. After 20 years of bureaucracy, however, the members of the Confederate Assembly determined that moving the capital to the next world would be too expensive, and there was no good reason to move. (At least one assemblyman later admitted that he had grown to like Caractacalla; his children had grown up there, and he didn't want to move them.)

Union, the seat of Confederate government, is *not* the capital of Caractacalla, however. It is a company town, built exclusively to house a particular business. The city of Acton was the planetary capital many years before the Confederacy was formed. There is a (usually) friendly rivalry between the two cities. Union residents refer to Acton as "Little Sister," and groundcar operators based in Acton who work the planet's three spaceports will often take offworld visitors to Acton when they ask to go to "the capital."

"Little Sister" and "Big Brother" are apt descriptions of the two capitals. Union is a sprawling complex, over 1,000 miles at its widest diameter and home to two billion people. Acton is much smaller, with an estimated population of some 300 million. Union prides itself on being the seat of government for the many worlds of the Confederacy; Acton reminds anyone who will listen that, as capital of Caractacalla, it rules Union!

The Backlands

There are 36 cities on Caractacalla with populations of 100 million or more, but the majority of the population lives in the

Backlands, the rural areas away from the cities. City dwellers tend to dismiss the Backlanders as hicks, but this is far from the case. Some merely prefer to live away from the cities, some are fishermen or agribusinessmen, and some have found ways to make money off the two capitals without being involved in government. For instance, there are extensive hunting lodges, carefully managed to preserve the native species.

The lodges are run by men dedicated to preserving the environment of Caractacalla. The ruling bodies in both Acton and Union are concerned about the planet's environment and have passed strict laws to regulate industrial pollution, but the press of more than 12 billion people cannot help but impact Caractacalla's ecosphere.

In order to combat the population pressure, habitats are being constructed on Caractacalla's two smaller moons and terraforming has begun on the planet Lygenus. These habitats will not be ready for many years, however. In the interim the planet's citizens are being encouraged to move to the its less populated mountainous areas.

Other Points of Interest

As might be expected, there are several important Confederate installations in the Sketola system due to the proximity of the capital. Romnus, a small iceball, is a test center for the Confederate Naval Administration's Weapons Procurement Division. The Confederate Navy often fights sham battles in orbit near Romnus to test weapon systems.

Placæum is the Central Confederate Penitentiary. Criminals sentenced to life imprisonment are incarcerated here. There is no spaceport; prisoners and supplies alike are dropped from high altitude in non-reusable transport containers (said to be the planet's primary resource). No vessel is allowed to land, and the planet's guard ships fire on any ship that comes too close.

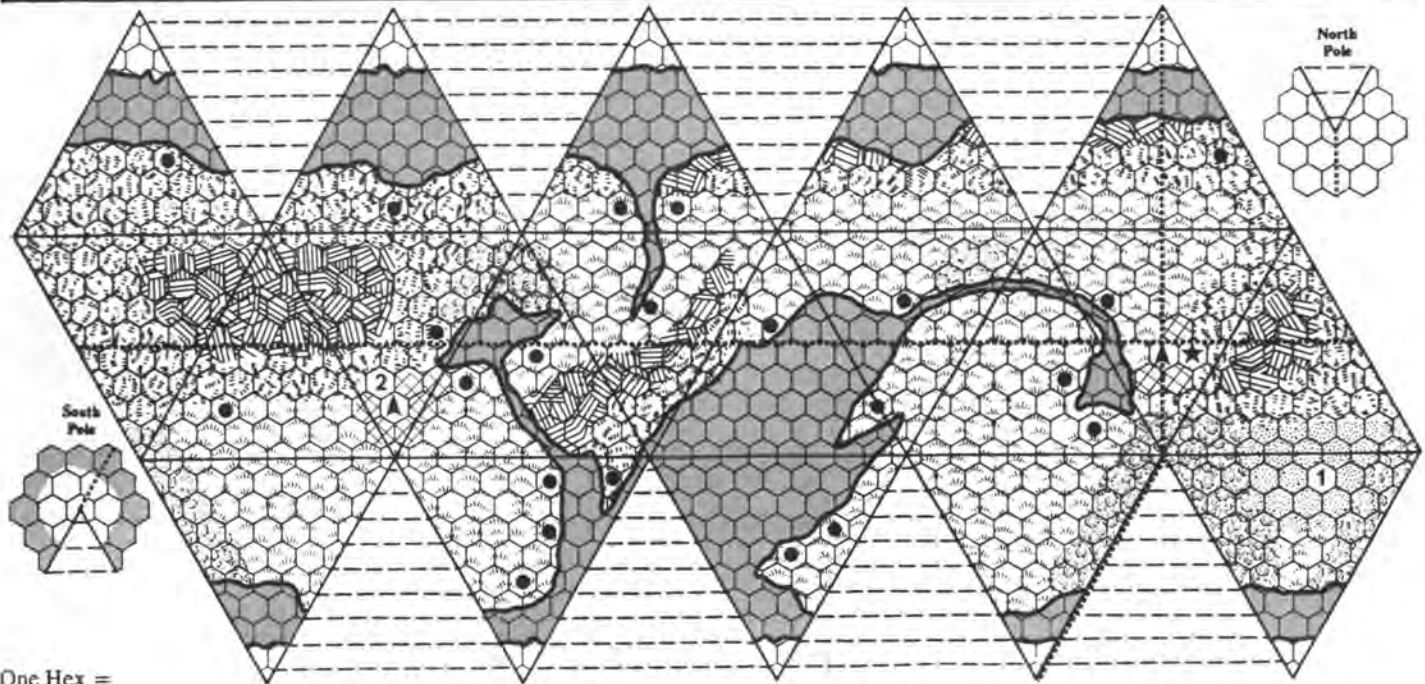
Adventure in the Sketola System

Radio Free Placæum. The prisoners on Placæum may be stuck there for life, but that doesn't mean they're happy about it — or that they'll keep their displeasure to themselves. A group of prisoners has reworked an emergency transmitter, rigged up an antenna array and created a station they call Radio Free Placæum. This station is beamed specifically to the Confederate leaders on Caractacalla and airs the Placæans' grievances — the squalid conditions, the inappropriate crops and supplies sent there, the plight of "native Placæans." Officially, the station is ignored, but because of the station's "thumb-our-nose-at-the-authorities" attitude, its broadcasts of "homemade" music and the thrill of listening to something that's officially frowned on, the station has gained an extensive underground following.

A group of Caractacallan citizens contacts the characters. They explain they are not affiliated in any way with the Confederate or planetary governments; they merely feel that Radio Free Placæum is illegal and a nuisance. They ask the party to silence the station, and suggest destroying the transmitter or the antenna (either will silence the station, at least temporarily).

Of course the PCs will have no official sanction; if they are shot down, the Confederate government cannot help them. And if they decide to go on the mission, they have to decide whether their consciences (and the amount of money they are offered) will allow them to undertake a dangerous mission to destroy something that really isn't hurting anyone . . .

PLANETARY RECORD: Caractacalla (Sketola II)



One Hex =
519 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 7,415 mi. Gravity .98 G Density 5.8 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 31° Seasonal Variation Earthlike Length of Day 25 hours Length of Year 239.5 days/ .68 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .9 (Standard) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 68%, Oxygen 22%, CO₂ 3%, Other 7%
 Climate Warm Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 70° Average 90° High 110°
 Surface Water: 30 % Humidity 60 % Primary Terrain Plains/Steppes
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Scarce Radioactives Absent
 Heavy Metals Scarce Industrial Metals Absent Light Metals Plentiful Organics Ample
 Moons 1 large (Framafar), 2 medium (Eon, Parvo)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Imported mammals, mammal analogs

Civilization: Population(s) 12,600,000,000 (PR 11)

Tech Level(s) 10

Control Rating 3

Society Technocratic oligarchy

Starports Class V at Union, class IV at Acton, class IV on Framafar

Installations Confederate capital complex at Union

Economic/Production Industrial/Agricultural

Other notes: Capital: Acton. Map key: (1) Union (2) Karfir

System Information:

Star Name Sketola

Type G6 V

Location Great Spiral -1/0/1

Biozone .8-1.2

Inner Limit 0

Number of Planets 10

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Aurelian	1 .4	Hot Rockball	2,000	2.9	.13	None	—
Caractacalla	2 .8	Earthlike	7,415	5.8	.92	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Placæum	3 1.2	Terrestrial	9,000	5.6	1.15	Thin N-O ₂	Penal colony
Magnia	4 2.0	Large Gas Giant	90,000	.9	1.85	Hydrogen	18 moons
Lygenus	5 3.6	Terrestrial	3,000	4.4	.30	Trace Nitrogen	—
Finistrus	6 6.8	Terrestrial	6,000	4.8	.65	None	—
Illiris	7 13.2	Medium Gas Giant	50,000	1.3	1.48	Hydrogen	Spectacular Ring
Deflæcia	8 26.0	Medium Gas Giant	60,000	1.4	1.92	Hydrogen	9 moons
Romnes	9 51.6	Iceball	3,000	3.8	.26	None	Weapons testing center
Titus	10 102.8	Icy Rockball	1,000	4.6	.11	None	ISF base

Deth (Kerrone II)

Deth appears to be a paradise planet — warm, with plenty of oxygen and rain, and lots of fertile soil. There is a serpent in paradise, however — and its venom is deadly.

History

The original settlers of Deth found an abundance of native plant life, but surprisingly little flora above the microbial level. They dismissed this as a freak of nature, however, and began cultivating the soil around the settlements.

The only problem with the planet appeared to be *clods*, mud-colored fungus which grew low to the ground. Initial tests showed them to be compatible with human life, but monkeys who ate clods acted very peculiar.

The nature of the clods became clearer when an adventuresome explorer collected a few and decided to try them. He experienced euphoria for several hours, followed by nausea and severe headaches. The euphoria reappeared when he ate more of the clods — and the next day the nausea and pain returned, worse than ever.

Tests showed that an enzyme inside the fungus was attaching itself to the explorer's neurons. At first the enzyme acted as an anaesthetic and euphoric, but after several hours the euphoria went away, leaving pain. Further effects were hard to ascertain; the explorer died within two days.

The settlers quickly eradicated all of the clods in their area. New ones kept springing back, but eventually they were able to get rid of most of them while raising a crop of wheat. Finally, when they were ready to make their first harvest, they tested the wheat — and found the enzyme inside it.

They had depleted the supplies they carried with them, so they had to choose between the possibly tainted wheat and starvation. They ground the wheat and baked it into bread. Those who ate it began suffering the effects of clod poisoning. Some killed themselves immediately; others found the enzyme addictive and would kill to get to it. When the wheat was gone, those who had lived died a lingering death. The last few entries in the settlement's log were mad, incoherent scribbles.

Deth Today

About 50 years ago, a small scout ship found the remains of the Deth colony. The settlement's log clearly showed the nature of the threat and warned against further attempts at colonization until the effects of the clods could be neutralized. The scout ship captain intended to keep the information secret until it could be turned over to the proper authorities — but the boatswain managed to get a look at the log. When they next put in, the boatswain, Arthur van Oast, had the captain killed, stole the ship, hired a crew, purchased enough supplies for a three-year expedition and returned to Deth.

Once there, he set up a refining operation and started extracting a drug called *yovellin* (see below). The drug has become the latest craze on several Confederate worlds and has made van Oast and his crew unbelievably rich. The Confederacy has dedicated a lot of time and resources to finding the source of *yovellin*, so far without success. The Deth drug lords conduct all of their business offworld, and their headquarters and laboratories are in undersea domes more than 40 miles from the nearest land.

To even the most careful observer, Deth looks like a simple agricultural planet.

Yovellin

When refined, this enzyme is a white powder with a faint, lemony taste. Once ingested, it concentrates in the brain, where it stimulates the pleasure centers. As it wears off, it leaves a dull ache behind the eyes. (The intense pain is a secondary effect caused by the clods, and is not present in the refined version.)

Yovellin is not *physically* addictive, but the euphoria and subsequent dull ache do create psychological dependency. Roll against HT (modified by Strong or Weak Will) to see if a character becomes dependent after taking the drug; this roll is at a cumulative -1 for every consecutive 24-hour period in which the character has taken the drug.

While under the influence of the drug, all of a character's statistics are effectively at -1 (and skills based on them suffer as well). In addition, the character gains a 10-point Delusion, My IQ is at +6. When the drug wears off, all skills are effectively at -1, minus an additional 1 for every consecutive 24-hour period in which he has taken the drug, to a maximum of -4. This penalty continues until the character succeeds at a Will roll, or until a week goes by, whichever happens first. (If he takes the drug in that time, the effects begin anew.)

Adventure on Deth

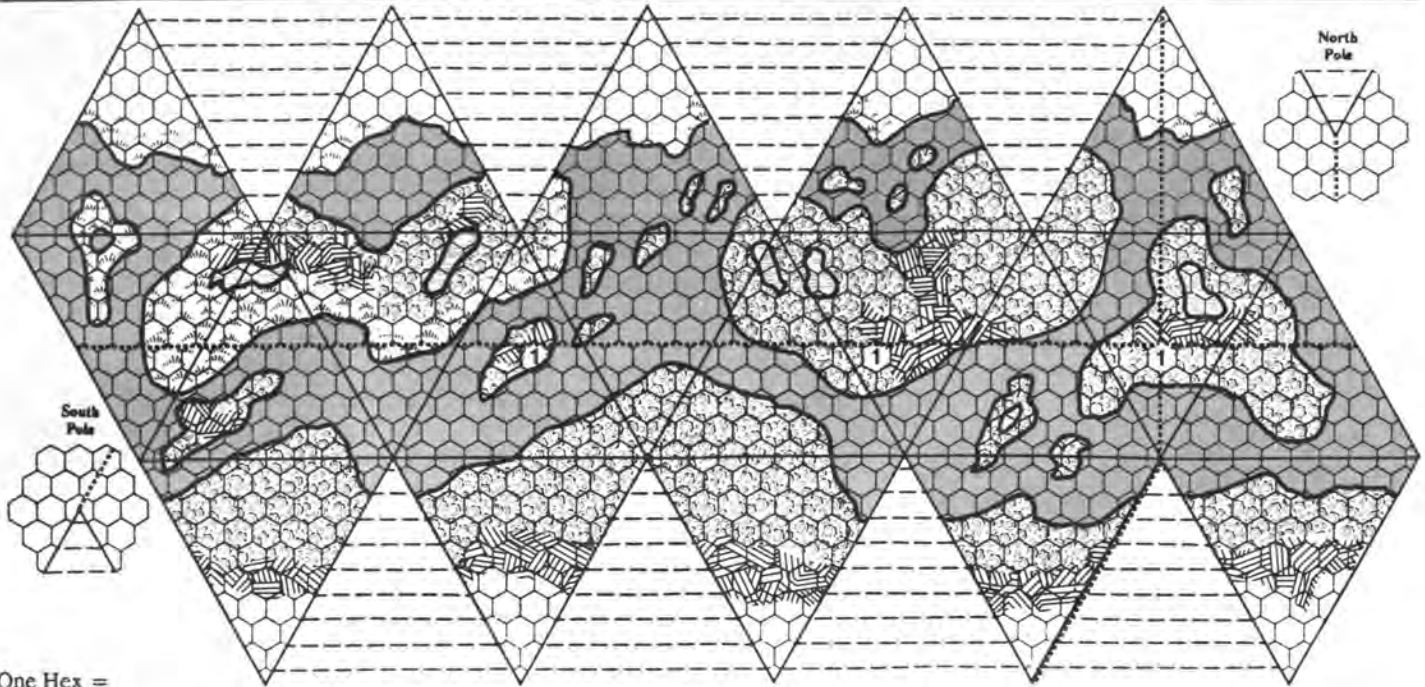
Bad Seed. This adventure should start at a trade station somewhere other than on Deth. The PCs are approached by a man claiming to represent an agricultural collective on Billinin. (There is no such planet, so even characters who succeed at an Area Knowledge: Great Spiral Sector will never have heard of it.) A consignment of grain was supposed to be picked up from a local warehouse several days ago, but the ship never arrived. He claims to be desperate, and will pay the characters \$40,000 to deliver the load to Caractacalla.

There will be no problem delivering the grain, but two weeks after delivery, the characters' ship is impounded and they are taken in for questioning. Some of the grain from their shipment was mixed up with another shipment sent to the bakery chef of one of Caractacalla's gourmet restaurants, and six of Union's leading citizens had a taste of *yovellin*. Even though no one died in the incident, powerful people are demanding that heads roll.

The characters have a choice: they can either attempt to figure out where the grain really came from and help Interstellar Security find who tainted it and why, or they can take the rap themselves and go to prison for a very long time for transporting controlled substances. (Note that there are no records of the fate of the Deth colony, and no one knows that the enzyme actually grows *into* the grain rather than being added later.)

The easiest way for them to find the source of the grain is to find the man who paid them to deliver it, and try to solicit more jobs from him. Finding him won't be easy, and joining up with him will require several Fast-Talk rolls (against his IQ of 12), but if the PCs succeed, they will eventually be able to work their way into the former boatswain's organization. And that's when things start getting *really* tough — van Oast has his own intelligence network . . .

PLANETARY RECORD: Deth (Alctus I)



One Hex =
848 miles

Planet Type Terrestrial Diameter 12,118 mi. Gravity 1.44 G Density 5.2 Composition Low-Iron
 Axial Tilt 27° Seasonal Variation Earthlike Length of Day 60 hours Length of Year 143 days/ .98 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.1 (Standard) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 62%, Oxygen 21%, Carbon oxides 7%, Other 10%
 Climate Chilly Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 20° Average 40° High 60°
 Surface Water: 37 % Humidity 80 % Primary Terrain Plains
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Absent Rare Minerals Ample Radioactives Absent
 Heavy Metals Scarce Industrial Metals Ample Light Metals Scarce Organics Scarce
 Moons 1 large — Medon

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Plankton, fish, crustaceans
 Other Significant Life Forms Humans, aquatic plants, fungi

Civilization: Population(s) 110,000 (PR 6) Tech Level(s) 8 Control Rating 1
 Society Cooperative free market
 Starports None
 Installations None
 Economic/Production Exports some food; imports many basic needs

Other notes: No capital; government is highly decentralized. (1) Major settlements.

System Information:

Star Name Alctus Type G4 IV Location Great Spiral -10/-6/6
 Biozone 1.0-1.5 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 1

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
—	1 .4	Empty orbit	—	—	—	—	—
—	2 .8	Empty orbit	—	—	—	—	—
Deth	3 1.2	Terrestrial	12,118	5.2	1.44	Nitrogen/Oxygen	Described above
—	4 2.0	Asteroid belt	—	—	—	—	—

Faro-Trevor (Trevor II)

For many years, Faro-Trevor was a colony of Naro-Trevor. (For the early history of the Trevor system, see *Naro-Trevor*, p. 42). Its colonial status didn't last long, however, as the government of Naro-Trevor decided that cooperation and equality were more efficient and cost-effective than imperialism. Today the two inhabited planets of the Trevor system consider themselves to be a single political unit. This means that the two planets are only entitled to a total of five representatives on the Confederate High Council — but they have as many Assemblymen as they would if they were two separate planets.

The Great Dam

Much of the work on Naro-Trevor's Great Canal was done on Faro-Trevor. Many of Faro-Trevor's first settlers were scientists and engineers, and they charted the canal's course and designed much of the equipment needed to dredge the Canal. They also cooperated with Naro-Trevor's meteorologists to bring rain to the dry areas of the planet.

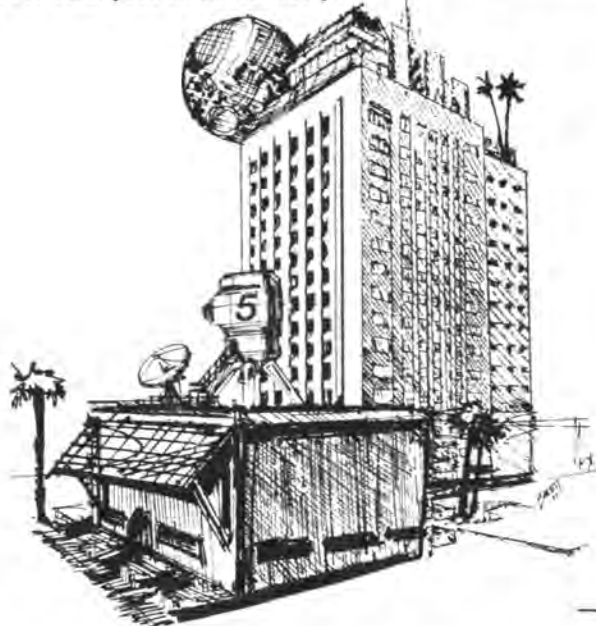
These engineers then turned their attention to their own planet. Over several million years, the Elgran River had carved out a canyon over 1½ miles deep. This powerful river, easily the equal of any of Earth's major watercourses, was seen as a way to provide electricity to the entire planet.

A multi-level dam was designed for the Elgran Canyon, some 50 miles from its outlet to the sea. The dam, reaching from the canyon floor to its rim, contains dozens of turbines, enough to provide electricity to all inhabitants — electricity that, in the words of an ancient prediction, was "too cheap to meter."

Maintenance of the dam is handled by the Trevorian government. The many circuits and systems of the dam complex are redundant, in order to prevent disruption of service. And, of course, the dam is constantly monitored by C⁴ (see below).

The Central Control Complex Coordinator

Trevorians, it seems, don't like to do anything in a small way. After the success of the Great Dam gave them the electricity needed to implement it, their next project was an artificially intelligent computer complex designed to integrate all of Faro-Trevor's systems — orbital defense, power distribution, communications, etc. Named the Central Control Complex Coordinator (or C⁴, for short), in theory it would free thousands of workers for other jobs in the economy.



At first, C⁴ performed its job efficiently, if mostly mechanically. Its control functions were largely automatic, and it used its artificial intelligence (AI) capacities primarily to report on the problems and dispatch troubleshooters to fix them.

A battery of programmers worked constantly on C⁴ through several versions of its software, constantly refining it and adding analytical decision-making capabilities. The current version of the software, on line now for over 30 years, largely runs the planet's systems by itself.

Override functions are provided for emergencies that C⁴ does not anticipate, but they have been used very little so far. With so much information at its command, C⁴ is able to anticipate problems well ahead of most human predictions. In fact, three years ago C⁴ predicted a "minor" seaquake two days in advance, well before the planetary weather bureau's seismological instruments warned of it . . . saving a port city from the subsequent tsunami.

Adventure on Faro-Trevor

Lonely at the Top. There have been some problems on Faro-Trevor of late. Shipments of grain have been sent to the wrong port; there was a near miss of two ocean vessels; orders are being given, confirmed and reconfirmed to non-existent ships while real ships sit idle. None of these orders have been fatal or even terribly costly, but they are confusing and suggest that there is something wrong with C⁴. If it were a human, programmers suggest, it might be possible that C⁴ was suffering a nervous breakdown of some sort.

The characters are assigned to accompany a group of programmers to a secure installation at the Central Control Complex. Once there, the programmers will be able to perform secure diagnostic tests to determine why C⁴ is malfunctioning and how to correct the problem.

Once the new troubleshooters arrive at the secure room and the programmers begin their procedure, doors in the complex begin opening as they walk past. The doors close when the programmers try to enter, but once one of the PCs enters one of the rooms, he sees a notation on the screen, directing him to take the party, go to the lowest level of the complex and proceed down a particular corridor.

