

The Official Netrunner CCG Conversion Rules for use with Cyberpunk 2020 From Rache Bartmoss' Brainware Blowout

ith such great collectable cards as Arasaka Owns You and the Bartmoss Memorial Icebreaker, the idea has come up to use Netrunner® events with or even in a Cyberpunk 2020



Illus. Mike Kimble @ 1996 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

game. The Corporate and 'Runner cards can be used to simulate things Corps and players do; a Corporate deck can be used as a "random" action simulator, as a dedicated datafort ready to be run, or even as a campaign hook. A 'Runner deck is less useful (fewer background machinations), but can be used for more immediate action such as interacting with suppliers, making new connections, etc. You can even swiftly play through Netruns with it (see the modified rules on page 114). Here are some of the campaign suggestions we've come up with, of course given with the usual caveat that you're a Cyberpunk referee, and if you don't like the suggestions, burn this book so you have to buy a new one.

ORGANIZING A CORPORATE CAMPAIGN DECK

"If you want to find out about a person, you ask, 'who.' The answer to, Who are you?' will tell you about that person's personality. But people don't really count. Big Business, now that counts. Unlike people, a corporation is faceless; 'who' is the only question you don't ask if you want to find out about a corporation. Who works there is not important- not at all. Today's marketing veep is tomorrow's floormat. Instead, you need to know the answers to all the other question words: what the corporation has, where it's going, how it intends to get there, when it can accomplish its goals, and why the board of directors thinks the corporate goals are important. These are the keys to the personality of a corporation. Now get out of my face before I have Tony bust your knees." -Dave Whindam

Syberpunk players being the independent-minded people they are, your players are generally going to choose their own targets. Face it: Cyberpunk players have an attitude, and we're damn proud of that fact. Few indeed are the Cyberpunk refs who can tell their players who their characters do or don't hate. So, unless you have that sort of players, you'll have to build the corporation's deck after you find out who the team is gunning for. After all, each evil Corp has its own unique style of sadistically grinding a runner to a pulp. And it's so nice for your game to have that personal touch.

High-tech firms like Zetatech tend toward equipment upgrades to make their dataforts the best possible; impregnability is more important to them than vicious countermeasures. Large corporations, especially those dealing with software, have a lot of sysops, as well as experimental virtual constructs like Viral Test Sites and Experimental Als. Corporations with subsidiary holdings, especially security subsidiaries like, oh, say, Arasaka prefer to work in the meat world, and typically employ a lot of trace and tag systems. Companies with a high media profile tend toward Braindance Campaigns and other not-really-all-that-sleazy-at-least-inpost-modern-terms nodes, while those who operate far from public scrutiny are fond of employing traps and ambushes of varying types.

Software (ICE, that is) also depends on the type of corporation. Those with high public access, like, say, New American Motors with their Braindance Test-Drive VR Constructs, have a lot of Net users wandering around their dataforts. These people need to be contained, but not too unpleasantly. On the other hand, ultra-high-security establishments like Skaldervikken SA know that no one should be on their premises, and remove the gloves before they strike. As an analogy, consider a bank versus a military base. At a bank, there are places the public definitely shouldn't go. The bank employs security measures, but the guards, though beefy and armed, are considerate and polite, and usher those vagrant souls back to where they properly belong. In contrast, if someone wanders into a minefield around a military base, no one is really going to raise a stink when he blows his hindquarters into his headquarters-he shouldn't have been there in the first place. The same sort of approach governs the choice of corporate datafort ICE. New American Motors has to choose more lenient software, at least as their first line of defense: Blowing test drivers out of their skulls would be bad for business. Simple data walls, code gates, and kid-gloved sentries like TKO 2.0 are the norms. Arasaka, on the other hand, not only doesn't need to take a soft approach, they actually increase their own reputation (and hence marketability) by being heavy-handed and ruthless. You can expect to see Data Nagas or Razor Wire data walls wherever you turn.

All that being said, the Agendas are perhaps the cards which should be chosen with the most care. After all, a corporation is best defined by its goals. Think Nike, and you think shoes (or missile bases). Think Arasaka, and you think, "Gee, I hope they don't decide to hurt me." Thus you should choose Agenda cards which one might reasonably expect the corporation to pursue-or just make them up.





: Feel and Substance

aturally, certain Agenda cards can be altered for purposes of color. For example, Polymer Breakthrough, in the strictest sense, would be a rare Agenda for most corporations to pursue. Only those corporations actively involved in experimental plastics and lubricants are likely to concern themselves with such things. Such a card can be altered slightly in flavor to keep it in line with the corporation. For Arasaka, a Polymer Breakthrough could result in a new sort of ballistic armor, perhaps a stiff Kevlar/mylar which protects against rippers as well as bullets. For Petrochem, a Polymer Breakthrough could result in a cheaper way to produce CHOOH-2, the meta-alcohol which fuels most of the planet's cars. For Diversified Media Systems, perhaps the breakthrough involves a new, dirt-cheap method of recording and distributing music and videos. Any of these sorts of inventions could reasonably be expected to result in a steady stream of additional funds for the corporation. Or you can make up your own Agenda card by using a note, or even by writing down what it really means somewhere else.

On the other hand, you may wish to include an Agenda or two which is definitely beyond the norm for that particular corporation, as a hint of darker events on the horizon. What would people think if the workaholic Boys in Black all took a big corporate vacation to the Bahamas (Corporate Retreat)? Wouldn't it make you nervous? Or what if a peaceable corporation like Biotechnica, ordinarily concerned with rain forests, pharmaceuticals, genetic engineering and the like, suddenly came out with a breakthrough in Bioweapons Research? Could it be that Militech acquired a controlling share of the company, or has Biotechnica secretly arranged an under-the-table-merger with the ESA with the intent of poisoning the planet with a tailor-made plague? The ESA could charge everyone a fortune to get off the planet while Biotechnica bought up contaminated land for pennies on the euro. Or maybe there are even darker plans in the offing ...

Darker even than poisoning the entire planet and bankrupting every human being alive who desperately wants to escape the bioplague? Oooh yeah. You betcha.

Remember, you are in no way limited to those Agendas published as Netrunner® cards ... although using some of them straight can make for wonderful adventure material.

