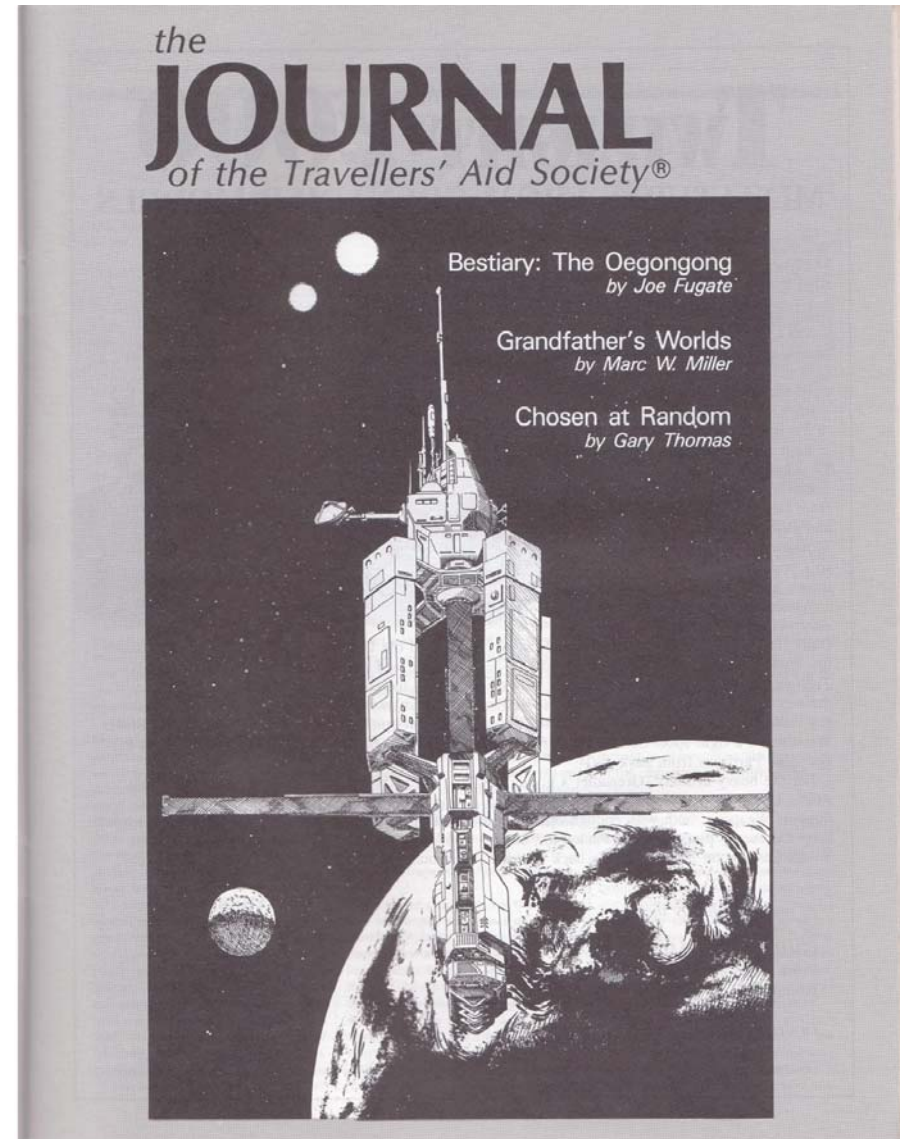


Steve Venter's classic image of Yaskoydray



The No. 27
JOURNAL
of the Travellers' Aid Society®

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The Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society is Game Designers' Workshop's registered trademark for its science fiction gaming magazine devoted to **Traveller**.

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Dates in this issue of the *Journal* are given in accordance to an arbitrary Imperial calendar of 365 days. The date consists of a three-digit day number (the current day of the year) a dash, and a four digit number (showing the current year since the founding of the Imperium).

The latest date of **Traveller News Service** in this issue is 142-1112.

All editorial and general mail should be sent to **Challenge**, P.O. Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702 1646.

The Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society is published quarterly as a supplement to **Challenge** magazine.

Submissions: We welcome articles and illustrations for the *Journal*.

Please inquire before submitting manuscripts, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope; we will send manuscript guideline and format sheets. Foreign inquires (except APO/FPO) please include International Reply Coupon.

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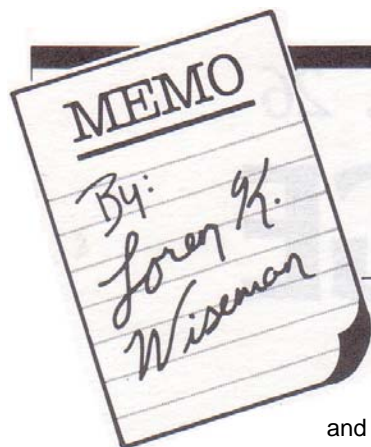
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Miller



From the Management

Reader feedback on the new format has begun to taper off (everyone who wants to has gotten their two cents in), and we've had a chance to look it over. By and large, everyone (well, almost everyone) seems satisfied with the larger size. No one commented on our new typeface, or the new page layouts, but we didn't really expect anyone to notice (or care very much).

As for the combination of **Twilight: 2000** and **Traveller**, about half of those writing in are players of one game who are interested in seeing about the other. A fair number (about a quarter) are interested in both games. The rest of those writing in were dissatisfied with one game or the other being covered at the expense of their favorite. A minority of this last group wants to see two separate magazines (which is just not feasible for us now or in the near future).

We have a lot of great articles in this issue, but the one which will hold the most interest for our readers is the announcement of our new game, **Traveller: 2300** (which I'll leave up to Marc to explain).

-Loren K. Wiseman

Issue 26 feedbacked as follows:

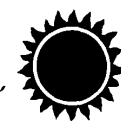
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JUST DETECTED

MAGAZINES

Travellers' Digest

Issue number 6 is in hand, featuring "The Most Valuable Prey," and "Tech Briefs: Grav Belts." Single issues are \$3.95, one year (four issues) subscription is \$14.00. Digest Group Publications, 8979 Mandan Ct., Boise, ID 83709.



TRAVELLER NEWS SERVICE

REGINA/REGINA (0310 A788899 A)

Date: 140 1112

¶ A dispatch from Terra/Sol (0207 A867A69-F) dated 130-1111 reads: "The Starship Accident Inspection Team (SAIT) of Australia Down Starport has been officially relieved of its duties in the inspection of the *Tyrol*, a Rome Inc. luxury liner which suffered mysterious damage while in hyperspace en route to this world. The Naval Attache to Terra, Captain Winston of Duncanhood, Earl of Lardher, officially relieved the SAIT and replaced them with his own team of specialists, including a number of civilian representatives from the Beta Draconis Industries. Heavy security measures, including marine guards, have been implemented, and all access to the *Tyrol* has been cut off to observers. ¶ Meanwhile medical specialists at the Demosthenes Naval Hospital have confirmed the gradual recovery of Commander Churner from the almost total loss of equilibrium he suffered as a result of exposure to hyperspace."

REGINA/REGINA (0310 A788899 A)

Date: 142 1112

¶ A dispatch from Terra/Sol (0207 A867A69-F) dated 132-1111 reads: "The remains of the three engineering crew who were killed in the mysterious mishap on board the *Tyrol* were identified today as First Mate Jerrance Willan of Hell/Sol, Second Mate Elizabeth Maeer of Prometheus, and Cargo Specialist Albaret Michaelsson of Terra/Sol. Their remains are being held pending the conclusion of medical investigation, after which they will be released to their families."

Traveller News Service is another Imperium wide benefit of membership in the Travellers' Aid Society.

Chosen at Random: A Vargr Scenario



"Chosen at Random" is a scenario designed for use by four to ten Vargr player-characters, citizens of Dzen Aeng Kho, the Society of Equals in Gvurrdon Sector.

Player's Introduction

"For once, I thought I had it made. There was this new merchant corp, y'see, starting up on Aegadh well, it wasn't new, exactly; it just had never set up a branch office on Aegadh before. Anyway, they wanted to expand, so they had hired a bunch of us to run a warehouse for them, and they were buying a ship for the Aegadh route.

"It wasn't the greatest work in the world, nor the greatest pay. I mean, all we did was move vacc crates around, mostly, but we thought when the loan came through that we'd all be working on the ship. Some of us had done some starhopping and a few hadn't, but we were all looking forward to it.

"The loan? Oh, yeah, this firm Gvaeghi Merchant Alliance they didn't have the cash up front to buy a ship or I guess they would have before. But Aegadh has been trying to boost trade so they've got this new program where they'll put up the down payment and all you have to do is make regular payments.

"So Erzinokh, he ran the company, he was here on Aegadh a lot, filling out paperwork and talking with a lot of guys wearing fancy clothes. And I guess everything checked out because one day we all showed up for work and here was this merchant liner sitting in the bay. What a rush! It wasn't the nicest ship in the world; I mean, it looked like it had already carried its share of cargo, but in a way it was our ship.

"Erzinokh was in a hurry then, so we loaded up the ship and he took off. I guess he had already picked a crew, but to tell you the truth I never saw any of those guys around the warehouse before. He said that Uerangetssae, he was second in charge, would be in the next day to give us new assignments. Well, we didn't see hide nor hair of anybody. And our paychecks were due, too!

"The cargo? I know now, but I didn't know when we were loading it in the ship. Erzinokh told us it was pharmaceuticals. None of us knew it was highleaf until you guys raided the place and found the crate we missed loading. I don't know how it got left behind. I guess it was just in the wrong place. If we'd known, we all could have retired without any old ship.

"So that's all I know about the thing, except what you guys have told us. We didn't know that there was no such thing as Gvaeghi Merchant Alliance. I mean, we'd been getting regular paychecks until they skipped with the ship. I'll tell you one thing though I'm going to be a lot more careful who I work for from now on. Nobody makes me a sucker more than once."

Transcript of police interview

The player-characters for this adventure are former employees of Gvaeghi Merchant Alliance. Several of them have decided to work together for the time being to locate Erzinokh and the ship. At the least, they might get the money owed them, and besides that, the government of Aegadh has posted a substantial reward for additional information or the ship's return.

The only real clue that the players have is that Erzinokh came from Hoursouth, a world 4 parsecs away. Erzinokh was familiar with one of the player-characters, and told him about some other members of his family who still lived in the backwoods of Hoursouth. The player thinks he could find this area if the group could get to the world. The missing ship itself was scheduled to arrive at Ngoerrgh (1216 E22065A 7), but it never arrived.

Both Aegadh and Lloursouth are part of Dzen Aeng Kho, the Society of Equals, a coalition of more than 50 Vargr worlds in the central area of Gvurrdon Sector.

REFEREE'S SYNOPSIS

Erzinokh and his colleagues are starting a new company, but it's a company of pirates rather than a company of merchants. To this end, they have travelled around the sector stealing ships by posing as subsidized merchants. The ships have been taken to Gurzueng where they are being outfitted with weapons. Erzinokh's band is skilled at piracy, and they are neither careless nor unprepared, so the party will encounter significant danger in this adventure.

Erzinokh's ancestral home on Lloursouth is now an armed adjunct of the Church of the Chosen Ones; strangers asking questions will not be welcome. A bank on Lloursouth is currently investigating Erzinokh because he pulled a similar scam on his homeworld. Two private investigators had been sent from there to Gurzueng and both died in air/raft accidents.

This adventure follows the "nugget" format used in Alien Realms. Each nugget of information deals with one item of interest for the scenario. The players may discover information in any of several orders, depending upon which path they travel through the adventure. As the referee, you should familiarize yourself with all of the nuggets before play begins.

AEGADH

Aegadh (1317 B737AEC B) is an unusual world in that it is ruled by officials of the Church of the Chosen Ones. The planetary government does not levy any taxes, but it does collect regular tithes from Church faithful and any other residents of the system.

