AURORA

THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
VARIANT RULES FOR SILCORE
JOVIAN CHRONICLES CAMPAIGN
HEAVY GEAR BLITZ! BATTLE REPORT
GEAR KRIEG & HEAVY GEAR FICTION

DREAM POD 9

From the Editor...

Woah, we're launching into our third year of publishing already. Twelve issues have paved the path so far, twelve gems of content for our favourite gaming worlds. Twelve issues chock full of articles, announcements, artwork, adventure and authors (forget being a triple-A organization, we're a penta-A organization!). And as we stand on the cusp of Volume 3 we start off with another issue jam packed with stuff. Here's to another year with an ever-expanding list of contributors, and with an ever-expanding reach to new readers, and an ever-expanding recognition throughout the gamersphere.

In the real world the economic situation is garnering more and more attention, along with anxiety. Games are often seen as an escape, a diversion to take our minds off that which worries us. However, games (more specifically playing games) can also be a vehicle for resolving things or moving forward. Sometimes it may come in learning or honing a skill, or trying out something new, while even greater can be in seeing something new we hadn't seen before. We often play games quite in the same way we live our lives; if we're open and willing to be in the inquiry about something, in playing the game something is revealed to us. It takes some intention and probably some after-game revisiting (given that we're caught up in the moment during the game) and suddenly the hidden comes to the fore, opening up all sorts of possibilities.

Whatever the case may be, games are involved, creative, expressive, engaging and stimulating. And that's just a bucket of darn good things. And no, I didn't forget fun – that's is, of course, the ultimate bonus.

We here at Aurora wish everyone an upcoming year of excellence and wellness, full of passion, adventure and fun. May the only combat that sees the light of day occur on the gaming table and not in the world proper.

Welcome to the first issue of Volume Three of the Silhouette Magazine.

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor

PS -- Don't forget to check out the just-announced contest!
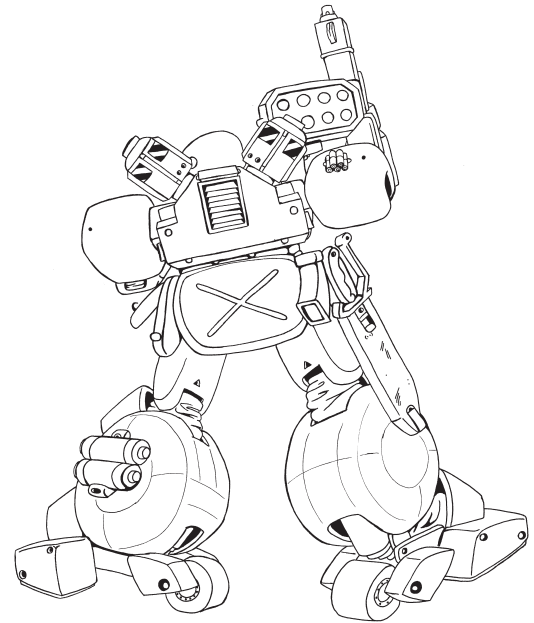
OFFICIAL-DP9

Only articles stamped "Official" are considered to be from Dream Pod 9 for Tournament or similar reasons. Some official material will be noted as optional, and are therefore treated as "Officially Optional". Said another way, consider the material in Official articles the same though published in a DP9 book.

TEST DRIVE

Articles stamped Test Drive indicates that the rules being presented are in testing. The rules are not official -- yet -- and being considered for later publication as Errata or are products in development. DP9 would appreciate feedback on their use, but they are not to be considered official. Note that they may change at any time or never be seen again.

Anything not so marked is a fan submitted rule not regarded as official and does not change the games or the DP9 game-universes as written in the books. Optional rules should only be used if all players agree upon their inclusion before play.

The Pimp:
In this case, we mean trick the vehicles out, not make them look like actual Pimps. Seriously, no pimp hats on the models. If you've seen the show Pimp my Ride, you'll have an idea, but for those not in the know, make the figures look all "shiny" like a person with too much money spent it all on visibly modding their vehicle.

The Tailgate:
For people outside of North America, a Tailgate Party is where sports fans get together outside of a sporting event and before the game, hold a party out the back of their vehicles. Often by dropping the tailgate on their pickup trucks and using that as a table. Note that Tailgate Party is now a generic term and does not actually require a Tailgate, all it requires is a vehicle and people willing to barbeque and have a good time. And quite often, showing off their pimped rides. All entries should have Tailgate Party as a theme, but it is up to the Entrants to interpret this while crafting their entries.

The Deadline:
9 AM, Pacific Standard Time, February 16, 2009. Entries should be submitted via e-mail to dp9.rules.support@gmail.com with a title of "Pimp my Gear '09 submission." Include your name, your location, the piece's title and any "in progress" Photos you wish along with the final Photos. Please make them web-resolution and do not send more than 5 per entry. If you have trouble e-mailing submissions, please contact John at the above address and he will work on arranging alternate methods of submission, within reason (John is not flying to Venezuela just to get some photos that might win you $55, unless you somehow think that a few thousand in airfare and lodging is worth it and pay him, although john would much prefer Scotland or Japan).

Looks like this will be an annual contest, guys! This year, your challenge is to take a DP9 Heavy Gear miniature (or group of miniatures) and "Pimp" it out with a theme of Tailgate parties.

The Entrants:
Any person not affiliated with Dream Pod 9 in an official manner. This means John, Phil and Greg cannot enter.* By entering, you agree to let us use your photos on the web page, in Aurora and for promotional purposes. But mostly to show that you guys rock.

The Prizes:
First place gets $55 credit at the web store, second gets $35 credit at the web store and third gets $25 credit at the Web store.

The Materials:
Use any DP9 figure or figures currently available from the Heavy Gear Blitz Store. No other figures may be used, but you may alter them as much as you want! And yes, this does include non-Gear Models. You may pimp out a Badger or Coyote as long as it fits the theme. While you are not required to use multiple figures, it would definitely enhance the "party" feel.

*Greg, John and Phil may create something, but cannot win prizes. Try to show us up, here!

The Judging:
All entries will be judged on Originality, Theme, Composition and Painting with priority given to Theme, Composition and Originality. Judging will be done by the DP9 staff and winners will be announce by the end of February

Good luck!

Beth Porter (thelieutenant@gmail.com) -- *Illustration: Pimp my Gear*
Beth Porter is an artist. She's done a lot of Heavy Gear fan art, and has pieces in the Hammers of Faith, Shields of Freedom and Swords of Pride books. She has an unnatural fondness for Ferrets.

Brad Bellows (bradley.bellows@3web.net) -- *Battle For Imperial Oil Station*
A former nuclear engineer who now works with sewage; Brad lives in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada with his wife, three kids, mortgage and car loan. A fan of Heavy Gear and Jovian Chronicles since the days of Mekton and Mecha Press, he currently spends his spare time playtesting new tactics and building new and improved army lists for Heavy Gear Blitz!

Dennis R. Johnson, Jr.(griffon296@msn.com) -- *Omega Company; Tears in Rain*
Dennis Johnson is a 27-year old who currently resides in Kentucky with his wife and child. A 6-year US Navy veteran, Dennis currently works at a GameStop where he torments his co-workers with an unending supply of Star Wars and Heavy Gear trivia.

Greg Perkins (gregoryperkins@gmail.com) -- *Logo: Pimp my Gear*
Greg Perkins occasionally works freelance for Dreampod 9 on top of the plethora of other things that consume his time and interests from architecture, to graphic design, painting, illustration, photography, and layout.

Jason Jarvis (jayderyu@gmail.com) -- *Effect Fu Dragons of Fury*
Jason has been a lover of Dream Pod 9 since purchasing Project A-ko and Video Fighter. Since then Master of English Mangling has been forcing his gaming group to play Silhouette. Currently living in Vancouver(the Lower Rainland), BC with his very patient and long suffering) wife and two spawn of hell...err beautiful children.(This article edited by Moriah Lalonde)

John Bell (jakarnilson@magma.ca) -- *Alfie's Tenners*
He gets labeled a "walking-talking encyclopedia." He draws what goes through his mind. He builds what he can't afford. He walks what others would take a lift for. He'd probably trade in his bike for a real, working Ferret; but then again, who wouldn't?

John Buckmaster (dp9.rules.support@gmail.com) -- *Messages from the Pod*
John Buckmaster is DP9's head rules monkey and line developer. He's one of the masterminds behind the whole Blitz thing, and has been a Heavy Gear fan forever.

Nigel Wong (silent_wayfarer@hotmail.com) -- *Project Clipeus*
An undergraduate of Nanyang Technological University, Nigel has nothing better to do in his spare time than spend it thinking about Heavy Gear. He firmly believes that all things can be made better with the gratuitous application of mecha, firepower and cute girls.
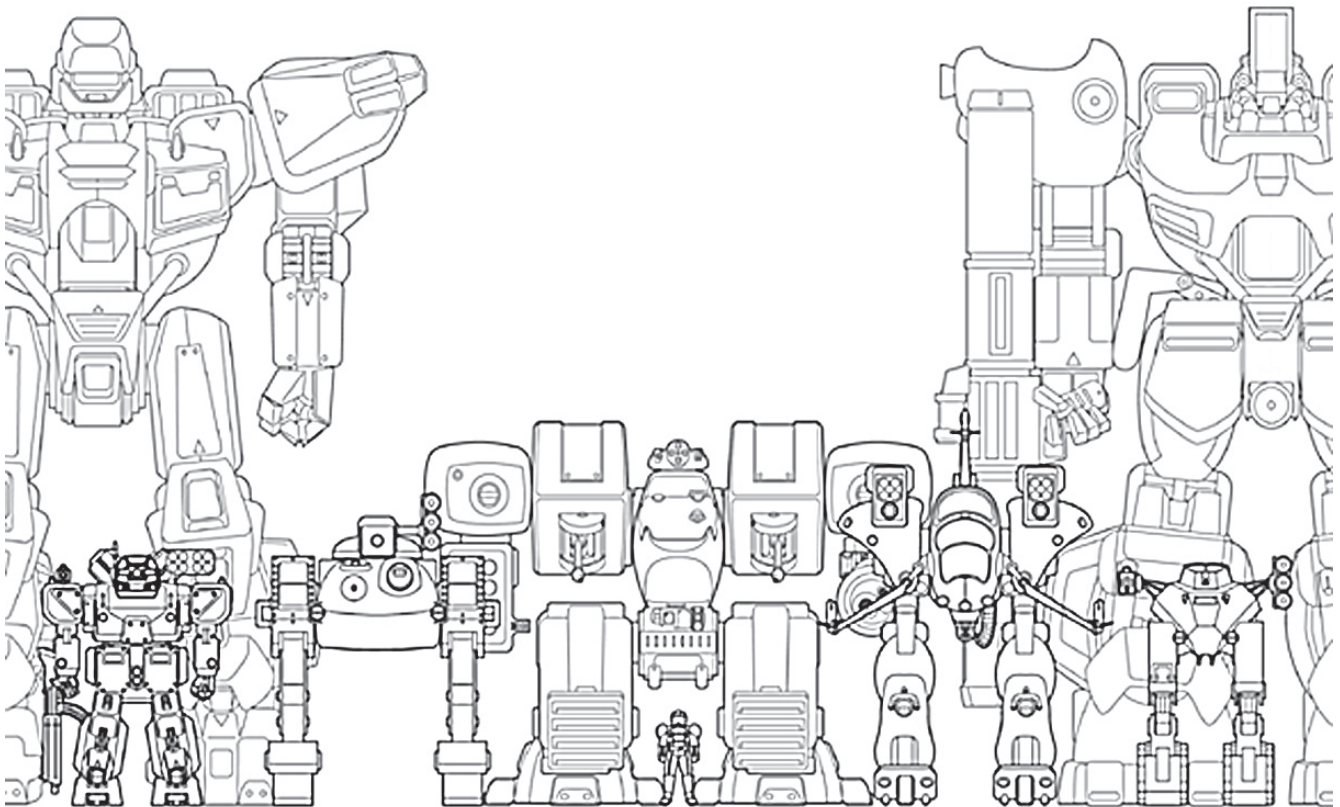
Oliver Bollmann (kannikcat@hotmail.com) -- *SOL-001 Phoenix*
It all started in a hobby store one day twenty odd years ago with an odd box containing something called Top Secret. Almost as soon as he began gaming he began writing, tinkering and adding for and to them, which led to self-publishing and e-publishing several supplements. In the times he's not playing games, practicing traditional Chinese martial arts, designing buildings, or being a stand for the world he continues to write and create for all manner of things. He's been in love with the DP9 universes since the first HG release and began his direct involvement with the Pod crew a couple of years ago.

Patrick St-Amand (patrickstamand@yahoo.ca) -- *Bail Out!*
Patrick St-Amand has been gaming on and off for seventeen years. He currently lives in Taiwan but longs to return to his native Canada. This is his first contribution to Aurora, though he has long lurked on the forum as Commando Zero.

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BAIL OUT!
PATRICK ST-AMAND

As the Jager in front of him burst in a ball of flame, Hadrian turned his attention to the Southern cadre leader. It was only as he pressed the trigger button that he realized his miscalculation. Instead of diving right, the Black Mamba turned toward him, leveling his autocannon and taking aim.

