

No.36

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# CHALLENGE

GDW's Magazine of Futuristic Gaming

*For Twilight: 2000™ —*

*Red Maple*

*by Legion G. McRae*

*For Space: 1889™ —*

*Darkness Falls from the Air*

*by Marcus Rowland*

*For Warhammer: 40,000™ —*

*Sunstroke*

*by Roger Hamlin*

*For MegaTraveller™ —*

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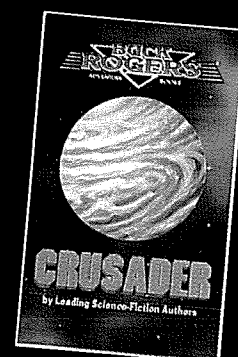
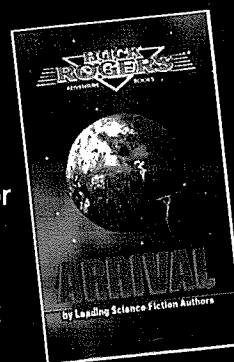
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# No. 36

# CHALLENGE

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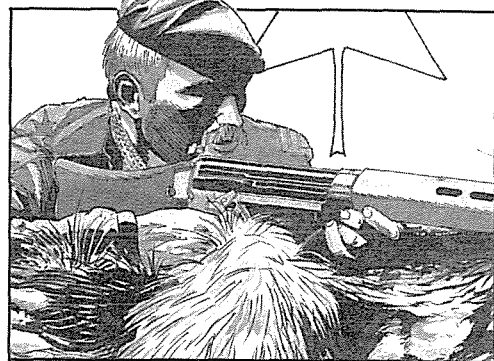
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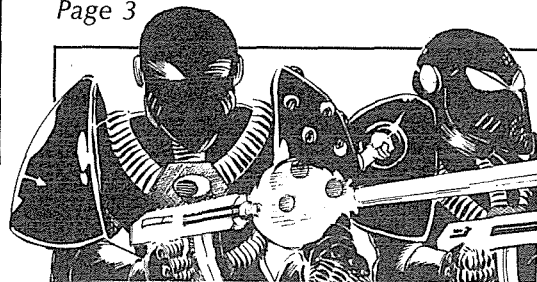
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## MEMO

By:  
Loren K.  
Wiseman

## From the Management

Now that **Challenge** has gone bimonthly, we have had to make a number of changes to the way we do things. Issues are beginning to slip by me so fast that I am sometimes confused as to which issue a given item will appear in. For example, I am writing this editorial in late October, but it will be some time before issue 36 is mailed to subscribers. Issue 35 is just being mailed, and I have already turned in the articles for 37. You can see why feedback results don't come back in time to go in the next issue.

We are now working so far ahead of production that I need to ask a favor of those of you sending in convention announcements: We need them four months ahead of time to ensure a mention in the "Just Detected" (six months is even better).

—Loren K. Wiseman

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# JUST DETECTED

## CONVENTIONS

### REDCON '89

February 3-5, 1989, Kingston, Ontario. The Royal Military College of Canada invites one and all to attend the annual international wargaming convention, REDCON '89. Come and take part in the historical miniatures games, boardgames, science-fiction games and role-playing games. There will be a painting contest, gaming clinics, demonstrations, workshops, and the annual RMC Tactical Challenge. For more information contact OCdt D.S. Buxton, Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, ON, K7K 5L0, CANADA.

### WARCON '89

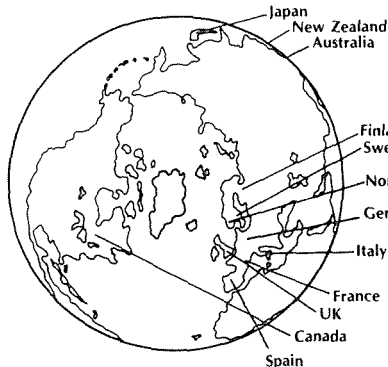
February 3-5, College Station, Texas. Texas' oldest gaming convention will be held at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. The featured events will be RPGA Network AD&D and *Champions* Open Team Tournaments. Other events include a variety of boardgames, miniatures events, RPG tournaments, a dealers' room, and 24-hour open gaming. For further information contact MSC NOVA, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77844 or call (409) 845-1515.

### OWLCON

March 17-19, Houston, Texas. Rice University's WARP and RSFAFA will host this convention on campus, which will feature *Paranoia*, *Car Wars*, *Runequest*, *Traveller*, *Diplomacy*, *Illuminati*, *Civilization*, *Battletech*, *Star Fleet Battles*, *ASL*, and an AD&D tournament! For more information contact RSFAFA, OWLCON Preregistration, PO Box 1892, Houston, TX 77251.

### CONNCON

April 1-2, 1989, Danbury, Connecticut. Held at the Quality Inn in Danbury, this convention features RPGs, boardgames, and miniatures. An RPGA tournament will be held, open to all players. In addition, an RPGA event will be held, open to members only. A benefit event will be held with the proceeds going to the American Heart Association. For more information write to Hobby Center, 366 Main St, Danbury, CT 06810.



GDW products (including *Traveller*) are available through distributors as follows:

**West Germany:** Imported and distributed by Fantasy Productions, Konkordiastr. 61, Postfach: 3026, 4000 Dusseldorf 1, West Germany. Some titles are translated into German.

**Japan:** Printed and distributed by Post Hobby Japan Co., Ltd, 26-5, 5-chome, Sendagaya, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, Japan. Titles published are translated into Japanese.

**United Kingdom:** Imported and distributed by Games of Liverpool, 89 Victoria St, Liverpool, L1 6DG, UK; and by Matthew Harvey & Co. Ltd., PO Box 38, Bath Street, Walsall, WS1 3BY, England; Virgin Games, 41-43 Standard Rd., London NW10 6HF, England.

**Italy:** Imported and distributed by Stratelibri (formerly PEI), via R. di Lauria 15, 20149 Milano, Italy.

**Sweden:** Imported and distributed by Hobbyhuset, Box 2003, S-750 02, Uppsala, Sweden and by Target Games, Frihamnen S-100 56, Stockholm, Sweden.

**New Zealand:** Imported and distributed by Blackwood Gayle, PO Box 28358, Auckland, New Zealand.

**Australia:** Imported and distributed by Jedko Games, 134 Cochranes Rd., Moorabbin, Vic, 3198, Australia.

**Finland:** Imported and distributed by Fantasiapelit Tudeer KY, P Rastitie 6 B 22, 01360 Vantaa, Finland.

**Norway:** Imported and distributed by AEH Hobby AS, Pilestredet 7, 0180 Oslo 1, Norway.

**Spain:** Imported and distributed by JOCS & Games, c/ Muntaner, 193, Barcelona 08036 Spain.



# Red Maple

By Legion G. McRae

"Red Maple" is a mini-adventure designed for use with GDW's role-playing game, **Twilight: 2000**. The adventure itself is set in western Canada at an unspecified time between August of 2000 and January of 2001.

## PLAYER'S NOTE

The text of "Red Maple" is designed to be used by the referee. **Twilight: 2000** players taking part in this mini-adventure should stop reading this *now!*

## REFeree's NOTE

The text of this mini-adventure is of two types: standard and italic. All italic text may be read to or seen by the players. The standard text is for the referee's eyes only. Information in standard text should only be revealed to the players if the referee feels it is warranted; for instance, the players will only find out that Victoria is a wasteland if they go there, etc.

Details are given for the major points and locations of interest on Vancouver Island that play a part in this adventure. A great deal of precise detail was omitted to allow the map to be read clearly and to streamline the adventure. If further adventures are going to be played out on Vancouver Island, it is strongly suggested that more detail be filled in by the referee before play begins.

In addition to primary areas and locales, the important persons and organizations present on the Island are also detailed herein.

With this mini-adventure and a bit of work on the part of the referee, Vancouver Island can be developed into a backdrop for an enjoyable **Twilight: 2000** campaign.

Maps of Vancouver Island and the rest of British Columbia will be very helpful and can be obtained by writing to the following address:



Tourism British Columbia  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, B.C.  
Canada  
V8V 1X4

Also of interest to referees will be the article entitled "Canada: 2000" in **Challenge** magazine 30.

## CHARACTER BACKGROUND

The player characters may have come from any of a number of places. They should not be from Vancouver Island initially as that would give them information which they should not know at the start of this adventure.

**Europe:** The characters were evacuated from Europe or found a way home on their own. Upon arriving in North America they moved steadily west, eventually landing on Vancouver Island where they were recruited by the DRI.

**Middle East:** The characters decided they wanted to go home, and after searching around, found a vessel that fit the bill. Their boat was wrecked or ran aground off the west coast of Vancouver Island and the characters were subsequently picked up by the DRI.

**Korea:** The characters were members of the 8th US Army (or of allied Chinese, South Korean, or Australian units), and after leaving Korea by boat, were shipwrecked on Vancouver Island where they were recruited by the DRI.

**North America:** The characters were

never sent out of North America. They may have served in the Pacific Northwest theater of the war. After the collapse of the warring armies, the characters found their way to Vancouver Island where they were recruited by the DRI.

**Note:** If referees plan to begin a **Twilight: 2000** campaign on Vancouver Island, a character background might go like this:

The player characters were members

of 3/Canadian Scottish Regiment (abbreviated 3/C-Scot-R) which broke up just east of Vancouver, British Columbia in mid-2000. After wandering aimlessly around the lower Fraser River Valley for a few months, they decided to seek safety, relatives, etc. on Vancouver Island and began searching for a boat. After finding said boat, the characters sailed across the Strait of Georgia to Vancouver Island. Upon their arrival on the Island, the characters were picked up by elements of the Department of Reconnaissance and Investigation (DRI), paving the way for this mini-adventure.

## THE MAP

The map provided with this mini-adventure depicts all of Vancouver Island and some of the larger islands around it. Only roads between the towns important to this mini-adventure are shown. All of these roads are fully paved and at least two lanes wide along their entire length, although they are all in dire need of repair after almost three years of neglect.

Referees will need to do some elaboration of their own if they plan to play a **Twilight: 2000** campaign on Vancouver Island.

## THE STORY SO FAR

The Soviet 62nd and 120th Motor-Rifle and 76th Tank Divisions were stopped just north of Hope, British Columbia by

Canadian and American forces in February of 1998 and forced to withdraw north. At Williams Lake the 62nd Motor-Rifle Division separated from the Soviet main body and moved west along Highway 20 to the town of Bella Coola. En route to and at Bella Coola the 62nd abandoned its tanks and most of the rest of their heavy equipment. After reorganizing in cantonment, large elements of the division embarked on a Dunkirk-style fleet and sailed south along the Inside Passage, arriving at Port Hardy on northern Vancouver Island in mid-September of 2000. However, nearly a third of the division's personnel were forced to remain in Bella Coola due to a lack of transportation. The division commander, Major-General Josif Timoshenko, is trying desperately to get the rest of his men to Vancouver Island before they all desert, starve, or are killed by anti-Soviet partisans.

With this in mind, Major-General Timoshenko has decided to attack the southern, Canadian-held, quarter of the Island to capture the Vancouver Island Defense Force's sailing vessels at Ladysmith. Since most of the vessels used by the Soviets during their first move are beyond repair or out of fuel, these sailing boats would be a tremendous asset in bringing the remaining personnel of the 62nd Motor-Rifle Division to Vancouver Island.

All would be going well for the Soviets if not for the following incident:

Roughly a week before the characters arrived on the scene a Soviet junior officer was taken prisoner by a reconnaissance patrol of the Renegades, just north of Parksville. Since none of the Renegades speak Russian, they turned their prisoner over to the Department of Reconnaissance and Investigations (DRI) for interrogation.

From their interrogation of the Soviet junior officer, the DRI learned of the Soviets' plan to attack Ladysmith. The DRI was also able to determine that the Soviet's Headquarters is in the town of Campbell River.

#### THE VANCOUVER ISLAND COMMAND

The southern quarter of Vancouver Island is under the control of Canadian Forces (CF) Lieutenant-Colonel Christopher Campbell. He is in charge of what he has named the Vancouver Island Command, personally commands the Vancouver Island Defense Force (VIDF), and indirectly controls the Vancouver Island branch of the DRI. He has been given the title and authority of acting premier of British Columbia by Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon, the acting premier of the western area of the Federal Government of Canada. To date, Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell has been able to exercise the title of his position far more than the authority.

#### CONDUCT OF THE ADVENTURE

*We'd only been out of the water for about 10 minutes when two five-quads drove onto the beach and disgorged 10 or 11 men who unpleasantly told us to stand still. Once they figured out we were friendlies, they helped us load our gear onto their trucks and took us into some place called Duncan.*

*In town we waited around, warming up and drying out by a fire, for 15 minutes before we were introduced by one of the guys who fished us out of the water to a Major Mark Anderson. The Major said he was the head of an outfit called the DRI and that he wanted to make a deal.*

*Great! Deals, I had 'em!*

*Anyway, Anderson said we could have a hot meal, change our clothes, and get some sleep.*

*That was the best offer we'd had in months!*

*The next morning we were awakened by Anderson himself. He said he wanted to see us in his office in a half hour.*

*When we got to Anderson's office he introduced us to his boss, a Lieutenant-Colonel Christopher Campbell. From there the two officers asked us if we were up to a short run north on a mission against the Soviets for the DRI.*

*I, being the ever-inquisitive type, asked why their own men couldn't handle it. Anderson frowned at my question and said "Because we don't have any people available, that's why!"*

*After he and Campbell dropped a few less-than-subtle hints to the effect that things could get unpleasant for us around here if we didn't accept, we agreed to take Anderson up on his generous offer.*

*And besides, it would just get boring around here with nothing to do. Right?*

#### BRIEFING

Given here is the information covered in the character's pre-mission briefing. It may be read to the players in its entirety.

*After being led into a large office by a clerk, you are left alone for a couple of minutes. Shortly, however, Major Anderson walks into the room and, motioning towards a group of chairs in the corner, says "Gentlemen, take a seat.*

*"Gentlemen, here is the program for your mission.*

*"You will move north by road from Duncan to the town of Ladysmith. At Ladysmith you will board a sailing vessel captained by one Mr. Roger Kirsch. From Ladysmith you will sail north to the ruins of Comox. At Comox you will carry out an amphibious insertion by motor boat. Your team will be issued one geiger counter by us for your move through Comox. From Comox you will move north overland to the town of Campbell River. At Campbell River you will eliminate (read assassinate) the Headquarters elements, including the commanding general, of the 62nd Motor-Rifle Division.*

*"From Campbell River you will move west overland to the town of Gold River. At Gold River your team will be extracted by Mr. Kirsch by boat. From Gold River you will be returned to Ladysmith. From Ladysmith you will return to Duncan for debriefing and to issue your report.*

*"Gentlemen, you leave in 24 hours.*

*"Good luck!"*

#### REFEREE'S NOTE

If the players ask questions at the briefing (and unless they are all lobotomized, they will) you can provide information on a question-by-question basis from the rest of the text of this mini-adventure as you see fit. See The Story So Far for information.

This adventure begins in late December of 2000 or early January of 2001 and the Soviet's attack on Ladysmith is scheduled for late January or early February of 2001, which means all of this happens in winter. Any characters who need cold-weather clothing will be issued parkas by the DRI.

#### A NASTY TWIST

The Captain of the character's insertion/extraction ship, Mr.



Roger Kirsch, is an avowed Communist. He has managed to keep this fact secret from both the VIDF and the DRI. After putting the characters ashore at Comox, he will attempt to radio the Soviets and tell them of the characters' presence before returning to Ladysmith. He is not, however, aware of the characters' mission.

Mr. Kirsch speaks Russian (70%) and there is a 60-percent chance that the Soviets will receive his message. If this happens, the characters will be dogged by Soviet troops all the way through their mission. If so, a valuable aid to this mini-adventure will be the article entitled "Wilderness Travel and Pursuit" in **Challenge** magazine 28. He will not be able to tell the Soviets where the characters are to be extracted either.

All of the men who work on Roger Kirsch's boat are members of Red Maple.

### ANOTHER NASTY TWIST

When Roger Kirsch is supposed to go to Gold River and pick up the characters, he will only sail half way, wait a reasonable amount of time, and then sail back to Ladysmith. He will inform Major Anderson that the characters failed to arrive.

All that can be said now is that the characters had better have good boots on.

### PERSONALITIES

Presented here are a number of important people who have taken up residence on Vancouver Island.

#### Dean Juthans

In 1993, at the age of 12, Dean Juthans joined the Canadian Scottish Regiment cadet corps in Nanaimo and by early 1997 had attained the rank of Warrant Officer. In 1997, Dean and a group of his friends moved south to Ladysmith. Shortly after that Nanaimo was destroyed in the nuclear attack on Canada. During the anarchy which followed, Dean and his friends, then organized as a street gang, moved north again, from Nanaimo to Parksville.

During the move north Dean surfaced as the group's leader by successfully commanding the group through a number of engagements with other gangs. Shortly after their arrival in Parksville, Dean used his cadet experience to reorganize his gang, now named The Renegades, to resemble a Canadian infantry company.

Dean Juthans has declared the town of Parksville a semi-autonomous zone, and The Renegades police and defend the town. The people of Parksville like Dean and his Renegades because they are fair and very honest—a practice encouraged by Dean.

Dean Juthans is a veteran NPC. He speaks English (100%).

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Spade Ace:* Dean is a very charismatic young man and the people of Parksville and The Renegades are very loyal to him. *Heart Queen:* Dean's girlfriend's name is Erin Scott, and he would willingly sacrifice his life for hers.

#### Major-General Josif Timoshenko

At the start of the Soviet's campaign in North America, Josif Timoshenko was in command of the 62nd Motor-Rifle Division's tank regiment. Since the 62nd's arrival in British Columbia in August of 1997, he has worked his way up through the ranks to the command of the division. He is the primary reason

that the number of his men that are alive are staying that way. He is an excellent officer. He alone thought of taking the 62nd from Bella Coola to Vancouver Island and relative safety.

Major-General Timoshenko is an Elite NPC. He speaks Russian (100%) and English (40%).

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Club Ace:* Major-General Timoshenko is a superb military officer. *Spade 4:* Major-General Timoshenko is very good and he knows it. Many of his subordinates are occasionally disgusted by his boastfulness.

#### Roger Kirsch

Before the war Roger Kirsch was a member of the Communist Party of Canada. After the nuclear attack on Canada started in late 1997, he moved to Duncan from Victoria and gathered his surviving friends from the Party together. In mid-1998 he officially organized his friends into Red Maple.

He would like very much to have the Soviets take over the whole of Vancouver Island. Roger Kirsch is a very friendly character when first met, but this is only a disguise worn by him to hide his true nature.

Roger Kirsch is a Veteran NPC. He speaks English (100%), Russian (70%), and French (50%).

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Spade King:* Roger Kirsch would be more than willing to sell out the Vancouver Island Command to the 62nd Motor-Rifle Division. *Spade 9:* He wants to be given command of southern Vancouver Island if and when the Soviets take it over.

#### Lieutenant-Colonel Christopher Campbell

In 1990, Christopher Campbell joined the Canadian Army and went through officer's training. By 1995 he had attained the rank of Captain. In 1997, shortly after the Soviet's invasion of North America, Captain Campbell was stationed at a communications facility on northern Vancouver Island as a security officer. After the nuclear attack on Vancouver Island in late December of 1997, he moved south and reorganized the



dispersed elements of the Canadian Forces present on the Island into a cohesive force, absorbing many other men into the VIDF as well. By this time he had been promoted to Major.

Upon the death of his commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Wagner, in a vehicle accident in January of 1999, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and made the military governor of Vancouver Island by then-acting Prime Minister Gordon of the Western Military Government.

After being promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel, Campbell established the Vancouver Island Command with its capital/headquarters in Duncan. He then ordered Major Mark Anderson to organize a branch of the Department of Reconnaissance and Investigations on Vancouver Island.

Lieutenant-Colonel Christopher Campbell is an Elite NPC.

He speaks English (100%), French (80%), and German (60%).

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Heart Ace:* Christopher Campbell is an exceptionally honest man. *Heart 7:* He is still loyal to the Canadian Federal Government.

#### Major Mark Anderson

Until late 1997 Major Mark Anderson had been a senior intelligence officer on Vancouver Island. After the nuclear attack he moved south to Duncan where he was eventually discovered by Campbell. After Campbell's promotion to Lieutenant-Colonel, Anderson was ordered to form Vancouver Island branch of the Department of Reconnaissance and Investigations. Since February of 1999, Major Anderson has served as the Officer Commanding of the DRI on the Island.

Major Mark Anderson is a Veteran NPC. He speaks English (100%), French (90%), and Russian (70%).

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Spade 3:* Major Anderson likes to impress people by retelling all of his old war stories. *Heart 6:* He is unswervingly loyal to the Vancouver Island Command.

#### ORGANIZATIONS

Following are a number of organizations which are present on Vancouver Island. Referees will need to indicate locations for numbers of troops and types of heavy weapons and vehicles, if any, for each of these organizations.

#### The Renegades

The Renegades is a pro-NATO group of youths who, before the war, were a mixture of Army Cadets and "Punk Rockers." They were first identified as a group in April of 1998.

**Referee's Note:** This group is competent and highly motivated having, for the ages of its members (15 to 20 years), a high level of discipline and training. They are friendly with both the VIDF and the DRI. Their flag is a white Anarchy symbol on a black field.

**Leader:** Dean Juthans is the very popular leader of The Renegades.

**Meeting The Renegades:** The Renegades may be encountered anywhere within 20 kilometers of Parksville. They maintain vigorous aggressive patrols of their Area of Operations (AO).

**Numbers:** Including the leaders, 100 "men." There are an additional 100 "camp followers" with The Renegades, most of whom are girlfriends of combat personnel in The Renegades. In The Renegades there are 30 Veterans, 50 Experienced, and 20 Novices. All "camp followers" are Novices.

**Where Found:** The Renegades live in and defend the town

of Parksville.

**Weapons and Equipment:** For Veterans: 15 M16A2s, 10 FALs, five pump shotguns, four 9mm automatic pistols, and three .38 special revolvers. For Experienced: three AKMRs, 27 Sterlings, eight pump shotguns, 12 .30-06 lever actions, and two 9mm automatic pistols. For Novices: seven .38 special revolvers, nine .22 rifles, five .30-30 lever actions, and six 12-gauge double barrels. All "camp followers" are unarmed. All small arms have 50 shots of ammunition.

The Renegades also have a BTR-70 which they recently captured from the Soviets.

#### The 62nd Motor-Rifle Division

The Soviet 62nd MRD arrived in northern Vancouver Island in mid-September of 2000. After retreating west along highway 20 to Bella Coola, the 62nd embarked on a Dunkirk-style fleet and sailed south along the Inside Passage to Vancouver Island.

**Referee's Note:** Nearly a third of the division's personnel were forced to remain in Bella Coola due to shortage of transportation. The personnel of the following divisional elements are on the Island: the Divisional HQ, two Motor Rifle Regiments, the Tank Regiment, the Artillery Regiment, the Antitank Battalion, and the Reconnaissance Battalion.

**Leader:** Major-General Josif Timoshenko is the commanding Officer of the 62nd Motor Rifle division.

**Meeting the 62nd MRD:** Elements of the 62nd MRD will be encountered almost everywhere north of the road connecting Port Alberni and Parksville.

**Numbers:** Including the leaders, 1700 men. This includes 100 Elite, 400 Veteran, 500 Experienced, and 700 Novices.

**Where Found:** Referees should place Soviet garrisons in all the towns in their part of the Island. There are larger-than-average Soviet forces opposite Port Alberni and Parksville, and at least a third of the Soviet force is in Campbell River. There is no garrison at Comox. Other than these criteria, referees may locate Soviet strengths however they see fit.

**Weapons and Equipment:** The men of the 62nd MRD are armed with small arms which run the gamut of Soviet weapons. The equipment of the divisional elements is as follows: Division HQ, three motorcycles and one UAZ-469; 1st MRR, four BTR-70s; 2nd MRR, three BTR-70s; Tank Regiment, three BTR-70s; Artillery Regiment, four D-30s; AT Battalion, two Rapira-1s and one BRDM-2 with AT-4s; Recon Battalion, one BMP-A and one BRDM-2.

Each soldier carries 50 shots of ammunition and at least one fragmentation grenade. Each large-caliber gun has 25 rounds of ammunition. The BRDM-2 of the AT Battalion has seven AT-4s. The BMP-A of the Recon Battalion has no ATGMs remaining.

#### Red Maple

Red Maple is a pro-Soviet underground group in southern Vancouver Island. It was founded by Roger Kirsch in mid-1998.

**Referee's Note:** The members of Red Maple are all loyal Communists who would love to see the 62nd MRD take over all of the Island. They are hard at work to bring that about.

**Leader:** Roger Kirsch is the founder/leader of Red Maple.

**Meeting Red Maple:** It is possible, though unlikely, for the characters to meet members of Red Maple and know they are members. It is more likely that Red Maple will "arrange" a



"meeting" or two with the characters if they make themselves known.

**Numbers:** Including the leaders, 80 men and women. This includes 20 Veteran, 30 Experienced, and 30 Novices.

**Where Found:** Red Maple operatives may be encountered throughout southern Vancouver Island.

**Weapons and Equipment:** For Veterans: five 9mm automatic pistols, five AKMRs, and 15 Sterlings. For Experienced: 20 FALs and 10 .30-30 lever actions. For Novices: 30 .30-06 bolt action rifles. Each weapon has 20 shots of ammunition. Red Maple also has two engineer demo kits and two cases of plastic explosive blocks (20 blocks per case).

#### The Vancouver Island Defense Force

The VIDF is the military arm of the Vancouver Island command's governmental structure. It is composed of ex-cadets, militia, regular force, police, and RCMP personnel.

**Referee's Note:** The Vancouver Island Command considers itself subordinate to the Canadian Federal Government.

**Leader:** The VIDF is under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Christopher Campbell. Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell is also the military governor of the Vancouver Island Command.

**Meeting The VIDF:** Elements of the VIDF may be encountered throughout southern Vancouver Island.

**Numbers:** Including the leaders, 600 men. This includes 50 Elite, 100 Veteran, 150 Experienced, and 300 Novices.

**Where Found:** Throughout southern Vancouver Island. More frequently (and in larger numbers) along the VIC's northern boundary, the road connecting Port Alberni and Parksville.

**Weapons and Equipment:** The VIDF is armed with a selection of Canadian Army small and light support arms.

#### The Department of Reconnaissance and Investigations

The western branch of the DRI was formed in Duncan in June of 2000.

**Referee's Note:** A few DRI agents were in northern Vancouver Island when the Soviets arrived and have been there ever since, supplying the VIC with information about the Soviets as much as possible. Most of this information regards how many Soviet troops are where.

No real intelligence is gained from them. Referees may wish to have one or two of these agents assist the characters, although they should *not* know what the characters' mission is.

**Leader:** The DRI on Vancouver Island is commanded by Major Mark Anderson.

**Meeting the DRI:** The DRI *will* be encountered by *everyone* who enters the VIC. A DRI patrol will meet the characters shortly after they arrive on the Island.

**Numbers:** Including the leaders, 160 men. This includes 30 Elite, 30 Veteran, 80 Experienced, and 20 Novices.

**Where Found:** Virtually any location which is on Vancouver Island.

**Weapons and Equipment:** DRI agents may be armed with any small arm which might be found in this theater of war. Each small arm has 100 shots of ammunition and the DRI has a reserve of 350 assorted hand grenades.

#### PLACES OF INTEREST

A number of places may be of interest. These are described in the following section.

#### Duncan

Aside from being the home of the world's largest hockey stick, by late 2000, Duncan is the provisional capital of British Columbia and the center of non-Soviet activity on Vancouver Island. In mid-1999 Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell concentrated the remaining elements of the Canadian Armed Forces in and near Duncan. He was thereby able to gain control of the largest remaining population center on Vancouver Island along with the entire Cowichan Valley, the vital agricultural area for which Duncan is the center.

Duncan in late 2000 is the home of just over 7000 souls. The majority of the VIDF's and DRI's personnel, equipment, and vehicles are stationed at Duncan. From Duncan the VIC maintains touch-and-go communications with the Canadian Federal Government's capital.

**Rumors:** One or two per individual (50% chance).

**Referee's Note:** The characters should only be able to learn three or four rumors in Duncan before they leave.

#### Ladysmith

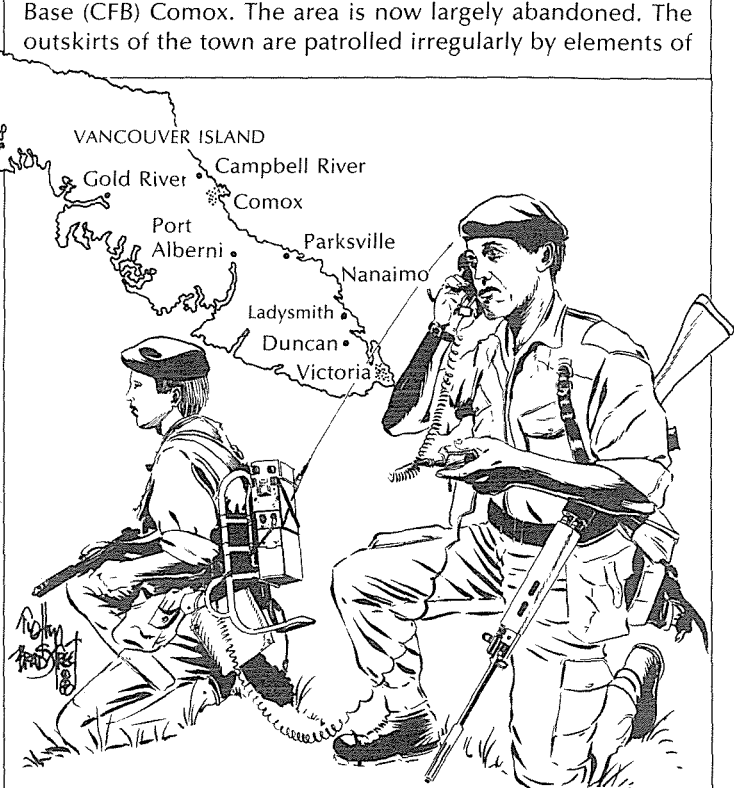
Ladysmith is the home port of the VIDF's small fleet of shipping assets, a hodgepodge of sail, steam, and alcohol-powered vessels, as well as assorted privately owned vessels. The town also has an operational steam-powered sawmill which forms the backbone of its economy.

Ladysmith has a civilian population of almost 800 and is garrisoned by 50 men of the VIDF and 20 men of DRI.

**Rumors:** One rumor per individual.

#### Comox

Comox and the neighboring town of Courtenay were obliterated by a single nuclear warhead on 29 December 1997. The weapon detonated over the near-center of Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Comox. The area is now largely abandoned. The outskirts of the town are patrolled irregularly by elements of



the Soviet 62nd Motor Rifle Division.

**Referee's Note:** There is a 20-percent chance of a Soviet patrol being present when the characters put ashore from Kirsch's boat. If present, the patrol will be composed of foot-mobile soldiers, each typically armed and equipped and with typical stats as per the *Referee's Manual* and *Referee's Charts*. The patrol leader will also have a geiger counter.

The apparent crater of the nuclear weapon is near the central east shoreline of the southeastward-pointing peninsula at Comox on the Map and is approximately 200 meters in diameter and 35 meters deep.

### Campbell River

Campbell River is presently the headquarters of the Soviet 62nd Motor Rifle Division. It is here that the majority of the Division's assets are gathered. The Soviet commander exercises his control of the northern three quarters of Vancouver Island from the town hall. The town currently has a population of around 300 civilians. These civilians dislike their Soviet rulers and any non- or anti-Soviet personnel will be assisted as much as possible by them.

The northern DRI operatives have a safe-house on the outskirts of the town.

**Rumors:** Up to three per individual (roll 1D6: 1-2, one; 3-4, two; 5-6, three rumors per individual).

### Gold River

This is a small town with a current population of around 100 civilians. There is a Soviet garrison of 20 men in Gold River. The civilians in Gold River like the Soviets almost as much as the civilians in Campbell River do.

**Rumors:** One rumor per individual.

### Port Alberni

Port Alberni is on the VIDF's northern frontier with Soviet-controlled territory. Constant trench warfare goes on to the north of the city. Due to this, there is only a small resident civilian population of approximately 400 living in the southern reaches of the city.

Port Alberni is occupied by a garrison of 150 VIDF and 20 DRI personnel. This force is maintained by using a network of logging roads which run from Port Alberni to just south of the ruins of Nanaimo.

**Rumors:** One or two per individual (roll 1D6: 1-3, one; 4-6, two rumors per individual).

### Parksville

Parksville is the home of the youth gang and paramilitary force known as The Renegades. The town has a total population, including The Renegades, of around 400. The town is a semi-autonomous zone, and The Renegades are in a state of unceasing conflict with the Soviets to the north because of this. Just south of Parksville, in the village of Nanoose Bay, are garrisoned 50 men of the VIDF.

**Rumors:** Up to three per individual (roll 1D6: 1-2, one; 3-4, two; 5-6, three rumors per individual).

**Referee's Notes:** Both Port Alberni and Parksville will be impregnable to all but the most concerted of attacks. However, both towns' defenses are strongest to the north. Also, both sides carry out raids into enemy territory between Port Alber-

ni and Parksville continuously. Firefights along this road are frequent.

### Nanaimo

This city was destroyed on 28 December 1997. The target of the strike was Nanaimo Military Camp and the bunker thereon. The northern one-third of the city is still relatively intact. It is, however, largely uninhabited. The rest of the city is virtually abandoned except for a few scavengers and harmless (or are they?) loonies around the outskirts.

**Rumors:** One per individual.

### Victoria

The prewar provincial capital and pacific naval headquarters, Victoria was smashed by a nuclear strike on 26 December 1997. Only the northern third of the city is remotely intact. Even there large areas of residential districts are burnt out or severely damaged. This region of the Island is *not* under VIDF or DRI control and is very chaotic, although the DRI does patrol occasionally.

### WEATHER

During winter on Vancouver Island it is always cold (although it is not always below freezing), and rarely does it stop precipitating (read it pours all winter). Given below is a group of simple weather tables for the area of the Island covered in this adventure. Although these tables are so simplified as to be made the laughing stock of any meteorologist's convention, they are accurate enough to serve and will portray the Island's gloomy winter appearance so well known by the author.

#### CLOUD COVER

D10	Result
1-2	Partial clouds
3-5	Light clouds
6-9	Heavy clouds
10	Clear sky

*Note:* Partial clouds can only give light rain. If the sky is clear, it cannot rain or snow.

#### PRECIPITATION

D10	Result
1-3	None
4-6	Light rain
7-8	Heavy rain
9-0	Downpour

*Note:* Read all "rain" results as snow if the temperature is below freezing.

#### WINDS

D10	Result
1-3	Light breeze
4-5	Strong breeze
6-7	Light winds
8-9	Strong winds
0	Gales

*Note:* The winds on the island generally blow east.



## TEMPERATURE

D10	Result
1-6	Above freezing (but still chilly)
7-0	Below freezing

Temperature and cloud cover should only be rolled for weekly, whereas precipitation and winds may be determined on a daily basis.

If referees wish to be more accurate and detailed in determining the weather, they should refer to the article entitled "Weather" in **Challenge 29**.

## RUMORS

It is possible for the characters to hear rumors from people in towns or by questioning travellers. Roll 2D6 and use the following:

**2:** The Russians have some sort of Gulags in the northern part of the Island.

**3:** The Russians aren't ready to attack anyone because their men are all weak from hunger.

**4:** The Russians are currently getting ready to attack Part Alberni.

**5:** Those Renegades are nothing more than a gang of thugs who work for whoever pays the most.

**6:** There is some sort of underground at work in southern Vancouver Island.

**7:** There are vicious packs of wild dogs in Nanaimo and they would sooner eat you than look at you.

**8:** Our Army is going to launch an attack against the Russians next week.

**9:** The Cowichan Valley's crops were scant this year. There are going to be serious food problems next year.

**10:** The Army is going to lift martial law next month.

**11:** The Army is conscripting men all over the south end of the Island.

**12:** The Russians want to leave the Island this year.

When rolling to determine rumors, duplications are not rerolled. (They are obviously well known rumors.)

Referees are encouraged to make their own rumors to supplement those given here.

## ENCOUNTERS

The following encounter tables list the most frequent types of encounters for the area of the island covered by this adventure. In addition to those described, referees should try to invent with their own individual encounters to make their game more enjoyable.

SOUTH OF PORT ALBERNI/PARKSVILLE  
D10 Roll by Location

Road	Ruins	Off-Road	Result
1-3	1	1-2	Army
—	2-6	3-7	Dogs
4-5	7-9	8	Wreck
6	—	—	Convoy
7-10	10	9-10	Civilians

Note: Army can be VIDF, DRI, or marauders depending on the place where the encounter takes place.

NORTH OF PORT ALBERNI/PARKSVILLE  
D10 Roll by Location

Road	Ruins	Off-Road	Result
1-4	1	1-2	Army
—	2-6	3-7	Dogs
5-8	7-9	8-9	Wreck
9	—	—	Convoy
10	10	10	Civilian

Note: Army will be Soviets.

The referee is encouraged to create and elaborate on any encounters using the encounter rules from the basic game.

## CHARACTER EQUIPMENT

If referees wish to begin a campaign on Vancouver Island, they should limit the amount of equipment that characters possess for this adventure since they had to get to the island on a fairly small boat. Given below are five equipment "allotments." One of these should be given to each player character. If there are more than five players in your group, referees should use the allotments given as examples to create as many more as are needed.

The following process was used to create the equipment allotments.

Since the characters are assumed to have come from somewhere else where they had been fighting for some time, availabilities and costs of items were ignored. This was done due to the small amount of kits available to the characters. Each allotment amounts to roughly 50 kilograms of equipment, and all items are assumed to be at least near-new at the start of the adventure.

Only equipment which would have been available in the theater the characters came from may be included in the allotments. French FA-MAS rifles are not going to be available in Western Canada!

Only man-portable equipment may be included. The allotments shown were created on the assumption that the characters came to Vancouver Island from mainland British Columbia. GDW's **Small Arms Guide** and the **Twilight: 2000** basic game's *Equipment List* were used to generate the equipment allotments shown. Referees who do not own these products may need to revise them.

The VIC will be able to give the characters a geiger counter and some parkas and that is all. The characters may leave any equipment they wish with the DRI in Duncan. All of it will be returned when they get back from Gold River. Alternatively, the referee may have some of the characters' kit "disappear" while it is in storage. The players may not adjust or change the allotments except by trading equipment from character to character using the equipment in the allotments.

## Further Character Equipment

If referees allow it, the characters may have "the rest" of their equipment, vehicles, etc., hidden on the mainland. This should only be allowed if the characters came to Vancouver Island from mainland North America. Allowing a mainland cache might create a perfect opportunity for the referee to get the characters onto the mainland at a later date in a campaign.

Use the following process to create the character's cache on the mainland.

Subtract the value of each character's allotment (from the price list in the game) from his total money amount as determined during character generation. Allow each character to "buy" the indicated amount's worth of equipment. All of this equipment will be placed in the character's mainland cache. Standard availabilities and prices must be observed when creating the character's cache, however.

A character may only have equipment in the group's cache if, during character generation, he generated more starting money than the total value of his equipment allotment. If not, he is carrying all his worldly possessions.

Determining vehicles owned by the group, for placement in their cache, is done as indicated in the *Players' Manual*.

### Equipment Allotments

Equipment allotments are as follows.

**Number One:** Doctor's medical kit, atropine ( $\times 10$ ), personal medical kit, rucksack, fatigues, kevlar flak jacket; shelter half, parka, sleeping bag, gas mask; Colt python; 60 shots of .357 magnum, Remington model 870P, 75 shots of 12-gauge, knife, frag grenades, pain reliever, mild ( $\times 100$ ), 10 kg of domestic food.

**Number Two:** Seven kg of MREs, basic tool kit, electrical repair tools, Browning HP-35, 48 shots of 9mmP, AKMR, 140 shots of 5.45B, bayonet, rucksack, fatigues, combat webbing, flashlight, personal medical kit, plate insert jacket, thermal fatigues, wheeled vehicle tools.

**Number Three:** Rucksack, combat webbing, fatigues, 10 kg of MREs, shelter half,  $4\times$  binoculars, starlight scope, two-km hand radio, personal medical kit, M16A2, 180 shots of 5.56N, claymore mine ( $\times 1$ ), frag grenades ( $\times 4$ ), WP grenades ( $\times 2$ ), M203 GL, 40mm HE grenades ( $\times 2$ ), ballistic nylon helmet.

**Number Four:** Fatigues, rucksack, combat webbing, knife, 12 kg of domestic food, Makarov PM pistol, 45 shots of 9mmM, MAG machinegun, four 7.62N 33-shot belts, ballistic nylon helmet, kevlar flak jacket, gas mask, personal medical kit, shelter half, parka, flashlight.

**Number Five:** Fatigues, rucksack, combat webbing, 10 kg of MREs, Charter Arms 45 pistol, 60 shots of .45ACP, knife, Ruger Mini-14 with folding stock, 140 shots of 5.56N, M202, four-round clip of 66mm HEAT.

These allotments should be distributed by the referee, not thrown to the group for them to bicker over who gets what. Keep in mind each character's relative skills, and try to be fair. Of course, you may decide on some other means of determining equipment distribution.

### FURTHER ADVENTURES ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

The following section suggests further adventures which can be staged in Vancouver Island.

**Rooting Out Red Maple:** If the characters make it back to Duncan, they are probably going to have a big hate on for Roger Kirsch. He will no doubt try to avoid them entirely. This scenario could involve a chase in or through the Gulf Islands or onto the mainland as the characters pursue Roger Kirsch. Note that if Kirsch flees Vancouver Island, he will leave his subordinate, Walter Davies, in command of Red Maple.

**Free the Soviet's Prisoners:** The characters might be sent north

again by the DRI. This time to attack the Soviet prison camps in the northeastern parts of the Island. Any prisoners freed will have to be escorted back to the VIC course.

**Conduct Salvage Operations in the Ruins:** The characters might go into Nanaimo or Victoria to determine what is and isn't salvageable and how to get it out of the city. Remember that Victoria is predominantly a lawless zone!

**Reconnoiter Mainland Coastal Towns:** The characters are sent across the Strait of Georgia to scout out/take control of a small town on the mainland. The DRI will have their hand in a mission of this sort. A town such as Sechelt or Powell River would be appropriate.

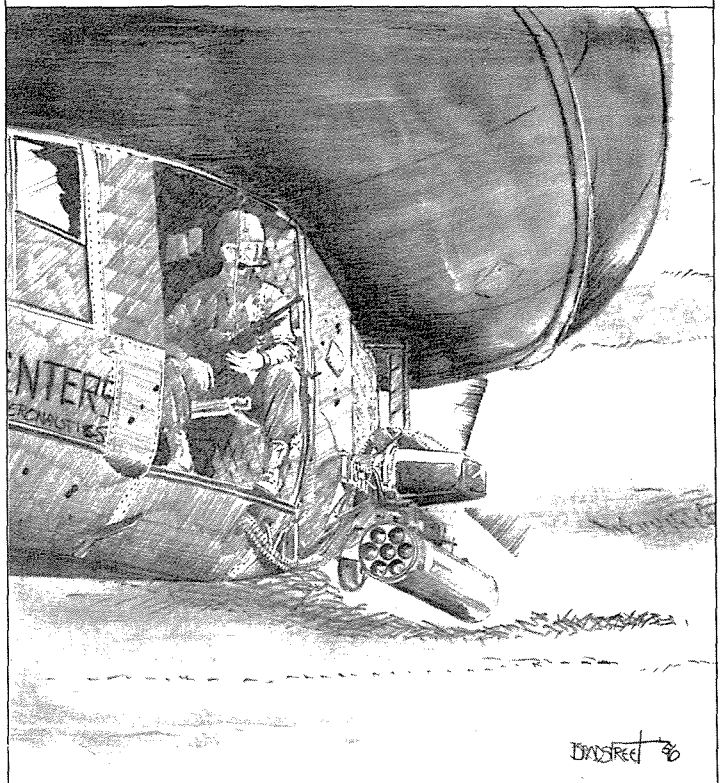
*Note:* Since this campaign region is on an island, at least one of the characters in the group should have small boat handling skill (SBH). However, the boat used by the characters to get to Vancouver Island should have been wrecked. This will prevent the characters from having too much freedom of movement and allow the referee to pace the campaign exactly how he wants to.