ORGANIZING A 'RUNNER CAMPAIGN DECK

ow you build the deck for your players depends largely on how you intend to use the 'runner's deck in the game. As a plot device, the 'runner's deck can be

very small, with just a few cards in it to garner them help. If you intend to use the 'runner's deck in a more integral fashion to the game, the deck will have to be correspondingly bigger. Balance between the 'runner's deck and the Corp's deck is largely obtained by matching the number of uncommon and rare cards in each deck. Agendas like Political Overthrow are powerful indeed, and should be matched by an equally powerful card on the 'Runner's side, say, Al Boon or a Silicon Saloon Franchise.

Players may wish to build their own decks so they can choose what sort of approach they want to take. You should let the players build their deck initially so it matches their style of play, and then adjust it as you see fit for your game and intended use. Pull out a few cards which you think are too powerful or too unlikely for your campaign plans. Alternatively, you can have the 'runner fake his deck using existing programs; if a program isn't in the cards, choose the nearest alternative. We also recommend that you insert a few extra cards into the deck of your own choosing, so that the players can get a few beneficial surprises in addition to all the nasty little things in store for them in the Corp deck. Rare though it is, sometimes things go the way of the average punk.

Don't worry too much about balancing the decks ... you can always take care of any discrepancies by adjusting the difficulty while they're role-playing. If the characters get blown away, well, they knew the job was tough when they took it. If they wanted safe, they should stuck to changing diapers in the corporate day-care center.

O: Using the Decks

: I Need A Datafort!

It happens all the time. The players are moving along your carefully built plot line, being nice and predictable, when suddenly they leap boldly onto a tangent you hadn't foreseen, unhesitatingly yelling out something like, "Quick! We run the cafeteria datafort to look for a backdoor into the personal e-mail system, and maybe see if our contact has any food allergies! And while we're at it, we link back to the Oscar Mayer distributor's datafort and order us a ton of weenies to go!"

With just seconds to prepare a full-fledged datafort to challenge your 'runner (let alone be consistent with the outer world and what they've already explored of the building) the question immediately comes to mind: Why bother?

The players know that this isn't the main fort they have to tackle, and they won't spend excessive time in the system. They won't care if you can't turn off the refrigerated water supply to the drinking fountain, because they won't be in the system for more than a few moments.

The corporate deck is a great quick-and-dirty way to generate a datafort. Decide how many bits the corporation



in question has to spend on the datafort. The local 24-7 should only have two or three bits, while even a small branch office of Militech would have ten or more. Flip up cards from the deck until you reach an Agenda card. The cards you drew determine the strength of the datafort. Any ICE drawn is encountered one at a time as the 'runner moves through the system. Of course, the corporation has to be able to pay to rezz the ICE; you won't see Razor Wire at very many convenience stores. Operations can be played at any time, even before the 'runner starts in the system: If you draw Efficiency Consultants, then by all means have the datafort be three bits more efficient and deadly. You'll want to wait before playing other Operations like Trojan Horse. The Agenda card drawn determines how valuable the information they found was: An Agenda worth only one point indicates that whatever the characters wanted to find in that datafort wasn't really there; they get minimal information, if any. On the other hand, an Agenda worth four points means the characters get a lot of very useful information, or perhaps a link to somewhere else where that information can be found. Or perhaps they simply found a lead which could turn up information leading to a completely different adventure ...

If the luck of the draw turns up too little ICE for your tastes (i.e., the first card was an Agenda and they're trying to crack an EBM direct-sales office), then either shuffle the cards and draw again, ignore the first Agenda drawn, or draw as many additional cards as you wish. In this last case, extra Agendas could either increase the amount of information the characters can get, or else provide other interesting leads.

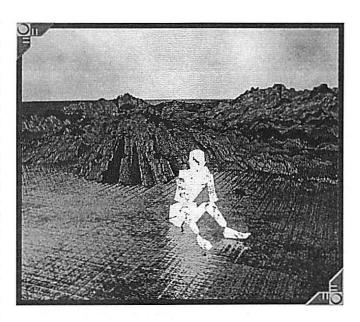
Or you could just give the information to the characters on a silver platter. Sometimes punks just get lucky. And there's nothing like having things be too easy to get a seasoned group of Cyberpunk players really paranoid ...

. Adventure Generator

tuck with only a couple of hours left before gaming, and You have to design a complete adventure for the crew? No sweat! Just use the decks!

This is the easiest and simplest way to employ the decks. Just play a game of Netrunner® with someone (preferably not one of the folks who has a character in your game, that is!), and keep a notepad handy during play. Jot down notes on what happened each turn. Your notes can be as abbreviated as "began new Agenda" or as detailed as "'Runner installed killer programs acquired through Fixer contact and got the low-down on the Corp's ICE from the Hunt Club. The Corp's HQ is revealed to contain a Code Corpse. 'Runner pulls an inside job trying to break HQ."

Bingo. You have a story arc. Both sides square off, build their forces, fight, and come to the inevitable conclusion. You have a set of sideline plots-runs, intervention by outsiders, etc.-which can happen during the story. Obviously, the play-



ers are going to stray from this plot. A lot. Happens all the time. But you have a basic sense for what's going on, what they're up against, and what they have that will work to their advantage.

The individual events may have to be reordered to react to the team's actions, but hey, that's why they need a brilliant and creative gamemaster like you to run the game, and not just a deck of cards.

There are two disadvantages to this method. One is that you might have to play a few games to get a decent story arc. Games where the 'runner runs R&D three times on the first turn and wins are not very good adventure material, nor are the games where the corporation rips right through its Agenda and wins. The other problem is that you will probably need to run the games past the 'runner's victory. You never know if the characters will be as effective as the person playing the 'runner's deck, so playing a few extra turns until the corporation wins gives your story arc a better endpoint.

No big, right? Hey, it's quick. It's dirty. And it's a little cheap. Much like life in 2020.

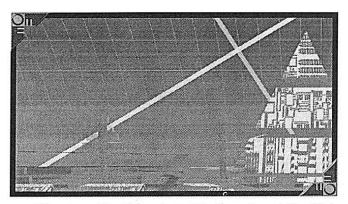
Plot Device

perhaps you have an idea already in mind, but you want to toss a few monkey wrenches in the works. Night City is a big place, and strange or unexpected occurrences can happen all the time.