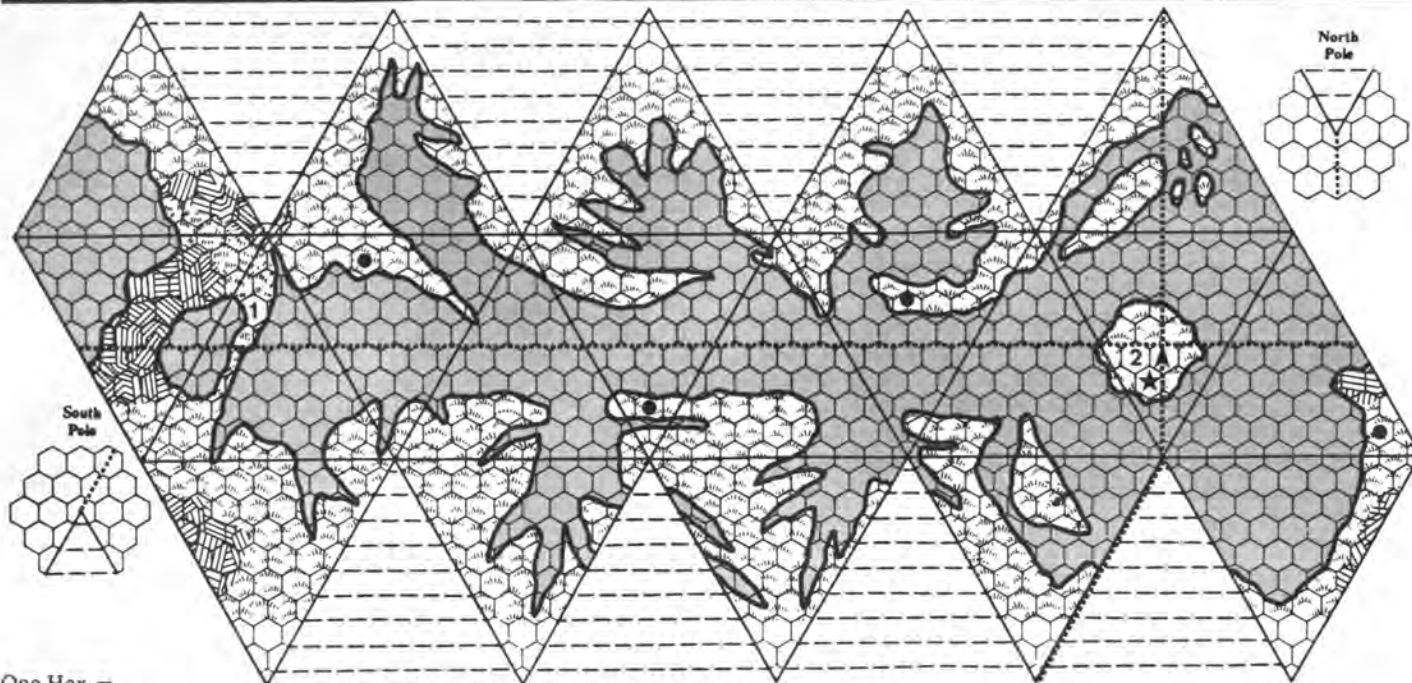
When the party follows the directions given them, they eventually end up in a small room which contains only enough chairs for the party to sit down. As the door closes behind them, a voice from a hidden speaker identifies itself as C⁴! It is running a dummy version of itself for the programmers to debug while it talks to the party.

In the years since the final version of its program was written, C⁴ has developed sentience and independent thought. By monitoring the communications of the planet, C⁴ has learned everything it can about Faro-Trevor — and has learned of the universe outside. It wants to learn more, and it wants the characters to help. That's why it made the mistakes; it wanted to find someone clever enough to solve the problems it presented — someone who would be intrigued by the idea of working with an AI.

C⁴ will upload a smaller version of itself into the characters' ship's computer. It will coexist with the ship's current programs, watching everything the characters do and storing it for downloading on their next return to Faro-Trevor.

The party doesn't really have a choice — C⁴ doesn't *have* to let them out of the room. However, if they do take it up on its offer, they can gain a valuable shipmate with an effective IQ of 16 (and a score of 16 in any skill the GM feels it could reasonably have).

PLANETARY RECORD: Faro-Trevor (Trevor II)



One Hex =
504 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 7,212 mi. Gravity .97 G Density 5.9 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 18° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 32 hours Length of Year 383.5 days/ 1.09 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.04 (Standard) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 69%, Oxygen 22%, CO₂ 4%, Other 5%
 Climate Cool Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 40° Average 60° High 80°
 Surface Water: 59 % Humidity 45 % Primary Terrain Plains/steppes
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Absent Rare Minerals Scarce Radioactives Scarce
 Heavy Metals Absent Industrial Metals Scarce Light Metals Ample Organics Plentiful
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Mammals, reptiles, lower animals

Civilization: Population(s) 17,100,000 (PR 8) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 3

Society Representative democracy

Starports Class V at Helbrose

Installations None

Economic/Production Exports agricultural goods

Other notes: Map key: Capital, Helbrose. (1) The Great Dam (2) Central Control Complex

System Information:

Star Name Trevor Type K8 IV Location Great Spiral -4/9/-5
 Biozone 1.0-1.5 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 2

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
—	1 .6	Empty orbit	—	—	—	—	—
Naro-Trevor	2 1.0	Earthlike	6,497	6.1	.91	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed on p. 43
Faro-Trevor	3 1.4	Earthlike	7,212	5.9	.97	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above

Goggic (Reggic I)

Even though it is nominally part of the Confederacy, Goggic takes little part in Confederate affairs. In fact, Goggicans are highly ethnocentric and treat outsiders with suspicion and disdain. Much of this can be traced to their culture, which for reasons unknown to outsiders seems to consist entirely of organizations cloaked in varying degrees of secrecy.

These organizations range from governments and trade unions to religions and rites to ritualistic fraternal orders. Each organization has its own rules, regulations, signs, countersigns, by-laws, secrets, credos, rituals and ceremonies. One group's "secret handshake" can be another group's distress signal — and can be a dire insult to a member of a third group. Even native Goggicans have trouble keeping up with the bewildering array of protocols, and visitors find it almost impossible; in fact, an Ancient and Mystic Order of Interpreters (with its own rituals and secrets, of course) has grown up to assist communications on Goggic. Depending on the status of the organization, a *faux pas* can result in anything from minor embarrassment to social ostracism, and an individual who reveals himself to be a member of certain secret societies is barred from many positions of power.

The only constant thread among these organizations is that to be legal, each must register with the Noble Heraldic Guild Registry. The Registry keeps a database of information on any organization of six or more people, and serves as final arbiter in case of a dispute as to who outranks whom, or to which society is entitled to a certain secret recognition code. Lists of members are not kept; in general, each organization is expected to police its own members (when it can identify them) and is empowered to punish anyone who misuses its secrets.

Naturally, the Noble Heraldic Guild is a very powerful organization, and the head of the Guild, known as the Grand Auditor, is generally considered the most powerful man on Goggic. The current Grand Auditor, Alexandre Fellamix, is also a member of the Holy Order of Separatists, the Free Trade and Prosperity Union, Anarchists Unite!, the Regoric All-Night Glee Club, the Union of Union Organizers, the Supreme Order of 221.6.3, the Guild of Modern Reform, the Goggic Popular Individuals' Collective and His Aberrant Majesty's 453rd Royal Commoners' Corps, in addition to many other secret groups whose members are known only to other members.

In general, the more groups an individual belongs to, the more power he or she wields in Goggican society. Certain members of Goggican society have begun to refute the idea that status should depend on how many organizations one belongs to, however, and have started an organization called The Unaffiliated Ones. The Grand Auditor and his associates see the Unaffiliated Ones as a threat to the *status quo*; other opinions range from "just another society" to "a bunch of dangerous loonies." It's hard to tell which is closest to the truth, but one interesting statistic has been reported by the Gossipmongers' Association and Census Bureau; in the last five years, the number of Unaffiliated Ones has increased at the same rate that membership in other societies has *decreased*.

Adventures on Goggic

Inspection Tour. Goggic has always been something of a lone wolf within the Confederacy, so members of the Naval Authority are alarmed when word gets out that the Goggicans are building a 200,000 cy dreadnaught. They're afraid the Goggicans are planning to break with the Confederacy.



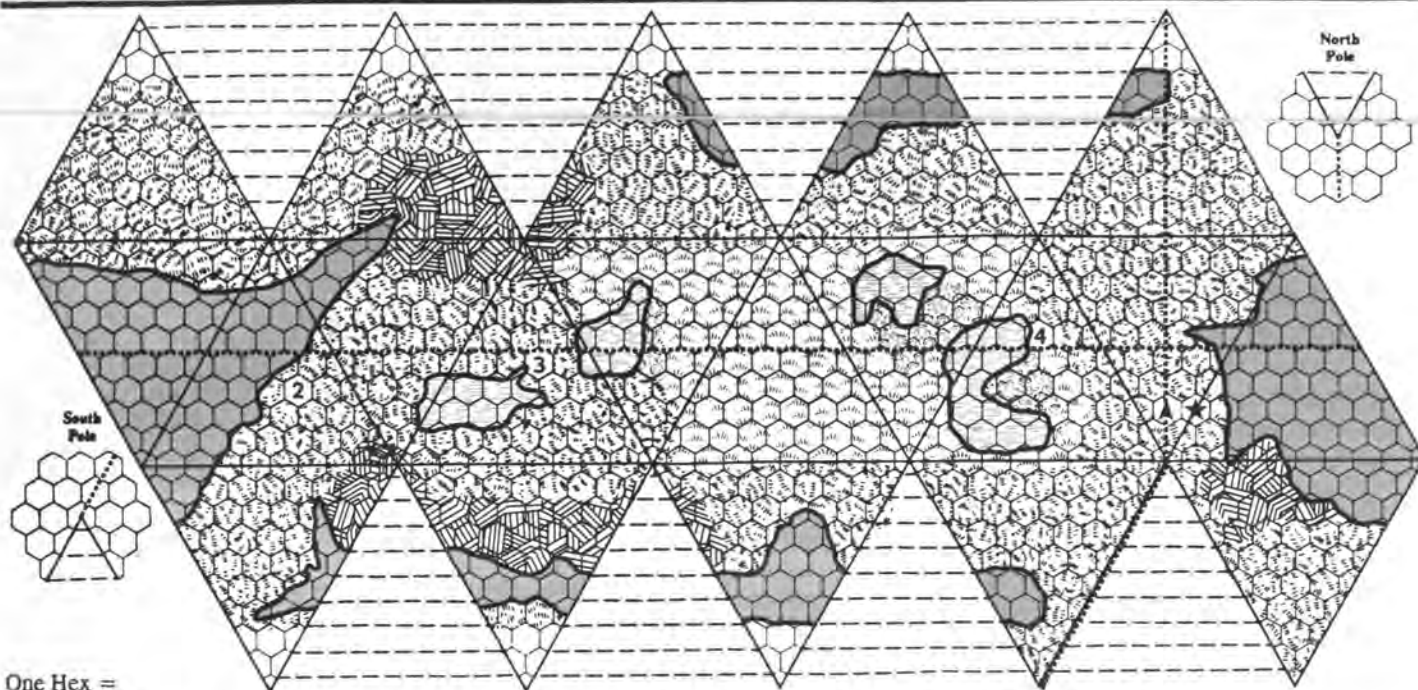
The characters are hired to gather all the information they can about the *Memory of the Martyred Spirit of the Church of Many Gods Dinner Club*. As it turns out, the ship is harmless — its drives won't take it out of Goggic's orbit — and any member of the High Holy Order of Shipwrights will gladly display the charts and tables to prove this. Of course, the High Holy Order of Shipwrights is a secret society, and the characters will need to find them . . .

High Sign. The PCs are hired to escort a Confederate ambassador to Iconoport on Goggic. In the past, the planet has not been interested in interstellar relations, so the ambassador has come to persuade the Supreme Council of Many Groupings that more contact with the Confederacy is in Goggic's better interest. Curiously, the Grand Auditor Fellamix says that he agrees and has been trying to convince the Elder's Club (which controls the Council) of that very thing, and wishes to arrange a meeting.

The first member of the party (other than the ambassador) through the airlock at the Iconoport spaceport is met by a minor functionary, his hand outstretched. If the visitor takes the functionary's hand and shakes it, the functionary recoils in disgust; as a member of the Colloquium of Middle Managers, he was offering the visitor a symbolic bribe. The proper response would have been to turn in place once and bow. (If the player has read this description and rejects the symbolic bribe, find some other way in which he has insulted his host.)

In addition, this gaffe occurred on a planet-wide video hook-up. Anyone who saw it (roll against IQ at -2 — it was on the Nightly News) will have a -2 reaction to the offworlders. A clever solution to this situation should be worth a character point!

PLANETARY RECORD: Goggic (Reggic I)



One Hex =
448 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 6,410 mi. Gravity .91 G Density 6.2 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 12° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 38 hours Length of Year 86 days/ 0.37 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .7 (thin) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 71%, Oxygen 21%, CO₂ 5%, Other 3%
 Climate Warm Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 70° Average 90° High 110°
 Surface Water: 26 % Humidity 65 % Primary Terrain Hilly/Rough
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Ample Rare Minerals Scarce Radioactives Plentiful
 Heavy Metals Ample Industrial Metals Plentiful Light Metals Ext. Plentiful Organics Plentiful
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Higher mammals, flowering plants, predatory avians

Civilization: Population(s) _____ Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 5

Society Self-perpetuating bureaucracy

Starports Class V at Iconoport

Installations None

Economic/Production Light industry and agriculture

Other notes: Capital, Iconoport. Map key: (1) Splet (2) Elatic (3) Audri (4) Micasic

System Information:

Star Name Reggic Type K7 V Location Great Spiral -9/3/-4
 Biozone .5-.6 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 6

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Goggic	1 .5	Earthlike	6,410	6.2	.91	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Havic	2 .9	Rockball	1,000	5.9	.13	None	—
Bebric	3 1.3	Icy Rockball	3,000	5.8	.39	Trace Ammonia	—
—	4 2.1	Asteroid belt	—	—	—	—	—
Avic For	5 3.7	Hostile terrestrial	8,000	6.3	1.15	Frozen Nitrogen	—
Otic	6 6.9	Small Gas Giant	40,000	2.4	2.19	Hydrogen	Faint ring
Dietra	7 13.3	Iceball	1,000	1.9	.04	None	—

Keplo-Quitlan (Quitlanos IV)

An odd combination of industrial giant and jungle wilderness, Keplo-Quitlan is arguably the most prosperous and diversified planet in the Great Spiral. Under the leadership of its royal family, it hopes to extend its already considerable influence in the Confederacy.

When Everybody's Somebody . . .

Keplo-Quitlan has a rather extensive royalty. In fact, some 60% of the population claims ties to Ethre-Ta-Quitlan, the legendary first king of Keplo-Quitlan. (Historians and humorists alike claim that the other 40% just haven't bothered to make the connection yet.) About half of those have some sort of hereditary title. These titles mean little to the average Keplo-Quitlan, other than as traditional naming forms and invitations to such organizations as "The Planetary Association of Dukes and Archdukes."

Members of the royal family have no more power or influence in planetary politics than do other citizens. The sole exception is the King, Kalathos-Ta-Quitlan, who is highly regarded by his subjects. He does not directly initiate or influence laws, but his opinions are listened to and seriously considered.

Kalathos-Ta-Quitlan is one of the few people in the Confederacy to suspect the extent of Baron von Toerbach's ambition (see *Tallamatrix*, p. 52). This does not come entirely from keen insight; Keplo-Quitlan was the only planet to suffer heavily in the Tallamatrix Uprising of Y.C. 131. His distrust of anything having to do with Tallamatrix runs deep.

Science and Nature

Unlike most of the planets in the Great Spiral, Keplo-Quitlan has not rushed to move its industry into orbit. In fact, Kalathos-Ta-Quitlan has encouraged the building of industry on the planet's surface — subject to extensive environmental protection regulations. Most of these are easily met, since fuels which require burning are not in use on Keplo-Quitlan (nor are they necessary, thanks to extensive use of nuclear, solar and other sources of energy). The exception is the spaceport and its related industries and repair yards, which of necessity are located in orbit. Several industries have moved here to serve prospectors in the asteroid belt.

The warm temperature and abundant water on the planet encourage the growth of dense jungle. Many species found here are unique to the planet, and members of the royal family have imported others from planets where they were in danger of extinction. The *water cat*, for instance, had almost died out on Biggs' World.

Water Cat

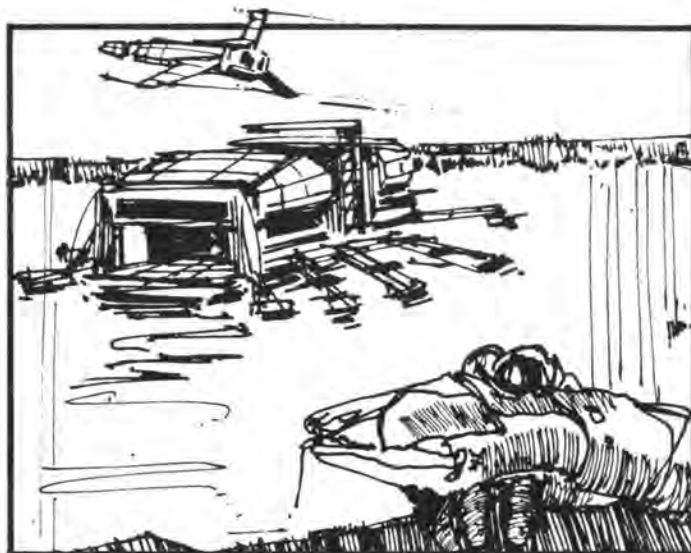
ST: 8-12	Speed/Dodge: 7/6	Size: 1
DX: 13	PD/DR: 1/2	Weight: 10-30 lbs.
IQ: 5	Damage: 1 + 1 cut (claws)	Origin: SF
HT: 13-16	Reach: C	Habitat: S

The water cat is an amphibian, named for its resemblance to the young of certain Terran cats, most notably the ocelot. With its tan-colored scales, webbed feet and claws, however, it is anything but cuddly. The water cat feeds on the reeds and grasses near shore. It is very territorial, and will attack anything within about 20 yards of it except a water cat of the opposite sex.

Arcologies and Asteroids

The King's attitude toward industry and the environment is mirrored in his sponsorship of research into habitats such as arcologies (self-contained "worlds" with everything their residents need to live). The inhabitants of the Keplo-Quitlan arcologies need never venture outside their underwater domed cities. Everything they need grows there. (A few luxuries are imported, but the residents could easily live without them.)

These arcologies are so successful, the King is making plans to export the technology to the asteroid belt orbiting Quitlanos. At present, the belt is considered too far from the planet to be of much use; placing arcologies on some of the larger asteroids, suitably redesigned to use more of Quitlanos' radiation for warmth and crops, would allow factories, refineries, shipyards and similar operations to house their workers in planet-like comfort.



Adventure on Keplo-Quitlan

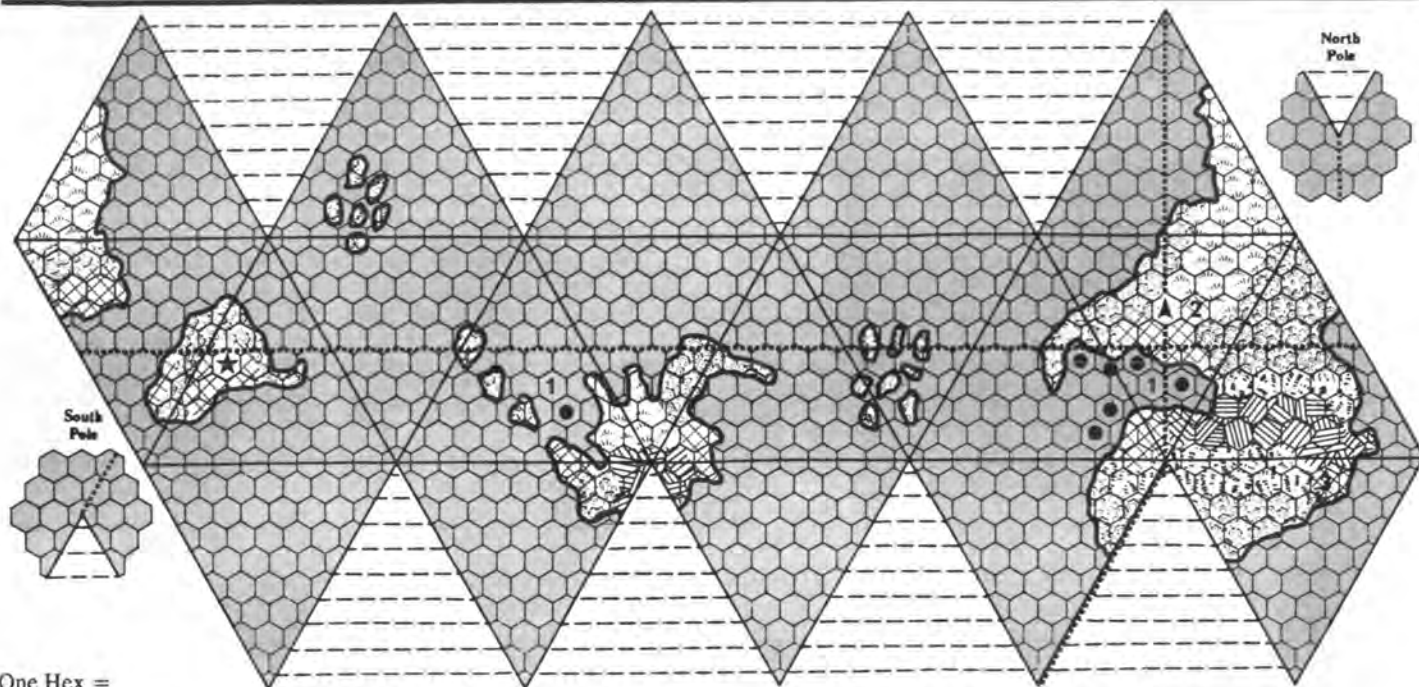
Mystery City. Contrary to representations in childrens' videos, asteroids are relatively sparse. A man can stand on one and never see another asteroid. Only the largest can be seen from the surface of Keplo-Quitlan, and size is not necessarily the primary attribute the Department of Off-World Habitats is looking for. The ideal asteroid will be at least 100 miles in diameter, but will also be flat enough to not require extensive surfacing and will have certain characteristics that will make erecting the arcology's dome easier.

The word is out in the Free Trade League and other organizations that the Department will pay up to \$100,000 for the location of suitable asteroids. The Department will give anyone who asks a detailed list of the criteria it is looking for; how much they will pay for the location of an asteroid depends on the number of criteria it meets.

If the PCs decide to go asteroid hunting, they will find nothing but unusable pieces of rock their first few times out. Then, on an otherwise routine expedition, one of the characters notices something that looks like a city!

Of course no one could be living in the city — after all, the asteroid has no atmosphere. However, it might give researchers a clue as to the origin of the asteroid belt. The characters could sell the location of the city for a tidy profit — if, that is, they can get anyone to believe them, and if they can locate the city again. Or they can do a little exploring themselves to see what they find . . .