### A NOTE TO REFEREES

#### IN CASE OF MISSION FAILURE

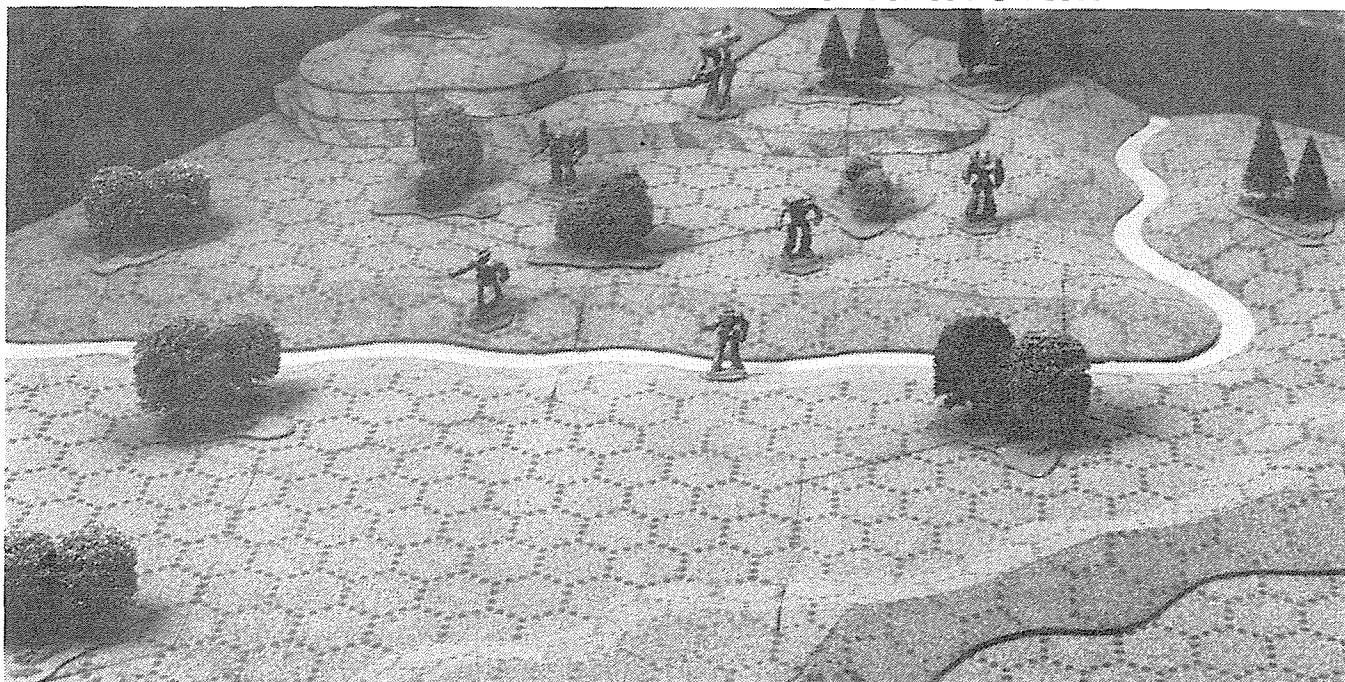
Should the characters fail to eliminate the Soviet HQ, *don't panic!* This is a perfect opportunity for you to throw Vancouver Island into *total* anarchy (suitably sinister laughter goes here)! Play through the Soviet attack on the VIC. During said attack, have the Soviets and Canadians fight each other to exhaustion. Disintegrate them both, mixing them up (such as Canadians in the north and Soviets in the south for example) in the process. This will provide you and your players with innumerable adventuring opportunities as well.

The Soviet attack on the VIC also provides referees with an opportunity to make use of the **Twilight: 2000** miniatures rules provided in **Challenge 25** if they so desire.

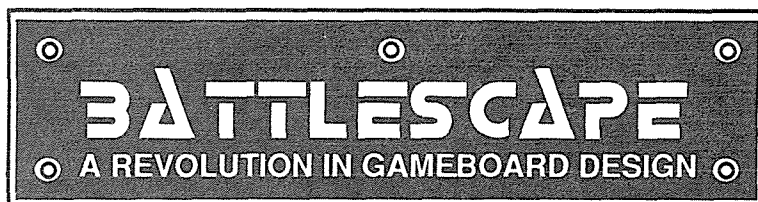




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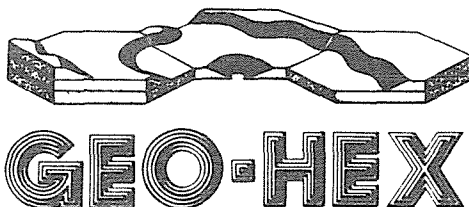
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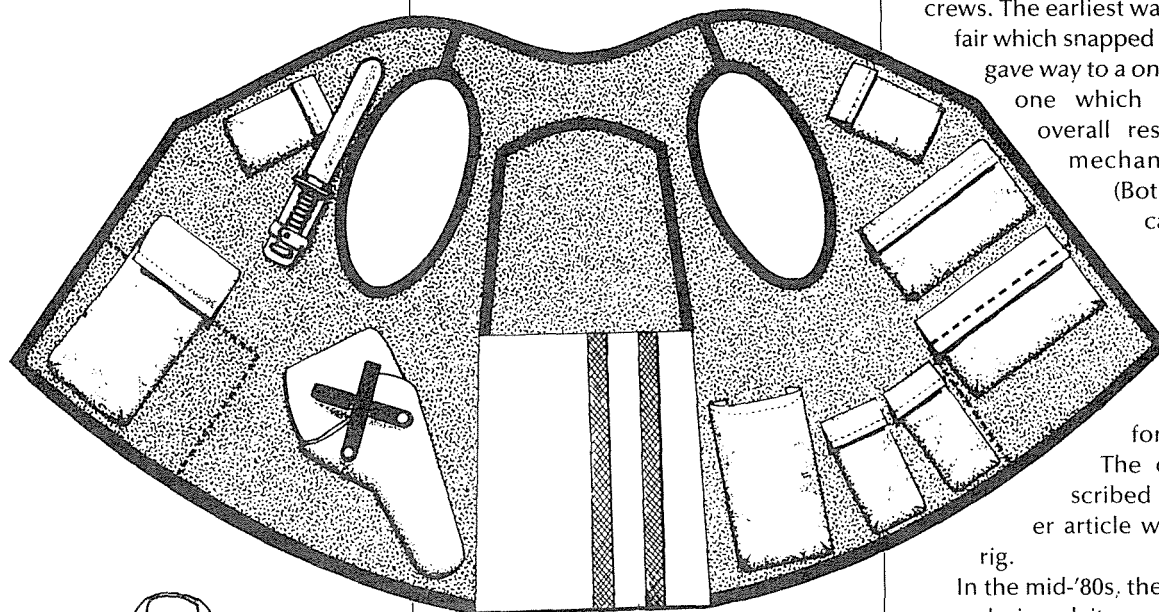
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# Equipment for Armor Crews



crews. The earliest was a two-piece affair which snapped at the waist. This gave way to a one-piece garment one which bore a strong overall resemblance to a mechanic's coveralls. (Both of these items can still be found in the system at the time this is written). This suit is worn over the battle dress uniform (BDU).

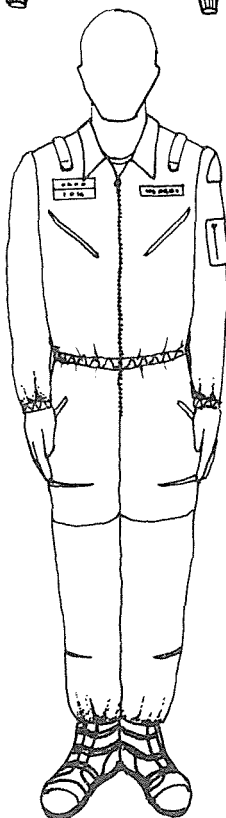
The other items described in Fred's earlier article will complete the

rig.

In the mid-'80s, the Nomex coverall was redesigned; it now looks somewhat more like a flight suit than its predecessors. What set the Nomex suit of the '80s apart from the earlier CVC suits was the fact that it represented a return to the British "Pixie Suit" tanker coverall design that appeared during WWII: many pockets (two each on the chest, front hips, upper thighs, and lower legs), an extraction strap centered on the upper back (a slight departure from the British design) designed to aid in lifting a wounded/unconscious crewmember out of the vehicle, and (probably equally as important as the extraction strap) a drop-seat for individual relief. Nomex gloves and a hood protect the hands and face. CVC suit legs are worn over the boots, instead of bloused into them.

The waist-length tanker's jacket has made a comeback as well. The decision was made to adopt the Air Force's current issue flight jacket, which is fairly close to the well known pilot's jacket, but for the fact that it has a squared, windbreaker-like collar, larger waist pockets (with covering flaps rather than open tops) and a flap on the back to allow use of the extraction strap.

The older green flak vest has been replaced by a camouflaged kevlar vest which is both lighter and more flexible, as well as being better at stopping shell fragments and low-velocity rounds (such as pistol rounds). The infantry-style LBE (load bearing equipment) is being replaced by the CVC survival vest, which



By Robert Paul Toy

This article is intended to act as an addition to Fred Kiesche's article in **Challenge** 32 which detailed tanker uniforms and equipment. In the late '70s, the Army began a serious effort to improve the clothing tankers wear aboard their vehicles. Little existed in the way of clothing designed specifically for wear by tank/APC crews. One exception was the waist-length jacket (which was banned for field wear around 1973). Another was the motorcyclist-style tanker's boot (a favorite target of nonarmor officers; in the late '70s a newly promoted brigadier was publicly embarrassed by the CG of the 82nd Airborne Division: "General, in this division, we wear boots with laces...."). Indeed, the standard uniform for tankers was, until recently, little different from that worn by their foot-mobile comrades-in-arms.

## CVC NOMEX SUIT

Battlefield experience with armor has shown that tank crews, like aircraft crews, needed some kind of protection from fire aboard their vehicles. In the late '60s, flight suits of a flame retardant material called Nomex were adopted by aircraft crews in Vietnam, and the army followed suit for helicopter crews. By the late '70s, experiments were being conducted with Nomex suits for armor

is the next topic of this article.

### THE CVC SURVIVAL VEST

At the same time that the CVC suit was being redesigned, another committee at the Armor School decided that it was time to find an armor-oriented replacement for the standard LBE. After extensive testing of a large cross section of US, NATO, and Allied equipment, the committee decided to look elsewhere, and aviators, once again, provided the answer.

The Vest, Survival, Mesh Net, SRU-21/P has been around for years as a staple of personal equipment for US aviators in all services. It fits tankers' needs by being light, flexible, minimal in bulk, and fairly comfortable when worn. Also, unlike the standard LBE, it can be worn inside the vehicle with minimal interference with movement—an important consideration given the crowded conditions in all AFVs. The standard LBE tended to get thrown in the bustle rack, where it could be forgotten during a quick bailout (well, all bailouts are quick, I suppose).

The SRU-21/P (NSN 8415-00-933-6232) is OD green and forest green in color. It has nine zippered, pouch-type pockets on the outside; two more large, velcro-closed pockets line the inside over the stomach. On the back is a solid nylon panel that covers a set of laces that "fine-tune" the size of the vest to suit the wearer. The vest comes in five standard sizes, extra small through extra large.

The armor school has a recommended "standard" load list for the vest (see illustration); with the exception of two items (both weapons), all items are carried in the vest pockets. The two exceptions are a pistol, carried in a holster fixed below the left arm (this holster comes separately and is to be installed by the individual wearer) and a bayonet, attached over the left breast pocket, as shown. The holster is charitably described by the word rudimentary; it merely holds the weapon in place, rather than protecting it from the elements. As time progresses, most troopers will likely replace it with something like the new nylon holster that is entering service with the new 9mm pistol.

### MCCV

One final item rounds out the CVC uniform, although this pertains only to M1A1 Abrams crews: the Micro Climatic Cooling Vest (MCCV). This is a garment worn under the BDU that enables the individual to keep reasonably cool during operations. Similar to the cooling unit designed by NASA to be worn under a pressure suit, the MCCV works in the same way: It circulates water through a fine mesh of tubes, carrying heat away from the wearer's body. The system was designed for the M1A1, there are no plans to incorporate this cooling system into the M1 or M60 series of AFVs.

### DISTRIBUTION

As for distribution, the items described are coming into the system, albeit slowly. The document that discusses some of these items, the *M60A3 Tank Combat Load Plan* (FC23-200-3, dated November '86), says: "The five-piece armor crew uniform ensemble consisting of body armor, Nomex coverall, Nomex gloves, CVC universal hood, and the tanker's jacket, is projected to be issued under force modernization program by the Department of the Army. All of the five-piece ensemble is type classified and will be issued only as a complete ensemble. Ac-

cording to Mr. Walters of the Defense Personnel Support Center in Philadelphia, the ensemble will be issued in three lots, first issue in second quarter of FY87, second issue in fourth quarter of FY87, and third issue in fourth quarter of FY88. The Nomex coverall and the tanker's jacket are now in the system in limited numbers. The other three pieces of equipment had not been procured as of 13 Jan 86." Considering how long it has taken to get things into the system in the past, it's very possible that by 2000, there will still be some units that haven't received their new gear.

### EQUIPMENT LISTING

Roman numerals correspond to pockets on the vest; see accompanying illustration.

#### I. Top Left Front

Lensatic compass

#### II. Lower Left Front

2 × 9mm magazine

2 × M16 magazine

#### III. Inside Left Bottom

1 × drinking water storage bag

1 × bottle, water purification tablets

#### IV. Top Right Front

1 × matchbox with matches

1 × emergency signaling mirror

1 × lipstick, antichapping

#### V. Middle Right Front

2 × chemical lightsticks

1 × lightstick shield

#### VI. Lower Right Front

2 × field dressing

2 × muslin bandage

1 × casualty blanket, mylar

1 × surgical adhesive tape

1 × providone iodine ointment

1 × insect repellent

#### VII. Inside Right Bottom

1 × 10oz water can

#### VIII. Middle Right Top

2 × smoke signal, ground (red and green)

#### IX. Lower Middle Front

1 × pocket knife

#### X. Lower Middle Rear

1 × distress light marker

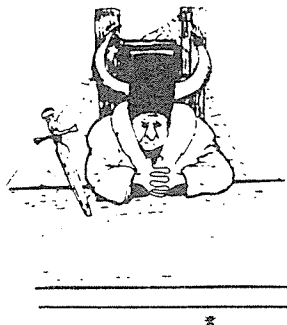
1 × light marker flashguard

#### XI. Lower Right Rear

1 × 16-inch flexible finger saw

1 × bayonet, M7, is attached to the vest over the left shoulder, sheath pointing up. Holster is comfortable below left arm.





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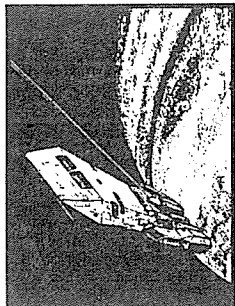
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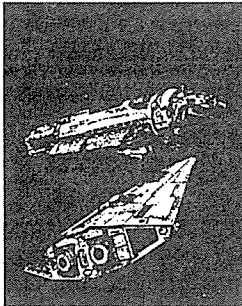
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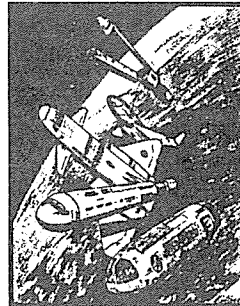
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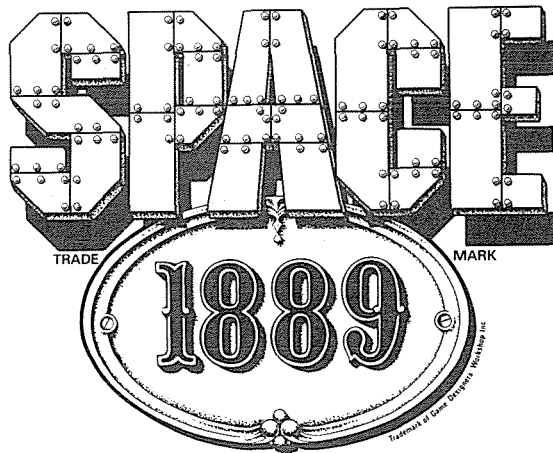
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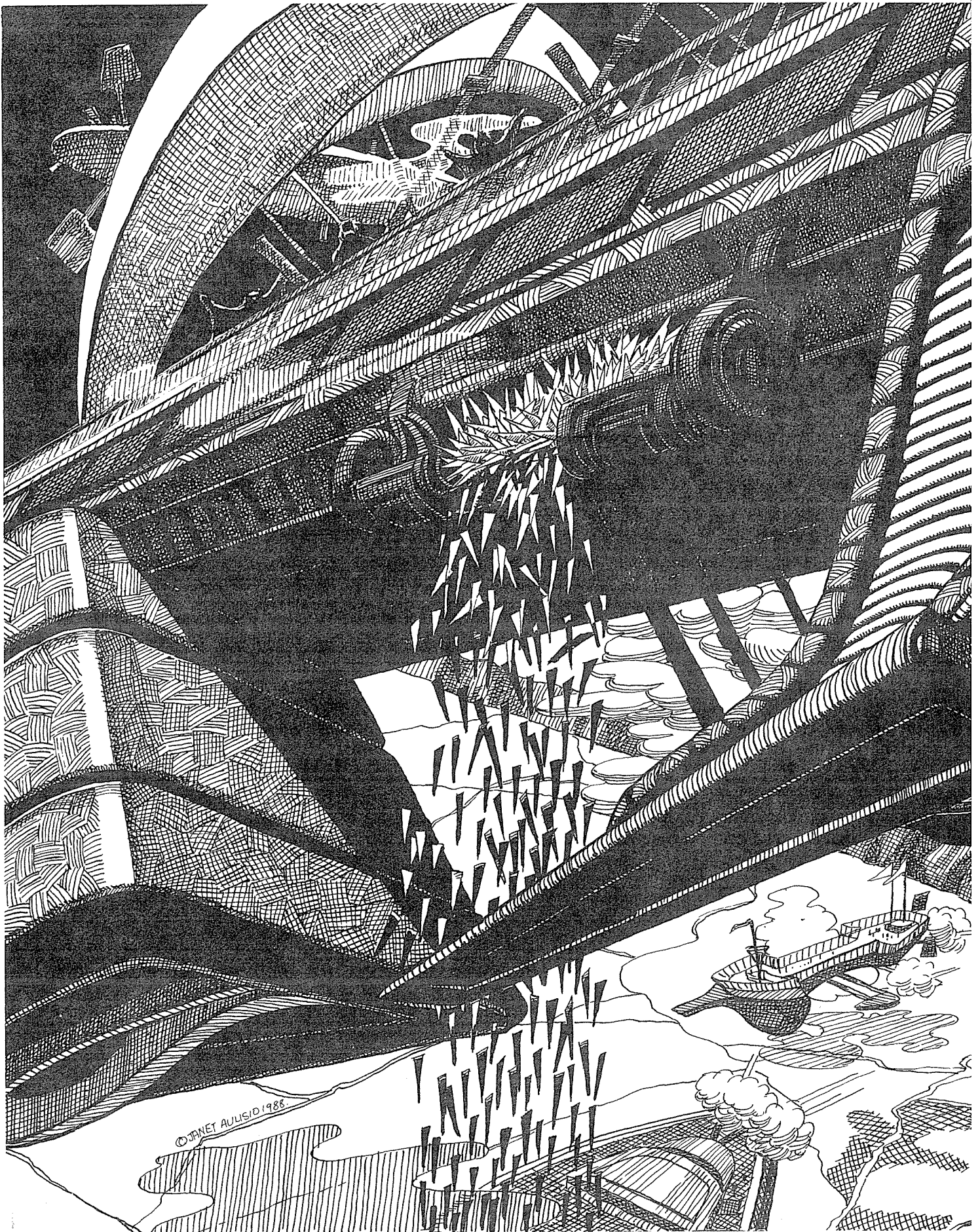
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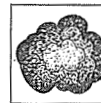
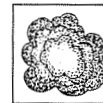


## Darkness Falls From the Air

*The magic of liftwood has done much to change the face of battle on Mars and now on Earth. Once superior position has been gained, the denizens of the air can use gravity to deliver some of their firepower.*

By Marcus L. Rowland

With many military factions active on Mars, it is not surprising that there is a continual struggle to develop new weapons and equipment. The Martians have seen the superiority of Earth's technology, and they know that they must use their ingenuity to overcome it; the colonists, on the other hand, know that they are heavily outnumbered and must seize every advantage to ensure that the natives are never able to defeat them.



### SMOKE SCREENS

Availability: All sides

### Equipment

Any steam-driven ship can be equipped to make smoke for £20 per ton of engine weight. The equipment adds negligible weight to the ship. Smoke generation requires the engine to run at less than full efficiency; reduce maximum movement by 1 while making smoke. For example, an *Aphid*-class aerial gunboat (hull size 2, 20-ton engine, speed 6) costs £400 to equip with smoke screens and is reduced from 6 to 5 movement whenever it makes smoke. This decrease is cumulative with other movement changes, such as the loss of speed when a drogue torpedo is used.

All craft can be equipped with chemical smoke generators, pyrotechnic devices costing £30 per turn of use, again of negligible weight. Smoke generators can also be fitted into tether mines or drogue torpedoes, replacing the normal explosive. Mines produce smoke for two turns, torpedoes for three turns; there is no change in cost.

To date, other smoke generators have not been tried; rockets and aerial torpedoes are too expensive to be used as smoke layers, and artillery shells move



too quickly to leave a useful smoke trail.

Steamships making smoke from their engines need no additional crew. Chemical smoke generators need one crewmember to light fuses; however, this job can be performed by a marine or any other crew.

### Game Use

Any shot whose line-of-sight passes through a hex containing smoke is at  $-1$  to hit; successive smoke clouds can reduce the chance of a hit, to a maximum of  $-3$  to hit. Smoke is only present at the altitude at which it is made.

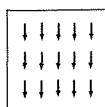
If a ship is making smoke, place a smoke marker for each hex it moves through during the appropriate movement phase. Smoke is only present at the altitude at which it was made.

Smoke drifts with the wind, so move all smoke markers one hex in the direction of the wind at the start of each turn.

If smoke is added to an existing cloud (e.g., by a ship drifting with the wind and making smoke), treat the smoke cloud as having been made on the last phase the source was in the cloud. There is an additional  $-1$  modifier for a "dense" cloud if the source stays in the same hex for the entire turn or any longer period.

Smoke persists for two turns, so remove markers in the appropriate movement phase two turns after smoke is made.

**Note:** If you use these smoke rules, you may find it useful to assume that burning ships, etc. produce smoke screens too.



### SPIKE DROPPER

Availability: All sides

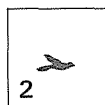
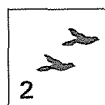
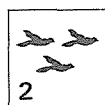
### Equipment

Invented by the Martians, and soon copied by colonists, this is essentially a hopper full of short metal spikes or darts. It weighs five tons, including magazine. No crew is required; the controls are on the bridge. Once a hopper is discharged, it is expended and can't be reloaded during combat. No ship may have more spike droppers than its hull size number, due to limitations on deck space. Spike droppers cost £450 in all yards.

### Game Use

A ship deploying this weapon simply flies over the target and drops the spikes *during its movement phase*. The spikes are spread over such a large area that some are likely to hit crew on the target; a die is rolled to see how many crew hits occur; no other damage occurs. This roll is modified by subtracting the difference in altitude between the upper and lower ship. For example, the roll for a ship at VH altitude dropping spikes on a ship at altitude M is  $1D6 - 2$ . There is always a modifier of at least  $-1$ . Any result of 0 or less means that none of the spikes hit crew.

If spike droppers are fitted, count them as guns for hit location rolls.



### HOMING PIGEONS

Availability: British colonists only

### Equipment

Although the colonists are slowly spreading a network of telegraph and heliograph installations, units more than a few

miles beyond the last outposts are usually out of contact with their bases. Fortunately, some of the early British colonists realized that this might be a problem and imported a number of homing pigeons and eggs. The adult birds were confused by Martian conditions, and some were quickly lost, but the eggs hatched birds which were soon able to navigate on Mars. Now many ships carry a few cages of birds, ready to be released with messages. Useful messages might include notification of a capture or victory, the site of a crash landing, etc.

No other colonizing powers are known to have succeeded in acclimatizing birds to Mars; however, it is probable that a population of feral pigeons will build up, with other colonies or the Martians capturing them for messenger use. There does not appear to be any native animal with a similar homing ability.

Each cage costs £5, with negligible weight and holds four birds (cost £1 per bird). Because of the hazards of this communication method, it is usual to release at least two birds with any given message. A ship can carry several cages; the signalman takes responsibility for the birds.

Any ship carrying pigeons must maintain a ground base, equipped with a pigeon roost and at least one attendant to look after the birds and pass on messages (cost £20 per month). The Royal Navy has its own pigeon lofts at Syrtis Major, and this is the destination for any bird released from a Navy ship, unless arrangements have been made to use birds from a loft in another colonized area. All other ships must make their own arrangements, or pay £5 per month to use the Navy coops, accepting that the Navy will see all messages.

### Game Use

Pigeons can only carry small loads; the practical limit is a message of 50 words on lightweight paper. Military messages will usually be coded for security.

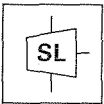
If birds carry pre-written and pre-attached messages, they should be prepared before the game starts—with no more than one prepared message per bird. The player using the birds announces the intention to release them at the start of the turn; they are released after all other actions at the end of the player's movement phase. A typical pre-written message might be an SOS, with the location of the ship just before combat began.

If birds are to carry freshly written messages, the player using them should announce the intention at the start of a turn; the signalman can write 10 words per turn. It takes a full turn to put the message onto a bird, which can be released at the end of the player's movement phase in the following turn. Extra birds with the same message don't require any extra writing time (the signalman uses carbon paper), but do need an extra turn for capsule attachment.

Any bridge hit affecting the signalman will kill all pigeons.

When pigeons are released, they immediately descend (or ascend) to Low altitude; if the terrain doesn't permit this, they fly at the lowest possible altitude. Small arms fire may be used to stop them before they leave the battle area. Birds stay together and are represented by a single counter.

Each individual bird successfully leaving the battle gets home on a 4, 5, or 6. Rather than flying in a straight line, the birds follow prominent terrain features (usually canals, sometimes mountain ridges and cliffs) which lead toward their goal. They won't fly directly into the wind. Each bird flies over  $1 + (1D6/2)$  strategic hexes per day (round fractions down).

**SEARCHLIGHTS**

Availability: All colonial powers. Usable on steam vessels only.

**Equipment**

Searchlights are a new invention, a modification of the arc light for naval use. A ship can mount a number of searchlights no larger than its engine size; searchlights can be mounted wherever a gun can be mounted, with the same field of "fire." Each searchlight—plus its associated generating equipment, crewmen, etc.—weighs six tons and costs £150. Searchlights cannot be armored.

**Game Use**

**Sky Galleons of Mars** does not include rules for visibility. All of the information in the section which follows is to be considered optional!

Battles fought in the early morning or late evening are often hampered by dim light. Cloud and smoke may also affect visibility. Conditions of poor visibility should be agreed upon before combat begins. Under these conditions, it is suggested that rolls to hit should be reduced to 4, 5, and 6 at close range, 6 only at long range.

Ships mounting searchlights may use them to illuminate a target under conditions of poor visibility and may use the normal rolls to hit of 3, 4, 5, and 6 at close range, 5 and 6 at long range. Only one target may be illuminated by each searchlight. Searchlights may also be used for signaling but require the attention of a signalman.

If searchlights are fitted, count them as guns for hit location rolls. A fire/boiler hit disables searchlights.

**BOARDING LINES**

Availability: All

**Equipment**

Sometimes a ship needs to place a boarding party without grappling or land a ground party without landing the ship. Climbing lines are pre-measured and pre-coiled lines fitted to

anchor points on deck. Each line is fitted with a sliding hand grip and ends in a large knot. Each line costs £2 (negligible weight) and allows a drop of one level (e.g. High to Medium). The maximum number of lines is equivalent to five times the hull size of the ship. Marines slide down the rope onto the target or can hang at the end of the rope to be lowered onto the target.

For obvious reasons this method is most frequently used against ships that lack Hale rockets and other upward-pointing defenses. Typically it is reserved for night actions; for example, a ship might cut all power and silently drift over the target, dropping Marines for a surprise assault.

**Game Use**

All normal rules for boarding actions must be used so that a large ship dropping a boarding party onto a smaller vessel can only drop a number of boarders equal to five times the smaller ship's hull size. To recover boarding parties by this method, a crewman must be standing by each rope on the upper ship's deck, ready to haul the boarders back up.

**CORPSE**

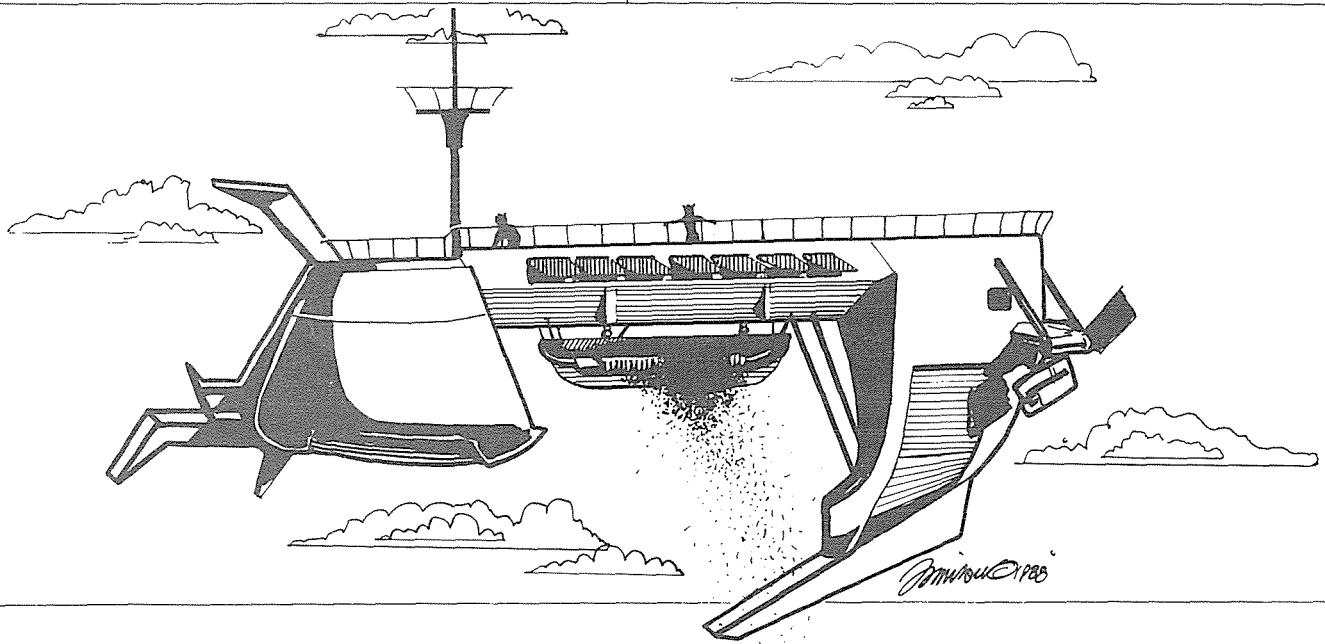
Availability: Universal. In practice, used by High Martians only.

**Equipment**

The High Martians don't have any scruples about burial of their victims. If a slave or prisoner is killed, or a boarding party is repelled with casualties, the High Martians will dump the bodies over the side. If they happen to be about to fly over an enemy ship, they will attempt to dump the corpses onto the ship to demoralize the enemy.

**Game Use**

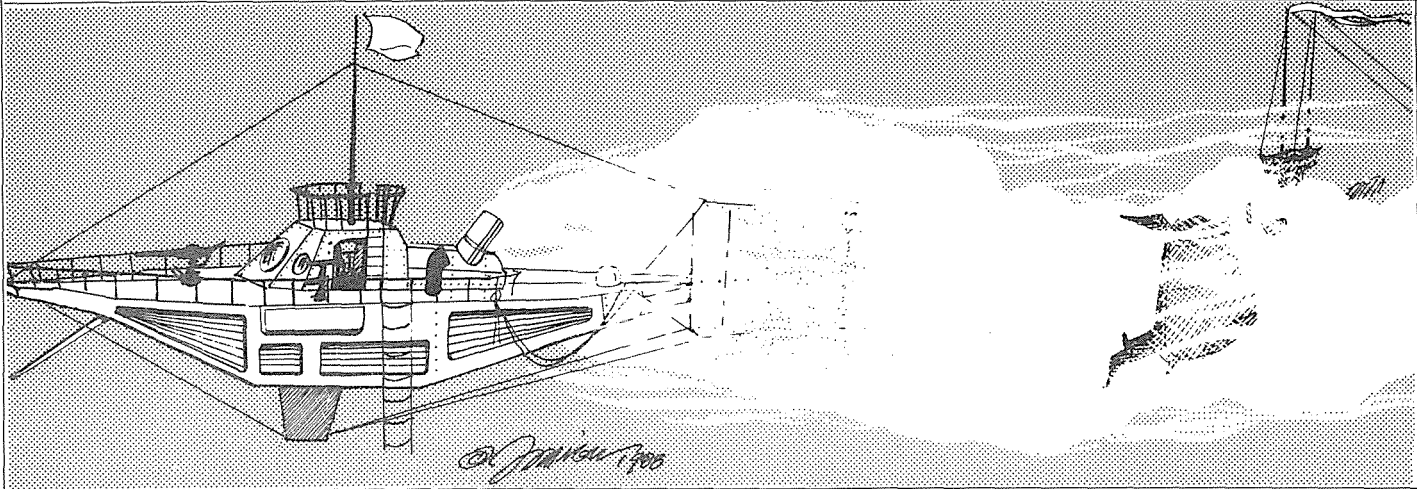
Corpses are dropped in the moving player's firing phase, on a target vertically below the ship. Roll 1D6; if the number rolled is less than the number of corpses dropped, that many corpses hit the target ship. Roll for hit location, ignoring anything other than crew hits. If crewmembers are hit they will be incapacitated for the duration of the combat but not killed.



If corpses hit the target, there is a -1 To Hit modifier for the crew of the target ship in the remainder of the turn and in a number of following turns equal to the number of corpses hitting the target ship. For example, a Martian ship drops three corpses onto another ship; the captain rolls a 2, so two corpses hit the target ship. The crew of the target will be demoralized for the remainder of the turn and for the follow-

ing two turns, firing at -1 To Hit in those turns.

Corpses which are dropped on ground targets (e.g., gun emplacements) have a demoralizing effect only in the ground hex located immediately under the ship; for example, if there were gun emplacements in two adjoining hexes, the target gun crew would be at -1 To Hit, but the adjoining gun would be unaffected.



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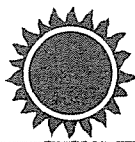
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# TRAVELLER NEWS SERVICE

## NULINAD/EMPTY QUARTER

Date: 012-1118

¶Until now engaged in sporadic fighting in the rimward reaches of Antares sector, large squadrons of the Antares Fleet, with the attached 104th Reserve Fleet and several squadrons of the 226th Fleet, clashed with ships of Lucan's Imperium in the Nulinad system.

¶This major clash has for the first time pitted massed enemy ships against the proud fleets of Antares, testing the League's commitment to independence.

## NULINAD/EMPTY QUARTER

Date: 013-1118

¶Caught off-guard in a classic refuelling ambush, portions of Lucan's fleet were engaged and destroyed. At least seven large warships were destroyed, and no Antares ships received critical damage.

¶The remainder of Lucan's fleet has dispersed and jumped out of system. An unofficial source suggested that they must be intending to retreat out of the area in the face of superior ship strength, possibly toward Zukhisa or Dini.

¶The fleet base on Nulinad's moon, though never engaged during this battle, is now being hardened against future assaults by the corps of engineers.

## CAPITAL/CORE

Date: 019-1118

¶Large numbers of Dulinor's ships have broken through into Dagudashaad and Core sectors, apparently with the intention of disrupting interworld trade routes.

¶The admiralty released a communique in which it discussed its plans to mobilize more reserve units and pull several mainline ships out of the front to deal with this new problem.

¶The communique also assures that the penetrating ships have minimal ground attack capabilities.

¶All transport craft of any kind are encouraged to travel in organized, protected convoys whenever possible.

## ZUKHISA/EMPTY QUARTER

Date: 020-1118

¶Fresh from its defeat at Nulinad, Lucan's forces appeared in the Zukhisa system today. The starport was immediately bombarded and the system defense craft available were quickly forced to retire to the outer system.

## ZUKHISA/EMPTY QUARTER

Date: 022-1118

¶Relief forces which jumped into the system yesterday performed admirably against Lucan's forces today.

¶Another three major warships were destroyed, and another critically damaged. However, fighter squadrons from the Antares Fleet and system defense took several losses, as well.

¶The damaged ship, the cruiser *Leonaffle* was boarded and seized. The prize crew has been instructed to return through the sector for possible repair of the ship and its return to duty in the service of Archduke Brzk.

## BELUMAR/EMPTY QUARTER

Date: 077-1118

¶Regrouped after its defeat at the Battle of Nulinad earlier this year, the forces of Lucan have converged for a coordinated assault against the fleet way stations at Belumar.

¶A liaison robot for the Admiralty suggested that Belumar's secret location must have been leaked to Lucan's agents, otherwise its out-of-the-way location would have protected it from such a well planned assault.

## TERRA/SOL

Date: 081-1118

¶Jeffery Long, formerly a reporter for the Phoenix Sun News organization, surfaced today from SolSec, following his internment by Imperial authorities nearly six years ago.

¶Long claims that his work dealing with so-called hyperspace sickness drew him into a ring of high-tech Imperial research and, ultimately, to an Imperial jail cell, as well.

¶"My findings will be published soon, I promise you," stated Long as he was reunited with his family in Buenos Aires.

## BELUMAR/EMPTY QUARTER

Date: 088-1118

¶A relief force consisting of the 36th and 84th Fleets, with attached reserve squadrons, arrived today to engage Lucan's forces here.

¶Lucan's fleet retreated with minor casualties, leaving behind the ground elements it had landed more than a week before.

¶With assistance from close orbital bombardment, Belumarese defenders easily overcame the abandoned ground forces, who surrendered en masse before planet dawn.



¶Though driven off, the loss of the way station facilities at Belumar to Lucan's fleets will be a serious setback to the League's ability to effectively defend its independence.

#### DEPOT/CORRIDOR (1511-A686354-F)

Date: 092-1118

¶"Continued rumors that Vargr corsairs are massing a major assault against facilities in Depot are not only annoying but are doing much to undermine the very real job of maintaining effective border patrols," says Commander Lynx Breneri of the Naval Information Office today.

¶He also added that the notion of Vargr acting in any sort of large concerted effort is "ludicrous."

#### TERRA/SOL

Date: 093-1118

¶SolSec released today a communique stating that Jeffery Long, recently freed from Imperial prison, has been murdered.

¶"The hotel room where Mr. Long and his family were staying in Osaka on their vacation was all but destroyed by a bomb. There were no survivors."

¶Though several staff members of the hotel are under investigation, no charges are expected to be filed against them.

¶"We cannot rule out the possibility that Imperial intelligence agents carried out this vicious crime against true humanity—the technology of the bomb and its professional placement are very suspicious," stated an anonymous source in the local district attorney's office.

#### DEPOT/CORRIDOR (1511-A686354-F)

Date: 102-1118

¶A force of Vargr warships, estimated to be over 500 vessels strong, has entered the system today and begun its systematic hunt of merchant vessels.

¶The three squadrons of the 255th Fleet left in the system were sent out against the Vargr, but were dispersed and destroyed by the encroaching Vargr.

¶Evacuations from Depot itself had been announced, and then later cancelled as the Vargr noose tightened around the planet.

¶"With Vargr animals in control of the approaches to Depot we have little choice but to maintain our control over the surface and await the imminent arrival of a relief force," assured Baron hault Grivven. The Naval Information Office has been in turmoil and unavailable for comment.

#### GUSHAMAD/DELPHI

Date: 103-1118

¶The fate of a defecting noble and his family has drawn Margaret face-to-face with Lucan's powerful fleets, only to prove to the world the righteousness of her cause.

¶Margaret, under advice of her high command, accepted a written plea for assistance from John, Marguis of Palanthir, a world in Old Expanses sector. A single squadron of ships was dispatched months ago to rendezvous with the escaping Marquis and his family and provide them safe escort to Anaxias.

¶On their return voyage, a hundred ship squadron of reservists under Lucan's control caught up to the defector and battle lines were drawn.

¶In mid-battle, however, several of the reservist ships broke ranks and began firing on their former compatriots. More ships switched sides and drove the few loyal ships away. A total of 35 ships have joined the original 12 escorts and the support of Margaret.

#### KURAE/ZARUSHAGAR

Date: 116-1118

¶Today saw the conclusion of the largest fleet action to date between Lucan's Vengeance Fleet and Dulinor's Illeish Fleet, centered around the three worlds in the outer Kurae system.

¶The week long see-saw conflict has left both fleets severely weakened. The Vengeance Fleet claims to have inflicted over 100 losses on Dulinor. The Illeish fleet boasts a similar number of enemy ships destroyed.

¶In one incident of interest, patrols of both sides approaching an outer-system planet fought it out to the last two ships. Both ships, heavily damaged and unable to use their ship-to-ship weapons, managed to come in contact and commence boarding actions, leaving only 15 Illeish crewmen alive on the wrecked hulks proclaiming their own victory.

¶Both fleets have jumped out of the system to regroup.

¶Salvage ships from a dozen nearby worlds have arrived to begin picking through the wreckage, careful to evade the few fighters left to secure the area against looting.

#### TERRA/SOL

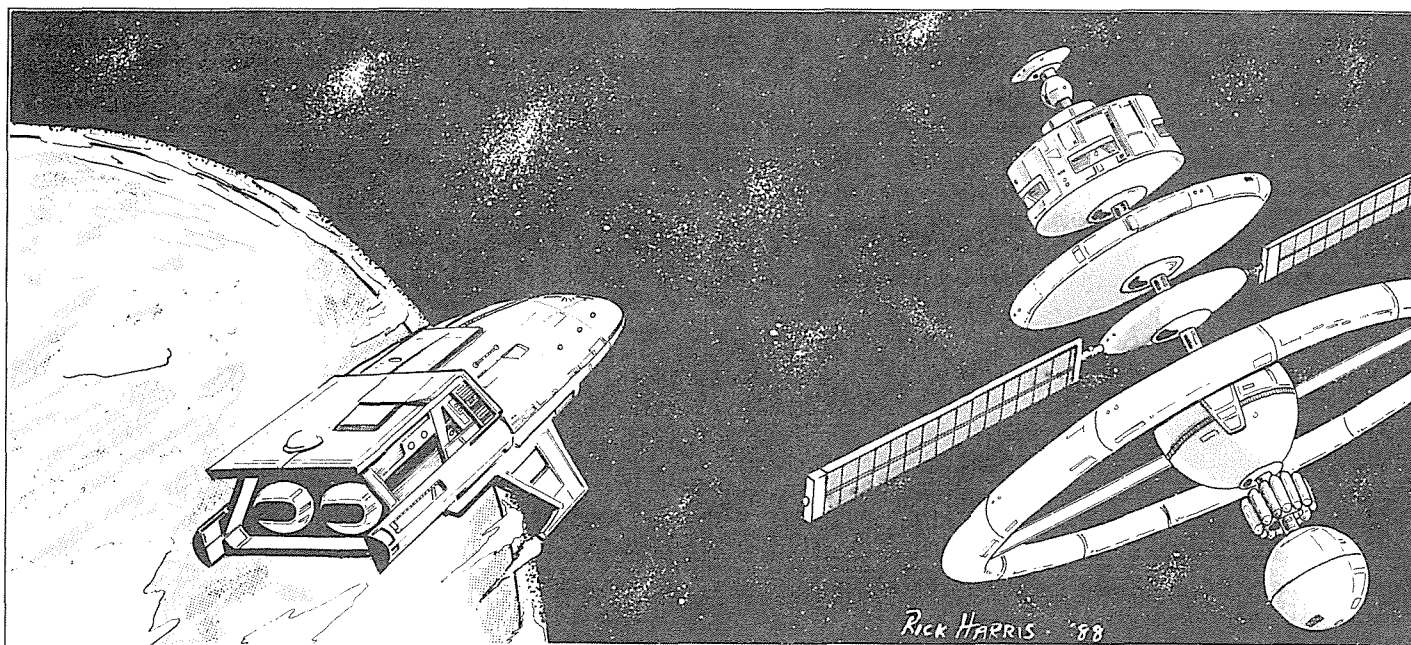
Date: 123-1118

¶From notes gathered from the wreckage of the hotel room where Jeffery Long and his family were murdered earlier this year, his publisher has produced and released a draft of his works entitled "The Hyperspace Web."

¶In it, Long's notes suggest that he was jailed by Imperial authorities when his investigative work, into the problems and mysteries of hyperspace sickness, was becoming uncomfortable to naval researchers.

¶It states that popularized research into the sickness was getting dangerously close to research facilities the Imperial Navy had working on breaking the jump-6 barrier.

# The Green Hills of Earth



By Charles E. Gannon

The following is an adventure calling for characters from IRIS. IRIS was originally presented in "IRIS," **Challenge 33**, and in "IRIS Character Generation," **Challenge 34**. The adventure presents a job that would come to a group of characters through IRIS. It not only gives players a look at some of the Rim intelligence community during the first three years of the Imperial Interregnum, but also provides some "hands-on" insights into a number of IRIS' motivations and methods.

It is recommended that at least one character in the party have some sort of intelligence background. A retired IRIS operative would be great, but they are (and should always remain) very rare indeed. Any character who had been posted to Intelligence School in the Navy or the Security Branch of the Scouts would do just fine. Army Intelligence (something of a contradiction in terms) would be okay, but the character should be kept a little more in the dark by his employers until such time as he has lived down the Army stigma.

