

# GURPS®

Fourth Edition

# INFINITE WORLDS I.S.T.™



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Written by **KENNETH HITE**  
and **STEPHEN KENSON**

**I.S.T. Created by ROBERT M. SCHROECK**

Edited by **NIKOLA VRTIS**

Illustrated by **BOB STEVLIC**  
and **JOHN ZELEZNIK**

*An e23 Game Aid for GURPS®*

# STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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# I.S.T.

This Earth may be the most dangerous – and the most promising – that Infinity has yet discovered. Less than a year ago, a team of Scouts was tracking a discontinuity in the equations underlying a series of alternates: worlds just a few “decimal places” out of what quantum parachronic theory predicted were their “correct” places. Although imposing direction is always suspect when dealing with parachronics, the Scouts decided to jump into the coordinates that the math indicated would be the epicenter of this “quantum faultline.” The world they found there was bizarre even by Patrol standards, one straight out of the comic books. Superhumans flew, battled costumed criminals, and saved their world from

extinction on an almost monthly basis. Most of the superhumans on the “world-saving” end of the spectrum worked for an organization called the International Super Teams, the I.S.T., chartered (like Infinity) by this world’s U.N. Cheered by this, some factions in Infinity (and especially in UNIC) want to reveal the Secret to the I.S.T. worldline’s U.N., who could probably take it in stride and could use the help. However, most of the Patrol and at least some of the Crisis Ministry staff believe that a world where seemingly anything can happen, from alien invasions to global mind control, is not a world they want knocking on Homeline’s door any time soon.

## FOUR-COLOR REALITY

The bizarrely mutable nature of the I.S.T. worldline’s reality poses tremendous obstacles for open contact (what if a reality quake knocks this world’s U.N. into a force for evil or a dictatorship?) and tremendous opportunities for study. Among the effects of I.S.T.’s strange quantum instability are the following.

*Expect the Incredible:* Synchronicities and happenstance seem to conspire on I.S.T.. Otherwise fatal accidents turn into “origins,” for example. People always seem to be in the right place at the right time (or wrong time, depending on how you look at it).

*Open House:* Increasing stress on the dimensional fabric in I.S.T. opens evermore frequent nexus portals, although the larger reality quakes collapse them again. Interdimensional visitors are quite common (comparatively speaking) on this worldline. The parallel’s inhabitants have encounters with parallel worlds, aliens, gods, spirits, demons, and all manner of other visitors. Fortunately, these portals seem to only open “deeper” into I.S.T.’s pocket multiverse (which seemingly includes at least two alternate versions of the I.S.T. world, including one in which all supers are evil). However, very little is for sure in this shaky alternate, and Infinity is on tenterhooks waiting for one of them to open elsewhere in the infinite worlds.



*Reality Instability:* This worldline is ontologically unstable, suffering nearly constant reality temblors and recurrent reality quakes. Indeed, the parallel seems to undergo periodic “revisions,” after which its history and major personalities change, sometimes subtly, other times dramatically. Some people and cities are transformed, while others are thrust out of reality altogether into a kind of “limbo.” Worse yet, some beings in this timeline can provoke such “cosmic crises,” usually in an attempt to gain ultimate power. (A particularly severe reality quake struck globally on local date January 1, 2000; its side effects are still making their way into the global consciousness.)

*Plastic History:* Plentiful reality quakes have littered I.S.T.’s history with subduction zones, reality shards, and artifacts from other timelines. Continuity of history there can sometimes become confused and uncertain, although the inhabitants don’t seem as aware of it as outtime visitors.

*Super-Powers:* While powers on I.S.T. stem from many different sources (including magic and psi), the quantum flux of the parallel seems to intensify them. I.S.T. supers are typically more powerful and capable than mages and psis from other worlds. If the Williams-Khor hypothesis holds (see *Infinite Worlds*, p. 21), reality in this worldline is far more malleable by human belief and will.

See *GURPS International Super Teams* for more details about this worldline.

*Black and White:* This seems to hold true on some level. Powerful personalities on the I.S.T. reality are often powerful supers and vice versa. Megalomania and madness are virtually assured keys to great power (at the cost of being a megalomaniacal madman, of course). Likewise, dedication to a cause and unshakeable faith tend to lead to the same (even among so-called super-normals). The people of I.S.T. (at least the supers) are more polarized, more “black and white” in some ways, than “normal” humans.

*Super-Science:* This theory is also buttressed by this parallel’s exceptionally powerful Heisenberg effects: Not only does the observer alter the result of an experiment on the subatomic level, he sometimes alters it on the macroscopic level as well. Some scientific breakthroughs or discoveries only work or make sense some of the time, to some people . . . sometimes only the scientist! Science is a dangerous profession and tends to attract extreme personalities (because they make the most effective scientists). Of course, when others can’t duplicate or even understand their work, they are sometimes called deluded or mad. This has led to a strange combination of superscience and more conventional technology, since scientific progress and development is not as steady or reliable as it is on other worlds. Reality quakes also may have altered I.S.T.’s tech level (or even the viability of science) more than once.

## I.S.T., 2004

### *Current Affairs*

A benevolent United Nations charters the International Super Teams to battle evil and keep the peace – at least, until the continuity shifts again.

### *Divergence Point*

1924; supers exist.

### *Major Civilizations*

Western (multipolar), Chinese (empire), Japanese (unitary), Orthodox (multipolar).

### *Great Powers*

United Nations (global technocracy, CR2), United States (representative democracy, CR3), People’s Republic of China (dictatorship, CR5), Japan (representative democracy, CR4), Russian Republic (oligarchy, CR4).

### *Worldline Data*

**TL:** 8 (plus variable superscience)

**Quantum:** 3

**Centrum Zone:** Inaccessible

**Mana Level:** low

**Infinity Class:** Z1

## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of **GURPS** players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: [info@sjgames.com](mailto:info@sjgames.com). Resources include:

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**GURPS** Line Editor ■ SEAN PUNCH  
 Managing Editor ■ PHILIP REED  
 e23 Manager ■ STEVEN MARSH

Page Design ■ PHIL REED and  
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