

The Legend of the Sky Raiders

*By J. Andrew Keith
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Approved For Use With

TRAVELLER™

*Science-Fiction Adventure in
the Far Future*



The Legend of the Sky Raiders

An Adventure For Traveller by

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William H. Keith Jr.*

*Maps and Illustrations by
William H. Keith Jr.*

*Dedication: To Indiana Jones, who would
feel right at home here.*



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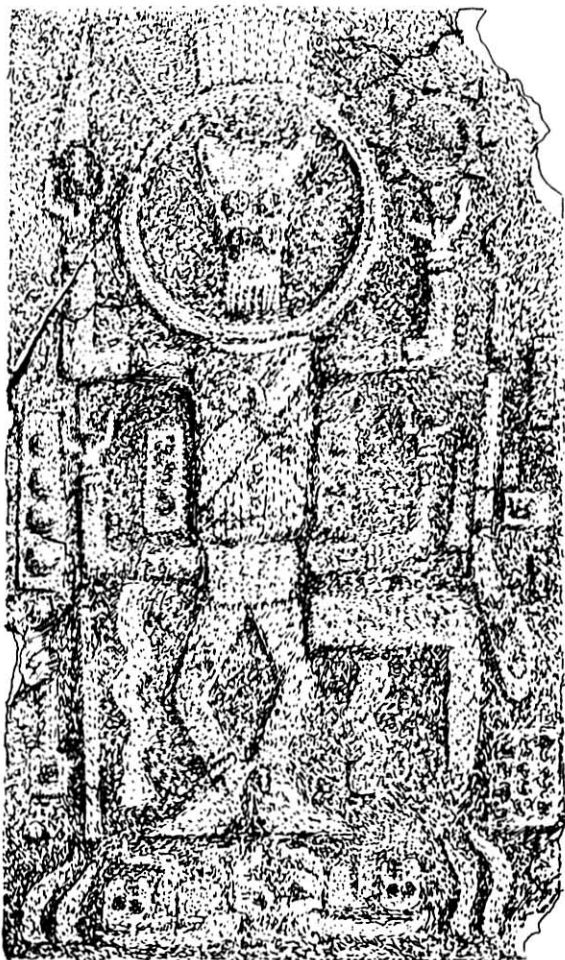
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Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
Standards and Assumptions	5
Using This Adventure	6
Characters	6
Equipment	7
Referee's Note	8
MIRAYN	9
JOB OFFER	11
IN VAL PRESZAR	12
Organizing The Expedition	15
The Guide	15
The Thugs	16
The City	16
Rumors	17
NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS	19
The Institute Party	19
Specialists	20
A Note on Skills	21
The Opposition	22
Hovercraft	23
INTO THE OUTBACK	24
Special Considerations	24
Points of Interest	25
USING THE MAP	27
THE LOST CITY	28
Ambush	28
Referee's Note	28
The Professor	30
ESCAPE	31
Crash	31
THE HILL OF THE SILENT GUARDIANS	33
At the Hill	33
The Ceremony	33
The Chamber	36
THE ISLAND	37
CONDITIONS IN THE OUTBACK	38
Food and Water	38
Encounters	40
Animals on Mirayn	41
LIBRARY DATA	43
HOARD OF THE SKY RAIDERS	46
THE NATIVES OF MIRAYN	47
REFeree's NOTES	48



" Traditional archeological opinion insists that the Gogs of Mirayn have never enjoyed a tech level of more than two or three in all their history. If this is so, what is the meaning behind this bas-relief discovered in the hills behind Val Preszar ? What is that enigmatic starship-shape rising above the figure's upper right hand ? Why the sun symbol at the upper right, when the inhabitants of Mirayn's swamps and bogs never see the sun ? And . . . could that possibly be an auto rifle of some kind, at the extreme right ?

. . .the figure is clothed in some kind of coverall garment - a spacesuit ? and is wearing what can only be a space helmet, complete with antennae. He is shown trampling fallen enemies under his modern-looking space boots, when everyone knows that the Gogs of Mirayn today are peaceful and shy . . ."

Exerpt from *Hoard of the Sky Raiders*, Jothan Massadi

Alzenei Press, 1104

Introduction

This booklet, entitled *Legend of the Sky Raiders*, is a comprehensive adventure designed for use with GDW's TRAVELLER. Set in the Jungleblut subsector of the Far Frontiers sector, it revolves around an archeological expedition searching for a lost civilization.

It is assumed that this adventure will be administered by a referee who has read through this adventure who is familiar both with it and with the rules for TRAVELLER. This situation calls for the basic TRAVELLER booklets (books 1, 2, and 3), plus Supplement 4, *Citizens of the Imperium*.

**Requires only
Basic Traveller
and Supplement 4**

No additional supplements, books, or other information are required. As usual, paper, pencils, six-sided dice, and square-grid paper will prove helpful during the course of this adventure.

Although not required in order to play this adventure, certain other TRAVELLER materials may enhance the enjoyment of the situation. Book 4, *Mercenary*, Book 5, *High Guard*, Supplement 1, *1001 Characters*, and Supplement 2, *Animal Encounters* can all be used in conjunction with *Legend of the Sky Raiders*. Of course, other TRAVELLER booklets, games, and supplements may prove useful as well.

STANDARDS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The following standards and assumptions are used in the text of this adventure.

Dates: All dates herein correspond to the Imperial calendar. The initial date for this situation is 345-1107; 345 is the current day (the 345th day of the standard 365-day year) while 1107 is the current year of the Imperium. Once the adventure begins, time should flow normally. If necessary, change the date to correspond to a local situation.

Date: 345-1107

Place: This adventure takes place on Mirayn (0504 D988737-7) in the Jungleblut subsector of the Far Frontiers sector. Mirayn is a large planet, some 15,000 kilometers in diameter, with a dense atmosphere and, in most areas, a hot, humid climate. The planet has a reputation as a treasure trove world, an archeologist's paradise, with relics of a past civilization common amid the marshes and jungles of the Outback. Belief in these stories has been fostered recently by the appearance of a popular book, *Hoard of the Sky Raiders*, written by one Professor Jothan Messandi, which identifies Mirayn as the site of a legendary race of star-faring raiders said to have been responsible for plundering several worlds in the region several thousand years ago.

**Place: Mirayn
Jungleblut Subsector
Far Frontiers Sector
Beyond the Imperium**

USING THIS ADVENTURE

The referee may use this adventure as an independent game situation with pre-generated characters (as written), or it may be used with existing characters from an existing campaign. Changes necessary for an on-going campaign should be obvious.

REFeree's CHECKLIST

1. Assign characters.
2. Allow equipment purchase.
3. State situation.
4. Guide characters through situation based on their actions.

Referee's Checklist: The steps shown in the referee's checklist should guide the referee through elements of administering this adventure. Characters are covered next in this section, then equipment. The basic

situation is presented beginning on page 9, with further material contained in the remainder of the adventure.

CHARACTERS

This adventure is intended for a band of adventurers numbering at least two and no more than eight. A group of pre-generated characters is supplied below, although the referee may allow other individuals instead.

1. Ex-Marine Captain 67C889 Age 34 4 terms Cr 1000
Cutlass-1, Revolver-2, Tactics-1, Brawling-2, Leader-2 Cutlass
2. Retired Navy Starman 9986A7 Age 46 7 terms Cr2000
Admin-2, Rifle-2, Computer-1, Medical-1, Ship's Boat-1 Rifle
3. Ex-Army Lieutenant 7A587A Age 26 2 terms Cr1500
Air/Raft-2, Rifle-1, SMG-1, Electronics-1 Rifle
4. Ex-Merchant Third Officer 687A96 Age 26 2 terms Cr3000
Streetwise-2, SMG-1, Navigation-1
5. Ex-Scout 589A46 Age 30 3 terms Cr1000
Carbine-2, Pilot-1, Jack-o-T-1, Mechanical-1 Carbine
6. Ex-Navy Ensign 8597BA Age 22 1 term Cr1000
Carbine-1, Forward Observer-1, Pilot-1
7. Ex-Rogue A89982 Age 30 3 terms Cr0
Streetwise-2, Bribery-2, Brawling-1, Rifle-0 Rifle, Blade
8. Retired Hunter 896786 Age 42 6 terms Cr4000
Hunting-3, Rifle-3, Leader-1, Medical-1 Rifle

A skill of 0 with a gun (for example, Rifle-0) shows the preferred or best weapon for an individual otherwise without weapon skill.

EQUIPMENT

Referees using an ongoing campaign should ignore the remainder of this section, except, possibly, for the Available Equipment Table below.

Characters should review their equipment, and may purchase more. Each has any items mentioned in the character description, plus the number of credits indicated that may be used to purchase more. As they are preparing to purchase equipment, the players should be informed that they will have a special fund intended for equipment purchase once they have seen the conditions of their planned destination for themselves. For the present, they should be told that they are to visit a jungle planet in a search for an ancient treasure hoard; this information should suffice to allow basic equipment purchases. Any equipment available may be purchased, subject to the following restrictions:

1. The equipment must be mentioned and priced in Books 1 or 3 of TRAVELLER or in the available equipment table, and
2. The price indicated must be paid.

Note that the price levels preclude some equipment (for example, battle dress) due to the restricted finances of the group.

Available Equipment: The table below presents several items which are also available to the group, perhaps having been acquired as souvenirs or simply items of interest.

AVAILABLE EQUIPMENT TABLE

1. **Machete:** Blade used in cutting vegetation to clear a path, campsite, etc. Equivalent to a cutlass, as in Book 1. Weight: 1000 grams. Tech Level: 4. Base Price: Cr 125.
2. **Electronic Binoculars:** Vision aid providing electronic enhancement of images. Device bears the same resemblance to regular binoculars that electronic sights bear to telescopic sights (see Book 1). Electronic binoculars feature light enhancement (treat as Light Intensifier Goggles) and range-finding capabilities. Comes in an over-the-shoulder carrying case; a sling is also provided for separate carrying. Weight: 2 kg. Tech Level: 8. Base Price: Cr 750.
3. ***Hoard of the Sky Raiders:*** A popular book written by Professor Jothan Messandi. The cover blurb claims the book contains "the secrets of the most valuable treasure in the Sector . . . the true story of the Sky Raiders and of Mirayn, their ancient home . . ." Base Price: Cr 15.
4. **Water Filtration/Distillation Unit:** Purifies locally found water for drinking in wilderness situations. Unit contains a distilling plant, filters, and chemical purification tablets. Weight: 1 kg. Tech Level: 7. Base Price: Cr 75.

REFEREE'S NOTE

It is urged that play of *Legend of the Sky Raiders* be broken into at least two, and preferably more distinct sessions of play. In this respect, the adventure should be treated more as a short campaign, spanning a longer period of time than most adventures.

Most portions of this book are for the use of the referee only. Some sections, however, may be made available to players, subject to further instructions contained in individual section notes. The segments open to player access include:

Mirayn (p.9)

Library Data (p.43)

Job Offer (p.11)

The Natives of Mirayn (p.47)

Vehicles (p.23)

Hoard of the Sky Raiders (p.46)

Material in sections other than these is presented by the referee, but players cannot themselves be allowed access to the material.

The enclosed 11 x 17 sheet contains maps intended for use by both referee and players. Players should not be allowed to examine any map until the information that map conveys would normally become available.



Mirayn

Mirayn: Planet in the Jungleblut subsector of the Far Frontiers sector. The official planetary statistics, based on the League survey of 1049, are as follows:

Mirayn/Jungleblut 0504 D989737-7

G

Planet: First of six in the system. Period 259.6 days. Density .98 standard. Equatorial diameter 15,276 kms. Mean surface gravity 1.10 G. Rotational period 33 hours, 41 minutes, 3.98 seconds. Axial inclination 3 degrees 47' 6.8".

Remarks: Swathed in low-lying cloud cover and a nearly perpetual mist, the tropical regions of Mirayn have proven virtually impossible to map even through orbital survey procedures. While sophisticated scanning techniques have established the broad outlines of lakes and rivers, detailed survey of this world can only be carried out from the ground.

First surveyed by Frontiers Developements, Inc., and then colonized by settlers from Selaek some 375 years ago, Mirayn was first intended as an agricultural colony. Conditions on the world hampered the growth of large-scale farming, however, leaving the planet trapped with a subsistence level economy. The lack of worthwhile raw materials prevented the formation of widespread industries as well, further hindering colonial progress.