It's easy to do with Netrunner® cards. Just keep a deck of each type handy, and whenever the action slows (or better yet, when the action is already too hot to handle), flip the top card of either deck. If you flip up something appropriate, work it into the plot line. If you flip up something inappropriate (like a Codegate when the team is engaged in a running gunfight in the streets), nothing happens.



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Of course, if nothing happens, then the plot's still in need of a pick-me-up, so you're free to flip over more cards until you get an inspiration! Go ahead. Your players will love you for it.

A variant of this idea is to shuffle the corporate cards and the 'runner cards together, and draw the bottom card from the deck. That way, neither you nor the players know who's going to get helped or hindered next. Although it lacks the ability for you to balance play one way or the other just by choosing which deck you draw from, it will certainly add more chaos to your game. And our experience says, where there's chaos, things happen.

Not necessarily good things, mind you ...

CARDS AS PLOT INSPIRATION

Various Operation, Agenda or Resource cards may not seem immediately applicable to your game, but think about them. A Political Coup doesn't have to happen right on top of the characters; it could represent a revolution in some distant country that somehow effects themtheir nemesis corporation was involved, relatives or friends were forced to flee the embattled country, or maybe the revolt affects the availability of some item or resource the characters need. Something like Punitive Counterstrike can be useful even if the characters themselves aren't the focus. Imagine the characters getting caught in the middle of a corporate hit on another group of edgerunners-especially if they think they're the targets, Even I Got A Rock-which is a big event in ANY campaign-could be toned down to something like an Orbital Laser Strike as the team's taking a suborbital airliner, forcing them down or maybe into an emergency docking at an LEO station.

In other words, let the cards inspire, not dictate, and be sure to use your imagination. After all, that's why you're the Referee and these other guys are only players.

Quick Mechanics

nother use for the decks, though not directly applied to Anetrunning, is found in assigning costs and efforts for tasks. Each action in Netrunner® is equal to a day or two of work (depending on how good you are at what you do). Thus, to flip the next card in a deck over requires a day of shopping around and buying drinks in the Short Circuit. In a day or two a decent cyberpunk ought to be able to earn 500eb doing scrounge work, or 1000eb doing contract programming.

Once a contact is made, it takes a day of negotiations and a bribe of a few hundred dollars (equal to two bits) to work out an Inside Job on a corporation. Getting a Short-Term Contract requires either several days of pounding the streets, a bribe to someone with contacts, or some combination thereof to equal four bits. Upgrading a program to tackle a nasty piece of ICE requires several days' worth of programming (one day per bit needed to increase the strength of the software).

Thus you can see the deck is an easy method to assign costs (in time and money) for players to tackle certain problems, be it finding the right contacts or upgrading their system to be able to tackle the Petrochem datafort. It may be balanced better for the card game than for role-playing, but it does allow for fast and furious game play.

. Netrunning System

ertainly gamemastering a Netrunner in a group is one of the toughest challenges facing a Cyberpunk 2020 referee. It's difficult to do without either having her escapades take up a lot of play time or else leaving her in the lurch without much chance to use her skills, both of which leave someone without much to do. Using the Netrunner® system can keep netrunning fast and furious, and therefore keep it as an active part of the game.

Your dataforts will perforce be designed differently than as described in the Cyberpunk 2020® rules. Instead, just make a list of which cards appear in which order in each datafort. (It sure makes designing a datafort a lot quicker!) You must also keep track of how much money (bits) the corporation has, and how quickly they are replenished. Every time the characters "take an action" by earning money, installing something new, making contacts, or whatever, let the corporation do the same. Just be sure that one out of every four actions the corporation takes are to draw another card from its deck.

Let the 'runner do private programming, building up bits to pay for killer software, etc. Obviously the 'runner should be the only one to be able to do this, although you could let the other characters work on making contacts and earning cash to pay for new hardware purchases. It's up to you how





to handle the actual Net mechanics. You could use the rules straight out the game, and just keep track of cards and hand size. Alternatively, you could use the variant rules in this book (page 114); if you're not doing dedicated runs and simply need to know certain effects or damage caused by cards, refer to the variant rules and the Netrunner® card-to-Cyberpunk 2020 lists.

: In Terms of Roleplaying

eing a card game, Netrunner® has to use definitive, Dalmost jargonistic terms for rules clarity. Cards are installed in dataforts. ICE is installed on dataforts. Agendas (and a few others) are advanced. Such terms don't pull much weight in the "real world" of the 21st century. No one expects to read a screamsheet headline that says, "Arasaka Advances Agenda Again: Analysts Fear Only One Bit To Go." Instead, you have to pull out some descriptions that are more realistic for the role-playing environment.

For the Agenda cards, try these:

Agendas in R&D are proposals that are under consideration by the Board of Directors, or else operational memos distributed around the branch. "Scanning the e-mail buffers, you find several messages regarding 'Project Babylon', including an excited transmission from the audio engineering group. You determine that Phat Phrenzy, a popular local band, is being evaluated by the corporation for possible sponsorship, and the band seems excited to receive financial backing." Stealing the Agenda involves copying the files, convincing the band that all is not well, and getting angry young cyberpunks to firebomb the recording studio. Perhaps even Johnny Silverhand and Kerry Eurodyne will finance a probe into this malpractice of audio engineering.

Agendas in HQ have been accepted in principle. They require scheduling and budgeting, but are on the corporate To Do list. Feasibility studies have been completed, and whatever it is, it's coming soon. Stealing it involves much the same actions as before.

Agendas installed have been begun. For Project Babylon, installing the Agenda in a datafort involves signing a contract with the band and plotting out a schedule for the release of Phat Phrenzy's new album, complete with corporate additions. Stealing the Agenda at this point involves releasing a copy of Phat Phrenzy's contract on the net (they were supposed to be independent), pirating copies of their studio tracks and passing them everywhere (including to rival corporations), and back-stripping the subliminals from the band's audio and video tracks and sending copies off to the screamsheet medias.

There are even ways to spin this subplot. The band might have gone public with their corporate backing, or else tried to maintain an independent front. They might know about the subliminals, or the corporation might have put them in without the knowledge of the musicians. Or, even sicker, perhaps the band members themselves have stumbled on a new type of subliminal, and they're using the corporation for their own twisted ends - they want global distribution of their new album, which is named-you guessed it-Project Babylon! Yeah, the corporation is unaware of the true implications of the project, and several of their key execs have already succumbed to the effects of the band's promo mixes. Eeeek. Conscienceless power-mad cyberpunk band members moving to take over a megacorporation, and then the globe.