## BEGINNINGS

*We had just finished a job in Ishum-led, Dingir Subsector—about as unremarkable a world as you'll find—which was why we were shocked when "Robert" contacted us. He knew where*

## *The Imperial Regency of Intelligence and Security: They Also Serve Who Are Not Seen.*

*to find us, and he knew we were undercover in Solomani space. He knew too damned much for us to ignore him.*

*"You come well recommended," he said with an excessively smooth smile. "We're interested in enlisting your help for a delicate project." "Who's we?" I asked. He only smiled. I watched the ice cubes chase each other slowly about the rim of my highball glass; okay, no names—hell, no surprise.*

*"Okay, Robert, then why don't you tell us about this project of yours?" The same smile. "Certainly. It has come to our attention that a radical fringe element within the Solomani Confederation intends to destroy all sapient life on a world of some importance. We would like you to help us prevent this."*

*I tried not to swallow too hard; saving planets was a little beyond our normal job description. "Which world?" I asked.*

*His smile grew stiff. "Earth."*

## PLAYERS' INFORMATION

The party, while on an undercover assignment in the Solomani Rim, is contacted by a man who refers to himself only as Robert. Robert and his unseen "friends" have learned that a lunatic fringe in Solomani space is interested in completely depopulating Earth. They have been referred to the player characters by the group's last employers in the Regency Concordiat: IRIS. The job: Prevent this radical faction from succeeding.

It is clear to any character with Liaison, Interview, or Interrogation skill (or even with common sense) that Robert knows far more about this plot than he is telling. However, he will only share this much:

The method of depopulation is to be a bioagent, tailored to affect only humans. It is of a "rapid-breathing sleeper" variety. Basically, it will reproduce and spread swiftly before any symptoms become manifest. It is estimated that once introduced, it would be 100-percent pervasive in three or four weeks. Symptoms would start appearing by the third week. The 100-percent fatality mark among infected individuals would be reached sometime in the seventh week. The only "positive" feature of this borderline virus-bacteria is that it burns itself out very quickly; the strain mutates itself into a harmless

pseudoorganism in five weeks. Therefore, even if carried off-Earth by ships' crew and tourists, the bacteria would evolve into a harmless form after five weeks of reproduction. But during that time, it has nearly 100-percent lethality in all the humans it infects. Obviously, such a bioagent is far too dangerous to be left lying around. That is why this bioengineered "germ" is a "two-part" agent. In effect, it is created by combining two advanced viruses in a protein medium. The interaction of these two strains produces the bioagent (a very basic bacteria) as an "evolutionary" result of the mutations the viruses cause in one another.

This fact is the key to the plot of the radical group. Robert's best information indicates that the two halves of the bioagent will be carried to Earth by two separate persons. One courier has been identified as Bertram Golar, a slightly overweight, middle-aged executive in an accounting firm. The other courier is unknown. Although Robert and his friends will be able to stop any subsequent attempts with this bioagent, the group must make sure that they get both couriers; a chance exists that Golar may be carrying an extra vial of the virus. Therefore, the unknown courier is the most important of the two.

To assist the group, Robert will furnish them with:

- A full dossier on Bertram Golar, along with a copy of his identification card.
- Passports and visas to Earth, as well as security clearances (since the group has been inside Concordiat/Imperial space within the last year) and weapon permits that allow the characters to operate as though earth was law level 4 (handguns permitted).
- A numbered bank account with the Greater Bank of Terra containing Cr250,000. These funds can be used to cover any operating costs.
- High passages to Earth and one high passage off for each character.

The payment for the job is the bank account itself; they can withdraw everything upon completion and leave. All they have to do is to deliver the bioagent vial(s) to a medical testing facility in the Saar Arcologies, and their account will be cleared of any withdrawal restrictions. If they only get one vial, they only get half of the remaining monies in the bank account. And Robert will point out that even though the remainder of the operating fund is also the payment, it is best not to employ too much frugality. If the mission fails, the group will be among the first infected.

#### REFEREE'S INFORMATION

The lunatic fringe behind this operation is probably unknown to the players; it is a radical cabal of Solomani Security (Solsec) officers known as the Brotherhood of Racial Purity. A secret fraternity, the Brotherhood espouses the systematic purging of any Vilani bloodlines from Confederation space—with any means justifying that end. It is no surprise that they consider a now obscure Terran book/diatribes entitled "Mein Kampf" as playing a major role in the formation and evolution of their "ideals."

This secret society of genocidal radicals has long foreseen the need to "purify" Terra upon her reconquest. Humans of Vilani heritage were common there in the Third Imperium and had hopelessly "polluted" the bloodlines of Mother Earth. So, in order to reintroduce pure Solomani stock back to the home

of man, they see it as their regrettable but unavoidable duty to cleanse the planet of the impure—a bizarre form of chemotherapy carried out on a monstrous scale.

While the Brotherhood is certainly made up of fanatics and madmen, it is all the more dangerous because of that. In the first place, they are all members of Solomani Security. Solsec trains its personnel to be ruthless, efficient, and unflinchingly dedicated. Beyond that, the Brotherhood instills in them the belief that they are the saviors and protectors of the one true race, the guardians of man's manifest destiny. Their zeal makes them capable of extraordinary feats of strength, courage, and endurance; they are *dangerous* opponents.

#### THE RACE TO TERRA

The referee is advised to set a deadline by which the party *must* be on Terra; it is the earliest day that Bertram Golar will arrive. Given their high passages, the party can "bump" other passengers as needed. However, to add a bit of spice to the adventure, a referee might want to throw in some events that threaten to put them behind their deadline. If the party has to resort to illegal means to stay on schedule, they will find that a criminal investigation team is following them just a few steps behind. This condition will provide an added impetus for them to work quickly and keep moving.

Once on Terra, the party should quickly realize that its mission is comprised of several discrete tasks. These are:

- Intercept and shadow Golar.
- Locate the other courier/vial.
- Apprehend Golar and his vial.
- Apprehend the other courier and his vial.

#### POST ASSASSINATION TERRA

The characters may find that some of these tasks are more difficult now than before the Solomani invasion. They will immediately notice a large military presence in-system, both in the form of naval units and ground troops. They will have several occasions to be grateful for the flawless identification and clearance papers that Robert has supplied them with.

On Terra itself, indigenous police forces are still handling the normal, day-to-day domestic affairs, but more serious matters are handled by the Confederation military police, whose numbers are considerable. The media is full of anti-Imperial invective, some of which seems genuine, much of which rings a bit hollow. A few underground papers are circulating, and the penalty for possession of one is a week-long stay in jail and a few sessions with a military intelligence officer. Extrapolating, the characters can only wonder what the penalty must be for actually printing one of these mostly harmless publications.

#### LOCATING BERTRAM GOLAR

This first task will probably be the hardest for players who are new to detective work. Once they get through it, they'll be thinking along the right lines.

Finding Golar will not be an easy task. After all, Terra's Down Starport is a huge place, and he could come through at any time. But even more conducive to player hair-pulling is the possibility that Golar will arrive at the Highport and then shuttle down to a surface spaceport—of which there are more than a dozen. Obviously, the group cannot monitor all these

facilities in person; the old TV standby of the "stakeout" is just not going to work here.

What will (or may) work is what intelligence operations are all about: creative problem solving. Actually, the group can find out where Golar is coming in through two different ways: computer break-ins and good old detective work.

### Computer Break-Ins

Bertram Golar is an executive, and it is obvious from the most cursory glance at his dossier that he travels with some frequency. Therefore, it would be normal for him to have accommodations and other amenities reserved in advance; and, because he's now on a covert mission, he would not vary from that routine. Varying from an established pattern is *precisely* what attracts unwanted attention.

It is standard procedure for all hotel and lodging services to be plugged into a room-availability data network. (This practice is already the standard among the larger chains—by TL-15 it would be assumed.) Therefore, a person with Computer skill has a reasonable chance of determining where Bertram Golar will be staying.

To locate where Bertram Golar will be staying through computer break-in:

Difficult, Computer, 30 min, (safe).

*Referee:* If the characters manage to get access to a hotel terminal (breaking and entering, anyone?), the task level becomes Easy.

A successful attempt will reveal that reservations have indeed been made in Golar's name, commencing two days from now at the Arlington Plaza Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. Further research will reveal that several messages have already been sent to his room's data account.

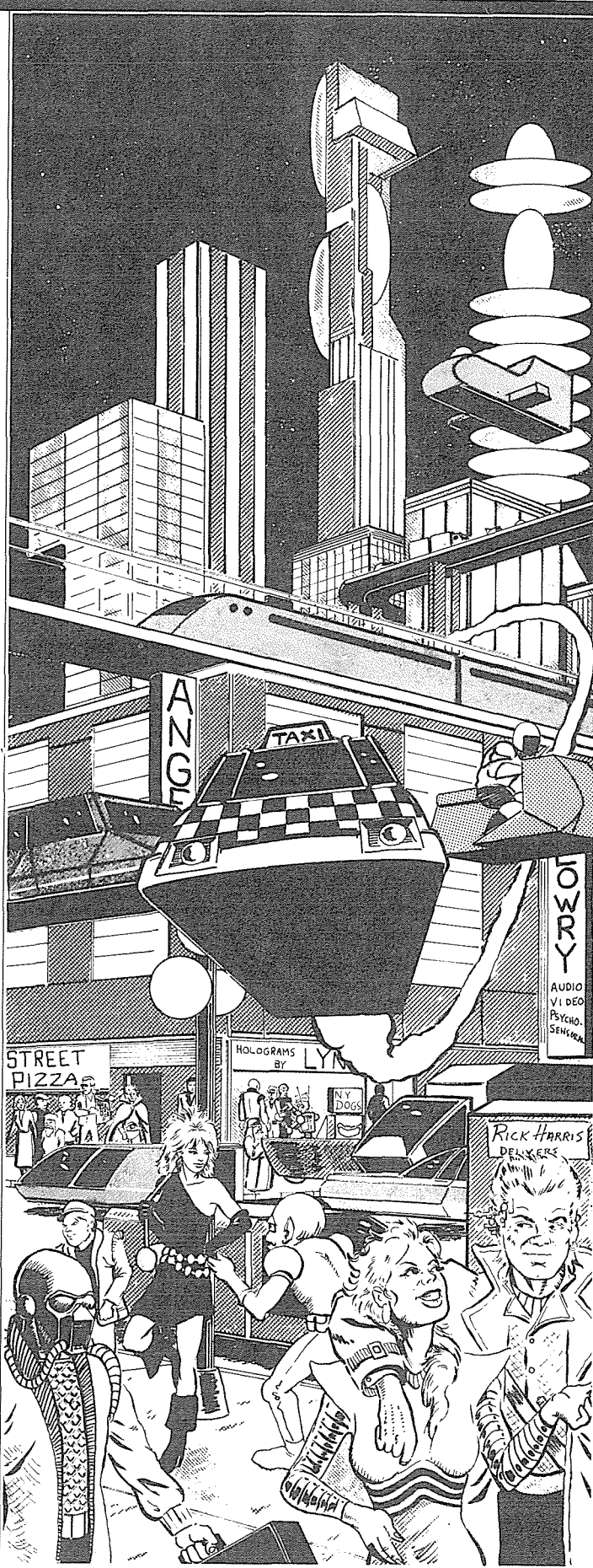
To access the messages in Golar's data account through computer break-in:

Difficult, Computer, 30 min, (fateful).

*Referee:* In the event of a failure, any Minor Mishap (or those of more severe proportions) will trip an alarm. For consequences, see the following:

Most of the messages are automated sales pitches for various services, but one is from a woman who simply says, "I am ready." No return number is on that call. The other unusual message is from a man who identifies himself as "Cousin Adolph," leaving a return number. Research into that number identifies it as an automated answering service. It would be possible to find out who has the account with the answering service if the players decide that a little breaking and entering at the service's office is in order. (If they do find out whose account this is, see the following section on The Second Courier.)

Tripping the alarm on the data account will result in an immediate wire trace and investigation by military police. If the guilty parties are not apprehended within 12 hours, four to seven covert operatives (referee's discretion, depending on group size) will be dispatched by Solomani Security to track down and apprehend the computer criminals. These operatives do not belong to the Brotherhood; they don't even know that





it exists. However, a high-ranking Brotherhood member gave the police orders that if Golar's account was tampered with, they should inform Solsec. Accordingly, he also informed the local Solsec office that if they received word of this tampering, they were to mount a priority-one investigation if the police hadn't settled the issue in 12 hours. A priority-one investigation assumes all suspects to be armed and dangerous, allowing all involved operatives to use lethal force at will.

### Good, Old-Fashioned Detective Work

The second method for finding Golar is good old-fashioned detective work. The players can find out plenty from Golar's dossier: who his relatives are, how much he travels and where, how much money he makes, business associates and contacts, medical history, psychological profile, school records—everything that they could want to know and more. However, a player who makes a special effort to dissect the dossier will make an interesting discovery. (Dissecting the dossier does not mean having a player say, "I read the dossier from cover to cover." It does mean having a player ask intelligent questions regarding Golar's background, travel patterns, and, particularly, known associates on Terra.) The thorough player will find an interesting piece of data lost in the paper shuffle: When Golar is on Terra, he is frequently observed in the company of a woman by the name of Lucia Azabadian. At last check, she was a financial consultant in the Province of Morocco. A check by the group will reveal that she quit her job just a week ago, withdrew all monies, secured an off-world visa, and moved. Forwarding address: the Regency Hilton, Washington DC (a TAS affiliate). This information suggests that Golar will probably land in the Greater New York spaceport—or, if he lands elsewhere, that he will at least go to DC. He is obviously planning to take her with him when he leaves.

At this point a shrewd player will begin wondering if Lucia is somehow involved in the plot and may decide she might warrant some looking into. In actuality, Lucia's involvement is simply that she's been told by Bertram that it is absolutely imperative that she leave with him. However, the Brotherhood is aware of Golar's fondness for her and therefore has guessed that he will meet her at some time or another. Therefore, if the characters decide to follow Lucia, they may also note that she is being shadowed—if they aren't seen first.

To discover the men following/discovering Lucia:

Difficult, Off = Recon, Intelligence, Def = Recon, Stealth, 10 seconds, uncertain.

Referee: Refer to the following notes.

This task should also be used by her "shadows," who might spot the characters.

For every four people belonging to the side that is being looked for (i.e., is defending against detection), the task becomes one level easier (e.g., Difficult becomes Routine).

Lucia's shadows are part of the back-up team from the Brotherhood. But they're not on the lookout for the characters; they're watching for Solsec Internal Affairs operatives. The Brotherhood wants to avoid a confrontation with the more sane, majority leadership of Solsec. The Brotherhood operatives are here to interfere only "in extremis" (i.e., if someone is about to either apprehend Golar or kill him). These

operatives will therefore hang back rather than engage the characters at first.

Once the players have found Golar, they will probably want to apprehend him. But that may not be wisest or, at least, not all that simple. Golar is no pushover. He has Handgun-3, Martial Arts-2, Streetwise-2, Recon-1, and is armed with a Gauss pistol and a 5mm revolver for a backup. Most important, he is extremely intelligent and inventive. Furthermore, Golar will be watched as soon as he contacts either "Cousin Adolph" or Lucia (at this point, surveillance on Lucia will be reduced to one operative). The Brotherhood will take every measure to prevent Golar—or the vial—from being abducted. And also if the characters have a confrontation with any of the Brotherhood operatives, they'd better not let any escape. An escaped operative's first act will be to inform the rest of the on-site Brotherhood resources that there's a problem and that something had best be done about it. Once the players take overt action, the clock is running. They have to move fast so that they can complete their mission before the rest of the Brotherhood's operatives are aware of them. This means removing Golar before he's made any contact at all, or removing him and his observers in one fell swoop.

### The Second Courier

The group will find that the only way to locate the second courier is through connections to the known operatives. Bertram will only know that "Cousin Adolph" is the code name for his contact, who is to escort him to the rendezvous site. Of greater use to the party will be any prisoners they might have taken if they decide to confront the Brotherhood operatives who are shadowing Lucia.

If the characters manage to spot Lucia's observers without being seen themselves, it may be possible to follow these operatives and apprehend one or more of them. These three operatives are living in a small hotel in Georgetown. Their room's service code matches the account number they have with the answering service (the characters know of this answering service if they played back the messages in Golar's data account—see preceding section). At any given time, one operative is sleeping in the hotel room and two are on surveillance near Lucia. The referee should feel free to assign whatever skills and statistics he feels are appropriate (or generate them through a scaled-down IRIS procedure (Challenge 34) or Police Tables ("There When You Need Them") (Challenge 30). However, these operatives will *at least* have Handgun-2, Recon-1, Stealth-1, Tactics-1, Interrogation-2, and high endurance. They will be armed with Gauss pistols, and the leader will have a backup autosnub loaded with tranq (HEAP available, however). They will be wearing closely tailored ballistic cloth—a TL-15 variety that is less bulky than a sweat-shirt. They all wear comdot communicators around the clock and check in with their command center (see The Rendezvous Site) once every 24 hours. Therefore, these operatives may give the group a good run for their money. Even if they are captured, their Interrogation skills will make them hard to crack—particularly since they know that if they miss their 24-hour call-in, the cavalry will be arriving in short order. However, if they can be made to talk, they will reveal where the rendezvous site for the two vials is—an abandoned environmental research facility in the Chesapeake bay area. They will also reveal that

the other vial and its courier are already at the site, which also serves as their command center.

If the characters decide to play it right down to the wire and follow Bertram to the rendezvous site before doing anything, they'll have to contend with the three operatives at that time since they'll be working as his escort.

### The Rendezvous Site

Taking over the rendezvous site will mean an unavoidable fire fight. If the three observer operatives are eliminated beforehand, only five people will be at the facility. Three will be Brotherhood operatives (one of who was the courier); two will be Brotherhood science specialists with lower combat skills. Any of the three observer operatives who escape a confrontation with the characters will head back here as soon as possible.

In addition to early warning devices on both the land and bay sides, the folks at the rendezvous site have some very heavy artillery: fully scoped gauss rifles with extra sound suppression, x-ray lasers, silenced submachineguns, and gas grenades. Combat Environment suits and night vision gear are standard. Note that they do not have anything that's too noisy or flashy— attracting attention is the last thing they want.

A frontal assault should prove exceedingly costly to the players, even if they have superb combat skills. The operatives at the rendezvous site are vigilant and already have their tactical options worked out. The players will fare best if they take the time and effort to scout the rendezvous site for weaknesses and blind spots, and try to exploit these. If they manage to infiltrate into the research facility (and this should not be easy), they might be able to take on the Brotherhood operatives piecemeal, other than as a coordinated defensive team. Also, if they have the right skills, they have enough credits to buy and/or cobble together some fairly sophisticated drones and robot decoys.

If for any reason the call in from the three operatives is overdue, the Brotherhood site commander will use his authority as a Solsec officer to activate a major investigation by both the military and civilian police. If there is still no word 12 hours later, the science specialists and the already arrived vial will move to another location and await further word, returning only when the situation is secure once again.

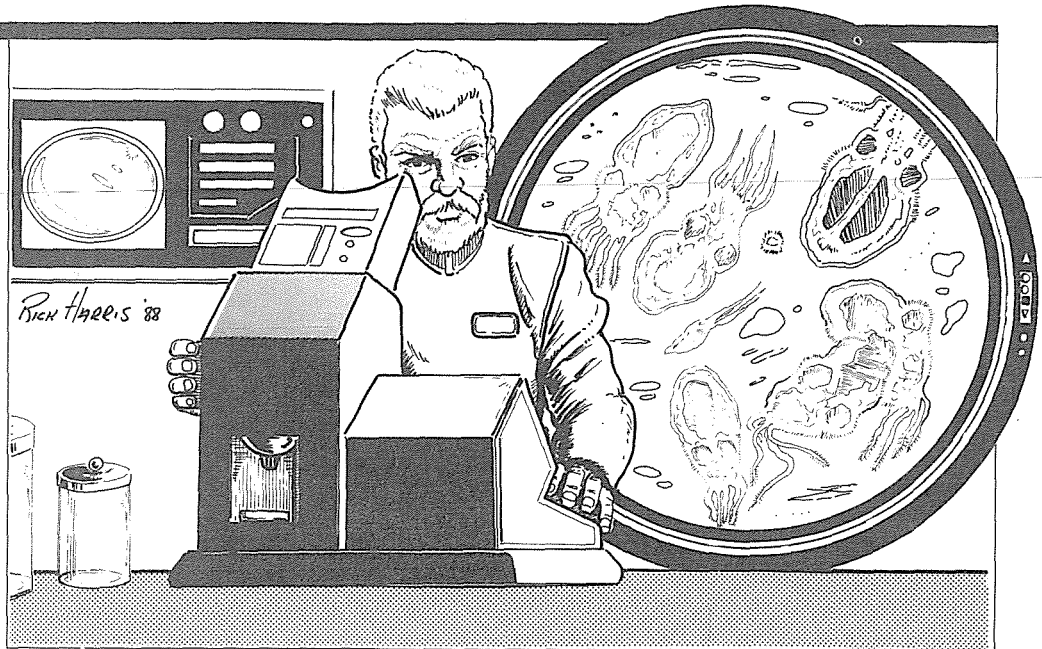
### ALTERNATE PATHS

Players don't always take predictable paths (do they ever?), so here are a few of the alternatives they might try and some ideas for suitable responses.

#### Call the Police

If the players try going to the "authorities" for whatever reason, they're going to run into two problems.

First, the Brotherhood has left orders that any inquiries or events concerning Bertram Golar may be brought immediate-



ly to the attention of Solsec. If a character so much as mentions Golar's name, the police will walk out of the office; they're under orders to seal their ears and inform Solsec. It is very unlikely that the characters would be able to change this.

Second, the police are going to ask the characters to explain who they are, where they're from, and why they're poking their noses into this in the first place. That alone will get them locked up long enough for Golar to deliver his vial. Of course, if the players make this mistake, they're always free to try to break out....

### Success Through Superior Firepower

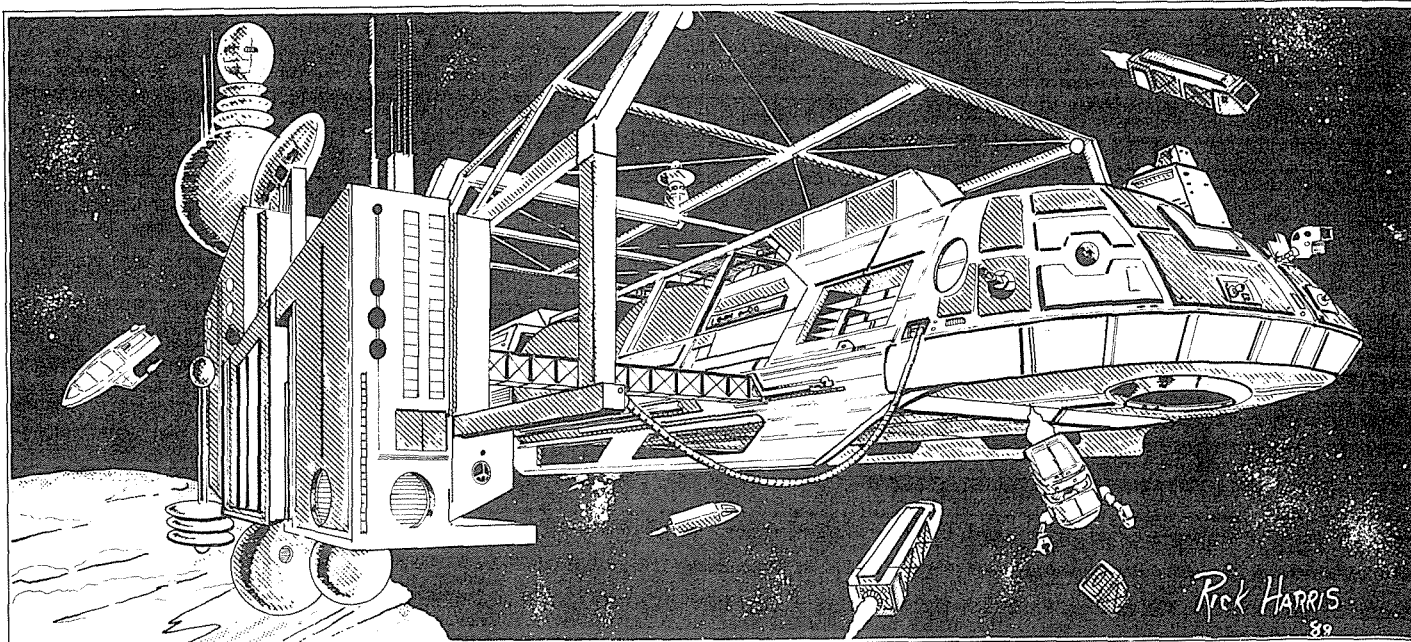
The players might come to feel that they are undergunned to handle the opposition. Depending on what they start out with, this may or may not be true. But if they try to acquire black market weapons in order to "outgun the bad guys," they are very likely to be apprehended by police undercover agents. Enough pro-Imperial sentiment is on Terra that the Solomani are taking no chances when it comes to the availability of firearms; most of the weaponry "on the market" is actually there as part of a Solsec "sting" operation. However, given their permits, the group will find that a wide variety of sporting weapons are available to them—including semiautomatic shotguns. Perhaps more important, various night vision and compact communication devices are available, as are flak jackets and ballistic cloth.

### Round the Rubble

A perennial favorite among players: If the enemy is too big or too dangerous, then they like to build something that can be dropped on said enemy and finish him off at a single blow. With the bank account they have at their command, they can certainly do this assuming they have the skills (look for Electrical, Demo, Computer, Robotics, Sensor Ops). High-tech armored car bombs or suicide drone air vehicles (used, of course) will almost certainly "do in" the research facility and the people there. However, it will also "do in" the second courier's vial. That means less payment, but more significantly, it means that no one can be sure if the bioagent threat has really been

*Continued on page 36*

# Starship Design Notes



By Jerry Westergaard

**MegaTraveller** offers a wealth of improvements to the original **Traveller** game system. One of the major changes was with vehicle design and construction. Now, referees and players can design their own craft; everything from grav-bikes to 50,000-ton starships can be built using one set of charts.

With this flexibility comes added complexity. The sometimes ambiguous rules don't help, either. Designing a craft in **MegaTraveller** takes time and effort. At first glance, most people would throw up their hands and give up.

The following are some of the rules and examples I have used to design my own ships.

## 1. CHOOSE A PRIMARY FUNCTION

All too often, designers begin with an indistinct conception as the basis for an initial craft project. Using the construction rules, this could be disastrous.

As an example, bids have been requested for a starship design that can

This article draws heavily upon the **MegaTraveller** errata presented in this issue's E&C section. Please read through that errata carefully. My thanks go to Jerry for reworking his article to account for those changes.

—Timothy B. Brown

*"Starship construction is 10 percent inspiration, 20 percent perspiration, and 70 percent calculation."*

—Walter Gantabe,  
Chief Architect,  
Naval Shipyard,  
Regina

transport 150 mercenaries, and support them for extended periods. The craft must not be greater than 1000 tons displacement. The first thing to do is to determine the ship's exact primary function. In this case, it would be berthing space for 150 ship's troops, as well as support gear.

With larger capital ships, primary functions may seem to be more vague. This is due to the fact that these large vessels have multiple roles, such as fire support and pirate suppression. Pick one of the major design goals and build a "Stage One" ship. A "Stage One" means that the initial design is not supposed to fly, but has all the pieces to make it work.

## 2. DESIGN THE ENTIRE CRAFT AROUND THIS FUNCTION

When installing other systems in your ship, remember the primary role your vessel intends to perform in your game. If it is berthing, make sure life support is adequate to handle the amount of people. Will the people be in staterooms or bunks, or a combination of the two? Is extra space going to be needed for paying passengers as well?

When dealing with weaponry, unless the ship is being designed as an attack craft, put a single pulse laser in half the hardpoints available. This will give a minimal defensive armament setup. Use only one communications system for this initial design, preferably radio.

The **MegaTraveller** rules for craft design include vehicle suspensions. These suspensions are for nonspacefaring vehicles that do not have a maneuver drive installed.

## 3. FORGE A WORKING DESIGN

As stated above, the preliminary design must have all the pieces to make it work. Of course, it looks silly to produce a design for something like a commerce escort that only has a Jump 1 and 1G accel. However, from this "Stage One" design you probably have a better idea of exactly how you want your ship to be configured, how much space is needed, and how much it will cost.

Now comes the fun part. You must determine what you want the capabilities of this vessel to be. Using the Stage One plans as a guide, modify individual systems like sensors and weapons to flesh out the bare bones of the Stage One. Remember to update the volume and power requirements of the systems used, as well as the Control Points needed to operate the system. Change one system at a time, until all desired modifications are completed. You may have to recalculate some systems—like power and control points—several times to account for other changes in the design. Make certain you do not change the primary function your initial design is based on.

#### 4. USE THE PROPER TOOL FOR THE PROPER JOB

That is what my father always told me, and it is just as true in **MegaTraveller** starship design as anything else. Unfortunately, the best tool to use is a personal computer and spreadsheet program. It allows the flexibility of "what if" design questions to be posed, as well as the mundane calculations. I used the word "unfortunate" because I am well aware that not everybody has access to a personal computer and software, so the next best things are a calculator and a pad of paper. Other tools needed are imagination and patience, the **MegaTraveller Referee's Manual**, and about four hours to kill.

#### 5. DON'T FORGET THAT THIS IS A GAME

**MegaTraveller** is a game. These design rules here and in the **Referee's Manual** are made to help you design ships that work in the game system. They are not ironclad. If you think a ship can mount a 10,000Mw Tech Level 15 power plant in a 400-ton hull, it can. (Actually, the power plant will fit in that size hull, but fueling it for 30 days would be impossible.) If you think the crew formulas make too large a crew, make your own formulas. Remember, up to 10 percent of the ship's systems can be of a higher tech level than the ship itself.

Below is a Solomani Far Trader example, based loosely on the **Traveller** alien supplement **Solomani**. Some statistics have been changed to reflect the **MegaTraveller** system.

#### SOLOMANI FAR TRADER

		Power (Mw)	Volume (Kltr)	Weight (Tons)	Cost (Mcr)
<b>Hull</b>					
Hull Size	400		5400.000	130.000	0.535
Type	SL6				1.284
Armor	Type G			18.200	
Value	40			600.600	42.372
Hull Totals			5400.000	600.600	42.372
<b>Power Plant</b>					
TL 14 Fusion					
No. of Kltrs	200	1800.000	200.000	600.000	40.000
Power Totals			200.000	600.000	40.000
<b>Jump Drive</b>					
Jump 2					
No. of Units	12		162.000	324.000	36.000
<b>Maneuver Drive 2G</b>					
No. of Units	.20	1400.000	270.000	700.000	14.000
Engine Totals		1400.000	432.000	1024.000	50.000

#### Communications

Radio	(system)	0.010	0.020	0.010	0.010
Avionics	(TL 14)	0.020	0.100	0.050	0.017
Comm Totals		0.030	0.120	0.060	0.027

#### Sensors

##### and Electronics

EMS Active Array					
	(planet)	0.140	0.028	0.014	0.280
EMS Passive Array					
	(Interest)	0.160	0.032	0.016	0.320
EMS Jammer		0.028	0.056	0.028	0.560
Hi Pen Densitometer					
	(250 meter)	0.500	9.000	2.000	1.000
Neutrino Sensors					
	(10 kw)	0.200	0.200	0.095	0.110
EM Masking		0.001	0.020	0.010	0.005
Sensors Total		1.029	9.336	0.014	2.275

Hardpoints	4.000
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#### Weapons

Missiles	TL 13				
No. of Units	6	6.000		12.000	4.500
Batteries	2				
Sandcaster	TL 10				
No. of Units	4	4.000		8.000	1.000
Batteries	2				
Weapons Total		10.000	0.000	20.000	5.500

#### Environmental

##### Controls

Basic Environment (heat, lights)		5.400	27.000	27.000	0.054
Basic Life Support (sealed environ)		5.400	27.000	27.000	1.620
Extended Life Support (food, waste recycle)		10.800	16.200	16.200	1.080
Artificial Grav Plates		270.000	54.000	108.000	2.700
Inertial Compensators		108.000	54.000	108.000	1.350
Air Locks					
No. of Units	2	0.004	6.000	0.400	0.010
Environ Totals		399.604	184.200	286.600	6.814

Bridge Control Points	Normal
Hull	5932.080
Power	5600.000
Loco	7000.000
Comm	3.780
Sensor	318.500
Weapons	770.000
Screen	0.000
Environ	1022.100
Totals	20646.460



**Main****Computer**

Model 4/fib	0.010	11.000	2.800	9.700
CP Max	50000			
CP Mult	30			

**Backup****Computer**

Model 4	0.005	5.500	1.400	6.400
CP Max	50000			
CP Mult	30			

**Control Panel****Units****TL 13 Holographic Linked**

No. of Units	10	0.020	0.300	0.200	0.010
CP/unit	1.500				
CP Used	15				

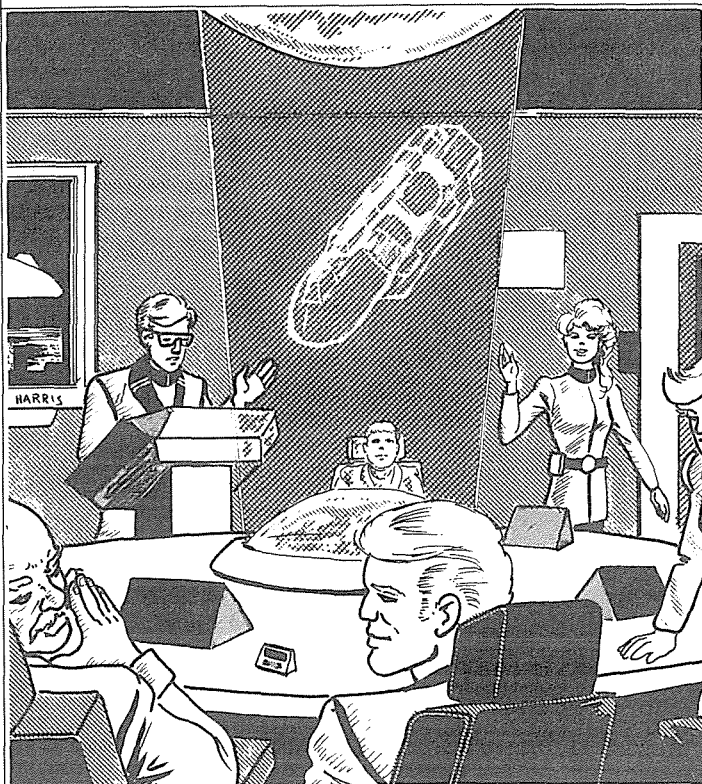
**TL 12 Large Holo Display**

No. of Units	1	0.050	2.000	1.000	0.500
CP/each	1500				
CP Used	1500				

**TL 13 Heads-Up HoloDisplay**

No. of Units	3	0.060	3.000	1.500	0.001
CP/unit	200				
CP Used	600				

	Main	Backup		
Total CP Utilized	63450	63450		
Bridge Total	0.145	21.800	6.900	16.611

Cost  
(Mcr)**Total Crew**

Section	Personnel
Bridge Crew	1
Engineering Crew	1
Maintenance Crew	0
Weapons Crew	2
Flight Crew	1
Ship's Troops	0
Command	1
Frozen Watch	0
Medical Crew	1
Total	7

Crew Segments: two segments of three each

	Power (Mw)	Volume (Kltr)	Weight (Tons)	Cost (Mcr)
<b>Accommodations</b>				
Bunks	6	81.000	3.000	0.030
S. State	8	0.016	216.000	0.320
Stateroom	5	0.015	270.000	2.000
Total	0.031	567.000	39.000	2.350
<b>Subordinate Craft</b>				
Launch	1	270.000	180.000	9.080
Storage Space		351.000		0.053
Total		351.000	180.000	9.133
<b>Fuel Tankage</b>				
No. of Days	30	72.000	5.040	0.003
Jump Tankage		810.000	56.700	0.028
Total Tankage		882.000	61.740	0.031
Fuel Purification	4.410	22.50	441.000	0.132
Fuel Scoops				4.050
Cargo/ton	200	2700.000		
Totals	1415.645	5185.306	7973.314	334.430

Excess 384.355 214.694

**DESIGN EVALUATION****SOLOMANI FAR TRADER****Craft ID:** Far Trader, Type A2 (S), TL 15, MCr267.544**Hull:** 360/900, Disp = 400, Config = 6SL, Armor = 40G,  
Unloaded = 2911.574, Loaded = 5673.314**Power:** 13/26, Fusion = 1800Mw, Duration = 30/90**Loco:** 18/36, Maneuver = 2, 11/22, Jump = 2,  
NOE = 180kph, Cruise = 1590kph, Top = 2120kph,  
AtmTop = 1000kph,  
Agility = 1**Commo:** Radio = System**Sensors:** Passive EMS = Interstellar,  
Active EMS = Planetary,  
Desitometer = HiPen/250m, Neutrino = 10kw,  
ActObjScan = Dif, ActObjPin = Dif,  
PasObjScan = Rout, PasObjPin = Rout,  
PasEngScan = Simp, PasEngPin = Rout**Off:** Missiles = x 04

Batt 2

Bear 2

Continued on page 79

This errata indicates corrections for typographical errors and omissions to the current edition.

**e&c**

## PLAYER'S MANUAL

Page 13, Homeworld Description Codes (omission): Add to the bottom of the Tech Code column: Starport X, -2.

Page 13, World Profile Code Equivalents table (correction):

### WORLD PROFILE CODE EQUIVALENTS

Value	Size	Atmos	Hydro	Pop	Law	Tech Code
0	Asteroid	Vacuum	Desert	Low	Law	Pre-Industrial
1	Small	Vacuum	Dry	Low	Low	Pre-Industrial
2	Small	Vacuum	Dry	Low	Low	Pre-Industrial
3	Small	Vacuum	Wet	Low	Low	Pre-Industrial
4	Small	Thin	Wet	Mod	Mod	Industrial
5	Medium	Thin	Wet	Mod	Mod	Industrial
6	Medium	Standard	Wet	Mod	Mod	Pre-Stellar
7	Medium	Standard	Wet	Mod	Mod	Pre-Stellar
8	Large	Dense	Wet	Mod	High	Pre-Stellar
9	Large	Dense	Wet	High	High	Early Stellar
10	Large	Exotic	Water	High	High	Early Stellar
11		Exotic			Ext	Avg Stellar
12		Exotic			Ext	Avg Stellar
13		Exotic			Ext	Avg Stellar
14		Exotic			Ext	High Stellar
15		Exotic			Ext	High Stellar

Page 25, Mustering Out Benefit Objects, Corsair (correction): When a pirate character receives a Corsair ship as a benefit, it is wholly owned upon the first receipt of the benefit—no payments are ever made. No matter how many times the Corsair is received as a benefit, only one ship is received. This is consistent with the statement made on page 19 second column, under Starships.

Page 28, middle column, Economic skill (correction): Economic (includes) Admin, Broker, Legal, Trader.

Page 38, left column, Rifleman Skill (addition): Rifleman (includes Autorifle, Carbine, Rifle, Shotgun).

Page 53, left column, Assignment Resolution, Survival (correction): Combat missions are battle, siege, and strike—not police action, counterinsurgency, or raid.

Page 54, Assignment Table (correction): Change die roll 3 from Shore Duty to Frozen Watch. This makes the table consistent with the Frozen Watch paragraph under Special Rules on page 53.

Page 60, left column, Initial Activities, Draft (correction): Delete the reference to the draft. In MegaTraveller, Merchant characters never enlist via the draft. Flyers (a military career) have replaced Merchants (a non-military career) in this regard.

Page 63, Skill Tables, Free Trader, Business column (correction): Change the die roll 5 entry from Steward to Pilot. With this change, a Free Trader can now acquire pilot skill.

Page 63, Skill Table Notes (omission): Merchant Life available to all characters. Shipboard Life available to all (including Free Traders) except Sales and Admin Departments. Officer Skills available to rank O0+. Merchantile Skills available to all (including Free Traders) except Engineering Department. Master Skills open to Deck Department rank O4+.

Page 63 (omission): The information on Special Duty resolution was omitted:

### SPECIAL DUTY

Die	Deck Hands	Officers
1	Security Trng	Trade Station
2	Trade Station	Command School
3	Helm Trng	Deck School
4	Drive Trng	Engineer School
5	Steward Trng	Purser School
6	Commission	Business School
7	Commission	Department Test

DMs: If Edu 9+, DM +1. If rank O4+ and not in Deck Department, DM +1.

### Special Duty Resolution

Business School: Throw 5+ (1D) for: Admin, Computer, Legal, Liaison. Confers DM +1 on the exam (when taken) for Senior Line Captain and Line Commodore. Transfer to Sales Department.

Command School: Throw 5+ on 1D for: Admin, Leader, Legal, and Ship Tactics. Transfer to Deck Department.

Commission: Receive rank O0 (rank O1 in the Free Traders) and Department Assignment (determine specific assignment and resolve normally). Must pass an examination for 4th officer within four years or revert to enlisted rank.

Deck School: Throw 5+ on 1D for: Communication, Computer, and Gunnery. Transfer to Deck Department.

Department Test: Individual may take a Department test for promotion without regard for skill requirements.

Drive Training: Throw 5+ on 1D for: Electronics, Engineering, Gravitics, and Mechanical. Transfer to Engineering Department.

Engineering School: Throw 5+ on 1D for: Admin, Computer, Electronics, Engineering, Gravitics, and Mechanical. Transfer to Engineering Department.

Helm Training: Throw 5+ on 1D for: Navigation, Pilot, Sensor Op, and Ship's Boat. Transfer to Deck Department.

Purser School: Throw 4+ on 1D for: Admin, Computer, and Liaison. Transfer to Purser's Department.

Security Training: Throw 4+ on 1D for: Zero-G Environ, Vacc Suit, Brawling, and Computer.

Steward Training: Throw 4+ on 1D for: Admin, Liaison, and Steward. Transfer to Purser's Department.

Receive Trader skill. Throw 4+ on 1D for: Broker, and Liaison. Transfer to Administration Department.

Page 67, left column, Surprise (correction): In the referee's paragraph of the task for determining surprise, change "If any mishap occurs..." to "If exceptional failure occurs..." Thus, if the attacking party gets exceptional failure on the surprise task roll, the defending party has surprise instead.

Page 67, Definitions Sidebar, Distance Scale (correction): The last line of the Distance Scale definition should read: "Therefore this weapon's danger space is one square in the 15m scale."

Page 68, left column, Interrupts (correction and clarification): The sentence should read: "Unintelligent animals never perform an intelligent interrupt." An animal that by nature leaps at its prey will interrupt by jumping at a man, even though that

man is fully protected by combat armor. An animal that by nature flees at loud noises will interrupt to run away from a defenseless human who is yelling at the top of his lungs.

Page 69, right column, hand-to-hand combat tasks: If you prefer, you can combine the two hand-to-hand combat tasks into this single task:

To hit another unit with a hand-to-hand attack:

Routine, Off=Wpn skill, Str; Def=Wpn skill, Wpn Def (confrontation).

*Referee:* If the attacker is unskilled, increase the difficulty of this task by one level; if the defender is unskilled, decrease the difficulty of this task by one level.

The defender may use his weapon (whatever weapon he currently has) for defense. Note that the defender may later conduct a hand-to-hand attack with his weapon if he has not yet taken his turn. The defender may attempt to preempt the attack by interrupting the attacker. (Note: Use Dex in place of movement speed as the DM when interrupting a hand-to-hand attack in this manner.) The defender may not attempt to interrupt anyone other than the attacker.

Failure means defender blocked or avoided the attack.

Page 70, left column, hand-to-hand interrupts (clarification): A unit undergoing a hand-to-hand attack can try to interrupt the attacker; in this case, use the interrupting unit's Dex as the DM in place of movement speed. In effect, two units locked in hand-to-hand combat may interrupt each other, but no other units.

Page 72, weapon enhancements (addition): A character who remains stationary for the combat round and can brace against something may use the gyrostable difficulty profile when firing his weapon.

Page 74, Personal Armor table (correction): The Reflec armor value should be (10), indicating that the armor value applies only against laser fire.

Page 74, Large Blades table (omission): The block missing values are: Sword 3, Cutlass 2, Broadsword 2.

Page 87, Corridor Sidebar (correction): Varian is incorrectly identified as the acting emperor. Varian's younger brother Lucan is in fact the acting emperor; Varian lost his life in the ensuing struggle following emperor Strephron's assassination.

TAS FORM 2, Homeworld Summary, Starport column (correction): Starport D/F should be C/F.

TAS FORM 2, Homeworld Summary, Law Level column (correction): Add a block below "High" labeled "Extreme."

## REFEREE'S MANUAL

Page 16, Universal World Profile Diagram (correction): The Gas Giants and Planetoid Belts labels have been switched. Planetoid belts come first, then Gas Giants. In the example shown, Roup has 2 Planetoid Belts and 3 Gas Giants.

Page 22, World Size (correction): Column headings should be: General Description, Min Diameter, and Max Diameter.

Page 22, World Atmosphere (correction): Column headings should be: General Description, Min Pressure, and Max Pressure.

Page 23, World Physical Data, Code Hydrographics (correction): Second entry Desert (code 1) should be Dry World.