The Church does not tolerate any activities of which it does not approve. Police supervision of the population is almost constant, and infractions are dealt with severely. Fortunately, there are few things which can be said to be "anti-Church," so the population does enjoy a relatively high freedom, notwithstanding the continual intrusion of police into private affairs.

An investigation into the details of Erzinokh's plot will show that he is indeed skilled in forgery. Company documents were good enough to fool the Aegadh lending institutions that put up the subsidy money. When they requested more information about his company from its homeworld, Kfolael (1421 B86AAA6 B),

they received a reply showing an excellent credit history. Authorities now know that the intersystem mail was tampered with for Gvaeghi Merchant Alliance never existed.

NGOERRGH

The trail to Ngoerrgh (1216 E22065A 7) is a false one, and this backwater world has little to recommend it. Its government uses computers to make important decisions. If the government had better technology, the citizens would be a lot happier and the standard of living would be a lot higher.

THE MISSING SHIP

Erzinokh's crew included an electronics expert who busily spent the time in jump disabling the stolen ship's transponder. Thus, its signal is different, and authorities in systems through which it travels will not have a record of its passage. The new signal, however, does leave its own trail, and if the party is clever they may be able to follow it. At each starport they can receive a list of ships in system at the appropriate time, and by cross-matching these lists they could discover the new transponder signal of the ship they are seeking. Starport authorities at worlds with higher law levels will not release this information readily.

THE HIGHLEAF TRAIL

One way that the characters can check their route is by asking around at each stop as to the availability of highleaf.

Erzinokh's route took him through 1417, 1616, 1717, and 1816, to 2015. Characters can discover that at each stop there was a sudden influx of the potent drug, but that the supply quickly dried up, showing that a permanent source had not been established. The time periods of these supplies will correspond to the times of Erzinokh's flights with the stolen ship. Erzinokh was careful not to sell his entire cargo at any one world, so as to keep demand (and the price) high.

Characters might want to remember that highleaf is restricted on most worlds. Their inquiries must be carefully made or the party is apt to find itself in trouble with the law. One solution to this problem, in fact, would be for them to approach local authorities directly, explaining their situation and why they want to know about recent drug levels.

Although highleaf has little effect on K'kree, its abuse by humans can be both exciting and devastating. The drug's initial thrills can yield a bitter harvest of addiction or permanent health impairment. Both the intoxicating effects of the drug and its dangers to health are applicable to Vargr as well as to humans.

LUNG

Lling (1417 B261866 9) is a rich world controlled from Aegadh. The influence of the Church of the Chosen Ones is small here and the inhabitants of Lling show surprisingly little unrest, for Vargr rules from afar. Lling is not a large planet, but even so, its population density is one tenth that of Aegadh.

Within the Society of Equals, Lling is renowned for its fine art. The skill of its engravers is particularly well-known for they have succeeded in blending laser



technology with art to produce beautiful miniature designs. The motifs created by these craftsmen are popular with Vargr everywhere.

GAKNOU VAL

The Gaknou Val system (1616 A98A614 2) is home to a Society of Equals naval base, reflecting its positional importance between the high population worlds of Aegadh and Lloursouth. The prevention of illicit piracy is paramount to the government of the Society of Equals, and this base plays an important role in that mission.

Licit piracy, on the other hand, is carried on along the borders of the Society against worlds not aligned with it. The Society Navy takes no action whatsoever against such plundering, and, in fact, supplements its own revenues by occasionally engaging in it.

Gaknou Val itself is owned by a Vargr corporation active throughout Gvurrdon Sector. The corporation exports fish and minerals from this watery planet. No fixed bases have been installed on the world, and all personnel and equipment are imported on a regular basis.

LLOURSOUTH

Hoursouth (1717 A253A9E C) is one of the few places that has more

government interference than Aegadh. Characters will encounter police everywhere. Not only will the characters rarely be out of sight of a police officer, but they will be stopped and questioned by police at least twice a day. If their papers are not in order a trip to the station can entail considerable delay while problems are ironed out.

If the characters ask any official source about Erzinokh, they will be given the runaround. Lloursouth's bureaucratic government is not designed to be efficient, and most agencies will readily refer the party to another agency which is "actually in charge of such matters."

But persistence will pay off. The party can eventually discover that Erzinokh is wanted on Hoursouth for theft of a starship. It seems that five months ago he posed as the leader of the Gnaeraeks Merchant Alliance; same song, different tune. Once the government subsidy came through, he and the company officers disappeared with the merchant ship and all company documents.

Police on Lloursouth will not cooperate with the players much concerning this second disappearance. After all, the ship is now long gone so it is hardly a local matter any more. The police have enough on their hands with the constant surveillance of the population without having to worry about stolen ships that might be trillions of kilometers away by now. They can, however, refer the characters to the mortgage holder for more information.

Rroelokdziks Assurance, a Vargr bank, is understandably upset at the ship's disappearance. Their investigation of the matter has been turned over to IgZ Investigators, but Rroelokdziks will give the player-characters the same information in hope that two search parties will have twice the luck of one.

ERZINOKH'S FAMILY

Erzinokh's fond reminiscences of his family "back on Llooursouth" are romanticized to an extreme. The actuality of the current situation bears little resemblance to the nostalgic tales of his youth.

His family lives on a religious commune owned and operated by the Church of the Chosen Ones. Gracing the grounds are a large temple and the famous "Museum of the Supremacy of Vargr Culture." The museum contains a variety of exhibits showing the history of the Vargr race and the Church. The museum purports to be an independent entity, but the relationship between it and the Church is very close indeed.

Visitors can learn how the Ancients carefully chose the original carnivore stock on Terra, and then how they manipulated these beasts into the perfect beings that the Vargr are today. Dioramas depict many of the important events in Church history, particularly the meeting 200 years ago between the founder of the Church and a living Ancient when the founder received the Church's oracle artifact. Another diorama shows how the galaxy will be governed when the Vargr have succeeded in conquering all of the surrounding inhabited regions.

The members of the commune on Llooursouth dress entirely in white, trim the fur around their ears, and have a variety of other eccentric beliefs and practices (remember that the Church of the Chosen Ones is not consistent among its 19 branches). They don't mind visitors who are interested in seeing the museum or working for the commune, but strangers who ask pesky questions are not appreciated.

Erzinokh himself has not been to see his family for more than twenty years, when he had a falling out with the Church leaders there. He vowed that he would from then on be independent from the Church and all of its activities, and that he would never visit his homeworld again. He has passed through the starport a number of times since, but he has remained true to his pledge and has not travelled to the commune site.

Erzinokh would not be welcome at any rate, and Church members who knew him 20 years ago will not take kindly to requests about his whereabouts.

The commune has a secret cache of small arms which they will use against the characters if they feel threatened. They have managed to keep the guns despite the high law level of the world, by bribery, stealth, and the cooperation of pro-Church officials in the local constabulary.

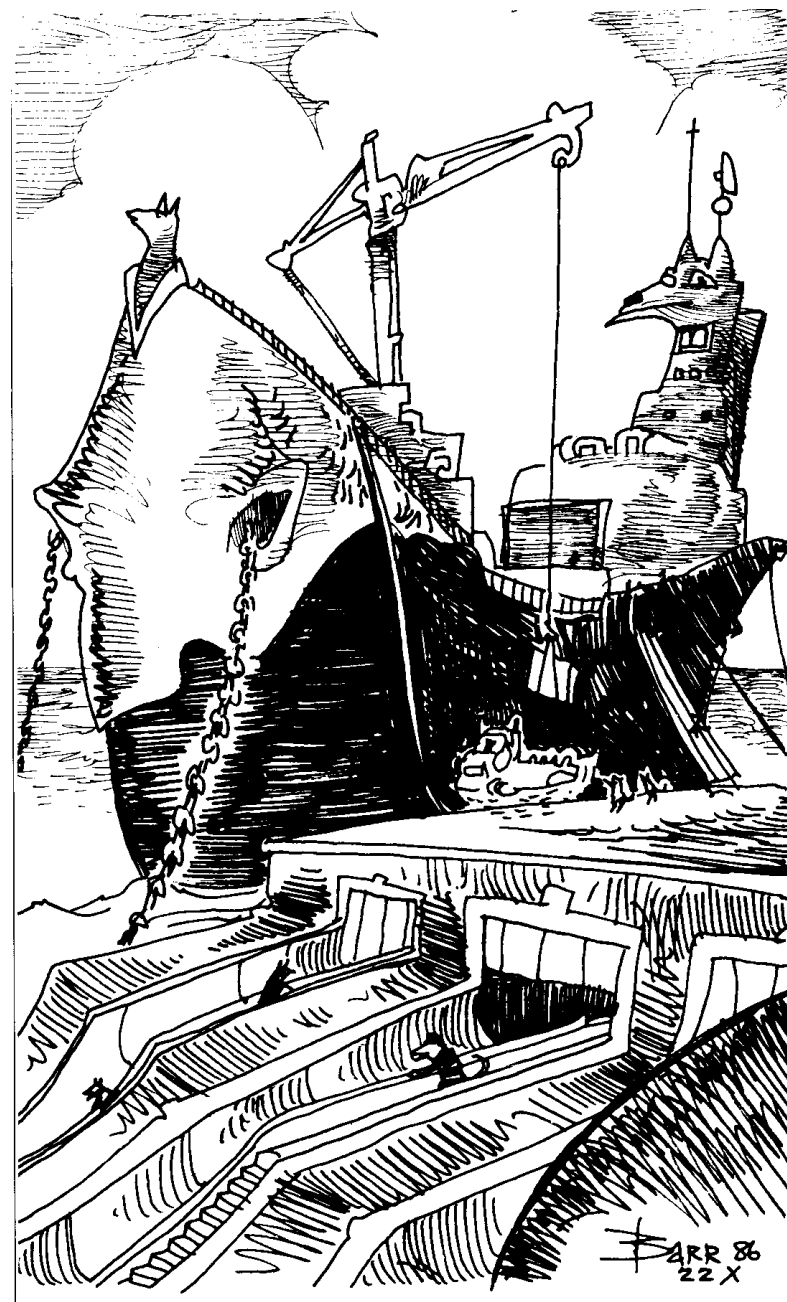
OEGONGONG

In their travels on Llooursouth, the characters are liable to encounter a local pest, the oegongong. (More information on this creature can be found in this issue's Bestiary.)

The adult oegongong is a distinct threat to air/raft travel. Chances for a collision are increased because of the air/raft's speed and the small size of the oegongong. Such a collision will ignite the oegongong's hydrogen sacs causing an explosion that can damage an air/raft. If the party is careless or flies on automatic pilot, a collision is inevitable. The odds for a collision will also come into play if the characters are involved in a high speed chase.

IGZ INVESTIGATORS

Officials at IGZ Investigators will be suspicious at first if the party asks about the case because they have just received unfortunate news about the investigator assigned to it. The company was notified



that the investigator was killed in a hit and run air/raft accident after following a weak trail to Gurzueng. Another investigator left for Gurzueng yesterday to follow up on the matter. Igz does not have any other information about the case, nor will they give out the names of the investigators involved.

UZOTSSAZA

Uzotssaza (1816 B225435 D) is more technologically advanced than most worlds in Dzen Aeng Kho. In fact, although several worlds have the same tech level, only two worlds are higher in technology than Uzotssaza.

Uzotssaza's 12,000 inhabitants live in a small complex orbiting the world. The planet's atmosphere is both thin and tainted, so life in a controlled space environment is simpler than life on the surface would be.

