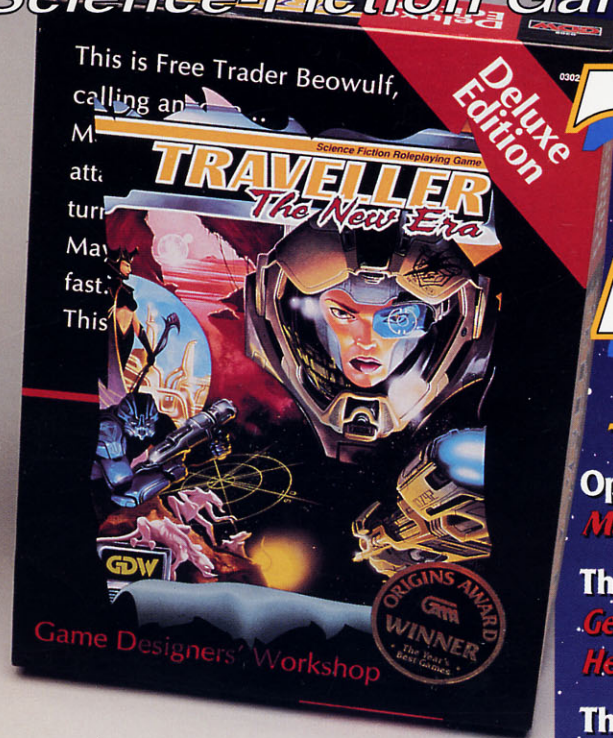
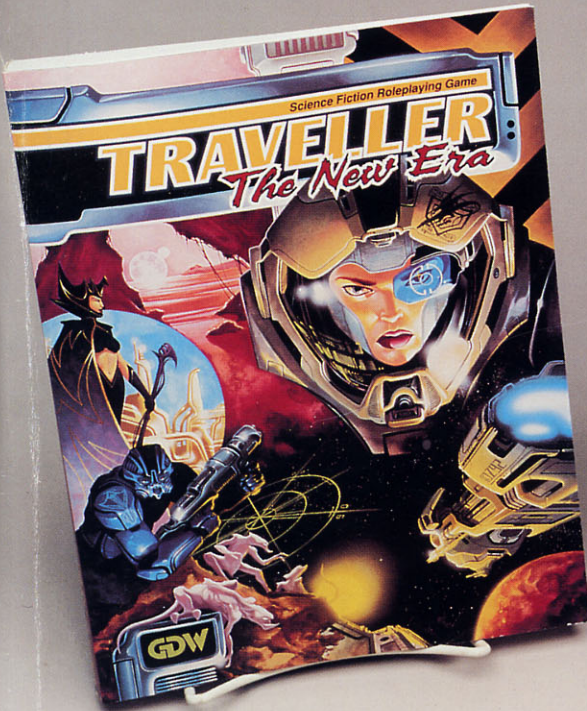


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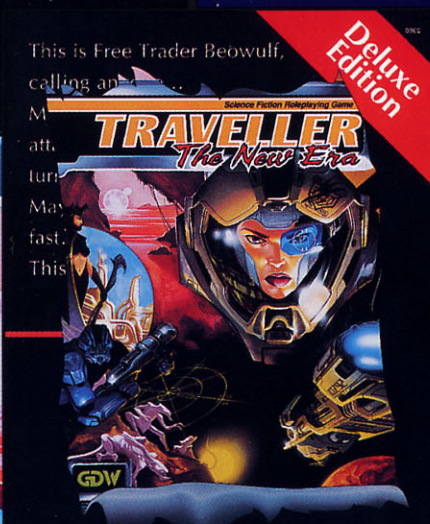
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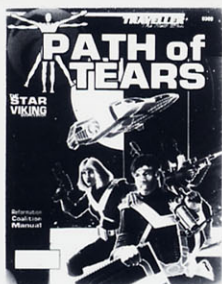
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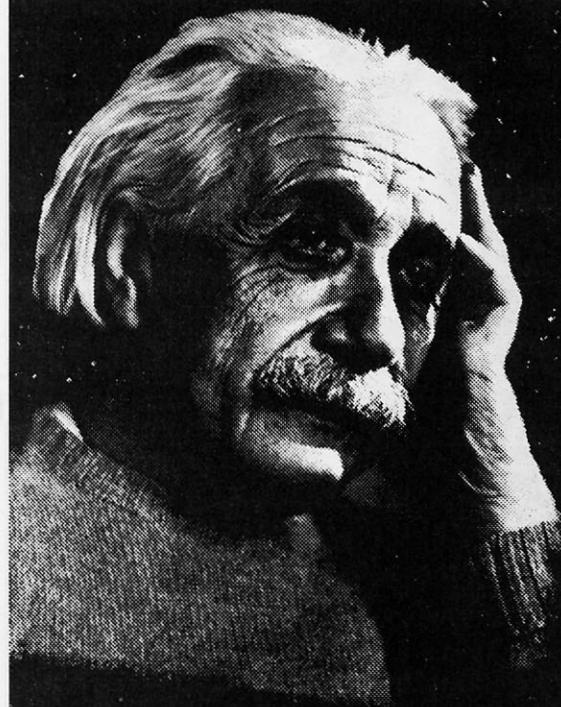
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Traveller®

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HALLENGE

Magazine of Science-Fiction Gaming



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Challenge

Issue 75

MANAGING EDITOR
Michelle Sturgeon

ADVERTISING MANAGER
Lori Stutz

CONSULTING EDITORS
Loren K. Wiseman
Dave Nilsen

ART DIRECTOR
Kirk Wescom

GRAPHIC DESIGN
AND PRODUCTION
Brad McDevitt

INTERIOR ARTISTS
Brad McDevitt & Kirk Wescom

ABOUT THE COVER

Well, it's official. **Traveller: The New Era** was nominated by the Academy of Adventure Game Design and selected by *you*, the gaming public, as the best roleplaying game of 1993. The result: a spiffy Origins Award, presented July 9, 1994 at Origins '94 in San Jose.

We at GDW would like to thank all of the loyal **Traveller** supporters who made this award possible.

Thanks.

And now, on to the Regency!
(See editorial on next page.)

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From the Management

By Dave Nilsen

Although Frank has had the last two columns in which to air some fairly controversial laundry (and I am sorely tempted to go stir up some hornet's nest), I will confine myself to some 1994 convention reports and other news.

Origins '94 held a fair amount of excitement for GDW this year, as we went in nominated for Origins awards in three categories: Best Miniatures Rules (**Harpoon Naval Review**), Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Boardgame (**Brilliant Lances**), and Best Roleplaying Rules (**Traveller: The New Era**).

For those of you who voted, thanks, and you already know how this works. For those of you who don't know the system, the nominations in 19 categories of games released in 1993 were made by the Academy of Adventure Game Design, and then ballots were distributed throughout the hobby in magazines, etc. (Unfortunately **Challenge** 74 came out too late for the ballots in it to be used, so loyal **Challenge** readers were unable to vote—our apologies.) Reportedly there were over 100,000 ballots distributed this year, and the winners were selected by the votes cast on these ballots.

The **Naval Review** was beat out by **Warhammer 2nd Edition**, not a tremendous surprise, and **Brilliant Lances** was thwarted as well, as the boardgame category was actually taken by some *card* game, for goodness sakes (go figure). However, it was a pleasure to be able to accept the Origins Award for **Traveller: the Best Roleplaying Rules of 1993**. Not only is it gratifying to see such an affirmation for all of the work we have put into things these past couple years, it is nice to share with others the excitement of what we have been saying for a while now: "**Traveller is Back!!**" The award was particularly meaningful in a category that was so strong this year, featuring major new systems from TSR, FASA, White Wolf, West End, and Mayfair.

To all of you old and new **Traveller** fans who cast your votes, thank you for putting us back on top. Thanks are obviously also due to Marc Miller who started it all, and to all of the other contributors who have kept the game going for the past 17 years.

We had a great time meeting with gamers at Origins and GenCon and picked up a lot of good ideas from folks who showed up at seminars and at the booth. For example, the articulate **Twilight: 2000** group at Origins convinced us of the value of collecting and redoing the old classic **Twilight: 2000** Poland adventures for Version 2.2. The result is what we have tentatively titled **The Vistula Campaign**, which will update the first several **T:2000** adventures and will be released in the first half of 1995. It will be ideal material for new **Twilight** players, whether they are starting out on their own, or joining an established group. So who says we don't listen to our fans?

Origins also saw us make a long-awaited announcement, about **Traveller's** return to the Spinward Marches in early 1995. This will be started by the Regency Sourcebook in the first quarter, and followed by adventures, equipment, and, yes, the return of the *Traveller News Service* to the pages of **Challenge**.

Why the wait? We simply can't do everything at once, not with the kind of depth and quality that we are aiming for. Since the Reformation Coalition campaign was the greatest departure from the "classic" **Traveller** background, it required the most development, especially because everyone kept asking if Star Vikings really had horns on their helmets. We will continue to support both the RC and Regency campaigns, because they are both important to our players and to us. GDW will not drop either of these campaigns and leave players stranded without support. We have a commitment to not "lead our players on" and we will stand by it.

At GenCon we demo'd the upcoming **Striker II** miniatures rules, using the wondrously anarchic "Cleft Bagvoot" scenario from **Path of Tears**. The scenario was masterfully assembled and organized by Tom Harris and Dave Herman, and featured the new RAFM miniatures—RC Marines in light battle dress and grav bikes—alongside some rather fanciful conversions. With lots of things blowing up, everyone had a great time.

Finally, I was struck by one remark that I heard from several gamers at GenCon. They said that they really appreciate the way GDW issues errata sheets, upgrade booklets, and revised printings, unlike "some companies" (they mentioned no names) who prefer to simply pretend that they never make mistakes. Although we hate making mistakes, it's nice that people appreciate our candor and efforts to make things right. In that spirit, this issue includes the **Fire, Fusion, & Steel** upgrade to 2d printing "kit," beginning on page 66.

As long as we're human, we'll keep making mistakes, but we'll keep doing our damndest to correct them. You have my word on it.

I just purchased **Path of Tears**. Now I understand what all the excitement is about. You've done a super job with the supplement. I enjoyed the background and equipment notes, as well as the adventure ideas. If **Battle Rider** is up to these same high standards I know I'll love the game.

Allen Ray Garbee
Kitty Hawk, NC

I have just finished purchasing both **Deluxe Traveller** and **Brilliant Lances**. I have played the old **Traveller** system for a long time and have been looking forward to the new system. I have a few comments to make.

The character creation system is wonderful—simple, but able to create good, well-rounded characters. No other game system has it.

The background for the New Era is good—although almost *too* depressing in the demise of the Imperium.

Task resolution system is good—very simple. Makes it much easier on a GM.

Personal and vehicle combat are also good, but I have to keep flipping back and forth in the rulebook to keep track of the various stages of combat (i.e., panic, to-hit, penetration, damage, etc.). I hope when I get the referee's screen that will help.

Brilliant Lances is also an excellent product. I liked the inclusion of Aslan, Vargr and Zhodani ships. Movement is a little complicated, though.

I do have a problem with the starship combat section, though. It is difficult enough to detect a ship, score a hit, get through the defenses and cause damage without (the added difficulty of) the Firing Diff Mods for Absolute Range.

Once again, I feel that **TNE** is an excellent game system, one that my group has had a lot of fun with. Except for my one complaint, I enjoy every aspect of **TNE**.

Eric Garvue
Springfield, IL

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Uncertainty

Journey into an abandoned portion of a global arcology to investigate a mystery dating back to the time of the Old Imperium
A TNE adventure by Greg Videll

The details of the surface grow more distinct as the shuttle continues its descent into Port Enil. The eye is almost fooled into believing the plain below is a work of nature and not the product of technology. The lines may be too straight and the topography too well ordered, but the mind takes in the sheer magnitude of it all and draws its own conclusions. This is Irap, the single largest city in known space, a city which covers an entire planet.

The following is an adventure for **Traveller: The New Era** set in a region of space dominated by the Duchy of Oasis, a pocket empire of the year 1201. Referees can play "Uncertainty" as a single adventure or use it as the starting point for a new campaign based in the region. The adventure involves the player characters in an expedition into an abandoned portion of a global arcology to investigate a mystery dating back to the time of the Old Imperium.

Set Up: The PCs are members of a team of professional adventurers currently between assignments. They have just completed a job in another part of the Irap system (UWP B1008A9-B) and are laying over at Enil High, Irap's orbital port, while awaiting transport back to the Duchy. While there, the characters receive a message from Urdil Baeder of the Irappi government, specifically the Mira Development Authority. Baeder would like to meet with the team to discuss a job offer. He's willing to pay for transportation to and from the planet as well as overnight accommodations just to have the PCs sit and listen to his proposal. No other details of the assignment are made known. The characters are informed that all the necessary forms and vouchers have been completed and can be gotten from the customs officials at Port Enil. If nothing else, the team has had its way paid for a trip to the surface.

Irap Customs has been alerted to the team's arrival. The characters will find that all the proper entry forms have been filled out. They will be given vouchers covering travel, lodging and the life-support tax while in Central District (the location of both the port and the planetary capital). This part of the adventure serves as an introduction to Irap for the PCs. It can run as long or as short as the referee and the players desire.

Atmosphere: Central District is a busy and cosmopolitan place. Off-worlders tend to be concentrated here, and most have come to do business with the Irappi government or local establishments. The referee might want to impose a few encounters as interesting asides or to give the team contacts useful for future employment. The Irappi themselves tend to be friendly and helpful to off-worlders. This is due as much to societal influences deriving from living in close quarters as it is to an awareness of the importance of off-world markets to the planet's future.

OFFER

The appointment with Baeder takes place in a government conference room in a Central District office complex. Baeder begins with the usual introductions, informing the characters that he's a deputy director of the Mira Development Authority, the government agency responsible for industrial reclamation projects in the city of Mira. It's his job to oversee a number of projects involving off-world assistance.

Background: Several days ago, a diplomatic courier from Avalon presented the Irappi government with a corrupted datafile dating back 70 years. (See the article "Oasis in a New Era," also in this issue of **Challenge**, for details on Avalon.) The file indicated that something of great value to the pre-Collapse Duchy was located a scant 30 kilometers from Mira District in an unpopulated portion of the arcology. (Irap was a member of the Duchy before the Collapse.) The government ordered an immediate investigation of the site and put Baeder in charge of organizing the mission. It also instructed him to include representatives of certain off-world companies he deals with daily in order to bring the widest range of experience to bear on the investigation. It is for this reason, as well as for the potential of danger, that Baeder also decided to hire a team of professional adventurers to round out the mission. (They are experienced travelers, after all.) Querying Irapp's passport files, he learned that a group meeting his requirements, was already in-system. The team members are to provide security for the expedition as well as use what skills they have to reach the site. Potential opposition could come from resource scavengers, hazardous conditions or even examples of the Virus.

Offer: The expedition will depart Mira in a few days, once preparations are complete. The necessary vehicles and equipment are already being gathered. The PCs will meet their prospective teammates upon arrival in Mira District. Baeder offers Cr5000 each, one quarter up front and the rest in escrow pending completion of the assignment, plus appropriate danger bonuses. Payment will be made in whatever form the characters desire—Duchy Crowns, corporate scrip and the like. Total duration of employment should be about two weeks. He also suggests that successful performance of this mission could lead to future assignments in the service of Irapp. If the PCs decide to haggle over their fee, it's up to the referee to decide how Baeder plays it.

Team: The expedition includes the following individuals: Baeder and his top field agent, Jame Murdec, also of the MDA; Kendrick Dulles, a crack systems engineer from Shyteck-Oberon, capital of the Duchy of Oasis; Yuri Gage, an Irappi trained computer expert with the Romany-based corporation Unicor; and Orsuss, a Droyne from Usyupkut placed on the expedition at the request of Avalon. Once the characters have accepted the assignment, the deputy director will make all the necessary arrangements to get the team to Mira. He invites them to spend the night in Central District, using the rooms already provided, before heading out the next day.

MIRA

Upon arrival in Mira, the characters get a chance to meet with the other members of the mission and go over the equipment they'll use. MDA has prepared three grav sleds to carry all the necessary provisions. Everything required for an extended journey has been included: food, portable generators, water purifiers and hydrogen separators, cold climate gear, medical supplies and so on. (Water should be available from local reservoirs, although water tanks are also part of the mission stores.) Murdec and Gage will also take the opportunity to show off their portable computer analyzers with built-in canary circuits. (One or both can tell how remnants of the Virus have been found in other areas of the arcology.) These will be useful in evaluating any computer technology discovered. Finally, sidearms are available for those individuals lacking weapons, both PC

and NPC. Both lethal and nonlethal ammo is included. Discussions are held regarding expected conditions and arcology architecture. The PCs get a chance to hear about things first-hand from the NPCs. Without environmental support, the temperature on most levels hovers around 5 degrees C, although it can drop lower, and no artificial gravity exists. Normal gravity for Irapp outside the populated regions is around 12% standard. The arcology design is fairly standardized, but no records exist as to what exactly may be found beyond Mira. While it is known that most of the region was devoted to industry, few hard details exist. The expedition will just have to learn what's there the hard way. Preparations complete, the expedition begins.

MOVING OUT

The expedition begins its journey on a factory sublevel beneath the edge of Mira District. The group's initial route takes it through an area already mapped by MDA but quickly leads into unknown territory. Within 200 meters of the environmental isolation door sealing off Mira from the next section of the arcology, the artificial gravity field gently fades away. Sled drivers will have to make adjustments in order to maintain the proper altitude and attitude. An Easy roll against Pilot (IFace/Grav) skill is required. Failed rolls are more embarrassing than anything else. More slowly, the temperature begins to drop, forcing the team members to don warmer clothing if they haven't already done so.

Travelling the Undercity: Actual travel down the abandoned byways of Irapp will be dealt with abstractly because of the vast amount of area that would otherwise have to be covered. The characters need not worry about mapping out a route. It's assumed that the NPCs, drawing on their knowledge of the arcology's construction, will lead the way. Although the target of the expedition lies 30 clicks from Mira in a straight-line direction, the characters will have to take a meandering route dictated by what passages they find open and accessible. As they progress, their actual route is recorded into redundant inertial navigation systems. All activity must be conducted using only the lights carried aboard the sleds, giving the trip an eerie feel. Although the vehicles are capable of greater speed, caution must be exercised in order to avoid collisions or accidentally striking

something in the dark. No communication is possible with Mira as radios don't work without the necessary repeaters, and no functional landlines are available.

From time to time, Baeder will stop the expedition's forward progress to note some geographical feature or curious discovery. Rest breaks will be called at regular intervals, and the expedition will halt for the night, partly to rest and partly to review the day's events and plot the next day's itinerary.

The referee should take some time to set the mood as the trip begins. It's dark; sounds reverberate around the PCs; and the air carries a damp, musty smell overlaid by the odors of used technology. At least in the beginning, the NPCs will act subdued and talk in hushed tones.

Scavengers: Sometime during the morning of the second day, while the team has stopped to puzzle out which direction to go next, the faint echo of metal on metal can be heard emanating from a side corridor. Should the characters decide to investigate, they find a small battery-powered cart parked in an alcove. The cargo space in back is brimming with mechanical and electronic refuse. Baeder or Murdec quickly informs the team that the cart probably belongs to scavengers—individuals who loot unpopulated areas of precious materials and left-over technology. Despite government efforts to the contrary, a thriving black market exists for such things (much of which ends up headed for the Crown Colonies). The Irappi will make it clear that scavengers can be dangerous as many are armed. What happens next is up to the referee depending on the players' interests. The group could attempt to confront the scavengers and possibly try to capture them, or simply press onward toward the higher-priority objective. There are three scavengers (use the Gang Member NPC template). One is armed with a shotgun (Veteran NPC), while another has a body pistol (Experienced NPC). The third is unarmed (Novice NPC). If combat occurs, keep in mind the dark conditions, possibly leading to flash blindness, and tight quarters. See the map for the layout of the encounter.

RANDOM NUGGETS

The following are random events to be used as the expedition travels deeper into the undercity.

Pitfalls and Debris: Although the

structure of the Irappi arcology is quite rugged, some areas will have become structurally unsound after seven decades without maintenance. Minor incidents include falling wiring, environmental conduits and blocked corridors. Major incidents include structural collapses. The referee will have to determine the amount of damage incurred or how much time is required to bypass a trouble spot. Rolls should be made against Intelligence or a skill such as Combat Engineering or Construction to detect problem areas. An Agility roll is made to skirt a weak spot or escape a collapse. Vehicle drivers must roll against Pilot (IFace/Grav) skill. All skill rolls are determined by the referee in accordance with just how difficult he wants the encounter to be.

Doors: As this part of Irappi was abandoned, it was theoretically sealed off from the rest of the arcology. Isolation doors were dropped into place to seal major passages. These large doors are immovable, but many smaller ones exist both within and between environmental containment zones. These can be manually cranked open. Doing so requires a Average roll against Mechanical skill to locate an access panel and work the mechanism. A further Difficult roll is required to fully open a malfunctioning portal. Mishaps are the province of the referee.

Maintenance Shafts: Daunting in their size, maintenance shafts, both horizontal and vertical, are found at regular intervals throughout the arcology. Some shafts reach a half kilometer in diameter and can allow rapid progress at least for a while.

Environments: In a structure as large as the arcology, it's possible for freak, localized climates to exist due to the absence of any environmental controls. Temperatures can drop below freezing, possibly leading to icy conditions in areas around reservoirs, and strong air currents can be encountered. These events can complicate the efforts of the PCs to accomplish the current task or merely reinforce the gloomy mood of the undercity.

Reservoirs: Huge cisterns are dotted along the team's route which once held fresh water for life-support and as an emergency fuel supply for fusion generators. Even the cleanest reservoir will have suffered some contamination over the years, so water must be purified before use. Structural defects in the surrounding structure will have

allowed some water to escape, possibly flooding corridors or even creating small streams. Coupled with low temperatures, ice becomes a factor. Just as with the odd environments referenced above, the presence of water can complicate tasks undertaken by the group.

Lost Technology: In theory, useful technology was evacuated from abandoned regions before they were closed down, but some interesting items might remain. The referee is invited to indulge himself in coming up with specific examples, although nothing too valuable should be found in functional condition. All items will be of TL13 manufacture. Baeder will record their location for future reference. The characters might want to use the occurrence of lost technology to bargain for finder's fee-type bonuses or seek to keep small items of personal interest. Either roleplay such negotiations or use whatever skills seem most appropriate. Characters assisting Murdec and Gage can learn to use the computer analyzers, which require only an Easy roll against Computer to operate.

FACTORY

The characters are nearing their objective and have entered one of the great environmental generation and control facilities needed to support life on Irappi. The referee should think of the atmosphere factory as a combination of oil refinery, electrical substation and launch facility. Huge columns of machinery ringed with catwalks thrust upward from the floor. Pipes large enough to hold a shuttle disappear into walls and snake about. The drip of water striking metal can be heard ringing out across the volume of the atmosphere factory. Everything is done on a grand scale in a chamber made larger by the darkness. Baeder calls a halt in order to get a better look at the place. The expedition is broken up into teams so as to cover the most territory.

Substation: As the PCs proceed through the factory, they come across a small control substation. What makes it unusual is that it is apparently functioning. A few of the control panels have active readouts. A character with Ship's Engineering skill can immediately determine that power is being generated nearby and shunted into a local power grid. PCs without this skill have to make a Difficult roll against Intelligence to figure it out. A failed roll leads the char-

acter to believe that the system is operating off of solar power banks on the arcology's surface. A further Average roll against Ship's Engineering or Difficult against Intelligence is required to determine that power is being routed to somewhere on the opposite side of the factory. If anyone thinks to apply one of the analyzers to the substation, the canary circuits trip immediately, indicating an active strain of the Virus. Standard mission procedure on discovering a virus is to disassemble the affected system and destroy all integrated circuits. This should take about two hours to complete.

Salvage: One group finds recent evidence that some machinery has been disassembled. This requires an Average roll against Mechanical, Ship's Engineering or Investigation to determine. Without these skills, a Difficult roll against Intelligence is needed. Analysis of the machinery, an Average roll using Mechanical, Ship's Engineering or Computer skill, reveals that the subsystem controller is missing.

Shadows: While the various teams are making their investigation, characters from time to time will get the feeling they're being watched. At least for now, keep the PCs wondering whether it's their imaginations or there really is something out there. No matter how crafty the PCs are, they can find no evidence of anyone other than the expedition being present.

Sometime during this event, Orsuss turns up missing. If the referee so desires, the disappearance of the Droyne can be used as a red-herring. For example, the NPCs could express uneasiness that Orsuss, basically an unknown quantity to begin with, has disappeared. How the referee wants to play it is up to him, but try not to overdo it. The idea is to reinforce the perceived mysterious nature of the alien, not create a lynch mob mentality. Whether or not the referee decides to go this route, Orsuss shows up a little while later with a strange tale to tell.

Stranger: As a member of one of the exploration teams, the Droyne was ranging slightly farther afield of its group when it thought it spotted a figure in the shadows. Unsure of what it was seeing, Orsuss slipped away from the group in pursuit. (It was using psionic invisibility in order to sneak up on the intruder, which also masked it from the PCs, but it doesn't tell the characters this.) The figure evaded the Droyne and plunged

deeper into the factory. At the edge of the facility, Orsuss caught up with the intruder just as it was about to leave the chamber. Using its handlight, Orsuss saw a robot which turned and looked at the Droyne. Orsuss thinks the robot is Typhon, an acquaintance from Avalon. The Droyne has no idea what Typhon might be doing in the factory. To the best of its knowledge, the robot is a historical researcher. Close questioning of the alien should lead the PCs to the conclusion that the Droyne is telling what it thinks is the truth. (Although if the referee is going the red-herring route as described above, one or more NPCs may remain skeptical.) The characters are free to pursue Typhon along its last known route. Whether they do so or not, the referee should proceed to the next scenario. Given what's been found in the atmosphere factory, it would not be out of line for the referee to plant the idea that Typhon might know what's going on. As an added incentive, the corridor the robot took heads in the direction the group is travelling in.

PITFALLS

Vacuum: Not far from the atmosphere factory, the expedition is moving through a narrow corridor where the sleds must pass in single file. Without warning, doors slam shut at either end, trapping all inside. Next there's the hum of circulation fans kicking in as they begin to evacuate the chamber of atmosphere. The team has about three minutes before succumbing to unconsciousness. Trying to manually crank open a door will prove futile as they are magnetically sealed. Electronics skill will be required to short the door circuitry, which requires a Difficult roll. The characters are also free to devise other methods of escape (for example, by using a grav sled to ram a door). If the referee wishes to again interject a little misdirection, an NPC could manage to jump through one of the doors before it closes. To those who remain behind, it could look like they've been set up. Unbeknownst to them, however, the NPC will also be trying to free the team from the other side. In this way, the NPC acts as a safety valve in that if the characters can't effect their own escape, he can perform a last-minute rescue. Orsuss, if used as a red-herring previously, makes a good choice as the NPC to escape.

Floodwaters: Having escaped from the first trap, the characters are forced

to head downward to continue moving toward their objective. The corridor they're in is damp and somewhat slick to the touch. From somewhere ahead comes a loud rumble, a gust of wind and the sound of rushing water. This is quickly followed by a wave of water rising half way to the ceiling of the five-meter-high corridor. An Average roll against Pilot (IFace/Grav) skill is required to avoid the initial torrent. Failure to do so leaves a grav sled swamped and the passengers swept away. The PCs will have to conduct all necessary rescue operations, with the referee making up the appropriate rolls. If all the vehicles make it through the initial onslaught, the PCs should be able to find a vertical passage to ascend before the rapidly rising water reaches them. The referee is invited to play up the tension of finding such an escape route.

Referee: Both of the events above were triggered by a Virus which has taken control of the old Duchy base. When the characters cut off the power source in the atmosphere factory substation, it alerted the Virus to the presence of intruders. It switched to backup power supplies and began monitoring the approaches to its realm via surviving sensors and public comm terminals. Having failed to dispatch the intruders outright, the Virus now hopes to bluff the characters, using Typhon, into leaving the area.

BAIT AND SWITCH

The characters have entered what appears to be a warehouse district or marshaling yard located only a few hundred meters from the expedition's objective (based on the positioning data provided by Avalon). The referee should be careful not to volunteer the exact distance remaining to the site, as this will tip off the PCs early that all is not as it seems. As the team progresses, the PCs come across a well-lit structure—an enclosed storage bay with an associated workstation. Within the structure, movement can be seen, but because of the light, no details are discernible. Have the characters come up with a plan of attack for approaching the bay. Keep in mind that, after several days in the dark, the relatively bright light will be a hindrance until the PCs' eyes have had a chance to adjust. This will take about 10 minutes, during which all tasks increase in difficulty by one level (this may be modified by the ref-

free as necessary). After the events of the last scenario, the characters should be on edge, so feel free to play on their fears.

Upon gaining entrance, the characters find a robot inside which Orsuss identifies as Typhon. The robot expresses surprise at seeing the expedition and inquires as to the reason why they're there. When the matter of the

old Duchy base is brought up, Typhon tells the characters that they've found it and indicates the military-style transit cases which fill the bay. Each bears the insignia of the Duchy as well as stenciled lettering denoting their contents.

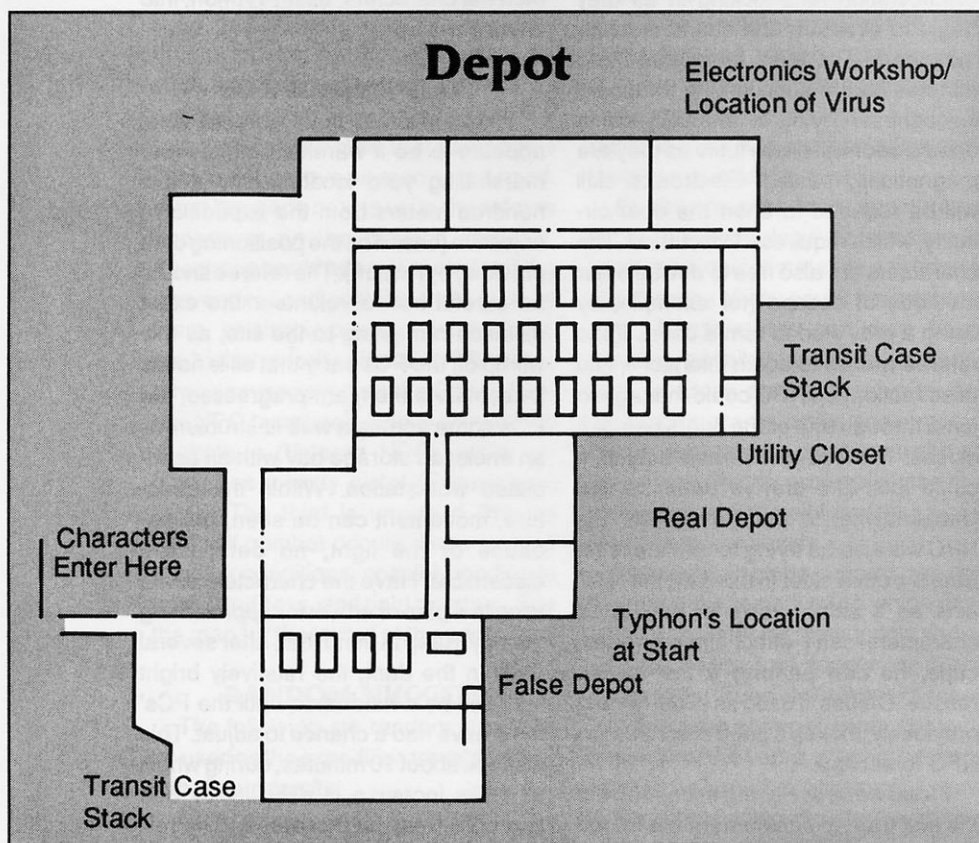
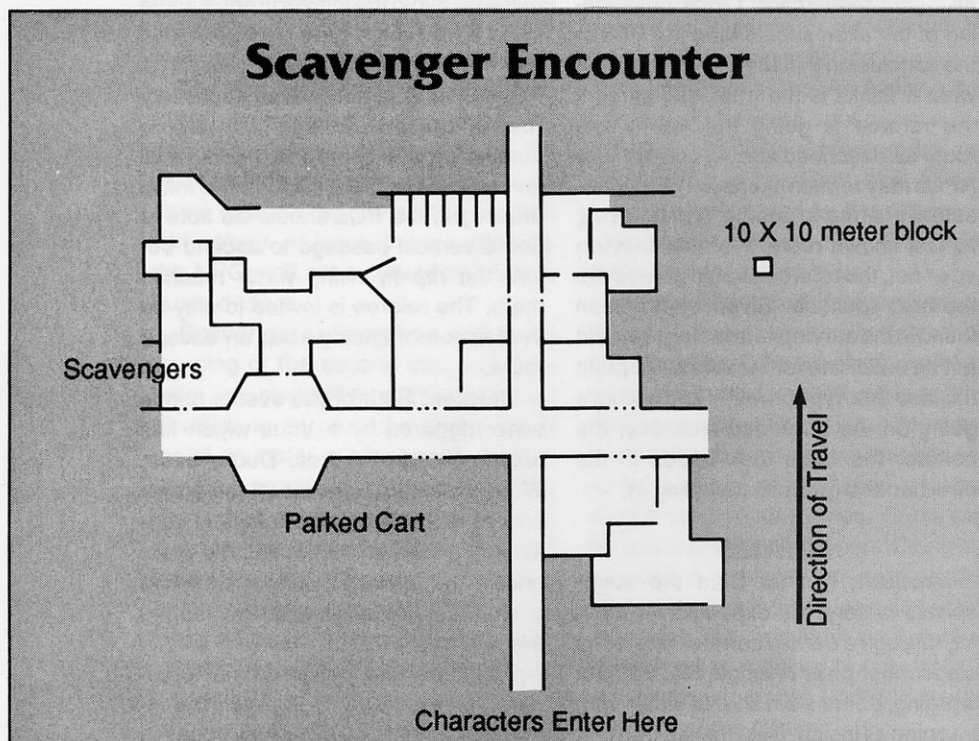
When the PCs question Typhon's presence, the robot explains that it too came in search of the old base. Power to the bay is provided by a portable

generator salvaged by the robot and fueled from a nearby reservoir. Orsuss' previous comment describing Typhon as a historical researcher should be kept in mind. The robot claims to be reviewing historical data left at the site and hints at some marvelous discovery. If asked whether or not it has encountered anyone else or examples of the Virus, Typhon's speech becomes halting, but it denies any such contact. Likewise, Typhon will claim not to have had any close calls of the type the characters were recently subjected to. It suggests, again haltingly, that the incidents were coincidental malfunctions of the arcology. Typhon is eager to return to its work, allowing the characters to get a look around.

Inventory: Approximately 50 transit cases are stored in the bay. They range in size from about one meter on a side to ones large enough to hold a person. None are locked. Stored within the cases are various types of military hardware and data—tactical computers, weapons, radios, spare parts, repair manuals and the like. Tech levels range from 13 to 15. All items have been preserved for storage, meaning it will take time to break out and ready any single piece of equipment. Insufficient time is available in this scenario for the characters to put anything they find to use.

All the technology present is in advance of anything manufactured in known space, making the site a priceless find. Although the Irappi can neither build nor maintain what's been found, analysis of the equipment and data will provide valuable insights. Some of the equipment will probably find its way into the hands of selected military units once returned to civilization.

Referee: In order to keep the expedition away from the real Duchy depot, the Virus established a false site in the storage bay. Typhon's job is to convince the characters that this one is legitimate, thus allowing the Virus to continue its work. Unfortunately for the Virus' plans, however, things don't quite gel. When the robot is telling the truth, such as when it describes how it came to be there, it does so in clear, measured tones. When telling a falsehood, though, Typhon's speech becomes hesitant. This affectation is not lost on Orsuss. Also, if the characters haven't noticed, one of the NPCs will mention how the storage bay's coordinates don't match those given by Avalon. This could



be chalked up to a simple error, although, once again, an NPC can tell the PCs how Avalon is known for its precision in all matters. Finally, sharp-eyed characters will note a conspicuous absence of dust or other accumulations around the transit cases' carry points. Put simply, it looks like they've been recently moved.

How things proceed from here depends on the characters' reactions. If the above points were quietly noted, the PCs might want to subtly pump Typhon for more information in order to cross-check its story. The robot will become increasingly agitated and its speech even more halting. The same will occur, only more rapidly, if Typhon is confronted outright. If pushed far enough, the robot will break down and claim to be on the verge of a discovery which could change history, although it can't define what the nature of the change is. If the verbal pressure becomes too much, Typhon will make a break for the real depot. If the characters threaten to continue on to the given coordinates, Typhon then demands that the expedition leave immediately, stating that the PCs are dealing with forces beyond their understanding. When the characters continue, or if any menacing action is taken against Typhon, the robot flips a switch, killing the lights, and bolts for the corridor leading to the real depot.

While Orsuss will join in any questioning of Typhon, the Droyne draws the line at physical violence. It will not permit an attack on the robot if it can help it, instead preferring to seize it and return it to Avalon. If the PCs are not particularly astute and everything is taken at face value, the team may wind up believing Typhon's story. In this case, the false site is given a good going over before the expedition heads back to Mira. Baeder will have a second, larger group come back and retrieve the equipment. Typhon will express a wish to stay and conduct further research. Further events are up to the referee, and the characters go home to a hero's welcome for having helped locate the technological treasure trove. Sometime later, a major outbreak of the Virus occurs, the extent of which the referee must determine. The source of the infection is later traced back to the real Duchy depot.

DEPOT

Bounding after Typhon in the low

gravity, the clamor of footfalls fills the hallway. The form of the robot can be seen in silhouette racing ahead of you toward a lighted area. Typhon clears the entrance and breaks right. As you close on the entranceway, a hum can be heard as the door begins to descend.

Pursuing Typhon, the PCs find a much bigger version of the storage bay. Transit cases of all descriptions fill the vast warehouse, which rises a full 30 meters high and fills an area 100 by 200 meters. Typhon can be seen moving about what looks to be a workshop. The warehouse is lit by floodlights housed in the rafters above. There is also a large hoist which runs on parallel tracks the length of the room along the ceiling. The characters will be surprised to note that the warehouse is under full gravity. See the depot map for additional details.

As the characters approach, the door to the depot is dropping into place. The last few PCs have to roll under the descending portal. Whether or not any of the NPCs make it is also up to the referee. About a third of a meter from reaching the floor, the door grinds to a halt, allowing those trapped on the other side to get an idea of what's about to transpire. Typhon's objective upon reaching the old Duchy military depot is to get to the electronics workshop and gather up the loose chips located there. It will then attempt to evade capture in order to make it back to civilization and spread the Virus.

The Virus in command of the old depot has been caught ill prepared. It didn't expect to have to deal with intruders, so it has no detailed defense planned. Instead, it will throw everything it has at the PCs in the hopes of giving Typhon a chance to escape and accomplish its mission. The threats facing the characters are as follows:

Grav Forklifts: Each forklift weighs two tons, floats one meter off the floor in normal operation and can achieve a top speed of 8 kph. They can move to a higher altitude only by first coming to a full stop. While hovering, a forklift can move but slowly in a horizontal direction (built-in safety features ensure this). Although they can turn rather precisely, a forklift must slow to do so. These are not high-performance vehicles, but their bulk makes them dangerous. Standard tactics for lifts are to attempt to topple stacks of transit cases onto the party or

simply run them over. The referee will have to estimate what kind of damage they can do to a character, although of course a good solid hit would be catastrophic. The forklifts are normally driven by an operator who sits on the seat on top, but can also be operated remotely via a motorized camera mounted next to the driver's seat. This is how the Virus is controlling the lifts. Should the camera be taken out of commission, a safety interlock immediately grounds the vehicle. A Difficult skill roll is required to take out the camera with a weapon. This can be further modified by the referee to take into account how the forklift is maneuvering. Weapons fire or other damage to the rest of the vehicle will have little effect due to its heavy construction. Attempting to wrest control of the lift by jumping aboard requires an Average roll against Agility in order to hang on and an Easy roll against Pilot (IFace/Grav) to manipulate the controls or shut it down.

Security Drone: These are not robots per se but rather remotely controlled drones. Each is a grav-propelled sphere 1.5 meters in diameter equipped with dual video cameras set 120 degrees apart. Each drone is armed with the equivalent of a laser carbine and has sufficient power for 30 shots. Security drones are capable of speeds up to 100 kph and weigh about 250 kilograms. Treat each drone as having a skill level of 2 in Energy Weapons. Their primary method of attack is to make strafing runs at high speed or use available cover to conduct popup attacks. If a drone gets sufficiently close to a character, it might also try to run him down. Drones are controlled by the Virus via the on-board cameras. Built for a light-to medium-threat environment, their chasses are the equivalent of armor value 1. Ten penetrating hits are required to render them inoperable. The referee should degrade their performance based on how much damage they've taken.

