

STAR WARS®

CLASSIC
ADVENTURES
VOLUME FOUR

THE BEST OF THE JOURNAL



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STRANDED

by Chuck Truett

Illustrations by Scott Neely

Day turns to night quickly on the flat plateaus of Karra. Soon the darkness is broken only by the fire burning between the village huts and your ship as you, Dr. Nardah, and his assistant gather with the natives for your evening meal.

Politely — as Dr. Nardah has requested — you force yourself to eat the coarse gruel the villagers have prepared for you, a thick concoction of foul-tasting tubers served in a smooth clay bowl that cools your hands despite the heat of its contents.

As you eat, you watch Tist, one of the largest of the aliens, continue his fascination with your weapons, awkwardly manipulating a blaster rifle with his long-fingered hands.

You cringe as he raises the rifle to fire, knowing that, as he has every time before, he will miss his target. Your only hope is that no one is injured.

But he does not fire.

Instead, he throws the rifle to the ground. "Useless," he tells you. "We will defeat the Imperials with our own strengths."

Dr. Nardah — who has developed the skill of eating the gruel as if he truly enjoys its taste — sniffs loudly, a gesture of comfort that he has taken from the natives. "Friend," he says, "you cannot hope to defeat them without our help."

"But we will," Tist answers, "as we always have. We have always conquered, and we always will." The other Karran warriors flick their tongues and hum, signalling their agreement.

Dr. Nardah stands and walks to Tist's side. They are an odd pair, the slight, white-haired Human contrasted with the tall, black-furred alien. Dr. Nardah slaps at the Karran with his forearm, another gesture of the natives, this time one of companionship. "We are brothers, it is only proper that we offer you assistance."

"But we will show you, Doctornardah, we will show that we have strength, then we will offer our assistance to you," Tist answers again. "We will attack. We will destroy the Imperials, as our ancestors destroyed all those that opposed them."

You laugh, quietly, to yourself. If only it were that easy.

Karra

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate to hot
Atmosphere: Type 1 (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Dry
Gravity: Low-standard
Terrain: Bipartite (grassy plateaus/jungle canyons)
Length of Day: 20 standard hours
Length of Year: 304 local days
Sapient Species: Karrans (no additional data available)
Starport: None
Population: 1,000–1,500 Imperials, undetermined number of natives
Planet Function: Failed mining colony
Government: Imperial Governor
Tech Level: Space (at Imperial base), primitive

Capsule: Karra is a small, dense planet that circles a yellow star in the largely unexplored rimward region of Rayter sector. With an average temperature of 45 degrees centigrade at the equator and little rainfall, the planet is climatically inhospitable, although most known sentient races can adapt to life in the cooler temperate zones.

The primary distinguishing factor of Karra is the immense number and variety of insects that populate its surface. This number is so great that the insects have supplanted all other orders of animal life, all but becoming the sole inhabitants of the planet.

Summary

In this adventure, the characters have escorted Dr. Elth Nardah and his assistant to the planet Karra. Dr. Nardah is attempting to negotiate a treaty between the natives of the planet and the Rebel Alliance.

It is an uneventful, almost peaceful assignment — until an Imperial shuttle crashes nearby.

While investigating the crash site, the characters capture an Imperial prisoner. A chain of events begins that ends in the destruction of their starship and earns the characters the enmity of the Karrans who were so recently their allies.

Without their starship, the characters are trapped on the planet unless they can make the long journey to the Imperial base and steal a ship.

Before beginning the adventure, allow the characters to read the “Mission Profile” sidebar, which provides them with all available information concerning their mission.

■ Dr. Elth Nardah

Type: Idealistic Diplomat
DEXTERITY 2D+1
KNOWLEDGE 3D+2

Alien species 7D, bureaucracy 6D, cultures 7D, cultures:

Mission Profile

Operation Identification: Primitive Sentient Protection and Alliance, Operation 265-A: Karra.

Mission Objectives:

- 1) Escort Dr. Elth Nardah and his assistant to Karra, providing necessary support and protection.
- 2) Examine and evaluate, from a military perspective, the physical and intellectual abilities of the native sentient species.
- 3) Return Dr. Nardah to the Seven Flames support base following the completion of negotiations (as determined by Dr. Nardah).

Mission Background: Several hundred years ago, a mining colony was established on Karra (see attachment) in response to reports that large concentrations of varmigio (trace elements of which are necessary in most hyperdrive cores) were present just below the surface of the planet. These reports were later discovered to be incorrect, and the Mineral Assets Partnership, which had underwritten the colony, withdrew its support, stranding the colonists. According to all available information, the colonists perished soon after.

Recently, the Empire has also established a mining operation on Karra (presumably acting on the

same incorrect information that precipitated the establishment of the original colony). Like before, no varmigio was extracted, and the Empire subsequently withdrew the entire staff of the mining operation and over 50 percent of the military personnel.

Karra would normally be of no concern to the Alliance; however, reports recently intercepted by Alliance Intelligence indicate that a sentient race has developed on the planet. Dr. Nardah has hypothesized that, as no mention of sentients appears in the records of the Mineral Assets Partnership (which conducted a thorough survey of the surface of the planet), a pre-sentient race developed into sentience through the presence of the original colonists. If this is true, then, because of their primitive state, the sentients of Karra are prime candidates for Imperial slavery.

Alliance High Command is prepared to use military force to prevent the enslavement of the Karrans, but we will not presume to act without their approval. Dr. Nardah, using his expert knowledge of primitive sentient species, must negotiate a fair and proper treaty that will allow for the protection of the Karrans.

primitive societies 10D, languages 7D, planetary systems 6D

MECHANICAL 2D
PERCEPTION 2D+1
STRENGTH 1D+1
TECHNICAL 2D

Computer programming/repair: information retrieval and processing systems 6D+2

Move: 8

Equipment: Sporting blaster: Galinolo XX, Diplomatic Edition (3D)

Capsule: Dr. Nardah is a small, wizened Human male, with worn skin and stooped shoulders. His hair, although silver, still grows thick, and he has not lost any of the vitality of his youth. He dresses well, as befits a diplomat, in the conservative fashion of the Old Republic, and the blaster that he wears, while underpowered, has been constructed of the finest materials.

Dr. Nardah's primary motivation as a member of the Alliance Diplomatic Corps is to prevent primitive sentient races from becoming slaves of the Empire.

■ **Karvinna Raen**

Type: Xenological Researcher
DEXTERITY 2D+1

KNOWLEDGE 3D+2
Alien species 4D, bureaucracy 6D, cultures 4D, languages 6D, planetary systems 4D, streetwise 4D+2

MECHANICAL 2D
Holorecorder operation: Rebel Alliance Treaty Recording System 5D, repulsorlift operation 4D

PERCEPTION 2D+1
STRENGTH 1D+1
TECHNICAL 2D
Computer programming/repair: information retrieval and processing systems 5D, holorecorder repair: Rebel Alliance Treaty Recording System 4D

Move: 10

Equipment: Rebel Alliance Treaty Recording System (see entry)



Capsule: Shy and quiet, Karvinna Raen shares little of Dr. Nardah's drive for the liberation of oppressed beings. Instead, she is fascinated by the pure facts of their existence, by how they cope, or do not cope, with both the presence of the Empire and the Alliance.

Karvinna grew up under the rule of the Empire, during a time when scholars were disdained, and has had to fend for herself through most of her life. Despite her youth, she has managed to acquire a much wider range of skills than has Dr. Nardah. These skills, in addition to her intelligence, have made her such a valuable assistant to the older diplomat.

Unlike most other beings, Karvinna has carefully cultivated a very plain appearance. She is of average height and weight, with short, brown hair and

dark eyes. She normally wears a long, beige colored tunic and loose slacks.

Besides assisting Dr. Nardah, Karvinna is the official recorder of all treaty negotiations and is never separated from the pouch which holds her holorecording equipment. The holos she records are considered legally binding by all the systems within the Rebel Alliance.

■ **Treaty Recording System**

Model: Rebel Alliance Treaty Recording System

Type: Holorecorder

Skill: Holorecorder operation: Rebel Alliance Treaty Recording System

Cost: None

Availability: Only available to Rebel Alliance diplomatic teams

Game Notes: The main image lens on the RecSys holorecorder has a fixed focus and only one focal length (depth of visual field, 1.1 to 3 meters), making it unusable for long-range surveillance.

Capsule: The RecSys consists of an ordinary-looking holorecorder which is mounted on a gyroscopically stabilized tripod. Its only uncommon attribute is that the images it records are processed through a special set of RTZ security filters, then recorded on a WORM chip so the data cannot be modified.

This system, along with special procedures that must be followed by the operator, virtually ensures that the recording cannot be manipulated. The images contained on the WORM chip are guaranteed to be a truthful recording of the events that occurred.

Preparations

The Rebel Alliance has a stock Ghtroc freighter (see *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game, Second Edition*, page 121, or use any other stock light freighter) which can be used for this mission.

Note: It is integral to the plot of the story that the ship in which the characters arrive on Karra is destroyed. If the group normally uses a personal ship for travel, then you should arrange for that ship to be temporarily "decommissioned" (undergoing major repairs, held by customs officials, etc.), forcing the characters to use the ship provided by the Rebel Alliance. (Unless, of course, it would be dramatically appropriate for the characters to lose their own ship.)

The Journey to Karra

The hyperspace journey to Karra lasts three days. During this time, the characters become well acquainted with Dr. Nardah, an amiable man whose special talent is an ability to make others feel comfortable in his presence.

Dr. Nardah spends most of the trip questioning the characters about the societies in which they grew up and explaining to them how the primitive history of a culture affects the advanced

society into which it evolves. Despite the rather dry nature of his conversation, Dr. Nardah is usually able to hold the attention of those who surround him.

His assistant, however, while constantly present, is rarely noticed, blending into the background and retreating from all attempts to approach her.

Gamemaster Note: It is important that Dr. Nardah's death comes as a surprise to the characters, in order to amplify the fact that no one understands the actions of the Karrans. While setting up the adventure for the players, emphasize Dr. Nardah's presence, implying that he will play a large part in the adventure. De-emphasize Karvinna's presence, referring to her (if at all) only as "Dr. Nardah's assistant." Avoid referring to her by name until after Dr. Nardah's death.

Episode One: Days Are Peaceful Here

The Village

The Karran village consists of a cluster of seven huts constructed in a roughly oval area cleared of the thick, two-meter tall grass that evenly covers the plateau (see the map, "The Karran Village"). The huts themselves are constructed of sun-dried brick made from clay and shredded blades of grass, making them the same

light brown color as the surrounding plain.

At the north end of the oval is a large, open area normally used as a ceremonial site, and this is the area where the characters have landed their ship.

The entire village is surrounded by a wall of the dense grasses, broken only by the well-traveled paths leading south to the fields where the Karrans grow their crops.

Negotiations Are Interrupted

The adventure begins on the morning of the fourth day on Karra. The characters are playing *solli*, a catching and tossing game involving three brightly colored balls of differing sizes, with a small group of juvenile Karrans, using their performance to judge their physical capabilities.

Dr. Nardah and his assistant are in the village chief's hut, deeply involved in negotiations (which seem to be progressing well). The majority of the adults are in the fields to the south, harvesting the tubers that form the basis of their diet.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

The game, which the Karran children have been enjoying greatly, judging from the volume of their humming, is interrupted by the roar of ion thrusters in the sky above you. You look up to see an Imperial Lambda-class shuttle fall in a staggered arc into the grasslands to the west, leaving behind a trail of thick, black smoke.

Panic in the Village

The Karran children quickly disappear, running into several of the brick huts, but the characters are not alone long. The Karrans working in the fields to the south appear in the compound almost immediately. They crowd around the characters, begging for protection, certain that the "Dreaded Imperials" (a phrase they have taken from Dr. Nardah) have begun their war on the Karrans.

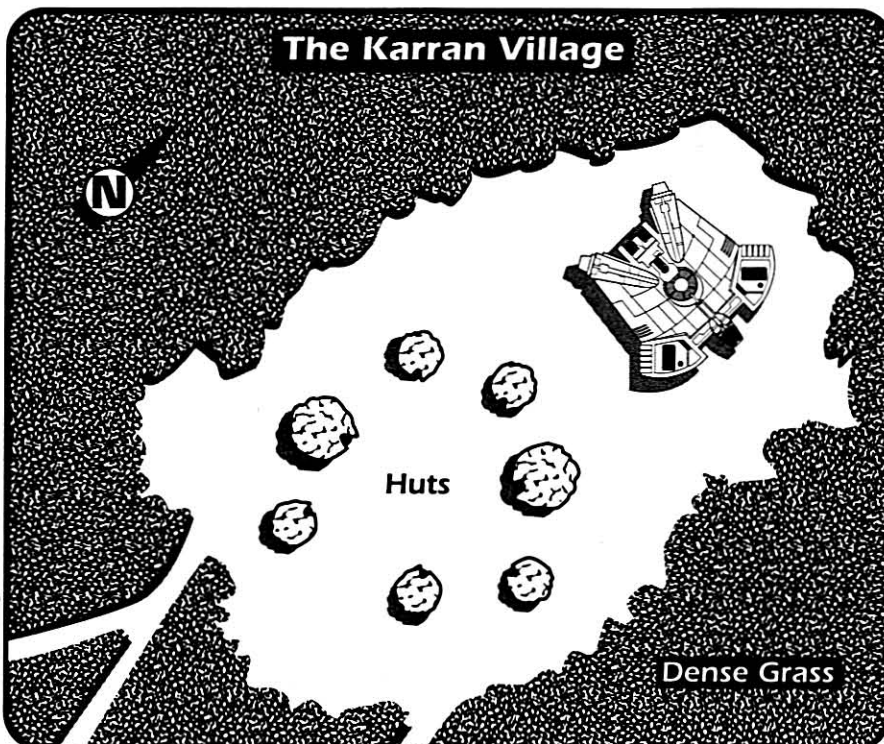
■ The Karrans

Attribute Dice: 12D
DEXTERITY 2D/5D
KNOWLEDGE 1D/4D
MECHANICAL 0D/3D
PERCEPTION 1D/3D
STRENGTH 2D/6D
TECHNICAL 0D/2D

Special Abilities:

Technological Ignorance: The Karrans know almost nothing about technology and have a difficult time grasping new concepts. They suffer a -1D penalty whenever they attempt to use any item more advanced than "stone age" (spears, axes, knives).

Claws: The Karrans can use their foreclaws as weapons doing damage equal to the Karran's STR.



Story Factors:

Altruism: A Karran's sense of individuality is easily suppressed by its insectoid sense of community survival. The group, whether it be village, tribe, or species, is of much greater importance than the individual. As a result, it is not uncommon for a Karran to sacrifice itself, if this sacrifice represents a potential for the group to survive.

Move: 5/10

Size: 2-2.5 meters tall

Capsule: The Karrans are large, lumbering insectivores. Their bodies are roughly cone-shaped, starting with narrow, slender snouts, and steadily increasing in mass until they end in thick legs and hindquarters. Karrans are covered with thick, dark brown or black hair. They wear no clothing, but will decorate their fur with stripes of white clay for special occasions.