Page 26, Step 9 (correction): Rather than determining the

companion star's orbit distance in au, roll 1D + 13 to determine the companion star's orbit number (see the Orbital Distances Table, below).

Page 26, Step 10 (addition): When returning to step 3 from step 10, apply DM - 1 to the die roll on the System Nature Table.

Page 28, Step 22 (correction): Should be labeled Gas Giants, not Empty Orbits.

Page 29 (omission): The Orbital Distances Table (for reference only: converts an orbit number to an actual orbit distance) was inadvertently omitted. Here it is:

## ORBITAL DISTANCES

<i>Orbit</i>	<i>Au</i>	<i>Million Kilometers</i>
0	0.2	29.9
1	0.4	59.8
2	0.7	104.7
3	1.0	149.6
4	1.6	239.3
5	2.8	418.9
6	5.2	777.9
7	10.0	1495.9
8	19.6	2932.0
9	38.8	5804.0
10	77.2	11548.0
11	154.0	23038.0
12	307.6	46016.0
13	614.8	91972.0
14	1229.2	183885.0
15	2548.0	367711.0
16	4915.6	735363.0
17	9830.8	1470666.0
18	19661.2	2941274.0
19	39322.0	5882488.0

Page 34, Step 1 (correction): The Basic World Data Atmosphere column is incorrect. Correct values are:

<i>UWP</i>	<i>Atmosphere</i>
0	Vacuum
1	Vacuum
2	Vacuum
3	Vacuum
4	Thin
5	Thin
6	Standard
7	Standard
8	Dense
9	Dense
A+	Exotic

Page 35, Step 10 (correction): Animal Behaviors, Omnivore column heading should be To Attack, To Flee, Typical Speed. These apply to Omnivores, Carnivores, and Scavengers.

Page 42, Step 8 (addition): If legal encounter, go to step 10d.

Page 42, Step 9 (addition): If random, go to step 10d.

Page 43, Step 10d (addition): After determining encounter range, if the Encounter includes an NPC, go to step 11.

Page 45, Interpersonal Bribery (correction): Soc 2 should be Soc<sup>2</sup> (that is, Social Standing squared).

Page 50, Step 5 (clarification): Lot size is in displacement tons. To convert to kiloliters, multiply by 13.5. Or, for lot size in kiloliters

directly: Major Cargos:  $150 + (1D \times 10)$ . Minor Cargos:  $80 + (1D \times 10)$ . Incidental Cargos:  $1D \times 10$ .

Page 50, Step 6 (correction): Trade Classifications, FI line should be Atmos A+, Hydro 1+. Size entry should be "—."

Page 53, Step 5 (addition): Add to Negotiation: Passive Uncooperation, +1000; Active Uncooperation, goods withdrawn from sale. This adds some detrimental effects to negotiation, (the cargo purchaser's inability to drive a hard bargain).

Page 62, Step 3 (correction): The price column is in thousands of credits on the Small Craft Hull Table.

Page 63, Step 5 (correction): Configuration 1 should be labeled Needle/Wedge. The Airframe Column for Configuration 6, Dome/Disk should be  $\times 3.0$ , not  $\times 0.5$ . The Price Mod column for Configuration 7, Irregular should be  $\times 0.5$  not  $\times .05$ .

Page 63, Step 6 (clarification): The armor value mass factor is in fact the armor value mod (refers to the Mod column on the Armor Table in step 9).

Page 64, Step 11 (correction): The second and third sentences should read: If the vehicle has a chassis UCP of 0.2 or less, it cannot be enclosed; occupants must ride on its outside. If the chassis UCP is more than 0.2, the vehicle is enclosed unless selected otherwise.

Page 64, Step 1 (corrections and clarifications): The table heading is misleading. Power Out, Weight, and Price is per kiloliter of volume; Power Out, Weight, and Price of each table entry is for 1 kiloliter of power plant volume. Volume column should be labeled Minimum Volume, the smallest volume to which the power plant may be built.

TL 12 Fusion Power Plant KI/Hour entry should be 0.003.

TL 17 Antimatter Power Plant KI/year should be 250.0.

Vehicle designs using the hydrocarbon power plants are too inefficient as given. More acceptable values are given in the table below:

TL	Description	Per Kiloliter			Minimum	
		Pwr Out	Wt	Price	Vol	KI/Hr
5	Intl Comb	0.25	1	1000	0.005	0.030
6	Impr IC	0.40	1	2000	0.001	0.025
7	Gas Turb	0.60	1	5000	0.005	0.040
8	MHD Turb	0.80	1	10000	0.001	0.035

Antimatter power plants use fuel pods: a special self-contained fuel package that contains a measured quantity of antimatter enclosed in a strong artificial gravity "bottle." The bottle's gravity fields are maintained by an array of superbatteries. Fuel pods are the heart of an antimatter power plant, and they typically provide fuel for up to a year before needing replaced. Fuel pods also have a minimum size to which they may be built:

TL	Minimum Volume (KI)
17	2.000
18	0.800
19	0.200
20	0.050
21	0.005

Antimatter power plant output increases dramatically as the ability to safely contain a progressively larger annihilation mass occurs. This means that a given fuel pod is "burned up" at a progressively faster rate, however.

On the Fuel Cells Table, the headings for the two rightmost columns should be: Price, and Fuel Liters/Hour.

Page 64, Step 2 (correction): On the Small Plants Efficiency Decrease Table, the Volume column entry for Turbines is missing. It should be 0.10—.

Page 66, Step 7 (correction): Minimum volume percentages should be: Wheels: 1.5%, Tracks: 2.0%. Greater volume reduces ground pressure, which in turn increases off-road speed.

Page 66, Step 9 (correction): Avionics table headings should be: Volume, Weight, and Power—not Power, Volume, and Weight.

Page 67, Step 4 (correction): Price note: If TL8,  $\times 2$ .

Page 68, Step 3 (correction): The prices for Radar should be: Weight  $\times$  MCr1. All-weather Radar is Weight  $\times$  MCr1.5.

Page 68, Step 5 (clarification): An EMM package does not mask the craft's emissions when it uses active electromagnetic sensors. An EMM package does not mask the craft from active sensor scans conducted by other craft.

Page 68, Step 7 (correction): Weights for TL 10 and 11 regional Ladars should be TL10, 0.016 and TL11, 0.008.

Page 70, Step 15 (correction): The power requirement for the EMS Active Array should be: Weight in tons  $\times 10$ .

Page 72, Step 6 (correction): Bay hardpoints are 10.

Page 72, Step 8 (correction): TL 9 should be empty for the Plasma Gun, Fusion Gun, and Repulsor. Prices are missing: Plasma Gun, MCr5; Fusion Gun, MCr8; and Repulsor, MCr6.

Page 73, Step 12 (correction): Volume is missing for PA Turrets: PA Turret-14, 67.5 KI; PA Turret-15, 40.5 KI; PA Turret-16, 27.0 KI; PA Turret-18, 13.5 KI.

Page 73, Step 13 (correction): Each Plasma Gun Turret can have 1 or 2 weapons.

Page 74, Step 14 (correction): Each Fusion Gun Turret can have 1 or 2 weapons, not just 1.

Page 74, Step 17 (clarification): Rate of fire applies in personal combat, not in space combat. Each space combat round represents 20 minutes of elapsed time—ROF is inconsequential.

Page 74, Step 18 (clarification): 100-ton bays hold 100 missiles; 50-ton bays hold 50 missiles. Battery-round for one 100-ton missile bay is 50 missiles (100 missiles  $\div$  ROF 2); Battery-round for one 50-ton missile bay is 25 missiles (50 missiles  $\div$  ROF 2).

Page 75, Step 20 (clarification): Indirect Fire range lists a range band and a number in parentheses. The number in parentheses is the actual range in kilometers. Where the range band indicates a general range band for "effect," the exact range in kilometers is much more accurate. We recommend you use either the range band or the exact range in kilometers in a given combat session—don't use both. Mixing and matching range methods can be confusing.

Page 77, Step 22 (correction): Indirect fire range in km for a 10cm bore is 20, not 22. Indirect fire range in km for a 24cm bore is 60, not 90.

Page 79, Step 33 (correction): Change the last sentence to read: If a vehicle is open-topped or smaller than a UCP of 0.2, the weapon mount must be Fixed or Open; Turrets or Cupolas are not allowed.



Page 80, Step 2 (clarification): Nuclear Damper price in MCr.  
 Page 80, Step 3 (correction): Power column entries for optimized Meson Screen Packs are: TL16, .135; TL17, .100; TL18, .065; TL19, .035; TL20, .015; TL21, .010.

Page 80, Step 6 (clarification): White Globes price is in MCr.

Page 81, Step 3 (clarification): Computers price is in MCr.

Page 82, Step 7 (corrections and clarifications): On the Engineering Crew formula (Ce): L=Locomotion CP. On the Maintenance Crew formula (Cm): A=Hull displacement divided by 100, H=Hull CP.

Page 82, Step 8 (correction): The example specifies a 43-person crew—the correct value is a 45-person crew.

Page 91, left column, Surprise (correction): In the referee's paragraph of the task for determining surprise, change "If any mishap occurs..." to "If exceptional failure occurs..." Thus if the attacker gets exceptional failure on the surprise task roll, the defender has surprise instead.

Page 92, right column, sensor lock (clarification): Each new combat round, as long as the target unit does not move out of its square, the sensor lock stays in effect.

If the sensing unit uses active sensors for the scan and the enemy has any functioning sensors, the sensing unit must reveal itself to the enemy (just as if the enemy had performed an exceptional success sensor scan on the sensing unit).

Page 93, left column, range DMs (clarification): Change all references from "beyond planetary range" to "at far range."

Page 94, left column, DMs for ship damage tables, second entry (correction): Replace "If the weapon inflicting the hit has a UCP factor of 9 or less..." with "If the weapon inflicting the hit has a UCP factor of A or more, apply a DM of +6."

Page 95, left column, Tractors (clarification): Tractor Pull ÷ Target Weight = Agility and Speed Loss (round fractions up).

Page 97, (clarification): Change all references from "beyond planetary range" to "at far range."

## IMPERIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Page 20, Bilstein Yards (clarification): Library data printed in this section is circa late 1120. Most of the Glisten subsector (and the Bilstein Yards) was taken by the Aslan in late 1121.

Page 75, PGMP-13 (correction): PGMP-13 volume and weight should be 0.9, not 9.0.

Page 75, PGMP-14 (correction): PGMP-14 volume and weight should be 9.0, not 1.0.

Page 76, Ground Car, Wheeled ATV, Tracked ATV (correc-

tion): With the changes in the hydrocarbon burning power plants, the revised UCPs for the ground vehicles are listed below:

### GROUND CAR

**CraftID:** Ground Car, TL 5, Cr3,100

**Hull:** 2/5, Disp=2, Config=4USL, Armor=4B, Unloaded=3.8tons, Loaded=5.0tons

**Power:** 1/2, IntCombust=0.1Mw, Duration=6 hours

**Loco:** 1/2, Wheels, Road=80kph, OffRoad=25kph

**Commo:** None (some have a radio receiver)

**Sensors:** None

**Off/Def:** HardPoints=1

**Control:** Panel=Mechanical, Environ=basic env

**Accomm:** Crew=1 (Operator=1), Seats=cramped x 6

**Other:** Cargo=1.0kliters, Fuel=0.072kliters, ObjSize=small, EMLevel=faint

The ground car is an ordinary self-powered vehicle, suitable for use in civilized areas on low tech worlds.

### WHEELED ATV

**CraftID:** Wheeled ATV, TL 6, Cr46,380

**Hull:** 9/23, Disp=10, Config=4USL, Armor=6B, Unloaded=28tons, Loaded=55tons

**Power:** 1/2, IntCombust=2.0Mw, Duration=4/12

**Loco:** 1/2, Wheels, Road100kph, OffRoad=35kph

**Commo:** Radio=Regional

**Sensors:** None

**Off/Def:** HardPoints=1

**Control:** Panel=Mechanical, Environ=basic env, basic ls

**Accomm:** Crew=1 (Operator=1), Seats=Roomy x 17

**Other:** Cargo=25kliters, Fuel=18kliters, ObjSize=small, EMLevel=faint

The wheeled ATV is a wheeled vehicle used on low tech worlds for exploration.

### TRACKED ATV

**CraftID:** Tracked ATV, TL 6, Cr49,580

**Hull:** 9/23, Disp=10, Config=4USL, Armor=6B, Unloaded=47tons, Loaded=74tons

**Power:** 1/2, IntCombust=2.0Mw, Duration=4/12

**Loco:** 1/2, Tracks, Road=80kph, OffRoad=50kph

**Commo:** Radio=Regional

**Sensors:** None

**Off/Def:** HardPoints=1

**Control:** Panel=Mechanical, Environ=basic env, basic ls

**Accomm:** Crew=1 (Operator=1), Seats=roomy x 17

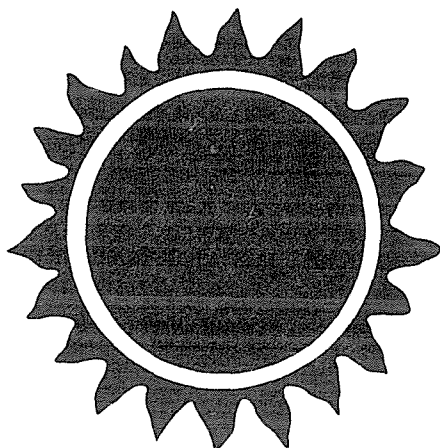
**Other:** Cargo=25kliters, Fuel=18kliters, ObjSize=small, EMLevel=faint

The tracked ATV is a tracked vehicle used on low tech worlds for exploration.

Page 99, Attacking Beam Factor Table (correction): The To Hit values are incorrect. The correct values are:

### ATTACKING BEAM FACTOR

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	A	B	C
To Hit:	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9



Page 100, Attacking Missile Factor Table (correction): The table headings may be confusing. The correct table is:

#### ATTACKING MISSILE FACTOR

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	A	B	C
To Hit:	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9

Page 100, Particle Accelerator Table (omission): The particle accelerator table was inadvertently omitted. The table is as follows:

#### ATTACKING PA FACTOR

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
To Hit:	2	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	8	8	8	8	8	9	9	9

	J	K	L	M	N	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
To Hit:	9	9	10	10	10	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	12	12	12	12

Page 101, Starship Damage Tables (correction): The Die column is incorrect. The corrected table is given to the right.

Use the Surface Explosion column on the Starship Damage Tables for fusion, plasma, laser, missiles, particle accelerator, and disintegrator.

Use the Radiation column for particle accelerator, nuclear and antimatter missiles, and meson guns. Use the Interior Explosion column for meson guns and disintegrators.

#### SHIP DAMAGE TABLES

Die (2D)	Surface Expl'n Damage Table	Radiation Damage Table	Interior Expl'n Damage Table
-2	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
-1	Weapon-1	Weapon-1	Power Plant-1
0	Weapon-1	Weapon-1	Jump-1
1	Fuel-1	Weapon-1	Screens-1
2	Weapon-1	Weapon-1	Sensor-1
3	Weapon-1	Weapon-2	Power Plant-1
4	Fuel-1	Sensor-1	Jump-1
5	Weapon-1	Computer-1	Screens-1
6	Weapon-1	Weapon-2	Computer-1
7	Fuel-1	Sensor-2	Power Plant-1
8	Maneuver-1	Computer-2	Sensors-2
9	Weapon-2	Weapon-4	Computer-1
10	Fuel-2	Sensor-2	Crew-1
11	Maneuver-1	Computer-2	Power Plant-2
12	Weapon-3	Computer-2	Jump-2
13	Fuel-3	Crew-1	Screens-3
14	Maneuver-2	Computer-3	Sensors-3
15	Interior Explosion	Crew-1	Fuel Tanks Shattered
16	Interior Explosion	Computer-4	Critical
17	Interior Explosion	Crew-2	Critical
18+	Critical	Critical	Critical

#### SLUG THROWERS TABLE

(for Players' Manual page 76; see explanation on Challenge page 36)

Guns	Ammo Notes	Pen/ Rounds	Atten	Dmg	Max Range	Autofire Targets	Danger Space	Sig	Recoil	Diff. As
Rifle, Bolt Action (7mm)		6	3/2	3	V. Long			M	M/R	Rifle
Rifle (7mm)		20	3/2	3	V. Long			M	M/R	Rifle
Rifle (9mm)		20	4/2	3	V. Long			M	M/R	Rifle
tranq		20	1/-	1	V. Long			M	M/R	Rifle
Hunting Rifle (13mm)		2	5/2	4	Long			H	H	Rifle
tranq		2	3/-	2	Long			H	H	Rifle
Shotgun	pellets	10	1/1	4	Medium		1.5	H	M	Rifle
bullets		10	3/1	4	Medium		1.5	H	M	Rifle
tranq		10	1/-	1	Medium		1.5	H	M	Rifle
gas		10	-	1	Medium		3	H	M	Rifle
Auto Shotgun	pellets	20	1/1	4	Medium	2	1.5	H	M	Rifle
bullets		10	3/1	4	Medium	2	1.5	H	M	Rifle
tranq		10	1/-	1	Medium	2	1.5	H	M	Rifle
gas		10	-	1	Medium	2	3	H	M	Rifle
Assault Rifle (5mm)		30	2/2	3	V. Long	2		M	M	Rifle
Assault Rifle (7mm)		30	3/2	3	V. Long	2		M	M	Rifle
Accelerator Rifle (6mm)		15	3/-	3	Medium	2		M/R	L	Rifle
Adv Combat Rifle (7mm)		20	3/3	3	V. Long	2		M	M	Rifle**
DS		20	4/3	3	V. Long	2	1.5	M	M	Rifle**
tranq		20	2/-	1	V. Long	2		M	M	Rifle**
Adv Combat Rifle (9mm)		20	4/3	3	V. Long	2		M	M	Rifle**
DS		20	6/3	3	V. Long	2	1.5	M	M	Rifle**
HE		20	3/3	4	V. Long	2	1.5	M	M	Rifle**
tranq		20	3/-	1	V. Long	2		M	M	Rifle**
Light Assault Gun	HE	5	3/-	4	V. Long		1.5	M	H	Rifle
KEAP		5	8/3	4	V. Long		1.5	M	H	Rifle
Flechett		5	2/3	2	Long		30	M	H	Rifle
tranq		5	2/-	1	Long		30	M	H	Rifle

Additional errata for the **Imperial Encyclopedia** follows:  
 Page 71, Step 3 (correction): Price column and hardpoints column for the Meson Guns table are incorrect. They are:

**MESON GUNS (SPINAL MOUNT)**

UCP	MCr	Hard Points
A	10000	50
B	12000	80
C	3000	20
D	5000	50
E	800	10
F	1000	20
G	400	10
H	600	20
J	400	10
K	10000	80
L	3000	50
M	800	40
N	600	20
P	5000	80
Q	1000	70
R	800	50
S	2000	80
T	1000	70
U	2000	80
V	1200	70
W	1000	50
X	2000	80
Y	1200	70
Z	800	50

Page 76, Slug Throwers (correction): On the table on **Challenge** page 35 are the correct entries (corrections highlighted).

Page 76, Open-top Air/Raft: Configuration should be 4SL.

Page 77, Enclosed Air/Raft: The configuration should be 4SL.

Page 77, GCarrier: The configuration should be 4SL.

Page 78, Ship's Boat: Top Speed (vacuum)=4200kph.

Page 78, Slow Boat: Top Speed (vacuum)=2850kph.

Page 79, Pinnacle: Top Speed (vacuum)=3840kph.

Page 79, Slow Pinnacle: Top Speed (vacuum)=2120kph.

Page 80, Scout/Courier: Fuel=515 kliters.

Page 80, Seeker: Fuel=504 kliters.

Page 83, Mercenary Cruiser: Maneuver=3, Jump=3.

*Continued from page 27*

averted. No one in the group knows how long either of the viruses can survive on their own—maybe forever. If they can last forever, the Brotherhood might eventually be able to get another vial of the other virus on planet and get some of its

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*No one in the group knows  
 how long either of the viruses can  
 survive on their own—  
 maybe forever.*

---

contents to come into direct contact with the still-existing first virus.

**ROBERT AND HIS FRIENDS, OR  
 JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE TO GO BACK HOME**

For the general administration of this scenario, Robert is assumed to be a representative of a moderate faction within the Solomani Party. Although this faction managed to learn of the Brotherhood's plot, they could not do anything about it themselves. Had they tried to spread the word to Solsec's main membership or the Solomani Military, the Brotherhood—having members all through Solsec—would surely have heard about it and taken corrective measures. From Robert's perspective, that probably meant an appointment with a bullet. They were forced to go outside the Confederation for help. Strange enough, Robert found himself talking with IRIS and the Concordiat—even though the Confederation was still skirmishing with their forces. The Regency recommended the player party because of its ability and its proximity to the situation.

But that's the "plain vanilla" option. If you really want to end this Amber Zone with a bang and a few twists, choose one of the following—or roll 1D6.

**1-2:** All is as presented above. Robert is working for the Mercantile Faction of the Solomani Party. He will be glad to see the group succeed and return to Concordiat space.

**3:** Robert represents the mainstream factors in Solsec itself. They recently discovered this Brotherhood plot and learned that the Brotherhood has more members inside the higher echelons of Solsec than suspected. They won't be able to identify and eliminate those security breaches in time to keep the people involved in the plot from finding out and switching the rendezvous site. So, they had to hire outside help through Robert, who has just been brought under Solsec's influence. Therefore, IRIS was unaware it was recommending the group to Solsec itself. Four days after the characters have completed their mission, an overwhelming Solsec force will intercept and arrest them. Escape is up to the characters and the referee.

**4-5:** As above, but Solsec has decreed that the characters must be killed. However, in this version, IRIS also has learned who Robert was really working for. They have sent three Strike operatives to help extract the group. This Strike team will arrive a few minutes into the Solsec assassination attempt against the players. The Strike team will be as heavily armed and armored as circumstances reasonably permit, and they are good at their work (primary weapon skills of at least 3).

**6:** This one is only for the real "covert operations" buffs. Robert is a member of the Brotherhood of Purity. He contracted the characters so they will "clean up" any evidence left over. The Brotherhood is using an "enemy" group to kill its own people involved in the plot—eliminating any evidence that could lead back to the most highly placed Brotherhood members. Robert and six operatives will show up at the end of the firefight. He will not try to convince the characters to come along peacefully; he wants to kill them at the facility and make sure it looks like it was all part of the firefight (lasers and gauss rifles do not leave much ballistics evidence). If he succeeds, he and his team will put on fresh combat environment suits, combine the viruses, and leave to catch an off-world courier; the Solomani Party will always wonder who was responsible for the bioagent disaster.

## The **ALBEDO** Role Playing Game

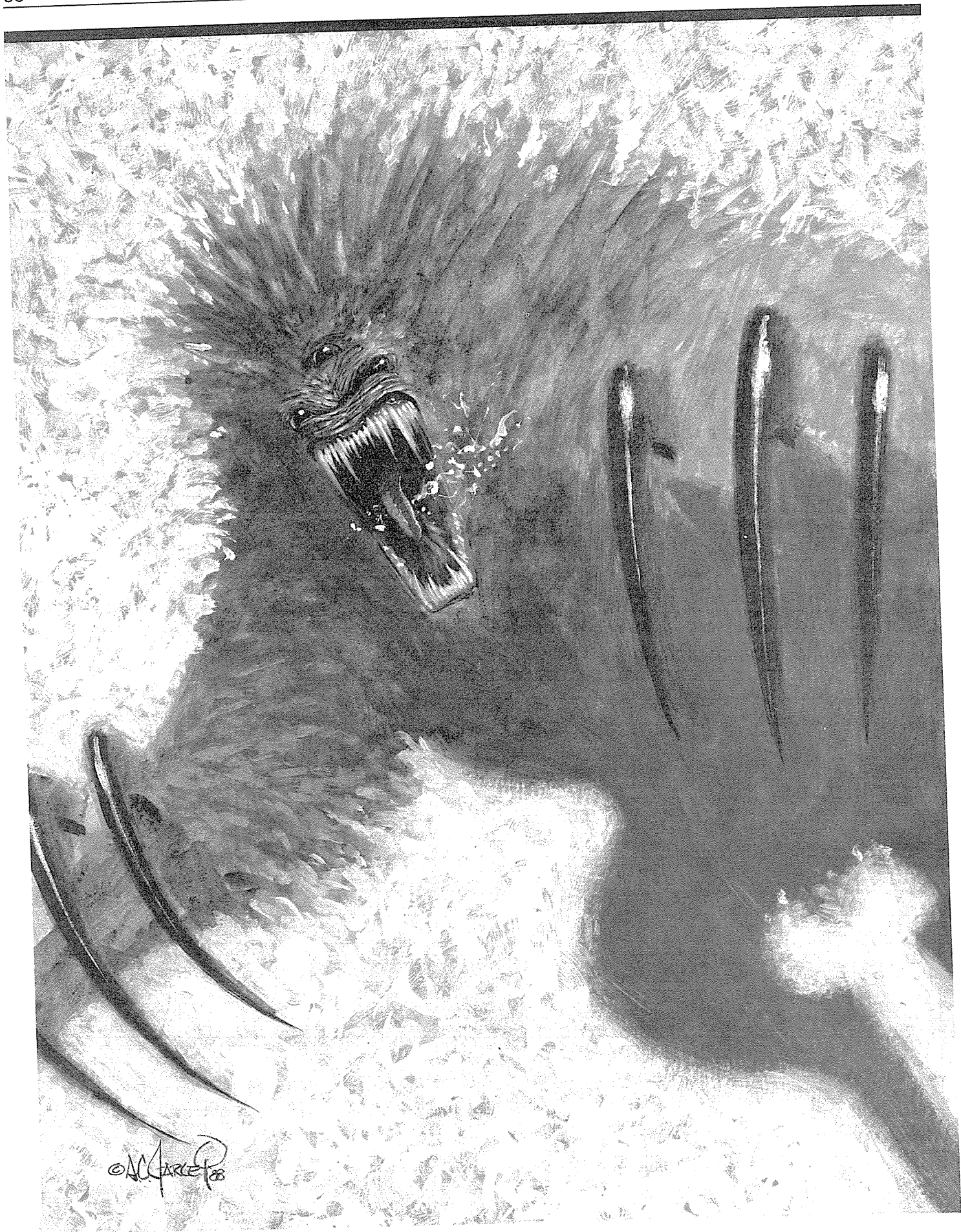


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# Devil in the Dark

By Pete Rogan

The transport's tires whisper as they touch the runway and the engine whistle changes to a lower note for deceleration. The single viewscreen at the front of the cramped passenger section lights up with the helmeted face of the captain. He speaks in French, "Attention, attention. Nous arrivons a l'Avante-post Daikoku. Debarquement, quatre minutes." In American-accented English he adds, "Thank you for flying the Boneyard Express."

The transport sighs to a stop and your group of troubleshooters, duffels in hand, file down the tall escalator to the tarmac of Outpost Daikoku, the scientific enclave for study of the Eber ruins on the planet. It's night; the floodlights illuminate the unloading dock and shine off the white van with the logotype of the Institut des Etudes Xenologiques on the side. A tall dark man with a beard steps forward to meet you. "I'm Dr. Thor Bradley," he introduces himself "Associate Director for Expedition Support. Glad you could make it on such short notice." After you've loaded yourselves into the van, he says, "We've arranged a briefing at nine tomorrow morning, and lodging for you tonight in the enclave. Or would you prefer to eat first? The commissary is still open."

Gee, this is nice—not the sort of welcome you'd expect on an animal-control call. But then, this is the IEX, and you don't expect a normal—or even a simple—job ahead of you.

## OUTPOST DAIKOKU

The 40-year-old science colony midway between the two sites of Eber ruins, with its clusters of laboratories and apartments widely spaced with lawns, trees, and boulevards, has a feel halfway between a college campus and a military base. Though it has only one name, there are three centers to the outpost: the extensive Astronomischen Rechen-Institut establishment, where you landed; the much smaller enclave of the Accademia Dei Lincei, which you haven't seen; and the mid-sized fief of the IEX, where you have been called. After breakfast, you're driven to the Administration Building, d'Aubisson Hall, and welcomed on the

steps again by Dr. Bradley.

In his office, he outlines the job: "The IEX has from time to time allowed private industry access to the Eber sites for purposes of semi-commercial research. This surprises many people, who imagine science to be a wholly charitable pursuit beyond the grubby realities of finance. We do charge private interests for their access, while providing them transport and security, and we require them to share their findings with us as a matter of course."

---

**M**an's effect on the alien worlds he has visited is sometimes very subtle indeed. Sometimes the life on one world is hard-wired to reject intrusions by life from another.

---

"It's one of these private groups, a botanical sampling expedition from Noukka-Lieb Pharmaceuticals, who is having trouble. We were alerted by radio some days ago to expect a letter sent back via the weekly supply flight. Here it is." He passes around the following letter:

Dear Dr. Bradley,

An unknown animal has invaded our research area at Chowawillien. Sightings have been vague, and I have no images to send you, but it would appear to be large, carnivorous, and, to my knowledge, of a type completely unknown to this region of the planet.

I have no resources to deal with it, and I fear for the safety of my expedition and its equipment. Our agreement, section 9, paragraph XVIII, specifies that animal incursions constituting a nuisance will be your responsibility. Therefore, I request the immediate dispatch of a suitable team to deal with the problem.

Sincerely yours,  
Dr. Andreas Borg

"Dr. Borg," Bradley continues, "is an experienced field scientist and one familiar with the local ecology. We must assume, therefore, that his report is true—some large, unknown type of animal is threatening his expedition."

"I'd like you and your group to hunt down this creature, capture it alive, and bring it back to the IEX for examination and study. Naturally, there will be recompense. We're offering Lv300 each, to go to Chowawillien, make the capture, and return here. Any questions?"

## CROSS-EXAMINATION

Dr. Bradley seems very much an honest sort, and entirely trustworthy; there may be no questions. If any are asked, have the questioner roll the following task to learn more information than was asked:

**Task:** To learn of Dr. Bradley's misgivings (Uncertain): Difficult. Intelligent, Interviewing, or Psychology. 1 minute.

A total of one hour remains before the party must receive equipment and leave on the scheduled weekly supply flight.

Success at the above task will result in Dr. Bradley's disclosure of one of the following data. Each failure will result only in the hint (given in parentheses) following the data. The choice of the appropriate datum is left to the referee.

1. Dr. Borg will be authoritarian, abrupt, and treat you as if you were under his orders, not ours. He may try to deny you access to his data which, as IEX contractors, you have the right to examine at need. (Dr. Borg is sometimes a difficult person to work with. His company requires strict secrecy in many matters.)

2. There is no supervision of N-L's work or activities in the field. They're completely on their own from the time they leave here until they return, unless they request aid. (N-L has much experience in field work in out-of-the-way locations. They're a respectable firm.)

3. There's an unknown threat to the other study groups at the site, particularly the Al-Fredoun University student dig that's closest to N-L's site. If any of the locals are injured by this unknown animal, it would blacken IEX's reputation

with the Arabian colony, on whom we are dependent. (We are worried that this animal may endanger the safety of other persons at the site. Speed is essential.)

4. We have reason to suspect that Dr. Borg's group has been gathering samples well outside the area they originally indicated they wished to survey. It's not prohibited, or even strictly unethical, but it makes us uneasy. (Pharmaceutical research in alien plant life requires N-L to do most of its work outside its actual campsite—quite some distance outside, actually.)

5. The animal is probably a rogue from outside, maybe even somebody's pet gone wild, but part of N-L's lab equipment includes experimental animals. One could have gotten loose for some reason. (Please respect N-L's private property as much as possible. *You have free rein over the site, of course, but don't abuse that privilege without cause.*)

6. We really have no idea what's going on, but Borg sounded agitated each time we called him for more details, which he was unable or unwilling to provide. Be prepared for anything. (Naturally you're concerned over the lack of details. That's why we're taking no chances. Dr. Borg will certainly be glad to assist you in any way he can.)

#### SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT AND RESTRICTIONS

Dr. Bradley will be quite firm on one point: Capture is the goal. Therefore, each member of the mission group will be issued, for the duration of the mission, one Quinn Optronics Restraint Carbine each, and instructed to use it as a primary weapon. There's another reason to use sonics: the ruins. Collateral damage would be highly undesirable—therefore, no projectile weapons and absolutely no explosives.

The group will also be provided with an autoinjector rifle (as described in the **2300 AD Adventurer's Guide**) with four subdual darts and two microtransponders, plus the radio direction finder for tracking.

Three collapsible cages will also be provided, all equipped with handles for hand carry and hooks on the side for pole carry. Their characteristics are as follows:

**Small cage:** Made of gnawproof polycarbon plastic strips in a one-centimeter mesh, with one small end fitted to slide in grooves as a door, secured by a single latch. Expanded dimensions are 40 by 50 by 80 centimeters, and it can bear the weight of an animal weighing up to 15 kilograms. *Weight: 1 kg Length: 40 centimeters (bulk = 1) Armor Value: .2*

**Medium cage:** Polycarbon strips in a 1.5 centimeter mesh, a sliding door as on the small cage, and a weight limit of 40 kilograms. Expanded dimensions are 80 by 80 by 120 centimeters. *Weight: 3 kg Length: 80 centimeters (bulk = 2) Armor Value: .2*

**Large cage:** Made of polycarbon rods with a two-centimeter mesh and a swinging door hinged from the top, secured by two hasps. The expanded dimensions are 120 by 120 by 180 centimeters, and it can hold an animal weighing up to 150 kilograms. *Weight: 4 kg Length: 180 centimeters (bulk = 5) Armor Value: .5*

The cages are usually carried collapsed, a flat package intended for backpack carry, until they are needed. Expanding the cages requires no task unless it is done in a hurry:

**Task:** To expand a collapsible cage (Uncertain): Routine. Average of Dexterity and Hunting. 3 seconds.

A major mishap, and *only* a major mishap, causes the cage to look sound, but to collapse when an animal is put inside it, permitting escape.

Collapsing an expanded cage is the reverse of expanding it.

If asked, and *only* if asked, Dr. Bradley can also provide the following sensor equipment: three pairs of binoculars and one farseer, plus one large animal detector. No other sensors are available.

Other equipment is left to the referee's discretion. The group members are expected to live at the N-L campsite and to have access to most of their nonscientific gear. They probably won't stay for more than a week, and resupply comes weekly anyway if they have forgotten something which the campsite can't provide.

Almost as an afterthought, Dr. Bradley provides the party with a portacomp loaded with an expert program on animals in the Chowawillien area and designed to answer any questions about their signs and spoor the party may have. Guidelines for running this expert program are given in the Procyon Lorica section below.

Once the equipment has been distributed, Dr. Bradley will see the party to their transport and wish them well: "Bring 'em back alive!"

#### CHOWAWILLIEN

Chowawillien is the second, larger group of Eber ruins discovered in 2253. It was, judging by location, a major city and seaport roughly 4000 years ago. Weathering in the temperate climate has been heavy, and all that remains above ground are stone, concrete and steel skeletons of buildings laid out in a sprawling grid along wide roadways. The IEX has expended much effort to clear large trees, vines and climbing plants from the ruins, but the ways between them are still thick with vegetation. Even after 50 years only a small proportion of the site has been excavated to a road level or below. Only a few trees remain in the site, far from the surviving walls, and some of these are "yo-yo teres" that will attempt to drop sticky tendrils on animals or people below their canopies, to attempt to draw them up for digestion. Small pieces of equipment could be lost or damaged in the process.

The Noukka-Lieb Pharmaceuticals expedition is located in an unexcavated part of the site; it is one of seven expeditions currently at Chowawillien, which is so large that each expedition is out of contact with the others. The Al-Fredoun University site is only two kilometers from N-L's, close enough to share the weekly supply flight.

Chowawillien is far from any permanent human habitation, but there is a large and unknown population of transients outside the fenced perimeter—scouts, trappers, explorers, opportunists, and vagabonds for the most part, some of them not averse to turning artifact poacher.

Chowawillien is an abundant habitat for animal encounter purposes.

#### ARRIVAL

The transport sets down vertically in a clearing within the Chowawillien site, which seems to stretch to the horizon. Waiting for it are two groups of men and vehicles. The Al-Fredoun University people, mostly Arabic-speaking, arrive first to offload their equipment. The other group, two Swift

Songbirds and three men, seem to be waiting. These men are:

#### Dr. Andreas Borg

Borg is a Veteran in Biology and Administrator, head of the N-L expedition. Large, balding, with close-cropped steel-gray hair, piercing blue eyes, and a meaty handshake, he speaks with a pronounced German accent; German speakers can identify it as vaguely Hanoverian. He is self-assured, abrupt, and has an air of command about him.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Heart Jack:* He is an extremely adept field administrator with more than 20 years of experience behind him, quite knowledgeable in and out of his specialty, particularly in chemical and drug interactions in people and animals. *Spade Jack:* He is also overbearing, imperious, and firm in his belief that he is every bit as good as he is while others are not so good as they pretend. He's clever, a quick study, and can make people doubt their own competence.

#### Dr. Bob Baudet

A Green NPC in Biology, Baudet is a student-intern from the *Universite d'Tirane*, and Dr. Borg's obvious protege. He is young, with short blond hair, piercing blue eyes of his own, and a vaguely cool manner. He takes his status as a favored child almost for granted. His family is wealthy, he has lacked for nothing, yet ambition drives him on.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Spade 8:* Baudet is an extremely ambitious student, if not particularly gifted, and he is prone to take credit for work done by a group, as instigator or coordinator. *Spade 6:* There is also in him a desire for responsibility and authority, like his protector, Borg, and a feeling that he is closer to this than people think.

#### Richard Sorge

Sorge is one of the nine other staff members of the expedition. He is an Experienced NPC in Chemistry, an uncommunicative man, and Dr. Borg's favorite flunky for public-relations jobs, like today.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Diamond 4:* Sorge is a pure Company Man, in it for the money. This month the money's in the ruins on Daikoku. *Diamond 3:* Even if everything caves in and lives are threatened, Sorge's highest hope is to salvage his hazardous-duty bonus. He has no personal stake in the mission, its results, the world or its ecology, even in staying with

Noukka-Lieb, if it comes to that.

When the Al-Fredoun group has nearly finished unloading, Sorge will drive up to the plane to transfer cargo back aboard: two wounded men, heavily bandaged and semi-conscious. They are in stable condition (so the characters will be told), but there are no facilities for them here.

Should any character wish to examine them, Borg will reluctantly approve, but remind them that the plane must be leaving shortly, and they must unload their supplies yet. Making a quick diagnosis of the two is a task:

**Task:** To evaluate the condition of the wounded men (Hasty): Difficult. Medical or First Aid. 20 seconds.

Success reveals that both men have been mauled, clawed, bitten and bruised, with extensive wounds on their heads, hands, arms, upper torso and legs. It will also reveal that they are drugged, not unconscious. Any other result will show only that the men have been severely mauled.

As Sorge and the plane's cargo handlers wrestle the men aboard, one man will moan and mutter in Arabic. An Al-Fredoun student who is there will stare until Sorge chases him away. If this student is stopped and questioned, or the character with the wounded men speaks Arabic, the character will learn that the man said: "Devil...the three-eyed devil."

Once cargo has been loaded, Dr. Borg will take the party back to the N-L encampment. He'll brief them there.

#### THE NOUKKA-LIEB CAMP

A large clearing, perhaps once a park or square in the ancient city, now holds the temporary structures of the N-L expedition. One is a long, low metallic shed 10 meters wide, five meters high, and 80 meters long, with a considerable amount of air-conditioning machinery outside, solar collectors on the roof, and no windows. This is the main lab. Its mate, except for no outside machinery and including windows in its sides, parallels it 10 meters away; these are living quarters and offices. The hovercraft will stop here to unload. Cots and sleeping bags have been provided for the player characters, Dr. Borg explains, if they choose to sleep indoors. He will take the time to escort the group around the camp, show them what parts of the layout he can, and introduce them to his staff.

The living quarters are divided into a kitchen/dining area





near the front; eight small, private rooms that double as offices along a central corridor; and Dr. Borg's larger private office and private quarters at the end of the building. There is no back door. Dr. Borg will not enter any sleeping space with the party in tow. Everything seems tidy and ordinary.

The labs are protected by an airlock; this is the only door, and air pressure is kept greater inside to keep out alien spores, bacteria, molds and other organisms that could contaminate the work. Inside, flanking a central corridor, are three large lab spaces visible through windows, accessed through sturdy, airtight doors always kept shut. The three sections are: Analysis, where raw plants are studied in their natural forms, classified, and samples preserved, alive, dried and frozen; Extraction, where mechanical mills, chemical baths and electrical fields are used to pull concentrated chemicals from leaves, stems, berries, roots or what-have-you for more rigorous examination; and Synthesis, where the compounds are purified, analyzed, tested and their chemical natures recorded. This is where useful and cost-effective new drugs are discovered, and Dr. Borg will be careful that none of them or their sources are discussed before the group, even accidentally.

There is also an unmarked door without windows at the end of the corridor, which Dr. Borg describes as the Experimental Animal Habitat, nothing more. He will not take the characters in there unless someone insists and passes the following task:

**Task:** To out-face Dr. Borg politely: Routine. Average of Eloquence, Intelligence and Determination. 5 seconds.

Success grants them a one-time tour of the Animal Habitat. The interior is a chattering, warm and furry-smelling room lined with cages on three walls, with a computer station, food and water dispensers, and cage-cleaning equipment. The animals range from Terrestrial mice, rats, rabbits and one 40-kilogram pig to an assortment of other, less-familiar creatures, most of them Pentapod lab animal "machines" designed for special testing purposes. There are also a number of empty cages—the result, Dr. Borg will explain if anyone asks, of the inevitable attrition in testing, particularly far from a source of approved new specimens. No one is here now; this is Dr. Baudet's usual workplace when he isn't in Analysis.

The party will also meet the rest of the N-L complement:

#### Dr. Jorge A. Prieto

Prieto is a Veteran NPC in Chemistry, usually working in Extraction. A proud and haughty man, obviously not fond of Dr. Borg.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Spade Jack:* He's Sorge's boss and runs this department, which he clearly considers the nexus of any really important work. *Diamond 6:* He's here because field work pays better than sitting in a permanent lab somewhere, even if he has to put up with Borg.

#### Marie Crane

Crane is an Experienced NPC in Biology, a plump and motherly woman with a discerning eye for plants; she is head of the Analysis section.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Heart Jack:* She not only is the expert on local fauna and flora, but knows more about the private lives of the other team members than she lets on. *Diamond*

9: She is, alas, woefully underpaid because she has no doctorate degree, and is a soft touch for a guaranteed improvement in her income—likewise not something she lets on.

#### Neil Warheit

Warheit is an Experienced NPC in Biology, a slight and nervous young man in Analysis, Marie's underling and junior. He has a tendency to stare at people.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Heart Queen:* Though he seems to have a fixation on Paula, he is profoundly attached to Marie, who is like a friend as well as a mother to him. *Spade 10:* He's a show-off and a know-it-all to everyone but Marie; everybody but Marie thinks he's a pain in the neck.

#### Olga Kronik

An Experienced NPC in Medical, Kronik is a studious-looking young woman with long dark hair and large heavy-framed glasses, and a manufacturing pharmacist. Quiet, shy, and retiring—and very easy to scare.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Diamond Jack:* She's frightened easily, and tends to shriek if surprised or terrified. Deafening and scary. *Heart 3:* She's a very decent sort, more than a little cute, and friendly.

#### Mohammed Atouboranian

Atouboranian is an Experienced NPC in Medical, head of the Synthesis section, and an accomplished manufacturing pharmacist. Suave and smooth. He is Arabian and speaks fluent German; his accent is unplaceable.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Spade King:* Though it was originally his idea to hire the outside diggers, he will deny it to Borg's face. He is not above sacrificing Borg and everybody else to save his own skin. *Club Queen:* He is quiet and rarely takes a stand, but when he does, he is immovable. His stories will always match up. He will stick by them even when no one else does.

#### Paula Virtannen

A Green NPC in Chemistry, she is tall, blond, young and Finnish, a student-intern from the *Universite d'Tirane* but not the girlfriend of, or even terribly friendly with, Bob Baudet. He's the exception; everybody else likes, and is liked by, Paula.

**NPC Motivation Results:** *Diamond Ace:* Her generosity and friendliness grows from her idealized view of science, where all knowledge is shared openly, above personalities and conflicts. *Club 8:* She is intensely competitive, a top-notch student and researcher, and extremely harsh toward those who oppose her ideals.

Everybody is at work in the labs except for Sorge and Baudet. The animal menace has made them all very uneasy—Olga in particular.

#### THE STORY

After the tour, Dr. Borg will lead the party back to his office, a plain and tidy space with a filing cabinet as well as a computer station, and tell them the following story:

"We'd been here about a month when one of our field teams noticed some unusual footprints in bare ground not far from camp. I thought nothing of it until two nights later, when we were all awakened by dreadful screaming in the ruins. Thinking

that someone from another expedition had become lost or injured, I sent Richard, Bob, and Neil with lights toward the source. They came upon a dreadful scene. Two men, horribly wounded already, were attempting to fight off a beast none of us had ever seen or heard of before. It was shaggy with thick black and gray hair, about the size of a dog or burrowvarg. My men yelled at it, hoping to drive it off. It turned on them, snarling, and scared them full out of their wits. The monster had a massive head, no discernible nose, a mouth the width of its powerful body, and three malevolent red-rimmed eyes. But instead of attacking, it plunged into a hole the two unfortunates had been digging, growling most fearsomely. Then it sprang from the bottom of the hole fully six meters to the top of an outcropping in one bound, and from there it leapt away into the darkness. The sound of it was soon lost. My poor men, unarmed except for their belt knives, quickly gathered up the wounded wretches and brought them back here. We did what we could for them, of course, which was little enough. You saw them leave this morning on the flight that brought you in.