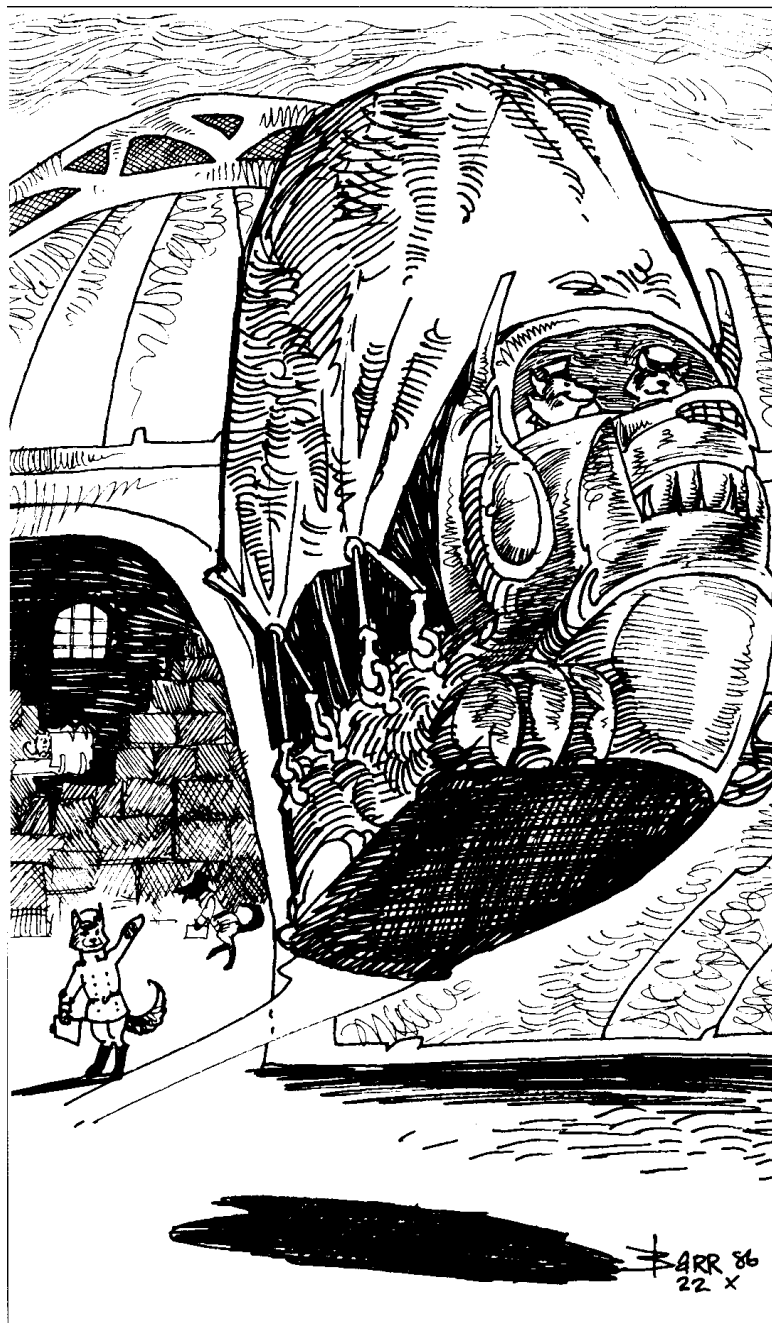
The entire complex is fully automated, a condition that has reduced the general health of the Vargr who live there. Conditions are so pleasant that the Uzotssazans have developed a philosophy of lazy hedonism: if it feels good, do it, but don't do it too much.

The permanent residents have gone to flab, and any physical exertion is frowned upon as ostentatious. The settings for the station's artificial gravity have been turned lower and lower over the years, so that now the residents live in entirely weightless conditions. This further impairs their muscular strength.

Today, even in the weightless environment, most residents wear zero-G maneuver equipment in personal harnesses. These devices are not meant to simplify travel around the station so much as they are meant to further reduce any strenuous activity.

GURZUENG

Gurzueng (2018 B788300 B) is a sparsely settled world with no local industry. Its two cities hold most of the world's population of 800 Vargr split evenly between them. One city, Ekh, is located next to the starport, and the other, Dzi, is on the continent on the other side of the world. Gurzueng has no government, which suits the inhabitants just fine.



A handful of the Vargr on Gurzueng run the class B starport, servicing ships passing through, but most of the residents are silver miners. Many of the richest veins lie just beneath the planet's thin topsoil, but strong winds blowing constantly across the landscape make mining a formidable task. The ore is extracted by the Vargr themselves without the use of mining robots.

Streetwise skill can pay off on Gurzeung. An on the ball character will easily discover that a great new shipment of highleaf recently arrived on the planet.

THE IGZ AGENT

Asking around will yield the information that the second Igz Investigators agent was killed a few days before when he was accidentally hit by a low flying air/raft. By now the players should be extremely suspicious of these coincidences.

His room rent was paid through the end of the following week, but with his untimely death the landlord has removed his belongings and prepared to send them back to Igz on Lloursouth. This is getting to be a usual state of affairs with the landlord as he sent the first agent's belongings back some time ago.

If questioned, the landlord will have little sympathy for either agent. "They should have been more careful where they were walking," he says.

Both agents were struck down by air/rafts which did not stop after the accidents. No other evidence has been found, and there is no government on Gurzueng to put forth an investigation or to file charges against any culprit. Given the proper inducement (such as a Cr20 bribe), the landlord will divulge some of the activities of the agent before his death. In particular, he made three visiphone calls to someone on the continent around the globe. The numbers were recorded by the landlord in order to bill the agent for them later. The landlord is willing to give the agent's belongings to the party for a suitable fee.



GURZUENG DOWN

The starport on Gurzueng is busier than one would expect at a world with such a low population. When the characters arrive, they might notice a ship in port unloading a number of crates marked with the name "Dzofakael."

Dzofakael is a manufacturer in the Vargr Extents, well-known for its sturdy heavy equipment and ship armaments. Among its products are bulldozers, backhoes, tractors, and small fusion-powered locomotives, any one of which might be used in a typical mining operation. Their other products include heavy lasers, PGMP 13s, sand casters, and ship hull armor, none of which would be used in a typical mining operation.

It is impossible to see what is in these crates without opening them up. The crates are being loaded onto a grav truck.

FOLLOW THAT GRAV TRUCK!

Once loaded, the grav truck starts up and flies away. Several Vargr grav platforms are sitting unattended on the dock; if the characters look they will find that the keys have been left in one of them. If the party takes advantage of this opportunity they will be able to follow the grav truck to a warehouse on the ocean shipping docks of Ekh.

At the warehouse the Dzofakael crates are combined with others already there and loaded onto an ocean freighter. The characters will recognize the names on the other crates as being manufacturers of space ship components, mostly military. The freighter is scheduled to leave for Dzi the next morning.

The freighter is guarded by three large Vargr armed with SMGs. Inside the warehouse are two more Vargr with automatic shotguns. Transshipment invoices on the freighter and inside the warehouse show that the crates are to be ultimately delivered (by grav truck) to an area deep within the other continent.

TRAVEL OPTIONS

A number of modes of transportation are available to the party should they wish to pursue the equipment on the freighter. The most obvious ways to follow along are to buy passage on the freighter or to stow away below decks. Passage to Dzi will cost Cr425 each with meals included for the six day trip. The food is the same as that served to the sailors from the ship's galley, filling and spicy.

A passenger hovercraft makes a regular run between Ekh and Dzi. Passage costs Cr750 each, but the hovercraft is faster and will arrive in Dzi two days before the freighter.

If the characters are not yet ready to trust themselves to the locals, they can rent grav platforms for Cr400 per day. Each grav platform can hold a crew of two. The characters can install a heavy machinegun on any grav platform they rent. The trip to Dzi takes 40 hours; dawdling along the way is ill advised as the platform has enough fuel for only a little more than 50 hours. The platforms can be refueled at Dzi for Cr40 apiece.

If the party was successful in breaking into the ship or the warehouse, they might know the cargo's final destination and they may decide to go there. On

maps of Gurzueng the area is shown as a wilderness with no inhabitants or outposts.

THE VISIPHONE NUMBER

The second Igz investigator made three calls to Dzi before he was killed. All three calls were made to a wilderness guide. The investigator was planning to hire a vehicle for a safari inland, but he did not tell the guide the precise location of his trek. The guide wondered why the investigator never called back after arrangements had been made, but he did not follow up on the matter.

If the party bribed the landlord enough, they will find a round trip hovercraft ticket between Ekh and Dzi among the investigator's belongings. The investigator died before the trip could be made. Also among his things is a map of the other continent with four areas marked with small Xs. One of these locations is in fact the destination of the ship armaments. The other three are just wilderness.

THE PIRATE BASE

The wilderness hides a base of operations for Erzinokh's corsair band. Four merchant ships are being converted to military use, including the two the characters have been tracking. The ship Erzinokh stole from Aegadh is operational and fully fueled, but the other three ships are only partially converted.

Parked alongside the merchant ships, but covered over with tarpaulins, are three Rampart IV FF 77 fighters. These Imperial vessels were stolen in the Spinward Marches. The fighters were shipped in sections to be assembled near their point of deployment. Erzinokh hijacked the shipment and replaced the crates holding the fighters with similar crates holding ordinary industrial equipment.

After the transporting of the fighters here, ship mechanics have been kept busy putting the pieces together. One Rampart is fully operational, fueled and armed. Another could be made battle ready in four hours. The third is still weeks away from its maiden flight.

The perimeter of the pirate base is heavily guarded, but if your players have made it this far without serious mishap it would be unfortunate to kill them off without a chance. Adjust the pirates' defenses according to the capabilities of the party. The finale to the adventure should be fair to both sides of the struggle.

Depending on the type of characters used in this adventure, you might play out a ground action or a ship-to-ship combat in the Gurzueng system. Several scenarios are equally enjoyable, depending on the temperament of your players.

THE RINGLEADER'S MEN

Erzinokh's crew are hand picked (paw picked?). If the party is at all careless in their investigations they will pick up a tail in Ekh or Dzi. Because of their number and their semi-official status they are less likely to suffer the sudden effects of an air/raft accident.

The pirates may try to kidnap the characters if an opportunity arises.

THE RINGLEADER

Erzinokh is feared and admired by his crew. At 38 years of age, he is a corsair leader with Leader 4 skill and a charisma of B. He leads by personal example; his bravery and strength are an inspiration to those around him.

If the party has been captured rather than killed, and if they have not caused him excessive inconvenience, he will be impressed by the fact that his old employees could find him across such a distance of space. Because of this, he will offer them positions within his band of corsairs if the characters desire.

The characters will have little choice in this matter: they know too much to be let free. If they do not accept Erzinokh's offer, he will have them killed. Seen in this light, and considering his personal magnetism, the characters may be inclined to join forces with Erzinokh's group.

Gary L. Thomas

Fighter Profile: The Rampart IV and V

FF 77 RAMPART IV

Origin: IDS Corp., a division of Sternmetal Horizons.

Type: Fighter/interceptor, interplanetary, all atmospheres.

Engine: IDS Mk.68H 1 Fusion Chamber.

Dimensions: l=8.10m, w=4.27m, h =2.66m.

Weights: Max. loaded =20.0 tons, dry= 14.8 tons.

Performance: Max. acc.=6g, agility=6.

Armament: two Jannen Mk.5TR Fusion Cannons.

History: First flight on 1107 364, service IOC on 1109 130.

User. Imperial Navy.

The Rampart IV project, secret until recently, was given a high priority due to the Zhodani invasion of the Spinward Marches in 1105. After many years of slow development and near cancellation, work was finally accelerated and the Imperial Navy awarded a development and production contract to IDS Corp. (Imperial Dynamic Systems Corp., of Ansenclorn/Core) in 1106. In 1107, the first prototype began flight testing at a secret test location. IOC (Initial Operational Capability) was achieved in 1109 when the FF 77 Rampart IV deployed to the Spinward Marches. Further details of the fighter's combat career are classified, but rumor has it that it is a "pilot's ship" and highly effective.

Much of this effectiveness may be due to its Naasirka LP 65N 7/R computer. Reportedly, the ship's performance has given it considerable popularity among pilots.

