

# Tidewater Traveller TIMES

## PENINSULA CHAPTER FORMED

An application for Chapter formation was presented to the council of the Tidewater Traveller Club for approval during its November meeting. After consideration of the application, the Chapter was accepted as a fully recognized Chapter of the Tidewater Traveller Club with all rights and benefits allotted to it under the Charter.

Forming the Chapter are two of our Charter Members, John Martin, who also serves as our Treasurer, and Ralph Mirabella. New members include Lawrence F. Leo of Poquoson and Lori Tawes of Hampton.

John Martin, who presented the application on behalf of the prospective Chapter, indicated that he expected the Chapter to grow soon, maybe even doubling membership within a short period of time. We are looking forward to having a strong Chapter on the peninsula, and its representation on the Council. Good luck to the new Chapter.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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### TIDEWATER TRAVELLER TIMES

The Tidewater Traveller TIMES is the official newsletter of the Tidewater Traveller Club. Submissions of artwork or articles are accepted subject to Editorial approval. Submitted items cannot be returned unless a SASE is included with the items. Subscriptions may be obtained by non-members for \$3.00 for a six month subscription.

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### EVENT HORIZON CURRENT AND FUTURE RELEASES

**FROM THE WORKSHOP:** The PLAYERS' MANUAL of MEGATRAVELLER is in the stores. Check out the Quick Reviews section for a review of this important new Traveller product. The boxed set of MEGATRAVELLER has arrived in their warehouse and is scheduled for release on December 1st. The set and the other two books, REFEREE'S MANUAL and IMPERIAL ENCYCLOPEDIA, should be in the stores about the middle of December. If you bought the PLAYERS' MANUAL, then you only need purchase the other two books to complete your set. On the other hand, you may still wish to purchase the boxed set because it would allow you to have an extra PLAYERS' MANUAL for use by other players. Also the boxed set should contain a bonus which you would not get by purchasing the three books separately. Also from the Workshop, NYOTEKUNDU for 2300 is in the stores. MISSION ARCTURUS also for 2300 should be in the stores by time you read this. AIR STRIKE, the first module for AIR SUPERIORITY, is now available. Coming products include COLONIAL ATLAS, a sourcebook of all of Earth's colony worlds for 2300, and URBAN GUERRILLA, a module set in central Florida for Twilight:2000. Future Twilight:2000 releases will include sourcebooks on small arms, and the governments of America, and more adventures, one of which involves the last operable U.S. Navy nuclear submarine. CHALLENGE number 31 should arrive sometime late in January.

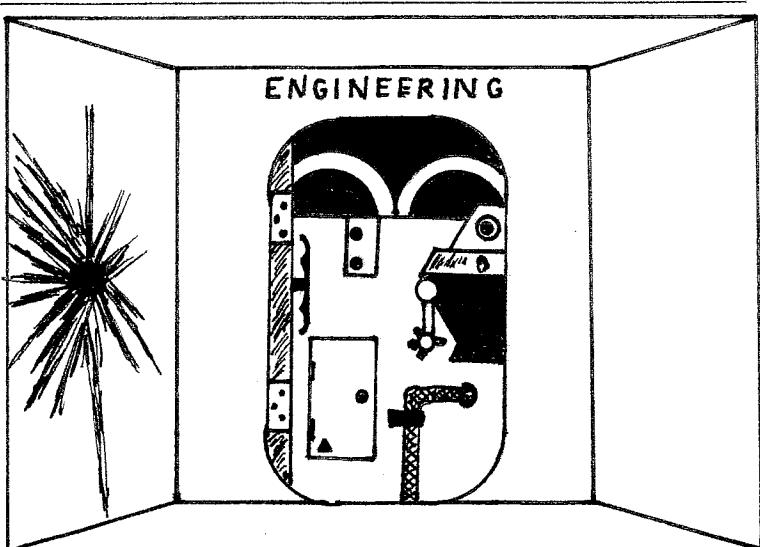
**FROM DIGEST GROUP PUBLICATIONS:** EARLY ADVENTURES is almost complete and should be available just before the first of the year. The TRAVELLERS' DIGEST has been set back one month in order for the publication to correspond to the beginning of a quarter. Coming up in the DIGEST will be more Medical Digests, and illustrations of weapons. We can look for 101 VEHICLES during the latter part of the first quarter of 1988 with STARSHIP OPERATORS' MANUAL probably arriving about the time of ORIGINS 88. Both of these products will be usable with MEGATRAVELLER. It is reported that with the release of the STARSHIP OPERATORS' MANUAL, CHALLENGE MAGAZINE will start of series of standard starships based on material presented in that publication. The staff at the TIMES is looking forward to these releases.

That about wraps up this month's report. I anticipate the announcement next month of the release of the remainder of the MEGATRAVELLER materials.

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"I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars." From the LEAVES OF GRASS by Walt Whitman.





## CAMPAIGN REPORT



**DARK RIVER I-** When we last saw our intrepid adventures, they were being accosted by a mercenary cruiser, "The Bloody Stump", and were attacked. After sustaining damage and delivering a judicious blow to the cruiser with some of the nuclear missiles, the Patchwork Pail created a stalemate. One of the mercenary fighters was bought off to fight against the other, resulting in the pilot joining the crew of the Pail. In order to break the stalemate, an offer was made to purchase the even bloodier Stump.

The ship's boat from the Pail visited the world of Bibihi in order to obtain some much needed supplies. The mercenaries from the Stump, "Warwick's Warriors", were harrassing the crew, who had to resort to a ruse in order to get back off the planet.

During the departure, another skirmish was started, but after both sides sustained damage, another draw was reached. It was eventually learned that the Pail, which for safety reasons was bearing Lekian registry, was being attacked by the Stump because that vessel was hired to war against Lekian shipping. When the misunderstanding was resolved, an appeal was once again made to the mercenary nature of the Stump's Captain, and the Stump was sold for a few paltry megacredits to the crew of the Pail. With some damage control effected on the Stump, she was renamed "The Golden Trader", and both vessels departed for Ade, where further repairs were effected on both vessels.

On Ade, the crew of the Trader picks up a passenger, and the jump was made for Bino. During flight, this passenger, by the name of Jeremiah Smith, proved to be from the Va'Can states, and he recruited the former mercenary fighter pilot to assassinate the president of Bino for political purposes.

When the assassination attempt failed, the Trader was forced to jump quickly, and, as a result, misjumped. The Pail also decided that it would be a good idea that they jump also, and they ended up at their next destination, the Lyaff system.

Upon arriving in the system, the Pail encountered a Far Trader with no transponder attacking a Yacht named the "Princess Caroline". Working together the two vessels defeated the pirate. In the boarding action, two prisoners were taken, the rest of the crew being killed in the starship fight or the boarding action.