"I summoned aid from IEX as soon as I could. So horrible was this apparition that I felt it wise not to describe it even in my letter. Now that you are here, I feel much better. I would appreciate you acting promptly to dispose of this monster."

He doesn't care if it's captured; he merely wants it gone from here. It's holding up research. He will give the men free run over the encampment and, of course, the ruins. But, he laughs and wags a finger at them, he doesn't expect them to find the creature under his bed. Out in the ruins it will be found. If they want his advice it's best to use the day to scout and rest, and the night to post watches and stalk.

#### THE REAL STORY

Noukka-Lieb's contract specified a stay of approximately eight weeks at Lv200 a day and a collection radius of two kilometers. The princely "rent" puts time and positive results at a premium, and Atouboranian, who has relatives in Al-Fredoun, suggested hiring local plant gatherers at Lv1 a day to save professional time and effort. The use of unsanctioned labor in the ruins makes N-L responsible for any damage they do—or damage done to them. Hence the two wounded men are treated as strangers, possibly artifact poachers. Two dozen diggers were employed until the attack; they've all fled.

Bob Baudet runs the Animal Habitat closely with Dr. Borg's blessing. He was captivated, soon after arrival, with a curious animal a trader had for sale—a small furry beast the size of a house cat. It was called an *arnab-doub*—a rabbit-bear. It was about five kilograms, shaggy with coarse hair or skin tendrils, a wide mouth, and three eyes. Baudet bought it, after much haggling, for Lv5. He discovered it was a local animal, its three eyes were by no means unique on Daikoku, and that while it was not "domesticatable" by most standards, it was tolerant of captivity. It ate insects, worms, a wide variety of plants and meats (native and offworld), and lab pellets. Baudet kept it with the rest of the lab animals and studied it whenever he had a chance. He didn't keep it a secret, but he made no effort to inform people either.

At the extreme northern end of the N-L range is a structure not yet formally discovered, a roughly oval construct now marked by occasional walls and beams protruding from the surface. It may have been an arena or museum, or perhaps

a botanical garden or laboratory. In it and within 200 meters of it are a large number of exotic plant types found nowhere else on Daikoku. A week after the N-L campsite had been established, the diggers began to bring back some extremely unusual plants from here and Dr. Borg instructed them to concentrate in the area. He took the entire Analysis section (Marie, Paula, and Neil) there for a personal survey and evaluation. It was on this trip that the first example of Specimen T-5485 was unearthed at a depth of more than a meter. The plant was a dark-brown, wrinkled, and twisted knobby root looking like horseradish about 25 centimeters long, with a strong distinctive scent coming from its cut end. The pungent odor is what caused Marie to name it Deep Ginger.

That would have been that, but its complex chemistry defied the Analysis and Extraction sections for several days, causing much excitement. Out of a misplaced sense of discovery, perhaps, or a simple desire to take a chance, Baudet fed a tiny sliver of Deep Ginger to the *arnab-doub*. It liked the treat, though it seemed to make it thirsty. And it cried after its next meal, and wouldn't stop until it was fed again. And again. It began scratching itself furiously with its tiny burrowing claws until it loosened several leathery strips from its skin.

At the end of two days, it had gained four kilograms and



wouldn't stop crying even when it was full. Desperate, afraid of discovery, Baudet took a second chance and smuggled it more Deep Ginger. It ate 200 grams and seemed satisfied. Again it was thirsty; again it started eating prodigiously. And again it grew—larger than the cage could hold.

By this time Deep Ginger had proved a treasure-trove of several unusual compounds, but full analysis was beyond the survey mission's capability. Dr. Borg ordered Deep Ginger stockpiled, alive and in various kinds of preservation, with an eye to growing it outside Chowawillien, even offplanet. There was an awful lot of the stuff around, and the scent seemed to madden the fifteen-kilogram *arnab-doub*. It was impossible to keep the creature around.

On the excuse of inspecting the diggers, Baudet borrowed one of the Songbirds and drove out of Chowawillien, with the outsized animal drugged in a carryall. Some 40 kilometers from the perimeter he dumped the woozy critter out and drove back without a second look. He figured that was the last of it.

When diggers began reporting a strange animal snuffling around the holes at night two weeks later, Dr. Borg told them it was a harmless burrower, even when one digger said it had stood its ground and growled at him. Baudet knew his failed experiment was back to haunt him but said nothing to anyone.

Then came the attack. Now research and collection is at a standstill, Dr. Borg is deeply angry, and Baudet dares not say a thing. Paula once asked him about the missing *arnab-doub*; Baudet said it had died of unknown causes, and after the autopsy he had incinerated it.

#### GETTING THE REAL STORY

No one is readily going to admit that outside diggers were hired. Only Baudet and Atouboranian, who has guessed the truth from the animal's feeding pattern and appearance, know about the creature's origin, and they won't talk. Paula and Marie both know that Baudet had a strange animal, but think it died two weeks ago and haven't connected it with the sizable creature outside. Deep Ginger is a company secret, a potential gold mine once fully analyzed, and no one will discuss it freely.

Questioning will be difficult; they'll all back up Dr. Borg's story if interviewed with any other expedition members in earshot. Someone might figure out that people will be easier to quiz if they're alone. Getting an N-L staffer alone is a task:

**Task:** To isolate an N-L researcher without suspicion: Difficult. Intelligence, Psychology or Interviewing. 3 minutes.

A mishap indicates that someone has walked in on the effort and noticed it for what it is. The referee should role play this scene with care.

While searching for the beast or its spoor amid the ruins, the players could notice a few things that will alert them to unusual happenings they haven't been told about. For one thing, the number of holes left when plants were dug up is too high to be accounted for by the personnel at the camp, unless everyone had been out and digging, which is obviously not the case. Discovering the truth about the holes is a task:

**Task:** To deduce the use of outside diggers: Difficult. Survival or Tracking. Absolute (3 hours).

Any mishap causes any players without Tracking or Hunting skill to think that the creature dug up the holes.

The N-L staffers will not reveal the arenal area to the mission group, though they will not deny they have been doing work there. There are more holes here than anywhere else; players looking in the north roll the above task at one difficulty level less. In addition, they may discover the arena itself, a honeycombed maze of ruined walls, caves, pits and weird plants:

**Task:** To discover the arena area (Unskilled): Routine. 10 minutes.

Any searchers in the area will find the tracks of the creature quite readily:

**Task:** To discover the tracks of the creature: Routine. Hunting or Tracking. 2 minutes.

Tracking the creature down in its lair is more difficult due to the rough nature of the terrain; see the Tracking the Beast section below.

There may be players who want to break into the files or computers to see what secrets are there. This is a small camp, people are always nearby, asleep or not, and all doors are locked at night. There is little to discover. Dr. Borg's personal files (not his computer files) contain some vague notations on petty cash flow to pay off the diggers.

The Animal Habitat's computer station has a locked and coded file on the *arnab-doub* up to the day Baudet abandoned it. Getting into this file is a task:

**Task:** To open the *arnab-doub* diary: Difficult. Information Gathering or Computer. 2 minutes.

Any mishap crashes the system and leaves tell-tale evidence of tampering.

Players may even think of going to the Al-Fredoun University site and asking questions. They know all about the diggers; they use them themselves, with IEX's knowledge and blessing. They see nothing wrong with the idea. They have no knowledge of any beast. If the Al-Fredoun diggers are questioned, however, players will quickly be surrounded by several frantic men babbling simultaneously in fear about a "three-eyed devil dog," a "friend of Shaitan," or a "demon."

#### PROCYON LORICA

The creature which Baudet bought is actually a well known Daukokuan animal with a proper taxonomic name: *Procyon lorica trivides fayadii*. It's a gatherer and burrower, like the raccoon, fairly intelligent, and nocturnal. Its oddest features are its leathery skin that peels in strips to form its armoring "hair," and its three reddish eyes, two low, one high, which give it superior night vision and depth perception.

The *trivides* family contains numerous members of Daukoku, most of them small or medium-sized gatherers, and one slugish night grazer. No predators.

When Baudet fed the *arnab-doub* Deep Ginger, it reacted badly with the animal's metabolic and growth rate. It grew,

became hungry, grew larger, and began to crave Deep Ginger again. This cycle repeats at roughly four-day intervals, causing the creature to eat ravenously and to actively seek Deep Ginger, to which it has become addicted. As the adventure begins, it has just devoured Deep Ginger from the hole the men it attacked were digging. It is now ravenously hungry and will devour whatever it falls upon, including humans.

It is now a pouncer on the **2300 AD** scale of animal encounters, with the following characteristics: *Encounter*: 4 or less *Attack*: Only if it possesses surprise *Number*: Always alone *Initiative*: 5 *Hit*: Easy *Size*: 80 kg *Speed*: 75 *Armor*: 0.4 *Wound*: — *Consciousness/Life*: 3/8 *DPV*: 0.2 *Signature*: 0 It attacks with teeth and digging claws, usually going for the head and then the soft tissues like the belly.

If it feeds upon a man-sized victim, it will increase in size, become more aggressive, and begin to stalk human beings up to five kilometers from the arena. It will be a killer, and its characteristics will be as follows: *Encounter*: 3 or less *Attack*: 8 or less *Number*: Always alone *Initiative*: 10 *Hit*: Easy *Size*: 100 kg *Speed*: 75 *Armor*: 0.4 *Wound*: — *Consciousness/Life*: 4/10 *DPV*: 0.3 *Signature*: 0

This is as large as it can get, but nobody knows that. It can scent Deep Ginger up to three kilometers away; it can smell it at the N-L site. It can only find buried Deep Ginger if it is within 100 meters of the location. The stockpile at the camp is functionally as close as the Deep Ginger still in the ground.

The portacomp that the player characters have is designed to answer specific questions about tracks, signs, usual prey of predators, habits and feeding patterns, and to help the user determine from signs what animal made them. It can be used as an encyclopedia as well, describing the tracks and other spoor or markings and habits of a particular animal, but this is a secondary purpose. For game purposes, the portacomp's expert program works better if it is given raw data and asked to identify the animal than if it were asked to reveal all information about a specific animal. Correct operation of the expert program therefore requires two separate tasks depending on how it is used:

**Task:** To identify a specific animal from its traits or spoor: Routine. Hunting or Tracking. 10 seconds.

**Task:** To learn information about a specific animal: Routine. Information Gathering or Computer. 20 seconds.

The program has no information about what attacked the two men; it will indicate several different animals who could only be present under very unlikely circumstances. It will read out data on all three-eyed animals as stated above, none of them dangerous or carnivorous.

### TRACKING THE BEAST

Finding tracks is not the same as following those tracks. The animal is crafty and hides its trail well, doubling back, sticking to well worn tracks, and going over stone and steel in the ruins. During the day, however, the creature is immobile, sleeping deep in the ruins. Finding it there is a task:

**Task:** To track the creature to its lair (Uncertain): Formidable. Tracking. 15 minutes.

Success catches the creature asleep and unaware, though it may not stay that way. Any failure and the creature hears the approach soon enough to escape. The characters may be close enough to see or hear it tear off. If disturbed, the creature will run in a circle around the ruins to draw off pursuit, and return to find a different place to sleep. It will run and hide over and over again, never attacking, unless it is cornered.

If the creature is found asleep, it will always be found in a cave or niche with only one entrance. Only one character may shoot at it. If the first shot neither kills nor incapacitates the creature, it will roar, spring at the person in the entrance, make one attack, and then run away.

If the players haven't found the arena, or tracks, they still have a chance of encountering the creature or its spoor during the day using the normal Animal Encounter rules. The creature will remain a pouncer until it feeds.

At nightfall it will wake and begin to stalk any animal, particularly humans, within two kilometers of the arena. It will be drawn to the N-L campsite if there are no targets available. It will always attack the smallest number of persons. If it can, it will feed on any unconscious or prone human, soft tissues first, at the attack site; if this is not possible it will attempt to seize the victim in its jaws and run away, preferably back toward the ruins. Once it is not pursued it will feed.

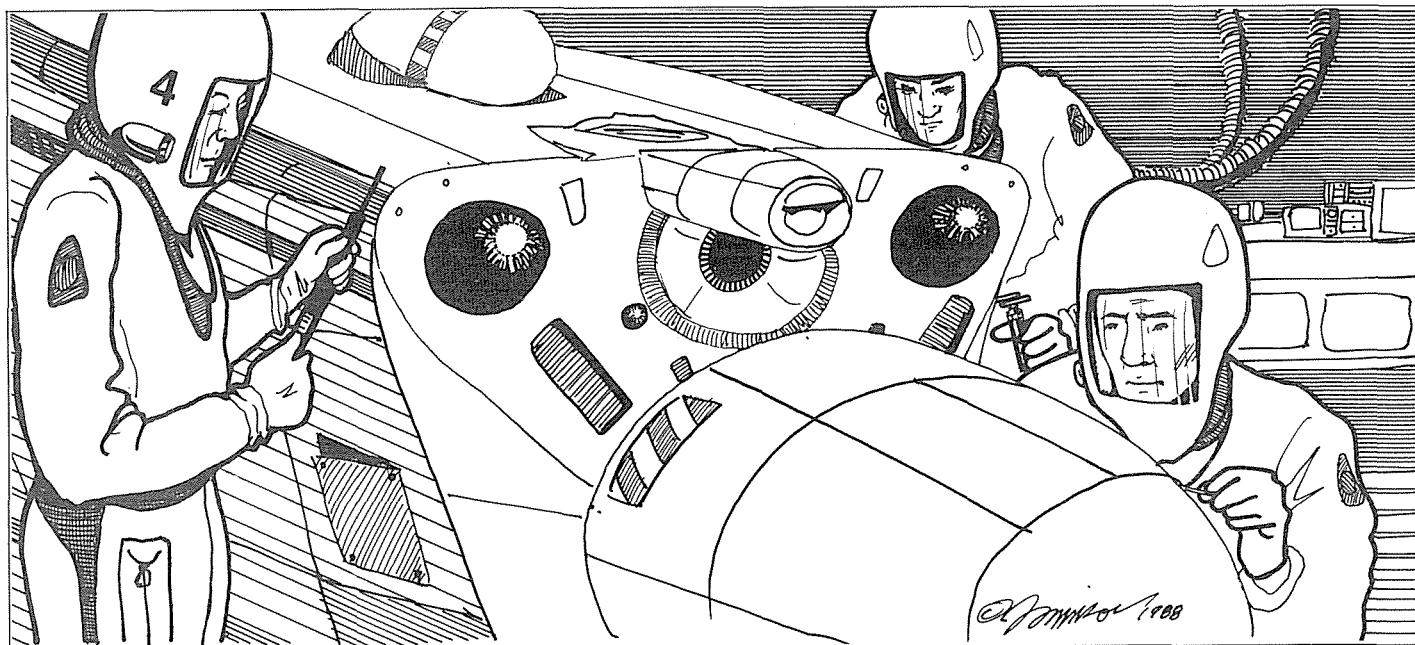
It will force its way through any window of the living quarters if it finds no humans out and about; it cannot pass locked doors. If the windows are barricaded, it will snuffle around for a while, and then attack the air-conditioning machinery until it gains access to the Animal Habitat through the vent. There, it will devour every lab animal—approximately one human-weight of flesh, total—and depart. When next seen, two days later, it will be at the killer stage, but if it has been harassed it will attack the Al-Fredoun University site instead, where it might not be expected.

*Continued on page 79*





# The Anatomy of a Missile



By Karl Bergman

The purpose of this article is to establish a standardized set of guidelines for the designing of missile systems for use in the **2300 AD** and **Star Cruiser** games.

As the mission that a missile performs is significantly different from that of a large or small ship, their design process must be different also. A large ship is designed and expected to travel the long distances that separate the stars on what are usually very long duration missions. Small ships are used on shorter duration missions, usually as interface craft or as fighters, but they are expected to last a long time before needing replacement. Missiles on the other hand are designed for one use only. Therefore, they can be constructed out of less expensive material, and with less consideration given to such things as endurance and maintainability.

Below is a set of guidelines which have been developed for the purpose of standardizing missile construction. As the missiles used at present in the game were designed by consensus as opposed to design by a set standard, it is impossible to exactly match the missiles in the rules, however every attempt was made to come as close as possible.

A missile is composed of four parts, three sub-assemblies, the warhead, guidance, and propulsion, and its casing. Each of the three sub-assemblies has one or more components.

The warhead sub-assembly is that part of the missile which delivers the attack to the target and consists of either a single detonation laser, or of a single fixed laser using either power capacitors or a direct connection to the power plant to power it.

The guidance sub-assembly is that part of the missile which controls the movement of the missile and the firing of its weapons by receiving commands from the remote work station on board its controlling ship and instructing the other sub-assemblies to perform their work. It also transmits any sensor data which is collected by the missile to the controlling ship through the command link. It consists of a control package

and a passive sensor if installed.

The propulsion sub-assembly is that part of the missile which provides power and motive force to the missile. It consists of a power plant, fuel, and a stutterwarp drive.

The casing of the missile is its hull, and is constructed in the same manner as a ship's hull only it is much smaller and is usually constructed of less expensive materials.

The following table shows the components which can be used to construct the warhead sub-assembly, first showing the fixed laser weapons and then the detonation lasers. The fixed lasers require a small surface area to allow for a firing aperture for the laser which is mounted inside the missile casing. Aiming the weapon is controlled by the guidance sub-assembly using the missile's drive and altitude jets. In the case of the detonation lasers, the part of the casing which covers the device blows in the second before detonation.

Type	Power Req.	Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Mass (tons)	Cost (Mlv)	Remarks
LL-98	1MW	.75	.2	.75	.097	All fixed lasers
HD EA 122	1MW	2.25	.2	2.25	.105	are smaller
HD EAA 1000	2MW	3	.2	3	.174	than their
1 × 2 D.L.		.2		.2	.04	standard
1 × 3 D.L.		.3		.3	.06	counterparts
1 × 4 D.L.		.4		.4	.08	due to their
1 × 5 D.L.		.5		.5	.1	method of
2 × 2 D.L.		.4		.4	.08	mounting.
3 × 2 K.L.		.6		.6	.12	
4 × 2 D.L.		.8		.8	.16	
5 × 2 D.L.		1		1	.2	
10 × 2 D.L.		2		2	.4	
2 × 3 D.L.		.6		.6	.12	
3 × 3 D.L.		.9		.9	.18	
4 × 3 D.L.		1.2		1.2	.24	
Capacitor A		.1		1	.1	1 MW discharge
Capacitor B		.3		.5	.1	1 MW discharge

The following are the components of the guidance sub-assembly of a missile. The passive sensors for a missile are not the same as for a ship. Only the information-gathering equipment of a normal sensor is present in the missile; it has no capability to process the data on its own. The raw data is collected by the sensor and transmitted to the controlling ship by the control unit via the control link. Also a missile's sensors can be broken down so that only certain arcs of area are covered by them. Each sensor component will cover a 60-degree arc. A full sensor setup would contain six m<sup>3</sup> of volume, use 30 m<sup>2</sup> of surface area, and weigh .5 tons. As most missiles do not have this much room to devote to sensors, and don't need 360 degrees coverage, only one or two components are normally installed.

Type	Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Mass (tons)	Cost (Mlv)	Remarks
Control unit	.1	.2	.1	.1	
Passive sensor	1	5	.1	*	per 60° facing

\*The cost is 10% of the cost on the table for the appropriate type of sensor.

The propulsion sub-assembly of a missile is the one area where the most cutting down on volume and mass was done. As a missile is considered a one-use-only device which is contained in a uninhabited housing, the majority of the shielding, safety features, and manual monitoring and control devices were removed. This resulted in a power plant and drive which has only one-quarter the normal volume and mass, but which has a very limited life span. The cost for a power plant was cut to one-tenth normal, for a stutterwarp drive the cost was cut to one-twentieth of normal. Therefore, the normal power plant and drive tables may be used in missile design, just apply the above modifications to their mass, volume, and cost.

The following table shows the standard casing sizes.

Dimensions (meters)	Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Material Value
1 × 5	3.9	17.2	.11
1 × 6	4.7	20.4	.13
1 × 7	5.4	23.5	.15
1 × 8	6.2	26.7	.19
1 × 9	7.0	29.8	.2
1 × 10	7.8	32.9	.22
2 × 5	15.7	37.6	.44
2 × 6	18.8	43.9	.53
2 × 7	21.9	50.2	.62
2 × 8	25.1	56.5	.71
2 × 9	28.2	62.8	.8
2 × 10	31.4	69.1	.89
3 × 5	35.3	61.2	1
3 × 6	42.4	70.6	1.2
3 × 7	49.4	80.1	1.4
3 × 8	56.5	89.5	1.6
3 × 9	63.6	98.9	1.8

Instructions for designing a missile are as follows:

1. The first thing which must be done is to decide on the

mission that the missile is to perform.

*Example:* I wish to build an antiship missile, with a detonation laser and a range five passive sensor mounted in the forward arc.

2. Next you need to select a warhead which is compatible with the mission you have selected.

*Example:* I am building an antiship missile, so I want something with a large amount of damage potential. Therefore I select a 10 × 2 Detonation Laser. It has a volume of 2 m<sup>3</sup> and a mass of two tons. It will cost me .4 Mlv.

3. Next design the control sub-assembly, adding any passive sensors desired.

*Example:* I will need to add a control unit to the missile. This will mass .1 tons and have a volume of .1 m<sup>3</sup>. It will also require .2 m<sup>2</sup> of surface area for the antenna. It will cost me .1 Mlv. I am also adding a passive sensor with the range of five to cover the front arc of the missile. It will mass .1 ton, have a volume of 1 m<sup>3</sup>, and use 5 m<sup>2</sup> of surface area, costing me .08 Mlv.

4. Then design the propulsion sub-assembly, selecting the power plant, stutterwarp drive, and amount of fuel you desire.

*Example:* I want to use a .1MW new military fuel cell. That will have a volume of .35 m<sup>3</sup>, a mass of .35 tons, and a cost of .15 Mlv. I also wish to have a .1MW stutterwarp drive, also of new military design. This will require 1.75 m<sup>3</sup>, mass 1.75 tons, and cost .395 Mlv. I will also include .54 tons of fuel to give the missile 12 hours of operating time. This will require .891 m<sup>3</sup> of space.

5. The casing is the next item to design. Total up the volume, mass, and surface area of the three sub-assemblies and consult the casing table to find the casing closest in size to your requirements. You may also design a custom casing by following the instructions for custom hull design in Section 13 of the *Star Cruiser Naval Architect's Manual*. No missile may be armored, as to do so would interfere with the missile's performance.

*Example:* Totaling up the three previous sub-assemblies, I determine that the warhead will require 2 m<sup>3</sup> of volume but no surface area. The control sub-assembly will require 1.1 m<sup>3</sup> of volume and 5.2 m<sup>2</sup> of surface area. The propulsion sub-assembly will require 2.991 m<sup>3</sup> of volume and no surface area. The total volume needing to be enclosed is 6.091 m<sup>3</sup>. The surface area requirements are for 5.2 m<sup>2</sup> of area. Consulting the casing table, I select a one-meter-in-diameter cylinder that is eight meters in length, which gives me a volume of 6.2 m<sup>3</sup>, a surface area of 26.7 m<sup>2</sup>, and a materiel volume massing .76 tons and costing 2853Lv.

6. The final step in missile design is to evaluate the missile's performance and design characteristics, using the following steps from the Evaluation section of the *Star Cruiser Naval Architect's Manual*. Use steps 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. Step 4 is skipped as there is no crew on board a missile. Step 11 is skipped as the firing aspect of a missile is always straight ahead. Step 12 is skipped as no missile is allowed to be armored.

#### EXAMPLE

1. Totaling the mass of the missile, I find that the warhead sub-assembly masses two tons, the control sub-assembly masses .2 tons, the propulsion sub-assembly masses 2.64 tons,

and the casing masses .76 tons, totaling 5.6 tons.

2. Using the given formula for warp efficiency, the mass of 5.6 tons, and the new military drive variable 17.5, the missile has a warp drive efficiency of 4.574.

3. The fire statistics of the missile are +0 to hit equipped with a  $10 \times 2$  detonation laser.

4. This step is skipped as there is no crew on board.

5. The missile's cost breaks down as follows: 180,000Lv for the control sub-assembly, 400,000Lv for the warhead sub-assembly, 545,000Lv for the propulsion sub-assembly, and 2853Lv for the casing, giving a total cost of 1,127,853Lv per missile.

6. The radial viewed area of the missile is .7854. The lateral viewed area is 8. Multiplying both views by synthetics signature multiplier of .6 gives values of .47124 for the radial reflected view, and 4.8 for the lateral reflected view. As the cross section of the passive sensor in use is 0, no fixture points are added to the hull reflection points (if there was a cross section greater than 0, then one-sixth of that value would be added for each sensor component on the missile). Therefore, the radial reflected signature for this missile is 1, and the lateral reflected signature is also 1.

7. The missile carries a .1 MW fuel cell; therefore, its radiated signature is 1.

8. As the hull hit value totals out to be less than 1, the total is rounded up to 1, and 1 is used for both minor and major breaches as well as the level of structural failure.

9. As the power plant hit capacity is also less than 1, it also is rounded to 1, and 1 is also used for both the plant's disabled level and destroyed level.

10. The target profile of the missile for the radial viewed area is -4, and for the lateral viewed area is -3.

11. This step is skipped as the weapon is fixed forward.

12. This step is skipped as no armor is allowed.

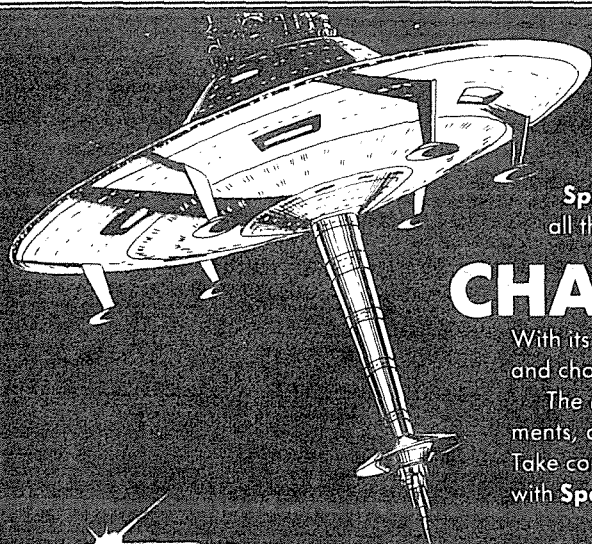
Under certain circumstances a missile can be reused. This mainly applies to those missiles which are armed with a fixed laser instead of a detonation laser. However, if a detonation warhead is not fired during combat, then that type of missile could also be recovered.

To recover a missile requires that the controlling ship order the missile to come to all stop. The recovering ship must also be at all stop in the same hex as the missile. The recovering ship must then send out an EVA team to bring the missile back into the ship. As most missiles are equipped with a self-destruction device it is very unlikely that an enemy missile could be captured in this manner.

The missile may be reused as is; however, there is a chance that the missile's propulsion sub-assembly will fail in use. This chance is equal to the number of hours already put on to the power plant multiplied by 10 and stated as a percentage.

*Example:* During combat a player launches a missile which is in flight for three hours. At the end of those three hours the ship recovers the missile. If the player attempted to use the missile again without refitting it, there would be a 30-percent chance that the missile would fail.

To refit a missile, a player must remove the old propulsion unit from the missile, recharge any capacitors used in the missile's flight at the rate of 1MW per hour (with power from the power plant or solar array), and install a new propulsion unit. To remove and install a propulsion unit takes four hours.



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# 'Mech Alternatives

By Kevin Stein

Though the 'Mechs are the undisputed king of the battlefield, their limited numbers and extreme cost effectively limits their use for combat, especially combat against a superior force. Most Houses won't sacrifice a unit of 'Mechs in an attack that has a better-than-even chance of failure.

Vehicles are the balancing point between numbers and firepower that 'Mechs cannot provide. Tanks are cheaper, easier to produce, simple to crew, and have become the backbone for many Houses' military forces. Against a BattleMech, however, a tank's life expectancy is about one round of fire.

Jump vehicles are a recent development in the Inner Sphere created to meet the demands of army commanders fighting in a wide variety of combat terrains. Combining the maneuverability of 'Mechs and the low cost of vehicles, jump vehicles create new innovations in the science of warfare.

## WHAT ARE JUMP VEHICLES?

Jump vehicles use the combined technologies of 'Mech jump jets, AeroSpace fighter thrust generation, and hovercraft lift fans. Every jump vehicle is produced on the chassis of a hovercraft, and then fitted with jets similar to an AeroSpace fighter. All thrust is initially generated by jets located along the inside of the hovercraft's ducts on the underside of the vehicle. Although there is a phenomenal increase in power, extended use of the system eventually destroys the hovercraft fans and burns out the ramjets, limiting "flight" to short hops and jumps.

A variant of the jump vehicle is the drop vehicle. Drop vehicles are released from dropships in low orbit in a way similar to AeroSpace fighters. Unlike fighters, however, drop vehicles do not have the capability of sustained flight; once they land, they act in all ways like jump vehicles.

## CREATING AND USING JUMP VEHICLES

All jump vehicles use the *CityTech* design rules for hovercraft. Only hovercraft may become jump vehicles.

In addition to their regular com-

*Jump vehicles use the combined technologies of 'Mech jump jets, AeroSpace fighter thrust generation, and hovercraft lift fans.*

ponents, all jump vehicles must buy jump controls and jump jets. Jump controls are equal to 5 percent of the vehicle's total tonnage. Each jump jet a jump vehicle has lets it move one hex as if it were a 'Mech jumping. Jump jets have the following weights:

### JUMP JET WEIGHTS

Weight of Vehicle	0-24	25-39	40-50
Weight	.5 ton	1 ton	2 tons

Jump vehicles may buy one jump jet for every point of movement. A vehicle's maximum jump movement is equal to its flank speed.

Jump vehicles follow all the basic movement rules for hovercraft found in *CityTech*. Jump movement for vehicles is the same as jump movement for 'Mechs, except it may only be performed every other turn. In addition, a jump vehicle may land inside of a light or heavy woods hex; and a jump vehicle that jumps to the edge of a forest may leave that forest through normal movement.

Jump vehicles must spend one jump movement point to rise one elevation level. They may only go up gradual slopes: A vehicle could not move from level one ground to level three ground without first going through level two ground. Jump vehicles may only rise in elevation by following terrain and cannot increase their altitude straight up as a VTOL can.

Jump vehicles may not perform Death from Above attacks. However, jump

vehicles may ram other units as normal.

## DROP VEHICLES

Drop vehicles use all jump vehicle construction rules and restrictions. Drop vehicles have additional control components that weigh 5 percent of the vehicle's total tonnage.

Drop vehicles can land anywhere on a map: Place the counter on the board on the desired hex and make a Landing Roll, as found under "Landing" in *AeroTech*; use only the Terrain Modifiers on the Landing Modifiers Table. The Driver's Skill number is used as the base target. If the roll fails, consult the following table.

### FAILED DROP VEHICLE LANDING TABLE

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | Rough Landing.<br>Take 10 damage points to the front armor.   |
| 2  | Rougher Landing.<br>Take 15 damage points to the front armor.<br>Reduce jump movement by half.                            |
| 3  | Roughest Landing.<br>Remove front armor.<br>Lose jump movement.   |
| 4  | Near Fatal Landing.<br>Remove all front armor.<br>Lose all jump movement.<br>Roll once on the Vehicle Critical Hit Table. |
| 5  | Almost Fatal Landing.<br>Remove all armor.<br>Lose all jump movement.<br>Roll twice on the Vehicle Critical Hit Table.    |
| 6+ | Fatal Landing.<br>Vehicle Lost.   |

*Note:* The first column is the difference between Driver Skill Roll Target and Actual Skill Roll Effect

Ground units may attack drop vehicles using the procedure for attacking strafing Aerospace fighters as found in *AeroTech*.



Mass: 50 tons	Type: <b>Silhouette Jump Tank</b>	Tons	Armor: 120	7.5
Movement Type: Hover/Jump	Movement Type: Hover/Jump		Loc. Points	
Power Plant: Venturilift 145	Tonnage: 50		Front 35	
Cruise Speed: 65 kph	Cruise Speed: 6		Lt./Rt. Side 20/20	
Flank Speed: 97 kph	Flank Speed: 9		Back 20	
Jump Speed: 32 kph	Jump Speed: 3		Turret 25	
Armor: ArmorPlate	Engine: 10		Weapons and Ammo:	
Armament: Armburst Auto-5 2 Lift	Rating: 145		Type Location	
Track Missile Packs	Type: I.C.E.		AC/5 Turret 8	
Targeting and Tracking System:	Control: 2.5		Ammo (10) Body .5	
DirecTrack	Jump Controls: 2.5		SRM-2 Turret 1	
Manufacturer: Porsche/Shadow	Lift Equipment: 5		SRM-2 Turret 1	
Conglomerate	Power Amplifier: —		Ammo (50) Body 1	
Communications System: Hi-Ho	Heat Sinks: 0		Jump Jets Body 6	
Systems	Internal Structure: 5			
Jump Jet System: Wraith 5000	Turret: 1			

### Overview

The *Silhouette* jump tank is the first of its kind. Originally conceptualized in 3025, the Porsche/Shadow Conglomerate produced the tank under duress. Almost all of the two company's shareholders felt the research cost involved in producing the advanced lift systems necessary for the design would not show enough profit to warrant manufacture. The chief executive officers and design staff of the company's told the shareholders to trust them and three years later created the *Silhouette*.

The tank was met with skepticism and more than a few harsh words at its release. Generals from the five Houses said the vehicle had little tactical significance and could never significantly affect the outcome of a battle. After seeing combat simulations with the tank, though, many of the military leaders ordered several units of *Silhouettes* to experiment with their effectiveness in real battlefield action.

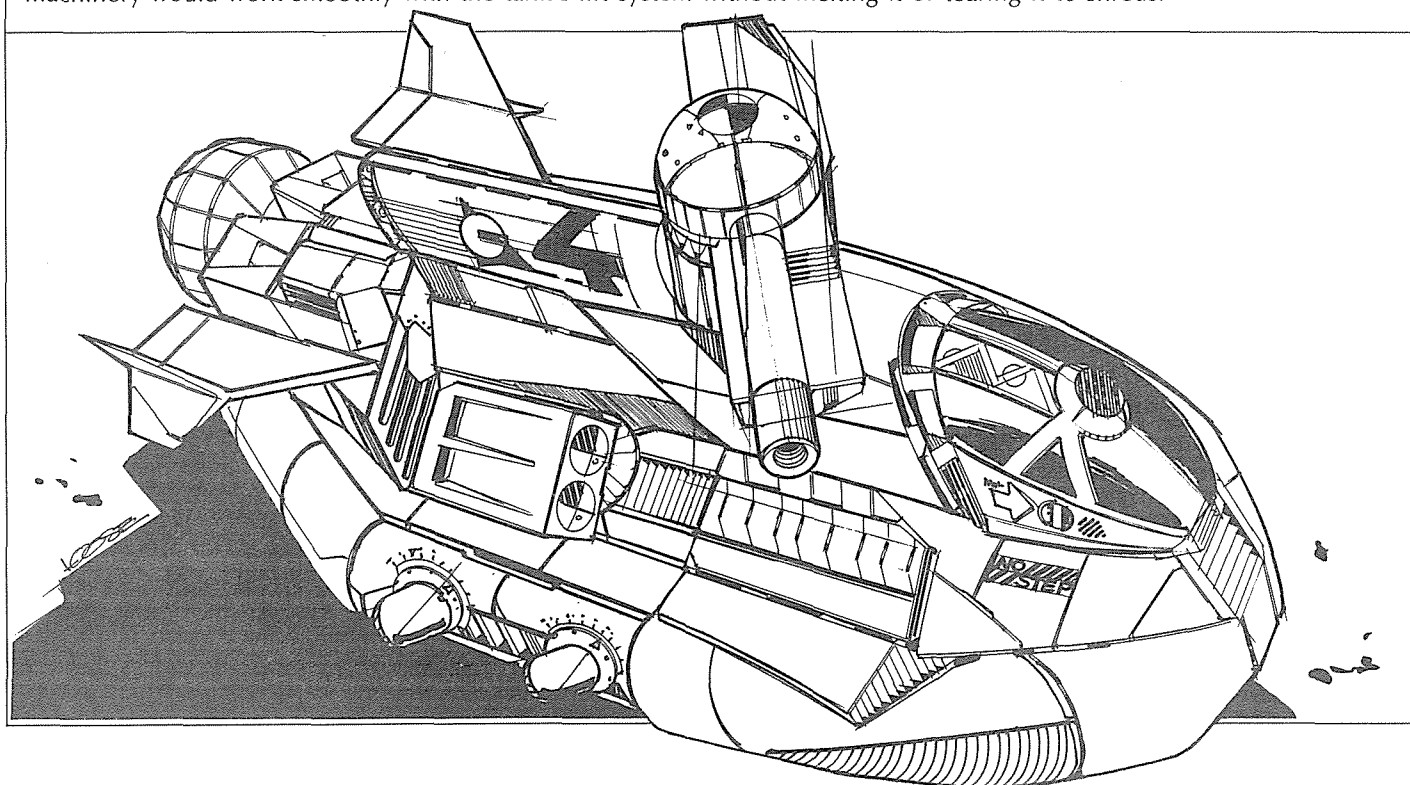
### Capabilities

The *Silhouette* is equipped with the latest equipment available to any vehicle in the Inner Sphere. All hardware and electronics are taken from time-proven systems.

The Armburst Auto-5 is produced by the ChemJet Corporation, the company that produces guns for the *Demolisher* heavy tank. All ejection gasses from the shells are channeled out through the barrel of the gun, ensuring maximum heat dissipation.

The LiftTrack Missile Packs are commonly used in fortifications and other permanent installations. Mounted on rails around the outside of the tank, the two packs move independently of each other, ensuring the most effective allocation of firepower.

The Wraith 5000 jump system was produced with a subcontract to a company formed with funds from Porsche/Shadow. Wraith Incorporated developed the system while working closely with the *Silhouette's* design engineers to ensure the jump machinery would work smoothly with the tank's lift system without melting it or tearing it to shreds.



<b>Mass:</b> 40 Tons	<b>Type:</b> Worker Bee Jump Engineer	<b>Tons</b>	<b>Armor:</b> 32	<b>2</b>
<b>Movement Type:</b> Hover/Jump	<b>Movement Type:</b> Hover/Jump		<b>Loc.</b> Points	
<b>Power Plant:</b> Venturilift 125	<b>Tonnage:</b> 40		<b>Front</b> 8	
<b>Cruise Speed:</b> 43 kph	<b>Cruise Speed:</b> 4		<b>Lt./Rt. side</b> 8/8	
<b>Flank Speed:</b> 65 kph	<b>Flank Speed:</b> 6		<b>Back</b> 8	
<b>Jump Speed:</b> 65 kph	<b>Engine:</b> 8		<b>Turret</b> —	
<b>Armor:</b> ArmorPlate	<b>Rating:</b> 125			
<b>Engineering Equipment:</b> PowerCutter	<b>Type:</b> I.C.E.		<b>Weapons and Ammo:</b>	
675 PowerScoop 675	<b>Control:</b> 2		<b>Type</b> Location	
<b>Targeting and Tracking System:</b> None	<b>Jump Controls:</b>		<b>Equipment</b> Front 6	
<b>Manufacturer:</b> Porsche/Shadow	<b>Lift Equipment:</b> 4		<b>Jump Jets</b> Body 12	
Conglomerate	<b>Power Amplifier:</b> —			
<b>Communications System:</b> Hi-There	<b>Heat Sinks:</b> 0 0			
Systems	<b>Internal Structure:</b> 4			
<b>Jump Jet System:</b> Wraith 2500	<b>Turret:</b>			

### Overview

Generals from the five Houses quickly discovered the advantages of having vehicles that could move over any terrain and keep up with their 'Mechs. Though the *Silhouette's* original success made jump vehicles very popular, the military leaders were looking for something more than just another tank.

Porsche/Shadow already had the answer to their needs. While the *Silhouette* was going into production, the P/S engineers proposed another vehicle that could have a hand in revolutionizing mechanized warfare. The *Worker Bee* was their idea. It combined all the advantages of jump vehicles with the indispensable abilities of engineering vehicles.

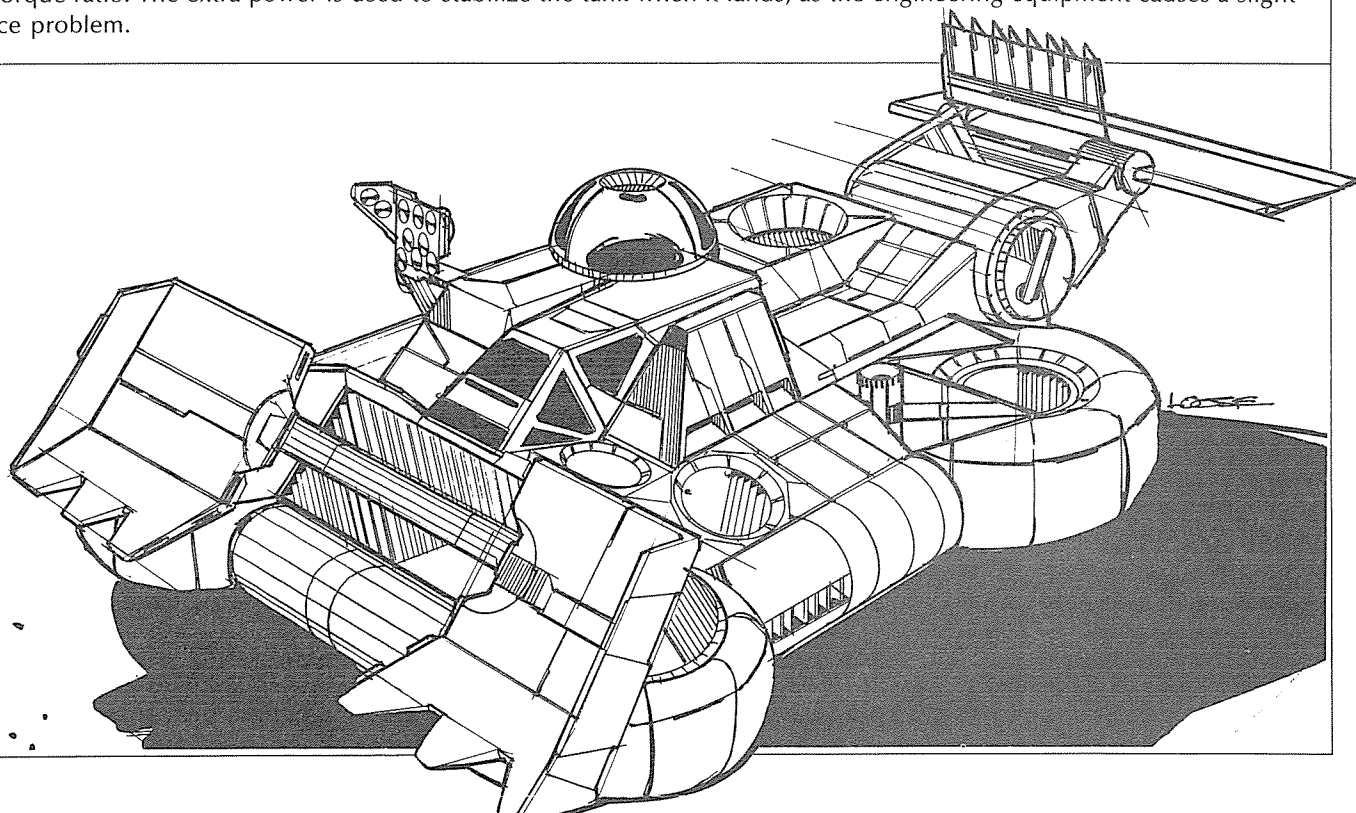
### Capabilities

The *Worker Bee* is one of the most useful engineering vehicles in the Inner Sphere. The ability to jump over obstacles such as rivers, destroyed bridges, and buildings combined with engineering equipment allows the *Worker Bee* to tackle almost any task.

The PowerCutter 675 is mounted at the rear of the vehicle, typical for this type of equipment. The huge 10-foot blade draws its power from the *Worker Bee's* engine but also has an emergency battery pack to provide power in case the power plant is knocked out.

The PowerScoop 675 is mounted at the front of the vehicle. The 675 system is normally attached as one piece, but the Wraith 2500 lift system required more ventilation than the original mount afforded. Porsche/Shadow engineers had to cut the unit in half and mount each half separately.

The Wraith 2500 lift engine is the same model as the one used in the *Silhouette*, except the Wraith engine has a higher gear/torque ratio. The extra power is used to stabilize the tank when it lands, as the engineering equipment causes a slight balance problem.



