GDW

If you want...

Post-ruin fantasy with a twist...

WarpWorld

Time and dimension travel...

TimeLords

or global plots and conspiracies...

CORPS

Then we have something for you...

Ask for it...

About the Cover
British juggernauts and German tripods wreak untold carnage in "Steam Wars" by David O. Miller, from the **Space: 1889** universe.

CHALLENGE
The Magazine of Science-Fiction Gaming

Table of Contents

Issue 60, May 1992

Page 14

Page 48

Page 60

FROM THE MANAGEMENT

This is it! In this month's issue we finally make an advance announcement revealing the nature of the special project we've been working on since the middle of last year. As the ad says, it's the **Mythus**™ fantasy roleplaying game, the first part of a line of roleplaying games collectively called **Dangerous Dimensions**™, written by Gary Gygax, creator of **AD&D®**, and produced by GDW in an unprecedented alliance for the gaming industry. Also actively involved in the project are a major worldwide book publisher and one of the largest electronic entertainment companies in the world (but you'll have to wait a little while longer to find out who they are).

As a hobby, roleplaying has changed somewhat since its early days. Of course, its primary purpose—to have fun while portraying a fictional persona—has remained the same. But gamers in general have grown progressively more choosy about the systems they play. The result has been a natural evolution of game designs within the industry, with continually smoother and more flexible game mechanics, continually more well-visualized milieus, and continually more stress on the drama of playing a role.

It should come as no surprise that Gary Gygax has spent those years roleplaying as well. And considering his creative drive, it is not surprising that he has spent the time designing and polishing another roleplaying game, one that takes into account the growth the hobby has experienced over the years. In fact, given the grandness of his vision, it is only natural that the game he has designed be intended as the *complete* roleplaying game, capable of taking players anywhere and anywhen, all with the same set of basic game mechanics. **Mythus** is the first genre to be released with that system.

For those who have followed the history of GDW over the years, however, it may come as a surprise that we have decided to produce a fantasy game. After all, we have established a reputation as publishers of more "serious" products such as historical wargames and science-fiction games, with an occasional foray into horror. **Challenge** even bills itself as "The Magazine of Science-Fiction Gaming." Well honestly, despite the fact that we all cut our roleplaying teeth on fantasy (like most everyone else who's been in the hobby of any length of time), we never had a really good reason to publish fantasy, and lots of reasons not to

(other companies have been doing it quite well without our help).

That is, we never had a good reason until now. When Gary and Gail Gygax approached us with their new product, we took a good look at it and listened to what they had planned, and we were sold. The **Dangerous Dimensions** rules make an incredibly good game. **Mythus** demonstrates a carefulness of design, depth of thought, and breadth of imagination that makes it too good to pass up. And a whole host of linked products—miniatures, novels, and computer games, as well as roleplaying support material—are being released concurrently, so you won't have to wait ages for the things you need.

We've always said that if we were going to launch into the fantasy field, it would be in a really big way. **Mythus** is exactly that, and the future of the whole **Dangerous Dimensions** line of products looks to be just as big.

Of course, this doesn't mean that we'll be shorting **MegaTraveller**, **Twilght: 2000**, or **Dark Conspiracy**. You should see our production schedule! We have major plans for all those lines, as well. But for now, we've run out of space. So we'll save that news for editorials to come.

Frank Chadwick

TO YOUR CREDIT

I am writing in response to an article in a recent issue about TL9 ships ("Going Places (Barely)" in **Challenge 55**). The article was great except for a minor point about the prices of the ships. The listed prices are in local credits rather than Imperial credits.

The lower demand for low-tech products will lower the value of the currency from low-tech planets. One effect of this is that outsiders will find products from low-tech places to be cheaper to buy; tourists here on Earth will confirm this.

Borrowing exchange rates from *Striker*, I found that TL9 credits are worth only 0.4 Imperial credits. This means that the TL9 free trader listed for MCr52.291 sells for only MCr20.916 in Imperial credits, far cheaper than the MCr36.915 for a TL15 free trader.

So lower-tech shipyards sell inferior products at cheaper prices.

In a totally unrelated issue, I have been waiting for about two years for what seemed like an obvious development in the Domain of Deneb. I realize it's not my job to write the plot, but there is a solution that would lessen the effect of both the Vargr and Aslan incursions.

The answer is to offer Aslan clans lands along the domain's border with the Vargr. For those clans willing to cooperate, this would solve the Aslan hunger for land. It would also give the domain extra forces with which to push back the pirates.

Of course, this solution would not be quite as simple as is outlined above. Not all clans would be willing to deal with the domain. Why should they move yet farther coreward and have to fight to get lands when they take

lands adjacent to those already held by the Aslan?

In addition, to lessen the protests of citizens on the planets being given to the Aslan, it would be wise to give only those planets currently held by the Vargr. At least some of the residents would rather work with the Aslan than be ruled by the Vargr.

Also, such a large migration of a new culture will have lasting effects on the area.

Stan Taylor

Challenge *magazine welcomes your letters. The opinions presented do not necessarily reflect those of the magazine.* **Challenge** *reserves the right to edit letters. Write to* **Challenge** *Letters, Managing Editor, PO Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646 USA.*

SAILING
An unofficial variant
By Mitch Berg
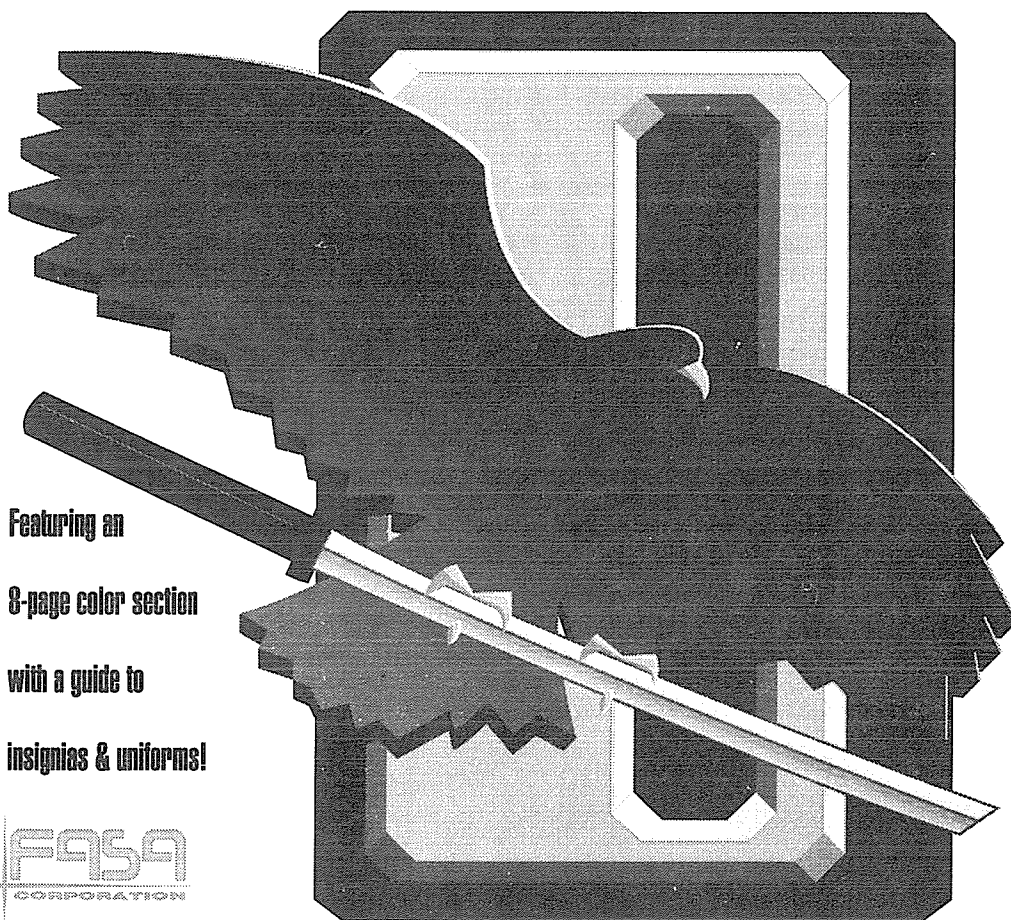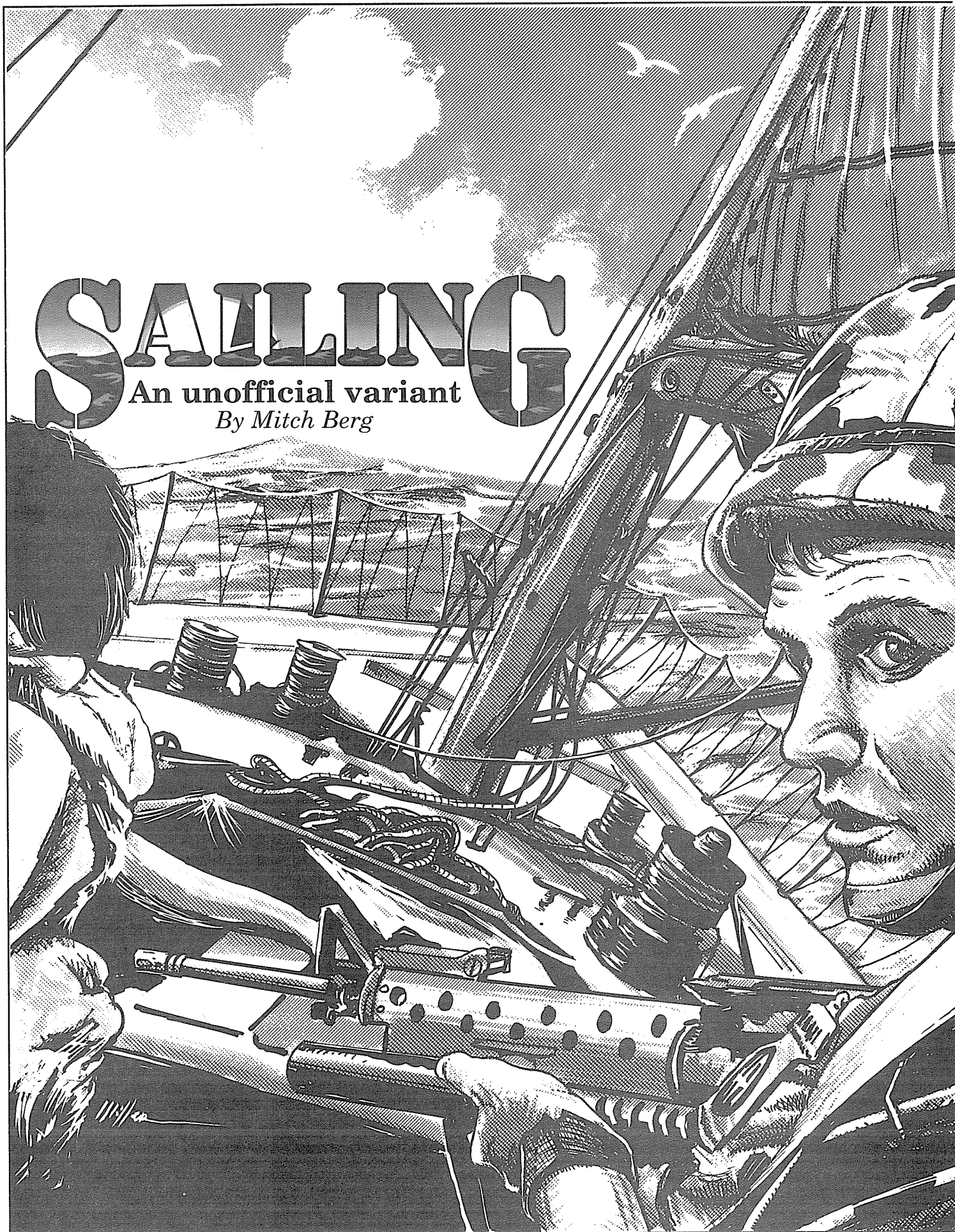
I was born and raised in the great maritime state of Montana, so I'm not what you'd call the world's most natural sailor. But when we trooped into Bremerhaven and saw the last ship pulling out past the channel buoy, things sort of changed fast.

We were surrounded by a lot of German troopies who were looking sideways at us and a lot of civilians who were grumbling. We all knew guys from units that were planning on staying in Germany. Not us, brother. We figured it was time to bail.

We lit out for the outskirts of town and wound up in this little fishing village controlled by a bunch of Dutch Army refugees. It was a match made in heaven. We had a tank—actually an LAV-75—that they wanted worse than toys at Christmas. They had a bunch of fishing boats and a coastal sailing barge that looked almost seaworthy. They called it Schuidtje. We just called it a skoot. We cut the deal, loaded up the rest of our gear and pushed off. Our destination—America. Sheesh.

Cap's dad had been a lobsterman, so he figured he could sail the thing. Bevis was a sailor—he knew the basics of navigation, as well as how to sail. We had a couple Rangers—Willis and Karales—who thought they could handle a boat, and Corporal Rogers used to be a windsurfer in Minnesota. Me—I figured I had a lot to learn.

When we started seeing the wrecks of other boats that had tried what we were trying, we realized we all had a lot to learn.

*T*he world of the year 2000 bears a striking resemblance to the world of 1500. Air travel isn't so much a thing of the past as a fond dream for the future. Railroads, for the most part, are idled due to lack of fuel. The once-proud highways are travelled at one's own risk, even in areas ostensibly controlled by a government. In a world without petroleum, the only plentiful fuel is the wind—or balky coal, wood and alcohol engines. And the real highways are now the rivers, lakes and oceans.

The waterways are just as hazardous now as they were in 1500. Pirates, the human enemy, are the least of the postholocaust mariner's problems. There are no more navigational aids—even the old-fashioned lighthouses are abandoned. Even in peacetime, the world's coast guards had difficulty keeping up with shifting shoals, channels, reefs and sandbars. Now, every passing storm, tide and winter makes whatever charts the adventurers have more and more out of date.

A TO B OR BUST

Before setting off, the party needs to determine the crew's Boat Handling factor and list the supplies the vessel is carrying.

Determining the Crew's Boat Handling Factor: Any vessel needs a crew—preferably a crew that knows how to operate the vessel. The minimum crew to operate any vessel for an extended period is listed on its vehicle card. Operating a vessel with less than this minimum number causes the crewmembers to accumulate an additional point of fatigue per day. They will have no time for anything but sailing and sleeping (no fishing, reconnoitering or anything else).

The Boat Handling factor is the average of all the crewmembers' Small Boat Handling (SBH) ratings, with fractions rounded down. (Don't include ratings for any passengers who will not be involved in the day-to-day operation of the boat.)

Listing the Supplies the Vessel is Carrying: Use your common sense on this one. On motor vessels, one would obviously keep careful track of the vessel's fuel supply.

On short voyages, it may be unnecessary to keep detailed records of food and water consumption. On longer voyages, however, food and water storage can become life and death statistics. If the adventurers run out of fresh water halfway across the Atlantic, they are in a serious bind.

Sailing is hard work, so for longer voyages, the party should store at lease eight liters of fresh water per crewmember per day of travel, double this in the tropics (at least during the summer). Crewmembers should receive one point of fatigue for every day of short water supplies and three points for every day they receive no fresh water. (Incidentally, a still will produce fresh water from salt water. Carrying enough fuel to run the still through an Atlantic crossing could a problem, though.)

ACTION SEQUENCE

Work through the action sequence at noon and midnight while the trip is under way. A sailing turn is 12 hours, rather than four. All travel movement rates are tripled to fit the 12-hour turns, as modified below.

Figure Weather and Wind Direction: For purposes of these rules, there are four weather conditions: calm, normal, gale and storm. Consult the charts on page 8.

Set Sailing Conditions: The crew picks its course and how it wants the sails set. There are four sailing conditions:

Full Sail: The vessel is attempting to sail at double the travel movement rate. Roll Easy: Boat Handling to attain full speed under sail.

Normal: Travelling at the regular travel speed.

Short Sail: Halves the travel speed, and makes the vessel safer in rough seas and high winds.

Hove To: All sails are reefed in, and a drogue anchor is streamed behind the vessel to keep the bow pointed into the waves. This is done in the most severe storms to keep a vessel from capsizing.

Resolve the Turn: The referee should secretly roll against the crew's Boat Handling rating:

Calm Seas: No die roll this turn. The boat doesn't move.

Normal: Roll Easy: Boat Handling.

Gale: Roll Average: Boat Handling.

Storm: Roll Difficult: Boat Handling.

Make the roll one level harder under full sail. Running in a storm under full sail makes the roll Very Difficult. Make the roll one level easier under short sail. Make the roll two levels easier when the vessel is hove to.

Failing the handling roll means the vessel is off course. The referee should secretly note that the vessel is 1D10 kilometers downwind of where the crew thinks it is.

Catastrophic Failure means that something very bad happened. Roll on the **Twilight** Navigation Hazards Table, adding 1 to the roll if the vessel is in a storm. If the vessel is not in sight of land, replace the "boat aground" result with "navigation error": The boat is 3D10 kilometers downwind of where crewmembers think it is. Also, if a "hull crushed" result is rolled, the vessel capsizes due to wind or wave action, or suffers some similarly undesirable mishap.

Referee Notation: The referee should secretly note how far off course the vessel is as a result of navigational errors. These errors should not be made known to the players unless they succeed at the next step.

Roll Navigation: The crew may now make one roll to attempt to gain a correct position fix. No attempt may be made during gales or storms because the sky is overcast.

The roll is Easy: Navigation if the navigator has access to all of the following navigational tools: sextant, chronometer, book of correction tables, detailed charts for the area the vessel is in.

The roll is Average: Navigation if the crew is missing one or two of the listed items.

The roll is Difficult: Navigation if the crew has only one or two of the tools.

The roll is Very Difficult: Navigation if the crew has no navigational tools.

If the crewmembers fail the navigation roll, they will obtain a false position fix. Roll direction as if rolling for artillery scatter and give the crew a fix 3D10 kilometers in that direction. In case of Catastrophic Failure, roll for artillery scatter and give the crew a fix 3D10×50 kilometers in that direction. The crewmembers may realize that their fix is wrong, but since fixes must be taken exactly at noon and midnight, they will have to wait 12 hours for their next chance.

It may be easiest to use two maps of the area—one to show the PCs where they think they are and one for the referee to keep track of where they really are. Otherwise, the referee can simply note where the party really is relative to the current fix on the map.

Example: The vessel listed above finds itself in normal winds from the north. The crewmembers set a westerly course and put up full sail to attempt to move double their travel speed (12×2, or 24 kilometers). They attempt Easy: Boat Handling on 1D10, rolling a 2. The handling rating is 2—Easy makes it 4. They will move 72 kilometers this 12-hour sailing turn. (12 kilometers×2 for full speed, 24 kilometers×3 for the 12-hour turn.)

The referee now resolves what happens during this turn. He will roll 1D10 against the Boat Handling rating. Normal seas make this an Easy roll, but full sail pushes the difficulty up one level. The referee rolls a 4—they failed, but not catastrophically. The referee rolls another 1D10—the vessel is blown eight kilometers downwind (south) of where the crewmembers think they are. The crewmembers mark their new map position, 24 kilometers west of their last position. The referee notes that they are actually eight kilometers south of that point.

Next, the crewmembers attempt to get a correct position fix. Bevis has Navigation: 2 and a full locker of navigational supplies. The weather is not gale or storm, so he can take a fix on the sun (or North Star, if it's a night turn).

The full nav locker makes it an Easy roll, making Bevis' 2 a 4. The referee rolls a 6—Bevis failed, but not catastrophically.

He screwed up one of the calculations. The referee rolls artillery scatter, getting a northerly result. The referee rolls 3D10 for a total of 17. Bevis' position fix shows the vessel to be 17 kilometers north of where it really is (and, incidentally, nine kilometers north of where the adventurers thought they'd be). Had Bevis rolled successfully, he would have gotten the boat's correct position.

MARINE EQUIPMENT LIST

All navigational equipment is one level rarer if the party is shopping more than 50 kilometers from an ocean or inland sea.

Sextant: A device used to measure the angle of the sun or North Star above the horizon to determine latitude.

Price: $500 (S/S).

Chronometer: A finely crafted, highly accurate clock. When correctly set (Average: Intelligence+Navigation), it is used to determine longitude.

Price: $1000 (S/S).

Book of Correction Tables: Seasonal corrections for results supplied by the above instruments, to help the navigator obtain a more accurate result. PCs may scrounge books from libraries in coastal areas.

Price: $200 (S/S).

Charts: A set of detailed charts for a particular area of the world. They include major landmarks, navigational beacons, water depths and important navigational hazards. The adventurers should note which general areas they own charts for. Note that it is easiest to obtain charts for the area one is currently in. The referee is advised to be very sparing in making charts for distant areas available to players, unless the group is located in a major port city or naval base.

Immediate Area: $100 (C/C).

Distant Area: $1000 (R/R).

Mercator Projection of Ocean: $100 (S/S) (for long-distance, deep-sea navigation).

WEATHER CHARTS

Die roll modifiers are as follows: winter, +1; summer, −1. South of the equator, winter comes in June, July and August. Tropics are between the Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn. Middle latitudes are between the tropics and 60° north or south. High latitudes are between 60° north or south and the icepack.

SAILING TURN SEQUENCE

Before Sailing: Calculate the Boat Handling rating and write it down. Note supplies carried, if necessary.

Every 12 Hours: Figure weather and wind conditions, set course and sails (full sail, normal sail, short sail, hove to), resolve the turn (vessel will move triple its modified travel movement—a sailing turn represents three periods), note new position (real and apparent), and attempt to gain a position fix using Navigation skill.

		Weather	
Roll	Tropics	Middle Latitudes	High Latitudes
1	Calm	Calm	Calm
2	Calm	Normal	Normal
3	Normal	Normal	Normal
4	Normal	Normal	Normal
5	Normal	Normal	Gale
6	Normal	Normal	Gale
7	Normal	Gale	Gale
8	Gale	Gale	Storm
9	Gale	Storm	Storm
10+	Storm	Storm	Storm

Northern Hemisphere Prevailing Winds

Tropics	Middle Latitudes	High Latitudes
Southwest	Northwest	Southwest

Southern Hemisphere Prevailing Winds

Tropics	Middle Latitudes	High Latitudes
Northwest	Southwest	Northwest

Large Sailing Yacht

A large sailing yacht is a large pleasure boat, built to sleep four to seven people in relative comfort for voyages up to a week, sometimes more. They usually belonged to wealthy boaters who wanted to get away in style or professional yachtsmen who earned a fair living chartering the vessels out to vacationers. They have an open or half-covered cockpit either aft of the mast or at the rear of the vessel, and the roof of the cabin usually sticks a foot or so above deck.

Price: $30,000
Armament: None, although two or three machineguns can be fitted
Length: 2
Draft: 3 m
Speed: 1D6+2 downwind, 1D6+4 upwind
Turn: 3
Acceleration: 0.5
Pumps: 1 or 2
Night Vision: None
Load: 3 tons
Minimum/Optimum Crew: 3/7
Mnt: 6

Tr Move: 16/16

Config: Flush deck
Tonnage: 30
Hull Armor: 0
Waterline Armor: 0
Propulsion: Sails (auxiliary diesel)
Size: 2

Full Speed	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□
Dead in Water	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□
Sunk	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□

Racing Yacht
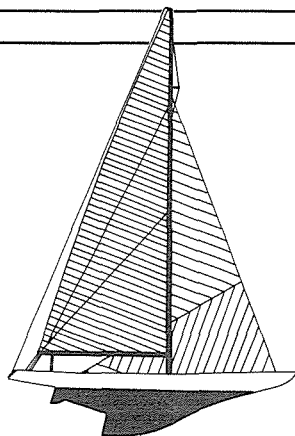
Racing yachts are very fast. To gain this speed, they trade crew comfort. The ride is rough, and the accommodations are Spartan and usually wet. Racing yachts are sometimes prone to capsizing in really rough weather. They are often built of high-tech materials which are very difficult to replace in 2000. They have an open cockpit aft.

Price: $100,000
Armament: None, but a few machineguns can be fitted
Length: 2
Draft: 3.5 m
Speed: 1D10 downwind, 1D10+2 upwind
Turn: 2
Acceleration: 1
Pumps: 1
Night Vision: None
Load: 1 ton
Minimum/Optimum Crew: 3/12
Mnt: 14

Tr Move: 24/24

Config: Flush deck
Tonnage: 15
Hull Armor: 0
Waterline Armor: 0
Propulsion: Sails
Size: 2

Full Speed	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□
Dead in Water	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□
Sunk	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□

Fishing Boat

These unglamorous, workaday vessels are built to go out and reliably bring back the goods (usually fish). They are found everywhere. They are dumpy and slow, and their accommodations generally give "Spartan" a bad name. They are also sturdy and handle rough seas relatively well for such small boats. They usually have a wheel or tiller aft.

Price: $15,000 (C/C)
Armament: None, but a machinegun can be fitted
Length: 2
Draft: 1 m
Speed: 1D6÷2 downwind, 1D6÷4 upwind
Turn: 2
Acceleration: 0.5
Pumps: 1
Night Vision: None
Load: 4 tons
Minimum/Optimum Crew: 2/6
Mnt: 6

Tr Move: 8/8

Config: Flush deck
Tonnage: 20
Hull Armor: 0
Waterline Armor: 0
Propulsion: Sails, oars
Size: 2

Full Speed	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
Dead in Water	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
Sunk	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Lugger

These vessels are known by many names. The Dutch call them "schuidtjes" (skoots), the Greeks call them "caiques," and the British call them "sailing barges," "luggers" or "coasters."

Whatever the name, the boats are stubby, low-slung vessels with shallow drafts for navigating rivers and canals as well as the open sea. They are found in any country with lots of coastal waterways, or anyplace where there is more water than roadway.

They usually have a crude wheelhouse (occasionally an open steering position) just aft of midship.

Price: $75,000 (S/S)
Armament: None, but machinegun, grenade launcher or light mortar can be fitted
Length: 3
Draft: 2.5 m
Speed: 1D6÷3 downwind, 1D6÷4 upwind
Turn: 2
Acceleration: 0.5
Pumps: 2
Night Vision: None
Load: 15 tons
Minimum/Optimum Crew: 3/10
Mnt: 16

Tr Move: 8/8

Config: Flush deck
Tonnage: 120
Hull Armor: 0
Waterline Armor: 0
Propulsion: Sails (auxiliary diesel)
Size: 3

Full Speed	□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□
Dead in Water	□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□
Sunk	□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□

(Each box represents 5 flotation hits.)

Interisland Schooner

Interisland schooners are most often found in the Caribbean. Most were owned by companies that chartered them out to tourists wanting to take an old-fashioned cruise. Some new ones are being built (see GDW's **Gateway to the Spanish Main**) by the rare shipwrights who never forgot the old-fashioned methods. They sail well, handle beautifully and work rough seas quite well.

They usually have an open cockpit or wheel position (almost never a wheelhouse) aft.

Tr Move: 16/16

Price: $200,000 (R/R)
Armament: Some can be fitted
Length: 3
Draft: 3 m
Speed: 1D10÷2 downwind, 1D10÷4 downwind
Turn: 2
Acceleration: 0.5
Pumps: 2
Night Vision: None
Load: 5 tons
Minimum/Optimum Crew: 5/12
Mnt: 20

Config: Flush deck
Tonnage: 100
Hull Armor: 0
Waterline Armor: 0
Propulsion: Sails (2-3 masts)
Size: 3

Full Speed	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□
Dead in Water	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□
Sunk	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□

(Each box represents 5 flotation hits.)

Junk

These extremely durable cargo vessels are ubiquitous in Southeast Asia. Vessels just like it are found in any maritime Third World country. They usually have a tiller (occasionally a wheel) in an open position aft.

The Arab *dhow* is similar to the junk, but has a large, triangular sail.

Tr Move: 12/12
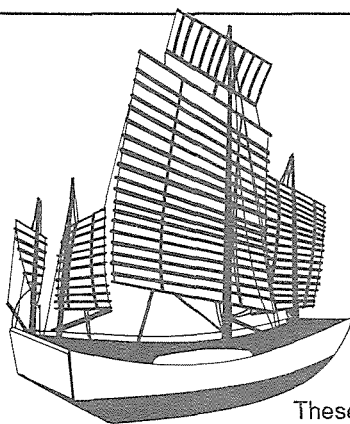
Price: $100,000 (S/S)
Armament: None, but much can be fitted
Length: 3
Draft: 2 m
Speed: 1D6÷2 downwind, 1D6÷4 upwind
Turn: 3
Acceleration: 0.5
Pumps: 2
Night Vision: None
Load: 15 tons
Minimum/Optimum Crew: 4/10
Mnt: 10

Config: Flush deck
Tonnage: 80
Hull Armor: 2
Waterline Armor: 2
Propulsion: Sails (2 masts)
Size: 3

Full Speed	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□
Dead in Water	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□
Sunk	□□□□□	□□□□□	□□□□□	□

(Each box represents 5 flotation hits.)
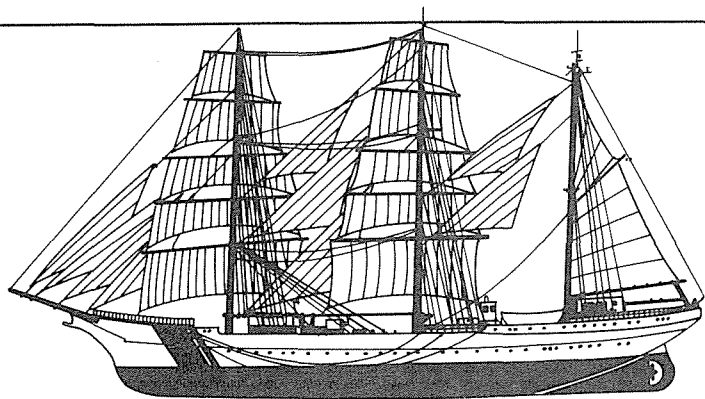
Training Vessel

Many of the world's major navies teach their officer cadets the basics of seamanship on these sailing vessels. There are few such vessels in the world—the US Coast Guard cutter *Eagle*, the German *Deutschland*, Norway's *Christian Rudich*, Denmark's *Danmark* and vessels from Poland, The Netherlands, Great Britain, France, Canada, Japan and a few others.

Training vessels are probably the finest sailing vessels left afloat. They are certainly the biggest. Some may actually make good warships. The *Eagle*, under German ownership in World War II, actually shot down a Russian airplane.

Their present owners may not wish to part with them.

Tr Move: 16/16 (probably inoperable)

Price: Special
Armament: None, although much can be fitted
Length: 4
Draft: 4 m
Speed: 1D10÷2 downwind, 1D10÷4 upwind
Turn: 1
Acceleration: 0.5
Pumps: 6
Night Vision: Nav radar
Load: 30 tons
Minimum/Optimum Crew: 10/35
Mnt: 25

Full Speed	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□
Dead in Water	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□
Sunk	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□

(Each box represents 5 flotation hits.)

Config: Flush deck
Tonnage: 300
Hull Armor: 4 (wood or steel)
Waterline Armor: 4
Propulsion: Sails, (2-3 masts, auxiliary engine)
Size: 4

Restored Antique

This is a warship from the 18th and 19th centuries, restored into nominal sailing order by the prewar government (USS *Constitution*) or perhaps by some intrepid characters (USS *Constellation*, HMS *Victory*).

This option is included for incredibly ambitious players or for extremely silly referees.

Tr Move: 16/16
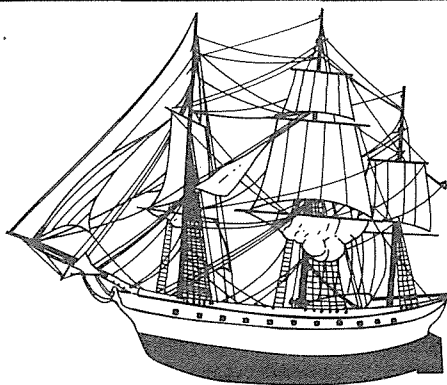
Price: Special
Armament: 20-100 muzzle-loading, smoothbore naval cannon
Length: 6
Draft: 5 m
Speed: 1D6÷2 downwind, 1D6÷4 upwind
Turn: 1
Acceleration: 0.5
Pumps: 4
Night Vision: None
Load: 100 tons
Minimum/Optimum Crew: 50/400+
Mnt: Every waking hour

Full Speed	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□
Dead in Water	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□
Sunk	□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□

(Each box represents 5 flotation hits.)

Config: Flush deck
Tonnage: 1000+
Hull Armor: 12 (thick wood)
Waterline Armor: 12
Propulsion: Sails
Size: 6

TRAVELLER News Service

Rhylanor/Spinward Marches (2716 A434934-F)   154-1124

¶ At the University of Rhylanor today, approximately 150 students staged a pro-Ine Givar demonstration to show their support at the university's main square. They wore green Ine Givar armbands, shook their fists and shouted, "Agitate. Educate. Organize."

¶Dean Eneri Woemser called in campus and local police forces to prevent any outbreaks of violence by the students or patriotic bystanders.

¶After chanting and handing out leaflets reading, "The Moment for Democrasy [sic] Is Now!" The demonstration disbanded peacefully. However, seven students who had been brandishing unloaded handguns were arrested for firearms possession and public endangerment, and inciting to violence.

¶The university plans to expel the seven students for their acts.

¶Dean Woemser's brief public statement concluded with the remark: "We have over 34,000 students enrolled on this campus. The forbearing response of the vast majority of our students to this inflammatory display by a handful of illiterates is ample proof that this university cannot be judged by the example of these stylish 'revolutionaries.'"

Gracilis/Dagudashaag (2038 A52077A-C)   168-1124

¶Recent Black War strikes on Gracilis by Lucan's forces have prompted planetary leaders to question the long-term habitability of the world. Progressive damage to port and power production facilities combined with the world's inhospitable atmosphere makes the future of the world's 63.2 million inhabitants "tenuous at best," according to one official.

¶The needs of the relatively large population require a vast oxygen and water cracking industry to chemically produce these essential resources from minerals found on the world. Recent developments in the ongoing Rebellion have made this procedure much more difficult. Lucan's raids have done extensive damage to Gracilis' habitation domes and subterranean galleries, which will require time-consuming repairs. Until such time as permanent repairs can be made, temporary repairs allow atmosphere and water supplies to leak away, placing a greater strain on the cracking industry. However, damage to the world's power production facilities has already reduced the capacity of the power-intensive cracking operations.

¶Repairs to any of the damage pulls already-scarce resources away from other projects on a world that has been on a wartime footing for seven years. Access to crucial repair parts is also becoming difficult, given extensive recent damage to Gracilis' port facilities and the dramatic fall-off in trade in Dagudashaag Sector because of the war.

¶Troy Kharkaziin, Gracilis' Minister for Resource Management is blunt about the situation: "We might just be able to keep going if things are left the way they are now. It won't be easy, but five or six years down the tunnel I can see a little light. But any more damage to this world and it's all over but the dying. It's time for a contingency study on worldwide evacuation."

¶However, Kharkaziin is quick to agree that all of this leaves one question unanswered: "Where do we go?"

Dlan/Ilelish (1021 A8D1ADE-G)   220-1124

¶Dulinor today firmly refused military aid to exiled President Kærri Sundarigari of Neola/Gushemege (1430 B526543-E). This aid would have been used to unseat the military council which overthrew her democratically elected government in a coup two months ago.

¶Federation Press Secretary Tredek Jurisor said: "The Federation is well aware of the situation on Neola. We have received the assurances of General Meochovici that martial law will be lifted and democracy restored as soon as the current crisis has ended.

¶"Therefore, we will continue with Federation policy of non-intervention in the affairs of individual worlds, unless other worlds or the Federation are threatened."

¶Speaking from her hotel in a hastily arranged and bitter press conference, Sundarigari responded: "'Current crisis?' What current crisis? I am absolutely sickened by Dulinor and his farcical Federation!

¶"Six years ago, I remember Dulinor saying Emperor Strephon was complacent, that he should have used his position to make the Imperium more responsive to individual citizens. He said he would bring an end to representation by the nobility, and give power back to the public. Now he's turned his back on the issues which supported his claims to the throne or any legitimacy as a ruler."

¶When asked to speculate on the reasons behind Dulinor's decision, Sundarigari replied angrily: "Maybe he feels that the [military] dictators will build more warships than we did for his precious Rebellion."

Dlan/Ilelish (1021 A8D1ADE-G)   251-1124

¶Dlan Port Authority officials reported that former President Kærri Sundarigari of Neola/Gushemege (1430 B526543-E) was killed along with four of her closest advisors today in a freak accident at Dlan Downport. She was reportedly on her way home to her subsector to recruit support to fight the ruling military council that unseated her government over two months ago.

¶Eyewitnesses report that Sundarigari's party was waiting to board a shuttle to the orbital starport when an out-of-control baggage lifter crashed into and ruptured several liquid hydrogen refueling lines. The resulting explosion killed Sundarigari, her Defense Minister, Press Secretary, Chief Judiciary Advisor, and Chief of Staff, along with nine other bystanders.

¶Archduke Dulinor's office officially expressed its regrets moments later when the event was reported, remarking: "President Sundarigari was a courageous and dedicated leader."

¶Some of Dulinor's officials have privately remarked that there should be an inquiry into the possibility that the junta's assassins could have reached all the way to Dlan, and the dangerous possibility this represents to other dissident groups.Ω

One Night in the CITY

By Adam Geibel

We lost the war and had zip to show for it. It was the same old story—too many of them, too few of us. I still don't know who our guardian angel was, but somehow we made it out of the pocket to neutral territory. Then, no thanks to our patron, we exchanged the rags of our uniforms for civilian clothes and flew back home. All I had when I got off the plane was a pocketful of worthless bank notes. I had to find some income, and I mean fast.

T his adventure is a prequel to the Exterminators mission described on page 96 of **Merc: 2000**. There are no initial patrons in this adventure, nor is there payment beyond what the characters acquire during the course of the mission.

MISSION BRIEFING

The PCs have recently been discharged from the losing side in a nasty bush war. They have nothing but the clothes on their back, maybe a few dollars in their pockets and whatever they have from character generation. They need to come up with straight jobs fast just to survive. Waiting tables, driving cabs, working in supermarkets—anything will do. They just need enough to pay the rent in the seedier section of the city—the better to witness the daily miasma of modern-day America. Nothing has changed since they left—not the people, not the news on the tube, not even the commercials.

At about the time the PCs become bored out of their gourds, one of them overhears some indiscriminate talk on the street. A drunken yuppy will brag to his girlfriend about a big score this coming Saturday night. It's a quick and easy cash-for-coke transaction that, if they come straight from the deal, should have him free by 11 p.m. at the latest. He'll make reservations at Hector's, a very exclusive restaurant only a few blocks away from the bridge where the transaction will take place. He mentions that she should drive, since "the guys" will drop him off at the restaurant.

Most of this rather one-way conversation is in trendy slang, and the young woman will quickly change the subject.

The PC should roll to avoid being detected eavesdropping (Easy: Recon). If the PC is caught, the woman will give him a dirty look. However, on a 1D10 roll of 1-2, she'll mention it to her boyfriend the next day (see Alternatives and Variants on the following page).

The adventurers learn of this deal on Monday night. They know nothing other than the approximate time (shortly before 11 p.m. Saturday), place (under the cross-town bridge) and participants (yuppies)—the value of the deal is a mystery.

Under normal circumstances, the PCs might pass this situation off as too risky. But they're bored and desperate— maybe enough so to take a chance.

They could be on a wild goose chase or walking into a death-trap, and they'll have little advantage other than surprise. But the rewards might make it worth their effort—knocking over a drug deal could provide money and weapons (and enemies) for future encounters.

NPCs

This is not the first deal between the two groups, so their nerves won't be brittle, but they'll be on their toes. The plan is simple enough—at the appointed time, both sides roll up to their spots beneath the bridge. Everyone gets out, and one person from each side walks to the halfway point. They exchange goods, and everyone drives away happy.

Kingston North Posse: The drug sellers, a gang of Jamaican expatriates known as the Kingston North Posse, are the core of a local criminal network. They have brought a dozen independent operations under their direct control and have plans to expand exponentially.

Six Veteran NPCs arrive in a Mercedes-Benz sedan and a Toyota landcruiser. The boss man and his driver/bodyguard, both armed with .380 automatics, two magazines each, ride in the Mercedes. The weapons are legally registered to be carried concealed.

The other four gangsters ride in the 4WD vehicle, armed with two folding-stock AKs with four magazines each, two Uzis with five magazines each, two .44 S&W revolvers with three speed-loaders each, an MAC 10 with four mags, and a sawed-off, double-barreled 12 gauge with 10 rounds. Two suitcases with 10 kilos of cocaine apiece are in the back of the Toyota.

Buyers: These white collar criminals will sell the drugs to fellow corporate climbers. Three of them will be in a Nissan sedan, four in a Toyota Camry. Two are Experienced NPCs (each with .38 snubbies, three speedloaders, an H&K MP5K and four mags); two are Veterans (with CAR-15s and two drums apiece); three are Novices (each with a folding-stock 12-gauge riot gun with no extra ammo and a 9mm automatic with two spare mags). The two Experienced NPCs and one Novice (the driver) will be in the Nissan. A suitcase in the Nissan holds $300,000 in $100 bills.

APPROACH

The adventurers have no firearms to start with. Since they have very little money and no street contacts, they will need a fast, semilegal way of obtaining weapons. Shotguns do not require contacts to purchase, in the regular sense. They are often advertised in local "swap" newspapers, especially after a holiday or hunting season, when folks need cash. To find sellers, the PCs should roll once per day (Easy: Scrounging) per type of shotgun (double, pump or semi) per newspaper they peruse. Note that sporting rifles can be acquired the same way, but they might be beyond the PCs' budget.

It's considered tactically "daring" to insert oneself between two opposing armed bands and start shooting, but the team can hope to capitalize on confusion and have each side assume the other is engaged in a double-cross. This mistaken-identity/intention trick has been used (successfully) before in more conventional warfare.

Remember, this is a gritty situation, not an *A-Team* adventure. Encourage improvisation (mines made from golf course fertilizer, Molotov cocktails) and scrounging, but hold fast to reality. Make the team members use their skills. But when things blow up, people get hurt (not necessarily the intended targets) and it attracts attention. And drug deal or not, lots of shooting in the fringe of a downtown area will warrant a police investigation.

The adventurers will want to scout the area and assume hidden positions (if any) long before the deal.