While attempting to sell the hulk of the Far Trader, the crew of the Pail had it impounded on them for evidence. During their stay on Lyaff, the crew get a lead on an artifact known as the "Sphere", get into a brawl in which Captain was critically wounded, Doc wakes up to find himself in "Hastor Hotel", and the hotel itself becomes a mystery. In the meantime, the Captain is transported back to the ship.

Will the Captain recover from his wounds? Where did the Trader end up? Stay tuned next month for further adventures.

**BALCONY BOYS-** No gaming this month, but further adventures on Tanstaal see the report on MURPHY'S COMPLAINT next issue.

**STAR OF EPSILON INDI-** No gaming this month.

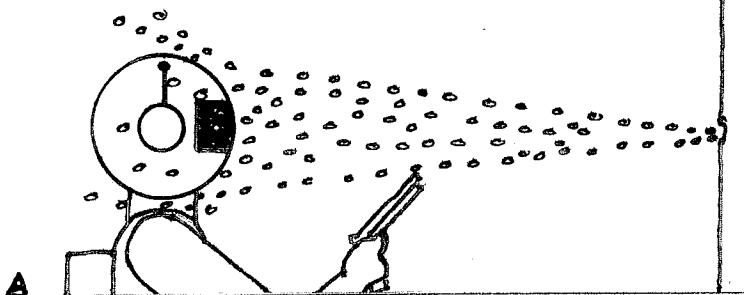
**FAST TIMES-** No gaming this month.

**CAGE CLEANERS-** (This is a report by John Martin of the open game he conducted in October) The scenario began at the downport at Gisten. Two characters, having been dropped off here, were in search of employment. During their search they stopped by a local bar, the Last Stand. Besides the usual burly barroom atmosphere, there were two people antagonizing the characters. One was a large, obviously inebriated man loudly proclaiming that he could beat anyone in the bar at arm wrestling. After conferring with her partner Kosa confronted the drunk, sat down and proceeded with the contest. The first few minutes were a stalemate, then Kosa finally defeated the drunk. After meeting a character called "The Mouse", the characters decided to look into a potential starship job.

After enquiring at Luigi's Air/Raft and Repair Company, they were hired to transport a cargo from Gisten to Talos; starship provided, and with a bonus for rapid delivery. The cargo proved to be a small furry creature with four legs and lots of speed. During the flight, the tasks of feeding and cage cleaning was rotated among the characters. During one cage cleaning attempt, the speedy fur-ball got loose and was scurrying through the compartment, up and down the walls, and into every little place it could squeeze its body. Capture attempts proved futile until Kosa cut the grav field and with a high-speed zero-g maneuver nabbed the critter.

Upon arrival at Talos, the ship landed at the field, which was little more than an oversized basketball court. (Continued on page 6)

SPACER SAM SAYS:  
DON'T SHOOT PRESSURIZED  
CONTAINERS WHEN IN A VACUUM!



## FORWARD OBSERVER

AN EDITORIAL BY MARK GELING

## ARE YOU A ROLL PLAYER?

There are probably a number of you reading this article who believe that I have either misspelled a word or created a typo in the title of this article. The fact of the matter is that I have done neither. I am not asking whether or not you are a role player, for most of you reading this article at least believe that you are. Instead I am asking if you are a roll player. Role playing goes beyond mere participation in a role playing game, it requires active involvement in the character that the player is controlling. Roll playing on the other hand is also performed during the conduct of a role playing game, but manifests itself by such traits as the constant need for action, letting the dice determine most of the character's decisions, all of a person's characters acting the same (with names changed to protect the guilty), and simple, two dimensional characters. In this article we will examine some of the causes and cures of roll playing. There are probably as many causes of roll playing as there are roll players, so we will examine the four largest causes of this phenomenon. The first cause is board games. Not that I am against board games, but some board gamers who come over to role playing sometimes bring with them the attitude that any combat or confrontation should be a realistic simulation of the real thing. Although most role playing games strive for reality, combat is subordinate to the character, and playability will cause some sacrifices in reality to be made. Thus, those who feel that role playing games should be a combat simulation will insist on a lot of action and will become bored with mood and setting descriptions that the referee is expressing.

The next cause is the "Hack and Slash" mentality. Although fantasy role playing games can induce some good role playing, far too many games fall into the "enter the room, kill the monster, and grab its treasure" routine. While the players of this type of game may find it enjoyable, it does not require any depth to the characters played. Consequently, when those players pass over into more serious game, they can carry this attitude with them, and be disappointed in the process.

The third cause is almost universal, and is what I refer to as the "Bane of Television". First of all, TV emphasizes the visual input, in that what is seen is often more important than what is heard. Also, TV requires only passive involvement, providing an input without demanding any though processing or output. Frequent televiewing will cause the imagination "muscle" to weaken from lack of exercise. After all, why picture something in the mind's eye when it is being presented to the real eyes? Furthermore, the characters on TV shows are often shallow and frequently resort to violence as a means of solving problems. It may be thus inferred that someone who watches a lot of television may have problems employing the imagination required to be a good role player.

The final cause of roll playing that I will discuss is egocentricity. This is the person who demands act "I" on, that is his character must be involved in, and at the center of anything that the group of characters does. Quite often, this persons characters are no more than a paper extension of themselves. (Continued on page 5)

**"ASCENT"****A****GNS****NEWSLINE:  
2300****CORE FLEET MOBILIZED**

**CAPITAL/CORE:** 310-1116: In an official statement, Emperor Lucan announced that the Core Fleet has been tasked with the capture of the assassin Dulinor. The Fleet he stated is currently en route toward Dian, capital of the villian, whose "actions warrant death," and who "will be brought to justice". It is speculated here at the Core, that Dulinor has a large base of popular support, and will not be an easy opponent to face. It is further believed that the opponents of Emperor Lucan's ascent to the Iridium throne were responsible for several acts of sabotage upon Imperial naval vessels preparing to leave for Dian.

**"CHIEF" STARKEY MURDERED!**

**PALNU/HARLEQUIN:** 309-1112: Eccentric millionaire and collector Dask "Chief" Starkey was found dead in his home early this morning. The apparent cause of death was laser fire, but as yet, the police have no suspects. Although the house was ransacked, Mr. Starkey's extensive, rare, butterfly collection was not disturbed, neither was any cash removed from the open safe. Before he died, Starkey was able to make a brief recording on the holorecorder found near his body. While it is mostly unintelligible, experts have been able to make out a single word, "princess". This word was used several times, but it is not known if this is in any way related to Starkey's death. A Cr 10,000 reward is being offered to anyone who can provide evidence leading to the arrest and conviction of the killer.