Rampart IV is also fitted with a 0.4 ton, type M 4/WQ24 ESU (Ejection and Survival Unit). The ESU has a rocket ejection unit, extra fuel for short duration travel (2g max) or surface landing, emergency life support, a rescue beacon (variable frequency), and a 50kg survival kit which includes food, a combo filter/resp mask, an instant shelter, and a weapon.

RAMPART IV

High Guard Statistics:

FF 0106SR1 10000 05000 0

2

2

TL=15, 20 tons, Fuel =5.2 tons, Agility=6, Cost=Mcr27.85

FF 81 RAMPART V

Origin: LSP Military Technologies Group.

Type: Ship killer, surface attack, interplanetary, all atmospheres.

Engine: IDS Mk.68K 7 Fusion Chamber.

Dimensions: 1=9.33m, w=5.65m, h =2.34m.

Weights: Max. loaded =20.0 tons, dry= 15.2 tons.

Performance: Max. acc.=6g, agility=6.

Armament: Two Amborg/Daniksen PS 33 Mk.1 six place missile launchers, each carrying twelve missiles.

History: First flight on 1108 042, service IOC on 1109 252. User: Imperial Navy.

A brother project to the Rampart IV, the Rampart V contract was awarded by the Imperial Navy to LSP/MTG Div. in 1106. Its engines are a modified version of the Rampart IV's and it uses two of the M4/WQ24 ESU's for a pilot and a weapon's operator (gunner). Its computer is the larger Naasirka LP 66N 3/3 which uses various weapons delivery programs.

A unique feature of the Rampart V system is the ability to allow up to five ships (usually four) to combine their missile launches into one salvo which is equivalent to a missile factor seven.

One of the four craft is designated as the leader and enters the appropriate program into his computer (1 space, 2MCO while the other four fighters load a corresponding gunnery program (1 space, .5MCR). The four computers update each other via short range microwave communications run automatically.

If the leader's ship loses its computer capability, then each of the ships must fire its weapons independently. Maximum size of the formation of four (microwave commo range) is 5000km.

RAMPART V

High Guard Statistics:

FM 0106MS1 K0000 00004 0

TL = 15, 20 tons, Fuel = 4.2 tons, Agility = 6, Cost = MCr33.2 (dry) Carries twelve (12) missiles; 4 per launcher.

Weight of Ejection/Survival Unit (ESU) = 0.4 tons ea.

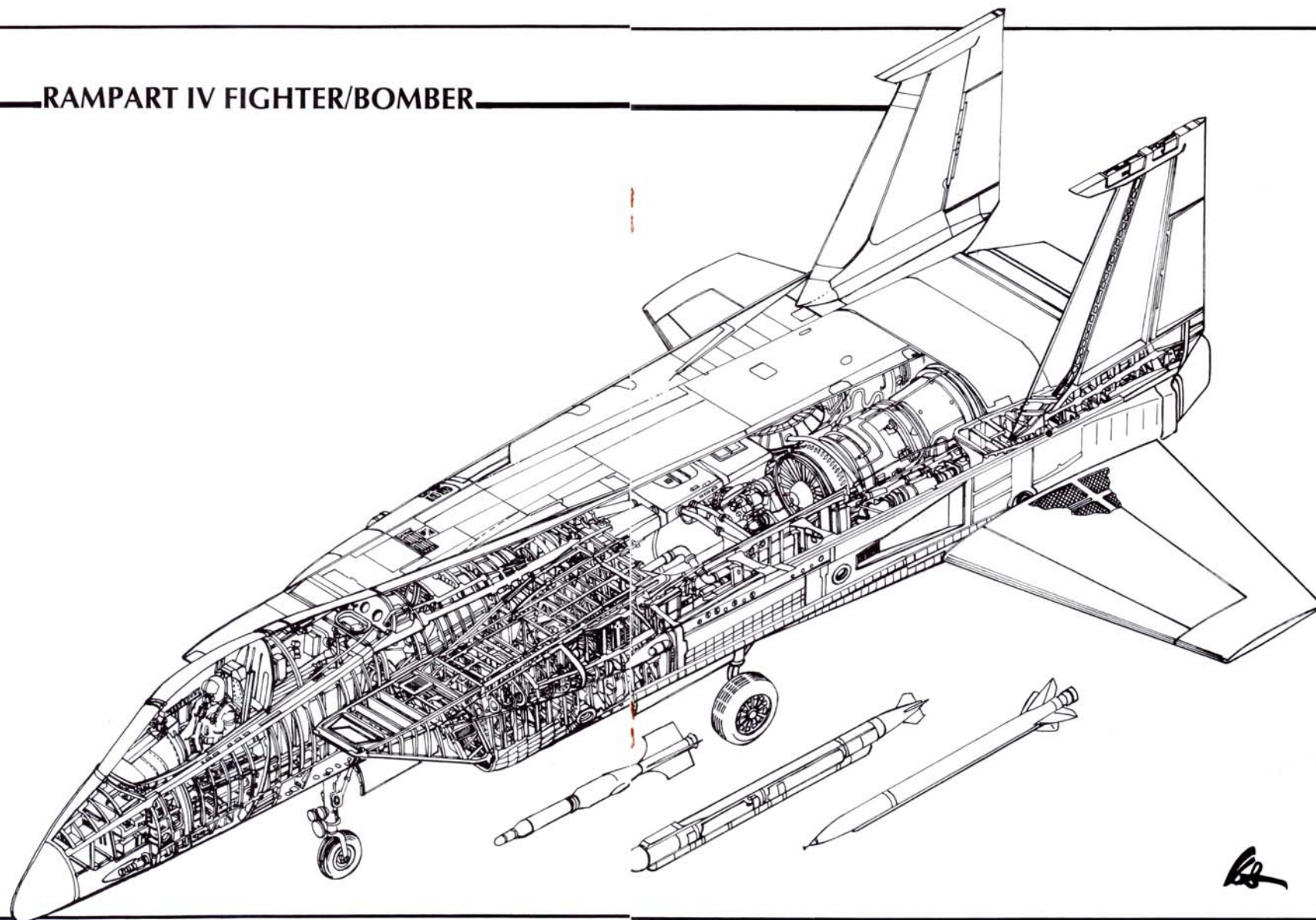
REFEREE'S INFORMATION:

Firing individually, each Rampart V adds its gunner's DM to the DMs from 'Predict' programs, if used. This procedure results in a net DM for each fighter. For the factor seven (to hit and damage) salvo shot these net DMs are averaged over all four ships to produce a DM for the salvo.

Also: The Rampart V's two hardpoints (see illustration) support the equivalent of a triple turret in weaponry. The missile launchers may be replaced with droppable ordnance, ECM pods (self-powered, act as ECM computer program), intelligence gathering equipment, or two 1.5 ton cargo/fuel pods. Refs, use your imagination.

Robert Lieberman

RAMPART IV FIGHTER/BOMBER



Each pronouncement of the artifact is numbered and the collection of these pronouncements forms the holy book of the Church. Some of the pronouncements are seemingly without meaning, being composed only of a series of numbers or asymmetric designs. These are held in special awe by believers, some of whom speculate that the patriarchs of the Church know the meaning of these oracles.

The artifact glows faintly when a message is waiting, and when a message is actually being received it glows so brightly that bystanders can be blinded if

Church of the Chosen Ones

The Church of the Chosen Ones is a fanatical Vargr sect which believes that the Ancients not only "invented" the Vargr race by genetic manipulation of Terran carnivores, but that the Ancients also returned to the Vargr several times, improving the race to the point that it could take its rightful place as the leader of this part of the galaxy. Some Church members even believe that the Ancients will return again to bring this about. The Church's influence has waned since its founding 200 years ago, but it still has followers on many worlds.

In the Vargr language of Gvegh, the Church of the Chosen Ones is known as Ourrhfaengaknokskugvorrgh.

The leader of the Church has the formal title of "Llaetsdhithae," and each official in the next lower level of the Church hierarchy is known as a "Dhaer," or "listener."

The Church of the Chosen ones is a church only in so far as it asks for a strong degree of devotion and trust from its members. It does not worship the Ancients any more than it worships the Vargr race. It does believe that it is the true leader and the only hope for the Vargr race because Church members are the only ones who recognize the true position of the race in the destiny of the galaxy.

The "holy book" of the Church of the Chosen Ones is an Ancient artifact. This artifact is a twisted piece of multi-colored crystal, garish in its appearance, but pleasing enough to the Vargr taste. The founder of the Church claimed to have received this artifact personally from the Ancients. Only the inner council of the Church has access to the device and, in fact, no other members of the Church have ever seen it. At various times the device is functional and it then reveals some new insight to the sect. It is not available for public examination, of course, because it is holy to the Church. Among non-believers there is a great deal of skepticism about this process.

How the device works has never been discovered. Some believers speculate that it is in fact a two-way communication device which allows Church leaders to contact the Ancients in their present home. This belief is furthered by the fact that pronouncements from the device typically occur during crises in Church history.



they look directly at it. The Llaetschlithae leader wears the artifact on a gold chain hanging around his neck. To receive a message, he places the device on his head so that one end covers his left ear and the other end covers his right eye. He then hears the words of the new message through one ear while he sees an apparently random pattern with the opposite eye.

The leader is assisted in his duties by nineteen "listeners," so called because they listen to and obey the messages of the artifact as the Llaetsdhithae reveals them. Each listener is assigned to an administrative area ranging in size from a small city to a number of sectors or subsectors. The listener assigned to an area is responsible for Church affairs in that area, such as building, publishing, recruiting members, and appointing officials of the Church in his region. About one half of the time, the Llaetsdhithae has been chosen from among the listeners. As the Church grows, the number and areas of the administrative units changes.