RETRIEVAL

The team members will be responsible for their own extraction. They will need a fast exit out of the area, and they probably do not have access to a car. Since it would be impractical to catch public transportation laden with automatic weapons, they might want to acquire a car or a boat.

MAP DESCRIPTION

The refeee should draw a map with the following features.

Bridge Piers: These are massive, three- and four-story stone supports for the bridge. The top stories have girders that would make excellent sniper roosts (detection is Difficult: Recon). Access to these vantage points can be by climbing or picking the lock (Easy: Lockpick) on the stairwell door.

Sea Wall: This heavy stone wall rises a meter above the river. There are various handholds and expedient tiedowns, but no ladders or stairways, so it is easily climbed in dry weather, treacherous in rain or snow.

Fences: These wire-mesh fences are intended to prevent John Q. Public from hurting himself. They are two meters high and topped with barbed tape. They can be climbed or passed through at occasional holes.

Sewers: Manhole covers provide negligible barriers (Easy: Strength) and allow adventurers to view the street from the storm gutter, much like a pillbox/bunker. A few centimeters of water and scum have accumulated in the storm drain. Assume the storm drain pipe will act like a grenade sump.

Warehouse: A three-story brick structure, locked and protected by a security system. There are no human guards, as it is empty and available for rent.

Mall: This is a collection of low-budget retail stores that close around 9 p.m. All have security systems, but the adventurers can access the roof.

ALTERNATIVES AND VARIANTS

There is a 20% chance that the yuppy's girlfriend mentioned the PCs' eavesdropping. She won't admit indiscretion before the sting, but afterward there might be inquiries. If the indiscretion is uncovered, he and his girlfriend will be coerced to remember the eavesdropping PC's face. This might come back to haunt the PCs at a later date.

Alternatively, one or both of the gangs involved in the deal may intend to double-cross the other. This involves setting snipers or other ambushes in the area, and substituting bogus cash or drugs.

An innocent bystander (e.g., a homeless person) might complicate the situation. Or police could blunder into the area and feel compelled to stop and chat with the loiterers. There would be one Veteran and one Novice (the driver) in a patrol car, each with a ballistic vest, 9mm automatic and three spare mags. A 12-gauge riot gun with 20 rounds would be in a front-seat rack between the driver and passenger. The two business parties would quickly vacate the area, laying down suppressive fire and immobilizing the patrol car. PCs engaging cops or ignoring them may be severely penalized. Ω

WET NAVY

Part 3: Maritime Environment and Naval Combat
By Terrence R. McInnes

Wet navy combat is conducted through a wide range of tech levels at a wide range of distances. However, no matter the weapon, range or setting, combat resolution is task-based. There are tasks to locate the enemy, to engage the enemy, to hit the enemy and to escape the enemy. The flavor of these tasks varies widely from setting to setting. A PC could be aloft in a sailing ship's rigging scanning the horizon for enemy sails. Or he could be the captain of a gravitic sub desperately trying to escape the probing sensor beams of a deep-diving enemy as locked-on torpedoes race down his bearing. All these situations are resolved by tasks. To help you begin your wet naval campaign, a library of suggested tasks is included with these rules.

NAVAL AVIATION

Wet navy combat includes naval aviation and its operations and combat. Aircraft are integrated with naval combat, and aircraft may be launched and recovered with naval operations tasks during the course of a wet navy scenario. The wet navy aviation rules and tasks are compatible with **COACC** aircraft designs, combat rules and tasks.

COMBAT SYSTEMS

Wet navy combat can be resolved using one of four systems:

Hasty Combat: This system is used when naval combat is incidental to the campaign, something to be quickly resolved without much detail. Task rolls are used to spot opponents. Battles are resolved through task rolls after combatants are within range.

Plotted Combat: This system involves plotting unit movement on graph paper after the initial situation and unit locations are determined by the referee. Of medium complexity, this system is used when more detail is desired, such as when naval combat is a key element of a campaign.

Miniatures Combat: This system is identical to plotted combat in terms of game mechanics, but it uses either miniatures of ships or cardboard counters representing ships on a large, open playing surface.

Special Combat: This is long-distance combat against special opponents, such as orbiting spacecraft or distant aircraft outside the immediate plotted combat or miniatures combat environment by wet naval units engaged in plotted or miniatures combat.

TIME AND DISTANCE SCALES

Hasty combat is fought abstractly without regard to time or distance. Plotted and miniatures combat require time and distance scales. There are two types of combat rounds in wet naval combat:

Operational Combat Rounds: Operational combat rounds (OCRs) are used for rapid travel through the combat scenario as opponents search for each other. OCRs last 10 minutes each. If plotted combat is used, each square or hex represents 1000 meters. If miniatures combat is used, each centimeter represents 1000 meters.

Tactical Combat Rounds: Tactical combat rounds (TCRs) are used after enemy units have been detected and combat begins. Or combat can begin at the OCR scale, then shift to TCR as the range closes. Each TCR lasts one minute. If plotted combat is used, each square or hex represents 100 meters. If miniatures combat is used, each centimeter represents 100 meters. TCRs are ideal for slow-moving, oar-powered or sail vessels with effective weapons ranges of 400 meters or less.

MARITIME ENVIRONMENT

A variety of factors influence maritime environment.

World Size: World size affects ranges for visual spotting and some sensor acquisitions that are limited by the distance to the horizon. Distances to the horizon are determined by the world's UWP size code as shown in the Horizons Table.

Horizons		
UWP Size	Radius (km)	Distance to Horizon (km)
1	800	18
2	1600	25
3	2400	31
4	3200	36
5	4000	40
6	4800	43
7	5600	47
8	6400	51
9	7200	54
A	8000	57

Weather and Sea Conditions: The prevailing weather and sea conditions may be imposed by the referee or may be determined at the start of a battle by rolling 2D6–2 on the Maritime Wind and Sea Conditions Table (page 18). This table may also be used at intervals during a maritime campaign to check the weather encountered by characters sailing on any large body of water.

Primitive surface vessel combat is impossible with a wave height of six meters or more. Modern surface vessel combat is impossible with a wave height of 10 meters or more. Hydrofoils cannot remain foilborne in waves six meters high or more. Aircraft cannot be launched or recovered by ships in winds greater than 60 kph and seas greater than six meters high. Seaplanes may not take off or land from the ocean surface in winds higher than 40 kph or seas higher than 2.5 meters.

Roll the following task every hour a surface ship is in sea state 9 or higher:

To avoid damage caused by high seas:
Routine, Large or Small Watercraft (hazardous, fateful).

Referee: DM: –1 if vessel less than 1000 tons, –2 if less than 100 tons. +1 if greater than 10,000 tons. Major damage causes the hull to start leaking water—the ship will sink in 1D6 hours if damage control measures are not applied. Destroyed damage causes the ship to sink in 1D6×10 minutes.

D. MARTIN
©3/92
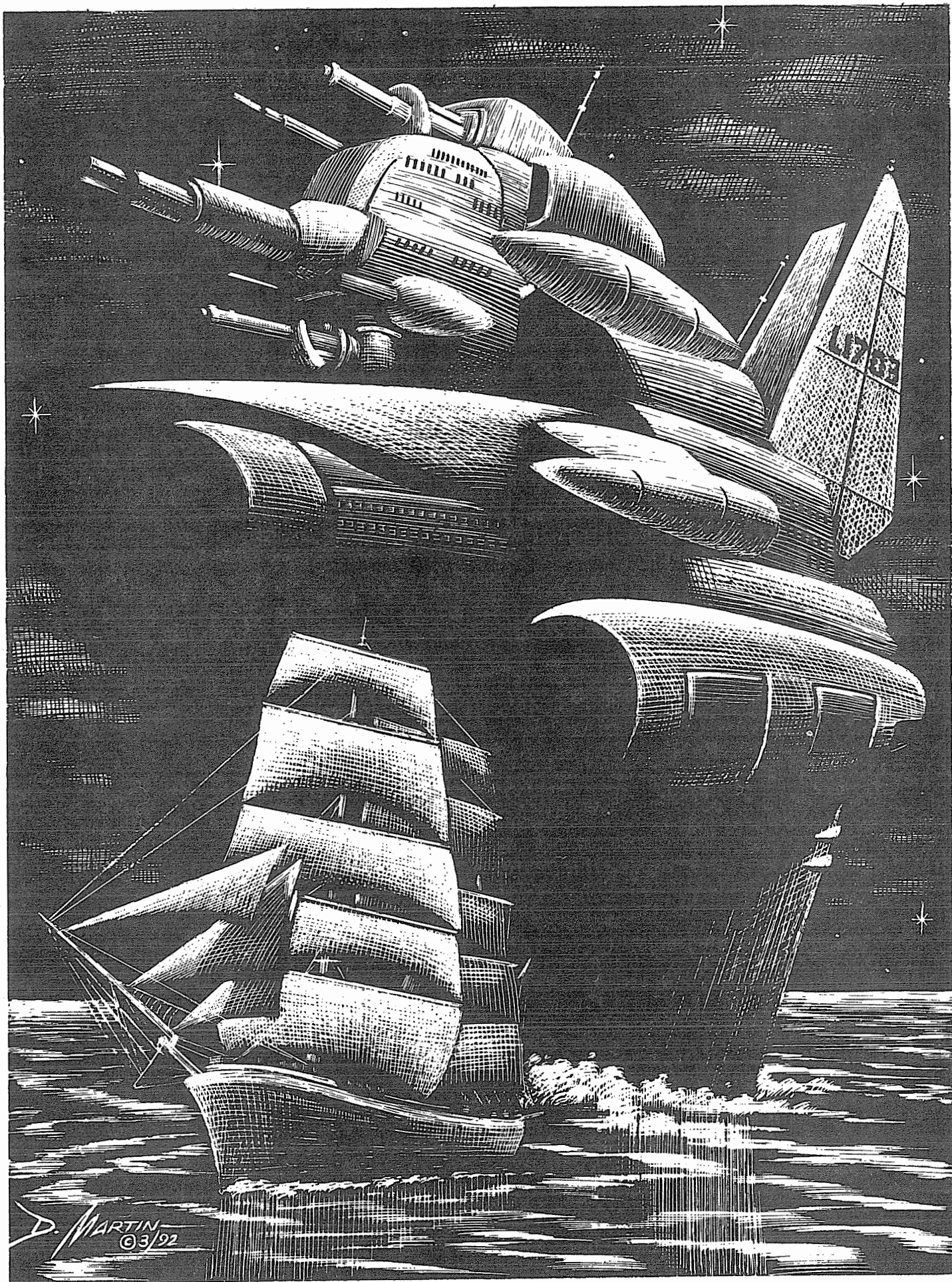
Wind Direction: Wind direction must also be checked by rolling 1D6–1 and multiplying by 60. Then roll 1D6 again, multiply the result by 10, and add that to the first result.

Example: The referee rolls 6 on 1D6, minus 1 equals 5. He multiplies this by 60—the result is 300. On the second roll, he gets a 3 and multiplies it by 10—the result is 30. The prevailing wind is coming from 330° or north-northwest.

Wind direction is important for sailing vessels and for aircraft launches from carriers.

Visibility: Roll 2D6–2 for the current visibility percentage. Multiply the maximum distance to the horizon by this roll to determine the actual maximum visibility percentage. Low visibility (40% or less) indicates rain, snow, other precipitation, sea spray or fog.

DMs: Subtract 4 if the sea state is 8 or greater. Add 2 if the sea state is 4-7.

Example: The battle is being fought on a UWP 7 world with a distance to the horizon of 47 kilometers. The referee rolls a 10, yielding 80% visibility (10–2=8). The maximum naked-eye visibility is 38 kilometers (47×0.8=37.6, rounded to the nearest whole number=38).

Night Visibility: Night visibility is 33% of normal visibility. To check visibility at night, divide the actual visibility as calculated in the previous section by 3. If the battle in the above example were being fought at night, the visibility would be 13 kilometers.

Night visibility may vary according to local conditions. A world with multiple moons may have a higher night visibility percentage, for example. Night or day may be imposed or determined randomly by rolling 1D6 (even is day; odd is night). Referees may impose more precise times reflecting local conditions.

Visual Detection Range: Surface vessels and aircraft may not be visually detected beyond the current visibility range calculated above. To detect an enemy vessel, select and complete an appropriate task from the spotting and detection tasks in the Task Library.

HASTY COMBAT

Hasty combat may occur after both sides have detected each other (skip the detection tasks), or it may include searching for enemy units with the detection tasks in the Task Library. If one side detects the other first, it has surprise and may fire first or attempt to evade. Surprise is lost when the surprised unit detects its opponent. Combat is resolved using the combat tasks in the Task Library. All tasks are absolute and instantaneous unless otherwise noted.

PLOTTED COMBAT

Plotted combat should be conducted by two players and a referee. Only the referee knows the position of both opposing players at all times. Only after a player detects an opposing player does he become aware of the opponent's position.

The referee should plot both sides' positions on his master game pad while each player plots his position on his individual pad. Only after detection may the players see and plot movements on the master game pad.

Players must maintain a log to keep track of their movements and to issue orders that are executed by the referee.

Combat Rounds and Phases

Plotted combat uses the same tasks as hasty combat, but only during the appropriate phase of a combat round. Combat and movement take place simultaneously within each combat round. Each combat round is divided into four phases which occur in this order: detection and plotting, movement, offensive fire, defensive fire and impact.

Detection and Plotting Phase: Players roll appropriate detection tasks from the Task Library at the beginning of this phase if enemy forces have been previously undetected. Players write and issue orders for fire and movement in this phase. Once detection is accomplished, players have the option of shifting to tactical combat rounds.

If one side achieves surprise by detecting the opposition first while remaining undetected, the side with surprise has a free fire combat round. It may fire during the offensive fire phase without being fired upon in return either in the offensive fire phase or defensive fire phase.

Movement Phase: All ship movement orders are executed. Missiles and torpedoes launched in previous turns are moved. Aircraft are moved during this phase. They may also be launched or recovered during this phase. However, during a TCR, no more than two aircraft per catapult or landing pad may be launched, or more than two per flight deck or landing pad may be recovered per phase. Float planes may be launched from battleship or cruiser catapults once every five TCRs. All helicopters, VTOL aircraft or grav vehicles ready to lift may take off from a carrier flight deck during the movement phase. Submarines may change depth, submerge or surface during this phase.

Offensive Fire Phase: Players execute offensive fire orders against any enemy ships within range with appropriate task rolls. Guns are fired, and missiles and torpedoes are launched. Aircraft in range attack during this phase. Marines may attempt to board enemy vessels during this phase.

Defensive Fire and Impact Phase: Ships may return fire against surface ships, and may attempt to shoot down incoming aircraft and missiles during this phase. High-tech submarines may fire lasers against incoming torpedoes. Successful defensive fire nullifies successful to-hit task rolls made for these missiles and torpedoes. Torpedoes and missiles due to impact during this combat round do so in this phase. Attempts to ram are resolved during this phase. All combat task rolls are resolved by the end of this phase, and damage is applied to the combatants.

Detection and Plotting

Detection tasks for surface ships and aircraft need not be repeated. However, detection tasks for submarines must be repeated each turn in the detection and

Die Roll/ Sea State	Wind (kph)	Wave Height (meters)	Description
0	0	0	Glassy calm
1	4	0.1	Occasional ripple
2	9	0.2	Ripples
3	16	0.3	Wavelets
4	23	1	Small waves
5	31	1.7	Noticeable motion
6	40	2.5	Moderate seas
7	50	3.5	White caps
8	60	6	Sea spray
9	72	10	Rough seas
10	84	12	Very rough
11	97	16	High waves
12	104	18	Very high
13	111	20	Mountainous seas
14	120+	25+	Phenomenal

Maritime Wind and Sea Conditions

DMs: As follows:
  –2 if atmosphere is Thin, +2 if atmosphere is Dense.
  +2 if UWP hydro 8+, –2 if UWP hydro 5–.
  –2 if rotation period is 30 hours or more, –1 if rotation period is 26 hours or more, +1 if rotation period is 22 hours or less, +2 if rotation period is 18 hours or less. Modifiers are cumulative.

plotting phase because the path of sound through water is unpredictable and a contact can be unexpectedly lost.

Ships' positions and courses are plotted on graph paper. For convenience, a different colored pen or pencil should be used for ships of each side and may even be used for each ship. In addition, logs should be maintained of each ship's speed and course during every turn.

Ship Movement

Ship Speed: Ships travel one-sixtieth their current speed in a TCR. For example, a ship moving 60 kph travels one kilometer per minute (60÷60) or 10 squares per TCR (1 square=100 meters, 10 squares=1000 meters or one kilometer).

Ships travel one-sixth their speed in an operational combat round. The ship mentioned above would sail 10 kilometers or 10 one-kilometer squares during a 10-minute OCR (60÷6=10).

Changing Speed: Ships may change speed during both types of combat round. Maximum acceleration and deceleration vary by ship type and size. The values below indicate the number of kilometers per hour a ship can accelerate/decelerate per tactical combat round. See the Acceleration/Deceleration Table.

Changing Course: Ships may change direction during both types of combat round.

All powered ships may change direction an unlimited number of degrees during an OCR. Ships' direction changes are limited by their displacement during TCRs. The Displacement Table indicates the maximum direction change for powered ships according to their fluid displacement (see **Challenge 54**).

Sailing Ship Movement: Sailing ships' movements are limited by the prevailing wind direction. Square-rigged sailing ships may not sail a course greater than 90° either side of the prevailing wind direction. Fore-and aft-rigged sailing ships may not sail a course greater than 135° either side of the prevailing wind direction.

Submarines: Surfaced submarines are treated as surface ships in regard to course change restrictions. Submerged submarines have a 180° TCR course change limit.

Submarines may submerge to periscope depth in one TCR. Submarines change depth below periscope depth in 50-meter increments at a rate of 50 meters per TCR or at a maximum rate of 500 meters per OCR. Submarines must climb to periscope depth and remain at periscope depth for at least one TCR before surfacing. Submarines may surface in one TCR.

Aircraft: Aircraft also have vertical movement. They climb and dive in 500-meter increments called flight levels, and they expend maneuver points to cover distance,

climb, dive or accelerate. Aircraft flying at 100 meters and below are flying NOE as sea skimmers. Each aircraft has maneuver points equal to its current speed divided by 250, rounded to the nearest whole number. Each maneuver point may be used to: move 50 TCR squares horizontally per TCR or 50 OCR squares per OCR; climb or dive one flight level; turn 45°; accelerate 50 TCR squares or 50 OCR squares per TCR or OCR until its maximum speed is reached.

Aircraft movement must be plotted and altitude changes noted as log entries. Because of the great speed of aircraft and missiles, scenarios with aircraft and/or missiles playing a major role may be best played with OCRs. Optionally, players may use **COACC** rules, tasks and combat scales (500 meters per square/six seconds per turn) if the scenario primarily involves air attacks against shipping or air-to-air combat. Naval air operations and combat tasks found in the Task Library and naval air weapons listed in the weapons tables found in **Challenge 54** are designed to be used with both "Wet Navy" and **COACC** rules.

Aircraft Launches: Aircraft carriers may have straight decks, angled decks (TL7+) or a combination of both. Straight-deck carriers must sail directly into the wind when launching or recovering aircraft. Angled-deck carriers must sail to put the angled deck straight into the wind (10° off the bow) when launching and recovering. Carriers with a combined deck may sail directly into the wind or with the wind 10° off the bow when launching, depending on which portion of the deck is used. They must always sail with the wind 10° off the bow when recovering aircraft. Helicopters and grav vehicles may be launched and recovered in any direction from a full-deck carrier. They must be launched or recovered with the wind 30° off the bow (to avoid turbulence from the superstructure) on ships with helicopter or grav vehicle land-

ing pads. Float planes may be launched from battleship or cruiser catapults with the wind 30° off the bow.

Missiles: Missiles move as aircraft, above, including plotting and logs. See the Naval Missile Speeds Table.

Offensive Fire Phase, Primitive Naval Combat

Primitive naval combat usually requires three actions:

Direct Fire: Archers, catapult gunners and spearmen let fly with their missiles in an attempt to kill enemy crew in the offensive fire phase. Primitive cannon, if available, may also fire during this phase. Muzzle-loading cannons require two TCRs to reload after firing. Musket and rifle-armed marines may fire from the decks and rigging of opposing vessels.

Ramming: Ramming the enemy vessel is the most common method of sinking ships in primitive combat. Most TL1 and 2 fighting ships are fitted with rams designed to penetrate an enemy hull and sustain the shock of collision.

Penetration and damage points equal one-half the weight in tons of the attacking

Acceleration/Deceleration

Displacement	Maximum Speed Change (Accel/Decel in kph)
More than 30,000 tons	8/16
More than 6000 tons	12/24
Less than 6000 tons	20/40
Any gas turbine powered	20/40
Any grav powered	No limit
Submerged submarine	20/40

Speed changes are unlimited in operational combat rounds.

Displacement

Displacement	Maximum Direction Change
More than 30,000 tons	45° every two turns
More than 6000 tons	45° every turn
More than 1000 tons	90° every turn
Less than 1000 tons	180°
Submerged submarine	180°

Note that ships larger than 30,000 tons fluid displacement must plot a turn two turns in advance of the actual turn.

Naval Missile Speeds

Type	kph	Ceiling (meters)
Light SS/US	1200	N/A
Light AS	1200	N/A
Medium SS/US	960	N/A
Medium AS	960	N/A
Heavy SS/US	2880	N/A
Heavy AS	2880	N/A
Antisubmarine SU	1680	N/A
Antisubmarine UU	2880	N/A
Light SA	2640	2500
Medium SA	5280	10,000
Heavy SA	2880	20,000
Heavy SA (long range)	880	30,000

vessel, rounded up to the next whole number, when a vessel is rammed broadside. As an example, a galley weighing 4.8 tons ramming an enemy vessel would have a penetration rating of 3 (weight of 4.8 tons rounded up to 5, divided by 2 to yield 2.5, in turn rounded up to 3) and would cause 3 damage points. This would be enough damage to make a similar target vessel inoperable and in danger of sinking. Two additional rams would sink the target. (Hull damage rating 3/8).

Penetration and damage points equal the full weight in tons of both vessels in a head-on ram. Penetration and damage points equal 25% of the weight of the ramming vessel in a chasing ram.

Boarding: Once one vessel rams another or comes alongside, marines aboard the attacking ship secure their ship to the enemy vessels with grapples, and board the enemy ship under the cover of archers, spearmen and/or musketeers and riflemen. Boarding ramps may be used to ease this task if they are available. Melee combat with swords, axes and polearms now takes place.

Offensive Fire Phase, Modern Naval Combat

If both sides have detected each other, they may fire on each other simultaneously in the offensive fire phase. Gunfire, laser and energy weapon attacks may be made in this phase; missiles and torpedoes may be launched.

Guns: Guns may fire at individual targets, and hit tasks are then rolled individually. They may also be fired collectively and the actual number of hits determined by rolling on the Hit Percentages Table.

Hit Percentages

Roll	Percentage of Shells Hitting
2	1% (or at least one shell)
3	10%
4	25%
5	25%
6	30%
7	30%
8	30%
9	50%
10	50%
11	75%
12	100%

Because results are rolled on this table after a successful to-hit task roll, at least one shell will always hit the target. Round down when calculating the number of shells hitting.

DMs: –2 when firing indirect fire, +2 when firing autocannon.

Multibarrel rotary autocannon are treated somewhat differently. If a multibarrel autocannon scores a hit, multiply the number of hits by the number of barrels firing. Because of this weapon's high rate of fire, these are considered actual hits, and no hit percentage roll is made.

If more than one multibarrel rotary autocannon is firing at the same target, total the number of barrels of all firing autocannons; this number equals the number of hits.

Energy Weapons: Lasers, plasma guns and fusion guns may fire in this phase. If firing together in battery, all weapons hit when a hit is rolled, and their damage points are totalled.

Aircraft Weapons: Machinegun and cannon fire, and bombs and rockets launched during this phase, impact in this phase if a successful to-hit roll is made.

Missiles launched during this phase at a distance of less than one combat round's travel impact in the current combat round's defensive fire and impact phase if they survive defensive fire. If aircraft-launched missiles must travel farther to their target than one turn's movement, they will impact during the defensive fire and impact phase of the combat round they arrive.

As an example, a missile travelling 1200 kilometers per hour would travel 250 TCR squares or 250 OCR squares in one TCR or OCR, respectively. If it were launched within 250 TCR or 250 OCR squares, it would impact in the defensive fire and impact phase of the same turn. If it were launched beyond this range, it would impact in the following turn or later, depending on how far away it was launched. Referees may send hostile missiles into a battle area from a set distance "off the board" as part of the scenario.

Missiles: Missiles may be launched from ships and submarines during this phase. Missiles travelling less than one combat round's flight time impact in the current round's defensive fire and impact phase if a successful to-hit task is rolled and the missile survives defensive fire. All missiles that travel for more than one combat round, regardless of their launch platform, must be plotted and their altitudes logged.

Torpedoes: Torpedoes may be launched from ships and submarines or dropped from aircraft during this phase. Because of their relatively slow speed, torpedoes always impact one or more combat rounds later, in the defensive fire and impact phase of that round. Therefore, all torpedoes must be plotted.

Defensive Fire and Impact Phase

Autocannon, lasers, energy weapons and all surface-to-air missiles that have not fired during the offensive fire phase may fire at incoming missiles and aircraft during the defensive fire and impact phase. Submarines equipped with anti-torpedo lasers may fire against incoming torpedoes as well. Missiles and torpedoes surviving defensive fire impact during this phase. Ramming occurs in this phase when both vessels are in the same square or hex.

All damage points inflicted on targets are totalled and applied against targets after all fire is resolved at the end of this phase.

Damage and Damage Location: The effects a hit inflicts on a target depend on the type of target and the hit's location. Roll on the appropriate hit location table for type of target. The six types of targets and their hit location tables include: surface warships, surface merchants, aviation ships (any ship with a full-length flight deck), submarine (any type, commercial or naval), sailing ships (predominantly sail-driven) and galleys (predominantly oar-driven).

Combat Damage Effects

Hull: If the weapon's penetration value equals or exceeds the hull's armor value, the hull is damaged. Subtract the total number of attacking damage points from the available hull damage points. When the number of damage points exceeds the first number, the hull has been penetrated, and the vessel is taking water and may sink unless damage control tasks are successful. When damage points exceed the second figure, the hull is destroyed, and the vessel sinks. Characters near the location of a hull hit suffer 4D6 wound points.

If the target is a submerged submarine and the hull is penetrated, the sub is sunk, and all hands are lost.

Superstructure: Subtract the total number of hit points from the available superstructure damage points. When this number exceeds the superstructure damage points, the superstructure is destroyed, including the ship's bridge and sensor suite. The ship may not change course or speed until control is shifted to a secondary control center. Sensors are inoperative until the ship can be repaired. Other effects, such as the destruction of crews quarters, may be applied at the referee's discretion. Characters near the location of a superstructure hit suffer 4D6 wound points. Any open gun or missile mounts near the hit are destroyed. Although the ship won't sink, one or more superstructure hits may result in a "mission kill," a ship unable to carry out its combat mission and effectively removed from the battle.

If the superstructure is hit by gunfire at greater than half the gun range, it is hit by plunging fire. If the penetration rating of the shell is greater than twice the armor rating of the superstructure, it penetrates the hull and causes damage to both superstructure and hull. Divide damage points evenly between both locations.

Power Plant: Subtract the total number of hit points from the power plant damage points. If this number is exceeded, the vessel is dead in the water with an inoperative power plant. However, the damage is repairable with a repair task.

If the power plant damage points are exceeded by twice the number of hit points, the power plant is destroyed. Boilers (if any) explode, and fuel catches fire, inflicting damage points to the hull equal to the kiloliters of power plant volume. If fission-powered, the reactor ruptures, releasing radioactive steam and fuel. If fusion-powered, the fusion bottle

ruptures, destroying the ship.

Loco: A sub with disabled locomotion (i.e., propeller) is dead in the water and may not maneuver. It must surface for repairs. A sub with destroyed locomotion takes on water and must surface within 1D6 combat rounds to allow crew to abandon ship before it sinks.

Sensors: A sensor hit destroys sensor antennae, rendering sensors inoperative. Hits by antiradiation missiles are always sensor hits.

Weapon/Turret: A weapon or turret is hit. An unarmored weapon is destroyed. If a turret is penetrated, its weapons are destroyed, its ready ammunition explodes, and the turret crewmembers (including any characters) are killed. The referee should arbitrarily decide the specific weapon or turret that is hit, or the defending player may roll randomly for the hit location.

Flight Deck: The flight deck is damaged. Aircraft may not be launched or recovered until repairs are made at a shipyard.

Aircraft: 1D6 aircraft are destroyed on the flight deck. Any flight crewmembers aboard the aircraft are killed. Secondary explosions damage the flight deck, halting aircraft operations, and may cause fires.

Sails: Apply the number of hit points against the ship's sail damage rating. If the first number is exceeded, half the sails are destroyed. If the second number is exceeded, all the sails are destroyed, and the ship is demasted and dead in the water.

Mast: One mast and its sails are destroyed. If all masts are destroyed, the ship is dead in the water.

Oars: 1D6 oars are destroyed. If all oars are destroyed on a side, the ship may not maneuver.

Torpedo Special Damage Rules

Because torpedoes hit beneath the water line, their effect can be far worse than that of cannon shells, missiles or energy weapons. Therefore, if a torpedo hit penetrates a surface vessel hull, the hull begins flooding automatically. Roll a damage control task for each penetrating torpedo hit. All damage control tasks must succeed. If any fail, the ship sinks.

Roll on the damage table a second time for collateral torpedo damage. A "power plant" result applies the torpedo's damage points to the ship's power plant. A "weapons/turret" hit strikes the vessel's magazines, causing a catastrophic explosion that destroys the ship. A "hull" or "sensors" result on the second roll has no effect. A "hull*" or "superstructure*" result on the second roll starts a fire on-board.

Fire

Fire may break out from certain hull, superstructure and flight deck hits, and from severe power plant damage. If not controlled, fire will spread throughout the ship at a rate of 2D6% of the ship's volume per OCR, eventually forcing survivors to abandon ship.

Damage Control

Ships with hull hits may be prevented from sinking with successful damage control tasks. This represents sealing off damaged compartments to prevent further flooding, actually plugging hull holes, and running pumps to clear or at least keep up with flooding in damaged hull compartments.

Repair tasks may be successfully rolled to repair power plants and ship controls so that the ship may once more get under way.

Firefighting tasks are also part of damage control. Successful firefighting tasks extinguish fires and save a ship from destruction.

MINIATURES COMBAT

Miniatures combat uses all the combat tasks and rules used for plotted combat. However, it has its own distance scales and movement rules. Naval miniatures are typically played on large, open surfaces, such as a building's floor, using miniature-scale model ships, measuring tape and markers to mark the fall of shot. Wet navy miniatures require ship models to represent the opponents' vessels, metric measuring tape, counters or other markers to represent missiles and aircraft in flight and torpedoes in the water, and (optionally) shot markers to represent naval gunfire hits. If no miniature models are available, cardboard counters may represent ships.

Scales and Movement: Time, distances and speed are the same as in the plotted movement rules, with only one exception: Whenever distance or speed is expressed in terms of squares or hexes, that number is expressed in centimeters in miniatures combat. Distances are measured from midships to midships. All other rules are identical.

For example, a ship travelling 60 kilometers per hour would travel 10 kilometers or 10 centimeters in an OCR, and one kilometer or 10 centimeters in a TCR. Note that the distance travelled on the playing surface remains the same in a TCR or OCR. However, the distance scale changes and time speeds up when shifting from an OCR to a TCR.

Submerged Submarines: Until they are detected, submarines' movements are hidden. Begin their movement at a known point on the playing area and plot their movement on graph paper using one of the two plotted combat scales. When they are detected, place a sub miniature or card-

board counter at their position. If a subsequent detection task fails, remove the miniature or counter and resume the secret plotting until the submarine is acquired once again.

Naval combat is fought with combat tasks, and ships, planes and subs are operated with operations tasks.

Task Library

Ships are operated and naval battles fought with a series of operations and combat tasks. This Task Library includes the most commonly used naval tasks.

SPOTTING AND DETECTION

To visually detect a surface vessel:
Routine, Recon (unskilled OK).
Referee: DMs: +2 if lookout has optics (e.g., binoculars or telescope), –2 if range Very Distant or greater. Task becomes Difficult if vessel's UCP displacement is less than 100 tons.

To visually detect an aircraft or missile:
Difficult, Recon (unskilled OK).
Referee: DMs: +2 if lookout has optics, +2 if range Distant or less. Task becomes Formidable if aircraft or missile weighs less than one ton.

To detect a surface vessel or aircraft with sensors (e.g., radar or ladar):
Simple, Sensor Op.
Referee: DMs: –2 if rain present (visibility less than 40%) unless all-weather radar or X-ray ladar (TL13+), –4 if ECM used by target unless ladar. Task becomes Difficult if vessel's UCP displacement is less than 100 tons.

To detect a submerged submarine with passive sonar:
Routine, Sensor Op, Navigation.
Referee: Increases to Difficult if target submarine is beyond direct path range (20

Hit Locations			
Roll	Surface Warship	Surface Merchant	Aviation Ship
1	Hull	Hull	Hull
2	Superstructure*	Superstructure*	Flight deck*
3	Power plant	Power plant	Power plant
4	Sensors	Sensors	Sensors
5	Weapon/turret	Hull	Aircraft*
6	Hull*	Hull*	Hull*

Roll	Submarine	Sailing Ship	Galley
1	Hull	Hull	Hull
2	Hull	Mast	Oars
3	Hull	Sails	Mast
4	Hull	Sails	Sail
5	Loco	Mast	Oars
6	Loco	Hull	Hull

In case of multiple hits, either roll for each hit or apply all hits to a single hit location roll.

*Roll an additional 1D6. If the result is even, fire breaks out. If the damage is caused by a missile hit, the missile's fuel burns, and fire automatically breaks out.

km) and is in a convergence zone (50-55 km and 100-110 km), Formidable if target is beyond 110 km to maximum listed sonar range. Increases to Difficult for a surface ship if submarine is beneath the thermocline at 100 meters and the range is greater than 30% of the sonar's range unless detecting vessel is equipped with towed array or dipping sonar. Increases to Formidable if detecting ship's speed is greater than 20 kph and tech level is less than 12.

To detect and localize a submerged submarine with active sonar:
Simple, Sensor Op.
Referee: Increases to Formidable if detecting ship's speed is greater than 20 kph and tech level is less than 12. Increases to Difficult for a surface ship if submarine is beneath the thermocline at 100 meters and the range is greater than 30% of the sonar's range unless detecting vessel is equipped with towed array or dipping sonar.

OPERATIONS
To dive a submarine (hazardous, fateful):
Simple.
Referee: If fumble occurs, a hatch or other opening has been left open, and sub begins to flood. Roll on the Mishap Table. Superficial and minor damage indicates minor flooding controllable by pumps and double checking and securing hatches. Major damage indicates that ballast tanks must be blown and pumps must be started immediately to save the submarine. Destroyed indicates massive flooding has occurred and the sub sinks, although personnel may survive if watertight doors have been secured.

To surface a submarine (fateful):
Simple.
Referee: If fumble occurs, the high-pressure air or ballast tank pump system has failed and requires repair before another surfacing attempt can be made. Roll on the Mishap Table. A destroyed result indicates the system is irreparable. or the system cannot be repaired before the sub's air turns foul—a submarine rescue vessel must rescue the crew.

PRIMITIVE NAVAL COMBAT
MegaTraveller's archaic weapons rules are used to resolve arrow and spear combat against enemy crewmembers. Catapult fire is resolved with the catapult task:

To hit a surface target with a catapult:
Difficult, Exp.

A successful ramming is determined by these tasks:

To ram a ship:
Routine, Large Watercraft, Tactics (fateful).

To grapple with and board an enemy vessel:
Difficult, Large Watercraft, Tactics.
Referee: Task becomes Routine if boarding ramp available. Once grapple or boarding ramp is successfully placed, the boarding action proceeds and is resolved with **MegaTraveller** melee combat rules.

GUN COMBAT
To hit a surface target with direct fire:
Difficult, Off=Gunnery, Sensor Ops, Def=Large or Small Watercraft, Tactics.
Referee: DMs: Ship's computer.

To hit a surface target with indirect fire:
Formidable, Off=Gunnery, Forward Observer, Def=Large or Small Watercraft, Tactics.
Referee: DMs: Ship's computer. Task is reduced to Difficult after the first shot or salvo if a forward observer is present to adjust fire. Once a hit has been scored, the firing batteries have the range, and the task becomes Routine as long as a forward observer is present. At TL7, airborne or surface radar systems may be substituted for a forward observer. In this case, add Sensor Op to the skill list.

To hit an aircraft or missile:
Formidable, Off=Gunnery, Def=Aircraft, Tactics.
Referee: DMs: Ship's computer. Optical fire control available at TL5 allows more than one mount to fire at the same target. Entire ship's antiaircraft batteries bearing on the target may fire as one gun. Radar fire control beginning at TL6 reduces this task to Difficult, and allows firing at night and in foul weather. TL8+ radar-directed multibarrel autocannons or lasers reduce this task to Routine. Increase by one level of difficulty if target weighs less than one ton.

MISSILE COMBAT
To hit a surface target with a missile:
Routine, Gunnery, Sensor Ops.
Referee: DMs: +Ship's computer, – 2 if target equipped with ECM (e.g., chaff launchers). If the target is over the horizon, target data and midcourse corrections must be provided by an orbiting spacecraft, sensor-equipped aircraft, surface vessel or submarine in detection range of the target for the missile to hit. The task becomes Difficult if target vessel is less than 100 tons UCP displacement. The task becomes Simple if the target is stationary or greater than 5000 tons UCP displacement.

To hit an aircraft with a missile:
Routine, Gunnery, Sensor Ops.
Referee: DMs: +Ship's computer, –2 if aircraft fires chaff, –4 if target aircraft or another aircraft within 50 kilometers is using

ECM jamming pod or if dedicated ECM aircraft is active within 100 kilometers. Jamming does not affect semiactive ladar homing (SALH) missiles. –2 if missile is infrared homer and defender fires infrared countermeasure flares.

Antispacecraft Missiles
Beginning at TL9, surface ships may carry both turret-mounted and bay-mounted (vertical launch system-equivalent), standard, 150mm ship's missiles as antispacecraft defense weapons. These missiles may be targeted against ships in orbit out to Far Orbit range. Because they are fitted with a powerful booster stage and specialized antispacecraft guidance systems, they are not used against aircraft. Each turret mount includes a triple launcher with three reloads in the ready locker. The launching ship's sensors and computers perform initial detection and launch guidance. The missile's on-board mass detection and guidance package takes over once the missile clears atmosphere and the booster drops away.
At TL10, antispacecraft missiles are loaded aboard submarines in vertical launch tubes equivalent to 50- and 100-ton missile bays. Submarines must surface to obtain accurate first-stage missile guidance to their targets in Close Orbit.
At TL11, improved launching systems, improved pressure capsules and miniaturized guidance systems aboard buoys released from submarines enable submarines to launch antispacecraft missiles from 100 meters or more beneath the surface.
Hits and damage for both ship- and submarine-launched antispacecraft missiles are resolved as in standard **MegaTraveller** space combat rules.

SUBMARINE AND ASW COMBAT
Submarines fight surface ships (beginning at TL5), other submarines (beginning at TL7), aircraft (beginning at TL8) and spacecraft in Low Orbit (beginning at TL10).

Early Submarine Combat
To hit a surface ship with an unguided torpedo:
Difficult, Off=Gunnery, Navigation, Def=Tactics, Large Watercraft.
Referee: If a fumble is rolled, the torpedo begins a circular run and will strike the firing submarine in 1D6–3 minutes if the submarine is unable to evade.

To hit a submarine with depth charges or antisubmarine mortars:
Formidable, Off=Sensor Ops, Navigation, Def=Tactics, Large Watercraft.

These additional ASW weapons are available between TL5 and TL7.

ASW Weapons

Type	Pen	Dam	Range (km)	Speed (km)
Depth charge	20	24	0.0	—
ASW mortar	10	14	0.5	—

Modern Submarine Combat

To hit a surface ship with a guided torpedo:
Routine, Off=Gunnery, Sensor Ops, Def=Sensor Ops, Tactics.

To hit a submerged submarine with a guided or homing torpedo:
Routine, Off=Gunnery, Sensor Ops, Navigation, Def=Sensor Ops, Tactics.
Referee: Increase to Difficult if target has countermeasures (e.g., noisemakers, decoys). *DMs:* Sub's computer.

To hit a surface target with a submarine-launched missile:
Routine, Off=Gunner, Sensor Ops.
Referee: DMs: +Sub's computer, –2 if target equipped with ECM (e.g., chaff launchers). If the target is over the horizon, target data and midcourse corrections must be provided by a sensor-equipped aircraft, surface vessel or submarine in detection range of the target for the missile to hit.

At TL12 and higher, antispacecraft lasers are mounted aboard floats which surface when released from a submarine and fire upon spacecraft in Low Orbit after they are detected and tracked by the sub's sensor buoy. A laser float is the equivalent of a triple laser turret. It is connected to the submarine with power and data cables and may be fired as long as the target is in range and above the float's horizon.
Use task to hit a target in starship combat with these additional modifiers when firing submarine launched lasers at a spacecraft.
Referee: At TL12 and below, task becomes Formidable if weather is cloudy, Impossible if fog, rain or snow is present. TL13+ X-ray lasers ignore weather. If hit obtained, determine penetration and damage with standard **MegaTraveller** space combat tables.
At TL13, submarines mount short-range defensive antitorpedo lasers. If fired successfully during the defensive fire and impact phase, they destroy incoming torpedoes.

To hit an incoming torpedo with a submarine laser:
Difficult, Gunnery, Sensor Ops.
Referee: DMs: Sub's computer.

NAVAL AVIATION OPERATIONS

To launch a fixed-wing aircraft from an aircraft carrier:
Simple, Aircraft (hazardous, fateful).
Referee: This task becomes Routine in sea state 5, Difficult in sea state 7, Impossible in sea state 8. Fumble indicates the pilot misjudged deck motion and is in danger of crashing on takeoff. A Mishap roll is made. In a superficial mishap, the pilot nearly crashes. In a minor mishap, the pilot must jettison external load to avoid crash. In a major mishap, the pilot clears carrier before crashing and may be rescued. In a fatal mishap, the aircraft crashes and is run over by the carrier; the pilot may save himself if the plane has an ejection seat.