**PRESIDENT BIRKHOLTZ DIES**

**BINO/TRAILEBREAK:** 160-1112: President Birkholtz died today of a rare cardiovascular condition known as a heart attack. Medical authorities stated that the President gave no previous indication of this condition. Vice President Yangston has been inaugurated as the new President of Bino.

**AUTHORITIES STILL SEEK ACCOMPLICE**

**BINO/TRAILEBREAK:** 160-1112 - Although authorities are still seeking a possible accomplice in the assassination attempt, it is now generally believed that he must have slipped through security and reboarded the vessel "Golden Trader", which left system shortly after the attempt. Because of the slackness in security which would have allowed this, Security Chief Stanmore was relieved of duty. His replacement is Colonel Xerxis, a security expert recently arrived from Steece. The appointment of the new security chief was made by the new president.

**SHIP DISAPPEARS**

**DIPCHICHIRO/TRAILEBREAK:** 247-1112: The "Ogi Mari", a 200 ton far trader has disappeared without a trace after making an initial post-jump contact with the world. Since the "Ogi Mari" was inbound, it is not believed that drive failure was the problem. This is the third ship to disappear in this subsector within the past 60 days. The first was the "Lantic Star", a far trader registered at Lan. She was reported missing as of 208-1112 in the Ehaiti system. The second was a 100 ton secker named "Julian's Joy", which vanished in the Konevo system. Anyone having knowledge of the whereabouts of any of these vessels or their crew, contact the Lantic Navy, which is investigating the loss of the "Lantic Star". Lt. Knorvill, a naval spokesman, stated that is is believed the incidents are connected. (Cont. on page 4)

**NARL SEEKS EXPLORERS**

**RED SPECK:** NOVEMBER 21, 2300: The North American Research League is seeking personnel with scientific or exploratory backgrounds to join the crew of the U.S.S. CHESAPEAKE BAY. She will be leaving from Red Speck on January 5, 2301 on an exploratory mission along the American arm and its environs. Persons who possess space skills are also required. If interested, contact Professor Quimby at TELEX 555-2324.

**TENSIONS GROW ON BETA CANUM**

**BETA CANUM:** NOVEMBER 16, 2300: Tensions between the French and German continents have grown significantly since early spring. The Germans are accusing the French of spying on them with devices planted in a common weather satellite. The satellite in question became missing late in March of this year. The French claim that it malfunctioned and crashed; the Germans claim that a team of troubleshooters working for an undisclosed organization visited the crash site and recovered a small spy camera from the wreckage. Making matters worse is the claim by Professor Geiger that there may be problems with the beanstalk located on the French continent. Professor Geiger is part of the German engineering team that performed much of the design work on the beanstalk. Some feel that this is a German plot to cut down the French advantage of having the beanstalk on their continent. Professor Geiger was not available for comment.

**STARSHIP CONTRACT AWARDED**

**EARTH:** OCTOBER 24, 2300: The Department of Defense of the United States of America has announced that it is awarding the design, development and construction of a new class of starship to the Newport News Shipbuilding Company. The class, which is yet unnamed, will be designed for combat against the growing Kafer threat along the French arm. Several protesters were arrested outside the company's ground based facilities. They had been protesting American involvement in the Kafer Conflict, fearing another global conflict, and claiming that it was a French problem. They were arrested after attempting to obstruct workers from entering the company facilities.

**NOVOA KIYEV'S PLIGHT CONTINUES**

**AURORE:** DECEMBER 2, 2300: Ukrainian patriot Dimitri Kharov was interviewed at a news conference in Tanstaafl City. During his interview, Kharov spoke at length about the hardships and suffering of his people back in Novoa Kiyev, and made a universal plea for help. Since the invading Kafers hold the capital city of Novoa Kiyev with its spaceport facilities, Mr. Kharov had to make a long and harrowing journey across the face of Aurome in a commercial hovercraft. It is reported that about half of his original crew died on the journey from various causes. Mr. Kharov stated that because of conditions in Novoa Kiyev, with a shattered industry and poor living conditions, they could not offer mercenaries very much. He did say, however, that any willing to make long journey back with him to Novoa Kiyev would be offered a chance to fight, and rewarded with what little they had to offer. We at the Tanstaafl colony can certainly sympathize with him, however our colony has not left without the harsh ministrations of the Kafers. We cannot offer much in the way of military aid, and cannot even send any troops. We can however publish Kharov's plea to you and tell any who are interested to contact him at Hotel Niven.

## MEETING REPORT NOVEMBER 1987

The November meeting of the Charter Chapter of the Tidewater Traveller Club was held Monday, November 16, 7:00 pm in the back room of Campaign Headquarters, Norfolk. Present at the meeting were the Spokesman, the Second, the Treasurer, the Chapter Representative, Josh Scialdone, and Ralph Mirabella. Also attending were prospective members Larry "Doc" Leo, and Lori Tawes. The meeting was opened, and the games held at Sci-Con were described. Then the report from the October meeting was read as were the Bulletins and Announcements from the TIMES.

### OLD BUSINESS

Because of problems obtaining a bank account, the dues period has been extended to the January Meeting. If dues are not paid by that time, the January issue of the TIMES will not be given to persons not paying.

It was resolved that a bank account with no monthly charge shall be opened at the SOUTHERN BANK at WARD'S CORNER MALL.

A notation was made that Walter Gard has joined the Club.

A notation was made that AMENDMENT V, the Non-Profit Amendment was approved.

An announcement was made that December's Open Game will be held December 5. It will be run using what MEGATRAVELLER rules we have. Pre-generated characters will be used.

### NEW BUSINESS

The Chapter decided to have a Christmas party. See Bulletins and Announcements for further details.

Lawrence Leo applied for membership and was accepted by a vote of the Chapter.

Lori Tawes applied, but could not be presented for a vote because she has not yet gamed with the Club. She later became a member through the provisions of the Charter for Chapter formation.

A motion to close the meeting was made and carried.

### COUNCIL MEETING

A meeting of the Council of the Tidewater Traveller Club was held immediately after the Chapter meeting on November 16. In attendance were the Spokesman, the Second, the Treasurer, and the Representative of the Charter Chapter.

### OLD BUSINESS

An announcement was made about the status of the Non-Profit Amendment.

Arrangements were made to open an account as mentioned in the Chapter meeting.

### NEW BUSINESS

An application to become a Chapter was made by a group of Club Members and one non-member from the Peninsula Area. After a brief discussion, the matter was brought to a vote and approved.

A decision was made to make the Charter and all applicable Amendments available to any member who desires one.

A decision was made to change the time and location of the Council Meeting to the first Monday of every month at the Spokesman's residence.

A resolution was made to include an Announcement about certain referee rights in the TIMES.

