

# Shark Nibbles #2

THE UNOFFICIAL MONTHLY SAVAGE WORLDS NEWSLETTER



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# THE MONSTER MASH

Welcome to the second issue of **Shark Nibbles!** In this installment of The Monster Mash, written by Bill Littlefield and Mark Swafford (with input from Clint Black), more creatures from the realm of Advanced Dungeons & Dragons (AD&D) are detailed. Of course, they have been suitably Savaged so as to be as fast, furious, and fun as possible. The graphics included in this article are © Wizards of the Coast and are used without permission. The Night Riders and the Berbalang originally appeared in **White Dwarf #17**. The Necrophidius is from **White Dwarf #7**.

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## The Berbalang

The berbalang is a tribal humanoid with leathery skin and bat-like wings. Its eyes are white and watery and it possesses unheralded night vision capabilities. In a berbalang lair—usually an underground cavern far from well-trodden paths—there may be as many as 50 of the beasts, male and female—unless under great duress, a berbalang will never leave its lair.

Once per day, the berbalang may enter a self-induced trance during which it sends forth a physical projection of itself in order to acquire its preferred food—a freshly-killed human corpse! While so entranced, the berbalang is inert and incapable of taking any actions. Emerging from this trancelike state can be done involuntarily, but requires 3 rounds to accomplish. The creature may exit his trance in a single round in a dire emergency; however, doing so leaves it Shaken.

The berbalang's physical projection is treated as a normal creature for all intents and purposes; however, any wounds inflicted on it require the actual creature to make a Vigor roll or suffer the same fate, thus it is possible to kill a berbalang by killing its projection.



**Attributes:** Agility d6; Smarts d8; Spirit d6; Strength d8; Vigor d6

**Pace:** 6" (on ground), 10" (flying); **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d8, and Notice d8

**Edges:** Arcane Background: Psionics (10 Power Points; *armor*, *deflection*, *telekinesis*, Arcane Resistance (Psionics), and Improved Rapid Recharge

**Special Abilities:**

**Claws x2** (Str+1)

**Bite** (Str+1; may bite on any attack on which both claws successfully strike their target)

**Dark Vision** (May ignore all penalties due to illumination)

## The Necrophidius

This fearsome addition to the ranks of the undead resembles a large skeletal snake; however, the skull is that of a human. These creatures are usually singular magical creations and are usually employed as guards or assassins. They are nearly silent, their bite is deadly poisonous, and they possess the ability to entrance their intended targets.

**Attributes:** Agility d6; Smarts d6; Spirit d6; Strength d6; Vigor d6

**Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

**Skills:** Fighting d8 and Stealth d12

**Special Abilities:**

**Hypnotic Trance** (Once per round, as a normal action, a Necrophidius may attempt to entrance a single target. The target must make a Spirit roll or become entranced by the creature's hypnotic swaying. An entranced target may take no actions. The target may make a Spirit roll at the start of each of his actions in an attempt to break the trance. This consumes the target's action for the round unless he achieves a raise on the roll. The trance is automatically broken if the Necrophidius is killed or forced to flee the area. Only one target may be entranced per round.)

**Poison** (-4)

**Undead**



# NIGHT RIDERS

Black-cloaked and hooded, these gray-skinned humanoids are often accompanied in their quests by orcs, trolls, or men who fear the night riders more than they fear death itself. Their name comes from the fact that they usually only operate during the darkest nights, you see, night riders have sensitive eyes which automatically close in bright sunlight or its equivalent, though they are still able to track by smell.

Night riders dwell deep within the darkest forests in hidden underground complexes. Their steeds are kept some distance away and are attended to by loyal human servants. No one knows their origins or motivations, but they are often found in the employ of great warlords (always those with an evil bent) as hunters and trackers. On occasion, they have also been seen working as bounty hunters and assassins. All that is known for sure is that their presence is a sure portent that bad things are about to happen.

**Attributes:** Agility d8; Smarts d6; Spirit d8; Strength d8; Vigor d6

**Pace:** 8"; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6; **Charisma:** -4

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidate d6, Notice d8, Riding d10, Stealth d8, Taunt d6, Throwing d8, and Tracking d10

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Fleet Footed, and Strong Willed.

**Hindrances:** Blind (when in full sunlight or its equivalent) and Bloodthirsty.

**Special Abilities:**

**Fearless**

**Dark Vision** (May ignore all penalties due to illumination)

**Gear:** Black steed, leather armor (Armor+1), dagger (Str+1; Range: 3/6/12; ROF1), and longsword (Str+3).

## THE ANKHEG

The ankheg is a burrowing creature with a taste for fresh meat. It has six legs, and a hard brown-yellow carapace. The typical specimen is approximately 10 feet in length and weighs in at around 800 pounds. An ankheg burrows using its legs and powerful mandibles. Normally, it does not make a usable tunnel (it collapses shortly after the creature passes through it; however, by moving at one-half its normal Pace it can construct a tunnel that will stand the test of time. This is often done to pass undetected through heavily populated areas on the way to its normal hunting grounds. The ankheg creates meandering tunnels up to 40 feet beneath the surface. They are roughly circular and 5 feet in diameter. The ankheg inhabits the rich soil of forests or farmlands. More than one ankheg may exist in a given area; however, they are solitary by nature and so do not cooperate while hunting.

**Attributes:** Agility d6; Smarts d4 (A); Spirit d6; Strength d10; Vigor d8

**Pace:** 6"; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, and Stealth d12

**Special Abilities:**

**Bite** (Str+1; a raise on the attack roll grants an additional 2d6 points of damage)

**Hard Carapace** (Armor+2)

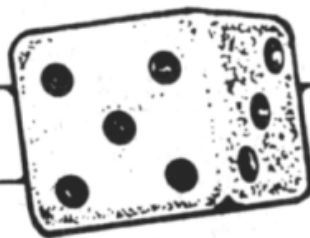
**Size+2**

**Spit Acid** (May be used once per round; treat as a normal ranged attack: 3/6/12 that does 2d6 points of damage on contact and an additional 1d6 points at the start of each round until it is washed off. Use the Agility die type for the attack roll.)

**Surprise Attack** (An ankheg usually lies 5 to 10 feet below the surface until its antennae detect the approach of prey. It then burrows up to attack. Targets are allowed an opposed Notice roll against the creature's Stealth. If they fail, they count as surprised for the first round of combat. On a result of snake eyes, the ankheg counts as having gotten The Drop on his intended prey as well!)



# With the roll of a die...



*This installment of With the roll of a die... brings you some more house rules culled from the Savage Worlds of the Pinnacle Forums. You won't find any proposals for sweeping change here—just juicy little tidbits that you can use or ignore without making any major modifications to the way that the Savage Worlds system works as a whole. So, with that said, take a look at what we've put together for you this month. Enjoy!*

## CANTRIPS

Cantrips are the magic spells learned and used by apprentice mages during their long, rigorous, and tedious training in the craft of magic use.

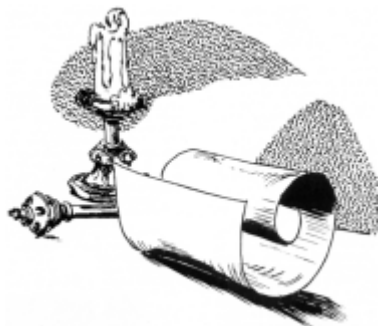
Most cantrips are simple little spells of no great effect—they all cost 1 Power Point to cast and have a range limited to Smarts. Effects are either instantaneous, permanent, or last for one round unless noted otherwise. Areas of effect, where applicable, are noted in the individual descriptions. Unless noted otherwise, cantrips cannot be maintained.

In order to cast a cantrip, a mage makes a normal arcane skill roll; however, due to the simplistic nature of cantrips, all such rolls are considered successful unless snake eyes are rolled. If the roll fails, the Power Point is expended with no effect or additional consequences. All mages (i.e., characters with the Arcane Background (Magic Edge)) start the game knowing a number of cantrips equal to their Smarts die type. Additional cantrips may be learned by taking the Cantrips Edge described below.

