

Kim Gromoll's cover

The No. 30
JOURNAL
of the Travellers' Aid Society®

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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 120-1117.

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.

- 30-02, From the Management (Editorial), Loren Wiseman
- 30-21, The Warehouse (Scenario), Joe Fugate & Gary L. Thomas
- 30-23, Stormriders (Scenario), Joe Fugate & Gary L. Thomas
- 30-28, **Traveller News Service (Traveller News Service)**, Marc Miller
- 30-30, The Fall of the Imperium (History), Marc Miller
- 30-34, There When You Need Them (Rules Module), Steven Brinich & James Schwar
- 30-47, Coach (Casual Encounter), Aaron Porter



From the Management

As you may have noticed, this issue of **Challenge** has a little more meat to it. We've expanded to sixty-four pages, allowing us to put in sixteen more pages of articles. When we conducted our Workshop

Newsletter survey, larger page count topped the responses. Another matter which received a favorable response was expansion of game coverage, especially other companies' games. Since its origins as the **Journal**, **Challenge** has been devoted solely to GDW products, but enough of our readers play other games to make coverage in **Challenge** worthwhile. This issue features our first article on a game which is not our own. **Challenge** will remain a magazine devoted to futuristic games, of both a board and role-playing nature, whatever their origin. With expanded page count and expanded coverage, we hope that each issue of **Challenge** will be more useful to the reader. This also affords us an opportunity to take on more submissions from our readers. If you have some ideas that you are interested in and you feel would be of interest to your fellow gamers, you might consider making a submission to **Challenge**. Write in for our guidelines, and go dust off your typewriter!

Timothy B. Brown

Issue 29 feedbacked as follows:

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JUST DETECTED

SUPPLEMENTS

ESCAPE

This folio adventure by J. Andrew Keith continues where his earlier folio adventure **Trading Team** (published by Marischal Adventures) left off. The players are a trading team on Htalrea, and have been captured by invading Aslan. Check out the title for what they have to do next. **Escape** is the first in a series of J. Andrew Keith folio adventures which Seeker plans to release.

Escape is a 12 page, 8 x 11 " booklet, priced at \$3.

Designer: J. Andrew Keith.

Publisher: Seeker, PO Box 337, Finley, ND 58230.

GAZELLE CLASS CLOSE ESCORT

A booklet and plans for (guess what!) the *Gazelle* class of close escorts in Imperial service. The booklet contains the plans themselves (in either 15mm or 25mm scale) for the ship and its 20 ton gig, a brief history of the ship, and (for the 15mm version only) 56 die-cut counters representing the ship's crew and sundry boarders, visitors, and interlopers.

The 15mm set is \$6, the 25mm \$8, both come with ziplock plastic storage bags.

Publisher: Seeker, PO Box 337, Finley, ND 58230

**CAPITAL/CORE (0508 A586A98 F)****Date: 200 1116**

¶ Unrest among the population continues following the assassination of Strephon and the questionable rise to power of Emperor Lucan. Fanned by opponents such as Duke Simair of Ushra, the flames of unrest have sparked rioting in major population centers and intense quarreling among the members of the Moot.

¶ Police and Imperial guard troops have kept these isolated outbreaks under control, but their frequency and intensity are on the rise.

CAPITAL/CORE (0508 A586A98 F)**Date: 217 1116**

¶ In the shadow of the Imperial Palace, a particularly violent clash between police and rioters has rocked the capital. For nearly three hours the skirmishes continued, as demonstrating citizens forced their way toward the palace against strict orders of the authorities.

¶ Non-lethal means were finally used to disperse the crowd, but not until over forty citizens and at least three riot policemen were killed.

¶ A spokesman for Emperor Lucan has stated that the Emperor, though aware of the problem, was not concerned, and did not at any time leave the palace for his own safety.

DLAN/ILELISH (1021 A8D1ADE G)**Date: 245 1116**

¶ The Archduke's official state visit to Capital ended abruptly today with his surprise return to Dlan and his immediate call for a full media press conference on the steps of his palace for later in the day.

¶ After appearing wearing an elaborately fashioned crown, the Duke began his statement with a list of wrongs and abuses perpetrated by Emperor Strephon. He concluded with the startling statement: "The Emperor is dead! I have dedicated my life to the people of the Imperium. I claim the Iridium Throne by right of assassination and shall rule this Imperium as Emperor Dulinor."

¶ The stunned public then listened as the Emperor called for a complete mobilization to seize all of the Imperium for his sacred cause. He made a public and official request to Admiral Hutara, his brother, for the Ilelish Fleet to side with him in his sacred struggle to gain his rightfully secured place on the throne.

¶ The Emperor Dulinor retired to his chambers without answering questions. A subsequent statement detailed the new Emperor's trip to Capital and the assassination of Strephon on the Iridium Throne itself. The statement concluded with an account of Dulinor's ascension of the Throne to the well-wishing cheers of millions of Capital's citizenry followed by a selection of patriotic video vignettes.

¶ Celebrations have been organized on Dlan and throughout the sector as the populace is encouraged to honor the beginning of a new age for the Imperium and Ilelish sector.

DLAN/ILELISH (1021 A8D1ADE G)**Date: 248 1116**

¶ Sector Admiral Hutara and his Fleet Officers made an official announcement that the Ilelish Fleet has declared for Dulinor.

¶ In a brief but ancient ceremony, Hutara offered his dagger to Dulinor, who solemnly accepted, and then briefly embraced his brother.

AMDANI/DAIBEI (2034 A727A88 E)**Date: 265 1116**

¶ Heightened high level conferences and military activity in the area have done nothing to quell rumors that Core sector is in civil unrest. Statements from the nobility have been universally, "No comment."

¶ As of this date, all naval personnel have been put on special alert, all shore leaves have been cancelled, and a complete media blackout of naval exercises has been imposed. The Admiralty has no comment.

AMDANI/DAIBEI (2034 A727A88 E)**Date: 309 1116**

¶ Official announcement of Emperor Strephon's assassination has reached the sector. The nobility has also issued a statement encouraging the populace to have faith in the systematic and peaceful shift of power to Strephon's heir, Duke Varian.

¶ Subsequent messages from Core sector have indicated that Varian was killed in combat in and around the palace area. Prince Lucan is apparently the new Emperor of the Imperium.

CAPITAL/CORE (0508 A586A98 F)**Date: 310 1116**

¶ Lucan has announced that unrest in Core sector has been successfully dealt with. All citizens are encouraged to have faith in the new Emperor, despite unsubstantiated rival claims to the Iridium Throne.

¶ Emperor Lucan also announced today that the Core Fleet is on the move toward Dlan to hunt down the criminal Dulinor. His actions warrant death, and he will certainly be brought to justice.

TERRA/SOL (0207 A867A69 F)**Date: 313 1116**

¶ In an unexpected move, much of the Imperial Rim Fleet has been concentrated and many reservists have been placed on alert. No substantial explanation has been forthcoming.

¶ General Yoshtiru of the Terran Home Guard has called for a high level conference of the commanders of all troops stationed on Terra.

TERRA/SOL (0207 A867A69 F)**Date: 322 1116**

¶ Military installations in Asia, Africa, and North America have been closed to civilians. All active duty personnel worldwide have been recalled from leave or furlough.

¶ An unofficial source has stated that large shipments of materials have been arriving at these closed installations. The exact nature of these shipments is unknown, and no official Home Guard spokesman will comment on the issue.