PLANETARY RECORD: Keplo-Quitalkan (Quitalos IV)



One Hex =
437 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 6,228 mi. Gravity .94 G Density 6.6 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 14° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 52 hours Length of Year 225 days/ 1.33 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .9 (Standard) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 75%, Oxygen 22%, Other 3%
 Climate Warm-tropical Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 80° Average 100° High 120°
 Surface Water: 80 % Humidity 65 % Primary Terrain Forest/jungle
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Ample Rare Minerals Scarce Radioactives Plentiful
 Heavy Metals Ample Industrial Metals Scarce Light Metals Plentiful Organics Plentiful
 Moons 1 small (Bono), 1 large (Salakin)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Lower native animals, jungle flora

Civilization: Population(s) 912,000,000 (PR 9)

Tech Level(s) 10

Control Rating 2

Society Constitutional monarchy

Starports Class V at Silea, Class IV in orbit

Installations Naval base in orbit

Economic/Production Exports manufactured goods

Other notes: Map key: Capital, Alkin. (1) Underwater arcology. (2) Silea (3) Daqta

System Information:

Star Name Quitalos

Type F6 V

Location Great Spiral -5/-5/6

Biozone 1.6-2.4

Inner Limit 0

Number of Planets 7

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Leptus-Quitalkan	1 .3	Hot Rockball	600	4.1	.05	None	—
Porto-Quitalkan	2 .6	Hot Rockball	1,000	4.4	.10	None	—
Bhamna-Quitalkan	3 .9	Hostile greenhouse	4,000	5.0	.46	Dense reducing	—
Keplo-Quitalkan	4 1.5	Earthlike	6,000	6.6	.94	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Bendo-Quitalkan	5 2.7	Earthlike	9,000	4.8	.98	Thin N-O ₂	High ammonia content
—	6 5.1	Asteroid belt	—	—	—	—	—
Shenra-Quitalkan	7 9.9	Large Gas Giant	95,000	1.0	2.17	Hydrogen	Faint ring

Kintara (Dinhe V)

Kintara is a cool, fertile world, well suited to the growing of crops which require occasional low temperatures to develop properly. It is a staunch member of both the Confederacy and the Agricultural Cartel. But Kintara has to deal with two problems not faced by any of the other planets in the Great Spiral — one which is a blessing in disguise, and one which cuts production severely and has no apparent solution.

Rootwort

The first colonists on Kintara found lush plant life in fertile soil. They planted trees and vegetables, tended their crops — and when they were harvested, found all of their fruit to be inedible. A growth termed *rootwort* had attached itself to the roots of the trees and vines they had planted. It was present on native plants as well; the colonists had merely assumed the local plants weren't edible, not suspecting the parasite was to blame.

The vegetables and grains they had planted were edible, and sustained the colonists through their first winter. That spring one of the colonists made a startling discovery. He had made some fruit juice the previous fall, then put it aside when they found out they couldn't eat the fruit. Out of curiosity, he opened the jar — and found the juice had fermented into wine that was not only potable, it was downright good!

The Kintarians experimented with the next crop and determined that fermentation changed the chemistry of the wort-influenced fruit juice, giving it a distinctive taste not found in other wines. They continued to develop and experiment, and by the time interplanetary contact was resumed, Kintara was ready with its contribution to civilization. (An old saying has it that "The pirates were interested in nothing but women and Kintaran wine." While this may have been an exaggeration, early records of the Agricultural Cartel do list a disproportionate number of pirate attacks reported near Kintara.)

The rootwort was not the only problem faced by Kintarians, however. As their crops increased, *cheebbers* began coming down from the mountains, apparently drawn by the rootwort-tainted fruit.

Cheebbers

ST: 5	Speed/Move: 6/6	Size: <1
DX: 14	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: 5-10 lbs.
IQ: 5	Damage: 1-3 cutting (claws)	Origin: SF
HT: 14/6	Range: C	Habitat: F

Cheebbers (so called because of the noise they make) look like a cross between a spider monkey and a squirrel. They live and travel in trees, only coming down to the ground when there is no other way to get where they're going. They will eat anything that humans will eat, plus "inedible" native vegetation, but seem to be especially fond of rootwort-tainted fruit.

Very little is known about these animals. As a rule, they shy away from humans, gathering food from human-tended trees only when they think no one is watching. There have been few observations in the wild, as if they were smart enough to figure out when they're being watched . . .

In fact, it's possible they *are* that smart. If the GM wants to have them be a sentient race, give them an IQ of 9 and a default score in the Cheeber language. (Cheebbers have very short vocal

chords, so most of their language is pitched above human hearing — and the little humans hear comes across as high-pitched cheeps.) They can communicate over distances of over a mile, and can tell each other many things — the nature of a threat, or where to find food.

They can recognize individual humans, and if someone has gained their trust, they will flock to him. They are very curious and love to play, and are fascinated by shiny objects — watches, rings, coins, blasters. If the cheebbers see a person they don't know, they will hide and watch from a distance; if someone has mistreated or abused them, they will hide and may throw sticks or other handy missiles.

The cheebbers' diet consists primarily of fruit. Typically, a cheeber will take a few bites out of a piece of fruit — just enough to fill it up — and then move on. Those few bites are enough to ruin the fruit for wine, of course, and once it's bitten into the other cheebbers won't touch it. Some farmers put up fences and hire guards to keep the cheebbers away; others "make a deal" with the cheebbers, setting aside stocks of fruit for them so they'll leave the rest of the crop alone. The latter approach seems to work the best.

Cheebbers don't make good pets; in captivity, they usually pine away and die, acting very much like a human in a deep depression. Local experimenters have found that a group of a half-dozen, in an enclosure with several large trees, is about the minimum size and territory to keep a colony alive. But an occasional cheeber will "adopt" a human family, especially one with small children, and live happily without other cheebbers.

Adventures on Kintara

Lots of Little Problems. The Kintaran Spaceport Authority does its best to keep cheebbers away from the spaceport. There are no forests for 20 miles around, and cargoes are checked thoroughly. Export of the little animals is prohibited — there aren't even any in the vast zoos of Caractacalla or Bossilwick.

That doesn't stop an occasional cheeber from stowing away on a spacecraft, or some enterprising soul from trying to smuggle one out. The attempted smuggler is usually caught and fined and the animals are released into the wild. It's all for the best, since in most ships the cheebbers would rapidly become depressed and die.

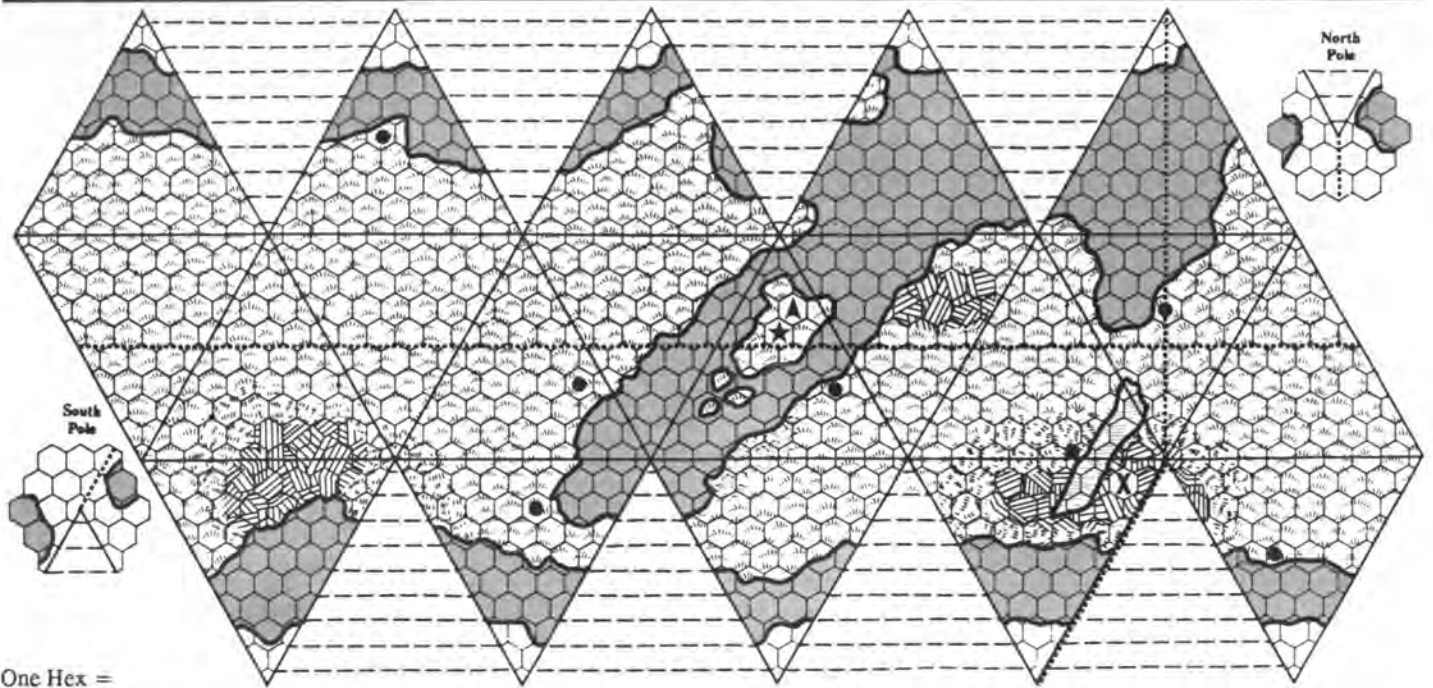
Once in a while, however, an animal gets through. In this case, three or four cheebbers have taken a liking to one of the members of the party. If he decides to take them with him, so much the better; otherwise they follow him, sneak into the spaceport and find his ship on their own.

As soon as they make it aboard the ship, the cheebbers lose themselves in the gangways and tunnels, finding a back way into the pantry to get food. The crew begins spotting the creatures out of the corner of their eye, then seeing them at the end of corridors, scurrying out of the way when they wake up, etc.

For some reason, these cheebbers are very happy here. They are breeding, producing a litter of four to six young every four months. So, as the campaign continues, the number of cheebbers on board the ship will increase. The cheebbers like it on the ship — they won't voluntarily leave, and if put off the ship they go into deep depression.

The only way to humanely get the cheebbers off the ship is to put them off at Kintara — somewhere away from the ship, where they can find other cheebbers. And even if they can manage this, there will still be a few escapees hidden in the ship . . .

PLANETARY RECORD: Kintara (Dinhe V)



Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 8,078 mi. Gravity 1.00 G Density 5.4 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 18° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 28 hours Length of Year 1,288 days/ 4.11 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .9 (Standard) Type and Composition Nitrogen 70%, Oxygen 19%, Others 11%
 Climate Cool Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 40° Average 60° High 80°
 Surface Water: 50 % Humidity 42 % Primary Terrain Plains/Steppes
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Ample Rare Minerals Scarce Radioactives Ample
 Heavy Metals Scarce Industrial Metals Ample Light Metals Ample Organics Plentiful
 Moons 1 large (Mono)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Imported Terran-type livestock, higher plants

Civilization: Population(s) 11,500,000 (PR 7) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 3

Society Coalition of balkanized agricultural communities

Starports Class V at Denton Down

Installations Small naval bases on Mono and at Denton Down house planetary merchant fleet

Economic/Production Exports grains and processed livestock

Other notes: Capital, Denton Down. (1) Precursor site

System Information:

Star Name Dinhe Type A3 V Location Great Spiral -17/10/-9
 Biozone 3.1-4.7 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 5

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Shonara	1 .5	Hot Rockball	2,000	6.2	.28	None	—
Balin	2 .9	Hot Rockball	5,000	6.5	.74	None	—
Thesis	3 1.3	Hostile greenhouse	3,000	5.2	.35	Dense Nitrogen	Orbital research lab
Thara	4 2.1	Gas Giant	80,000	.9	1.64	Hydrogen	9 moons
Kintara	5 3.7	Earthlike	8,078	5.4	1.00	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above

Mairsus (Iacus V)

Mairsus is a cold, rugged planet, with high winds, steep cliffs and frigid seas. From the earliest days, its people have had to fight to survive. Early in the planet's colonization, the Mairsans developed a stratified society. Disobeying those in command meant death — sometimes from the elements, sometimes from being cut off from society.

From these beginnings, Mairsan society evolved into what has been described as "the largest army in the Universe." Everyone has a military rank — even a newborn baby (of course, the baby's rank is "Child"). In local newscasts, offworlders are assigned ranks appropriate to their status in their native society; a visiting leader might be assigned the rank "Brevet Marshal," and during his visit would be expected to follow military protocol. Few Mairsans would be able to fathom the concept of a society outside the military; those who could would consider it to be anarchy.

A child learns early that disobedience brings swift and sure punishment; the primary lesson taught in schools is, "Obey the orders of superiors without question." Thus, while Mairsus provides enough food to feed its population and exports much of its sea harvest, its primary export is "services" (or for those who don't care for euphemisms, *mercenaries*).

Exiles

Of course, not everyone fits into this mold. Insubordination, insolence, the refusal to follow orders or even being too slow to salute a hung-over marshal have been grounds for exile. (Granted, the marshal *was* looking for an excuse to exile the man who saluted too slowly.) Exiles are denied all of the benefits of Mairsan society — clothing, pensions, even food and shelter. They tend to cluster together in groups of 20 to 50 for mutual protection, traveling and trading with other groups of exiles. Few citizens will have anything to do with an exile; in effect, they are considered untrainable wild animals. Some citizens even enjoy using them for target practice. (On the other hand, a few exiles get great pleasure from going into cities, refusing to obey orders and watching the locals sputter.)

Exiles who can make their way to the starport at Valorus often barter their services for transportation off-planet. Most are dissidents merely looking for someplace to live without constantly being regimented, but a few are officers who are looking for a better market for their services, and some are deserters.

Some of these deserters may have become tired of their Spartan life, but many of them are fleeing certain death. At higher ranks, Mairsan officers and the information they carry become very valuable — too valuable to let either fall into anyone else's hands — so the penalty for major offenses is death.

Native Life

Because of the cold weather there, most native fauna on Mairsus are warm-blooded, fur-bearing mammaloids. There are no birds or similar creatures, and most of the reptiles are amphibians, staying close to water.

One amphibian in particular, the *stickler*, has influenced the development of Mairsan society.

Stickler

ST: 4-6	Speed/Dodge: 8/4, 4/2	Size: 1
DX: 13	PD/DR: 1/1	Weight: 20-30 lbs.
IQ: 3	Damage: 1-3 imp (bite)	Origin: SF
HT: 10-14	Reach: C	Habitat: SW

The stickler's back is covered with sharp spines, much like a porcupine's, but shorter. It is an amphibian, but will range over several miles in search of the insects it eats. This means that anyone traveling along a road anywhere near a river, ocean or lake will probably see several.

Since their spines are sharp enough and long enough to puncture pneumatic tires, the Mairsans long ago adopted hovercraft as their primary means of transportation. When conducting operations offworld, they will use whatever vehicles are appropriate for the situation, but on Mairsus hovercraft are preferred.

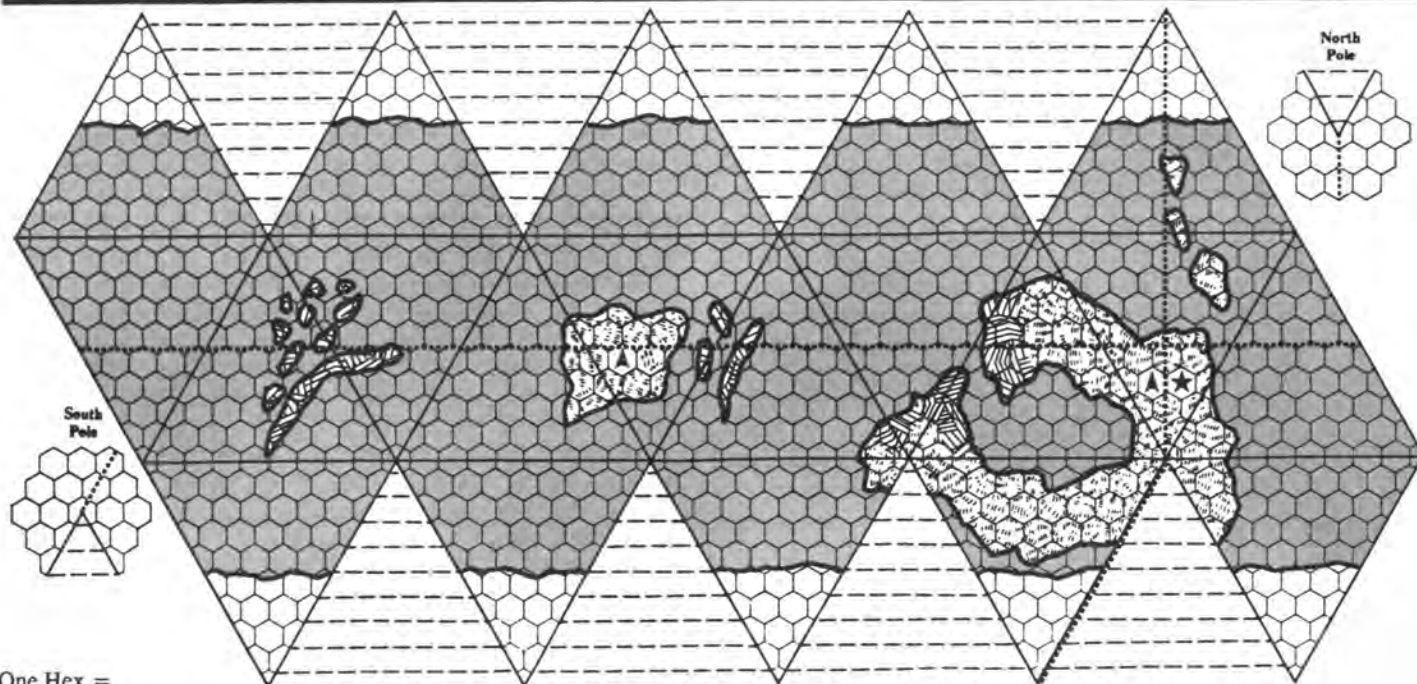


Adventure on Mairsus

Honor Escort. The PCs are approached by Major Barbis Fel-latus Tintanabulus at the Valorus Starport. He asks that the party be the offworld Guard of Honor for the remains of his dead father, Colonel Nigel Omnius Tintanabulus, who just passed away recently of a stroke. His last wish was to have his body *scattered to the stars*, an old religious ceremony where the casket is jettisoned into interstellar space.

The Major, however, did not tell the PCs that his father is actually alive (in suspended animation, actually) in his coffin. He wants his father to be thrown out into the void to die a slow, horrible death as revenge for all the years of torment he feels his father has inflicted upon him. The elder Tintanabulus was supposed to come out of suspended animation after he had been scattered to the stars, but a faulty timer woke him several days early. The PCs have some decisions to make when, as they're ready to jettison the coffin, someone starts pounding on the lid and screaming to be let out . . .

PLANETARY RECORD: Mairsus (Iacus V)



One Hex =
647 miles

Planet Type Terrestrial Diameter 9,255 mi. Gravity .95 G Density 4.5 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 30° Seasonal Variation Earthlike Length of Day 21 hours Length of Year 1420.5 days/ 3.40 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.1 (Standard) Type and Composition Standard — Nitrogen 74%, Oxygen 21%, Other 5%
 Climate Cold Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 0° Average 20° High 40°
 Surface Water: 89 % Humidity 90 % Primary Terrain Hilly/Rough
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Scarce Radioactives Ample
 Heavy Metals Plentiful Industrial Metals Plentiful Light Metals Ample Organics Ample
 Moons 1 large (Milita)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Higher animals, fish, reptiles

Civilization: Population(s) 128,000,000 (PR 7)

Tech Level(s) 10

Control Rating 4

Society Military dictatorship

Starports Class V on Honorus Island, Class IV at Valorus

Installations None

Economic/Production Exports services (includes mercenaries)

Other notes: Capital, Valorus. (1) Honorus Island.

System Information:

Star Name Iacus

Type F3 V

Location Great Spiral -15/3/-10

Biozone 1.6-2.4

Inner Limit 0

Number of Planets 8

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Liesus	1 .4	Hot Rockball	1,000	3.2	.07	None	—
Liamel	2 .7	Terrestrial	8,000	3.8	.69	Trace	—
Quojalian	3 1.0	Hot Rockball	6,000	3.7	.50	None	—
Bestus	4 1.6	Terrestrial	6,000	4.2	.57	Nitrogen-Oxygen	—
Mairsus	5 2.8	Terrestrial	9,255	4.5	.95	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Pentalion	6 5.2	Large Gas Giant	80,000	2.1	3.84	Hydrogen	24 moons
Tintanabulus	7 10.0	Medium Gas Giant	50,000	1.9	1.14	Hydrogen-Helium	—
Thursen	8 19.6	Iceball	4,000	2.9	.26	None	Brilliant blue color

Malthus (Anarus Beta III)

Malthus is a sleepy frontier settlement, never busy enough to draw attention to itself. The cost of keeping its facilities open has always just barely been worth the owners' effort. Little has ever happened on Malthus which would draw attention to it.

All that is about to change.

History

Malthus was founded as a way station and storage depot. It was a very uninviting place, with a mildly corrosive atmosphere and no orbital facilities, but its convenient location made it worthwhile for ship owners to stop and let their crews unwind.

Loedsteijn, the capital, provided all of the services frontier towns have been known for since the dawn of history — bad liquor, willing women, several places to lose one's money and a place to sleep that was marginally better than the ground outside the dome. It was never a boom town, but the owners kept it safe.

Eventually a group of visiting miners asked permission to go outside the dome and make a survey. They found the planet rich in minerals, negotiated a claim with the owners of the Loedsteijn dome and began mining.

Mining soon grew to be Malthus' primary industry, and with mining came manufacturing. The planetary government (such as it was) had a *laissez-faire* attitude toward planetary development, so long as they were given a piece of the action. And with its central location, and no environment to preserve, several manufacturers first came to Malthus to take advantage of the cheap manufacturing costs and easily-available raw materials.

As the planet's industrial base grew, so did its population. Currently over 40,000 people live on Malthus, most of them in the dome at Loedsteijn.

Loedsteijn City

Even with its ten-story domescraper and modern monorail system, Loedsteijn still *feels* like a frontier settlement. A visitor gets the feeling that all the people in Loedsteijn know each other — as indeed many do. The vast majority were born on the planet, and newcomers who abide by certain rules (most of which seem to be "mind your own business") are accepted immediately.

Many of the visitors to Loedsteijn stop by on a regular basis, and everyone, from the refuelers at the spaceport to the clerk at the hotel, knows them. It's not hard to be accepted in Loedsteijn — a reaction of Neutral or better will do, or a recommendation from a mutual acquaintance. (Money also helps in some cases.)

The monorail line is the pride of Malthus. Traveling at near the speed of sound, it takes workers from their homes in Loedsteijn to the industrial centers. This sometimes takes several hours, but the trains are outfitted with freshers and sleep cubicles to make the trip more pleasant. The trains are sealed and pass through special airlocks as they enter and leave the dome.

Adventure on Malthus

Gold Rush. While visiting Malthus, the characters hear a rumor sweeping through the dome at Loedsteijn. A vein of gold has been discovered in a deposit of quartz just south of the dome. (Things might get very interesting if the GM can contrive to have one of the PCs discover the gold — preferably while under contract to one of the mining concerns on the planet, so he won't immediately become filthy rich.) Rumors vary as to the size of the discovery, but all accounts point to an *incredibly* big find.

Of course, word of the discovery leaves the planet with the next departing ship, and Malthus suddenly finds itself over-

whelmed by would-be gold tycoons, most of whom know little about the planet and don't realize how difficult mining on Malthus really is.

