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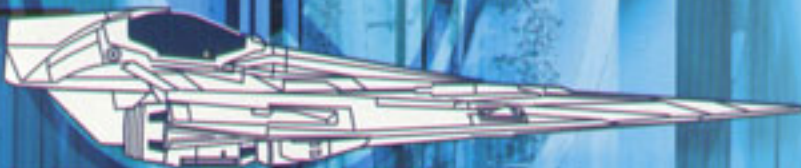
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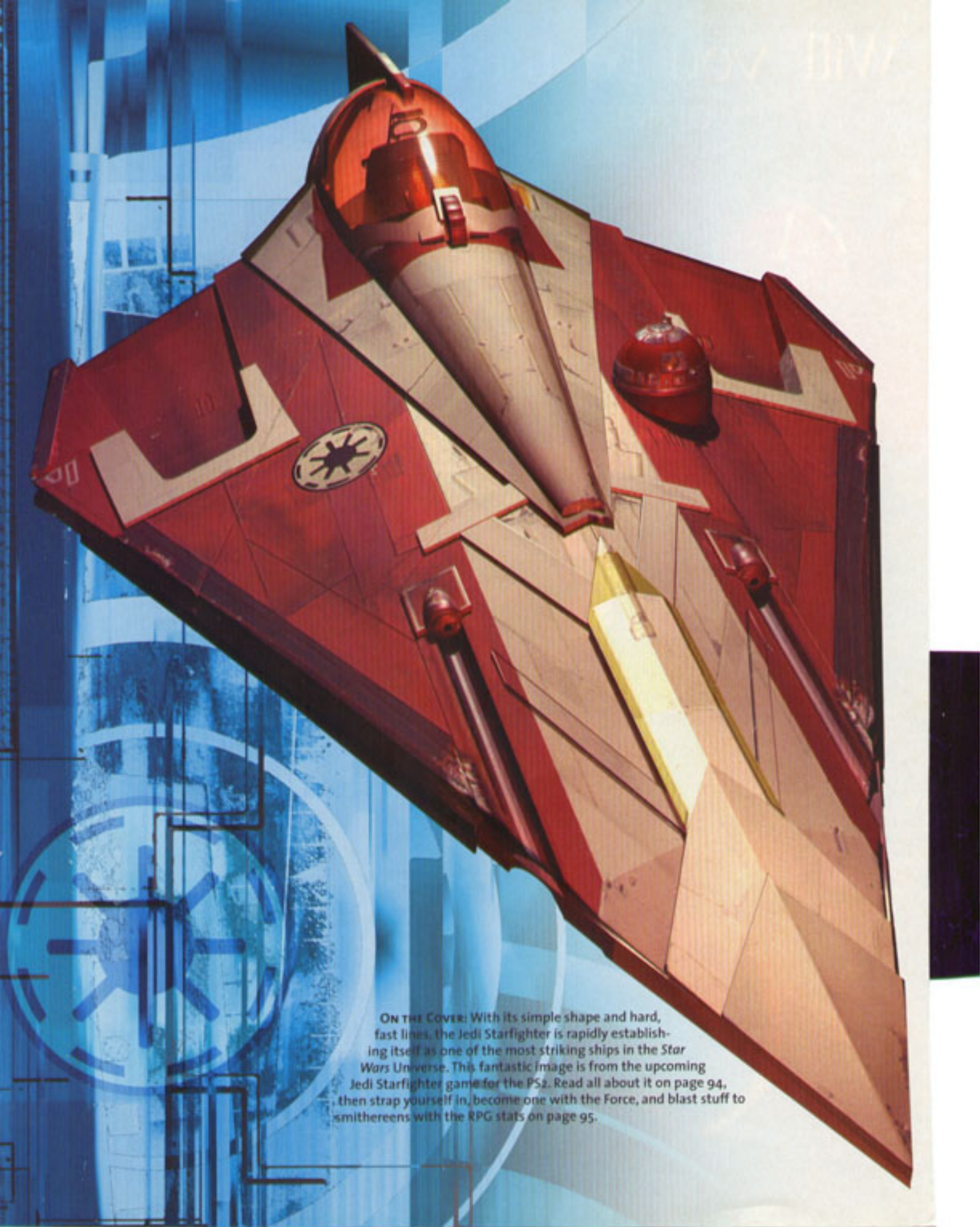
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ON THE COVER: With its simple shape and hard, fast lines, the Jedi Starfighter is rapidly establishing itself as one of the most striking ships in the *Star Wars* Universe. This fantastic image is from the upcoming Jedi Starfighter game for the PS2. Read all about it on page 94, then strap yourself in, become one with the Force, and blast stuff to smithereens with the RPG stats on page 95.

STAR WARS **Gamer**

THE FORCE IN STAR WARS GAMING

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 3

STARFIGHTERS

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Flights of Fancy

The problem with the *Star Wars* galaxy is that you can't really get there from here.

Sure, we can peer through the magic mirror of the movie screen and see what's happening in the imagination of George Lucas, courtesy of the talented actors, designers, and effects wizards. Try to reach through and touch the world of Coruscant, however, and you'll bump up against the unsympathetic wall of reality. You can't get through.

Luckily, we have games.

Cards, boards, character sheets, miniatures, action figures, toys of all varieties—these are the passages to the *Star Wars* universe. Of them all, the most versatile is the electronic game, and one kind in particular is surprisingly close to the action it means to simulate. While the accouterments of other games might seem artificial—how convincing is a plastic Yoda, anyway?—what could be more realistic than a joystick (throttle), a keyboard or gamepad (control panel), and a set of headphones (flight helmet) when playing a space fighting game?

Maybe you like piloting X-wings or Naboo starfighters, but for me it was TIE Fighter that turned me into a devoted *Star Wars* gamer. No other electronic game could compare to the one that gave me the chance to be the Emperor's Hand and fly my TIE Advanced into pitched battle, restoring order to a chaotic galaxy. Even later, when the excellent Dark

Forces II: Jedi Knight handed us a lightsaber and a thermal detonator, I yearned for a throttle and a battery of fire-linked laser cannons.

What is it about space combat that sends so many of us into fits of rapture? Maybe it has something to do with the science-fiction trappings of the *Star Wars* galaxy. While the films are heroic fantasies through-and-through, the hardware sure appeals to SF fans who wouldn't otherwise indulge in a magical setting. Lump all your science-fiction buffs together with fantasy fans, and you get a crowd the size of... well, of *Star Wars* fandom.

More likely the thrill of starfighting has something to do with the universal lure of flying dreams. The ultimate physical escape, after all, is to rise up off of the ground and travel in any direction you desire. Could there be any greater freedom outside the realm of imagination?

All metaphors aside, flying is just too cool, and quad lasers are icing on the cake. So the next time you want to transport yourself to the galaxy far, far away, just remember that the best way to get there is to fly.

Dave Gross
 Gamer-in-Chief
vader@wizards.com





FORCE FEEDBACK

"I felt a great disturbance in the Force... as if millions of voices suddenly cried out..."

Come Fly with Me

Starships of the Galaxy Comes in for a Landing

By now you've picked up your copy of *Starships of the Galaxy* and are already flying around in your heavily modified light freighter. Many of you wrote to tell us what you thought about the sourcebook, most of it good. For those of you who are a little confused, we've got some answers.

Unlike those who wrote about the past few issues, few of you got caught up in the usual controversies. Though we love to get any mail, a collective sigh of relief can be heard throughout the office. Keep those letters rolling into swgamer@wizards.com, and we'll keep printing them.

As the release of *Attack of the Clones* looms so closely over the horizon, most of you wait with bated breath for anything relating to the latest chapter in the *Star Wars* saga. For *Star Wars* gamers, that means RPG stats, the new trading card game from Wizards of the Coast, and electronic games from LucasArts. As this month's cover promises, you'll find the first of our Episode II-related material in these pages: exclusive previews of the *Star Wars* TCG and the Jedi Starfighter computer game. That's just the tip of the iceberg. In the months to come, we'll have more *Attack of the Clones* material than you can wave a lightsaber at.

Michael Mikaelian, Managing Editor

Where Are You Pointing That?

I went out and bought *Starships of the Galaxy* and loved it. In it, however, I found something that didn't make sense.

The weapon listings for capital ships under firing arcs have "batteries," but there's no mention of what batteries are in the book. The Bothan Assault Cruiser has 24 heavy double turbolaser cannons (1 front, 2 right, 2 left, and 1 rear). How many guns are in a battery?

I'm guessing each battery has 4 cannons, which would mean that the left and right arcs have 8 each, while the front and back arcs have 4.

I'm asking because I'm a stickler for stats. I'm sure there are a few GMs out there asking the same thing. And why wasn't the clawcraft included in the book or in #7 where it was in a short story ("Red Sky, Blue Flame")?

Richard Herman
Las Vegas, NV

According to Chapter 11: *Starships of the Galaxy* core rulebook, a weapon battery is a group of up to five identical weapons that fire as one. Each additional weapon after the first adds +1 to the attack roll, up to a maximum of +4. If the attack hits, roll damage as if only one weapon hit.

The Bothan Assault Cruiser has (you guessed it) six 4-cannon batteries. In general, each battery should be treated as one weapon for game purposes.

Stats for the Chiss clawcraft originally appeared in the "University of Sanbra's Guide to Intelligent Life: The Chiss" in *Star Wars Gamer* #5.



Blasted from the Past

When did Maarek Stele become one of the Emperor's Hands ("The Emperor's Pawns," *Star Wars Gamer* #5)? After the novella included with TIE Fighter, I never heard about him again. I currently only have the Adventure Game, but I am saving up for the RPG. Does the RPG have stats for all of the TIEs, including my personal favorite, the TIE Defender?



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I really like the d20 system. I am looking forward to other RPGs that use the system.

Christopher Dueck
via email

Like many of the connections drawn between past agents of evil and Emperor Palpatine, Maarek Stele's indoctrination as an Emperor's Hand was created specifically for *Star Wars Gamer #5*. Blackhole's detailed history was so exciting it made its way into the *Rebellion Era Sourcebook*.

The core rulebook has stats for the TIE fighter. *Starships of the Galaxy* has stats for the TIE advanced $\times 1$, TIE bomber, and TIE interceptor. As for the TIE defender, TIE avenger, TIE scout, and countless other Expanded Universe TIEs, I can't promise anything. Hm... that'd make a good *Gamer* article...



The Near-Human Condition

First off, the obligatory love your mag. I've gotten about equal use out of *Star Wars Gamer* as the sourcebooks. Great work. Keep them coming.

I am preparing a darksider campaign (after much pleading from my gaming

group), and one of my players wants to play a Zabrak Dark Side Devotee. In *Star Wars Gamer #5*, the article on the Chiss ("University of Sanbra's Guide to Intelligent Life: The Chiss") states they receive additional feats and skill points just like Human characters (though there is no mention of this in *Alien Anthology*). My assumption is that near-Human species get the same bonuses as Human characters. Is it reasonable to assume that any species without attribute modifiers such as the Chiss, Arkanians, and Zabrak receive the same starting benefits as a Human character?

Is there any plan for a droid sourcebook in the near future? I find droids can become very useful secondary characters. My group has picked up an R2 unit and, after one adventure with it, is already treating him as any other character. They've even taken to referring to him as "Nate" (short for R2-N8). I would love to see more varieties and a broader list of modifications and upgrades.

John Brannan
Lakewood, CO

The Near-Human species (actually a loose collection of species that might as well be Human) is used anytime a character's

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Back Issues

Log onto swfan.wizards.com, the official website of the *Star Wars* Fan Club, to order back issues of *Star Wars Gamer* (search for "gamer") and *Star Wars Insider*, as well as hundreds of other *Star Wars* products.

Almost Gone!

[SWFAN.WIZARDS.COM](http://swfan.wizards.com) has the last copies of *Star Wars Gamer* #1-4 available.



Star Wars Gamer #5

The Dark Side! The Emperor's pawns, objects of the Sith, campaign guide to the Centrality, Slicer prestige class, Charlatan class combo, Silent Death™ Rise of the Empire ships, "The Hutt Hit," and "Talnar's Rescue" adventures.



Star Wars Gamer #6

The Hunt is on! Dengar, Zuckuss, 4-LOM, bounty hunter weapons, bounties worth dying for, heroic combat tactics, Dark Horse Comic characters, Freelancer class combo, "Welcome to the Jungle" adventure.



Star Wars Gamer #7

Living on the Fringe! Huge Bartyn's Landing campaign setting and adventure, starships of the bounty hunters, "Secrets of Mos Eisley," Dilettante class combo, Vehicle Ace prestige class, and Jag Fel fiction from Elaine Cunningham.



Star Wars Gamer #8

The New Jedi Order! Spaceport Guide to the Vaynai Archipelago, "I, Yuuzhan Vong," revised starship combat, premier installment of "Dice, Camera, Action!" by Robin D. Laws, the Priapulid, Sector Ranger prestige class, Mercenary class combo, 3 1/4-inch-scale Mos Eisley cantina, "Hive of the Infidel" and "Topside Infiltration" adventures.



species profile is so close to Human that it doesn't merit its own profile. In the original version of the core rulebook, Darth Maul is presented as a Near-Human. His description was written, edited, approved, and printed before his species was determined. Once it was made clear that he was a Zabrak, species traits for Zabrak were created. The revised core rulebook and *The Dark Side Sourcebook* both present stats for Darth Maul as a Zabrak. He no longer gets the Human bonus feat at first level, nor does he get any bonus skill points.

Just as Darth Maul doesn't get any Human bonuses in addition to his Zabrak bonuses, neither would Chiss, Arkanians, or any other vaguely humanoid species. *Gamer #5's* Chiss statistics were erroneous: Chiss do not get Human bonuses in addition to other species bonuses.

As for droids, read on.



Maker's Remorse

Can you change the feats on a droid, the way you can change its skills? For example,

my character has an R2 unit, and I want it to have Starship Operation (space transport) instead of Skill Emphasis (Repair). My GM says you can't change the feats, because the core rulebook doesn't say you can. Is it possible to change the feats?

Also, must droids start off as a professional class, or can you start it off in a heroic class? In one issue C-3PX, Maul's droid ("Galaxy's Most Wanted," *Star Wars Gamer #3*), had all hero classes and no professional. Can my character reprogram his R2 unit's levels into a hero class? Can he buy a new R2 unit with 4 levels in scout or soldier?

Doug Choe
Buena Park, CA

Technically, your GM is correct: The core rulebook *he* has does not have rules for changing a droid's feats. If your GM allows it, you could devise your own system for changing a droid's factory-set feats.

Most factory-built droids have only professional levels (diplomat, expert, or thug), but there's no rule that says they all *must*. Expensive, custom-built, or heavily modi-

fied droids (such as C-3PX) can have heroic levels and no professional levels.



Balance of the Force

I've loved *Gamer* since the first issue. It's getting even better. I'm happy to see a new archetype and prestige class in every new issue. I liked "Secrets of Mos Eisley" (*Star Wars Gamer #7*) as well. If my group travels to Tatooine, I'll be sure to use it. Your inside information on alien species, planets, and organizations helps me breath life into my campaigns.

I'd love to see more Jedi archetypes and prestige classes. There are many dark-side prestige classes right now in *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, but the light side is somewhat lacking. Please bring balance to the Force.

I recently picked up a copy of *Starships of the Galaxy*. The point system is extremely easy to use. I made the sheet for my group's ship in minutes. Could a similar point-based method be used for constructing droids and cybernetics? One could even be used for vehicles and computers.

Asmodaeus Lupine
via email

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The Thrill of the Hutt!

By Ray and Val Vallese

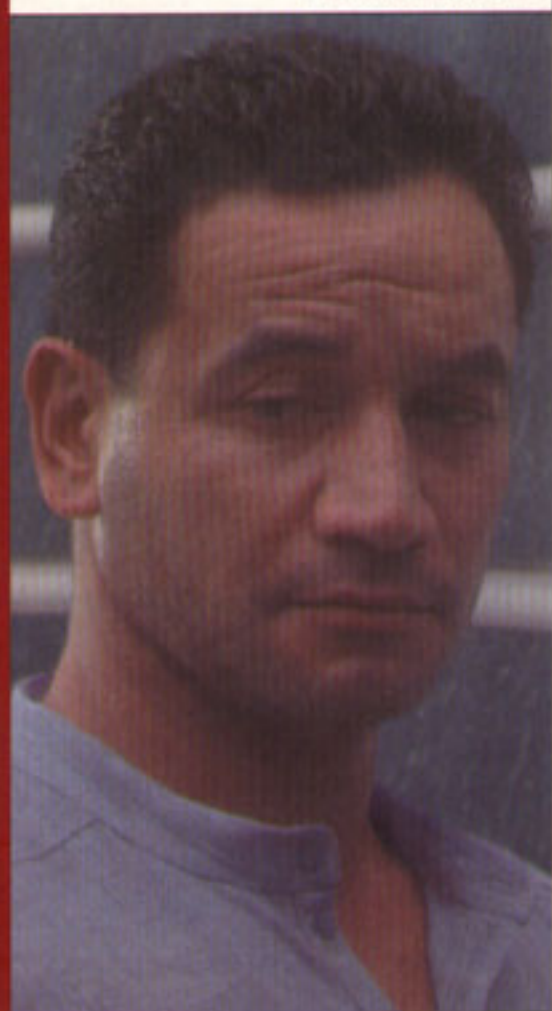
Does the thought of Hutts give you a warm, snuggly feeling inside? How about an oozy, disgusting feeling? Whatever you think of Jabba and his cronies, this spring is a great time to visit www.wizards.com/starwars, the official website of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*. That's when we'll show our slimy side with a load of original tie-in material for the new super-adventure *Tempest Feud*, an epic scenario that at last shines a spotlight on the notorious Hutts!

Our coverage kicks off in February with a teaser interview with co-designer Jeff Grubb, then blasts into high gear in March, when we'll get a different perspective on *Tempest Feud* from co-designer Owen K.C. Stephens. We'll also take a few sneak peeks between the book's covers, with previews of the writing and the artwork. We'll give you a new creature to drop into *Tempest Feud* or

your own campaign, and we'll even throw in a Hutt-related mini-adventure to use on the side or as a stand-alone.

Naturally, we realize that even the hardest *Star Wars* fan can stomach the Hutts only for so long, so we'll distract you with one last *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook* tidbit—a designer chat transcript. You can also look forward to a screensaver of art from the upcoming core rulebook revision. We'll continue to give you all the gaming tips and ideas you've come to expect from our regular how-to columns and character write-ups (and welcome a few new features you'll love). Then there are the Living Force updates and scenario tie-ins, the advance looks at upcoming issues of *Star Wars Gamer* and *Star Wars Insider*, and the previews of GENCON and Celebration II.

Visit www.wizards.com/starwars regularly in March and April to check in on all the news, features, and surprises we'll have waiting for you.



continued from page 10

You want balance? You want Jedi prestige classes? Check out this issue's "Special Ops: The Jedi Weapon Master." That's just a taste of what you'll find in the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook* coming out this summer. Or, if you can't wait that long, pick up the revised core rulebook this spring. It'll have three new Jedi prestige classes that'll knock your socks off. (If you read "Galaxy's Most Wanted" in *Star Wars Gamer* #8, then you already got your first peek at the Jedi Master prestige class.)

STAR WARS Gamer

Next Issue

Attack of the Clones

EMISSARY OF THE VOID PART III

Uldir Lochet is the best there is at what he does: getting into trouble.
By Greg Keyes.

HANDOFF

Mara Jade returns in an all-new short story by fan-favorite author Timothy Zahn.

THE NEW CORUSCANT

Attack of the Clones delves into the political intrigue and seedy underworld of the capital planet of the Republic.

YOU'RE NOT A JEDI YET

Learn how to play the new *Star Wars* TCG.

STAR WARS TCG COMPLETE CARD ENCYCLOPEDIA

See full reproductions of every card in the base set of the new *Star Wars* TCG.

REVISED CORE RULEBOOK

What's so special about the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook? New rules, new skills, new feats, new classes, and over 50 pages of *Attack of the Clones* material.

PLUS

- Sanbra's Guide: The Clawdites
- Special Ops
- Callsigns: Names of Kashyyyk

Points are cool, but sometimes straight-up credits make for a simpler system. Stay tuned for more details on arms and equipment.



Getting Started

I used to get *TopDeck* magazine, but you stopped making it, so *Star Wars Gamer* filled the rest of my subscription. I absolutely love your magazine, even though I play no *Star Wars* games. I am interested in the concept of the *Star Wars* RPG, but I go to a relatively small school (about 300 people), and there is nobody there who plays. How would you recommend getting started? Also, how would you recommend finding people who play the *Star Wars* RPG in Austin, Texas?

Dave Willis
Austin, TX

If you've never played a pencil-and-paper RPG before, the *Star Wars Adventure Game* (available in most toy, book, and hobby stores) is your best bet. It's ideal for a group made up of entirely new players.

The next step is to get the core rulebook. Since you're new at this, I recommend you hold out for the revised core rulebook, available this spring. Though everything you'll ever need to play is in that book, *Star Wars Gamer* magazine and the various sourcebooks each enhance the game and provide fuel for your imagination.

If you can't convince any of your friends to play, there are a few resources at your disposal. The Wizards of the Coast *Star*

Wars website (www.wizards.com/starwars) has discussion lists and message boards that can help you locate other players near you.



Spell It Out For You

In *Star Wars Gamer* #6 you had a section on bounties to collect for the *Star Wars* RPG ("Bounties to Die For"). I noticed that some of them lacked the expected language skills. For example; Vooz Nooxoo Oona, Reerookachuk, and Scranton Toon had no Read/Write skills; and Traggissk Reosss had no language skills at all. This seemed very strange to me.

Other than this, you have a rather good magazine, and I intend to continue reading it as long as you continue making it.

Danny S. Dyche
Hillsboro, OR

The Imperial Peace-Keeping Database has been on the fritz lately. The missing data is:

- Vooz Nooxoo Una: Read/Write Basic
- Scranton Toon: Read/Write Rodese
- Traggissk Reosss: Read/Write Dosh, Speak Basic, Speak Dosh

You should be aware that Reerookachuck grew up as a slave with no one to teach him anything as scholarly as reading and writing, especially not his native language of Shyriiwook. While we're splitting Wookiee hairs, it should also be noted that Reerookachuck should have Speak Basic (understand only) instead of Speak Basic.



continued on page 112





JEDI COUNSELING

Answers to Your STAR WARS RPG Dilemmas

BY JD WIKER

Do you add your Strength modifier to damage when fighting with a lightsaber? I say yes, but my GM says no. He says you don't because lightsabers don't have any resistance when cutting through something. You add your Strength modifier to damage when fighting with a lightsaber. You also add it to the attack modifier, but that's a separate question.

For years now, there has been a widespread belief that lightsabers are able to cut through anything without any effort. There's plenty of evidence that lightsabers don't act that way, just in *The Phantom Menace* alone. First, we see Qui-Gon Jinn slowly cutting through the blast doors on the bridge of the Trade Federation flagship over Naboo; if a lightsaber could slice through anything like a hot knife through butter, Qui-Gon could have simply made a couple of quick swipes, and he would have been through. Later, when Darth Maul is gloating over Obi-Wan Kenobi's imminent demise on Naboo, he slashes his lightsaber back and forth across the lip of the pit, but he's not cutting the lip of the pit at all. He's just striking sparks. If lightsabers cut through metals that easily, Maul's lightsaber should have taken long strips off the pit's edge, which would have been raining down on Obi-Wan's head.

Why does Strength increase your attack roll in melee? It really should be Dexterity if anything—just because you're stronger doesn't mean your attack will be any more accurate than it was if you were of normal strength. If anything, it means your attack would do more damage—but that's already figured in by the bonus damage based on Strength.

The reason given in the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Player's Handbook* also apply to the *Star*

Wars Roleplaying Game: Strength affects melee attacks because stronger people are able to swing weapons harder and faster than weaker people. It's easy to block a weapon wielded by a physically weak person; it's almost as easy to step aside. A weak attack might only pierce one's clothing or nick one's armor—represented in the d20 system by a miss—whereas a strong attack, delivered hard and fast, can penetrate further and inflict damage.

The Deflect Blasters Force feat says that it's effective only against personal-scale weapons. In *Return of the Jedi*, Luke deflects the blasts from a speeder bike, and, in *The Phantom Menace*, Qui-Gon Jinn deflects blasts from a STAP. Wouldn't both of these be considered speeder-scale weapons?

Nope, because there's no such thing as "speeder scale" in the d20 version of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*. The scales we use are "starship scale," representing everything from starfighters to Star Destroyers and beyond, and "personal scale," which accounts for pretty much everything else. Both a speeder bike and a STAP are considered personal-scale weapons, and a lightsaber can deflect blaster bolts from them as easily as it can deflect a bolt from a blaster pistol.

When a character runs out of vitality points and then takes a critical hit, what happens? Does the critical become meaningless, since the damage would already be applied to his wounds (since he has 0 vitality), or would he be instantly reduced to 0 Wounds (like a grunt would)?

The damage is simply applied to wounds, just as if the character still had vitality. The reason "grunts" (professionals and commoners) are reduced to zero wounds is not

because they don't have vitality but because the rules treat them differently from heroes. Heroes survive critical hits because they're heroes; non-heroic characters are just background characters, and keeping them alive isn't as important.

In the "Survival Strategies" article of *Star Wars Gamer #6* on page 58, it reads, "Vinto tumbles from behind the battle droids and fires at one of the Dark Jedi, rolling a natural 20. The scoundrel's player decides to use a Force Point before rolling to confirm if this is a critical hit." However, in Chapter 8 of the *Star Wars* rulebook it reads, "The decision to use a Force Point is made during a character's action, before any dice rolls are made."

So my question is: Does one have to declare the use of a Force Point before any dice rolls are made?

The rules in Chapter 8 of the core rulebook can be a bit misleading; it is possible to spend a Force Point at any point in the turn, even during an opponent's action. What the rule is trying to clarify is that the Force Point you spend only applies to rolls made after you roll the Force dice. Thus, the "Survival Strategies" example is accurate: The Force Point adds a bonus to the scoundrel's confirming roll, but it doesn't add anything to the original roll (which in this case, isn't necessary anyway, since a natural 20 always hits). Also, the Force Point applies until the same point in the next round, when the scoundrel acts again. If, on the other hand, the scoundrel had spent his Force Point to enhance a saving throw, then the bonus would apply until that point in the next round, the point in the initiative order when he had to attempt the save.

That having been said, many GMs use the "just after you roll" rule for Force Points: You can choose to spend a Force Point after see-



ing the result of your die roll, but before you make any other rolls, and before you know whether your check succeeded. I happen to prefer this method. For one thing, it makes spending a Force Point a bit more meaningful. For another, it can be entertaining watching a player squirm when, before you tell him whether his attempt succeeded, you dispassionately ask: "Do you want to spend a Force Point?" Try it sometime.

Let's say I have a Jedi character who decides he wants to build and use a double-bladed lightsaber. Does Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) cover all lightsaber variants (lightsabers, dual-phase lightsaber, and double-bladed lightsabers)? Or, does he have to get separate Exotic Weapon Proficiency for each type unless he wants to suffer a -4 penalty when he uses a different type?

Technically, each variety of lightsaber is a different kind of weapon, but they can be wielded like an ordinary lightsaber. A dual-phase lightsaber, for example, has an adjustable blade length but is otherwise operated just like a normal lightsaber: You hold the handle and swing the blade. A double-bladed lightsaber need not use both blades at once; it, too, can be wielded like a normal lightsaber. In these cases, there is no non-proficiency penalty.

When using the double-bladed lightsaber with both ends lit, however, the weapon effectively becomes a "lightstaff" and is as different in use from a regular lightsaber as a quarterstaff is from a club. One can still wield only one end of it, of course, foregoing the extra attack that using two weapons normally provides but also avoiding the two-weapon fighting penalties. If you aren't proficient in wielding a double-bladed lightsaber, however, you suffer a -4 penalty to your attacks, whether or not you're attacking with both ends.

Let's say this same Jedi character decides to go over to the dark side and wants to make a really menacing weapon, so he puts a razor sharp blade in front of the hand grip,

like a hand guard. What kind of damage would the blade do? How would I mark that on the character sheet?

Interesting idea! If this were my campaign, I'd rule that the blade did the same damage as a knife (except that it would be slashing damage) and that the character could choose to attack either with the lightsaber blade or the hand guard. The character would probably just use the lightsaber blade, although I would also allow using both under the "attacking with two weapons" rules, treating the hand guard blade as an off-hand weapon but treating the character as though he had the Ambidexterity feat since he's using the same hand for both weapons.

In the core rulebook, it says that a light weapon is a weapon of a class smaller than your character (to a Medium-sized character, a knife, being a Small weapon, is considered "light"). Since all the weight of a lightsaber is in the handle (which is why it is a dangerous weapon to a non-skilled user), shouldn't it be considered a light weapon also?

If the size of a weapon were based on its weight, this would be a valid argument. But a weapon's size listing is based on precisely that: its size. An ignited lightsaber is about 130 centimeters long, just a bit shy of a yard and a half. That means that it takes more space to operate efficiently than a weapon the size of a knife. It also means that it's difficult to judge by weight alone where the blade is, which is *really* what makes it dangerous to an unskilled wielder.

Is it possible to ignite a lightsaber underwater? What happens to a lightsaber that is submerged? Generally speaking, just how solidly constructed are these things? A Jedi guardian in my campaign threw his lightsaber to intercept a thermal detonator thrown at his party, and I ruled that the subsequent blast damaged the lightsaber, but I took pity on the player and said that it could be repaired. Just how sturdy are lightsabers?

Well, not that sturdy; thermal detonators are pretty destructive, and as a Medium-sized weapon, a lightsaber should only have 5 Hardness and 5 wounds, not enough to survive a thermal detonator at ground zero. We also know from the screenplay for *The Phantom Menace* that an ignited lightsaber underwater will burn out, although it can be recharged fairly quickly. As a stickler for the movies, I would rule that a submerged lightsaber instantly shuts down and must be recharged for at least half an hour before it can be used again.

A Force adept in my campaign wants to take Sense at 1st level, but the rulebook says she'll get it at 2nd level. Does that mean she can't get it at 1st level? And if she can take it at 1st level, then does she get to choose a different feat she'll get for free at 2nd level, instead of Sense?

You can always take a Force feat—or any feat, for that matter—if you meet the prerequisites. The only prerequisites for Sense are that the character have the feat Force-Sensitive and have at least one level in a Force-using class. So, yes, the Force adept in your campaign could take Sense at 1st level as her 1st-level feat, and she would also get Alter and Force-Sensitive (along with her weapon proficiencies), because a Force adept gets those for free at 1st level.

At 2nd level, though, she wouldn't gain Sense, since she already has it—and she wouldn't get an alternate feat, either. Essentially, she has chosen to forego her 1st-level feat to take Sense early. ☐

**Got rules questions?
Send them to:**

**Jedi Counseling
c/o STAR WARS Gamer
P.O. Box 707
Renton, WA 98057**

**or via email to:
swgamer@wizards.com
(include "Jedi Counseling"
in the subject)**

ROGUES GALLERY

Pilots for Hire

ILLUSTRATED BY SCOTT ROLLER

Seedy cantinas, crowded spaceports, and nicer laundromats are usually teeming with pilots ready to give you a lift. Hey, if you spend most of your life crammed into a tiny cockpit, it's important to keep those flighty-whiteys smelling fresh. These rocket jockies spill over with so much attitude, is it any wonder they can't hold steady jobs? Be sure to buy the insurance.







EMISSARY OF THE VOID

Dark Tidings

BY GREG KEYES

ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE HUDDLESTON

W "What a nice start to the day," Klin-Fa Gi commented, cutting her dark eyes at Uldir. Her sarcasm wasn't lost. "At least we're alive," he said. "That was anything but a given last night."

Klin-Fa's mouth settled in a thin line. Uldir wondered if he would ever see the young Jedi smile. She was pale, her short brown hair matted and full of silt from the flood they had survived the night before, and the bump on her forehead had gone a shade of purple he'd heretofore seen only in certain nebulae. Still, he felt if she smiled, she'd be pretty.

Annoying, almost insufferable, but pretty.

"Yes, we're alive," she admitted. "Bravo. Terrific job. Now if you'll just take care of that search patrol and the—what? Eight enforcement fliers? Maybe I'll forget that if it weren't for you I wouldn't be in this mess at all."

That was a little too much. "CSA was chasing you before I ever laid eyes on you," Uldir said. "Without me they'd have you by now."

"Doubtful," Klin-Fa retorted. Then she sighed. "Also irrelevant. Do you have any weapons?"

"No. I lost the blaster." *My hands were full saving you from drowning*, he silently finished.

"At least I still have my lightsaber."

"Yeah," Uldir said, eyeing the ever-nearing search party coming down the arroyo toward the cave where Klin-Fa and he were hiding. "Look, I'll admit you're pretty handy with that thing, but against these odds—"

"The Force can prevail against any odds," she insisted firmly. "Anyway, it's not like we have a choice. They'll find us soon enough. Unless you have a plan."

"I do, as a matter of fact. Sit tight until the rest of my outfit shows up. They're bound to be here soon. If you want to use the Force, try to project the thought that we're in a different direction."

Klin-Fa's mouth twisted as if she'd just chewed a sour thorn, but she eased her head in a reluctant half-nod. "That might work—even at this distance, I might be able to project a suggestion. But it won't fool that Yuuzhan Vong down there." She lifted her chin toward one of the members of the search party. Even from this distance, Uldir

could make out the scars and tattoos that marked him as a member of the extragalactic invaders bent on conquering the galaxy—and doing a more than competent job of it so far.

"True," he admitted. "But he doesn't know where we are. He'll have to trust his local guides."

Klin-Fa grunted what he guessed was agreement, took a deep breath and closed her eyes. She reached out her arm, and the fingers of her right hand fluttered slightly. Uldir felt the Force in motion, which had the affect of deepening his frustration with the whole situation. He'd studied at the Jedi academy but left it a failure, having no natural aptitude for the Force. The most his training had left him with was a slight ability to sense Jedi when they worked with the Force, and what some would say was an uncommon sort of luck. Still, the experience had taught him something important—sometimes it didn't matter how hard you wanted something, you weren't going to get it. You lived with what you did have and took pride in your real assets, not the ones you wished you possessed. He'd thought he was over useless self-remonstrations at his failure, and he had been. He really had—at least until Klin-Fa Gi had bounced off the center of his table in a local cantina, pursued by law enforcement officials of the Corporate Sector Authority. Her attitude had managed to wake the old resentment in him. Why did someone like *her* have such strong affinity with the Force, while he could only hear it whisper?

It wasn't fair, which made him even angrier, because he knew the universe wasn't fair.

But it ought to be *balanced*. That was what the Force was all about, right? And there was something very unbalanced about Klin-Fa Gi. When she had used the Force to cushion the crash of their atmospheric flier, he'd almost thought he sensed something dark.

Her eyes were still closed, and Uldir studied her. She didn't look evil, in her tattered yellow skirt and black leggings. She looked young and intent.

Ah, what do I know? Uldir asked himself. *I couldn't tell a Sith from Master Yoda himself, not with my puny senses.*

She'd said she was on a secret mission for Master Skywalker. He'd believe her until proven wrong. Anyway, she was Jedi, and Uldir's job was to rescue Jedi from the Yuuzhan Vong and their agents. He

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might not be able to use the Force, but no one had ever said he wasn't good at his job. There wasn't a better rescue pilot in the business.

Of course, right about now it would be nice to have something to pilot.

The group of searchers was pointing up the other side of the arroyo. He heard shouting, and then they broke into a trot.

"You *did* it," Uldir breathed.

"Yep," she said. "It won't fool them for long." She started forward, out of the cave mouth.

"Hang on," Uldir said, waving vaguely upward. "There're still the fliers to consider."

"You consider them. You're the pilot."

"No. We should wait on my people, or make some kind of plan."

She pushed a straggling lock of hair from her face. "Hey, you had a good idea, jets. Don't spoil it by thinking too much."

"Now, listen—hey!"

"JEDAI," HE GROWLED. "YOUR DAYS ARE DRAWING TO A CLOSE."

Too late. She'd already sprinted from the cover of the cave and was starting up the arroyo slope in the opposite direction in which she had sent the search party.

"Vaping Moffsl!" Uldir snarled, and did the only thing he could do, the thing he'd been doing from the start of this whole mess—he started after her.

He came over the lip of the ravine in time to see her vanish down into another one. Bonadan had lost most of its natural life forms to the brutal industrialization of the Corporate Sector, and without roots and rhizomes to hold them in check, erosion had fast furrowed the highland soils outside of the spaceport, peeled back their planetological history, and turned them into a badlands.

Somewhere, Uldir heard the whir of fliers, but he didn't see them. They were probably conducting some sort of grid search. They likely had satellite intelligence, too. The broken nature of the terrain gave them a chance, but only a small one.

He caught up to Klin-Fa Gi as she hit the bottom of the next ravine at a dead run.

"Where do you think you're going?" He snapped, trying to keep his voice down and match her pace at the same time.

"Away," she said. "Away from the Vong."

He got it then. "You're scared of them. The Yuuzhan Vong."

"Scared? No. I'm scared of nothing. But my Jedi powers are useless against the Vong. If I fight, I might lose, and I can't afford that. The galaxy can't afford it. My mission cannot fail."

"Hey, I've dealt with Yuuzhan Vong before," Uldir chuffed. "They aren't invincible."

"It's great you feel that way. Why don't you go hold 'em off for me?"

"Maybe I'll just do that," Uldir snapped. "It's better than—down!" He yanked her against the wall of the ravine, just as the shadow of a flier moved across their feet. The steep angle protected them, mostly, but Uldir still held his breath.

The shadow moved on.

"That was too close," he said. "Next pass we might not be so lucky."

"Fine," she said. "What do you think we ought to do? Your friends don't seem to be showing."

"I can signal them," he said, indicating his comlink.

"You're just now thinking of that?"

"No," Uldir said reluctantly. "I called them last night."

"Last night? They're taking their time."

"Our ship's in dry-dock. It might have taken them all night to get it out. Besides, it's not like I had exact coordinates to give them."

"Maybe you would have if you hadn't had the stupidity to fly into a sweeper storm," she reminded him.

"Me?" Uldir growled. "I was just trying to make the best of a bad situation, and you were no help. Maybe if you weren't so closed-mouth about what it is you're up to..."

"Uh-uh," she said. "I can't trust you."

"Not even now?"

"No."

"That's just great."

"Why don't you stop whining and call your shipmates?"

"I could do that, but those fliers would get a fix on us. If my friends aren't around, we'll only get caught faster."

Klin-Fa slowed to a halt and gave him a glance as hard as durasteel. "Fast or slow, makes no difference," she said. "Either your crew found some way out here or not. Either we'll get caught or we won't. What, do you have a cushy retirement planned?"

Uldir returned her glare, but she was right. He keyed on the comlink.

"This is catchhawk one," he said. "Catchhawks, do you copy?"

Static drizzled for a moment, then the voice of his second-in-command, Vega Sepen, answered him.

"I hear you boss-boy. You're still alive, I guess." There was nothing in the tough Corellian woman's tone that suggested she'd been worried about him.

"I'm in a bad spot, two, right between a supernova and a black hole. Did you manage to find some legs?"

"Ah... sort of," Vega replied.

"Great. Got a fix on me?"

"Sorry. Don't have that sort of equipment on board, I'm afraid."

There was a background gabble he couldn't quite make out—Vega talking to someone else—and some sort of music. Then Vega's voice came back. "Vook thinks he can triangulate with our comlinks. Can you keep sending?"

"Sure," Uldir said. "*Asyui-In*."

"Understood. We'll get you boss-boy, sit tight."

"What's that music?"

"Nothing."

"What in the Force are you flying, two?"

Vega didn't answer.

"If you keep sending, they'll be able to track us," Klin-Fa snapped.

"Shh." He laid the comlink under a nearby rock. "I know that."

"But your friends—"

"My friends know that *asyui-in* means 'not' in Dug," Uldir replied. "They'll look in a radius around the signal. Now, come on."

"Wait," she said. In the next instant, she bounded up the side of the ravine, just as Uldir noticed the sound of the flier returning. Klin-Fa reached the lip of the chasm as the patrol vessel came over. Blaster fire kicked up dust around her feet, but she dodged lightly, and her lightsaber was suddenly on. In the next instant it was a whirling disk of brilliance, shearing through the nose of the flier. More blaster fire from somewhere else made a spectral bridge over the arroyo top, but by then, Klin-Fa had dropped back below the rim, the deadly lightsaber returning to her hand and extinguished.

"Carbon flush!" Uldir breathed. Then she was rushing past him.

"Move!" She shouted.

They ran down the arroyo, cutting over a low rise into the next, then doubling back.

Right into a patrol, four humans with enforcement blasters and a Yuuzhan Vong. They were less than two meters away.

"Hey!" One of the humans shouted.

Uldir didn't think. He hurled himself low and hard at one of the humans, feeling the heat of blaster fire scorch his back. He hit the man in the waist and they went down. Uldir hoped the others would be reluctant to shoot for fear of hitting their comrade. The two men rolled, and then rolled some more as Uldir suddenly realized that his mad tackle had taken them down yet another slope. Rocks dug angrily at his back as his opponent tried, with moderate success, to club him with the butt of his blaster. Fortunately, the blows were glancing, and by the time they fetched against a stone large enough to stop them, Uldir had managed to get one of his hands free for a sharp uppercut. He felt teeth snap together, and the officer went limp.

Blaster fire cracked the stone that had arrested them. Frantically, Uldir dove away, at the same time searching for the officer's weapon. He found it a meter away, rolled and caught it up, then trained it back up the slope. Another shot dug into the sand centimeters from his knee. Uldir fired, missed, scrambled to his feet and ran up the slope shooting. His third shot hit an officer in the sternum and kicked him back out of sight.

By the time he reached Klin-Fa, she had taken out the remaining officers and was in a swirl of motion with the Yuuzhan Vong. Like all of his kind, the warrior disdained the use of mechanical contrivances—he fought with an amphistaff, a living weapon that resembled a snake, at turns rigid and sharp and flexible and whip-like. Klin-Fa was having a hard time countering the furious, complex attack. Uldir raised his blaster to change the odds.

At the same moment, another flier came over the ridge, blasters pumping. Swearing an Ettian curse he'd never quite understood but liked the sound of, Uldir dodged into cover behind a shelf of rock and fired back. His bolt ricocheted off the side of the flier, and the answering shots pulverized his shelter. He could see the pilot grinning through the windscreen. Snarling, he broke out at a run, firing as he went. He couldn't get a proper bead, and his shots all either went wide or glanced off the tough metal of the flier. The pilot was having no such trouble aiming—hovering, his front-mounted blasters followed Uldir like a pair of fiery footsteps, getting closer. One bolt hit so close it caused him to stumble, and in a strange moment the world seemed to go entirely still. Uldir felt his finger depress the trigger a final time, and then the weapon went flying

from his hand as his face smacked against the ground. He spat out the taste of blood and metallic dirt, waiting for the inevitable.

The inevitable didn't come. Warily he glanced back up. The flier was still hovering, but the pilot wasn't smiling anymore—he was slumped sideways in his seat, and there was a neat hole in the windscreen.

"Wow," Uldir breathed. Sometimes his luck surprised even him. He picked up the blaster and turned toward the sounds of combat, fearing what he would see.

Klin-Fa was in his line of fire, but as he watched, she ducked beneath the whipping amphistaff and swept her leg at the Yuuzhan Vong warrior's foot. She clipped it, putting him slightly off-balance. He took a long retreat to correct for it, but Klin-Fa leapt high into the air, flipped over her opponent's head, and struck down at the same time. To his credit, the warrior caught the blow in a behind-the-back parry and spun to riposte. Klin-Fa, however, landed in a split, and the blow whistled over her head as she drew her blazing weapon through the Vong's midsection. He gaped and fell in two cauterized halves.

He still took another swing at her, but the Jedi was back on her feet, dancing out of range.

"For Yabeley," she snarled. Uldir wondered who or what Yabeley was.

The Yuuzhan Vong watched her go, black eyes glittering with hatred.

"*Jeedai*," he growled. "Your days are drawing to a close."

"Not as quickly as yours," she said. Her voice was colder than night on the dark side of an airless moon.

The Yuuzhan Vong spat blood. "Your blow was skilled," he said. "I salute you. But you will die. All of your kind will die. Even your own kind has turned against you."

Klin-Fa gestured contemptuously at the downed officers. "These cretins are not my kind," she said. "I don't claim kinship with anyone foolish enough to believe the Yuuzhan Vong will stop their conquest of our galaxy simply because they turn Jedi over to you."

The warrior smiled strangely. "It is not your galaxy," he said. "You have merely infested it for a time. We have come to end the infection, in the name of glorious Yun-Yuuzhan."

"Our galaxy," Klin-Fa repeated, firmly. But the Yuuzhan Vong did not hear her. His gaze had wandered beyond the stars.

Klin-Fa extinguished her saber and clipped it to her belt.

"Hey," Uldir said. "Nice moves. But we're not out of this yet. I hear more fliers coming."

"Let them come," Klin-Fa said, grimly.

They did, three of them, and soon Klin-Fa was acting as a living shield, deflecting bolts as Uldir tried to hit the fliers or their pilots at some critical point. These pilots didn't hover, however, but began spreading out to encircle them. When that was done, it would be all over. Klin-Fa couldn't block fire from every direction.

A bolt sang through her defenses and scorched Uldir's ear. Klin-Fa gasped as a second scored along her thigh, and the fliers tightened in for the kill. Uldir and Klin-Fa stood back-to-back.

"Thanks for trying," Klin-Fa said. It sounded as if she really meant it.

"No problem," Uldir replied. "It's my job." He wanted to say something else, but what it was exactly eluded him. He fired four shots at the nearest flier instead.

Dark Tidings

"Do you hear music?" Klin-Fa asked.

"Now that you mention it, yeah. I thought I was losing it." Two fliers had him firmly in their sights, now. He could try and dodge, but that would leave the Jedi's back unguarded. He repressed the urge to close his eyes. He'd watch death come for him, thank you, and stare it down until the last second.

Except that the flier didn't fire. Instead, it was forced to turn at a barrage of small-arms fire sizzling against its hull. In fact, all of the fliers were under attack. One didn't turn fast enough to meet the new threat, and lost its aft stabilizer and repulsorlifts within a few heartbeats of one another. It wobbled and then dropped like a stone. One of the others banked up and caught it in the belly, dropped low and limped away smoking. Uldir fired after it, as something rather strange showed itself over the edge of the arroyo.

A pair of gigantic eyes was staring down at them, set into a head at least a meter-and-a-half wide. From its gaping mouth, music was blaring. Stranger still, a figure seemed to be dancing on the head, spinning out streamers of bright green light.

"What in—" he began, before it finally started making a twisted sense as he noticed the light was not streaking off randomly but harassing the remaining flier. The dancer was a Dug, balanced on one forepaw and firing blasters with his other three hand-feet.

"I'VE BEEN MAKING MISTAKES SINCE THE MOMENT I FIRST SAW YOU. WHY SHOULD THINGS BE DIFFERENT NOW?"

"It's Leaf!" he shouted.

A thicker series of bolts joined the Dug's wild firefight with the flier, and Uldir made out a platinum-haired woman standing beside the head, which he could now see was mounted on some sort of hover-platform. That was Vega and her blaster rifle.

"Come on!" Uldir told Klin-Fa.

"That's your crack team of rescue pilots?" She asked, skeptically.

"You better believe it."

"Why are they riding on exec Lounha's head?"

"I'm sure they have a good explanation," he replied.

The two ran through a decreasing volume of skyborn fire until they reached the floater. Vega gave Uldir a hand up without looking at him, at the same time stitching red bursts through the wind-screen of the last flier still in sight. It went down, leaving a blaze of flame across the far wall of the canyon.

"That's three to your two," she called up to Leaf.

"Hurr. Human luck," the Dug snarled down. "Next time—"

Vega ignored her companion. "Vook," she called into the gigantic head. "We've got the boss. Now get us out of here."

"Doing!" The Duro called.

At an excruciatingly slow speed, the floater began drifting back toward the spaceport.

"This is insane," Klin-Fa said. "Where are we going on this thing?"

"Farther than you were going on foot," Vega said, dryly. "You okay, boss?"

"I'm fine," Uldir replied. "But she has a point. One of the fliers got away, and besides, they must be in contact with their headquarters. We can't fight off another half-dozen fliers on this thing, let alone something bigger."

"Hey, we did the best we could," Vega said. "This was the only thing we could find on short notice."

Despite himself, Uldir cracked a grin. "A float from the parade? You were always good at improvising, Vega, I'll give you that."

"You better believe it," Vega replied. "And I'm not done yet."

"What's that mean?"

"I got a call from Uvee right before we picked you up. He finally got the ship out of dry-dock. It's on the way."

"Uvee?" Klin-Fa asked. "Another one of your aces?"

"Our astromech," Uldir clarified.

"An astromech flying a ship? Alone?"

"He's not your ordinary droid," Uldir replied.

"No," Klin-Fa said. "I don't expect he would be."



The *No Luck Required* arrived about ten minutes later, flying a little erratically and landing with a bump that set Uldir's teeth on edge. He hadn't wanted to say so in front of the Jedi, but he'd had his own doubts about whether he would ever see his ship again after Vega's casual announcement—though he'd modified the UV-002 droid to fly the ship in emergencies, the reality was pure theory until now.

Though the landing was a little rough, the droid seemed to have done okay, and it was good to see the rugged transport. They abandoned the floater and crowded up the landing ramp. Uldir went straight to the controls, where the readout was scrolling, Uvee talking to him from his mooring station.

Hi boss-boy. How did I do? the droid translator read.

"You did great, Uvee," Uldir said, making a mental note to keep Vega away from the astromech in the future. He *hated* being called "boss-boy." "Perfect."

Shall I take us to orbit?

"That's okay," Uldir quickly replied. "Take a rest. I'll get us out."

"Fliers, four clicks," Vook said, from tactical.

"That's just fine," Uldir said. "They can chew our exhaust." He punched in the drive, turned the ship skyward, and left Bonadan in a bloom of ions.

Only much later—two jumps from Bonadan—did he relax, and then not much.

"We still don't have shields," he noticed.

"No," Vook said. "And the hyperdrive is—undependable. The repairs were not completed."

Uldir blew out a breath and nodded. "Well, you take what you get," he said. "At least we have some drive capability. Where can we set down to finish repairs?"

"Well, there's Shelter," Vega said. "That's close."

"Yeah. And in the Maw. I won't try that run with a testy hyperdrive."

"Good point. How about Mon Calamari?"

"Sounds prudent."

"No!" Klin-Fa interrupted. "We can't spare the time for that. You have to plot a course for Wayland, immediately."

"Wayland?" Uldir said. "What in blazes are you talking about?"

"And just exactly who are you?" Vega asked, her gaze tracing uncharitably up the Jedi's figure.

"And what in space makes you think you can tell us what to do?" Leaft added, edging close to her, his teeth bared.

Klin-Fa tensed, but otherwise ignored the threatening Dug.

"I suppose introductions are in order," Uldir allowed. "Everyone, meet Klin-Fa Gi. She's a Jedi, if you haven't figured that out already. Klin-Fa, this is my crew—Vega Sepen, Leaft, and Vook Gehu."

Vega nodded her platinum tresses curtly. Leaft continued to growl, and Vook turned his flat face toward her and nodded absently. "Pleased to meet you," the Duro said. He didn't sound pleased—he sounded doleful. Vook always sounded doleful.

Klin-Fa wasn't distracted. "I have to get to Wayland," she said. "It's important."

Uldir grinned sardonically. "But you won't tell me why."

"I can't. I've explained that."

"You want me to space her, boss?" Leaft asked, in a helpful tone.

"Yes," Uldir returned, "but you'd better not. Klin-Fa, Wayland is in Yuuzhan Vong occupied space, in case you haven't heard. I'm not taking a ship in this condition there unless I have ample reason. You've given me no such reason."

"I'm on a mission for Master Skywalker. That should be reason enough."

"Sure. If I believed you, but I'm not sure I do. Trust goes both ways. You want me to take you to Wayland? Tell me why."

"I can't."

"Fine. Then we're going to Mon Calamari. Meanwhile I'll try to contact Master Skywalker and see what he has to say about this."

"You're making a mistake."

"I've been making mistakes since the moment I first saw you. Why should things be different now?"