REGINA/REGINA (0310 A788899 A)**Date: 330 1116**

¶ The ducal household today announced that Duke Norris of Regina will travel to Rhylanor to meet with representatives from several key worlds in the Spinward Marches and Deneb sectors. The conference is scheduled to cover "economic matters," a general term used when an agenda has not been made public. The exact nature of the meeting has not been disclosed.

¶ In related matters, a rumor that the Duke has recently received a private communication from Emperor Strephon has not been confirmed by official sources.

REGINA/REGINA (0310 A788899 A)**Date: 340 1116**

¶ The ducal household announced today that Duke Norris was elevated to rank of Archduke of the Domain of Deneb by the hand of Emperor Strephon 091 1116 in recognition of his activities in the late Fifth Frontier War.

¶ The Duke plans a trip to Capital to personally accept the Emperor's blessing.

TERRA/SOL (0207 A867A69 F)**Date: 036 1117**

¶ Emperor Strephon has been assassinated in the Imperial Palace by Archduke Dulinor of Ilelish 132 1116. In a prepared statement, a spokesman for the Terran Government has appealed for calm and for all citizens to mourn the loss of the Emperor.

TERRA/SOL (0207 A867A69 F)**Date: 037 1117**

¶ In an almost immediate response to the announcement of Strephon's assassination, rioting and rebellion have broken out in key population centers around the world. Thought to be Solomani sponsored, this tremendous unrest has affected almost the entire population and has tied up all transportation and industry on Terra.

¶ Clashes between the occupation army and rebels has been particularly fierce in India, where riot police have been unable to stop rioters from looting Vilani-owned homes and businesses. In India alone there have been over a hundred people killed.

¶ Curfews and restrictions on activity have been announced by the military governor for many population centers. Violators will have to deal with strict penalties, as the rights of the citizenry have been temporarily suspended in the face of this current crisis.

REGINA/REGINA (0310 A788899 A)**Date: 067 1117**

¶ The Emperor Strephon was assassinated on 132-1116. His assassin, the Archduke Dulinor of Ilelish, fled the scene. The fighting during and after the assassination plot also took the lives of Empress Isolde, Grand Princess Iphegenia, and Prince Varian. Prince Lucan has ascended the Iridium Throne as the new Emperor.

¶ Duke Norris of Regina is en route to the upcoming Rhylanor Conference and was unavailable for comment. The ducal household expressed its deepest sympathy and has dispatched a special ceremonial convoy to Capital to pay last respects to Strephon and homage to Lucan.

HOME/ALDEBARAN**Date: 117 1117**

¶ The Committee for Information has announced the assassination of Emperor Strephon. His assassin, Archduke Dulinor of Ilelish, has fled, probably to his base of support in his home sector.

HOME/ALDEBARAN**Date: 120 1117**

¶ Subsequent reports from the Imperium, reporting considerable unrest and multiple claims to the throne, have met with considerable favor among officials here today. Quotes vary, but most sources consulted uniformly agree that what's bad for the Imperium is almost certainly good for the Solomani movement.

¶ Administrator Howard has stated that "Our brothers who are still under the yokes of Imperial rule are calling out to us now. It is our obligation, indeed our moral imperative, to contact them and lend them our support in this moment of opportunity, and bring us one step closer to the ultimate victory of the Solomani destiny."

¶ Rumors that large portions of the fleet have been placed on alert and are on the move have not been officially confirmed.

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

The Warehouse

PLAYER'S INFORMATION

While pursuing trade along the Imperial frontier in the Trojan Reach sector, the group is approached by Patrick Gaanash, an agent of APS Stellar. Gaanash explains that APS Stellar is not satisfied with the performance of the merchant line they usually contract with to do their small cargo runs (under 200 tons); thus, they have decided to contract some of the runs to free traders. Gaanash says that he has heard of the group and would like to hire them for a cargo run.

APS Stellar would like the group to run supplies to their miners on the world Peroi (Trojan Reach 1219, E360256 4), where mining of various heavy metals is being done by several companies with the help of some local scientist prospectors. A return shipment of ore should be waiting

in the one and only warehouse near the starport landing pad. All the group has to do is drop the supplies off and pick up the shipment of ore marked for APS Stellar.

The landing area and warehouse are guarded and run by Imperial personnel. Gaanash can provide the group with the proper identification to certify that they are supposed to pick up the ore shipment for APS Stellar. Payment for the shipment of supplies to Peroi is the standard Cr1000 per ton, while the return shipment of ore will be paid at a premium rate of Cr1500 per ton.

The trip to Peroi is uneventful, as usual. The "starport" on the desert world is little more than a bare spot of rock on top of a mesa. The landing spot is bordered on one side by three weather-worn rough stone structures, a

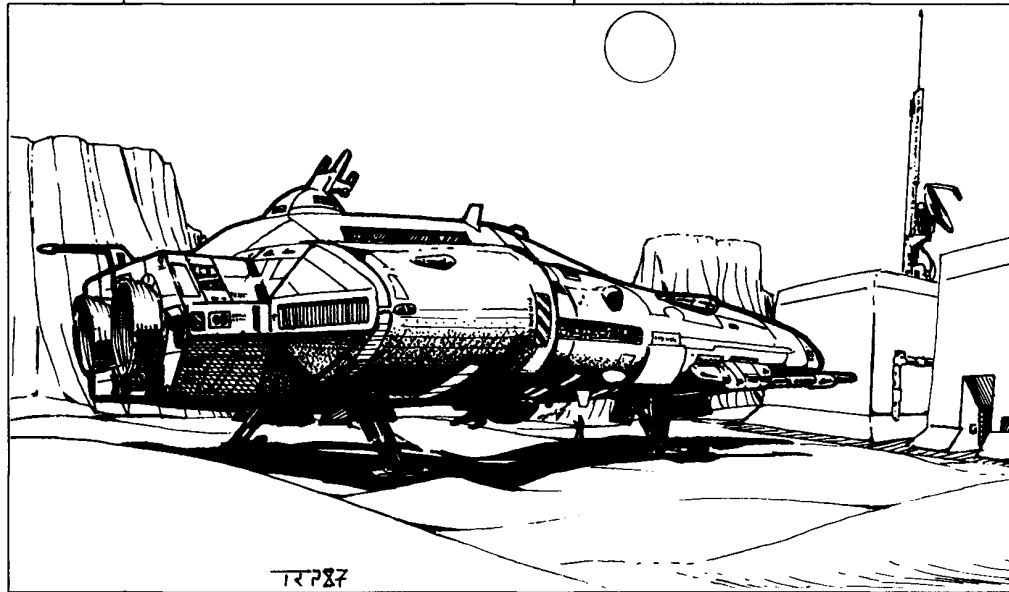
warehouse/hangar, an operations office and a "barracks." Also nearby is a crude wind-powered water tower. The group arrives right at twilight, just as Peroi's binary suns are setting.

Upon checking with the operations office, the manager says the APS Stellar ore shipment has yet to arrive. He adds that the prospectors are overdue and it would be good for them to go to the APS Stellar claim in the morning to see if everything's okay. He graciously offers to lend the group his new air raft and some of his people as guides.

The manager also informs the group that the accommodations at the starport are minimal and asks if they wouldn't mind spending the night in their ship.

After their discussion with the manager, the group returns to their ship for the night. It isn't long before one of the group discovers a strange "stowaway" in his cabin. The stowaway, a man apparently suffering from severe exposure and dehydration, is barely able to speak. He manages to utter only two hoarse words before he passes out:

"The ... warehouse..."