A motion was made and carried to close the meeting.

### ROLL CALL

This month's roll call includes two new members both of whom belong to the Peninsula Chapter of the Club.

Leo, Lawrence F.-

Tawes, Lori-

"The stars at night may shine into your soul, and put thoughts of glory into your mind, but it is land that holds our dwellings and provides meat to fill our bellies." Quote from "The Book of Stars" by Awyaryerlah, Asian philosopher, translated by Sir Thomas Nile of the Spinward Marches.

### BULLETINS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Tidewater Traveller Club will hold a Christmas Party on Friday, November 11. The Party will be held at the residence of Mark and Kate Gelinas and will start at 7:00 pm. All club members are invited. Admission to the Party requires one two liter bottle of a non-alcoholic beverage and a form of snack per person. A guest may be brought, but the per person requirements still apply.

#### PLAYER EXCLUSION

In order to be able to maintain order in games, the referee has the right to expel from the game any player whose behavior is not conducive to good order and discipline. Continued unruly behavior on the part of a Club member could eventually result in dismissal from the Club.

#### NEW ADDRESSES

Honorary Member Gerry Hartman is now attending a naval school in California. His current address is: A-130-0029 Class 88040, PLEASWTRACEMPAC, San Diego, CA 92147. Ken McKittrick is now out of the Navy and can currently be reached at RD 2 Box 807, West Monroe, NY 13167.

#### NAME CHANGE

The old "Workshop News" column had been given a new name in order to reflect the fact that products other than those published by Game Designers' Workshop are covered in the article. The new name is "Event Horizon" and will normally be found on page 1 of the TIMES.

#### SPACER SAM SEZ

The cartoon "Spacer Sam Sez" will become a regular feature of the times. Spacer Sam is intended to point out the humorous and often silly things that characters sometimes do during a game. It is mostly intended to amuse, but may prevent some grief to your character sometime. Submissions for Spacer Sam sayings and even drawings will be accepted, subject to standard submission policy.

#### NEWSLINE:2300

NEWSLINE:2300 is a new feature of the TIMES intended to provide a forum for presenting background information and news pertinent to 2300 campaigns. If you have a 2300 campaign and would like to submit a news item, send your news article to the TIMES. All articles are subject to standard submission policy.

#### NEW FORMAT

Starting with this issue, the TIMES will be go to a new format. The center two pages are primarily intended for the Charter Chapter of the Club, but, until such time as certain changes can be implemented, it is useful to the majority of our readers. What I would eventually like to see is each chapter providing its own insert with such things as their Meeting Report, Roll Call, and Chapter Specific Bulletins. That would make the times both applicable to all members, but unique to each Chapter as well. The honorary members and inactive members who receive the TIMES would receive the material from the Charter Chapter. These are only some ideas that I have. Let me know your feelings on these matters. Feedback is important to the effective growth of both the Club and the TIMES.

#### GEOCON TO BE DISCUSSED

GEOCON VI will be discussed at the next meeting of the Charter Chapter of the Tidewater Traveller Club. Since this will be a Club event, Peninsula members are invited to attend to express their views and discuss the event.

#### MEETINGS

The December meeting of the Charter Chapter of the Tidewater Traveller Club will be held at Campaign Headquarters in Norfolk on Monday, December 21, at 7:00 pm. Members of the Peninsula Chapter should contact John Martin, who is coordinating the founding of that Chapter, for a meeting time and place.

#### GNS (CONT.)

#### URI BANISHED!

**AQUARIA/AQUARIA:** 230:1110: Emperor Ch'har, speaking from the Crystal Throne, officially banished Prince Uri from the realm. In his text, the Emperor proclaimed that "this rebellious youth has been allowed to run around like a spoiled child long enough!" He further declared that, although the Prince's actions may have been worthy of death, banishment would strip Uri of the lifestyle that he has known and would be like a living death to him. The Emperor gave Uri sixty days to get beyond the border of the realm, and declared that, if the Prince was ever found inside the realm again, Uri was to be shot on sight.

## QUICK REVIEWS

### NYOTEKUNDU

REVIEW BY SCOTT MADDOW

Nyotekundu is labeled as a sourcebook, and is from Game Designers' Workshop for 2300. As a sourcebook, Nyotekundu proved to be somewhat disappointing, but as an adventure module, it reached into the realms of outstanding.

Although adequate information was given about the Nyotekundu system to run the adventure, lacking was an abundance of open ended information suitable for the referee's improvisational inputs. The main adventure of the book was well planned and laid out so as to require minimum planning effort on the part of the referee. These features make it more deserving of the subtitle "module" than "sourcebook".

The enclosed adventure has several intriguing twists and leaves hints as to the possibility of a more advanced star-faring race out there. This book was written by J. Andrew Kieth, and is recommended for its mystery and adventure, not as a sourcebook. Nyotekundu is moderately priced and is available at most gaming stores in the area.

### CHALLENGE 30

REVIEW BY JOE UMPHRESS

Once again, the people at Game Designers' Workshop have produced a fine issue of CHALLENGE. As usual, CHALLENGE 30 contains articles for all three of GDW's roleplaying games. CHALLENGE has with this issue started covering other futuristic roleplaying games with the inclusion of an article on FASA's BATTLETECH game.

For Traveller, there is a scenario and associated creature from the fine folks at Digest Group Publications, and a large sampling of articles in the Travellers' News Service. Unfortunately, the Travellers Aid Society, provider of articles for the Travellers' News Service, receives far more items than it can include.

Also included for Traveller, is a Law Enforcer career which, while it works quite well in and of itself, does not have the same four year system included in MEGATRAVELLER. It does however have an advanced generation system for Law Enforcer types which MEGATRAVELLER does not. In either case characters generated from these systems will be compatable with MEGATRAVELLER with little or no conversion.

The most important article for Traveller in this issue would have to be Marc Miller's article on the current state of the Imperium. This will be especially useful to those of you who missed the Traveller Seminars at ORIGINS.

Articles for 2300 describe the AR-I ship Bayern and its mission, and L'institute des Extudes Xenologies. Not all the names mentioned are true translations to French, but sound close enough to keep most of us happy. There is also an enlightening article on the principles of the stutterwarp drive.

For Twilight-2000 is an adventure and some new AFV descriptions. There is also a three part article about Canada during World War III. Even if you are not a player or referee of Twilight-2000, the information is still of considerable use, especially considering that the history of Twilight-2000 is the past history of Traveller-2300.

BATTLETECH players will find an interesting article on how to optimize the construction of a mech.

It would be nice to see the map referenced on page 10, but it is nowhere to be found in this issue. Hardcore Traveller fans would like to see a semi-regular appearance of the old JTAS features.