The Karrans are capable of using tools, but the dexterity of their four-fingered, thumbless hands is limited by the long, sharp claws that extend from the tip of each finger. They are further limited by the resources available to them on the plateau:

grass, clay, and small stones. The primary craft in which the Karrans participate is pottery (at which they are relatively proficient). The grasses of the plateau, which are the most accessible resource, are primarily used for fuel, although fibers from the grasses are occasionally woven into a coarse cloth. However, the presence of wooden items (primarily simple spears and adze handles) indicates that the Karrans have some method of gathering materials from the valleys.

The Karrans speak an oddly accented dialect of Basic, apparently introduced to them by the original Human settlers, which has been relatively unchanged by time.

Investigation

On hearing the screams of the villagers, Dr. Nardah (followed by his assistant) and the village chief and warriors push their way through the crowd of agitated Karrans and demand to know what has just happened.

After hearing the explanation, the chief, a rotund female, requests that Dr. Nardah and the characters go to the site where the ship landed and investigate. Dr. Nardah agrees, insisting that, not only do all the characters go, but that six of the Karran warriors also accompany them.

When the characters have made whatever preparations they think necessary, the group begins to push its way west through the grass, toward the end of the shuttle's flight arc.

The Shuttle

The Karrans lead, walking through the grass as if it was not there, using their great strengths



and masses to clear a path for the others to follow. Fifteen minutes after they leave the village, the party arrives at the site of the crash. Read aloud:

The shattered wreckage of the shuttle rests in a 20-meter wide trough of raw earth, framed by a wall of scorched and burning grass. The bulk of the shuttle is at the far end of the trough, more than 100 meters away. It is so twisted by the impact that it is barely recognizable as the starship it once was.

The smaller cockpit section of the shuttle is much closer, less than 30 meters away. It is almost completely buried in the dirt, but there is still enough exposed that you can see the ragged opening where it was torn from the main section. In that opening, you can see the slowly moving figures of two Imperial pilots.

And, as the Imperials raise their blasters, you realize they can also see you.

2 Imperial Pilots. All stats are 2D except: *blaster 4D*. Blaster pistol (4D).

The Imperials are at a numerical disadvantage, but they are hiding in the remains of the shuttle and are almost completely covered. Add 3D to the base difficulty (determined by the ranges of the characters' weapons) for the characters to hit the Imperials. The pilots in the shuttle are 20 meters away.

For the purposes of this encounter, treat the *Strength* of the shuttle hull that protects the Imperials as 6D, and ignore the applicable scale modifications.

If the Imperials are able to hold the characters off for ten rounds, then two of the Karrans act to end the combat. They rush up to the shuttle cockpit, reach into the opening, pull the Imperial pilots from the cockpit, then break their necks and drop them to the ground.

The Governor

When the characters search inside the cockpit section, they find a lanky, middle-aged Human wearing a very expensive Imperial suit strapped into one of the flight couches.

Shackles (*Strength 5D*) bind his hands together in front of him. His hair is disheveled and his suit wrinkled, as if he has been treated roughly by his captors. Read aloud:

The Imperial prisoner eyes you nervously.

"You are not from this planet," he says. "You are Rebels, enemies of the Empire."

He is quiet for a moment, then a gleam of recognition appears in his eyes. "I am Darryn Edalm, Imperial Governor of Karra. I have been accused of treason and am being sent to certain execution. I surrender to you and request your protection as a prisoner of war."

Edalm is extremely polite and gracious during this first encounter. He attempts to make the characters feel he has suffered abuse at the hands of the Empire and is interested in joining the Rebellion. He is, in fact, only interested in saving himself. If he begins to fear the characters might desert or harm him, he announces that he has information which will be useful to the Alliance, although he does not specify what this information is.

■ Darryn Edalm

Type: Imperial Governor
DEXTERITY 3D
KNOWLEDGE 3D+1
Bureaucracy: Imperial planetary occupation forces 5D
MECHANICAL 2D
PERCEPTION 3D+2
Command 4D, command: Imperial military personnel 5D, con 4D+2, persuasion 5D
STRENGTH 2D+2
TECHNICAL 3D
Move: 10
Equipment: expensive gray suit



Capsule: Darryn Edalm is a tall, thin Human with pale skin and red hair. He is a low-level bureaucrat — paranoid and compulsively meticulous — who is trying to fit the mold of sophisticated Imperial Governor.

Edalm is the Imperial researcher who rediscovered the results of the original survey of Karra, leading him to believe that there existed a large mass of valuable resources on the planet. He immediately shared this belief with his superiors, and, as a reward, was granted the Imperial Governorship of Karra.

Unfortunately, Edalm's reward soon turned to shame when the miners discovered there was no varmiglio on the planet.

All civilian personnel were immediately recalled. After the military commander determined the natives of the planet were not a threat, the majority of the military forces were withdrawn. Suddenly, Governor Edalm had control, but no power — and no importance.

A Prisoner?

When the characters and Edalm emerge, Dr. Nardah and the Karrans have gathered in front of

the opening, and Dr. Nardah's assistant has set up her holo equipment to record the event. On seeing Edalm, Dr. Nardah immediately asks the characters to explain what has occurred.

When the Karrans hear that Edalm is an Imperial, they become agitated, making quiet whistling sounds, but they do not act.

After the characters complete their explanation, Dr. Nardah asks a few questions to clarify the story, then makes his decision:

"According to the policies for contact with the enemy developed by our military high command, it is our duty to deliver this prisoner to our commander at the Seven Flames base. We will return to the village and restrain him until treaty negotiations are complete, after which time we will transport him to the proper authorities."

Treason

The Karrans' agitation quickly turns to rage, but they still do not act until the characters begin to escort Edalm to the village. When this occurs, read aloud:

The Karrans begin to howl.

Tistscreeches, "Traitor! You are one of them!" The other Karrans join in, chanting, "Traitor!" and the brittle grass shakes with the force of their anger.

Tist screams again, "Insects! We will kill you all!" In a flash, Dr. Nardah is in Tist's grasp, and the huge Karran is pounding the diplomat's already still body with his fists, screaming, "Traitor!"

The other Karrans begin to move towards you.

6 Karran Warriors. All stats are 1D except: *Dexterity 3D, brawling parry 4D, melee combat: spear 5D, melee parry 5D, Strength 5D, brawling 6D.* Move 7. Wooden spear (STR+1D).

The Karran warriors fight until dead, because they are not fighting for themselves — they are fighting for their village and their species. Their individual deaths are of no consequence.

Karvinna does not move when the combat starts. Instead, she attempts to record it with her holo equipment and will not stop unless one of the characters drags her to cover. The Karrans will not attack Karvinna unless they have defeated the other characters.

Edalm, however, spends the entire battle trying to stay behind the characters and demands that they concentrate on protecting him.

Returning to the Village

When the characters start to return to the village, Edalm demands to know where they are going, but when he is told, he balks:

“To their village?” he asks, indicating the dead Karrans. “Are you kidding? What do you plan to say? ‘Sorry we killed your friends, goodbye and have a nice day?’ ” He shakes his head. “I refuse to go along with this.”

There are a wide range of responses the characters can offer to this announcement. Edalm attempts to persuade the characters to go to the Imperial base, where a confiscated smuggling ship is being stored in the adjacent mining warehouse. Edalm claims the warehouse is unguarded, so they will be able to easily slip inside.

If the characters agree with Edalm, go to Episode Two; if they decide to return to their own ship, go to The Village.

Regardless of the decision made, Edalm willingly goes with the characters (although he complains loudly if they decide to return to the village).

Karvinna also follows the characters, becoming, if possible, more quiet and withdrawn than before. She does whatever the characters say — except leave without her holorecorder.

The Village

When the characters return to the village, they find it is deserted. Nothing has been taken from the village, and there is no sign of violence, but every inhabitant has disappeared.

The characters' ship, however, is still there, and it appears to be unharmed. Characters making Moderate *Perception* rolls notice a large number of tiny insects crawling on the hull of the ship.

When the characters enter the ship, they realize something horrible has happened. First, they discover that the main entry ramp will not open or close. Then they find that it is dark inside the ship, and there is no power going to the interior lighting systems — even the emergency lights are out. As they move through the ship, they learn that every system is without power. The ship is completely dead.

Infestation

The cause of the breakdown becomes obvious the first time a maintenance panel is opened. The ship is infested with billions of tiny insects. They have penetrated into every part of the ship, eating wires, cables, and computer chips, destroying the very soul of the ship. An Easy *starship repair* roll determines that this ship will never fly again.

Included among the inoperative equipment is the hyperspace transceiver, several integral parts of which have been totally consumed by the insects.

Now the characters realize that their only hope for escape lies in the confiscated smuggling ship in storage at the Imperial base.

On searching the ship for supplies, the characters find that nothing of any potential use is intact except for a two-week supply (for five Humans) of NSFS food blocks. Everything else in the ship has been destroyed by the insects. You can make exceptions to this, if you wish, but limit it to very low technology items. Anything more complicated than a spear or a wrench has been destroyed.

Karvinna is the only one in the party who is familiar with the geography of Karra. She knows the Imperial base is due east, but she is unsure of how far away it is. She does, however, believe it is in one of the valleys.

The characters turn away from their ship and begin to push their way through the grasses.

Episode Two: Brains With Which to Think

The First Day

The first day's journey is uneventful, and all the characters encounter is the endless monotony of the plains. They see nothing except for the sky above them and the brown grass at their sides. When they prepare to rest as night falls, they have no idea how far they have traveled.

The Second Day

On the morning of the second day, have all the characters make *Perception* rolls. The character with the highest roll is the first to arise, awakened by Karvinna as she gathers her equipment and begins to walk back towards the Karran village.

Karvinna cannot believe that Dr. Nardah is dead and has decided to return to the crash site to provide him with medical attention.

Karvinna

Karvinna is the only member of the party with a reason to grieve over Dr. Nardah's death. She has worked with him for several years, and he has been both her mentor and surrogate father.

In addition, Karvinna is a scholar, not a soldier, and this is her first experience with the violence of war. It is not surprising she was numb and lifeless during the previous day, but now her emotions have returned. It is obvious from the quiver in her voice and the unnatural expression on her face that she is upset. Karvinna does not begin crying until after the characters have convinced her that Dr. Nardah is dead.

Karvinna begins this encounter by denying Dr. Nardah's death:

“He's not dead. He's unconscious. We just have to go back and wake him up and he'll be okay.”

When the characters have convinced Karvinna

that Dr. Nardah is truly dead, her fears for her own safety surface:

“We’ll all die here, won’t we? There’s no escape for us.”

Now the characters have to convince Karvinna that they actually have a chance of sneaking into the Imperial warehouse, stealing the ship, and escaping the planet without losing their lives.

Governor Edalm

Edalm will not be much help to the characters as they attempt to console Karvinna. His responses (which you can interject whenever the characters seem to be at a loss for words) range from “Let her go, she’ll just slow us down” to “If you can’t leave her, tie her up and drag her along.”

Continuing the Journey

Once Karvinna has been reassured that there is a chance of escape, the journey can resume. The rest of this day will be like the previous day, a seemingly endless journey through the grasses, broken only by the coming of night.

The Third Day

On the third day of their journey, the characters unexpectedly reach the edge of the plateau. Read aloud:

On the third day, you break through the edge of the grasslands and find the sheer drop of a 1,000-meter cliff at your feet. Neither to the north nor the south can you see any sign of a

cleft or ridge that would permit you to descend.

The true cruelty, though, is the sight of the Imperial base, sitting in a clear area of the canyon. It cannot be much farther than a day’s walk away, yet it could be on another planet, for all your chances of approaching it.

You are trapped yet again.

Unexpected Discoveries

Regardless of whether the characters go north or south, after a two hour walk, they stumble across an abandoned settlement:

You turn slightly, following the curve of the cliff’s edge, and notice an area where the huge grasses are much less dense. Peering through the scattered blades, you discover that this planet has yet another secret to yield — a small grouping of prefabricated metal buildings, and, next to them, almost hidden by the grasses, a large starship of unfamiliar design.

The Starship

The characters may feel a brief wave of elation on seeing the starship, but this soon dissipates, because there is very little about the starship that they can understand.

The hull of the ship is similar to that of a Mon Calamari starship, an organic-looking collection of bulges and curves. These curves are periodically broken by flat, hard-edged planes, as if slices had been carved out of the ship.

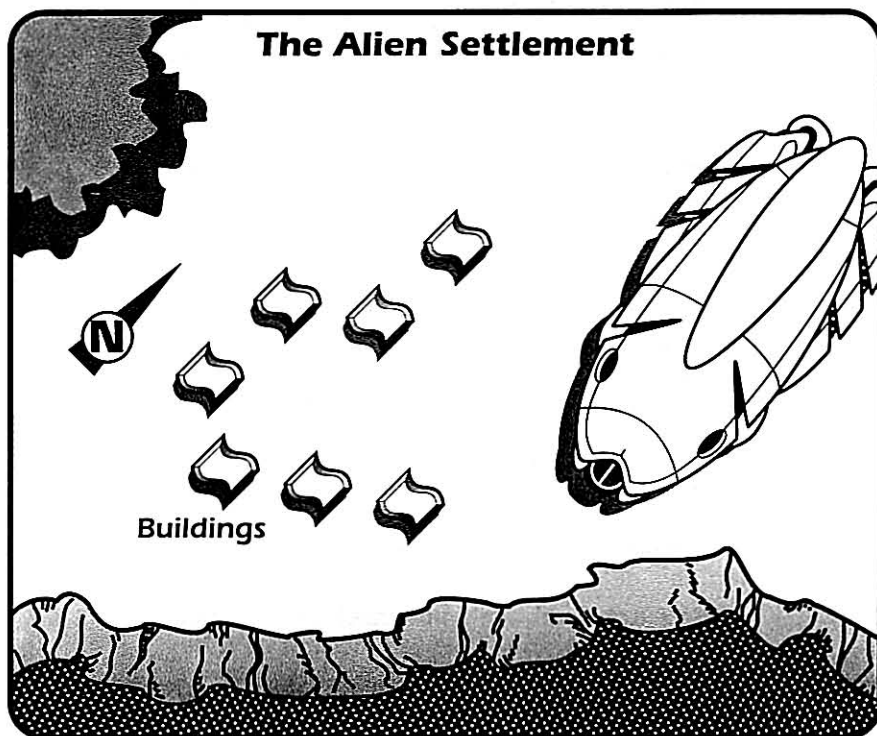
There are only two compartments in the ship. The first, a small compartment at one end, appears to be the cockpit or engineering station, while the second, which takes up the bulk of the ship, is the cargo hold.

The Cockpit

There are no seats or flight couches in the cockpit, although there are a number of straps that might have been used as safety harnesses. Most of the controls are mounted on the ceiling, while visual displays appear to be located on the upper sections of the walls.

The characters can attempt to use their *space transports* and *space transports repair* skills to determine the purposes of the controls, but all they can determine is that there is no power flowing to any of the systems.

Characters who want to examine the controls more closely must make a *Moderate space transports repair* roll. If this roll succeeds, the characters find a maintenance panel. On opening this panel, the characters



discover that the internal components of this ship are filled with the dead carcasses of billions of tiny insects.