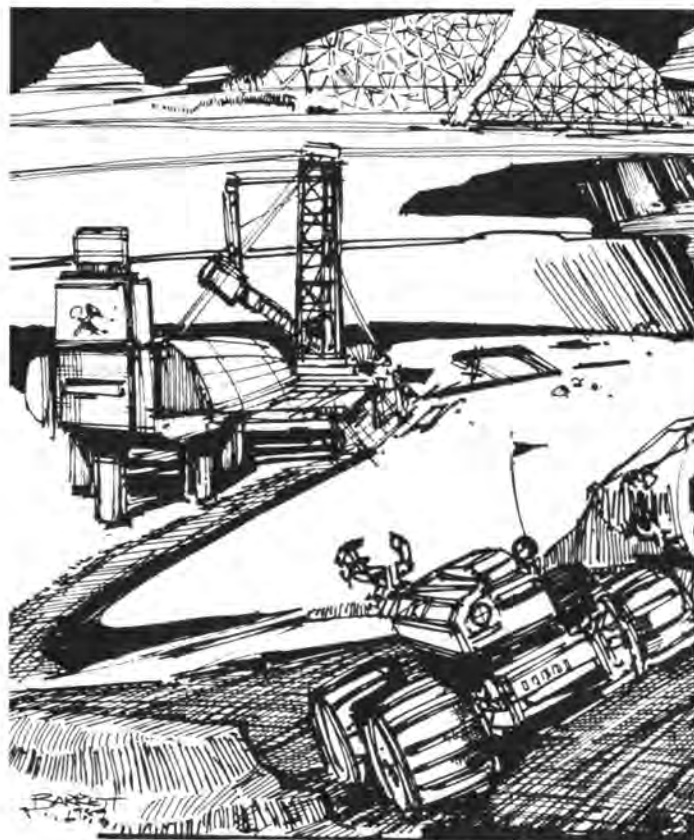
This adventure can take two different paths. If the PCs stay on the planet during the gold rush, they will have a chance to see Loedsteijn grow from a sleepy little town where everyone knows everyone else to a booming city of over 300,000, with more arriving every day. If they leave before word of the gold strike spreads, they will return to a city they won't even recognize, with the old-timers complaining bitterly about the changes and the newcomers trying to strike it rich — either in the gold mines or from those who go mining.

Either way, there are many opportunities for adventure in the boom town. Here are a few ideas:

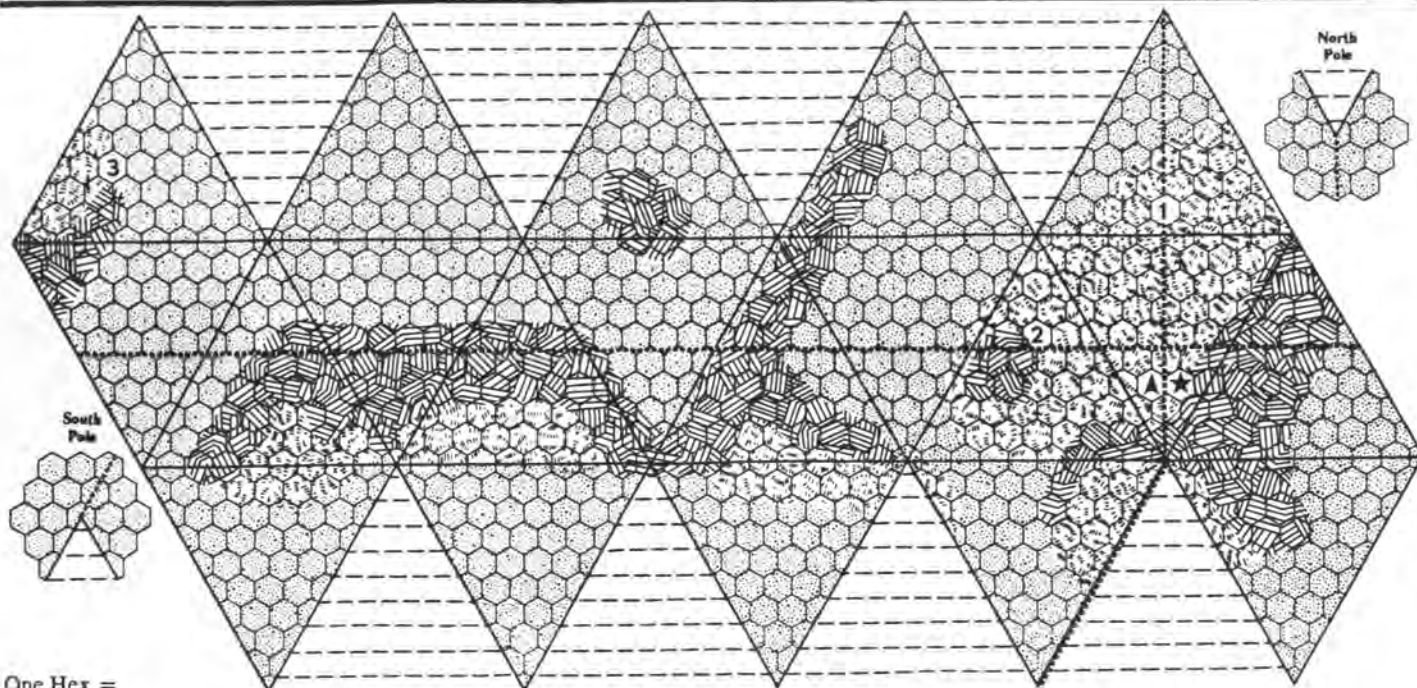
Free Trade. When a gold rush begins on a planet where life support is absolutely necessary outside the domes, there will be fortunes to be made selling equipment, protective gear or even food to the miners. (Characters of questionable integrity can no doubt come up with creative ways to fleece the miners. They had better be able to defend themselves or hide well, however.)

Law Under the Dome. Mining towns don't just attract miners — they also attract those who prey on the miners. As long-time visitors before the boom (or strangers who are honest enough, as the case may be), the characters are deputized to help keep the peace. This can involve anything from breaking up confidence rings to stopping fights to solving murders.

Gonna Build a City. The Loedsteijn dome was built to handle a maximum of 150,000 people, and twice that many are crowding into it, with more trying to get in every day. The characters are hired to help supervise the erection of a new dome to house the overflow. This will require Engineering, Administration, Logistics and other skills, as well as the purchase of supplies — not just dome-building materials, but food, oxygen and other essentials.



PLANETARY RECORD: Malthus (Anarus Beta III)



One Hex =
232 miles

Planet Type Terrestrial Diameter 3,323 mi. Gravity .46 G Density 6.0 Composition High Iron
 Axial Tilt 1° Seasonal Variation None Length of Day 10 hours Length of Year 714 days/ 81 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .58 (Thin) Type and Composition Corrosive—Nitrogen 70%, Hydrogen Sulfide 22%, Other 8%
 Climate Warm Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 70° Average 90° High 110°
 Surface Water: 0 % Humidity 0 % Primary Terrain Barren
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Ample Rare Minerals Plentiful Radioactives Ext. Plentiful
 Heavy Metals Plentiful Industrial Metals Ample Light Metals Plentiful Organics Scarce
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Human
 Other Significant Life Forms None

Civilization: Population(s) 41,220 (PR 5) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 4
 Society Corporate state
 Starports Class IV at Loedsteijn Dome
 Installations Industrial centers
 Economic/Production Mining and manufacturing; some ship facilities

Other notes: Capital, Loedsteijn. (1) Discs (2) Thermidor (3) Industrial center

System Information:

Star Name Anarus Beta Type G2 V Location Great Spiral 8/9/11
 Biozone 0.8-1.2 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 4

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Anarus Beta I	1 .3	Hot Rockball	1,000	6.3	.14	None	—
Anarus Beta II	2 .6	Hot Rockball	7,000	6.2	.99	None	—
Malthus	3 .9	Rockball	3,323	6.0	.46	Nitrogen-Sulfur	Detailed above
—	4 1.5	Asteroid Belt	—	—	—	—	—
Anarus Beta IV	5 2.7	Gas Giant	50,000	2.4	2.74	Hydrogen	—
—	6 5.1	Asteroid belt	—	—	—	—	—

Naro-Trevor (Trevor I)

There's something about the Trevor system that encourages the growth of abundant, strong, healthy crops. It could be the components of Trevor's solar radiation, or the composition of its planets' soil, or the industry of the settlers who landed there. Most likely, it's a combination of all three and more. Whatever the reason, the Trevor system is the Confederacy's leading supplier of food.

History

Naro-Trevor was one of the first planets settled by the generation ships from the Phoenix Nebula. It was colonized by accident; the ship's survey crew had spotted Faro-Trevor and considered it a suitable planet for colonization. Naro-Trevor was much less desirable due to its large desert area.

But due to a miscalculation, the ship missed its window for approach to Faro-Trevor. The ship's alternatives were to land on Naro-Trevor, to try to swing the ship around and make another pass at Faro-Trevor (which would take many years at best), or to bypass the system and look for another one (and no one knew how long that would take). The decision was made to land on Naro-Trevor.

The ship crash-landed in the desert, but only some 30 miles away from a range of mountains which encircled the planet's only ocean. Working at night to conserve water and energy, the colonists moved everything they owned from the crash site across the mountains.

As surveys from space had indicated, the valley was fertile. Clouds dropped their moisture into the mountains, where it melted and ran off and fed the sea. The native life was compatible with their plants (some was even edible!), and soon the colonists were harvesting bumper crops.

Naro-Trevor's population increased rapidly, and within a few hundred years the entire Valley was farmed. While the populace were primarily agricultural, scientists had been working on re-developing interplanetary travel. They remembered the stories of the "Dream Planet" they had almost colonized, and their studies indicated that Faro-Trevor was at least potentially as rich as the legends said.

The development of space travel came at a time when Naro-Trevor was first beginning to feel population pressure. After Silestra and Sinustra, the planet's two moons, the obvious destination for exploration was Faro-Trevor. The first astronauts sent to Faro-Trevor radioed back, "Air clean. Abundant water. Lots of land for crops. Send our wives."

The Great Canal

Even with the emigration to Faro-Trevor, the ever-increasing population of Naro-Trevor was straining the valley's resources. Planetary leaders often talked of expanding beyond the valley, but such a project would essentially require water, plants, manpower — in essence, the world beyond the valley would have to be terraformed.

The transformation of Naro-Trevor was the largest public works project ever undertaken in the history of the Great Spiral. The plants and the manpower were no problem, but getting enough water to irrigate the parched surface of the planet stumped the terraformers for many years. Finally, plans were drawn up for a Great Canal, linking the lake to itself along the planet's equator.

The canal was built over a period of 200 years. The project involved pluviculture, forming water through the combustion of hydrogen, boring tunnels through the mountains ringing the Lake Valley and skirting plateaus, and many other spectacular feats of engineering. In order to fill the canal to its projected level, artificial thunderstorms were created throughout the planet.

In the years since it was built, the Grand Canal has become one of Naro-Trevor's primary resources. Passengers and freight are transported up and down its length in every kind of craft from barge to luxury liner, and it provides water to farms which now feed half a dozen worlds. It isn't much of a tourist attraction — in fact, nothing on Naro-Trevor is, except perhaps to envious agriculturalists — but it was never meant to be.

Adventure on Naro-Trevor

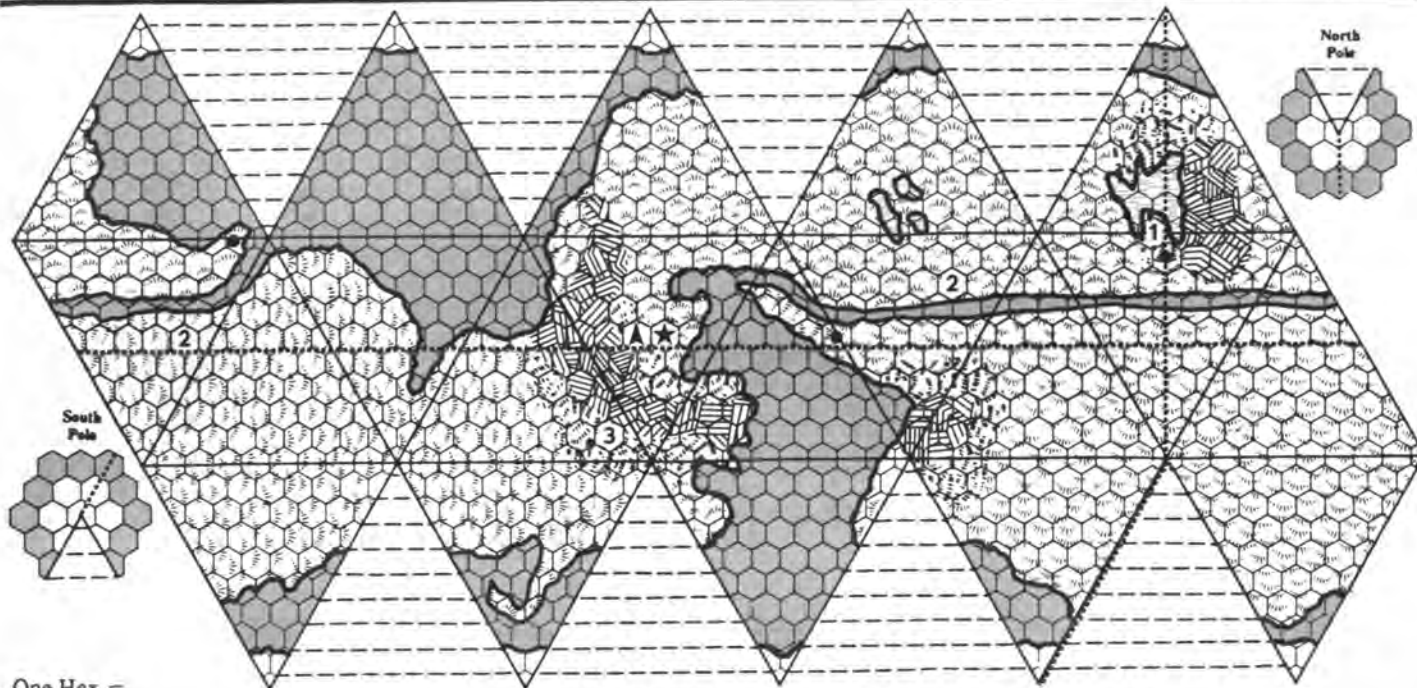
Typhoid Mary. The characters are contracted as part of a flotilla of ships bringing new stock into an area of Naro-Trevor being opened for agriculture. As a routine precaution, the ships are stopped in orbit before landing to make sure the plants and animals they carry are free from disease.

One of the other ships in the flotilla is found to have trees with a root fungus — bad news for the other ships, since this means *all* of the ships must be thoroughly searched. When it comes the party's turn, the tubers their ship is carrying are infected with a mutant strain of Hidarin 2-9-A, a powerful virus which attacks and destroys grasses and grains.

The plants the ship is carrying are immune to the disease, but if they are planted on the surface they will wipe out over half of Naro-Trevor's crop within a matter of months. If the characters can convince the authorities that they had nothing to do with the blighted tubers, they will have to find out who poisoned the plants and why.



PLANETARY RECORD: Naro-Trevor (Trevor I)



One Hex =
454 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 6,492 mi. Gravity .91 G Density 6.1 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 12° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 22 hours Length of Year 181 days/ .66 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .84 (Standard) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 74%, Oxygen 24%, CO₂ 6%, Other 8%
 Climate Warm Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 70° Average 90° High 110°
 Surface Water: 30 % Humidity 65% Primary Terrain Plains/steppes
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Absent Radioactives Scarce
 Heavy Metals Ample Industrial Metals Scarce Light Metals Scarce Organics Plentiful
 Moons 2 large (Silestra and Sinustra)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Higher animals, insects

Civilization: Population(s) 10,600,000 (PR 8) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 2

Society Participatory democracy

Starports Class V at Reaper's Crossing

Installations Agricultural Cartel office complex at Irial

Economic/Production Exports grains and livestock; imports manufactured goods

Other notes: Map key: Capital, Reaper's Crossing. (1) Irial (2) The Grand Canal (3) Channelport

System Information:

Star Name Trevor Type K8 V Location Great Spiral -4/9/-5
 Biozone .5-.6 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 2

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
—	1 .6	Empty orbit	—	—	—	—	—
Naro-Trevor	2 1.0	Earthlike	6,497	6.1	.91	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Faro-Trevor	3 1.4	Earthlike	7,212	5.9	.97	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed on p. 31

Padderborn (Belicose II)

Since the secession of Trebberhorn, Padderborn is the sole remaining colony world of Bossilwick. (For the early history of the system, see *Trebberhorn*, p. 54.) In many ways, Padderborn has benefited more from Trebberhorn's revolt than Trebberhorn did, since it now has many of the advantages of an independent world with few of the disadvantages.

Too Much of a Good Thing

Before the first colonists reached Padderborn they knew the planet supported life, and therefore that its atmosphere contained oxygen. But they didn't realize that the oxygen content was 28% — enough to send explorers into laughing jags from oxygen euphoria.

Establishing a colony on a world with a high-oxygen atmosphere was as challenging as on an airless or hostile world. Unchecked, oxygen euphoria can kill a man, drying out his lungs as he laughs so hard he finds it impossible to breathe. At altitudes of over 3,000 feet, the atmosphere is thin enough to allow breathing, so all permanent settlements on Padderborn are on the extensive plateaus which rise above this level. There are mining settlements in the lowlands, but they are domed and airtlocked just like any settlement in a hostile environment.

Miners venturing out of the domes must wear special filters to decrease the oxygen content of the air they breathe. In addition, they must use special tools and precautions to prevent spontaneous combustion. Mining machinery and transports must be specially designed for the environment, using plastic sealants and enclosed power supplies to keep the chance of flash fires to a minimum. Workers' safety suits are designed from a special fire-retardant material; even so, burns are the primary cause of work-related deaths on Padderborn.

The Oxygen Mines

Oddly enough, the oxygen supply on Padderborn is *increasing*. This is because of a plant found at the bottom of Plateau Lake, the planet's largest concentration of fresh water. These plants, called *aerators*, extract carbon dioxide from the water and give off oxygen in streams of bubbles — hence the name.

Giant extractors collect the oxygen from the lake; it is then liquified and stored for shipment out of the system. Much of Bossilwick's income over the last 200 years has been from selling oxygen to emerging colonies.

The Remaining Colony

The loss of Trebberhorn made the government of Bossilwick realize how important its remaining colony was to it. For a brief time, there was talk of using Bossilwick's military forces to occupy the planet and prevent revolts, but cooler heads soon prevailed. Before the people of Padderborn had a chance to make demands, the government instituted a series of reforms, including free transportation between the two planets and giving the

miners a share of the profits from the sale of the resources they mined.

The government of Bossilwick had over-reacted — the miners of Padderborn had no intention of rebelling. A few agitators were pressuring for more rights, but for the most part the miners were only on Padderborn to earn money. They saw the planet as a resource to be exploited rather than as a home; they never intended to stay, much less settle down on Padderborn.

Still, the reforms were welcome. Now the miners work fewer hours, which means the chance of flash fire or oxygen euphoria is lower, and they earn more money, which means they have to spend less time on Padderborn before they can return home.

Adventures on Padderborn

Air Party. While on Padderborn, the characters are invited out for an "air party." These are deceptively simple; the group dons protective gear, hikes down the side of the plateau to an altitude of 2,000 feet, and half of the group takes off their respiratory gear. The other half watches them to make sure no one gets sick from the oxygen; they then help the others back into their respirators. Then it's the turn of the other half of the party.

The oxygen exposure requires a HT roll every 5 minutes. Failing the roll means the character becomes euphoric (-2 to all IQ and IQ-based skill rolls) and takes 1 point of damage to the torso. The damage is cumulative, but the IQ penalty is not. A character who wants to end the euphoria must make an IQ roll (include the above penalty, plus Will modifiers) to realize he must put his respirator back on; otherwise the euphoria impairs his judgment.

This is a harmless way to let the characters get a semi-legal high. It's also an introduction to the possible dangers of Padderborn, and an object lesson in wearing protective gear.

Another Link in the Food Chain. Several maintenance men have disappeared in the past few weeks while doing repairs on the oxygen extractors in Plateau Lake. The characters are hired to find out what happened to them, and to find a way to prevent it in the future.

Plateau Lake is home to a wide variety of sea life, much of which so far has not been catalogued. One of these unknown species is the *colloth*, an aggressive carnivore.

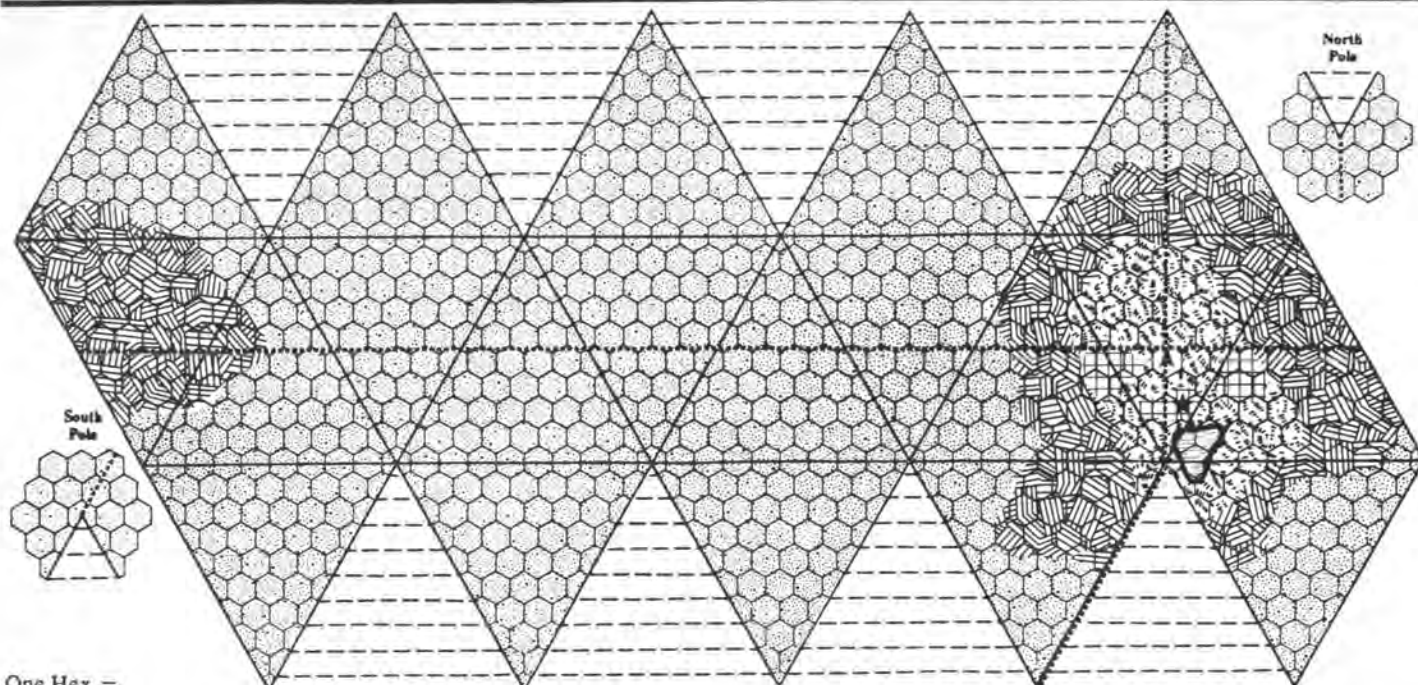


Colloth

ST: 18	Speed/Dodge: 7/7, 4/2	Size: 3
DX: 14	PD/DR: 1/1	Weight: 300-400 lbs.
IQ: 3	Damage: 1 + 1 imp (bite)	Origin: SF
HT: 13/10-14	Reach: C	Habitat: FW

The colloth is about the size of a large shark; it has bad eyesight and feeds on another fish which (to it, anyway) looks remarkably like a human in diving gear. Rolls against skills such as Zoology, Ichthyology and Marine Biology will be useful in figuring this out — as will surviving an attack by one of the beasts, or finding the remains of one of the divers who didn't.