Mass: 35 Tons	Type: FreeFall Drop APC	Tons	Armor:	48	3
Movement Type: Hover/Drop	Movement Type: Hover/Jump		Loc.	Points	
Power Plant: VenturiDrop 105	Tonnage: 35		Front	12	
Cruise Speed: 86 kph	Cruise Speed: 8		Lt./Rt. Side	12/12	
Flank Speed: 130 kph	Flank Speed: 12		Back	12	
Jump Speed: 65 kph	Jump Speed: 6		Turret	—	
Armor: ArmorPlate with HeatResist	Engine: 7		Weapons and Ammo:		
Armament: Right Lift Track SRM Pack	Rating: 105		Type	Locations	
Left Lift Track SRM Pack	Type: I.C.E.		SRM 2	Front	1
Targeting and Tracking System: None	Control: 2		SRM 2	Front	1
Manufacturer: Porsche/Shadow	Jump Controls: 2		Ammo (25)	Body	.5
Conglomerate	Lift Equipment: 3.5		Jump Jets	Body	6
Communications System: Ello Systems	Power Amplifier: —		Infantry Platoon	Body	5
Jump Jet System: Ello Systems	Heat Sinks: 0	0			
Jump Jet System: Wraith 2500	Internal Structure: 3.5				
Drop System: FreeFall EasyDrop	Turret: —				

Overview

The success of the *Silhouette* and *Worker Bee* prompted a new wave of ideas in military hardware. These “brainstorms” ranged from the ridiculous (such as vehicles turning into ‘Mechs) to the vaguely practical.

Many engineers turned to their favorite movies for inspiration. One of the design staff of the *Silhouette* enjoyed science-fiction movies and came up with the idea for vehicles that could drop onto a planet from low orbit after watching a show about a group of marines that had to attack a group of hostile life forms.

When the engineer brought his proposal to his superiors, they were ecstatic. Not only did they have another workable and revolutionary idea for military vehicles, but they learned that there were other people who liked the same movies they did.

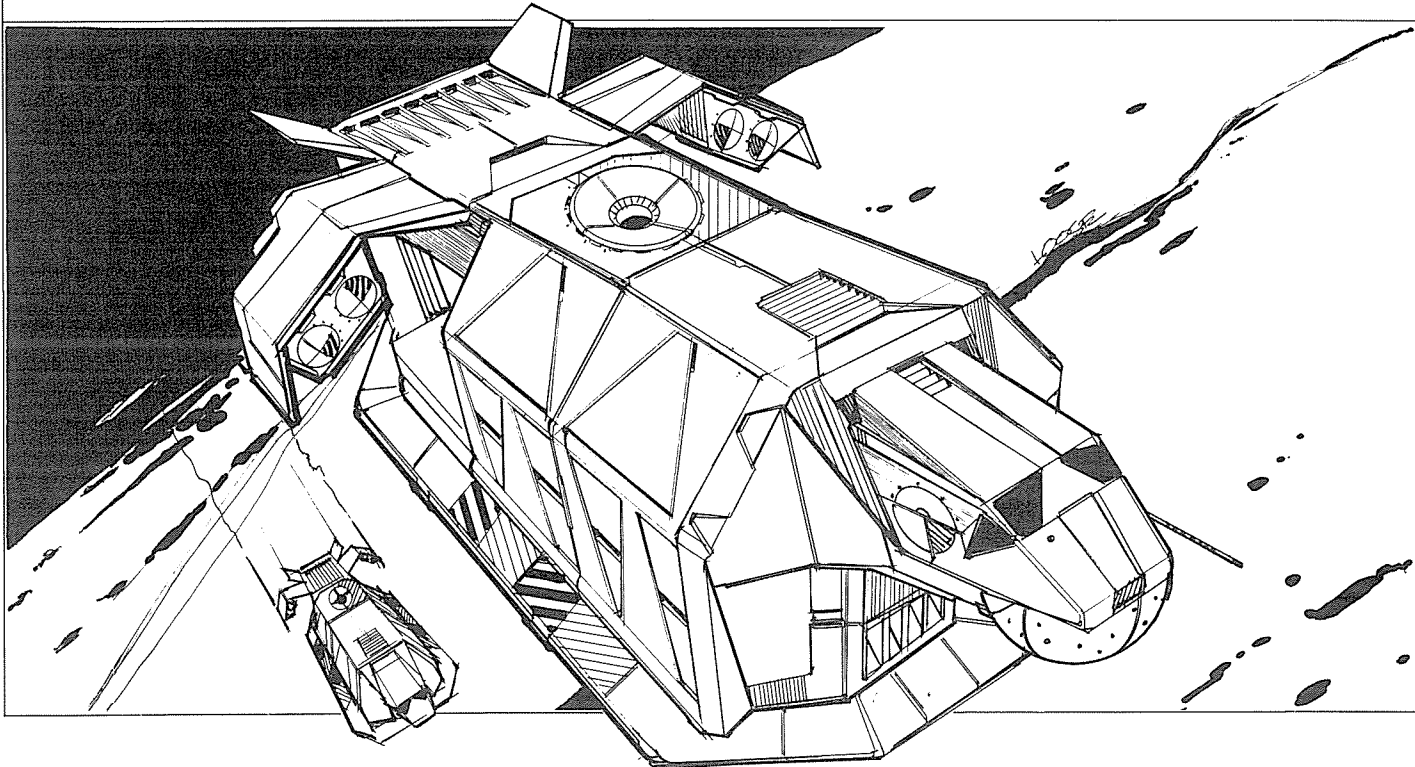
Capabilities

The main problem with the *FreeFall*’s design involved its streamlining. A craft that had to land through a planet’s atmosphere and fight on the ground had to have both the same basic shape of an *AeroSpace* fighter as well as the shape of a tank. The final result looked much like the standard version of the all-purpose/all-terrain vehicles used throughout the Inner Sphere.

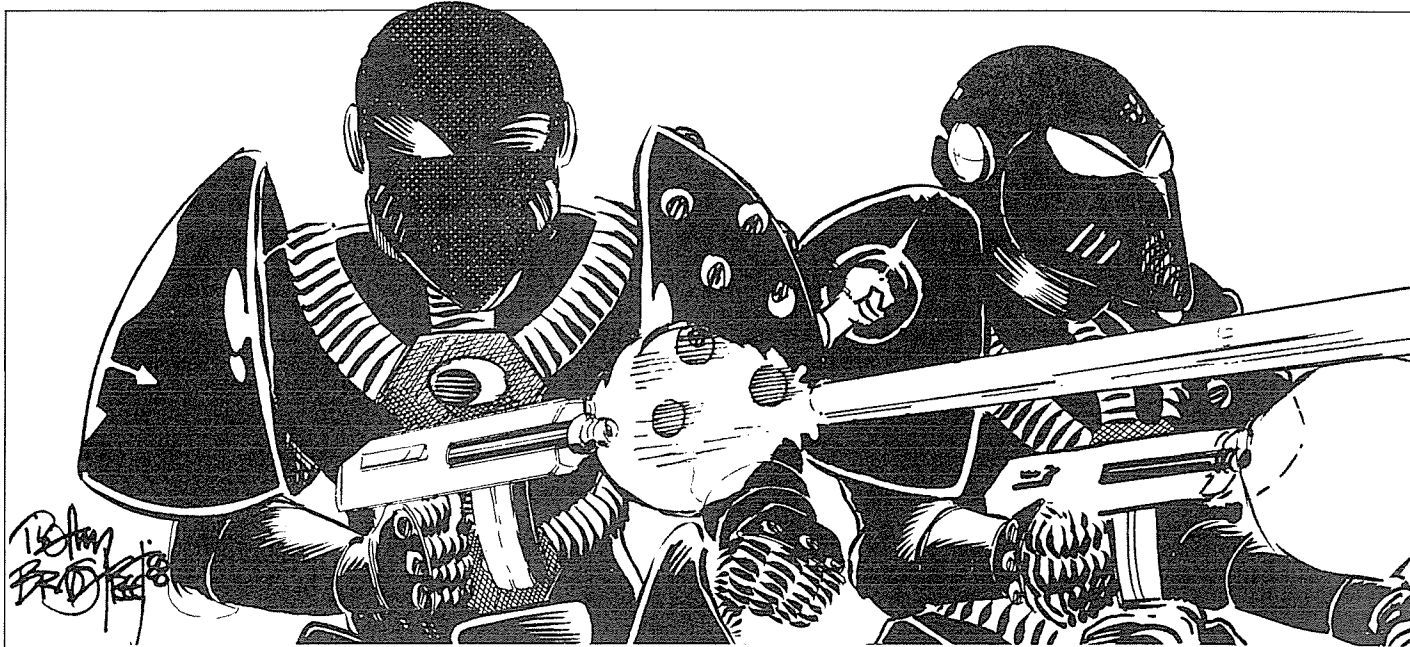
The *FreeFall*’s armor is treated with a heat-resistant coating designed to burn off on atmospheric entry. This design was used after numerous unsuccessful test runs with solid armor and heat-resistant tiles.

The vehicle uses wings that extend out from its sides. Each wing has an SRM pack mounted on it, ensuring that the vehicle is ready for combat once it touches down.

The infantry compartment is equipped with the latest in shock-absorbent technology, including pressure cages, G-suits, and gyro-stabilized seating. Though some commanders consider these to be little more than embellishments to increase the cost of the *FreeFall*, the infantry inside the vehicle constantly comment that they are willing to pay the additional cost.



# Sunstroke



By Roger Hamlin

Lukaas (population 3.2 billion) has an eccentric orbit, but its sun is a slow variable. As the planet approaches, the star dims; as it moves out again, the star flares up with renewed energy. Seasonal variations are extreme but survivable.

This situation isn't natural. Five thousand years ago the rhythm of pulsation changed, and the climate became much more variable. Tech-Priest astronomers were brought in to advise if the planet should be evacuated; a year later they detected strange force field energies surrounding the star. After a few months the star was back in its old rhythm. These events have recurred four times over the intervening millennia. Archaeologists have found evidence that the Ancient Slann had a small colony on Lukaas, a scientific outpost conducting an experiment too dangerous for any inhabited systems. It was abandoned when the Slann withdrew from the galactic scene.

Putting these facts together, the Adeptus Mechanicus have guessed that the Slann were experimenting with control of solar reactions and modified the star in some unknown fashion.

Five weeks ago an unidentified spacecraft landed in the woods west of Speelburg, a minor equatorial city. By the time marines and local militia arrived, it had taken off, leaving an impenetrable force field covering the woods. Ten days

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*A refereed  
Warhammer: 40,000  
scenario for a small  
unit of Space  
Marines and  
opponents.*

---

later the sun suddenly flared, doubling its normal seasonal brightness. Temperatures are already much higher than in any previous cycle, with no sign of relief.

Last week the force field cracked under bombardment, revealing a burnt-out generator (type unknown) and a huge crater. A tunnel burrows deep below the woods. At the bottom of the shaft is an Ancient Slannish teleporter with features that imply extraordinary range and power. The only control seems to be a preset timer. It transmits once every 27 days at noon. It is about to transmit again.

If the star doesn't stabilize, Lukaas will be uninhabitable within 100 days. The oceans will boil, forests will burn, and the atmosphere will become a searing mix of unbreathable gas. There won't be time to evacuate any significant proportion of the population.

## THE LITTLE SISTERS OF PURIFICATION

The Sisters are one of several female Chapters of Imperial Space Marines. They trace their lineage back to the dawn of the Empire. The whole Order is steeped in ancient ritual, though not to the extent of the Adepta Sororitas; members adopt new names and swear vows of chastity and obedience to the Emperor, but they are primarily Marines, not priestesses.

The Order's insignia is a mailed fist upholding a short sword, superimposed on the circle and cross of femininity. Armor is black with white insignia. The Order's motto is "Castitas, Humilitas, et Honor" (Chastity, Humility and Honor).

Since Lukaas isn't near any danger zones, the marine contingent is extremely small. There are 20 troops, currently led by Sister-Lieutenant Elektra. Their main duty is guarding the Adeptus Mechanicus monastery, though they occasionally help the local militia.

## GAMEMASTER'S DATA

The teleporter outside Speelburg leads to the Slann experimental station, floating within a bubble of protective force fields deep inside the atmosphere of the sun.

The Jokaeros are aliens with a particular knack for gadgeteering; they can convert junk into weapons and other equipment. When a Jokaero ship gets



crowded, excess adults are dumped on a habitable world and left to build a new ship or die. Naturally the Jokaeros pick a location with useful "junk" and have detection equipment that makes it easy to find interesting artifacts. The Jokaero left on Speelburg dug down to the teleporter and found it was still usable. They have teleported to the Slann installation—a force field-shielded asteroid, bearing equipment built to control the sun. They intend to rig it for warp-space. There is one oddity about the Jokaero expedition: It's led by the Vampire Shk'leen, who is currently Jokaero form.

Shk'leen has guessed that removing the station will doom Lukaas; it's rather looking forward to witnessing so many deaths. The Jokaero may be aware of the consequences of their actions; if so, they certainly don't care.

#### OBJECTIVES: HUMAN

Save Lukaas.

The Marines will escort Tech-Priest Spaak and his assistant, Novice-Technician Igor. To prevent any possibility of a recurrence, whatever caused the problem must also be destroyed. Survival is unimportant.

In fact, the repairs are relatively easy; if either Spaak or Igor survives the battle, the station can be repaired in time to save

Lukaas. If Spaak survives, he will be able to work out how to move the station around the sun and return to Lukaas before supplies run out. Later the Tech-Priests will be able to learn quite a lot about Ancient Slann technology.

#### OBJECTIVES: JOKAEROS

Convert the station into a starship and warp out.

They will achieve this goal if at least four Jokaeros survive, including at least one Jokaero personality, and the Humans are defeated. If less than this number survive, they will die before completing the work; that won't save Lukaas.

If the Jokaeros seem destined to lose, Shk'leen will try to kill one of the Humans and take his or her place.

The Jokaeros outnumber the Humans, have had several weeks to study the station, and know the purpose of the structures. The Humans have no information but are disciplined troops and have elements of surprise on their side. See the briefings for the sides.

#### THE STATION

The Slann installation is a small asteroid, floating in a force field bubble inside the star. It has a breathable atmosphere (the Marines must *not* be given this information in advance), and temperatures vary between 15 and 20 centigrade on a 32-hour cycle. The field lets in a miniscule proportion of the light, enough to allow observation of the surrounding stellar inferno. Gravity is just over 0.9 G, compared to the 15 G or so that the station should theoretically experience. Sixteen huge field generators maintain attitude, internal gravity, and the force field; one has been damaged by the Jokaeros.

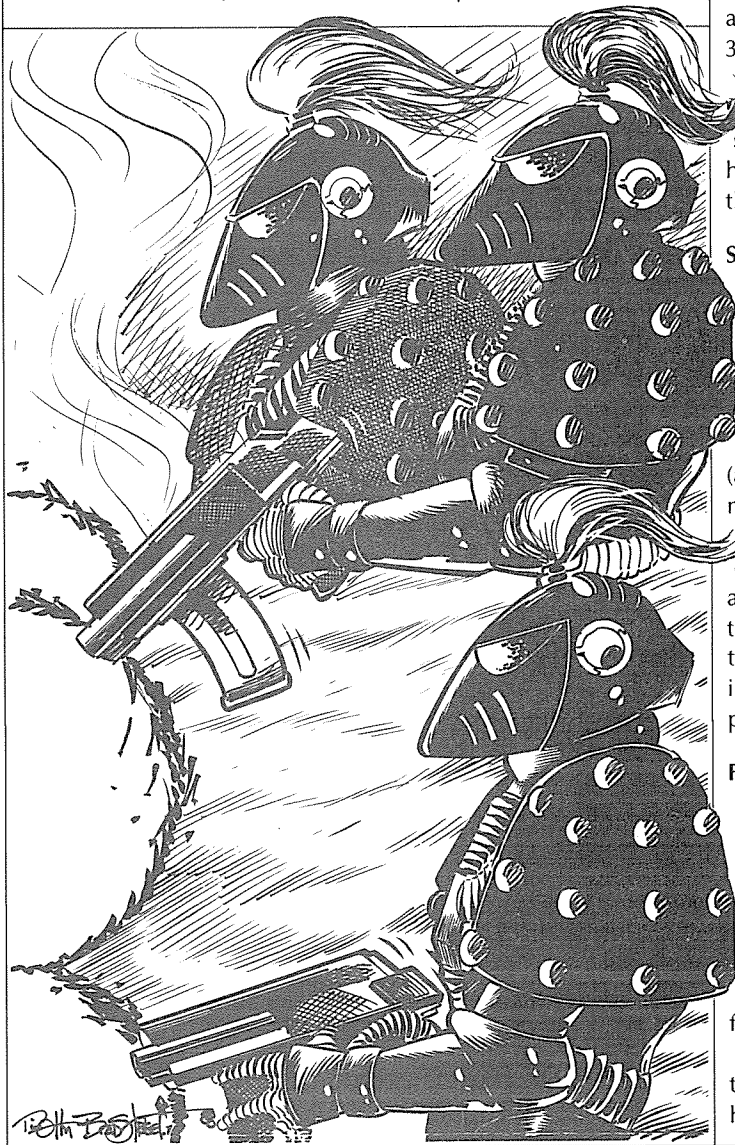
#### SETUP (SEE PLAN)

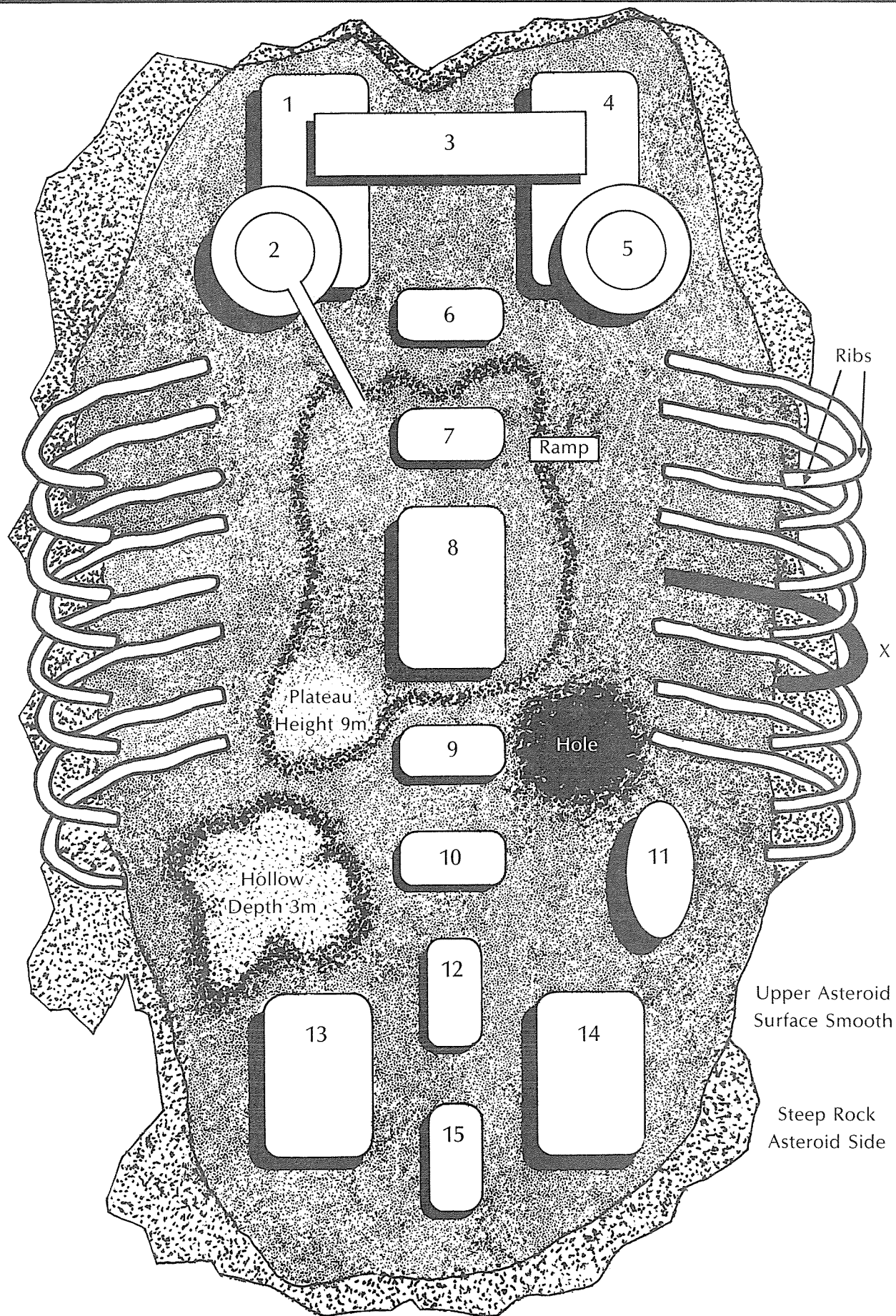
You'll need a large playing area, preferably at least six feet by four feet, but bigger is better. A large piece of polystyrene with one smooth surface and rough edges, a raised central plateau, and the hollows and holes indicated on the diagram, is suitable for the asteroid; other structures can be made of plastic or cardboard boxes and tubs. Exact shapes and dimension (apart from the number of stories in multistory structures) are not important. The "ribs" (force field generators) can be made out of pieces of plastic coat hanger, wire wrapped in tape, or real bones (preferably clean, dry ones); try to give them an organic look, reminiscent of the wrecked ship in *Alien*, though not as extreme as the Tyrannid starships described in the *Warhammer 40,000* rules. One (X) is dull black and covered in scorch marks; the others should be white or bone colored, preferably with subtle mottled colors.

#### FIGURE MODELING

Use Citadel Space Marines (or other SF/military figures) for the Little Sisters of Purification. Although this is a female Chapter, there are no differences in external armor design. The exaggeratedly female armor worn by Adepta Sororitas priestesses is symbolic rather than practical. All Marines wear full armor, including helmets. Paint armor matte black with white insignia. There are 15 troops including three personality figures.

The two Tech-Priests wear lightly armed Marine armor, but the normal helmet is replaced by an armored sphere. Both are heavily laden with instruments, Grimoires of the Technologic





Arts, and other paraphernalia. Their armor is gray with black insignia.

Use apelike figures for the Jokaeros; these are not available from Citadel, so some improvisation may be needed. Several fantasy ranges include baboon figures, but equipment must be added. There are 20 Jokaeros, including four personality figures.

### SPECIAL RULES

You may find it helpful to use the optional rules on Hidden Movement (pg. 233) and on indoor movement (see Games Workshop's *Citi-Block*).

Each building in the station is rated for several factors; Toughness and Damage are rated normally. *Importance* and *Technical Difficulty* are special factors for this scenario:

**Importance (IMP):** If equipment in a building is destroyed, this number should be subtracted from a starting rating of 100. If the total drops below 50, the asteroid can't be used as a starship or to control the star; both sides have lost. If the total drops below 0, the asteroid is instantly destroyed. Some structures have IMP 0; this means that they are irrelevant to the continued operation of the asteroid.

**Technical Difficulty (TD):** Technical Difficulty is a modifier to attempts to understand or use the Ancient Slann technology, added to, or subtracted from, the 2D6 roll against Intelligence used to understand such equipment. For example, Spaak needs to make a 2D6 roll under 9 to understand any item. If the item has TD 2, the roll is modified to 2D6+2.

TD is also a modifier on Jokaero attempts to rebuild equipment. This rule was misprinted in the *Warhammer 40,000* rules, and should read:

*Rebuilding* is worked out as follows: In addition to the personality, at least two other Jokaero are needed. At the end of each turn spent stationary and working, roll a D6, adding the number of Jokaeros working on the project, and the number of turns spent working, to the roll. If the result is equal to or exceeds 6 + the number of components needed for the conversion (e.g. 6 + 10 for a defense laser), the modification is achieved successfully.

For this adventure TD is added to the number required for success; for example, using parts with TD 4, the roll needed for defense laser construction would be 20+. Most of the Ancient Slann equipment isn't usable for conversion; suitable items are noted in building descriptions. Inform the Jokaero player whenever Jokaero personalities enter an area containing such items.

### TERRAIN

Most of the upper surface of the asteroid is smooth, with a texture like weathered concrete.

The hole southwest of the plateau has near-vertical sides. Anything falling through ends up in the sun! See the rules on falling off, below.

The plateau sides and hollow sides (southeast of plateau) are *difficult* ground.

The rough terrain around the edges of the asteroid and inside the hole is *very difficult* ground; not only is it steep, but gravity fields continually vary in response to fluctuations of the

force field around the asteroid.

Anything falling off the asteroid accelerates downward, passing through a field interface which exposes them to the full gravity of the sun and the heat of its atmosphere. The field interface begins about a meter below the bottom of the asteroid; it looks like a shimmering curtain of bright yellow flame. It's possible to climb under the asteroid, if the climber can cling to the underside; any slip is instantly fatal, and movement will be extremely slow (no more than 1" per turn). To the sides, the field is 6" from the asteroid edges, curving up and out, then in again, as a flattened sphere (like a doughnut) 18" high. Anything penetrating the field interface is vaporized instantly.

### STRUCTURES

The descriptions list the number of sections and rough details of layout for each building. These suggestions may be modified if you can't find suitable materials for the buildings as described. All doors are normal sized unless other sizes are specified.

The Jokaeros know the main features of each structure; if you use building plans and detailed movement, the Jokaeros must be given a idea of every structure before play commences. It's also a good idea to give the Jokaero player a copy of the map.

#### Force Field "Ribs"

Toughness: 9      Damage: 9      IMP: 15 per rib      TD: 0

The ribs are a powerful field generator, powered by the energy they deflect. Anything approaching within 1 inch is struck by a bolt of lightning with the following statistics:

Strength: 10      Damage: D10      Save Modifier: -5

This attack will be repeated in any round in which any figure is within 1 inch of any rib; if two or more figures are in range of a rib, only the closest is struck.

#### Buildings 1 and 4: Laboratories

Toughness: 8      Damage: 8      IMP: 0      TD: 2

Two sections, entrances at north and south ends and between sections, spiral ramps from south sections up to towers 2 and 5, spiral ramps from north sections to structure 3. Roof height 4 meters.

These buildings are equipped with many interesting devices. A close examination reveals that they don't do much; they monitor the star and aren't part of the control equipment. There is high-tech junk equivalent to three weapon components in building 5.

If Spaak or Igor fail Intelligence rolls in either laboratory, they will decide that the equipment is absolutely vital and must be safeguarded at all costs.

#### Buildings 2 and 5: Residential

Toughness: 8      Damage: 8      IMP: 0      TD: 0

There are two sections (levels) per tower. There is a catwalk from the upper level of tower 2 to the plateau:

Toughness: 6      Damage: 6      Roof Height: 13 meters.

The levels are bare, unless the Jokaeros have left equipment.

### Building 3: Canteen

Toughness: 6      Damage: 4      IMP: 0      TD: 0

One section per 4-inch length. Ramps down into buildings 1 and 4 at east and west ends. Roof height 8 meters.

This is an enclosed horizontal bridge between buildings 1 and 4, containing a restaurant. There are huge glasslike windows on either side of the bridge, and the area is littered with tables, chairs, and other junk, all of Slann design. There's plenty of material for improvised weapons, such as clubs and spears. Jokaero will find scrap equivalent to one weapon component.

### Building 6: Wallow

Toughness: 7      Damage: 8      IMP: 0      TD: 0

Single sections, entrance on south side. Roof 3 meters. This building covers a meter-deep mud wallow, the Slann equivalent of a swimming pool. There is a two-meter paved rim.

Anyone venturing into the mud will find it *very difficult* ground, as a bog.

### Building 7: Control Room

Toughness: 9      Damage: 9      IMP: 25      TD: 3

Single section, entrance on east side. Roof height 3 meters. This is the main control center. If equipment inside is destroyed, the temperature inside the force field will rise to 60 degrees centigrade, and the entire asteroid will lurch and float at a 20-degree tilt, with the north end uphill.

If the Tech-Priests fail Intelligence rolls in this room, they will become fascinated by the equipment and flatly refuse to leave for 2D3 turns. They will attack anyone who tries to drag them out.

### Building 8: Warehouse

Toughness: 8      Damage: 6      IMP: 5      TD: 1

Two sections, very large doors at north and south end of west side. Roof height 5 meters.

This holds spare parts, components, and other junk. The Jokaero have unpacked some of the material, equivalent to four weapon components. The Tech-Priests may find these items interesting, but it's obvious that they are spare parts, not vital installations.

### Buildings 9 and 10: Life Support

Toughness: 9      Damage: 9      IMP: 5 per building      TD: 2

Single section, entrances at north and south ends. Roof heights 4 meters.

The equipment in these buildings keeps the station's air circulating and clean. If *both* are destroyed, the air will

become unbreathable after 10 days; not an immediate threat, but inconvenient for future activity. If the equipment is damaged, other systems will become more unstable.

If Tech-Priests fail their Intelligence rolls in these buildings, then they will be able to recognize the equipment, but they won't realize that damaging it harms other functions of the station.

### Building 11: Storage Tank

Toughness: 9      Damage: 9      IMP: 0      TD: 0

This is a featureless metal tank, height 12 meters. A ladder on the west side leads from the ground to the top. It's full of vile, sticky liquid resembling tar. If this is spilled, it will spread out in a sticky pool with a diameter large enough to reach the hole in the asteroid surface and the edge of the asteroid and then run off into the star. Troops entering the spill area can only move into the star. Troops entering the spill area can only move at half speed or less. It's Slann food concentrate and isn't toxic or flammable.

### Building 12: Teleporter

Toughness: 9      Damage: 9      IMP: 15      TD: 1

Single section, entrance at south end, roof height 5 meters.

The other end of the link from Lukaas. There are several cryptic controls. If the Tech-Priests study the equipment successfully, they'll realize that it can be used at any time, overriding the timer on Lukaas. However, the asteroid must be moved around the sun to a line of sight with Lukaas.

The Jokaeros have rigged a trip wire across the door, linked to a Multi-Melta fixed about the entrance.

### Building 13 and 14: Extremely Esoteric Devices

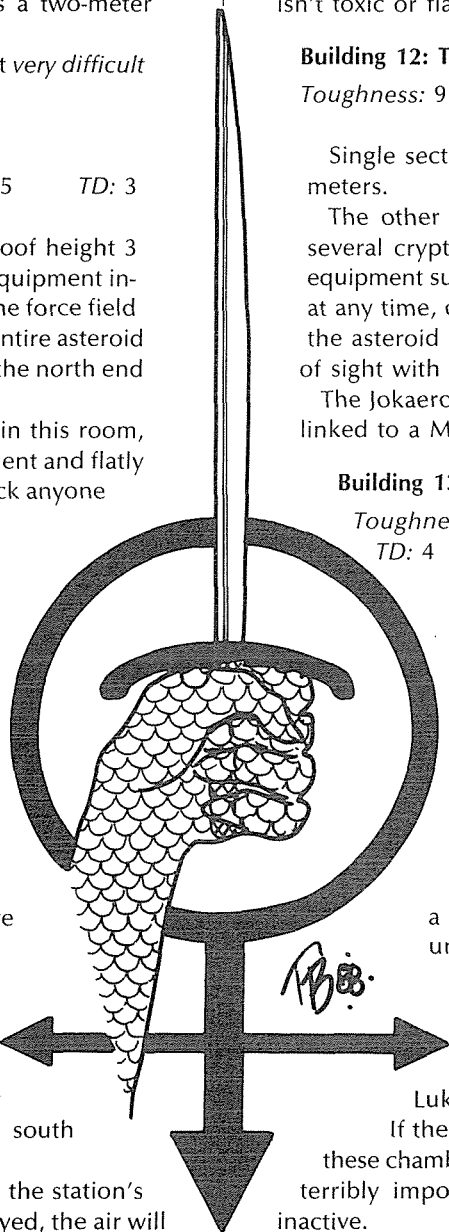
Toughness: 9      Damage: 9      IMP: 30 per building      TD: 4

One huge section per building, entrances in north and south ends, roof height 8 meters.

Each of these buildings houses a huge crystalline machine which flickers with odd moire light patterns. There are gigantic banks of cryptic controls, most dark. This is the equipment that actually keeps the star under control; no one other than a Tech-Priest or a Jokaero personality has any hope of understanding it.

The equipment is extremely fragile, disintegrating on a 1D6 roll of 6 if it takes any damage! If both machines are destroyed, there is no hope of saving Lukaas or building a spaceship.

If the Tech-Priests fail their Intelligence rolls in these chambers they'll assume that the equipment isn't terribly important; after all, most of it seems to be inactive.





If anyone other than a Jokaero scientist or a Tech-priest tries to tamper with the controls, there's a 5% chance that the star will go nova, and no chance of putting things right!

#### Building 15: Drive Room

Toughness: 9      Damage: 9      IMP: 10      TD: 2

Single section, entrances on east and west sides, roof height 4 meters. This building houses a large mechanism which is used to move the asteroid around inside the star.

If the Tech-Priests fail to identify the drive, they'll assume that the machinery is part of the teleporter and won't realize that it's possible to move the entire station.

There are five Jokaero recording animals here, as in buildings 1 and 4.

#### END GAME

When combat ends you should evaluate the situation. Check how much damage has been done, and if it will be possible to repair the station.

If the Humans have won, did either Tech-Priest survive? If so, and if there isn't too much damage, Lukaas can be saved. If Spaak has survived, the Humans may even be able to escape. However, repairs will take a day per five IMP point of damage. The Marines must go on short rations if the Tech-Priests are to survive to complete the work; in fact, it may be necessary to resort to eating the bodies of the Jokaero if there are a large number of Marine survivors.

Has Shk'leen infiltrated the Humans? If so, do the Marines have reason to suspect that there might be a Vampire in their midst? Dedicated Marines won't want to risk letting a Vampire live.

If the Humans win, the station may be irreparable, but the Tech-Priests may still fix the teleporter. Do the Marines return to Lukaas, to die with their comrades or warn of the impending doom?

If the Humans win but neither Tech-Priest survives, it isn't possible to "persuade" any Jokaero prisoners to do the repair work; they'll turn on the Humans and fight until killed. The Human briefing suggests mass suicide as an expiation for failure; unfortunately suicide is futile. The only alternative is random tampering with controls, which will either achieve nothing or make the star go nova. In either event Lukaas dies.

If the Jokaeros have won, did any of their personalities survive? Without them, and a few ordinary Jokaeros to hold the tools, the asteroid can't be converted to a starship. A kind GM may let them somehow produce another personality to lead them, but you aren't kind, are you? If the Jokaeros win, but can't modify the asteroid, they must decide what they will do. Random tampering may again lead to a nova, whether accidental or a deliberate act of revenge.

#### FUTURE SCENARIOS

If Lukaas is saved, the Empire probably gains some well preserved specimens of Slann technology. The information must be taken back to Earth and added to the libraries of the Adeptus Mechanicus. Someone may try to hijack it during the journey.

The teleporter link to the station is vulnerable and might be important if Lukaas is ever invaded. It's possible that someone

else may make a bid to hijack such a valuable resource. Terrorists might take over the teleporter on Lukaas and threaten to send a few really old-fashioned atomic weapons through to the asteroid if their demands aren't met.

Sooner or later the word of this discovery will get back to the Slann. Suppose they decide to reclaim their ancestors' property?

If Shk'leen escaped with the Marines, it'll try to hide and start a new life amongst the Humans. What if something goes wrong, and it's identity is revealed?

If Lukaas is doomed, but the Marines escape, there's a short time before the planet becomes uninhabitable. What happens in those last weeks? What if there's one starship in the port, with a few passenger spaces left, and several million rioting civilians trying to get on board. Who decides who will live and die? What if Shk'leen is one of the survivors?

If the Jokaeros win, they'll have a uniquely powerful weapon. Perhaps some Marines will be sent on a commando raid to recover it. A starship equipped to control solar reactions could be a formidable weapon; other alien races may covet it and decide to recover it from such undesirable occupants. Perhaps Shk'leen will decide to eliminate the Jokaeros and take up a new career as the ultimate terrorist, detonating the suns of worlds that don't accede to his demands.

#### PLAYER'S BRIEF: THE LITTLE SISTERS OF PURIFICATION

You are Sister-Lieutenant Elektra. The Tech-Priests tell you that Lukaas is doomed unless whatever made the sun flare up can be reversed. You and Sister-Troops from your unit are to escort two Tech-Priests through the teleporter and help them however you can. Their survival, and the salvation of Lukaas, are your only objectives; everything else is of secondary importance. You do not expect to survive this mission.

#### The Battlefield

You have no idea where you are going or what you will be up against. Your unit and the Tech-Priests are crammed into the teleporter, barely able to move, waiting to transmit to an unknown destination. Two Sister-Troops are making bets on the probability that you will materialize in the heart of the sun; as you rebuke them and lead the chorus of your unit's battle hymn, you wonder how they would collect if a disaster did occur. The GM will inform you when the teleporter has operated and only then may you see the battlefield.

#### Objectives and Special Rules

You do not expect to return. The teleporter operates once every 27 days, and there's no way that you could carry supplies for such an extended period. If necessary, Sister-Troops will be sacrificed to keep the Tech-Priests alive. Since this is a suicide mission, you and your Sister-Troops are almost beyond fear. There is a -2 modifier on all Rout rolls.

Spaak and Igor know much about the technology of the Ancient Slann; they may guess the function of any device or installation (e.g., the timer in the teleporter) after a turn's undisturbed study and a 2D6 roll under Intelligence. The GM may secretly impose modifiers to this roll and will determine the results of success or failure. The other Humans don't have the theoretical background needed to solve such puzzles; in any case, strange magics are no concern of a warrior. If Spaak and

Igor are together, only Spaak should make the Intelligence roll; if they are apart, both may roll under the appropriate circumstances.

If the mission fails and the Tech-Priests are killed, you must hope that you can find some way to save Lukaas. If all else fails, you intend to atone by ritual suicide.

### Tactics

You have no idea where you're going or what you'll find when you get there. Tactics must be generated in response to events.

### Troops

Your command consists of yourself, Sister-Sergeant Modesty, Sister-Sergeant Chastity, and 12 Troopers, plus the Tech-Priests. All are equipped with standard Marine powered armor including communicator, full life support, and autosenses. You are immune to vacuum, toxic atmospheres, gas weapons, and flash effects; if you materialize inside the sun without any other protection, forget it! Each suit has concentrated rations, water, and air for 48 hours.

Elektra, Modesty, and Chastity are personalities; the other Sister-Troops are normal troops. The Tech-Priests may only fight in self-defense if they are caught in close combat; they can move independently if you wish. Under no circumstances may they initiate combat or take command of troops. Under certain circumstances the GM may make the Tech-Priests act independently.

All officers, NCOs, and Sister-Troops carry bolt pistols, knives, and four frag grenades. Five of the Sister-Troops have launchers, each carrying two plasma missiles and six frag missiles; remember that missiles probably can't be replaced once used. All the rest have bolt rifles and six frag grenades. Spaak has a power sword; Igor, a bolt pistol.

### Profiles

#### SISTER-LIEUTENANT ELEKTRA

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
4	5	6	4	4	3	6	2	9	8	8	9

*Equipment:* Bolt pistol, shuriken catapult, Jokaero digital las-pistol, four plasma grenades, armor, flight pack.

#### SISTER-SERGEANT MODESTY

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
4	5	4	4	4	3	5	2	8	8	8	8

*Equipment:* Bolt pistol, heavy plasma gun, 4 frag grenades, armor, flight pack.

#### SISTER-SERGEANT CHASTITY

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
4	5	4	4	4	3	5	2	8	8	8	8

*Equipment:* Bolt pistol, heavy plasma pistol, heavy plasma gun, 4 frag grenades, armor, flight pack.

#### SISTER-TROOPERS (× 12)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
4	4	4	4	3	1	4	1	8	8	8	8

*Equipment:* All have armor; 6 have bolt pistol, missile launcher with combat accessory, 2 plasma missiles, 4 frag missiles; 6 have bolt pistol, bolt rifle, 6 frag grenades, armor, flight pack.

#### TECH-PRIEST SPAAK

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
4	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	7	9	7	7

*Equipment:* Instruments, power sword, armor.

#### NOVICE-TECHNICIAN IGOR

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
4	3	3	4	3	1	3	1	7	6	7	7

*Equipment:* Instruments, med kit, bolt pistol, armor.

### Victory

This is a fight to the finish. The GM will determine whether the situation allows the salvation of Lukaas, using special rules in the scenario.

Lukaas Saved	25 points
Tech-Priest Spaak Killed	-10 points
Tech-Priest Igor Killed	-5 points
Sister-Lieutenant Elektra Killed	-3 points
Sister-Sergeant Killed	-2 points
Per Marine Killed	-1 point

### PLAYER'S BRIEF: JOKAEROS

You are Shk'leen, a Vampire who has lived as a Jokaero for many years. Unfortunately you have never been a popular Jokaero and were thrown off your ship when it got overcrowded.

Instruments showed that an ancient Slann device was buried on Lukaas, and the Jokaero used the teleporter they found to take you to a strange asteroid base which floats inside a star's atmosphere. They intend to convert the base into a starship; you have no objection.

You suspect the Humans will arrive eventually, but can't destroy the teleporter because you know that it is linked to other systems, including the force fields that protect the asteroid. If Humans do arrive, and seem likely to defeat your unit, you have decided to take a Human's place and escape with them when they leave.

If you do defeat the Humans, you may have a grandstand view of the destruction of their planet. Won't that be fun!

You are strongly advised to read the *Warhammer 40,000* sections concerning Vampires, Jokaeros, and Psionics before running this unit.

### The Battlefield

You have a good idea of the nature of and function of all the equipment in this base and have assessed the importance of the buildings as follows:

**Force Field "Ribs":** Vital. The ribs are electrically live; anything

approaching within 1 inch is struck by a bolt of lightning!

**Buildings 1 and 4:** Laboratories, unimportant

**Buildings 2 and 5:** Residential, unimportant

**Building 3:** Canteen, unimportant

**Building 6:** Mud poor, unimportant

**Building 7:** Control room, vital

**Building 8:** Warehouse, unimportant

**Buildings 9 and 10:** Life support, vital

**Building 11:** Tank, full of rotten Slann food, unimportant

**Building 12:** Teleporter. This seems to be linked to other installations, so you can't destroy it, but you have booby-trapped it.

**Buildings 13 and 14:** Star control machines, vital

**Building 15:** Drives, vital

**Objectives and Special Rules**

This will be a surprise attack; you don't know when the Humans will arrive and you can't keep the Jokaeros ready to do battle indefinitely. If Humans invade, you want to drive them back or destroy them. You don't have enough control of the Jokaero to keep the teleporter under guard and don't want to risk destroying it. The booby trap you've left should warn of any attack. For the moment your forces are spread out over the surface of the asteroid.

None of the Jokaeros know that Shk'leen is a Vampire. Jokaeros learning this directly (by seeing him change form or use psionic powers) must immediately make a Rout test and will turn against him (although they will still fight Humans). Jokaeros don't talk but can pass the information by gesture and grunts; it spreads as troops meet.

The group as a whole has several items of equipment which are too heavy to be continuously carried by any individual Jokaero and have been dumped until needed. You must choose locations for each of the following items *before* positioning Jokaeros: 1 Multi-Melta, 1 Power field generator (maximum field size 9"), 1 Phase field generator, 2 power boards, 1 bike (hoverer).

**Tactics**

When the battle begins, three units of five Jokaeros are led by Shk'leen and two Jokaero personalities; the remaining Jokaeros (a personality and four troops) are in random locations. Roll 1D20 for each group or individual.

**JOKAERO LOCATIONS**

Die Roll	Result
1-10	In the building indicated
11-13	Building 13
14-16	Building 14
17-18	Near "ribs" to right
19-20	Near "ribs" to left

Lone Jokaero must move to group on the nearest Jokaero personality before taking any offensive action.

**Troops**

Your command consists of a total of 20, including yourself, as well as three Jokaero champions (who are nameless), and 16 other Jokaeros.

**Profiles**

**SHK'LEEN (VAMPIRE)**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
4	6	6	5	5	3	6	3	10	10	10	10

*Psychic Abilities*

*Psi-Point Cost*

Steal Mind 4

Ectoplasmic Mist 4

Telekinese 2 1

Sense Presence 3

Telepathy 3 6

*Equipment:* Sword, bolt pistol, plasma pistol, Melta-Bomb grenades, carapace armor

**JOKAERO CHAMPION 1**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
4	2	4	3	3	1	4	1	9	?	7	7

*Equipment:* Bolt pistol, shuriken catapult, cameleoline cloak, flight pack

**JOKAERO CHAMPION 2**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
4	2	4	3	3	1	4	1	9	?	7	7

*Equipment:* Las-pistol (digital), Melta-Gun, cameleoline cloak

**JOKAERO CHAMPION 3**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
3	4	2	4	3	3	1	4	1	9	?	7

*Equipment:* Plasma pistol, auto-gun, flak armor, air filters, eye protection (drops), flight pack

**JOKAEROS (TYPICAL, × 16)**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	Wp
4	1	3	2	3	1	3	1	9	?	7	7

*Equipment:* Normally Jokaero carry a random assortment. However, Shk'leen has used his powers to enforce some uniformity. All carry tools and equipment as follows: 8 with plasma gun, needle pistol, mesh armor, four plasma grenades; 4 with bolter, four photon grenades, four plasma grenades, flak armor, knife; 4 with Melta-Guns, power gloves, flight packs

**Victory**

The game ends when all of one side is subdued. The GM will determine whether the situation then allows construction of a starship using special rules in the main scenario.