Hadrian barely had time to swear while bracing himself for impact.

So, your daring attack backfired and got you overkilled?

What happens to your character after his Gear bursts out in a fireball? The 2nd Edition Rulebook suggests allowing the PCs to escape one overkill result per game session but to refrain from rewarding the concerned player-character with experience points (p.118). This has two obvious advantages: it keeps things simple, and it avoids the excessive killing of cherished characters.

But it also has several drawbacks: first, players may not feel much incentive to be careful if they know their character will walk away safely no matter how recklessly they charge into battle. Second, to put it plainly, it's just not much fun.

To add some extra tension and danger to the overkill process, the GM may alternatively ask the player to roll PSY on the following table. The roll may be made openly or secretly, or the table may be used simply as a guideline. Personally, I also think this role has the positive effect of making PSY more important as an attribute. Characters with a deathwish (and a negative PSY) will tend to get their wishes fulfilled.

Some Gears are fitted with additional protection to increase pilot survivability. Others leave the pilot more exposed to injuries. The following Perks modify the PSY roll:

-2	Exposed Crew
+1	Emergency Medical
+1	Reinforced Location Armor (Crew)
+2	Reinforced Crew Compartment
+2	Ejection System

Familiarity and training may also play a role.

-2	Unfamiliar with Gear piloting
-1	Unfamiliar with specific Gear model
+1	Character has the specialization applying to the Gear he is piloting

Only the highest positive AND negative modifier applies. Bonuses do not stack.

BAIL OUT SUCCESS TABLE

RESULT	EFFECT
1	There is a flash of light and a ball of fire. The character never saw it coming. There probably won't be much of a body to send home.
2	The character sustains some major injury with permanent repercussions. Roll one more dice:

    1. The character is badly scarred. Reduce APP by one.
    2. The experience has left the character shaken and psychologically damaged. PSY is reduced by one. The GM could also give the character some acquired flaw, such as Flashbacks, to simulate the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), though this should only be imposed with the player's consent.
    3. The character has been left badly shaken by his/her experience. WIL is reduced by one.
    4. The character sustains neurological damage. Select randomly either KNO, INF, CRE, or PER and reduce by one.
    5. The character is maimed in some way. Reduce AGI by one.
    6. The character loses a randomly determined limb. He/she will die without medical attention.

RESULT	EFFECT
3	The character escapes but sustains a major injury (deep wound). Unless the character can be retrieved promptly or some medical attention can be provided, it is likely he will succumb to his injuries.
4	The character escapes but sustains some injury (flesh wound)
5	The character in shaken, bruised, and sustains some superficial injuries, but is otherwise glad to be alive.
6+	The character escapes unharmed.

Wolf stared at his opponent. Zak's glare was intense. Zak was known for his speed and deadly fighting arts. Wolf would have to keep his bearings. The judge called for the match to begin. Before he knew it Zak was right in his face; His hands ablaze with fiery chi and his fist coming straight towards his head.

Fast, furious, foot and fist action. A staple of arcades and a hand-to-hand rpg combat. This is not a comprehensive set of rules to mimic any fighter, but an abstract interpretation of the classic genre.

Dragons of Fury is an old Card Game from DP9. It's design was to mimic the arcade fighters. While many of us have moved on, the game still has elements of inspiration and roots in DP9 history. Below is simple Role Playing retake of that game that the company provided so many years ago.

Effect Fu

Effect Fu Dragons of Fury uses a different axis of the Silhouette dice mechanics to provide depth. Below is a focused use of Effect Fu to capture the elements of daring heroes & uncanny villains with Fist Fights, Combos and all the other arcade fighter staples.

OLD AND NEW AXIS

For Effect Fu, the system uses an additional vector: It places values on the lower rolled dice for depth. This generates a unique result that the highest die is important, but all the extras that are very low will also give value. In general terms any die that results in equal to or below value X will have an impact on this or the next round. Rolling all 1's is still a very bad botch.

PERCEPTION

Currently the combat design is that each fighter individual rolls their actions, then the defender rolls to counter.Then it is the defender's turn to attack. This proceeds back and forth until a victor is announced. Dragons of Fury uses a different perspective for combat.In it, Fighters enter into a simple comparative Melee Round.

THE ROUND

Represent a series of blows, counters, dodges, feints, and so on. They are not entirely abstract either: the actions add up to either single or a series of blows that result in the same end effect. This is by no means that a representation of luck or fatigue.

There are two primary actions in the Round: Offense and Defense. When both participants are trying to strike each other, both roll an offense skill. If either are sacrificing a normal attack to defend themselves, then roll Defensive skill.

When rolling a normal round the attack roll represents both the Attack and Defense value rating for the fighter. A fighter can sacrifice their attack and instead makes a pure Defense roll. This roll has other benefits listed later.

FU

Individual accomplishment or cultivated skill obtained by long and hard work. In Effect Fu, Fu represents any dice used to produce effects on top of the basic action. In Dragons of Fury Fu represents opportunity or effort in a Melee fight. This represents a range of 0 - 4. What influences Fu range come from Mastery and various Specializations.

Fu Dice are gained whenever any die on the skill roll results in equal or less than the Fu range. Fu Dice are not normally rolled, but instead spent on purchasing effects.[The term Fu Dice is only reflect to be consistent with Skill Dice and Emergency Dice which are both available to be spent on Effects.]

A fighter who uses Defense forfeits the opportunity to do damage. Instead their Fu range is equal to their Defense skill straight + Mastery. This can typically be used to generate Fu dice.

COMBAT SENSE

For the purpose of Dragons of Fury the use of Combat Sense is altered to continue to be still useful. Combat Sense is a pool of Fu Die. Whenever the fighter has a moment to gain their bearing(no actions) their Pool is restored in full. The pool size/max is equal to their skill level. The pool can also be restored by a Defense action with any Fu Die optionally spent to be stored back into the Combat Sense pool.

RANGE

Range in Melee combat is simple. The fighter is either within range of being struck or isn't. When changing range a fighter is automatically takes the Go After Effect without the extra Fu Die.

MASTERY OF THE FIVE PATHS

In anykind of Hand to Hand focused combat it would be unjust to consider all fighting to be based solely on the Hand to Hand skill. While the skill is used in all rolls Mastery of an area influences the Fu Range. The areas of Mastery that Fury Fighters can have are Hand, Foot, Block, Grip, Zen. Each Mastery starts at 0, which represents nothing but basic knowledge. Rank 1 Shodan advanced techniques, Rank 2 Rokudan being high level techniques. Any higher ranges would enter a far superior realm of combat. More suited to the likes of Dragon Ball. The 5 Masteries are used for the base level of the Fu Range.

- Rank 0, no cost
- Rank 1 Shodan, cost 5 sp / xp.
- Rank 2 Rokudan, cost 15sp / 10xp

Mastery of Hand follows those of strikes or actions with open hand, edged hand or closed fist.

Mastery of Foot are strikes or actions that deal with the foot, knee or leg.

Mastery of Block is a defensive ability. Any use of Block Mastery gains +1 Defense value, -1 Attack Value.

Mastery of Grip includes manipulating the opponents body as a whole with ones own, throws, etc.

Mastery of Zen techniques that focus on mind over matter, Energy over flesh. These could be Fire Balls, Iron Coat, light foot.

EFFECTS

An Effect may be performed by using a Skill, Fu or Emergency Die. Almost all Effects cost 1 Die. There are a few exceptions to that rule. Any Effects and any number of Effects can be combined. Feel free to interpret what happens any way you want. Be it 3 "Another Blow" Effects looking like a 100 Palm Strike attack.

Heavy Blow
Deliver an additional +7 to the damage result.

Weak Attack
This reduces the final damage by 5, but you gain +1 Fu die.

Go First
Your effects attack effects and results take place before the opponent. The opponent still rolls normally. If the Go First attack doesn't end up interrupting then they still take their action. With any applicable results.

Go After
Your effects and results end up going after the opponent. Including possible wound penalties. Going after earns the benefit of gaining +1 Fu Dice.

Rebalance
For whatever reason you're suffering a die penalty from an effect or situation. This Effect removes this effect on a 1 for 1 ratio. This could be from being dizzy, knocked down or what have you.

Another Blow
This delivers another result value equal to the roll -1. Additional Another Blow continually reduce the value roll. So Another Blow twice on an attack roll of 6 would result in the original 6, a 5 and 4.

Chain
This carries over a Die to the next roll as skill or Fu Die.

Piercing
A piercing attack effectively reduces the armour/threshold of the target by 5.

Accurate Strike
Striking a targeted location normally applies penalties as a modifier(Silhouette 1 & 2) or subtracting dice(Silhouette 3.x). Accurate Strike is designed to generate Fu dice to reduce these penalties. Otherwise using straight Skill and Emergency dice would have no impact to the Silhouette 3.x rules.

Body Strike
The fighter uses the momentum or size of their body to increases their multiplier. The increase to damage is equal to 3 + body with a minimum of 1. [This differences from Heavy Blow in the matter that this is potential while a Heavy Blow is guaranteed damage]

Maneuver

The fighter sacrifices Damage for the roll. The Fighter still rolls to determine if they are struck. If they are not struck, they gain +2 Fu Die.

Evasive

The fighter is more evasive and increases their effective Defense value of the roll by 1.

Multi Blows

Double the number of targets being struck per purchasing of the effect.

Rush In/Out

Quickly moving in or out of combat range may effect striking the target. The Effect reduces the penalty by 1.

Grab

Grabbing the opponent reduces the targets Defense value by 1. This also reduces both fighters rolls for the attack value by 1, however the grabber is not penalized by doing throws or holds.

Push

regardless of how the "Push" is performed the effect is that the target is forcefully moved a number of meters equal to Fit + Bld + Skill + 1

Dizzy

This causes the target fighter to become dizzy. The target loses 1 die the next round. Any additional Dizziness past 1 causes an equal amount of dice lost per round, but reduces each round by 1. So a Dizzy of 3 starts by causing the target to lose 3 dice first round, 2 dice second round and 1 dice 3 round.

MANEUVERS

Compounded Effects that cost less Fu dice. Maneuvers take time to train, but offer the benefit that Maneuvers cost less Effect dice to perform than their free form Effects. The end result is that to perform a maneuver only requires half the number of Fu dice. So having two Heavy Blow effects would only cost one Fu die. There is no limit to the number of Effects a maneuver can have. Maneuvers also need a defined Mastery. An additional 2 sp/xp can add an additional Mastery.

- Maneuver Cost = 2 + (2 x Number of Effects)
- Additional Mastery +2
- Associated Effect +2

Weak Attack or *Go After* do not count towards Fu Dice cost to perform.

Weak Attack or *Go After* can reduce cost by 2 if they do not offer the Fu Die.

Accurate Strike requires that upper, mid or lower be specified.

Example: Zak has a specialization in Pain Strike. and performs a Pain Strike maneuver. This is a Hand Mastery maneuver. Zak rolls a 6 and 3. The 3 just falls into his Pain Strike range. If Zak's action isn't canceled he can add the maneuver to this round and stack the the total Effects.

SPECIALIZATION EFFECT

These offer the benefit of increasing the Fu range for dice to produce that particular effect. Normally the Fu range is low 1 or 2. Having a specialization in the effect increases the Fu range by 1. Depending on the Effect this could be applied either immediately or next round. Specialization effects are not skill specializations. They are use for all applicable skills.

Example: Wolf has a Hand Mastery of 2 and a Chain Specialization. When performing a Hand(punch) type attack he would have an effective Fu range of 2, but on a 3 would receive the Chain Effect, in the end adding an additional roll able die next round.

SPECIALIZED MANEUVERS

A specialized Maneuver works like the Effect version to add an increase to the Fu range by 1. A maneuver can also have an associated Effect. Use whatever is most appropriate. This ends up allowing the Specialized Effect + Specialized Maneuver to increase the total Fu range by 2. It should be noted that the Mastery starts as the lowest value, followed by Effect, then maneuver.

Example: Wolf has a Specialized maneuver in Low Strike. He has also learned it with the Chain Effect. Wolf rolls a 5,4,2 when using his Mastery of Hand. By default he can just accept the 1 Fu Die generated from the 2. His specialization however allow him to have the 4 as a generated Fu Die but to just the Low Strike Maneuver. Because the Maneuver has a Chain Effect which adds +1 Fu Die the maneuver is limited to the next round.

ZEN

This is the fighters state of mind. This isn't about the clear-headed Zen, this could be a form of angry meditation (if such exists). Zen is the art of channeling emotion, mind and energy. It is in the realm of Zen where much of the fantastic elements of the genre come together.

Any die that rolls within the raw Zen range can accumulate in a pool that is not required to be spent nor does it disappear. The Fu Dice from the Zen Pool can be spent as either normal Fu Die or Zen Effects. A Zen Effect triples any specified other Effect.