"Because the fate of the galaxy depends on what we do now, that's why. There's no time to lose."

"So you say," Uldir said, shrugging.

Klin-Fa's face registered barely concealed fury, and again Uldir felt something a little troubling in her presence. The feeling faded as she composed herself and vanished when she quirked a little grin, the first he had seen. He was right—it made her prettier.

"I guess I wouldn't believe me, either," she admitted, reluctantly. "Fine. When you contact Master Skywalker, he'll confirm what I've said. But you ought to do it quickly."

Uldir raised his eyebrows in surprise. "That sounds almost too reasonable."

She shrugged. "What choice do you leave me? I'm at your mercy."

"Great," Uldir said. He glanced at his filthy clothes. "I'm glad that's settled. We've got a long hyperspace jump—I for one, could use a 'fresher. You could probably do with the same."

"I suppose," she conceded.

"You can go first. Vega will find you a change of clothes."



An hour later, feeling considerably more human, Uldir met with Klin-Fa again in the ship's small lounge. She looked smaller in one of Vega's black jumpsuits, and younger, too.

"Maybe we got off on the wrong foot," Uldir said. He stuck out his hand. "I'm Uldir Lochett. Pleased to meet you."

She grinned wryly and took his hand. "Pleasure," she said.

"You'd better watch that," he said.

"What?"

"That's twice now you've smiled. It might ruin your look."

"If you'd been through what I have..." she began, but trailed off, her gaze going muddy, lost in a past that Uldir knew nothing about.

"Yeah," he said. "Well, if you ever feel like talking about it, I'm a good listener."

"Right. The soul of concern." She shifted. "So this is a Jedi rescue ship."

"Yep. My little kingdom."

"Looks kind of beat up."

"Well, we don't like to attract attention. But she can do the job, when she's in good condition."

"You're proud of her," Klin-Fa noticed.

"Sure. And of my crew. You won't find better."

"I don't deny the four of you seem to get through, somehow."

Uldir couldn't tell if that was a compliment or not. He let it pass.

"Want a look around?" He asked.

"Well, you've seen one transport..."

"Nah. C'mon."

"Shouldn't you be trying to contact Master Skywalker?" She asked.

"Vega's working on that. We have to bounce the signal around a good bit and put it through several layers of encryption. Takes time."

"Not too much, I hope."

"No. I expect an answer in an hour or so."

She sighed. "Fine. I guess I'll take that tour."

"Okay," he stood and started leading her around. "The chassis is an old Corellian medium transport," he explained, "but we've made a few changes."

He took her up the shaft into the turbolaser turret.

"Nice," she said, when she saw the armaments.

"Turbolaser is state-of-the-art," he replied. "Cesium vapor, and packs a real mean punch. We can also target proton torps from here, as well as from the central panel. And there's an extra layer of plating."

"But just one turret?"

"Yep. I sacrificed the other for something better."

"What's that?"

"The best part. Come back up."

She followed him to an access hatch.

"This used to be the cargo hold," he explained, keying the hatch open. "Between that and the missing second turret, we made room for these."

He finally had the pleasure of seeing her surprised.

"Starfighters!" She breathed.

"Yep," Uldir said, gesturing at the sleek little ships. There were

Dark Tidings

four of them, nestled in a rotating frame. "We can only launch one at a time, but we can still get them all out in under a minute, if we have to."

"A-wings," she noted, sounding somehow disappointed.

"You know your ships," Uldir said. "They came out of the shipyards as A-wings. Now they're a little something special—each has room for a passenger and emergency medical equipment. Sometimes we have to get into tighter places than the *No Luck Required* can go."

"You use them to extract Jedi?"

"And place them. We're not only in the rescue business—sometimes we ferry Jedi into Yuuzhan Vong space, when a mission calls for it."

"Interesting. Things have changed a little since I've been away."

"I guess so."

"I see you sacrificed the escape pods, too," she mused. "But I suppose the A-wings can serve the same purpose."

"Yeah. It's never come to that, but that's part of the plan. Number one there is even hyperspace capable, so if we have to split the mission or send for help, we've got the extra legs to do it."

"Fine," she said. "You've impressed me." As if to belie that, she yawned. "Now, with all of this, do you have a spare bunk? I haven't slept in—well, I guess a week. I think I'll take the rest of that hour to have a nap."

"No problem," Uldir said.

"WAYLAND IS WHERE EMPEROR PALPATINE'S SECRET TOY-BOX WAS. ALL KINDS OF NASTY DARK SIDE THINGS ON WAYLAND."

After showing her to her bunk, Uldir went back up to where Vega sat at the controls.

"Nice new friend you've got there," the Corellian commented.

Uldir nodded. "Not bad with a lightsaber."

"From what I saw, I'd say spectacular," Vega corrected. "Cute, too."

"That I hadn't noticed."

"No, of course not. You just instantly recognized her as Jedi in need of aid and chased after her."

"I thought she was a thief," Uldir said, defensively. "I thought I'd help the local authorities catch her. I didn't know they were the bad guys."

"Yeah," Vega said. "Speaking of which, I think we can mark the whole Corporate Sector down as unfriendly now. I did some checking up on that new exec, the one whose head we borrowed. From what I was able to glean, I'm guessing he's been in secret negotiations with the Yuuzhan Vong for two weeks now."

"Given that there was a Vong in the search party, that's not surprising. And Klin-Fa said there was an executor on Bonadan."

"Well, things just keep getting better and better don't they?"

"Just makes things more interesting," Uldir said.

"You can say that again. And you probably will. There's more hot systems every day."

"It'll turn around, eventually," Uldir said. "Now that Master Skywalker has plans in motion."

"You put an awful lot of faith in him," Vega said.

"It's not faith. Faith is something you accept without proof. Master Skywalker and the Jedi have proven themselves time and again. It's the government of the New Republic that's gumming things up."

"Don't be too sure," Vega said. "The Jedi are all well and good, but they aren't invincible." Her tone became somehow more cautious—and more leading. He knew Vega, and knew she was about to make a point of some sort, probably an unpleasant one.

"What?" He said.

"The Jedi. If even one of them turns to the dark side, we could have bigger troubles than the Yuuzhan Vong."

"That's true, but I don't think it's likely." He tilted his head in suspicion. "You have a reason for bringing this up?"

"Sure. Just how much do you know about this Klin-Fa Gi?"

He hesitated.

"Well?"

"It's just—I got some disquieting feelings from her, back on Bonadan."

"What do you mean?"

Uldir frowned. "I'm not sure. Probably nothing."

Vega twisted her mouth. "Look," she said, "I know you've got a little of this Force thing—"

"Very little. What I have isn't dependable."

"Maybe not. But don't let a pretty face distract you from what it

might be telling you."

He turned to her seriously. "What are you saying?"

"Well, I got a feeling from her, too. Not one of your mystical ones—just the suspicion that something doesn't add up about her. And Wayland—why Wayland? I can think of only two possibilities, right off hand, to explain why a Jedi would want

to go to Wayland."

"I haven't had time to think about it all," Uldir admitted. "Fill me in."

"Wayland is where Emperor Palpatine's secret toy-box was. All kinds of nasty dark side things on Wayland."

"Not anymore," Uldir said.

"Wrong. I've read the reports. Some of the Emperor's devices are still there—buried, yes, but still there."

"Buried under a mountain," Uldir corrected.

"Yes. But the Yuuzhan Vong are there now, and they have a way of digging things up, don't they?"

Uldir acknowledged that with a tilt of his head. "But the Yuuzhan Vong don't exist in the Force," he pointed out. "Even if they found some kind of dark side weapon, they wouldn't be able to use it."

"Probably not—but they might be able to learn something about the Jedi that will be of use to them," she held up a finger. "So that's one possibility—they've studied the Emperor's old tech and are developing some sort of anti-Jedi weapon. Our new friend learned of this somehow and is off to foil their evil plot."

"You mentioned two possibilities."

Vega unfolded a second finger. "The other possibility is that they've found something Klin-Fa Gi thinks she can use herself."

"You're saying she's gone dark."

"I'm saying she's angry. Even I can see that. And aren't you always telling me that anger is of the dark side?"

"I think she lost someone," Uldir said. "She mentioned a name, when she killed the Yuuzhan Vong warrior. And I'd be angry too, if my home planet was doing its level best to turn me over for sacrifice."

"Does the reason she's angry really matter? So she feels justified in whatever she's planning. Would that make it any better?"

"But if Master Skywalker ordered her to Wayland—"

"Well, that's the problem," Vega said. "He didn't."

"What?"

She tapped a readout. "This came in just before you did. Klin-Fa Gi was killed on Gyndine, or presumed so, two months ago. And Master Skywalker doesn't know anything about any mission to Wayland."

"Oh. Carbon flush."

"Yeah. You see."

"What does Master Skywalker want us to do?"

"Bring her in for debriefing, as soon as possible."

Uldir nodded wearily. "I guess that's what we'll do, then."

"Where is she now?"

"Taking a nap. Or at least—" he paused. "Does the air smell funny to you?"

Vega's eyes widened, just as Uldir felt his ears pop.

He turned quickly to his instruments. "Vaping Moff's! We're losing air pressure."

At that moment, the ship shuddered as if struck, and the lights went out. Cursing, Uldir brought emergency power online. "We've dropped out of hyperspace!" He said.

"Interdicted?"

"No. The drive failed."

"I bet it didn't just fail," Vega said.

"I bet you're right," he agreed. "Vega, get back there. Don't be afraid to shoot."

"It's too late," the Corellian told him.

But Uldir saw that, too. A-wing one was just crossing their field of view, under full acceleration. An instant later it vanished into hyperspace.

"Vook!" Uldir shouted. "Get that vector!"

"Got it, boss," the Duro's voice replied. "But we have our own troubles."

The air was getting really thin now. "She's opened us to space," Uldir growled. "That little—"

"And sabotaged the hyperdrive," the Duro added. "We aren't going anywhere, sir. We're stranded here."

"Nearest planet on slower-than-light?" Uldir asked, grimly.

"Two years away, sir. The stars are sparse out here."

"Like I said," Vega drawled. "Things just get better all the time." ❏

To Be Continued . . .

Greg Keyes is the author of *Star Wars: The New Jedi Order—Edge of Victory I: Conquest* and *Star Wars: The New Jedi Order—Edge of Victory II: Rebirth*.

No Luck Required

MODIFIED CORELLIAN ENGINEERING CORP YZ-775 MEDIUM TRANSPORT

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Class: Space transport | Crew: 4 (unique) |
| Size: Medium (52m long) | Initiative: +0 |
| Hyperdrive: ×1 (backup ×12) | Maneuver: +0 |
| Passengers: 8 | Defense: 20 (+10 armor) |
| Cargo Capacity: 150 tons | Shield Points: 180 (DR 15) |
| Consumables: 6 months | Hull Points: 210 (DR 15) |

Cost: Not available for sale

Maximum Speed in Space: Attack (6 squares/action)

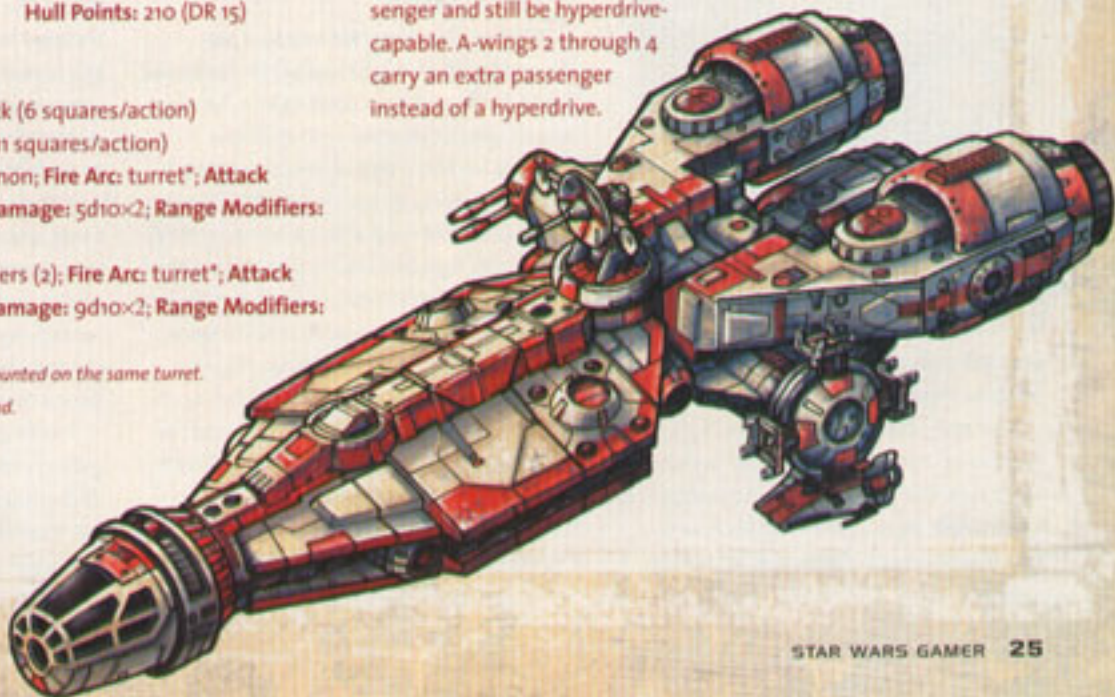
Atmospheric Speed: 650 km/h (11 squares/action)

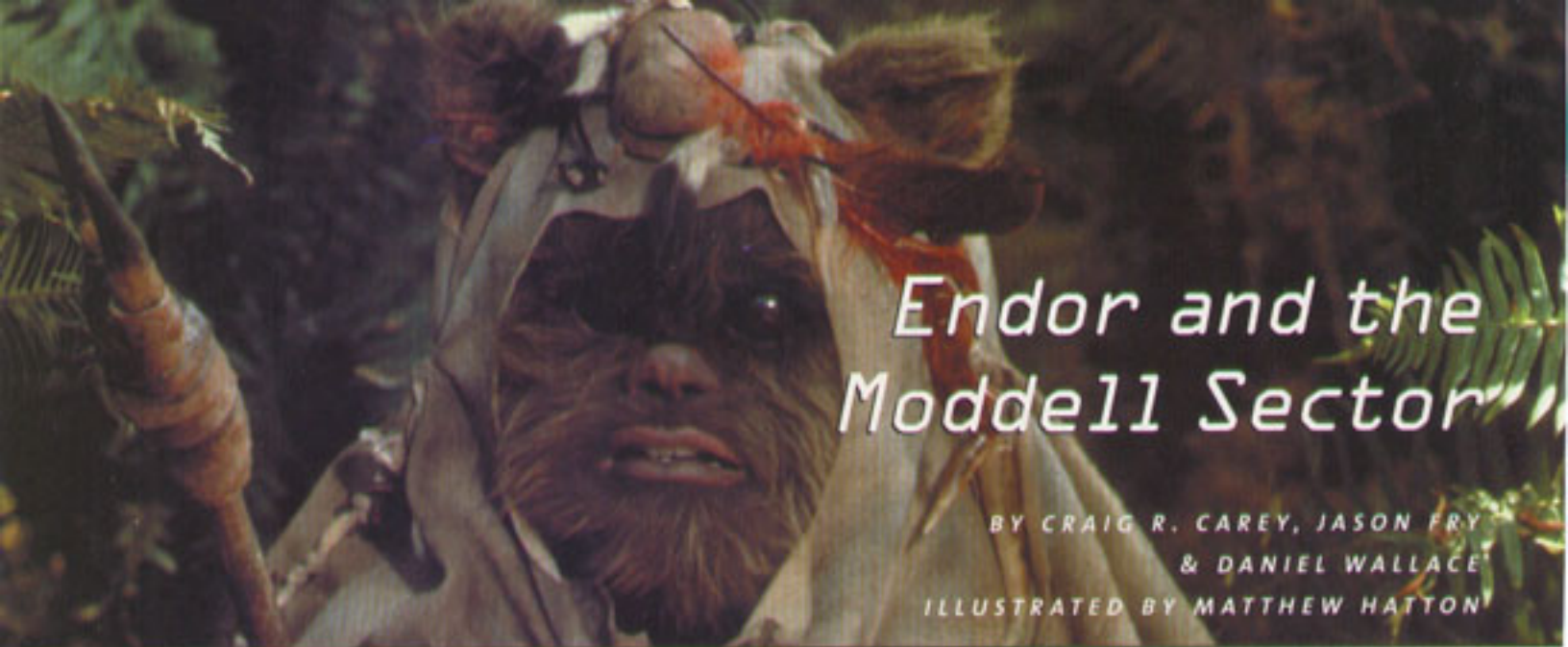
Weapon: Double turbolaser cannon; Fire Arc: turret*; Attack Bonus: +6 (+6 fire control); Damage: 5d10×2; Range Modifiers: PB/S +0, M -2, L -4.

Weapon: Proton torpedo launchers (2); Fire Arc: turret*; Attack Bonus: +4 (+4 fire control); Damage: 9d10×2; Range Modifiers: PB +0, S/M/L n/a.

*No Luck Required's weapons are all mounted on the same turret. Only one weapon can be fired each round.

The *No Luck Required* has had one of its weapon turrets and a large portion of its main cargo hold replaced with a revolving A-wing launch bay cylinder. Every other round, the *No Luck Required* can launch an A-wing. A-wings launched this way enter a space battle in the same square as the *No Luck Required* with any facing you choose. A-wing 1 was heavily modified to accept an extra passenger and still be hyperdrive-capable. A-wings 2 through 4 carry an extra passenger instead of a hyperdrive.





Endor and the Moddell Sector

BY CRAIG R. CAREY, JASON FRY
& DANIEL WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY MATTHEW HATTON

"GREAT HISTORICAL EVENTS DON'T ALWAYS TAKE PLACE AGAINST AN INTERESTING BACKDROP—astrocartographically speaking, you could pick half a million sectors on the edge of Wild Space and find more striking phenomena than the Moddell offers. Still, while I don't need to see an abandoned bunker or a black spot where someone put a Sith Lord to the torch, I would like to see that diamond core they found around the Din Pulsar. And I wouldn't pass up some time on the Ast Kikorrie array, if only to take a look around. That's the thing about these half-explored sectors—you never know when you might stumble across something fascinating."

—Beryl Suttrige, *Ur-Dean Emeritus, College of Astrocartography, Charmath*

The Moddell Sector & Beyond

Uncomfortably close to the Unknown Regions and exhaustingly far from the familiar lanes of the Corellian Trade Spine, the Moddell sector forms the fuzzy outer border of the Inner Zuma region. Even seasoned spacers sometimes scratch their heads when asked about Inner Zuma. Before a famous battle was fought there, nobody had heard of the Moddell sector either.

That all changed when Emperor Palpatine died at the Battle of Endor—the sector's sole claim to fame. But these days few spacers travel to Endor, and even fewer know of the other sights to be found throughout Moddell and the Inner Zuma. If a typical sector of the Core Worlds is a blazing beacon of culture and civilization, the Moddell sector is a flickering candle in a pitch-black wood.

The Inner Zuma and the Outer Zuma regions lie atop one another like layers in a sandwich. The Outer Zuma, situated below the galactic plane, encompasses four sectors (Kakani, Sugai, Fusai, and Ikenomin);

the Inner Zuma sits on its larger sibling's shoulders and is made up of three sectors (Spar, Ablajeck, and Moddell). Overhead two-dimensional representations of the Zuma typically illustrate only one "slice" (Inner or Outer), but navigators should nevertheless be aware of the regions' relationship to one another.

The Republic, long defined by a pie-shaped wedge lying between the Perlemian Trade Route and the Corellian Run, finally began wide-scale colonization of the galaxy's northern and southern quadrants with the blazing of the Hydian Way about 3,000 years before the Battle of Yavin (BBY). Soon after, Republic scouts established the new super-hyperlanes known as the Rimma Trade Route and the Corellian Trade Spine, as a frenzy of discovery extended those ancient routes from the Core all the way to the galaxy's edge. Even today, traffic to the Zuma regions is only a trickle; in fact, both regions were considered part of the Unknown Regions a few hundred years ago.

Prospectors and profiteers charged down

the routes' lengths, hoping to catalog and claim new sources of mineral wealth and exotic gases. Inevitably, the margins of explored space began to bleed out from the straight-line thrusts of the Rimma and the Spine. As they did so, what had been Wild Space became "civilized" and what had been the Unknown Regions became Wild Space. As recently as 1,000 years BBY, the Zuma regions were uncharted. Today they technically fall under New Republic jurisdiction, though the cartographic distinctions that separate them from the neighboring (and unclaimed) expanses of Wild Space are nebulous at best.

A traveler with his eye on the Moddell sector likely passes through the Spar or Ablajeck sectors first, assuming he is coming from the direction of the Corellian Trade Spine. The fact that the Zuma is so little traveled means that hyperspace routes to the region are slow, uncomfortable and sometimes unsafe. Unfortunately, those routes through the region are worse: Trying to navigate to Moddell is like picking one's way across a muddy briar patch—or, as some spacers say, like tiptoeing across an unmapped minefield. The hyperspace eddies and sinkholes that plague the region remain mysterious, and even travelers making the short hop from Annaj to Ovisse have been known to vanish.

The Empire, of course, undertook the galaxy's largest construction project at Endor, lured by the combination of the Forest Moon's remoteness and the presence of a treasure trove of metals in the system.



Still, Emperor Palpatine knew that his second Death Star would not long remain a secret once Imperial supply barges and hired superfreighters became common sights along the zigzagging paths of the Inner Zuma. Instead, Imperial astrocartographers catalogued the existing routes branching off from the Rimma and artificially extended the most promising candidate—an obscure but stable route known as the Sivestri Trace—all the way to Endor. This fragile tunnel, known as the Sanctuary Pipeline, was built by planting non-mass S-thread boosters in hyperspace and moving realspace detritus from a thousand locations to avoid catastrophic mass shadows. It required round-the-clock upkeep and cost billions of credits, but it allowed ships carrying Imperial material and the proper navigational coordinates to reach the Death Star with due dispatch—and kept Endor's secret long enough for Palpatine to craft his plan to trap the Rebel Alliance.

Palpatine allowed details of the Sanctuary Pipeline to be captured along with the plans for the second Death Star; when the Alliance leapt to attack the battle station they departed from the Pipeline's node at Sullust. After the Battle of Endor much of the Sanctuary Pipeline became unnavigable, wrecked by a combination of natural decay and the theft of any S-thread booster that could be located by smugglers or some of the Alliance's less-savory allies. Travelers can still attempt a jump along the Pipeline for a quick trip to Endor, but they do so at their own risk.

The difficulty of getting from one place to another in the Moddell sector doesn't bother the indigenous inhabitants: To them, the hyperdrive is a new and wondrous invention. Until their discovery by Republic scouts, few of the local species had developed even rudimentary space travel. The Ayrou came the closest, and when the New Republic admitted the Moddell sector into its ranks—a step taken more for political symbolism than tangible benefit—an Ayrou senator was appointed to serve on Coruscant. The sector's other species, including the Marauders of Sanyassa, are largely primitives.

On their homeworld of Maya Kovel the Ayrou named the bright stars of the night sky, and some of the labels are still applied in the Moddell sector. The constellation of Kuna has lent its name to the stars (and major planets) of Kuna's Tooth, Kuna's Eye, Kuna's Fist, Kuna's Tail, and Kuna's Horn. Despite their names, the systems have nothing in common beyond proximity. (The remaining stars in the constellation, the supergiants Kuna's Heart, Kuna's Scale, and Kuna's Gullet, appear as neighbors only from the perspective of Maya Kovel. In fact, these stars lie scattered among a number of neighboring sectors and the reaches of Wild Space, and are known there by different names.)

Annaj—sometimes known as Cannij Barr—is the Moddell sector capital, a dis-

inction left over from the days of Imperial rule. While it has been years since the Annaj docks swelled with Palpatine's warships, the planet is typically the first stop for those heading into the sector. Most traffic along the in-sector hyperlanes is local—Ayrou traders bringing boxes of seeds to Thonner, for example, or Vashan penitents making their seasonal journey to Mina. Outside traffic consists mostly of explorers and fortune-seekers, with a sprinkling of scientists bound for Ast Kikorie. Most of the sector's traffic is found on the Annaj-Houche Run between Annaj and Vasha; those worlds, along with Vex, Mina and Kuna's Tooth, together make up the Inner Moddell systems. Passing beyond those systems into Outer Moddell, traffic drops off substantially. Even on the busiest routes, fugitives



Endor and the Moddell Sector

make up a small but reliable percentage of all annual visitors to Moddell, and this number has risen precipitously since the invasion of the Yuuzhan Vong.

Outsiders' attempts to bring their businesses and causes into Moddell have mostly been failures. In the waning years of the Republic the Ffib religious order began missionary work in the sector, even establishing a mission on the Forest Moon in the then-uncharted Endor system. Resistance from local faiths and the Empire's repression of the Ffib put an end to their missionary work shortly after the estab-

Rokna Blue

Whether the characters are hired by a crime lord to smuggle it, recruited by law officials or rival gangsters to stop the smuggling, or simply offered a dose in a spaceport cantina, Rokna Blue is an inescapable presence in any Moddell sector adventure. When swallowed, the blue-tinted pebbles—derived from the rokna fungus of the forest moon of Endor—cause a brief sense of euphoria followed by a loss of memory and a craving for more Blue. Long-term addicts are empty, burned-out automatons with no recollections of their former lives.

A character who tastes Rokna Blue must make a Will save (DC 16). If the save fails, subtract one point of Intelligence. The character is then driven to seek out more Blue as soon as the opportunity presents itself, and each subsequent dosage requires a Will save (DC 28). Failure means the loss of one Intelligence point per dosage, up to a maximum of 6 points.

The condition can be reversed at a qualified medical center (usually at a cost of 3,000–5,000 credits), through the Treat Injury skill (long-term care task, DC 15), or through the Force skill Heal Another (requires a check of 20 or better). Each success restores one point of Intelligence.

If the condition persists for more than one week from the time of initial exposure, the character's reduced level of Intelligence at that moment becomes permanent.

lishment of the New Order. Immediately following the Battle of Endor, a tour company sought to capitalize on the sector's sudden fame by promising "convenient daily departures to the exotic moon of Endor" along the decaying Sanctuary Pipeline. Accidents and mismanagement drove the company into the ground several months later. The only concern to gain a foothold in Moddell since then is an illicit one—smuggling of the drug Rokna Blue. Years after the collapse of the tourist industry, New Republic personnel stationed at Endor's Salfur's Trading Post discovered the euphoric properties of the native rokna fungus. Before long an undercover rokna channel had developed: Smugglers left Endor, delivered raw fungus to backalley cookhouses on Kuna's Tooth, shipped the refined Rokna Blue past Moddell customs officials on Annaj, then sold the drug in the galaxy's worst vice dens. Rokna Blue reached the peak of its popularity at the time of the Black Fleet crisis; though still smuggled today, it is difficult to find outside Moddell and much less popular (despite a lower price on average) than glitterstim or ryll.

Away from the wobbly hyperlanes of the Moddell sector is a swath of largely unexplored space marking the sector's farthest edge. This territory, while technically claimed by Moddell, is for all intents and purposes Wild Space. One hyperlane,

Shipwrecked!

Suitable for use during any era of play. One of the many anomalies that have over the course of centuries thrown scores of ships to the surface of the Forest Moon snares the heroes' craft. They must make the necessary repairs to their ship, and obtain a number of crucial parts damaged in their landing. But where are they going to find starship components on this primitive moon?

The Marauders inhabiting the forest moon crashed here decades ago, and their leader, King Terak, still maintains a cache of parts at their fortress, a foreboding structure in the Dragon's Pelt savannas beyond the forests. Can the characters stage a daring heist of the parts they need from the vicious Marauders and their Dathomir witch ally?

blazed two centuries ago by the Bakur Corporation, leads off in the direction of Bakura. A few other routes lead to various Wild Space outposts, but those who travel them are setting themselves up for pirate attack, hyperdrive blowout, or worse. Given the poorly-mapped hyperspace anomalies in the Moddell sector, many stars in this area and in the Monsua Nebula (still identified by Republic-era alphanumeric tags) are unreachable at faster-than-light speeds. Needless to say, no one is willing to make the years-long journey required to reach them at sublight, so any trailblazing scouts who open up these planets to the outside galaxy will find them ripe for the picking.

Endor

No planet in galactic history has been simultaneously as famous and as quiet as the forest moon of Endor. To uncounted trillions, it's a household name signifying the sudden break between Imperial despotism and New Republic democracy. Yet the offworlders who have set foot on its surface could fit aboard a single spaceliner.

The second of nine moons orbiting a silver-banded gas giant, the forest moon is what most people mean when they say "Endor," despite the fact that the star system and the gas giant share the same name. The small green sphere has a lighter gravity than standard and bursts with life, including a surprising number of indigenous intelligent species. Though forests dominate most of the orb, the green monotony is broken here and there by gray mountains, blue lakes, and golden savannas.

Hyperspace navigation through the Endor system can be tricky, given the gravity shadows of the system's gas giants and a generous sprinkling of stellar debris. As a result, hundreds of ships have crashed on the Forest Moon over the years, their carcasses littering the forest floor underneath shrouds of leaves and conifer needles. Those crewmembers who survived impact scratched out meager existences in the wilderness, waiting in vain for rescue. Notable castaways have included the Towani family, a tribe of Marauders from Sanyassa, and the Human trader and scout Noa Briqualon. Endor has earned its unwelcome reputation as a "desert island in space."

THE FOREST

A plummeting ship is statistically most likely to crash in the forest, given Endor's preponderance of moss, wood, and dewy greenery. Here one is likely to meet the Ewoks, Endor's most populous intelligent species. Ewoks stand not much taller than one meter and are covered with short fur; their size and "cute" appearance (reminding many observers of babies or cubs) belies the fact that they are ferocious warriors who have been known to cook their enemies alive over open flames and eat the roasted flesh.

Ewoks live all over the moon of Endor, including the mountains and lakeshores, but the vast majority make their homes in the forest, where the trees can grow as high as one kilometer in the moon's low gravity. The woods seethe with predators, and the Ewoks have built their communities high in the trees despite their lack of arboreal adaptations (such as attenuated arms or hooked claws, traits found, for example, among tree-climbing Wookiees).

Though not blessed by nature to live among the branches, their superior brains have allowed them to function quite well above the ground. Ewok engineers have developed rope swings, pulleys, and collapsible ladders to reach their villages, which stand 50 meters in the air. The platforms of Bright Tree Village, home to the tribe that helped the Rebel Alliance destroy the shield generator protecting the second Death Star, are extensive enough to house nearly 200 Ewoks.

After the Battle of Endor, the victorious Rebel Alliance kept their headquarters near Bright Tree Village for nearly a month, until driven off the moon by invading armies of the alien Nagai, striking from the Unknown Regions. The Nagai offensive soon collapsed, but Mon Mothma and the rest remained offworld to prepare for the capture of Coruscant. In their place came New Republic traders who hoped to barter with the Ewoks for local crafts and medicines. Salfur's Trading Post became the largest and most successful of these operations, turning a modest profit in its first year and exploding in riches after the discovery of Rokna Blue. Today Salfur's has outlasted all its competitors and still does business on the Forest Moon, albeit at a reduced level. Salfur's sits 10 meters above the forest floor on metal columns which protect it from foraging beasts of the night. Salfur's also offers the only true landing pad on all of Endor, an elevated disc large enough to accommodate a small freighter.

Despite their primitive technology, Ewoks are as intelligent as any New Republic member species. Following the Battle of Endor many left their homeworld and—after a brief period of culture shock—became independent fringers or soldiers in the New Republic military. Two Ewok brothers, Tokkat and Wunka, served as gunners aboard the New Republic Star Destroyer *Liberator*. They bravely defended the surviving crew, including General Lando Calrissian, when their vessel was shot down over Imperial City during the time of the reborn Emperor.

"IT'S A TRAP!"

The Ewoks exhibit exceptional cunning in the construction of their traps (as both the Rebel commando team and the Imperial forces learned during the Endor campaign). Many of the traps the Ewoks employed against the Empire during the Battle of Endor were actually in place long before the Empire ever established a presence on the Sanctuary Moon. Existing village defenses against raiding Gorax proved exceptionally useful, particular in destroying several of the Imperial AT-ST walkers. Notable among these are the *kal puk*, or log piles, which are rolled from nearby hillsides and make walking—for either a Gorax or an Imperial walker—impossible.

Hunting nets are common throughout the peripheral territories surrounding an Ewok village. For larger game, carcasses are left on trigger spits, and when a hungry beast pulls down the bloody meat, they are quickly caught up in a sturdy fiber net. Smaller sling nets not only trap but also kill smaller game: When a creature steps into the loop and sets off the pressure trap, a pinned sapling breaks free and flings the prey into the nearest tree, usually killing it instantly. This is a particularly popular method of trapping the sturicis, a nasty-tempered forest scavenger.

Translated literally as "head hitter" in Ewokese, the *tek swee* trap is a common defense employed against raiding Gorax. Typically, when a Gorax attempts to pillage an Ewok village, the defending Ewok warriors let loose with a massive log roped into the trees. The log swings into or onto the Gorax from any number of angles like a great battering ram or club. Villages have warded off a Gorax with this technique on more than one occasion.

When the Empire arrived, it became apparent to Ewok builders that the single log might not suffice against the mysterious, square-headed beasts that ambled about the forest. The two-legged creature's gray hide was incredibly strong, and one log might only anger the fierce creature. The Ewoks needed to make sure that the trap stopped the creature, and didn't just harm it enough to cause it to flee, as is typically done with Gorax.

The answer, of course, was simple: The Ewoks positioned two swinging *tek sweets*

In the Right Paws . . .

The Ewoks' weapons are primitive by galactic standards, but they are still weapons: Any species of forest-dwellers armed with only rocks and slings that can take out an entire legion of the Emperor's best troops must be doing something right. Most Ewok weaponry is smaller than its galactic standard counterpart, to accommodate the Ewoks' smaller build and shorter limbs. In game terms, all Ewok weapons are in the Primitive Group.

| Weapon | Damage | Critical | Range | | Weight | Type | Size |
|-------------|--------|----------|------------|--|---------|-------------|--------|
| | | | Increment | | | | |
| Bow | 1d8 | 20 | 12 meters | | 1 kg | Piercing | Medium |
| Arrows (10) | — | — | — | | 0.75 kg | Piercing | Medium |
| Club | 1d6 | 20 | 1.5 meters | | 1 kg | Bludgeoning | Medium |
| Knife | 1d4 | 20 | 1.5 meters | | .75 kg | Piercing | Small |
| Net | — | — | 2 meters | | 4 kg | — | Medium |
| Sling | 1d4 | 20 | 6 meters | | 0.3 kg | Bludgeoning | Small |
| Rocks (10) | — | — | — | | 1 kg | — | Tiny |
| Spear | 1d8 | 20 | 4 meters | | 1.5 kg | Piercing | Medium |

Endor and the Moddell Sector

across from one another in a clearing near the shield generator. When the first scout walker to pass through the clearing entered the trap, the massive logs that struck didn't just stop it, they killed it.

MEDICINAL PLANTS OF ENDOR

Nearly every Type I (Breathable) world contains a number of useful flora. Some can be used for sustenance (such as the meatvines of Threfal or perosa, detailed below), others as tools, medicine, or even weapons (such as the infamous "grenade fungi" of Yavin 4 or widownmakers of Dononger Minor). The Sanctuary Moon is no exception. The rare (non-native) senoti tree is a near-sacred healer among the Ewoks, and there are numerous other flora with medicinal or nutritional qualities.

In most cases, incorporating medicinal and useful plants into game mechanics is a fairly simple task. Some of the most

important skills in locating, harvesting and utilizing such flora are Survival, Treat Injury (in the case of medicinal plants), or any Knowledge or Profession emphasis that facilitates a character's acquisition and/or use of the plant.

Senoti

The senoti tree is not actually native to the Endor moon, but rather to New Canistel, an inconsequential world in the Borderland Regions. Xenoarborists suspect the species was introduced by one of the two Canistel AgriStar freighters lost in the Moddell Sector decades ago. The popular hypothesis is that either or both of the Incom X-19 barges carrying senoti seed were subject to one of the many navigatory anomalies, and crashed on the moon. The few seeds that found suitable soil conditions on the moon took root (most of the moon's arable soil is highly acidic, and therefore unsuitable to the deep-rooted senoti). The senoti's watery sap is a powerful fever reducer and pain reliever.

Endor's Medicinal Plants

| Item | Use | Treat Injury DC |
|----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Senoti extract | Fever reducer; pain reliever | 10 |
| Fgir root | Anesthetic | 10 |
| Kata-wata | Salve against infection; coagulant | 15 |
| Perosa sap | Adhesive | — |

Species on Endor

Numerous creatures inhabit the Forest Moon. Some of them are benign, but many are not. The Ewoks don't carry those spears for nothing.

GORAX

The massive, black-furred Gorax are semi-sentient carnivores that can reach heights of more than 20 meters. Simple beasts, the Gorax nevertheless do have enough intelligence to keep their captured live prey in hanging cages far above their lairs' floors, and they make use of rough-hewn furniture and some tools.

The species' long, triangular ears provide them with excellent hearing. Popular accounts of 30-meter tall Gorax are generally discounted by scholars, as the largest of the species thus far encountered was 25 meters at most (which of course is still a colossal beast).

Sometimes acting in concert with the Gorax are the purple-pelted hanadaks, three-meter tall semi-sentients who share the badland territories in which the behemoth Gorax hunts. Popular Ewok consensus is that the hanadaks (see the *Alien Anthology*) are controlled by the towering Gorax, but that claim has not been substantiated.

Fewer than two dozen of the monsters are believed to inhabit the forest moon.

GORAX: Forest Predator 6; Init +0; Def 12 (+4 natural, -2 size); Spd 20m; VP/WP 55/38; Atk +11 melee (2d6+7, 2 claws), +6 melee (2d8+10, bite) or +4/-1 ranged; SQ Low-light vision, terrifying presence, DR 8; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +2; SZ H; Rep 1; Str 24, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 8. Challenge Code: E.

Skills: Climb +10, Hide -8, Intimidate +9, Spot +4, Survival +4.

Feats: Cleave, Power Attack, Skill Emphasis (Intimidate).

BORDOK

Quadruped beasts of burden, bordoks stand approximately 1.5 meters at the shoulder and have two short, upward-curved horns. They have thick, muscular bodies that make them ideal for long caravans, and often show such keen instinct that some researchers feel the creatures may be approaching basic sentience. For more information about bordoks including game statistics, refer to *Alien Anthology*.

DIVTO

A fierce, triple-headed reptilian, the divto is a limbless killer with three sets of venomous fangs and a nasty temperament. Some adult divtos have been measured at over four meters, though most typically range between 2 and 3 meters long. Thick, armor-like scales make the nocturnal creatures fairly resilient.

There are only a few senoti trees growing on the forest moon; most of the moon does not have the proper alkali content to support the species. Only one grows in the Ewok territories; the others are scrubby.

"One Wook's wine is a Pacitthip's poison."

That common phrase is just as true in dealing with wild plants and their various applications. The qualities of the plants detailed here apply to Ewoks, Yuzzum, and most non-sentient species native to the Endor moon, as well as most sentient Republic species.

NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS

The healing properties of fgir root have proven useless to Aqualish, Mon Calamari, Quarren, and Priapullins.

Perosa sap actually elicits an allergic reaction from Kel Dors and Gands (any character of those species who come in contact with perosa sap must remove the sap within 104 minutes or make a Fortitude Save of 15 to avoid succumbing to the reaction; treat as a Contact Poison as detailed in Chapter 12 of the core rulebook).

Barabels have shown little response to kata-wata.



During the considerable Imperial presence on the Forest Moon at the end of the Rebellion Era, some of the species managed to sneak aboard Imperial freighters and shuttles, and have as a result been found on other worlds since. For more information about divto including game statistics, refer to *Alien Anthology*.

CONDOR DRAGON

Its silhouette in the sky inspires terror, for the condor dragon can swoop down and carry off a medium-sized creature with ease. Condor dragons nest in tunnels formed in the Yawari Cliffs.

Condor Dragon: Airborne Predator 3; Init +4 (species, Dex); Def 15 (+4 natural, -1 size, +2 Dex); Spd 2m, 15m fly (average); VP/WP 26/16; Atk +5 melee (2d4+3, 4 claws), +0 melee (2d6+4, bite) or +4 ranged; SQ Lowlight vision, screech (+4 species bonus to Intimidate); SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +1; SZ L; Rep 2; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 4. Challenge Code: B.

Skills: Hide -2, Intimidate +7, Listen +4, Spot +4, Survival +2.

Feats: Flyby Attack, Power Attack, Run, Track.

REARING SPIDER

This six-legged insectoid spins webs inside desert caves. Often it feeds on dead and rotting meat left behind by Gorax. When it traps

its own prey, the spider holds the smaller creature down with two tusks and chews at the flesh with needle-sharp mandibles.

Rearing Spider: Desert Vermin 4; Init +0; Def 14 (+5 natural, -1 size); Spd 10m; VP/WP 30/14; Atk +4 melee (2d4+3, bite) or +2 ranged; SQ SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +0; SZ L; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 4, Wis 8, Cha 6. Challenge Code: C.

Skills: Hide -2, Listen +2, Move Silently +6, Search +2, Survival +5.

Feats: Stealthy, Track.

BLURRG

A slow-witted bipedal reptile, the blurrig is a gentle plant eater. It can be ridden or used as a draft beast. Ewoks have ignored blurrigs due to the creatures' preference for the savanna, but Endor's stranded Marauders have enlisted them to haul equipment for their raids.

Blurrig: Plains Herd Animal 3; Init -1 (Dex); Def 18 (+10 natural, -1 size, -1 Dex); Spd 6m; VP/WP 18/16; Atk +5 melee (1d6+7, bite) or -1 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will -2; SZ L; Rep 1; Str 20, Dex 9, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 5, Cha 7. Challenge Code: C.

Skills: Hide -3, Listen +1, Spot -1, Survival +3.

Feats: Endurance, Run.

Endor and the Moddell Sector

wild-blown specimens on the savanna. When the Towani family crashed on the moon, Wicket's family used senoti extract from the local tree to nurse young Cindel back to health.

Perosa

The perosa is a stout deciduous tree found nestled among the giants of the dark Endor forest. The outer bark layer is tender and thick enough to be used for sustenance; a juicy perosa steak grilled over a spittfire is

Yuzzum

The migratory Yuzzum exist at the same basic technology level as the Ewoks. Though not exceptionally strong, the species is resilient and are capable trackers (the slight Yuzzum should not be confused with the brawny Yuzzem of the Ragna system). A pair of sensory feelers set atop their heads assist Yuzzum in navigating the tall grasses of their home territories.

Yuzzum technology is on the same basic level as the Ewoks, in that they employ spears and traps for their hunting and defense, and do not have any industrial technology.

While Yuzzum are encountered with even less frequency than the Ewoks in the galaxy, most who have left the Sanctuary Moon are performers. Notable performers include Joh Yowza, who plies the Outer Rim Territories with the Max Rebo band during the Rebellion Era, and "Fugitive" Fod, the outlaw singer who bases his troupe out of the Corporate Sector during The New Jedi Order.

Yuzzum Commoner: Init +1 (Dex); Def 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 8m; VP/WP —/10; Atk —1 melee (1d3-1, punch) or +1 ranged; SQ Primitive; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10. Challenge Code: A.
Skills: Read/Write Yuzzum, Search +1, Speak Basic, Speak Yuzzum, Survival +4.
Species Features: +2 Dex, -2 Str; Primitive—Yuzzum suffer a -4 penalty on any tech-related skill checks; +2 bonus on Survival checks.

actually far more appetizing than one might think (though it has little true nutritional value). The durable, soft bark can also easily be used as soft armor for Ewok warriors and other diminutive species.

The sap of the tree (drawn from the harder secondary bark layer) is used by Ewoks and Yuzzum as a strong adhesive. Rope lashings are often fortified with perosa extract, and warm sap is often used in the construction of Ewok huts, to both stabilize the buildings and seal them from the elements. Objects bound with perosa sap require a DC 30 Strength check to separate.

Fgir

Often referred to as "shooter roots" by offworlders, the roots of the fgir bush make the otherwise beneficial plant a dangerous harvest. Sensitive to the pressure applied to them from footfalls within a 20 meter radius of the tree, the fgir roots are hollow and contain hard, thin needles that fire from beneath the soft loam when the air in the roots is compressed. Resisting the poisonous needles' affects requires a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15); a failed save results in 2d6 points of temporary Dexterity damage.

Braver Ewoks have been known to harvest and dry out the roots and fashion them into blowguns; the moisture in the roots, weaker than the poison the needles inflict, makes an effective anesthetic.

Kata-wata

The lush green kata-wata fern is commonly used by the smaller scavengers of the forest moon to hide from their predators. Ewoks have long used the moist fronds for building, and have secured the ferns' fluid-filled stems for medicinal purposes; the kata-wata extract helps stave blood flow and protects against infection (doubles vitality and wound points recovered through Natural Healing as in Chapter 8: Combat of the core rulebook).

THE REST OF ENDOR

North of Salfur's Trading Post and Bright Tree Village the forest ends abruptly at the plunging Yawari Cliffs. Ewoks have long used the cliffs to test their wood-and-skin gliders, and there are a few places in the cliff face where one can reach the top again by ascending through tunnels in the rock.

These shafts are also home to Endor's nightmarish condor dragons, so entering one is not recommended without the presence of an Ewok guide.

Beyond the Yawari cliffs, lush Endor gives way to a dead wasteland of cracked rock and filmy acid pools. The Desert of Salma is practically devoid of vegetation. Ewoks never venture there, and only the hardiest creatures on the Forest Moon can make their homes in such an unwelcoming place. Endor's race of giants, the Gorax, live here and venture into the forest to hunt. Gorax typically inhabit the cavernous interiors of the desert's prodigious rock formations, where rearing spiders the size of dewbacks feed on the scraps of messy Gorax banquets.

To the west of the central forest lies the Dragon's Pelt savanna. This wide stretch of grassland covers the underlying lava rocks like a living blanket, though here and there sharp lava tors pierce up into the sun. In the distance is the Dragon's Spine, a range of snow-capped mountains.

Yuzzums live here, yet another intelligent species to have arisen on the Forest Moon. These short, long-legged aliens subsist primarily on burrowing rodents called ruggers and resort to violence only when their hunting lands are threatened.

The Dragon's Pelt is also home to a gloomy fortress of decidedly non-Yuzzum origin. Decades before the Battle of Endor, a shipload of Sanyassan Marauders became another casualty of Endor's treacherous hyperspace shoals. Their stolen ship crashed in the forest, damaged beyond repair. The surviving Marauders and their leader, King Terak, relocated to the open savanna where they built a square-walled castle with stone quarried from mines at the foothills of the Dragon's Spine. For years they sallied out from their keep astride tamed blurrigs, making life miserable for the Yuzzums and Ewoks. Their blasters even allowed them to hold their own against the giant Gorax. King Terak died several months before the Battle of Endor, but the surviving Marauders continue to blot the savanna with their conspicuous vulgarity.

NOA BRIQUALON

A kind, gentle old Human who befriended Cindel Towani and Wicket during their adventures on the Forest Moon, Noa



Briqualon spent decades as a mid-level scout before falling prey to the Moddell anomalies. He spent a number of seasons on the forest moon before his encounters with the Marauders, which ultimately led to his acquisition of the last part he needed to effect repairs on his craft.

Taking the orphaned Cindel under his wing, the two plied the stars for some time until the Alliance victory at the very moon where they'd met. In the years since, the two have made their modest home in the Mid-Rim. Cindel has grown into a successful reporter and editor for the Coruscant news feed, and Noa has long since retired.

Noa Briqualon: Male Human Sct 12; Init +1 (Dex); Def 19 (+8 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 82/15; Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+1/1d6+1, quarterstaff) or +10/+5 ranged; SQ Trailblazing, uncanny dodge (Dex to Def); SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +8; SZ M; FP 2; DSP 0; Rep 4; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 16. Challenge Code: D.

Equipment: Field kit, quarterstaff.

Skills: Astrogate +12, Diplomacy +9, Gather Information +9, Hide +10, Knowledge (anthropology) +10, Knowledge (biology) +10, Knowledge (botany) +10, Knowledge (Endor) +10, Knowledge (geology) +11, Knowledge (zoology) +10, Listen +12, Profession (surveyor) +17, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Rellarian, Read/Write Shistavanen, Search +14, Speak Basic, Speak Ithorese, Speak Rellarian, Speak Samuac Tree Code, Speak Shistavanen, Speak Shyriiwook, Speak Teek, Spot +12, Survival +20, Treat Injury +9.

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Skill Emphasis (Astrogate, Survival), Track, Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, primitive weapons, simple weapons).

TERAK

The ruthless leader of the Marauders stranded on Endor's moon, Terak is a giant Marauder with a nasty disposition and ruthless demeanor. Brutal, unforgiving, and calculating, he embodies the cultural and psychological traits commonly attributed to his kind, only more so. The self-styled King of his band, he rules with an iron fist from the Marauder's fortress at Dragon's Spine.

Though King Terak was killed in the final battle against the Ewok warrior Wicket and his Human companions, in the century preceding his death he was the scourge of the moon and a constant source of strife and conflict.

Terak: Male Sanyassan Thug 9; Init +1 (Dex); Def 14 (+3 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP —/15; Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+2, sword) or +10/+5 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 4; Rep 2; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 9. Challenge Code: C. **Equipment:** Enchanted ring, blaster pistol, sword.

Skills: Intimidate +9, Knowledge (Endor) +8, Read/Write Sanyassan, Speak Basic, Speak Sanyassan, Spot +4.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Dodge, Toughness, Weapon Focus (sword), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

CHARAL

A Dathomiri witch formerly of the Nightsister clan, Charal escaped Dathomir over a century before the Battle of Endor. Highly regarded for her mastery of shapeshifting and other skills Jedi researchers have yet to fully understand, her abandonment of the Nightsister clan was not well-received. She lived with a death mark for some time, and was hounded across the sector by witches sent to hunt her down and return her to Dathomir so that she might be fed to the rancors.

Endor and the Modell Sector

In a desperate move to rid herself of her oppressive pursuers, Charal sought refuge in the remote Modell Sector, where she eventually met with Terak's band of Marauders. Though her "partnership" with the rough alien leader was only intended to be a temporary respite from her former allies, she found herself stranded on the forest moon soon thereafter, and languished there for nearly a century.

Charal: Female Human FA 2/Dark Force Witch 6; Init +1 (Dex); Def 19 (+8 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 48/13; Atk +5 melee (1d6, crit 20, punch) or +5 melee (1d6/1d6, staff) or +6 ranged; SQ Inspire fear (-2), spider walk, enshroud; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +11; SZ M; FP 4; DSP 10; Rep 6; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 14. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Feather and grafiform robes, various necklaces, staff, magic ring*.

Skills: Climb +2, Craft (clothing) +5, Craft (rope) +4, Handle Animal +14, Intimidate +8, Jump +2, Knowledge (culture—local) +5, Read/Write Basic, Ride +12, Speak Basic, Speak Ewokese, Survival +10, Swim +4.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +11, Drain Energy +3, Enhance Senses +10, Fear +5, Force Grip +5, Force Push +5, Force Stealth +2, Heal Another -1, Move Object +8, See Force +8.

Feats: Animal Affinity, Athletic, Force-Sensitive, Martial Artist, Skill Emphasis (Affect Mind), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, primitive weapons, simple weapons).

Force Feats: Alter, Force Whirlwind, Sense, Summon Storm.

* Charal's magic ring gives her the ability to take the form of a giant raven-like bird. The exact origins of the ring or how it found its way into Charal's hands are unknown. It is probably the result of early experiments with Sith sorcery performed millennia ago. Charal can, as an attack action, change form using the ring. She can also change form as part of a jump (also an attack action), using her bird form's fly speed to calculate the distance.

Charal (bird form): Female Human FA 2/Dark Force Witch 6; Init +7 (species, Dex); Def 25 (+8 class, +2 size, +5 Dex); Spd 2m, 20m fly (average); VP/WP 48/10; Atk +5 melee (1d4-2, 2 claws) or +12 ranged; SQ Improved grab, low-light vision, inspire fear (-2), spider walk, enshroud; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +11; SZ T (.6m long); FP 4; DSP 10; Rep 6; Str 6, Dex 21, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 14. Challenge Code: C.