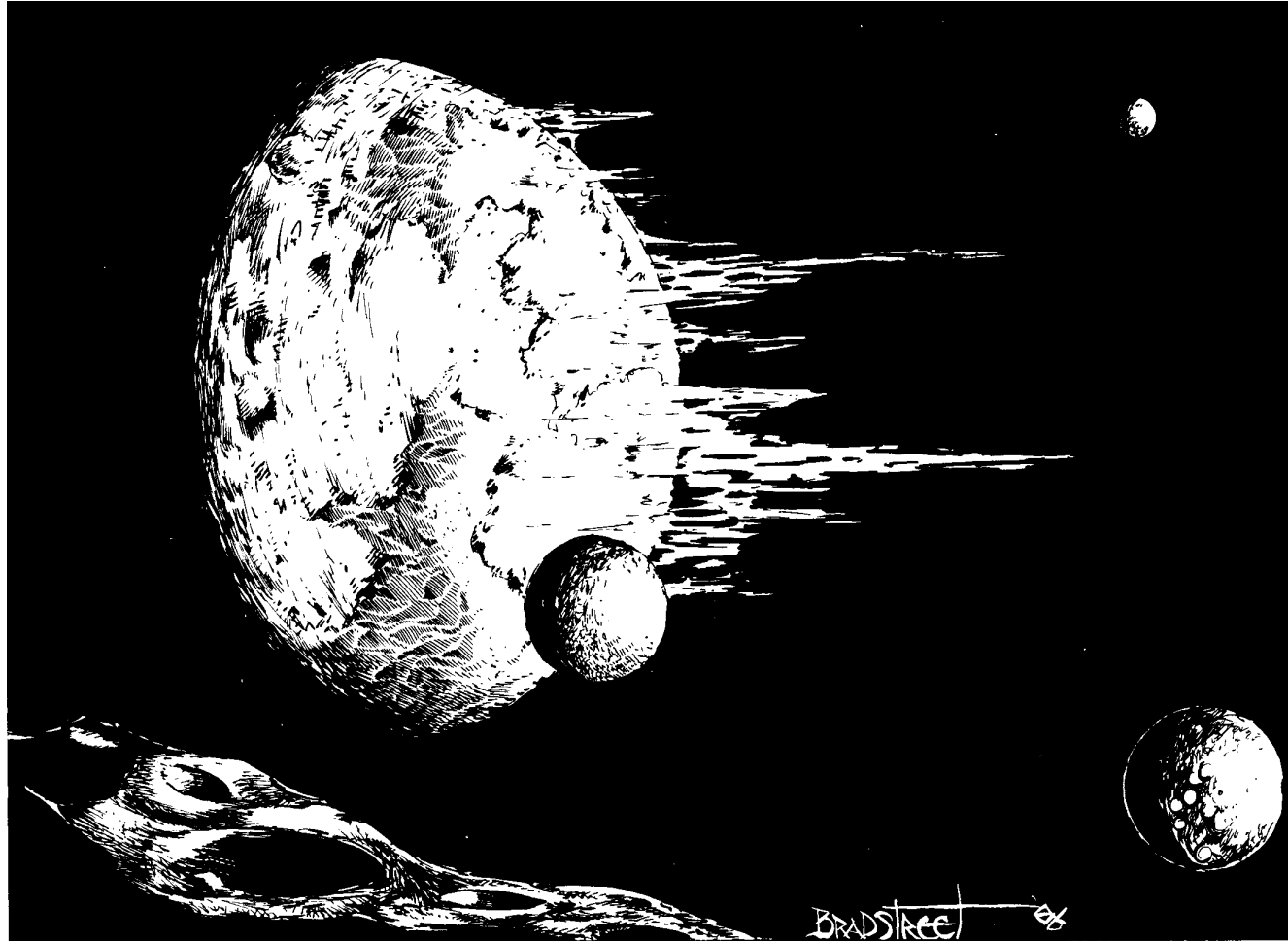
The first message received from the artifact was "Treat me well. I am the third most valuable thing." This message has been repeated before every subsequent message. The meaning of this message is interpreted by the Church as follows: the artifact, since it serves as a two-way communication device with the Ancients, is the third most valuable thing in this area of the galaxy. The Vargr race, because of its favored position among all of the sentient races, is the second most valuable thing. The most valuable thing has not been revealed, and its identity is a matter of speculation among the Church faithful.

Some say the most important thing is the Ancient race itself. Others say it is the Church of the Chosen Ones. Still others say the most important thing is something that does not exist yet that will be revealed at some future time.

The first portion of the message, "treat me well," is taken very seriously by those in the Church assigned to care for the artifact. Before the full importance of the artifact was understood by the Church, many mysterious deaths resulted from carelessness with it. These deaths have encouraged the view that the artifact is a two-way device.

Is the artifact genuine?

The Church believes it is, and so do many Vargr who are not associated with the Church. As the artifact is considered holy by the Church, it has not been exposed to careful, unbiased examination by the scientific community, so there is plenty of room for opposing opinions concerning the artifact's origins. Some scientists do believe the device is an Ancient artifact, but opinion is divided over what it actually is.



Naturally, the Church is organized charismatically. The Llaetschlithae is a charismatic Vargr who demands and receives total loyalty from the Church faithful. This leader is chosen by the artifact, usually after the death of the previous leader, although in a few instances the leader has been chosen before the death of the leader in power. As the leader chosen by the artifact always has a high charisma, the Vargr accept him without difficulty. There has never been a female leader of the Church. This is not an established policy; it is just

that the artifact has never chosen a female for the post. In two instances the leader chosen was only a pup. One of these lived as leader of the Church for 62 more years, the longest anyone ever held the post. The other died soon after the announcement.

Directing the Church is a difficult task because the tendency of the Vargr is not to obey a leader at any great distance away. The "listeners" must, in response to this, do a good deal of travelling throughout their administrative areas. The leader of the Church avoids travel by virtue of his control over the artifact.

Referee: Is the artifact genuine? Does the Vargr race deserve a special status in the galaxy? Will the Ancients return to establish the Vargr in their proper position of leadership? Answers to these questions are not available to player-characters, but we will deal with them briefly here.

The oracle device of the Church of the Chosen Ones is an Ancient artifact, but its function is not properly understood by the Church. The Ancients developed the Vargr from Terran carnivore stock, not in an attempt to produce a superior race, but in an attempt to create a species of servant.

To help further the development of intelligence in the neoVargr race, the Ancients used three different psionic devices. One of these was discovered by the founder of the Church of the Chosen Ones.

When a Vargr places this device properly on his head, the device psionically reads the Vargr's thoughts. The device then articulates sounds to clarify the Vargr's thinking. The seemingly random patterns seen in the device are meant to stimulate the opposite hemisphere of the brain, enhancing the learning through the ear.

Because the device does have artificial intelligence and because it is meant to help the Vargr develop greater intellectual and socialization skills, its messages seem to support the ongoing activities of the Church. Sometimes this is coincidence. Other times the device is actually using the Church structure (which it understands from the thoughts of the Llaetsdhithae) to stimulate the development of Vargr society and culture.

About thirty years ago, the Church discovered a mirror image of the artifact. This is the second device that the Ancients used in training the young Vargr race. By sending messages to one eye, while cross stimulating the brain with another message to the ear, this device developed Vargr intelligence in other ways. Because the "messages" (through the ear) from this device seem to be random, the Church is at a loss to explain the device's function, and has not announced its discovery. This device, incidentally, is the "second most valuable thing."

When a Vargr had been under the influence of these two devices for a certain period of time, a third device would be used to test the success of the training. This "most valuable thing" would decide whether a Vargr's genetics were sufficient to allow him continued membership in Vargr society. Vargr who failed this test were disposed of by the Ancients. Perhaps fortunately for the Church, this device has not been discovered.

The argument for Vargr racial superiority used by the Church is specious. If the motives of the Ancients were to create a new, better race, then they might have had the technical prowess to accomplish this. But the Ancients' goal in developing the Vargr was to create a race of perfect servants and in this the Ancients failed. The experiment was abandoned sometime before the Final War.

Gary L. Thomas

Vargr Grav Platforms

SHIP'S LOCKER

It is impossible to characterize anything as being "typically Vargr" since they are such a diverse and fragmented race. This goes as much for equipment and gear of all kinds as it does for governments or societies. Most of what we call "Vargr" is based on the standards of the various Gvegh speaking cultures of the regions to Coreward of the Spinward Marches. This still leaves quite a bit of ground to cover, but serves frequently as a basis for discussing "typical Vargr" items or attitudes.

Many Gvegh groups, and particularly a number of corsair bands, make use of a highly specialized vehicle: the "Grav Platform." Introduced at tech level 9, the grav platform is an early



forerunner of the individual's grav belt. It is less technically complex and costs nearly half as much as the grav module and harness array.

It is a versatile little vehicle: a barrel shaped, open-topped craft with just enough room for two individuals to stand inside. Grav generators and the power plant are located at the base of the vehicle; the crew stands above this with their upper bodies exposed.

Theoretically, the vehicle can attain speeds in excess of 720 kph. In practice, of course, such speeds are not obtained because the exposed crew could not take it. Some models are equipped with a windscreen, and, instead of holding two standing crew, are fitted with a single seat. These vehicles can approach the maximum speeds allowed. Usual operating speeds vary between 40 and 100 kph, with 40 the maximum safe speed when flying in nap-of-the-earth mode.

Grav platforms are used for a variety of purposes. They make excellent recon vehicles and are frequently employed on patrols or as part of a perimeter security establishment. For night operations, a platform can be fitted with a removable pintle mount and a searchlight.

Basic Traveller Data: The basic **Traveller** data for the grav platform is given below.

Grav platform (Tech Level 9)

Cr62,000; .25 tons. A small, grav-powered craft intended for paramilitary scouting and general support operations. Similar in principal to the air/raft and the G carrier, it is capable of speeds of up to 100 kph under normal circumstances and is subject to wind effects as an air/raft. Refueling is required after 50 hours of continuous operation. The grav platform carries a driver (who operates the craft using grav vehicle or air/raft skill) plus a single passenger who may serve as a gunner if weaponry is mounted. The vehicle can carry 100 kilograms of cargo. It may reach orbit, is open-topped and is unpressurized.

Although considered a Vargr vehicle due to its frequent use by Vargr corsairs and military units, the vehicle is frequently found in non-Vargr hands as well. A model similar to the one described here is manufactured by GSLAG in the Imperium, and Vargr manufactured models are frequently imported by firms such as Oberlindes and Akerut. Because of its versatility and comparatively low price, the grav platform finds many applications in everything from starport cargo handling (with suitable modifications, of course) to scout survey work to military uses.

Striker Information: The grav platform can be created through use of the **Striker** vehicle rule as modified in Andrew Keith's "Civilian Striker Vehicles" article (Journal 14). One special note: Standing crewmen are not assumed to take up one cubic meter, but rather only one-half cubic meter since the vehicle is open-topped and they are standing with only half their bodies inside the "chassis" of the vehicle. Either a searchlight or a HMG can be mounted, but not both, and the special rules modification from "Civilian Striker Vehicles", particularly as concerns power plant and cargo size is in force. The **Striker** data for the vehicle is listed below.

Grav Platform (Tech Level 9)

The vehicle has a crew of one (two if a gun is mounted), and total capacity of two occupants. It may mount a heavy machinegun, but usually carries no weaponry.

Dimensions: Height: 1.6 meters. Width: 1.2 meters. Length: 1.3 meters. Total Volume: 2.496 cubic meter. Weight: 1.8213 tons. Price: Cr61,552.

Movement: Maximum, 720 kph/600 cm; cruise, 540 kph/450 cm; NOE, 40 kph/33cm.

Movement Effects on Fire: No fire possible during movement.

Armor: All faces (except top), 2. Open-topped.

Target Size DMs: + 1 low.

Equipment: 500 power radio, map box. Searchlight mount optional.

Power Plant: .5 mw output fusion power plant consumes .75 liters of fuel per hour; fuel capacity is 40 liters, enough for 50+ hours.

Weapons: A pintle mounted heavy machinegun is optional.

J. Andrew Keith

The Oegongong

BESTIARY

Vargr realize that the flyer and the amphibian were, in fact, one creature with a triphibian life cycle.

The Oegongong is an hermaphroditic triphibian omnivor originally native to Hoursouth, but now found on several worlds throughout the Gvurrdon Sector. Hatchlings crawl o land when they first emerge from their egg cluster. The hatchlings immediately seek out waterwallowing periodically i the shallows, while developing gills. As the hatchlings grow, they spend more and more time in the water and less and less on land.

Immature adult Oegongong stay in the water using biological form of

electrolysis to generate hydrogen from the water; the generated hydrogen fills bubble like sacs on their back. During this period in the Oegongong's life an egg cell mass begins production inside its body, causing it to swell.

After a time, the hydrogen sacs make the Oegongong buoyant enough to float just below the surface of the water. The sacs continue to expand until they become huge and balloon like with enough lift to pull the Oegongong from the water into the air as a freefloating adult, its body swollen with a great mass of egg cells.