### Cantrips

Seasoned, Arcane Background (Magic), and Spellcasting d6

When a character takes this Edge they gain the use of three cantrips. This Edge may be taken more than once, but not more than once per rank.



The following list of cantrips is not intended to be all-inclusive; they are merely examples:

- **Arcane Mark:** This cantrip allows the caster to inscribe his personal mark on any single object. The mark is only visible to the caster. Casting *detect arcana* will reveal a concealed Arcane Mark.
- **Emit Odious Noise:** This cantrip causes the target to emit a single loud belch, yawn, or giggle. Treat the target as having a -2 Charisma modifier to all within hearing distance for the next 10 minutes.
- **Guidance:** This cantrip will reveal the direction of magnetic North to the caster.
- **Lullaby:** This cantrip causes the target to feel drowsy. The game effect is a -2 modifier on the target's next Notice roll.
- **Message:** This cantrip allows the caster to pass a message of up to 10 words to a target within range. The message is delivered as a faint whisper in the target's ear.
- **Nodwink:** This cantrip causes the target to make a single and involuntary nod or wink. The effects will vary with the situation.
- **Tweak:** This cantrip allows the caster to magically pinch a single location on a single target within range. The game effect is equivalent to attempting a Trick if used in melee. Outside of melee, this cantrip can be used to distract the target, make the target act inappropriately, or simply annoy it.
- **Unravel:** This cantrip magically causes all seams on one set of clothing to come undone!
- **Whiff:** This cantrip allows the caster to envelop an area equal to a medium burst template with an odor of his choosing. The odor may be any with which the caster is familiar.

## THE SPEAR

The lowly spear sure does seem to generate a lot of controversy on the PEG Forums! After taking a look at its game stats though, it's not hard to understand why. I mean, for starters, the darn thing has a listed cost of \$250! Now I understand that this reflects its utility, after all, it does have Reach +1 and grant a bonus of +1 to Parry, but its listed as a two-handed weapon and so disallows the use of a shield (so much for Viking warriors and hoplites), yet it can be thrown! So what to do? My solution is to split the ubiquitous spear into three separate weapons: the javelin, the spear, and the long spear.

**Javelin:** This weapon, 3-4 feet in length, is primarily intended as a ranged (thrown) weapon (Str+1; 3/6/12; ROF1; \$50; 3 pounds), although in a pinch, it works just as well in the melee (Str+1).

**Spear:** This is the standard one-handed spear of legend. Your typical fantasy spear, 5-7 feet in length and weighing about 5 pounds, that can be used as either a melee weapon (Str+2; Reach +1; \$100) or as a thrown weapon ((Str+2; 3/6/12; ROF1). It may be wielded with one or two hands. In the case of the latter, you may not use a shield; however, you do get a +1 bonus to your Parry.

**Long Spear:** Here's the spear described in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook—the weapon of the Greek hoplite—a weapon 7-9 feet in length and weighing around 8 pounds. Use it as listed with the following additions: It may be used one-handed (thus allowing the use of the shield); however, in such cases, damage is reduced to Str+1 and the Parry bonus is negated. In addition, the butt end of this weapon ends in an iron spike, so if the main attacking point is cut off, the user can use the other end to good effect. These weapons can be thrown; however, the range is only 2/4/8.

## A NEW RACE: THE WOLFEN

The Wolfen are a secretive race of bipedal humanoids that dwell in the cold northern wastelands. They have the heads and lower limbs of a wolf and the arms and torso of a human. Yes, they have tails. One can only speculate at their origins.

They live in small packs (10-20 individuals), each of which is a part of a larger clan (500 or so individuals). Three or more clans often combine into the largest political unit, the tribe.

### WOLFEN:

**Natural Hunters:** Wolfen are expert hunters and woodsmen. They gain a bonus of +2 on all Tracking rolls.

**Observant:** Wolfen are blessed with the senses of their wolf kin. They gain the Notice skill at d6 for free during character generation.

**Outsider:** Although relations with other races are, at least for the time being, ambivalent, the Wolfen are still viewed with suspicion and fear by the other races. They suffer from the Outsider Hindrance.

**Primitive:** Wolfen live a primitive lifestyle, preferring to stick to the “old ways”. They suffer from the All Thumbs Hindrance.

**Swift:** Wolfen are swift of foot. They have a base Pace of 8” and use a d10 when running.

## BENNIES FOR XP

OK, the *Savage Worlds* rulebook states, “At the end of each game session, roll 1d6 for each benny you have left over. Each roll of 5 or 6 gives your hero an additional Experience Point.”

That seems pretty simple and straightforward—no need to put a special call in to Clint to clarify this one! Well, you’d think so, but that’s not really the case.

Lots of Savages disagree with this rule, myself included. To many of us, getting extra XP simply for not using bennies doesn’t sit right. I mean, after all, there are many reasons why you may have chosen not to use your bennies, and many of them have no correlation with gaining bonus XP.

Perhaps the main “sticking point”, at least in my case, is that it’s possible to get extra XP from bennies that you started the game with (and will start each and every session with). By hiding out in the back and foregoing an active role in the session, a player can hoard his bennies and have a chance of getting XP that he didn’t really earn through roleplaying.

So, with that in mind here are a few alternate methods of handling the question of, “Should I allow bennies to be converted into XP at the end of a session?”

- The GM decides whether or not a player has earned the right to attempt to convert his unused bennies into XP. Such a decision could be based on the player’s roleplaying, his contributions as a player, or a combination of the two.
- Rather than converting on a 5+, a benny is only converted on a d6 result of ‘6’.
- Only those bennies *gained during play* may be converted. The bennies your character starts each session with are ineligible for conversion. This also excludes bennies gained through the Luck and Greater Luck Edges!
- Grant one bonus XP to any player who has *any* bennies left over at the end of the session. The amount of bennies and their source is irrelevant.
- Let each leftover benny equal the number of chances on a d6 that a player will receive one XP at the end of the session (e.g., a character with 3 bennies left over at the end of the session will gain one bonus XP on a d6 result of 4+). Initial bennies and those gained through the Luck or Greater Luck Edges are not considered in this method.
- Only bennies that are *actually spent* during a session are eligible for conversion. So if your character starts with 3 bennies and spends only one, he may only attempt to convert the benny he actually spent to an XP.
- Each leftover benny gives the player one die (d6) to roll for the chance of gaining a single bonus XP. If any of these dice come up ‘6’, the character gets the bonus XP. So, if a player had 3 bennies left over at the end of the session, he can roll 3d6. If any of the dice come up ‘6’, he gets the XP.”



## A NEW EDGE: THE PUGILIST

Here’s an Edge I included in one of my *Savage Pulp* sessions. The player that requested it had a character with the Pacifist (Minor) Hindrance. He simply wanted a way to be more effective with his fists—this Edge seemed an appropriate solution.

### Pugilist

Novice, Strength d6, and Fighting d6

A hero with this Edge may increase his unarmed damage to Str+2. In addition, all Grappling rolls are made at +2 so long as the character is not wounded or fatigued.

## READY, SET, GO!

OK, I admit it: I can be an evil GM from time-to-time! There, I’ve come clean... Now, on occasion, my “evilness” does lead to some interesting rules. Try this one on for size, but mind you, if you have indecisive players (you know, the kind that couldn’t make a snap decision if their life depended on it), you may not find this one to your liking.

Once cards are dealt you have one minute per active player to resolve all character actions and just to make things fair, the GM is under the same restriction—one minute per active NPC. If your character doesn’t act in the allotted time he loses his action for the round!

During combat, the allowed time is cut in half (30 seconds). Now combat is a matter of “think quick...or die!”

## NEW RITUAL: SPIRIT PRISON

Remember that article on Mystics in **Shark Bytes #1**? Well, what about the follow up, *Arcane Rituals*, in **Shark Bytes #2**? Here’s a new ritual from Clint Black using those rules. Shame on you if you haven’t read them yet!