REFEREE'S INFORMATION

The players will have noticed that the large, double-doored warehouse is locked and guarded. If the players ask the guards to let them into the warehouse, the referee should fake a secret reaction roll and then have the guards declare that no entry is allowed. They must protect the valuable find one group just made. Another large ship will arrive in a few days for it. The guards may also comment (in small talk with the players, if they engage in conversation with the guards) that business is picking up so much that the starport will likely soon be upgraded to a class D. The players must devise some type of break in if they are to gain access to the inside of the warehouse. Once inside, they will find that the warehouse contains a shipment of ore marked APS Stellar, as well as a 400 ton starship with several blast marks. Close examination by someone with engineering skill will reveal that the jump drives are not functional.

Although the group has no way of knowing just what has happened, 10 days ago a pirate raider starship attacked a merchant vessel shortly after it left Peroi with a cargo hold full of platinum ore. Much to the pirate's surprise, the merchant ship was armed (a miscalculation on the pirate's part). The ensuing battle saw the pirates destroying the merchant ship while sustaining heavy damage to their own jump drives.

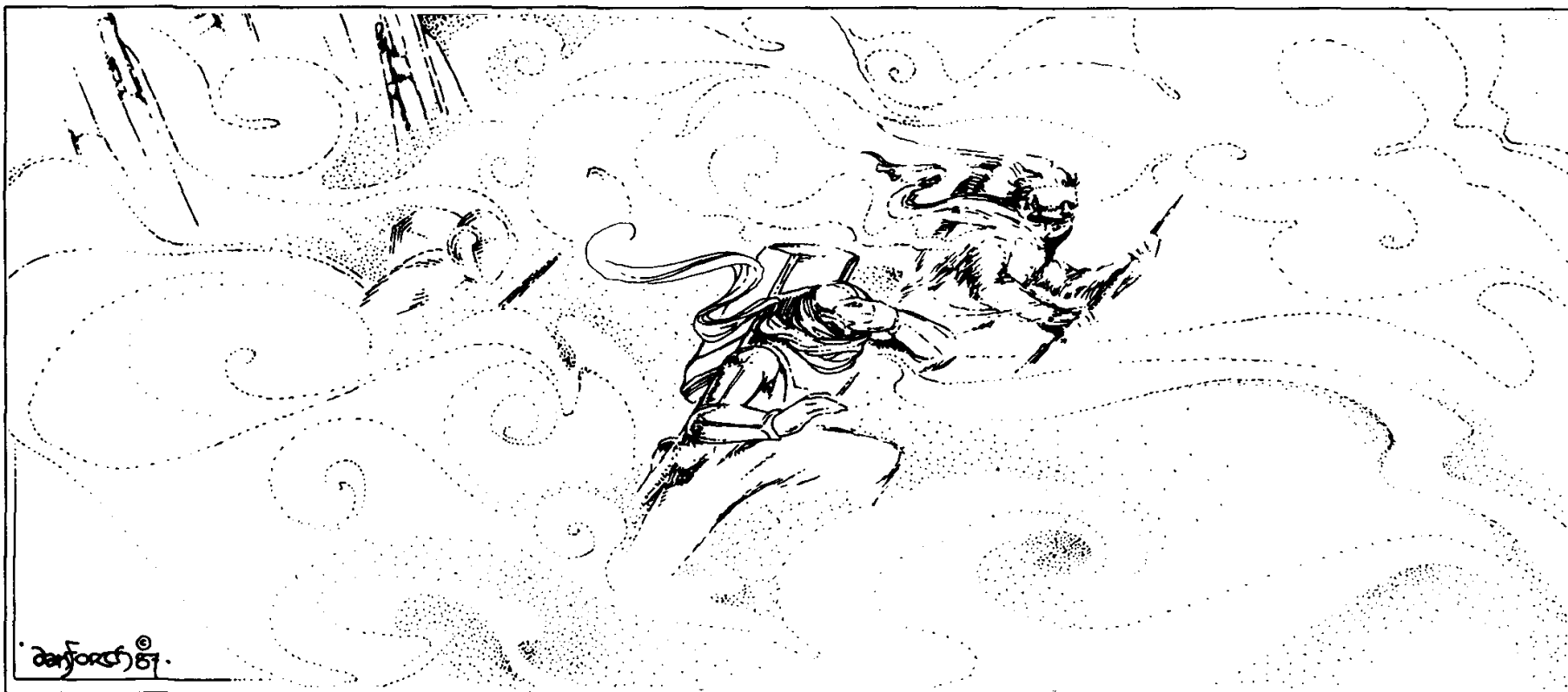
Desperate, they landed on Peroi and staged a takeover of the starport. Twenty personnel were taken by air raft into the desert and left to die in the harsh climate of Peroi. One of the starport personnel evaded the pirates when the takeover occurred, hiding in the desert near the mesa, hoping to warn the

next starship to land, that he was the group's "stowaway." Unfortunately, exposure to Peroi's environment was almost too much for him. After his utterance, he should remain in a coma through the adventure. The players will have to do the footwork to learn what's going on.

If the group is foolish enough to take the "manager" up on his offer, one day out they will be stranded by the "guides" who will take all supplies and the air raft. If matters aren't bad enough, that evening a storm will start with the threat of stormriders likely if the group cannot find shelter. If the group refuses to go out with the "guides" looking for the APS Stellar prospectors, their ship will be taken at gunpoint by the pirates, and the group will be forced onto the air raft, taken out into the desert and stranded as above.

In either case, after a few hours in the desert (and a few encounter rolls, just to heighten the tension), the referee should enforce the following encounter: the players will happen upon a group of scientist prospectors riding six-legged camel like creatures who (after a fake reaction roll) will help them get back to the starport. They will arrive just in time to see the pirates loading the last of the APS Stellar cargo onto the players' starship and about to lift off. Subsequent events are up to the referee. In all cases, the referee should balance the number and armament of the pirates with that of the players and their prospector friends so that the players have a fighting chance of getting their starship back. A satisfying victory over the pirates would make this adventure one that the group would not soon forget and it should open a lot of doors for them with APS Stellar as well!

Joe Fugate and Gary L. Thomas



Stormrider

Many of the so-called desert worlds in the Imperium are not totally void of water; they just have little free-standing water, and hence a zero hydrographic percentage. In fact, if a desert world has a population digit of 6 or more and an atmosphere type 2 9, it is likely that water can be found somewhere; either

deep underground, frozen in ice caps, high up in the atmosphere, or locked in strong chemical bonds with elements in the world's crust.

Several of these water poor worlds also harbor a near microscopic lifeform often called a "stormrider." Stormriders get their name from their common dormancy habitat: riding like sand particles in a windstorm. It is believed

stormriders are native to the desert world Duuga in the Zarushagar sector. The history of their appearance on other desert worlds in the Zarushagar sector during the First Imperium seems to bear this out. Today, in the Third Imperium, they are known to exist on desert worlds all the way from the Spinward Marches to the Solomani Rim. Since dormant stormriders resemble grains of sand, it is difficult to keep them from being slowly spread from world to world by interstellar travellers.

In the presence of moisture, a stormrider "grain" leaves its dormant state and secretes a sticky, superglue like substance that attaches it securely to a possible source of water and nutrients. If the source contains reasonable nutrients, the grain multiplies wildly and in several hours can spawn a large, tough, pitch-like colony more than 10,000 times the size of the original parent grain. When the moisture source is removed, the colony loses its "stickiness" in a matter of hours and quickly breaks down into a multitude of sand-like grains. Each dormant grain then awaits the time when moisture will trigger the cycle again.