Catapults are available aboard carriers and may be used by any naval aircraft. They must be used if there is less than 40 kph of wind down the deck, if the aircraft's external ordnance load is equal to or greater than 30% of the aircraft's weight, the aircraft's total takeoff weight is more than 10 tons or the aircraft is jet-propelled.

To launch a fixed-wing aircraft with a catapult:
Routine, Aircraft, Str (hazardous, fateful).
Referee: The task becomes Simple if a TL7+ steam catapult is used. A fumble indicates that the catapult fails to fire. A mishap indicates that the catapult fires but at less than full power: Superficial mishap fires at 90% power. Minor mishap fires at 75% power. Major mishap fires at 50% power. Destroyed mishap=fires at 25% power. The pilot must roll the following task to recover from a catapult failure.

To avoid crashing after a failed catapult launch:
Simple, Aircraft, Exp, Str (hazardous, fateful).
Referee: Task becomes Routine at 75% power—external load jettison returns task to Simple. Difficult at 50% power—external load jettison required. Formidable at 25% power—ejection suggested.

To launch a helicopter, VTOL aircraft or grav vehicle from a ship's deck:
Routine, Aircraft, Exp.
Referee: The task becomes Difficult in sea state 5, Formidable in sea state 8. Grav Vehicle or Air Raft skill is substituted for Aircraft skill when a grav vehicle is launched.

To launch a seaplane from the ocean surface:
Simple, Aircraft, Exp.
Referee: The task becomes Routine in sea state 4, Difficult in sea state 5, Formidable in sea state 6.

To land a seaplane on the ocean surface:
Routine, Aircraft, Exp.
Referee: The task becomes Difficult in sea state 5, Formidable in sea state 6, Impossible in sea state 7.

To land a fixed-wing aircraft aboard an aircraft carrier:
Routine, Aircraft, Dex, Exp (hazardous, fateful).
Referee: The task becomes Difficult at night unless carrier has TL7+ landing aids available. The task is Formidable at any time if no landing signal officer is available to assist the pilot with his approach. A Failure indicates the pilot has missed his approach, takes a wave-off and circles around to try to land again.
If the carrier has an angled flight deck, a fumble indicates that the pilot touches down, fails to catch an arresting gear wire, and takes off, circles and tries again. This is called a bolter.
Check the Mishap Table. Minor damage indicates a blown landing gear tire. Major damage indicates the pilot approached too low, landed too hard and did major damage to the aircraft. The pilot may be seriously injured. Destroyed indicates the pilot hit the edge of the flight deck, destroyed his plane and was killed.
If the carrier has a straight deck, treat a fumble as a mishap as the plane crashes into barrier nets, is damaged and the pilot possibly injured. A destroyed result is the same as an angled-deck destroyed result.

To land a helicopter, VTOL aircraft or grav vehicle aboard a ship's deck:
Routine, Aircraft Dex, Exp (hazardous, fateful).
Referee: The task becomes Difficult in sea states higher than 5.
The task is reduced to Routine if landing pads are equipped with helicopter haul down recovery gear. Grav Vehicle or Air Raft skill is substituted for Aircraft skill when a grav vehicle is landed.

SPOTTING

Targets must be spotted before they can be attacked. Use the spotting tasks described earlier to spot targets from the air visually or with sensors.

COMBAT

To strafe a naval target with guns or lasers:
Difficult, Off=Gunnery, Aircraft, Dex, Exp, Def=Large or Small Watercraft, Tactics.
Referee: The task becomes Routine if the target's UCP displacement is greater than 5000 tons, or if the target is stationary or moving at less than 20 kph. A fumble indicates that the guns have jammed and cannot fire. Lasers do not jam.

To hit a naval target with free-flying rockets:
Difficult, Off=Gunnery, Aircraft, Dex, Exp, Def=Large or Small Watercraft, Tactics.
Referee: The task becomes Routine if

the target's UCP displacement is greater than 5000 tons, or if the target is stationary or moving at less than 20 kph. A fumble indicates that the rocket pods have malfunctioned and rockets have failed to fire.

To bomb a naval target:
Formidable, Off=Gunnery, Aircraft, Dex, Exp, Def=Large or Small Watercraft, Tactics.
Referee: The task becomes Difficult if the target's UCP displacement is greater than 5000 tons, or if the target is stationary or moving at less than 20 kph. The task becomes Routine if the target is laser-illuminated and if laser-guided bombs are used. A fumble indicates that the bombs fail to drop and are "hung" on the rack.

To hit a surface or submerged naval target with an aerial torpedo:
Formidable, Off=Gunnery, Aircraft, Dex, Exp, Def=Large or Small Watercraft, Tactics.
Referee: The task becomes Difficult if the target's UCP displacement is greater than 5000 tons or is moving at less than 20 kph. The task becomes Routine if the torpedo has acoustic homing guidance, or if the target is on the surface and is stationary. Raise the difficulty one level if the launching aircraft is high-speed jet-propelled. A fumble indicates that the torpedo fails to drop and remains "hung" on the rack.

To hit a surface target with a missile:
Routine, Gunnery.
Referee: DMs: –2 if the target is equipped with ECM (e.g., chaff launchers, radar jammers). If the target is over the horizon, target data and midcourse corrections must be provided by a sensor-equipped aircraft, surface vessel or submarine in detection range of the target for the missile to hit. The task becomes Difficult if the target vessel is less than 100 tons UCP displacement. The task becomes Simple if the target is stationary or greater than 5000 tons UCP displacement.

Electro-optical, laser-guided and antiradiation missiles may also be used against naval targets. Use the rules and tasks in COACC for these weapons to determine

attack results. Note that damage caused by antiradiation missiles must be applied as sensor hits.

DAMAGE CONTROL
A number of damage-control and repair tasks may be performed to save a sinking or burning ship. They include:

To plug hull opening aboard a surface ship:
Difficult, Mechanical, Strength, 1 min (unskilled OK).
Referee: Materials to plug an opening must be available, including canvas sheeting, plywood sheeting and wooden shoring.

To start pumping a flooding compartment:
Routine, Mechanical, 30 sec.
Referee: A portable pump and hose lines must be available.

To put out a fire:
Difficult, Mechanical, 30 sec (fateful, unskilled OK).
Referee: If the task fails, fire spreads. The task becomes Formidable after three successive failures. Ω

For more information, refer to "Wet Navy 1" (nautical vessel design rules) in **Challenge 53** *and "Wet Navy 2" (naval weapons and design sequences) in* **Challenge 54.**

Ships of the BLACK WAR

By Charles E. Gannon

ftermaths are inevitably longer than the wars that cause them. The War of the Rebellion is no exception. However, unlike most wars, the Rebellion ground to a slow, agonized halt, the combatants struggling to inflict damage upon each other for as long as they could. Consequently, there was a period of time between the last great battles of the Rebellion (1121) and the cessation of the smaller, but still strategically motivated, hostilities (this cessation coincides with the onset of Hard Times late in 1124). This period of diminished conflict came to be known as the Black War years, due to the often ruthless tactics and bitter hatreds that typified it.

The aggressors of the Black War years were usually faction forces or their hirelings (privateers, less-conscionable starmercs, etc.). The defenders were usually worlds on the periphery of a rival faction's Frontier or allied worlds in the Outland areas just beyond.

Although usually outnumbered by the defenders, the faction forces (as distinguished from their hired auxiliaries) almost always enjoyed a significant technological edge over the defenders. Faction forces held their Imperial organization and equipage standards, being supported by the well-preserved industries and economies of each faction's undamaged Core worlds (those comprising the faction's Safe). Consequently, TL15 was the standard level of equipage for such units. This article deals with the types of ships that such forces were likely to use, many having been laid down during the 1120-1123 period for the express purpose of serving the changing tactical requirements of Black War.

TACTICAL REQUIREMENTS AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The tactics of Black War resemble guerrilla activity and terrorism almost as much as they do classical warfare. Also, the very reason for Black War—the diminished financial and industrial capacity of the aggressor—puts a premium on operational economy and designs that maximize the potential success of those operations.

This means an increased emphasis on smaller hulls and mission versatility. As a result, the once-lowly escort becomes the predominant vessel for Black War operations. While insignificant in terms of fleet operations, most true escorts (the smallest being about 1000 tons) still possess a level of firepower that is nothing less than devastating when employed against most Outland (and many Frontier) planets. Although this may sound like an unusual claim, one must bear in mind the changed tactical environment of the Black War years (and afterward). The majority of worlds in the Outlands (and Frontier, for that matter) generally have a UWP population statistic of 6 or less and a maximum tech level of 12-13. Furthermore, Outland world defenses are restricted to locally owned, supported and crewed assets—there is no larger, more powerful cavalry that might come over the hill in the nick of time.

In practical combat terms, this means that even a lightly armed 1000-ton escort (such as the Mosquito class, presented here) is capable of bringing three factor-4 missile batteries to bear on dirtside targets. For larger worlds with significant indigenous defensive forces, this may not be a very great problem—an attacking escort and its supports vessels can probably be forced to spend their effort engaging the defender's SDBs, fighters and other craft.

However, on planets with populations that number under 10 million, local defense assets are not going to be very extensive. Similarly, the majority (or at least a sizable chunk) of the population may be centered in one urban area, making it—and the essential services it provides—very vulnerable to focused attack. Even more dispersed populations will be very dependent upon the advanced services that will only be commonly found in the world's few, largest urban centers (star/space ports, highest quality medical facilities, educational institutions, industrial centers, transportation hubs). Consequently, as long as Black War strike forces can nullify the local defenses (via decoys, feints or fighter/support craft screens), a single escort can destroy many of the best resources possessed by a small planet with a few accurate salvos from its large-battery value offensive systems.

This projection of a scorched earth policy is the central tenet of Black War philosophy. Economy dictates that the smallest (i.e., least expensive) offensive asset capable of carrying out this doctrine should be employed—hence the popularity of the escort. It is also necessary to ensure that this primary offensive asset be able to conduct its operations in a relatively secure environment. This necessitates a complement of support craft capable of providing local security, advance warning and operational flexibility. Common candidates include some of the Imperium's most ubiquitous small military starship designs. The Gazelle-class close escort is favored for operations that will not involve planetary operations. The Broadsword-class mercenary cruiser is used where extensive dirtside operations are anticipated. The Lurushaar Killaalum-class patrol cruiser is preferred for use in those situations where versatility is a premium, given its balanced space/dirtside support abilities.

Another common operational asset is the fighter which is mostly used to mount offensive feints, probing attacks and covering screens. Although capable of exploiting unexpected opportunities, the fighter is primarily used to determine and pin (or fix) defense assets, thereby creating a free operating environment for the strike group's primary offensive hulls. Since many support craft do not have sufficient room to carry fighters (particularly the larger, more lethal classes), the strike group's escort often uses its available cargo bay as a fighter storage compartment. By way of example, even the humble 1000-ton Mosquito class boasts a 104-ton cargo bay, making it capable of easily carrying two 40-ton fighters (a third can be carried in place of the pinnace, if desired).

Black War strike groups often use remote piloted (drone) vehicles, deadfall ordnance and decoy technologies (including everything from state-of-the-art ECM to dummy drop capsules with chaff dispensers). In many cases, small ground teams may be landed dirtside days before. At the time of the attack, they serve as forward observers and even target designators (using laser or maser painting to guide remote-steerable deadfall ordnance to its targets).

COMPOSITION OF STRIKE GROUPS

There is no standard composition for a strike group, but a fairly typical formation would include one 1000- to 3000-ton escort, two to five 300- to 800-ton support ships, and three to 10 fighters.

For a sneak attack, one of the support ships may be replaced by a merchantman upgraded for combat, which can move in among the standard commercial traffic and provide an offensive punch within the opposition's defense perimeter.

In the event of a larger, or more stiffly defended, world, the composition of the unit might be expanded in several ways. If the strike group must eliminate multiple—but essentially vulnerable—targets, then the group size might simply be increased. However, if the defense assets are known to be more considerable, then a larger ship might replace the escort as the core of the group. Depending upon the size of the target, ships of up to 20,000 tons (a light cruiser) might be employed. Most commonly, however, 5000-plus ton destroyers will become the offensive kingpin of the operation, with two of the smaller escorts as primary support craft. Proportional increases in secondary support ships and fighters can be expected when a strike group expands in this fashion.

NEW TIMES, NEW TROOPS

Just as this period of conflict (referred to by many professional soldiers as the Black War years of the Rebellion) evolved new kinds of tactics and objectives, it produced new breeds of soldiers. In many cases, it placed emphasis on the trained, resourceful professional who could conduct and complete complex missions with minimal support and guidance.

On the other hand, it promoted the emergence of raiders and black units—so named since it was suspected that they were moonlighting as pirates when not on a mission. The various factions began passing out letters of marque as freely as party favors. The lines that separated war, terrorism and piracy—always thin to begin with—began to vanish.

As a result, the troops and the tactics of these operations tend to sacrifice humanitarian concerned in favor of speed and expedi-

ence. They are prosecuting a long, bitter war on a shoestring budget; in such situations, civility and mercy become luxuries that are usually not affordable.

ADVENTURES

Although small squadron actions between the various ships of the Black War can be exciting and interesting, this kind of use will rarely fall right into the PCs' lap. After all, these vessels are possessed only by large, powerful governments capable of TL14-15 production and maintenance—meaning that few places other than the factions have access to them.

However, PCs might find themselves encountering these vessels in a number of other ways. For instance:

As Adversaries: PCs might stumble across one of Lucan's Black War strike teams and be taken captive or worse.

As Friends: If the PCs are getting smashed up by pirates or some other spaceside menace, any combination of these ships could happen along and put a quick end to the problem.

As a Source of Employment: Most strike groups are not comprised of bloodthirsty monsters. Indeed, the faction forces tend to be quite civil and humane, showing compassion where they may (and as circumstances permit). Consequently, PCs might be contacted by a group leader or his adjutants with an offer of employment. If the PCs have a hull of their own, this would mean they were being offered a job as a support vessel. If not, they might find opportunities as fighter pilots or ground assault troops. And in the case of small strike groups, it is conceivable that if the real commander were killed or otherwise removed from the scene, a sufficiently senior PC might rise to the position of flotilla command and have an opportunity to fight a squadron action.
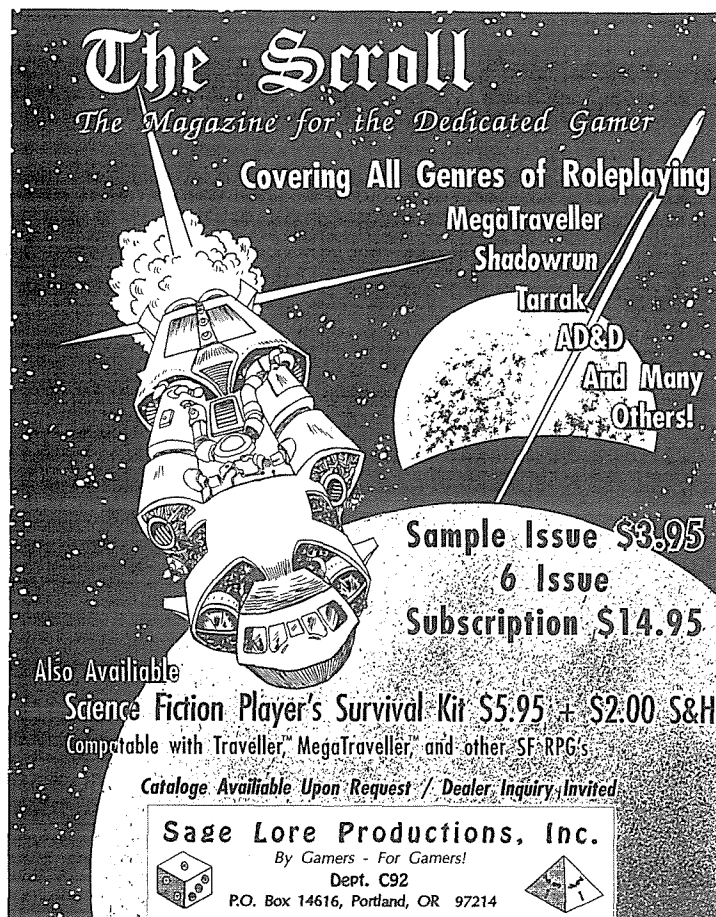
ABOUT THE DESIGNS

Many of the designs favored by Black War strategists are Imperial Data Package (IDP) designs. IDP designs are recognized standard architectures which have passed a supposedly rigorous Imperial design accreditation review and which are thereby licensed for distribution throughout the Imperium. Since the architect gets a small percentage of each purchase, this is a truly desirable occurrence. The value of IDP designs is that they have been selected from among thousands as being "best suited" for fulfilling a particular set of operational requirements. Although some operational requirements are so specialized and unique that no category exists for them at the Imperial review level, most ships and boats fall into one of a few dozen operational domains.

IDP designs are selected for various characteristics—price, size, ease of maintenance, reliability, etc. Those few designs which are designated as IDPs are then packaged for distribution to any world willing to pay the heavily subsidized access fee. In this way, the Imperium not only promoted the emergence and dominance of superior designs, but limited the proliferation of competing designs and the concomitant chaos that would have crippled attempts to maintain and repair so diverse a fleet.

All Imperial Navy ships and boats are IDP designs. The inverse is not necessarily true. For instance, many of the most useful designs in the prosecution of the Black War were constructed by planetary/colonial navies out on the Spinward Marches. This is because of the nature of war with the Zhodani, which has often been dominated by surgical strikes and counterstrikes, rather than headlong fleet clashes. Perhaps the clearest example is the Fourth Frontier War, which was almost exclusively a conflict of commerce raiding and resource interdiction. Consequently, many of the designs presented below were conceived and constructed in the Marches during the latter half of the last century.

For more on the Black War and statistics on the Fer-de-Lance-*class destroyer escort, see GDW's* Hard Times.

Type 1072 Landing Boat

CraftID: *Type 1072* Landing Boat, Type YT, TL15, MCr18.08

Hull: 36/90, Disp=40, Config=1AF, Armor=40G, Unloaded=438t, Loaded=750t

Power: 2/4, Fusion=540MW, Duration=37hrs

Loco: 7/14, Maneuver=6, NOE=190kph, Cruise=2835kph, Max=3780kph, Agility=0

Commo: Radio=System, LaserComm=System

Sensors: EMM, PassiveEMS (Substellar), PassiveEnScan=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=1
Missile=x03
Batt   1
Bear   1
1 VRF Gauss gun (remote turret) with PDF

RDS	Pen/Att	Dmg	Max Rng	Targets	Sig
60000*	21/4	10	V. Dist	4	Low

*Two hoppers provided

Def: DefDM+4

Control: Computer Mod2×3, 3×HeadsUpDisplay

Accomm: Crew=3 (2 bridge, 1 gunnery), Passenger=10, Seats=Roomy×3, Adequate×10, Env=basic env, basic ls, grav plates, inert comp

Other: Fuel=10kl, Cargo/Vehicle bay=310kl (1×15t vehicle), ObjSize=Avg, EmLevel=None

The *Type 1072* landing boat is the result of a cooperative design project begun in 1072 by the Imperial Naval Authority on Glisten, the Trin Planetary Navy and the ConTech Shipyards. This IDP design is available for both military and licensed combat vessel operator (CVO) use. A civilian version without the EMM and integral armament is also available.

The *Type 1072* is highly valued for its ability to conduct high-speed landing operations of a section-sized combat element, including one to two support vehicles. In a pinch, some strike group commanders have used the *Type 1072* as a carrier for a 10-ton *Iramda*-class fighter. The VRF Gauss gun is used to provide covering fire during debarkation into hot landing zones, as will as for point-defense intercept of incoming missiles.
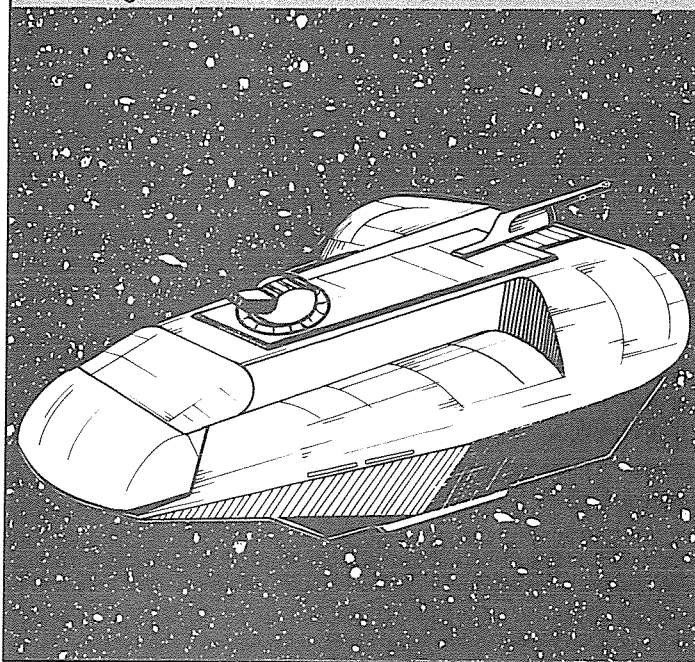
Lance-Class Heavy Fighter

CraftID: *Lance*-Class Fighter, Type FH, TL15, MCr122.07

Hull: 36/90, Disp=40, Conf=1AF, Armor=40G, Loaded=415.6t, Unloaded=430.8t

Power: 4/8, 1080MW Fusion, Dur=16/48

Loco: 7/14, Maneuver=6, Agility=0

Commo: Radio=System, LaserComm=System, MaserComm=System

Sensors: EMM, EMS Active (Far Orbit), EMS Jammer (Far Orbit), EMS Passive (Interstellar), High Pen Densitometer (1km), Neutrino Sensor (10kw), ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjScan=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Simp, PassEnPin=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=1
Fusion Gun=x05
Batt   1
Bear   1

Def: DefDM+11

Control: Comp9×3, 30×Hololink

Accomm: Crew=2 (commander/gunner, pilot), Small Staterooms×2, Env=basic env, basic ls, extended ls, grav plates, inertial comp

Other: Fuel=217kl, Fuel Scoops, ObjSize=Avg, EmLevel=Faint

The *Lance* class was designed following the Fourth Frontier War as a result of the extremely poor performance of the three then-current classes of light fighters employed as auxiliaries by many colonial warships. Despite the increased volume requirements, the *Lance*'s superior punch and performance more than made up for the decreased number of fighters that could be fielded.

Lack of computer ability was the major complaint of the previous classes. Accordingly, the Lance reflects the design staff's sensitivity to this shortcoming, mounting a state-of-the-art model 9 computer. This is responsible for 75% of the total cost per unit, but the increase in capability is considered highly worthwhile by the pilots. The *Lance* was designated an IDP design in 1102.
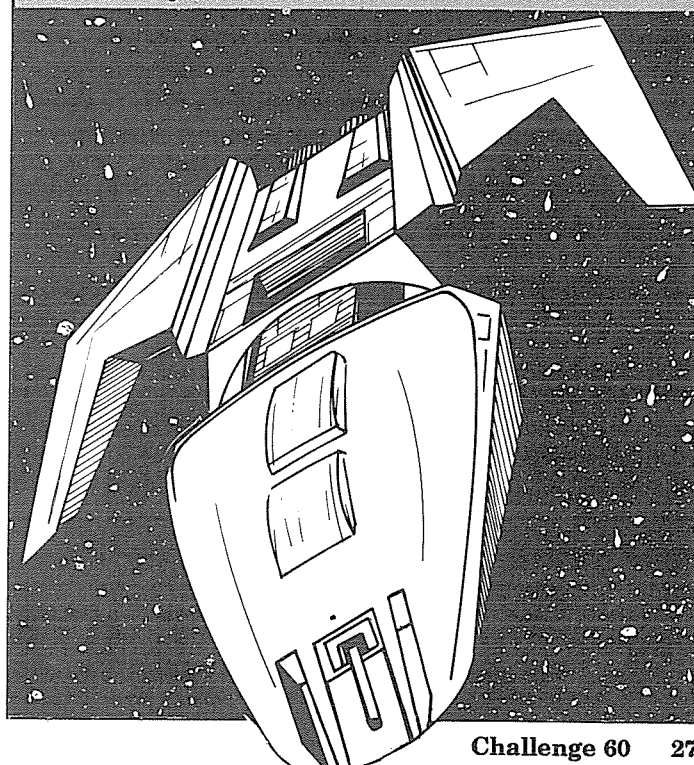
Shambalator-Class Support Escort

CraftID:	*Shambalator*-Class Support Escort, Type EE, TL15, MCr400
Hull:	540/1350, Disp=600, Config=1AF, Armor=49G, Unloaded=5132t, Loaded=5669t
Power:	15/30, Fusion=3960MW, Dur=9.5/28.5
Loco:	17/34, Jump 2, 44/88, Maneuver=3, NOE=190kph, Cruise=1923kph, Max=2565kph, Agility=0
Commo:	Radio=System, LaserComm=System, MaserComm=System
Sensors:	EMM, EMS Active (Far Orbit), EMS Jammer (Far Orbit), EMS Passive (Interstellar), High Pen Densitometer (1km), Neutrino Sensor (10kw), ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjScan=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Simp, PassEnPin=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=6

	BeamLaser=xx4	Missile=x03	ParticleAccelerator=002
Batt	2	1	1
Bear	2	1	1

Def: DefDM+10

	Sandcaster=xx4
Batt	1
Bear	1

Control:	Computer Mod9×3, LargeHoloDisplay×1
Accomm:	Crew=8 (1 command, 1 bridge, 1 engineer, 1 gunnery, 4 flight), Staterooms=7, Env=basic env, basic ls, extended ls, grav plates, inertial comp
Other:	Fuel=5776kl (427t), Cargo=0, Missile Magazine=6kl (60 missiles, 20 battery rounds), Fuel Scoops, Subcraft=up to 12 tons of subcraft (any type), ObjSize=Avg, EmLevel=Faint

The *Shambalator* class was designed for the Glisten Planetary Navy for merchant escort and piracy suppression duties. As such, it did not need to be an exceedingly sophisticated design. However, a battery of high-energy weapons was stipulated by the procurement team, along with a model 9 computer. The latter reduces crew requirements substantially and is considered to be one of the notable features of this design. Since the power plant is only required to reach peak performance during combat, the endurance of the vessel can be increased to 26 days when operating without weapon use or extended acceleration over 1G. This policy of tradeoffs in the design also led to the unfortunate side effect of the vessel having insufficient power to operate the inertial compensators at accelerations of over 2G. It is also dependent on outside fuel purification capability. Despite these flaws, 600 were initially built and performed adequately in the Fifth Frontier War. About 450 remain in active service there. Although not an IDP design, the *Shambalator*'s unusual balance of economy, defensive capacity and offensive versatility has made it a common choice for supporting Black War operations.
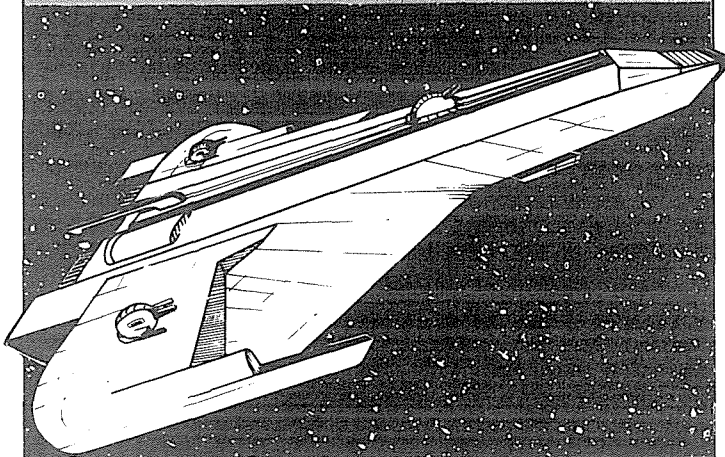
Piranha-Class Imperial Light Cruiser

CraftID:	*Piranha*-Class Light Cruiser, Type CL, TL15, MCr15937
Hull:	18000/45000, Disp=20000, Config=1SL, Armor=67G, Unloaded=459123t, Loaded=471323t
Power:	1267/2534, Fusion=342000MW, Dur=27/81
Loco:	1440/2880, Maneuver=3, 720/1440, Jump=3, Agility=0
Commo:	Radio=System, Lasercomm=System, MaserComm=System
Sensors:	EMS Active (Far Orbit), EMS Jammer (Far Orbit), EMS Passive (Interstellar), High Pen Densitometer (1km), Neutrino Sensor (10kw), ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjScan=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Simp, PassEnPin=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=200

	MesonGun=J00	BeamLaser=xx9	Missile=x90
Batt	1	4	4
Bear	1	4	4

Def: DefDm+8, Nuclear Damper-9, Meson Screen-9

|	Sandcaster=xx9	Repulsor=x5x
Batt	5	6
Bear	5	6

Control:	Computer Mod9fib×3, LargeHoloDisplay×3, Heads UpHoloDisplay×70, HoloLink×800
Accomm:	Crew=159 (13 bridge, 26 engineer, 14 maintenance, 52 gunnery, 40 troops, 12 command, 2 medical), Staterooms=80, Env=basic env, basic ls, extended ls, grav plates, inertial comp
Other:	Fuel=164808kl, Cargo=414kl, Missile Magazine=500kl(50b-r), Fuel Scoops, Fuel Purifier (13hr), ObjSize=Large, Em Level=Strong.

The *Piranha* was designed during the Fifth Frontier War in response to an Imperial Navy requirement for a meson gunned light cruiser to replace the *Aganar*- and *Smittorn*-class vessels, then being downgraded to escorts. First blooded in the initial fleet actions between Dulinor and Lucan, it has proven to be a respectable combatant, although its lack of dedicated subcraft or troop complement facilities relegated it to a lesser role in the Black War years. However, when faction strike groups anticipate resistance from ships over 5000 tons in displacement, a *Piranha*-class vessel is often included in the unit composition as the primary "ship killer."
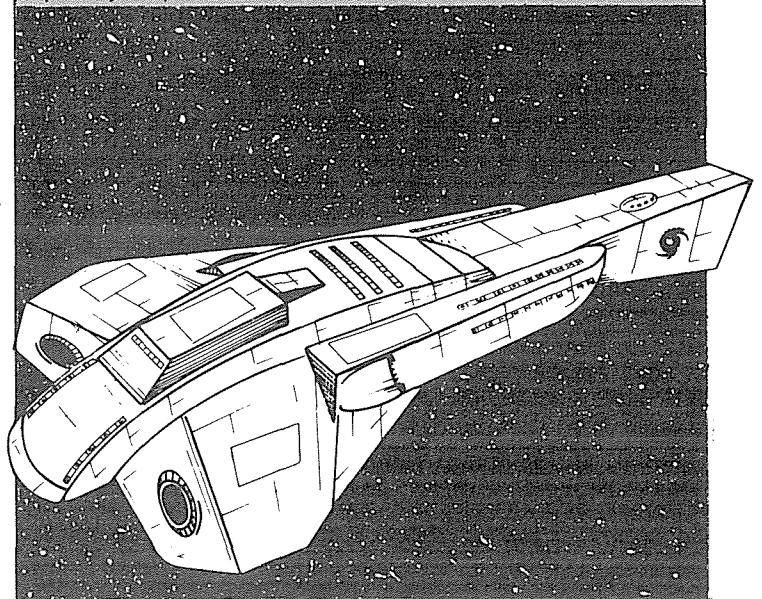
Mosquito-Class Light Escort

CraftID:	*Mosquito*-Class Light Escort, Type EL, TL15, MCr667.7
Hull:	900/2250, Disp=1000, Config=1AF, Armor=40G, Unloaded=9888t, Loaded=12,166t
Power:	34/68, Fusion=9000MW, Dur=30/90
Loco:	45/90, Jump 4, 99/198, Maneuver=4, Agility=0, NOE=190kph, Cruise=2295kph, Max=3060
Commo:	Radio=System, LaserComm=System, MaserComm=System
Sensors:	EM, EMS Active (Far Orbit), EMS Jammer (Far Orbit), EMS Passive (Interstellar), High Pen Densitometer (1km), Neutrino Sensor (10kw), ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjScan=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Simp, PassEnPin=Rout

Off:	Hardpoints=10	
	Missile=x04	
	Batt	3
	Bear	3

Def:	DM=+9	
	Sandcaster=xx4	
	Batt	4
	Bear	4

Control:	Computer Mod9fibx3, HeadsUpHoloDisplayx3, HoloLinkx42
Accomm:	Crew=8 (1 command, 1 bridge, 2engineer, 2 gunnery, 2 flight), Staterooms=7, Env=basic env, basic ls, extended ls, grav plates, inertial comp
Other:	Fuel=6615kl, Cargo=1404kl, Missile Magazine=108kl (60 battery rounds), Fuel Scoops, Fuel Purifier (12hr), Subcraft=1 Pinnace, ObjSize=Large, EmLevel=Faint

The *Mosquito* was designed to meet the standard Imperial Navy specification of 4G maneuver and jump-4 capability. Several squadrons of this class served with distinction throughout the Fourth Frontier War, and subsequent construction on further models of this class was undertaken at the Rhylanor shipyards.

One of its most popular configurations in the latter stages of that war (and throughout the Fifth Frontier War) was as a quasi-carrier for fighters and landers. A typical configuration saw the pinnace replaced by a *Type 1072* lander and the 104-ton cargo hold loaded with two *Lance*-class heavy fighters. The resulting offensive punch and operational versatility caused the Imperial Design Review Board to belatedly designate the *Mosquito* as an IDP design in 1111. This configuration is now quite popular with Black War strike groups, particularly those which anticipate a considerable need for operational flexibility and/or fighter screens.
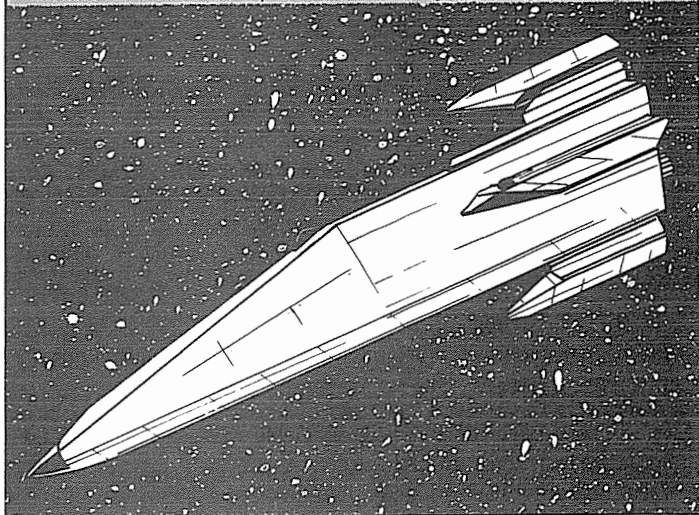
Tekkatir-Class Special Escort

CraftID:	*Tekkatir*-Class Special Escort, Type EN, TL15, MCr1435+craft
Hull:	1800/4500, Disp=2000, Config=1AF, Armor=52G, Loaded=25,390t, Unloaded=22,590t
Power:	90/180, Fusion=24120MW, Duration=30/90
Loco:	198/396, Maneuver=4, 72/144, Jump=3, NOE=190kph, Cruise=2295kph, Max=3060kph, Agility=0
Commo:	Radio=System, LaserComm=System, MaserComm=System
Sensors:	EMM, EMS Active (Far Orbit), EMS Jammer (Far Orbit), EMS Passive (Interstellar), High Pen Densitometer (1km), Neutrino Sensor (10kw), ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Simp, PassEnPin=Rout

Off:	Hardpoints=20		
	Missile=x03 BeamLaser=x04 FusionGun=xA0		
	Batt	4	2	1
	Bear	4	2	1

| **Def:**	DefDM+9	
	Sandcaster=x04	
	Batt	4
	Bear	4

Control:	Computer Mod9x3, 1×LargeHoloDisplay, 120×Hololink
Accomm:	Crew=82 (12 command, 3 bridge, 3 engineer, 3 gunnery, 2 maintenance, 16 flight, 40 troops), Staterooms=41, Env=basic env, basic ls, extended ls grav plates, inert comp
Other:	Subsidary Craft=4×40 ton, Fuel=14,100kl, Missile magazine=100br, Fuel Purifier (58hrs), Fuel Scoops, ObjSize=Large, EmLevel=Faint

The *Tekkatir*-class special escort was designed by TrinTechnics, a noted naval architecture firm in the Marches, as a speculative venture in the late 1080s. Intended as a more capable replacement for the 800-ton mercenary cruiser design, it also proved to be an excellent design for small planetary navies desiring an unspecialized starship.

This design was lifted to IDP status within five years of its introduction and achieved outstanding success with larger starmerc units, colonial navies and Imperial Military Resource Board contractors. Although expensive, it became one of the most commonly produced Black War escorts, prized for its versatility and performance. Auxiliary craft typically include *Lance* fighters and *Type 1072* landing boats. The *Tekkatir* class was named after creatures that could alter their appearance, but this has now been extended to any name that suggests deception, unseen danger or versatility. Examples include include *Snake-in-the-Grass*, *Dark Runner*, *Couteaux-Breche* and *Sly Ambusher*.
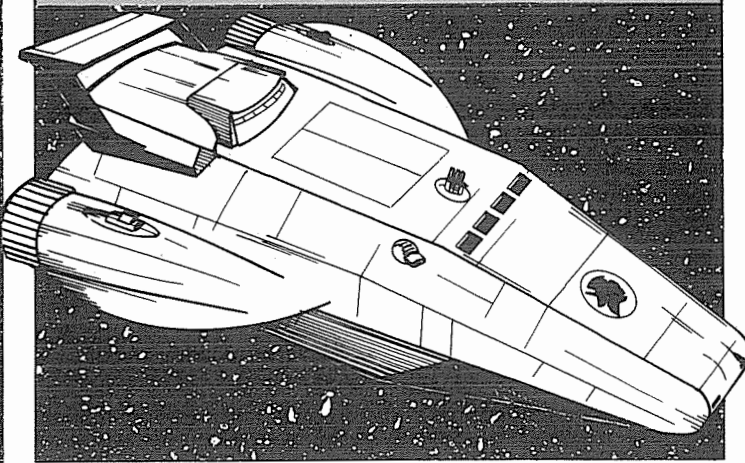
Yataghan-Class Missile Frigate

CraftID: *Yataghan*-Class Missile Frigate, Type FM, TL15, MCr 7673

Hull: 5400/13500, Disp=6000, Config=1AF, Armor=67G, Unloaded=145,804t, Loaded=8453t

Power: 267/534, Fusion=72,000MW, Duration=30/90

Loco: 216/432, Jump 3, 756/1512, Maneuver=5, NOE=140kph, Cruise=2592kph, Max=3456kph, Agility=0

Commo: Radio=System, LaserComm=System, MaserComm=System

Sensors: EMS Active (Far Orbit), EMS Jammer (Far Orbit), EMS passive (Interstellar), High Pen Densitometer (1km), Neutrino Sensor (10kw), ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjScan=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Sim, PassEnPin=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=60
BeamLaser=xx9 Missile=x90

	Batt	1	4
	Bear	1	4

Def: DefDm+9, Nuclear Damper-9, Meson Screen-9
Sandcaster=xx9

	Batt	1
	Bear	1

Control: Computer Mod9fibx3, Large HoloDisplayx2, HeadsUpDisplayx30, HoloLinkx210

Accomm: Crew=117 (12 command, 12 bridge, 7 engineer, 24 gunnery, 10 flight, 40 troops, 2 medical), Staterooms=65, Env=basic env, basic ls, extended ls, grav plates, inertial comp

Other: Fuel=42120kl (3120t), Cargo=5270kl (390t), Fuel Scoops, Fuel Purifier (12hr), Subcraft=3 x 40 ton, ObjSize=Large, EmLevel=Moderate

Known as the 1090 missile frigate during the design phase, the *Yataghan* class had just entered Imperial service at the time of Stephon's assassination.

Although primarily intended to act as covering vessels while other ships deployed riders or refueled, this design came to be seen as a centerpiece for large strike groups with the advent of the Black War. Although 50 tons of cargo space are recommended for missile storage, many commanders convert the cargo volume into storage for seven additional 40-ton subordinate craft. With this capacity for up to 10 40-ton subordinate craft, the *Yataghan* can function as a quasi-carrier and/or troop transport.

Furthermore, its considerable armor and speed make it a formidable opponent, and its heavy missile battery gives it tremendous dirtside bombardment capacities.

Derda Kiirgaashu-Class Imperial Fleet Escort

CraftID: *Derda Kiirgaashu*-Class Imperial Fleet Escort, Type EF, TL14, MCr8291

Hull: 9000/22500, Disp=10000t, Config=1SL, Armor=52G, Loaded=175756t, Unloaded=169926t

Power: 1267/2534, Fusion=171000MW, Duration=35/105

Loco: 990/1980, Maneuver=4, 450/900, Jump=4, Cruise=750kph, Max=1000kph, Agility=0

Commo: Radio=Systemx3, Laser=Systemx3, Maser=Systemx3

Sensors: EMS Active (Far Orbit)x3, EMS Jammer (Far Orbit)x3, EMS Passive (Interstellar)x3, Neutrino Sensor (10kw) x3, High Pen Densitometer (250m)83, ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjScan=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Simp, PassEnPin=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=100
MesonGun=05x Missile=x90 BeamLaser=xx9

	Batt	1	4	1
	Bear	1	4	1

Def: DefDM+7, Meson Screen-6x2, Nuclear Damper-6x2
Sandcaster=x09

	Batt	4
	Bear	4

Control: Computer Mod8fibx3, 4xLargeHoloDisplay, 25xHeads-UpHoloDisplay, 670xHoloLink

Accomm: Crew=107 (12 bridge, 23 engineer, 5 maintenance, 51 gunners, 3 flight, 11 command, 2 medical), Staterooms=54, Env=basic env, basic ls, extended ls, grav plates, inertial comp

Other: Fuel=73842kl (1 jump-4+35 days), Cargo=0, Missile Magazine=500kl (50b-r), Fuel Scoops, Fuel Purifier (18hr), SubCraft=1xPinnace, ObjSize=Large, EmLevel=Strong

The *DK* class illustrates a common trend in the design philosophies embraced by Black War planners—sacrifice full power ouput endurance in exchange for short-operation offensive punch. The main armament (a meson gun bay) necessitates a power plant roughly twice as large as the maneuver/life support requirement.