**Power:** Puppet

**UM:** +4 (affects spirits with only one command)

**Focus:** Personal effect belonging to target spirit during life.

**Effect:** Traps spirit within the personal belonging.

Basically, the spirit is forced into staying within the object. Of course, it would take some serious planning to figure out a way to use this ritual without doing it Quick and Dirty!

You could also use *barrier* (only affecting spirits) making the object into a prison of that Toughness.

# Roleplaying without Pity

*Adding cinematic and literary elements to Savage Worlds, by Christian Johnson*

## Introduction

When it comes to roleplaying games we all have different styles of play. Some players want to hack and slash their way through “armies of darkness.” Others want to solve the great riddles left behind by scholars who left hints on how to destroy “Things Not Meant to Be Known.” Still others desire to negotiate with the great statesmen of medieval kingdoms, preventing conflicts on a “War of the Roses” scale. A great deal has been written on how to incorporate these various types of players into a successful campaign. Particularly noteworthy in this regard is Robin D. Laws’ book *Robin’s Laws of Good Game Mastering*, which covers this subject and more.

While our playing styles vary, one thing is certain. Our reasons for gaming are often very similar. We are inspired by movies, books, comics, radio, and television shows. As players of role playing games we desire to emulate the heroes and heroines of the tales we love so much. Who hasn’t wanted to be Batman, Indiana Jones, Han Solo, Wilma Deering, Red Sonja, or Eowyn? We play roleplaying games to evoke these types of characters and to create our own stories of their adventures.

Too often in our games, we are only getting half of the story! When we watch a film or read a book we know not only what the hero is doing, but often what the villain is doing as well. Our game-stories, whether linear or freeform, are usually limited to our character’s personal experiences in real time. Yes, we’re free to write “backstories”, detailing our characters’ exploits before, between, and after the adventures we participate in with our group. This is a rewarding experience for some, but many don’t have the time to devote to drafting such detailed histories. When players do have the time, often GMs often don’t have the time to write comparable materials for their villains and other NPCs. Even if the GM had the time to write “prequels” detailing the actions of villains, wouldn’t it be more exciting to experience them first-hand and collectively as a roleplaying group?

## Past, Future, and Sideways Anatomies: Introductory Scenes, Flashbacks, and Cutscenes

In *Shark Bytes* #2, Butch Curry wrote the wonderful and aptly named article *How to Write a Horror Adventure*, which paired the design of a horror adventure with the conventions of classic horror movies. He discussed how movies often use a “three-act” format, and gave advice on how to use this format for adventure design. He defined the format points as The Setup, The Action, and The Conclusion, while also providing many useful subsections for each point. To help us move into the use of “Introductory Scenes,” “Flashbacks,” and “Cutscenes,” I would like to briefly expand upon Mr. Curry’s very useful groupings.

Instead of using a three-act format, let us divide these three-acts into five major narrative events:

1. Introduction
2. The Adventure Begins
3. Raise the Stakes
4. Hero Loses it All
5. Resolution

The “Introduction” and “Adventure Begins” segments of this format line up perfectly with Mr. Curry’s “Setup” section, but help (as do Mr. Curry’s own subsections) adventure designers move from a format which is time limited (most screenplays are designed for 90 minutes) to one which has almost no time constraints. Though keep in mind that *Savage Worlds* adventures should be *fast*, *furious*, and *fun*, so don’t get too bogged down in the details.

Dividing the Setup into two distinct categories allows for the easy insertion of an **Introductory Scene** or **Flashback**, what I like to call “Setting the Stage.” Use the “Introduction” section as an opportunity to introduce the villain/threat, and the “Adventure Begins” section to insert the PCs into the action. Many fantasy adventures, and superhero ones for that matter, begin with a debriefing (at a tavern or satellite headquarters, respectively) informing the PCs of the Primary or Secondary Threat in the current adventure. Why not let the players act out that threat instead?

Think of the movie *The Rock*. The film opens with Ed Harris and crew breaking into a military base to steal rockets and VX gas. Which sounds like more fun to you: playing out the sequence in the role of the mercs as they raid the base, then cutting to the PCs in the midst of a briefing on the situation; or just being summoned for a spoken briefing? Time may require that the adventure be limited to the second option, especially for a convention game, but it can inject some real excitement and immersion to play out the first option.

The same can go for character **Flashbacks**. Use the characters’ past experiences in play to set up a coming conflict or to illustrate a point. Do you have players who write detailed backstories and keep character journals? How many times have you used those stories to assist you in creating an over-arching villain for your campaign? What if you were to begin a session/adventure with one of the events from a PCs life before the adventure? Remember *Raiders of the Lost Ark*? Indiana Jones enters a South/Central American temple attempting to acquire a valuable idol only to discover that after all his hard work, Belloq is there to steal the prize. Worried that your players won’t be surprised when they encounter the main villain in Act 3? Don’t be. After all, while Indy was surprised at Belloq’s interference in the opening scene, the revelation that Belloq was still his opponent later in the story seemed natural and appropriate. The same will be true in your game.

To add a sense of urgency to the heroes’ actions, and to let them know that villains don’t sit idly by when the PCs aren’t around, use **Cutscenes** to keep the narrative exciting. A perfect opportunity for this is during the “Raise the Stakes” segment. Just as the PCs are

disposing of the Secondary Threat and realize the existence or potency of the Primary Threat is the perfect time to cut away to a scene that demonstrate the power of the threat. Imagine for a moment that the PCs have just foiled the plans of an agent of SPECTRE. This Secondary Threat villain escaped, but his plans were thwarted and the PCs now know who he works for and where they have to go. Now is the perfect time to act out a Cuts scene in which the Primary Threat executes the Secondary Threat for his failure, putting him in a deathtrap that the PCs will inevitably find themselves in later. You as the GM play "Number One," the head of SPECTRE, and the PCs play "Number Two" and his defeated goons. Next thing they know, the group has been dropped into the "den of whirling death" and chopped to mincemeat, and the Primary Threat declares his ultimatum to the UN demanding "One million dollars!"

This gives you an opportunity to introduce future locations and obstacles, while at the same time reminding the PCs of the seriousness of the consequences should the PCs fail. Will the UN pay the money, or will "Number One's" plan to have his name carved into the face of the moon succeed? You don't need to have silly examples like the above; you can use more realistic or even horrifying consequences. Nor do you have to limit the Cuts scene to such a linear activity. Maybe the Cuts scene plays out a valiant effort of Navy SEALs to retake the VX-loaded rockets from the villains, doomed to fail miserably.

## The Mechanics of Alternate Scenes

Using alternate scenes introduces the practice of playing scenes not focused on the PC heroes into your gaming sessions, but how do you insert these devices without "giving away" the secrets and statistics of the villain? Providing players with plot-sensitive information could significantly decrease the impact of the adventure because the PCs will know what they're facing. Here are some guidelines to minimize this effect when using alternate scenes:

### 1. Flashbacks

- a. Write up a "past version" of the PC (or PCs) experiencing the flashback and any necessary NPC the players will portray. Base these write ups on the current character's stats and what level they were during the flashback. *Savage Worlds* has a particularly useful level system to assist you. Was the character a Novice, Seasoned, etc.?
- b. Don't follow the player's written backstory too literally. Remember, hindsight may be 20/20 but we also often remember through rose-colored glasses.
- c. Write up a "past version" of the NPCs involved, but don't let the players see the actual stats. Just give them a list of verbal descriptions of the character's abilities, goals and personality.
- d. Allow the PCs in a Flashback to spend bennies without it affecting their benny total for the session (this means these bennies won't translate to XP either). After all, the character lived through any past events.
- e. At the end of an adventure (not session), give out 1 extra XP per Flashback. Also add 1 XP to your villain's XP total per Flashback he or she participated in.