Any plant life on water-poor worlds often develops very tough, nonporous skin to prevent loss of water. Severe windstorms can puncture or tear the skin of these plants, spelling almost certain death as the plants lose their water rapidly into a parched atmosphere. If there are stormriders in the storm, they rapidly accumulate around the wound and effectively seal the plant's skin, protecting the plant from further water loss. The stormriders that have attached themselves to a plant become parasites and shortly multiply into a large colony: a "knob" on the plant. The colony knob will grow until it begins to tax the resources of its host, at which point no longer increases in size, having reached an "equilibrium." Another windstorm will eventually break the colony knob off the plant. Robbed of a source of moisture and nutrients, the colony quickly breaks down into a multitude of dormant stormrider grains to ride the winds in yet another storm.

Studies have been made to determine why stormriders seem only to survive on desert worlds and not also in the desert environments on worlds with more water. Results indicate that the tough, leather-like skin of a living stormrider colony is specialized to release the metabolic wastes of the colony into the air. In atmospheres with anything over about 1 percent water vapor, the specialized waste releasing skin does not form, and a new colony quickly dies, basting in its own wastes. Likewise, when a dormant grain is submerged in water, the result is death because it is unable to eliminate its wastes without the missing specialized skin. A living colony that already has developed its specialized skin under dry conditions can be subjected to humidities as high as 80 percent with little or no ill effects.

Studies also show dormant stormriders are unharmed by vacuum conditions, moderate extremes in temperature (-140 C to +250 C), and most corrosive chemicals. They are, however, killed by high atmospheric pressure (3 + atmospheres), extreme heat (over 250 C) and extreme cold (-140 C and below), and corrosive chemical combinations found in most insidious atmospheres. Exposure to radiation often causes the grain's resulting colony to go "cancerous" with odd colony shapes, incomplete or "tumorous" skins, or other defective mutations.

Needless to say, stormriders present a considerable hazard to adventurers, especially those caught in a storm containing them. The stormriders will accumulate in a character's eyes, mouth, nostrils and even their ears.

Generally, roll 6+ for stormriders to be present in a violent windstorm on a desert world that could harbor stormriders. For each 10 minutes that a character is not in shelter, roll 8+ for stormrider accumulation to cause 1D damage to dexterity or endurance. If the character's endurance reaches zero, he or she will die in the next 10 minutes from suffocation unless emergency aid is rendered (under shelter) by an individual with at least medical 1 skill. If the character's dexterity reaches 0, he is debilitated and is blind unless an individual with at least medical 1 skill can render aid (again under shelter). If the character does go blind and aid is not rendered at major medical facilities in the next 1D weeks, the blindness is permanent. A permanently blind character's dexterity can only return to one-third its original level, and then at only 1 point every 30 days as the character learns to cope with his new handicap.

If a character is simply walking through sand containing stormriders, a problem will only arise if anything is done that gets the sand into the eyes, mouth, nostrils or ears.

Energy weapons will kill dormant stormriders, but to do this en masse is obviously impractical. Slug throwers are worthless. The most effective weapon against stormriders turns out to be: stay away from them!

Ironically, carrying dormant stormrider grains from their dry desert habitat into a starship with its over 1 percent atmospheric humidity also effectively kills them. They will start to grow into a colony, only to die because of the failure to develop their specialized skin! Under these conditions, a dormant grain will enlarge into a runny patch of "syrup" in about 30 minutes and then slowly dry up. Stormrider grains in areas of a starship in a vacuum (cargo hold, external hull, etc.) will survive unharmed.

The hits and armor figures below apply only to a growing, healthy, stormrider colony. The remaining figures are for dormant stormrider grains when encountered and introduced into the eyes, nose, mouth or ears.

Animal	Weight	Hits	Armor	W&W	Reactions
Stormriders	.01 g	1/0	cloth 1D	as stinger	A0 F0 S0

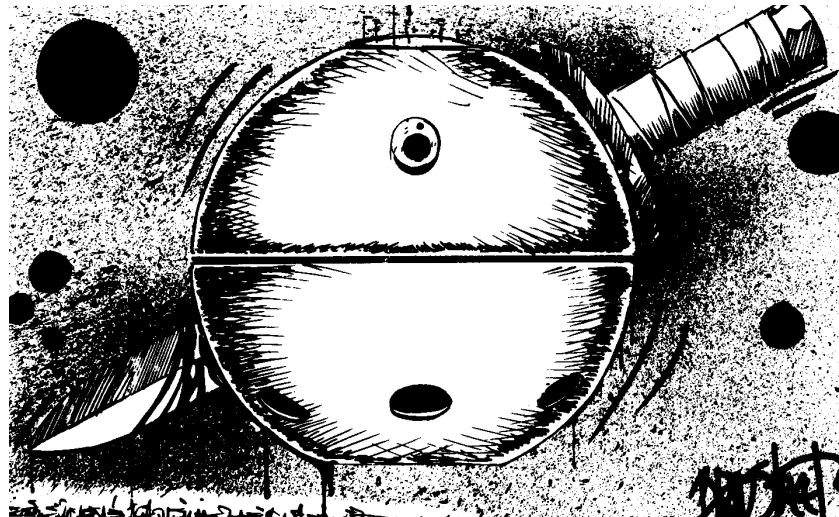
Joe Fugate and Gary L. Thomas

Fall of the Imperium

THREE YEARS OF REBELLION

Editors Note: The dispatches from Core Sector presented in **Challenge** #29 were all dated from the year 1116. Note that the **Traveller News Service** entries in this issue are from the year 1119. Three years have passed since the Emperor's assassination and the breakdown of Imperial rule. **Challenge** will begin presenting information about the ongoing rebellion from this point, the year 1119, forward.

This essay will let you catch up on the happenings within the Imperium over those three years. For a complete history of the civil war and the great economic and political upheavals of that period, consult **MegaTraveller**, appearing this fall.



The Imperium is crumbling. Its thousand year reign created an illusion of strength and lasting power, but continued expansion and internal pressures have strained its ability to govern to the limit. The only thing that held the vast interstellar empire together was the person of the emperor: the one individual to whom all imperial citizens ultimately owed their loyalty.

Now the emperor is dead. He has no immediate heirs. His assassin claims the throne by an obscure and obsolete right. His nephew claims that he is the Emperor's rightful successor. The Moot demands a say in naming a new emperor. The Solomani demand independence. The Vargr have invaded several frontier provinces. Aslan Ihatei are nibbling at a few distant subsectors.

The Imperium is crumbling.

The Imperium was held together, before the Emperor's death, by a web of personal oaths and loyalties. Hereditary nobles held their offices directly from the emperor; new appointees hold their offices as rewards for contributions or good work. Potentially disloyal citizens were often granted nobility and co-opted into support of the empire. All nobles had a vested interest in supporting the

Imperium. But which side do they choose when no faction is clearly right, or clearly winning? Their choices were dictated by their other loyalties: most often dividing the nobles at the expense of the Imperium.