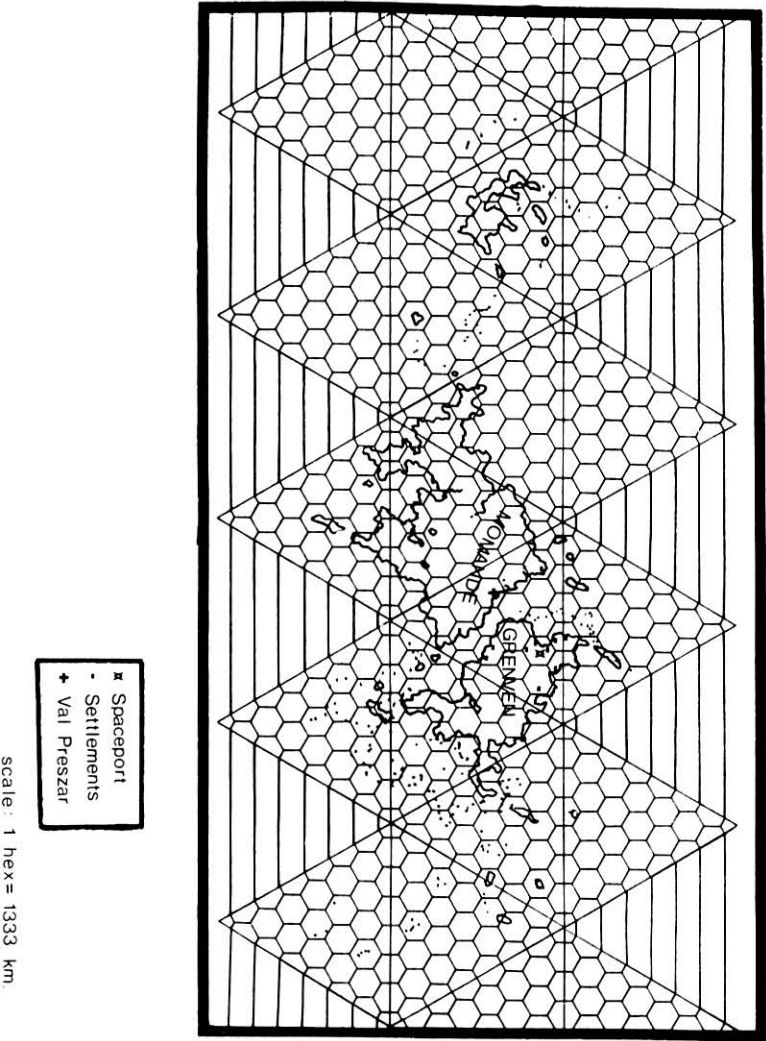
Scientific interest, followed by considerable attention from offworld tourists, was sparked by the discovery of extensive ruins left by a native civilization in the coastal regions of Grenven, the first human settled continent on the planet. An even richer field of archeological endeavor was opened when humans penetrated Momande, the larger, but also less known continent. Small settlements, the largest a city named Val Preszar, were established along the coast of Momande and began to cater to the needs of parties investigating what became known as "The Outback."

Investigation of various ruins has led scientists to venture the opinion that a native culture of about Tech Level 3 flourished on both continents. The collapse of that civilization left a few scattered aboriginal savages. As these findings were published, scientific interest in Mirayn faded, though tourism continued to be a fairly steady source of revenue for the government. Amateur archeologists still made occasional visits to the planet, but by and large, it dropped into obscurity.

This state of affairs was shattered two years ago, when Professor Jothan Messandi published his famous book *Hoard of the Sky Raiders*. The theories presented in that book brought treasure hunters to Mirayn in great numbers; fortune seekers continue to throng there today.

Mirayn's natives — known to the offworlders as "gogs" — are of minor concern, and are commonly seen only in the Outback or the settlements along Momande's coast. The human colony continues to support a limited amount of agriculture and some industry; most of the planetary revenue is based, however, on the various offshoots of the tourist trade. The government of Mirayn, a council of ruling landowners, is active in the promotion of tourism and takes an interest in the world's antiquities. Though they lack the manpower to themselves hunt for possible

archeological finds, the government does pay for artifacts from the Outback or the locations of major sites. Unfortunately, scales of payment are rather low, which has encouraged attempts at smuggling artifacts offworld where they command a high price among interested collectors. To combat this, the ruling council has imposed a number of strict laws against removal of antiquities from the planet. Mirayn's small standing army is employed almost exclusively in the enforcement of these laws.



Job Offer

The time for recriminations was long over . . . it no longer mattered which of the adventurers was responsible for the trouble the group now faced. Only the facts were important now: they had come to Mirayn in search of a fortune in lost treasure, but the one who was rich now was the con man who gave them a phony story, sold them a useless map, and then managed to steal most of their money. There was no longer any thought of making a fortune on Mirayn; now, their problem was one of scraping together money enough to keep eating . . . and, hopefully, to get off the humid, sweltering mudball called Mirayn.

So there it was . . . back to the old grind of circulating around the bars and the starships, looking for a way to earn some money or a working passage off the planet. Days passed, and their meager funds dwindled, but there just didn't seem to be any openings. Not when there were plenty of other people around in the same mess. And those who weren't had no intention of splitting potential profits from successful expeditions into the Outback with a band of adventurers. Things were looking bad; desperation was setting in . . . until they met the girl.

Her name was Lorain Messandi, and she claimed to represent the Institute for System Studies on Alzenei, a nearby world. She had come to Mirayn with a small university grant and a handful of friends to carry out a search for ruins that might link this planet to the legendary Sky Raiders . . . or put the theory to rest once and for all.

Only recently appointed to the Institute, Lorain has never before led a field expedition; her specialty has always been in research work. And, though the Institute had approved the mission, the subject of the Sky Raiders was not a popular one, and she had been given little support in her task. With an enigmatic reference to her father's professional enemies, Lorain Messandi put forward her proposition. She needed a skilled band of assistants, people with experience in handling dangerous situations and strange worlds, to help her in organizing and leading her expedition into the Outback.

She couldn't offer them much money -- all she could manage was a promise of whatever portion of the grant was not spent on the expedition itself. In addition, though, she could offer passage off-planet aboard an Institute lab ship that would come for her in three months. That, at least, would get them off-planet, and she had heard of their need to leave from several reliable sources in town.

It wasn't hard to decide to join Lorain Messandi's expedition. It was the first offer to come their way -- and it could well be the last for quite some time. As they listened to the girl's summary of what she needed . . . especially her mention of needing help in avoiding the pitfalls of local criminals and con artists . . . they gave a silent prayer that she would never hear of their own encounter with that kind of trouble, and soon found themselves agreeing to meet her next morning for a trip to Val Preszar.

In Val Preszar

Having concluded their deal with their new patron, the adventurers join the archeologist and her companions (described on page 19) aboard a commercial ground effects transport. This carries them to Val Preszar, the main port of entry for explorers planning to visit the great Outback region. Like so many such cities, it is a lawless frontier town where almost anything goes; at the same time, it is the kind of place where almost anything can be bought — subject to limitations of technology and general availability — if the buyer is willing to pay the price.

ORGANIZING THE EXPEDITION

As players begin this phase of the adventure, they should be given an opportunity to examine the Library Data, the section dealing with natives, and the material contained in *Hoard of the Sky Raiders*. This activity, plus basic introductions to the various Non-Player characters in the expedition, should be interwoven with the activities described below.

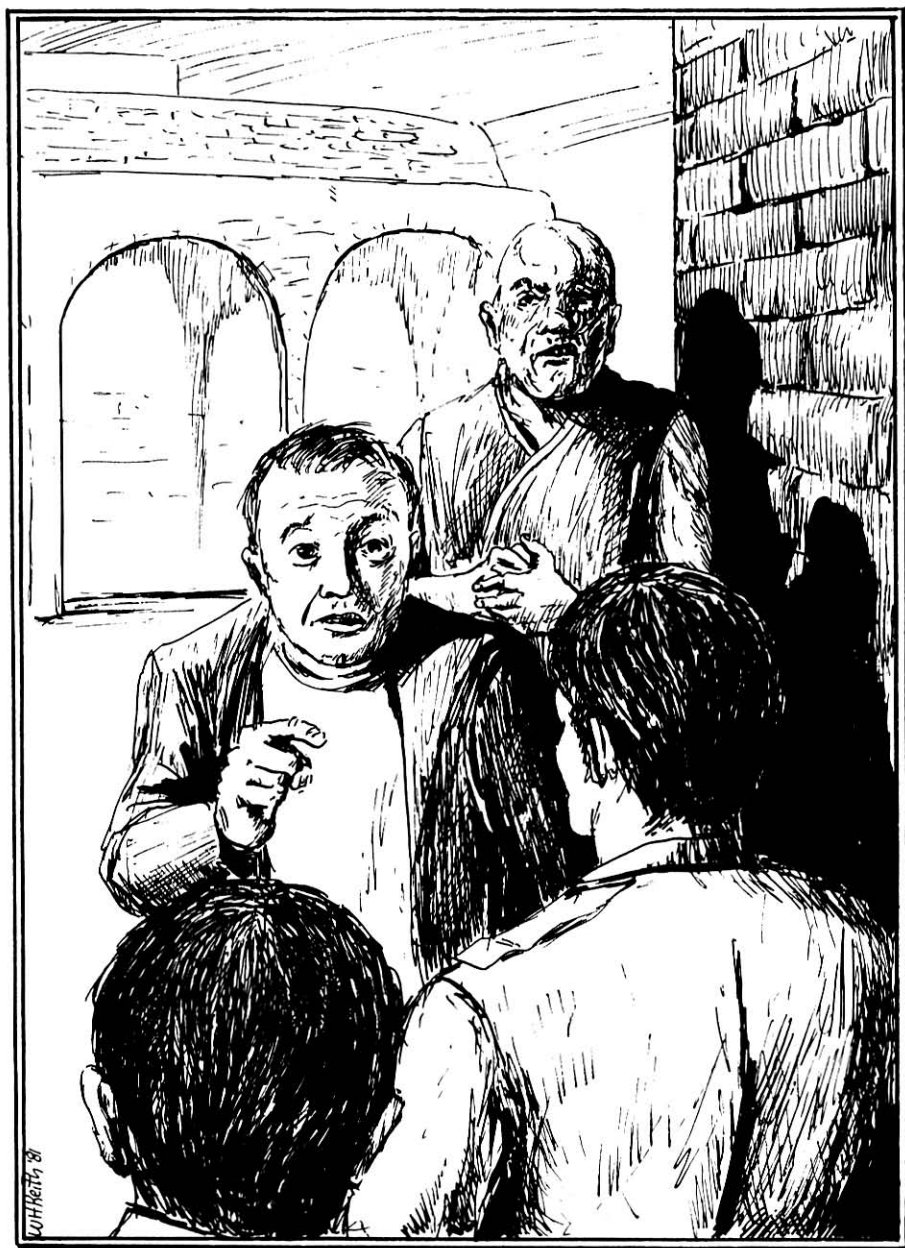
The adventurers are responsible for helping Lorain Messandi put together an expedition that will be able to survive the dangers of the Outback. They have a budget of Cr 200,000 to work with — less if they intend on keeping any as payment for themselves. Out of this budget must come all the costs of organizing, outfitting, and equipping their exploratory team.

Permits: An important first consideration should be government permits. No outfitter will deal with the party unless they can display the proper authorization. Permits are gained at Government House. Unfortunately, the local bureaucracy is hopelessly corrupt, and it will be necessary to bribe one or more officials in order to receive proper permits. Bribery involves several officials on many occasions (1D people will be involved); each of these will require between 200 and 1200 credits apiece (roll 2D). Bribery skill serves as a DM in reducing the amount of these bribes, but they can never be brought below Cr 200.

Forged permits may be obtained instead. Streetwise skill can be applied to track a source of forged documents down. Cost is increased by 1,000 credits for each level of forgery skill above level-1 that is requested. Lorain Messandi, an honest person, will probably protest the use of forged permits, but may agree to them if there has been a great deal of trouble in dealing with the government. Reaction rolls should be used in all matters pertaining to permit dealings.

Permits allow the party to venture into the Outback, and lower the law level for the party to 3 while they are outside of settled regions. Among the items required by permits is the attachment of one accredited guide to each vehicle used by the party, and a sworn statement that all finds will be turned in and/or reported to the government. No artifact may be taken offworld by any member of the party. Failure to adhere to these sworn conditions will be punishable by serious penalties — ranging up to 20 years in jail.

Guides: Guides are the most important personnel an expedition will require. Inquiries for guides will lead the party to Jen Kelso, by reputation the best hunter



“If you value your lives, don’t go into the Outback!”

and guide in Val Preszar. Kelso will become the chief guide for the group, and can also arrange to outfit and equip it, arrange hiring of other personnel, and generally attend to the details of getting the expedition organized. His long experience with the Outback makes him an expert at such procedures.

The material presented below represents Kelso's expedition arrangements. All equipment, supplies, vehicles, and personnel are specified, with the exception of personal equipment or the specialized gear Lorain Messandi provides. Prices, fees, and salaries have been indicated, as well as the total weight to be carried. At some point after Kelso has been set to this task, the referee (working through Lorain Messandi) should present the material to the players so that they can verify that all has been taken care of. Certain items on the list may be superfluous for the group; most, also, are very much overpriced. If players notice these factors and protest, the referee may adjust the price to the correct (Book 3) value. Prices can only be adjusted on regularly available equipment; salaries, charter fees, fuel, and prices on "miscellaneous" items may not be changed.

Rations are provided for about six months — a safety margin — but are listed far overprice. Cost may be adjusted. Rations are packed 1000 units to a crate. Each crate that is opened during the course of the adventure will have inedible rations on a roll of 9+. If inspected, inedible rations may be replaced by edible ones on demand, but only those rations actually found to be bad will be replaced.

Expedition Vehicles: Total Charter Fees: Cr52,000 Total Down: Cr13,500

1 Hovercraft (passenger - capacity 16/3) Charter: Cr2,000/wk Down: Cr6,000

1 Hovercraft (cargo - capacity 4/6.6) Charter: Cr2,000/wk Down: Cr6,000

1 Scout Hovercraft (capacity 3/0) Charter: Cr500/wk Down: Cr1500

Capacity is given as passengers/tons of cargo. Charter is total cost/week to use the vehicle. Down indicates the price that must be paid in advance.

