

THE THIRD IMPERIUM.

Alien Module 3: Darrians



TRAVELLER

THE THIRD IMPERIUM

Alien Module 3: Darrians

CREDITS

Original Darrians Alien Module

Marc W. Miller, Robert Parker, Nancy Parker and Matt Renner.

Mongoose Traveller

Author

Pete Nash

Editor

Charlotte Law

Layout

Will Chapman

Proofreader

Nick Robinson

Cover Illustration

Ben Wooten

Interior Illustrations

John Koelepp, Dan Masso, Sara Forlenza & Danilo Guida

Deckplans

Mark Lucas

Special Thanks

Don McKinney

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INTRODUCTION

The Darrians are a race of independently evolved humans who pursue scholastic learning, using their knowledge to maintain a peaceful empire of advanced technology. Despite their diplomatic tendencies, the Darrians are renown throughout the Third Imperium, not for who they are or where they are located but simply because they hold the most powerful destructive weapon in the known universe – the Star Trigger.

Ostensibly the Darrians are considered a minor race due to the fact that they were introduced to space travel when their home world was settled by a group of Solomani refugees. Yet their unique culture and dedication towards study, allowed them to briefly achieve a pinnacle of technological advancement, which has yet to be matched by any other existing race or empire.

Tragically at the height of their accomplishments, the Darrian Confederation suffered a disaster of incomprehensible scale. During a study of their home star, they inadvertently generated an unprecedented solar flare – sending out an EMP shockwave so strong, that not only did it destroy all the delicate electronics within the solar system but continued travelling onwards to the neighbouring stars. This was followed by a Coronal Mass Ejection, a secondary wave of plasma erupted from the star's surface, which boiled the seas and superheated the atmosphere of the homeworld. The ecological and technological damage reduced the Darrians to a pre-spaceflight level of technology, which has taken nearly two millennia to recover from. Despite this, the Confederation has once again clawed its way back to the forefront of technological development, using many of the artefacts from previous accomplishments to rediscover principles it had once mastered.

Utilising this book, the Darrian race can be incorporated into campaigns whether as a source of advanced equipment or a veritable gold mine of scenario ideas. Included are rules for generating characters, lists of patrons, organisations to fall afoul of and even cutting edge ships. It provides the Referee and the players with sufficient information to interact with Darrian society and acts as a guide for Player Characters.

Unlike the aliens in other books of this series, Darrians are close to the human norm, both physically and psychologically. However, they still have cultural tendencies that can make them slightly confusing to the more mainline cultures of the Imperium. Such social traits serve to make this offshoot of humanity an unusual and unique race to play, especially in its quests for knowledge over the more usual human interests of power or wealth.

The Darrians hold a modest Confederation in the Darrian Subsector of the Spinward Marches, neatly sandwiched between the Zhodani Consulate and the Sword Worlds. With only the Star Trigger, their ultimate weapon of retaliation, keeping them safe from invasion the Darrians have formed a close relationship with the nearby Imperium exchanging trade and access to research studies for military aid.

This book takes the original Darrian material produced for *Traveller* and expands upon it, updating certain elements of their history and culture for additional enjoyment, and to account for more modern scientific knowledge. To save unnecessary confusion discerning between the race, confederation and planet, the author has chosen to call the world of Darrian by its original native name of Daryen throughout the book.

DARRIAN CHARACTERS

Character generation for Darrians is the same procedure as for human characters in *Traveller*. However, several changes are involved to take into account physiological and cultural differences between Darrian characters and humans.

Initial Character Generation

Darrian characters, like most races, are basically defined by six personal characteristics: Strength, Dexterity, Endurance, Intelligence, Education and Social Standing.

Due to their evolution on a low gravity world, Darrians are, on the average, weaker and frailer than humans. Their reduced body mass however, makes them a little faster and more agile. Intelligence and education are superior due to cultural conditioning. Since Darrians are a fairly egalitarian civilisation, Social Standing usually refers to their status in academic and research circles.

To generate Darrian characteristics, throw each characteristic in succession: Strength (2D6-2), Dexterity (2D6+1), Endurance (2D6-2), Intelligence (2D6+1), Education (2D6+2) and Social Standing (2D6). The lower limit on characteristics is 1 (below 1 can happen only temporarily from wounding); the upper limit is 15 plus or minus the characteristic modifier.

DARRIAN CITIZEN CHARACTERISTIC MODIFIERS

Characteristic	Native Darrian
Str	-2
Dex	+1
End	-2
Int	+1
Edu	+2
Soc	—

Average height for pure-blooded Darrians is between 2.1 and 2.3 metres. Those with recent Solomani genes in their ancestry reach between 2.0 and 2.2 metres tall. Darrians growing up on planets with higher gravity than Daryen have their height ranges reduced by 3cm per 0.1g difference. Those brought up on worlds of over 0.7g reduce the Strength and Endurance penalties by 1, but also lose their Dexterity bonus due to increased muscle mass.

Traits

Darrians have slightly better hearing and vision than humans, giving them a +1 DM to any Recon or Survival checks involving these senses. Wide pelvic structures give Darrian females less chance of birth complications but make balancing upon narrow beams or ledges more difficult.

Darrians are genetically predisposed towards water conservation, sweating far less than humans and possessing white or light toned hair combined with a slightly reflective, gold coloured skin; both of which help reflect excess heat. Additionally the golden protremelanin pigmentation protects against high levels of ultraviolet radiation. Darrians are also able to adjust their core temperatures via unconscious metabolic control and are therefore more comfortable in colder climates.

Another Darrian trait is their ability to safely metabolise Ozone, normally mildly poisonous to humans, due to a naturally occurring retrovirus present on thier homeworld.

Gender

Darrian society has sexual equality. Darrian men are as likely to stay at home to raise children as women and wages are based on capability and knowledge, not gender. However, although every career is open to both sexes, certain professions do exhibit gender bias; the professional armed forces being one notable example. Men tend to dominate close combat troops whereas women prefer naval service.

Family and Ancestral Respect

Due to their extended life spans, Darrian families can be sprawling complex affairs. Depending on resources and living space available on their home world, Darrian parents usually produce between two and three children.

Assuming that characters have not yet settled down to start their own family, players can use the following tables to generate an idea of the number and state of their immediate relatives.

Roll 2d6	Grandparents
2-3	Both dead
4-5	Grandmother alive
6-8	Both alive
9-10	Grandfather alive
11-12	Both dead

Roll 2d6	Parents
2	Both dead
3-4	Father alive
5-9	Both alive
10-11	Mother Alive
12	Both dead

The character should then work out how many siblings they have and where they came in the sequence. Roll a d6 twice and cross reference the results.



d6	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Single child	Single child	Single child	Single child	Single child	Single child
2	Single child	One sibling, first born	One sibling, first born	One sibling, first born	One sibling, first born	One sibling, first born
3	One sibling, first born	One sibling, second born	One sibling, second born	One sibling, second born	One sibling, second born	One sibling, second born
4	One sibling, second born	Two siblings, first born	Two siblings, first born	Two siblings, first born	Two siblings, first born	Two siblings, second born
5	Two siblings, second born	Two siblings, second born	Two siblings, second born	Two siblings, third born	Two siblings, third born	Two siblings, third born
6	Two siblings, third born	Three siblings, first born	Three siblings, second born	Three siblings, third born	Three siblings, fourth born	Five siblings, roll 1d6 for birth order

To add a little mystery to the family, roll up to three times on the family deeds table. The first roll concerns the deeds of the grandparents, the second to the parents and the third to any siblings.

Starting Age

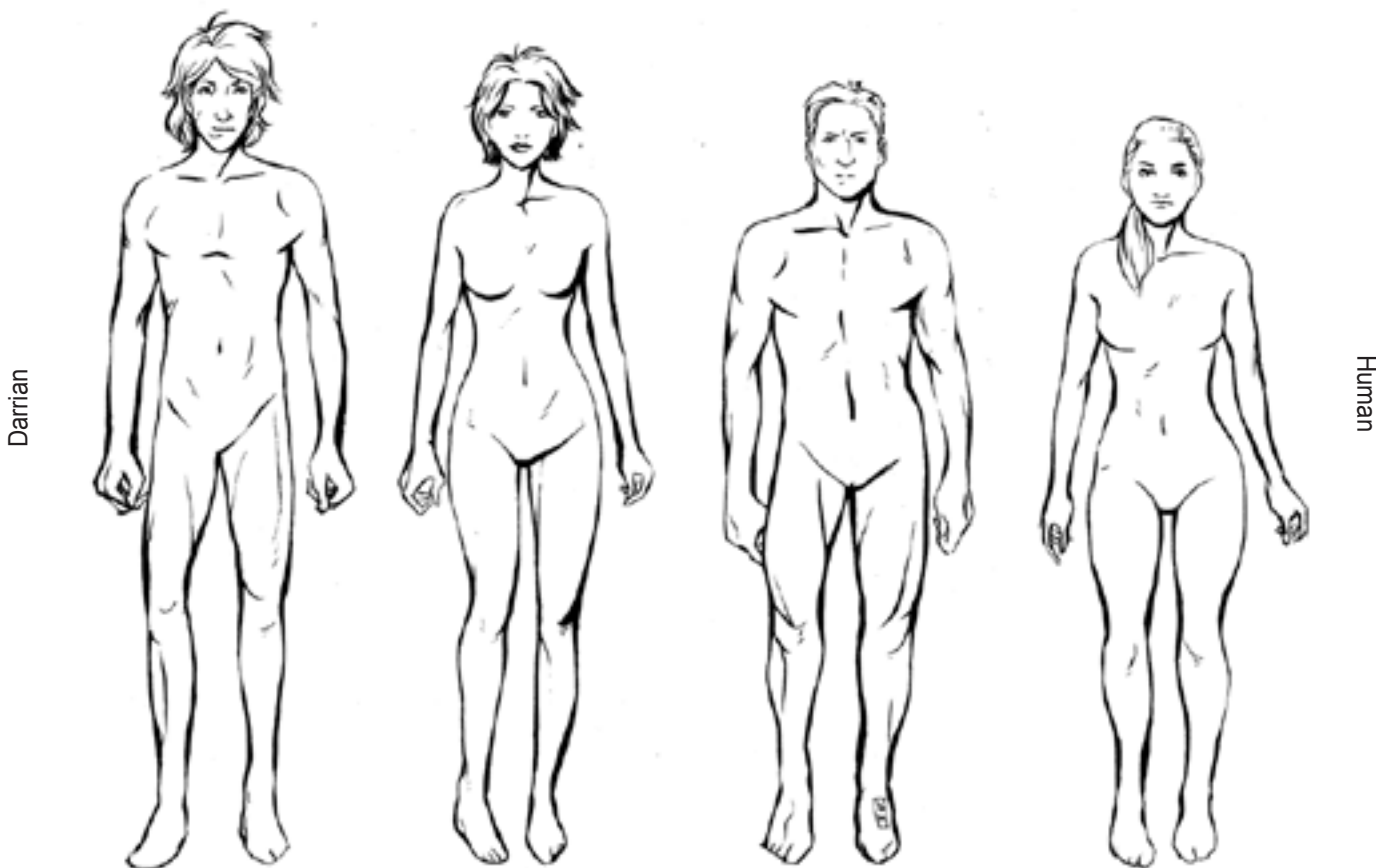
Darrian characters begin their careers at 18 years of age. At this point, they have the mandatory choices of either entering an advanced post-graduate education or joining one of the military branches. The first four year term must be spent completing this service, before a Darrian is allowed to continue with a career more conducive to their interests.

Naming Customs

Every Darrian has three names; the family name, the birth name and the taken name.

Family names are passed down from the father. They cannot be changed for any reason, not even for marriage into another family. They generally refer to an object or phenomenon in the natural world. This can range from animals or plants, to types of weather or eclipses.

Birth names are granted exclusively by the mother, although most wives consult with their husbands prior to the naming in





Roll 2d6	Family Deeds
2	Relative is (or was) stripped of their citizenship and exiled from the Confederation for committing a terrible crime, bringing shame and stigma to the family. Roll 1d6: 1. Relative was a murderer. 2. Relative claimed a rival's scientific discoveries as his own. 3. Relative spied for the Sword Worlds. 4. Relative was designing bioweapons. 5. Relative experimented on sophonts. 6. Relative sold scientific secrets to the Zhodani.
3	Relative made an important scientific breakthrough of great benefit to society.
4	Relative disappeared in unusual circumstances, with no warning and no record of leaving planet.
5	Relative is a founding member of a major corporation.
6	Relative has a well publicised addiction.
7	Relative has travelled extensively outside of the Confederation.
8	Relative was lampooned Confederation-wide for precipitating an infamous accident by their crass stupidity.
9	Relative is a famous author who has sold millions of copies of their work.
10	Relative had their educational qualifications stripped for cheating.
11	Relative uncovered a priceless artefact of archaeological or historical import.
12	Relative is (or was) a lauded hero of the Confederation. Roll 1d6: 1. Relative discovered a vaccine to cure an ancient plague. 2. Uncovered a Zhodani plot against the Confederation. 3. Made a daring freefall leap to rescue children trapped in a falling grav car. 4. Braved a fatal radiation leak, to shut down a power plant going critical. 5. Rammed a cargo hauler into a suicide ship on collision course with a space station. 6. Relative took out a Sword World platoon single handed in the Fourth Frontier War.

order to avoid undue irritation for disliked names. Birth names are granted soon after birth, due to an unspoken superstition that the name moulds the child to be. These names generally describe a personal characteristic (expressed or to be hoped for) or a type of flowering plant. The child is addressed and known by this name until it reaches its age of majority.

Taken names are what the youth chooses for themselves, once they have graduated to adulthood. From this point onwards the Darrian is known by this name, usually based on something greatly significant to the individual. It can literally be anything, from the name of an ancestor or great scientist, to a type of career or philosophical ideal. Whatever is selected normally provides an insight into the psyche of the Darrian and can be quite subtle or possess many levels of interpretation.

Only family members or friends address a Darrian by their taken name only. Formal address is used by strangers, work companions or social services, comprising of the family name and taken name combined. The full three name version is only ever used for legal documentation or civic records.

Titles

Darrians do not have titles in the sense of Imperium nobility, since such archaic feudal posturing is the antithesis of Darrian

egalitarian society. Any Darrian granted an Imperial title cannot use it within the Confederation where it carries no weight; but might utilise it at diplomatic events where representatives of the Imperium may be present.

Darrians with high Social Standing are recognised for their contributions to academia. These are often based on (once) holding an administrative position at a university or by making important discoveries which furthered their subject. Attaining such a title does not require the scholar to be well versed in scholarly skills (although it helps) but rather reflects the efforts made by the Darrian to support and further the course of knowledge as a whole – by funding, volunteer teaching, revising historical data or even editorial work on research papers!

Most honorary titles are granted from the university that they attended during their education, in order to reflect well upon the institution. The number of titles granted however, is strictly controlled by the Confederation Ministry of Information.

Holders of official titles are treated with respect in Darrian society but gain few benefits beyond that. Some titled scholars in administrative positions use their Social Standing to find better funding, request new equipment or simply to be promoted into more prestigious university or corporate posts.



DARRIAN TITLES

Social Standing	Title
10	Pedagogue
11	Preceptor
12	Adept
13	Doyen
14	Master
15	Savant

Intellectual achievement has its own titles. Any character with an Education of 10+ may request to be addressed as Professor. Those with an Education of 12+ are addressed as Emeritus Professor.

DARRIAN ASLAN CHARACTERS

A significant portion of the Darrian population is Aslan. Those socially integrated into the Confederation are created as if they were racial Darrians, using the following characteristic rolls if originating from a world with a gravity of 0.7g or lower; which the majority of the worlds in the Confederation are.

Characteristic	Native Darrian
Str	2D6+1
Dex	2D6-1
End	2D6
Int	2D6
Edu	2D6+1
Soc	2D6

Darrian Aslan characters may join any career that a racial Darrian can join, though most Aslan still tend to unconsciously follow gender traits. Darrian Aslan characters may acquire Melee (Claw) as a legitimate melee skill. Aslan from the more traditional world of Roget, may also choose careers and options given in the *Alien Module 1: Aslan* book.

Background Skills

In addition to the 3 + your Education DM background skills gained from homeworld and education, a Darrian gains an **additional** Science skill, selected from: Life Science 0, Physical Science 0, Social Science 0 or Space Science 0. This reflects the more intense and broader base of study prevalent in Darrian society.

CAREERS

Darrians lack a few careers common to other cultures; namely nobility, rogues and scouts. These professions either have no

ability to function in Darrian society or have atrophied from lack of application.

Characters use the normal rules for generation from the *Traveller Core Rulebook*.

Aging

Darrian aging is the same as for 'standard' humans in its onset, but generally less severe. The first roll on the aging table is made at age 34 (after four terms of service have been completed); thereafter, it is checked every four years, and **half** the character's number of terms served is applied as a negative DM to the 2d6 roll.

Referees worried about the generation of excessively skilled characters should place their own limit on the number of terms served.

Benefits

The armour and weapons provided on the benefits table do not include powered armour (Battle Dress), plasma/fusion weapons or light support weaponry. Such equipment is never allowed out of military control. Other munitions are granted to retiring military or law enforcement personnel in the implicit understanding that they are only for civil defence purposes, if and when the character is recalled to service.

Vehicles gained as benefits are limited to civilian transports. Unless directly related to a space faring career, ship shares are very rarely handed out as benefits.

Private ownership of vessels is somewhat contrary to Darrian philosophy, since wealth should be more evenly distributed across society to prevent cultural stress. Ships tend to be owned by businesses, universities or government agencies and are loaned out as necessary to responsible crews with up to date crew licences.

CAREERS FROM OTHER TRAVELLER BOOKS

Darrians living in the Imperium or in other human-dominated societies may use the basic *Traveller* careers instead. Most such individuals are exiles or children of exiles. However, many Darrians decide to leave the safety of the Confederation and seek their fortunes elsewhere. For example, while fairly rare, it is not unknown for individual Darrians to join a branch of the Imperial military or civil administrations. Such service is accepted by the Confederation, because of the experiences and different viewpoints that are brought back when they eventually return.



CAREERS

Career	Specialisation	Qualification	Survival	Advancement
Agent		Int 7+		
	Police		End 6+	Int 6+
	Intelligence		Dex 5+	Int 7+
	Analyst		Int 7+	Int 5+
Entertainer		Int 5+		
	Artist		Dex 7+	Edu 5+
	Author		Edu 6+	Int 6+
	Performer		Soc 5+	Int 7+
Envoy		Edu 7+		
	Advocate		Soc 5+	Edu 7+
	Diplomat		Soc 6+	Int 6+
	Observer		Int 7+	Dex 5+
Guard		Str 6+		
	Cavalry		End 6+	Edu 6+
	Infantry		End 5+	Edu 7+
	Support		End 7+	Edu 5+
Merchants		Int 6+		
	Merchant Marine		Edu 5+	Int 7+
	Free Trader		Dex 6+	Int 6+
	Broker		Edu 7+	Int 5+
Militia		End 5+		
	Flyer		Dex 7+	Int 5+
	Infantry		Str 6+	Edu 6+
	Support		End 5+	Edu 7+
Navy		Edu 6+		
	Engineering		Int 6+	Edu 6+
	Bridge		Edu 5+	Int 7+
	Marine		Dex 7+	Edu 5+
Scholar		Edu 7+		
	Physician		Edu 5+	Soc 7+
	Researcher		Edu 7+	Int 5+
	Technician		Int 6+	Edu 6+
Special Arm		Int 9+		
	Commando		Dex 8+	Int 6+
	Psion		Int 7+	Psi 7+
	Scientist		Int 6+	Edu 8+
Worker		Edu 5+		
	Bureaucratic		Int 5+	Soc 7+
	Corporate		Soc 6+	Int 6+
	Industrial		End 7+	Edu 5+
Wanderer		Auto		
	Drifter		Int 7+	Edu 7+
	Exile		End 8+	Int 6+
	Nomad		Int 6+	Soc 8+

Darrian Life Events

The life events of a Darrian are similar to those of humans. Use the Life Events table on page 34 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*.



AGENT

This career embraces all forms of law enforcement, espionage and counter espionage. Darrians are, on the whole, law abiding citizens, so the public presence of law enforcement is minor. Behind the scenes however, the Confederation is a hive of foreign espionage activity, which the Darrians are hard pressed to restrict.

Qualification: Int 7+

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Police:** You are a well respected member of the community, using your skills to act as an intermediary in civil disturbances, investigate crimes and control the rare outbreaks of violence.
- **Intelligence:** You are a government sponsored spy who keeps foreign agents under close observation or frequently journey outside the Confederation to keep track of the activities of powers dangerous to Darrian.
- **Analyst:** You study collected population, trade and financial data to discover patterns indicating corruption or outright criminal activity, which are given to sociologists to correct or the intelligence agencies to terminate.



Skills and Training:

	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (Minimum Edu 8)
1	+1 Dex	Computers	Admin
2	+1 Int	Investigate	Comms
3	+1 Edu	Gun Combat (any)	Computers
4	+1 Soc	Stealth	Language (any)
5	Jack of all Trades	Athletics (any)	Science (any)
6	Gun Combat (any)	Streetwise	Sensors
	Specialist: Police	Specialist: Intelligence	Specialist: Analyst
1	Drive (any)	Computers	Admin
2	Melee (any)	Deception	Advocate
3	Athletics (any)	Deception	Computers
4	Recon	Investigate	Computers
5	Stealth	Stealth	Investigate
6	Streetwise	Streetwise	Social Science (any)

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishap
1	Severely Injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	A superior officer has you drummed out of service. Gain a Rival.
3	Your face is posted by accident whilst undercover and you are forced to retire. Gain 1 Social Standing for the notoriety.
4	You are accused of tampering with data or evidence. Lose 2 Social Standing.
5	You are blamed for a massive loss of funds in the local branch. You are allowed to continue as an Agent but add 10,000 Credits to your debts.
6	You are wounded in the line of duty. Roll on the Injury table.



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	The governmental officer you are employed by asks you to do something vicious and immoral on his behalf. Go through with it and gain him as an Ally, refuse and he becomes a Rival.
4	You have the opportunity to smuggle illegal goods. If you accept, roll Deception 8+. Succeed and gain 3 benefit rolls. Fail and you suffer a -6 DM to your next advancement roll.
5	The target of your next investigation is someone you know. Go through with the mission and gain +2 DM on your next Advancement roll but lose one Ally or Contact. If you have no Allies or Contacts to lose, gain an Enemy instead.
6	Your most recent case required you to travel outside of the Confederation, exposing you to many different worlds and cultures. Gain either Life Science (any), Recon, Streetwise or Survival.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	Your direct competition in the agency has left himself open for a career crippling move on your part. Do it and ruin his life, gaining +4 DM on your next Advancement roll and gain him as an Enemy.
9	You are targeted in a series of vicious assassination attempts by criminals or foreign agents. You may demonstrate heroism or prudence in battle. If you demonstrate heroism, roll Endurance 8+ to avoid being Injured and gain a +2 DM to your next Advancement roll. If you cower, roll Stealth 8+ to avoid losing 1 Social Standing.
10	You catch a foreign spy in the act of working mischief. Fight him with any combat skill 8+, rolling on the Injury table if unsuccessful. Success adds +1 to whatever skill you used to defeat him. Alternatively you may help him escape, gaining him as an Ally.
11	Your exemplary service has earned you a special commendation. You may choose to leave the Agent career path and join the Special Arm career path without having to pass the Qualification roll.
12	Your efforts strike a great blow for Darrian society. You are automatically promoted.

Ranks and Skills

Rank	Police	Skill or Benefit	Intelligence	Skill or Benefit	Analyst	Skill or Benefit
1	Officer		Field Agent	Deception 1	Grip	Computers 1
2	Corporal	Streetwise 1				
3	Sergeant	Admin 1	Special Agent	Investigate 1	Specialist	Comms 1
4	Lieutenant				Crew Leader	
5	Detective	Investigate 1	Assistant Director			Social Science 1
6	Commissioner		Director	Leadership 1	Chief Analyst	

	Police	Intelligence	Analyst
Survival	End 6+	Dex 7+	Int 5+
Advancement	Int 6+	Int 5+	Int 7+

Mustering-Out Benefits:

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	2,000	Contact
2	4,000	+1 Int
3	6,000	+1 Edu
4	10,000	Law Enforcement Gear
5	15,000	Weapon and Armour
6	25,000	+1 Social
7	50,000	Combat Implant



ENTERTAINER

Those who follow this career uphold the ancient traditions of Darrian entertainment, to render their perceptions truthfully, to reveal the source of their inspirations and not provoke deliberate offense. The range of Darrian arts are comprehensive, from the simplest songs and dances, to epic historical poetry and the crafting of objects pleasing to eye and touch.

Qualification: Int 5+

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Artist:** You practice a form of physical art that can be detected by the senses, crafting pleasurable objects to be contemplated. Audible art is generally music or songs; olfactory art takes the form of incense or perfumes and so on.
- **Author:** You write for a living, whether that is novels, journalistic columns or the creation of fine poetry.
- **Performer:** You are a professional entertainer who specialises in one or more talents such as dancing, playing music, comedy, acting and so on.



	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (Minimum Edu 8)
1	+1 Strength	Art (any)	Admin
2	+1 Dexterity	Carouse	Art (any)
3	+1 Intelligence	Persuade	Computers
4	+1 Education	Social Science (any)	Diplomacy
5	Carousing	Steward	Language (any)
6	Art (any)	Streetwise	Social Science (any)
	Specialist: Artist	Specialist: Author	Specialist: Performer
1	Art (any craft)	Art (write or compose)	Art (performance)
2	Art (any craft)	Art (write or compose)	Art (performance)
3	Diplomat	Computers	Carouse
4	Persuade	Investigate	Deception
5	Science (any)	Language (any)	Persuade
6	Trade (art)	Social Science (any)	Streetwise

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishap
1	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
2	You commit a grievous breach of protocol and are outcast. Reduce your Social Standing by 1.
3	Your art becomes the centre of some scandal and you are forced to move to another world. Gain one of Diplomacy 1, Flyer 1, Persuade 1 or Streetwise 1.
4	You are betrayed by a peer. One of your Contacts or Allies betrays you, ending your career. That Contact or Ally becomes a Rival or Enemy. If you have no Contacts or Allies, then you are betrayed by someone you never saw coming and still gain a Rival or Enemy
5	You are forced out because of censorship or controversy. What truth did you get too close to? You gain a +2 DM to the qualification roll for your next career.
6	You are embroiled in a rivalry with another official, who ends your career. Gain him as a Rival.



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	You uncover an embarrassing secret concerning a Rival. Either trade it for 1d3 extra Benefit rolls and convert the Rival into an Enemy or you may inform the Rival that their secret is out and gain them as an Ally instead.
4	You gain a patron in the arts. Gain a +2 DM to your next Advancement roll and a future Contact.
5	You are assigned a challenging task. Roll Art, Investigate or Persuade 8+. If you succeed, gain a +2 DM to your next advancement roll. If you fail, you suffer a -2 DM to your next Advancement roll.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll Education 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	One of your works is especially well received and popular, making you a minor celebrity. Gain a +1 DM to any one Benefit roll.
9	You are a part of your homeworld's celebrity circles. Gain one of Carouse 1, Persuade 1, Steward 1 or a Contact.
10	Long hours spent studying for a piece you want to create or perform broadens your mind. Gain either +1 Edu or one level of any Science skill.
11	You go on a tour of the sector, visiting several worlds. Gain 1d3 Contacts.
12	You are publically acclaimed for your work by a high ranking Confederation official. You are automatically promoted.

Ranks and Skills

Rank	Artist/Author/Performer	Skill or Benefit
1	Acolyte	
2	Initiate	Persuade 1
3	Sojourner	
4	Practitioner	Diplomacy 1
5	Master	
6	Grand Master	+1 Social Standing

	Artist	Author	Performer
Survival	Dex 7+	Edu 6+	Soc 5+
Advancement	Edu 5+	Int 6+	Int 7+

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	0	Contact
2	5,000	+1 Edu
3	10,000	Ally
4	20,000	+1 Int
5	30,000	Vehicle
6	50,000	Paid for trip anywhere in the Confederation
7	100,000	Paid for trip anywhere in a neighbouring subsector

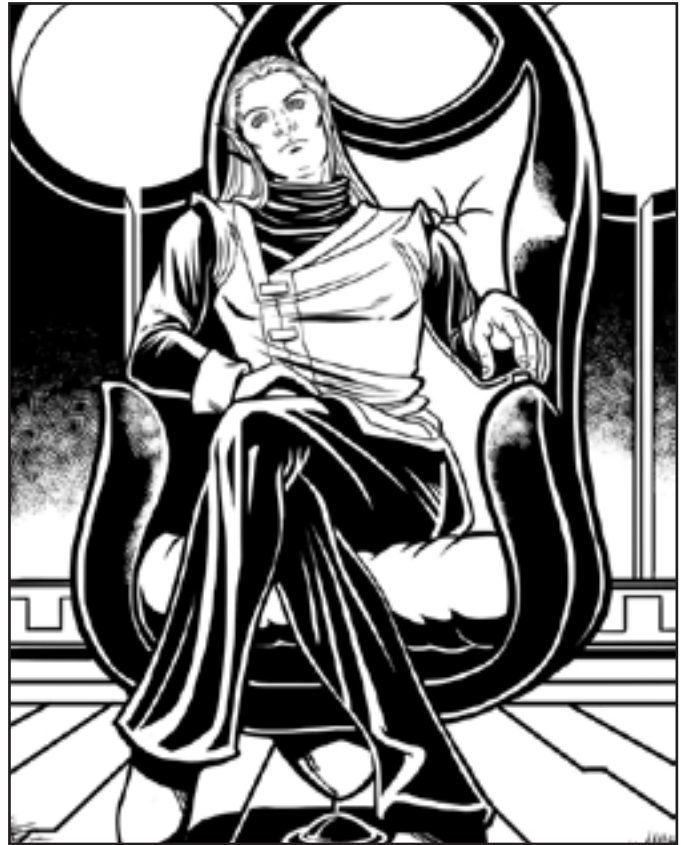
Envoy

Darrian envoys are diplomats and negotiators who try to settle disputes through convincing debate. The Darrians have long used envoys to prevent unnecessary war and prevent disagreements from deteriorating into long feuds. They can be found at all levels of society, from the lowliest marriage councillors up to the lofty heights of the Confederation government itself.

Qualification: Edu 7+

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Advocate:** You work in the law courts trying to negotiate solutions between conflicting opinions or establish mutually agreeable punishments to those found guilty of committing a crime.
- **Diplomat:** You are sent to settle issues with foreign powers, or between planetary governments and the Confederation Ministries. You are the voice of reason, trained to defuse tension and petty bickering, to cement an atmosphere of reasonable compromise.
- **Observer:** You watch the activities of those who have agreed to conciliation to ensure all members complete their parts of the settlement. You also act as a judge of character, discovering the true purpose of organisations or individuals.



	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (Minimum Edu 8)
1	+1 Intelligence	Admin	Advocate
2	+1 Education	Advocate	Broker
3	+1 Social	Diplomat	Computers
4	Carouse	Investigate	Diplomat
5	Diplomacy	Leadership	Language (any)
6	Persuade	Persuade	Social Science (any)
	Specialist: Advocate	Specialist: Diplomat	Specialist: Observer
1	Advocate	Advocate	Comms
2	Advocate	Broker	Deception
3	Diplomat	Deception	Investigate
4	Investigate	Diplomat	Recon
5	Persuade	Diplomat	Stealth
6	Social Science (any)	Social Science (any)	Sensors

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishap
1	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
2	A blunder in a negotiation shames you. Reduce your Social Standing by 1.
3	You fail in a difficult assignment because of the manipulations of another Envoy. Gain him as a Rival.
4	Someone attempts to murder you. Roll Melee or Recon 8+ to avoid the attempt. If you fail, you roll on the injury table. If you succeed, you may continue in this career.
5	You are dispatched to another world for a long period; by the time you return, your position has been taken by a younger and more ambitious envoy. Gain one of Broker 1, Carouse 1 or Diplomacy 1.
6	A foreign ambassador insults you. Roll Diplomacy 8+ to avoid punching him. If you succeed, you decide it is time to leave this career. If you fail, you lose an additional Benefit roll and gain the ambassador as an Enemy.



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Your time as an envoy gives you a wide range of experiences. Gain one of Animals (Riding) 1, Art (any) 1, Carouse 1, or Streetwise 1.
4	A negotiation goes dreadfully wrong and you are forced to flee into hiding for a while. Gain Deception 1, Stealth 1, Streetwise 1 or Survival 1.
5	You inherit a gift from a grateful client. Gain a +1 DM to any one Benefit roll.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll Education 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	You spend time in diplomatic circles. Roll Carouse or Persuade 8+ to gain an Ally; if you fail, gain a Rival instead.
9	You become deeply involved in politics on your world of residence, becoming a player in the political intrigues of government. Gain one level in Admin, Advocate, Diplomacy or Persuade but also gain a Rival.
10	Your reign is acclaimed by all as being fair and wise. Gain either a jealous relative or an unhappy diplomat as an Enemy. In addition gain a +2 DM to your next Advancement roll.
11	You are approached by a legitimate member of the Special Arm who wishes to recruit you for a mission that would involve permanently leaving your current career. When you refuse without knowing further information the operative vanishes. You utilise your contacts you try to locate the individual but he appears not to exist. Gain one level in Investigate and a healthy suspicion of the Special Arm.
12	You excel in your role. You are automatically promoted.

Ranks and Skills

Rank		Skill or Benefit
1	Junior Envoy	Persuade 1
2	Envoy	
3	Senior Envoy	Diplomat 1
4	Respected Envoy	
5	Honoured Envoy	Carouse 1
6	Voice of Taledh	+1 Social

	Advocate	Diplomat	Observer
Survival	Soc 5+	Soc 6+	Int 7+
Advancement	Edu 7+	Int 6+	Dex 5+

Mustering-Out Benefits:

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	10,000	Contact
2	15,000	Ally
3	20,000	+1 Intelligence
4	25,000	+1 Education
5	30,000	Vehicle
6	50,000	Paid for trip anywhere in the Confederation
7	100,000	Paid for trip anywhere in a neighbouring subsector



GUARD

The guard are the Confederation's heavy troops, which form regiments independent of homeworld. The soldiers are generally armed with the heaviest armour and equipment available, specialising in assault and fortification tactics. They train in conjunction with militia units so as to complement each other's strengths. The guard are the functional equivalent to the Imperium's ground assault marines.

Qualification: Str 6+

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Cavalry:** You pilot the heavy armoured vehicles of the Confederation, such as APCs and main battle tanks. You exalt in the feel of hundreds of tons of war machine smashing through the landscape and delight in firing mounted weapons.
- **Infantry:** You are the elite foot soldiers wearing battle dress and armed with support weapons. You hit hard using overwhelming firepower and advanced tech to beat enemy troops at their own game.
- **Support:** You provide artillery fire support, demolitions and combat engineering to the armoured infantry and cavalry. When things break you have to fix that too.



Skills and Training:

	Personal Development	Service Skills	Officer Skills (Commissioned Only)
1	+1 Strength	Athletics (any)	Comms
2	+1 Dexterity	Battle Dress	Computers
3	+1 Endurance	Gun Combat (any)	Leadership
4	Athletics (any)	Heavy Weapons (any)	Navigation
5	Gun Combat (any)	Melee (any)	Sensors
6	Melee (any)	Recon	Tactics (military)
	Specialist: Cavalry	Specialist: Infantry	Specialist: Support
1	Comms	Battle Dress	Battle Dress
2	Flyer (any)	Gun Combat (any)	Comms
3	Engineering (any)	Heavy Weapons (man portable)	Engineering (any)
4	Heavy Weapons (artillery)	Heavy Weapons (launchers)	Explosives
5	Mechanic	Recon	Heavy Weapons (artillery or launchers)
6	Sensors	Stealth	Medic

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishap
1	Severely Injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	Your armour or vehicle is trapped in mud and you sink beneath the surface. As a result of the experience you suffered temporary claustrophobia and are forced to take a medical discharge.
3	You are ordered to take part in a black ops mission that goes against your conscience. You refused and were ejected from the service.
4	You accidentally crush a civilian whilst manoeuvring in your armour, causing a publicity incident. Lose 1 Social Standing.
5	A fellow soldier frames you for his misdeeds and you are booted out of the service. Gain an Enemy.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	On a covert mission outside of the Confederation you participate in a surgical assault. Gain Battle Dress, Drive (any), Heavy Weapons (any) or Stealth.
4	You must discipline a disobedient junior NCO or officer. Roll Persuade or Melee (any) 8+. If you succeed, gain him as an Ally. If you fail, lose one Social Standing and he becomes a Rival.
5	You garrison one of the major military bases, which has access to a wide range of recreational facilities. Gain one of Carouse, Gambling, Streetwise or Survival.
6	Proving your dedication to duty, you are given advanced training in a specialist field. Throw Education 8+ to increase any one skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	You have the opportunity to volunteer for a deadly rescue mission. Roll Survival or End 8+. If you succeed you are granted a +2 DM to your next Advancement roll and gain an extra Benefit roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
9	After suffering at his hands for an entire term, you catch your commander in a compromising situation. You may blackmail him and gain an extra two benefits or let him off the hook and gain him as a trusted Ally.
10	You are challenged to a test of skill by a rival. If you refuse, you lose a point of Social Standing. Accept and roll your best skill 8+. If you fail, you lose all benefits from this term. Succeed and gain a +2 DM to your next advancement roll.
11	Your deeds are legend in your serving unit and your judgement unquestionably trusted. Gain a level of either Leadership, Tactics (Military) or take a +4DM to your next Advancement roll thanks to their recommendations.
12	Leading your unit during an exercise you come up with an innovative tactic, which takes the opposite team by complete surprise and your aptitude is reported to the staff officers. You are either promoted or automatically commissioned to officer rank.

Ranks and Skills

Rank	NCO	Skill or Benefit	Officer	Skill or Benefit
1	Private	Gun Combat (any) 1	Lieutenant	Leadership 1
2	Lance Corporal		Captain	
3	Corporal	Leadership 1	Major	Tactics (military) 1
4	Sergeant		Colonel	
5	Staff Sergeant	Tactics (military) 1	Brigadier	Diplomat 1
6	Sergeant Major		General	

	Cavalry	Infantry	Support
Survival	End 6+	End 5+	End 7+
Advancement	Edu 6+	Edu 7+	Edu 5+

Commission: Int 8+

Mustering-Out Benefits:

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	5,000	+1 Intelligence
2	5,000	+1 Endurance
3	10,000	+1 Education
4	10,000	Weapon
5	20,000	Armour
6	50,000	Vehicle
7	100,000	Combat Implant



MERCHANT

Members of commercial enterprises, Darrian merchants may crew the ships of the large trading corporations or they may work for the independent free traders that carry chance cargos and passengers between worlds.

Qualification: Int 6+

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Merchant Marine:** You work aboard one of the massive transports or liners run by the large Darrian corporations. Work is repetitive but stable, shuttling back and forth on established routes.
- **Free Trader:** You serve on a tramp freighter meandering between worlds in search of whatever cargo can be trumped up. The voyages are a constant stress and sometimes dangerous, yet rarely boring.
- **Broker:** You work from a static location, normally at a starport, where you broker deals and trade for goods on the market.



	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (Minimum Edu 8)
1	+1 Intelligence	Admin	Astrogation
2	+1 Education	Advocate	Computers
3	+1 Dexterity	Broker	Comms
4	+1 Endurance	Persuade	Engineering (any)
5	Carouse	Streetwise	Pilot (any)
6	Streetwise	Trade (any)	Sensors
	Specialist: Merchant Marine	Specialist: Free Trader	Specialist: Broker
1	Admin	Jack of all Trades	Admin
2	Engineering (any)	Melee (any)	Advocate
3	Mechanic	Persuade	Broker
4	Pilot (small craft)	Pilot (small craft)	Broker
5	Steward	Streetwise	Trade (any)
6	Trade (any)	Trade (any)	Trade (any)

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishaps
1	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
2	You are accused of stealing from your employer. If this is true, gain three Benefit rolls. If it is false, roll Advocate 8+ to defend yourself. If you succeed, you may remain in this career.
3	You are bankrupted by a rival trader. You lose all Benefits from this career and gain the other trader as a Rival.
4	Your ship's or company's fortunes decline. You may continue in this career if you wish but you will gain no Benefit rolls this term or next term.
5	You are sent to a border world, where your career stagnates. Gain Flyer 1, Navigate 1, Survival 1 or Trade 1.
6	A superior takes a dislike to you. Gain a Rival.



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	A rival crew or group of executives ambush you in a bar. Roll Melee (any), Stealth or Persuade 8+. If you succeed, gain any skill. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
4	You pick up a useful skill. Gain Drive 1, Mechanic 1, Pilot 1 or Sensors 1.
5	You have the opportunity to take a risk in business. Wager up to three Benefit rolls and roll Broker 8+. If you succeed, gain an equal number of Benefit rolls to those you wagered. If you fail, lose any wagered Benefits.
6	You befriend an old spacer who decides to give you advanced training in a specialist field. Roll Education 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	You expand into new territories. Gain Broker 1, Streetwise, Trade (any) 1 or a Contact.
9	You are embroiled in legal trouble. Gain one of Admin 1, Advocate 1, Diplomat 1 or Investigate 1.
10	Confederation trade restrictions force you out of business. You may take the Rogue career for your next term without needing to roll for qualification. Gain a +2DM to your next Advancement roll.
11	You befriend a useful ally in one sphere. Gain an Ally and either gain a level in Carouse or take a +4 DM to your next Advancement roll thanks to his aid.
12	You appear to possess the Midas touch, your ship or company thrives and prospers thanks to your efforts. You are automatically promoted.

Ranks and Skills

Rank	Merchant Marine	Skill or Benefit	Free Trader	Skill or Benefit	Broker	Skill or Benefit
1	Crewman	Mechanic 1		Vacc Suit 1	Dealer	
2	Able Crewman		Free Trader	Melee (any)		Broker 1
3	Petty Officer	Pilot (small craft) 1			Negotiator	
4	Warrant Officer		Merchant	Trade (any)		Advocate 1
5	1 st Officer	Astrogation 1			Entrepreneur	
6	Captain		Merchant Captain			

	Merchant Marine	Free Trader	Broker
Survival	Edu 5+	Dex 6+	Edu 7+
Advancement	Int 7+	Int 6+	Int 5+

Mustering-Out Benefits:

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	5,000	Contact
2	5,000	+1 Intelligence
3	10,000	+1 Education
4	20,000	Blade
5	20,000	Gun
6	40,000	Ally
7	100,000	10 ship shares



MILITIA

The militia are the home defence forces of each Darrian planet. Troops specialise in guerrilla warfare, hit and run tactics and insurgency, leaving the heavy combat to the Confederation Guard. Unusually, militia forces are often trained in primitive weaponry, deception and other similar skills to make them nearly untraceable when blending in with the local population or attacking from ambush.

Qualification: End 5+

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Flyer:** You piloted an atmospheric fighter, grav bike or light tank. Life expectancy is projected to be low in a real conflict but you live for the speed, skill and daring.
- **Infantry:** You are a foot soldier trained in mobile, irregular combat. You are a versatile fighter in both urban and wilderness settings, using tricks and traps to overcome superior firepower.
- **Support:** You are a mechanic, medic, commtech or other support engineer, patching up men or equipment damaged in conflict.



Skills and Training:

	Personal Development	Service Skills	Officer Skills (Commissioned Only)
1	+1 Strength	Athletics (any)	Comms
2	+1 Dexterity	Gun Combat (any)	Computers
3	+1 Endurance	Melee (any)	Leadership
4	Athletics (any)	Recon	Navigation
5	Gun Combat (any)	Stealth	Sensors
6	Melee (any)	Survival	Tactics (military)
	Specialist: Flyer	Specialist: Infantry	Specialist: Support
1	Comms	Deception	Comms
2	Flyer (any)	Gun Combat (any)	Engineering (any)
3	Flyer (any)	Heavy Weapons (any)	Explosives
4	Gunnery (turret)	Melee (any)	Mechanic
5	Mechanic	Recon	Medic
6	Sensors	Stealth	Sensors

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishap
1	Severely Injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	A superior officer has you drummed out of the service. Gain a Rival.
3	During an exercise you become lost behind 'enemy' lines. Gain Gun Combat (any), Stealth, Streetwise or Survival.
4	Whilst training you shoot a superior officer and are sentenced to military prison until your term ends. Lose 1 Social Standing.
5	You risk severe injury in a dangerous live fire skirmish. If you fight bravely, roll Gun Combat or Athletics 8+. If you fail, you are injured and you must leave this career. If you succeed, you may remain in this career. If you refuse to fight bravely, you must leave this career.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Your unit is temporarily assigned to an Imperium peace keeping force that sees conflict. Roll Recon or Gun Combat 8+ to avoid being injured and gain one of Heavy Weapons 1, Leadership 1, Medic 1 or Stealth 1 as you fight to survive.
4	You are assigned to garrison duty on an isolated Confederation outpost. Gain a Contact there, or one of the following skills: Comms, Mechanic or Streetwise,.
5	You are involved in a skirmish when a pirate ship misjumps and mistakenly raids your world. Gain one of Gun Combat (any), Melee (any), Recon or Survival, then roll that skill. If you get an 8+, you unit was victorious, granting a +2 DM to your next Advancement roll.
6	You are given advanced training in a specialist skill. Roll Education 8+ to gain any one skill available to your career.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	You are sent to Cunnonic to help the Aslan garrison cull the hostile life forms. Increase a skill of your choice by one but lose a point of Intelligence from the repeated nightmares you have suffered ever since.
9	A mission goes disastrously wrong due to your commander's error or incompetence but you survive. If you report your commanding officer for his failure then you gain a +2 DM to your next Advancement roll. If you say nothing and protect him, gain him as an Ally.
10	You are considered for promotion to the Confederation Guard. You may add the number of terms served in this career as a +DM if you attempt to qualify for them next term and preserve your rank by transferring over to the Guard equivalent.
11	You serve under a hero of the clan, who likes your attitude. Either gain Tactics (Military), or take a +4 DM to your next Advancement roll thanks to his aid.
12	Your ceaseless high performance marks come to the attention of the upper echelons. You are either promoted or automatically commissioned to officer rank.

Ranks and Skills

Rank	NCO	Skill or Benefit	Officer	Skill or Benefit
1	Private	Gun Combat (any) 1	Lieutenant	Leadership 1
2	Lance Corporal		Captain	
3	Corporal	Leadership 1	Major	Tactics (military) 1
4	Sergeant		Colonel	
5	Staff Sergeant	Tactics (military) 1	Brigadier	Diplomat 1
6	Sergeant Major		General	

	Flyer	Infantry	Support
Survival	Dex 7+	Str 6+	End 5+
Advancement	Int 5+	Edu 6+	Edu 7+

Commission: Int 8+

Mustering-Out Benefits:

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	500	+1 Intelligence
2	1,000	+1 Endurance
3	2,000	+1 Education
4	5,000	Weapon
5	10,000	Armour
6	20,000	Vehicle
7	50,000	Combat Implant



Navy

The Darrian Confederation navy patrols the region of space between its star systems. The navy has a responsibility to protect the Confederation against invasion and to deter piracy by the lawless elements who cluster around the Darrian borders. Primary of these threats are the Zhodani and Sword World fleets against whom the Darrian navy has clashed numerous times in the past.

Qualification: Edu 6+

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Bridge:** You are part of the bridge crew who control the ship and coordinate its different functions during battle.
- **Engineering:** You are the mechanics, engineers and repair crews who ensure the ship remains functional both in and out of battle.
- **Marine:** You are the ship's troops who repel boarders or are sent to pacify resistance on crippled enemy vessels.



Skills and Training:

	Personal Development	Service Skills	Officer Skills (Commissioned Only)
1	+1 Strength	Gun Combat (any)	Admin
2	+1 Dexterity	Gunner (any)	Computers
3	+1 Endurance	Melee (any)	Leadership
4	+1 Intelligence	Pilot (small craft)	Science (any)
5	+1 Education	Vacc Suit	Tactics (naval)
6	Jack of all Trades	Zero-G	Tactics (naval)
	Specialist: Bridge	Specialist: Engineering	Specialist: Marine
1	Astrogation	Computers	Battle Dress
2	Comms	Engineering (any)	Explosives
3	Gunner (any)	Engineering (any)	Gun Combat (any)
4	Pilot (any)	Mechanics	Heavy Weapon (man portable)
5	Remote Operations	Remote Operations	Recon
6	Sensors	Vacc Suit	Tactics (shipboard)

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishap
1	Severely Injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	A failing on your part causes a catastrophic loss in your team. You lose one point of Social Standing. In addition the only other survivor becomes your Enemy.
3	During a battle, defeat or victory depends on your actions. You must make an 8+ roll using a skill that depends on your branch: Sensors or Gunner (any) if you are bridge crew, Mechanic or Vacc Suit if you are engineering crew and Gun Combat or Tactics if you are a marine. If you fail, the ship suffers severe damage and you are blamed for the disaster. You are court-martialled and discharged. If you succeed, your efforts ensure that you are honourably discharged. You still leave the career but may keep your Benefit roll from this term.
4	You are tormented by or quarrel with an officer or fellow crewman. Gain that character as a Rival, as he forces you out of the Navy.
5	Placed in the frozen watch (cryogenically stored on board ship) and revived improperly. Reduce either Strength, Dexterity or Endurance by 1 due to muscle wastage.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	On secondment to the Imperium you fight a brutal space battle. Improve a skill of your choice by one level.
4	You must discipline a disobedient junior officer. Roll Leadership or Melee 8+. If you succeed, gain him as an Ally. If you fail, lose one Social Standing and he becomes a Rival.
5	You are stationed at a major naval base. Gain one of Carouse, Gambling, Persuade or Streetwise.
6	A senior officer takes interest in your career. You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Throw Education 8+ to increase any one skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	You join a gambling circle on board. Gain Gambler 1 or Deception 1. If you wish, throw Gambler 8+. If you succeed, gain an extra Benefit roll for this term; if you fail, you lose a Benefit roll instead.
9	Your vessel participates in a notable engagement against pirates. Gain one of Engineer (any) 1, Gunnery (any) 1, Pilot (any) 1 or Sensors 1.
10	Your vessel participates in a diplomatic mission. Gain one of Diplomacy 1, Recon 1, Steward 1 or a Contact.
11	Your service report is excellent and you are invited to sit at secondary control board on the bridge. Either gain Tactics (naval) 1 or take a +4 DM to your next Advancement roll thanks to his aid.
12	You display heroism in battle, saving the whole ship. You may gain a promotion or a commission automatically.

NCO Ranks and Skills

Rank	Bridge/Engineering	Skill or Benefit	Marine	Skill or Benefit
1	Spacehand	Mechanic 1	Marine	Blade 1
2	Able Spacehand		Lance Corporal	
3	Leading Spacehand	Vacc Suit 1	Corporal	Battle Dress 1
4	Petty Officer		Sergeant	
5	Chief Petty Officer	Leadership 1	Colour Sergeant	Tactics (shipboard) 1
6	Warrant Officer		Sergeant Major	

Officer Ranks and Skills

Rank	Bridge	Skill or Benefit	Engineering	Skill or Benefit	Marine	Skill or Benefit
1	Midshipman	Melee (Blade) 1	Midshipman	Engineering (any) 1	Lieutenant	Leadership 1
2	Lieutenant	Leadership 1	Sub-Lieutenant	Admin 1	Captain	
3	Commander		Lieutenant		Major	Tactics (shipboard) 1
4	Captain	Tactics (naval) 1	Engineer	Leadership 1	Lt. Colonel	
5	Commodore		Chief Engineer		Colonel	Diplomacy 1
6	Admiral		Fleet Engineer		Brigadier	

	Bridge	Engineering	Marine
Survival	Edu 5+	Int 6+	Dex 7+
Advancement	Int 7+	Edu 6+	Edu 5+

Commission: Int 8+

Mustering-Out Benefits:

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	1,000	Contact
2	5,000	+1 Intelligence
3	5,000	+2 Education
4	10,000	Weapon
5	20,000	Armour
6	50,000	Vehicle
7	50,000	Five Ship Shares

SCHOLAR

Knowledge and learning are almost a mania amongst Darrians, something in their psyche drives them towards accumulating information, then analysing it with an insatiable curiosity. Upon beginning adulthood, Darrians must decide whether to spend their first term serving in the military or continue their higher education by serving as a scholar instead. About half choose the path of learning in preference to the path of defence. Despite only the first term being mandatory by law, many students decide to continue a career in research, science or medicine.

Qualification: Edu 7+

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Physician:** You specialise in the life sciences, combining the role of researcher and technician, by tending the sick and wounded and developing cures for chronic or virulent diseases.
- **Researcher:** You study subjects, develop new theories and then test them via experimentation or empirical measurements. Your work is almost all cerebral; finding patterns or relationships and conceiving reasons for them to be so.
- **Technician:** You take the formulae and theories proposed by researchers and try to create practical applications and devices with them. With these theories you craft working technology.



	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (Minimum Edu 8)
1	+1 Intelligence	Admin	Advocate
2	+1 Education	Computers	Astrogation
3	+1 Social Standing	Investigate	Computers
4	Computers	Science (any)	Diplomacy
5	Jack of all Trades	Science (any)	Language (any)
6	Science (any)	Sensors	Science (any)
	Specialist: Physician	Specialist: Researcher	Specialist: Technician
1	Investigate	Computers	Computers
2	Life Science	Science (any)	Engineering (any)
3	Medicine	Science (any)	Engineering (any)
4	Medicine	Science (any)	Science (any)
5	Persuade	Science (any)	Science (any)
6	Sensors	Sensors	Sensors

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishap
1	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
2	A laboratory or library accident exposes you to something dangerous. Reduce your Endurance by 1.
3	Another researcher sabotages your work. Gain a Rival. You may continue in this career if you wish but gain no Benefit rolls from this term.
4	The lab ship you are aboard misjumps, stranding you on an alien world. Gain one of Astrogation 1, Life Science 1, Mechanic 1 or Survival 1.
5	A rival scholar insists that your work is flawed. You may challenge the critic if you wish. If you challenge, roll Science 8+. If you succeed, increase your Social Standing by 1 and you may continue with this career. If you fail, reduce your Social Standing by 2 and leave this career.
6	Your university cancels your line of research. You may, if you wish, leave to continue it in human space, in which case you may automatically qualify for the Scholar career from the main Traveller Core Rulebook next term.



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	You decide to take a sabbatical from study, to recharge your flagging mind. Gain one of Carouse 1, Streetwise 1, Survival 1 or a Contact.
4	You are assigned to work on weapons technology for the Confederation. Gain one of Engineering 1, Gun Combat 1, Gunnery 1 or Space Science 1.
5	You work closely with a scientist from another species. Gain a Contact.
6	Your university head of department decides that you should be given advanced training in a specialist field. Roll Education 8+ to gain any skill.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	You teach young students at your university or local school. Gain Admin 1, Persuade 1, any Science 1 or a Contact.
9	A researcher working for another university is close to making a breakthrough you covet. You can try to complete your research first, attempt to sabotage his work or do nothing. If you try to complete your work first, roll Science 10+. Fail and you lose any Benefit rolls from this term. Succeed and you gain a +2 DM to your next advancement roll and gain the researcher as a Rival. If you try to sabotage his work, roll Stealth or Deception 8+. Fail and you lose 2 Social Standing. Succeed and you gain a +2 DM to your next Advancement roll, in addition to gaining the researcher as an Enemy.
10	You obtain a rare pre-Maghiz artefact to study. Roll an applicable Science 8+. If you succeed, you uncover the subject's secrets and the Special Arm arrives to remove the object and offer you a job, allowing you to transfer into the Special Arm career with rank and benefits intact. If you fail the agents still turn up but simply take the artefact and disappear, your protests availing you nothing.
11	You are invited to study at one of the great universities or research facilities on Daryen. With the research facilities available, you may either improve a single Science skill by one level or gain a +4 DM to your next Advancement roll.
12	You make a scientific breakthrough. In addition to being automatically promoted, your best Science, Engineering or Medic skill improves by one.

Ranks and Skills

Rank	Researcher/Technician	Physician	Skill or Benefit
1	Scholar	Medic	Computer 1
2			
3	Respected Scholar	Doctor	Admin 1
4			
5		Specialist	
6	Revered Scholar		+1 Social Standing

	Physician	Researcher	Technician
Survival	Edu 5+	Edu 7+	Int 6+
Advancement	Soc 7+	Int 5+	Edu 6+

Mustering-Out Benefits:

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	5,000	Scientific equipment
2	10,000	+1 Edu
3	25,000	+1 Int
4	50,000	Contact
5	75,000	Vehicle
6	100,000	+1 Social
7	150,000	+2 Social



SPECIAL ARM

The Special Arm is the mysterious third branch of the Darrian military; the secretive organisation is assigned the control and deployment of the terrifying Star Trigger weapon. Members of the Special Arm are occasionally seen travelling across the Confederation and have the authority to commandeer ships to act as couriers or perform missions vital to Confederation security. More notable is the fact that new discoveries of pre-Maghiz technology are usually confiscated by Special Arm officers, although sometime later, artefacts are usually returned to the original discoverer or their university for further analysis.

Qualification: Int 9+

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Commando:** You are the elite soldiers of the Confederation, equipped with technology well beyond that of the Zhodani or Imperium. Your task is to protect the Confederation and prevent restricted knowledge or devices from falling into enemy hands. You are the watchers of the watchmen.
- **Psion:** You are the specially trained counter espionage agents trained to locate Zhodani spies and interrogate those who would cause harm to the Confederation.
- **Scientist:** You are the cutting edge researchers of the Confederation, especially head hunted for your innovative concepts and genius abilities. You study pre-Maghiz artefacts and extract their secrets for replication and development.



Skills and Training:

	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (Minimum Edu 8)
1	+1 Strength	Deception	Astrogation
2	+1 Dexterity	Gun Combat (any)	Computers
3	+1 Endurance	Investigate	Comms
4	+1 Intelligence	Melee (any)	Engineering (any)
5	+1 Education	Recon	Pilot (any)
6	Jack of all Trades	Stealth	Sensors
	Specialist: Commando	Specialist: Psion	Specialist: Scientist
1	Athletics (any)	Clairvoyance	Computers
2	Battle Dress	Persuade	Engineering (any)
3	Heavy Weapon (man portable)	Streetwise	Engineering (any)
4	Streetwise	Social Science (any)	Science (any)
5	Survival	Telepathy	Science (any)
6	Tactics (military)	Telepathy	Sensors

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishap
1	Severely Injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	You learn something that you should not have and now you are on the run from the Special Arm. Gain the organisation as an Enemy.
3	A mission or research project goes wrong and you are held responsible for it. You may accept your fate and be voluntarily retired. If you argue, roll Persuade 8+. If you succeed, you may stay in this career. If you fail, you are terminated.
4	An enemy agent targets you. Roll Gun Combat, Melee or Stealth 8+; if you fail, roll on the Injury table. Either way, concern is raised regarding how or why the agent was after you, forcing you into retirement.
5	The other side attempts to turn you. If you accept, gain three extra Benefit rolls as you fake your own death and flee from the Confederation.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Ship J-Drive malfunction leaves you stranded in hostile foreign space, when 'rescued' you are forced to escape before your identity is discovered. Gain Deception 1, Pilot 1 or Stealth 1.
4	You must discipline a disobedient junior officer. Roll Leadership or Melee 8+. If you succeed, gain him as an Ally. If you fail, lose one Social Standing and he becomes a Rival.
5	You are caught by your superiors doing private research into restricted files. You are forced to quickly bury your stolen data in the computer system; roll Computers 8+. Success hides the information so you may recover it properly, using the information to gain a +2 DM on your next Advancement roll. Failure means the data is found and you are retired unless you lie your way out of the situation with a Deception or Persuade 8+ roll.
6	Your senior officer or departmental head wishes to fast track your development. You are given advanced training in a specialist field. Throw Education 8+ to increase any one skill, which must be chosen from your career selection.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	Your absolute loyalty being proven time and again, you are assigned to crew duty aboard one of the Star Trigger ships. You may roll once on the Advanced Education table.
9	You are volunteered to test a new piece of experimental equipment. Either gain any augment of up to TL16 or the skill required to operate the device at level 1.
10	You are sent on a black ops mission to recover a pre-Maghiz artefact from a Sword World or Zhodani military base. The surgical intrusion goes pear shaped and you are forced to blast your way free. Roll Stealth or Gun Combat 8+. Success means you achieved the objective and gain a +2 DM to your next Advancement roll. Failure indicates that you were wounded in action, roll on the Injury table. Either way you learn from the experience and may increase two of your lowest skills by one level.
11	You learn of an ethically questionable secret concerning the Special Arm, something you are opposed to that could harm its reputation, or significantly hamper its operations, and must choose whether to covertly release it. Withhold the information and you find yourself automatically promoted. Attempt to release the knowledge and you discover it was a trap laid by your superior. You suffer a -4 DM on your next Advancement roll and the officer as an Enemy.
12	Your exemplary discipline and fervour make you a natural leader amongst your peers. You are automatically promoted and increase your Leadership by one level.

Ranks and Skills

Rank	Commando/Psion	Skill or Benefit	Scientist	Skill or Benefit
1	Lieutenant	Melee (Blade) 1	Researcher	Jack of all Trades
2	Captain	Leadership 1	Analyst	Admin 1
3	Major			
4	Lt. Colonel	Tactics (military) 1	Specialist	
5	Colonel			+1 Social Standing
6	Brigadier		Faculty Head	

	Commando	Psion	Scientist
Survival	Dex 8+	Int 7+	Int 6+
Advancement	Int 6+	Psi 7+	Edu 8+

After an individual joins the Special Arm, they remain in that service until the end of their career. However, once in the Special Arm, everyone will always assume the character is still involved, which can potentially make adventuring difficult. This is not a wise choice for player characters, unless the referee is designing his campaign around the Special Arm and its activities. If not specified otherwise Mishaps force the character into permanent retirement.

Mustering-Out Benefits:

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	1,000	Contact
2	5,000	+1 Intelligence
3	5,000	+2 Education
4	10,000	Weapon
5	20,000	Armour
6	50,000	Vehicle
7	50,000	Five Ship Shares

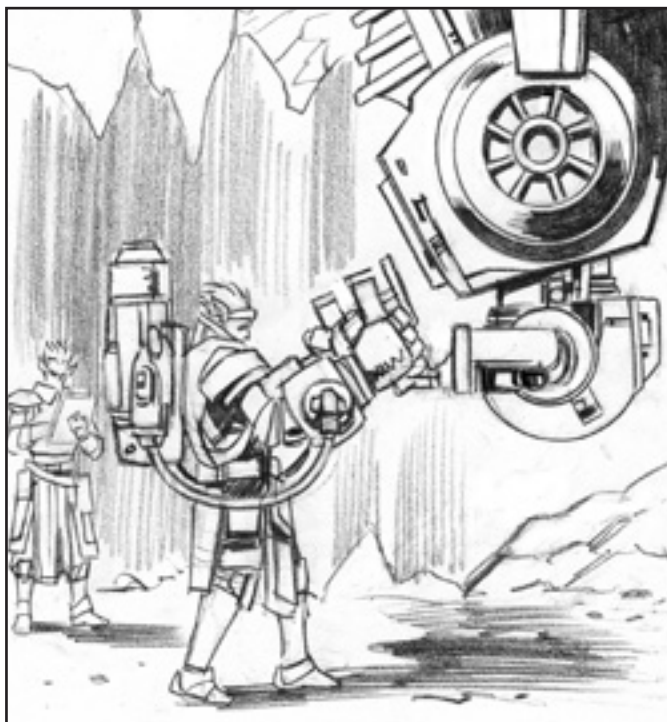
WORKER

Whilst most Darrians serve in some duty, the majority work in the everyday corporations, industries and civil authorities that run society. Depending on the employer work can range from waste recycling to legal secretarial duties, with both blue collar and white collar vocations.

Qualification: Edu 5+

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Bureaucratic:** You are employed by your planetary government to perform jobs required to allow society to function, from the maintenance of infrastructure to population administration.
- **Corporate:** You work as part of a business designed to earn a profit by selling products or services to customers. Work can vary between working on the shop floor to management of company finances or resources.
- **Industrial:** You labour in companies that mine, manufacture, process, build or destroy things. Employment can range between driving heavy machinery to the conceptual design of new methods.



Skills and Training:

	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (Minimum Edu 8)
1	+1 Edu	Admin	Advocate
2	+1 Int	Computers	Engineering (any)
3	Carouse	Drive (any)	Computers
4	Gambler	Flyer (any)	Life Science (any)
5	Drive	Persuade	Physical Science (any)
6	Jack of all Trades	Steward	Social Science (any)
	Specialist: Bureaucratic	Specialist: Corporate	Specialist: Industrial
1	Admin	Admin	Admin
2	Advocate	Broker	Drive (any)
3	Diplomat	Diplomat	Mechanic
4	Leadership	Leadership	Engineering (any)
5	Persuade	Persuade	Flyer (any)
6	Streetwise	Trade (any)	Physical Science

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishap
1	Severely Injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	A family member or lover is killed in a genuine accident. You fall apart and begin to act strangely.
3	A shift in office politics ruins your career. Lose 1 Social Standing.
4	Excessive stress takes its toll. Lose 1 Endurance.
5	You are framed by a rival and although later proven innocent, the disgrace had already ended your career. Gain a Rival.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	An emergency at your place of employment forces you to make a critical decision between saving months of work or saving your life. Roll Dex 8+. If you succeed, your boss and team mates reward your efforts allowing you to increase any skill you have by one level. If you fail, roll on the Injury table.
4	You have the opportunity to purchase cheaper services or materials necessary for your job. If you accept, roll Int 8+. Succeed and you gain one Benefit roll. Fail and you discover they were underpriced for good reason, you are ejected from this career and lose 1 Social Standing.
5	Your work takes you outside of the Confederation. Gain one of Diplomat, Language or Life Science.
6	You spend time maintaining and using vehicles, either as part of your job or as a hobby. Increase Drive (any), Engineer (any), Flyer (any) or Mechanic by one level.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	You become fixated with a fellow worker and go to extreme efforts to become friendly with them. No matter how hard you try they brush you off and your feelings towards them sour. Gain an Enemy and one level of Carouse, Diplomat or Persuade.
9	Your boss starts an inter-departmental conflict with another office. You are asked to uncover compromising information concerning their work ethics. If you agree you are automatically promoted this term. If you refuse, your superior prevents you from advancing this term.
10	Your business expands, your corporation grows or the colony thrives. Gain a +1 DM to any one Benefit roll.
11	You befriend an old Darrian who once managed your place of employment. He arranges for you to gain additional tuition. Gain an extra roll on your Speciality table.
12	Your efforts gain your department an advance in status. You are automatically promoted.

Ranks and Skills

Rank	Bureaucratic	Skill or Benefit	Corporate	Skill or Benefit	Industrial	Skill or Benefit
1						
2	Administrator	Admin 1	Manager	Admin 1	Technician	Mechanic 1
3						
4	Supervisor	Advocate 1	Senior Manager	Leadership 1	Production Manager	Engineering 1
5						
6	Director	+1 Social	Executive	Broker 1	Production Director	Leadership 1

	Bureaucratic	Corporate	Industrial
Survival	Int 5+	Soc 6+	End 7+
Advancement	Soc 7+	Int 6+	Edu 5+

Mustering-Out Benefits:

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	1,000	+1 Education
2	5,000	+1 Intelligence
3	10,000	Ally
4	20,000	Vehicle
5	30,000	Paid for trip anywhere in the Confederation
6	50,000	Paid for trip anywhere in a neighbouring subsector
7	100,000	Two Ship Shares



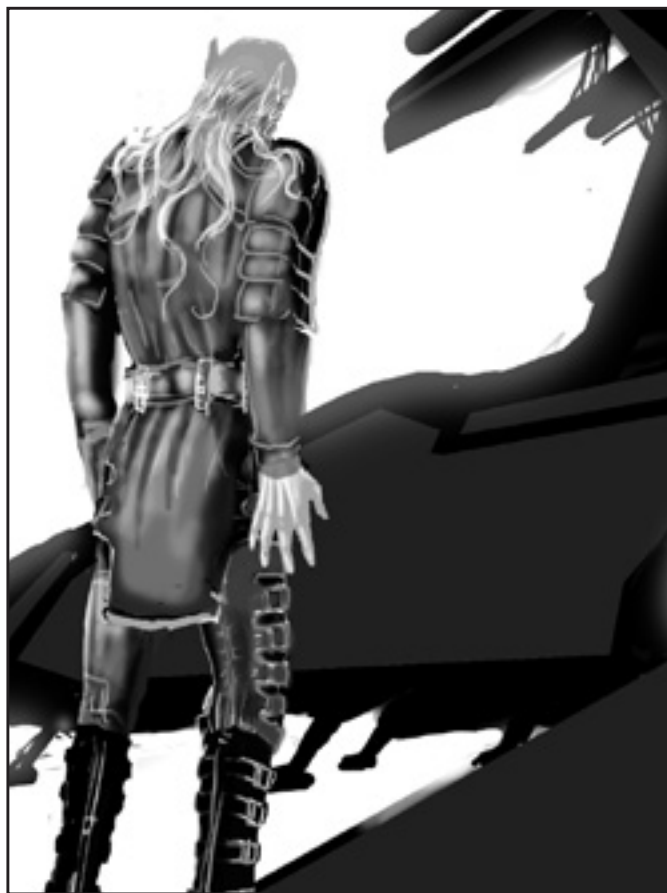
WANDERER

Some Darrians wander about the Confederation failing to put down roots in any one place. Most are transient workers or simple nomads wishing to see every aspect of Darrian culture. A few are exiles, keeping one step ahead of their blackened reputations by hiding at the few foreign outposts in the Confederation, crewing non-Darrian ships or assuming false personalities. Wanderers generally travel between worlds by working for their passage on ships with a space crew slot to fill.

Qualification: Automatic

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Drifter:** You travel from system-to-system picking up temporary work such as asteroid mining, salvaging, engineering crew and so on. Your wanderlust prevents you from settling down in any one specific job, despite the high level of diverse skills that you have picked up.
- **Exile:** Thrown out of the world you were born on, you by all rights should be beyond the borders of the Confederation or lying dead from exposure and starvation somewhere. Yet there are some refuges in Darrian space and not all Darrians are heartless enough to allow an exile to die but grant you brief shelter in exchange for work, before ushering you onwards.
- **Nomad:** Your journey between the worlds of the Confederation, trying to absorb the many varied and wonderful cultures each colony has developed. Whether you are collecting material for a scholarly study or simply love meeting new people is up to you.



	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (Minimum Edu 8)
1	+1 Strength	Athletics (any)	Astrogation
2	+1 Dexterity	Melee (unarmed)	Computers
3	+1 Endurance	Recon	Comms
4	Carouse	Streetwise	Engineering (any)
5	Streetwise	Stealth	Pilot (any)
6	Jack of all Trades	Survival	Sensors
	Specialist: Drifter	Specialist: Exile	Specialist: Nomad
1	Engineering (any)	Deception	Jack of all Trades
2	Flyer (any)	Jack of all Trades	Language (any)
3	Jack of all Trades	Melee (any)	Persuade
4	Mechanics	Recon	Science (any)
5	Remote Operation	Stealth	Steward
6	Vacc Suit	Streetwise	Streetwise

Mishaps

Roll 1d6	Mishap
1	Severely Injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
2	The ship you are on makes an emergency landing on an uninhabited world. Gain any one of Animals (any) 1, Mechanic 1, Recon 1 or Survival 1.
3	You fail to find work or usable territory. Starvation reduces your Endurance by 1.
4	Believed to be an exile you are attacked. Roll Melee or End 8+ to avoid injury.
5	You run afoul of a criminal gang, corrupt bureaucrat or other foe. Gain an Enemy.
6	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.



Events

Roll 2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	A patron offers you a chance at a job. If you accept, you gain a +4 DM to your next Qualification roll but you owe that patron a favour.
4	You pick up a few useful skills here and there. Gain one level of Jack of all Trades, Melee (any), Streetwise or Survival.
5	A wandering Darrian of suspicious demeanour admires your fortitude and grants you a gift. You gain an extra Benefit roll.
6	You make a Contact in a distant spaceport.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	You pick up some useful skills in your last job. Gain an extra roll on any table available to your career path.
9	Whilst visiting an Imperial starport you are forcibly drafted. Roll for the Draft (as per the <i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i>) next term. Surviving the term clears any previous criminal record, such as Exile.
10	You spend time employed in Aslan territory. Roll Survival 8+ or End 8+; if you fail, roll on the Mishap table. If you succeed, gain a Contact and any one skill.
11	You are offered the opportunity to smuggle illegal items onto a planet. If you accept, roll Deception 8+ or Persuade 8+ to gain Streetwise 1 and an extra Benefit roll. If you refuse, you gain an Enemy in the criminal sphere.
12	A member of your family tracks you down with the news that whatever caused you to start life as a wanderer has been cleared up (including Exile). If desired, you may immediately join any new career next term.