### 2. Introductory Scene/Cuts scene

- a. Write up Wild Card versions of any characters the players may be portraying, whether or not that character is a Wild Card. For the primary or secondary threat, include abilities they don't actually have and leave out ones that they do have. Let the actual capabilities of the villains be a mystery. A mystery that is compatible with available information, but a mystery nevertheless.
- b. Encourage the players really ham it up if they are playing the villains. Players can be innovative, so let them provide you with new ideas about a villain. Reward creative play with bennies!
- c. Give the player's less time to make decisions; keep these sequences even Faster and more Furious than normal.
- d. Remember, if this is a villain scene, this should be a scene which overwhelmingly displays the power of the villain or threat.
- e. Give the PCs 1 XP per two Cuts scenes they act out at the end of the Adventure, and give NPCs one per Cuts scene. If you think this is too much for the villain, remember that PCs are always gaining XP. If your villain gets away, he or she will only earn the XP for what has happened so far and you will have to increase them to be a threat later on anyway. Whether you give it to them now as XP or later as a narrative bump up makes little difference. (All this assumes that you keep track of NPC experience. Don't worry about it if you do not in your games.)

I hope you have enjoyed this edition of *Roleplaying Without Pity* and are able to incorporate alternate scenes into your roleplaying experience. I think you will find that it adds a fun component and fills one of the gaps that are often left in the stories created by RPGs. In my opinion, it is more fun to defeat a villain whose acts of evil I have witnessed rather than one whom I have only heard about.

In my next article, I will present a brief adventure scenario that utilizes alternate scenes. Future articles will include adapting ideas from Media to Action, and quick and easily memorable NPCs.



BE PREPARED FOR ISSUE #4 ON APRIL 15<sup>th</sup> 2005!

# The Mystic Monk

## Something about Chi..., by Brett Pickerign and Paul Kasper

This article attempts to add the mystical side of martial arts to *Savage Worlds*. This expansion was originally created for a Savage West campaign, but it should fit for any campaign you want to run. Because of the simplicity and extensibility of *Savage Worlds*, here are the simple, step-by-step instructions on how to create a Mystic Monk.

### STEP 1: ARCANES BACKGROUND

A Mystic Monk uses the new Arcane Background (Chi) Edge:



#### Arcane Background (Chi)

Arcane Skill: Chi (Spirit)  
Starting Power Points: 10  
Starting Powers: 2

Chi is the “life force” that a trained martial artist can use as a tool or weapon. The more effectively a martial artist can harness and focus his Chi, the more powerful he can become. Chi Drain: When a Mystic Monk rolls a 1 on his Chi roll (regardless of his Wild Die), he is automatically Shaken.

### STEP 2: EDGES

These additional Combat Edges are essential for a Mystic Monk:

**Martial Artist** (Professional Edge: Novice, Unarmed Fighter, Spirit d8, Vigor d6): The character has trained extensively in a Martial Arts and has honed his body to be a lethal weapon. Martial Artists are considered armed when fighting without a weapon (negates Unarmed Defender penalty) and the character may use Agility instead of Strength for unarmed damage. Also, the character's body (a hand/foot) is considered a weapon, so Edges like Trademark Weapon can apply.

**Unarmed Fighter** (Combat Edge: Novice, Fighting d6): The character has extensive training in boxing or any one of the martial arts. All unarmed damage and grappling rolls are at +1.

**Improved Unarmed Fighter** (Combat Edge: Seasoned, Unarmed Fighter, Fighting d8): All unarmed damage and grappling rolls are at +2.

### STEP 3: CHI POWERS

A Mystic Monk uses the powers provided in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook, with some changes to ranks and ranges.

The main difference is using the *bolt* power, which is no longer considered to be a ranged attack. Instead, the character declares that he will use the *bolt* power and how many Power Points will be spent. No Chi roll is required to activate the power. The character can attack three different opponents using three bolts, or he can direct multiple “bolts” to one opponent. The character makes an unarmed Fighting roll against each opponent; however, he does not get the normal +2 bonus for a touch attack. With a success, the character rolls damage—for the bolts, but not for the Fighting roll. With a failure, the power is lost and the attack ends.

The following powers are available to a Mystic Monk at the various ranks, with notes on any changes to the original power:

#### Novice

*Armor* (Range: Self)  
*Bolt* (Requires successful Fighting roll; Range: Touch)  
*Boost/lower trait* (Range (Boost): Self; Lower Trait means character can sense opponent's weakness).  
*Deflection* (Range: Self)  
*Healing* (Range: Self)  
*Obscure* (Range: Self)  
*Smite* (Range: Self—hands/feet)  
*Speed* (Range: Self)

#### Seasoned

*Quickness* (Range: Self) and *stun*

#### Veteran

*Barrier*, *blast*, *fear*, and *telekinesis*

#### Heroic

*Fly* (Range: Self; Character must always be able to touch something physical—water, tree branch—between rounds to maintain flight).  
*Greater healing* (Range: Touch; Can also use Healing power on others).  
*Invisibility* (Knowledge of *obscure* required).

A Mystic Monk does not have access to the following powers: *detect/conceal arcana*, *dispel*, *light*, *puppet*, *shape change*, *environmental protection*, and *zombie*.

### STEP 4: CHI TRAPPINGS

The best part of the SW powers system is the way you can create your own unique trappings. Creating a Mystic Monk is no different. As you choose your powers, choose what the character does or what happens when he uses the particular power and tie it into the specific Martial Arts he is using. Since there are so many different Martial Arts, power trappings provide a simple way to make your character unique but not complex.







## **A Down and Dirty Savaging by Bill Littlefield**

*Alright, I admit it. I played Star Frontiers for more than a few years back in my heyday. Who didn't? It was simple, had a pulpy feel to it, and had a decent backstory. What more could a young gamer ask for? Well, it's been over 15 years since I last played this game, but after looking through the boxed set the other night, I figured that it could be Savaged as easily as any other setting. I was going to check out what had already been done on the PEG Forums, but in the end decided that it would just be easier to start from scratch and go with my own gut instincts. This Savaging is based only on the material found in the original Star Frontiers Boxed Set and a few select articles from Dragon Magazine. Future articles utilizing additional sources will expand on this information. Star Frontiers is © Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This article does not challenge, nor infer a challenge to that copyright. I hope you enjoy playing Savaged Star Frontiers as much as we enjoyed savaging it! Now go save the galaxy!*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Near the center of a great spiral galaxy, where stars are much closer together than Earth's sun and its neighbors, a Human race developed. They were not identical to the Humans of Earth, but they were not very different either. When these Humans discovered that waves of subspace pitachyon particles could cross interstellar space faster than light, they realized they had found a link to the stars. A radio message that would have taken years to travel between stars could be sent with subspace communicators in months or even weeks. The Humans started broadcasting news of their existence to the neighboring stars, and soon found they weren't alone.

The Humans made contact with an inventive race of insect-like creatures called Vrusk, who had developed limited space travel decades earlier. One of the Vrusk's mining colonies had already contacted another race, the shape-changing Dralasites. The two races had been exchanging information for several years. The Vrusk and Dralasites were pleased to learn of another race. They sent a wealth of scientific information to the Humans. Using this new knowledge the industrious Humans quickly developed interstellar spaceships.

The three races met in a large area of space known as the Frontier. There, they discovered the Yazirians, a race of tall, shaggy-maned humanoids. Soon, settled worlds in the Frontier became melting pots for the four races, with dazzling mixtures of architecture and alien cultures.

To supply the needs of these worlds, the first interstellar company, the Pan-Galactic Corporation (PGC), was formed. It developed interests everywhere, from scientific research to farming to spaceship building. PGC even created its own language, Pan-Galactic, which soon became the most common language of all races on Frontier worlds. Many large companies which started later were modeled on PGC, but none approach the size or power of the original.

Then, the Sathar appeared. No one knows where they came from or why. They attacked and destroyed lonely systems on the edges of explored space, moving slowly inward. Survivors described the Sathar as wormlike creatures 3 to 4 meters long. That was all that was known about them because they would rather kill themselves than be captured. As the danger increased, the Humans, Dralasites, Vrusk and Yazirians formed the United Planetary Federation (UPF) to defend their worlds. The mysterious Sathar were forced back, but before long they returned in a more sinister form.