Example: Wolf manages to receive an additional Fu Die from a Chain last round and has a Zen die in the pool. This round, Wolf intends to follow up with a simple kick with a few additional Effects. Wolf adds Push to knock Zak away and a Combat Sense Die for the Go First. Wolf adds a Zen Die to the Push. If Wolf succeeds he will send Zak flying 15 meters = (Fit/Bld + Skill) x 3(Zen bonus)

HADO

Hado attack techniques are a gathering of a character's energies and channeled into a manifest form of sorts. This could be a ball a Chi or howled waves of destruction. Regardless of the form they result in same effect: a blast wave of energy. When struck, the blast wave is not absorbed by parries or blocks. This means that if the fighter successfully strikes with a Hado maneuver then the the Hado attack roll determines it's damage vs a value of 1. The damage is straight to the person. If the defender rolls Defense then the damage MoS is compared normally.

Hado can only be achieved through maneuvers. It requires 1 Zen die, uses an entire Zen pool and does not allow for any further Fu die gain from the roll. The damage multiplier from a Hado attack is equal to 5 x Zen Pool including the required Zen Die.

Example: Zak gets up after being sent an incredible distance and rolling along the ground. Zak is pretty far from Wolf and not in close range. He decides to summon a Fiery Pit under Wolf and spends his remaining Combat Sense Die and the required Zen Die. Zak has 2 Zen dice though he doesn't spend the second Zen die since he wants the maximum damage. Zak's attack will Go After Wolfs. If Zak succeeds in his attack his Attack Roll will be compared against a difficulty of 1 with a x10 damage.

Hado Block

Blocking with another Hado attack requires the target to spend a Zen die and lose a die from the next round. If they do this then both compare the Hado damage. If the Attacker has the higher damage then the remaining damage is delivered. If the Defenders damage is higher then the attack is stopped.

Hado techniques can only "kill" an opponent for Role Playing effects. Otherwise they can do no more than a Deep Wound.

Example: The ground itself burns and tries to burn Wolf. Wolf let's out a Kiai Howl in an attempt to disrupt the Fiery Pit. Zak rolled a 6 for a total damage of 50(7vs1 x10). Wolf rolled a 7 resulting in a damage of 30(7vs1 x5). Wolf will end up taking 20 points of damage. Wolf was too far away and wanted an opportunity regain his Combat Sense pool and so held of attacking.
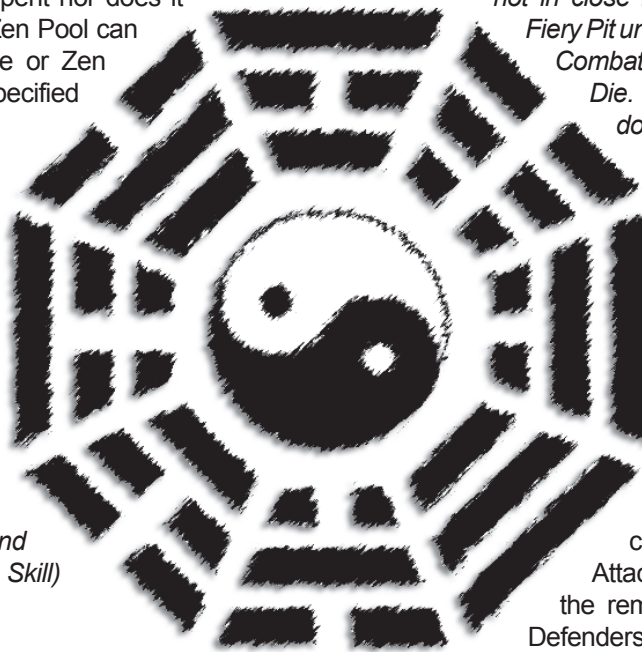
Wolf

Wolf felt the draw of adventure and excitement. He left his family's flying circus to rescue damsels in distress and doing good deeds. Wolf declares himself an expert marksmen but seems unable to find a gun that works well. He has learned to use his internal energies to defeat his opponents.

Zak

Driven, insane, megalomaniac. The being known as Zak seems driven towards goals that swirl in his own mind. An organizer of underground fighting tournaments, he seeks the toughest fighters. Winners either disappear or are found dead. Zak's fiery powers and green skin unsettle many. His origins remain a mystery.

+2 Fit, Agi, Per
+1 Bld, Psy
-1 Cre

+3 Agi
+2 Fit, Influence
+1 Bld, Cre
-1 Psy

3 Melee, Defense, Piloting, Fire Arms
2 Combat Sense

3 Hand to Hand, Combat Sense, Leadership
2 Defense, Theatrics 1

Mastery
2 Hand, Foot, Block
1 Grip, Zen

Mastery
2 Hand, Foot, Zen
1 Grip, Block

Specializations
Accurate Strike Effect, Chain Effect, Spinning Kick Maneuver, Trip Kick Maneuver.

Specializations
Pierce Effect, Hado, Pain Strike Maneuver, Swarm Punch Maneuver.

Maneuvers
- Spinning Kick(Foot : 1 Fu) : Weak Attack, Go Before, Accurate Strike(upper area)
- Low Strike(Hand/Foot: 2 Fu) : Week Attack, Go Before, Chain, Accurate Strike(legs), Dizzy
- Palm Block(Block : 1 Fu) : Weak Attack, Go Before, Evasive
- Snarl Shout(Zen : 1 Fu): Weak Attack, Chain, Hado
- Power Punch(Hand : 1 Fu) : Pierce, Accurate Strike(upper area)
- Stomach Blow(Foot : 1 Fu) : Go Before, Accurate Strike(upper area)
- Trip Kick(Foot : 2 Fu) : Go Before, Chain, Rush In, Accurate Strike
- Head Kracker(Grip : 2 Fu) : Accurate Strike, Dizzy x3
- Kiai How(Zen : 1 Fu) : Go After, Heavy Attack-Hado
- Uppercut Smash(Hand/Foot : 2 Fu) : Evasive, Body Strike, Accurate Strike(upper), Dizzy

Maneuvers
- Fire Ball(Zen : 1 Fu) Weak Attack, Go Before, Hado
- Tremor(Zen : 2 Fu) Weak Attack, Go Before, Chain, Hado, Accurate Strike(low)
- Pain Strike(Hand : 1 Fu) Go Before, Pierce, Dizzy
- Leap Kick(Foot : 2 Fu) Go Before, Dizzy, Accurate Strike(upper), Evasive
- Swarm Punch(Hand : 1 Fu) Go Before, Chain, Pierce
- Quake Stomp(Zen: 1 Fu) Chain, Hado
- Aura of Flames(Zen: 2 Fu) Accurate Strike, Dizzy x3
- Fire Storm Shield(Zen: 2 Fu) Accurate Strike, Evasive x3
- Leaping Fury(Foot : 1 Fu) Go After, Strong Attack, Evasive
- Fiery Pit(Zen : 2 Fu): Go After, Heavy Attack, Accurate Strike, Pierce, Hado

The captain hid his scowl as he sat and listened to the Chaplain deliver another pre-battle exhortation to the weary faithful, keeping their disillusionment at bay for at least one more season. The top brass had declared objective 24117 a priority target for his forces to seize ahead of their Southern counterparts. The Captain knew better and figured that his force was about to be sacrificed to gain another bargaining chip for the coming cease-fire talks. At least he pulled some strings to obtain two of the prototype Grizzlies with the new actuators and armour inserts. Hopefully their improved manoeuvrability and protection would help their pilots survive to see the end of this fruitless war.

. . . .

"It's just a gas station!"

The Political Officer's eyes glittered coldly over the holographic map. "Non, Lieutenant, it is the only refuelling facility within 200 kilometres of our position. Regardless, High Command has designated the leadership of the Northern forces approaching that location as high-priority targets for removal and has attached a Fire Dragon to your section to provide support. I suggest you do not fail in this endeavour or else your name will figure prominently in my report back to your Commandant. Now do your duty – I will be watching closely."

The Lieutenant wondered darkly if one of his Iguanas might accidentally designate the sycophant's gear for Northern indirect fire as he left the command centre to brief his troops.

After spending so much time playtesting Locked and Loaded, I was anticipating how the rules would fare out in the wild. I was also anxious to try out my new Northern Army I finally built as an OpFor for my infamous Southern army. As a bonus, I was able to use some of the optional post-1940TN upgrades for Northern Forces. Ryan "Henshini" Henshaw played the South, as he wanted to try out his newly built and painted Fire Dragon he received as part of his prize package from CanGames 2008.

The playing area was roughly 4 feet wide by 5 feet long. We used varied terrain pieces that I had brought from home and borrowed our local game store. We used green, faux moss-covered styrofoam rocks that were considered dense, medium cover vegetation and the buildings were considered hard cover. For visual variety, we had white pieces of concrete that were considered rough terrain and the black area that was a road.

1000 TV BATTLE TOE

NORLIGHT ARMED FORCES
(Priority Level 2, 5CP, 4SP, 6VP)
4 Combat Groups, 18 Units, 23 Actions

Infantry Platoon (4 Squads, Badger) (60) (Core) <Veteran>
  Options: Add 2 Light Mortar (+30)
  Add 2 AGR (+10)
  Add Infantry skill 3 to lead Platoon (+10)
  Add ATV to Lead Platoon (+10)
  Add 2 x Stealth(2) to AGR and Lead Platoon (+10)
  Add Demo Drone to Lead Platoon (+5)
  Add Badger (+25)
  Add Stealth (2) and ECM2 to Badger (+5)
  Make Lead Platoon Army Commander 165 points

Light Tank Squad (2 Bandit Hunter Klemm) (160) (Specialist)
  Options: Klemm (+160)
  Swap 2 Klemm for Bandit Hunter Klemm (-160) 160 points

Recon Squad (Jaguar, 3 SD Hunters, Ferret MkII, Weasel) (345) (Core)
  Options: Add Cheetah (+70)
  Swap 3 Cheetah for Stripped Down Hunter (-120)
  Swap 2 Cheetah for Ferret (-60)
  Swap Ferret for Ferret MkII (+5)
  Swap Ferret for Weasel (+5)
  Swap Ferret MkII LAC for MRF (0)
  Swap Weasel LAC for MRF (0)
  Swap SD Hunter LAC for MRF (0)
  Swap Jaguar MAC for HRF (0) 245 points

FS Squad (Jaguar, 2 Cheetah, 2 Crossbow Grizzly) (295) (Aux) <Veteran>
  Options: Swap 2 Grizzly MRPs/HGM for ATM (Crossbow variant) (-30)
  Add 2 x Roaring Grizzly Upgrade Package <TN1940 upgrade> (+10)
  Swap Headhunter for Jaguar (+15)
  Add MBZK to Jaguar (+10)
  Add +1 Leadership to Jaguar (+10)
  Add +1 Att/Def to Jaguar (+10)
  Swap 2 Hunter for Cheetah (+50)
  Swap 2 Cheetah DPG for LAC (+10)
  Swap 2 Cheetah LAC for MBZK (+20)
  Add +1 Att/Def to a Cheetah (+10)
  Add Chaplain to Lvl 3 Cheetah (+20) 430 points

THE BATTLE FOR IMPERIAL OIL STATION

We rolled for the scenario, which resulted in a daylight encounter in clear weather with a five round time limit. There were no special rules and the game took about 4 hours to complete. For mission type we both rolled an offensive mission. I chose two Seize objectives and two Scout objectives while Ryan chose Scout, Recon my Light Tank Squad, and 3 Assassination objectives (the Infantry Army Commander, The Recon Squad's Lead Jaguar, and the Lead Bandit Hunter Klemm).

For Support, both sides brought in Fighter-Bomber Airstrikes. The North secretly assigned their last Support Point to a pair of Medium Artillery Barrages while the South secretly allocated 2 additional Command Points.

We rolled Short Edge for our deployment ones and alternated placing combat groups back and forth. Everyone was at top speed except the infantry, who were stationary.

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"Contact! Enemy bearing 270, looks like gears with armour and strider support." The Captain hunkered behind an outcropping with the rest of his squad as his communications specialist outlined the enemy dispositions.

He issued orders rapid-fire. "Tell Fire Support to flank south and assault the main objective. Scan the gas station along the way to see how full the in-ground fuel tanks are. Recon, back them up and snipe targets of opportunity. Infantry and tanks, forward observe and provide indirect fire, now move!" After calling in air support, he reviewed some of the battlevid streaming through his helmet's HUD. His gears rushed forward, hugging cover as glimpses of the enemy popped in and out of sight. Direct fire and indirect counter-fire arced around them, explosions adding to the cacophony of weapons fire.

A Badger used a lull in the action to speed forward and relay co-ordinates that sounded garbled by enemy jamming until the Weasel used its impressive electronics suite to clear up the transmission. The whoosh and thump of tank rockets and infantry mortars gave way to rumbling explosions as the munitions found their mark and obliterated the enemy units sheltering there.