Bits also require conversion into role-playing terms. They're simply a few days' worth of time and effort. This can be cash (a few days' contract programming gets you some quick bucks), material (a passkey which allows an inside job), work (custom-programming your killer to take on some new ICE), or just legwork (doing some "social engineering": dating that junior veep so you can use her email account to sidestep network security).

In this section we include a variety of short subjects which can be retrofitted into any of the above play styles. Use them or discard them as you wish.

New Kid vs. Old Giant

"Corps're like cockroaches. You can never get rid of them." -Nomad Santiago

ow long has the target corporation been in the area? This will certainly have an effect on how you use the cards for the corporation. If the Corp has been in the area for a while (for example, Arasaka has been squatting over Night City for some twenty years or so), then the dataforts will all be in place. In

general, upgrades, restructuring, fiscal considerations, and changing corporate goals, giving the corporation one free turn per year that it has been established is a good rule of thumb.



However, with longevity comes exposure. If a corporation has been in an area for a number of years, the local 'runners know what the score is on the dataforts. They've been

through, they know people who have been

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through, they watched people come running out of the datafort only to get eaten by a code corpse at the virtual automated order station for Pizza Zero. Expose one piece of installed ICE per three years of longevity in an area—even though the stuff has assuredly been upgraded, corps tend to be pretty unimaginative when it comes to writing specs for new ICE: "Make it just like the last one, but better." When each piece of ICE is exposed, the Corp can opt to rezz it.



Illus Mike Kimble @ 1996 of Wizards of the Coast. In

. MEGACORPS VERSUS UPSTARTS

"They all look the same size when they're stomping on your face."

—Johnny Silverhand

"Johnny, some have bigger boots than others. Much bigger boots." —Morgan Blackhand

etrunner® is a carefully balanced game. Each turn, both sides get exactly four actions (one of the Corp's actions has to be to draw a card). Each side plays by the same rules—well, not EXACTLY the same rules, but they are equitable.

In Cyberpunk 2020, life is anything but fair. Just ask Rache. The bigger a corporation is, the more money it has at its disposal, the more workers it commands, and therefore the more it can get done. Obviously, this is not necessarily an arithmetic progression; a company twice the size loses some production due to inefficiency, poor communication, and general bureaucracy. But in Cyberpunk, a Megacorp is not twice the size of, say, Microsoft or even IBM. It's whole orders of magnitude bigger.

Upstart companies? They might be as small as a Merrill, Asukaga and Finch field office that decided to go rogue and hired a few solos to keep the main office off their backs—cost effectiveness and all that.

To simulate size differences, a corporation could get more actions per turn, or even fewer. EBM or Net54, as worldwide concerns, could get four or five, or even six actions a turn in addition to drawing a card from the deck.

Barney's Corporate Assassination Agency would

DATASCREEN

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only get two (don't go below two; corporations just don't maintain feasibility under such a yoke).

Is the corporation huge but inefficient? Increase the number of draws it must take each turn. That'll get the Corp to cycle through stuff in a wasteful manner.

TRASHING RESOURCES

"A friend in need had better move fast" -street saying

Nothing deserves to be role-played and experienced like the trashing of a Resource. This is where the iron-toed corporate boot treads heavily upon the life of the Netrunner like a giant among ants. The 'runner will invariably feel both fortunate not to have been squashed personally, but also very paranoid that the corporate dragnet is indeed tightening all around ... how much time is left?

How the Resources are trashed depends on what sort of Resource it is. Individuals, like Karl de Veres or Wilson the Weef, can be bloodily assassinated in the street, preferably while the characters are present. Smith's Pawnshop can go up in a ball of flames straight out of The Crow. In fact, what if the characters were in the pawnshop when it happened? Either a massive LAW attack suddenly strikes, or else a dozen corporate thugs come in and start prepping the place. "Mr. 'Smith', we know you sold a certain piece of software to a notorious Net criminal. See, the software was a plant, it had a special signature, and within a week of us selling it to you, it was used in a raid on our datafort. I'm afraid we'll have to cancel our account with you." (Smarter corps can move in on Mr. Smith very quietly and whisper something in his shell-like ear about cooperating, naming names and keeping said ear open. In return, the corp won't send the graduating class of its Mook School over to practice on Mr. Smith, and everything will be hunky-dory.) Are the characters going to fight it, or will they just make like everyone else in the place and step out quietly-and quickly?

Other Resources may simply have contracts canceled, with or without due notice being given. Imagine a character desperately calling for Trauma Team extraction, only to find that her service contract had been bought out by Arasaka Ambulance, Inc.? They have an 800 number ...

Whatever you do, always play to the big picture. Successful Netrunners can cost a Corp millions or even billions of dollars of loss, so they are perfectly willing to spend hundreds of thousands on prevention. Hound the characters' Nomad Allies with AV-4 attacks until they are driven into hiding somewhere in the Ozarks. Plague the Floating Runner BBS with so many sysops and Netwatch goons that 'runners stop coming and they close up shop. Have Arasaka take over the security service contract for Hilliard ... for free. Things change in the world, and the players should be very aware that their actions impact not only the corps, but also everyone who stands in their shadows.



TRASHING NODES AND UPGRADES

"Always do favors for Netrunners. It's like money in the bank." -Morgan Blackhand

rashing Nodes in Cyberpunk 2020 can't necessarily be done just by a few Net hacks. While some Nodes can be destroyed through the Net-Vacant Soulkiller and Nevinyrral are a few examples of such, and even the South African Mining Corp could be effectively destroyed by scrambling its financial records-other Nodes need to be destroyed by some combination of meatworld and electronic activity. Examples of these include the Solo Squad, the Euromarket Consortium, the Chicago Branch, and the Cowboy Sysop.

With these Nodes, the trash cost paid by the 'runner gives the 'runner the information—passwords, floor plans, schedules, whatever-necessary for a Solo or a Nomad clan to take down the target. Netrunners generally have a variety of contacts available for such dirty work. Even if the Netrunner can't spare any euro to fund the Operation, someone out there, some competitor is sure to put up some earnest money. Or perhaps the Solo will do the job just for the practice.