Skills: Climb +0, Craft (clothing) +5, Craft (rope) +4, Handle Animal +14, Hide +13, Intimidate +8, Jump +0, Knowledge (culture—local) +5, Read/Write Basic, Ride +16, Search +5, Speak Basic, Speak Ewokese, Spot +7, Survival +10, Swim +2.

Force Skills: Affect Mind +11, Drain Energy +2, Enhance Senses +10, Fear +5, Force Grip +5, Force Push +5, Force Stealth +1, Heal Another -1, Move Object +8, See Force +8.

Feats: Animal Affinity, Athletic, Flyby Attack, Force-Sensitive, Martial Artist, Skill Emphasis (Affect Mind), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, primitive weapons, simple weapons).

Force Feats: Alter, Force Whirlwind, Sense, Summon Storm.

It wasn't until the Towani family also crashed on the forest moon that Charal and her Marauder cohorts had the opportunity to escape, an opportunity foiled by the youngest Towani, her Ewok companion, and the Human Noa.

THE ENDOR SYSTEM

The Endor system includes three other planets, all in distant orbits that render them chilly, lifeless places. All were mined by Imperial crews as part of the Death Star project. Next out from Endor is Eloggi, a large, dark orb whose mineworks were turned over to a Sullustan mining company after the Battle of Endor. (Eloggi's veins of ore were later exhausted and the outpost was abandoned.) Then comes Megiddo, a pale ball where the slow movement of surface ice has obliterated all trace of the mining works. The last planet in the system is Dor, and its presence is the reason the second Death Star was built in the system. This planetoid began attracting prospectors immediately after Endor was first explored, as Dor's thick, immensely dense black crust hid a wealth of nearly pure metals from iron and gold to such rare alloys as neutronium, zersium, doonium and phobium—all shot through with veins of crystallized lommite. Scientists argued for years over what strange combination of realspace physics and hyperspatial effects could have produced the dense little world; while they debated, Dor's surface became pitted with shallow impressions as local prospectors struggled to find a way to penetrate the crust and reach the metals that instruments promised were there. The Empire found a way—though whether it did so by using a test bed Death Star superlaser or a massive concentration of warship firepower remains a subject of dispute within New Republic Intelligence. Regardless, the construction of the second Death Star spelled the end for Dor: Huge chunks are missing from its spherical bulk, like bites taken from a melon, and the planetoid has lost almost all structural integrity. The project has also all but stripped Dor of the metals that once made it the stuff of dreams.

Between the orbits of Megiddo and Dor is a gutted and decrepit space station. The claustrophobic star-shaped facility—each spoke

Wired to Kill

The New Jedi Order era adventure hook

When the defense systems on the old Rokna Blue processing station begin firing at random passers-by, the New Republic Security Force determines the slave-rigged defenses are malfunctioning. Plans are set in motion to destroy the aging station to prevent further damage to the infrequent travelers to the area.

But one former rokna runner knows the defenses aren't malfunctioning; they've simply begun to defend the new harvest: a potent, slow-growing strain of the once-popular drug that was inadvertently left behind and has only now matured.

After a run-in with NR forces, the nefarious Taloron drug kingpin "Blue" Imcrix and his crew hijack the characters' craft and try to force the characters to help them retrieve the valuable drugs before they are destroyed by the Republic law.

Getting to the rokna vials before the NR demolition team sets the charges is one thing, but when the station you're invading doesn't want you there . . .

measuring only one hundred meters—was built twelve years after the Battle of Endor and abandoned ten months later. Its sole purpose was to distill Rokna Blue from raw rokna fungus. The station's owners left in a hurry, taking most of their equipment with them. It is unknown whether anything of value still remains on board.

The explosion of the second Death Star filled the Forest Moon's orbit with thousands of tons of debris, ranging from pebble-sized bits to 100-meter sections of the space station. While a few chunks fell onto the Forest Moon, the satellite was spared any significant environmental damage; even today, Death Star wreckage litters local space. As any Moddell resident will tell you, the remains have long since been picked clean by New Republic Intelligence agents, military historians, and souvenir hunters. Nevertheless, rumors of priceless Imperial secrets continue to attract the curious.

What most visitors to the Death Star wreckage don't know is that the Forest Moon's orbit bears a psychic scar to match its physical one. When Emperor Palpatine perished in the reactor shaft, the agony of his disembodiment manifested itself as an angry clot of dark side energy staining the fabric of the Force. Travelers with Force sensitivity have been known to suffer blackouts and even internal bleeding when assaulted by the noxious evil. Non-Force sensitives experience only a vague tingling of dread.

Other Moddell Sector Worlds and Features

ANNAJ (CANNIJ BARR)

Galactic Coordinates (-334, -697, 16)

Colonists came to Annaj—called Cannij Barr by the Ayrou—some 300 years before the Battle of Yavin and turned the system into a scouting base for Moddell and the backwaters of the Ablajeck sector. It became Moddell's sector capital by default when the Republic incorporated the Inner Zuma sectors some 50 years BBY. Annaj briefly became a boomworld during the later stages of the second Death Star's construction. With progress on the battle station lagging, the Empire denied freighters that had offloaded their cargoes access to the crowded Sanctuary Pipeline and sent them back through the Moddell, a weeklong journey that left most spacers desperate for some form of R&R.

After the Emperor's death, what remained of the Imperial fleet assigned to Endor regrouped at Annaj. The fleet soon dispersed; for a brief while Alliance forces enriched Annaj, but in time they too departed. Today the planet's 400 million inhabitants have returned to the relatively dull existence they've long known; their world is a customs depot endured by starship captains, a stopover for scouts and explorers, and a first destination for desperate souls fleeing into Wild Space.

Weather ranges from chilly to tepid on

the fog-shrouded globe, which does have a pair of notable native species. The docile, silver-furred quadrupeds known as rujos have spread through the sector as draft animals and mounts, while the planet's brief summers are marked by the mating flights of countless Annaji chromoflies, moth-like creatures whose brilliantly patterned quadruple wings can reach nearly a half-meter in length.

AST KIKORIE

While the Moddell sector theoretically extends for nearly a hundred parsecs into Wild Space toward Houche, Firrerre, and Bakura, in practice the green globe of Ast Kikorie is the most remote world that acknowledges Annaj as its capital. "Ast" stems from Kikorie's original designation as the site of an ASTrocartographic research station, but the prefix has evolved from a code on star charts to a part of the system's name, much in the way some former ordinance regional depots have picked up the prefix "Ord." While Ast Kikorie remains on the fringes of Wild Space, its great ring of orbital telescopes is

Endor System Characteristics

Star: Ibleam (yellow)

Orbital Bodies: 5

| Name | Type | Moons | Known Settlements |
|---------------|---------------|-------|--|
| Endor | Gas giant | 9 | Ewok villages, New Republic trading post |
| Eloggi | Barren | 0 | Sullustan mining outpost (abandoned) |
| Megiddo | Barren | 0 | None |
| Rokna station | Space station | N/A | Abandoned |
| Dor | Barren | 0 | None |

Forest Moon of Endor

Type: Terrestrial; **Temperature:** Temperate; **Atmosphere:** Type I (Breathable for Humans); **Gravity:** 85% Standard; **Terrain:** Forests, savannas, mountains, lakes; **Length of Day:** 18 standard hours; **Length of Year:** 402 local days; **Spaceports:** 1 limited; **Population:** Less than 50 offworld trading post staffers, unknown number of Ewoks, Marauders, and other intelligent species; **Moon Function:** Alien homeworld; **Government:** Non-existent overall, Ewok tribes ruled by chieftains; **Tech Level:** Primitive; **Major Exports:** Rokna fungus, foodstuffs, medicinal goods; **Major Imports:** Supplies for trading post.

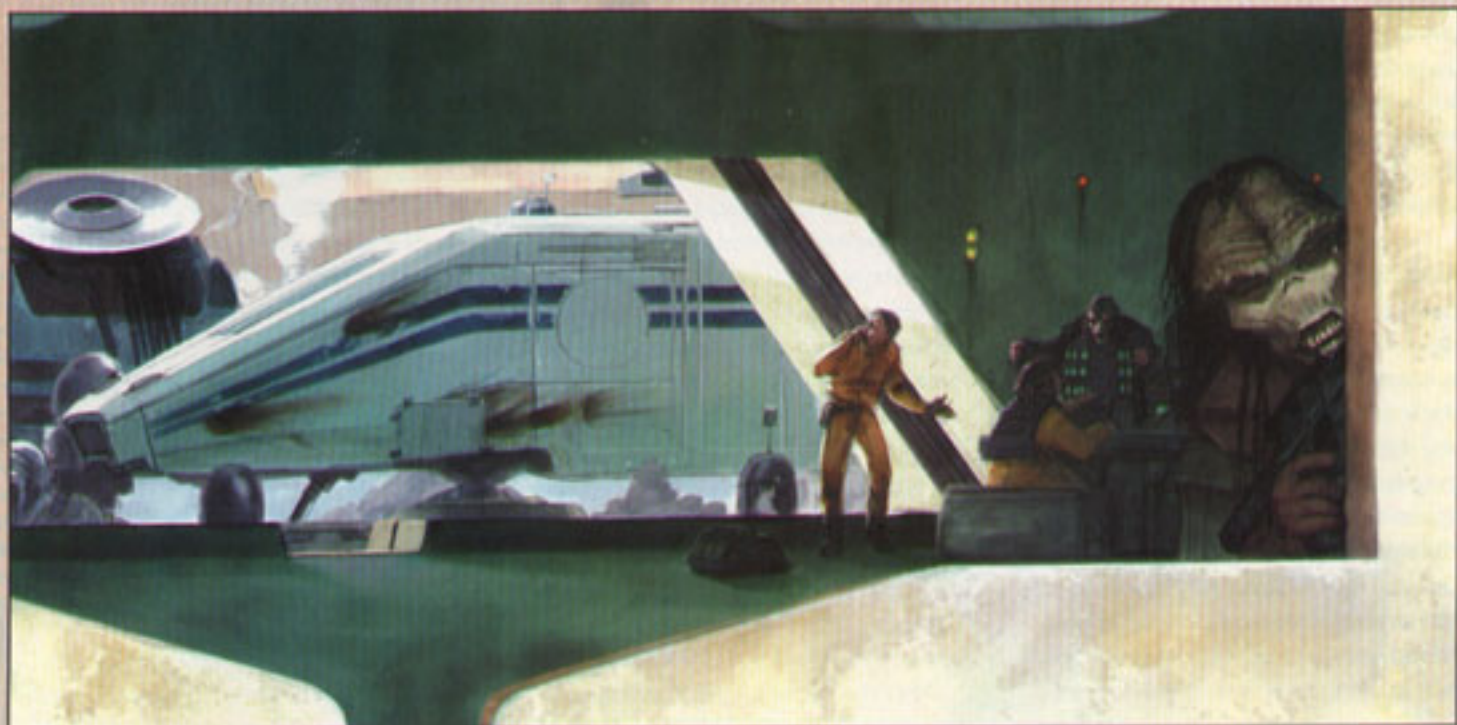
Sift Lords

A New Jedi Order era adventure hook. In the months following the Battle of Endor, the wreckage strewn about the forest moon's surface is incredible. Scavengers from all corners of the galaxy (including a clan of Jawas, 480 strong) search the dangerous terrain for untold prizes. The battle station and starship wreckage in orbit about the moon have been thoroughly scrutinized by the Alliance fleet, intelligence agents, and treasure hunters. Yet rumors persist of impossible relics, and of one prize in particular.

Lord Vader's crimson lightsaber was never recovered from the wreckage of the Death Star, and some insist it still maintains orbit about the Sanctuary Moon, or has landed somewhere in the primeval forest. And a prize like that would be worth . . . well, more wealth than you could imagine.

The race is on, but it soon becomes obvious to the characters that the new challenge won't be locating the Sith Lord's lightsaber, but surviving the cut-throat competition!

Endor and the Moddell Sector



now too far from the scientific frontier for use in charting new star systems. Most such situations call for the disassembly and redeployment of AST installations, but Moddell is so remote and scouting has been cut back so heavily that neither the Empire nor the New Republic has considered the expense worthwhile. Because of that, scientists weary of battling for telescope time at other AST emplacements have made Ast Kikorrie a favorite destination.

The herders and farmers of Kikorrie proper call their world "Downbelow," often with a nod at the bright ring visible even during the daylight hours above. A skyhook connects Kikorrie Port, a city of half a million souls, to the AST complex in geosynchronous orbit

The Dark Side Stain

The evil energy left by Palpatine's death is impossible to map and players cannot determine its precise location. When Force-sensitive beings enter the vicinity of the Death Star wreckage, there's a 15% chance they'll pass through an affected area. All Force-sensitive characters must make a Fortitude save (DC 14) or suffer 1d6 points of damage and a Fortitude save (DC 16) or experience 2d6 minutes of unconsciousness.

above. Docking platforms ring the Port and its streets teem with a mix of native farmers, cocky pilots for hire, absent-minded astronomers muttering to their datapads and hard-eyed spacers with arsenals on their hips. Outside Kikorrie Port one finds a world of lush fields dotted with small farms, long summers and a deep quiet that even the galactic civil war did little to disturb.

DIN PULSAR

The star known as Din died some five millennia before the Battle of Yavin, when the Inner Zuma was nothing more than a fuzzy blotch glimpsed from the Republic's borders. But ancient Sanyassan art and songs (from which Din gets its name) record that event, and the supernova may have encoded itself in the radiation-blasted DNA of the unfortunate Marauders. Today, one finds an expanding cloud of shimmering red gases that shields a whirling, flashing pulsar. In the last century the combination of magnetic pulses and filaments of gas have made the Trindello-Endor route increasingly unstable, extending travel times between the two worlds and frying countless hyperdrives.

The Ewoks call the nebula the Gorax King's Heart and recount how their golden

sun god led the trees in battle against the Gorax King and imprisoned him in the darkness of the night sky. The King refused his exile unless he could keep his most treasured possession, a flawless diamond the size of an Ewok hut. When the sun god refused, the King swallowed the diamond, which made its way to his heart and remained in the sky after the King died and the rest of his body melted away. Oddly, when survey droids reached the Din system, they found that the supernova had vaporized any inner worlds and left only three outer bodies—the cores of gas giants whose vast atmospheres had been boiled away in the cataclysm. One of those cores turned out to be a diamond the size of a terrestrial planet, forged by the intense pressure of the gas giant's vast atmosphere and then revealed by Din's explosion. With no safe hyperspace route to the system available, this huge diamond seems fated to remain a stellar curiosity.

THE ENDOR GATE

The Endor Gate is a black hole located several light years off the hyperspace route between Endor and Sanyassa. Since it isn't especially large and is well charted, it shouldn't pose a danger to a competent

starship captain. However, spacers' tales tell of strange things happening on the space lanes near the Endor Gate—most notably ships found drifting whose captains swear they were traveling on the other side of the galaxy before their systems went dead. Cynics note that for all the outlandish tales, none account for any independent ships weeks late on a run.

KUNA'S EYE

Kuna's Eye is a typical blue giant—a young star surrounded by a lifeless disk of rocks and dust that hasn't yet formed a system of planets. But that protoplanetary disk contains a surprising amount of valuable metals and alloys, and prospectors have flocked to the system. The Mote, a cobbled-together space station on the system's periphery, is a jumble of mini-refineries, law offices, flophouses and cantinas, the site of many a shady deal and not a few gun battles.

KUNA'S FIST & KUNA'S HORN

Both of these systems are red giants nearing the end of their stellar lives. Few live there or bother to visit, though the barren worlds have been the subject of any number of rumors and tales over the years. One persistent rumor claims the Ayrou hierarchs regard the Kuna systems as holy and have secreted any number of treasure troves in out-of-the-way places somewhere around the five suns. While such tales have never panned out, between the Fist and the Horn the stubborn have no shortage of places to look.

KUNA'S TAIL

The remote system of Kuna's Tail is inhabited—though Annaj would probably prefer that it weren't. The third planet of the Tail, locally called Sarafur, is a small desert world that no longer rotates, spinning around the Tail's yellow sun with one face always locked toward it. Strange ruins, hewn from gigantic stone blocks by a now-vanished species, litter the border between light and dark; many of these ruins have become bolt holes for prospectors, treasure hunters and fugitives. Death is commonplace on lawless Sarafur.

KUNA'S TOOTH

The Tooth is a mining world kept under what passes for tight control in the Moddell sector, caught in a tug-of-war between the relative order of Annaj and the lawlessness of the rest of the Kuna worlds. A small orbital shipyard run by a pair of Duro brothers, Doestes High Port, builds mining craft and the occasional private craft. (Moddell authorities suspect the Doestes brothers of using the High Port as cover for some other business, whether Rokna Blue smuggling or something worse.)

MAYA KOVEL

Scouts who swept through what would become the Moddell sector located an obvious candidate for joining the Republic, as Maya Kovel's Ayrou had already taken their first tentative steps away from the cradle of their homeworld, establishing a research station on the planet's airless moon and dreaming of visiting the stars. They would get their wish sooner than even the most optimistic Ayrou had dreamed: Within a generation of first contact with the Republic, Ayrou traders, infochants, and adventurers roamed the galaxy and had established themselves as a power to be reckoned with throughout the Zuma regions.

The Ayrou are tall, willowy Humanoids known for their glossy white skins, iridescent eyes, and rickety-looking triple-jointed limbs. They are strong-willed individualists, wily negotiators and tireless collectors for information about anything and everything. Yet despite their relentless drive, the Ayrou are a peaceful species: They regard haggling and dealing as an art form and think combat is the refuge of juveniles, the feeble-minded, and others who can't succeed with their wits. More than one Moddell resident has compared the trilling, shrieking Ayrou language to the sound of a songbird being strangled.

Fierce windstorms mark Maya Kovel and huge deposits of iron oxide and other elements give its surface a deep red appearance. Human visitors should note that the air, while breathable, is acrid; visitors without breath masks often develop a hacking cough that can leave them dangerously short of breath if left untreated. (The Ayrou have no problem breathing other Type I atmospheres.) Maya Kovel's rift

valleys are carpeted with colonies of dark green lichen that erupt from tough green seeds the size of shockballs when they find themselves out of the wind and with a reliable source of water—even if such conditions take centuries to develop. The Ayrou farm such colonies and export undeveloped seeds (which are delicious) throughout the sector and into Spar and Ablajack Sectors as well.

MINA

A periwinkle moon lost against the glowing green bulk of the gas giant Hanchin, Mina is a rugged world of jagged peaks broken by rivers that tumble through steep-walled

Galactic Coordinates

As with all star systems in the Known Galaxy, Annaj's galactic coordinates are based on the Coruscant system, which locates a star system's place in the galaxy by its XYZ coordinates. The X, Y, and Z coordinates correspond, respectively, to the star system's "east/west" and "north/south" location and finally to whether the system is above or below the galactic plane. Apprentice navigators must remember, however, that Coruscant, as the Imperial capital, lies at coordinates (0, 0, 0)—even though in galactic terms Coruscant is slightly northwest of the true galactic center, as well as slightly above the plane of the ecliptic. (This discrepancy has irritated astrocartographers—particularly those not born in the Core Worlds—for centuries.)

The Coruscant system is used by starship navigators, and based on parsecs. A parsec is 3.258 light years, and 15 parsecs (or a little under 49 light years) corresponds to 1 unit on the coordinates scale. A negative number for a X, Y or Z coordinate indicates that a star system is west of, south of, or below Coruscant's position.

A starship's navicomputer contains XYZ coordinates for billions of star systems and carries those coordinates to hundreds of decimal places, but few galactic citizens need that level of detail. In typical galactic atlases, coordinates are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number, and only supplied for sector capitals.

Inhabited Worlds of the Moddell Sector

| System | Type | Temperature | Air ¹ | Gravity ² | Terrain | Hours/ Day ³ | Days/ Year ⁴ | Spaceports | Major Population |
|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Annaj (Cannij Barr) | Terrestrial | Temperate | Type I | 100% | Forests, plains, swamps, lakes | 26 | 380 | 2 stellar, 3 limited | 400 million Humans |
| Ast Kikorie | Terrestrial | Temperate | Type I | 95% | Forests, plains, mountains, skyhook | 24 | 400 | 1 standard | 2 million Humans |
| The Mote (Kuna's Eye) | Artificial | — | Type I | 100% | Space station | — | — | 1 standard | 1,000 various species |
| Sarafur (Kuna's Tail III) | Terrestrial | Temperate ⁵ | Type I | 100% | Desert | — ⁶ | 240 | 3 limited | 150,000 various species |
| Kuna's Tooth | Terrestrial | Cool | Type I | 90% | Barren | 17 | 215 | 1 standard, 2 limited | 50,000 Humans, 30,000 Vashans, 10,000 Ayrou |
| Maya Kovel | Terrestrial | Temperate | Type II | 90% | Desert, rift valleys | 29 | 463 | 2 stellar, 4 limited | 300 million Ayrou, 250,000 Vashans, 25,000 Humans |
| Mina | Satellite | Cool | Type I | 100% | Mountains, forests | 21 | 300 | 1 standard | 2 million Humans, plus 2 million pilgrims ⁹ |
| Murk | Terrestrial | Frigid | — | 50% | Barren | 11 | 98 | 1 landing field | Unknown |
| Ovise III | Terrestrial | Temperate | Type I | 105% | Urban | 26 | 372 | 1 stellar, 3 standard | 500 million Humans, 150 million Vashans, 50 million Ayrou |
| Midakos | Satellite ⁷ | Frigid | Type III | 75% | Glacier | 43 | 245 | 1 standard | 500,000 Humans, 300,000 Vashans |
| Midakinos | Satellite ⁸ | Frigid | Type III | 90% | Barren | 31 | 300 | 1 limited | 200,000 Humans |
| Ovise VI | Terrestrial | Cool | Type I | 100% | Plains, Glaciers, Ocean | 24 | 600 | 4 standard | 300 million Humans |
| Sanyassa | Terrestrial | Temperate | Type I | 100% | Forests, plains, savanna | 24 | 389 | Unknown | 1 billion Sanyassan |
| Thonner | Terrestrial | Temperate | Type I | 95% | Ocean, islands | 21 | 312 | 1 limited | 30 million Humans |
| Trindello | Satellite | Cool | Type I | 95% | Forest | 14 | 190 | 1 standard, 4 limited | 12,000 Humans, 8,000 Vashans |
| Vasha | Terrestrial | Hot | Type I | 110% | Desert | 22 | 402 | 2 stellar, 10 standard | 1 billion Vashans, 200,000 Ayrou |
| Vex Major (Far Gent) | Terrestrial | Temperate | Type I | 100% | Swamp, forest, ocean | 20 | 299 | 1 limited | 250,000 Humans |
| Vex Asteroid Belt | Asteroids | — | — | Varies | Barren | — | — | 2 standard, 10 limited | 3,000 Humans |
| Zorbia II | Terrestrial | Temperate | Type I | 105% | Forest, Plains, Desert | 28 | 360 | 2 limited | 30 million Humans |

1. Type I (breathable), Type II (marginal), Type III (unbreathable).
2. Percent of standard gravity.
3. Standard hours in a local day.
4. Local days in a local year.
5. 3rd moon of Ovise V.

6. 4th moon of Ovise V.
7. Sarafur's equatorial region is the only inhabitable part of the planet.
8. Sarafur is tide-locked; the same parts of its surface always face the sun.
9. Members of all Vashan castes make annual pilgrimages to Inicus Mont.

valleys overflowing with lush vegetation and fruit. It's a wild, beautiful place bathed in the eerie wash of Hanchin light; Mina's nights are short or nonexistent. The Minans export fruits, meat, and hides, the latter two obtained from a surefooted variety of rujos and from a glossy-pelted native beasts called pechs. Helping Minan landholders watch their herds are dochinies, eight-legged, feathered gliders that are easily domesticated and called by means of pipes that sound tones above a range Humans can hear.

Mina has perhaps two million beings, but in mid-winter its population can double as the Vashan penitents make their annual migration to the moon. Vashan's holy site is Inicus Mont, a limestone spire dotted with caves in which the Vashan bodhis meditate and pray. The movement of thorax muscles required to produce their prayer-drone polishes stones (known as sin-bullets) that the bodhis hold in their six antestomachs. At mid-winter, during Hanchin-set, the bodhis appear in their cave-mouths and expectorate the polished sin-bullets, which the penitents

gathered below then fight over. A penitent who obtains a sin-bullet immediately swallows it and crushes it in its true stomach, a ritual that absolves the penitent of the last year's misdeeds. The Minans think the whole thing a bit odd, but they still make many a quick credit from it: Docking fees at Mina's sole spaceport soar during mid-winter and both Human and Ayrou traders attend the crowds of penitents, eager to take their money for beds, sustenance or anything else they need. Rokna Blue addiction is a growing problem on Mina.

MONSUA NEBULA

The Monsua Nebula is a churning cloud of gas and dust at whose heart lies a cluster of young blue giants and brown dwarfs. While the stars in this nursery are too young to interest settlers, the outer reaches of the nebula feature a number of much older stars, including a quintet that have planets but have proved stubbornly out of reach. While slow hyperspace routes and interstellar anomalies plague the entire Moddell sector, the fringes of the Monsua Nebula

are by far the worst. Scouts forge routes light-year by painstaking light-year, only to see them decay almost overnight, while other stars simply remain inaccessible despite the best efforts of scouts and survey droids. The only Monsua system that can be reached reliably is Zorbia—the one place no sane spacer wants to go.

MURK

Red dwarfs like Murk account for some 70 percent of the galaxy's stars—there are more than 100 such stars in the Moddell sector alone. Most are deservedly anonymous, bearing an alphanumeric designation instead of a name, left off standard star maps and surveyed only once by a recon droid, if at all. (The star is so dim that it's invisible to the naked eye from all of Moddell's inhabited planets.) Murk emerged from obscurity when the Empire terminated the Sanctuary Pipeline in the system. To help maintain the secrecy of the Death Star project, the Empire established a transfer station for raw materials and cargo on and above the red dwarf's inner-

| Planet Function | Government | Tech Level | Major Exports | Major Imports |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Sector capital | Democracy | Space | Rujos | Foodstuffs |
| Astrocartographic research station | Tribal councils | Space | Foodstuffs, hides, woven goods | None |
| Shadow port | Plutocracy | Space | None | Foodstuffs, ore |
| Shadow port | None | Space | None | None |
| Mining | Bureaucracy | Space | Ore, Rokna Blue | Mining tools, foodstuffs, Rokna fungus |
| Ayrou Homeworld | Clans | Space | Foodstuffs, seeds | Technology |
| Farming world, pilgrim center | Democracy | Space | Foodstuffs, hides | Technology, foodstuffs, Rokna Blue |
| Abandoned Imperial outpost | None | Space | None | None |
| Factory world | Democracy | Space | Technology, metals | Foodstuffs, ore |
| Mining colony | Corporate | Space | Tibanna gas | Foodstuffs, technology |
| Mining colony | Corporate | Space | Ore | Foodstuffs, technology |
| Agricultural world | Tribal councils | Space | Foodstuffs, livestock | None |
| Alien Homeworld | Clans | Feudal, some Space | None | None |
| Fishing/farming world | Tribal councils | Space | Foodstuffs | Lumber, technology |
| Mining colony | None | Space | Lumber | Foodstuffs, workers, supplies |
| Vashan Homeworld | Theocracy | Space | Ore, workers | Foodstuffs |
| Subsistence world/religious retreat | Clans | Space | Foodstuffs | Foodstuffs |
| Scout bases | None | Space | None | Foodstuffs, Technology |
| Lost colony | Clans | Feudal, some Space | None | None |

most planetoid, an airless rock. In Murk's dull maroon light—no brighter than an average planet's moon—Imperial crews unloaded the deep-space haulers and superfreighters bearing Death Star components for shipment on to the nearby Forest Moon. Today the cargo-transfer station remains, although scavengers have stripped it of a number of its more valuable components. It is not abandoned, however: A Shell Hutt, one Tagoonta, has fled there with his motley band of retainers in an effort to escape troubles in Hutt Space.

OVISE

Perhaps a billion miners, farmers, and industrial workers make their homes on the four inhabited planets and moons of Ovisé, making the system the sector's second-most-populated. Ovisé III is quickly becoming a blighted factory world, while the gas giant Ovisé V has yielded promising deposits of tibanna gas. Common sights in the system include Ayrou, Vashans, and Humans from all across the Moddell. The largest independent corporation in the Moddell sector, Tripartite Lines, has its headquarters on Ovisé III. Tripartite's chairman, the Ayrou hierarch Muchardis Mulaxis, serves as the sector's senator to the New Republic, but the senator

isn't exactly interested in galactic politics. His one trip to Coruscant lasted just long enough to take the senatorial oath of office.

SANYASSA

New Republic xenobiologists argue over the ultimate origin of Endor's Marauders, but within the Moddell sector there is little debate: After all, bands of alien space pirates from the gloomy, stormy world of Sanyassa IV have been pests in Outer Moddell for nearly as long as their Zorbian neighbors. Sanyassan history goes back for millennia and hints at eras in which society was decidedly more advanced than the might-makes-right kleptocracy found there today. An Ayrou theory holds that the Sanyassans were particularly susceptible to deadly radiation from the Din supernova, a genetic cataclysm from which the species has never recovered. On Sanyassa, the leathery-skinned Marauders sometimes pursues subsistence farming or trade of a limited, prickly variety, but their real love is plunder and war, whether carried out with blades or blasters. If Sanyassan space pirates are rarely canny enough to give even Zorbians a good fight, they still can make travel in the Outer Moddell dangerous.

THONNER

Shallow salt seas bathe Thonner's fourth planet, broken by strings of sandy islands. Despite its position on the Houche Run, colonists settled the planet just 25 years BBY, responding to the discovery of freshwater vents that dotted the globe. Thonner's first settlements sprung up on great platforms, built above these bubbling vents out of giant Trindellan oaks. At first, the Thonnermen made their living fishing and trapping bony, sea-dwelling crustaceans known as Thonnerwrots; later, they constructed aqueducts to bring fresh water to the islands. Today, colonies of lush lichen imported from Maya Kovel cover many of those islands.

TRINDELLO

Trindello isn't much of a star system: a white dwarf closely circled by a barren, rocky world which itself has but a single small moon. But lusters of gigantic trees known as Trindellan oaks cover the moon—though the oaks are in fact not free-standing trees but fast-growing shoots sharing a single root system. Botanical semantics aside, the dark green wood from Trindellan oaks is nearly as hard as iron, making it a common sight in structures throughout the sector. Trindello is uninhabited save for scattered camps of Human and Vashan cutters backed either by Tripartite Lines or wealthy entrepreneurs on Maya Kovel or Annaj. Some parties of cutters have fallen afoul of kargul, 80-meter nocturnal worms that lair at the heart of oak clusters. Scientists have warned that not enough is known about Trindellan oaks to ensure that they aren't overharvested. But so far, with credits to be made, these warnings have fallen on deaf ears.

VASHA

When Republic settlers began visiting the Inner Zuma, the chitinous Vashans were divided into rival theocracy-castes battling with steel blades; today, the planet is a virtual satrapy of the Ayrou, who control Vasha's deep-delving mines from a patchwork of spaceports on its surface. The people of the Moddell sector prize the powerful, tireless Vashans as miners and workers, but loathe them for their rather odd habits. Vashans forego food until absolutely necessary, but then gobble

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neatly) to store in their sextet of antestomachs. Vashans also use their antestomachs to investigate items they find interesting: The Vashan swallows the item and then either spits it out or retains it for further study later. Not surprisingly, many Moddell restaurants and shops sport "No Vashans" signs. This disapproval has done little to perturb the Vashans, who bow only to the orders and instruc-

immense quantities (and none too

tions of their caste theocrats; entire castes (which can include anything from a dozen Vashans to hundreds) generally hire out under the control of a theocrat. The Vashans' religious wars ended once contact was established with the Republic; today the highest-ranking members of all Vashan castes make annual pilgrimages to Inicus Mont in the Mina system. Exactly why is a mystery.

New Moddell Sector Species

DOCHINIES

Eight-legged gliders with feathery wings, dochinies are often domesticated by Mina's landholders and help herd the planet's rujos and pechs.

Dochinie: Airborne Predator 1; Init +4 (species, Dex); Def 12 (+2 Dex); Spd 15m, 25m fly (good); VP/WP 8/10; Atk +1 melee (1d8, bite) or +3 ranged; SQ +6 species bonus to Jump checks, -4 penalty to Dex when not airborne; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will -1; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 8, Cha 10. Challenge Code: A.

Skills: Intimidate +4, Jump +10, Spot +5.
Feats: Track.

AYROU

Willowy humanoids from Maya Kovel, the Ayrou have triple-jointed limbs and are known as wily negotiators and expert hagglers.

Ayrou Commoner: Init +0; Def 10; Spd 10m; VP/WP —/8; Atk +0 melee (1d3, punch) or +0 ranged; SV Fort -1, Ref +0, Will +1; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 8, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10. Challenge Code: A.
Skills: Bluff +2, Diplomacy +1, Intimidate +2, Read/Write Ayrou, Sense Motive +2, Speak Ayrou, Speak Basic.
Feats: Persuasive.
Species Features: +2 Wis, -2 Con; Bonus feat of Persuasive.
Automatic Languages: Ayrou and Basic.

RUJOS

Docile, silver-furred quadrupeds from Annaj, different varieties of Rujo have spread through the Zuma regions as draft animals and mounts.

Rujo: Herd Animal 2; Init -1 (Dex); Def 12 (+4 natural, -1 size, -1 Dex); Spd 12m; VP/WP 15/18; Atk +3 melee (1d6+4, bite) or -1 ranged; SQ +2 species bonus to Survival checks in mountainous environments; SV Fort +7, Ref -1, Will -1; SZ L; Rep 1; Str 17, Dex 9, Con 18, Int 2, Wis 8, Cha 4. Challenge Code: B.
Skills: Climb +5, Hide -5, Listen +4, Survival +3.

SANYASSAN MARAUDERS

Leathery-skinned Humanoids from Sanyassa, these warriors are fierce brawlers renowned for their bad tempers and poor intelligence.

Sanyassan Commoner: Init -1 (Dex); Def 10 (+1 natural, -1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP —/12; Atk +1 melee (1d3+1, punch) or -1 ranged; SQ Natural armor; SV Fort +1, Ref -1, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10. Challenge Code: A.
Skills: Intimidate +2, Read/Write Sanyassan, Speak Basic, Speak Sanyassan.
Species Features: +2 Str, +2 Con, -2 Dex, -2 Int.
Automatic Languages: Sanyassan and Basic.

VEX

Vex offers two major inhabited locales: Vex Major and the Belt. Vex Major is a swampy, storm-battered globe, home to clans of sturdy, Human fisher folk with little interest in the doings of the New Republic beyond the basics of trade. The system's asteroid belt is the domain of a quarreling collection of freighter jocks, prospectors, and scouts (mostly independents, though the New Republic Survey Corps maintains a small outpost on the Belt's largest asteroid). The Belters have no interest in the dealings of Vex Major's "mudballers" and ask few questions about anything else—flash enough credits in the Belt, and you can hide a starship or a fugitive, strike a shady deal, or sell hot cargo.

Visitors to the Belt should beware of Ecclesius von der Agar, a decorated Nova Scout whose lifelong eccentricity has decayed into dementia in recent years. He can be found in the Belt's kiriswing joints and cantinas recruiting rookies as apprentice scouts, but he's as likely to lead them on blind jumps through Wild Space or accuse them of stealing his charts as he is to actually teach them and pay them. (Of course, von der Agar does have an uncanny ability to find new routes and uncharted worlds.) Vex's odd name comes from its original mission as a staging area for scouting runs—none successful to date—into the nearby Monsua Nebula. A Ffib sect settled Vex Major four decades ago; their descendants (most of whom remain deeply religious) insist that their world is called "Far Gent."

VASHANS

Powerful, chitinous insectoids from Vasha, members of this caste-based species are prized as miners and workers but disliked for their odd habits.

Vashan Commoner: Init +0; Def 13 (+3 natural); Spd 10m; VP/WP —/12; Atk +2 melee (1d3+2, punch) or +0 ranged; SQ Natural armor; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -1; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 6. Challenge Code: A.
Skills: Craft (varies) +2, Profession (varies) +1, Read/Write Vashan, Speak Basic, Speak Vashan.
Species Features: +4 Str, +2 Con, -2 Wis, -4 Cha.
Automatic Languages: Vashan and Basic.

KARGUL

These 80-meter worms, found at the heart of Trindello's oak clusters, are nocturnal and generally shy, but they can be terrible opponents when aroused.

Kargul: Forest Herd Animal 7; Init +0; Def 10 (+8 natural, -8 size); Spd 15m, 10m burrow; VP/WP 8g/248; Atk +8 melee (2d8+19, bite) or +8 melee (4d6+13, slam) or -5 ranged; SQ +2 species bonus to Survival in forested environments; SV Fort +15, Ref +2, Will +1; SZ C; Rep 5; Str 37, Dex 10, Con 31, Int 1, Wis 9, Cha 11. Challenge Code: F.
Skills: Hide -16, Intimidate +5, Listen +5, Survival +1.
Feats: Blind-Fight, Power Attack.



ZORBIA

The three worlds of the Zorbia system huddle on the edge of the Monsua Nebula. Zorbia is home to a quarrelsome society of Humans whose language appears derived from ancient Corellian dialects and whose first love is piracy. No one knows whether the Zorbians are a lost Corellian colony or the descendants of long-lost castaways; either way, they predate Republic surveys of the Inner Zuma and have been a nuisance in the Outer Moddell for centuries. The Zorbians prey largely on each other, but sometimes attack ships traveling between Trindello and Ast Kikorrie—and on rare occasions have raided into Wild Space or the Inner Moddell. When first encountered by the Republic, the Zorbians still possessed some antique spaceboats with fluidic systems and fought largely with slughtrowers; today they are considerably better armed, but no better organized. ■

Don't Miss the Following Adventures Set in the Moddell Sector . . .

The Ewok Adventure: Caravan of Courage, 1984. This TV movie provided a detailed look at Ewok culture and introduced new monsters such as the Gorax.

Ewoks: The Battle of Endor, 1985. A sequel to *Caravan of Courage*, this movie saw the first appearances of the Marauders, blurrigs, and oatmeal pitchman Wilford Brimley in the role of Noa Briqualon.

The Ewoks and Droids Adventure Hour, Nelvana, 1985. An animated cartoon series showcasing the pre-*Return of the Jedi* adventures of Wicket and his friends.

Ewoks, *Star Comics* #1–15, 1985–87. Though individual issues are tough to find these days, this children's comic book series introduced the Zorbian pirates.

Star Tours, 1987–present. A Disney theme park attraction that promises to take tourists on an excursion to the lovely Forest Moon—and instead dumps them in the middle of a white-knuckled dogfight.

Star Wars Bounty Hunters: Aurra Sing, Tim Truman, Dark Horse Comics 1999. A one-shot Aurra Sing adventure that represents the only appearance of Endor in the prequel era to date.

The Illustrated Star Wars Universe, Kevin J. Anderson and Ralph McQuarrie, Bantam 1995. *National Geographic* meets *Star Wars* in this coffee-table book, which features a chapter on the wildlife of Endor.

Star Wars, Marvel Comics. Late in this series' run (circa Issues #90–100) the Alliance uses the Forest Moon as their primary base, from which they must battle an advance force of Nagai invaders.

Shield of Lies, Michael P. Kube-McDowell, Bantam Books 1996. Though not set on Endor, this novel introduces the drug Rokna Blue.

The Glove of Darth Vader, Paul and Hollice Davids, Bantam Skylark 1992. How did the glove of Darth Vader wind up on Mon Calamari? Musings on the nature of hyperspatial anomalies provided the background for the Endor Gate in this article.



ON WINGS OF ROGUES

The bravery of starfighter pilots is a key element in the Star Wars galaxy, from the attacks on the Death Stars to the defense of Naboo and the exploits of Rogue Squadron. For the Star Wars Gamemaster, the fighter squadron represents a perfect structure for an ongoing campaign: A strong setting that can provide numerous adventures across the galaxy—and not just for pilots and their R2 units.

In every era, worlds need fighter squadrons to defend them, and pilots find themselves on the front lines of any war, often called upon to do much more than fly and fight. You can use that need to create your own squadron-based campaign inspired by the adventures of Rogue and Wraith Squadron in the *X-wing* series of novels and comics.

"Lock S-Foils in Attack Position!"

The fighter squadron works well as an introductory campaign, giving players a substantial frame of reference. During character creation, the temptation to overbalance heroes with combat and piloting skills is high, but GMs should emphasize that flying and blasting aren't all there is to the game. Starting a campaign from scratch has the advantage that it can be set *in media res*, thrusting the heroes slam-bang into the

action in the very first game. Alternatively, a "miniseries" approach can work for those who don't want to stop an ongoing campaign. This style of play can find a group of otherwise uninvolved characters (such as a freighter crew or a Rebel strike team) drafted and trained as pilots. Most squadrons are run in a quasi-military fashion even if they owe allegiance to the almighty credit instead of the Alliance or the Emperor, and while the heroes might have less freedom to choose their missions, they can rely on the support of a whole squad of wingmates to cover their backs.

Player groups are typically loose teams of about equal standing, whereas the military imposes a hierarchy structure from the start. Some players might find it hard to snap to attention and shout, "How high, sir?" when told to jump. They might

soon weary of being locked in the brig for disobeying orders. Rather than have players ordering other players, it is easiest to make the squadron commander a GM character with all players answering to him or her. Colonel Vrei (see sidebar) is a typical example.

The strength of the fighter squadron as a player unit is that it mimics party structure, granting the heroes a degree of independence while also tying them together. Inter-party trust becomes very important when a flight of TIE fighters has you in their sights.

"I Used to Bulls-Eye Womp-Rats in My T-16 Back Home."

Each of the basic *Star Wars* classes can find a place within the fighter squadron campaign setting, without necessarily having to take on the role of a pilot.

Fringers are the archetypal "bush pilots" known across the Rebel Alliance, the type who hot-wired Skyhoppers in their youth and blasted holes in the clouds, dreaming every day of breaking the light barrier in a Z-95 Headhunter. They are also well suited to support roles in a squadron, working on maintenance crews using their uncanny repair abilities to patch damaged ships on the fly. Fringers can join a fighter squadron campaign in any era.



Creating Starfighter Squadrons in the *Star Wars* Galaxy

BY J. SWALLOW
ILLUSTRATED BY MIKE VILARDI

Nobles can own their own fighter squadrons if they're rich enough, or they can be royalty-in-exile (like Rogue Squadron's "warrior princess" Plourr Ilo) who have succumbed to the lure of the cockpit. Older, more experienced nobles might be commanding officers, former pilots who've moved up the ladder to administrative postings. High-society noble pilots are best suited to the Rise of the Empire era, while noble officers fit in any time period.

Scoundrels go hand-in-hand with the brash, never-tell-me-the-odds stereotype of the fighter jockey, and those with the Skill Emphasis (Pilot) feat are the perfect wing-mates to fly beside you in a furball—but scoundrels are also troublemakers who constantly end up in harm's way, much to the exasperation of their squad mates. Alternatively, non-pilot scoundrels can excel as squadron supply officers, bending the rules to keep the fighters supplied with spare parts. Scoundrels can take part in a fighter squadron campaign in any era.

Scouts also make good flyers, and with their Trailblazing ability they're typically the pilots chosen to handle reconnaissance missions or search-and-rescue operations in danger zones. Applying the Uncanny Dodge and Skill Mastery (Pilot) abilities to space combat also makes scouts formidable foes in any era.

Soldiers are the typical stock from which fighter pilots are drawn, and at 6th level a soldier can most easily adopt the starfighter ace prestige class. Soldiers are the rank-and-file flyers who have earned their wings the hard way. They can also serve as squadron leaders or commanders, taking the officer prestige class as early as 6th level (with one level of noble mixed in). Soldiers can appear in all eras.

Force adepts and **Jedi guardians** can utilize their uncanny abilities with The Force to make them formidable fighter pilots, unmatched by most normal beings. In the tradition of Jedi pilots like Luke Skywalker, Corran Horn, Kyp Durrion, and Jaina Solo, adepts and guardians can take on piloting skills, but only as an addendum to their Force abilities. **Jedi consulars** are less likely to be flyers, more so to be ranking superiors or perhaps even serving a squadron in a medical capacity. Force-user pilots are more likely to be encountered in the Rise of the Empire and The New Jedi Order eras.

Generous GMs might give characters without substantial ability in the Pilot skill a free boost of 1–4 skill points (but not above the maximum skill points per level) or the necessary Starship Operation feat as a squadron campaign bonus.

GM characters form a crucial part of the fighter squadron campaign, and with a

COLONEL ALASK VREI,
SQUADRON COMMANDING OFFICER
Vrei is a former Twi'lek baron cast into poverty when his holdings were seized in a clan power-struggle. Discovering he had a talent for starship tactics, Vrei became a starship line officer and has been decorated several times for courage under fire. Outwardly aloof and cool, he thinks of his crew as his "subjects" and considers it his duty to protect them from harm, but he's not above playing hardball with them if they get out of line; his command style is best described as "harsh but fair."

Alask Vrei: Male Twi'lek Nbl 2/Sol 4/Officer 2; Init +2 (Dex); Def 19 (+7 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 49/12; Atk +5/+0 melee (1d3-1, punch) or +8/+3 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SQ Low-light vision, bonus class skill (Survival), call in a favor (1), leadership; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +6; SZ M; FP 3; DSP 1; Rep 7; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 18. Challenge Code: B.

Equipment: Hold-out blaster, datapad, commlink, holoprojector, recording rods.
Skills: Appraise +8, Astrogate +7, Bluff +6, Computer Use +6, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (military tactics) +5, Knowledge (spacer lore) +4, Pilot +8, Read/Write Ryl, Sense Motive +8, Speak Basic, Speak Lekku, Speak Ryl, Survival +5.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Spacer, Starship Operation (capital ship, space transport, starfighter), Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

small or medium-sized player group it's important to flesh out the background with a supporting cast. Create enough pilot characters to fill the squadron ranks, and ensure that each has a distinct personality, for players feel a stronger emotional charge if the wingmate who is shot down was playing Sabacc with them only hours ago. Every squadron has its seat-of-the-pants barnstormer and its arrogant

ace, as well as the people who keep the flyers flying—the tech sergeant, quartermaster droid, and doctor are just a few. Most squadrons also have a commander, typically an officer at least two or three levels higher than the players. Rebel Alliance squadrons comprise 13 pilots: a commanding officer (of Commander rank or higher), two Captains (each commanding a flight of five other pilots), two Lieutenants (acting as executive officers to the Captains) and eight Flight Officers.

"All Wings, Report In!"

Not all squadrons have the high profile of the Rogues; some are backwater bush pilots flying rattletrap ships with barely enough proton torpedoes to go around. The GM determines the type and quality of a given squadron's ships or can calculate them using factors based on the heroes' Squadron Reputation bonus.

Squadron Reputation works in much the same way as it does for heroes (see Chapter 6: Heroic Characteristics of the core rulebook), but it applies to the entire group rather than to a single pilot. In the same way that a heroic deed by an individual can boost a Reputation bonus, so can an action by a fighter squadron do the same for its members.

All squadrons start with a base Squadron Reputation bonus of 1d4; add +1 for each squadron member with Jedi abilities (except during the Rebellion era), and +1 for each +5 Reputation bonus of each individual squadron member (+1 for a member with 5–9, +2 for a member with 10–14, and so on).



FRINGER

For example, the Nightfighters have eight pilots, four with a Reputation bonus of +2, one Jedi guardian with a Reputation bonus of +15, and three pilots with Reputation bonuses of +5, +6, and +10. The Nightfighters roll a 2 on 1d4; their starting Squadron Reputation bonus will be +10 (2+8).

Squadron Reputation can work the same way as a hero's Reputation bonus, adding bonuses to Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Entertain checks. Optionally, you can use Squadron Reputation checks only when dealing with members of the command structure. For example, a squadron with a high Reputation bonus (such as the Rogues) has far less difficulty procuring ammunition, spare parts, and fuel than does a less well-known fighter group like the Nightfighters.

The Squadron Reputation bonus also lets the squad "buy" Fighter Quality Grades and Maintenance Levels; the higher the score, the better the squadron's ships and the better their condition. As the campaign progresses and the Squadron Reputation bonus increases, the heroes receive upgrades to their craft and their maintenance level. Ships kept at anything less than the Well Maintained level suffer from Flaws; these are random, recurring mechanical glitches that add "character" to player's ships—an X-wing with S-foils that constantly jam, for example. Depending on the situation, Flaws can range from annoying to deadly. After determining the hero squadron's starting Fighter Quality Grades and Maintenance Levels, the GM should consult the Flaws Table to determine the type and number of glitches for each hero ship.

FIGHTER QUALITY

Superior: The galaxy's greatest shipwrights manufacture ships in this grade to the highest specifications. Superior craft are expensive and sometimes unique. The Naboo N-1 Starfighter and the TIE x1 Advanced are typical examples of Superior Grade fighters. **Squadron Reputation cost = 8**

Average: This grade covers most starfighter types encountered in the *Star Wars* universe, the everyday, commonplace production-line ships flown by pilots. Incom T-65 X-wings and TIE fighters are Average Grade fighters. **Squadron Reputation cost = 4**

Poor: Aging, badly designed, or cannibalized fighter craft fit into this category. Typically, Poor Grade fighters are held together with bonding tape and prayers. Y-TIEs and other "Uglies" are Poor Grade. **Squadron Reputation cost = 2**

Basic Pilot Kit

Fighter squadrons supply their pilots with a suite of flying gear: a flight suit with helmet and gloves, a comlink, a medpac, a field kit, and a blaster pistol. Some fighters also have a tool kit stowed on board. Imperial pilots and some mercenaries use armored flight suits instead of the more common variety.

MAINTENANCE LEVELS

Well Maintained: Trained mechanics and technical staff keep these ships at the peak of their efficiency. Well Maintained fighters perform to the best of their capability and might even exceed the manufacturer's specification, at the GM's discretion. **Squadron Reputation cost = 8**

Typically Maintained: Most military bases and spaceports keep ships at this maintenance level. The majority of spacecraft perform normally, although some still exhibit the occasional Flaw. **Squadron Reputation cost = 6**

Poorly Maintained: Mechanics without the right tools or under-equipped bases keep ships at this level. While Poorly Maintained fighters can still fly and fight, they suffer from Flaws on a regular basis. **Squadron Reputation cost = 4**

Neglected: A Neglected ship is just barely spaceworthy, and it frequently suffers numerous Flaws, some of them potentially life-threatening to the pilot. Neglected craft are in desperate need of a complete overhaul. **Squadron Reputation cost = 2**

NUMBER OF FLAWS

| Fighter Quality | Maintenance Level | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|---------|------|-----------|
| | Well | Typical | Bad | Neglected |
| Superior Quality | None | 1 | 1d4 | 1d6 |
| Average Quality | None | 1d4 | 1d6 | 1d6+2 |
| Poor Quality | 1d4 | 1d6 | 1d10 | 1d10+2 |

2d6 Flaw

- 2 **Serious Flaw.** Roll again (reroll any result of "2" or "12"). The ship gains that Flaw and the chance of failure is doubled. The DC to repair this Flaw is increased by 2d4.
- 3 **Engine Malfunction.** There is a 20% chance per flight that one engine cuts out without warning. Reduce the ship's maximum speed by one category (attack becomes cruising, and so on) when an engine fails.
- 4 **Life Support Malfunction.** There is a 20% chance per flight that the fighter's internal life support system will fail. If the fighter has no life support system, treat this as a No Flaw result.
- 5 **S-Foils/Landing Gear/Hatch Jam.** There is a 30% chance per flight that one of these mechanical systems jams open or closed (GM's discretion on which one).
- 6 **Weapon Malfunction.** There is a 20% chance per flight that one weapon system is inoperative.
- 7 **No Flaw.**
- 8 **Projectile Weapon Jam.** There is a 25% chance per flight that a projectile weapon launcher is inoperative. If the fighter has no projectile weapons, treat this as a No Flaw result.
- 9 **Communications Glitch.** There is a 20% chance per flight that the comm system will fail. The crew cannot communicate with other craft or installations.
- 10 **Hyperdrive burnout.** There is a 25% chance per flight that the hyperdrive suffers a burnout on activation; if the fighter has no hyperdrive, treat this as a No Flaw result.
- 11 **Shield Failure.** There is a 25% chance per flight that the shield generator will fail; if the fighter has no shields, treat this as a No Flaw result.
- 12 **Multiple Flaws.** Roll again twice (reroll any results of "2" or "12").