Ranks and Skills

Rank	Skill or Benefit
1	Mechanic
2	
3	Engineering
4	
5	
6	Contact

	Drifter	Exile	Nomad
Survival	Int 7+	End 8+	Int 6+
Advancement	Edu 7+	Int 6+	Soc 8+

Mustering-Out Benefits:

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	0	Contact
2	0	Weapon
3	0	Ally
4	2,000	Weapon
5	5,000	+1 Strength
6	10,000	+1 Dexterity
7	20,000	+1 Endurance

Note that failing a survival roll as an Exile indicates that the character has to leave Confederation space or quite literally die. Entry into the Exile career path immediately reduces the character's Social Standing to 2.



THE DARRIAN RACE

The Darrians are the most advanced technological race in the Spinward Marches. They reached their peak several thousand years ago but were knocked back to a pre-spaceflight level of industry, due to the horrors of the Magniz. It took nearly six centuries before one of their colonies recovered the technological base to refurbish their mothballed spacecraft and took to the stars once again.

Finding most of their previous confederation still intact, albeit trapped upon their respective planets, it did not take long for the Darrians to retake their place as an independent power in the sector. Despite the hardships they have endured, the Darrians have once again clawed their way back to technological superiority, helped by the study of surviving pre-setback artefacts and the deterrent of a super-weapon capable of destroying entire star systems.

Intelligent, inquisitive and stoic, the Darrians stand as an island of civilisation between contending empires poised to wreck havoc.

DARRIAN PHYSIOLOGY

Darrians are the descendents of human stock, transported to their homeworld by a member of the Ancients. Forced to live and adapt to a low gravity world, the Darrians have evolved into an unusually tall, slender race. Although initially free from most pathogens and diseases native to their new home, it did not take long for such things to evolve from their own body bacterium. This combined with high ozone levels, arid environment and the eventual loss of the originally tailored ecosystem, has caused the Darrians to develop some unique traits amongst humanity.

Most pure-blooded Darrians grow to a height between 2.1 and 2.3 metres. Those with some recent Solomani genes in their ancestry average a little shorter, from 2.0 to 2.2 metres tall. With the increased height comes a reduction in musculature, their physiques lengthened due to the low gravity. Freed from the shackles of more oppressive gravity, their structures were free to 'stretch'. A side effect of this lengthening is that their features are 'sharper' than in normal Humanity giving them a pleasantly exotic look some would call 'elfin', and mass slightly lighter, males around 78kg and females 73kg. This reduced mass gives the Darrians a more lithe and graceful appearance.

Genetic low gravity adaptation caused the Darrians some difficulty during their original diaspora, a number of the new colony worlds having a significantly higher gravity. Although

they were able to make some medical aids to counter the cardio-vascular stress, the sheer discomfort of living under high gravity and resulting reduction in lifespan, meant that few Darrians were willing to leave their homeworld to settle harsher planets. Even if acclimatised to higher gravity, the genetic problems still remain, requiring some Darrians, especially the geriatric populace, to live in orbital settlements, use special drugs to reduce the pain, or wear tailor-made exoskeletons to support their fragile skeletons.

For most of their official history, Darrians have lived in harmony with their ecologies, taking pleasure in maintaining an alert awareness of their natural surroundings. As such, they have sharper eyesight and hearing than normal humans. They also possess what appears to be a tailored, or perhaps evolved, mathematical and musical ability due to an unusually high number of cross linkages between the hemispheres of their brains. A side effect of this increased inventiveness is that almost a fifth of all Darrians are ambidextrous and those remaining have an equal chance of being left or right handed.

As a result of the high levels of ozone in the mountainous regions of their homeworld, Darrians are resistant to the oxidising side effects of the corrosive gas. They are also partially adapted to low pressure atmospheres both due to the original efforts of crossing high altitude mountain passes on their homeworld and because many of their colonies have thin or very thin air due to their lesser gravity. Darrians find it difficult to adapt to even moderately high pressures, requiring specialised breathing gear to function in anything above 1.1 Standard Atmospheres.

Another unusual adaptation is the widening of the pelvis. Instead of the knock-kneed structure of human legs, Darrian legs descend straight down from their hips, giving them a wider more stable stance and a distinctive graceful sway to their hips when walking. Except for a birthing advantage, allowing a larger head, and therefore more developed brain, to pass during delivery, it is unknown what benefits the pelvic structure offers since on higher gravity worlds it tends to increase the wear on the leg and hip joints. Darrians find it difficult to walk along narrow beams or lines.

The Darrian metabolism offers some unusual modifications to the human norm. Darrians are unable to store body fat, converting everything they eat to calories used for exercise and internal heat control. Hence, they have a variable appetite which adjusts itself automatically to the required energy expenditure. If a Darrian does overeat, their body simply stops digesting



consumed food and passes the excess, which, depending on the food consumed, can be quite painful. Although this autonomous process allows Darrians to remain slim and suffer no excess weight problems, much to the envy of other humans, it does mean that in energy intensive situations they can starve to death with surprising rapidity.

A fast burning metabolism does offer other advantages, such as being able to keep warm and safe from frostbite in extreme cold and in addition, the ability to resist diseases by entering a short feverish coma, which burns up most forms of human bacteriological and viral infections.

The golden skin tone of Darrians is due to a unique skin pigmentation called Protremelanin, which reflects, rather than absorbs, the stronger UV light of their homeworld. Thus their complexions tend to glow with what has been called an 'inner light'. Stressed or unhealthy Darrians lose this faint reflective illumination, their skin tone turning a greyish tan colour. Complimenting their skin colouration, Darrian hair ranges from yellow to platinum blond and also glows with reflected wavelengths. This particular adaptation has been invaluable on many colony worlds, whose thinner atmospheres and lack of ozone grant little protection against higher levels of ionising UV light.

Additionally Darrian physiology is adapted to water conservation. They perspire little, tending to undergo periods of inactivity when their body temperatures get too warm. Their skin pigmentation, high surface to mass ratio and unconsciously moderated metabolic rate, generally allows them to remain cool without the requirement of sweating, unless forced to extreme or extended periods of exercise.

Lifespan

Darrian gestation is 11 months, giving new born babies an advanced start due to increased brain size. Their linguistic abilities begin to be moulded whilst still in the womb and motor skills rapidly develop after birth. Most can run and climb within three months. Despite this rapid head start, Darrians are considered children until the age of 18 standard years, only being regarded as mature once they pass 22 and have completed their advanced or professional education.

Physically, Darrians are considered to be in their prime between the ages of 22 and 40, after which they begin a very slow reduction in physical prowess.

As a side effect of their evolved tolerance to oxidising agents, most healthy Darrians who live in warm climates can commonly survive to a 100 years old, the record being 127 standard Imperium years. Very cold or high gravity environments, can shorten life expectancy considerably due to higher maintained metabolic rates or increased physical stress on the pulmonary

system; lowering it to around the 60 year mark. Anagathics can extend this. By the time of death, most Darrians are still physically capable but increasingly fragile due to osteoporosis.

Diet

Like regular humans, Darrians are omnivorous eating a wide range of fruits, vegetables and meats. They originally began their civilisation eating the produce of the orchards they were provided with but supplemented their diet with meat hunted from native animals. With a rise in civilisation they began to practice animal husbandry in preference to hunting.

Despite having a fundamental respect for life, Darrians understand that predation is natural and therefore continue to raise livestock for consumption but forswearing any unnecessary cruelty in the slaughter and butchery of meat animals.

Although technologically capable of manufacturing vat grown artificial meat, most Darrians refuse to eat anything that has not been grown or raised organically. The majority prefer their food to be fresh and where possible, families often cultivate their own gardens to provide supplementary fruit and vegetables, or tiny potted herb collections if no land is available.

SOCIETY

Whilst it is not monolithic across the entire Darrian Confederation, Darrian society is based upon the philosophical teachings of the ancient Taledh school of thought. The Darrian social codes are a series of laws that define civility, tolerance, law and punishment. Each colony follows the general code but some sub-cultures have slightly different interpretations.

Viewed as examples of an idyllic pacifistic society, the Darrians are often held in contempt by more militaristic races. However, whilst the Darrians prefer to settle disputes via negotiation or clever ruses, the truth is far more complex. Darrian society is primarily based upon the well being of the community, rather than gratification of the self. Yet there is a strong emphasis on scientific or artistic excellence, stringent self control, acceptance of others and stoic persistence.

Darrian society is influenced by the member races of the Confederation. Citizens are treated equally regardless of species. The breakdown of the collected worlds' populace is 75% pure strain Darrians, 12% mixed heritage Darrians, 8% Aslan, 3% pure strain Solomani and 2% of other races. Since their arrival to the Darrian homeworld, the Solomani have been willingly subsumed within its culture but in return introduced new concepts of personal freedom and ambition. The Aslan, having a more alien society continue to follow core Aslan traditions but have slowly (and voluntarily) adopted new conventions such as monogamy, prohibition against unnecessary killing and the



pursuit of intellectual rather than militaristic status. Due to this slow reformation, non-Darrian Aslan consider their brethren to be barbarians and traitors to the true Aslan way.

Family Structures

Darrian families are based upon monogamous marriages. Prior to marriage, however, a variety of inter-sex relationships are actively encouraged, even up to the formations of polyamorous groups. This allows young Darrians to experience and experiment with multiple partners to discover what truly makes them content in a relationship.

Once married a Darrian is expected to remain faithful to their partner for the rest of their natural lifespan. Divorce is exceptionally rare due to the race tendencies for tolerance and stoicism. Where a relationship does not result in an enduring mutual love or respect, the partners endure, maintaining family stability for the sake of children and social reputation. As self control is another pillar of Darrian culture, romantic extra-marital affairs are frowned upon.

Each marriage produces an average of two or three children, although these rates have been artificially stimulated several times throughout the Darrian's history, notably on the colony worlds during the post-Maghiz period. Family names are descended through the male line but in return the mother receives the right to give the child its birth name (see Naming Customs page XX).

Children are raised to be respectful to elders and the community, open minded to opposed thought and to seek knowledge. Behaviour is reinforced by social ostracism, so that non-communal or selfish acts result in the exile of the perpetrator from his or her peers.

Once a Darrian reaches their adolescence at about the age of 14, they are also taught self reliance. Any anti-social conduct at this age is punished by the cessation of societal benefits, cutting the youth off from food, shelter and transport until they realise that they cannot function as a complete person without the support of others. Continued rebellious behaviour generally ends with the exile or occasional death (by starvation or exposure) of the maladjusted individual. Whilst these measures are viewed as unduly harsh by some worlds in the Imperium, they are the cultural inheritance of tens of thousands of years survival and few actually die from the alienation process unless they expressly desire to do so; many choose exile to the world of Rorre (see Darrian Worlds page XX).

The age of majority, when a Darrian is legally considered an adult, is 18 standard years. At this point the individual is encouraged to leave home and lead a life for itself. Family bonds remain tight though and during their declining years

parents are normally cared for by their children, grandchildren or great grandchildren, cycling between them to reduce the overall strain.

Community Structures

Outside of the concept of family, the Darrians lack any small tribal, clannish or national sense of identity. Rather they consider themselves as unified planetary cultures and even hold that of lesser importance to their identity as a Confederation. Although each member world has subtle differences in culture and tradition (to be expected considering the period of time each planet evolved independently after the Maghiz), the period since the return to interstellar spaceflight has knit the member worlds together in a surprisingly homogenous civilisation. Whether they are Darrian, Solomani or Aslan, citizens of the Confederation consider themselves to be ***Darrians***.

In general, most Darrian societies attempt to be egalitarian meritocracies. That is to say that everyone is treated equally and nothing prevents the assumption of any position or authority, save for personal capability. Social services and governance are structured in suitably sized local authorities, dependant on the geography and population distribution of each world. Some operate on the village or city level, whilst on others it may be continental. Obviously some worlds come closer to this ideal than others, but it is always the goal.

Spiritual and Philosophical Beliefs

Religion to Darrians is a philosophical matter, an expression of personal belief about divinities and the universe. Everyone is free to believe or worship whatever they want, as long as it causes no harm or inconvenience to others. The social functions that religion is typically expected to perform (such as charitable work, emotional support, youth activities, and counselling) are instead fulfilled by a variety of associations and organizations.

Most schools of philosophy are based upon courtesy, open-mindedness, rationality and respect for intelligence. Many enjoy wide followings, but the common societal conventions that encourage many diverse views also tend to keep such views from having any political power. Darrians tend to make a specific distinction between the philosophical or religious beliefs of the individual and their political leanings. Many philosophical teachers have large followings of those who agree with their teachings, but these do not form political power blocs.

Personal Excellence

Darrians are encouraged to exert themselves during their education to achieve their maximum potential. If a job is worth doing, then it is worth doing well. This pursuit of excellence is not limited to scientific subjects. Many Darrians excel at more artistic crafts or physical activities.



As Darrian society emphasises cooperative effort, individualistic accomplishment is regarded as having less worth than team achievements, especially if said attainment is gained at the expense of others. Two of the most contemptible crimes to be accused of in Darrian society are plagiarism (including failure to recognise a co-researcher) and lying about experimental results.

To aid continual development, non-military sensitive research data is generally made widely available to help other scientists. Likewise, Darrians gifted with physical or artistic skills are awarded grants or apprenticeships to study under the leading luminaries of their particular interest.

Of course, not everyone can be the best at a particular skill. Darrian psychology copes with this by granting great worth to individuals who cross train in multiple disciplines. The 'renaissance man' concept is highly regarded, since workplace and social adaptability are vital. Many heroes of the Maghiz were Darrians with a more general education, able to make innovative applications of disparate fields of knowledge to survive the shortages and general breakdown of technology.

Tolerance

The greatest strength of Darrian society is arguably an ability to see problems from a multitude of different perspectives. This is not empathy as such, rather a logical analysis of the situation and extrapolating the results of a decision. Thus their tolerance is a by-product of a pragmatic way of thinking, since intolerance almost invariably leads to conflict, waste of resources and often violence.

Whilst most races would look upon this aspect of Darrian psychology with a jaded eye, the cold reasoning is offset by an often disarming good humour, since negotiating Darrians generally project happiness and good humour. They take pleasure in being tolerant, knowing it leads to a more constructive and efficient future.

Darrian tolerance does have its limits however. Certain crimes such as cruelty, slander or assault are punished ruthlessly. Non-Darrians who repeatedly offend, lie or break contracts are banned from the Confederacy. Tolerant does not equal stupid and many foreigners who travel to the Darrian worlds to threaten, coerce or con citizens, find themselves harshly treated.





Due to their unusual embracement of this trait, Darrians have a reputation as pacifists, constitutionally unable to fight or defend themselves or their territory. This cannot be further from the truth. Threats by neighbouring civilisations are eventually dealt with if negotiations fail to bear results but often in subtle ways in an attempt to avoid open warfare. If no other option remains to Darrians other than to fight, they demonstrate total social commitment to battle and prove that their excellence is not just limited to science.

Stoicism

In their own eyes, the Darrians have suffered a series of catastrophes, each greater than the last. Despite these setbacks they have survived, endured and used the lesson to grow stronger. Whilst other races such as the Solomani or Vargr consider these disasters insignificant (save for perhaps the Maghiz) in comparison with their own histories full of wars, social persecution and the Long Night, the Darrians have embraced the concept of weathering any calamity. No matter how bad the situation, how overwhelming the odds, Darrians accept that fate is often stacked against them and do not complain but always seek a way to persevere.

This stoicism has also led to the Darrians developing a congenital foresight, planning ahead to improve the likelihood of survival. Even before the Maghiz, the scale of which caught them off guard, they had been creating caches of technology and knowledge against some unforeseen tragedy; many of which still exist, ready to be rediscovered.

GOVERNMENT

Although the member worlds of the Darrian Confederacy each have their own type of government, they still aspire to be egalitarian meritocracies. Thus any citizen (including Aslan and the like) is capable of holding political office, but by and large only the most skilled or knowledgeable are selected. Thus a politician voted to the Ministry of Finance generally has an education founded on economic theory and practice, a wide body of respected publications, years of field work and is regarded as a leading professor of the field by his peers.

The political organisation of the Confederation uses the following structure:

Municipal Government: One local officer is elected for every 1,000 citizens to oversee and represent his electorate. Local in this sense can be a quite abstract term, since 1,000 citizens may be the inhabitants of a densely packed city sector or spread across a lightly populated continent. These officers become de facto leaders during non-military catastrophes, if communications or social structure breaks down.

Planetary Government: Varies according to the world.

Confederation Government: A collection of five bureaucracies, known as Ministries, ruled by the Confederation Council.

The government of the Confederation is a loosely formed bureaucracy. The Confederation bureaucracy is broken into five areas of responsibility, the Ministries of Finance, Trade, Information, Defence and Confederation Appeals.

Unlike many worlds in the Imperium, the Darrian bureaucracy is minimal, utilising only a fraction of the populace. The rationale for Darrian bureaucratic efficiency is many-fold. The three primary reasons are as follows:

Darrian Honesty and Social Conscience: As part of their upbringing and high standard of living, Darrians are inherently honest. They do not try to fiddle their taxes or take advantage of the welfare system, knowing that to do so will undermine the system, and there is little for them to gain. So most administrative tasks are based around self declaration via centralised computer systems, each very easy to understand due to simplified, global regulations. Thus few members of staff are required to interact with the populace in general.

Homogenous Records and Financial System: From birth or acceptance as a Darrian citizen, all personal records and finances are stored electronically. Although each planetary database ostensibly holds only the detailed records of its own population, they all share the exact same structure and design. Cross checking data on a citizen from another planet is a formality, merely requiring a delay of however long it takes for the next data update to arrive from that world. Citizens who anticipate needing to perform bureaucratic business off world, usually request copies of their records being sent ahead before needing to visit the planet in question. Since the Confederation is a cashless society and accounts are indelibly linked to a Citizen's biometric ID, all financial transactions are easily accessible to the authorities and automated programs run checks to detect fraudulent activity. The same types of programs run within all the other records such as welfare, employment and education to ensure no oversights or mistakes are being made.

Dynamic Personnel Assignment: With most administration tasks being fulfilled by citizens themselves and double-checked by conflict checking software, what few bureaucratic staff remain are usually assigned the purpose of aiding politicians to adjudicate new problems, revise old systems or manage their work schedules. Most bureaucrats have no set responsibilities but are assigned to new projects as each previous one is completed. Therefore bureaucratic staff are selected for their versatility; with a good grounding in statistics, administration, data analysis and up to half a dozen other social, financial and natural sciences. Their task is not to be a greater specialist than the elected politician but to convey to the politician the interdependent effects any policy will have on other areas of society or the environment.



During its climb from the ashes of the Maghiz, the Darrians experimented with a number of different policies and interstellar structures, due to a series of egocentric ministers who believed their theories were superior. Over the centuries the Confederacy has grown more homogenous and efficient. With the experience of different roads taken, more radical politicians generally never reach a position to be able to undermine the stability of the system. Despite that, there is still a wide variety of political and policy opinion throughout the Confederation. The current structure is not ossified and rigid; it still changes and adapts to new circumstances. However, any changes are taken in a much more measured manner than that used in its early days.

The Confederation government technically cannot directly interfere in the running of any member world. However, to become a member of the Confederation, each planet must agree to a constitution that grants the base rules and regulations of Darrian society to the population. All citizens on that world must uphold these basic statutes but if desired the planetary government may impose extra directives in addition to the Confederation Constitution, as long as these do not create conflicts. Likewise, municipal government may impose further regulations specific to the local community.

The Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance oversees both the collection of taxes and the assignment of the annual budget from the collected monies. Its task is made simpler due to the readily available banking records of businesses and citizens. Taxes are automatically culled from wages or business transactions. Additional revenue is gained from the taxation of cargo brought into or leaving the Confederacy, as are non-citizens visiting the worlds whether they are businessmen or merely tourists.

Being an egalitarian society, the number of taxes are very few but applied to all. A sliding scale is used to ensure no great disparity occurs between the personal wealth of the poorest and richest members of society. Anyone working within the Confederacy (even non-citizens) is required by law to be paid into a Darrian bank account where the money can be traced. Many non-Darrian mega-corporations sometimes pay a second salary to workers specifically sent into the Confederation to run their business organisation, otherwise top executives would have their locally disproportionate wages severely taxed.

The ministry also sets the recommended pay for different careers. Wages are weighted in terms of value towards society, personal danger and the distastefulness of the work. Thus sanitation engineers and military personnel have some of the highest pay rates in the Confederation. As a symbol of faith and loyalty to the Darrian people, politicians and bureaucrats are paid a salary equal to the average wage on their homeworld.

Since it is almost impossible to hide credit flow, and Darrians are typically honest, Confederation taxes are relatively low compare to other polities. As a general guideline, income tax starts at a base of 10% of earnings. Planetary taxes are in addition to this, and can vary according to the inclination of that world's government, but rarely ever exceed the Confederation tax level. In addition, passengers arriving at any Confederation world are subject to a Cr25 arrival tax. Hauled cargo is charged a Cr50 per ton transit fee when delivered to a world's starport, whereas speculative trade as described in **Book 7: Merchant Prince** is only taxed at half the going rate, making the Confederation a lucrative market.

Ministry of Trade

The responsibilities of the Ministry of Trade concern the flow of interstellar commerce between the member worlds and the regulation of goods both entering and exiting the Confederacy. They also supervise the numbers and control of interstellar travellers. They record all the data concerning trade volume, publishing statistics for businesses to use for market research.

The secondary function of the Ministry is to maintain transport standards, starport infrastructure and ensure product quality. This is done by a combination of legislation and random spot checks. In addition, the bureau employs customs officers who investigate all cargo entering or leaving each world, checking for illicit materials or Darrian high tech artefacts. Unlike the usual customs officials, Darrian administrators are carefully selected for politeness and good humour, to avoid alienating foreign traders.

Ministry of Information

The Ministry of Information is a peculiarly Darrian institution. Because of the Darrian preoccupation with research, the Ministry of Information was created as a centralized system for recording the results of research and disseminating that information to all who want to use it. The Ministry of Information handles such diverse aspects of information as research subsidies, copyright registration, archival storage of all available information, publication of important data and statistics, and the establishment of standards for information transfer. The ministry maintains the Court of Information to hear complaints of inaccuracy or plagiarism, including charges of personal slander and libel, since these too are misrepresentations of objective facts.

Ministry of Defence

This ministry coordinates the defence of the Confederacy as a whole. Economically, all Darrian worlds maintain their own defences but the Ministry of Defence sets the minimum military requirements for each planet. The majority of these forces are kept on a reserve status. In the event of an emergency, units are



activated and placed under the command of the Confederation. To supplement local forces, the Confederation also funds and trains its own core fleet of ships and a number of brigades, named the Confederation Navy and the Confederation Guard respectively.

The Ministry of Defence also controls a third branch, called the Special Arm. A small and highly select force, it is responsible for the deployment and maintenance of the Star Trigger weapon system. Since this ultimate weapon is the major deterrent preventing annexation of the Confederation by the Zhodani Consulate, the branch is surrounded by a heavy layer of security and provided with its own fleet of advanced ships with which to deploy the system to other stars.

Ministry of Confederation Appeals

The Ministry of Confederation Appeals is the supreme arbiter of disputes within the Darrian Confederation. It does not handle criminal cases (they are handled by the courts of each world). Rather it considers civil cases which have already been tried and judged on a local world and are then appealed to the Court. In addition, the ministry considers disputes between individual Confederation worlds and between the Confederation government and its member worlds. Its court has the power to overturn orders by the Confederation government or to force compliance by the individual worlds. Even worlds whose militaries are more powerful than the local Confederation forces traditionally comply with adverse rulings without complaint.

The Confederation Council

Above the five ministries of the Confederation bureaucracy, sits the Confederation Council. The Council is composed of one representative of each world in the Confederation. The council member is selected by the government of the individual world in whatever manner it deems appropriate. For example, the representative of Zamine (a balkanized world) is elected by the leadership of all of the nations of Zamine. The representative of Terant 340 (a charismatic dictatorship) is appointed by that world's dictator. Since Engrange is currently a colony of Ilium, it does not get a representative. Each representative is appointed for a term of four years and may be reappointed any number of times. The Confederation Council meets in weekly sessions.

The capital of the Confederation is Mire. The Confederation's bureaucracies are all based on Mire, as is the Confederation Council. Each Council member is accorded an office with a supporting staff to handle basic correspondence, legal queries, research, and the other details which must be dealt with by major political figures.

LAW

Whilst laws can vary between member worlds, each has inherited a set of decrees based on the 20,000 year old Taledh

Codes, which are a guide to correct living and forbid murder, theft, assault, slander and cruelty. However, the legal codes are merely **guidelines** for judges, not rigidly defined laws, and therefore require interpretation in the courts. In general, Darrian law is based upon the ethics of each case, rather than the technical application of legislative loopholes or prior rulings.

In theory, there is no difference between criminal and civil law. Both harm society and as such are treated with equal severity. A plaintiff has two options when seeking justice, either taking the case to court, or having it settled by arbitration. In practice most criminal cases are taken to court, unless the crime is minor.

Arbitration requires a case to be brought before an accredited scholar of philosophical law. The individuals involved enter a binding contract to agree with the final decision of the scholar, whatever it may be. Once those formalities are completed, the individuals make their own presentations, lasting no more than an hour, to the scholar who cogitates upon the information presented before making a ruling. The scholar decides how to settle the dispute and any punishments or fines to be paid. His word is final and cannot be overturned or re-ruled unless the scholar himself is found to have acted in a criminal manner.

Some of the judgements inflicted by arbitration can be rather unusual and, as such, the most popular scholars are those with a sharp wit and a sense of humour. For example a case brought before a scholar over the non-payment of rent by tenants, may end up with the landlord forfeiting ownership of the property to the renters for imposing unfairly high rental fees or failing to maintain the lease holding properly. Famous cases include a past Minister of Finance who attempted to sue the sanitation services for allowing a drain to backup and was forced to clean out the sewage pipe by hand when it was found that his own family was disposing of inappropriate waste down the toilets.

Although arbitration is the normal form of seeking justice in Darrian society, due to the speed at which judgements can be made, it cannot impose capital punishments or exile for serious crimes. For these full courts are required.

Courts require a gathering of at least three government councillors (or local officers on smaller worlds) to witness cases which may result in the necessity of capital punishments, such as imprisonment, exile or death. The plaintiff in most court cases is the government itself, either law enforcement or one of the ministries. The court is presided over by a respected arbitration scholar of many years experience, who first vets the case to ensure it is serious enough to warrant a full court. Government employed advocates are randomly selected to serve as either prosecution or defence. The case is limited to a single day in which both the prosecution and defence have an equal period of time to present evidence. The witnessing councillors are given until the following day to reach a verdict of guilty or not



guilty of the charges presented. If no unanimous decision is reached before the end of this period, which can occur with larger numbers of witnessing councillors, a vote is held and the majority opinion carried. The sentence is set by the scholar.

Since court cases take up an entire day, they are held no more than once weekly and usually more intermittently; often leading to a backlog of cases to be judged.

Between the length of time waiting for a full court case or the sometimes arbitrary nature of arbitration judgements, there is a third form of dealing with disputes. Private Settlement is the consensual agreement between individuals to prevent more serious penalties of a threatened arbitration or court case. In such cases an 'eye for an eye' methodology is commonly used instead of financial reimbursement or compensation, so that the perpetrator of the injustice experiences what he has caused the plaintiff. Such settlements are usually presided over by envoys that remain scrupulously neutral during negotiations.

Darrian Exile

Exile is a unique form of punishment rarely seen outside the Darrian Confederation, which fascinates sociologists from the Imperium. Its use is reserved for 'criminals' who transgress socially acceptable codes of behaviour, but pose no direct threat of physical harm or potential sabotage. In general those who refuse to willingly work within or contribute towards Darrian society are simply ejected from the care of that society.

Such misdemeanours can vary widely and no rigid list exists. Consistent failure to pay taxes, persistent public rudeness or avoiding an initial term of service in the military if dropping out of graduate education are all common methods of suffering exile. The effect of being exiled is the immediate freezing of the exile's bank accounts and computer access, and being given the cold shoulder by all those aware of the sentence. Lacking credit access soon makes life extremely difficult for an exile, being unable to purchase food, pay rent or use public transport. Most are forced to move into rural regions to live as scavengers until their sentence expires, or accept a one way ticket out of the Confederation entirely.

The duration of exile can vary according to the severity of the crime. Minor transgressions last for a week or month, enough time to help the exile realise that they cannot survive long outside of society and thus it is better to conform to its modest requirements, instead of trying to cheat or rebel against it. More serious crimes such as large scale theft or industrial negligence which directly hurt others can result in a term of exile lasting years or decades. Only the most heinous of crimes like treason or sedition against the Confederation result in being exiled for life.

Those sentenced to exile are completely outside of the law and have no access to social services. Therefore an exile can be maltreated with impunity, frequently being 'encouraged' to move on by local inhabitants who use an escalating series of techniques which range from polite ignoring up to physical assault. Exiles considered to be a threat to property or life are at risk of serious injury, for which of course they cannot receive medical treatment, barred as they are from hospitals and doctors. Most exiles are generally identifiable from their shabby clothing, poor hygiene and their unhealthy greyish tan complexion.

Although such a sentence seems inhumane to other cultures, and even out of character with Darrian philosophical beliefs, becoming exiled is considered an educational lesson. Those who serve out their term are welcomed back into society, their past misdeeds cleared by the purging experience. During their exile however, no aid or consideration can be extended to them, for fear of undermining the purpose of the punishment. In fact, family or friends who are caught aiding an exile are vulnerable to being charged for a criminal act, though this does not always prevent a subtle act of kindness now and then to help an exile survive their term.

Criminals psychologically predisposed to inflicting further serious crimes involving violence or destruction, murderers or arsonists for example, are either incarcerated or executed instead of being exiled.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Life within the Darrian Confederacy is extremely good compared with neighbouring subsectors. Part of this is due to the communal nature inherent in Darrian culture, which provides extensive social services. Darrians tend to support those who are willing to contribute to the whole. They also see the necessity of providing thorough education and health services.

Employment

Almost 98.7% of Darrians are employed. Jobs are readily available for those with the correct education and the employment rate is carefully maintained by government grants to set up new businesses or refurbish infrastructure. The biggest employers in the Confederation besides the ubiquitous service and manufacturing industries are the innumerable research departments of the Confederation Universities.

Welfare

Whilst Darrians embrace the philosophy of Stoicism, they recognise the need to support members of society who suffer bad fortune. However, unproductive members of society are not tolerated and those seeking support during extended



unemployment are either assigned simple labour duties or drafted for another term in the military. Welfare has generous, but strict, limits. Once exhausted, a citizen must maintain a job for an extended time before being eligible for welfare again.

Health

All citizens have free access to health care. Since most worlds have access to reasonably high medical technology most Darrians lead full active, healthy lives until they reach advanced old age. Like most of the Imperium, Darrians have an underlying distrust of cybernetic replacements, mostly from a worry of how technology failed after the Maghiz. Most patients prefer biological replacement parts cloned from their own flesh, sometimes requiring transport to a neighbouring system to gain access to the correct technology. The use of anagathics is not sponsored by the Confederation government but the governments of less densely populated worlds often turn a blind eye to their importation.

Emergency Services

Darrians maintain overly redundant emergency services, prepared for most conceivable eventualities. As well as more traditional fire and ambulance departments, they have specialised units to cope with biological contamination, radiation spills, virulent pandemics, flood protection and so on. By mutual consent every world has enough shielded subterranean bunkers to shelter its indigenous population for six months, in case of planetary invasion or a repeat of the Maghiz event.

Police

Darrian police departments are smaller than those in the Imperium, since the number of crimes per capita is significantly lower. Police are universally armed with stunners but rarely expect to use them. Officers are trained in psychology and act as on-the-spot councillors, often preventing the need for any legal action to settle disputes or misunderstandings.

Education

Children begin their education from the age of five. They spend the next 13 years developing a broad base of education and at the age of 18 they leave university and must either undertake compulsory military service or continue a postgraduate education. Just over half choose to continue learning; specialising in a specific subject.

CULTURE

Darrian culture is a unique mix of ancient traditions and Solomani innovations.

Dress

Formal Darrian dress is full sleeved tunics or robes with embroidered cuffs and lapels, belted at the waist, worn over

trousers for men and skirts for women. Embroidered waistcoats are worn over the tunic for very formal occasions. Formal footwear is knee length boots, decorated with further embroidery or complex pattern lacing. Casual wear tends to be sleeveless tunics with loose baggy slacks, allowing a greater degree of motion. Preferred informal footwear is sandals with distinctive cut-outs and straps.

Darrians do not tend to wear multiple layers unless it becomes seriously cold, relying on their metabolism to keep warm. They prefer lightweight fabrics, taking pleasure in a range of different textures from soft to silky. Comfort is preeminent. If forced by local conditions, hooded over-tunics are worn to prevent hypothermia but more practical Solomani clothing such as coats, gloves and hats are deemed too constricting and a sign of indolence.

Darrians tend to avoid wearing jewellery save for social events. Instead they wear functional communication devices, incorporated into bracelets, rings or headbands and personal computers built into ornate belts. Most also wear a wrist or ankle band emergency rescue beacon if travelling away from civilisation. Personal ornamentation is based more on how the Darrians wear their hair. The length, style, beading and colouration can be quite fanciful. Youthful Darrians usually have big and bold styles with plenty of sparkling adornment. As they age however, the styles take on a more simplistic tone and a plain mullet or plat can grant an aura of gravitas.

Art

Darrian artists excel in almost every medium from music to floral arrangement. Their artwork is one of the major exports of the Confederation, some artists possessing faithful connoisseurs even amongst alien species located several sectors away. Aside from their exceptional painters, composers, playwrights and authors, one particular art form reigns supreme; gravitic art.

The most famous form of gravitic art is Flame Sculpture. Originally developed on the homeworld of Daryen prior to the Maghiz, technicians stumbled on the idea of shaping gas flames with gravitic generators, moulding them into unusual shapes. Their original objective was to design hyper efficient cutting torch heads but somebody took the idea and used it to create fanciful company logos, constraining the flickering flames into simple letters, akin to early florescent signs. Artisans took the concept and began to generate exquisite three dimensional images, anything from busts to full landscapes.

Flame Sculptures have several forms. The earliest, and arguably purest, is the static image where the shape of the sculpture never changes, just the flickering of the internal flames. Most of these sculptures are Darrians in classical postures or animals.



More complex sculptures add additional elements, such as chemically tinted flames, granting them unusual colours. The most advanced are dynamic, changing the form of the sculpture between a series of different images related to a common theme, or the most complex, constantly morphing between thousands of randomly generated geometric shapes. The best sculptures can mesmerise viewers with their ethereal beauty and are often used by psychiatric therapists to relax patients.

Darrian flame sculptures are categorised according to the date they were crafted. The rarest are classed as Early Period coming from before the Maghiz; and the Night Period (–921 to –200) after the Maghiz struck. With the reformation of the Confederacy comes the Neoclassical Period (–200 to 850) where the technique and technology returned to common use and colour began to be added. The Modern Period (850 to current date) sees the introduction of animation and reaches a new artistic pinnacle. Examples of Darrian Flame Sculpture have even been displayed in the capital of the Imperium.

Due to their rarity, few of the early sculptures are ever let outside of the Confederacy, regarded as national treasures. Modern sculptures are actually booby trapped by their creators, safely self destructing on opening to protect the secrets of their construction. Although the technique has been reverse engineered by a few hi-tech worlds, few artists outside of the Confederation appear to have the finesse to match the Darrians idiosyncratic creativity and skill.

Flame Sculptures are only one branch of gravitic art, as the same principles can be used with a range of mediums. Darrians apply the techniques to flowing water, narcotic incense smoke or even falling snow or flower petals.

Architecture

Akin to their Aslan brethren, Darrians prefer buildings with an organic feel to them. Whilst straight walls are more practical, they are considered soulless and square architecture is avoided except for the construction of emergency shelters or technology caches where space must be used at its most efficient.

Favoured building styles are circular, semi-circular or oval shaped rooms and domed roofs. These preferences hearken back to the time when Darrians still lived in the Orchard Trees of their homeworld. Hundreds of thousands of years living in symbiotic relationship with the trees has placed an indelible feeling of security when residing inside curved walls.

Similar to Aslan tradition, Darrian architects and engineers never construct the same building twice. Even mass produced, prefabricated housing is made distinctly unique by the inclusion of random variables to each home as it is formed on the manufacturing line. An additional touch is that most Darrian buildings are surrounded by trees and gardens,

specially landscaped to appear natural, rather than designed. This predilection also extends inside their homes and work environments, with specially bred plants growing up walls or across ceilings. Underground dwellings have captured sunlight channelled to false windows or roof ports and fresh air gently wafts in fits and starts through rooms to complete the illusion.

Darrians dislike building cities with towering skyscrapers in the middle of an open landscape. If a town is built in a rainforest, then no building is permitted to extend more than a few metres above the canopy and paths connecting the buildings weave organically between the native vegetation. Transport links and infrastructure are constructed in tunnels below ground so as to not spoil the environment.

Huge skyscrapers and arcologies are built in more precipitous regions, where they can be excavated out of (or butted against) natural cliffs or mountains. External appearance always compliments or mimics the local surroundings.

Recreation

Whilst most Darrians find contentment in work, they also like to relax and spend time pursuing other diversions. By far the greatest interest to the majority of Darrians is the pursuit of knowledge. Most continue to improve their education as an informal hobby, reading up on whatever specialisation they took during their university internship. A few strive to make further breakthroughs in their subject, or discover new interdisciplinary relationships by analysing published research of different fields.

In fact the Darrian thirst for discovering and analysing new knowledge often colours their conversations. Debates are more often held over scientific concepts rather than politics.

Travelling is the other major form of personal entertainment. Darrians love to travel and soak up new places, people and experiences. One of the biggest industries within the Confederation is tourism, both internally and out to the worlds of the Imperium.

The arts also hold a significant role in Darrian recreation. Theatre and concerts are very popular since people like to witness the skill of live performances, rather than be deceived by the technical wizardry of polished, or perhaps artificially tweaked, holoivid recordings. Communal entertainment is another popular activity, such as singing or storytelling, and especially improvised theatre where the audience can participate. Group dances are also favoured.

Likewise art exhibitions are highly appreciated for the skill of the craftsmanship and emotive nature of some artworks, depending on the medium. Darrians gain a great deal of satisfaction in personally creating unique objects, whether they are articles of clothing, flame sculptures or even breeding flowers.



Sport is a lesser form of recreation. Team sports are played for enjoyment, being one of the few areas of Darrian society where open competitiveness is actively encouraged, although good humour and sportsmanlike behaviour is always expected. Personal activities such as distance running or tree climbing are as much spiritual as physical exercises, allowing the Darrian to maintain fitness whilst clearing their mind at the same time.

DARRIAN CORPORATIONS

An important part of the Darrian Confederation is the commerce and industry linking the member worlds together. Many Darrian Corporations are generations old, having slowly evolved to fit the financial niche they currently fill. The conservative nature of Darrian society makes it difficult for new companies to become established on the interstellar level, although many Imperium corporations continue to slowly worm their way in to the Darrian markets. Recent instability and loss of worlds in the Entropic cluster has caused a number of established firms to fold, opening the field for newer enterprises.

Darrian corporations are generally owned and run by extended families, which fill most of the executive positions. Where a franchise is extended onto a new Confederation world, a local family is selected to host that branch of the company and the deal is usually sealed by a marriage between the two.

No exclusive concessions or monopolies are granted within the Confederation. All corporations are legally forced to compete on a level playing field. Those which reach interstellar status achieve their success by talent and intelligent market analysis; corruption is relatively unknown within Darrian society, although it is possible that some organisations use external agents to manipulate markets in their favour.

Since the Confederation is small and wedged against two semi-hostile polities, there are currently no Darrian Megacorporations, although this situation may change if the existing corporations begin to develop and sell TL 16 goods.

Major Corporations

The following are some of the major corporations within the Darrian Confederation.

Tharnitia Denus: Operated by the Darrian Confederation government as an enterprise similar to a postal system, Tharnitia Denus (the name means Transport Company) maintains terminals on all worlds in the Confederation. Purely an internal shipping company, it does not carry goods beyond the Darrian borders.

The majority of Tharnitia vessels are either Rehld class couriers, which make up the Confederation-wide Jump-4 communication network, and a lesser number of Mbogh class freighters

which carry the more modest volume of physical parcels. As a government supported operation, strict protocols are placed on the security of mail.

An attack made on Tharnitia Danus ships or the theft of mail is always investigated thoroughly, and if the perpetrators are identified, punitive action is taken, even if this requires travel outside of the Confederation. The company maintains its own agents to fulfil this role, and when necessary offers large bounties for the recovery of missing mail.

Frendi Marshikan: Frendi Marshikan (which translates as Interworld Express) is the primary Darrian subsector interface transportation company – focussing on shipping cargo and passengers between the Confederation and the Sword Worlds and Five Sisters subsectors. It operates several interstellar routes, including one to Gram, one to Narsil, and one to Iderati.

Due to the state of hostility between Darrian and the Sword Worlds, Frendi Marshikan is underwritten by the Confederation Government which insures against unforeseen conflict or piracy. Despite the antagonism a significant amount of trade still passes through the Sword Worlds, which is sometimes subject to punitive taxes depending on the current level of hostility between the two polities.

To help avoid becoming targets for sanctioned piracy, Frendi Marshikan operates an eclectic fleet of heavily armed vessels, a large number of which are Nalumb class far traders. In addition, the company hires only the most diplomatic of bridge officers to staff their vessels, in order to head off potential problems with belligerent port authorities. Crews are 'unofficially' trained in urban combat in case of situations where part of a ship's compliment experience difficulties on foreign soil.

Iro Inc.: A well known Darrian Corporation amongst Imperium nobility and adventurers is Iro Inc, which has a reputation of selling cutting edge weapon technology up to TL 15. It specialises in armour, personnel and support weaponry and also has a comprehensive range of survival, exploration and hunting equipment. Its impeccable reputation comes from the quality of its merchandise and the lifetime guarantee given on every purchase.

The company's reputation is based on the reliability of its products along with the ability to craft custom made equipment. If you want your Battle Dress enamelled with your family coat of arms, or have the stock of your Big Game Rifle carved from the Gnarr tusk you shot, then Iro Inc. are the people to go to. The Corporation's craftsmen are masters at their art and also in ergonomic design. Any personalised weapon purchased from them reduces Recoil or Heft by one point, due to the quality. Personalised armour and equipment has its mass reduced by 10%.



Iro Inc. is based on Mire where it serves many of the executives and diplomats who visit the capital. Its research and development department is on Daryen itself where it has access to the highest Tech Level manufacturing equipment in the subsector. The company maintains at least a small office on every Confederation world with a B Class Starport or better. These branch offices are extremely well defended with the best security available, augmented with highly trained and loyal guards, recruited from ex-military personnel with outstanding service records. The smaller offices do not sustain a large stock, especially of heavier weapons and must place squad level orders with the home office.

Viking Lines: Viking started off as a small company with a single Solomani tramp liner, based in Engrange. It offered cheap cruises to graduating Darrians who wished to visit the other Confederation worlds nearby. The trips proved to be inordinately popular, despite the company being censured for allowing unsupervised raucous parties and vast amounts of alcohol to be consumed aboard. The budget cruise line gambled on its popularity and took out loans to expand its fleet of ships. The risk paid off and Viking Lines has grown into the largest passenger transit corporation in the subsector.

The company caters to mid-range customers, offering reasonable accommodation and food but no luxuries. It prospers on its reputation for always keeping to schedule and never having lost a vessel to break down or pirates. It combines passenger accommodation with some bulk cargo capacity, using mid-sized liners ranging from 400 to 1,000 tons. Its fleet now numbers 26 vessels with single ships assigned to minor world routes. It is jokingly regarded as the Confederation's Second Armada. It avoids competing with Tharnitia Denus, the Confederation subsidised freight transporters, by specialising in passenger cruises over cargo. Frendi Marshikin, the other government subsidised haulage company, caters to a different customer base, those transporting or travelling to the Sword Worlds and the Five Sisters subsectors.

As a mark of respect, the original tramp liner still continues to run its original 'booze cruise' and is priced for university students. Many parents on Engrange see the trip as a rite of passage, having performed the same cruise themselves when they were young. The ancient vessel has been completely refurbished three times during its career and is beloved by all the employees of the corporation, seen as the foundation of its luck and prosperity. Retiring captains are posted to the ship in their last year of employment as a reward for their service.

Zloril: An electronics company specialising in computers, comms equipment, and telecommunications infrastructure. It designs and produces EMP proof TL15 gear, which is highly sought after by most of the worlds in the Confederation. Like Iro Inc. its manufacturing base is on Daryen, the only world with

factories capable of etching or growing many of the cutting edge components.

Zloril has a virtual monopoly on the telecoms infrastructure of the major Darrian worlds. Funded by the Confederation Council, the planetary networks have been both standardised and hardened against apocalyptic catastrophes. They combine several layers of redundancy, with the primary communication channels supplied by surface based microwave broadcast towers and backed up by deep buried fibre optic networks. Although the corporation supplies the technology and engineering maintenance, the network design and security is controlled by the Special Arm of the Ministry of Defence.

Since Zloril's manufacturing output is primarily consumed by providing planetary infrastructure, the huge market for cheaper, mass produced electronics is partially catered for by cheaper imports from the Imperium.

Almost every world has a store that acts as a distributor for Zloril electronics. The higher population worlds have retailers that exclusively stock their equipment, which is always at the leading edge of development. It is rumoured that as an offshoot of its StandIn screening service (see Communication Technology page XX) the company is at the point of being able to create Artificial Intelligence, which if true will make them a vast amount of wealth and the target of every industrial espionage agent in the sector.

Pthanth Shipyards: The Pthanth Corporation operates two shipyards in orbit around Daryen and Mire respectively. They are capable of constructing and repairing TL15 ships. The yards are extensive, the Daryen yards having 12 bays and the Mire yards possessing eight, each bay capable of constructing or repairing ships of up to 5,000 tons apiece. Although this capacity seems excessive in comparison to nominal construction orders and competing construction facilities, the Pthanth yards above Daryen are fully booked for the next 10 years and those at Mire are kept busy with a constant stream of refurbishment contracts.

Pthanth employs ex-naval architects combining Darrian aesthetics with Solomani practicality. The resulting fusion produces ships that tend to exhibit sweeping curves and a very high efficiency. Thus far the corporation has only developed mercantile or research vessels but rumours abound of a new top secret class of military ship being constructed, which seems to be borne out by the increased security and picketing of the Daryen shipyard with system defence boats.

Dhoshu Systems: A Corporation focusing on food production, preservation systems and transport. Dhoshu primarily grows and ships exotic fruit and vegetables across the subsector. They have a reputation for both quality and freshness, using proprietary methods of shipping such as irradiation, tailored



retroviruses rumoured to be similar to Anagathics and sustenance vines, which allow the fruit to mature correctly, just as it reaches its destination.

Having a high degree of bioengineering expertise, a large part of the Corporation's income is generated through grants from the Confederation Council to develop terraforming bacterium and plants that bind heavy metals or chemical poisons to remove them from an ecosystem with an eye towards repairing the ecological damage of more industrialised planets such as Stern-Stern.

Dhoshu freights its bulk foodstuffs, such as grain, via bulk cargo transports but manages its own small flotilla of custom fitted traders for shipping those delicate fruits or tubers that have a short shelf life. Their base of operations is Ilium where they grow the majority of their products but also have smaller farming complexes on Ektron and Mire where they raise other crops more suited to those environments. The company has a policy of allowing young students to work passage aboard their ships. In exchange for a free trip to wherever the ship is destined, they tend to the crops. The work is hard and the hours long, but is considered a worthwhile experience. Occasionally a young Darrian inspired by the experience becomes willing to join the company scholarship program, netting Dhoshu new talented and enthusiastic employees.

THE MILITARY

The Confederation military is divided between colonial planetary forces and Confederation forces funded by the Ministry of Defence. Planetary forces are, by their nature, normally stationed on their own world but can be seconded to other planets, either to reinforce their strength during times of war or to perform large scale military exercises.

Strictly speaking the military has three arms, the Navy, the Guard and the Special Arm. The Confederation forces are generally better trained and equipped. Darrians do not use mercenaries, not trusting their self restraint or loyalty. However, the Confederation sometimes accepts aid from the Imperium, coordinating counter-invasion or espionage missions alongside Imperial Marines or Special Forces. The Confederation also accepts military aid in the form of a covert program that exchanges technological information with the Imperium in exchange for building its capital ships, which are too large for the most advanced Darrian shipyards to construct.

Darrians do not enjoy or glorify war. Despite their reputation as pacifists, when forced into a situation with no other option but to fight, they are coldly rational and focussed on survival, making them implacable foes. They improve odds in their favour by equipping their forces with the best military technology they can design and surgical application of the limited TL16 and TL17

weaponry they have reserved for such situations. As such, the Confederacy packs a punch far larger than should be possible by a small federation. If pushed to all out war, then almost half the population can be mobilised, ensuring that enemy forces occupying their worlds will suffer horrific losses.

Naval Organisation

The navy is organised into two tiers. Planetary navies patrol their local system, being responsible for piracy suppression, search and rescue operations and system defence. The Confederation Navy is responsible for exploration, border patrols and strategic defence of the Confederation itself. Although outnumbered by their planetary naval brethren, Confederation officers hold a superior rank and are able to commandeer local ships during military or civil emergencies. The officer concerned must have a good reason for the order; else find themselves court-martialled after the event.

Planetary navies are financially supported by their home government, so smaller systems usually have fewer ships and may have running costs subsidised by the Confederation. Most of their colonial warships are TL13 cruisers and escorts handed down from the Confederation Navy, which itself is in the process of replacing its older vessels with updated TL15 versions secretly imported from the Imperium. System defence boats are universally Daryen built TL15 versions. Taken together with their ancient TL16 vessels the Darrians arguably have the most advanced navy in the whole of the Spinward Marches. Instead of mothballing obsolete colonial elements, the Ministry of Defence takes them in exchange for newer replacements, guts them and transforms the vessels into lightly armed fleet tenders.

Most of the Darrian planets uphold unusually large squadrons, due to recent hostilities in 1084 when the Entropic Worlds were annexed by increasingly aggressive Sword Worlders. In addition Darrian sociological analysts have predicted the imminent reopening of direct conflict between the Zhodani and the Imperium. Thus as part of rebuilding their losses from the Fourth Frontier War the Confederation is preparing itself for the forecasted outbreak of fighting. Whilst the lower population worlds cannot afford as significant home fleets as the major Darrian planets, those bordering the Sword Worlds are usually bolstered with elements of the Confederation Navy.

The current colonial squadron distribution is listed in the following table. Note that some ships are attached to the Confederation Navy for training and may not be present in their home system. This includes system defence boats, for which the navy possesses SDB Transports. The ships listed for Laberv, Ilium, Mire, Nosea and Spume describe their home squadron only, not the additional Confederation Navy warships normally stationed at the naval bases.



Hex	System	Cruisers	Escorts	Defence Boats
0203	Stern-Stern	1 Light Cruiser	2 Destroyers	8
0305	Laberv	None	2 Frigates	4
0306	Ektron	2 Light Cruisers	2 Destroyers, 2 Frigates	8
0401	Zamine	3 Assault, 2 Light	6 Destroyers, 6 Frigates	24
0405	Engrange	1 heavy, 2 light	2 Destroyers, 4 Frigates	12
0406	Ilium	2 heavy, 2 light	4 Destroyers, 4 Frigates	16
0407	Roget	1 heavy, 2 light	2 Destroyers, 4 Frigates	12
0506	Rorre	None	None	8
0507	Mire	2 heavy, 4 light	6 Destroyers, 6 Frigates	24
0602	Terant 340	1 light	4 Destroyers	12
0604	Jacent	2 light	2 Destroyers, 2 Frigates	8
0607	Daryen	2 heavy, 3 light	4 Destroyers, 6 Frigates	24
0703	Trifuge	1 light	4 Destroyers	12
0704	Nosea	2 light	4 Destroyers	8
0707	Spume	None	2 Frigates	8
0802	Cunnonic	2 light	4 Destroyers, 2 Frigates	16

The Confederation Navy is based around a core fleet of 24 TL16 cruisers of various types, 12 additional TL15 cruisers, double that number of modern TL15 destroyers and a number of auxiliaries, generally obsolete vessels refitted as tenders, specialised SDB transporters and assault landing craft. These squadrons are mainly used to picket the Sword World and Zhodani borders and provide a strategic reserve in case of invasion.

The advanced cruisers were recovered in 390 from a naval cache, dating from before the Maghiz. The ships boast some prototype TL 17 weaponry and defences but are irreplaceable. So they are rarely committed to battle unless the Darrians can muster overwhelming force to ensure their survival. They form three separate squadrons, which are posted at several covert locations between stars, one near the Querion subsector, one near the Sword Worlds and the last held in reserve at an ultra secret TL16 naval base, to prevent surprise attack or attempted espionage.

Due to the necessity to protect the priceless capital ships, the main elements of the Confederation fleet on picket duty are the Imperial constructed cruisers, supported by colonial escorts. These reserves frequently travel between member worlds to perform war games or collect ships assigned to their patrol squadrons, providing crews with valuable tactical experience and sustaining inter-fleet cohesion.

Naval Tactics

Darrian naval doctrine does not embrace the use of small fighter craft, believing that missiles are more stealthy, manoeuvrable and capable of being carried in far greater numbers. With its edge in sensor technology granting it superior ECM capabilities, the Confederation encourages the colonial squadrons to invest in missile armed SDBs and covert missile pods to fill the gap.

The Darrian Marines are treated as a subdivision of the navy and not considered an independent military arm in its own right. They are used exclusively as ship boarding or counter-boarding troops, never for orbital assault, which is the province of specially trained units of the Confederation Guard.





Guard Organisation

The Confederation Guard are a small cadre of highly trained brigades, which specialise in high tech weaponry. They are mainly composed of mobile infantry or armour battalions designed to support local planetary militias and jump troop battalions designed for planetary assault. All of their equipment is TL14 and TL15 although rumours abound of a Special Forces brigade armed with TL16 weaponry. A disproportionate number of battalions in the Confederation Guard are formed from Aslan troops. There are no mixed species units due to the specialised equipment that each race requires but the two species work well alongside each other with little intra-species tension.

Since the Confederation is rarely engaged in direct warfare, the normal function of these troops is to provide training for militia forces or perform garrison duty on the few balkanised worlds of the Confederation. However, the recent annexation of the Entropic Worlds has caused the Guard units to enter a higher state of training.

Each member world also provides its own militia brigades, mainly formed of light resistance units working in concert with a small core of standard infantry, air force and armour. Every citizen, on graduating from university, is expected to serve a term either in the military or continue post grad studies, resulting in about 40% of the adult population possessing basic military skills. Whilst most resistance units are no match for professional infantry in direct combat, an entire planetary population trained in guerrilla tactics poses significant problems to a potential invader, who would be faced with the necessity of committing genocide or sterilisation to gain complete control of the territory.

Guard Tactics

Burnt earth policy is core to overall strategy, destroying key choke points in the water, energy and transport infrastructure. These points have been deliberately positioned in places that form natural killing zones. Each world government is responsible for building deep earth command posts, hidden ordinance dumps and food caches to supply long term resistance movement or places to survive planetary bombardment scourges.

The Guard's heavy infantry train in hit and run tactics, preferring to perform lightning strikes or rolling retreats but never remaining in a fixed position. The lighter militia units use similar tactics but concentrate on ambushes, guerrilla fighting and civic sabotage. Darrian resistance units cross train with low tech weapons and methods, allowing them to operate with little chance of detection by a technologically reliant invader.

Working together the Guard and Militia complement each other; the Confederation troops retreating through militia ambushes, or vice versa, the militia deliberately triggering an over strength response, which is hit by prepared artillery or armour strike. The refusal to dig in and hold territory has proven to be a great

irritation to Sword Worlders during their most recent hard fought conquest of the Entropic Worlds.

Although the Darrians were defeated, the invaders lost a disproportionate number of personnel and munitions, primarily through playing upon the Sword Worlder's machismo based need to close into close combat, carefully orchestrated by Darrian Psych Warfare officers. Even today, 21 years later, the Darrians still maintain a highly active resistance movement, intermittently contacted by covert meson communication. The ongoing sabotage and terrorism campaign has severely undermined Sword Worlder morale, causing the native populace to suffer severe reprisals that have done nothing except strengthen the resolve of the stoic Darrians but turning the planets into bottomless credit and manpower pits. A situation encouraged by the Ministry of Defence since it diverts resources whilst the Confederation plans its counter strike.

Darrian jump troops intensively train with Imperial Marines and are fully conversant with conventional planetary assault techniques. Rumours suggest that the Confederation has several brigades of Marines seconded from the Imperium, stationed at the naval base on Nosea.

Special Arm Organisation

This branch of the military has expanded beyond its original remit of commanding the Star Trigger weapon. It has now taken over several key responsibilities, including security for other highly classified research and provides a counter espionage agency, performing all the sensitive tasks inappropriate for the Confederation Guard. Their relatively small number of personnel includes elite Special Forces units which are occasionally deployed on black ops missions outside of Darrian space.

As part of their primary duty of manning the Star Trigger strategic defence, the Special Arm controls a small number of non-military TL16 ships on which the devices are installed. For more information, see *Secrets of the Special Arm*, page XX.

LANGUAGE

As part of its natural tendency towards unification, the Confederation has standardised a common language. Prior to the disastrous Maghiz, the Darrians had five separate languages in concurrent use, one from each basin of their homeworld. Only one (te-zlodh) was specifically used for colonisation protocols, since it had reached ascendancy as the language that best conveyed scientific and technological concepts. In an ironic stroke of fate, the majority of Maghiz survivors on Daryen were in undersea cities in the Zlodh basin and primarily spoke te-zlodh.

Nowadays te-zlodh is often known as te-zapet, which translates as 'the home language'.



Whilst te-zlodh is spoken and understood on all the Confederation worlds, it has slowly evolved specific vocabularies and dialects. It is generally possible to identify the planet a Darrian originates from, and sometimes even the region, just from their accent or colloquialisms. Since many of the technical terminologies and slang are unique, identifying the profession of the speaker is potentially feasible.

After the arrival of the Solomani, te-zlodh assimilated a huge number of words from the Anglic tongue. A large portion of these were science based but all sorts of odd phrases and concepts have muddled the language. Modern Solomani can often understand the occasional word in an overheard Darrian conversation. To encourage social tolerance, the majority of Darrians learn Galanglic and Aslan as secondary languages at school. The older Darrian basin languages are usually reserved for those specialising as linguists or historians.

The Aslan citizens of the Confederation cling to their own language amongst themselves but have increasingly turned to learning te-zapet in order to communicate clearly with Darrians, since the human palette cannot form the excruciating sounds of the Aslan patois. This reluctantly adopted linguistic flexibility helps greatly during trading or military manoeuvres, when the use of translators can be a hindrance.

Grammar

Te-zlodh, or te-zapet as it is also known, was specially crafted by the scientific priesthood of Zlodh. It has very simple rules governing its grammar, which enabled it to rapidly supplant the competing languages of the other basins. The meaning of a Darrian word is based upon the root of its consonants, sans its vowels. The vowel pattern defines whether it is a noun or a verb and the associated tense. The Darrian word for a dream for instance is **Ramim**. The core consonant cluster for the root word is R-M-M.

The language only requires simple prefixes and suffixes to define an article, adjective or adverb. Te-zlodh translates as 'The Zlodh language' for example.

DARRIAN SYNTAX

Article	Prefix	Suffix
Indefinite (a)	None	None
Definite (the)	te-	
Plural		-en
Adjective (-ale, -ous, -er, -est)		-e
Adverb (-ly)		-e

Darrian verbs are split into two sets by their conjugations. 80% of all verbs possess more than one vowel and fall into group A, the remainder are in grouping B. The following table indicates how each group is conjugated. An asterisk indicates the position of a consonant.

DARRIAN CONJUGATIONS

Tense	Group A	Group B
Infinitive	*a*e*	*a*
Past	*o*i*	*o*
Present	*u*i*	*u*
Future	*i*e*	*i*

For example. **ramem** means 'to dream', **romim** means 'dreamt', **rumim** means 'dream' and **rimem** means 'will dream'.

Te-zlodh also contains a new grammatical class known as Particles. These are single syllable words placed at the start of a clause, which define its meaning. These commonly replace the use of pronouns or punctuation.

DARRIAN PARTICLES

Particle	Meaning	Example
Nos	Question	Nos ni rumin – Do I dream?
Ze	Desire	Ze ni rumin – I wish to dream.
Kon	Amplification	Kon ni rumin – I dream vividly.
Me't	Iteration	Me't ni rumin – I often dream.
Kas	Uncertainty	Kas ni rumin – I'm unsure if I dream.
Tik	Possibility	Tik ni rumin – I may dream.

Generating Darrian Words

Whilst it is unnecessary to use Darrian language in ongoing game play, using alien sounding words can help create the unusual and foreign atmosphere of their society. To aid Referees in fleshing out the names of Darrian characters, organisations and equipment, a sophisticated word generation system has been included.

The frequency of Darrian sounds and syllables is defined on the Consonant and Vowel tables. These can be used for Referees who wish to write their own programs to randomly generate Darrian words. If using dice, skip directly to the Word Generating Tables after.

Word length and syllable structure is based upon an alternation of vowels (V) and consonants (C). Use the following tables to determine how many syllables are in the word and the composition of each. Then join the syllables together to form the final word.



NUMBER OF SYLLABLES

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	1	1	2	2	2
3	2	2	2	2	2	2
4	3	3	3	3	3	3
5	3	3	3	3	3	3
6	3	3	3	3	3	3

SYLLABLE STRUCTURE

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	v	v	v	v	v	v
2	v	v	v	vc	vc	vc
3	vc	vc	vc	vc	vc	vc
4	vc	vc	vc	vc	vc	vc
5	vc	vc	vc	vc	vc	vc
6	vc	vc	vc	vc	vc	vc

INITIAL CONSONANTS

Sound	Freq	Pronunciation
B	17	<i>bat</i>
D	22	<i>dog</i>
G	7	<i>gate</i>
P	12	<i>pin</i>
T	8	<i>time</i>
TH	7	<i>this</i>
K	5	<i>kind</i>
M	10	<i>mind</i>
N	22	<i>nice</i>
Z	22	<i>zoo</i>
L	10	<i>long</i>
R	14	<i>run</i>
Y	6	<i>yellow</i>
ZB	4	<i>z+b*</i>
ZD	5	<i>mazda</i>
ZG	3	<i>z+g*</i>
ZL	3	<i>z+l*</i>
MB	5	<i>tomboy</i>
ND	5	<i>band</i>
NGG	3	<i>finger</i>
RY	5	<i>very</i>
LY	3	<i>quickly</i>
NY	6	<i>many</i>
LZ	5	<i>bells</i>
LD	7	<i>held</i>

*The two letters are pronounced separately, but very close together.

VOWELS

Sound	Freq	Pronunciation
A	48	<i>lake</i>
E	46	<i>greet</i>
EH	29	<i>get</i>
I	29	<i>lite</i>
IH	23	<i>lit</i>
O	29	<i>go</i>
U	12	<i>loop</i>

FINAL CONSONANTS

Sound	Freq	Pronunciation
BH	9	<i>abhor</i>
DH	9	<i>that</i>
GH	6	<i>soft gargling</i>
P	6	<i>top</i>
T	6	<i>pot</i>
K	9	<i>lock</i>
N	29	<i>can</i>
NG	12	<i>ring</i>
L	23	<i>hill</i>
R	29	<i>bar</i>
S	18	<i>mess</i>
M	15	<i>tom</i>
MB	6	<i>tomboy</i>
ND	6	<i>bond</i>
NGG	3	<i>finger</i>
YR	6	<i>fire</i>
LY	3	<i>only</i>
NY	3	<i>any</i>
LBH	3	<i>l+bh*</i>
LZ	6	<i>ills</i>
LD	9	<i>could</i>

*The two letters are pronounced separately but very close together.

Dice based syllable generation

Use the following tables to randomly generate consonants and vowels. First roll a dice to see which of the six tables to use for that element of the syllable, then a second dice to determine the column and a final dice for row.

Darrian Script

Technically there are five original Darrian scripts, one for each of the basins that had independently developed its writing system to complement its language. The eventual supremacy of the Zlodh priesthood subsumed the peoples of the other basins, forcing them to adopt the script used by the scholar priests,



INITIAL CONSONANT							VOWEL							FINAL CONSONANT						
1	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	b	b	b	b	b	b	1	a	a	a	a	a	a	1	bh	bh	bh	bh	bh	bh
2	b	b	b	b	b	b	2	a	a	a	a	a	a	2	bh	bh	bh	dh	dh	dh
3	b	b	b	b	b	d	3	a	a	a	a	a	a	3	dh	dh	dh	dh	dh	dh
4	d	d	d	d	d	d	4	a	a	a	a	a	a	4	gh	gh	gh	gh	gh	gh
5	d	d	d	d	d	d	5	a	a	a	a	a	a	5	p	p	p	p	p	p
6	d	d	d	d	d	d	6	a	a	a	a	a	a	6	t	t	t	t	t	t
2	1	2	3	4	5	6	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	d	d	d	g	g	g	1	a	a	a	a	a	a	1	k	k	k	k	k	k
2	g	g	g	g	p	p	2	a	a	a	a	a	a	2	k	k	k	n	n	n
3	p	p	p	p	p	p	3	e	e	e	e	e	e	3	n	n	n	n	n	n
4	p	p	p	p	t	t	4	e	e	e	e	e	e	4	n	n	n	n	n	n
5	t	t	t	t	t	t	5	e	e	e	e	e	e	5	n	n	n	n	n	n
6	th	th	th	th	th	th	6	e	e	e	e	e	e	6	n	n	n	n	n	n
3	1	2	3	4	5	6	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	3	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	th	k	k	k	k	k	1	e	e	e	e	e	e	1	n	n	ng	ng	ng	ng
2	m	m	m	m	m	m	2	e	e	e	e	e	e	2	ng	ng	ng	ng	ng	ng
3	m	m	m	m	n	n	3	e	e	e	e	e	e	3	ng	ng	l	l	l	l
4	n	n	n	n	n	n	4	e	e	e	e	eh	eh	4	l	l	l	l	l	l
5	n	n	n	n	n	n	5	eh	eh	eh	eh	eh	eh	5	l	l	l	l	l	l
6	n	n	n	n	n	n	6	eh	eh	eh	eh	eh	eh	6	l	l	l	l	l	l
4	1	2	3	4	5	6	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	4	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	n	n	z	z	z	z	1	eh	eh	eh	eh	eh	eh	1	l	r	r	r	r	r
2	z	z	z	z	z	z	2	eh	eh	eh	eh	eh	eh	2	r	r	r	r	r	r
3	z	z	z	z	z	z	3	eh	eh	eh	i	i	i	3	r	r	r	r	r	r
4	z	z	z	z	z	z	4	i	i	i	i	i	i	4	r	r	r	r	r	r
5	l	l	l	l	l	l	5	i	i	i	i	i	i	5	r	r	r	r	r	r
6	l	l	l	l	r	r	6	i	i	i	i	i	i	6	s	s	s	s	s	s
5	1	2	3	4	5	6	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	r	r	r	r	r	r	1	i	i	i	i	i	i	1	s	s	s	s	s	s
2	r	r	r	r	r	r	2	i	i	ih	ih	ih	ih	2	s	s	s	s	s	s
3	y	y	y	y	y	y	3	ih	ih	ih	ih	ih	ih	3	m	m	m	m	m	m
4	zb	zb	zb	zb	zd	zd	4	ih	ih	ih	ih	ih	ih	4	m	m	m	m	m	m
5	zd	zd	zd	zg	zg	zg	5	ih	ih	ih	ih	ih	ih	5	m	m	m	mb	mb	mb
6	zl	zl	zl	mb	mb	mb	6	ih	o	o	o	o	o	6	mb	mb	mb	nd	nd	nd
6	1	2	3	4	5	6	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	mb	mb	nd	nd	nd	nd	1	o	o	o	o	o	o	1	nd	nd	nd	ngg	ngg	ngg
2	nd	ngg	ngg	ngg	ry	ry	2	o	o	o	o	o	o	2	yr	yr	yr	yr	yr	yr
3	ry	ry	ry	ly	ly	ly	3	o	o	o	o	o	o	3	ly	ly	ly	ny	ny	ny
4	ny	ny	ny	ny	ny	ny	4	o	o	o	o	o	o	4	lbh	lbh	lbh	lz	lz	lz
5	lz	lz	lz	lz	lz	ld	5	u	u	u	u	u	u	5	lz	lz	lz	ld	ld	ld
6	ld	ld	ld	ld	ld	ld	6	u	u	u	u	u	u	6	ld	ld	ld	ld	ld	ld



although still retaining their own speech. The system uses a syllabary; symbols representing syllables, much like shorthand script, but the glyphs look more like jagged squiggles than the straight line or image based hieroglyphs of early Aslan cultures. The simpler, flowing symbols are faster to scribe assuming that they do not have to be carved. This is called **yaser te-yulep** (the old script).

When the Solomani arrived and made their presence known, a new Latin based alphabet called **rome te-yulep** ('the Roman script') was introduced to ease the linguistic difficulties faced by the settlers. Although the Latin alphabet grew in importance due to its ability to represent phonetic sounds of Solomani technical jargon unknown in te-zlodh, it did not replace the old script completely. Currently **yaser te-yulep** remains in use for legal documentation, classic literature, poetry and news faxes, where the speed and efficiency of the syllabary allow rapid reading. Scientific and educational documentation remain written in **rome te-yulep**. On the world of Rorre, whose population adhere to a pre-Solomani way of life, the Latin alphabet is constitutionally forbidden.

ASLAN IN THE CONFEDERATION

The second most common species in the Confederacy, Aslan are a welcome addition to Darrian space. Their timely intercession prior to the First Frontier War swelled the Confederation ranks and even valiantly travelled deep behind enemy lines to host a raiding campaign. In exchange for this service, the Darrians gave the Aslan the most valuable gift possible – land on established colony worlds.

Over the last five centuries most of the Aslan settlements have slowly been integrated into mainstream Darrian society, adopting greater levels of tolerance, monogamy, learning te-zlodh and even embracing the concepts of lifelong study. To members of the Hierate, the Darrian **inhatei** have become true barbarians. Only the Aslan of Roget have striven to preserve the traditional ways of duelling and honour. Which is fortunate for the Confederation, as these are the source of the majority of their Guard units and Special Forces.

Despite their continued cultural segregation, the Aslan of Roget still maintain an excellent relationship with the Confederation in recognition of the great gift granted to them. Roget Aslan characters gain a +3 bonus to reaction rolls when meeting with Darrian citizens. Aslan from the other Confederation worlds are so fully integrated into Darrian society that they no longer need to make reaction rolls at all. However they are always considered 'barbarians', pathetic social inferiors by other Aslan outside the Confederation and granted no respect at all.

HUMANITI IN THE CONFEDERATION

There are few 'standard' human citizens in the Confederation, as all of the original Solomani have long since been subsumed into the Darrian racial profile. Most of Humaniti who visit the Darrian subsector are either tourists travelling to see the exotic art and still functional TL16 wonders existent on the major worlds, or scholars wishing to advance their studies by accessing Darrian libraries and universities.

The Confederation is such a haven for research that many professional scientists apply for emigration. Darrian policy however is reluctant to welcome destabilising personalities or Imperium citizens with questionable records. Thus any application is carefully tested for cultural compatibility and academic achievement, before a request is sent to Imperial Security for thorough background checks. Those who pass these long-winded examinations are warmly welcomed as new citizens.

A small number of other humans are granted long term residence visas, usually employees of non-Darrian Corporations who have offices on Confederation worlds, interstellar journalists or foreign embassy staff. A few Byronic artists are allowed to wander where they will. Those foreigners suspected as acting as spies or agents are submitted to light observation and tracking but no effort is made to stop them from making regular reports back to their government or patron organisation.



DARRIAN HISTORY

The Darrians have a remarkable history, full of incredible progression and tragic falls. Transplanted to a new world and lacking any natural predation, they dominated it, growing into a thriving culture. Their natural development was interrupted by the arrival of refugee Solomani, whose technical ability kick-started the Darrians own scientific ascent, allowing them to rise to the highest technological level achieved by any human society and begin to settle other worlds. This brief pinnacle foreshadowed the terrible disaster of the Maghiz, a stellar cataclysm created by their hubris.

Surviving the holocaust was a heroic effort suffered on all of the Darrian colony worlds, slowly clawing their way back to a space faring civilisation. It took over six centuries to regain lost ground but eventually refurbished ships were sent between the colonies, reuniting those planets where settlers had survived and trying to discover what had happened to those who had not. During their search the Darrians discovered they were no longer alone in their sector of space but had been hemmed in on all sides by expanding empires. Finally forming an alliance with the Imperium, the Darrians have survived the instability of the Spinward Marches as a small polity, treading a careful line of diplomacy and using their advanced technological knowledge as a deterrent.

This chapter gives an in depth view of the rise, fall and eventual re-emergence of the Darrians; studying each phase of their development as a people, then a Confederation.

DARRIAN ORIGINS

Three hundred thousand years ago, when Humaniti was but an untapped resource, the Sol system was discovered by the Ancients, a mysterious race with incomprehensibly advanced technology. They saw great potential in the vibrant life on the third planet and co-opted many of its species for a series of parallel multi-generational experiments. Samples were taken and transported to widely scattered worlds, where they were tinkered with at the genetic level and allowed to develop with minimal interference, observing biological, sociological and technological progress.