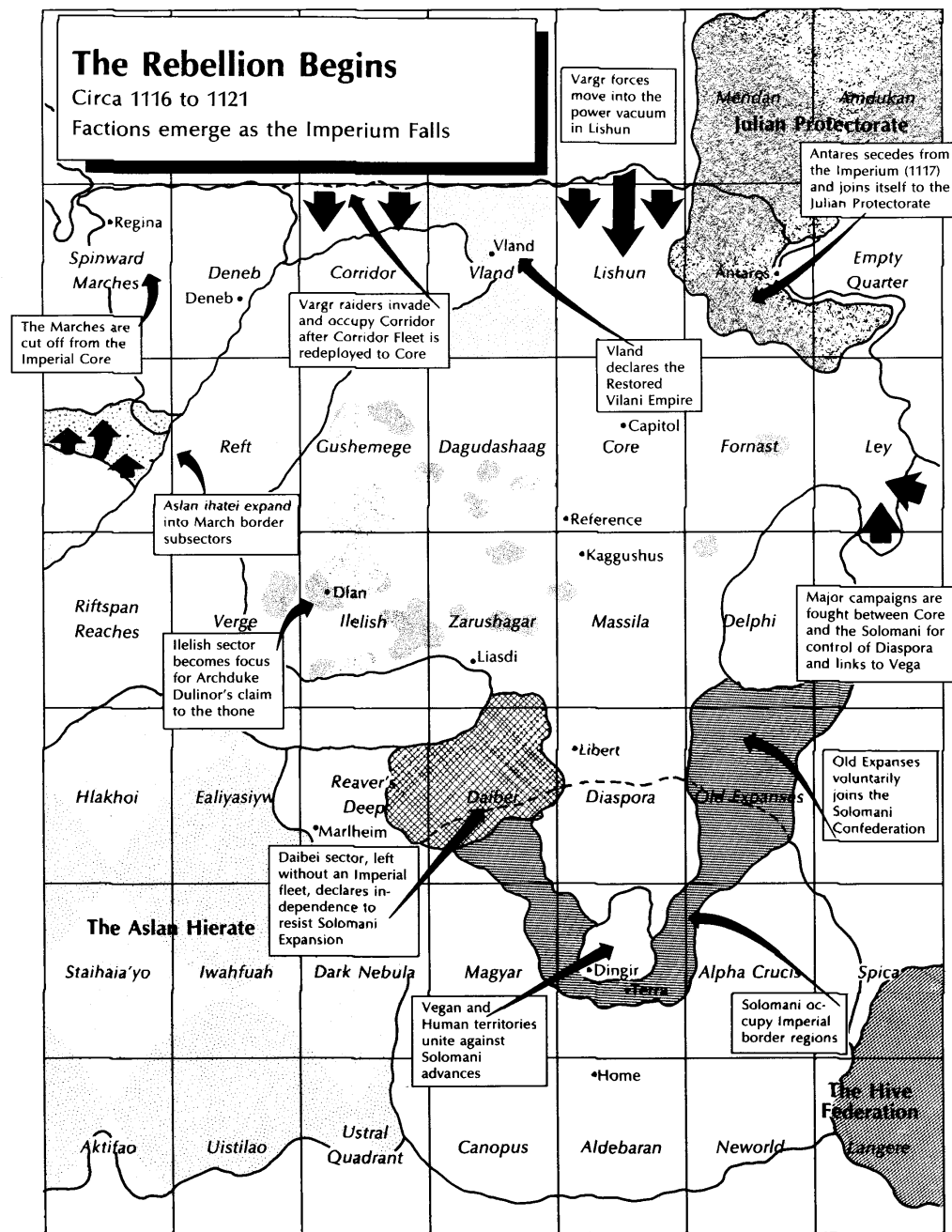
At the same time, signs of weakness within the Imperium enticed outsiders to attack, conquer, and pillage. The famous Corridor Fleet was transferred to the Core, and Vargr raiders moved into the void it left; the entire Spinward Marches territory was cut off from the central Imperium. Imperial task forces were withdrawn from the Trojan Reach to fight the invading Vargr, and Aslan Ihatei conquered undefended worlds on the Marches' frontier. Imperial fleets along the Solomani border moved back to a more defensible line, and the Solomani gobbled up whole sectors at the first opportunity. Unrest and Vargr incursions in Vland sector

forced three megacorporations there to re-establish the Vilani Empire, with its merchant socialism, if only to protect their markets. The League of Antares found their portion of the Imperium unprotected against raiding Vargr, and seceded to become a client state of a more protective border empire.

Within the Imperium the population was not faced with clear choices. Loyalists supported a new emperor, but its various factions could not agree on which of several heirs had priority. The Pretenders supported Emperor Strephon's killer, accepting that ascending the throne by right of assassination was a legitimate, if seldom used, precedent. Federalists supported a change to the federation form of government. And many citizens preferred to keep quiet, wishing that the old days were back.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Advance Knowledge: Though current technology in the Imperium allows jump 6 travel, the standard means of ferrying information, the xboats, only travel at jump 4. Publicly, the Imperium writes this discrepancy off, citing the high cost of building new ships and the fact that many frontier routes simply do not need jump 6 service. The cost of jump 6 is high enough to make a universal jump 6 xboat network inefficient. But the Imperial government also knows the



standard multi-sector grid

power of information, and maintains a variety of naval couriers which can make jump 6. Knowing vital facts before they become general knowledge is essential to a well-run bureaucracy.

When Strephon was assassinated on 132-1116, the word went out immediately by both naval courier and the standard news services. The following table shows the increasing discrepancy between the advance word and the official news:

Assassination		132 1116
World	Advance	Official
	Word (J 6)	News (J 4)
Vland	202 1116	237 1116
Dian	244 1116	300 1116
Daibei	250 1116	309 1116
Terra	311 1116	036 1117
Regina	328 1116	067 1117
Home	001 1117	117 1117

Note that Dulinor announced the news locally in Dian 245-1116.

The further from the event, the greater the discrepancy between the advance word and the official news reports. As an example, at Regina, there was over one hundred days between the time the government and nobles knew about the Emperor's assassination and the time the official news reports were broadcast to the public. This gave the nobles one hundred days to prepare themselves, possibly to sway public opinion, and to lessen the shock when the news became available to the masses.

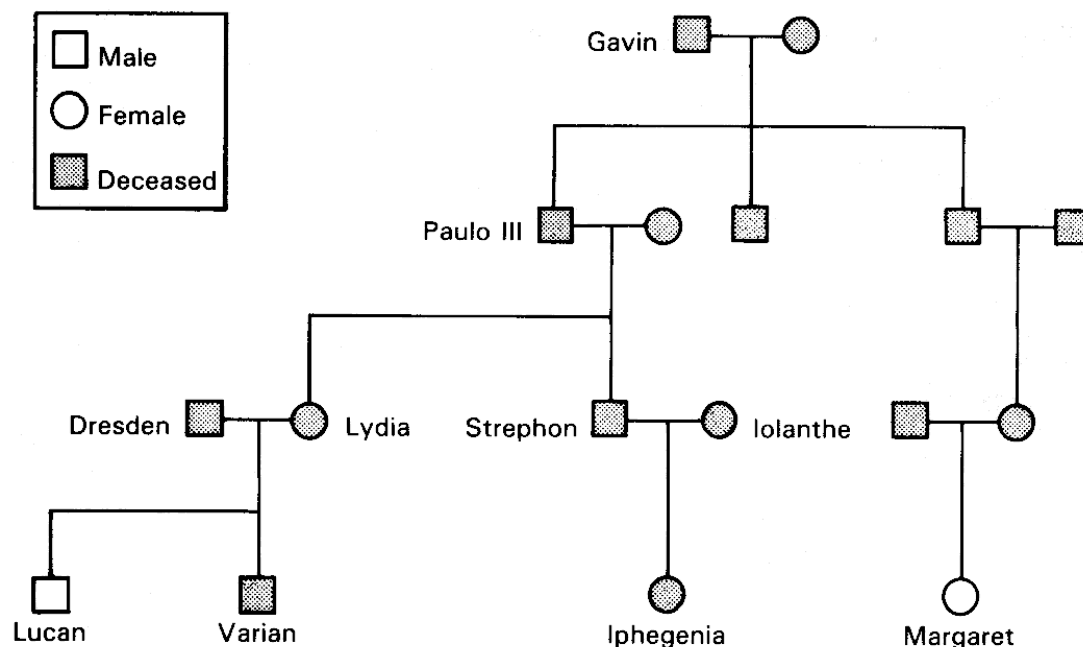
The Moot: The Moot rises to a prominence it has never had before with the assassination of Strephon; it is the legislative body of the Imperium. It has few powers, and even more rarely exercises them. The Moot is theoretically composed of all nobles (baron and above) of the Imperium. It has evolved over the years into a sort of elective assembly, as those attending hold proxies for absent nobles, and vote them on matters of importance. Sitting members cast weighted votes based on the proxies they hold.