The Sathar had learned that they could not beat the UPF in battle. Instead, they began hiring Yazirian, Human, Dralasite and Vrusk agents to sabotage interstellar trade and interfere with local governments. The UPF created the Star Law Rangers, an interstellar police force, to track the Sathar's agents from planet to planet and fight them on their own terms. But despite the efforts of the Rangers, the sly Sathar agents have become the most dangerous threat ever to face the United Planetary Federation and the frontier corporations.

## **SO WHAT CAN THE CHARACTERS DO?**

Savaged Star Frontiers is a wide open setting. The fewer limits you place on the characters, the better. It should be played in the spirit of a star-hopping pulp epic in the vein of the old *Buck Rogers* serials with as little focus on "hard science" as possible. So, with that in mind, let's take a brief look at a few of the possible roles for your characters to assume, but remember, the only real limit is your imagination!

- The characters are freelance operatives for the Star Law Rangers and spend their time hunting down the enemies of the UPF.
- The characters are industrial espionage spies for an upstart corporation and must avoid being caught by PGC security.
- The characters are members of a mining company and are sent to explore a small planet beyond the fringes of the Frontier.
- The characters are mercenaries and spend their time plying their trade amongst the galaxy's inhabited star systems.
- The characters are members of a UPF strike force sent to attack an isolated Sathar outpost.
- The characters are archaeologists and are charged with locating, retrieving, and preserving antiquities wherever they find them.

## CREATING A CHARACTER

Creating a character in *Savage Star Frontiers* is pretty much the same as creating a character for any other setting that uses the *Savage Worlds* rules. Any exceptions, additions, or modifications to those rules are noted in the following sections.

### INTELLIGENT SPECIES OF THE FRONTIER

The four major species in the Frontier are described below. Please note that these are not the only intelligent species living in the Frontier; however, these four are the only ones that have managed to build starships and explore and colonize other worlds—as far as we know.

**Human:** Typical adult humans stand approximately 2 m tall and weigh around 70 kg. Their hair, eye, and skin color varies depending on nationality and racial background. Their average lifespan is quite long—around 200 years.

The human species is the most prolific and versatile in known space. As a group they are not as warlike as the yazirians, as businesslike as the vrusk, or as thoughtful as the dralasites. Yet individual humans can surpass the most violent yazirian, the most dedicated vrusk, and the most philosophical dralasite. It is this versatility, coupled with their innate curiosity and love of adventure, which allow them to succeed on a galactic scale. All humans start the game with a free Edge of their choice as well as a d6 in any one attribute.

**Dralasite:** Dralasites are short, rubbery aliens that have no bones or hard body parts. They stand around 1.3 m tall and weigh, on average, 65 kg. They live for nearly 250 years. Their skin is a flexible membrane that is very tough. Dralasites breathe through their skin. Their most important sense is that of smell and they only see in black and white.

Dralasites are stronger than humans; however, they are also slower. They start the game with Strength d6 and a Pace of 5". Dralasites judge themselves by the quality of their ideas and their ability to discuss important ideas wisely. Dralasites are also widely known for their strange sense of humor—they love old jokes and puns that make humans groan.

Dralasites, due to their unique muscle and skin structure, also have the ability to create pseudopodia. All Dralasites may create four "base pseudopodia" (two arms and two legs) without any effort. The character may create one additional pseudopod for each die step of Agility (i.e., d4 = one, d6 = 2, etc.); however, only one pseudopod may be grown/reabsorbed at a time and doing so counts as a normal action (so growing four pseudopods would require four complete rounds). A pseudopod may not be longer than 1 m or thinner than 1 cm. The normal MAP rules apply, regardless of how many pseudopodia are created; however, no off-hand penalty is applied.

**Vrusk:** Vrusk look like large insects. Eight legs grow from their abdomen, four on each side. Their torso is upright in front of the abdomen. The torso is humanoid, with two arms connected at the shoulders. A vrusk's shoulders are double-jointed, so they can rotate their arms in a full circle. Vrusk hands are circular pads with five fingers spaced evenly around the edge. All vrusk are Ambidextrous; however, they suffer from the effects of the All Thumbs Hindrance when using any gear or equipment that was not specifically designed for them. They are more agile than humans and start the game with Agility d6. A vrusk's body is covered by a hard carapace. This grants them the equivalent of Armor +2 in all locations. They stand about 1.5 m tall (and are slightly longer), weigh around 85 kg, and live to be about 175 years old on average.

Vrusk are hard-working and practical. Their society is organized around independent corporations. To a vrusk, the company he works for is his family and his nation. The company determines everything about the vrusk's life; who he lives with, what his job is, where he travels, etc. Vrusk give their company name before their personal name. Vrusk adventurers, however, are different. Some are independent businessmen, some are company employees who were fired, and some are just too rebellious to put up with company rules. Vrusk also love beauty, harmony and order. The goal of most vrusk is to become wealthy, collect art, and live in peace.

**Yazirian:** Yazirians are tall, thin humanoids. They have long arms and legs and slender torsos. Two large flaps of skin grow on either side of their bodies, attached along their arms, torso and legs. They have muzzles and high foreheads, giving them an animal-like appearance. Their heads are surrounded by manes of hair. They are slightly taller and slimmer than humans and live for about 140 years. They have four knuckles on their fingers and toes. The inside toe is opposed like a thumb, allowing them to grasp things with their feet. These characteristics, combined with their animal-like appearance, earned them the nickname "monkeys".

Yazirian communities are divided into large, loosely organized clans. All the members of a clan are related to each other. A custom Yazirians have kept intact is the selection of a life-enemy to which he dedicates his life to destroying, overcoming, or outdoing that enemy as completely as possible. To fail to do so is considered to bring dishonor to the character's clan.

Yazirians evolved from nocturnal hunters and thus gain the benefits of Low Light Vision; however, in bright light they must wear shaded goggles or suffer a -2 penalty to all attack and Notice rolls. They are also naturally agile and start the game with an Agility of d6. They may also glide, descending 1" vertically for every 2" moved horizontally. They also gain a new Agility-based skill, Gliding, at d4. This may be improved normally. A Gliding roll during a round in which a character glides allows them to stay level for that round. A raise allows them to climb 1", but sacrifices 2" of horizontal distance. A complete absence of wind ruins the gliding ability, causing them to drop like stones. Because of their light bone structure, yazirian characters must subtract one from their Toughness.

**Sathar:** Although this race plays an active part in the setting, little is known about them, and as such, they are best used as NPCs under the control of the GM rather than as player character races. That said, there's nothing from stopping the GM from allowing them as a possible race choice—I just don't recommend it, at least initially.

## EDGES, HINDRANCES, AND SKILLS

First off, the following Edges are not allowed: Arcane Background (Magic or Miracles), Arcane Resistance (Magic or Miracles), Improved Arcane Resistance (Magic or Miracles), all Power Edges (as applied to the AB: Magic or Miracles Edges), Champion, Holy/Unholy Warrior, and Wizard. Now, by “not allowed” I mean they are not normally used unless your GM decides to allow them. A few additional Edges, that help capture the mood of the setting, are detailed below.

All of the Hindrances listed in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook are also applicable to *Savaged Star Frontiers*. No new Hindrances have been added.

All of the skills listed in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook are allowed in *Savaged Star Frontiers*. No new skills have been added.

### NEW EDGES

**Computer Geek** (Professional Edge: Novice, Smarts d6, Knowledge: Computer Use d6)

Not only do you know how to use a computer, you *really* know your way around a keyboard. In addition to being able to perform advanced computing tasks, you are also able to write computer programs, hack into computer security systems, network multiple systems, locate information more quickly, and you can even repair the darn things! This Edge grants you a +2 bonus on all Computer Use rolls when attempting basic computing tasks. In addition, it also grants the bonus when attempting Repair rolls on a computer or when using a computer to aid with an Investigation roll.