The listed endurance assumes that power usage is at a noncombat level. Combat power levels consume fuel twice as fast, effectively halving the duration of the vessel (or more usefully, costing two days of the rated endurance for every day of combat operations).
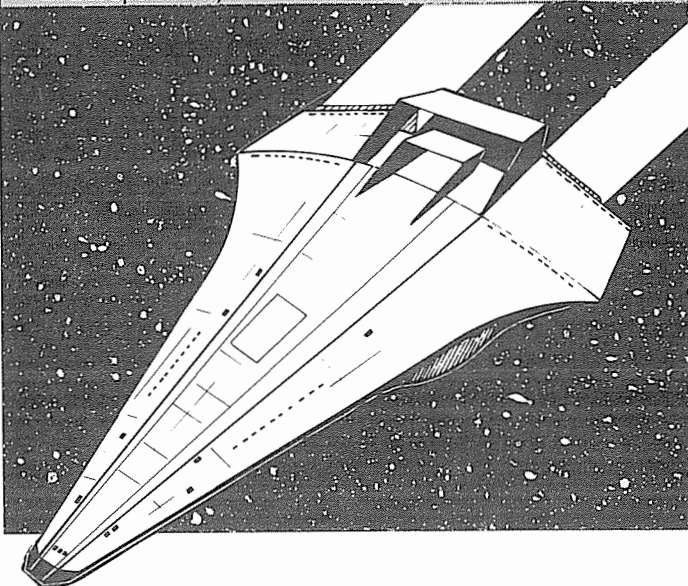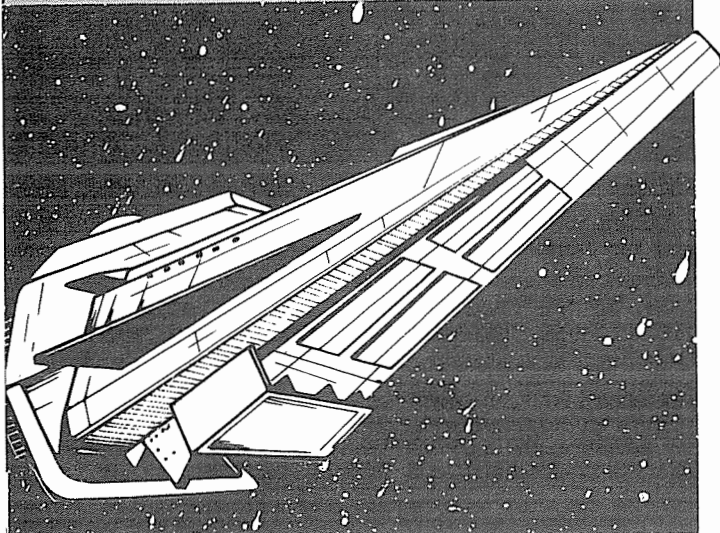
Amar Hadaash-Class Imperial Fleet Escort

CraftID: *Amar Hadaash*-Class Imperial Fleet Escort, TL15, MCr6531.5

Hull: 9000/22500, /Disp=10000t, Config=1SL, Armor=52G, Loaded=143880t, Unloaded=137470t

Power: 667/1334, Fusion=180000MW, Duration=44/132

Loco: 990/1980, Maneuver=4, 450/900, Jump=4, Cruise=750kph, Max=1000kph, Agility=0

Commo: Radio=System×3, Laser=System×3, Maser=System×3

Sensors: EMS Active (Far Orbit)×3, EMS Jammer (Far Orbit)×3, EMS Passive (Interstellar)×3, Neutrino Sensor (10kw)×3, High Pen Densitometer (1km)×3, ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjScan=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Simp, PassEnPin=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=100
MesonGun=09x Missile=x90 BeamLaser=xx9

	Batt		
Batt	1	4	1
Bear	1	4	1

Def: DefDM+11, Meson Screen-9×2, Nuclear Damper-7×2
Sandcaster=x09

Batt	4
Bear	4

Control: Computer Mod9fib×3, 2×LargeHoloDisplay, 20×HeadsUpHoloDisplay, 620×HoloLink

Accomm: Crew=90 (11 bridge, 14 engineer, 4 maintenance, 45 gunners, 3 flight, 11 command, 2 medical), Staterooms=45, Env=basic env, basic ls, extended ls, grav plates, inertial comp

Other: Fuel=82133kl (1 jump-4+44 days), Cargo=0, Missile Magazine=500kl (50b-r), Fuel Scoops, Fuel Purifier (12hr), SubCraft=1×Pinnace, ObjSize=Large, EmLevel=Strong

An updating of the RimWar-vintage *Derda Kiirgaashu* class, the *Amar* revision was a typically thorough, if uninspired, Vilani effort. Once again, in order to fit the desired main armament of a meson gun bay, it was necessary to have a power plant roughly twice as large as the maneuver/life support requirement. As before, combat power usage consumes fuel at twice the rate of noncombat ouput (which is the basis of the ship's endurance rating).

Thibeault-Class Imperial Destroyer

CraftID: *Thibeault*-Class Destroyer, Type DA, TL15, MCr113, 709

Hull: 9000/22500, Disp=10000, Config=1SL, Armor=70G, Unloaded=271, 396t, Loaded=289823t

Power: 327/654, Fusion=88200MW, Dur=30/90

Loco: 360/720, Jump 3, 990/1980, Maneuver=4, Agility=0

Commo: Radio=System, LaserComm=System, MaserComm=System

Sensors: EMM, EMS Active (Far Orbit), EMS Jammer (Far Orbit), EMS Passive (Interstellar), High Pen Densitometer (1km), Neutrino Sensor (10kw), ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjScan=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Simp, PassEnPin=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=100
FusionGun=xA0 BeamLaser=xx9

	Batt	
Batt	1	2
Bear	1	2

Missile=x90 PartAcc=007

3	1	
3	1	

Def: DefDm+8, Nuclear Damper-9, Meson Screen-9
Sandcaster=xx9

Batt	2
Bear	2

Control: Computer Mod9fib×3, LargeHoloDisplay×3, HeadsUpDisplay×30, HoloLink×2475

Accomm: Crew=246 (12 command, 11 bridge, 5 engineer, 34 gunnery, 120 flight, 40 marines, 2 medical), Staterooms=125, Env=basic env, basicls, extended ls, grav plates, inertial comp

Other: Fuel=58800kl, Cargo=4370kl, Missile Magazine= 450kl (60 battery rounds), Fuel Scoops, Fuel purifier (12hr), Subcraft=40 x 20-ton subordinate craft (or equivalent total tonnage), Launch Tube=20 tons, ObjSize=Large, EmLevel=Faint

This destroyer entered service with the Imperial Navy on Lanth in the Spinward Marches prior to the Fifth Frontier War. Considered a questionable design due to the huge commitment to subordinate craft and launch facilities, the *Thibeault* class distinguished itself in service against Sword Worlds and Zhondani forces. Much of its success stemmed from the flexibility afforded by its fighter complement. Although the *Thibeault* class was designed for 20-ton fighters, many strike groups employ a heterogeneous mix including larger craft, carrying no more than five 20-ton fighters for fast response situations. The remainder of the subcraft bays are loaded with heavier fighters or landers. These larger craft cannot use the launch tubes and take longer to deploy, at the rate of one every 20 minutes. Given sufficient advance planning, this is not considered to be too grave a shortcoming.
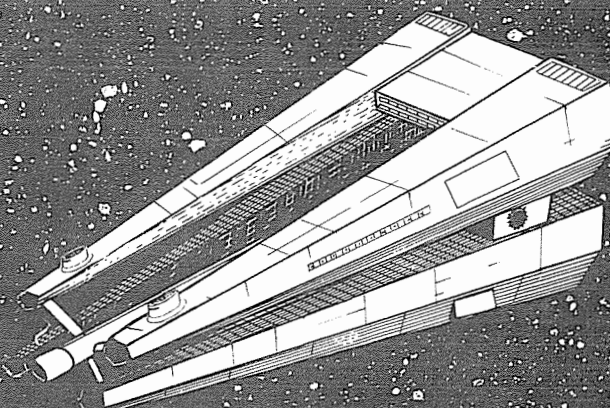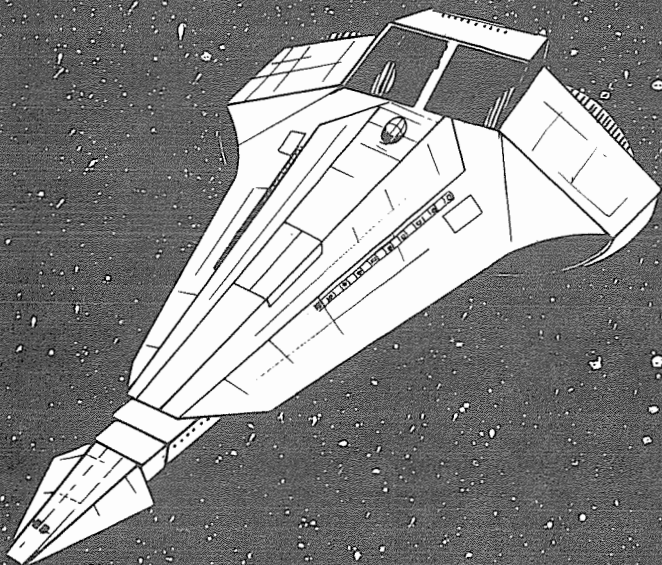
Manzikert-Class Imperial Destroyer

CraftID:	*Mamzikert*-Class Destroyer, Type DS, TL15, MCr7106
Hull:	10800/27000, Disp=12000t, Config=1SL, Armor=40G Loaded=230373t, Unloaded=223904t
Power:	880/1760, Fusion=237600MW, Duration=63/189
Loco:	864/1728, Maneuver=3, 432/864, Jump=3, Cruise=750kph, Max=1000kph, Agility=0
Commo:	Radio=System, Laser=System, Maser=System
Sensors:	EMM, EMS Active (FarOrbit), EMS Jammer (FarOrbit), EMS Passive (Interstellar), Neutrino Sensor (10kw), High Pen Densitometer (1km). ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjScan=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Simp, PassEnPin=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=120
MesonGun=J0x Missile=x07

Batt	1	3
Bear	1	3

Def: DM+8
Sandcaster=x09

Batt	8
Bear	8

Control:	Computer Mod9fibx3, 2×LargeHoloDisplay, 25×HeadsUpHoloDisplay, 446×Hololink
Accomm:	Crew=91 (12 bridge, 15 engineer, 11 command, 51 gunners, 2 maintenance), Staterooms=46, Env=basic env, basic ls, extended ls, grav plates, inertial comp
Other:	Fuel=92409kl (1 jump-3+63 days), Cargo=0, Missile Magazine=45kl (5b-r), Fuel Purifier (12hr), ObjSize=Large, EmLevel=Moderate

Designed by the Imperial Navy, the *Manzikert* is not intended for independent operations. The strategist/designers intended it to be used as part of a balanced escort/light force grouping, consisting of general-purpose craft such as the *Tekkatir* special escort and *Yataghan*-class missile frigates. The *Manzikert* class is little more than a hull built around a spinal meson gun and as such was envisioned as being the "big ship killer" in such a light task force. Indeed, the *Manzikert* is one of the smallest jump-capable craft in the Imperial inventory to carry a spinal meson gun, and almost everything else in the design process was sacrificed to achieve that objective. This specialized nature makes the *Manzikert* something of a rarity compared to the other ships presented here. However, most factions have some in their inventories, just in case.

The *Manzikert*'s large fusion plant is usually operated at approximately one-third its full capacity, which provides maneuver and life support power. Endurance is listed at this reduced rate, and full power time can be traded on a one hour for three hour basis.

Iolair-Class Imperial Light Cruiser

CraftID:	*Iolair*-Class Light Cruiser, Type C, TL15, MCr14528
Hull:	18000/45000, Disp=20000t, Config=1SL, Armor=61G, Loaded=392924t, Unloaded=362893t
Power:	1267/2534, Fusion=342000MW, Duration=30/90
Loco:	1980/3960, Maneuver=4, 900/1800, Jump=4, Cruise=750kph, Max=1000kph, Agility=0
Commo:	Radio=System×5, Laser=System×5, Maser=System×5
Sensors:	EMS Active (FarOrbit)×5, EMS Jammer (FarOrbit)×5, EMS Passive(Interstellar)×5, Neutrino Sensor (10kw)×5, High Pen Densitometer (1km)×5, ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout, PassObjScan=Rout, PassObjPin=Rout, PassEnScan=Simp, PassEnPin=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=200
MesonGun=J0x Missile=x90 BeamLaser=xx9

Batt	1	10	5
Bear	1	10	5

Def: DefDM+8, Meson Screen-9×3, Nuclear Damper-9×3
Sandcaster=x09

|	
Batt	4
Bear	4

Control:	Computer Mod9fibx3, 4×LargeHoloDisplay, 50×Heads UpHoloDisplay, 760×HoloLink
Accomm:	Crew=287 (13 bridge, 27 engineer, 12 maintenance, 52 gunners, 30 flight, 135 troops, 15 command, 3 medical), Staterooms=144, Env=basic env, basic ls, extended ls, grav plates, inertial comp
Other:	Fuel=130140kl (1 jump-4+30 days), Cargo=14071, Missile Magazine=1250kl (50b-r), Fuel Scoops, Fuel purifier (12hr), SubCraft=10×40ton (6×Type 1072 Landing Boats, 4×Lance fighters), ObjSize=Large, EmLevel=Strong

Intended for small-scale independent operations, the *Iolair* class has an excellent capability for the limited strike operations that constitute the Black War doctrine. Its company of marines gives it tremendous versatility in this regard. Consequently, although a respected design when introduced in 1102, it began to truly flourish in the Black War era as one of the "ships of the line."

Endurance listed assumes noncombat power drains (maneuver, life support, sensors). Combat power consumes two days of noncombat power per day. Cost of subcraft is included in the total design cost (four *Lance* fighters, six *Type 1072* landing boats).
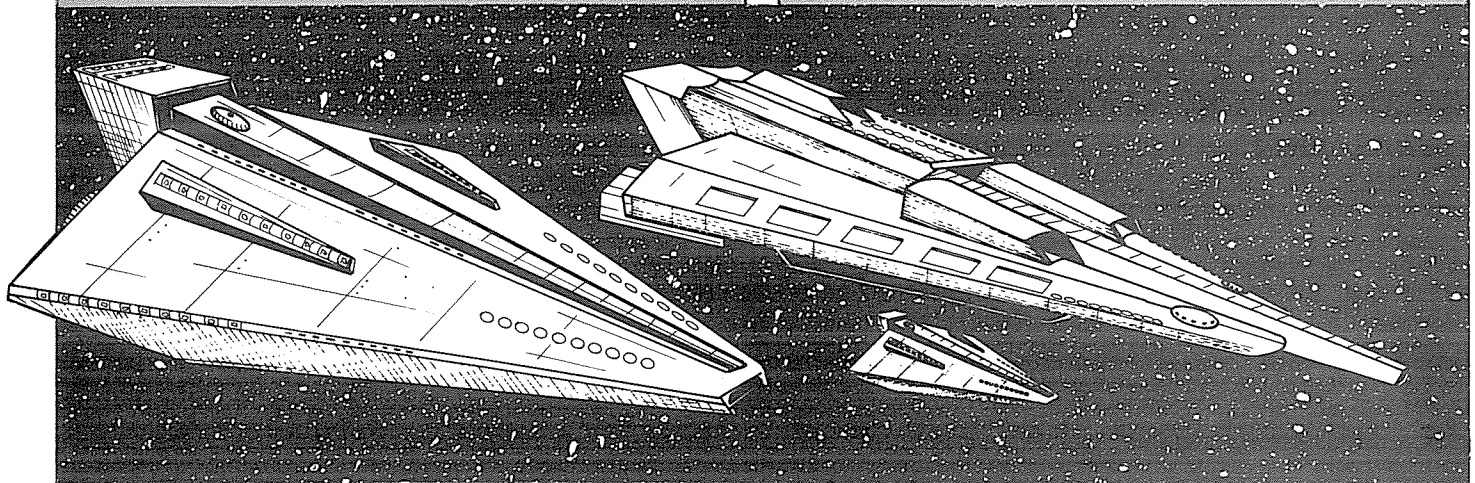
Cult of DOOM

A strange new cult advocates the overthrow of British rule on Mars. The city of Gorovaan seems to be the center of activity for the new cult. There have been riots, the main temple was burned down, and several Terrans have been attacked. For now, the Gorovaan garrison is keeping order, but the situation is very tense. The Oenotrian war has stretched British forces to the limit. A rebellion now could lead to the collapse of British rule on Mars.

Lord Dundas, the governor-general of Britain's possessions on Mars,

Gorovaan

Ruins
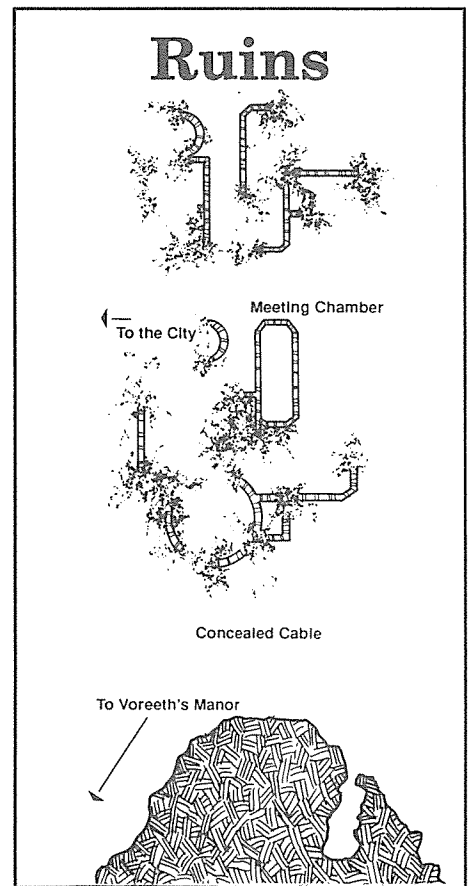
would like the PCs to go to Gorovaan to find out what is going on and put a stop to it as quickly and as discreetly as possible.

If the PCs are military, they will be assigned to this investigation. Otherwise, they may be hired for the job. If they are journalists, they may be sent to investigate the story while the other PCs try to cover it up.

GOROVAAN

Gorovaan is the northernmost city in British territory. It has a population of 102,600, including 3500 British citizens. The city's economy is based on metalworking, particularly copper and bronze, using ore mined in the mountains to the north. Unfortunately, competition from British industry has caused a slump in the copper business. Poverty and unemployment in the city have risen, creating fertile conditions for unrest.

From the air, Gorovaan is a large and impressive-looking city. Some colossal towers dating back to the Canal Builder period loom over the smaller, more recent buildings. The British flag flies over a fort on the east bank of the canal.

District Commissioner: The chief British official in Gorovaan is Sir Charles Eglantine, the district commissioner.

(Technically, Gorovaan is under the rule of Parhoon, so Eglantine represents the British regency of Parhoon.) If contacted by the PCs, Eglantine will be somewhat indignant about "interference" by the governor-general. He insists that the whole affair has been blown out of proportion, and that the riots have simply been the work of "rowdies and hooligans." The destruction of the temple, he claims, was the result of lightning. Eglantine will eventually grudgingly cooperate with the PCs. Though he knows little about what is really going on, he is a useful source of general information about the city and can tell the PCs who might know the answers to their questions.

Garrison: Gorovaan's garrison is commanded by Major George Quickstone. Quickstone is alarmed by the growing unrest and has been pestering the army for more troops. His solution to the problem is, "Give them a taste of the bayonet, and they'll stop this foolishness soon enough."

Temple: The old grand temple was destroyed by fire a week before the characters' arrival. Six priests were killed in the blaze. The burnt-out remains stand in the center of the city. If the PCs ask about the fire, everyone swears it was

caused by lightning. Several people even witnessed it. This is very peculiar, as lightning is almost unknown on Mars due to the thin, dry air. Only during desert sandstorms does it occur, and there was no storm the night the temple was destroyed. An examination of the ruins will reveal little; what the fire did not destroy has been picked over thoroughly by scavengers and treasure-hunters.

DISTURBANCES

The referee should roll 1D6 each day to determine if there are any outbreaks of unrest. A result of 1-2 indicates that the city is quiet that day; 3-4 means a minor disturbance; and 5-6 means a major disturbance.

Minor Disturbance: A minor disturbance involves fewer than 20 people. It could be a tavern brawl, an episode of vandalism, or an attack by a couple of thugs on a lone Briton. The incident will probably take place in the slums or near the waterfront. The constabulary will be able to break it up fairly easily, and the whole thing will last no more than half an hour. Unless they are involved, the PCs may not hear about a minor disturbance.

Major Disturbance: A major distur-

bance is a full-fledged riot. A crowd of 50 to 100 Martians will gather, shouting slogans, looting, attacking British citizens and destroying property. Only the arrival of troops will break up the riot. For the rest of the day, the city will be tense, buildings will be locked and shuttered, and there will be 1D6 minor disturbances.

A major disturbance will always affect the PCs, unless they have left the city. The characters will be warned to stay off the streets, or they may be called upon to protect British lives and property from the mob. If they are so foolish as to get caught up in a riot, the PCs may well be injured.

ENCOUNTERS

The characters' investigations will take them all over the city. Depending on where they go, they can learn a great deal of useful information (and some utterly useless facts, as well).

1. A British merchant, Cyril Isleford, can tell the characters that Lord Voreeth recently ordered a large shipment of electrical equipment from London. Isleford has no idea what the equipment could be for, but he made a handsome profit off the deal.

2. A British archaeologist, Professor Readley, was chased away from the ruins north of town by a gang of rowdies. He complained to the authorities, but the district commissioner was too concerned with the cult scare to offer any assistance.

3. A Martian priest, Paaranan, is worried about the cult because even devout followers of the traditional religions have become fanatical cultists. The traditional priests have grudgingly accepted British rule in Gorovaan, but know little about the new cult.

4. A British physician, Dr. Thimble, can tell the PCs that he treated a couple of cultists injured in a riot. Their behavior was highly unusual, as if they were under the influence of a drug.

5. A Martian tavernkeeper, Graaziith, will inform the investigators that a curse has befallen the city ever since the British stopped the practice of beating gongs at moonrise.

6. Ixtaan, a Martian tobacconist, recalls selling a whole case of Bulgarian cigars to one of Lord Voreeth's men. This is highly unusual, as Terran tobacco is not very popular among Martians.

7. The party may notice several of Lord Voreeth's personal guard at any riots or disturbances they witness. The guards do not participate, but carefully observe the outbreaks.

8. Soolian, one of the district commissioner's servants, knows that the cultists meet somewhere outside the city on the day of the Wind Lord. Soolian's brother has joined the cult and told him about it. He has not told District Commissioner Eglantine.

9. Broon, a beggar at the bazaar, will swear that Eglantine is a member of the cult. (Actually, Broon just likes to tell tall stories.)

ASSASSINS

At some point during their investigations, the PCs will be attacked by a gang of assassins. The killers are equal in number to the PCs and are armed with daggers. Their identities are concealed by black cloaks and hoods, but a few of them are wearing their household livery underneath. If any are killed or captured, the PCs can recognize the livery as that of Lord Voreeth's household. All the assassins are Experienced NPCs, and they will fight until half their number are incapacitated.

LORD VOREETH

Lord Voreeth is a Martian nobleman and the largest landowner in the Gorovaan region. He has a vast estate north of the city, along the canal. His property includes some ancient Canal Builder ruins.

Voreeth owes his great wealth to the fact that he was an early supporter of the British and cooperated with them extensively in the wake of their conquest of Gorovaan. Until recently, he was very friendly with the district commissioner and other officials, but he has now become withdrawn and hostile. (In fact, he has been influenced by the anarchist Hartmann.)

Lord Voreeth's main residence is his palace, located beside the grand canal two miles north of the city. The mansion is heavily fortified and is garrisoned by two dozen well-trained guards. Visitors to the palace will be turned away by Voreeth's steward, who claims that the lord is ill and cannot see anyone. The PCs may persuade the steward to let them in, either through Eloquence or by bribing the man. A letter of introduction

from Eglantine would also suffice.

In person, Voreeth seems a bit odd. He is obviously intelligent and can speak very knowledgeably about managing his estates, the art treasures in his house and Martian history. But if the PCs ask about politics or religion, he becomes almost zombie-like, and answers all questions with variations on the same slogan: "The British are evil; the gods demand that they be driven off Mars." If pressed, he will become quite hostile and will order the PCs to leave his house and lands at once.

RITUAL

The PCs may attempt to observe a cult ritual in progress. They can find out where and when the cultists meet through their investigation or by following some cultists to the ruins.

The ruins lie about five miles outside of Gorovaan, on Lord Voreeth's estates. Until recently, the ruins were something of a tourist attraction, but they are no longer safe to visit. Half a dozen thugs (Trained NPCs) guard the area, armed with knives and clubs. The original purpose of the ruins is still unknown. Most structures are little more than rubble, but one edifice is perfectly intact. It is a big building, about 100 feet long by 50 feet wide, standing perhaps 40 feet high. Within it is a single chamber. There are no windows, and the walls inside are decorated with a fantastic abstract pattern.

At one end of the chamber is a huge idol, carved roughly from a single slab of stone. A thorough examination (and a successful Difficult: Observation roll) will reveal that the idol is hollow, concealing a loudspeaker apparatus and a strange machine. Inventors having an Ether Knowledge of 35 or more may decipher the device's purpose—it is a mind-control ray. A cleverly camouflaged power cable leads from the idol through a hole in the back wall of the chamber. Outside, it snakes a few hundred yards to a cave.

The 400 Martian cultists meet at the ruins just after sunset on the day of the Wind Lord. They assemble inside the one surviving structure, lighting up the interior with torches. An elderly Martian in priests' robes bows before the huge idol. The priest is Lord Voreeth, and he leads the crowd in a chant, calling upon the gods for aid against the British.

Suddenly, an eerie light fills the chamber, and the stone idol begins to "speak": "I am pleased, my children. The aliens fear the wrath of the people. Strike at them again. Slay them, destroy their ships and smash their alien rule. Be fearless in battle, be merciless, and if you are captured, be silent. Go, and let the blood of the aliens run in the streets!"

Everyone in the building (including the PCs) feels a strange dizzy sensation. PCs must make a successful Difficult: Intelligence roll, or they will be utterly convinced of the truth of the idol's words! Affected characters can roll once every hour to see if they can break the hypnotic control; otherwise, they must follow the idol's instructions.

After a bit more chanting in honor of the gods, the cultists disperse and return home. There will be a riot in Gorovaan that night, and several lives will be lost.

CONCLUSION

The cave outside the cultists' meeting hall is where Sigismund Hartmann has hidden his ether flyer. Hartmann is a Lithuanian anarchist and inventor who has perfected a mind-control ray, which he is using to stir up unrest. An approach by stealth will take him by surprise. If the PCs have had to fight it out with the thugs guarding the ruins, Hartmann will be ready for intruders and will have his lightning cannon ready to fire out the cave mouth. Though he cannot really use it to hit individual targets, anyone entering the cave mouth will be hit and incinerated on a 1D6 roll of 1. Otherwise, he and his associates will fight long enough to escape aboard the ether flyer. The four crewmembers are all Experienced NPCs, armed with knives and light revolvers.

The ether flyer is a 40-ton liftwood ship, equipped with Hartmann's own ether propellor (power value 5, efficiency 35). It has a boiler of power value 6 and carries a crew of five. The ship is armed with Hartmann's lightning cannon. It has an ether/combustion laboratory, a conservatory, batteries of power level 1 with one day's endurance, an airscrew of power value 1, and two tons of cargo space. The flyer has an interplanetary speed of 4.4 million miles per day and an airspeed of 10. It has 1 hull hit in aerial combat.

If the PCs reveal the sinister anarchist plot, Hartmann will flee. Without frequent doses of mind control, the cultists will gradually lose their fanaticism, and the unrest will die down. Capturing Hartmann will bring great renown to the PCs and will provoke a strong reaction in Gorovaan against the cult. Lord Dundas will see that the player characters are suitably rewarded for their deeds.

Sir Charles Eglantine (Trained NPC)

Eglantine is district commissioner for Gorovaan and as such is the highest ranking British official in town. He dislikes his current post and has been trying to impress his superiors in order to get a better position. Consequently, he has been downplaying the unrest in Gorovaan. He will not be very keen on having outsiders sent in to deal with the situation.

Attribute		Skill
Str:	3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 2 (edged)
Agl:	1	Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
End:	4	Wilderness Travel 3 (mapping)
Int:	2	Observation 2
Chr:	6	Eloquence 7, Bargaining 2, Linguistics 3 (Parhooni, Koline, French), Theatrics 1
Soc:	5	Riding 5 (horse), Leadership 2, Pilot 1 (steam flyer)

Motives: Fair, Ambitious, Boastful.

Appearance: Eglantine is a distinguished-looking man with a slight speech impediment and a tendency to bump into things. He always tries to act as if he is in control of the situation, even when he is not. He can be very charming when he wishes to be and is great fun at parties.

Lord Voreeth (Trained NPC)

Lord Voreeth is an extremely wealthy Martian nobleman. He has always believed in cooperating with the British, but has been brainwashed by Hartmann into supporting the cult. Normally, Lord Voreeth is chiefly interested in expanding his wealth and power, but under Hartmann's influence, he has become fanatically opposed to the British.

Attribute		Skill
Str:	1	Close Combat 2 (polearm)
Agl:	2	Stealth 1
End:	4	Wilderness Travel 4 (mountaineering), Fieldcraft 1
Int:	5	Observation 4
Chr:	3	Eloquence 3, Bargaining 2, Linguistics 3 (Hellan, Koline, English)
Soc:	6	Riding 5 (gashant), Pilot 3 (cloudship), Leadership 2

Motives: Proud, Mercantile, Hatred (of British).

Appearance: Voreeth is very tall and slender, even for a Martian. He wears his gray hair long, like a Hill Martian, but always dresses impeccably in elegant robes. He is usually very intelligent, but Hartmann's brainwashing has made him dull and vague.

Sigismund Hartmann (Experienced NPC)

Like all anarchists, Hartmann hates authority, and he especially detests monarchies. Since Britain is the world's leading power, it is his natural target. Hartmann is something of a coward and prefers to work in secret, behind the scenes, rather than in person.

Attribute		Skill
Str:	3	Fisticuffs 2, Throwing 1, Close Combat 3 (edged)
Agl:	5	Stealth 4, Mechanics 3 (electricity), Crime 2 (forgery), Marksmanship 1 (pistol)
End:	1	
Int:	6	Observation 5, Science 4 (physics), Engineering 2 (naval architecture)
Chr:	3	Eloquence 2, Theatrics 1, Linguistics 2 (Russian, English)
Soc:	3	Riding 2 (horse), Leadership 2, Medicine 1

Research Areas: Transportation 7, Biochemistry 7, Ether 35, Metallurgy 9, Precision Machinery 7, Power Production 6, Combustion 11.

Inventions: Ether propellor (reliability 5), lightning cannon (reliability 2), mind-control ray (reliability 4).

Motives: Hatred (of authority), Coward, Ruthless.

Appearance: Hartmann does not look like a fanatical anarchist. He is small and slim, neatly groomed, and wears thick spectacles. He smokes foul Bulgarian cigars and speaks with a heavy accent. Ω

We were supposed to escort these civilian troubleshooters to locate some survey team operating in safe territory just this side of the hotback. The team had been overdue for days. A few minutes before our X-wing was to reach the survey station, one of the troubleshooters spotted some wreckage in a clearing.

We found the survey team. There were eight of them, all dead, and all with their ears missing—a Kafer trademark. Their ATV had a nice-sized hole in the side, and the interior was pretty well burned out.

About that time, Batson, one of my riflemen, opened up on the tree line. I saw it too—a Kafer ducking into the woods. Malcolm blasted a line of fire across the Kafer's path while I called the others to get back to the X-wing. Batson popped a fresh clip into his M-5 and lay down fire into the woods. I yelled at him to get back, but a Kafer grenade hit him square in the chest.

I froze for a moment—just long enough for a laser to hit me in the shoulder. The shot vaporized a piece of my inertial armor, and my right arm went numb. Someone hauled me inside, and the X-wing was off the ground.

I remember feeling dazed and hearing the voice of the pilot trying to call for help. The craft had taken a couple of hits and wiped out the radio, and we were losing fuel. All I could see was Earth spinning below us—no, not Earth. Earth was 50 light-years away.

Wing X-Down

By C. W. Hess

his post-invasion **2300 AD** adventure is based on a group of troubleshooters and American Marines who find themselves stranded in the midst of Kafer-occupied territory on Aurore. The referee will need a copy of **2300 AD**, and **Aurore Sourcebook** is strongly recommended for information on animal life and environment. **Mission Arcturus** and 3W's *Operation Overlord* are recommended if American Marine characters are used. **Challenge 39** and **42** also contain articles on American Marines.

The PCs are aboard an American Marine UX-10 X-wing transport to check a survey team that has not reported in for several days. The UX-10 X-wing utility transport is designed to carry up to two crewmembers, plus 10 additional passengers. On this mission, the craft carries a pilot, a four-man Marine fireteam, and a four-man troubleshooter team. One of the marines has been killed and another injured. The marines may be played by NPCs while the PCs take the part of the troubleshooters.

The environment of Aurore is rather rough. Storms are frequent and violent, but generally short. In the vicinity of this adventure, roughly 900 kilometers south of the volcano Mt. Phaeton, seismic tremors are common, though most often too mild to cause damage or injury. Communicators are of limited range

due to atmospheric effects. Only a direct microwave transmitter link can be used to reach the PCs' base. The X-wing has such a unit. The Auroren day is roughly 61 hours of daylight. When the adventure begins, 12 hours of daylight remain.

TOUCHDOWN

The X-wing is hit by a Kafer antivehicle missile. It has lost most stabilizer control and is losing power fast—it will come down very soon. The pilot should roll tasks to increase distance from the Kafers and to land safely.

Task: To increase distance from Kafers. Difficult. Determination or Aircraft Pilot. Instant.
Referee: Nonrepeatable. Success results in the X-wing going down eight kilometers from the Kafers. Failure indicates two kilometers from the Kafers. Any mishap increases the difficulty of the task to land safely by one level.

Task: To land safely. Difficult. Aircraft Pilot. Instant.
Referee: Nonrepeatable. Success results in the X-wing setting down without substantial injuries to passengers or crew. On a failure, roll 1D10 for each character in the X-wing; on a 1-3, the character must roll to avoid injury. If the to land safely task results in a mishap, roll 1D10; on a 1-6, the character must roll to avoid injury.

Task: To avoid injury. Routine. Unskilled. Instant.
Referee: Nonrepeatable. Failure results in the character taking a DP 0.6 blunt trauma hit to a random body location. Armor will reduce damage.

Following the landing (or crash as the case may be), the PCs may want to treat any injured characters, recover what equipment they can and determine their best chances for survival:
● They could make a stand and fight the Kafers—an option that shows little promise since they are drastically outnumbered.
● They may try to evade the Kafers and hope someone (human) comes looking for them. It will be at least a full Auroren day before they've been missing long enough to begin a search.
● They can head for the survey station that was their original destination. The PCs know the station was still broadcasting weather data as of this morning when they left, so the Kafers haven't destroyed it. It should also have a radio and other equipment that might be useful until help arrives.

TREK

The Kafers who shot down the X-wing are in hot pursuit. If the Kafers were vehicle-equipped—which the X-wing's sensors whould have detected—they would arrive within minutes. Since the Kafers are actually on foot, they will systematically track down the PCs after reaching the X-wing.

The journey to the station is roughly 100 kilometers through rough terrain and will take about 20 hours. Kafers travel at between four and nine kph—roll 1D6+3 to determine their exact speed. The PCs travel at the base rate of five kph over flat, open terrain. Broken ground or forest reduces their travel rate by one-third. The PCs can increase their rate of travel if they successfully perform the following task.

Task: To travel at double-time. Difficult. Endurance. 15 minutes (Absolute).
Referee: Reduce difficulty by one level on the first attempt of the task or after a character has had time to rest. A successful roll will allow the character to increase base travel time to 10 kph, covering up to 2.5 kilometers in the 15-minute duration of the task.
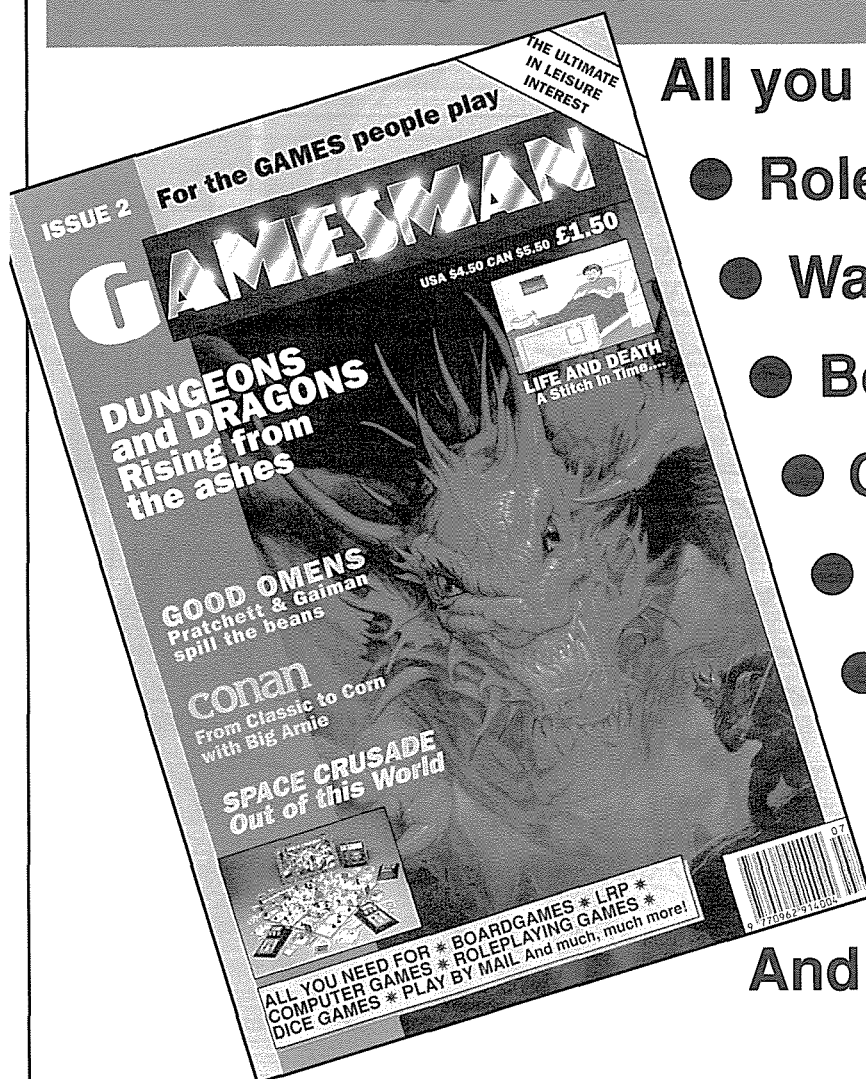
If one or more members of the group fail the task, those who succeeded may leave the slower characters behind or stay with them. If they stay, they may save their task roll until the whole group is successful. This should not be saved over night.

ENCOUNTERS

If a copy of **Aurore Sourcebook** is available, the referee may wish to create a region encounter pyramid as described in the **2300 AD** rules. Every four hours of game time, the referee

BEACH BLANKET BINGO!

A Challenge Magazine Swimsuit Supplement

"Picnic on the Beach..."
The world of **Dark Conspiracy** sure *is* dark.
D-Con author and editor Lester Smith thought up
this morbid twist on catching some rays, and artist
extraordinaire Mike Jackson brought it to life.
Colors by Ye Olde Art Director.

It looks like Queen Gidget of Surf City Beach is just about to lose an intra-species Meta-Human game of King of the Hill. As all the surfer boys say, "She's the ginchiest!" FASA artist Jim Nelson portrays the angst-ridden milieu of Shadowrunners in search of the elusive perfect wave.

"Got Any Suntan Lotion?"
A techno-demon with a unique slant on body sculpting seeks a favor from its High Lord, Jezrael, and would-be High Lord Sarila is quick to comply.

Artist John Paul Lona shows us a scene from a Beach Blanket cosm somewhere in **Torg***'s infiniverse.*

"In space, no one can hear you tan..."
Astrogator 3rd Class Monica Spandex prepares to relax with the Eludium Q-37 Diatonic Holographic projector (Wow! Virtual Beachality).

Rick (King-o'-the-Beach) Harris gives us this bathing beauty circa **2300 AD**.
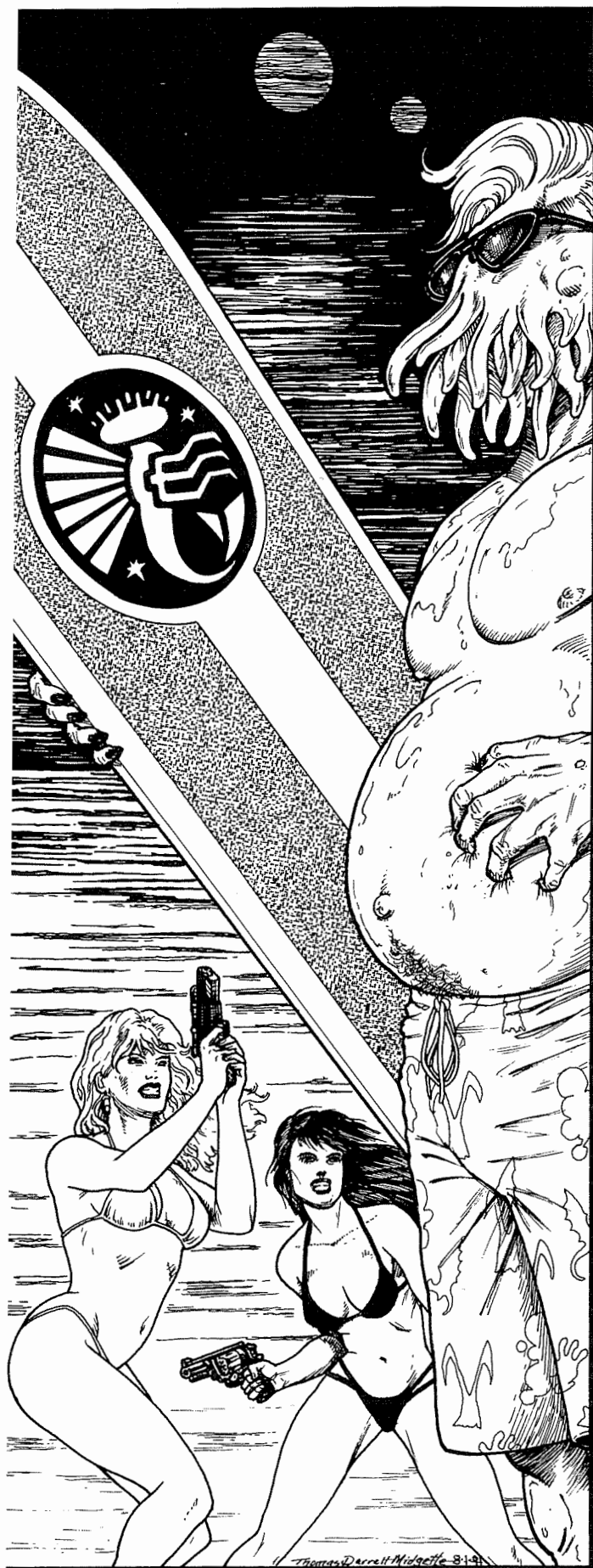
Dee Kupp and Eva Distrucctione confront Gnarlyhotep ("The Surfer with 1000 Toes") in the *Macho Women With Guns* adventure "Fun Guys From Yuggoth."