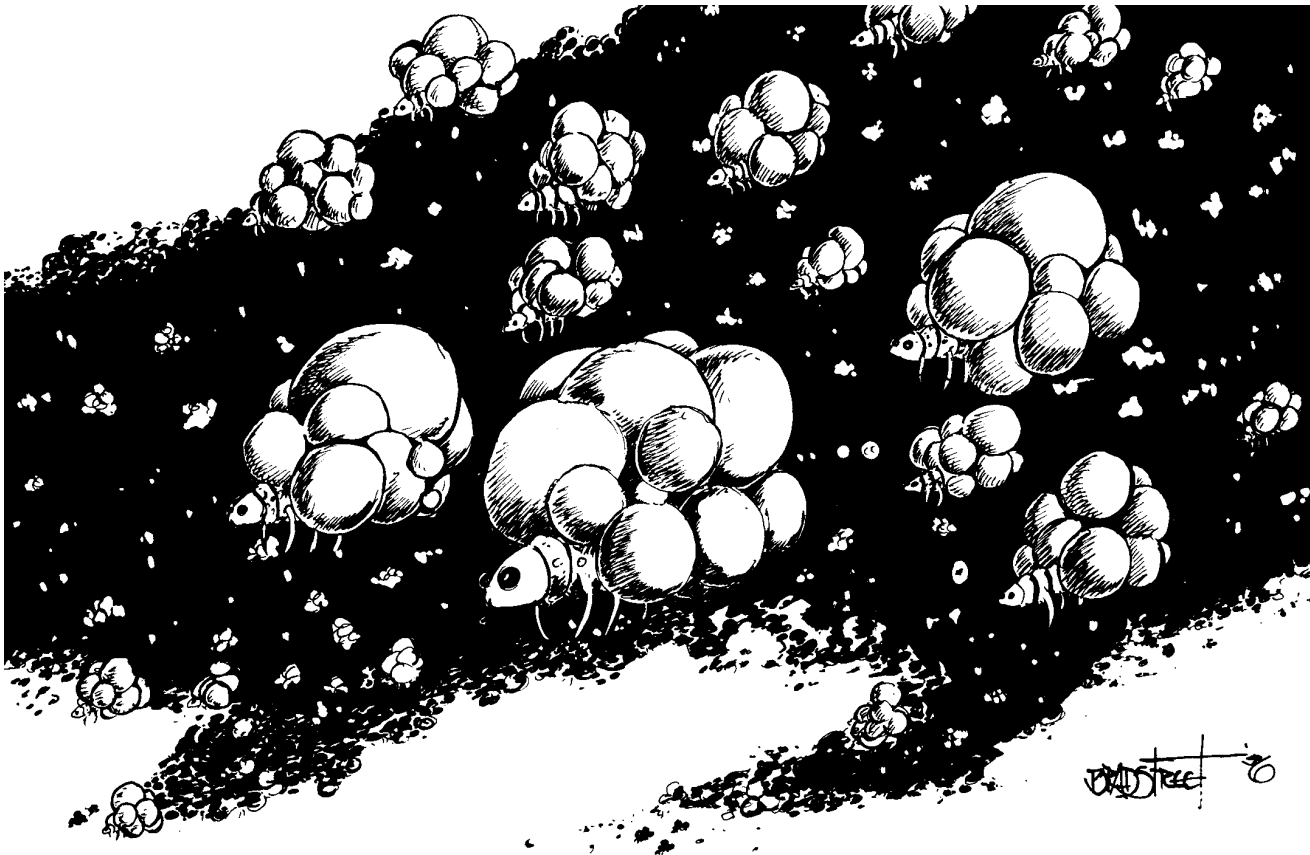
As the adult drifts over land, egg cells are dropped periodically to the ground over a period of several days. With fewer eggcells in its body, the adult becomes lighter, drifting higher into the atmosphere until ultimately the balloon sacs expand and burst, killing the adult Oegongong.

When the egg cells strike the ground the zygote material mixes and fertilizes the eggs, which then begin development. The jelly like eggs are covered with a gummy, black, sticky mass that cements them firmly onto rocks, foliage, or tree trunks. Many ground animals consider the eggs to be a great delicacy, eliminating most of the thousands of eggs normally produced.

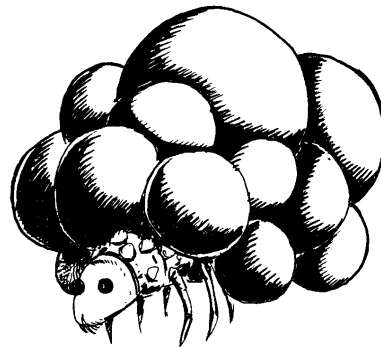
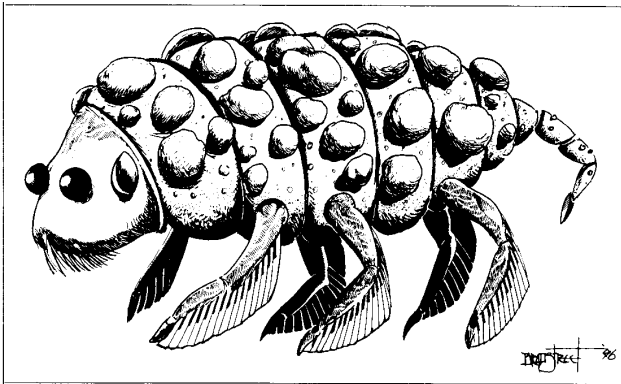
For its size, the Oegongong has a stinger that is especially potent and painful. The

stinger is capable of an unlimited number of stings, which means an attacking Oegongong can potentially kill any animal if it can sting it enough.

In addition, an Oegongong will eat or attempt to eat almost anything so that many animals (particularly the smaller ones) steer clear of them. The tough rubberlike exoskeleton of the Oegongong makes it a generally undesirable food



Vargr corsair bands from Gvurrdon first encountered the Oegongong during the great expansion period known as the Gvurrdon HvaeK. Records from that period (circa 2650) indicate that the first Vargr visiting Llooursouth believed th Oegongong to be two different and distinct species: one a buoyant flyer born in the water, the other a water and land-dwelling scorpion. Only later did the



for all but the largest carnivores. Also, the Oegongong's stinger is active throughout its three life stages, which further discourages other animals from disturbing it. On the worlds where it flourishes, the Oegongong generally has few natural enemies.

Adventurers in the Gvurrdon sector may encounter the Oegongong on any world of size 5 or less with a thin or thin tainted atmosphere (UPP codes 4 or 5) and a hydrographic percentage of 30% to 80%.

The Oegongong's sting is painful and multiple stings can kill if the characters are not careful. Fortunately, only one Oegongong is generally encountered at a time they rarely travel in groups.

Adult Oegongong with their hydrogen sacs present a considerable hazard to flying vehicles: a collision causes a damaging explosion. Another hazard the players may encounter is an egg cell bombardment by an adult Oegongong. Handling both possible situations is discussed in the events below.

The stats for the Oegongong are as follows:

Animal Type	Weight	Hits	Armor	Wounds & Weapons
Triphibian Eater	1kg	6/0	jack	6 stinger
				(land) A5 F5 S2
				(water) A3 F5 S2
				(air) AO F4 S1

Event: Possible midair collision with an adult Oegongong. Character piloting the craft must roll 11 + to avoid the collision, with DMs of +1 per level of applicable vehicle operation skill, + DEX/5 (drop fractions). If a collision occurs, treat as a single, point blank hit with a laser rifle (41D).

Event: Oegongong egg cell bombardment. Characters must each roll their dexterity or less to avoid getting hit with an eggcell mass. Those hit with an egg cell mass must roll their strength or less to remove the sticky mass (only one attempt is allowed per 10 minute period). Other characters may also make an attempt to remove the sticky mass by rolling their strength or less (takes another 10 minute period per attempt). Joe D. Fugate, Sr.

"The Oegongong's sting is painful and multiple stings can kill if the characters are not careful."

Three for the Road

SMALL CARGOS

CARGO: GC96/13

Lots: 1 kg each (750 doses + packaging) Value: Cr50 per lot

Transport Price: Cr30 per lot

Transport Cost: None

Market: Standard Item. Restriction +2

Availability: 10+

Special Handling: Extremely subject to temperature effects. Keep refrigerated at all times.

Player's Information

GC96/B is a pharmaceutical developed comparatively recently by researchers in the employ of SuSAG, the megacorporation which is most often connected with chemical and pharmaceutical research. It is a specific against Denebian Spotted Fever, a mutated virus of high communicability and frequently devastating effects.

The disease is transmitted by carriers who are themselves generally immune to it; they may suffer a slight illness after being exposed but recover quickly. The disease may then lie dormant for some time until triggered by environmental factors (which have not been as yet identified with any exactitude, but which would appear to be connected with life in artificial environments, shipboard living, or asteroid or domed colonies). Then the disease spreads to those who come in contact with the carrier (unless a secret saving throw of 10+ is made for each potential victim).

Those who contract the disease will come down with it after a period of 1d days. Symptoms include nausea, high fever, delirium, and an outbreak of dark red spots on the face, torso, hands, and arms. The disease rages for 2d days, during which time 1D damage is taken each day. Attendant medical skill reduces the time by one day per 3 levels of skill, and the damage by one point per 3 levels of skill on each damage roll. Once a character has had the disease, however, he or she will be subject to recurrences every so often, determined as the referee desires. Relapses last only 1D days.

GC96/13, when administered, gives the attending characters the equivalent of an additional medical 9 skill while treating outbreaks of the disease. Doses are in 1 gram pill form; 1 dose per day is required until the disease has run its course. Doses must be kept refrigerated prior to use as temperatures above 50° C cause the drug to break down rapidly into a worthless, inert substance.

Referee's Information

Roll 1 die, and apply the following:

1 Prior to shipment, this batch of the drug was not properly handled and was exposed to room temperature for a significant length of time. It is now useless.

This will be discovered upon delivery. An investigation to determine responsibility will cause the crew to be denied clearance for 2D days, DM 1 per level of admin. skill (or DM 2 per level of legal skill if using Special Supplement 1, Merchant Prince) of the captain or officer in charge of the ship's records.

2 During the long flight refrigeration machinery fails. The characters have 2D hours to make repairs before the temperature becomes too warm for the drug. Roll 10+ per hour to accomplish repairs, DM + mechanical skill of one repairing character (or per 2 levels of JOT, if mechanical is not available); DM+1 per hour spent making the repairs after the first. If the referee determines that repairs are not made in time, characters will be held liable for the cost of the damaged merchandise.

34 An outbreak of Denebian Spotted Fever occurs on board the ship in transit (either a character has been exposed previously, or a passenger brings it on board). The drug is stocked on shipboard only if the Availability throw is made. The alternative is to appropriate the cargo to avert the worst effects of the disease. Roll again; a result of 1 or 2 applies as described above to the cargo. If the cargo is used, the characters are liable for the full value of the shipment (not just the portion used). Also, the ship will be placed in quarantine on arrival until 6 days after the last day of damage to any victim of the disease. As long as the ship is in quarantine it must remain in orbit and may not discharge passengers or cargo or have direct contact with any other person or vessel.

5 6 No ill effects. Shipment poses no special problem.

CARGO: !!XUG'K (HIGHLEAF)

Lots: 1 kg each

Value: Cr25,000 per lot (Cr25 per lot)

Transport Price: Cr1250 per lot (Cr1 per lot)

Transport Cost: None

Market: Restricted Item. Restriction 5. (Luxury item. Restriction +2)

Availability: 12+ (7+)

Special Handling: None

Player's Information

It's called !!Xug'k in K'kree space where it is grown, but humans know it as highleaf, one of the most potent addictive drugs known to man.

Highleaf is a luxury item for K'kree traders. It is a mild narcotic, no more harmful or effective in the K'kree system than a glass of wine to a human. But humans find highleaf far more intoxicating: a 10 gram dose of highleaf (which sells for Cr250 on the streets) gives the user a powerful feeling of euphoria and giddiness for a 12 hour period. During that time, dexterity and intelligence are decreased by 1 while endurance is increased by 1. When it wears off, endurance returns to normal but the other affected stats return only if a roll against the character's current (modified) stats is less than or equal to those levels. Moreover, once a human has chewed highleaf, a roll less than or equal to endurance must be made once each day for a number of weeks equal to 15 endurences. Failure of any of these rolls results in the slow onset of withdrawal symptoms. The character requires another dose of the drug within 2D hours or suffers 3D damage. The worst thing about the drug is the way that the craving can emerge, suddenly, many weeks after the last consumption of the drug.