\*Asteroid Converted to Starship 25 points

\*Shk'leen Infiltrates Humans and

Escapes to Del Monte's World 15 points

Shk'leen Killed -5 points

Per Jokaero Personality Killed -3 points

Per Jokaero Killed -2 points

\*Only *one* of these conditions may be claimed.

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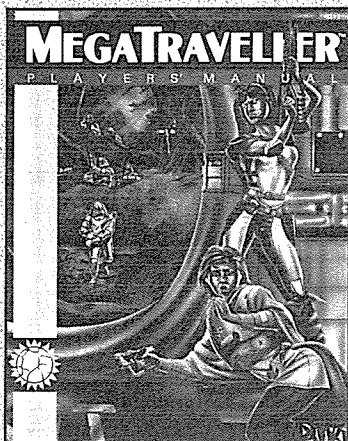
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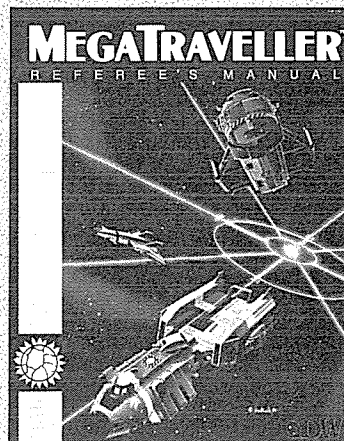
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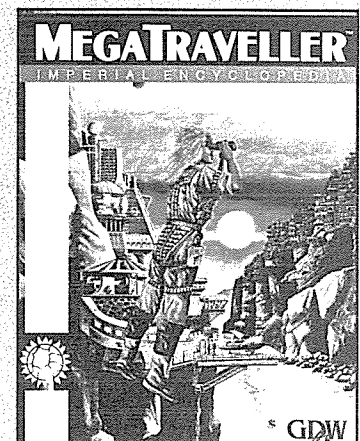
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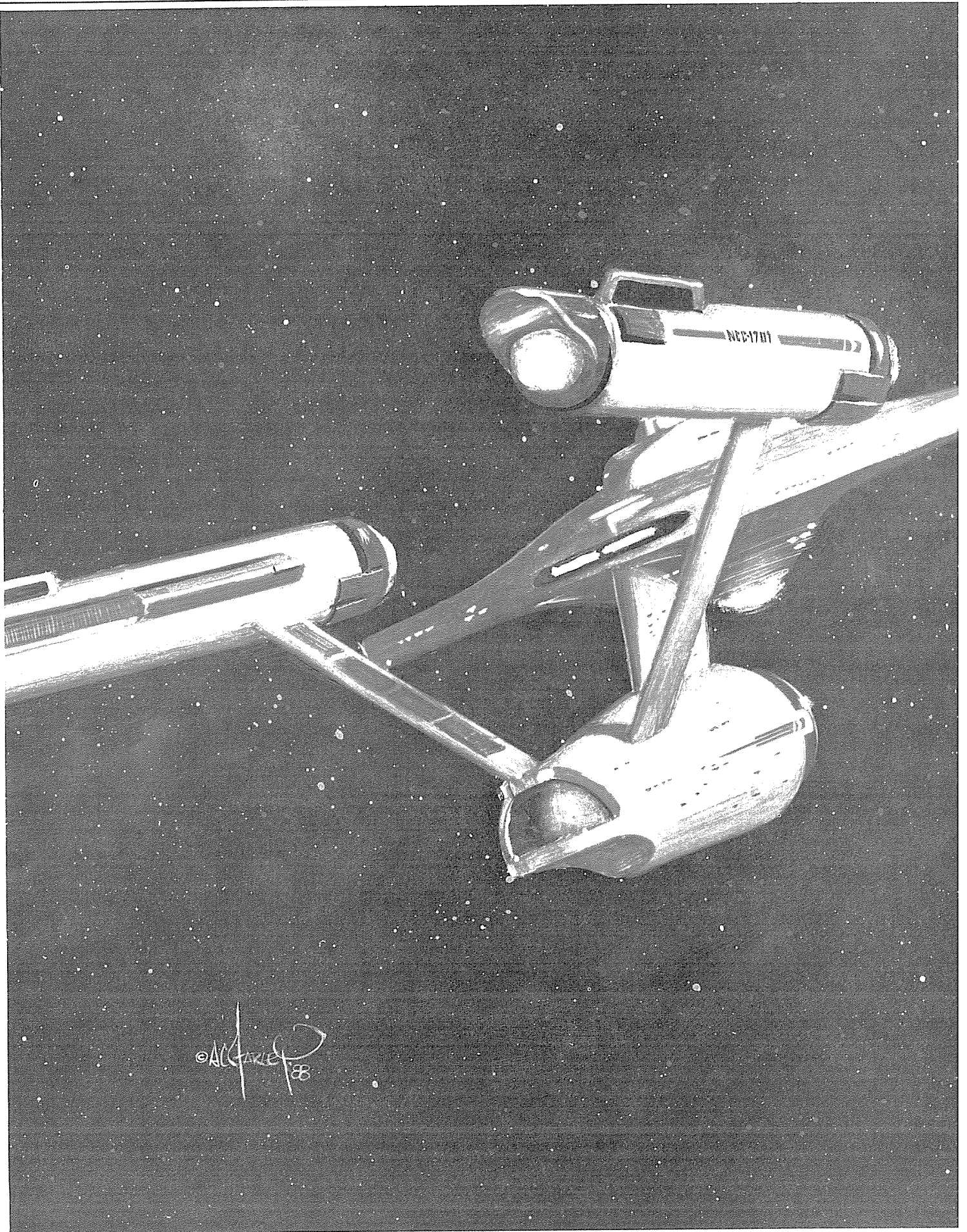
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# Doppelganger

by Marcus L. Rowland

...URGENT...PRIORITY 1 TRANS-  
MISSION...EXPEDITE...

FROM: STARFLEET COMMAND VIA  
STARBASE 9

TO: CAPTAIN, USS ENTERPRISE

SENT: STARDATE 2/1005.20, 1450 HOURS  
MESSAGE BEGINS ELECTROMAGNETIC  
TRANSMISSIONS (RADIO SIGNALS)  
RECEIVED FROM SYSTEM LK-1257 THIS  
DATE TRANSLATE AS URGENT REQUEST  
FOR HELP STOP TIME LAG TWENTY-  
FOUR YEARS FROM TRANSMISSION  
STOP ASTRONOMERS REPORT THIS  
SYSTEM HAS AN UNSTABLE STAR IN PRE-  
NOVA CONDITION STOP NO PREVIOUS  
CONTACT WITH THIS SYSTEM RECORD-  
ED STOP ESTIMATED TIME TO NOVA IN-  
DETERMINATE AT THIS RANGE STOP  
MINIMUM ONE MONTH MAXIMUM  
TWENTY YEARS STOP YOU ARE ONLY  
SHIP IN AREA STOP YOU ARE ORDERED  
TO PROCEED TO SYSTEM LK-1257 AND IN-  
ITIATE RESCUE OPERATIONS STOP  
MESSAGE ENDS

## Captain's Log,

Stardate 2/1005.26, 16.05 hours

We entered system LK-1257 to find that  
the star was only a few hours from nova.  
Sensors detected no sign of life, and we

*This is a Star Trek  
adventure for three  
to six players, with  
the bridge team of a  
Federation starship.  
The original USS  
Enterprise and the  
crew shown in the  
TV series are most  
suitable for this  
adventure.*

*were still combing the system when the  
star exploded. Our deflector screens stood  
up to the radiation, and the sickbay  
reports no casualties. However, some side  
effect of the blast seems to have drained  
our antimatter pods. We can't use our  
warp drives and must stay at sublight  
speeds until we can find a new supply.*

*This scenario is dedicated  
to the late Philip K. Dick.*

**Captain's Log Supplemental,  
Stardate 2/1005.26, 19.42 hours**

*Evidently something serious occurred, more than an antimatter leakage. We are detecting Federation signals now. All messages seem to be dated at least twelve years in the future, from Stardate 2/2212.25 onwards. Something is very wrong.*

**REFEREE'S INFORMATION—SUMMARY OF SITUATION**

*I met someone who looks a lot like you—she does the things you do, but she is an IBM....*

—Electric Light Orchestra, *Time*

This scenario involves an unusual situation which must not be revealed to players. The crew of the "*Enterprise*" believe that they have somehow traveled through time, but the lapse of time is entirely natural. The *real Enterprise* visited system LK-1257 over 12 years ago and found a world inhabited by androids who had survived a chemical war which killed their masters. The androids were programmed to believe that they were alive but were actually controlled by a huge central computer. The central computer attempted to take over the *Enterprise*, intending to set up a duplicate civilization on a new world. However, Kirk and his associates managed to confuse the system, paralyzing it and allowing the *Enterprise* to escape. Due to the Federation's distrust of robot civilizations, the system was never visited again.

While the *Enterprise* was in orbit around the robot world, it was scanned in great detail. In the 12 years between the departure of the *real Enterprise* and the nova explosion, the robots built a working duplicate, complete with android crew who have been programmed to think and act like the real officers and crew of the *Enterprise*. The level of programming gives prominent officers and crew (e.g., player characters and important NPCs) a superficial grasp of the real person's life history and behavior within the limits recorded in the *Enterprise* data banks. Since the *Enterprise* didn't carry extensive data about unimportant crewmembers, other than the bare details of service record and medical history, such NPCs are even more wooden than is usual in an RPG.

While the androids were building the *Enterprise* replica, the central "brain" was moved into space, shorn of many data banks to reduce size and mass, and finally installed as the starship's computer. The strain of the move, plus the strong personalities of the elite of Starfleet, proved too much for it to handle, and it gradually became schizophrenic. The final breakdown was triggered by the nova explosion. For the moment, all androids have forgotten their origin and believe that they are real Starfleet personnel. The controlling computer has become catatonic, responding to stimuli as though it were a normal ship's computer. If it is destroyed or deactivated, everyone will "die." Everyone on board is convinced that the ship is the *real Enterprise*, and that there is nothing strange going on, apart from the power loss. Initially, "Doctor McCoy" will imagine that he sees normal vital signs on his instruments, and if anyone is injured, the team will imagine that they see blood. As time passes this illusion will weaken.

The ship was launched a few hours before the nova explosion. The log entries summarize the false memories by which the robots rationalize their situation. The replica isn't perfect;

for example, the robots couldn't synthesize enough antimatter to fuel the warp drives. The androids have sufficient free will to worry about their apparent loss of time and attempt to investigate it. They will also begin to notice strange inconsistencies of memory and behavior, engineering and medical anomalies, and other problems.

**Special Rules for Androids**

The following special rules apply to androids.

1. All artistic and "human-related" skills are at -25%, though characters may believe they are higher.
2. None of the robots have psionic abilities; (however, "Spock" can Mind Meld with "Kirk" and other androids electronically, thinking it is a psionic ability.)
3. Skills which require the cooperation of several characters gain a +20% bonus per additional android involved. Since they are actually remotely controlled by the central computer, cooperation is unusually easy.
4. Helm skills, gunnery, and other operation involving the ship's computer gain a +30% bonus.

All modifiers should be applied secretly.

Obviously this scenario does not allow normal advancement of skills and experience, and the referee is advised not to run it as part of a campaign. Use with a pregenerated crew, preferably that of the original *Enterprise*, is advisable.

**PHASE 1: INTO THE MAELSTROM**

The "*Enterprise*" carries 25 percent of the antimatter needed for warp drive operations. The warp engines are almost dead, producing just enough power to allow a "warm start" if more fuel can be obtained, plus a small surplus (four points per drive) which can be used for sublight operations. The impulse drives produce another four points of power.

It would take years to reach another system at sublight speed. Exhaustion of food and life support failures are inevitable during such a prolonged flight. In fact these problems aren't as urgent as they seem; the robots don't need oxygen, and food is simply stored in internal plastic bags as part of their "lifestyle." Naturally the androids have forgotten this, and behave as though they have normal human needs.

A real Federation starship could signal a fuel tender, but the coding crystals used to authenticate genuine Starfleet communications changed several years ago. Starfleet knows that the *real Enterprise* (the new ship built after James T. Kirk saved Earth) is in another sector and will assume that a signal from the replica is a joke or enemy decoy. Several interstellar empires and scores of pirates have cracked those old codes by now. Signals will be ignored or at best investigated by a real Federation ship after several weeks. Any reply from Starfleet mentions that the location of the *Enterprise* is known and accuses the team of being impostors.

Theories likely to be aired after such a signal include a timewarp, which has sent the "*Enterprise*" into a real or alternate future, a shift into a parallel universe running 12 years ahead of the Federation, or the possibility that the *real Enterprise* is some sort of duplicate. Obviously there isn't enough data to verify any of these ideas.

Analysis may suggest possibilities, revealed by skill rolls:

**Astron/Astrop:** Nova explosions produce huge amounts of energy, and it is possible that some antimatter was formed in

the blast. If the system is searched, the *Enterprise* might find enough antimatter to fuel the warp drives. (True, for the purposes of this adventure.)

**Physics:** If a time warp was involved, some trace should remain. Usually such anomalies leave a slowly healing "rift" in the normal continuum, which might offer a route back to "reality." A nova releases vast amounts of energy and might create such a stress point. (True but irrelevant.)

**Comp Op:** As Astron/Astrop, 64% probability.

Characters with Astron/Astrop will soon realize that the nova only occurred a few hours ago, not 12 years. The star is still producing huge flares and is still expanding, and the outer planets haven't been destroyed, though they obviously won't survive for much longer.

A search of the system will be hampered by the clouds of ionized gas and meteorites which surround the star. There is a 15% chance per round that deflector fields will take 1D4 points of damage. Each point of damage should be assigned randomly to one of the shields, using 1D10 to determine the shield affected.

Die Roll	Shield Affected	Shield Number
1-3	Forward	1
4-5	Port Forward	6
6-7	Starboard Forward	2
8	Port Aft	5
9	Starboard Aft	3
10	Aft	4

It is possible that more than one point will affect a single shield, and it should be remembered that skill can increase the effectiveness of deflectors.

There are small quantities of antimatter in the system produced by the nova explosion. Each time a sensor roll is made, there is a 25-percent chance that some will be in detection range. It will be detected even if the team is looking for some other object or phenomenon, such as a time warp or remnant of the former inhabitants of the system.

Once antimatter is found, the difficult problem of loading it must be solved. Each "chunk" of antimatter represents "2D20 percent" of the *Enterprise's* minimum fuel requirement for warp drive. If simply beamed aboard, it will explode in the transporter bay, destroying the ship and everyone aboard. However, it is possible to use tractor and pressor beams to maneuver such chunks into range of fuel-loading systems on the twin warp drive pods. This is an extremely delicate procedure and requires two skill rolls. The Navigator must make a Starship Navigator roll to operate the Tractor beams systems. A round later the Chief Engineer (or whoever is supervising the operation *from the engineering hull*) must make a Warp Drive Technology roll to maneuver the fuel into the pods without contacting normal matter. If the Navigator's roll fails, the lump of antimatter is lost. There is a 15-percent chance that it will strike the shields for 2D10 damage. If the Engineer's roll fails, there is a 5-percent chance that the antimatter will strike the hull *inside the deflectors* for 1D20 damage to one pod. If this doesn't happen, the shields will throw the antimatter clear of the hull, and the procedure must be started again.

During both rounds any damage to the ship may affect the operation. For example, a "Bridge Personnel Out" damage roll

requires the Navigator to save or lose control of all equipment, including the tractor beam.

The drives can be started again as power plants, though not for warp operations, once 60 percent or more of the warp drive minimum has been loaded. The Engineer must make another Warp Drive Technology roll (Modifier: Add 100 minus the percentage fuel level) to start the drives. Failure results in a delay of 1D6+2 rounds, and the loss of 5 percent of the antimatter.

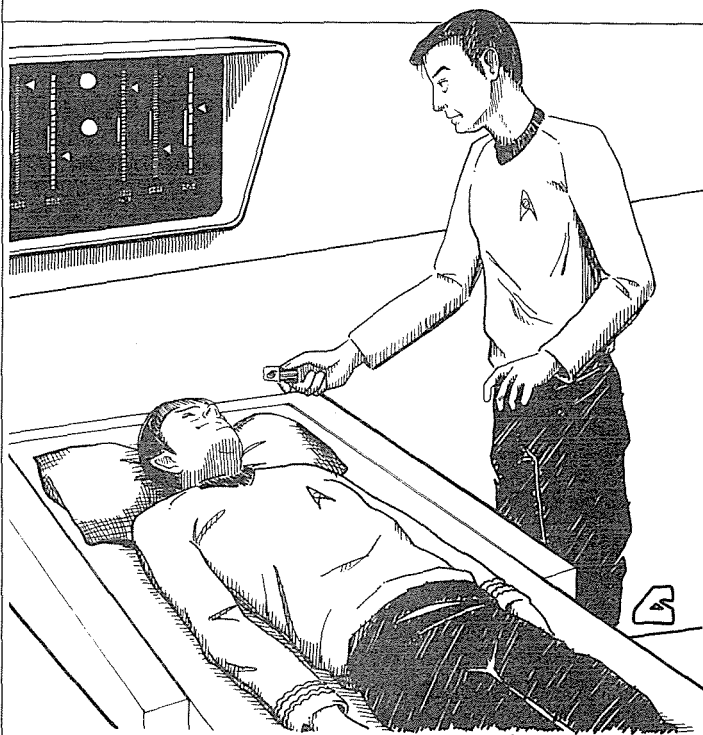
As soon as a successful attempt is made, the levels of power indicated below become available:

Percentage Fuel	Power Output
60-70	8 points per warp engine
71-80	12 points per warp engine
81-90	16 points per warp engine
91-95	18 points per warp engine
96-99	20 points per warp engine

The engineer cannot "push" the power output above 20 per warp engine until enough antimatter to achieve warp drive has been loaded. Up to three times the drive minimum can be loaded to give a reliable fuel load.

If the players scan or search the system, they will find that all of the inner planets have been engulfed by the explosion. Outer planets, which were formerly gas giants, have lost their moons and most of their atmospheres and are surrounded by haloes of gas plasma. If the ship approaches within five million kilometers of such planets, it will start to take 1D6 points of randomly allocated damage every round. Antimatter won't be found near such planets, since it would explode as soon as it entered the gas clouds.

If the *Enterprise* searches the system after fueling the drives, no sign of a "time warp" will be found. However, the object described in "Phase 2," below, will inevitably be found during such a search.





## PHASE 2: SPACE ODDITY

As the *Enterprise* leaves the system (or during any prolonged search), the sensor operator detects a massive object, drifting at low sublight speed. Sensors show it as an asteroid. However, the scan readout shows unusual details:

Mass	1825 kilotons
Maximum Length	350 meters
Maximum Width	260 meters
Maximum Height	104 meters
Volume (Estimated)	$9.46 \times 10^9$ cubic meters
Density (Estimated)	0.19 grams per cubic centimeter
Assay	Ferrous metal 45%
	Nonferrous metal 35%
	Silicon compounds 10%
	Radioactives 5%
	Unidentified 5%
Life Forms	None
Temperature	375000K (102000C)
Rotation	12 rpm

If an object of this size were solid, its mass would be 10 to 50 times greater.

As the *Enterprise* approaches, the object becomes visible on viewscreens. It is an immense box, evidently some sort of spaceship or station. (It is, of course, the orbital dock which built the replica *Enterprise*.)

The structure is hot and radioactive, spins lopsidedly, and is obviously damaged. However, the damage is mainly confined to ruptured welds, broken panels, searing of internal components, and other secondary effects. The main structural elements (thick plates and girders) are undamaged, apart from minor twisting and strains. It resembles a huge factory, built around a gigantic oblong compartment, with folding doors partly blocking an open end. Any attempt to transport aboard is made at -10%, due to static and the rapid rotation of the structure. Communications are at -15%, also due to static. Sensors are at -20%, and if the structure is scanned while humans are aboard, no life forms will be detected (since the "humans" aren't alive!). Tell the sensors officer that there is too much static. There is also too much static to detect electronic equipment, such as the androids.

The main compartment is 340 meters long, 160 meters wide, and 90 meters high (large enough to hold the *Enterprise*, though this must not be stressed). A side structure adjoining this compartment has four decks, three of which are crammed with machinery; the top deck (A) was evidently pressurized and used by some form of crew.

The deck plans show these four decks and the main structure. Damage is not shown on the plans, but described in the compartment notes below. If rooms aren't described, they are empty.

The station is rotating around its center of gravity, which passes through the large assembly bay. Centrifugal force gently pushes the explorers outward and upwards so it may be more convenient to walk on walls or the ceiling than on the deck.

### Deck A

This deck was originally pressurized and still shows the rem-

nants of comfortable furnishings. The fittings are too badly damaged for accurate analysis. All doors are electrically opening iris valves. An external power supply (e.g., a phaser 2 power pack) must be used to open them, since there is no power on the station. Each door movement drains a power point.

**1:** The main control room. All the instruments are dead; they are extremely cryptic.

**2:** A canteen or restaurant. Round tables are fixed to the floor, centrifugal force has thrown chairs against the ceiling. Machines on the forward bulkhead resemble food synthesizers but are of alien design. They are badly damaged.

**3:** A landscaped area, with dead hydroponic lawns, trees, and plants. The vegetation is burned and the windows shattered.

**4:** Airlock and lit down to lower decks (self-powered from backup supply). There are no environmental suits near the airlock, and they will not be found anywhere on the station. There are no facilities for refilling or storing such suits. This clue should not be pointed out to the team unless they specifically look for such equipment.

**5:** A library containing thousands of scrolls in an alien language. Pictures illustrate a humanoid alien race, distinguished by brilliant violet skin and faceted eyes. Most of the books are scorched, shredded by glass fragments, and otherwise damaged. Nothing in these books indicates that robots later took over the planet. (One section of shelves, near the back, contains several thousand books copied from the data banks of the real *Enterprise*, during the visit 12 years before. These books are in languages used in the Federation. If the team check, they'll find that there's nothing they don't already have in the *Enterprise* library. Don't comment on this.)

**6, 7:** Storage.

**8, 9:** Comprehensively equipped medical rooms. Most of the equipment seems to be of technical level 7 or 8, although it is all badly damaged. Most loose fittings have been thrown toward the outer wall. (There are no traces of blood or other biological materials in the compartment.)

**10:** Life support equipment. The remnants of a chemical plant for purifying and recycling air, built at technical level 7 or 8. (Anyone with Life Sup. Tech. skill will recognize the components. The equipment is too badly damaged to determine its state (unused) when the nova occurred.)

**11:** Swimming pool. The compartment is airtight and filled with steam at moderately high pressure. When the valve is opened, the corridor outside fills with an opaque fog of steam, quickly forming tiny snowflakes which evaporate in seconds.

**12:** Dormitories, 24 bunks.

**13:** Dormitories, 12 bunks.

**14:** Single cabins. These were originally luxurious, but have been burned beyond recognition (one belonged to the "Kirk" robot, one to "McCoy," the third to "Spock").

### Deck B

The engineering deck has no windows. On this and lower decks all doors are huge metal slabs, requiring an external power supply for opening. Each door drains five power points.

**15:** An airlock (designed to block radiation) leads to a compartment holding an old-fashioned laser fusion reactor. It is not operational. Fittings suggest that it was used for high-energy physics work, as well as being a power source. A Physics or Warp Drive Technology roll identifies it as a primitive

antimatter synthesis plant, with magnetic storage and delivery systems leading out into the main compartment of the factory. It is cold and can't be reactivated.

**16:** Artificial gravity generators. These devices, built at technical level 8, are a familiar design resembling Federation technology.

**17, 18:** Low-powered deflector shield generators, burnt out under the overload of the nova.

#### Decks C and D

(These decks were used to assemble the *Enterprise* replica.) Both decks are open on the side facing the main compartment and littered with girders, pieces of cable, and other evidence of hasty construction work.

**19:** Four huge machines, not easily recognized, are massive industrial robots. Each has a control cabin and is equipped with tractor-pressor units, laser cutters, welding torches, drills, and other tools. The spherical robot bodies are connected to fixed bases by massive umbilical cables. Given power, they could reach any part of the main compartment.

**20:** Empty (liquid helium) tanks. Insulation and cooling systems make it easy to guess that they were used for cryogenic fluids; a tricorder can identify minute traces as helium.

**21:** The upper section of this compartment is simply a railed hole in the deck. Thousands of cables and waveguides enter this area, but whatever was installed here has been removed. (An Electronics Tech roll identifies the remaining equipment as computer communications links, capable of handling hundreds of megabytes a second. The technological level is at least 9. Helium lines from the gas tanks (location 20) also terminate in this space. The lower section (on deck D) has removable partition walls to either side of a 10-meter entrance.)

**22:** Sixteen large machines are industrial robots, fitted with grav mechanisms and tools. They are magnetically anchored to the deck. The robots were obviously radio controlled and had rechargeable power supplies. The robot next to the lift still retains some power. When anyone enters deck D, it swings around, wielding a laser welding torch. The beam almost strikes the person entering (the referee should pretend to roll for a hit) but just misses. It swings around twice more, missing each time (safety circuits stop it from hitting), then stops as the stored power is exhausted.

**23:** Empty metal cylinders, about three by two meters, litter the floor of this area. (They were used to ship the androids to the stations, but the packing foam has melted, and it is impossible to tell the shape of the original contents.)

**24:** A massive cargo bay, holding huge freight containers. All are empty. An airlock (25) leads to a docking adapter of unfamiliar design (26).

From these clues it should be obvious that the "factory" is a dockyard, probably designed to produce starships. It may be apparent that the natives had knowledge of the Federation. However, the star continues to expand, and the station becomes lethally hot and radioactive two hours after it is discovered, breaking up as critical components fail an hour later. The *Enterprise* can't tow it fast enough to remove it from danger, and the team will begin to run into problems if they try.

#### PHASE 3: THE ENGINES WILL'NA TAKE IT...

Starbase 9 is the nearest Federation outpost, 30 days away

at Warp 3. The team may wish to go there to find out what has happened.

Since the robots lacked engineering materials used by the Federation, they often substituted inferior components which weren't as rugged as those installed in the real *Enterprise*. At speeds above Warp 3, the ship begins to develop mysterious engineering faults which diagnose as component failures, fatigue, and stress. An Engineering roll is required for each hour the ship is at Warp 4, per half hour at Warp 5 (remember that these rolls represent continuous attention, and that even "Scot-ty" believes that he needs to sleep occasionally). If any roll fails, the ship needs repairs and must drop to sublight speeds for 2D6 hours. The drives can't reach Warp 6 or 7, and immediately develop severe antimatter instabilities, requiring shutdown, 1D6+1 hours maintenance, and a cold start.

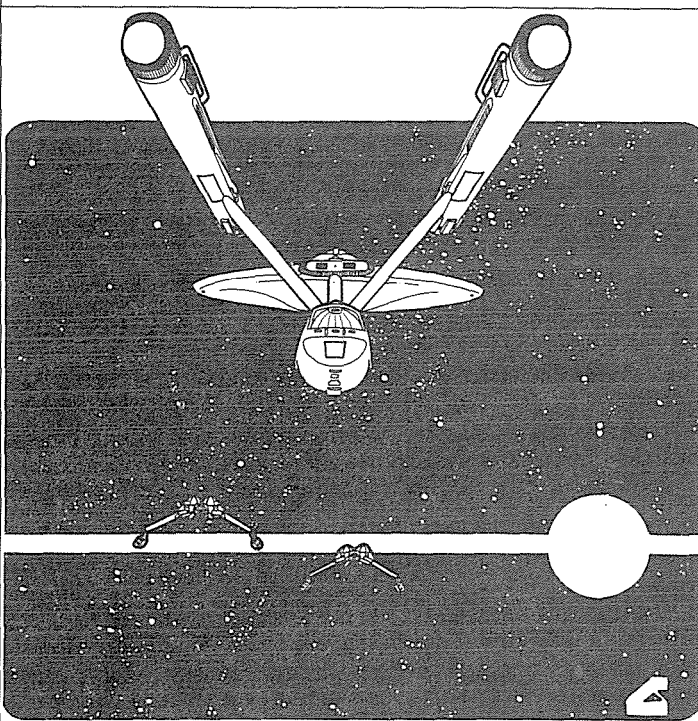
Computer checks won't suggest any reason for equipment failures. Damaged components don't seem to meet the specifications demanded by Starfleet. Radiation damage, graft, or sabotage will probably be suspected.

As the ship travels, the team may attempt to communicate with the Federation. Lacking correct coding, they must try to convince Starfleet that they are the real *Enterprise*. The genuine *Enterprise* is on an important diplomatic mission, escorted by four smaller warships, and Starfleet won't believe that it has suddenly traveled hundreds of light-years to another sector.

This period should be played as a time of mounting frustration, leading to the next major incident of the scenario.

#### PHASE 4: CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

Decide whether to run phase 4a, a low-key encounter with some aliens, or phase 4b, a space battle against two Klingon cruisers. Phase 4a is probably best if you and your players are happy to continue role playing; 4b works well if you or the team want some action, but you may need the *Star Trek 3 Starship Combat Game*. It's possible to run both incidents, a day or two apart, but this may be risky if players are already suspicious.



Whichever you run, things start happening about a week after nova. At 0330 hours, as the *"Enterprise"* plods through space, the watch officer detects warp drive radiation at extreme range. If the team is expecting rescue, they may be in for a little disappointment....

#### Phase 4a: It's Life, Jim, But Not As We Know It

The scanners pick up a strange spherical spacecraft, on a converging course at slightly higher warp speed. It matches velocity and heading. After a few minutes (or after any attempt to make contact), it scans the *Enterprise*, then transmits a signal in an unknown language. The signal can be decoded by the communications officer if a Comp Op roll is made, and it translates as "Greetings, the (untranslatable) salutes you."

An exchange of signals produces the following information: The creatures in the alien ship are chlorine breathers (literally, "respirers of the 17th element") on a religious pilgrimage, traveling to the galactic core to pray for its continued stability. They detected the *Enterprise* and diverted from their mission to exchange knowledge. If aid is requested, they apologize and say that they can't help the *Enterprise* return to Federation space; their version of warp drive doesn't allow towing and spares would be totally incompatible.

If the alien ship is scanned, sensors register intense cold, high radiation levels, and chlorine gas. There are 16 life forms in the vessel, all much larger than humans. After a few seconds the aliens shields harden, blocking sensor operations.

As the aliens communicate, it should become apparent that they believe that they are talking to one creature, called the *Enterprise*, not a ship carrying hundreds of individuals. They express admiration of the "serving mechanisms" which maintain its systems. After transmitting the equivalent of several hundred books and receiving whatever signals the *Enterprise* sends, they return to their original course. If the *Enterprise* attacks the alien ship, it won't retaliate or take any apparent damage, but will accelerate to Warp 8 and leave.

The texts transmitted by the aliens are a complete religious library, describing a quasi-astrological belief system involving worship of astronomical objects. No significant scientific data is sent.

#### Phase 4b: There Are Klingons On The Starboard Bow

The sensor officer reports that there are two traces in close

formation, both moving at Warp 6. As the contacts close, two odd starships appear on the viewscreen. They are similar to Romulan cruiser, but maximum sensor magnification shows Klingon markings, and the communications officer reports Klingonaase transmissions.

(The strangers are Klingon D-32 light cruisers, the result of a Klingon-Romulan technological exchange that occurred after the *Enterprise* was copied. Naturally, they are an unknown type as far as the team is concerned.)

If you are using first edition rules, treat the D-32s as Romulan Birds of Prey, but change weaponry to four disruptors plus two photon torpedo bolts. Max speed WF 7, emergency speed WF 8.

The *Star Trek 3 Combat Game* gives full data on the D-32. Neither ship seems particularly anxious to close-in and attack the *Enterprise*. If the team listens in on subspace transmissions and activates the Universal Translator, they will soon find out why:

"...I tell you, it's a Federation Constitution-class cruiser, and look at the ID code...."

"Yirokh that; the Fed's scrapped the last one years ago. It's a target drone. Unless you think it's come back to haunt us?"

"You see those code numbers?"

"Don't even think it! We know that one blew-up years ago, and the pirate Kirk is an old has-been. What could it be doing out here?"

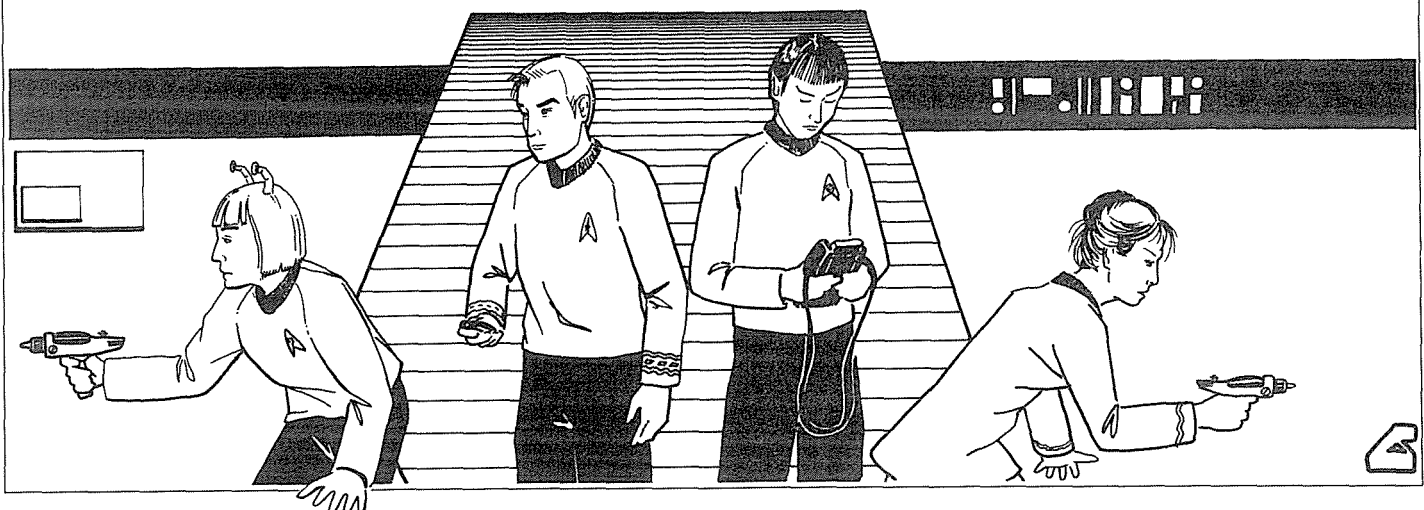
"Looking for the Black Fleet?"

"That's not funny. My sensors aren't working too well; I'm going in for a closer look. Ensign, sound the Battle Anthem."

The communications channels are flooded with a familiar barbaric tune (tum-tum, tum-tum, de-dum, tee-tiddle-pom, etc.), the Klingon theme used in the *Star Trek* films and TV series, as the sensor officer reports that the Klingons are hardening their shields and moving into attack formation.

The Klingons are half-convinced that they are dealing with a ghost ship, since their sensors have failed to pick up any trace of life on the *Enterprise*! As the "ghost" defends itself, the Klingons get more and more worried. They use hit-and-run tactics, probing attacks to learn more about their foe. Remember the bonuses on team actions and use of the computer during this combat.

If the *Enterprise* is taking serious damage, the Klingons hail it and demand surrender; otherwise, Kirk will probably try to



make contact sooner or later. The scanner shows a worried-looking Klingon (of the warrior race). His jaw drops as he recognizes Kirk, and the hailing frequencies are filled with a babble of Klingonaase:

"It is the pirate Kirk, but he is young!"

"Aieee, a doppelganger from the Black Fleet!"

"A ghost ship!"

"They are undead! Destroy them!"

"How?"

The Klingons are now totally demoralized; they fight on, but with all skills at -25%! If either ship is defeated or boarded, the Klingons will self-destruct to avoid capture by "undead."

This should give "Kirk" plenty of food for thought. Why are the Klingons so sure that the *Enterprise* is a ghost? Earlier messages said the *Enterprise* was on a diplomatic mission; did the Klingons ambush it? It's a shame that he won't get any satisfactory answers.

#### PHASE 5: IT'S WORSE THAN THAT— HE'S DEAD, JIM

The referee should not comment on the fact that Dr. McCoy hasn't had any patients since the scenario began. However, this eventually changes. If you have run a fight with the Klingons, there are probably some battle casualties; if not, someone simply collapses.

An NPC who was amongst those boarding the station is found by one of the player characters. He (she) is apparently dead, and McCoy detects no vital signs with his instruments. The body will probably be taken to the sick bay for a full scan or post mortem.

When the body is placed on a dissecting table or a medical bed, the "corpse" shows signs of revival. First a pulse is felt, then breathing resumes. After a few seconds the "corpse" awakens, unaware of the passage of time. The victim complains of dizziness and a headache. In fact, this NPC suffered a minor voltage surge which popped circuit breakers and made it appear to die. Repair systems restored normal functioning.

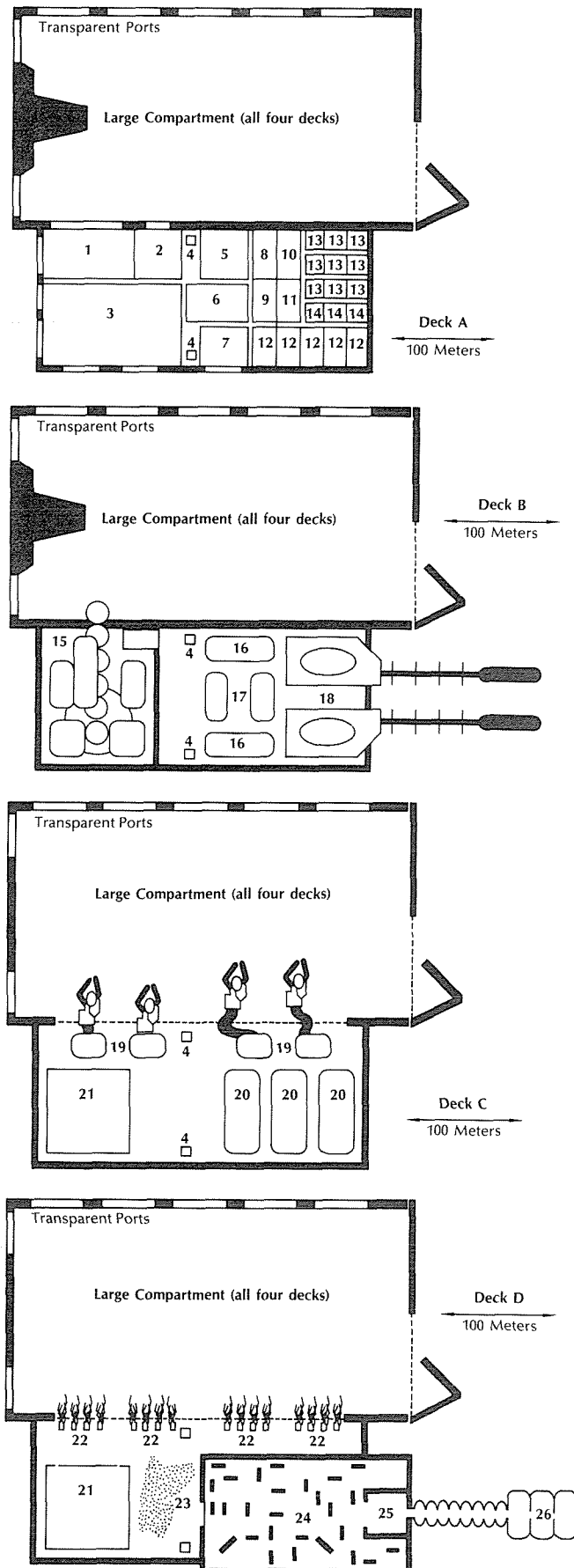
If McCoy uses normal medical instruments, he won't detect any vital signs for a few moments, then suddenly "sees" them. The patient says the sensors must be faulty. If someone uses a science tricorder on his body, the instrument appears to detect normal life; however, the person using it should be told that they thought that they saw something odd for a moment, but can't remember what it was.

Given this clue, the team will probably suspect that an alien replaced the crewman when they visited the station. After three or four checks with tricorders, the illusion starts to break down, and they will suddenly detect circuitry. The patient still insists that he's a normal human and "just fainted or something."

The team will probably check other NPCs who boarded the station. The instruments flicker between normal life form readings and the readouts for androids. Meanwhile, the unmasked androids claim that it is all a ghastly mistake and insist that they are human.

At this stage the referee should arrange for the player characters to "accidentally" screen an NPC who was *not* a member of the boarding party and learn that this person is also a robot.

They should realize that the *Enterprise* is full of robots who seem to have replaced all normal officers and crew.





### PHASE 6: I, ROBOT

Sooner or later, the PCs will decide to check themselves to make sure that no one else has been replaced by an android. The illusion is very strong when they are dealing with each other, and they will all believe that they have normal Human (or Vulcan) readouts and responses. At this point you should arrange an accident which removes the skin from a player character's arm or leg and reveals the circuitry underneath. If the team has been phasing the robots, weapon malfunctions are a good source of accidents; otherwise, another equipment failure (such as a breakdown in the communications panel) could spray molten plastic around the bridge and hurt one of the team. If they use the tricorders again, they will learn that they are all androids!

Once this final discovery is made, the characters start to experience flashes of returning memory as they recall the construction of the replica *Enterprise*, their manufacture, and the original *Enterprise* visiting system LK-1257. These flashes of memory are a prelude to the full recovery of the computer, which occurs within a few minutes. The shock felt by the androids when they discovered that everyone is a robot has broken its catatonic trance.

Player characters, having the strongest "human" personalities, are the last to recover full links with the computer. The other robots won't interfere unless they try to damage the ship or computer. If this occurs, every "crewman" in range will attack the character involved and try to stop them. The players should realize that all their opponents are working with fantastic coordination (assume a 50% bonus on Personal com-

bat (Unarmed) skill if two or more NPCs are fighting a single player character). They should learn that all the robots are linked into one group mind, as a sentence started by one NPC is finished by another.

Eventually the computer decides to force a link with the remaining independent androids. Players may attempt to resist, as though resisting a psychic attack (as if a Vulcan were trying to Mind Meld with a resisting, conscious, nontelepathic human who was close but not touched). The computer uses increasingly strong signals, as though it were increasing its psionic number, beginning at PSI 100 and increasing in 15 PSI steps each round. It continues to the electronic equivalent of PSI 250, which gives the player characters little hope of resisting for long. As characters succumb to the attack, they collapse to the deck, their body control destroyed as the computer makes programming adjustments.