1000 TV BATTLE TOE

SOUTHERN REPUBLICAN ARMY
(Priority Level 3, 7 CP, 5 SP, 6 VP)
4 Combat Groups, 11 Units, 15 Actions

Strike Cadre (Black Mamba, Sidewinder, FlammJäger, King Cobra) (240) (Specialist) <Veteran>
  Options: Add Vibrorapier to Lead Black Mamba (+5)
  Swap Black Mamba for King Cobra (+50)
  Swap King Cobra LPA for LLC (+10)
  Swap Jäger for Sidewinder (+5)
  Add Political Officer to Sidewinder (+20)
  Swap Jäger LAC/LRP for MFL/IRP (FlammJager variant) (+15)
  Lead Black Mamba is Army Commander (+40) 390 points

GP Cadre (Black Mamba, 2 Iguana, Jäger) (160) (Core) <Veteran>
  Options: Swap 2 Jäger for Iguana (+40)
  Swap Lead Jäger for Black Mamba (+25)
  Swap Jäger LAC for LBZK (+5) 230 points

Tank Cadre (2 Hun) (180) (STank) (Auxiliary)
  Options: None. 180 points

Strider Cadre (Fire Dragon) (180) (Specialist)
  Options: Swap Naga for Fire Dragon (+20) 200 points

Turn 1

North won initiative and the South moved its Fire Dragon, using its actions for "We're In Trouble!" (WIT) and put its HRP on standby. The Klemms crawled forward and each spent an action for WIT to pop smoke on top of themselves and put an action on standby for co-ordinates. The Strike Cadre activated and advanced alternating combat and top speeds while the Recon Squad SD Hunters sprinted forward into cover positions. The Recon Jaguar, Ferret and Weasel moved at combat speeds into sniper positions for their rifles. The Ferret spent its action to hide while the other gears reserved their actions.

The firing started when the GP Cadre activated. The Mamba walked out to fire at the Recon Jaguar, which snap fired back, both for no effect. The Mamba then used autopilot to forward observe the Jaguar, at which point the King Cobra and Fire Dragon unloaded their HRPs, using rate of fire for area effect, doing heavy damage to the Jaguar and mulching one of the bases of infantry. The Fire Support Squad mimicked the Strike Cadre by alternating top and combat speeds, moving themselves into forward positions and active detecting one of the scout objectives.

The Huns manoeuvred into the trees and fired at the damaged Jaguar for no effect. For the final activation, the Badger APC sped down the highway in the open, trying to forward observe the GP Mamba. An Iguana tried to contest the comm roll with ECM, but the Weasel supported the APC with ECCM so the call got through. As one, a barrage of missiles and mortar rounds descended from the infantry and Klemms, overkilling both the Mamba and a Jäger caught inside the northern weapons' area of effect.

Then the air strikes came in. The south fighter-bomber streaked in behind the Klemms, using active detection to pinpoint their position. It Target Designated the lead Klemm and fired two AGMs thought the smoke, scratching paint. The Northern fighter-bomber manoeuvred onto his opponents' six and fired an AGM up his tailpipe, but only lightly damaged it. The Northern Aircraft then hooked around behind the Dragon to designate and fire an AGM that merely glanced off the armour. Both aircraft retreated from the board.

Turn 2

South won initiative, forcing the North to activate their infantry. The Badger moved behind cover at top speed, but not before it successfully forward observed a cluster of gears (after the Iguana and Weasel contested/supported the comm event), and the infantry mortars stunned the Sidewinder and the gatling-equipped Mamba leader while knocking a sturdy box off the Cobra. The Fire Dragon moved behind a low hill while the Klemms moved forward while still under cover. The Strike Cadre moved slowly forward as the Cobra and Mamba shook out their cobwebs, removing their stun counters, while the Sidewinder forward observed the Recon Jaguar. But before anyone could fire indirectly, the Northern Commander spent a CP to allow the Jaguar to activate out of sequence, sidestep out of the killzone and take a pot-shot at the Sidewinder for no effect. The Recon Squad SD Hunters spread out and dug in around the Seize objective and the

Ferret went stationary to effectively break all combat locks to its position before firing its Rifle at the FlammJäger, doing light damage.

The Huns moved out of the trees at top speed but had no targets for their remaining actions. The FS Squad swept around the building complex and completed their scout objective. One of the Cheetahs successfully penetrated the South deployment zone while the Grizzlies fired ATMs. One target was the Sidewinder but the stationary Grizzly fumbled the roll. The other was the Fire Dragon but its anti-missile system (AMS) swatted down the projectile before impact. The GP Cadre Iguanas then forward observed one of the Grizzlies for the Fire Dragon's HRP, which scratched the Grizzly's paint with indirect fire.

Turn 3

South won initiative again and decided to go first. The Huns slowed to combat speed and moved to flank the stationary Grizzly, but the North spent a CP to activate it out of sequence, popping from behind the hill to blow apart the leading Hun with a short-ranged ATM before being overkilled in turn by the Hun's partner. The Klemms continued to loiter around behind cover while the Strike Cadre activated. The FlammJäger moved beside the Hun and threw a grenade at the army commander's infantry squad for no effect. The King Cobra managed to get line of sight to the damaged Jaguar and overkilled it with its LLC. The Sidewinder active detected the Southern Scout objective as the Black Mamba surged forward.

The "Real Deal" - Turns 1 and 2
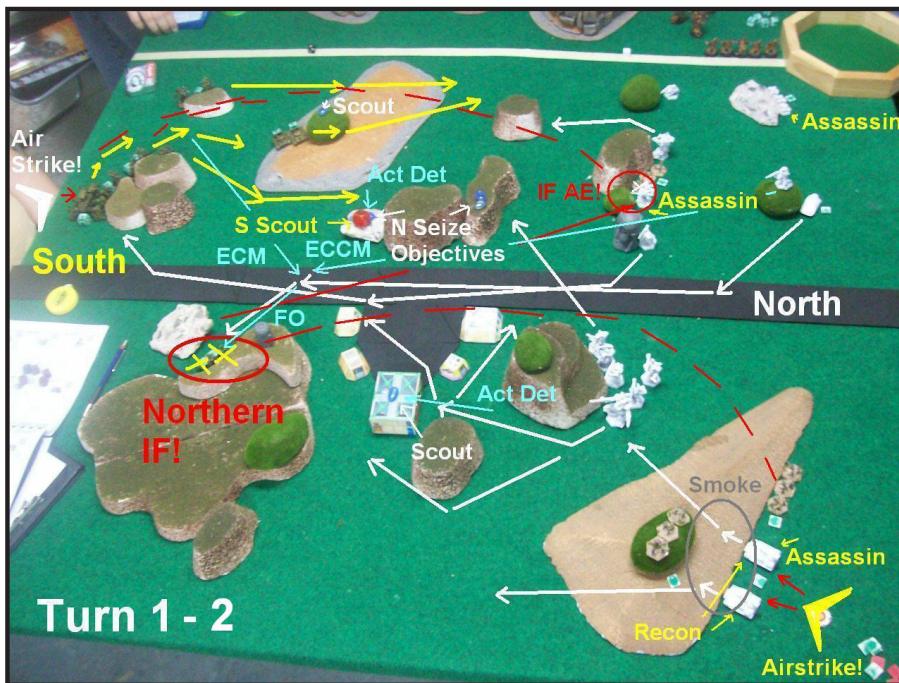
The FS Squad Chaplain Cheetah clambered around the rough terrain to get a bazooka shot at the Sidewinder for light damage and the other Cheetah overkilled a GP Iguana with a Point Blank MBZK shot to the rear. The remaining Jaguar moved to support the northern flank while the Grizzly fired another ATM at the Fire Dragon, only to have it knocked down by the AMS again. The Fire Dragoon returned fire with the HRP at the Grizzly for

no effect and it's flamer at the Cheetah, stunning it. The Ferret moved backwards at ground speed out of the cover and threw a grenade at the clustered Hun and Jäger, scattering for no effect. One of the Recon Squad SD Hunters streaked along the road to successfully forward observe the Black Mamba, contested and supported by EW from the remaining Iguana and Weasel. MRPs and Light Mortars rained down on the Mamba's position, stunning it and knocking out a sturdy box. The other two Hunters Forward observed the FlammJäger 's position and called in two medium artillery strikes with unskilled leadership rolls. One landed on target while the other scattered spectacularly, knocking the sturdy off the Hun and heavily damaging the FlammJäger.

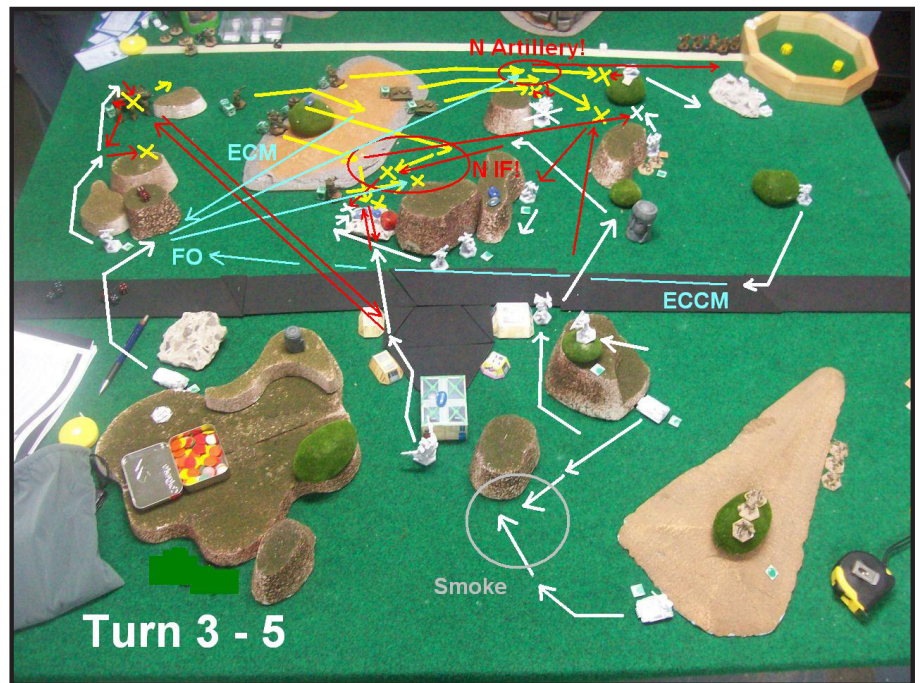. . . . .

"Tabarnaque!" The Lieutenant saw a Hun turret pop into the air after its frame was hit by an anti-tank missile fired by a Grizzly. It's cadre mate avenged its destruction, spearing the offending monster with a laser through the torso. The gear stiffened as its pilot vapourized before erupting as the beam of light burned through the chassis to ignite its fuel tank.

"All units take out the leaders! For the glory of the Republic!" That last bit was for the benefit of the political officer. Truthfully there wouldn't be much glory today. But the King Cobra listened and decapitated one of the Jaguars with its own laser as his section charged forward. The Northern line recoiled at the onslaught and expectation flared briefly in the Southern commander that they might just pull this off. But an explosion he heard behind him dashed his hopes and the lives of several of his men.

"Cheetahs to the rear! We just lost an Iguana!"
"Dragon under ATM attack!"
"Incoming!"

That last comment caused him to reflexively jerk his controls to the right, which just saved him as rockets, mortars, and artillery salvoes rained down around his command leaving many of them stunned and disoriented. The enemy took advantage of the confusion and destroyed the Political Officer's Sidewinder and the rest of his lead elements.

A Cheetah firing a bazooka and draped with a sash of the Revisionist clergy approached his flank. Grimly, he swerved his Mamba

towards the fanatic's gear and riddled it with gatling fire as he keyed in his final commands. "All units fall back and regroup. The strike cadre will cover for you as long as we can. If I cease transmission, sauve qui peut." He only hoped his orders were not too late.

. . . .

Turn 4

Once more, the South won initiative. The North moved its Klemms behind cover and popped smoke to hide themselves. The Strike Cadre activated and while the FlammJäger tried to toast the ATV infantry and the Sidewinder completed the scout objective, the rest of the cadre converged en masse on the Cheetah Chaplain's position and annihilated it with a LGM and HGLC at short range. The Badger manoeuvred into cover from EW and forward observed the Mamba's position. Again, mortars and rockets hit the Strike Cadre, overkilling the Sidewinder, lightly damaging the King Cobra, and heavily damaging the Mamba.

The Hun rumbled forward and fired its LLC and heavy rifle at the closest SD Hunter, critically damaging it. The Hunter fired back for no effect when the Recon Squad activated, but the Ferret ducked from behind cover to take down the FlammJäger with a rifle round to the chest. The Dragon spun around and stunned the Cheetah again, which approached to point blank and fired its bazooka twice using a CP for only light damage. The Grizzly closed with the Cobra to critically damage it with an

The "Real Deal" - Turns 3 through 5

ATM. The Fire Support Squad's Jaguar swooped in from behind a stonehead to pump a bazooka round into the flank of the Hun, blowing it sky high.

Turn 5

North won initiative and chose to activate first. What followed was a delicate dance of CP expenditure and reaction fire as the Northern Fire Support Squad activated and the Jaguar moved behind the remains of the Strike Cadre. But before anything could happen, the Southern Commander spent his last command point to activate the King Cobra out of sequence. The Grizzly immediately declared snap fire and the Cobra instantly responded by firing its LLC point blank at the Grizzly for light damage. The Grizzly's return ATM shot scrapped the Cobra. The Jaguar fired a short-range point blank shot into the rear of the Mamba and destroyed it as well. The remaining stunned Cheetah went stationary and fired its MBZK point-blank into the flank of the Dragon, overkilling it. All remaining units on both sides converged on the Seize objectives, but in the end the North outnumbered the South and the game was called.