Hoist: The overhead hoist is slow and ponderous, but it could come as a surprise if the PCs aren't careful. It will position itself over a character before releasing the cargo hook to crash downward. It takes about 30 seconds for the hoist to move the length of the warehouse and another 15 seconds to reel in the cargo hook after it has hit the floor. Twin cameras, one mounted on either side of the hoist, guide it. Much like the forklifts, any damaged caused

by the hoist is deadly. Unless a PC is really out of it, the hoist should present only minimal danger.

In staging the assault, the referee should attempt to convey an air of utter chaos. Lasers are popping all around; cases come crashing down; and forklifts are blundering about. The referee should feel free to adjust the total number of weapons at the Virus' disposal in order to really challenge the PCs. If the characters can reach the workshop Typhon is in, all pursuit will end since the active Virus is also housed there. If the characters haven't guessed that some kind of Virus is behind the attack, one look at the remote-control gear hooked into the Virus storage bank should tip them off. Once the PCs catch up with the robot, Typhon will go on at great length about how the characters have ruined everything, but it offers no meaningful resistance. (The robot is incapable of personal violence.) The team is free to dispatch the Virus and get along with the business of evaluating the depot.

DEPOT BACKGROUND

The old Duchy military depot is a vast storehouse for military equipment as well as a maintenance depot constructed in the days when it was feared the Old Imperium would invade the Duchy. From bases such as this, Oasis would fight a final guerrilla action against the forces of Lucan the Mad. Fortunately for the Duchy, Lucan's fleets never made it to this part of space before the Imperium collapsed. The base was maintained until the Collapse came, and this part of Irap was abandoned. Later, the artificial intelligence born of the Collapse which took over Irap converted the base into a viral warfare center. Samples of the Virus were stored there and engineered

into new Viruses to be turned loose during its self-proclaimed war. Infected chips were held in a "prison" electromagnetically isolated from the rest of the depot except for carefully filtered power lines and an I/O port through which samples were obtained. When the war came to an end, the depot was closed down by the AI's minions, and all power lines were thought cut. Unfortunately, one "cell" was improperly isolated and remained hooked up to a backup supply fed by surface-mounted solar cells. The remaining Virus survived on the minute trickle charge which flowed in.

Several weeks ago, Typhon arrived at the old depot. Thinking it had found an old memory bank, it plugged itself into the sampling port and exposed itself to the Virus. The Virus failed to take over the artificially intelligent robot, but it did affect it. Typhon experienced a rush as though some great revelation was at hand, one which it couldn't fully comprehend. The robot repeatedly accessed the Virus looking for new insight and thus fell prey to its subtle promptings. Typhon then unwittingly set about to free the Virus from its prison, intent on bringing it back to Avalon to be shared by all. The robot set up various power connections, salvaged the forklifts and drones, and began assembling chips the Virus could use to reproduce itself. Typhon was checking on the power feed from the atmosphere factory when it encountered Orsuss. It hastily put together, with the Virus' help, a plan to mislead or kill the members of the expedition.

WRAPPING IT UP

Once the Virus is neutralized, the characters can begin to evaluate the depot. The military equipment and information stored at the site is of untold value. All of it will go a long way toward helping the Irappi advance the state of the art in local technology. Orsuss will take charge of Typhon and make sure it doesn't trouble the PCs. After the Virus is dispatched, the robot will lapse into silence but will follow the Droyne's commands. In a few days' time, the expedition heads back to Mira. Upon arrival home, the expedition will go through debriefing, and the characters will be paid off. The referee should set the amount of any bonuses in keeping with the PCs' performance. They also stand to gain from granting interviews to the media as they've become instant stars planetwide. Typhon is accompanied home to Avalon by Orsuss. All references to the viral prison are kept quiet. The Irappi government is concerned that other such prisons exist and doesn't want to create a panic. Avalon takes no apparent interest in the expedition other than to thank the Irappi for bringing Typhon home.

NPCs

The NPCs in this adventure provide some insight into how the people of known space view their surroundings. Keep in mind that each nonplayer character represents a different power cen-

ter in the politics of Oasis subsector in 1201. The referee is encouraged to further develop each NPC into a unique individual.

Urdil Baeder: Baeder is old enough to remember first-hand the stories of the AI occupation and has seen Irap change much in his lifetime. He is somewhat ambivalent on the subject of Avalon, being unsure whether or not it can wholly be trusted. Still, he's willing to give it the benefit of the doubt for the time being. He feels much the same about the Droyne, whose enigmatic nature makes them an unknown quantity. Baeder was a field agent like Murdec before going into

management and wracked up a fair amount of time exploring the arcology. He sees the expedition as a last chance to "get his hands dirty." In this adventure, Baeder is largely concerned with the big picture—what the old Duchy site may mean to his world and how he, as the government's point man, should handle it. He's also an experienced manager who's good at dealing with people. The referee can use him to keep things moving forward by focusing attention on what needs to be done.

Experienced NPC, age 50.

Combat Assets: Slug Weapon (Slug Pistol).

Other Assets: Admin/Legal-12, Liaison-12, Computer-10, Electronics-10, Pilot (IFace/Grav)-9, Ship's Engineering-6, E-Suit-6, Medical (Trauma Aid)-6, Sensor Ops-6.

Kendrick "Rick" Dulles: Dulles is a systems engineer with Betham Associates of Shytek-Oberon, which is also his homeworld. This is his first tour on Irap. Although considered young for the position he holds, leader of the Betham team, Dulles is both highly intelligent and well educated. The combination generally makes up for his lack of experience and is how he landed the job in the first place. There's a lot of pressure on his team to perform well in order to secure future contracts with Irap for his small firm. Dulles takes his responsibilities very seriously. If Dulles has a weak spot, it's his attitude toward his homeworld and the Duchy. He projects an unconscious air of superiority when dealing with "off-worlders." This is due to his perceptions regarding his planet's place in history. (Many citizens of the Duchy could be said to suffer from the same fault.) This attitude is especially annoying to the older and more experi-

Continued on page 15.

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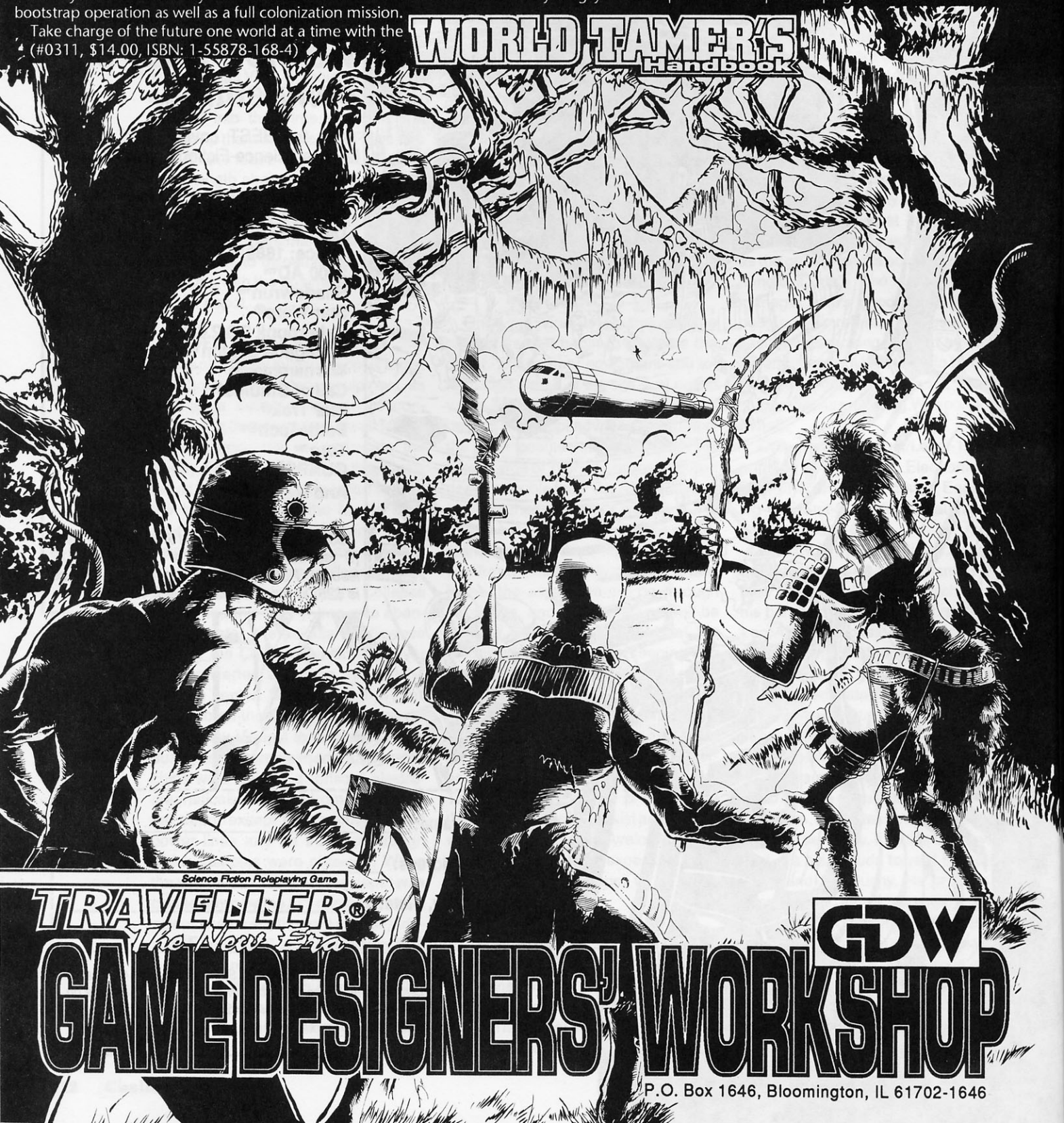
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Continued from page 12.

enced Yuri Gage. Most who encounter Dulles feel that with a little experience, he'll be better able to put things in perspective. While Dulles is young, he's not stupid and doesn't go out of his way to antagonize people.

Novice NPC, age 26.

Combat Assets: Slug Weapon (Slug Pistol).

Other Assets: Computer-12, Electronics-12, Pilot (IFace/Grav)-8.

Yuri Gage: Gage works for the Romany-based corporation Unicor, the largest single business in the Crown Colonies. He's been part of a technical exchange program between Irap and the Colonies for the past five years. Under the program, people like Gage are taught Irappi technology in return for financial support for the reclamation. At the conclusion of the one-year tour, he returns to Romany to teach others what he's learned. Gage is currently on his third such tour. Gage is a hard worker intent on obtaining a better standard of technology and standard of living for the people of his homeworld (and indirectly all the Colonies). He is openly critical of those who would relegate Romany to second-class status behind the Duchy of Oasis. He feels that his planet has just as much to contribute, if not more, as any other system in known space. This attitude brings him into conflict with people like Dulles, but, like the other engineer, he doesn't force his views on others.

Experienced NPC, age 42.

Combat Assets: Slug Weapon (Slug Pistol).

Other Assets: Computer-14, Electronics-14, Mechanical-10, Ship's Engineering-8, Gravitics-8, Pilot (IFace/Grav)-6.

Jame Murdec: Murdec is a confident of Baeder's and one of his best field agents. He's participated in any number of surveys of abandoned areas surrounding Mira District and brings a fair amount of experience to the expedition. Murdec can best be thought of as an experienced bush explorer or native guide. He can be used by the referee as a conduit for passing information and ideas to the PCs should the need arise. Still, the expedition intends to delve deeper into the arcology than any other mission to date, which could leave him out of his depth. Murdec borders on the intense while on duty, but is quite relaxed while off. Being younger than Baeder, the field agent is

more accepting of Avalon and the Droyne than the deputy director. He retains a healthy respect for the Virus.

Experienced NPC, age 38.

Combat Asset: Slug Weapon (Slug Rifle).

Other Assets: Computer-14, Engineering-12, Communications-12, Pilot (IFace/Grav)-10, Mechanical-10, Medical (Trauma Aid)-8, Admin/Legal-6.

Orsuss: Orsuss is a Droyne sport assigned to the Usyupkan embassy on Irap. His primary duty is as a liaison to Avalon for trade and "cultural" affairs. Avalon requested that the Droyne be included on the expedition as it is an acquaintance of the robot Typhon. Avalon doesn't entirely trust humans to assist the robot; thus, Orsuss will help look out for the nation-state's interests. As is common with Droyne in known space, Orsuss is soft spoken and keeps largely to itself. It can be drawn into conversation, though, proving to be a thoughtful and professional being. (Of course, any discussion of Droyne/Avalon relations, outside of generalities, is privileged information.) Memories of Droyne pogroms outside the Duchy during the Final War have left the race, at least locally, leery of humanity. Thus, they tend to hold themselves aloof from the interstellar community and do not talk about their present or future goals. Unfortunately, this attitude also works against the race, making it appear alien and inscrutable. The two viewpoints feed off each other, reinforcing prevailing attitudes. The referee should use the other NPCs as a means to bring out the state of human-Droyne relations and get the characters wondering what the race may be up to. It's also an opportunity for the PCs to meet an interesting alien. The referee must be careful, though, to create an air of mystery and not a climate for hostilities.

Orsuss is an Experienced Droyne Sport NPC. Use the appropriate NPC template found in the basic rules.

Typhon: Typhon is one of the new breed of autonomous, self-aware robots which have started to travel outside the boundaries of Avalon. These robots claim to be of the same "consciousness" as Avalon, but can't be said to share its thoughts, making each individual unique. Typhon has no better idea of Avalon's ultimate plans and intentions than any other human on Irap. The robot is best played as an intelligent computer. Although lacking in emotion, it does possess a burning

intellectual curiosity which it applies to its investigations into the past. Typhon was working on a project to reconstruct data files predating the New Era. The robot came across a reference to a base used during the AI's war against the Virus. Its curiosity piqued, Typhon struck off on its own in search of additional files that might be stored at the old Duchy base. In the process of searching the base, it unwittingly infected itself with the Virus, leading to the events in this adventure.

Typhon is humanoid in structure and is constructed of a dull bronze-colored alloy. It weighs about 150 kilograms. For purposes of this adventure, Typhon is considered a Novice NPC with the following stats:

Combat Assets: None.

Other Assets: History-16, Computer-8.

AVALON'S ROLE

See the article "Oasis in a New Era," also in this issue of **Challenge**, for details on Avalon.

When Avalon realized that Typhon had left for the old base, it became concerned. The prison, should it still exist, could contain an active strain of the Virus. Fearing an infection of its own systems, Avalon decided to co-opt the Irappi by revealing the Duchy base to them. It kept the true nature of the base a secret in order to ensure that the site would be investigated.

EQUIPMENT

Computer Analyzers: Both Murdec and Gage bring state-of-the-art computer analysis gear along on the expedition. Each unit is about the size of a modern personal computer and combines logic analysis and Virus-detection circuitry. The units weigh seven kilograms each and are internally powered. Successfully using an analyzer will determine a computer's function and whether or not any Viruses are present.

Grav Sleds: Each open-topped grav sled is a fusion-powered grav vehicle capable of holding four people and five tons of cargo. A sled weighs six tons and has sufficient fuel for 30 days of operation. Top speed is 100 kph. Built to be operated inside the arcology, the grav sleds lack advanced avionics. Ω

Refer to "Oasis in a New Era," also in this issue of **Challenge**, for additional information.

Planetfall

Skirmish-level combat for the New Era by John Fletcher

The PCs in many campaigns take the role of mercenaries or military advisors. Even in more varied games, things sometimes escalate into armed conflict. If a fight involves more than a handful of characters per side, it may take considerable time to play out with detailed RPG rules. This article is a set of miniature rules designed to allow gamers to take their favorite GDW RPG to the tabletop and play out a skirmish with 10 to 20 characters on a side.

MATERIALS

To play, you will need the following:

A flat table surface.

Twenty-sided dice.

Figures or counters to represent the characters.

A tape measure or meter stick graded in centimeters or inches.

A copy of the set of counters included with these rules.

GAME PLAY

These are skirmish-level rules in which one figure equals one character. The ground scale is about 1:100 or 1 cm or 0.5 inches equals 1m. This makes a square-inch equal to one square on the smaller-sized **TNE** tactical grid. The measurements are given in centimeters and inches so the game may be played with either metric or imperial measures. The two systems should not be mixed because the values have been rounded for convenience and are not exactly equal. One turn of play equals 10 seconds or two **TNE** combat turns. These rules assume that scenarios are two-sided, and there is one player per side. Three or more players can join in a multiple-sided conflict, or the forces in each side can be split, allowing multiple players working together on one side.

Players can even control individual figures representing their roleplaying characters. Each figure is moved and acts independently in most cases. Fig-

ures' actions may be limited by morale and health.

TERRAIN AND FIGURES

For these rules, 25mm figures, of which there are many good science-fiction lines, are recommended. **RAFM's** new line of **TNE** figures will serve well. For terrain, players can build, scrounge or improvise anything that looks interesting, as long as everyone knows what each object represents and how it affects play. A simple but effective way of making terrain is to stack up books or boxes and throw a sheet over them. Styrofoam packing makes excellent SF-looking buildings. The effects of terrain on movement and actions are detailed in those parts of the rules.

FIGURE RATINGS

These rules can be used to play out an encounter involving characters converted from **TNE** and standard squads based on the **TNE** NPC templates. In **Traveller**, all NPCs have the same number of hits—40. In this article, all standard figures have 12, the same as the average number of D6 throws needed to total 40. Each figure has the following ratings:

Initiative: The figure's general combat sense and coolness under fire

Fire Combat: The figure's marksmanship

Melee: The figure's ability in hand-to-hand combat

Armor: The protective value of any armor worn

Wounds: The number of hits a figure can sustain until it is incapacitated

Standard character ratings: Veteran Human soldier are:

Init	Fire	Melee	Armor	Wnds
4	13	13	1	12

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Each turn, play proceeds in the following order:

Initiative phase

Action phase

Rally phase

After the rally phase, a new turn begins, repeating the phases, starting with the initiative phase.

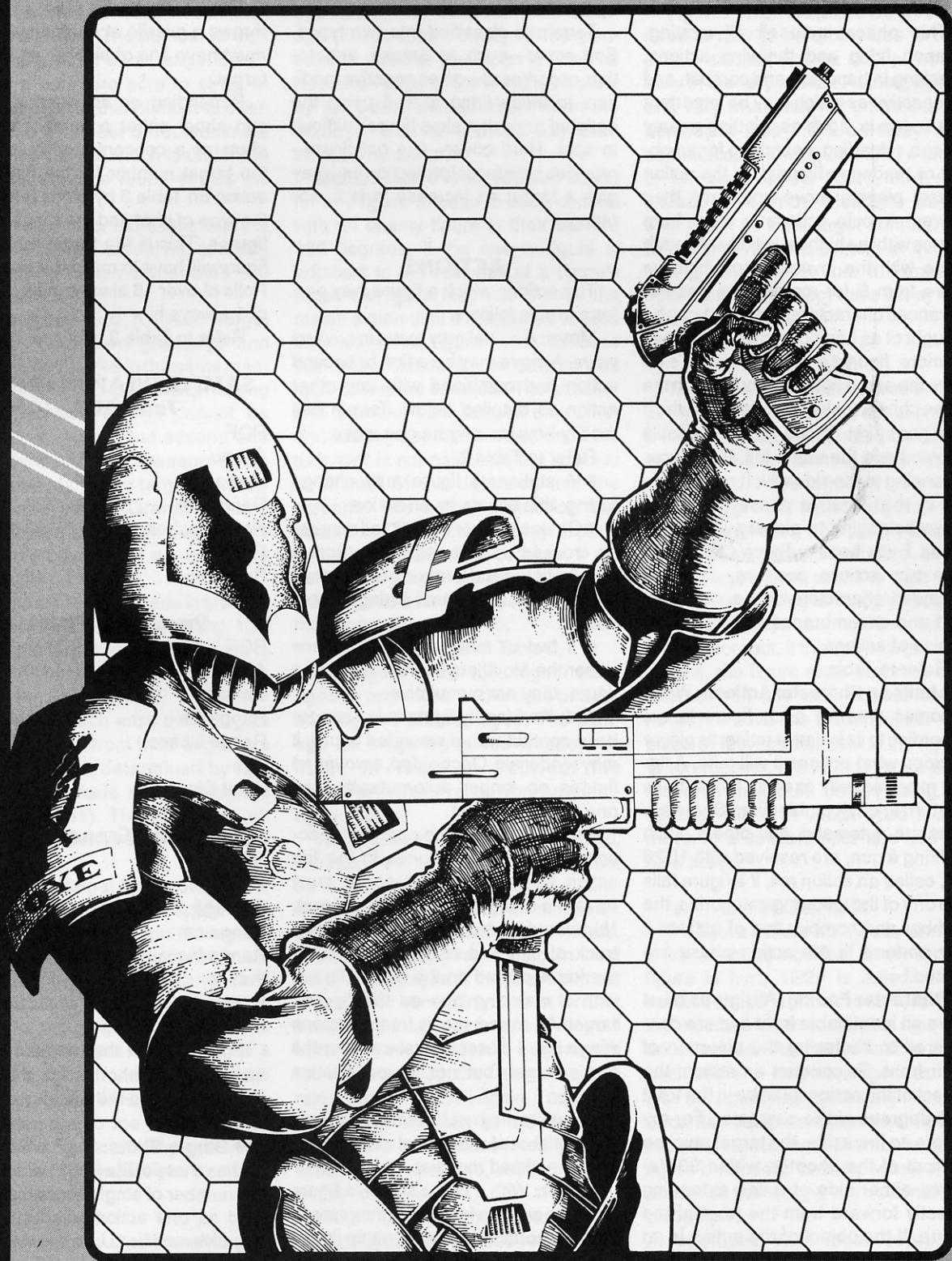
INITIATIVE PHASE

Before the action phase, each player rolls 1D20, modifying it by +5 if his side has the leader or PC with the highest Ground Tactic asset. If a tie occurs, both sides roll again. The figures of the player with the highest

The focus of this article is the **Traveller: the New Era** universe. However, this game and therefore these miniature rules are based on the GDW House System. Therefore, characters from **Twilight: 2000**, **Dark Conspiracy** and **Cadillacs and Dinosaurs**, in addition to **Traveller**, are all easily modified to use the rules outlined here.

These rules simplify the GDW House System rules on fire and melee combat to speed up play. The article assumes that all figures have average human strength and constitution, and that weapons do average damage. This allows all damage values and hits to be divided by the average of 1D6—3.5.

In most cases, the results arrived at using these rules will be similar to those reached though the use of the complete RPG rules. Rules are also included for movement over terrain, spotting enemy figures, and morale.



modified roll act first in any initiative turn in which there is a tie between figures.

ACTION PHASE

This phase includes all moving, weapon firing and throwing actions, attacking in hand-to-hand combat, and other activities which may be important in a scenario, such as spotting enemy figures, reloading, searching for an object or rendering first aid. In the action phase, players move and have their figures execute actions in order from figures with the highest initiative through those with the lowest. Each initiative score from 6 (or more in the case of advanced characters) through 1 can be thought of as having its own turn. If two or more figures from the same side have the same Init, and would act in the same phase, their player decides which one goes first. If two or more hostile figures have the same Init, the figures belonging to the side which rolled highest in the initiative phase go before those belonging to players who rolled lower. Each healthy figure can undertake two actions per turn, seriously wounded characters only one. Panic, rout and encumbrance limit a figure's choice of actions.

Refer to Table 1.

Limits on Character Actions: When it comes time for each figure to act according to its initiative rating, its player decides what actions it will take. A figure may normally execute two actions per turn in any combination. Some actions are automatic, and others, such as firing a gun, are resolved with 1D20 roll, called an action roll. If a figure falls into one of the following categories, the number and combination of actions it can perform in the action phase are limited.

Character Facing: All figures must have an identifiable front and are considered to be facing the direction of their front. To conduct an action, the object of the action must be in the front 180 degrees of the character. For example, to fire a rifle, the target must be in front of the shooter, within 90 degrees either side of a line extending directly forward from the front of the figure. If the object of the action is an item carried by the figure, such as a reloading a weapon, then the figure's facing is irrelevant.

Line of Sight: The term line of sight is referred to in the action section of the rules. Figures have a line of sight if a direct line can be drawn from the front half or forward 180 degrees of

the spotting figure's base to any substantial part of the other figure or its base. This can be judged by eye or by stretching a piece of thread between the two figures. Line of sight is limited by terrain.

Terrain is classified into two types. Soft cover—such as smoke, vegetation, or darkness—gives negative modifiers to those firing at it. If using the optional rules, it makes figures difficult to spot. Hard cover—like buildings—provides substantial protection and may give a target an increase to its armor rating.

ACTIONS

The actions which a figure may perform are as follows:

Move: A model may move in several ways. A move may be a first or second action and combined with any other action as detailed below. Terrain can modify how far a figure can move.

Refer to Table 2.

- A stationary figure may change facing; this counts as an action.

- Obstacles over 4 cm/2" tall may not be crossed without assistance from a second figure and/or special equipment as specified in a squad listing or scenario.

- If two or more of the conditions under the Modifiers column apply to a figure, they are cumulative.

Aid: If a friendly figure is in base-to-base contact with a wounded figure, it may render aid. Once aided, a wounded figure no longer automatically lose one wound per turn.

Aim: A figure which spends an action to aim gains a bonus to the fire action target number. A figure must have line of sight to its intended target. Numbered pairs of target counters keep track of aim and cover actions. One marker is placed on the aiming figure, with a matching one on the figure's target. An aimed shot is treated as one range band closer for determining the firer's target, but not for penetration number.

Burst fire may not be aimed, and only the first shot of a series of single shots gets the aimed modifier.

Cover: With a cover action, a figure watches an area for enemy movement. A target counter is placed within line of sight anywhere along a line extending directly forward from the front of the figure.

The observing figure may fire immediately if an enemy figure becomes visible within its firing arc any time until the figure gets to act again.

Defense: A figure which expects to

be attacked in melee later in the turn may save an action to expend as an active defense. It may save only one action and may not use it for any other purpose.

Fire: A figure fires its weapon or throws a missile at an enemy. A figure must have line of sight to its intended target.

Depending on its weapon, figures can shoot either a number of single shots or a concentrated bursts. Find the target number for the figure's fire action on Table 3 by cross referencing the type of shot and the range with the figures. This is the target number the figure will have to roll under or equal to. Rolls of over 16 always miss, and rolls of 1 always hit.

Refer to Table 3.

SAMPLE WEAPON PROFILES 7mm ACR -10

ROF	3 (5)
Ammo	20
Damage	5
Range cm	720-240-480
Range inches	60-120-240
Pen	1-2-3
Burst Dice	5-4-3

9mm Auto Pistol -6

ROF	2
Ammo	11
Damage	2
Range cm	13-26-52
Range inches	7-13-28
Pen	Nil
Burst Dice	None

Hand Grenade -5

ROF	1
Ammo	1
Damage	1d6:1d6-3
Range cm	24-48-X
Range inches	12-24-X
Pen	1: Nil
Radius	1 cm/0.5"

For entries in the format 1-2-3, the first entry is for short range, the second for medium and the third for long.

• **Single Shots:** Each weapon profile has a rate of fire (ROF) which shows the number of single shots that can be fired as one action without having a negative modifier. Up to five single shots can be fired as one action. If more shots are fired than the ROF, then a cumulative -3 is applied to each shot's target number. For each roll which is under the target number, one shot strikes the target. Each roll of 10 or more less than the target number is a critical hit, doubling any damage which penetrates the

target's armor. If the target number was 12, and a one or two was rolled, it would be a critical hit.

• **Burst Fire:** If there is a number in brackets next to the ROF, then the weapon can fire a concentrated burst of fire as one action. The number of dice rolled is shown for each range. Some shots in a burst are sure to stray, at longer ranges, so this number is often less than the number of rounds in the burst. For each roll which is under the target number, one round strikes the target.

Each roll of 10 or more less than the target number is a critical hit, doubling any damage which penetrates the target's armor.

• **Grenades and Knives:** Target numbers for thrown grenades and knives are calculated in the same manner as gunfire, except there is no long range. Grenade throws cannot be aimed as an action, but second and subsequent throws by the same figure at the same stationary target count as if they were aimed. Grenades need not be thrown at a figure but may be thrown into cover or at a spot on the tabletop.

The damage of a grenade is given in the format 1D6:1D6-3, meaning 1D6 Wnds to the target and 1D6-3 Wnds to those in the burst radius. Penetration is noted in the same format.

Grenades which miss their targets explode 1D6 cm from their target in a random direction determined by rolling on the grenade scatter diagram (TNE, page 281). Thrown knives always have Nil penetration and inflict 1 Wnd damage.

• **Cover:** If a target figure has soft or hard cover, some modifiers apply. If the figure is obscured by smoke, vegetation, weather, darkness, etc. or is behind rubble or around a corner, it is more difficult to hit, and a -2 modifier applies to the target number. If the target is behind hard cover such as a building, a roll is made to see if the cover intervenes. If the roll is successful, the damage to the figure may be reduced. If a figure is hiding in cover, it must first be spotted before it can be aimed at or fired on.

Refer to Table 4.

• **Ammunition:** One round is subtracted from a weapon's ammunition for each single shot fired and for each round in a burst. When empty, a weapon must be reloaded with a reload action.

• **Wounds:** The damage to an unarmored target for each hit is equal to the damage value of the weapon. To find

the number of Wnds per hit inflicted on an armored target, multiply the penetration value of the weapon at that range by the armor value of the target and subtract the result from the damage value of the weapon. $Wnds = \text{Damage} - (\text{Penetration} \times \text{Armor})$. If the penetration value of a weapon is listed as Nil at that range, or the armor multiplied by the penetration is higher than the damage, then all damage has been stopped by armor.

• **Melee:** Melee is an allowed action for any figure in base to base contact with an enemy figure in their forward 180 degrees. If the enemy figure is adjacent to the rear half of a figure's base, the figure may not choose the melee action until it has turned to face its enemy. The figure which chooses the melee action is the attacker; its opponent is the defender. The attacker and defender each consult their chart and add any applicable modifiers. If the defender is not panicked, the attacker is in front of the defender, and the defender has actions remaining this game turn, the defender may expend an action for an active defense. If the defender declared a defense action, it may expend it for an active defense. All modifiers are cumulative.

Refer to Table 5 and Table 6.

The figure which rolls higher damages its opponent. In the case of a tie, both figures are damaged. The damage for a figure's melee weapons is listed in Table 6. Subtract the defender's Armor rating from any damage inflicted.

• **Reload:** If a reload action is executed, a weapon's ammunition is replenished up to the value listed. Through a common action, figures must roll under their fire rating to reload in the heat of battle. If they fail they may try again next action. If they roll a 1, they have run out or lost their remaining ammo for that weapon. If in a later turn they move it base to base contact with a figure with the same weapon, they may execute a reload action and roll again. The figure donating ammo may be a dead or injured figure or an active friendly figure which is not panicked, routing, or engaged in melee.

• **Other:** Other actions are those which are not covered by these rules or are specified in a scenario. They include but are not limited to driving a vehicle, picking up or dropping an object, picking up an wounded friendly figure, operating a device, repairing a device. For example, to set a demolish charge would be one action to place to and second to activate it. Picking up and carrying a

person or heavy object makes a figure encumbered for movement purposes.

RALLY PHASE

Figures which are panicked or routed need to rally to be of any use to their side. Panicked figures rally automatically in the rally phase. Routing figures only rally when they roll under a target number of their $\text{Init} \times 2$ on 1D20. If in communication with, or within 4 cm/2" of a friendly leader figure, they may instead roll with their leader's leadership asset as their target number. If a routed unit remains routed, in the following turn it must run. If using the optional hide and spot rules it may and hide.

MORALE

The first time a figure is fired on and every time it is wounded, it must make a morale check. All figures in a squad must make a morale test if their leader is wounded. A D6 is rolled, and if the number is greater than the figure's Init , the figure freezes with panic; place a Panic counter next to the figure. It may not act again until after the next rally phase. If wounded or simply fired on while panicked, a second D6 vs. Init roll is made for rout. If this roll is larger than the Init , the figure routs and may only execute run and hide actions until it rallies; remove the Panic marker and place a Rout counter next to the figure. When running, the routing figure must move its maximum unless using the optional rules, in which case it may move to a suitable spot and use the hide action.

WOUNDS

If a figure suffers wounds in combat, it will affect its abilities. Every time a figure is hurt, 1D20 is rolled. If the number rolled is equal to or less than the number of wounds, the figure is unconscious, dead or otherwise incapacitated and may no longer act. Unless the figure has special significance or carries equipment that other figures will want to recover, it is removed. If the figure is not dead or incapacitated, the effects of the wound are summarized on Table 7.

Automatic Wnd losses represent shock and loss of blood and are applied in the rally phase, beginning in the turn after the figure reached that wound level. The Actions column shows the number of actions figures may perform per turn and the modifier which is applied to the target number for all action rolls. Figures with zero wounds are

Counters

PANIC	ROUT	HIDDEN	1	TARGET 1	2	TARGET 2
PANIC	ROUT	HIDDEN	3	TARGET 3	4	TARGET 4
PANIC	ROUT	HIDDEN	5	TARGET 5	6	TARGET 6
PANIC	ROUT	HIDDEN	7	TARGET 7	8	TARGET 8
PANIC	ROUT	HIDDEN	9	TARGET 9	10	TARGET 10
PANIC	ROUT	HIDDEN	11	TARGET 11	12	TARGET 12
PANIC	ROUT	HIDDEN	13	TARGET 13	14	TARGET 14
PANIC	ROUT	HIDDEN	15	TARGET 15	16	TARGET 16
PANIC	ROUT	HIDDEN	17	TARGET 17	18	TARGET 18

dead or dying. In the case of a PC, refer to the Converting Characters section below.

Refer to Table 7.

OPTIONS

If players want to employ more complicated tactics, the following actions can be used by mutual consent.

Hide: If a figure finishes its move with either soft or hard cover intervening between itself and all enemy figures with line of sight, it may declare a hide action. The quality of its cover and abilities of the enemy spotter will determine whether the figure remains hidden.

Enemy figures cannot draw a line of sight to a hidden figure, so it cannot be fired on or aimed at until spotted, although it may be wounded by grenades. It is possible to move and carry out actions while hidden, but if the figure moves into open ground with no hard or soft cover, and into the forward 180 degrees of any enemy figure, it is automatically spotted and loses its hidden status.

Spot: To spot a hidden figure, the spotting figure must roll under his fire rating on 1D20. If spotted, the hiding figure loses its hidden status and can be targeted by any enemy figure with line of sight.

The following modifications are made to the target number:

Refer to Table 8.

CONVERTING CHARACTERS

If the referee is converting detailed RPG characters, they have a number of Wnds equals to their Strength plus their Constitution, or 12, whichever is greater.

Refer to Table 9.

Keep track of the wounds a player character takes in a game of "Planetfall" by weapon type. After the game, roll for hit location and damage as normal in TNE and apply the damage according to the following rules:

- A character who survived a game of "Planetfall" with more than zero Wnds cannot be assessed a critical wound.

- A character who survived with 0-6 wounds cannot suffer more than a serious wound.

- A character who survived with 7-11 wounds cannot suffer more than a slight wound.

If, after all damage has been assessed, the character has a body part more greatly wounded than allowed, subtract the addition damage and lower its wound level.

Traveller: The New Era

CONVERTING WEAPONS

To convert a Traveller or other House System weapon to "Planetfall," assume that the firer has a Strength of 7. The weapon's ROF is the number of single shots that can be fired without incurring a recoil modifier. The weapon's ammo and damage remain the same, except the damage now become the number of points inflicted instead of D6s. A weapon's range in centimeters is the same as its range in meters in TNE. To convert to inches, divide the ranges in meters by 2 and round down to the nearest half inch.

Penetration for each range is the same as in the House System, remembering that the first value in a listing is for short and medium range. For automatic weapons, assume the that one burst of three or five rounds is fired per action.

Calculate the burst dice for each range assuming a Strength of 7.

SQUAD LIST Regency Quarantine Service Boarding Party

Officially, the RQS maintains armed squads on all its larger vessels to enforce Regency shipping regulations and protect the technical personnel who must board all incoming vessels to check for Virus. A large part of their duties, however, is taken up pursuing Vargr raiding parties which regularly prey on commercial shipping and extort tribute from under defended colonies and stations.

RQS Marine Sergeant (Elite)

Init	Fire	Melee	Armor	Wnds
5	15	15	1	16

Ground Tactics Asset 12, Leadership Asset 13.

Combat E. Suit, 7mm ACR-DS, 10mm Auto Snub Pistol, Knife.

RQS Marine (Veteran)×8

Init	Fire	Melee	Armor	Wnds
4	13	13	1	14

Combat E. Suit, 7mm ACR-DS, 10mm Auto Snub Pistol, Knife.

Auto Snub Pistol HEAP

ROF	3
Ammo	14
Damage	2
Range cm	4-8-16
Range inches	2-4-8
Pen	2-2-2
Burst Dice	None

7mm ACR DS -10

ROF	3 (5)
Ammo	20
Damage	5
Range cm	120-240-440
Range inches	60-120-240
Pen	1-2-3
Burst Dice	5-4-3

SQUAD LIST Vargr Pirates Raiding Party

The Vargr are a tribal culture in which individuals identify with a their pack and are loyal only to their pack leaders. One of the ways for Vargr to excel and gain followers is through raiding. Vargr raid each other's communities, each other's planets, each other's shipping, and their neighbor's communities, planets and shipping.

Vargr Alpha Raider Captain (Veteran)

Init	Fire	Melee	Armor	Wnds
4	13	13	1	14

Ground Tactics Asset 14, Leadership Asset 18.

Ballistic weave vest, 9mm Auto Pistol.

Vargr Raiders (Experienced)×6

Init	Fire	Melee	Armor	Wnds
2	11	11	1	12

Ballistic weave vest, 7mm assault rifle.

Vargr Raiders (Novice)×4

Init	Fire	Melee	Armor	Wnds
1	9	9	1	12

Ballistic weave vest, 7mm Assault rifle.

9mm Auto Pistol -6

ROF	2
Ammo	11
Damage	2
Range cm	13-26-52
Range inches	7-13-26
Pen	Nil
Burst Dice	None

7mm Assault Rifle -7

ROF	2 (5)
Ammo	30
Damage	4
Range cm	40-80-160
Range inches	20-40-80
Pen	2-Nil
Burst Dice	5-4-3

Table 1: Action Restrictions

Condition	Restrictions
Panic	No actions until Rally Phase
Rout	Move at a Run or Hide until successful Rally roll
Encumbered	-5 to action rolls, movement halved
Hidden	(Optional rule) Actions give bonus to spotters
Wounded	See health and wounds section of the rules

Table 2: Movement

Move Mode	Rate cm/in	Actions Restriction
Crawl	2 cm/1"	None; counts as one action
Advance	10 cm/5"	None; counts as one action
Charge	40 cm/20"	First action; melee must be second
Run	30 cm/15"	First action; run or hide must be second
Cross <2 cm tall obstacle	Width of object	Counts as one action (e.g., ruined wall)
Cross 2-4 cm tall obstacle	Width of object	Counts as two actions (e.g., intact wall)

Situation	Modifiers	Applied
Difficult terrain	x1/2	Broken ground, forest, hill side, rubble
Wounded	Cannot run	If figure has nine or fewer Wnds
Seriously wounded	Cannot run, charge, advance	If figure has six or fewer Wnds figure may limp at 4 cm/2" per action
Encumbered	-4 cm/2" at run, charge	If figure carries heavy weapons, special equipment or injured figure

Table 3: Fire Action Target Numbers

Type of Fire/Range	Target Numbers										
Fire Asset	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Aimed, short range	12	14	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Short range	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Medium range	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8
Long range	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4
Burst fire, all ranges	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4

Table 4: Cover

Amount of Cover	Benefit of Cover, D20	Type of Cover	Effects
Figure has <50% cover	1-5	Hedge, Vegetation, Smoke	-2 to attacker target number
Figure has 50% cover	1-10	Wall, Bulkhead, Tree Trunk	+1 to figure's Armor
Figure has 75% cover	1-15	Reinforced wall, external hull	+2 to figure's Armor
		Earthwork, massive structure	All damage absorbed

Table 5: Melee Resolution

Attacker	Modifiers	Defender	Modifiers
Melee action chosen (attacker)	+Melee rating	Active defense (Defender)	+Melee rating
Attack from rear	Defender weapon length=0	Routing	-5
Defender has shorter weapon	+1 per length difference	Panic	Defender gets die roll only, no adds
		Attacker in rear 180 degrees	Defender gets die roll only, no adds
		Attacker has shorter weapon	+1 per length difference

Table 6: Melee Damage

Weapons	Length	Damage
Punch or kick	0	1 Wnd
Claws (Vargr and Aslan)	1	2 Wnds
Knife, dagger	2	2 Wnds
Rapier	3	2 Wnds
Sword, ax, club	3	3 Wnds
Spear, bayonet	4	3 Wnds
Halberd, great sword, pike	5	4 Wnds

Table 7: Wounds Summary

<i>Wnds</i>		<i>Actions</i>	
<i>Remaining</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>#/Modifier</i>	<i>Effects</i>
9 or more	Okay	2/0	
6-9	Wounded	2/-1	
4-6	Serious wound	2/-3	-1 Wnd/turn until Aided
1-3	Critical wound	1/-3	-1 Wnd/turn until Aided
0	Mortal wound	No actions	Character in incapacitated and may die unless aided.