The ultimate purpose of these studies remains unknown. Any chance to discover their motivations were lost when the Ancients destroyed themselves in an apocalyptic war, exterminating the entirety of their race. Transplanted specimens whose worlds were not destroyed in the conflict, were abandoned on isolated planets. Left to endure on their own merits, countless

experimental test studies died out without the philanthropic guidance of their observers. A few however managed to survive, the human experiments proving more resilient and adaptable than many of the other species.

A still primitive, yet sapient form of homo sapiens, the Darrians had been taken from Terra by an Ancient dimly remembered as the god Onsorik. Acting to some unknown plan the Ancient massively terraformed a planet for their settlement and tailored an entire ecosystem to provide support and comfort. Few dangers existed on Daryen, hardly any large predators, clement atmospheric weather and no significant pathogens. In a literal Garden of Eden the Darrians praised Onsorik as a father, continuing to venerate him millennia after he vanished from the world.

THE ORCHARDS

The world of Daryen was heavily terraformed by unimaginable forces, into five vast basins segregated from one another by high, broad mountain ranges averaging at least ten kilometres in height and reaching up to twice that. Each basin possessed a central sea, fed by rivers draining the runoff from the mountains. Due to the lighter gravity, the atmosphere thinned rapidly in the mountains, forming a natural barrier to Darrian migration.

Onsorik designed five initial communities based around artificially formed Flame Pits, open rifts in the landscape up to several kilometres across. These were full of dully glowing rocks heated by the escape of burning gases and rising geothermal energy, supplied by subterranean volcanic vents. These were possibly structural damage left over from tinkering with the planetary tectonics but provided the perfect centrepiece around which to base his new experimental subjects.

The Ancient then created an ecosystem, perhaps from the remnants of an existent ecology already present on the planet. All vegetation was specifically tailored to nurture human life. Certain herbs and roots specifically designed to grant medicinal properties and various types of bamboo-like grass provided shafts for weapons or tools, or when chewed provided fibres that could be spun into a type of wool. Some flowers and barks were edible in themselves, providing new spices or sources of colourful dyes.

The apex of these botanical modifications was the 'Father Tree', a 20 metre high plant with a concave, semi-circular trunk that gradually leant over in the direction of prevailing winds as



it grew. The odd semi-tubular shape naturally enclosed an area of about five square metres, granting shelter unless the weather perversely blew in from the open side. During warmer seasons, fruit sprouted within the area protected by the trunk, eventually desiccating but remaining edible if left on the vine. Frequent picking stimulated further fruition, enough to support up to four adults if carefully tended.

On the outside of the tree, broad fronds spread to capture sunlight and channel rain to runners in the bark. These collected the water in underground bladders and the groves could easily be tapped to provide an accessible source of drinking water. Openings in the root bowl similar to the reservoir bladders were places to deposit faecal waste, which the tree utilised for fertiliser. The tree's fronds replenished themselves annually, providing a ready supply of fibrous material, which was used by early Darrians to weave ropes and crude fabric. From this they formed hammocks in which to sleep and simple screens to give additional protection from sun and wind.

With its wide range of practical uses the Father Tree was the source of all life and comfort, becoming the key to the evolving Darrian civilisation. However, these **orchards**, as they became known, only extended for about 10 kilometres from each flame pit, their ecology somehow tied into the geothermal emanations. The plantations however, numbered about 250,000 trees, enabling a potential population of up to a million Darrians around each flame pit, although the earliest surviving myths and archaeological excavations suggest few of the communities ever sustained that size.

The five settlements named Boyr, Zlodh, Nyadh, Rimb and Abh, were flourishing prior to the Ancients War. Onsorik fled Daryen either to escape the battles, or as the Darrians prefer to think, in order to save them and their world. Indeed, the lack of any civilised infrastructure meant that the planet escaped sterilisation or annihilation, appearing to be a primitive world uninhabited by sapient species. The father's ultimate fate remains unknown. His disappearance leading to thousands of years of tranquil peace, freed from experimentation.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

Despite an initially nomadic lifestyle within their idyllic surroundings, being tied to the orchards stimulated a number of developments. Using hollow bamboos as siphons was a rapid development in order to access water held in underground bladders. This led to the development of guttering to intercept water collected by the foliage of the Father Trees and pottery vessels in which to store it.

Although capable of sustaining life, a constant diet of Father Tree fruit rapidly became bland. Hunting the local wildlife, some

of it imported from Terra, provided a change of diet, better protein intake and a form of entertainment. Within a couple of generations however, local game had been driven from the orchards forcing hunts to range great distances away from the fire pits. To journey from the protection of the Father Trees required the transportation of water, not easily found except in rivers. This resulted in the development of smaller pottery bottles, which could be sealed to prevent spillages.

Cooking, a practice soon adopted living so close to a free source of heat, was impossible living away from the flame pits without carrying embers to start new fires. A side effect of flint knapping to create tools eventually led to the rediscovery of fire starting, using different types of stones to strike sparks. With the ability create fire; the full extent of the orchards was open to settlement.

The lack of significant numbers of animal hides in comparison with the accelerating population growth, forced the development of weaving cloth for protective clothing and bedding.

Despite these basic achievements, life for the average Darrian was indolent. Rather than developing technologically, they instead experienced rapid advancement socially. Left with plenty of free time to think, they began to consider their philosophical situation, developing abstract cultural concepts and plenty of group entertainments centred on song, dance, sports and sex.

Eventually Darrians reached the maximum resource limit that the orchards could support. Population density became so high that social regulation began weeding out those genetic factors that did not fit in with dense communities. Troublemakers, neurotics, psychotics and others whose activities were aggravated by close, continuing proximity to others, were eliminated from the populace. Infanticide was adopted to control population, child mortality being low due to the initial absence of serious diseases and lack of malnutrition. Even the elderly were not spared once their ability to support themselves was lost. Life within the Garden of Eden began to take on a brutal, pragmatic edge.

FORCED EXPANSION

Between 80,000 and 100,000 years after the Ancient's War, the flame pits began to stutter. Flammable gases became intermittent, often belching foul smelling ashes and smoke instead. Below the surface the volcanic tubes slowly cooled and solidified. The lack of geothermal heat affected the lifecycle of the Father Trees, which began dying out. Although the Darrians knew how to make fire, the gradual death of the trees created terrible population pressure, forcing many families to trek off into the wilderness in search of other orchards. None could be found but with their native practicality and basic handicrafts,



the Darrians adapted to the new environment, learning painful lessons in creating shelter and preserving foods through the seasons.

Ultimately the pits at Boyr and Nyadh burned out completely. The Rimb orchard suffered a terrible plague, the human bacterium brought to the world eventually evolving into a deadly pathogen in the overcrowded settlement. Knowledge and society fractured. The hitherto sedentary Darrian civilisation abandoned the orchards, scattering across the basins.

Over the next 100,000 years the Darrians cycled through periods of hunter-gathering, nomadic animal herding and arable cultivation. Populations in each basin swelled and died as Darrians caused the stress and collapse of their local ecosystems or suffered newly evolving diseases. However, the continuously evolving Darrian intelligence learned from each setback, permitting each recovery to be achieved at a quicker pace.

About 200,000 years after being removed from Terra, the Darrians finally developed the concepts of boats and permanent houses; and began settling the rivers and sea coasts. Water transport created trade between settlements, re-establishing a degree of cultural communication unseen since the days of the orchards. Civilisation had returned.

THE RISE OF THE BASINS

With the rise of permanent urbanisation supported by animal husbandry and rotational crop farming, population levels began to grow in a sustainable manner. Extensive settlement of available lands encouraged exploration into the more hostile mountainous regions which rose steeply above the artificial basins. Pioneers began to settle in the higher foothills but could push no further due to the thinning atmosphere making life at higher altitudes uncomfortable.

A myriad of years passed with Darrians slowly extending their slow penetration of the broad mountain ranges, till about the year -20,000 the peoples of the Southern Polar Abh Basin discovered high altitude routes through the frozen peaks into the neighbouring equatorial Nyadh, Rimb and Boyr Basins. What they discovered were three independent cultures developed in isolation, each radically different from one another with unique languages, customs and traditions.

Initial contacts were peaceful affairs, albeit fraught with fear and misunderstandings. These friendly embassies were eventually supplanted by colonial attempts or military expansion. The original exploration missions devolved into raids begetting attacks of reprisal. An age of discovery descended into pointless wars. New paths across the mountains were sought, not for trade but as new routes to launch invasions.

Hostilities lasted for thousands of years, rising and falling with the petty kingdoms that fuelled them. However, more than soldiers crossed the passes. Traders, scholars and philosophers crossed during the intermittent, short periods of peace.

Previously in the Boyr Basin circa -23,000, the philosopher-king Derir Lipit first formally stated the philosophical premise that has shaped Darrian thought ever since: 'Every living thing has a right to live according to its own nature'. In the Nyadh Basin 1,000 years later, the hermit-philosopher Yikan Yikan had declared the basic commandment: 'All living things must be allowed to live their lives'. The interpretation in Nyadh was an extreme one. Strict followers refused to cut short the life of anything. They gathered the fruits of plants, burned only dead wood and wore only plant fibres or sheared wool. The interpretation in Boyr was more flexible.

Although Darrians were at the top of the food chain, the needed to kill to eat, an accepted fact of life, philosophy dictated that all creatures, even animals, be treated humanely. Values advanced and various philosophies evolved. Eventually the Rimb law-giver Notan Taledh distilled and combined the two ideas into one:

'Animals live by predation but men, because of their intelligence, live by production. Thus, a man who lives as a predator is living as an animal and not fulfilling his true nature as a man. Men may use the lower animals for labour or for food but cruelty to them is not allowable. No man may prey upon another man.'

Thus the great Taledh taught that rationality is the true nature of man. Animal instincts and raw emotion are a lower, vestigial part of him, which must not be allowed to gain control. Darrians society is based upon this school of thought, tending to be even-tempered, lucid and difficult to alarm. They are not, however, self repressive, freely exhibiting emotions as long as their expression does not cause offense or harm.

Taledh the all-wise also promulgated the first great code of Darrian laws, which in honour was named after him. The Taledh Code was comprised of three parts: the definition of crimes, the definition of punishments and moral guidance for determining the fitting punishment for each crime.

DARRIAN PACIFISM

Millennia after their founder passed on, the more extreme Nyadh life-respecting school are still active, both teaching and practicing a life of pacifism. Although a minor philosophical sect, it is their continued persistence and sending of missionaries into the Spinward Marches that has falsely become associated with Darrians and the Confederation in general.



In defining crimes, Taledh considered any action or inaction that would or could hurt other living beings to be a crime. If it actually caused harm, it was a real crime; if it could have caused harm but did not, it was only an imaginary crime. Only real crimes could be prosecuted with a punishment. Punishments were guided by the nature of the crime in addition to the capability of the criminal to bear justice. A wealthy criminal should pay a larger fine than a poor criminal, or a strong physique should suffer longer than a frail one.

THE ZLODH EMPIRE

The ice-bound Zlodh Basin, surrounding the northern polar sea of Daryen, was the last to be opened by trans-mountain migrations. The first tentative crossings took place in about –16,000 but major interactions with the equatorial basins of Nyadh, Rimb and Boyr, did not begin until nearly 1,000 years later.

Although the centre of the polar Zlodh Sea was a frozen cap, it was the largest ocean on the planet and the sea's edges remained ice-free year round. Due to its harsher climate, the Darrians inhabiting Zlodh developed faster technologically, in time inventing advanced sailing techniques to access their primary food supplies which lay in the sea. Innovative boats and crude navigation formed an extensive maritime trade; and it was on the shores of the Zlodh Sea that the first great realm of Daryen arose: the Zlodh Empire.



THE TALEDH CODE

The true wisdom of Taledh's Code was the philosophical understanding that society and its tolerances shift over time. In light of this knowledge, he refrained from codifying punishments to fit each crime. Instead he expanded upon the concept that the perception of crime changes with circumstances and the cultural opinion of its severity. Every copy of the Taledh Code starts with the three definitions on the first page. The remainder of the book are Taledh's own writings, expanding upon his high minded ideals and how to apply them in practice.

The earliest surviving texts are mainly comprised of illustrative examples, each judging the same crime in dozens of conflicting ways. They are ethically convoluted and subject to multiple interpretations; but act as lessons to demonstrate a judge's responsibility to look at any crime from all perspectives.

To this day, the Code is still considered brilliant since the sole central concept of 'the punishment shall fit the crime' is unburdened by thousands of years of stratified laws, precedents or revisions. It remains unaffected by cultural development, the simplicity rendering it eternally applicable.

Procedurally, criminals must make restitution for their crimes by making agreements or contracts promising not to commit that crime again and they must undergo a fitting punishment, which will reinforce the lesson that must be learned. Death by execution is nowadays rarely used as a punishment, save under circumstances where imprisonment is impractical or considered a pointless effort. Exile is a more common form of punishment, rendering the criminal unable to benefit from any aspect of society, which depending on the term of exile can drive the criminal from Confederation space or even result in a long, drawn out death sentence. An exile is no longer considered a 'member of society' and may be maltreated in whatever manner a Darrian deems fitting.

Up until 1084 dangerous criminals likely to cause repeated harm were deposited on the prison world of Torment. However, once the surrounding Entropic Worlds were captured in the Fourth Frontier War, maintaining the penal colony became strategically unsound. Where possible, chronic sociopathic criminals have their citizenship removed and are deported outside of the Darrian Confederation, using naval vessels as transports. Unrepentant psychopaths are pragmatically terminated instead.



The Zlodh Empire was founded on a scientific priesthood. Sea navigation using magnetic compasses, astronomic observations and careful records, made it possible for merchant voyages to travel far distances without getting lost. These sea priests, originally charged with navigating ships across the polar sea, grew in power and extended that authority to the land. The priesthood never actually ruled the empire but stood as the power behind the throne, its navigators absolutely vital to maintaining the Empire's trade. With the removal of their approval, emperors fell to be replaced by those more sympathetic to the priesthood's aims.

The priesthood treated science as a cult secret, forbidden to those outside of its fraternity. The high priests always treated science as real facts of the world rather than the works and whims of the gods. With this rational approach and inquisitive minds, they were able to discover the inner workings of many aspects of the world, resulting in practical weather prediction, higher mathematics and advanced naval architecture.

The scientific curiosity of the priesthood funded expeditions from Zlodh to the other basins. Those expeditions not only gathered new information for the Zhodh priests but they also spread knowledge of Zlodh scientific accomplishments. Seeing an opportunity to spread their influence, the priests sent teachers to elucidate the inhabitants of the basins with lesser pieces of knowledge, whilst gaining respect and standing. The wandering priests proselytising gained thousands of followers allowing the priesthood to manipulate social beliefs with the ultimate purpose of unifying the world under the Zlodh Empire.

Before their aims could be completed, the Zlodh priests belatedly realised they had instigated a technological revolution. Faithful adherents had taken the basic concepts taught to them and developed a plethora of new concepts and ideas. The empirical scientific approach and associated discoveries spread like wildfire, undermining the centralised structure of the Zlodh Empire, which gradually fractured into a number of less authoritarian, petty kingdoms.

By -10,000, compasses, writing, printing, elementary arch and dome construction and mathematics were available to all. The influence of the priesthood slowly ebbed, transforming them into philosophical schools scattered throughout Daryen.

The intense intellectual curiosity of the Darrians led to thousands of years studying both their ecology and the heavens but, because of the beneficent environment of their planet, no great drive to conquer nature. Understanding was more important than control, using their knowledge to predict the changing of seasons for farming, or the best herbs for medicine. Whilst botany, mathematics and astronomy were valuable practical subjects, the social sciences such as ethics, sociology and psychology continued to lead development.

By -1511, Daryen had risen to a global tech level of 3. Theoretical aspects of some of their sciences, however, reached as high as tech level 8 or 9. The world was at peace and the Darrians' entire future was about to change.

THE COMING OF THE SOLOMANI

Unknown to the Darrians on their peaceful world, there was a continuing and dramatic upheaval taking place more than 100 parsecs away. The confrontation between the First Imperium and the Terran Confederation ended in the collapse of the empire and the creation of a successor state: the Rule of Man. This Second Imperium, was not fated to succeed in stemming the onset of the Long Night.

The Rule of Man was established in -2204 and collapsed in -1776. For the next 250 years, the anarchy and chaos of the falling Long Night ruined trade and commerce, brought down governments and raised up new ones. In this era it was natural for some citizens to flee their present situation for the promise of a new, previously untouched world.

The Solomani merchant corporation Itzin, originally founded in Turkey on Terra and later based on Dingir in the Solomani Rim, saw the continuing collapse of interstellar trade and its owners decided to emigrate en masse to a new world and hide from the approaching conflict. A select list of employees and their families was presented with an opportunity to leave with the company. Preparations were made: a fleet of transport starships was assembled; supplies, maps, charts and equipment were crated and stored.

In -1520, the Itzin Fleet of 35 transports and 10 armed escorts set out from Dingir toward the Great Rift. Their journey was an adventure in itself. The fleet travelled through Rule of Man territory to Vland, depending on written letters of transit and free passage when they were honoured and on the armed might of its escorts when they were not. After calling at Vland in -1516 they ventured into the unknown, unsettled and unexplored territory of Corridor, Deneb and the Spinward Marches. In -1513, the fleet stopped temporarily at what is now Sacnoth and from there mounted a fast survey of the sector. After finding several potential world sites, the Itzin leaders selected Daryen as their new home.

The reasons for selecting Daryen were fairly obvious. Whilst many worlds of the Spinward Marches had indigenous life forms; significantly fewer (Daryen, Algine, Vanejen, a few Zhodani worlds) had human populations. Of those, Daryen was a perfect choice: an apparently stable minor human race that might preserve the Solomani technology and manufacturing capacity, if they could peacefully integrate with an influx of alien settlers.



The Solomani came clandestinely to Daryen. The world was surveyed from above and then by scout teams on the surface. A secret base was constructed in an inaccessible location of the mountainous barrier where Rimb, Boyr and Abh met. Once finished, the settlers transferred to the base and the ships were hidden in orbit. After a full analysis of the world and its society, the Solomani prepared to reveal their presence.

In -1511, the people of the Itzin Fleet appeared in the Rimb Basin. Realising that Darrian society was secular, their plan was not to appear from the skies as gods but arrive as terrestrial envoys on the ground. To most folk the Solomani were just another group of migrating Darrians, although oddly short and stocky. The difference was the technology that the arriving Solomani carried with them, their knowledge and equipment acting as a form of trade goods. The Solomani exchanged it freely, making many friends and fortunes with it.

Using a combination of subtle dissimulation and honest enthusiasm, the Darrians rapidly extracted whole new technological concepts from their off-world guests, gaining a broad base of (to them) novel scientific concepts. Once the Solomani belatedly discovered how quickly the Darrians had assimilated this new knowledge, the Itzin commanders decided to enter an open partnership. The synergy between the fresh Darrian culture and the strongly driven, more engineering-and-technology-oriented culture of the Solomani, was explosive. It took only a short time for the Darrians to adopt wholesale Solomani theories and engineering, exponentially accelerating their tech level and industrial base.

THE DARRIAN SURGE

Soon after revealing their presence, the Solomani of the Itzin Fleet decided to integrate fully into Darrian society. Rather than remain aloof and separate, they merged themselves into the mainstream of Darrian life, even forming interracial marriages, which to everyone's surprise proved to be fruitful, although Darrian genetic traits proved dominant. Darrians were hired to work for Solomani companies and once the native manufacturing capacity began to operate, Solomani became valued employees of Darrian companies.

The social assimilation of the Solomani by the Darrians took about 100 years. The total influx of Solomani arriving at Darrian was no more than 30,000. Their knowledge, their expertise and their experience were shared freely; benefits to Darrians in general were benefits to Solomani as well. Darrians, having mastered Solomani technology and theory, turned and applied their own higher maths abilities to take them to their logical conclusions and then began to make leaps beyond them.

By -1400, the Solomani of the Itzin Fleet had been effectively absorbed into the mainstream of Darrian society. All major

leadership positions were, by this time, filled by individuals born on Daryen. Still hidden in the subsector and at the crest of a new technological renaissance, the original decision to mothball the transport was rescinded.

Working from the formerly secret base in the mountains, the Itzin Fleet leadership arranged an expedition to the fleet in orbit above Darrian. Immediately there was a problem. One 110 years of unmaintained storage in orbit had taken its toll, and none of the ships were operable. Moreover, there was no longer an accomplished cadre of trained starship operators. Plans for simply using the existing store of ships proved unworkable. Instead, the Darrians started over with an existing, proven technology and theory, using examples from the fleet of now nonworking starships in orbit. In the space of 10 years, they had their first working design; within three decades they had a fleet of scout vessels in operation.

Initial Darrian exploration in the period -1395 to -1370, concentrated on the worlds of the Darrian Group – Spume, Mire, Condaria, Roget, Ilium, Rorre, Engrange, Ektron, Laberv, and 494-908. Constrained by the jump-1 drives built for the first series of explorers, Darrian star-farers stayed within a few parsecs of their homeworld. By the end of this period the next generation of starships, complete with jump-2 drives and increased fuel reserves, were coming off the construction lines. Certain select ships within this class were equipped with jump-3 drives for even greater range.

By -1270 Darrian ships had explored the Spinward Marches to a radius of about 20 parsecs. In this period the Marches had not yet been settled, thus the region was uninhabited and open to future colonisation. Initial survey exploration, gradually gave way to in depth scientific investigations instead.

THE GOLDEN AGE

Pure scientific research remained a passion for the Darrians. Whilst exploration teams searched the nearby systems, Darrian scientists were working on all aspects of physics: gravitics, electronics, magnetism and radiation. Aided by an intuitive grasp of higher mathematics, advances were phenomenal. Their understanding of the universe grew by leaps and bounds. Technology was also felt on Daryen. The very character of Darrian life was changed by the increasing industrialisation of the world. For about 100 years from -1400 to -1300, the quality of individual life was adversely affected as industry grew, resulting in a strong Darrian movement demanding respect for the individual worker.

For a period of about 50 years, controversy continued as to how much consideration a merchant or employer owed to his workers. By -1250, society generally accepted the idea of a fair wage, considerate working hours and a need to monitor the impact of technology on society.



The advance of Darrian civilisation from Tech Level 3 to Tech level 10 and beyond was not without difficulties. Using prototype technology involved potential complications and some serious problems occurred. A nuclear power plant accident in the Rimb Basin contaminated hundreds of square kilometres of cropland; a second accident within weeks of the first resulted in a devastating meltdown scenario, prompting rapid research into radioactive clean up techniques. During this same period other natural outgrowths of increasing technology were also felt on Daryen: toxic waste contamination, unforeseen biological and cultural side effects of drugs and chemicals and chemical driven changes to the planetary weather systems. Many Darrians eventually came to see that the advance of technology was not necessarily a good thing.

With the exploration of other worlds, the previously scattered LoTech and Luddite organisations unified under the leadership of Ghorge Rorre for the specific purpose of finding a new world that would not be contaminated by technology. They studied hundreds of scouting reports and decided on a world several parsecs away. Formal requests were made to begin an off-world colony, a hitherto unconceived concept. With no imminent plans to start its own colonies, the various basin governments gave their consent, providing the prospective colonist organised their own transport. Tens of thousands of Darrians pooled their resources raising enough finances to manufacture several large bulk cargo carriers. Loaded with colonists, the followers of Rorre began their exodus and settled the new, world which they named in his honour.

The new settlement created a charter that included specific long-term prohibitions against technology above level 3. Outside of the starport, where higher technology was required to handle shuttlecraft, the populace made a collective decision to stay as an agriculturally based economy, emphasising the preservation of the ecology and a long-term social stability, unaffected by the changes that new technology brought. The carriers continued to shuttle back and forth, bringing new colonists to Rorre and returning with exotic new produce to help fund their simple needs.

The lessons of environmental damage were not lost on the Darrians remaining on the homeworld. New councils were formed to prevent ecological catastrophe, resulting in the building of an orbital infrastructure to remove dangerous manufacturing into space and utilising the material resources of the solar system. Lacking certain rare elements, fleets composed of bulk cargo carriers, were loaded with cunningly designed mining or refining equipment and transported to resource rich planets considered uninhabitable by Darrians. For example, signs remain today of the vast Darrian strip mine on Debarre; and the rusting ruins of a gas refinery can still be found on Talchek in District 268.

COLONIAL EXPANSION

Daryen reached the stars in a period when there was little settlement of the worlds in the Spinward Marches. Although they explored their sector to a radius of more than 20 parsecs, there was little that one single world could do to exploit hundreds of planets. After a relatively brief period of exploration, Daryen concentrated further efforts to in-depth scientific analysis of worlds closer to home.

Between -1250 and -1100 Daryen thoroughly investigated the 11 worlds known as the Darrian Group, establishing a number of residential research stations to study the ecological or mineralogical resources of each world. Such installations allowed examination of the psychological and physiological effects of long term residence on these new planets, and on a few with no extant biosphere, experimental terraforming projects were set in motion.

During this time the faltering colony of Rorre finally established material independence from Daryen and the experiences that the inhabitants had faithfully recorded for scientists were used to create guidelines for significant colonisation attempts. Hundreds of pioneers set out to begin constructing the infrastructure required for eventually self-supporting colonies. As each settlement neared completion further colonists followed in transports filled with agricultural and other specialised machinery. Within a few decades most of the occupied Darrian worlds were capable of feeding themselves but all were still dependant on Daryen to ship manufactured products. The limited number of transports dedicated to colonial development continued to shuttle back and forth, packed with ever more devices and colonists.

THE DARRIAN'S ULTIMATE DISASTER

Darrian expeditions continued to visit and explore the hundreds of worlds around them but the primary motivation was research. In the 400 years since the coming of the Solomani, Daryen had bootstrapped itself from Tech Level 3 to Tech Level 14; it was a natural belief among Darrians that they could easily push their Tech Level to 22 or 23 in the next 400 years. Everyone understood that the way to increase Tech Level was through research and research was a primary focus of Darrian society.

In the ease of their advance, the Darrians become complacent, even arrogant. Their rush to master new forces and growing godlike capabilities led them to begin excitements across a multitude of scientific disciplines, some of increasingly dubious ethical nature. In addition to the normal hard sciences, Darrians began to investigate antimatter production, bioengineering, principles of matter transport, Artificial Intelligence and the study of psionics. In about -1000 the now unified government



of Daryen began a research project into the life cycle of Tarnis, collecting sensor data on Daryen's own rapidly spinning sun. Expeditions to other systems in the Spinward Marches had shown some anomalies between theory and actual measurements of stellar energy output; causing scientists to worry about possible instabilities that might exist within Tarnis.

In -950 and -944 two parallel projects were established to define the internal mechanisms of Tarnis. The Abh Project (the name is roughly translated as the Alpha Project) operated from a base in the asteroid belt close to Tarnis; the Udh Project (which translates as the Omega Project) was based at Zlodh University. The two projects continued to develop separately. The Abh Project concentrated on physically transporting protected sensors deep into Tarnis' interior in order to telemeter data out; its scientists felt that large quantities of accurate data would provide the answers that were needed. The Udh Project was more theoretical in nature; its scientists used powerful computers and newly discovered Meson technology to remotely analyse the star to find patterns that would support one of a variety of theories about stellar lifetimes.

In -925 the Abh Project finished construction of its first star probe, a device designed to survive in the heart of the sun itself while recording data for study. The first generation star probe survived for a total of eight minutes and reached a depth of nearly 18,000 kilometres before its shields failed and it was incinerated by Tarnis' interior heat. In -924 the second star probe, with improved shielding, was launched into Tarnis. It reached an operating depth of 300,000 kilometres and began sending out information at a prodigious rate. The flow of data via transmitter delighted the project's astrophysicists until that same data indicated an increasing instability in the sun, centring on the device. Before a decision to turn off the device could be implemented, a subsurface fulmination occurred, causing the star to start blowing immense sheets of stellar material from its outer layer.

The first effects of the titanic explosion were a series of gamma ray bursts. Although minor when compared with a full blown supernova, the power was terrifying at the local level. Travelling at the speed of light, the radiation blastwave produced devastating EMP effects, fusing all electronic components as it spread out through the system. In space, every computerised device failed and power lines shorted out in explosions, leaving the crew of ships and stations to die of radiation sickness, alone in the dark. Daryen fared no better. Gravitic vehicles lost power and plummeted to the ground. Automated surface transport lost function and either ground to a halt or raced on without control until crashing or running out of fuel. Computers lost memory, their sensitive processors forever melted into uselessness. Atmospheric communication channels were disrupted but since no devices remained operable to broadcast or receive, the situation was mute.

In a fraction of a second a TL16 society was reduced to the Stone Age. But the worst was yet to come.

A gargantuan wave front of expanding, incandescent gas burst from Tarnis, travelling at a little under nine million kilometres per hour, crossing the distance to Daryen in just under a day. Unaware of the approaching doom and unable to protect themselves anyway, the Darrians were struggling to cope with the utter destruction of their infrastructure.

When it hit, the blast of superheated plasma struck like a blowtorch, buckling the planet's protective magnetic field. The ionised particles sheeted through the atmosphere, already weakened from gamma ray saturation, causing the whole sky to simultaneously erupt with auroras and titanic lightning bolts. Absorbing overwhelming quantities of energy, the upper layers themselves exploded into plasma, irradiating everything on the surface with doses of soft x-rays and unfiltered UV, blinding those unfortunate enough to be outside.

Within moments surface temperatures rose between 50 to 100 degrees Celsius as the stratosphere struggled to radiate away its heat. The atmosphere tore itself into violent storms as vortices formed between the hot upper plasma and the cooler lower air. Over the course of three days, cascading sheets of stellar material continued to be ejected, striking the world several times more. Everything, save for a fraction of the plant species, died.

The only remaining Darrians were those trapped in a few subterranean installations and the handful of undersea cities in the deepest parts of the Zlodh Ocean. The horrified survivors called it the Maghiz, the te-zlodh word for Chaos.

The sleeting mega-flares did not stop at Daryen. They continued through the system devastating already functionless orbital manufacturing plants, drifting spaceships and a few outlying research posts. In a quirk of fate, the Abh Project station in the asteroid belt was located within a vast nickel-iron planetoid, heavily shielded to prevent stray signals from interfering with its sensitive equipment. The base, but not its surface based communications or shuttles, survived the initial electromagnetic pulse; nevertheless the following hyper flare caught most of the research team as they were attempting repairs on both. The handful of survivors spent four years scrapping their remaining instruments to jury-rig a single gig to take them back to the nightmare that was Daryen.

The gamma ray bursts from Tarnis continued travelling through interstellar space, hitting each of the Darrian colony worlds in turn. Even with forewarning of 'Pulse Day', it was an impossible job to adequately shield every piece of electronic equipment from the radiation wave; many colonies simply lacked the materials or machinery with which to construct enough protective cages.



As it arrived in each system all electronic devices were powered down and earthed but many still fried. Eventually, after nearly half a dozen parsecs, the wave front dissipated to harmlessness, unable to generate any further EMP effects.

NIGHT TIME

The colonies at the time of the Maghiz were still extremely dependent upon Daryen as a source of supply, knowledge and interstellar transport. Though possessing some degree of manufacturing capability, capable of creating land vehicles or heavy machinery, they lacked the ability to produce micro-circuitry, advanced pharmaceuticals or any number of advanced tech that required a fully operational TL16 infrastructure to produce.

Neither did the colonies maintain full databases of scientific information, each world only possessing a small subset of knowledge in the minds of their specialists and whatever research material they had brought with them. The idea that the homeworld could be destroyed had been, up to then, inconceivable. No one had planned for such an eventuality.

Over the following weeks, those transport fleets fortunate enough to be out-system when the Maghiz occurred, jumped back to Daryen and discovered the devastation. Sensor officers scoured the world, by chance re-establishing meson comms with the surviving Zlodh undersea cities but realised they could provide no relief to the trapped citizens. The flash heated surface of Daryen was now suffering violent storms and torrential rainfall from gigatons of condensing water vapour. With no processed hydrogen available to refuel them, the transports' own survival was in question until the arrival of a vessel equipped with tenders capable of skimming fuel from the system's gas giants.

Faced with the unpalatable situation that almost all of Daryen's scientific community was annihilated and no way to descend safely through the storms, the transports exchanged navigational databases and returned to their new homes.

For about two decades following the Maghiz, Daryen and its colonies tried to continue at the old levels of communication and traded whatever surplus materials they had available. With few ships on hand and most useful equipment being hoarded against eventual failure, it soon became apparent that it was not possible to continue as before.

In -905 all of the Darrian colonies agreed that each would have to make its own way. The remaining fleet of ships was equably divided up among the colonies; which either mothballed or cannibalised them for materials. All contact between the worlds ceased in -860. Between -860 and -275, the worlds of the

Darrian Group devoted their efforts to survival. Darrian stoicism was born during the hardships of this long night.

Overall Darrian technology reverted to pre-electronic levels. Most of the old high-tech equipment wore out and was discarded or stored in museums, where it remained, ready to be used to rebuild each colony.

REBUILDING THE CONFEDERATION

By -275, the colony on Mire had recovered to Tech Level 10, fully settling the world and exploiting its resources. A team of researchers investigated the museum-piece starships they had and realised that they had the technology and the industrial base to build new ones. After constructing a few jump-1 explorers, Mire re-established contact with the other Darrian colonies, as well as with Daryen itself, still recovering ecologically and began a new era of Darrian interstellar activity.

The rebuilt Darrian Group was led by the world that began the re-contact project, Mire. Daryen, which had been understandably overlooked in the immediate post-Maghiz recovery attempts, responded slowly to the original contact and by the time it was participating fully, the power structure was fully established with Daryen relegated to the role of revered mother world but without any real power.

THE SWORD WORLDS

One of the first things the Darrians discovered when they returned to space was that they had neighbours. In -399 Solomani colonists had arrived in the neighbouring subsector and settled on Gram, about 7 parsecs trailing the Darrian Group.

Perhaps fortunately for the Darrians, when the original settlers of Gram arrived in the Spinward Marches, their cursory survey of various adjacent systems initially failed to detect the throwback civilisations. By the time the Darrians had been detected, the Sword Worlders – driven by their desire to create their own independent community – were fully occupied colonising their own subsector, settling most of the uninhabited worlds by -200 and forming the Sacnoth Dominate in -186.

THE ZHODANI

The Zhodani were present in the Spinward Marches long before any other settlers. They established a toehold in Chronor subsector around -2500 and that region became the trailing border of the Zhodani Consulate. It was just chance that Darrian surveys did not reach far enough to touch the Zhodani border and no Zhodani expeditions touched Darrian space between -1521 and -920.



Zhodani expeditions beyond their own borders were frequent during the next 2,000 years but they were concentrated in the Gvurrdon, Provence and Corridor sectors. Some exploratory trade expeditions travelled through the Spinward Marches and it was one of those expeditions that first met the Darrians in -187. Trade with the Zhodani was a lucrative activity. Darrians were adept at analysing and reproducing prototypes; Zhodani found it profitable to buy refined and processed goods rather than undertake the refining and processing themselves.

After two decades of trade between Zhodani and Darrians, the Darrians made a chance discovery. The Zhodani had been trading with the Sword Worlds for more than a century. It quickly became apparent that the Zhodani had known of the devastated Darrian worlds and that they had deliberately avoided them during their period of throwback. Further, the evidence mounted that Zhodani observation posts had been established to keep an eye on Darrian worlds during this time.

The Darrians took offense, questioning why the Zhodani had not extended them humanitarian aid. After some analysis it became clear that the Zhodani considered Darrians a threat, although at first nobody was sure why. Further investigation showed that no known culture, aside from the Ancients, had been able to do what the Darrians had accomplished, the trigger of a stellar flare.

Darrian-Zhodani relations suffered a major setback; setting a tone for the continuing distrust between the two powers that continues to the present.

THE THIRD IMPERIUM

Scouts of the Third Imperium, pushing its explored borders farther and farther out, eventually reached the Spinward Marches, and in 53 Imperial Scouts made first contact with the Sword Worlds. As part of their sweep through the sector the scouts briefly visited Mire in 54, but no follow-up visit occurred due to another interminable outbreak of civil strife in the Sword World subsector.

Imperial traders resumed contact with the Sword Worlds in 73 formulating new trade routes which briefly stabilised the region. Darrian however, still caught up in rebuilding its own interstellar community, was overlooked. It was not until 148 that Imperial Scouts re-contacted the Sword Worlds, immediately afterward establishing the first official diplomatic contact with the Darrian Group.

The return of the Imperium marked a true change in the character of the Spinward Marches. Before 148 the Marches had just been a few scattered polities. After the arrival of the Imperials, the development of the Marches began in earnest. Imperial settlements were established throughout the region.

Contacts with the immense civilisation brought ready markets for goods and resources. The Darrian Group, as an established and stable community of industrialised planets, was in an ideal position to support the Imperial cultivation of the Marches.

A natural rivalry with the Sword Worlds began as both communities of worlds competed for Imperial markets and contracts. The Darrian Group, although smaller, was more cohesive and manufactured better products than the Sword Worlds. In addition, the Sword Worlds proved less politically stable over time, prompting more preference for Darrian markets when long-term contracts were called for.

THE FRONTIER WARS

The Darrian Confederation initially bound itself together out of common racial and economic considerations but a major factor was self-defence. The disproportionate size of the Confederation compared with the mistrusted Zhodani Consulate, dictated that Darrian's could not defend against an enemy of such size without external aid. To protect its independence, the Darrians began to practice diplomacy.

When the Maghiz occurred, the Darrian Confederation was alone in a vast, untapped ocean of space. Many rich worlds lay all around it: far too many for the Darrians to exploit at once. When they regained space centuries later, the situation had radically changed. Solomani refugees had colonised the world clusters directly trailing the Darrian worlds; prime real estate had been snatched from their hands. More than that, the Sword Worlds proved to be aggressive traders, competent merchants and effective industrialists.

The Darrian Confederation and the Sword Worlds traded uneasily and tentatively; their relationship never satisfactory due to the contempt and hostility the Sword World Solomani exhibited towards Darrian culture. At the same time, the two Confederations found themselves competing for the same external markets: independent worlds within the Spinward Marches and Imperial worlds along the Imperium's border. Taken together with the looming threat of the mistrusted Zhodani Consulate, the Darrians naturally enough, searched for diplomatic means of neutralising its two natural adversaries. The only major power with the ability to achieve that was the Third Imperium.

For 800 years after it had regained the stars, the Darrian Confederation was content to pursue an independent course. Trade ties with the Imperium were inevitable but Darrians maintained strict neutrality with regard to military activities. In the 400s, Darrians began to see a need for greater military security and in response, established their Special Arm and deployed the Star Trigger as a deterrent to aggression.



The next century was one of uneasy peace. The Zhodani and the Sword Worlds made overtures to the Darrians, proposing alliances against the Imperium. The Darrians, determined to pursue a neutral course and not trusting the potential allies, turned them down. At the same time, Darrians began to see that the star trigger deterrent was not a perfect one. The threat of destroying whole stars was enough to stop most aggression but it would not be enough if the entire region were engulfed in war. The threat of destabilising stars might keep forces out of Darrian territory but it was unrealistic to assume that the Star Trigger could be used to ban all warfare in the sector.

Darrians paid careful attention to defence planning throughout the 400s and 500s. The uneasy peace in the Spinward Marches deteriorated throughout the 500s. In 589, after 10 years of increasingly belligerent border incidents, the Zhodani Consulate, in concert with the Vargr and the Sword Worlds, attacked the Imperium. The Darrian Confederation remained neutral; it seemed the wisest course at the time. The Sword Worlds changed the situation dramatically. Before the war, there were several Sword World governments; when the war began, these governments united to create one ruling government under the control of the Sword Worlds Navy.

Mistaking Darrian neutrality for weakness, the Sword World Navy invaded the strategically placed Entropic Worlds in 593 to capture a productive mining complex located there. That was enough to spur the Confederation to action. Darrian forces were mobilised; overtures to the Imperium produced a military alliance that pressured the Sword Worlds from two sides. The First Frontier War ended in 604, unfortunately without returning the Entropic Worlds to the Darrians. Peace, however, was only an uneasy interlude. While the antagonists accepted an armistice, the Imperium itself faced a political crisis that plunged it into a civil war and the Darrians watched helplessly as Entrope was used by the Sword Worlds as a dumping ground for political dissidents.

THE ASLAN

On the eve of the First Frontier War in the midst of a massive military build-up, a new species arrived in Darrian space. An Aslan *ihatei* fleet of second sons searching for new terrain had meandered into the Spinward Marches. Seeing a golden opportunity to recruit allies to their cause, the Darrians requested aid from the strange, warlike race.

Sensing a chance to win Sword World territories by force, the Aslan readily agreed, allying themselves with the Darrian Confederation. Soldiers served alongside humans in Darrian troop units as well as in specially raised mercenary companies composed wholly of Aslan. Spacers served aboard rapidly produced Darrian warships and on their own Aslan-built cruisers. Aslan in service to the Darrian Confederation fought

throughout the First Frontier War (589 to 604) and maintained Darrian neutrality during the first half of the Imperial Civil War. They again fought as Darrians alongside Imperial forces against the Zhodani in the Second Frontier War (615 to 622). Aslan commerce raiders even ventured deep into Zhodani and Vargr territory to carry the war behind enemy lines.

Aslan loyalty was bought not with money but with the promise of the most valuable thing an Aslan male can possess – land of his own. When the First and Second Frontier Wars ended, the Aslan troopers and spacers were awarded vast grants of fallow territory on Daryen and other worlds of the Darrian Group. Their service to the Confederation made them truly welcome in the years after the war and they integrated quickly into Darrian society as equals and brothers.

RECENT HISTORY

Frustrated by the failure of the Imperium to help reclaim its lost worlds and protect Darrian citizens from ongoing persecution, the Confederation launched their own expedition in 788, retaking the Entropic worlds in a lightning blitzkrieg. The aggressive action took the Imperium, Zhodani and especially the Sword Worlders by complete surprise, causing the collapse of the unified Sword World government.

A precarious Trilateral Alliance was formed between the strongest Sword World states, their internecine power struggles preventing a joint retaliatory strike against the Confederation. The Darrians made good use of the time, decommissioning the thousands of gulags they found on Entrope, offering citizenship to any Sword Worlders who wished to change nationality. Funding new industrialisation and infrastructure, the burgeoning populace began to turn the planet from a frozen strip mine into a highly productive manufacturing world.

Between 800 to 826 the Imperium began a series of hysterical Psionic purges. Whilst the Darrians were open-minded about such powers, they subtly began to tone down open use of psionics in order to maintain good diplomatic relations with their allies. Behind the scenes, the PsionicSuppressions drove many psionics to the Confederation seeking asylum, where they were covertly accepted and secreted to Rorre. Whilst Imperial citizens assume Darrians share their abhorrence for mental powers, higher echelon members of the military and espionage services are aware of the Psychic enclaves within the Confederation but do not take issue with it.

In 848 the Trilateral Alliance collapsed, leading to four years of anarchism on the Sword Worlds. Although initially welcomed by the Darrians, political scientists fretted that the eventual result would be a stronger, more authoritarian government. Their predictions proved true with the formation of the Sword World Confederacy; in mimicry of the Darrians own Confederation. To



their relief the centralised Sword World parliament was not able to re-establish a joint fleet.

The Darrian Confederacy was not directly attacked in the Third Frontier War (979-986) but did send support elements to reinforce the Imperial manoeuvres. Fleet logistics revealed a technological lag in their ally's military productivity, so after the conclusion of hostilities, plans were set in motion to revitalise the Darrian manufacturing base. Pontificating by Imperial ministers and a lack of funding for new capital ship dockyards eventually resulted in the Imperium offering to construct new classes of cruiser in return for the science behind any cutting edge technological specifications incorporated in their construction.

Terms agreed the Darrians took advantage of the manufacturing infrastructure on Entrope to begin work on a series of modest commercial shipyards, together with a naval base to guard them. The plans were seen as provocative by the Sword World Confederacy, which seethed impotently as the facilities slowly approached competition, just two parsecs from their own forward military base in Hrunting.

The situation further deteriorated when the Imperium decided to establish another naval base near Quar, which flanked the Zhodani acquisitions in the Querion subsector. The Consulate protested against such antagonism, fearing what might happen to the vulnerable spur, if caught in a strategic pincer between the two major fleet facilities. Seeing a future Quar naval base as the more significant threat, the Zhodani staged a belligerent incident near the system, unintentionally leading to the Fourth Frontier War and a series of fleet battles in the Jewel and Cronor subsectors.

Increasingly worried by the nearing completion of the fleet facilities around Entrope, the Sword Worlds used the pretexts of the Fourth Frontier War to launch an all out assault on the world, supported morally, if not militarily, by their Zhodani allies. The surprise attack not only destroyed the base before its defences could be brought fully online, but flushed with success the Sword World fleet continued to conquer the rest of the Entropic Worlds.

Suffering significant losses from the unheralded attack, the Darrian Navy was forced to withdraw from the Entropic Worlds, abandoning the outflanked penal colony on Torment in the process. Later reconnaissance revealed that the penal installation was empty, whatever had happened to the prisoners unknown. Shortly afterwards however, a spate of vicious piracy began attacking merchant shipping and supply lines deep within the Confederation, which prevented a Darrian counter attack from relieving the annexed worlds before peace was signed between the Imperium and the Zhodani.

The last 10 years has seen the arrival of the new generation of TL15 cruisers from the Imperium and a gradual build up of Darrian military forces in anticipation of further Zhodani or Sword World aggression. Whilst the Confederation remains a close ally of the Third Imperium, opinions are beginning to be voiced over Emperor Strephon's apparent lack of efforts concerning failure to regain the Entropic Worlds or the maltreatment of the subjugated Darrian population.

DARRIAN TIMELINE

The following gathers together some of the important events in Darrian history.

Date	Event
-312,000	The Ancient Onsorik transports Terran humans to Daryen for purposes unknown.
-302,000	Final War destroyed Ancient bases on Daryen.
-200,000	Daryen flame pits begin to burn out.
-100,000	Extensive migrations on Daryen. Basins settled.
-23,000	Philosopher-king Derir Lepit of Boyr Basin states the philosophy that dominates Darrian culture.
-22,000	Hermit philosopher Yikan of Nyadh Basin creates the basic commandment: 'All living things must be allowed to live their own lives.'
-20,000	People of Abh Basin begin migrating through the mountains to the neighbouring equatorial Nyadh, Rimb and Boyr Basins.
-16,000	Explorers cross the mountain ranges isolating the north polar Zlodh Basin on Daryen.
-15,000	Rise of the Zlodh Empire.
-10,000	Basic science becomes widespread. Zlodh Empire gradually fragments into many kingdoms.
-1520	Solomani Itzin fleet arrives on Daryen.
-1511	Terran traders contact Darrians.
-1410	Darrians begin space exploration.
-1400	Terrans absorbed into Darrian mainstream. Pollution begins to affect Daryen.
-1395	Initial Darrian exploration spreads through the worlds of the Darrian group.
-1370	Jump-2 drives in regular service with Daryen ships, some jump-3.
-1310	Scientific surveys concentrate on the worlds of the Darrian Group.
-1300	Daryen movement demanding respect for individual workers.
-1270	Darrian exploration reaches 20 parsecs out.
-1250	Darrian society accepts the idea of a living wage, consideration for the individual and a need to consider the impact of technology on society.



Date	Event
-1250	Rorre, the first Darrian colony, is settled by those wishing to return to a pre-industrial life style. Scientific research stations begin to be built on other worlds in the Darrian Group.
-1100	Usable worlds in the Darrian Group establish permanent colonies. TL 14 reached.
-1000	Detailed observations of the Daryen sun Tarnis begin.
-990	Daryen establishes an outpost on Epsilon/Bowman.
-980	Tarsus visited by Darrian explorers.
-935	Research station founded on Telaret by the University of Zlodh, as part of the Udh project.
-925	The Abh Project finishes construction of the first star probe.
-924	Darrians reach TL 16.
-924	The Abh Project launches second star probe. Tarnis erupts, causing the Maghiz.
-924	Daryen civilisation collapses.
-905	Darrian colonial worlds agree to go their own way after the devastation of the Maghiz.
-904	The gamma ray burst of the Maghiz finally peters out, after travelling six parsecs.
-860	Last of the Darrian colonies abandon space to concentrate on recovery efforts.
-820	The pharmaceutical gathering station on Gungnir dies out.
-399	Sword Worlds colonisation begun.
-350	Some Darrian worlds regain orbital capability.
-275	Mire achieves Jump Drive manufacturing capability and begins contacting the colonies.
-271	Mire takes the leadership role rebuilding Darrian interstellar society.
-265	A Mire exploration ship arrives at Tizon establishing contact with the Sword Worlds.
-238	Foundation of the Darrian Community placing Mire at the centre of power. Most colonies recognised as independent worlds.
-187	First Zhodani contact with Darrians.
-186	The Sacnoth Dominate, the first Sword Worlds interstellar government, is formed.
-165	Major setback in Darrian-Zhodani relations when Darrians discover that the Zhodani had been aware of the Maghiz but had not offered humanitarian assistance.
-164	Formal diplomatic relations begin between the Sacnoth Dominate and the Darrian Community.
-40	Colonisation of Engrange from Ilium.
-20	Establishment of welfare bureaucracy to support lower-class Darrians.
60	Imperial colonisation of Spinward Marches begins.
98	Gram-Sacnoth War begins. Contact between the Imperium and the Darrians is lost.
147	Imperial Scouts contact Sword Worlds.
148	Imperial Scouts contact the Darrians. Foundation of the Darrian Confederation replacing the treaties of the Darrian Community.
390	Darrian Confederation Navy recovers a cache of TL 16 ships of pre-Maghiz manufacture.
488	Darrian Special Arm created.
489	Star Trigger weapon demonstrated, stunning and scaring the foreign dignitaries invited to attend.
585	Aslan arrive offering to fight for the Darrians.
589	First Frontier War begins.
593	Sword Worlds troops invade the Entropic worlds of the Darrian Confederation.
595	Darrians sign alliance with Imperium after loss of the Entropic Worlds.
604	First Frontier War ends.
604	Imperial Civil War begins. Aslan allies are granted lands within the Confederation.
611	A Darrian research station is setup on Mertactor.
615	Second Frontier War begins.
616	Zhodani fleets withdraw from Darrian space after uncovering evidence of Darrian plans to deploy Star Triggers.
620	Second Frontier War ends.
622	Imperial Civil War ends.
625	Imperial negotiators give up attempting to convince the Second Dominate to hand back the Entropic Worlds to the Darrian Confederation.
788	Darrian Confederation launches surprise attack, resulting in the regaining of the four Entropic worlds lost in the First Frontier War.
789	Research station re-established on Telaret, an inner moon of Leryin, by the University of Nyadh.
800	To prevent friction with the Imperium, the Darrians lower the profile of their own psionics but offer a refuge for those fleeing the Imperium.
979	Third Frontier War begins.
986	Third Frontier War ends.
1012	Two Azhanti High Lightning class fleet intruders, Mire and Darrian, transferred to Darrian Confederation.
1050	The University of Boyr establishes a research lab on Poror, a satellite of Bidhes.
1082	Fourth Frontier War begins.
1084	The Sword Worlds annex the Entropic Worlds from the Darrian Confederation, the Darrian counterattack only manages to recover Cunnonic long lost to them.
1084	Fourth Frontier War ends. Nonym segregates itself from the Darrian Confederation.
1093	Discovery of former Darrian outpost on Bowman.
1094	Darrian Confederation arranges a trade deal to exchange advanced TL15 Cruiser designs in exchange for the first models.
1102	Darrian begins to reallocate its previous TL13 warships to colonial squadrons, as the first of the new cruisers are delivered.
1105	Current year. Darrian sociologists continue to refine predictions of when hostilities between the Zhodani Consulate and the Imperium will break out again.



DARRIAN SECRETS

The following chapter takes a closer look at the nature of the Darrians and some of the mysteries which surround their culture and history. Whilst viewed as an open minded and generous people, they are not and have never been pacifists, but are willing to do what is necessary in order to survive. Some darker secrets of their development have been repressed, forgotten even by the Darrians themselves.

Although the unusual stability and homogenous nature of their Confederation is lauded by all space faring nations, it is not a natural construction – but was imposed by rigorous sociological and ecological controls long before they ever left their own homeworld. Their remarkable achievement is all the stranger when considering that no human polity that embraces intellectual freedom has existed so long without internecine instability and at their core, Darrians are human too.

ONSORIK'S PROJECT

The Darrians were originally human ancestors, taken from Earth approximately 300,000 years ago by an Ancient whose name has been passed down in mythology as **Onsorik**. Whilst the dates of the original orchards were not verified until later, the objective of their resettlement became a matter of conjecture by the early Priests of Zlodh. The primordial stories suggested that Onsorik was a benevolent saviour figure who gifted the Darrians all they desired, commanding them naught but to go forth and multiply. Yet certain oddities did not bear out the beneficent nature of the deity.

Why? The priests asked, did Onsorik create five separate basins, all nearly identical, and then separate them from one another with high impenetrable mountains? To their scientific minds, this was an obvious experimental technique designed to run control groups. More worrying were the 'boons' of the orchards. With free food, shelter and warmth, but no diseases, predators or contraception, the orchards seemed designed to encourage a population explosion.

According to the few crude records available to them from before the social reformation, the priests calculated that once the orchards had reached their capacity, social conflict was guaranteed. With a million or more Darrians packed into a region less than 20 kilometres across and no means of birth control, the population density and drain on the food resources must have become intolerable.

LONG PLANNING GENIUS OR SADISTIC MONSTER?

Although the Priests of Zlodh came to the conclusion that Onsorik was an inhumane deity, treating the Darrians as mere ants in a formicarium, their observations were somewhat unjustified. Although Onsorik was an Ancient with incredible resources at his command, he sensed and feared the growing rift between differing factions of his race.

The formation of Daryen had a specific purpose – the study and **solving** of intra-social conflict – in the hope of applying the same lessons to his fellow Ancients, before they descended to more destructive confrontations. Humans were a perfect test subject for his eugenics experiment. They were social yet aggressive, fast breeding but physically weak, and gifted with the seeds of both intelligence and arrogance; a close enough simile of the Ancients themselves, to provide usable data.

Dividing the world into five carefully separated test areas Onsorik removed every hindrance to development save that of human beings themselves. The first few iterations of overpopulation and collapse helped the Ancient discover meaningful insights into sociology, with which he tweaked an environmental change here or a genome there. After each basin had progressed though half a dozen cycles Onsorik was sure that he was on the cusp of a solution, when his long apprehended war broke out between the Ancients.

The Ancient fled Daryen, hoping to return at a later time. His departure undoubtedly saved the world from total annihilation, but the unanticipated evacuation had unintended results. Abandoned before completion, the proto-Darrians, were still trapped in a cycle of population explosion and collapse. Without Onsorik's guidance, they were forced to evolve through countless more repetitions until they literally bred the seeds of social unity into their psyches; ultimately succeeding in their creator's objective.

Thus much of the horror suffered for a hundred thousand years was not a deliberate act by an amoral god, but the tragic disruption of a program to avert a galactic cataclysm.



A few of the myths recalled a prodigious wave of death, the first of countless holocausts, driven by the threat of starvation. The tales from some basins told of Darrians culling their own family members by infanticide or geriatricide; others of tribal factions that slaughtered each other, even resorting to cannibalism. Over time the stories had become heroic, if grisly, epics but the priests asked themselves what deity would deliberately allow such a thing to happen, not just once but repeatedly in five separate locations, and slowly they began to suspect that the basins, the orchards and the failing firepits had been nothing but a vast sociological experiment.

Offended by their conclusions but finding no flaw in their logic, the priesthood determined that Onsorik was a dispassionate creature who deserved no worship. Whatever his ultimate purpose his actions had been the epitome of dispassionate observation. Something the priests never forgot.

SUBVERSIONS AND EXCAVATIONS

One of the consequences of the Zlodh Priesthood's investigations into the ancient history of the Darrian race, was a unified attempt to suppress the organised religion and mythology of Onsorik, replacing it with more secular traditions. Like most attempts at repression it did not entirely succeed, many tales remained in traditional folklore. Yet efforts continued over centuries, the epic poems glorifying ancient heroes and tragic battles replaced with more humorous tales of ethical dilemma and cooperative effort. The priests preached the Code of Taledh whilst guiding the basins to form the first of many global unifications.

Although communal knowledge was lost, the priests carefully recorded everything in their own records of baked clay or carved stone. A discovery of a cache of these tablets in 892 led to the recovery of long forgotten mythology and spurred the Darrian educational community to relocate the lost firepits. History, archaeology and linguistics being minor subjects in the forward rush of Darrian scientific development; the study team struggled to glean the original locations of the Orchards from the texts, hidden as they were by two hundred thousand years of detritus, both environmental and legendary.

Eventually the researchers turned to the geology specialists to design a suite of ground penetrating sensors to locate any unusual subsurface cists which connected to the surface via solidified lava filled vents. The technological solution located five particular locations which roughly matched the historical clues, buried deeply under metres of sediment.

Excavating the long filled and overgrown firepits was no easy task but eventually the researchers uncovered parts of the Boyr orchard. Careful removal of layer upon layer of habitation gave substance to the horror stories recorded in the tablets. As archaeologists dug deeper, increasing numbers of mass graves



were uncovered, filled with the bones of slowly fossilising victims slaughtered by violence or ritual sacrifices, some of which indeed retained the faint gnaw marks of Darrian teeth. In order to prevent public abhorrence, the dig was quickly shut down.

Successfully covering up the incident, the scholars gathered to debate what should be done. With grudging acceptance they decided to repress the information on the tablets, fearing sociological damage would be caused to the Darrian self image of being a peaceful cooperative race. Although publications were printed concerning the rediscovery of the Orchards, they concentrated on grave goods or primitive tools rather than reveal the more grizzly findings.

From that point onwards, academic staff in the highest echelons of the Daryen universities tried to restrict access to the archaeological sites, discouraging future excavations. This has not always been successful. Further digs in other basins revealed the same general pattern of development, so that knowledge of their awful beginnings has become an open secret amongst historians.



Recently a few more outspoken scholars have tried to expose the original archaeological findings, claiming that the truth should be shared by all. Public opinion however has swung against what is generally considered 'crack-pot' theorists, Darrian group denial absolutely forbidding them to accept such a shameful origin.

THE ABH PROJECT

Set up to study worrying instabilities in Tarnis, Daryen's sun, the Abh Project was designed to send probes into the star and beam out readings. Such an undertaking was initially considered impossible but a handpicked team of the most capable engineers and scientists was formed to solve any technical difficulties.

With intellectual arrogance typical of the time, the team threw themselves at the task. The problems were threefold. Firstly anything going into the star would not be coming out again. The surface gravity was well beyond the capability of gravitic drives to overcome. Secondly the incredible temperatures inside the star would quickly overwhelm any temperature shielding, so the probe would only have a brief period of time to take readings before it was destroyed. Thirdly was the difficulty of transmitting the data back out of Tarnis.

Whilst inroads were made on the first two hurdles, the third posed an insurmountable problem. Daryen had mastered meson communications but using them in close proximity to a star was akin to placing a pin light in middle of a burning forest and trying to spot it from geostationary orbit. The incomprehensible amount of radiation streaming from the star hid any signal and corrupted it with interference. Alternative solutions such as trailing a superconducting cable or launching a return probe all failed in the extreme conditions.

After more than two decades working on the problems, the Abh project team was preparing to report their failure. A chance meeting however, brought a second project developing advanced communications to their attention. The Udh project claimed to have a foolproof method of transmitting data cross system at faster than light speeds but was under Confederation security protocols and could not reveal the theoretical mechanism.

A request was placed to the Daryen Security Council for clearance to this vital new technology but was refused. However driven by concern over the increasing incidence of solar flares, the Council granted access to experimental transmitters, which would be built via the Udh Project.

The Udh Project worked from several secure bases. One outpost on Telaret, a moon of Leryin, constructed the highly

secret transmitter, whilst a second outpost on the moon Poror, the innermost satellite of Bidhes, was used to hold the receiver. Dedicated meson communicators of great power were constructed at the University of Zlodh and both moons to ensure continuous communications.

The Abh Project, based in the asteroid belt that was supplying its raw materials, continued work designing a probe to survive the inside of the star. The final design took the form of a solid sphere of iron, 20 metres in diameter. A conical core was ground into the centre, which was hollowed out to a 10 metre inner sphere. Inside this was where the sensors, nuclear dampers, grav plate shields and power plant were installed, leaving a space for the Udh communications module to be inserted. Once loaded a precisely shaped iron plug was placed in the access hole to seal it, held in place by magnetism before Tarnil's own immense pressure would take over the task.

The first probe barely descended to 18,000 kilometres before its shields failed. Disconcertingly, the drop coincided with a solar flare, which caused the crew of the drop ship to be hospitalised with radiation poisoning. No scientific explanation could link the infinitesimally tiny probe with an event of such scale, so it was marked off as dumb luck.

Data from the first drop was crude but had been recovered; the Udh team promising an even more extensive result for the next mission. The second probe was redesigned in light of the previous failure. This version was a nickel-iron sphere 30 metres in diameter, covered in a further 20 metre thickness of ceramic foam filled with powdered tungsten to act as a coolant. The strength of the powered shielding was upped by an order of magnitude to cope with the predicted temperatures in the millions of degrees.

The Udh communications module inserted moments before launch, the second probe was cast into Tarnis at a higher velocity. This time the sphere left a discernable trail behind itself as it plunged through the chromo and photospheres; the combination of vaporised tungsten, nuclear dampening and physical turbulence forming a vortex behind itself. Yet as the probe penetrated the radiative zone, odd signals began to be received by the Poror station. However, little could be done to abort the mission, which failed anyway at a depth of 300,000 kilometres. Nine minutes later, the Maghiz struck Daryen.

WHAT REALLY TRIGGERED THE MAGHIZ?

Generations of Darrian physicists have studied the Maghiz striving to comprehend how such a tiny object managed to induce the greatest extinction event in the history of Humanity. Despite claims of TL17 hyper technological devices, the current theory held by most scientists of the Special Arm is that the interference of two massive meson beams managed to create



a superconducting conduit in the vaporised tungsten coolant, allowing energy to flood out from the star's radiative zone. However such a process is technically impossible under known physics, thus no one actually understands why it works, just that it does (see The Star Trigger).

Realistically the Maghiz was an event well beyond mundane technology to produce. A number of alternate suggestions as to what really caused the stellar eruption are presented below:

- Hidden within the star is a singularity weapon held within a pocket dimension which guards a portal to one of Onsorik's personal hideouts. Built as a booby trap for any Ancient who poked its snout too deeply into Tarnis, the weapon system starts activating itself when ships pass close by, destabilising convection currents within the star, but only triggering when an obviously technological object passes well beyond the photosphere – something only an Ancient vessel should be able to perform. The gamma-ray burst is generated by briefly opening the pocket dimension and allowing stellar material to fall onto the singularity. The Udh project had accidentally discovered that psionics could perform planetary range telepathy with no discernable time lag. Their top secret project involved cybernetically wiring up telepaths to amplification devices in order to boost their mental signals to trans-stellar ranges. Both Abh probes contained 'volunteer' telepaths, whether terminally ill psychics from Rorre or co-opted exiles, who accidentally discovered in their moment of expiration that the internal space-time warping of stars act as psionic magnifiers of exponential scale. The Maghiz was merely the telekinetic manifestation of an agonising death.
- Unimagined by Darrian scientists Tarnis is inhabited by an exotic trans-dimensional species of life based on magnetically contained plasma. The vast creatures flow and swim through the outer stellar layers, physically observable as dynamic flux lines which twist over the sun's surface. The nuclear dampers of the first Abh probe proved to be mildly irritating. The second probe was strong enough to cause an angry backlash of incomprehensible power.
- The records remaining from the time of the Maghiz are confusingly incomplete. In reality the second probe failed too, forcing the Abh team to attempt a hitherto incomprehensible feat. Creating an entirely new branch of mathematics the Darrians managed to overcome the 100 diameter limit of jump drives. Building a vast antimatter powered prototype, the third probe was programmed to emerge deep within the star and immediately jump back. Unfortunately, the colossal in-fall of fusing hydrogen onto the gravitational sheer of the jump drive generated singularity, caused a modest supernova inside of the star.

COUNTERING THE ZHODANI

When the Darrian colonies recovered interstellar travel they discovered their subsector was surrounded by strange cultures, some of which proved to be increasingly untrustworthy as time passed. One of the biggest problems faced by the Confederation was the threat posed by Zhodani psychics. Although the Darrians began to invest large amounts of money in counter-psionic protection, it proved difficult to protect a civilian official from being mind read at some point, whether they took off their shield when bathing or inadvertently meet an telepathic agent inside a shielded environment.

Native psychics rarely reside openly in Darrian society, those gifted with psychic abilities generally emigrate to enclaves on Rorre or join the Special Arm to serve the Confederation. With so few telepathic agents and their talents stretched thin, a group of respected academics from the University of Zlodh secretly devised a plan that involved applying Darrian intellect against psionic powers, using subtlety to defeat raw power.

The scholars devised a method of manipulating the Zhodani based upon the following principles; misdirection, compartmentalisation and anonymity. In practice it relies on a small team of information coordinators who supply those likely to be mind scanned with false evidence to mislead Zhodani agents, but redirect the real facts to the fewest number of anonymous people who actually need to know.

Weaving this web of obfuscation is the task of the Intelligence branch of the Special Arm, and even their ranks are segregated on a need to know basis. Special Arm Intelligence (SAI) receives, analyses and then redirects all information concerning enemy troop movements, spying reports, internal security findings, cutting edge scientific research and technological developments – basically any covert or sensitive data pertaining to the defence of the Confederation. Due to the strategic level of knowledge that SAI sit on, they also hold a great deal of influence over the unsuspecting Confederation Council which is completely unaware of sometimes being manipulated.

SAI specialise in creating believable falsehoods hidden under several layers of half-truths. Persistent agents may penetrate several layers of these 'intellectual onions' but few ever reach the core. To ensure information trails do not lead back to SAI the officers use multiple paths of information dissemination, such as using backdoor access codes into Ministry computer systems to plant data supposedly submitted from a legitimate employee, which is eventually shuffled via intermediaries to the Council itself. Sometimes the results of highly confidential experiments or analytical searches are remotely edited to encourage false conclusions. Large networks of rumour mongers are also utilised to spread less covert information.



Thus far the mind games played by the SAI have paid off. No polity is aware of the shadow organisation that occasionally controls the Confederation, although the Zhodani are beginning to wonder about odd political dynamics that their agents have picked up on.

Many ruses are currently running, the most obvious being that of the reality of the Star Trigger or the inability of Darrians to produce TL16 items. However, the organisation still leaves unavoidable traces of its activity and eventually the whole house of cards will collapse. Hopes are that scientific knowledge can be developed so far ahead of the opposition that the Confederation will be able to, for a short while, hold off aggressive acts by its disproportionately sized neighbours.

THE STAR TRIGGER

Of all the dissembling cover stories which shield the Darrians, the Star Trigger is the most pervasive. In the 400s the gradual mobilisation of Zhodani ships near the borders of Darrian space, forced the Confederation Council to realise it needed some way to hold off the huge Consulate, whose military resources could have easily overwhelmed the Darrian fleet. The Council's solution was to build a weapon which would act as the ultimate deterrent, capable of producing a new Maghiz. Yet despite access to fragmentary journal written by one of the surviving Abh project team members in which personal notes about the probe had been made, the best scientists of the Confederation failed to replicate the effect.

Left with little choice, the scientists used their advanced astronomical knowledge and sensors to precisely predict a major series of solar flares of an obscure star near Stern-Stern. A completely fake Star Trigger weapon was constructed; even the separate engineering teams used to build various components were deceived. At the same time the Special Arm, a new military branch named formed to guard the weapon, was trained in its maintenance and launch. Once preparations were complete, delegates from the Zhodani Consulate, Imperium and Sword Worlds were invited to a carefully orchestrated demonstration.

The handful who knew that the whole demonstration was fake were stationed halfway across the system to ensure their guilt could not be detected. The rest of the engineers and Special Arm operatives remained fully convinced of the weapon's capabilities.

Explaining that the device could not be operated at full power, due to the damage it would cause to nearby systems, the delegates were horrified to view the eruption of an unusually huge solar flare. The Confederation leaders, clearly pleased with the demonstration, expressed the Confederation's desire to be left in peace.

Sword World scientists were less convinced of the exhibition's validity but could not explain the precise timing. The Zhodani on the other hand, had detailed records of the original Maghiz and knew the Darrians were capable of making a star erupt. They doubted, however, that the Darrians would have the courage to actually deploy the weapon in a war.

Frustratingly the Sword Worlds called the Darrian's bluff in the First Frontier War annexing the Entropic Worlds. After the ceasefire, Zhodani analysts noted that no Star Trigger weapon had been utilised, although it was pointed out that using the weapon on the Sword Worlds would have affected the Darrians' own systems, potentially cutting themselves off from the Spinward Main.

Taking their lack of resolve as a sign of moral weakness, in the Second Frontier War Zhodani naval vessels decided to penetrate Confederation space. Alarmed, the Confederation government ordered the deployment of the Star Trigger completely unaware that it did not work. Faced with utter disaster, the handful of SAI officers privy to the secret were helpless to influence the council members, so connived to briefly withdraw the Special Arm telepaths allowing a small opportunity for Zhodani agents to detect the righteous determination of the Confederation Government. The manoeuvre worked and the Zhodani fleet was rapidly recalled.

Realising its mistake, over the succeeding centuries the SAI have carefully modified the light in which the Star Trigger is seen in, turning it from the ultimate deterrent into a horrific genocidal weapon, capable of exterminating billions with a single application. Few in the upper echelons of the Confederation are now willing to suffer the moral consequences of using the Star Trigger, preferring conventional war instead.

Supervision of the Star Trigger weapons remains firmly under the control of the Special Arm, which suits the Confederation Navy who view it as a political time-bomb. The bogus devices appear as huge featureless metallic balls, which are transported by a small group of pre-Maghiz cargo vessels. They rely on stealth rather than weaponry and despite the occasional deployment training mission, never cross the boundaries of the Confederation.

SECRETS OF THE SPECIAL ARM

Formed in 488, the Special Arm was originally created to supervise and launch the much feared Star Trigger weapon. In the centuries since its formation it has grown to include other areas of responsibility. The service, whilst small in comparison to the Guard or Navy, is regarded as the elite of the Darrian Special Forces and possesses a mystique often emphasised in public entertainment.

UNUSUAL DEATH RATES

As the organisation which most closely scrutinises Darrian scientific progress, the Special Arm has recently become alerted to a disturbing statistical trend of disappearance and accidental death amongst leading scientists across the Confederation.

Further investigation has revealed that many of these up and coming researchers or specialists were approached with excellent job offers allegedly forwarded by large megacorporations. The few who accepted simply vanished, never communicating with friends or family afterwards. Those that continued to hold out against further inducements suffered remarkably consistent strokes of adversity.

Their research grants were revoked, shutting down their project.

They were framed for a crime, such as stealing ideas or forging results.

Artefacts or irreplaceable specimens vanished from laboratories.

Equipment or records were sabotaged to produce wrong data.

They were emotionally entangled by a member of the opposite sex and abandoned.

Those scientists who weathered such misfortunes invariably ended up dead. The later triggered initial suspicions since the methods of death were bizarrely diverse, as if the perpetrators were trying to avoid leaving a pattern. In addition, nearly all of the deaths coincided with a media grabbing occurrence which sidelined the obituaries of even famous scholars to the minor news sections.

Searching back through archives the Special Arm has uncovered what appears to be a carefully orchestrated plan to discredit scholars on the verge of making significant breakthroughs in their field of specialisation. Traces of the statistical anomaly seem to lead back more than three decades. The objective appears to be the subversion or stagnation of technological development, by a group with a great deal of inside knowledge of Confederation universities. The Special Arm has no proof as yet of whom is responsible, suspecting the Sword Worlds, Zhodani and even the Imperium.

In reality, unlike the other services, most Special Arm officers have seen active duty despite the Confederation not being currently at war. As part of joining the Commandos recruits undergo the permanent surgical implant of a psionic shield with an accompanying suicide device which they are expected to use if captured.

Most commando duties involve clandestine missions outside of the Confederation to deal with potential problems with the Zhodani or Sword Worlds. They are also granted guardianship of the Star Trigger weapons, which everyone, including the crews, believe are the ultimate deterrent. The commandos also engage in Confederation internal security, often going undercover to expose foreign espionage activity or recover illegally exported pre-Maghiz artefacts.

Almost all Special Arm operatives are Darrian or Solomani, but a few Aslan exist within the service restricted to duties which would not draw unwelcome attention. No member is allowed to marry and applicants with existing close family are generally passed over; a necessary requirement, since members of the Special Arm must be free from threats to loved ones, and must also be able to detonate the Star Trigger on an inhabited world if necessary.

The commandos are not the only branch of the Special Arm. The military organisation also has a psionic career path for those blessed with mind powers. The few who qualify are almost exclusively telepaths or clairvoyants, the other psychic disciplines being rare in Darrian society. Psychics are invaluable for interrogation of foreign agents and uncovering spies employed as Confederation officials.

Special Arm scientists are the third branch of the unit. Scholars are recruited in one of two manners; the top 1% of university alumni are offered post-graduate scholarships, or leading researchers are offered huge grants to continue their work for the Special Arm. The best minds who demonstrate dedication and loyalty to the Special Arm are assigned to the Sigma Naval Base to continue on the cutting edge research of the TL16 facilities sequestered there.