This assault can be a role-playing session in itself, be it as simple as tracking down a hated sysop like Olivia Salazar in the seamy underworld of rathole bars in Night City and blowing her away, or as gargantuan as leading the Aldecaldos against the Rustbelt HQ of the corporation in a major slugfest replete with milspec weaponry.

The players can even try to take down these Nodes without the benefit of the 'runner's information-it's just sure to be a teensy bit more challenging.

If you want to grind in the pathos-and why not, you're playing Cyberpunk-make the Nodes personal. Perhaps the characters set out to assassinate Turbeau Delacroix, but he spends almost all his time in corporate-controlled areas. Direct attacks are out of the question. The only way is to get close to him, and the only way to do that is to get into the exclusive spas he attends and become his friend. So they infiltrate the club, hang out, and end up playing racquetball with Turbeau and drinking mineral water with him after the matches. And he's a cool guy. Really nice. Has a life. A wife. Two kids. An Abyssinian cat named Max. They finally get a good opportunity to assassinate this hated corporate sysop ... when he brings the wife and kids over to eat dinner with "Uncle Morgan."

"Hey, you spend a lot of time honing that bit of code to make a good killer. But then if you trash a program or burn it away to accomplish your goal, you don't cry over it, you move on and make a new program. Same goes for friends, as far as I'm concerned." -Rache Bartmoss

"Really, Rache? I'll keep that in mind ... friend." -Spider

BEATING THE CORP

"Damn. I think they're on to me, guys. We've gotta..." —last words of many a weeflerunner

n Netrunner®, when you accumulate seven Agenda points, you win. What does this mean in Cyberpunk 2020 terms? For the corporation, if they gain seven Agenda points, they have achieved a temporary measure of inviolability. Either they are too popular (what with their lenient employment contracts and that neat new polymer) for punks to attack without raising the ire of the common citizen, or they've amassed enough blackmail material to keep the corporation at bay, or else they have solidified their position well enough to be able to brush off most attacks.

Time for the punks to pull back, get out of the areas newly designated as corporate-policed zones, and fight the expansion across town where they're planning that new corporate mallplex. All punks know that the beast can't maintain a good face forever in a growing and dynamic world.

For the Netrunner-the player characters-victory means that enough damage has been done to the corporation that it suffers a major upheaval. This may result in the closure of the branch office, the removal (think about it ...) of a senior executive or perhaps the entire senior staff, or a major financial reorganization along with a new and more tolerable corporate direction. Whatever the result, it's for the better in the views of the cyberpunks, if not the wage slaves now suddenly unemployed or the executives suddenly going down in a flaming jet to a sudden and very short landing in the Mojave. Only in the rarest of cases will this actually take a Corp down entirely; they have a lot of finances and diversified sources of income to keep themselves viable through the worst of disasters ... but what remains may be a shadow of the former threat.

Unfortunately, by spilling the advance beans on a corporation's intents, punks may inadvertently give a leg up to the corporation's competitors ...

In short, victory is a good excuse to shake your campaign up completely. Wall off the character's favorite hangouts into the new corporate zone, bulldoze their flophouse, and round up a bunch of those homeless criminals and shoot them. Assassinate the mayor and put a corporate board member in his place. Or else burn the Corp, have its stick drop to the gutter, and leave it at the mercy of other corporate raiders and extraction teams, and elevate the characters to folk heroes among the punker dives and hangouts. In short, pull out the stops and have fun with it, whichever way it goes.

Especially if the 'runner gets flatlined.



etrunner® Prime is a fast and easy way to use Netrunner® cards in everyday Cyberpunk® games. Netrunner® Prime also allows the Referee of a Cyberpunk® RPG game a unique possibility-if he trusts his players enough (?!), he can just slap a Fortress in front of his 'Runners and say, "Go run yourself while I handle the rest of the group." The 'Runner can then solo his way through the deck until he is either killed, knocked out of the Net or wins his way through to an objective.

Pringing Netrunner Cards into *Cyberpunk*® Play

In this adaptation, you may only have cards you can buy in the Netrunner® card game. Corps pay nothing for their cards; they can use anything they can get their hands on. (Want a million Hellhounds? Knock yourself out-you have nearly infinite resources available.) Netrunners don't have it so easy; not having megabuck budgets, they have to justify the software they have access to.

There are two main kinds of card Netrunners will want in Netrunner® Prime; Icebreakers and Resources (Hardware, Preps, Resources). The Realspace cost of an Icebreaker is based on its cost in this book (pgs. 41-93). Don't look for a simple Bit to eurobuck conversion; there isn't one; the game mechanics between Cyberpunk® and Netrunner® require two very different systems that are effectively incompatible. If you want to bring in a new program from, say, Proteus™ (the new Netrunner® expansion) you'll have to do what we did for this book; build the sucker in Cyberpunk® terms (pg. 33-40), or wait till we post the Proteus™ expansion on our Web page (http://www.best.com~rtg1)

If it's a resource you're trying to "buy" into the game, its cost (as listed on the card in the upper right corner) is a measure of how many Improvement Points (IP) it took to "buy" that resource: For example, to hire Mantis, Fixer at Large would cost 3 IP. You can buy a Prep from IP accrued in earlier adventures or by going on an adventure to earn that card (3 IP might be equal to a small trip down to the Street to locate that Fixer and talk him into working for you, about an hour long game session with a few dangerous encounters). As a rule resource costs range from 0 to 11.

If it's a Chip, Deck Hardware or Vehicle resource, consider all these resources to be equivalent to a one of a kind prototype you have to get ahold of (the Natsuko Cycle is a one of a kind road racer test bike, or the Artemis 2000 a superdeck of which there is only one in existence). If it's a Base Link, you might have to spend a bunch of time on the Net asking your friends how to locate someone with the right access codes. If it's a Connection, you may have to go down to the Street and actually talk to them.

💇 Corporate Setup

ou will need a variety (at least two dozen) of Corporate Netrunner® cards to play, as well as a handful of counters (glass beads, pennies, M&Ms) to record any tags you put on the 'runner.