The drug is highly illegal on most human worlds, and the Restriction modifier is applied to the roll for the punishment inflicted for possession as well as to the import/export legality rolls. For the most part the weed is unobtainable in human space because of these serious restrictions, but human smugglers often slip into K'kree space to import the drug from there. In K'kree space the drug is perfectly legal, not particularly expensive and easy to obtain. A few stashed lots of highleaf can set up a drug smuggler for life.

Referee's Information

Roll 1 die, and apply the following:

1 The cargo of leaf was improperly cured. This results in far more dangerous effects; users take 3d damage immediately in addition to normal effects, and, moreover, on a roll of 10+ suffer an additional 2D hits applied against intelligence and education; this is an especially severe form of shock amnesia. A recovery is possible only on a roll of 12 + QM + attendant medical skill) made once each month. Education can be recovered through lengthy, expensive reeducation processes (per the Experience rules). While suffering these effects, level 1 skills become level 0 skills and higher levels are reduced to level 1. Introduction of this dangerous form of the drug will result in an intensive search for the criminal and can lead to full murder charges when prosecuted.

2 5 The planetary authorities of the destination world have received a tip that a load of leaf is on its way and are being doubly vigilant. Customs inspections

will find the leaf on a throw of 8 +. Bribery of officials or particularly clever methods of concealing the cargo could allow DMs, of course.

6 No ill effects. The shipment poses no special problems. Note: Parenthetical information on the cargo data is for K'kree space; other listings are for human space.

CARGO: WOLFE'S BLACKSTREAK

Lots: 25 kg each

Value: Cr500 each

Transport Price: Cr25 each (per jump)

Transport Cost: Cr4 each (per week)

Market: Luxury Item. Restriction 1

Availability: 8+ (outside Spinward Marches, 10+)

Special Handling: Live cargo. Noted transport cost is for conscious transport; low berth costs Cr1 for up to 5 animals in a common berth who share the same recovery die roll. Transport price is generally the same either way.

Player's Information

The animal known as Wolfe's Blackstreak is described fully in the Beastiary in this issue; it is an animal which is popular for sport or as a guardian beast for rich owners. They are relatively common in the Spinward Marches, somewhat less so outside the Marches. They can be quite valuable but somewhat hard to handle on occasion.

Referee's Information

Roll 1 die, and apply the following:

1 2 The animal(s) being shipped is not domesticated (wild breeding stock is frequently transported). If shipped conscious, the animal(s) will find transport disconcerting. Twice a day at feeding time, roll to see if a frightened blackie attacks the crewman assigned to feed the cargo. Otherwise, no effect.

3 4 Some blackies have shown a decidedly bad reaction to the drugs used in preparation for low berth. For each blackstreak carried roll 2D; on a 9+, the animal in question is allergic to the drugs and dies in transit. The ship's doctor is responsible for examining the creatures before they are Put under (roll Education or less, DM xenomedicine). If the roll is successful, the problem is noticed and trouble forestalled. If it failed, the doctor can be sued for up to 10 times the value of the animal. Roll 2D - 2; on a 0, there is no suit; otherwise the suit is for that multiple of the value of the animal. The suit is found in favor of the plaintiff on a roll of the law level of the destination world or less.

5 6 No ill effects. The shipment poses no special problems.

J Andrew Keith

Grandfather's Worlds

One of the aspects of the Traveller universe that has always intrigued me is Grandfather Yaskoydray, the original Ancient. Since Traveller players share this interest, I spent some time working out one of Grandfather's projects as the basis for a number of adventures. This article paints with broad strokes what can be found when adventurers encounter Grandfather's hidden worlds in the Regina system.

In the course of Grandfather's activities before, during, and after the Ancient War, Grandfather translated a large number of worlds out of normal space and created portals which gave him and his robots access to them. In some cases, the world included a star which provided illumination, warmth, and a natural environment. In other situations, he took only a single world, but then created an artificial sun and even artificial gravity to make the world comfortable.

Some of these worlds were created experimentally before Grandfather began the long Ancient War. Many were produced during the war (not only by Grandfather, but also by his children). And a few were created by Grandfather after the war was over. One place in which he worked his technological magic was the Regina system.

THE HIDDEN REGINA SYSTEM

The Regina system once had more worlds than it does today. Grandfather, in the years immediately after the Ancient War, built a laboratory there. He selected a large gas giant (in orbit 5) along with its three satellites and rotated them into a pocket universe. Using technology he discovered during the Ancient War, he ignited the gas giant, transforming it into a very small star which he named Braykossa. Its small mass meant that it would shine for a very short time, probably less than a million years (but that would be enough for Grandfather's purposes). Harnessing gravitational stress in the pocket universe, he shifted the three satellites into equidistant positions along an orbit and placed observation stations on these planets and left them to record the evolution of the mini star. When he was finished, he left on other business. He hasn't been back to the Regina system since the year 290,000.

Observation stations can be any number of things.

They could be banks of instruments, or totally automated sensor arrays. In the Braykossa pocket universe Grandfather created three separate observation stations on the three separate worlds. By creating three distinctly different stations, he hoped to compare the data they collected and learn even more by correlating the differences in observation techniques.

Elkyulm: Grandfather named the first world Elkyulm and populated it with solid state mechanical robots. He hard wired into their brains an overriding purpose to observe and analyze the astrophysical life of Braykossa. These gleaming, metal cased robots devote their lives to detailed observation and analysis of Braykossa. In 290,000 years they have not only developed an accurate record of the star's history, but have also generated a comprehensive theory which predicts the future life cycle of the star.

Kraldosk: Grandfather named the second world Kraldosk and built on it an automated vat that could create biological robots (androids) which were near duplicates of humans. He placed in charge of this world and its vat a single human servant (named Na Kraldosk) who had shown outstanding loyalty and support throughout the Ancient War. Na Kraldosk was given explicit instructions to maintain a cadre of scientific monitors to observe the life cycle of Braykossa, and he has done so. The vat, however, has also given Na Kraldosk the ability to prolong his own life and he still lives on Kraldosk managing and maintaining the android population of the world.

Prissuls: Grandfather named the third world Prissuls, and on that world he established a special life form sensitive to the light of Braykossa. The small, five legged beasts respond to the specific peak wavelengths of Braykossa's light on the genetic level, and as the star ages the animals (also called prissuls) change in temperament and form. All were originally herbivorous, but as peak light wavelengths have shifted more and more have become omnivorous or carnivorous. Grandfather reads data on the life cycle of Braykossa directly from the nature of the population of Prissuls.

The Central Control Station: Grandfather also created a small central control station to monitor the three worlds and to maintain the data produced by them. When Grandfather visits the system, the central control room is where he begins his tour.

The central control room is staffed by a small number (less than a dozen) of loyal robots (called controllers) which he built specially for this purpose.

The Stairway to the Stars: Grandfather's controllers in the Regina system of worlds built a way to walk (!) from one world to the next. Hundreds of 'pearls' were built, each one an iridescent sphere about one hundred kilometers in diameter. On opposite sides of each pearl were placed portals which directly connect to other pearls. Strings of pearls led from one world to the next, connecting the three worlds around Braykossa in a necklace of portals.

Each pearl is about one million kilometers from the next. Pearls near the worlds are closer together. The portals in the pearls transport individuals instantly to the next pearl. Because the pearls themselves are so large, the greatest amount of time is consumed in traversing the pearls themselves. In zero G (some have no artificial gravity), a pearl can be traversed in about ten

hours. Other pearls have small environments or habitats and can take from twenty hours to several days to traverse. Walking from one world in the Braykossa system to another requires travelling through about one hundred pearls and takes about one hundred days.

Each pearl is iridescent when viewed from outside; from inside its shell is transparent and gives a view of space, Braykossa, and the three worlds. The controllers have created a variety of environments in the pearls: some are filled with water; others are empty, air filled bubbles; still others are mini habitats with foodstuffs growing for the nourishment of travellers.

The pearl chains touch down on the worlds at immense stations where a pearl (100 kilometers in diameter) is embedded in the surface of the planet. The portal opens onto a platform about one kilometer in diameter and twenty meters above the world surface. Potential travellers must first ascend the platform before beginning their journeys; arrivals must leap down from the platform to reach the world.

Human Imitations: The vats of Kralciosk can produce nearly exact imitations of any human. They are, in fact, exact with the exception that all are missing the little finger on their left hand (this was an identification technique which Grandfather included in the basic specifications of the vat).

Na Kraldosk has also used the vat to produce replacement parts for himself... he is now over 290,000 years old and has replaced body parts time and again. The only remaining original parts are a very old and crippled left little finger and his original brain.

The Storefront: Very recently the human robots of Kralciosk reached a new breakthrough in portal technology and (unknown to Na Kralciosk) succeeded in creating a portal which reached the true universe. They have not yet grasped the full extent of their discovery and think of the new world they have reached as just another in their own universe.

What they have done is to establish a secret research outpost on the world they reached Regina. Their outpost is a small storefront in Regni, a major city on Regina. They have succeeded in learning the local language and they sell small handcrafted items in order to raise money to buy goods and to finance expeditions on Regina.

The Necklace: The controllers built a scale model of the stairway to the stars when they finished their project. This miniature, in the form of a necklace, consists of three large pearls (representing Elkyulm, Kralciosk, and Prissuls) connected by hundreds of smaller pearls (representing the pearls of the stairway to the stars). The entire necklace is about one meter in length. A golden clasp is located halfway between two of the worlds and represents the central control station. It is attached in such a way that it does not touch the adjacent pearls directly.

The necklace has a mechanism to indicate its precise location within the Braykossa system. The pearl or world corresponding to its current location warms to the touch and is visible in the infrared. The effect is subtle enough that it is not usually noticed. A wearer may notice the effect by chance or after careful examination.

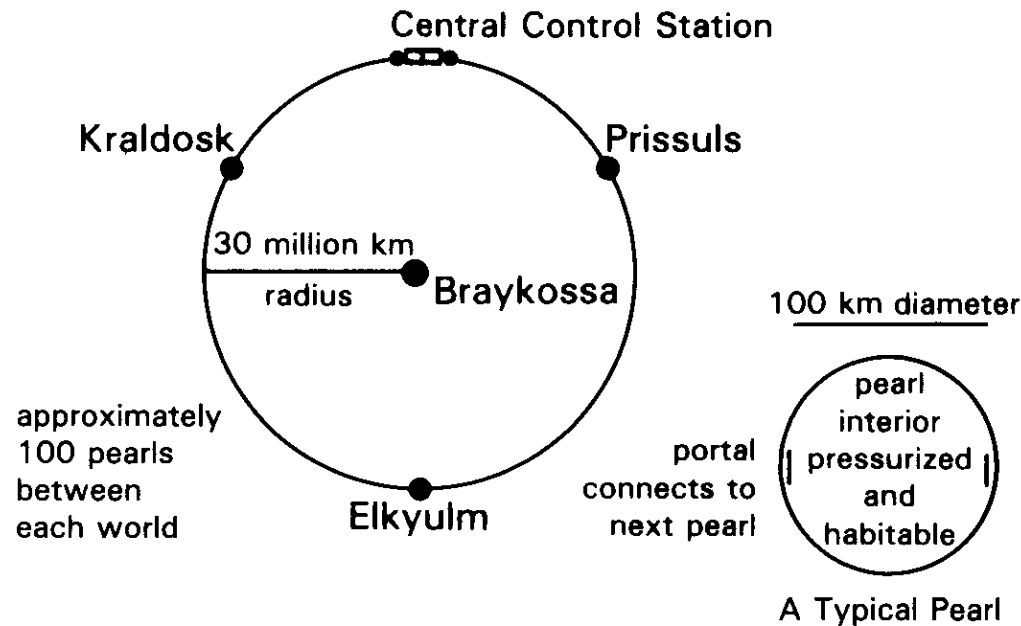
The necklace also controls the portals of the pearls. Whenever two pearls are placed adjacent to each other, they override the normal portal relationship and make the portals connect between those two pearls. It is possible to use this technique to shorten travel time between worlds considerably. This technique is also the only way to gain access to the control center.