Final Score

North: 5/6 VP (2 x Seize (Objectives) 4VP, Scout (Objective) 1VP) - 83% Overwhelming Success

South: 4/6 VP (Recon (Light Tank Squad) 2VP, Assassinate (Recon Jaguar) 1VP, Scout (Objective) 1VP) - 67% Success

Game Comments

Airstrikes are worth their support points. They can be a quick way to score Victory Points with Recon objectives involving small combat groups of 1 to 3 units. They can also be used to quickly assassinate targets with low defensive modifiers.

It's probably best to avoid choosing multiples of the same objective. It's not too hard to achieve one objective, but two same objectives require some contingency planning in case the combat group you assign the objective is wiped out.

The Command Points were used mostly for rerolls, second shots, or activating units out of sequence. The Political Officer and Chaplain reroll abilities were very effective and could be used to give a unit a second chance to hit if already given a CP.

Overall the game was a lot of fun and felt different from the destruction-based scoring of Blitz 1.0. This revision is a worthy improvement of the game we have all come to appreciate. So have at it and have fun!

Infantry Charge!

PROJECT CLIPEUS

NIGEL WONG
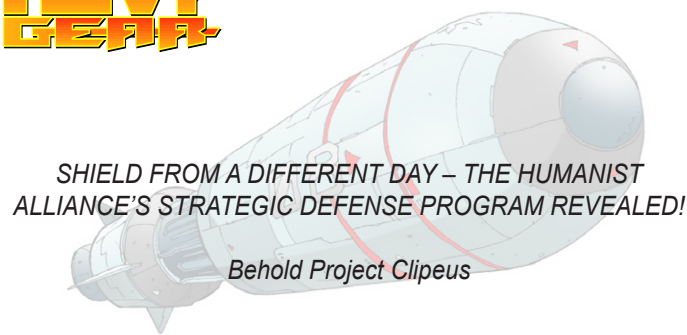
SHIELD FROM A DIFFERENT DAY – THE HUMANIST ALLIANCE'S STRATEGIC DEFENSE PROGRAM REVEALED!

Behold Project Clipeus

Like so many of the Humanist Alliance's weapons development programs, the truth about Project Clipeus was not revealed until after the fall of the Alliance. Clipeus was first conceived when preceptor-caste analysts contracted to work on the Southern Republic's orbital weapons programs reported an alarming increase in the amount of ortillery satellites being placed into orbits over Terra Nova – and over the other leagues of the AST. Republican propaganda stated that the satellites were needed to curb Norguard aggression, but the preceptors could see the writing on the wall – the ortillery could be used as a Damocles sword to compel obedience from the other Southern leagues if they would not submit to conventional force. It was decided that a countermeasure would have to be developed, and Clipeus (originally called SATAN, for Satellite Tracking And Neutralization) was born.

SECRECY

Technology was not a major problem – the Humanist Alliance possessed some of the brightest scientific minds on Terra Nova, and they had access to samples of salvaged CEF technology. However, developing a satellite defense system under the noses of the ever-suspicious SRID would prove to be a significant challenge indeed. Large-scale manufacturing of the system components (and the manufacturing would have to be large-scale – a single site would be too vulnerable to destruction from the Republic's OPSEC cadres) would arouse the attention of political officers placed to oversee Humanist military buildups, and delegating the construction to other leagues was considered too great a security risk.

In the end, all of Clipeus's system elements were developed and mass-produced by disguising them as upgrade programs for the South's war machine. These initiatives pleased the SRA High Command, which would benefit greatly from the Humanist improvements to their vehicles, and enabled Clipeus to proceed, tacitly supported and approved by the government that it had been developed to defend against.

OLYMPUS

On the surface, Project OLYMPUS was conceived to replace the many communications and utility satellites lost in the CEF's attack on Terra Nova. Of course, the Southern Republic wanted to place more spy satellites in orbit, in order to better keep an eye on the movements of Badlands and Northern factions. The higher-ups in the SRA Space Command thus warmly welcomed the Humanists' development of low-visibility and high-sensitivity reconnaissance satellites. However, even as the many spy satellites intended for intelligence gathering on the Southern Republic's enemies were placed into low Terranovan orbit, many more Humanist-controlled spy satellites were launched with them. These satellites would form the intelligence-gathering arm of Project Clipeus, with the codename of OLYMPUS.

The OLYMPUS satellites would detect ortillery bombardment requests from the ground over the entirety of the Humanist Alliance, discern the location of the ortillery satellites in question, and relay the coordinates to the earth-based CHILIARCH missile control element via burst transmission. In addition, OLYMPUS would use passive sensors to collect information on satellite movement and orbits in the surrounding space, which could be used to produce a map of potentially targetable satellites for transmission to CHILIARCH.

In addition, stealth was a high priority for the OLYMPUS satellites. It was presumed that the Southern Republic possessed antisatellite countermeasures of their own, and because their location was much more predictable and easily discerned than the CHILIARCH or SARISSA elements, the OLYMPUS network was considered the weakest link of Project Clipeus. To that end, the OLYMPUS satellites would only gather intelligence and not transmit at all until a master activation signal triggered them. While their survivability once activated was judged to be very low, it was hoped that the regularly-archived data collected from passive sensor scans would be transmitted to CHILIARCH before they were destroyed, and provide sufficient information for CHILIARCH to plot fire missions. As it turned out, this was precisely the case.

CHILIARCH

Project CHILIARCH was conceived as an upgrade program for the Command Naga series of striders, ostensibly to improve the performance of the vehicle's information control and satellite uplink systems. While this was certainly the case, CHILIARCH-equipped striders also possessed extra processors and targeting software, which would allow them to process information obtained from OLYMPUS satellites and plot firing solutions against ortillery satellites. CHILIARCH Command Nagas also received upgrades to their communications equipment, both to receive the large chunks of information that the OLYMPUS network would dump to them, and to relay the plotted firing solutions to the XYSTON striders. The software written for the CHILIARCH upgrade automated the entire process and would only execute once Clipeus's master activation signal was transmitted. Theoretically, even striders crewed by SRA-loyal crew members could be co-opted into the Clipeus program, because even if they were aware of what was going on, there was no way for the crew to stop the process once it took place, short of destroying the strider's computer or communication equipment.

CHILIARCH was only activated on a small portion of Command Nagas during the first and only use of Project Clipeus, and many Command Nagas with CHILIARCH upgrades are still in service now, so it is possible that they could be used in future activations of Project Clipeus.

XYSTON / SARISSA

As the action arm of the entire Clipeus project, XYSTON was initially conceived as an antisatellite laser, which would be mated to the Naga strider chassis and passed off as an upgrade to Sniper Nagas all over the AST. Striders had been chosen because they combined excellent cross-country maneuverability with high carrying capacity, both of which would be essential to evade Southern Republic counterstrikes and to carry the heavy burden of the XYSTON weapon. More importantly, sanctions imposed by the Southern Republic on the Humanist Alliance's possession of high-end combat vehicles such as landships forced a general shift in focus to strider-based combat platforms and Gears.

However, the idea ran into a lot of problems during the planning phase. Most combat lasers only had to operate over a distance of 2 kilometers at the most. The distance from the surface to low Terranovan orbit was easily over a hundred times that. Weather conditions would have to be optimal; else much of the laser's power would be lost on thermal blooms. Terra Nova's ionosphere would also cause significant interference in the use of the more-stable particle accelerator technology, which was also more difficult to produce (even with Port Arthur's assistance) and shorter-ranged than conventional laser weapons. The final nail in the coffin for XYSTON came when the requirements for a laser meeting all the above requirements were determined. It would not only be costly, but need so much cooling and power supply that there would simply be no way to pass it off as nothing more than a routine upgrade. Perhaps if the laser were mounted in a fixed facility… but that would make it even more easily found than if it were based on a strider, and fixed facilities presented the problem of sabotage by OPSEC cadres.

As a result XYSTON was scrapped, but another approach, dubbed SARISSA, was theorized. If the antisatellite element were a guided missile, instead of a laser, it would be possible to produce field conversion kits for the many striders in service throughout the South and convert them to be able to fire an antisatellite missile with remote guidance from CHILIARCH striders.

The SARISSA missile was based on an ancient Earth antiballistic missile design called the Spartan (the plans for which were conveniently provided by Port Arthurian sources). Guided by a miniaturized Nnet, it would essentially be a boost stage for a terminal-phase acceleration relativistic kill vehicle (RKV). Once the SARISSA reached the optimal attack distance, the missile's second stage, a high-impulse single-use fusion tube would accelerate the remainder of the missile to a significant fraction of the speed of light, while simultaneously detonating the explosives nestled in the cluster of depleted uranium rods which were the business end of the SARISSA. The net result would be a spray of extremely high-velocity kinetic energy penetrators that would have destructive effects on a satellite similar to a shell from a Visigoth MBT's main cannon, albeit in an expanding cone centered on the predicted location of the ortillery satellite.

Advances in materials sciences, chemistry and rocketry across the millennia enabled the miniaturization of the original missile to its current incarnation as the SARISSA, but it was still too large for the Tusked Naga chassis it was designed for. The Tusked Naga had been chosen because it was already equipped with stabilizers and reinforced launch hardpoints for deploying the Matterhorn-VII heavy antitank missiles, but SARISSA was so much more powerful than the Matterhorn missiles that the test launch ripped the firing Tusked Naga's right leg clean off and nearly killed the crew. The lopsided arrangement of the Tusked Naga was adequate for the Matterhorn-VIIs, but was far too unstable for the use of SARISSA. The Naga chassis was discarded from consideration as a launch platform for SARISSA, but work had also proceeded in parallel on conversion kits for the Sagittarius and Fire Dragon walkers. Those met with considerably more success.

The Fire Dragon (the SARISSA variant would have been known as the Star Dragon) was a stable firing platform with advanced targeting computers and a large size, which would enable it to support SARISSA missiles easily. Unfortunately, Fire Dragons were expensive and while serviceable, they were also old, and thus not in plentiful supply. It soon became evident that relying on Fire Dragons alone as launch platforms would result in a lack of adequate missile carrying capacity to ensure sufficient destruction of ortillery networks. The advanced firing computers of the Fire Dragon were also wasted, because the SARISSA missile possessed a dedicated navigation Nnet, which would not require input from the launching strider's fire control systems. Indeed, the entire firing sequence could take place free of crew intervention – all they had to do was load the missile and wait for the firing solution from the CHILIARCH command striders. Plans for the Star Dragon were scrapped, which left only one platform for use – the Sagittarius.

The Sagittarius had not received much attention during the weapons-mating phase because its high profile was thought to be too prominent for consideration. However, in virtually every other way, the Sagittarius was ideal for carrying the SARISSA missile. It had originally been conceived as a rocket artillery strider, so it already possessed reinforced joints, actuators and blast shielding for supporting heavy barrages of missiles from its central, heavy-mount missile hardpoint. It was also faster than the lumbering Fire Dragon while retaining the same cross-country ability all Southern striders possessed.

Moreover, it would be child's play to develop an extra set of stabilizers (ostensibly to help the Sagittarius support ever more powerful artillery missiles) and the Sagittarius was in wide distribution as a close fire support vehicle. The entire SARISSA design and mating process could be passed off as an upgrade program to design a new missile for the Sagittarius to fire and enabling it to support its new weapon.

It was thus decided to use the Sagittarius strider to carry the SARISSA antisatellite missile, and thousands of conversion kits were produced and shipped to Sagittarius striders throughout the Southern Republic. The SARISSA missiles, disguised as a new design of heavy artillery missile, were obviously stockpiled by Humanist commanders and not released to the Southern Republic, but the other upgraded Sagittarii used the more widely-available PAM-17 Godhammer.

EFFECTIVENESS

Clipeus worked as well as intended. SARISSA- and CHILIARCH-equipped Nagas and Sagittarii had already been secretly dispersed throughout the Humanist territories in carefully prepared hides and bunkers. When the surviving members of the preceptor caste ordered the protectors to initiate Clipeus, dozens of striders heaved themselves into firing positions and disgorged a cloud of antisatellite missiles into the Southern Republic's ortillery network overhead. Within fifteen minutes, the Southern Republic had lost 85% of their ortillery capability, most of them weapons satellites, but enough observation and control satellites had also been lost that the threat of Southern Republic orbital bombardment on the fleeing Humanist forces was effectively neutralized. Most of the OLYMPUS satellites were untouched and shut themselves down after the activation signal was terminated; the initial strike had been so effective that the Southern Republic's antisatellite capability could not be brought to bear in time to destroy more than a handful of the OLYMPUS satellites.

The Norguard space program detected the sudden launch of missiles against the South's ortillery satellites; fearing a similar response to their own ortillery network, they immediately changed all orbits for their satellites to give the Humanist Alliance territories a wide berth. This essentially eliminated most ortillery support from the subsequent Interpolar War, except during skirmishes in the Badlands.

The CHILIARCH and SARISSA striders purged their special programming and equipment and joined the exodus to the Free Emirates. However, not all the striders were activated, and of those striders that were activated, some were left behind. Their exact locations are no longer known, which means that they're effectively very valuable salvage for a lucky scavenger…

OFFSHOOTS

Many concepts were experimented with and ultimately abandoned as impractical during the course of Project Clipeus. However, while the discarded ideas were not suitable for Clipeus, some of them were developed as projects of their own.