With a Squadron Reputation bonus of 10, the best option for the Nightfighters are Average Quality Fighters at the Typically Maintained level; however, they could also opt for better Superior Quality ships, at the expense of the much lower Neglected Maintenance Level, or Poor Quality ships at the higher Well Maintained level.

FLAWS

Roll 2d6 and check the result below for each Flaw. If you roll the same Flaw twice, apply it to multiple systems of the same type if possible. If not, add it cumulatively to one system. If a ship does not have the affected system, you get off lucky—the ship doesn't suffer a Flaw for that roll. Characters with the Repair skill can attempt to fix one Flaw in their fighter once per week (DC20), at the GM's discretion.

The Nightfighter pilots can expect to suffer at least one or two Flaws in each of their Average Quality ships until they increase their Squadron Reputation to 12.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Fighter pilots joining a squadron are assigned a rank based on their personal Reputation bonus. There are other ways heroes can earn ranks. Although a hero may earn Reputation

| Reputation | Rank |
|------------|----------------|
| 0–5 | Flight Officer |
| 6–10 | Lieutenant |
| 11–15 | Captain |
| 16+ | Commander |



NOBLE

bonuses through these methods too, she is not required to have the appropriate Reputation bonus to achieve a higher rank.

At the Lieutenant rank, pilots can choose to remove one Flaw from their fighter's systems; at Captain's rank, they can remove two Flaws, and at Commander's rank they can remove three Flaws. Promotion in rank typically grants heroes added perks, such as individual quarters on base, higher pay, and other benefits of officer status. This ranking system follows the Rebel Alliance and Imperial Navy models, and other worlds or fighter forces may use different grading. In non-military squadrons, such as mercenary or pirate fleets, rank is largely enforced by might rather than merit. In these squadrons, heroes might have to buy their own ships or earn back the cost of them through shares of booty. Mercenary units often post bounties for kills made, which pilots can spend on repairs or weapons; an unlucky, cash-poor mercenary flyer might find himself out of proton torpedoes at a critical moment in the battle.

"Echo Base, I've Got Something..."

Fighter squadrons are high-maintenance operations, so a secure base of operations is necessary to keep both pilots and ships ready. Squadron bases fall into two categories; planetside and spaceborne. Typical planetside bases vary in size and complexity from small, concealed affairs like the Rebel Alliance strongholds on Massassi and Tierfon, to large facili-

SQUADRON BASE LOCATION

| 1d10 | Location |
|------|------------|
| 1-6 | Planetside |
| 7-10 | Spaceborne |



SCOUNDREL

ties like the Naboo RSF spaceport in Theed or any standard Imperial garrison complex. Fighter bases in space can be hidden inside asteroids or comets, but generally a squadron is garrisoned at a space station or aboard a starship. The GM can choose fighter base assignments or determine them by random rolls on the charts below. Each base has three key factors: Location, Size, and Operations Grade.

PLANETSIDIE BASES

1d10 Type of Base

- 1 Airless Moon.** A barren lunar surface; bases here might be in pressure domes, cut into rocky cliffs, or set deep inside craters.
- 2 Ice World.** Similar to planet Hoth; bases here are concealed inside glaciers or snow-covered mountains.
- 3 Temperate Planet.** Worlds like Naboo or Dantooine can provide cover for a base in their small cities or rolling fields.
- 4 Desert World.** Shifting sands and rocky landscapes on planets like Kessel and Tatooine are remote but secure bases.
- 5 Jungle Planet.** Heavily forested worlds like the Moon of Endor or Kashyyyk can hide bases within their treelines.
- 6 Gas Giant.** Repulsorlift platforms and carriers can make their home in the atmospheres of gaseous worlds like Bespin.
- 7 Urbanized World.** Planets with heavy population, from Corellia to Coruscant, typically feature several fighter bases on their surface.
- 8 Ocean Planet.** Fighter bases on worlds like Mon Calamari are frequently based on floating carrier vessels or small island chains.
- 9 Hostile Atmosphere.** Harsh environments like the toxic gases of Sullust can be damaging to fighter craft, but their unpleasant nature makes them perfect hiding places for secret bases.
- 10 Ruined Wasteland.** The sites of earlier battles, such as Dantooine, provide good cover for a base among the wreckage of a dead world.

SPACEBORNE BASES

1d10 Type of Base

- 1-3 Space Station.** Space platforms can orbit planets, float alone in deep space, or hide inside nebula clouds, ranging in size from a small docking platform to a vast Death Star.
- 2-7 Starship.** Carrier ships vary from dedicated vessels like the *Imperial Star Destroyer* or the Trade Federation battleship to simple docking frames with rudimentary flight systems and a hyperdrive engine.
- 8 Asteroid Belt.** Bases situated on asteroids are typically dug deep into the surface of a large rocky body, protected by the belt's natural cover and defense.
- 9 Cometary Ice Mass.** Vast balls of dirty ice, hangars and other facilities can be cut into these slow-moving comets.
- 10 Derelict.** Wrecked ships or space stations adrift in the void can be converted into fighter bases and refitted for covert use.

SQUADRON BASE SIZE

1d10 Base Size

- 1-3 Large Base.** Large fighter bases typically have thousands of personnel and house more than one fighter squadron, support craft, and facilities. Major planets like Coruscant or the Death Star space station are Large Bases.
- 4-7 Standard Base.** Standard bases field a handful of squadrons and are by far the most common; the Rebel base on Hoth and a Star Destroyer are Standard Bases.
- 8-10 Small Base.** Small facilities might have as few as one or two squadrons based there; occasionally these locations are for secret operations or stealth missions. Tierfon Outpost in the Sumitra sector and Theed Spaceport on Naboo are Small Bases.

BASE OPERATIONS GRADE

1d10 Operations Grade

- 1-2 Superior.** Bases at this grade are very well equipped, with talented mechanics and the best hardware. Fighters located here can remove one Flaw from their ships as a result of the increased quality of technical expertise available. Bases with a Superior Operations Grade add +2 to Squadron Reputation checks when dealing with the chain of command.
- 3-7 Average.** The majority of starfighter bases fall into this category, the typical standard of most military facilities throughout the galaxy.
- 8-10 Poor.** Bases at this grade are seriously under-staffed, ill-equipped, and lacking for spares. Fighters posted to a base with a Poor Operations Grade gain a Flaw and suffer a -2 penalty to any Squadron Reputation checks when dealing with the chain of command.

The Nightfighters roll 7, 9, 9, and 2, so their randomly generated base is a Small, Spaceborne facility concealed inside a Cometary Ice Mass on a long solar orbit. The base's Operations Grade is Superior, which helps their pilots by removing one Flaw from each of their ships.

At the GM's discretion, fighter squadrons can attempt to increase the Operations Grade of their base with a Squadron Reputation check once per month. The check to upgrade from Poor to Average is DC 25; the check to upgrade from Average to Superior is DC 30. The GM may also consider requiring the squadron to perform one or more missions instead to obtain an Operations Grade increase.

While it is possible for a fighter group to operate without any permanent support facilities, these "nomadic squadrons" are not well maintained, usually traveling with a number of auxiliary transport ships and shuttles, setting up temporary bivouacs wherever the squad finds itself, and making repairs on the fly. Nomadic squadrons (without a capital ship) are the equivalent of a Poor Operations Grade.

No matter where it is located, a fighter base needs a number of key elements to be viable: maintenance facilities, quarters for the flight crew, a medical bay, a tactical command center, long-range communications, and—most important of all—adequate defensive capability. GMs can consider creating outlines and maps for the squadron's per-

manent base for use in play. Most squadrons backed by a military organization or government already have a base or a carrier vessel, but the search for and construction of a viable base can also serve as an adventure hook to begin a fighter squadron campaign.

"Get to Your Ships!"

Depending on era setting and galactic location, the fighter squadron can fulfill a variety of functions; planetary defense forces exist on thousands of independent worlds throughout the galaxy, some protecting single worlds or star systems like Naboo's Starfighter Corps and Corellia's CorSec, while others cover larger zones like the Hapes Cluster, the Corporate Sector Authority, or the Tapani Sector. These smaller forces do not stray far from their borders, dealing largely with smugglers or pirates, moving onto a war footing only during invasions or outright galactic conflicts. Groups like these exist in every era. During the Rebellion, however, many of the smaller fleets are disbanded or conscripted by the Empire. Pirate and mercenary fighter groups work for cold, hard credits, operating in the darker corners of the galaxy or out on the Rim, because in every era there are unwary travelers to be ambushed and brushfire wars to be fought. In the Rebellion era, pirate and mercenary forces do their best to steer clear of Imperial entanglements unless the price is right. During the reign of Emperor Palpatine, starfighter pilots are recruited in their thousands by both the Rebel Alliance and the Imperial Navy to fight one another, and after the rise of the New Republic, The New Jedi Order sees a return to the tradition of Jedi Knight starfighters not seen since the Rise of the Empire, like



SCOUT

Kyp Durrón's Dozen-and-Two Avengers, piloting XJ-variant X-wings fighters on peacekeeping missions.

Adventure Hooks

Invasion! (any era): A lone planet is caught in the grip of an expansionist enemy, intent on cutting them off from the rest of the galaxy and squeezing them dry. The sole defensive squadron is caught on the ground, unawares. Now, a handful of their number must free their wingmates and recapture their ships before launching a last-ditch assault on the invader's command ship.

Breakout (Rebellion era): The Imperial Navy has developed a prototype TIE fighter that could turn the balance of power against the Rebellion if its test flight is a success; dropped behind Imperial lines without their ships, the heroes must destroy the prototypes or capture them if they can, and escape alive.

Protect the Peace (Rise of the Empire or The New Jedi Order eras): A courier ship taking ambassadors to a neutral border world requires an honor guard. What seems like a milk run turns into a deadly battle when saboteurs and pirate raiders combine to wreck the peace process, on the orders of a shadowy villain.

Pirates of the Asteroids (any era): Striking from a secret base deep within a zone of asteroids, raiders have choked off shipping lines to worlds on the Outer Rim. While some of their squadron attempt to infiltrate the pirate ranks, the rest of the players prepare for some of the most dangerous combat flying of their lives, inside the shifting, uncharted asteroid belt.



Warrior's Diplomacy (Rise of the Empire era): A newly discovered world in the Expansion region holds valuable mineral rights, but they will not consider membership in the Republic without proof that its warriors are strong; the Supreme Chancellor sends a squadron of his best pilots to represent him in a series of testing dogfights and aerobatic challenges where second place could mean death.

Typical Squadrons

Victor Flight, Naboo Royal Space Fighter Corps

Era: The Rise of the Empire

Base: Theed Spaceport, planet Naboo (Small Temperate Planet base, Superior Operations Grade)

Squadron Complement: Several Naboo Police Cruisers, two N-1 Starfighters (Fine/Average Quality fighters, Well Maintained)

Auxiliary Craft: A single light shuttle for inter-orbital operations

Compatible Character Classes: Scoundrel pilots with a shady past might wind up posted to Victor Flight, and disgraced young nobles could also find themselves assigned there as a punishment. Fringers could also find some kindred spirits among the unit.

Background: Victor Flight serve the RSF as an orbital "coast guard," patrolling the upper atmosphere and close orbit space lanes around Naboo, occasionally venturing farther out on escort runs to the colony on Ohma'Dun. Unlike the more famous squadrons of the Starfighter Corps, like

Bravo Flight and Echo Flight, Victor Flight's pilots have a reputation in the Naboo Security Forces as troublesome mavericks and problem cases. This poor perception of the Victors reaches back to a point before the Trade Federation embargo of Naboo, when the flight leader of the squadron was arrested for collusion with pirates after supplying the raiders with transit patterns for incoming freighters. Although it was never proven, the then-current head of Royal Security, Captain Magneta, made no secret that he suspected the involvement of other Victor Flight pilots in the crime. Regarded as something of a backwater posting on Naboo, Victor had already been used as a placement for pilots with "difficult" natures, and the arrest of the commander tarnished their repete even further. However, Victor Flight's new commanding officer, a naive and untested leader named Stal Bridda, hopes to turn the opinions of the Naboo people around—and after leading an attack on a Trade Federation transport group using only under-powered Police Cruisers, Bridda has started down the long road to rebuild Victor Flight's good name.

Typical Missions: Victor Flight acts as a last line of defense for Naboo against invaders or pirates. They most frequently run across smugglers attempting to get off-planet with full cargo holds, Gungan activists, and other planetside threats.

The Crimson Aces, Independent Mercenary Strike Force

Era: The Rebellion Era

Base: The *Stacked Deck*, a converted Nebulon-B Frigate (Small Starship base, Poor Operations Grade)

Squadron Complement: A mixed force of elderly starfighters, mostly Z-95 Headhunters, with a couple of salvaged X-wings and a

SOLDIER

few Y-TIE Ugliers (Average/Poor Quality fighters, Typically Maintained).

Auxiliary Craft: An old, obsolete cargo shuttle

Compatible Character Classes: Fringers, Scouts, Soldiers, and Scoundrels will be at home among the Aces



Background: Until the early days of the Empire, the Crimson Aces had been the space defense force of planet Repea, near the Cron Drift. Fearful and avaricious Repean politicians feared the Aces would turn against them and, in concert with the Empire, wiped out the Aces' planetside base and drove the survivors into space. The commander, a

human named Gikkin, sought his revenge by recruiting mercenary pilots to replace those who had been killed—after capturing a Nebulon-B frigate (which he renamed *Stacked Deck* as a wry reflection of the Aces' betrayal), Gikkin sowed dissent between the Empire and Repea by striking at both sides with disguised ships. Eventually, a pair of Star Destroyers delivered the message of vengeance to Repea that Gikkin could not. In the process, the Aces found they had a talent for the mercenary life, and although their founder was later killed during a sortie, his second-in-command Colonel Tyrus took over, seeking to continue the squadron's notoriety.

Typical Missions: The Crimson Aces go where the credits take them, frequently taking missions from Hutt gangsters, Black Sun, and even the Empire as well as defending Rebels, independent worlds, and corporate consortia. With the *Stacked Deck* as a mobile base, the Aces can handle most missions that require a fast-moving, deadly strike force.

Nomad Squadron, New Republic Navy

Era: The New Jedi Order

Base: The *Allegiant*, a MCBob Mon Calamari Star Cruiser (Standard Starship base, Average Operations Grade)

Squadron Complement: X-wings, A-wings, and B-wings (Average Quality fighters, Well Maintained)

Auxiliary Craft: Lambda-class shuttles

Compatible Character Classes: As the Yuuzahn Vong invasion rears its ugly head, almost any kind of character could be drafted into the defense of the galaxy against this threat.



Background: While less well-known than the Rogues or the Wraiths, the Nomads are one of the Rebel Alliance's first full squadrons, formed after the Battle of Yavin initially as a force for reconnaissance missions and hit-and-fade strikes. In the early days of Nomad

Squadron, the group was almost completely composed of A-wings, but as the Rebellion against the Empire continued, Nomad pilots were cross-trained on almost every fighter craft in the Alliance arsenal. By the end of the Emperor's rule, it had become a point of honor among Nomad Squadron that their pilots could fly anything, anywhere, anytime. In the age of the New Jedi Order, the versatility of the squadron members is reflected in their flight line aboard the star cruiser *Allegiant*, with X-wing

space superiority fighters parked alongside A-wing interceptors and B-wing attack ships. Under the command of Captain Tarrik, the Nomads have become an exceptional fighting force, often performing missions on the ground as well as in space.

Typical missions: At the beginning of the Yuuzahn Vong incursion into New Republic space, the military were slow to respond, but now that the threat is clear, the New Republic has mobilized hundreds of ships to fortify the galactic borders. Stationed in the Meridian Sector, the *Allegiant* and Nomad Squadron patrol the spacelanes watching for any signs of Yuuzhan Vong forces. **E**

References and Recommended Reading

Star Wars: The Essential Guide to Vehicles & Vessels by Bill Smith, Doug Chiang, and Troy Vigil

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X-wing: Wedge's Gamble by Michael A. Stackpole

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X-wing: The Bacta War by Michael A. Stackpole

X-wing: Wraith Squadron by Aaron Allston

X-wing: Iron Fist by Aaron Allston

X-wing: Solo Command by Aaron Allston

X-wing: Isard's Revenge by Michael A. Stackpole

X-wing: Starfighters of Adumar by Aaron Allston

Star Wars: X-wing Rogue Squadron from Dark Horse Comics by various writers and artists



JEDI

Wraith Squadron

The Dirty Dozen of *Star Wars*



BY JOSHUA J. RADKE

About three years after the Battle of Endor Wedge Antilles assembled an elite commando team in the form of a starfighter squadron. The squadron's main goal was to help the New Republic track down its most formidable foe since the Empire's demise: Warlord Zsinj. Unlike most of the New Republic's other flyers, Wraith Squadron pilots required knowledge of ground infiltration and guerrilla warfare. Wedge drew his recruits from Fleet Command's least wanted to give talented but difficult pilots a second chance. Fleet Command was not impressed with this decision, but ultimately Admiral Ackbar agreed to the experiment. Not only did the concept amuse him, but it gave him

ILLUSTRATED BY JOE CORRONEY

a chance to make a wager with Wedge. If these washouts couldn't come together as a fighting unit, Wedge would accept a promotion he'd repeatedly refused in the past—to the rank of General.

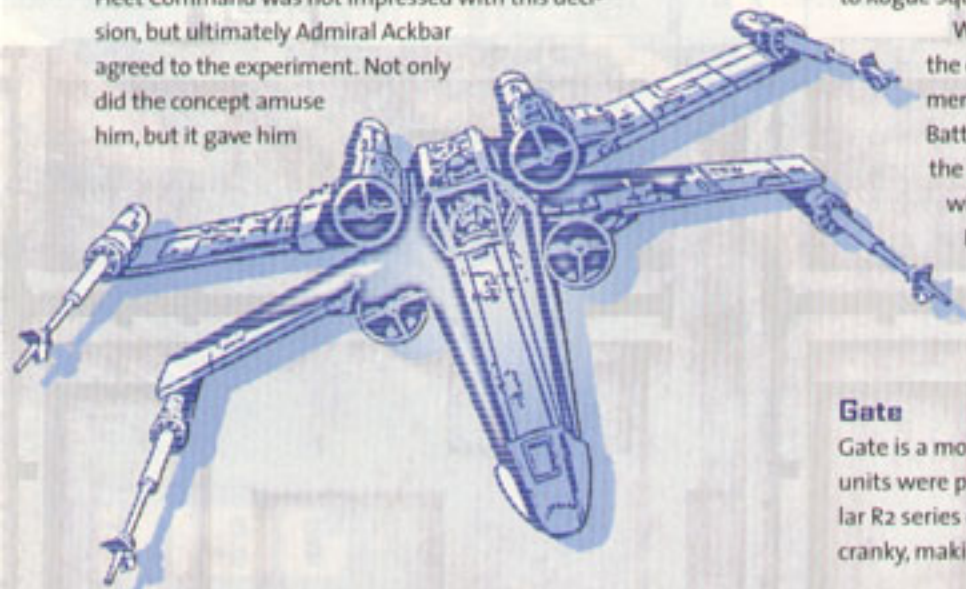
Wedge Antilles

Wedge commands Wraith Squadron, but he allows a few of the Wraiths to get a taste of leadership responsibilities. He plans eventually to give full control of the squadron to the Wraith pilots and return to Rogue Squadron.

Wedge is a legendary Corellian who was born to fly. He is the only pilot to help destroy both Death Stars and survive. A member of Rogue Squadron since its inception before the Battle of Yavin, Wedge has been in command since just after the Battle of Hoth. Wedge enjoys great respect not only within Fleet Command but also from citizens of the New Republic in general. He doesn't like the idea of being an Admiral, as he fears the position will keep him from doing the thing he most loves: flying. Many in the military describe him as being a "soldier's officer."

Gate

Gate is a modified R5 unit. In general, Industrial Automaton's R5 units were poorly designed and are quite inferior to the more popular R2 series of droids. Consequentially, these droids tend to be quite cranky, making them even more unpredictable. Supposedly, the R5





droids were designed primarily for agricultural uses, so there is not a lot of room in the droid housing for improvements. It takes a good deal of modifying and programming to get an R5 unit close to the capabilities of its R2 counterparts.

Wes Janson

Wes is Rogue Squadron's tough man whom Wedge brought over to act as Wraith Squadron's Executive Officer. Wes also has connections to two of the Wraiths: Kell Tainer (whose father he killed) and Myn Donos (whom he personally trained). He has also become Wedge's confidant, so he is included in many command decisions.

Wes flew for the Alliance for many years, and his knowledge of starfighter combat has proven valuable to the New Republic. More importantly, he's helped many up-and-coming pilots adjust to military life in general. Wes has been known to deliver reality checks to many pilots—both cadets and veterans.

Kell Tainer

Kell is the squadron's demolitions expert and assistant mechanic. He is a big man who strives to prove that the Dorans are not cowards. For this reason, Kell does his absolute best to exceed the expectations of his superiors both in and out of combat, but never at the expense of a comrade. When he is not busy flying or fixing starfighters, Kell spends his time charming fellow pilot, Tyria Sarkin.



Wedge Antilles: Male Human Sol 7/Starfighter Ace 5/Officer 3; Init +8 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 24 (+10 class, +4 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 99/12; Atk +12/+7/+2 melee (1d3, punch) or +16/+11/+6 ranged (3d8, blaster pistol); SQ Starfighter defense, familiarity +3 (X-wing), starfighter evasion, leadership, requisition supplies; SV Fort +11, Ref +12, Will +9; SZ M; FP 4; DSP 0; Rep 10; Str 11, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14. Challenge Code: E.

Equipment: Flight Suit, field kit, blaster pistol, X-wing, Gate (R5 unit).

Skills: Astrogate +16, Bluff +7, Computer Use +17, Demolitions +8, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (alien species) +4, Knowledge (Corellia) +8, Knowledge (military) +10, Knowledge (spacer lore) +8, Listen +4, Pilot +27, Profession (gambler) +6, Read/Write Basic, Repair +13, Sense Motive +6, Speak Basic, Speak Binary, Speak Shyriiwook, Spot +10, Survival +5.

Feats: Alertness, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Heroic Surge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Emphasis (Knowledge: military, Pilot), Spacer, Starship Dodge (starfighter), Starship Operation (space transport, starfighter), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).



Gate: Tracked Astromech Droid Expert 4; Init +2 (Dex); Def 14 (+1 class, +1 size, +2 Dex); Spd 8m; VP/WP —/12; Atk +6 melee (1d3+2, claw) or +6 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +5; SZ S; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 11. Challenge Code: A.

Equipment: Heuristic processor, improved sensor package, diagnostics package, video recording unit, tool mounts (x4), telescopic appendage, environmental compensation (vacuum), magnetic feet, internal storage (1kg), fire extinguisher.

Skills: Astrogate +13, Computer Use +10, Disable Device +9, Hide +6, Knowledge (astronomy) +10, Listen +6, Pilot +9, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Binary, Repair +13, Search +8, Speak Basic, Speak Binary, Spot +6.

Unspent Skill Points: 3.

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Astrogate, Repair), Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

Wes Janson: Male Human Sol 7/Starfighter Ace 5; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 21 (+8 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 83/12; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d3+1, punch) or +13/+8 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Starfighter defense, familiarity +2 (X-wing), starfighter evasion; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +6; SZ M; FP 4; DSP 0; Rep 6; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 11. Challenge Code: D.

Equipment: Flight Suit, field kit, blaster pistol, X-wing, R2 unit.

Skills: Astrogate +15, Bluff +2, Computer Use +16, Demolitions +7, Diplomacy +3, Knowledge (alien species) +3, Knowledge (military) +5, Knowledge (spacer lore) +7, Knowledge (Taanab) +4, Pilot +21, Profession (teacher) +11, Read/Write Basic, Repair +11, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Shyriiwook, Spot +12, Survival +3, Treat Injury +4.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Expert Gunner, Gunner, Heroic Surge, Improved Initiative, Skill Emphasis (Pilot), Starship Dodge (starfighter), Starship Operation (starfighter), Starship Point Blank Shot (starfighter), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vehicle weapons, vibroweapons).

Wraith Squadron

Kell is the son of Alliance pilot Kissek Doran, a Rebel pilot shot down out of necessity by Wes Janson when he panicked during a "hit and fade" operation in the early years of the Rebellion. Disgraced, Kell's mother changed the family's name to "Tainer" and moved the family to Alderaan just before the Death Star destroyed the



Kell Tainer: Male Human Sct 2/Sol 5; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 17 (+5 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 47/13; Atk +8/+3 melee (2d4+2, vibrodagger) or +8/+3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Trailblazing; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 0; Rep 1; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 11. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Flight Suit, field kit, blaster pistol, vibrodagger, X-wing, Thirteen (R2 unit).

Skills: Astrogate +8, Bluff +2, Climb +5, Computer Use +7, Demolitions +15, Hide +4, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (spacer lore) +3, Listen +5, Pilot +15, Read/Write Basic, Repair +10, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Shyriiwook, Spot +8, Survival +8, Treat Injury +5.

Feats: Alertness, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Emphasis (Demolitions, Demolitions), Starship Operation (starfighter), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

planet. Escaping the rest of his family's fate, Kell joined the Alliance and distinguished himself with Lieutenant Page's commandos on Borleias during the operation to take Coruscant. A natural pilot, he joined Wraith Squadron with hopes of being able to use his commando skills while satisfying his hunger to fly.

Hohass "Runt" Ekwesh

Runt is a Thakwaash pilot from Thakwaa, a species noted for having several different personalities used to show different emotions. The more emotions a Thakwaash has, the more personalities he demonstrates. The Thakwaash have excellent control of these personalities, however, so they rarely pose a problem when they are performing their duties. Runt is a close friend of Kell, his wingman.

Initially brought into the squadron because of his exceptional strength (also characteristic of his species), Runt later replaced Jesmin as the Wraith's communications specialist. Runt got his nickname from his siblings due to him being shorter than is normal for his species. He ended up with Wraith Squadron after a series of transfers because his "pilot" personality had a habit of disobeying orders while in on a mission. Runt has since learned to control his "pilot mind."

Hohass "Runt" Ekwesh: Male Thakwaash Frg 3/Sol 4; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 16 (+5 class, -1 size, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 39/11; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+3, punch) or +7/+2 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Multiple personalities, barter, adaptive learning (Computer Use); SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +1; SZ L; FP 1; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 11. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Flight Suit, field kit, blaster pistol, X-wing, R2 unit.

Skills: Astrogate +9, Climb +4, Computer Use +12, Hide -2, Jump +6, Knowledge (holonet) +10, Knowledge (spacer lore) +3, Knowledge (Thakwaa) +4, Pilot +15, Read/Write Thakwaash, Repair +5, Speak Basic, Speak Binary, Speak Thakwaash, Spot +4, Survival +4, Swim +4.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Improved Initiative, Skill Emphasis (Computer Use, Pilot), Starship Dodge (starfighter), Starship Operation (starfighter), Starship Point Blank Shot (starfighter), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Garik "Face" Loran

Garik, a talented actor, is one of the Wraith's two insertion experts. As a thespian, he feels he must always be the center of attention, and he has quickly become the "squadron clown." In combat, Garik does everything but clown around and has proven several times that he is as good a leader as he is a joker. Wedge has taken note of this performance and often puts Garik in charge when he is off on other duties.

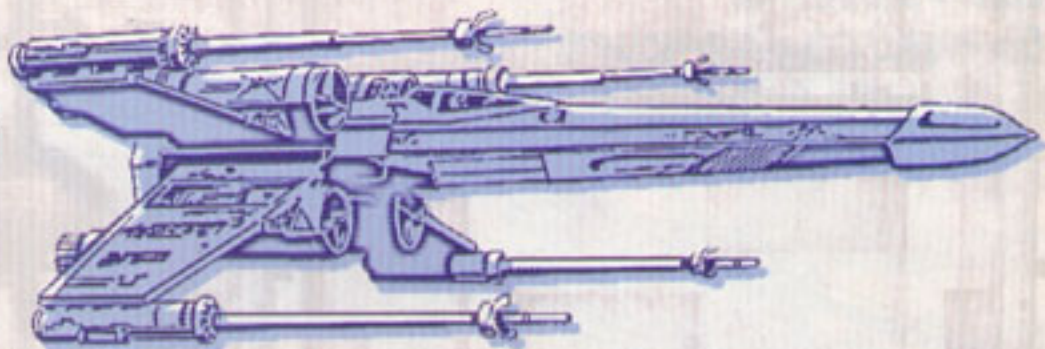
Garik was a famous child performer known as The Face. As an actor, Garik played several roles in Imperial propaganda films that greatly increased morale and recruitment. Years later, as he prepared for more adult roles, he was kidnapped by Rebel fanatics to be executed. Before carrying out the sentence, however, the Alliance operatives showed Garik the evil that he was helping to spread. While this was going on, an Imperial commando unit stormed the Rebel hideout, and Garik escaped during the ensuing bloodbath—but not before a stray blaster bolt grazed his face. To help him remember the tyranny he had helped spread, Garik let the wound heal into a nasty scar. Then, using the common belief that he was dead, Garik went into hiding on Pantolomin with members of his family. When he became of age, he enlisted in the Alliance, where he fought until joining Wraith Squadron.



Lieutenant Myn Donos

Trained by Wes Janson, Myn is a former Corellian Armed Forces sniper and one of the New Republic's most promising officers. Unfortunately, most of the time he is a ticking thermal detonator. He keeps mostly to himself and for a while held an unusually strong bond with his astromech. Myn has also developed a romantic interest for Lara Notsil, but the relationship might prove to be more than he bargained for.

Before coming to Wraith Squadron, Myn was a member of the Corellian armed forces' elite counterinsurgency unit. There he received his Corellian Bloodstripes for conspicuous gallantry. Myn later joined the New Republic with the aspirations of becoming a squadron commander. As fate would have it, his X-wing squadron fell into a cunning Imperial trap and was wiped out on its first mission. Myn survived the ambush physically, but not mentally. Eventually cleared of any wrongdoing, Fleet Command considered Myn "broken" and allowed him to transfer to Wraith Squadron both to employ his skill as a sniper and to see whether his leadership skills could reemerge.



Tyria Sarkin

Tyria is obsessed with living up to standards that people from her past have set for her. When she was first assigned as "Wraith 10," Tyria took it to mean she was one of the worst pilots in the group. Tyria needs to realize that it does not matter what others want her to be so much as that she attain her own goals and is happy. Regardless, she wants to be the best, and she will not let anyone think otherwise. Tyria is a veteran of the Antarian Rangers on Toprawa, and her stealth skills make her the Wraith's second key insertion expert.

Tyria inherited some sensitivity to the Force. This ability instantly got her into the



The Thakwaash

The Thakwaash are reclusive bipeds with heads that very much resemble those of Gungans. The difference is Thakwaash have shorter ears that sit atop their heads and long manes of hair. On average, a Thakwaash stands about 3 meters high and possesses the strength of about four Humans combined.

Even more impressive than their size and strength, each has several personalities, or "minds" as they call them. It is not completely understood how many "minds" a Thakwaash may possess, how they control them, or how a "mind" comes into being. Studies by New Republic psychotherapists have found that some minds are harder to control than others and that a Thakwaash doesn't always remember what his last "mind" was doing.

Since the fall of the Empire, more Thakwaash seem to be venturing out into the galaxy. They are friendly and sociable, but they take some getting used to. Individual Thakwaash refer to themselves in the plural, and their personalities can change suddenly. Thakwaash possess a native tongue but also speak perfect Basic.

Thakwaash Commoner: Init -1 (Dex); Def 8 (-1 size, -1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP —/12; Atk +1 melee (1d3+2, punch) or -2 ranged; SQ Multiple personalities; SV Fort +1, Ref -1, Will -1; SZ L; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 14, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8. Challenge Code: A.
Skills: Climb +3, Hide -5, Jump +3, Read/Write Thakwaash, Speak Basic, Speak Thakwaash.
Species Features: +4 Str, +2 Con, -2 Dex, -2 Wis, -2 Cha; **Multiple Personalities**—Before making a skill check, a Thakwaash can attempt to draw upon a "secondary" personality's experience as a free action by making a Will save (DC = number of ranks Thakwaash has in that skill). On a successful save, the Thakwaash receives a +4 species bonus to that skill and a -2 species penalty to all other skills. These modifiers last until the Thakwaash attempts to call upon another personality; is stunned, dazed, or knocked unconscious; or after one hour of rest or light activity.

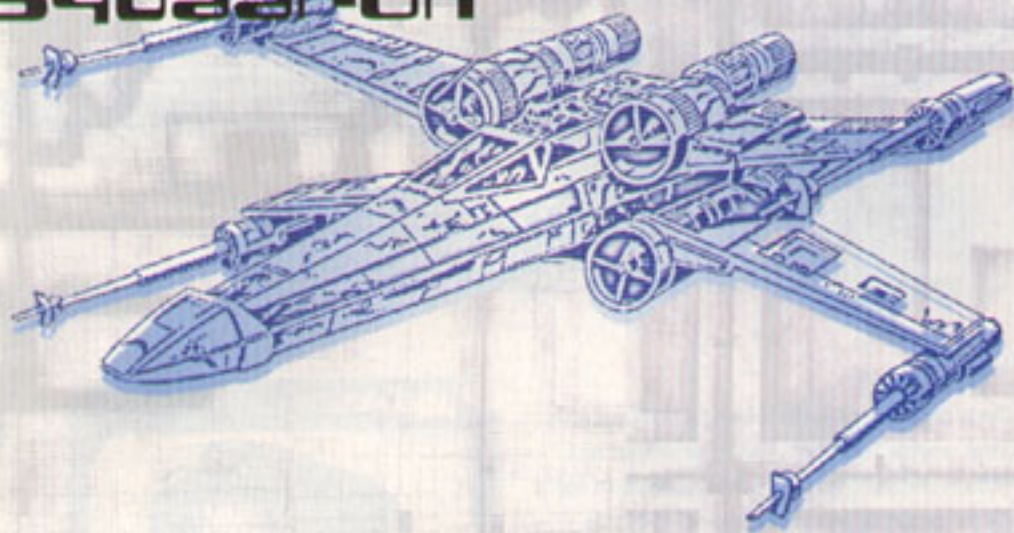
Garik "Face" Loran: Male Human Nbl 4/Sol 3/Starfighter Ace 1; Init +3 (Dex); Def 20 (+7 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 39/10; Atk +6/+1 melee (1d3, punch) or +9/+4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Bonus class skill (Pilot), call in a favor (x1), inspire confidence +1, command +2, starfighter defense; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +8; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 0; Rep 9; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 16. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Flight suit, field kit, blaster pistol, X-wing, Vape (R2 unit).

Skills: Astrogate +7, Bluff +5, Computer Use +10, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +12, Entertain (acting) +12, Entertain (comedy) +7, Knowledge (spacer lore) +6, Pilot +17, Read/Write Basic, Repair +8, Speak Basic, Speak Shyriilwook, Spot +9, Survival +4.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Fame, Mimic, Skill Emphasis (Pilot), Starship Dodge (starfighter), Starship Operation (starfighter), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Wraith Squadron



Myn Donos: Male Human Sct 7/Sol 1/
Starfighter Ace 1; Init +3 (Dex); Def 21 (+8
class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 46/11; Atk
+7/+2 melee (2d4+1, vibrodagger) or +9/+4
ranged (3d6, blaster pistol) or +9/+4 ranged
(3d6+1, crit 18–20, sniper rifle); SQ Trailblaz-
ing, uncanny dodge (Dex to Def, can't be
flanked), skill mastery (Move Silently),
starfighter defense; SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will
+6; SZ M; FP 2; DSP 1; Rep 2; Str 12, Dex 16, Con
11, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Flight Suit, field kit, blaster
pistol, SoroSuub X-45 sniper rifle,
vibrodagger, X-wing, Shiner (R2 unit).

Skills: Astrogate +7, Bluff +5, Climb +4, Com-
puter Use +7, Demolitions +5, Hide +13,
Knowledge (Corellia) +7, Knowledge
(spacer lore) +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +13, Pilot +15, Read/Write Basic, Repair +11, Speak
Basic, Speak Binary, Spot +9, Survival +7.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Starship Dodge (starfighter),
Starship Operation (starfighter), Stealthy, Weapon Focus (SoroSuub X-45 sniper rifle),
Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple
weapons, vibroweapons).

New Equipment: Sniper Rifle

Originally designed and marketed as a sporting
blaster called the "Riflette" the SoroSuub corpora-
tion attempted to have its cake and eat it to, with a
highly accurate sports rifle with an over-focused
beam. This produces a blaster-bolt thinner than nor-
mal, but much more lethal. It was released to the
civilian market first during the days of the Empire,
but after it proved to be all-too popular with assas-
sins and was reclassified as military-only. The X-45 is
extremely fragile, and as such is usually carried in a
case until needed.

Model: SoroSuub X-45 Sniper Rifle
Proficiency Group: Blaster Rifles
Cost: 1,000
Damage: 3d6+1
Critical: 18-20
Range Increment: 50 meters
Weight: 4 kg
Stun Damage: —
Type: Energy
Size: Medium



New Republic Academy where they hoped to groom her to be the next "Luke Skywalker." When it became apparent that her attunement was not strong enough and her piloting skills were viewed as less than satisfactory, she was transferred to remedial training under Colonel Repress. She did not fare much better there, leaving with a notation on her record for gross insubordination when she refused to help Repress in a black market scheme.

Voort "Piggy" saBinring

Voort is the sole surviving Gamorrean from an Imperial experiment that altered his biochemistry to make him "human." Helped to escape to the Alliance by his "creator," who hated the work the Empire forced him to do, his above-normal abilities allow him a greater-than-human attention span, control of his primal anger, and a genius-level understanding of mathematics. His squad mates have given Voort the nickname "Piggy," which he does not mind in the least, especially when it comes from Wedge and Wes, who say it reminds them of their good friend Jek Tono Porkins, who shared the nickname.

As a member of the New Republic navy, Voort received a great deal of persecution from other squadrons. While in his last squadron, his superior officer falsely accused Voort of striking him. The officer informed him that he would be court-martialed unless he transferred, so Voort complied and joined Wraith Squadron.

Dia Passik

Dia was brought into Wraith Squadron as Falynn Sandskimmer's replacement. Her experience with a variety of vehicles and space vessels and her knowledge of criminal organizations aids the squadron in its war against Zsinj. At times, the Twi'lek exhibits a cold-blooded ruthlessness, especially when dealing with Imperials. She points to her time as a slave as the reason for her icy behavior but insists she has moved on. Inside, however, Dia is crumbling and desperately needs to confide in someone.

Dia spent most of her adolescence as a slave. She used her appealing looks and position as an "innocent slave" to learn as much about ships and vehicles from pilots she met in the hopes of one day escaping.

Tyria Sarkin: Female Human Sct 5/Sol 3; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 19 (+6 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 51/13; Atk +7/+2 melee (2d4+1, vibrodagger) or +9/+4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Trailblazing, uncanny dodge (Dex to Def), skill mastery (Move Silently, Survival); SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +5; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 10. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Flight Suit, field kit, blaster pistol, vibrodagger, X-wing, Chunky (R5 unit).

Skills: Astrogate +8, Climb +6, Computer Use +9, Demolitions +10, Hide +11, Knowledge (Jedi lore) +9, Knowledge (Toprawa) +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +11, Pilot +14, Read/Write Basic, Repair +7, Speak Basic, Speak Binary, Speak Shyriiwook, Spot +6, Survival +7, Treat Injury +5.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Dodge, Force-Sensitive, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Starship Operation (starfighter), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Voort "Piggy" saBinring: Male Gamorrean Thug 2/Sol 6; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 14 (+2 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 45/15; Atk +10/+5 melee (1d3+2, punch) or +10/+5 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Humanized; SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +2; SZ M; FP 2; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 21, Wis 10, Cha 8. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Flight suit, field kit, blaster pistol, translator, X-wing, R2 unit.

Skills: Astrogate +16, Bluff +1, Computer Use +16, Demolitions +8, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Gamorr) +8, Knowledge (mathematics) +18, Knowledge (spacer lore) +8, Pilot +18, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Binary, Read/Write Gamorrean, Repair +8, Speak Basic, Speak Gamorrean.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Emphasis (Knowledge: mathematics, pilot), Spacer, Starship Dodge (starfighter), Starship Operation (starfighter), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).



Humanization

Piggy is the result of a complex Imperial experiment. Between 2nd and 3rd level, he underwent genetic modifications that made him essentially Human. He gained +4 Dexterity, +2 Intelligence, and +1 skill point per level. He lost his +1 species bonus to melee attacks.

As part of his "humanization," Piggy's captors implanted a removable translator device into his throat. It translates primitive Gamorrean grunts and squeals into tinny Basic, removing the normal Gamorrean restriction on speaking Basic. If removed, Piggy can no longer speak Basic, but can still understand it.

When that day came, she was more than prepared and took revenge on her "superiors" as well.

Shalla Nelprin

Shalla is the Wraiths' expert hand-to-hand combat instructor. Her knowledge of Imperial Intelligence doctrine and tactics is also an asset that Wedge recognized as something the Wraiths needed in their fight against Warlord Zsinj.

Shalla is the younger daughter of Republic-era intelligence agent Vyn Narcassan, who disappeared soon after Palpatine declared himself Emperor. Vyn became an enemy of the Empire and fled to Ingo, a backwater world far from Coruscant, with his two daughters. There, Shalla

and her older sister Vula were both raised with the skills and knowledge necessary to help them survive should they ever become a target of acquisition by Imperial Intelligence operatives. (Shalla's sister, Vula, is a combat instructor as well and trained Kell Tainer when he served with Page's commandoes.)

Lara Notsil

Lara's real name is Gara Petothel. She works as one of Zsinj's Intelligence operatives and was assigned to Admiral Apwar Trigit aboard the *Implacable* when the Wraiths attacked the Star Destroyer and crippled it. Gara escaped the doomed ship and waited to be picked up by the New Republic. She eventually returned to her homeworld of

Coruscant with a new identity: Lara Notsil. From there, she made contact with Zsinj and awaited her new assignment.

While waiting on Coruscant, Lara was visited by Ton Phanan and Face, who convinced her to join the Academy on the promise that they would convince Wedge to transfer her into Wraith Squadron. Inwardly not believing her good fortune, she agreed. However, as a member of the Wraiths, Lara is beginning to wonder whether she might have been fighting for the wrong side all this time.

Elassar Targon

Elassar, unlike the original Wraiths, has a spotless record and a reputation as an amicable pilot, making him a sort of outcast among outcasts. He volunteered solely for the opportunity to be able to fly with

Wraith Squadron

Wedge Antilles. Elassar serves as Wraith Squadron's medic and brings his own devilish humor to the job. This has caught the attention of Face, who had been good friends with another Wraith who was both a medic and a comedian. Elassar will never be Ton Phanan's replacement, but he sure is a good imitation.

Cubber

Cubber is Wraith Squadron's chief mechanic who also worked in the same capacity for Rogue Squadron. When not fixing X-wings Cubber spends most of his time drinking, dreaming of retirement, and rehashing inspiring stories for the young pilots.



Cubber: Male Human Tech Specialist 10; Init +1 (Dex); Def 17 (+6 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 38/10; Atk +7/+2 melee (1d3, punch) or +8/+3 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Research, instant mastery (Demolitions), expert (Craft: starship weapons, Repair), tech specialty (mastercraft: starship weapons +2); SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +4; SZ M; FP 3; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 9. Challenge Code: C.
Equipment: Tool kit, comlink, blaster pistol.

Skills: Astrogate +10, Computer Use +15, Craft (droids) +16, Craft (starfighters) +16, Craft (starship weapons) +20, Demolitions +15, Disable Device +12, Knowledge (spacer lore) +15, Pilot +12, Read/Write Basic, Repair +23, Speak Basic.

Feats: Gearhead, Skill Emphasis (Craft: droids, Craft: starfighters, Craft: starship weapons, Repair), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Squeaky

Squeaky is an irritable 3PO series protocol droid assigned to the Wraiths as their quartermaster. As a part of his colorful past, Squeaky served aboard Princess Leia's *Tantive IV*. Eventually captured when the

ship fell to Darth Vader, Squeaky ended up on Kessel with other captured droids. There, he orchestrated an escape plan and made his way back to the Alliance. Before coming to Wraith Squadron, Squeaky served as the temperamental waiter in the DownTime lounge.

Squeaky: Walking Protocol Droid Diplomat 3; Init +0; Def 11 (+1 armor); Spd 8m; VP/WP —/13; Atk +1 melee (1d6, punch) or +1 ranged; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +3; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 10. Challenge Code: A.

Equipment: Heuristic processor, recording unit (audio), self-destruct system, translator unit (DC 6), vocabulator.

Skills: Computer Use +9, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (etiquette) +12, Knowledge (security) +9, Knowledge (spacer lore) +9, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Binary, Speak Basic, Speak Binary.

Unspent Skill Points: 11.

Feats: Skill Emphasis (Diplomacy, Knowledge: etiquette), Weapon Group Proficiency (simple weapons).

Dia Passik: Female Twi'lek Frig 1/Sol 6; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 17 (+5 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 41/11; Atk +7/+2 melee (1d3+1, punch) or +8/+3 ranged (3d8, blaster pistol); SQ Low-light vision; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +1; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 9, Cha 14. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Flight Suit, field kit, blaster pistol, X-wing, R2 unit.

Skills: Astrogate +9, Bluff +3, Computer Use +10, Gather Information +6, Knowledge (starships) +7, Knowledge (streetwise) +15, Knowledge (vehicles) +7, Pilot +15, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Ryl, Repair +11, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Lekku, Speak Ryl, Speak Shyriiwook, Spot +3.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Gearhead, Improved Initiative, Skill Emphasis (Knowledge: streetwise, Pilot), Starship Dodge (starfighter), Starship Operation (starfighter), Starship Point Blank Shot (starfighter), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Shalla Nelprin: Female Human Sct 4/Sol 5/Elite Trooper 1; Init +3 (Dex); Def 19 (+6 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 85/16; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+2, crit 20, punch) or +12/+7 ranged; SQ Trailblazing, uncanny dodge (Dex to Def); SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +5; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 10. Challenge Code: D.

Equipment: Flight Suit, field kit, blaster pistol, vibrodagger, X-wing, R2 unit.

Skills: Astrogate +14, Climb +4, Computer Use +10, Demolitions +12, Hide +7, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (ISB) +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +9, Pilot +15, Read/Write Basic, Repair +6, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Shyriiwook, Spot +8, Survival +10, Treat Injury +9.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Dodge, Martial Artist, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Starship Operation (starfighter), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Wraith Squadron:

Wraith 1: Wedge Antilles

(Leader of Flight One)

Wraith 2: Jesmin Ackbar

Wraith 3: Falynn Sandskimmer

Wraith 4: Eurrsk "Grinder" Thri'ag

Wraith 5: Kell Tainer (Leader of Flight Two)

Wraith 6: Hohass "Runt" Ekwesh

Wraith 7: Ton Phanan

Wraith 8: Garik "Face" Loran

Wraith 9: Myn Donos

Wraith 10: Tyria Sarkin

Wraith 11: Wes Janson

(Leader of Flight Three, XO)

Wraith 12: Voort "Piggy" saBingring

CHANGES FOR IRON FIST:

Wraith 2: Castin Donn

Wraith 3: Wes Janson

(Leader of Flight Three, XO)

Wraith 4: Dia Passik

Wraith 10: Shalla Nelprin

Wraith 11: Tyria Sarkin

Wraith 13: Lara Notsil

CHANGES FOR SOLO COMMAND:

Wraith Leader: Wedge Antilles

Wraith 1: Garik "Face" Loran

(Leader of Flight One)

Wraith 2: Lara Notsil

Wraith 3: Myn Donos

Wraith 4: Tyria Sarkin

Wraith 7: Dia Passik

Wraith 8: Voort "Piggy" saBingring

Wraith 9: Shalla Nelprin

Wraith 10: Wes Janson

(Leader of Flight Three, XO)

Wraith 11: Elassar Targon



Wraith Squadron Honor Roll

Jesmin Ackbar: Admiral Ackbar's niece, Jesmin worked as Wraith Squadron's communications expert. She was killed in action over the pilot moon New Blood.

Falynn Sandskimmer: A native of Tatooine, Falynn was an expert on ground vehicles. She regularly flew one of the TIE fighters captured by the squadron. Falynn was killed in action in the battle against the *Implacable*.

"Grinder" Thri'ag: Nicknamed Grinder, this Bothan male served as the squadron's expert code-slicer. He was killed in action in the battle against the *Implacable*.

Ton Phanan: Ton was the squadron's first medical officer and best friends with Face. He possessed a rare allergy to bacta. Ton was critically injured when shot down by one of Zsinj's TIE pilots on Halmad. He later died from his injuries.

Castin Donn: A native of Coruscant, Castin was an expert slicer. He died in action while on a covert mission aboard the *Iron Fist*.

Lara Notsil: Female Human Sc 6/Sol 2; Init +3 (Dex); Def 20 (+7 class, +3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 43/12; Atk +6/+1 melee (1d6, crit 20, punch) or +9/+4 ranged (3d8, blaster pistol) or +9/+4 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SQ Illicit barter, better lucky than good, sneak attack +2d6; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +3; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 2; Rep 1; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 14. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Flight Suit, field kit, blaster pistol, hold-out blaster, disguise and gadget case, X-wing, Tonin (R5 unit).

Skills: Astrogate +13, Bluff +14, Computer Use +13, Demolitions +8, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +8, Disguise +13, Entertain (acting) +5, Forgery +7, Gather Information +11, Hide +6, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (holonet) +13, Knowledge (ISB) +8, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Pilot +17, Read/Write Basic, Speak Basic, Speak Binary, Speak Huttese, Spot +9.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Low Profile, Martial Artist, Mimic, Skill Emphasis (Bluff, Pilot), Starship Operation (starfighter), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Elassar Targon: Male Devaronian Sol 4/Tech Specialist 4; Init +2 (Dex); Def 16 (+4 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 41/10; Atk +7/+2 melee (1d3, punch) or +9/+4 ranged (3d8, blaster pistol); SQ Research, instant mastery (Spot), tech specialty (surgical specialist +1); SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 2; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 12. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Flight suit, field kit, 4 medkits, surgery kit, blaster pistol, X-wing, R2 unit.

Skills: Astrogate +9, Computer Use +11, Gather Information +6, Knowledge (biology) +8, Knowledge (Devaron) +5, Knowledge (medicine) +6, Knowledge (spacer lore) +5, Pilot +18, Profession (doctor) +7, Read/Write Devaronese, Speak Basic, Speak Devaronese, Speak Huttese, Speak Shyriiwook, Spot +6, Treat Injury +18.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Gearhead, Spacer, Starship Operation (starfighter), Surgery, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

RUNNING THE BELT

A Deadly Pilot Challenge for
the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game

BY JD WIKER

ILLUSTRATED BY COREY MACOUREK

If Lando Calrissian has a gift for anything, it's knowing how to find money. From gas mining on Bespin to gem diving on Yavin 4, Calrissian always finds profit opportunities in the most mundane things. On Dubrillion, Calrissian's credit generator is a game of skill called running the belt.

The Dubrillion system has an asteroid belt known as Lando's Folly, about 20 kilometers thick and several dozen kilometers wide, just outside the orbits of the worlds Dubrillion and Destrillion and ringing the entire system. Bypassing this belt is simple work for any pilot, and even passing through it is not terribly difficult; mining ships do it all the time. But Lando, in his typical style, decided that he could make money by setting up gambling on who could last the longest *inside* the asteroid field, flying *against* the "current." Pilots, Lando believed, would flock from all over the Outer Rim to prove their skill against Lando's Folly. Of course, wherever a contest of skill sprang up, so did betting. All Lando needed to do was to overcome the inherent "suicide factor" and advertise to the galaxy.

Acquiring *Belt-Runner I*, a space station capable of extending its shields around other ships, and tweaking the safety features of a small squadron of modified Imperial-surplus TIE starfighters, Lando launched his profit center. Just as he'd predicted, hotshot pilots and gamblers flocked to Dubrillion, looking to make a reputation, a fortune, or both.