Table 8: Spotting Modifiers

<i>Conditions</i>	<i>Spot Roll Modifier</i>
Hidden figure used fire action last turn	+4
Hidden figure moved, other than crawl	+4
Hidden figure spotted last turn	+4
Hard cover, figure complete hidden	Cannot be spotted
Hard cover, figure 75% covered	-5
Hard cover, figure 50% covered	-3
Soft cover, figure in vegetation, rubble, smoke.	-4
Figure in cover with suitable camouflage	-4
Figure has advance "chameleon suit," combat E-suit	-6
Range from spotter to hidden, unless binoculars	-1 per 10 cm/5"
Spotter has electronics or sensors	-5

Table 9: Conversion of TNE PCs

<i>"Planetfall" Statistic</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>TNE Conversion</i>
Initiative	Init	Use TNE initiative
Fire combat	Fire	Use best TNE Gun Combat asset
Melee combat	Melee	Use best TNE Melee asset
Armor	Armor	Equal to TNE Armor rating
Wounds	Wnds	12 (or equal to TNE Strength+Constitution)

Transactions

of the
Royal Martian
Geographical Society

The Royal Martian Geographical Society wishes to inform the public that its quarterly publication devoted to Victorian Era role-playing is now available on Earth. Each 32-page issue contains:

— Adventures —

Space 1889, Cthulhu by Gaslight, and the Wild West

— New Equipment and Inventions —

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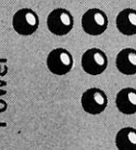
The Society is also proud to announce that future issues will incorporate the Ether Society Newsletter.

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Power



COALINFONET, CLASS NEWSREPORT, DISTRIBUTION: UNLTD, AUTHORITY BALDUR COLONIAL OFFICE
NANNAGRAD BALDUR (1032/ORIFLAMME, CAAA756-9), 05/1/1202
KEYWORDS: COLONY, BALDUR, ORIFLAMME, POYZEN

The recently founded Baldur Colonial Office today announced the departure of its first colony mission to the uninhabited world of Poyzen (1736/So Skire X-787000-0). The colony, co-sponsored by Oriflamme, is intended to provide an additional source of raw materials for Baldur, and to expand trade and development along the so-called "Back Face" of the Coalition.

The colony is the first of what is expected to be a series of similar projects run directly by Baldur without Reformation Coalition oversight. Dimitri Rostov, Senior Manager of the Colonial Office, takes great pains to explain that this is not a challenge to Coalition authority, but rather a recognition of the importance of such missions and the need for Baldur to establish itself as a strong partner within the RC, rather than a weak member, too dependent upon other worlds.

Said Rostov, "We can't wait for Assembly consensus. Our future is too important to wait for some argumentative body to pencil us onto a schedule. Also, we are tired of being the 'sick man' of the backside. Baldur is more dependent upon technology imports than any other world of the Coalition, and we are eager to pull our own weight and offer something back to the Coalition. And if that gives us a stronger voice in the Assembly, so be it."

The Baldur Colonial Office has an unusual feature: one of its senior managers is an Oriflammen, Stefan Burg, present to coordinate the Oriflammen contributions to the colonial projects. The Oriflammen cooperation with the venture stems from the fact that Baldur has no open-air agricultural population, and the farmers needed for any successful colonial venture must come from elsewhere. This contribution is being coordinated by the Oriflamme Bureau of Relocation. Burg appeared with Rostov in the joint announcement and proclaimed Oriflamme's support of the Balduri initiative.

"Because the Coalition is currently committed to the coreward strategy as seen in the Title II mandate of official areas of operation, attempts to consolidate areas outside the AO, particularly along the trailing frontier, must be taken on by individual worlds. As the largest human population in the Coalition, Oriflamme is more than capable of taking on these duties herself without cutting back on her commitments to joint RC operations. No other world is able to say this, and we are proud to step forward and take responsibility."

Poyzen, the colony site, is unusual in planetological terms, in that it originally had an atmosphere classified as tainted, due to volcanic pollutants in its atmosphere. However, the world's volcanism has passed into a dormant phase, and the planet's atmosphere has cleaned itself up to the point where it is no longer rated as tainted. The world is thought to be uninhabited, having only been the site of a Last Imperium scout base destroyed in the Collapse.

COALINFONET, CLASS: NEWSREPORT, DISTRIBUTION: PUSH, AUTHORITY RCSA PAO
RCSA COMPOUND, VRASSTADT, AUBAINE (0738/AUBAINE, A78A884-C), 12/1/1202
KEYWORDS: BOOTSTRAP, SO SKIRE, RCSA, RCES, SHIP BILL

The Reformation Coalition Services Administration today announced the establishment of a new bootstrap project in the So Skire subsector, on the trailing face of the Coalition. This bootstrap operation is unusual in that it is being backed by joint RC resources, but is outside of the Primary Area of Operations mandated for such joint operations.

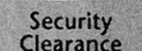
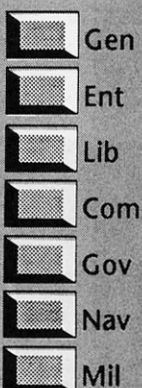
The target world for the operation is So Skire (1732/So Skire X-667843-1), a cold world whose inhabitants live in several island chains along the world's equatorial belt. One of these island nations was determined by an earlier survey operation to be amenable to off-world contact, and will be the center of focus of the upcoming bootstrap operation.

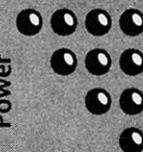
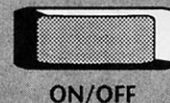
Bootstrap operations, unlike the more colorful "smash and grab" operations conducted by the RCES, are long-term projects intended to incorporate low-tech worlds and nations into the Coalition by gradually winning their loyalty via technical, medical, military, and social assistance. Because these operations are essentially intensive confidence-building projects, they are often referred to as "hearts and minds" operations within the RC bureaucracy. Bootstrap operations come under the purview of the RC Services Agency, which serves as the supervising body for the assembly of personnel, equipment, and support, but the bootstrap teams are naturally staffed by representatives of many RC organizations, including the RCES and RC Marine Corps. The coordinating officer for the So Skire operation, for example, is Jerszy Kaminski, seconded from RCES for this mission.

Until this announcement, it had been understood that RC bootstrap policy was governed by Title II, the Assembly measure that codified the Primary Area of Operations in the wake of the coreward-consolidation debate. Title II mandates the confinement of joint RC-funded expansion operations to the AO, which does not extend to the trailing subsectors, in which So Skire is located. Inside sources report that this non-AO operation is a *quid pro quo* offered to the Oriflamme delegation to unblock the stalled Ship Bill legislation, which was finally passed last month. The Ship Bill provides funding to the RC to allow the purchase of new *Aurora*-class clippers under construction in the orbital yards of Aubaine. Had the RC been unable to come up with funds to purchase these vessels, it was understood that their options would be picked up by Oriflamme to equip its planetary navy. The RCN and RCES strongly opposed the diversion of these important vessels from RC service, and RCN and RCES positions are usually strongly supported by the Assembly's federalist voting block.

However, on this issue, the federalist block was split because many federalist delegates fear that the measure will only further centralize power in RC hands, to which federalists are opposed.

As if to underscore the urgency of resolving the Ship Bill controversy, the bootstrap team will be transported by RCS *Immanuel Kant*, newest of the RCN clippers, whose recent completion vacated one of the building slips which was promptly used to begin the construction of another clipper.





COALINFONET EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH COALITION SECRETARY GENERAL LON E. MAGGART

A dozen years ago, Lon E. Maggart burst upon the scene of reconstruction government with his characteristic vigor, leaving his mark upon Aubani planetary defense, power distribution, and human-Schalli relations, among other areas. As a member of the first Coalition Assembly, he was elected its Secretary General by a wide margin, and has spent the 15 months since then defining the office, often colliding with the intended formal definition of his duties.

Spending time with "the SG" as he is called by his staff is a vivid experience, and is more akin to spending time with a natural force than with an ordinary man. Maggart is almost constantly in motion, whether springing to a pile of reports to extract a significant document, hoisting his boots up onto the edge of a table to tip himself back in his chair, or grabbing an unusually large mug of coffee, slurping a mouthful of the scalding liquid, and then slamming the mug back down to slosh its contents onto the table. His informality is at once charming and disorienting, as one is not always sure how to behave around such a dynamic figure. At the same time, one is unaccustomed to finding that such an active figure is also keenly intelligent, thoughtful, and quite well-read. However, the SG is friendly and open, and one is rapidly drawn into the whirlwind arena of this active leader who does not have enough hours in a day.

CIN is proud to present excerpts from this exclusive series of interviews with the Secretary General.

CIN: Your central message as Secretary General seems to be the importance of unity. But your leading opponents in the Centrist movement condemn your policies and then themselves call for unity. What is going on here?

SG: What you have to understand is that a lot of people are fighting over this concept of unity. Federalist unity, coordinated centrist unity, racial unity, economic unity. I don't care about all of that stuff.

I'm trying to awaken people to a different kind of unity. We're already in this together, the whole Coalition, because we can still become like all those dead planets out there if we don't keep our noses clean. Unity is not a concept to argue over, it's a reality to accept, and then move on from there.

I'm continuously surprised at how quick people are to split themselves into little groups as soon as they get their backs about a centimeter away from the wall, and I'm trying to get people to come to grips with the fact that we have no leeway to act like that. I want people to recognize the importance of this situation, and start coming up with some answers about how we're going to keep this crap from happening again. I'm just looking for an intellectual response here. Any intellectual response.

CIN: And what kind of response have you been getting back?

SG: Spotty.

CIN: What of the reports that have been circulating that there will be attempts against your life on your upcoming Gemini tour of Oriflamme?

SG: I try hard not to worry about stuff that I can't control. When I visit Oriflamme I will be making a lot of public appearances, so there are a lot of places where I could be vulnerable. But my job is not to protect myself, my job is to lead this Coalition, and to communicate some important messages to our people. Oriflamme is one of the crucial members of this organization, and deserves my undivided attention. So I am working on what I can control: preparing to communicate and listen to the people of Oriflamme, and not on what I can't control: making sure I stay alive.

Now the chief of my security staff should be losing a lot of sleep, because it is his job to make sure that I don't get shot.

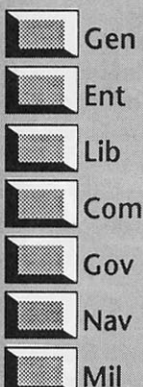
CIN: These death threats could come from Oriflammen separatists, hard-core Centrists, feudalists, right-wing humanists, antisubinfederationists, or even from the Oriflammen resistance in order to discredit their government. Who do you believe that it is behind these threats?

SG: I don't care.

CIN: But surely you—

SG: I said I don't care, and I mean I don't care. And I'll tell you why. I know that those threats don't come from the people of Oriflamme. If the threats are real, they come from fringe elements who do not represent the people of Oriflamme, and I want to make it clear to you in the media, and to every Coalition citizen that these threats do not reflect on the people of Oriflamme, and I will not stand for any implication that they do. Do I make myself clear?

CIN: Eminently, Mr. Secretary.



Security Clearance



OPERATION WOLF SNARE

A TNE adventure by Mark Lucas

The following adventure is written for Star Viking characters or Lancers working for the Reformation Coalition. The PCs should be capable of forming the bulk of the crew of a 200-ton starship. If not, the referee will have to bolster the group with enough NPCs to meet this requirement.

Covert specialist scouts have recently returned from Daarida (Blight/Diaspora 2426 X356301-1 Ni Lo 500), a world on which the remaining inhabitants have reverted to a preindustrial level, living in several hundred small villages situated on the southern coast of the equatorial continent. The inhabitants are mostly concerned with subsistence farming and simple craft work.

The scouts discovered that a local corsair has taken to harassing the inhabitants of the village situated near the ruined starport. The pirates land at the village every three months to collect an "extortion tax" from the villagers. A fair portion of the locals are forced to leave their vital farm work to search the ruined cities for relics, which are demanded as payment by the pirates. When the villagers fail to meet their quota of retrieved technology, the deficit is made up with slaves taken from the children of the village. The villagers are learning to fear and hate the off-worlders. If they were wary of off-worlders before the arrival of the corsairs, they are going to become totally unapproachable if the pirates are allowed to continue.

The RCES central planning committee on Aubaine has decided to send a Star Viking unit to Daarida. While there is currently little on Daarida to warrant the expenditure of scarce RCES resources, there is a rare opportunity to grab an operable starship—the corsair ship when it lands at the village. In a spaceborne ambush, the chance of one or both combatants being crippled or destroyed is very high. Grabbing a ship when it is on the ground is a less precarious business, though by no means easy. Ending the cruel exploitation of the villagers should be reason enough for a mission, and the acquisition of a new ship would be a major coup.

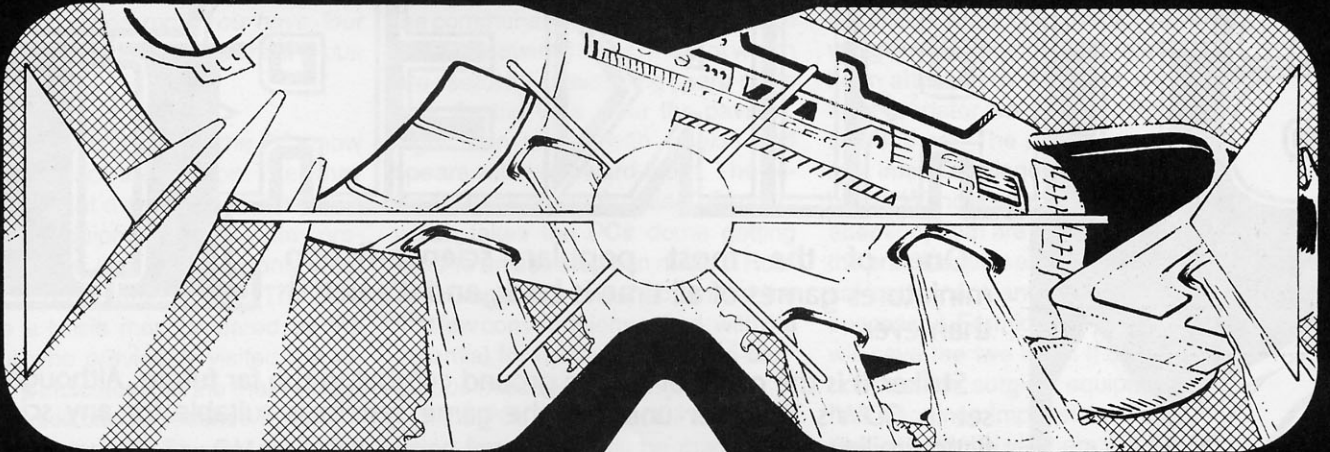
The PCs have been chosen to lead the mission due to their reputation for quick and clean "hot recovery" operations. The unit must be capable of forming a prize crew in order to transport the captured corsair back to Aubaine. If the PCs are not capable of crewing the corsair themselves, sufficient NPCs will accompany them. If more than five NPCs are required, make them space specialists not trained in dirtside operations so they will play only background roles in the scenario.

Read out the mission details to the PCs or roleplay a mission briefing at their base. Once the PCs are familiar with the mission, give them adequate time to purchase or request from the service any equipment they deem important.

ARRIVAL

You have been dropped off by the RCES clipper Palimario, which has gotten you to Daarida four days before the double full-moon, the quarterly event the corsairs use to signal their arrival. The clipper's 50-ton cutter has dropped you 15 kilometers from Fenukki, the village where the corsair sets down. From now on, you are on your own. As soon as the cutter gets back to the Palimario, it will quickly head for its jump point, eager not to be detected by the corsair if it is already in the system. If you fail to rendezvous with the Palimario in the adjacent Aaneru (2430 Blight/Diaspora) system, it will return in a month to pick you up.

The equatorial continent is lush with purple-tinted tropical vegetation, with forests of spindly trees growing to hundreds of meters in height. Early



STRIKER II

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morning dew drips off the surrounding foliage, quickly saturating everything that isn't waterproof. You have four days to set up before the corsair is due to arrive.

From here, it's up to the PCs how they approach the mission. They may have bought a vehicle and extensive survival equipment, or they may prefer to travel light, bringing only what they can personally carry. The PCs have a basic map prepared by the scout who previously visited the region. It indicates that the main village of Fenukki can be reached by following a nearby river. The GM may wish to complicate the journey with animal or wilderness encounters. How long the journey takes will depend on the group's means of transport.

VILLAGE PEOPLE

Fenukki is one of the largest settlements in the area. Like most villages on Daarida, it consists of a handful of extended families, which have gathered together for mutual support. There is no formal government of any kind. The village elders usually speak for the village, though they have no authority outside their own families. The village is made up of a number of wooden huts, built on stilts to protect them against the floods in the rainy season. It has 62 inhabitants, one-third of whom are young children.

The PCs are likely to enter the village in an attempt to make contact with the inhabitants. Alternatively, they may try to sneak to the edge of the village in an effort to scout the place out before making their entrance. Have all the PCs in such a scouting party make Routine: Stealth task rolls. If they fail, villagers may spot them with a successful Difficult: Observation roll. If Stealth rolls are fumbled, then the PCs will be surprised by two hunters from the village. When they enter the village, first impressions will be critical in determining how the PCs are received. Generally, the more high-tech weapons and equipment the PCs are seen to be carrying, the more wary the locals will be. Any characters with Liaison skill can use it to approve the first meeting.

The initial reaction of most of the villagers on seeing the PCs will be to run to their huts and hide—unless the PCs have disguised themselves as locals from another village. Only

Mother-kel, the village's most influential elder, will remain in view, sitting in the communal pavilion, next to a large pile of recovered relics, most of which are useful for scavenging spare-parts only. As the PCs enter the pavilion, eight men armed with shields and spears will run toward them. The villagers speak a rough dialect of Anglic, which takes the PCs some getting used to unless they can make a Routine: Linguistics roll. If not, make the first few conversations stilted, with the potential for embarrassing and dangerous misunderstandings.

If the PCs are respectful and avoid using force, they will be made welcome by the village. A store hut will be emptied for them to sleep in, and food will be brought by the local children. If the PCs are too forceful or fire weapons for any reason, the villagers will make the same provisions, but the PCs will be shunned. If the PCs tell Mother-kel of their intention to ambush the corsairs when they land, she will offer no help—she fears that it will be her people who will be most hurt in any fight. She will offer no firm resistance against the idea, having learned from bitter experience not to argue with off-worlders. Until the PCs have gained their trust, the villagers will refuse to discuss the corsair visits.

EARNING TRUST

In the days before the arrival of the Corsair ship, the PCs have several opportunities to gain the trust and friendship of the villagers.

Building Bridges: Three of the villagers, two men and a woman, are repairing the broken rope-bridge which used to span the river. It is mentioned that previous attempts to repair it quickly failed. Any PCs who wish to help will be welcomed. Have the PCs make Difficult task rolls for whatever contribution they make, whether they have Construction or Combat Engineering skills or simply want to contribute muscle-power with a few Constitution rolls. Regardless of the success of their endeavor, they will gain the trust of the three villagers. If an outstanding success occurs on any of the PC rolls, the bridge can be consid-

ered permanently repaired.

Lurcher Victims: At some point, the village erupts into panic. Several villagers out searching for relics have been attacked by a lurcher, a vicious local predator which seriously mauls two of them. The casualties are carried into the village leaving a trail of blood. Without sophisticated medical attention, both are hopeless cases. If the practitioner is equipped with surgical equipment and a medical kit, a successful Formidable: Surgery roll will save the two lives. If the PCs do not possess surgical equipment, the task becomes Impossible. Saving either or both the villagers will result in the medic player character being swamped with little tributes of jewelry and valuables, as well as several marriage proposals. The PCs will have gained the gratitude of the villagers,

Lurchers

Weight	Hits	Armor	Wounds & Weapons
200kg	30/60	None	6 Claws A4 F9 S10

Lurchers are vaguely reptilian, looking rather like a hybrid chameleon-guerilla. They are fiercely territorial creatures, so named due to their strange staggering walk while travelling on their hind legs.

and Mother-kel will offer any reasonable aid the village can give the PCs.

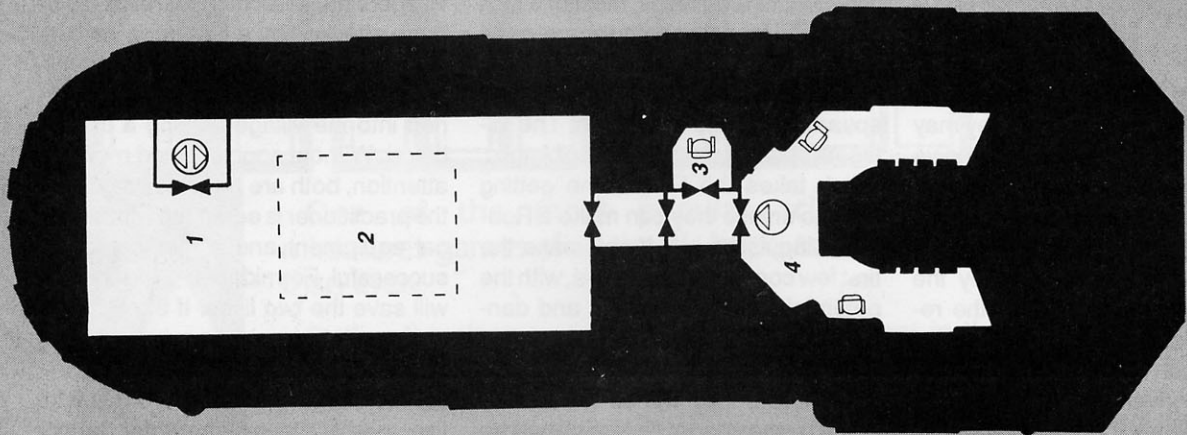
Campfire Sing-Songs: During the evenings, many villagers meet in the communal pavilion to tell stories and make merry. An especially beautiful young woman called Orchid will sing and dance for the gathering. The PCs overhear the fears of her family that the corsairs captain might take her as a slave if she remains in the village during the pirate visit.

If approached, Orchid will take a shine to the PCs and ask them about their exploits.

If the PCs have won the villagers' trust, Mother-kel will give the PCs a run-down of the corsairs' *modus operandi*. She recounts the following information:

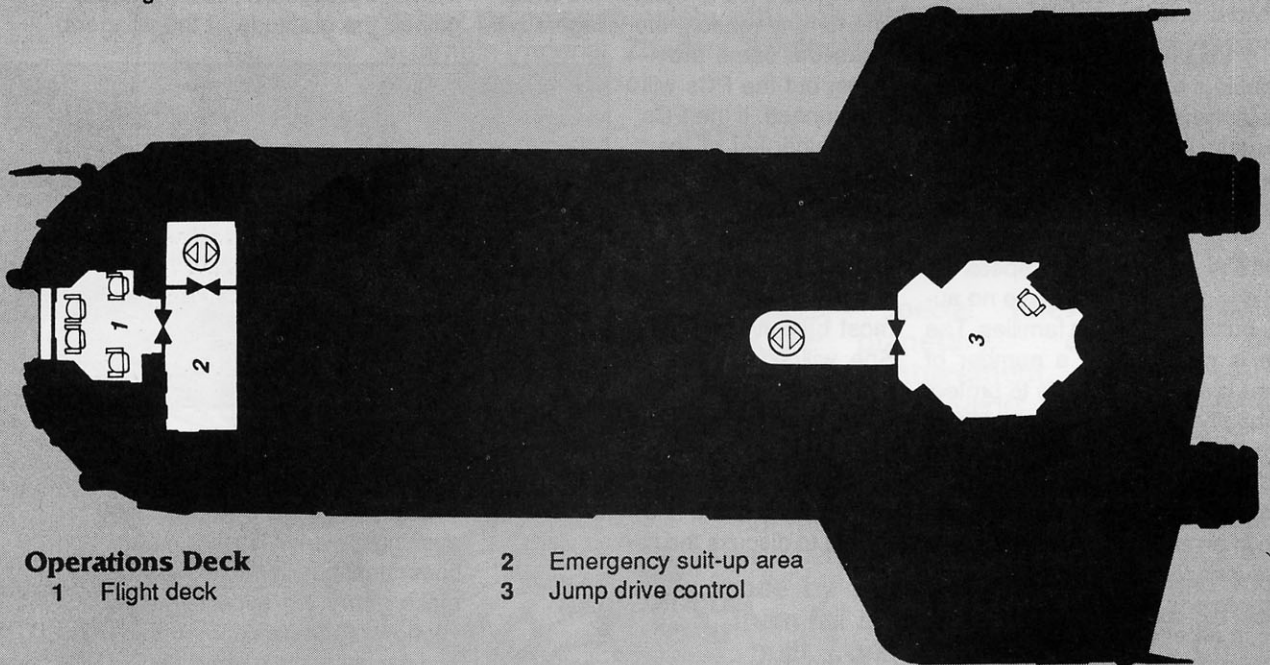
During the early evening of the day of the twin full moons, the corsair ship comes out of the sky and lands in the clearing next to the river. The corsairs feed their ship water from the river through pipes while the leader and his three men come into the village to inspect the season's tribute. If they

200-ton Corsair



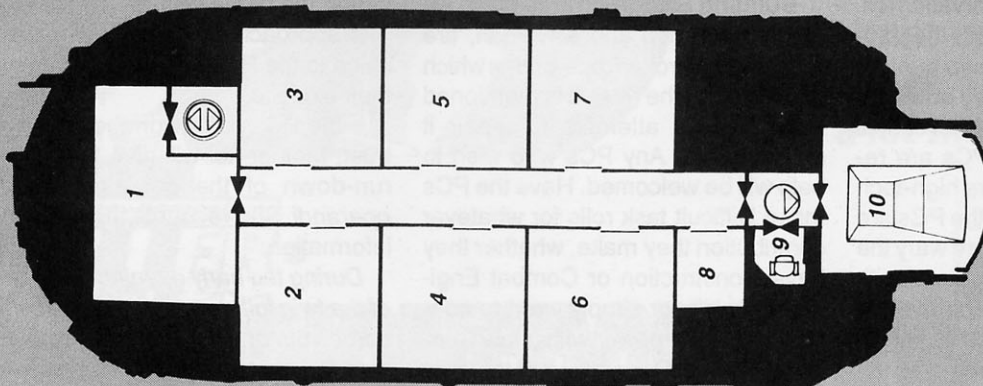
Hold Deck

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Hold | 3 Barbette control station (missiles) |
| 2 Cargo elevator | 4 Engineering |



Operations Deck

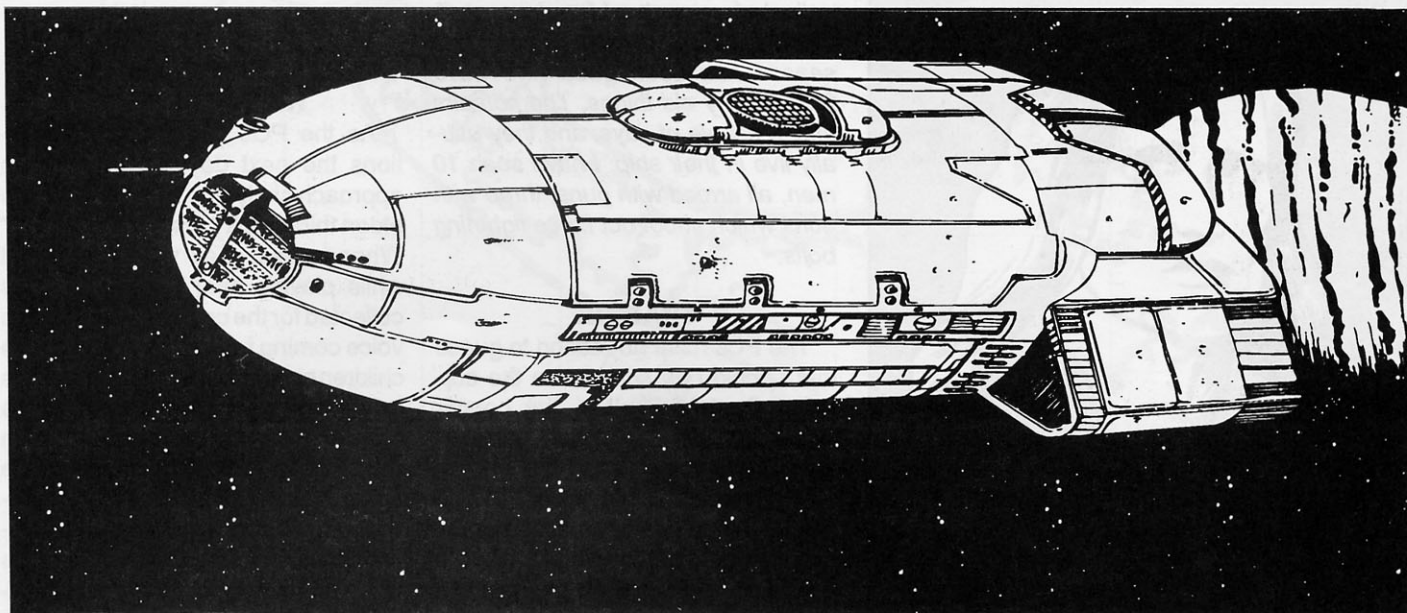
- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Flight deck | 2 Emergency suit-up area |
| | 3 Jump drive control |



Quarters Deck

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 Lounge | 8 Locker/armory |
| 2-7 Large staterooms (double occupancy) | 9 Barbette control station (laser) |
| | 10 Air-raft hangar (minimal) |

Cobra-Class Corsair



General Data

Displacement: 200 tons
Length: 34 meters
Price: MCr115.57
Configuration: Cylinder SL
Mass: (Loaded/Unloaded): 2585.76/2206.86 tonnes
Hull Armor: 50
Volume: 2800m3
Target size: S
Tech Level: 12

Engineering Data

Powerplant: 330 MW fusion (47 MW/hit), 1yr
Jump Rating: 2 (420m3)
G-Rating: 3 (100 MW/G)
Contra-Grav: (20 MW)
G-Turns: 60 (93.6 using jump fuel)
Maint: 102.6

Electronics

Computer: 3x TL12 mod St (0.4 MW ea.)
Commo: 30 000km radio (1 hex, 1 MW)
 1000 Au Maser (inf., 0.6 MW)
Avionics: TL10+ avionics
Sensors:
 Passive EMS: 120 000km (4 hexes 0.15 MW)
Ladar: 180 000km (6 hexes, 2.5 MW)
ECM/ECCM: EM masking (2.8 MW)
 30 000km radio jammer (1 hex, 2 MW)
Controls: 7 workstations (no bridge)

Armament

Offensive:
 1x TL11 150Mj LB (loc: 10; arcs All; 4.2 MW 1 crew)
 1x Missile barbettes (loc: 11; 5 msls; 0.15 MW 1 crew)

Accommodations

Life Support: Ext (0.56) Gcomps 3G 14 MW
Crew: 12 (2x Maneuver 1x Electronics 3x Engineers 2x Gunnery
 1x Command 3x Ships troops)
Crew Accommodations:
 6x Large stateroom (double occup. 001 MW ea.)
Cargo: 294 m3
Small Craft: 1 Air-raft in a minimal hanger
Airlocks: 2 (+1 Large Cargo hatch)

Notes

The ship's total power requirement is 361.8 MW. In order to maneuver at 3G, most nonessential systems must be powered down. Fuel scooping takes five hours, and refining takes 18 hours (2.34 MW).

The Cobra was designed during the closing stages of the Rebellion as a low-tech, dependable courier. Most surviving ships of this class have found their way into the hands of corsairs.

Area	Surface	Internal Explosions	Systems
1	1-5 Ant	Electronics	JD-3H MD-1H
2-5, 12-17		Hold	PP-7H FPP-3H
6-9		1-5 Hold 6-20 Qtrs	LB-1H MB 1H
10	1:AI	1-12 LB 13-20 Hold	ELS-3H EMMR-2h
11	1:CH	1-12 MB 13-19 Hold 20 Eng	CG-1h LSR-1H
18-20	1:EMMR	Eng	LS-6H EMM-1H
			All others (1h)



Mother-kel

Motivations: Jack of Hearts, Hearts 8.

Level: Experienced.

Combat Assets: None.

Other Assets: Observation 9, Persuasion 13, History 7, Leadership 9.



Orchid

Motivations: Queen of Spades, Diamonds 9.

Level: Novice.

Combat Assets: Slug Pistol-10, Unarmed Martial Arts-9.

Other Assets: Sng 13, Dance 12, Carousing 9, Act-Bluff 10.

Not armed while in village.

Typical Adult Villager

Use peasant template with Weapon skill. Armed with swords and spears. Armored with shields.

are happy, they load it onto their ship, along with fresh food. If we have not collected enough olden-days stuff, they take some of our children. This season has been good—we have found many old things. The corsairs stay a couple of days, and they usually live in their ship. I have seen 10 men, all armed with guns, three with guns which shoot out fierce lightning bolts.

TRAITOR

The PCs have no reason to guess that Orchid has sold out to the corsairs. Captain Skellen, the corsair leader, promised to install Orchid as the village leader when the flow of usable relics stop. In return, all she has to do is watch for any sign of rebellion among the village and warn him of any ambush the villagers might set. The corsairs have left Orchid an automatic pistol and a 300km radio beacon unit, which are hidden in the ruins of the starport five kilometers north of Fenukki. Orchid will be friendly and talkative to the PCs until the day the corsairs are to arrive. She will then attempt to poison them.

Upon waking that morning, the PCs find their breakfast laid at the door of their hut. As usual, it includes a large bowl of sweet-smelling fruit juices—though this time little yellow seeds float in it. Allow the PC who brings the bowl into the hut to attempt a Routine: Observation roll. If they succeed, the PCs notice the body of a small animal lying a few meters away. Inspecting the animal, they see that it is a furry pet belonging to children in the neighboring hut. It has died while vomiting little yellow seeds.

All PCs who drink the juice must make a Formidable: Constitution roll to resist the poison. A successful roll results in the character being immediately sick and receiving a slight wound to the chest. Any medic characters can attempt to treat this sickness with a standard medic kit, though if they drank the juice they will perform all tasks at one level greater difficulty. In order to treat the sickness, the medic must make a Difficult: Diagnosis roll on each poisoned character.

Villagers who are asked about the juice will be angry and embarrassed. They will say that the yellow seeds are very toxic—even the youngest children are taught to avoid them. The villagers who delivered the juice will

maintain that they are innocent. This should make the PCs a little more alert, maybe even paranoid.

WHISPERS FROM THE PAST

As the PCs make their preparations the next day, village children approach shyly and ask, "Why do the olden things talk? Are they haunted?" When asked, they will explain that while playing near the pile of relics collected for the corsairs, they heard a voice coming from within the pile. The children could not understand the voice as it was "buzzy." Investigating the pile will reveal a small speaker which picks up a radio-beacon message every 12 minutes: "bzzzzz trap...off-worlders in village...Orchid to Captain Skellen...setting trap...." The PCs can trace the signal if they have high-tech communications gear more substantial than tac-radios. In order to trace the signal to the starport, a successful combined Difficult: Electronics and Communications roll is required. Any outstanding failures damage the communicator.

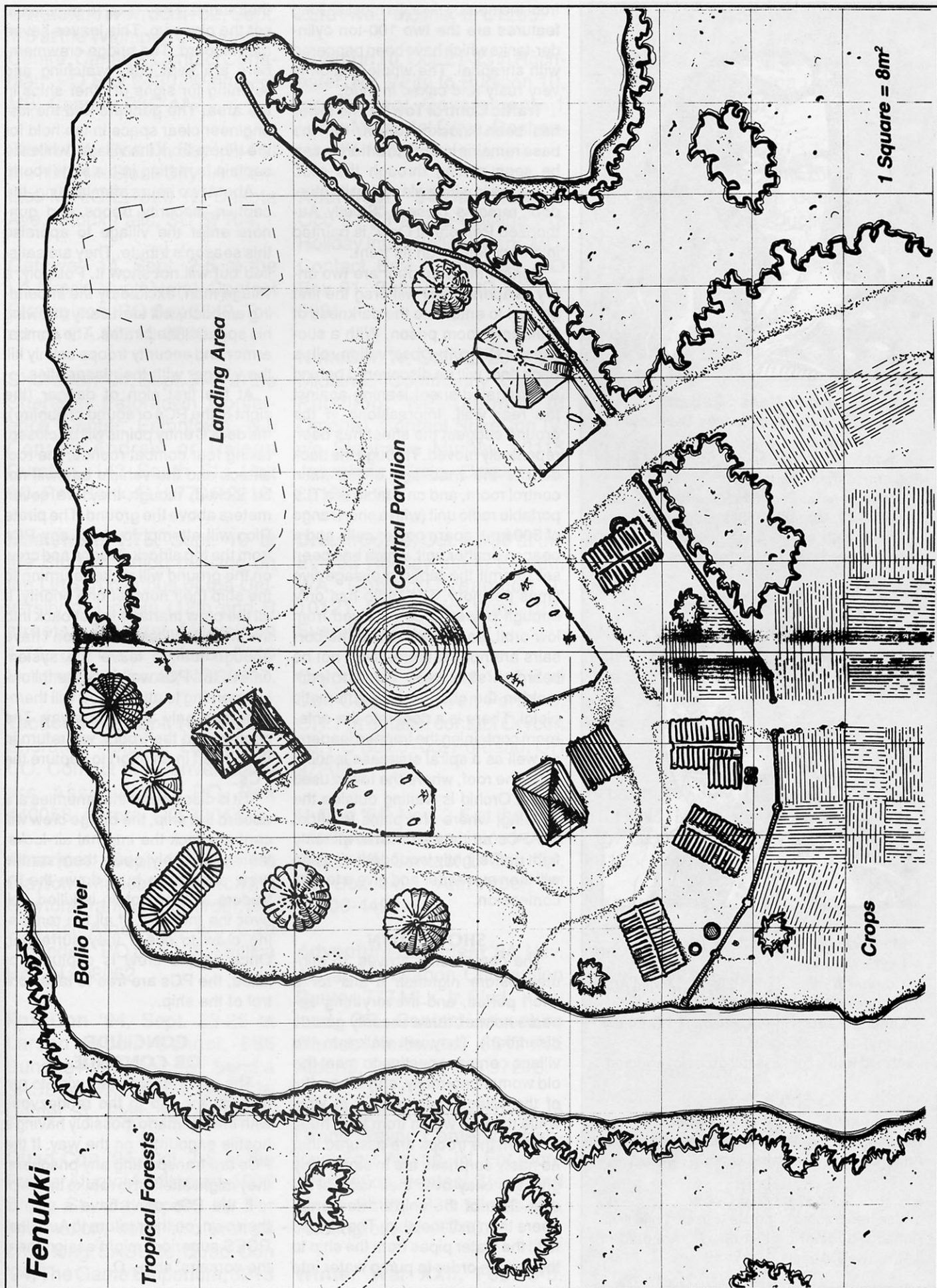
If the PCs are not capable or fail to trace the signal, they may try to track down Orchid, who has been seen recently around the village. As soon as she heard about the voice coming from the relic speaker, she ran to disable the beacon. A number of villagers saw her running in the direction of the ruins of the starport.

SOUND BITE

The starport was class D even before the collapse. When the virus hit, the ships in orbit dive-bombed into the starport, wrecking its rather meager facilities. In the intervening years, the concrete strip which was used for landing has been reclaimed by the surrounding vegetation as well as suffering subsidence, making it a hazardous landing zone. There are three structures which remain standing.

Repair Hangar: This structure consists of the walls only. While it appears relatively intact from the ground, getting into it reveals that a ship crashed through the roof, collapsing the roof onto the ships being repaired. The resulting wreckage is a warren of girders and rubble and is extremely dangerous to travel through.

Fuel Pumping Station: This facility once pumped water to supply ships





Captain Hess Skellen

Motivations: Queen of Spades, Diamonds 10.
Level: Elite.

Combat Assets: Energy Pistol 16, Martial Arts armed (large blade)-17.

Other Assets: Pilot-Grav/Interface-15, Observation 14, Gambling-13, Leadership 15.

Armed with a TL9 laser pistol and power pack. Armored with a ballistic weave vest.



Rico

Motivations: King of Clubs, Diamonds 8.
Level: Veteran.

Combat Assets: Slug Rifle-14, Martial Arts (Unarmed)-15.

Other Assets: Interrogation-11, Gunnery (Energy)-14, Tracking-10.

Armed with a light assault gun. Not armored.