- 1) Discard all Operations Cards except the following: Urban Renewal, Scorched Earth and Punitive Counterstrike. Put these in one pile, called Objectives.
- 2) Discard all Upgrade Cards except the following: Dedicated Response Team. Add these to your Objectives pile.
 - 3) Discard all your Node cards except the following:

ACQUIRING RESOURCE CARDS IN A CAMPAIGN

KIND OF ADVENTURE OR EXPERIENCE REQUIRED Cost

- No big thing, You just do it. Example: All-Nighter. Anyone can do an all nighter. You're probably doing them right now to get through finals. And anyone can download the Hunt Club—the address is constantly available all over the Net to those in the know.
- A small adventure, with maybe one minor threat of danger. Example: Mantis, Fixer at Large requires going 2-3 down to the Street, finding the fixer and facing down his bodyguards to talk him into working for you.
- A larger adventure lasting one whole game session, with several threats equal to you and at least some 4-5 chance of getting really hurt or killed. Example: Rigged Investments requires that you get a man into the Merrill, Asukaga and Finch offices, past several layers of guards and one major villain.
- An adventure lasting a couple play sessions, with a direct threat that will give the players a real chance of 6-9 getting hurt. Example: to get Pandora's Deck means you have to learn about the deck (A Street mission), find it's location (another Street mission) get into the Pandora Corp's labs, defeat many traps and threats, and go up against the head of Pandora security, a freelance Arasaka cyborg. The higher the cost, the uglier the steps of the mission and the more sessions of play required (we recommend 1 step for every 2 points, or one session per 3 bits cost)
- 10-12 A major campaign, with lots of steps where the players must crack a lot of problems on their way to the goal.



CYBERPUNK 2.0.2.0

Setup, Schlaghund, I Got a Rock, Solo Squad, Experimental AI, TRAP! and Vacant Soulkiller. Add these to your Objectives pile. Note: These three groups represent Traps-retaliatory forces the Corp can use to pay back the Netrunner should he get tagged.

4) Pull out all the Agenda Cards and add them to your Objectives pile. As a rule, you'll ignore all text on Agenda Cards, using them as as "prizes" inside Forts. If you score an Agenda, you have basically discovered a plan of the Corporation (or information it has on a competitor's plans) and can sell it on the Black InfoMarket for a value equal to it's Agenda Point Value (lower right corner)



times 1000 eurobucks.

5) Finally, add any Game-specific Objectives you might have, representing actual game-based information (we suggest using a very common Netrunner® card and tape a label or Post-It to the back describing the data you want to be uncovered).

6) Discard the following Ice cards: Viral 15, Too Many Doors, Virizz, Shock-r, Ice Sentry, Canis Major, Canis Minor, Vacuum Link. Discard all Sysop cards. Sort the rest of your cards out into one big pile. This is the pile you will use to build your Data Fortress.

💇 Netrunner Setup

ou will need at least two dozen Netrunner® cards to play Netrunner® Prime.

- 1) Discard all Virus Cards
- 2) Discard the following Programs: Poltergeist, Scattershot, False Echo, Start-up Immolator, Microtech Al, Mystery Box, Netspace Inverter, Zetatech Software Installer, Expert Schedule Analyzer, Newsgroup Filter, I-Spy, Shredder Uplink Protocol.
- 3) Discard the following Hardware cards: Armadillo Armored Road Home, Drifter Mobile environment, Microtech Backup Drive, Microtech 'Trode Set, Shredder Uplink Protocol, Record Reconstructor, ZZ22 Speed Chip, Corolla Speed Chip, R&D Interface and HQ Interface
- 4) Discard all Prep cards, except the following: Stumble Through Wilderspace, Nomad Allies, Total Genetic Refit, Danshi's Second ID, Fall Guy and Open Ended Mileage Program.
- 5) Discard all Resources except the following: Technician Lover, Access to Arasaka, Access thru Alpha, Back Door to Orbital Air, Submarine Uplink, Back Door to Hillaird, Access to Kiribati, The Springboard, Trauma Team, Leland Corporate Bodyguard and Arasaka Owns You.
- 6) Sort the rest of your cards out into one big pile. This is the pile you will use to build your Cyberdeck.

STARTING THE RUN

The Corp starts his part of the Run off by by setting up his Data Fortress. The Fortress is a stack of cards he designs, equal to the number of CPU in his fortress times two. He stacks his cards face down-this can be random or chosenbut the first card in the stack must always be a Wall or Gate.

He also selects one additional card for every CPU in his deck; this stack is placed face down to one side and becomes his Recompiling stack.

Finally, he selects one Objective card (from his Objective pile) for each CPU in his fortress and places these face down in a row opposite of the 'Runner; these are the Objectives the 'Runner is trying to steal. He can choose any cards in the Objectives pile to do this, as long as his total number of Operations or Upgrade (i.e. trap) cards does not exceed his total number of Agendas or Game specific Objectives.

The Netrunner starts off by picking a hand of cards equal to the number of MU in his deck (all cards take 1 MU in Prime). In most cases, this is four cards (a standard deck has 4MU). He also selects one additional card for every MU in his deck; this stack is placed face down to one side and becomes his Hard Drive pile.

Not enough MU? Hardware-Deck cards are one way to boost the bandwidth-equivalent to buying a buffed up cyberdeck. You may only play one Hardware-Deck card at a time. If you have a Hardware-Deck card, you should place that card face up at this time and leave it on the table facing the Corp; you then get the basic 4 cards plus the bonus for that Deck. Example: Artemis 2020 provides +2MU. This means when I have an Artemis card in play, I have 2+4 lbasic deckl MU to work with-a total of 6. Note: Additional Hardware has no effect on your Hard Drive pile, which remains at 4.

You can also apply one additional chip card (Tycho Mem Chip, Zetatech Mem Chip) to either your existing 4MU



cyberdeck or a Hardware-Deck card. Place this card underneath your Hardware-Deck card (or in the place you would place a Hardware-Deck card if you don't have one). Example: I plug in a Tycho Mem Chip to boost my Artemis 2000 Hardware-Deck card. The Mem Chip adds +3MU, boosting my total car-

rying capacity to nine (4+2+3).

Demons are another way to increase the number of cards you can rezz. A Demon allows you to carry as many MU in programs as the demon's description allows. While the Demon is in your hand, any or all of its programs are also accessible; if the Demon is returned to the Hard Drive stack, or destroyed, all of its programs go with it. The best way to bring a Demon into play is to bring the Demon card into your hand, then place it face up in front of you, with all the programs it has fanned out beneath it.