Supplies and Equipment: (Full cost must be paid before departure).

8 Tents (Cr 2000)

1 Electronic Set (Cr 3000)

1 Mechanical Set (Cr 1500)

1 Carpentry Set (Cr 500)

10 Cold Light Lanterns (Cr 400)

1 Chain Saw (Cr 750)

1 Medical Kit (Cr 1500)

2 LR Commos (Cr 1200)

1 MR Commo (Cr 500)

Misc. Survival Gear (rope, packs, etc.) (Cr 1000) (50kg)

Canned Food (4000 units - 2 tons - 400 person days) (Cr 50,000)
(Value Cr 40,000)

Dehydrated Food (14,000 units - ½ ton - 1400/pers/days) (Cr 75,000)
(Value Cr 40,000)

Canned Water (1 ton) (Cr 10,000)

4 Filtration/Distillation units (see page7) (Cr 500)

Fuel: (2,000 liters - 2 tons - approximately 8,000 km range for all vehicles) (Cr 100)

Misc. Personal Gear (Purchase separate)

Total Weight: (approximate) 3750 kgs, excluding fuel.

Total Cost: Cr 147,850

Total Value: Cr 89,200

Personnel: Total Salaries: Cr 14,700 Total Advance: Cr 3675

3 Hunter/Guides (Kelso, Lewis, Kalendrin) Salary: Cr 150/person/week

4 Vehicle Operators (Carnac, Crain, 2 others) Salary: Cr 100/person/week

5 Support Personnel (use as guards, workers, etc.) Salary: Cr 75/person/week

All hirelings must be paid a three week advance on salary. This group is built around an eight player adventuring party; if fewer players are present, more support personnel should be hired to round out the expedition.

Personal Equipment and Weapons: The equipment listed above does not include weapons or ammunition. Players must provide their own, along with any additional equipment they desire. Equipment and weapons for Institute NPCs are also the group's responsibility; NPCs on Mirayn provide their own. Equipment purchased on Mirayn is limited to Tech 7 gear available in Books 1 and 3. Purchases of equipment should be kept within reason by the referee.

SEARCHING FOR INFORMATION

While the expedition is being organized, the player characters should begin a search for worthwhile information that might lead the party to Tlaynsilak, the most famous of Mirayn's "lost cities". Lorain Messandi has some basic information, gleaned from past research, that leads her to believe that the Nahahnir River region is the best area to begin examining. But more specific information might be found by careful work among Val Preszar's bars and back alleys, seeking out the latest reports from the Outback.

The referee should allow two or three weeks for the gathering of information. At the end of this time, supplies and equipment will be assembled, and the local garrison will see to it that their armed party cannot linger around the settlement. During the period before this happens, the referee should allow the players to plan and execute whatever actions they desire. Rumors (page 17) may turn up as the party moves about Val Preszar. In addition, certain specific encounters may take place.

THE GUIDE

While they are in Val Preszar, the party will be approached by Lindon Greene (352682), an old bum who shows the ravages of jungle diseases and long neglect. Greene will claim to have a map and notebook describing the route taken by Professor Messandi's lost expedition, which he claims to have accompanied. He claims to have been left behind in a native village far up the Nahahnir River after falling ill. Much later, he was rescued by another party that visited the village.

Greene's story will sound suspicious to the characters who meet him. The referee should emphasize his disreputable appearance and remind the players that they were cheated out of a large amount of money by a similar story before the start of this adventure. Also, he should provide several other encounters with con artists and salesmen before the meeting with Greene.

Though it may take a long time to verify it, Greene's story is true. His map and notebook, which he will sell for Cr300, can be of great value to the party. If, however, they do not buy these items when they first meet Greene, they will be too late. The next time they encounter him, he will be found in the entrance to a dark alley, badly beaten. Before he dies, he gasps out a word (later identified by a guide as the name of a village) — "Adlayra" — and then whispers "Kalamnanaru planned it all." He then dies. His map and notebook are not on his body, or anywhere else the players may search.

If the players bought the material, it will show a route up the Nahahnir River, ending at the village of Adlayra. The notebook will be weatherbeaten and mostly unreadable, but near the end a page contains cryptic scrawls that state "Trail of Stone . . . lake", the note "Prof says landing str—", and another village name, Sanalaysa. If the party made the purchase, the referee may choose whether or not they meet him again after the beating described above.

THE THUGS

If the players have made inquiries into the doings of Kalamnanaru, Professor Messandi, or Greene, or if they have bought the map and notebook from the latter, they will encounter a band of thugs a short time thereafter. The referee may choose the size and armaments of these ruffians. Pylory and Gildinkur (see page 22) will be among them. The thugs will accost some of the adventurers, attack them, and issue the warning "If you value your lives, don't go into the Outback." They may demand the map and notebook if the party has them. If thwarted or when they are finished, the thugs will disappear. Attempts to discover anything about them will meet with failure.

Other encounters, generated randomly from Book 3, should also be interjected during the party's stay in Val Preszar. These should be merged into the flow of the adventure so as to contribute to, or merely confuse, the total picture.

THE CITY

The enclosed 11x17 sheet includes a map of Val Preszar. Included are the locations of several points of interest, such as Government House, the waterfront, and places where outfitters and chandlers may be found. Use of the map for encounters and movements can add color to the situation, though no exact grid or movement rules can be provided.

Val Preszar is typical of human frontier towns. Descriptions of local architecture, climate, humidity, and Miraynian equivalents to mosquitoes and other pests can all be based on the coastal towns of 19th century Africa — Casablanca or Stanleyville — to set the mood and help players visualize their surroundings.

Colonists and native laborers, plus offworld adventurers, are all found in Val Preszar. Natives are described on page 47. They are regarded locally as subhuman

in intelligence, and treated with contempt. Called “gogs” by nearly everyone (a term of contempt), they will be servile, uneducated and unimpressive.

RUMORS

While moving about Val Preszar, the adventurers will be exposed to a variety of rumors which may prove of use to them later. A number of such rumors are listed below; others may be added to tie into the adventure at the discretion of the referee.

In many adventures, encounters and rumors are generated randomly. This one, however, does not provide for random discovery of information (though encounters may still be rolled as usual). The referee may allow players to *think* that they are receiving material on the basis of die rolls, but in reality rumors are chosen and introduced entirely by the referee. This allows him to shape the flow of the adventure more closely than random die rolls could allow.

Rumors should be worked into the flow of the game whenever possible. They may be brought into play as a result of specific player inquiries, or as chance conversation overheard in a bar. The referee should feel free to amplify, embellish, repeat or change rumors as the need arises.

- A. A professional guide (984887) claims few offworlders are actually exploring the deep jungle or the Great Swamp. They are too scared to venture very far afield.
- B. Two merchants swapping yarns at a bar are heard discussing the exploits of a famous smuggler, Ereni Kalamamaru.
- C. An adventurer (3749CA) just back from the Outback displays a shard of pottery he found in the jungle. He plans to sell it to the government, but says he'll keep the place where he found it a secret, so he can come back some day and collect some really valuable finds. The pottery looks primitive, and of native origin.
- D. The proprietor of a supply store says he outfitted Professor Messandi's expedition when it assembled a year and a half ago. There were five large hovercraft, 45 men, and “enough gear to run a planetary survey” on board.
- E. An amateur archeologist recognizes Lorain Messandi and gets into a debate with her over her father's theories. Every bit of scientific evidence, he says, points to Mirayn's natives having climbed no higher than Tech 3. Lorain agrees, maintaining that it will take physical evidence — which she is looking for — to prove her father's theory. Nonetheless, there is a lot of interesting evidence that points to Mirayn as special . . . such as the fact that people from the sky play no part in native mythology, even though the planet is surrounded by other Sky Raider targets.
- F. A guide, discussing Mirayn's dangers, mentions the Aiyankra (see page 42).
- G. An ex-naval officer is heard wondering why Ereni Kalamamaru, a man known

for his mercantile sense, has been away from his company's home offices for long periods during the past two years, leaving the company to subordinates. He has been seen on Mirayn, a planet with little to trade, several times. What is the man up to?

- H. The head of a hovercraft chartering firm says that Professor Messandi leased five hovercraft from him while forming his expedition. He provided his own pilots, however — which was just as good, since no one came back.
- I. Two adventurers swapping stories ridicule a native sweeper in the bar. They say all the natives they saw during a trip up the Nahahnir River were the same, cowardly, shiftless, and stupid, but always eager to please offworlders.
- J. A hovercraft pilot recalls a time when his vehicle crashed into the Great Swamp. As he and his companions tried to make their way to a clearing where another hovercraft promised to pick them up, native tribesmen attacked them. Everyone but the pilot was either killed or carried off into the swamp, never to be heard of again.
- K. The group sees a well-dressed, sinister man talking to a bartender as they are leaving the establishment. Money is changing hands, and the bartender gestures in their direction. The man disappears into the shadows. He is later identified as Bren Pylory. The bartender is too frightened to tell them anything about Pylory, and will refuse any money they offer.
- L. A government official asks to see what permits the group has for exploration, then gives a lecture on reporting any and all discoveries made in the Outback to the government. Everything found should be turned in, he says, or they could face up to 20 years imprisonment.
- M. A starport controller visiting relatives in Val Preszar is heard bemoaning the sad shape of tracking equipment at the starport. People could land ships in Momande almost any time, he says, and it could never be noticed. No wonder the government is so concerned about artifacts being shipped off-planet!
- N. A xenanthropologist discusses his research into native culture, and makes mention of some of the interesting conceptual gaps he has encountered in native culture. The concept of sky, for example, is difficult for the natives to grasp, since they spend their time in a region where mist and perpetual cloud cover hides all aspects of the heavens.
- O. A barkeeper comments that the government is cracking down on offworlders. A party of amateur archeologists got 15 years and a stiff fine recently when they tried to smuggle a stone tablet out of Val Preszar.
- P. Inquiries about Professor Messandi lead two local residents to laugh loudly and advise the party to seek out "Old Lin", a character who claims to have been in Messandis's party. He's a crazy old bum, they say, but good for a laugh or two.

Non-Player Characters

The characters below are provided to add color and interest to the adventure. In addition to normal stats and skills, character notes are included to give special information about the person's behavior and motives. This information should not be directly revealed to players; rather, it should become slowly known through the NPC's actions. The referee need not use all the NPCs provided, and even if all are in use they do not have to be made crucial to the adventure. Nonetheless, doing so lends extra interplay to the game, as well as keeping players uncertain as to who can be trusted.

THE INSTITUTE PARTY

1. Lorain Messandi (Scientist) 69ABA6 Age 26 2 terms Cr0
Leader-1, Carbine-1, Admin-1, Computer-1 Carbine

Lorain is Professor Jothan Messandi's daughter. She is intelligent, brave, competent, but lacks experience and judgment. Though quite skilled in her own field, she must rely heavily on outside advice in matters that don't overlap archeology. She is much better as a scientist than her father ever was; her work on researching the Sky Raiders was the only worthwhile part of Messandi's book. She wants to vindicate her father's theories if possible, but is too good a scientist to ignore facts that might contradict those theories.



2. Drew Kensing (Noble) 64859A Age 26 2 terms Cr0
Hunting-1, Admin-1, Bribery-1, Rifle-0 Rifle

A young second son from a prominent Alzenei knight's family, Kensing is a former classmate of Lorain's. He is hopelessly in love with her, an affection she does not return. Kensing is neither talented, bright, nor physically coordinated, and has an embarrassing tendency of doing the wrong thing at the wrong time. The referee should roll when Kensing is to use any skill; on an 8+ the skill is applied as a *negative* modifier to the success roll, rather than as a positive one.

Kensing is along primarily because his father was largely responsible for the funds that enable the expedition to proceed at all. His loss will cause a great deal of trouble for all involved. The referee should generally treat Kensing as a source of dangerous mistakes, ill-timed bravado, and other problems.

3. Tallia MacKenzie (Doctor) 7A9AA8 Age 26 2 terms Cr0
Medical-3, Electronic-1, NO GUN COMBAT SKILL Instruments

Another of Lorain's schoolmates. Tallia is a doctor with considerable interest in xenobiology. She is accompanying the expedition both as Lorain's friend and in

an effort to gather material for a paper she is writing, "Xenobiological Adaptation to Alien Ecosystems." She is competent as a doctor, but does little else.

Each member of the Institute party has contributed all available cash into the expedition fund; hence the Cr0 given to each. In addition to personal equipment and weapons indicated, the group carries the following gear:

One Inertial Locator
Three Short Range Communicators
One Metal Detector
One Geiger Counter
One Portable Computer
Misc. Archeological Gear

The PORTABLE COMPUTER listed with this equipment is a self-contained computer designed for use in the field. The unit in question, the Halliers Mark III Field Computer, features excellent data storage and retrieval capabilities. A standard library program is central to the unit. It is carried as a backpack, and is rather bulky due to the need for an internal power source. Players using Book 4, *Mercenary*, may use this unit as a Map Box in addition to the Library program. Service life: 500 hours of continuous use. Weight: 25 kg. Base Price (includes library program): Cr 500,000.

SPECIALISTS

The following individuals are hirelings. They should be used before any additional NPCs are added from other sources.