Characters who wish to try their luck have two options: a solo run aboard one of Calrissian's three modified TIE advanced $\times 1$ fighters, or a tandem run with a copilot in one of his two modified TIE bombers. Always one with an eye on profit, Lando charges a nonre-

fundable 2,500-credit "damage deposit," claiming that the perception of impending doom both weeds out the timid and lends an element of risk to the game—as if flying a TIE fighter into an asteroid field weren't risky enough. Lando has been known to waive this fee in special cases, since the real money comes from the betting.

Belt-Runner I

Originally constructed as an asteroid-mining base, *Belt-Runner I* has seen better days, but when Lando Calrissian purchased the space station, he had grand dreams for refurbishing it—as the centerpiece of an obstacle course.

Belt-Runner I has been modified to heavily upgrade its paltry shields and to allow it to project those shields several thousand kilometers away, to cover other ships—in this case, modified Imperial-surplus TIE fighters. Not that Calrissian has any designs on fielding squadrons of shielded TIE fighters—they are merely the vessels in which pilots can attempt to set record times in his running-the-belt game, played out in Dubrillion's chaotic asteroid field. (Note that this space station and the two TIE models that follow have prices only for used models, since these craft are no longer in production in The New Jedi Order era.)

The shield projectors of *Belt-Runner I* can cover ships at sensor range, providing up to 600 shield points to any given ship—more than enough to survive a head-on collision with one of Dubrillion's asteroids, thus ensuring the safety of those who play the game.



Belt-Runner I can also split these shield points among multiple ships—as it does during the Yuuzhan Vong attack on Dubrillion, when *Belt-Runner I* provides shields for TIE fighters piloted by Jaina, Jacen, and Anakin Solo.

Modified TIE Advanced $\times 1$

Sienar Systems made many prototype TIE models in the years just before and immediately after the Battle of Yavin. One of the most successful of these was the TIE Advanced $\times 1$, which for years was used by the elite of the Empire, including Darth Vader. Larger than a standard TIE, the $\times 1$ mounts more powerful engines, heavier

Craft: *Belt-Runner I*; **Class:** Space Station; **Cost:** 18,000,000 (used only); **Size:** Small (28.4 m); **Initiative:** +2 (-2 size, +4 crew); **Crew:** 86 (Skilled +4); **Passengers:** 4; **Cargo Capacity:** 560 metric tons; **Consumables:** 1 month; **Hyperdrive:** None; **Maximum Speed:** Docking; **Maneuver:** -2 (-2 size, +4 crew, -4 engine quality); **Defense:** 18 (-2 size, +10 armor); **Shield Points:** 680; **Hull Points:** 375; **DR:** 20.
Weapon: 20 turbolasers; **Fire Arc:** 1 battery front, 1 battery left, 1 battery right, 1 battery rear; **Attack Bonus:** +8 (-2 size, +4 crew, +6 fire control, +4 battery fire, -4 engine quality); **Damage:** 7d10 \times 5; **Range Modifiers:** PB -6, S -4, M -2, L +0.

Craft: Modified Sienar Fleet Systems TIE Advanced $\times 1$; **Class:** Starfighter; **Cost:** 78,400 (used only); **Size:** Diminutive (7.8 m long); **Initiative:** +12 (+4 size, +8 crew); **Crew:** 1; **Passengers:** None; **Cargo Capacity:** 150 kg; **Consumables:** 5 days; **Hyperdrive:** $\times 4$; **Maximum Speed:** Ramming; **Maneuver:** +12 (+4 size, +8 crew); **Defense:** 24 (+4 size, +10 armor); **Shield Points:** None; **Hull Points:** 90; **DR:** 5.
Weapon: Heavy blaster cannons (2 fire-linked); **Fire Arc:** Front; **Attack Bonus:** +8 (+4 size, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 6d10 \times 2; **Range Modifiers:** PB -2, S -4, M/L n/a.
Weapon: Proton torpedo launcher (16 torpedoes); **Fire Arc:** Front; **Attack Bonus:** +8 (+4 size, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 9d10 \times 2; **Range Modifiers:** PB +0, S/M/L n/a.

Craft: Sienar Fleet Systems TIE Bomber; **Class:** Starfighter; **Cost:** 72,500 (used only); **Size:** Tiny (7.8 m long); **Initiative:** +2 (+2 size); **Crew:** 2; **Passengers:** None; **Cargo Capacity:** 15 metric tons (bomb bay); **Consumables:** 2 days; **Hyperdrive:** $\times 6$; **Maximum Speed:** Attack; **Maneuver:** +2 (+2 size); **Defense:** 22 (+2 size, +10 armor); **Shield Points:** None; **Hull Points:** 130; **DR:** 5.
Weapon: Point laser cannons (2 fire-linked); **Fire Arc:** Front; **Attack Bonus:** +6 (+2 size, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 3d10 \times 2; **Range Modifiers:** PB +0, S -2, M/L n/a.
Weapon: Concussion missile launcher (16 heavy missiles); **Fire Arc:** Front; **Attack Bonus:** +9 (+2 size, +7 fire control); **Damage:** 9d10 \times 2; **Range Modifiers:** PB +0, S/M/L n/a.

blasters, a more durable hull, bent solar wings (giving it a lower profile), shield generators, and even a modest hyperdrive. However, the $\times 1$ carries only five days' worth of supplies, limiting the distance a pilot would want to travel through hyperspace.

The TIE Advanced $\times 1$ models that Lando Calrissian uses for his running-the-belt game have been altered to include proton torpedo launchers, though at the cost of internal shields. Of course, in most circumstances the shielding provided by *Belt-Runner I* is more than sufficient.

Modified TIE Bomber

The TIE bomber was once the Empire's assault bomber, designed to make precision strikes against starships and ground installations, rather than engaging other starfighters. The ship has a double-pod hull, with one pod acting as the cockpit and the other as a weapons bay. Although it is no longer than a TIE interceptor, the bomber's width and mass make it a Tiny ship rather than a Diminutive one. Calrissian's modifications to the two TIE bombers in his belt-running "fleet" include redesigning the cockpit as a two-seater, to test the skills of pilot/copilot teams.

Making a Belt Run

The goal of running the belt is to see how long one can stay inside the asteroid belt. If

the pilot strays outside the field—as defined by the monitoring space station—the run ends. Since running the belt is a test of prolonged skill and engineering know-how, pilots fly one-at-a-time in one of Lando's ships. *Belt-Runner I* protects the pilot by covering the ship with much of its own shield power. All that remains is for the pilot to enter the belt and try not to get knocked clear. The number of rounds spent in the belt is the pilot's score.

Running the belt does not require any map, template, or other method of tracking the starship's location. The only variables you need to keep track of are your ship's speed, the number of shield points provided by *Belt-Runner I*, whether you're "hugging the rim" or performing "risky flying" (see Belt Running Tactics, below), and how many rounds you've been in the belt. If you lose control, you'll need to note the number of consecutive rounds your ship is out of control.

BASIC BELT RUN SEQUENCE

Step 0: The pilot leaves *Belt-Runner I* and enters the belt at cruising speed.

Step 1: The player generates hazards for the round, consulting the Speed in the Belt table and the Asteroid Hazards table. She picks two hazards (usually the two with the lowest DCs) to attempt to avoid. Remaining hazards are ignored.

Step 2: The player makes her first of two maneuvers for the round. She then attempts to avoid the first hazard. Failure might lead to the Failed Maneuvers section and might also lead to determining whether she is knocked out of the belt.

Step 3: The player makes her second of two maneuvers as above and attempts to avoid the second hazard.

Step 4: If the pilot is still in the belt at the end of the round, the player marks one more complete round in the belt and returns to Step 1. If not, the player goes to step 5.

Step 5: Total the number of rounds in the belt, then determine whether the player gets a Reputation point.

11 RUNNING THE BELT

GENERATING ASTEROID HAZARDS

Because the pilots move against the flow of the belt, the asteroid hazards commence as soon as the run begins. A pilot going faster suffers penalties to his Pilot checks but gets more choices for which asteroids he needs to avoid.

Each round, the player generates a number of hazards (incoming asteroids) according to his ship's speed, as given on the Speed in the Belt table below. The number in the "Modifier" column applies to any Pilot checks the character makes in the current round as well as rolls on the Asteroid Hazards table.

The hazards are generated on the table below. Roll a d20 for each hazard that must be generated, modifying each roll according to the ship's current speed (see the table above). Each type of hazard is represented by the DC of the Pilot check needed to avoid it; a DC 40 hazard is much more difficult to avoid than a DC 15 hazard, for instance.

The player then chooses two of the generated hazards to tackle this round, noting the DCs for the Pilot checks she has selected to undertake. (This does not count as a "hit" for purposes of some prestige classes' starfighter evasion ability.)

While this table is for the Lando's Folly asteroid belt, GMs can use it as the basis for similar space hazards, by adjusting the results for lower (or higher) Pilot check DCs to avoid hazards.

BELT-RUNNING TACTICS

Belt runners employ two useful tactics for lasting longer in the field.

Hugging the Rim: The asteroid belt is thicker in the middle, so flying there is rougher than at the edges. Thus, many pilots choose to stick to the edge (adding +5 to rolls to generate hazards). The danger is that a pilot can be knocked out of the belt more easily, thus ending one's run.

Whenever a pilot loses control while hugging the rim, roll a d6 rather than a d10 to determine whether the ship is knocked out of the belt (see Leaving the Belt, below).

Risky Flying: A pilot can gamble against the asteroid field itself, by taking a chance that a clever piloting maneuver won't put her in the path of an asteroid she simply can't avoid.

When making a Pilot check to avoid a hazard, a pilot can add a bonus on the check (and associated loss of control checks) less than or equal to her number of ranks in the Pilot skill. This bonus stacks with her skill modifier and any other bonuses or penalties that apply to the check. If she uses this extra bonus, she must then subtract that number from all Pilot checks she makes in the next round. Risky flying penalties are cumulative, so if a pilot uses risky flying on two successive actions, she will suffer the total of those penalties on the third action. Risky flying penalties reset to 0 at the end of any round when the pilot doesn't use risky flying.

Example: Jaina encounters a particularly difficult hazard (DC 35) and decides to use risky flying. She has 6 ranks in Pilot, and she applies the full number for an extra +6 bonus on her Pilot check to make her skill check on this action. Her skill modifier for Pilot checks is +12, so on this check she has a +18 bonus. (For the purpose of this example, assume that Jaina is piloting her ship at cruising speed, which gives her neither a bonus nor a penalty on her Pilot checks.) With a d20 roll of 17, she scrapes by the asteroid.

On her next round, Jaina encounters a difficult pair of asteroids (a DC 25 hazard and a DC 30 hazard). Because she used a +6 bonus for risky flying last round, she suffers a -6 penalty on both of her Pilot checks this round. This penalty effectively reduces her bonus in this round from +12 to +6.

Jaina can use risky flying again this round to help offset the penalties from her last use of it, hoping that next round's obstacles won't be so severe. She adds only +3 to her Pilot check against the DC 25 hazard, bringing her bonus up to +9 for this check—meaning that she needs a roll of 16 or higher. She succeeds again and then uses the full +6 for her Pilot check against the DC 30 hazard. This time, with a total bonus of +12, she needs a roll of 18 or higher to succeed.

The next round, her penalty will be -9 for both of her checks (-3 for the first hazard in the second round, and -6 for the second hazard in the second round). She will make both checks at only a +3 bonus (her normal +12 skill modifier being mostly offset by the -9 penalty) unless she again decides to use risky flying. Jaina hopes that the asteroids she encounters next round will be easier to avoid, or she'll be in real trouble.

FAILED MANEUVERS

As with normal maneuvering, a failed Pilot check while running the belt means the maneuver has failed. If the Pilot check fails by 10 or more, the pilot might lose control of the starship. (A pilot cannot lose control due to a failed opposed check, however.) The pilot makes another Pilot check against the same DC as the original (failed) check. If the second check succeeds, the pilot maintains control but still fails to perform the desired maneuver.

Asteroid Hazards

| d20 | Pilot Check DC |
|------------|----------------|
| 4 or less | 40 |
| 5-8 | 35 |
| 9-12 | 30 |
| 13-15 | 25 |
| 16-18 | 20 |
| 19-20 | 15 |
| 21-22 | 10 |
| 23 or more | 5 |

Loss of Starship Control

| Failed by ... | Effect | Penalty |
|---------------|--------|---------|
| 5 or less | Skew | -2 |
| 6-10 | Yaw | -5 |
| 11-15 | Bump | -5 |
| 16-20 | Spin | -10 |
| 21 or more | Crash | -10 |

Speed in the Belt

| Speed | Modifier | Number of Hazards |
|----------|----------|---|
| Stop* | +4 | Roll no hazards, and the run ends |
| Docking | +2 | Roll two hazards and try to avoid both |
| Cruising | +0 | Roll three hazards and try to avoid two |
| Attack | -2 | Roll four hazards and try to avoid two |
| Ramming | -4 | Roll five hazards and try to avoid two |

*A stopped ship cannot make Pilot checks except to increase its speed.

If this second check fails, the pilot has lost control of his vessel. Compare the pilot's degree of failure (the number by which he missed his second check) to the Loss of Starship Control table to determine the effect. Chapter 11: Starships of the core rulebook provides complete descriptions of the effects of skew, yaw, and spin.

Bump: Bumps a randomly determined target (usually an asteroid, but could include other ships) within its point blank range ring. Treat this as if the ship had rammed the target, but damage is only one-quarter normal (round fractions down).

In most cases, a collision of this kind with an asteroid has no effect on the asteroid. If the ship running the belt is being protected by a shielding ship, such as *Belt-Runner I*, you can forgo calculating damage to the ship itself. If the ship is not so protected or collides with an unprotected vessel, calculate damage as normal. (See Ramming and Starship Collision in Chapter 11: Starships of the core rulebook.)

The pilot must also immediately make a Pilot check (DC 20; be sure to apply the -5 penalty from the table above). If this check fails, consult the Loss of Starship Control table again for an additional effect, treating a second bump result as a crash.

Crash: Crashes into a randomly determined target (starship or obstacle) at point blank range. (If no other vessels are within point blank range, the ship has struck an asteroid.) Treat this as if the ship had rammed the target. In most cases, a collision of this kind with an asteroid has no effect on the asteroid.

If the ship running the belt is being protected by a shielding ship, such as *Belt-Runner I*, you can forgo calculating damage to the ship itself. If the ship is not so protected, or collides with an unprotected vessel, calculate damage as normal.

The pilot must also immediately make a Pilot check (DC 20; be sure to apply the -10

penalty from the table above). If this check succeeds, no additional effect occurs. If it fails, consult the table again for an additional effect. If the second result is also a crash, the run is over. (In starship combat, it just means more damage.)

LEAVING THE BELT

A ship can leave the belt in one of two ways: voluntarily, by aiming for the belt's edge; or accidentally, by being bounced out of the belt. Leaving the belt voluntarily requires declaring the intent to do so, then generating 1d4 more rounds' worth of hazards to avoid.

An out-of-control ship might also cross the boundary of the belt, ending the run. At the beginning of any action during which a ship is out of control, the ship's pilot rolls a d10. If the result is equal to or less than the number of consecutive actions the ship has been out of control, the ship is bounced out of the belt.

Example: Jacen fails his Pilot check to avoid a hazard so heinously that he crashes into an asteroid. At the end of the action on which Jacen lost control, he rolls a d10. If the result is 1, he bounces off the asteroid and out of the belt, ending his run.

Jacen doesn't roll a 1, but he also doesn't regain control on his next action. At the end of that action, he again rolls a d10. This time, if he rolls a 1 or a 2, his run is over, and he clears the belt.

BELT-RUNNING REWARDS

A pilot gains a Reputation point the first time she gets a score of 20 or more rounds.


Hazard Size, Speed, and Direction

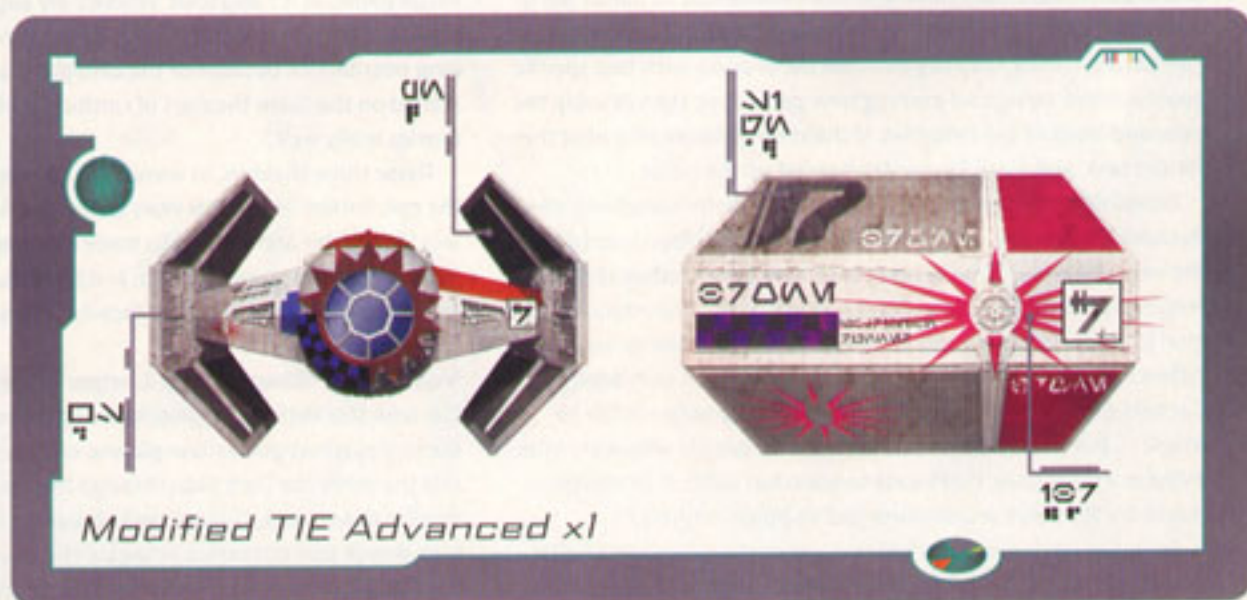
Use the tables below to determine an asteroid's size, speed, and direction when necessary.

| d20 Roll | Obstacle Size |
|----------|---------------|
| 1 | Colossal |
| 2 | Gargantuan |
| 3-4 | Huge |
| 5-7 | Large |
| 8-11 | Medium-size |
| 12-14 | Small |
| 15-17 | Tiny |
| 18-19 | Diminutive |
| 20 | Fine |

| d20 Roll | Obstacle Speed |
|----------|----------------|
| 1-4 | Stationary |
| 5-8 | Docking |
| 9-12 | Cruising |
| 13-16 | Attack |
| 17-20 | Ramming |

| d20 Roll | Obstacle Direction |
|----------|----------------------|
| 1-7 | Moving Away |
| 8-13 | Moving Perpendicular |
| 14-20 | Moving Toward |

She gets a second point the first time she gets a score of 30 or more rounds. She gets a third point the first time she gets a score of 40 or more rounds. She gets a fourth point the first time she gets a score of 50 or more rounds. Four Reputation points is the maximum number a pilot can get for running the belt. 



Modified TIE Advanced x1

THE FORCE WILL BE WITH YOU

Wizards of the Coast Unveils Its New
Star Wars Trading Card Game

BY MICHAEL G. RYAN

As *Attack of the Clones* reaches theaters in May, Wizards of the Coast releases a new *Star Wars* trading card game. Designed by Magic creator Richard Garfield, the game's format parallels the story-telling wizardry of the films by taking the struggle for the galaxy from space battles to ground assaults to one-on-one combat.

Crafting a New Galaxy

The Wizards of the Coast design team—Richard Garfield, Mark Rosewater, Robert Gutschera, and Skaff Elias—had its hands full in coming up with a game that would appeal to novice and veteran gamers alike. Thus, they began in the fall of 2000 with two specific goals in mind: Design an exciting new game first, then develop the nuts-and-bolts of the initial set. Richard Garfield spearheaded the former task, and Mark Rosewater headed up the latter.

Establishing the right design had to come before anything else. Because there are so many fans who have never played card games, the new game had to be accessible to new players while still challenging veterans. No one was more aware of the importance of this goal than the game's designer. "I wanted to make the game very different from any of the other games Wizards has ever done," Garfield explains. "Yet I wanted the complexity to be similar to Magic... but not simpler. I was hoping that people who were interested in a new game that's easy to learn but difficult to master might try *Star Wars* and discover just as much richness."

From the beginning, Garfield envisioned the design as a battle game. "There are many units in *Star Wars*—ships and armies and

individuals," he points out. "It might be unfair to make Harry Potter into a game about fighting, and while there's more going on than that in *Star Wars*, it would still be a good reflection of the films.

"In terms of a battle game, I wanted to reinforce the idea that a big unit stays around for a while. It takes damage, makes repairs, takes more hits, and stays in the game for a longer period of time. But if you're going to do a battle card game, you're really restricted by the layout—some people would say that layout is the heart of a battle game, as it's all about 'Where's my airplane?' 'Where's my dragon?' 'Where's my army?' We had to throw away all those mapping possibilities because of the card game aspect. Eventually, we settled on the three theaters of conflict. That seemed to reflect the movies really well."

These three theaters, or arenas as they are now called, are where the epic battles of the *Star Wars* universe take place: **Space**, where a Jedi Starfighter and *Slave I* can trade fire; **Ground**, where AT-ATs clash with Rebel snowspeeders; and **Character**, where Darth Maul and Obi-Wan Kenobi can fight face-to-face again.

Your First Step into a Larger World

The new *Star Wars* TCG makes learning the rules simple. The introductory playmat guides two players, one controlling the Light Side and the other the Dark Side, through the steps of battle for each of three arenas: Space, Ground, and Character. The object of the game is to defeat your opponent in two of the three arenas by winning battles and driving the enemy from those arenas.



Unlike many combat-based games, the battle sequence in *Star Wars* is not governed so much by who acts first and who acts next but rather by which cards in each arena have the greater Speed. This aspect makes the combat much more exciting, as one player might attack twice in succession in Space this turn, only to have his or her opponent add cards to that arena and change the order of attack next turn. Players attack by rolling a number of dice equal to a card's Power, then calculating hits for each 4, 5, or 6 rolled. Why include dice with a card game? Garfield explains, "Dice give a character depth, because that character then has some range."

After you learn the basics, you can add more sophisticated rules to the game, making the experience even more strategic. These include rules for enhancing a character, playing one Anakin Skywalker card atop another to create a more powerful Anakin, as well as rules that govern precisely which cards and how many can go in either a Light Side or a Dark Side's deck. "In your first game, you can learn some of the rules and have a good time," says Robert Gutschera, who—along with Mike Elliott, Brian Schneider, Dave Eckelberry, and Henry Stern—was part of the team that developed and expanded the game's initial design. "And then as you buy boosters and go on, you can learn more rules and see some of the more interesting yet complicated parts of the game."

The cards themselves add new rules, of course, which is the golden design rule of trading card games. With more new cards come more new rules, allowing the game to grow from release to release.

Jedi's Counsel

The cards themselves continue to undergo development, many of them with intriguing names like "Execution in the Arena" and "Wedding of Destiny," both of which are Mission cards. Interestingly, among the Character cards, Anakin Skywalker, Count Dooku, and Jango Fett appear in multiple forms. Richard Garfield had a particular approach in mind when introducing more than one version of the popular characters into the initial design of the game.

"I definitely wanted to see people who were opening up packs for the first time to be playing with characters they recognized and understood," Richard says. "A lot of IP-based games try to save those characters to be rare, so you end up playing with obscure characters like 'the cook's son.' That seems so evil to me. You want to be playing with the key, central characters. But at the same time, I also wanted to have the rare, cool Darth Vader card, for example. It's an apparent contradiction—I want these cards to be common yet rare. The solution we settled on was multiple copies of each character, and as you play them, you build them up, they stack to get some combined power."

The appeal of this solution is obvious—characters acquire layers of depth and abilities as they grow from simpler, more common versions into more powerful rare cards. Obi-Wan Kenobi, for example, appears in three different versions in the first set for the new game. Even C-3PO currently exists in two versions, but the big questions remain. Will the Anakin card be able to evolve into Darth Vader? Do the Senator Palpatine and Emperor Palpatine cards combine?

TRADING CARD GAME

Using the Force

So, what are the hot cards in the new *Star Wars* trading card game? "Well, the Jedi cards are pretty good," Mark Rosewater says in obvious understatement. As fans might expect, cards that use the Force will prove to be among the most powerful cards. In game terms, the Force offers some very exciting effects, though even the Force is limited—it's possible to "use up" the Force through various actions.

Jedi can use the Force to dodge blows, to deflect them, and to increase their own power; all of these actions deplete a player's Force. Players can also use the Force to play certain combat cards that change the course of battles. Finally, some cards actually generate additional Force, giving players a chance to replenish this resource as the game progresses. Managing the Force carefully when constructing a deck will determine whether a player's deck focuses on the Jedi or on influencing combat cards.

"The Jedi and the Sith in the films are—surprise, surprise—the best fighters," Mark points out. "We wanted to reflect that power level in the game, so the natural place to delegate that power was in key character cards." In Magic, cards that cost 6 mana to use—that is, the bigger creatures—are usually the top-end cards that players are willing to try to use in their decks. Costs above 6 tend to be prohibitive. But in the *Star Wars* trading card game, "the big get pretty big," Robert Gutschera notes. "There are some 9- and 10-cost units that are very playable." For example, multiple versions of Anakin Skywalker, Yoda, and other central characters appear in the sets, and paying more gets a player a more powerful version of that character.

"In the films, the heroes are the heroes for a reason," Mark points out. "They're good at what they do, though some are better in different circumstances. In a trading card game, there aren't a lot of absolutes. But the major characters in this game are, generally speaking, strong gameplay cards."

"That's a problem for developers," Garfield laughs.

Having this many characters with the same name allows narrow cards that target specific characters—"Darth Vader," for instance, as the design team envisioned having Darth Vader appear in almost every game. Other cards can target ships in Space or Ground forces. Naturally, the existence of cards with a particular focus can open the door to unusual interactions. "During playtest," Garfield says, "we really looked forward to seeing which character would be on the receiving end of a card we were calling 'I Am Your Father.' Vader ended up being General Veers's father more than once, as I recall."

As co-designer Robert Gutschera notes, however, there are other intriguing cards in the game besides the evolving Character cards. "The Power-pumping cards are nice all by themselves," he says, "but they work really well in combination with cards that have the ability to do Critical Hits. Also, there are several cards that combo well with great big units—for instance, 'prevent all damage to 1 unit,' 'heal 4 damage,' any of the cards that add Speed, because big units tend to be slow."

The New Hope

As players might expect, Wizards of the Coast intends to support its new *Star Wars* trading card game with a wide range of activities and products, including sanctioned tournaments, preconstructed decks (one for the Light Side and one for the Dark Side with fixed holo cards included), and promo cards. *Star Wars* TCG Associate Brand Manager Michael Kent notes that preconstructed tournament-level decks probably won't roll out until November (when Wizards expects to release its Episode IV base set). In fact, the fully supported Organized Play system will be one of the strongest features Wizards offers *Star Wars* TCG players, according to *Star Wars* TCG Brand Manager Carole Pucik. "Initially, tournaments will be constructed format, eventually evolving to include limited play," she says. "We're set to hold the first *Star Wars* TCG tournaments at the *Star Wars* Celebration II event in Indianapolis the first weekend of May. We're also planning to run a league to bring new players into the game, support weekly sanctioned tournaments at the store level, and produce annual Championship events." The projected tournament





Phantom Strategies

"Because you must win two out of the three arenas, thinking about how you're going to do that and investing your resources across those three is very important," co-designer Robert Gutschera advises. During the set-up phase and later as you build up more units, he advises, you'd like to create a situation in which you lose by a great deal in the arena you plan to sacrifice. "I know this is counter-intuitive," he says, "because you want to catch up in the arenas you're losing. But often, if your opponent has a lot of resources in one arena, let your opponent win by an overwhelming margin in one arena while you just barely win two." That way, you save your resources for the battles you intend to win.

Of course, your opponents are likely to think the same way and should be wary of over-committing to any one arena as well. "For example, if you see that you have Space won," Gutschera says, "you may not want to assign any more resources to it. But this leaves you vulnerable in that arena. Determining that balance will be one of the more strategic elements of the game."

"There's a rock-paper-scissors circle—a certain strategy beats another strategy, which beats a third, which can beat the first," Mark Rosewater adds. "We spent a lot of time trying to get the right balance so that players won't do something as simple as focus on two arenas and completely ignore the third." The R&D team plans to include deck construction rules that show players the requirements for certain levels of commitment to each of the arenas.

Even before development was finished, certain deck concepts became apparent. Bombard/Ion Cannon decks with a minimum of Characters, big unit decks, decks that maintain swarms of small

units (and corresponding support cards), decks that focus on cards with Critical Hit abilities and numerous plus-Power cards, droid decks, and decks that use a lot of Force in combination with Force-generating cards are all strong contenders for future decks. The strategies then develop as players learn the formats: Decks with small units require fewer Battle and Mission cards, for instance, so they might want to include expensive Battle cards to ensure that they can use all of their Force. Alternatively, decks with big units can afford to play more Battle cards, so they might want to include cheaper ones.

All of these strategies, Robert Gutschera points out, are "somewhat modular. By this I mean that you could pick more than one item from the above list in some cases . . . for example, you could do a big unit deck and have it be a high Force deck also, or you could do Bombard/Ion Cannon and add in droids (which are mostly in the Character arena). This modularity arises in part because there are three battle arenas, so if you do one thing in Space, you could do a different thing in Ground."

"You might think that the best rule would be 'Build whatever decks you want,'" he notes, "and that would allow the most interesting deck types. But with that many choices, only a couple end up being good enough to win. Instead, we're trying to come up rules that will actually be restrictive enough to allow more choices. That's really how it works. Requiring variety in decks—a four-of-a-kind rule, a rule that balances out the three arenas—without creating complicated rules is the end goal of a successful game."

THE FORCE WILL BE WITH YOU

system will provide worldwide ratings and rankings to bring greater meaning to the game.

Furthermore, the initial release itself features a premium set of holofoil cards, with each card in the set having its equivalent in holo form. The odds of finding one of these collectible premium cards is 1-in-33, or in one out of every three of the booster packs, which contain 11 cards each and will sell for \$3.29.

The second release is already well into design. Currently called Sith Rising and slated for release in July of 2002, it will continue to expand on the characters and events of *Attack of the Clones* while adding familiar faces, ships, and moments from *The Phantom Menace*. In time, the designers

and developers expect to revisit all of the films in the series, including the as-yet unscripted Episode III. The first set has its U.S. debut on April 23.

For Richard Garfield, designing TCGs just gets easier as time goes by, and the *Star Wars* game design was an exciting opportunity for him to engage his exceptional creative instincts once more. "You have a bigger box of tools," he says in looking back over past designs that influenced the new *Star Wars* game. "Every design I put behind me has a collection of mechanics to draw from. You begin taking a few from here, a few from there, to see what works together in a new way. And I like to develop tools, so I can put a new one in the box with each game if I like. I used to introduce new tools just because I could, but I realized I was doing players a disservice. After all, learning games is hard, and if

players can learn the game using rules they're already a little familiar with, that makes it more enjoyable for them. New tools should be added only if it really brings something exciting to the game."

Future expansions of the new TCG will explore the *Star Wars* galaxy in greater detail, incorporating elements from all six films and even the Expanded Universe. For now, however, the *Attack of the Clones* launch set arrives in April, when players can decide for themselves whether the new *Star Wars* trading card game is as exciting and challenging as its designers and developers feel it is. The initial feedback is promising, as one playtester noted, "Any game that lets me pit Yoda against Boba Fett in one-on-one combat is a game that I can't wait to play." **E**

CARD NAME

The name of the character, ground unit, or starship this card represents. Some characters have more than one card, each with different abilities.

BUILD COST

This is how much it costs to put this card in play. At the beginning of the game and every turn players get build points to spend on putting new cards into play.

KEY WORDS

This shows what type of card this is (Anakin is a character), as well as any other important information (he is also a Jedi).

AFFILIATION

Cards can be either Light Side, Dark Side, or Neutral. Anakin is a Light Side card.

CARD TEXT

This lists what the card can do when in play. Below the rules text, some cards have flavor text that has no game effect.

COLOR

Each different kind of card has a different color:

■ SPACE ■ GROUND ■ CHARACTER ■ MISSION ■ COMBAT

SPEED

In battle, speed determines the order cards attack in. The highest speed attacks first, followed by the next highest, and so on.

POWER

When a card attacks roll this many dice. Each die result of 4, 5, or 6 is a hit.

HEALTH

A card hit this many times must be discarded from play. Counters placed on the card keep track of hits.

UNIQUE INDICATOR

If a card represents someone or something unique, each different version will have a different letter here. This is version "C" of Anakin Skywalker.

CARD NUMBER/RARITY SYMBOL

The card number shows what number this is and how many cards are in the same set.

The rarity symbol shows that the card is either rare (★), uncommon (◆), or common (●). (The card pictured here is an unnumbered promo card.)



STANDARD CARD ANATOMY

Race for the Tessent

BY CRAIG R. CAREY, JASON FRY &
DANIEL WALLACE
ILLUSTRATED BY
RAMÓN PÉREZ



"The Tessent? Half-meter-tall chunk of rock. Clear in places, kind of milky in others, with these bands of color running through it. Folks from Alsakan think it looks like a farlus hawk with a felinx head, but I never thought so. The Ayrou? Maybe it was theirs. But if the feather-heads think so, means their guys couldn't sculpt either. That's kind of funny—you'd think two planets could find a decent artist between 'em so there wouldn't be this wild gundark chase. Tell you where I saw it? Not for all the t'bac on Annaj, mah bukee. You want the Tessent, you're on your own."

— testimony of Barzur Antilles (now deceased), Annaj House of Detention

The Moddell Sector might be remote from galactic events (at least until the time of *Return of the Jedi*), but it's still home to any number of intrigues and wild tales. Perhaps wildest of all is talk of the Tessent, a valuable chalcedony idol that supposedly hides a great secret.

The Tessent, talk has it, is lost or hidden somewhere in the sector. Exactly where depends on what yarn you hear. Some people say it's buried in the wreckage of an astrocartographic station on the surface of Ast Kikorie. One tale teller swears the tomb of a Dark Jedi hides it. Cantina talk is that it lies buried deep in a lost mine on Vasha. Others say it's lost in the unexplored worlds of the Monsua Nebula, or floating among the tumbling asteroids of Vex, or secreted on a lifeless rock around one of the sector's hundred-odd uninhabited red-dwarf stars.

Such tales have drawn treasure hunters into the hidden places of the Moddell

Sector for years without panning out. However, even those who believe cantina stories had best ask which chalcedony idol a given tale describes. Thanks to a quirk of galactic culture, there are stories of two different idols—both now called the Tessent. One idol originally belonged to the Ayrou of Maya Kovel, while the other disappeared from the Core World of Alsakan, countless light years away. No one seems to know how to tell one from the other. After all these years and all these yarns, no one seems to be able to keep straight which was lost where and what its secret might be.

"Race for the Tessent" is an adventure for 4–6 heroes averaging 5th level.

THE HUNT BEGINS

The heroes could be native sons and daughters of Moddell searching for the truth behind the local legend, would-be bounty hunters paid to go on a scavenger hunt, or adventuresome traders pursuing a tall tale

on a lark. In their travels through the sector, the heroes hear plenty of tales—a few true, most not, and many impossible to verify. What they'll never doubt is that many competitors—from Alsakan expatriates and relic collectors to treasure hunters and galactic riff-raff—are also searching for one or both idols. With big reward money at stake, these searchers will do most anything to get their hands (paws, claws, or tentacles) on either Tessent.

The following sections offer background on the two idols. Over the course of the adventure, the heroes should piece together this information from a variety of sources with any number of false starts and garbled renderings encountered along the way.

ALSAKAN'S PROTECTOR

In Alsakan legend, the tessent is a fierce avian with a feline head that appeared in times of crisis to aid the ancient kings of Archais, the bloodline from which most of Alsakan's great houses sprang. Saml Previl, the Prime Abseiler of Alsakan, reportedly rode the tessent into his final battle against the dukes of the Ten Valleys. After Previl and the Archais kings descended from him united the planet, the tessent became a common symbol of Alsakan and its culture. The Alsakan Guard adopted it as their emblem, and Alsakan merchants took to painting a tessent on the noses of their starships as a ward against pirates and mischance.

More than a millennium ago, an unknown Alsakan artist from the primitivist school of Collus Elder carved a block of milky chalcedony mined in the quarries of Archais into a tessent idol. The Tessent, as the idol became known, remained a prized possession of Alsakan until its mysterious disappearance shortly before the fall of the Empire.

The Tessent isn't particularly valuable for its chalcedony content—the mineral is cheaply mined in countless sectors, and it is



easily synthesized. Its value to patriotic Alsakans is immense. Alsakans have offered vast rewards for the idol's safe return, collectors of antiquities have scoured remote regions of the galaxy for clues to the Tessent's location, and underworld figures have killed to gain possession of the idol.

There are rumors, meanwhile, that the Tessent has a value beyond its cultural significance. Those whispers promise that the Tessent contains a key to unlocking one of Alsakan's deepest secrets. Some say the key is a set of galactic coordinates carved with a nanometer-sized laser tool in the base of the idol and visible under the right frequency of ultraviolet light. Others say the Tessent's heart holds a datachip, or a holographic transmitter that activates and plays a message when someone utters the right code phrase while holding the idol.

If so, what secret does the Tessent hold? It depends on whom you ask. Some say the Tessent is the key for finding an Alsakan vault containing a treasure hoard (including the planet's rarely seen crown jewels) that was used to back Alsakan's currency. Wilder tales, meanwhile, have it that the Tessent can lead those who discover its secret to a cache of weapons removed from the planet when Alasaka renounced violence—a cache big enough to turn a smart smuggler into a crime lord overnight, or to transform some rebel force arrayed against the galaxy's rulers into a formidable power.

Whatever the rumors, collectors of Tessent lore agree that the idol vanished from Alasaka more than a generation ago, whether stolen or sent offworld, and those who took it hid it in some remote region of the galaxy.

THE AYROU'S PAST

Neighbors of the Ayrou of Maya Kovel in the Moddell Sector know the skinny avians for their matchless ability as hagglers and their painfully shrill language of trills and shrieks. Cultural historians of the Inner Zuma region note the violent paradigm shifts that mark their culture, marveling at the way the species lets a cultural or religious debate consume it for a generation, then abruptly commits itself in virtual unanimity to a single path. What's more, the Ayrou are touchy about their past, with discredited philosophies or creeds can become sources of embarrassment that decent folk don't discuss. (The Vashans, as near-vassals of the Ayrou, have adopted this tradition of religious upheaval.)

No event in recent Ayrou history caused more tumult for the species than the first contact between Ayrou scouts and the Republic. When first contacted, the Ayrou followed a conservative religious tradition known as *il Madri*, best translated as "contemplation upon that stored away for meditation." Under *il Madri*, the Ayrou sought to lead ascetic lives marked by quiet action. They suppressed deeper feelings and explored them only through solo meditation. The Ayrou hoarded material gains and used them only when messages received during deep meditation indicated they should. After first contact, the Ayrou renounced *il Madri* utterly, adopting a vigorous, almost flashy ethic of mercantile expansion.

What really makes the beings from the Moddell shake their heads, however, is that the hierarchs of the *il Madri* chapterhouses

declared their accumulated wealth taboo. The contents of some vaults were placed aboard freighters and shot into Maya Kovel's sun; others were simply abandoned. According to one legend, the vast riches of Maya Kovel's Ur-Chapterhouse of *il Madri* were transported to a bolthole in the Kuna systems and sealed away, with the secret of their location encoded in a rough-hewn chalcedony idol of an Ayrou once used by the Ur-Hierarch as a tool for contemplation. That idol, it is said, was either stolen from the Ur-Chapterhouse during its whirlwind reconstruction into the Society for Self-Actualization or sent offworld by the Ur-Hierarch to be buried as a symbol of the Ayrou's break with the errors of the past.

THE TWO TESSENTS

Rather than presenting a set plot, this adventure offers a number of settings and scenarios for pursuing the Tessent. The GM is free to choose from these scenarios or combine them to create an adventure as simple or complex as desired. It's also up to the GM to decide which idol the heroes or their rivals may ultimately find.

No matter how events unfold, the heroes are likely to contend with two main groups of rivals in pursuing the idol or idols. Their chief rival is Follnor Callat, an Alsakan xenoarchaeologist with an unsavory reputation. Callat has hired a mysterious Mandalorian and a Blood Carver tracker to help him hunt the Alsakan Tessent. (While he has no interest in the Ayrou Tessent, Dr. Callat pursues rumors of that idol as well.) Callat's base of operations is Ast Kikorie, but he employs spies across the sector and is quick to hear of any leads the heroes are pursuing. After he does so, Callat and his hirelings are on the heroes' trail at once.

The heroes will also likely run afoul of the Kintan Gunrunners. The Gunrunners, a band of weapon smugglers, hide in the wastes of Sarafur. Of late the gang—in particular their ambitious lieutenant Tu'rc'yulir—has started to think that there's something to the local legends of the Tessent. With informers everywhere in the Moddell, the Gunrunners can wind up on the heroes' trail almost as quickly as Callat. The Gunrunners don't care which Tessent they find, figuring that either idol would make them rich. As an added complication, if the Gunrunners become serious about pursuing



Race for the Tesseract

the Tesseract, their rival, Korraj, and his band of

Thonner pirates might get involved in a bid to stop them.

Two Vashans might also have a prominent role in the search. The swordsman Poina Tuc-shol believes the Tesseract is a religious artifact and that unbelievers (non-Vashans) aren't fit to touch it. The caste theocrat Dochi At-Rial, meanwhile, has developed an intense curiosity about the idol. Tuc-shol and At-Rial are generally found on Vasha or Qina, but they can be thrown into mix almost anywhere.

Settings

Ast Kikorie

Though removed from the galaxy at large (and even the rest of the Moddell Sector), Ast Kikorie and its orbital stations are always abuzz with activity. Minor celebrities of academia are often seen wandering the narrow streets of Kikorie Port, and the academic reputation of the AST facilities, despite their distance from the Core and other prominent regions, is considerable.

TESSANT LORE ON AST KIKORIE

There are two local legends regarding the Tesseract on Ast Kikorie, the latter of which has brought Dr. Callat to the world.

The first legend is that the Ayrou secreted their sacred Tesseract idol on Ast Kikorie after their initial contact with Republic scouts. At the time, Ast Kikorie was the farthest extreme of space that unmanned Ayrou drones had explored. Navigation to Ast Kikorie

was exceptionally difficult, and the Ayrou thought (perhaps naively) the Republic scouts would not progress farther. This seems unlikely to most, as it is thought the Ayrou Tesseract contains coding which reveals vault coordinates in the Kuna system: Hiding the Tesseract on a hard-to-reach third location such as Ast Kikorie makes little sense—unless there was reason to hide the idol so far away. . . .

The second legend is given far greater merit by the Alsakan interests, Dr. Callat especially. Several of the investors who contributed funds to the astrocartographic facility in Ast Kikorie's orbit were Alsakan. Some believe a former Guard of Aldera was among those who took up residence on the world shortly after the facilities' first stage of completion, and that he held the Tesseract. Though the meteorite shower that downed the second station is well documented, the fate of those aboard remains something of a mystery. The Guardman is believed to have perished in the station's descent into the planet's atmosphere, but the Tesseract was never accounted for. It certainly no longer resides on Alasaka (or remains thereof), and many concede Ast Kikorie is where the idol currently resides, most likely in the scattered station wreckage outside the city's perimeter.

"DR. CALLAT, I PRESUME?"

Given the rather stuffy academic setting of Kikorie Port's Lon Heights, it surprised many that Follnor Callat recently took up residence there. Given Dr. Callat's shady reputation and lack of scruples (who could forget his infamous run-ins with the Iotran Antiquities Enforcement units?), there have been a number of rumors as to his reason for being on Ast Kikorie. Few of the locals know he hopes to locate the Tesseract.

When Dr. Callat made landing aboard his diminutive *Placid*-class freighter, he unloaded a great deal of hardware and furnishings. He has four assistants who have taken residence on the apartment's first floor. Dr. Callat inhabits and works on the second floor. The assistants are thought to be former students of Callat's from the University of Rudrig, before Callat was expelled.

Local informants have taken note that Callat is *trying* to blend into the heavy academic setting of scientists and researchers, but that he is failing miserably. Nikto mercenaries have been seen frequenting Callat's residence and the light industrial area of Kikorie Port, though with whom they are associated is unknown.

Dr. Callat has also made the rather bold move of hiring a handful of "freelance operatives" to help him acquire the Tesseract. Among those hired is a Blood Carver thief and a mysterious Mandalorian (presumably a bounty hunter), as yet unidentified.

RUMORS

A number of rumors have surfaced since Dr. Callat took up residence in Kikorie Port. Here are a few that the heroes might hear while on Ast Kikorie, depending on whom they ask. Heroes can cooperate and make a single Gather Information check or make individual checks. On a result of 10 or less, no one's heard of him. Otherwise read all the responses below that apply. A separate Gather Information check using the HoloNet (DC 30) reveals much of Callat's history detailed in the **Follnor Callat** section.



Gather Information**Result Rumor**

11–15 "There's a group of bounty hunters on their way, looking for Dr. Callat."

16–20 "Those Nikto characters are trouble. They're selling something to those merchants down at the docking bays; I see credits changing hands almost every night."

21–25 "The ship that gravedigger came in... it's stolen."

26+ "That crazy Alsakan's hired Boba Fett to find some artifact for him! Can you believe it?"

FOLLNOR CALLAT

Dr. Callat is notorious throughout academic circles. He's been banned from the University of Rudrig, stripped of his titles at the University of Sanbra, dismissed from Shafr Center (Prime Campus), and has several warrants out for his arrest. He has little regard for procedures, willfully breaks local antiquities laws, and has been known to raid sites of other xenoarchaeologists. He is easily one of the most competent, well-read researchers in his field, but he is also one of the most ruthless and despised. Despite Callat's current reputation as a grave robber and callous thief, he once held several prestigious posts at institutes throughout the galaxy, both on his native Alasaka and elsewhere.

Dr. Callat is a Core-World snob of the worst variety, from his exaggerated accent to his disdain for all non-Core cultures, histories, and locales. He spends much of his time bemoaning the deplorable conditions of the backwater sector he finds himself in—a complaint he's as likely to deliver in the Tapani or Senex sectors as in a true backwater like the Moddell. If the heroes make his acquaintance on Ast Kikorrie, he treats any Core Worlders like relative equals (though that won't keep him from doing whatever he needs to do to get the Tesseract) and patronize any Humans who aren't from the Core. He isn't obviously biased against non-Humans—that's boorish behavior in his book—but even a little time with the professor shows that he has trouble thinking of non-Humans as anything other than hirelings or barbarians. He also tends to dif-

ferentiate alien species solely by their physical characteristics—Ayou are "feather-heads," Vashans are "bugs," and so forth.

Dr. Callat believes the Tesseract currently being sought in the Moddell Sector is the Tesseract of Alsakan's archeological lore. He intends to obtain the artifact, no matter what it might take. He is launching his search on Ast Kikorrie because he believes the Aldera Guard angle has some promise, but he extends his search to encompass any and all possible leads. If this Tesseract is the one he hopes it is, he will be rich beyond his wildest dreams.

Follnor Callat: Male Human Expert 12; Init +0; Def 14 (+4 class); Spd 10m; VP/WP —/10; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d3–1, punch) or +9/+4 ranged (3d4, hold-out blaster); SQ SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +10; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 3; Rep 3; Str 9, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 12. Challenge Code: B.

Equipment: Datapad, hold-out blaster, comlink, universal access pass (invalid).

Skills: Bluff +7, Computer Use +12, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +3, Forgery +18, Gather Information +14, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (alien species) +11, Knowledge (archeology) +21, Knowledge (criminal organizations) +7, Knowledge (galactic history) +14, Knowledge (streetwise) +9, Profession (archeologist) +18, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Camaasi, Read/Write Cerean, Read/Write Dakoti, Read/Write Issori, Read/Write Ithorese, Read/Write Jerne, Read/Write Killik, Read/Write Kivian, Sense Motive +7, Speak Basic, Speak Camaasi, Speak Cerean, Speak Ithorese.

Feats: Infamy, Iron Will, Skill Emphasis (Knowledge: archeology, Profession: archeologist), Trustworthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Heroes who search for the Tesseract on Ast Kikorrie encounter difficult obstacles. First and foremost is Dr. Callat, who has had time to learn the area fairly well in his few weeks planetside, and who is making good use of the local criminal element to fan out through the various stations and Kikorrie Port neighborhoods to locate the idol (use the Low-Level Generic Thug in Chapter 12: Gamemastering of the core rulebook).

Second is the help the Callat has hired, particularly Fenn Shysha who shadows the heroes' every move and is ready to pounce at the first indication of their success.

Though even the good doctor does not know it, the Aldera Guard killed during the meteorite storm was *not* aboard the second station when it finally entered the planet's atmosphere and crashed into the wilderness west of the city. Rather, he was ferrying medical supplies and personnel in a small shuttle that later crashed some kilometers southeast of the station's wreckage. Like most of the station's remains, the dense forest quickly consumed the shuttle wreckage, and in the centuries since those events, it has remained undisturbed. The question remains, however: Did the Guard carry the Tesseract?

Any success in locating the guard and the idol in his possession could be short-lived when Shysha descends upon the heroes, intoning in a gravelly voice, "I appreciate the work you've done, but I'm afraid this idol belongs to my employer." Half a dozen of the local guns accompany him.

FENN SHYSHA

Boba Fett isn't the only being that's adopted the armor made famous by the Mandalorian warriors. Though details of his early career are sketchy, the human Fenn Shysha acquired a suit of armor and assumed the role of a Mandalorian Supercommando. He typically sticks close to the planet Mandalore, but has hired himself out for mercenary and retrieval jobs to earn credits for his fight against slavers back on his homeworld.

Shysha has been contracted by Dr. Follnor Callat to find the Tesseract. The elite Supercommando is an honorable man and won't harass the heroes any more than is necessary to gain control of the Tesseract.

Era Note: The GM may wish to substitute a different Mandalorian-clad figure in place of Fenn Shysha depending on the circumstances of the adventure. During prequel times Jango Fett or a lesser survivor of the Mandalorian army could fill this role, while Jodo Kast or the bounty hunter Alfreda Goot are appropriate choices for the Rebellion or New Republic eras. (For information about Jodo Kast, refer to the *Rebellion Era Sourcebook*.)

Race for the Tesseract

Fenn Shysha: Male Human Sol 7/Sct 2/Elite Trooper 5; Init +2 (Dex); Def 21 (+9 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 94/12; Atk +14/+9/+4 melee (1d6+1, crit 20, punch) or +14/+9/+4 melee (1d6+3, spiked boots) or +16/+11/+6 ranged (3d8+2, blaster carbine) or +15/+10/+5 ranged (2d6, flamethrower gauntlet) or +15/+10/+5 ranged (2d6, rocket darts); SQ Trailblazing, uncanny dodge (Dex to Def), weapon specialization (blaster carbine); SV Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +7; SZ M; FP 4; DSP 0; Rep 4; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12. Challenge Code: E.

Equipment: Modified Mandalorian battle armor, blaster carbine, flamethrower gauntlet, jet pack, rocket darts, spiked boots, modified space transport (*Free Mandalore*).

Skills: Astrogate +8, Climb +7, Demolitions +10, Hide +11, Intimidate +9, Jump +11, Knowledge (Mandalore) +15, Move Silently +10, Pilot +8, Read/Write Basic, Repair +6, Ride +6, Search +8, Speak Basic, Speak Shyriiwook, Survival +11, Tumble +9.

Feats: Acrobatic, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy, powered), Blind-Fight, Dodge, Martial Artist, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Starship Operation (space transport), Track, Weapon Focus (blaster carbine), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Male Blood Carver Sc 3: Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 17 (+5 class, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 13/10; Atk +2 melee (1d4, knife) or +4 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 1; Rep 1; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10. Challenge Code: A.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife.