Objectives



CORPORATE FORTRESS



Stack

Data Fort Top Card is rezzedl

SAMPLE LAYOUT





Hard Drive Pile

'Runner's Rezzed Hand

NETRUNNER DECK



Hardware [MU booster]

Swapping

The Netrunner has a couple other options the Corp doesn't. For one thing, although he usually carries fewer rezzed cards (equal to the number of MU in his deck), he also has the option of exchanging cards from his Hard Drive pile in a process called swapping.

Swapping allows you to bring new cards into play when you haven't got enough MU space to rezz them otherwise. Putting a card into the Hard Drive pile doesn't mean it's destroyed forever; it just means the card is stored away for future use. Programs that are swapped (an action that takes place at the start of a turn), are returned to the Hard Drive, and can be replaced by bringing in new cards from the Hard Drive. You can only swap one program per round.

: ROUNDS

Vetrunner® Prime is played in 1 second rounds. Each round follows a sequence:

1. The 'Runner gets to use any Detection programs that are active in his Cyberdeck (see below).

2. The 'Runner can swap a card from his Hard Drive.

- 3. The Corp asks the 'Runner if he will proceed with the run this round or jack out. If the 'Runner jacks out, end the run. If not, the Corp flips over the top card in his stack facing the 'Runner, which rezzes the card into play (see below).
- **4.** The 'Runner must now deal with this card, rezzing his own card to defeat, avoid, or minimize the other card's effect. If he has no countermeasure, he takes the card's full effect.
- 5. The next round begins, until the run ends (see page 118).

: Rezzing

Cards are put into play in *Netrunner® Prime* by an action called **rezzing**. A card can be rezzed:

- · to counteract the effects of another card.
- to set up a condition; something that affects other cards to be played, like a tag permitting a bad thing to be done in Realspace.
- · to act upon an opponent in some manner.

Both sides will rezz one card each Round; the Corp to present an obstacle and the 'Runner to overcome it. You rezz a card by drawing it from your hand and showing it to your opponent. If a combat action is required, you then perform that action and return the card to your hand. You need not show un-rezzed cards; you can keep those hidden in your hand or stack.

Note: Forts generally rezz cards from their stack in order. Netrunners can only rezz a card that they hold active in their Cyberdeck, *not* from their Hard Drive.

💇 What You're Rezzing

ach side of a *Netrunner® Prime* game has its own arsenal of software—programs designed to break into Data Fortresses or to stop Fortress incursions. The Corps have **Ice Programs**, and the Netrunners have **Icebreakers** (see next page).

Each program has what are called **subroutines**: things the program does as one of it's functions. Subroutines are always marked on a *Netrunner*® card, and are usually signified by a symbol of some sort.:

Expose an Installed Card

or Send the run



In Netrunner® Prime, you will always use the first subroutine on the card as its function, and do what that subroutine tells you to do. If there are further instructions, you'll ignore them and implement only the first. Where this is unclear, you will use the first instruction given to you on

the card (you can ignore any "color commentary"—quotes or descriptions—that might lead off the card text. Where there are exceptions to the instructions printed on the card, they will be noted below.





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! Ice Programs (Corps) WALLS

These are barriers which can be knocked down by any Program with the **Break ice** subroutine or **Break wall** subroutine. If not counteracted, Data walls do first function listed on the card

CODE GATES

Similar to Walls, Code Gates are hardened code defenses designed to keep Netrunners from entering without a password. They can be knocked down by any program with Break ice subroutine or Break code gate subroutine abilities. If not counteracted, Code Gates do first function listed on the card.

SENTRIES

The worst of the Corp's arsenal. Sentries are free-roaming programs that look for intruders and zap them with something ugly. They can be knocked down by any Netrunner Program with *Break ice subroutine or *Break Ispecific sentry! subroutine abilities. If not counteracted, Sentries do the first function listed on the card.

SPECIFIC RULES FOR ICE PROGRAM SUBROUTINES:

Anti-personnel Subroutines (Do X amount of Net, Meat or Brain damage)

Programs that attack the Netrunner (Cerebus, Liche, Code corpse, Zombie, Cortical Scrub, Neural Blade, Data Darts, Mastiff, Bolter Cluster) all do physical damage. If the card reads Net or Meat Damage, take 1D6 for each pip of damage. Each Brain Damage subroutine takes one permanently off the Netrunner's INT. Damage will be taken off your Cyberpunk® character sheet.
• Special: if Fatal Attractor comes up, its damage takes place immediately, just like any other kind of AP black ice.

End Run Subroutines [5 End the run]

Good News: These subroutines just cut you offline. You are dumped into Realspace and have to start over. Bad News: The Fortress can (and probably will) be Recompiled before you start your next run.

• Special: TKO 2.0—ignore the forgoing next action instruction. Instead, you're knocked out for 2D6 Realspace turns.

Anti-Program Subroutines [3 Trash a program]

Subroutines that trash Programs (Data Naga, D'Arc Knight, Triggerman, Sentinels Prime, Ice Pick Willie, Banpei) all operate by allowing the Corporation to randomly remove one program from the Netrunner's current rezzed "hand". Although the Netrunner can refill his hand with a card from his Hard Drive in the next round, the card is removed to the Recompling Stack

Traces [3 Trace X —if Trace is successful]

These subroutines allow the Corp to locate the Netrunner's Realspace coordinates—tagging it. The power of the trace is sig-

nified by the superscrpt number (see Base Links)This is bad, because that allows the Corp to scramble a waiting Solo team to clobber the offensive 'Runner, or blow up his apartment, or drop a rock from orbit, or ...Traces are defeated by programs that either defeat the trace (any Base Link or Link) or remove a tag altogether (Open-Ended Mileage Program, Fall Guy, Danshi's Second ID, Total Genetic Retrofit, Nomad Allies).

 Special: Reverse the order of the instructions on Jack Attack and follow BOTH instructions.

Note: While there are traces that have an instant effect (Cinderella, Flatline, Rex, Asp,Fang 2.0, Fang, Homewrecker) generally, most of the outcomes of traces take a lot of time, Netwise. But even in Realspace time, it may only take a few minutes to scramble a Solo team and whisk them by AV-4 to your location. It may take even less time to adjust an orbiting railgun to drop a rock on you. We suggest that in the event you tag someone and then send something nasty their way, you start the clock immediately after the run ends (most runs aren't longer than a minute or two anyway), and roll a D6+3 to determine how many minutes it will take for the bad news to arrive. Or use your own judgement; an incoming rock is a great way to shake up an otherwise complacent Cyberpunk® team.