The Moot is technically supreme in the Imperium, but its power is extremely limited. Its acts are primarily advisory to the Emperor. In practice, the Moot has one power: to dissolve the Imperium --- the power to commit suicide. When this power is brought to bear, it compels compromise between opposing parties.

In the absence of an Emperor, the Moot becomes important as the validating body for the new Emperor. It has the power to examine the qualifications and credentials of the heir apparent, and in unusual situations, reject him.

Right of Assassination: The curious fact is that the assumption of the Imperial throne by a successful assassin traces its roots back more than 800 years. Assassination grew to be accepted as a viable way of removing an unfit, insane, or ineffective Emperor.

The Imperial Family — 1116



Certain conditions apply to such assassinations; no commoner can simply walk in, shoot the Emperor, and take over his job. The assassin must be a high-ranking noble, be prepared to defend his or her actions to the Moot, and have sufficient support in the Moot to make the claim stick. As such, assassination is a risky undertaking, since death at the hands of Imperial bodyguards or the Imperial justice system is a very real possibility.

When Martin 11 died in 244, he had no immediate heirs to take his place; the Moot examined the credentials of several claimants and supported Cleon Zhunastu, great-great-great grandson of Cleon II. Cleon resolved disagreements within his cabinet by shooting vocal opponents. Surviving members of the government decided it was essential to the health of the Imperium that Cleon be deposed. Porfiria drew the short straw, and shot Cleon as he entered the council chamber. Partially in recognition of her efforts, she was proclaimed Empress in 245.

During a 147-year period in the chaotic fifth and sixth centuries, 11 assassinations propelled new emperors to the throne. In most cases, the new emperor personally assassinated the old one. Only with the assumption of Arbella in 629 did the method fall into disuse.

The Factions: Remember, every Imperial noble has a vested interest in maintaining the power and strength of the Imperium, which is, after all, the source of their power. Why should any tear down the most powerful government in the universe? But every noble in the power structure faces a unique problem in the current situation: in supporting the Imperium, who exactly does one support? There is no clear choice at present.

The choices each face include: the Usurper Dulinor who raises genuine criticisms of the current government, and claims the throne by time-honored right of assassination; the Pretender Lucan, already crowned Emperor, but also accused of killing his own brother on the way to the throne; the Other Pretender Margaret, seen as an easy and legitimate alternative to Lucan; the "Real" Strephon, who appeared in Usdiki/Gushemege in 1117 claiming his double was the one killed in the Palace; or even the Archduke of Deneb (the Duke of Regina), conquering hero of the Fifth Frontier War, and a loyal commander of a major group of fleets. Less powerful Imperial leaders, each ruling a significant force of starships and territories, include: Litinin of Daibei, who declared independence for his sector when the Imperium started draining it of naval strength; the Shadow Emperor of the Restored Vilani Empire; and the Regent of Antares, now aligned with the Julian Protectorate in order to resist the advances of Vargr worlds to coreward—various Vargr marauders and even entire nations have been on the move since the civil war began.

Every noble has made his choice; every Imperial citizen will have to live with the consequences.

THE IMPERIAL FAMILY

Four generations of the Imperial family are depicted here. Starting with Gavin, we see that Lucan is Strephon's nephew, and that Margaret is somewhat further removed from his line.

THE MAP

The map shown here depicts the approximate positions of power and resistance at this chaotic point in the struggle for dominance. Of course, friction is widespread—virtually no part of the Imperium is free from commerce raiding or outright warfare.

The attached notes give explanations of certain important events and their locations. Detailed information is for the most part unavailable, and the average Imperial citizen is left pretty much in the dark about the wars waging around him. Actual coverage of events is often far removed and reshaped by propaganda, and the rumor mills are working full tilt. However, information on this map should be considered reliable.

—Marc Miller

BASIC POLICE GENERATION TABLES

Prior Service (Police)			
Enlistment	7 +	Promotion	8 +
DM +1	Intel 7 +	DM +1	Intel 9 +
Position	8 +	Survival	6 +
DM +1	Educ 8 +	DM +2	Dext 8 +
DM +2	Endur 8 +	Reenlist	5 +

Combined Rank/Benefits Table

Rank	Title	Cash Benefits	Material Benefits
1	Lieutenant	5,000	Low Psg
2	Captain	5,000	+2 Intel
3	Major	10,000	+1 Educ
4	Lt. Colonel	10,000	Gun
5	Colonel	20,000	High Psg
6	Commandant	20,000	+1 Social
7	—	40,000	Travellers'

Characters with gambling skill or who have retired may take a DM +1 on cash benefits.

Those with rank 5+ may take a DM +1 on material benefits.

Skill Table

	Pers Dev	Serv Skills	Educ	Adv Educ (Educ 8+)
1	+1 Stren	Vehicle	Vehicle	Medical
2	+1 Dext	Admin	Legal	Electronic
3	+1 Endur	Streetwise	Streetwise	Computer
4	Gambling	Brawling	Bribery	Tactics
5	Carousing	Blade Cbt	Interrog	Interrog
6	Brawling	Gun Cbt	Gun Cbt	Leader

Automatic Skills

Police Enlistee: Pistol-1 (See below.)

Police Lieutenant: Leader-1 (See below.)

The initial Pistol skill is taken in the standard handgun of the character's local police force, which is chosen by the referee. Usually, this will be a snub pistol if tech level 8+ is available because of the value of tranq or gas rounds in police work. At lower tech levels, the revolver is the most common choice.

There When You Need Them

BASIC CHARACTER GENERATION

Tables are provided for generating Police characters using the basic system of Book 1. These tables are used in the same fashion as the tables of Book 1 and Supplement 4; all skill definitions on this table are as in Supplement 4, except as noted below:

Bribery: Note that in police work, bribery skill reflects experience in offering benefits such as police toleration of petty crimes or lighter punishment after a conviction in exchange for cooperation such as information or physical evidence.

Gun Combat: In addition to the guns listed in Supplement 4, Police characters may also select skill in Snub Pistol. Due to the option of using tranq rounds, this is a common weapon of police forces

at tech level 8+.

Interrogation: Naturally, police interrogation techniques will vary with the society. Police operating under low law levels will be restricted to moderate psychological pressure (the "third degree"); in more repressive societies, full-fledged physical and psychological attack may be used (especially by Security Police) in some cases.

Legal: This skill represents knowledge of local laws and law enforcement procedure.

Referee: Legal skill is directed to the situations faced by police in the field (e.g. Is it legal to use deadly force in this situation?); it does not encompass the skills required to function as a lawyer. This skill will help characters gauge the probable legal consequences of a given action should they be caught at it.