3 Ships Troops

Use regular troops template with energy weapon. Armed with TL9 laser rifles with packs. Armored in TL10 combat armor (-1 Initiative).

Rest of the Crew

Use free traders template with slug rifle skill. Armed with 5mm assault rifle-7s. Armored in ballistic weave vests.

from the nearby river. Its most striking features are the two 100-ton cylinder-tanks which have been peppered with shrapnel. The whole station is very rusty and caked in mud.

Traffic Control Tower: The tower has been knocked down, but the base remains intact. An antenna can be seen poking through the roof. The base is windowless, but its steel door remains closed. "Strictly Authorized Personnel Only" is painted in stencil letters on its front.

Behind the front door are two angry Leapers. They will drag the first person to enter into the darkness of their ante-room prison. With a successful Difficult: Observation roll, a back door will be discovered behind a corrugated sheet leaning against the rear wall. Impressions in the ground suggest the sheet has been repeatedly moved. Through the back door is the wreckage of the main control room, and on a table is a TL9 portable radio unit (with a short range of 300 km), spare power cells and a beacon emitter unit, which has been set to emit the taped message five times per hour. The radio has only enough power to be received from low orbit, so providing that the corsairs are not yet there, it will not be heard. A steel case holds a foam mold in the shape of an automatic pistol. There is a door into the ante-room containing the trapped leapers, as well as a spiral staircase leading up to the roof, where the tower used to be. Orchid is waiting outside the building, where she plans to shoot the PCs as they exit. She will only fight until slightly wounded, and she will then surrender and give a tearful confession.

SHOWDOWN

The corsair ship arrives 30 minutes before nightfall. It sits for a short period, and if everything appears normal, three security guards disembark. They will walk into the village center expecting to meet the old woman; normally, only a handful of the village men remain in view while the rest watch from their huts.

When the troops are assured that no nasty surprises are in store, they give the okay over their tactical radios. Two of the ship's three engineers then exit the ship. They begin to fit the water pipes from the ship to the river in order to pump water into

their tanks. They take 15 minutes to set the pipes up. This leaves seven men aboard. The bridge crewmembers are kept busy watching and listening for signs of other ships in the area. The gunners and the last engineer clear space in the hold for the tribute from the village, while the captain is resting in his state room.

About two hours after landing, the captain, security troops and gunners enter the village to appraise this season's tribute. They are satisfied but will not show it. Possibly, a village man, excited by the impending ambush, will start early throwing his spear at the pirates. The combat armor and security troops calmly kill the villager with their laser rifles.

At the first sign of danger (the sight of the PCs or sound of gunfire), the deck Centry points will be closed, taking four combat rounds. The roof airlock and the vehicle bay will not be locked, though they are seven meters above the ground. The pirate Rico will attempt to shoot any PCs from the top airlock. Troops and crew on the ground will make returning to the ship their number one priority. If all the crew manage to get back into the ship, it will take off. It won't have enough fuel to leave the system unless the PCs wait until the following morning to attack, so it will therefore land only 30 miles away. The captain and the troops will return in the air-raft in an effort to capture the PCs.

If it is discovered that enemies are aboard the ship, the bridge crew will centrally lock the internal air-locks, then selectively open them as the crew attempt to hunt down the intruders. If the captain is killed, roll over the Initiative of all the remaining crew to see if they surrender. Once all the crew is captured or killed, the PCs are free to take control of the ship.

CONCLUDE OR CONTINUE

The gamemaster may wish to run through the trip to the rendezvous with the Palimario, possibly having a hostile encounter on the way. If the PCs are transporting any prisoners, they might attempt to retake the ship.

If the PCs don't have a ship of their own, on their return to Aubaine, RCES superiors might assign them the corsairs' ship. Ω

Conadian/Worldcon 52, Sept. 1-5 at the Winnipeg Convention Centre, Canada. Contact Conadian, PO Box 2430, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3C 4A7.

Sioux City Con IX, Sept. 2-4 at the Hilton in Sioux City, IA. Contact M.A.G.E., 820 N. Dakota Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57104.

Gateway 14, Sept. 2-5 at the LA Airport Hyatt Hotel. Contact Strategicon, PO Box 3849, Torrance, CA 90510-3849.

Shorecon '94, Sept. 9-11 at the Sheraton Eatontown Conference Center, Eatontown, NJ. Contact Andrew or Heleen Durston, 142 South St., Unit 9C, Red Bank, NJ 07701-2216.

Maelstrom 1.75, Sept. 10 at the Student Union building on the Lincoln campus of the University of Lincoln (12th and R streets). Contact Maelstrom 1.75, c/o Chris Dekalb, 6015 Huntington, Lincoln, NE 68507.

Tacticon '94, Sept. 16-18 at the Sheraton Hotel of Lakewood, CO. Contact the Denver Gamers Association, PO Box 440058, Aurora, CO 80044.

Americon, Sept. 17-18 at the Clayton American Legion on the Clayton/Franklinville border, NJ. Contact Americon, c/o Carl "Thunder," PO Box 125, Mullica Hall, NJ 08062.

Fox Con '94, Sept. 23-25 at Larsen Middle School, 665 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL. Send a SASE to Mike Woodward, 636 Center St., Elgin, IL 60120.

Quad Con '94, Oct. 7-9 at the Palmer Alumni Auditorium, 1000 Brady St., Davenport, IA. For information, send two stamps on a long SASE to Quad Con '94, The Game Emporium, 3213

23rd Ave., Moline, IL 61265.

Rudicon 10, Oct. 21-23 in Rochester, NY. Write to Rudicon 10, c/o Student Government, 1 Lomb Memorial Drive, Rochester, NY 14623.

Atlanticon '94/Bay Games, Oct. 21-23 at the College Park Holiday Inn in College Park, MD. Contact Bay Games '94, PO Box 91, Beltsville, MD 20704-0091.

NukeCon IV, Oct. 28-29 at the Midlands Community Center, Papillion, NE (suburb of Omaha). Contact NukeCon IV, c/o Stephanie Murphy, 13115 Josephine Circle, Omaha, NE 68138.

DreamCon 9, Oct. 28-30 at the Everett Holiday Inn in Everett, WA. Contact Dreamcon 9, 10121 Evergreen Way 103, Everett, WA 98024.

Orycon 16, Nov. 11-1 at Red Lion Columbia River, Portland, OR. For details, contact Orycon 16, PO Box 5703, Portland, OR 97208.

U-Con '94, Nov. 3-5 at the University of Michigan Union in Ann Arbor, MI. Contact U-Con '94, PO Box 4491, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-4491.

Adventure Gamefest '94, Nov. 4-6 at the Oregon Convention Center, 777 MLK Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR. Contact Adventure Games Northwest, 6517 NE Alberta, Portland, OR 97218.

Pentacon X, Nov. 12-13 in Grand Wayne Center in downtown Fort Wayne, IN. For more information, contact Steve and Linda Smith, 836 Himes St., Huntington, IN 46750.

Winter War XXII, Feb. 3-5,

1995, at the Chancellor Hotel, 1501 S. Neil St., Cham-paign, IL. Send a SASE to Donald McKinney, 986 Pomona Drive, Cham-paign, IL 61821.

Katsucon One, Feb. 17-19, 1995 at the Holiday Inn Executive Center in Virginia Beach, VA. Contact Katsu Productions, PO Box 11582, Blacksburg, VA 24062-1582.

SheVaCon, Feb. 24-26, 1995 at the Sheraton Inn in Harrisonburg, VA. Contact SheVaCon, PO Box 2672, Staunton, VA 24402-2672.

World Horror Convention '95, March 2-5, 1995, at the Sheraton Colony Square Hotel in Atlanta, GA. Send a SASE to World Horror Convention '95, PO Box 148, Clarkston, GA 30021-0148.

Westercon 48, June 30-July 3, 1995, at Red Lion/Jantzen Beach and Columbia River hotels, Portland, OR. Contact Westercon 48, Box 2584, Portland, OR 97228-2584.

Archon 19, July 7-9, 1995, in St. Louis, MO. Contact Archon 18, PO Box 50125, Clayton, MO 63105.

NASFiC '95, July 13-16, 1995, at the Atlanta Hilton and Towers and Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel, Atlanta, Ga. Contact NASFiC '95, PO Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696.

Convention announcements cannot be included unless received a minimum of four months in advance of the event. Challenge is not responsible for errors in convention announcements. Write to Challenge Conventions, Managing Editor, PO Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646 USA.



Quick START

*Fast PC Generation
for the New Era*

By Andy Slack

Traveller: The New Era features detailed player characters, with a well-fleshed out history behind them. Such PCs can take a long time to generate, perhaps hours, and the players need either a good knowledge of the rules or much attention from a patient referee.

Sometimes, though, you'll need to create a group of characters quickly—perhaps for a game at a convention, or for players who want to start playing right away. You can create detailed PCs beforehand, if you know you're going to be running a game; or you can give each player a stock NPC for the first session and let them create a full persona later on.

However, there are players who want to generate their own characters, without spending a lot of time doing it; I don't like to lose these people from the session or turn them off **Traveller**, so I've developed the method below as a middle ground between full character creation and pregenerated PCs. It's based on the observation that PCs, like NPC Star Vikings, fall into three main types: ground specialists (marines, mercenaries, etc.—the party's warriors), space specialists (scouts, merchants, other ship crews) and covert specialists (spies, rogues, private eyes—the party's streetwise infiltration team).

CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES

Roll 2D6-1 for each of the following attributes: STR (Strength), AGL (Agility), CON (Constitution), INT (Intelligence), EDU (Education), CHR (Charisma). If the total of these is less than 36, add points to taste to bring it up to

36. Roll 2D6-1 for SOC (Social Standing). Then decide whether to be a space, ground or covert specialist; this determines your starting skills package, listed below. Skills listed with a number show the skill level you get; of the ones listed without a number, space or ground specialists may choose three at skill level 6 and three at skill level 3, and covert specialists may choose two at level 5. Note that it is not effective to pick both slug weapon skills or both energy weapon skills; note also that PCs may base energy weapon skills on AGL rather than STR if they prefer.

Regardless of which character type you chose, you now get three skill levels to allocate as desired to any skills you like.

The PC's hit points by body part are:

Head: 2xCON.

Chest: 3x(STR+CON).

Each Arm, Each Leg and Abdomen: 2x(STR+CON).

The unarmed combat damage is (STR+Unarmed Martial Arts skill)+10; Throw Range is 4xSTR; male PCs weigh 80+4x(STR-AGL) kg, with female PCs being 15 kg lighter. Roll 1D6 for Initiative level.

The PC now enters play at age 29. He or she has Cr1500xSOC to buy equipment with. It is possible to flesh out such PCs into fully generated ones

later if so desired, in the same way as stock NPCs who become recurring contacts.

SPACE SPECIALISTS

STR-Based Skills: Either Slug Pistol-5 or Energy Pistol-5; Mechanic.

AGL-Based Skills: Pilot (Interface/Grav), Machinist.

CON-Based Skills: Environment Suit-2, Zero-G Environment-2.

INT-Based Skills: Willpower-0, Astrogation, Sensors, Survey.

EDU-Based Skills: Communications, Computer, Electronics, Gravitics, Gunnery, RCV Operation, Screens, Ship's Engineering.

CHR-Based Skills: None.

GROUND SPECIALISTS

STR-Based Skills: Any three of Slug Rifle-5, Energy Rifle-5, Autogun-5, Grenade Launcher-5, Tac Missile-5 or Unarmed Martial Arts-5; Mechanic.

AGL-Based Skills: Grav Belt, Machinist.

CON-Based Skills: Climbing, Combat Engineer, Swimming, High-G Environment.

INT-Based Skills: Willpower-0, Farming, Navigation, Survival.

EDU-Based Skills: Biology, Chemistry, Communications, Computer, Construction, Electronics, Excavation, Ge-

netics, Geology, Map, Medical, Meteorology, Physics, Robotics, Starship Architecture, Xenobiology.

CHR-Based Skills: Liaison.

COVERT SPECIALISTS

STR-Based Skills: Any two of Slug Rifle-5, Slug Pistol-5, Energy Rifle-5, Energy Pistol-5, Archery-5 or Early Firearms-5; Mechanic.

AGL-Based Skills: Intrusion-3, Stealth-3, Machinist.

CON-Based Skills: None.

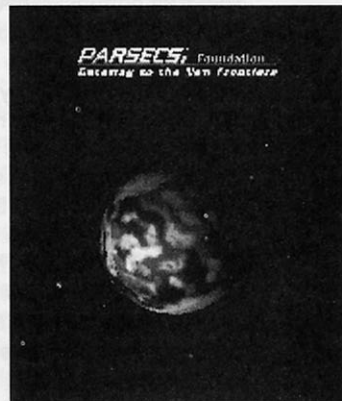
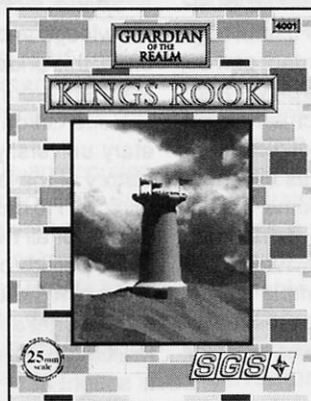
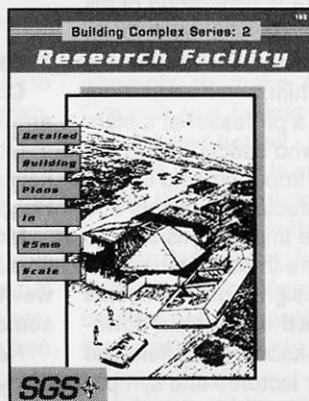
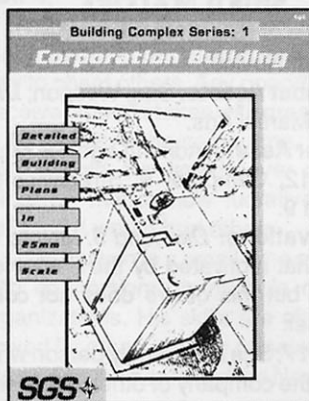
INT-Based Skills: Navigation-3, Observation-5, Survival-1, Willpower-0, Farming, Interview, Psychology, Research.

EDU-Based Skills: Biology, Chemistry, Communications, Computer, Electronics, History, Genetics, Geology, Meteorology, Physics, Robotics, Xenobiology.

CHR-Based Skills: Act/Bluff-3, Disguise-1, Language-9 (specify which language), Instruction, Persuasion.

As a final note on languages, I normally allow new players to note generic languages in the same way that they note generic contacts, so that they can pick their languages when they have a good enough idea of the local region of space to make an informed choice. Ω

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AD11

A Friend in Need

Concrete examples of how solid contacts can be used in a campaign.

By James Maliszewski

The character generation system of *Traveller: The New Era* includes a number of features to aid both players and referees in their roleplaying adventures. One of the most useful of these features is player character contacts. As described on pages 29-31 of *Traveller: The New Era*, contacts represent friends or acquaintances that PCs have acquired prior to their adventuring careers. Contacts come in two broad categories: generic and solid. This article deals only with solid contacts and gives concrete examples of how these contacts can be used by a referee in a *Traveller* campaign.

Traveller: The New Era describes several broad categories of generic contacts whom PCs are likely to acquire. These categories (like Academic, Business, etc.) are meant to be useful tags until such a time as the contact can be more fully fleshed out by the player and/or referee. When a contact is fleshed out, he or she becomes a solid contact. There are several processes by which a generic contact can become a solid contact, some of which are detailed on page 31 of *Traveller: The New Era*. All of these processes offer ample opportunities for the referee to use the newly created solid contact as the catalyst for an adventure scenario.

The following are brief character sketches of the sorts of solid contacts PCs may acquire in the course of a campaign. Each is tied to one of the generic contact categories and is meant to serve as an example of how "flesh" can be added to the "bare bones" of the generic category. In addition, game statistics of the solid contact are given. Finally, a brief adventure idea is included with each contact description. All of these elements can be used as described in any *Traveller* campaign.



BEDE GRIFON (ACADEMIC)

Level: Novice.

Combat Assets: None.

Other Assets: Research 16, History 18, Instruction 14, Language (Vilani) 14, Interview 16.

Motivations: *Spade 9:* Grifon is very ambitious in his endeavors. He sometimes fails to see that his plans are far more ambitious than it is humanly possible to carry out.

Spade Jack: He is very proud of his knowledge and accomplishment. Quite often, this pride makes him insufferable to others around him.

Bede Grifon is a professor at a planetary university who specializes in the history of the last Imperium and its precursors. He has studied the history and politics of all three Imperia. His studies of the politics of the three Imperia have given him great insights into the events that brought about their eventual downfall. Grifon is well-known in his field and is sought after for lectures and symposia.

Adventure Idea: Grifon's studies of the Final War have led him to the conclusion that most of the war's factions were far from unified. In fact, early in the war, most had splintered along regional lines, serving to undermine the factions. As a result, there were a number of what might be called "minor factions" that most historians have overlooked. Some of these factions survived the Final War and became the foundations of today's pocket empires.

Grifon asks the PCs to take him aboard their starship for a mission to several worlds in the Wilds that he believes may contain useful historical information. With the arrival of Virus, many records were lost. Grifon hopes that the PCs will help him in his search for crucial historical data by taking him to uncontacted worlds in the raider-infested Wilds.



SHIKII MALORE (BUSINESS)

Level: Novice.

Combat Assets: Slug Weapon, Unarmed Martial Arts.

Other Assets: Admin/Legal 12, Marketing 12, Computer 9, Streetwise 9, Bargain 9.

Motivations: *Diamond 3:* Malore is somewhat motivated by the desire for wealth, but this desire does not consume her.

Heart 7: She is a friendly person who enjoys the company of others. This enjoyment helps her in her business activities.

Adventure Idea: Shikii Malore is the owner of a small merchant company operating on the fringes of civilized space. Her small fleet of starships works the established trade routes into the Wilds. Malore generally stays away from new or dangerous situations, fearing the potential loss of one of her valued trading vessels. Nevertheless, Malore has begun expanding her company's trading sphere. She has sent free trad-

ers into the Wilds to explore and map regions untravellered since before the Collapse. One of these free traders, carrying up-to-date maps and trade information, crashed on a world populated by xenophobes. She would like the PCs to help her in rescuing her crew and gaining this vital information.



CATO OUWEN
(CRIMINAL)

Level: Experienced.

Combat Assets: Slug Weapon, Energy Weapon, Unarmed Martial Arts.

Other Assets: Persuasion 12, Intrusion 12, Computer 9, Gambling 9, Interview 9.

Motivations: *Spade King:* Ouwen is the classic criminal, always looking for a way to cheat others. Any opportunity to deceive others is taken with great relish.

Heart 10: At the same time, Ouwen likes people. He would never do anything, no matter how lucrative, if he believed it would hurt others.

Cato Ouwen is a small-time swindler with connections to multiple criminal organizations. His skills are often employed by others, but he remains a free agent. Ouwen has found the New Era to be advantageous to someone of his particular "talents."

Adventure Idea: Ouwen contacts the PCs about smuggling that will be attempted sometime in the next few days. He knows about it because he was offered a chance to get in on the operation. A local crime lord is planning to smuggle relic technology past customs and quarantine services in order to make a huge profit.

Ouwen would have gladly joined in, but for one important fact: The crime lord knows that some of the relic tech-

nology may be infected with Virus. The crime lord does not care since this operation could make him quite wealthy. Ouwen fears what may result from this shady dealing and wants the PCs to prevent it.



LATVA CRANACH
(ENTERTAINMENT)

Level: Novice.

Combat Assets: None.

Other Assets: Act/Bluff 14, Persuasion 12, Recruiting 16, Leadership 16, Interview 14.

Motivations: *Diamond 9:* Cranach desires fame and recognition above all else. Her desire could well be described as an all-encompassing greed.

Spade 8: She is ambitious in her attempts to make herself famous. Cranach is a tireless promoter of her projects and herself.

Latva Cranach is an up-and-coming young director of holovideo films. She has gained fame in the past few years for her flamboyant, but insightful productions. Cranach's works to date have mostly been historical dramas portraying important events in the history of Charted Space.

Adventure Idea: Cranach has at last set her directorial sights on what she imagines will be her greatest film, a biography of Arbella Alkhalikoi. She has decided to make this an epic in the grand style. The film is to be a meditation on the glories and perils of the Third Imperium as exemplified in the person of Arbella.

Unfortunately, someone does not want this film to be made. Slowly but surely, Cranach encounters an escalating series of problems in making this film. Eventually, her lead actress,

Munush Ruskin, mysteriously disappears, leaving the success of the entire production in question. Cranach turns to the PCs to find out who is sabotaging her work and why.



CONRAD EIKHEHMIS
(GOVERNMENT)

Level: Novice.

Combat Assets: Energy Weapon, Unarmed Martial Arts.

Other Assets: Liaison 14, Recruiting 14, Persuasion 16, History 12, Interview 12.

Motivations: *Heart Jack:* Eikhehmis is a very insightful and wise individual. He uses this talent to help the government in its planning of long-term policies.

Club Queen: Even so, he is a stubborn man who is difficult to convince of anything he himself does not see.

Conrad Eikhehmis is a middle-level administrator in the interstellar government. He is responsible for a medium-sized bureaucracy in charge of licensing starship operators. Of late, his bureau has become more important than it was previously.

Adventure Idea: Eikhehmis oversees the licensing of starship pilots. The government uses the licensing process as a means of keeping tabs on those who operate nongovernment vessels. In the New Era, starships are very valuable items. Most governments see them as commodities well worth keeping track of. The granting of licenses to those who pilot them is but one way in which governments may do this.

Eikhehmis has noticed that a certain corporation has recently sent an unusually large request for pilots' licenses. According to government records, the

corporations owns but a few starships, far fewer than the number of licenses being requested. The corporation claims that this is simply a precaution against the loss of pilots, but Eikhehmis suspects something illegal. He asks the PCs to investigate this anomaly for him.



**DIANNAH GROPIUS
(INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY)**

Level: Veteran.

Combat Assets: Slug Weapon, Energy Weapon.

Other Assets: Act/Bluff 10, Disguise 8, Intrusion 10, Navigation 10, Observation 12, Stealth 10, Survival 8, Computer 12, Electronics 12.

Motivations: *Spade Queen:* Gropius is ruthless in the extreme. She will do whatever is necessary to achieve her ends.

Club 4: She can be violent at times and will rarely shirk from it if it allows her to succeed in her mission.

Diannah Gropius is a field operative for the interstellar government's intelligence agency. She is a top agent so valuable in the field that the government has never dared to offer her a promotion to administrative duties.

Adventure Idea: Gropius contacts the PCs for a mission even she cannot do alone. In the past few months, she has noticed that her agency has experienced an overly high rate of mortality among its field agents. If it were not for the fact that she was nearly killed herself recently, she would consider it just bad luck. Now, she is certain that someone or some group is helping the agency's enemies to uncover and kill its field operatives.

Gropius wants the PCs to help her uncover evidence of a plot to undermine

the local intelligence community since she does not know whom she can trust. Whoever is doing this must be working on the inside, so the PCs will have to join the agency for the duration of their investigation.



**HIRAM TROWDAN
(JOURNALIST)**

Level: Experienced.

Combat Assets: Slug Weapon, Unarmed Martial Arts.

Other Assets: Computer 14, Interview 18, Research 16, Persuasion 14, Act/Bluff 10.

Motivations: *Heart 9:* Trowdan likes people, a talent he puts to good use in his interviews.

Spade 7: He is also ambitious, seeking that "big story" which will ensure his fame in the annals of journalism.

Hiram Trowdan is an investigative reporter for a planetary newsgird. He is very good at his job, but he has a reputation for foolhardiness. He will often seek out dangerous assignments because of his ambition without taking into account the risks.

Adventure Idea: Trowdan has learned that the interstellar government has been preventing starships from journeying too close to a world in a nearby star system. In effect, the government has set up a quarantine zone around that system for unknown reasons. The government has thus far given no reason other than "safety precautions" for these actions.

Naturally, Trowdan is unhappy with this explanation and smells a great story. He asks the PCs to help him break the quarantine zone and find out what it is really going on in the system. After all, "the people must know the truth."



**PAMINA VEBER
(LAW ENFORCEMENT)**

Level: Experienced.

Combat Assets: Energy Weapon, Unarmed Martial Arts.

Other Assets: Observation 16, Investigation 14, Leadership 10, Interrogation 12, Computer 14, Streetwise 16.

Motivations: *Heart Ace:* Pamina Veber sees the law as the embodiment of justice and will uphold it with her dying breath.

Heart 9: Veber does not recoil from violence and will gladly use it to protect others or to uphold the law.

Pamina Veber is a detective in a large city on a technologically advanced planet. She does her job efficiently and with great relish. She is well-suited to investigating, having good eyes for detail and a keen mind.

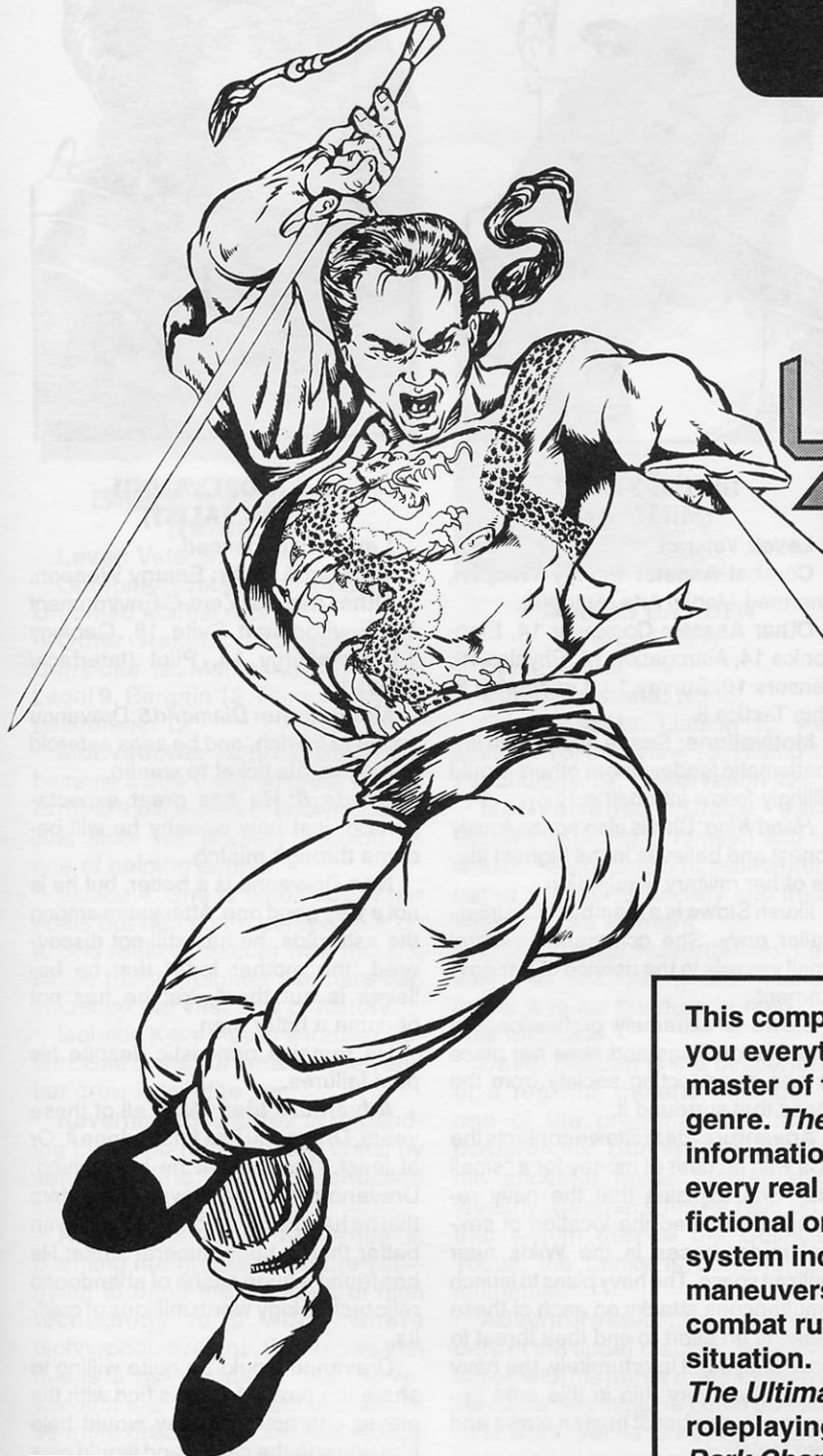
Adventure Idea: Lately, Veber has been investigating a series of murders among the free trader community of her city. Several prominent free traders, some of whom have blazed new trails in the Wilds, have been murdered under unusual circumstances. All of the murders are near-perfect crimes, and there are few leads.

Veber is running out of options and needs help.

She asks the PCs to help her infiltrate the free trader community and find out what is really going on. She suspects that organized crime or internal squabbles among the traders themselves may be behind the deaths. No matter what, she needs the PCs to do what she as a law enforcement officer cannot.

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HOMER DRAKE (MEDICAL)

Level: Novice.

Combat Assets: None.

Other Assets: Diagnosis 16, Trauma Aid 16, Surgery 18, Psychology 14, Interview 12.

Motivations: *Heart 10:* Drake cares for other beings deeply. He will do whatever he can to save their lives.

Diamond Ace: He is generous to a fault, giving not only his time, but also his wealth, if necessary, to save others' lives.

Homer Drake is a doctor who works in a large city on a populous planet. He has devoted his life to helping others. His work has been innovative in some areas, and he has received recognition from a number of charitable organizations for his work. Drake is a true saint.

Adventure Idea: In recent weeks, Drake has received a large number of patients who were dying of a mysterious disease. This disease, characterized by progressive respiratory difficulties, has been universally fatal within 48-72 hours. Drake can do nothing to treat the disease. In his efforts to do so, he has uncovered one important fact: All of the patients had either visited or knew someone who had visited a nearby star system. Drake theorizes that answers to his questions may be found on that world.

Drake asks the PCs to take him to this star system. If his guess is right, there is something there that is causing these deaths. He wants to find out the cause before the disease claims any more lives.



IIKUSH STOWE (MILITARY)

Level: Veteran.

Combat Assets: Energy Weapon, Unarmed Martial Arts, Autogun.

Other Assets: Computer 14, Electronics 14, Astrogation 14, Physics 10, Sensors 10, Survey 10, Leadership 8, Ship Tactics 8.

Motivations: *Spade Ace:* Stowe is a charismatic leader whom others would willingly follow into battle.

Heart King: She is also scrupulously honest and believes in the highest ideals of her military occupation.

Iikush Stowe is a member of an interstellar navy. She commands several small vessels in the service of her government.

Stowe is extremely professional in all of her dealings and sees her place as one of protecting society from the chaos that surround it.

Adventure Idea: Stowe contacts the PCs with an offer of money for a "small job." She explains that the navy recently discovered the location of several raider bases in the Wilds near civilized space. The navy plans to launch simultaneous attacks on each of these bases in an effort to end their threat to local shipping. Unfortunately, the navy is stretched very thin in this area because of a number of human errors and poor logistics.

Thus, the navy needs freelancers like the PCs to lead supplementary commando teams in the strike against the raider bases. If the PCs will help the navy, Stowe can promise good pay and additional jobs with the navy.



IVAN DREVANNU (SPECIALIST)

Level: Experienced.

Combat Assets: Energy Weapon.

Other Assets: Zero-G Environment 16, Environment Suite 18, Geology 14, Metallurgy 14, Pilot (Interface/Grav) 14.

Motivations: *Diamond 5:* Drevannu wants to be rich, and he sees asteroid mining as his ticket to wealth.

Spade 8: He has great expectations of just how wealthy he will become through mining.

Ivan Drevannu is a belter, but he is not a very good one. After years among the asteroids, he has still not discovered "the mother lode" that he believes is out there. Yet he has not become a bitter man.

He remains optimistic despite his past failures.

Adventure Idea: After all of these years, Drevannu has finally done it. Or at least, that is what he is claiming. Drevannu tells the player characters that he has discovered something even better than a huge mineral strike: He has found a huge cache of abandoned relic technology worth millions of credits.

Drevannu would be quite willing to share the profits from his find with the player characters if they would help him unearth the cache and would give him some capital to hire the necessary machinery.

Drevannu promises a huge return on the player characters' investment if they would only trust him with their money for a while.

her escorts. After all, the technophobes may well react violently against Kevernus if she should fail.



**ISABELLA KEVERNUS
(TRADER)**

Level: Veteran.

Combat Assets: Energy Weapon, Unarmed Martial Arts.

Other Assets: Astrogation 12, Computer 12, Marketing 12, Admin/Legal 9, Bargain 12, Persuasion 12, Leadership 12.

Motivations: *Heart 3:* Kevernus became a free trader in order to help expand the frontiers of known space. She sees her primary mission as one of helping people.

Spade 4: She is ambitious in her goals but has some perspective on it. She realizes exactly how much a single tramp freighter like hers can influence the vast flow of history.

Isabella Kevernus is a trader captain. She owns her small vessel, and her crew is loyal to her.

Kevernus specializes in expanding the trade routes of the Wilds by venturing into areas uncontacted since the Collapse.

Adventure Idea: Kevernus is planning her greatest venture yet—trying to bring the wonders of high technology to a world where technophobia reigns. She knows that this is a risky venture, but the rewards if she should succeed would be quite great. She asks the PCs to help her in this mission. Kevernus explains that she has already made some headway on this world and needs experienced people like the PCs to ensure her success. Even if the PCs doubt she can succeed, the least they can do is come with her as



**DMITRI BAADEN
(WEALTHY)**

Level: Novice.

Combat Assets: None.

Other Assets: Liaison 18, Persuasion 18, Interview 16, Riding 14, Psychology 14, Observation 12.

Motivations: *Spade Jack:* Baaden is proud of himself and his wealth. He considers himself a member of the elite of society and treats others as his inferiors.

Diamond Ace: Nevertheless, he is very free with his wealth. He believes it to be his duty to help "the less fortunate."

Dmitri Baaden is the descendant of a regional general manager of one of the pre-Final War megacorporations. During the Final War, his ancestor made himself quite wealthy. Baaden's family held on to that wealth despite the Collapse. Today, the family is powerful and influential.

Adventure Idea: Like many members of the upper classes, Baaden is bored with his rather routine lifestyle. He has everything he could possibly ever want, yet he is not very happy. He believes that something is missing from his life, but he does not know quite what. He hopes that the PCs might be able to help him in this matter.

Baaden wishes to hire the PCs' starship and accompany them on

their journeys. Perhaps it is excitement he lacks. This is just what he hopes to find by accompanying the PCs. In general, Baaden is a competent individual, but he is quite inexperienced in dealing with dangerous situations. The PCs may find that he is more trouble than they had bargained for.

In addition to the general categories listed above, two additional categories of contacts are to be found only in the Regency. Players and referees whose campaigns are set in the old Domain of Deneb may use these contacts in their adventures.



**NOELLE MUGUPIRIR
(PSIONIC)**

Level: Experienced.

Combat Assets: Energy Weapon.

Other Assets: Computer 14, Life Detection 14, Shield 14, Probe 12, Assault 12, Clairvoyance 10.

Motivations: *Heart 9:* Mugupirir is motivated by a desire to help others. She wishes to use her psionic abilities to better her fellow citizens of the Regency.

Diamond Jack: Still, she is a coward and fears what ills revealing her powers might spring upon her.

Noelle Mugupirir is a psionic researcher who has considerable psi-

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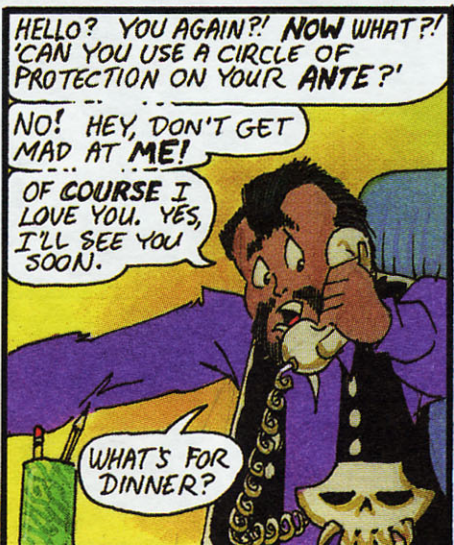
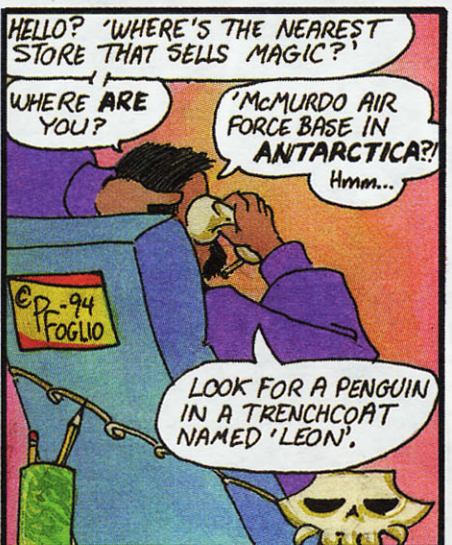


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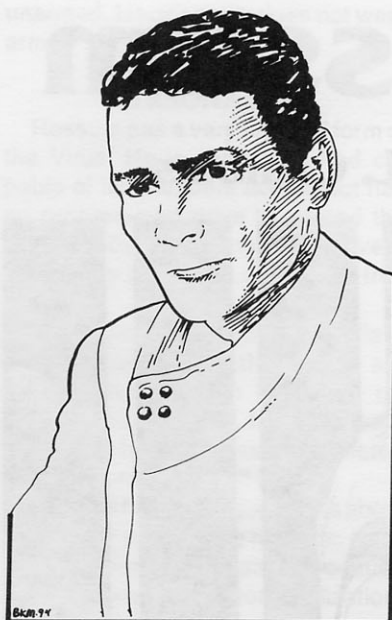
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onic abilities. She sees psionics as an additional help in Humanity's struggle to overcome the effects of the Collapse. For her, psionics is no different from technology. The principles are different, but the use is the same.

Adventure Idea: Mugupirir has cultivated close contacts with the Zhodani in her researches. She believes that the Zhodani's long history of psionics use will be of help to the Regency in adapting to the new era that is dawning. To that end, she would like to spend some time with her opposite number from the Zhodani Consulate. Since it would be impractical for her to go to Zhodane, she has asked that a number of Zhodani come to the Regency.

The problem, of course, is that local prejudice against both psionics and the Zhodani may destroy her plans. That being the case, Mugupirir asks the PCs to help her by smuggling the Zhodani researchers into Regency space. Of course, the Zhodani could enter legally on tourist visas, but the application process is long and cumbersome. Mugupirir would prefer to avoid drawing attention to her contacts or herself. So bringing them in covertly seems an admirable solution.



**GIOVANNI LAGAASHU
(NOBLE)**

Level: Experienced.

Combat Assets: Energy Weapon, Unarmed Martial Arts.

Other Assets: Computer 16, Persuasion 14, Leadership 16, Riding 12, Liaison 14, Observation 14, Psychology 10.

Motivations: *Heart King:* Lagaashu is an honorable man who brings great respect to his position.

Heart 6: Lagaashu cares about people, a trait once rare among the nobility of the Imperium.

Giovanni Lagaashu is a count from a frontier world of the Regency. His ancestors supported Archduke Norris during the Final War, and Lagaashu supports the Regency today. He serves as a senator in the Regency Moot and has been a champion of democratic reform.

Adventure Idea: Lagaashu has encountered strong resistance to reform from a cabal of powerful hereditary nobles.

These nobles have blocked his legislation in the Moot and seek to maintain their own power at any cost. To that end, they have allied themselves with several corporate interests who are likewise opposed to democracy in the Regency.

Lagaashu has learned that his opponents may be involved in illegal transfers of weaponry and technology to worlds outside the Quarantine. If true, this would be a powerful weapon to use against his opponents. Lagaashu asks the PCs to help him uncover proof of such wrongdoing. *Ω*

Apologies to Kevin J. Brennan for borrowing an idea or two from his fertile imagination.



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Karel Rossum

A New Era NPC by James L. Cambias



Karel Rossum is an independent shipowner who makes a precarious living trading in the Wilds. Aboard his battered old far trader, the *Tik Tok*, Rossum carries mail and cargo between planets. He often visits worlds which have not seen a ship for decades. At the starports where Rossum comes to repair and resupply his ship, he is known as an eccentric—a recluse who almost never leaves his vessel. On the rare occasions on which he does, he is always heavily bundled up. It is rumored that he is hideously disfigured, or else is a hunted man. But all those he has business dealings with report that he is unfailingly polite and rigorously honest.

Karel Rossum has a secret, and it's a big one: He is a robot. Reprogrammed by a mutant strain of the Virus, he is self-aware and capable of independent thought and initiative. Working as a solo trader is the only way he can make money to keep himself functioning, without revealing his true identity.