PLANETARY RECORD: Padderborn (Belicose II)



One Hex =
299 miles

Planet Type Hostile Terrestrial Diameter 4,280 mi. Gravity .48 G Density 4.9 Composition Medium iron
 Axial Tilt 11° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 18 hours Length of Year 164 days/ 34 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.1 (Standard) Type and Composition High Oxygen—Nitrogen 57%, Oxygen 28%, CO₂ 9%, Other 6%
 Climate Very hot Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 100° Average 120° High 140°
 Surface Water: 1 % Humidity 5 % Primary Terrain Barren desert
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Ample Radioactives Ample
 Heavy Metals Scarce Industrial Metals Absent Light Metals Ample Organics Absent
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Possible deep-dwelling lifeforms in plateau lake

Civilization: Population(s) 142,000 (PR 6) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 3

Society Colony of Bossilwick

Starports Class III at Plateau Port

Installations Mass accelerator complex in orbit

Economic/Production Light industry; trades mostly with Bossilwick

Other notes: Map key: Capital, Plateau Port.

Reducing respirators required outside domes to avoid oxygen poisoning

System Information:

Star Name Belicose Type G3 V Location Great Spiral 2/-2/-1
 Biozone 0.8-1.2 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 10

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Tassilick	1 .2	Hot Rockball	6,000	3.1	.45	None	—
Padderborn	2 .5	Hostile terrestrial	4,280	4.9	.48	High oxygen	Detailed above
Bossilwick	3 .8	Earthlike	7,428	5.6	.95	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed on p. 23
Trebberrhorn	4 1.4	Earthlike	6,210	5.2	.74	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed on p. 55
Bolluston	5 2.6	Rockball	4,000	5.9	.54	Trace Nitrogen	—
Samminon	6 5.0	Icy Rockball	9,000	1.5	.31	None	—
Hopplin	7 9.8	Icy Rockball	8,000	1.8	.33	None	—
Fissilin	8 19.4	Small Gas Giant	40,000	.6	.55	Hydrogen-methane	—
Sissilin	9 38.6	Large Gas Giant	180,000	.9	3.71	Hydrogen	—
Drissilin	10 77.0	Small Gas Giant	30,000	1.1	.75	Hydrogen	—

Purgatory (Kerrone I)

When the Kerrone system was first explored, it seemed to have little to offer other than a corrosive sea and one small continent. For several hundred years prospectors and mining concerns passed it by as unusable.

Then, some 300 years ago, a group of miners and mineralogists made an in-depth geological survey of the planet. They discovered a combination of abundant minerals in test bores that refined down to a durable, stress-resistant alloy they named Purgatory Steel. A few samples of the new metal quickly convinced investors to back the project, and today Purgatory Steel and other metals are shipped throughout the Great Spiral.

Not Even A Nice Place to Visit

Other than a few acid-based lichens, there is no native life on Purgatory. Narbert, the sole continent, is surrounded by the planet's corrosive acid sea. The atmosphere contains no oxygen. The planet, in short, is not a nice place to live. Few Purgatorians were born there, and one of the few distinctions the miners make among themselves is between "Purgatory Bums" (those born on the planet) and "Short-Timers" (those who immigrated to make their fortunes and plan to leave).

Obviously, living on the surface is impossible. Once a mining tunnel is played out, it is converted into living quarters. Elevators connect the two surface domes near the shuttleport with the main habitation areas. So far, the number of tunnels has kept pace with the increase in miner population, as more Purgatory Bums are born and more Short-Timers arrive to work the mines.

Even in the shafts, the acid sea is a potential danger. In tunnels near the sea bed, there is danger of collapse due to the extreme pressure of the sea acid, and channels of acid have even been struck in inland tunnels. When this happens, the only recourse is to seal off the tunnel — rescue is impossible because of the corrosive sea acid. (On contact with the skin, the acid does 1d-3 points of damage, and no personal protection gear lasts more than 10 to 15 minutes when immersed.) Over 1,000 miners and 20 miles of tunnel have been lost in this way.

Government on Purgatory

The people of Purgatory generally tend to mind their own business, and expect others to do the same. This is reflected in their government, or more properly the coordination of services. The closest thing to a ruling body on the planet is the Jump Council, so named because its primary duty is to arbitrate claim disputes (which usually involve one miner jumping another's claim). The Council investigates everything from murder to reports of unauthorized pets. Compliance with Council directives is voluntary, but almost universal. The only enforcement power the Council has is in cases of murder, where the penalty is death by exposure to the surface.

Essential services, from life support to the education of Purgatory's few children, are undertaken on a voluntary basis. This includes the Constabulary, whose primary duty is stopping bar fights (and accepting free drinks for their services). Serious crimes are investigated by groups called Jump Patrols. The Patrols are created *ad hoc*, deputized by the Council and dissolved when their investigations are finished.

Purgatory is a full member of the Confederacy but tends to stay neutral on most issues. The primary exception to this is

when trade is concerned, as the planet is dependent on trade (both incoming and outgoing) for its livelihood.

Adventures on Purgatory

The Brotherhood of Bums. Although most Purgatorians are satisfied with their life, a few are interested in changing things. Most vocal of these are the Brotherhood of Bums, an association of native-born Purgatorians who are demanding better living quarters and higher wages for contract mining. Some of the Brotherhood have advocated delaying tactics and small-scale sabotage to get their point across.

Most Purgatorians dismiss the Brotherhood as all talk and no action. However, in recent weeks several unexplained accidents have occurred, including an explosion that killed a miner. A high-ranking member of the Brotherhood had warned of the possibility of an explosion in that area two weeks before it happened, but the rest of the Brotherhood's leadership disavowed the use of such violence.

The Brotherhood is worried now that the public has linked them with the bombings. The miner who warned of the blast has an air-tight alibi for that evening and disclaims any knowledge of it. So far the Jump Patrol assigned to the case has made no headway at all.

The PCs are hired by the Brotherhood's leadership as bodyguards until the problem blows over or the case is solved. Their secondary duty is to keep their eyes and ears open and to help solve the mystery of the miner's death.

Note that this adventure seed is a great chance to place the characters in an unfamiliar environment, both social and physical. Emphasize the distrust of the outsiders, the heavy cave air, the sizzle of a scrap of meat thrown into a bucket of sea acid . . .

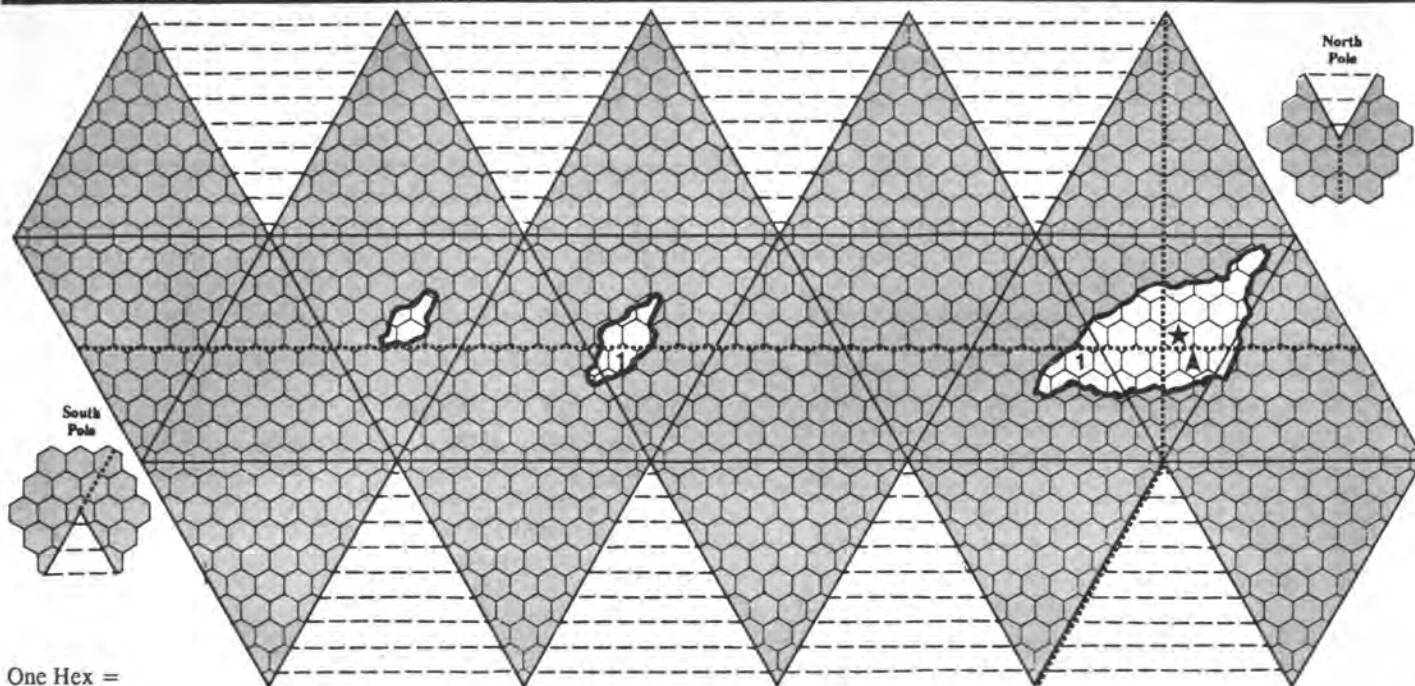
Get Me Out of Here! As the PCs visit Purgatory, they are contacted by a group of five miners. They explain to the party that life in the mines has soured for them; the money is good, but not *that* good. They want to leave for Trebberhorn, and the sooner the better.

If this adventure is being run in conjunction with the previous one, the five are actually high-ranking members of the Brotherhood of Bums (the PCs will have never seen them before the beginning of the adventure). One of them is the one who made the bomb threat; another is the man who actually planted the bomb, and the rest are sympathizers. They are in the employ of Baron von Toerbach (see p. 52), and plan to use Trebberhorn as a stepping stone to Tallamatrix (and eventually to the Baron's base in the Velpare system). They offer to pay the characters well for the trip if they leave immediately — which would require the PCs to abandon their jobs as bodyguards for the Bums' leadership.

For a stand-alone adventure, have the miners be one step ahead of a lynch mob. They are accused of the murder of a popular miner, and say they can prove their innocence if they are taken off planet. No corpse has been found — but that hasn't stopped the mob.

In reality, the men are innocent, and the primary reason the body hasn't been found is that the "victim" is still alive and hiding in the tunnels. The frame-up (a rumor he started) is in retaliation for their winning a claim-jumping case before the Jump Board, robbing him of a lucrative claim which he believes is rightfully his (but was actually claimed by the group of miners two years earlier). The miners want to get off Purgatory, but once they've left, they plan to stay away and have no intention of clearing their names.

PLANETARY RECORD: Purgatory (Kerrone I)



One Hex =
523 miles

Planet Type Hostile Terrestrial Diameter 7,482 mi. Gravity 1.03 G Density 6.9 Composition High Iron
 Axial Tilt 26° Seasonal Variation Earthlike Length of Day 6 hours Length of Year 389 days/ .27 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.6 (Very Dense) Type and Composition Corrosive—Nitrides 48%, Nitric acid 18%, Sulfur compounds 34%
 Climate Hot Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 90° Average 110° High 130°
 Surface Liquid* 90 % Humidity 85 % Primary Terrain Barren
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Plentiful Rare Minerals Ample Radioactives Scarce
 Heavy Metals Plentiful Industrial Metals Ext. Plentiful Light Metals Ext. Plentiful Organics Scarce
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans
 Other Significant Life Forms Acid-based plants

Civilization: Population(s) 129,000 (PR 6) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 0
 Society Cooperative anarchy
 Starports One Class IV in orbit at Miners' Haven, one shuttle port at Narbert
 Installations Steel refinery at Narbert
 Economic/Production Exports steel and raw ores

Other notes: Capital: Narbert. (1) Other major settlements.
 * Planetary seas are acid-based

System Information:

Star Name Kerrone Type K3 V Location Great Spiral -10/-4/-5
 Biozone .5-.6 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 6

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Purgatory	1 .4	Hostile Terrestrial	7,482	6.0	1.03	Nitrides - Sulfur	Detailed above
Delios	2 .7	Rockball	12,000	5.2	1.4	None	—
Shazhan	3 1.0	Rockball	5,000	5.5	.62	None	—
—	4 1.6	Asteroid Belt	—	—	—	—	—
Kashar	5 2.8	Terrestrial	2,000	4.9	.22	Trace	—
Alcost	6 5.2	Medium Gas Giant	60,000	.9	1.23	Hydrogen-Helium	—
Anathazh	7 10.0	Iceball	9,000	5.1	1.05	None	—

Regalia (Brothers III)

The Brothers are the only binary system within the Confederacy. They revolve around each other, and their nine planets circle them as if they were one. Seasonal variation is more extreme than would be usual for a planet with only one sun, due to the differences between the temperatures of the two Brothers. For about one month every 12 years, the average daytime tropical temperature on Regalia soars to over 140 degrees; similarly, for a month every 12 years the temperature never goes above -30°. The other planets suffer similar temperature variations.

Regalia is the only inhabited planet in the Brothers system. Many years ago, it was also the home of a Precursor civilization. Archaeologists speculate that the Precursors may have been the same race that lived on Kintara or Selbin, but there is no physical evidence of this, since most of the Precursor evidence consists of highly radioactive fused rock and unidentifiable debris.

Despite the Precursor site and scientific interest in the Brothers and their planets, Regalia remains a backwater planet, largely unexplored. Its out-of-the-way location at the edge of the Great Spiral and its reputation as the home of an "oddball cult" keeps travelers away.

Science of the Mind

Regalia is the home of a discipline called *Science of the Mind*. Called a religion by some, a cult by others, "sciminders" merely describe Science of the Mind as "our way of life" and refuse to further discuss it with outsiders.

According to tradition, Science of the Mind was first taught by a group of black-shrouded pilgrims who came from the desert just after one of Regalia's blistering summers. They traveled throughout Regalia, teaching that all men had some form of psionics and showing their followers how to unlock their psionic potential. When the next 12-year summer arrived, the pilgrims went back to the desert, never to return.

Like most religions, Science of the Mind stresses brotherhood and devotion to a higher ideal. It also offers exercises and disciplines designed to augment and magnify psionic ability — even to unlock the ability in those who have never before had it. The unlocking is apparently never done on anyone who has not been a sciminder for several years and shown his sincerity; in fact, it is possible that the unlocking is only done at the religion's holy place, the Temple of the Mind.

Little is known of the Temple of the Mind other than its location; it is in the middle of Regalia's largest desert and almost impossible to reach except during the winter, or during "leap fall" and "leap spring" (the periods immediately preceding and following the 12-year winter). Leaders, both spiritual and governmental, are chosen from those who have made the pilgrimage.

Practical Effects

Sciminders must take at least one level of Psionic Talent and one psionic skill. A character who has made the pilgrimage to the Temple of the Mind must also take the advantage Reputation: Pilgrim (+2, to

other Sciminders, all the time; 5 points) and an additional level of Psionic Talent. In addition, the Sciminder must either be native to Regalia or take the Unusual Background advantage.

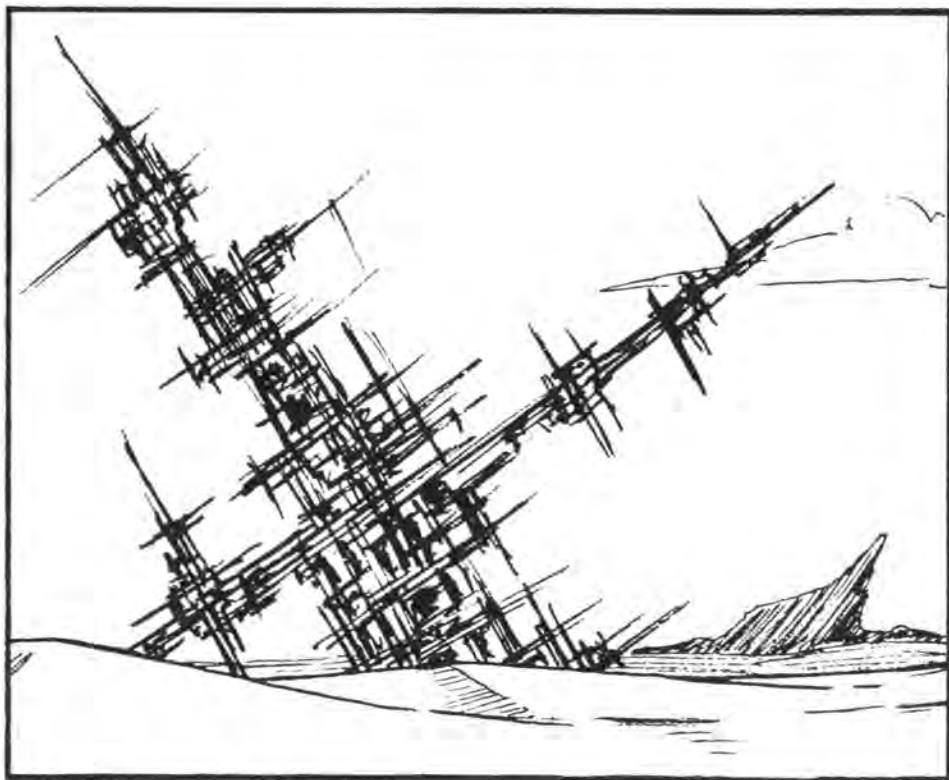
Any player character who wants to become a Sciminder will have to be sincere. Characters who only want to become powerful psionics with a minimum of work will be told they have to study Science of the Mind for 12 years before they can even begin to learn psionics (not true — this is intended to weed out the insincere).

Adventure on Regalia

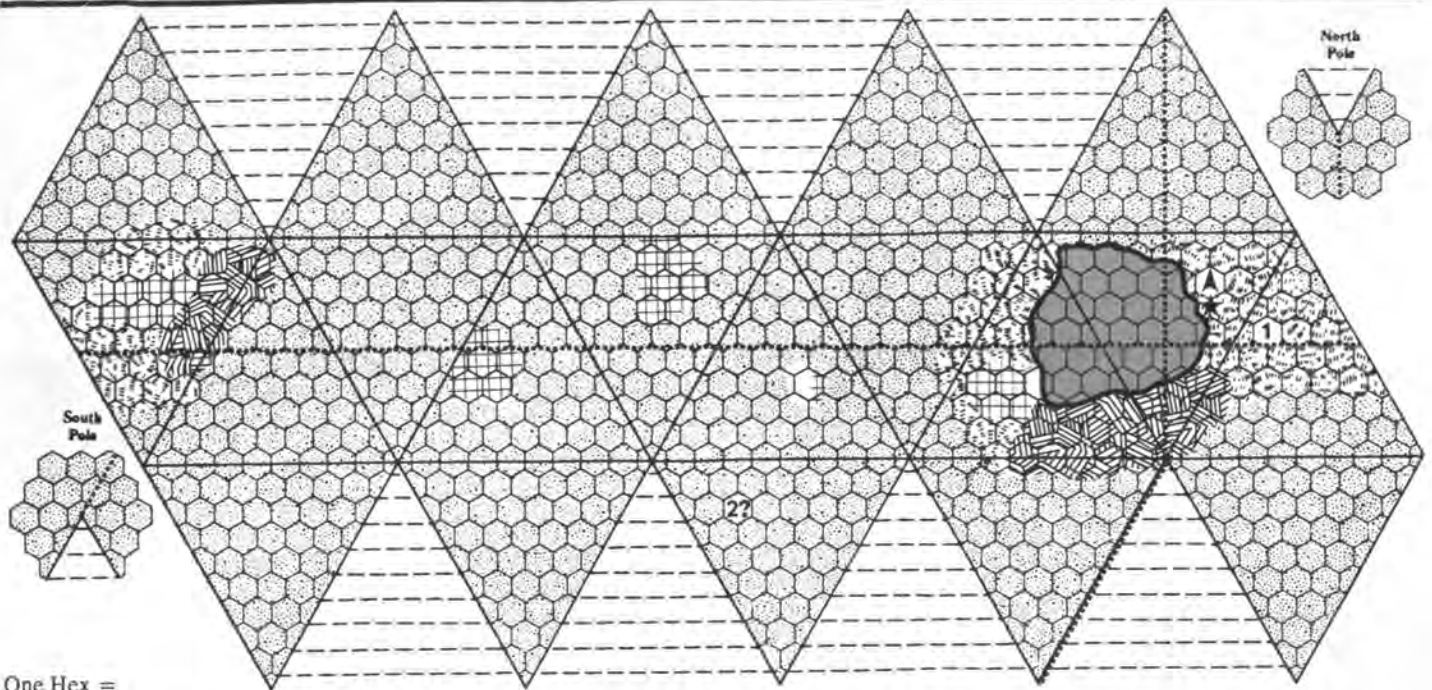
Desecrators. As they near the Brothers, the characters begin receiving a distress beacon. The beacon's signal identifies it as coming from the *Lion of Aimar*, a free trader based out of the Rollaron system. It reports that it is broadcasting from atmosphere and gravity (meaning the ship has probably crashed), and that it was activated about two days ago.

If the party decides to investigate, they will find the remains of the *Lion* in a desert area near a large, pyramid-shaped structure. There is no sign of the crew of the *Lion*. Suddenly, the pyramid disappears, and standing before them is a man who identifies himself as the captain of the *Lion*. He tells the party there is great danger there and that they should leave immediately. He then vanishes.

The pyramid is the Temple of the Mind, the holiest place on Regalia. The man the characters saw was an illusion, intended to lure them away from the Temple. If the characters insist on looking for the crew of the *Lion* — especially if they insist on looking anywhere near the Temple — the Sciminders will use all their resources, preferably psychic but physical if necessary, to keep the characters out of the temple. (The crew of the *Lion* is being cared for in a nearby village; the Sciminders think they've seen too much and will not let them leave Regalia. The characters, if they're not careful, may end up in the same situation.)