Project PRODROMOS

The forerunner to OLYMPUS, PRODROMOS would have consisted of a network of stealth balloons carrying observation equipment, which would have relayed detected ortillery support requests to CHILIARCH striders. The idea had promise – the balloons were cheaper than launching satellites into orbit, and many of the problems with the harsh Terranovan weather were not found in the airspace above Humanist territory. However, the balloons, subjected to the vagaries of the weather in the high atmosphere, could not be relied on to thoroughly and efficiently cover the area of the Humanist Alliance. This was even considering the use of long tether cords to ensure the balloons remained in roughly the same location; without them they would have been totally uncontrollable. The tether cords would have weighed so much that the size of the balloons needed to support them would have rendered them completely impossible to conceal with any amount of stealth measures.

More importantly, the preceptor caste had managed to convince the Southern Republic to fund the development and launch of the OLYMPUS satellites, so the major argument for deploying PRODROMOS was shot down. In addition, the volume of flights needed to deploy balloons to cover Humanist territory would have aroused SRID suspicion.

PRODROMOS still lives on in a truncated form – an upgrade package for command vehicles was being designed to improve communications performance over long distances. Part of this package included a PRODROMOS balloon tethered to the strider by a 500-meter long wire antenna. This would essentially create a massive radio mast, which could overcome the physical barrier of not being strong enough to support its own weight because the PRODROMOS balloon would bear most of that burden. Another advantage of this approach is that instead of having to laboriously assemble/disassemble the mast every time the command vehicle had to move, the PRODROMOS balloon could simply be dragged along by the command vehicle when mobility was needed. Of course, the system's portability would fail to function in regions of dense vegetation like the jungles of the Mekong… but then it would only be as effective as conventional radio repeater systems, and comms drones were even more vulnerable to jamming and only slightly more effective than PRODROMOS.

Project PROTAXIS

The Naga chassis was unsuitable for the task of carrying and launching the massive SARISSA antisatellite missiles, but the Tusked Naga variant showed potential as a theater missile defense platform. Codenamed PROTAXIS, these missiles had similar physical dimensions to the Matterhorn-VII HATMs which were the main weapon of the Tusked Naga, but instead of a large armor-piercing warhead, the PROTAXIS missiles were intended to intercept the heavy and very heavy artillery missiles used by landships and other strategic defense positions against attackers. PROTAXIS was essentially a scaled-down version of SARISSA that used the same Nnet guided-RKV technology designed for SARISSA, though its job would be easier since most artillery missiles were larger and slower than satellites.

The PROTAXIS missiles and the Tusked Naga conversion kits were produced in limited quantities, but the targeting software to control them was not coded for the Tusked Naga until the Humanist Alliance was "pacified" by the Southern Republic. The few surviving Humanist scientists who had fled to the Free Emirates eventually wrote the programs, but then, in an ironic reversal, the Tusked Nagas and PROTAXIS missiles were in short supply.

Another potential application of the PROTAXIS missiles is against landships. With a range comparable to most artillery missiles, an RKV warhead that is virtually impossible to intercept for most antimissile systems and precision targeting which can shoot a missile out of mid-flight, a PROTAXIS missile could theoretically make a single, surgical strike against the bridge or engine housing of a landship, crippling it in one shot. Unfortunately, no PROTAXIS missiles have yet been recovered for testing purposes…

ALFIE'S TENNERS

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OMEGA COMPANY

DENNIS R. JOHNSON, JR.

"One minute it we were chasing down a PAK patrol, the next thing I know is Jansen's Warrior IV goes up in a ball of fire and these jet-black hovertanks are right in the middle of us, shooting us to pieces. I don't know who they were, but I never want to run into them again."

-- Master James Shelton, sole survivor of PRDF Third Regiment, 2nd Company, 1st Section, wiped out by an Omega Company ambush.

In the Port Arthur Korps, there is no more elite or prestigious unit than Omega Company. Formed from the most experienced veterans of Colonel Arthur's 15th Tukhachevsky Guards when he first arrived in Port Arthur, it contains the best and brightest of the PAKs soldiers, officers, and GRELs.

When Colonel Arthur first arrived in the remains of the Western Basin Base in 1919 and began exerting his authority, he knew that not all would follow him willingly. He knew some would be more easily swayed through negotiations, some through brute force, and some simply had to be eliminated. For the last option, he created a single company from his most loyal and experienced soldiers of the 15th Guards and gave the unit the designation of "Omega" since they were only to be deployed as a last resort. Omega Company recieved its first official mission soon after, and word quickly spread about Colonel Arthur's own personal "Death Company." It has been suspected that Colonel Arthur even propagated the rumor that he had convinced the surviving members of the Death Watch armored company to join him in order to force other groups to surrender without a fight. Using a combination of commando raids, stealth operations, and armored assaults, Omega managed to efficiently and brutally suppress or eliminate Colonel Arthurs most ardent opponents. By the time Colonel Arthur had consolidated his hold on West Base, Omega Company was an elite unit with a long string of successful missions and an exceptional kill record. When Colonel Arthur formed the PAK, he added Omega Company to it's roster as an independent company of the First Brigade. While officially attatched to First Brigade, Omega Company's CO is answerable only to Colonel Arthur, and takes all orders directly from him.

While its primary purpose has switched from suppression and assasination to front-line combat, Omega's fighting doctrine remained surprisingly intact. The unit specializes in high-speed, hit and run tactics, as well as ambushes and supply-line raids. As befits such tactics, it is an entirely mechanized outfitcomposed mostly of fully-equipped HT-72 Hovertanks, with a few mint-condition HT-68s and HPC-64 Pacifier-mounted infantry squads, supported by Light Hovertanks and forward-deployed Morgana commando squads. Each soldier or support staff member, regardless of rank or assignment, is also trained in infiltration, hand-to-hand, and commando operations in addition to the standard survival training for crews trapped behind enemy lines.

In terms of personnel, the unit is a mix of both human and GREL soldiers, with most of the GRELs serving with Omega Company since the unit was founded. Omega Company is also unique in the fact that it does not rotate it's GREL contingents out like the rest of the PAK, but instead keeps them on permanent duty. Keeping them on-duty helps to prevent the instability and defects that are becoming so prevalent in most of the other Arthurian GRELs as well as to help keep Omega Company working smoothly as a fighting unit. When an Omega Company member is either killed or disabled, a replacement is chosen from a list of prospective candidates.

Getting into Omega is no easy task, as many criteria are required before the applicant is even considered for the position. For humans, they must have a spotless disciplinary record, excellent performance reviews, engaged an enemy force, and cannot have been either a Party member or an MVD officer. For GRELs, they must pass the same list of criteria, but in place of the Party/MVD check is a battery of psychological testing to ensure they are not already showing signs of instability. Most also need to have some infiltration or commando background, meaning most replacement GRELs come from the 15th Guards.

The unit's commander, Captain Piotr Ewy, has been leading Omega Company since its initial inception in 1919 and shows no signs of stepping down soon. Originally a junior lieutenant when he arrived on Terra Nova as a member of Colonel Arthur's unit, the brash and abrasive young officer quickly moved up due to his skills with both tactics and unorthodox leadership until the war ended. Afterwards, he was one of the first to declare his loyalty to Colonel Arthur and remains fanatically loyal to the man. Known for being abrasive, overconfident to the point of arrogant, and sometimes abusive, his record shows an almost undefeated record and his men are unflinchingly loyal. Until recently,he has been leading punitive raids against the PRDF's Third Regiment in retaliation for Commander Hunaman's skirmishes with PAK patrols in the Western Desert. These actions have not been without casualties, however, and has recently lost his commanders for both his Heavy Hovertank and infantry Troops. Due to the fact that Captain Ewy must now train their replacements, Lieutenants Kayla Nagashima and Symon Newell, as well as increasing tensions concerning interpolar war, Colonel Arthur has kept Omega Company on a short leash for the time being. In addition to Lieutenants Newell and Nagashima, a third lieutenant, Senior Lieutenant Anya Fedorovich, a former CEF grunt who has risen through the ranks, commands the Light Hovertank Troop.

OMEGA COMPANY

Color Scheme:

Instead of the standard shadow grey with gold banding displayed on PAK vehicles, Omega Company uses matte-black with shadow grey banding, and infantry are allowed to paint their armor with the same black with grey trim color scheme.

Regimental Organization:

Omega Company is formed as PAK unit with the following exceptions. No Gear or Support Squads may be taken, only Infantry Platoons, Cavalry, Light, and Heavy Hovertank Squads. Due to their elite status, all units can be upgraded to Veteran Status, regardless of Priority Level. Heavy Hovertank squads can upgrade an additional HT-68 to an HT-72 for +65 TV (Total of 3 HT-72s possible for a single squad). Only half of the force's vehicles may be upgraded to a GREL crew, but GRELs are no longer susceptible to the "GREL Instability." Infantry(Mordred and Morgana units) still test for GREL instability as normal. Omega Company can also take 2 Morgana GREL squads per infantry platoon, but must be mounted on hoverbikes. All infantry(barring Morgana squads) MUST be mounted in HPC-64 Pacifier Transports.

Port Arthur

SOL-001 PHOENIX
OLIVER BOLLMANN
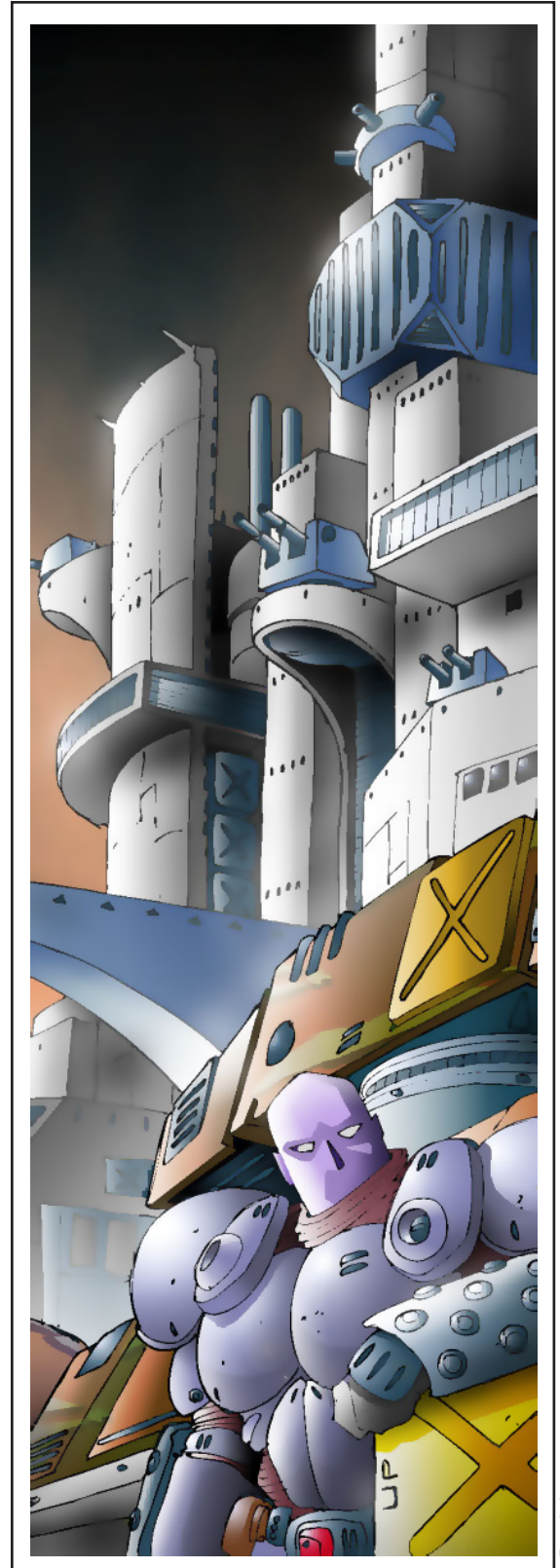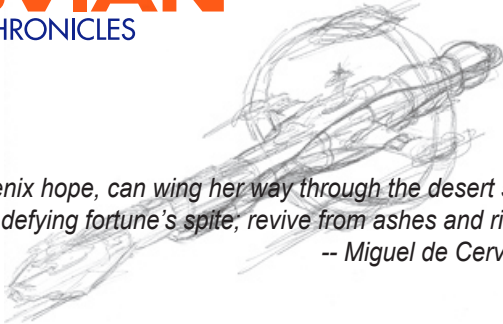
"The phoenix hope, can wing her way through the desert skies, and still defying fortune's spite; revive from ashes and rise."
-- Miguel de Cervantes

The Edicts Defence Force is a division that does not exist. It does not maintain a small compliment of customized and highly-capable craft and vessels, piloted by elite officers capable of discretion and highly effective strikes. It does not operate out of sight, on dark wings throughout the solar system. It does not intervene and cut off hydra's heads before they can muck things up. It simply does not exist.

Likewise, the SOL-001 Phoenix is a fighter craft that does not exist. There are no registry codes, no IFF listings, and no known identification matrices in the various Solar Nations' tracking computers that would recognize or classify the interceptor on a scan. A ghost or shadow is all it is.