**Robot Rigger** (Professional Edge: Novice, Smarts d6, Repair d6)

Robot Riggers are technicians specially trained to build, maintain, and repair robots and robotic systems. A character with this Edge may, by making a successful Smarts, Notice, or Repair roll (as determined by the GM) accomplish such tasks as identifying robot types by sight, add or remove peripheral equipment, repair or enable broken or disabled robots, determine and/or alter a robots functions and programmed mission, diagnose robotic malfunctions, and deactivate faulty robots or robotic equipment.

**Dralasite Truth Seeker** (Social Edge: Novice, Dralasite, Notice d6)

Your character is quite adept at detecting lies. Whenever dealing face-to-face with another character, you may make a Notice roll at +2 to determine whether or not they are actually telling the truth. This ability only allows you to detect outright falsehoods, not “half-truths” and counts as a full round action. This ability may only be used on one character at a time.

**Dralasite Truth Seer** (Social Edge, Novice, Dralasite Truth Seeker, Notice d8)

The character can detect half-truths as well as outright lies. With a raise on the Notice roll, the character can determine the truth within the target’s statements.

**Yazirian Battle Rage** (Combat Edge: Novice, Yazirian, Fighting d6)

Yazirians train themselves to go berserk in battle. By making a successful Smarts roll at the start of the combat round, which counts as a regular action, the character gains the benefits (and penalties) of the Berserk Edge. When in the presence of their chosen life enemy, Yazirians with this Edge may automatically go berserk.

**Yazirian Berserker** (Combat Edge: Novice, Yazirian Battle Rage)

The character may ignore the Parry penalty. In addition, a Yazirian Berserker may end his rage by making a normal Smarts roll (unless in the presence of his life enemy, in which case, the normal –2 penalty still applies).

**Vrusk Diplomat** (Social Edge: Novice, Spirit d8)

Due to their complex societal structure, Vrusk are adept at mediating interactions as well as knowing who to contact when they need to accomplish a difficult or specialized task. Characters with this Edge gain a Charisma bonus of +2 as well as the benefits of the Connections Edge. The Charisma bonus stacks with that provided by the Charismatic Edge.

### NEW SKILLS

*Savaged Star Frontiers* adds no new skills to the mix; however, using a computer and speaking both one’s native tongue and Pan-Galactic (Pangee) are Common Knowledge skills. If you want your character to be more proficient in these areas, then they must take the appropriate skills: Knowledge (Computer Use) and Knowledge (Language).

## GEAR AND EQUIPMENT

All characters start the game with 1500 Credits (Cr) with which to purchase gear and equipment. Each Credit is equal to \$1 in the *Savage Worlds* rules. The tables below list the most common items that are available to the characters. These tables should not be considered all-inclusive and the individual GM is encouraged to add or delete items as appropriate to his own campaign.

### Weapons and Ammunition

Weapon	Range	Damage	ROF	Weight (lbs)	Cost (Cr)	Shots	Min Str	Notes
Laser Sword	—	Str +10	—	5	1000	—	—	AP4
Molecular Knife	—	Str+3	—	1	250	—	—	AP2; cannot be thrown
Molecular Sword	—	Str+5	—	8	500	—	—	AP2
Gyro-jet Pistol	20/40/80	2d8	1	10	200	10	—	AP2; minimum range of 6"
Laser Pistol	15/30/60	1-3d6	1	4	400	20	—	Semi-auto; each damage die uses one charge of power pack
Laser Rifle	30/60/120	1-5d6	1	8	800	10	d6	Auto; 3RB; each damage die uses one charge of power pack
Needler Pistol	5/10/20	2d8	1	2	200	10	—	Treat as shotgun firing shot
Doze Grenades	5/10/20	Special	1	1	25	—	—	Medium Burst Template; Targets must make Vigor roll or be Shaken (with a 1 on either the trait die or the Wild Die they fall asleep for d6 rounds instead)
Tangler Grenade	5/10/20	Special	1	1	35	—	—	Medium Burst Template; Targets must make an Agility roll or be entangled (–2 to Pace and all Strength and Agility rolls as well as linked skills). With snake eyes the target is completely immobilized. The target may make a Strength roll at the start of each round to escape.
Shock Gloves	Touch	2d6	—	2	50	—	—	This item must be connected to a power pack
Stun Stick	Touch	Special	—	2	75	—	—	When set to shock, this weapon delivers Str+2d6 points of damage; when used to stun, the target must make a Vigor roll or become Shaken. With snake eyes, the target is Incapacitated for d4 rounds instead.
Gyro-jet Ammo	—	—	—	2	10	10	—	One 10-round clip
Laser Power Pack	—	—	—	1	25	—	—	One full load for pistol or rifle
Needler Ammo	—	—	—	1	5	10	—	One 10-round clip
Power Pack	—	—	—	1	10	—	—	Provides power for defenses, shock gloves (10 uses), or stun sticks (5 uses).

All archaic weapons listed in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook are still available; however, cost and availability is at the GM's discretion.

## Defenses

Type	Armor	Weight (lbs)	Cost (Cr)	Notes
Albedo Screen	+5	3	2000	Effective against lasers; uses power pack (drains one charge per use)
Gauss Screen	Special	3	1000	Effective against electrical attacks; uses a power pack (drains one charge per use) – so long as power is available the target is immune to electrical attacks.
Inertia Screen	Special	5	2000	Effective against projectiles; uses a power pack (drains one charge per use) – all damage sustained is halved.
Skinsuit	+2/+4	3	500	Treat as Kevlar armor

All defensive screens are worn around the waist in the same fashion as a belt. Only one screen may be active during any given round. Activating or deactivating a screen counts as a normal action. All archaic armor types listed in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook are still available; however, cost and availability is at the GM's discretion.

## Miscellaneous Gear and Equipment

Item	Weight (lbs)	Cost (Cr)	Notes
MedKit	10	100	Contains everything needed to effectively use the Healing skill
RoboKit	20	300	Contains everything needed to effectively use the Robot Rigger Edge
TechKit	20	200	Contains everything needed to effectively use the Repair skill
All-weather Blanket	2	10	Protects against temperatures to –20°C (i.e., no Fatigue roll required)
Chronocom	—	25	Combination watch/communicator (5km range)
Everflame	—	5	Think space-age Zippo...
Flashlight	1	3	Provides illumination using the Cone Template
Gas Mask	2	20	Allows user to breathe in toxic environments
Magnigoggles	3	125	Think space-age binoculars...
PolyVox	1	500	Worn about the neck; translates vocalizations into chosen language
Survival Rations	2	10	One week's worth; add water and get a nutritious meal of gray mush...

Most equipment listed in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook is still available; however, cost and availability is at the GM's discretion.

## SETTING-SPECIFIC RULES

Since *Savaged Star Frontiers* is set in the wilds of space, it would only make sense that we should include rules for things that are germane to the space opera genre: communication between the various species, the effects of gravity, movement in a weightless environment, and space travel. We tried to keep these things as true to the *Savage Worlds* mantra of “Fast, Furious, and Fun” as possible, so if they don't quite sit right with the more scientifically-minded Savages, then they'll just have to get over it by playing some *Space Opera*!

### Communication Between the Species

The intelligent races, in addition to speaking their native tongues, also are fluent in Pangee. All of the heroes, as noted above, converse in Pangee as a function of Common Knowledge. The only way to learn additional languages is to take the appropriate Knowledge skills. A human or Yazirian character may learn a number of additional languages (beyond his native tongue and Pangee) equal to Smarts/2. Dralasites and Vrusk may learn a number of additional languages equal to Smarts.

### The Effects of Gravity

The gravitational force of a planet depends on its size. This is an optional rule, so if you don't feel the need to include it simply assume all planets have a gravity of 1 g. Otherwise, you may use the following guidelines to simulate the effects of different gravitational pulls.

For every 0.1g less than 1.0g:

- Increase Carrying Capacity by 10 pounds
- Increase leaping and jumping distances by 1" (6 feet)
- Decrease all damage suffered from falling by 2 points (minimum of 1 point of damage on any significant fall)
- Gliding rolls (Yazirians) are made at +1 (0.8-0.9g), +2 (0.6-0.7g), or +4 (0.5g).