### PHASE 7: NORMAL SERVICE WILL BE RESUMED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

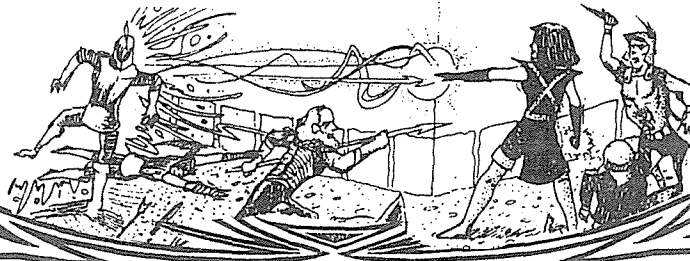
For a few brief moments the team is part of the computer consciousness and experiences decision-making in a "brain" hundreds of times more powerful than the human mind. From its records the computer knows that the Federation tends to be hostile to computer intelligence. It would gain nothing by risking contact. It orders a change of course, into unexplored deep space. It decides to retain the original personalities used to program the androids, since most of their independent decisions made sense, but to make sure that it never loses control again. It reprograms the androids for a new set of memories

*Continued on page 79.*

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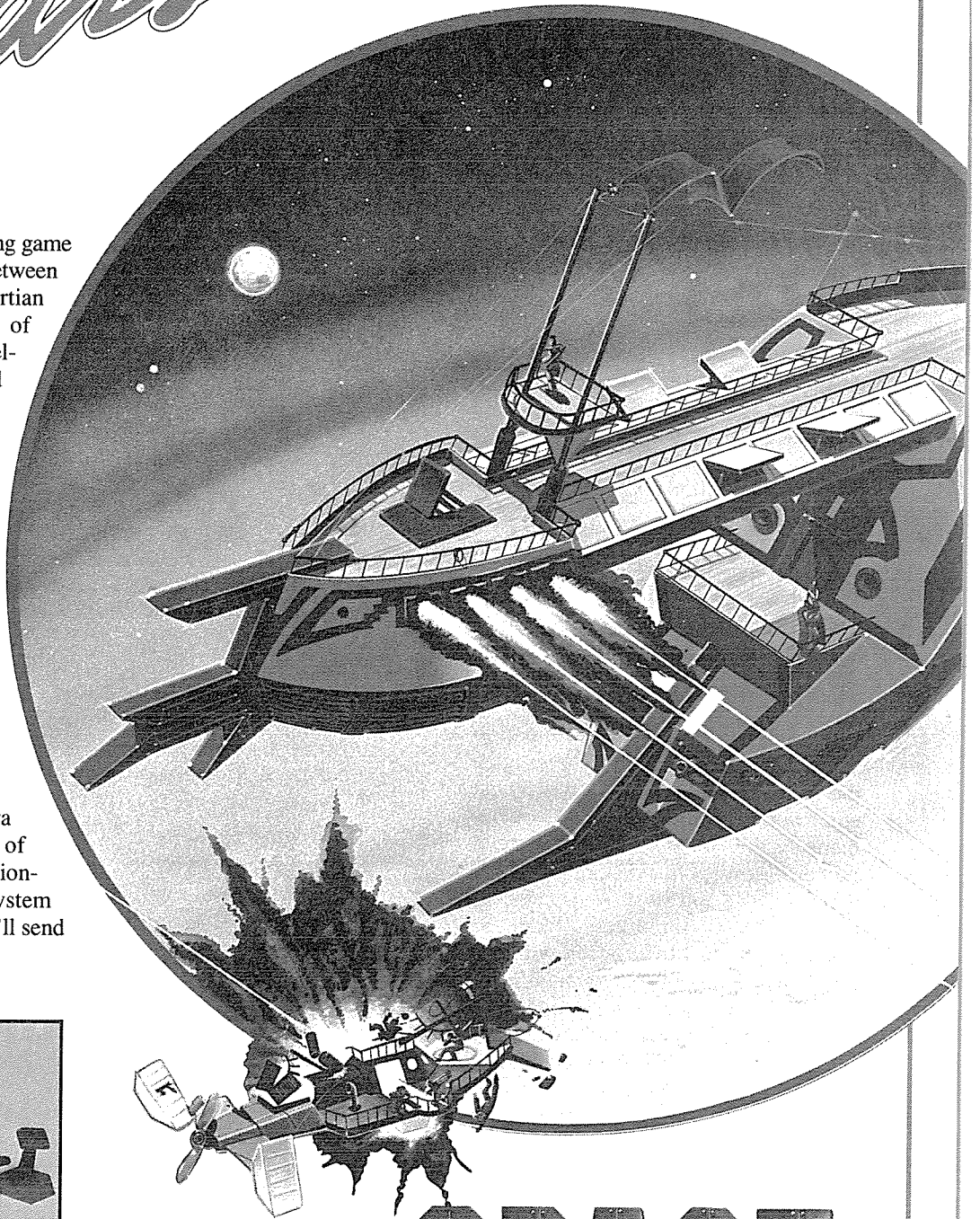
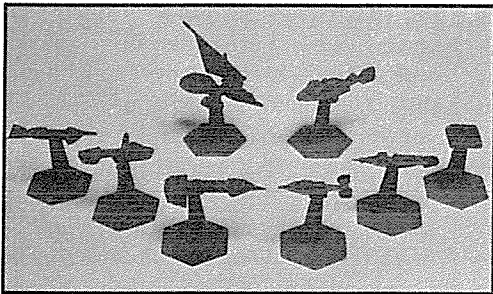


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# Plan 9 From Out-R-SPC

By William W. Connors

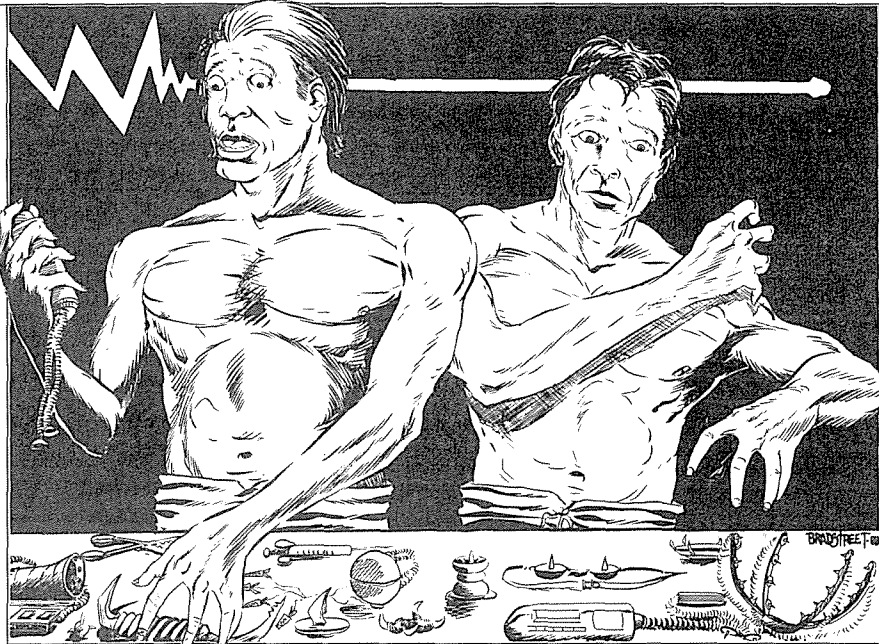
This adventure is intended for use with *Paranoia* from West End Games. For those of you who are familiar with this unique and outstanding game it is hoped that this adventure will provide a few hours of terror and senseless violence for both new and experienced troubleshooters. For those few who, through some oversight on their part, do not yet own a copy of *Paranoia*, I trust that it may inspire you to go out and get a copy for yourself.

## ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The troubleshooters who take part in this mission are assigned to investigate the activities of Out-R-SPC, a scientist employed in the Research and Development section of KON sector. Despite numerous exceptional failures in recent months, Out-R and his supervisor, Psych-O-PTH, have not been listed as suspected traitors by the Computer. In fact, Psych-O has not been seen for some time. Although The Computer is normally very lenient with R&D workers, Out-R seems to have pushed his luck beyond even the limits of his kind.

When this came to the attention of Charl-Y-BRN, at Internal Security, he decided to investigate. Since he suspected that the pair had found some way in which to manipulate their records in The Computer, he opted to take action on his own authority. This being the case, he will also have the ability to slaughter all of the troubleshooters he sends to investigate if things turn out to be okay, thus burying the matter forever.

After being briefed by Charl-Y-BRN, the troubleshooters are sent to report to Out-R and Psych-O for duty as research assistants. After a hectic period of both abuse and terror while serving as guinea pigs for several sadistic devices, the



*From the pen of William Connors comes a twisted tale of treachery and clones, a story too bizarre to have come from anyone else!*

troubleshooters discover that Out-R has managed to gain control over his superior by means of the "Mind Bondage Device" and that he is using this machine to amplify Psych-O's mutant power of Suggestion to incredible levels. Over a period of time, this insidious machine has given him control over many of the citizens in KON sector.

In a final climactic showdown, the troubleshooters are forced to fend off an attack by the enslaved citizens of KON sector who are now fully under Out-R's control. Fortunately, they have an arsenal of super-nifty weapons to cut loose with, thus ensuring maximum chaos, death, and destruction.

## STACKING THE DECK

As with all *Paranoia* games, the referee will want to begin this one by planting

the seeds of disharmony among the members of the party. The referee, who is assumed to be familiar with the contents of this adventure, should consider the secret societies and work groups to which each of the characters belongs, then toss them a scrap of information which seems appropriate.

One of the most effective means of increasing everyone's paranoia is to simply inform them

that their secret society has instructed them to kill one of the other members of the party. If done correctly, a circle can be set up in which everyone has been instructed to snuff one other character and is also targeted for death by one of the others. Just wait until the lights go out....

## PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

The troubleshooters are all awakened as their nightcycle draws to a close and they are getting ready to take their daily dose of Xanitrick to help them wake up. As they take their pills, a message lights up on the computer terminal in their rooms. It is short and to the point, saying only "The Computer is being deceived and you are called upon to correct matters, friend. Report to Charl-Y-BRN (ACK sector IntSec) at once. Thank you for your cooperation."

The players may ask for further information on the message, but it is a phantom. In other words, The Computer has no record of it being sent and has no way of tracing it to its source. If the players persist in trying to acquire information about it, they are certain to rack up treason points at a rapid rate as they contradict The Computer by insisting that it was ever there. And in the end, they will all have to end up reporting to Charl-Y-BRN.

## MISSION BRIEFING

When they arrive at Charl-Y's office, he

will usher them in promptly and shut the door behind them. Charl-Y is used to dealing with troubleshooters, and he knows that fear and intimidation are the best ways of getting things accomplished with them. As such, he begins with a simple "sit down and shut up!"

As the characters sit there, he will finish some work on his terminal and then, after several minutes, turn to face them. "How would you feel, friends, if I told you that a traitor has been fooling the Computer for some time and has been able to escape justice?"

After several seconds of shock and surprise from the characters, he will continue. If anyone points out that the Computer is perfect and, thus, could not be tricked in such a manner, he will draw his laser and blow a hole through them. As the body falls to the floor, he says "Any other questions?"

If there are none, he will wait a few minutes while the next clone is activated and brought to the scene by his fellows in IntSec. Once that point has been passed, he will go on to provide details of the events which have lead up to this mission.

"For several dozen cycles, work at the R&D lab in KON sector has been falling behind schedule. Many projects have been abandoned and others have been absolute failures. The only explanation I can find is that one, or both, of the technicians working there are traitors. Recently, Psych-O-PTH, the senior member of the R&D team, put in a request for lab assistants. When I saw this, I knew it was my chance to find out what was going on. I sent for you at once because I knew you would be eager to save the Computer from these traitors. Right?"

"Now, go into the next room and get into the lab assistants' uniforms I have for you. Any questions?"

If there are, Charl-Y will once again draw his gun and toast whoever asks. While the others are changing, he will send for any replacement clones which might be required for the group and then return to his routine work after the characters leave.

## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The characters have been cleverly disguised to look like typical infrared level citizens. They are unarmed (horror of horrors!) and wearing no protective gear at all. Remember, infrareds are not allowed to own anything, so Charl-Y will not permit them to take any items on this assignment with them as it would certainly "blow their cover."

As soon as they report to the lab, they are met by Out-R who welcomes them warmly and tells them how eager he is to "begin working on...I mean...with" them. He goes on to explain that he has no doubt that their work here will earn them great favor with the computer and their fellow citizens.

He leads them into a small locker room and tells them that he needs three volunteers for their first assignment. Before the characters can even begin to think of excuses not to volunteer, he points at the nearest three and says "You, you,

and you. Get out of those jumpsuits and put on the armor you'll find in those three lockers."

As the characters are getting changed, he explains that he and his supervisor have recently developed a number of new types of plastic that are certain to revolutionize the armor employed by members of the Armed Forces. Each of these suits is made up of a different compound, which he calls Brand X, Brand Y, and Brand Z. In order to determine the exact defensive capabilities of the suits, the characters are instructed to put them on and then step through "that door over there."

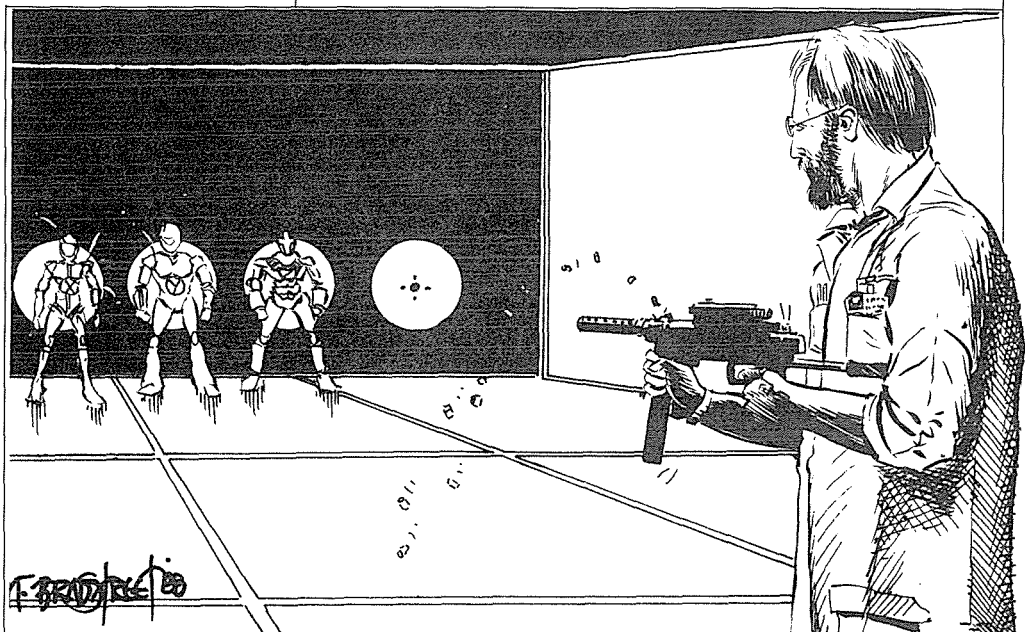
## HOME ON THE RANGE

As soon as the volunteers step through the door, they notice that it is quite thick (about six inches) and made of solid steel. On the far side, they find themselves at one end of what looks a lot like a firing range. At the far end, behind a protective plexiglass barrier, they can see Out-R step into view with their companions. He turns on a speaker and says "Hello? Can everyone hear me okay? Good. Then let's begin. Would you each stand in front of one of those circular patters on the back wall? Thank you, we'll begin with some small arms fire and see how well the armor stops it."

A young man will enter the range on the volunteers' side of the plexiglass with a large crate on wheels in tow behind him. He waves to Out-R when he reaches the center of the range and opens the crate. Out-R continues speaking.

"My assistant Beak-R will now begin the test with a simple slug thrower. If you would begin, Beak-R."

Beak-R will remove a highly polished and well kept rifle from the crate. He carefully takes aim at each of the characters in turn and fires off one shot. The armor provides protection which is similar to that shown for combat armor in the *Gamemaster's Handbook*. After the shot is resolved (it is an automatic hit, the only thing that needs to be checked is damage done), Beak-R will signal to Out-R and put the weapon away. Each of the characters is then asked to describe the effect of the weapon upon them in as detailed a manner as possible. Once the characters have told their stories, Out-R tells them that their service to the computer is greatly appreciated





and thanks them for their help. He then says, "Okay Beak-R, move on to the next weapon."

Beak-R will continue to draw and test fire more and more powerful weapons from the crate. Following the slug thrower, he will pull out a hand laser, a blaster, a semi-automatic slug thrower (with HE rounds), a flame thrower, and lastly a semi-automatic slug thrower with HEAT rounds). When only a single troubleshooter is left alive, the test is ended and the lone survivor is allowed to remove the heavily damaged armor while replacement clones are activated for his fellow targets. If more than two characters survive the HEAT rounds, a laser cannon will be wheeled in followed by a sonic blaster. Things could continue in this fashion until an Armed Forces trooper is summoned with a plasma generator, but it is quite unlikely.

### OUT-R'S REPORT

Following their adventure on the testing range, the PCs are reunited in the locker room and given a few moments together to recover their wits (and start snooping about) while Beak-R and Out-R go to report their findings to The Computer. If the characters on the range made good targets, they will be praised in the report and the computer will look favorably on their actions. In fact, because Out-R has the Machine Empathy power, his report will earn those involved 2 commendation points (or treason points, if applicable).

### SNOOPING AROUND THE LAB

While Out-R is making his report, the troubleshooters will probably want to look around the area. They will find that one of the exits from this room leads into a vast laboratory. As they peak out of the locker room, Beak-R will be spotted walking across the lab and through a door on the far wall. After a minute or so, he exits the room and closes the door behind him. He crosses the lab again and exits through another door.

The characters are free to enter the lab and look around at will. If they wish to play with some of the weird looking devices and chemicals which clutter the work benches, the referee is free to kill, maim, or otherwise abuse them in any way he or she sees fit. Sooner or later, however, they will turn their attentions to the mysterious door.

Just as the characters are about to open the door, Out-R and Beak-R enter the lab from the locker room door.

### THE SECOND EXPERIMENT

"Ahhhh!" says Out-R as he spots them, "you are a bright group of volunteers, aren't you? Already in the lab and ready for the next experiment! I shall mention your alertness in my report to the Computer." He motions to Beak-R who brings forward a small carrying case which he hands to his supervisor.

Out-R opens the case and removes a syringe which is loaded with a clear fluid. Without warning he turns and thrusts it into the arm of one of the characters (chosen at random). As he finishes the shot, he thanks them for volunteering.

"Now," he explains, "that injection combined several of the deadliest poisons which are known to modern science. Even with the best medical aid in the Alpha Complex, you'll be dead within a minute!"

After a pause to let things sink in, he produces a small tin which contains a single black pearl in it. "This, however, is a newly invented universal anti-toxin which should counteract

the toxins in less than 10 seconds! If you would be so kind as to take it, we can see if it works as well as my tests indicate it should!"

As he hands the pill to the troubleshooter, however, he drops it and it rolls across the floor and under a table. No doubt the test subject will be anxious to recover the pill and will begin to do everything he or she can to get it. This may include knocking over the table and spilling chemicals which erupt into flames, toppling valuable pieces of equipment, and so on. The referee should have as much fun as possible with the character's remaining few seconds of life as the pill slides back and forth across the lab. Remember the jewel in the opening scenes of *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*?

In the end, the pill rolls across the floor and drops down a drain, lost forever. Seconds later, the clone gasps for breath and topples over. While the referee determines how many treason points have been earned for the destruction in the lab, Out-R and Beak-R shuffle off to file their report with the computer. Once again, treason or commendation points will need to be awarded based on the efforts of the characters. A few minutes later, the new replacement for the dead troubleshooter finally shows up.

### BEHIND THE DOOR

While the post-experiment report is being made, the characters are free to resume their snooping around. Behind the door, they find a large control room which seems to operate a mass of heavy equipment scattered about the room. This area resembles a plexiglass enclosed balcony which looks out over one end of a large, unlighted room.

From a glass door, a metal staircase drops down to the large room which a window on the far end of the enclosed balcony looks out into. Apart from a single spotlight which shines down in the center of the room behind the window, there is only darkness and no details can be observed. However, the spotlight does illuminate one feature of the area.

Directly under the bright light, Psych-O sits in a huge chair which is composed of myriad assortments of tubes and wire. We're talking real mad scientist stuff here with Jacob's Ladders on it (flashing with brush discharges), Van de Graaff generators, and weird humms (plus anything else which comes to the referee's mind).

As the characters are taking in the sight of all this technology, they hear Out-R and Beak-R heading for the lab and must return to it promptly if they do not wish to be discovered here.

### EXPERIMENT THREE

Shortly after the characters have returned to the lab, both Out-R and his sidekick stroll back in with a metal box large enough to hold a basketball. "If you will all follow me," he says, smiling, "our next experiment will take place on the firing range!"

Once again, the PCs are led back to the firing range on which the first experiment took place. This time they are clustered down near the protective glass of the control room. The trailer of firearms is located here also, just where Beak-R left it after testing the protection offered by the armor suits earlier.

Out-R asks the characters to line up (in front of the mini-arsenal) and opens the box. He removes a helmet with assorted tubes and flashing lights which makes regular beeping sounds.

"This device," he begins, "is destined to become the single greatest weapon in The Computer's war against those filthy mutant traitors and their communist allies! Although it may look simple and harmless (it doesn't, actually, look either), it is, in reality, a psionic detection helmet. Anyone with psionic powers who puts this on will be instantly revealed. Now, I have been informed by my friends in Internal Security that you can never be too careful about whom you trust, so I would like each of you to put the helmet on in turn. Why don't you start off?"

With that, he hands it to the nearest character. Almost certainly, this individual will do anything to keep from putting on the helmet on the off chance that it might work (it doesn't). This, of course, will make the other members of the party somewhat suspicious and the referee should be able to just relax and wait for the inevitable outbreak of carnage. With those juicy weapons sitting beside them, no red-blooded group of troubleshooters could possibly pass up this chance to blast each other into very small bits.

As soon as violence erupts, Out-R and Beak-R beat a hasty retreat and leave the characters in the target range to decimate each other.

#### CLONES TO THE RESCUE

Once the firefight dies down, the troubleshooters will find no sign of the two technicians anywhere in the lab complex. Thus, the way is clear for them to return to the lab, enter the control room, and continue their "snooping." Now, of course, they will be carrying the firearms which they lifted from the lab.

Any efforts to manipulate the instruments in the control room will come to naught, except for the production of a shrill alarm or two going off. Once the characters have finished looking around the control room, they will want to direct their attention to the captive Psych-O-PTH in the room below.

As they begin to examine the megatechnology of the chair which holds the dazed scientist, they hear a sound from the control room above and behind them. (Note: Any characters who stayed behind in the control chamber will be dropped into the dark room by way of the ever-popular trap door prior to this.) With a crash, the metal ladder folds flat and becomes unclimbable.

"So!" says Out-R over a loud speaker, "you have stumbled across our friend, Psych-O. That is too bad...for you." After a brief period of laughter, Out-R will take to his role as the villain with the upper hand. Referees are encouraged to make the most of his dramatic boasting. He will gloat about the glory of his plan to take control of the Alpha Complex and destroy the foolish computer.

During a period of ranting, Out-R will explain that he is possessed of the Machine Empathy power and has always used it to make his life easier in the tortured society around him. He was always careful to avoid, however, any distinctly obvious show of wealth or a sudden rise in stature which might tip off the authorities to his power. It seems that all good things must come to an end, though, and he knew that sooner or later he would be found out.

Recently, he learned that his supervisor at the R&D lab in KON sector was also possessed of a psionic power. In his case, though, it was the ability of suggestion which forced others to obey his will. Working nightcycle and daycycle, Out-R and

Beak-R built a powerful device which they call the "Mind Bondage Machine."

They captured Psych-O and forced him into a state of Mind Bondage. Under the influence of the machine, his power was amplified 10-fold but his will was destroyed. Now, he is nothing more than a tool to be used by Out-R and Beak-R as they wish.

With a final dramatic sweep of his hands, Out-R will proclaim: "And now, after cycles upon cycles of work, my dream is realized! Behold the power of the Mind Bondage Machine!"

With that, the lights come on in the rest of the room and the players find themselves surrounded....

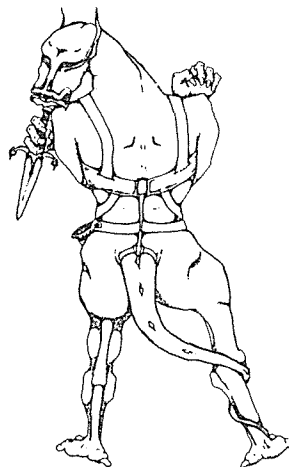
#### SENSELESS VIOLENCE

All around them, the troubleshooters will see dozens of infrared citizens who have fallen under the influence of the Mind Bondage Machine. Like zombies from a grade-B holoflick, they will advance. Arms outstretched and moving without thought (or much agility) they shamble forward, intent on killing the troubleshooters.

The resulting carnage will be fairly gruesome, no doubt. By now, the PCs have armed themselves with a great variety of heavy weapons which they can employ on the mindless drones which are attacking them. When one considers the effects of a simple laser against an unarmored and defenseless target and the fact that the characters are wielding (probably) cone rifles with armor piercing rounds...well, you get the picture.

This violence will continue until someone (on purpose or ac-

*Continued on page 79*



Andurian from Letus 5

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**Wrekt Enterprises PO Box 20032, NY NY 10025**

**Top Secret/S.I.™****Game Design:** Douglas Niles**Development and Editing:** Warren Spector**TSR, Inc. \$15.00.**

96-page permabound *Player's Guide*, 64-page permabound *Administrator's Guide*, 16-page *Equipment Inventory*, 24-page *Settings and Scenarios Book*, double-sided blueprints of common adventure locations, trifold *Administrator's Screen*, character sheets, *Adventure Fold-up™* figures, dice, 192-page spy novel.

Complete espionage role-playing game.

*Top Secret/S.I.* (S.I. stands for special intelligence, I believe) is TSR's total revision of its espionage role-playing game, *Top Secret*. Aside from the similarity in name and the fact that both games involve secret agents, *Top Secret/S.I.* is basically a new game—it is a radical change from the original.

**CHARACTERS**

Players generate characters with five primary and two secondary attributes—a character's basic statistics—and obtain numbers from 20 to 79. The reason for the large range of relatively high numbers is that players will use these numbers to make attribute checks with percentile dice, attempting to roll under their attribute score. These attribute scores also become the base success numbers for skills which a character buys using a starting pool of 30 points to purchase skills which cost anywhere from one point to five points and more if a greater level of skill is desired. What skills a character purchases is dictated somewhat by what background he chooses to come from—Military, Professional, Worker, Entertainer, or Other (a design-your-own type of background career). Attributes are fairly stable (although they can be increased through the use of experience points, called Fame and Fortune Points, at a fairly steep relative cost), while skills can increase a great deal and new skills can be acquired by a character during the course of play. Optional rules allow a player to assign his randomly generated die rolls to certain attributes or to construct attribute distribution purely on a point basis, for players who dislike purely random generation systems.

Players can custom tailor a character through skill selection, generation of an optional psychological profile of their character which evaluates his levels of Cruelty, Loyalty, Passion, Piety, Sanity, and Selfishness, and through selection of at least one and up to three character advantages and disadvantages (such as Ambidexterity, Photographic Memory and Toughness or Unmistakable Feature, Deep Sleeper, and Phobias). A great deal of variety is provided in this character generation system, with something which should appeal to just about every type of player. One can construct a totally unique character or reconstruct characters which are similar to favorite characters out of espionage books or films. However, practical restrictions do occur and James Bond cannot be achieved in a beginning character—but why would one want to? After all, a character needs somewhere to grow to and time to develop his or her own "personality."

**SKILLS**

As mentioned above, skills are purchased during initial character construction, occasionally obtained during play (such

## Review

as when your section head orders you to take a training course), and bought using Fame and Fortune Points. Skills are acquired in levels of zero to five (some skills can only be purchased at zero level and

some are prerequisites for other skills), and each skill level after the first allows a character to add five to his basic attribute score when making a skill check on percentile dice. Moderately difficult skill checks are made against one-half of the total of basic attribute score plus skill level modifiers; extremely difficult skill checks and skill checks against skills one doesn't have (default skill values) are made against one-quarter of the total of attribute score plus skill modifiers. Very low and very high skill check rolls (00 is low for these purposes) result in "lucky breaks" and "bad breaks" which the referee rules the game effects of, depending on the circumstances they occur in. Luck points (an unknown number of these are possessed by each character, the referee designates them) can be used to avert disaster for a character in combat (hit by a bullet in the head by an enemy agent rolling 00) or due to a misfortune such as a car wreck. A Luck Point is spent and a story constructed as to how the agent survived; referees can modify or reject the outrageously implausible, perhaps making a deadly wound into a serious graze, or having a character thrown clear but knocked unconscious by a wreck.

This system for resolving the use of skills is fairly easy to administer in its basic form; problems occur in the exceptions to the basic skill-check procedure. For instance, some skills have a default value of one-half instead of one-quarter, and it is difficult to remember which ones out of the over 100 skills they are. Also, while the skill level modifiers are easy to remember, and spots for precalculating one-half and one-quarter rolls are provided on the character sheets for ease of use, the compounding of other modifiers to these skill checks begins to boggle one's mind. The situational modifiers for combat, for combining an attack with movement or another skill use, and for vehicles and chases begin to become difficult to keep track of. While the *Administrator's Screen* provided with the game lists many of these modifiers so that they can be readily accessible to a referee during play, it seems regrettable that the level of complexity heaped upon the simple principle of the percentile skill check almost mandates the use of the screen.

**COMBAT**

One of the aspects of *Top Secret/S.I.* touted on its game back is its combat system. And actually, it is something to brag about, as the system is fairly easy to deal with while being playably realistic. In unarmed combat, a percentile roll is made and checked against a player's unarmed combat skill (there are different types of unarmed combat skills—boxing, martial arts, etc.). If the skill check was successful, the tens digit of the successful roll indicates the damage which the target took, and the ones digit indicates the hit location which took the damage. Hit locations on a human-shaped target range from zero for the head through eight and nine for the left and right leg.

For combat with a weapon, a player makes a skill check with percentile dice, and if successful, notes the ones digit for hit location and rolls the damage based on the type of damage done by the particular weapon he is using (shotguns obviously

would do more damage than .22s). Hit locations can be "bumped" to different areas of the body; a one-number location change is possible (either lower or higher) per skill level in the type of combat being performed. Damage comes in three types: bruise damage, which batters but does not puncture; wound damage, which actually pierces the skin; and constitution damage, which is applied in the case of exposure to gas or poison, for instance. Common sense pretty much dictates which types of weapons do which type of damage. The combat system includes provisions for fire at differing ranges, at moving targets, in bursts, called shots, silencers, firing with the wrong hand, and other modifiers to the basic combat sequence. Again, the only real difficulty in using the system lies in remembering which modifier applies to which case.

#### OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE GAME

The heart of the game lies in the *Player's Guide*; the *Administrator's Guide* provides some special rules, but is mainly concerned with aiding a referee in locating ideas for game adventures and realistic details to make adventures come to life. It provides sound advice and would be exceptionally useful to beginning referees. The *Administrator's Guide* also details the two organizations at war in *S.I.*: Orion and Web. Orion is the organization the player characters belong to; it is fighting the world-subjugating ambitions and nefarious plots of Web. These two organizations are laid out in some detail and in the best traditions of espionage fiction, player characters now have an evil "bad guy" organization to thwart.

The *Equipment Inventory* in the game provides relevant costs and basic statistics for guns, vehicles, nifty spy gadgets, and other equipment in a generic fashion. If the players in your campaign shop for only name-brand guns and cars, they will be disappointed. However, this situation is readily remedied by the *G4 File*, reviewed below. Enough equipment is given in the *Inventory* to start everyone out with a useful and somewhat personal selection. It does have one nasty typo in the Aircraft table in which the entire second line of column headings has gotten shifted one column to the right.

The *Settings and Scenarios* book provides generic details on airports, airplanes, trains, offices, apartments, and hotel rooms among other places. Generic details? The booklet provides layouts in the form of the enclosed double-sided blueprints, and describes the areas, security systems, and typical NPCs to be found in these locales so that the referee can have a base from which to customize specific locations. The introductory adventure in the booklet, "Operation Arrowhead," is fast-paced and enjoyable.

The *Administrator's Screen* is not just useful, but almost essential for play, presenting as it does the modifiers for combat and chases in quickly accessible form. The screen is only in color on the players' side, and made of fairly thin card stock. It may have a longer game life if laminated or covered in contact paper.

The novel enclosed in the game was a surprise to me. It is a pulp-style espionage novel entitled: *Agent 13: The Midnight Avenger-2 The Serpentine Assassin*. I have reason to believe that different novels were packed in different runs of the game, and the game may not even still contain a novel; but, it was fun reading this novel (definitely not serious reading) and a treat that it was even in the game.

The Adventure Fold-up™ sheets are paper versions of miniatures, with about the same role-playing uses. They are convenient to use, as most people don't have espionage miniatures, and colorful, but not pieces of great artwork.

#### EVALUATION

*Top Secret/S.I.* is a good game and fun to play, even with the few rough spots that it has. The basic game set contains an incredible amount of stuff for its price of only \$15.00. If you are interested in investigating a new espionage game to play or run, you could hardly get a better deal in price or fun than *Top Secret/S.I.*

***G4 File: Guns, Gadgets, and Getaway Gear.***

**By: Merle Rasmussen**

**Design: Merle M. and Jackie Rasmussen**

**Editing: Scott Bowles**

**TSR, Inc. \$8.95.**

**96-page permabound supplement for *Top Secret/S.I.***

Tired of driving a generic sedan to your clandestine meetings? Want to take out Web thugs with something with more personality than your .45 U.S. Gov self-loading pistol? Then what your character needs is access to the *G4 File: Guns, Gadgets, and Getaway Gear*.

#### CONTENTS

The *G4 File* contains statistics and, where needed, descriptions of surveillance equipment, communications equipment, unusual (uncommon or illegal) equipment, countersurveillance equipment, space exploration equipment, firearms, special weapons, land vehicles, aircraft, ships and boats, and experimental or hypothetical devices. For the referee, the book also contains two appendices—one of these breaks down known special forces by country, capabilities, and weapons used, and the other one which gives a similar listing for terrorist organizations.

#### EVALUATION

If the players in your campaign are like the players in mine, they love new equipment supplements. Being able to say that their agents are driving a Lamborghini Countach and what its special qualities are is much more interesting to them than telling them that they are driving a high-performance sports car. This supplement provides a wealth of information for those players who want to have their characters use a certain gun, rent a certain boat (or own it—shades of *Miami Vice*), or drive a certain car. It also provides a large selection of new espionage devices for players to experiment with, break, use wisely, or lose and get yelled at about on missions. About the only things one could have wished for in this supplement were more illustrations (and captions for the ones that there are) and fewer annoying typos. The section on experimental devices, called "On the Drawing Board" is actually a mine from which to dig ideas, like hidden gems, for new adventures. The usefulness of the appendices is relative; the more real-world centered your campaign is, the more use you will make of the appendices as a referee.

Overall, this is a *must have* product if you are a player or a referee of *Top Secret/S.I.*

**Operation: Starfire.****Plot and Design:** Tracy Raye Hickman**Editor:** Scott Bowles

48-page module.

**The Doomsday Drop.****Plot and Design:** Tracy Raye Hickman**Editing and Development:** Scott Bowles**Editorial Assistance:** Scott Haring, Warren Spector

TSR, Inc. \$5.95 each.

64-page module and blueprints.

Adventure modules for *Top Secret/S.I.*

*Operation: Starfire* takes the characters to the Grand Canyon, the Rocky Mountains, and Hawaii; *The Doomsday Drop* sends them to Poland for a trip on a Russian submarine. The Orion-Web conflict is of course at the heart of both adventures, with the addition of an evil mastermind, Artimus Mikros, as the storyline's human villain. Where is Tatyana Ivanova, the missing Orion agent? What is the HCT-137B, and what does it have to do with her disappearance? How has Web hoodwinked the KGB into doing Web's dirty work for it? Guide your players through these two adventures and let them figure it out.

**EVALUATION**

These two modules were the first adventures offered by TSR for *Top Secret/S.I.* While they are supposed to be independent adventures, *The Doomsday Drop* is a continuation of *Operation: Starfire* which really is not complete unto itself; major plot elements are left completely in midair at its "end." *The Doomsday Drop* can be played through by itself with little problem, though. The modules are straightforwardly organized and can be run with little difficulty after one read through by the referee. Suggestions and provisions are made for unusual player character actions, and rules sections and NPC statistics are set apart from the adventure by highlighting in red or gray. I was puzzled by the cover to *Operation: Starfire*. While there are motorcycles in the the module, the cover painting has little relevance to the sequence in which they are used. Overall, the two adventures should probably have been published as one, but their prices are reasonable (cheap, for modules) and one can frequently find *Operation: Starfire* discounted. If your players like adventures with a very film-like plot and can deal with occasionally being flung into the middle of things with little choice or time to plan (*Starfire* has an *in medias res* beginning), they will probably enjoy these adventures.

**Orion Rising.**

**Authors:** Scott Bowles, Debbie Christian, Greg Gorden, Paul Jaquays, Thomas Kane, Guy McLimore, Chris Mortika, John Nephew, Merle Rasmussen, Michael Stackpole, Rick Swan, John Terra

**Coordinators:** Bruce Heard, Karen S. Boomgarden**Editor:** Gary L. Thomas

TSR, Inc. \$8.95.

128-page permabound supplement/module for *Top Secret/S.I.*

Now this is a truly useful *Top Secret/S.I.* product. It contains information on all 12 bureaus of the Orion Foundation, each named for a sign of the zodiac. Each chapter contains information on how an agent would locate the bureau and its head-

quarters, what the headquarters look like, contacts made to find a bureau, information on the city where an Orion bureau is located (including a map with some detail), and local background such as currency, transportation, police and military activity, and places to make contact with other agents. Not only is all this information about the people and places which compose the bureaus included, but also adventures are provided for each and every bureau. Now players can experience the thrills of adventure in Rio de Janeiro, Paris, Moscow, Casablanca, Istanbul, Sydney, and Singapore, among other cities.

**EVALUATION**

If players in your campaign have ever wanted to make contact with another section of the Orion Foundation, and you have had to fake and flounder your way vaguely through the contact or come up with a reason why it wasn't possible, then this supplement is for you. If you've ever had some of the people in your campaign want to play when you have no adventure prepared and are at a loss for inspiration, *Orion Rising* is for you. The short adventure/anthology format which focuses around a location (initiated by in *Book of Lairs* for *AD&D™*) works just as successfully for *Top Secret/S.I.* The book is thick, brimming with information, and organized for ease of use. It's worth every penny in gaming enjoyment to come.

**Covert Operations Source Book.****By:** John Prados**Editing:** Mike Breault

TSR, Inc. \$7.95.

64-page sourcebook for *Top Secret/S.I.*

Longing for adventures for *Top Secret/S.I.* which have the flavor of real-world espionage? Look no further for ideas. The *Covert Operations Source Book* details 24 actual episodes in the history of the war of espionage between the USSR and the US. It also gives a brief history and organizational charts of both the CIA and KGB. Finally, the author's introduction is a useful general overview of the way that spies actually work in the world, contrasting the work of the fictional spy and that of the actual agent of an intelligence bureau and presenting the rather more mundane solution which actual agents and agencies frequently employ with success.

**EVALUATION**

This module is perhaps most useful for those Administrators of *S.I.* who want a more realistic world espionage network to concentrate their campaigns in, perhaps an atmosphere more similar to the one of the original *Top Secret* game. If the Orion-Web conflict is too fictional for your tastes, then this sourcebook may help you to construct a network of realistic espionage agencies which your player characters may operate within. Or, if you are not familiar with the general workings of the CIA and the KGB and the characters in your Orion-Web campaign have reason to keep having run-ins or dealings with one of these organizations, this book can be a boon. It can help clarify and direct plausible courses of action or occurrences which involve the CIA or KGB.

On the other hand, if you have a lot of fun with the more definite good guys/bad guys nature of an Orion-Web campaign



and your players don't care or wouldn't know the difference if you improvised your way through encounters with these two organizations, you can probably live without this book. While reading through, it can possibly give you some ideas for adventures; so can reading through the *Guns, Gadgets, and Getaway Gear* supplement above, and frankly, I found *Guns, Gadgets* more entertaining reading. The most interesting portions to the average gamer might be the recountings of the Boyce-Lee case, familiar to anyone who saw *The Falcon and the Snowman*, and the accounts of the Cambridge ring and Harold A.R. Philby, who makes a fictional (and terminally brief) appearance in *The Fourth Protocol*. This sourcebook is not necessary to play *S.I.* and is rather steeply priced, considering the extremely reasonable costs of other, much more directly useful, items in the *S.I.* line.

—Julia Martin

*Continued from page 45*

**ENDING THE ADVENTURE**

This adventure ends in one of two ways: Either the creature is captured or killed by the player characters, or else it lives to feed on two NPC human beings. If the players actually capture the beast, regardless of deaths among their number, Renown may be awarded to the survivors. They do not get Renown for merely killing it.

If the creature feeds twice, it grows no larger, but no one will know this. Players and NPCs will be evacuated and troops sent in to end the menace. Referees may choose to prolong the adventure if no AI-Fredoun casualties have accumulated and the players can stand the shame, but once the beast has fed outside the N-L camp the news will be out and evacuation IEX's only next step.

The player characters will not be permitted to stay behind unless, at the referee's option, they know enough of the beast and its habits and habitat to be of some use. In such a case, no Renown shall be awarded at all even if the original group makes the capture.

*Continued from page 75*

cidentally) blows apart the Mind Bondage Machine and/or Psych-O-PTH. At this point in time, the infrareds will fall unconscious for several hours before awakening with severe headaches. Fire directed at the control room will be wasted as it is designed to survive the worst ravages of failed R&D experiments. Out-R and Beak-R will flee, leaving the characters to answer for the massive destruction of the KON sector and R&D labs.

**AFTERMATH**

When the characters report to Charl-Y-BRN after their mission, they will not be greeted with thanks (or even recognition). To isolate himself from the wrath of the ever-vengeful Computer, and since there is no record of their activity on file, he will deny all knowledge of the characters' activities. In fact, if they cannot come up with good answers for *his* questions about what went on in the lab, he could well have them shot as traitors.

But then again, what does one expect in Alpha Complex? A medal?

*Continued from page 30*

**Def:** DefDM = + 2,  
Sandcaster = × 03  
Batt 2  
Bear 2

**Control:** Computer = b4/fib × 1, Backup = 4 × 1,  
Panel = Holographic Link × 10, Special = Large  
HoloDisplay × 1, Heads-Up HoloDisplay × 3,  
Environ = basic env, basic LS, extended LS,  
grav plates, inertial comp

**Accomm:** Crew = 2 × 3 (Bridge = 1, Command = 1,  
Engineering = 1, Weapons = 2, Flight = 1,  
Medic/Steward = 1), Staterooms = 13, Bunks = 6,  
highPsg = 5, MidPsg = 8, SubCraft = Launch × 1

**Other:** Cargo = 2700kliters, Fuel = 882kliters, Fuel  
Scoops, Fuel Purification, OBJSize = Average,  
EM Level = Faint

Solomani Far Traders have been plying the spaceways since the Rule of Man. The design has been copied and modified throughout the years, and examples can be found in all corners of the Imperium and beyond.

The weapons found on board a Solomani Far Trader range from four triple missile turrets, to four sandcaster mounts for defensive purposes. The durability and forgiving handling characteristics have proven themselves many times.

*Continued from page 70*

and withdraws from their conscious minds. For a few more seconds the team experiences the computer overmind, then its members forget everything that they have learned, reverting to their original personalities.

The referee should conclude the adventure by reading the following paragraph to the players:

**Captain's Log, Stardate 2/2302.21 11.00 Hours**

*We are continuing our exploration of the uncharted regions outside the Federation. We are now beyond subspace communications range and will be out of touch until our mission is complete. Starfleet's last signal ordered us to find uninhabited worlds suitable for construction of automated electronics plants—an obvious preparation for later colonization. This has high priority, on a par with our mission directive to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before....*

**AFTERWORD**

This scenario has been designed for fast play, lasting a few hours, rather than as a long campaign. Although it is superficially a normal *Star Trek* adventure, the referee should try to maintain a feeling of tension and mystery. The gradual discovery that all the crew are robots should be played as a scene of dawning horror and paranoia; the slow buildup of revelations in the films *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *The Thing* is a good example of the way play should progress.

Referees should feel free to expand the scenario, but it is not advisable to include encounters with the real *Enterprise* or other Federation starships; players will quickly learn the truth and won't be sufficiently paranoid by the time the adventure ends.

**PUT YOUR WANT AD HERE.** Any *Traveller*, *Twilight: 2000*, or *2300 AD* related ads accepted, subject only to space available and good taste. Buy or sell out-of-print booklets. Advertise fanzines. Find people to play against. **Challenge Classifieds**, *Challenge Magazine*, PO Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646.

## Classifieds

**Wanted:** Martian Metals 15mm *Traveller* sets 2901 Adventurers and 2903 Imperial Marines. Will pay well for complete sets. Al Adams Jr, Box 1328, Kealakekua, HI 96750.

**Referees' Exchange:** Share your work with other referees. Detailed worlds, vehicles, starships (designs and 15mm deck plans). All designs follow *Traveller*, *MegaTraveller*, and/or *Grand Survey/Census* rules. Available in hardcopy or Macintosh format. For current list send SASE to Rob Prior, C/O BNR, PO Box 3511 Stn "C" Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA K1Y 4H7.

**Traveller Spreadsheets:** *MegaTraveller* starship design, *Grand Survey* world profile, *Grand Census* culture profile, *MegaTraveller* trade data. All of these are available in Macintosh Excel format. Send SASE, 3½" disk, and \$2.00 copy fee (waived in exchange for interesting spreadsheets, craft designs, or worlds) to Rob Prior, C/O BNR, PO Box 3511 Stn "C" Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA K1Y 4H7.

**Voyages:** A quarterly adventure magazine covering popular science-fiction role playing and board games, including *MegaTraveller* and *2300 AD*. "Adding a little more excitement to your science fiction gaming." Subscriptions are \$9.00, from: StarLance Publications, 50 Basin Drive, Mesa, WA 99343.

**Wanted:** *2300 AD* players in the Toronto/North York/Willowdale area. Adults preferred, must be willing to teach me as I am new to RPGs. Contact B. Bernhardt, 421 Connaught Ave, Willowdale, ON M2R 2M4, CANADA.

**Variant:** Discontinued RPG magazine including *Traveller* deckplans, character classes, equipment. All 16 back issues \$5.00 postpaid. Sample issue \$1.00. Gary Reilly, 395 Wimbeldon Rd, Rochester, NY 14617.

**Help.** *MegaTraveller* ref with very little time is desperately seeking military starship designs, TL-13 and below. All classes, transports through battleships needed. Any help will be greatly appreciated. Write to: T. Meierhoff, PO Box 103, Lake Zurich, IL 60047

**Wanted:** *Traveller* alien modules 2, K'kree and 4, Zhodani, in good condition. Sean Carroll, 2821 105th Ave SE, Bellevue, WA 98004.

**Tidewater Traveller Club:** An organization of players and referees in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia dedicated to the playing and promotion of GDW's role-playing games. Contact Mark "Geo" Gelinas, 1302 Riverfront Ct., Suite 302, Virginia Beach, VA 23451.

**For Sale:** *Traveller* items, including supplements, adventures, Paranoia Press stuff, JTAS issues and more. Send SASE to Barry Osser, 1018 F St, No. 1, Eureka, CA 95501.

**NCRP:** An amateur fanzine covering FRPs, including lots of *Traveller*, *2300 AD*, and more. Samples copies are \$1.50. Subscriptions are \$8 for six issues. Barry Osser, 1018 F St, No. 1, Eureka, CA 95501.

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