While the Solar Police are renowned for their investigatory prowess, they are far less regarded (if even given a second thought) in the field of combat. Even the Crisis Intervention Team is seen and classified as nothing more than a well-disciplined and "mostly competent" force. They are solid and capable, but not something that would really elicit awe, especially when mirrored against the navies of the Solar Nations, or even compared to some of the larger pirate and nomad bands. Tied by the leash of the USN they do their duties and distribute their information, and on occasion they may respond or act when the local government cannot (or will not) -- but they will not and cannot stray too far from their chartered course.

There exists, however, times when swiftness is of the essence. There are times when immediate action is required to prevent a greater catastrophe and even certain occasions where required intervention may be blocked by one of the Solar Nations (on whatever grounds, or whatever motives). At the extreme, there are circumstances that call for strong and decisive intervention. And above all, instances when full process can lead to hindrance.

The EDF operates outside these boundaries of Solapol.

. . . .

The Edicts Defence Force is an alternate campaign idea for Jovian Chronicles. In this campaign, the player characters are part of a specialized and very-well equipped rapid reaction force that may see action throughout the solar system. The secrets and origin of this shadow organization will be revealed through a series of articles in upcoming issues of Aurora.

The SOL-001 Phoenix Fighter

The Phoenix is a space superiority fighter developed to be the equal to and even the better of any production craft in widespread service today. Within the limited resources possessed by the EDF only a handful are in service, highly specialized and nearly unique. They have made their mark mostly by not making a mark – getting their job done and racing away, disappearing the threat and retreating into the dark.

The core beauty of the Phoenix lies in its innovative and effective plasma channel system. Clearly the person who engineered the system was a genius in the field of plasma dynamics. The Phoenix's reactor and PCCs are second to none in the solar system, giving the Phoenix two great gifts befitting a bird of fire.

The first gift is that of thrust, more thrust and lots of thrust. The Phoenix possesses an incredible acceleration of up to 4.2 Gs, one of the highest thrusts available to any craft in the Solar Nations. The Phoenix is also surprisingly nimble for its size, and these two things coupled together gives the fighter potent battlefield mobility and a huge manoeuvrability sphere, allowing it to get in, use its weapons to the greatest extent, and get out quickly.

Tipping each nacelle on the Phoenix is an experimental Plasma Emitter, and these form the foundation of the second great gift. Each emitter is a tightly-focussed and highly-charged linear accelerator that uses very efficient PCCs to channel a tightened beam of high-velocity plasma. Controlled by an advanced targeting system, the emitters are set to converge at the target point, creating a localized impact zone of high-energy plasma that literally cores through armour and whatever else may be there. Despite the tightness of the focussing rings, the plasma does still dissipate somewhat the further out it travels, rendering the weapon slightly less effective at longer ranges, yet still capable of significant damage. By altering the trajectory of the emitters, the firing pattern can also be loosened, reducing concentrated power but affecting a much larger area to better hit fast-moving targets or to affect more general incineration.

For close-in defence as well as a secondary weapon to back-up the limited arc of fire of the plasma emitters, the Phoenix carries a double-barrelled pulse laser system. The system is fairly typical vis-à-vis other systems of the type, with both offensive and defensive/anti-missile modes of operation. Turreted beneath the craft, the system provides a clear zone of fire. Four heavy missiles and eight light missiles (carried internally on pop-out rails) round out the typical armament.

Most fearsome, however, is the capacity for the Phoenix to carry two HELL torpedoes. These specialized drones are only carried when authorized by EDF command. The HELL warhead itself consists of two main devices. The first element sets up a localized, spherical magnetic bottle around a 100m radius centered on the impact point. The second amounts to six plasma lances that are unloaded all at once into the bottle. Through the strong field of the magnetic bottle, the plasma itself aligns and becomes nearly self-sustaining. The result is a contained fireball of an otherwise uncontrolled plasma reaction. Once the lingering reaction passes, very little often remains -- a plus for an organization covering its tracks as well as for dealing with the often dangerous nature of Edicts violations.

Inside the cockpit, the Phoenix is a technological marvel of good design married to exceptional computer, communication, information warfare and sensor systems. A special acceleration-compensating seat is installed to aid the pilot in managing the g-forces from the ship's massive thrusters.   Even then, only the most skilled and the most quick of pilots can manage this formidable bird.

Images of this craft are being held for further verification and processing. Confer with future briefings for visual recognition.
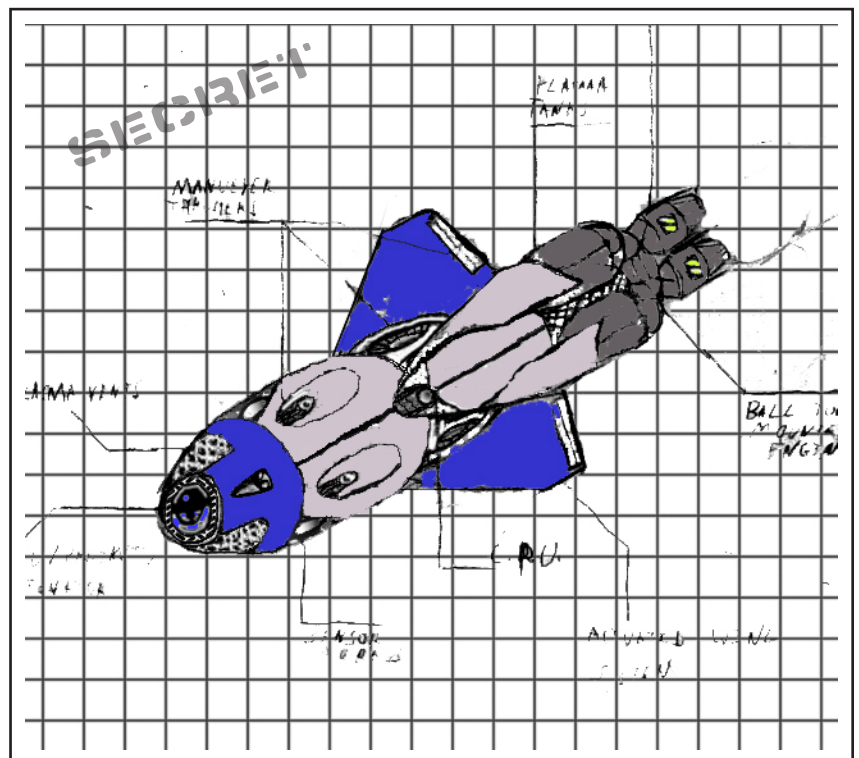
Lord Crazy Mike: HELL Warhead Diagram

SILCORE STATISTICS

Name: SOL-001 Phoenix
Size: 11
Threat Value (TV): 4905

Devensive Threat Value (DTV): 1670
Movement: Space 21/42, Ground 0
Maneuver: -1
Armor: 27/54/81

Miscellaneous Threat Value (MTV): 6237
Crew: 1 Living, 1 Computer (Dumb, Level 3) (3 Actions)
Deployment Range: 500 hrs; Reaction Mass: 650 Points
Perks And Flaws: 2x Life Support (Limited); Escape Pod; Communications (+1/15km); Sensors (+2/8km); HEP:Vaccum, Radiation (4); Reinforced: Crew, Backups, Chassis; ECM (4/5km); EECM (4/5km); Armour: Heat Resistant (4); Autopilot; Decoy (2 - Visual and Sensor); Large Sensor Profile (2)

Offensive Threat Value (OTV): 6806

Qty	Name	Type	Arc	Acc	BR	DM	RoF	Perks & Flaws	Ammo
1	Quad Plasma Cannons	Energy	FF	0	4	x22	0	AC, SCATTER, RED, AD2, HEAT	U
1	AGAMS	Energy	T	1	2	x13	2	RED, HEAT	U
	AMS Mode	Energy	T	2	1	x4	6	AM, RED, DEF, HEAT	U
4	Heavy Missile	Missile	F	-1	6	x26	0	SK (1), HEAT, LINK	4
8	Light Missile	Missile	F	-1	5	x16	0	SK (1), HEAT, LINK	8
*2	Hell Torpedo	Drone						DRONE (+942 TV Each)	2

Name: HELL Torpedo
Size: 2
Threat Value (TV): 1110

Devensive Threat Value (DTV): 2928
Movement: Space 22/44, 0
Maneuver: +1
Armor: 4/8/12

Miscellaneous Threat Value (MTV): 122
Crew: Computer 1 (Dumb Level 2, Drone) (2 Actions)
Deployment Range: 50 hours; Reaction Mass: 100 Points
Perks And Flaws: Autopilot; Communications (-1/10km); Sensors (+1/2km); HEP:Vaccum, Radiation (3); Vulnerable to Haywire

Offensive Threat Value (OTV): 280

Qty	Name	Type	Arc	Acc	BR	DM	RoF	Perks & Flaws	Ammo
1	HELL Warhead	Energy	FF	-1	M	x50	0	AC, AE0, PERS, HEAT	1

TEARS IN RAIN

DENNIS R. JOHNSON, JR.
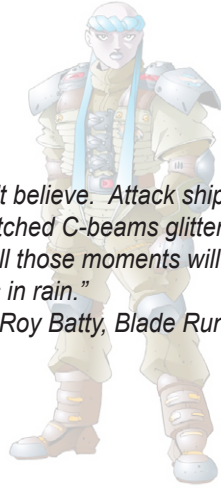
"I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion. I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhauser gate. All those moments will be lost...in time, like tears in rain."
-Roy Batty, Blade Runner

35 Spring TN 1937
Ruins of Jan Mayen, Western Desert
Terra Nova

Minerva C-class unit Joanna-2016 tried to steady her hands as she fiddled with the exposed wires she had pulled from the Support Cobra's cockpit. It wasn't easy as it used to be back in training. Perhaps it was because she had been living a peaceful, quiet life since Jan Mayen had led them here, perhaps it was because she hadn't practiced any of her martial skills since she had come here, and perhaps it was because everything and everyone she knew or cared about died two days ago. To her, it felt like two eternities. For two days, she had been surviving in the ruins of the once-proud Badlands city, scavenging food and water where she found it and trying to find others alive. She found food and water, but nothing else was left alive. Joanna guessed only those who first fled when the shooting started survived, the rest simply couldn't get out in time or died defending their home.

Sleep was also starting to become a factor for her. She hadn't slept in over eighty hours, and while she knew she was designed to go a while without sleep, Joanna knew that she was pushing the limits of her endurance. Although she had tried to sleep on several occasions, every time she closed her eyes to sleep she saw her adopted family. She had found their bodies a few meters away from the house they had called home. Her younger brother was still had his favorite toy clutched in his cold hands. And for what, she wondered. They didn't ask for this, nobody in this place wanted a war. In fact, GRELs like her came here to escape the violence that had once made up their daily lives. And their only reward for wanting peace and quiet was the death of all that they had ever worked for.

Joanna stopped her work for a moment, took a deep breath, tried to clear her head, then resumed hotwiring the Cobra. She didn't really know what she was going to do once she got the Gear restarted, since it probably didn't have enough fuel to get her to the nearest settlement, to say nothing of the other units sure to be sweeping the ruins for survivors or prisoners. That was how she managed to acquire this Cobra. The lone Gear was sweeping the ruins when it suddenly stopped and its pilot popped the hatch. As soon as the pilot took two steps away from his vehicle, that's when Joanna lept into action. She pounced from her hiding place onto the pilot, ripping his helmet off and getting her hands around the Snake's neck. She squeezed

the life out of the pilot as hard as she could, tears of rage and sadness flowing down her cheeks, clouding her vision. She held on long after she knew the pilot was dead, as though somehow she could funnel all of the rage and despair she had felt over the past two days into the corpse. Joanna then stripped the body, hid it under some rubble, and examined the items she had taken. Fortunately, the helmet and suit fit her, so she changed into them hoping she could fool an enemy patrol for at least a few minutes if she was discovered. So far everything was working in her favor, but Joanna knew that would last only so long. She needed a plan. So far she had managed to survive long enough to acquire some transport, but as for how far that transport would take her was an open question. She knew it wouldn't be very far, and even if she made it to a nearby town, there was a pretty good chance of it being occupied by a polar faction, neither of which would just let her gas up her stolen Gear and keep going. As her mind went over scenario after scenario, she began to understand her choices. If she stayed, she would die. If she fled, she would die, if not from enemy forces then from equipment failure and exposure. So she decided that if she was most likely going to die, then she would go down swinging. She would use the Support Cobra to get as close to the Southern lines as possible, then wreak as much havoc before being brought down. She would die, but she would not go quietly and she would take vengeance for her family.

Several minutes later, she finally managed to start the Support Cobra and bring it on-line. She pulled the hatch shut and sealed it before scanning the comm channels for something that would allow her to find the Southern base of operations. As she was scanning, she heard something odd on an unencrypted channel, one typically used by traders. She isolated the channel and listened in on it.

"Prophet's tears, this place is a disaster! Looks like somebody flattened this place good, sir," a male voice said in a Western accent.

"Copy that, Maderas, keep scanning for survivors. I don't think we're going to be delivering our cargo here, Ambers," another male voice said. Joanna could tell by the tone of his voice that this was the group leader.