1. Jen Kelso (Hunter) 9BA865 Age 38 5 terms Cr10,000
Hunting-3, AutoRifle-3, Hovercraft-2, Survival-1 AutoRifle

Kelso is a professional guide, one of the best available. Taciturn and pessimistic, Kelso is widely respected as an authority on Mirayn's Outback, and just as widely feared for his hair trigger temper and violent manner. The referee should make frequent reaction rolls for Kelso, using a DM-2 to simulate this short temper. For all his surliness, Kelso may well be the most valuable man in the party, as he is the most reliable pipeline for information about the Outback.



2. Hal Lewis (Hunter) 798A79 Age 30 3 terms Cr10,000
Rifle-3, Hunting-1, Survival-1 Rifle

Lewis appears as much more agreeable companion than Kelso, spending much time talking with the party. He will tend to exaggerate the dangers of the Outback when speaking. He also will do his best to lead the party away from the direction of Tlaynsilak once they begin closing in. Lewis is actually a spy planted by Eneri Kalamanaru. When all else fails he will engineer an ambush at the lost city.

3. Lur Kalendrin (Hunter) 679896 Age 38 5 terms Cr10,000
Hunting-1, Hovercraft-3, Rifle-2 Rifle

A newcomer to the guide profession on Mirayn, Kalendrin is actually in the

pay of the government. He will take no action against the adventurers, but has a concealed transmitter that keeps the government informed of the expedition's location. Kalendrin should become a casualty during the confrontation at the Lost City; this will ensure trouble with the government as a result.

4. Ross Carnam (Sailor) 889788 Age 42 6 terms Cr70,000
Hovercraft-2, JOT-2, Mechanical-1, Electronic-1, Rifle-1 Rifle

Owner of a hovercraft charter firm, Carnam is also the chief pilot. Carnam lavishes much attention on his vehicles, and seems able to fix anything. He tends to be overprotective of his equipment, however, and must be cajoled into any activity that might involve risk to the vehicles.

5. Harmon Jael (Sailor) 69A884 Age 30 3 terms Cr7000
Hovercraft-1, Carbine-1, Medical-1, Gambling-1 Carbine

Jael is another hovercraft pilot, competent at his trade but with an unfortunate tendency to freeze under stress. He compensates for this by being boastful and vain, a habit that often lands him in trouble.

Other NPCs: Additional characters to round out the expedition (see page 12) may be drawn from any source that seems good to the referee. They should be given names, and, if possible, character quirks like those discussed above; this will make these individuals more than just extra guns for the party.

Uses can be found for many character types, including Hunters, Sailors, Doctors, Scientists, as well as regular military or paramilitary veterans. They can be used as guards, laborers, or any other kind of useful worker as needed, and can be used by the referee as a way of demonstrating dangers without wasting major characters. NPCs can be as important, or as neglected, as the referee cares to make them.

A NOTE ON SKILLS

Several characters presented above possess skills not given in Book 1; most of these are explained, however, in Supplement 4, *Citizens of the Imperium*. One skill, however, is not explained there; it is drawn from Book 4, *Mercenary*, and the supplement refers to that source for the explanation. For the benefit of those who lack Book 4, this skill is presented below.

Survival: The individual is familiar with the theory and practice of living off the land.

Individuals with survival skill are adept at locating food and water, constructing or finding natural weapons and shelter, and finding their way across country in a wilderness. The referee should allow favorable DMs for this skill, based on environment and situation. The likelihood of survival skill (no matter what level) allowing a character to find breathable air in a vacuum is slight.

Note: The HOVERCRAFT skill granted to Hunters in this adventure is derived

by interpreting VEHICLE skill according to Book 1, Second Edition, rather than using the Supplement 4 rules. This was done to reflect the prevalence of hovercraft on Mirayn, where ground effects vehicles are far more common than any other transport.

THE OPPOSITION

During the course of the adventure, the players will find themselves facing danger from a group of smugglers working on Mirayn. The leaders of this group are presented below.

1. Eleri Kalamanaru (Merchant) 756C87 Age 42 6 terms Cr100,000
Bribery-3, Streetwise-2, Pilot-2, Navigation-1, Gunnery-1, Revolver-1

Kalamanaru, head of a company called Kalaman Enterprises, is well-known throughout the Far Frontiers sector. His company is wide-ranging, and controls all manner of activity from legitimate merchant ventures to smuggling and even piracy. Though not a large company, it commands great respect and fear; a reputation for mishaps befalling those who cause trouble for Kalamanaru has protected him.

Greedy for wealth, power, and luxury, Kalamanaru tends to remain in the background while subordinates carry out his plans. Note that the information given above does not reflect the full range of Kalamanaru's resources; the credit balance can be considered "petty cash", and Kalamanaru commands a large number of hirelings, several starships, and whatever equipment he desires.

2. Bren Pylory (Other) 6A7A95 Age 38 5 terms Cr100,000
Streetwise-3, Bribery-1, Forgery-1, Revolver-1

Kalamanaru's right-hand man, especially when it comes to dirty work. A furtive man of uncertain background, Pylory shields Kalamanaru from direct contact with the disreputable side of Kalaman Enterprises. He is nervous about his safety, and is usually accompanied by one or more bodyguards; though he usually stays out of fighting himself, Pylory often is nearby when thugs deliver his censures. Like Kalamanaru himself, Pylory can draw on the resources of the company when needed, expanding the credit balance and equipment that would normally be available to him.

3. Taren Gildinkur (Other) C7B642 Age 34 4 terms Cr10,000
Brawling-3, Blade-1, Streetwise-1

Gildinkur is chief bodyguard and assistant to Pylory. Though not bright, Gildinkur's imposing appearance and strength make him a valuable tool. He is chiefly recognizable by his badly scarred face, ruined beyond the ability of any surgeon to repair. Ruthless and nasty, Gildinkur carries out any order given by Pylory or Kalamanaru to the limit.

The ranks of the opposition can be filled in by drawing characters from such careers as Other, Merchant, Rogue, or even Pirate. Special care should be taken

that the three characters above be preserved from harm; in future adventures involving the Sky Raiders campaign, these individuals will turn up again.

HOVERCRAFT

Several models of hovercraft are commonly used by expeditions investigating the Outback. The three that follow are typical of those that may be used by the adventurers.

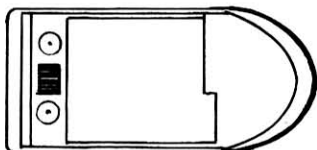
Passenger Hovercraft: The Quicksilver Model Transport Hovercraft, assembled by Enitern Products on Mirayn, is built largely from components imported from off-planet, and is rated as a Tech 9 vehicle. The price of importation is reflected in its basic cost. This model is not usually armed, except in military use.

Crew: 1. Passengers: 15. Cargo: 3 tons. Fuel: 150 liters. Speed: 60 kph. Range: 2000 kms. Base Price: Cr 425,000.

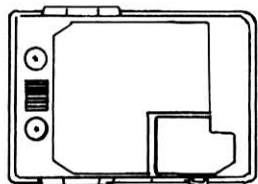
Cargo Hovercraft: Crew: 1. Passengers: 3. Cargo: 6.6 tons. Fuel: 150 liters. Speed: 60 kph. Range: 2000 kms. Base Price: Cr 424,000.

Scout Hovercraft: Crew: 1. Passengers: 2. Cargo: 100 kgs. Fuel: 40 liters. Speed: 110 kph. Range: 2000 kms. Base Price: Cr 135,000.

These vehicles are designed in accordance with the rules presented in GDW's *Striker*. None are armed, although military models may mount a machinegun or other support weapon. Note that the passenger model is based on the hovercraft presented in Book 3; differences reflect the need to import Tech 9 fusion power plants to Mirayn in order to extend range and reduce fuel consumption. The largest change — cost — will not be a factor in this adventure, as the vehicles are chartered anyway.



Passenger Hovercraft



Cargo Hovercraft



Scout Hovercraft

Into The Outback

Once organized, the expedition will set off into the Outback. The information gathered in Val Preszar, particularly whichever set of clues are gained from Lindon Greene, should be sufficient to send the expedition to Adlanayra, a native village far up the Nahahnir River. If the players seem hesitant, Lorain Messandi will make this decision. If they lack Greene's map Kelso can find the village.

Map number 3, included on the enclosed 11x17 sheet, shows an overview of the Outback, with the relative positions of Val Preszar, Adlanayra, and the area covered by the detail map on the reverse side of the sheet, plus the general layout of rivers and lakes between the coast and the village. The map gives the players a feel for the general situation, and can also be used if further adventures in Mirayn's Outback are attempted.

Travel time from Val Preszar to the native village is 45 hours of continuous hovercraft flight. Players should count on only about 16 hours of travel per day, since Mirayn's long nights are too dark to allow safe navigation. Further time may also be lost each day in wrong courses and other delays; the referee rolls 1D each day and subtracts this from the travel time they are allotted.

Encounters will occur during this trip, taking place twice each day according to the rules given under Encounters. Natives may also be met, if a roll of 9+ is made. Tribes encountered will be coastal natives, the most peaceful types that can be encountered on Mirayn; as explained in the section covering natives, these tribes will either flee to avoid contact or will be friendly to the party. The referee may use native encounters to impart additional information; rumors of the Professor's passage two years ago, warnings about dangerous animals, or mention of other offworlders in the area are all possibilities that can be considered. Rumors of fiercer natives dwelling deep in the swamps might also be related.

Once in the village of Adalanayra, the party will have deal with these natives, also a coastal tribe. If friendly, these villages will remember the professor and the man he left behind. They will repeat for the adventurers a story they told to Messandi concerning a great "Trail of Stone" that runs through the swamps near another village, Sanalaysa. Natives will lead the party to that village in exchange for some kind of trade goods — possibly metal blades or other implements.

The natives of Sanalaysa are from a jungle tribe, less easy to deal with; otherwise similar procedures should be followed once the party arrives there. Again, the natives (if friendly) will lead the adventurers to the place they want to see in exchange for goods. If unfriendly, the adventurers will have to coerce one or more into cooperation.

In all cases, the Reaction Table should be used as a guide for negotiations.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Government Patrol: Unbeknownst to the adventurers and their companions, the government has taken an interest in Lorain Messandi's presence on Mirayn. She is known, and it is suspected that she has the best chance of anyone of finding the fabled Sky Raider hoard. Therefore a close watch is being kept on her

movements, and a full platoon of troops — fifty men aboard three large hovercraft, with supporting scouts — has been detailed to track her closely. In addition, one of the NPCs in the expedition is actually a government agent.

The troops will follow the expedition, but stay out of sight and take no action unless they perceive that the party has discovered something of interest. At that point they will close in and intervene before the offworlders have a chance to remove artifacts or objects of value. They will arrive within 2D hours of being summoned.

Their spy has a transmitter hidden carefully; this radio uses a rarely used channel that is unlikely to be detected. Through this, plans, location, and discoveries made by the party are relayed to the pursuers. Any time the referee deems that the transmitter is operating — at least once each day — there is a faint chance that it will be detected, but *only* if the players are specifically attempting to detect outside transmissions. A throw of 11+ allows them to detect the operation of the transmitter. Signal strength will be strong, but the message will probably be too short for them to be sure it is originating with them.

During the course of their travels through the Outback, the players may on occasion detect the pursuers by accident. Glints of metal in the distance, a faint hum of hovercraft engines, or a rumor of other strangers picked up from a native village can all be used to point to the presence of these troops. Clues should be passed to the group as if they were a part of the regular encounter process; otherwise too much importance will be attached to them. The referee should insert them when a “No encounter” result was rolled and a little extra activity is desired. In reality, though, they are not of random origin. It is up to the referee to decide what clues should be given and when they should be given and when they should be played.

All attempts by the players to trap or discover these pursuers will fail, thanks to the warnings that the spy can send. If he so desires, however, the referee can greatly increase the complications facing the players by building on the existence of the pursuit. The discovery of the transmitter is but one of the ways the action can be livened, and the excitement intensified, during the adventure.

POINTS OF INTEREST

On the 11x17 detail map of the Outback (map 4), certain important sites are marked. Native villages are named if they are known to members of the party (either offworlders or guides). Other villages, plus archeological sites, are numbered. Explanations of these localities are given below.

Adlanayra: Village inhabited by coastal tribe. See page 24 and the section on natives on page 47.

Sanalaysar: Village is inhabited by jungle tribe. See pages 24 and 47.

1. The “Trail of Stone” mentioned in Greene’s notebook and by the natives in Adlanayra. This is a cobbled stone roadway, running in an absolutely straight line through the swamp for a distance of over 5 kms. To the southeast, it is gradually swallowed up by the swamp, growing gradually less defined. To the northwest, it disappears into an arm of the lake. Investigation of land directly

opposite this point will uncover a further stretch of road that, once again, runs into the lake and is then lost. Note: extending a straight line along the path of the road will lead directly to Tlaynsilak (5) on one hand, and a watchtower (2) on the other. In describing this road, it should be made clear that it looks like a Tech 3 stone road — a Roman road, for instance — though initial descriptions by natives might lead the adventurers to think that it is a landing field of some sort. This is certainly what the Professor thought (of Greene's notebook entry).

- 2, 3, 4. These are all ruined watchtowers built by the Raynirjik. They are crumbling and choked with jungle growth. Inspection shows them to contain nothing of value to the party (though the sites themselves might be worth something from the government). The fitted stone walls are consistent with the Tech 3 culture already known; a covering of some kind, once fastened to the interior walls, has been forcibly removed.
5. The "Lost City" of Tlaynsilak. See page 28 for details of what is found here.
6. The "Hill-of-the-Silent Guardians". Information on this location is presented beginning on page
7. This island is being used by Eneri Kalamamaru as a landing area for ships. The area is described in more detail on page 37.
- 8 - 12. Native villages. All belong to Deep Swamp tribes, and are not friendly. Those within ten hexes of the Hill-of-the-Silent-Guardians will observe the rites and ceremonies connected with that place. Page 47 contains further information on the natives; the Hill (6) is described on page 33.