The Cargo Hold

Characters who make an *Easy space transports repair* roll realize that the hold appears to have been retrofitted to carry a cargo that required an atmosphere. The only hint as to the nature of the cargo is the hundreds of three-by-one meter U-shaped troughs mounted on racks within the hold.

The Settlement

The settlement consists of seven oddly shaped buildings (see the map, "The Alien Settlement"). The buildings themselves are constructed of unfinished metal of some unfamiliar alloy. The walls are not tarnished, but they are marked by scratches and punctures. There are windows along the straight sides of the buildings, and many of these windows have been shattered. Characters who make *Very Difficult metallurgy* or *crystallography* rolls (both are *Knowledge* skills) realize that it would have taken an incredible amount of force to mar either material.

Treasures?

Unlike the starship, the technological items contained within the buildings of the settlement did not suffer an attack by the insects. The majority of the items seem to have suffered physical damage, or have suffered the effects of great age.

If the characters search through the buildings, then they find the following items which may prove useful:

- A large, blocky-looking device. It consists of nothing more than a metal box with a wide opening at one end and a small opening at the other. The only control appears to be a single button. (The molecular converter.)
- A much smaller (less than 50 centimeters long) version of the previously described device. This device is lacking the control button. (The heat generator.)
- A small supply of building materials, including several long, straight, rigid bars and flat plates, both made out of a reinforced cellulose aggregation.
- Five plastic containers of supra-molecular binding paste, which can be used to join nonmetallic and non-ceramic materials.

In addition, they find an interior room in one of the buildings that has remained sealed and locked.

The Sealed Room

There is a simple, mechanical lock sealing the room. Disengaging the lock is a *Moderate security*

task, or the characters can use force to break down or shoot through the door (*Strength 3D*).

When they enter the room, they find that it is a small storage room. Its walls are lined with dusty shelves that are empty except for a small computer terminal on one of the upper shelves.

The Computer

A *Moderate computer programming/repair* roll is needed to discover how to access the files stored within the computer. (If the characters are not able to succeed at this, Karvinna can.) The internal power cells are still working, although their efficiency has been greatly decreased by the passage of time, causing the display to be dim and blurry.

The Alien Journal

The only file contained in the computer is the personal journal — consisting of a flatscreen visual display with an accompanying vocal track — of one of the alien colonists.

Surprisingly, the vocal track is in Basic (a fact that interests Karvinna immensely), although the dialect and accent are unfamiliar.

If the characters choose to examine the journal, read "The Alien Journal" sidebar. If the characters are not interested in the journal, Karvinna examines it alone.

The Molecular Converter

This is the large, blocky-looking device shown in the journal recording.

The characters are not immediately able to determine its purpose. (It will take a *Heroic Knowledge* roll for a character who has not seen the journal to identify it; the difficulty decreases to *Difficult* after viewing the journal recording.) However, if the characters imitate the actions of the aliens in the recording, they should be able to easily determine the purpose of the device. All the characters have to do is feed grass into the chute, and it is converted into three-centimeter diameter rope (*Strength 4D*). Pressing the single button located on the device changes its mode, and it produces a one-meter wide sheet of cloth. Pressing it again causes the device to revert to the previous mode.

The process that the device uses is simple. A mass of material is inserted into the chute on the back of the device. The converter then destabilizes the bonds which provide the molecular structure for the source material. This process releases a large amount of energy, which the converter then uses to reconstitute the source material into something as closely resembling the target material as possible. The optimum target material is a dense, quasi-metallic substance; however, the most readily available source material on Karra — the grass — results

in a substance similar to celluloid cloth or rope.

The Heat Generator

The heat generator is the smaller version of the molecular converter and is operated in a similar manner. When organic material is loaded into the chute at the rear of the unit, it is completely converted into superheated gases which are expelled through a small nozzle at the front of the unit.

The Building Materials

The building materials are nothing more than very strong pieces of chemically reinforced wood, although their origin is not apparent.

The Binding Paste

The binding paste can be used to connect the building materials to each other and to the cloth or rope produced by the molecular converter.

Getting Down the Cliff

There is no single solution that allows the characters to descend to the canyon floor. Instead the players have a chance to use their imaginations.

The available materials can be used to construct any number of devices which allow the characters to reach the canyon floor safely, including parachutes, gliders, a hot-air balloon, or a winch. In this situation, the question is not,

The Alien Journal

Entry 1

Visual: A Karran stands next to a wide table manipulating several solid polyhedrons of varying sizes and colors. Three unfamiliar aliens are standing slightly away from the table, studying the Karran.

The aliens themselves are motile trees. Thick roots growing from the base of their trunks are used for locomotion, while the limbs that grow from their crowns end in narrow tentacles used as manipulators.

Audio: "We have not yet reached any conclusions with regard to the intelligence of the natives, but they have made an interesting assumption about us. They do not believe that we are capable of independent thought. The phrase they use is 'Only we are given brains with which to think.' At first, I believed that this applied only to animals, but I realize now that it applies also to us."

Entry 2

Visual: Three of the allophylic aliens are operating a large, blocky-looking device. Two of them are feeding bundles of grass into a chute at the rear of the device, while the third is coiling the thin cabling that is being extruded from the front.

Audio: "The days are peaceful here, despite the incessant hum of the flying insects. We have begun preparations to bring the colony ship down from orbit. The natives do not seem to comprehend the magnitude of the event. Their only response has been, 'Why did your queen not seed the hive herself?'"

Entry 3

Visual: A large number of the aliens have gathered next to the hull of the starship. Several of them are spinning, while others bounce up and down on their

roots, and some sort of liquid is being sprayed into the air.

Audio: "A group of native leaders appeared as we began our celebration of the arrival of the colony ship. The new colonists were greatly pleased with this event, but the natives themselves were very stern and ill-humored and refused to join in the festivities. Instead, the eldest of the natives demanded, 'Where are your warriors?' Most of us, intoxicated with excitement, laughed at this, but now, after giving it more thought, I find the question quite disturbing."

Entry 4

Visual: Several small aliens play in the reddish dust, drawing patterns with both their roots and limbs.

Audio: "One of the children has noticed that the sounds of the insects have ceased. Apparently, the arrival of the colonists has offended the natives, for we have seen no sign of them since their appearance at the celebration. Of late, I've begun to rest at the cliff's edge and watch for sudden storms."

Entry 5

Visual: Several of the aliens slowly move through the grass, collecting samples from the soil.

Audio: "We appear to have cured the sickness of the children and are returning to our study of the soil. There have been sightings of..." (The alien's speech is overwhelmed by a low rumble that turns into a deep, thunderous hum).

Visual: The picture changes to that of a window, and through the window you see the aliens running from the attacking Karrans. Then the insects come, hundreds of millions of them, all sizes and species, ripping and tearing at the bark of the aliens, until the picture turns to static.

“Can they make their skill rolls?” but “Can they come up with an interesting, logical solution to the problem?”

Any logical solution should succeed, but the characters might have to make some applicable skill rolls to add some tension to the actual attempt at descending.

During the scenes surrounding the design and construction of whatever conveyance the characters use to descend the cliff, neither Karvinna nor Edalm will be very helpful.

Karvinna will fluctuate between an extreme interest in the alien artifacts and a sadness brought on by the fact that Dr. Nardah is not available to share these discoveries. She will begin any task that the characters ask of her, but it is not likely that she finishes it, before she becomes distracted.

Edalm, however, attempts to take an active part in the process, but most of his suggestions are on the order of “You can’t be serious; that’s much too dangerous.” He attempts to veto any plan that involves a risk to his own safety.

Episode Three: Watch For Sudden Storms

The First Day on the Canyon Floor

It will not be as easy to travel in the canyon as it was on the grassy plateau. On the ground, the thick roots of the trees wind around each other, forming an uneven carpet of slick, black wood. Less than three meters above, the limbs intertwine, forming an intricate roof painted yellow and green with the profusion of swirling leaves. Between these, the twisted, gnarled trunks and limbs of the trees coil and writhe, almost filling the space through which the characters must walk.

Very little sunlight makes its way through the dense leaves of the forest canopy, leaving the forest floor dark. The air is thick with heat and moisture, and tiny pools of foul-smelling water fill the crevices among the roots.

Walking through this forest is not an easy task, since it involves climbing over and under the coils of the tree trunks as well as walking over the slippery root system. For every day the characters are in the forest, have them make a Difficult *running* or *Dexterity* roll. Characters who fail this roll suffer a minor injury (such as a sprained ankle) and can only move at half speed for the remainder of the adventure. Successful use of a medpac can ease this pain, but it cannot fully heal an injury of this type, nor can injured characters heal naturally unless the party ceases movement completely for three days.

Aside from this potential for injury, nothing

occurs during the first day of travel through the forest.

The Night

While the characters are sleeping during their first night in the canyons, have each make a *Perception* roll. The character with the highest roll awakens, and you should privately tell that player that the sounds of the insects have stopped.

If Karvinna is awakened from her sleep by the characters, and first learns this information in the middle of the night, her fears of death return, and she becomes upset. However, if the waking character chooses to wait until the morning to share this information with the rest of the party, her fears are almost balanced by her scholarly curiosity.

When Edalm hears this news (whether it is day or night), he becomes extremely agitated and loudly demands that he be protected.

The Second Day on the Canyon Floor

Nothing happens during the morning of the second day, but at noon, the characters hear the roar of ion engines and the thunder of firing blasters in the sky above the trees.

An hour later, they begin to hear the sounds of battle coming from the east. An hour beyond this, the characters reach the edge of the forest.

The Imperial Base

The Imperial base is a hexagonal pyramid that sits in the center of a massive, flat plain of artificial rock. Before placing the base on the planet, the Imperial Engineers leveled a 2,000-meter radius circle of the canyon floor, stripping away the vegetation and topsoil all the way down to the bedrock, then replacing it with a thick layer of permcrete. It was supposed to be an almost perfect defensive position, but, instead, it has become an almost perfect battlefield.

The entire plain is filled with skirmishes, as the Karrans have apparently made good on their promise to attack the Imperials themselves. At their sides fight all the insects of the planet. Read aloud:

The permcrete plain between you and the Imperial base has been transformed into a swirling sea of battle.

Hundreds of Imperial troopers kneel on the permcrete, firing at their enemies, their bodies shielded only by the shattered remains of destroyed combat vehicles. Landspeeders and airspeeders whirl through the air, circling and firing, cutting swaths through the combatants on the ground with their blasters, while huge flying insects throw themselves in their paths. Two walkers, their metal skins covered with a

layer of squirming insectoid life, trudge across the field of battle, bringing their heavy metal feet down on Karrans and insects alike.

But, despite the carnage being wrought by the Imperials and their high-tech weaponry, it is obvious that they have suffered many losses. You can see the smoking ruins of three TIE fighters. Before your eyes, one of the walkers falls, flames spewing from its neck, as it grapples with a huge Karran mantis that is almost as large as it is.

And, suddenly, the Karrans bring you into this war.

As their enemies.

After the characters emerge from the forest, a Karran warrior and three large insects attack them.

Karran Warrior. All stats are 1D except: *Dexterity 3D, brawling parry 4D, melee combat: spear 5D, melee parry 5D, Strength 5D, brawling 6D.* Move 7. Spear (STR+1D).

3 Karran Beetles. All stats are 2D except: *Strength 4D.* Special abilities: mandibles do STR+2D damage; forelegs do STR damage. Move 15.

The beetles are two-meter-long black insects, all angles and edges. They move on all six legs,

One of the walkers grapples with a huge Karran mantis almost as large as it is.

and must rise up on their four rear legs in order to attack (this counts as an action).

During this and the following combat encounters, Karvinna and Edalm are not very helpful. Karvinna is more interested in recording the events (holding her holorecorder to her eyes as the party travels). Edalm stays very close to the most powerful character, constantly demanding protection.

The Mining Warehouse

The mining warehouse is half the size of the Imperial base, and is located about 1.5 kilometers away on the far side of the base. It takes the characters about 15 minutes to move from the forest edge to the warehouse, twice that if one of the characters was injured in the forest. However, it is not an easy journey.

The Battle

This is the one time in their lives that the characters don't have to worry about having the Imperials fire at them; they are all too busy fighting off the insects and Karrans. The insects,

however, attack any non-Karran being that they encounter. Depending on the strength of the characters and their interest in combat, they can participate in these encounters as combat encounters, or you can just describe the creatures as being part of the greater conflict that they pass.

Leaper. All stats are 2D except: *Strength 7D.* Special abilities: mandibles do STR damage; creature can leap 60 meters. Move 15. This creature has a small (50 centimeter), almost spherical body surrounded by six, three-meter-long legs.

Swarmers. All stats are 0D. Special abilities: fly in eyes and ears, causing temporary deafness and blindness (-2D penalty affects all skills involving sight or hearing). Move 15. These almost microscopic flying creatures can do little harm on their own, but they cause interference during the characters' next encounter.

Legworm. All stats are 2D except: *Strength 4D.* Special abilities: claws do STR damage; mandibles do STR+2D damage; creature can attack up to 10 targets per round and suffers massive amounts of damage before dying (treat *Strength* as 10D for purposes of determining damage sustained by the creature). Move 10. This creature is a ten-meter long segmented worm, one meter in diameter. Ten of the creature's segments have a pair of two-meter-long legs, while the head segment possesses two large, silvery eyes and a set of sharp, pinching mandibles.

Entering The Warehouse

The warehouse doors (four-meters tall by 20-meters wide) are sealed by a simple electronic lock. An *Easy security* roll opens the lock, then the characters must manually open the doors. Opening the doors partially takes a *Difficult Strength* roll, while opening them fully takes a *Very Difficult Strength* roll. Characters can easily combine actions for this task. Karvinna freely agrees to assist, but Edalm must be coerced.

Inside the Warehouse

The inside of the mining warehouse is one large, empty space, occupied only by the confiscated smuggling ship (use a stock light freighter for this, or, if the characters lost their personal ship at the beginning of the adventure, this ship can be used as a replacement, and should be of similar, though not identical, capabilities).

While the characters are opening the entry way into the ship (an *Easy space transports repair* or *space transports* task), the large insect they saw grappling with the walker earlier crashes through the wall of the warehouse and begins to approach the ship.

Preparing the Ship

The characters must make a *space transports* skill roll to prepare the ship for flight. (Again, the characters can combine actions for this task, but every character involved will be occupied until the ship is ready to fly, and cannot enter in the combat with the giant insect.) The result of the skill roll determines how long it takes the characters to prepare the ship.

Result of Roll	Time
Very Easy (1–5)	10 rounds
Easy (6–10)	8 rounds
Moderate (11–15)	6 rounds
Difficult (15 or greater)	4 rounds

■ Karran Mantis

Type: Large carnivorous insect

DEXTERITY 5D

PERCEPTION 2D

STRENGTH 10D

Special Abilities:

Foreclaws: Do STR+2D damage

Move: 20

Size: 15 meters tall, 30 meters long

Scale: Walker

Capsule: This is the last surviving specimen of the Karran mantis, and it is the largest insect on the planet. This individual only survives because the Karrans are able to induce it to retreat into a cave at the base of one of the plateaus and hibernate, awaking from its sleep only when the Karrans call for it. Mantis-like in appearance, with a head much like that of a giant Arconan, it walks on its four rear legs, holding its head and slender thorax upright, while the thick abdomen remains horizontal. It strikes at its prey with the long, spear-like claws of its forelegs.