UNIQUE PEARLS

Each pearl is unique, and this uniqueness provides a **Traveller** referee with an opportunity to present puzzles, enigmas, and problems for the adventurers to solve. The following are a few suggestions for pearls.

Water Bubble: The pearl is filled with water and travel across it seems impossible without special equipment. Near the portal, however, is a bubble of air drawn from the previous pearl. The adventurers must figure out how to cross the water pearl. There may be convection currents which will carry a pinched off





bubble of air across to the other portal. There may be swimming animals (similar to dolphins) which will help. Or the characters may have technological equipment which will help them.

Air Bubble: The pearl is empty but filled with air. It has no gravity, so the characters must propel themselves across the 100 km gap by just leaping. They may encounter local life forms as they drift through the clouds of the pearl.

Gravity Faces Out: The inner surface of the pearl may have an artificially induced gravity which makes that surface out. The adventurers will have to walk from one portal to the other.

Other Possibilities: There are hundreds of pearls, and each is different if only in subtle ways. There may be jungles, mazes of tunnels or corridors, steamy hothouses, frigid ice platforms, and any number of other inspirations. There are two overriding factors to remember: each pearl is different, and it is possible to travel between worlds by using the pearls.

ADVENTURING

Against the background of Grandfather's hidden worlds in the Regina system a band of adventurers can have a variety of interesting adventures. The following are a few suggestions.

Come Help Us: A small delegation of humanoid robots from Kraldosk approach the adventurers for assistance. The beasts of Prissu Is have reached an eater phase (where a large proportion are now genetically eaters).

Moreover, they have reached a rudimentary level of intelligence and are spilling out over the string of pearls. They have now sprawled over more than half the pearls between Prissuls and each of the other planets, and through an accident have even overrun the central control station. The adventurers are asked to travel to the Braykossa pocket universe and help repel the prissuls menace.

Go Investigate: One of the handicrafts that the humanoid robots have sold on Regina is the string of pearls necklace and it has ultimately ended up in the hands of the adventurers. Now controller robots are tracking down the string of pearls and closing down the storefront. They attack the adventurers, leading them to the storefront where they stumble onto the portal and then into the Braykossa pocket universe. Pursued by the controllers, the adventurers must race through the worlds of the pocket universe trying to find their way back to their own world.

Trapped by Circumstance: The controllers have discovered the humanoid robot outpost on Regina and are closing it down. In their investigations they have found that some humanoids have had finger transplants to disguise themselves on Regina. Now the controllers have mistaken one of the adventurers for a humanoid robot and grab him to return him to the Braykossa pocket universe. In their sweep they carry all of the adventurers off, and once on Elkyulm the party must find its way out of the pocket universe and back to Regina.

Marc W. Miller

Cain

Ex Marine Captain 9C9DA7, Age: 40, 4 terms. Cr Variable.

Skills: Rifle 3, Demolition 3, Streetwise 4, Carousing 2, Dagger 2, Grav Vehicle 1.

Cain is a terrorist, dedicated to the overthrow of Imperial power and the reestablishment of Solomani domination in the Solomani Rim.

He was born on a small world on the Solomani side of the border, then carrying the name Franz Fitzkloff. He decided to enlist in the Solomani Marines and at the age of 23 he was sent to OCS. He received commando training and was later transferred to intelligence. His superiors realized his ruthless character and sent him on a very demanding kind of mission. He went into the Imperium to work with the organizing anti-Imperium terrorist groups on Solomani dominated worlds. As usual Captain Fitzkloff performed well, committing several acts of terrorism himself.

When he returned to ordinary duty some years later he found it too uninteresting. He also disagreed strongly with the current policy towards the Imperium, considering it too submissive. He resigned from service at the age of 32. Before leaving his job he managed to destroy several important files about himself and his activities. He left the Solomani realm and went into the Imperium to work with the friends he had made. His nom de guerre became Cain, picked from the book of Genesis.

Today, eight years later, Cain has a fearful reputation as an efficient and competent terrorist. No one but himself knows the full record of his crimes. There have been bombings, assassinations, sky jackings, robberies, and much more.

Cain no longer looks like Franz Fitzkloff. Plastic surgery has given his face a nondescript Caucasian look, with well balanced features. He excels in assuming false identities, using imagination and whatever means there are at his disposal.

Cain's motivations are simple. He is a Solomani chauvinist who sincerely believes in the superiority of the Solomani race and who wholeheartedly hates the Imperium because of the Solomani Rim War and the humiliating conquest of

Terra. He is a clever and competent, but totally ruthless fanatic. The ends justify the means. Within these concepts lies a weakness that might one day prove his undoing.

The players could encounter Cain in many ways. They could involuntarily become involved in one of Cain's murder attempts. This situation could be very



interesting if played in a confined space, such as a starship or a domed colony. The players could unknowingly become a part of Cain's organization. This could prove very challenging when the players discover what kind of people they have become involved with and set out for revenge. Finally, they could work for an Imperial agency that is trying to capture or kill Cain.

Anders Blixt

Journalism and the Stars

In the Traveller universe the trader in information, the journalist, is an important man. Through such men vital data are gathered, processed, and directed to the people that can profit from them. The journalist does not work only for the media. He has all kinds of customers for his information.

Within the Imperium there are several agencies specializing in information trade. The most well known is TNS, run by the Travellers' Aid Society. But there are many others that deal mainly with corporations and governments, and thus are less known to the public. These range from huge, Imperium wide corporations to agencies covering only parts of a subsector.

For all agencies in the information business, it is very essential to maintain a reputation for credibility and balance. Because of this, the agencies are very careful to maintain their independence from outside interests. The corporate statutes usually regulate ownership of voting stock thoroughly.

The major agencies have offices and bureaus all over the Imperium and on many important worlds outside its borders. You usually find bureaus on all Imperial worlds with population 8+, and on most non Imperial worlds with population 9+.

A world bureau is responsible for covering events within its own and the neighboring solar systems. The subsector bureau is usually located at the subsector capital. It gathers data from the world bureaus and covers events within the subsector that cannot be covered by the world bureaux. The sector headquarters are mainly occupied with the processing and distribution of news, but it also deals with extra sector activities.

But not even the big agencies are able to cover all matters of interest, especially in areas outside the Imperium. Here the free lance journalists have

their important role. However, the agencies are very careful with material they acquire from outsiders. An erroneous story could easily damage the agency's reputation. The agencies prefer to buy stories from well known tradesmen on whose qualities they can rely, thus journalistic fame takes on more importance for free lancers.

The legal status of journalists varies widely from place to place. In free countries, the authorities respect the journalist's rights to investigate within the frame of the law. But in many places, freedom is a matter of little importance for the government, and journalists face troubles practicing their profession. Common sanctions used against journalists are refusal to grant entry into a country, arrest and confiscation of material followed by extradition, constant surveillance by authorities, and in really bad cases, accusations of espionage followed by prison sentences or outright assassinations. When a player journalist faces troubles with the local authorities, the referee must determine what measures will be taken. The only governments that provide good working conditions are types 2, 4, and 8.

Journalists that get into trouble with the authorities will often have to rely on their own abilities to get out of it. The agencies will give their men whatever assistance they can, but since communications are slow and it can be difficult to send a message from many places, they will often stand helpless.

Journalist characters played by the gamers should always be freelancing when working within their profession during play. Working as an employee within an agency will surround them with orders about what they are expected to do and not to do, and would thus hamper their freedom of movement.

JOURNALIST CHARACTER GENERATION

Enlistment. Any character wishing to become a journalist must first pass through journalism school. Such schools are available on all worlds with pop 7+ and tech 5+. The roll to enlist is 8+ with DMs, +1 educ 7+, +2 int 9+. This education lasts two years and gives the journalist two skills: Journalism 1 and one die roll on the office skills table.

Career. After leaving journalism school, the character starts his ordinary career. Following the standards set down in earlier **Traveller** material, it is counted in four year terms, divided into four one year assignments. At the conclusion of a term, the character can try to re enlist or leave the profession.

A character can pursue two different careers: free lance or agency. The free lance career is open to all journalists. To be hired by an agency, the character must roll 9 + QM + 1 if Soc 7 +, DM + 2 is Int 9 +, DM + 1 per fame point). A character can try to be hired by an agency at the beginning of every four year term. An agency journalist can switch to free lancing between two terms with no restrictions. The re-enlistment roll is 6+ for free lancers and 5+ for agency journalists.

Assignments: Every year the character must determine what assignment he will have during the year, and then resolve the assignment in terms of survival, fame, and skills. To obtain any of these three things, the character must roll equal or higher than the numbers in the resolution table with 2D. The exact assignment is determined by the roll of one die.

Fame is a measure of how well known the journalist is. It is important for two matters: when the journalist tries to be hired by an agency, and

when he tries to sell an article to an agency.

Special Duty: When a character receives special duty, roll 1D and consult the table.

Survival Training. The character is sent to survival school. Roll 1D 4+ for the following skills: Survival, Gun Combat, Hunting, Brawling, Jack o T. In the future all assignment rolls of 2 are dangerous service. The character receives permanent DM+1 for survival (this bonus can only be received once).

Journalist School Teacher. Receive one level of instruction.

Space Training: Receive one level of Vacc Suit, and on a roll of 1D 3+, one level of zero g combat.

Starship Training. Roll 4+ for Pilot, Navigation, and Engineering.

Language School: Learn one foreign language.

ASSIGNMENT DETERMINATION

	Free lance	Agency
1	Field mission	Office
2	Field mission	Office
3	Field mission	Field mission
4	Dangerous	Field mission
5	Dangerous	Dangerous
6	Unemployed	Special

Explanations:

Office: The character works in an agency office, processing material, and writing background stories.

Field mission: The character is sent somewhere to investigate something.

Dangerous mission: This is a field mission to a dangerous area, e.g. a war zone. It gives the character one experience point when determining morale according to Book 4 rules.

Unemployed: The character has no proper work this year and survives by taking temporary jobs.

ASSIGNMENT RESOLUTION

Free Lance	Survival	Fame	Skill
Field	3+	10+	7+
Danger	4+	8+	6+
Unemployed	auto	no	9+
Agency			
	Survival	Fame	Skill
Field	3+	10+	7+
Danger	4+	9+	6+
Office	auto	no	8+

Journalism: This new skill is the ability to make good saleable material, both with text and pictures. When a free lance journalist wants to sell a story, he must roll 2D 11 + DM journalistic skill and fame). He is paid fame xCr80/day of production (double if the material was gathered in dangerous conditions).

SKILL TABLES

Die	Life	Office	Field	Life	Unemployed
1	Journ	Admin	Vehicle	Pilot	Gambling
2	Journ	Admin	Survival P	Journ	Carousing
3	Bribery	Computer	Vehicle	Forgery	Admin
4	Carousing	Computer	Gun	Carous	Computer
5	Streetwise	Journ	Ship's Bt	Streetwise	Streetwise
6	Jack-o-T	+1 Educ	+1 Endur	Jack-o-T	Carousing

Vehicle: Choose Wheeled, Tracked, Grav, or Helicopter.

Gun: Choose Rifle, Pistol, or Submachinegun.

An agency journalist can always choose either the assignment column or the journalist life column. A free lancer can choose the assignment column, the journalist life, or the free lance life columns. Unemployed must use the unemployed column.

MUSTERING OUT TABLES

Die	Free lance	Agency
1	Low Psg	Mid Psg
2	Mid Psg	Mid Psg
3	Gun	Mid Psg
4	+1 Int	+1 Int
5	+1 Educ	+1 Educ
6	High Psg	High Psg
7	Scout	Travellers

On the material benefits table there is a DM+1 if the character has Fame 4+, and on the monetary table if he possesses Gambling skill. Keep agency and free lance terms separate since two different tables are used.

Anders Blixt