Using The Map

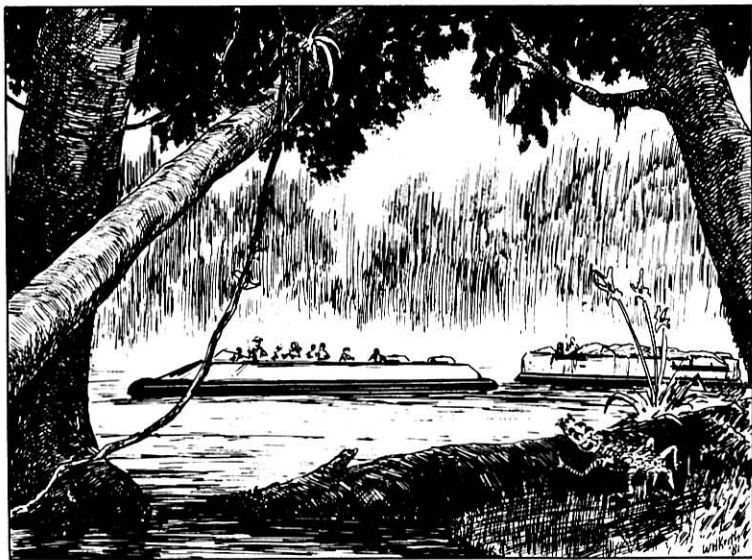
The 11x17 detail map of the Great Swamp and its environs will play a crucial part in the resolution of the adventure. A terrain key is provided on the map itself; the information below is also of great importance.

Travel times: Each hex on the map is 5 kms across. When moving on the map, use the travel times given below.

Terrain	By Hovercraft	By Foot	By Canoe
Open	12 per hour	1 per hour	impassable
Jungle	6 per hour	½ per hour	impassable
Swamp	10 per hour	¼ per hour	¼ per hour
Up River	12 per hour	use hex terrain	½ per hour
Down River	12 per hour	use hex terrain	1 per hour
Cross River	not applicable	1D hours	1D X 10 minutes
Lake	12 per hour	impassable	1 per hour
1 x Contour Line	No Effect	No Effect	impassable
2 x Contour Line	impassable	+1 hour	impassable
3 x Contour Line	impassable	impassable	impassable

Note: crossing rivers without a vehicle requires location of a ford; this variable is reflected in the time stated on the chart.

Travel in the Outback is also subject to the special conditions outlined on page 24.



The Lost City

The hex containing location 5 on the detail map of the Outback is the site of Tlaynsilak, the lost city of ancient Miraynian legend. The city is virtually impossible to approach overland, especially by hovercraft, due to a combination of rough ground and heavy jungle. It will most likely not even be seen until a party moves out into the lake by which the city stands.

Tlaynsilak rises from the lakeshore, with many buildings visible in and under the water of the lake itself. That part of the ruins not drowned by the gradual rise of the water has become choked with vines and jungle growth, which have overwhelmed a crumbling, 5 meter tall wall across the base of the peninsula.

The buildings are of massive, cut-stone blocks. The overall impression is of a fairly primitive culture, perhaps Tech Level 3. Everywhere, buildings have been broken down, walls stripped of ornamentation — and there are signs of a ruthless, systematic attack. No precious stones or metals are anywhere visible.

Near the center of town, quite unexpectedly, the party will encounter a wide, square, shallow pit, recently excavated. A row of modern-looking quonset huts, and stacks of tools and crates of supplies, suggest that an archeological dig is already underway here.

AMBUSH

Just as the adventurers realize this, they will be ambushed by over 50 well-armed people. The party will first become aware of their presence by the sound of weapons being readied; they will then be called upon to throw down their own weapons and surrender.

The referee will have to handle the resulting situation with great care. There is no way for the players to escape this ambush; and, though the first instinct of most players will be flight or resistance, they should be manipulated into surrender for the moment. Time the ambush to catch most of the party at the pit, so that there is no chance for anyone to slip away unnoticed. When the ambush occurs, two or three expedition NPCs should put up a fight and be killed. Kalendrin, the government spy, must be among their number. Kalamanaru's agent, Lewis, can help make the trap foolproof by being in a position to surprise members of the party from an unexpected quarter.

The first order to surrender will be followed by a second one, in a different voice. Weary and quavering, this second voice addresses Lorain by name; she at once recognizes her father. When this happens, Lorain will urge submission.

If the party is split, the referee should be sure to take care of both groups. Hovercraft sweeping in from the lake can effectively cut off retreat, and can be used to steal the fate of anyone who does manage to break away.

REFEREE'S NOTES

The Professor's Story: Upon being captured, the expedition members are confined in quonset huts at the edge of the city. The player characters should

be confined together, along with Lorain and a few of the other major NPCs, plus Professor Messandi.

The Professor's presence will be a surprise at first, but he will explain, eager to justify his role in this unpleasant affair. He is, he says, as much a prisoner as they are . . . and has been for almost a year. The expedition he led into the Outback was not what it seemed, and everything has gone against him from the start.

After losing his post at the Institute, Messandi suffered a number of other setbacks. Bad luck and mismanagement left him nearly broke; most of the money made from his book was lost in speculative ventures that failed. Within six months of his forced resignation, Messandi faced total ruin. Lorain had gone away to take special courses off-planet, leaving him without anyone to rely on for advice or help.

It was at this time that a wealthy trader, Eneri Kalamannu, appeared. He expressed interest in *Hoard of the Sky Raiders* and the theories it advanced. Kalamannu offered to outfit a complete expedition, under Messandi's leadership, to seek out the proof of those theories on Mirayn. The professor would have all the men, supplies, and equipment he needed to vindicate his position; in exchange, Kalamannu was to handle the business end of disposing of the fabled hoard, and split the profits with Messandi.

Professional ambition and greed combined to make the professor agree, and Kalamannu kept his end of the bargain handsomely. Step by step the Professor tracked down the location of Tlaynsilak, his postulated home for the Sky Raiders. This city was what he found; but it, like all the other ruins found on Mirayn, was only another Tech 3 settlement built by the known native culture. At first Messandi was convinced that the ruins represented a post-Sky Raider city, built after the Sky Raiders had collapsed on the site of their original dwellings. He continued to send glowing reports to Kalamannu, who landed on a nearby island periodically with supplies. But excavations had turned up nothing but pottery and a few stone artifacts; there was no sign of an advanced technology, no precious metals or gems.

The professor is now convinced that the Sky Raiders had nothing to do with Mirayn. Clearly, their legends include nothing about visitors from the sky, and there are no signs of this being, as he once thought, the homeworld of the Raiders. But for the past year, Kalamannu's picked men surrounding him have treated Messandi as a virtual prisoner. Messandi is fairly sure Kalamannu will be very unhappy if he discovers that the professor was wrong . . . and the stories he has heard about Kalamannu since coming here are enough to convince the professor that the results of such a discovery would not be pleasant.

Messandi has been leading Kalamannu and his people on for quite some time, trying to keep them from realizing that there is nothing here worth their while. But Kalamannu's patience has worn thin; on his last visit to Mirayn he warned the professor that he would tolerate no more delays. Results — and valuable ones rather than worthless hunks of stone and pottery — are needed by the time Kalamannu comes again . . . or the whole operation will be terminated and the professor's usefulness will be at an end. And, Messandi adds, Kalamannu is due back soon.

THE PROFESSOR

Jothan Messandi (Scientist) 5947B5 Age 50 8 terms Cr0
Computer-3, Admin-4, Rifle-1, Survival-1

Messandi is a poor scientist, wedded to his theories even in the face of contrary facts. He has trouble making decisions in a crisis, and drifts from one disaster to the next without taking positive action. Hardship and pressure from these two years on Mirayn have made this characteristic even worse.



The remaining personnel in the city are in the pay of Eneri Kalamanaru, and are not susceptible to outside influence. If characters are needed, they may be drawn from any applicable category — especially merchant, other, or thug characters in Supplement 1, and rogues or pirates from Supplement 4.



Cheftain of a deep-jungle tribe, in traditional ceremonial costume.

Escape

Within a few hours of their capture, the party will become aware of a disturbance outside of their hut. The sound of approaching hovercraft will be their first warning that something is happening, followed by an amplified voice ordering the people in the city to surrender in the name of the Ruling Council. Moments later gunfire will begin, some of it from close by the makeshift prison huts.

As a fight develops outside, the party has a chance to make an escape attempt. There may be hesitation — or a desire to let the government free them. If no player action is taken, the referee should move things along with NPCs. Kelso, for instance, will know that the government is not apt to treat the captives much differently from the thugs outside. The professor, certainly, and probably all of Lorain's party as well, will most likely be treated as accessories and thrown in prison. With this prompting, an escape should be attempted.

Details of the attempt are up to the referee. Outside the hut, the government troops detailed to follow Lorain's expedition have surrounded the city and are closing in. A firefight between Kalamamaru's men and the troops is still raging as the captives break out, and it will be dangerous to remain in the area. A hovercraft will be grounded near the hut; it will present the best chance of escape.

During the escape, some or all of the characters may acquire weapons. A few might be in the hovercraft, along with various supplies. The hovercraft is one of those from the professor's expedition, which means the players will have no idea what weapons or equipment are present. The rest of their party, if there were any others left alive after the ambush, will be confined at some unknown location, and there will be no time to organize a rescue.

When their hovercraft takes off, a government vehicle will follow, and must be shaken off. During the fight that develops, the player's hovercraft will be badly damaged and barely able to fly more than 5 kms. For each hex entered, roll a 10+ to stay aloft; DM-1 for each hex entered (cumulative).

CRASH

The referee should not allow the party to crash out of reach of land. When they do come down, it will be plain that the hovercraft cannot fly again. At this point, things will look bleak for the party as they take stock of their situation and realize how much trouble they face.

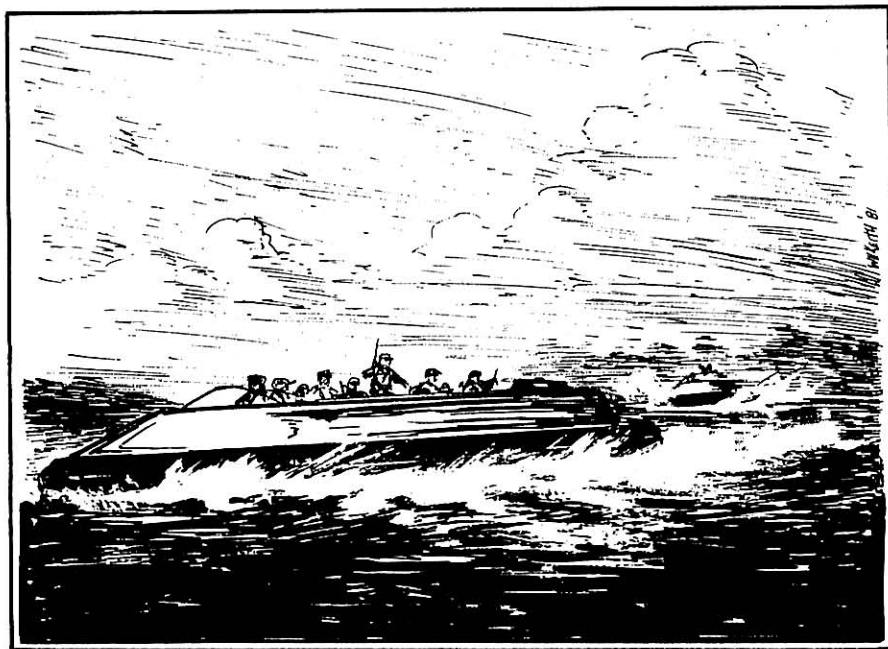
Even if they could hike to Val Preszar, there is a good chance that they will be recognized and arrested in connection with the illegal excavations. At the very least, the professor, and probably Lorain as well, would be taken; the fate of their companions would be less certain but probably unpleasant. Once again, an NPC should help the players reach this conclusion if they have not already reached it themselves.

From clues in the Professor's story (and, possibly, a little prodding from NPCs), the players should consider the fact that Kalamamaru lands supplies, and

picks up uncovered artifacts, at an island landing site somewhere near the ruins. He is expected back soon — and might be the best way of getting transportation off-planet that doesn't involve an encounter with the government. The players will have to decide whether they want to attempt negotiation, bribery, or force to get offworld. Messandi can lead them to the island, and will be able to brief them on Kalamamaru's usual routine for landing, to prepare them for the meeting.

Once the decision to go through with this plan is reached, the stage is set for the final part of the adventure. This will involve a hazardous trek through the swamp, plus the need to find a way of crossing the lake to the island. There will also be a few surprises along the way. Complications — a wounded party member, or short supplies, for instance — can be added as desired by the referee to increase the excitement of the situation.

Referee's Notes: On inspection, the wrecked hovercraft will have some useful supplies and equipment. The referee can determine what is available, and in what quantities. Some items — a water distillation unit, for example — will be essential. Weapons, ammunition, and some supplies should also be present. The referee is urged to use discretion in providing these items. Too little generosity makes the trek impossible; too much destroys the suspense and excitement. Much will depend on the players; their experience, the size of the group, and many other factors should be taken into account when setting up this situation.