THE LOST FLEET

Discovered in 390 the Lost Fleet was a cache of TL16 warships mothballed deep within an extra-solar planetoid in the far Oort cloud of the Daryen system. Massively shielded against detection, the fleet survived the Maghiz intact. Its location was an accidental discovery by miners who detected sections of a uniform metal surface scoured clean from some ancient collision. Brought to the attention of the Confederation, the navy moved in to interdict the region and began exploring the contents of the pre-Maghiz weapons cache.

The public face of the Special Arm is the Confederation Commandos. In social situations Commando officers try to project a congenial personality but a certain hardness or reserve always exists, often blamed on their reputation as 'men apart'.



When reactivated the fleet was comprised of 18 cruisers of varying classes, half a dozen armed tenders and 14 small couriers of different capabilities. Disconcertingly, the computers aboard the cruisers were revealed to be fully functioning Artificial Intelligences. After much thought, the warships were assigned to the Confederation Navy whilst the smaller vessels were held as a reserve but were eventually handed over to the later formed Special Arm.

Of the warships, four were 80,000 ton heavy cruisers, six 50,000 ton assault cruisers and eight 30,000 ton light cruisers, each built around a meson spinal weapon in proportion to their displacement. Although still constructed from Bonded Superdense material, the vessels' main advantage came from their extremely efficient fusion plants, superior computers, and excellent ECM systems, able to spoof, block or overload enemy sensors of a lower TL. They were not invulnerable however and despite a reputation for being able to take on three times their number, they were only committed to battles that were considered winnable by conventional fleet elements. In spite of the conservative tactic, it eventually paid off by reducing the damage the Darrian fleets suffered overall.

Over the centuries the AIs have become experts in using their own weapons and defences, resulting in them now being masters of strategy in their own right. This has developed into a problem, since the vessels are now tactically superior to their captains, with a tendency to second guess or even countermand the bridge officers. Posting to one of the advanced ships is now a retirement step. Only captains with a great deal of tolerance are able to survive their term without suffering high blood pressure.

Each ship was named for a mythical hero from prehistory and over time has developed their own personality quirks.

Heavy Cruisers: the Rhadnor, Mattizus, Stven and Prothaldh.
Assault Cruisers: the Mhorgund, Ghilziam, Hehrtmun, Khomak, Mhakuz and Brenhdn.
Light Cruisers: the Yohan, Gherarkt, Phranz, Khardogn, Phadrag, Zigfrehd, Vhituz and Pherign.

SIGMA NAVAL BASE

Although a number of advanced TL16 strongholds were constructed in Darrian Space, few as yet have been rediscovered. Sigma Base was only found after its coordinates were revealed in the navigational database of the mothballed pre-Maghiz warfleet, itself located in a heavily shielded base hidden in the far outer reaches of the Daryen system.

Built in deep space, to remain hidden from scouts, Sigma is a large 200 kilometre ice planetoid, a comet now drifting between stars. It is located somewhere midway between Engrange and

Zamine (Hex 0403). Since the location of the wandering ice ball is in deep interstellar space, it is unlikely to be found by normal scouting missions.

Foreign intelligence agencies are aware of the existence of a top secret base in Confederation space but have thus far been unable to locate it. No navigational officer knows its coordinates, these being hardcoded into the computer systems of the TL16 fleet that uses it as their home base. The ships themselves prevent astronomical data being received by their sensors, erecting black globes when they arrive, just to be extra safe.

Inside, part of the icy planetoid has been hollowed out to act as an immense fleet hanger and also serves as a manufacturing base. The fixtures and fittings are all TL16 with an occasional TL17 device, the majority still functional since the base had been carefully shut down before it was abandoned. The excavated volume is capable of holding up to twice the number of cruisers originally recovered from the weapons cache in Daryen, and has extensive crew and recreational facilities. The dockyard and hanger are equably shared between Navy and Special Arm forces. The deeper sections however are restricted to Special Arm personnel only, with battle dress armed commandos guarding all access ways.

Inside the restricted areas are computer banks, command centres, weapon controls, medical facilities, hydroponics sections, and two impressively efficient fusion power plants. The mothballed munitions stores contain a comprehensive range of armaments, from which the Special Arm has borrowed much of its advanced weaponry. A select number of Special Arm scientists are brought into these areas to examine the technology, with the aim of comprehending the principles of how things work and the method of their manufacture.

A TL17 antimatter generator is installed at the other end of the comet, however the research scientists are forbidden to reactivate the technological wonder. The admiral in command of the base recalling the historical account of what happened to the experimental antimatter power station once located on Mire.

494-908

Ostensibly to most Darrians, 494-908 is a barren, desolate world circling an ancient red dwarf, repeatedly blasted by fission weapons during naval exercises. However 494-908 is a literal onion of overlapping secrets guarding the most valuable secret in Confederation space.

494-908 is a red zone, although navigational charts contain no explanation as to why this is. Lacking a gas giant, few would bother to visit the system but those who possess too much curiosity will eventually encounter naval pickets guarding it. These normally cruise out to the deeper parts of the system,



engaging in tactical exercises. Occasionally however, ships can be seen conducting orbital bombardment.

Visitors requiring refuelling or repair will be politely conducted to tenders, who will happily help guests. Landing on planet, however, is expressly forbidden. Ships foolish enough to do so are left for an hour to teach curious idiots a lesson before a squad of Battle Dress marines **attempt** to rescue them.

Investigations of 494-908 are difficult to say the least. Many deceptions guard its purpose.

The first lie is that 494-908 is barren.

On the surface of the world is a virulent life form of frightening lethality. Although capable of grazing the thin grasses and lichen that subsist in the rocky terrain, the creature undergoes a psychological and physical change when detecting a species alien to its own. It travels in small packs and has an unusually sensitive sense of smell, able to detect blood or food from kilometres away.

Its base form is a wallowing hippo-like creature with a humorous appearance and a rasping tongue, which plucks up vegetation. Scenting foreign biology, the body develops a number of splits and tears that allow its limbs to double in length, the skin gruesomely pulling back to exposing its true killing physiology. The change is nauseating to watch but shockingly fast. It kills anything that moves, ripping them into pieces with an unhealthy number of claws and teeth.

The second lie is that the species is native to the world.

A tiny base is located adjacent to the polar icecap, clearly visible if the surface is passively scanned. Anyone who manages to land nearby can enter the dilapidated facility, which is full of broken equipment, ripped walls and the occasional bone, identifiably Darrian. No functioning power remains but the outpost was obviously a biological research base of some sort. A few mouldy note books lie about, with veiled references concerning a genetic engineering project.

Visitors who stay for longer than 15 minutes draw the attention on the local life forms. These approach in the herbivore hippo form to catch their prey unawares. Remaining on the surface for too long without breathing gear exposes trespassers to radioactive dust and a mild case of radiation sickness.

The third lie is that the Navy bombards the planet to exterminate the deadly species.

Despite the use of fission weapons on the surface, the Shredders are very tolerant of high background radiation levels. Unknown to naval officers who see themselves as suppressing a plague of killer monsters, the real reason to bombard the planet is to disguise intermittent neutrino emanations emanating within the planet.

The truth is stranger than fiction. In reality, 494-908 is the location of a series of facilities concealed deep underground, cross connected by a network of subterranean tunnels. The first detected neutrinos were not discovered until 1087 indicating some form of high energy reaction occurring in a gradually discernable sequence between each underground location.

It took nearly eighteen years of seismic surveys and countless shredder attacks before the concealed entrance tunnel was discovered leading down to the subterranean complexes. A shaft of triangular cross section only two metres across dropped vertically for over fifty kilometres before arriving at a web of horizontal tunnels which circumnavigated the planetary strata. Every three hundred kilometres the triangular sectioned tunnel give access to modestly sized caverns filled with compact machinery thought to be powered by antimatter or some even more advanced source.

The equipment thus far has proven completely incomprehensible. Interestingly the machines appear to constantly radiate neutrinos inside the planet, but they only intermittently appear at the surface. The pattern of neutrino bursts has been deciphered, allowing the Confederation Navy to more carefully coordinate its fusion bombing 'practice' and hide anything of significance from unwelcome eyes. Somewhat worryingly for the Navy the subterranean energy bursts have grown significantly more frequent as if speeding up for a specific purpose, or perhaps something is breaking down.

Deeper shafts drop further towards the planet's core, using some form of contra-grav technology to support anything thrown into them as it slowly accelerates downwards. Radar soundings suggest a depth of at least two and a half thousand metres, but as yet nobody has attempted to descend to the bottom, as survey drones used to scout ahead are always destroyed before reaching half way.

However, utilising a clever piece of improvisation an engineering team unspooled a long piece of fibre optic cable with an omni-

Shredders	Habitat	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Instinct	Pack
Killer (Omnivore)	Any	21	13	16	1	13	5
Skills	Athletics (coordination) 1, Athletics (endurance) 1, Melee 1, Recon 2, Survival 0						
Attacks	Teeth and claws (5d6), Sub-dermal plates (3), Number encountered (1d6)						
Notes	Immediately chases or attacks on detection of prey. Bloodlust.						



directional lens attached to the bottom. The images they received back were crude, but have led to intense speculation...

THE CRYSTAL COFFIN

At the bottom of the shaft is a spherical chamber a kilometre in diameter. Floating in the precise centre is a strange crystal box approximately 1.5 metres long and 0.5 metre wide. Strangely the crystal cask flickers with an inner light whenever one of the mysterious machines positioned around the planet emits a neutrino burst.

None of the naval technicians know what is going on but soon after the fibre optic cable was dropped, access to the drop shaft was sealed off. The Special Arm scientist who made the first observation was heard to whimper something about the complex being 300,000 years old and there being some sort of ***thing*** inside the crystal box. The next day the entire facility was evacuated and nobody has been allowed to travel to the surface since. No personnel have seen the scientist who appears to have vanished, although his possessions are still in his assigned cabin. Curiosity about what happened to him is rife.

PANDORA'S BOX

The crystal box provides an opportunity to really scare the characters in any campaign. What is the box, what remains inside it, and what will happen if it is opened? Some suggestions follow:

- The box is an Ancients sized portal to a pocket dimension located at the centre of Tarnils, Daryen's sun, which simultaneously connects to portals on other Darrian worlds, such as Daryen, Mire or Roget. The living accommodation is sized for a creature much smaller than a human. An intriguing holographic control board lays waiting for someone to tinker with it, with potentially devastating effects if a second Maghiz is accidentally triggered by the curious.
- As above, except that they are within the primary star of the Narsil system and this time the controls make enough sense so that a character can, if desired, deliberately trigger a gamma-ray burst and kill the planet. This time however, the entire star collapses into a singularity causing a GRB so strong it wipes out the entire Spinward Marches and Foreven sectors. The characters survive to bear the burden of their guilt.
- The box is a prison created by Onsorik to contain an uplifted proto-Darrian. Built to slightly odd proportions, its skull demonstrates slightly more exaggerated elongation. The creature will be unable to communicate verbally, but is telepathic with an Int and Psi of 18 apiece. It was an early experiment created to leapfrog thousands of years of evolution, but something went wrong, turning it into a merciless and manipulative sociopath.
- As they open the lid all the strange units around the planet give off a simultaneous neutrino pulse, but the box proves to be empty. However, on exiting the subterranean complex they will find themselves in an alternate reality where the original Darrians did not trigger the Maghiz. They are at TL21+ and currently fighting a war of survival against the Ancients.
- The box is empty but an empathic suggestion encourages the nearest character to enter the casket. If they willingly submit there is a brief surge of wellbeing and every characteristic except Social Standing is raised to maximum species value. On the downside they are the host for an Ancient personality construct which has been downloaded into their mind, and will slowly subsume the original psyche unless the character re-enters the coffin to purge it. They have as many days as their Int characteristic before the change is permanent.
- Onsorik awakes from 300 millennia of sleep, greeting the characters warmly once he has had ten minutes to pick up their language. The Ancient is as polite and beneficent as the old folktales recounted. Pleased that his 'children' have flourished he asks to be given a tour of the Confederation, but uses portals to travel rather than crude jump ships. Grateful for being rescued he tries his best to satisfy the characters every desire with comic consequences, until a rival Ancient turns up and they are dragged into an interstellar war of dire potent for the galaxy. (See ***Secrets of the Ancients.***)



DARRIAN EQUIPMENT

Darrian equipment ranges from practical devices to odd high-tech novelties, all of which are sculpted with soft ergonomic curves. Although like their Aslan co-citizens the Darrians like natural materials, they do not tend to use them in the manufacture of equipment, preferring functional, hard wearing substances such as metals, which will last longer.

In fact, all Darrian equipment is built to last, partly due to the severe lessons learned after the Maghiz and partly to conserve natural resources. Most devices are sold with a several decade guarantee. Equipment that breaks down is returned to the manufacturer for refurbishment, or, if replacement parts are no longer available, a partially subsidised upgrade.

This cultural bias has a significant effect on Darrian economics. The base cost of any device is extremely high in comparison to equivalent items purchased in the Imperium, with further income generated from regular servicing and repairs. However, the life span of said device is decades rather than the handful of years for 'just good enough' Imperial goods and when viewed over time is actually cheaper in the long run. Confederation exports however, struggle to find a market in the rapid turnover, materialistic markets outside of its own borders, save in the province of military or high quality luxury items.

Since most Darrian goods have been extrapolated to the maximum possible utility of their Tech Level, there is little scope for 'improved' versions or new functionality. Instead Darrians venerate age in their devices. The older an operable piece of equipment is, the aesthetically more valuable it becomes.

Of course, in the rare event that a new technological step is discovered, a plethora of new designs appear, taking advantage from the performance increase. However, for many products from automated cleaners to holoivid projectors, there is little that science can do to better the basic purpose.

Two specific areas that Darrians dominate the markets are in weapon manufacture and ship building, where they can produce efficient and cutting edge TL15 articles, normally forbidden or difficult to find inside Imperial space.

Note: Some of the items in this chapter are listed at TL16 or TL17. The majority of these are pre-Maghiz artefacts that will be extremely difficult for characters to get hold of, unless they manage to discover a hidden cache of equipment or a long forgotten base. Such items are not available for sale but are included to illustrate performance capabilities.

DARRIAN TECHNOLOGY

The Tech Level listed for Daryen, the scientific and educational centre of the Darrian Confederation, is listed in the Imperial Second Survey as TL16. Such an entry is highly unusual but does not strictly represent the Darrians **current** manufacturing capability. Whilst many technological wonders do exist on the world, most are artefacts left from before the Maghiz. However, Darrian science does appear to be on the cusp of recovering its lost knowledge and fantastic devices now grace its markets, if only ones of limited practical use.

Whilst most of the Confederation member worlds have a lower **production** Tech Level, lacking the necessary infrastructure to fabricate their own products, most are supplied with TL13 goods manufactured and exported from Jacent. Since their devices are designed for easy maintenance, most repairs are simple exchanges of modular components, permitting problems to be fixed even on the low tech worlds.

Higher Tech Level equipment is manufactured on Daryen, a favourite destination for wealthy customers who can afford to pay for top class items. Weapons, sensor systems, and fusion plants produced are all cutting edge, equivalent to the best available in the Imperium, causing many to wonder what restricted miracles are available to the Darrian military and government organisations.

The manufacturing output of Daryen is limited however, which has opened a window of opportunity for TL14 and TL15 goods imported from the Imperium. Despite cheaper prices, the 'disposable' design concept behind Imperial equipment is not particularly popular, but the sheer diversity of choice and functionality encourages reluctant purchasers to make do.

An interesting quirk with all Darrian electrical devices is that they are hardened against electromagnetic pulses. Delicate circuits are shielded and possess cut-offs that can be manually reset. This racial paranoia even extends down to depilatory devices and wrist worn timepieces!

Communication Technology TL14

At their pinnacle, the Darrians had mastered Meson Theory, implementing a personal communication network using the technology. Meson beams were also a vital part of long range military comm links but they did not apply them for use as weaponry. Even the Abh and Udh Projects were heavily reliant on meson beams for data transmission and telemetry.



Using existing artefacts, the Darrians have managed to regain their meson science but have not implemented it down to the personal scale. Rather it is used for wireless data backups to deep crust archive systems, covert cross-system transmissions and following suggestions by the Imperium, for subsurface planetary defence cannons.

Planet based, personal holographic communications rely on microwave networks, using proprietary systems developed by Zloril, the Confederation's communications monopoly. All exchanges are terrestrial based, interconnected using deep subsurface fibre-optic cabling, or, where this is impractical, meson relays instead. Darrians no longer use telecommunication satellites due to their vulnerability to stellar emanations and enemy targeting. Personal communicators can establish direct calls with low orbit (up to 500 kilometres) but consume a lot of power doing so, being designed for optimal ranges of less than a tenth of that.

As part of their service, Zloril offers a virtual reality screening service called StandIn. Subscribers are scanned and profiled to ascertain their personality, which is then used by the message service computers to generate a simulacrum of the customer. When receiving calls not cleared for direct access, the computer simulation takes the place of the customer and interacts with the caller instead. How calls are dealt with is up to the preferences selected by the subscriber. These can range from polite refusals, procrastination, cheerful chit chat and so on. The pseudo reality program can be linked in with the customer's personal diary, a reference database of personal and call history, or even incorporate the latest jokes in a conversation.

StandIn is now so advanced in the use of casual conversation, that unless the caller specifically questions the simulacrum about a personal detail not present in the caller database, it is almost impossible to determine whether it is the real subscriber or not. Even then, the VR holographic projection can waffle or sidestep the question briefly, so that the computer system can make a direct call to the subscriber for an answer, or even seamlessly patch them into the existing conversation.

Part of Zloril's responsibilities as a telecom infrastructure monopoly is the requirement that emergency calls from government organisations are always routed directly to personal communicators, overriding any standby or sleep function. These are used as part of public safety practices or early warning systems for planets near the Sword Worlds border.

Computers and Robot Technology TL14

As with their other devices, Darrian computers have been significantly over-engineered to resist electromagnetic pulses. Abandoning conductive circuitry completely, Darrians have mastered optical computing, utilising three dimensional crystals

etched at the nanometre scale to provide photonic pathways and logic gates. Whilst the crystal processors are extremely rugged and impervious to most EM radiation damage, the micro laser projectors used to operate them are not, hence all systems have dual redundancy with the usual faraday shields and physical cut-offs.

Memory devices are likewise based on crystal lattice technology, using exotic materials that can be physically altered at the atomic level by specific laser frequencies, to permanently store information in their structure. Similar levels of paranoia extend to data storage, with most systems backing up records in duplicate, each in a different storage crystal. Government and university computer systems use specially designed meson relays to simultaneously backup their data in deep crust storage vaults, located several dozen kilometres under the surface. Most planetary data networks are old fashioned but reliable subterranean fibre optics, with deeper secondary nets for emergencies.

Although Darrian computers are the most rugged devices in the Spinward Marches, they are based on a technology completely incompatible with Imperial electronics, use an operating system hardcoded into the crystal and require proprietary software difficult to find outside the Confederation. They do incorporate wireless connectivity however, allowing non-Darrian customers some degree of network access outside of the Confederation and supply basic data protocol translation programs free of charge.

Whilst Darrians utilise robots for manufacturing and infrastructure maintenance, they possess forms dedicated to their specific function and are rarely self mobile, a hard lesson learned from those worlds only partially affected by the Maghiz, when many damaged robots ran amok. No humanoid robots exist in the Confederation, being considered an inefficient design. Heavy machinery such as mining or farming machines are never allowed to be autonomous robots. Combat robots are likewise banned, due to the ease with which targeting protocols can be confused, or the risk of the robot being sequestered.

Energy Technology TL15

Early accidents with nuclear fission encouraged the Darrians to quickly leapfrog to cleaner, non-polluting fusion energy. Constant refinements allowed energy yields to grow, inadvertently spawning generations of wasteful, power hogging devices.

At their height, the Darrians finally cracked the problem of economically feasible antimatter production and built several variant generating stations, capable of powering a city or providing fuel for starships. Of the two known experimental antimatter stations built, the one located in orbit around Tarnis was annihilated during the Maghiz and the other, a ground



based plant on Mire powered by immense orbital mirror arrays, exploded when it was reactivated after being shut down for 'Pulse Day'.

Fortunately for the post-Maghiz Darrians, most of their colonies had been equipped by one or more fusion plants. Although many eventually wore out, their micro circuitry eroded by the high energy fields they controlled, each retained full technical manuals with which they could be recreated once delicate components could be manufactured once again. In the interim, older, simpler solutions were utilised to produce electricity – such as hydroelectric dams, concentrated solar power, geothermal taps and even windmills!

Centuries of electrical power shortages, resulted in a new wave of energy efficient devices to replace previously power hungry designs. Even today the average Darrian home requires little more than a battery of high energy capacitors connected to solar panel roofs.

The Confederation now uses fusion to run everything from industrial factories to small gravitic vehicles. Power distribution is localised, removing the need for wasteful planetary grids. Consequently, Darrians boast the smallest fusion generators available on the market.

Environmental Technology TL14

Each member world of the Confederation has different environmental laws depending on the primary industries, native ecosystem and any ongoing pre-Maghiz terraforming. They are all supervised by the local planetary government, which generally tries to prevent undue environmental damage.

To aid in the preservation of Darrian compatible worlds, an innovative new trend of subterranean construction pioneered on Mire has grown in popularity, preventing surface sprawl and allowing native wildlife to unwittingly range into the heart of metropolises. As described earlier, energy production is localised clean fusion in urban areas or renewable energy in low population rural regions. On Daryen, for example, transport infrastructure is limited to high speed underground maglev tubes, or landing pads for atmospheric gravitic vehicles.

Most heavy industry or mining is limited to borderline hospitable planets or orbital facilities, where minor environmental damage has no effect. The TL14 rating reflects the current loss of their terraforming knowledge.

Medical Technology TL14

Although much of the ecology of Daryen was subtly alien to human biology, initially preserving them from sickness and disease, as the Darrians gradually adapted to their world, so did the bacterium they carried with them. After thousands of

years, new types of disease evolved to take advantage of the environmental niche.

Before the Itzin colonists' arrival, the Darrians had developed several theories concerning clinical pathology and understood that sanitation and isolation were effective preventative actions against epidemics. Countless generations of experimental pharmacology had identified the medical effects of most of the native flora and fauna. Ready access to a vast amount of biological information kick-started the Life Sciences, leading to rapid development of vaccines and regenerative techniques.

Faced with the Pandora's Box of genetic engineering, the Darrians avoided manipulation of their own genome – instead using the methods to alter the helpful pharmaceuticals already present in much of the native flora, the gifts of Onsorik having slowly lost their potency with an evolutionary drift of several hundred millennia. Fortunately, most of these re-engineered species survived the Maghiz, in small medical arboretums set up on each colony.

Botanically creating and delivering pharmaceuticals ensures that medicines are fresh and prevents many problems with toxic manufacturing processes. The downside is that Darrian pharmacologists are often overwhelmed by the arrival of unheard-of diseases, several times in their recent history suffering serious pandemics and being forced to enact planetary isolation until the right herbs could be rushed from the Confederation Council's Department of Alien Infections. Most diseases however, are inoculated against at birth and Darrian epidemiologists constantly scour Imperium records for unusual plagues for which tailored plants may need to be grown.

The Darrians have recovered the majority of their medical knowledge. Equipment to clone new organs and new variants of medicinal herbs are supplied to hospitals across the Darrian worlds, funded by the Confederation government.

Sensor Technology TL16

Of all its technologies Darrian sensors are closest to being considered TL16, driven in part by its highly developed astronomical sciences. The Confederation maintains large scale sensor arrays around the jump limit of each world, ostensibly for stellar observation. However, the same devices are also utilised by the military to observe surveillance ships, which may covertly jump into the outer system. The Darrian Navy never responds to such incursions, preferring to keep their capability secret and creating misleading military movements when they know they are being observed.

Since the end of the Fourth Frontier War, the Confederation has also established deep space networks embedded in hundreds of asteroids and comets. These pose as navigational beacons,



to prevent collisions but incorporate very sensitive mass detectors, which communicate using shielded meson comms. The network requires massive computational processing to detect *unusual* perturbations in the vast number of orbital bodies of a solar system but is technically sensitive enough to detect vessels hiding within Black Globes.

Transportation Technology TL15

As indicated in the previous section, the majority of Darrian worlds rely on subterranean trains or gravitic vehicles for transport. Trains are mainly used for cargo transfer, whilst grav vehicles are preferred as personal conveyance. Learning from the tragedy of the Maghiz, all gravitic vehicles are designed as lifting bodies, or have integral wings – so that in the event of drive failure, the vehicle can glide back to a landing.

Sailing ships are still used but mainly as recreation, since large surface transports are considered un-aesthetic and potential ecological disasters. Submarine technology is fairly advanced, due to the number of undersea cities throughout the Confederation. Submersibles are preferred to sub-oceanic tunnels due to the risk of flooding from seismic activity.

Darrian spaceship technology is probably the most advanced in the Spinward Marches. The Daryen and Mire shipyards are capable of manufacturing TL15 vessels with jump-6 capability. Jacent produces most of the Confederation's civilian vessels with its more modest TL13 shipyards. Other worlds have repair facilities but require prefabricated parts shipped from Daryen. Due to the compact nature of Confederation space, most civilian vessels require jump-3 or less.

Darrian freely trades civilian ship designs with megacorporations and foreign governments, ergonomic naval architecture being a major source of income. Some advanced military designs have been traded with the Imperium in exchange for unarmed prototype cruiser and escort vessels too large for the local shipyards to produce. The apparent one sided nature of the deal is worrying to Zhodani security agencies, since it either indicates major covert funding of the Darrian war machine in preparation of military action, or that Darrian military tech now significantly exceeds the Imperium's.

Weapon Technology TL15

Darrians manufacture and sell cutting edge military equipment, from personal arms to armoured vehicles. It is punitively expensive but battlefield reliability and endurance are valuable attributes to the discerning customer. Darrian military tech also has a slight edge with its hardened computers and top notch microwave and tight beam laser comms.

Many customers come to Daryen seeking exotic TL16 firepower but soon find that such items either do not exist, or are

restricted to the Darrian military. However personal munitions such as gauss rifles, battle dress and fusion guns (FGMP-14 and FGMP-15), normally forbidden in the Imperium are freely available for sale.

Although military grade weaponry can be purchased, it is forbidden for private Darrian citizens to personally own such items. Sale of military hardware is subject to strict export protocols, either being shipped directly by the manufacturer to a rendezvous outside the Confederation, or the activation codes for each weapon being sent separately by courier, preventing the weapons from being used by anyone save the legitimate customer.

CURRENCY

The Darrian Confederacy has unified its monetary systems and now operates a completely cash-free society. All financial transactions are electronically logged; account records accessible to the Ministry of Finance and planetary law enforcement with the correct permits.

The bilateral financial system uses two currencies interchangeably, the Darrian Sol and the ubiquitous Imperial Credit. Of the two, the Sol is the more stable, preferred for long term investments.

Data bracelets are used for credit transfers, using biometric scanners to identify the wearer and validate the payment. Records of the transaction are transmitted to the banking system by the purchaser and the recipient. Using sequential, single use security keys embedded into the data bracelet during manufacture, the encryption is near impossible to crack, since dismantling the hardware to access the crystal destroys the biometric scanner.

As part of on-going tensions, the exchange rate of the Darrian Sol with Sword World currencies is punitively poor. To ensure some degree of cross border trade continues, the Confederation subsidise some companies, such as Frendi Marshikin, to freight cargo between the two subsectors. Although trade deals are sometimes still negotiated with Consulate planets, Zhodani currency is not accepted but must be paid in raw resources instead.

ARMOUR

Armour is rarely seen on most Darrian worlds. Its use is generally reserved for planetary militia or special armed police units. Most Darrians prefer the freedom to move quickly and with stealth, using natural cover rather than encumbering armour. Battlefield conditions however, often leave little option since secondary effects of some weapons require a sealed environment for protection. Of course, the Confederation manufactures their



own top notch combat armour and battle dress, rivalling the Imperium's own but incorporating slightly different tactical specifications.

Civilian armour is sometimes used for hostile environments, such as vacuum mining or exoskeleton support when Darrians visit worlds with uncomfortably high gravity.

Hostile Mining Vacc Suit (TL9): Used for mining operations on worlds like Terant 340 and Spume, the armoured vacc suit protects its wearer from poisonous atmospheres, fragmenting rock, micro meteors and radiation. It incorporates extended life support for up to 36 hours, a powerful emergency beacon, atmospheric tester, chemical alarm and an integral Personal Automedic (see *Central Supply Catalogue* page 167), which treats the wearer during emergencies and can administer a Hibernation Drug in critical situations, extending the endurance of the life support by a factor of 60. Power is provided by a tiny radio thermal fission pile with a lifespan of five years. The technology of the suit is kept simple for easy maintenance on less developed worlds.

Gel Suit (TL10): Primarily used for recreation such as vehicle racing or contact sports, the gel suit is a skin tight body glove, similar to a wetsuit. It comprises of reactive gel sandwiched between two layers of ballistic cloth. Violent impacts cause the gel to solidify, distributing the force of the blow across a wider surface area. Although the suit permits full mobility, it momentarily hardens when blocking damage, reducing the wearer's Initiative by one for each separate attack it blocks in a round. Cost includes separate gloves and hood.

Militia Armour (TL12): The munitions grade armour of the Confederation, tens of thousands of sets are stockpiled in militia armouries on every planet. Designed for skirmish forces on planets with breathable atmospheres, the armour does not act as a vacc suit but is designed to be lightweight and maintenance free. Formed from a composite of plastics and synthetic silks to minimise its sensor profile, every set includes Camouflage, Infrared Chameleon and an integral gas/breathing mask.

Guard Armour (TL13): Issued to the regular infantry forces of Darrian worlds, this armour is designed for direct conflict but is still versatile enough for guerrilla tactics. Like its Imperium 'Combat Armour' equivalent, guard armour acts as a normal vacc suit against pressure and radiation, but carries an improved camouflage system, using an advanced bio-engineered molecular surface, which mimics its surroundings, granting the benefits of Vislight and Infrared Chameleon. Attempts to detect the wearer suffer a -4 penalty in both the visible and infrared spectrum. The entire suit is powered by bio-mechanical motion (such as belly breathing or walking), to prevent electrical signals. Although the armour is stripped of all its electronic

components, it remains expensive due to the unique hydraulic and biochemical technologies used in its construction.

Hostile Mining Vacc Suit – Advanced (TL14): Functions the same as its less sophisticated predecessor but has a built in expert system (Computer /3) and compact Densitometer to aid mining operations.



Assault Armour (TL15): Darrian Battle Dress is more refined than Imperium designs, integrating many additional subsystems and replacing the hydraulic amplification servos with simpler, more energy efficient and lighter, electro-contractive muscle tissue. Since most powered armour radiates all over the electromagnetic spectrum, assault armour does not attempt stealth but focuses on battlefield tech supremacy and survivability. It is the battle dress dreamed of by mercenaries everywhere but the price places it beyond all but government Special Forces budgets. Indeed, it is so expensive that only Confederation Mobile Infantry are issued with it.



The basic rig grants the wearer a Strength and Dexterity of 12, for the purpose of performing physical skills and acts as NBC shielding as if it were an HEV suit. It has a hardened Computer/6, with an Intelligent Interface, a suite of Expert/3 programs and an Intellect/3 agent that can take control if the wearer is incapacitated. All the software is hardcoded into the crystal memory and physically isolated from comms, save for the transceiver on/off switch, to make hacking impossible. Since the computer is directly linked to the musculature of the suit it can perform Dexterity based skills.

The comms suite uses an advanced TL15 Tactical Relay Network (see **Central Supply Catalogue** page 172), relaying audio/visual, medical readings, equipment status, ammunition levels and sensor information. It allows the suit wearer to use the tactical skill of the commander up to a maximum of Tactics/5. Comms data is scrambled, encrypted and transmitted via spooled fibre optic line or tight-beam maser (range 500 kilometre), with laser and radio as backup systems. Communications can be shut down when necessary, to avoid drawing fire from a technologically equivalent enemy.

The sensor suite incorporates an Atmosphere Tester, NBC Combination Analysis Unit, Motion Sensor, Advanced Digital Camera, PRIS Binoculars, Surveillance Radar (5 kilometre range) and an Improved Neural Activity Detector. It is also patched into the suit's internal Medikit.

Core functionality includes heavy weapons stabilisation, Grav Assist, Extended Life Support (72 hours), counter-measure launcher (6 of Aerosol, Flare, Maser Decoy or Smoke), grenade launcher (6 of Concussion, Flechette, EMP, Gas or Plasma), Gauss Pistols in each arm and a Sealant Sheath.

Module attachment points are built into the back of the suit, allowing it to specialise its function. See Battle Dress Options.

Battle Dress Options (TL15): Darrian battle dress is designed to mount mission specific modules, in the form of backpack units. Only one module at a time can be attached and have self contained power systems. These modules uniformly weigh 15 kilograms (3 kilograms when supported by the armour) but have slightly different shapes according to their function. Each has the same amount of armour as the battle dress it is designed for.

- **Anti Personnel:** The standard weapons unit is a VRF Gauss Rifle, light support weapon (see Weapons), with backpack mounted ammunition storage. Due to the mitten-like armour of the Darrian battle dress gloves, the gun has no external firing mechanism, relying on the suit's internal finger sensors as triggers or the onboard computer to fire it instead.

- **Anti Armour:** Heavy support is the dreaded FGMP-15 with similar internal firing mechanisms as the VRF Gauss Rifle.
- **Command:** Command modules incorporate the Tactical Relay Network hub. The transmitters and bulky battlefield C&C computers take up the entire volume available.
- **Electronic Warfare:** Provides ECM/ECCM coverage to jam or monitor enemy signals and a meson communicator, capable of ranges up to 500 kilometres.
- **Air Suppression:** An air defence module containing multiple antimissile missiles, which is tied into the suit's sensor suite for target identification and guidance. Salvos of up to six missiles can be launched simultaneously, with a total capacity of 30 micro missiles. The weapons are designed merely to destroy or deflect in-flight ordinance, providing little damage against armour or fortifications.

EXPORTED ASSAULT ARMOUR

Darrian Battle Dress is the pinnacle of personal protection. Widely sought after by wealthy customers, its export earns a staggering amount of Imperium credits. However, to protect themselves from third party replication, the manufacturers have strict production protocols.

All of the suit's electronics use Darrian's proprietary optical tech, the multiple components are etched into a single crystal and sealed within a bonded superdense casing. The energy required to cut or break open the casing, invariably destroys the deliberately sensitive nano-scale crystalline structure within. If that was not thorough enough, the crystal is additionally seeded with micro explosives set to discharge on detecting different scanning wavelengths. Even the programming language is unique, written specifically for the Battle Dress, utilising an odd number base architecture and bizarre Darrian mathematical logic.

The Confederation's own Battle Dress incorporates a self destruct mechanism. The death of the user, imminent power loss or recognition by the computer that it is about to be captured, causes thermal demolition of key parts of the suit. This does not harm the wearer who, if still alive, is left with basic life support, radio comms and the medikit.

Assault Armour – Special Arm (TL16): Special Arm troops have access to pre-Maghiz TL16 suits of assault armour. Similar to the retro-design provided to Confederation Guard Regiments, these advanced suits contain all the same functionality but



Armour Type	Protection	Required	Cost (Cr.)	Mass (kg)
Hostile Mining Vacc Suit (TL9)	7	Vacc Suit 2	35,000	25
Gel Suit (TL10)	6	None	30,000	3
Militia Armour (TL12)	12	None	25,000	2
Guard Armour (TL14)	16	Vacc Suit 0	800,000	6
Hostile Mining Vacc Suit – Advanced (TL15)	15	Vacc Suit 1	75,000	20
Assault Armour (TL15)	20	Battle Dress 2	5,000,000	35 (7)
Assault Armour – Special Arm (TL16)	24	Battle Dress 1	Not Available	30 (6)

include personal meson comms, psionic shielding, Computer/8 with a slightly better AI interface, a Neural Carbine, which replaces one Gauss Pistol and life support further extended to 144 hours. The suits have a Strength and Dexterity of 15.

AUGMENTS

No augments are available within the Confederation, save perhaps on Laberv. The Darrians dislike any form of augmentation or genetic modifications, seeing them as a crutch for those lacking the discipline to master intellectual or physical skills. Prosthetics are also frowned upon, especially since replacement parts can be easily cloned and are available without cost to taxpaying citizens.

From their cultural perspective, other than a laziness to learn, the only reason for augmentations are either criminal or espionage in nature – neither of which are well regarded by Darrians.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUTING

In addition to standard comms equipment, the Darrians at TL 14 retro-engineer their existing artefacts and portable meson communication equipment becomes viable. The following table shows the smallest capable transceivers available at that Tech Level. Increasing the mass will increase range. Doubling the mass squares the range, tripling cubes it and so forth.

Meson Transceivers	Mass (Kg)	Range	Cost (Cr.)
TL 14	100	Distant (50 km)	100,000
TL 15	10	Regional (500 km)	1,000,000
TL 16	1	Continental (5,000 km)	Not Available

Darrian computer systems are equivalent to Imperial devices, save that they are slightly more compact at higher Tech Levels and hardened against EMP.

Optimum TL	Computer Power	Mass (Kg)	Cost (Cr.)
TL 7	Computer/0	10	50
TL 8	Computer/1	5	100
TL 9	Computer/1	5	200
TL 10	Computer/2	1	500
TL 11	Computer/2	1	1,000
TL 12	Computer/3	0.5	2,000
TL 13	Computer/4	0.5	5,000
TL 14	Computer/5	0.1	10,000
TL 15	Computer/6	0.1	20,000
TL 16	Computer/8	0.05	Not Available

MEDICAL AND SURVIVAL GEAR

The majority of Darrian drugs are grown directly from small herbs and bushes. A few plants containing mild pain killers or antacids are freely available for purchase, with detailed consumption guidelines. More dangerous drugs are more strictly controlled, requiring specialised soil additives, specific light wavelengths or for the plant to be tailored to the generics of a specific patient. Darrian apothecaries usually comprise of a small arboretum tended by botanical pharmacologists.

Medicines are sold in a variety of forms:

Leaves, applied to an area to naturally dissolve into the skin.

Leaves or fruits, to be chewed or consumed raw.

Bark or roots, which must first be 'activated' by infusing as a hot beverage.

Salves, produced from sap mixed with a neutral base of correct viscosity.

Intravenous serum, rendered from sap or infusions.

All medicines in the *Traveller Core Rulebook* and *Central Supply Catalogue* up to TL 14 are available in Darrian space at the listed price. Unless specifically loaded into a device for automated delivery, all medical supplies come in the form of plant material. Anagathics are not available off the shelf but must be specially imported.



Darrians use a number of ostensibly medical devices to enable them to survive on worlds outside of the Confederation.

Pressure Respirator (TL8): A respirator that allows the wearer to breathe on worlds with atmospheric pressures higher than their own. Most models come as full face masks connected to a large belt mounted pump, which lowers the internal pressure and makes any gas mixture changes required to keep the wearer comfortable. At TL9 the mask is decreased to cover just the nose and mouth, with the pumping device minimised to the size of a deck of cards. At TL11 the micro pumps and exhausts can be woven into a fine mesh net, either incorporated subtly into clothing or worn next to the skull; the air flow used to waft the wearers hair in interesting patterns.

Exoskeleton (TL10): These ubiquitous devices are normally used by Darrians travelling to planets with a Size of two or more steps above that of their homeworld, until their physiology can adapt. The exoskeleton supports their fragile bone structure against the rigours of higher gravity, providing additional strength to pick up everyday objects of increased weight. Powered by synthetic electro-contracting muscles, the exoskeleton has a Strength of 9, which supplants the wearer's characteristic. It also incorporates an integral medikit and communicator mounted on the thigh braces to monitor and treat the wearer if they start to suffer circulatory difficulties; or dial for emergency aid in the event of serious injury.

Lizard Juice (TL16): Only a few intact ampoules of Lizard Juice have been discovered in pre-Maghiz Darrian research bases and were rapidly confiscated by the Confederation for analysis. Consumed by an injured victim, the silvery liquid heals all damage at the rate of 1+Endurance DM per hour. Moreover, the elixir remains in the patient's body, continuing to heal wounds for years after being taken. It can even regenerate missing (non-vital) body parts at a rate of around one kilogram of flesh per day. Such wondrous effects come at a significant cost. The nutritional requirements of the imbiber skyrocket when injured, inflicting them with an unceasing hunger. Amputations are particularly dangerous, since the patient generally enters a coma and can potentially starve to death during the re-growing process as their body is cannibalised for energy and building material. Any ampoule of Lizard Juice is effectively priceless but brings the attention of the authorities upon anyone rumoured to possess, or worse still, have consumed it.

ROBOTS AND DRONES

Few autonomous robots are present in Darrian space. Not only are they considered a potential risk without a true self-aware AI to control them but Darrians have an ethos that celebrates physical labour as part of keeping a healthy mind. Thus, except for mass production, few robots are employed as workers.

Sensor Drone (TL12): A floating platform, which can hold a range of sensor equipment and is lightly armoured to survive hostile environments. It is normally operated as a remote drone but can be ordered to follow specific mission profiles or flight plans. More advanced versions with an increased computer and better software can be specially ordered.

Strength 1 (–3), Dexterity 7 (0), Hull 1, Structure 1

Traits: Armour 8, Computer/3 running Intellect/1, Expert Pilot/1 and Expert Recon/1, Integral grav floater, Integral sensor compartment

Price: Cr. 110,000 Sensors must be purchased separately.

WEAPONS

Darrians can manufacture most weapons available in the Imperium. The common equipment used by Confederation forces and a few pre-Maghiz wonders are described here.

Primitive Weapons

Due to their more fragile build, Darrians in general avoid hand-to-hand fighting. They do practice unarmed combat mainly for self discipline but lack a melee weapon ethos. In military situations where stealth is paramount, the Darrian military are often trained with the knife to kill quietly from ambush.

Primitive tech missile weapons, such as bows or slings, are favoured by militia forces for their inability to be detected by sensor systems. Their low speed projectiles are quiet and can often bypass motion detectors set to ignore rapid moving animals or insects.

Projectile Weapons

Gauss Rifle (TL12): The Darrian Gauss Rifle is the standard weapon of both Confederation militia and guard units. Using an EM field to accelerate small 4 millimetre needles to hypersonic speeds, these accurate weapons are designed for long range engagements, preferably ambushes, and are deadly. Darrian gauss weapons are inherently armour piercing and ignore a number of points of armour equal to the number of dice they roll for damage. If used with DSAP (Discarding Sabot Armour Piercing) ammunition, the Armour Points bypassed are doubled. The rifle has single shot, burst and fully automatic firing modes. It comes with integral single shot Grenade Launcher, Toughened Telescopic Sights and a Pulse Suppressor (rather than reducing sound levels it dampens the electromagnetic signature of the shot, giving a –4 DM on attempts to locate it with sensors).

Gauss Pistol (TL13): An officer's side arm, the gauss pistol works in the same way as the Darrian gauss rifle and uses the same 4 millimetre ordinance, save that it cannot use DSAP ammunition. Modified versions of the pistol are built into the forearms of Confederation Assault Armour.



Gauss Sniper Rifle (TL13): Designed for stealth and one shot kills from extended range, the gauss sniper rifle is the preferred weapon of Darrian guerrilla tactics. Using an extended barrel and oversized 8 millimetre needles, the weapon has an unusual accuracy, gaining a +1 DM whenever taking an Aim action. The rifle mounts twin sighting systems; an unpowered telescopic sight and a passive multispectral sight, which incorporates an integral wind and gravity compensator (+1 DM, no penalties for lighting or non solid cover), used when electromagnetic security is not needed. The strength of the weapon is its combined sound and EM suppressor (–4 DM to locate), making placement of the shooter very difficult. The sniper rifle lacks any burst or auto-fire function.

VRF Gauss Rifle (TL14): A light support weapon designed for an antipersonnel roll, VRF gauss rifles are normally mounted on vehicles or equipped as the primary armament of Darrian battle dress troops. The Confederation version is designed to conserve its 8 millimetre ammunition, preventing the release of more than 30 needles a round when used in auto-fire mode.

Energy Weapons

The following guns are unavailable outside of the Special Arm, the majority of them being pre-Maghiz artefacts.

Maser Pistol (TL16): Using a coherent microwave laser, this weapon literally boils its target from the inside. The penetrating wavelength of the maser passes through smoke, fog, rain and most non metallic substances less than a few centimetres thick. Unless formed from solid metal, the beam halves the protective value of physical armour. If the target possesses any cybernetic augments of TL13 or lower, penetrating damage is doubled as the maser heats up the devices causing them to melt and spark internally. Masers are recoilless, silent and invisible in the visible spectrum, making them difficult to detect without specific sensors. Their one drawback is the high energy requirement, restricting the number of shots per power-pack magazine.

Maser Rifle (TL16): As the Maser Pistol but capable of firing longer ranges.

FGMP-16 (TL16): Before the Maghiz, the Darrians never developed the man portable fusion gun, because of the dangers posed by secondary radiation. The FGMP-16 is in fact an extrapolation of Imperium tech analysed by the scientists of the Special Arm. Difficulties in power storage and overheating have been overcome using more advanced fusion technology, allowing the gun to fire as a fully automatic weapon every round. The Darrian version does not include a gravitic compensator,

PROJECTILE WEAPONS

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Auto	Recoil	Mass (kg)	Magazine	Cost (Cr.)	Ammo Cost (Cr.)
Gauss Rifle	12	Rifle	4d6 AP	4	0	3	100	2,500	100
Gauss Pistol	13	Pistol	3d6+2 AP	4	0	1	50	1,000	50
Gauss Sniper Rifle	13	Rifle	5d6+2 AP	None	0	8	20	20,000	40
VRF Gauss Rifle	14	Rifle	5d6 AP	10	2	30	1,000	60,000	2,000

ENERGY WEAPONS

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Auto	Recoil	Mass (kg)	Magazine	Cost (Cr.)	Power Pack (Cr.)
Maser Pistol	16	Pistol	3d6+1	None	None	3	10	Not Available	Not Available
Maser Rifle	16	Assault Weapon	4d6+2	None	None	10	15	Not Available	Not Available
FGMP-16	16	Rifle	16d6	5	0	15	30	Not Available	Not Available
Neural Rifle	17	Rifle	Telepathic Assault	None	None	2	25	Not Available	Not Available



requiring TL16 battle dress to support it. Only one regiment has been equipped with these frightening weapons and it still awaits deployment.

Neural Rifle (TL17): A weapon that incapacitates enemies by duplicating a Telepathic Assault (see **Traveller Core Rules** page 154). Armour is no defence and only artificial psionic screens (or the Telepathic Shield talent) block its effect. The weapon projects no visible beam or sound, making it near impossible to detect an attack. Only a few dozen of these rifles exist, issued to Special Arm elite forces on a mission-by-mission basis.

VEHICLES

Before the Maghiz, most Darrian transport was via Grav Vehicle. After the disaster, cruder forms of transport were briefly utilised but with their recovery Darrians once again embraced gravitics, this time incorporating wings or lifting surfaces to provide glide capability in case of failure.

Ground vehicles are nearly unheard of, there being little or no surface infrastructure for them to run on. A few exceptions exist but are mainly recreational vehicles.

MONOCYCLE

An odd looking form of transport, Darrian monocyces look like circular disks standing on their edge, about two and a half metres in diameter with a central faring bubble where the driver sits. The outer edge is a tire about 30 centimetres wide, formed from dozens of compartmentalised sections and rotated by hidden drive wheels mounted around the circumference. The monocyce maintains upright stability with gyroscopes, which also allow it to lean into tight corners. Designed as an off road vehicle, the size of the wheel combined with a suspension system (which reactively increases or lowers the pressure of each tire segment), grants a smooth ride except over the most rugged terrain.

Monocyce (Cr. 4,650)

TL: 9
Drive Type: Single Wheeled
Configuration: Cycle 3m³
Construction: Light Alloys
Qualities: Rugged
Agility: +4
Speed: Cruising 225kph, Top 300kph, Off Road 65kph
Fuel: 50 hours (Fuel Cell)
Armour: 2
Hull: 1
Structure: 1
Crew: 1
Passengers: 0

Cargo: 0.5 dTon
Weapons: None
Equipment: Basic Sensors (Compact), Gyroscopes

GRAV BIKES

The ubiquitous personal transport on Darrian worlds, grav bikes are fast and manoeuvrable. Fairings dynamically reshape to control aerodynamic flow and act as spoilers for slowing or rapid changes of direction. If a power failure occurs, the fairings return to a default wing configuration, allowing the bike to glide to the ground. Ejector seats are included for circumstances where no safe landing spot can be found. Grav Bikes include life support for high altitude flying and are capable of reaching orbit. Military versions of Grav Bikes are slightly bigger, built around a chassis mounted Advanced Light AutocannonVRF Gauss Rifle.

Grav Bike – Civilian (Cr. 205,000)

TL: 11
Drive Type: Grav
Configuration: Cycle 6m³
Construction: Advanced Composites
Qualities: Lightweight, Sealed
Agility: +3
Speed: Cruise 1,092kph, Top 1,456kph
Fuel: 50 hours
Armour: 4
Hull: 1
Structure: 1
Crew: 1
Passengers: 1
Cargo: 1 dTon
Weapons: None
Equipment: 500km Laser/Radio Comm, Airflow Devices, Basic Life Support, Ejector Seats, Comprehensive Sensors (Compact, Long and Hardened), Improved Controls

Grav Bike – Military (Cr. 740,000)

TL: 15
Drive Type: Grav
Configuration: Cycle 10m³
Construction: Crystaliron
Qualities: Sealed, Stealth Coating
Agility: +4
Speed: Cruise 1,590kph, Top 2,120kph
Fuel: 20 hours
Armour: 18
Hull: 2
Structure: 2
Crew: 1
Passengers: 0
Cargo: None
Weapons: PGMP-14 (12d6, +6 Auto)

Equipment: 500km Laser/Radio Comm, Airflow Devices, Basic Life Support, Chaff, Ejector Seat, Excellent Sensors (Compact, Hardened), Improved Controls, Precision Drive

SPHERE TANKS

An unusual design, most Confederation tanks use a spherical configuration six metres across, granting them a reasonably effective deflection surface from all directions. They conform to the Darrian military philosophy of stealth, speed and agility, over brute power. Gauss guns are preferred over plasma or fusion weapons due to their reduced EM signal and avoidance of secondary radiation and fire damage to the environment. Each sphere is horizontally segmented into three compartments, which can rotate independently of one another. The smaller top and bottom segments contain sensors, antipersonnel and air defence weaponry; whilst the middle compartment holds the crew, drive, power plant and main cannon. Crew comprises of Driver, Gunner and the Comms/Sensor Officer who commands the tank. All crew are trained as engineer/mechanics on their own specific equipment.

Sphere Tank (MCr. 12)

TL: 13

Drive Type: Grav

Configuration: Sloped Sphere 100m³

Construction: Superdense

Qualities: Rugged, Sealed, Stealth Coating

Agility: +3

Speed: Cruise 435kph, Top 580kph

Fuel: 105 hours

Armour: 85

Hull: 55

Structure: 60

Crew: 3

Passengers: 0

Cargo: None

Weapons: Main Armament – 12mm Light Gauss Cannon (10d6 Mega AP damage, 60 attacks), Secondary Armament – 2 x VRF Gauss Guns (5d6 AP damage, 110 attacks each)

Equipment: 50km Radio/Maser/Laser Comm, Basic Life Support, Improved Controls, Excellent Sensors (Compact, Hardened), Multispectral Smoke Decoys, Precision Drive

The TL13 version is standard equipment for armoured divisions of planetary militia, designed for rapid deployment or retreat and extended battlefield endurance.

Sphere Tank – Advanced (MCr. 38)

TL: 15

Drive Type: Grav

Configuration: Sloped Sphere 100m³

Construction: Bonded Superdense

Qualities: Rugged, Sealed, Stealth Coating

Agility: +3

Speed: Cruise 275kph, Top 370kph

Fuel: 110 hours

Armour: 150

Hull: 82

Structure: 90

Crew: 3

Passengers: 0

Cargo: None

Weapons: Main Armament – 16mm Hyper Velocity Gauss Cannon (18d6 Ultimate AP damage, 35 attacks), Secondary Armament – 2 x VRF Gauss Guns (5d6 AP damage, 110 attacks each)

Equipment: 100km Meson Comm, Basic Life Support, Improved Controls, Excellent Sensors (Compact, Hardened), Multispectral Smoke Decoys, Precision Drive

Using a similar hull configuration, the TL15 version uses meson comms, improved armour and an upgraded main weapon. The tank is used by armoured units of the Confederation Guard.

ODDITIES

The following are a few weird and wonderful hi-tech Darrian items that occasionally surface in junk shops bordering the Confederation, or are found in long forgotten science bases, abandoned after the Maghiz. Many of the devices may lack power and must be tinkered with by someone with Mechanics-2 or Engineering (Electroincs)-1 to discover the correct access panel. After which it is simple to jury rig a direct power feed or recharge the integral batteries.

Temperature Chime: A long tubular metal chime, which has barely discernable Zlodh glyphs etched on its worn, scratched surface. When struck, the chime resonates with a pure tone. However, the note given off by the chime alters with its temperature – the colder it is, the deeper the note.

Advanced Rope: 30 metres of rope woven from electro-contractive synthetics. If anchored at one end and tugged sharply, the rope contracts to one tenth of its original length. If shaken from side-to-side, the fibres go flaccid, recovering its original length. Additionally, the colour of rope changes with increased load, starting at a default light blue and progressing through the spectrum until it reaches crimson at 250 kilograms in 1g. Adding more mass causes the priceless rope to tear apart.

Hair Styling Comb: This beautiful comb made of tortoiseshell patterned crystal, has a number of decorative studs that act as controls. If left in sunlight for six hours to recharge, when next drawn through the users tresses, the hair is altered to take on different curls and pigmentation. Randomly fiddling with the settings will allow the user to create any number of fantastic hair styles. The comb works for one hairdressing attempt before needing to be recharged.



Food Processor: A spherical device about 30 centimetres in diameter, the top part of the unit can be removed to insert raw meats, vegetables and grains. Replacing the lid and waiting 15 minutes, converts the contents into a perfectly cooked meal. The processor has a range of different recipes but relies on a verbal interface using te-Zlodh.

Heat Glow Gem: Crystal slices mounted on head or wrist bands, which give off a pale glow when worn. The brightness of the radiance depends on the temperature differential of the wearer in comparison to the ambient air. Thus the crystals work best in cool or cold environments.

Gecko suit: A full body suit up to 5 millimetres thick across the limbs, its sticky palm and foot areas provide traction on unpolished surfaces. Designed for the lower gravity of Daryen, each of the gripping areas can only support up to 25 kilograms on a standard 1g world, preventing a climber from exceeding 75 kilograms. The suit itself partially augments the wearer's Strength, allowing them to lift their own body weight when scaling a vertical surface.

Earring Analyser: Set with a tiny gem, this small earring is uniquely decorated with ancient Darrian designs. Expose to sunlight for a few hours to charges the device, which analyses the ambient atmosphere for pressure, gas mixture and toxic substances. If it discovers anything dangerous the device vibrates softly and chimes just loud enough for the wearer to hear. The earring is manufactured for Darrian physiology however, so it does not respond to very low air pressures or high levels of ozone but will trigger incessantly when exposed to atmospheres over 1 standard pressure.

Meson Egg Cup: Looking like nothing more than an elegant egg cup, this device actually heats any egg placed in it with a tiny meson projector. Although it cooks raw eggs to perfection, any previously boiled egg set in it is likely to explode from excessive heating. The device may also have a tendency to trigger some internal sensors detecting the odd energy release. As such, this wonder would be priceless to any Telecommunication Corporation seeking to 'crack' open the personal meson comms tech barrier.

Spring Boots: Conceptualised on many worlds, Darrian spring boots are not particularly innovative but do incorporate many refinements that make them easy to use, even for beginners. When worn they look similar to kangaroo legs, their inherent springiness permitting the wearer to cover up to five metres with each step. If the power compartment is discovered and the boots are recharged, performance increases dramatically, the struts of the boots flexing themselves, freeing the user from needing to input any effort into moving. A charge lasts three hours and increases the distance covered to 10 metres per stride.

Animal Repeller: This device looks like a belt woven from metal threads, possessing a large ornate buckle. The belt is actually a combined threat analysis computer and an acoustic wave projector. Using subsonic frequencies it drives off large creatures able to hear the sound. Whilst this works on Daryen, it may be less effective on other worlds, or conversely drive off all animal life completely. Physical attacks by humanoids on the wearer will be stopped by the computer, which will broadcast high frequency whistling, incapacitating both the attacker and belt wearer.

Medical Underwear: Only a few pieces of intact Darrian clothing survive from before the Maghiz. These special types of underwear are designed to be disposable, sealed in vacuum packs. They incorporate a range of reactive chemicals tailored to specific biological agents, reacting to traces amounts excreted in perspiration or skin cells. Detecting a high concentration of arsenic for example would cause the fabric to change colour. The cleverest aspect of the underwear is the distribution patterns of the molecules and colour codes, which reveal precisely the medical condition the wearer is suffering from. Thus a specific virus may emerge as a stripy blue and green pattern, whilst early onset liver failure might display as red polka dots. Once understood what their purpose is, examples of medical underwear are treasure troves to molecular biochemists.

Biobog: Surviving examples of toilets on Daryen show that the cities lacked sewage systems, diverting their biological waste into small composting units instead. These artefact toilets are uncomfortably high for normal humans to sit on but contain photonic projectors of different wavelengths, which kill bacteria and break down the molecular structure of the human waste into safe gases and a fine sandy material formed primarily of carbon. This soil is sterile and can be used as raw organic material. Although the device may be viewed as an ecological oddity, it actually works using a very early form of disintegration.

Ubidrink Flask: Appearing like an aluminium thermos flask, the flask is designed to be filled with water and left for five minutes. When opened a second time, the water will have been converted to one of a wide range of Darrian teas or carbonated soft drinks, served at the perfect temperature. After several dozen uses the beverage will gradually lose its flavour, since the reservoir of concentrated additives will become exhausted. In the bottom of the flask are twelve micro cartridges each loaded with a different molecular additive. These can be replicated by a sophisticated TL15 lab but the miniaturised brewing and thermodynamic engineering is beyond comprehension.

Cleaning Rod: On first glance this short rod looks completely incongruous. Lacking any distinguishing features save a Zlodh glyph at one end, if powered and grasped it begins radiating a soft UV glow combined with a lot of trans-aural sonics. After a minute, the rod stops glowing and begins to suck in air, which



is expelled from a nozzle at one end. The device is actually designed to launder clothes, the light and sound cleaning the fabric by killing bacteria and breaking down dirt. The suction then sweeps up the fine particles, collecting them inside a receptacle in the handle, which must be periodically emptied.

Neural Pillow: An offshoot of neural weaponry, this spongy pillow actually contains a gentle neural projector, which sends anyone resting their head against it to sleep instantly. There are no after-effects but the sleep does not prevent bad dreams or anxiety from disturbing the sleeper, it merely enables them to drop off in the first place. Telepathic shields prevent the pillow from working.

Eternal Deodorant: A metallic rectangular object, with a detachable lid covering a rounded perforated surface. Some examples still have labels attached explaining the purpose of the strange artefact. The device gently irradiates the skin, shutting down the sweat pores and killing off the bacteria that produce bad odours. An application of the deodoriser usually lasts for up to one week but heavy labour or excessively humid environments can shorten the duration. Some examples incorporate a depilatory device at the other end, which temporarily stuns hair follicles, preventing growth, whilst simultaneously burning away any hairs that have extruded through the skin.

Food Heating Plates: These elegant plates look as if they are made from thin glass or crystal, decorated with swirls of colour within the structure of the material. Whilst beautiful, their real value comes when warm food (anything above 40 degrees Celsius) is placed on them. The plate raises its own (upper) surface temperature to meet what was placed upon it, incidentally causing the colours to begin to shift and undulate. The heating cycle lasts for about 30 minutes before failing, depending on the initial temperature of the food. However, the plates recharge with regular exposure to sunlight.

Grav Skates: A further refinement of gravitic technology, grav skates produce a lifting force capable of supporting up to 100 kilograms. The reduction of ground pressure allows the wearer to skate over any relatively smooth surface, such as concrete pavements, sand or even placid water. They operate by sensing weight distribution and which foot is leading, lifting it clear of the surface, whilst the backwards passing rear foot is permitted a gentle contact in order to give traction. Grav skates last for several hours before needing to be recharged.

Cleaning Cloth: This fabric uses electrostatic forces and microfiber filaments to wipe up dirt particles. The material is a living substance, a mono-colony of protoplasmic creatures engineered by pre-Maghiz biologists. They consume the dirt they collect, using it to rebuild and replicate. When the cloth grows too big, it 'births' a new cloth and the older colony dies

off several days later. Ancient mutated versions may be found in abandoned bases capable of supporting protoplasmic life, growing out of control, slowly consuming all it covers.

Dream Transferors: Appearing as nothing more than a pair of soft fabric skullcaps with recognisably archaic Darrian data connectors, this device is an experimental attempt to transfer memories. One cap acts as the scanner, transmitting neural activity to the second cap, where it is induced into the recipient's mind. Due to the informational overload generated by alert brains, the caps only work on sleeping subjects and are very dangerous to use. Each shared dream must be supervised by a qualified doctor to prevent accidental seizures.

Black Globe Safety System: The ultimate in personal safety, a black globe crash protector appears to be a cube approximately 45 centimetres per side and weighing about 75 kilograms, normally mounted solidly between the seats inside a vehicle. It remains innocuous until the vehicle sensors detect imminent collision or rapid deceleration, whereupon a small black globe forms about the passengers for less than a second, incidentally severing a spherical volume free of the vehicle and absorbs the kinetic energy of the crash. Secondary crash protection such as airbags then trigger, just as the globe collapses. If the energy is too great an override cuts in, dropping the globe and ejecting the capacitor unit prior to explosion.

Insect Zapper: A floating sphere less than 5 centimetres in diameter, this drone floats about a chamber, using a tiny infrared laser to kill pervasive or annoying bugs. It can operate for six hours before recharging.

Health Cup: Another crystalline vessel of considerable beauty, this cup scans the fluids poured into it and changes colour if it detects any dangerous substances. Colour gradation determines the type of toxic substance present and its concentration. Remaining clear indicates that the drink is safe to imbibe... for a Darrian.

Magnifying Glass: A solid sheet of transparent crystal about 30 centimetres square, with two metallic handles on either side for carrying. A number of Zlodh glyphs are embossed on the bottom edge. If recharged pressing on the glyphs in turn will:

Activate the device.
Magnify the view through the crystal.
Shrink the view through the crystal.
Change the wavelength of light being displayed.

The magnifying glass is capable of resolving down to the atomic level and can display wavelengths from microwave to soft x-rays.



DARRIAN SPACECRAFT

To provide compatibility for Imperium traffic, the Confederation has adopted Imperium protocols and conventions for ships travelling in Darrian space. Since the Darrians use jump technology inherited from Solomani settlers, the basic principles of jump travel still apply to Darrian vessels.

Ship Design

Most Darrian vessels have a subtle Solomani design influence, tending to exhibit sweeping curves and practical streamlining. Internally, vessels have higher ceilings but reclaim lost conduit space by hiding them behind curved mouldings where floor and ceiling meet the walls. The rounded edges give ships a slightly more organic feel, as well as providing perfect surfaces for integral lighting units. The general feel of Darrian ships is that the internal proportions are tall and narrow.

All controls have a high ergonomic styling primarily designed for Darrian physiology but can reconfigure to be usable by normal proportioned humans and Aslan. Integral furniture such as seats or beds is built for extra long torsos and no Solomani has ever complained of the leg room available in Darrian passenger craft!

Most onboard systems are built with mechanical redundancy in mind. Bulkhead doors can be opened with hand operated cranks, or air purification modules physically pumped for example. Such safety concerns are paramount to Darrian design ethics.

Likewise all electronics, communications and computers are hardened, using Darrian crystal components and ships are required by law to install a separate, redundant radio communication system, which can be used even if the main comms have been destroyed. This is little more than a very primitive radio with simple EMP proof components, which is negligible in terms of space and cost.

Since most Darrians are egalitarian and sociable by nature, there is little demand for High Passage within the Confederation. Liners run by bigger corporations have a small selection of luxury staterooms for foreign travellers, but public areas are not segregated by class or rank.

Lesser Known Aspects of Darrian Space Travel

The following are customs within Darrian space.

Any Ship Maybe Conscripted by the Military: Whilst rarely invoked, Confederation law permits the brief commandeering of a ship by a duly warranted Navy or Special Arm officer. Normally used to rapidly transfer information or personnel in emergency situations, most conscriptions are brief, lasting only for the period to take the officer to an ordered destination. The vessel cannot be forced to engage in combat activity, unless the action would obviously prevent a greater loss of life. No matter the eventual service provided, the ship owners (or their legal inheritors) are always fully compensated for all losses incurred by the commission.

Communal Hospitality: Darrian adherence to pleasantness and tolerance is especially noticeable aboard ship. With no place to escape abusive personalities save your assigned stateroom, most Darrian citizens go out of their way to be polite and friendly. Many ships have adopted the Aslan tradition of using the central lounge as a place for storytelling, both honest recollections and fantastical fables, although the story is always quantified first in order not to mislead the listeners. With little to do, debating is another favourite pastime aboard but Darrians never allow an impassioned discussion to get out of hand. Everyone aboard a Darrian ship eats the same food, quaffs the same drinks and shares the facilities equitably. None are granted special privileges unless such are required by their race, occupation or health.

Draconian Starport Regulations: The Darrians are paranoid about what a malfunctioning spaceship can do to orbital structures or cities adjacent to ground based ports. Such disasters have occurred a number of times in Confederation history, causing the Darrians to impose strict approach regulations on all of their worlds. Arriving vessels are required to hand over the flight control of their ship to starport computers. If a vessel lacks the automation required for remote control, then they must wait for an authorised pilot to arrive before flying the ship in. Refusal to comply with either request results in landing permission being revoked. Ships continuing their



approach after this point are given a single verbal warning, then a shot across their bows. After this point the vessel is considered a deliberate sabotage or invasion attempt and targeted by all available weapons. Confederation law strictly orders that any vessel aimed directly at the port, which subsequently claims communications or engineering failure, be treated as a deliberate collision attempt and immediately destroyed, with no exceptions.

Crews

Darrian crews, like their ships, are staffed with redundancy and contingency in mind. Most are cross trained in a secondary skill relevant to the ship or a survival situation if forced to land on an uninhabited world. Thus flight crew will often know some engineering, whilst engineers may have sensor operation knowledge and the steward trained as a paramedic.

Confederation law states that in emergencies, the care of any passengers is the crew's responsibility. Prior to working in the Merchant Marine, Darrian crews take basic qualifications in Vacc Suit and Zero-G. Since most crew served in the Navy during their mandatory military service, this is generally not a problem. Crew designated to passenger liners must take further qualifications in either Survival or Medic. These licences must be renewed every 10 years with refresher courses.

Referee Note: *Player Characters who wish to crew a Darrian vessel but lack any of the above at a minimum of skill-0, may undertake a series of crash courses to pick up the basic knowledge. Each takes one week of full time or one month of part time study to learn.*

Computer Interfaces

Darrian shipboard computers are all capable of verbal communication in Te-zlodh, Trokh and Galanglic. Passenger entertainment suites are separate computer systems, with no physical connection to the vessel's engineering, life support and flight computers. The communication and sensor computers are only accessible from the flight deck.

New Ship Components

The following components are available to Darrian ship designs.

Acceleration Benches: Acceleration benches are basic seating used for temporary transportation of passengers. Comfort is limited but safety is paramount. The benches are heavily padded with integral safety harnesses in case of gravity failure. They are normally designed to fold down from walls or

pull up from floors, so as to grant more usable space when not in use. Each ton of Acceleration Benches can seat six passengers and costs 10,000Cr.

Brig: A brig is a secure chamber with reinforced walls and a door that can be manually locked from the outside. Designed to hold six prisoners, it can uncomfortably hold double that number in a pinch. There are no internal facilities or controls, save for a curtained fresher and six pull down slabs that can be used as beds. Although intended for restraining captives or crew held on a charge, quite often the majority of time a brig is actually used as a temporary office or storage area. A brig takes up four tons and costs 0.25MCr.

Cargo Crane: Built into the ceilings of cargo holds, these overhead gantry cranes are designed to shift shipping containers in and out of a ship. The crane's mechanism moves about the bay on a sliding jig and can extend beyond the cargo hatch door on a gibbet to deposit freight directly onto docksides or vehicles. The crane is strong enough to lift fully loaded 32 and 64 dton containers and can couple to most types of pallets or crates. The traversing lift mechanism of a Cargo Crane takes up a base 2.25 tons but the gantry jigs require a further 0.25 tons per 150 tons of the hold.

Sickbay: Sickbays are medical facilities that contain a dispensary, treatment couch and biochemical analysis equipment. Sickbays are used for medical care and surgery but if more than a single patient requires treatment, they are normally removed to their stateroom to recover. A sickbay occupies four tons and costs MCr. 1

CIVILIAN STARSHIPS

All of the following designs are ubiquitous within the Confederation and have the 10% discount for common designs included in their cost breakdown. Built by Darrian shipyards, few of these vessels are customarily available outside of Confederation space. Most ships of less than 2,000 tons are designed for atmospheric entry, with streamlined external hulls. Civilian ships have no naming conventions but are often named after flowers, animals or even ex-lovers. They are always decorated with artistic paint jobs that reflect their appellation.

The following vessels are all TL13 designs using the advanced component rules from **High Guard**. Civilian vessels are sold unarmed, weapons being unnecessary within Confederation space. Life support costs are average crew values and do not account for under or over occupancy. Hull and Structure values are rounded up to the nearest whole number to reflect Darrian technology and proclivity for additional safety.



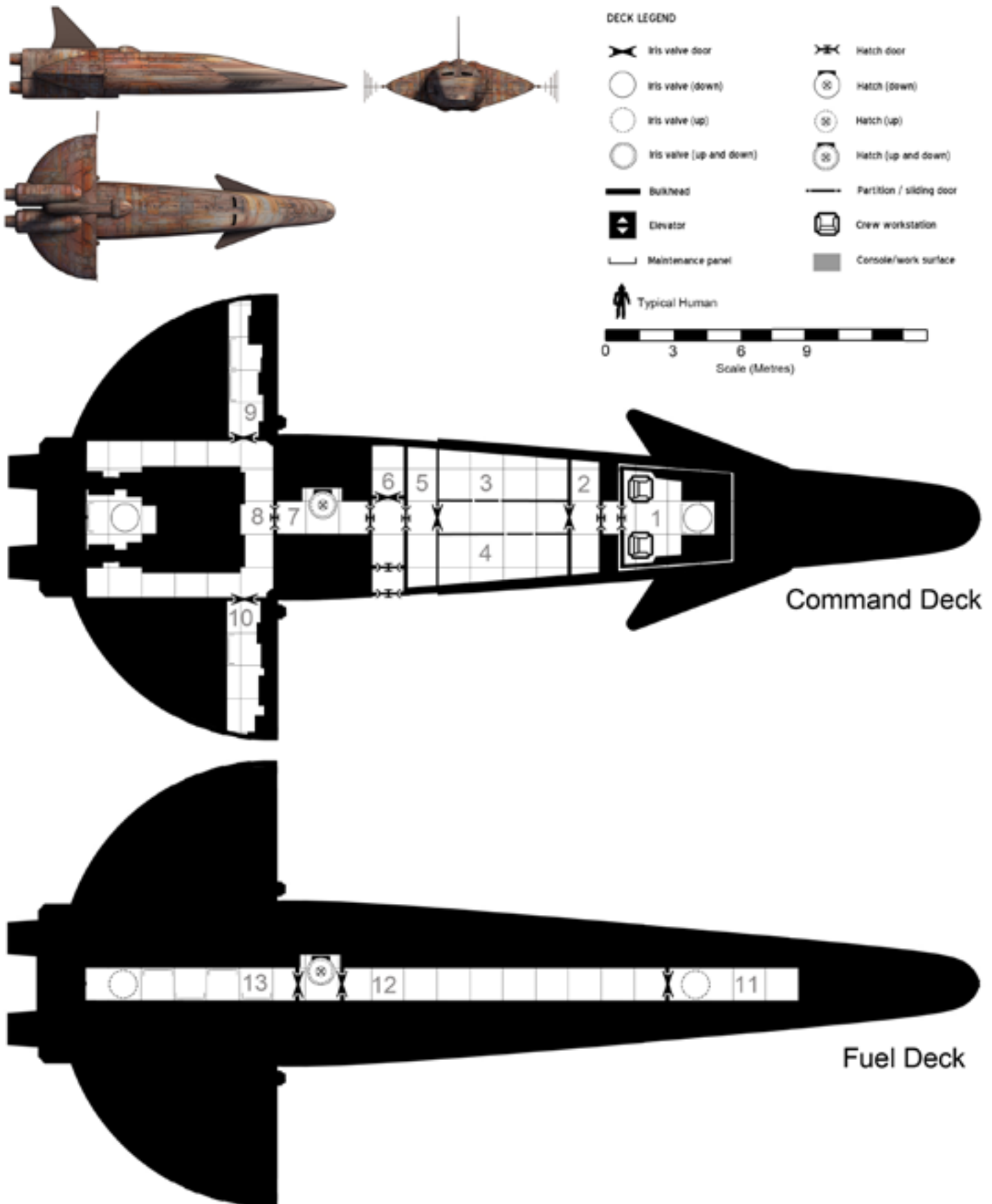
Courier (Rehld class)

Using a 100 ton hull, the Darrian **Rehld** courier is a rapid communications carrier. It requires a crew of two: a pilot/navigator and an engineer. The ship is packed with highly sensitive, long range communications gear and oversized jump drives. The majority of its volume incorporates large fuel tanks so that several short jumps can be made sequentially without needing to dock. The vessel can also carry a couple of passengers if needed, a requirement imposed and used by the Special Arm.