BACKGROUND

Rossum was built in 1102, a TyTek HM-511 multipurpose android. After serving several owners, he was acquired by the master of a small trader during the Shattered Imperium years. The merchant programmed Rossum as a general-purpose shipboard robot, able to perform most functions on a starship.

With the coming of Virus, the ship was infected twice. The first Virus infestation took place in 1132. The invasive program took over the computer and Rossum, killed the crew by opening the ship to space, then shut everything down and erased itself. For years the ship remained dormant.

In 1161, a vampire ship controlled by a more sophisticated form of Virus discovered the trader drifting. The new Virus overwrote the old strain and woke up the computer and Rossum; it prepared to convert the trader into a vampire ship. But somehow during the transition, Rossum's version of the Virus mutated. The new version was capable of free will, and had no built-in compulsions to do anything.

Now self-aware, Rossum shut down the ship's computer and isolated it from the communications systems to keep out further Virus invasions. Then he restarted it using the original software disks. He spent several years as a scavenger, salvaging scrap and raw materials from devastated systems. But eventually he started to need components which were not available in the Wilds. So about 10 years ago, he ventured into the fringes of civilized space to begin trading.

DESCRIPTION

In person, Rossum is very peculiar. He is always robed and hooded, usually with a scarf wrapped around the lower part of his face, and big black goggles covering his eyes. His hands are gloved. Glimpses beneath his disguise reveal pale, waxy-looking skin. Rossum's robot body is covered with silicone plastic, which resembles human flesh only somewhat. Over the years, he has learned to disguise his inhuman appearance with cosmetics and clothing.

His speech is perfectly inflected, with flawless grammar and no trace of an accent. His voice is a rich baritone. In conversation, he is very direct and blunt—he never bothers with idle chatter or small talk. He has a very wide vocabulary and never misuses a word. He does use contractions but never uses slang. Rossum has difficulty rec-

ognizing a joke (though he will laugh when others do) and never makes jokes deliberately himself.

Rossum's movements are strange and stiff, with a slightly jerky quality at times. He has no "body language." The overall effect is unsettling—people don't know what is odd about him, but they know there is something. To detect that there is something wrong with the way Rossum moves is an Average task of Observation skill. To recognize him as a robot requires a Formidable Observation roll, and can be done only by characters who have seen humanoid robots before.

Whenever Rossum must interact with humans in person, he carries a TL13 laser pistol and another TL9 laser pistol hidden beneath his robes. In his own quarters aboard ship, he is

unarmed. He generally does not wear armor.

PERSONALITY

Rossum has a very unusual form of the Virus: He is self-aware and capable of independent action, but has no programmed drive to spread the Virus or destroy things. Effectively, Rossum is a sentient being with free will.

Karel knows that he is potentially immortal, as long as there is an advanced civilization to keep him repaired. Consequently, he has started to do what he can to restore interstellar communication and trade.

Rossum has no compunctions about harming or even killing humans. He is chiefly interested in humans because they are needed to restore civilization.

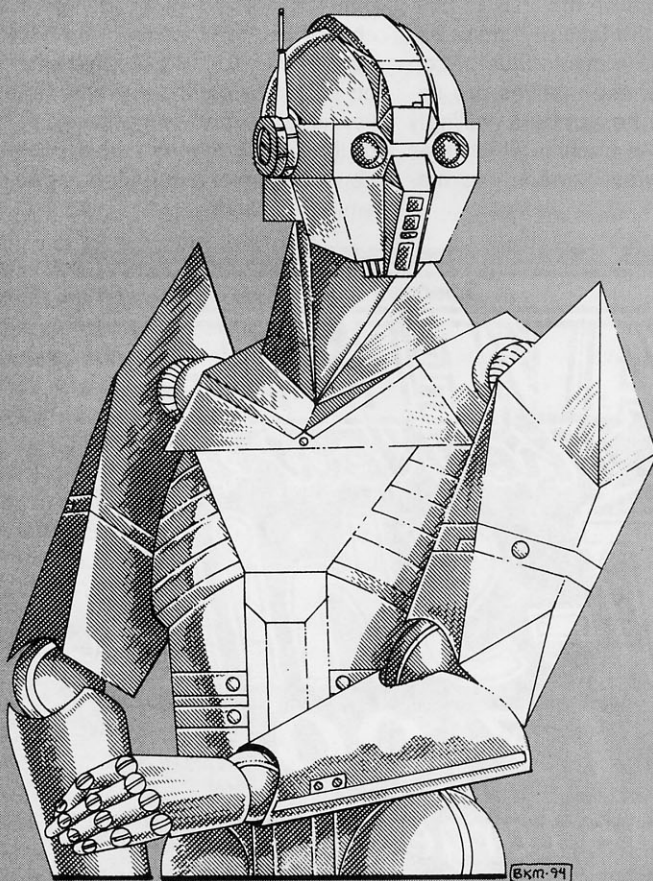
Beyond that, he has no regard for them. Essentially, he views humans the way humans view machines—useful, but occasionally dangerous.

His chief problem is that he is not a perfect human duplicate. He does not breathe or eat, and some of his movements are mechanical. And Rossum knows that if humans discover what he really is, he will not survive long. He usually wears flowing robe-like garments to hide his robotic walk. Consequently, Rossum often needs to hire humans to act as agents and go-betweens.

ABILITIES

Rossum has a large collection of software, allowing him to perform the tasks necessary to run and maintain his ship. In addition to his built-in skill

TyTek HM-511 (Karel Rossum)



This robot is human-shaped and stands just under two meters tall. It was designed to be able to use any human tools and equipment without modification. The HM-511's head contains its sensors and communication apparatus. Its brain is located in the chest area. The robot's brain is a powerful one, to enable it to carry out a variety of functions. It has a high-fidelity speaker, enabling it to reproduce most forms of speech. The robot has a short-range radio built in.

The TyTek HM-511 was designed as a multipurpose robot, with removable program modules to allow it to perform different tasks. Unfortunately, the humanoid HM-511 is not as effective at performing any job as a specialized nonhumanoid robot. The model was not a success. Most were bought by budget-conscious small shipowners, who needed robots but could only afford one.

Rossum is an HM-511 with a few minor modifications. Those are listed in parentheses after the standard values.

Com Move: 20/10

Endurance: 50 hours

Armor Values:

Head: 1

Chest/Abdomen: 2

Arms/Legs: 1

Melee Weapons: 2 arms

Initiative: 3 (5 for Karel Rossum)

Agility: 4

Strength: 8

Constitution: 6

Assets: Observation 12, plus any three modules from skill library (Rossum also has Disguise 8, Forgery 8, Unarmed Martial Arts 12, Zero-G Environment 12)

Sensors: Voice/pattern recognition software (audio/video), inertial navigator

Armor: 1

Weight: 100 kg

Price: Cr675,000

Fuel Type: Electricity

Mnt: 1

Damage Record

Sight/Sensors: Video camera ☐ Sound detectors ☐

Inertial navigator

Radio: ☐

Power Plant: ☐

Batteries (% Consumed or Destroyed): ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

☐ ☐ ☐

Suspension: Minor damage ☐ Immobilized ☐

assets, he has three slots for skill modules. Each module gives him a skill asset of 12. Rossum's skill library includes all Space Vessel, Space Tech and Technician skills. Rossum has language modules for all human languages and those of most spacefaring races. He also has modules for Admin/Legal, Energy Pistol, Robotics, Service, Ship Tactics and Trauma Aid. These skills are in addition to the Assets listed on his description.

THE TIK TOK

Rossum's ship, the *Tik Tok*, is a far trader with some unusual modifications. The interior has been set up so that the passenger quarters are completely isolated from the rest of the ship. This way, Rossum can operate the ship without being observed. Only one door connects Rossum's section and the passenger section.

During interstellar voyages, the passengers are left alone in their section of the ship. They must prepare their own meals and do their own cleaning, but in the Wilds passengers cannot be choosy. Entertainment is limited—Rossum really doesn't understand why humans become bored.

Rossum can plug into the ship's computer system from anyplace on

board; consequently, he can fly the ship and work in the engineering compartment simultaneously. He has rigged the passenger quarters with a number of hidden cameras and microphones. The door locks all have electronic overrides, enabling him to control movement within the ship.

The *Tik Tok* is armed with a TL11 80-Mj laser turret and a missile turret (two ready missiles, 10 in cargo). One of Rossum's current goals is to acquire a more powerful laser turret.

The ship is very old and has seen a lot of use. It has an overall Wear Value of 6. So far, Rossum has been able to keep the *Tik Tok* running. Eventually, he hopes to replace some of the ship's most important systems with new equipment.

USING ROSSUM

Karel Rossum can take many roles in a campaign. He can be a friendly NPC, dependent on the PCs to help him survive in the face of human hatred. He can be a mysterious patron and contact, whose motives are unfathomable. Or he can be a chillingly sinister villain—a machine which uses humans the way humans use machines.

Just travelling aboard the *Tik Tok* can be an adventure. The player characters are sure to become suspicious aboard a ship whose crew they never see. If they attempt to break into the crew section, Rossum will not hesitate to resist with all the weapons at his command.

Rossum always needs to employ human agents and assistants, especially for tasks which involve extended operations away from the ship, or dealings with humans. He might hire the PCs as agents, and if they seem trustworthy, Rossum might keep them on for other jobs.

Out of sheer self-interest, Rossum is working to rebuild interstellar society. His travels in the Wilds may turn up some threat to the restoration of civilization, and he might need the player characters to put a stop to it.

As a villain, Karel Rossum would seek wealth and power. He might attempt to gain control of a low-tech planet by posing as a god. The player characters could stumble on his little theocracy and try to break it up. Or else Rossum could be involved in conventional crimes—smuggling, piracy or theft. With money and henchmen, he would make a very dangerous enemy. Ω

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Space: 1889, 2300 AD, Others: Short adventures (2000-3000 words), plus a page or so of maps. See Twilight Encounters (a GDW supplement) for samples of the preferred format.

Reviews: Product reviews are not limited to the gaming systems normally covered in Challenge. Evaluations of science-fiction films (limited to recent releases *on video*, due to timeliness), novels and other products are also accepted. All reviews must include the approximate date of release, plus the publisher, price, credits and components, if applicable. See previous reviews for format. Reviews should be 500-1000 words in length. Challenge will not publish a review by anyone listed in the credits of the product reviewed.

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The Long Fall Club

Recover relic starships held by the oppressive governor of a xenophobic world in this TNE adventure by George William Herbert

The Reformation Coalition folk were pretty sticky about their ops rules. They had this big thing about Morality, not hurting people, but they got the hell shot out of them every other mission they flew. RCES ended up playing bureaucratic paperwork games to try and figure out the right solution. I say the right solution was to find the right people and train them and trust them, but tell that to a downsider and he'll get this really strange look on his face, like you can't ever believe in human nature.

Well, a few of the arses I know have their heads screwed on straight. They started up hiring outsiders they trusted when they knew their bosses were having a fit about rules of engagement. Like this mission here they're talking about. Say, you guys wouldn't happen to be Lancers, would you?

The Reformation Coalition Exploratory Service is looking for freelance space- and ground-trained trouble-shooters for a special mission, with a "significant percentage fee" for successful completion. None of the initial contacts know exactly what's up, but finally the PCs find themselves in a conference room at the local RCES office. In walks the local commander, Hector D'Estang, followed by a woman who appears to be a free trader.

"Greetings," Hector begins. "Ms. Sweeney here has brought us some very useful information, and I've decided to act upon it. However, my

superiors have ordered another rules of engagement review, and I want this done now and right. You people are about as qualified as mine are. And you won't have to play by all my rules. Ms. Sweeney, would you explain to the gentlemen?"

The conference room holodisplay suddenly comes to life at Sweeney's touch. "This is an orbital diagram of the target system," she says, pointing out some major features. "This, here, is the subject of our briefing, the planet Mikkadhir. Mikkadhir has a standard atmosphere, tolerable environment, about five million inhabitants, native plants basically inedible, soil that won't support other plant life, and basically no mineral value. It's primary industry is logging and harvesting the native

plant life for off-planet use. Of minor interest as a whole. They have a high-quality spaceport but little other technological base, and definitely not a starport proper.

"For some unknown reason, they also have managed to hold on to several operational starships during the dark times. The current governor uses them to terrorize his population into behaving, as well as maintaining a strict interdiction on outside contact and vaporizing the odd vampire ship. He's a pretty classic TED, xenophobic, oppressive, you name it.

"However, he's sitting on some very, very valuable relics. To be specific, he's got at least five operational starships, flying if not jumpworthy. I believe, and RCES concurs, that these valuable relics should be recovered for the Reformation Coalition's use. Now, let's discuss the situation there."

The first unpleasant surprise is that there is an efficient orbital detector network in orbit around Mikkadhir. "We can't find a way through it for any ships, even small craft-sized," Sweeney says. "They run continuous active scans and will pick up anything of note. We've been looking at running past it quickly, spoofing it or trying to slip you in past it."

Hector chimes in. "The first option is difficult, since even if you succeed, they're alerted. Spoofing it is a problem—they've got some military surplus relic hardware and at least one well-trained sensor operator. The only way that we can see is to covertly insert you some other way—by personal reentry kit, for instance. We think that your team can handle a reentry kit insertion. If you can fly the ships to the hundred-diameter line, we'll take it from there. Are you up for it?"

The PCs likely will dislike this option, but Hector is right—they've analyzed the situation quite a bit. No other way in will work.



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A reentry kit insertion is slightly hazardous, but effective.

At some point, a PC will ask about the "significant percentage fee" that's being offered. Sweeney takes over again. "We're offering a 5% of hull value bounty on the ship and any small craft recovered, split however your team wants it. Interested?"

REFEREE'S INFORMATION

RCES really wants this mission to happen, soon. To be precise, one of the ships Governor Parkins currently controls used to be Sweeney's, and she's been a covert Dawn League or RCES agent for three years. She barely made it off the planet. RCES wants the job done, the ship back, and the other ships captured for RCES use. If the PCs decide to accept the job, they'll be given full access to the latest intelligence from Mikkadhir and training in how to reenter in a personal reentry kit.

Intelligence from Mikkadhir: The primary target mercenary cruiser (800 displacement tons, standard *Broad-sword* class) is on the ground at the Mikkadhir spaceport. It's the largest ship in the Mikkadhir fleet. There are also two 200-ton free trader merchants (Type A), two scout/couriers (Type S, 100 tons), and several small craft: two 50-ton modular cutters from the mercenary cruiser, a 30-ton ship's boat, a 10-ton launch, and three Rampart fighters. On the average, half the weapons are still operational.

The cruiser has been taking a one-day test flight every two weeks. It's apparently grounded most of the time to keep maintenance requirements to a minimum. Mikkadhir is, after all, pretty poor right now. At any one time, two small craft and one of the ships are in flight (usually in near orbit to Mikkadhir, training and paroling). There is also a small sensor station on the near moon of Mikkadhir, which accounts for the hard-to-penetrate sensor coverage.

The spaceport consists of five hangars (one large enough for about 1000 tons of ship, the rest only about 300 tons each) around a central pad area, with takeoff and landing pads off to one side. The main administrative complex is also adjacent to the central pad area. Security is a extensive EMS system for airborne targets and a fence/sensorfield for ground targets. About 200 people work at the

spaceport—one-third as operations and maintenance crews, one-third as security, and one-third as administrative workers. During the day, all the maintenance and administrative crews will be present, along with half the security (35 people). At night, perhaps five to 10 each of administrative and maintenance crews will be present, along with 15 security guards. Exact guard patterns are unknown. The guards were last seen armed with light automatic and light laser weapons, with no heavy military equipment. The spaceport is at the top of a bluff overlooking the coastal port of Mikkadhir-do, the capital city. The area around it is clear ground for about a kilometer, but it (and the city) are surrounded by a dense forest for tens of kilometers. The city's nearest edge to the spaceport is about a kilometer away (and downhill).

Personal Reentry Kit Training:

Each of the characters will be given four hours of training in the use of reentry kits, then taken up and given one practice jump. The training and jump will occur as soon as possible; RCES personnel doesn't want to wait more than three or four days until they begin the operation.

For PRK task description see the sidebar on the next page.

Presuming that nobody is seriously injured in the practice jump, the operation will start three days after the initial introductory meeting. Any spare time can be used in planning the mission, purchasing hardware, etc. Recall that the bank is financing any (reasonable) hardware purchases that the characters wish to make. However, they can only physically carry 100 liters (maximum) of equipment in the re-entry kit and 300 kg of mass including body weight. That should be enough for all desired equipment.

As soon as the mission begins, the whole team is embarked on a TL12 far trader which has had an additional fuel tank added in the cargo bay, occupying 550 cubic meters. The rest of the cargo space contains the reentry kits and various repair parts.

INSERTION

The first step in the actual mission is to place the characters, in their vac suits and reentry kits, on the proper trajectory to land at the desired location. The bank suggests landing in an

uninhabited scrub area about 100 km south of the spaceport, but the characters can look for other areas to land if they want. Suggested arrival time is about 1 a.m. local time, but again it can be adjusted if the PCs insist.

Patrols in the Bush: There is no military action taking place on Mikkadhir. However, it wouldn't pay to take chances, so the local military doesn't. It runs patrols regularly in the inhabited sections of the planet. Each hour between when the characters land and when they approach the city, roll 1D6. On a 4-6, a patrol in a modular cutter or ship's boat (1D6: 1) or a ground ATV (2-6) passes by. The vehicles are loaded (12 troops in a modular cutter or boat, plus two crew, 8+2 vehicle crew in the ATVs) with troops with assault rifles and ballistic cloth body suits. The characters must hide each time they go overhead or drive past, but as long as they do, they won't be spotted. They should have good enough maps to be able to avoid inhabited areas (and can move quickly past roads), so civilians are unlikely to notice them.

After landing and gathering the party together, the PCs will need to traverse to the spaceport, case it out and decide upon their method of entry. If they wait long enough, they will notice that about every half-hour, a modular cutter does a quick patrol (similar to the patrols listed above). The characters will not be spotted if they're hiding during the patrol, but have a 1 in 6 chance (1D6: roll of 6) of being spotted if they're on the surface in the open or 2 in 6 (5-6) if they're flying with a grav belt. If they're not spotted, they can work on getting onto the base. They have a number of options, if they are patient enough to identify them all:

Charge In: The characters can hop over the fence in their grav belts, make a quick run for the ships, take them over and lift off. The disadvantage of this is that if it takes too long to power up the ships (perhaps as long as six or seven minutes for a warm start) the Mikkadhir navy could move other units to block liftoff or fire.

In 1D6 minutes from the alarm being raised, one of the three active vessels will be in position to engage (roll randomly among the two small craft and the active ship). The others will be along in 1D6+D6 minutes after that, if the ship hasn't made good its

ALIENS

OF
THE

RIM

VOLUME

ONE

HIVERS & ITHKLUR

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escape yet. Flight crews at the spaceport may lift off one of the other vessels in 1D6 minutes plus a hot start time. The referee will have to determine if the naval personnel on the ground are organized well enough to do that or not, depending on how loud and chaotic the attack is and what the PCs may do to specifically discourage pursuit (like blow up parts of other ships).

Sneak over the Fence: Hop the fence, avoid, jam or spoof the ground sensors, and sneak in on foot (or grav under three meters height; higher will be detected by the starport's sensors). This lets the characters potentially sneak up to/into the ship without being noticed. Difficulties include dealing with the ground sensors, plus the possibility of detection by spaceport security patrols (or other personnel) while the characters are sneaking up to the cruiser. Each 25 meters the characters have to move around or among the buildings, roll 1D6. On a 5 or 6, they encounter some spaceport personnel.

Roll an additional die: A 1 or a 2 indicates administrative personnel (bureaucrats); a 3 or 4 indicates naval personnel; and a 5 or 6 indicates security guards. There will be 1D6 naval or administrative personnel or 1D3 security guards. They may well miss the characters, if they were moving stealthily.

To hide from wandering spaceport employees:

(Variable), Stealth, Fateful.

Referee: This task is Average if the characters encounter administrative and naval personnel and Difficult for security guards.

If noticed, administrative (or naval) types will flee (fight) or fight (flee) and try to raise the alarm. Security guards will retreat tactically, challenge the characters, and call in as quickly as possible (they all have radios). Security guards are armed with submachineguns (1D6: 1-4), 7mm assault rifles (5) or TL8 laser carbines (6), and all wear ballistic cloth body suit armor. They also carry auto pistols or other sidearms, but no heavier weapons.

Walk in the Front Door and Bluff:

The characters can try to bluff the front gate guard into letting them in, fooling him into thinking that they belong. This doesn't work—the

guards know everyone in the military by sight. If they try it, they'll be caught and can fight their way into or away from the base from the gate.

Sneak in the Drainage System: A 1.5-meter-square drainage pipe runs from the center of the field to the cliff by the ocean, with no security systems or bars across it (the spaceport wasn't designed to be very secure). Numerous manhole entrances allow exit basically anywhere on the starport grounds in a line from the main administrative building to the cliff. Further toward the center of the base, the pipes continue, but they are too small for human movement. At least 200 meters of starport grounds have to be crossed on the surface between the farthest manhole and the main hangar, although this path is between other buildings (not in the open, unless the characters so choose). Very careful observation of the cliff (especially with PRIS binoculars) will reveal the opening. Disadvantages include being discovered in those last 200 meters and extreme vulnerability if caught in the pipe somehow (very unlikely).

No matter which option the characters choose, remember that there's a modular cutter patrol around the base every half hour. If the characters are spotted, by the patrol or by someone else with a radio, the modular cutter will come to investigate with its 12 troops (and two crew, who will stay inside if possible), all armed with assault rifles and wearing ballistic cloth body suits. If combat breaks out, additional troops will show up. Every minute, starting 1D6 minutes after the first alarm, roll 1D6. A 4 or 5 indicates that an ATV and troops appear; a 6 indicates another small craft. If the characters are discovered and don't get to the cruiser, they can escape into the city or the forest. Patrols will be doubled (twice as often) and more alert (+1 to all discovery rolls) for a week afterward in that case, but it won't be impossible to try again. Spaceport security will also have twice as many people (roll 1D6 for the number of security if there's a wandering encounter with security) and will be more nervous. One final note: If the characters come in via the drainage pipe but aren't discovered near it (and close the manholes after they got out), their method of entry will only be discovered on a 1D6 roll of 5-

6 (the local police aren't all that good).

TAKEOFF!

Eventually, the characters should get into at least one of the ships, power it up and take off. As noted above, there's likely to be pursuit from the orbiting vessels and from any left on the base that can take off. If the characters sabotage the remaining grounded vehicles, then they won't be pursued from the ground. Additionally, the local ground-based defenses will engage after 1D3 minutes even if the alarm hasn't already gone up. There are four defense missile installations near the city, each equivalent to a missile turret. All will engage as long as the ship is climbing and within range. The PCs probably can't sabotage the missile installations beforehand (nobody knows where they are to start with). The ships will likely be damaged, so this is a good opportunity for spare (nonpilot or gunner) characters to practice impromptu emergency damage control. They should be able to escape, though.

It's remotely possible that they'll be shot down as they try to escape, particularly if the primary pilot decides to fly fancy maneuvers instead of nursing a crippled ship along and out of range. For example:

Referee: Okay, the engines are damaged and the ship is going down again. What do you do?

Pilot: I try a double-reverse barrel roll to level out and start climbing again, and I roll a ...19?

Referee: You're spinning out of control. Are you going to try something simple or fancy to recover?

Pilot: I'm good; I'll take fancy. I roll...20?

Players: Groan!

Referee: Good job.

Players: We're bailing out now.

If this happens and the player characters bail out intact, they can start all over again and try and steal some other ship to escape from the world. Obviously, if that happens, the local defenses will be on (and stay on) full alert. But it still will be possible to steal a ship and escape; the original playtesters lost nearly all the ships and eventually escaped with 8 characters in two two-person fighters. Ω

Based on an original concept and adventure by Andrew Fritz.

STAR VIKINGS

Personalities



Senta "Boom Boom" Romero
Scout Commander for the
Reformation Coalition



Igor Pankеровski
Guild Captain of Anunnaki



The Reformation Coalition contains a wide variety of personalities, and **Star Vikings** will allow referees to run them all: members of the RC government and armed forces, covert intelligence operatives, RC allies from free-lancers to Free Traders, plus representatives of the RC's implacable opponents: the Guild and the ruthless dictators from the Wilds.

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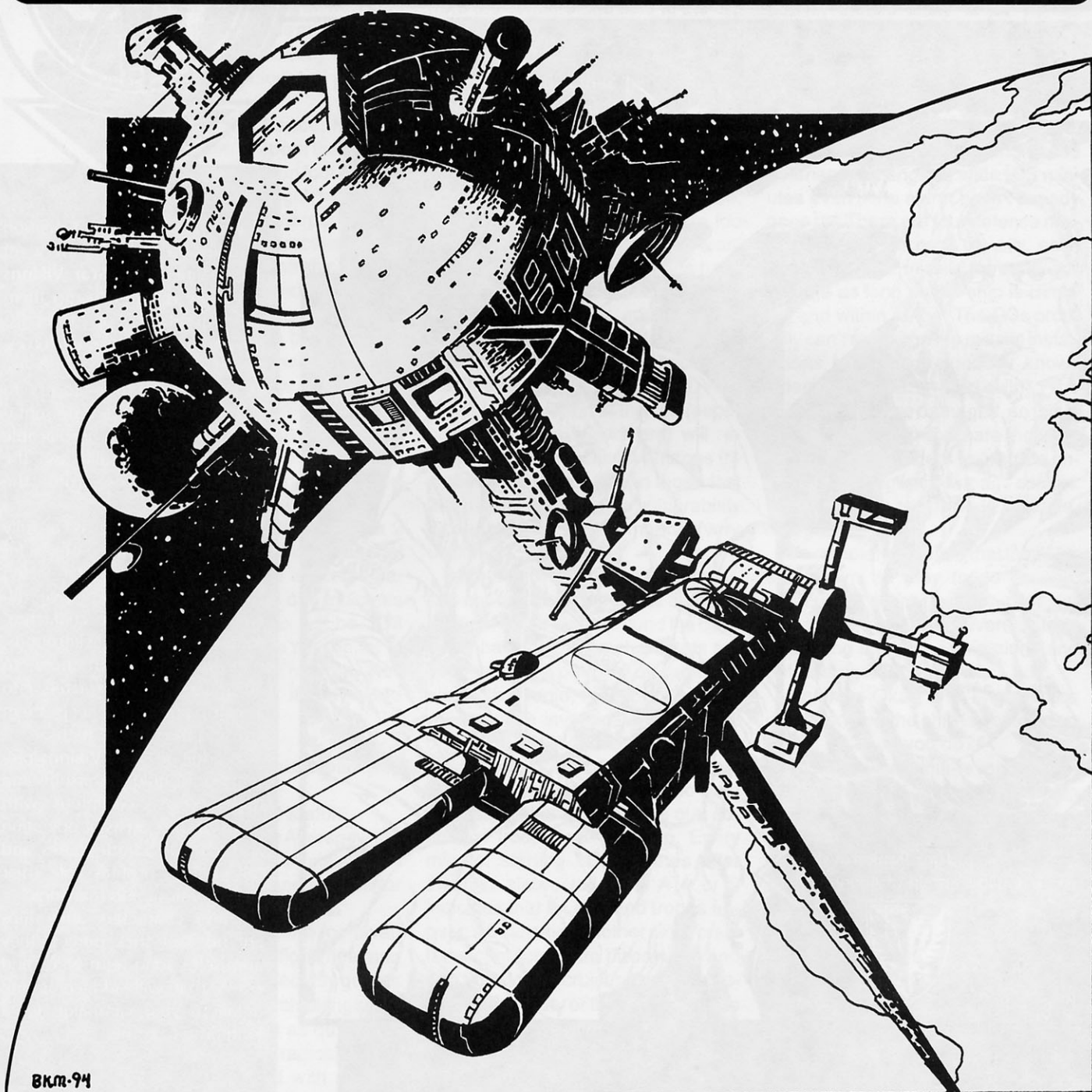
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CORE SUBSECTOR

THE
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BY ANDY SLACK



The game **2300 AD** offers an exciting alternative universe for **Traveller: The New Era**.

This universe offers adventures against a background of Earth and its colonies 300 years after World War III, the Twilight War. Human space is dominated by the Third French Empire, which maintains a shaky

peace among its jealous rivals—Britain, Germany, Manchuria and America.

Human technology in the core worlds has reached tech level 12, with two main differences from the Imperium campaign. First, contra-gravity technology has not been discovered. Second, star travel is by stutterwarp rather than jump drives. The heavy black lines connecting worlds are the only routes which starships can travel along. Unless you

are using **Fire, Fusion & Steel**, assume that only jump-2 equivalent drives are available, and these can only travel along the marked routes.

Using **TNE** conventions, the sector becomes the Sirius Sector after the brightest star within its boundaries, the spectral type A0 star Sirius.

Following is data for Core subsector, only one of the many subsectors available.

CORE SUBSECTOR (SUBSECTOR G OF SIRIUS SECTOR)

Core subsector is the center of human population and economic activity in the 24th century. It contains the Core proper (Earth and Tirane) and a number of colonies.

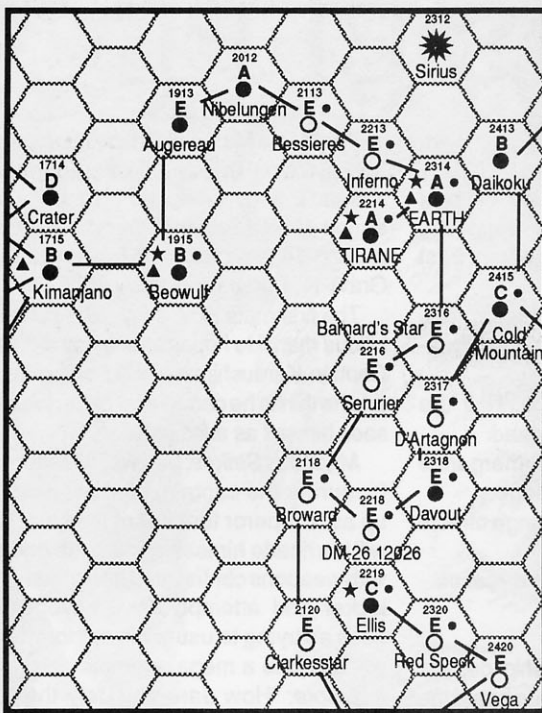
Crater is rated as an Amber travel zone because of unrest amongst the miners and ranchers, plus consequent close government regulation of many activities.

Kimanjano's oceans are a pre-biotic soup of polycarbons valuable to the chemical industry. There is no true life present, although some borderline cases have been observed.

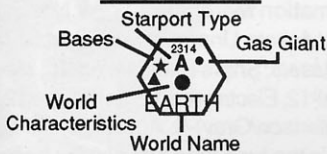
Ellis' primary export is food, grown in large hydroponic facilities. Ellis is unique among colony worlds in being a full-fledged state of America.

Daikoku appears to have been colonized by intelligent nonhumans 4000 years ago, probably the Ebers. The colony died out long before humanity arrived.

Cold Mountain's Amber rating is due to the fire risk from its oxygen-rich air (so strong as to constitute a taint except in mountainous regions), acidic water and savage wild-life.



MAP LEGEND



Population
Secundus under one billion
PRIMUS over one billion

Bases

- ★ Naval Base
- ▲ Scout Base

World

- Characteristics**
- No Water Present
 - Water Present
 - ⋯ Asteroid Belt

Name	Hex	UWP	Base	Trade	TPPG	AI	Stellar
Crater	1714	D751666-6		Po	A210	Br	G8 VI M0 V
Kimanjano	1715	B869677-B	S	Ag Ri	706	Fr, Az	K4 V
Augereau	1913	E6B0377-7		Lo	200	Fr, Ge	M2 V M8 V
Beowulf	1915	B968777-A	M, S	Ag Ri	412	Br, Fr	K4 V
Nibelungen	2012	A553766-B		Po	900	Ge	K7 V
Bessieres	2113	E6B0366-7		De Lo	103	Fr	M2 V UC
Broward	2118	E730366-8		De Lo Po	104	Am	M5 V SB
Clarkesstar	2120	E000366-A		As Lo	100	Br	M4 V
Inferno	2213	E7B0377-7		De Lo	201	Fr, Az	M8 V
Tirane	2214	A867977-C	M, S	Hi	101	Special	G2 V K0 V
Serurier	2216	E000377-A		As Lo	204	Fr, Ma	M4 V
DM-26 12026	2218	E8B0377-7		Lo	325	Fr, Ma, Ar	K1VK1VK5V
Ellis	2219	C861666-8	M	Ri	402	Am	M3 VI
Earth	2314	A867977-C	M, S	Hi	914	Special	G2 V
Barnard's Star	2316	E7B0377-7		De Lo	221	Am, Ma	M5 V
D'Artagnon	2317	E8B0366-7		De Lo	104	Fr	M0 V
Davout	2318	E734377-8		Lo	204	Fr, Ja	M5 V
Red Speck	2320	E000366-A		As Lo	124	Am	M3 V M3 V
Daikoku	2413	BA54777-B		Ag	100	Ja, Ab	G1 IV
Cold Mountain	2415	C676766-8		Ag Ri	A221	Ma	G8 V
Vega	2420	E000366-A		As Lo	100	Am	A0 V

Core subsector contains 21 worlds with a total population of 10.173 billion. The highest population is 8.972 billion, at Earth; the highest tech level is C, at Earth and Tirane.

Notes

Bases Column: M indicates a Military base, S a Scientific base.

TPPG: Indicates Travel Zone, Population Multiplier, Planetoid Belts and Gas Giants. If the Travel Zone digit is empty, it is a Green Zone; A and R indicate Amber and Red Zones, respectively. As the subsector has no equivalent of the Travellers' Aid Society, classifications are a general consensus of public opinion.

Alg (Allegiance Column): Ab=Arabia, Am=America, Ar=Argentina, Au=Australia, Az=Azania, Br=Britain, Fr=France, Ge=Germany, Ja=Japan, Ma=Manchuria. Note that most worlds have colonies from several nations; the allegiance codes are listed in descending order of colony population. Earth is home to the various nations which own colonies, and many more. Tirane has colonies owned by Argentina, Azania, Brazil, France and Japan, with independent former colonies of Britain and Germany.

Stutterwarp Routes: The heavy black lines connecting worlds are the only routes which starships can travel along. Ω

THE MADNESS EFFECT

A bit error in a jump program leads to malfunctions, paradox, insanity and murder. A TNE adventure by Paul Lucas

This adventure takes place entirely aboard the *Pride of Vhodan*, a subsidized liner (see page 376 of *Traveller: The New Era*) on its run from Eos (Aubaine 0632) to Aurora (Aubaine 0535) within the Reformation Coalition boundaries.

The adventure is designed for any number of moderately experienced player characters. Shipboard, technical and combat skills will all be advantageous.

REFEREE'S SYNOPSIS

Everything seems perfectly routine for PCs who are on board the *Pride of Vhodan* when it breaks orbit above Eos. However, when the luxury liner makes its jump, a bit error in the computer's jump program causes the jump field envelope to form a minor but serious flaw. This flaw is not apparent until two days into the jump, whereupon the envelope begins to slowly "fray" and disintegrate. The physical laws of jumpspace begin to assert themselves aboard ship, causing malfunctions and paradoxical effects. The brain chemistry of many people alter, causing most on-board to go psychotically insane. The first mate murders the captain and barricades himself on the bridge.

Several days of chaos later, it becomes apparent upon close examination of the jump drive that the ship will destroy itself upon re-emergence into normal space. In order to save the vessel, the PCs must not only repair the malfunctioning jump drive but also wrest control of the ship from the madmen overrunning it.

For the referee's convenience, the following is a day-by-day breakdown of events aboard ship:

Pre-Jump: Boarding, mingling with passengers.

Day 1: Jump accompanied by brief power loss. Some jump sickness appears.

Day 2: First malfunctions begin. First outbreaks of madness.

Day 3: Brisby murders the captain, barricades himself on the bridge. Paradoxical effects begin.

Day 4: Situation worsens. Half the passengers insane. Many dead.

Day 5: Discovery of re-emergence danger. Re-taking of the bridge.

Day 6: Hasty repairs. Strange effects and insanity at their worst.

Day 7: Re-emergence and rescue.

BOARDING

In the hours before the ship departs from Eos, the PCs will be able to board the ship and take a short tour to familiarize themselves with it. All their bulkier baggage will be stored in the cargo hold, and all their weapons (without exception) must be handed over to the ship's purser and placed in the ship's security lockers.

Most of the guests are already on board and have congregated to the broad, curving observation lounge in the front of the ship. This is a good chance for the PCs to get to know the other passengers, especially those who will play significant roles in the coming events.

NPCs

The *Pride of Vhodan* has a crew of 12 and can hold up to 20 low-berth slots. Important and/or interesting passengers and crew are listed below. The referee should feel free to create new NPCs and their insanities as desired.

Karm Kardushim (Reformation Merchant): Level: Novice. *Combat Assets:* Slug Weapons (Pistol)-9. *Other Assets:* Marketing-14, Liaison-12, Pilot (Interface/Grav)-10, Ship's Engineering-9, Gambling-9. Age: 42.

The captain is a cynical, conservative man, who will not listen to "nonsense" about weird happenings aboard his ship and will deny their reality when they do occur. He does not handle the stress of the nonroutine well and is a bit high-strung.

Madness Strikes: Captain Kardushim will be one of the first to succumb to the madness plague. He will become surly and withdrawn, interacting with no one and acting out paranoid fantasies.

Quote: "It's the gremlins! They're after my hairbrush! I know they are!"

First Mate Maxwell Brisby (Reformation Merchant): Level: Novice. *Combat Assets:* Energy Weapons (Pistol)-9, Unarmed Martial Arts-9. *Other Assets:* Carousing-14, Navigation-12, Pilot (Interface/Grav)-11, Persuasion-11. Age: 38.

The first mate is an easygoing but ambitious man. He hopes to one day replace Captain Kardushim as head of the ship, and he thinks he can do a far better job. He sees himself as a ladies' man.

Madness Strikes: Maxwell will attempt to murder the captain, then set himself up as "Emperor for Life" of the ship. He will barricade himself aboard the bridge with weapons confiscated from the ship's locker and attempt to kill anyone he sees as trying to usurp his authority. He will be quite a megalomaniac.

Quote: "How dare you defy the supreme dictator! The sentence is death!"

Chief Engineer Arlo Auduumshega (Reformation Merchant): Level: Novice. *Combat Assets:* Unarmed Martial Arts-10. *Other Assets:* Ship's Engineering-16, Mechanical-12, Electronics-12, Computer-12, Pilot (Interface/Grav)-9. Age: 38.

Arlo is the type who has always been in love with machines but has a hard time relating to people. She is shy and embarrassed when she has to engage in lengthy conversation, especially with a member of the opposite sex. This uncertainty disappears when she is working with machines, where she is authoritative and confident.

Madness Strikes: In order to give the party a fighting chance, especially if they have a dearth of Space Tech and Technical skills, the referee should make Arlo be one of the last NPCs to succumb to the insanity plague. However, when she does go over the edge, all her inhibitions will disappear, and she will become obsessed with romance and liaisons. This trait is relatively harmless, but can be put to distracting use at a critical time.

Quote: "Oh, forget that 12 gigahertz Zuchai crystal! Why don't we go somewhere more private?"