For every 0.1g *greater* than 1.0g:

- Decrease Carrying Capacity by 5 pounds
- Decrease leaping and jumping distances by 1" (6 feet)
- Increase all damage suffered from falling by 2 points
- No gliding (Yazirians) possible.

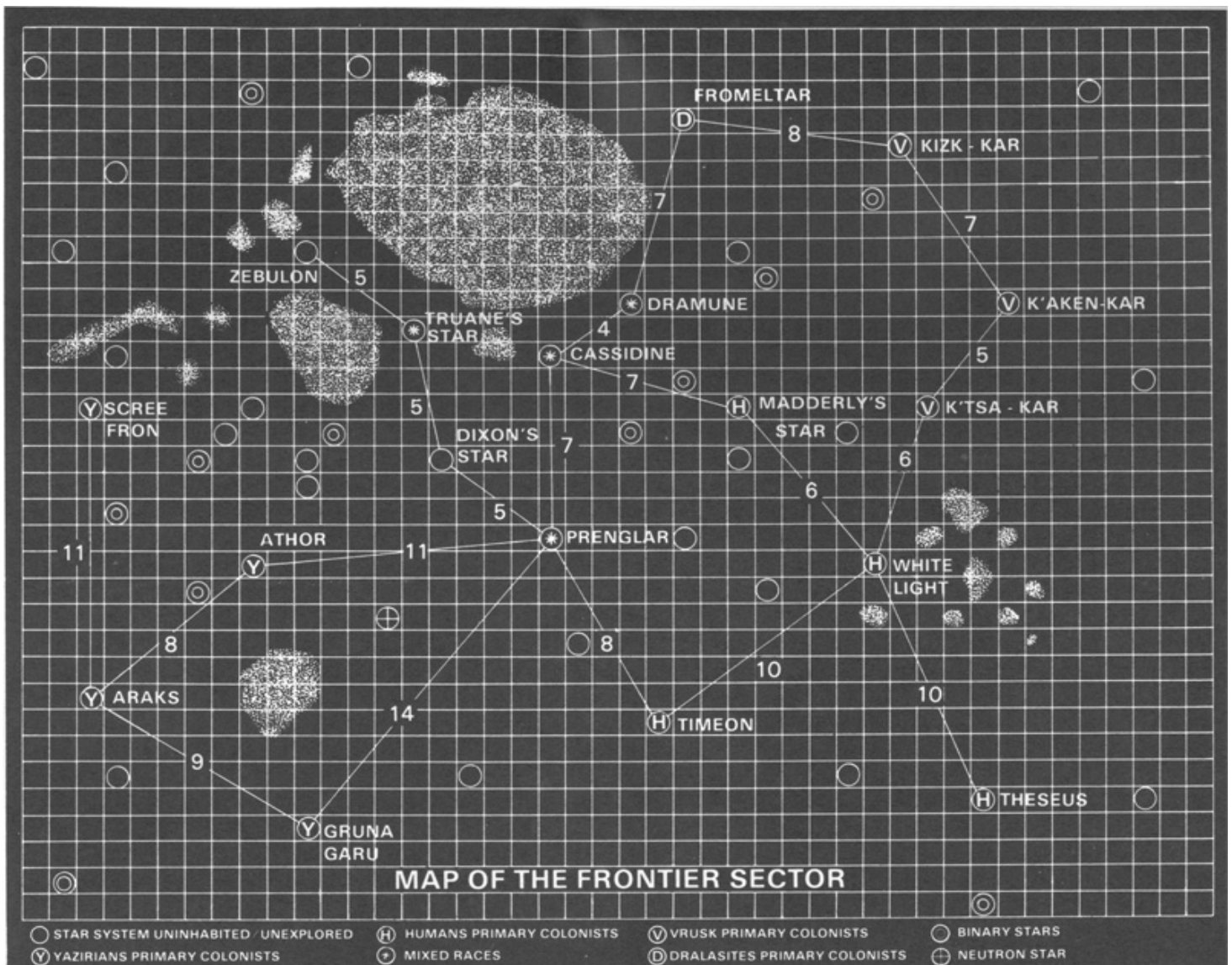
## Zero-G Environments

Moving in an area where there is no gravity is different than normal movement. Handholds are built into the walls of most space stations and spaceships, so characters can pull or push themselves along in freefall. Once a character starts moving, he will not stop until he bumps into a wall or grabs another handhold and stops himself. Characters moving this way can move at their normal Pace; however, moving counts as an action. They must follow a wall or, if they move across an open area, they must move straight at a constant speed until they reach the opposite wall. They may not "run".

Some ships have Velcro strips along the hallways, so characters wearing special boots can walk normally. Characters walking this way can move at one-half their Pace as a free action. They may run; however, if the running die comes up as a 6, they trip and fall (count as prone) and lose their action for their turn as they stand-up.

Characters can move outside ships or space stations using space suits. Space suits have magnetic boots so characters can walk on the metallic surface of the ship or station at one-half their normal Pace (no running). Characters can connect themselves to the ship with a tether; if they are knocked off the ship they can simply pull themselves back along the tether at their normal Pace.

Suffice it to say that in areas where there is no gravity, missile weapons (thrown or propelled) are all but useless. Laser weapons and melee weapons still function. Damage rolls for successful attacks by impact-type (e.g., clubs, maces, etc.) weapons cannot Ace.



## Space Travel 101

Starships can travel between star systems at speeds many times faster than the speed of light. A trip that would have taken hundreds of years in a spaceship could be made in only a few days in a faster-than light (FTL) starship. Because of their cost, however, large corporations, planetary governments or starship travel companies own most starships in the Frontier. The established travel routes are marked on the Frontier map. These are the only explored routes that have been mapped and certified as safe for starships to use. When adventurers travel, they are limited to scheduled or chartered trips following these routes.

The length of each route in light-years is printed on each route. Because FTL ships travel one light-year per day, this number also is the number of days needed to travel this route. This time includes take-off and landing, maneuvering in orbit, passenger loading and all other normal procedures. For example, the route from Prenglar to Cassidine is 7 light-years. A starship traveling from Prenglar to Cassidine, or from Cassidine to Prenglar, would take 7 days (140 hours) to reach its destination. Most starships never land on a planet. Instead, the passengers board shuttles on the ground that take them into orbit, where they board the starship. When the starship reaches its destination, shuttles again take the passengers either to the planet's surface or to an orbiting space station where they can wait for another flight.

## Some Star Frontiers links you might find useful...

Commander Cody's Savaged Star Frontiers Website

<http://cmdrcody.bravepages.com/savage.html>

Star Frontiers.Com

<http://www.starfrontiers.com/rules/>

Advanced Star Frontiers, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

<http://users.vnet.net/seawolf/sf/>

Star Frontiers.Org

<http://www.starfrontiers.org/>

The Star Frontiers Archive

<http://www.geocities.com/starfrontiers/>

Star Frontiers: Dark Nebula

<http://gotm.homeip.net:1081/sf/>

Star Frontiers: Now and Forever

<http://www.xmission.com/~lavne/Star.html>

Palalym Cluster

<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Corridor/5788/rpg/sf/sf.htm>

Ephemeris: An Almanac of the Frontier

<http://members.aol.com/timc27/sf-rpg.html>

Frontier 3

<http://www.bauser.com/roleplaying/StarFrontiers/>

Starbase Hellhound

<http://members.tripod.com/~TheHound/index2.html>

Red Knight: A Star Frontiers Online Novel

<http://www.xmission.com/~lavne/book/RedKnight.html>

## PARTING SHOTS

Well there you have it. *Savaged Star Frontiers*, at least enough to get you thinking, in only seven pages! Keep an eye for lots of *Savaged Star Frontiers* articles to appear in the pages of **Shark Bytes** and **Shark Nibbles**! Until next time: keep an eye out for Sathar agents and Stay Savage!