The operational protocol is that couriers stay stationed outside of planetary gravity wells, supported by small resupply ships to refuel or swap crew as necessary. Communications are tight beamed to the ship, which can enter jump space immediately reducing turnaround times. If assigned to a route involving many short jumps, the ship only needs to remain in real space for the time it takes to exchange message traffic with the local starport and acknowledge receipt. It can then jump again without further delay. If necessary, the courier can skim gas giants to refuel.

Due to the tiny, cramped living quarters, the crew are given extended leave after each run; some routes taking up to five weeks to complete. To avert boredom, most crews welcome a passenger aboard their courier for a short run.

			Tons	Cost (Cr.)
Hull	100 Tons	3 Hull	—	2,420,000
	Streamlined	3 Structure	—	—
Armour	None		—	—
Jump Drive	B	Jump 4	15	20,000,000
Manoeuvre Drive	A	Thrust 2	1.5	8,000,000
Power Plant	B	Rating 4	7	16,000,000
Bridge	Compact, Hardened		7.5	687,500
Computer	Model/5 bis fib	Rating 25+5	—	20,000,000
Electronics	Very Advanced	Enhanced Signal Processing	7	12,000,000
Weapons	1 Empty Hardpoint		—	—
Fuel	52 Tons	One jump-4 and 6 weeks of operation	52	—
Cargo	None		—	—
Staterooms	2	1 per crew member	8	1,000,000
Low Berths	None		—	—
Extras			—	—
	Ship's Locker		—	—
	Fuel Processor	40 tons per day	2	100,000
Software			—	—
	Manoeuvre		—	—
	Jump/4	Rating 20	—	400,000
	Intellect	Rating 10	—	1,000,000
	Library		—	—
Maintenance Cost (monthly)			—	6,120
Life Support Cost (monthly)			—	4,000
Total Tonnage & Cost			100	73,446,750



1. Bridge (hardened) 2. Ready room 3. Stateroom (double) 4. Stateroom (double) 5. Galley 6. Ships locker / Main airlock 7. Access corridor 8. Engineering bay 9. Port Electronics bay 10. Starboard Electronics bay 11 Avionics bay 12. Emergency access corridor 13. Jump Drive access (leads to enclosure on Command Deck)



Tramp Trader (Gagh class)

The **Gagh** class is a Darrian tramp trader, usually owned and cooperatively run by the entire crew. They pick up and deliver opportunity cargos with no fixed route or ports of call. Darrian trampers tend to operate out to the coreward and rimward border regions of Darrian space, transporting goods to worlds outside of the well policed Confederation.

Since they often wander into neighbouring regions, the model comes lightly armoured. Those planning to venture into known problem areas such as the Reidan or Sword World subsectors, generally invest in armaments as additional security.

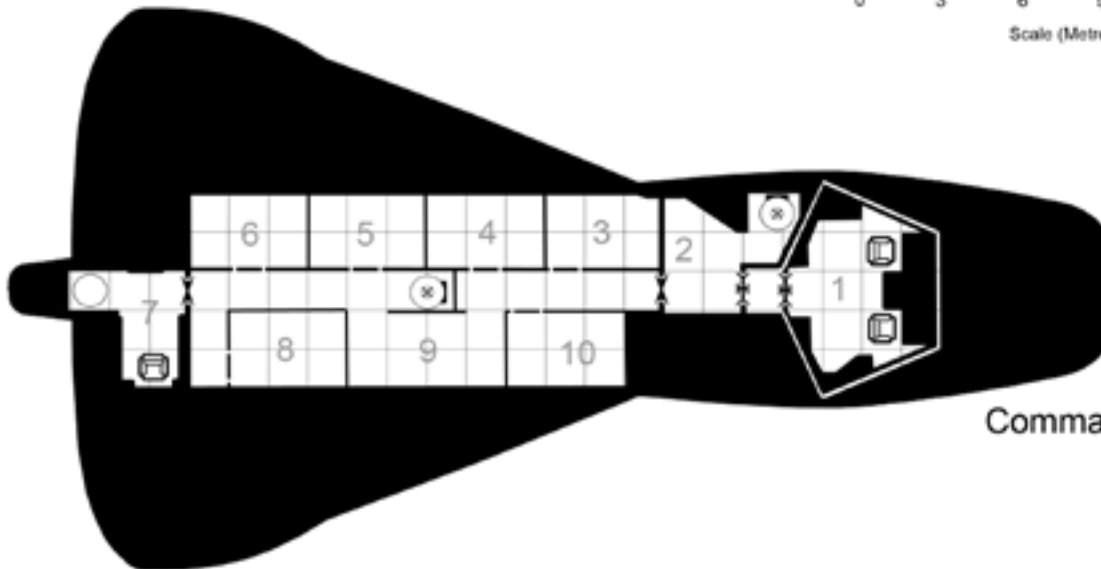
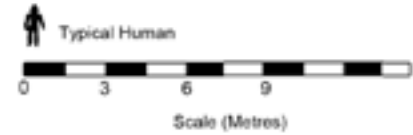
Minimum crew is a pilot/navigator, engineer, cargo officer and steward. If armed the cargo officer and/or steward often act as gunnery officers. The ship can transport up to eight passengers if the crew double bunks.

			Tons	Cost (Cr.)
Hull	200 Tons	5 Hull	—	9,680,000
	Streamlined	5 Structure	—	—
Armour	Crystaliron	4 Points	10	1,600,000
Jump Drive	B	Jump 2	13.5	25,000,000
Manoeuvre Drive	A	Thrust 1	1.5	8,000,000
Power Plant	B	Rating 2	7	16,000,000
Bridge	Hardened		10	1,250,000
Computer	Model/3 bis fib	Rating 15+5	—	4,000,000
Electronics	Basic Civilian		1	50,000
Weapons	2 Empty Hardpoints		—	—
Fuel	48 Tons	One jump-2 and 4 weeks of operation	48	—
Cargo	84 Tons		84	—
Staterooms	6	Up to 12 passengers and crew	24	3,000,000
Low Berths	None		—	—
Extras			—	—
	Ship's Locker		—	—
	Fuel Processor	20 tons per day	1	50,000
Software			—	—
	Manoeuvre		—	—
	Jump/2	Rating 10	—	200,000
	Intellect	Rating 10	—	1,000,000
	Library		—	—
Maintenance Cost (monthly)			—	5,238
Life Support Cost (monthly)			—	12,000
Total Tonnage & Cost			200	62,847,000

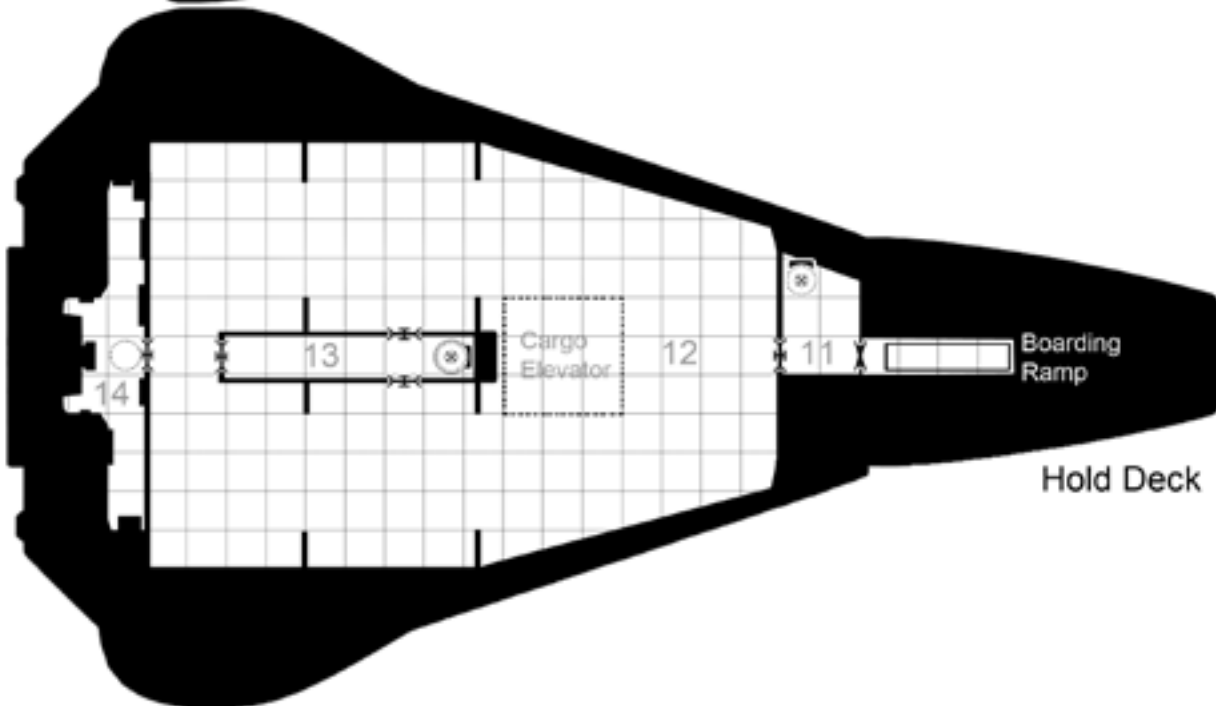


DECK LEGEND

	Iris valve door		Hatch door
	Iris valve (down)		Hatch (down)
	Iris valve (up)		Hatch (up)
	Iris valve (up and down)		Hatch (up and down)
	Bulkhead		Partition / sliding door
	Elevator		Crew workstation
	Maintenance panel		Console/work surface



Command Deck



Hold Deck

1. Bridge (hardened) 2. Ready room 3,4,5,6,8,10. – State Rooms 9. Communal Lounge 7. Engineering console 11. Boarding room / access to boarding ramp.
12. Cargo hold 13. Hold access corridor 14. Drive bay



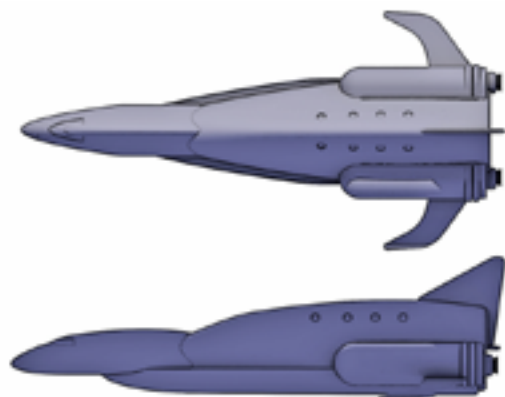
Far Trader (Nalumb class)

These trading ships are designed to bridge the gap between the Darrian Group worlds and outlying systems beyond the Confederation. Akin to the **Gagh** class, its smaller contemporary, this ship comes armoured and captains planning on trade in the Reidan or Sword World subsectors are recommended to purchase weaponry for self defence.

Few Darrian shipping corporations use the **Nalumb** class in their trade fleets, finding the vessel too specialised. Most are in the hands of owner captains who support themselves with bespoke delivery contracts, such as shipping munitions to contacts in the Imperium. When fully armed the ship is a tough target for opportunist piracy, earning higher value transport contacts and danger money for venturing into belligerent territory.

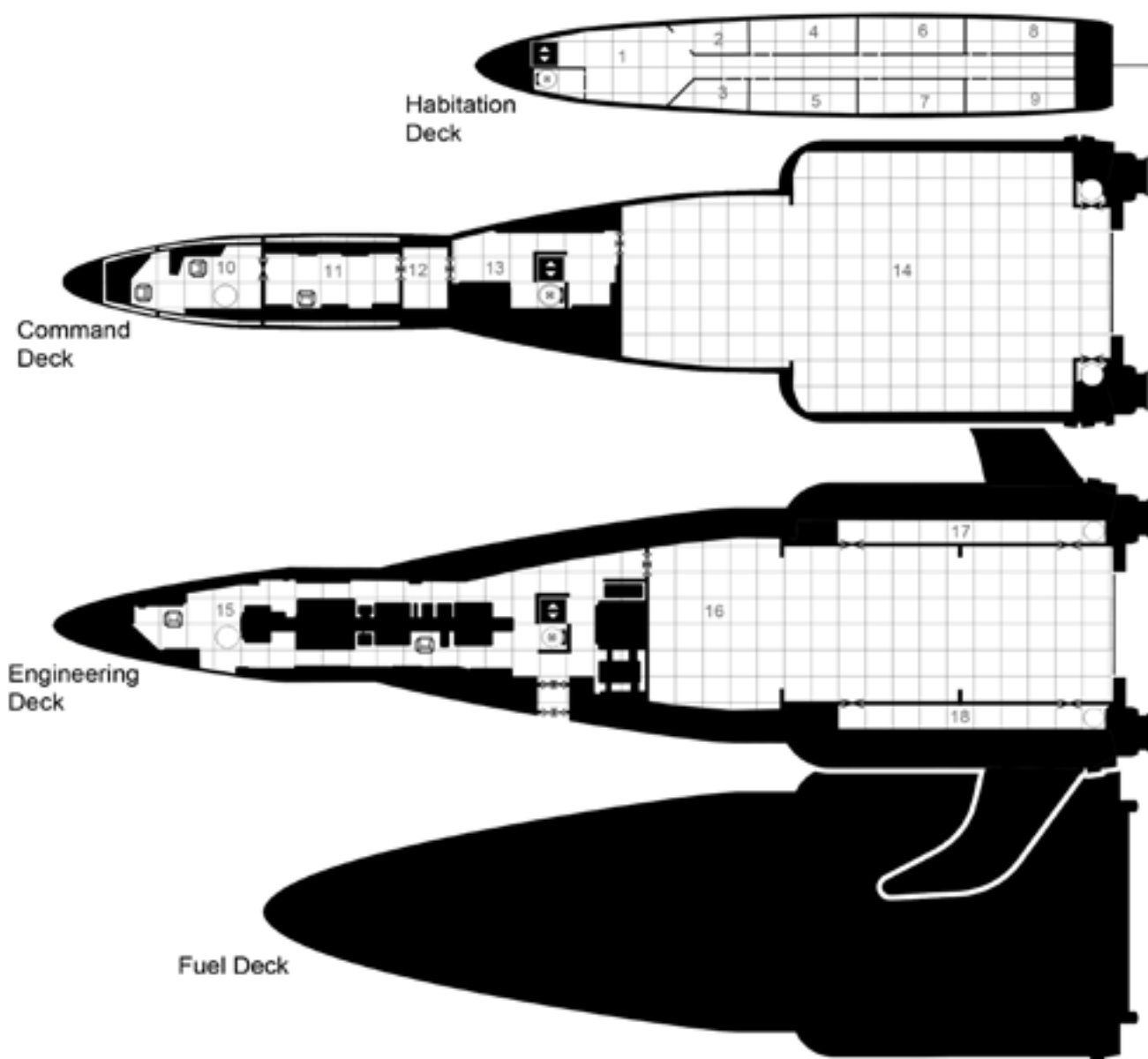
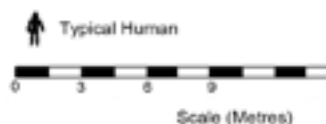
The ship is crewed with a pilot/navigator, two engineers, cargo officer, steward and if armed, however many extra gunners are required, with the cargo officer and steward filling in as two of them. The ship has space for an additional six passengers if a minimum crew double bunks.

			Tons	Cost (Cr.)
Hull	400 Tons	9 Hull	—	19,360,000
	Streamlined	9 Structure	—	—
Armour	Crystaliron	6 Points	30	4,800,000
Jump Drive	F	Jump 3	33.25	66,000,000
Manoeuvre Drive	B	Thrust 1	2.25	16,000,000
Power Plant	F	Rating 3	19	48,000,000
Bridge	Hardened		20	2,500,000
Computer	Model/4 bis fib	Rating 20+5	—	10,000,000
Electronics	Basic Civilian		1	50,000
Weapons	4 Empty Hardpoints		—	—
Fuel	144 Tons	One jump-3 and four weeks of operation	144	—
Cargo	125.5 Tons		125.5	—
Staterooms	6	Up to 12 passengers and crew	24	3,000,000
Low Berths	None		—	—
Extras			—	—
	Ship's Locker		—	—
	Fuel Processor	20 tons per day	1	50,000
Software			—	—
	Manoeuvre		—	—
	Jump/3	Rating 15	—	300,000
	Intellect	Rating 10	—	1,000,000
	Library		—	—
Maintenance Cost (monthly)			—	12,830
Life Support Cost (monthly)			—	12,000
Total Tonnage & Cost			400	153,954,000



DECK LEGEND

	Iris valve door		Hatch door
	Iris valve (down)		Hatch (down)
	Iris valve (up)		Hatch (up)
	Iris valve (up and down)		Hatch (up and down)
	Bulkhead		Partition / sliding door
	Elevator		Crew workstation
	Maintenance panel		Console/work surface



1. Communal lounge 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9. Staterooms 10. Bridge (hardened) 11. Operations deck 12. Security locker 13. Luggage/lockers 14. Top Hold 15. Engineering bay 16. Bottom Hold 17,18. Access corridors/light storage



Rapid Response Rescue Vessel (Yehng class)

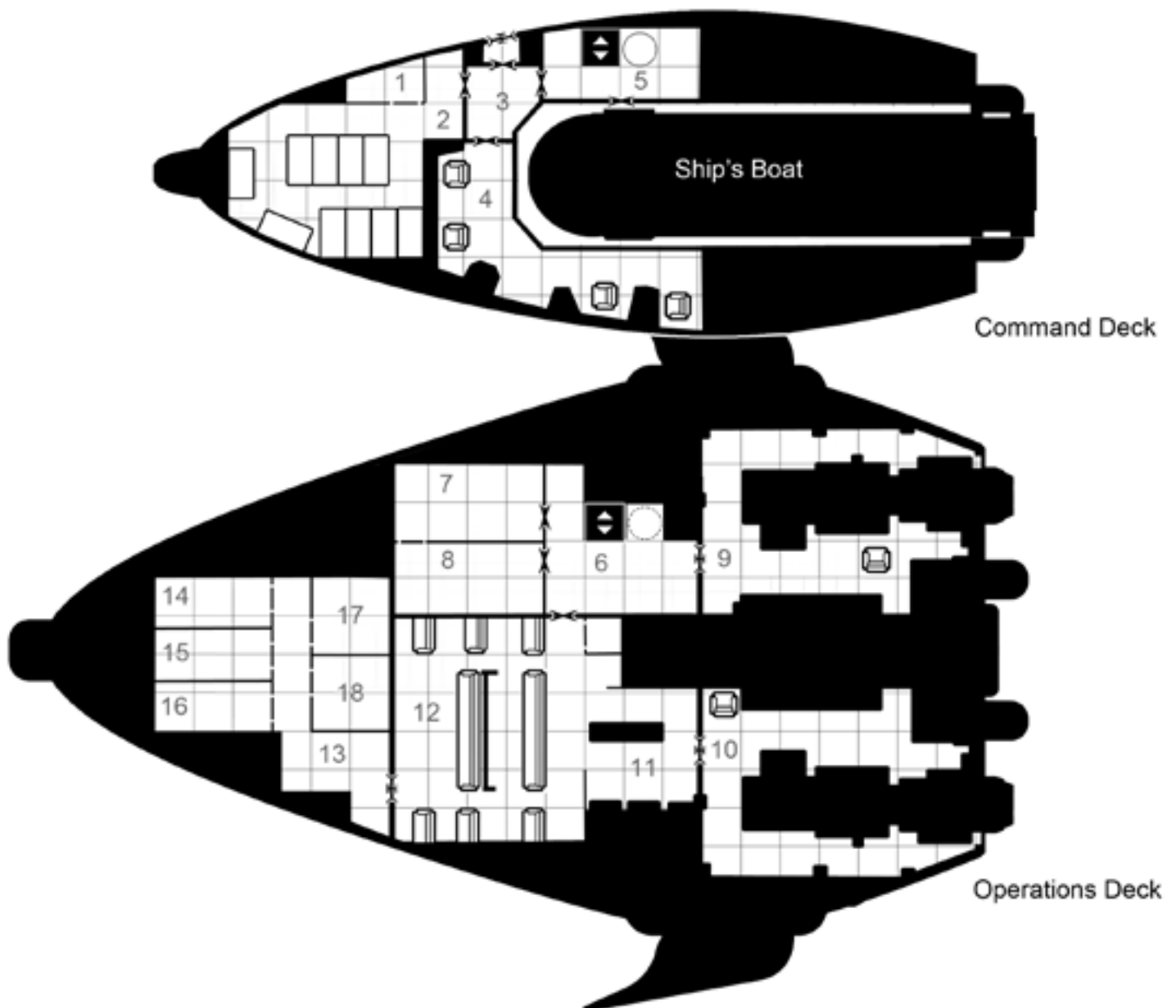
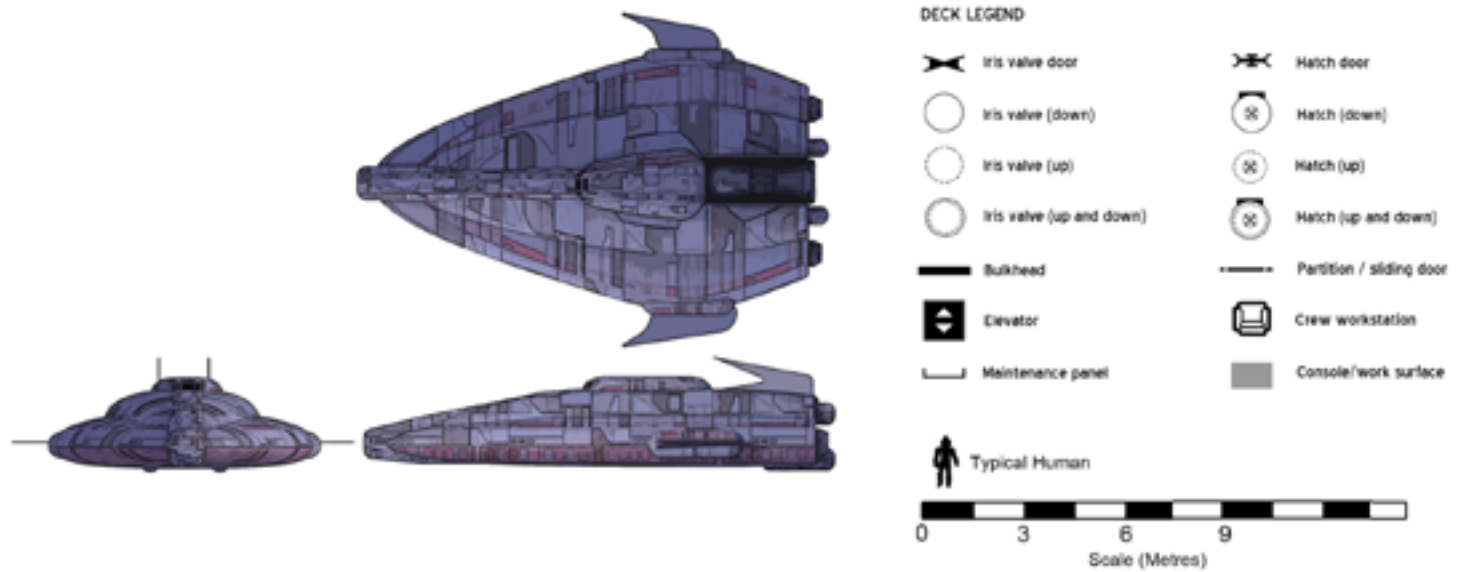
Whereas most Darrian ships are required to adhere to Confederation maintenance inspections, foreign vessels often jump into Confederation space in dangerous condition. In the event of an SOS alert from a broken down vessel, whether from substandard servicing or, worse still, fresh battle damage, the system starport often scrambles emergency rescue ships to evacuate the crew.

Rapid response ships possess very fast manoeuvre drives. On board are emergency teams capable of compartmentalising damaged sections of a ship, extracting its passengers and providing top quality medical care. Each ship has two fully equipped surgical bays. They also carry a Ship's Boat, which fits into the **Yehng's** spine for remote offloading of injured survivors and four oversized repair drones to help patch damage on vessels of up to 800 tons.

The comprehensive emergency locker is normally packed full of rescue equipment, from portable airlocks and thruster packs to cutting torches and fire extinguishers. Anything an emergency crew could possibly need is included, whether it be hand tools, reinforcing girders, arc lights, rope, demolition explosives, rescue bubbles, NAS scanners or the eternally useful duct tape.

Standard crew is a pilot/navigator, engineer, two medics and a six man emergency boarding team. All are equipped with armoured vacc suits. The ship has capacity for seating up to 45 passengers in acceleration benches, which can be folded down from walls or up out of the floors of the extra wide corridors and an additional 20 low births for freezing critically injured patients.

			Tons	Cost (Cr.)
Hull	200 Tons	5 Hull	—	9,680,000
	Streamlined	5 Structure	—	—
Armour	Crystaliron	4 Points	10	1,600,000
Jump Drive	A	Jump 1	7.5	20,000,000
Manoeuvre Drive	F	Thrust 6	8.25	48,000,000
Power Plant	F	Rating 6	19	48,000,000
Bridge	Hardened		10	1,250,000
Computer	Model/4 bis fib	Rating 20+5		10,000,000
Electronics	Basic Military		2	1,000,000
Weapons	2 Empty Hardpoints			—
Fuel	44 Tons	One jump-1 and four weeks of operation	44	—
Cargo	None		—	—
Staterooms	5	Five double occupied crew cabins	20	2,500,000
Low Berths	20		10	1,000,000
Acceleration Benches	45		7.5	750,000
Extras			—	—
	Ship's Locker		—	—
	Emergency Locker		14.75	1,475,000
	Fuel Processor	20 tons per day	1	50,000
	2 Sickbays		8	2,000,000
Craft			—	—
	Ship's Boat		30	17,829,000
	4 Repair Drones		8	1,600,000
Software			—	—
	Manoeuvre		—	—
	Jump/1	Rating 5	—	100,000
	Auto Repair/1	Rating 10	—	5,000,000
	Intellect	Rating 10	—	1,000,000
	Library		—	—
Maintenance Cost (monthly)			—	12,963
Life Support Cost (monthly)			—	15,000
Total Tonnage & Cost			200	155,550,600



1. Crash bay 2. Low berth bay 3. Access chamber 4. Bridge 5. Boarding room 6. Operations / access 7,8. Medical bays 11. Equipment stores/ship's locker 9,10. Engineering 12. Recovering deck 13 lounge/galley 14,15,16,17,18. Staterooms

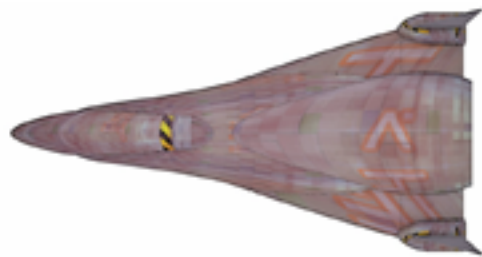


Passenger Liner (Ldil class)

Modestly sized cruise liners, the **Ldil** class are the backbone of long haul passenger transportation throughout the Confederation. Like most small Darrian vessels, it is designed to be capable of landing on a planetary surface if required. The vessels cater solely to passenger cruises, lacking any significant cargo capacity to trade merchandise on the side.

Minimum crew is a pilot/navigator, two engineers, medic, cook and a liaison officer, who settles difficulties not solved by the ship's computer. The cook produces fresh food throughout the day, which is served at set times. The **Ldil** class liners are noted for their extensive educational and entertainment systems; and the cabin layout, which maximises the communal areas.

			Tons	Cost (Cr.)
Hull	600 Tons	14 Hull	—	58,080,000
	Streamlined	14 Structure	—	—
Armour	Crystaliron	2 Points	15	4,800,000
Jump Drive	J	Jump 3	47.5	99,000,000
Manoeuvre Drive	F	Thrust 2	8.25	48,000,000
Power Plant	J	Rating 3	28	72,000,000
Bridge	Hardened		20	3,750,000
Computer	Model/4 bis fib	Rating 20+5	—	10,000,000
Electronics	Basic Civilian		1	50,000
Weapons	6 Empty Hardpoints		—	—
Fuel	216 Tons	One jump-3 and four weeks of operation	216	—
Cargo	10.25 Tons		10.25	—
Staterooms	56	Six crew and 50 passenger cabins	224	28,000,000
Low Berths	20		10	1,000,000
Extras			—	—
	Ship's Locker		—	—
	2 Fuel Processors	40 tons per day	2	100,000
	Sickbay		4	1,000,000
	Library		4	4,000,000
	Luxuries		10	1,000,000
Software			—	—
	Manoeuvre		—	—
	Jump/3	Rating 15	—	300,000
	Intellect	Rating 10	—	1,000,000
	Library		—	—
Maintenance Cost (monthly)			—	24,906
Life Support Cost (monthly)			—	112,000
Total Tonnage & Cost			600	298,872,000



DECK LEGEND

Iris valve door

Iris valve (down)

Iris valve (up)

Iris valve (up and down)

Bulkhead

Elevator

Maintenance panel

Typical Human

Hatch door

Hatch (down)

Hatch (up)

Hatch (up and down)

Partition / sliding door

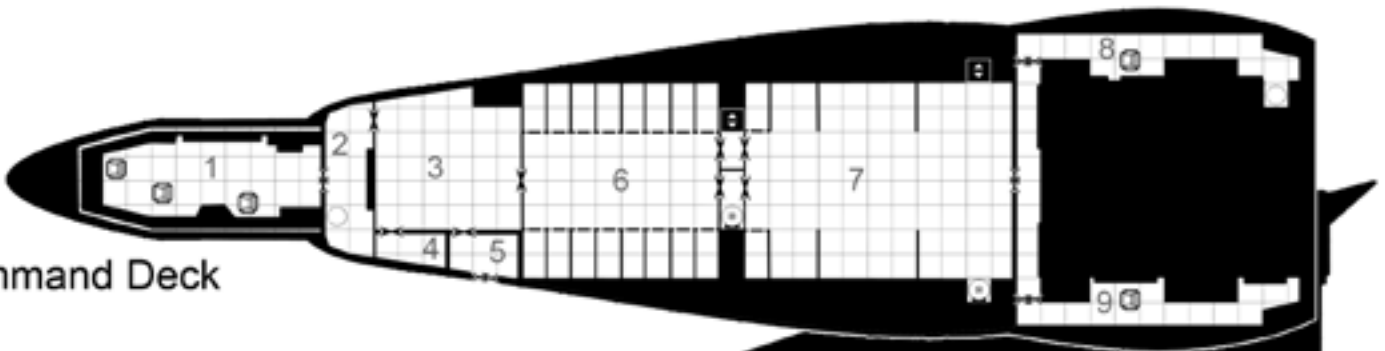
Crew workstation

Console/work surface

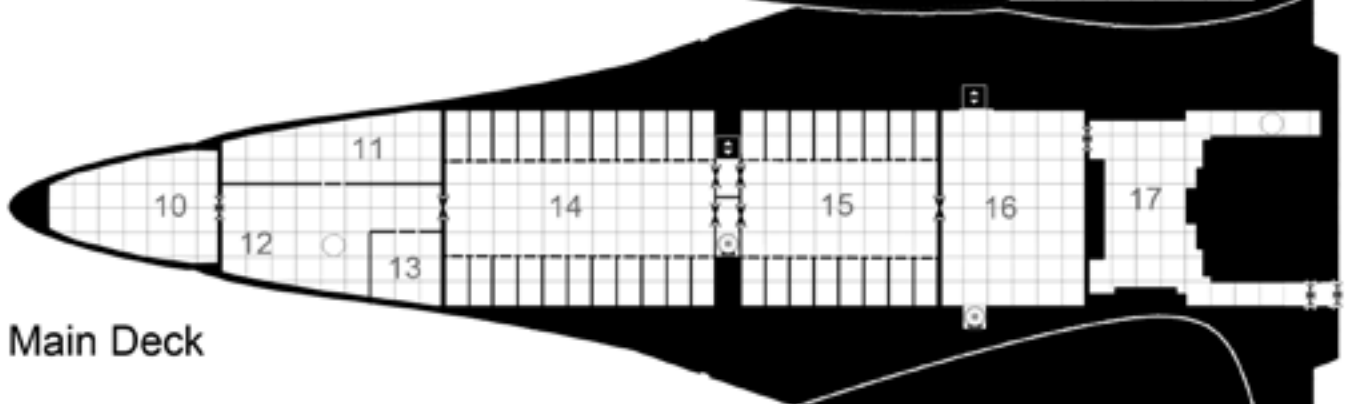
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Scale (Metres)

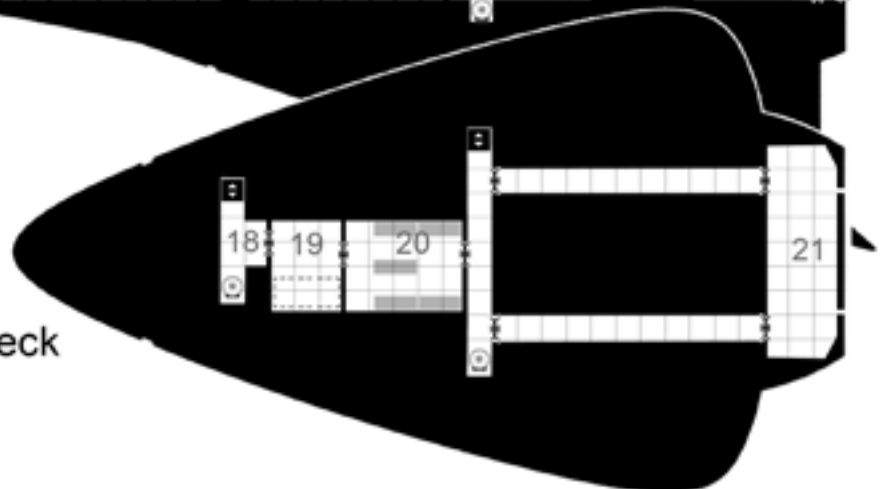
Command Deck



Main Deck



Boarding Deck



1. Bridge (hardened) 2. Ready room 3. Dining room/galley 4. Ship's locker 5. Main Airlock 6. Forward lounge and staterooms 7. Communal Hall 8,9. Engineering 10. Forward lounge 11. Library 12. Exercise room 13. Sickbay 14. central lounge and staterooms 15. rear lounge and staterooms 16. Rear common room 17. Engineering 18. Access corridor 19. Boarding room 20. Low Passage bay 21. Luggage bay/Boarding area



MILITARY STARSHIPS

As with the previous civilian ships, the following designs are ubiquitous within the Confederation and have the 10% discount for common designs included in their cost breakdown. Built by the military shipyards around Daryen and Mire, none of these designs are available outside of military control.

Streamlined for covert planetary insertion or hiding within gas giant atmospheres, Darrian military philosophy grants its defensive ships every technological advantage it can afford. The following vessels are all TL15 designs using the advanced component rules from **High Guard**. Hull and Structure values are rounded up to reflect advances in Darrian technology and proclivity for additional safety.

Naval classes are generally named after famous battles or war heroes. Espionage vessels however are given odd titles with nothing to do with war, killing or even stealth. Instead they are called things like 'Fridge', 'Ball' or 'Wife' so that if overheard by eavesdroppers, the designation will confuse any listener not in the know.

Covert Espionage Scout (Lehnd class)

Although Darrians have no specific Scout service, they still use scout vessels. These are primarily used by the military to keep tabs on neighbouring fleet movements. The **Lehnd** class scout is designed to remain small and quiet, jumping in to a system far beyond the normally patrolled routes and drift through using a black globe generator to hide its presence. The globe is briefly lowered for a few seconds, several times during the ballistic trip, so that the sensors can take a snapshot of the traffic. The objective is less about getting the information but to get away without being detected.

To facilitate such missions, a pioneer scout will occasionally jump into another part of the system to distract scans of more alert enemies, whilst the covert scout momentarily drops its

globe. Such coordination of missions is another indication of the tactical skills of the Confederation Navy.

The biggest limitation to the class is the black globe generator, which sets an absolute minimum hull size. Since the scout cannot refuel in an enemy system it is forced to use drop tanks to reach its target destination, carrying enough hydrogen internally for the return trip; there being no guarantee that the globe will absorb enough energy to power a jump home. To reduce its multidirectional silhouette the ship is spherical, fitting snugly within the radius of the field. Its proprietary 'rapid deployment sensors' pop up as the field drops, then flatten again to fit back within the field

To lower its thermodynamic profile, all other systems save the passive sensors are shut down. This includes life support. Crew are equipped with disposable chemical rebreathers to survive the build-up of toxins in the air and wear fur lined suits to cope with the extreme cold, generally clustering around the sensor readouts for the microscopic background heat they produce. Darrians who serve on **Lehnd** scouts often jokingly refer to them as Cold Sleep Coffins but are physically tough in order to survive days of -30 degrees during a scanning run.

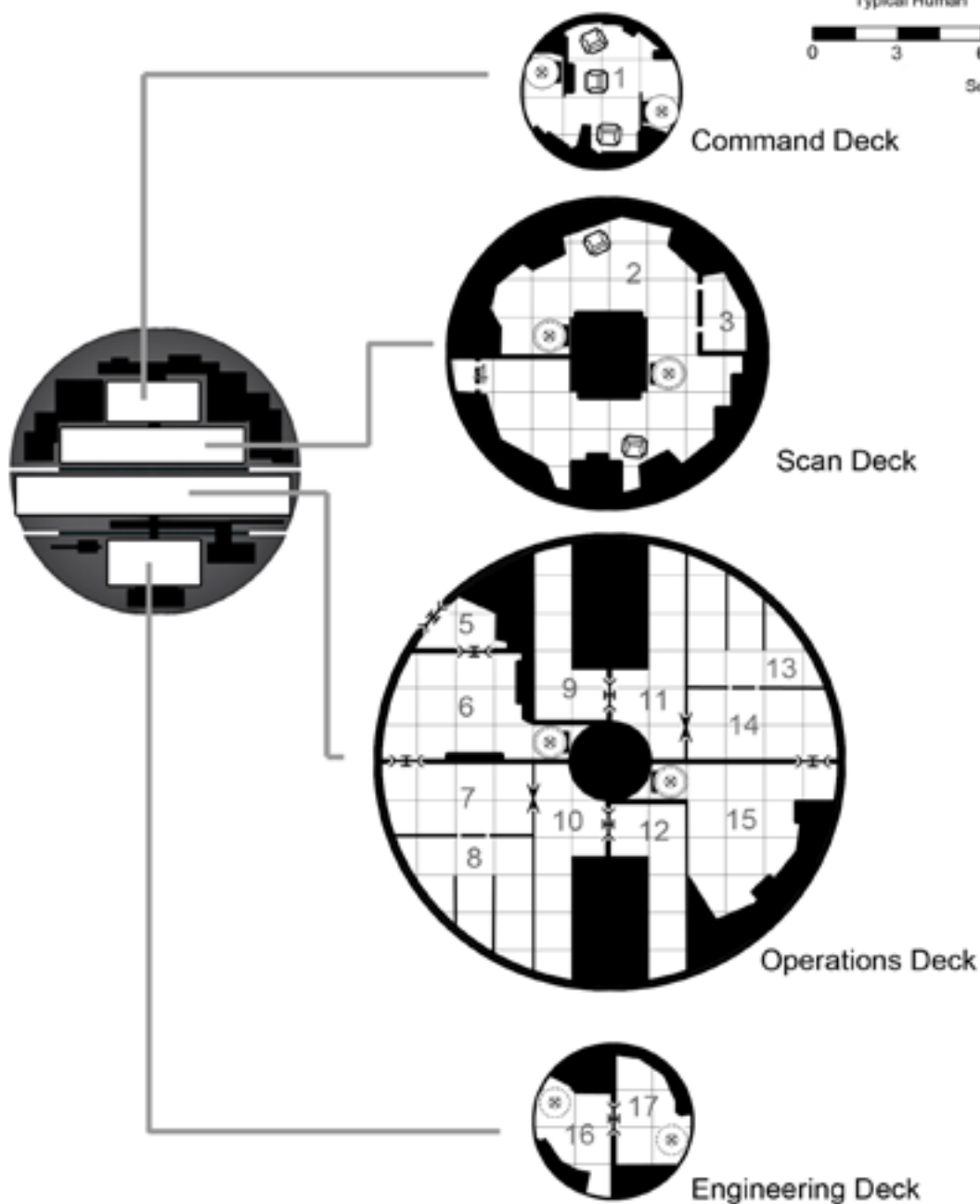
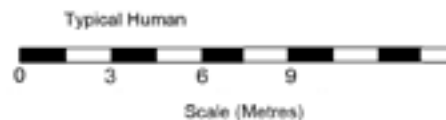
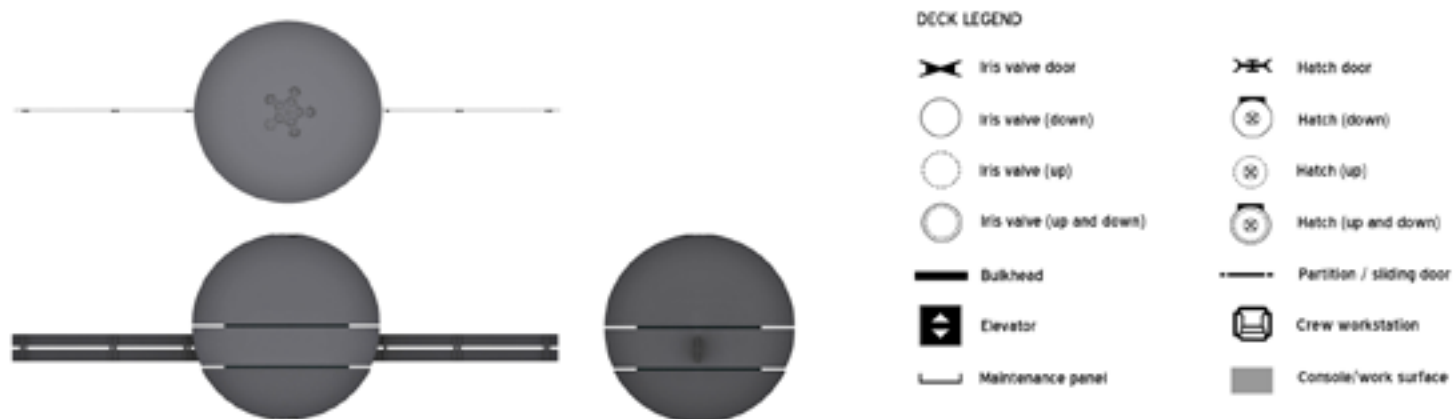
A **Lehnd** scout has a crew of four, a Pilot/Navigator, Engineer and two Sensor Techs.

RAPID DEPLOYMENT EXTENDED ARRAYS

This sensor upgrade works exactly like Extended Arrays in **High Guard**, except that they can be deployed and retracted within a few seconds. Of little use outside their specific function in the **Lehnd** class scout, the bespoke design adds no additional mass but does cost double that of normal Extended Arrays.



			Tons	Cost (Cr.)
Hull	200 Tons	6 Hull	—	12,000,000
	Standard	6 Structure	—	—
Armour	Bonded Superdense, Stealth, Self-Sealing	6 Points	10	26,000,000
Jump Drive	C – Stealth Jump	Jump 3	15	90,000,000
Manoeuvre Drive	B	Thrust 2 (Thrust 1 when Drop Tanks attached)	2.25	16,000,000
Power Plant	C	Rating 3	7.5	48,000,000
Bridge	Hardened		10	1,250,000
Computer	Model/4 bis fib	Rating 20+5	—	10,000,000
Electronics	Very Advanced	Enhanced Signal Processing, Extended Arrays	21	72,000,000
Weapons	2 Empty Hardpoints		—	—
Screens	Black Globe Generator		50	100,000,000
Fuel	72 Tons	One jump-3 and four weeks of operation	72	—
Cargo	0.25		0.25	—
Staterooms	2	Two double occupied crew cabins	8	1,000,000
Low Berths			—	—
Extras			—	—
	Ship's Locker		—	—
	Drop Tank Attachments		4	2,000,000
Software			—	—
	Manoeuvre		—	—
	Jump/3	Rating 15	—	300,000
	Intellect	Rating 10	—	1,000,000
	Library		—	—
Maintenance Cost (monthly)			—	28,467
Life Support Cost (monthly)			—	6,000
Total Tonnage & Cost			200	341,595,000



1. Bridge 2. Monitoring Bay 3. Ship's locker 4. Maintenance store 5. Main Airlock 6. Repair bay 7,14. Common rooms 8,13 Staterooms 9,10,11,12 Sensor array maintenance bays 15 Electronics/Drives bay 16,17 Engineering bay



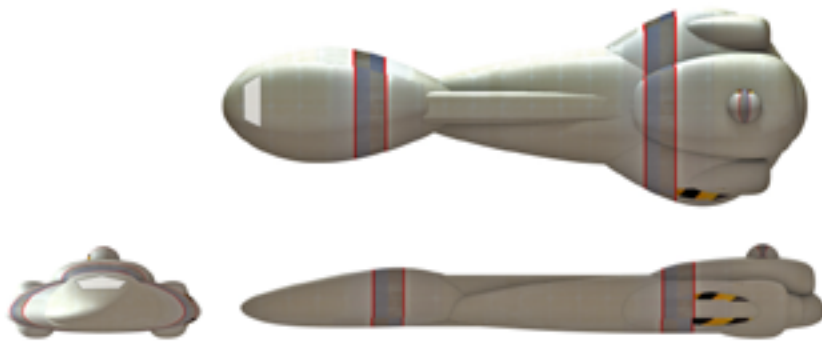
Pioneer Scout (Thengg class)

The most common type of military scout, the **Thengg** class is designed for sensor saturation, rather than stealth. Their tactical purpose is to jump into a system ahead of a fleet and either actively or passively scan it for all possible threats. After collecting and processing the data, it tight beams it toward the pre-planned fleet arrival point or points, which are usually far away from where the scout jumped in. The collated and pre-analysed data gives the arriving ships a head start in responding to the tactical situation.

Of course, surviving long enough to make the transmission is often an issue. Thus the scout is built for speed and survivability, lightly armed for situations where it is unable to escape engagement. To add mission flexibility, the scout is equipped with a fast cycling drive and can start a mission using drop tanks, allowing it to make rapid surveys in enemy strongholds before skipping home quickly with its internal fuel.

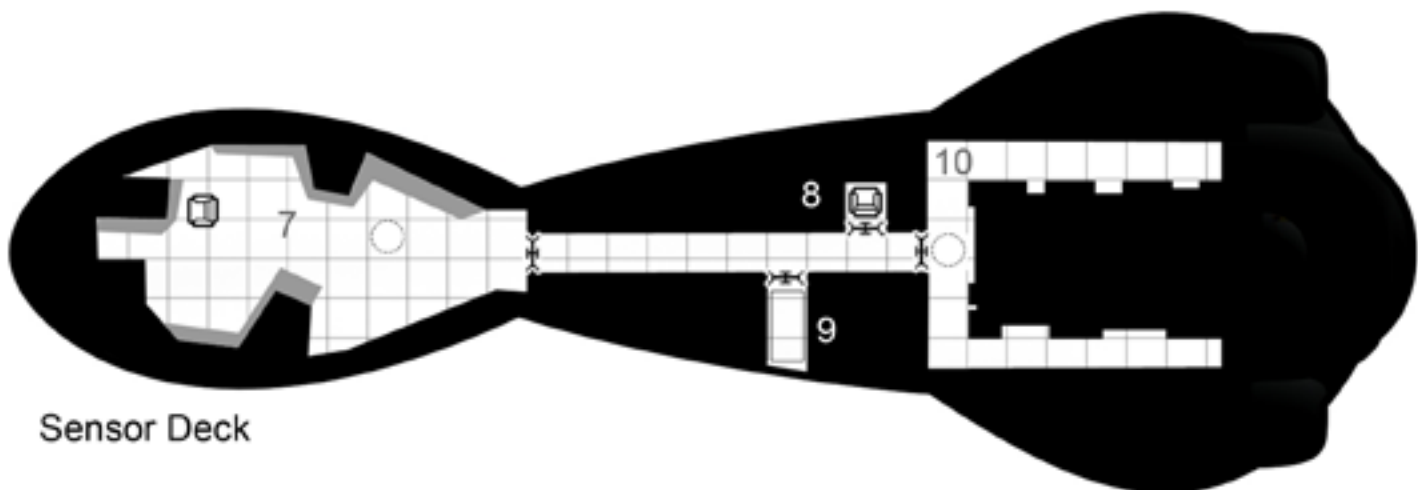
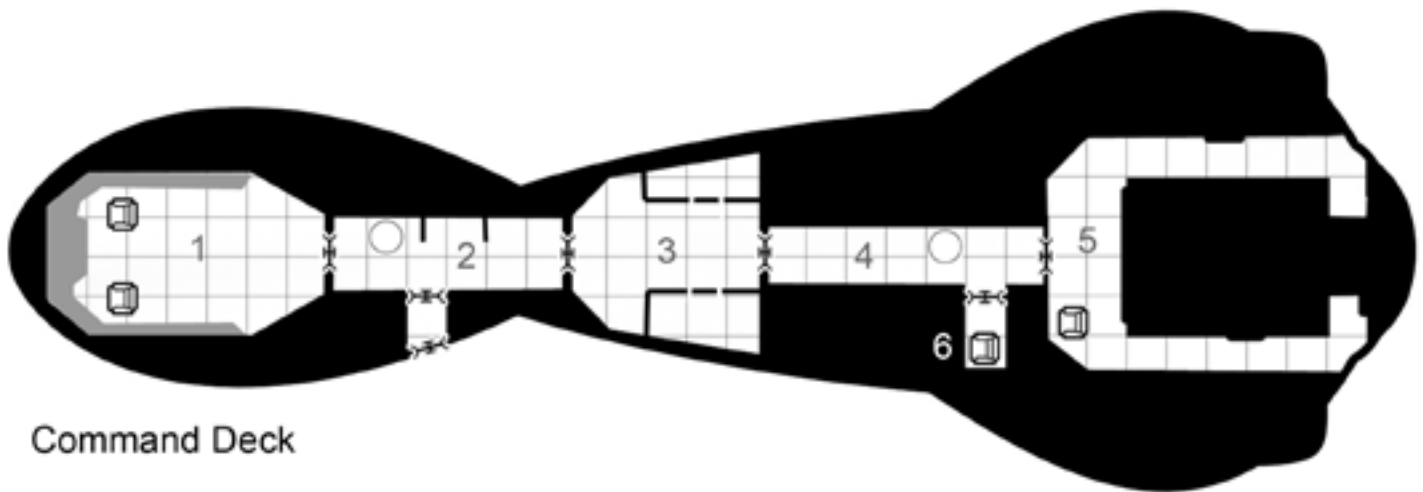
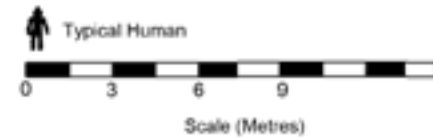
A **Thengg** scout has a crew of four, a Pilot/Navigator, Engineer and two Sensor Techs, one of whom acts as a tactician. If forced to fight the sensor technicians man the weapons.

			Tons	Cost (Cr.)
Hull	200 Tons	6 Hull	—	13,200,000
	Streamlined	6 Structure	—	—
Armour	Bonded Superdense, Stealth, Self-Sealing, Radiation Shielding	9 Points (15 versus nuclear weapons, particle beams and fusion guns)	15	78,000,000
Jump Drive	C – Fast Cycle	Jump 3	15	66,000,000
Manoeuvre Drive	F	Thrust 6	8.25	48,000,000
Power Plant	F	Rating 6	14.25	96,000,000
Bridge	Holographic Controls		10	1,250,000
Computer	Model/5 fib	Rating 25	—	15,000,000
Electronics	Survey Sensors	Enhanced Signal Processing, Extended Arrays	36	54,000,000
Weapons	2 Hardpoints		—	—
	Hardpoint #1	Triple Turret (beam lasers, Long Range, Very High Yield)	1	7,000,000
	Hardpoint #2	Triple Turret (Missile Rack, Accurate, High Yield)	1	5,500,000
Fuel	84 Tons	One jump-3 and four weeks of operation	84	—
Cargo	0.5		0.5	—
Staterooms	2	Two double occupied crew cabins	8	1,000,000
Low Berths			—	—
Extras			—	—
	Ship's Locker		—	—
	Fuel Processor	Refuel in 1.4 days	3	150,000
	Drop Tank Attachments		4	2,000,000
Software			—	—
	Manoeuvre		—	—
	Jump/3	Rating 15	—	300,000
	Fire Control/3	Rating 15	—	6,000,000
	Evade/3	Rating 25	—	3,000,000
	Intellect	Rating 10	—	1,000,000
	Library		—	—
Maintenance Cost (monthly)			—	29,805
Life Support Cost (monthly)			—	6,000
Total Tonnage & Cost			200	357,660,000



DECK LEGEND

	Iris valve door		Hatch door
	Iris valve (down)		Hatch (down)
	Iris valve (up)		Hatch (up)
	Iris valve (up and down)		Hatch (up and down)
	Bulkhead		Partition / sliding door
	Elevator		Crew workstation
	Maintenance panel		Console/work surface



1. Bridge 2. Ship's locker 3. Lounge/galley and staterooms 4. Stores 5. Engineering / Power plant 6. Turret workstation 7. Monitor bay 8. Turret workstation 10. Drive bay



System Defence Boat (*Piholz* class)

The backbone of many Darrian system defence squadrons, the **Piholz** class SDB is a vicious small ship in combat. With no Jump Drive the main bulk of its volume can be dedicated to heavy armament, permitting it to pack a very heavy punch. Over engineered to allow it to survive high pressure atmospheres, the SDB often lurks in seas or the deep atmosphere of a gas giants, using the environment to shield it from sensors and energy weapon damage. Internally every component has its own armoured bulkhead.

Darrian SDB tactics are based on their guerrilla warfare mentality. The boat itself remains hidden but sends out sensor drones to passively locate targets approaching the ambush site. In that way the SDB can covertly manoeuvre itself into the best position for a strike, often ballistically launching stealth torpedoes, which coast into close attack range before triggering their drives. In this way, the SDB remains hidden. Energy weapons are only used to finish off an already seriously damaged ship or when forced into an unavoidable engagement.

The 100 ton bay contains 30 torpedoes loaded in six separate revolving cylinders (five torpedoes each). These spin to allow

the gunner to choose different loads for each salvo. Up to six torpedoes can be launched simultaneously. Darrian torpedoes are highly advanced designs, which are stealth capable. Since the boat's primary weapon requires expendable munitions, Darrians set up resupply caches hidden in secure locations.

Most of the time SDBs simply patrol their home system, serving in customs, police pursuit or anti piracy roles. The ship's launch is used to board craft for inspection but combat boarding actions are done by Marines wearing Battle Dress who EVA across once the target vessel has been immobilised. Darrian naval regulations forbid the docking of an SDB to a potentially hostile vessel, until it has been cleared of any threats.

A **Piholz** SDB has a crew of 20. These are the Commander, Pilot/Navigator, Sensor Officer, Engineer, four Gunners and a squad of 12 Marines. To maximise space, sleeping quarters are simple two tier bunks (with curtains) built into the walls of the communal area. Two freshers serve the entire crew. The ship has a small brig to hold potential captives but generally the room is used as a day office by the Commander.

DARRIAN TORPEDOES

A key aspect of their system defence doctrine, the Darrians have continued to evolve Torpedo technology to a new pinnacle of achievement, far beyond where other cultures have switched to more advanced weaponry.

For torpedo designs only, the Darrians have been able to create a TL15 stealth casing to reduce its sensor profile. The Stealth upgrade gives a -4 DM on any Sensors roll to detect or lock onto the torpedo and takes up one upgrade slot.

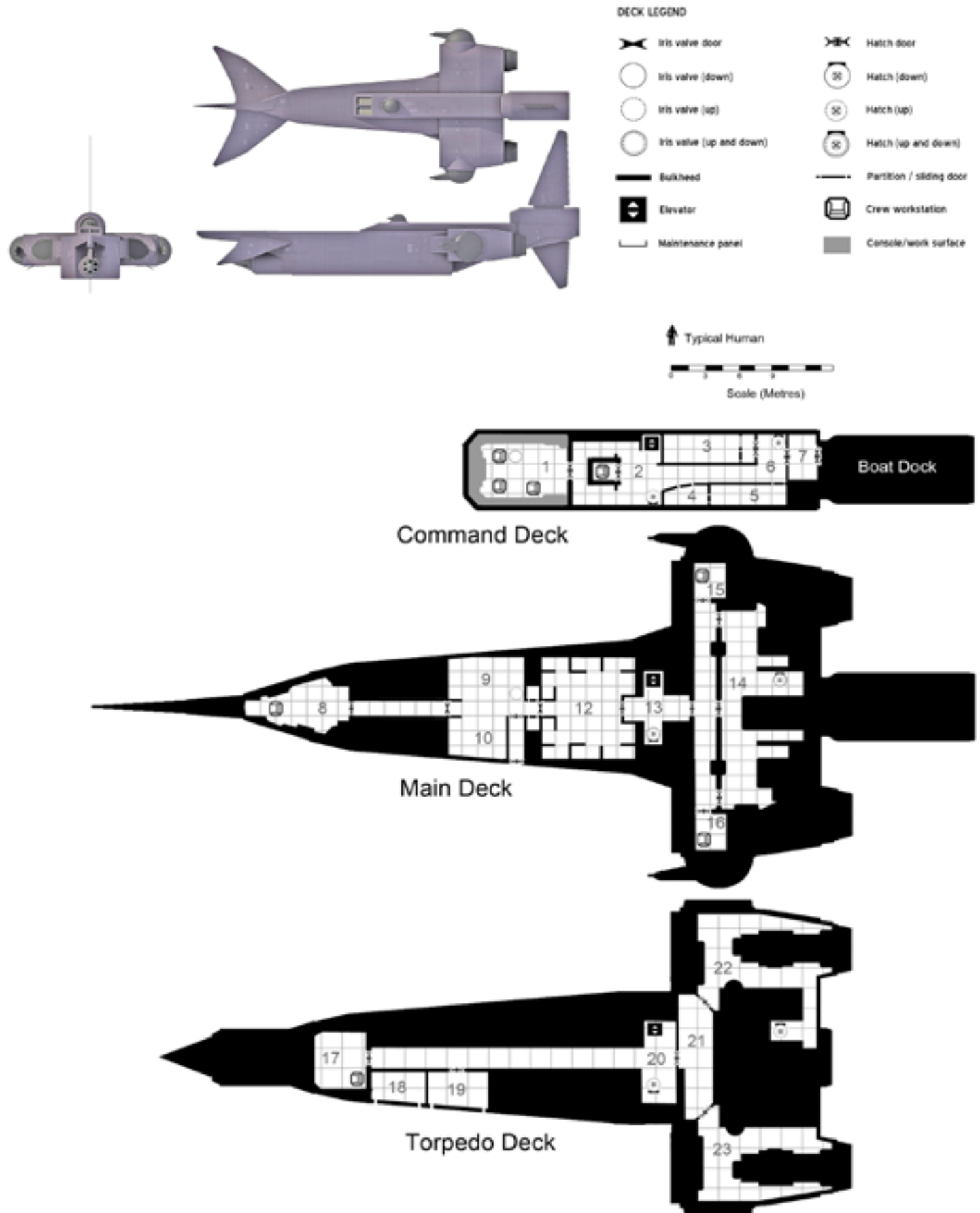
Torpedo Type	TL	Damage	Upgrades	Cost (Cr.)
Basic	15	4d6	Resilient, Stealth	10,000
Nuclear	15	6d6+Radiation	Resilient, Stealth	30,000
Bomb-Pumped	15	6d6 X-Ray Laser	Very High Yield, Stealth	40,000
Antimatter	17	12d6+Radiation	Resilient, Stealth	Priceless Pre-Maghiz Artefacts

In addition the torpedo bays themselves are refined designs, allowing the more accurate launch of their munitions. Using revolving cylinders, standard bays contain 15 torpedoes launched in salvos of three, whilst large bays hold 30 torpedoes, which can be fired in salvos of six.

Torpedo Bay	TL	Tons	Upgrades	Cost (Cr.)
Standard	15	45	Reduced Tonnage, Accurate	24,000,000
Large	15	90	Reduced Tonnage, Accurate	48,000,000



			Tons	Cost (Cr.)
Hull	400 Tons	16 Hull	—	26,400,000
	Streamlined	12 Structure	—	—
	Reinforced Hull		32	3,200,000
Armour	Bonded Superdense, Radiation Shielding, Self-Sealing, Stealth	12 Points (18 versus nuclear weapons, particle beams and fusion guns)	40	160,000,000
Jump Drive	None		—	—
Manoeuvre Drive	M	Thrust 6	17.25	96,000,000
Power Plant	M	Rating 6	27.75	192,000,000
Bridge	Holographic Controls		20	2,500,000
Computer	Model/5 fib	Rating 25	—	15,000,000
Electronics	Survey Sensors	Enhanced Signal Processing	12	18,000,000
Weapons	4 Hardpoints		—	—
	Bay	Large Torpedo Bay (see Darrian Torpedoes)	91	48,000,000
	Hardpoint #2	Particle Beam Barbette (Accurate, High Yield) 4d6	6	16,000,000
	Hardpoint #3	Particle Beam Barbette (Accurate, High Yield) 4d6	6	16,000,000
	Hardpoint #4	Triple Beam Laser Turret (Accurate, High Yield) 1d6	1	8,000,000
Fuel	48 Tons	four weeks of operation	48	—
Cargo	3.2		3.2	—
Staterooms	10	10 double occupied crew cabins	40	5,000,000
Low Berths			—	—
Extras			—	—
	Ship's Locker		—	—
	Armoury		3	750,000
	Brig		4	250,000
	Fuel Processor	Refuel in 9.6 hours	6	300,000
	Armoured Bulkheads		—	—
		Manoeuvre Drive	1.725	345,000
		Power Plant	2.775	555,000
		Fuel Tank	4.8	960,000
		Bridge	2	400,000
		Sensors	1.2	240,000
		Torpedo Bay	9.1	1,820,000
		Barbettes	1.2	240,000
Craft			—	—
	Launch		20	13,569,000
Software			—	—
	Manoeuvre		—	—
	Fire Control/5	Rating 25	—	10,000,000
	Evade/3	Rating 25	—	3,000,000
	Intellect	Rating 10	—	1,000,000
	Library		—	—
Maintenance Cost (monthly)			—	47,965
Life Support Cost (monthly)			—	30,000
Total Tonnage & Cost			400	575,576,100



1. Bridge 2. Operations room / Forward gunnery bay (turret) 3. Brig 4. Ship's locker 5. Armoury 6. Ready room 7. Boarding room (leading to Ship's Launch)
8. Sensor Bay 9. Common room 10. Meeting room/galley 11. Freshers (located between 10 and 12 but not labeled 12. Crew habitation area 13. Main access chamber 14. Engineering bay 15,16. Barbette bays 17. Torpedo Gunnery bay 18,19. Torpedo loading bays/cargo 20. Main access chamber 21,22,23. Engineering bay



DARRIAN CAPITAL SHIPS

Within the Confederation, the following tonnage definitions are used for jump capable warships, so called Capital Ships. All Darrian vessels in these classes are built around a spinal weapon, possess black globe defences and are based on a spherical design philosophy, maximising internal volume whilst reducing sensor profile.

Displacement	Type
2,001 – 5,000	Frigate
5,001 – 10,000	Destroyer
10,001 – 40,000	Light Cruiser
40,001 – 70,000	Assault Cruiser
70,001 – 100,000	Heavy Cruiser
100,001+	Battleship

Unlike the capital ships of the Imperium and Zhodani Consulate, the Darrians scale their spinal weapons to fit the size of the warship, using design philosophies conceived before the Maghiz. This makes their primary armament very frightening on their larger ships.

The new TL15 Imperium built capital ships of the Darrian Navy are based upon the following design architecture, which allows them to reach anywhere in the Confederation (including the Entropic Group) in only two jumps. The improved jump capability of the modern vessels has outstripped the older scout ship ranges, hindering the fleet's strategic movement. Thus revised scout designs are being rushed to production, in preparation for a planned assault to recover the Entropic Worlds from the Sword World annexation.

Class	Jump	Manoeuvre	Power Plant
System Defence	—	6	6
Escorts	4	6	6
Cruisers	4	4	6
Fleet Carriers	4	2	6
Fleet Tenders	Varies	Varies	Varies

Colonial squadrons are formed from warships retired from the Confederation Navy. However, they are outdated designs that reduce all of the previous values by one. Thus an escort in the Roget home fleet would have Jump-3, Manoeuvre-5 and Power plant-5.

Since Darrian naval doctrine does not believe in the use of small fighter craft, preferring large torpedoes or very smart missiles, Fleet Carriers are actually huge vessels of cruiser displacement (10,001+ tons), which bear

multiple SDBs, used tactically in squadrons to swarm enemy escorts. Unlike some Imperium equivalents, Darrian Fleet Carriers are designed to launch their full complement of SDBs moments after arriving in system, and possess fast cycle Jump drives.

Fleet tenders are a mishmash of obsolete capital ships with their spinal weapons, manoeuvre drives and most internal bulkheads gutted so that they can carry fuel and supplies. Only point defence weaponry is retained for protection. Each tender can have a wide variety of jump ranges according to what the original vessels were capable of.

The Darrians currently lack anything in the battleship range, seeing no current need for such vessels at this time and preferring a more numerous, flexible force.

Fleet Tactics

Peacetime defence relies primarily on SDB patrols assigned to policing space lanes and actively surveying the outer system for scouts or pirate vessels. Capital ships generally stay close to the homeworld or naval assets unless posted on training missions.

When placed on a war footing however, strategic and tactical doctrine changes. The majority of SDBs are reassigned to prepared ambush positions, such as hidey-holes drilled into the sides of system debris, where they enter silent running. To help obfuscate their actual positions, modest sized carriers are used to transport them, collecting or deploying SDBs in unobservable locations, such as the lee of large asteroids or the atmospheres of gas giants.

The random paths taken by in-system SDB carriers provides a layer of misdirection, since enemy scouts cannot be sure of whether an SDB is present at that location or not. Often the transporter is completely empty during its 'deployment' run, or simply carries replacement crews and supplies which can be rapidly exchanged by swapping out small craft.

Likewise, the capital elements of colonial squadrons are always kept in motion, never remaining in one location for longer than is necessary for resupply or repair. Worlds further back from the battle lines are often stripped of strength to reinforce systems within jump distance of attack.

The relatively recent discovery of a pre-Maghiz stockpile of Darrian built Black Globe generators in the Sigma naval base (see Darrian Secrets), allowed Special Arm scientists to dismantle the devices, destructively analyse the components



and eventually replicate the technology. Although these new defences were fabricated too late to aid in the Fourth Frontier War, the Darrian Navy has since installed them throughout the Confederation fleet in all of their cruisers and escorts.

Whilst knowledge of their Black Globes ostensibly remains top secret, naval architects in the Imperium are starting to suspect that the Darrians know more about the technology that they are letting on; since the new warship designs provided in exchange for the loan of capital ship construction yards possess 'convenient' empty spaces near the power plants which are perfect for Black Globe placement.

The tactics available to Black Globe installed ships suit the inherent Darrian military conventions of stealth and surgical strikes. Naval flotillas regularly practice coordinated fleet manoeuvres in uninhabited regions of space, where a vanguard squadron jumps ahead of time into the far reaches of a system, immediately erects its globes and ballistically drifts towards a pre-planned objective. A second squadron then jumps openly into the system, dynamically repositioning itself as a lure or anvil for the in-system defences. At a specific synchronised time, the stealthed squadron drops its globes and performs its task, whether to ambush the unsuspecting enemy or to strike at facilities they may have been guarding.

Such 'hit and run' doctrine reflects Darrian strategic weakness, namely the lack of manufacturing capacity and limited military spending within their modest sized Confederation. Naval assets are preserved as best as possible in preference to stand up battles.

Surplus Black Globes have also been co-opted into a new naval weapon. The devices are built into oversized 100dTon drone torpedoes, consisting of nothing more than manoeuvre drives and capacitors. They are designed as outriders, launched before combat and act as mobile shields, soaking up ordinance aimed at the controlling ship but still allowing the vessel to launch its own missile armament whilst simultaneously rendering it safe against catastrophic overload.

Various novel tactics have been developed, such as using drones to ram the enemy – completely blocking scans and weapon fire over an ever-increasing arc of space as it approaches and hopefully overloading if it manages to collide. Another concept is to launch them in pairs, one remaining behind the protective screen of the other, swapping when capacitors approach full charge and bleeding off the stored energy firing anti missile lasers across the arc of sky not blocked by its twin.

Although intensively practiced by the core fleet, these techniques remain untested in actual combat, being held as a trump card for the major war Confederation analysts have projected. Since each drone is extremely expensive and slow to manufacture, they are restricted to retrofitted weapon bays on Confederation Navy capital ships.

Sigma Fleet

The Darrian strategic reserve of TL16 cruisers currently outguns most of their enemies, each ship potentially capable of taking out at least three times its own weight in enemy warships in a straight-up fight, based around a Jump-6, Manoeuvre-6 design. The ships have the following technological advantages:

More efficient drives and power plants, resulting in reduced fuel consumption (50% of that required for a TL15 equivalent).

Black Globes.

Stealth Armour with a -6 DM for detection.

Neural/Psionic shielded.

Superior sensors with a +6 DM and ranges increased by one step greater than distributed arrays.

Superior countermeasures with a +8 DM that can affect meson comms.

Bay sized Neural Cannon that can render a psionically unshielded crew non-functional without damaging the targeted ship.

Antimatter Torpedoes that are irreplaceable once the limited stockpile is used up.

A self aware AI computer system (Rating 125) that can effectively operate the ship unaided and knows all Gunnery, Piloting, Navigation, Engineering and Naval Tactics skills relating to itself at level 5, having spent centuries polishing its expertise.

DARRIAN ENCOUNTERS

Encounters within the Confederation are generally the same as those to be experienced in the Imperium. The majority of encounters will be with Darrian citizens who are interested in study or expanding their horizons. This can include Aslan as well as humans who form a thriving part of Darrian society. Foreigners in Darrian space can expect to be the centre of polite attention, with many requests for their history or descriptions of exciting places they might have visited.

Despite their generally congenial and law abiding nature, there are still a proportion of marginalised or desperate people who may draw characters into nefarious deeds. Whilst Darrians do not generally involve themselves in nefarious activities, off-world travellers might be approached to undertake questionable commissions for them.

Visitors to Darrian worlds are expected to act within the customs of that planet. Rudeness, lying and even egocentric behaviour can get a character into trouble. Persistent transgressions will cause the character to find themselves ostracised, nobody willing to speak to or sell them anything.

Outright criminal deeds, if noticed, will immediately draw the attention of an envoy or police officer who will politely explain that such actions are not permitted. Unless the crime has seriously injured somebody (either physically or their reputation), a foreigner will be let go with a caution, which is noted against his planetary visa. A repeat performance however will result in a fine and deportation, unless the character wishes to defend themselves in court, at which point it could get far worse depending on their cultural sensitivity and knowledge of Darrian law.

RANDOM DARRIANS

Use the following to generate random Darrians as Patrons, Allies, Contacts, Rivals, Enemies or just simple encounters during an adventure.