All in all, this issue should be required reading for all referees and players of the GDW game systems, and is well worth the \$3.25 price.

## MEGATRAVELLER

### PLAYERS' MANUAL

REVIEW BY MARK GELINAS

The Players' Manual is the first of the MEGATRAVELLER products to arrive from Game Designers' Workshop. MEGATRAVELLER, unlike Traveller-2300, is not a new game system, but rather is the name of the current edition of Traveller rules, representing a major rules revision and incorporating the best of materials released during the past 10 years. To fully understand MEGATRAVELLER, one must first learn a little bit of the history of the Traveller game system.

In 1977, GDW produced a boxed set of three books which formed the core of Traveller, and was industry standard for roleplaying games at the time. Within a year, a need for a consistant, readily available background for Traveller was seen by the Workshop, and the Imperium was created. In the ensuing years, advanced character

generation systems were developed, as were advanced systems for nearly every facet of the original set. New editions of the basic set were published, and the Imperium grew in detail and complexity. Characters in one of the sectors experienced a major war.

However, even with all the improvements, Traveller was starting to be overshadowed by third generation roleplaying games, whose systems incorporated knowledge gained from years of roleplaying experience. Then, about two years ago, a group of people who enjoyed Traveller, and believed in the basic premise, formed Digest Group Publications. The task system published in the Travellers' Digest from the Group breathed new life into the Traveller game system. With successive issues, the task system improved, and a version of it was included in the Traveller-2300 game system, but as yet, no plans had been made to revise Traveller. In fact, a decision not to revise Traveller, but to publish a state of the art roleplaying game resulted in the production of Traveller-2300.

Then about a year and a half ago, two significant projects were announced for Traveller. One project was the compilation of ground combat systems into what was tentatively called the Traveller Advanced Combat System. The other project was a compilation of the ten years of published Traveller material into several volumes.

Somewhere between these announcements and ORIGINS, MEGATRAVELLER was born. MEGATRAVELLER includes both of the above projects and the task system, as well as a major upheaval in the fabric of the Third Imperium. It is significant that its editors are Joe Fugate, Sr. and Gary Thomas, the driving force behind Digest Group Publications. With the publication of MEGATRAVELLER, Traveller has joined the ranks of third generation roleplaying games. Included in the Players' Manual are an introduction, a brief overview of the task system, basic and advanced character generation systems, the combat system, and psionics.

The introduction contains die rolling conventions, definitions, and basic roleplaying information. Scattered throughout the book are essays on the state of the Third Imperium. Important tables are set off on pages by themselves and marked for ease in location.

The brief overview of the task system provides the information that the players need about tasks. Referee information will be contained in the Referees' Manual. I cannot think of a single modification that has done more to improve the playing of Traveller than the task system. The task system is the heart of MEGATRAVELLER, and I believe that I can safely say that without the task system, there would not be a MEGATRAVELLER.

The character generation systems include some new concepts that allow characters from the basic system to be as skilled as those generated by the advanced systems. A failure of the survival roll no longer means death, that has been relegated to an optional rule, now it means an injury forcing early resignation from the profession. The eighteen career types found in the basic set and CITIZENS are here with Law Enforcer replacing the Other career. Some important new skills have been added, some skills have been grouped, and some skills such as the much neglected Tactics skill have taken on new importance in the game system. There is also a means of improving characters during game play.

The combat system has combined the best aspects of all previous combat systems into a single standard. Combat results can now be determined by a single die roll. The special situations section goes a long way to defining what can happen in a variety of situations.

The psionics section contains the standard Traveller psionics with some improvements. The defining of psionic abilities as tasks means that a low level psionic can attempt a higher level task, but will have a lower probability of succeeding than a higher level psionic.

As with all publications, the Players' Handbook is not without its flaws. An errata will be included in this issue's GEO'S VARIANTS, including the omitted MERCHANT PRINCE generation material and a revised slug thrower table. Non-members, who do not get the VARIANTS, may obtain the errata from the TIMES by writing to them. We cannot charge for these, but, due to high postage prices, we cannot send them to anyone not including a SASE with their request. Overall, the Players' Manual of MEGATRAVELLER is an excellent product and well worth the \$10.00 cover price. Every Traveller player should own a copy. This book along with the Referees' Manual and the Imperial Encyclopedia will be included in the boxed set which will sell for about \$30.00. Players who want all three books should probably wait a few weeks until the boxed set is released and buy that instead, unless they want an extra copy of the Players' Manual.

**FORWARD OBSERVER (CONT.)** These types get impatient when others are performing actions, and often prove to be quite annoying to other players.

These then are the four greatest causes of roll playing. Next month this column will examine how to be an effective role player.



## COMING EVENTS



**DECEMBER CLUB MEETING-** DECEMBER 21- The meeting of the Charter Chapter of the Tidewater Traveller Club will be at 7:00 pm at CHQ in Norfolk.

**GEOCON VI- JANUARY (?)**- Yes, we are planning on having a GEOCON in January, probably the first part of the month. Plans will be made at the December meeting. Watch for more information.

### CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ad space is available in the TIMES for the low rate of 50 cents for 25 words or less for one months publication.

**CAMPAIGN REPORT (CONT.)**- The two characters and Luigi Andrews, who had travelled with them, headed in an air/raft toward their destination, the estate of Ivan Quartermain. The air/raft was stopped for speeding by a police officer who had been patrolling on a grav cycle. When the characters explained the nature of their mission, the officer allowed them to go on their way, and even provided an escort. When the crew finally arrived at the estate, they delivered the cargo and learned that the mysterious long legged furball was intended to be a birthday gift for Quartermain's sister.



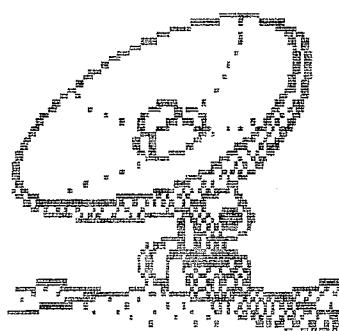
# "AD ASTRA" Tidewater Traveller TIMES

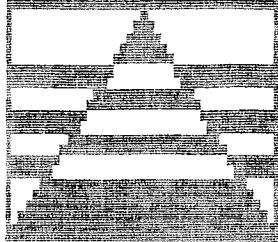
1302 RIVERFRONT CT. SUITE 302  
VIRGINIA BEACH, VA 23451

January 1988

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 NEW YEARS DAY	2
3	4 TTC CNCL MEETS	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 CLUB MEETS 7 PM	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

3	4 TTC CNCL MEETS	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 CLUB MEETS 7 PM	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						