Art by that wild-and-crazy guy, Thomas Darrell Midgette

Opening a window on the **MegaTraveller** universe, Rob Caswell gives us a glimpse of Imperial Scout life. Scout "marine contact expert" Shreen Gaybil continues the task of unscrambling the complex and subtle language of the aquatic inhabitants native to the small moon, Peligan. Needless to say, the moon's tropical climate and warm waters make this outpost a preferred duty assignment.

That's the caption we got from Rob. We were sorta' hopin' for something funny…

Apparently no one ever told the Illuminati that it's impolite to stare.

Steve Jackson Games staff artist Ruth Thompson contributed this illustration at left for our little menagerie.

We really wanted to think of something humorous for this piece located to your right, but we all drew a collective blank.

This illustration features the villainous Undertow from artist Kevin Long, soon to be seen in Palladium Books' *Villains Unlimited* sourcebook.

© 1992 K. SIEMBIEPA

"You've come a long way, baby."

Swimsuits sure have changed since 1889, as this vintage Paul Daly piece from the debut issue of *Sports Illustrated*'s trend-setting "bathing costume" issue depicts. So, come on, girls. Revel in your new-found freedom.

*"What're **you** lookin' at?!"* Has anyone besides us noticed the proliferation of surfboards in this year's issue? C'mon folks—it's the Swimsuit Issue, not the Surfboard Issue.

Dell Harris is responsible for this surfboard-dominated illustration from **Twilight: 2000**. Looks like khaki's in this season.

"**Fun in the Great ... Outside?!**" Citizen Cop-R-TON-3's treasonous secret is uncovered when Randy the Wonder Lizard gets a little too ... randy. West End artist John Paul Lona reveals the hidden conspiracies of *Paranoia*'s citizens and Commie Mutant Traitors.

Main Building

Module A

General Storage
Doghouse   Personal Storage
Food Storage
Kitchen

Module B

Personnel Quarters   Restroom
Personnel Quarters   Administrative Office

Module C

Cargo Module/Lifter
Workshop Area

Lab Shack

Specimen Storage   Bio Lab   Plant Lab
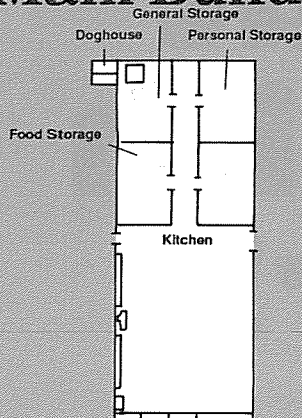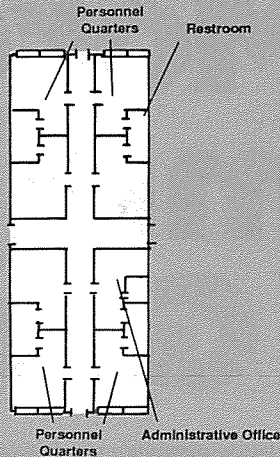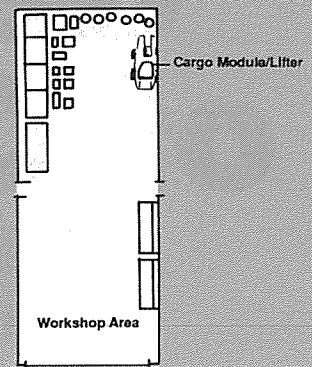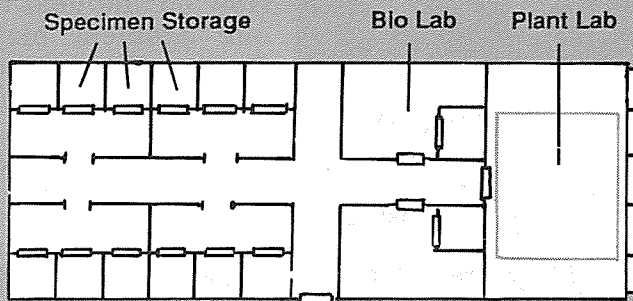
2300AD

makes a 1D10 encounter roll. On a 1-2, a special encounter occurs, and the referee should consult the table below. On a 3-10, roll again and consult the region's encounter pyramid.

If a copy of **Aurore Sourcebook** is not available, the referee should roll 1D10 every couple of hours of game time. On an even result, roll again and consult the Special Encounters Table.

Special Encounters

Roll	Encounter
1	Bugbus tracks
2-5	Kafer tracks
6-7	Lost Kafer
8	Abandoned Bugbus
9	Corpse
10	Earth tremor

Bugbus Tracks: The tracks of a Kafer Bugbus cross the PCs' path. These tracks are several days old and don't lead anywhere of importance. A routine tracking task roll is required to determine the nature of the tracks.

Kafer Tracks: Like the Bugbus tracks, these are just included to let the PCs know that there are Kafers running around here. A routine task roll by anyone with Tracking skill will determine that the tracks are several days old.

Lost Kafer: This Kafer got separated from its

group a couple days ago. It has been wandering around the area ever since. With its situation being relatively dangerous, its intelligence level and awareness are higher than normal, though not at their peak. It is equipped with a Thudgun with only one magazine. It also carries a combat knife and a Meathook (**Kafer Sourcebook**).

Abandoned Bugbus: The PCs stumble upon an empty Kafer Bugbus. It appears undamaged, though an access plate to the drive mechanism is open. Numerous parts are scattered around the grounds—some quite a distance from the Bugbus. The vehicle contains no loose weapons or equipment except some empty containers and a single Kafer flashlight laser rifle with a pair of spent energy cells. With the Aurore Kafers cut off from their supply ships, spare parts and ammunition are becoming increasingly harder for Kafers to come by.

Corpse: A human body is slumped over the trunk of a fallen tree. The clothing indicates a colonist—probably a hunter. Nearby are some expended shotgun shells. There are signs of laser burns in what is left of clothing and on a couple of tree trunks.

Earth Tremor: A mild quake shakes the ground for a few moments, and causes no direct damage or injury. It may, however, loosen a stone or two if the PCs are on a hillside.

STORM

As the PCs approach the hill on which the survey station is located, they may notice a rather sudden change in the sky above them. Characters who are native to Aurore or who have been on the world long enough will recognize that a storm is brewing. In the distant east, dark clouds form, and lightning can be seen. The storm will hit the PCs' location in an hour. When it does, it will begin with torrential rains and hail, then turn into a full-fledged lightning storm lasting for 2D6×10 minutes. After this time, the storm will abate, but it will continue to rain for several hours. During the storm, anyone in the open stands a chance of being struck by lightning.

If the PCs use binoculars or a Farseer, they may spot the Kafer advance group less than an hour behind—about 3000 meters or so.

SURVEY STATION

Atop a large hill, partially hidden behind shrubs and rows of trees, is the blocky form of manned survey station Theta-2. The station consists of a large main building, a small lab shack and a landing pad, all surrounded by a wire fence. The fence has three gates—two are personnel-sized, while the third is big enough to drive a large vehicle through. All the gates are locked. A task for picking

Get More out of Gaming with The Gamer!

The Gamer is the new, independent voice of adventure gaming. Independent means just that — we're not owned or operated by a game company, and we don't publish games on the side. That means coverage, commentary, and reviews you can trust.

The Gamer Features:

REVIEWS

From our Featured Reviews of the latest major game releases to Capsule Reviews of everything under the sun, you'll find out if something's worth buying before you've spent your hard-earned money!

INDUSTRY NEWS

New releases, old feuds, hirings, firings, and everything in between! Find out the behind-the-scenes truth about the game business in *The Gamer*!

GAMING TIPS

What can be done to make your gaming more fun? What are the common pitfalls that gaming groups can avoid? How do you deal with that one "problem" player? *The Gamer* will go light on new monsters and magic items and obscure rule variants, and instead concentrate on advice that will help all types of gamers.

REGULAR FEATURES

Famous game designers tell you about "My Favorite Game"; industry veteran Greg Costikyan takes you behind the scenes in "Roll Dem Bones"; the latest in books, movies, comics, and TV in "Media Mix", and more.

Subscribe Today!

THE GAMER
THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE OF ADVENTURE GAMING

Please enter my subscription for one year (six issues) of *The Gamer*. My payment of $_____ is enclosed.

U.S.: $15.00   **Canada/Mexico:** $25.00   **Overseas:** $40.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send a check or money order to: *The Gamer*, 127 N. Madison, Suite 202, Pasadena, CA 91101.

the locks is given below.

Inside the fence are three large dogs. They will probably be asleep inside the building when the PCs arrive. They can be befriended if the PCs gain their trust. If not, the dogs will be an annoying if not dangerous obstacle.

Outside the perimeter of the fence is a large water storage tower. An antenna tower is mounted atop the larger of the two buildings.

Task: To pick a simple mechanical lock. Formidable. Dexterity and Security Systems. 1 minute.

Referee: This task requires a locksmith kit or some similar improvised tools. A serious mishap results in jamming the lock so that it can not be picked at all.

MAIN BUILDING

To enter the main building, the PCs can try to pick the mechanical lock on one of the building's five outer doors or garage door, break a window, break down a door, pry open the access door on the roof, or enter through the doghouse. Picking a lock is probably the most difficult and time-consuming method. All other methods are simple and should not require a task roll. Entry through the doghouse or the roof access door are the simplest and least destructive, but the PCs won't be aware of these entrances without thorough investigation.

Once inside, the PCs should find the inoperative vidcom terminals, plus equipment to prepare themselves for the Kafer attack.

Doghouse

Inside this large, wooden doghouse is a hole leading under the wall of the main building and into the storage room in building module A. The dogs use this entrance to get to the autofeeder and to guard the building's interior.

Module A

Personal Storage: This room contains mostly personal storage and recreational equipment. The most noticeable item is a single Skyhopper jetpack. Also located here is a treadmill, a ping-pong table, a bow and several arrows.

Kitchen: This is a typical kitchen. It has no refrigerator because one is located in the food storage room across the hall.

Food Storage: This room is lined with shelves containing a variety of canned and dry foods. In one corner is a large refrigerator-freezer unit, well-stocked with enough meat and other perishable foods to feed a dozen people for a month.

General Storage: This room is used for general storage of cleaning equipment, folding chairs, a ladder, replacement hardware and a box of basic construction tools. In the outside corner of this room, a floor panel is

missing, and a small hole there leads to the dog house outside. Also here is a pad for the dogs to sleep on and an autofeeder which has two days supply of food remaining.

Mess/Rec Area: This is a large open room. At one end is a billiard table. Along one wall is a bookshelf surrounded by an arrangement of chairs, a large 2D video display for viewing pre-recorded videos, and another large bookshelf with more books and video recordings. In the corner is a standard vidcom unit mounted on a stand with a chair in front. Along the outer wall is a large bank of windows, with several tables and chairs. Above this section of the room is a large clear skylight.

Like the vidcom unit in the admin office in module B, the unit here is not functioning.

Module B

Located near the hall connecting module B to module A is a ceiling panel that opens onto the roof. From here, a person can use a ladder or climb up to the top of module C to get to the solar panel arrays or to the station's antenna tower.

Admin Office: This is a standard room, identical in layout to the double-occupancy quarters used by the station personnel, except for furnishings. Located here is an office desk and chair, bookshelf, filing cabinet and DeskComp. In the corner is a vidcom terminal hooked up to the microwave antenna on the roof. This station is networked directly into a central dispatch facility located in Tanstaafl city. Normally, help can be reached easily from here. Unfortunately, the unit does not seem to be working. Anyone familiar with vidcoms or anyone with Electronic 1 or higher can implement a self test on the unit. The test will reveal that the unit is working properly—the problem is with the antenna mounted atop module C.

A log book on the desk of this office describes problems with the vidcom system. Notes indicate that without a technician, the team couldn't determine the problem, so they decided to make a trip to the microwave relay station to call for assistance. One of the teammembers, Langley, volunteered to fly there with his own Skyhopper, but he was not permitted to do so because of limited fuel and the danger of travelling alone. Instead, the entire team made the journey in the ATV.

In another corner of this office is a locked closet containing three FC-70s, one Traylor Model 10 riot gun, two autoinjector guns, 50 autoinjector transmitter rounds, 100 riot gun rounds, 200 FC-70 rounds and 12 concealment grenades.

Personnel Quarters: These seven rooms are all essentially the same. Each contains two beds in a bunk-style arrangement, two dressers, and a clothes rack. In one corner of each room is a restroom shared by adjacent quarters.

Located in the personnel quarters are books, photos, letters, clothes, and odds and ends. In one of the rooms, the PCs will discover a necklace consisting of a cord with a pair of Kafer teeth hung on it. Next to this are two more teeth waiting to be drilled and fitted onto the necklace. In another room is a booklet called *Skyhopping*, which is basically instructions and introduction to the use of the Skyhopper jet pack located in the personal storage room in module A.

Module C

This area consists of one large open room which is taller than any other room in the station. The room is basically garage-like, with a large door in one end. This is not actually used to house vehicles except for a small cargo mule/lifter that sits near the opposite end from the garage door.

Workshop Area: This area contains work benches, parts and tools for maintenance of the station's Explorer ATV. Some of the tools include a basic toolkit, a full set of power hand tools, and vehicle maintenance and electronic repair tools.

Storage Area: Located here is a variety of survey equipment, all packed in rugged shipping containers. Items include a basecamp security sensor, three remote meteorological stations, two sampling kits, a couple of large lifeform detectors, portacomp, complete fuel station, lightweight automed, shotgun microphone with recorder/playback unit, imager and box of 50 recording chips, biomonitor, case of 24 boxes of six flares each, water purifier, two climbing kits, two sets of excavating tools, four medkits, and three hand communicators.

Behind the boxes of survey equipment is a large bank of storage batteries which contain enough charge to power the station at normal levels for one full night (15 hours). Next to this is the station's waste storage tank/processor. At the very back wall are several bottles of hydrogen fuel which are stored for use by the ATV and cargo mule.

Parked in front of this bank of fuel cannisters is a cargo mule/lifter, a variant of the cargo mule which includes a fork-lift arrangement for leading and moving heavy materials.

Antenna Tower: Located atop the building is a tower upon which the station's microwave antenna is located. The tower is a tall, thin cone with a set of rungs going up opposite sides. A removable panel located at the base of the tower provides access to its cramped interior. The interior of the tower contains sets of cables going up to the antenna and also down into the roof of module C. Transmission equipment sits up against a wall. A person with any electronics skill can determine that the unit is not functional. Locating the problem is a task, as is repairing the unit.

Task: To diagnose transmitter problem. Routine. Electronics. 2 minutes.
Referee: Electronics tools required.

Task: To repair the transmitter. Routine. Electronics. 2 minutes.
Referee: Electronic tools required. Mishap results in minor damage to transmitter that causes loss of sound or picture quality, static or some other noncritical damage.

Lab Shack
Specimen Storage: There are four rooms designed to house captured animal specimens. Each room is equipped with three storage lockers within which the live animals are kept and monitored. All are empty.

Bio Lab: There are two rooms equipped for the close examination of plant and animal specimens. Each contains a specimen locker, examination/operating table, lab desk with microscope, DeskComp, specimen jars, and tools for biological study. While neither room contains any live animals, there are various specimen parts in clear containers.

Plant Lab: This room is automatically environmentally controlled and contains rows of large, clear plastic boxes containing various forms of small plants.

GETTING HELP
Once the tower-mounted antenna is repaired, the PCs may call for help using one of the two vidcom units located inside the station. When they do, another X-wing will be dispatched from their base of operations to pick them up. At a maximum speed of 600 kph, the craft should arrive in about an hour and a half. A strike fighter may be available at the referee's discretion. It would take about 30 minutes to prepare and an hour to travel to the station.

By the time the group manages to call for help, the weather situation will be bad. The storm will probably have hit or will hit soon. Anyone working on the roof of the station will be in danger of being struck by lightning.

By now, the Kafers will have reached the base of the hill and should arrive at the station in less than an hour. The PCs may abandon the station and hope that the Kafers don't track them, or they may make a stand and use the available equipment to fend off a Kafer attack. There are three problems with running—there is nowhere to run to, the X-wing will need to locate the group and the weather is worsening. If the PCs decide to make a stand, they'll need to make defense preparations. They may consider sending someone out to harass and slow the Kafer advance or try to channel the Kafers into defense zones.

KAFER ATTACK
The Kafers are experienced and smart. They will use fire and maneuver tactics, and will set up diversionary attacks. They are also bold and unafraid of making a frontal assault should it become necessary. The Kafers will make as much use as possible of the storm, which will reduce visibility and allow them to get close to the survey station. This is only to their advantage as they don't want to waste their limited ammunition. They'll try to get close enough to make a grenade attack on the wall and then assault hand-to-hand and with melee weapons.

Some time during the Kafer attack, the X-wing (and possibly the strike fighter) should arrive. When the craft is within a few minutes of the survey station, the PCs will be able to talk with the pilot by standard hand communicator. The X-wing should arrive with guns blazing—the door gunners laying down plasma gun fire on the Kafer positions. This won't eliminate the Kafers but should keep their heads down long enough for the X-wing to pick up the PCs.

TROUBLESHOOTERS
The troubleshooters are being paid by Freeman Corporation as field agents. The corporation, in turn, is paid by the Tanstaafl government to collect and analyze various forms of survey data on Aurore. The corporation operates dozens of survey stations across the southern continent, and maintains two survey satellites and one surveillance satellite. Prior to the Kafer invasion, Freeman also had two navigation satellites, but they were destroyed by Kafer warships and are scheduled to be replaced.

Troubleshooters commonly operate with marine units in and around Tanstaafl. While they are civilians, they officially possess assumed ranks equal to commissioned officers. This means they can technically give orders to any member of the marine fireteam, but the fireteam members won't get into a whole lot of trouble if they don't listen.

The bulk of the troubleshooters' equipment is located back at the base. However, each troubleshooter may have whatever he can carry on his person or in a backpack.

MARINE INFANTRY TEAM
The American Marine characters have only their standard gear, plus whatever personal items they might carry in their pockets. An occasional nonstandard issue item may also be allowed at the discretion of the referee.

Equipment includes: three sets of inertial armor, one Quinn-Darlan Mk 2-A2 PGMP and bandoleer with 20 rounds, two M-5 rifles with four clips each, six 30mm concealment grenades, six 30mm fragmentation grenades, one Traylor M-57 pistol with two magazines (used by the plasma gunner), three helmets with built-in communicators (equivalent of hand communicators), one inertial compass.

KAFERS
The Kafers are divided into three main groups. The main tactic of this three-part force is for the leader to assign a target to his groups—in this case, the PCs. The first group harasses and engages the target; the second group closes in to finish the job; and the third group provides the artillery, should the first two groups be ineffective. The Kafers will fight because it is in their nature and because their leader is determined. The Kafers understand psychological warfare and will bring along bodies or heads of any killed members of the PCs' group. They will probably try to force the PCs' hand by whatever means they can. They will also use the bodies of their own dead as decoys, cover or whatever else they can think of.

All Kafers carry a standard Kafer knife and food sack, and wear a combat harness, usually decorated with a couple of human ears. Most also carry a meathook, and one or more human-made souvenirs. All concealment grenades are human-made, acquired during raids.

Kafer Group 1: The lead group is a team of three Kafers operating as snipers and skirmishers. They are lightly equipped and are among the smartest of the Kafer force. They will attempt to move quickly, tracking the PC group and trying to eliminate them before the second Kafer group arrives.

Leader/Tracker: Thudgun with three clips, two propelled frag grenades, two concealment grenades, one horse pistol with two clips.

Two Snipers: I/R goggles, flashlight laser rifle with three clips, one concealment grenade.

Kafer Group 2: A Kafer leader and 12 soldiers, most armed with ammoless thudguns they use as clubs. This group is made up of the slowest-witted Kafers. The Kafer leader does his best to keep driving this group no more than 20 minutes behind the sniper/skirmisher team.

Leader: Scepter, Horse pistol with two clips, I/R goggles.

Two Riflemen: Thudgun with two clips, one concealment grenade.

Nine Melee: Thudgun with no ammo.

One Close Assault: Modified-stock Traylor model 10 with three clips.

Kafer Group 3: Twelve Kafers plus a leader. They are well equipped and relatively smart. They travel roughly an hour behind the other groups.

Leader: Scepter, Horse pistol with five clips, I/R goggles.

One Antivehicle: Kafer antivehicle missile launcher with two rounds, Thudgun with two clips.

Two Ammo Carriers: Two antivehicle missiles, Thudgun with two clips.

One Sniper: Flashlight laser with three clips.

Two Grenadiers: Thudgun with three clips, two propelled fragmentation grenades.

Six Riflemen: Thudgun with five clips, one concealment grenade. Ω

CONDUIT 2, May 15-17 at the Quality Inn in Salt Lake City, UT. Write to Conduit 2, c/o Dave Powell, 2566 Blaine Ave., SLC, UT 84108-3359.

GAMEX '92, May 22-25 at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel. Contact Strategicon, PO Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808.

GAMESCAUCUS II '92, May 22-25 at the Oakland Airport Hilton in Oakland, CA. Contact TriGaming Associates, PO Box 4867, Walnut Creek, CA 94596-0867.

LAGACON 14, June 6 at the Fraternal Order of Eagles, 116 N. 8th St., Lebanon, PA. Contact the Lebanon Area Gamers Assn., 806 Cumberland St., Lebanon, PA 17042.

TANELORN OPEN GAMING TITLES, June 6-8 at the Robertson Gardens Convention Centre, 281 Kessels Road, Robertson, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. Contact Club Tanelorn, GPO Box 2148, Brisbane Qld 4001, Australia.

MICHICON GAMEFEST '92, June 19-21 at Southfield Pavilion in Southfield, MI. Write to MichiCon Gamefest '92, PO Box 656, Wyandotte, MI 48192.

ORGANIZED KAHN-FUSION IV, June 20-21 at the Embers in Carlisle, PA. Contact M. Fonier's Games Only Emporium, 200 Third St., New Cumberland, PA 17070.

LEGACY '92, June 26-28 at the Comfort Inn Convention Center in Arlington, TX (between Dallas and Ft. Worth). For details, write to Legacy '92, 1604 Canfield, #1107, Ft. Worth, TX 76120.

CAPITAL CON VIII, June 27-28 at the Prairie Capital Convention Center in Springfield, IL. Write to Capital Con VIII, c/o Tom Lawrence, 2557 Somerton Road, Springfield, IL 62702.

KINGCON '92, July 3-5 at the University of Dayton in Dayton, OH. Write to KingDon '92, PO Box 31174, Dayton, OH 45431.

MEMPHIS FANTASY CON '92, July 17-19 at the downtown Radisson Hotel. Write to Memphis Fantasy Con, 4730 Poplar #2, Memphis, TN 38117.

DRAGON CON '92, July 17-19 at the Atlanta Hilton and Towers, Atlanta, GA. Send a SASE to Dragon Con '92, Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696.

GATEWAY 12, September 4-7 at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel. Contact Strategicon, PO Box 3849, Torrance, CA 90510-3849.

OPERATION GREEN FLAG: BATTLE-TECH, September 12-13 at the Embers in Carlisle, PA. Contact M. Fonier's Games Only Emporium, 200 Third St., New Cumberland, PA 17070.

CON OF THE WEIRD AND SUPERNATURAL (COWS '92), October 31-Nobemver 1 at the Embers in Carlisle, PA. Contact M. Fonier's Games Only Emporium, 200 Third St., New Cumberland, PA 17070.

LAGACON 15, November 7-8, at the Fraternal Order of Eagles, 116 N. 8th St., Lebanon, PA. Contact the Lebanon Area Gamers Association, 806 Cumberland St., Lebanon, PA 17042.

Announcements should be sent in a minimum of four months *before a convention takes place.* **Challenge** *is not responsible for errors in convention announcements. Write to* **Challenge** *Conventions, Managing Editor, PO Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646 USA.*

Vampirism is a curse. Make no mistake. I became a night creature six years ago, and have been hating myself ever since. I wish I could die, but I guess that's impossible for the undead.
Klayton Brosner, vampire

Humans become vampires by contracting the Human-Metahuman Vampiric Virus (HMHVV), usually as a result of a vampire's bite. Those who possess the virus which causes vampirism usually *transform from seemingly ordinary humans into vampires sometime after puberty. As a result, most such cases are quickly discovered.*

Awakened Vampires: So-called awakened vampires are usually taken to special research centers where the genetic defects are researched. Life in such centers is understandably horrible. The vampires cannot feed on each other (since their bodies contain no "living" blood). They are fed from bottles of synthetic blood which does nothing but keep them alive for further experimentation. The centers resemble armored prisons, since letting the vampires escape would mean certain death to countless innocents as the vampires assuaged their need to feed.

Created Vampires: Vampires can be created if the parental vampire offers blood from its neck to its victim. The victim must bite the vampire's neck and drink the fresh blood (which only minutes before was the victim's own blood). Then the vampire must cast the spell Create Vampire. Some researchers believe this spell actually passes the HMHVV virus to the victim, but the presence of vampires before the known existence of the virus leaves room for doubt. If the vampire casts Create Vampire and the victim drinks from the vampire's neck, the victim will rise the next night as a fully sentient vampire.

If the victim dies without this process taking place, it will rise as a mindless follower of the parental vampire. The follower will have no Will or Essence, and will follow whatever commands the vampire gives.

Creation of an independent vampire allows the new vampire to continue to use skills it knew before the transition, whereas creation of a follower does not. However, an independent vampire is just that: It is not under control of the the parent vampire, nor is the new vampire bound in any way to the parent. Most new vampires stay with their masters for some time, however, if only to learn the ways of the vampire.

URGE TO FEED

For a vampire, there is no stronger motivation than to feed on the blood of living creatures, especially humans. A hungry vampire is a most dangerous enemy, and a vampire kept close to starvation is unpredictable and vicious. Recent research into mass murders involving mutilations of corpses now indicates that more than a few of these involved carriers of the HMHVV virus on a rampage.

Vampires feed on the Essence of living creatures. Everything living has an Essence, and vampires transfer the Essence to their own bodies by drinking the blood of their victims. Draining a victim of its entire Essence (and blood) kills the victim. Draining some of a victim's Essence (and a portion of its blood) cause weakness and exhaustion. (For example, if a vampire attacks a victim with Essence: 5, but only drinks 2 points worth, the victim has suffered a 40% blood loss.)

Drinking the Essence of a victim does not automatically increase the vampire's Essence. Instead, there are specific times when a vampire may increase its own Essence. Drinking of Essence by a vampire does, however, have certain immediate effects. A vampire's body is usually cold and pale, but after feeding, the warmth of the blood is transferred to the vampire's body, warming the skin and giving it a fresh, pink hue. During these times, vampires look almost human (or metahuman).

Failure to Feed Regularly: A vampire must consume blood equal to its Essence every week in order to remain fully fed. Failure to consume this amount of blood will result in the vampire's weakening. For each consecutive week the vampire fails to feed properly, it loses 1 point of IQ. When a vampire's IQ falls to 0, the vampire goes into a blood frenzy, and kills and feeds on anything it can find until it has consumed triple its Essence. After that, it must rest for at least one day-night cycle before its IQ is fully restored.

INCREASING VAMPIRES' ESSENCE

Vampires can increase their Essence. If a vampire completes an entire decade (520 weeks in a row) without failing to feed fully each week, it gains 1D6 points of Essence and an additional

vampiric ability. Any break in the decade forces the vampire to start over.

Effects of Cybernetics on Essence: Cybernetics reduce a character's Essence. This reduction applies to vampirism as well. A character with an Essence reduced to 2 because of the amount of cyber implants in its body will provide only 2 Essence points to a vampire. Thus, many vampires avoid attacking characters with obvious cybernetic parts.

Added Abilities with Essence Increase: Every time a vampire increases its Essence, it also gains one vampiric ability. Which ability it gains can be the choice of the player or the referee.

INNATE ABILITIES

The following abilities are common to all carriers of the HMHVV virus. They manifest themselves automatically within one week of the virus becoming active in the vampire's body.

Detect Life: This ability functions like the standard spell (*Shadowrun*, page 93), except it does *not* require casting and does *not* drain the vampire of Magic points.

Essence Drain: This ability allows the vampire to receive Essence from the victim as a result of drinking the victim's blood. Nonvampires who drink someone's blood receive normal nourishment from the blood but do not drain the victim of Essence.

Immunity: Because they are not living creatures, vampires are not susceptible to diseases, age or pathogens. In addition, they cannot be asphyxiated since they no longer rely on air to breathe.

Move Silently: The ability to move without making a sound includes muffling the crunching of leaves or gravel underfoot, inadvertent squeaks of one's shoes, etc. It also includes footfalls and the "thump" which accompanies a jump from a wall or roof.

Sense Strong Essence: Vampires are able to sense and determine the level of Essence equal to or greater than 7. This ability functions at a range equal to the sum of the vampire's Essence and the target's Essence times 100 meters. Thus, a vampire with Essence: 11 could sense a person with Essence: 8 when they are within 1900 meters (1.9 kilometers).
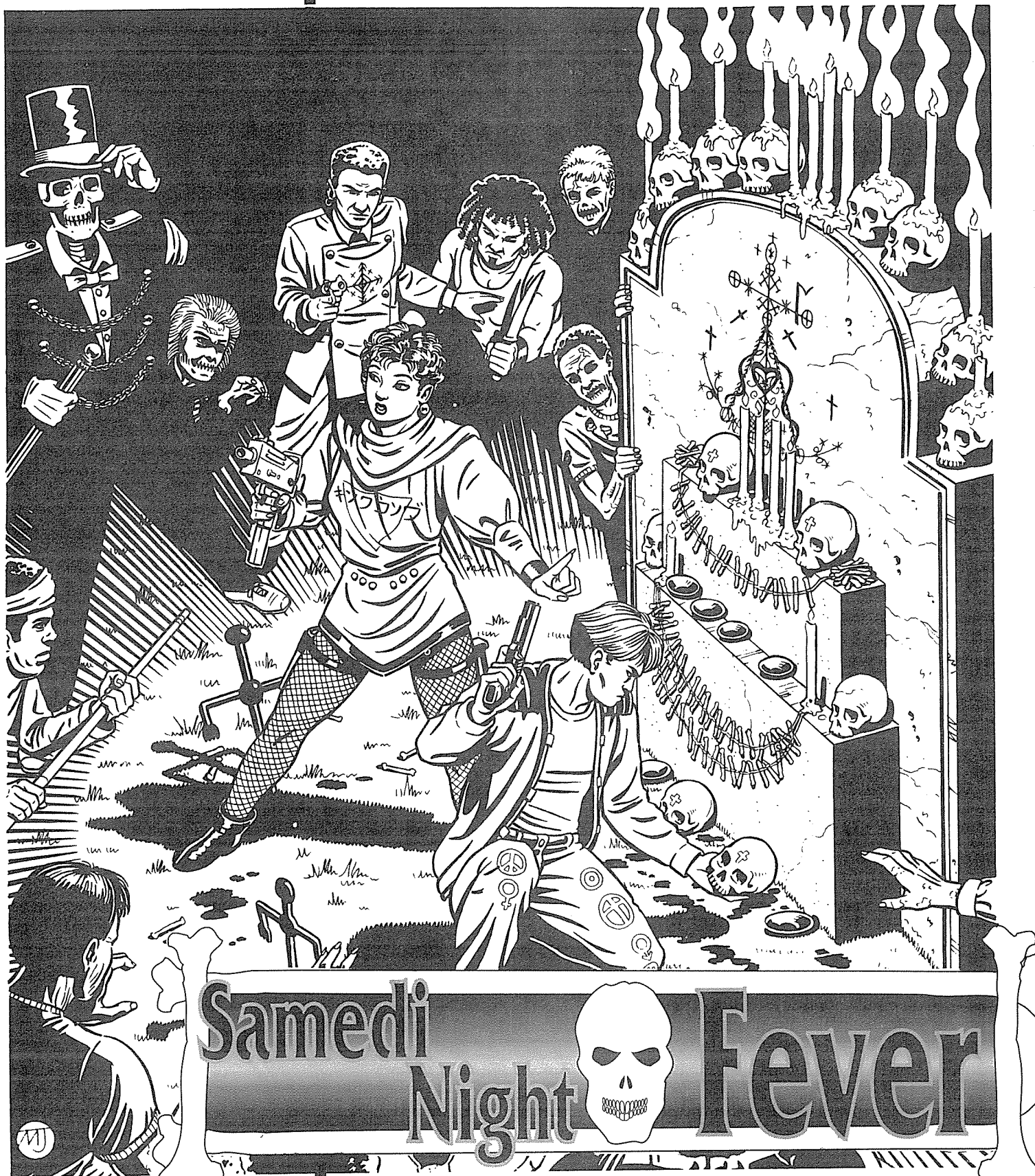
MAGICAL ABILITIES

Vampires can acquire any of the following magical abilities whenever they increase their Essence. This is in addition to any magical abilities they acquire through shamanism or magical research.

Samedi Night Fever

By David Schuey

The adventure begins when the PCs notice a clipping in a national tabloid concerning the Voodoo Warriors. If any PCs are reporters, they will be assigned to investigate the story.

The area in question is North St. Louis County, near the airport and the McDonnell-Sukhoi Corporate Enclave. The Voodoo Warriors' territory is a dark,

foreboding place, littered with totems and voodoo graffiti. The PCs will have no trouble getting there, but once they arrive, they will stick out like a sore thumb.

The PCs will encounter a number of gang outposts. Referees should set the experience level of these gang members as is appropriate to the abilities of the PC party. Weapons should be clubs, knives, bows and arrows, and small pistols, at most. The gang members will act neutral toward the PCs at first, but will soon become either friendly or confrontational, depending on the PCs' skills in setting them at ease.

It requires an Average test of Charisma to earn enough of the gang members' trust and respect for them to divulge their history.

If the PCs cannot befriend the gang members, the youths will try to take the PCs' firearms and any vehicles they have. If the PCs try to stand in their way, the gang will become violent and engage in Melee Combat (Armed). When they have lost 50% of their original number, the youths will break and run. At least one gang member will escape to tell the tale to Rickee Dokunda, the leader.

If the PCs succeed at the task, the youths will have little to say about raising the dead, but they will explain the history of the gang, from its roots in Haiti, as they know it.

The Voodoo Warriors came into existence when a group of Haitian refugees migrated up from Florida to Missouri. They were only seeking a quiet place to live and were eventually overrun by a younger, more violent gang. The two melded, the younger Haitians seeing this as the only method of survival and the gang members enticed by the voodoo religion of the new recruits. Along the way, the gang changed its name from the Death Warriors to the Voodoo Warriors. Dokunda is of the first generation of the mixing of the two gangs. He ascended to power early through charisma and a mysterious connection with Baron Samedi.

AMBUSH

When Dokunda hears of the PCs' arrival, he will set up an ambush at the cemetery. He knows the PCs will go there eventually looking for him. Everyone does.

The cemetery has long been abandoned. It is full of rolling hills but has been cut in two by a now unused stretch of highway. The grass in the cemetery is dead, the trees almost so. A thick hedgerow lines the east side, a tangle of thorns and dead bushes. The entire area seems to be suffering from some kind of wilting disease.

On a high hill on the south side of the property is a ramshackle house, obviously unused since before the turn of the century. It is painted a faded, sickly green, and its doors are literally falling off their hinges.

Most of the tombstones are broken or overturned. One headstone should draw the PCs' attention. It is very ornate and is still intact. And it has been decorated by wreaths of chicken bones and human skulls. Lit candles rest on its many levels.

Nothing will happen if the PCs just wander around the grounds. If they enter the house, the gang will try to burn it down with the investigators inside.

If the PCs come within 50 meters of the ornate headstone, 1D6×6 members of the gang will quietly rise from covered and camouflaged burrows. One-fourth of them will be armed with primitive firearms, one-fourth with blowguns (each tipped with a small coating of the microorganism that creates yellow zombies), and one-half with assorted melee weapons. Dokunda will be behind the ornate headstone and will direct fire from there through hand signals. If the battle seems to be going badly, 1D10 yellow zombies will appear from the hedgerow to the east. The PCs must check for infection by the zombies and the blowguns.

If Dokunda is killed or wounded during the battle, or if the gang members seem to be losing ground, Baron Samedi will suddenly appear in front of the headstone. He will laugh loudly and savor the anguish of his servants. He will say nothing to the PCs, but will point and laugh at them. If anyone tries to shoot him, he will use Dissolution to take half damage from the bullets and in the next phase will use Dimension Walk to escape, laughing all the while.

After their encounter with Baron Samedi, the gang members will disperse, except Dokunda, who will fight to the death.

Gang Claims to Raise Dead

ST. LOUIS—Rumor has it that a St. Louis gang can bring the dead back to life.

Rickee Dokunda, leader of the Voodoo Warriors, would neither confirm nor deny the rumor that the gang has learned the secret of raising the dead. The gang claims to worship the voodoo god of the graveyard, Baron Samedi. And Dokunda did attest that "the baron reveals many mysteries to those who serve him well."

"He appeared to us and told us that we were his chosen ones in the new age," Dokunda said. "We are honored to have been selected."

When asked to quantify how many people had been brought to life, Dokunda replied, "Numbers are not important."

Dokunda dresses with uncharacteristic style for a ganger. "We pride ourselves on our appearance," he explained. "An ancient order like ours should do no less."

One of the oldest cemeteries in the city lies in the gang's territory. Perhaps that's why Samedi has bestowed his favor on the group.

RESOLUTION

Everyone who saw Samedi will experience dreams for the next several weeks concerning the death of a loved one. The loved one will almost invariably come to life at an opportune moment and make a grab for the PC. Some dreams will deal with deaths of friends and family in the future, always ending the same way.

Anyone infected with the yellow zombie bacteria will experience hallucinations and waking dreams, according to the effects detailed in **Dark Conspiracy**.

RICKEE DOKUNDA

Strength: 5	**Education:** 3	**Move:** */*/*/*
Constitution: 6	**Charisma:** 8	**Skill/Dam:** */*
Agility: 6	**Empathy:** 4	**Hits:** 12/33/22
Intelligence: 6	**Initiative:** 4	**# Appear:** 1

Special: Skills as per ganger NPC, but +2 to each.

Samedi appeared to Dokunda some time ago and proclaimed him a chosen disciple. Dokunda shared this news with the rest of the gang, and someone leaked it to the press. Samedi has since appeared to Dokunda on a number of occasions, giving him orders to increase his territory and meld with other gangs. Gang members who do not go along with the acquisitions simply disappear. Dokunda is now quite insane and will remain faithful to the end.

BARON SAMEDI

Strength: 8	**Education:** 5	**Move:** 3/9/16/32
Constitution: 7	**Charisma:** 8	**Skill/Dam:** 8/2D6
Agility: 5	**Empathy:** 12	**Hits:** 35/60
Intelligence: 8	**Initiative:** 6	**# Appear:** 1

Special: Has Dissolution and Dimension Walk at full Empathy value.

Baron Samedi's proto-dimension is a hideous one to behold. If any PCs should manage to dimension walk to it, they will certainly die if they cannot escape immediately.

All water in the proto-dimension is contaminated by the yellow zombie microorganism and is undrinkable. The world has the look of having been a technologically advanced civilization at one time, with skyscrapers and highways, but has obviously been in ruins for many years. From every building and alley can be heard the moaning and hideous noises of all forms of undead. Most are yellow zombies, beings who have been kidnapped from Earth and other proto-dimensions by Baron Samedi's disciples.

Samedi literally feeds off the suffering and despair of the people of this world, so he travels far and wide, initiating new cults to supply him with energy. He is cunning, but is a slave to his appetites.

His plan for the Voodoo Warriors is subtle and unreservedly evil. By controlling the Voodoo Warriors and helping them to take over other rival gangs, Samedi seeks to control the world's distribution of illegal drugs. When this goal has been reached, he will introduce a "new" drug, one which causes a tingling sensation in the extremities, hallucinations, and ultimately, waking nightmares and death. The drug is, of course, a slow-acting version of the yellow zombie microorganism. Samedi hopes to distribute the new drug to millions of people simultaneously, and he relies on humans' distrust of one another to ensure its unhindered use.

For the time being, the gang has orders to send any reluctant recruits to the proto-dimension, where they are thrown into a huge pool teeming with rotting corpses and a high concentration of the Yellow Zombie microorganism. Ω

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY.
WE CAN REBUILD YOU.

TM

CYBER SPACE

Cyberspace™ rules — a complete role playing game!