The Hill of the Silent Guardians

Natives encountered in the Great Swamp are hostile; they will always fight with great ferocity. The referee should see to it that at least one such encounter occurs in the course of the party's trip to the island. This encounter should take place within ten hexes of location 6, the Hill of the Silent Guardians.

Attacking natives will do their utmost to overwhelm the party. In so doing, they will always try to take at least two prisoners. How they manage to do so is up to the referee — ambush, overwhelming attacks, or traps are all possibilities to consider. It is suggested that at least one player character and/or a crucial NPC (the professor or Lorain, for instance) be among those taken prisoner, so that the players feel obligated to risk a rescue attempt.

The natives and their prisoners will travel by the most direct route possible to the Hill of the Silent Guardians. In order to follow them, the rest of the party must track them through the swamp. Characters with hunting skill may track the natives automatically. Other characters must roll against intelligence in each hex to keep to the trail. (If characters from Book 4, *Mercenary*, are used, Recon skill should be used as a modifier in this).

AT THE HILL

The hill is a low, rounded area of high ground, surrounded by a fairly large open space that is drier than the surrounding swamp. On the east side of the hill, at its foot, a wide clearing surrounds a raised stone cairn. Behind this, set back against the hillside itself, two tall statues flank an ornately carved slab of stone set in a shallow recess in the side of the hill. The statues are plainly of humans; the stone slab will ultimately prove to be a sealed door.

THE CEREMONY

The prisoners will become featured attractions in a quaint native ceremony. Natives in this region preserve traditions about the coming of the "Strangers from Beyond" who caused great destruction before disappearing into the hill, where they are now believed to wait, sleeping, for a chance to return and once more bring devastation and disaster.

Since humans first began to venture into the Great Swamp, native traditions have been greatly strengthened. The Guardian statues are of humans; thus the natives see the humans who have come as Strangers from Beyond who have risen again. To avert the evil they think the humans will bring, the natives capture humans and use them as "messengers" to the resting Strangers to tell them that the time is not yet come for their return. Captives are killed in an impressive ceremony in order to carry this message to the sleeping Strangers.

Referee's Notes: The "Strangers from Beyond" are, of course, the Sky Raiders; the revelation that they are human is a major discovery. The natives of Mirayn have little or no conception of the sky as the place these intruders came from . . . on foggy Mirayn, there is no real reason for the natives to have connected their

"Strangers" with anything except this hill, a visible sign of their presence. Hence the elaborate traditions and the ceremony.

When the adventurers reach the hill, it should be after nightfall, and the ceremony should just be getting underway. The natives, though fierce, will be easily dispersed if an attack is handled properly. There should remain a strong feeling, though, that they will be returning, to keep the adventurers from becoming too complacent.

THE DOOR

Once the natives have fled, inspection of the statues and the carved stone slab they flank can be undertaken by members of the party. An illustration of these appears below; this should be shown to the players as they attempt to examine the enigmatic ruins.

Players must suspect traps, and approach with exaggerated caution. In fact, there are no working traps anywhere around; there is, however, equipment for an electronic eye mounted on either side of the recess that holds the stone door. This electronic eye is no longer functioning, and will cause no difficulty, but this will only become apparent by experimentation or by examination conducted by a character with electronics skill.

Both statues and the door are all carefully fashioned and carved, with intricate markings. Archeologists will recognize the carvings as being in an old Vilani alphabet, but will not be able to translate the obscure dialect used in the writing.

Most noticeable of all features on the door will be the series of three concentric bands surrounding a central raised knob. Each band moves independently around the center, and can be manipulated by small knobs that appear on each. These give the appearance of being a solar system diagram, but there is no way to determine what solar system is represented. The mechanism is actually a lock; if players do not guess this, they should throw against intelligence to allow the referee to give them this idea.

There are an almost unlimited number of combinations that could be attempted in unlocking the door. The correct solution is to line the "planet" knobs up in the fashion represented by the symbol which appears on each statue's chest; this symbol has some significance to the Sky Raiders which remains undetermined. If players do not notice these symbols for themselves and try the combination, another throw against intelligence allows the referee to bring these to their attention.

When the symbols are correctly aligned, the adventurers will hear a click, but nothing else will happen. Only if weight is put against the door will it swing inward, revealing the chamber that lies beyond.

Referee's Notes: In the examination of the lock, the referee must combine player knowledge with that possessed by the characters in the game. A player might not have a hope of puzzling out the idea behind the lock; but if his character has a high intelligence rating, that character would be expected to do much better. Let the players have a long chance at opening the lock with their own efforts before intervening; it will be more rewarding if they do it themselves. But fall back on rolls against intelligence if the party simply isn't getting anywhere.



THE CHAMBER

Through the open door, the party will see a short passage opening up into a wide chamber. The walls are of fused rock, the apparent result of laser tunneling. There is no light within, but, by torchlight, the party will be able to make out the glint of gold and other precious metals inside.

Torches will also reveal the raised bier that stands in the center of the chamber. The bier is a single piece of fused stone, far too massive to be moved. On it lies two skeletons, humans, surrounded by a small pile of artifacts and treasure. Other precious stones and gems lie on the ground in places, especially in the further corners of the chamber where the light does not penetrate well.

Closer inspection of the bier and its contents will reveal a variety of bracelets, rings, and other items, all made of precious metals, and many set with rare gems. One item in particular, secured by a chain around the neck of one of the skeletons, is a thin iridium plate of circular design. Into the center of the plate is set a raised gemstone of unknown origin. Two laser carbines of unusual design are also present, but these will not function.

Should the party gather up the valuable items, they will amount to some 10 kilograms of material (discounting the circular iridium plate), which will be worth an estimated Cr1,000,000.

Referee's Notes: This chamber, of course, belongs to the Sky Raiders, proving they were humans, and further conclusively showing that they did not originate on Mirayn. It is not simply a burial vault, though it is now serving that purpose; originally it was used as a storehouse for plunder while the Sky Raiders were ravaging the planet. When they left, they buried two fallen comrades here, along with personal effects and a few odds and ends that were missed during the loading of the treasure into Sky Raider ships.

These conclusions can be presented by Lorain Messandi if no one else manages to draw them.



The Island

Location number 7 on the map is the island where Eneri Kalamamaru's ships have been landing to unload supplies and collect artifacts unearthed by the professor's expedition.

In order to reach the island, canoes or rafts will be required. Canoes can be obtained from most native villages along the coast or in the swamp. They have a capacity of 10 people, and moves as discussed on the chart on page 27. Given the hostility of the natives in this region, theft or force will probably be required to gain the use of canoes. Rafts can be built from logs and other found material, but will be difficult to put together (thanks to scarce materials and lack of tools) and poor in their ability to maneuver in the water. A raft will take 2D+6 hours to build (DM-1 for each hunter — of whatever skill — present). Treat as a canoe for movement purposes, except all travel times are doubled.

The Landing Area: Kalamamaru's ship will probably not be present when the party first arrives (roll 11+ for it to be there). The landing field is an open, muddy plain capable of holding a ship of up to about 400 tons. It is bounded on one side by the lake, and inland by rising ground. Boulders and rocks are strewn about, but have been cleared from the landing area proper.

Several quonset huts, covered by camouflage tarps, line the landward edge of the field. These contain crates of supplies, plus some pottery and similar worthless artifacts sent there by Messandi.

Final Confrontation: If the smugglers are not already present, they will arrive in 3D days. Their ship will make enough noise as it lands to attract the attention of the characters. It is a Type A2 Far Trader (see GDW Supplement 7, *Traders and Gunboats*, for details of layout and performance) with ten men aboard — five crew and five laborers. Armament and equipment is at the discretion of the referee. If desired, Kalamamaru or Pylory can be aboard to lend interest to the confrontation.

The professor will be able to inform the adventurers on normal procedure for landings like this, and thus gives them an edge in planning an ambush. Neither bribery or negotiation will prove viable as ways of getting off-planet; it will be necessary to attack and capture the vessel.

Referee's Notes: Most details of the fight are left to the referee. However, the safety of Kalamamaru and his top aides and of Messandis is vital to any attempts to run later adventures based on the Sky Raiders. Upcoming FASA adventures continuing the Sky Raiders campaign will require Pylory, Kalamamaru, Gildinkur, and Lorain Messandi alive as non-player characters, and the referee is urged to protect these individuals from harm if the campaign is to be run later.

Complications to the situation, especially the arrival of troops dispatched in response to interrogation of Kalamamaru's men captured at Tlaynsilak, should also be considered.

Conditions In The Outback

During any period when the party is travelling through Mirayn's Outback, the conditions discussed below should be taken into account. They are most important when the characters must hike from the crashed hovercraft through the Great Swamp, but may come into play at other times as well.

Mirayn's high humidity prevents anything from ever really drying out. Each week, each character must roll for the effects of constant contact with these conditions. On a 7+, the character takes 1D damage, representing the ravages of heat, humidity, diseases, and countless minor irritations (scratches, insect bites, and similar nuisances) that plague everyone. A DM-2 is applied to the occurrence roll if the party is travelling by hovercraft or other vehicle.

During each week, some piece of equipment — chosen by the referee — will malfunction on a roll of 10+, as a result of damage from rust, mildew, or infestation. The chance of repair should be based on the equipment damaged and the resources and skills available to the party.

Vivid descriptions of the conditions encountered should help aid players in visualizing the causes behind these problems.

FOOD AND WATER

No one can live more than a few weeks without food, or more than a few days without water. Supplies carried by the expedition should be sufficient for the entire three-month expedition, with plenty of margin for emergencies; however, after their capture and escape, rations become an important factor in party survival.

For the purpose of this adventure, each individual is considered to require ten units of food per day. Packaged supplies are canned or dehydrated; the supply

SUPPLY TABLE

Type	Units	Weight	Cost
Canned supplies	10	.5 kgs	Cr 20
Dehydrated Supplies	10	.3 kgs	Cr 25
Meat	20	1 kg	—
Edible Plants	10	1 kg	—
Water	½ liter	.6 kgs	Cr 20

table outlines costs and weights of such supplies.

Hunting or contact with natives can provide extra food. Dehydrated foods require the addition of potable water in order to be made edible.

For every two units (or fraction thereof) less than ten consumed each day, deduct one point

from strength and endurance. Points lost in this fashion are only recovered by eating the full requirement, one point being recovered for each day the required amount is consumed.

In addition to food, 1 liter of water is required per person per day. Deduct one point from strength and endurance for each 10% less than the required amount consumed.

Hunting: An extra animal encounter may be obtained over and above the normal ones by hunting. Hunting takes 1D hours, during which the party does not travel more than one hex from their starting location. Roll on the appropriate table and resolve the encounter. Detailed procedures for dealing with food gained from edible beasts are detailed in Book 3.

Natives: Native villages will have food, both meat and edible plants, that may be gained by trade, theft, or force. The referee is responsible for dealing with interaction between the adventurers and natives; remember that all villages encountered within the Great Swamp region are likely to be hostile to the party.

Water: There is no shortage of water on Mirayn, but most water found will be contaminated by all manner of microorganisms, mud, silt, and algae. In order to be rendered safe for human consumption, water must be passed through a water filtration/distillation unit (see Available Equipment on page 3). Failure to do so causes each character to suffer 1D damage per week for the next six weeks.

Canned distilled water is among the supplies provided for the expedition. This can be used instead of relying on local water, but more will be needed if the players prefer not to rely on natural water supplies at all.

Dehydrated food requires water; this must be distilled, or the characters suffer the same effects as they would from drinking undistilled water.



ENCOUNTERS

The referee checks for animal encounters twice each day when the party is travelling in the Outback (three times if they are hunting). Use the terrain type of the hex in which the encounters is deemed to occur (the referee uses his discretion in this if more than one choice is possible). Follow normal Book 3 procedures in resolving these encounters.

The tables below reflect the types of terrain most frequently found on Mirayn; they are sufficient for the resolution of any encounters in this adventure. Others may be created by the referee, however, to increase the variety and interest of animal encounters on the planet. Also, the tables used in Supplement 2, Animal Encounters (Large World, Dense Atmosphere) may round out those provided here.