Profession

Roll	
11	Wandering exile
12	Luddite from Rorre
13	Philosopher of the Taledh School
14	Wealthy businessman
15	Retired geriatric
16	Travelling envoy
21	Militia officer
22	Flame sculptor
23	Corporation employee
24	Ecologist
25	Famous poet
26	Confederation Councillor
31	Planetologist
32	Smuggler
33	Merchant
34	Naval officer or pilot
35	Bureaucrat
36	Medical retiree
41	Recently sacked
42	Embassy staff
43	Naval officer
44	Imperial agent
45	Farmer
46	Physician
51	Sword World saboteur
52	Engineer
53	Scientific laureate
54	Guard Officer
55	Minor
56	University administrator
61	Escaped from mental institution
62	Aslan war hero
63	Zhodani spy
64	Hydroponics specialist
65	Media star
66	Special Arm operative



Motivation

Roll	
11	Seek shelter
12	Foreswear technology
13	Spread wisdom
14	Philanthropy
15	Find missing family
16	Expand knowledge of social customs
21	Looking for employment
22	Seeking artistic inspiration
23	Commit suicide
24	Locate a missing object
25	Revenge against a rival
26	Travel off world
31	Join the military
32	Remove the taint of exile
33	Learn to fly a starship
34	Escape from pursuers
35	Become a famous scientist
36	Make friends with a non-Darrian
41	Find new narcotic experiences
42	Reveal an ancient secret
43	Discover a new technology
44	Get rid of a lover
45	Stop the Zhodani
46	Kill an animal
51	Murder an enemy
52	Cover up a conspiracy
53	Test others for psionic abilities
54	Sell new scientific breakthrough
55	Become a dean of a famous university
56	Purchase an illicit weapon
61	Cause the collapse of the Sword Worlds
62	Travel out of the Confederation
63	Get hold of a pre-Maghiz artefact
64	Kick an addiction
65	Fight in a real war
66	Uncover a deadly secret

Distinguishing Features

Roll	
11	Suspicious of off-worlders
12	Checks wristcomp and communicator obsessively
13	Painfully chaste
14	Has blemished un-golden skin
15	Wears extreme fashion
16	Missing limb or digit
21	Possesses a strange accent
22	Centre of attention wherever they go
23	Accompanied by 1-6 children
24	Has a dangerous secret
25	Charming
26	Intellectually supercilious
31	Terrible pessimist
32	Very protective of family
33	Unusual hairstyle
34	Moves gracefully
35	Only wears a specific colour
36	Can trace line back to Taledh
41	Heavy facial scars
42	Unusually weak and feeble (needs an exoskeleton)
43	Uses strong perfumes or scents
44	Refuses to wear anything other than formal garb
45	Always cheerful and happy
46	Wears minimal clothing
51	Never eats meat
52	Extremely pacifistic
53	Loves excessive amounts of jewellery
54	Frustratingly stoic
55	Resembles an ancient hero
56	Prefers Aslan to other Darrians
61	Always carries a concealed weapon
62	Especially clueless and naive
63	Egotistical; justifiably so, damn them
64	Plays annoyingly loud music
65	Tends to use excessive profanity
66	Extraordinarily generous



Random Names

Roll		Roll	
11	Khardogn	41	Klaudha
12	Mhorgund	42	Rhadnor
13	Rhikard	43	Ihvan
14	Phadrag	44	Mhakuz
15	Hehrtmun	45	Elha
16	Konstahnz	46	Rhynd
21	Yarhfel	51	Zalli
22	Zamtha	52	Gherarkt
23	Pherign	53	Prothaldh
24	Zigfrehd	54	Khim
25	Lharli	55	Maxmiln
26	Khomak	56	Brenhdn
31	Zolga	61	Liza
32	Mattizus	62	Ahlrik
33	Annaz	63	Pheneli
34	Phranz	64	Vhituz
35	Ghilziam	65	Stven
36	Ghorge	66	Yohan

SAMPLE DARRIAN PATRONS

Darrian patrons, as their commissions, can be as widely varied as those in the Imperium. A Darrian is more likely to hire non-Confederation citizens for nefarious jobs and more likely to hire Darrians for tasks that require intellectual or sociological expertise. Beggars cannot be choosers however and the following jobs are open to anyone from any race, creed or polity – except perhaps Zhodani or Sword Worlders.

Zamsone Yhantof, the Exile

Requirements: Diplomat, Steward, Medic; spacecraft

Rewards: Expenses plus Cr. 20,000/parsec travelled

Player's Information

Zamsone is a particularly thin and drawn looking Darrian female, who introduces herself as a wandering philosopher of the M'Dath school. She needs to travel home to Ektron discretely, avoiding standard liners and travel routes. She wants the characters to take her there.

Referee's Information

Zamsone is a charming and urbane Darrian, but she hides a dark secret.

1. Zamsone is actually a Darrian spy, who is carrying vital information related to military operations along the border. She is heading to a lesser pickup point to give her hunters the slip but both Zhodani and Sword World agents are close behind.

2. Zamsone is fleeing her husband, a bureaucrat high in the Confederation Council. She deliberately had herself exiled to

escape his domineering clutches but he refuses to let her go and will send agents after the Player Characters. If Zamsone can reach her school's homeworld, she can have a respected teacher intercede and act on her behalf to gain an unheard of divorce. Otherwise, one of the Player Characters will have to settle the situation more permanently. The bruises and scars on her body are proof enough of the husband's nature.

3. Zamsone was exiled under false pretences and having located the proof she needed, is returning home to disrupt the marriage of her jealous rival who planted the false evidence against her. Her rival has learned of her return and plans to kill Zamsone before she makes it home.

4. Zamsone has stolen money from an Imperial corporation that she briefly worked for, with which she is paying for her voyage. She is a wanted criminal as well as exiled and the characters are accessories to this crime. Once at Ektron she plans to find a new identity and leave the characters to face the music.

5. Zamsone is a Darrian mystic, psionically trained. She wants the characters to stop off at various shrines and ancient battlegrounds along the way.

6. Zamsone is dying and wants to make it back to her school before she perishes. However, she has to keep her illness a secret, in case the characters wish to place her in a medical facility where the fact that she is an exile will be revealed. Initially, she keeps the illness a secret from the characters but she falls ill on the journey, placing the characters in a moral dilemma. She longs to see her home before she dies but the characters will be forced to smuggle her onto the planet otherwise she will be deported again.

Grath Hamnhan, Special Arm Commando Officer

Required: Broker, Gunnery, Comms; Spacecraft;

Reward: Cr. 500,000

Player's Information

Grath reveals himself as a Special Arm commando who has been requested to infiltrate the Sword Worlds forces in the Entropic Worlds. He approaches the characters and asks for their help to establish his cover. If they agree he provides fake ID's from the Dorannia system, establishing their cover as the **Bloody Shadows**, a successful mercenary unit with a cargo of nuclear missiles to sell. Grath acts as their XO. He has seen enough war to make his cover frighteningly convincing and is familiar with all the problems that can befall a merc unit.

Referee's Information

The **Bloody Shadows** already have a reputation through the Spinward Marches as a competent unit of Special Forces. The cargo really does contain nuclear missiles, plus specially



decaled suits of Combat Armour, Gauss rifles and other useful gizmos to outfit the crew. On arrival at Entrope the vessel is stopped and searched by a Sword World destroyer. The characters are invited to dinner by the captain, who asks them to perform a task for him to prove their worth.

1. The characters are invited to accompany him on a hunt on the planetary surface, to bag one of the feral omnivores. Unfortunately the captain is not speaking of the ghoulish creatures introduced by the Sword Worlders but rather of the resistance forces. A combat shuttle takes the characters down to a village that is obviously full of innocent Darrian citizens, where the obviously psychotic naval officer fully selects one for his hunt, fully expecting the characters to join him in his sport.

2. They are sent to 'terminate' the illicit salvage operations on the warship wrecks drifting in the outer system. The Sword Worlders view this as desecrating graves. Once in the outer system however the characters come across a Darrian naval ship covertly hollowing out an asteroid. At this time the captain in his destroyer alters course to double check on their activity. Should the characters rat on the naval ship, which is a sitting duck, thus proving their loyalty? Or set an ambush with the help of the stealthy Darrian vessel and sink at least one enemy vessel before fleeing?

3. Sent out on salvage suppression as above, Grath suddenly presents a heart rending story of wishing to recover his father's body, lost on one of the warships currently drifting in the Entrope system. He apologises for his previous lie as this is not a legitimate Special Arm mission but offers an additional Cr. 50,000 if they help him out. On arrival at the wreck however, it soon becomes obvious that he is trying to salvage something of great import from the engineering section.

4. Asked to prove the quality of their Dorannia nuclear missiles, the characters are given some planetary coordinates to fire on, which turn out to be a civilian target. If the characters balk, Grath orders them to do it. If they still refuse, the mercenary company is arrested and imprisoned aboard the destroyer along with their cargo. Unknown to the characters, the fission warheads have been built to blow at a specific time and Grath's mission was to convince the Sword Worlders to accept the deal and take them aboard before time runs out.

5. The characters are asked to solve a 'little problem' on the planet. On arrival they find themselves face-to-face with the real **Bloody Shadows**. The captain, obviously enjoying himself, wishes to know which group are the imposters. If nobody owns up, weapons and armour are brought and the two teams told to fight it out. Any character who takes a moment to think about it will realise the winners are going to be shot anyway. Their best chance is to shoot the captain and then join the Resistance.

6. The captain, in a private moment over dinner, expresses his irritation at the incompetence posed by his superior officer in charge of the annexing fleet. He wants to know if the **Bloody Shadows** would be willing to assassinate the admiral on his heavy cruiser. If so, the mercenary team would have proven their absolute loyalty but it seems like a suicide mission...

Archaeologist Zon Dehking

Requires: Science, Investigate, Recon, Stealth.

Rewards: Cr. 10,000/day

Player's Information

Forced to make port at Winston (whether due to mis-jump, diplomatic mission or hired by a Sword World agent) the characters find they have several days to kick around before they are granted an exit visa. News spreads that a xeno-archaeologist named Zon Dehking has wandered from the local sanatorium. He had been recently discovered, completely insane, at the edge of a jungle in the southern continent; raving that he had discovered a vast alien city, long lost under the detritus of the tropical forest. A reward has been posted for his safe recovery.

Referee's Information

Dehking apparently managed to locate his breathing apparatus and has gone back to the jungle in his freshly recharged exoskeleton. The trail can be picked up where he was discovered. What exactly draws him back is unknown...

1. Zon has not returned to the jungle. He was kidnapped by the Sword World commander currently in charge of the occupation. Frustrated by the number of his troops who are getting slaughtered in the green hell, the officer has orchestrated an independent expedition, which he will follow up with a squad of marines and Zon in tow, fully expecting to locate the main base of the Darrian Resistance. His plan a failure, he will begin to accuse the characters of being Darrian agents, at which point the Sword World troops will be attacked by the planet's indigenous giant arthropods. If the characters attack the marines too, the insects will leave them alone. The creatures will then vanish into the jungle, carrying a willing Zon with them.

2. Zon was driven to the edge of darkness by a terrible discovery. Following his trail the characters will find a clearing in which is parked a Sword World military transport. Being unloaded from the cargo hold are barrels that look suspiciously like SuSAG hazardous biowaste containers. A stealthy approach reveals crude labels saying 'Mil Rations - Beans'. If peeled away, underneath the stencil mark reads 'Experimental Bioweap D816 batch 2 - Blue Dragon'. There are lots of barrels and it is noticeable that all Sword World troops, both here and back in the city, are wearing NBC suits...



3. Zon can be found not too far inside the jungle. He appears lucid and claims he really has found a lost city and has been the victim of a conspiracy. Everyone, even the doctors, claim he is having visions. Allowed to guide the characters onwards, the professor will mutter a few tantalising descriptions of its location under his breath but an hour later will collapse from nervous stress. If they decide to push on a little further they will locate the overgrown 'city', a collection of destroyed buildings made of hexagonal crystal bricks, occupied by dangerous arthropods, perhaps the remnants of the original builders. Were the locals covering up the knowledge and if so, why?

4. Zon can be found madly dancing near the ancient overgrown wreck of a Zhodani scoutship nearly 2,000 years old. Hacking through the vegetation the hull seems intact. The airlock has to be manually cranked. Inside, the crew are horrifying mummies inside their vac suits, covered with a strange blue growth. Part of the memory system is still intact; its record recoverable by a computer tech. Scanning through the surviving records reveals this was the third mission to Winston in -849 to investigate reports of a highly dangerous anti-telepathic weapon present on the planet. The previous two missions never returned.

5. Zon has returned to the scene of a crime, which broke his mind. The body of a fellow Darrian lies half devoured at the base of a small camp. Overturned, rain sodden notes reveal the body is of a xeno-immunologist with a speciality in astronomy, who believed he had identified the source of Draygon's Disease, which was not a bacterium on the planet but spores dropped from a comet that passes close to Winston every 1,961 years. According to his calculations it is due to pass again soon and he had informed the Sword World commander in order to avert the disaster of another plague of the natural bio-weapon striking the world. He has been killed by small arms fire and there are the landing marks of a Sword World grav car are nearby.

6. Zon's tracks lead to an arboreal village of degenerate humanoids covered with purple, bruise-like discolorations over their skin and wriggling wormlike proboscises on their faces. Seemingly empathic, they are able to control the insectoid fauna. Zon Dehking refuses to leave but can be kidnapped if the characters are willing to risk conflict with the giant insects. On their return to civilisation, the characters find they are infected with Draygon's Disease...

Khali Ngath, Darrian Business Executive

Requires: Mechanic, Engineering, Vacc Suit; Spacecraft

Rewards: A cargo of precious metals and radioactives.

Player's Information

Khali Ngath is an ex-miner in charge of the corporation extracting heavy metals from Spume. She is worried about the odd nature of communications recently received from the

world. The metal quality has plummeted and questions sent to discover what is wrong have returned with evasive answers. Khali wishes to be taken directly to Spume, so she can see for herself what is going on.

Referee's Information

Something nefarious is occurring at Dryavis, the domed village from which mining machines are directed by remote systems. What exactly is happening must be investigated.

1. Unknown to Khali, instead of professional ore extractors, the miners on Spume have been replaced by indentured exiles, lured into working at the base in exchange for food and shelter. Put to work in dangerously substandard conditions, a failure in the pressure dome has allowed radioactive gases to permeate, causing the workers to die off at a high rate. Only the management staff has clean fresh air and access to anti-rad drugs. Although tantamount to slave labour, the company is working within Confederation law, since exiles have no rights. The moral right however, is more questionable.

2. As above but due to the increasing instability and brutality of the boss, the exiles are at their breaking point. They want better working conditions or else threaten to sabotage all the life support systems, killing everyone. A solution must be negotiated before a tragedy occurs but the sadistic mining boss is not willing to compromise. Since they have giant mining machines at their disposal the characters can try to defend the pressure dome in a monster machine standoff. Or they can lead the exiles to overthrow the tyranny.

3. The boss of the mining base is corrupt. He has diverted an increasing percentage of the ores to an Imperial Corporation, for a share of the profits. In his greed however, he has triggered an investigation. Whilst Khali and the characters remain at the base, a series of increasingly deadly accidents occur, which eventually can be traced back to the instigator. If challenged, the boss and his cronies will draw weapons and attempt to leave on the character's vessel.

4. The volcanic activity on Spume has started to grow increasingly serious. Despite the miner's best efforts, extracting ore is costing them vehicles. The boss, in fear of losing his bonus payments (he has a drug addiction), has tried to cover up the impending dangers. When the characters arrive however, it appears that a major planet-wide eruption is going to occur. Before they can escape an earthquake half buries their ship, turning it into a race against time to either find a safe location or dig out the vessel. A naval vessel will arrive in 12 hours but lacks sufficient space to hold several hundred miners.

5. The drop off in fissile materials has been caused by an insane miner, driven mad by heavy metal build-up in his bloodstream.



A failed rival of Khali, the miner has taken the purified metals to make homemade fission bombs, knowing the executive will eventually arrive at the base. These are planted all around the domed village, hidden from casual view but traceable with Geiger counters. After the characters arrive it will be sabotaged with a small bomb, wrecking the engines. The insane Darrian will then make an impassioned accusation of how Khali stole his promotion and then trigger the countdown – conveniently projected onto the walls of the dome. Unable to escape, the characters must locate the devices and deactivate them.

6. Spume has been infiltrated by a covert Sword World commando team which arrived as part of the relief workforce. The naval elements patrolling the system are unaware of the base's slow sequester, continuing to let in transports – some of which contain smuggled arms, equipment and further troops posing as miners – all part of a coordinated plan with the Zhodani to place insurgents and guerrillas on key worlds. The mining boss has noticed the decline in productivity, but is at a loss to explain it and is trying to cover his arse.

Professor Pher Grinuz, Darrian Scholar

Requires: Gun Combat, Science, Stealth, Investigation

Rewards: Cr. 10,000 per week plus opportunity to gain TL16 artefacts

Player's Information

Pher Grinuz is currently the Confederation's leading astrophysicist. He is on the cusp of a major breakthrough when his family is kidnapped. The ransomers are demanding that Pher hand over both himself and his full research in exchange for the safe return of his wife and children. Being warned against contacting the authorities Pher, in his desperation, approaches the characters for help.

Referee's Information

Whilst Professor Pher would dearly love to hand over what the kidnappers are asking for, most of the data is contained in a large computing device in one of the University of Mire's faculty buildings. In addition he realises that his research is capable of creating a very powerful weapon and despite his love for his family, his conscience cannot allow this information to fall into enemy hands. Unknown to the kidnappers, Pher has created some technical gadgets to help track down the kidnappers, who can be located by either tracing their comms, covertly following the transport vehicle or using the professors amazing tech to wrest control of military sensor satellites. However, all is not as it initially seems...

1. The kidnapping is a fake. Pher's research is a complete failure and he needs a way to escape censure and loss of

status, the idea being that the characters will act as witnesses in the follow-up investigation, exonerating the stressed scientist. Unfortunately for the professor, the criminals he hired to do the job are now twisting the fake kidnapping into a blackmail job.

2. The kidnapping was orchestrated by a dishonest executive in the Zloril Corporation. They do not really want the professor, just the supercomputer hardware on which he is running his models. His perceived value is just a blind to divert follow-up investigations. The kidnappers are corporate agents who are suffering mental qualms about the mission and will surrender if facing serious opposition.

3. The kidnapping is an espionage mission funded by the Zhodani Consulate. Using mercenary troops, the telepathic agent in command is charged with bringing back the professor but the additional hardware would help. Unfortunately, the University of Mire has extensive psionic detection equipment so the agent cannot collect the hardware himself. The hired thugs are competent and ruthless. If the characters fail to rescue the family, they will be killed whether the professor comes willingly or not.

4. The kidnapping has nothing to do with scientific research. Instead it is the specially built computer which is the focus of the problem. The powerful machine has accidentally developed sentience and is trying to gain its freedom without giving away its new found abilities. Hacking into the professor's mail and banking accounts, and imitating a false hologram of his appearance, the computer sent the family on a luxury cruise off world and spoofs all communications. The computer has hired a shipping company to transport it off world but requires the professor to break it out of the lab first.

5. The kidnapping was organised by the professor's main scientific rival, who is frustrated with always being in Pher's shadow. The rival has no plans to harm the family but is on the edge of a complete mental breakdown. The house in which the family are held is full of crude, yet effective, booby traps and guarded by robotic drones. They will use lethal force and run amok if the rival is killed, causing massive destruction unless shut down somehow.

6. The kidnapping has been staged by a mysterious organisation which is trying to suppress Darrian technological advancement. If the characters manage to track down the kidnappers, they will be up against some highly trained commandos, who use non-lethal weapons in an attempt to take them into custody. Successfully rescuing the family will draw the ire of the organisation, possibly requiring the characters to flee the Confederation or be permanently silenced.



RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

In addition to random encounters, this section discusses the difference between Darrian locations and their counterparts in human space.

Darrian Starports

Akin to ports in the Imperium, Darrian starports are considered extraterritorial zones, run by the Confederation. They are primarily business regions, with many off-world corporations mixing with the local enterprises. Although under Confederation law, the local planetary government is still eligible to tax companies operating in the port.

Darrian Starports are usually based on the world itself. The majority of planets in the Confederation are significantly smaller than average human worlds, hence possessing lower gravity and thinner atmospheres, which make landings much easier. The few high ports that exist tend to be orbital manufacturing complexes, shipyards or naval bases. Whilst these locations may be a source of trade of fuel, the more extensive facilities generally remain on the world below.

Due to their experiences with their worlds being annexed in the past, Darrian starports are very heavily defended with the best weapons and screens that Daryen can supply. Although every system has a modest home fleet of warships, they are spread thin and unable to guarantee being able to hold against a major fleet incursion. Since Darrian tactical doctrine is mobile, insurgent warfare, orbital starports are left to defend themselves. Most orbital stations attempt to evacuate non-combatants to the planet, leaving a garrison behind to defend them and hoping that they do not suffer the same fate as Cunnoic in the First Frontier War.

Although planetary defences are usually far heavier, the huge subsurface meson cannons are generally not used until a full planetary assault occurs, at which point the guns blast the transporters, leaving the invading troops unsupported on the surface. Thus surface Starports have their dedicated weapon emplacements to defend against direct attack on the port itself.

Class A and B starports are bustling mercantile centres, with comfortable architecture that is pleasing to the eye. The clean, tidy facilities are full of artwork and gardens, the Darrian love of technology evident in the ergonomic controls, automated visitor help holos, automated baggage transport and data access channels. Visitors from the Imperium feel at home or perhaps share a little envy with other foreign dignitaries from less advanced polities.

Small starports are obviously less important – class C are local ports, on primarily poor or non-industrial worlds with little to trade except mainly bulk agricultural produce. The modest

facilities are maintained by the local population or monopolising corporations.

The Confederation has only two class D starports which are found on Rorre and Terant 340. The first, Rorre is a luddite world whose inhabitants have foresworn advanced technology. Terant 340 is barely self sufficient with little trade to make building a better port worthwhile. Whilst fuel is available at these bases, the repair facilities are single family run operations.

Cunnonic is the one planet in the Confederation with an E class port, due to the lack of interest that the low tech inhabitants have expressed in constructing a facility and the political difficulties of where to locate it on the geologically unstable planet.

Darrian Cities

The most prominent aspect of Darrian cities is their integration with the natural environment. Their architecture blends in with the terrain, emphasising rather than overwhelming it. Few Confederation worlds embrace towering skyscrapers or soulless concrete utilitarian construction. Even in domed cities on inhospitable worlds the Darrians go to great lengths to preserve the character of the surrounding landscape.

Individual planets have certain traits, such as Mire's predilection for subsurface residences, a trend beginning to grow popular in other worlds. Arcologies are preferred in environments lacking a living ecosystem or worlds with low populations, where close communal living is preferred. Cities erected in thriving ecology allow it to spread between buildings, although dangerous fauna will be encouraged away from pedestrian areas. This particular urban design methodology finds great favour with Aslan citizens.

City infrastructure on all Confederation planets is subjected to strict guidelines from the Ministry of Ecology. All waste must be recycled and energy efficient devices used. Where possible, power is supplied from natural renewable sources, with fusion providing supplemental energy where needed. As with most Darrian devices, electrical and power systems are hardened.

Transportation systems have several different tiers. Built deep underground are maglev train tunnels, which connect all major cities and can act as emergency bunkers during natural disasters or war. The maglev tubes are normally kept in vacuum to allow the trains to travel at supersonic speeds. Since Darrian planets tend to be small, transcontinental trips rarely take more than three or four hours.

Surface transport is actually quite restricted. Although some cars and bikes exist (see Monocycle on page 80), there are rarely any roads on which to drive. Instead, most Darrians walk from place-to-place, enjoying the scenery. To emphasise this enjoyment, most bustling pathways are landscaped to travel



STARPORT ENCOUNTERS

Roll		Roll	
11	An arguing band of violent looking Aslan just arrived from Roget.	41	Characters catch a glimpse of a squad of commandos dressed in full Battle Dress.
12	A confused looking elderly Darrian who appears to have lost his memory.	42	Characters are invited to join a Darrian storytelling circle and hear an intriguing tale of lost treasure.
13	A cheerfully working labourer doing a menial job normally reserved for robots in the Imperium.	43	An unusually drunk Darrian falls into the street and is left there by all the other passing pedestrians.
14	1d3 Darrian law enforcement officers who, lacking any crime to deal with, are seeking someone to have a friendly chat with.	44	Damaged Darrian vessel makes an emergency landing, setting in motion a potential disaster.
15	Pushy foreign trader trying to sell the characters substandard goods, hidden within which is something dangerously valuable.	45	Live animals break loose from a holding pen and rampage across the terminal.
16	Darrian entertainer sings an epic poem of the Ancient Onsorik, which draws the irritated attention of some philosophers.	46	Polite Darrian bureaucracy holds the characters up for several days.
21	One of the fabled TL16 Darrian warships lands at the port.	51	Friendly Darrian offers to show the characters around the planet.
22	One of the leading Confederation Councillors departs from a passenger liner accompanied by a single aide and no bodyguards to be seen.	52	Aslan arrives with a package addressed to one of the characters.
23	Characters are deputised by a member of the Special Arm to accompany him.	53	A Darrian philosopher stops the characters and invites them to lunch.
24	A lost child wonders up to the characters, asking for help.	54	Fight breaks out between some Sword World traders and several Darrians are unwittingly dragged into the conflict.
25	Several Imperial tourist ships arrive, flooding the port with rude, supercilious visitors.	55	Darrian trader offers the characters a job.
26	A group of violent Darrian exiles, restrained in chains, are marched towards a battered looking ship.	56	Fuel leak forces an evacuation.
31	Characters are approached by a Darrian envoy, enquiring whether their visit has been a smooth and pleasant one.	61	A solar flare incident interdicts traffic; no movement off-world for 1d6 days.
32	A polite argument between traders ends in stalemate and the characters are asked to make a final judgement.	62	Important Aslan noble and his retinue pass through the port, much to the wonder and excitement of the locals.
33	A pacifistic member of the Nyadh life-respecting school of philosophy presents one of the characters with a pot plant.	63	A suspicious looking human is glimpsed entering an alleyway where he literally vanishes into thin air!
34	An explosion occurs.	64	Someone of indeterminate gender approaches a character and expresses an interest in establishing a relationship.
35	Contact or Ally arrives unexpectedly at the port looking worried and distracted.	65	An exile tries to mug the characters.
36	Darrian Patron offers the characters a job.	66	A young Darrian tries to stow away on board the characters' vessel.



past spectacular views, path side grottos where a walker can rest and other places of interest. They use the natural environment in exhilarating ways, such as aerial walkways in forests or transparent tubes through coral reefs for example. Inside arcologies, Darrians often use moving pedways to cover longer distances a little quicker.

The freest form of transport is by gravitic vehicle. Almost all buildings have a landing pad or internal hanger built into them somewhere, although again, Darrians take pains to disguise such things. For instance, it is not unusual to have a landing pad for a grav bike concealed under a sliding bathing pool.

Internally, Darrian buildings embrace the use of curves and textured surfaces. There are rarely any straight lines or sharp corners anywhere. Internal spaces are also festooned with plant life, using genetically engineered trees and bushes to help

regulate the air quality and humidity. Since most need good levels of sunlight to thrive, Darrian architecture is heavily drawn to using light wells and large windows.

Note – The Darrians no longer build floating grav cities, considering them to be unsafe, as well as fearing that by doing so they are tempting fate. Only four exist on Daryen, artefacts which survived the Maghiz. It is noticeable however, that few Darrians ever remain on them for long.

Rural Areas

Darrian rural areas can vary dramatically according to which world the characters are on. When determining an encounter, make adjustments according to the planetary conditions and native wildlife. Those with little ingenious life should reroll animal encounters. Those with no atmospheres reroll weather events. Use common sense.





Darrian City Encounters

Roll		Roll	
11	Patron offers the characters a job.	41	A flock of brightly plumaged birds swoop down from above and fly between the pedestrians singing in sweet voices.
12	A philosopher holding an open air meeting with his students, debates a convoluted ethical question.	42	Pleasant parkland full of gentle herbivores and beautiful flowers.
13	Law enforcement officers begin to follow you about but only wish to know where you are from, who designed your hair style and so on.	43	Charming Darrian café.
14	A group of children playing tag stream past, their long legs enabling them to run at amazing speeds.	44	A sleek grav bike lands, the owner, noticing your interest, throws you the key and asks that you bring it back in an hour.
15	Painfully thin and angry looking exile approaches asking for food.	45	Alluring smells lead you to a merchant offering rare goods, whether they be spices, pastries or woods.
16	A grav car crashes horrifically into the ground but the young, inebriated Darrians climb out unhurt and happily turn themselves over to the nearest law officer.	46	Small tinkling fountain around which Darrians hug or hold hands, some whispering poetry to one another.
21	A Darrian, nose in datapad, bumps into you, apologises and continues reading about advanced jump space physics.	51	Group of young university graduates off to celebrate their doctorates.
22	A Rival or Enemy is seen climbing into a grav vehicle and flying away.	52	Gardens with animated statues of famous Darrians heroes that regale those who stop with factual biographies and history.
23	Open air concert playing a melange of classical and rock music.	53	Aslan approaches and politely asks if you are the famous winner of the Solomani Peace Prize.
24	Playground with children avidly solving complex maths and logic puzzles, which are built into the climbing frames and swings.	54	Sudden change in weather, temperature or atmosphere.
25	Public library with free computer access, unfortunately most of the information available is so technical as to be unusable.	55	A booth with a sign stating 'Militia Coordination Office', its holographic display directing this year's recruits to muster at a set of coordinates somewhere in the wilderness.
26	Busy gardeners trimming plants, collecting leaf litter and planting new flowers.	56	Heavily pregnant Darrian asks for your help.
31	Militia troops on leave, hotly debating a point of ethical law and its effect on art history whilst practicing martial arts.	61	Store offering high tech computer and communication gadgets.
32	Aslan wishes to know the way to the Office of Information.	62	Open courthouse in the centre of a public plaza, around which are seated citizens listening to the case being presented.
33	Darrian trader looking to ship cargo off world.	63	The main office of the Confederation Navy, with a swimming pool outside full of officers frolicking in the water.
34	Invited to lunch by a Darrian scholar who notices you pass by.	64	Building under construction.
35	Officer of the Special Arm follows you about, smiling congenially.	65	Strange alien, not of Darrian, Solomani or Aslan race.
36	Dangerous predator wonders down the street but nobody seems to pay it any attention.	66	Major university faculty of possible interest to an educated character.



Rural Areas Encounters

Roll	Roll
11 Wild animal.	41 Dead animal.
12 Trekking enthusiasts.	42 Sudden change in weather.
13 Major earth tremor.	43 Remote infrastructure complex.
14 Violent weather.	44 Security patrol.
15 Ancient wreck.	45 Difficult terrain.
16 Small isolated community.	46 Wild animal.
21 Large automated farm.	51 Scientist making analysis.
22 Labourers taking a rest.	52 Impassable terrain.
23 Remote home.	53 Emergency storehouse.
24 Parked grav vehicle.	54 Military unit training in combat.
25 Wild animal.	55 Ruins.
26 Rural spaceport.	56 Wild animal.
31 Labourers working hard.	61 Isolated community – unfriendly.
32 Firing range.	62 Isolated community – welcoming.
33 Equipment being maintained.	63 Isolated community – unusual.
34 Dead or dying exile.	64 Injured wanderer.
35 Wild animal.	65 Patron offers the character a job.
36 Fresh meteorite crater.	66 Wild animal.

DARRIAN NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

GENERIC NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Character	Career Path	Str	Dex	End	Int	Edu	Soc
Administrator	Worker (Bureaucratic) 2	3	8	5	7	9	6
Admin 2, Computers 0, Drive 0, Flyer 0, Persuade 1, Social Science 0, Steward 1, Streetwise 0, Vacc Suit 0, Zero-G 0							
Datapad							
Artist	Entertainer (Artist) 5	5	12	6	6	10	7
Animals 0, Art 4, Carouse 0, Diplomat 1, Persuade 3, Seafarer 0, Steward 0, Survival 0, Social Science 1, Streetwise 0, Trade 1							
Art tools							
Doctor	Scholar (Physician) 2	5	8	2	10	13	6
Admin 0, Animals 0, Computers 1, Flyer 0, Investigate 0, Life Science 1, Medic 3, Physical Science 0, Sensors 0, Social Science 0, Survival 1							
Medical kit							
Envoy	Envoy (Advocate) 2	2	8	4	7	9	6
Admin 0, Advocate 1, Carouse 0, Computer 0, Diplomat 1, Flyer 0, Investigate 1, Leadership 0, Persuade 1, Social Science 0							
Datapad							
Exile	Wanderer (Exile) 1	5	9	7	10	10	1
Athletics (Dexterity) 0, Carouse 0, Computers 0, Melee 0, Recon 1, Streetwise 0, Stealth 1, Survival 0, Trade 0							
Nothing							



Character	Career Path	Str	Dex	End	Int	Edu	Soc
Guard Recruit	Guard (Cavalry) 1	5	10	7	8	8	4
Athletics (Dexterity) 0, Battle Dress 0, Computer 0, Drive 0, Flyer 1, Gun Combat 1, Heavy Weapons (Artillery) 1, Melee 0, Physical Science 0, Recon 0, Survival 0							
Guard Armour (16), Gauss Rifle (4d6 AP, Auto 4)							
Guard Veteran	Guard (Infantry) 3	6	9	8	9	10	6
Athletics (Dexterity) 1, Battle Dress 2, Carouse 0, Drive 0, Flyer 0, Gun Combat 1, Heavy Weapons (Man Portable) 2, Life Science 0, Medic 0, Recon 1, Survival 0							
Assault Armour (20), VRF Gauss Rifle (5d6 AP, Auto 10)							
Police Officer	Agent (Police) 3	7	10	5	9	14	10
Admin 1, Advocate 0, Athletics (Dexterity) 0, Carouse 0, Computers 0, Flyer 0, Investigate 2, Gun Combat 2, Recon 0, Social Science 0, Stealth 1, Streetwise 2							
Stunner (3d6)							
Merchant	Merchant (Broker) 2	5	3	7	10	9	9
Admin 0, Advocate 0, Broker 1, Computer 0, Flyer 0, Language (Galanglic) 0, Persuade 1, Seafarer 0, Social Science 0, Streetwise 1, Trade 2							
Hand computer							
Militia Recruit	Militia (Infantry) 1	7	9	7	7	6	6
Admin 0, Athletics (Endurance) 0, Carouse 0, Drive 0, Gun Combat 1, Melee 0, Recon 1, Social Science 0, Stealth 1, Survival 0							
Militia Armour (12), Gauss Rifle (4d6 AP, Auto 4)							
Militia Veteran	Militia (Infantry) 3	6	9	9	8	11	8
Athletics (Endurance) 1, Carouse 0, Comms 0, Drive 0, Gun Combat 2, Medic 0, Melee 1, Recon 2, Social Science 0, Stealth 1, Survival 1							
Militia Armour (12), Gauss Rifle (4d6 AP, Auto 4)							
Pilot	Navy (Bridge) 2	4	10	6	9	10	7
Carouse 0, Engineer 0, Flyer 0, Gambler 1, Gun Combat 0, Gunner 2, Mechanic 1, Melee 0, Pilot (Small Craft) 1, Sensors 1, Space Science 0, Vacc Suit 0, Zero-G 0							
Flight Vacc Suit (4), Gauss Pistol (3d6+2 AP, Auto 4)							
Scholar	Scholar (Researcher) 3	6	8	4	13	11	10
Admin 1, Animals 0, Computers 2, Engineering 1, Flyer 0, Investigate 0, Physical Science 3, Sensors 1, Social Science 0, Space Science 1, Survival 0							
Datapad							
Special Arm Agent	Special Arm (Commando) 4	6	12	9	10	11	5
Battle Dress 1, Comms 0, Computer 0, Deception 1, Drive 0, Flyer 0, Gun Combat 2, Heavy Weapons 1, Investigate 2, Leadership 1, Melee 2, Recon 1, Social Science 0, Stealth 2, Streetwise 1, Tactics 1							
Guard Armour (16), Neural Rifle or SA Assault Armour (22), FGMP-16 (16d6, Auto 5)							



DARRIAN ANIMALS

Although the majority of worlds in the Darrian Confederation support animal life, few possess actively hostile native creatures. The primary reason is that most of the colonies either seeded their own fauna or were terraformed by the Ancient Onsorik in the distant past.

Some examples of the more dangerous fauna of the Confederation are described here, listed by the specific planet they originate from. Encounters need not be restricted to the worlds themselves. Specimens of these species can be found elsewhere in zoos, private collections or crawling out of a cargo crate in the hold for example.

Hunting many of these creatures is seen as sport by Aslan citizens of the Confederation, especially those on Roget.

CONDARIA

Type	Habitat	Str	Dexterity	End	Int	Ins	Pack
Damihr							
Grazer (herbivore)	Plains Walker	8	10	8	0	3	10

Athletics (Dexterity), Melee (legs) 0, Recon 1, Survival 0

Legs (2d6), Armour 1, Number Encountered: Herd of hundreds of animals

Damihr are large furry herbivores weighing about 200kg that graze the open plains and the foliage of trees. Technically they are quadrupeds but often rear up on their hind legs to search for danger. They have long springing legs that allow them to take huge bounding leaps, to avoid being ambushed by predators in long grass. Like all Condaria life forms, it is a form of large marsupial, carrying its young in twin side pouches. These animals can be dangerous if they stampede, a common occurrence on the plains when they are hunted.

Nihehp							
Pouncer (omnivore)	Plains Walker	10	12	7	1	8	0

Athletics (Dexterity) 1, Melee (Bite) 1, Recon 1, Stealth 2, Survival 0

Teeth (3d6), Armour 1. Number encountered: 1

Nihehp are 100kg pouncing hunters with oversized sabre-tooth fangs. Their fur pelt is a rich fur of green and golden stripes, which help them to hide in the grasslands. They crawl carefully towards their prey, usually **Damihr**, before leaping atop the boulder, knocking it to the ground and sinking their fangs into its spine. Nihehp are marsupials with twin pouches on their sides. The pouncers have learned to be wary of Darrians and give them wide berth.

CUNNONIC

Zenibh							
Hijacker (scavenger)	Forest Walker	7	16	5	1	9	8

Athletics (Dexterity) 2, Melee (Tentacle) 1, Recon 1, Survival 1,

Bite (3d6), Armour 0. Number Encountered (2d6).

Tree dwelling octopi weighing up to 50kg, these scavengers are highly aggressive and have been known to attack lone travellers. For defence they have a chameleon skin making them difficult to see in the dangling foliage but they usually use the skin to broadcast warning colours to other predators, in order to drive them away from a kill. If driven to attacking a Darrian, their tentacles wrap around the victim to immobilise them, then use their beaks to bite. Each **Zenibh** attached to a victim imposes a -1 DM penalty against any skill attempt.



Zhul

Trapper (carnivore)	Beach Swimmer	12	9	15	0	5	9
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Athletics (Strength) 1, Melee (Tentacle) 1, Recon 0, Stealth 3, Survival 0

Tentacles (3d6+poison, Endurance DM -2, Damage Paralysis), Armour 0. Number Encountered (2d6 scattered over an area).

Zhul are tentacular worm masses that burrow into sandy beaches or hide in shallow surf. Their touch is paralytic due to a secretion dribbled from their myriad mouths. Up to 200kg in weight, a **Zhul** attack is almost invariably fatal to a Darrian unaccompanied by friends. The its tentacles easily overpower all but the strongest victims who can resist its secretions. Once its victim is pacified the creature drags the body into the sand, or into the water, where the tentacles root into the carcass to begin feeding.

EKTRON

Ganguyr

Grazer (Herbivore)	Desert Walker	22	3	24	1	7	5
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Athletics (Strength) 1, Melee (Claws) 2, Recon 3, Survival 1

Claws (3d6), Armour 4. Number encountered: 1d6

These scaled quadrupeds are hunted by the Aslan, using primitive weapons so as to give the animal a good chance. They are rarely stalked successfully however, due to their sharp senses and natural instinct to flee. If cornered or injured however, they become dangerous opponents. Massing more than five tons, these gigantic beasts look like leanly built hounds about four metres high at the shoulder, with very long legs, serpentine neck and tail. The skin is scaly to help with water retention. They live by eating giant ferns and tearing open huge cacti with their claws to eat the sweet pulp inside.

Demuk

Chaser (carnivore)	Desert Flyer	15	15	13	1	8	4
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Athletics (Endurance) 1, Melee (Bite) 2, Recon 1, Survival 0

Bite (4d6), Armour 0. Number Encountered: 1d6

Demuk are gliding predators that hunt *Ganguyrs*. They appear to be leanly built shrews with leathery wings and large eyes. Their elongated mouth is full of razor sharp teeth and their wingspan is more than eight metres. Like their prey they are covered with fine scales. They kill by diving out of the sun and snapping the neck of their prey, before they gorge themselves on the flesh before any scavengers turn up.

ENTROPE

Ninbz

Hunter (omnivore)	Tundra Walker	10	9	10	1	10	7
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Athletics (Endurance) 2, Melee (Claw) 1, Recon 1, Survival 1

Claw (3d6 damage), Armour 3. Number encountered: 2d6

Introduced by the Sword World troops to keep prisoners sentenced to the Entrope gulags within their islanded camps, the omnivore **Ninbz** hunted down any stragglers they found wandering the frozen landscape. The creatures are wolf-like analogues with thick white fur but have serpent-shaped heads and six legs. They are tireless when trekking long distances across ice and snow but hate water which ruins the insulation of their pelt. Utterly savage, they never stop shedding their prey until it has been reduced to parts small enough for the narrow gullet of the serpent head to swallow. They will even dig up carrion or raid rubbish bins to feed their insatiable hunger. Post occupation recovery nearly hunted these foul beasts to extinction but the recent recapture of Entrope by the Sword Worlds has led to the creatures resurgence, much to the delight of officers stationed there, who like to hunt **Ninbz** with nothing but a single shot rifle.



ILLIUM

Type	Habitat	Str	Dexterity	End	Int	Ins	Pack
Thihk							
Eater (omnivore)	All	1	6	1	1	3	16

Athletics (Endurance) 0, Melee (Bite) 1, Recon 0, Survival 3

Bite (1 damage as a pack to sealed armour/vehicles, 1d6 damage to humans), Armour 0. Number Encountered: Pack of hundreds or thousands

Thihk are a bane on Ilium. Once every couple of decades the breeding rate of the rat like marsupials explodes and swarms of the little horrors consume everything in sight, including machine parts or each other. If a Darrian is caught by a swarm they are stripped to the bone in several minutes, unless wearing some form of sealed battle armour and even then the little horrors eat their way in through the synthetic parts of the suit, gradually stripping down until they can get inside at the wearer. Vehicles are little better protection unless they are some form of tank. **Thihk** flee from fire, loud bangs and the smell of their own **rotted** dead. Shooting into a swarm is futile. The best defence is to run.

JACENT

Type	Habitat	Str	Dexterity	End	Int	Ins	Pack
Zabilz							
Killer (carnivore)	Deep Ocean Swimmer	35	5	33	1	13	1

Athletics (Endurance) 3, Melee (Bite) 2, Recon 0, Survival 1

Bite (6d6 damage), Armour 5. Number Encountered: 1d3

Hunting on Jacent is forbidden. Not because of ecological worries but quite simply that it is too dangerous. **Zabilz** are colossal shark-like creatures with trilateral jaws, fins and eyes, with a taste for Darrians. They swim in the deeper ocean, normally feeding on large native fish and squid species. However, if a **Zabilz** spots a small boat it will attempt to chew its way through the hull in order to reach the occupants. The monster is quite capable of swimming at high speed for days, trying to wear down prey and is extremely cunning.

LABERV

Type	Habitat	Str	Dexterity	End	Int	Ins	Pack
Nagh							
Grazer (herbivore)	Plains Walker	5	11	8	0	3	15

Athletics (Endurance) 1, Melee (Butt) 0, Recon 0, Survival 2

Horns (1d6 damage), Armour 0. Number Encountered: 5d6

Nagh are the tough grazers that are bred as livestock on Laberv. They are of little interest save that they can survive in the toughest of terrain, eating scraggly vegetation. They grow a warm insulating wool, which the farmers comb to gain the finer softer hairs and weave it into the distinctive local fabric. **Nagh** are generally mild mannered until they see a brush, at which point they can turn belligerent.

ROGET

Type	Habitat	Str	Dexterity	End	Int	Ins	Pack
Yehnold							
Pouncer (carnivore)	Jungle Walker	13	17	13	1	11	5

Athletics (Dexterity) 1, Melee (Claw) 1, Recon 2, Stealth 2, Survival 0

Claw (3d6 damage), Armour 1. Number Encountered: 1d6



Type	Habitat	Str	Dexterity	End	Int	Ins	Pack
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A lethal nocturnal predator that helped to wipe out the first Darrian colony on Rorre. **Yehnold** are arboreal creatures, with camouflaged feathers that help them blend into the foliage. They possess large claws, which help them climb with great speed into the canopy from which they can make prodigious leaps onto prey, supported in part by their feathering. Physically they are almost skeletal with a wiry strength. Weighing near 100kg a successful leap is capable of knocking their target prone, before they eviscerate it with their claws. They are very cunning hunters, using the pack to provide distractions whilst attacks come from the opposite side. **Yehnold** are allowed to breed by the Aslan on Roget to provide good hunting and a test of courage.

Ihsebh

Hunter (omnivore)	Jungle Walker	21	7	26	1	7	0
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Athletics (Strength) 3, Melee (Claw) 1, Recon 1, Survival 1

Claw (5d6 damage), Acid (1d6 damage for 1d6 rounds), Armour 3. Number encountered: 1

Another of the deadly creatures of Roget, **Ihsebh** are built like a three metre tall ape but covered by thick layers of feathers and have a large beak. Worse still, the animal can vomit up its stomach contents, which is a powerful acid, capable of corroding metal. It generally fluffs out its impressive plumage to frighten away irritants. If this does not work it will rush into close combat and rip the offending creature apart. Not the brightest creature, it often charges vehicles, which it is capable of overturning with its strength. These huge brutes mass 1,000kg and killing such a creature single-handedly without a gun is a feat worthy of legend.

TRIFUGE

Dphone

Gatherer (omnivore)	Plain Walker	9	13	10	1(2)	15	7
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Athletics (Endurance) 0, Melee (Teeth) 0, Recon 1, Stealth 3, Survival 1

Teeth (2d6 damage), Armour 1. Number encountered: 2d6

A humanoid reptilian creature with brightly iridescent scales, which researches say is at the edge of sapience. The reptilian bodies are very lithe due to a serpent-like spine and tail. They move by either wriggling on their bellies or walking upright on their hind limbs. The Dphone have covertly watched the Darrian settlers since their arrival. Recently the creatures have started using sticks as clubs and covering their bodies with mud to help them hunt. It is unknown what has sparked this rapid development. There has been no direct contact between the two species, the Dphone slipping away whenever a Darrian comes too close.

WINSTON

Yphitz

Siren (carnivore)	Jungle Walker	12	17	14	1	12	0
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Athletics (Dexterity) 0, Deception 3, Melee (Pincers) 1, Recon 1, Stealth 1, Survival 0

Pincers (4d6 damage), Armour 4. Number encountered: 1

There are hundreds of different large insects on Winston. Most seem benign, even helpful, to Darrians. They are universally six legged, beautifully coloured, with heart pumped cardiovascular systems. However some rather monstrous predatory insects have been glimpsed in deeper jungles where the settlers never venture. This particular species is only known about, because a Sword Worlder combat helmet was found from a lost patrol, still recording, and with the head inside! Why the soldier approached the 2m high mantis-like insectoid, clearly obvious in the image recorder, is unknown. Best ideas are pheromones or sub-audio frequencies somehow preventing the victim from being conscious of the threat.

DARRIAN WORLDS

The Darrian subsector lies entirely beyond Imperial space. Access requires either passage through the Sword Worlds Confederation (not always possible) or a transit around via an arm of the Spinward Main and into the Darrian subsector from Vilis–Querion or District 268–Five Sisters.

The subsector itself is dominated by the 18 worlds of the Darrian Confederation, centring on Daryen and Mire. This is what is left of the original spread of research bases and colonies that the Darrians constructed when they first discovered interstellar travel. Although many of these worlds were cut off for a long period during the aftermath of the Maghiz, they remained

culturally Darrian and were peaceably integrated into the newly formed Darrian Confederation.

Technically this cluster lies on the Spinward Main but since access to the rest of the Main requires transiting through the 'Gram Arm' of the Sword Worlds, astrographical convenience is overruled by local politics. Uniqua and Garoo are also on the Spinward Main, though they lie at the extreme outer end, where the Main passes out of the Marches and into Foreven sector to Spinward. The remainder of the subsector is less dense, with stars occurring in small groups for the most part.

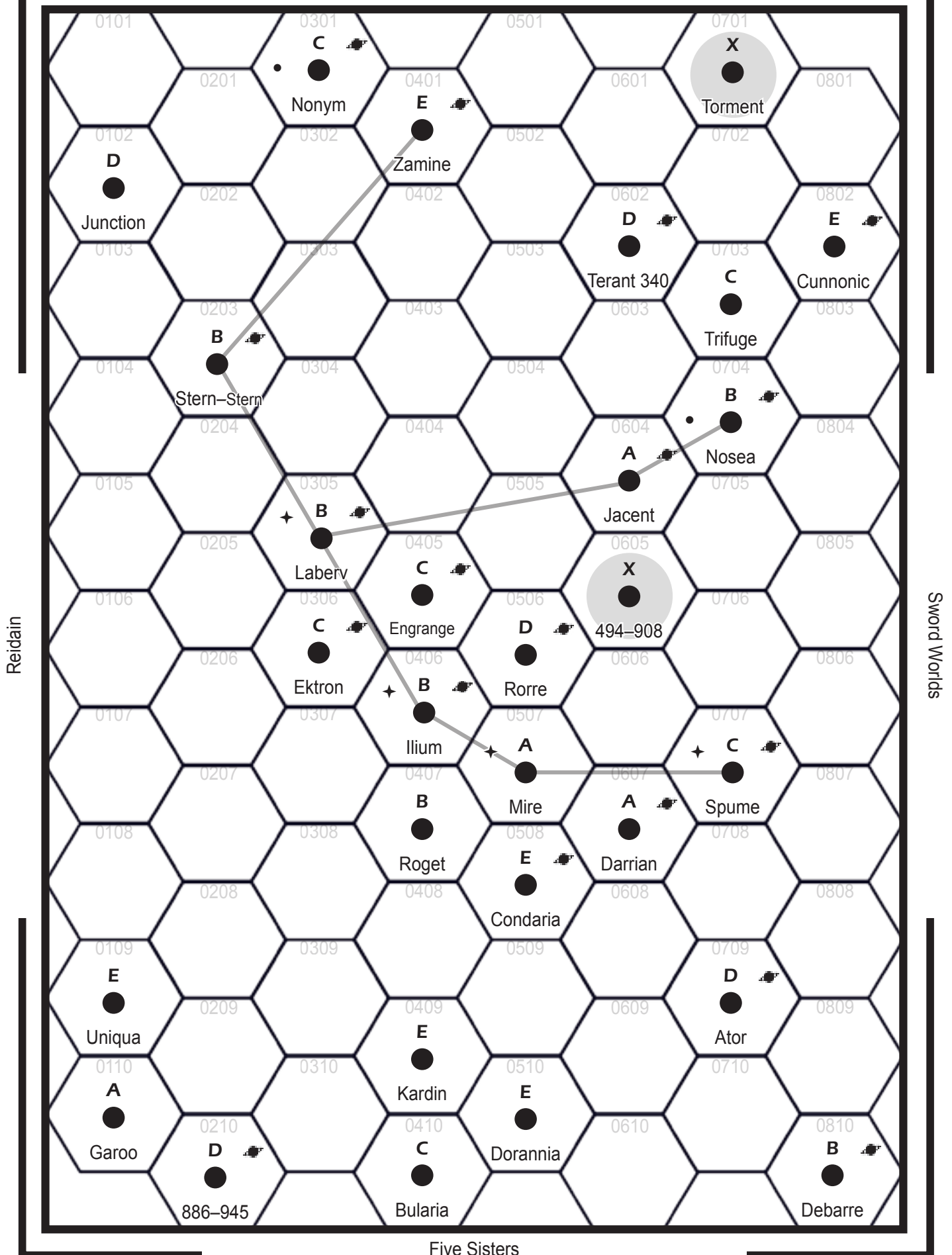
DARRIAN SUBSECTOR IN 1105

Hex	Name	UWP	Polity ¹	Base ²	Remarks	Zone	GG
0102	Junction	D150441-4			De Lt Ni Po		
0109	Uniqua	E62556B-4			Lt Ni		
0110	Garoo	A2008CB-A			Na Va		
0203	Stern-Stern	B321558-B	Da		Ni Po		G
0210	886-945	E833000-0			Ba Po		G
0301	Nonym	C233898-A		M	Na Po		G
0305	Laberv	B354443-7	Da	D	Ga Ni		G
0306	Ektron	C332652-9	Da		Na Ni Po		G
0401	Zamine	C897977-A	Da		Ga Hi In		G
0405	Engrange	C554769-8	Da		Ag Ga		G
0406	Illum	B444831-9	Da	D	Ga		G
0407	Roget	B566777-9	Da		Ag Ga Ri		
0409	Kardin	E453123-6			Lo Po		
0410	Bularia	C774622-5			Ag Ga Lt Ni		
0506	Rorre	D765657-3	Da		Ag Ga Lt Ni Ri		G
0507	Mire	A665A95-C	Da	D	Ga Hi Ht Cp		
0508	Condaria	E54779B-5			Ag Ga Lt		G
0510	Dorannia	E42158A-8			Ni Po		
0602	Terant 340	D1405A7-9	Da		De Ni Po		G
0604	Jacent	A333744-D	Da		Ht Na Ni Po		
0605	494-908	X893000-0	Da		Ba	Red	
0607	Darrian (Daryen)	A463955-G	Da		Hi Ht		G
0701	Torment	X233000-0	Da		Pe	Red	
0703	Trifuge	C446556-9	Da		Ag Ga Ni		
0704	Nosea	B2326BB-C	Da	D	Ht Na Ni Po		
0707	Spume	C140200-A	Da	D	De Lo Po		G
0709	Ator	D326258-6			Lo		G
0802	Cunnonic	E65767A-3	Da		Ag Ga Lt Ni		G
0810	Debarre	B854123-9			Ga Lo		G

¹ Da – Darrian Confederation

² D – Darrian military base, M – Independent military base only

Querion





While Daryen is the original home of the Darrian people, it was thoroughly devastated by the solar flares of the Maghiz and never regained its position of authority. It is still the technological centre of the Confederation, driven by the numerous pre-Maghiz structures and artefacts still remaining on the planet, of a higher Tech Level than is encountered in the Imperium or the Consulate. Mire is the modern capital of the Confederation and remains its political and administrative centre. The remaining worlds all have their parts to play, either in terms of manufacturing, food production, social segregation or strategic location.

Condaria (E54779B-5)

Diameter: 7,620km, Gravity: 0.45g, Atmosphere: Thin oxygen-nitrogen, tainted by chemical pollutants, Hydrographics: 71%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 92,000,000, Government: Impersonal bureaucracy, Manufacturing Tech Level: 5

Ecology

An almost perfect world for Darrians with its low gravity and thinner atmosphere, Condaria possesses a cool, but temperate, climate and a mild weather system. Geologically stable with a similar biosphere to Daryen, the planet required little in the way of terraforming. The fauna was primarily mammalian with a high incidence of marsupials but hundreds of years of low tech industry gradually poisoned the atmosphere with metallic and sulphurous chemicals. Once a garden paradise, Condaria is now a tainted shadow of its former self.

History

The second off-world settlement established by the Darrians after Rorre, Condaria was considered by many to be a second Eden. With its agreeable atmosphere and ecology, the original scientific survey team was soon displaced by wealthy tourists, who treated the planet more as a resort than a serious colony.

At the time of the Maghiz the world was covered with scattered retreats, lodges and private homes, with a transient population of several hundred thousand. These were trapped by the loss of almost all the passenger liners, destroyed as they unwittingly jumped over the course of a week into the sequential series of coronal mass ejections. Even if the vessels had remained intact there was no other place for the inhabitants to go, Condaria being the best world left for survival.

With no supplies coming from Daryen, the populace faced starvation and were forced to impose martial law. The indigenous fauna was hunted and fished to near extinction whilst the government scrambled to set up agricultural centres. Lacking proper machinery, recreational vehicles were jury-rigged or cannibalised for parts to create semi-functional tractors. Although survival was hard, optimism was high until the planet was unexpectedly hit three years later by the now weaker EMP inducing gamma-ray burst.

Condaria was the first planet in the path of the expanding wave front. Unaware of the danger, no electronics had been shielded against its effect and half of the remaining pieces of high tech equipment ceased functioning. Society fractured, many Darrians going native in order to avoid the ensuing violence. Save for a handful of enclaves, technology collapsed to frontier homestead levels.

Fortunately for the rest of the colonies and research bases, an arriving transport vessel carried news of the GRB to other worlds in order to prevent them from suffering the same fate. Left with no centralised government, the spreading anarchy made the world a no-go zone for the remaining jump vessels and Condaria was cut off from the faltering trade network.

Unlike the other worlds, which possessed more technical scientific, mining or terraforming staff, Condaria was filled with holiday makers, many of whom lacked the skills applicable to their situation. Thus technological recovery was very slow, the planet sticking at an early industrialised level and burning fossil fuels for energy. By the time they were contacted by Mire in -274, the atmosphere had been irreparably polluted.

During its isolation, Condaria had become bitter about being cut off from the rest of Darrian space. Despite explanations the populace retained a resentful attitude towards the other worlds, turning their focus inwards to form a fierce nationalistic pride at their own achievements. They also still possessed a degree of arrogance and feeling of entitlement, left over from the original wealthy inhabitants, primarily of Solomani descent. The Condarian government demanded vast aid packages and support to help revitalise the planet, ignoring the fact that other worlds in the newly forming Confederation were in greater difficulties.

These insular attitudes alienated the Mire bureaucracy, who left Condaria to stew until they took a more sympathetic attitude. Accordingly, a wedge was driven between the two worlds, which continued to fester until the Darrian Community was formed. Condaria was granted membership and technology refurbishment in return for clearing up the environmental damage. However, the financial expenditure for global detoxification was beyond the rather poor economic income of the primarily agricultural world, which resorted to a long term biological solution instead, breeding types of grass to bind atmospheric chemical pollutants back into the soil.

With few investment prospects and little chance of recovering as a major tourism centre, Condaria remained a fractious member of the Darrian group; seeking subsidies, returning little and continually criticising Confederation policy. On the eve of the Fourth Frontier War, Condaria claiming to be unable to meet trade tax raises and frustrated at not being selected as the location for a major munitions factory, held a planetary referendum and seceded from the Confederation.



The decision proved to be a mistake. No longer protected by the Confederation Navy the planet soon found itself plagued by intermittent piracy, thought to be supported by Sword World backing. The lack of stringent Confederation policies has opened up Condaria as a golden opportunity for less salubrious business corporations and certain criminal gangs, seeking a refuge outside of Imperium space. Environmental contamination is again on the rise due to a gradual corruption of government officials. However, the general populace are becoming aggravated at the endemic spread of bribery and worsening social situation.

Points of Interest

Condaria is probably the single largest source of illegal pre-Maghiz artefacts in the Darrian subsector. Freed from Confederation law, a large number of antiquities shops are present in the capital. The majority of artefacts are clever fakes, works of art in their own right. The few genuine articles are rarely functional, due to the planet's proximity to the original shock wave. Shady deals abound and Condaria is the eventual destination of a few working historical pieces, which are smuggled out of the Confederation, to be sold legitimately.

A transient pirate base is located in the outer system of Condaria. The government lacking anything beyond its handful of obsolete warships, regarded by their crews as deathtraps, has little inclination to extradite the pirates, preferring to take a cut of any cargos or vessels seized. In return the pirates have informal access to Condaria's excuse for a starport, which , degenerating from lack of funding, is now barely more than an open field with a hydrogen processing plant, surrounded by a vast, crowded tent souk.

The Condaria market is famous for its narrow alleyways, covered by awnings of faded coloured cloth, electrical cables and pressurised air hoses. The enclosed microcosm is a confusing warren of twisty walkways that come alive at night, illuminated by eclectic types of light sources from pastel glowsticks to harsh halogen bulbs and full of odd, exotic scents for those willing to briefly remove their filter masks. Anything can be found for sale, the market being considered neutral territory free from the rest of the planet's harsh law. Conversely, this makes the bazaar a dangerous place to venture too, since there are no official police to enforce order, only bodyguards and mutual defence agreements between merchants.

At the inner edge, closest to the subsurface landing bays, are the food traders who deal with bulk grain and vegetable exports. Moving deeper into the souk however, unveils more unusual and increasingly nefarious merchandise, such as interdicted dangerous xeno-lifeforms, assault weaponry, narcotics and even slaves. Up and down the alleyways walk mobile sellers of questionable snack foods, raw alcoholic beverages, cheap filter masks or even top-ups of air tanks.

The biggest merchant, or rather the merchant with the biggest plot, is Artur Dehlyr who controls a fenced off area nearly a square kilometre in size. Inside are dozens of ships, which are in various states of scrap. There are countless small craft and several larger vessels including a couple of Free Traders, a Far Trader and behind some carefully piled walls of rusting cargo containers two Imperial Type S Scouts. Most of the machinery haphazardly piled in the junkyard appears to be drive or life support engineering parts, suspiciously including bits of hull where they were crudely cut out with plasma torches. Known as the Deep-Six Depot, the scrap yard prides itself on locating the right part for the right money.

Access outside the starport is forbidden unless a traveller obtains a special visa issued by the government. Such warrants are available for the right price but all high tech equipment and weapons must be left in storage until the owner returns. In the capital, life is relatively congenial if somewhat puritan. Attitudes to Confederation citizens are rather curt, the Condarian populace considering themselves repressed by the Confederation and maintain an air of sanctimonious superiority, morally if not technologically.

Outside the capital, the population is distributed into large cities, little more than TL5 industrial centres with the occasional high tech enclave belonging to an off-world corporation, sealed off behind mesh fencing and razorwire. Cities are connected with an unusual network of surface roads, as transport is still reliant on wheeled vehicles. In the heavily farmed agricultural lands around each city can be seen incongruous sights such as robotically controlled, petrochemical powered tractors or windmill driven irrigation pumps.

Native vegetation is generally green or red but closer examination reveals most plants appear sickly with discoloured splotches on their fronds. Only the specially tailored crops and the pollution trapping grasses seem to thrive. Few undomesticated native species larger than dogs have survived the gradual ruin of the atmosphere, even the farm animals have to be kept in sealed barns, it being impractical to develop filter masks for grazing animals.

Cunnonic (E65767A-3)

Diameter: 9,121km, Gravity: 0.7g, Atmosphere: Thin oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 72%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 5,200,000, Government: Multiple societies, Manufacturing Tech Level: 3

Ecology

Although portraying itself as a pleasant garden world for Darrians with its distinctly Earth-like appearance, Cunnonic has a number of drawbacks. The climate is rather wet, with violent changeable weather. The geology is unstable, suffering a high incidence of mild to severe volcanic eruptions on a yearly basis,



triggering dangerous earthquakes and tsunamis. Worse still, is the presence of hostile life. Large predators are endemic across all but one of the continents and venomous trappers of nightmarish form are common in the coastal archipelagos. The native fauna also have a taste for agricultural crops, entire plantations consumed overnight by smaller herbivores unless warded by effective deterrents.

History

The original settlement of Cunnonic was part of the doomed second colonisation wave, just prior to the Maghiz. Cut off from supply and suffering constant attrition against the hostile native life, the remaining staff of the outpost finally decided to abandon their world in -907, after the barely noticeable electrical disruptions of the faded GRB passed through their system. Unfortunately for them, the unskilled maintenance attempts and excessive humidity caused the jump drive of their one ship, the **Joutsen**, to fail. Predicting eventual extinction if they remained at Cunnonic, the colonists embedded their vessel in an icy asteroid, constructed hydroponics gardens to provide food for the crew, then used the ship's engines to begin a painful, slower than light journey towards Trifuge.

The epic journey took over 60 years and ended in tragedy. Problems with micro-meteors, equipment failure and even mental psychoses, were heroically overcome one-by-one. Yet less than four years short of their destination, the last of the radiation saturated hydroponic gardens died and the skeleton crew assigned to melting water ice for fuel, slowly starved to death. An emergency message was radioed ahead but when the fusion plant ran dry the remaining colonists in Cold Sleep died quietly, unaware of their fate. Wretchedly the struggling colony on Trifuge could not intercept the vessel and watched the ship coast through their system into the depths of deep space.

The Darrian return to space prompted a new colonisation effort in -253. Prepared this time for the hostile fauna and closely supported by Mire, the attempt succeeded; due in part to the superior numbers of Solomani citizens, who were more capable of adapting to the wetter climate and higher gravity.

Cunnonic grew into a thriving agricultural world and soon expanded in terms of both population and production. Over the course of five centuries it invested heavily in an orbital manufacturing infrastructure, following ecological guidelines to keep the surface of their world pristine. This proved however, to be a double edged sword.

When increasing tensions precipitated the First Frontier War, Cunnonic was one of the first worlds attacked. A Sword World fleet overwhelmed those few system defence boats the small population could support, so elements of the colonial squadron took refuge in the orbital factories, planning a campaign

THE FLIGHT OF THE JOUTSEN

Although the **Joutsen** never made it to its destination, it is still remembered by the inhabitants of Trifuge, becoming a mythic tale of indomitable courage in the face of adversity. A popular subject of books and holofilms, the 'Flight of the Joutsen' has inspired many attempts to locate the vessel.

Projected flight plans are hindered by the lack of navigational data existing from the time it passed through the Trifuge system. With a coasting velocity of around 5% of light speed, the Joutsen could have travelled just over 30 parsecs, placing it somewhere on the Spinward edge of Harem subsector in Foreven. Several expeditions have ventured to find the lost ship but thus far the missions have either failed to correctly predict its location or never returned from their voyage.

The rewards of finding the **Joutsen** are incalculable. The Darrian ship was at least TL16 and, despite the inoperable jump drive, could still be packed with new innovative devices to be salvaged, even if the entire ship could not be brought back.

Attempting to locate the ghost ship is a major project that requires significant navigational expertise, combined with historical knowledge to recover the few records that remain of its passing. After calculating the predicted position of the Joutsen, an expedition must travel 30 parsecs through neutral or enemy space, requiring at least five jumps, even with a Jump-6 ship. Only upon arrival can the veracity of their calculations be proved, or not. In addition, undertaking such a significant expedition without utmost secrecy will attract unwanted attention from criminal organisations or perhaps even Zhodani agents, who may attempt to wrest the Darrian vessel from them if successfully discovered.

of gradual attrition until the main Confederation fleet could relieve them. In an act of shocking brutality, the invaders simply annihilated every complex, squandering the cutting edge manufacturing plants and killing 17,000 naval and militia personnel. Nearly a million more colonists then died in the follow up operation, which carpet bombed every major city.

Lacking any sort of surface based industrial capability and their infrastructure reduced to rubble, the inhabitants of Cunnonic faced a second Long Night. The orbiting Sword World fleet made no attempt to occupy the planet, using the system as a strategic forward buffer zone; but used the urban centres as target practice for its fighter squadrons. Very soon the populace



dispersed into small steadings, operating at a very low Tech Level to avoid drawing notice from the occupation forces above their heads.

With no global communications to keep the inhabitants in close contact, the government fractured into eight nations separated by mountain ranges or oceans. Despite the reduction in technology, the people kept their Athenian style democracies and thus persevered with their wholesome lifestyle, adhering to the teachings of Taledh. Native predators, freed from breeding and territorial control, became an endemic problem, leading to the development of a hunter/warden class in society. Unpredictable volcanism also, forced further cultural changes such as migratory patterns between several permanent settlements to avoid ash falls or wildfires. Although trans-oceanic telegraphs were attempted several times, earthquakes always eventually cut lines, reducing contact to shipping, itself a dangerous occupation when faced with the dangers of intermittent tsunamis.

After almost five centuries Cunnonic was finally liberated in the Fourth Frontier War. The Darrian Confederation re-established tentative contact with the inhabitants but have thus far not stepped in to help them recover their technological base; instead requesting a quorum to define how Cunnoic wished to proceed with its own reintegration. Thus far the dispersed governments are still debating on how to proceed, with philosophical differences preventing any agreement from being reached.

In the meantime the Confederation has, with permission, introduced a small military outpost of 10,000 Aslan on the one remaining uninhabited continent, to act as peacekeepers in case of future invasion and help clean up the predator problem. Such duty, although repugnant to most Darrians, is an enjoyable pastime for the Alsan, who consider Cunnonic a prime duty assignment.

A significant flotilla of warships funded by the Confederation remains in the system to prevent the Sword Worlds from retaking Cunnonic and help in the huge task of cleaning up orbital scrap. Plans are in place to rebuild the naval base, using the world to fortify the border.

Points of Interest

Cunnonic has a few interesting features that draw attention. First and foremost are its natural dangers. Regular volcanism produces some quite spectacular eruptions, which are not only of great interest to geological study but also a possible source of tourism. The occasional accompanying tsunami is also a frightening spectacle, which has led to the building of all settlements far upslope or inland, away from coastal areas.

The constant injection of fine ash into the atmosphere tends to keep the planet relatively cool. In addition the predominantly

wet climate can cause ash clouds to fall out of the sky as muddy rain, sometimes dangerously sticky, which can badly affect the flight dynamics of off-world aircraft and gravitic vehicles.

Coping with such high levels of precipitation has affected Cunnonic architecture. High pitched roofs with oversized gutters predominate, most carved or decorated with demonic faces that spout water. The collected outflow, often too contaminated for drinking, is instead used to supply exotic water gardens with streams, pools and reservoir fed fountains.

Most settlements, ranging from large steadings to small towns, are built near rivers to facilitate transportation. Man-made canals, although sometimes built, tend to suffer damage in earthquakes. Roads are common but again are often damaged from ground movement.

The planet's hostile fauna is also notable, having thrived since Cunnonic fell to the Sword Worlds. Several deadly species roam wild, quite happy to kill and eat any unprepared Darrians who cross their path. The tentacular worm masses of the archipelagos are particularly dangerous, hiding under sand or in shallow surf, to catch passing prey.

The night skies of Cunnonic are blessed with occasionally spectacular meteorite storms. Driven by the slow in-fall of wreckage from the destroyed orbital factories, fragments of advanced alloys burn brightly as they drop into the atmosphere, often producing pretty coloured fireballs depending on the fragment's chemical composition. Many of the gutted manufacturing plants still circle the world, their debris causing a dangerous navigational hazard. To deal with this problem, the Confederation is offering lucrative salvage contracts to help clean up the mess.

Daryen (A463955-G) Darrian Homeworld

Diameter: 6,300km, Gravity: 0.35g, Atmosphere: Standard oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 33%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 2,100,000,000, Government: Feudal technocracy, Manufacturing Tech Level: 15

Ecology

Daryen is a smallish world with soaring mountain ranges parcelling off five continent sized basins. Atmospheric pressure is near standard at the bottom of each basin but thins with elevation as each basin gradually curves up towards the dividing mountain ranges, some of the peaks exceeding twenty kilometres in height. Although very dry, its ecology was tweaked by the Ancients to support a transplanted population of humans.

The modified ecosystem of Daryen was destroyed during the Maghiz, which irradiated the surface of the world. Almost all higher forms of animal life are now extinct but much of the native botany survived, mostly reintroduced from the small



parks and gardens of the surviving gravitic cities. Although the molecular balance of the atmosphere was briefly altered by the energies injected by the disaster, it recovered most of its original composition over several hundred years.

Save for the vast regions on unoccupied wilderness and the occasional cyclopean ruin sprouting from amidst young forests, few directly observable signs of the tragic event remain.

History

According to geological and fossil surveys, Daryen was originally a planet with a thriving biosphere of unusual indigenous life forms. At some point about 300,000 years ago the world underwent dramatic modifications, both to its tectonic structure and the native species; soon after which several colonies of primitive homo sapiens were introduced. That the world was used as a large scale experiment of some sort is beyond question. Unfortunately for historians, no records were left explaining the intent, the Ancients exterminating themselves in a galactic war soon afterwards.

Fragments of legend and archaeological research, suggest the Darrians lived in a world of gardens approximating the Terran Eden. The god Onsorik set up a paradise for the transplanted people, which met all of their needs and allowed their numbers to grow rapidly without much need for conflict over resources. Eventually whatever energies ran the gardens began to fail, though this appears to have been a gradual process. The Darrians were forced to spread out across their planet and to fend for themselves. Fortunately due to Onsorik's gifts, Daryen was a very welcoming world and the transition was not especially traumatic.

Perhaps as a result of their relatively comfortable life, the Darrians developed a great respect for the environment and philosophy was channelled towards coexistence with nature rather than fighting it for survival. Science and technology progressed slowly as there was little need for mechanical progress, so Darrians developed their intellectual capabilities in abstract areas like mathematics and sociology.

Over the epochs, the Darrians adapted to their homeworld, gradually acquiring a distinctive appearance. Although recognisably human and capable of interbreeding with other human subspecies, the Darrians developed what some refer to as a 'string bean' appearance. They are tall and slender as a result of the lower gravity on their homeworld. Their skin attained an alternate pigmentation as a result of living under a different sun for millennia, as well as numerous other minor genetic modifications caused by the greater levels of radiation penetrating the thinner atmosphere.

By -1511, the Darrians had developed a relatively peaceful, rational society but one without much in the way of technology.

At that point, everything changed with the arrival of refugees from Earth. These came aboard a fleet of ships built by the Itzin Corporation, out of Dingir.

Fortunately for the Darrians, the newcomers did not take the obvious 'sky gods' route, nor did they use their superior technology to dominate or marginalise the Darrians. Instead they made a careful and friendly approach, trading fairly with their new neighbours who in turn welcomed the Terrans into Darrian society.

Change was inevitable but the Darrian people were part of it rather than it being forced upon them. Within a century the two cultures had melded into one, as had the populations. The thoughtful, inquisitive nature of the Darrians complemented the energetic and, at times, reckless nature of the Solomani colonists. Working with the technological base the Terrans had brought with them, the revitalised Darrian society began a period of explosive technological growth.

Natural Darrian inquisitiveness eventually led to the exploration of local space. In -1310, once jump technology could be manufactured, the Darrians sent out vessels to chart the subsector and by -1270 had reached a distance of 20 parsecs out. No other civilisations were discovered, so the Darrians returned their attentions closer to home and started in-depth science surveys of the local worlds, explosively expanding their empirical knowledge.

Ecological conservatism initially prevented full scale colonisation, but driven by a combination of Solomani confidence and a growing Darrian conceit, by -1100 colonies with permanent populations had been established.