The Attack

During the first round following its appearance, the mantis moves between the ship and the open doorway, then moves forward during the next round, and begins attacking the ship during the third round.

The characters may defend themselves using their hand weapons and the weapons on the ship (although using the ship's weapons drains power, and extends the time needed to prepare the ship by two rounds).

If the characters wound the mantis before it reaches the ship, then it stops its forward movement for one round.

If the characters wound the mantis after it has begun to attack, then it ceases attacking that round (although it will resume its attack in the next round).

If the mantis is incapacitated or killed after it has begun attacking the ship, then it falls forward onto the ship, causing 3D damage to the hull.

There is enough open space in the warehouse to allow for substantial amounts of movement, so the characters can retreat from the stalker and maneuver around it in the ship, once the ship is ready to fly.

The purpose of this attack is not to allow the mantis to destroy the ship, but to make the characters believe the mantis will destroy the ship. Make all damage rolls for the ship in secret, ignoring any results which would cause the ship to become completely inoperative.

Leaving the Warehouse

Whether or not the ship can leave the warehouse without suffering additional damage depends on two things.

If the characters only opened the doorway partially, then the ship suffers 2D damage when it crashes through the door.

If the characters fully opened the doorway, then the pilot must make a Moderate *space transports* roll. Failure means the ship nicks one side of the doorway and suffers 1D damage.

Escape

As the ship flies away, the characters get one last look at the surface of the planet:

Below you, the battle rages on. The Imperials may last another few hours, but the Karrans and the insects could hold out for days.

You consider, briefly, the report you will make. Do you know enough about the Karrans to truly make them allies? And, if not, can you risk the possibility that they might become your enemies?

The planet shrinks beneath you as you prepare for the jump to hyperspace. What will you do with Karra's secrets?

Epilogue: Seven Flames

The trip through hyperspace is uneventful (despite the damage suffered by the starship), and, after three days, the characters arrive safely at the Seven Flames base.

Immediately following their arrival, the members of the group are separated. Heavily armed agents of Alliance Intelligence surround Governor Edalm and take him to be interrogated, as a crowd of fashionably dressed diplomats whisks Karvinna away without a word. The characters themselves are escorted to a comfortably furnished residential suite where they spend the next week alternately resting and undergoing extremely intense debriefing sessions conducted by a starkly black and white protocol droid.

Award the characters 5–10 Character Points, adding bonuses for creative thinking and well-executed roleplaying. If the characters lost a

Report on Karra

I thought that you might be interested in seeing these excerpts from the report I have prepared concerning our mission on Karra...

The Hive Mind of the Karrans: Judging from the actions of the Karrans, it is apparent that, as a result of their years of warring with semi-sentient insect races, they have, by necessity, developed a hive mind of their own. This communal mind allows them not only to communicate among themselves and coordinate the actions of large numbers of their own species, but also to command and coordinate the actions of the less-evolved insectoid species of the planet.

Hive Warfare and Its Implications: This aspect of the psychology of the Karrans is evident in the nature of their attacks on the starship provided for the diplomatic party and on the alien village discovered during our journey to the Imperial base (a more detailed report on the alien settlement is forthcoming).

At first glance, the attacks — performed by insects under the control of the Karrans — appear to be reactions against the technology, but they are, in fact, confined to the starships, as the technological artifacts within the alien settlement were largely unharmed (although many items suffered collateral damage as a result of the attack by the Karrans and the larger insects).

This paradox can be accounted for by hypothesizing that the Karrans saw the starships as being the “queens” of the respective hives (one being the

aliens, the other being our diplomatic party). According to the Karrans' view of the world, once the queen has been destroyed, the ultimate destruction of the entire hive will soon follow.

This can further be seen in the conduct of the Karrans' attack on the Imperial base. This attack, which devastated the base itself, did not encompass the adjacent mining warehouse. The reason for this is that the Karrans' saw the withdrawal of the mining personnel as the “death” of the mining hive. Therefore, the mining warehouse, if it was indeed the “queen” of the mining hive, was dead before the attack began, and the Karrans had no incentive to attack what they saw as a being that was already dead.

Recommendations: While the Karrans may ultimately prove to be powerful allies of the collected species of the Rebel Alliance, it will be necessary to proceed much more slowly in future negotiations, and I recommend that additional investigation of the Karrans is undertaken before these negotiations are begun.

Based largely on my work with Dr. Nardah and my previous experiences with the Karrans, I believe that I am the most qualified individual for this task, and suggest that you enlist the aid of those Alliance personnel who accompanied Dr. Nardah and myself on the original diplomatic mission to Karra as my support team for this investigation.

I sincerely hope that I will be working with you again in the near future.

personal ship during the adventure, then the Alliance allows them to take possession of the ship in which they escaped from Karra and assists in the task of repairing the ship.

Darryn Edalm

The information that Edalm had (if he indeed had any information at all), apparently was of no use to the Alliance, because the characters soon learn that, shortly after he was delivered to Seven Flames, he was transferred to a medium-security work camp on Shimmer, destined to spend the

remainder of the conflict carving blocks of ice from the massive glaciers.

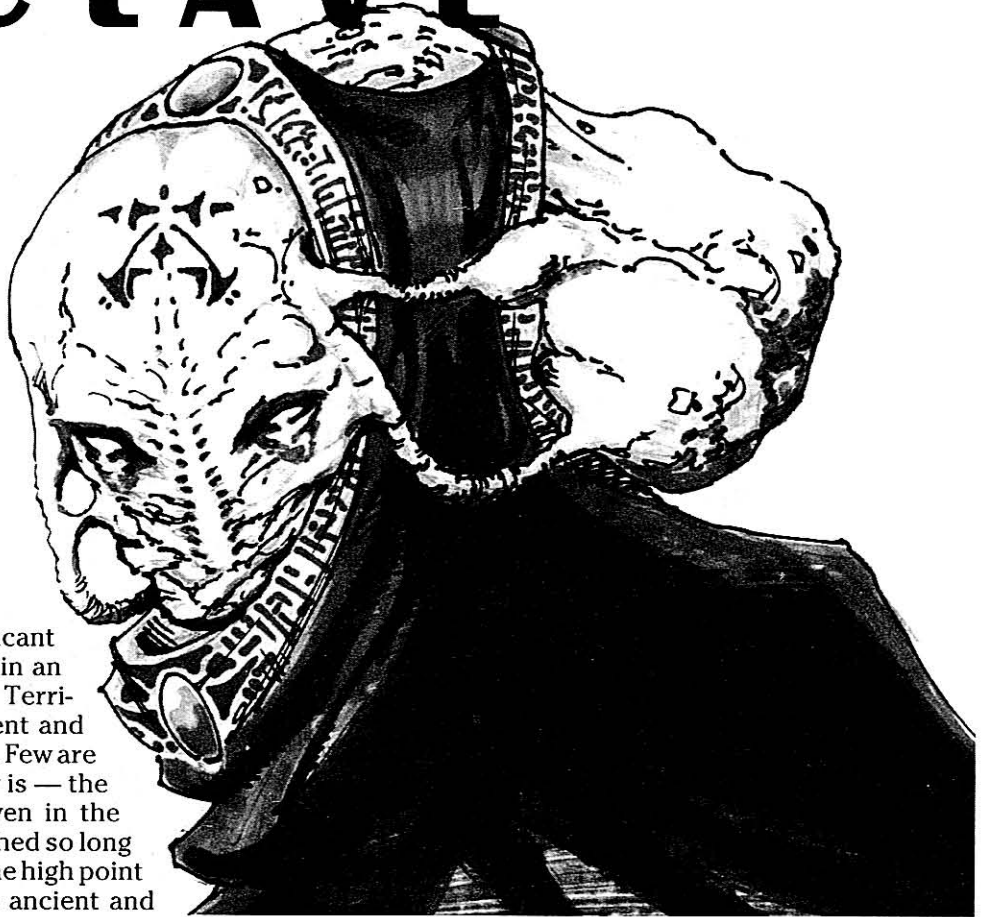
Karvinna Raen

The characters learn through formal channels that Karvinna was promoted and transferred to the investigative branch of the diplomatic corps, but they learn little else until they receive a data chip containing excerpts from her report on their mission to Karra (allow the players to see the “Report on Karra” sidebar). ☹

THE GREE ENCLAVE

By Timothy O'Brien

Illustrations by
Chris Gossett



The Gree worlds are an insignificant handful of systems tucked away in an isolated corner of the Outer Rim Territories, the remainder of an ancient and once highly advanced civilization. Few are certain how old this alien society is — the secret of Gree origins is lost even in the collective Gree memory. It flourished so long ago that Gree historians refer to the high point of their civilization as the “most ancient and forgotten days.”

The Gree themselves are a species of cephalopods, six-tentacled creatures with gray skin, large, sad-looking eyes, and tall foreheads supporting the immense brain sacs which flop oddly behind their head. Gree decorate their large foreheads with hieroglyphic tattoos which indicate rank and caste. No mouth is visible in their faces, although it is thought the multiple fleshy folds beneath the eyes serve the Grees' vocal communication needs. Since they evolved in the Type II atmosphere of their homeworld, Gree, these aliens are most comfortable in that atmosphere. They find Type I atmospheres unpleasant, and often cover their communication folds with odd spongy devices when in such environments.

Much of their bodies are hidden beneath fanciful robes, although slots allow the head to poke through and provide means for tentacles to emerge. One pair of the Gree tentacles functions as fine manipulators, another as heavier grippers, and the third pair as ambulators, which help the Gree shuffle around like large, shambling mounds of flesh. Gree rarely grow greater than a meter and a half.

Thousands of years ago the Gree developed a technology which is extremely alien from anything known today. Much of the technology has been forgotten, although Gree can still manufacture and operate certain mundane items, and Gree Masters can operate the more mysterious Gree devices. Most Gree technology consists of devices which emit musical notes when used — instruments that must be “played” to be used properly. This technology is attuned to the Gree physiology — devices are operated using complex systems of levers, foot pedals and switches designed for manipulation by

the suckers coating the underside of Gree tentacles. Conversely, Gree are extremely inept at using Imperial-standard technology from the rest of the galaxy.

Today the Gree are an apathetic species and their once unimaginably grand civilization has declined to near ruin. They are mostly concerned with maintaining what few technological wonders they still understand, and keeping their cultural identity pure and their technology safe from the outside galaxy.

■ Gree

Attribute Dice: 12D

DEXTERITY: 2D/3D

KNOWLEDGE: 2D/4D

MECHANICAL: 3D/5D

PERCEPTION: 1D/3D

STRENGTH: 1D/3D

TECHNICAL: 2D/5D

Special Skills:

Mechanical skills:

Device Operation: This skill allows Gree to manipulate their odd devices. Gree technology is different enough from Imperial-standard technology that a different skill must be used for Gree devices. *Device operation* is used for native Gree technical objects. Humans (and similar species) are unlikely to have this skill and Gree are only a little more likely to have developed Imperial-standard *Mechanical skills*. Humans using Gree devices and Gree using Imperial-standard devices suffer a +5 modifier to difficulty numbers.

Technical skills:

Device Repair: This skill allows Gree to repair their ancient devices. However, only masters of a device would have its corresponding repair skill. Even so, few masters excel at maintaining their deteriorating devices.

Story Factors:

Gree Masters: Gree place great value on individual skills. Those Gree most proficient at operating their ancient technology are known as "masters." These masters are respected, honored and praised for their skills, and often take on students who study the ancient devices and learn to operate them.

Droid Stigma: Gree ignore and look down on droids, and consider droids and autonomous computers an unimportant technology. To the Gree, devices are to be mastered and manipulated — they shouldn't be rolling around on their own, operating unsupervised. Gree don't hate droids, but avoid interacting with them whenever possible.

Move: 5/7

Size: 0.8-1.2 meters

Gree History

Gree history is shrouded in mystery — even the Gree know little of their past, since their civilization's greatest era ended well before the formation of the Old Republic. Much of Gree history is locked away, perfectly safe and recorded but inaccessible because the Gree themselves have lost mastery of their own information storage technology.

Most scholars believe the Gree species originated on their homeworld — itself called Gree — hundreds of thousands of years ago. After a long period of evolution, it is thought they developed

some form of hyperspace technology and struck out to explore the stars.

The Gree found themselves far more advanced than most of the other civilizations of the era they encountered, few of whom had even entered an industrial age. The Gree alternately traded on and ruled some of these worlds, but developed a policy of not granting a developing civilization any technology they could not theoretically develop themselves. The size and reach of the Gree civilization is unknown, and few clues have been discovered to indicate whether their influence was galaxy-spanning or restricted to a few neighboring sectors.

Ancient Gree technology surpassed modern Imperial technology millennia ago. At the peak of their civilization the Gree had mastered stellar engineering, quanta-technology, and dimensional engineering. Technology made the Gree masters of their empire and became the basis for their society.

This was their downfall — the Gree came to value the ability to use the technology they had above the ability to improve it. Improvement of skill replaced creative ability, and the Gree civilization slowly slid into ruin. Devices were developed that allowed single operators to perform tasks that had previously taken dozens of experts. The creation of new devices became the province of a small section of the operator caste of highly trained experts — the ancient masters — who independently honed their skills and came to pass those skills on only to a small number of students, who served long, arduous apprenticeships for the chance to become a master.

The masters were extremely protective of their knowledge. In time, the jealous masters allowed knowledge of the ancient devices to fade as masters died before passing the secrets of their most advanced tools to their students. The researcher and creator castes declined and vanished in this process. Gradually, the administration caste slowly gave up its power to the few remaining masters, the only ones left capable of operating the great and complex Gree devices.

The Gree population declined and specialized, aided by the development of life-extending devices. Over thousands of years even the fabulously engineered Gree devices began to fail, and though the maintenance of the artifacts was within their ability, repair was not. The Gree civilization slowly withdrew and pockets of Gree became cut off as the government and key devices failed. In time the Gree actively turned their back on the galaxy, seeking only to indulge in the technological achievements remaining near their homeworld.

Gree Society

Formerly, Gree society had four roughly equal castes. Crafters produced devices, and researchers created new technologies. Operators knew how to “play” the devices, and administrators functioned as the Gree government. Each caste had several subgroups or guilds responsible for individual functions within the caste. As their technology reached its apex, the operator caste came to dominate the other castes, and eventually eclipsed them. Now the researcher and crafter castes are no longer produced in the spawning beds — partially because they are no longer needed in the dying Gree civilization, and partly because it is believed the Gree have forgotten the proper bio-engineering processes to create those castes.

Each of the few worlds in the Gree Enclave are controlled by a grand council, with a representative from each of the local guilds attending. Grand councils meet at need, and answer to the grandmaster council on the Gree homeworld.