! Icebreakers ('Runner)

Icebreakers usually specify the **type** of ice they break. Either they break a specific type of ice (*Dogcatcher* stops all *Pitbull, Hellhound, Bloodhound or Watchdog* subroutines) or a **class** of ice (*Evil Twin* breaks all *Sentry* routines, *Flak* all *AP* subroutines, *Ramming Piston* any *Wall*). Some just break any kind of ice (*Bartmoss Memorial Icebreaker*).

Special note: Pile Driver breaks only one wall in this game.
 Using/Defeating Ice: To use an Icebreaker, add the



Strength value of the Icebreaker (lower right corner) to a 1D6 roll. The ice you are trying to break adds its strength (lower left corner), plus a D6 roll. If the Netrunner's total is equal or higher, he wins the encounter.



ICEBREAKER

STEALTH PROGRAMS

Stealth Programs are a special way of defeating one kind of ice; you just sneak past it. Stealth works only on Sentries. When Sentry Ice is Encountered, play your Stealth card (Vewy Vewy Quiet, Invisibility, Cloak) as a normal Icebreaker, using the value in asterisks ("Put ..."). as its Strength vs. the Program's Strength. If your roll is equal or higher, you pass that card as if it isn't there and remove it from play.

DETECTION PROGRAMS

All Detection Programs (Mouse, Seeya, Smarteye) let you look at the next card in the Ref's Fortress hand before you swap from your Hard Drive. Only one Detection program can be rezzed at a time.





- Special: R&D Protocol lets you look at up to 5 cards in the Fort's stack.
- · Special: Technician Lover also lets you look at the next card in the Data Fort.

BASE LINKS

A Trace can only be counteracted by either an Icebreaker that just breaks the ice, or some other sort of



trace stopper like a Base link. If you can't stop it cold, you can try to play a Base Link card and add its value to a D6 roll. The Corp rolls a D6 and adds the value (the little superscript number next to the word Trace in the card instruction) of the Trace. If the Corp's total is

higher than the 'Runner's total, the trace turns into a tag, allowing the Corp to send a nasty surprise after the 'Runner in the next turn.

- Special: treat Baedeker's Net Map and Bakdoor as a Resource-Base link, not a Program-base link.
- Special: Treat Stumble Through Wilderspace as a +9 Base Link.
- Special: Treat Rabbit as a +1 Base Link
- Special: Treat Signpost as a +2 Base Link

If you get a tag, you can still remove it by playing a card with a [3 Remove a tag] ability (Open-Ended Mileage Program, Fall Guy, Danshi's Second ID, Total Genetic Retrofit, Nomad Allies).

Resolving the Round

ach Round, the 'Runner must either defeat the rezzed card or take the consequences. The 'Runner does this by using one of the cards in his hand. Example: On Round three, the Corp in the MegaCity Datafort reveals a Data Naga with a Strength of 5. Unless the 'Runner has a program designed to kill Ice or Data Naga programs, he's going to face the resultlose one program.

If the 'Runner wins, he has the choice of jacking out or continuing the run with a new Round (and the next card). If the 'Runner loses, then the first instruction on the card takes place. The card then remains in play until it is either bypassed, recompiled or defeated. Example: 'Runner Jack Flash encounters a Bolter Cluster and is unable to stop it. He takes 4 Net damage (4D6), and will continue to take 4 Net damage each round until he either defeats the Cluster or jacks out.

Once a particular piece of ice has been defeated, the Corp then removes that that card to the Recompiling Stack.

ENDING THE HUN

here are three ways in which a run ends: The Netrunner gets aced, the Netrunner gets bounced off-line and the Fortress gets recompiled or finally, the Netrunner gets through the entire Fortress stack. Let's tackle each outcome:

- 1) You're aced. No problem. Roll up another character, weefleboy.
- 2) You're bumped off line. While you take no damage (hopefully), there is one downside-Recompiling (see below).
- 3) You get through. You're at the end of the road. But where were you headed? What CPU have you cracked? Working from his Objective pile, the Corp has secretly selected one card for each CPU in his Fortress. The Netrunner gets to randomly select ONE. This is the Objective he has reached. If he wants to continue the run to get to the other Objectives, he will have to keep tackling the ice, and the Corp gets to recompile its ice now as well, with some limitations, to prepare the gauntlet to the next Objective within the fort (see below)

Recompiling

↑ hen a Netrunner is cut off or otherwise ends the run, the Fortress operators automatically get the chance to "recompile" their fortress. This means they can quickly swap in new offensive software to be ready for the next run, choosing these new programs from their Recompiling stack. Example: The Microtech Fortress player knocks 'Runner Jack Flash out of the Net, allowing him to recompile the Fort. He goes to his Recompiling Pile and selects three cards, swapping them for three cards already in the Microtech Fortress. Recompiling is why the 'Runner really doesn't want to jack out and restart again; the run gets tougher because now the target has an idea of what you can throw against him and can defend against it.

If the 'Runner accesses an Objective and is continuing the same run to another one, the Corp may still recompile the Fortress before the 'Runner can move to the next Objective. There is a catch, however: The Fortress now has one less CPU's worth of cards-for example, a Fort with 5 CPU has 10 cards-after the first Objective is reached, this would now drop to 8 cards; if another Objective is reached, that would drop to 6 cards and so on. The reduction in CPU is reflected only in the number of cards of ice in the Fortress, not in the INT of the system or any other factor.

Sysop War

hile Netrunner® Prime is designed to work with the **V** basic structure of the *Netrunner*® card game, you can add another dimension to RPG play by using this optional rules variant called Sysop War. In this variant, the Corp brings his previously discarded Sysop cards into play as characters, using the stats for them on pgs. 100 thru 106. He equips them as Netrunners, using all the 'Runner setup rules, and also allowing all 'Runners in the game access to black ice (normally Corp-only, take 1 MU each) as well as the regular 'Runner cards. The Sysop plays as a 'Runner defending a Fort, trying to ace other 'Runners with his own ice-while other 'Runners similarly equipped try to ace him in turn!