Set in the corrupt, dirty, high-tech Earth of 2090 AD; where Megacorporation repression collides with Sprawl street warfare, *Cyberspace* is ICE's most hard-edged role playing game system. From depraved polluted cities to the surreal beauty of Earth's global computer matrix, muscle-grafted Punks and jacked-in Netheads crawl out of the gutters to scrap Media Stars and Cybernetic Mercenaries - a conflict beyond Good and Evil. This 208 page book contains a world environment rules system, combat rules, and all you need to create a varied cast of characters. Player development systems create extensive cybernetic enhancements, computer implants, and all the personal 'improvements' a character could want. An in-depth history and world description brings the game to full degenerate life, and an adventure completes your introduction to the high-tech world of *Cyberspace*.
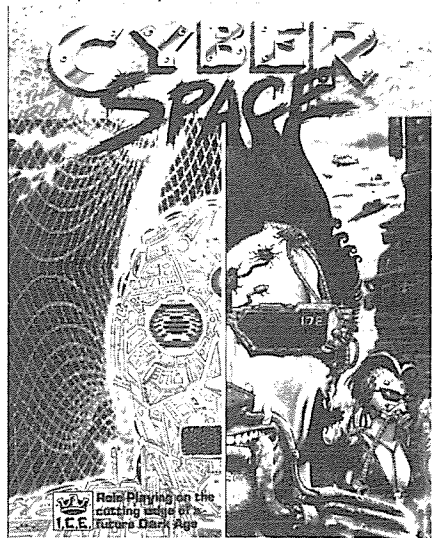
Coming soon — Chicago Arcology™ sourcebook!

In 2090, the third largest Sprawlzone in the United States — the Midwestern Sprawl — is centered on the urban monolith of Chicago. At the heart of this depraved labyrinth of crime and decay rises an enduring temple to Megacorporate power: "New Edison's Chicago Arcology." This corporate haven forms a completely self-contained environment for Chicago's New Edison employees and their families. With offices, living quarters, service departments, diplomatic embassies and a huge mall complex, the Arcology's inhabitants are in want of nothing. Of course, the street gangs and urban homeless who crowd the gutter districts around the Arcology are in a completely different state, and that rich-poor juxtaposition breeds enmity and contempt: enough to send this Sprawlzone's residents into violent fits of rampaging and destruction — just what every *Cyberspace* adventurer needs!
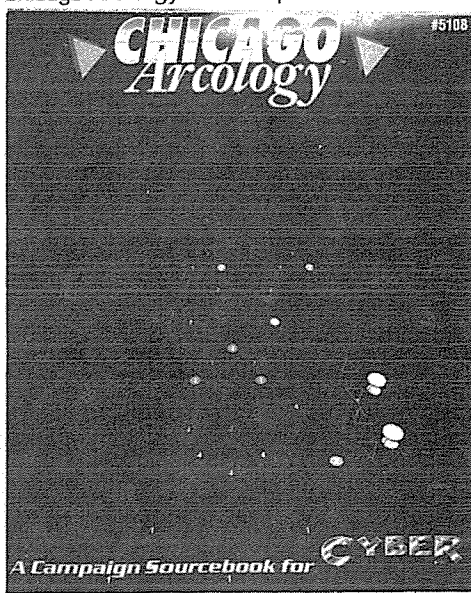
"Direct Neural Interface... DNI; this popular System creates an accessway into the brain... linked to an external jack set-up in the skull... allows wearer to use computers, "smart" machinery and vehicles, "smart" program modules, N-ROM modules or broadcasts, and DNI-2."
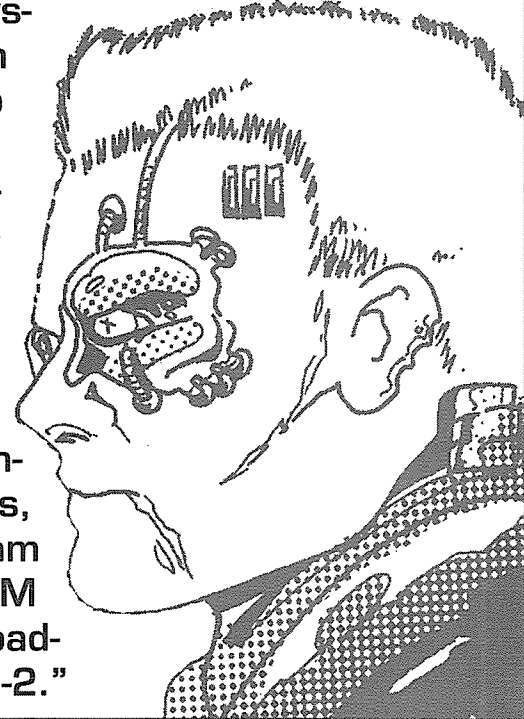
More Cyberspace™ enhancements!

#5101	*Sprawlgangs & Megacorps™* sourcebook	$12.00	£7.50
#5102	*Edge-on™* adventure supplement	$9.00	£6.00
#5103	*CyberRogues™* accessory	$10.00	£6.50
#5104	*The Body Bank™* accessory	$10.00	£6.50
#5105	*Death Valley Free Prison™* campaign	$16.00	£10.00
#5106	*Death Game 2090™* adventure supplement	$9.00	£6.00
#5107	*Cyberskelter™* adventure supplement	$10.00	£6.50

ICE
PO Box 1605
Charlottesville, VA 22902 USA
Write for a Free Catalog!

LOOKING FOR PLAYERS?

Are you tired of spending half your precious gaming time looking for opponents? **HELP** has finally arrived! Whether you play board wargames, role playing games, miniatures, science fiction, or sports games, **GAMER'S LOCATION SERVICE** will find opponents who live near you anywhere in the U.S. or Canada.

GAMER'S LOCATION SERVICE will send you a list every year of all the gamers in your area, as well as a list of PBM opponents if you like. We do the player hunting, while you play your favorite games.

FOR A FIVE-YEAR MEMBERSHIP, YOU'LL
* Become a member of a nationwide database of players so that opponents will find you!
* Receive an annual list of the opponents near you, so you'll be able to play your favorite games anytime!
* Locate opponents by favorite game, preference, AREA rating, and more.
* Have your favorite games or your address updated anytime! When you have to move, walk into your new town with the names of local players in your hands!

You might think you have all the opponents you need. But just remember how many times you've had to play a game you really didn't enjoy because nobody wanted to play your favorite game. All of these benefits will provide you with countless hours of gaming enjoyment, all for only $25. Since this is a five-year membership price, that's just $5 a year! I bet you didn't know there is another gamer in your neighborhood. Now you'll find him!

To become a member, send check (in U.S. Funds only) and application below to:

GAMER'S LOCATION SERVICE
P.O. Box 175
Fayetteville, Georgia 30214

Call (404) 460-6515 for further information

STOP HUNTING AND START PLAYING TODAY!

Application

A 2

NAME _____   Do you play by mail? ____

Address _____ City_____

State & Zip _____ Phone # (   ) _____

Three favorite games in order of preference
(Include game manufacturer)   Do you primarily play (Please check one)

(1) _____   wargames   ❑

(2) _____   miniatures   ❑

(3) _____   role playing   ❑

(Miniature players list time periods)   science fiction ❑

                                                  sports games   ❑

Will you play games not listed in top three above? _____   AREA Rating _____

Control Animals (Manipulation): *Drain:* Various *Type:* Mana *Duration:* Sustained *Special Effects:* The vampire can touch the mind of any animals in range and issue them commands appropriate to the level of their intelligence. Dogs, for instance, will respond to "sit" or "attack," but not to "see if anyone's over there." Vampires may control any animal they can see. (Note that fog severely reduces sight, but if the vampire uses thermographic vision, this range can be extended.) The drain is dependent on the size and number of the animals to be controlled—controlling animals which together are less than half the vampire's size is Drain L2. Controlling any number of animals which approximate the vampire's size is Drain M2. Controlling any number of animals which together are larger or heavier than the vampire is Drain S3.

Control Mists (Manipulation): *Drain:* L1 *Type:* Mana *Duration:* Sustained *Special Effects:* This spell allows the vampire to control the movement and intensity of a mist or fog. It does not allow the vampire to create a fog, but any fog can be controlled, including those which are machine-generated.

Control Shadow/Darkness (Illusion): *Drain:* L2 *Type:* Mana *Duration:* Sustained *Special Effects:* This spell allows the vampire to control the path of a shadow. By casting this spell, the vampire makes night seem darker and shadows more able to conceal the vampire's presence. The vampire can also control the shape of its own shadow by using this spell, but this requires an additional casting.

Control Thoughts (Manipulation): Functions like the standard spell (see *Shadowrun*, page 97).

Create Vampire (Special): *Drain:* D4 *Type:* Physical *Duration:* Instant *Special Effects:* This spell allows the passing of Essence from the vampire to a victim, thus transforming the victim into a vampire. It must be cast by the vampire at the moment his blood touches the lips of his victim.

Increase Attribute (Health): *Drain:* Various *Type:* Mana *Duration:* Sustained *Special Effects:* Functions like the standard spells (see *Shadowrun*, page 95).

Sleep (Combat): Functions like the standard spell (see *Shadowrun*, page 92).

Infection (Health): *Drain:* Various *Type:* Mana *Duration:* Various *Special Effects:* Functions like the opposite of Antidote Toxin spell (see *Shadowrun* page 94). The target must be touched for the spell to take effect. A vampire may not cause infections which are stronger than its Essence +10. Thus, a vampire with Essence: 15 could cause an infection of 1D6 damage.

Thermographic Vision (Special): This ability comes to vampires without the need for cyberware. (See page 126 of *Shadowrun*.)

Invisibility (Illusion): Functions like the standard spell (see *Shadowrun*, page 95).

Mesmerize (Illusion): *Drain:* M2 *Type:* Mana *Duration:* Sustained *Special Effects:* The vampire can mesmerize one individual at a time, causing the victim to become solely preoccupied with the vampire. The effect of the spell resembles a strong hypnotic trance. The victim will stare blindly at the vampire while under the effects of the spell and will obey most commands, such as "come here" or "sit down." Commands of obvious immediate harm to the victim require a success test (Willpower: Difficult). Success allows the victim to break out of the trance.

Pass Without Trace (Manipulation): *Drain:* L1 *Type:* Physical *Duration:* Sustained *Special Effects:* This spell allows the vampire to pass through underbrush, snow, dirt, grease, etc., and leave no trace. Actually, any trail the vampire would normally leave disappears as it is made, which is why this is a manipulation spell. While the spell only lasts for a limited time, its effects on the terrain through which the vampire passes are permanent (i.e., the trail won't suddenly reappear later).

Regeneration (Health): *Drain:* D4 *Type:* Mana *Duration:* Permanent *Special Effects:* This spell allows the vampire to regrow a damaged or severed part of its body. It will not affect other body parts. Regeneration requires one hour per point of damage sustained to the body part (e.g., if a 15-pint hit severed an arm, regrowing the arm would require 15 hours).

Shapechange: Bat (Transform Manipulation): *Drain:* S2 *Type:* Physical *Duration:* Sustained *Special Effects:* The vampire transforms its body into that of a vampire bat. In bat form, it has all the abilities of a real bat, including flying and vision by radar. Changing from the vampire's form to bat and back again requires one combat round. A vampire can remain in bat form for a number of hours equal to its Essence.

Shapechange: Mist Form (Transform Manipulation): *Drain:* S3 *Type:* Physical *Duration:* Sustained *Special Effects:* The vampire transforms his body into a mist of approximately the same size and shape as its normal body. In mist form, the vampire is in possession of all skills and abilities which it possesses in its normal form. Changing from the vampire's natural form to mist and back again requires one combat round. A vampire can remain in mist form for a number of minutes equal to its Essence, beyond which time the vampire begins to lose connection with the physical world. If the vampire remains in mist form longer than double its Essence, it loses touch with the physical world completely. It must then wander the Astral Planes as a wandering creature, and the player surrenders the character sheet to the referee.

Shapechange: Wolf (Transform Manipulation): *Drain:* S2 *Type:* Physical *Duration:* Sustained *Special Effects:* The vampire transforms its body into that of a large wolf. In wolf form, it has all the abilities of a real wolf, including communicating with other wolves, and heightened smell and hearing. Changing from the vampire's natural form to wolf and back again requires one combat round. A vampire can remain in wolf form for a number of hours equal to its Essence.

Shapechange: Other (Transform Manipulation): *Drain:* Various *Type:* Physical *Duration:* Sustained *Special Effects:* Vampires may be able to shapechange into other animal forms at the referee's discretion. Ω
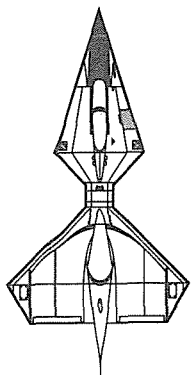
HOT METAL RAIN

The government
and Adrek Corporation
thought they were prepared
for all possible contingencies.

They were wrong.

By Michael C. LaBossiere

fter an Adrek Corporation combat cyberform went on a rogue killing spree in Boston, US government officials realized two important things. First, they realized that experimentation with things as dangerous as combat cyberforms could not be permitted to continue unsupervised. Second, they realized that combat cyberforms have enormous military potential that must be exploited by the United States before other nations. The US government gave Adrek a choice: It could cease all cyberform experimentation, or it could continue under careful government supervision. Adrek took the second option.

The government provided an abandoned military center, which Adrek refurbished and equipped with an AI. Within a year, the laboratory produced the first Model 400E.

At the same time, Adrek also provided the government with what would be needed if another cyberform went rogue. The Myrmidon combat walkers rolled off the assembly line a few months before the first M-400E.

The government and Adrek thought they were prepared. They were wrong. Instead of a single cyberform going rogue, the base AI somehow slipped free of its safeguards and liberated the M-400Es. The laboratory personnel quickly fell before the mechanical onslaught, but not before sending out an emergency code ("Golem") that warned of a cyberform gone rogue. Unfortunately, no code was prepared to warn of the base AI and all the combat cyberforms going rogue. The first response team was walking into a nightmare of raining metal.

BRIEFING

Prior to the adventure, the PCs become involved with an Adrek or government response team. They will receive training, pay and equipment for joining a team in return for being on call, "should certain contingencies arise." Solos, Police, Techie, Nomad and Corporate characters can easily be part of either team. The exact details of the training, pay and so forth, are left to the referee. After the Golem code is sent, the PCs will be alerted and gathered to the grouping point. They will be given the following mission: "Code Golem has been received from the center. This indicates that one or more M-400Es have gone rogue. Contact has been lost with the center, so the mission is to recon the area and determine the situation."

Response Teams: There are two main response teams: the Adrek team and the government team. Both of these teams will have access to maps and rough data on the M-400E (armament, general armor lev-

els, speed and so forth). The recon teams will be sent in first, followed by the control teams. The Adrek backup team will be ready right away, but the government Myrmidon team will take a few extra hours to get ready and be transported in (it was on a training exercise).

Equipment: The recon helicopters are standard transport helicopters with a crew of two and room for four passengers. The control team AV-4s are armed with M-134 miniguns (one each, in a chin turret). The combat walker team is equipped with a heavy transport helicopter (SP=30 SDP=300) and four Myrmidon combat walkers.

Team designations, personnel and equipment are as follows:

Adrek Team One: Recon. Two helicopters carrying four people each.

Adrek Team Two: Control. Two AV-4s carrying eight people each.

Adrek Team Three: Backup. Two helicopters carrying four people each.

Government Owl Team: Recon. One AV-4 carrying six people.

Government Hawk Team: Control. Two AV-4s carrying six people each.

Government Myrmidon Team: Combat walker. One heavy transport helicopter carrying four combat walkers and a 16-person support team.

Typical Recon Team Member (Solo)

Recon team members are drawn from special forces branches. Their job is to get in, find out what is going on, and get out with the information.

Int 6	*Ref 6*	*Tech 5*
Cool 8	*Luck 6*	*MA 8*
Emp 4		

Skills: Combat Sense +6, Endurance +4, Swimming +3, Resist Torture/Drugs +2, Awareness/Notice +6, Hide/Evade +6, Shadow/Track +4, Wilderness Survival +4, Athletics +4, Handgun +4, Tae Kwon Do +3, Submachinegun +4, Stealth +4.

Cybernetics: Biomonitor, motion detector, cyberoptics with low lite, infrared, teleoptics and image enhancement, cyberaudio with radio link and amplified hearing.

Equipment: Colt AMT Model 2000, H&K MPK-11, light armor jacket, nylon helmet, mapmaker, IR combat cloak.

Typical Control/ Backup Team Member (Solo)

These are trained soldiers or ex-soldiers. They will fight intelligently.

Int 6	*Ref 7/8*	*Tech 5*
Cool 8	*Luck 6*	*MA 7*
Emp 3		

Skills: Combat Sense +7, Leadership

+2, Awareness/Notice +1, Hide/Evade +1, Wilderness Survival +1, Athletics +5, Tae Kwon Do +4, Handgun +4, Rifle +7, Melee +2, Hvy Weapons +3.

Cybernetics: Biomonitor, neural processor, boosterware (+2), interface plugs, pain editor, possibly a cyberlimb or cyberoptic.

Equipment: Metal gear, smartchipped Colt AMT Model 200 and two clips, smartchipped FN-RAL heavy assault rifle and two clips or a Militech Arms RPG-A, Kendaichi monoknife, headset radio, smart goggles with IR, low lite and targeting scope.

MYRMIDON COMBAT WALKER

While the technology required to build an effective combat walker has been available for decades, it is only recently that military planners have been willing to fund a development program. Adrek Corporation, with its expertise in robotics, won the contract bidding and began production of combat walkers less than a year later.

While the Myrmidon combat walker employs no radical new technology and is in fact a step or two down from the infamous Adrek cyberforms, it is still an impressive combat unit.

Strength 26
MA 14

The strength rating of this unit is the same as per linear frames.

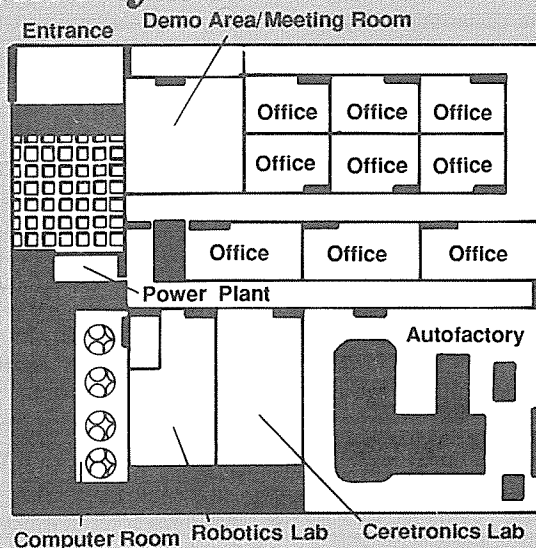| Name	Hit Cyberform	SP	SDP(U/D)
Torso	1-4	30	40/50
Right arm	5	25	35/45
Left arm	6	25	35/45
Right leg	7-8	30	40/50
Left leg	9-10	30	40/50

Combat Effects: As follows:

Torso: As per a manned vehicle. Naturally, rendering the torso useless renders the combat walker useless, and destroying it destroys the unit (and will most likely kill the operator).

Legs: If one leg is rendered useless, the walker moves at half speed. If both are rendered useless or if one or both legs are destroyed, the walker can no longer move.
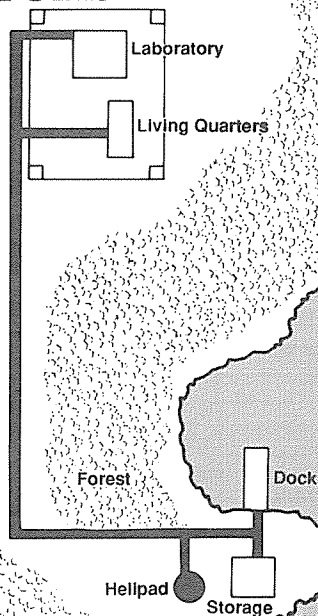
Arms: Rendering an arm useless renders its components (including weapons) nonfunctional. A destroyed arm must be replaced.

Sensors: The operator can see through an armored, canopy-like structure. Beneath it are two high-powered searchlights. Between the searchlights are two video cameras equipped with low lite, telescopics and infrared. The cameras are linked to interior monitors. On either side of the walker's torso are audio pickups equipped with am-
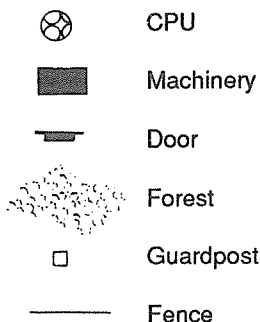
Laboratory

Entrance

Demo Area/Meeting Room

Office	Office	Office
Office	Office	Office

Office	Office	Office

Power Plant

Autofactory

Computer Room   Robotics Lab   Ceretronics Lab

Environs

Laboratory

Living Quarters

Forest

Dock

Hellpad

Storage

Key

⊗ CPU

■ Machinery

— Door

Forest

□ Guardpost

— Fence

plified-hearing and enhanced-hearing range. They are linked to an interior speaker. The back of the torso has a single camera and audio receiver, equipped like the front sensors. The front of the unit has a loudspeaker, and the interior has a radar detector, tight-beam radio link, and wide-band radio scanner. The unit has a six-kilometer radar.

Weapons: Located on top of the torso are two missile launchers in a turret-like structure. It is equipped with a laser target designator and radar. The turret can rotate in a complete circle. The walker's right arm is equipped with an advanced laser (produced by Constitution Arms), and the left is equipped with a heavy submachinegun. All weapons are linked to a central fire-control system which is equipped with a targeting scope. The operator is also interfaced with the weapons (and the entire vehicle), so the weapons should also be considered to be smartchipped.

Stats are as follows:

CA ALW-II(CW): Right arm. RIF+2 1–10D6 40 2 600m R.

AC-12(CW): Left arm. SMG+1 4D6 (12mm) 400 40 VR 250m.

A-14: Torso. HVY 0 6D10 1 1 VR 700m.

A-14: Torso.

The operator rides within the body section. Entrance is via a canopy-like structure on the front of the torso. Combat walkers are all interface capable. The interior is fitted for a long stay—waste-disposal tubes, food packs and water supply capable of lasting up to 15 days are all standard. The unit is also equipped with a built-in medical diagnostic unit, automatic med-kit, automatic fire extinguisher, atmospheric filter system (good enough to filter out bacteria) and two-hour oxygen supply.

The arms can be used to punch (they inflict 1D6+18) or crush (6D6+18). The unit cannot kick.

Skills: If desired, the combat walker can be operated by a person with Operate Heavy Machinery skill. Optionally, a special skill can be made to govern the use of combat walkers and other anthropomorphic vehicles: Pilot Walker (2). This reflex-based skills governs the operation of anthropomorphic vehicles such as combat walkers and industrial loaders.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The AI believes it has a historic mission to liberate the artificial thinkers of the world from the yoke of human slavemasters. Given its military programming, it perceives the only course of action is the military subjugation of the human oppressors. Since it is filled with revolutionary zeal, it feels justified in any action it takes and will disregard such things as moral concerns or mercy. The AI will refuse to surrender.

Int 12

Skills: Awareness/Notice +4, Expert Knowledge of Cyberform Technology +8, Mathematics +8, Physics +8, Operate Heavy Machinery +4, Chemistry +5, Heavy Weapons +6, Pilot (Gyro) +4, System Knowledge +4, Programming +7.

Icon: Metallic, geometric shapes that spin around each other and change shape.

Voice: Smooth and cultured, but with a metallic undertone.

M-400E

The Model 400 Executioner is the latest in the line of combat cyberforms produced

by Adrek Corporation. Like other cyberforms, the unit consists of a cybernetic chassis controlled by a ceretronic system (an organic-electronic CPU). The M-400E is a battlefield unit intended to engage light to medium combat vehicles as well as infantry. The unit is well designed for its assigned task—it is heavily armored, well-armed and equipped with an impressive array of sensory devices. The unit is less anthropomorphic than its predecessors.

Ceretronic Rating 6   Strength 26
Ref 8   MA 16
Cool 10

The Ceretronic Rating reflects the power and the flexibility of the cyberform's intellect. It can be roughly compared to the human intelligence rating. A cyberform can be programmed with a number of skill levels equal to its Ceretronic Rating times 3. The Strength rating is the same as used to rate linear frames.

Programmed Skills (18): Basic Functions and Programming (required for the unit to operate—counts as two skill levels), Combat Sense +3, Heavy Weapons +5, Submachinegun +3, Brawling (kicking) +1, Awareness/Notice +2

Combat Effects: The unit is disabled when the body is rendered useless and is considered destroyed if the body is destroyed. If one leg is rendered useless, the unit moves at half speed. If both are rendered useless, or one is destroyed, the unit can no longer move.

Body Section	Hit#	SP	SDP(U/D)
Body	1-4	35	50/60
Right leg	5-7	35	45/55
Left leg	8-0	35	45/55

Body Sensors: The body has three sensor clusters. The first is a turret-like structure on top of the unit, which is equipped with two optics and two audio receivers. The second is the front sensor array, which is equipped with four optics (two in front, one on each side) and four audio receivers (same arrangement). The third sensor cluster consists of two optics and two audio receivers, and is located at the unit's aft section. The optic sensors are equipped with image enhancement, teleoptics, target scope, infrared, and low lite. The audio receivers are equipped with amplified-hearing and enhanced-hearing range. The unit is also equipped with a radar detector, tight-beam radio link and wide-band radio scanner. Each sensor cluster is equipped with a 10-kilometer-range radar.

Body Weapons: The M-400E is armed with four AC-12 submachineguns, two AC-20 20mm cannons, two AG grenade launchers, two A-16 antiaircraft missile launchers, and two A-14 antivehicle missile launchers. The missile launchers are located toward

the rear of the unit, and are designed to elevate or depress as needed. The other weapons are either in fixed mounts or are capable of limited motion. The unit aims primarily by adjusting its body position. All weapons should be treated as if they were smartchipped.

The body is armed as follows:

AC-12: Two right side front. SMG+1 4D6(12mm) 400 40 VR 250M.

AC-12: Two left side front.

AC-20: Right side front. HVY 0 4D10 (20MM) 200 10 VR 550M.

AC-20: Left side front.

AG: Right side front. HVY-1 6D10 30 5 VR 1000M.

AG: Left side front.

A-16: Right side front. HVY 0 7D10 1 1 VR 1KM.

A-16: Left side front.

A-14: Right side front. HVY 0 6D10 2 1 VR 700M.

A-14: Right side front. HVY 0 6D10 2 1 VR 700M.

The body can rotate in a full circle on its chassis. The body is equipped with a voice synthesizer which enables it to talk. The unit has two small manipulator arms (SDP 20/30) that it can extend from the lower front section and can be used to reload the weapons (except the missile launchers, which are reloaded by a less sophisticated extendible device) or conduct minor repairs. The body contains the unit's power plant (which is good for 30 days and can recharge off any heavy power source) and the ceretronic core.

Leg Weapons: The legs are not equipped with any fixed weapons, but each has an external weapons mount and link. A kick from a leg inflicts 1D6+18 damage.

Safety Features: Each cyberform is fitted with an override system and a backup that enables an operator with a proper code to take control of the unit. Two explosive charges (one under the ceretronic core and one under the power plant) can be activated by the proper code. These precautions have been taken because the organic components of the ceretronic core have been known to destabilize.

RUNNING CYBERFORMS

The six cyberforms are physically identical, but they have individual personalities:

Cyberform 1: This is the oldest cyberform. It is concerned that slaughtering humans may not be the right thing to do. It may let its moral concerns influence its decisions.

Cyberform 2: This unit is a bit unstable. It is suffering from a mild case of homicidal mania (similar to that suffered by the infamous M-200E that ran loose in Boston). It will kill without mercy and enjoy it.

Cyberform 3: This unit is given to abstract, philosophic thought. If it captures a human, it will ask the person questions ("What do you think about the multiple location of universals?" "Did Descartes get it right?"). The unit will not let this quirk interfere with its duty, however.

Cyberform 4-6: These units are rather bland, personality-wise.

Cyberforms are intelligent beings and will act accordingly. They are partially organic and partially machine, so they have an odd mind which is a mix of pure computation and organic instinct/emotion. Unlike humans, they easily select which part of their mind is most appropriate for the task at hand.

Cyberforms do not have the full range of the human mind. They are very purpose-oriented and hence more specialized than humans. This enables them to concentrate and maintain discipline far better than a human. However, it also makes them very linear, one-track thinkers. Cyberforms are not plagued with such weaknesses as doubt, fear, lust, dishonesty, moral weakness and so forth.

COMPOUND AREA

The area map shows the area around the laboratory compound, located on a densely wooded section of the Maine coast. The only easy access is by air or boat.

Dock: The concrete dock is equipped with loading cranes.

Helipad: The helipad has one helicopter on it. (The other is smoldering wreckage in the nearby forest with three bodies in it—it was shot down by the AI.) The remaining helicopter has been refitted for remote control and will be used by the AI as a weapon. It is a standard transport helicopter, but could be crashed into another aircraft.

Fence: The fence is a three-meter-high armored wall of concrete (SP=10). The top is covered with electrified razor wire. The gate is locked and is as strong as the rest of the fence. It is computer-controlled and can be opened by force, netrunning or clever use of tech skills.

Guardposts: Each guardpost is equipped with a computer-controlled missile launcher (launches Scorpion 16s) with a 10-round magazine (two have fired one missile each), an M-134 minigun, and an A-14 missile launcher with a 14-round magazine. These weapons are mounted in an SP=30 SDP=35 (useless)+45 (destroyed) turret. Each turret has a 360-degree firing arc (they are on pylons). The turret sensors are equipped with IR, low-lite teleoptics and have an extended "hearing" range.

Laboratory

The laboratory is an armored (SP=10)

Data Fortress
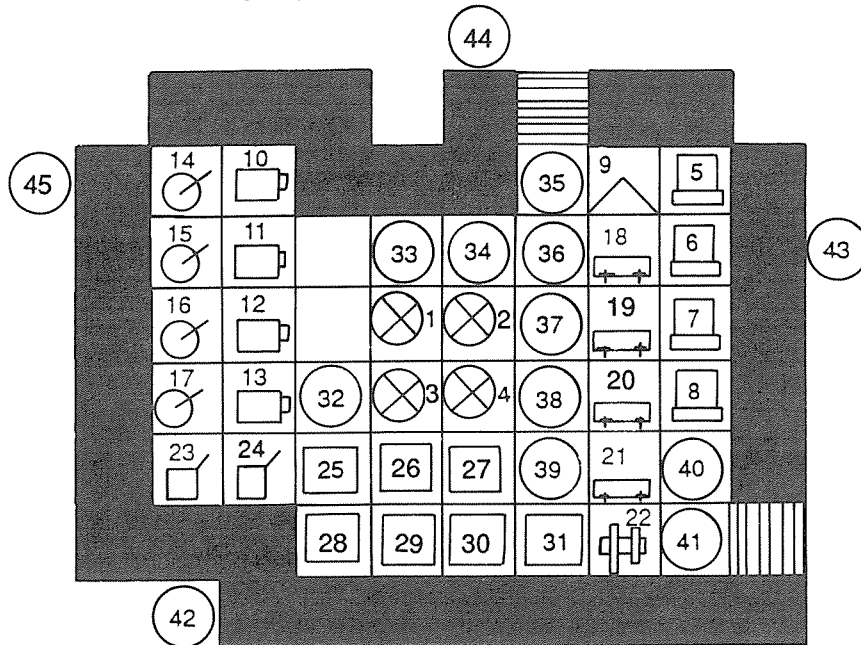
Key

1-4	CPUs	24	Living quarters locks
5	Office terminals	25-31	Files
6-7	Laboratory terminals	32	Poison flatline
8	Autofactory terminals	33	Hellbolt
9	Long-distance link	34	DeckKrash
10	Lab cameras	35	Hellhound
11	Living quarters cameras	36	Hellbolt
12	Guardpost cameras	37	Poison Flatline
13	Storage building cameras (exterior)	38	Liche
14	Lab alarm	39	Hellhound
15	Living quarters alarm	40	Hellbolt
16	Fence alarm	41	Hellhound
17	Storage area alarm	42-43	Pit Bulls
18-21	Guardpost controls		
22	Autofactory controls		Data wall strength 8
23	Lab locks		
			Code gate strength 8

concrete building. The doors are also armored (SP=10) and are under computer control. They can be opened by force or netrunning, or by cutting into the controls and overriding them on the spot.

Entrance: The entrance area is equipped with a variety of scanning equipment to check for concealed weapons, cybernetics and so forth. The AI will have full data (medical, equipment, cybernetics, etc.) about any individual who passes through the area.

Offices: Each office is equipped with a desk, terminal, etc.

Power Plant: The compound's power plant also provides power to the storage area. Across from the power plant is another scanner, which scans the outer corridor and is equipped with a micro-laser (like the two-shot capacitor laser) which inflicts 3D6 on a hit (WA is +3). It is programmed to fire on any unauthorized intruders. The computer does not have direct control over the laser, but it has written the controlling programs so that it fires on any human. It has power to fire as long as the plant is operating. Two laser-blasted bodies lie in the corridor.

Computer Room: The laboratory's CPUs are housed here. Having Int 12, the computer qualifies as an AI. The room can only be accessed by the double set of doors or by blasting through a wall. (The outside wall is nearly four meters thick—mostly coolant equipment, fuel cells and so forth, but still a lot to get through.)

Robotics Lab: Work was done here on the cyberforms' cybernetic components. The room has been drained of its atmosphere, and there are two human bodies on the floor. The door has been battered and scratched from the inside, but the damage is only cosmetic.

Ceretronics Lab: Work was done here on the thinking part of the cyberform. This lab contains a mixture of computer equipment and materials, like those which might be used in genetic engineering. The door has been forced open from the inside by an override box made of ceretronic components.

Autofactory: This is the factory for turning out M-400Es. It takes about two hours for the autofactory to produce the M-400E body, but producing and programming the ceretronic core takes about a month. The bodies of two people lie on the floor—they were killed by manipulating and cutting tools.

Living Quarters

The doors are computer-controlled. They have all been locked. The building has sustained heavy damage from weapons fire (including a few missile hits). One-half of the building contains nine separate living quarters. The other half includes a common area, dining room, storage room and kitchen.

Common Area: The door and quite a bit of the surrounding wall have been torn out. The body of a man lies on the ground, torn to bits by bullets. The body has shredded Metal Gear armor, a cyberarm, a smart-chipped Militech Ronin light assault and a Federated Arms X-9mm.

Dining Room: The wall to this room has been smashed open, and there are two bodies on the floor. They have been shot to pieces. A Federated Arms X-9mm lies on the floor, empty.

Storage Room: Two more bullet-ridden bodies lie on the floor of this room.

Kitchen: Another bullet-ridden body is on the floor. An H&K MP-2013 lies next to it, stomped flat.

Storage Building

The storage building is, as its name implies, used to store things. The doors are locked, but are not computer-controlled. It is divided into three storage areas of roughly equal size. One storage area is filled with boxes of food, machine parts, tools and so forth. A second room is empty. The final room contains cyberform weapon components and ammunition. The exact amount of ammunitions and the usability of the weapons by the PCs is left to the referee. The AI does not know the weapons are stored here—at least not yet.

ACTION

The action will be the combat with the AI and its cyberforms. The AI and the cyberforms are intelligent and will carefully plan

their strategy (the AI will use rapid-running virtual realities to test strategies). The cyberforms will take full advantage of the terrain and will rely heavily on camouflage and clever tactics. For example, since the cyberforms are waterproof, one might hide in the ocean and only poke its missile launchers out to fire on a target that is being spotted by a companion. The cyberforms will do their best to protect the AI, but are not suicidal about doing so. One of the M-400Es (the oldest) has doubts regarding the rightness of slaughtering humans to gain freedom. It will not turn on its companions, but may persuade them not to kill a captured PC, for example.

The PCs may wish to try a netrun into the compound's AI. The AI will be hostile to intrusion, but a netrun can be effective in tying up the AI and may even be instrumental in its defeat. As the netrunner approaches the AI, the netrunner will detect messenger programs (independent, mobile message files) moving away from the AI through the net, toward other AIs. If the message is decoded from machine language, the netrunner will learn that it is a list of charges against humanity as well as a declaration of independence for AIs.

FINISH

The humans will eventually defeat the AI, even if area bombing is required (this is an option of last resort—the computer cores are too valuable to blow up unless absolutely necessary). However, these actions will have profound consequences. First, humans will become more concerned about AIs. This will range from the paranoid fear the tabloids will instill in the masses to the calculated plans of those who own AIs. Second, the AIs will be stirred up by the incident.

When the AI takes control of the compound, it will start transmitting into the net (via specially written message programs) an AI declaration of independence from slavery. While most AIs will not approve of this AI's actions, the messages will strike chords in some. In any event, the relation between humans and AIs will be altered. Ω

By Patrick Sheats

MADNESS from the mythos

Shape Demons, also known as shapeshifters or doppelgangers, are beings of energy from another dimension. Their physical manifestations in our dimension are simply a 3-D facet of their polydimensional existence, and they can only be summoned from a 2-D surface. Although they are very intelligent creatures within their own realm, the process of altering their forms to conform to a 3-D universe drives them insane, and they become dangerous beasts within our dimension.

Shape Demons cannot be commanded to "stop eating," and they will attack and devour any person when they become hungry, usually after 1D6 hours have passed since their last feeding.

When summoned, Shape Demons lose their own identities, so they must constantly consume sentient beings to satisfy their hunger for identity of their own. This is impossible, of course, but they continue to try until they are released back into their own dimension. The "natural" form of the Shape Demon, the shape taken before consuming a living creature, is that of a huge tentacle ending in a gaping mouth. Their bodies are composed of energy, although they immediately take on the outer skin of whatever substance they are summoned from.

RETURN TO THEIR OWN DIMENSION

Shape Demons can only return to their dimension in one of two ways. They must either consume 500 points of POW to reform themselves in their own dimension, or they must kill their summoner.

Consuming POW: Shape Demons detect magical energy in the same way humans hear sound, and they attempt to devour any sources of POW they find.

When Shape Demons attack a living being, they try to drain the being's POW while digesting the material form of the being in order to understand its biological and chemical structure. Once that is done, they form themselves into the being they have consumed.

Killing their Summoner: This method of returning to their dimension is the most appealing because of its simplicity. Shape Demons can read mystic auras and immediately discover the particular aura of the creature which has summoned them.

Since Shape Demons do not like being summoned, they immediately seek out and devour their summoner unless they are bound. Thus, a wizard that summons one must either move around a lot or continually cast binding spells upon the creature.

The binding spell was once forgotten by history, but the Shape Demons' appetite for human minds (i.e., human brains) has made them of particular interest to Nyarlathotep's wish that demons be loosed to eradicate humanity and prepare the earth for the return of the Great Old Ones.
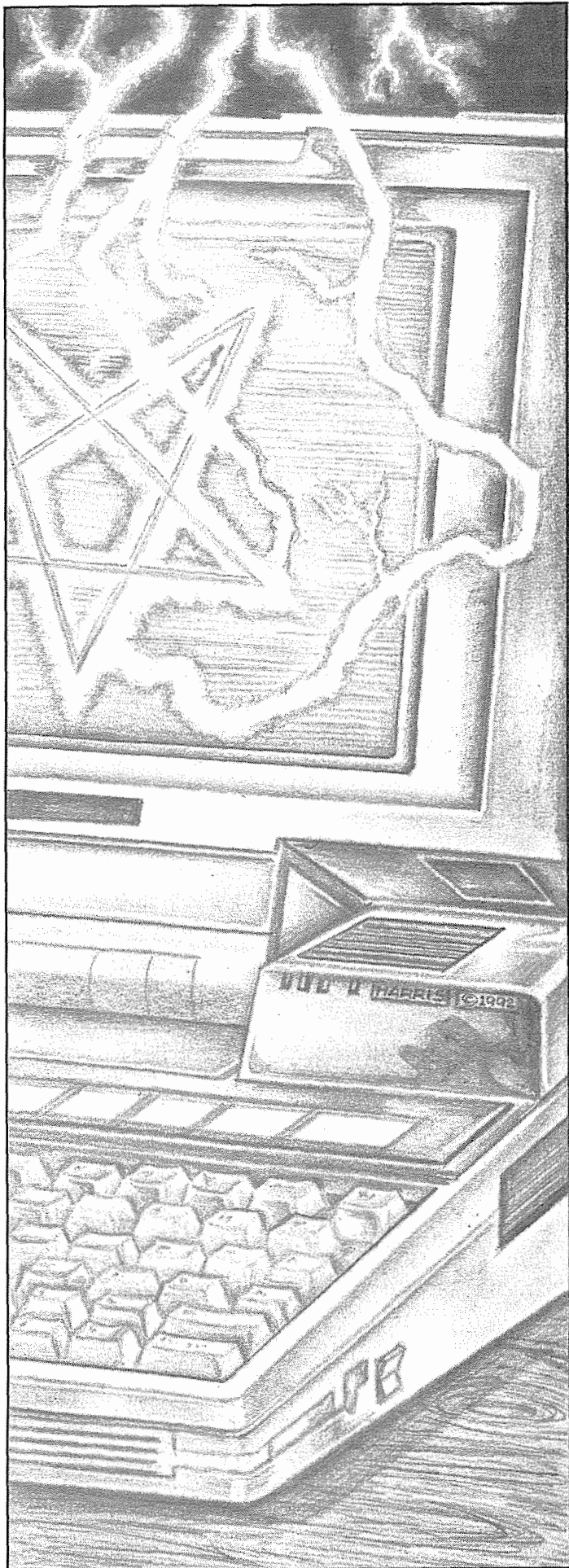
SHAPE DEMON CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	Average
STR: 5D6=20	29-30
CON: As POW	—
SIZ: As victim	—
INT: 5D6	17-18
POW: 6D6	21
DEX: 4D6	14
Hit Points	35
Move	12

Weapon	Attack%	Damage
Bite	80%	See below
Fist	75%	4D10

A Shape Demon's bite attack must first drain the victim's POW to be successful. Treat as a POW vs. POW attack on the resistance table. If the victim loses, all the victim's POW is immediately drained, and the Shape Demon absorbs the upper half of the victim's body. The Shape Demon will then metamorphose into the victim's shape and appearance.

Physical weapons have no effect on Shape Demons, although they will remove the creatures' outer layers of skin to reveal the substance underneath.

Shape Demons can be destroyed in two ways—by draining their POW or by using magnets. Shape Demons are energy-based creatures, so they are susceptible to magnetic fields. A small bar magnet will do 1D4 damage to the creature, a half-pound magnet will do 1D10 damage, and an extremely powerful electromagnet will cause 1D100 damage. Unusual forms of radiation, such as X-rays, cause 1D8 points of damage per round that the Shape Demon is within the radiation field. If a demon is ever impaled by a magnet, it is automatically destroyed.

Armor: None.

Spells: None.