Guilds are the local regulating bodies of a caste subgroup; constructors, synthesors, textmasters, and so on. Each master on a planet holds a seat on the council of his guild. There are a limited number of seats on a guild council — if there are no empty seats there can be no new masters in that guild. A seat cannot be taken from a living master, but a dead master's seat can be eliminated — a rare practice — preventing his senior assistants from gaining a master's position. Seats can be added if an assistant is noted as a profound expert in his field, but this means the guild council has almost certainly added a permanent seat. Some guilds always vote a seat to superior assistants, others hold the number of seats rigid.

The principal structures of the great Gree cities are cavernous halls, often operated by a guild and governed by a guildmaster. Gree halls are monolithic block-like buildings with several built-in habitats. Some Gree halls remain mostly functional and feature advanced food production and preparation systems, microclimate control, adjustable internal architecture, information systems, and powerful defensive devices. The most fully functional halls are under the control of the most influential guilds and masters. Lesser halls are governed by less important masters, and the hulks of non-functioning halls shelter the remaining Gree masses. Each hall needs a hallmaster to function. Hallmasters are fairly common. Satikan, a large city on Asation, has about a dozen hallmasters.

Gree Hierarchy

The masters dominate society. A master has a seat on the local guild of their profession, and

need respect only the local guild council, guildmaster, and grandmasters. A guildmaster is the head of a local guild, while grandmasters are those recognized as the preeminent master of their field on a planet. A master is greatly respected by Gree, and expects to have preference over any lesser creature, Gree or not. Masters operate the ancient devices which keep Gree civilization functioning, and are given tribute in return for their services and knowledge. Most of the tribute given to the masters is in bartered goods. Gree masters have little use for credits.

Senior assistants are masters-in-waiting. Some have not yet achieved mastery in their particular field, but most have and are simply waiting for an empty guild seat. The seniors are professionals in their field, and perform much of the master's petty work or assist the master in operating devices.

Students serve and learn. Students are numerous, although few advance to senior assistant, spending much of their apprenticeship skulking about a master's workshop, aiding the senior assistants or performing menial tasks for the masters.

The Gree masses are the rabble of society. Most Gree never even try to enter the operator professions and are quite willing to perform the minimal services needed to justify a master keeping them fed and clothed. The masses include those Gree with few skills, but who are still attached to a master by caste and guild. The Gree masses are listless and near mindless, having short attention spans and being prone to brief bursts of energy to acquire food or wealth. Some members of the masses find employment with Gree traders, putting their meager skills and low energy to some use.

Gree traders are considered part of the Gree masses, but are on the top level of the rabble. Traders aren't new to Gree society. They challenge the position of the masters in that they trade goods for goods, or goods for services of a lesser sort than the masters provide. Masters look down on this, but need the traders to bring them clients and goods from outside the Gree Enclave.

A relatively new and unusual kind of trader has recently developed. These *sevarks* translate and bargain with masters on behalf of alien clients, and generally assist visitors to the Gree Enclave as guides. Sevarks are still rare, although they cluster in those starports open to alien spacefarers. They command large fees for their services, but are often the only way outsiders can interact with the Gree masters. A sevark's expertise can cut the cost of dealing with a master significantly, and can make a visit to the Gree Enclave much safer, profitable and interesting.

Gree Economy

The Gree economy is different from the economy of many other worlds. Gree do not generally accept credits and prefer to trade goods or services. This applies to most transactions, from the most humble trader to the most lauded master. Gree goods vary widely. Some are individually made, others are made by crude industrial processes, and a few are precision crafted to extremely high standards.

The value of something to a Gree depends on a variety of things — how much the Gree needs what's offered in a trade, whether the Gree thinks she's making a profit, whether she likes your species, the time of the day, and how business has been lately.

Gree masters trade their services and expertise for a high price, generally considered tribute to the master for his importance and skill. Suggesting that the master is selling his services would be very rude. The Gree consider those who operate the ancient devices the most important members of their society. A Gree master considers herself a lord, while those seeking a master's services are seen as pleading peons (or "supplicants," the official term). These Gree masters are to be respected and rewarded well for their services. Most Gree masters can expect to become very rich regardless of profession and without being called on to operate their devices every day. The price of a Gree master depends on his interest in your traded items or services, his mood and attitude, and his opinion of your species.

As a rough minimum, a Gree master requires an opening tribute of at least a hundred credits worth of goods, just to meet a supplicant. After complimenting the master on her skill and importance, a supplicant can broach the idea that the master might be able to grant a favor. The master usually declares that her time and skill are most valuable and that she should not be disturbed at this time. The supplicant may offer further tribute. The master often voices a variant on the "too busy and important" theme until a proper amount of goods or services has been offered. If the supplicant runs out of tribute or patience, he may withdraw to fetch more tribute, or just give up. Note that the tribute is not refundable, and that asking a master to return tribute is extremely rude. Savvy masters do not milk their supplicants dry, since poverty stricken supplicants have a harder time coming up with tribute in the future.

Masters of the more rare technology or large devices can expect thousands or tens of thousands of credits worth of tribute per service. Masters of lesser technologies expect less, only hundreds or thousands of credits worth. The

more ordinary the tribute, the lower the value of the tribute; a hundred thousand credits of bantha hides isn't impressive, but a thousand credits worth of gems is. Unusual and exotic trade goods — alien art, odd delicacies, unusual devices — can cut the tribute considerably as almost all masters are collectors of one sort or another.

Gree Technology

The oldest Gree technology still in existence is the most advanced. It is assumed that the most ancient artifacts are examples of the absolute peak of Gree technology and that more recent technology was less advanced. This is difficult to confirm since no known devices from before the "most ancient and forgotten days" of Gree technology exist. This level of technology is as far beyond Imperial standard as Imperial technology is beyond feudal level, although the technology was never as widely spread and available to the average Gree as modern Imperial technology is to the average Imperial citizen.

What high technology remains is still very advanced. The Gree have been known to synthesize simple technological devices on almost no notice, to produce large amounts of simple elements with little difficulty, and to quickly transport huge amounts of material across vast distances. What advanced levels the Gree have fallen from, and what prevents them from controlling a larger area of space given their current technology, is subject to debate.

In the modern era, Gree technology is highly varied and queerly anachronistic. Many of the oldest devices are slowly breaking down and are not repaired or replaced. Gree society is so focused on these elder devices that they consider any other technology to be unimpressive. An ancient device capable of impressive feats apparently violating known physics might be the center of a shanty village where Gree warm their one-room shacks by burning dead plants. A Gree city might be lit by primitive electric lights and provide beast-drawn carriages for mass transit, but be defended by a powerful force field. A Gree master might operate his material synthesizer by torchlight.

Material synthesis is a basic Gree technology, and a comparatively less-exalted mastery than other fields. Material synthesizers don't actually create matter, they reconfigure it. The process requantifies the nuclear structure of matter, allowing for the transformation of commonly available elements (silicon, carbon, or hydrogen, for example) into rare and valuable elements, isotopes, or chemicals. There is some entropy in the process and a small percentage of the original material is lost. Master synthesizers are relatively common — perhaps a dozen exist on each Gree

world.

Another common mastery is that of the constructor. A master of a constructor device can assemble any sort of equipment the operator wishes using basic materials and an example of the item to be made. While considered useful by visitors to the Gree Enclave, the ability to produce less advanced, non-Gree technology is not highly valued (Gree cultural biases are often not what Humans might consider practical). Constructors are about as common as synthesors, with whom they work closely. Master constructors produce several nearly identical copies of an item, but the traditional limit is seven (the Gree number system is based on 14, the number of suckers on two main sucker-pads). More than seven is a separate project, and much more expensive, perhaps twice as much — masters get bored with making the same item over and over. A third project would be very difficult to arrange and would require vast tribute, at least four times the value of the original favor.

A vast amount of information has piled up over the hundreds of millennia of Gree history. In previous eras the Gree libraries had decillions of files on each specialized subject — not only technology, but also philosophy, science, art, history, politics, xenology, and literature. Today these files exist in nearly indestructible memory rods, but have been stockpiled in storage, to allow easier access to the manuals of operation, the main interest of current Gree society. The nearest Gree equivalent to a sage is a textmaster: a master of the esoteric and arcane information systems and communication devices. There are fairly few textmasters — one in an average Gree city, three or four in a major city — and their services are mostly requested by other masters searching for scraps of documentation. Te Hasa has the greatest concentration of textmasters — perhaps a dozen — working in the Great Library of Manuals.

Lesser technology is available to the Gree through the constructors. A wide variety of lesser Gree devices (with functions equivalent to Imperial standard items) can be produced via a constructor. Additionally, any technological item of a less-advanced technology — from A-wing to blaster — can be roughly duplicated by a properly operated constructor as long as the master constructor has access to the proper materials and an example to work from. Most often, the item duplicated is a lesser Gree device of some sort — a blastrod or transport pod or other simple and common devices. Gree are duplicating Imperial standard devices more and more in recent years. Droids are a curious exception to this. Gree as a whole regard droids as an unworthy technology, since the existence of droids flies

in the face of the Gree exaltation of personal expertise.

In theory, the constructors may be able to duplicate the achievements of the ancient Gree, if the master has the proper manual, material and example, but this thought has never occurred to the Gree due to a cultural block. The elder devices are individual works of art, and Gree masters find the concept of duplicating such artwork offensive in the extreme.

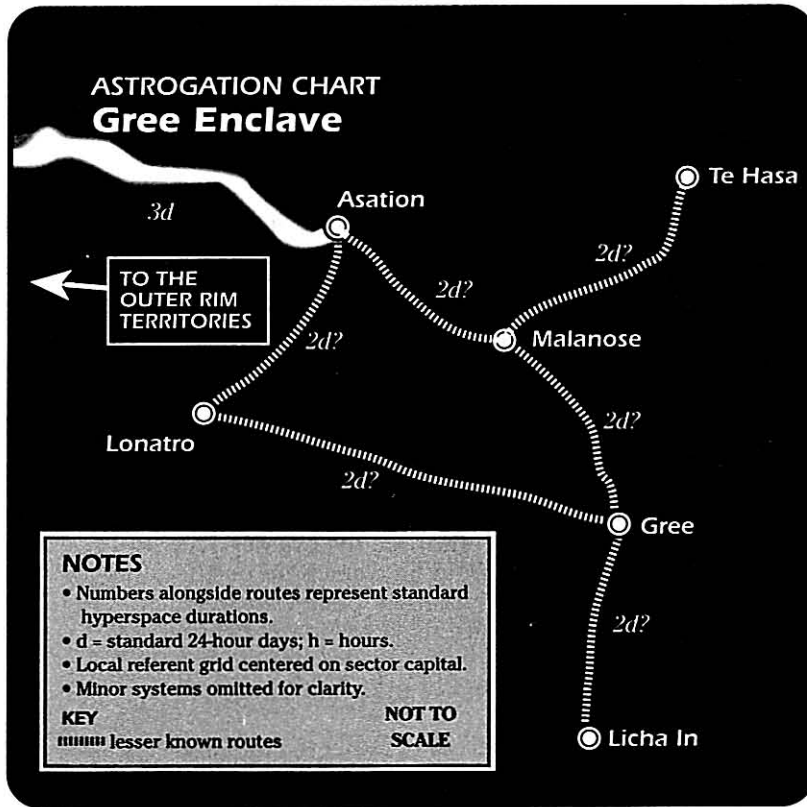
The hypergates are just one of these lost, artistic technologies the Gree refuse to duplicate. Hypergates were a significant development of Gree technology. Hypergates looked like free-standing accessways of some sort, usually a large door, arch, or gateway. When properly activated by a gatemaster, they transported anyone crossing their threshold through hyperspace to its terminus point, another hypergate. The receiving hypergate could be elsewhere on the planet of origin, or on another planet entirely. Although starships were used for many centuries after the hypergates were developed, the gates made other forms of personal interplanetary travel obsolete.

Dozens of hypergates once connected the Gree worlds. Now only their ruins remain, mostly on Malanose and Licha In, and their existence is kept a closely held secret. Gatemasters are very rare and highly respected, although this mastery is currently strictly theoretical — no master has activated a gate in centuries. Gate mastery is usually secondary to another mastery, since there is no prestige in studying defunct devices.

Gree Space

The Gree hold a handful of worlds in their small Outer Rim enclave. Access to these worlds is strongly discouraged by the Gree, who look down on the “low civilizations” of the galaxy. Members of similarly old species — Bith or Columi, for example — have less trouble gaining access to the Gree worlds. The Gree are slowly losing the ability to use the advanced technology of their ancestors, and are slowly opening their borders to trade. Those visiting the Gree Enclave land first on Asation, a gateway world to the other Gree systems. It's the only Gree world with reliable astrogation coordinates to nearby systems outside the enclave. Asation also has the largest “alien quarter” and caters to the economic needs of traders, scholars and other visitors.

Although the Empire maintains a presence on Asation, it has little concern with the Gree Enclave. Imperial agents are more interested in exacting taxes from traders visiting Asation than they are in an ancient and dying alien species with a lost and obscure technology. The Imperial



scout droids often disappear without a trace. Other sensor sweeps have revealed only a little — the space between the Gree worlds has various astrographical hazards, including nebulae and asteroid fields. The Gree do not reveal what routes their Baran takes to the other Gree worlds — if visitors knew the routes to jump to whatever worlds they pleased, the Baran would be obsolete and the Gree would have little control over travel in their enclave. At this time, the other Gree worlds do not have extensive starport facilities, and can often be dangerous to land on. Each system has its own port for the Rokak'k Baran's passenger launches.

The Rokak'k Baran

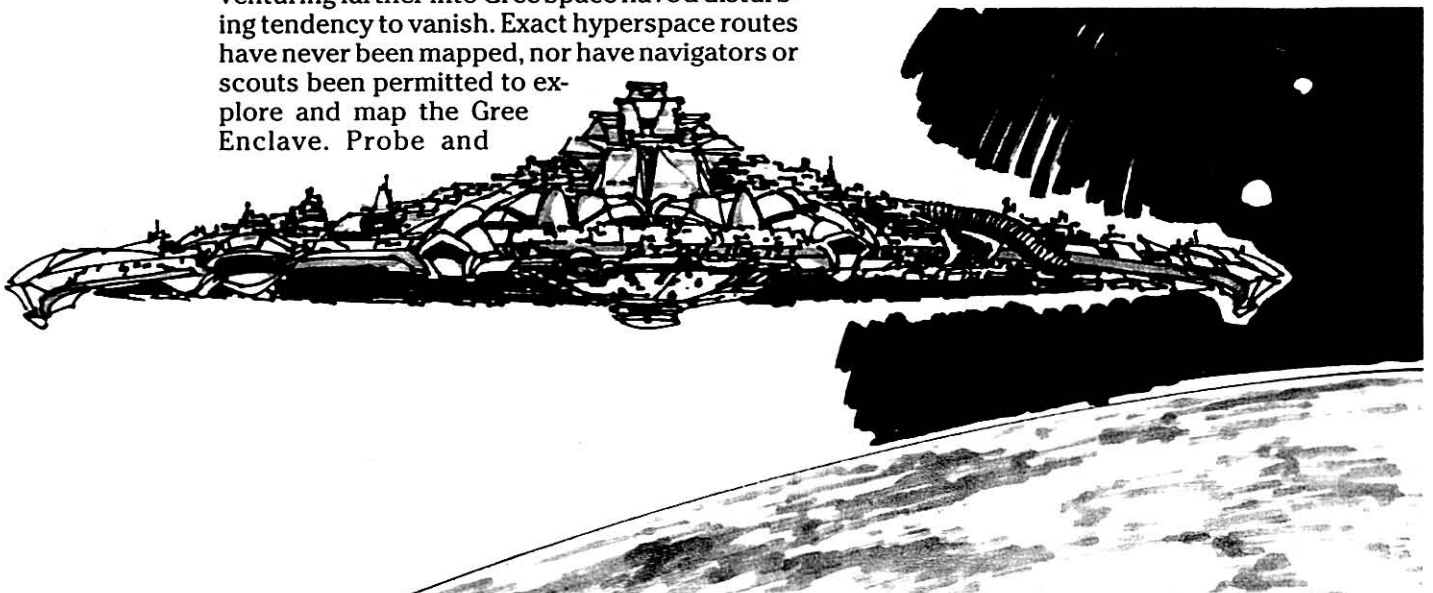
The Rokak'k Baran is the main method of travelling through the Gree Enclave. The vessel is more like a traveling city than a starship, a disk five kilometers in diameter. Nearly 5,000 Gree, including several masters, operate this vessel and make the Baran their permanent home.