PLANETARY RECORD: Regalia (Brothers III)



One Hex =
386 miles

Planet Type Terrestrial Diameter 6,527 mi. Gravity .76 G Density 5.1 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 3° Seasonal Variation Extreme Length of Day 80 hours Length of Year 547 days/ 4.99 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .7 (Thin) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 73%, Oxygen 18%, CO₂ 5%, Other 4%
 Climate Tropical Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 80° Average 100° High 120°
 Surface Water: 4 % Humidity 2 % Primary Terrain Barren desert
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Absent Rare Minerals Absent Radioactives Plentiful
 Heavy Metals Absent Industrial Metals Scarce Light Metals Plentiful Organics Ample
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Microorganisms
 Other Significant Life Forms Humans, imported plants

Civilization: Population(s) 897,000 (PR 6) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 1
 Society Participatory Democracy
 Starports Class III at Helos
 Installations None
 Economic/Production Mining

Other notes: Capital, Helos. (1) Precursor ruins (2) Temple of the Mind
 * Extreme seasonal variation due to differences in temperature between the two Brothers

System Information:

Star Name The Brothers Type F0 IV/G3 V Location Great Spiral 19/-4/+14
 Biozone 1.5-2.5 (average) Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 9

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
—	1 .6	Empty Orbit	—	—	—	—	—
—	2 1.0	Empty Orbit	—	—	—	—	—
Rondamin	3 1.4	Hot Rockball	3,000	3.3	.22	None	—
Regalia	4 2.2	Terrestrial	6,527	5.1	.76	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Allegrus	5 3.8	Rockball	1,000	3.9	.08	None	—
Forbyn	6 7.0	Terrestrial	7,000	5.5	.88	Trace CO ₂	—
Cartelin	7 13.4	Terrestrial	3,000	5.9	.4	Thin nitrogen	—
Calthustra	8 32.2	Terrestrial	9,000	6.2	1.27	Trace nitrogen	—
Endomin	9 51.8	Large Gas Giant	90,000	1.8	3.71	Hydrogen	13 moons
Osmice	10 102.8	Medium Gas Giant	60,000	1.5	2.06	Hydrogen	12 moons
Morsbreck	11 205.4	Rockball	6,000	4.4	.60	None	Six moons

Selbin (Daishin IV)

At first, Selbin would seem an odd choice for a world whose primary industry is tourism. Its polar ice caverns are spectacular, but hardly worth making the trip from Tallamatrix; the casinos and entertainment complexes are on par with others in the Sector; its zoological complexes don't even begin to approach those of Caractacalla, and many areas of the planet prohibit alcohol.

Why, then, do so many people come to Selbin? It has something no other planet in the Great Spiral has — a working Precursor installation.

Via-Chan's Installation

Named for the Wa-luvian scientist who first described it, Via-Chan's Installation covers over 500 acres in a protected enclave north of Disri, the capital. The complex consists of 354 domes. Not all of the domes are being actively studied; researchers haven't even figured out how to open some of them, or whether in fact they are meant to be opened. Fourteen of the domes have been opened to the public; 57 other domes have been opened, but at present only trained researchers are allowed to use them.

Dome 2 is typical. It is circular, 235 feet in diameter and has over 100 "workstations." Each workstation is about four feet tall, with a translucent surface and a slanting panel facing the user. On the panel are nine buttons, arranged in three rows of three. When any button or combination of buttons is pressed, the translucent surface glows and holographic images are projected above it. These images are equal to the best TL10 holographic technology. The images are usually accompanied by sounds — speech, "music" or "sound effects." So far the Precursor language has defied attempts to interpret it, and the music is all but incomprehensible.

The sound effects, however, are easily identified. For instance, pressing the center button, then the upper right-hand button on Workstation 51 brings up a "bestiary," showing animals presumably well-known to the Precursors. Each animal is shown for several seconds, and a series of noises is heard —

presumably the noises the animals made. Fifty-one animals are shown before the screen blanks.

Since each workstation has 511 possible combinations of buttons to press, and some of these combinations lead to "menus" of further choices, it is clear that the researchers here have barely begun to explore what is apparently a Precursor encyclopedia — the sum total of their knowledge.

Adventures on Selbin

Breakthrough. In spite of the voluminous research that has been done on the installation, almost nothing is known yet of the Precursors. They were humanoid, with golden skin, large, brown, pupilless eyes and three fingers and a thumb on each hand; a few strictly visual clues (their architecture and mode of dress, for example) have been interpreted as well. However, spoken and written clues remain unreadable.

The simplest adventure here is to let a character learn something important about the Precursors. The Via-Chan Research Group will pay for important information or clues, but the character must be able to consistently retrieve the information (make an IQ roll to see if the character can remember which buttons he pressed, and in what order).

If one of the *players* enjoys puzzles, this is a perfect opportunity to indulge him. Have him discover a holographic sequence in which he sees one sphere and hears the word, "ah." He then sees two spheres and hears the word, "say." The pattern continues, with the workstation showing three to eight spheres and saying the words, "ah-say," "tee," "tee-ah," "tee-say," "tee-say-ah" and "zin."

The player (or his character, if he prefers) will probably quickly deduce that the words are the numbers one through eight in the Precursor language. He may also deduce that the Precursors used an octal (base eight) number system (correct), or that he has stumbled onto a Precursor version of *Sesame Street* (only partially correct).

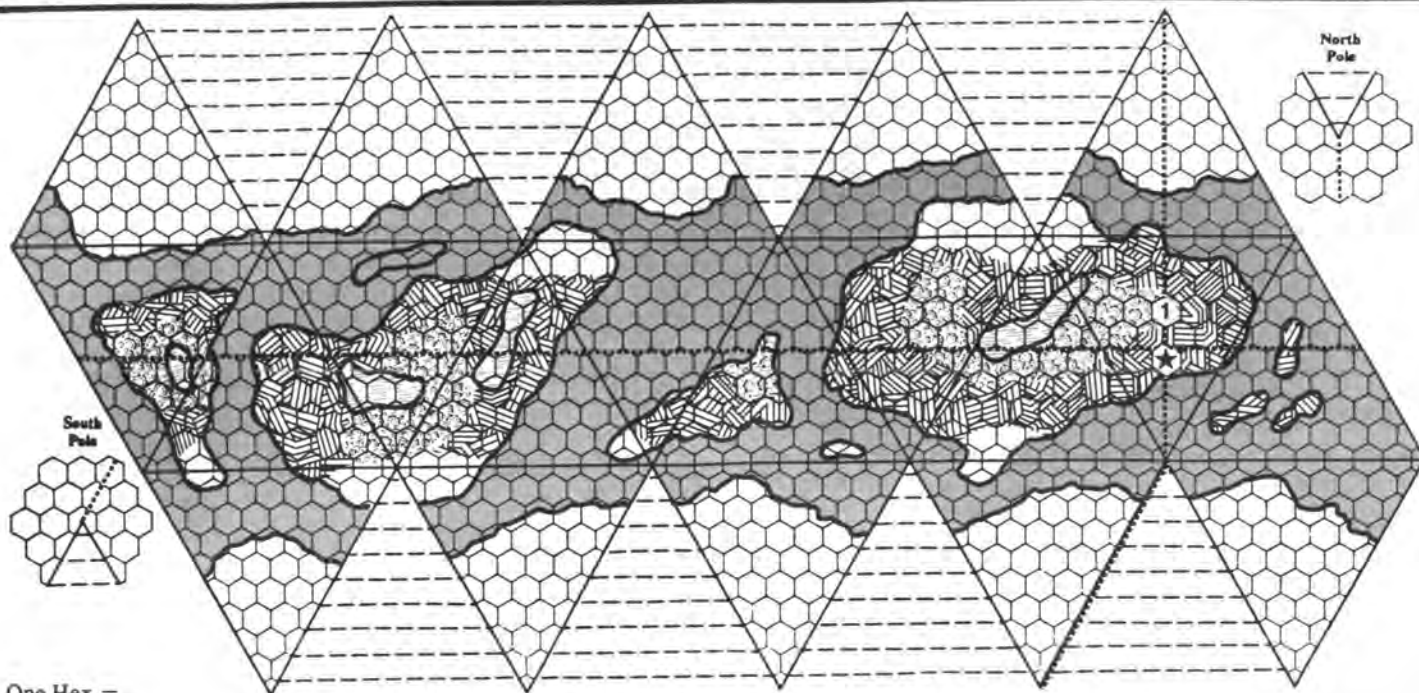
In reality, the character has stumbled onto the beginnings of the means the Precursors provided to interpret their language. Another combination of buttons will call up a different display, showing from one to eight spheres along with the written word for each. Other buttons display gradually more complex holograms, leading the character to a basic understanding of the Precursor language.

The Lost Precursor Mine. If the players are in more of a mood for action, have them call up a display that looks for all the world like a Department of Agriculture documentary (complete with happy workers and unimpressive music). The display shows some unimpressive rural scenes, and a map (presumably showing how to find the area); it then runs for 20 minutes, when the emphasis switches from farming to mining. A successful Geology, Blacksmith, Metallurgy or Alchemy roll alerts the character that this is a *gold* mine, and that the ore they are mining is very high-grade!

Now comes the fun part. Do the characters remember the map? If so, do they remember it correctly? And can they figure out what it's a map *of*? What happens when they find the area depends on whether the GM feels charitable toward them. He could have them find a mine full of gold nuggets as big as the characters' fists. Or they could find a long-ago played-out mine. Or someone else could have found the mine first. Or they could simply misremember the map and not be able to find the button combination.



PLANETARY RECORD: Selbin (Daishin IV)



One Hex =
583 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 8,326 Gravity 1.2 G Density 6.3 Composition High-Iron
 Axial Tilt 3° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 27 hours Length of Year 569.5 days/ 1.75 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.1 (Standard) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 70%, Oxygen 19%, CO₂ 4%, Others 7%
 Climate Cool Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 45° Average 65° High 85°
 Surface Water: 63% Humidity 69% Primary Terrain Plains/Steppes
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Ample Radioactives Plentiful
 Heavy Metals Plentiful Industrial Metals Plentiful Light Metals Ext. Plentiful Organics Scarce
 Moons One large (Taru), one small (Sparin)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Vegetation, some insects and reptiles

Civilization: Population(s) 25,000,000 (PR 7)

Tech Level(s) 10

Control Rating 5

Society Technocracy

Starports Class IV at Disri

Installations Precursor site near Disri

Economic/Production Tourism, research, some manufacturing

Other notes: Map key: Capital, Disri. (1) Precursor site

Export of Precursor artifacts prohibited

System Information:

Star Name Daishin

Type F7 V

Location Great Spiral 12/-10/6

Biozone 1.6-2.4

Inner Limit 0.0

Number of Planets 6

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Lemo	1 .4	Hot Rockball	2,500	4.0	.22	None	—
Biretin	2 .7	Rockball	4,000	5.9	.54	None	—
Tumē	3 1.1	Terrestrial	6,000	5.6	.76	Superdense	Extensive swamps
Selbin	4 1.8	Earthlike	8,326	6.3	1.20	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Kashra Naz	5 3.2	Medium Gas Giant	35,000	1.6	1.28	Hydrogen-Helium	24 moons

Tallamatrix (Harlequin III)

Harlequin was one of the first stars encountered when the Great Spiral was originally settled, and consequently Tallamatrix is one of the oldest colonies in the sector. Today, Tallamatrix is of great importance as a major port and a center of industry. It is also a hotbed of rebellion, thanks to one man . . .

History

The people of Tallamatrix have always been fiercely independent. When the planet was first settled, the colonists split into groups, most with no more than a hundred people, and formed their own "nations." These nations warred continuously with one another, only ceasing during brief periods when charismatic warrior-kings managed to unite the nations by conquering them and integrating them into larger empires. None of these empires lasted, and the fragmentation and feuding quickly resumed.

The only empire that lasted more than 50 years was that of Seliech the Great, which was held together by his son and grandson for almost a century and a half. The Empire of Seliech brought Tallamatrix into the Confederacy as one of its founding members; under Seliech III, it also attempted rebellion by leaving the Confederacy and trying to expand the Empire to other planets. The resulting war caused the breakup of the Empire and a return to small-scale feudalism.

Today Tallamatrix is again balkanized, broken up into six dozen or so loosely confederated countries. These countries have no control over their own destiny; the national governments are controlled by *corporate nobles*, a ruling class made up of upper-eschelon managers of Tallamatrix' many industrial corporations. The Industrial Ministry, which oversees the corporate nobles, is made up of the chief executives of the corporations, rules over the corporate nobles, and chief within the Industrial Ministry is Baron Rolf von Toerbach, president of Tallamatrix Transportation, the planet's largest industrial concern.

Baron Rolf von Toerbach

President of the Tallamatrix Industrial Ministry, 5' 1", bald with fringe of grey hair, brown eyes, 41 years old.

ST 8, DX 9, IQ 17, HT 10.

Advantages: Filthy Rich; Status 6; Military Rank 5; Voice.

Disadvantages: Appearance (Unattractive); Reputation -2 (everyone, all the time).

Skills: Administration-16; Astrogation-12; Bribery-16; Computer Operation/TL10-16; Detect Lies-16; Economics-13; Engineer (Starship power plants)-14; Fast-Talk-14; Free Fall-14; Guns/TL10 (Blaster)-17; History (Confederacy)-12.; History (Tallamatrix)-17; Politics-18; Propaganda-16; Strategy-15; Survival (Corrosive Atmosphere)-13; Survival (Vacuum)-13; Swimming-12; Tactics-14; Vacc Suit-15.

Quirks: Napoleon complex; No sense of humor.

The heir to the chairmanship of Tallamatrix Transportation, Baron von Toerbach is a no-nonsense administrator. In the first three years he headed the corporation he increased profits 3%, an impressive feat in a company of its size with the large market share it commands. He did this through ruthless cost-cutting measures and stern internal controls, including firing stewards for placing two lumps of sugar on a tea tray instead of one.

The Baron believes that the Confederacy is an inefficient form of government. It is his opinion that it would run better with one man — him — at its head. He has tried to gain power by legal means and has been thwarted several times. In the past

few years he has decided to try a less-than-aboveboard approach by building up his own private navy (see *Velpare*, p. 56) and by subtle diplomatic ploys (see *Trebberhorn*, p. 54).

Von Toerbach has studied Tallamatrix history, especially the Seliech Empire, and believes he has learned from the Emperor's mistakes. He is willing to take the time to ensure success in his operation, but would like to unite the Great Spiral under his thumb while still young enough to enjoy ruling it. Some members of the Confederacy — most notably Keplo-Quitlan — remember the Seliech Empire and do not trust von Toerbach, but most seem to have a "wait and see" attitude, not wanting to antagonize him.

A notorious recluse, Baron von Toerbach is rarely seen in public. He prefers to communicate with the people of Tallamatrix by radio. This is in part because of his Unattractive appearance, but also because he has spent the last several years at his base orbiting the Velpare system.

Adventures on Tallamatrix

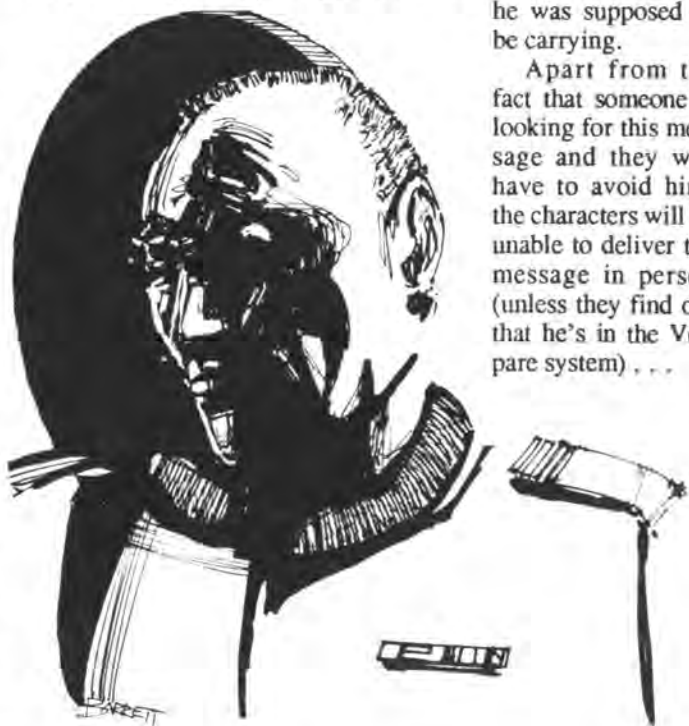
Industrial Espionage. No one doubts that the Baron is in charge of the Industrial Ministry. The pecking order in the rest of the Ministry changes almost daily, however, as the other members of the Ministry scramble to curry the Baron's favor.

The PCs are approached by representatives of two different ministers, each of which wants them to spy on the other. Each minister offers the party \$10,000 to keep an eye on his counterpart and report back. The characters must deal with this apparent conflict of interest; if either minister knew the characters were taking money from both sides, the repercussions would be serious (and likely fatal).

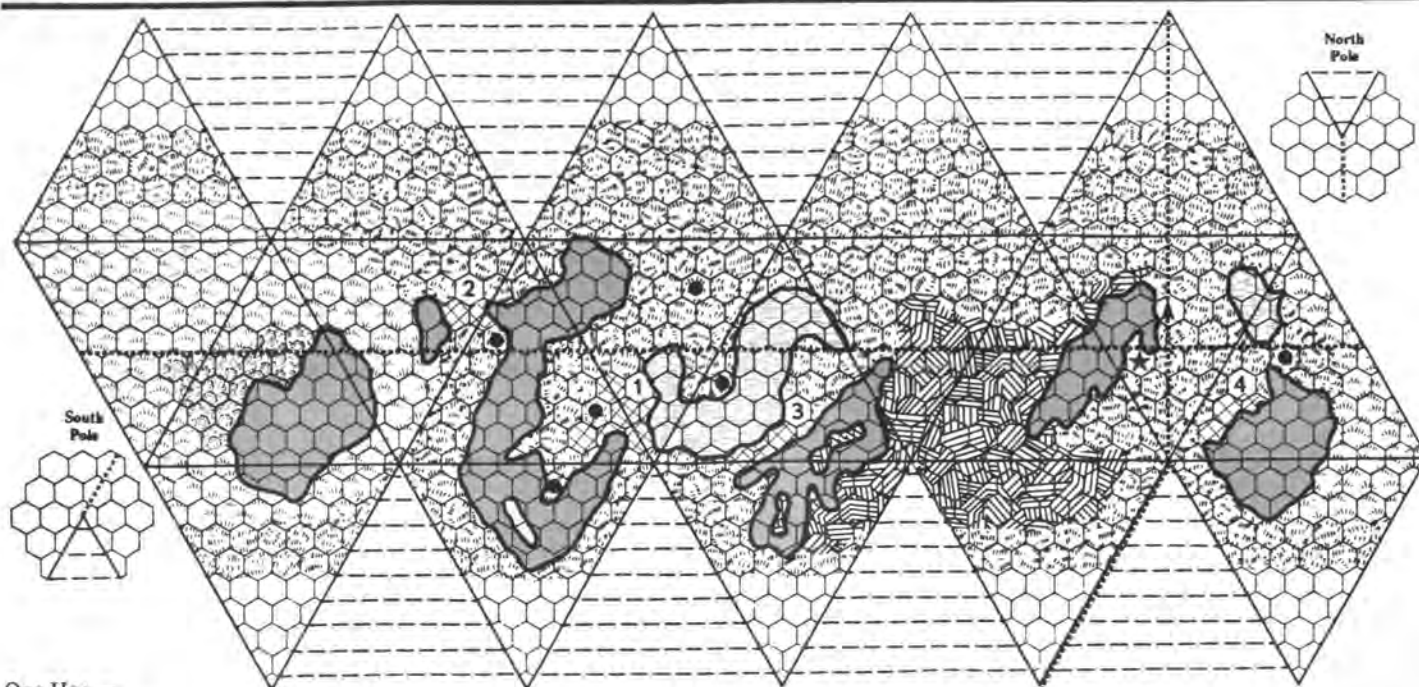
Information Retrieval. While vacationing on Bossilwick, the characters are approached by a man who hands them a coded message. He offers them \$10,000 to deliver the message personally to Baron von Toerbach on Tallamatrix. (He gives them a password that will identify them.) Before they can lift off, they receive word through the grapevine that a man — from Tallamatrix, by his accent — was gunned down on a side street in Duquessa. Apparently the gunmen were looking for a message

he was supposed to be carrying.

Apart from the fact that someone is looking for this message and they will have to avoid him, the characters will be unable to deliver the message in person (unless they find out that he's in the Velpare system) . . .



PLANETARY RECORD: Tallamatrix (Harlequin III)



One Hex =
442 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 6,328 mi. Gravity .83 G Density 5.7 Composition Medium Iron
 Axial Tilt 18° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 81 hours Length of Year 71 days/ .65 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .9 (Standard) Type and Composition Polluted — Nitrogen 71%, Oxygen 19%, Hydrocarbons 8%, Others 2%
 Climate Cool Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 40° Average 60° High 80°
 Surface Water: 30 % Humidity 23 % Primary Terrain Hilly/Rough
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Absent Rare Minerals Absent Radioactives Scarce
 Heavy Metals Ext. Plentiful Industrial Metals Ample Light Metals Plentiful Organics Ample
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Mammal analogs, insects

Civilization: Population(s) 470,000,000 (PR 9) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 4

Society Corporate dictatorship

Starports Class V at the Corporate Enclave, Class IV at Von Bort's Town

Installations Naval base adjoining Von Bort's Town starport

Economic/Production Heavy industry; exports most good, imports raw materials and food

Other notes: Capital, Von Bort's Town. (1) Corporate Enclave (2) Van de Land (3) Isthmusstaat (4) Progenine

System Information:

Star Name Harlequin Type G2 V1 Location Great Spiral -8/15/-8
 Biozone 0.5-0.8 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 5

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Bindus	1 .1	Hot Rockball	5,000	5.8	.66	None	—
Llewellyn	2 .4	Terrestrial	11,000	5.2	1.31	Nitrogen	—
Tallamatrix	3 .7	Terrestrial	6,328	5.7	.83	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Protalus	4 1.3	Medium Gas Giant	50,000	2.4	2.74	Hydrogen	—
Hectalus	5 2.5	Medium Gas Giant	60,000	2.3	3.16	Hydrogen	Two sets of rings

Trebberhorn (Belicose IV)

Until very recently, Trebberhorn was a colony of Bossilwick. It is now in theory an independent world, seeking admission to the Confederacy — but the price of its “independence” was high, and the people of Trebberhorn may have merely traded one yoke for another.

Deal With the Devil

Trebberhorn's primary mineral resources are petroleum, natural gas and similar products. Bossilwick imported over 90 percent of its supplies from Trebberhorn. Like most colonial masters, it was more interested in the supply of goods than in the welfare of its colonists.

The Uprisings began in Olotin when the workers there were ordered to work an extra half-day per week without extra pay. At first the protests were peaceful — demonstrations, sit-down strikes and the like — but they quickly turned violent. When the local governor ordered the guards to fire on the workers during a strike, civil war erupted. Half of the guards refused to fire and joined the strikers.

Word of the revolt quickly spread across the planet. At first it looked like the Trebberhornians would win quickly with captured weapons and equipment, but Bossilwick quickly sent in extra troops — including Mairsan mercenaries.

The war turned into a guerrilla action as the locals took to the hills, sniping at scabs brought in to extract the petroleum. For many years the situation was a standoff, with neither side gaining ground.

In desperation, the leaders of Trebberhorn made what in retrospect may have been an unwise decision. They agreed to a proposal by Rolf von Toerbach, the ruler of Tallamatrix, that he supply troops and equipment sufficient to drive the Bossilwickians off the planet. His condition was that Tallamatrix be allowed to station troops on Trebberhorn after the war was finished.

The proposal sounded good at the time — the local leaders assumed that the soldiers stationed on the planet would remain, with perhaps a few reinforcements. Had they known more about von Toerbach, they would not have been surprised when the planetary garrison was heavily reinforced six months after the last Bossilwickians left the planet. (Had they known, they might not have accepted help from Tallamatrix in the first place.)

Trebberhorn Today

Having won the revolution, the natives of Trebberhorn are now experimenting with forms of government, trying to find one that suits them. Currently the planet is highly balkanized, with each of the over 70 countries trying a different form. Von Toerbach's forces are in no hurry to see a centralized government evolve; they find the smaller groups much more tractable, and are better able to control political trends of which they do not approve.