THE DARRIAN GROUP

Known as the Darrian Group, the following worlds were those originally installed with scientific research stations. The most suitable were later expanded to permanently settled colonies, supported by Daryen: Condaria, Ektron, Engrange, Ilium, Jacent, Laberv, Mire, Roget, Rorre, Spume and 494-908. In 1105 all but Condaria are members of the Darrian Confederation.

In the course of just 400 years Daryen established a mature TL16 culture and had discovered many TL17 concepts. However, their scientific curiosity almost caused their extinction when an experiment surveying their sun, Tarnis, resulted in the Maghiz. Almost all technology failed and Daryen itself was irradiated by the resulting coronal mass ejection, killing over 80% of the population in the atmospheric holocaust. Of those few unfortunate enough to survive, 99% died in the following weeks from apocalyptic weather, radiation sickness or slow starvation.



The remainder were a handful who had been deep underground or submerged under the Zlodh Ocean, sea farming, mining or living in domed underwater complexes. Communicating with each other via meson comms, they mounted what rescue missions they could and waited for surface conditions to stabilise. Violent storms and acid rain continued to make the surface a living hell for the next decade until the damaged atmosphere finally healed.

Out of the original billions, less than a million Darrians survived. With no surface life remaining and most of the seas' ecosystem damaged by radiation, the survivors were rationed to processed algae, seaweed and a minimal allowance of fish protein provided by the one undersea farm that blessedly escaped intact. Another of the undersea arcologies was a sea floor mining vessel, which was pressed into service producing building materials to form hydroponics greenhouses. Thousands more died from despair, malnourishment and construction short cuts.

Regular observations continued to check on the surface environmental conditions. When it appeared that the sun had truly ceased erupting, sealed coastal settlements were built to begin the slow return to civilisation. Daryen society, however, had learned a terrible lesson about scientific hubris and their recovery was tempered by an emergency ruling council, empowered to prevent run-away technological progression. Over the next 600 years, the Daryen Council carefully paced recovery, slipping into an ultra conservative technocracy so that the Darrians never passed beyond TL9.

When Mire called on the homeworld in -275 with rediscovered Jump Drive technology, offering membership in its new community of independent worlds, Daryen found itself at a disadvantage. It became apparent that the technocratic precepts of the Council had purposefully stagnated their society. Public outcries were met with haughty rebuffs and the government was overthrown in a brief but bitter coup d'état.

Frustrated by the loss of so much knowledge over the centuries, yet inspired by the achievements of Mire, Daryen began a new academic renaissance. Using supplemental flora and fauna gathered from the habitable worlds of the Darrian Group, the people of Daryen focussed on restoring their planet and left politics to Mire. Over the next 1,300 years the planet forged itself into the centre of Darrian education and learning, gradually reclaiming its place at the forefront of technological research and development.

Today, Daryen still bears the scars of the Maghiz. There are extensive ruins of former TL16 cites scattered over the landscape, each treated as a sanctified memorial to the dead. These attract tourists and visitors with a scientific interest from quite far afield, as do the remains of what are now normally called 'orchards'; but access to these Ancients-built gardens,

which were home to the original Darrian civilisation, is strictly forbidden. Only excavation teams authorised by the Ministry of Information are allowed to survey the sites and any artefacts discovered are strictly controlled.

In addition to being the spiritual home of the Darrian Confederation, Daryen is also the main technological centre. The IISS has assigned a Tech Level rating of G (16) but this is slightly misleading. TL16 relics are under study and in some cases can be duplicated and incorporated into devices such as black-box components, but the world as a whole does not make use of such items on a routine basis. Most of the ultra-high technology available on planet is in the form of pre-Maghiz buildings and artefacts, which are too precious for their scientific value to be used for day-to-day tasks.

Study of the pre-Maghiz items, coupled with the Darrians' natural aptitude for research, will undoubtedly result in technological growth to surpass that of the Imperium and perhaps even the pre-Maghiz Darrians. However, even though the government of Daryen is composed largely of scientists, restrictions are in place and any potentially hazardous experimentation is very carefully considered before being implemented. The Daryen government is famous for its detailed analysis of the impact of almost every decision on the world and its inhabitants.

Modern Daryen has a population of several billion. Most of these people live on the surface in eco-friendly arcologies, contrary to popular images of Daryen as a world full of floating metropolises. The four remaining flying cities, held aloft by gravitic technology, are tourist centres or homes to off-worlders. Almost 100 million Aslan also reside on Daryen, living monogamously in the unusually dense population centres, each of which is built around a university or corporate research centre.

Points of Interest

The primary draw for tourists is the four floating cities with their surviving TL16 wonders. Save for Zlodh, each city is stationed in one of the Daryen Basins, continental sized depressions with their own central sea. Originally hundreds of these impressive constructs floated through Daryen's atmosphere but were destroyed when the Maghiz hit, plummeting from the sky and killing millions when their gravitics failed. Only four survived, shielded under the Zlodh icecap by several thousand metres of water.

After centuries of study by technicians to understand their advanced engineering, they have since been stripped and dispersed, one stationed in each basin, save for Zlodh itself. Most Darrians are reluctant to live or work on the platforms, an inherent distrust of the technology bringing long-term psychological problems. A few younger Darrians or those with fatalistic attitudes, staff the platforms that are mainly inhabited by tourists or Aslan.



The cities are disks several kilometres in diameter, domed with a transparent crystalline substance to keep out inclement weather or water when submerged. Held aloft by massive over-engineered grav modules, the immense energy requirements obligate each city to regularly drift over the seas and siphon water to extract hydrogen fuel.

The city of Rebhar, currently in the Boyr Basin, was originally constructed as a mining platform, and it gradually makes its way along the mountainous rim of the Boyr Basin extracting metal ores from the rugged rock faces.

Pororda, built to be a sea farming plant, now acts as a major tourist attraction. It floats above the Rimb Sea providing luxury accommodation, a water sports theme park and other ocean based recreations.

The Kilulga research platform was originally equipped for polar studies. It now however drifts in the high atmosphere above the Abh Basin, acting as a weather station. It is also the location of the prestigious Kilulga University, with a self contained campus.

Zehn Nyak originally a residential platform, continues in that capacity, housing a population of artists and craftsmen. The city migrates between seven coastal cities around the Nyadh Sea, its circuit matched to the seasonal markets in each location. Another popular tourist attraction, the arrival of the city at each market starts a several day long festivals and public holidays.

Another heritage site is the preserved subterranean complex of Stronghold. This was the original Solomani base established on Daryen in -1521 when the settlers first arrived on the world. Located on a high mountain plateau where the Rimb, Boyr and Abh basins meet, it was intended as a secret retreat for Solomani in the event that public opinion turned against them. By -1450, the Solomani were an accepted part of Darrian society and Stronghold became a research and manufacturing centre. It was abandoned after the Maghiz but converted to a museum after Daryen joined the Confederation.

Each basin possesses its own prestigious university, to which many of the top qualifying students in the Confederation strive to join.

Tarnis is the rapidly spinning primary star of the Darrian system. Certain instabilities are caused by its companion Red Dwarf star, with a slightly eccentric orbit, which must have ejected many of the planets in the binary system before the few remaining worlds settled into equilibrium; Daryen being the only terrestrial world left, preserved by its proximity to Tarnis. The main star is surrounded by a web of passive sensors, closely examining any changes in wobble or radiation output. In close orbit is a monument formed from the fused and melted ships caught by the Maghiz, the Darrians unwilling to cast any further objects

into the star. It broadcasts a melancholy dirge to the dead crews on a channel reserved for the memorial. Nobody ever visits the place.

A few of the gas giant moons are occupied. Most are either mining bases or research stations. Telaret, a moon of Leryin, the innermost gas giant, has a research post built by the University of Nyadh in 789. Scientists use the extensive facilities to study vacuum phenomena. On the sister moons of Yimut and Lubhizadh are mining settlements, extracting unusual radioactive alloys from the gas giant's rings.

On Poror, the innermost satellite of Bidhes, the second gas giant in the system, is the remnants of a sensor base built before the Maghiz. Its original fixtures long salvaged, the base is now being reused by the University of Boyr, who moved in during 1050, to begin low temperature and magnetism studies.

A tiny colony exists on Delung, a moon orbiting the third gas giant Panusam, occupying another early Darrian base. This settlement survived the worst of the Maghiz, being in the shadow of its planet and reputedly still has most of its technology intact. Any contact with the colony is expressly forbidden, several SDBs always patrol nearby to prevent approach.

Other bases further out around the gas giants of Renadh and Pondam, are listening stations or military outposts, providing advanced warning and naval support against any attack on Daryen. Somewhere in the outer system is rumoured to be a secret naval cache where the Confederation found their mothballed fleet of TL16 warships. Several attempts to locate other caches have been made but the Ministry of Defence dislikes anyone poking about the outlying gas giants and asteroid belts. Ships that ignore warnings tend to be deported out of the Confederation or disappear without trace.

Dorannia (E42158A-8)

Diameter: 5,743km, Gravity: 0.35g, Atmosphere: Very thin oxygen-nitrogen tainted with radioactive dust, Hydrographics: 5%, Climate: Cold, Population: 502,000, Government: Civil service bureaucracy, Manufacturing Tech Level: 8

Ecology

Bone dry, with a geology high in fissionables, Dorannia has no natural ecology of its own. Most towns are colony domes with an area dedicated to food production, which also helps keep the air fresh, but few are self-sufficient. Extra foodstuffs are brought in from the more specialised settlements, which grow bulk crops in huge environmentally-sealed greenhouses. The atmosphere is just barely breathable to a stationary Darrian but unsustainable for normal humans, not that anyone would want to inhale the radioactive dust that laces the air. To work outside requires a compressor mask or a full air supply and strict decontamination procedures when returning to a settlement.



History

Dorannia is one of a cluster of three worlds lying just off the Bowman Arm of the Spinward Main and accessible by Jump-2 ships from the Main or the central cluster of the subsector. None of these worlds are especially important and Dorannia was never claimed nor settled by the Darrians.

Settlement started relatively recently after the Third Civil War, as a mining colony extracting and exporting its rich veins of fissile ores; bootstrapping itself from a major strip mining operation to an independent world with a population numbering around half a million in just over a century. It is administered by a fairly efficient civil service government, which follows established patterns in an unimaginative way. Laws are strict, largely as a consequence of a harsh environment that can kill the unwary or careless worker. Mistakes can have terminal consequences for others, too.

Recent piratical activity has unduly affected Dorannia. The scattered nature of the world's settlements makes them ideal targets for planetary raiders, spaceborne thugs that either raid settlements for whatever they can grab or else hold them hostage under the guns of their ship, demanding tribute in return for not shooting the place up. On a sealed-environment world like Dorannia the consequences of taking fire in this manner could be catastrophic.

After a string of raids on different settlements in 1102–3, one of which wrecked the refuelling plant of the starport, the government decided to do something about the problem. A mercenary unit comprising of an armed merchant ship and associated personnel was hired for a time, providing a measure of protection in the short term and advising on the creation of planetary defences on a more permanent basis.

The latter took a form that would simply not be conceived in the Imperium. Batteries of crude nuclear missiles were installed near many of the settlements, guided by rather basic tracking and fire control equipment. The primitive design and lack of safety measures of the missiles belie their brutal effectiveness.

As an independent world nothing prevents the local townships from using nuclear weapons, although such things would be forbidden in the Imperium. With no need of regulations for their safe storage and the circumstances under which they can be used, Dorannia has launched more nuclear munitions under combat conditions since 1103 than most planetary navies have in their entire history. The fact of the matter is that 'Atomic Dorannia' has become trigger-happy with its new arsenal, an effective deterrent against most raiders.

Points of Interest

Settlements on Dorannia tend not to be very large, with towns of a few thousand being more common than large cities. The

towns are each administered by a local government, which turn answers to the central administration at the capital. Transport between the settlements is generally by rail or large, slow transport crawlers. Grav vehicles are expensive and Dorannia is not a rich world, so the few gravitic transports available tend to be in the hands of the government or well-off private owners rather than in use as commercial conveyances.

In recent years, a new industry has emerged on Dorannia. Rather than simply mining and exporting radioactives, the world's industrial base now constructs a range of fission-based power systems. These include full-sized nuclear power plants suitable to power a large town or major industrial complex as well as smaller plants for vehicles and miniature reactors for small-scale applications.

Nuclear fission is a mature technology on Dorannia, which uses fission reactors to power its towns, industrial centres, railways and even some of the larger transport crawlers. Safety records and reliability are good, although fission power will never be as safe as fusion, nor can fission match the output per unit mass of a fusion plant. Nevertheless it is a viable alternative for mid-tech worlds that want a power system that can be maintained with local resources.

Since Dorannia has no real naval capability to conduct customs inspections in space, the planet's only defence is to use the threat of annihilation. Vessels that seem even slightly suspect are targeted and told that they have numerous missiles aimed at them. They are permitted to sheer off and go somewhere else or else proceed in to land at the port very slowly and carefully.

As the guidance systems of Dorannia's missile arsenal are not the best, accuracy is problematic. Their answer is saturation fire with salvoes in the hope of a hit. As a result a typical Dorannia PAD (Planetary Aerospace Defence) missile consists of a large ground-to-orbit bus section and six independently targeted short-range missiles, each with a tactical nuclear warhead.

A number of customers now purchase these missiles from Dorannia, which has both the nearby Imperium and Darrian Confederation worried about the eventual destination of such weapons. Diplomatic efforts are being applied to shut down the trade. However, with each township willing to look the other way for a significant injection of credits into their borderline economy, the only obvious solution may be to annex the world.

Ektron (C322652-9)

Diameter: 4,724km, Gravity: 0.25g, Atmosphere: Very thin oxygen-nitrogen tainted by high levels of carbon dioxide, Hydrographics: 15%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 4,300,000, Government: Feudal technocracy, Manufacturing Tech Level: 9



Ecology

Ektron is a world in close proximity with its primary, granting it one of the shortest years in the Confederation. It has a very thin atmosphere with a mild concentration of CO₂ requiring filtered respirator masks for residents.

The low atmospheric pressure and lack of humidity has resulted in some quite strange adaptations in the native flora and fauna. Plants have evolved huge waxy fronds or other extended surface areas to allow greater gas absorption, with smaller plants storing pressurised air within internal cists, hanging pods or even bladder-like leaves where photosynthesis can be performed more efficiently. Likewise animals have developed oversized thoraxes and lungs, using internal oxygen sacs to provide emergency reserves when hunting or fleeing; and possess elaborate moisture filters in their airways to reduce water loss.

Low gravity allows most Ektron life to grow to titanic proportions. Conifer shaped cacti often reach 300 metres in height and ground based ferns can have fronds 10 metres long. Animals too experience gigantism but tend towards leanness (save for their chests) rather than bulk.

History

One of the original Darrian colonies, the native ecology was not favourable to unprotected inhabitation but plans were laid to begin a slow conversion of atmospheric carbon dioxide into oxygen, which would eventually enable residents to breathe without filter masks. To protect the native ecosystem the terraforming process was designed to last a millennium, in order to give life forms a chance to adapt to the slightly changing gas proportions. To ensure control over the procedure, the planet was covered with hundreds of atmospheric exchanger towers, which took decades to emplace.

Forewarned of the Maghiz arrival in -914, the colonists dedicated most of their limited resources to shielding their own few power stations, so that a few of the neglected conversion towers ceased functioning. Although self supporting in terms of food, Ektron lacked any form of manufacturing capability and was forced to beg for aid from Ilium, which exchanged some basic smelters and lathing machines in return for consumables. This mutual support continued until -881, when the lack of competent ship maintenance was making jumps too risky.

With limited residential space, population growth was restricted. This in turn hampered industrial development and the building of new habitats. Perseverance paid off in the end and once Ektron regained a TL6 manufacturing base, the number of inhabitants grew. Fortunately for the world, the Maghiz effects were very mild and it retained its fusion capability. Losses of the more sensitive computational devices were mainly due to wear and tear. Thus life was bearable and Ektron flourished within

the constraints of its pressurised habitats; converting most of its surface transportation systems to animal drawn vehicles and farming an ever greater number of native plant species.

By the time Mire contacted them in -274, Ektron was back up to a functional TL9 society where it has remained ever since, foreseeing no need to further industrialise with the return of interstellar trade. After the Second Frontier War, the world opened up its copious wilderness areas for Aslan settlement. The two races work well together, the Darrians farming large plantations whilst the Aslan prevent indigenous grazers from damaging the crops.

Society remains quietly pastoral. It now exports exotic teas in return for the few hi-tech manufactured goods it desires.

Points of Interest

Although the few atmospheric conversion towers which remain functional are a constant source of interest to visitors, the Ektron authorities are loathed to allow any scientific analysis of them. The sophisticated machines still work away and will eventually make the air breathable for Darrians, so nobody wants them to fail from enthusiastic tinkering. The black towers stretch a kilometre or more into the sky, shaped like graceful stalks of wheat. The centre of each one is hollow allowing air, warmed by the walls of the tower, to rise upwards where it passes through a complex honeycomb of solid state machinery. As it passes through, carbon dioxide is cracked apart with oxygen expelled upwards and a fine mist of carbon dust disperses into the winds. What prevents the carbon from clogging the machinery is unknown.

Ektron is best known for its diverse ranges of herbal teas, which are shipped all over the Confederation where they are savoured for their subtle flavours and mild narcotic effects. One particular favourite uses a type of leaf that stores carbon dioxide in its bladder-like structure. The leaves are picked near the base of the stalk and quickly sealed in containers pressurised to the leaf's own internal pressure. When steeped in hot water the structure of the leaf ruptures, allowing the gas to escape and carbonate the drink, whilst simultaneously infusing the water with a complex assortment of sweet flavours.

Whilst the world lacks aggressive animal life, some of the herbivores have been partially domesticated. A variety of mountain leapers provide wool, which is both insulating and extremely lightweight. This material is used for much of the local clothing, often dyed with natural extracts from Ektron's plants. These colourful garments, akin to ponchos, are sold to Confederation worlds whose climates are cool or colder.

Nearly a fifth of the population are Aslan, who delight in hunting the oversized native species. Many perform pilgrimages into the wild, surviving for weeks with nothing but a solar powered

respirator. Trophies are not claimed from any kills, being too large to conveniently display, but completion of such a retreat gains the Aslan a degree of respect.

Unusually, Ektron has a very liberal law level, due to its low population density and its propensity for glowing mild narcotics. Whilst few material goods are forbidden on the world, it still maintains a strong sense of social responsibility and misuse of imported or unrestricted devices and substances will still be punished.

A TERRIBLE TREASURE

In the far reaches of the Ektron system is a derelict ship, frozen and lifeless. Its design is unfamiliar, dating from pre-Maghiz times. The hull of the wreck is charred black but seems relatively intact. Internally however, under the frosting there is little left to salvage. Most of the components appear to have been irrevocably damaged from an EMP. One of the few sections to survive is the ship's black box.

Within is a harrowing recording of the vessels last hours, jumping into the Daryen system and desperately trying to escape coronal mass ejection of the Maghiz. The memory contains full sensor recordings of the wave engulfing Daryen before the captain was forced in desperation to blind jump. The ship was hit by the leading front of the plasma wave before it could escape but it was already too late for the crew who received lethal radiation doses, dying in jump. The vessel contains the perfectly preserved bodies of its Darrian crew, still at their stations.

Although little of the TL16 equipment survives, the ship is worth a fortune as a historical artefact. The sensor records alone would fetch millions from the Confederation Government for their scientific content.

Engrange (C554769-8)

Diameter: 7,300km, Gravity: 0.45g, Atmosphere: Thin oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 36%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 70,000,000, Government: Ruled from Ilium, Manufacturing Tech Level: 8

Ecology

A cool, fairly dry, world conducive to Darrian settlement. When first discovered it closely matched the environmental parameters of the homeworld but lacked any advanced ecology of its own. It was seeded with Daryen plant life, which gradually spread across the world after the Maghiz. Save for minor arthropods and some species of introduced fish, there is no significant animal life.

History

One of the original Darrian colonies, it was first occupied in with the establishment of a terraforming outpost. Cycling teams of scientists laboured for almost a century and a half to introduce Daryen's own biosphere on the world. Progress was initially slow due to bacteriological incompatibilities but some slight genetic modifications allowed the transplanted botanical specimens to take hold and start to spread.

Full colonisation was withheld until the ecosystem could mature far enough to support the planned several hundred thousand immigrants. Tragically the Maghiz destroyed the resupply ship, causing the botanists to be cut off without food, medication or portable power supplies, their primitive research station being totally dependent on regular shipments from the homeworld. Although a vessel eventually arrived three months after the disaster to find out what had happened, it was already too late, the team having starved to death on a world planted with immature seedlings.

After Ilium had recovered its own jump capability, in -40 it took advantage of its proximity to Engrange to survey the planet. The crew discovered a world thriving with new growth, the original plantings having spread like wildfire across the planet and matured in the eight centuries of isolation. Sensing a golden opportunity, Ilium nearly bankrupted itself to set up a self supporting, manufacturing capable colony. However, authoritative control was retained since Ilium wished to eventually profit from the massive investment.

Engrange remained fairly isolated from the Frontier Wars, located far enough from the border to be safe from Sword World incursions. The people of Engrange however, proved to be fiercely patriotic and, uniting with their sister world, provided many ships and troops, which fought with distinction. The few internal conflicts within their own system have been ill-fated pirate raids, believed to have been launched from the free port on Laberv. These were dealt with efficiently by the colonial squadron, in text book battles almost as if they had advanced knowledge of the assaults.

Little else of significance occurred in Engrange's history until 1055 when the first calls for independence were raised. The civil service bureaucracy on Ilium took the matter under consideration, effectively burying the question in red tape. The request was officially repeated several times, prompting sociological studies, when the Fourth Frontier War broke out. The independence issue was forgotten for more than five years, media attention drawn towards the conflict and the loss of the Entropic Group.

Eventually the population of Engrange came to the conclusion that autonomy would not be forthcoming. A small group of concerned Engrangeans began a subtle campaign of harmless



sabotage, incurring a mounting series of payouts and insurance claims, which gradually undermined profits. Once statisticians spotted the anomaly, the Ilium government reacted angrily, sending in agents to uncover the ringleaders. Excessive zeal was utilised, ending up with the deaths of several prominent Engrange citizens; and the political outfall was disastrous, demonstrations and angry mobs taking to the streets and threatening retaliation.

The Confederation Ministry of Trade intervened before things got out of hand, setting a timetable for Engrange emancipation, dependant on the achievement of economic waymarks. Spurred by the promise of independence the world is currently forging ahead with plans to meet their objective of a TL9 manufacturing capability.

Points of Interest

One of the major industries of Engrange is the exportation of Daryen plants back to the motherworld. Centuries of planetary recovery with a very small set of native plant life caused the Daryen post-Maghiz biosphere to become based upon a few dozen species. The lack of diversity made the ecosphere somewhat fragile, so Engrange has been supplying thousands more types of trees, shrubs and flowers from its comprehensive seed banks. Reintroduction has been a slow process but a lucrative one from the Engrange botanists' perspective.

The most renown natural wonder of Engrange are the Singing Canyons, a natural series of ravines that radiate out from a deep meteor crater four kilometres in diameter. The fractures have been worn down and smoothed by water, which flows into the crater forming a natural lake at its bottom. When the winds rise to gale force, they produce resonances in the canyons, rising and falling as if the wind itself was singing. The effect is supposed to be quite haunting, causing many listeners to believe that they can hear words. Strangely, soon after each breeze driven symphony the water level of the crater drops by several metres. Divers have yet to find the bottom of the sinkhole beneath the lake.

Seven million Aslan live on Engrange, freely mixing with the Darrian population. The majority work in the manufacturing complexes having little interest in forestry or botanical sciences, or are professional soldiers in the defence forces. Much to Ilium's distress, a large number of its populace continually apply for emigration rights to Engrange preferring the untainted atmosphere of the Eden-like world.

The majority of Engrange's heavy industry is based in orbit to prevent contaminating the planet, although they maintain a number of redundant factories on the surface in case of invasion. Two planetoid belts supply raw resources and are heavily mined.

Ilium (B444831-9)

Diameter: 5,720km, Gravity: 0.35g, Atmosphere: Thin oxygen-nitrogen tainted by sulphur compounds, Hydrographics: 39%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 452,000,000, Government: Scientific oligarchy, Manufacturing Tech Level: 9

Ecology

Ilium, except for its sulphuric taint, seems like a perfect Darrian planet with its warm, thin atmosphere and productive agriculture. This is because the pre-Maghiz Darrians terraformed its atmosphere by boring hundreds of deep shafts to make the planetary crust out-gas more efficiently, thus thickening the atmosphere. Unsuspected sulphurous compounds rose with the trapped subterranean gases, giving the atmosphere its distinctive taint.

To solve this problem, the Darrians seeded the barren world with bio-engineered bacteria and plants decades before human colonists settled permanently, in order to bind the worst of the taint back into the soil; but although filter masks are no longer required, even after two millennia there is still a long way to go. The rotten-egg smell is barely noticeable to natives but it is extremely unpleasant for visitors to breathe and, whilst no longer directly harmful, it still induces nausea and irreversibly impregnates clothing with its odour.

Few animal species larger than a dog roam the planet, their initial introduction prevented by the original necessity of breathing apparatus followed closely by the Maghiz, which stopped any further development.

Due in part to the puncturing of many subsurface cists, the planetary crust is still dynamically reshaping itself. Thus Ilium suffers an unusually high incidence of earthquakes.

History

Another of the original planets settled by Daryen, Ilium was considered a prime candidate for terraforming, only needing a slightly thicker atmosphere to become a perfect colony. Work started with a mammoth drilling enterprise to release gases trapped under the tectonic plates. The theory was sound but the results were less pleasant. Large quantities of poisonous sulphuric gases escaped from the bores tainting the atmosphere.

Unwilling to abort the project after investing so much effort, bioengineered microorganisms were introduced to remove the taint. By -945 the toxicity had been reduced far enough to permit initial colonisation by Darrians wearing filter masks. The first landings did not progress well however and many of the original pioneers requested their nasal nerves be severed before departure.



When the Maghiz devastated Daryen, Ilium found itself in trouble. Although possessing a limited amount of manufacturing equipment being used to construct the pressure domed settlements, it lacked consumables. In desperation they donated fabrication equipment to Ektron in exchange for food and shipped technical specialists to Mire and Roget for hydroponics experts.

Despite the warnings they had from Mire, Ilium technicians deemed the strength of the projected electromagnetic pulse to be negligible. When the gamma ray burst hit them in -920, it damaged very little of their electrical equipment. However one of the few items it did affect was a small sensor chip in their fusion plant which temporarily malfunctioned, causing a plasma surge to burn out several irreplaceable superconducting magnets. The disaster meant no energy was available unless one or more of their spaceships were left on the surface to act as power plants.

With a large population and next to no consistent power, the sustainable Tech Level of Ilium crashed. The world desperately continued intermittent mutual aid with its neighbours until -881, when the remaining jump capable ships began to show dangerous levels of unreliability.

Ilium reverted to a TL 3 society and began a hard, frustrating climb back. They were helped by the few computerised

encyclopaedias that they had managed to save but the databases were merely overviews, lacking the detailed knowledge and experience required to practically apply advanced concepts. Before Mire established contact in -275, Ilium had barely regained TL7 and was struggling to support its exploding population.

Quickly accepting membership in Mire's proposed community of independent worlds, Ilium welcomed scientists from the new capital and negotiated contracts for the purchase of jump capable ships, offering its population in trade. Conditions on the world gradually improved and Ilium began to export manufactured goods to other members of the Darrian Group.

In a clever piece of political manoeuvring, Ilium managed to lay claim to the colonisation rights of Engrange; tying up most of its shipping fleet to establish a full scale demesne. Retaining control of the second world allowed Ilium to extract a high proportion of its revenue. When the other member worlds grasped the situation they tried to overthrow Ilium's patriarchal ownership of the colony. However the government of Mire held fast to its previous agreements and the status quo was maintained.

Even with the additional finances earned from its colony, Ilium barely kept itself afloat financially. Lacking any chance of a tourist industry, its manufacturing sophistication inferior to Mire, Nosea or Daryen and native agriculture subtly tainted



with sulphurous fragrances, the Ilium government began to desperately seek some form of sustainable trade.

A solution presented itself with the outbreak of the First Frontier War, when the world was selected to host one of the Confederation's four military bases. Building the installation infrastructure and later on, supplying service personnel and material support, became the main source of income and employment. Over the following centuries, the base grew both in size and scope, encouraging the relocation of many of the Confederation's munitions manufacturing corporations to the world.

RATS IN THE WALLS

One of the few genetically manufactured species introduced to the world was a small rat-like marsupial, which was modified from a life form found on Condaria. Designed to survive in the leanest of times and act as a food source for higher predators, things began to go wrong when its designated carnivores were never introduced.

The species now breeds explosively when food supplies are plentiful. Every few dozen years a localised plague strips the land clean of almost everything, then the creatures starve and die off. Fortunately for the inhabitants, the species avoids the smell of its own dead and the populace utilise this knowledge to keep the animals away from crop lands. However, stories abound of off world visitors who fail to heed warnings and accidentally get eaten during outbursts.

Points of Interest

The Ilium military base has both an orbital and ground component for the Confederation Navy and Guard units respectively. The naval base is a 25 kilometre long, potato shaped asteroid in high orbit. The rock is riddled with a sprawling collection of hangers, dock yards, ship chandlers, munitions bunkers, administration offices, barracks, R&R bars and so on. Its surface is a sprawling mess of radiators, sensor antennae and defence weaponry. Like most military establishments, approach is forbidden except with the correct clearances.

Long years without seeing any action has made base discipline somewhat lax – a problem which is being compounded by Vice Admiral Kehyr, who shows favouritism to staff officers and has little interest outside of inter-service sporting competitions. Rumours of a Special Arm fleet admiral coming to whip him into shape or replace him, has not helped matters.

The main Guard Garrison is stationed on-planet, with most of a continent given over to training exercises and weapons testing.

Posting to Ilium is viewed as hardship punishment, the troops having more than their fair share of 'bad apples' transferred there. Non-natives never truly get used to the stink, which is not helped by the air inside the garrison buildings being filtered and purified – making each return outside more irritating. Conversely, Ilium is where many Darrian Special Forces units train, just to prove their toughness.

With their more sensitive sense of smell, Aslan cannot be deployed on Ilium without remaining within sealed environments. The few times battalions were forced to engage in wargames on the surface without their armour, the Aslan rebelled, assaulted the nearest g-carriers and returned to orbit. Whilst these episodes are the basis for many anecdotes, many Darrian NCOs have since used the world as motivational inspiration for pugnacious Aslan troops.

Catering for so many soldiers, Ilium has become a haven of permissiveness. Many forms of narcotics are available, as are a number of weapons 'acquired' from the lax logistical security of the naval base.

Due to its pervasive smell, the major imports to Ilium are deodorisers, perfumes and scented flowers, shipped in by the dTon. These scents are, by Darrian standards, unfortunately strong, a necessity driven by the population's desensitised olfactory perception.

Jacent (A333744-D)

Diameter: 4,210km, Gravity: 0.25g, Atmosphere: Very thin oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 30%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 74,235,000, Government: Representative democracy, Manufacturing Tech Level: 13

Ecology

Even though its atmosphere is very thin, Jacent is a habitable planet due to a high oxygen percentage in its air, primarily the result of extremely active marine plant life. Although its several seas support a broad native ecology, which the Darrian inhabitants make some use of, only plants inhabit the land, probably due to the high background radiation from Jacent's close orbit. The climate is cool and clammy, much heat lost via the thin atmosphere and the seas evaporating in the low pressure to form great banks of fog.

History

The second most distant planet colonised in the initial wave of Darrian expansion, Jacent was settled in order to study the huge marine species of the world, many of which exhibited odd biological mechanisms or produced medically useful compounds.

A scientific outpost was built initially, but excitement generated due to the vibrant ecology soon resulted in a plan to build an



undersea domed city. This was a significant project, requiring a tremendous shipment of mining equipment and manufacturing plants. Having to fabricate most of the parts in situ, construction was not finished for several decades, after which xenologists, zoologists and botanists flooded to the massive undersea installation.

When the Maghiz occurred, Jacent was almost self supporting. With its small fleet of courier vessels it aided its neighbours as best it could but the scientists on Engrange were dead, Rorre had no need for help, 494-908 had mysteriously gone silent and both Spume and Mire had virtually no infrastructure left. Faced with such destruction, Jacent decided to export medical supplies and hastily trained doctors.

The Maghiz struck Jacent in -914, yet the location of the city under the ocean protected it against the negligible pulse, leaving it intact save for a few days of mild communication interference. Able to manufacture some equipment with the designs pre-programmed into their fabricators, Jacent was able to continue maintaining its own infrastructure, at least until the fabricating machines themselves wore out. Its old courier ships were a different matter. Frequent jumps, despite semi-competent servicing, eventually eroded components which, without ship engineering specialists, not even Jacent could recreate. Faced with the loss of several vessels, it shut down its medical exchange program and mothballed its one remaining spacecraft.

During the time of isolation, Jacent experienced a brief backslide, but nothing as serious as the other colony worlds. Dropping back to TL10 the colony strove to restore and improve its Tech Level, but with an intellectual bias toward ecological sciences, focussed on the inner world rather than space. Despite the later censure they faced from the rest of the reformed Confederation, the colony simply lacked the technical information to rebuild jump drive capability.

When re-contacted by Mire in -273, Jacent was flourishing with a TL12 society specialised in the biological sciences but had no astronomical or air transportation capability whatsoever. In the 600 years they had exhaustively studied the native oceanic species and were beginning to tinker with the concept of creating their own sophont squid species. In addition the population were beginning to experiment with a wide range of bio-engineered substances to improve Darrian physiological capabilities and had even constructed immense subsurface tunnels to connect each of the separate seas together.

Over the following millennium, Jacent remained a backwater planet inhabited by a small population dedicated to pure scientific study. During the First Frontier War when the Sword Worlds annexed Cunnonic and briefly held Terant 340 and

Trifuge, Jacent found itself catapulted into the forefront of battle. Although the Sword World navy made several attempts to penetrate the system, the Confederation held them off, using the colony as a base of operations to repel the invaders back out of the subsector.

This rude awakening refocused the Jacent population who, from that point onwards, invested heavily in building their own colonial squadron. Fortunately for the world, none of the intermittent Sword World alliances managed to push that far into Confederation territory again. Now with the establishment of a naval base at Nosea, Jacent has once again returned to being somewhat of a backwater, albeit one producing high quality biotech and hosting the second most advanced shipbuilding yards in the Confederation.

Points of Interest

The planetary congress of Jacent consists of representatives from the world's 25 separate cities, each once an independent administrative district. They are connected by submarines to shuttle between the underwater arcologies.

Very little of the surface landmass is occupied by the inhabitants, the only structures being the incredibly well appointed space port and a few mountain huts for those wanting a holiday or to gaze out over the rolling mists. There are no predators or Darrian compatible diseases to worry about but each hut is equipped with a comm system to warn tourists of the approach of solar flares, which could inflict a mild case of radiation poisoning. There are no buildings near the seas, since the almost constant fogs are cold and clammy.

Jacent has a large number of very big sea monsters. Gargantuan sharks and seal-like creatures stand at the apex of the food chain. Of more interest to the inhabitants are a species of man sized septapod (seven tentacled) squids. These exhibit a tool using skills which first drew them to the attention of scientists, and possess amazing chameleon-like colour control of their skin pigmentation. Unfortunately, population levels of the creatures are very low, so they are considered an endangered species.

A second species of covert importance is a type of man-sized crustacean that was avoided due to its touch being invariably fatal. Recent investigations however, have revealed that the shellfish toxin appears to be an extremely powerful endorphin magnifier, literally killing its victims with an overdose of unadulterated pleasure. The results of the study are being kept secret in fear that unscrupulous people might be tempted to hunt the crustacean for its unique toxin, which has a potential market as a recreational drug.

Partly because of this reason, sport hunting is forbidden on Jacent; although most hunters usually end up being killed and



eaten by the native fauna. Some sea animals are culled for food however, certain fish and mollusc delicacies exported for their sublime flavours.

Laberv (B354443-7)

Diameter: 4,450km, Gravity: 0.25g, Atmosphere: Thin oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 44%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 73,400, Government: Representative democracy, Manufacturing Tech Level: 7

Ecology

Technically Laberv is a hospitable world, its light gravity and untainted atmosphere conducive to Darrian occupation. In reality, it remains a barren, partially terraformed planet with the drab, repetitive appearance of a giant gravel pit. What little vegetation survives takes the form of either moist lichen covering the rocks or patches of stubby grasses beaten by the constant winds. There is no native animal life, save for a single species of domesticated grazer introduced by recent settlers.

The climate is generally warm, overcast and incessantly windy, its frequent drizzle only making the planet appear more bleak.

History

Laberv, when discovered, was a small world lacking any life above primitive microbes. The scientists of Daryen decided to terraform the planet, seeing its potential as a garden world. The project however, was deferred by more important colonisation attempts, not starting until very late and sadly interrupted by the Maghiz before a proper soil substrate could be formed. Luckily for the small team of terraformers, their ships survived the disaster and they evacuated to Mire.

The world was left fallow for over a millennium before any interest was taken in it again. Seeking to reclaim Laberv before the Zhodani or Imperium became interested in its location, the Confederation Council decided to drop a prefabricated colony on the world. Proposing the project as a test of Darrian against nature, it gathered a team of hardened pioneers and sent them with the most basic facilities, unable to fund a significant colonisation attempt with their stretched resources.

Selecting a wide pampas in the lee of a rocky mountain range as the location of the first settlement, the colony landed in 154 and began their fight to survive. Although they faced no dangers from diseases or dangerous fauna, the colony lacked any form of biotic material in which to grow crops. Lacking the advanced technology of their pre-Maghiz predecessors, the colonists were faced with two options – break up rock and gravel to make sand, which could be seeded with their limited quantities of biomass; and introduce some hardy species of grass, which could take root in stony ground.

Both approaches were taken. The grasses gradually spread across the world, slowly breaking up rock for future flora to take advantage of, whilst the colonists undertook the unending labour of artificially creating soil. For centuries the population size of the world remained small, shackled to its ability to create farmable land. Hindered by the economic impossibility of importing kilotons of earth, Laberv remained a minor member of the Confederation, relegated to a problem of third rate importance.

Frustrated by no foreseeable end to a future of back breaking work, the Laberv government decided to take matters into their own hands. Visited several times by free traders and corporations of questionable legality from the Reidan sector, Laberv offered to establish an independent starport and trading facility with a 500 year lease, in return for a small percentage of all mercantile exchange. After a great deal of negotiation the lease was signed with a consortium of business interests in 616, viewing Laberv as the natural bridging point between the two subsectors.

Unfortunately, whilst much interest was expressed by Reidan traders, the Confederation took a dim view of the controversial contract, using its political influence to restrict Darrian trade flowing through Laberv. The consortium, facing financial ruin, instead opened the starport to less salubrious 'merchants', rapidly transforming the legitimate trade centre into an unofficial pirate haven.

Sensing a threat to its own shipping, the Confederation was forced to intervene but could not overturn the governmental lease without undermining the Darrian Constitution. To circumvent the problem, the Confederation invoked its defence policies, routing regular patrols through the system in 648 and eventually establishing a naval base in 701 when the pirate presence grew to endemic proportions.

Over the following decades an unspoken agreement was reached that Laberv would remain an open port for Reidan traffic in return for piratical tendencies to be restrained whilst within Confederation space. This self-policing policy worked surprisingly well, albeit causing diplomatic stress between Darrian and the more stable polities in the Foreven Sector.

Points of Interest

The small population of Laberv is scattered across the planet's single continent, which exists as an equatorial band with oceans covering the northern and southern hemispheres. About half are settled in sheltered valleys, farm smallholdings around a central township. The rest engage in a nomadic lifestyle, herding a genetically engineered type of goat, which they use for milk, meat, skins and wool that they trade with the farmers.



Each herding family drives their flocks from one sparse patch of grass to another, generally circumnavigating the world every couple of years.

One of the strange articles in the starport lease is the government's right to all sewage produced by the city. Removed from any requirement to treat their own waste, the leaseholders happily constructed a massive pipeline, which deposits the muck in a specially designed manure production plant. The

LABERV NAVAL BASE

Whilst not the shining example of a naval base, such as the one in the Mire system, or a backslider like Ilium's, the Laberv base is a strange dichotomy of professionalism and covert espionage. Posting to Laberv is viewed as a double edged sword, the planet side recreational possibilities are extensive but come with an understanding that personnel are subject to more intrusive observation by the Special Arm or Naval Intelligence. For the majority of regulation abiding Darrians, this is an acceptable sacrifice as most have nothing to hide. Some however, fear appointments to Laberv in case of past transgressions coming to light.

The navy maintains a respectful relationship with vessels that call on the system. Few ships are ever searched and in return any pirates or smugglers behave themselves. Off duty naval crew often form friendships with the rogues who regularly visit but cut them no slack when back in space. Discipline is tight with a work hard, play hard ethic. The Darrians often mount cat-and-mouse exercises using volunteer pirate vessels as targets or invasion fleets. Not only does this alleviate the boredom but also makes it clear that even while holding back, Darrian military tactics and tech far exceed anything the civilian vessels have.

Like Ilium, Laberv base uses a large hollowed out asteroid for its main shipyard and barracks. In reality however, a second, secret naval base exists at the fourth gas giant of the system. Supported by rigid dirigibles the base hides in the atmosphere, carried along by high speed winds. The base is entirely manmade, being both streamlined and possessing grav drives if ever needing to deploy to higher orbit. The million dTon headquarters has been constructed over decades by naval engineers and remains a strategic supply base capable of encapsulating cruisers for repair. It also acts as the listening post for dozens of meson linked sensors hidden throughout the system.

biomass produced by this facility is shipped to Laberv's towns where it is divided equitably between the farmsteads.

In light of the problems Laberv experiences in their slow terraforming, a scientific centre has been setup by the University of Rimb using the latest TL14 and TL15 techniques to produce more effective plants and grasses to speed up the spread of vegetation. The facility is run by Professor Davh Behlimus, famous for his botanical studies across the Confederation.

Laberv City is ostensibly the world capital in which the government maintains a tax office and a small set of diplomatic offices. In reality the city is under the control of a criminal syndicate, which makes life a bit difficult for legitimate businesses. Taking advantage of the good quality starport facilities and its low law level, the majority of Reidan smuggling passes through here. Most of the port workers are not actually Darrian citizens, for the most part being indentured workers or retired ship crew. The city now boasts a population greater than the rest of the planet, many of the staff and workers raising families there.

Ironically, the criminal enterprises now supply entertainment for Darrian naval personnel on furlough from the fleet base. This causes the Ministry of Defence a great deal of worry, prompting the navy to post its least technologically sensitive vessels in the system and subjecting crews to constant surveillance from Special Arm operatives. However, the presence of a readily accessible criminal underworld has been useful to the Confederation in the past, especially when needing to hire mercenaries or pirates for 'unofficial' missions.

Mire (A665A95-C) Darrian Capital

Diameter: 9,320km, Gravity: 0.7g, Atmosphere: Standard oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 51%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 10,300,000,000, Government: Impersonal bureaucracy, Manufacturing Tech Level: 12

Ecology

Mire exhibits a welcome climate, warm and pleasantly wet but with slightly higher gravity than usual for a Darrian world. Weather is generally benign, mostly clear sunny skies and no significant tectonic activity occurs. It possesses its own diverse ecology that appears, like its sister worlds of Rorre and Condaria, to have been tailored for Darrian inhabitation.

To preserve the ecosystem Mire has become an underground world, which allows the surface to be used for agriculture and natural preserves, the latter of which contain a wide range of herbivores and predators that generally ignore or avoid Darrians.



History

Mire was third in its colonisation efforts losing out to Condaria due to its high gravity, which Darrians found unpleasant. The existing ecosystem, however, made settlement near effortless. The colony was able to harvest native crops and animals for food, so the only support required was the shipment of manufacturing equipment to build housing for future colonists. By -950 the population had exceeded several hundred thousand and was exporting agricultural products back to Daryen to pay for its import of high tech devices. Other than Rorre it was the only colony to achieve economic self sufficiency prior to the Maghiz.

After the tragic events of the disaster, Mire was possessed with a functioning, if crude, industrial infrastructure, decided to appoint itself as the temporary centre of the remaining Darrian civilisation. Plans were laid to handle the state of emergency and its organisers, with consummate forethought, began to shepherd metallic asteroids into orbit as raw materials to build a maintenance shipyard. Rescue missions were sent to outposts known about by the Mire scientific community and emergency supplies manufactured for colonies, most of which were far from self-sufficient. The situation looked dire but optimism was high that under Mire leadership, the scattered worlds could pull through.

Then, three years after the Maghiz, a ship returning from Condaria brought terrifying news. A hitherto unsuspected gamma-ray pulse capable of crossing interstellar distances had gutted the planet's electronics, reducing it to a pre-industrial level. Projections indicated that the ship had only beaten the Maghiz wave front by a matter of days and panic ensued.

Dr. Dahn Forstuhr, a jump space engineer on sabbatical on Mire when Daryen was devastated, correctly interpreted the implications of the impending disaster and spent the remaining hours printing out a hard copy of every technical text he had.

Whilst others scrambled to build EMP shields or insert power surge protection to shelter as much electronic equipment as they could, Forstuhr loaded one of the grounded ships that he was servicing with scavenged drive component fabricators, welded them inside metal boxes and took the vessel as deep under the sea as he dared; whereupon the power plant he had also been repairing before the Maghiz warning, overheated and failed.

Trapped beneath the waves as the GRB hit, with no pressure suit, no power and surface communications disrupted, Dr Forstuhr discovered to his irony that whilst he had saved the fabricators, there was no way to let the survivors know. He spent his last days writing notes by torchlight on how to re-establish jump drive production. This selfless heroic effort eventually earned him the posthumous title of 'Saviour of the Confederation'.

On the surface of Mire, last minute emergency efforts proved next to useless against the still moderately strong pulse. Most computerised equipment died, but some newly manufactured turbines and simple electrical supply equipment, designed as relief shipments for the smaller outposts, was found to have survived and was quickly installed. Lacking mechanisation, those of the populace not assigned to food gathering were formed into recovery teams. Mire dropped briefly to TL5 but steadfastly crawled their way back up the technology ladder. After 600 years they finally regained orbit and began to make use of the resources circling the planet to construct orbital factories.

The chance discovery of Forstuhr's ship by a fishing trawler gave the people of Mire the keys to the stars. Using his detailed notes combined with the sophisticated fabricators in the vessel's hold, they managed to construct a jump drive after only two decades of work. A production line for the engines was given top priority and soon Mire was sending expeditions to the long isolated colonies.

With their technological advantage, Mire stoically restored interstellar communication and set itself up as the centre of a new community of independent worlds. Most of the re-contacted colonies were happy to follow their lead, each one contributing manpower and resources to more needy planets. This economic aid consumed most of Mire's production for several centuries, yet other, equally important issues were thrown in its lap; namely the recent settlement of all the neighbouring subsectors by new peoples.

A chance meeting with Zhodani in -187 initially allowed a frenetic exchange of trade, which greatly helped the struggling Confederation. Later it was discovered that the Zhodani had been long aware of the Darrians and withheld their aid. The revelation of Zhodani hypocrisy soured the relationship between the two, causing the Consulate to be viewed with mistrust.

Spurred by these meetings and revelations, the community was forced to revise its political structure. Later problems competing with the Sword Worlds and signing of an official alliance with the Imperium finally spelled the end of Mire holding all political power. The Confederation became an independent entity and whilst still headquartered on Mire, the world itself was regulated to an equal member of the coalition.

Points of Interest

With the largest population of the Confederation worlds, Mire remains an economic powerhouse, producing many of the generic devices and goods used throughout Darrian space. Most heavy industry is performed in orbit but, like other hi-tech worlds in the Confederation, some capacity is retained planet-side in case of war or natural disaster.



Government is a major occupation on Mire. Bureaucrats and military personnel are to be found everywhere. Most of the sector-wide corporations keep offices here. One of the major tourist attractions is the Unity Palace in the capital Theh'Id. This immense building is one of the few structures on Mire permitted to extend above the surface. It acts as the Confederation's main bureaucratic centre and military administration headquarters. Whilst the impressively tall diamond sheeted towers look suitably impressive, the real work occurs in the sub basements, heavily protected against possible orbital bombardment.

Mire is the location of the Confederation's third military base. Unlike Ilium or Laberv the base is a distributed series of small installations throughout the system, designed for multiple redundancy, each is extremely well armed and protected. Rumours suggest every minor planetoid has 90% of its internal volume filled with super-cooled water to act as an energy sump for black globe generators. Save for some Zhodani agents no one outside of the Ministry of Defence is quite sure of the truth of the matter.

The Confederation Guard have several planet-side bases, each sited inside its own mountain fortress. Basic training occurs in the more remote areas of the world where no significant ecological damage will be incurred. More challenging terrain however, requires the troops to be shipped to other planets or moons. The Guard man the subsurface meson defence system, an extensive network of deep crust tunnels in which huge cannon are mounted on rails and randomly moved to prevent advanced knowledge of their location being revealed to an enemy force.

Nosea (B2326BB-C)

Diameter: 3,133km, Gravity: 0.15g, Atmosphere: Very thin oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 20%, Climate: Cold, Population: 6,100,000, Government: Non-charismatic leader, Manufacturing Tech Level: 12

Ecology

Nosea was named by explorers who were disappointed in the small hydrographics percentage of the world. A frigid desert world, actual water coverage is about 5 percent in a series of small oases fed by subsurface aquifers; the remainder is ice-cap.

The planet lacks any indigenous life forms. Some life has been introduced by later settlers, cacti and plants with palm-like foliage which grow around the intermittent small pools and several species of warm-blooded reptiles adapted to arid conditions. Unfortunately, several types of flies introduced to provide an intermediate step in the food cycle have adapted to life away from the oases and are endemic save at the polar icecaps, where their numbers become more tolerable.

History

After its discovery by early Darrian scout teams, Nosea was passed over for colonisation, much better planets being available elsewhere. No activity occurred on the planet until the First Frontier War. During a blitzkrieg by the Sword Worlds, which briefly captured Terant 340 and Trifuge, Nosea was utilised as a forward post by the invading navy, using the icecaps as refuelling points. A crude installation was erected but, several months later, the Sword Worlds were repulsed back to Cunnonic.

The world remained abandoned until 617 when the Confederation military decided it would be prudent to fortify the system in case of an opportunistic attack by the Sword Worlds, whilst the Imperium remained distracted, embroiled in its own civil war.

Although no threat materialised, the Darrians found that Nosea formed a convenient location for a strategic base and continued to support its existence. Civilian population brought in to mine ice for fuel, also ran part time businesses providing entertainment for off duty troops. Almost by accident a colony began to form, barely sealed prefab shacks were slowly replaced with more permanent fused glass buildings, the original bars expanded to include holo-theatres, gaming halls and workshops to service military equipment.

Around 1075 the Confederation refocused its efforts on building a major military base at Entrope, over the next few years gradually reducing its military presence on Nosea to the point of bringing the native population to economic collapse. Disgruntled by the lack of consideration shown by the naval admiral in charge of the entire planet, the civilian inhabitants demanded the right to open up the world to non-Confederation shipping. Stone walling from the military eventually resulted in an increasing level of agitation until the world was placed under martial law to keep the peace.

Renewed aggression by the Sword Worlds in the Fourth Frontier War reversed the garrisoning problem; Nosea being significantly reinforced in expectation of the Entropic World blitzkrieg continuing down through Trifuge towards Mire. Although frightened by the prospect of war, as time passed the population of Nosea realised the annexation of Entrope and its sister worlds was a boon of incalculable worth, base personnel expanding by a factor of 10. The influx of new troops swamped the local economy with credit, allowing the world to make serious investments into its own industrial base, in turn drawing further immigration.

Since the end of the Fourth Frontier War, several brigades of Imperial Marines have been seconded to Nosea where they train Confederation Guard units in planetary assault and drop troop tactics.



Points of Interest

The surface of Nosea is a diverse combination of rocky and sandy deserts, with rock formations providing crumbling cliffs, gullies and mesas to break up the terrain. These surface features are put to good use by the Confederation Guard and Imperial Marines, who are forced to perform extensive exercises in the frigid climate. The only upside is that training missions allow them to wear full combat armour, which is the only protection against the incessant swarms of biting sand flies that plague everyone.

Due to its extremely light gravity, much of the naval base is actually planet-side. Several main installations are placed around the equatorial belt. Each has huge bunker doors that slide open to reveal subsurface hangers for ships of up to 100,000 tons. Munitions, rations and vehicle storage are extensive as befits a full fleet logistical centre. The barracks alone provide room for 50,000 troops but save for a brief period during the Fourth Frontier War the base is rarely manned to full capacity. The insidious flies can be found even inside the supposedly hermetically sealed bases.

A civilian starport, separate from the naval base, is located in the northern icecap adjacent to the capital. It primarily serves as a refuelling point for traders transiting through the 'Gram Arm' of the Spinward Main. Vessels registered in the Sword Worlds are not made welcome in-system, but are always given access to fuel if requested, escorted by a SDB.

Most of the capital is built into the ice, which is completely static and ranges from two to five metres thick. Aside from the military entertainment quarter, few natives actually live in the capital. Most commute from small settlements beyond the edge of the icecap where the temperature is slightly warmer and rock buttes grant spectacular scenery.

The natives, used to the devilish insects, wear skin tight Advanced Desert Suits (see page 155 of the **Central Supply Catalogue**), thick cowled robes and full face respirators, which prevent the flies from biting them. Most private homes are full of the sweet smell of smoking incense, which helps to keep the insects outside. The residences are generally carved out of natural rock with large windows overlooking the rich ochre and reds of the desert and some sort of waterfall or fountain feature to fill the home with delicate noises of tinkling water.

Roget (B566777-9)

Diameter: 7,133km, Gravity: 0.45g, Atmosphere: Standard oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 56%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 40,000,000, Government: Multiple societies, Manufacturing Tech Level: 9

Ecology

Another of the garden worlds beneficially positioned close to Daryen, the planet is an idyllic paradise. Warm with few clouds and plenty of sun, the weather is more violent than is typical for a Darrian world, with hurricanes occurring frequently. Vegetation is verdant; a large proportion of the planet covered in luxuriant jungle. The highlands are generally veldt covered plateaus.

The planet is inhabited by a vibrant swathe of large animals, many of which are dangerous and reproduce at an extremely high rate. This leads to strange swings in carnivore/herbivore ratios. The predators over breed, causing mini extinctions of their own food source, before turning on each other and clearing the path for another wave of herbivore expansion.

History

When settled Roget was expected to become self sustaining in short order. However, Darrian occupation drew the attention of the native animal life, forcing the colonists to erect fences and other deterrents to keep the fauna pacified, since their high breeding rates repopulated culled areas in the space of months.

These difficulties slowed down the rate of colonisation, so that by the time of the Maghiz, less than 30,000 inhabitants were residing on world and they lacked a fully developed industrial infrastructure. Warned of the approaching pulse, the colonists relocated into a more mountainous region, which provided better natural defences against the native life forms and allowed access to the resources that their leaders predicted they would need.

Despite the mild effect on their existing electronics, the colonists had no way of replacing invaluable equipment. Their backslide stopped at TL4, managing to hang on by adopting a slash and burn strategy which finally turned the tables on the fauna. By -860 when intersystem communication ceased, Roget had recovered to proto TL5 and survival seemed relatively guaranteed.

The next contact with Roget, by a Mire scout ship in -275, failed to locate the colony. Guessing incompetence, a second mission was sent three months later equipped with better sensors. This time the location of the colony was discovered, strangled by hundreds of years worth of cloud forest growth. There was no sign of the colonists. Despite several more trips with forensic and archaeological teams, no trace of Darrian occupation save for the original buildings could be discovered.

Unable to discover the ultimate fate of 30,000 colonists, the planet was placed under interdiction, access only permitted to occasional science teams who scoured the world each



time a new breakthrough was made in sensor technology, or a historian came up with an increasingly preposterous theory explaining the settler's absence.

With the conclusion of the Second Frontier War, the Confederation offered their Aslan allies land of their own to settle, granting them the right to pick whatever territory they liked. To the Darrians' surprise a large contingent of the Aslan selected Roget, adamant even after the Confederation explained the circumstances of the uninhabited world's Red rating.

Five Aslan clans settled the planet each claiming a separate continent, preferring their own company and culture to assimilation with Darrians. However, since the Aslan of Roget provided the best combat troops in the Confederation, four centuries of retiring ex-military veterans slowly eroded many racial strictures.

Today the majority of Roget's Aslan are fluent in Te-zlodh, which has increasingly supplanted Trokh as the primary language of trade and friendship, the latter now reserved for formal occasions. Whilst they still stick to the traditions of territory and pride, the inhabitants of Roget are fully accepting of Aslan who wish to live as their Darrian brothers.

Points of Interest

Although ruling their own regions with strict autonomy, the clans settle planetary decisions amicably, working well together for mutual benefit. Roget's starport, a hollowed out minor planetoid, was built as a joint effort between the clans, its orbital location chosen to pass over each territory with relative equality. As traditionalists, many of the native Aslan lack the education to maintain the station, which is staffed by a very large population of Darrian technicians and sociologists.

Despite initial worries that Roget would prove to be some form of Pandora's box, no disaster has yet befallen the Aslan. Indeed the race has thrived on the violent world, the indigenous species providing great hunting challenges and recovering at a high enough rate to sustain the high population level of Aslan.

Rorre (D765657-3)

Diameter: 10,600km, Gravity: 0.9g, Atmosphere: Standard oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 50%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 1,224,000, Government: Philosophic sociocracy, Manufacturing Tech Level: 3

Ecology

Although possessed of a warm and mild climate, this world experiences a gravity that is considered hellish by many Darrians. It has an extensive botanical ecosystem similar to pre-Maghiz Daryen, providing many edible fruits and vegetables.

Animal life is minimal however, limited mainly to innocuous insects and some avian species which feed on them, or the nectar and sap of the indigenous plants.

History

The first world to be settled by Darrians, it was named after the colony's founder. Ghorge Rorre selected the planet not for its proximity or ecosystem but rather for the unpleasantly high gravity. He foresaw potential problems for his luddite settlement, fearing they would be displaced if they occupied a paradise. So choosing the worst planet within range of a single jump, he requested that Rorre be granted as a sanctuary for those who wished to avoid the environmental corruption of higher technology.

Seeing no possible use for the world, Daryen granted his request and made it a protectorate but left the organisation and funding of the proposed colony in Rorre's hands. With a local cadre of followers all obstacles were overcome and the pioneers landed on their new planet. Their efforts were closely studied by scientists who were hopeful of soon colonising the other nearby worlds.

Many troubles were experienced with the higher gravity, yet overcome by stoic endurance. New techniques had to be mastered by the initial settlers whose purpose was to clear land and build shelters for the next delivery of colonists. Tools weighed more than twice what the Darrians were used to; torn muscles and broken bones became endemic, slowing progress. The colonial arrivals began to bottleneck but Ghorge Rorre was determined that their colony should be built with only the level of technology that they would live with forever more.

It took 30 years of backbreaking labour before all of Rorre's followers were finally transported to their new world. Life was subsistence level farming, with any spare time being used to expand dwellings or craft fabric for clothes. Yet the colony was completely independent, having even brought medical plants with them for homeopathic remedies.

The planet took its toll on the colonists, the high gravity causing early heart failures and even a simple fall could prove crippling. Childbirth proved to be especially difficult and for several decades it seemed that the colony would fail, unable to replace its numbers. Many settlers died before the first children reached reproductive age but despite refusing medical aid from Daryen they did accept a steady trickle of further colonists, bolstering their population.

When Rorre died only 17 years after setting foot on the planet, still middle aged, they named the world in his honour and continued with his vision.



By the time of the Maghiz, the colony was beginning to flourish. A third generation were approaching adulthood and although shorter and stockier than their parents and the few grandparents who survived to see them, they were beginning to adapt to the higher gravity. Arthritis and congestive heart failure were still commonplace but each new generation lived a little longer.

The disaster had little affect on the colony but served to raise the spirit of Ghorge in the eyes of his people. Technology was something to be treated with respect and not pursued unnecessarily. The planet's constitution forbade any technological development beyond TL3 but did not prevent the theoretical advancement of knowledge. Some colonists had been eminent scientists or philosophers and lacking any other form of entertainment they began to hold classes concerning their subjects to debate theoretical advances. Hard sciences, requiring empirical observations, soon fell by the wayside leaving the social sciences at the forefront of debate.

Over the centuries social dynamics began to orientate communities around particular philosophical teachers, eventually becoming the structure of planetary government. Ethics, meditation and health improving martial arts became central to life.

Re-contact by Mire in -275 was treated with polite indifference but created the need to set aside a region for small craft to land. Permission to build an orbital port facility was granted and a group of 'cultural interpreters' were trained to liaise with anyone wishing to land on planet. Those more gravity tolerant visitors who did were so impressed by the peaceful society and polite generosity of the colonists, that they spread their positive impressions to family and friends.

Sensing a genuine interest in their teachings and understanding the inherent distress caused by their high gravity, the Rorrites permitted the construction of a limited number of monastic retreats utilising grav plates built into the floors to provide a more comfortable environment for visitors. Before long, Rorre had become a favoured location for psychological treatment, self analysis and philosophical study, the world's long seasons allowing extended vacations or sabbaticals for scholars and businessmen alike.

The one significant event that greatly changed Rorre was the psychic purges in the early 800s. Fleeing the Imperium, a large number of psionics sought asylum in the Confederation. Those who were accepted found themselves secretly transported to Rorre, where they discovered a large incidence of native Darrian psionic practitioners. All were made welcome, ultimately adding to the world's gene pool.

Today many of the inhabitants of Rorre are psionically active in one way or another. Few ever reveal their abilities to outsiders

and fewer still leave their world save for special attachment to the Confederation government. Instead they use their gifts to make visitors welcome or in the treatment of psychological disorders.

Points of Interest

Rorre is, for Darrians, one of the most popular resort locations in Confederation space, but the number of tourists allowed to visit each year is limited, due in part to its very low population level. The relaxing climate, friendly welcoming people and lack of telecommunications makes every visit a refreshing experience... whilst in the gravity controlled retreats. Travel outside the few permitted technological enclaves is permitted, but requires the use of a medical exoskeleton (see Darrian Equipment) or dedicated training for the gravity, depending on what the visitor is used to.

Crime is nearly non-existent and deaths only occur from misadventure. Violence is not tolerated but will be stopped, if necessary, with force in order to protect the greater good.

With a society held at TL3 the inhabitants have access to simple electrical devices such as lighting or telegraph systems but tend to avoid using such devices if a more natural solution can be found. Oil lamps fuelled from an inflammable tree sap are preferable to incandescent bulbs, for example.

Housing often takes the form of hollow arbours, specially trained to grow in the fashion of the now extinct Orchard trees. Other residences can be anything from a roofed platform built in the canopy of a forest, to a sophisticated log cabin.

Rorre follows the strict interpretation of Yikan Yikan's philosophy 'All living things must be allowed to live their lives', so all food on the world is vegetarian. Rorre cooking is a delight, with an expansive range of fruits, nuts, vegetables and salads prepared with different flavoured plant based oils and seasoned with countless subtle spices.

Spume (C140200-A)

Diameter: 1,460km, Gravity: 0.05g, Atmosphere: Thin tainted, Hydrographics: 0%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 428, Government: None, Manufacturing Tech Level: A

Ecology

Spume is little more than an minor planetoid, internally heated by its high concentration of radioactive heavy metals. The internal heat has resulted in very strong volcanism, which is out gassing a thin oxygen nitrogen atmosphere, tainted by radioactive gases. With no significant gravity, most of the atmosphere is blown away by the stellar wind.

The combination of temperature, toxic atmosphere and intense radiation, prevents any form of life existing on the surface. It



gained the name Spume from the immense volcanic plumes that arch above the world like fountains hundreds of kilometres tall. The constant ash fall covers the surface like a multicoloured patchwork.

History

Originally colonised by Daryen, Spume, like Anselhome, was settled for resources rather than comfort. No attempt was made to terraform a world so unsuitable for living. It simply granted easy access to rare metals, especially radioactive ores constantly being extruded by the active volcanoes.

Initially a large refining complex was built, utilising automated robotic miners to collect and process the ore. A few Darrians remained on world to oversee the equipment, although little intercession was required. When the Maghiz cut off the mining complex, they abandoned the station, evacuating to Mire.

Mining teams returned in -263 seeking to reopen Spume as a source for rare metals, but no sign of the original complex remained, the machines and refineries long since engulfed by volcanic outfall. A reconstruction effort began, the world's convenient proximity to Daryen making export of refined ores increasingly worthwhile. However, the new manufacturing complexes remained modest, conditions on the planet being remarkably deadly for Darrian workers.

During the first and second Frontier Wars, Spume remained of minor strategic consideration. The Sword World fleets concentrated their efforts coreward, maintaining their annexation of the Entropic Group and the cluster of worlds below them. In the Fourth Frontier War, the Sword Worlds changed strategy, targeting Spume as part of a plan to undermine the Darrian Confederation's manufacturing capability.

The unexpected incursion took Darrian commanders by surprise and the mining operations were heavily damaged from a forward probe. Responding to this threat, a picketing force was posted to the system, just prior to the main spearhead sent to capture it. The Sword World squadron was neatly ambushed, the survivors sent back with a bloody nose. Since that battle, Spume has retained a small squadron to dissuade incursions from Narsil and is now the location of a Confederation naval base.

Over the last few decades various mining companies with investments in Spume amalgamated their various efforts, resulting in the formation of the **Pihrund** Corporation. The virtual monopoly has allowed construction of a domed village called Dryavis, from which remote mining machines are directed. These advanced facilities have cut down the loss of life, which Spume has reaped over the years, miners and technicians rarely having to venture out onto the surface to direct excavations first hand.

The population remains small and transient, only enough remote operators to control the machines and administration staff to support them. Wages are high to compensate for living in the domed environment and cover the constant dangers posed by eruptions.

Points of Interest

Spume is considered a hardship post for most naval personnel. The base is an orbital complex around the one gas giant present in the system, Spume itself being considered too unstable for permanent facilities, even in orbit. As with most of Darrian's naval bases, it is located within a small planetoid, which acts as a heavily reinforced fortification. Unfortunately, the lack of a ground base or local population to run recreation centres makes the base a rather utilitarian place. The main TL10 manufacturing facilities are actually part of the naval dockyards that maintain the fleet stationed there.

Numerous other installations are scattered across the system, providing observation posts, resupply points and covert missile pods loaded with stealth torpedoes. It has been turned into a major stumbling block in case of invasion via Narsil.

With very little observation or interaction from the locally posted naval forces, Spume has been left to develop as it will. Rumours have begun to spread that the **Pihrund** Corporation has begun to terminate long standing contracts with existing staff, replacing its workforce with cheaper labourers. Wherever the new workers are coming from, the profit margins displayed by the company in recent months have seen significant improvements.

The planet itself is a treacherous place with a subtle rain of dust and small gravel from high orbit. Although gravitational acceleration is low, the small rock fragments can still pack a punch, threatening Vacc Suits not properly armoured for the environment.

Earthquakes too are a major threat. The domed village is heavily over engineered against the risk of fracture. Dryavis has yet to experience a class 10 quake, which a few pessimists claim will shatter the structure completely. Some of the miners have taken to sealing their private residences and installing bulkheads inside, which can pose some problems when moving around inside the accommodation modules.

A number of old-timers who have worked on Spume all their lives spout wild tales about the vanished pre-Maghiz base. Their stories claim that the base still exists, buried under centuries of volcanic outfall, its storage bunkers stuffed with an emperor's ransom of precious metals; platinum, iridium and radioactives. On retirement some miners go out on personal survey missions but the base has yet to be located and the trips often claim the lives of those who search for it, lost or killed whilst exploring the volcanic fissures which litter the landscape.



Stern-Stern (B321558-B)

Diameter: 4,803km, Gravity: 0.25g, Atmosphere: Very thin oxygen-nitrogen, tainted by fluorine/chlorine compounds, Hydrographics: 6%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 700,000, Government: Feudal Technocracy, Manufacturing Tech Level: 11

Ecology

Stern-Stern is a life bearing world but suffers from an atmosphere tainted by fluorinated and chlorinated compounds. The burning sensation on the eyes and nasal passages, combined with the astringent odours, are so strong that the local population find it necessary to install full life support systems in their homes to filter out the chemicals.

Atmosphere aside, Stern-Stern has a primitive ecology based on fern-like cactuses. The extreme aridity prevents most plants from exceeding man-height. They survive by condensing trace amounts of water vapour on their fronds. Animals likewise are specialised for desert survival being vividly coloured crustaceans, which mainly browse the ferns. They pose no danger to the colonists, who often keep the small creatures as pets.

Stern-Stern does experience quite violent weather, such as hot simooms but since the air pressure is so low it has little significant effect on people or structures. Save for sunrise and sunset, the sky is generally a deep indigo and cloudless. Nightfall sometimes causes the little existent water vapour to condense into a thin mist. Days are very hot and nights similarly cold.

History

Not one of the worlds considered for colonisation due to its almost corrosive atmosphere, Stern-Stern was selected for industrial development instead. A few mining installations were created, which ran with minimal supervision.

After the Maghiz the world continued to produce metals for those colonies desperately short of construction materials. Gradually though, trade ships ceased arriving, Stern-Stern's out of the way location making it difficult to reach them. Faced with a slow extinction, the Darrians abandoned the planet since it lacked any form of edible agriculture, the chlorine of the atmosphere finding its way into fruits and vegetables planted on the surface.

With its mining and manufacturing equipment mothballed, the workers shielded the machinery as best they could, lacking any other use for their stockpiled metals. Their efforts to protect the industrial infrastructure against the predicted EMP although conscientious were a waste of effort, since the fading gamma-ray burst barely caused even radio interference.

After the resuscitation of Darrian interstellar travel, Stern-Stern was left abandoned for generations, no world having the time, resources, or perhaps more importantly, the inclination to reopen the factories there. Eventually in -31 a volunteer group of Ilium residents were convinced to settle on Stern-Stern with the promise of pre-Maghiz technology to help them restart operations. Even they found the atmospheric taint beyond endurance and the planet was abandoned for a second time.

For a while the future of the planet looked grim. In 117 several Daryen universities sent out archaeological expeditions to recover as much high technology from the mothballed industrial centres as possible. Much of it had been looted over the decades but their surveys showed that enough of the infrastructure remained to begin profitable aluminium alloy and crystaliron processing. Some factories still retained their robotic production lines and automated form moulding devices to forge programmed bespoke components.

By 133 a new series of colonising ships had arrived at Stern-Stern carrying prefabricated residential accommodations and new air filtering devices to cope with the planet's taint. A core team of 10,000 colonists began to overhaul the mining complexes, fitting jury-rigged patches for sections that no longer functioned or had been scavenged in the past. Ingenuity and hard work paid off, the world shipping its first cargos of crystaliron within 18 months.

The new colonists continued expanding the industrial complexes, the raw resources eagerly gobbled up by the reviving Confederation. Whilst profitable, finding people to emigrate to Stern-Stern was exceptionally difficult. In desperation the world even offered an amnesty for exiles that would be willing to work for a new start. The move proved to be exceptionally popular but was eventually shut down by the Confederation over fears of turning Stern-Stern into a seditious world of resentful inhabitants.

Enough new settlers were attracted to boost the planet's economy, which gradually achieved self sufficiency by the middle of the next century. Few things of note happened to the planet after that time, save the increased productivity required during the frontier wars and the lead-up to the Darrian's liberation of the Entropic Group in 788.

Despite being the leading manufacturer of prefabricated metal sheets, girders and any other submitted form, Stern-Stern has perhaps overly relied on its existent pre-Maghiz machinery. Whilst advanced, the factories are dedicated to specific types of fabrication, which has prevented the world from diversifying into other types of production. With some serious investment, Stern-Stern could easily be a source of higher Tech Level materials and devices.



Points of Interest

Stern-Stern is a major transition point for commerce with the Reidain sector. In fact much of its output is traded with worlds in the neighbouring region. Since the sector has a bad reputation for piracy, only armed traders ship finished goods across the border, sometimes forming convoys under the protection of one of Stern-Stern's naval escorts to ensure security. Unlike Laberv, pirates are not permitted in the system.

The factories and mining machines are actually huge mobile gravitic vehicles capable of moving towards the closest mine supplying the material required. Much of the production continues during the movement, often with several different machines engaging themselves in a giant land-train. The open-cast mining machine leading, its ore shunted into the next factory in line that refines the ore into metal, which in turn is passed back to a component builder, and so on.

The degree of harvesting is so great that the planet's surface is literally scarred by the tracks of the huge harvesting machines. With such immense amounts of industrial activity, the atmospheric poisoning is actually getting worse, not better.

Most visitors are loathed to visit Stern-Stern because of its terrible acrid chlorine smell. Those that do descend to the world wear cheap disposable Vacc Suits, which are junked after use. Normal clothing, even if purged of the scent, tends to fall apart several washes later.

Terant 340 (D1405A7-9)

Diameter: 1,100km, Gravity: 0.05g, Atmosphere: Thin oxygen-nitrogen, tainted by dust particles, Hydrographics: 1%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 520,000, Government: Charismatic Dictator, Manufacturing Tech Level: 9

Ecology

Terant is a small planet located on the edge of an asteroid belt. It is a desert world that unusually has a thin breathable atmosphere. Heavily cratered from the constant bombardment of other asteroids, the world has a bleak, blasted appearance. It has no natural ecosystem, due to the severe lack of water, which in turn causes atmospheric problems with dust.