The Gree dislike alien ships travelling through their worlds and expect all aliens to use the Baran. This ancient vessel keeps a regular schedule, visiting each world in the Gree circuit in turn. The Baran stops at Asation, Lonatro, Gree, Malanose, and Te Hasa — it stops for two days at each port, and takes two days to reach the next port. The Baran stops at Licha In for one day every year.

The tribute for transport on the Baran is fairly small for Gree, and only about 1,500 credits for aliens (round trip). Tribute is paid to Master Rokak'k, who runs this artifact ship with a team of lesser masters, senior assistants and students. Rokak'k's assistants collect the fee as visitors board the small launches used to bring passengers to the Baran. The Baran has cargo facilities

consul-general lets the Gree rule their worlds, and does not venture from his embassy on Asation. A Carrack-class cruiser orbits Asation to keep order and reinforce the impression of an Imperial presence, however meager and powerless it may be.

Transport to other systems in the Gree Enclave is provided aboard the Rokak'k Baran, an immense ship of Gree design which follows a regular schedule of stops at various Gree worlds. Visitors leave their starships on Asation and board the Rokak'k Baran. Independent travel in other starships is strongly discouraged — ships venturing farther into Gree Space have a disturbing tendency to vanish. Exact hyperspace routes have never been mapped, nor have navigators or scouts been permitted to explore and map the Gree Enclave. Probe and



— visitors can bring fairly large cargoes with them (up to 100 metric tons), but this requires additional tribute proportional to the size of cargo.

The Baran itself has no traditional sensors, weapons or defensive systems, although some of the masters on board have devices which approximate sensors, weapons and shields. The Karkak'k Marek is a sensor-like device, and the Varat'k Snarap is a powerful weapon, both used to aid the Baran community. The Varat'k Snarap is not a blaster weapon. It seems to generate a field that can be manipulated into wind-like energy bolts that rake across attacking ships. Fifteen years ago, a pirate ship decided to raid the Baran while it was approaching Asation. The ship opened fire and inflicted minor damage on the Baran before Master Varat'k reached the Snarap. The pirate ship, a frigate, was immediately vaporized in a single sweep of energy issued from the Snarap. The patrolling Imperial cruiser that had been maneuvering to assist the Baran quickly halted and returned to its orbit around Asation.

■ **The Rokak'k Baran**

Craft: Gree Starship Artifact
Type: Unique transportation habitat
Scale: Capital
Length: 5,000 meters
Skill: Device operation: Rokak'k Baran
Crew: 5,000
Crew Skill: See Master Rokak'k
Passengers: 10,000
Cargo Capacity: 250,000 metric tons
Consumables: 6 months
Hyperdrive Multiplier: x3
Space: 5
Hull: 8D
Shields: 4D
Sensors:
Passive: 100/2D
Scan: 200/2D+2
Search: 400/3D
Focus: 10/3D+2

Weapons:

The Varat'k Snarap

Fire Arc: Turret
Crew: 1
Skill: Device operation: Varat'k Snarap
Fire Control: 4D
Space Range: 3-15/40/75
Damage: 10D

■ **Rokak'k**

Type: Gree Master
DEXTERITY 3D
 Blastrod 4D
KNOWLEDGE 2D+2
 Bureaucracy: Gree 5D, intimidation 4D+2, languages 4D, planetary systems: Gree Enclave 9D, willpower 7D
MECHANICAL 5D
 Device operation: Rokak'k Baran 9D
PERCEPTION 2D+1
 Bargain 5D, command 7D, persuasion 4D
STRENGTH 2D
TECHNICAL 3D
 Device repair: Rokak'k Baran 5D+2
Force Points: 2

Character Points: 12

Move: 6

Equipment: Blastrod (4D), ceremonial whistle

Capsule: Rokak'k is the current master of the Baran — the main transport between Gree worlds — and is perhaps the most influential and respected master alive today. He commands the 5,000 Gree who help operate the immense starship, and personally oversees many of the ship's vital operations.

Rokak'k is more concerned with keeping the Baran's schedule than fretting about Gree guild politics and prestige. The Baran is the Gree's only means of travel within their enclave, and thus seems to be their only way to transfer messages, news and trade goods. Rokak'k believes it is his personal duty to maintain the Baran's schedule to keep the Gree Enclave from slipping further into a decrepit and helpless state.

Rokak'k bustles everywhere he goes and has little time for dawdling with aliens. He shuffles around the Baran's corridors, overseeing lesser masters and students, vocalizing orders and operating the more important starship devices himself. Although his ship is often filled with aliens visiting the other Gree worlds for trade and tourism, Rokak'k tolerates them as a necessary evil. When guests aboard the Baran approach him, he often rudely huffs and shuffles along on his way.

Asation

Asation is the main trading post and access system to the Gree Enclave. Asation is governed by a guild council that lightly regulates trade with non-Gree. The Empire maintains a small consulate on Gree, but has no governor or garrison. The Imperial consul-general has a small force under his command — including one Carrack cruiser — and wields uncommon power over Imperial activities in the system. Consul-General Skalus has so far maintained a low profile. Trade between Gree and non-Gree flows with little check. The sector Imperial Customs office has repeatedly petitioned Skalus to crack down on this trade and gather uncollected tax revenue. Skalus has been deaf to their pleas — he hates his latest assignment and hopes his inaction will get him a demotion to a more hospitable world.

Asation is a wet, gray, high pressure world with extensive slimy wetlands and jungle, and relatively primitive lifeforms. Its atmosphere is so thick and humid that most travelers prefer to use breath masks while outdoors. Rumors say that the Gree completely terraformed this formerly uninhabitable world millennia ago, populating it with lifeforms left over from Gree genetic experiments. Native Asation Gree are shorter than other Gree, and wear dark colored robes outside, but brighter robes indoors. Some of the Gree have become shrewd traders in their own right, but are rarely found on other worlds.

Satikan is the largest city on Asation, housing the starport, consulate, guild chambers, several marketplaces, and thousands of alien traders — including Humans, Devaronians, Squibbs, Aggorons, and Nalroni. The starport is managed by a Gree master, and the main passenger port for transfer to the Rokak'k Baran is actually his guild hall. The rest of the city is seething with visitors and Gree engaged in trade.

Gree from all over the enclave are found here, pursuing trade in the interests of their guilds and masters. Satikan boasts the greatest concentration of sevarks in the Gree Enclave — most swarm the starport, seeking visitors to guide and merchants to trade with. These sevarks use odd translation devices which hang around their heads and translate the Gree's grumbling language of low moans and gurgles into a tinny Basic voice. Although most sevarks still require bartered goods or services for their assistance as guides or intermediaries to the guilds, more and more are accepting credits to more easily trade with visitors.

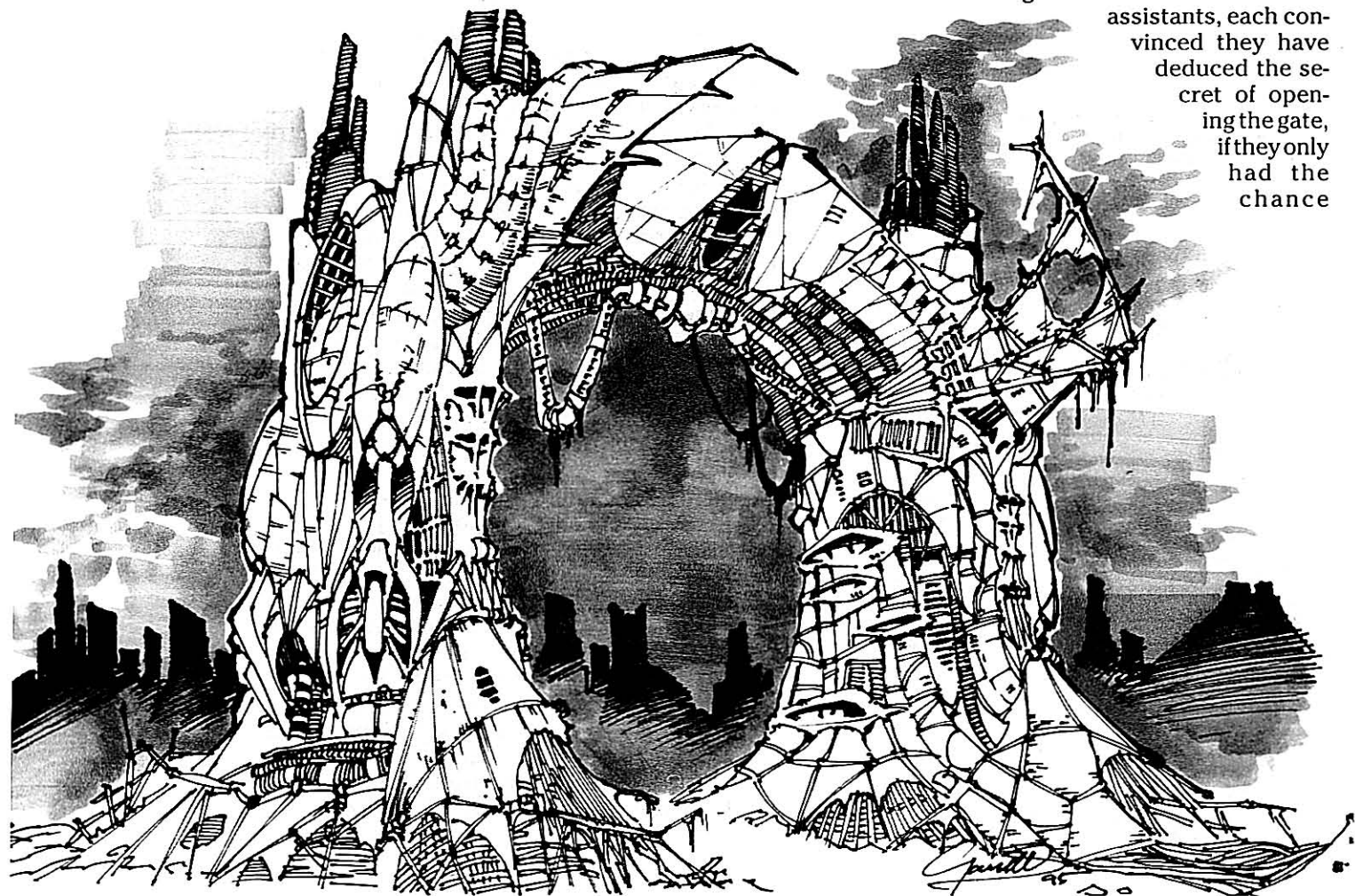
Most trade in Satikan starport is in ordinary mercantile goods, but some trade with the Gree is in illegal goods — including contraband weap-

ons and spice. Although the Gree do not keep slaves for apparent cultural reasons, they have not restricted the alien slave market in Satikan.

Trade in Gree artifacts is restricted to lower technology items: nothing any more advanced than the Imperial standard may be traded to non-Gree, although certain Gree have been known to illicitly trade higher level devices for other alien artifacts or foreign artwork. A contingent of Gree from Te Hasa keep an eye on the artifact trade, and are empowered to interfere with the trade of highly advanced devices.

Perhaps Asation's greatest monument of the "most ancient and forgotten days" is the Grand Hypergate located in the ruins of Satikan. The Grand Hypergate appears to be a circle of seven triumphal arches — the obelisk in the circle's center seems to be the gates' control device. The gatemaster of Asation doesn't know how to activate the hypergates, although he regularly tries in what seems to be a weekly ceremony. It is unknown how many, if any, of the gates are functional at all. The master knows the termination points for five gates — two to Gree, and one each to Te Hasa, Malanose and Licha In. The termination points for the remaining two gates are unknown. The gatemaster has three senior

assistants, each convinced they have deduced the secret of opening the gate, if they only had the chance



Adventure Idea: Corellia Antilles and the Ancient Khoz'zhak

The characters have come to Asation for some trading venture. After concluding their deal-making with a local Gree trader living on the edge of the city, they see a ragged woman stumble out of the forbidden jungle and collapse at their feet. The woman mumbles about "finding the Khoz'zhak," then passes out.

After the characters nurse her back to health, Corellia explains that she is an archaeologist who uncovered what she claims is an ancient Gree device (gamemasters can choose this device's nature — weapon, information recorder, miracle healer). She and her survey team crept into the jungle to explore the ruins, and found the device among a tribe of feral Gree living deep in the wilderness. As the group made a mad dash back to Satikan, they were attacked by savage jungle beasts and hostile Gree tribes. Corellia hid the device in an abandoned Gree structure two days from the city, then made her way back to the city. She has only just escaped from an expedition of Gree from Te Hasa who were intent on either stealing the device from Corellia or capturing her.

Corellia is determined to return to the ruins and retrieve the Khoz'zhak device and smuggle it off of Asation. But she has to do this before the Te Hasan Gree find her. These artifact-keepers are obsessed with finding the Khoz'zhak, too, but could be willing to kill Corellia to keep its location safe from foreigners.

Corellia offers the characters 7,500 credits to help her retrieve the artifact. To help them, she shares her data map with them, and her notes on the device and

feral tribe of Gree. The characters can hide Corellia on their ship while they gather supplies for the jungle expedition.

At a dramatically appropriate moment, a contingent of Te Hasan Gree show up at the characters' ship (or hideout) searching for the archaeologist. The Te Hasans don't explain themselves, except to mention that the woman stole something valuable. They don't conduct a very thorough search. But if the characters haven't hidden her, these Gree might find Corellia and drag her off to some nameless fate — leaving the characters to find the artifact on their own, with only her notes and map to help them.

To retrieve the Khoz'zhak from its hiding place, the characters must venture into the forbidden jungle, fighting off voracious carnivores and savage Gree tribes. When they finally find the ruins where Corellia hid the device, they see that the artifact's hiding place has collapsed — to retrieve it, the characters must delve into an underground labyrinth of ancient Gree passages, complete with traps, unstable ceilings and dangerous obstacles. Eventually they find the artifact and trek out of the jungle.