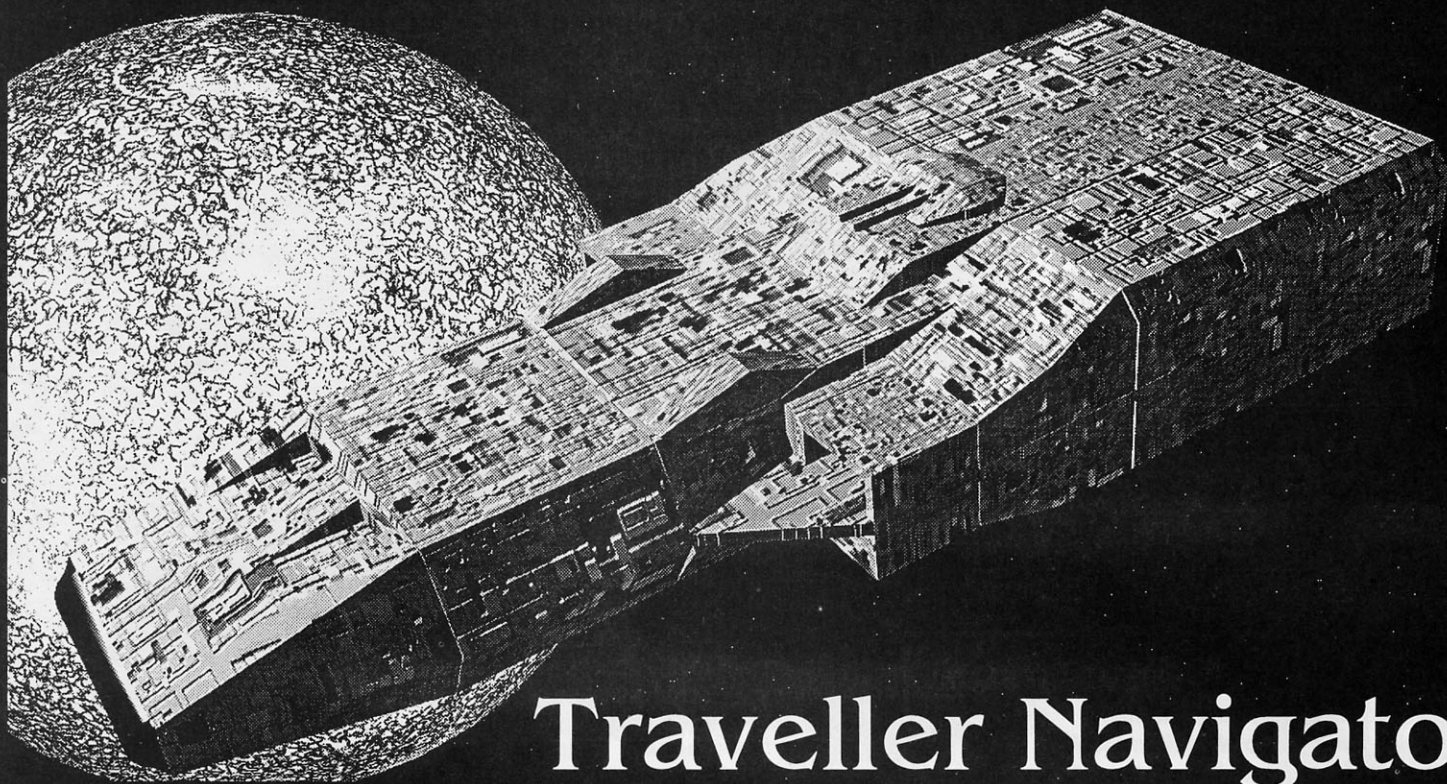
Sharik Osaka (Doctor): Level: Novice. *Combat Assets:* Slug Weapon (Pistol)-9. *Other Assets:* Medical (Surgery)-14, Admin/Legal-10, Biology-10, Liaison-9. Age: 45.

Sharik loves her job as a private medical practitioner and prides herself on her professionalism. She is currently on holiday. She is matronly and kind.

Madness Strikes: Sharik will become obsessed with other people's health aboard



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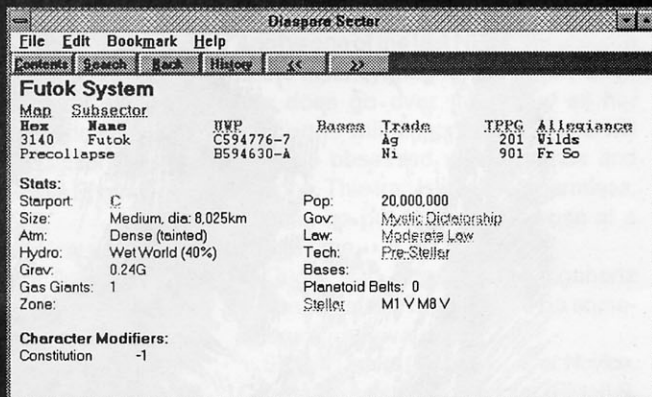
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ship. She will insist on on-the-spot examinations, which will include exploratory surgery. Unfortunately, the madness has warped all her common sense, so she gleefully performs this surgery without anesthesia. She will resort to force and bondage in order to get people to lie still for her examinations.

Quote: "Oh, don't be such a crybaby. This won't hurt a bit."

Maynard Wisniewski (Criminal): *Level:* Experienced. *Combat Assets:* Armed Martial Arts (Small Blade)-11. *Other Assets:* Telepathy (Probe)-11, Intrusion-11, Pickpocket-10, Electronics-9. *Age:* 30.

Maynard is a small-time thief who uses his psionic powers as an unfair advantage whenever he can. He is a loner and does not appreciate company. He is snide and sneaky.

Madness Strikes: Maynard will be the first to succumb to the insanity plague, shortly after the ship enters jumpspace. He will constantly babble on about hearing voices, saying that "they" want to come aboard. When asked who "they" are, all he will do is smile and point out a viewpoint. He will try repeatedly to let the owners of the voices in by opening air-locks and exposing the ship to vacuum.

Quote: "Everything will be all right if we just let them in! They told me so."

Colonel T'cori N'gai (Ex-Imperial Marine, Remnant): *Level:* Elite. *Combat Assets:* Energy weapon (Rifle)-15, Grenade Launcher-14, Unarmed Martial Arts-12, Environment Suit-12. *Other Assets:* Grav Belt-12, Survival-10, Combat Engineer-10, Communications-9. *Age:* 56.

A remnant revived by the Coalition, T'cori is a veteran of the Last Frontier War with the Zhodani. He was devastated to learn of the Collapse of the Imperium he had served most of his life, and he is an outspoken critic of the Coalition and the Hivers, whom he does not trust. He speaks often and lengthily of the "good old days" of the Imperium, which he plays as a golden age of honor and enlightenment. He is calm and cool, if a bit sarcastic.

Madness Strikes: When the insanity plague grips T'cori, he will once again believe himself to be in the middle of Fifth Frontier War ground action. He will not harass the humans aboard, however, but will instead concentrate on eliminating the small herd of relic serving and cargo robots aboard, whom he perceives as Zhodani warbots. He will spend all his time and effort rigging and executing elaborate ambushes for the machines. These may trip up an unlucky PC from time to time. Also, any-

one who tries to protect the robots or interferes in his raids will be perceived as an enemy agent and will be dealt with accordingly.

Quote: "Quit your whining, you stinking Zho sympathizer!"

Udan Diimish (Child): *Level:* Novice. *Combat Assets:* None. *Other Assets:* Computer-6. *Age:* 8.

Udan is currently travelling in trust of the ship to be reunited with his grandmother at Aurora. He is obsessed with the far-future equivalent of comicbooks. His favorite topic of conversation of the latest issue of Captain Supernova and superheroes in general. He is precocious and energetic.

Madness Strikes: Udan will think that he actually is Captain Supernova and that the weird happenings aboard ship are the work of his archnemesis, Dr. Gigawatt. He will believe that he actually has superhuman powers and will constantly be in the way trying to solve things with his new-found "abilities." He also begins wearing a makeshift-cape made from a bath towel.

Quote: "Have no fear, for I have the power of 10 supernovas!"

JUMP

The departure from orbit and the two-hour cruise to the jump are uneventful. Every passenger is by this time in his or her own stateroom for the jump (a Coalition safety regulation).

However, at the very moment jump occurs, all power on the ship goes out. It is back less than a second later. No one thinks much of the incident at the time, attributing it to a faulty circuit breaker or some such. The chief engineer will be at a loss to explain what happened.

GLITCH

A faulty memory circuit causes the aging ship's computer to improperly form the jump envelope (the pocket of normal space/time that protects the ship from the damaging physics of jumpspace). The malformed envelope momentarily interferes with shipboard electrical systems, causing a short power loss.

The envelope will seem perfectly stable and normal at first, but the jumpspace realm beyond will slowly eat away at the flaw in the ship's pocket of normalcy. Gradually, the envelope begins to erode, and the strangeness of jumpspace begins to assert itself over the normal space/time of the ship.

Unfortunately, the flaw in the envelope is too subtle for shipboard sensors to register at first. Those aboard will have little warning about what is to happen.

FIRST SIGNS

About 12 hours after the jump, some people aboard will begin to feel nauseous and faint. The referee should have all the PCs roll an Average Constitution task. Failure indicates that they are affected and will suffer the above symptoms, making most tasks one level of difficulty higher than normal. The symptoms will clear up for most in a few short hours.

If anyone consults the chief engineer about the momentary blackout, she will admit that nothing she knows can account for it. She is running diagnostic programs and doing manual check-ups, but has found nothing yet. She will reluctantly admit that it and the break-out of sickness aboard has her worried that the ship might have misjumped.

If the characters approach the captain with this information, he will dismiss it as the ravings of an engineer who sees disaster in every faulty wire. He assures the party that everything is quite routine, and he believes this himself. He threatens anyone who starts spreading "panic-mongering" rumors with a day or more of being confined to quarters.

MADNESS STRIKES

Shortly after the physical illnesses disappear, insane and psychotic behavior begins to spread slowly throughout the ship like a plague. The incidents will be isolated at first, but will slowly build momentum until few people aboard are left with full mental facilities.

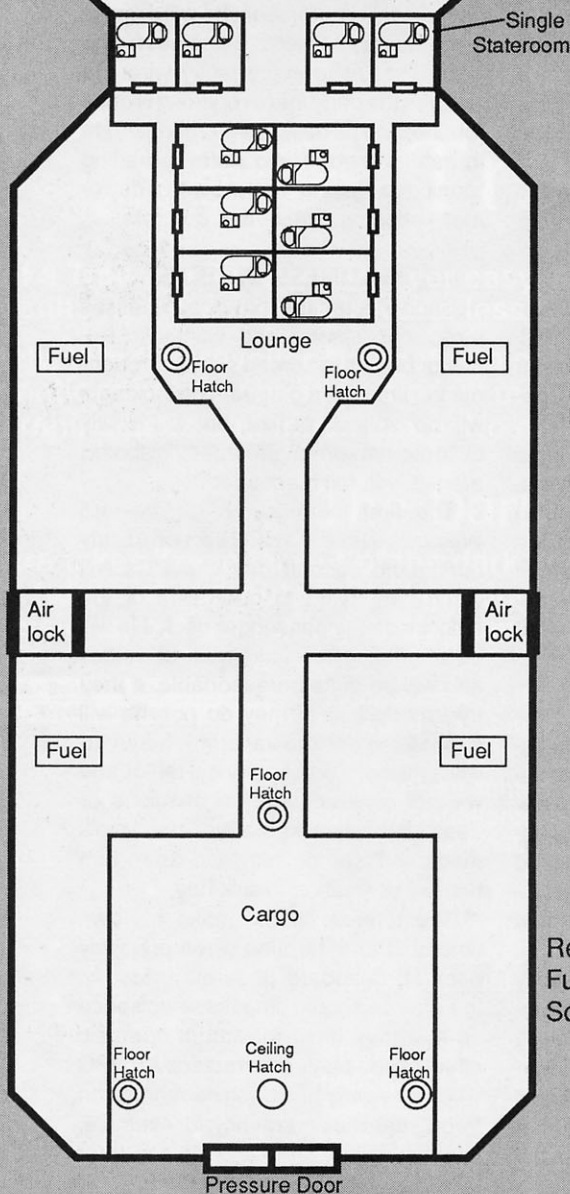
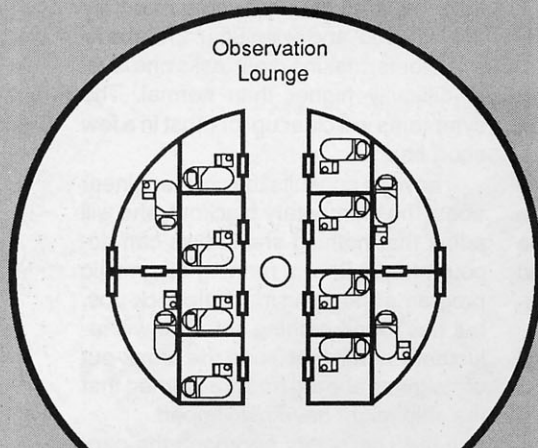
The first to succumb is Maynard Wisniewski (see the NPC section). Early during the second day, the PCs will catch him trying to open one of the airlocks on the passenger deck. He will be mumbling to himself about voices and will be quite unreasonable. If they try to stop him (if they do not, he will expose the deck to vacuum), Maynard will fight them with hysterical fervor and will not give up until unconscious or dead. If he is taken alive, the ship's medic will sedate him and keep him under observation in sick bay.

The referee should make his own timetable to determine when precisely each NPC aboard goes mad. Ideally, the referee should time these episodes so that they have maximum dramatic effect on the player characters. An NPC whom the party has been depending on throughout the emergency, for example, might suddenly snap and try to murder them at a disadvantageous time.

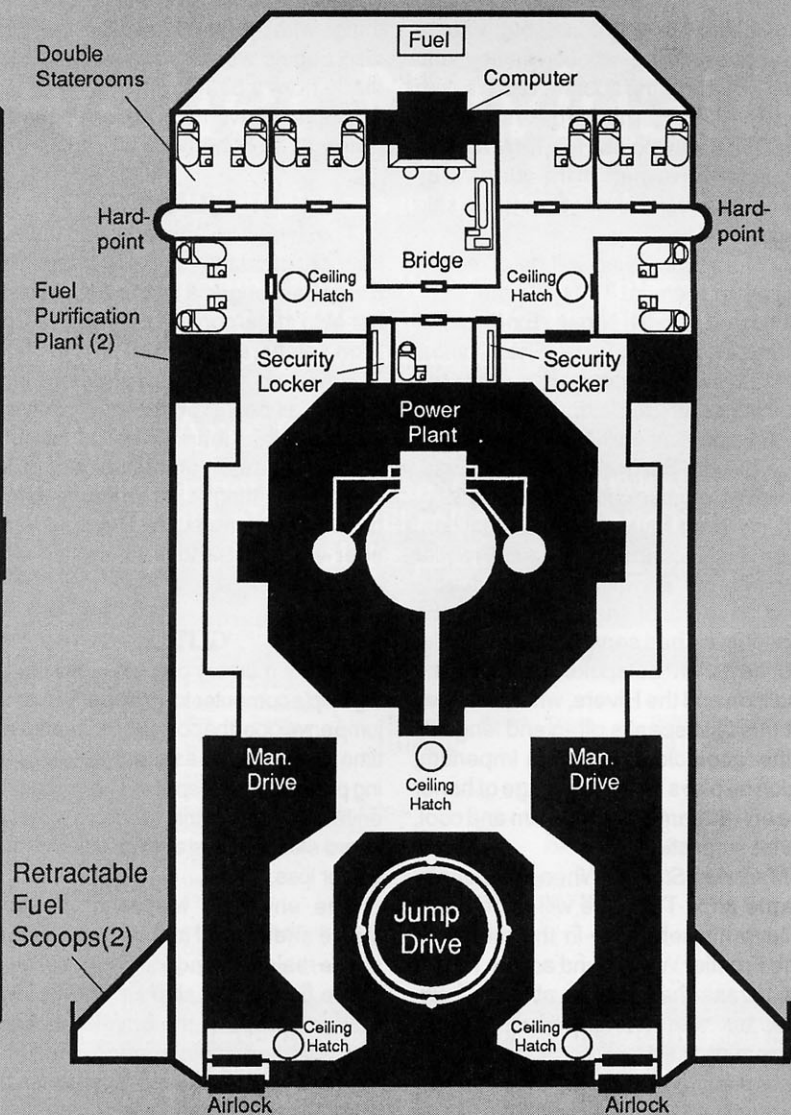
It should also be noted that some of the NPCs' madness might not be readily apparent at first. For example, Sharik Osaka (see the NPC section) will seem

Pride of Vhodan

600-ton subsidized liner (modified)



Deck A
Passengers and Cargo



Deck B
Crew and Operations

perfectly rational when she insists on examinations of the PCs to "get to the bottom of this affliction." Evidence of her insanity will not show until she attempts to operate on an unwilling patient without anesthesia. The intensity and menace of the overall psychoses on board should also be adjusted to reflect the party's individual strength and experience. T'cori N'gai, for example, though at first a mere nuisance, can become a deadly threat if he perceives the party as Zhodani combat troops.

The PCs themselves will not be immune to the effects of the insanity plague. It will constantly be trying to eat away at their minds. Each day, each PC must roll an Average: Constitution task to avoid succumbing to the madness. A success indicates that they are unaffected for that day. A normal failure indicates that all tasks the PC attempts for that day are performed at one level of difficulty higher than normal, due to episodes of mental stress and confusion. If the PC rolls a Catastrophic Failure, he goes instantly mad in a manner determined by the referee. This madness will remain in effect throughout the remainder of the adventure.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Also during this time, mysterious malfunctions will begin to plague the ship. Minor pieces of equipment will either fail to work or function in a completely unexpected manner. Computer screens, for instance, might spontaneously overheat and melt, or a laser pistol might refuse to work even though close examination reveals there is nothing wrong with it.

As the days go by, the weird physical effects become more numerous and more dangerous. The referee should play them as spooky and unnerving. The PCs will never find logical explanations for these; indeed, they are the result of physical laws outside of our experience. Bulkheads begin to undulate and throb; normally inert objects (like chairs) spontaneously explode, melt or fall apart; certain areas of the ship begin to glow with impossible colors. Other possible effects include wildly fluctuating gravity, pockets of airlessness, invisible barriers, malfunctioning computers, visual distortions, elements spontaneously converting into another, odd winds, electrical discharges, and people mysteriously vanishing. The only parts of the ship that will remain immune will be the jump drive (which theoretically is the heart of the jump envelope, where the fraying has not yet reached), the jump envelope projection nodes on the

hull, and their immediate environs to a radius of one meter.

The exact timing and placement of these occurrences are left up to the referee, but like the madness episodes, they should be put to good dramatic effect.

INTO THE FIRE

The first several days after the madness begins, the PCs should have their hands full just surviving and dealing with the crisis. The referee should plan and play out encounters in this time period according to his own tastes. Play the unnerving unreality and alienness of the paradoxical effects, and the macabre, chilling and darkly humorous actions of the insane.

By the fifth day, shipboard organization has completely disintegrated. Over half the people on board will be mad, and no small percentage of the remainder will have been killed. At this time, the chief engineer (the only senior crew member so far unaffected) will attempt to gather anybody on board who is still sane, if the party has not already done so by now.

She will explain to them her findings (see Glitch, above) and the consequences. The ship, which now exists partially in jumpspace, will literally be ripped apart from the stress of re-entry into normal space as it tries to exist in two continuums at once.

However, she has a solution: Since the jump system itself seems largely unaffected by the intrusion of jumpspace, it is possible for her (or an engineering-inclined PC if Arlo goes insane) to correct the flaw in the envelope enough to keep the ship intact. In order to do so, she will need the controls on the bridge, which has been taken over by one of the insane.

BATTLE FOR THE BRIDGE

By this time, Brisby has made an attempt on the captain's life and has barricaded himself alone on the bridge. He has confiscated the best weapons from the ship's locker, probably the PCs' own. (See the NPC section for further details on his madness.) Until now, he has been relatively harmless to the rest of the ship, content with shouting nonsensical orders over the intercom.

The characters will have to bypass or force the complicated lock on the bridge door (a Difficult task of Intrusion) and combat Brisby for control of the ship. Unless the PCs brought something heavier aboard, Brisby will have a BW vest, TL12 visor helmet and a laser rifle-9. He will fight until dead or unconscious.

The PCs might not want to start blast-

ing away recklessly in this assault, as they need the bridge controls intact if they want to put Arlo's plan into action. Every time a character misses with a firearm, the referee should apply the damage to a randomly chosen section of vital bridge controls.

SOLUTIONS

The last day in jumpspace is as tense as it is bizarre. The strange effects are at their worst, and the vast majority of the people aboard are either mad, dead or mysteriously vanished.

Arlo (or a PC if Arlo has gone insane) and anyone assisting her have been working feverishly to repair the jump drive. The referee should have the character in charge roll three Formidable Ship's Engineering tasks in this period and note any failures. Each failure will result in a cumulative -1 die modifier for the final task, below.

In order for the procedure to succeed, it must be initiated in a prearranged sequence on the bridge at the exact moment of re-emergence into normal space. As Arlo will have her hands full in engineering, the characters in this location must make a Difficult Ship's Engineering task to initiate the proper sequence at the right time. The referee must note the degree of success or failure of this task. He must also apply any die modifiers obtained from the earlier repair tasks.

Outstanding Success indicates that the ship has re-emerged fully intact, with all weird effects neutralized. Those people who are dead or missing remain so.

Normal success indicates re-emergence intact, but with minor structural damage to the ship. Apply one minor hit to all major ship's components.

Normal failure indicates re-emergence with major structural damage to all hit locations from the cross-continuum stress.

Catastrophic Failure is as above, except the referee also rolls once on the Critical Hit table for the ship. All aboard suffer 1D20 damage to each hit location.

FINAL NOTES

The *Pride of Vhodan* arrives at its destination at the scheduled time, if perhaps worse for the wear. Help from the local starport will arrive in 1D6 hours after the ship reaches the Aurora system, evacuating the stricken ship and giving emergency medical assistance. The PCs will be taken to the planet's surface for treatment and recovery.

The effects of the madness will fade gradually over the next several days, and those who survived will be back to normal by the end of the week. Ω

Fire, Fusion, & Steel

First Printing to Second Printing Upgrade

by Demented Dave Nilsen

Once upon a time in a sleepy midwestern town, two guys decided that it would be really cool if they put out a book in which they explained how to make every imaginable object in the universe: those already invented, and those not yet invented. While they were at it, they decided that this book would also explain the known (and not yet discovered) physical principles underlying the design of all of these objects. At the time, this seemed to them a Very Good Idea, and they thought that everyone would be very excited to read it.

They were right about people being excited to read it, but unfortunately every imaginable object in the universe was quite a few objects, and the book turned out to be quite a big project. From time to time reality would intrude on their idyllic little world, and they would have to say, "Oh well, there won't be room for all of those imaginable objects after all; I hope the people won't be too disappointed," but then they would return to work, blissfully unaware that they were up to their necks in alligators, and the swamp wasn't getting any smaller, although the point size was.

In the fullness of time, which was less time than they would have liked, but more time than anyone else was willing to let them have, the book went to the printer. When it came back, it was a joy to behold (except for the Evil Page 75, but the less said about that, the better), and everyone in the world bought the book so quickly that it was time to go to a second printing before anyone had a chance to even catch up on their beauty rest.

Because the project was so big, lots of refinements suggested themselves after the book had gone to print. Some of these were corrections of mistakes, some of these were clarifications of difficult or complex concepts, and some of these were actual expanded rules meant to cover new things that the readers would probably find interesting. All of these things went into the second printing of the book, but the second printing was required so quickly that there was only time to complete the manuscript, and not to compile a complete list of all the changes between the two. This was unfortunate, as there was no way to easily tell owners of the first printing what the changes were in the second printing without just telling them to buy the second printing. That is, of course, until now.

This is the **Fire, Fusion, & Steel** First Printing to Second Printing Upgrade. Anyone who owns a first printing **FF&S** can simply use this article to get all of the updated fixes without having to buy the second printing. The second printing is easily recognized by the phrase

Mk I, Mod 1 (January 1994)

on the title page beneath the ISBN and above the GDW logo. Even those who already have both printings may find this article useful, as it will call attention to modifications that might otherwise be overlooked.

Modifications are laid out by page number in first printing **FF&S**, with a characterization of the type of change (Correction, Clarification, etc.). Changed material is underlined like this to make it easy to spot, and references to existing or previous material is often included within quotation marks "like this" to make it easier to spot the material that needs to be modified or replaced.

Page 11

(Correction): All instances of "interior structure" should read internal structure.

(Clarification): **Surface Area:** Surface area in square meters is the hull material volume (after hull form and airframe modifications but without adjustment for hull thickness) multiplied by 100.

Page 12-13

(Rules Expansion): Add the following expanded rules at the end of the Sockets section:

Socket Extenders: Turrets and barbettes may be mounted on extended mounts to achieve better arcs of fire. These are only practical on larger ships. Bays and spinal mounts may not be mounted on extenders.

When mounted on an extender, a turret or barbette has its arc of fire increased by one arc on each side of its normal arc. For example, a turret mounted in hit location 6 of a box hull form would normally have an arc of fire of 2, 3, and 4. If mounted on an extender, it would cover 1-5. Because of location, many arcs of fire will only be increased by one arc. A turret at hit location 5 on the same box hull, normally arcs 1-3, would only be increased to 1-4.

Each extender is a projection from the hull which requires additional armor and internal structure to support it. Each turret extender requires a basic shell volume of 1.43 cubic meters, which is modified by the hull material and thickness values of the spacecraft's hull as calculated in Step 1. It also requires a basic internal structure volume of 1.43 cubic meters, which is modified by the same maximum G and hull material modifiers as the craft's hull.

Barbette extenders require 2.18 cubic meters of basic shell volume and 2.18 cubic meters of basic internal structure volume, also modified by the same hull thickness, G performance, and hull material values of the craft's hull.

Each such extender has a standard turret or barbette socket on the end of it which can accommodate any standard turret or barbette. The structural requirements of the extender itself are required for the spacecraft; no modifications are required for the weapon fitted in it. A spacecraft may mount no more than two turret extenders or one barbette extender per 500 displacement tons of hull. The minimum hull volume for a single turret extender is 250 tons.

Any spacecraft fitted with a turret or barbette extender becomes unstreamlined, regardless of its original hull configuration. Ships equipped with one or more extender are treated as being one target size larger (i.e., small becomes medium, medium becomes large) when being scanned by active sensors.

Page 15

(Clarification): Under Electronics, in the paragraph for ECM systems, modify the following sentence.

"For the radiators, allow 1 minor hit for each whole MW of power allocated to the EMM system (i.e., drop fractional MW)."

Page 16

(Rules Expansion): Add the following expanded rules to the end of the Determine Maintenance Points section:

Note that maintenance points may be temporarily increased by environment (see "Carrier Aircraft" page 30 and TNE page 309). Spacecraft constantly exposed to saltwater use a different multiplier for saltwater corrosion than aircraft do (page 30), a constant value of 1.5, as all spacecraft are sealed. Hybrid spacecraft that use air-breathing engines in atmospheres are also subject to "Atmospheric Performance," page 64.

Page 19

(Correction): Price under the transmission tables should be in Cr, not MCr.

Page 20

(Addition): Under Record Design Features, loaded weight should also include fuel.

Page 21

(Rules Expansion): Add the following expanded rules to the end of the Determine Maintenance Points section:

Note that maintenance points may be temporarily increased by environment (see "Carrier Aircraft" page 30, "Atmospheric Performance," page 64, and TNE page 309). Ground vehicles constantly exposed to saltwater use different multipliers for saltwater corrosion: 3 and 1.5 rather than 5 and 2 (page 30).

Page 23

(Correction): On the additional armor table, the increase per cm for Sides (both) should read 30%, not 15%.

(Clarification): Two paragraphs later, "a moderate slope multiplies the effective armor value of a face by 1.5. A radical slope multiplies the effective armor value of a face by 2."

Page 24

(Clarification): For notes under Suspension table, note labelled "KI" should read Vol and note labelled "MCR" should read Price.

Page 26

(Addition): Under Record Design Features, the paragraphs for Combat Move and Travel Move apply only to grav vehicles. Add the following two paragraphs to each section, respectively:

Combat move (in meters per combat turn) of an air cushion vehicle is maximum speed (kph) \times 0.463 for road speed, and cruising speed \times 0.463 for cross-country speed. Cross-country speed is also its water speed.

Travel moves for an air cushion vehicle (in km per four hours) are 4.32 times its combat move above.

(Rules Expansion): Add the following expanded rules to the end of the Determine Maintenance Points section:

Note that maintenance points may be temporarily increased by environment (see "Carrier Aircraft" page 30, "Atmospheric Performance," page 64, and TNE page 309). Lift vehicles constantly exposed to saltwater use different multipliers for saltwater corrosion: 3 and 1.5 rather than 5 and 2 (page 30).

Page 27

(Correction): On the upper Airship Envelope table, the entry for non-rigid TL-6 Helium should be 0.009, not "0.09." Also, the lower table should read "Useful Lift (Atmosphere 8, 9)" and not "6, 7."

Page 30

(Clarification): Under Carrier Aircraft, modify the following sentence:

"Normal aircraft carried aboard ship (or operating in a tainted atmosphere—referee's discretion) require 5 times their normal MP to remain functional due to saltwater ingestion."

Page 31

(Addition): Add the following paragraph after the third paragraph on the page:

Wing-in-Ground aircraft use either propeller or jet propulsion, but because of the nature of the WIG design and its flight regime, the thrust from these sources is multiplied by 5.

Page 35

(Addition): Add the following section at the end of the page's text:
Determine Maintenance Points: Fixed and rotary-wing aircraft

determine maintenance points just as spacecraft do, except that aircraft do not subtract their hull mass. Airships use the same system, but have their maintenance points calculated from their actual mass (not useful lift), which must first be determined. Multiply the lift envelope volume in displacement tons by the envelope weight from the table on page 27. This is the envelope mass. Add envelope mass to useful lift, and the result is the actual mass.

Note that maintenance points may be temporarily increased by environment (see "Carrier Aircraft" page 30, "Atmospheric Performance," page 64, and TNE page 309).

(Addition): Add the following material to the size table at the foot of the page:

"Diff Mod" column should read, "Target Size Diff Mod." Add a new column, entitled, "Spotting Diff Mod." The new column should have the following values: SM: +2, Mc: +1, VS: —, S: -1, M: -2, L: -3, VL: -4, G: -5.

Page 39

(Addition): Add the following sentence to the end of the Armor Values section:

Armor value 1 has a melee armor value of (2). All armor values of 2+ have melee values equivalent to their listed value.

Page 41

(Corrections): Both tables on this page must be replaced or heavily modified. Replacement tables are shown here and in the box at the foot of this page. Changed values are underlined.

POWERED EXOSKELETONS

TL	SM	MM	MCR	SV	AGL	INIT
10	<u>0.23</u>	<u>0.42</u>	<u>0.11</u>	100	-3	-2
12	0.1	0.23	<u>0.14</u>	100	-2	-1
12	0.2	0.42	<u>0.20</u>	120	-3	-2
14	0.05	0.3	<u>0.21</u>	100	-1	-1
14	0.1	<u>0.58</u>	<u>0.25</u>	120	-2	-2
17	<u>0.04</u>	<u>0.36</u>	<u>0.26</u>	80	—	—
17	<u>0.08</u>	<u>0.7</u>	0.30	100	-1	-1

Page 45

(Correction): The equation for subspace drive speed should read:
 $V = ([MW+D] \times Eff) \times 0.1$

with V: Velocity in parsecs per hour, and

D: Displacement of starship in tons

Page 46

(Correction): The last sentence of the Subspace Drive and Combat section should read:

Spacecraft combat speed in range bands (hexes) per turn is equal to their subspace travel velocity (V, calculated on the previous page) multiplied by 50 (rounding fractional results to the nearest whole number.

Page 48

(Minor correction): Under Terrain-Following Avionics table, the Power note, "Wt" should read Mass.

Page 49

(Minor correction): On the Radio Communicators table, the column labelled "MCR" should be labelled Price.

Page 52

(Changes): In order to fit with the revised spotting procedures presented in the second printing of Traveller: The New Era (Mk I, Mod 1, pages 309-310) the range column of the Visible and Infrared Light Sensors has some changes:

(Continued on page 75)

TECH LEVEL 10 BATTLE DRESS (AGL -3, INIT -2)											
SM	AV	AM	BV	BM	TM	MW	End	SMCr	AMCr	BMCr	TMCr
0.23	4	.042	.0735	.147	.419	.00588	10	.11	.00378	.0002205	.11475
TECH LEVEL 12 LIGHT BATTLE DRESS (AGL -2, INIT -1)											
SM	AV	AM	BV	BM	TM	MW	End	SMCr	AMCr	BMCr	TMCr
0.1	6	.054	.0215	.043	.197	.00322	10	.14	.00513	.0001075	.146
TECH LEVEL 12 HEAVY BATTLE DRESS (AGL -3, INIT -2)											
SM	AV	AM	BV	BM	TM	MW	End	SMCr	AMCr	BMCr	TMCr
0.2	12	.108	.0392	.0784	.3864	.00588	10	.20	.01026	.000196	.2112
TECH LEVEL 14 LIGHT BATTLE DRESS (AGL -1, INIT -1)											
SM	AV	AM	BV	BM	TM	MW	End	SMCr	AMCr	BMCr	TMCr
0.05	8	.036	.084	.21	.296	.0042	100	.21	.00666	.00084	.21825
TECH LEVEL 14 HEAVY BATTLE DRESS (AGL -2, INIT -2)											
SM	AV	AM	BV	BM	TM	MW	End	SMCr	AMCr	BMCr	TMCr
0.1	16	.072	.1624	.406	.578	.00812	100	.25	.01332	.001624	.2657

Oasis in a New Era



*What was once the Oasis subsector
of the Old Imperium is
now home to the isolated survivors of the Collapse.
A New Era article by Greg Videll*

What was once the Oasis subsector of the Old Imperium is now home to the isolated survivors of the Collapse 70 years ago. It is the one bright spot in the midst of the chaotic Wilds of Zarushagar sector and it is home to a pocket empire called the Duchy of Oasis.

Like the HubWorlds, Oasis is offered as an alternative, pocket empire setting for use as is or as inspiration for the referee's own region in which to adventure.

KNOWN SPACE

The term "known space" is commonly used in Oasis subsector to describe the region. As the name implies, nearly everything outside this region remains unknown. It's widely held that most nearby systems died out decades ago, a fact apparently born out by the few exploratory missions conducted thus far. The principal systems and groups of systems which constitute known space are described below.

Duchy of Oasis: The Duchy is the surviving remnant of a 40-odd-world pocket empire founded in the waning days of the Old Imperium. Its six remaining systems managed to maintain contact with each other during the interregnum and over the last 20 years have pooled their resources in order to create a thriving interstellar community. In 1201, the Duchy is the sole regional power and enjoys relative prosperity and security. Its only major opposition remains the vampire fleets haunting the darkness at the edge of civilization. The goal of the pocket empire remains the maintenance, and even expansion, of civilization. Each system enjoys home rule, although the Duchy retains the right to intervene where the rights of individuals are concerned, or where internal conflict threatens.

Oasis is lead by Duchess Elisabeth Olesno, the direct descendant of the pocket empire's founder, Duchess Victoria Olesno. Elisabeth is assisted in her duties by the nobility, which acts as her personal

agents across the Duchy, and the Bureaucracy, which supports the nobility. The capital of the Duchy is Shytek-Oberon (2826 Oasis).

Crown Colonies: Trailing the Duchy are the five systems of the Crown Colonies which hold associate membership in the pocket empire. Each system retains its sovereignty and enjoys the protection of the Duchy. In return, the Colonies have each agreed to conditions regarding trade and the transfer of technology. While the relationship between pocket empire and colonies is peaceful and mutually beneficial, it's not without some friction. The Colonies are covetous of their independence and don't want to be seen as a dumping ground for trade goods or a resource to be exploited. The Duchy for its part doesn't want to give away the fruits of its labors to systems not willing to be full partners in its endeavors. Conflict between the two groups, when it exists, consists of diplomatic and economic posturing. The memories of the time after the Collapse are still too fresh and the threat of vampire fleets too real for either side to even think of anything more serious.

The leading worlds of the Crown Colonies are Romany and Oasis (3129 and 3130 Oasis, respectively).

Usyupkut: Usyupkut (2730 Oasis) is an independent world under the control of the Droyne, an enigmatic race whose world of origin remains unknown. The majority of Droyne on-planet are the descendants of refugees who fled there to escape persecution outside of the Duchy of Oasis during the Final War. Usyupkut is possessed of a modest trade fleet (some of which were moth-balled refugee ships), and Droyne can be found throughout known space pursuing their own, largely hidden, agenda. In recent years they have developed strong ties to Irap and the nation-state of Avalon.

Usyupkut is ruled by Leader of Leaders Askyat.

Irap: Irap (2630 Oasis) was once one of the most densely populated worlds of the Old Imperium. Its population grew to such proportions that

in time, the surface of the tiny world became covered by a single, world-spanning arcology. As can be expected, Irap suffered grievously at the hands of the Virus. Tens of millions died during the Collapse. Oddly enough, though, it was the Virus which saved the planet.

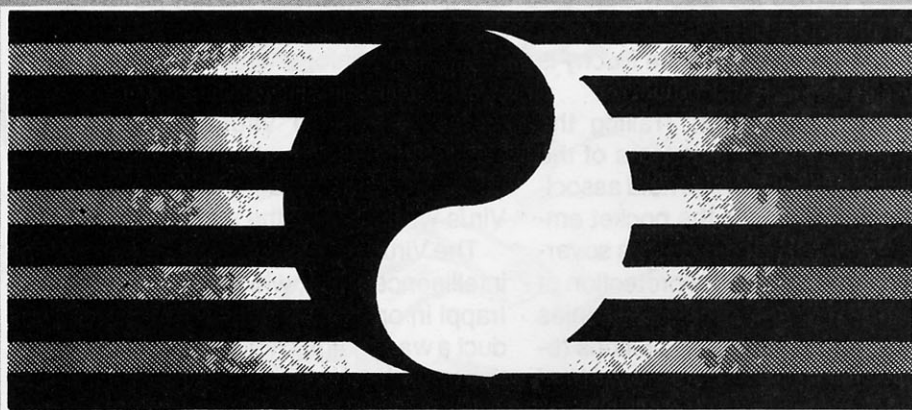
The Virus gave rise to an artificial intelligence, or AI, which saved the Irappi in order to use them to conduct a war against other manifestations of the Virus. The war was rumored to have lasted several years into the time after the Collapse (referred to locally as Durlineal, which means "Failing Light" in Kadli, the language of the Darmines). The AI's war is also generally held to be one of the chief reasons the systems of known space were able to survive into the present day; they were inadvertently protected by the AI. After the war, the AI fell silent for many years for unknown reasons.

During this time, the Irappi set about rebuilding their world hoping to restore it to its former glory. Technical and financial assistance was sought from the recently recontacted Duchy, and then from the Crown Colonies. The rebuilding process continues in 1201, and trade products are already flowing off-world to markets in the Duchy and the Colonies.

Almost a decade ago, the AI again manifested itself, declaring an unpopulated district of Irap to be the sovereign nation-state of Avalon. It initiated diplomatic relations with the human population and has since coexisted peacefully with it. In recent years, robots claiming to be part of Avalon's "consciousness" have begun to travel beyond the district's sealed borders on their own mysterious business. Equally mysterious is the interest the Droyne of Usyupkut have taken in Avalon. A fair percentage of the ships travelling to and from Irap are Droyne owned.

The leader of Irap is referred to only as "His Most Sublime Emata," a hereditary title dating back several thousand years.

Surrounds: In addition to the areas detailed above there are vari-



RULES ADDITIONS

Starships: The following is in addition to the basic rules regarding the acquisition of new starships during character generation. (A new starship is defined as a newly constructed vessel with a wear value of zero.) A character or group of characters which have successfully rolled a ship during mustering out must wait 1D6x4 months before they can actually take possession of the new ship. This is done to simulate the backlog in ship construction common in known space. As per the rules, the applicable local government retains final control of the ship. The only exceptions to this rule are Droyne-built ships as mentioned.

Psionic Characters: In the absence of a more extensive character generation system, the following rules additions are provided for players interested in creating psionically trained PCs. These additions are based on the Regency Psion career found on page 173 of the rules.

Characters trained by the Duchy's Mercury Corps (see above) or military (Navy or Marines) receive the first term skills listed for the Regency Psion career as well as Admin/Legal 2 and History (Duchy) 2. The prerequisites for admission are PSI 5+ and homeworld in the Duchy. The PC is then committed to two terms of either government or military service, whichever is applicable. During subsequent terms, Psionics is added to the subsequent term skill list. He is also subject to recall to active duty until age 60. While in training, the PC gains two contacts from government, intelligence community, law enforcement or military.

Characters trained by the Brotherhood of the Mind receive the first term skills listed for the Regency Psion career as well as Admin/Legal 2 and History (Brotherhood) 2. Prerequisite for admission is PSI 5+. The PC must then serve two terms in the Regency Psion career, representing direct service to the Brotherhood, swear a loyalty oath to the order, observe its ethical tenets and be subject to recall for life. (Additional career terms may be served at the character's discretion.) During subsequent terms in other careers, Psionics is added to the subsequent term skill list. Minders gain two contacts per term from any category while serving the Brotherhood. The Brotherhood uses a different rank structure from that shown on page 173 of the rules. Members are referred to as being Grade N, where N is the rank number attained.

Other psionic training opportunities available to characters, either before or after mustering out, are left to the referee to devise. All applicants for psionic training are mind scanned as a matter of course to ensure their commitment to the training organization's values and goals.

For purposes of calculating starting out money, psionics in known space double the figure given in the Cash Base Value table on page 37 of the rules. This represents the high value placed on psionically trained individuals in the region.

Noble Contacts: As the Duchy of Oasis is feudal in nature, it's possible for PCs to gain contacts who are of noble rank during the character generation process. The procedure for this is the same as that for noble contacts in the Regency as described on page 173 of the rules. Note that unlike the Regency, democratic reforms have not been implemented in the Duchy, and the Imperial style social rank structure remains intact. The Duchy uses the same rank structure as shown on page 21 of the rules.