SWAMP Terrain (7+)

Die	Animal	Weight	Hits	Armor	Wounds & Weapons
2	5 Swimming Reducers	50kg	21/9	jack	8 thrasher A6F6S2
3	1 Flying Gatherer	25kg	11/7	none	3 claws A9F3S1
4	11 Carrion-eaters	1600kg	35/10	none	16 claws A4F3S1
5	1 Gatherer	400kg	19/7	none	13 stingers A6F7S1
6	1 Filter	3200kg	31/16	none	see book 3, p.36 A0F7S1
7	1 Intermittent (NYANARSIK)	12000kg	36/15	battle+4	20 thrasher F4A8S1
8	1 Flying Intermittent	50kg	16/6	none	4 horns F6A6S1
9	4 Flying Killers (ARROWDRAC)	25kg	17/7	none	12 claws+1,teeth+1 A4F9S3
10	EVENT: Hostile Natives. A tribe of hostile aboriginies is encountered. These natives attack offworlders automatically. They will kill as many as possible. If the event occurs within 10 hexes of the Hill of the Silent Guardians (6), natives will attempt to take prisoners for participation in a native ritual see page 33.				
11	1 Pouncer (SNICKERSNACK)	100kg	18/10	none	6 as blade A0F0S1
12	1 Amphibian Trapper	50kg	19/6	none	12 as pike A0F7S1

JUNGLE Terrain (8+)

Die	Animal	Weight	Hits	Armor	Wounds & Weapons
2	5 Hijackers	1kg	5/0	none	6 thrasher A7F6S1
3	2 Hunters (AIYANKRA)	200kg	16/15	mesh	12 claws+1 A3F5S2
4	6 Carrion-eaters	6kg	4/3	mesh+1	4 claws A9F4S1
5	6 Eaters	50kg	15/12	none	11 claws&teeth A2F5S1
6	5 Intermittents	6kg	1/6	mesh+1	7 claws&teeth F6A5S1
7	3 Intermittents	12kg	6/4	none	10 claws&teeth F6A9S1
8	1 Intermittent (SYANNILTUK)	800kg	19/16	battle	27 hooves&teeth F6A7S1
9	12 Flying Chasers	3kg	4/6	none	7 teeth+1 A0F7S4
10	EVENT: Ruins. A small Raynirjik town or monument is discovered. There are no finds of great value here (though a few small artifacts may be worth selling to the government, along with the location). Signs of looting and destruction are found. Throw 2D; on a 2, natives are encountered; on a 12, offworlders. Consult reactions.				
11	1 Pouncer (SNICKERSNAC)	100kg	18/10	none	6 as blade A0F0S2
12	1 Pouncer	200kg	23/13	jack	16 teeth+1 A0F0S2

RIVER Terrain (8+)

Die	Animal	Weight	Hits	Armor	Wounds & Weapons
2	10 Swimming Reducers	50kg	21/9	jack	8 thrasher A6F6S2
3	9 Eaters	25kg	13/10	none	12 stinger A4F6S1
4	1 Hijacker	3200kg	25/12	cloth+1	41 claws&teeth A3F8S1
5	2 Hunters (AIYANKRA)	200kg	16/15	mesh	12 claws+1 A3F5S2
6	12 Flying Grazers	3kg	1/4	none	9 horns F4A8S4
7	1 Intermittent (SYANNILTUK)	800kg	19/16	battle	27 hooves&teeth F6A7S1
8	15 Grazers	100kg	15/8	none	7 hooves F1A5S4
9	1 Amphibian Trapper	50kg	19/6	none	12 as pike A0F7S1
10	EVENT: Small Flying Eaters. Cloud of flying insects swarm around the party. Each is highly poisonous. Roll 2D for each character; 10+ means the character suffers a severe reaction to the toxin. These characters must then throw against endurance. Failure of the throw means death within an hour unless proper antitoxins are available. Attending medical skill is used as a DM here. If the character survives, reduce strength, dexterity, and endurance to ¼ original levels. Recovery is normal. All other character take 1D wounds from poison.				
11	1 Pouncer	200kg	23/13	jack	16 claws&teeth A0F0S2
12	11 Chasers	50kg	14/9	none	5 as blade A0F9S2

OPEN Terrain (9+)

Die	Animal	Weight	Hits	Armor	Wounds & Weapons
2	3 Carrion-eaters	100kg	12/6	none	12 claws&teeth A4F5S1
3	2 Hunters (AIYANKRA)	200kg	16/15	mesh	12 claws+1 A3F5S2
4	1 Hijacker	12kg	7/3	cloth	5 thrasher A2F7S1
5	4 Flying Hunter	50kg	12/3	none	10 stinger A1F8S2
6	14 Grazers	800kg	22/12	none	15 hooves F6A7S3
7	9 Flyng Grazers	12kg	3/10	none	5 horns&teeth F6A4S4
8	12 Grazers	100kg	19/6	jack	8 horns F5A6S2
9	3 Chasers	25kg	13/7	none	5 claws&teeth A0F6S2
10	EVENT: Native Village. A tribe of natives in a small village is discovered. The type of tribe will depend on the hex location; in doubt, the referee should use common sense. See the section on natives on page 47 for details.				
11	6 Flying Chasers	3kg	4/6	none	7 teeth+1 A0F7S4
12	1 Killer	50kg	8/8	none	7 claws&teeth A6F7S1

ANIMALS ON MIRAYN

Listed below are five of the animals which appear on the Encounter Tables. They are provided both because they are commonly encountered or particularly interesting or dangerous beasts, and to give the referee insight into the general type of fauna which are to be expected on Mirayn. Based on these creatures, others may be described in such a way as to meld them with Mirayn's ecology.

NYANARSIK: A denizen of the deep swamp, rarely seen by outsiders, the Nyanarsik is a massive (12,000 kg), slug-like beast that often lurks in the mud at the edge of large pools of water and ooze. Two five-meter long grasping tentacles are

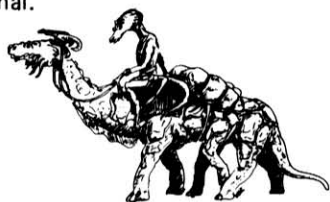
used to grasp and uproot vegetation along the shore. Though herbivorous, the creature is dangerous when disturbed, due both to sheer size and to the danger presented by flailing tentacles.



ARROWDRAC: Large flying species of Mirayn's dominant hexapodal family. The Arrowdrac has a 3.7 meter wingspan, with claw-tipped appendages and sharp, tearing teeth. It characteristically drops from great heights to attack prey, which it rends, shreds, and eats on the spot.



AIYANKRA: "Deathstalker" is the nearest translation of this native name for these omnivore hunters. Large and powerful, these beasts always travel in mate-pairs which hunt together. They have been known to track prey for several days, finally attacking in a short rush or a leap from a tree. Their six legs are equipped with sturdy, sharp claws. If a single beast is encountered, it is often attempting to flush prey for an attack by a second, hidden animal.



SYANNILTUK: Called a "Tucker" by humans on Mirayn, this beast is commonly used as a beast of burden, both by the natives and by humans in Val Preszar and other outpost settlements. In spite of its bulk, it is an excellent swimmer, but tends to avoid swamps or bogs where it might become trapped.

SNICKERSNAK: An arboreal, hexapodal pouncer which lurks along jungle trails or in clumps of trees in the swamps of Mirayn. With four-meter long arms that resemble jungle vines, the creature is difficult to spot. When it attacks, it immobilizes prey with quick slashes from vicious, blade-like claws, then descends to eat.

Library Data

Alzenei: Star system in the Jungleblut subsector of the Far Frontiers sector. Official statistics are:

Alzenei/Jungleblut 0304 B768895-C S Rich G

The Alzenei system is the hub and capital of the League of Suns, an Imperial-allied state embracing some ten worlds in a loose coalition. An Imperial mission is maintained on the world, and the government, by treaty, services Imperial scout and naval units operating in this region of space. The Imperial presence has helped limit encroachment by neighboring Zhodani clients. The planet is an important center of trade and culture, housing a regional office of Frontiers Developments, Inc. as well as the famed Institute for Systems Studies.

Frontiers Developments, Inc. : Widespread mercantile and minerals development firm in the Far Frontiers Sector. FDI maintains regional offices on Alzenei and on Skela/Cabala, as well as less important centers on several other worlds. Owned by a consortium of investors with strong Imperial ties. FDI transcends local boundaries within the sector. Their research and development operations are a prime source of economic activity throughout the region.

Hoard of the Sky Raiders: (Alzenei Press, 1104). Psuedo-scientific tract written by Professor Jothan Messandi, formerly of the Institute for Systems Studies on Alzenei. The book's theories stirred considerable controversy. For more information, see page 46.

Institute for Systems Studies: Research foundation located on Alzenei. Primarily concerned with historical, archeological, and xenothropological research, the Institute maintains a wide range of facilities for all manner of other scientific endeavors as well. Founded in 988, the Institute is closely tied with Imperial research organizations. Teams from the Institute are employed throughout the sector, from the Ancients site on Khalfe to the Imperial diplomatic enclave on Eshaar.

Kalamanaru, Eneri: Head of Kalaman Enterprises, a mercantile firm based in the Far Frontiers sector. Born 1066, Kalamanaru served on free traders for many years, rising first to command, and later to own, a small merchant vessel. Business acumen and good fortune led to his amassing a large fortune, which he has invested in his company. Kalaman Enterprises has a fleet of fifteen ships of various sizes, and offices on several worlds. The company's activities are currently the subject of close scrutiny by a League Tribunal, in connection with the disappearance of the FDI liner *Luushagur* in 1101.

Messandi, Jothan: Formerly Professor of History at the Institute for Systems Studies on Alzenei, and author of the popular book *Hoard of the Sky Raiders*. Born 298-1057; educated at Alzenei University and several advanced schools; degrees in history and comparative folklore. Missing and presumed dead, 1105. Messandi's career was undistinguished before the publication of his book, which led to a short-lived celebrity status. His theories on the origins and fate of the so-called "Sky Raiders" created great public interest, as well as considerable controversy among scientific circles. It has been suggested that Messandi's act of publishing his material for popular consumption, without first going through accepted academic channels, was as much behind Messandi's resulting ostracism as any failure in scholarship or research in the theories themselves. At any rate, Messandi was forced to resign his position with the Institute shortly after the appearance of the book in 1104. He retired to private life; in 1105, however, Messandi disappeared, reputedly while leading a privately organized expedition to Mirayn in an attempt to vindicate his theories.

Messandi, Lorain: Archeologist on the staff of the Institute for Systems Studies on Alzenei. Born 164-1083; educated at Alzenei University with degrees in archeology and history; honors student. Her chief claim to fame is her connection with her father, Jothan Messandi. She is credited with much of the research that backed up her father's book; her diligence in unearthing three new references to the Sky Raiders in the traditions of Slaenarik and Rajeeln earned warm praise even from enemies of her father's theories.

Raynirjik: Native name used by various aboriginal tribes of Mirayn for the ancient civilization which flourished on that planet some 5,300 years ago. The name translates as "Lords of the Golden Walls." Archeological evidence has placed that the Raynirjik were a Tech 3 culture embracing parts of both of Mirayn's two continents. Little is known of the Raynirjik culture, as most ruins thus far discovered have contained little in the way of records, artifacts, or other useful material.

Professor Jothan Messandi, in his book *Hoard of the Sky Raiders*, has suggested that the Raynirjik civilization should actually be identified with the so-called Sky Raiders (qv). The theory has received considerable popular support, but little in the way of scientific backing. Evidence has not supported his position to date. It is not, however, impossible that remains of a more advanced culture may yet be found on Mirayn, as a great deal of the Outback remains unexplored.

Sky Raiders, the: Name given to a semi-legendary culture which seems to have flourished some 5,300 years ago in the Far Frontiers sector. Almost all evidence of the Sky Raiders has come from oral traditions, myths, legends, and the like from a number of separate worlds in the Jungleblut and Taemerlyk subsectors. Their origins, fate, and details of their culture remain unknown. Estimates place them at Tech Level 9-10, and stories seem to indicate them to be a race of upright bipeds, but nothing is certain.

Tradition invariably depicts the Sky Raiders as a ruthless, aggressive race, descending from the sky to spread destruction and death among the inhabitants. Plunder and pillage would seem to have been their main object in these raids. A number of theories have circulated regarding their origins; the most recent,

put forward by Professor Jothan Messandi, places them on an obscure world in the Jungleblut subsector known as Mirayn. The theory has not won widespread support in scientific circles.

Tlaynsilak: Native name given to the most famous of Mirayn's "Lost Cities." Reputedly a great center of power and wealth among the Raynirjik, little is known about the veracity of native stories of this city. It is believed to exist somewhere in the Outback of Mirayn's largely uninhabited continent of Momande. Despite the persistence of the legends, many scientists believe the city to be an "eldorado" with no basis in fact. Followers of Professor Jothan Messandi's theory, which holds Tlaynsilak to be the home of the so-called "Sky Raiders", disagree with this view.



Hoard of the Sky Raiders

"Alone among the systems of the Rimward Reach, Mirayn has left us no legends recounting the coming of the Sky Raiders. It can only be assumed, then, that Mirayn — standing near the heart of the region where the Raiders flourished — must be the home of those interstellar Vikings . . . "

from Chapter 1

Hoard of the Sky Raiders continues in a similar fashion to present 493 pages of collected stories, legends, suppositions, and speculations into the background of the Sky Raiders. Much of the book is devoted to a recapitulation of the material known about the Sky Raiders, and the research presented is among the finest ever assembled on the subject. However, some of the material chosen for inclusion in this portion of the book has proven to be unreliable, in some cases even falsified, apparently included only because it supported the theory being presented. A case in point is the legend cited from the tradition of Assair, a planet in the Jungleblut subsector, which has long been proven to be connected with the arrival of human colonists some 2750 years ago, long after the accepted period of Sky Raider activity.

The book turns to speculation once these initial chapters of background are completed. Professor Messandi tends to exaggerate both in writing and in his drawing of conclusions in general; for example, sweeping statements that "no Sky Raider activity is recorded in any Miraynian tradition" are based on a lack of such legends in the folklore of a handful of coastal tribes, the only ones on which extensive research material exists.

The lure of treasure also taints Messandi's scholarship. He seems much more concerned with discussing the fabled "hoard" — five full chapters are devoted to doing so — than he is in presenting a fair account of who the Sky Raiders really were. The main thrust of the book is the identification of the Sky Raiders with the Raynirjik culture mentioned in Miraynian myth; this apparently because the descriptions of the lost city of Tlaynsilak are indicative of the kind of wealth credited to the Sky Raiders. When discussing the subject, the Professor sheds any pretense of scientific detachment and waxes poetic.