Police Characters

ADVANCED POLICE GENERATION TABLES

Enlistment

Branch	Enlist
Patrol	6+
DM +1	Intel 7+
DM +2	Endur 8+
Detective	(cross training only)
Customs	8+
DM +1	Endur 6+
DM +2	Intel 8+
Riot	10+
DM +1	Endur 7+
DM +2	Stren 9+
Security	9+
DM +1	Social 9+
DM +2	Educ 7+

Assignments

Patrol	Detective	Customs	Riot	Security
2 Civ Dist	Covert Op	Covert Op	Invest	Field
3 Special	Special	Special	Special	Special
4 Staff	Staff	Covert Op	Field	Staff
5 Staff	Staff	Staff	Staff	Invest
6 Field	Field	Field	Field	Invest
7 Field	Invest	Field	Civil Dist	Covert Op
8 Field	Invest	Invest	Civil Dist	Covert Op
9 Invest	Invest	Invest	Covert Op	Staff
10 Training	Training	Training	Training	Training
11 Special	Special	Special	Special	Special
12 Invest	Covert Op	Covert Op	Special	Invest

Assignment Resolution

Patrol, Detective, and Customs

	Train	Admin	Field	Invest	Civ Dist	Covert Op
Survival:	auto	auto	4+	5+	6+	6+
Citation:	none	none	11+	10+	8+	9+
Promotion: (6+)	(8+)	9+	7+	7+	7+	7+
Skill:	8+	8+	7+	6+	6+	5+

10 Training	Training	Training	Training	Training
11 Special	Special	Special	Special	Special
12 Invest	Covert Op	Covert Op	Special	Invest

Security

	Train	Admin	Field	Invest	Civ Dist	Covert Op
Survival:	auto	auto	4+	5+	6+	5+
Citation:	none	none	10+	10+	8+	8+
Promotion: (6+)	(7+)	9+	6+	8+	8+	6+
Skill:	7+	7+	8+	5+	6+	4+

Table of Ranks

Enlisted	Officer
1 Patrolman	2nd Lieutenant
2 Patrolman 1st Class	1st Lieutenant
3 Lance Corporal	Captain
4 Corporal	Major
5 Sergeant	Lt. Colonel
6 Leading Sgt.	Colonel
7 First Sgt.	Vice Commandant
8 Master Sgt.	Commandant

Special Assignment

Patrol	Detective	Customs	Riot	Security
1 OCS	OCS	OCS	OCS	OCS
2 Combat	Combat	Space Env	Combat	Combat
3 Admin	Admin	Space Env	Admin	Space Env
4 Tech	Tech	Tech	Tech	Tech
5 Medical	Medical	Medical	Medical	Medical
6 Crs Trn	Intel	Intel	Military	Intel

DM +1 if commissioned officer.

DM -1 allowed if Educ 8+.

Cross Training: Roll two skills on the Branch Skill table of another branch. The character may then transfer to this branch at the beginning of any subsequent term of service.

Medical: Receive Admin-1, Medic-1; if one of these skills is already level 3 or more, substitute Instruction-1 (if both are level 3 or more, only Instruction-1 is received).

OCS: Roll one skill each from the character's Branch Skills table.

For all other situations, roll twice and consult the indicated table:

Special Assignment Skills

Combat	Milit	Tech	Admin	Space Env	Intel
1 Veh*	Veh*	Mech	Admin	Zero-G Cbt	Bribery
2 Recon	Recon	Electron	Recruit	Zero-G Cbt	Forgery
3 Vacc Suit	Surv	Comput	Comput	Vacc Suit	Comput
4 Hvy Wpn	Demo	Commo	Legal	Vacc Suit	Electron
5 Hvy Wpn	Cbt Eng	Gravitics	Instruct	Gunnery	Interrog
6 Battle Dr	Battle Dr	Demo	Liaison	Ship's Boat	Interrog

*For indicated Vehicle skills, characters may also choose to select a category from Air Craft or Water Craft. These two categories have been further explained and defined in Supplement 4.

Skill Table

Police Life	NCO Skills	Officer Skills	Field Skills	Staff Skills
1 Brawl	Brawl	+1 Educ	Brawl	Admin
2 Streetwise	Streetwise	Admin	Blade Cbt	Comput
3 Carousing	Gun Cbt	Instruct	Gun Cbt	Admin
4 +1 Stren	Admin	Admin	Vehicle	Medical
5 +1 Endur	Leader	Bribery	Streetwise	Recruiting
6 +1 Dext	Tactics	Leader	Gambling	Legal
7 +1 Educ	Legal	Legal	Legal	Legal
8 +1 Social	Admin	+1 Social	Liaison	Legal

Die modifiers for the above skills table are as indicated in the following list: DM +1 NCO, DM +2 ES+, DM +2 O4+, DM +2 Off.

Branch Skill Table

Patrol	Detective	Customs	Riot	Security
1 Gun Cbt	Gun Cbt	Zero-G	Gun Cbt	Gun Cbt
2 Vehicle	Vehicle	Vacc Suit	Vehicle	Electronic
3 +1 Endur	Bribery	Medical	Recon	Forgery
4 Interrog	Interrog	Interrog	Interrog	Interrog
5 Streetwise	Interrog	Forgery	Gun Cbt	Interrog
6 Streetwise	Streetwise	Ship's Boat	Hvy Wpn	Bribery

Advanced Police Characters

There When You Need Them

ADVANCED CHARACTER GENERATION

Initial Preparation: Roll the six characteristics Strength, Dexterity, Endurance, Intelligence, Education, and Social Standing in the usual manner.

Enlistment and Branch Selection: Characters may choose to attempt enlistment in one of the following branches of Police service:

Patrol police routinely guard the community and deal with routine crimes.

Detective police investigate crimes in order to identify and gather evidence against criminal suspects.

Customs police guard starports and associated free trade areas and deal with crimes concerning extra-planetary trade (such as smuggling).

Riot police control civil disturbances which are beyond the capability of patrol police, but do not require military intervention.

Security police investigate crimes against the state. The scope of this mandate depends considerably on the government. Societies with high law levels will treat even minor political dissent or illegal economic activity as crimes against the state; those with lower law levels will use security police only against clear dangers to the social order (espionage, sabotage directed at the national defense, major economic crimes such as counterfeiting, etc.).

Basic Training: Basic training occupies the first year after enlistment. This training provides two skills rolled on the appropriate Branch Skill Table.

Assignment Determination: Each year roll two dice on the appropriate Assignment Table to determine the character's assignment for the year.

Special assignments are determined by rolling on the appropriate Special Assignment Table. The skills received in a given special assignment are described just below these tables.

Assignment Resolution: The rolls for survival, citations, promotions, and skills are made as indicated. A character may take a negative DM up to -2 for survival and receive an equal positive DM for citation (police organizations discourage

NCO Skills: Must hold rank ES E8.

Officer Skills: Character holds commissioned rank (01 08).

Field Skills: Character is in a Field, Investigation, Civil Disturbance, or Covert Operation assignment.

Staff Skills: Character is in a Training or Staff assignment.

Branch Skill Tables: The character is in the appropriate service branch.

Skills: As per the basic Police generation system except:

Gun Combat: Police characters can select from Pistol, Rifle, Submachinegun, Laser Weapons, and, for characters with Zero-G

Combat skill, Zero G Weapons.

The snub pistol is included in Pistol and Zero-G Weapons skill. The higher skill is used under normal gravity; only Zero-G Weapons skill may be used under very low or zero gravity ("very low" refers to the gravity of a size 0 world).