Skills: Bluff +6, Climb +3, Computer Use +4, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +2, Forgery +7, Gather Information +6, Hide +10, Intimidate +4, Jump +2, Listen +6, Move Silently +10, Read/Write Blood Carver, Speak Basic, Speak Blood Carver, Speak Huttese, Spot +8, Tumble +7.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Sarafur

Where there is no law, the lawless thrive. Sarafur is no exception: Criminal bands make this backwater desert world their primary base of operations.

TESSANT LORE ON SARAFUR

The rumor that the Tesseract might be somewhere on Sarafur is the result of the world's history of harboring underworld figures. Various cantina tales hold that the Ayrou Tesseract, the Alsakan Tesseract, or both fell into the possession of a criminal kingpin or spice lord, and that the owner in question lived or lives on Sarafur in one of the many bolt holes throughout the ancient ruins.

Some treasure hunters tell a different tale, swearing that the Tesseract was stolen but then fell into the hands of grave-robbers who scour the ruins constructed eons ago by the now-extinct species that once called Sarafur home. The Tesseract, they say, is locked deep within a crypt of a deceased alien ruler, likely below the hideout of some nefarious crime lord.

THE KINTAN GUNRUNNERS

Among the groups known to maintain a base in the desolate and dangerous wastes of Sarafur are the Kintan Gunrunners, a vicious group of weapons smugglers (primarily Niktos) that has operated out of the fringe regions for decades. Their main base lies just on the sun-side of the world's event horizon, in a series of ruins that stretch along the Krasho Salt Rifts. Niktos are more comfortable in the heat than most species, and keeping their base there helps protect them from prying eyes. The Gunrunners have two craft at their disposal, a *Predator*-class gunship and a smaller Lantillian cruiser, both housed in an old arena deep within the alien ruins. They also make use of a number of cargo skiffs for navigating their "turf" along the Krasho monoliths.

The Gunrunners are known throughout Hutt Space, the Corporate Sector, and other outlying areas, but they have only recently developed ties to the Moddell underworld. Their reputation for cruelty and murderous folly is well earned. It should be noted that while the majority of their membership consists of one Nikto subspecies or another, several other species fill out the roster, especially here on Sarafur. While their rival Korraj

employs primarily aquatic henchmen at his base in the seas of Thonner, Weequays, Kamarians, Twi'leks, and other species well suited to the harsh desert environs are common at the Gunrunners' desert outpost.

Kintan Gunrunner: Male Red Nikto Thug 3; Init +2 (Dex); Def 19 (+5 armor, +2 natural, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP —/15; Atk +5 melee (2d8+2, force pike) or +5 ranged (3d8, blaster pistol); SQ Desert dweller, natural armor; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 1; Rep 2; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 11. Challenge Code: A.

Equipment: Force pike, blaster pistol, blast helmet and vest.

Skills: Intimidate +6, Jump +8, Knowledge (organized crime) +5, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Nikto, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Nikto.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Special Qualities: Desert Dweller—Red Nikto live in the arid regions of Kintan called the Endless Wastes. They gain a +4 species bonus to Survival checks in a desert environment, and can go up to a week without any water at all.

TU'RSC'YULIR

A Kajain'sa'Nikto (red Nikto), Tu'rs'c'yulir is a lieutenant with the notorious Kintan Gunrunners and leads the small contingent of smuggling operating out of Sarafur's salt wastes. She and her employees bear no love for the Hutts, and whereas most Nikto are indentured to the Hutts, the Kintan Gunrunners see themselves as peers—if not better—of the slug-like criminals with whom they do business.

Tu'rs'c'yulir knows that retrieving either the Ayrou or Alsakan Tesseract could make her rich, but her real dream is that the Alsakan Tesseract will prove to be the key that unlocks a weapons cache that will allow her to make the Gunrunners an unstoppable force in the galactic underworld. Her pet Kar'sylic, a vicious Kintan Strider, always accompanies Tu'rs'c'yulir.

KAR'SYLIC

A hulking Kintan Strider standing just over 2.5 meters, Kar'sylic is a ruddy pink primate with massive shoulders, thick, muscular



arms, and short, powerful legs. Unswervingly loyal to Tu'rc's'yulir, he attempts to crush any threat to her and her associates. Any hero faced with fighting Kar'sylic at close range is in for quite a challenge: Kintan Striders are remarkably strong and have accelerated healing abilities far beyond those of Abyssins or Trandoshans. Though the creatures have been hunted to extinc-

tion on Kintan, a number survive off world. Hutt lords are known to use Striders as guard beasts, especially in environments where nashtahs cannot thrive.

"PLUG-EYE" MAYGO

A freakishly muscular Marauder from Sanyassa, Maygo is a brutal bone-cruncher who does most of his talking with his fists.

Tu'rc's'yulir: Female Red Nikto Scl 6; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 21 (+7 class, +2 natural, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 24/10; Atk +3 melee (1d3-1, punch) or +6 ranged (3d8, blaster pistol); SQ Desert dweller, natural armor, illicit barter, better lucky than good, sneak attack +2d6; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +3; SZ M; FP 2; DSP 2; Rep 3; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 15. Challenge Code: B.

Equipment: 250,000 credits worth of contraband weaponry, blaster pistol.

Skills: Appraise +9, Astrogate +12, Bluff +11, Computer Use +6, Craft (vehicles) +4, Craft (weapons) +4, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +4, Forgery +11, Gather Information +10, Hide +6, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (organized crime) +6, Listen +5, Pilot +11, Profession (merchant) +10, Read/Write Nikto, Repair +6, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Nikto, Speak Shyriiwook, Spot +5.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Skill Emphasis (Astrogate), Starship Operation (space transport), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Kintan Strider: Desert Predator 6; Init +0; Def 15 (+6 natural, -1 size); Spd 10m; VP/WP 67/22; Atk +12 melee (1d3+10, slam) or +5 ranged; SQ Natural armor, +4 species bonus to Survival in desert climates, superior recuperation; SV Fort +13, Ref +5, Will -1; SZ L; Rep 5; Str 24, Dex 10, Con 22, Int 4, Wis 4, Cha 8. Challenge Code: C.

Skills: Hide -4, Intimidate +8, Listen +3, Spot +4.

Feats: Cleave, Great Fortitude, Power Attack.

"Plug-Eye" Maygo: Male Sanyassan Thug 5; Init -1 (Dex); Def 11 (+1 class, +1 natural, -1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP —/18; Atk +7 melee (2d8+2, force pike) or +4 ranged (3d8, heavy blaster); SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +1; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 3; Rep 1; Str 15, Dex 9, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10. Challenge Code: B.

Equipment: Force pike, heavy blaster pistol.
Skills: Intimidate +8, Read/Write Sanyassan, Speak Basic, Speak Sanyassan.

Feats: Endurance, Toughness, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

After leaving Sanyassa as a youth, he wound up in the spaceport district of Annaj, taking odd jobs as a bodyguard and prizefighter. He earned his nickname after a malfunctioning slugthrower discharged in his face during a robbery, leaving an iron ball lodged in his left eye socket.

The Kintan Gunrunners hired Maygo when they arrived in the Moddell sector. They figure he'll provide some much-needed brawn, but they have no intention of sharing the Ayrout treasure with him.

KRASHO SALT RIFTS

The Krasho Salt Rifts are a former seabed, surrounded on both horizon-sides by steep ridges. From orbit, the Rifts look like a bright spot on the otherwise dusty and forbidding landscape of Sarafur's shadowed meridian. But the Krasho region is a dangerous territory, littered with skeletal fossils and crystal

KINTAN GUNRUNNER SKIFFS

Craft: Ubrikkian Bantha II; **Class:** Ground (Speeder); **Cost:** 8,000 (new), 5,000 (used); **Size:** Huge (9.5 meters); **Crew:** Normal +2 (1 pilot, 1 gunner); **Passengers:** 20 or cargo; **Cargo Capacity:** 135 metric tons; **Speed:** 70 m (max speed 200 km/h); **Altitude:** up to 20 meters; **Defense:** 10" (-2 size, +2 armor); **Hull Points:** 20; **DR:** 5.

Weapons: Double laser cannon (fire-linked); **Fire Arc:** Front; **Attack Bonus:** +2 (+2 crew, -2 size, +2 fire control); **Damage:** 5d8; **Range:** 150m.

**Cargo skiff provides one-quarter cover.*

Race for the Tessent

formations that would tear a ship's—and a sentient's—skin to shreds.

Dry for centuries, the Rifts are still littered with the bones of colossal sea creatures and deceased coral formations; some astronomers theorize that Sarafur's tidal lock occurred so quickly that the sea evaporated in a matter of years or even months. Such a cataclysm likely caught the entire aquatic ecosystem off guard and killed all life before any of it had time to adapt. The coral formations, still strong and heavily calcified, have served as hideaways for various fringe groups in the past, as have some of the larger skeletal remains.

The Salt Rifts extend for hundreds of kilometers, covering the entire event horizon for several degrees of latitude with crest after crest of hard, often razor-sharp blocks of crystal vertices. Tall, wind-carved spires dot several stretches of the Rifts, and Arconan criminal enterprises have been known to mine some of the crystalline salt blocks for personal use (the salt-addiction problem of Moddell Arconans worsens with every season; see *Alien Anthology* for more information about the Arconans). Rival criminal groups who operate in the region sometimes settle their differences with daring Podraces or swoop competitions in the many mazes of salt formations.

THE SHISTAVANEN YARN

There's an old legend on Sarafur that even the esteemed Dr. Callat doesn't know—because the only tellers of it don't visit Moddell anymore. This legend comes from Shistavanen spacers who came through Moddell long ago. Perhaps the heroes hear it in a cantina far from Annaj, or receive it second-hand from a spacer in the Moddell who doesn't believe in old yarns.

According to the Shistavanen tale, at the edge of the Krasho Salt Rifts, beyond the Armorers' shops, rests a lost building where the now-extinct inhabitants of Sarafur once bathed in the sulfur-laden mineral waters. Likely the only standing "surface" water that remains on the barren shadow-world of Sarafur's event horizon, these baths are now encased beneath tons of collapsed basalt columns and sandstone walls, entombed in a lasting darkness just below

the world's surface. It was here that a Killik "artisan" from Alsakan came to hide long ago, fleeing persecution on his world long before humans ever settled there.

In a twist of irony, one member of a now-extinct species took refuge in the bustling city of another doomed species. The Killik was a Sith. When he died on Sarafur, his tomb became a beacon in the Force to those who can sense dark energies. The dark side adept Jilst Bindalin, a prodigal son of Alsakan, heard the legend and found the tomb. Later, he hired a Shistavanen captain to bear him from the Core Worlds to the distant Moddell Sector. He said nothing of his mission, and he carried an iron case he refused to let out of his grasp. The Shistavanen left him on Sarafur, and Bindalin was never seen again.

Discreet drilling, digging, or an old-fashioned exploration of adjoining subterranean ruins could prove what some suspect: Bindalin stole the Alsakan Tessent and buried it, as a private form of petty vengeance, in the tomb of a Sith warrior driven off Alsakan by the humans who supplanted his species. Force users feel a dark, sinister presence there. Others find the place unsettling, and even those who typically show no fear get a bad feeling from it.

Submerged within the stinking waters is a vaguely humanoid skeleton, and farther below, where the waters are thick with sludge and slime, an idol. And there are dangers beyond those of possible collapse, Kintan Gunrunner intrusion and the dangers inherent in obtaining the idol. Though Dr. Callat does not know the Shistavanen lore, he is certainly aware of another legend, one of a lone Sith guardian who sat within the ruins of his adopted people, waiting to unleash his wrath on those who dare disturb him.

Depending on the nature of your campaign, you can choose to have the tomb truly deserted, or turn it into a dark side site inhabited by dark side spirits. (See *The Dark Side Sourcebook* for more information on dark side sites and spirits.) The idol that rests in the bottom of the pool can be either the Alsakan Tessent or Sith Holocron.

OTHER "INTERESTS" ON SARAFUR

There are a number of criminal or likewise unsavory operations that are based on Sara-

fur. Here are a few the heroes might encounter during reconnaissance of the alien ruins—and who might join the hunt for the Tessent if they get wind that the heroes are on the idol's trail.

Vashan Liberation Force

The VLF is a small group of perhaps twenty Vashans planning revolt against their Ayrou oppressors. They are well organized and have obtained outside funding, but they do not have enough troops to present much of a danger to the Maya Kovel forces. Despite that, they protect their small base, hidden atop a series of collapsed multi-story ruins, to the death.

The Vashan rebels conform to the Low-Level Thug in Chapter 12: Gamemastering of the core rulebook.

Rodian Shipjackers

Tershan, a Rodian shipjacker of some fame in his home system and the Outer Rim, has recently set up shop in the skull of a massive sea creature on the northern perimeter of the Krasho Salt Rifts. His crew of four has begun to scout out a more secure station in the dense ruins a few kilometers north, and is likely to encounter the heroes during their investigations.

Tershan conforms to the Mid-Level Outlaw, and his accomplices the Low-Level Outlaw, in Chapter 12: Gamemastering of the core rulebook.

LC-Zed

Killing your master is a dangerous thing to do, especially when you're a droid. Killing your master, three law enforcement officials, a portmaster, and stealing the governor's shuttle during your escape is worse—especially when you're a droid. LC-Zed knows the Abbaji System Constables have fanned out from the nearby Spar sector in search of it, so the rogue droid has taken temporary refuge on Sarafur. It arrived in a stolen (and now slightly damaged) shuttle, and is currently on the hunt for a new hyperdrive motivator as well as laser cannon energy coils.

LC-Zed is an early-model LC "hunting droid," a precursor to the Eliminator 434-series assassin droid. It's vaguely insectoid and moves about on a repulsor-ball carriage, somewhat like the infamous Trade

Thonner

Federation destroyer droids. It has no vocabulator and is incapable of audible speech.

LC-Zed: Hovering Assassin Droid Sol 6; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 19 (+7 armor, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 50/15; Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6+1, punch) or +8/+3 ranged (3d8, 2 heavy blasters); SQ DR 5; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1; SZ M; Rep 2; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 9. Challenge Code: B.

Equipment: Two heavy blasters, cerellium armor, sensor package, internal comlink.

Skills: Intimidate +8, Listen +6, Search +4, Speak Basic (understand only), Speak Binary, Spot +6.

Feats: Alertness, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

Xal 3 Armorers' Confederacy

Outlaw armorers and weapons technicians, these dangerous engineers are one of the longest standing "residents" of the Sarafur ruins. The group made their headquarters in the ice caves of Xal 3 in the Ablajack sector for nearly a generation, before a long-running feud with other outlaw techs finally displaced them, then simply known as the "Armorers' Confederacy."

They are led by an aging Trandoshan male named Kallukoras, and they have no interest in what the heroes are doing, so long as they do not disturb the Confederacy's business. Astute heroes may note two or three ships arriving in the general vicinity of the armorer's base every standard day; the Xal 3 group has a superb reputation for custom-designed armor and can repair nearly any combat armor.

Kallukoras: Male Trandoshan Sct 3/Tech Specialist 5; Init +1 (Dex); Def 18 (+6 class, +1 natural, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 51/17; Atk +7 melee (1d3+2, punch) or +6 ranged (3d8, blaster rifle); SQ Darkvision, natural armor, trailblazing, research, instant mastery (Pilot), expert (Craft: armor), tech specialty (mastercraft: armor +1); SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 2; Rep 4; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 7, Cha 11. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Blaster rifle, comlink, tool kit.

Skills: Climb +4, Craft (armor) +16, Intimidate +5, Jump +4, Listen +4, Pilot +5, Profession (merchant) +9, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Dosh, Read/Write Rodese, Repair +11, Speak Basic, Speak Dosh, Speak Rodese.

Feats: Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Skill Emphasis (Craft: armor), Toughness, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, simple weapons).

The fourth planet in the system with the same name, Thonner was "settled" only 25 years before the Battle of Yavin. But as with Sarafur, it had been used for years as an occasional hideout for fugitives.

In the years following settlement, the Ayrrou presence was heavy (though now it is primarily noticeable only from the lichen harvested on many Thonner islands), and the semi-nomadic Thonnermen developed a comfortable life harvesting the seas. The Thonnermen, it should be noted, are not solely drawn from one species: They are a tight-knit group consisting primarily of Humans and Kian'thar descended from the original settlers. The aquatic Kian'thar are primarily responsible for reaping the sea harvests, while the Human Thonnermen tend to most above-water matters and construction on the sandy isles. Only a few Ayrrou still reside on the world and refer to themselves as "Thonnermen."

TESSENT LORE ON THONNER

Those who believe the Tesseract is somewhere in the seas of Thonner think it was brought and then lost by the Ayrrou who helped develop the first settlements. Though the Ayrrou deny it, there is some evidence that Thonner was once a penal colony of sorts for Ayrrou who resorted to violence to achieve their ends, a conduct wholly rejected by modern Ayrrou. Sly Ayrrou criminals might have stashed the Tesseract on Thonner during their incarceration, making their plans to raid the Kuna vaults when their chance to escape finally came.

KORRAJ

Korraaj is a battle-scarred t'landa Til bull and leader of a group of pirates hidden on Thonner. Several years ago Korraaj was involved in

the Tertiary Ingo Riots and was grievously injured during combat: As a result, his throat sacs were permanently disabled, and he has lost the bizarre euphoria-inducing ability for which his people are noted. He speaks in a gravelly whisper that does nothing to diminish his rather intimidating presence.

The pirates' base of operations is in the shallow tidal flats of the Lesser Firagh Peninsula, accessible only by a series of treacherous sea caves some kilometers southwest of the base's actual location. Their primary attack-and-plunder craft, a heavily-armed "SkyHeist" 43v, docks in a cave beneath the surface that has been filled with compressed air: the ship must enter the sea to reach or depart its docking facilities, but while docked it rests on a dry platform.

Though he is impressed with his self-perceived clout and the number of underlings (roughly two dozen) under his employ, Korraaj is a fairly minor player in the Moddell underworld. He is dangerous, but he has neither the resources nor the network to be much more than a small-time hood. Korraaj is smart enough, however, to have hired aquatic henchmen to guard and staff his base. A trio of vicious Quarren and two Aqualish guard the sea cave entrance, and a number of local Thonnermen are on his "extended" payroll to report any suspicious or unusual activity—nosy offworlders especially. The only aquatic species that *cannot* be encountered among the t'landa Til's employees are Pale Nikto (Gluss'sa'Nikto or island Nikto), because Korraaj hates them.

Korraaj knows nothing of the Tesseract beyond vague tales, but he takes an interest if it means profit or a chance to hinder the hated Kintan Gunrunners. Korraaj conforms to the Mid-Level Outlaw, and his henchmen Low-Level Outlaws, in Chapter 12: Gamemastering of the core rulebook.

LESSER FIRAGH PENINSULA

A thin strip of land between the Firagh continent and the Greater Zoun Archipelago, the Lesser Firagh Peninsula is a marshy region rife with dangerous creatures, with the terrestrial Zoun mauler the most dangerous of all. There are no Thonnermen settlements on the peninsula, as the indigenous life proved too perilous for an extended stay.

Race ^{for the} Tessent

Thonnermen visit the marshlands every

few months to harvest wood from the corsit-puzzle trees, so named because their trunks are so thickly laden with spikes that even the native corsit (an amphibious creature with uncanny climbing skills) cannot navigate a path along the branches without impaling itself. The Thonnermen use lasercutters to fell the trees and smooth a surface area on the branches large enough to hold with ungloved hands. The resulting puzzle-wood staffs are commonly used as vicious melee weapons; bigger boughs and stumps serve as the base of pit traps to capture large game.

RUMORS

The hunt for the Tessent on Thonner starts with a legend, coupled with a grizzled "eyewitness" with a story that might be worth investigating. Heroes can cooperate and make a single Gather Information check or make individual checks to uncover the information below. On a result of 5 or less, no one knows anything. Otherwise read all the responses below that apply.

| Gather Information | |
|--------------------|--|
| Result | Rumor |
| 6-10 | "I knew a feller named Vcikas what had some sort of statue, but I never seen it. He was a sly fellow, and ornery as a rabid mynock." |
| 11-15 | "Sixteen years. Sixteen years those rail-thin, self-righteous Ayrou kept me locked up in that stinking, rotten-fish-infested hole. One fistfight on their world, and they think you're a menace to their culture." |
| 16-20 | "When that swoop gang set up shop south of the holding cells and started harassing the guards last summer, I thought our chance had come. We overwhelmed our sentries, and headed out into the Peninsula. Oh, that was a mistake. By the time we got to the sea, Vcikas and I were the only ones still breathing, and if it weren't for Vcikas, I'd have been a dead man. That mauled came down on us outta nowhere. Cut me nearly in two, and you can see what he done to my face." |
| 21-25 | "The Thonnermen found me and kept me on with their harvesters; they didn't care where I was from, just that I worked hard and kept in line. When the Ayrou guards came 'round looking for their escaped inmates, they didn't even recognize me on account of my face." |
| 26+ | "Never heard what happened to Vcikas, least not officially. But he's out there. Every so often one of the cخال nets will be empty—not cut or nothin', just empty. Figure he must still be out there, livin' off the land and taking some of our harvest during the leaner seasons. He was always sly, and he's proddy got that funny lookin' little statue with him, too. Loved that thing more than life itself ... said when he got outta the joint he'd go dig it up from where he'd stashed it out past the mollusk arches and that the Ayrou 'would never get it back,' whatever that meant." |

Aside from occasional crews of Thonnermen felling trees, the only beings who make use of the peninsula are Korraj's minions, who hunt and fish in the marshland and the tidal flats offshore.

Zoun Mauler: Swamp Predator 8; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 13 (+3 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 56/15; Atk +9 melee (1d6+1, 2 claws) or +11 ranged; SQ +2 species bonus on Survival checks in swamp environments; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will -1; SZ M; Rep 1; Str 13, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 5, Cha 9. Challenge Code: C.

Skills: Climb +5, Hide +6, Intimidate +7, Move Silently +14, Spot +3, Swim +5.

Feats: Athletic, Improved Initiative, Stealthy.

SAQC'OR

A grizzled Svivreni, Saqc'or is a veteran miner and metallurgist, one even fellow Svivreni acknowledge to be among the very toughest (high praise indeed from the rugged Svivreni). Saqc'or spent several decades on "nearby" Ovis III, eventually amassing enough personal wealth to establish his own company. He is currently "venture prospecting" on Thonner, which he believes may hold valuable and as-yet-untapped resources. His extensive knowledge of mining, tunneling and drilling may prove of some

Saqc'or: Male Svivreni Frg 7; Init +0; Def 17 (+1 size, +6 class); Spd 6m; VP/WP 49/15; Atk +8 melee (1d4+2, knife) or +6 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Barter, adaptive learning (Demolitions, Appraise), jury-rig +2; SV Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +4; SZ S; FP 1; DSP 1; Rep 2; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 13. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Blaster pistol, knife, tool kit.

Skills: Appraise +10, Climb +6, Computer Use +8, Demolitions +10, Hide +4, Intimidate +3, Jump +7, Knowledge (geology) +9, Profession (miner) +13, Read/Write Svivreni, Repair +3, Search +12, Speak Ayrou, Speak Basic, Speak Svivreni, Speak Vashon, Survival +5, Treat Injury +3.

Feats: Endurance, Great Fortitude, Skill Emphasis (Knowledge: geology, Profession: miner), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

Species Features: +2 Str, +2 Con, -2 Dex, -2 Wis; +4 species bonus to Appraise checks involving the evaluation of ores, gems, and other mined minerals; +2 species bonus to Fortitude and Will saves.

Automatic Languages: Svivreni and Basic.

Vcikas: Male Mon Calamari ScI 3/Sct 5; Init +1 (Dex); Def 19 (+8 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 44/13; Atk +7 melee (1d3+2, punch) or +6 ranged; SQ amphibious; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +6; SZ M; FP 1; DSP 2; Rep 2; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 11. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Blaster carbine, field kit.

Skills: Bluff +6, Climb +8, Computer Use +8, Craft (traps) +6, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +7, Disguise +2, Escape Artist +7, Forgery +8, Hide +8, Intimidate +2, Jump +8, Knowledge (galactic history) +10, Listen +11, Move Silently +12, Read/Write Calamarian, Speak Ayrou, Speak Basic, Speak Calamarian, Speak Quarren, Spot +11, Survival +15, Swim +14.

Feats: Alertness, Skill Emphasis (Survival), Track, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, simple weapons).

use to the heroes on Thonner or elsewhere, should they befriend the grizzled equinoid.

Era Note: If encountered during the Rebellion era, Saq'cor is also on Thonner for another, secret reason. The Empire is actively trying to "recruit" (read: enslave) him to work on the new Death Star project in the Modell Sector. He has spurned their "offers," and fled to remote Thonner for refuge.

Vasha

The mines of Vasha drill down into the core of the rocky planet, bringing vast mineral wealth to its Ayrour overseers at the expense of the insectoid Vashan workers. Word that Vashan miners have uncovered something that the Ayrour once prized strikes some observers as cosmic justice.

TESSENT LORE ON VASHA

Recently word has hit the Modell Sector rumor mill that a deep-core mining operation has struck pay dirt of an unusual sort—an idol found in feather wrappings bearing the seals of an *il Madri* hierarch.

The Vashans are jealously guarding their treasure lest their Ayrour bosses get wind of it and take possession. Many among them believe the Vashan gods have given them the Tesseract in fulfillment of ancient prophecy. Although there is little chance that this Tesseract could be the missing Alsakan Tesseract, the Alsakan search team is eager to get their hands on it just in case.

The story entered circulation through a loose-lipped Vashan miner affiliated with Dochi At-Rial, a Vashan caste theocrat. At-Rial labors among the common Vashans, considering it his religious duty to dirty his pincers alongside sinners as they tunnel their way toward the lair of the Rot-Maggot. Vashan religion states that the god of decay nests within the center of the planet, and the Vashans who have been forced to work in the planet's deepest mine (known locally as The Abyss) are close to revolt. The supposed discovery of the Tesseract has been taken as a sign of divine favor, and the Vashans working the Abyss do not take kindly to anyone who tries to remove their holy icon.

Repulsorlift platforms carry miners from the surface of Vasha to the dregs of The Abyss. The platforms have no railings, and many a hostile miner has disposed of a rival with a simple shove. Non-miners can gain access into The Abyss with a bribe to the Ayrour authorities, or they can hang around the dormitories for free. Vashan miners sleep in honeycomb-like berths outside the nearby spaceport of Tatarrar. However, it's well known among the Ayrour administrators that a guilty Vashan will flee. To confront a suspect, it might be necessary to corner him in an enclosed environment.

At the base of The Abyss sleep vermin that have convinced the Vashan miners that they are on the brink of breaking into the realm of the Rot-Maggot. Deep core mining has disturbed a writhing legion of corpse-white apilid worms, never before seen by the inhabitants of Vasha. The creatures apparently bore through the ore veins near the planet's core, and their rock-munching mandibles make short work of soft flesh.

APILID WORMS

Meter-long predators that can burrow through solid rock, apilid worms are a mystery to all who have seen them. So far, no biologist has been able to study their life cycle since the worms were discovered in the deepest mine of Vasha.

Apilid Worm: Subterranean Predator 1; Init +1 (Dex); Def 12 (+1 size, +1 Dex); Spd 8m; VP/WP 10/15; Atk +3 melee (1d6-1, bite) or +3 ranged; SQ Blindsight; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will -1; SZ S; Rep 1; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 4, Wis 8, Cha 6. Challenge Code: A.

Skills: Hide +9, Listen +7, Read/Write Subterranean, Speak Basic, Speak Subterranean, Survival +1.

Feats: Weapon Finesse (bite).

RUMORS

The rumors about Vasha lead the heroes to Tatarrar, Vasha's primary spaceport. A successful Gather Information check (DC 18) among the drinking-dens of Tatarrar turns up the following information from a drunken patron or a bigoted barkeep:

"It was Dochi At-Rial that found it. But you'll never find *him*. He's a caste theocrat, sure, but all Vashans look alike to you off-worlders. But y'know what? If you've got eyes, you can't miss the heads. Ayrour heads. He's got a string of dried-up heads around his neck, and they can't do anything bout it, cuz he didn't kill 'em. He took 'em from the unmarked morgue, the big faker."





If the heroes choose to pursue Dochi At-Rial, approaching the Vashan anywhere other than in the enclosed Abyss triggers a flight reflex. At-Rial flees to Qina, the holiest site in his religion.

If the heroes successfully detain Dochi At-Rial, a successful Knowledge (alien species) check (DC 30) reveals that the Tessent could be in the safest possible place for a Vashan—his antestomach. In fact, Dochi At-Rial has swallowed the relic, and convincing him to part with his treasure will be even harder than detecting it. At-Rial has the advantage of dozens of penitent Vashan miners eager to do his bidding. In particular, the Vashan swordsman Poina Tuc-shol might be shadowing the heroes throughout their stay on Vasha, eager to skewer unbelievers on the cold steel of his blades. At-Rial, however, is not as pious as he pretends to be and can be intimidated or bribed into handing over the goods, but only when escape is not an option and none of his fellow Vashans are there to witness his lapse in

faith. If this happens, he flees to Poina Tuc-shol with a concocted tale designed to win help in getting the idol back.

If the heroes fail to retrieve the Tessent from his antestomach, At-Rial flees to the holy site of Inicus Mont on the planet Qina. Once again, the hunt is on—and this time At-Rial has shed his necklace of shrunken heads. The barfly's observation that "they all look alike" might come back to haunt the heroes.

Other options exist for retrieving the Tessent from Vasha. It's possible that Dochi At-Rial has placed the Tessent in his honeycomb cell in Tatarrar, or that he has entrusted the artifact to a trusted lieutenant (even the swordsman Poina Tuc-shol). If the heroes arrive on Vasha after another interested party has already retrieved the Tessent, they must sort out a scene of utter chaos as outraged Vashans take their revenge on the Ayrour overseers and anyone who looks like an offworlder. And unless the heroes are Vashans, that includes them.

POINA TUC-SHOL

An expert swordsman, Poina Tuc-shol is one of the few Vashans who have kept alive their people's ancient tradition of edged-weapon combat. The Ayrour overseers of the Vashan mines have outlawed the carrying of blades, and consequently the instinct that once guided Vashan limbs in furious windmills of steel has faded. Poina Tuc-shol and others like him are adherents of the old ways and come from traditional combat schools hidden in the crags of Vasha's lonely mountains.

Tuc-shol believes that the Tessent is a religious artifact (a sin-bullet expelled by the Vashan god of creativity) and is merciless when retrieving it from the hands of unbelievers. His rugged mountain upbringing makes him a competent tracker and survivalist.

Qina

It's penitent season on Qina. Thousands of chitinous Vashans are arriving on the lush moon every hour, and freighters barely have time to unload their passengers and fuel up before heading back to Vasha for another load.

TESSENT LORE ON QINA

The heroes might come to Qina in pursuit of Dochi At-Rial, a Vashan caste theocrat who could be carrying the Tessent in one of his antestomachs.

If the heroes have not yet met At-Rial, they can be drawn to Qina by rumors that Vashan miners recently uncovered an idol

Poina Tuc-shol: Male Vashan Sct 2/Sol 8; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Def 21 (+6 class, +3 natural, +2 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 67/13; Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+2, 2 short swords) or +11/+6 ranged; SQ Natural armor, trailblazing; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +2; SZ M; FP 3; DSP 1; Rep 3; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 6, Cha 8. Challenge Code: D.

Equipment: Two short swords, necklace with religious charm in shape of golden sin-bullet.

Skills: Climb +8, Hide +6, Intimidate +11, Jump +8, Knowledge (religion) +7, Move Silently +10, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Vashan, Speak Basic, Speak Vashan, Survival +10.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Armor Proficiency (light, medium, heavy), Dodge, Heroic Surge, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Skill Emphasis (Survival), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibroweapons).

on their homeworld and, viewing it as a religious icon, have shuttled it to Inicus Mont on Qina for safekeeping by the holy bodhi hermits.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

As a public service to visiting penitents, the Qina spaceport broadcasts the following information to all ships arriving on the moon:

Welcome to Qina, and blessed be the luminous mandibles of Antikra the Egglayer.

The limestone peak of Inicus Mont contains forty-two caves in which the most perfect of the Vashan bodhis have spent the past year in prayer. You must make the worthy pilgrimage to the summit if you hope to catch a polished sin-bullet as it flies from a bodhi's holy mouthparts. Listed below is information on four of the most-visited bodhi retreats. Stop by the welcome office for maps to all forty-two.

At coordinates 63-361 is the Cave of the Blade. The bodhis here honor the ancient tradition of combat and have preserved the Vashan swords of fallen heroes from long ago.

At coordinates 63-451 is the Cave of the Image. According to legend the most revered artifacts of Vashan religio-archaeology are kept here, safe from the venal claws of thieves.

At coordinates 63-778 is the Cave of Sanctuary. This group of bodhis welcomes those who would deny them peace freedom from the secular world.

At coordinate 63-985 is the Cave of Memory. The bodhis here honor Antikra through the analysis of the holy forces of memory found within art objects.

It is our sincere wish that even those unable to consume a sin-bullet during this time of penitence find peace among the blissful spires of Qina. Enjoy your stay.

EXPLORING QINA

If the heroes came to Qina on the trail of Dochi At-Rial, they might realize that their target is likely to seek refuge in the Cave of Sanctuary. If they have not yet encountered At-Rial, the Cave of the Image might prove to be the repository of the Tessent. If Poina Tuc-shol is not already tailing the heroes, the

Vashan swordsman is probably lurking near the Cave of the Blade and responds quickly to any disturbance on Inicus Mont. Finally, the Cave of Memory could prove invaluable in untangling which idol the heroes (or their rivals) have found, and is an ideal site for a satisfying endgame to the adventure (see the "Possible Endgames" section).

The way to Inicus Mont is treacherous and exhausting. The path winds through steep valleys and across rushing rivers, where those who lose their footing can be swept over a waterfall. Wild pechs are a threat among the tree-covered crags, attacking in packs (could be as many as 2d6 pechs in a pack). Unfortunately for the heroes, pechs only have a taste for mammals and completely ignore the Vashan pilgrims making the same journey. (The pechs' indifference toward Vashans could extend to all non-mammalian species at the GM's discretion.) It might seem amazing that no one has set up a repulsorlift taxi system or even built a simple bridge, but the lack is intentional. Making the trek too easy would be an insult to Vashan penitents.

This situation doesn't prevent the heroes from seeking shortcuts, however. Rujos make excellent mounts and pack animals. An Ebranite "tour guide" for Vashan pilgrims named Groex Gal might approach the heroes soon after their arrival on Qina and offer his services as a mountaineer. If the heroes pay his fee (300 credits per hero, negotiable), their journey should prove much easier. Groex Gal discourages the heroes from using their ship to get to Inicus Mont. Angry Vashans have been known to attack those who disparage their beliefs this way.

The bodhis on the mountaintop are not fighters, but they defend their meditative sites against intruders. If any Vashan pilgrims witness the bodhis in distress, they rush to their aid, and they make no distinctions among outsiders (including the Kintan Gunrunners, the Alsakans, or Fenn Shysha). A clumsily executed retrieval plan—on anyone's part—could end with hundreds of Vashans howling for the heroes' blood.

GROEX GAL

A skilled Ebranite scout and mountaineer, Groex Gal originally came to Qina in hopes of establishing a colony for his people, a resilient six-armed species of mountain-dwelling

Groex Gal: Male Ebranite Expert 9/Sct 3; Init +4 (Dex); Def 19 (+5 class, +4 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 26/21; Atk +10/+5 melee (1d3+2, punch) or +12/+7 ranged(3d8, blaster rifle); SQ Trailblazing; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +10; SZ M; FP 3; DSP 0; Rep 3; Str 15, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 8. Challenge Code: C.

Equipment: Blaster rifle, field kit, tool kit.

Skills: Astrogate +8, Climb +18, Handle Animal +5, Hide +7, Jump +7, Knowledge (galactic history) +11, Knowledge (wilderness lore) +15, Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Pilot +12, Profession (mountaineer) +19, Read/Write Ebranite, Repair +8, Ride +6, Search +10, Speak Ayrou, Speak Basic, Speak Ebranite, Speak Shyriiwook, Speak Vashan, Spot +10, Survival +17, Swim +4, Treat Injury +5.

Feats: Ambidexterity, Starship Operation (starfighter), Skill Emphasis (Profession: mountaineer, Survival), Toughness, Track, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, simple weapons).

Species Features: +2 Str, +2 Dex, -4 Cha; +1 species bonus to Fortitude saves; bonus feat of Ambidexterity; +4 species bonus to Climb and Survival checks.

omnivores hailing from the Dousc system. While that endeavor never came to fruition, Groex has stayed on Qina and makes a good living working as a scout and unofficial tour guide of sorts for the hundreds of Vashan penitents. For offworlders attempting to do any exploration of Qina's perilous mountain regions, Groex Gal is the being to see.

Groex works from a small cave enclosure on the eastern slope of the Mont's foothills, where he fabricates nearly every tool from local resources. The Vashan penitents trust him, for he has been on Qina for over a decade now and is well known by many of the devout insectoids. He takes great care to ensure his charges' safety ascending the Mont. During the "off season" (when the Vashan penitents are not making their pilgrimages to Inicus Mont) Groex's rates are extremely low (100 credits per hero, negotiable); he loves his work, and is often willing to journey into the mountains for the price of his expenses alone.

Race for the Tesseract

Groex's dreams of founding an Ebranite colony have had one legacy that could prove important to the heroes: He maintains a quartet of refitted Z-95 Headhunters in a hidden cave near his enclosure. Originally envisioned as a defense force for his colony, the Z-95s now serve little purpose save for giving the six-armed Ebranite something to tinker with in the off season. If Groex takes a liking to the heroes—or if he takes a particular dislike to their rivals—he could prove willing to lend this small force to the service of their cause, taking the controls himself if sufficiently moved. Groex feels protective toward the Vashan penitents and would be incensed if anyone harmed the insectoids.

SPACE BATTLE!

A GM who'd like to work a starship or airspeeder battle into the adventure can pit Groex's four Z-95s (plus any ships the heroes bring) against the vessels of their rivals. The Kintan Gunrunners have a *Predator*-class gunship and a Lantillian cruiser, as well as a quintet of "Uglies" in poor shape. Fenn Shysa has his *Free Mandalore*, a *Kubrai*-class transport; other forces—from Z-95s to Y-Wings or TIE Fighters—can be added to the mix as desired.

Z-95 Headhunter

See Chapter 11: Starships of the core rulebook.

Free Mandalore

Craft: Modified Kubrai Transportation Kubrai S4; **Class:** Space transport; **Cost:** Not for sale (likely to be valued at 590,000 credits); **Size:** Tiny (20 m long); **Initiative:** +3 (+1 size, +2 crew); **Crew:** 1; **Passengers:** 4; **Cargo Capacity:** 32 metric tons; **Consumables:** 1 month; **Hyperdrive:** x1 (backup x4); **Maximum Speed:** Ramming (10 squares); **Maneuver:** +9 (+1 size, +8 crew); **Defense:** 21 (+1 size, +10 armor); **Shield Points:** 75; **Hull Points:** 100; **DR:** 10; **Weapon:** Blaster cannons (2); **Fire Arc:** Turret; **Attack Bonus:** +7 (+1 size, +3 fire control, +3 crew); **Damage:** 5d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB/S +0, M/L n/a.

Weapon: Proton torpedo tubes (4 proton tracking beacons each); **Fire Arc:** Turret; **Attack Bonus:** +7 (+1 size, +3 fire control, +3 crew); **Damage:** Special; **Range Modifiers:** PB +0, S/M/L n/a.

"Uglies"

Craft: scratch-built starfighter; **Class:** Starfighter; **Cost:** Typically 25,000 to 40,000 credits; **Size:** Tiny (16m long); **Crew:** 1 (Skilled +4); **Passengers:** None; **Cargo Capacity:** 80 kg; **Consumables:** 1 day; **Hyperdrive:** x2; **Maximum Speed:** Attack (7 squares); **Defense:** 22 (+2 size, +10 armor); **Shield Points:** 40; **Hull Points:** 100; **DR:** 5; **Weapon:** Laser cannons (2 fire-linked); **Fire arc:** Front; **Attack Bonus:** +8 (+2 size, +2 +4 crew, +2 fire control); **Damage:** 2d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB +0, S/M/L n/a

Endor

The Forest Moon is far too inaccessible for the Ayrour or the Alsakans to have placed the Tesseract on its surface intentionally, yet Endor has always been plagued by navigational instabilities. Now it appears its gravitational eddies may have snared another victim.

TESSANT LORE ON ENDOR

It's rumored that one of the Zorbian pirate craft *Skewer's* recent victims was an Ayrour antiquities freighter and a caravan from Annaj carrying a number of offworld treasures for appraisal and resale, and the pirates crashed on the Forest Moon. This might not be true—Zorbian raids have long been blamed in cases of insurance fraud and embezzlement—but dozens of fortune hunters, including the Alderaanians and the Kintan Gunrunners, are eager to locate the plunder.

EXPLORING THE FOREST MOON

In an adventure set before the Battle of Endor, the heroes need a guide to find to the Forest Moon. In the New Republic era they can begin searching at Salfur's Trading Post on the moon's surface. In either scenario, a rotund fringer named Macy Yakaro might approach them. Between drags on his cigarra, he confides, "Before I became a guide, I worked for a dozen years out of Annaj as a spaceport controller. The *Skewer* had a black-market transponder, sure, but I know what frequencies they were using. I've got a detector, and if we got close enough I could home in on her signal. I want in for thirty percent. If that's too much for you, go search for it yourself. There are

hundreds of square kilometers where the *Skewer* could have gone down. You don't stand a chance without my help."

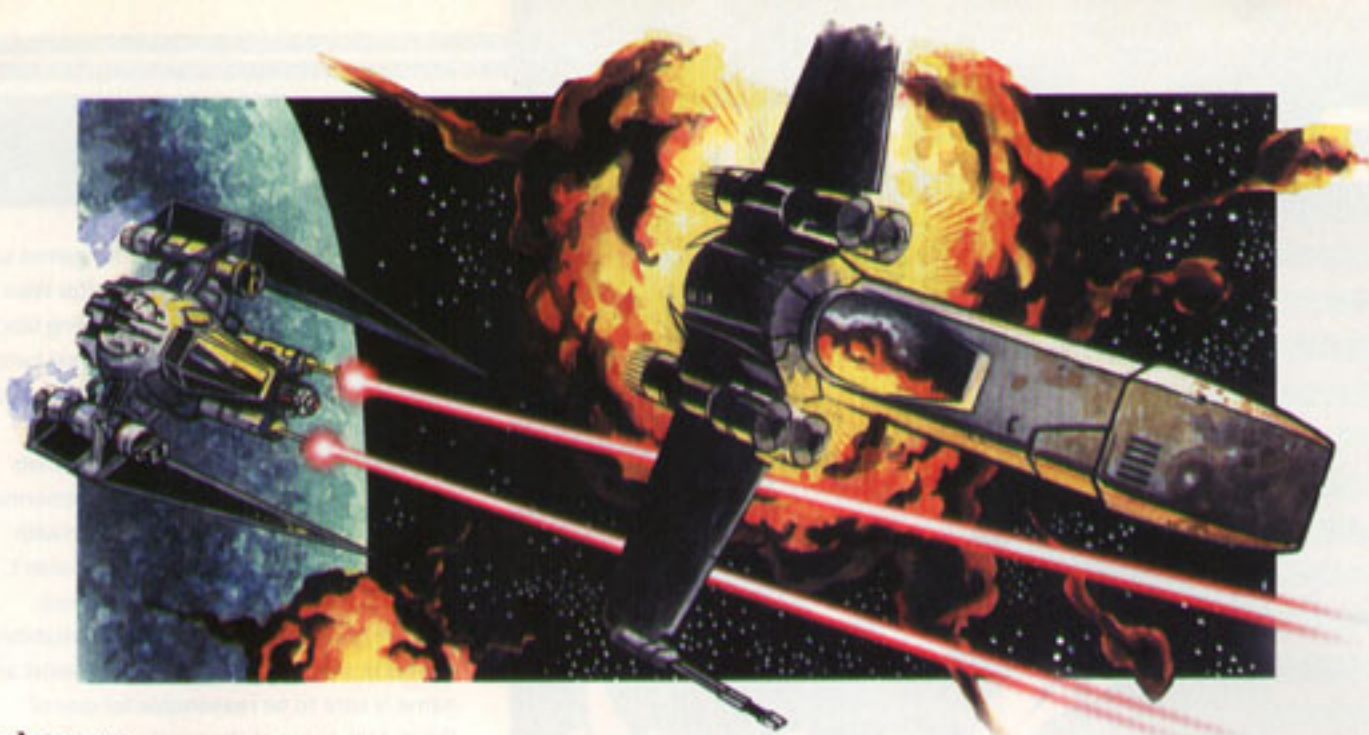
He's bragging, of course, but if the heroes hire Macy or buy his transponder detector (or find some other way of obtaining the gadget), their search proves easier. If they ignore him, another party obtains Macy's device. The heroes can certainly try to find the *Skewer* using an alternate method, but under this scenario their first tip-off as to the ship's whereabouts might be the commotion caused as a rival team makes off with a cargo skiff stuffed with treasure.

The transponder detector works poorly beyond 500 meters. The heroes stand the best chances searching on foot or on vehicles appropriate for Endor's forests, such as speeder bikes. If the search spans several days—and if the heroes have brought Macy with them—there's a 20% chance each evening that the fringer goes missing. If Macy disappears for more than an hour and the heroes go looking for him, they'll discover a nearby Ewok encampment where Macy is roasting on a cooking spit. This tribe of vicious Ewoks has been cast out of their home village for their adherence to the dark ways.

Even if the above encounter does not occur, the Tesseract might already be in the paws of Endor's most irritable Ewoks. The *Skewer* disintegrated on impact, but the renegade Ewoks have retrieved bits of electronic equipment (including the still-functional transponder) and shiny pieces of treasure. What they missed, a flock of condor dragons snatched up to add to their nests.

Both groups fight to keep their prizes. The Ewoks have a fortified encampment with booby traps and as many warriors as the GM needs to provide the heroes with a challenge. The condor dragons have carried their sparkly trophies back to a rocky aerie within the Yawari Cliffs, where they can be seen emerging from their holes and wheeling above the highlands like carrion birds. Because of the circumstances surrounding the crash, you can choose to place the transponder and the Tesseract at different locations.

If any of the other parties have also arrived on Endor, the heroes could try to strike a temporary alliance. Or they could stand aside and hope the condor dragons and Ewoks thin out the herd.



Endgames

You can use any of the scenarios and settings as building blocks for an adventure. If you prefer guidance on an endgame you'll want to take advantage of the possibilities presented by Inicus Mont and the Cave of Memory.

The three Vashan bodhis in the Cave of Memory follow Brixbrax Ux-rox, who has parlayed the ability to read objects into a vastly profitable business. By placing an object in his antestomach for several minutes, Brixbrax can sense the psychic manifestations of hundreds of years' worth of previous owners. While he bills this feat as a way to draw lessons from holy objects used by the greatest caste theocrats, Brixbrax has become a rich Vashan using his ability to tell collectors from the Zuma Regions the provenance of objects brought to him. Over the years he has made his job easier by developing an encyclopedic knowledge of several species' antiquities, minimizing antestomach time and maximizing the credits taken in. (Brixbrax charges anything from 10 credits to 1,000 credits for reading an object and cannily sets prices by sizing up his customers and the objects they've brought.)

If offered the Tessent, Brixbrax swallows it and renders an accurate verdict within several minutes. (Note that he can ascertain nothing about any clues or powers the idol may conceal.) What happens next depends greatly on what has happened before: You might arrange things so that some or all of the rivals in the hunt arrive at the Cave of Memory while the Vashan is contemplating the idol in his innards, leaving all concerned

trading threatening glances while awaiting word of what one of them has found. Brixbrax is no thief, but he's also no fool: If he sees a threatening situation develop in his cave, he keeps the idol in his antestomach or immediately spits it out onto the floor at the feet of whomever gave it to him, depending on what course of action seems least likely to get him killed. If pressed or threatened with the Tessent in his antestomach, he puffs himself up and expectorates it out of his cave entirely, sending it hurtling down among the Vashans below. There, it is likely to be mistaken for a sin-bullet and swallowed by one of the milling horde.

When Brixbrax reads the idol, you decide which Tessent has been found—the Alderaanian one or the Ayrour one. Depending on which one has been found, the heroes' rivals will act in different ways:

Follnor Callant couldn't care less about the Ayrour Tessent: In fact, if he winds up with that idol, he doesn't want it. "What do I want with some backwater antique?" he asks, adding with a snort, "If featherhead art ruled the galaxy, suet exporters would dine at the Manarai every night." He then tosses the Ayrour idol to the bewildered heroes and marches from the cave with his hirelings in tow. He'll do everything in his power to make the Alderaanian Tessent his own.

The Kintan Gunrunners don't care which Tessent they find—either can make them rich, and they'll fight to get it. Korraj and the Thonner pirates feel the same way if drawn into the affair.

Poina Tuc-shol fights to the death to secure the Ayrour Tessent, but the swordsman doesn't care about the Alderaanian Tessent. He flies into a windmilling rage if a Vashan bodhi or penitent is harmed. Dochi At-Rial won't risk his chitin for either idol, but if he sees a chance to snag either during the fighting, he slurps the idol into his antestomach and tries to lose himself among the penitents below.

Finally, you should consider one final possibility: that Brixbrax spits back an idol he announces to be of synthetic chalcedony, redolent with the psychic energies of an Annaj factory-shift worker from five years ago. In other words, the Tessent is a fake. If so, the heroes and their rivals might notice that someone in the contest has slipped quietly away while everyone else awaited Brixbrax's verdict. Perhaps Fenn Shysa has just found a huge source of funds for fighting Mandalore's slavers.

As for what secret either Tessent holds, that's the stuff of another adventure. ■

Eras of Play

Until the Battle of Endor, the system is an uncharted world known only to the well traveled in the Moddell sector. An adventure set near the end of the Rebellion era must take into account the Empire's presence. In the New Republic and The New Jedi Order eras, Endor is familiar to every hero, and the moon boasts a small spaceport and trading outpost.



Names of Corellia

When designing characters for games such as *Star Wars Galaxies* or the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*, a common stumbling block is coming up with a character name. Good names in the *Star Wars* universe tend to have a certain feel that is easy to recognize but hard to describe. This is particularly true for Human characters, whose names should seem normal enough that a Human would come up with them but unique enough that you wouldn't expect to see them in a local phone book.

There are thousands of Human-inhabited worlds in the *Star Wars* galaxy, so almost any name is sure to be reasonable for one of them. Still, some of the most common names and naming conventions can trace their roots back to Corellia. With its long history of hyper-space travel and strong adventurous spirit, Corellian culture has colonized hundreds of worlds and had an impact on thousands more. While Corellian names certainly aren't universal—even on Corellia—they are an excellent example to explore when deciding on a character's name.

The most common form for a Corellian name to take is a single given name followed by a single family name (for example, "Drea Rann"). This pattern is in keeping with the Corellian tendency for short, simple names that flow well. On the other end of the spectrum, some Corellian families give each child two fairly short names. Individuals from such families often insist on using both of their given names as well as their family name (for example: "Hal Kir Drayson").

A very few Corellians prefer to use just a single name, usually a given name they choose for themselves sometime after adulthood. A number of Corellian names descend from common nicknames, and many Corellians take a nickname they use more commonly than their given names. Occasionally, Corellians on the run from the law (or hiding from criminals) have several nicknames or aliases they use in different social circles, each a single name.

When two powerful families are joined by marriage or business, their names are sometimes combined to represent their alliance (for example, "Sal-Solo"). Lesser families sometimes use such combinations to claim allegiance with more powerful groups. Given the long history



of Corellia, it's not uncommon to find two people who share last names but are not related by blood or marriage.

If you need a lot of names, you might want to look at creating new Corellian names. Don't worry about how accurate such names are. It's a big galaxy, so any name you come up with is likely to be in use by some Corellian somewhere. Although not every name developed by these methods sounds right, frequently you'll need only a minor change to make it suitable.

Substitution

One method for creating new Corellian names is to replace the vowels in a common name or word to different vowels, especially "i" and "y." You can combine this method with removing a consonant, especially one consonant of a pair next to each other. With some experimentation, this method can produce decent Corellian names. While "Tom Smith" is a boring, very un-*Star Wars* name, "Tam Sythe" is far more appropriate. You might also want to experiment with adding new vowels and consonants, especially a, b, d, f, g, i, k, m, t, v, or z.