# GEO'S VARIANTS

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## ISSUE 6

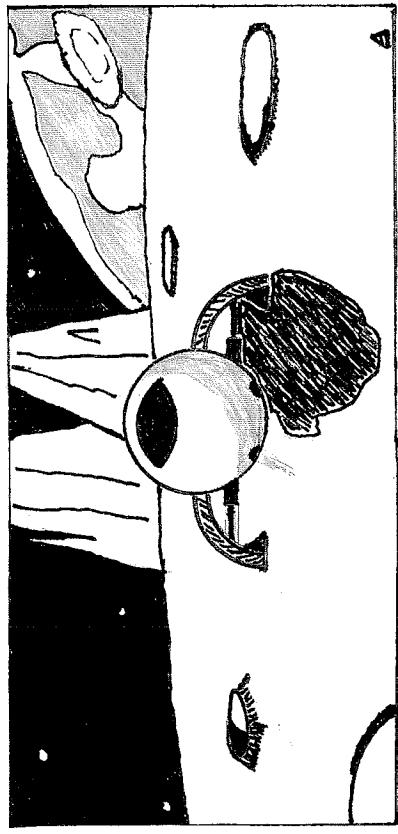
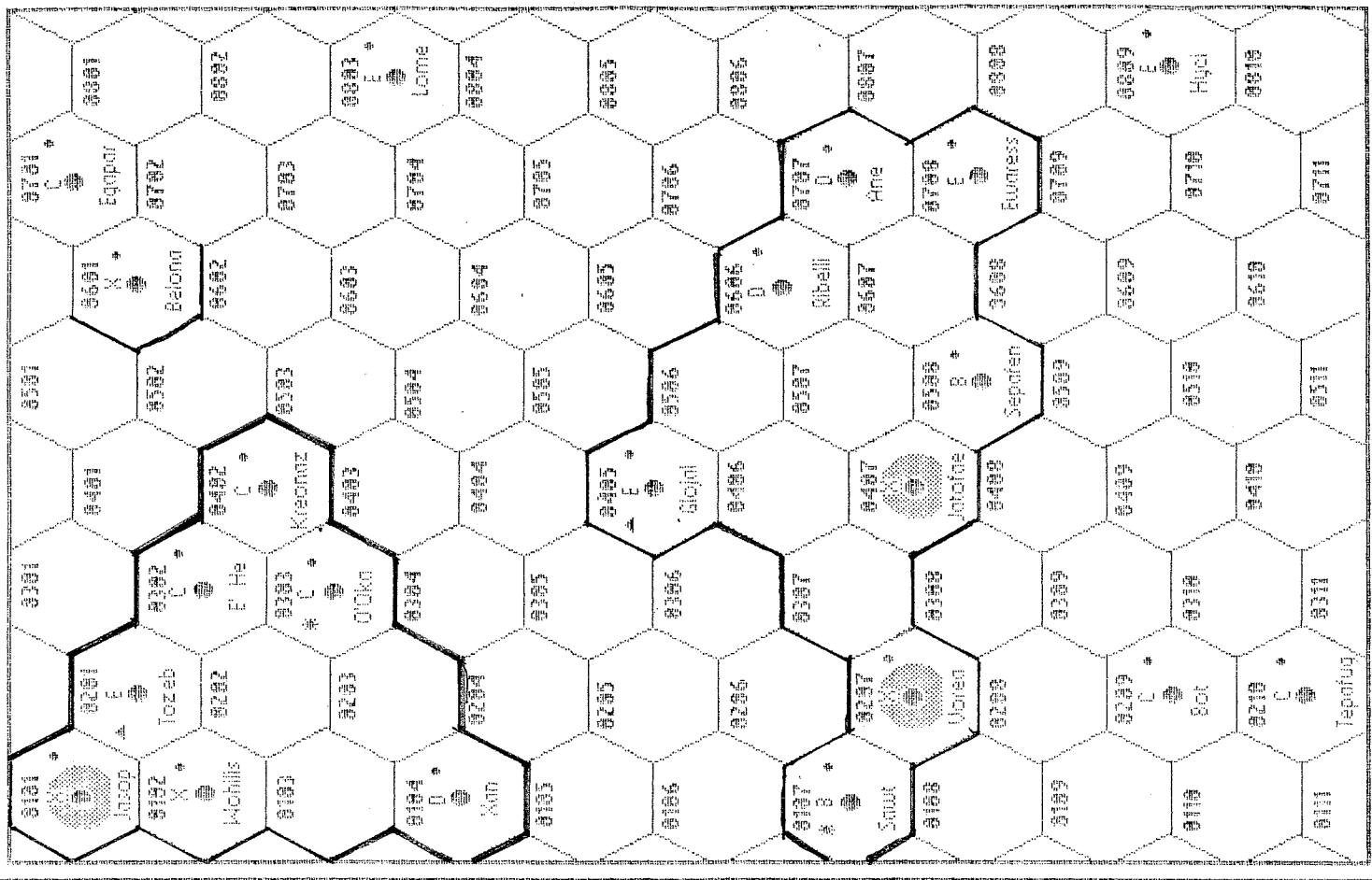
This month's edition of the Variants contains another subsector of the Dark River Sector. Refer to Issue 4 of the Variants for more background information on the sector. The major feature of this month's issue is an errata for the Players' Manual of MEGATRAVELLER. Additional copies of this errata may be obtained by requesting it from the TIMES. All requests for errata must be accompanied by a SASE. This issue of the VARIANTS is a special double sized issue.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR  
FROM THE TIMES**



**STAR SYSTEM MAP GRID**

Sector Name: Shilleagh



Subsector D of the Shilleagh Sector.

Shilleagh Subsector is subsector D of the Dark River Sector. It contains 21 worlds and two minor empires. Its highest TL is D at Sepafen, and highest population is 9 billion at Jato. The Thexin Hierate is an Aslan governed stellar state. The Kingdom of O'OKA was primarily settled by refugees from turmoil in the Vanguard Reaches. Abbreviations: TH-Thexin Hierate; KO-Kingdom of O'OKA; IN-Independent World. Subsector graphics done by John Martin.

# MEGATRAVELLER PLAYERS' MANUAL ERRATA

The following errors have been found in the Players' Manual of MEGATRAVELLER. This list is by no means exhaustive, and may be superceded by an official GDW errata. Corrections are primarily based on source documents as listed in the Players' Manual.

**General note:** this document does not propose to correct any typos that may appear in the book, the correction for those are generally self evident. Also, there are several cases in which a cascade skill appears in normal type as opposed to boldface. Upon becoming familiar with the skills list, these will also become evident, and therefore we will not list those here.

**Page 13: Homeworld Generation Table:** it is recommended that on the Tech Code roll, DM -2 be applied for Starport X, as per CHALLENGE 29.