Heavy Weapons: Police characters may select Auto Weapons, Auto Cannon, Fluid Cannon (water or gas in crowd control), and Grenade Launcher (usually gas).

Vehicle: Police characters may select from Wheeled, Tracked, Gravitic, and Helicopter.

Stephen Brinich and James Schwar

Advanced Police Characters

excessive risk-taking); citations come in only one type.

Re-enlistment: At the end of each term of service, the character must make the re-enlistment throw from basic Police character to be allowed to re-enlist. A throw of 12 exactly requires re-enlistment.

Transfers: A character who has completed cross-training in a branch may choose to transfer to that branch upon re-enlistment.

Mustering Out: Characters who have completed service muster out. (See basic Police character generation.)

Skill Eligibility: Skills are received as basic/advanced training, special assignments, or from the skill roll. Skill table usage is restricted to the following:

Police Life: Any Police character.

"Coach" Gorkin Flangulanti
Spaceracer

UPP: 5CSC68 Age 43 6 terms Cr 6,000
Pilot 5, Ship Maint 3, Navigation 2, Ship Tactics
1, Brawling 1, Instruction 2

Gorkin Flangulanti was a Belter in the Castor system of the Gemini Sector of the Solomani Rim for one term before finding a place with a space-racing team on Aristotle (Gemini 0110) at age 22. After only two years he became an active member of a racing team, specializing in Navigation.

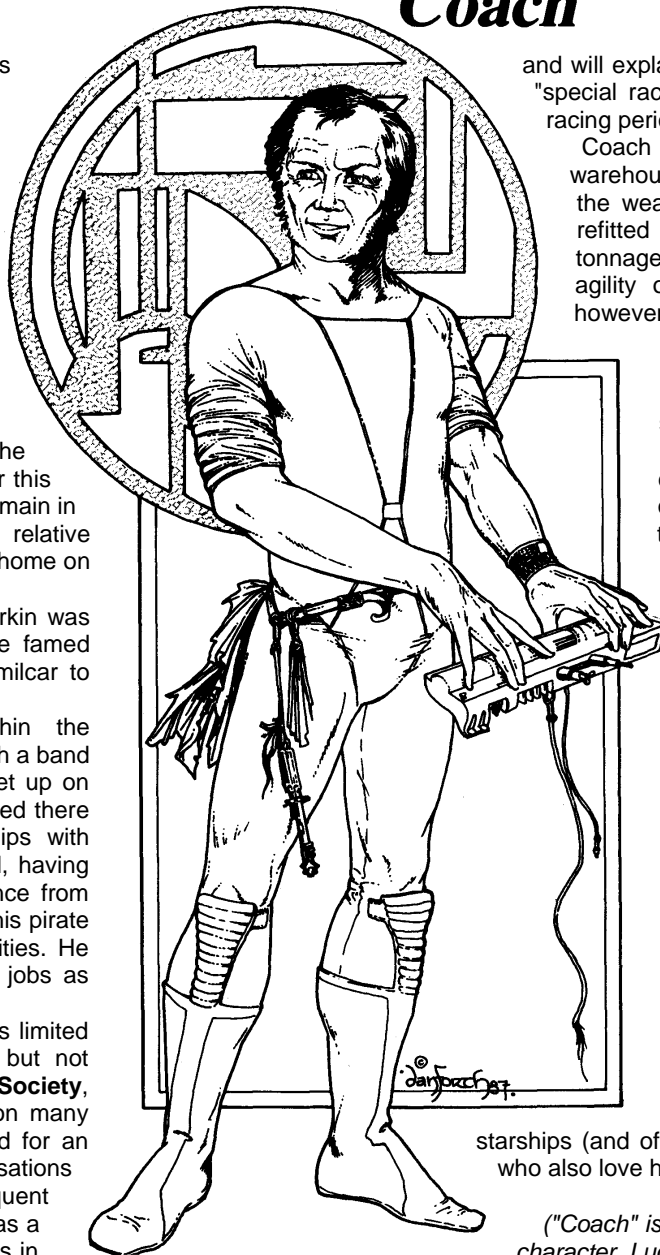
Six years later, when the team's pilot was killed in an accident, he took on the task as team leader and soon proved his mettle as a pilot. At age 33, he led his team across the finish line winning the Procyon 500, one of the most grueling races in the Solomani Rim. After this single spectacular win, Gorkin was unable to remain in the racing spotlight, and after three years of relative obscurity, retired to coach new racers from his home on Aristotle.

One young racer who was a protege of Gorkin was Terrance Schnelling, who went on to win the famed Lightcourse Run (the Jump 1 route from Hamilcar to Twylo) in 1108.

Coach, growing restless remaining within the confines of a single star system, soon fell in with a band of pirates operating from a temporary base set up on the asteroids of Pollux (Gemini 0606). He moved there with them, flying their high performance ships with ease. Within a year, however, he was missed, having misjudged the significance of his disappearance from racing circles. He retired, at the suggestion of his pirate comrades, after only one year of illegal activities. He now roams the Solomani Rim taking on odd jobs as they come.

Coach is a friendly, open man who takes his limited fame in stride. He usually travels in style, but not opulently. As a member of the **Travellers' Aid Society**, he maintains social contact with old friends on many worlds. He will smile and comply when asked for an autograph, and will openly engage in conversations on starship, piloting, etc. Although not an eloquent speaker, he is nevertheless sharp of wit and has a knack for discussing complex mechanical topics in

Coach



layman's terms, which occasionally gets him part-time jobs teaching evening classes in Ship Maintenance at local schools.

As usual, he will not admit ever having been with the pirates, and will explain his one year absence from society as private tutoring of a "special racing student," which has lead to considerable speculation in racing periodicals about the "special student's" identity.

Coach owns his own ship, which is stored in a racing club's warehouse on Aristotle. A refurbished Lucifer class Destroyer Escort, the weapons were stripped and the entire aft end of the ship was refitted with reduced armor to accommodate increased engine tonnage, providing Jump 6 and 6G acceleration with a corresponding agility of 6. Coach's high performance engines are very fragile however, and require enormous amounts of fuel and almost constant maintenance. For these reasons and because its basic configuration (Destroyer Escort) raises the eyebrows of Navy patrols and system defense forces wherever it goes, the ship spends most of its time in storage.

Despite Coach's fame and open friendliness, he can be a dangerous adversary. His few friends in the pirates owe many of their most recent successes to his superb piloting and are therefore willing to assist him in any way possible, even though he no longer actively participates in their capers.

Coach is basically a law-abiding individual, but, like so many others, will not pass up a chance to make a fast buck if it does not involve too much risk. His primary love is to operate a starship: he does so simply for the joy of sitting in the pilot's couch. His motives are apolitical; he never crossed into Imperial space because visas are hard to come by, and "running to border" is too risky (unless he's driving someone else's ship).

Any money he earns is immediately spent on his ship, which he calls "Black Wing."

Traveller characters, especially Scouts, will have a reasonable chance to have heard of Coach, and maybe even have seen him racing. If they engage him in conversation, chances are he will be between odd jobs, since he only makes planetfall because ships' captains tell him to. If hired on to a ship, he will immediately be found tinkering with the ship's systems on his off time (anything that is remotely out of order will catch his eye), and may be suspected of attempted sabotage, depending on the crew's paranoia. At the least, he will be considered odd by most of the crew. His love of

starships (and of operating them) can truly be understood only by engineers, who also love huge pieces of complex machinery.

("Coach" is accreditable in part to Aaron Porter, who helped develop the character. Lucifer class Destroyer Escort FASA, 1981.)