But just as they emerge from the jungle with the Khoz'zhak, the characters are surrounded by Te Hasan Gree — they want to negotiate to acquire the device, since the characters have proven their right to ownership by retrieving this artifact. The characters can get up to 10,000 credits in trade goods for the device, and possibly a lesser Gree device as well. Under no circumstances will the Te Hasans allow the characters to leave with the Khoz'zhak.

to try. The gamemaster is the only Gree allowed to operate the control obelisk. It is said that when the Grand Hypergate is functional, the obelisk blasts a sonorous bass melody over the city. The hypergate has not sounded a note in several hundred years.

Satikan's starport and alien district sprawls along the edge of a large ruined city forbidden to non-Gree. The ruins are partially covered by thick jungle growth, and no paths leading into the area can be seen. When asked about this region, most Gree explain that it is the remains of a greater city which fell prey to some kind of disaster. Some Gree have been overhead saying that the jungle is filled with bioengineered predators who are somehow confined to the ruins. Others whisper of lost chemical vats and ancient devices which now belch out poisonous gases. Trespassers rarely return. Alien visitors generally stay in Satikan and do not venture far into the jungle ruins.

■ Asation

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Hot
Atmosphere: Type II (breath mask suggested)
Hydrosphere: Moist
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Wetlands, jungle
Length of Day: 18 standard hours
Length of Year: 380 local days
Sentient Species: Gree (N), Humans, various aliens
Starport: Standard
Population: 1 million Gree, 200,000 Humans, 500,000 aliens
Planet Function: Trading post, Gree Enclave entry world
Government: Guild council
Tech Level: Information
Major Exports: Raw material, lesser Gree artifacts
Major Imports: High technology

Lonatro

Lonatro supplies the Gree Enclave with food. Today the planet is mostly wilderness, but once the whole world was cultivated to feed the teeming Gree masses. Now only 10 percent of the planet is used for food production, with smaller

preserves used for botanical gardens and an interplanetary zoo.

Lonatro's original purpose was to provide a secure food production facility in the Gree heartspace against the possibility of a large-scale disaster. The world has always unfailingly performed that function, but demand has steadily declined for centuries and the production facilities have been scaled back accordingly. Each Gree world produces its own staple foods, of course, but Lonatro supplies the variety foods — especially meats and fruits.

The Lonatran Gardens would be the 778th wonder of the galaxy if known to the botanists of the Empire. The Gree cultivate samples of rare and otherwise extinct plant life to maintain the genetic line. Exotic botanical species like the Alderaanian flame-rose, the Duran feather lily and the silver koanwood are perpetuated here.

The Lonatran Zoo covers huge areas of Lonatro. Small colonies of land animals from species across the galaxy have been maintained here for millennia. Many species collected by the Gree have since vanished on their homeworlds, either from normal extinction or from sentient species pressure. Most of the species have evolved slightly through natural selection, but overall the zoo animals are the same as their original ancestors.

Lonatro's "starport" consists of a landing area for Baran passenger launches and a small alien quarter. Most Lonatro Gree are experts in caring for the various lifeforms cultivated in the gardens and zoo, and are proficient at manipulating the harvesting devices which slowly shuffle over the few croplands remaining. Lonatro sees little alien traffic, since it has little of value to the average free-trader. Some scholars, however, travel there to study Lonatro's ancient plants and animals.

■ Lonatro

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Moderate
Atmosphere: Type II (breath mask suggested)
Hydrosphere: Moderate
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Mixed terraformed
Length of Day: 22 standard hours
Length of Year: 340 local days
Sentient Species: Gree (N)
Starport: Landing field
Population: 3 million
Planet Function: Agriculture
Government: Foodmaker guild
Tech Level: Atomic
Major Exports: Foodstuffs, rare plants
Major Imports: Rare botanical specimens

Gree

Gree is the mother world of the Gree. Little is known of it in the Empire, as very few non-Gree

are allowed onto the planet. Even Captain Marris, who made first contact with the Gree during his scout expeditions through this sector — and was apparently highly respected by the Gree — was only allowed to visit Gree once.

The Gree homeworld has a special place in Gree mythos. It is the center of their culture. Even those Gree who have never visited the system consider it a sacred, revered world. Visitors are allowed on Gree only at the pleasure of the guild council, often when conducting large-scale business on Asation is not acceptable to the Gree. It is rumored that Consul-General Skalus' predecessor was one of the handful of Imperials allowed on Gree when he conducted diplomatic talks regarding the annexation of Asation. Other visitors have been allowed for scholarly, trade, and diplomatic reasons, but at a seemingly capricious Gree whim.

Those few travelers to Gree report a harsh, barren planet, covered in wasteland and ruins. All visitors agree that they were required to land on the top of a huge slab of what resembled black grainy metal in the center of a sprawling city. The city splays out across a vast plain and has hundreds of gigantic halls and skyscraping towers of assorted designs and materials. There is no starport as such, and thus no facilities for repair or restocking ships, although supplies and fuel were made available by the hosting Gree when requested. Much of the city seems abandoned, but visitors were not allowed to explore on their own, and were warned that wandering off would be dangerous.

The Gree capital city seems to be the only inhabited one, although ruins of other gigantic cities are visible on approach. Even less is known about the regions outside the city, although the observed countryside is entirely bleak and appears to be uninhabitable wasteland. Visitors also report that the oddities of Gree technology are more visible here. Advanced technology equal or greater than Imperial standard is common, and highly advanced technology is in evidence, although anachronistic technology has been observed here as well.

■ Gree

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate
Atmosphere: Type II (breath mask suggested)
Hydrosphere: Moist
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Wasteland
Length of Day: 27 standard hours
Length of Year: 360 local days
Sentient Species: Gree (N)
Starport: Landing field
Population: 60 million
Planet Function: Homeworld
Government: Guild high council
Tech Level: Space

Malanose

Malanose was once a colony for the now extinct crafter and researcher castes. In the "most ancient and forgotten days" the planet was famous for its vast halls of Gree researching and constructing new and fantastic devices. While many new devices were distributed among other Gree worlds, prototypes and replicas were kept in the researcher vaults beneath Malanose city. Thousands of years later, after the last of the Gree researchers and crafters had died out, many common Gree devices began to run down, malfunction and fall apart. When the other Gree worlds realized how much ancient technology they were losing, Malanose's ancient vaults were emptied and all their portable artifacts were distributed among the handful of Gree worlds left.

However, the larger, immobile artifacts remained. The operators and would-be masters of these devices traveled to Malanose to study and run them. Today, Malanose has a larger collection of functional large artifacts than the other Gree worlds. The remaining Malanosian cities are inhabited not because of their comfortable climate or fine buildings, but because they are the homes of the largest Gree artifacts.

Much of the Malanosian economy is based on tribute received from Gree masters traveling from other worlds to research and use these artifacts. Malanosian Gree are extremely protective of their

monolithic devices — a bitter attitude left over from the days when the artifact vaults were emptied. Alien visitors to the Gree Enclave are not permitted to use or study these artifacts, although on extremely rare occasions a prestigious alien scholar has been allowed to briefly watch a particular artifact in operation.

Hypergates were among these immense artifacts. The hypergates on Malanose were maintained for thousands of years after those on other worlds had collapsed. Although the Malanosian hypergates may still be functional, the operating knowledge has been lost. Part of the planet's earlier economy was based on charging tolls on the gate traffic between Gree worlds. This economy disappeared with the collapse of the gate network, but the old fees are still remembered — if a working gate were found, the Malanosian Gree would be pleased to start accepting tolls again.

Malanose's most famous artifact device is the Totth'kLotos. This device extends a patient's life by repairing the stresses and damages inflicted on the body in the course of normal living. Although it is reputed to youthen the body, it only maximizes the body's structural integrity — a fragile and ill 80 year-old Gree treated will become a healthy 80 year-old. Many Gree masters travel to Malanose to partake of the Lotos' rejuvenating qualities.



The Lotos is a pool enclosed in a vaulted chamber, deep in the heart of a semi-functioning guild hall. An altar-like main control desk dominates one end of the chamber, and controls and gauges are irregularly spaced on the walls. The pool is filled with a warm, thick, slowly roiling green gel. The treatment appears to be a communal ritual in which supplicants of the same species are immersed in the pool while Master Totth'k and his assistants hurry from control to control, tensely manipulating them and carefully monitoring gauges and indicators. Most supplicants require an hour of immersion for the Lotos' treatment to work.

While this ancient device is attuned to the Gree physiology, some visitors to the Gree Enclave have been allowed immersion in the Lotos. These privileged aliens pay exorbitant tribute to Master Totth'k, even when the Lotos has unexpected effects on their alien physiology.

Game Notes: Aliens immersed in the Lotos must successfully make a Very Difficult *stamina* roll to endure the treatment. A successful use cures chronic and acute illness and soothes the pains and stresses of age. A failed roll offers no benefits, and might result in a complication with unexpected side effects.

■ Malanose

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate
Atmosphere: Type II (breath mask suggested)
Hydrosphere: Moist
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Wetlands, jungle, mountains
Length of Day: 18 standard hours
Length of Year: 320 local days
Sentient Species: Gree
Starport: Landing field
Population: 150 million
Planet Function: Artifact world
Government: Local guilds
Tech Level: Atomic
Major Exports: Artifact information
Major Imports: Services, trade goods

Te Hasa

Te Hasa is the fabled hidden world of the Gree. It is a secret treasure house of ancient Gree technology and knowledge, housing hundreds of ancient, unique, and useless devices. For thousands of years the Gree have deposited devices they have forgotten how to use on Te Hasa. They are catalogued and warehoused here in the vague hope that one day an enterprising Gree will uncover the secrets of their use. Each year dozens of hopeful Gree make a pilgrimage to Te Hasa to study these artifacts. Occasionally a Gree stumbles across the correct activation sequences for a device, or decrypts the relevant instructions from the vast Library of Manuals, and is catapulted into the ranks of mastery for a long-

forgotten device.

The Te Hasa Gree seem to be the closest the species has to a priesthood. These Gree wear dark colored robes ornamented and embroidered with hieroglyphs. Student-pilgrims wear their traditional bright robes, and are specially tattooed to indicate they studied on Te Hasa. The Te Hasa Gree are a closely knit community — they carefully guard their artifacts, but acknowledge that they need the help of other Gree to unlock the secret to their operation. Gree who figure out how to operate an ancient device are often rewarded with the artifact — the Te Hasa Gree gain knowledge to operate duplicates of the device kept in their vaults.

Te Hasa was terraformed to be formidable to any alien species that might stumble across the planet. The native carnivores were bioengineered to be aggressive and deadly, their prey engineered to sustain the predators. The native desert was extended over large swaths of the surface by routing some of the planet's water to underground cisterns at oasis valleys and transporting the rest of the water to other Gree worlds.

The main storehouses of Te Hasa are located in or near the valley oasis. Some of these warehouses, the older ones, are carved into the rock, while newer ones were constructed as longhouses which seem like temples rising above the planet's surface. The artifacts judged most valuable or dangerous are transported to a restricted and secret warehouse deep in the planet's largest desert, called *Sik'ark'kuck*, "the Swallower."

■ Te Hasa

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate
Atmosphere: Type II (breath mask suggested)
Hydrosphere: Dry
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Desert, oasis, canyons
Length of Day: 29 standard hours
Length of Year: 296 local days
Sentient Species: Gree
Starport: Landing field
Population: 10,000
Planet Function: Hidden treasure world
Government: Librarian guild
Tech Level: Information

Licha In

Licha In was one of the first of the Gree home systems to degenerate. In the "most ancient and forgotten days" it was a major gateworld, a nexus for long-range hypergates. Trade moved briskly and several sentient species from across the galaxy set up merchant outposts on the world. The long-range gateways collapsed early in the degeneration of the Gree (thousands of years before the birth of the Old Republic), stranding the alien merchants who had come to Licha In. The few cyclopean hypergates still standing are

non-functional. Some Lichan Gree masters believe the gates will activate under specific astronomical alignments and under the manipulation of a prophet gatemaster, but this theory has not yet been proven.

The native Gree have since become localized into competing city-states. Lichan Gree have come to view their technology in a pseudo-mystical fashion, and see their masters as magician-priests of sorts. The masters use what few artifacts are left to rule their city-states. Occasionally, masters incite their shambling armies of Gree masses to war with other city-states for food, resources or slaves. The Lichan Gree seldom leave their homeworld, although they have contact with other Gree during the Rokak'k Baran's annual one-day visit. Other Gree consider the Lichans to be rather backward examples of their culture — they're often mentioned as examples of the degeneration of Gree civilization.

Although they are considered lower than other Gree, the Lichan Gree believe they are the rightful rulers of the "lesser" species on Licha In — the ancestors of the alien traders who came here millennia ago. Roaming aliens are enslaved and used as primitive work forces to build Gree stronghold-cities and harvest crops. Aliens visiting the Gree Enclave are discouraged from visiting Licha In without a Gree escort. Unauthorized visitors are often mistaken for escaped slaves and are either executed or put back to work.

A handful of alien city-states exist far from the Gree cities. These primitives included Devaronians, Duros, Humans and near-Humans. They have long since formed and broken alliances, become friends and enemies, fought wars, founded a variety of political structures and cycled through technological levels. When any alien city-state advances far enough that the Gree masters consider them a threat, those mas-

Adventure Idea: Stranded on Licha In

The characters are somehow transported to Licha In. They might arrive through an astrogation or hyperdrive error, might have walked through an unknown yet active hypergate on another Gree world, or might have arrived on the Baran during one its annual stop there. The only way off Licha In is the Baran, which comes by once every year — and it just left.

Licha In is barbaric in many ways and the characters find everyday life here is an adventure. Many of the aliens they encounter are familiar but have developed a little differently, the dialects are hard to understand, the Gree are even weirder and harder to approach, and their credits are worthless. The characters could even be mistaken for escaped alien slaves and might be captured and hauled off to labor in one of the Gree city-states. The characters could spend their time adventuring through the exotic barbarian-science society, or they could try to find a functioning hypergate off the planet (although where the hypergate actually sends them is a different question).

ters use their ancient war devices and their shambling armies to conquer the city and enslave the aliens there.

■ Licha In

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate
Atmosphere: Type I
Hydrosphere: Moderate
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Island continents, mountains, plains, forests
Length of Day: 24 standard hours
Length of Year: 364 local days
Sentient Species: Gree, Humans, various aliens
Starport: Landing field
Population: 500 million
Planet Function: Degenerated civilization
Government: Local city-states
Tech Level: Feudal



THE KAAL CONNECTION

By Peter Schweighofer with Timothy Zahn

Illustrations by David R. Deitrick

Jeng Droga peered over the bridge of the Emperor's Shadow. The crew worked anxiously as they emerged from hyperspace and made headway toward a bluish world in the distance. He would await his master's orders here, until summoned to his side.

A horrible pain wrenched Droga's body, and a scream pierced the air. The entire crew looked to their dark Jedi captain. His robes whipped the air, his body twisted in agony. "No!" he cried. "It cannot be! I must go to him, I must ..."