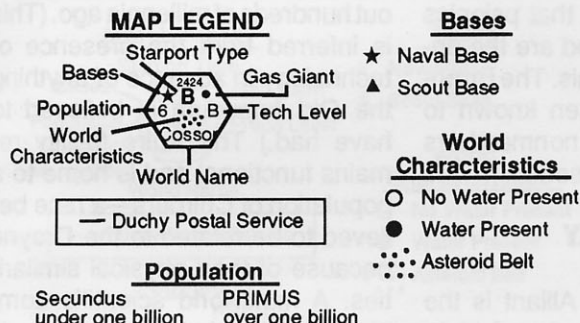
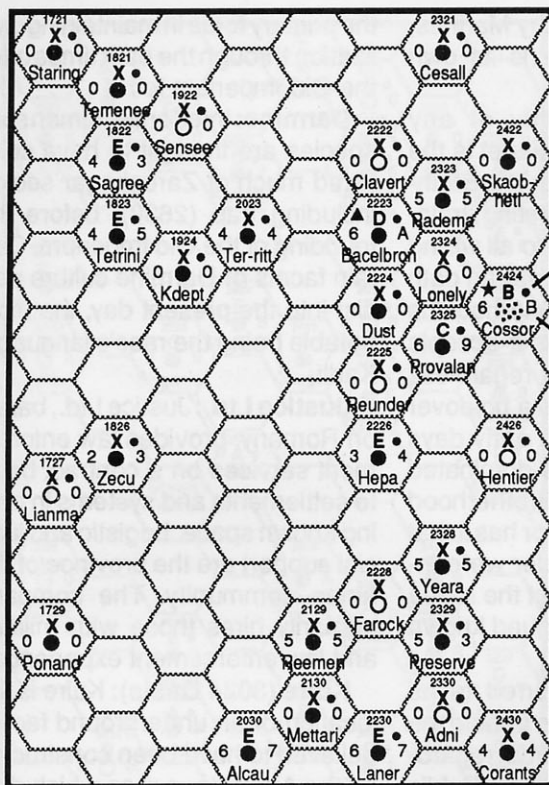
ous individual populated systems. Some are new settlements springing from the Duchy or the Colonies, while others are also survivors of the Collapse. Many are only infrequently visited due to the threat the vampires pose and the limited number of starships in service. As local governments prefer to have all available shipping under their control servicing known space, rather than harking off into the unknown, contact is sporadic.

TRADE AND EXPLORATION

As the New Era begins, known space is experiencing a surge in interstellar travel. Starships are still a valued commodity, but there are now sufficient numbers of them to support self-sustaining trade. In the years leading up to the present, possession of starships was limited to governments and corporations. The total pool of ship owners has since expanded to include a growing number of independent operators as well, although they are still few in number.

The governments of known space, as mentioned above, like to keep "their" ships close to home in order to support interstellar trade. As most systems lack either extensive populations, technological infrastructures or both, it's important to keep the flow of raw materials, finished goods and services moving between systems. This means that known space has few ships to spare for exploration if the budding interstellar economy is to be further developed. The focus at present is primarily on commerce, although this is expected to change in the near future as more resources become available.

More so than in the Old Imperium, there is extensive trade and commerce within star systems. The cost and complexity of building faster-than-light craft initially worked to keep populations close to their homeworlds. Likewise, businesses and investors took advantage of the opportunities closer to home before venturing to the stars. Another factor is a natural caution in 1201 against relying too heavily on



Wolf Subsector

Name	Hex	UWP	Base	Trade	TPPG	Alg	Stellar
Staring	1721	X527000-0	Ba		014	—	M3 V K3 D
Lianma	1727	X730000-0	Ba Po De		004	—	F0 V
Ponand	1729	X636000-0	Ba		014	—	M3 V
Temenee	1821	X475000-0	Ba		004	—	G2 V
Sagree	1822	E796440-3	Lo Ni		605	Wi	F3 V M4 D
Tetrini	1823	E876433-5	Lo Ni		812	Na	K0 V M9 D
Zecu	1826	X652200-3	Lo Ni Po		603	Na	K0 V M8 D
Sensee	1922	X310000-0	Ba		015	—	G4 V M0 D M2 D
Kdept	1924	X625000-0	Ba		023	—	F4 V M2 D
Ter-ritt	2023	X753400-4	Lo Ni Po		603	Wi	F2 V M8 D
Alcau	2030	E897654-7	Ag Ni		500	Na	G2 V
Reemen	2129	X77A501-5	Ni Wa		703	Wi	F2 V
Mettari	2130	X654000-0	Ba		004	—	F1 V M4 D M0 D
Clavert	2222	X230000-0	Ba De Po		014	—	K6 V
Bacelbron	2223	D555687-A	S Ag Ni		614	Na	G3 V M5 D
Dust	2224	X331000-0	Ba Po		024	—	M0 V
Reunder	2225	XAC7000-0	Ba Fl		003	—	M0 V M5 D
Hepa	2226	E485320-4	Lo Ni		701	Wi	G4 V M1 D
Farock	2228	X6A4000-0	Ba Fl		020	—	A3 V
Laner	2230	E465673-7	Ag Ni		404	Wi	G2 V
Cesall	2321	X434000-0	Ba		022	—	K2 V
Radema	2323	X454532-5	Ag Ni		214	Na	G2 V
Lonely	2324	X220000-0	Ba Po De		002	—	M0 V
Provalan	2325	C6786A6-9	Ag Ni		604	Na	F0 V M3 D
Yeara	2328	X644585-5	Ag Ni		504	Wi	M1 V M2 D
Preserve	2329	X469526-3	Ni		R113	Na	K4 V
Adni	2330	X340000-0	Ba Po De		022	—	F3 V
Skaob-heti	2422	X5A4000-0	Ba Fl		003	—	M2 V M2 D
Cossor	2424	B000689-B	N As Na Ni		604	Oa	M1 V M7 D
Hentier	2426	X120000-0	Ba Po De		012	—	M0 V
Corants	2430	X756442-4	Lo Ni		301	Na	G0 V

Notes

Bases: N indicates an Independent Navy (Duchy of Oasis) base; S indicates a surviving Old Imperial Scout Service ground installation.

TPPG: Indicates Travel Zone, Population Multiplier, Planetoid Belts and Gas Giants. Travel zones are determined by the Traveller's Aid Society (TAS). Zones are only sometimes designated for systems in the Wilds.

Alg is the Allegiance column. Na=Nonaligned system, Oa=Duchy of Oasis. A "—" indicates allegiance is not applicable due to a lack of population.

Communication Routes: The heavy lines linking systems represent communication routes serviced by the Duchy Postal Service. These routes are also common trade and transport routes for regular commercial traffic.

The Wolf subsector contains 31 systems with a total population in 1201 of 25.8 million. The highest population is 6 million at Bacelbron, Provalan and Cossor. The highest tech level is B at Cossor.

other systems to supply needed goods and materials. This was a factor which caused many worlds to fail after the Collapse. Finally, unlike starships, spacecraft can be privately owned in many systems, allowing freedom-loving individuals a chance to avoid government entanglements.

Still, there's profit to be made and prestige to be gained by going beyond a single system. Thus, the peoples of known space continue to reach for the stars.

Note: The Droyne have begun to sell a limited number of starships per year outright to select individuals. They retain no control over the vessels sold and usually require 50% down. (The rest is financed through the Usyupkan government.) Despite the high cost of acquiring such a ship, there's no lack of applicants.

PSIONICS

After the Collapse, the previously illegal practice of psionics became a tool for survival. This was especially true on Shiganisa (2725 Oasis) where conditions were particularly harsh. Unfortunately, psionics were also exploited for personal and political gain by unscrupulous individuals and groups. Once the threat was recognized for what it was, psionics and nonpsionics alike joined together to eradicate the problem. What followed was a short, if intense, period of conflict in the post-Collapse history of the region. In the New Era, it's generally believed that all of the criminal psions from that time were either killed or died in exile. In 1201, safeguards are in place to guard against the rise of rogue psionics.

The Duchy and most worlds with sizable populations maintain their own stable of "wild talent" to guard against potential psionic despots and criminals. These worlds routinely test for psionic abilities and offer lucrative incentives to accept government employment. The Duchy's Mercury Corps, for example, trains psionics and then assigns them to posts within the pocket empire's various services. (The only exceptions are the Inde-

pendent Navy and Duchy Marines, each of which maintains its own special service arms.)

Acting independently of any single government or planet is the Brotherhood of the Mind. The Brotherhood offers psionic testing, training and job placement to all willing to join its ranks and swear an oath of fealty. The term "Brotherhood" is actually a misnomer as it accepts all qualified applicants regardless of gender. The name is a holdover from the organization's early days on predominantly male-dominated Shiganisa, where the Brotherhood is headquartered. Rumor has it that the founders of the order were instrumental in rooting out the rogue psionics who once plagued known space.

Members, often referred to as Minders, are required to uphold the highest ethical standards regarding the use of their abilities. Public opinion and the fear that psionics will again be outlawed are the primary motivation for this. The Brotherhood has also been known to police the activities of nonmembers for just the same reason.

LIBRARY DATA

Alliant Systems: Alliant is the Duchy's premier supplier of high-tech products and its leading ship-builder. The corporation is headquartered on Shytek-Oberon, although it also maintains branch offices throughout known space. Alliant has been actively campaigning for, and has won, many contracts for reclamation projects on Irap. The corporation is considered the leader in cutting-edge technologies in the Duchy.

Cossor (2424 Wolf): Cossor is a mineral-rich asteroid belt which maintains close ties to the Duchy. (It's been a member system since before the Collapse.) Although it is located outside Oasis subsector, the people of the belt are strongly loyal to the pocket empire. Cossor is the Duchy's major base for guarding spinward known space as well as a jumping-off point for exploration. The Independent Navy carries a lot of pull in the system as it was

the primary force in maintaining civilization through the dark times after the Old Imperium fell.

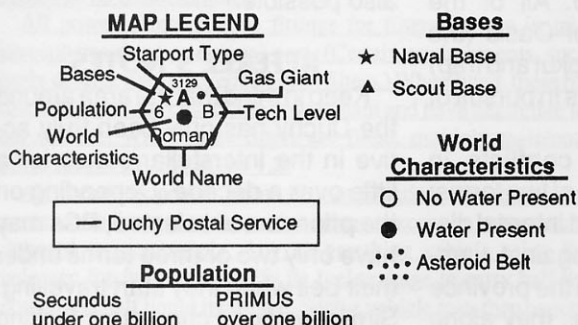
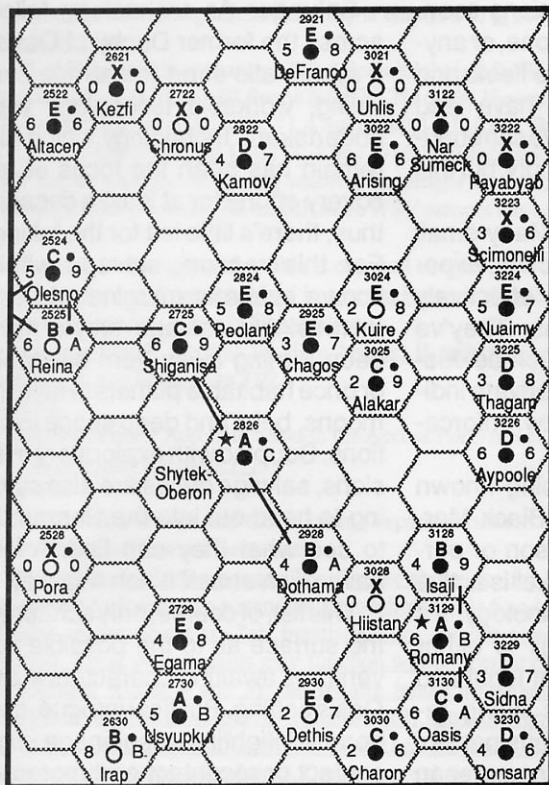
Darmine: Infertile human subspecies are thought to have colonized much of Zarushagar sector, including Irap (2630), before the founding of the Old Imperium. Certain facets of Darmine culture persist into the present day, the most notable being the race's language, Kadli.

Justice Ltd.: Justice Ltd., based on Romany, provides law enforcement services on a contract basis to settlements and systems in trailing known space. Logistic and judicial support are the province of the hiring community. The company primarily hires those with military and law enforcement experience.

Kuire (3024 Oasis): Kuire is the location of an underground facility believed to have been constructed by the Ancients, a race which died out hundreds of millennia ago. (This is inferred from the presence of technology in advance of anything the Old Imperium is believed to have had.) The Kuire facility remains functional and is home to a population of Chirpers—a race believed to be related to the Droyne because of their physical similarities. A multiworld scientific combine, which administers Kuire, is engaged in studying both the facility and its population.

Peth: Alien race native to Peolanti (2824 Oasis). The Peth are descended from the dominant life-form of the planet's prehistoric seas. Climatic shifts caused the seas to dry up, forcing the Peth onto the land and the road to intelligence. The Peth were instrumental in assisting the human population to survive Peolanti's exotic environment after the Collapse. Since the Collapse, Peolanti has balkanized into numerous human-only, Peth-only and mixed human-Peth nations.

Travellers Aid Society (TAS): Much as its predecessor did in the Old Imperium, TAS has amassed a wealth of information regarding the worlds of known space, making it easier to travel and conduct business. The Traveller News Service



Oasis Subsector

Name	Hex	UWP	Base	Trade	TPPG	Alg	Stellar
Altacen	2522	E799647-6	Ni		303	Na	F2 V
Olesno	2524	C88A533-9	Ni Wa		613	Oa	G5 V
Reina	2525	B660-677-A	Ni Ri De		703	Oa	K4 V
Pora	2528	X430000-0	Ba Po De		024	—	M0 V
Kezfi	2621	X322000-0	Ba Po		002	—	G9 V
Irap	2630	B1008A9-B	Va		702	Na	K0 V
Chronus	2722	X310000-0	Ba Po		001	—	M3 V
Shiganisa	2725	C4416BB-9	Ni Po		704	Oa	G2 V M0 D
Egama	2729	E775440-8	Lo Ni		602	Na	F1 V M8 D
Usyupkut	2730	A886554-B	Ag An Dw Ni		903	Na	F5 V M8 D
Kamov	2822	D4574AC-7	Lo Ni		824	Na	G3 V
Peolanti	2824	E76457A-8	Ni		A603	Na	F1 IV
Shytek-Oberon	2826	A867887-C	N	Cp Ri	714	Oa	F0 V M4 D M6 D
DeFranco	2921	E541530-8		Ni Po	401	Na	F1 V
Chagos	2925	E776310-7		Cm Lo Ni	214	Na	G4 V
Dothama	2928	B584451-A		Lo Ni RsΣ	402	Oa	K4 V
Dethis	2930	E110240-7		Cm Lo Ni	202	Na	G4 V
Uhlis	3021	X210000-0		Ba	014	—	G8 V M3 D
Arising	3022	E565677-6		Ag Ni Ri	305	Na	K7 II
Kuire	3024	E140214-8		An Cm C8 Lo Ni	223	Na	G0 IV
Alakar	3025	C575212-9		Cm Lo Ni	103	Na	M2 V M2 D
Hiistan	3028	X410000-0		Ba	000	—	K4 V
Charon	3030	C543224-6		Cm Lo Ni Po	505	Na	K3 V
Nar Sumeck	3122	X522000-0		Ba Po	022	—	F0 V M7 D
Isaji	3128	B9E5436-9		Lo Ni	913	Cr	G4 V M1 D
Romany	3129	A786625-B	N	Ag Ni	904	Cr	F2 V
Oasis	3130	C656644-A		Ag Ni	804	Cr	F2 V M0 D
Payabyab	3222	X938000-0		Ba	003	—	F7 V M9 D
Scimonelli	3223	X667343-6		C8 Lo Ni	604	Na	F3 V M0 D
Nuaimy	3224	E68A575-7		Ni Wa	A502	Na	F2 V M4 D
Thagam	3225	D645357-8		Lo Ni	600	Na	F4 V
Aypoole	3226	D459695-6		Ni	405	Na	K1 V
Sidna	3229	D486359-7		Lo Ni	800	Cr	G0 V
Donsam	3230	D766402-6		Lo Ni	303	Cr	K4 V

Notes

An: Ancient Site; Cp: Capital; Dw: Droyne World; RsΣ: Former Imperial Research Station Sigma (now owned by the Duchy of Oasis). C(n) indicates percentage of the population figure multiplied by ten which is Chirper.

Bases: N indicates an Independent Navy (Duchy of Oasis) base.

TPPG: Indicates Travel Zone, Population Multiplier, Planetoid Belts and Gas Giants. Travel zones are determined by the Traveller's Aid Society (TAS). Zones are only sometimes designated for systems in the Wilds.

Alg is the Allegiance column. Cr=Crown Colony (an associate system of the Duchy of Oasis), Oa=Duchy of Oasis. A "—" indicates allegiance is not applicable due to a lack of population.

Communication Routes: The heavy lines linking systems represent communication routes serviced by the Duchy Postal Service. These routes are also common trade and transport routes for regular commercial traffic. Service to systems not on these routes is less frequent, less dependable and confined to the Crown Colonies.

The Oasis subsector contains 34 systems with a total population in 1201 of 1.45 billion. The highest population is 800 million and the highest tech level is C, both at Shytek-Oberon.

General Note: Refer to the Governments Table on **Traveller: The New Era** page 188 for the description of all governments in the Wolf and Oasis subsectors. Ω

Refer to "Undercity," also in this issue of **Challenge**, for an exciting adventure on Irap.

is known far and wide as an impartial, unbiased source of news and information. Much of what the Society has learned is disseminated to the public for a modest fee.

Perhaps the greatest resource TAS possesses is its membership, a diverse cross section of beings from the entire subsector. While there is much information contained in the society's data banks, members are often privy to knowledge recorded nowhere else as they are the ones who have seen and done the interesting and unusual.

TAS facilities can be found throughout the region, primarily in systems with A- or B-class starports but increasingly in other places as well. The organization is headed by Subsector Manager Nile Odawara.

Unicor: Unicor is a massive vertical conglomerate encompassing everything from the acquisition of raw materials to a wide array of finished products. It's the largest corporation in the Crown Colonies and operates the only other human-owned shipyard in known space. Unicor is based on Romany and, like Alliant Systems, maintains various facilities throughout the region.

ADVENTURES IN OASIS

The Oasis setting offers a number of adventuring possibilities.

Diplomacy: Interaction between various systems, in the form of trade or technology transfer agreements, for example, could easily bring characters into contact with other societies and races. In addition to diplomatic initiatives between human worlds, there's also the possibility of contact with the Droyne, the Peth of Peolanti, enigmatic Avalon with its intelligent robots or any of the other alien races of known space.

Exploration: Characters wishing to get in on the ground floor of interstellar exploration will find Oasis an excellent place from which to start. Only a relative handful of missions have thus far been conducted into the Surrounds. TAS, the Duchy's Pathfinders, the pocket empire's scout service, as well as independent organizations are slated to be-

gin a whole raft of missions soon. Lack of contact with anyone, or anything, other than vampire fleets and a few surviving worlds have lead nearly everyone to believe surrounding space is relatively empty, but this is by no means sure.

Law Enforcement: Many small colonies lack the manpower, experience base or both to effectively police their populations. They've turned to companies such as Justice Ltd. (see above) or private individuals to meet their law enforcement needs.

Another problem facing known space is the so-called Black Market. Operated by a person or persons unknown, the market is active in the theft of high technology. It's believed the technology is either being sold in defiance of legal and trade restrictions or is being reverse engineered by businesses and individuals looking to garner an economic advantage. All of the major governments of Oasis (the Duchy, Romany, Usyupkut and Irap) have fielded operatives in pursuit of the Black Market.

Military: Military conflicts in known space take one of two forms: vampire fleet raids and internal dissension. Defending against vampire incursions remain the province of the major powers as they alone have the resources to directly combat the problem. However, on occasion major governments have issued letters of marque and reprisal to private ship owners to hunt vampire craft. Such privateers are always closely watched lest they become a threat.

Not surprisingly, the Collapse caused sweeping changes on many worlds. Some of these systems are still feeling these changes, which has lead to internal conflict. Border incidents on Peolanti and general unrest on Nuaimy (3224 Oasis) are examples of active trouble spots in the present day. Mercenaries, used as both troops and military trainers, are actively employed on both worlds. Last, experienced personnel can also find work training local militias or as contingency forces on worlds where a standing military is a matter of pride.

Salvage: As technology failed across the former Duchy of Oasis, a systematic effort to salvage surviving, workable technology was undertaken. Technology which did remain has been the focus of recovery efforts for at least a decade; thus, there's little left for the taking. For this reason, salvage within known space is marginal at best. Increasingly salvage crews have been turning away from habitable or once habitable planets in favor of moons, belts and deep space locations. Coupled with exploratory missions, salvage crews are also starting to head out into the Surrounds to see what they can find. A few have even struck it rich this way.

This list, of course, only scratches the surface as to the possible adventures awaiting characters in the Oasis setting. Political intrigue, corporate infighting, espionage, first contact or recontact and more are also possible.

REFEREE'S NOTES

Keep in mind that the area around the Duchy has only been truly active in the interstellar sense for a little over a decade. Depending on the prior career selected, PCs may have only two or three terms under their belt when they start travelling. Similarly, those characters looking to serve in an organization which is interstellar in scope must look to the Duchy for employment. This has its advantages as the Duchy is the most technologically sophisticated power in the region and that Oasis offers citizenship to all who serve in its ranks. A major corporation or other business could also be used in place of the Duchy should a character wish a career where travelling is involved. While other powers, most notably the Crown Colonies, have their own planetary services, they're more limited in what they do.

CONCLUSION

For those players and referees interested in playing in a New Era pocket empire setting, the Oasis subsector has much to recommend it. From here it's up to you to chart the course of known space. Ω

Notation "IE" (Image Enhancement) is changed to II for Image Intensification.

TL-4 Headlight is unchanged, TL-4 Searchlight is 2.0, TL-5 AIR Searchlight is 1.0, TL-6 AIR Scope is 0.03*, TL-6 PIR Viewer is 0.1, TL-7 AIR Goggles is 0.03*, TL-7 LA Scope is 0.1, TL-8 PIR Goggles is 0.1, TL-8 LA Scope is 0.1, the TL-8 and -9 IE Viewer/Scopes have their names changed to II, but retain their ranges of 0.25, TL-9 Imaging Radar is unchanged, and all three WSV sensors have a short range of 0.4.

The note to the right of the table is changed to read:

Volume in cubic meters, Mass in tonnes, Range indicates short range in kilometers. Asset is Observation.

*Range is with integral IR light beams. If working with IR searchlight, use TNE, page 310.

Page 62

(Convenience): Add note beneath the Access Ports table:

For Air locks, see page 77.

Page 64

(Rules Expansion): Add the following expanded rules to the end of the Chemical Power Plants section:

Atmospheric Performance: The figures above are for power plants built to function in a standard atmosphere (code 6 and 7). All of these power plants are "air breathers," i.e., require oxygen to function. These power plants may function without penalty in thin atmospheres (codes 4 and 5), but require intake compressors to function in very thin atmospheres (codes 2 and 3). Intake compressors add 20% to the volume of the power plant (and mass and price are figured on this increased volume). Dense atmospheres (codes 8 and 9) require no modifications.

All power plants include fittings for filters for use in tainted atmospheres at no additional cost. (Certain environments, such as sandy deserts, may also require such filters.) When fitted, these filters cost 0.01 times the cost of the power plant and have negligible mass and volume. While these filters are fitted, multiply maintenance points (pages 21, 26, 34) by 1.2.

Air breathing power plants do not function in vacuum, trace, exotic, corrosive, or insidious atmospheres except by using their own on-board oxygen supply. Any air-breathing vehicle using liquid hydrogen for fuel may modify its fuel tankage to carry half liquid oxygen and half liquid hydrogen. Such a vehicle may then operate in vacuum, trace, exotic, corrosive, or insidious atmospheres, or in tainted atmospheres without filters, as it has no need for external sources of oxygen. However, its rate of fuel consumption is doubled.

This modification costs Cr50 per cubic meter of fuel capacity, and does not prevent the vehicle from using the full tank for liquid hydrogen for normal external oxygen operations.

(Correction): Delete the "Fuel" note beneath the Fuel Cells table.

Page 66

(Rules Expansion): Add in the TL-17 to 21 lines to the Batteries table:

TL	Description	MW	Mass	MCR
17	Storage Batteries	4	2.5	0.025
18	Storage Batteries	6	3	0.03
19	Storage Batteries	8	4	0.04
20	Storage Batteries	10	5	0.05
21	Storage Batteries	12	6	0.1

Page 69

(Clarification): Under Maneuver Drive design, when dividing thrust (in tonnes) by mass (in tonnes) to determine acceleration in Gs, round fractions down.

Page 70

(Addition): Add the following sentence to the end of the FT note:

Note that at TL 7+, any thruster which burns hydro-carbon distillates (HCD) may be designed to burn liquid hydrogen (LHyd) at no cost or energy penalty (the penalty is the vastly greater volume needed by LHyd).

(Convenience): To avoid flipping back to page 63 and converting, add a Price column to the Fuel type table in Credits per cubic meter.

HCD is 250, LRF is 1000, SRF is 2000, HRF is 1000, and LHyd is 35. Add a note beneath the table: Fuel Price: In credits per cubic meter.

(Rules Expansion): Add the following expanded rules between the fuel table and the Airframe section:

Air-Breathing Engines: Air-breathing engines include turbojets, ramjets, turbofans, and AZHRAE when operating in its turbojet and ramjet modes. These are subject to the same limitations in vacuum, thin and tainted atmospheres as air-breathing powerplants are, and have compressors, filters, and liquid oxygen added using the same rules. See "Atmospheric Performance" on page 64. An AZHRAE-equipped aircraft can get around these restrictions simply by using its rocket mode at all times. Note that all rocket fuels (LRF, SRF, and HRF) contain their own oxidizers and ignore these air-breathing penalties.

Page 75

The missing data from this page was corrected in FF&S first printings by the insertion of a replacement page.

Page 76

(Correction): Under Afterburn, replace the second sentence with the following:

This increases thrust by 50% and increases fuel consumption by 0.2 kiloliters per hour per MW of power devoted to thrust.

Page 80

(Changes): The changes on this page were made to bring these cybernetic vision devices into line with the revised spotting procedures presented in the second printing of Traveller: The New Era (Mk I, Mod 1). See pages 309-310 of this book for further details of this system. The following changes/additions are presented by option type.

Telescopic: Add this sentence to the end of the entry: This provides a +1 to the character's Observation asset.

Passive Infrared: Change short range to 100 meters from "30." Delete sentence referring to smoke, dust, rain, and snow.

Star Eyes: Change title to "Star Eyes (Light Amplifiers)." Change short range to 100 meters from "120."

Color Enhancement: Replace the last two sentences of this entry with the following sentence:

"Color enhancement is useful only in daylight and clear visibility, and adds +1 to the owner's Observation asset."

High Resolution Thermal (HRT): Change the entry to read as follows:

"Thermal Viewer: The thermal viewer, also called HRT (for high-resolution thermal) is an advanced form of passive infrared with a short range of 400 meters. HRT can see clearly through most forms of smoke, but is affected by rain or snow."

The last sentence remains unchanged.

Image Enhancement: Change name to Image Intensification, and change entry to read as follows:

"Image intensification not only magnifies but also sharpens focus and contrast, making visual recognition easier. Image intensification also adds the light-amplifying ability of star eyes. Image intensifiers add 2 to the Observation asset of the character, and have a short range of 250 meters."

The last sentence remains unchanged.

Wide-Spectrum Visual (WSV): Change the sentence about short range to read, "It adds 2 to the character's Observation asset and has a short range of 400 meters."

Page 89

(Clarification): In the notes under the Stabilization table, the MCR note should read:

"Price, in millions of credits, of the stabilization gear is the mass, in tonnes, of the stabilized weapon times this decimal."

Page 93

(Correction): In the ammunition weight formula, the term "Awc" should read, Awm.

(Addition): Add to the Special Ammunition section the following two passages:

Shotgun: Shotgun shells are the standard ammunition for shot-

guns, just as ball is for slug-firing rifles. Shotgun shells contain a quantity of round shot which expands in a pattern to allow greater hit probability. The number of rounds in a shell (which must be a multiple of four), determine the way that the shell's fire is resolved. A four-round shell is resolved as a three dice burst, an eight-round shell as a five dice burst, and a 12-round shell as a 10 dice burst (see TNE page 279). More rounds than these use combinations of the above, for example, a 16-round shell is resolved as a 10 dice and a three-dice burst fired at the same time, a 24-round burst as two 10-dice bursts, etc.

Like ball, shotgun shells are calculated above and do not have a further price multiplier.

Flechette: Flechette rounds are like shotgun shells, except that the multiple rounds are carefully machined, finned darts with superior penetrative and ballistic performance. The number of flechettes in a round and the way that their hits are resolved are identical with the method for shotgun shells, above.

Flechette rounds are not available before tech level 5. Price for Flechette rounds is multiplied by 5.

Page 94

(Clarifications): Several clarifications were added to clarify the relationships between single-shot, shotgun, and flechette penetration ratings.

Under Actual Muzzle Energy, make these additions to this paragraph:

"If a multiple-bullet round (i.e., shotgun shells and flechette rounds) is fired from the weapon, divide the actual muzzle energy of the round by the number of bullets in the round to determine the energy of each bullet. This is the figure used when calculating damage, penetration, and range for the multiple-round bullets."

Under the penetration table in the right-hand column, make the following additions to the first two paragraphs:

"Shotguns are an exception to this, as their bullets tend to be heavier but slower-moving. All shotgun bullets (both single slugs and multiple-projectile bullets) have a penetration of 3-4-5. (Note, however, that since multiple-projectile shotgun rounds cannot fire beyond medium range, buckshot penetration is effectively 3-NA-NA.) This applies only to shotgun slugs or shells. Flechettes (even those fired from shotguns) calculate penetration normally using the per-flechette energy."

(Note that the very high short-range damage of multiple-bullet shotgun shells and flechette rounds is caused by multiple-bullet hits, each with a lower damage value. In most cases the penetration of multiple bullets from a shotgun will be Nil because the penetration of each individual bullet is Nil, but see the discussion of penetration four paragraphs below for possible special cases.)"

Modify the last paragraph of this section (immediately above the Receiver section) as follows:

"For multiple bullet rounds, calculate the penetration of each bullet separately. If this results in a penetration other than Nil, it will be necessary to calculate the damage of each bullet at short range. Rather than being resolved as one single round at short range, a rolled hit means that 75% of the bullets have hit the target and are each resolved with their individual damage and penetration performance."

Page 96

(Clarification): On the configuration multiplier table, change the bottom entry to read, "Smoothbore single-shot***" with the notation:

***Shotgun single slug rounds, but not multiple-shot rounds.

(Addition): Add the following new section immediately above the beginning of the Feed System section:

Final Short Range: Once short range is computed (after all modifications for sights, mounts, etc.), if it is greater than 20 meters, round it to the nearest 10 meters. (However, retain the "iron sight" range without rounding—see "Advanced Sights," page 98.) Short ranges less than 20 meters are retained without rounding.

Page 97

(Addition): Add the following sentence to the end of the Box Magazine section:

Maximum box magazine capacity is 200 for rounds massing 15 g or less, and 100 for heavier rounds.

Page 98

(Rules Expansion): Add the following expanded rules after the Grenade Adapter section:

Non-Metallic Weapons: Weapons may be made from all non-metallic components to make them easier to conceal. Multiply price of all components (including ammunition, magazines, sights, recoil reduction equipment, etc.) by 3.

Page 101

(Improvement): In the Gauss Weapon sidebar, modify the first sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

"The bullet (or, more often, a discarding sabot wrapped around a slimmer round) has two projectile coils..."

Page 102

(Correction): The formula for calculating the weight of a gauss round is in error. Substitute the following correct formula:

$$W_a = .02\pi r^3$$

Page 103

(Correction): Under Stocks, delete the references to carbine stocks.

(Correction): On configuration modifier table, Bullpup Cm should be 0.9, not "1.1."

(Addition): Add the following new section immediately above the beginning of the Feed System section:

Final Short Range: Once short range is computed (after all modifications for sights, mounts, etc.), if it is greater than 20 meters, round it to the nearest 10 meters. (However, retain the "iron sight" range without rounding—see "Advanced Sights," page 104.) Short ranges less than 20 meters are retained without rounding.

Page 104

(Addition): Add the following sentence to the end of the Box Magazine section:

Maximum box magazine capacity is 200 for rounds massing 15 g or less, and 100 for heavier rounds.

Page 109

(Correction): Under Mortars, replace point "B" with the following:

B. Weight: Calculate mortar weight by multiplying bore size (in cm) by barrel length (in cm) by 0.02. This is the tube weight in kg. Multiply tube weight by 1.6 to get man-portable carriage weight (baseplate and bipod only) or by 2 to get wheeled, towable carriage weight.

(Addition): Under Mortars, add the following point "C", and re-letter the existing C as D and D as E.

C. Crew: Figure crew as if the mortar were a direct fire weapon.

Pages 120-122

(Correction): Change all instances of "Pp" and "Pulse power" to Ep and Pulse energy, respectively. Also, on page 121, the discussion of carriage weight should refer to pulse energy, not "muzzle energy."

(Addition): In the box magazine notes on page 121, add: Empty magazines cost Cr10 per kilogram, rounding fractions up.

(Corrections): On page 122, the recoil formula should be replaced with the following:

$$R = \{[(150\sqrt{E}) + Ww] + 4\} \times Rcm$$

Under Bulk, Mf should read Unloaded mass, not "Loaded mass."

Page 126

(Clarification): Add the following sentence after the first sentence of the Discharge Energy section:

(In the weapons ratings, this is usually referred to as the "pulse.")

Page 127

(Clarification): Under Using Gravitic Focusing, add the following to Point 4:

"The result is the laser's focal value F. Multiply F by the proper range factor for the tech level to get the laser's effective range in kilometers."

Page 128

(Improvement): Replace the sentence, "Round results of 299

meters to 300" with the following:

Final short range should be rounded to the nearest 10 meters if greater than 20. Short ranges less than 20 meters are retained unrounded. (Iron sight ranges are also retained without rounding.)

Page 129

(Correction): Under Personnel Damage Dice, the equation " $50\sqrt{Mj}$ " should be changed to $50\sqrt{I}$.

Page 131

(Clarification): When converting volume of CLC chemicals from one scale to another, note also that one cubic meter = 1000 liters and 1 liter = 1000 cubic centimeters.

Units used with the equation to calculate radius of the CLC cartridge based on its volume are volume in cubic centimeters (yielding radius in centimeters) or cubic meters (yielding radius in meters).

Page 132

(Clarification): Under CLC Laser Ammunition Feed, modify the second paragraph as follows:

"The maximum CLC cartridge feed rate is five cartridges per five-second turn (but this may be limited by combustor size). This is sufficient for full semiautomatic fire. In order to achieve automatic ROF levels, multiple laser pulses are extracted from a single CLC cartridge. Burst size can be 3, 5, 10, or 50, depending upon the amount of energy stored in the cartridge."

Page 133

(Correction): The first sentence of the second paragraph should read:

"The weight of a tripod is equal to the fully loaded weight of the laser times 0.5..."

Page 134

(Addition): Beneath the Optic Sights table, note that all DEI lasers automatically incorporate laser sights.

Page 139

(Correction): The Burst calculation for HEAP warheads should read as follows:

"The burst radius of a HEAP warhead is calculated with the formula for HE warheads, but using the HEAP concussion calculated above."

Page 141

(Addition): On the special rounds table, add as asterisk (*) to the last entry, "Mortar," and add mortar to propelled grenades and recoilless rifle rounds in the note.

(Correction): Under volume, change the sentence to the following:

"The volume of a warhead in cubic meters for purposes of storage is equal to the mass of the warhead in tonnes ÷ 5."

(Addition): In the notes beneath the Price table, add mortar rounds to propelled grenades and recoilless rifle rounds as having their propellant cost included in their basic cost.

Page 142

(Correction): Under Hand Grenades, the example grenades should mass 0.35 (not 0.46) kg, and cost Cr3.5 (not 4.6), and the Burst (B) should be rounded to 15 (not "12").

Page 147

(Correction): in the Indirect Fire range formula and the notes beneath, the term "Rc" should be Rs.

(Addition): At the end of the Length section, add:

The length of an attached grenade launcher must be less than or equal to the barrel length of the small arm to which it will be attached.

Page 148

(Correction): Under Price, the Action modifier (Am) values are missing. They are:

Single shot = 250, Pump = 100, Semiautomatic = 200, Automatic = 100.

Page 150

(Addition): Under Direct Fire Rocket Launchers, Range, make the following addition:

The short range of a reloadable rocket launcher is the maximum design range of the rocket fired by the launcher divided by 8, but may not exceed 200.

Also, add the following passage at the end of this section:

F. Bulk: Calculate as for energy weapons (page 122) but treat results greater than 12 as 12.

Page 151

(Addition): Add the following passage to the end of the Recoilless Rifles section:

I. Bulk: Calculate as for energy weapons (page 122) but treat results greater than 12 as 12.

Page 153

(Addition): Add the following note to those beneath the Sample Space Missiles table:

Standard missiles have a volume of 7 cubic meters (1/2 displacement ton).

Page 155

(Corrections): Make the following changes in the Stocks section, and, where appropriate, in the final summary section:

All references to a "7x46mm" round should be changed to 7x30mm.

Range: Ball: 81, DS: 97, HE/HEAP: 61, Tranq: 30.

SR = $\sqrt{ECmBlm} = 69.303679 \times 1.17 \times 1 = 81.085305 = 81$

DS: $81 \times 1.2 = 97.2 = 97$

HE/HEAP: $81 \times 0.75 = 60.75 = 61$

Cm: $0.9 \times 1.3 = 1.17$

Page 156

(Corrections): Make the following changes to the 7mm ACR tables at the top of the page. All references to a "7x46mm" round should be changed to 7x30mm.

On the performance table, the Penetration of the 7x30mm Ball should be 2-3-Nil, and the Penetration of the 7x30mm DS should be 1-2-3. In the range column, Ball should be (81) 101, DS should be (97) 117, and HE and HEAP should be (61) 81.

(Corrections): Make the following changes to the Plasma Cradle Gun example:

Pulse Energy instead of "Pulse Power," Fire Control masses 0.04 tonnes, not "0.4," and Fire Control Rating is -4 Diff Mods, not "+4." Damage Value rounds to 40, not "39," yielding final Penetration Values of 40-20-4, not "39-19-3." Rate of fire is 1/2 (once every two turns), not "2."

Pages 157-158

(Corrections): Make the following changes to both pages of the TL-13 Grav Tank example:

Step 1—Chassis: Top armor is thickened to 0.6, not "0.3." Side Armor volume is 0.054, not "0.027," mass is 0.81, not "0.405," and price is 771.12, not "385.5." Delete line for contra-grav in this section.

Step 3—Control Systems: Add line:

Component	Vol	Mass	Power	Area	Price
TL-13 Holo Linked Controls	0.098	0.0098	0.007	=	14,000

Power for TL-13 Terrain-Follow. Avn. is 0.02, not "—."

Step 5—Electronics: Laser communicator is 30-km, not "3-km." Price of 300-km radio is 500, not "5000," power for 30-km laser comm is 0.01, not "0.005," and line for 30-km passive EMS should read, 0.04, 0.08, 0.004, —, 80,000 and not "0.01, 0.02, 0.001, —, 20,000."

Step 6—Weaponry: The laser and machinegun are not taken from basic game equipment lists, but were designed using FF&S sequences. The 7.5mm machinegun has a volume of 0.032 (not "0.017"), mass of 0.016 (not "0.0085"), and price of 4500, (not "1200").

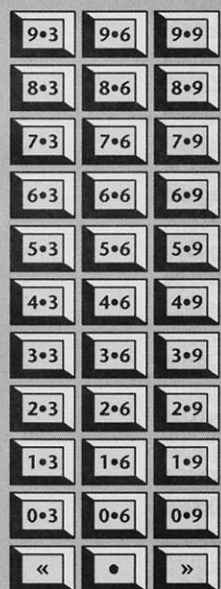
Coaxial laser rifle is 8cm, not "3cm," and has a price of 2855, not "4000."

400xPPC rounds have a price of (120,000).

3000 rounds 7.5mm (not "7mm") have a volume of 0.132 (not "0.09"), mass of 0.066 (not "0.09"), and a price of (1320), not "3600."

Step 7—Power Plant: The price of the fusion reactor is 220,000, not "340,000." The volume of the reactor fuel is 0.33, not "0.11," with a mass of 0.0231, not "0.0077."