# BOYS OF BRAZIL

## A Necessary Evil Search and Destroy Mission, by Mark Aylor

### INTRODUCTION

The V'sori did indeed have advanced scouts on Earth during WW II, and South America is where they and their Nazi puppets fled when it became apparent all was lost. After 50 years of hiding out in the South America jungle, they were not joyful when the V'sori finally invaded, and they were far from inactive during those years.

The German and V'sori scientists used early genetic experiments combined with V'sori knowledge and genetic samples from several races to create horrors no man should ever know. They decided to release some of these creatures to chase off both the local rebels and the V'sori invaders. They were more than content to continue as they had for another 50 years. However, the scientists made one mistake. A mistake they would not live to regret.

Now the horrors plaguing the area are drawing a lot of attention to the area, and Dr. Destruction wants the characters to check it out.

"There is something peculiar going on in the jungles of Brazil. We lost contact with the rebels living in the jungle fighting the V'sori. We have intercepted V'sori transmissions that their patrols have been attacked also. The messages make claims of terrible creatures attacking anything that moves. Whoever, or whatever, is doing this is taking out both sides. We need to talk to them and get them on our side before the V'sori do.

Go there, find out who or what is doing this, and either recruit them or put an end to this so we can reestablish communications with the rebels."

### WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

Once the team gets to Brazil, they must make contact with the rebels there. If not, then they will have to wander in the jungle until they run across something.

Once they get close to the rebel base, they will hear a yell. It is a rebel patrol being hit by one of the resultant horrors of the Nazi and V'sori experimentation. They should arrive just in time to hear the dying words of the last rebel, "Andador de Morte" (Death Walker). They can try to find the rebel camp. It is not far away. A slaughterhouse awaits them. Whatever Andador de Morte is, it eats what it kills. Play up the eeriness of the jungle and the feeling they are being watched.

As the villains make their way through the jungle, the occasional Hunters will attack them. They will always attack with surprise. If they are spotted or sensed, they will melt back into the jungle. If the villains managed to find a guide before leaving for the jungle, the guide abandons them the first time one of these creatures' attack. The beasts usually hunt in small packs of 3-5 but will occasionally hunt in larger packs of up to 10 (depending on the size of your group). They first try to pick off stragglers.

The V'sori/Nazi base is hidden underground. It takes someone with knowledge of where the base is or a Notice roll at -6 to find it. Until they do, there is a 1 in 6 chance per hour of

an ambush by 3-5 Hunters. Use a staggered d6 to determine the number (1-3 = 3, 4-5 = 4, 6 = 5). If these prove no challenge to your group, try a large pack.

### THE BASE

When they finally find the base, it is a blood bath. A power outage resulted in the release of the nastier creatures. It is underground, dark, and gruesome. There are dead V'sori and Nazi scientists everywhere—half-eaten. It is tense with the sounds of things skittering around in the dark. These are other failed experiments. For the most part these things will hide and avoid contact with the villains. They know what is loose and are content to remain unnoticed. Play up the bloody gore of the base, the Nazi paraphernalia, the eclectic mix of V'sori and older human technology a lot of it in ruins. There should be occasional flickering emergency light sources. Throw a few Little Horrors at them along the way.

The players should be able to find all sorts of information on the genetic experiments and the resulting creatures in the computer systems. Once again, play up the monstrosity of the information and the footage along with the information. The Hunters and Little Horrors while dangerous were the precursors to the real terrors that are the Andador de Morte.

The research information the players find here give details on these creatures. They were originally human children kidnapped from the area or born in a test tube then genetically altered to include DNA from several other species. The remaining creatures use the base as a den to hunt from. There are several of them hiding here. The villains should only encounter 1-2 of these at a time. They are *extremely* dangerous with up to 4 attacks a round.

The final recording from one of the German scientists:

"One of them succeeded in cutting the power again. Two of the others were waiting when we tried to by-pass it. How they got out, I don't know. They have been picking us off one by one. At least the base is sealed. When we are all dead, they will starve to death in here. I don't know if I am the last one or not. The last person I saw was one of the V'sori. He locked himself in a storage room yesterday, but the door was torn open when I went by today.

"I think the only reason I'm still alive is because of Traugott. He is flesh of my flesh after all. The others seem to follow him as much as they follow anyone or anything that is. Once they get hungry though, even Traugott will not be able to protect me. It is just a matter of time now.

"Something's coming... Traugott? Is that you? Ah, my son. Come in. I will be right with... Urk! At least...it...was...you..."

Blood sprays the camera obscuring the view. A vague shape moves in the background but is indeterminate through the blood.



## HUNTERS

Hunters were one of the V'sori/Nazi scientists' successes. They are terrifying creatures designed to hunt, kill, and survive. They hold vaguely humanoid shapes, but that is the only thing about them that is recognizable. They have an extra pair of vestigial limbs that serve no purpose. They have red glowing eyes, razor sharp teeth and claws, a shiny black exoskeleton, and are very fast. They are cunning, but not smart. They will use surprise to attack their prey from the ground or trees using all cover available to them. They exude a pheromone that causes terror in its prey.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d12

**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Notice d8, Stealth d8, Tracking d8

**Pace:** 8 (d10 running); **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Fleet Footed, Frenzy, Quick

### Special Abilities:

- **Claws/Teeth:** +2, Heavy Weapon
- **Darkvision:** Suffers no darkness penalty.
- **Fear:** Opponents make a Guts check -2.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** Second Shaken does not cause a wound.
- **Toughness:** +2 Toughness, Heavy Armor

## LITTLE HORRORS

The Little Horrors are failed V'sori/Nazi test subjects. They are about the size of a rat or cat but bear no resemblance to any creature on earth. They have six legs and scuttle around in dark. Their eyes glow a sickly yellow-green in the presence of light.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Quick

### Special Abilities:

- **Claws/Teeth:** +1, Heavy Weapon
- **Darkvision:** Suffers no darkness penalty.
- **Small Size:** -2 Toughness, -2 to be hit.
- **Toughness:** +1 Toughness

## ANDADOR DE MORTE [Wild Card]

The Andador De Morte is the culmination of the V'sori/Nazi experimentation. The scientists endearingly called them their "boys." Unlike the Hunters, these creatures are actually intelligent. They understand German and V'sori, though they are incapable of speaking it. From the tapes, it is even clear that they even took orders and went on missions. These horrors look more alien even than the Hunters. They are 7 feet tall, have a hard spiny exoskeleton, and an extra pair of fully useable limbs. They exude the same fear pheromone the Hunters do, but in a much stronger concentration that could allow beings with super senses to detect them.

**Attributes:** Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12+2

**Skills:** Climbing d12, Fighting d12, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Swimming d10, Tracking d8

**Pace:** 10 (d10 running); **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 13

**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Combat Sense, Fleet Footed, Improved Frenzy, Improved Nerves of Steel, Quick

### Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Water Movement equals pace.
- **Awareness:** Suffers no penalties due to bad lighting, fog, or other obscurement.
- **Claws/Teeth:** +4, Heavy Weapon
- **Extra Limbs:** 2 extra limbs (two extra attacks each round)
- **Fear:** Opponents make a Guts check at -2.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Hardy:** Second Shaken does not cause a wound.
- **Toughness:** +4 Toughness, Heavy Armor
- **Wall Walker:** The creatures move at their pace on any surface including on or up walls and even on ceilings.

## AFTERMATH

Hopefully the villains will decide to wipe this vile place from the face of the earth, destroy all the information there and bury it so it may never be found again.

Dr. Destructions Message:

"You did well to destroy and buried that foul place. Some things should never see the light of day, and that base and what was in it, is one of them. I am also impressed that you managed to come out of there alive. Let us hope that nothing else did..."

## UNTIL NEXT MONTH... STAY SAVAGE!

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**Don't forget to stop by the  
Shark Bytes website on  
February 20<sup>th</sup> for B.D. Flory's  
sneak peek of Deadlands:  
Reloaded!**