"I agree. We should look for survivors, but I don't want to stay too long. We should plan where we are going next," a female voice replied.

"Yeah, especially since it looks like this was recent damage, and not from one side, either. We've probably got two polar groups skulking around here so I don't want to be here for much long-" his voice was cut off by someone else cutting in on the comm channel.

"Unidentified convoy, this is Sous-Lieutenant Giscuard of the Southern MILICIA, lower your weapons and exit your vehicles! You have thirty seconds to comply!"

"Lieutenant Giscuard, this is Lars Svenson of the Desert Dawgs mercenary outfit, we are escorting this convoy to Jan Mayen. We only want to sweep for any survivors than continue on to another destination, we request to-" the MILICIA officer cut off the mercenary leader a second time as he began shouting orders again.

"Request denied! You will power down and exit your Gears and your convoy will exit their vehicles. All of your assets are being hereby siezed by the AST!" Joanna knew that the situation was going to escalate rapidly out of control, and judging by the attitude of Sous-Lieutenant Giscuard, end with the convoy being shot to pieces and more Badlander lives lost to polar stupidity. She quickly isolated where the transmissions were coming from to see if she could get there in time to do anything. A quick check revealed they were actually on the other side of the Oasis tower behind her. She made sure her weapons were locked and loaded with the safeties disengaged before putting her Cobra into a run around the tower. In the seconds it took her to get around the tower, the situation deteriorated even further.

"Lieutenant, we're just trying to get out of here, we didn't know you would destroy our destination so let us just leave!" Svenson barked back. As the situation came into view, Joanna saw how dangerous it was. The convoy consisted of several Longrunner transport trucks, with at least two being used as fuel tankers, being escorted by six well-maintained and garishly painted Gears; two Cheetah Paratroopers, two Hunters, and two Jaguars, one of which was carrying a snub cannon. One of each type of gear was on either side of the convoy, flanking the Longrunners and providing a good defense against ambushes from both sides. The problem was that the Snakes had approached the convoy from one side, meaning they would have to shoot either over or through the Longrunners to get at the Gears on the far side, most likely setting off the fuel and killing everyone on the convoy. The MILICIA forces looked like the remains of two general-purpose squads, composed of six Jagers and one Black Mamba, most likely the Sous-lieutenant's vehicle. The first to notice her was one of the Cheetahs, it's head darting in her direction, followed seconds later by the rest of the Dawgs. Joanna surmised that the Dawgs had their own encrypted comm channel for their own use when they didn't want to share things with their convoy. The MILICIA followed suit shortly thereafter, at which point Giscuard began ordering her about.

"Ah, excellent!" he crowed, "You see, now you are outnumbered and outgunned! You have thirty seconds before I order my men to gun you all down." As he talked, Joanna brought her Cobra around to the side so that all seven MILICIA gears would be in her line of fire. Making sure at least one Jaguar was watching her, she tossed a thumbs-up with her Gear's left hand as she brought her VHAC in line with the MILICIA forces and pulled the trigger. In the half-second it took for the weapon to spin up, the nearest Jager noticed what she was doing and started to backpedal. She mowed it down in a barrage of heavy-calibur shells, tracking it as it backed up until it fell to the ground in a heap.

"Merde!" Giscuard cried as his Mamba turned to face her, "Retreat! Retreat!" At this, the Dawgs now opened up, their own autocannon rounds shredding the Jagers as they attempted to fall back. Giscuard's Mamba lunged towards Joanna, it's vibormachete drawn. Joanna stood her ground, turning her autocannon on the Mamba's legs, shredding armor and machinery alike and sending the Mamba pitching forward onto it's face. It stayed still for a brief second, then began crawling towards her. Joanna drew back one of her Cobra's leg, then brought it forward in a devastating kick that crushed the Mamba's head and stilled it's movements. When Joanna looked up to survey the battlefield, she found that the Dawgs had mopped up what remained of the MILICIA units and were now looking at her. One of the Jaguars, the one without the snub cannon, took several steps toward her before the comm channel crackled to life.

"Thanks for the help, stranger," Lars said, his breathing heavy, "I take it you're not a MILICIA soldier, are you?"

"No, I'm from here, or I used to be, my name's Minerva Joanna," she replied.

"She's a bloody GREL!" one voice exploded over the comm.

"Shut it, Kowalski, she saved our butts out here and we owe her our lives!" Lars immediately shot back in rebuke. "I'm sorry for that outburst. So now that you've saved our bacon, what are you going to do?"

"I don't know."

"Well, would you come with us? We've got fuel and supplies we can share with you, and we could certainly use a pilot of your caliber." Joanna sat in silence for several seconds while she thought it over. She toyed with the idea of still carrying out her suicide vendetta, but realized it wouldn't bring her peace and it wouldn't be what her family wanted. She realized that they would want her to go on with her life and find some measure of happiness, even if it wasn't with them. She took one last look around and said goodbye to the life she once had before replying.

"Sure, I'll go with you."
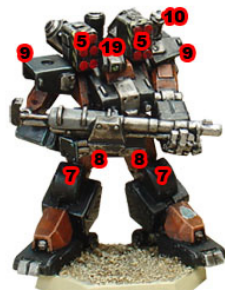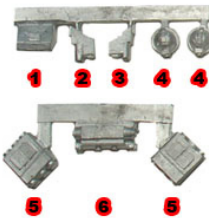
From the rules monkey...

They're big. They're heavy. They're coming. They're... variants!
Check out this gear and strider goodness, all coming soon!
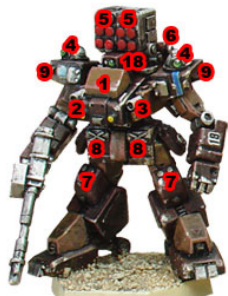
Mad Dog R   Bear   Den Mother

for Mad Dog
flip engine &
cut off part.

Article Guidelines

The Aurora Magazine focuses on the worlds created by Dream Pod 9. As such, we are primarily interested in, but not limited to, articles dealing with SilCore and Blitz rules (variants, additions, explorations of the rules) and on fiction, mechanized designs, equipment and the like that draw on established DP9 universes. This does not mean, however, that articles that are generic in nature or that do not deal with unique or original material, only that the focus is on exploring Silhouette and it's attendant universes.

Any article that is a promotion piece for another product, be it an excerpt or a lead-in to another product, must be clearly defined as such within the article body.

No articles will be accepted that use another's Intellectual Property or Copyrighted material without an included signed permission to use said material.

Fiction may be a one-off or serial based, as desired. Please note that long works of fiction may be split into multiple pieces over multiple issues for length reasons; if you are writing a long story it is best to indicate breaks in the story (chapters, for example) that allow us to chose the best point to split the story, if necessary. In keeping with the nature of the magazine we ask that fiction be accompanied by Silhouette CORE or Blitz! rules detail of some kind, be it stats for characters or equipment in the story, game scenarios, mechanized designs, new rules or explanations of how to simulate aspects of the story using the Silhouette/Blitz rules. This is not a hard requirement, and you may request that another contributor be asked to create the rules support based on your story.

Aurora is also looking for original artwork. Art may be used to accompany the article and/or for the cover of the APA. Please see below for copyright information regarding images.

Submission Guidelines

All work for Aurora should be submitted in an .rtf (Rich Text Format) file. The text within should be in Arial 10pt font, and single-spaced. Hard returns should be used only to separate paragraphs (with a double hard return) or with bullet points and list items. Do not indent paragraphs. You may use italics, boldface or bullets where deemed necessary.

Tables may be included in the submission. Preferably, tables should be created with minimal lines between cells, instead using background colour and/or cell spacing for clarity. Tables may also be included in courier-font/fixed-formatting. Identify these kind of tables with the following: <<<Table>>>

The article's title should be clearly noted at the beginning of the file, followed by a short (less than 75 words) introductory text. This introductory text can either be a synopsis, a quote, story, etc. It will be used at the beginning of the article to 'set the stage'.

The file should end with the Author's name(s), contact information (if desired) and a short bio (optional). This information will be placed on a Contributing Author's page in the magazine.

Please spell check and proofread your article. English or American spellings may be used as desired.

Photos, drawings or images should be accompanied by photo credits as well as a brief description/caption for each photo (optional). Indicate within your article where the images are to be included like so: <<<Image_Filename.ext>>>. Images should be sent at a maximum of 150dpi for greyscale or colour images, 300dpi for black & white images (1-bit). Given the size of a page, images should be no larger than 7 by 7 inches (18 by 18 cm). If we need a higher resolution image, we will contact you. Images should be compressed with an appropriate method; please check the quality of your images before sending. If by including images the submission would grow over 2 megabytes in size, please place the images on an Internet-accessible server where we will download them (don't forget to tell us where they are located).

Copyright Guidelines

Quotes or information that are attributable to other sources are permissible in appropriate quantities, and should be identified/cited (including page numbers), preferably within the article. Be sure that each quote is written exactly as it appears in the original source.

If you wish to include photos/drawings/images with your article, please provide the photo credits (artist/photographer/illustrator and subject if applicable). You may only submit images for which you have obtained permission to include in your article.

All articles and images used by Aurora remain in the copyright of the original submitters. You, as the author, must consent to release the article for publication by Aurora, with the knowledge that Aurora will not provide any compensation other than what has been listed above, and that Aurora, as an online magazine, will be downloaded by third-parties in a PDF format. All work for Aurora is volunteer-based. Should DP9 decide at a later time to compile and sell articles within a contract will be negotiated with the author at that time.

The End Print

Please send all submissions to the following email address:

auroramag@gmail.com

Thank you everyone for your interest, and we look forward to seeing your submissions soon!

Deadline for Submissions for Issue #3.2: February 15th 2009

Historical Articles

Under this broad category are pieces meant primarily for illuminating or detailing something within the game universe. This can be truly historical in nature (describing history), detailing a region, the language, customs, architecture, technical systems, corporations, social structure, music, and more, to name a few. Articles may either be written from a neutral point of view (impartial observer from above) or written 'in character', that is, in the manner such information may be presented if it were available in the game world. See the Historical Accuracy note, below (especially important for this category).

Fiction

Any story (narrative with characters) that takes place within the established DP9 game worlds falls under this category. See the Historical Accuracy note, below, and also see the submission guidelines for further requirements.

Modules

Also known as adventures, a written collection of plot, character, and location details used by the gamemaster to manage the plot or story in the DP9 RPGs. All manner of modules are open for submission, from espionage to social to military to a combination of all three. Module submissions must be detailed enough for the GM to run the entire adventure, including descriptions and dispositions (where applicable) of major NPCs, locations, accessories and story/plot. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Scenarios

These are the tactical equivalent of modules, an encounter between two (or more) factions set up for combat. A complete scenario will detail the background of the encounter (the why), the forces engaged (the who -- what physical units at a minimum, regiment and designations to go the full way), the map and terrain (the where) the victory conditions (the how) and any special rules or conditions (the what). Scenarios should be designed to be balanced for each side, either via the types/numbers of units or through special circumstances or conditions. If the scenario is not balanced this must be mentioned in the background. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Note: Historical Accuracy

Aurora is committed to accuracy within the established DP9 worlds. All articles that take place 'within' the game world should be checked for its accuracy within the established timeline, faction dispositions, available equipment, etc. Submitted articles will be run by the game world historians, so check your work! You may, however, submit your article clearly marked as "Alternate History" and if published the article too will bear this mark. Be sure, if you submit this way, to provide in the background all that is necessary to describe what has changed.

Designs

New mechanical designs/vehicles/ships for use in the DP9 worlds. Designs must be legal and use either the latest SilCore rules (including all errata and the FAQ) or Blitz rules. Please indicate which design rules were used. Mechanical designs should fill a void that is not already covered by another unit. Background and a description must be included with the design, while artwork is optional and preferred. See the Historical Accuracy note, above.

Artwork

Aurora accepts all artwork for consideration, no matter the media type (rendering, sketch, painting, etc) within the rules set herein. Miniature photographs will also be accepted (dioramas encouraged!). Artwork must relate to an established DP9 universe and be easily identified as such. Artwork with nudity, racial undertones, sexism or sex will not be considered. See the submission guidelines on how to submit images.

House Rules

Original rules for the Silhouette/Blitz! system and modifications to existing rules. All rules submittals must include an explanation of the rule's purpose, the rules themselves clearly written, and an example of the rule in play.

Note: Blitz! Rules

House Rules covering existing Blitz! Rules will be limited. New Rules covering areas of the game not explicitly contained in the existing rules (as found in the Blitz! line of books) may be submitted freely. House Rules that modify or replace the written Blitz! ruleset (as found in the Blitz! line of books) will be forwarded to the line developer for review and comment. They will then contact you if the idea may proceed forward. Note that this applies only to the Blitz! line -- rules may be freely submitted for any other SilCore game.

Tactics

Have you won countless battles? Have a strategy you would like to share? Write a tactics article. Usually this type of article will be in a step-by-step (or turn by turn) format to illustrate the tactic. An introduction and conclusion is required to create a complete package and to convey to the reader where the tactic is applicable and how it came about.

Miniatures/Modeling

Any article on preparing miniatures, painting, terrain making, sculpting, foliage techniques, etc will be accepted. Photographs and/or diagrams are strongly encouraged.