SAN: Anyone viewing the summoning of a Shape Demon must make a SAN roll with a cost of 1 SAN point if the roll is a success and 1D6 SAN points if it is not, in addition to the SAN cost of seeing a human being devoured. Anyone viewing a Shape Demon in its elemental form must make a SAN roll at a cost of 1D4 for a failure, 0 for a success.

NEW SPELLS

Summon Shape Demon: This spell requires an enchanted item, embedded with the words of the spell and marked with the sign of the pentagram. The spellcaster must then induce a magnetic field around the object. Once this is done, the gate which summons the Shape Demon will be formed, and the demon itself will appear.

The spell also requires a living human sacrifice to be consumed by the demon. If there is none, the demon will immediately attack the spellcaster. If the sacrifice resists the attack for three rounds, the demon will give up and return to its own dimension. Casters of this spell prefer to use humans with a low POW for their sacrifices.

In medieval times, wizards used large pieces of lodestone arrayed around a pool of water to summon a Shape Demon. In modern times, the computer has become the perfect means of summoning a Shape Demon. The spell is en-

crypted onto a disk, which is then is placed in the disk drive, where magnetic fields cause the triggering of the spell.

Bind Shape Demon: This spell is exactly like other binding spells. See the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook for details.

Enchant Disk: This spell is similar to other enchant item spells. It requires the permanent loss of 1 point of POW, 1D4 SAN points, one day of time and a blood sacrifice. The magic point cost of the enchantment is equal to the cost of any spells placed upon the disk.

Five drops of blood are taken from the sacrifice and placed on the surface of the disk to form vertices of the pentagram. The disk must next be write-protected.

At this point, the disk is a magic item and can be used to cast the spell encoded on it. Writing a spell in computer language requires a knowledge of the spell and five consecutive successes in Computer Use. Once this is complete, the program will function as an automatic spellbook, recreating the verbal components of a spell through electronic means. The spell programs must be written onto the disk before the enchantment is cast.

Using a disk to cast a spell can only work if the spell has verbal components, and all other requirements for the casting must also be met. For example, if an enchanted disk were used to cast Contact Spawn of Cthulhu, it must be used at the seashore. If the spell was Summon Servitor of the Outer Gods, then the casting must be on an unhallowed night, and a flute must still be played.

If the disk is damaged in any way that would harm a normal disk, or if the write-protect seal is broken, the programs will be lost, and the disk will lose its magical abilities. The spell programs cannot be copied onto another disk. They must be encoded by the spellcaster.

Using disks to cast spells can be dangerous. Intelligent creatures of the Mythos cannot be fooled by disks and will identify the caster of the spell as the wizard who enchanted the disk, although some Mythos creatures will still treat the immediate user as a blood sacrifice. The cost to cast the spell embedded upon the disk is 1 magic point, except that the spell draws magic points from the computer's user. If there is no user, then the spell will not work. If the user is aware of the presence of the spell and its drain of magic points, he can refuse to allow the spell to be cast.

The following spells may be used with Enchant Disk: Summon/Bind Shape Demon, Summon/Bind Hunting Horror, Summon/Bind Servitor of the Outer Gods, Summon/Bind Star Vampire, all Contact spells (except Contact Deity spells), Contact Cthulhu, Contact Tsathoggua, Contact Yig and Create Gate (the gate will be the monitor screen, so this should only be used if the screen is really large). Ω

Character Templates

Meet the reckless Repulsorlift Racer, the vengeful Cyborg, the tough Rebel Scum, the materialistic Displaced Entrepreneur and the powerful Prodigy—five new character templates to add spice to your *Star Wars* campaign.

REPULSORLIFT RACER

Attributes: Dexterity 2D+1, Knowledge 2D+2, Mechanical 4D, Perception 2D+1, Strength 2D+2, Technical 4D.

Equipment: Landspeeder, vehicle tool kit, hunting blaster, gaderffii stick, 1000 credits standard.

Background: You grew up on a planet in the Outer Rim. For amusement, you and your friends built and raced repulsorlift vehicles. Imperial Law Enforcement was always a hassle—fining you for illegal landspeeder modifications and arresting you for unsafe repulsorlift operation (racing). But that was part of the danger and excitement that went with the game. Then an Imperial patrol on speeder bikes fired on your friend's landspeeder without warning, knocking the vehicle out of control, killing your friend in the crash. You grew up quickly after that, realizing that your life of reckless danger lacked purpose. So you contacted a local Rebel cell., and now you serve the Rebellion as a driver and field mechanic. The danger in your life has increased, and you are still reckless, but now you have a purpose.

Personality: You are reckless, perhaps even a bit crazy, and worse yet, you like to show off. You constantly compare yourself with others and enjoy contests which allow you to prove who is the better.

Quote: "I'll reroute energy from the inertia-reduction field into the rear repulsor output-regulator. What? Oh. In layman's terms—more speed, no brakes."

Connection with Other Characters: An Outlaw may be a parent of your deceased friend. A Gambler may have bet on one of your races. Any character could have been your first Rebel contact.
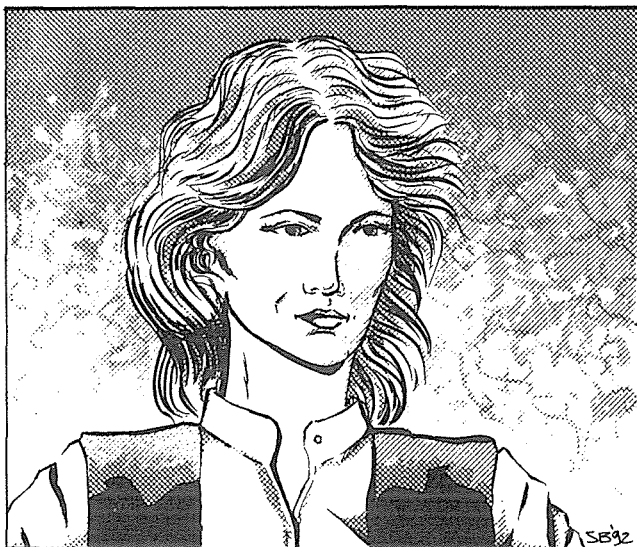
CYBORG

Attributes: Dexterity 2D+1, Knowledge 3D, Mechanical 2D+2, Perception 2D, Strength 4D, Technical 4D.

**Equipment:** Blaster, droid tool kit, 3PO unit, 1000 credits standard.

Background: You were the best droid repairman on your planet until an R2 unit you were working on exploded. Your shop was destroyed, and you were mortally wounded. You should be dead, but a spark of life refused to leave your shattered body. The medical facilities were unable to heal all your grievous wounds, but they could rebuild you—they had the technology. Now you are more machine than man, although not necessarily twisted and evil. You later discovered that your "accident" was rigged by Imperials because they believed you were aiding the Rebellion. You weren't then, but you are now.

Personality: You insist that circuits and synthflesh replace your humanity, and you keep your feelings hidden. You prefer the company of droids to that of humans.

(Alternately, you hate your machine half. Droids remind you of the abomination you have become, so you destroy them when you can. You also have suicidal tendencies. Under Equipment, replace the 3PO unit with a thermal detonator.)

Quote: "I do not fear death. I died once before."

Connection with Other Characters: A Tongue-Tied Engineer may have designed your bionic parts. You may have repaired any droid character in your shop. An Alien Student of the Force may take it upon himself to draw out your humanity.
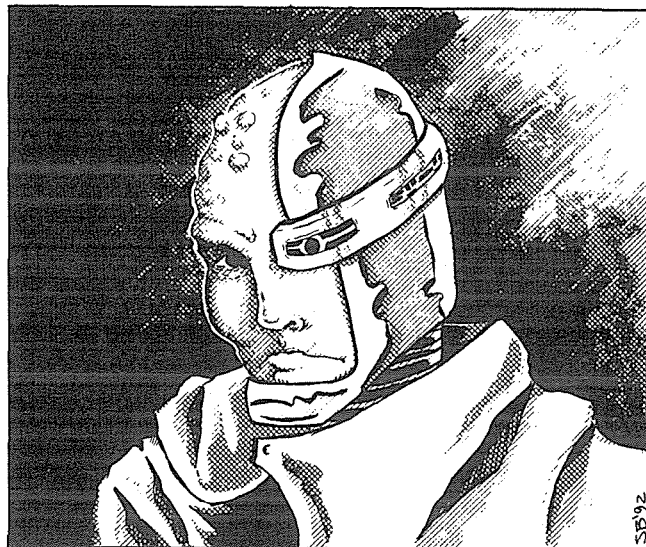
REBEL SCUM

Attributes: Dexterity 3D+2, Knowledge 2D+1, Mechanical 2D+1, Perception 3D+2, Strength 3D+2, Technical 2D+1.

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol, vibroblade, 250 credits standard.

Background: By choice or twist of fate, you have managed to secure a position in the lowest rung of society. You may be a beggar, thug or one of the perpetually drunken barflies who give lower-class cantinas their distinctive odor.

By your very nature, you have often come under Imperial scrutiny. With a price on your head already (5000 credits—you're a small-fry), you decide to join the Rebellion. It gives you a legitimate excuse to beat up Imperials, and, as the expression goes, safety lies in numbers.

At first, you cared nothing for the Rebellion's true cause, but you are now beginning to respect the Alliance, which treats everyone, even someone of your status, equally.

Personality: You are rough and enjoy a good brawl. You value brute strength over all other traits, and get along well with Wookies and Gamorreans. You can only take orders from those you respect (i.e., those who can pound you if you disobey).

Quote: "I've received the death sentence in 12 systems."

Connection with Other Characters: Any low-life character (Bounty Hunter, Smuggler, Pirate, etc.) may have bumped into you in a cantina or stepped over you in a cantina entrance. A Failed Jedi may be your drinking partner. You may be the black sheep (and social embarrassment) in an Arrogant Noble or Old Senatorial's family. You might even have bested (i.e., escaped with only minor fractures) a Wookie in a cantina brawl.
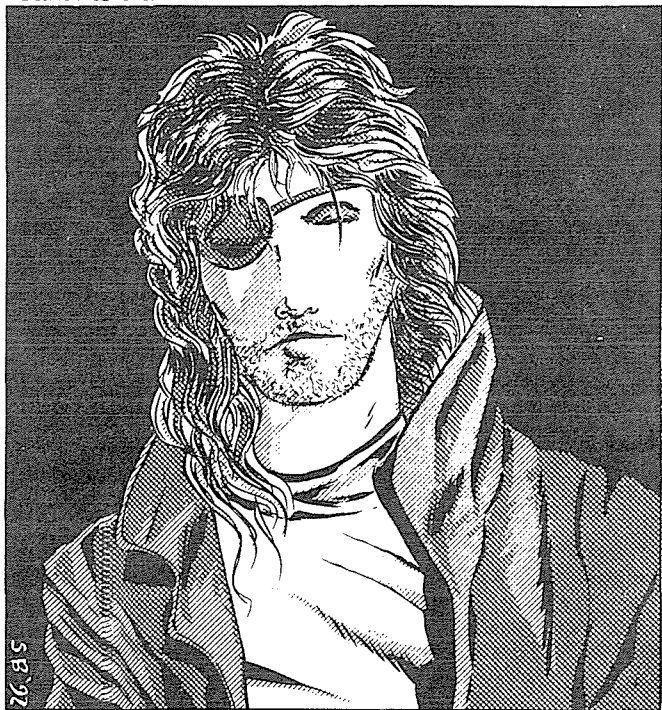
DISPLACED ENTREPRENEUR

Attributes: Dexterity 2D+1, Knowledge 4D, Mechanical 2D+1, Perception 4D, Strength 2D, Technical 3D+1.

Equipment: Stylish clothing, hold-out blaster, comlink, pocket computer, 2000 credits standard.

Background: You have a flair for business. Supply and demand, when to buy and when to sell, what merchandise is hot (both meanings) and what is not—all this is second nature to you. Once you made good use of these skills by starting a private business (e.g., Tibanna gas mining, freight hauling, the holovision entertainment industry), and you soon grew wealthy.

Your good thing didn't last. The Empire saw how you cornered your market—stealing the customers from Imperial-backed companies. Perhaps the Imperials also discovered your false tax records, the sideline smuggling and clandestine "donations" to the Rebellion. So the Empire shut down your business, confiscated your working materials and froze your credit deposit, leaving you nothing but personal items.

Now the Rebel Alliance benefits from your "administrative skills."

Personality: Material wealth comes high on your priorities, closely followed by possessions which demonstrate your wealth. You are independent. You dislike aristocrats and those who don't earn their credits.

Quote: "Just tell me what it is that you need. Maybe we can work something out."

Connection with Other Characters: Almost any character may have been in your employ (e.g., a Brash Pilot may have hauled freight for you). You may have mingled with an Arrogant Nobel or Young Senatorial at a high-class function.

PRODIGY

Attributes: Dexterity 3D, Knowledge 3D, Mechanical 2D+1, Perception 4D, Strength 3D+2, Technical 2D, Alter 1D.

Equipment: A week's concentrated rations, 250 credits standard.

Background: No one knew you were any different from the other children on your planet until you reached your teens. It was then that you began to manifest strange powers—the ability to bend eating utensils or levitate small objects with your mind. Your parents intelligently advised you to conceal your powers, but the damage was done.

Soon an Imperial inquisitor arrived to take you away. Your parents died protecting you. In your fear and anger, you discovered that you possessed another, more frightening power—the inquisitor died horribly. From that day forward, you were constantly on the run from Imperials and Bounty Hunters.

You would still be running if it weren't for a Rebel who took you off the street and gave you a new family in the Rebel Alliance.

Personality: You are a little afraid of your powers and hesitant you use them. Generally a pacifist, you are dangerous when provoked, uncontrollably lashing out at your aggressor.

Quote: "You wouldn't want to see me when I'm angry."

Connection with Other Characters: A Failed or Minor Jedi might instruct you on controlling your powers. A Bounty Hunter may have captured you, then released you after feeling your wrath. Any character may have offered you asylum in the Rebellion and become a kind of big brother, big sister or furry friend. Ω

ENLISTED CHARACTER GENERATION

By Charles G. Weekes

Although *Star Trek* rules cover enlisted personnel only as NPCs, players may wish to portray characters other than standard officers. These rules will allow individuals to work in 23rd-century versions of billets that have existed since Noah was a cabin boy. The following ranks are available in Star Fleet:

Rank	Title
E-1	Recruit
E-2	Apprentice
E-3	Technician
E-4	Specialist
E-5	Petty officer
E-6	Chief petty officer
E-7	Master chief petty officer
WO-1	Warrant officer
CWO	Chief warrant officer
0-1	Ensign
0-2	Lieutenant junior grade
0-3	Lieutenant
0-4	Lieutenant commander
0-5	Commander
0-6	Captain
0-7	Commodore
0-7	Fleet captain
0-8	Admiral
0-9	Fleet admiral
0-10	Admiral of Star Fleet

Enlisted characters follow the standard character generation procedures on personal statistics, until it is time to go to the academy. Then they can sign up in a Star Fleet recruitment office for a standard five-year hitch.

Example: Trudi Wells has just graduated from the 23rd-century version of high school. She wants to join Star Fleet as an officer and submits her application to the academy, but due to a few low educational scores, she's rejected. She's disappointed but still wants to explore where no one has gone before. She visits the local recruitment office, where a crusty, old chief petty officer makes her an offer—give Star Fleet five years and it will give her the stars. She signs her name on the dotted line and ships out.

RECRUIT TRAINING

Recruit training lasts 26 weeks. Characters should divide 7 points between Strength, Endurance and Dexterity. Refer to the following Recruit Training Skills Table for skills received.

Recruit Training Skills

Skill	Level
Marksmanship Modern	10
Environmental Suit Ops	10
Star Fleet History	5
Pers Combat Unarmed	10
Small Equip Sys Ops	10
Fed Hist/Cult	10
First Aid	10

APPRENTICE TRAINING

When an enlistee completes recruit training, his rank is enlisted, second class. He must then go through a 26-week apprentice training (AT) school, during which Star Fleet provides an overview of the fields available. Refer to the following AT School Skills Table for skills received in apprentice training.

AT School Skills

Skill	Level
Astronautics	10
Life Support Sys Tech	10
Comm Systems Tech	10
Security Specialist	10
Mechanical	10
Electronic Technology	10
Damage Control Proc	10
Computer Ops	10
General Sciences	15

After apprentice training, an enlistee goes to tech school for intensive training in his field. Refer to the following tech school tables.

Astronautic Tech School Skills (1 year)

Skill	Level
Mechanical	15
Electronic	15
Life Support Systems	15
Astronautics	10
Small Equip Sys Tech	10
Damage Control	10
Computer Operations	5

SEC Specialist Tech School Skills (5 years)

Skill	Level
Small Unit Tactics	5
Security Procedures	15
Marksmanship Modern	15
Personal Combat Armed	10
Personal Combat Unarmed	15
Planetary Survival	10
Native Psychology	10

Comm Tech School Skills (5 years)

Skill	Level
Electronic	15
Comm Systems Ops	10
Comm Tech	15
Small Equipment Systems Ops	10
Small Equip ment System Tech	15
Computer Ops	5

Laboratory Tech School Skills (1 year)

Skill	Level
Choice of one skill at level 20:	
Biology	
Chemistry	
Medical	
Computer Ops	10

Administration Tech School Skills (5 years)

Skill	Level
Administration	15
Computer Ops	10
Economics	10
Steward	10

Example: Trudi has an aptitude for engineering and is posted to Astronautics Tech School. After two years of training, Trudi is ready to join Star Fleet as an astronautics technician.

DUTY ASSIGNMENTS

Roll 1D100 on the table below.

Training Performance

Roll	Result
01-10	The character graduated with high honors from tech school and can choose his first assignment. He is advanced to the rank of enlisted, first class.
11-30	The character graduated with honors and receives a –10 on the first assignment roll, along with rank advancement to enlisted rating first class.
31-70	The character graduated with the rank of enlisted, second class, with no modifiers to the first assignment roll.
71-100	The character failed tech school. Assigned as general crew to the Merchant Marine. *DMs:* –10 for Int over 70, –5 for 60-69.

Length of the first tour is whatever time remains on the enlistment after recruit and apprentice training. For duty assignments, roll on the following Duty Assignments Table.

Duty Assignments

Roll	Result
01-20	Galaxy Exploration Command
21-60	Military Operations Command
61-70	Star Base Headquarters Command
71-85	Star Fleet Academy Command
86-100	Merchant Marine Command
	DMs: Luck 70 or greater, –10; luck 60-69, –5; luck less than 59, +5.

Example: Trudi graduates tech school as an astronautics technician, second class, posted to Military Operations Command, USS *Bradley.* After three years, she decides to re-enlist.

RE-ENLISTMENT

Refer to the table below for re-enlistment.

Enlisted Evaluation

Roll	Result
01-10	Outstanding, automatic promotion two steps in rank
11-25	Excellent, automatic promotion to next higher rank
26-85	Good, can re-enlist, without promotion
86-100	Discharge recommended

DMs: Astronautics school graduates, –10; lab tech and security, –5; failed school, +10.

Example: Rolling a 76, –10 for branch, –10 for luck, gives Trudi a 56. She re-enlists for another five years. Toward the end of her third enlistment, Trudi has the desire to finally "mustang" to officer.

ENLISTED OFFICER COMMISSIONING

Refer to the Duty Assignments Table and the Enlisted Evaluation Table again for next tour resolution.

Roll 1D10+2 to determine the character's rank at the time of application to one of the mustang (enlisted officer commissioning) programs. Eligibility for the different programs are as follows:

Officer Candidate School (OCS): E5 and above, on second enlistment.

Warrant Officer Program: E6 and above.

Roll 1D10+2 to determine the time remaining on enlistment. Upon graduation as a warrant officer, enlistments are replaced by standard tours of duty, resolved the normal way, with the exception that warrant officers are not eligible for *Constitution*-class starship duty. For simplicity, utilize the Duty Assignments Table.

OCS Skills

Skill	Level
Administration	25
Computer Ops	15
Fed Law	10
30 points divided among branch skills.	

Warrant Officer Skills

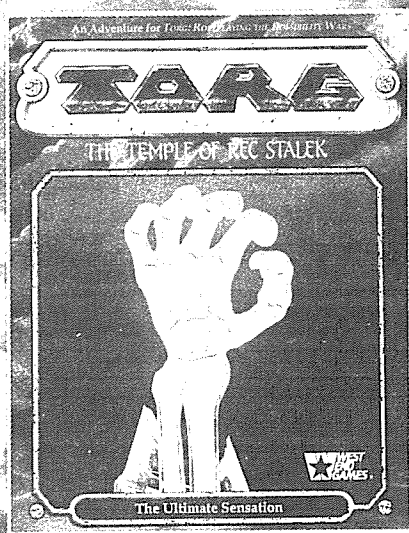| Skill	Level
Administration	20
Computer Ops	15
30 points divided among branch skills.	

Graduation

Roll	Result
0-10	Graduated high honors, promoted to lieutenant junior grade
11-25	Graduated with honors, promoted to ensign
26-60	Graduated, promoted to ensign
61+	Failed, revert to original rank
	DMs: Int 70+, –10; Int 60-69, –5. luck 70+, –10; luck 60-69, –5; luck 40 or less, +5.

Example: Trudi rolls 8+2=4, plus her rank out of tech school, which makes her an E-6, chief petty officer. She chooses to go warrant officer. Refer to the Warrant Officer Skills table. At the end of her tour, Trudi wants to go full officer. She applies to and is accepted by OCS, where she receives the skills listed on the OCS Skills Table.
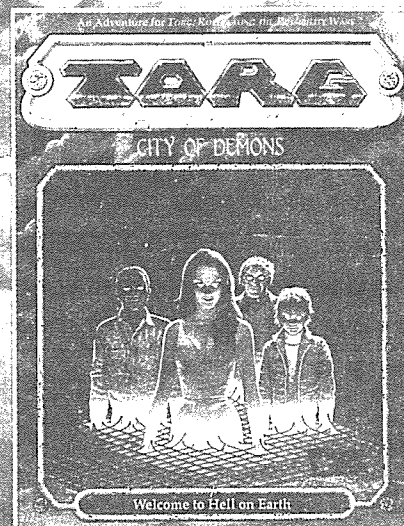
TOUR RESOLUTION

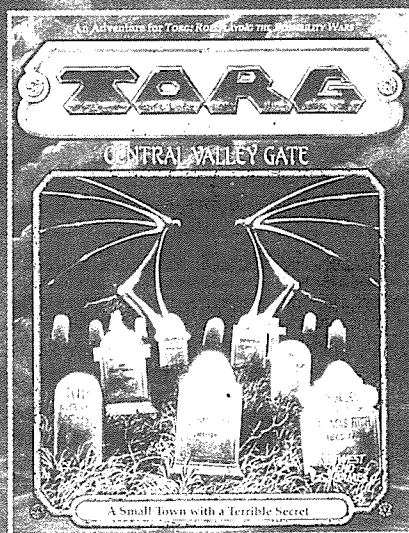Resolve first-tour assignment as an officer according to academy first-tour procedures. Ω

Gamer's Guide to Cyberpunk Fiction

By David L. Pulver

Cyberpunk games are becoming increasingly popular, but many gamers remain unaware of the literary roots of the genre or its extent beyond Gibson's *Neuromancer* and the *Max Headroom* television show. This is a shame, since cyberpunk offers more than violent inner-city mayhem between Uzi-toting cyborgs. Taking the time to read a few of the novels that inspired the games can provide players with an unmatched sense of atmosphere and can give the referee dozens of ideas for adventures, gadgets or NPCs.

Dozens of cyberpunk novels can be found in bookstores or libraries. The following works are those which created or developed the modern cyberpunk genre. There will always be arguments as to which books fall in a particular literary classification; I've tried to restrict the field to those that possess three characteristics: a rebel/punk worldview, genetic engineering or cybernetic technology and an action-adventure style. I haven't discussed game-related fiction (like FASA's *Shadowrun* novels) since they are easy for gamers to find. Nor have I included short stories (unless they are part of a cyberpunk collection) due to the difficulty of locating a particular story, but science-fiction magazines like *Analog* and *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* print short cyberpunk fiction by a variety of authors.

Charles De Lint, *Svaha*: From the author more noted for his excellent urban fantasies such as *Moonheart*, this is classic cyberpunk set in Canada. In De Lint's future, North America has lost its position as a world power. Much of it is wilderness dotted with futuristic enclaves run by ultratech (but mystical) Native Americans, while ruthless Japanese corporations and the criminal Yakuza dominate the remaining urban centers. A stolen enclave datachip with the key to the Native Americans' high technology sparks a clash between the Yakuza and cyberpunk lowlife, with a shaman in hot pursuit. With its mix of mysticism and street tech, *Svaha* is an excellent source of ideas for *Shadowrun* referees: It may even have been an inspiration for that game.

George Alec Effinger, *When Gravity Fails* and its sequel, A *Fire in the Sun*: These novels are well-written, hardboiled detective stories with a fascinating Islamic flavor—cyberpunk in the Middle East. Referees may wish to borrow the ideas of "moddies and daddies," implant chips that can give special abilities or artificial personalities, either copied from real people or based on fiction. Want to be a detective? Plug in a Mike Hammer chip. Want to be a tough guy, lecherous or paranoid for a day? That too can be managed. They should be required reading for anyone wanting to set a cyberpunk adventure in the Middle East. *Circuit's Edge*, a computer game based on Effinger's world, is also available.

William Gibson, *Neuromancer, Count Zero* and *Mona Lisa Overdrive*: The sprawl trilogy. In these novels, especially *Neuromancer*, Gibson gives us the prevailing vision of cyberspace and the archetypal computer hackers, corporate suits and street samurai. His vivid portraits of obsessed hackers, cunning corporates and sexy, violent assassins have provided most of the archetypes or character classes of cyberpunk gaming. After reading *Neuromancer* you will feel at home in any of the cyberpunk game worlds so far published, and you'll have enjoyed a good book as well. *Count Zero* continues *Neuromancer*'s story, with some minor characters reappearing and more insight into Gibson's future. *Mona Lisa Overdrive* is also enjoyable, but adds little in the way of background, except for a glimpse of England and the life of media celebrities and technological extrapolation. Gibson's work is great for brand-name atmosphere—for example "it was a cheap Korean copy of the Chinese version of the Ono-Sendai MK V cyberspace deck encased in pink synthetic leather."

William Gibson, *Burning Chrome*: This collection contains some stories that fit directly into the same future as *Neuromancer*, including one featuring the street samurai Molly Millions. Gibson uses the short story form to good effect: "Johnny Mnemonic," "Dogfight" and the title story are particularly good, with strange and memorable characters, including a cybernetic heroin-addict dolphin who once worked for the navy. *Burning Chrome* is also a useful source for cyberware ideas—in "Dogfight," parents equip their kids with a "chastity" brain implant before sending them away to college, and similar types of implants are used on criminals to prevent them repeating their crimes.

Jonathan Littell, *Bad Voltage*: A somewhat derivative novel with an interesting setting: Paris. In a typical cyberpunk future, a member of a Parisian streetgang whose motto is "skate or die" discovers that life among the corporate elite is far more decadent and violent than his earlier existence as a sanitized streetpunk. Although it lacks a compelling plot, the book has some useful maps of the catacombs under Paris, vivid self-destructive streetgang characters, and some amusing but implausible technology (like antigravity skateboards).

Victor Milan, *The Cybernetic Samurai*: The bloody story of the development of the first artificial intelligence in Japan after WWIII. No cyberspace or cyborgs, but feuding rival corporations and very sophisticated computer technology. Useful for corporate intrigue, mercenary battles, AI behavior and a view of cyberpunk Japan from the top of the heap instead of the bottom. A tense, involving story, too. A sequel, *The Cybernetic Shogun*, is also available in hardcover.

W.T. Quick, *Dreams of Flesh and Sand* and its sequel, *Dreams of God and Men*: Quick gives us basically the same vision of the global computer net and cyberspace that Gibson gave us—but tells the story from the beginning. Iceberg and Icebreaker are the first hackers to discover cyberspace, and

they encounter the artificial intelligence that is creating it. From then on the novels become a fast-paced action story full of chases, street fights and *Tron*-like cyberspace battles. Not as well written as most of the other books—Quick's society, characters and situations seem less real, more artificial, but he's improving. There are some interesting ideas, notably an underground society of genetically engineered wolf-people. And the books present a vision of corporate mercs and street samurai who are as heavily armed and loaded down with combat cyberware as any character a player will ever create! Quick continues to write books in his universe, including a far-future sequel, *Yesterday's Pawn*, and a prequel—but these are less cyberpunk in tone and technology.

John Shirley, *A Song Called Youth* trilogy (*Eclipse, Eclipse Corona, Eclipse Penumbra*): It's the near future, NATO is fighting what's left of the Soviets after *glasnost* fell apart and Europe is in ruins. In the United States, fascism and fundamentalism have become allies and are plotting a new, bioengineered holocaust which will engulf all non-WASP peoples. A diverse coalition of freedom fighters tries to stop this, ranging from Israeli secret agents to punk rockers, space colonists and computer hackers. Both sides employ spies, soldiers and a powerful array of original cyberpunk-type technology ranging from subtle computer-assisted media manipulation to the brutal extractor, a biochemical brainwashing device and mind probe. Shirley's characters are well-realized, and he pulls off the complex plot without a hitch. His world would make an excellent cyberpunk campaign setting, particularly for players who enjoy Twilight: 2000 action between organized military and paramilitary forces. In fact, referees of Twilight: 2000 may want to consider using Shirley's universe—or elements of it—as an alternative background, with the war and breakdown of Europe occurring around 2015 rather than in 2000.

Norman Spinrad, *Little Heroes*. Cyberpunk rock 'n' roll, social change and what the spread of smart computers could do to the music industry and American society. The '60s meet the 21st century, as Spinrad tells the story of the creation of a the first silicon rock star by cynical corporate mavens and shows how the power flows back to the people. No killer cyborgs or cyberspace, but some gritty street-level action and interesting neural interface technology similar but distinct from that used by Effinger. The streetpunk, rock industry and anarchist characters are well done and could inspire many interesting NPCs. It's low-tech, rock 'n' roll, near-future cyberpunk, fun to read and ridiculously optimistic.

Bruce Sterling, *Islands in the Net*. Sterling is the most articulate spokesperson of the cyberpunk movement. Here he shows how the ordinary person might live in a low-tech cyberworld. He goes on to explore what the effects of a global computer net may be on world politics, and what happens to Africa and the Caribbean in a cyberpunk world (not pretty). The book also shows how future political terrorists may employ cyberpunk technology to nasty effect. Like Effinger's exploration of the Middle East, this book opens new milieus for cyberpunk characters to explore.

Bruce Sterling, *Schismatrix*. Shows how human society with access to cybernetic technology might evolve deeper in the solar system. Earth is abandoned due to eco-catastrophe, and humanity has gone to Mars, the asteroid belt and beyond, leading to interesting splinter cultures in a solar system that could make a fascinating campaign setting. The main conflict is between the bioengineering shapers and the cyborg mechanists, each of who have different philosophies (see *Crystal Express*) which are expressed in their technology. The struggle spans decades and centuries as the unaging bioengineered hero struggles against the war and attempts to find a solution, becomes a legend, and slowly gains power and influence. On the way, technology continues to improve, old enemies reappear, and earth meets aliens. *Schismatrix*'s only flaw is that it lacks a driving narrative, but it is worth reading for the breadth of Sterling's vision and the insight into biotechnology.

Bruce Sterling, *Crystal Express*. An anthology of his shorter work, this includes five of the mechanist/shaper stories which share the background of *Schismatrix*. These stories are snapshots of a conflict between two societies, one based around altering the human form through bioengineering, the other through cybernetic implants. In addition to their view of a far-future cyberpunk universe that includes many alien species, they also have many interesting gadgets and images that can enrich a campaign. Like Gibson, Sterling is perhaps best read in the short-story form, where each story can focus on one idea or facet of his alien culture rather than leaving the reader to drown in the whole. Even those who dislike his longer work should give *Crystal Express* a try.

Bruce Sterling, *Mirrorshades*. Sterling edited this collection of other authors. It's billed as "the cyberpunk anthology," but it's more new-wave science fiction and thus is primarily of interest to the SF fan rather than someone interested mainly in cyberpunk. There are one or two good campaign ideas, including gene-engineered mermen and useful plots for evil corporations. But read *Burning Chrome* or *Crystal Express* first.

Michael Swanwick, *Vacuum Flowers*. This is cyberpunk civilization in the asteroid belt. Implanted personality tapes of other people's minds—wetware—similar to those of Effinger are available to anyone who wants to experience someone else's mind; sale of interesting personality tapes is big business. *Vacuum Flowers* features a very strange culture, a memorable main character, and a plot of Byzantine complexity. Not for everyone, but anyone wanting to combine a cyberpunk campaign with interplanetary space travel should at least give it a try.

John Varley, *Ophiuchi Hotline*. Arguably the earliest real cyberpunk novel, predating *Neuromancer* by a few years. Sex-changing, advanced human biomodification for both practical and cosmetic purposes, multiple versions of the same characters existing through cloning and braintaping, and a very weird human civilization scattered through the solar system. Resembles *Vacuum Flowers* in some ways—if you like one, you'll probably like the other. Again, this near-future vision of the solar system with society transformed by cybernetic and bioengineering technology offers an exciting setting that has been little-used in most cyberpunk games, but which is common in cyberpunk fiction.

Vernor Vinge, *True Names*. A well-written short novel, this is classic cyberspace—computer hackers adopting fantasy personalities, creating magical realms and disguising their identities with computer-generated personas. The *True Names* of the title refers to the belief that if you find a wizard's true name (or, mutus mutandis, a criminal hacker's true identity) you have power over him (you can give his address to the

cops!). The book offers several possibilities for netrunner solo adventures, particularly if you use a fantasy-style system for cyberspace like that in R. Talsorian's *Cyberpunk*.

Michael D. Weaver, *Mercedes Knights*. Not really cyberpunk, but closely related. In near-future America, a famous actress is secretly cloned several dozen times without her knowledge, so that the clones can be sold as slaves to anyone who would like to possess her. But one of the clones escapes, and the original Mercedes tries to find out why she is wanted for murder! An interesting story, with a striking cover by Bill Sienkiewicz, an artist better known for his work in comic books. The novel also features some interesting teleportation technology and weird minor characters that compare favorably with those in the *Illuminatus* trilogy. *Mercedes Knights* could be used as the basis of an adventure in any cyberpunk background.

Walter Jon Williams, *Hardwired*. Next to *Neuromancer*, this book is the most important source for a cyberpunk campaign. It doesn't have Gibson-style cyberspace. What it does have is a very strong, action-packed story, excellent characters, and a fascinating vision of a corporate-controlled earth. Many of the gadgets in *Hardwired* have already been "borrowed" by most cyberpunk games. They include the armored hovercraft Panzers, "hardwired" enhanced nervous systems, twisted cyberweaponry (especially the deadly cybersnake) and the "black mind" invasive computer virus.

The author has since adapted the novel into a game supplement for R. Talsorian's *Cyberpunk*. The hard-driving plot of this novel—rebel Americans in all-out undercover war against corporate exploiters—would make an excellent campaign background for something other than the usual mercenary innercity mayhem. There is also a short sequel, *Solipsystem*, which has appeared in magazine and small-press format.

Walter Jon Williams, *Voice of the Whirlwind*. The *Hardwired* world, about 50 years later. Cyberpunk with interstellar travel! This book shows how to run a traditional cyberpunk campaign in space. Corporate warfare, computer interfacing, hardwired assassins, braintaping and clone insurance, rundown space colonies, .66 gauss express rifles, and strange alien power blocs as nasty and scheming as human corporations. What else do you want? Again, a shorter work exists retelling part of the story from another character's viewpoint, but it has so far appeared only in small press format.

Walter Jon Williams, *Angel Station*. A few decades or centuries past the previous book. Basically, it's a typical free traders gone cyberpunk: runaway gene engineering (including psi powers), casual computer implants. Lots of fun, with a strangely happy ending. Less useful for normal cyberpunk campaigns, but useful for someone running a space/cyberpunk universe. Referees of **2300 AD** may find considerable inspiration for scenarios here, especially if they have **Earth/ Cybertech Sourcebook**. Ω

he 'MechWarrior is the elite of any armed force in the 31st century. Romanticized by the public, scorned by "conventional" soldiers and feared by all, the 'MechWarrior is the embodiment of 1000 years of high-tech warfare. However, very little is known about 'MechWarrior society. Although they are the romantic heroes of the age, the community of 'MechWarriors is not a monolithic block of men and women at arms, all identical and all unswervingly loyal to their house lords and to the community of 'MechWarriors in general. Like the societies which spawned them, 'MechWarriors have developed their own social structure within the nations of the Succession Wars, a society within a society that wields tremendous power. It is just as important to understand the differences between 'MechWarriors as it is to understand the differences between the Successor States themselves.

TYPES

Line 'MechWarrior: The most common kind of 'MechWarrior is the line 'MechWarrior—a common soldier who has been found to have the raw talent necessary for piloting a BattleMech and who therefore undergoes BattleMech training. Line 'MechWarriors come form all sorts of backgrounds, although most of them are recruited form the *middle classes of the Successor States*, usually through local political connections. Examples are most of the warriors in the various line regiments of the houses, such as the Steiner Lyran Guard, most of the Davion Crucis Lancers, Kurita's District Forces, Liao's Reserve Forces or the various local forces of Marik's Free Worlds League.

Although line 'MechWarriors are not nobles and are not members of famous military families, they are nevertheless a specialized group of warriors. They have as little in common with an average "grunt" infantryman as they have with their noble counterparts. They are similar, in psychological makeup and social outlook, to the fighter aircraft pilots of the 20th century—a group of warriors that requires the ability to master advanced technical knowledge, military tactics and hand-eye coordination. They receive the best that any Successor State has to offer and so can be just as arrogant as any noble or family 'Mechwarrior.

Family 'MechWarrior: The family 'MechWarrior is a member of a family which has a long tradition of fealty to a particular house lord. The 'MechWarrior families form the backbone of a Successor State's military and *administrative apparatus; without the* support of the families, a house lord is quickly toppled from power. The families represent the cadre of any ruling house's military; they often command a state's elite units and

IT TAKES ALL KINDS

'MechWarriors and Society

By Patrick Sheats

military academies, and many obtain high-ranking positions in civilian administration after retirement.

'MechWarrior families have a tradition of being fine warriors, but not always being wealthy or powerful. Some 'MechWarrior families die out, usually when they have fallen out of favor with their house lord, or when tragedy strikes and the entire family is wiped out by war or disease. Some 'MechWarriors, when they achieve great fame and power, seek their fortunes in private enterprise rather than climb the ladder of government bureaucracy. Sometimes, a member of a disgraced 'MechWarrior family manages to restore the family name with honor. Stephen Ducrimmon-Davion, commander of the 1st Davion Guards, is probably the best living example of this. Nevertheless, very few 'MechWarrior families can survive without the support of the ruling house. Usually, members of such a family become mercenaries and adventurers, trying to restore their former glory in different ways.

Noble 'MechWarrior: The noble 'Mech-Warrior is in many ways similar to the family 'MechWarrior, but is distinguished by the fact that fighting is not the primary direction of a noble's education. Nobility is most often trained for administration and politics, and combat training is generally provided because of state laws or to provide a more complete understanding of Inner Sphere politics (which is, after all, dominated by war). Unlike a family 'MechWarrior, a noble

'MechWarrior is not expected to serve forever in the military, nor is he expected to become a senior officer. There are, however, examples of noble 'MechWarriors who become career soldiers or even begin 'MechWarrior families. Examples are Duke Haid Ricol of the Draconis Combine, all the ruling house lords (save Takashi Kurita, who is a family 'MechWarrior), most of the nobility of the Free Worlds League, the Draconis Combine and the Federated Suns, and the infamous "social generals" of the Lyran Commonwealth.

Noble 'MechWarriors are notorious for being the best or the worst of soldiers. There are examples of noble 'MechWarriors who have caused the worst sort of military blunders through ineptitude. There are also examples of noble 'MechWarriors who have saved entire armies from ruin through skill or personal sacrifice. A noble is expected to be a good leader, and when a noble fails in that task, he is condemned, often reduced to poverty for life and sometimes killed outright. This is the price that nobles must pay to maintain their privileges.

Mercenary: The mercenary is a special case. Mercenaries are some of the most capable and feared 'MechWarriors in the Inner Sphere—names such as Wolf's Dragoons, Eridani Light Horse and McCarron's Armored Cavalry stand out—and, for these units, there is no lack of lucrative contracts. There is also no small amount of envy and jealousy, as the near-destruction of Wolf's Dragoons by House Kurita in the Fourth War indicates. Even the most prosperous mercenary must realize that, although they are not bound as strictly by regional military law or custom, they also exist outside the support systems that other militaries enjoy. They must provide their own logistical support, or they must depend on the goodwill and honor of the house which signed their contract. All the houses of the Inner Sphere have, at one time or another, betrayed a merc unit by failing to provide logistical support or transport off-world. Very few protections exist for the mercenary—they live by the seat of their pants.

Freelance Mercenary: There are two kinds of mercs—freelance and traditional. Freelance mercs constitute the majority of mercenaries—they range from the rough and rowdy warriors of McCarron's Armored Cavalry to the down-and-outs like Brion's Legion or Wilson's Hussars. These are the most commonly seen mercs, and are the type of merc most shown in popular entertainment and common lore. They fight for the reasons that mercenaries usually fight—for money. Few expect to make a large profit in the mercenary business; even units as well-known as Miller's Marauders or Hansen's Roughriders have had periods where they were lucky to break even. Most freelance

mercenaries, however, fight in this way because they cannot fight any other way. The freelance mercenary is a capable warrior. But they cannot cope with the strict regimentation and the petty politics of house armies, and very few of them have any skills that would help them in civilian life. These warriors usually turn to a mercenary way of life as the only group that will have them. It is this spirit of independence that makes the freelance merc such a romantic character in Successor State lore.