**Page 13: Homeworld Profile Code Equivalents:** a corrected table appears elsewhere in this errata.

**Page 19: Material Objects: Starships: Corsair:** Described here as being fully owned upon receipt of the benefit. Page 25 specifies payments. Recommend that the Corsair be entirely owned upon receipt (it would make more sense for a pirate)»

**Page 26: 16. Rogue:** should include the default skill of Streetwise-1.

**Pages 28-29 (et al): Skill List:** The skill of Rifleman and Combat Rifleman should have the included skill of Shotgun.

**Page 53: Survival:** Naval assignments for which a Purple Heart may be obtained are Battle, Siege, and Strike, NOT Police Action, Counterinsurgency, and Raid.

**Page 53: Frozen Watch:** does not appear on Special Assignments Table (Page 55), recommend adding at a roll of 0, and implement DM-1 for Imperial Navy.

**Page 60: Draft:** According to Page 20, a roll of 5 for the draft will find the character in the Flyers, not the Merchants. Technically a character may not be drafted in the Merchants, although the referee may wish to use this as an option.

**Page 63: Missing Tables:** the Special Assignment Table and Special Assignment Resolution are missing entirely. They have been copied from Merchant Prince and printed here for those of you who do not have that GDW publication.

**Page 63: Skill Table Notes:** Should include the following notes: Merchant Life open to all characters. Shipboard Life open to all (including Free Traders) except Sales and Admin Departments. Officer Skills available to Rank 00+. Merchantile Skills open to all (including Free Traders) except Engineering Department. Master skills open to Deck Department rank 04+.

**Page 63: Shipboard Life:** Zero-G Cbt should be Zero-G Environ.

**Page 63: Free Trader Business:** Given available skill tables for Free Trader, it is not possible for a Free Trader to gain Pilot Skill. Recommend deleting one of the "Steward" results from this Table and replacing it with "Pilot".

**Page 67: Surprise:** Change last line to read "Outstanding failure results in the defending party has surprise."

**Page 72: Bracing characters may use the Gyrostabilizer line for resolving fire.**

**Page 74: Large Blades:** the Block Value for Sword is 3, Cutlass is 2, and Broadsword is 2.

**Page 74: Personal Armor Table:** the value for Reflec should be enclosed in Brackets () to denote that Reflec only applies against laser fire.

**Page 76: Personal Slug Thrower Table:** This table has been revised to conform to previously published material, specifically Mercenary and Striker.

**Page 76: Personal Slug Thrower Table:** the Danger Space for Flechette is its length. The Danger Space starts at any point along its flight path as determined by the firer and is 15 meters wide.

**Page 87: Corridor:** the current occupant of the Iridium Throne is Lucan; Varian was killed shortly after Strephon, leaving the way to the Throne open to Varian's brother Lucan.

**TAS FORM 2: Starport:** D/F should be C/F.

**TAS FORM 2:** Should include a block for Extreme Law.

**TAS FORM 2:** Recommend extending "MODIFIED:" to cover Intelligence and Education; modify block 11 to include 110. Determination.

## SPECIAL DUTY

Die	Deck Hands	Officers
1	Security Trng	Trade Station
2	Trade Station	Command School
3	Helm Trng	Deck School
4	Drive Trng	Engineer School
5	Steward Trng	Purser School
6	Commission	Business School
7	Commission	Department Test
	DM +1 if Educ 9+; DM +1 if rank O4+ and not in Deck Department.	

## SCHOOLS AND SPECIAL DUTY

The special duty table provides:
<b>Business School:</b> Throw 5+ (1D) for Admin, Computer, Legal, and Liaison.
DM +1 allowed on exams for Senior Line Captain and Line Commodore.
Transfer to Sales Department.
<b>Command School:</b> Throw 5+ (1D) for Admin, Leader, Legal, and Ship Tactics.
Transfer to Deck Department.

## Commission: Receive rank 00 (rank

O1 in the Free Traders) and Department Assignment (determine specific assignment and resolve normally). Must pass the examination for 4th Officer within four years or reverts to enlisted rank.

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

**Department Test:** Individual may take a Department test for promotion without regard to skill prerequisites.

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

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

**Helm Training:** Throw 5+ (1D) for Navigation, Pilot, and Ship's Boat. Transfer to Deck Department.

**Purser School:** Throw 4+ (1D) for Admin, Computer, Liaison. Transfer to Purser's Department.

**Security Training:** Throw 4+ (1D) for Zero-G Combat, Zero-G Weapons, Vacc Suit, Brawling, and Computer.

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

**Trade Station:** Receive Trader. Throw 4+ (1D) for Broker and Liaison. Transfer to Administration Department.

## MUSTERING OUT TABLES

### Material Benefits

Megacorporation	Sector-wide Line	Subsector Line	Fledgling Line	Interface Line	Free Trader
1	High Psg	High Psg	Mid Psg	Mid Psg	Low Psg
2	+ 2 Intel	+ 1 Intel	+ 1 Intel	+ 1 Intel	+ 1 Endur
3	+ 2 Educ	+ 2 Educ	+ 1 Educ	+ 1 Educ	+ 1 Educ
4	Gun	Gun	Gun	Gun	Gun
5	High Psg	High Psg	Mid Psg	Mid Psg	Blade
6	Travellers	High Psg	High Psg	Mid Psg	Mid Psg
7	+ 1 Social	Travellers	Free Trainer	Fat Trainer	Far Trainer
	DM +1 if rank O5+.				

### Cash Table (in Credits)

Megacorporation	Sector-wide Line	Subsector Line	Fledgling Line	Interface Line	Free Trader
1	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
2	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	2,000
3	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
4	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
5	30,000	30,000	40,000	50,000	30,000
6	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
7	50,000	50,000	100,000	40,000	50,000
	DM +1 if Gambling-1+. Maximum three rolls (not counting bonuses) allowed on this table; remaining rolls must be on the material benefits table.				

DM +1 if Gambling-1+. Maximum three rolls (not counting bonuses) allowed on this table; remaining rolls must be on the material benefits table.