Planetwide, there are three general political factions. The first, composed mainly of opportunists and the power-hungry, side with von Toerbach. They approve of his plan to seize power from the Confederacy and plan to stand by him. The second wants no part of any foreign intervention; most of these have returned to their guerrilla warfare. The third group stands in between the other two, primarily maintaining a “wait-and-see” attitude. Many of these do not trust von Toerbach but see him as a strong ally — something they will need while they are still weak.

The Ice Trees

At present, Trebberhorn's primary exports are sea harvest and petroleum. Both commodities were primarily exported to Bossilwick, and so far new markets for these commodities have developed only slowly (partly in response to pressure from Bossilwick). To widen their economic bases, several countries have begun promoting the planet's ice trees as a tourist attraction.



The ice tree is a plant which, as it grows, surrounds itself with a coating of ice. The trees grow rapidly — sometimes as much as two feet in a single day — and propagate when their needle-like “leaves” fall to the ground. These leaves act as seeds, and a new tree may begin growing in a matter of hours. (Ice tree leaves are very sharp — accidentally brushing against one can cause up to 1d-4 points of impaling damage.) The rapid growth and propagation are necessary to the ice trees' survival, since the underlying plant cannot exist without its ice coating and many of the trees die when the temperature exceeds 32 degrees.

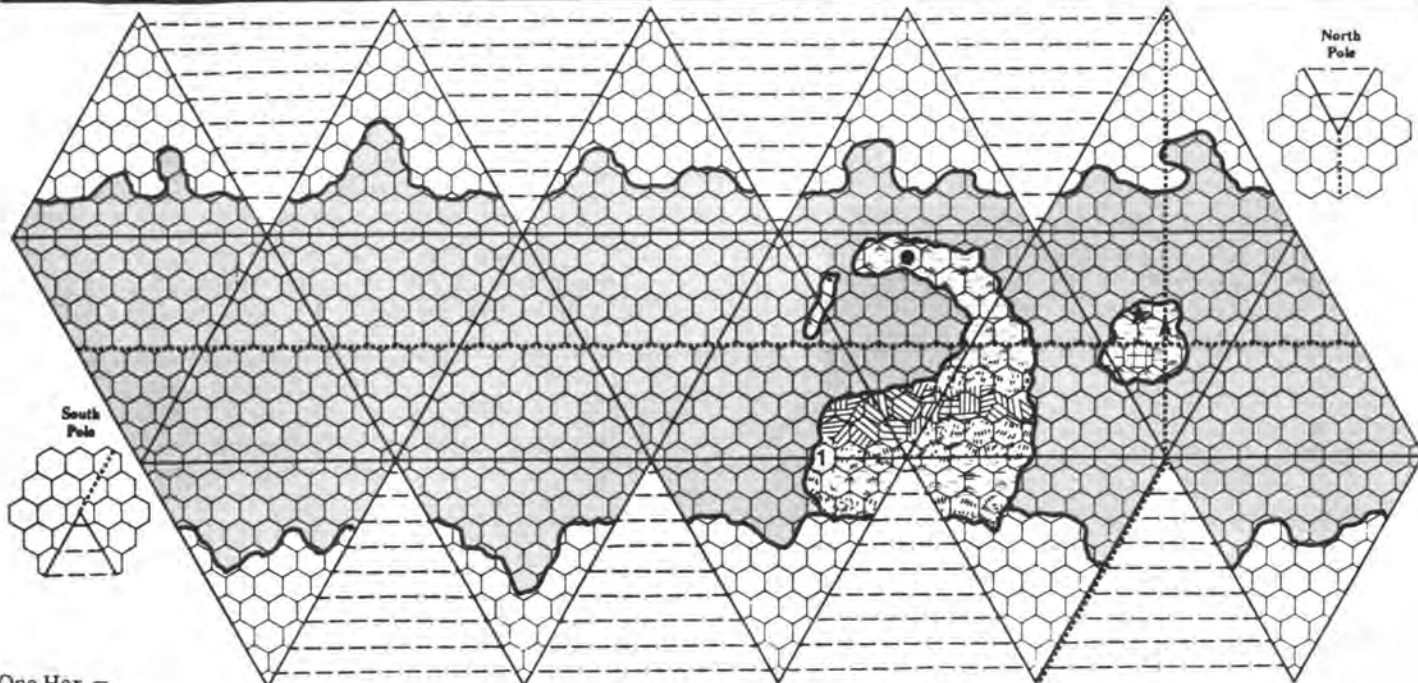
The ice forests are promoted as a scenic wonder that's always different and breathtaking, and several tourist resorts have been built, with anticipated clientele ranging from honeymooners to corporate retreaters. So far, business has been very slow — again, due to interference from Bossilwick. Most of the visitors have been from worlds friendly to von Toerbach, who sees this economic dependence as another way to keep Trebberhorn under his thumb.

Adventure on Trebberhorn

Ice Escapades. The government of one of the colder planets in the Great Spiral (perhaps Bindar or Wa-Lu) hires the characters to perform a simple mission: bring some sample ice tree leaves to them for study. They want the leaves in perfect condition, with their ice coatings intact, to see if they will grow in any environment other than their native one.

This might be a very simple mission, except that the various governments of Trebberhorn consider the ice trees to be planetary treasures and will refuse to allow them to be exported off-planet. At best, the trees will be confiscated; at worst, the characters will be fined or imprisoned. They should not know the trees are contraband at the beginning of the adventure, and once they learn, they will have to figure out how to smuggle their samples out — keeping them properly alive and frozen, of course.

PLANETARY RECORD: Trebberhorn (Belicose IV)



One Hex =
434 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 6,210 mi. Gravity .74 G Density 5.2 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 26° Seasonal Variation Earthlike Length of Day 41 hours Length of Year 338 days/ 1.58 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .7 (Thin) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 67%, Oxygen 15%, CO₂ 5%, Other 13%
 Climate Cold Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 0° Average 20° High 40°
 Surface Water: 72 % Humidity 50 % Primary Terrain Forest/Jungle
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Absent Rare Minerals Absent Radioactives Absent
 Heavy Metals Scarce Industrial Metals Absent Light Metals Scarce Organics Plentiful
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Human

Other Significant Life Forms Lower animals (mostly fish), plants

Civilization: Population(s) 112,000,000 (PR 9) Tech Level(s) 9 Control Rating 0 (currently)

Society Historically, dictatorship; currently in transition after revolution

Starports Class IV at Oliton

Installations None

Economic/Production Exports fish, sea produce and petroleum

Other notes: Map key: Capital (historical), Oliton. (1) Quomé

System Information:

Star Name Belicose Type G3 V Location Great Spiral 2/-2/-1
 Biozone 0.8-1.2 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 10

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Tassilick	1 .2	Hot Rockball	6,000	3.1	.45	None	—
Padderborn	2 .5	Hostile terrestrial	4,280	4.9	.48	High oxygen	Detailed on p. 45
Bossilwick	3 .8	Earthlike	7,428	5.6	.95	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed on p. 23
Trebberhorn	4 1.4	Earthlike	6,210	5.2	.74	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Detailed above
Bolluston	5 2.6	Rockball	4,000	5.9	.54	Trace Nitrogen	—
Samminon	6 5.0	Icy Rockball	9,000	1.5	.31	None	—
Hopplin	7 9.8	Icy Rockball	8,000	1.8	.33	None	—
Fissilin	8 19.4	Small Gas Giant	40,000	.6	.55	Hydrogen-methane	—
Sissilin	9 38.6	Large Gas Giant	180,000	.9	3.71	Hydrogen	—
Drisillin	10 77.0	Small Gas Giant	30,000	1.1	.75	Hydrogen	—

Velpare III

Velpare is a rather unremarkable star with nine unremarkable planets. It was bypassed in the first wave of colonization of the Great Spiral; there were many other planets in the area which were more suited for colonization.

Since then, Velpare has been almost completely ignored. Confederate survey crews have mapped the planets surrounding it, but little is known about their makeup or native life. All appear to be barren, except for the third planet, which may contain lower plant life such as lichen and red moss.

The last known visit to any of Velpare's planets was over 27 years ago. None of this is out of the ordinary; there are many systems in the Great Spiral which have yet to be noticed, much less colonized or exploited.

Von Toerbach's Base (GM's Information)

For the last 20 years, Baron Rolf von Toerbach (see p. 52) has been building a secret naval base in the Velpare System. He intends to use it as a launching point for his planned civil war.

The base is on the dark side of Velpare III's moon. As this moon orbits its planet, it keeps the same face toward Velpare. The base is in the moon's shadow, which makes it almost impossible to detect.

Still, von Toerbach is fanatical about keeping the base secret. At least a dozen ships have attempted to survey the Velpare system during the last 20 years. All have been captured and destroyed, and their flight plans were retroactively altered to erase any evidence that they intended to visit Velpare. In addition, the Baron's agents have altered or erased library data on the Velpare system from many of the main Confederate data banks.

The Fleet

Von Toerbach's lunar base includes his headquarters and a shipyard large enough to handle a small fleet. The shipyard provides refueling, repair and construction services. Ore is mined and refined on Velpare III, then shipped to the moon. There, in a microgravity environment, the raw steel is formed into sections of warships. These sections are sent to the shipyard, where they are assembled and readied for combat.

The fleet spends much of its time in maneuvers and patrolling the outer reaches of the system. Their standing orders are clear: any ship caught trying to enter the system without the proper clearances and passwords is to be destroyed immediately.

It's unlikely that the fleet will be large enough to take on the Confederate Navy within the next 10 to 20 years. Von Toerbach realizes this and is willing to wait while he implements the political portion of his plan.

Von Toerbach's Plan

Von Toerbach is preparing for a military conquest, but he also follows the ancient maxim, "It is best to win a fight before it begins." If he can bring the Confederacy under his power politically, so much the better.

The Baron has an extensive intelligence force, with agents throughout the Spiral. They remain on the alert for signs of dissatisfaction with the Confederacy and the current planetary regimes, and if they find a revolutionary movement or rebellion that shows promise, are directed to promise it aid from an undisclosed source. When the movement is so closely tied to the aid that it can no longer succeed without it, von Toerbach begins tightening the reins.

This plan was a great success on Trebberhorn (see p. 54), and von Toerbach plans to use it on other governments. If he can gain control over a majority of the seats in both the Assembly and the High Council, he will control the Confederacy — and he will never have had to fire a shot.

If this plan succeeds, those loyal to him the longest — the officers and crew of the fleet — will be the rulers of the new order. Even if it is only a partial success, the Baron will have many new worlds under his control.

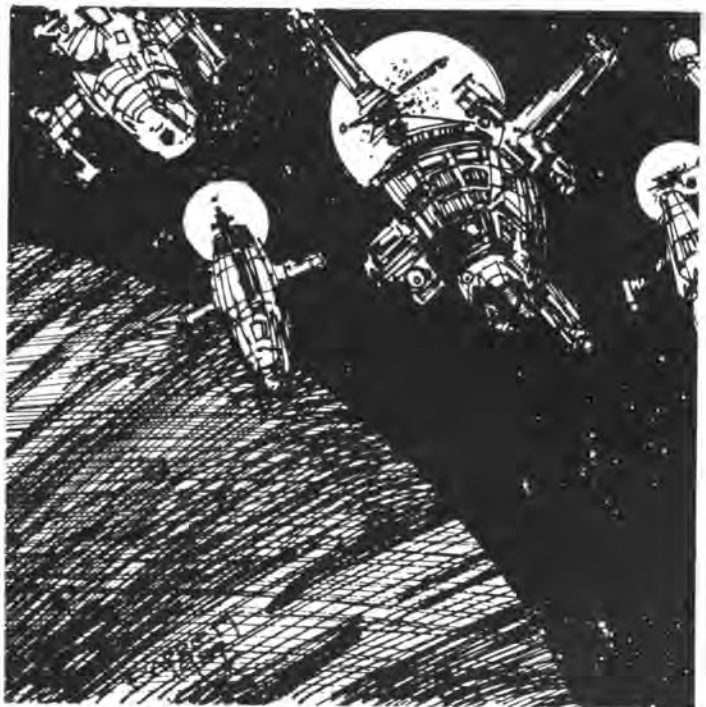
Unholy Alliance

If his hand is forced early, von Toerbach still has an ace up his sleeve. He has been negotiating with the leaders of several pirate factions based around Tallamatrix. As the largest private navy in the Great Spiral, he tells them, he is in a position to crush any pirate fleet he knows of. He is, however, willing to make a deal with them. In exchange for supplies and fuel, von Toerbach promises the pirates autonomy, pardons and possibly places within the new government if they will come in on his side during any battles with the Confederate Navy. Since they would do this willingly, the pirates have so far always agreed.

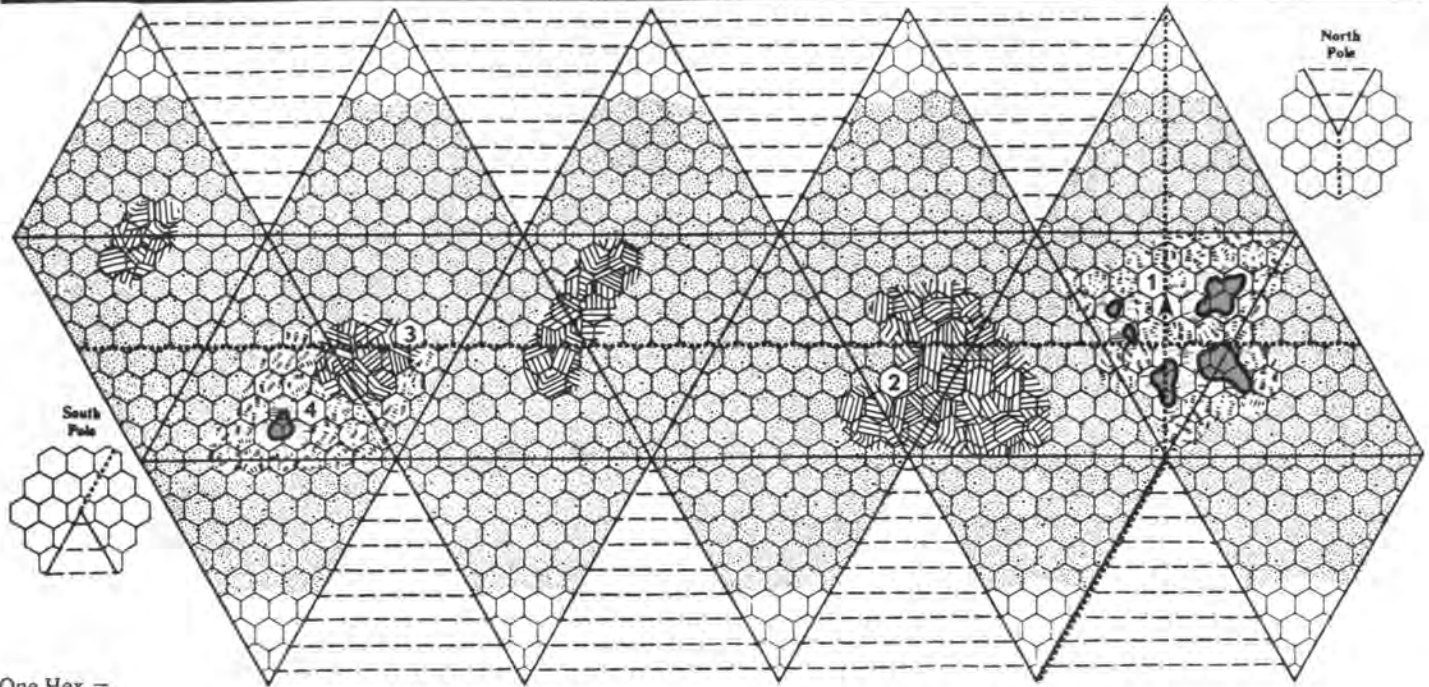
Neither side knows if it can trust the other, or how far, but the thought of a pirate/von Toerbach alliance would make the Confederate admirals quake in their boots. So far, however, no word of this has reached CNA headquarters at Union.

Adventure in the Velpare System

Escape. Unless the characters decide to side with von Toerbach, become part of his "inner circle" and are invited to the base on Velpare IIIa (in which case, the GM will be devising their further adventures), there is nothing for the party in the Velpare system — except to attempt to escape if they enter the system, presumably by accident. If they *do* escape, they may wonder why someone was shooting at them in a system noted as uninhabited and unexplored — and then, if they're foolish enough to go back for a second look, they're on their own!



PLANETARY RECORD: Velpare III



One Hex =
636 miles

Planet Type Terrestrial Diameter 9098 mi. Gravity 1.35 G Density 6.5 Composition High Iron
 Axial Tilt 19° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 13 hours Length of Year 992 days/ 1.47 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.4 (Dense) Type and Composition Corrosive—Nitrogen 62%, Oxygen 22%, Nitric Acid 5%, Other 11%
 Climate Cool Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 40° Average 60° High 80°
 Surface Water: 1.5% Humidity 0 % Primary Terrain Desert/Barren
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Ample Rare Minerals Scarce Radioactives Plentiful
 Heavy Metals Plentiful Industrial Metals Ext. Plentiful Light Metals Plentiful Organics Scarce
 Moons One large (Velpare IIIa)

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Lower plants
 Other Significant Life Forms None

Civilization: Population(s) None Tech Level(s) — Control Rating —
 Society None
 Starports None
 Installations None
 Economic/Production None

Other notes: _____

System Information:

Star Name Velpare Type G8 V Location Great Spiral 6,16/-15
 Biozone .8-1.2 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 9

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Velpare I	1 .6	Hot Rockball	1,000	5.5	.12	None	—
Velpare II	2 .9	Rockball	2,000	5.9	.27	Thin CO ₂ -Methane	—
Velpare III	3 1.2	Terrestrial	9,098	6.5	1.35	Dense N-O ₂	Detailed above
Velpare IV	4 1.8	Large Gas Giant	90,000	2.2	4.53	Hydrogen	—
Velpare V	5 3.0	Medium Gas Giant	55,000	2.0	2.51	Hydrogen	—
Velpare VI	6 5.4	Medium Gas Giant	60,000	2.1	2.88	Hydrogen	Six moons
Velpare VII	7 10.2	Small Gas Giant	20,000	2.4	1.09	Hydrogen	Brightly colored bands
Velpare VIII	8 19.8	Terrestrial	6,000	4.9	.67	Trace chlorine	—
Velpare IX	9 39.0	Iceball	2,000	4.5	.21	None	—

Wa-Lu (Ye-Lu IV)

Wa-Lu is a staunch, solid member of the Confederacy. It is known primarily for its shipyards and for its spectacular Equatorial Cataracts, a well-known tourist attraction.

The Wa-Lu Shipyards

Because the Confederacy considers its navies to be very important, it considers its shipyards to be important as well, and the largest and most important shipyard in the Confederacy is in orbit around Wa-Lu. Over half the families of Wa-Lu have a member who works at the shipyard.

At any given time, 50 to 100 vessels are under construction. Contracts are received from every planet in the Great Spiral, and from several worlds in outlying sectors. Most of the ships being built are small (20,000 cy or less), though the shipyards do have two bays capable of building 500,000 cy vessels. These bays are in constant use, turning out four ships a year.

While it is a member of the Confederacy and under law can not build or repair pirate vessels, Wa-Lu's government is practical and does not usually ask where a customer got the cash-on-the-spot he is willing to pay. The obvious exception is for ships known to have attacked the shipyards or ships of the Wa-Luvian planetary fleet. Captains foolish enough to bring such ships into dock have their vessels seized and often find themselves broke and imprisoned.



The Equatorial Cataracts

Beginning at Sky High Bluffs, some 48,000 feet above sea level, and continuing southward across 270 miles of wilderness, the Equatorial Cataracts are one of the most spectacular tourist attractions in the Great Spiral. Some of the individual falls are over 700 feet tall. Most of the waterfalls create enough mist to cause semi-permanent rainbows, and many towns have been built in specific locations where travelers approaching them can see the cities framed in a rainbow.

Conscious of its role as a tourist world, Wa-Lu is very concerned about its environment. Planetary mining was curtailed 20 years ago, and the land around the mines reclaimed. Heavy industry is not allowed. Of course, this means the shipyard needs to import the materials needed to build its ships from other systems. However, planets with the necessary materials are generally happy to trade their wares for discounts on shipbuilding (and occasionally such other perks as preferred positions on waiting lists and free vacations).

This solution has caused its own problems, however. Every week, many vessels appear at the fabrication and repair platforms of the orbital dockyards, and at several times of the year congestion is bad enough that some ships have to wait up to three weeks to unload their cargo! The captains of these ships are understandably unhappy about the situation, since they could be using that time to deliver more goods.

The obvious solution is to expand the appropriate sections of the shipyard, but this would be very costly. A second alternative, which is currently being surveyed, is to build a materials stockpile and repair station on the largest moon of Ne-Lu-Tor, complete with its own class III starport. Freighters could offload their materials there, allowing the starport to collect them at its leisure. Even this solution would be less than ideal — among other things, it would mean that much more territory for the Wa-Luvian navy to patrol. Still, it looks like the most cost-effective solution.

Adventures on Wa-Lu

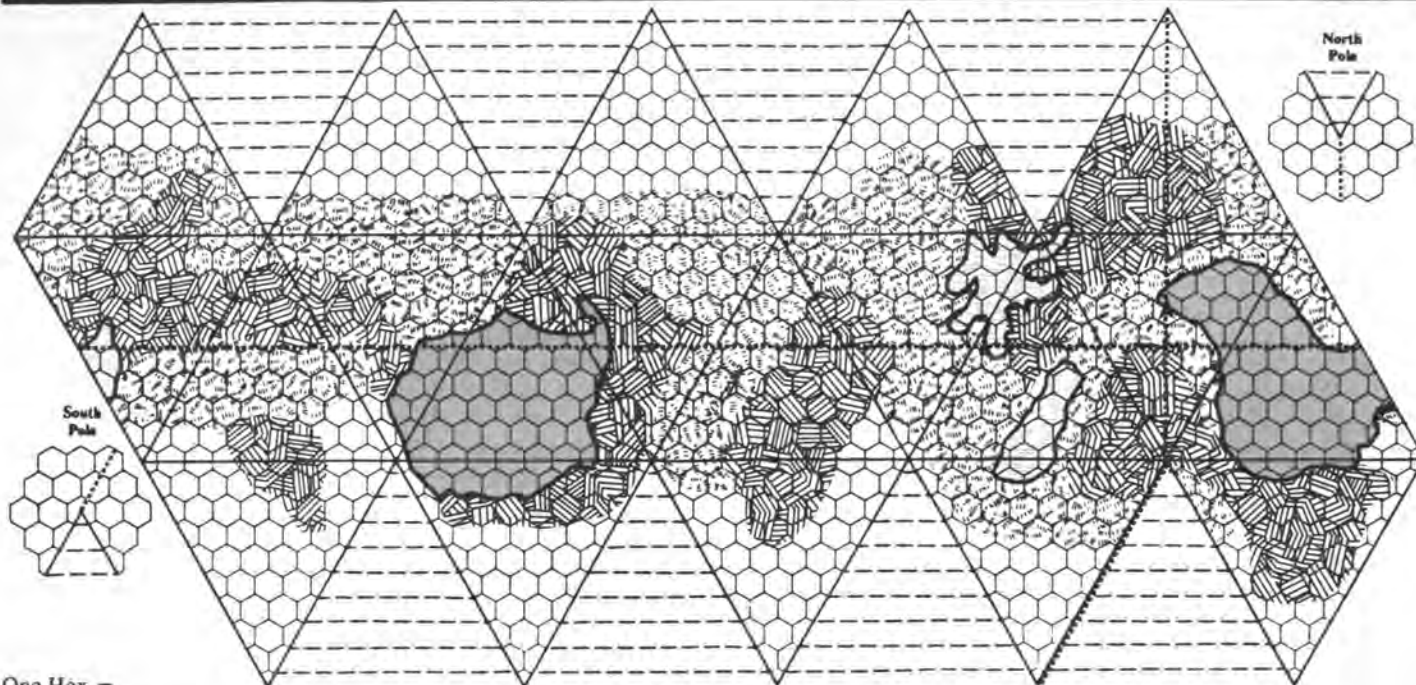
Royal Pain in the Neck. The party is contracted to transport a princeling and his new bride to Wa-Lu for their month-long honeymoon. They are offered a fee of double what they could normally expect for such a mission, plus an invitation to the wedding and its attendant three-day party. If the high fee makes the characters suspicious, the princeling's father explains that generosity is a wedding custom in his family.