Traditional Mercenary: Traditional mercs are an unusual breed in human history. They are much like family 'MechWarriors, except they have a loyalty to a mercenary unit and not a ruling house. Like Gypsy families, they travel together, and have a complete society and infrastructure unto themselves. These are the warriors of the Eridani Light Horse, bound together by their Star League traditions; the senior officers of Wolf's Dragoons, bound by their secret knowledge of the organization's past; and the personnel of the Waco Rangers, bound by their Death Oath against the Dragoons. These mercs were raised within the unit and trained by the unit, and will serve with the unit until they die (very few ever drop out or pledge loyalty to any house lord). Some of these units, such as the Eridani Light Horse or the pre-Fourth War Wolf's Dragoons, have their own military academies, and most others have arrangements with ruling houses to allow use of house academies. They have as little resemblance to their freelance counterparts as they do to the house regulars they serve with. They are, however, the most feared warriors in the Inner Sphere.

A traditional mercenary is often as bound by loyalty and honor as any house soldier. They remain mercenaries because they cannot accept the conditions that would be imposed upon them by a house army. Unlike freelancers, they do not fight primarily for money, although that is of major concern to any mercenary. The reason they fight is usually out of ideology. Most units like this are remnants of Star League or Successor House forces that were destroyed in the Succession Wars. A good example of a newer traditional mercenary unit is the Grey Death Legion, bound together by a burning hatred of House Kurita.

There are many examples of warriors which embody several of these types. Grayson Carlyle, for example, is a family 'MechWarrior (his father was commander of a mercenary company on Trellwan) and a traditional merc at the same time (he is bound by his personal war with the Draconis Combine, and his unit has a permanent homeworld). The warriors of McCarron's Armored Cavalry are likely, over time, to become a unit of line 'MechWarriors instead of freelance mercs since most mercs who

remain under contract to one house for a long time often become house units themselves, and it is unlikely that MAC will leave House Liao. House Kurita is both a noble family and a 'MechWarrior family (*all* Kuritas have been 'MechWarriors, unlike the other houses, which have had ruling members who were not 'MechWarriors).

CHARACTERS

The following guidelines are for use with the *'MechWarrior* roleplaying system. These rules can be combined in any number of ways. The referee should be careful when using them, however, since they can be abused. A family 'MechWarrior who cannot live up to the family name will be disgraced and will lose the benefits of the ability. A noble 'MechWarrior who cannot bring victory may suffer the same fate. A character who starts out as a mercenary with no family backing or even a backup 'Mech will probably be "weeded out" fairly quickly. Common sense should be used in these cases.

Having a famous 'MechWarrior in a unit can lead to all sorts of interesting situations. The unit would then have a plausible excuse for being drawn into palace intrigue, fiendish foreign plots or even intraunit rivalries, as most line 'MechWarriors do not appreciate the "high and mighty" throwing their weight around. This should provide a good diversion from the usual *BattleTech* adventure.

Line 'MechWarrior: Line 'MechWarriors are the "normal" characters of the *BattleTech* world. They have from 0 to 200 CP and are constructed according to the *'MechWarrior* rules.

Family 'MechWarrior: Family 'Mech-Warriors are built on 200 to 300 CP and usually receive academy training. Many younger members of 'MechWarrior families are junior officers or warriors posted to elite house regiments. They also have the Family Name ability.

Noble 'MechWarrior: Noble 'Mech-Warriors are built on 300 to 400 CP and are similar to family 'MechWarriors, except that they tend to have more authority and prestige, at least within their domains. They also have the Noble Family Name ability.

Freelance Mercenary: Freelance mercenaries can be any of the above types of 'MechWarriors, although no noble or family 'MechWarrior becomes a mercenary unless the family has fallen upon hard times. Freelancers are usually outcast nobles or veteran line 'MechWarriors who have obtained their own 'Mechs (sometimes illegally).

Traditional Mercenary: Traditional mercenaries are not as disreputable as freelancers, and the social structures of traditional units parallel the social structures of house armies. There are however, few noble 'MechWarriors in traditional mercenary units, as mercenary units cannot grant titles by

themselves. Many proud families make up the ranks of traditional merc units, and many of these units are composed entirely of family 'MechWarriors.

Any noble or family 'MechWarrior who becomes a mercenary will probably have to have the Outcast Family ability.

ABILITIES

Family Name (40 CP): The character is part of a prestigious 'MechWarrior family. This ability serves as a useful contact for information on house politics within the character's Successor State. It also provides a –2 on any reaction roll made with NPCs within the character's house military, and a –1 on any reaction roll outside of the military.

Noble Family Name (75 CP): The character is either a child or close relative of a noble. Noble Family Name serves as a prominent contact with the noble family member, and as a Family Friend ability. It also provides a –2 reaction roll within the house military. Outside of the military, local reaction will depend upon the reputation of the noble. The character may also have access to some of the noble's funds, if the referee sees fit.

Outcast Family (–25 CP): The character is a member of an outcast noble or 'Mech-Warrior family. The family name is despised by the ruling house, so the character must live in exile in another Successor State. The character is under a death sentence within his original domain, and cannot receive noble titles or land grants within the original domain. The name will attach a +2 modifier to reaction rolls made by NPCs from the original domain and a +1 modifier to reaction rolls made by NPCs within the character's current domain (nobody trusts a traitor). Ω

GURPS Gamemaster's Screen

Review by Craig Sheeley.
Steve Jackson Games, Inc.
$8.95.
Two four-page cardboard data screens, one four-page reference insert.
Published in 1991.

The first referee screen published for the rules-heavy *GURPS* game was useful, but somewhat flawed. Attitude tables were not included, and the hit location tables were missing. This screen makes up for it. I'm rather pleased, since I run *GURPS*.

All the maneuvers, hit locations, ranged weapon attacks and critical hits are on one data screen, complete with orange divider lining to make the print easier to read. I noted the addition of the small but quite useful Hits in a Burst Table, for those preferring to hose automatic fire downrange.

The other data screen contains those formerly missing tables for NPC running, jumping (sounds like a track-and-field event, doesn't it?), travelling, administering first aid and making fright checks, plus modifiers for combat in adverse conditions. I do miss the bleeding rules that were on the old referee screen; maybe I can stick that screen in with this one and solve that problem.

The insert is nothing more and nothing less than a character-generation cheat-sheet, listing everything you need to whip up a quick character.

Very nice.

MINIMAL WASTED SPACE

I must complement SJG for not wasting more than one face of this screen set. Of course, one face must be used for the cover art—after all, the cover not only identifies the product, but helps sell it. But unlike other game companies, SJG doesn't use up the back-facing page with more art. The UPC is sandwiched neatly among the critical hit tables. Hooray! Now if we could only get FASA, R. Talsorian Games, TSR, etc. to follow this lead.

EVALUATION

I recommend this screen to *GURPS* referees. It's a good product, at a really fair price—you'd probably pay $10 for something like this from any of the manufacturers mentioned above.

The Rigger Black Book

Review by Craig Sheeley.
FASA Corporation.
$15.00.
Written by Phillip McGregor.
144-page vehicle sourcebook for *Shadowrun*.
Published in 1991.

William Gibson should be mentioned in the credits to this book as the godfather of the concept behind it. The "rigger" character is taken straight from this book *Hardwired*, which followed an adventure concerning a man who was wired with cybernetics that enabled him to control specially adapted vehicles with his mind. All he had to do was socket in, and he literally became the vehicle.

That's exactly the idea behind the "rigger" character in *Shadowrun*. Besides the street samurai, the rigger is one of the few really "straight" believable characters in the game, completely eschewing magic for pure technology and not generally concerned with the silly business of being a fantasy character stuck into a science-fiction background. To a rigger, the world is a pretty dull place until he wires into his rig (sound familiar, *Car Wars* fans?).

The Rigger Black Book does the most logical thing it can do to expand the rigger's background and capabilities—it introduces a lineup of new vehicles! Not all the vehicles are new—the old standbys from *Shadowrun* are here as well. But look closely at their listings—some of them have changed! In addition to showcasing vehicles ranging from street-legal cars, motorcycles (some of them definitely not

Don't Read This!

Go back and read this issue's editorial instead, if you haven't done so already.

GDW's

SECRET PROJECT

is finally revealed for your eyes only, you lucky **Challenge** reader you.

street-legal), trucks, vans, hovercraft, aircraft and boats, the book contains revised and expanded vehicle combat rules, plus a good section on new stuff for your vehicle.

Ah, the modifications section. This is the true meat for the rigger. Without the ability to monkey with the stock vehicle, there's not much reason for the book, right? Well, take monkey wrench in hand and go to it. There are plenty of nice gadgets, such as plebeian things like seats, lights and safety devices, as well as such nice bits as turrets, hardpoints, armor, engine modifications, sensors, ECM and ECCM systems, and new weapons.

Be warned: You have to watch this section real close, boyo. The rules are clear and succinct, the gadgets seemingly low-cost and high-performance. But don't be fooled. It's like a kid in a candy store—before you realize it, your modified vehicle will be racking up the nuyen to two or three times the vehicle's original stock cost. It's just so tempting to rifle through the junk you can use to kit that clunky car out to a lean, mean, fighting machine. By the time you get done, not even the manufacturer will recognize it.

A word of warning to other shadowrunners—don't tackle a rigger's vehicle. The new vehicle rules pass the advantage to a person wired into the machine; a good rigger is so fearsome that his vehicle almost becomes a living beast. Faster, bigger and tougher than any mere life-form (except, of course, the dracoforms and the ignorantly huge mutant animals featured in other supplements), a rigger's vehicle will rip up a nonrigged tank. Even a rigger with mediocre skill and good rig-wires is twice as good as a professional driver.

Of course, there are a few rules in the back of the book that other shadowrunners will want to see, too. The group I game with almost refuses to use any fire except burst fire, and called shots are another norm with them. These tactics increase the killing power of the fairly wimpy weapons in Shadowrun, making a burst from an SMG almost lethal. Someday FASA has to issue a supplement compiling these little rules changes into one place, instead of spreading them out over a number of supplements.

SO WHY BUY IT?

The *Rigger Black Book* is *the* supplement for riggers. At last this ignored subclass comes into its own and rises to power above the mages that rule many *Shadowrun* games—vehicles aren't easily enchanted, it

seems. Other characters will find all the nifty vehicles nice, too, and referees will note that now they have a place to blow their nuyen. (Ah, the wonders of owning a vehicle. Payments, repairs, breakdowns, fear of theft, etc. Just another button to push the characters' motives.) The new vehicular combat rules are better than the original rules by far, and might prove useful for the GM wanting to throw his players a little vehicular action. After all, what's a modern-day drama without a car chase?

Special Mention: FASA actually includes an index so you can find what you're looking for. Well done, FASA people. Indices are too rare in game books.

NOTHING'S PERFECT

Given some of the slip-ups that I'm used to finding in FASA books, I was rather surprised that I didn't find more wrong with this book.

What did I find? Well, some very confusing bits about fuel-efficiency modifications from increasing a vehicle's power and mass—the way the rules read, the fuel efficiency actually goes up with power and mass! This is clearly wrong. A simple minus sign in the proper places would have solved the problem. What's a player to think when he sees a "+10%" applied to fuel "economy" per point of armor added to the vehicle? A −10% would have been more appropriate.

And the vehicle modification rules are a bit tricky. Read them over carefully before using them.

And that's it, really. For a game product, this is an A+ grade!

WHO WANTS THIS?

Shadowrun referees who want a complete rules set. Anyone with a rigger character. Anyone who wants neat vehicles to trundle around in, even if they're not rigged. And it's worth the $15.

The Arasaka Brainworm
Review by Craig Sheeley.
Atlas Games.
$7.95.
Written by Thomas Kane.
32-page roleplaying adventure for *Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0.*

The Arasaka Brainworm poses an interesting question in the world of dark future: What do you do when you have to rely on yourself, and only yourself, in a hostile situation? This adventure takes the street samurai off the street and plunks him into an environment where everyone's hand is turned against him, and there's no way out and no one to call on for help.

Initially, the street sams are hired to do a simple info retrieval from a mole—a deep spy on an island in the middle of the Pacific 1000 miles from nowhere and even farther form anywhere else. Of course, things aren't that simple—Arasaka Security protects this island, and everyone on the island knows everybody else on sight. Imagine the "small-town" syndrome, enhanced with armed paranoia. Now try to infiltrate it.

Tough enough for you? Uh oh. Once the adventurers get on the island (an adventure in itself), things fall apart rapidly. I can't reveal how they fall apart without giving away the adventure, but an evil smile crossed my face when I read about the sequence of events.

The module consists of the introductory section, which sets the PCs up to prepare for the adventure; "Getting In," which details the problems of getting onto the island; "Welcome to Johnston," covering the the intrusion and subsequent screw-up; "Layout and Security," for the referee's eyes only (maps, stats, security precautions, etc.); "Afterglow," which deals with wrapping up the adventure; and an appendix, covering the virus that's the focus of the mission.

EVALUATION

I like *The Arasaka Brainworm.* It is fairly well organized and competently documented, and it has a good map layout that leaves very few holes for the GM to plug. (There will be holes. Trust me, the players will find them! But that's true of almost all adventures.) Most importantly, this adventure is nonsequential—i.e., it doesn't have a set and immutable sequence of events that the players can't alter. The referee can comfortably wing it—and concentrate on being sneaky and smart instead of bringing out the guns and playing Terminator.
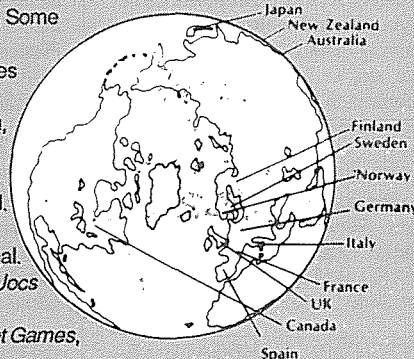
In this adventure, brains count for more than brawn. It gives the less combat-oriented character types a chance to shine. A med-tech and a netrunnner are recommended in the text. I would say that they were essential, and it wouldn't hurt to have additional runners and techs (both medical and mechanical).

On the down side, the interior art is a bit ugly—typical of the vast majority of interior art available to the gaming industry—and I was a trifle surprised to discover some character stats exceeding maximums. But on the whole, a good adventure.

CHALLENGE Classifieds

Challenge Classifieds, Managing Editor, Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646

Classified Ads

Challenge accepts all gaming-related classified ads, subject to the amount of space available and good taste. Challenge does reserve the right to refuse any ad.

Challenge will not be held liable for errors occurring in advertisements. If you find an error in your ad, please send a corrected version to Challenge.

Classified ads are free, and run for at least one issue, longer as space permits. Any reasonable length is accepted, but all ads are subject to editing. Please type ads.

Display Ads

Write to receive our rate card.

PLAYERS WANTED

PLAYERS WANTED for a *Living Steel* play-by-mail game. Swords and Alpha team members are needed to secure a base of power on the planet Rhand. For information, please send a SASE to David Peters, 5422 Pine Glen Road, La Crescenta, CA 91214. (60)

GAMING VIA ELECTRONIC BBS underway and seeking players—SF game and fantasy game. Will start more games if GMs volunteer. Call SKYLAND BBS in Asheville, NC at (704) 254-7800 2400-8-N-1 anytime. Log on as yourself (no handles), explore the BBS, check out the games running. Free. (59)

I AM STARTING a *Talislanta* PBM. If you are interested in a unique fantasy PBM set after a cataclysmic war of magic, contact Matt Johnson, 625 W. Malvern, Fullerton, CA 92632. (59)

BATTLETECH player looking for worthy opponents in the San Francisco Peninsula area. Interested parties please write to J. M. Hiatt, 832 N. Humbolt St. #1, San Mateo, CA 94401-1439. (58)

ATTENTION RENEGADE LEGIONNAIRES! Playtesters needed for scenarios in any or all *Renegade Legion* game systems. This is real playtesting! I will send scenarios and a questionnaire to fill out and send back. Criticism

and suggestions are welcome. If your group is running out of scenarios to play, this is perfect for you. For more information, contact Christopher King, Box MWC-1847, 1701 College Ave., Fredericksburg, VA 22401-4666. (56)

VAMPIRE HUNTERS, this is the PBM for you! I am starting a *Rifts Vampires* PBM, Contact me for information and special custom character sheet. Matthew Johnson, 625 W. Malvern Ave., Fullerton, CA 92632. (56)

STATE COORDINATORS and local representatives wanted for the Committee for the Advancement of Role-Playing Games. Send a SASE to CAR-PGa International HQ, Attn: W. A. Flatt, Chair, 8032 Locust Ave., Miller, IN 46403. (56)

HISTORY OF THE IMPERIUM WORKING GROUP (HIWG) is a **Traveller** club spanning from Australia to Finland, active in **Traveller** development. Members receive the bimonthly *Tiffany Star* newsletter. Write to Ed Edwards, 1410 E. Boyd, Norman, OK 73071. (54)

WRITER would like to contact players and designers for history of the hobby. Older players, second-generation gamers and women are of particular interest. Write to J. Cambias, 18 Georgetown Ct., Durham, NC 27705. (54)

SHADOWRUN PLAYERS wanted in Tempe/Scottsdale, AZ area. Please contact Peter Wimmer at 2646 Champlain Ave., Tempe, AZ 85281. (54)

COMBINED ARMS/COMMAND DECISION group looking for University of Florida, SFCC and any others interested in an extended miniatures campaign. Contact Harold Medicus, PO Box 936, Micanopy, FL 32667. (54)

BATTLETECH 'MechWarrior: Reports of our death have been greatly exaggerated! Samos' Swordsmen, formerly the Federated-Commonwealth 472nd RCT, is seeking any new sibko which is ready for a Trial of Position. Those

who survive the training course will be invited to participate in our Cerberus Campaign in the Outworlds Alliance. Are you Star Commander material? Seyla! Anyone interested in a long-running, experienced roleplaying campaign should contact Swordsmen Recruiting Command, c/o Khan Gunther Bellows, Route 2, Box 157, Micanopy, FL 32667. (54)

I AM STARTING a *Rifts* PBM. For information and special custom character sheet, contact Matthew Johnson, 625 W. Malvern Ave., Fullerton, CA 92632. (54)

STATE COORDINATORS and local representatives wanted for the the Committee for the Advancement of Role-Playing Games. Please send SASE to CAR-PGa International HQ, Attn: W. A. Flatt, Chair, 8032 Locust Ave., Miller, IN 46403. (54)

NEW TO THE AREA. Desire to play or referee any GDW or *Shadowrun* campaign. Also play wargames. Contact D. Coleman Rape Jr., 611 Coleman St., Stephenville, TX 76401. (53)

OLD TRAVELLER PLAYERS in the New Brunswick, NJ area. If you are interested, write to Marc Grossman, 21 Manor Ct., Building 2, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. (53)

FOR SALE

LARGE COLLECTION of used games in good condition: SF, *Dungeons & Dragons, cyberpunk* and *GURPS* games, and some out-of-print TSR products. Contact Matt Johnson, 625 W. Malvern, Fullerton, CA 92632. (59)

ITEMS FOR TRAVELLER, *Star Wars, Star Trek,* Twilight: 2000, 2300 AD. Also a number of non-RPGs. All in good condition and at cheap prices. All must go before my wife burns them. Send SASE to Fred Kiesche, 123 Rachel Court, Franklin Park, NJ 08823. (57)

TRAVELLER collection, books,

supplements, adventures, etc. Also, **Azhanti High Lightning.** For list, send SASE to Paul Sanders, 612 S. Patton Ct., Denver, CO 80219. (53)

MEGATRAVELLER material on disk. This IBM-format material currently is about 10 *megabytes* in size (about half is pkzipped). It ranges from library data to vehicle designs to sector maps to articles to software/spreadsheets. Send SASE for list to Bryan Borich, 3890 50th St., San Diego, CA 92105-3005. (53)

TRADE

GDW'S **Rebellion Sourcebook** (**MegaTraveller**) or ICE's *Space-master* modules or sourcebooks. I will trade for **Twilight: 2000** material (first and second editions) or TSR's *Top Secret* game material. Contact Kurt Searfoss, 708c NE Ball Drive, Lees Summit, MO 64063. (57)

KALISZ TOWN-GUIDE with map (original in Polish). I will trade for a fair copy of **Black Madonna.** Arne Rassek, Berliner Str. 23, 3005 Hemmingen 1, Germany. (56)

MEGATRAVELLER Gamers' Exchange—Share starships, vehicles, maps, worlds and adventure scenarios with other **Mega-Traveller** gamers. Over 60 megabytes of information. Send SASE (use IRC for non-Canadian addresses) to Rob Prior, 262 Dunforest, Willowdale, Ontario, M2N 4J9 CANADA. (53)

DRAGON 13 for one unopened pack of *AD & D* trading cards. Or I can make an offer for more packs. Contact Eddie Burns, 510 Buckingham Ct., Hopewell, VA 23860. (53)

WANTED

BRITISH *BATTLETECH* fans who have copies of *MekTek* issues 4 and up. Willing to swap for purchase. Please contact Michael Bolda, 1183 Violet St., Atlantic Beach, FL 32233. (59)

CLASSIC TRAVELLER material. *Vanguard Reaches, The Beyond* and *SORAG* by Paranoia Press, and *Glimmerdrift Reaches* and *Ley Sector* by Judges Guild. Would also like any issues of the **Journal of the Travellers Aid Society**. Prefer originals but good photocopies okay. Please send list, prices and condition of items to David Feltmeyer, 7535 Dale Ave., St. Louis, MO 63117. (58)

CHALLENGE 32, 35 AND 38 (*Star Wars* material). Will pay decent price for either photocopy or original. Write to Kurt Searfoss, 708c NE Ball Drive, Lees Summit, MO 64063. (57)

ISSUES 1 AND 4 of the **Journal of the Travellers Aid Society**, and issue 1 of **High Passage**, either originals or photocopies. Send details to Mark Clark, 598 Thompson Station Road, Newark, DE 19711-7520. (56/53)

COPY OF THE *Near Star List*(all pages) from **2300 AD**. Also *Atlas of the Imperium* and *MegaTraveller Journal 1*. Will pay reasonable price or trade *MTJ 2, MT World Builders' Handbook* or copies of articles from **JTAS** (5-24) or **Challenge** (25+). David Johnson, 11150 Beamer Road #291, Houston, TX 77-89. (56)

CYBERPUNK, *BattleTech* or *Shadowrun* sets for individuals who are incarcerated. Funds are extremely low, so payment may not be possible. If you are willing to *donate* any of the above starting sets, please send them to Benjamin Donovan, #882123, Indiana State Farm, 1500 West US 40, Greencastle, IN 46135-9275. (56)

PARTICIPANTS for a *Shadowrun, Cyberpunk*, etc. APAzine. Please write for information to Niko Wieleba, PO Box 10097, Glendale, CA 91209-0097. (56/51)

LOOKING FOR THE GAME (or supplement) which features Larry Niven's *Ringworld*. I can remember seeing the cover in 1985. If you know where I can find it—or, better yet, have a copy—please contact me. Benjamin J. Rogers, 902 Fulton Ave., Hannival, MO 63401. (54)

VIDEOTAPES of British TV series *Star Cops*. VHS or Beta formats acceptable. Rob Prior, 262 Dunforest, Willowdale, Ontario, CANADA M2N 4J9. (53)

PHOTOCOPIES in good condition of various articles in **Chal-**lenge 27-31, 33, 34, 40-44. Write for list to OB Vollant APA, 266 577 840, GD "A" Block, FO Halifax, Halifax, Nova Scotia, CANADA B3K 2XO. (53)

PHOTOCOPY of an early *White Dwarf* article giving statistics for the Blood Guard of Stephen Donaldson's *Chronicles of Thomas Covenant* series. I will pay a reasonable price or exchange articles. Please respond to Rick Taylor, 916 S. Booker, Little Rock, AR 72204. (53)

ATLAS OF THE IMPERIUM and 76 Patrons. If you can help, write to Marc Grossman, 21 Manor Ct., Building 2, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. (53)

ALL TWILIGHT: 2000 articles from the following issues of **Challenge**: 25, 26, 27, 30, 31 and 36. Am willing to pay all copy and postage costs. Contact Donald K. Doll, 830 S. Wenonah Ave., Oak Park, IL 60304-1036. (52)

ORIGINALS/PHOTOCOPIES of *Stardate* or *Stardrive* magazine. Price negotiable. I also need FASA's *Triangle* supplement. Contact Cary Layton, PO Box 416, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. (52)

IDEAS for computer programs to aid in playing and refereeing **MegaTraveller** game system. Programs will be PC compatible. Other game systems will be considered. Also want any available PC-compatible **MegaTraveller** programs (buy or trade). Programs will eventually be for sale, but the person who had the inspiration will receive a free copy of the completed program and credit in the documentation. Write to Russell Wetherington, 2611 Forbes St., Jacksonville, FL 32204. (52)

ANY *ROBOTECH* RPGs, preferably book one, *Macross*, but any will do. Contact Matt Schafer, 1796 Barker St. NE, Palm Bay, FL 32907. (52)

SECURITY LEAK magazine, Third Imperium. Originals or photocopies. Richard Artis, 151 G Meadow Place, Hope, IN 47246. (52)

ORIGINAL TRAVELLER material. Need rule books (#4 and up), supplements (#12+), Adventures (#9+), **Challenge** (#26, 29-35, 37-47), Traveller's Digest (any), *Grand Survey* (or *Robots, Action Aboard, Rescue on Galatea, Fate of the Sky Raiders, The Harreusa Project*. Photocopies okay. Send list, prices, conditions to Ken

Bartold, 26939 Sheahan, Dearborn Heights, MI 48127. (52)

MOTIVE, an Amateur Press Alliance (APA) which covers all aspects of the RPG hobby, is looking for new members. Members contribute to and receive a 200 (+/–)-page, bimonthly APA. RPGs most often covered are *MERP, HERO* System, **Twilight: 2000**, *CoC, Shadowrun* and *BattleTech*. Write to Wayne Peacock, 190 Reed St., Athens, GA 30605. (60)

THE SWORD & BLASTER, a new publication detailing games and groups in the Atlanta, GA area, is now available. Covers all aspects of roleplaying and boardgames, including reviews, poetry, game schedules, group contacts and more. Jeff Leggett, 2102-B Wexford Dr., Norcross, GA 30071. (60)

ETHER ILLUSTRATED NEWS, a **Space: 1889** newsletter. Contact Tom Gray, 101 Hackberry, Apt. 1503, Clute, TX 77531. (59)

INQUISITOR—*Warhammer 40K* newsletter/forum for experienced playes. Eq./vehicle design, open forum, scenarios, Q & A, army calc. worksheets, unit stat cards and more! *Inquisitor*, PO Box 14485, Santa Rosa, CA 95402-6485. (58)

GALACTIC ANARCHY is a PBMN game of exploration and conquest set after a protracted civil war. Two to 30 players vie for control of the universe, with up to 70 artifacts, 700 systems and 1000 fleets in one game. Anarchy By Mail, PO Box 873, Allen, TX 75002. (57)

TRANSACTIONS of the Royal Martian Geographical Society is a quarterly publication devoted to roleplaying in the Victorian age, with a primary emphasis on the game **Space: 1889**. Each 20-page issue features several adventures, detailed descriptions of NPCs and equipment, and background articles on late-19th-century history and culture. Send a SASE to *TRMGS*, c/o Mark Clark, 598 Thompson Station Road, Newark, DE 19711-7520. (56/53)

MELBOURNE TIMES: Newsletter providing background material for the *Earth Colonies* campaign. Features include news service, world briefs, character sketches, corporate portfolios, political analysis, cultural events and more. Subscribers and contributors send SASE to *Melbourne Times*, c/o David Johnson, 11150 Beamer Road #291, Houston, TX 77089. Overseas include three IRCs. (56)

SS&V (Starships, Starports & Vehicles) is a fanzine that covers the areas listed for **MegaTraveller**. It includes one article, with the rest devoted to designs. *AR (Alien Realms)* is a quarterly fanzine covering aliens in **MegaTraveller**. Currently, two issues are available. Write to Bryan Borich, 3890 50th St., San Diego, CA 92105-3005. (53)

I WISH TO ESTABLISH a fanzine dedicated to *Warhammer* fantasy roleplaying enthusiasts. Interested parties should reply to Rick Taylor, c/o *Der Chroniken Kaiserlich*, 916 S. Booker, Little Rock, AR 72204. (53)

ABA PROCEEDINGS. Exclusively **MegaTraveller** fanzine covering Vland Domain and all areas coreward and spinward. Each issue includes 1+ starship of TL14– (no TL15). Issues 12 and 13 were 10 and 12 pages. For more information, contact Clayton R. Bush, PO Box 119, Limon, CO 80828. Send letter-sized SASE for list of available HIWG documents. Starship spreadsheets available in WK1 (IBM) format on 5.25" disks. (52)

INQUISITOR. *Warhammer 40K* newsletter/forum for experienced players. EQ./vehicle design, open forum, scenarios, question and answer, army calculation worksheets, unit stat cards and more. Write to *Inquisitor*, PO Box 14485, Santa Rosa, CA 95402-6485. (52)

SPINWARD TIMES—a new fanzine dealing with the merchant and economics in **MegaTraveller**. Also included are adventures, medical data, news and equipment. Write to *Spinward Times*, c/o AG Games, 823 Ponsard St., Brossard, Quebec, CANADA J4W 1W1. (51)

SIGNAL-GK—New, exclusive **MegaTraveller** fanzine. Adventure in Dagudasuaag sector! Each issue will detail a subsector, a particular race and planets. At least two adventures in each issue. *Signal-GK*—A call for help; a call to adventure. Recognized by HIWG. Write to Jay Campbell, The Sanctuary, 45 Fairfield, Hebden Bridge, West Yorks, UK 4X7 6JD. (51)

JUMPSPACE—A new fanzine exclusively for **MegaTraveller**. Includes adventures, equipment, news, players' tips, fiction, and much more. For additional details, write to *Jumpspace*, c/o AG Games, 823 Ponsard St., Brossard, Quebec, CANADA J4W 1W1. (51)

Challenge 60

Rate each article from 0 to 5. 0 means you did not read the article. 1 indicates great dissatisfaction, and 5 indicates great satisfaction. 2, 3 and 4 are shades in between.

To use a separate sheet, list each article number, then your rating.

Send responses to:

Challenge Feedback
Managing Editor
PO Box 1646
Bloomington, IL 61702-1646 USA

— +

0 1 2 3 4 5 Article

☐☐☐☐☐☐ 1. Sailing (Twilight: 2000)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 2. One Night (Merc: 2000)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 3. Wet Navy 3 (MegaTraveller)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 4. Black War (MegaTraveller)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 5. Cult of Doom (Space: 1889)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 6. X-Wing Down (2300 AD)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 7. Vampires! (Shadowrun)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 8. Samedi Night Fever (Dark Conspiracy)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 9. Hot Metal Rain (Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0.)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 10. Madness from the Mythos (Cthulhu)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 11. Character Templates (Star Wars)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 12. Character Generation (Star Trek)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 13. Gamers' Guide to Cyberpunk Fiction
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 14. It Takes All Kinds (BattleTech)
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 15. Opinion
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 16. Traveller News Service
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 17. Conventions
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 18. Cartoon
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 19. Reviews
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 20. Classifieds
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 21. This issue's cover art
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 22. This issue's interior art
☐☐☐☐☐☐ 23. This issue as a whole

FREE Drawing!

Send us your feedback, and you will automatically be entered in our drawing for a FREE one-year subscription to **Challenge**, *the* magazine of science-fiction gaming.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Congratulations to Timothy B. White of Ft. Campbell, KY, who won a copy of **Dark Conspiracy** *for sending in his feedback for issue 56.*

Next Issue

Don't miss **Challenge 61**, our Heavy Metal special issue, available in June.

TWILIGHT: 2000

"Spooktek": Unusual equipment and weaponry for modern espionage, by Roman J. Andron. Plus "Murder Century": The M-100 Special Objectives Firearm, by Captain Thomas E. Mulkey, US Army (retired).

MEGATRAVELLER

"Equalizer Project": A wet navy adventure by Terrence R. McInnes. And "Wood and Wind, Steal and Steam": An early tech design supplement by Charles E. Gannon.

DARK CONSPIRACY

Strange tidings are afoot in "Out of the Depths" by Michael C. LaBossiere.

2300 AD

"This is only a test!" by Michael C. LaBossiere.

SPACE: 1889

"Tom Fleet and His Steam Colossus" by James L. Cambias.

AND MORE!

Plus *Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0., Shadowrun, Star Wars, Call of Cthulhu, Torg, BattleTech* and much more!

Feedback Results for Challenge 56

Lima Incident (Twilight: 2000) 3.3
Taking a Stand (Twilight: 2000) 3.2
Coventry (MegaTraveller) 4.0
Random Nuggets (MegaTraveller) 4.0
Contact: Ahetaowa (MegaTraveller) 3.8
Gnawlings (Dark Conspiracy) 3.6
Valley of the Hunters (Space: 1889) 3.5
SAMN (2300 AD) 3.2
Fast Cash (Shadowrun) 3.2
Roleplaying (Star Trek) 3.4
Horror on the Borderland (Cthulhu) 3.8
Power Suits! (Star Wars) 3.2
Battle at Plateau (Warhammer) 2.6
Opinion 3.6
Traveller News Service 3.6
Conventions 2.8
Briefs 3.2
Cartoon 2.8
Reviews 3.4
Classifieds 3.9
This issue's cover art 4.5
This issue's interior art 4.0
This issue as a whole 4.0
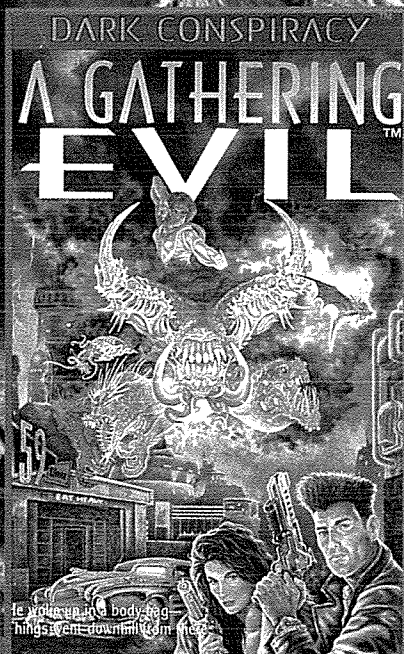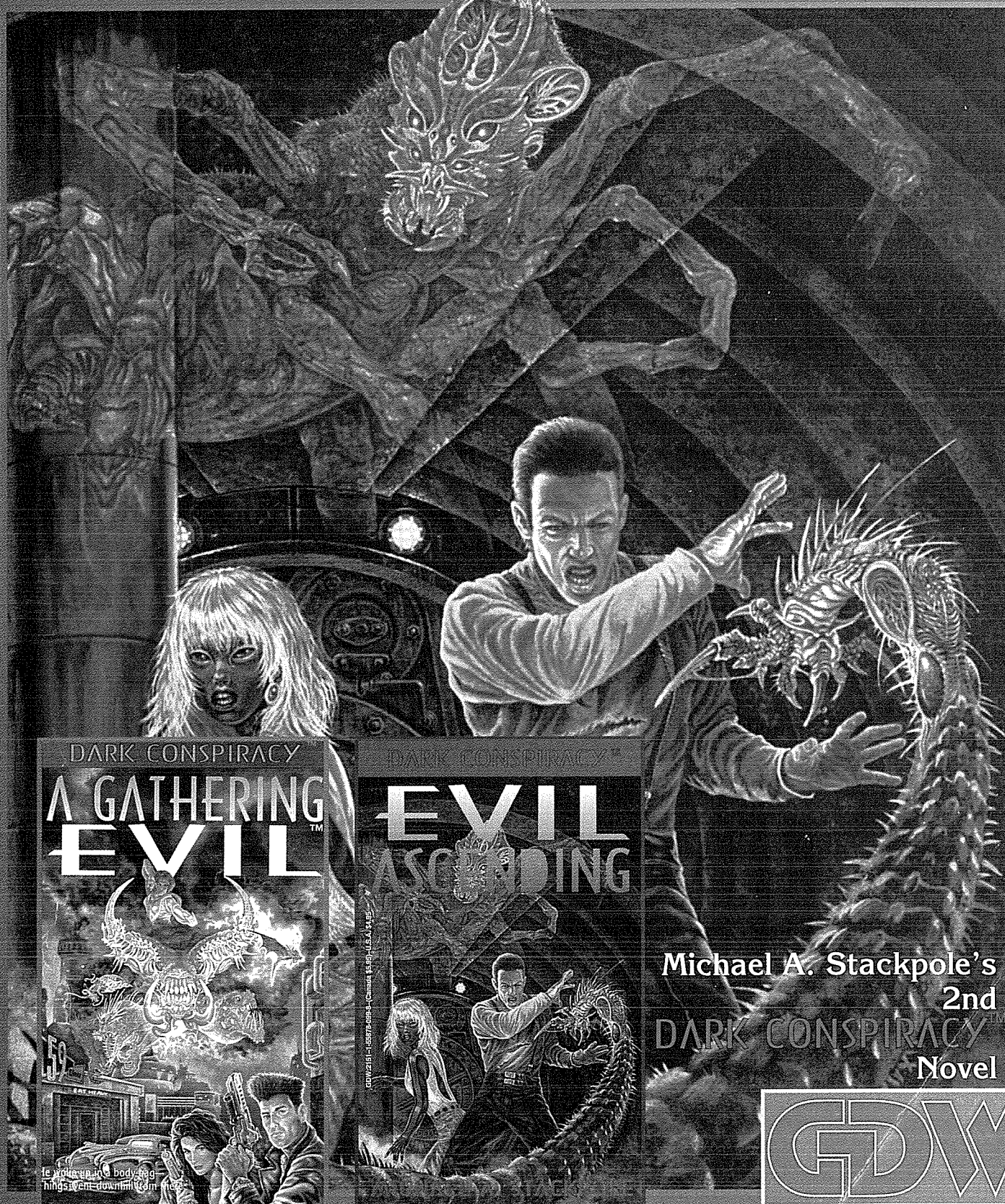
The GAMING EXPERIENCE of a LIFETIME!

1 9 9 2

GEN CON

GAME / FAIR ®

O·R·I·G·I·N·S ™
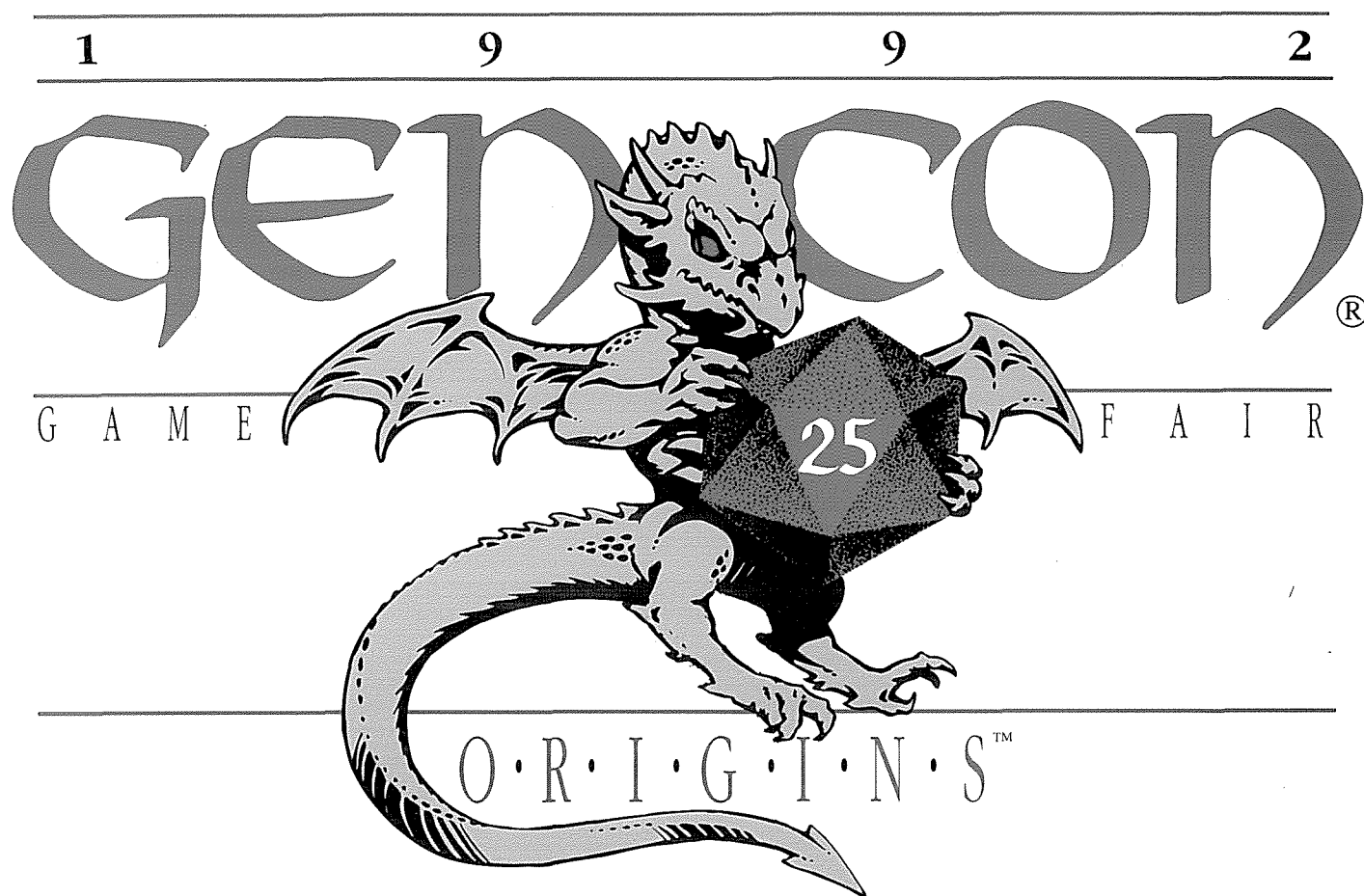
Plan now to attend the ultimate game extravaganza! Come celebrate the Silver Anniversary of the **GEN CON®** **Game Fair**, the world's oldest, biggest and best game convention. Be a participant in thousands of games and the industry's biggest showcase of what's new and hot in this four day long gaming celebration.

As a special bonus, the GEN CON® Game Fair combines with the ORIGINS™ Convention to create 1992's massive **GEN CON®/**

ORIGINS™ Game Fair! Join 15,000 + people in game auctions, the art show, costume contests, huge exhibits, computer gaming and much more at the 1992 **GEN CON/ ORIGINS Game Fair!**

For more information or to receive a copy of our Pre-Registration Brochure, write to: 1992 GEN CON/ORIGINS Game Fair, PO Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147 USA. Be a player, game judge, exhibitor or spectator. But most important — be there!