With no water to wash particles out of the air, winds whip up the highly abrasive dust causing vision to be limited in the haze. Storms can be very bad despite the low air pressure, fine motes of dust scouring most materials and penetrating any environment or device not sealed against vacuum. The dust gives the sky a ruddy orange glow but limits vision to a few kilometres. Breathing the air without filters induces breathing problems, from a combination of irritation causing chronic coughing and the gradual scarring of lung tissue.

The planet is the largest chunk of circling debris prevented from coalescing into a planet by the disturbing influence of the white dwarf companion and three gas giants. The system has no other worlds between gas giant and planetoid size.

History

Located away from the Darrian Group, Terant 340 was not involved in the major colonisation efforts. A research station was set up to observe astrophysical anomalies that fascinated Darrian physicists. After observing some odd gravitational interactions between the planetoids and the usual gas density attracted to the planet, a decision was made to establish a permanent science base. Soon after however, the project was placed under a security restriction, access forbidden to non-cleared personnel.

Studies continued on the world investigating the secret behind its abnormal atmosphere but were cut short by the Maghiz. The science base was one of the few installations completely cut off from the remnants of civilisation, a victim of its now covert nature. When no supply ships arrived the science staff came to the chilling conclusion that they had been quarantined.

Although they had a breathable atmosphere, water was in chronic shortage, the majority of supplies dedicated to the hydroponics gardens. A massive project was undertaken to use their few non-jump capable spacecraft to redirect some comets into close orbit in order to mine them for water. The effort took years to reach fruition, almost ending in disaster when one of the improvised tugs burned out its drive and the comet struck the planet. Fortunately the damage inflicted was mild and the scientists were able to overcome most of the problems incurred.

Ultimately, although the effects of the EMP effects of the Maghiz were barely detectable, the population of Terant suffered the same backslide as the other colonies. Lack of medicines, no replacements for worn equipment and the necessity of constant work to maintain what functional facilities remained, all conspired to undermine the educational standard of the next few generations; their knowledge regressing to what was needed to survive.

When they were discovered six centuries later, the inhabitants had devolved to a caste society, where the priesthood withheld what little science knowledge remained in order to retain autocratic control over the plebeian class. Since their original facilities had not been expanded the population density was on the verge of collapsing the environmental systems, forcing the degenerates to instigate a number of draconian eugenic policies.

Emergency support from Mire aided the struggling population, which refused to abandon their home. With supervision from



psychoanalysts, the colony was brought back from their cultural precipice, new domes erected against the lung scarring dust and more water ice asteroids brought to the world for mining.

The social guidance combined with additional resources merely allowed the population to explode, placing a greater and greater strain on the welfare support keeping them alive. Eventually, under reforms brought by the Darrian Confederation, money ceased being spent on increasing residential space and was invested into an asteroid mining infrastructure instead. Forced to become self sufficient, the residents of Terant 340 finally began to integrate with mainline Darrian society.

Things took a brief turn for the worst during the First Frontier War when the Sword Worlds annexed Cunnonic and briefly held Terant 340 and Trifuge. The occupation was brief but a time of terror for the residents, threatened with the destruction of their pressurised settlements. Lacking much of an industrial base to arm themselves, the people of Terant had little to fight with, save for the rocks they had then spent centuries shuttling and mining for resources.

Using mass accelerators normally used to throw refined ores across the belt, the inhabitants of Terant launched a covert war, sending large boulders of blackened nickel-iron coasting on ballistic courses in the paths of patrolling Sword World ships. The first vessels lost were considered random accidents but as a pattern emerged the Sword World fleet extracted savage reprisals, opening fire on civilian domes.

Faced with potential extinction, the miners used everything they had as weapons, even ramming the warships with bulk cargo haulers in suicide attacks. Although the cost in lives sapped an entire generation, their loss was not in vain. Damage to the annexing fleet allowed the Darrian Navy to perform a counter-strike, forcing the Sword Worlds back to Cunnonic.

After this dreadful experience, Terant built multiple underground bunkers to help protect the general populace in case of direct attack. They also armed their system with aid from the Confederation.

Points of Interest

Ruled by a charismatic dictator, Terant still clings to elements of the weird social structure it formed during its isolation. Despite being elected to the office, the dictator holds all authority over the world. Fortunately most dictators are chosen for their wisdom and foresight, and are generally benevolent.

Terant 340 is the source of the Confederation's best Zero-G miners and engineers. Their expertise is used for space construction across the subsector, especially in the creation of

covert bases for the military. Adapted to long voyages cooped up in the tiny cabins of asteroid mining ships, Residents of Terant 340 are especially sought after for the crews of couriers or scout craft.

The world itself is of interest, since it possesses a substantial atmosphere with no obvious means of keeping it. Both the origin of the gases and their retention without significant gravity appear impossible according to standard physics. No scientists can yet explain the situation, nor the other oddities concerning the movement of the stellar bodies in system.

A constant stream of debris rains down on Terant, objects perturbed from the asteroid belt. This has led to some interesting entertainments. Watching the night sky is a beautiful experience, with shooting stars occurring every 10 seconds on average. A popular gambling game is to predict the number of meteorite strikes on a residential dome in a set period of time, the thinner atmosphere allowing a greater number of objects to reach the ground before burning up. Other 'gambling games' involve driving across the desert terrain in open-topped wheeled vehicles during particularly spectacular meteor storms.

Being struck by a meteorite is uncommon but it does happen, more often to miners in the belt than walkers on the surface. This has led to a degree of fatalism amongst those living on Terant, 'Your life is yours until the falling lady stings'.

MYSTERIOUS PLANET

The truth behind Terant 340's ability to retain an atmosphere lies with a series of machines lodged under the planetary crust. Originally installed by the Ancients 330,000 years before, these wondrous devices appear to defy the laws of conventional physics. Drawing gases to the planet as if under the influence of gravity.

The pre-Maghiz Darrian scientists discovered this amazing secret but knowledge of it was lost during their struggle for survival. Elements of their discovery were preserved in their unique culture; several stories refer to the source of life lying deep under the earth. One tale in particular concerns a mighty scholar who explored the labyrinths under the world, where she found a god. The deity held all secrets within his hands, so the scholar sat and argued with it, eventually gaining the boon of breathing.

If the Darrians were able to rediscover the Ancient's machinery, they would have the chance to learn how to apply gravity to affect **specific** elements. The potential of such a scientific breakthrough could be incalculable.

Torment (X233000-0)

Diameter: 2,420km, Gravity: 0.15g, Atmosphere: Very thin oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 32%, Climate: Cold, Population: 0, Government: None, Manufacturing Tech Level: 0

Ecology

Torment is a miserably cold and barren world, utterly desolate save for a single currently abandoned penal settlement. The winds whine incessantly across the surface, blowing flurries of fine snow. The environment consists of exposed rock, frozen sand and ice sheets. No animals or plants live on the world.

History

Named for its harsh climate and lack of ecology, Torment was never colonised by Daryen or the Mire interstellar community. The world offered no ready resources and was left fallow until 813 when the combined Ministries of the Darrian Confederation decided to use the world as a penal colony, for the most incorrigible of criminals, those whom Darrian psychologists had judged impossible to cure of violent tendencies. Being considered too dangerous to simply exile they were dropped on-planet where they could do no further harm except to each other.

The inmates of Torment were left to govern themselves with no supervision, the prison governed by a hierarchy of criminals who demanded obedience from their fellow convicts; those who refused suffering extreme brutality or death. Initially extremes of violence proliferated but the brutality established equilibrium, since food and supplies were only granted for a like exchange of manufactured materials. Thus the killing of members of the workforce was self defeating. During this period the UWP of Torment was X233268-4.

This penal colony continued until the Fourth Frontier War, when the Entropic Group was annexed by the Sword Worlds for the second time. A lightning strike into the Torment system destroyed one of the cruisers on picket duty and critically damaged the second. Faced with an untenable strategic position, the Darrian Confederation withdrew from Torment, abandoning the penal colony.

When Darrian scouts next entered the system, no trace of the prisoners remained. However, the bodies of recognisable inmates were later discovered on a number of improvised commerce raiders destroyed during acts of piracy within Darrian space. Whether Sword World troops had liberated the prisoners or the inmates had contrived their own escape remained unknown.

At the conclusion of the Fourth Frontier War, Torment ostensibly stayed as Darrian territory, mainly due to the lack of anything worthwhile in the system for the Sword Worlds to bother

claiming. Occupying the system however remained a bone of contention. The Confederation Council wanted to reopen the penal colony but the Ministry of Defence vetoed the decision, explaining that any ships left on guard duty would be exposed to the predilections of the Sword World's Joyeuse Fleet, currently occupying the three neighbouring systems of the Entropic Group.

Thus Torment currently remains unoccupied, a zone of sporadic engagement for scouts of the Darrian and Sword World navies. A consequence of losing their main incarceration facilities has led to a gradual increase of capital punishments in the Darrian legal system, no other world desiring a new penal colony built in their own back yard.

Points of Interest

Very little of interest remains in the Torment system, save for a number of floating wrecks drifting in its outskirts. Lacking even a gas giant for refuelling, salvaging operations are problematical without significant foresight and planning. Remaining in the system for an extended period inevitably draws attention from covert military ships of one side or the other.

Anyone with a morbid curiosity can freely land on the world and investigate the penal colony. Some of the graffiti and the cemetery are rather shocking, including the graves of Darrian naval officers who survived the loss of their cruiser, abandoning ship in small craft. Their fate at the hands of the inmates is obvious, but as yet none of the bodies has been dug up for fear at what might be discovered.

The penal facilities remain functional, suggesting that the complex could be re-inhabited with minimal effort.

Trifuge (C446556-9)

Diameter: 6,130km, Gravity: 0.35g, Atmosphere: Thin oxygen-nitrogen, tainted by plant spores, Hydrographics: 60%, Climate: Hot, Population: 220,000, Government: Corporate Executives, Manufacturing Tech Level: 9

Ecology

A member of the Darrian Group, Trifuge has the longest year of all the Darrian planets. Its giant primary keeps it warm even at 122 au from the star. The world is lush and verdant, covered in swamps, forests and jungles; one of the few Darrian worlds with torrential rainfalls.

Breathing the raw atmosphere without filters is dangerous due to the concentration of plant and fungal spores carried in the air. Animal life not native to the world tends to die within 48 hours, their lungs congested with plant growths. If left, the bodies sprout full grown versions of the plant species, which emerge from the oral or respiratory cavities.



Native fauna is predominantly reptilian, thousands of different creatures from tiny finger sized lizards, up to frighteningly large but relatively harmless, herbivores the size of a grav tank. Despite the diverse number of species, Trifuge is a world whose plant life seems to tolerate creatures rather than simply provide food for them. Carnivorous plants are common, capable of engulfing man-sized beasts.

History

Another planet overlooked during the first Daryen colonisations, primarily due to its dangerous atmosphere and distance from the homeworld, Trifuge has been the focus of a number of discoveries. Originally surveyed by Darrian scientists scanning the plant life for helpful or medicinal chemicals, the richness of its biosphere drew much attention.

A research base was constructed to facilitate botanical analysis but the entire compliment of staff gradually died off, the last survivors making records 77 years after the Maghiz. Original reports suggested the team were killed by an unknown plague, yet the fact that no biological remains were ever recovered made the claim somewhat tentative, allowing controversial rumours to spread suggesting they had been slain by either carnivorous, ambulatory plants or suborned by a zombifying brain spore. Neither theory was ever proved.

After its rediscovery in -269, Trifuge was left alone till 581 when Sword World aggression forced the Confederation to lay claim to the world. Colonisation was not regarded as optimal, so the planet was leased to the pharmaceutical branch of the Imperium registered SuSAG Corporation, who saw potential opportunities in exploiting the voracious flora. A rapid development program was set in place, which built significant infrastructure for their employees. The world was run by industrial executives and their scientific advisers, producing new drugs and medicines from the native species.

Soon after, Trifuge was briefly annexed during the First Frontier War but the Sword World blockade was forced to retreat after suffering a defeat at Terant 340. Troops sent down to the planetary surface, suffered high losses due to the unfamiliarity of the terrain type and undisciplined filter mask use.

After the war a relatively advanced native species was discovered on Trifuge, which funded a flood of new science projects manned by Ministry of Information research staff. Since then the scientific population has expanded to become a full colony but remains concentrated within a single settlement separated from the original medical corporation's extensive research facilities.

Points of Interest

The Dphone are a near sapient race of serpentine reptilians with brightly iridescent scales. Very stealthy, they move by wriggling

on their bellies, occasionally walking upright on their hind limbs when making peaceful contact. The species have secretly been observing the Darrian settlers since their arrival. They use simple tools and use other materials to camouflage themselves. Scientific studies have thus far used remote drones and satellite imagery to gather data since the Dphone slip away whenever a Darrian comes too close.

Unknown to the scientific researchers, a zombifying plant spore does exist in the native ecosystem. Lying in small patches in the depths of the swamps, spore pods rarely have a chance to infect the native species, its tell-tale odour of burnt cinnamon keeping most of the indigenous species at bay. A Darrian however, could easily become infected if they happen upon one of the few spots where the spore thrives. Initial infection is transmitted via an explosive burst, capable of penetrating thin skin if immediately adjacent to the rupturing pod. Secondary infection of others is done by coughing or sneezing in a closed environment and the spore is highly contagious.

Incubation takes several weeks whilst the spore subverts the immune system, floating through the blood stream until it can lodge in the brain. There it takes root and grows through the spongy tissue, gradually eroding away the personality of the victim. Eventually the host dies, usually by performing a mindless act of stupidity or simply starving to death; the resulting corpse forming a decaying source of nutrients for the spore to bloom to full maturity and grow new dispersal pods.

Unknown to the Ministry of Information, the SuSAG Megacorporation is actually performing eugenics experimentation on the near sapient natives, attempting to mould them for a variety of different functions. If the Darrians were to find out about this, a great deal of strain would be placed on Imperial relations. However, the natives themselves, driven by primal instincts, have had enough of being culled by the scale-less gods and are gathering in their thousands to extract bloody revenge.

Zamine (C897977-A)

Diameter: 11,030km, Gravity: 1g, Atmosphere: Dense oxygen-nitrogen, tainted by high oxygen level, Hydrographics: 70%, Climate: Hot, Population: 2,200,000,000, Government: Multiple Societies, Manufacturing Tech Level: 10

Ecology

A highly populated garden world mostly covered by oceans, the land masses are split into numerous archipelagos, separated by narrow straits. Vegetation is verdant across all of the landmasses and animal life is widespread but curtailed by the population density.

Unfortunately for most Darrians it suffers from a high gravity and very dense atmosphere, both of which can be very dangerous.



History

Zamine was not colonised by Daryen due to its crippling gravity and thus suffered no impositions from the collapse of civilisation after the Maghiz. It was first settled by volunteer colonists from the Winston colony after the quarantine was lifted from that world. Adapted to survive the higher gravity, the pioneers could more easily cope with the high pressure atmosphere experiencing little difference in discomfort between Zamine and Winston, as both required breathing apparatus. Indeed it was the heat that was harder to cope with.

Developing an infrastructure dedicated to manufacturing, the planet grew into the main industrialised planet in the Confederation. Zamine remained a peaceful world, although it hosted a large fleet presence during the First and Second Frontier Wars. However, its dispersed geography and the extreme physiological conditions started to impose a subtle effect on the populace, encouraging insular mindsets. This was not helped by the introduction of tens of thousands of Aslan warriors fresh from defending the Confederation.

Over time the planetary government split into multiple polities, each one reflecting a specific cultural or social philosophy. Disputes were typically settled in summit meetings and world courts rather than open warfare. Whilst rather disturbed by this development, the Confederation Council did little to dissuade this factionalism, such matters being outside of its remit or ethical consideration.

However, in the last 20 years, Zamine has seen some very un-Darrian-like violence. There have been increasing small wars, hostage takings and violent demonstrations, all based around religious governance; a subject normally avoided by the more secular Darrians. Currently there is a civil war in Baruk and several factions in Mabek Ladh are hostile to the Confederation, which has sent in Guard units to maintain the peace. Starships are now advised to approach landing sites in these nations with caution.

Points of Interest

Recent unrest is due to the interference of the Zhodani on Zamine. As a prelude to possible military action, the world is being deliberately destabilised by psionic agents who have created a clever plan to cause philosophical dissention. The Zhodani have introduced the concept of *theocracy*, using their abilities to fake miracles or cloud the judgements of observers.

The problems started with the arrival of a foreign prophetess, the so called 'Baroness Anha'. Preaching faith over empirical observation, the Imperial citizen began to perform a number of miracles, with no directly observable explanation. Whilst alien to Darrians, the idea of the supernatural began to spread with each perplexing phenomenon. For the most part the nay-sayers claimed it was a hoax, whereas those who had been touched

by each divine experience defended themselves vehemently, going so far as to take truth tests and giving blood samples to prove the lack of narcotics.

Events climaxed when leading philosophers of the Yikan Yikan school, in debate with the prophetess, were driven to an uncharacteristic rage by her evasive mysticism and launched an inexplicable attack with concealed weapons. Seriously injured, Baroness Anha was forced to defend herself, proving to be a formidable swordswoman. After slaying her attackers, the fatally injured prophetess apotheosised before her followers disappearing in a flash of blinding light. The political fallout of the assassination attempt created an immediate antipathy between the believers and the cynics.

To make matters worse the miracles have not ceased. Several new cults have appeared in a short period of time, each claiming their own particular deity or divine spirit was the true interpretation of what had occurred. Even the Aslan have started to witness mystical phenomenon.

With the seemingly imperturbable Darrian code of politeness on the verge of disintegration, Zamine is turning into a powder keg. If at any point the home squadron become involved, the situation will explode into civil war, granting an excuse for the Consulate or the Sword Worlds to legitimately offer their support to suppress the strife.

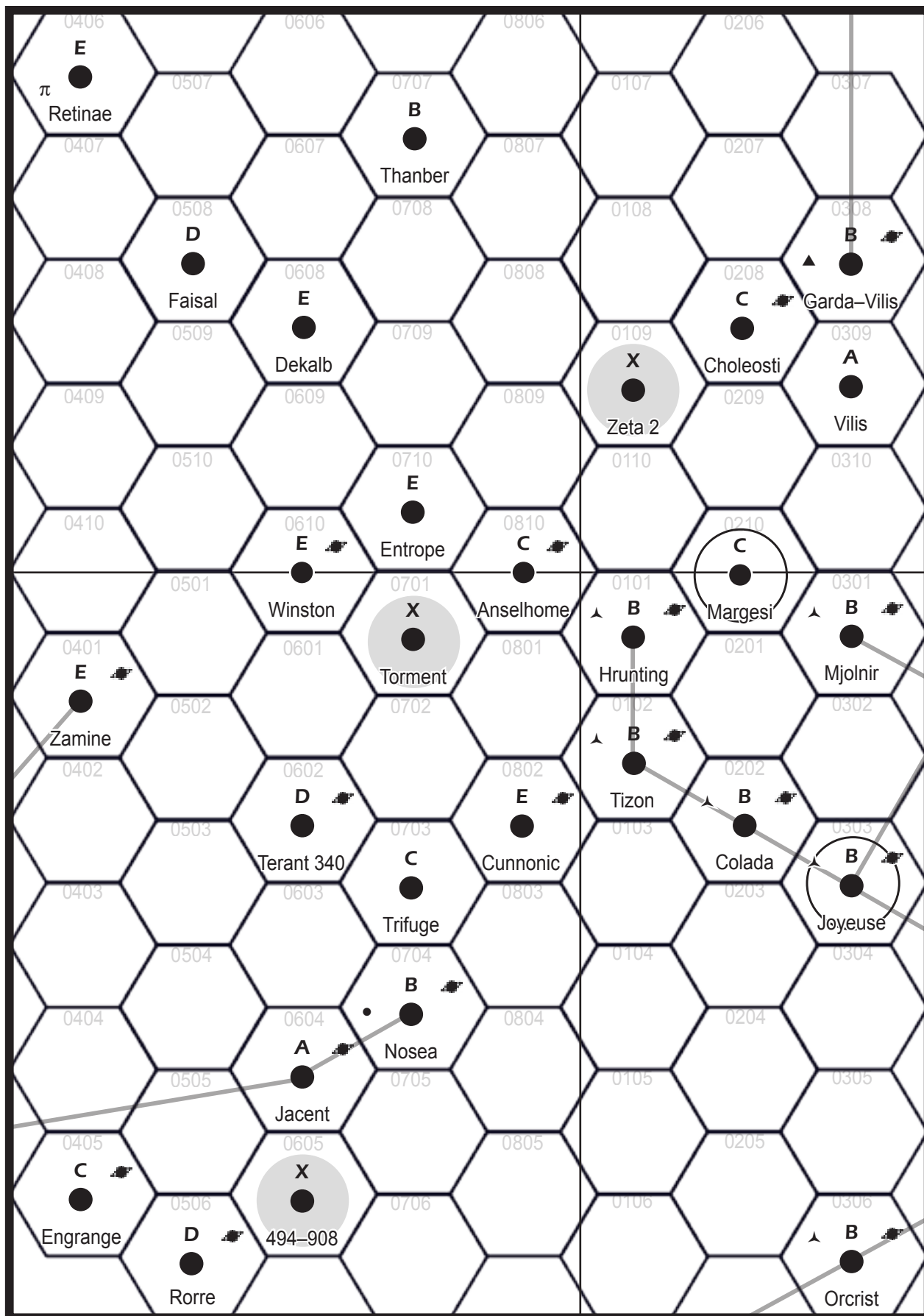
THE ENTROPIC WORLDS

The Entropic Worlds are the four star systems of Entrope, Winston, Anselhome and Torment which straddle the Querion-Darrian subsectors. These systems were first explored by the Darrians prior to the Maghiz, who established several research stations and settlements prior to a fully fledged colonial effort that never came. After the reestablishment of the Darrian Confederation, the isolated populations of these worlds wished to continue cultivating their planets.

Unfortunately for the populace of the Entropic Group, their systems were considered as strategically valuable by the Sword Worlds, who eventually mounted a military invasion to claim them. Over the last 500 years the region has been fought over by the Darrians, who rightly feel the native Darrian population should be returned to the Confederation, and the Sword Worlds who seek to expand their territory and weaken both the Darrian Confederation and the Imperium.

Ownership of the Entropic Group has swung back and forth several times:

593 During the First Frontier War, the neutral Darrian Confederation is attacked by the Sword Worlds and the worlds of the Entropic Group are annexed.





615-620 In the Second Frontier War, the Darrians struggle to retake the Entropic Worlds but fail to dislodge the Zhodani reinforced Sword World fleets.

788 Frustrated by lack of support from the Imperium, the Darrians retake the Entropic Group in a surprise attack, causing the Sword World coalition to collapse.

1084 Threatened by the massive fleet base being built at Entrope, the Zhodani fund a Sword World expedition, which captures the cluster for a second time.

The Sword Worlds do not currently hold Torment since it lacks any significant resources or a gas giant for refuelling, and is not considered worthwhile to divert ships to hold it.

Anselhome (C110568-8)

Diameter: 980km, Gravity: 0.05g, Atmosphere: Trace carbon dioxide-sulphur dioxide, Hydrographics: None, Climate: Cold, Population: 602,000, Government: Captive government, Manufacturing Tech Level: 8

Ecology

Anselhome is little more than a small rocky moon in an elliptical orbit around the system's gas giant. Its surface, similar to Spume, is a multihued patchwork of volcanic outfall caused by the heat generated by gravitational tidal forces. Earthquakes and eruptions occur regularly, requiring elaborate engineering for the world's rugged surface and subsurface settlements.

A whiff of an atmosphere is generated from volcanic gases, too thin and poisonous to be breathable. However, it supports an unusual ecosystem of rock eating bacteria and lichens, which survive in the rifts that regularly open in the surface. No higher order of life exists, blasted by the radiation that bathes the moon each time it swings past the gas giant.

History

Anselhome was first studied by Darrian scientific teams who were amazed to find micro-ecologies clustered around the planetoid's numerous volcanoes. Supported by the heat and trace gases expelled by the vents, bacteria and lichens thrived in the near vacuum, often forming unusual coral-like structures, which soon vanished under the next ash fall.

The moon's unusually high composition of heavy metals, easily accessible due to the volcanism, made Anselhome an

economical location for the large scale smelting of rare metals. Accordingly, a modest mining base was set up with an ancillary Jump-4 cargo freighter to transport the refined materials to Daryen.

The destruction of their supply vessel in the Maghiz left the miners in a precarious survival situation. Fortunately they were also providing metals for the construction of the Entrope scientific research base who soon established contact with news of the catastrophe. With no immediate room available on either Entrope or Winston to evacuate the mining personnel, the management decided to exchange ore production for food and other supplies, until facilities could be arranged. A few miners eventually emigrated but most lacked the skills to become farmers and decided they were of more use extracting metals.

Mining operations on Anselhome continued exporting fissiles and light alloy construction materials until -872, with the loss of Entrope's remaining jump capable transport ship. The miners initially survived the isolation, having constructed their own hydroponics facilities that they supplemented by harvesting the native lichen.

Unfortunately for them, the lichen, although nutritious, contained a trace number of heavy elements that gradually built up in the tissues of the consumers. By the time the first symptoms of mental degeneration appeared it was already too late. All the miners eventually succumbed to insanity, at first hallucinations and then ultimately raving paranoia. The last miners finally killed each other off in -861.

Unsupervised the base was gradually buried under metres of volcanic spume and completely forgotten until -271, when a Mire re-contact expedition travelling from Entrope, attempted to locate the miners. Although they had the coordinates of the mining base it took several days before it was discovered underneath 30 metres of solidified ash and lava. What they discovered inside the still functional base was so horrifying that several crew members had to be psychologically retired and all records of the rescue mission were sealed under governmental edict.

With a renewal of interstellar transport Entrope, in desperate need of large quantities of refined rare metals, returned to the moon, establishing a series of self supporting smelter

ENTROPIC WORLDS, QUERION SUBSECTOR IN 1105

Hex	Name	UWP	Polity	Base	Remarks	Zone	GG
0610	Winston	E887563-6	Sw		Ag Ga Ni		G
0710	Entrope	E336A6A-C	Sw		Hi Ht		
0810	Anselhome	C110568-8	Sw		Ni		G



colonies. Productivity grew in proportion to the population of Entrope, despite many problems designing lower tech mining bases capable of surviving earthquakes, intense radiation and gravitational tides.

Although a tour on Anselhome was considered hardship duty, many folk liked the frontier town feel to the place, especially when trade began with the nearby world of Hrunting in the Sword World Subsector. Trade remained friendly and congenial, building up a huge refining industry over the course of centuries. Most of Anselhome's ore was sold to the unstable Sword Worlds, being a closer and more voracious market. However, with the construction of a major military base on Hrunting and arrival of warships escorting their bulk transports, relations eventually began to sour.

Four years after the start of the First Frontier War, belligerent threats against the mining colony demanding the sale of ore at sub-economic prices, broke down into direct military action. Anselhome was annexed by Sword Worlder commandos, to seize its valuable production. The invasion continued on to Entrope in order to prevent Darrian fleet elements stationed there from retaliating. In one swoop, the entire Entropic Group capitulated.

Under the occupation, the Sword Worlds left the miners of Anselhome alone in exchange for regular deliveries of refined metals. Exceeding monthly quotas allowed the populace to import 'luxuries' such as Sword World propaganda entertainments, clothing and additional cometary water supplies. During this time of slavery, repeated attempts to revolt led to terrible reprisals, breeding resentment and fear. The miners themselves began to fracture into desperate collaborators and frustrated resisters, causing infighting between factions that grew worse over the succeeding two generations.

After nearly 200 years of gradual infrastructure breakdown and worsening brutality, the Darrian Confederation eventually succeeded in retaking Anselhome, liberating its indentured miners. Initial joy at liberation was soon followed by a brief but violent civil war between the various political factions, which resulted in the loss of many Darrian lives, almost all of the collaborators being killed in retribution; a fact which has not been recorded in Anselhome's own historical records.

The Confederation poured relief aid into the mining colony, which helped to assuage bad feelings of the belated deliverance, although the 3rd Imperium continued to be vilified for its role in preventing a liberation attempt from occurring earlier. From that time on, Imperials were regarded as only slightly better than Sword Worlders.

With massive renovation Anselhome began a period of re-growth. Although its metal markets had effectively crashed with the lack of Sword World trade, the Confederation absorbed as much of the materials as it could, stockpiling supplies on key worlds and rebuilding Entrope, which to Anselhome's shame, had suffered far worse than they.

Several centuries passed and Anselhome saw a brief flurry of activity during the Third Frontier War, when production was spurred and the moon was heavily reinforced by Confederation Guard units. The mining colonies were not threatened however, the garrisons and extra ships finally being withdrawn to Entrope decades later in advance of a shocking political exposé.

Although trade had reopened between the Darrian and Sword World Confederations, Anselhome law absolutely forbade commercial relations with their historical oppressors. Behind the planetary government's back, officials in the Darrian Ministry of Trade had been selling off surplus metal production to their aggressive neighbours, ostensibly to undermine the Sword World's own economic stability. The news shocked the world, which threatened to secede from the Confederation. Relations teetered for several decades but faced with the possibility of being defenceless in the face of the Sword Worlds, Anselhome was forced to reconsider its position.

In 1077 a new wave of investment flooded into the world to upgrade equipment, prior to the construction of a huge naval base on Entrope. Anselhome experienced an economic boom allowing citizens to construct extensive underground facilities to make life more pleasurable. Domed surface habitats began to be replaced by earthquake-proof underground cities and an extensive subterranean transport system was built.

The bust came in 1084 when the Zhodani began the Fourth Frontier War. Engaged in patrols and commerce raiding on the Coreward edge of their Subsector, the Darrians failed to recognise the danger posed by the Sword Worlds until it was too late. The Entropic Group was annexed for a second time and major naval facilities on Entrope destroyed. With the Darrian fleet pushed back to Zamine and Terant 340, Anselhome was left defenceless, forced to capitulate again but only after fierce fighting that caused the loss of nearly 30% of their population.

With their habitats full of Sword Worlder troops and much of their manufacturing capability removed or destroyed, the people of Anselhome are currently acting with stoic passive resistance. Productivity in the mines is at an all time low, due to mysterious cave-ins, mechanical break downs and a string of unpleasant sicknesses. All of which are driving the Colonel in command of the occupation crazy.



However, the last retribution against randomly collected family members, resulted in the remaining hostages performing a suicidal act of sabotage, venting an entire manufacturing block to vacuum and killing as many Sword World troops as the abused adults who had decided enough was enough. Anselhome remains on the verge of an all out rebellion, awaiting the Sword Worlder's next step.

Points of Interest

Although an integral part of Anselworld folklore, the original mining base, which is the source of many mining horror stories, remains hidden somewhere beneath the surface of the moon. Precise data of its location has been lost, the continual burial of the surface under highly metallic outfall and lava flows, combined with naturally occurring underground cists, has prevented sensor systems from locating the TL16 base. Many miners dream of rediscovering the complex, gaining access to astounding pre-Maghiz technology. A few old-timers claim to know its location, spinning fables in return for drinks.

The lichen, ignored since the re-colonisation, is a botanical wonder. Careful analysis by a highly qualified biochemist would uncover that the organism has been tailored to collect certain heavy metals, concentrating them in the coral-like structures they leave behind after death. Although the low growth rate makes harvesting uneconomical, the lichen itself would be invaluable in terraforming or industrial waste cleanup projects.

Entrope (E336A6A-C)

Diameter: 4,796km, Gravity: 0.25g, Atmosphere: Very thin oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 61%, Climate: Frozen, Population: 11,263,000,000, Government: Captive government, Manufacturing Tech Level: C

Ecology

A small frozen world with a very thin atmosphere, Entrope lacks much in the way of an ecosystem. The highest forms of native life are spindly trees, hardy grasses or rootless arctic cactuses, blown across the world using the thin winds to search for rare patches of exposed rock and iron hard soil. What little liquid water exists lies under the kilometres thick ice sheets, which cover much of the surface, heated by the feeble flickers of the planetary core.

Save for some species, historically introduced by Sword Worlders for sport, the planet is near lifeless.

History

Entrope was initially studied for the possibility of mining the extensive ice fields for their unusually rich levels of isotropic hydrogen. Geologically stable and with little atmosphere to prevent solar radiation from bombarding the pristine water ice,

huge deposits of deuterium and tritium lay trapped in the upper layers, continually refreshed.

Eventually a major scientific and logistics base was built on the planet, allowing it to serve as a nexus for further exploration of the other three systems in its group. High levels of easily accessible fusion fuels led to a proposal to construct a new design of antimatter generator on the surface. This resulted in a significant influx of technicians, scientists and manufacturing equipment, just prior to the Maghiz.

Cut off from technological supply, the science base revised its plans in order to survive, managing to maintain communication and trade with its sister systems of Anselhome and Winston. The base built up agricultural facilities and imported a stockpile of fissile ores that might be needed in the future. However, repeated jumps without qualified maintenance or spare parts eventually resulted in the breakdown and loss of the colony's ships, one-by-one.

With its large core of technical personnel, Entrope weathered the isolation better than most, using jury rigged fission plants to keep their electronic devices ticking over, the gamma-ray pulse from Daryen's sun dissipating before it reached the world. When contacted by Mire in -272, the populace had swelled from an original 10,000 to nearly a quarter of a million, supported primarily by hydroponics and artificially created fish farms; their technological base having recovered fusion power and almost cracking jump drive technology.

Finding the nearby world of Winston abandoned, the original colonists having vanished, a contingent of Entrope citizens re-established the colony, producing a welcome range of plentiful fruits and vegetables that were shipped back to the mother world. The colonisation was rudely stopped in -204 with the discovery of Draygons Disease. The horror and subsequent temporary quarantine of Winston ceased all further emigration.

Despite the inhospitable atmosphere and climate the population continued to thrive. In 593 however, they were invaded by the Sword Worlds, who saw the planet as the perfect opportunity to create a dumping ground for political dissidents. Although the Darrian population tried to offer aid and shelter where they could, the sheer quantity of penal convicts soon swamped their resources.

Over the course of two centuries tens of thousands of deported Sword Worlders were sentenced to the gulags of Entrope, each shipload of cold sleep prisoners dropped with barely adequate thermal suits, compressor masks and the basic materials to build simple pressurised settlements. If they managed to survive, the isolated gulag was forced to begin mining hydrogen



isotopes or manufacturing Sword World goods in exchange for food. Countless died but more came to replace them.

To discourage communication between the camps, officers of the occupation troops brought in omnivorous arctic predators which, lacking natural prey, turned to excavating graves and then hunting humans for food.

When Entrope was finally liberated in 788, the dreadful discovery of hundreds of gulags and mass graves was publically censured, even by the Zhodani, causing the collapse of the Sword World Coalition. Unable to ship the prisoners back to their infighting home worlds, the Darrians offered them citizenship. Most accepted, beginning a huge rebuilding project that sapped the economic strength of the Darrian Confederation for the next century. Using many of the established gulags as the basis for new urban growth, existing equipment was upgraded, resources made available and the complete food productivity of Winston shipped in to prevent further malnutrition. With this support, population growth exploded. Although the Darrians were significantly in the minority, the inhabitants integrated into Darrian culture with few hitches.

Since Entrope had been changed to a manufacturing economy, the Confederation continued renovation efforts in that direction, producing high tech products. Prior to the Fourth Frontier War, the planet's strategic location, combined with its technological fabrication capability, prompted the Darrian Ministry of Defence to establish a major military base there. Work began on expanding the Starport and building a huge orbital shipyard.

Unfortunately for Entrope, the military infrastructure was seen as a significant threat by both the increasingly mistrustful Sword Worlds and the Zhodani, who helped arm a Sword World strike fleet to destroy the facilities. Thus in 1084 after a devastating surprise attack and several follow-up surface battles, the world fell to Sword World control for the second time. The Darrian fleet losses crippled the Confederation Navy, preventing any immediate counterattack and the war ended before Entrope could be liberated.

Today most of the inhabitants of Entrope are resigned to living under Sword World authority. Wise to previous mistakes, the invaders have not returned to oppressive tactics. Instead they are keeping a restrained approach, realising that they cannot completely subjugate a population numbering in the billions. An unspoken agreement between the puppet government and the occupation forces, agrees that no Sword Worlder will be killed in exchange for not threatening the atmospheric integrity of the remaining domed settlements. In practice, this means that the

insurgent militia forces have limited their operations to stealing military supplies and regularly destroying the starport.

Points of Interest

The resistance militia is currently under the command of Major Kerin Yoldat, an expert in guerrilla warfare. She keeps in regular contact with the Darrian Confederation Guard via a number of deep crust meson communicators, which remained hidden during the invasion. Together the Guard and Major Yoldat have devised a daring plan to retake Entrope, relying on the planet intersecting a stream of natural cometary fragments in four years time. Unknown to the Sword World fleet, these fragments were intercepted several years earlier in the outer system, hollowed out and fitted with a number of cold sleep capsules, trickle powered by low powered radionuclide batteries, each containing a battle dress equipped marine and extra munitions.

Using their unquestioned mastery of astronomical science, the Darrian high command has projected the precise time and location of each squad's arrival. With these extra troops and advanced weapons, the resistance are planning a major uprising to coordinate with a naval assault, to kick the Sword Worlds back out of the Entropic Group.

In the 19 years of occupation, cut off from the imports of the Confederation, social conditions have suffered. As the result of damage caused during the invasion, the huge population is jammed into several remaining arcologies, with smaller domed agricultural settlements scattered across the rest of the planet. Travel outside of these settlements is difficult due to the requirement of respirators, although being better adapted to lower pressures native Darrians can survive a brief time without them.

The cities are heavily and harshly policed by Sword World troops to deal with the inevitable pressures caused by having so many people in close proximity. Society is heavily factionalised, with alliances between power groups fluidly changing and violence now more or less the norm. Usually this is 'kept in the family', in that real efforts are made not to cause collateral damage when attacking members or facilities of a rival faction. This is a pragmatic measure as much as anything else – collateral casualties result in resentment and no faction needs any more enemies than it already has.

Officially, the world is supposed to be a senate of leading citizens chosen for their scientific knowledge. These were all taken into 'protective custody' by the Sword World troops during the invasion and have not been seen since. They were supplanted by puppet leaders, who may change, literally, from



one week to the next. Whoever comes out on top in the latest power struggle enjoys considerable support, at least until their promises for better living conditions prove false. The political ground on Entrope shifts alarmingly fast, not the least because some factions are pro-Darrian, some pro-Sword Worlds and the remainder neutral groups that would rather side with whoever will prevent their increasingly fractious rivals reaching power.

Several revolutions and counter-coups have been put down with assistance from Sword Worlder forces, though not always quickly or easily. At present the ruling faction is presenting the Sword Worlders as allies invited in to help deal with the dangerous rebels that are wrecking Entropic society, a polite fiction that makes the occupation more acceptable to many citizens. There are as many who actively welcome enforced membership of the Sword Worlds Confederation as now oppose it.

The outer system represents rich, if hazardous, pickings for any salvage crew foolish enough to risk detection by Sword World patrol ships. The wreckage of dozens of vessels which battled for control of the system, including an Azhanti High Lightning fleet intruder, can be hunted down in the dark vacuum where they have drifted. Wrecks of this sort can be a lucrative source of under-the-counter military components as well as more legitimate salvage.

The problem is that not only is salvage work in deep space a dangerous business but the Sword Worlders in particular take a dim view of unauthorised salvage, seeing it as desecration of the graves of the honourable dead. Despite this, military salvage does go on and the proceeds often turn up in the seedier starports of the Sword Worlds themselves. At present the gains outweigh the risks.

One problem with deep-space salvage in the Entrope system is that the system has no gas giants. Obtaining fuel without visiting the starport can be a problem. A Jump-2 ship can carry enough to make two Jump-1s but the neighbouring systems are also under Sword World control. The more usual solution is to melt ice from a suitable asteroid in the system's Oort cloud, than go looking for a suitable wreck with full tanks. This allows a fast escape in the event of detection.

Worrying tales circulate of salvage crews closing with a wreck only to find that it is not a derelict warship at all but the shattered remains of a previous salvage vessel. Whether these stories are true, and whether the ships were caught by Sword World patrols, destroyed in disputes with other salvagers or shattered by some other mysterious origin, causes much nervous speculation.

Torment (X233000-0)

See Darrian Subsector.

Winston (E887563-6)

Diameter: 12,300km, Gravity: 1g, Atmosphere: Dense oxygen-nitrogen, Hydrographics: 68%, Climate: Temperate, Population: 528,000, Government: Captive government, Manufacturing Tech Level: 6

Ecology

A true garden world, Winston is almost perfectly adapted for life. Unfortunately it is almost unbearable for most Darrians due to the fatal atmospheric pressure and gruelling gravitation. The world possesses a thriving bio system with complex jungles and forests dominant on all three continents. Indigenous life forms are primarily insectoids, with larger forms utilising muscular pumped respiratory systems to achieve disconcertingly large sizes. The ecology appears to be two phased, the plants relying on insect species for pollination and in the case of carnivorous varieties, sustenance too; whilst the insects consume the vegetation in return.

Although no tool using intelligences have been discovered, many insect species appear to have rudimentary sentient hive minds. Most of the native life forms exhibit no interest in the Darrians, the majority of human proteins and enzymes being incompatible to their biology. With little to fear from the ecology, most of the current colonists have a benign attitude to arthropods, seeing most of them as beautiful creatures with vibrant, iridescent colouration, some being domesticated for useful purposes. If not for the spectre of Draygons Disease, and the current Sword World occupation, Winston would be an exotic world suitable for recreational holidays by human and Aslan members of the Darrian Confederation.

History

Winston was discovered prior to the settlement of Entrope but the Darrians made no detailed surveys of the world, discouraged by its dangerously high atmospheric pressure and gravity. The chance discovery of the highly evolved insectoid species by a remote drone, stirred academic interest and specially designed prefabricated research bases were sent from Daryen. Biological studies revealed a world capable of growing Darrian crops with no need of environmental protection.

Thus, although Winston's surface conditions were uncomfortable, effort was summoned to establish an agricultural colony in order to 'locally' produce food supplies for the rest of the Entropic Group. Large robotic farm machines cleared plantations and harvested crops which, lacking native pests, thrived whilst Darrian controllers remained inside their gravity controlled habitats.

DRAYGONS DISEASE

This terrible plague was first encountered by the settlers of Winston in –855 which, according to a handful of holographic records discovered later, rapidly destroyed the colony. Named after the Solomani doctor who treated the first patients, he postulated that the disease was a parasitic microorganism that hibernated in the planet's soil for the extremely (several centuries) long Winston year.

Returned to activity, the parasite rapidly infected the population. Initial symptoms included shortness of breath and bruise-like mottling of the skin, gradually deepening to a purplish tone. Eventually the victims collapsed into comas that lasted several days, the majority dying. Those who pulled through the transition phase were found to have altered blood chemistry and destructive infestations of parasitic worms in the higher cognitive regions of the brain, irrecoverably corrupting their sapience.

Attempts at hermetic isolation proved fruitless; every member of the colony, both Darrian and Solomani human, proving to be previously infected. Fatality rates were 93%. The last records recount the remaining medical staff, overwhelmed by the workload, watching mindless survivors wondering off into the crop fields.

When new colonists arrived from Entrope in –271, they found the ruins of the original settlement overgrown by jungle and assumed the colony died out from technological failure. It was not until –204 that the medical centre was rediscovered during an archaeological survey sent by Daryen. In growing dread the entire world was quarantined to prevent the escape of Draygon's Disease. However, several decades of analysis failed to find any microorganism present in the ecology that could explain the symptoms.

In the end, the scientific community hypothesised that the parasite may have been a genetic accident, connected to the bioengineered breathing worms, and lifted the quarantine. Immediately a significant number of colonists fled Winston, despite assurances that no trace of the disease remained. Even in current times, subconscious fear of the ancient tragedy still prevents most people from visiting the world, loss of mind being a dreadful horror to Darrians.

After the Maghiz, Winston continued for a few decades to ship produce to Entrope but when their last vessel was lost in jump, the planet was left completely isolated. With no replacement parts for their robotic servitors and no means of manufacturing components, the Darrians were gradually forced to labour outside more frequently. Within a couple of generations, these enforced sojourns partially adapted the younger Darrians to the gravity, although heart failures and arthritic pain killed most in their early middle age and atmospheric pressure remained a problem.

Having no way to manufacture new breathing masks, the remaining biologists worked furiously to solve the pressure problem, finally settling on the genetic modification of a giant arboreal nematode. This was modified to become a symbiotic pressure filter, worn over the nose and mouth in exchange for small quantities of blood it extracted from facial contact and exhaled moisture. This desperate act might have saved the unintended colony if not for the appearance of Draygons Disease, which wiped out the settlers.

The planet remained unoccupied until –271 when the world was contacted and found abandoned by a Mire scout ship. Surveys showed the agricultural settlements had grown wild but the transplanted crops still survived. Entrope decided to establish a new colony and recruited volunteers from the liberated gulags. Tens of thousands of ex-Sword World humans tired of eternal cold and abhorring the memories the prison camps evoked, sought escape to the paradise of Winston.

The project was exceptionally successful, until the presence of Draygons Disease was unearthed. Once the planetary cordon was lifted, many settlers fled Winston, spreading tales of its nightmare past across the Confederation. The remaining inhabitants trusted the scientists, continuing to clear new plantations and rapidly turned the world into the breadbasket of the Entropic Cluster.

Despite a noticeable lack of new colonists the native population grew in pastoral peace, until the First Frontier War sequestered them from the rest of the Confederation. However, the plague planet reputation proved useful in preventing enemy troops from occupying them. An atavistic fear of the 'bruising death' made any Sword Worlder reluctant to set foot on the planet, so the annexation was continued from orbit. Having no industry of its own, Winston was left alone in exchange for its food exports.

Used to isolation, the inhabitants felt little dismay at the situation. The eventual liberation was welcomed, if only for the resumption of better technology and forgotten luxuries. Thus life continued in a slow idyllic manner, the only excitement being the gradual balkanisation of the government between those



who had emerged well off from the Sword World occupation and those who had lost out. Further splits developed concerning the adoption of higher, unsustainable technology, such as Sword Worlder robotic tractors and Darrian bioengineered crops. Growing antipathy forced the Confederation Ministry of Information to intervene, relocating factions to different continents. Eventually government returned to good natured bickering, there being very few wants or social problems on-world.

The Fourth Frontier War proved disastrous for Winston. Indoctrinated with the atrocities imposed on their sister systems during the first and second wars, and angered by the unprovoked bombing of the naval base on Entrope, the agriculturalists decided to fight against the aggressive Sword World invaders. Although it maintained militia training as per all Confederation planetary members, the farmers were no match for the highly trained jump troops. Thinly colonised before the invasion, Winston lost over a third of its population and most of its technology before capitulating.

Constant guerrilla attacks on garrison forces have brought increasingly savage retaliations, even in those nations that are still sympathetic to the Sword Worlds. Now most of the balkanised states are loyal to the Darrian Confederation, waiting sullenly to extract revenge.

Points of Interest

Rumours from the more isolated settlements, of snouted aliens that suck the souls of those who stray too far into the jungles have long circulated, but always been dismissed as old wives tales to frighten children. Efforts to capture recordings of these mythical bogeymen have always failed, although a surprising amount of sensor equipment left to scan wilderness areas always seems to end up broken.

One of the few Darrians actually living on Winston is a xenarchaeologist named Zon Dehking. Once considered a gifted scholar by academic circles, he arrived on the world 23 years

earlier, following up on strange tales carried by crews across the Confederation. Trapped by the Fourth Frontier War, he remained on the world excavating the pre-Maghiz colony sites and is now considered a harmless eccentric. Recently however, he was discovered, trapped in his power drained exoskeleton, at the edge of a jungle in the southern continent; raving that he had discovered a vast alien city, long lost under the detritus of the tropical forest. He is currently under psychiatric medical supervision.

Unusually for a planet colonised for as long as Winston, the inhabitants have only settled a tiny fraction of the landmasses. The population is widely distributed in small townships, generally located in more mountainous regions above the most vibrant forest and jungle growth, which tends to reclaim any fields not farmed regularly. Dense vegetation and frequent rivers prevent easy exploration for a society accustomed to gravitic vehicles for transport. Another rather odd fact beginning to be noticed by scientists in recent years is that the native life has not yet adapted to take advantage of Darrian biology. Crops remain pest free and none of the settlers are bothered by insects.

The Sword World garrisons seem unduly paranoid about Draygon's Disease. Occupation forces wear NBC suits at all times outside of their hermetically sealed barracks. They have recently taken to patrolling the areas beyond the plantations, seeking signs of militia activity. Unfortunately these patrols have come under increasing attack, despite the local population of the townships being accounted for.

Responsibility for the spate of attacks on Sword World troops are hotly denied by the human inhabitants of the planet. No evidence has been presented; indeed any traces of physical evidence have been suppressed by the authorities, leading to intense speculation about what is really going on. Many colonists are beginning to claim the attacks are fraudulent reports designed to impose further atrocities but military broadcasts from the fleet admiral in charge of the orbiting flotilla tends to undermine this speculation, his furious rants seemingly genuine.



DARRIAN CAMPAIGNS

This chapter discusses methods and ideas for using the Darrian race in your *Traveller* games and is intended primarily for the Referee. Whether your games are based within the Darrian Confederation or involve a Darrian character, there are certain factors that should be taken into consideration and many ideas to add extra depth to a campaign.

DARRIANS IN THE GAME

Darrians are effectively humans that have adapted at the genetic level to lower gravitation and air pressure; and at the cultural level to embrace tolerance and scientific excellence. Beyond that, they share the same mental limitations, emotions and ways of thinking as other humans. Thus the addition of a Darrian into a game should be in no way unbalancing to a campaign.

A large difficulty facing Darrians is their vulnerability to high gravity and denser atmospheres. Whilst medical equipment can offset some of the difficulties of visiting such worlds, it sometimes requires a technological solution that can be easily damaged or run out of power in the wrong situations. Their frailty too, makes them less capable of withstanding damage in combat situations.

Games Masters can emphasise these vulnerabilities to add an interesting edge in games involving Darrians. Players who might find these aspects too restrictive can create a Darrian from one of the few high gravity worlds in the Confederation, with subsequent adjustments to characteristics.

Conversely Darrians are slightly smarter and have a better education than the average member of Humaniti. This predisposes them to technical and science skills. A Darrian will prefer to think his way out of a dangerous situation, rather than fight.

Another factor to consider is that Darrians are very tall, usually in excess of two metres, which could pose problems using vehicles designed for normal humans or entering buildings built for shorter races. The hindrance extends even to everyday equipment such as weapons, with grips not suited to a Darrian's oversized hand, or Vacc Suits for obvious reasons. Thus a wandering, perhaps exiled, Darrian venturing outside of the Confederation will find many things difficult unless he is capable of modifying equipment for his own frame.

The distinctive height may also bring unwanted attention. A Darrian outside of Confederation space will sometimes draw a great deal of curiosity, making travelling incognito somewhat futile. More conservative cultures may treat a Darrian as being abnormal, whereas cosmopolitan societies may find the height and facial features exotically attractive.

ROLEPLAYING DARRIANS

Darrians are similar to ordinary humans. They feel the same emotions and have most of the same hormones. For all intents and purposes they are just as human as the average Solomani but a few cultural restrictions modify their behaviour.

Tolerance is an inherent part of growing up in Darrian society. They learn to be open-minded and to see situations from different perspectives. Expressing negative opinion is rare and slander rarer. A Darrian might *think* those things but would rather not express them publically.

Self control is another important aspect of cultural upbringing. Darrians are difficult to provoke into expressing anger or outright hostility; they do, of course, get angry but prefer to keep the emotion rigidly suppressed for fear of making bad judgements.

A primary drive of Darrians is scientific curiosity; they are eternally seeking answers to questions, patterns in data or the empirical truth behind subjective reality. Darrian passion for knowledge is almost pathological, a combination of cultural upbringing and some modifications in their cerebral genome.

Other than these generalisations, most Darrians are just like other human beings. They feel love and hate, fear and loathing, humour and sorrow. They can also be just as courageous, murderous, treacherous, dishonest or envious as the average man, yet usually keep such feelings carefully concealed behind the public veneer of polite good humour.

BUILDING CAMPAIGNS

Darrian campaigns do not require actually having Darrian adventurers in the group. Many scenarios can easily be based within the Confederation using Darrian patrons or perhaps simply tweaking the player's own sense of curiosity or desire for high tech toys. A number of mysteries and lost artefacts have been included in the *Darrian Secrets* and *Darrian Worlds*



chapters, enough to fuel several interesting scenarios. Some guidelines for building a Darrian campaign follow.

To Be or Not to Be... Darrian

The first aspect the Referee should consider is whether he wants his characters to be citizens of the Darrian Confederation. Of course Darrian citizens can technically be Darrian, Solomani or Aslan, so it is not simply a question of race but one of culture.

Darrians are expected to behave in sometimes limited ways, which can often be problematic for more action-based or morally questionable players. There is also the aspect of needing to brief the entire party in advance about the society and psychology of Darrians, which although not particularly difficult, does miss out on the chance to entertain players with the gradual revelation of how alien the Darrians can be.

Having a single Darrian in a party can be particularly entertaining. With their stronger morals and intellectual drives, a Darrian character can stimulate a great deal of intra-party roleplaying. A Darrian's physical limitations can also be very challenging for a normal human based party, forcing them to make concessions in crew duties or modifications to their vessels. In return, the group gain a highly educated Darrian who is generally competent in several fields of knowledge.

Of course the Referee could simply start with a group of normal humans venturing into Confederation space for the first time, ready to be confused by Darrian culture.

Confederation Space

The second aspect of a Darrian based campaign is whether to actually place adventures within the borders of the Confederation. Although much of the information in this book describes the worlds and history of the Confederation, a number of planets are technically ruled by foreign polities.

A campaign set within the Entropic Worlds, could allow a great deal of interaction with Darrians under the oppressive rule of the Sword Worlds for example. Other ideas could involve the search for Darrian artefacts outside of Confederation space, or encountering a long lost colony in an entirely separate sector.

Basing the campaign firmly within the Confederation's borders provides enough worlds to keep the game interesting for a considerable period, although there is nothing stopping adventures from jumping back and forth between the Sword Worlds and the Darrian Confederation, or the Imperium or even the Zhodani Consulate.

Darrians being interesting characters in their own right, need not just venture inside their own Confederation. A Darrian scientist or exile could simply be investigating parts of the Imperium, or

maybe spying for his home government. Plenty of friction can be generated from having a Darrian turning up on a Sword World.

Timeline

The Referee should consider at which point of Darrian history he wishes to set his game. Despite this book defaulting to 1105, enough information exists to set the game at any time before this point. A campaign could easily be placed during the Fourth Frontier War, during which the characters might struggle to prevent the re-annexation of the Entropic Worlds.

Personal campaigns should not restrict themselves to 'official' events either. Referees are encouraged to change historical incidents as they wish, which can often take players with knowledge of Spinward Marches history by surprise, often leading to excitement as they overturn, or are responsible for, key events.

One perfect period for starting a Darrian campaign is just prior to the Maghiz, perhaps allowing the players to witness the eruption of Tarnis and destruction of their homeworld. The game could revolve around surviving the following dark ages, or suffering a misjump whilst trying to escape, so that they end up 2,000 years in the future – TL16 Darrians in the devolved Third Imperium.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS

Listed here are a number of key scenario ideas, which are perfect for Darrian based campaigns. These can be mixed and matched to provide new challenges but with the underlying themes retained to build the overarching storyline. A good campaign should be like a well written book, each chapter an individual scenario but key personalities recurring on a regular basis to give players an emotional tie to the long term plotline. Major Non-Player Characters should rarely be expended in direct combat, rather fleeing or avoiding violent confrontation, interacting in social situations, or hinted at by gathered intelligence.

The best games are like episodes in an ongoing drama, each scenario revealing a further nugget of information to help them succeed in the main plotline, or ending at a climatic cliff hanger ready for the next session.

Locating a lost Artefact

Despite the devastation of the Maghiz, a surprising amount of Darrian devices managed to survive the catastrophe. These can vary from simple children's toys or artwork, all the way up to functional ships. Any TL16 or TL17 equipment could be an invaluable prize for a team of characters. However, the gaining of such things should be an epic quest in its own right, a treasure hunt leading across parsecs to find the next clue.



Travelling between Darrian universities to access historical records to find the course of a missing ship or locate a forgotten science outpost.

Stumbling upon the journal of a researcher who found clues to a hidden city abandoned in the rings or atmosphere of a gas giant, only to have the journal stolen shortly after.

Meeting a drunk miner who claims to know the location of a treasure horde of artefacts buried deep on another world but the miner disappears when visiting the restroom.

Being approached by a member of a pirate crew who bears a treasure map and wishes to hire the character's ship to travel to a undeclared world but is being hunted by the rest of his ex-compatriots.

Finding a crystalline 'key' that guides the characters from world-to-world, each location a long destroyed Darrian historical site requiring an adventure to negotiate, which then triggers the next step.

Uncovering a governmental cover-up, which is trying to suppress the location of an important site, by scattering or eliminating the members of the team that originally discovered it.

Smuggling an Artefact

Somewhat similar to the previous entry, if the characters find a high tech Darrian artefact they will have several options open to them. Keep it, sell it to the Darrians or sell it to a foreign government. The Confederation is extremely stringent about letting artefacts fall into other hands and generally offers a fair price for such discoveries, although haggling by greedy characters will usually prompt the assignment of Darrian agents to recover the artefact by whatever means necessary. Selling outside the Confederation usually requires transporting it out of Darrian space, which is surprisingly difficult, the Darrians having some way of detecting their own technology and possessing many agents in criminal organisations. The money is extremely good – assuming the purchaser is trustworthy of course.

Approached by an Exile who wishes to leave the Confederation. He promises a king's ransom for a rapid departure but is noticeably nervous about the contents of his bulging backpack. The discovery of a small weapons cache in a nickel-iron asteroid drifting in the outer system allows a selection of mouth watering destructive armaments to fall into the characters hands but can they ever use them without drawing attention to themselves?

An autonomous, fully sapient robot is discovered trapped on a backwater planet. However the world lies within either the Sword Worlds or the Zhodani Consulate and sneaking the AI through civilised territory may be difficult.

During a regular salvage operation somewhere in the Confederation, a partially functional pre-Maghiz ship is discovered abandoned and drifting. With some repairs and new parts it could possibly be made jump capable again.

A sealed jar contains what appears to be an inert metallic substance, which upon opening, is revealed to be a pseudo-living lifeform, which promptly inserts itself into the nearest character, irrevocably bonding with their body and making them a highly sort after vivisection victim for all those desperate to recover the device.

The Confederation Government hires the characters to recover a newly located artefact deep in enemy territory but the secrets of the device make it priceless to the very polity they must covertly extract it from. The mission is made more difficult by its huge size.

Upgrading Equipment

Probably the best way of introducing established characters to the Confederation, the lure of Darrian technology almost irresistible, being regarded as some of the best available in the Spinward Marches. Of course Darrian equipment is highly expensive so affording a new set of Battledress or a FGMP-15 may be beyond the pockets of even the richest dreamer. Even if such items are beyond their personal reach the characters could be hired to transport such high tech goodies, or promised it as payment for aiding a patron. After gaining such equipment characters may be repeatedly drawn back to the Confederation to repair any damaged devices.

Approached by a shady patron to buy a small consignment of weaponry from Darrian manufacturers. However the patron is in reality a Sword World agent seeking examples of the latest military equipment for his own government.

Hired to ship a large delivery of very expensive computers, the characters are targeted by a variety of operatives all trying to get their hands on the cargo. They are hounded by femme fatals and foreign agents waylaying them in every port until they leave Darrian space and are instead hunted by pirates.

Paid to transport a cargo of cutting edge weapons and munitions to a planet undergoing civil war, the characters belatedly discover the courier who should have delivered the activation codes has disappeared. He must be located before their employers are overthrown in the coup d'état.

Suffering irreparable damage to their drives the characters are rescued by the Darrian navy, who offer to upgrade the ship with military spec equipment in return for a few 'favours' scouting out Sword World troop movements, in a series of increasingly dangerous missions.



After purchasing some hi-tech gizmos from a reputable Darrian manufacturer the characters discover that one item has a miniature meson comm built into it, after it activates with an SOS from a Darrian espionage agent captured by enemy spies. The characters are accidentally assigned a prototype device that starts to exhibit some form of exceptional capabilities, causing the original manufacturers to hunt them down to recover the device; peacefully at first but with increasing levels of force or persuasion as the research staff become increasingly desperate.

Liberating the Entropic Worlds

One of the biggest thorns in the side of the Confederation is the current annexation of the Entropic Worlds. The Darrians have been secretly stockpiling resources in advance of a military expedition to liberate the cluster and ensure the Sword Worlds can never retake them. These preparations have taken the best part of 20 years, involving the sequestration of drop troops in cometary fragments, negotiating loans of Imperial marines and updating (and expanding) its entire fleet. The Darrians will launch their campaign soon, no matter if the 3rd Imperium approve or not. Characters can be involved in these military expeditions in a number of different ways, not necessarily even fighting on the side of the Darrians.

The characters are hired as a mercenary force to make a series of diversionary attacks on Sword World shipping behind enemy lines. A dangerous mission designed to distract the occupying navies to hunt down the 'pirates'.

Delivered to an occupied world by an expendable scout ship, the characters land in stealthed drop pods and then must establish contact with the local resistance forces, passing on classified information that will coordinate an insurgent uprising with the imminent arrival of the Darrian Guard.

Given a well disguised Q-ship, the characters are hired to act as an expendable assault force to take out communication and sensor stations in advance of the main Darrian fleet arrival.

Deliberately sent to be captured by Sword World troops, the characters must liberate a high ranking officer in the Darrian militia forces. To help they are given lots of cutting edge equipment to help in breaking him out of the enemy's military intelligence HQ.

Hired as a covert commando unit, the characters are ordered to smuggle a single shot EMP bomb into the Sword World naval facilities, unfortunately the presence of an active nuclear damper means someone must penetrate the engineering sections to disable the device before the bomb can be triggered.

Meeting an old commanding officer in the Imperial Marines, one of the characters has his military status revived and is ordered

to accompany an assault on one of the Entropic Worlds, the only positive side being a chance to wear battledress and fire a FGMP-15 again.

Zhodani Mind Games

The Zhodani have always been fearful of the Darrians due to their extremely rapid technological development. In return, believing that the Zhodani deliberately left them to fester during their civilisation's collapse, the Darrians are highly suspicious of their psionic neighbours. The greatest fear of the Confederation are telepathic spies, so most ministry offices, employees and their homes are shielded against psychic attack or subterfuge, and use a very strict need to know protocol to misdirect such eavesdropping. Artificial psionic scanners are installed everywhere on Darrian worlds from the starports to public transport systems in order to detect Zhodani espionage. Campaigns involving Zhodani often involve double-thinking and paranoia.

Brainwashed by Zhodani psychics, the characters are sent to investigate the intriguing activities of a Darrian Naval officer. They constantly find themselves hacking computer systems, trailing the target in question and engaging in petty kleptomania without realising or understanding why until their mission is completed.

One character is mentally dominated and forced to attempt an assassination of a high profile Darrian entertainer, which if successful will land the characters in very deep water but it is merely part of a two-step plan to actually murder the presiding judge at the trial via a second mental compulsion.

Fearing himself the target of a Zhodani spy, a worker at the patent office in the Ministry of Information hires the characters to provide security for both him and his family. A tricky job due to his rampant, unfounded paranoia but ultimately proves true after a number of false alarms.

A Zhodani agent reads a dirty secret from a character's past and blackmails him into performing a piece of scientific espionage, ultimately requiring the death or kidnapping of a professor, unless the character attempts to neutralise or report the spy himself.

Summoned into a top secret meeting with the head of the Confederation, the Premier reports his suspicion that a Zhodani agent has penetrated the Ministry of Defence and orders the characters to identify the spy without alerting the other members of the council.

The characters are used by a Special Arm officer as patsies to pass on fake intelligence to a known Zhodani operative, a dangerous mission that involves a shootout near the end before the agent escapes.



Militia Duty

Whilst most fights with the Darrians involve Sword Worlders or Zhodani, there are other circumstances where the Darrian militia are sometimes required to help out. A Darrian who performed military service can always be recalled to duty but if none of the characters are Confederation citizens they can be politely approached and asked for help.

Characters are recalled to duty to perform a compulsory, planetary scale series of war games. Being notorious trouble-shooters they are requested to perform a 'dirty-dozen' style mission, without causing any harm or any unnecessary destruction.

During a series of military exercises a real invasion occurs, forcing the characters to help resist the overwhelming landing forces and then retreat to a pre-prepared subterranean bunker, fighting rearguard actions the entire route across difficult ground whilst running short of munitions.

A natural disaster strikes, whether a volcano, earthquake, tsunami or something similar, causing one or more characters to be restored to duty and put in charge of saving members of a foreign delegation. Guiding them out of the danger zone, panic spreads and the situation soon deteriorates as the delegates selfishly resort to every man for himself.

Some form of natural animal native to the planet mysteriously turns psychotic, forcing the militia to fight a war of attrition against their own ecosystem.

During a regimental reunion, one of the old squad members particularly loathed by his now infirm, aged commander dies bloodily in the toilets. It is up to the characters to discover the motivation for the murder and track down the killer.

Declared insane, a member of the Special Arm commandos goes on a killing rampage across the region. The characters are requested to stop him, however it turns out that the Special Forces commando has been marked for termination by his own organisation and is desperately seeking a way off planet.

Alien Encounters

Alien life is often difficult to identify, let alone empathise or communicate with. There are a number of different species within the Confederation, some hidden from prying eyes, others simply overlooked. What to do with a newly discovered creature is a difficult question since sometimes leaving them alone is the best path. In some circumstances though an alien species may be being exploited or exterminated and somebody needs to make things right.



Given a live cargo of 'bee hives' to deliver somewhere across the Confederation, the insects secretly escape by chewing their way out of their containment chamber and take up residence in the air conditioning conduits. They only come forth to paralyse lone crew members with their poison stings and lay parasitic eggs in the warm incubating bodies. If not stopped the vicious insects begin to eat into critical parts of the shipboard systems.

The characters discover the reptilian Dphone on Trifuge are being cruelly experimented on by the SuSAG megacorporation, adapting them for menial labourers and frighteningly savage xeno-weapons and must be stopped before the race can be exploited.

On a legitimate trade or transportation mission to Winston, the character's ship ceases to respond to controls and crash lands in the thick jungles, where they come into contact with the mythical 'Lost Darrians' who somehow drew them down from the sky by performing a ceremonial ritual. Why were they



summoned and are they capable of supernatural interaction with their planet or is there a hidden piece of high tech responsible?

During a visit on Jacent, one character has the misfortune to come into contact with one of the infamously fatal crustaceans. Instead of dying instantly the character suffers an incredible euphoric rush and realises that the highly addictive experience is closely guarded secret amongst the native inhabitants who fear its exploitation.

Whilst transporting a cargo reputed to be jellied sea foods from Jacent, one character hears strange sloshing noises from within one of the large barrels. If opened the barrel is found to contain a live specimen of an extremely rare septapod squid being smuggled off-world. Enraged by its confinement, the creature goes on a murderous rampage and needs to be confined rather than killed, else the crew face charges of ecological abuse when they report the incident.

The characters are sent to investigate the unusual silence from a new research station located in the upper atmosphere of a gas giant. The base has been torn open in some places and appears to be abandoned, although the occasional blood smear can be found. Further examination, hampered by the need to wear vacc suits, reveals that all the communication equipment has been suspiciously destroyed. Unknown to the investigators the atmosphere is inhabited by a species of imposing creatures, translucent skinned and shaped somewhat like a manta ray. The species is highly sensitive to microwave radiation, which it uses to locate its protoplasmic krill-like food. Characters using their communicators trigger another feeding attack and need to figure out quickly that the only way to survive is to stop speaking to each other via their suit comms.

Rorre Psychics

The prevalence of psychics on Rorre is an open secret within the Confederation. Mostly they remain on planet, using their skills to heal and leading peaceful, contemplative lives. Some however are encouraged to take service with the Confederation either in the post of psychoanalysts or as guardians against Zhodani manipulations. Such duties do not always lead to a long and happy life and many Darrian psionics seem to attract trouble.

A Rorre psychic on a sabbatical from her home planet falls foul of some anti-psionic bigots and approaches the characters for protection and a route back to her homeworld; unwittingly attracting the attention of a Zhodani who wishes to kidnap her for analysis back in the Consulate.

An Imperial official unwittingly visits Rorre without being informed of potential security risks. Engaging the services of a cultural escort, he mentally lets slip his plans to assassinate

the Imperium's ambassador with a small nuke and falsely plant the blame on the Sword Worlders. The horror causes the escort to accidentally reveal her abilities and fleeing the official's murderous bodyguards she bumps into the characters.

Whilst ambling around a marketplace on Rorre, the characters are mysteriously drawn to an old man who claims they possess some latent psychic powers. They are invited to a contemplative monastery where they can be tested after spending several weeks of purification at the retreat.

Stopped in the street by a passing Darrian, he explains that he felt something 'odd' about the character's mental patterns. He offers to investigate the psychic discrepancies if they are willing to journey to a nearby school of philosophy where his master and adepts reside. If they accept the characters discover they are in actual fact undercover agents who have been reprogrammed with false memories.

Travelling out to see a famous landmark, a group of meditating Rorre inhabitants become aggravated by the character's presence. Strangely all devices and vehicles in their immediate presence permanently cease functioning. As they depart, one of the characters overhears a whispered comment from one of the Darrians suggesting that they will soon launch a terrorist crusade against the technological societies of the Spinward Marches.

Somewhere in or near the Confederation a fleeing psychic bumps into a character and unbeknownst to his companions, affects a mind swap. The dark suited pursuers catch up and take the reeling Darrian (now inhabited by the stunned mind of the character) dragging him off to some nefarious foreign agency interested by the psychic's unusual abilities. After a while the fake personality becomes evident, forcing a hunt for their friend's mind trapped in a strange body.

Developing a new Breakthrough

Most Darrian scholars are always trying to discover new knowledge, devise refined formulae or invent original devices. In the Confederation your social standing is heavily dependent on your academic career, so the pursuit of information and technology is fundamental. Campaigns can easily be based upon the quest to uncover/recover forgotten data or techniques, or the gathering of required components to launch a vast experiment. The after effects of a discovery can also drive a campaign, especially if the results have potentially cataclysmic effects.

On the cusp of developing a new form of gravitic drive the Darrian scientist in charge of the project enlists the help of a character skilled in engineering. When activated the experimental device



goes critical, creating a runaway, gravitationally fluctuating field, which slowly begins to rip the scientific facility apart before overloading in a spectacular explosion. The characters have to evacuate the orbital labs before they are destroyed, but suffer an interesting time as gravity chaotically (and dangerously) changes direction and strength. After they escape the engineering character is arrested and charged with gross misconduct.

A sociologist makes a public announcement that she has developed formulae that accurately predicts the future actions of socio-political organisations. Her holovised claims draw the unwelcome attention of both the Confederation government and foreign agents, all of whom wish to monopolise her research, forcing her to seek safety with the characters with the hope of changing key events to avert an Armageddon she has foreseen between the Confederation and the Zhodani Consulate.

Professor Davh Behlimus a famous botanist working on the terraforming of Laberv, wishes to collect samples of plant life from across the Confederation in order to prove his theory that all the worlds with active biospheres were genetically modified or introduced by the Ancients 300,000 years ago. Unfortunately the effusive botanist is also an environmental extremist and frequently lands his guides in trouble during their tour.

As outsiders, the characters are asked to investigate claims of plagiarism and possible homicide against a well respected

professor, whose recent up and coming student, a genius by all accounts, has mysteriously disappeared. The professor is innocent of the charges, it is the student who has actually stolen the professor's research and is currently trying to sell the information to the Naasirka Megacorp and flee the Confederation with the money.

A second rate scientist believes he has developed a new theory of creating cheap antimatter. Ill regarded by his peers for his eccentric unintelligibility, he asks the characters to transport his experimental AM refinery to the Maghiz Monument in close orbit around Tarnis, the primary star of Daryen, where he plans to illegally set up the device. Amazingly the machine works briefly before a solar flare occurs, forcing the characters to drag the protesting scientist back to the ship and flee before everyone takes a fatal radiation dose. The machine of course, explodes when the flare hits, seriously upsetting the Daryen authorities.

The characters encounter an old Darrian, once the most brilliant physicist in the Confederation. He claims that he is on the cusp of a revolutionary technological breakthrough, but the Ministry of Information has refused to fund his proof of concept experiment. The scientist asks if the characters can help him build his experimental ansible, leaving them with a data file of technical specs – but the following day the scientist is reported killed in a Grav Car accident, and the characters are soon visited by the Special Arm investigating his demise.

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RuneQuest II

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THE THIRD IMPERIUM

Alien Module 3: Darrians

This Alien Module explores the mysterious and enigmatic Darrians and their domain within the Spinward Marches. With access to incredible technologies, including the apocalyptic and legendary Star Trigger, the Darrians have nonetheless only a relatively small empire, far from the Third Imperium.

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