If using words other than names, try to use short, sharp words. Looking randomly through a dictionary, my eyes happen to fall on "desk" and "algae." Looking at the recommendations above, for the first name I change the "e" to an "a" and get rid of the "s." Adding consonants for the second name I throw in an "f" and a "t." This results in the name "Dak Falgate," which sounds pretty good.

Mixing

Another popular method is to take the first three letters of your last name and add the first two letters of your first name. For example, using this method, I get the name "Steow." For a second name, you can take the first three letters of your mother's maiden name and add the first three letters of your hometown. Doing this, I end up with "Faunor." "Steow Faunor" isn't a perfect name, but it certainly sounds different. With a little imagination I can get it to "Stow Fanor," which sounds much better. Try playing with your middle name, nearby towns,

or even friends' names until you find something you like.

Sometimes you can gain good results by spelling names and common words backward. This tends to be even more hit-and-miss than other methods but can result in

Good names in the Star Wars universe tend to have a certain feel that is easy to recognize but hard to describe.

some pretty cool names—"Erik Mona" becomes "Kire Anom," and "Dave Gross" becomes "Evad Ssorg."

References

Finally, look at foreign names. Resources like atlases and history books can provide numerous names that have a Corellian sound to them. Baby name books, translation dictionaries (and even the local phone book) can also be good for name mining but are likely to require a lot more work to find names that sound sufficiently different without sounding specifically foreign. ■

Common Corellian Names

Presented below are 75 common female and 75 common male given names, along with 35 common family names.

Female Names

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Aerena | Eida | Jaina | Naren | Tanda |
| Ala | Ellia | Jem | Nile | Tendra |
| Anen | Ettal | Jenica | Noval | Teniell |
| Areta | Erisi | Jessa | Platt | Timmser |
| Asori | Fable | Joi | Ranna | Todra |
| Auren | Fane | Kalya | Rell | Tour |
| Betl | Fianna | Kara | Roget | Trinna |
| Bola | Fiolla | Kymber | Sayl | Tyria |
| Canna | Gara | Lannah | Sei | Vanel |
| Cheriss | Gaeriel | Llyl | Sena | Varel |
| Dace | Genna | Mara | Sera | Viera |
| Dalla | Hala | Mayli | Shalla | Yane |
| Dasha | Iella | Melanah | Shell | Zana |
| Deena | Inyri | Mirax | Shinnan | Zena |
| Drea | Ishale | Myn | Sulen | Zu |

Male Names

| | | | | |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Adson | Daclif | Herron | Marl | Tal |
| Aeron | Dash | Huff | Myn | Tanner |
| Aves | Davin | Ilm | Naren | Tash |
| Bane | Desric | Iving | Noval | Thel |
| Bel | Devron | Jacen | Okins | Torm |
| Bevel | Dyans | Jaster | Par | Thraken |
| Booster | Edor | Jix | Pash | Tormax |
| Bren | Evir | Jorus | Perth | Vict |
| Cal | Fein | Jost | Ran | Waric |
| Cole | Gaen | Kader | Rayf | Wedge |
| Corran | Garm | Kell | Rennek | Wes |
| Crev | Garik | Kir | Rogan | Wodi |
| Crix | Haken | Klyn | Sal | Zak |
| Cubber | Hal | Kyle | Sair | Zeven |
| Dack | Han | Lancer | Sate | Zon |

Family Names

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|--------|----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|--------|---------|
| Alder | Bastra | Bombassa | Duine | Gallamby | Leikvold | Midanyl | Sal | Thomree |
| Antilles | Bell | Colton | Drayson | Grottil | Madine | Nane | Sode | Vigil |
| Arcturus | Belos | Creel | Ellan | Horn | Malo | Novar | Solo | Wessiri |
| Ardellian | Berus | Donos | Erelen | Iblis | Mereel | Rann | Terrik | |

The Nosaurians

BY CRAIG R. CAREY, JASON FRY

& DANIEL WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY DARRELL RICHE



From the Desk of Professor Eliss

It was just last semester, and the bubble of security in which I had allowed myself to wallow since my return to Sanbra had yet to be popped by the nightly updates on the progress of the Yuuzhan Vong invasion. The girl was a youngish Nosaurian aide in Professor Eppington's department. I'd passed her hundreds of times in the hall, but of course Sanbra is a big place. The senior staff was in the lounge, all buzzing about the Vong attack on Yag'Dhul, when we heard a roar so loud and abrupt I thought an air hose had slipped its fittings.

Through the window we saw her on her knees in the courtyard, surrounded by fallen datacards, her arms rigid and her hands squeezing emptiness. That terrible drone only grew louder, as if something were reaching through her parted teeth and yanking the sound from deep in her gut. Most of the onlookers hurried past, embarrassed, while others tried to speak to her but could see no cognition in those blank eyes. Eventually campus security anesthetized her and loaded her into the medic's speeder.

We later learned her homeworld had been wiped clean by the Vong. I'm ashamed to admit I didn't even know her name.

—Tem Eliss

The two-legged reptiles known as Nosaurians are former inhabitants of New Plympto, one of the Outlier systems of the Corellian sector. Standing between 1.2 and 1.55 meters, Nosaurians have four nimble fingers on each hand and possess three-toed, birdlike feet. Their most striking feature by far, however, is the six-spiked ridge of horns sprouting from their foreheads like a savage headdress. The horns are sharp enough to gore opponents,

though most Nosaurians protect their horns to avoid an accidental break. (The number of jagged stubs on their heads can identify particularly old or quarrelsome Nosaurians.)

Nosaurians have black-and-white vision. This trait is rarely incapacitating, and many outsiders who interact with the species don't even realize the Nosaurians lack color-sight. This is because they can usually distinguish one color from another—"red"

usually represents a darker shade of gray than "blue," for instance. Nevertheless, subtle gradations in shade elude them. Black-and-white Nosaurian eyes might have difficulty interpreting computer displays or complex starship controls.

A Nosaurian can turn the lining of its mouth phosphorescent at will. This ability also manifests in lesser animals from New Plympto who use it to lure prey, but the Nosaurians have conducted so little research into their own prehistory that it is unknown whether the trait evolved in them for the same purpose.

Nosaurians possess quicksilver reflexes, making them fine athletes and pilots. They also have a strange quirk—when the sun dips below the horizon on New Plympto, they bray at the top of their lungs to "sing it down." This trait is almost involuntary, and Nosaurians can tell when the sun is setting even if they're indoors. Those who live offworld lose their internal rhythms and tend to burst out with this loud call at inopportune times. Many a restaurateur or theater owner has denied service to a paying Nosaurian for fear of annoying his other patrons.



Rarely visited despite its location in the Corellian sector, New Plympto subsisted for centuries by exporting a raw intoxicant to the galaxy at large. The popular and addictive physic consisted mostly of egg yolks extracted from the ovum sacs of female rikknits, ten-legged crustaceans that nested in the treetops of New Plympto. Efforts to breed the rikknit in captivity failed, and by the time Valorum assumed the office of supreme chancellor, the spider-like beasts had been hunted almost to extinction. Valorum signed an environmental law making the rikknit a protected species, turning most of New Plympto's population into poachers virtually overnight.

An economic depression followed, and most Nosaurians were quick to blame Republic politicians for meddling in Nosaurian affairs. New Plympto lacked direct representation in the Senate and instead had to air its concerns through the Corellian sector's human representative. When Palpatine declared himself Emperor, the impoverished Nosaurians had grown disgusted with what they viewed as high-handed human politics, and Palpatine's New Order made things much, much worse.

The Imperial Procurator of Justice classified New Plympto "expendable," which enabled the Empire's bureaucrats to seize control of the planet's scant resources and kill any natives who interfered. The Nosaurian general Fefar Blackeye led the first successful organized resistance, executing three ferocious guerrilla campaigns over two years. When the local Imperial general finally captured Blackeye one year after the Battle of Yavin, the Nosaurian resistance movement collapsed. Badly wounded and no longer able to speak, General Blackeye was shipped to Coruscant as a prisoner of war and displayed in a zoo near Imperial City. The general spent six months sharing a transparisteel display cage with a troop of wild primates before taking his own life.

The Nosaurians didn't learn of General Blackeye's fate until the New Republic's liberation of Coruscant. Shocked by the Empire's cruelty, many Nosaurians transferred their anger to the human leaders of the New Republic. New Plympto adopted a standoffish attitude as it tried to rebuild its

economy. The entire Corellian sector followed a similar but unrelated path of isolation. Fourteen years after the Battle of Endor the leaders of the Outlier system of Saccoria rebelled against the New Republic during the so-called Corellian insurrection, and New Plympto took advantage of the temporary chaos to declare its own independence. Once the excitement of the failed insurrection wore off, the planet quietly rejoined the New Republic. To do otherwise would have been economic suicide.

Nevertheless, anti-human sentiment remained strong. Twi'lek demagogue Nola Tarkona found a receptive audience on New Plympto for her "aliens first" political movement; thousands of Nosaurian soldiers joined Tarkona's Diversity Alliance. During the Yuuzhan Vong invasion the Nosaurians sought leadership through other Twi'lek women—in this case the Jedi sisters Alema and Numa Rar. Though the Rar sisters couldn't prevent New Plympto's invasion (which occurred shortly after the fall of nearby Duro), they led an underground counterstrike and destroyed countless biohatcheries, Shaper damuteks, and shrines to Yun-Yammka.

After nearly a year of frustrating losses, the Yuuzhan Vong commander in charge of New Plympto abandoned the world and left behind a life-consuming virus. The Twi'lek sisters escaped, but hundreds of thousands of Nosaurian citizens melted into jelly. Like the similarly afflicted planet Ithor, New Plympto is now under total quarantine. If this deplorable occurrence has any bright spot, it is that most Nosaurians had left their

homeworld long before its destruction. Millions can be found throughout the galaxy, but don't expect any to be in a good mood.

Nosaurians

Nosaurians are a bipedal reptilian species known (in past decades) for their cultural animosity toward humans. The recent loss of their homeworld to the Yuuzhan Vong has left the species tragically adrift.

Personality: Gregarious and even-tempered by nature. However, the perceived injustices inflicted upon the species by humans in power have left most Nosaurians embittered and angry. The destruction of New Plympto has only increased the Nosaurians' descent into a kind of disgusted fatalism.

Physical Description: Nosaurians are easily identified by the six horns that stick up like crowns from their foreheads. They are slightly shorter than humans (between 1.2 and 1.55 meters) and have thick skin ranging from light green to black.

Homeworld: New Plympto.

Languages: Nosaurian, Basic.

Example Names: Clegg Holdfast, Fefar Blackeye, Moco Minkfruit.

Adventurers: Nosaurians can be of any class, though members of the soldier and fringer classes have become more common in The New Jedi Order era.

New Plympto

System/Star: Plympto/Pym (yellow)

Type: Terrestrial (wasteland in NJO era)

Atmosphere: Breathable (breath mask needed in NJO era)

Gravity: Standard

Climate/Terrain: Plains, Mountains, Seas

Length of Day: 22 standard hours

Length of Year: 370 standard days

Sapient Species: Nosaurians

Population: 1 billion in Republic era, 20 million in Empire era, unpopulated in NJO era

Major Exports: Rikknit eggs (before NJO era)

Major Imports: Communications technology, foodstuffs (before NJO era)

Satellites: None

Spaceports: 1 stellar, 3 limited service (abandoned in NJO era)

Nosaurian Commoner: Init +1 (Dex); Def 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP —/13; Atk +0 melee (1d3, punch) or +0 melee (1d6, gore); SQ Horns; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; Rep 0; Str 10; Dex 12; Con 10; Int 10; Wis 10; Cha 8. Challenge Code: A.

Skills: Climb +2, Pilot +2, Profession (varies) +2, Read/Write Nosaurian, Speak Basic, Speak Nosaurian, Survival +2.

Species Features: +2 Dexterity, -2 Charisma; +2 species bonus on Climb and Survival checks.



Clegg Holdfast, Podracer

Born to a fish-catcher father and a candle-maker mother, Clegg Holdfast started work as a journalist but earned fame as a Podracing pilot. His improbable career made for good copy, but it didn't help him in the cut-throat Boonta Eve Classic.

The Holdfast family was never successful, scratching out a passable income in the drifter's district of Phemiss, New Plympto's capital. The Republic's decree that the rikknit would henceforth be protected

NOSAURIAN SPECIES TRAITS

- +2 Dexterity, -2 Charisma. Nosaurians possess quick reflexes but are regarded as troublemakers by other species, particularly Humans.
- Medium-size. As Medium-sized creatures, Nosaurians have no bonuses or penalties due to size.
- Base speed is 10 meters.
- +2 species bonus on Climb and Survival checks. Nosaurians are agile climbers and have developed sustenance techniques as a result of hard times on their homeworld.
- Automatic Languages: Nosaurian and Basic.

Eras of Play

Rise of the Empire era: Under the Republic, the Nosaurians swallowed the Senate environmental law that ended generations of rikknit trade and sent New Plympto into economic recession. Many Nosaurians became poachers, while hundreds of thousands emigrated to nearby Core Worlds. Nosaurians could be found among every career class.

Rebellion era: With the rise of the Empire, New Plympto became one of twenty-seven alien-inhabited Core Worlds classified as "expendable" by the Imperial Procurator of

Justice. The Empire seized control of all resources and commerce, ignoring the Nosaurians (except for those who resisted, whom they killed). The Nosaurian general Fefar Blackeye led three campaigns against the Imperials, spanning the year before and the year after the Battle of Yavin. Nosaurian soldiers and mercenaries became more common during this era.

New Republic era: The discovery of General Blackeye's mistreatment at the hands of his Imperial captors on Coruscant turned many Nosaurians against humans. They resisted New Republic membership and attempted to piggyback on the Saccorian Triad's failed sector revolution, known as the Corellian insurrection. During the Diversity Alliance crisis, Nosaurian army defectors joined Nolaa Tarkona's anti-human political movement.

under Senate environmental regulations did not affect the Holdfasts directly, but the subsequent economic depression made their difficult lives untenable. Clegg left New Plympto at thirteen, the Nosaurian age of adulthood.

He dreamed of landing a reporter's job with the estimable Galaxy News Service, but he discovered that his writing chops were not quite as strong as his peers in the Phemiss data market had led him to believe. *TriNebulon News* eventually hired Holdfast to fill the back pages of its Corellian Sector edition, mostly because he was willing to work cheap. Clegg wrote such scorching exposés as "Orbital Habitat B Gets New Sewer System" and "Area Woman Has Sector's Largest Collection of Juri Jars" before falling to *TriNebulon* budget cuts in a layoff affecting the entire Corellian bureau.

Holdfast discovered that no one lies better than a broke writer in a job interview. He found himself named the new feature columnist for *Podracing Quarterly* despite

his utter ignorance of the sport. As a participatory journalist, Holdfast frantically learned the basics of Podracing both to preserve his lie and to survive long enough to win a less hazardous assignment.


In a Keizar-Volvec KV9T9-B Wasp—sponsored by *Podracing Quarterly* advertisers—Clegg Holdfast made a respectable showing as a Podracing pilot. Though he never admitted it even to himself, Holdfast intentionally shot for the middle of the pack and the safer, mid-size purses. Jealous rivals labeled him a dilettante, but fans picked up every issue of *Podracing Quarterly* for the inside scoop from their man in the field.

Clegg Holdfast: Male Nosaurian Frg 1; Init +1 (Dex); Def 14 (+3 class, +1 Dex); Spd 10m; VP/WP 8/10; Atk +0 melee (1d3, punch) or +0 melee (1d6, gore) or +1 ranged; SQ Horns; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 0; Rep 0; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 11. Challenge Code: A.

Equipment: Datapad, comlink, Podracer.

Skills: Bluff +2, Climb +2, Computer Use +2, Gather Information +5, Knowledge (Corellia) +5, Knowledge (Podracing) +4, Listen +2, Pilot +2, Profession (journalist) +4, Profession (Podracer) +4, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Nosaurian, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Nosaurian, Spot +2, Survival +2.

Feats: Alertness, Skill Emphasis (Gather Information), Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

The New Jedi Order era: Following their conquest of Duro, Yuuzhan Vong forces pressed into the Corellian sector but met stiff resistance from all corners. On New Plympto, the Yuuzhan Vong overcame the Nosaurian defense and fortified the planet as an advance base. Yet their occupation crumbled under a merciless guerrilla resistance campaign led by the Twi'lek sisters (and Jedi Knights) Alema and Numa Rar. After nearly a year of unrelenting sabotage, the Yuuzhan Vong abandoned New Plympto and wiped it clean of all life with a bioengineered plague. Any Nosaurian encountered in the years after the destruction of his homeworld is certain to be bitter and spoiling for a fight. 

DICE, CAMERA, ACTION!

The McGuffin

BY ROBIN D. LAWS

Welcome to part two in an ongoing series that ransacks the techniques of moviemaking for use in our roleplaying games. Last time we introduced the concept of structure, which helps you give your adventures a sense of coherence and forward momentum. Then we showed how structures arise out of the goals of the main characters. Now it's time to connect those two things.

This connection is especially important, and tricky, in a roleplaying game, because the players create the characters while the GM dreams up the adventure. The GM needs a device to stitch together all of the elements of this group effort.

Fortunately, that device is ready and waiting for us. It's called a McGuffin. The term was coined by legendary suspense director Alfred Hitchcock (*Vertigo*, *Rear Window*), but the device itself probably goes back to the first stories ever told, back in the primordial reaches of time.

What's a McGuffin?

The McGuffin is a thing that the characters pursue to make the plot work. In *A New Hope*, the McGuffin is the Death Star. The heroes know they've won when they blow it up. The very first thing you see on screen, the battle between the Rebel blockade runner and the Imperial Star Destroyer, is all about that McGuffin: Darth Vader is trying to recover the stolen plans to the battle station.

Other famous movie McGuffins include the money Marion Crane (Janet Leigh) steals at the beginning of Hitchcock's *Psycho*, the mysterious suitcase in *Pulp Fiction*, and the Ark of the Covenant in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. In all of these examples, the McGuffins are objects. Whenever possible, see to it that your McGuffin is a physical object—or can be represented as one. In film, making the McGuffin a physical object allows the moviemakers to depict the struggle for it in visual terms. In a roleplaying game, it also helps your players visualizing their characters and the people, places, and things they interact with. More importantly, a physical McGuffin helps the players know when the story is over. When players get involved in a story, they often want to keep

going, even when they've actually done all there is to do. You don't have a composer to write triumphant music for you or a camera operator to set up a slowly receding overhead shot. The physical presence of the princess, ship, or experimental power converter the heroes were looking for provides them the necessary cue to stop and feel the flush of ultimate success.

When Leia gives the Death Star plans to R2-D2, she creates a physical representation of the McGuffin. The card jammed into his data slot isn't the Death Star itself, but it provides the means to destroy it. In story terms, the data card gives both the heroes and villains a reason to move from one place to another and undertake the various actions that, taken together, make up the plot.

This is Not the McGuffin You're Looking For

Your McGuffin can carry all the way through your story, or it can be just a device to take the heroes to the point where the real story begins. *Psycho* isn't about the money Marion steals or even about Marion herself; Hitchcock tricks us into thinking we're watching a caper movie about one character when he's really drawing us into a horror movie about a crazed loner, his mother, and their kitchen knife.

The Phantom Menace also uses a bait-and-switch McGuffin. At first the movie seems to be about the trade blockade of Naboo. Unlike the money in *Psycho*, this plot element isn't a total diversion. It is important to the overall story, setting up a political situation that will lead to the creation of the Empire. But the real McGuffin turns out to be Anakin Skywalker, whose powerful connection to the Force interests both the Jedi and the Sith.

Here we see that a McGuffin can be a person. In *The Empire Strikes Back*, it turns out that Luke is the McGuffin; the entire plot is a setup to deliver him to Vader. At the end of that film, Han becomes the McGuffin for the extended introductory sequence of *Return of the Jedi*; he's frozen and encased in carbonite for delivery to Jabba the Hut.

When a sympathetic character is the McGuffin, you need to find a way of making that person help-

A physical McGuffin helps the players know when the story is over.



less or immobile. Otherwise, he can move around on his own, with no need for the heroes to intervene. Anakin is a young child; Han is frozen. Even during the early stages of his rescue from Jabba, Han is blinded and can't participate in his own rescue.

McGuffins in Your Game

In a game, a sympathetic McGuffin character should almost always be a GM character. Nobody wants to spend the evening playing a character stuck in carbonite or imprisoned in an Imperial outpost. If you know that a player will be absent for a given session, however, you can make her the McGuffin for that session, but make sure you have a believable way to keep the hero from permanent harm while she's in your care. You can even enlist the player's help, secretly arranging for her to do something to get her character caught at the end of a session. The next session, while she's away, the other heroes can hunt for the place where the Empire has her stashed. If you're really clever at timing, you can stage the climactic fight at the beginning of the player's first session back. Like Han, her character can recover partway through to take part in the action sequence.

You can also create an unsympathetic McGuffin character, one the heroes must hunt down. Almost every cop or mystery movie you care to name features a hunt for the perpetrator of a crime, whose identity is often unclear as the story opens. Your heroes could hunt for a double agent with knowledge of Rebel plans, the saboteur who blew up an important installation, or a bounty hunter turned assassin.

Everybody Wants the McGuffin

Whatever or whoever the McGuffin is, try to set up your story so that both heroes and villains seek it. That way, when the players bog down and can't decide what to do next, the villains can take an action to get them closer to the McGuffin or keep them farther from it. The heroes then have to take active countermeasures, forcing them to stop planning and get back to doing things.

In some stories, the villains are active, and the heroes act only to escape them. *The Empire Strikes Back* works this way. The Rebels begin the movie in a defensive posture; we don't see them doing much more than patrolling around their base on Hoth. Vader goes after them in search of Luke, who, as we've already established, is the movie's McGuffin. Even after the attack, Luke's goal is non-adventurous; he just wants to study with Yoda. It's Vader who keeps the adventure going by drawing Leia and Han to him, so Luke must come to rescue them.

Be warned though, just as *The Empire Strikes Back* is the darkest of the original trilogy, stories in which the heroes are the bad guys' McGuffin tend to be emotionally bleak. This is even truer in roleplaying games, where players can easily become discouraged when placed under pressure, especially if you've done a good job of portraying the villains as tough and determined. If you set your game in the Rebellion era, you might have to resort to this structure just to keep the Empire believable. But don't rely on it too much, or players might feel cheated of the breezy, optimistic world of adventure they expect from a *Star Wars* game.

When to Use the McGuffin

Not all stories need highly tangible, obvious McGuffins. With the right group of players, you might all enjoy a story about a more abstract goal, like campaigning for a political office, perfecting a new technology, or exploring a frontier. However, these more complicated ideas often appeal more to GMs than players, so make sure you're truly catering to your players' tastes whenever you steer a *Star Wars* campaign away from its action-adventure roots.

To create a McGuffin, ask yourself the following questions:

- 1 **What is the McGuffin?**
 - object (specify)
 - person (specify)
 - place (specify)
 - other (specify)
- 2 **Who wants it?**
 - Heroes
 - GM characters
 - both
- 3 **Why do they want it?**
- 4 **Where is it now?**
- 5 **How do they find out about it and/or know they want it?**
- 6 **(If the heroes seek it) What is the first obstacle standing between the heroes and the McGuffin?**
- 7 **(If GM characters seek it) What is the first problem the GM characters' hunt for the McGuffin will pose for the heroes?**

Answer these questions, and you have the first act of your structure mapped out. Then you'll be ready for the next stage of your adventure-building process: the Big Twist. Join us next time, and we'll show you exactly what that is. ☒



THE JEDI WEAPON MASTER

BY OWEN K.C. STEPHENS WITH JD WIKER

ILLUSTRATION BY JEREMY JARVIS

Although it is true that a Jedi's greatness does not come from his martial ability, it is also true that some threats to peace and justice can be met only with force. While all Jedi receive some training in combat, a very few make fighting the central focus of their union with the Force. The Jedi are weapon masters, adepts of various styles of melee combat.

The best Jedi weapon masters choose their martial path early and dedicate a large part of their lives to perfecting one form of combat. Such Jedi are not especially violent or angry, for all Jedi know that such attitudes are the first step on the path to the dark side. Instead, these Jedi have simply found that they are closest to the Force when practicing and perfecting a particular style of combat.

Jedi weapon masters were most common during the Tales of the Jedi era, when violence was frequently an unfortunate way of life for many Jedi. As the Republic became more settled and less dangerous, Jedi weapon masters grew less common, though there were always a few Jedi who focused on combat more than their brethren did. No Jedi weapon masters are known to have survived the Jedi Purge, but some could easily develop in Master Skywalker's Praxeum.

CLASS FEATURES

All the following are class features of the Jedi weapon master.

Bonus Weapon Feat: At 1st, 4th, and 7th level the Jedi weapon master gains a bonus feat drawn from the following list: Ambidexterity, Exotic Weapon Proficiency, Improved Critical, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Martial Artist (Defensive Martial Arts, Improved Martial Arts, Advanced Martial Arts), Two-Weapon Fighting (Improved Two-Weapon Fighting), Weapon Focus, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Group Proficiency.

Deflect: At 1st level, the Jedi weapon master can deflect blaster bolts and other ranged weapon attacks with his lightsaber. He must be carrying an activated lightsaber to use this special ability. The ranged attack must be from an antipersonnel weapon; heavy weapons or ship weapons can't be deflected.

Defense: Deflecting a ranged attack is a reaction that costs a move action during the Jedi weapon master's next round.

Deflect can be used in conjunction with a total defense action to gain the dodge bonus to Defense provided by this ability as well as the dodge bonus provided by total defense. In this case, deflect blasters is instead an attack action used in a round when the Jedi expects to come under heavy fire.

At 1st level, the Jedi weapon master has a +1 dodge bonus to Defense when using his lightsaber to block blaster or other ranged attacks. At 8th level, the dodge bonus increases to +2.

Attack: At 1st level, the Jedi weapon master has the ability to block a blaster attack and deflect the bolt toward a target within one

range increment of his position. (The weapon being deflected determines the range increment.) He can deflect a number of attacks equal to one-half his Jedi level, rounded up, in one round. The attack being deflected back must miss. After a missed attack, the Jedi weapon master immediately rolls an attack with his lightsaber's bonus and a -4 penalty. If the attack succeeds, the deflected shot hits and deals damage to the target.

At 3rd level, the Jedi weapon master's penalty to redirect an attack is reduced by one (to -3). At 10th level, the penalty is reduced by one again (to -2).

Extended Defense and Attack: At 6th level, the Jedi weapon master can extend this defensive ability to others within 2 meters. A character affected in this manner gains the dodge bonus to Defense, and he can block and deflect back attacks made against anyone within 2 meters of his position.

Increase Weapon Damage: At 2nd, 5th, and 9th level, the Jedi weapon master gains the ability to do an additional +1d8 points of damage with any one melee weapon, chosen at the time he gains this ability, with which he is proficient. The Jedi weapon master can select the same weapon each time, gaining an additional die. She can choose any melee weapon, including punch (if she has the Martial Artist feat).

Weapon Mastery: At 3rd, 5th and 10th level, the Jedi Weapon Master gains one of the abilities listed below. Each applies to only

Requirements

To qualify to become a Jedi weapon master, a character must fulfill all the following requirements:

Base Attack: +5

Skills: Battlemind 8+, Tumble 6+

Special: Jedi level 5+

Feats: Alter, Control, Expertise, Force-Sensitive, Sense, Weapon Focus (any melee weapon or punch)

Class Skills: The Jedi weapon master's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Computer Use (Int), Craft (Int), Empathy (Wis), Enhance Ability (Con), Friendship (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Int), Profession (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

All Alter, Control, and Sense skills are also considered class skills for the Jedi weapon master.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier

Vitality per Level

1d10



one melee weapon selected when the ability is chosen. Each ability can be taken multiple times but applies to a different weapon each time it is selected.

Devastating Strike: On his action, before making any attack rolls, the Jedi weapon master can choose to increase the chance of scoring a critical hit with the chosen weapon. This ability can be used a number of times per day equal to his level. The threat range of a weapon is doubled for one complete round. For example a lightsaber usually threatens a critical on a 19 or 20 (two numbers). When making a devastating strike the lightsaber threatens a critical on a 17–20 (four numbers).

Martial Arts Kata: Once per game session, when the Jedi weapon master makes a full attack against a single target with the chosen weapon, he gains an additional unarmed attack against the same target. This attack is at his full attack bonus and inflicts the Jedi weapon master's normal unarmed damage.

Alternatively this attack can be used to perform a disarm or trip attack. If used to disarm, the attack gains a +4 bonus to hit. If used to trip, a failed roll does not allow the target to attempt to trip the Jedi in return. For more information on these maneuvers see Chapter 8: Combat in the core rulebook.



Rapid Strike: The Jedi weapon master can make an additional attack each round at his highest attack bonus with the chosen weapon. However, the additional attack and all other attacks that round suffer a –2 attack penalty.

Superior Weapon Focus: The Jedi weapon master gains a +1 attack bonus with the chosen weapon. This stacks with any other attack bonuses he has, including the Weapon Focus feat.

Weapon Specialization: Weapon Specialization adds a +2 damage bonus with the chosen weapon. The Jedi weapon master must have Weapon Focus with that weapon to take Weapon Specialization. If the weapon is a ranged weapon, the damage bonus applies only if the target is within 30 meters.

Jedi Knight: When a Jedi weapon master's total Jedi class levels (Jedi weapon master levels plus any other Jedi heroic and prestige class levels) equal 7, the character gains a bonus Knight feat. This bonus Knight feat must be drawn from the following list: Acrobatic, Burst of Speed, Cleave, Dodge, Force Mastery, Force Mind, Knight Defense, Knight Mind, Knight Speed, Lightsaber Defense, Mobility, Weapon Focus (any melee weapon).

A character can only gain a bonus Knight feat once.

[The Jedi weapon master prestige class is designed for use with the revised Star Wars Roleplaying Game core rulebook, available soon. It is also compatible with the premiere version of the core rules. —Ed.]

The Jedi Weapon Master

| Level | Base Attack Bonus | Fort Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special | Defense Bonus | Reputation Bonus |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|---|---------------|------------------|
| 1st | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Bonus weapon feat, deflect (defense +1) | +1 | +0 |
| 2nd | +2 | +2 | +2 | +2 | Increase weapon damage | +2 | +1 |
| 3rd | +3 | +2 | +2 | +2 | Deflect (attack +1), weapon mastery | +2 | +1 |
| 4th | +4 | +2 | +2 | +2 | Bonus weapon feat | +2 | +2 |
| 5th | +5 | +3 | +3 | +3 | Increase weapon damage, weapon mastery | +3 | +2 |
| 6th | +6 | +3 | +3 | +3 | Deflect (extended) | +3 | +3 |
| 7th | +7 | +4 | +4 | +4 | Bonus weapon feat | +4 | +3 |
| 8th | +8 | +4 | +4 | +4 | Deflect (defense +2) | +4 | +4 |
| 9th | +9 | +4 | +4 | +4 | Increase weapon damage | +4 | +4 |
| 10th | +10 | +5 | +5 | +5 | Deflect (attack +2), weapon mastery | +5 | +5 |

Battle Empath

BY JESSE DECKER

ILLUSTRATION BY VINOD RAMS

One of the most compelling reasons to play in a world as richly detailed as that of the *Star Wars* movies is the immense variety of character concepts available. The *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* provides eight character classes that, through feat selection, ability score placement, and skill point allocation, allow a wide variety of character concepts. Despite the vast possibilities of mixing the base classes, a few character concepts don't quite fit into one of the basics. Enter the rules for multiclassing.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Throughout the galaxy, many seek to master the secrets of the Force, exploring its mysteries and surrounding them with peaceful contemplation. From the Jedi Counsel on Coruscant to the witches of Dathomir, devotees achieve fearsome prowess in combat by first mastering the Force. Prevalent in most eras of play, the Jedi identify most Force users and recruit them to become Jedi hopefuls, but there are still many who escape their notice. These Force users follow their own traditions, exploring the mysteries of the Force as their culture dictates.

Most become healers and sages within their communities, never knowing that the intuition that guides them is actually the Force. A few, however, choose to experience a wider world, seeking new challenges and new dangers. To these characters, it is danger that forces them to master themselves and strengthens their bond with the Force.

Although some battle empathths find themselves drawn to the easy power of the dark side, just as many find peace and clarity of mind in risky situations and maintain a balance in the Force throughout their lives. Although they are powerful and willing to do battle, conflict is a part of life to them, not related to fear, anger, or other emotions typical of the dark side.

Lacking the signature lightsabers of the Jedi, these warriors nevertheless bond to their weapons and find that the Force guides their blows just as it guides their decisions and purpose in battle.

ROLEPLAYING NOTES

Battle empathths dedicated to the light side of the Force either find the Jedi code too confining or encounter the Jedi too late in life to undergo the apprenticeship. These good-hearted warriors seek more traditional combat training to supplement their Force powers, relying on the Force to guide their blaster shots. These soldiers often serve as elite guards of a wealthy and well-meaning noble or diplomat.

NEW FORCE FEATS

FORCE SHOT

The Force guides your attacks with ranged weapons against hidden targets.

Prerequisite: Force-Sensitive, Sense, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Base Attack 3+.

Benefits: You gain a +2 Force bonus to your ranged attack rolls against targets with some degree of cover or concealment. This feat has no effect on targets with no cover or concealment. When making a ranged attack against a concealed target, reduce the miss chance by one-half (for example, a fully concealed target would confer a 25% miss chance instead of a 50% chance).

GUIDED ATTACK

Your awareness of the Force allows you to anticipate your opponent's moves, making it harder for her to dodge your attacks.

Prerequisite: Force-Sensitive, Sense, Force level 1+.

Benefit: If you do nothing but study an opponent for two rounds during combat, reduce her Dexterity bonus to Defense by one-half (round up) for the duration of the combat. If Guided Attack makes the opponent's Dexterity modifier +0 or less, that opponent is still not treated as being denied her Dexterity.





Battle empath's who succumb to the dark side, on the other hand, see the heavy armor and blaster weapons of modern armies as a quick and easy means to power—rather than take the time to master the Force, they grab the most dangerous weapons they can find. Dark side battle empath's are powerful foes of the Jedi, scorning their organized beliefs and peaceful philosophy. They quickly become "tainted" early in their careers (see Chapter 9: The Force in the core rulebook), but few explore the Force far enough to become a full-fledged "dark side" character.

Variant Abilities

Although the chart below shows the typical level progression with abilities granted according to the multi-class rules found in the core rulebook, your GM might allow you to substitute some of the existing class abilities for abilities that stick closer to the battle empath archetype.

Variant 1: Instinctive Warrior

Instead of Armor Proficiency (heavy) the battle empath gets the bonus feat Precise Shot at level 4 (soldier level 3). This feat represents the empath's intuitive grasp of his allies' movements amplified by his understanding of the Force. Until the battle empath meets all of the prerequisites for the Precise Shot feat, this ability cannot be used.

Variant 2: Amplified Training

The battle empath has focused on using the Force instead of on using armor in battle. Substitute Skill Emphasis (Force skill) for the soldier's Armor Proficiency feats.

Variant 3: Talk Softly

Substitute the typical soldier's Intimidate class skill for Diplomacy. This change represents the empath's desire to hold force in reserve and makes a battle empath who stays on the light side of the Force more believable.

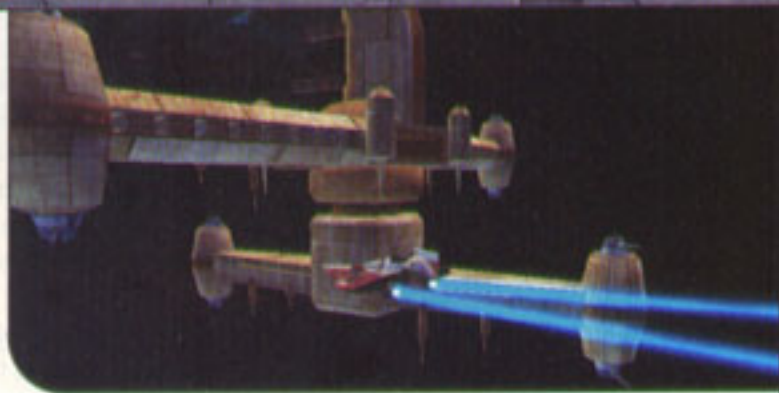


The Battle Empath

| Level | Class Level | Base Attack Bonus | Fort Save | Reflex Save | Will Save | Special | Defense Bonus | Reputation Bonus |
|-------|-------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1 | FA1 | +0 | +1 | +1 | +2 | Starting Force Adept feats | +3 | +0 |
| 2 | Sol1/FA1 | +1 | +3 | +1 | +2 | Starting Soldier feats | +3 | +0 |
| 3 | Sol2/FA1 | +2 | +4 | +1 | +2 | Armor Prof. (med), bonus feat, feat | +3 | +0 |
| 4 | Sol3/FA1 | +3 | +4 | +2 | +3 | Armor Prof. (heavy), +1 to attribute | +4 | +1 |
| 5 | Sol3/FA2 | +4 | +5 | +3 | +4 | Sense | +5 | +1 |
| 6 | Sol4/FA2 | +5 | +6 | +3 | +4 | Bonus feat, feat | +5 | +1 |
| 7 | Sol4/FA3 | +6/+1 | +6 | +3 | +4 | | +5 | +2 |
| 8 | Sol5/FA3 | +7/+2 | +6 | +3 | +4 | +1 to attribute | +5 | +2 |
| 9 | Sol6/FA3 | +8/+3 | +7 | +4 | +5 | Bonus feat, feat | +6 | +3 |
| 10 | Sol6/FA4 | +9/+4 | +7 | +4 | +6 | Control | +6 | +3 |
| 11 | Sol7/FA4 | +10/+5 | +7 | +4 | +6 | | +6 | +3 |
| 12 | Sol8/FA4 | +11/+6/+1 | +8 | +4 | +6 | Bonus feat, feat, +1 to attribute | +6 | +3 |
| 13 | Sol9/FA4 | +12/+7/+2 | +8 | +5 | +7 | | +7 | +4 |
| 14 | Sol9/FA5 | +12/+7/+2 | +9 | +6 | +7 | Force weapon +1d4 | +8 | +4 |
| 15 | Sol10/FA5 | +13/+8/+3 | +10 | +6 | +7 | Bonus feat, feat | +8 | +4 |
| 16 | Sol11/FA5 | +14/+9/+4 | +10 | +6 | +7 | +1 to attribute | +8 | +4 |
| 17 | Sol12/FA5 | +15/+10/+5 | +11 | +7 | +8 | Bonus feat | +9 | +5 |
| 18 | Sol13/FA5 | +16/+11/+6/+1 | +11 | +7 | +8 | Feat | +9 | +5 |
| 19 | Sol14/FA5 | +17/+12/+7/+2 | +12 | +7 | +8 | Bonus feat | +9 | +5 |
| 20 | Sol15/FA5 | +18/+13/+8/+3 | +12 | +8 | +9 | +1 to attribute | +10 | +6 |



STAR WARS JEDI STARFIGHTER



Premiere *Attack of the Clones* Game Takes Great Series to Force-ful New Heights

BY ERIC BRATCHER
PLAYSTATION 2

In February 2001, the original *Star Wars* Starfighter took the video game world by storm. The first *Star Wars*-themed game to be released for Sony's PlayStation 2, it boasted addictive, arcade-style flight combat, beautiful graphics, and creative missions that immediately earned the deserved praise of both fans and critics alike. All the more impressive then that the sequel, *Star Wars Jedi Starfighter*, doesn't just look to be every bit as good as its progenitor—it looks to be a whole lot better.

Those clever folks at LucasArts let *Star Wars Gamer* inside their secret laboratories for a hands-on preview of the first game based on *Attack of the Clones*. Here's what we learned.

It's All in the Name

The two games might have similar titles, but the all-important inclusion of the word "Jedi" in the sequel's name exemplifies the new direction the series is taking. Director Daron Stinnett

explains: "Our overriding goal is that we want players to really feel like a Jedi, able to single-handedly swing the balance of large battles, and to have this tremendous effect on everything." Thus, two of the three playable characters from the first game (Luke-esque rookie pilot Rhys Dallows and stealthy mercenary Vana Sage) have been discarded to make way for a new character with a serious midichlorian count—Adi Gallia, a Jedi councilwoman seen briefly in Episode One (as well as a character in 2000's *Star Wars: Episode I Jedi Power Battles*). Adi pilots an agile, lightly armed craft called a Jedi Starfighter, and she is also the key to the most significant, far-reaching enhancement in the game—the incorporation of Force powers into space combat.

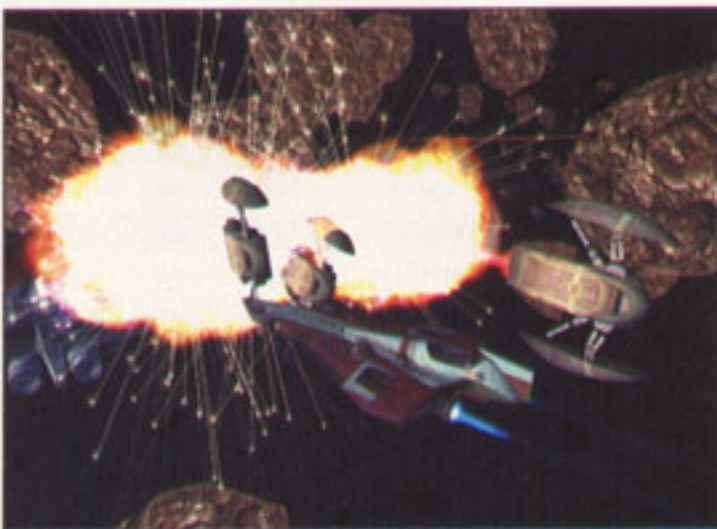
"Force powers are not just your typical projectile weapon," Stinnett proclaims, "They're extremely powerful, very strategic, and completely unique. They're basically magic in space." In other words, if you thought it was cool that Luke used the Force to target that tiny thermal exhaust port, you haven't seen anything yet.

Use the Force—To Blow Stuff Up

There are four Force powers in all, learned one at a time as the player progresses through the game. The first of these is Shield, which is exactly that—a barrier that deflects enemy fire. Then



If you thought a Pinto was dangerous, try backing a Jedi Starfighter into an asteroid.



Jedi Starfighter features the return of everyone's favorite crunchy Trade Federation starship: the Scarab.



Advanced graphics allow for more opponents at once in Jedi Starfighter.

comes Lightning, another eponymous attack that can either disable enemy ships or destroy them outright. Reflex is next, a skill that simulates the ultra-fast reflexes of a Jedi. In practice, Reflex slows time but leaves Adi's craft free to maneuver at full speed, effectively lending the player Matrix-style super-speed. Last and not least subtle is Shockwave, a spherical concussion blast that proves especially useful when the player is surrounded and outnumbered by enemy ships.

As formidable as these Force powers are, the team wanted to give them added potency when used by players who took the time to perfect their technique, or in Stinnett's words, players



Jedi Starfighter balances the newfound power of the Force with a greater number of opponents.

who become "more skilled in the ways of the Force." Thus, the game creators devised a system in which simply initiating the attack produces "Force connect," the standard effect, but releasing the attack at the proper time results in "Force clarity," triggering an enhanced, massively powerful effect.

Under Force clarity, Shield no longer simply deflects enemy fire. Instead, it redirects it to your selected target (great for attacking capitol ships). Similarly, Lightning begins to arc from one enemy to another, enabling the player to destroy entire squadrons of enemies with a single shot. Reflex grants the player not just enhanced speed but also an enhanced rate of fire, and Shock-

The Jedi Starfighter

When Jedi Master Saesee Tiin—an experienced test pilot—suggested that the Jedi create a "Jedi starfighter corps," Kuat Systems Engineering stepped forward with their designs for a swift, single-passenger fighter craft. Unlike the Republic's Corellian-built diplomatic cruisers, they aren't immediately recognizable, and they're a cost-effective way of ferrying Jedi from place to place.

The *Aethersprite*-class starfighter is not hyperspace-capable but can dock with a separate hyperdrive module: the TransGalMeg Industries hyperdrive booster ring. (The process takes 3 rounds and requires a DC 20 Pilot check.) However, when the Delta-7 is docked with the booster ring, the starfighter suffers a -4 penalty to maneuvers due to the unbalanced nature of the module.

The Delta-7 incorporates a specially adapted astromech droid. Without the proper droid (an R4-P series droid, which comes hardwired into the starfighter), the pilot suffers a -2 penalty to Astrogate and Computer Use checks; the droid itself suffers a -2 penalty to these checks and to Repair checks for the starfighter. While this might seem like a disadvantage, the Jedi do not mind; non-standard components help ensure that an unattended Jedi starfighter is not a tempting target for a thief.

The Delta-7 and accompanying astromech droid are available through the Kuat Systems Engineering, and only to the Jedi through the dispensation of the Supreme Chancellor's office. The "used" cost listed below is the price a *Aethersprite* would fetch on the black market.

KUAT SYSTEMS ENGINEERING DELTA-7 AETHERSPRITE-CLASS STARFIGHTER

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Class: Starfighter | Crew: 1 (Normal +2) |
| Size: Diminutive (8m long) | Initiative: +6 (+4 size, +2 crew) |
| Hyperdrive: ×1 | Maneuver: +6 (+4 size, +2 crew) |
| Passengers: None | Defense: 24 (+4 size, +10 armor) |
| Cargo Capacity: 60 kg | Shield Points: 30 (DR 5) |
| Consumables: 1 week | Hull Points: 65 (DR 5) |

Cost: 180,000 (new), 145,000 (used)

Maximum Speed in Space: Ramming (10 squares/action)

Atmospheric Speed: 1,150 km/h (19 squares/action)

Weapon: Laser cannons (4 fire-linked); **Fire Arc:** Front; **Attack**

Bonus: +8 (+4 size, +0 crew, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 6d10×2;

Range Modifiers: PB +0, S +0, M/L n/a.

wave takes on a much wider blast radius. Achieving Force clarity is a gamble; a mistimed attempt creates a Disconnect, which yields a fizzled end result much less powerful than even the basic Force connect. Still, a successful result is well worth the risk, and Force powers did indeed make us feel that we could single-handedly turn the tide of a battle.

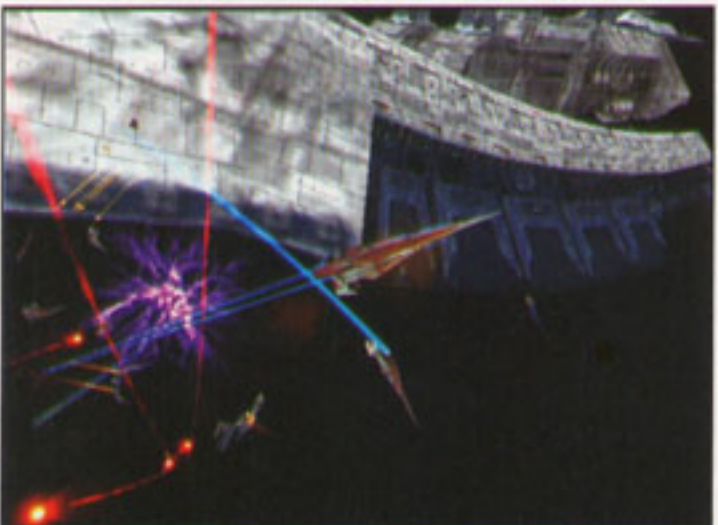
Equal Opportunity

The second playable character in the game is Nym, the gruff yet compassionate Feeorin space pirate from the first game. Nym doesn't have the advantage of Force powers, and his bomber the *Havoc* is notably slower and less maneuverable than Adi's Jedi Starfighter. However, it boasts an explosive array of high-powered artillery, including basic laser cannons and no fewer than four high-powered secondary weapons.

First among these are bomblets, held over from the original



Use the Force power Shockwave to clear out asteroid fields and enemy fighters alike.



Use multiplayer mode to fly with or against your friends.

game, which are best suited for taking out ground targets like enemy barracks or tanks. In addition, the *Havoc* is now outfitted with cruise missiles capable of inflicting devastating amounts of damage even to capitol ships, and dumb-fire cluster missiles, which are far less potent but reload much more quickly. Rounding out the package are proximity mines, ideal for stacking around choke points and places from which enemy reinforcements are likely to emerge.

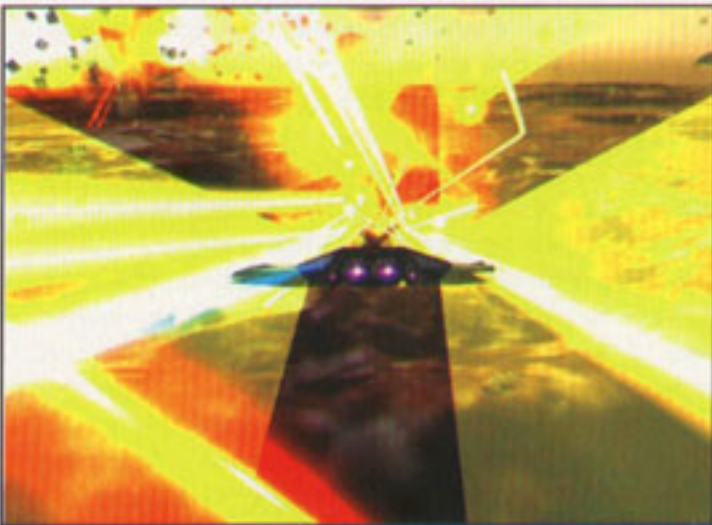
Despite the tremendous destructive capabilities that both Adi's Jedi Starfighter and Nym's *Havoc* possess, Stinnett promises that the players will need to utilize every bit of this firepower simply to survive.

"Because the player is so powerful, we have to throw a lot at them." He warns ominously, "Now, instead of just one ship coming at you, it's whole squadrons."

The Plot Thickens

As it turns out, the Trade Federation has good reason throw entire squadrons of ships right at you—you're not exactly friends. *Star Wars Jedi Starfighter* takes place ten years after *Star Wars Starfighter*, at the same time as *Attack of the Clones*. As with the original *Starfighter* and Episode I, the game's plotline will be interwoven with that of the film, starting out as a distinct story but converging, so that the player ends up playing a pivotal role in some of the events of *Attack of the Clones*.

The story unfolds as follows: In the ten years since the events of *Star Wars Starfighter*, Nym's base on the planet Lok (destroyed in the first game) has been rebuilt as a Trade Federation outpost. Nym has assembled a ragtag group of resistance fighters to drive the Neimoidians out of their homeland. Meanwhile, Adi is sent by the Jedi council to investigate suspicions that the Trade Federation is manufacturing weapons. Nym and Adi inevitably cross paths and join forces, learning along the way that the Trade Federation is manufacturing not just any weapon, but a devastating super-weapon that could well lead to the downfall of the galaxy.



The Force isn't just for tossing battle droids around any more.

While this plot thread has nothing to do with the plot of *Attack of the Clones*, it is nonetheless so closely intertwined with the film that there are some things that Stinnett can't reveal, for fear of giving too much away.

"See that planet there?" he points out during one deep space battle sequence, "That's an Episode II planet, and while I'm not allowed to show you its surface, I will say that a battle takes place there during one of the later missions that's practically straight out of the movie."

Not in Kansas Anymore

While their direct connection to locations in the film will likely vary widely, it seems certain that each of the fifteen missions (and nine bonus levels) will be patently beautiful, thanks to a retooled game engine that can draw more vehicles onscreen at once, create bigger, better explosions and special effects, and cover the landscape with incredibly lush, detailed textures. In fact, Stinnett claims the team has even incorporated bump-mapped textures into the game, a feat that few anticipated the PS2 could accomplish. The resulting graphics are simply breathtaking, often more closely resembling matte paintings than game screens.

Each level will also retain the first game's focus on creating locations that directly affect the action. "We try to make each environment impact gameplay." Explains Stinnett. For example, being in a canyon has a massive effect on gameplay, as does being in deep space, or an asteroid field (and just wait until you see the density of the asteroid field this time around). This mindset has yielded some truly unique locations, ranging from massive terrain structures like a 4-kilometer mountain (with gives the action a decidedly vertical angle) to a small moon, complete with a light side, a dark side, and spherical, point-source gravity field.