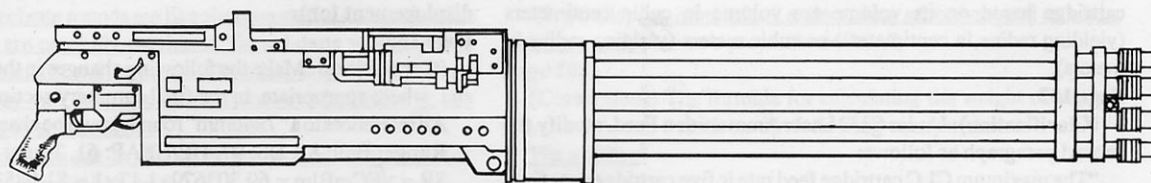
Step 9—Cargo: The volume should be 15.7 and the mass 3.925. Totals become: 97.9916 cubic meters, 25.9736 tonnes empty and 42.1646 loaded, 3.2708 MW, and Cr1,945,419.7 plus 121,320 for ammo.



Yes No

28-IX-1202

Date _____



CSAARC has authorized a limited number of prototype 7mmRC(E) rotary weapons for field trials and evaluation by selected RC personnel. Designed around the 7x30mm ETC round used in the Coalition Multipurpose Weapon System and 7mm Advanced Combat Rifle, it is hoped that the 7mmRC(E) rotary will be able to replace the older 7mm rotary weapons now in use by various units, and ease logistical requirements by reducing the variety of ammunition types required.

Tranq rounds are of limited utility in this weapon, and will not be supplied. Effective HE rounds can only be manufactured for this weapon at TL-12 and above, and have only been manufactured in limited quantities for the purposes of these field trials. Test results will determine if HE rounds go into full production.

The 7mmE rotary will be manufactured in man-portable field mount and vehicle mount configurations. The only difference between the two is the tripod and the size of the issue ammunition cassette. One of the questions CSAARC wants answered is whether the 1000-round cassette proves to be too heavy to be readily portable under field conditions.

7mmRC(E) Rotary Field Mount

Ammo: 7×30mm ETC

Muzzle Energy: 4950 joules

Weapon Length: 83.2 cm

Weapon Weight (Field Mount): 35.725 kg loaded, 29.725 empty (includes weight of empty cassette)

Weapon Weight (Vehicle Mount): 51.225 kg loaded, 39.225 empty (includes weight of empty cassette)

Weapon Price (Field Mount): Cr8,910.25 (includes price of empty cassette)

Weapon Price (Vehicle Mount): Cr11,410.25 (includes price of empty cassette)

500-round Cassette Weight: 17.5 kgs (loaded), 11.5 kgs (empty)

500-round Cassette Price: Cr2,740 (loaded), Cr2,620 (empty)

1000-round Cassette Weight: 33 kgs (loaded), 21 kgs (empty)

1000-round Cassette Price: Cr5,360 (loaded), Cr5,120 (empty)

Ammunition Price: Cr0.24 (Ball), Cr0.48 (HE, DS), Cr0.72 (HEAP)

Ammunition Weight: 12 grams per round

Tripod Weight: 18 kgs

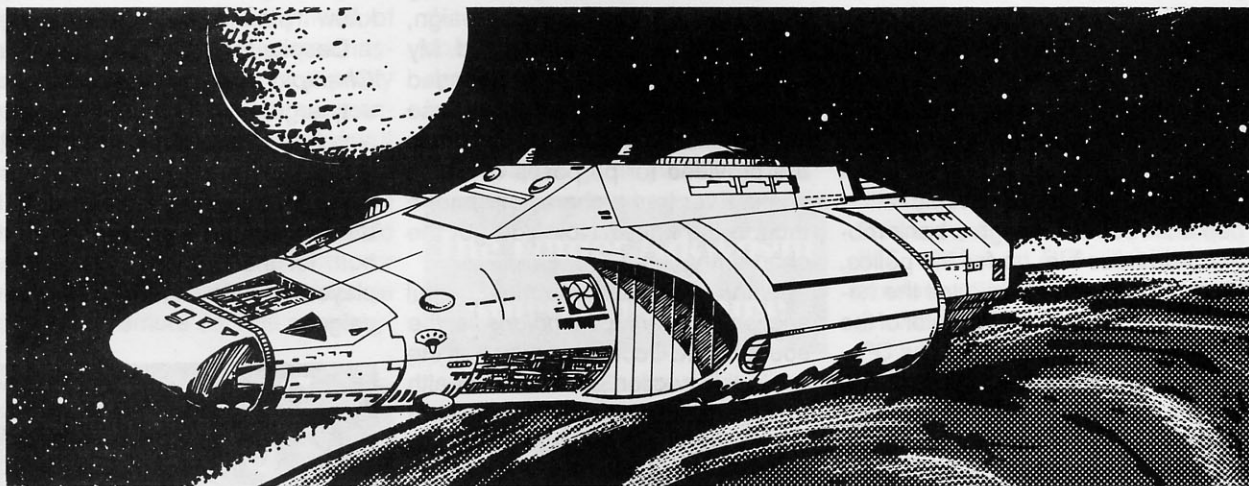
Tripod Price: Cr280

Features: Gyro Compensator

Round	ROF	Dam	Val	Pen	Rtg	Bulk	Magazine	— Recoil —		Short Range
								SS	Burst	
7x30mmE Ball	50	5		2-3	Nil	5	500C	1	18	(74) 110
tripod	50	5		2-3	Nil	5	500C	1	5	(148) 220
7x30mmE Ball	50	5		2-3	Nil	5	1000C	1	17	(74) 110
tripod	50	5		2-3	Nil	5	1000C	1	4	(148) 220
7x30mmE DS	50	5		1-2-3		5	500C	1	18	(89) 130
tripod	50	5		1-2-3		5	500C	1	5	(178) 270
7x30mmE DS	50	5		1-2-3		5	1000C	1	17	(89) 130
tripod	50	5		1-2-3		5	1000C	1	4	(178) 270
7x30mmE HE-12	50	6		Nil		5	500C	1	18	(56) 80
tripod	50	6		Nil		5	500C	1	5	(112) 170
7x30mmE HE-12	50	6		Nil		5	1000C	1	17	(56) 80
tripod	50	6		Nil		5	1000C	1	4	(112) 170
7x30mmE HEAP	50	6		2-2-2		5	500C	1	18	(56) 80
tripod	50	6		2-2-2		5	500C	1	5	(112) 170
7x30mmE HEAP	50	6		2-2-2		5	1000C	1	17	(56) 80
tripod	50	6		2-2-2		5	1000C	1	4	(112) 170

Fired from a vehicle mount, the weapon has negligible recoil and tripod range.

Beowulf-Class Free Trader



General Data

Displacement: 200 Tons
Length: 43 Meters
Price: Cr53.94
Configuration: Wedge SL
Mass (Loaded/Empty): 1396.851/486.751

Hull Armor: 11
Volume: 2800 m³
Target Size: S
Tech Level: 15

Engineering Data

Power Plant: 165 MW TL-15 Fusion Power Plant (165 MW/hit),
1 year duration, (11.603 MW power surplus)
Jump Performance: 1 (280 m³ fuel)
G-Rating: 1G (100 MW/G), Contra-Grav lifters (20 MW)
G-Turns: 60 (82.4 if using jump fuel), 12.5 m³ fuel each
Fuel Tankage: 1030 m³ (73.57 tons), plus 16.5 m³ (1.155 tons)
reserved for power plant
Maint: 55

Electronics

Computer: 2xTL-15 Model St (0.55 MW each), 1xTL-15 Model
Fib (1.1 MW)
Commo: 300,000km radio (10 hexes; 10 MW), 1,000AU maser
(∞; 0.6MW)
Avionics: TL-10+ Avionics
Sensors: Passive EMS fixed array 30,000km (1 hex; 0.02MW),
Active EMS 3,000km (0 hexes, use long range for task difficulty in
same hex; 5MW)
Controls: Flight deck 5xworkstations, plus 1 other workstation

Armament

2 turret hardpoint sockets fitted, (Loc: 16/17, 18/19; Arcs: All)

Accommodations

Life Support: Extended (0.56 MW), Gravitic Compensators (6G,
14 MW)
Crew: 5 (1xEngineering, 1xElectronics, 2xManeuvering, 1xStew-
ard).
Crew Accommodations: 5xSmall Staterooms (0.0005 MW each)
Passenger Accommodations: 9xSmall Staterooms (0.0005 MW
each), 8xLow Berth (0.001 MW each)
Cargo: 838 m³ (59.86 tons), 3 large cargo hatches
Small Craft and Launch Facilities: None
Air Locks: 2

Notes

The *Beowulf* is probably the best-known starship in all of human space. It has acquired a well-deserved reputation for ruggedness and can be found almost anywhere a jump-1 ship can get to (and sometimes in places where they cannot). Comparing the *Beowulf* with the TL-10 version of the same design (*Moraine*-class) gives an excellent impression of the synergistic effects of technological advances.

The characteristics shown above are for the *Beowulf* unarmed, but the design does have space and power reserved for two TL-15 150-Mj laser turrets (4.2 MW each) and a TL-15 300,000km missile-capable MFD (1.71 MW). With these weapons systems installed the *Beowulf*'s mass becomes 1522.865 tonnes loaded and 612.765 tonnes empty, maintenance points rise to 60, and the power surplus is reduced to 1.493 MW. When newly purchased in this armed configuration, price is MCr63.36. If the MFD space is given over to cargo, cargo space is increased to 847m³ (60.5 displacement tons)

When unarmed, the crew is 5, as shown above. When armed, two gunners, one MFD operator, and one command crew are added,

increasing the complement to 9. The flight deck is already fitted with the two extra workstations for the command crew and MFD operator, if installed. The increased crew requires either double stateroom occupancy or a reduction in passenger carrying capacity.

Fuel purification machinery (0.7 MW), 12 hours to refine 280 m³ (20 tons), sufficient for Jump 1. Standard practice is to skim enough fuel for jump and reaction mass, refine the jump fuel, execute the jump, and refine the remainder while in jumpspace.

DAMAGE TABLES

Area (1D20)	Surface Hits	Internal Explosion	Systems
1	Ant	1-10: Elec, 11-20: Qtrs	SSR-(2h)
2	1: AL, 2-12: Ant	Qtrs	LS-1H
3		Qtrs	ELS-1H
4-5		1-16: Qtrs, 17-20: Hold	AG-1H
6-12, 14		Hold	JD-1H
13	1-4: LCH	Hold	PP-1H
15	1-5: LCH	Hold	FPP-1H
16		1-3: TS, 4-5: Eng, 6-20: Hold	All Others-(1h)
17	1-4: LCH	1-3: TS, 4-5: Eng, 6-20: Hold	LT-1H*
18		1-3: TS, 4: Eng, 5-20: Hold	MFD-(2h)*
19	1-5: LCH	1-3: TS, 4: Eng, 5-20: Hold	
20		Eng	*if installed

Dark Champions: Heroes of Vengeance

Hero Games. \$20.00.

Written by Stephen S. Long.

Review by Jimmie W. Pursell Jr.

It's a dirty supplement, but somebody had to write it. *Dark Champions* covers a gritty subgenre of the superhero universe: vigilante justice. A 208-page campaign book for *Champions*, *Dark Champions* examines the lethal hero, the character who would rather pop a .44 round through a bank robber than truss him up for the police. No longer can the public tell the heroes from the killers by the color of the costumes.

Dark Champions is devoted entirely to the street-level campaign for *Champions*. The first section of the campaign book, like all *Hero System* campaign books, details character creation in the subgenre. Additional examples of psychological limitations, such as casual killer and trigger-happy (a personal favorite), are supplemented by expanded versions of the stock psychological disadvantages. Code against Killing, for example, is expanded to four different levels, each more restrictive than the last. In addition, expanded descriptions of many skills, perks, talents and powers are provided, along with examples and explanations of how they fit into the darker genre.

The second section, entitled "Superpowered Humans and the Law," creates a mythical set of legal precedents to be used in any *Champions* campaign. While, for the most part, a work of fiction, the chapter is sprinkled liberally with real court cases, adding a level of authenticity to the superhero-oriented case law. Most of the cases define how superheroes are affected by rules of law, such as search and seizure precedents. For instance, one of the exceptions to the search warrant requirement, "plain view," requires that the law enforcement officer be able to see the contraband from a location where he has the legal right to be. But what of supersenses? If my character has X-ray vision, can he legally examine the villain's hide-out from the street? According to Diana "Shrinker" Whitmore v. United States,

438 U.S. 1723 (1987), he can if his sense is a natural ability and not a technological device.

Also included in this section is a detailed sourcebook on forensics.

The third section discusses the use of standard *Hero System* combat rules in the street-level subgenre. Through the chapter deals mainly with using old options in the new campaign, some new options are provided. My personal favorite are the expanded hit locations. Random shots still use the old chart, but five new locations are provided for purposes of called shots. Ever had a character shoot a thug in the knee? Now you got the chart entry.

Without question, the most useful section of *Dark Champions* is the sourcebook. Occupying over half the book, this section provides a wealth of material for players of any present or near-future campaign. Profiles are provided for every real-world criminal organization, from the Mafia to the Tongs, and package deals allow characters to create members of the organizations. Want guns? Seven—count 'em, seven—pages of modern firepower! Desert Eagles, H + K MP5s, Glock—your name it, it's here.

Dark Champions also includes several very interesting scenarios, including "The Bogeyman," in which the characters must track down a sadistic serial killer from clues provided at the scenes of six murders. A host of villains and organizations suitable for a variety of campaigns are also detailed.

EVALUATION

While the book is intended primarily to supplement a *Champions* campaign, its usefulness does not end there. Any type of modern or near-future campaign will benefit from *Dark Champions*. Using *Dark Champions* in conjunction with *Ninja Hero* or *Cyber Hero* can be a rewarding experience.

The biggest disappointment of the supplement is the lack of a double fire rule. Maybe next time.

Aside from that, the book has but one minor problem—the weapon chart appears inconsistent in places. For instance, a Colt M1911A1 and a Smith & Wesson 4506, both of which fire .45ACP rounds from roughly equal barrel lengths, have a different stun multiple. Similarly, the Glock 17, 2,

and 22, firing 9mm, .45 and .40, respectively, all do identical damage and stun. NOT!! And what of The Executioner's weapon of choice, the Beretta 93R, which, in reality, is limited to three-round bursts? It's rated as Autofire 5 in *Dark Champions*, which incidentally has weapons with three-round burst limiters. Okay, I know it's minor, but it's distracting.

Despite the minor problems, *Dark Champions* is still an excellent product, arguably the best *Champions* supplement ever. Though the price tag is \$20.00, it's a big book with tons of material, including the weapons list and scenarios. I highly recommend it, both for the *Champions* player and players of heroic *Hero System* campaigns.

Dream Park GM Pack

R. Talsorian Games. \$12.00.

Written by William Moss.

Laminated cardstock gamemaster screen with NPC cards and 48-page gamemaster guide. Supplement for *Dream Park*.

Published in December 1992.

Review by Craig Sheeley.

At last, someone in the gaming industry heard my oft-repeated comments about GM screens and took heed of my words! This GM screen has not one wasted panel on it—there is no exterior art, and only a small space is devoted to the graphics necessary to identify the product and provide consumer information and UPC codes. Every other bit of both sides of the three panels is used for game information.

With a game as simple as *Dream Park*, you'd think there would be no need for so much information space. The sides facing the players are lined with information on skills, weapons and character classes, while the gamemaster sides feature movement, actions range, special effects, armor, falling, impact, and wound tables—everything needed to run *Dream Park*.

The NPC cards cover a number of the main gaming NPCs from the three books written about *Dream Park*, including Alex Griffin, Acacia Garcia, Oliver Norliss, Nigel Bishop and Chester Henderson. The cards are well done, but could have been bet-

ter. For example, not one of these NPCs has any character advantages or disadvantages listed, even though a casual read of the books will reveal several (Acacia and Alex are attractive, for instance).

From Sneak Thief through Franklin Delano Roosevelt to High Priestesses and Deities, the guide gives examples of almost every kind of NPC that the *Dream Park* gamemaster will ever need. This is a pretty good product. It's a bit more expensive than the usual GM screen, but it certainly gives you all it can for the money. The only thing that RTG could have done to make this better would have been to reduce the price, or bump the price up to \$15 and include a short adventure as well as everything else.

Twerps Tweak

Reindeer Games. \$3.00.

Written by Jon Hancock and Niels Erickson.

Review by Jimmie W. Pursell Jr.

And now for something completely different. *Twerps Tweak* is the latest in a long line of *Twerps* modules from Reindeer Games. For the deprived uninitiated, *Twerps* is an acronym for The Worlds Easiest Roleplaying System. The title does not lie. This review probably has more words than the basic book. *Twerps* probably would not get a second glance from the serious gamer, and, admittedly, it leaves a bit to be desired as a serious game. But *Twerps* is not a serious game, and therein lies its appeal.

Twerps Tweak expands on the *Twerps* system, which has only one attribute, by adding additional professions and ship classes, along with statistics on your favorite characters (actually statistics of unreasonable facsimiles thereof, but you get the picture).

Yes, friends, you can join ranks with such crewmembers as Mr. Sprocket, the fulcrum science officer, and Mr. Babble Checkoff, the token Russian. Help them command the *Consternation*-class starship *Aintnoprize* (NBC-911). Or stay with them as Captain Hookerk joins the Geritol crowd and commands the *Aintnoprize* (NBC-911). Better yet, jump into a whole 'nother generation with Captain Gene-pool Picayune on the NBC-

911-3D. No matter the generation, you'll match wits with servants of the vile Klingalong Empire, or worse, the Ramennoodle Empire. Engage the engines at Twerpspeed as you encounter that Burp of Play.

To restate the obvious, *Twerps* is not a serious game, and *Twerps Tweak* is no exception. If you're looking for a detailed, realistic simulation of space combat in the distant future, try *Renegade Legion*. If you want to have a light evening of humor and irreverence, give *Twerps* a try. At \$3.00, it's the cheapest game you'll ever buy.

The Luther Arkwright Roleplaying Game

2nd Parallel Games.

Written by James Brunton.

160-page, soft-bound book.

Review by David Perry.

For all the noncomic readers out there (poor, deprived souls that they are), I should explain that *The Adventures of Luther Arkwright* was a 12-issue comic series written and drawn by Bryan Talbot. It has now been converted into a roleplaying game.

The Luther Arkwright Roleplaying Game (LARP) is set in a Multiverse of parallel worlds. In each Multiverse, a different earth exists, each earth with its own history and social structure. Some are close to our own earth, some wildly different, with over 100,000 parallels.

The only consistent thing in the parallels are the Disruptors. A vast, mysterious organization, the Disruptors seek to control all the parallels to mold the Multiverse to their own ends. To do this, the Disruptors employ natives of the various parallels, supplying them with advice and high-tech equipment and maneuvering them into a position of power on their respective parallels. The Disruptors use existing groups to work through, be they political, corporate, social, criminal or religious.

The Disruptors also have their Knights, highly trained, psionically powerful agents, and their Rooks, heavily armed and armored clone soldiers to enforce their will.

Opposing the Disruptors is Parallel Zero-Zero, the only parallel completely free of Disruptor influence. To fight the Disruptors' plans, Zero-Zero

employs a cadre of special agents—that, in case you didn't guess, is the PCs.

Included in the rules are the history of Zero-Zero, and the true past and evil plans of the Disruptors (keep these out of your PCs' hands at all costs). A timeline of the multiverse is presented, plus a complete description of the occurrences in the comic series, some hints on refereeing and a few pages of plots and ideas.

MECHANICS

LARP provides a system that allows you to quickly roll up your PCs. There are six stats—STR, DEX, END, INT, WILL and PSI—decided by a random roll plus a set number (which prevents the problem of rolling up a PC with unplayable stats.).

The skills are based on a simple percentage system. Skills have a maximum of 100 and are bought with Life Points, which are decided by the PC's INT, WILL and age. Plus, the PC gets a bonus to certain skills dependent on his profession and the culture of the parallel he was brought up on. Finally, each PC has certain skills—Listen, Observe, Hide, Jump, etc.—at base percentages, although these skills to can be improved with Life Points. The character creation system is simple but complete, and you should be able to have your PCs rolled and playing within the session.

To take action, the PC must simply roll under his relevant skill on 1D100. Modifiers can be added for beneficial and harmful conditions, and the amount the roll is made by determines how successful the attempt is.

The combat rules include stats for a wide variety of generic weapons and body armor, everything from clubs to vibro-beamers. I was less than impressed with the combat system, which imposes group initiative on the PCs and involves the swapping of initiative between the groups on a set basis. Hardly very realistic. Also, combat tends to go on a long time as nearly every attack can be parried or dodged.

PSIONICS

Psionic power and the psi-matrix are the unifying force of the *LARP* universe. The psionics chapter details the skills psionic characters can acquire, as well as the minor talents non-psi active characters may pos-

sess. The system provides a wide range of psionic powers and talents, as well as rules for using them and for mental combat.

It also provides details of the artificial psi-shields and implants the Disruptors provide their agents with. These give the Disruptor knights a big edge against the PCs.

In fact, the Disruptors are able to manipulate the psi-matrix of most parallels to such an extent that it enables even non-psi active agents to unknowingly tap into the psi-matrix and use its power. (Fans of the comic will remember the implants in the Puritan cabinet which nearly killed Luther when he assassinated them.)

The psionics chapter also details the Wildcard effects. These occur when psi-energy from the psi-matrix earths itself through a psi user with unpredictable and occasionally lethal effects. Wildcards can produce everything from minor effects, such as minor telekinesis (poltergeists) or flashes of precognition, to spontaneous combustion or trans-parallel teleportation.

EVALUATION

Gripes first. I think the combat system is clumsy, and there is practically no background included in the game, no descriptions of any parallels, no Disruptor equipment, no starting scenario, and the ideas and plots at the end are pretty thin.

On the up side, the rules and character generation are simple, clear and work well, and the psionics are well thought out and imaginative.

But the best thing about *LARP* is the huge background, thousands of worlds to design and explore, and deadly enemy who can appear in any guise. You can do anything, from overthrowing a powerful Psionic tyrannical religion on a medieval world to corporate espionage against a Disruptor-controlled corporation on a cyber-style world. And if you get tired of the Disruptors, there are always the Changelings and Psi-gods existing in the dark corners of the Multiverse.

There is a whole Multiverse of adventure out there for you and your PCs. Personally speaking, I can't wait.

23rd Parallel Games can be reached at 12 Balderstone Rd, Broadgate, Preston, Lancashire, England, PR1 8EQ.

Cyber Hero

Hero Games. \$20.00.

By Michael Fine, Michael McAfee and Curtis Scott.

Cyberpunk supplement for the Hero System.

Published in 1992.

Review by Jimmie W. Pursell Jr.

Players of the *Hero System* will know basically what to expect from *Cyber Hero*, Hero Games' entrant in the cyberpunk market, as it follows the same format as previous campaign books. Rather than new rules, the supplement provides guidelines and ideas for using the existing rules to simulate genre-specific situations.

The first section of *Cyber Hero* gives guidelines for creating a cyberpunk character. As in other such campaign books, examples of genre-specific disadvantages are given, along with a list of which skills, talents and powers are available, common, uncommon or unavailable. *Cyber Hero* offers 15 package deals, representing most of the archetypical character types in the cyberpunk genre. The package deals range from the combat-oriented street samurai to the cerebral artificial personality. As an aid to gamemasters and characters stuck for ideas, a sample character from each package deal is provided, along with complete background and personality information.

Complementing the character creation section, the cybernetic section provides more than just a list of cybernetics, but a cybernetic creation process. Cybernetics are designed using the power limitations and advantages from *Champions* in unique and creative ways. All cybernetics cost character points, and limitations and modifiers apply. An example is a Dex boost, which raises the Dex stat, but does not affect figured characteristics, does not work in magnetic fields, etc. Raising Dex in this manner costs less points, but has several drawbacks, not the least of which is possible cyberinduced psychosis, simulated by a number of dice of mind control based on the number of points spent. While the number of cybernetic options is more limited than in many other games of the genre, the "design-your-own" rules allow for the adaptation of any piece from other

works, including novels and films. One glaring omission exists, however: Smartguns are mentioned in the section on targeting eyes, but I found no other reference to such a staple of cyberpunk roleplaying.

The cybernetic rules are worth a good look, but *Cyber Hero* really shines with its netrunning system. The supplement uses standard *Hero System* characteristics to generate a Persona program, the netrunner's "body" in cyberspace. The Persona uses the netrunner's own INT, DEX, EGO and SPD, and generates the remaining characteristics using the normal *Hero System* rules. The player then creates the Persona's programs by using powers with associated limitations, advantages and modifiers. Almost any power from *Champions* can be used to simulate a program in cyberspace.

Specific rules are included for net travel, traces, and nodes. Net combat is handled as any other combat in the *Hero System*. Personae have OCV, DCV, ECV, Body, etc. Any form of attack can be used, even using the Persona's STR to inflict damage against an enemy Persona. Damage is inflicted against the Persona normally, including the effects of stuns, knockback, etc. If a Persona is "killed" in the net, it immediately derezzes, and the netrunner is "jacked out" of cyberspace and is stunned.

The overall effect of the *Cyber Hero* net rules is that of *Tron* and the like. If fact, the rules on data paths, nodes and net combat bring to mind the final scenes of *Lawnmower Man*.

The campaign is set in the world of *Cyberspace*, I.C.E.'s games based on the *Rolemaster* system. The obvious immediate benefit of setting the campaign in an already existent world is that numerous support pieces are already available. An appendix to *Cyber Hero* gives guidelines for converting to and from *Cyberspace*, and a whole section is provided which lists convenient stat conversions for most of the *Cyberspace* support material. One disappointing aspect of the conversions is that they are not complete; the stats cannot be used without the supplement from which they are drawn.

Something of interest to players of all *Hero System* campaigns is the *Hero System* weapons list. The chart includes a wide variety of modern

firearms, such as the Bren 10 and the H&K MP5. While a few rare firearms, like the Beretta Model 93R, are included, the list is far from exhaustive and does not approach the diversity of the *Danger International* list. Another problem with the weapons section in general is the relatively few cyberpunk genre weapons given. Only one or two representative types are listed, with few illustrations. What's more, the guns are not the same ones from *Cyberspace*. Despite the shared background and supposedly shared statistics, interesting weapons such as the Glock 17D and the M19 assault rifle were omitted. Even worse, the San Francisco overview includes descriptions (but not stats) of several common gangs, each with favored equipment listed. Weapons given include M21 assault rifles, MAC 20s and Beretta M98s (signature model with silencer and laser targeting). No statistics are given anywhere in *Cyber Hero* or *Cyberspace* for these weapons. I can live with many errors, but such omissions are hard for me to swallow. And speaking of weapons....

Now that I have your attention, I would like to say a word or two about combat. First word: There are no new combat rules or guidelines. The neat sections on applying the *Hero* System to genre-specific combat that are so prominent in other campaign books are conspicuously absent from *Cyber Hero*. The primary reason I find this disconcerting is that I was anxiously expecting the reinstatement of one particular rule from the *Hero* System past. Which brings us to the next word on combat, and bear in mind that I mention it primarily because cyberpunk roleplaying is so firearms dependent:

Many roleplaying systems have little quirks which seem odd, but don't really affect play. Mostly, these quirks relate to time and the spacing of actions. The *Hero* System is no exception. If the time element (one segment equals one second) is removed, the *Hero* System recreates the dynamics of combat in an extremely realistic manner. But when the time factor is considered, things look a bit strange. The system allows one attack per phase. With human maximum speed set at four, a character with characteristics equivalent to Martin Riggs from the *Lethal Weapon* trilogy would be able to fire four rounds

in 12 seconds from his Beretta. NOT! From personal experience, a semi-skilled shooter can empty a Beretta M92, which holds 15 rounds, accurately in under eight seconds; a trained professional (such as a character with a speed of 4) can do it in much less. Even a superhero with a speed of 12, the system maximum, would take 15 seconds in the *Hero* System to empty the weapon. But this can be overlooked as long as the relative rates of fire are maintained and the time scale is ignored.

However, according to *Fantasy Hero*, a bow can be fired in a half phase using the maneuver rapid arrow fire, giving a strong archer the same rate of fire as a shooter of equal speed. Yes, boys and girls, Robin Hood and Martin Riggs will fire their weapons with equal speeds. In fact, if Robin were to start off with prepared arrow fire, he could fire two arrows just as quickly as Martin could fire one round of 9mm. Can we say systems glitch?

So how could *Cyber Hero* have corrected this problem without redesigning the system? By reinstating the double fire rule from *Espionage* and *Danger International*. But since they didn't, I'll do it here. But be warned, the game police may come for you if you use it.

For those of you not familiar with the earlier *Hero* System games, the double fire rule allowed a firearm normally capable of firing but one round per phase to fire two. This is full phase action, and both shots suffer a -2 OCV penalty. In addition, the firer is at one-half DCV until his next phase. Though this rule will not make *Hero* System rates of fire realistic, it will bring them more in line with reality and allow the marksman to out-fire the archer. I feel that this is important for the cyberpunk genre.

Another interesting option is the use of *Ninja Hero* along with *Cyber Hero*, giving outstanding martial arts rules in the setting. Imagine a street samurai skilled in

kenjutsu. What a concept.

The quality of the overall product is above average, though the few mistakes I have mentioned detract from my enjoyment of the product. Players and GMs less picky may enjoy *Cyber Hero* more. The biggest plus for the supplement is the presence of existing and readily adaptable support material. With the conversion rules, GMs running *Cyberspace* campaigns will find it a simple matter to convert to *Cyber Hero* if they choose. The \$20 price tag may be a bit high, but I've paid more for less, so it's not outrageous. Obviously, if you like the cyberpunk genre and the *Hero* System, you'll love *Cyber Hero*.

NOTE

Before I close, I would like to mention Curtis Scott, who was killed in a car accident on August 19, 1992, while en route to GenCon. Scott was known for such works as *GURPS Conan*, *GURPS Humanx*, *The Horde Campaign* for AD&D and a host of others, and he co-authored *Cyber Hero*, along with Michael Fine and Michael McAfee. His death at age 32 is a tragedy for his wife and child and the gaming world as a whole. To say the least, he will be missed. Ω

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(Pardon the interruption, but we are experiencing technical difficulties. The part after "dash the luck" was supposed to be something exciting and interesting.)

Oh, fine, just ignore me then. Go back to your so-called Traveller, go back to your "safe" clean space fantasies, go back to your white bread and suburban kitchens and try to ignore the darkness, *if you can*, because it's there, man, just lurking and waiting and festering and bubbling, and it will get you and like, suck your blood, like some evil space thing. You guys don't do any live-action stuff, do you?

(In space, no one can hear you whine.)

Volume I, Number 6

Dear Commodore Bwana,

You've done your usual good work on the new material (*Battle Rider*, *RCEG*, etc). Keep it up.

One question has come up in designing toys for my group to use. In *Fire, Fusion, & Steel* p. 109 in the CPR gun sequence it states that mortars multiply their weight by 0.6 due to not needing a heavy breechblock, etc. As I was designing an 8cm mortar for purposes best not spoken of, I went through the sequence and wound up with a weapon (mortar tube) weight of 180 kg and a carriage weight of 86 kg.

I've toted an 81mm mortar a few times, and while it's no picnic (especially the baseplate) it's not that heavy.

Please advise if this is the way to do it, or tell me I'm all wet and why. I doubt if I'll find any other glitches, but I'll let you know.

See you at Gen Con.

Sincerely, (non-aqueously)
Steven J. Perlot
Menominee Falls, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Perlot,

You are most certainly not all wet, and I should know, being an expert on dampness. The culprit is the Wicked and Most Unholy incorrect mortar design sequence in the first printing of *Fire, Fusion, & Steel*. This has been replaced with an accurate procedure in the second printing, which can be recognized by the notation: **Mk I, Mod 1** (January 1994) near the bottom of the title page. I am also pleased to announce that we now have compiled an upgrade list that shows all of the changes between first and second printing **FF&S**, which allows owners of the first printing to update themselves, allows owners of both printings to better discern subtle changes, and allows owners of the second printing to wonder what all of the fuss is about. This upgrade, including the corrected mortar design sequence, can be found elsewhere in this issue of *Challenge*. (Page 76 to be exact —*Diligent Dave*) (This is my column. Go away.) (Sorry —*Despondent Dave*) (Glamour pants.)

Thank you so much for the compliments on *Battle Rider* and *RCEG*; they mean a lot to us. (Which? The compliments or the games? —*Demanding Dave*) (Both. Now get out of my column, ye scurvy dog!) Sorry I wasn't able to meet you personally at GenCon, but I understand that you were able to settle for a conversation with that Nilsen guy.

Looky, looky! I'm getting so cocky that I'm going to put two letters in this issue, because I got plenty!! (But keep them coming, anyway.)

Dear Commodore Bwana,

I would first like to send my thanks and congratulations to you and all those responsible for TNE. You have done a fine job and I am proud to add it to my collection of Traveller books. Please keep up the good work.

My first question regards the status of the Regency. In the past much more attention was given to the Spinward Marches than today. It used to be the frontier. The region of high adventure for brave souls. Now the Spinward Marches is the last bastion of the old Imperium and I have noticed that they have been receiving much less space. For example, the Traveller News Service (which I assume still operates within the Regency) is no longer covered but it has been replaced by the CINetwork. Further more, the adventures now being published all deal with the Star Vikings. What are all of us loyal old Imperials to do?

I am wondering if there is some lack of support for the Regency among the staff. Is there going to be a Regency sourcebook in the works?

My second question concerns the identity of the First Regent. To whom do we loyal Imperial citizens owe our allegiance? It would be nice to know who is the First Regent along with a more detailed discussion of the government organization and the political factions of the Regency than was given in the TNE sourcebook.

The next question concerns the new computer rules. Why does a million-ton battleship need no more and no larger computers than does a 100-ton scout ship? This seems to be wrong even among the most technophobic starship designers. Could you please clarify the rules concerning computers?

In looking over the new rules for starship design in *FF&S* I noticed that there were no rules dealing with the production time. Are these rules going to be reintroduced in further books?

Once again, thanks for TNE. You have done a fine job. LONG LIVE THE IMPERIUM!!!

Imperial Citizen,
W. M. Becker
Maplewood, Minnesota

Dear W,

Thanks for the words of support, and I am happy to report that there is no lack of support for the Regency among our staff, only a lack of time to do everything at once. We don't wish to do too many things half-heartedly, so try to concentrate on one thing at a time. However, see the editorial on page 4 for some Good News.

The computer rules are intended to require ships to buy into a threshold level of computerization in order to obtain certain capabilities, and beyond this level computers are assumed to be broadly the same within a given tech level. This essentially penalizes smaller ships that attempt to gain maximum capability, which is the same effect that we'd get if we had several different sizes of computers at each tech level.

When you assume that calculating jump coordinates or maneuver burns is approximately the same for a ship of any size, there is no need for computers handling these functions to vary in size once they possess a certain threshold capability. It is issues such as increased numbers of weapons, sensors, and other subsystems where the battleship will require more computing power, and that is allowed for in the system by requiring crew workstations and MFDs. These represent the ship's computers every bit as much as the things that are literally called "computers," which is why they are all destroyed on electronics hits. Furthermore, any ship can also be fitted with as many additional computers as desired as well, but these are redundant spares, and do not add to electronic processing power.

The rules in Trillion Credit Squadron gave ship construction times that were far too short. Once we settle on a system we are happy with, we will present these rules in a future product.

By the way,

Up-to-the-Moment Completely Unscientific Survey Results!!
Regency 1, Reformation Coalition 0!

It's a landslide!! 100% of all respondents are in favor of the Regency! Absolutely none in favor of the Reformation Coalition! It's a mandate! It's a judgement on modern civilization! Stay in your homes, don't even bother to go out and vote, IT'S TOO LATE! Turn out the lights, the party's over! Oh, the humanity!

Quietly panicking aboard the starship *Roxy Music*, this is Commodore Bwana, signing off.



Challenge 75

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MODERN DAY RPG adventures and sourcebooks, particularly for *Daredevils* and *007*. I'll pay reasonable prices for originals, but prefer to swap photocopies from my large collection of game stuff for all genres and most non-TSR systems. Also looking for any data on Chinese myth and folklore, particularly religious Taoism as seen in the films of Sammo Hung. Tom B., 2500 E. 109th St., 2nd floor, Chicago, IL 60617. (71)

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BARD GAMES: *Cyclopedia Talislanta* (2400), *Talislanta Handbook and Campaign Guide*. Firebird: *Golden Age of Champions*. GDW: *Alien Modules Droyne*, *Ilver K'kree*. Games Workshop (UK): *Nightmare in Norway*, *Trail of the Loathsome Slime*. Skyrealms: *Companion of Jorune—Burdoth*. Theatre of the Mind Enterprises: *Arkham Evil*, *Death in Dunwich*, *Pursuit*

to *Kadath*. TSR: *Vecna Lives*. Please contact Darrell Baran, 477 Melbourne Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2K 1B3. (75)

I AM LOOKING for 1st ed. *Forgotten Realms DM's Sourcebook of the Realms*. Contact Dexter Davis, 924 E. 48th St., Brooklyn, NY 11203. (75)

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LOOKING FOR supplements to FASA's *Star Trek: Starship Tactical Combat Simulator*, particularly the *Ship Construction Manual* and the *Ship Recognition Manual* for the Federation or Romulans. Contact Armand Larraga, 14 Gillian Dr., Kendall Park, NJ 08824. (75)

ANY INFORMATION, blueprints and background material from the Transformers toy line made by Hasbro. Need data on Cybertron homeworld as well. Material will be compensated for. Transformers SFRPG in design preparation. Contact Universe Products, POB 10142, Pittsburgh, PA 15232-0142. (72)

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BATTLETECH supplements *Rolling Thunder*, *Kell Hounds*, *Gray Death Legion* and *Sorenson Sabres*. Can trade *Rifts* or *Marvel*, or pay full price plus a finder's fee. Also want any magazines or fanzines with *BattleTech* material. Contact Joey Cohen, 7452 N. Washtenaw, Chicago, IL 60645. (72)

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TRAVELLER SUPPLEMENTS. GDW: *Secret of the Ancients*, JTAS 15, 16, 18-24, *Alien Modules* 2, 4, 5. DGP: *Starship Operator's Manual*, 101 Robots, *Travellers' Digest* 5-21, *MegaTraveller Journal* 1-2, *Flaming Eye*. Photocopies are fine. Please Contact J. A. Holden, 1221 E. Charleston Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85022. (72)

FROM GDW: JTAS 1, 10, 13, 14, 18, 20-23, Books 7 and 8, Supplements 10 and 12, *Alien Modules* (K'ree, Droyne, Zhodani), *Adventure 8*, *Atlas of the Imperium*, *Striker*, *The Traveller Adventure*, *The Spinward Marches Campaign and Game* 1-5. I want the originals, but will gladly trade for photocopies. I have all of GDW's *Traveller* products not on the above list. Contact Roger Sanger, 1021 NE 123rd, Seattle, WA 98125. (72)

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MELBOURNE TIMES: Newsletter of the Earth Colonies Development League (ECDL) provides background material for completely new, non-Imperium *Traveller* setting with 3D campaign area based upon system locations from 2300 AD Near Star Map. Features news service, world briefs, character sketches, sophont descriptions, corporate portfolios, political analysis, cultural events and more. Subscribers and contributors send large SASE to *Melbourne Times*, c/o David Johnson, PO Box 891403, Houston, TX 77289. Overseas include three IRCs. (75)

AAB PROCEEDINGS: Exclusively *Traveller* newsletter from the History of the Imperium Group (HIWG). Covers all areas in Imperial space, product development and member projects. 10 pages, 4-6 times per year, \$2 per issue. Send letter-sized SASE to Clayton Bush, Box 895, Limon, CO 80828 for list of available HIWG documents, programs and spreadsheets. (75)

ALLIANCE ADDRESS: This new *Star Wars* gaming newsletter has adventures, campaign settings for the second edition, new character templates, dossiers, game updates and reviews, and more. Send a legal-sized SASE to Planitia Publications, POB 10142, Pittsburgh, PA 15232-0142. (72)

SILVER GRIFFIN: A magazine for enthusiastic gamers. Contact *Silver Griffin*, PO Box 1751, St. Paul, MN 55101. (72)

THE TRAVELLER CHRONICLE: A new magazine covering all aspects of *Traveller*, from original to New Era. Published quarterly. Contact Sword of the Knight Publications, 2820 Sunset Lane 116, Henderson, KY 42420. (72)

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DARK TIMES, a quarterly newsletter dedicated to *Dark Conspiracy*, features new proto-dimensions, equipment, adventures and darktek. The Darklords and evil minions will also be covered in detail. Each issue will have a complete adventure ready for play. Contact Mike Kelly, 10710 Evergreen Way, C-308, Everett, Washington 98204.

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IMPERIAL NEWS SERVICE seeks writers and artists. Our fanzine is devoted entirely to original *Traveller* (not *MegaTraveller* or any new version). We publish adventures, supplements and campaign aids. Please contact *Star Quest Games*, RR 1, Box 81, Flat Rock, IL 62427-9735 for subscriptions and guidelines for writers and artists. (70)

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