## WORLD PROFILE CODE EQUIVALENTS

VALUE	SIZE	ATMOS	HYDRO	POP	LAW	CODE	TECH CODE
0	ASTEROID	VACUUM	DESERT WORLD	LOW	POP	NO LAW	PRE-INDUSTRIAL
1	SMALL	VACUUM	DRY WORLD	LOW	POP	LOW LAW	PRE-INDUSTRIAL
2	SMALL	VACUUM	DRY WORLD	LOW	POP	LOW LAW	PRE-INDUSTRIAL
3	SMALL	VACUUM	WET WORLD	LOW	POP	LOW LAW	PRE-INDUSTRIAL
4	SMALL	THIN	WET WORLD	MOD	POP	MOD LAW	INDUSTRIAL
5	MEDIUM	THIN	WET WORLD	MOD	POP	MOD LAW	INDUSTRIAL
6	MEDIUM	STANDARD	WET WORLD	MOD	POP	MOD LAW	PRE-STELLAR
7	MEDIUM	STANDARD	WET WORLD	MOD	POP	MOD LAW	PRE-STELLAR
8	LARGE	DENSE	WET WORLD	MOD	POP	HIGH LAW	PRE-STELLAR
9	LARGE	DENSE	WET WORLD	HI	POP	HIGH LAW	EARLY STELLAR
10	LARGE	EXOTIC	WATER WORLD	HI	POP	EXT LAW	EARLY STELLAR
11		EXOTIC				EXT LAW	AVE STELLAR
12		EXOTIC				EXT LAW	AVG STELLAR
13		EXOTIC				EXT LAW	AVG STELLAR
14		EXOTIC				EXT LAW	HI STELLAR
15		EXOTIC				EXT LAW	HI STELLAR

## SLUG THROWERS

## PERSONAL SLUG THROWERS

WEAPON	AMMO NOTES	RDS	PEN/ ATTN	DMG	MAX AF	DGR	SIG	RECOIL	DIFFICULTY
REVOLVER(5MM)	---	6	0/-	3	MED	---	---	MED MED/R	HANDGUN
REVOLVER(7MM)	---	6	1/2	3	LNG	---	---	MED MED/R	HANDGUN
REVOLVER(9MM)	---	6	2/2	3	LNG	---	---	MED MED/R	HANDGUN
MAGNUM REVOLVER(9MM)	---	6	3/2	3	LNG	---	---	MED MED/R	HANDGUN
SNUB PISTOL(10MM)	HE	6	1/-	4	MED	---	1.5	MED LOW/R	HANDGUN
	HEAP	6	6/-	4	MED	---	1.5	MED LOW/R	HANDGUN
	TRANQ	6	1/-	1	MED	---	1.5	MED LOW/R	HANDGUN
	GAS	6	---	1	MED	---	1.5	MED LOW/R	HANDGUN
AUTO SNUB PSTL(10MM)	HE	20	1/-	4	MED	---	1.5	MED LOW/R	HANDGUN
	HEAP	20	6/-	4	MED	---	1.5	MED LOW/R	HANDGUN
	TRANQ	20	1/-	1	MED	---	1.5	MED LOW/R	HANDGUN
	GAS	20	---	1	MED	---	1.5	MED LOW/R	HANDGUN
BODY PISTOL	---	6	0/-	3	MED	---	---	MED MED/R	HANDGUN
AUTOPISTOL(7MM)	---	15	1/2	3	MED	---	---	MED MED/R	HANDGUN
AUTOPISTOL(9MM)	---	15	2/2	3	LNG	---	---	MED MED/R	HANDGUN
GAUSS PISTOL(4MM)	---	15	4/2	4	LNG	---	---	LOW LOW/R	HANDGUN
	TRANQ	15	2/-	1	LNG	---	---	LOW LOW/R	HANDGUN
CARBINE(7MM)	---	10	2/2	3	V/L	---	---	MED MED/R	RIFLE
BLT-ACTN RFL(7.62MM)	---	6	3/2	3	V/L	---	---	MED MED	RIFLE
RIFLE(7MM)	---	20	3/2	3	V/L	---	---	MED MED/R	RIFLE
RIFLE(9MM)	---	20	5/2	3	V/L	---	---	MED MED/R	RIFLE
	TRANQ	20	1/-	1	V/L	---	---	MED MED/R	RIFLE
HUNTING RIFLE(13MM)	---	2	6/2	4	LNG	---	---	HI HI	RIFLE
	TRANQ	2	3/-	2	LNG	---	---	HI HI	RIFLE
AUTORIFLE(7MM)	---	20	3/2	3	V/L	2	---	MED MED/R	RIFLE
GAUSS RIFLE(4MM)	---	40	7/4	3	DST	3	---	LOW LOW/R	RIFLE**
	TRANQ	40	2/-	1	DST	3	---	LOW LOW/R	RIFLE**
SHOTGUN	PELLETS	10	1/1	4	MED	---	1.5	HI MED	RIFLE
	BULLETS	10	3/1	4	MED	---	1.5	HI MED	RIFLE
	TRANQ	10	2/-	1	MED	---	1.5	HI MED	RIFLE
	GAS	10	---	1	MED	---	1.5	HI MED	RIFLE
AUTOSHOTGUN	PELLETS	20	1/1	4	MED	3	1.5	HI MED	RIFLE
	BULLETS	20	3/1	4	MED	3	1.5	HI MED	RIFLE
	TRANQ	20	2/-	1	MED	3	1.5	HI MED	RIFLE
	GAS	20	---	1	MED	3	1.5	HI MED	RIFLE
SMG(9MM)	---	30	3/1	3	LNG	3	---	MED MED/R	HANDGUN
ASSAULT RIFLE(5MM)	---	30	2/2	3	V/L	2	---	MED MED/R	RIFLE
ASSAULT RIFLE(7MM)	---	30	3/2	3	V/L	2	---	MED MED/R	RIFLE
ACCLRTR RIFLE(6MM)	---	15	3/-	3	MED	2	---	LOW MED/R	RIFLE
ADV COMBAT RFL(7MM)	---	20	3/3	3	V/L	2	---	MED MED	RIFLE**
	DS	20	4/3	3	V/L	2	---	MED MED	RIFLE**
	TRANQ	20	2/-	1	V/L	2	1.5	MED MED	RIFLE**
ADV COMBAT RFL(9MM)	---	20	4/3	3	V/L	2	---	MED MED	RIFLE**
	DS	20	6/3	3	V/L	2	---	MED MED	RIFLE**
	HE	20	3/-	4	V/L	2	1.5	MED MED	RIFLE**
	TRANQ	20	3/-	1	V/L	2	1.5	MED MED	RIFLE**
ASSLT ROCKET LNCHR	HE	20	5/-	5	V/L	2	3	HI LOW	RIFLE**
	HEAP	20	10/-	4	V/L	2	1.5	HI LOW	RIFLE**
	KEAP	20	8/4	4	V/L	2	---	HI LOW	RIFLE**
LIGHT ASSAULT GUN	HE	5	3/-	4	V/L	---	1.5	MED HI	RIFLE
	HEAP	5	8/3	4	V/L	---	---	MED HI	RIFLE
	FLECH	5	2/-	2	LNG	---	45	MED HI	RIFLE
	TRANQ	5	2/-	1	LNG	---	45	MED HI	RIFLE