In addition to these new settings, the team has designed a wide assortment of brand new vehicles to populate the space-

ways. There are roughly 40 new craft, 75% of which have been created specially for the game (the remaining 25% are from the film). These include massive capitol ships like the huge, talon-shaped Hex Deployers. These behemoths are so large that, like the Star Destroyers in *Star Wars: Rogue Leader*—Rogue Squadron II, they must be taken out piece by piece. Stinnett is particularly proud of the scale of these massive leviathans.

"Some of these ships are so large that they're like terrain in and of themselves," he promises.

The missions themselves also benefit from a little creativity, seasoning the classic destroy/guard/escort themes with several less conventional scenarios. For example, Adi has a "Missile Command" level in which she must fend off enemy fighters while simultaneously protecting innocent civilians from incoming ballistic missiles that are being launched toward the surface from space. Other missions put the player in command of unique



Nym returns in Jedi Starfighter to wreak havoc on enemy starfighters.



"Stay on target..."



"It's a hit!"

wingmates, like a group of ground-based commandos or a gigantic planetary gun capable of destroying massive enemy installations with a single shot.

Of course, these wingmates are exceptions to the rule—most missions still pair you with other pilots, who should prove to be much smarter and more effective this time around. But if you're still not satisfied, you can ditch the A.I.-controlled sidekicks altogether and bring in another human being—every single-player mission can also be played in two-player split screen mode, with the second player taking on the role of the wingmate.

Smoothing the Edges

In addition to reinventing and expanding the game, the team is determined to counter the few criticisms that were leveled at the first title. For starters, because few players of the original title actually learned all of their crafts' capabilities, the new game

boasts five detailed training missions that ensure that the player is familiar with every aspect of the game. Similarly, players who sometimes became uncertain as to just what they are supposed to be doing will find extra guidance in the form of dialogue scripted to remind them exactly what they should be doing at any given moment.

The team was also very careful to create a smoother difficulty curve. In the first game, many casual players hit a wall around mission six or seven and eventually quit without finishing the game. Stinnett is adamant that this must not happen again.

"Everybody should be able to finish this game," he says. "A lot of what *Starfighter* is about is exploration. It's an experience. You're going to other planets, you're seeing new things, you're unfolding a story. . . . It's a journey. To me, it's not satisfying unless you're getting to the end." With this in mind, the team has taken extra care to keep the level of difficulty from rising too quickly, and has made it possible for the player to shift difficulty levels on the fly, in case a particular mission proves too problematic.

Finish Line

Thus far, *Star Wars Jedi Starfighter* looks well prepared to improve upon its already formidable predecessor in every way, and should easily meet its planned March ship date (though it's uncertain if the film's John Williams-penned score will be ready in time to be incorporated into the game's soundtrack). Plus, as the first *Attack of the Clones*-themed game, it also fills us with great hope for the future and the Episode II-inspired games to come—a thought unquestionably validated by Stinnett:

"I've read the script for Episode II, and I've seen the rough cut—it's going to be a great movie. But there's also so much great stuff there for games. There's so much new hardware, great battle sequences, a better definition of good and evil. It's what we've been waiting for as gamers."

Let the games begin! 



Land, sea, air . . . it doesn't matter. Scarabs still crash when you hit them.



"Ooh . . . ah . . ." Jedi Starfighter utilizes PS2's monster memory to put on some spectacular light shows.



Happy trails. Jedi Starfighter gives a new meaning to "fire-and-forget."



Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast

The Name's Katarn.
Kyle Katarn

BY ELLIOTT CHIN
PC

The *Star Wars* galaxy is filled with individuals destined to become Jedi. It is as if the Force itself manipulates events to place lightsabers in their hands. Most of them already yearn to be Jedi, so their hunger and the will of the Force meet in a fortuitous intersection of desire and destiny. Others never wanted to become Jedi and resist the call of the Force, but they still cannot escape their destiny. Whether or not they accept their fate, they are Jedi at the core.

In the *Star Wars* novels, Mara Jade, the Emperor's Hand, is such a person. In the *Star Wars* computer games, the reluctant Jedi is Kyle Katarn, a mercenary from the Rebellion era who eventually takes up the lightsaber and accepts his role as a champion of the Force.

The Dark Forces adventures are among the most popular *Star Wars* computer games ever made. In the first installment, Kyle was a commando who used blasters and thermal detonators to

Dark Forces: Enemies of the Jedi

The evil of Dark Jedi Desann is much more pervasive than even Luke Skywalker could have guessed. His minions are legion, and you must face them all.

- **Reborn:** Foremost among Desann's servants are his disciples, called the Reborn. Originally, Desann tried to create Force sensitive apprentices through vile experiments, but when these go wrong, he dupes you into helping him realize his dream of truly Force-endowed evil soldiers.
- **Stormtroopers:** These Imperial throwbacks serve Desann and provide a familiar face to fight. In numbers they are strong, but cut down their leader and they could panic and flee.
- **Bounty Hunters:** Various Gran and Rodian bounty hunters oppose your missions, although some of these cowardly mercenaries might flee at the first sign of your lightsaber.
- **Mine Monster:** Not all the enemies in the game are servants of Desann. Some are mindless beasts. In the mines of the second level, you'll face this deadly creature.

The New and Improved Lightsaber

The lightsaber is definitely the most powerful weapon in the game, but it's also your best defense. In addition to its offensive capability, it can also deflect laser fire.

For the first time in a *Star Wars* computer game, the lightsaber is a three-dimensional object, which means that lightsabers can block lightsabers, and the game can track exactly where each blow lands. Thus, if the saber hits a vulnerable part of the enemy, like a head, the blow registers as an instant kill. If the saber hits a tougher spot, like the arm or leg, the enemy is only wounded.

Wielding a lightsaber in *Jedi Outcast* is simple. If you move forward and hit the attack button, you make an overhead attack. If you move left and attack, you swing left. As you advance in experience, your lightsaber attacks become more elaborate. You might start out just making a swipe when you attack, but at higher levels, you might twirl the lightsaber around before your blade slices through your enemy's head, torso, or legs.

lay waste to stormtroopers and droids guarding the Empire's greatest secrets. How did you think the Rebel Alliance originally came by those Death Star plans, anyway?

In the second game, *Dark Forces II: Jedi Knight*, Kyle learned that he was Force-sensitive and trained to become a Jedi. He fought Jerec, a Dark Jedi who schemed to steal the secrets of graveyard known as the Valley of the Jedi. However, Kyle's mercenary side conflicted with his Jedi training, and he was as likely to use a blaster as he was a lightsaber. Although he defeated Jerec, he ultimately decided that the way of the Jedi was not for him. In the expansion pack, *Jedi Knight: Mysteries of the Sith*, Kyle's demons finally usurped his soul, and he was corrupted by the dark side until Mara Jade came to save him.

Return of the Jedi Outcast

Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast is a first-person shooter, an action game with lots of territory to explore and plenty of enemies to fight. The story begins nine years after the conclusion of *Mysteries of the Sith*, when Kyle believes he no longer needs the Force and doesn't even carry a lightsaber. In his experience, a blaster has proven to be just as trusty, and it comes without all those heavy Jedi responsibilities. Kyle is once again undertaking missions for Mon Mothma, just as he did in the original *Dark Forces*. His companion on his missions for the New Republic is long-time friend Jan Orrs.

The game begins as Kyle is assigned to investigate an old Imperial listening post on the planet Kejim. Mon Mothma suspects that remnants of the Empire have gathered there. Upon arriving on the world, Kyle finds that Mon Mothma's suspicions are correct, as the listening post is guarded by stormtroopers. Kyle soon discovers that these remnants of the shattered Empire don't herald the resurgence of an Imperial general. Rather, they are the harbingers of a far worse adversary. A Dark Jedi named Desann has taken over the abandoned Imperial listening post and is using it as a base for nefarious experiments.

Spoiler Alert! The Missions

Jedi Outcast is divided into eight main settings, or levels, each composed of multiple chapters divided by dramatic mid-level cut scenes.

The first level begins on Kejim, but each mission can take surprising turns. For instance, although your original mission is to investigate the listening post and return to Mon Mothma, after Kyle discovers that prisoners are being mistreated at the listening post, you take a detour to help them, starting a new chapter in the game.

The second level takes you to a vast mining network of caves and tunnels, then to the Valley of the Jedi. Up to this point, because of Kyle's abandonment of the Force, you'll play *Jedi Out-*



cast like a standard shooter, with guns and grenades. Once you visit the Valley of the Jedi, however, Kyle finally understands that he cannot escape the Force; he must embrace it and use his Jedi powers to hunt down Desann. Jedi Outcast is as much about mastering your own powerful emotions of anger as it is about defeating Desann, however, so by the end of the game you must overcome Kyle's dark side before you can truly face Desann.

After your epiphany in the Valley of the Jedi, the game's remaining six levels shift to a Jedi-oriented atmosphere as you master your Force powers and use the lightsaber to strike down Desann's minions. You'll travel to Yavin 4 to enlist the aid of Luke Skywalker in reawakening your Jedi powers, pursue a quest on Bespin, and plumb the seedy underworld of Nar Shadda. All the while, Desann mocks your achievements and creeps closer to the culmination of his evil plan.

Two Barrels of Fun

You depend on a variety of weapons. Beyond Kyle's initial blaster, there are more weapons to discover as the game progresses, including a long-range sniper rifle, a rapid-firing repeater rifle, a powerful disruptor rifle, and even a crossbow-like bowcaster, similar to the weapon the mighty Chewbacca wielded in the *Star Wars* movies.

Each weapon has both a primary and a secondary firing mode. The bowcaster, for example, usually fires a single energy pulse. If you hold down the secondary fire button, however, it shoots a spread of three or five pulses, depending on how long you hold the button. With the secondary modes, Kyle has an even wider arsenal at his disposal, and much of the fun of the game comes in discovering and using each weapon and its unique secondary attack.

In addition to firearms, you have the chance to employ gadgets like thermal detonators, electrobinoculars, and infrared goggles. Of course, once you reclaim your link to the Force, you pack your

very own lightsaber as well. The lightsaber is a powerful weapon that can cut down opponents in a single blow. Its disadvantage is that it is a melee weapon, but at higher levels, you'll learn to throw it and guide it back with the Force, thus extending its lethal power to ranged attacks.

Use the Force, Kyle

Jedi Knight established the precedent for Force powers and role-playing elements in the Dark Forces series. Jedi Outcast includes those Force powers but makes them much easier to use. As you overcome foes and come closer to your goals in the game, you earn experience points that let you advance in level and improve your abilities. Those abilities include your lightsaber attacks and Force powers. One of the benefits of the lightsaber is that it consumes no ammunition. Force Powers, however, are hungry for Force energy, with the stronger powers consuming more and more power.

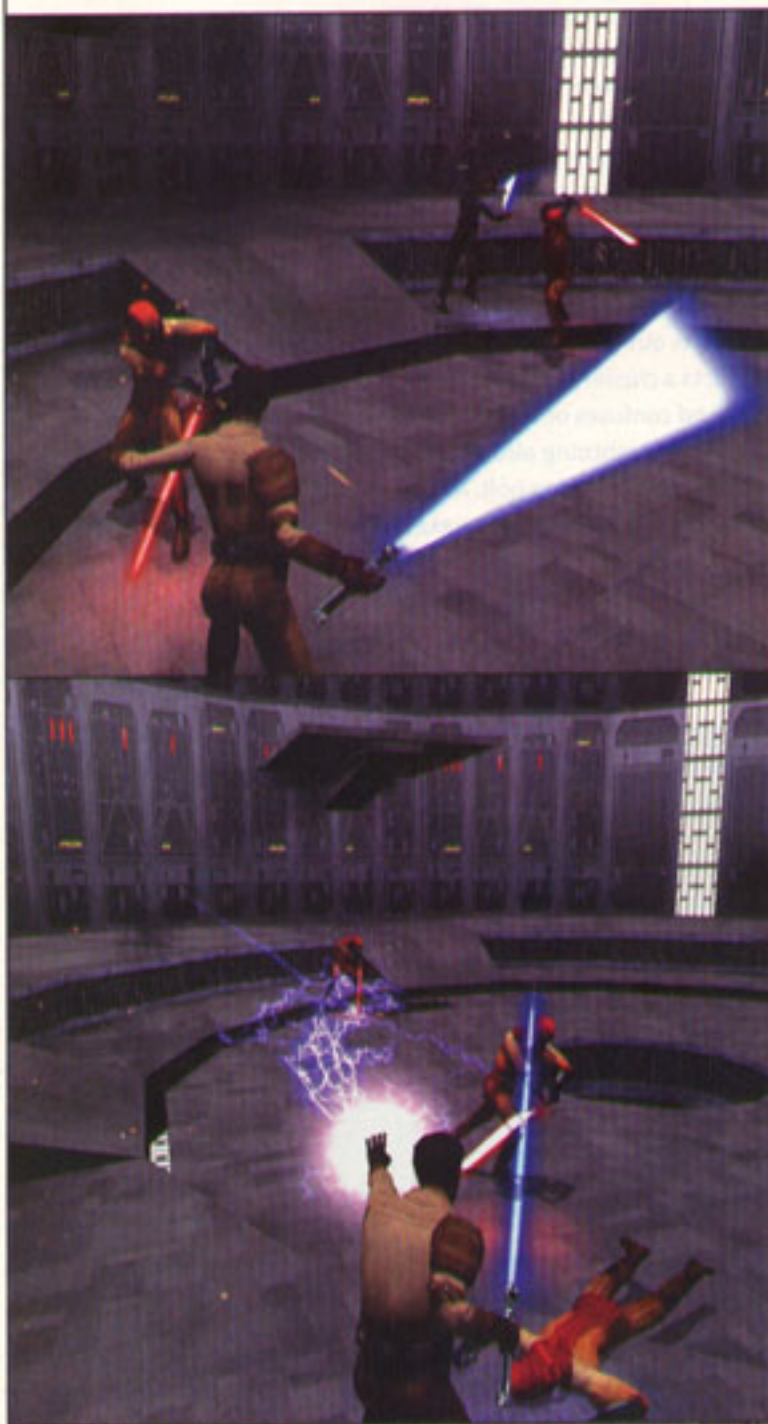
Stronger powers become available only as you reach higher levels. Force Lightning is obviously more powerful than Force Jump, so you gain it much later. All Force powers begin at the lowest level of efficiency, and most of them can only affect one target. As your proficiency with each power improves, you can affect more targets or a greater area. Some powers even have more powerful effects at higher levels. Jedi Mind Trick, for example, starts out immobilizing only a single enemy. At higher levels, it affects a cluster of enemies; at its best, it affects multiple enemies and confuses one of them so that it begins attacking its allies. Force Lightning also starts out affecting only one target with a single lightning bolt. At higher levels, it becomes a massive sheet of lightning that makes nearly everything on screen snap, crackle, and pop.

Other Force powers in the game include Force Jump, Force Heal, Force Push, Force Pull, and Force Choke. Although some of these powers—like Darth Vader's signature Force Choke and Pal-



patine's favorite, Force Lightning—may seem to be of the Dark Side, Jedi Outcast producer Brett Tosti believes that all Jedi can use them; they just choose not to. Kyle, on the other hand, isn't a true Jedi, even though he fights on the light side, so he can use Force powers typically eschewed by classically trained Jedi. After all, Force powers are only a tool; it's how you use them that determines whether they are evil.

Jedi Outcast returns the most popular character from the *Star Wars* computer games to more action than he's ever faced before. If taking his role and facing an insidious Dark Jedi through fast-paced lightsaber duels isn't enough to get your blood running hot, consider that this game also lets you battle side-by-side with Luke Skywalker himself. What *Star Wars* fan can resist that chance? **E**



STAR WARS GALAXIES™

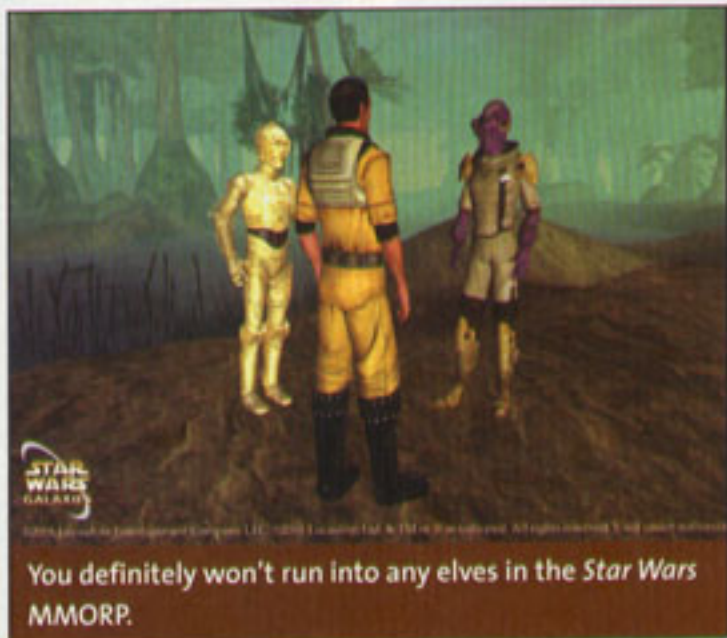
Galaxies Update First Step into a Larger World

BY HADEN BLACKMAN
PC

As *Star Wars Galaxies* continues towards its Fall 2002 release, the Development Team is eagerly awaiting the beginning of the Public Test period (sometimes referred to as the "Open Beta"), in which thousands of gamers will finally get to playtest the Massively Multiplayer Online Roleplaying Game (MMORPG) and experience the virtual *Star Wars* galaxy firsthand. The Public Test will officially unveil many aspects of the game, allowing the developers to evaluate their decisions and adjust the game as necessary. But what, exactly, do the developers do during the Public Test (besides playing the game themselves)? Read on to learn how they plan to spend their time.

Bug Hunting

Given the size, scope, and complexity of *Star Wars Galaxies*, there are bound to be some glitches in the game's programming code



You definitely won't run into any elves in the *Star Wars* MMORP.

and scripting. Bugs can range from an error that causes the game to crash to a typo in a nonplayer character's dialogue. By the Public Test, the game should be relatively stable, ensuring that crashes are rare and major bugs almost non-existent.

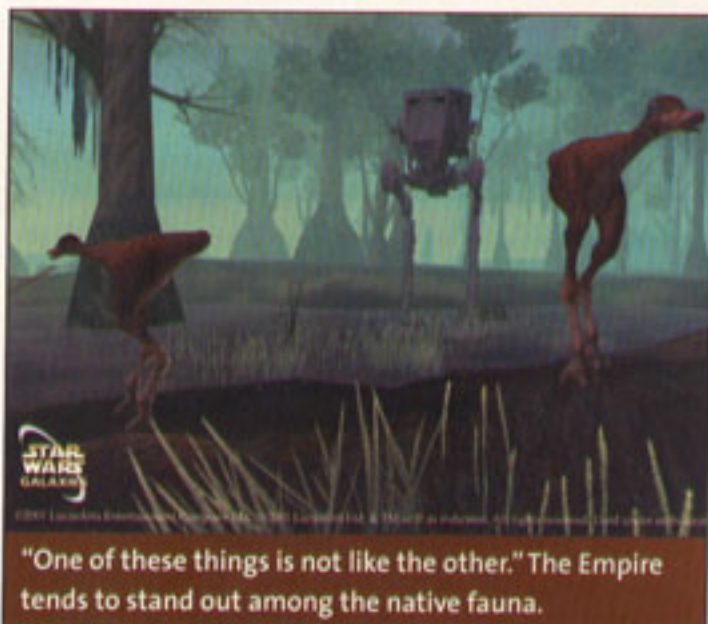
When a tester reports a bug, the programmers and scripters investigate and decide how best to resolve the issue. Since no two bugs are created equal, programmers prioritize them. Anything that keeps people from playing the game, like a "crash bug," receives preference. Next on the list might be those bugs that distract from the visual quality of the game: a missing texture on a krayt dragon would instantly destroy the sense of immersion, so it's important that these oversights are corrected before the game launches. The bug exterminators also focus on errors that hamper or distort gameplay—this might include a bug that creates unwanted duplicates of a powerful item or allows a stormtrooper to shoot through walls. Small nuisance bugs, like typos, have the lowest priority, but they should still be fixed before launch.

The developers are also hoping to enlist the aid of many diehard *Star Wars* fans during the public test period to spot any potential continuity conflicts.

Balancing

Probably the most difficult aspect of designing a large MMO is balancing, a process in which the designers make sure that the game basically treats all players equally. Some areas where balancing is critical include:

- **Species:** *Star Wars* Galaxies allows players to create a character from one of eight species (Bothan, Zabrak, Mon Calamari,



Wookiee, Human, Rodian, Trandoshan, and Twi'lek). Ideally, each of these species has something unique to offer players, but no one species should be more powerful than the others. During the Public Test, the designers study each species' performance and determine whether each is balanced with the others. If a special ability gives one species an unfair advantage, the designers might remove or weaken it. If a species seems weak in key areas, its core attributes (Strength, Health, and so on), the designers might strengthen it. The designers already know they must pay special attention to Wookiees, who receive bonuses to many attributes due to their physical prowess.

MMO Terminology

Massively Multiplayer Online gaming has its own language. To navigate this genre, you need know the following terms:

MMO: Massively Multiplayer Online.

This acronym refers to any game in which hundreds (or thousands) or gamers play alongside one another simultaneously, via some sort of Internet connection.

MMORPG: Massively Multiplayer Online Roleplaying Game. A type of MMO that focuses heavily on character development, an MMORPG allows players to create characters and undertake adventures as part of an online community. Player characters (PCs) gain experience points through combat and other activities; these points can be used to improve PC's abilities over time. *Star Wars* Galaxies is an MMORPG.

Newbie: A new player.

Persistent World (Persistent Galaxy): A game space that players explore and that

persists over time. Changes made to the Persistent World continue to exist for days, weeks, and months after they occur. If a player builds a house, that house persists and can be seen by other gamers. When the player "logs off," the house remains and is still present when the player logs on again. In *Star Wars* Galaxies, a Persistent World is called a Persistent Galaxy to avoid confusion (since the game includes a number of *Star Wars* worlds for players to visit).

Server: A powerful computer that contains game content for MMOs. Players "log onto" a server in order to access that content.

Shard (Galaxy): A collection of servers that contain data for one entire persistent world. In *Star Wars* Galaxies, a "shard" is known as a "Galaxy." Each Galaxy includes all game data, including all of the game's planets. When *Star Wars* Galaxies

launches, it will provide a number of shards for players to join. Each shard has identical content and is persistent. As the game ages, the shards evolve independently according to player actions.

Log On/Log Off: Connecting or disconnecting from a server in order to enter an MMO's persistent world.

Avatar: A player character.

Beta: Shorthand for "Open Beta Test" or "Public Test," a phase in development in which the game is made accessible to a people outside the development team. Public Testers get the first look at a product and help the designers balance the game and "stress test" the servers.

Patch: Updates to the game, provided via a download through the player's Internet connection. Patches are typically deployed to fix bugs, but they can also add new content to the game.

- **Skills:** A character in *Star Wars Galaxies* is defined largely by his or her skills. Players can learn everything from slicing (the *Star Wars* equivalent of “hacking”) to hairdressing. Obviously, some skills are more beneficial than others, especially in combat, but it’s important that no one skill significantly outweighs all others or provides a uniquely powerful advantage. During the Public Test, designers can change the abilities or bonuses that skills confer, adjust the requirements for obtaining skills, eliminate a skill altogether, or create new skills to balance the game.
- **Skill Combos:** Massively Multiplayer gamers are notorious for identifying the most effective combination of abilities (read: skills) and “power-gaming” to acquire these combos. Because *Star Wars Galaxies* offers so many skills, it’s feasible that some combination could yield unexpected and unbalancing results. Much as they track the species’ performance, the *Star Wars Galaxies* team must monitor the use of skills, especially as they interact with one another. If a particularly powerful skill combo becomes apparent during the Public Test, the designers can adjust the skills involved as necessary. They might opt to make the skill combo available but control access to it by applying stringent prerequisites.
- **Equipment:** Knowing how to use a blaster isn’t very useful if your character doesn’t have a blaster handy, so equipment also plays a major role in *Star Wars Galaxies*. While equipment ranges from droids and bacta patches to gaffi sticks and comlinks, ranged weapons are among the most important items in the game. Ranged weapons are defined by a number of attributes, including rate of fire, maximum range, damage, and the skills necessary to handle the weapon properly. As players advance and learn more elite skills, they gain the ability to use more powerful weapons. Balancing weapons revolves around ensuring that only the most advanced players, who are in turn fighting the most dangerous opponents, can employ the most lethal weapons. If players use one

weapon to the exclusion of all others during the Public Test, then the designers must reevaluate its attributes and might tone down its capabilities or make it more difficult to acquire.

- **Enemies:** Combat is a major component of *Star Wars Galaxies*, and players can face a variety of opponents, ranging from terrifying wump rats in Tatooine’s deserts to cagey Imperial stormtroopers. These enemies must present specific types of challenges for varied groups of players, so the designers take great pains to ensure that each creature and NPC is properly constructed. An NPC’s attributes, like health or weapon damage, determine how easily the creature can be defeated. The game developers can monitor who kills what during the Public Test of the game; if a particular NPC is frequently targeted because it’s seen as an “easy kill,” then the designers might change the NPC’s equipment (armor and weapons, especially), abilities, or attributes to make the enemy more competitive.

In most cases, balancing is resolved by tweaking numbers—a Wookiee’s strength, the damage caused by a weapon, and the effect of skills are all simply numeric values that designers can adjust during the Public Test.

New Content

MMO developers realize that this type of game is never truly finished. New content can be added to the product well after the game launches. While many members of the development team are focused on fine-tuning the existing content during the Public Test, artists and scripters continue working on new data for the game world. New content might include:

- **New Art:** Either due to an oversight, a continuity bug, or just a quest for perfection, the artists might swap out models, textures, animations, or other art assets to improve the visual quality of the game.
- **New Enemies:** You can never have too many enemies in an MMO, so it’s likely that designers and artists will be working on opponents until the game launches—and even afterward.
- **New Equipment:** Players like to have variety when it comes to their possessions, so artists generate literally hundreds of weapons, articles of clothing (“wearables”), and other objects. Many of these objects will be in place by the time the Public Test begins, but others could easily be slipped into the game later.
- **New Missions:** Scripting the intricate missions (or “quests”) in the game is a time-consuming process. Many important missions will be included (and tested) before the game reaches the Public Test, but more missions will be added to improve the flavor and diversity of the game. ■



Tatooine nights can be lonely for the single R2-unit.

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER

ROGUE SQUADRON II

Back in the Cockpit Again

BY CORY J. HERNDON
GAMECUBE

The Best of the Best

Rogue Leader has a lot of features in common with Rogue Squadron—including the Death Star Trench Run—and the designers haven't gone out of their way to fix what wasn't broken about the previous game. The point-of-view and combat controls are virtually the same, albeit with much updated, crisper, more cinematic graphics. Your selection of Rebel starfighters is pretty much the same stable of Letter-wings and speeders—the all-around useful X-wing, the sturdy and sluggish Y-wing, the speedy A-wing, the deadly B-wing, and the AT-AT-smashing snowspeeder.

Once again you participate in a few missions pulled straight from the films, though the bulk consist of "cut scenes" inferred from the classic storylines. You'll play as either Luke or Wedge, depending on who's in charge of the squadron for that mission. LucasArts even got the same guy to play Crix Madine, from the sound of it.

But boy oh boy, did they fix what little was broken, and then they added a freighter-load of nifty new features. The targeting computer, for example, helps you zero in on the enemy (and looks exactly like classic *Star Wars* tech), but it can be tricky to use effectively—and if you use it too much you risk never getting enough medals to unlock the requisite bonus missions or ships.

Who's the Master?

Rogue Leader also builds on the heritage of the X-Wing series of combat flight sims that have been a staple of PC gaming for years, especially the recent X-Wing Alliance. Unlike Rogue Squadron, which was confined to planetary missions almost exclusively, Rogue Leader gets you out where the action should be for an ace starfighter pilot—among the stars—at least for a few missions. Several take place entirely in space, where you'll dodge asteroids, navigate through a nebula, or (in some really hairy battles) go head to head with an Imperial Star Destroyer.

Like X-Wing Alliance, Rogue Leader's storyline takes place over the course of the original trilogy and climaxes at the Battle of Endor with the destruction (if the Force is with you) of the second Death Star. Somehow, the creators have also scoured the nooks and crannies of the original trilogy to find a few more little side plots that haven't yet been depicted in a *Star Wars* game to throw in along the way.

Since you are the squadron leader, after all, you also get to boss around some wingmen. But where some console games (*Starlancer* springs immediately to mind) make wingmen commands much more complicated than necessary to emulate a PC-style interface, Rogue Leader makes dispensing orders a breeze and even helps you decide when you really need to use the feature.

Go for the Legs

A good example is the Battle of Hoth. Instead of showing us the same initial defense against the AT-ATs that we've seen before, Rogue Leader sends you out to cover the retreat of the Rebels from the battlefield. Then you'll cover the escape of the Rebel transports as they rejoin the main fleet.

Not that it's all about running away—Rogue Squadron's specialty is the impossible hit-and-run mission, and you'll find yourself breaking prisoners out of the Maw Installation, blasting a path for a commando team raiding a crashed Star Destroyer—one of the coolest planet backdrops in the game, though not



The challenges on the Tatooine levels aren't too dangerous, but they are certainly scenic.



As soon as the top secret "wheels" project clears Imperial R&D, this trick won't work anymore.

Special Modifications: Weapons Upgrades

You don't have to pick up the various weapon upgrades, but you'll find it's a lot easier to get to the Battle of Endor if you do. Unless you get lucky and fly through one on your first mission attempt, it's usually best to finish the mission first, then go back and replay to pick up the upgrade.

Of course, those upgrades aren't just lying around anywhere. Use this handy guide to spot those technological advances that will bring the Empire to its knees.

Mission 1: Death Star Attack

Upgrade: Advanced Shields

Benefit: Take more enemy fire without getting turned into fried Porkins.

Where, Exactly? After you've taken out the towers, a cut scene will take you to the TIE fighter attack. Fly straight ahead from your starting point, the upgrade is right next to a turret.

Mission 2: Ison Corridor Ambush

Upgrade: Advanced Proton Torpedoes

Benefit: Boost the destructive power of the proton torps, the secondary weapon on your X-wing, and clear the way for homing torpedoes. See, secondary weapons get two upgrades each. Pretty cool, huh?

Where, Exactly? Down and forward from the bow of the frigate. (That's the front end, landlubber.) Just dive as soon as the mission starts, and you'll head right for it. It's inside a big hunk of space junk, so fly carefully.

Mission 3: Battle of Hoth

Upgrade: Advanced Blasters

Benefit: Get a bigger bang out of your primary weapon.

Where, Exactly? After the AT-ATs blow the main generators (don't panic, it's a cut scene, and you can't help it) you'll be sent back to base. Loop around to where the generators used to be, and you'll see your upgrade.

Mission 4: Prisons of the Maw

Upgrade: Advanced Cluster Missiles

Benefit: Fire missiles by the half-dozen when you're in a TIE advanced or *Slave I*.

They're not particularly useful for the good guys, and painfully hard to target without the second upgrade.

Where, Exactly? After the prisoners contact you and tell you what they need bombed, you'll likely follow a roughly circular flight path around the train path. The upgrade appears after you destroy the only communications tower and environmental dome that are all alone about halfway up the path.

Mission 5: Razor Rendezvous

Upgrade: Advanced Proton Bombs

Benefit: Turn a Y-wing's "boom!" into "BOOM!"

Where, Exactly? Quickly fly to the far side of the Star Destroyer at the top of the mission and take out the shuttle that's coming in to dock. The upgrade will appear when it's destroyed.

Mission 6: Vengeance on Kothlis

Upgrade: Advanced Homing Proton Torpedoes

Benefit: Your powerful torps (see Mission 2) will now be able to lock onto a target and, as the name implies, home in. Very useful, especially when you go back to get those medals.

Where, Exactly? This one's a tight fit: you'll have to find a gap in the ruined command deck. You can pick it up at any time, but it's easiest after taking out the TIEs and before going after the AT-ATs.

Mission 7: Imperial Academy Heist (Day)

Upgrade: Advanced Concussion Missiles

Benefit: Already powerful concussion missiles become even more destructive.

Upgrade 1 of 2.

Where, Exactly? You'll have to fly into the hangar on the right side of the academy as you approach. A typically tight fit, but not as bad as some.

Mission 7: Imperial Academy Heist (Night)

Upgrade: Advanced Spread Proton Bombs

Benefit: Your already-boosted bombs now drop in clusters (handy for the day-time mission, if you go for this one first).

Where, Exactly? Same as the advanced concussion missiles, except on the other side of the Academy complex.

Mission 8: Raid On Bespin

Upgrade: Advanced Homing Missiles

Benefit: Lock on with concussion missiles, as you do with those homing torpedoes.

Where, Exactly? Careful—finding this one could hurt your chances of finishing the mission. Blast the first balloon, then head for the Imperial tanker near the second platform. Destroy it, which will take out some of the refinery tanks and reveal your upgrade.

Mission 9: Battle of Endor

Upgrade: Advanced Homing Cluster Missiles

Benefit: Remember those useless cluster missiles? Now you can fire and forget them. (Trust me, you'll be really happy once you're in the cockpit of Vader's TIE.)

Where, Exactly? For once, no fancy flying is necessary, but sharp eyes are. Fly down and to the left of the Star Destroyers, and look for the white dot floating over the planet. That's it.

Mission 10: Strike at the Core

Upgrade: Advanced Targeting Computer

Benefit: Finally! The technology to leave the targeting computer up without holding down the Y button, and point out specific targets for your wingmen. And here it was sitting in the Death Star all along.


Where, Exactly? Tucked under five L-shaped pipes on the lower right side of the tunnel, just before you get to end. You'll have to slow way down and fly very carefully—after a few tries, you might decide that releasing the Y button is overrated.

quite as pretty as Cloud City—and sneak into an Imperial academy to swipe a shuttlecraft for General Solo before flying into the core of the Emperor's second Death Star.

And those are only the regular missions.

No Reward is Worth This

As your score improves and you earn more medals, you'll collect bonus points that can be spent to unlock bonus missions (see sidebar), some of which take place in "Infinities"-style alternate realities where the Empire wins key battles, or a lone X-Wing attacks the Death Star.

You unlock most bonus ships with the notable exception of Vader's TIE Advanced, a key ship in the "Infinities" missions. You'll sometimes have the opportunity to use multiple ships to complete a specific mission, for example. In some of those cases, you'll unlock a ship by making a specific ship transfer. 



Forget about *déjà vu*—the Battle of Hoth hasn't seemed this real since *The Empire Strikes Back*.



"My eyes! My eyes! No, wait, that's just the targeting computer."

Spoiler Alert!

Become an ace stick jockey and you'll eventually get access to these goodies. Piece of rishcate!

Bonus Ship/How to Get It

TIE Fighter: Steal one in Mission 7, and complete both the day and night versions of that mission.

Millennium Falcon: Earn bronze medals in all 10 basic missions.

Slave 1: Earn silver medals in all 10 basic missions and the first 2 bonus missions

"Mystery Ship": Earn gold medals in all 10 basic missions, and all 5 bonus missions.

Bonus Mission/Where You've Seen It Before

Death Star Escape: In the original *Star Wars*. You're Luke, taking the *Falcon's* quad guns for the first time. Don't get cocky.

The Asteroid Field: *The Empire Strikes Back*. This is the classic chase through the asteroids that gave the world the phrase, "They'd be crazy to follow us."

Triumph of the Empire: You haven't, exactly. You play Darth Vader. To win, you'll need to put your snot-nosed kid in his place. Or splatter his whiny butt all over the trench. Whatever, you're evil.

Revenge on Yavin: In another alternate reality: you're Vader again, and you've got to wipe out the base on Yavin IV. (Why not blow it up with the Death Star?)

Death Star Endurance: In your worst *Star Wars*-themed performance anxiety nightmare. The Rebel fleet's taken a wrong turn at Dantooine, and now it's you, your X-wing, and your brave little R2 unit against wave after wave of TIE fighters flying out of the second Death Star. Expect to fight so many ships that you'll only keep track of the waves.



It looks like a big blue anchor, but that's really an A-wing tucked away under the Nebulon-B frigate.

STAR WARS GALACTIC BATTLEGROUND

Multiplayer: The Final Conquest

BY HADEN BLACKMAN
PC



There's nothing more ferocious than a mounted Wookiee!



Despite appearances to the contrary, hovering units cannot fly over these walls.

So, you've completed all five campaigns and have mastered the intricacies of the single-player game. You've led Vader to victory, commanded Chewbacca and his Wookiee brethren in their war with the Empire, and aided the Gungans in repelling the Trade Federation. Now you're ready for the game's true challenge—your friends. Galactic Battlegrounds includes a multi-player mode that allows you to compete against up to seven other flesh-and-blood players. But before you hop onto the internet or your LAN, study up on the tactics below, provided by Galactic Battleground's multiplayer expert, Matthew Keast.

Explore Early: Exploration provides you with some critical information: the location of valuable resources; and enemy positions. As you build up your settlements, send scouts out into the world. Even when you unveiled the entire map, continue to explore—you never know when your enemies might move or capture an important resource site.

Expand Early: Once you have an understanding of the map and its resources, begin expanding as soon as possible. Send out workers to take control of resources, build outposts, secure holocrons, and establish defenses at important locations.

Don't Stop Creating Workers: This seems like an obvious hint, but many players forget to build additional workers as their civilization grows. Workers should represent about half of your population. This may seem like a high number, but workers are critical to success. The faster you can gather resources, the more quickly you'll be able to build an army. Workers are also cheap, and if you really need additional military units, you can always sacrifice a worker or two...

Build Multiple Command Centers: Because command centers are the heart of your civilization, it's always wise to have a backup or two. Once you reach Tech Level 3, start constructing additional command centers in place of processing centers. While



Sittin' on the dock of Theed Bay
Wastin' battle droids today...

processing centers are cheaper, your workers can garrison inside command centers.


Prioritize Resources: It's important that you focus on gathering the right resources at the right time. Generally, the priority is as follows:

- **Food:** Early on, food is the most important resource for most civilizations. About a third of your workers should be gathering food or working farms.
- **Carbon:** Carbon is used for a wide range of structures and units, but it takes time to collect. More than half of your workers should be gathering carbon throughout the game.
- **Nova:** When you find nova deposits early in the game, assign at least one worker to begin harvesting the crystals right away. As the game progresses, gradually increase the number of workers collecting nova. It will become increasingly more important as you reach higher Tech Levels, so hold on to any nova deposits that you find.
- **Ore:** As with nova, you will want to lay claim to ore deposits early, but you don't need to focus on collecting ore until you reach more advanced Tech Levels. You'll definitely want to corner the market on ore eventually.

Pick your Technology Path: As you learn your civilization's strengths, you'll start realizing that some units need to come into play as early as possible, which will in turn require that you harvest specific resources earlier than you might otherwise. Gungans, for example, rely heavily on the fambaa shield generator units. These units require ore, so Gungan players should assign additional workers to harvesting ore from the outset of the game. If you plan on creating Jedi or aircraft, you'll need a store of nova.

Build Multiple Unit Centers: Some multi-player games become a war of attrition. In these battles, any structure that produces

military units becomes extremely important. Always build multiple Troop Centers and Mech Factories, preferably at several different (but well-defended) sites across the map.

Build Forward Bases: Trying to win a war with only one settlement or base is extremely risky. As you spread out across the map, be sure to defend your new structures and use these new settlements as launching pads for future exploration and attacks. When you're ready to attack an enemy's base, create an "assault settlement" nearby your target. Such a settlement might include a power core, various military buildings (including a troop center), a fortress, and a shield generator. Quickly produce your most powerful units, a group of troops, and a few special units, then launch your first attack wave. 



Those silly Gungans, always thinking with their stomachs.



If you can get the jump on your opponent's workers, destroying her structures should be the end of her.



Rebel forces find the perfect spot for a picnic before battle.

JEDI MIND TRICKS

Flight School

You are gaining in knowledge, my Padawan. Now, the Jedi training demands you master the discipline of flying under pressure.

Place yourself in the flightboots of a Jedi ace flying in the asteroid field below. Each space on a horizontal or vertical line takes one second to fly in the starfighter.

Asteroids 0 through 6 start at their noted positions on the left and are moving to the right at varying rates of speed (each asteroid having a constant rate of speed). The five hyperspace beacons, labeled A through E, are right in the paths of the asteroids.

Now imagine the starfighter has been shot to pieces. The maneuvering is failing, the life support is critically low, the hyperdrive is on the blink, and the R2 astromech droid is fading in and out. Before winking out forever, the R2 unit gives these three incomplete pieces of information:

BY MIKE SELINKER

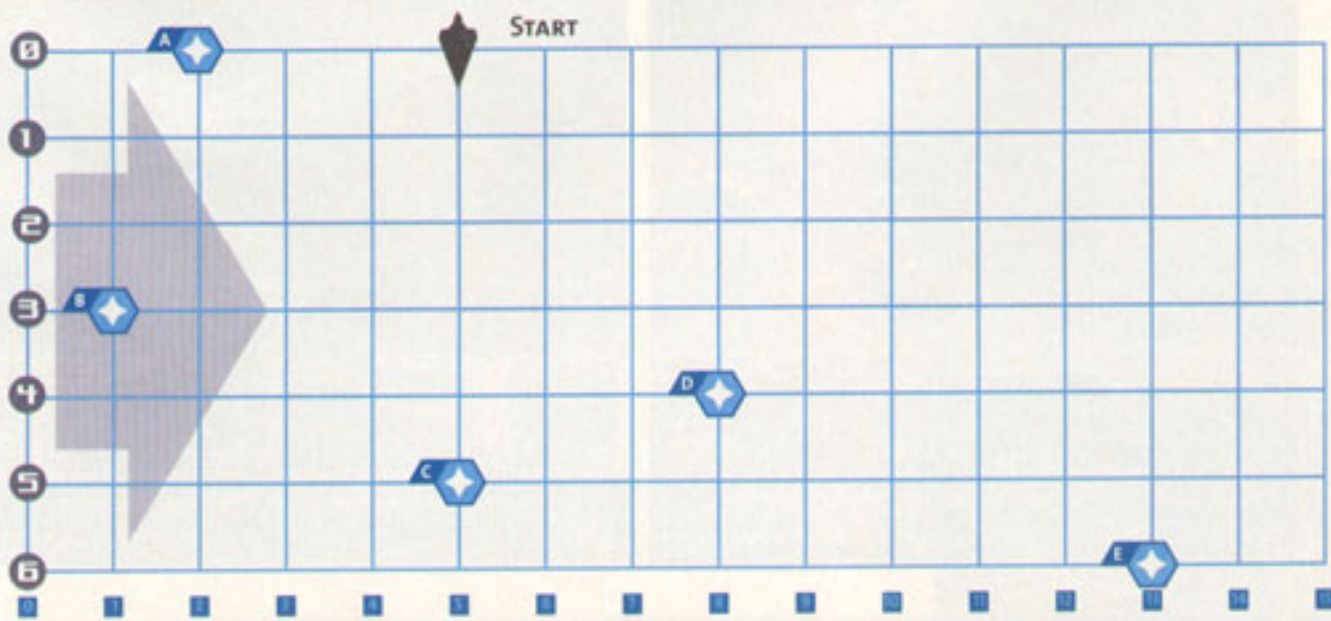
ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT MORSE

1) The starfighter (which begins at START) can make exactly one turn, and it must be immediately if at all. Then it must travel in a straight line (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal) till it reaches a beacon and can launch itself into hyperspace. The starfighter cannot speed up or slow down.

2) Each asteroid moves at either $\frac{1}{1000}$ of a space per second, $\frac{1}{10}$ of a space per second, $1\frac{1}{4}$ spaces per second, or $1\frac{4}{10}$ spaces per second. Any number of asteroids can move at any given speed.

3) Given the speeds that the asteroids move, all but one of the beacons is impossible for the Jedi ace to reach. The starfighter will either exactly collide with an asteroid en route, or the asteroid will smash into a beacon before the pilot can get there. Only one beacon is safe for as long as it takes for the pilot to get there.

A true Jedi ace would know from these clues where to go. Given these three bits of data, toward which beacon would the Jedi ace head? **E**



solution on page 112

Urban Renewal

What happened "Model Citizen?" This was a fantastic set of articles and I hoped to see one in every issue of *Star Wars Gamer*, but there wasn't one in #7. Will there be any more?

Jed Docherty
Venice, CA

Jed must have blinked and missed the previous installment of "Model Citizen" in *Star Wars Gamer* #8. For those of you who missed it, it was just about the coolest one yet: The Mos Eisley Cantina in 3 1/4-inch action figure scale. The models provided by HG Walls are so intricate we can get one in only every other issue. Keep an eye out for next issue's Lars homestead model in 25mm scale.



N-J-O! N-J-O! N-J-O!

I love your magazine. I've got every issue. I play just about every pencil-and-paper, card, and electronic *Star Wars* game and *Star Wars Gamer* extensively covers all three. I couldn't ask for more in a magazine. Actually yes I can. MORE NEW JEDI ORDER please! I know the sourcebook is coming out soon, but that's not soon enough. I'm running a dark side game in the NJO era, and I want to see more stats for the Yuuzhan Vong. Also I'm happy to hear about more galaxy maps on the way. I loved the one you gave us in issue #5. I would love to see a dedicated *Star Wars Galaxies* section when that game finally releases. Keep up the good work and more NJO!

Kenny Hopkins
Pasadena, MD

Kenny's head probably exploded when he opened up *Star Wars Gamer* #8, The New Jedi Order issue. In Ken's memory, though we'll share a few secrets. *Gamer* #8 had enough Yuuzhan Vong to kick-start an all-invaders campaign. I think we'll rename the *Galaxies* section the Kenny Hopkins Memorial *Star Wars Galaxies* section in his honor.



A Few Os

You guys put out a great magazine that doubles the fun of gaming. Also Barty's Landing was so cool! Great job! Jeff Grubb deserves much praise for his incredibly original and hilarious "Head Trip" adventure (downloadable at www.wizards.com/starwars). Now for the questions.

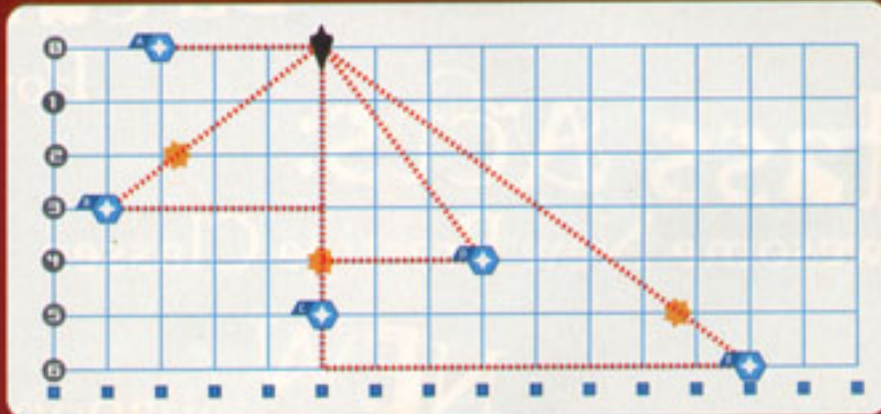
1. My friends have the opinion that

Jedi Mind Tricks Solution

The trick with this puzzle is to realize that all the beacons lie in a straight horizontal line, a straight vertical line, or a straight diagonal line from the start point, the diagonals all in perfect Pythagorean triangles. The Pythagorean theorem states that for a right triangle, the sum of the squares of the two sides of the right angle equals the square of the opposite side. A perfect Pythagorean triangle is one where all those numbers are integers, such as a 3x4x5 triangle ($9 + 16 = 25$) or a 6x8x10 triangle ($36 + 64 = 100$).

Beacon A is in a straight horizontal line. Beacon B is in a 3x4x5 triangle. Beacon C is in a straight vertical line. Beacon D is in a 3x4x5 triangle. And beacon E is in a 6x8x10 triangle. Knowing that any number of asteroids could be moving at a speed too slow to matter, you now must determine which beacon is always safe.

Before the ace can get there, beacon A will be hit by asteroid 0 unless it is moving at $1/1000$ of a space per second (sps). Even if the asteroid's speed is $1/10$ sps, asteroid 0 will travel $2 1/10$ spaces in the time it takes the starfighter to travel 3 spaces. Thus A is



always unsafe unless the asteroid moves at the slowest speed.

Asteroid 1 cannot travel fast enough to hit a starfighter heading for beacon B; in the time it takes the ship to travel $1 1/2$ spaces and intersect line 1, the fastest asteroid could only travel a little more than halfway to the flight path. However, asteroid 2 could hit the ship at point X if it travels at $1/10$ sps, covering 2.33 spaces in the 3.33 seconds it takes the pilot to reach line 2. And asteroid 3 can obviously hit the beacon before the 5 seconds it takes to reach point B. So beacon B is unsafe in several cases.

At point Y, an asteroid can hit the starfighter heading toward beacon C. If

asteroid 4 travels at $1 1/4$ sps, it hits the ship at Y after it has traveled 4 seconds.

Only at point Z can an asteroid hit a ship going for beacon E. If asteroid 5 is going at top speed ($1 4/10$ sps), the asteroid will hit after the ship travels $8 1/2$ seconds to reach line 5. At that speed, asteroid 6 will also destroy the beacon just before the ship gets there.

Finally, beacon D is always safe. Even at top speed, no asteroid can fly far enough to hit the ship. Asteroid 4 has the best chance, but at $1 4/10$ sps, it travels only 7 of the 8 spaces before the ship reaches beacon D in 5 seconds. So, it must be the safe harbor.

people who are being attacked with a lightsaber shouldn't get their armor bonus because the saber would cut through it. What do you think?

2. Will we see stats for the Jedi Starfighter?
3. Do you think that at the end of every year you could release a synopsis of all new skills, feats, equipment, vehicles, prestige classes, and so on?
4. Wouldn't it be easiest to stun a high-level enemy with lots of vitality and blast him in the face?

Alex Davis
via email

Thanks for the props.

1. This month's "Jedi Counseling" provides all the details you and your friend need

to understand why lightsabers don't ignore armor.

2. Turn to page 95.
3. Though such a resource would be nice even for our own uses, it's not something you'll see anytime soon. Sorry.
4. The stun setting can be powerful against high-level enemies. The higher their level, however, the better their chances of making that Fortitude save. A little investigating reveals that most high-level enemies (let's say 10th level for argument's sake) have a +3 to +7 Fort save (not including Con bonus). A blaster pistol has a paltry DC 15 to resist its stun effect. Most high-level enemies are going to make their save roughly half the time. So you tell me, do you still think stun is the way to go?

You guys unfailingly blow me away with the superb quality of your magazine. When I first picked up #1, I wasn't into roleplaying, but *Star Wars Gamer* has converted me. Thanks for showing me a new galaxy of entertainment!

In addition to the roleplaying articles and resources, I'd like to encourage you to keep up the good work in the short fiction department. I've enjoyed all of them, particularly the stories that revisit old friends like Jaina, Jag, Darth Bane, Fenig Nabon, and Panaka. It was also great to read new stories by Kathy Tyers and Kevin Anderson. Adding another story or two to each issue might not hurt either, but I'll trust your good judgment on that.

As they say on Nal Hutta: *Mee jewz ku* <good-bye>!

Christopher King
Wilberforce, Ontario
Canada

One or two more stories?! As the Ewoks say, *Na Gool!* ☐

STAR WARS INSIDER

Next Month

#59

STAR WARS SILVER ANNIVERSARY

The *Insider* looks back on a quarter-century of *Star Wars* and chronicles the careers of Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker), Harrison Ford (Han Solo), and Carrie Fisher (Leia Organa).

THE NEW ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO CHARACTERS

Read about the updated version of this invaluable resource that incorporates *Attack of the Clones* characters, including two exclusive, expanded character entries.

WHO'S WHO IN ROGUE SQUADRON

An insider's guide to every hotshot who's ever flown with this famous group of Rebel pilots.

FOLLOWING THE BANTHA'S TRACKS

Read about the early days of the *Star Wars* Fan Club from the perspective of its first official newsletter.

PLUS

- Comics Link: *Attack of the Clones* comic preview
- Set Piece: *Home One* Briefing Room
- Gamescape: *Star Wars* TCG



What Have I Started?

H'chu apenkee <greetings>, as the Hutts would say!