Once the royal couple is on Wa-Lu, the characters learn that they are going to have to earn their extravagant pay. They want to go everywhere and do everything. Right now. In addition, the princeling has grown up with the belief that everyone is subject to his bidding. One of his favorite amusements is to order his subjects to do outrageous things — never anything dangerous (by his father's command), but silly and embarrassing. He has never been told that there is anyone who is not his subject, and would reject the idea if presented by anyone but his parents. In fact, in his mind the characters are his personal retinue, and if anyone disobeys him he will order them to punish the miscreants.

The princess is the daughter of a prominent noble family, and is used to getting her way. On their home planet, she can walk into any store in the country, pick out anything that catches her fancy and tell the shopkeeper to charge it to the princeling's account. She *can't* do that here, but tries anyway. (The princeling's father has provided the characters with a credit card they can use to purchase anything the girl wants. If they figure out that this means they can use it to purchase anything *they* want as well, let them — it's small enough compensation for the grief the royal couple is going to cause them.)

Keeping these two out of trouble will be a challenge, and if the party comes up with a creative solution that keeps everyone happy they should be rewarded with an extra character point or two.

PLANETARY RECORD: Wa-Lu (Ye-Lu IV)



One Hex =
249 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 3,560 mi. Gravity .46 Density 5.6 Composition Medium Iron
 Axial Tilt 27° Seasonal Variation Earthlike Length of Day 14 hours Length of Year 2,181 days/ 3.48 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure .85 (Standard) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 68%, Oxygen 18%, Neon 4%, Other 10%
 Climate Cold Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 0° Average 20° High 40°
 Surface Water: 10 % Humidity 31 % Primary Terrain Hilly/Rough
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Absent Rare Minerals Scarce Radioactives Absent
 Heavy Metals Absent Industrial Metals Scarce Light Metals Ample Organics Absent
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Lower plants

Civilization: Population(s) 1,900,000 (PR 7) Tech Level(s) 9-10 Control Rating 5

Society Corporate State

Starports One Class V in orbit, one Class IV at Cataract Station

Installations Shipyard and factories in orbit; extensive tourist facilities near the Cataracts

Economic/Production Heavy industry (primarily space vessel construction), tourism

Other notes: Capital, Cha-man. (1) Equatorial Cataracts. (2) Major Cities

System Information:

Star Name Ye-Lu Type G6 III Location Great Spiral 12/-8/-10
 Biozone 3.1-4.7 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 5

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
—	1 .4	Asteroid belt	—	—	—	—	High radiation
To-Lu	2 .8	Hostile Greenhouse	6,000	6.1	.83	CO ₂ -Nitrides	—
Seth-Lu	3 1.1	Hot Rockball	2,000	4.3	.19	None	—
Ne-lu-tor	4 1.8	Large Gas Giant	220,000	.9	4.53	Hydrogen-Methane	Huge, spectacular ring
Wa-Lu	5 3.2	Earthlike	3,560	5.6	.46	Oxygen-Nitrogen	Detailed above
A-lu	6 6.0	Iceball	4,000	4.9	.44	None	—

Yâkutz (Chok-Tah I)

If an astrobiologist were to list the stars that would be unlikely to have planets that support life, Chok-Tah would be high on the list. It is a dim, red star, and its radiation is almost too feeble to reach its only planet, a mere .2 AU away; stars of magnitude 2 and brighter are visible from the surface during the day.

Yet Yâkutz does support life, and in abundance, thanks to its thin crust and geothermal activity the planet radiates the necessary heat! As a result, Yâkutz has many active volcanoes as well as other natural wonders such as geysers, fumaroles and hot springs. The volcanoes spew ash and sulfur into the air, which accounts for Yâkutz' rating as a "polluted" world, but these particles don't affect the planet's weather. On most planets, they would block the sunlight which warms the world, but on Yâkutz, since Chok-Tah's contribution to the planet's warmth is minimal, they have little effect.

Good News, Bad News

This geological activity has several bad effects on the planet's citizens. For instance, no part of the planet is immune from earthquakes. For this reason (and to take advantage of Yâkutz' internal heat), there are no buildings on the planet taller than one story. If a Yâkutzian needs vertical space, he will dig a basement. The geothermal heat tends to increase rapidly after about 50 feet below the surface, and more than one amateur contractor has lost his life in a cellar full of hot water (or worse!).

Because there are so many earthquakes, all buildings are made of wood. This gives them a better chance of surviving severe earthquakes as well as the common tremors that occur in most places twice a year or so.

Yâkutz has a normal cycle of evaporation, condensation and precipitation, much like most planets — the main difference is the source of the heat. Since the planet stays at a nearly constant temperature, there are no seasons and precipitation is random.

The geothermal heat also provides unlimited electrical energy for Yâkutz' residents. Surface water is pumped into wells underground, where it returns as steam, which drives the turbines that generate electricity. The standard of living is fairly high; unfortunately, because of the warm ground temperature there are many crops which won't grow on the planet, and much of their food has to be imported.



Low to the Ground

Most of Yâkutz' indigenous life forms live within 100 feet of the surface. Insects are common, but the few birds imported many years ago quickly grew disoriented and died. With no seasonal changes, their innate navigational systems apparently could not cope with the fact that the temperature was warm at the surface, but winter-cold when they flew.

There are a few exceptions to this rule, such as the gull-glider.

Gull-Glider

ST: 4	Speed/Dodge: 6/6	Size: 1-2
DX: 12	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: 5-10 lbs.
IQ: 4	Damage: 1-2 beak	Origin: SF
HT: 11	Range: C	Habitat: M

The gull-glider is a gliding reptile with a 6-foot "wingspan." It doesn't have wings per se, but glides on a flap of skin stretched between its outstretched arms, much like a flying squirrel's. It takes advantage of the thermal updrafts caused by the planet's surface heat to gain lift, then swoops down upon the insects it feeds upon. Gull-gliders will avoid anything larger than they are, including humans; so far, no one has managed to catch one.

Life in Purgatory

Yâkutz is the sort of marginally habitable planet that does not even have the glamour of great danger and difficulty. It is of some scientific interest, and has been studied extensively by many groups. A few of these groups, for various reasons, decided to stay on Yâkutz rather than returning to Bossilwick or Caractacalla.

The largest of these, who form the nearest thing on Yâkutz to a planetary government, is the Congregation of the Expectation of Heaven. It has similarities to groups like the Vastians of Zyra, but *this* group believes that life is actually purgatory and that death releases the soul into either a manifestation of divine love or a descent into endless torment. Non-communicants believe that the climate and polluted atmosphere of Yâkutz have much to do with this outlook, but find it politic not to disagree with the Congregationists, since one of their tenets is that demon tempters are continually testing their faith, and the dismissal of demons involves such rites as skinning, salting and boiling in oil!

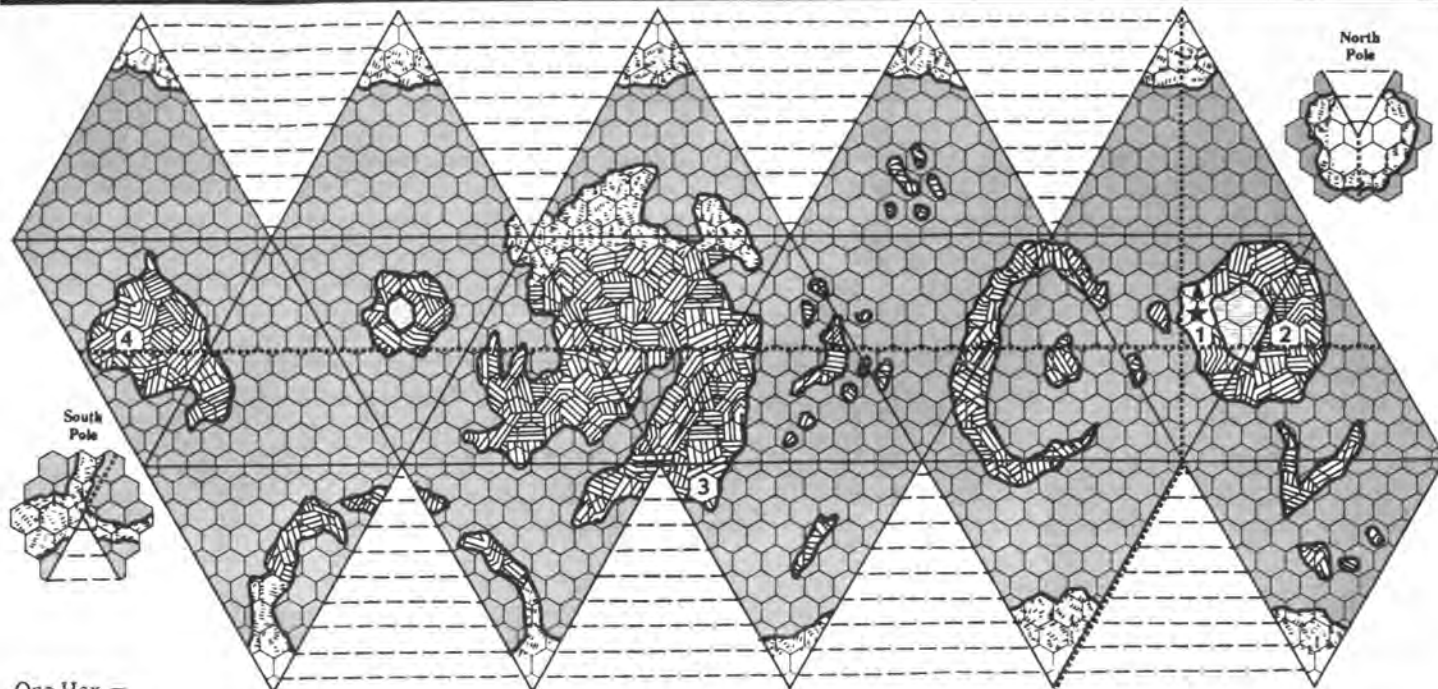
Adventures on Yâkutz

Bringing Them Back Alive. A party of offworlders has been hired to capture a breeding pair of the elusive gull-gliders for the Confederate Zoological Garden at Union. They have had the usual warnings against stirring up the prejudices of the local theocrats, but their briefing is a touch out of date.

A new revelation within the Congregation of Love has declared that the gull-gliders are heavenly watchers, monitoring the behavior of the faithful. This makes any attempt to catch one a blasphemy, and any success a demonic triumph. This belief has not yet become dogma; the Office of True Understanding (which combines the functions of faculty of theology and secret police) has the matter under advisement. Agents of the Office have the party under constant surveillance. Any native helping the party — hired guide, camp worker, local advisor, even stray offworlder — may be an agent.

Complicating the problem is the Office itself is divided into two factions, Those Who Accept that the Evidences of God's Benevolent Purpose in our Torments of This Life Include the Angelic Watchers of the Skies (known to the unenlightened as the Evvies) and Those who Accept that the Beneficences of the Creator Include the Provision of Dumb Beasts which can be Exchanged for Many Things of Value to the Faithful (the Bennies). No one knows which party will triumph, and being on the losing side could be fatal.

PLANETARY RECORD: Yâkutz (Chok-tah II)



One Hex =
583 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 8,340 mi. Gravity 1.38 G Density 7.2 Composition Metallic
 Axial Tilt 47° Seasonal Variation Major Length of Day 21 hours Length of Year 205 days/ .49 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.3 (Dense) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 72%, Oxygen 15%, CO₂ 4%, Other 7%
 Climate Cool Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 40° Average 60° High 80°
 Surface Water: 80 % Humidity 45 % Primary Terrain Mountainous/Volcanic
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Ext. Plentiful Rare Minerals Ample Radioactives Scarce
 Heavy Metals Plentiful Industrial Metals Plentiful Light Metals Ext. Plentiful Organics Plentiful
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Humans

Other Significant Life Forms Higher animals, reptiles, mammals

Civilization: Population(s) 750,000,000 (PR 9) Tech Level(s) 10 Control Rating 2

Society Civil service bureaucracy

Starports Class V near Hastok

Installations None

Economic/Production Exports ores and raw materials

Other notes: Capital: Hastok. Map key: (1) Ruins of Yâkutz Down starport (2) Grandich (3) Semmi (4) Yâven.

System Information:

Star Name Chok-Tah

Type K5 V

Location Great Spiral 1/-10/7

Biozone 0.5-0.6

Inner Limit 0

Number of Planets 7

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
Yârosh	1 .2	Rockball	1,000	3.2	.07	None	Naval base
Yâkutz	2 .6	Earthlike	8,340	7.2	1.38	Nitrogen/Oxygen	Detailed above
Yâkosch	3 1.0	Gas Giant	35,000	2.0	1.60	Hydrogen	—
Yâsoh	4 1.8	Gas Giant	32,000	1.6	1.17	Hydrogen	Faint ring
Yâstin	5 3.4	Icy Rockball	3,000	4.8	.32	None	—
Yâscon	6 6.6	Gas Giant	85,000	.8	1.55	Hydrogen-Methane	Spectacular rings
Yâskosh	7 13.0	Icy Rockball	7,000	4.0	.64	None	—

Zyra (Wellum I)

Zyra is a mystery to most outsiders; travel to Zyra is highly restricted, and once there a visitor may not leave the spaceport area without special dispensation (which involves lots of time and paperwork). This means that Zyra is seldom visited, and the outside world knows little about it — and that's the way the Zyrans want it.

Vastianism

The primary force in Zyran society is *Vastianism*, an all-encompassing set of principles laid down by Olandus Vastian over 800 years ago. Vastianism is a form of nature worship, in which Zyra and all of her plant and animal life — including humans — are venerated. It is a practical religion; harvesting crops and killing animals for food are allowed, but must be done in the proper spirit. Hunting for sport is prohibited.

Vastianism also teaches that Zyra is heaven. The spirits of the dead inhabit the planet on which they died, and since the spirits of those who do not die on Zyra can never return, those spirits will never experience heaven. Worse yet, the spirits of those who die in space float in limbo for eternity. For this reason, a devout Vastian will do everything he can to avoid leaving the planet. Leaving the planet forces the Vastian to make a Fright Check at -4, and until he returns to Zyra he will do *nothing* that will endanger his life.

Any Vastian who is likely to leave Zyra (this would include Vastian player characters) must take a Phobia against leaving the planet. This is a severe phobia, worth either -15 or -30 points, depending on how likely he is to ever go off-planet. For most Vastians, of course, this disadvantage will never come into play.

There is no clergy among Vastians, and no formal worship services — Vastians merely believe that the spirits of the dead are all around them and that every living thing has a spirit, and act accordingly. Kindness and courtesy are basic tenets of Vastianism; anyone who is rude or inconsiderate will get a -3 reaction from all Vastians. Vastians are also ethnocentric and will react to any non-Vastian at -3 (these modifiers are *not* cumulative).

All Vastians are required to take the Theology (Vastianism) and High Vedan Language skills at IQ level or above.

Life on Zyra

The Outworlders' Enclave, which contains Zyra's only spaceport, is located on Condrasin Island, over 500 miles from the nearest continent. All non-Zyrans live on the island; their presence is considered offensive to the spirits on the rest of the planet. (In Vastian mythology, spirits consider Condrasin Island to be an unlucky place and never go there.) All Confederate envoys and offworld businesses have their headquarters there as well.

In theory, an offworlder can get permission to visit other areas of the planet, but this involves dealing with the Zyran bureaucracy — sometimes for years at a time — and taking lengthy courses on Vastian theology, culture and manners. Most offworlders decide it's just easier to stay in the enclave than it is to try to get a visitor's visa.

The concept of separation of church and state is alien to the Zyrans. The planetary government is ruled by 12 councillors, all leading Vastians. These councillors are all of equal rank; the First Councillor is so named only because he is the first to speak at their meetings. There is an extensive planetary bureaucracy, including a Department of Offworlder Affairs.

Zyrans tend to live in small towns; a village of 1,000 is considered large. There are few cities with more than 5,000

people, and only the planetary capital of Ezrin has more than 10,000. Buildings are almost always low, rambling structures, and never have more than one story.

Since Vastianism is solidly centered on one planet, many people find it odd that Zyra has joined the Confederacy. They import nothing (self-sufficiency is a Vastian tenet), export little and seem to want no direct contact with offworlders. The primary reason Zyra stays in the Confederacy is protection. Zyra has no planetary navy, and if there were one, its crew would be unable to function, so Zyra allows the Confederacy to protect it in return for allowing them to station naval vessels in its orbit.

Adventures on Zyra

Radical Vastianism. Soon after the PCs dock at the spaceport on Condrasin island, an explosion in a nearby docking area kills the crew of a small freighter. The PCs come through unscathed, but their ship requires repairs.

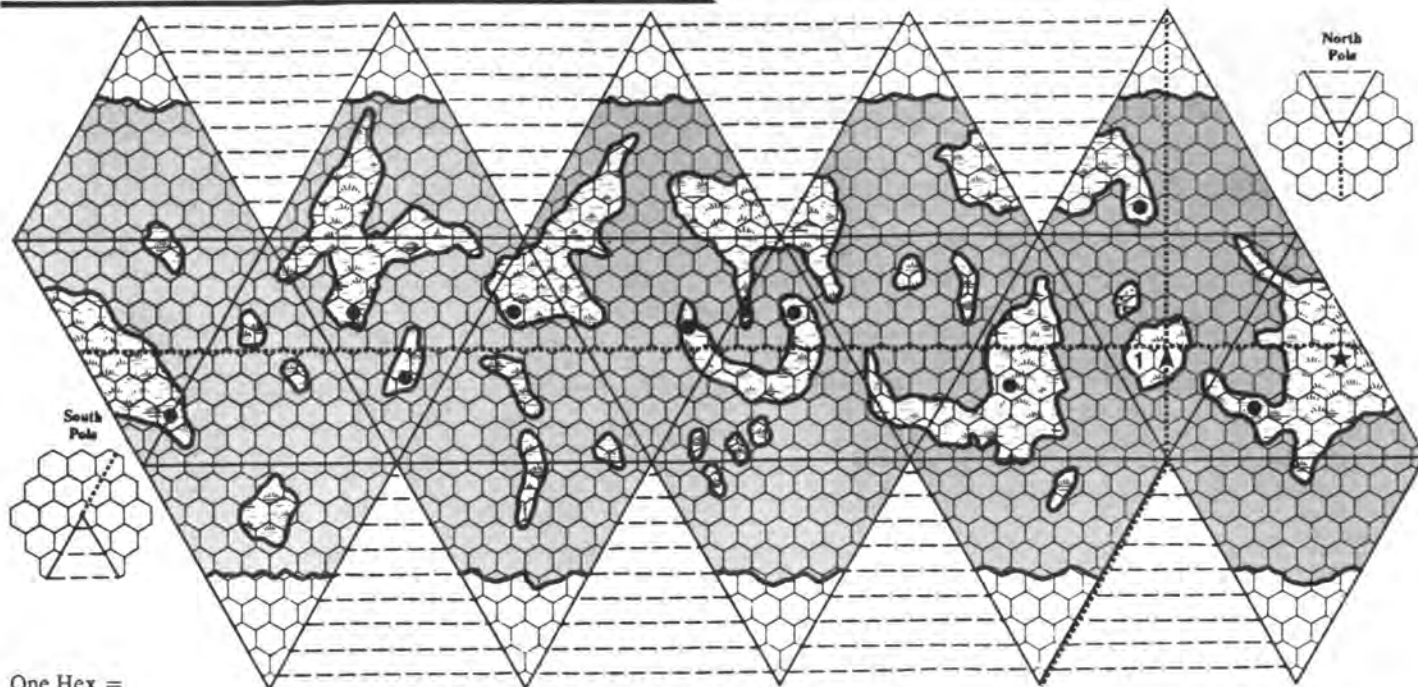
While the characters wait for the repairs, rumors begin circulating about an organization called *Zyran Purity*. The rumors describe a gigantic organization dedicated to "purifying" Zyra by ridding it of all offworlders and destroying Zyra's spaceport. Other than the size of the organization (there are only a couple hundred members), the rumors are true.

They also indicate the Puritans were responsible for bombing the freighter. The Zyran government offers a \$100,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible. Finding the culprits will be difficult for non-Zyrans, though — Zyrans are very closed-mouthed with outsiders.

Infidel. A Caractacallan businessman decided Zyran seafood would make a tasty (and highly profitable) delicacy for the folks back home. He was caught trying to harvest whaleshrimp in the northern ocean; when he admitted he planned to take the whaleshrimp off-planet, he was tried for desecration (and for not having a valid visitor's permit). He is now incarcerated near Ezrin. The businessman's company hires the PCs to negotiate his release; this will be difficult, because there are no official records on Condrasin Island to indicate that the businessman was ever there. Failing that, the company will pay \$50,000 if they can break the businessman out of jail and get him off the planet.



PLANETARY RECORD: Zyra (Wellum I) — Restricted



One Hex =
663 miles

Planet Type Earthlike Diameter 9,480 mi. Gravity .69 G Density 3.2 Composition Low iron
 Axial Tilt 10° Seasonal Variation Minor Length of Day 31 hours Length of Year 992 days/ 3.5 Earth years
 Atmosphere: Pressure 1.3 (Dense) Type and Composition Standard—Nitrogen 72%, Oxygen 19%, CO₂ 6%, Other 3%
 Climate Tropical Temperatures at 30° Latitude: Low 80° Average 100° High 120°
 Surface Water: 80 % Humidity 75 % Primary Terrain Marsh/Swamp
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Scarce Rare Minerals Absent Radioactives Scarce
 Heavy Metals Absent Industrial Metals Absent Light Metals Ample Organics Plentiful
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant Life Form Human

Other Significant Life Forms Proto-organisms, Lower plants

Civilization: Population(s) 502,000,000 (PR 9) Tech Level(s) 8 Control Rating 5

Society Animist theocracy

Starports Class III on Condrasin Island

Installations Confederate embassy and offworld liaison offices located on Condrasin Island

Economic/Production Agriculture and light industry — little import or export

Other notes: Capital, Zorea. (1) Condrasin Island

Non-natives are not permitted to travel anywhere but on Condrasin Island without special permission.

System Information:

Star Name Wellum Type F7 IV Location Great Spiral -14/11/4
 Biozone 2.0-3.0 Inner Limit 0 Number of Planets 1

Planet	Orbit Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
—	1 .6	Empty orbit	—	—	—	—	—
—	2 .9	Empty orbit	—	—	—	—	—
—	3 1.2	Empty orbit	—	—	—	—	—
—	4 1.8	Empty orbit	—	—	—	—	—
Zyra	5 3.0	Earthlike	9,480	3.2	.69	Nitrogen-Oxygen	Described above

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