"Stories reach us from the natives of Mirayn of Tlaynsilak, the 'City of the Golden Walls', a fabulous eldorado in the humid jungles of Momande 'where the sky draws near the ground'. Where so-called scholars dismiss the story as legend, a knowledgable seeker of truth can discern the true location of the great hoard. Tlaynsilak existed, and still, I say, exists in that great Outback; and he who finds that golden city will find the plundered wealth of a dozen worlds."

Though the theory is beguiling, flaws in Messandi's scholarship detract from the quality of the work. Of all his faults, perhaps Messandi's worst is his armchair theorizing; he has never himself led an expedition to seek proof. Thus his book, though popular, is destined to remain a borderline, pseudo-scientific work.

THE NATIVES OF MIRAYN

The aboriginal natives of the Miraynian Outback are derived from a hexapodal, omnivore/hunter stock which evolved first in the swamps and marshes of the world. It is theorized that glacial periods changed the climate and ecology of the planet, forcing the development of intelligence as the natives adapted to new conditions.

The last ice age on Mirayn ended about 5,300 years ago. During that last period of cooler, drier weather, the natives achieved civilization. Unfortunately, the return of Mirayn's normal climate conditions (coupled, possibly, with some other disaster hinted at in native traditions) caused the collapse of culture, leaving ruins amid the swamps and jungles that returned with the new wave of warmth. Reduced to savagery, the natives have had no incentive to revive their society, and thus have made little progress back towards a civilized culture.

The contemporary natives are Tech 0 savages, little regarded by offworlders and often referred to derogatorily as "gogs". They band together in small tribes of perhaps 50-100 individuals. Though most encountered have been friendly or too frightened for contact, natives do carry a variety of primitive weapons (spears and clubs predominate), and have been known to fight one another. Offworld tools and simple weapons (blades, in particular) are sometimes found, usually as prized possessions of tribal chiefs, received as trade goods from offworlders.

REFEREE'S NOTES

Native tribes can be classified in two basic groups, "coastal" natives living near human settlements or in the better-explored regions of the Nahahnir River basin, and "swamp" tribes with little exposure to human contact. The inhabitants of the Great Swamp are implacably hostile and quite dangerous. When rolling for reactions, "coastal" natives receive a DM+3, and will flee, rather than become hostile, on any result of 6-. Natives in the Great Swamp (unless otherwise designated by the referee) need no reaction rolls . . . they attack automatically, and fight with great ferocity.

All native tribes speak a generally similar language, and are acquainted with a sort of pidgin tongue used by them for intertribal communication. Any hunter/guide character with the adventurers will speak this, and it can be learned by any character of intelligence 10+ who declares his intention to learn and spends 2D weeks doing so.

The natives currently retain no written language, but oral record-keeping (by legends and traditions) is quite common. The referee may wish to introduce myths and legends as a way of leading (or misleading) adventurers in their search for Raynirjik relics.

Referee's Notes

In *Legend of the Sky Raiders*, there are several levels of action and thought which can be made the thrust of the adventure. Aside from the obvious action-adventure elements, the archeological puzzles presented can provide more thoughtful players with interesting problems. Are the Sky Raiders from Mirayn? Where? Is there really a treasure? Players along for more than the chance to shoot up horrible creatures and ignorant savages will enjoy having these questions to try and answer.

The evidence that slowly unfolds should answer them. Mirayn is not the home of the Sky Raiders, but neither was it neglected by their attacks. The Hill of the Silent Guardians is where this becomes clearly indicated, but other clues along the way suggest it strongly. The adventure ends with part of the problem solved: the Raiders, startlingly enough were humans. But their home planet, and the location to their treasure, remain unknown. Just enough is shown in this adventure to show what might be found. There the adventure ends, but in reality, it is just beginning.

Legend of the Sky Raiders is intended to serve as a springboard for further adventures centered around the hunt for the Sky Raiders. Some much-needed clues for later adventures are provided here, along with the necessary background. Later FASA adventures will examine the Sky Raiders in greater detail, leading step by step through a search for the hoard. For this reason, the referee running this adventure should think ahead. Certain key NPCs, especially Lorain Messandi and the people around the smuggler, Kalamanaru, and perhaps a few others will be important in later encounters, and should not be killed off. If need be, die rolls and/or situations can be slightly altered to allow these individuals to escape. The adventure should stand by itself, and does . . . but later situations can rely on previous ones as building blocks.

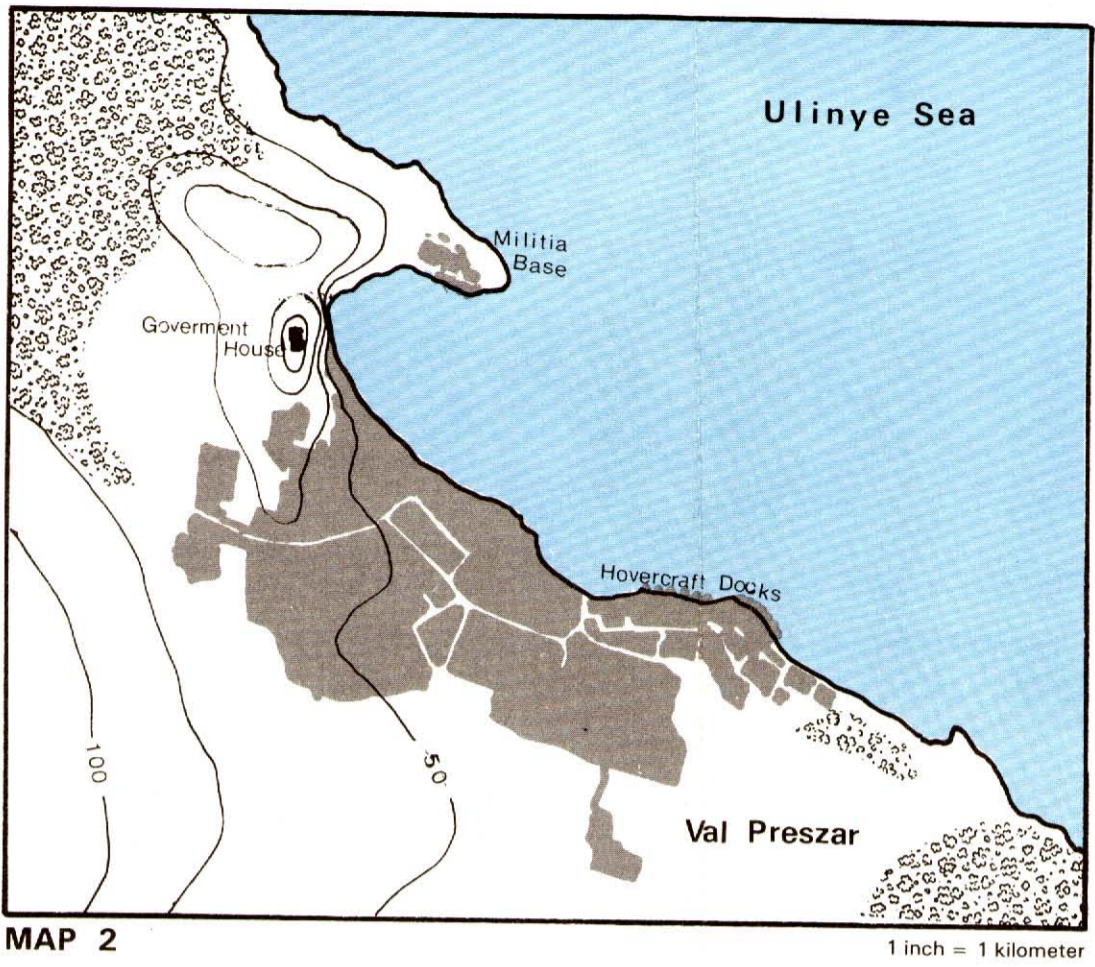
The referee can have a lot of fun in *Legend of the Sky Raiders*. A welter of differing NPCs allows a great deal of referee input, for good or ill. Complications arising from the spies, the government troops, the possibility for other explorations on Mirayn, and other factors lend excitement and variety to the basic situation. Feel free to spend more or less time on individual parts of the adventure than seems to be indicated in the text; adapt to the interests of the players to make the adventure most enjoyable to them. That is the reason behind a role-playing adventure.

We hope, as always, that you will find *Legend of the Sky Raiders* enjoyable. We've tried to give it the same unique aspects you've seen in our previous adventures, *Ordeal by Eshaar* and *Uraqyad'n of the Seven Pillars*; at the same time, it is like neither of these. Our adventures are designed to be just a little bit special. We hope you have found them so.

The Legend of the Sky Raiders

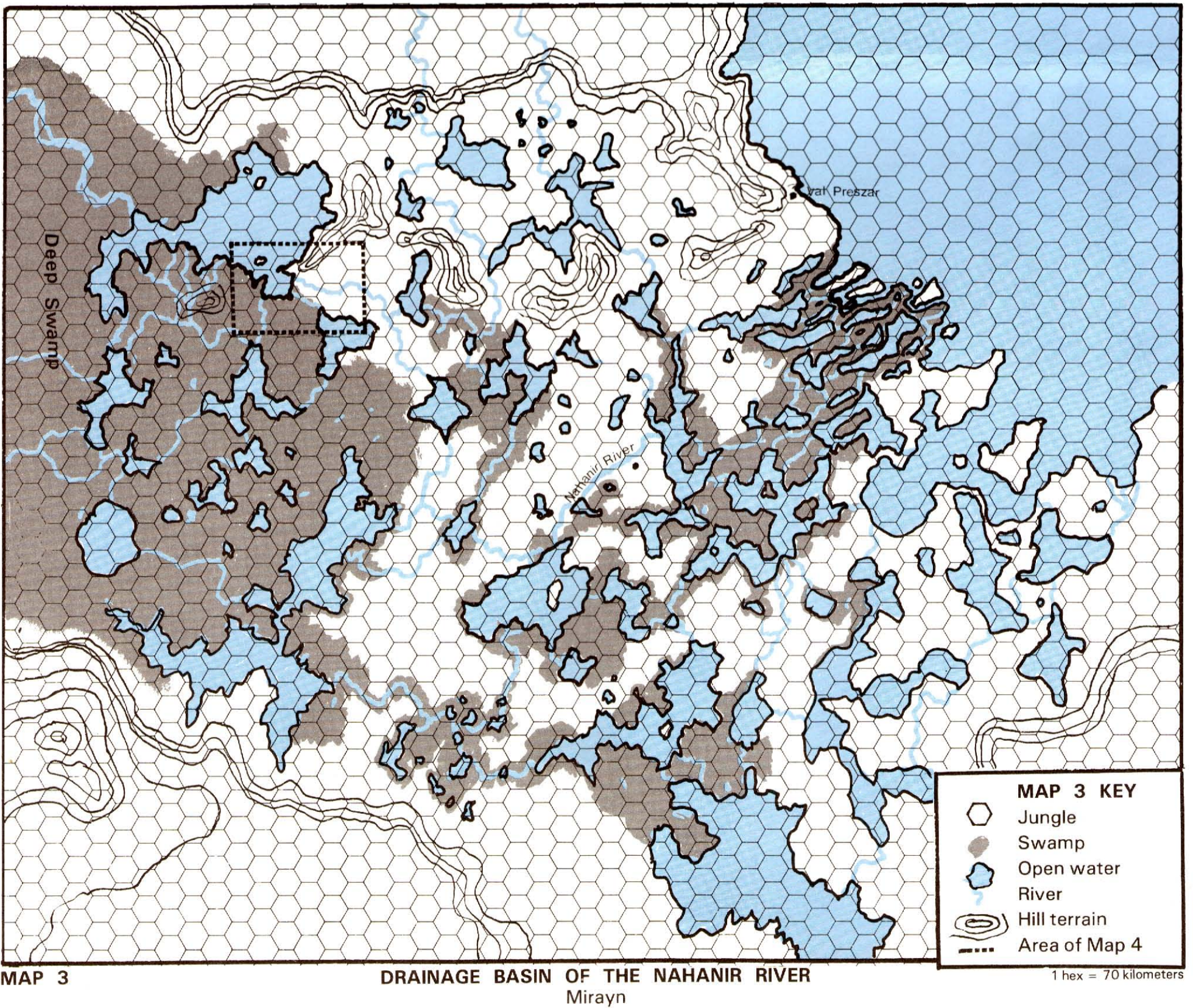
The Sky Raiders . . . They pillaged a dozen worlds sometime in the distant past, then vanished. Who were they? A beautiful archaeologist leads a band of adventurers into the swamps of the planet Mirayn, searching for their secrets . . . and their lost treasure hoard. Join in the search . . . the expedition seeking the truth behind . . .

The Legend of the Sky Raiders.



VAL PRESZAR		
Population (1091)	:	194,983
Tech Level	:	7
Law Level	:	7
Mean Temperature	:	30°C.
(No seasonal variation)		
Annual Precipitation	:	160 cm.
Average Humidity	:	80
Industries	:	Kayakiya Beans, Tourism

NOTE: Local law prohibits export of local archaeological artifacts. All artifacts must be turned in to the Ministry of Antiquities at Government House.



MAP 3 KEY	
	Jungle
	Swamp
	Open water
	River
	Hill terrain
	Area of Map 4