The first mate approached. "My lord, you are not well ..."

Droga reached out with the Force and crushed the man's throat in his rage. Several other crew members stood around, watching Droga cry out. "Let me go to him!"

Two crew members approached, intending to restrain their captain. But Droga screamed again how he yearned to be at his master's side. His lightsaber flashed, slicing through crew members and control panel alike. In his rage he destroyed

the bridge controls and killed the crew, all the while screaming in agony for his master and writhing in unimaginable pain.

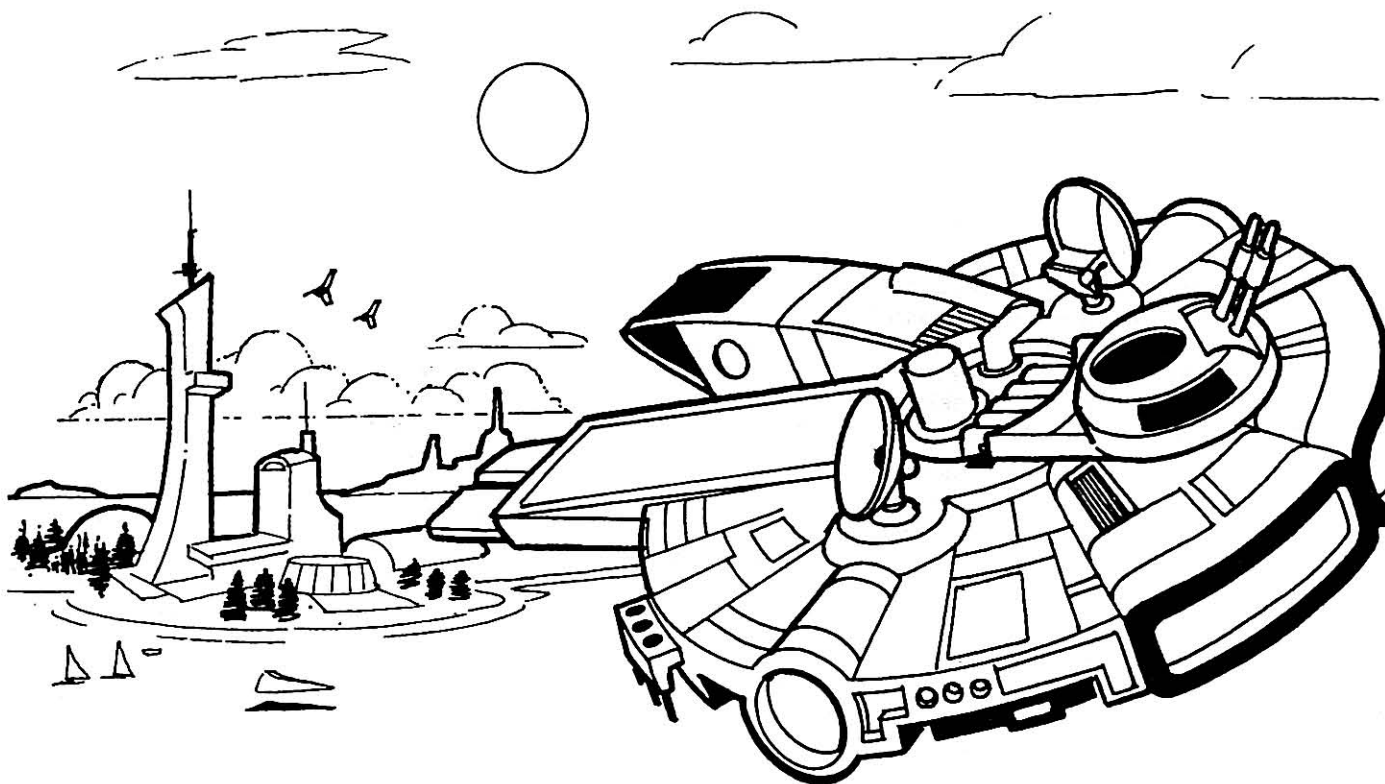
When Jeng Droga next looked up into the viewport, the blue planet loomed ahead. Within seconds his agony was over as the ship crashed into the ocean, vaporizing water as it hit, and stirring up enormous waves ...

Halfway across the galaxy, the Rebel Alliance was celebrating its victory at the Battle of Endor ...

Since the formation of the New Republic, the Provisional Council has faced many military and diplomatic challenges. Mon Mothma placed Ral-Rai Muvnc, the Sullustan Supreme Commander of Ordnance and Supply, in charge of aiding the industrial worlds abandoned by the Empire after the Battle of Endor. Many of these worlds were left in ecological ruin, with few resources, little contact with the rest of the galaxy, and no means of providing their own food. Many systems have just barely survived the past two years, but if food isn't provided to some worlds soon, starvation and rioting could run rampant.

Ral-Rai Muvnc has been sending negotiating teams all over the galaxy to agricultural worlds freed from the Empire — these teams have been negotiating deals to supply hungry systems with food. He has called the characters together to negotiate one such deal on a planet called Kaal, in the Yushan Sector. Kaal's current ruler, a crimelord named Tirgee Benyalle, controls that world's aquaculture industry — Ral-Rai thought the characters would be the perfect choice for this delicate diplomatic mission.

Ral-Rai asks the characters to travel to Kaal immediately to participate in negotiations. The New Republic can offer Benyalle laborers to help



her harvest food from Kaal's immense oceans, 50 percent of all profits from any sales, transport of the food to the various systems in need, and five million credits up front (provided to the characters in credit chips filling five large, security locked crates). Ral-Rai will allow characters to increase Benyalle's percentage of profits as high as 65 percent during negotiations — this is the only portion of the New Republic's terms of the agreement that can be varied.

Ral-Rai warns the characters that others are participating in the negotiations for Kaal's food products. He knows of at least two — Admiral Kermen, who represents the remaining Imperial forces, and Moff Prentioch, who has carved out his own little empire in the Mid-Rim. Both could be at each other's throats to gain this contract. Ral-Rai believes others will be there as well.

■ Kaal

Type: Water world
Temperature: Tropical
Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Saturated
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Oceans, archipelagos
Length of Day: 36 standard hours
Length of Year: 210 local days
Sapient Species: Humans, various aliens
Starport: Standard
Population: 4.5 million
Planet Function: Aquaculture, entertainment
Government: Criminal organization
Tech Level: Space
Major Exports: Foodstuffs

Major Imports: Luxury items, high technology

Capsule: Kaal was an Imperial resort world in the Mid-Rim until Imperial troops withdrew after their loss at Endor. While here, the Empire did not exploit Kaal's rich ocean life to its full potential, harvesting only what it needed for the planet and allowing the seas to teem with fish, plankton and other possible food sources.

When the Empire left, Tirgee Benyalle, the crimelord who ran Kaal's many casinos and entertainment industries, stepped in to run the aquacultural industry. Using capital from her casinos, she purchased several immense repulsorlift harvesters, huge floating factories which ply the oceans, scooping up food from the sea, separating, preserving and packaging it for sale.

Kaal's only starport is located on a string of islands which form the resort city. Casinos, high class hotels and other entertainment establishments abound, attracting the galaxy's wealthy classes and underworld elements.

Episode One: Casinos of Kaal

The characters arrive at Kaal in their own ship or one provided by the New Republic. As they descend toward Kaal's starport, they pass two immense Imperial Star Destroyers in orbit. They don't seem to be orbiting in any formation, but are quite a distance apart, facing one another.

The characters are directed to land in a docking bay near the Grand Imperial casino and hotel. Once they have set their ship down, a lone alien figure emerges from the docking bay personnel

entrance. The Duros is Boleb Hiiz, Tirgee Benyalle's casino administrator and major domo. He greets the characters, telling them he has reserved a luxury suite in the Grand Imperial for the duration of their stay, and has extended each character a line of 3,000 credits at the Grand Imperial casinos, all courtesy of Tirgee Benyalle. Boleb says the other representatives have all arrived, and are staying at the Grand Imperial. The negotiations begin tomorrow morning, but until then, the characters have the rest of the afternoon and all evening to explore Kaal and the casinos. Boleb offers to lead the characters through the city to their suite at the Grand Imperial.

Boleb Hiiz. All stats are 2D except: *Knowledge 3D+1, bureaucracy 4D+1, business 5D+2, streetwise 4D+2, value 5D, Perception 3D, gambling 6D, persuasion 5D.* Move 10. Comlink, datapad, hold-out blaster (3D).

If the characters are worried about the five security-locked crates filled with credit chits, Boleb assures them that they would be safe locked away in the hotel's vaults. Of course, some characters may stay behind (and miss out on all the action) if they decide the safest place for the credits is their own ship. But if they'd like to keep the crates in the hotel's vault, Boleb can summon a security crew to transport the credits. Characters would be wise to guard the ship until the security crew arrives.

Should Boleb leave to escort some of the characters to the Grand Imperial, the characters remaining to guard the ship soon see a cargo skiff pull into the docking bay. The five guards on the skiff are dressed in a variety of rough clothing, including blast vests and helmets, and look more like bounty hunters than security forces. The gruff alien leader says he's here to pick up the credits ...

However, these aliens really *are* bounty hunters, sent by one of the competitors in the negotiations. They intend to load the crates onto the skiff and disappear into the city. However, careful characters might question them further about where they're taking the crates of credits. They might even insist on going along with the aliens (hitching a ride to the hotel). If the characters unmask these bounty hunters, the aliens zoom off in the skiff — with or without the credits — after trading a few blaster shots with the remaining characters.

5 Alien Bounty Hunters. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 4D, blaster 6D, dodge 5D, melee combat 5D, Perception 3D, hide 4D, sneak 5D, Strength 3D+2, brawling 5D.* Move: 10. Blast vest (+1 energy, +1D physical, torso only), heavy blaster pistol (5D), knife (STR+1D).

A few moments after the bounty hunters leave, the real security force — dressed in snazzy uniforms and all — arrives to transport the credits and the remaining characters to the hotel.

Welcome to the Grand Imperial

As he leads the characters through the starport, Boleb answers most of the characters' questions about Kaal and its aquacultural industry. Benyalle has 10 giant repulsorlift platforms plying the oceans, collecting, processing, packaging and storing food supplies. If asked about the Imperials, he knows that they left about two years ago (shortly after the Rebel victory at Endor). Just before the Empire withdrew its forces from Kaal, natives saw a "shooting star" or meteor flash in the sky. The resulting meteor impact with the ocean caused tidal waves which destroyed much of this section of the city, as well as island settlements throughout the hemisphere. Currently Kaal's resort includes only the islands around the starport, although there used to be a more rural retreat on the Unis Islands to the northwest, until the tidal wave washed most of the resorts from those islands.

The characters' suite at the Grand Imperial is perhaps the most luxurious dwelling space they've ever seen. The full-length windows overlook Kaal's sparkling blue ocean, the furniture is comfortable, and servants are on call to cater to most of their whims (for a proper tip, of course). Once they have settled in, Tirgee Benyalle personally pays them a visit with her Twi'lek bodyguard, Sendir. Her intentions are simple: to welcome the characters, invite them to enjoy the comforts of the resort (including fine dining and gambling), and size them up. Tirgee is graceful and witty, seeming genuinely interested in their involvement in the negotiations. She tries to answer any questions characters have about the deal, although she promises everything will be discussed the next morning. Negotiations are to take place early (0900 hours) aboard her personal sail barge docked in the harbor below.

It is in Tirgee's best interest to see that her guests are cared for properly, in order to cultivate a good deal on Kaal's aquacultural industry. She leaves them with an invitation to join the other negotiators in a high-stakes game of sabacc later this evening.

■ Tirgee Benyalle

Type: Aging Crime Lady

DEXTERITY 3D+1

Blaster 7D, brawling parry 5D+2, dodge 6D+1, grenade 4D+2, melee combat 6D, melee parry 5D, pick pocket 5D+1, thrown weapons 4D+2

KNOWLEDGE 3D+1

Bureaucracy 7D, business 7D+2, intimidation 4D+2, streetwise 8D, survival 5D, value 6D+2

MECHANICAL 2D



games of chance offered in the Grand Imperial casino.

Admiral Kermen

Admiral Kermen is playing sabacc at one of the lower-stakes tables, practicing his skills for the high-stakes game later. He is easily fleecing several fancily-dressed aliens, and would more than welcome the chance to fleece the characters.

Kermen is a haughty and confident sabacc player. He always acts as if his hand is the best, often inspiring other players to fold before he reveals his cards. The stakes are fairly low at this table,

but Kermen has been winning steadily. Two stormtroopers constantly stand behind him as bodyguards.

At one point during his game, an Imperial Naval officer steps up to Kermen and whispers something into his ear. Characters at the sabacc table actively engaged in the game might be able to overhear the officer's whispers to Kermen on a Moderate *Perception* roll. The officer informs Admiral Kermen that "the plan is well under way," and that "prime candidates are already in place for insertion." This message seems cryptic to the characters at first.

Kermen is here at the behest of the Imperial Advisors currently running the remnants of the crumbling Empire. The New Republic has already taken several key agricultural worlds which supply the Core Worlds and the

Archaic starship piloting 4D+2, repulsorlift operation 5D+2, starship gunnery 4D, starship shields 3D+1

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 8D+2, command 6D+1, con 7D, forgery 5D, gambling 9D, persuasion 6D+2, search 5D+1, sneak 5D+2

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 6D, climbing/jumping 6D+2, stamina 4D+1, swimming 5D

TECHNICAL 2D+1

Demolition 3D+2, security 6D

Force Points: 2

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 12

Move: 10

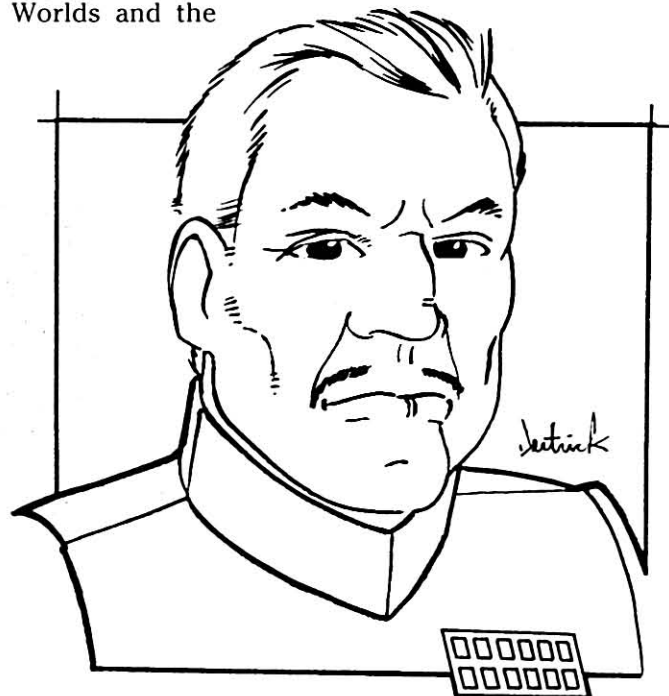
Equipment: Comlink, deck of sabacc cards, hold-out blaster (3D), blaster pistol (4D), 2 knives (STR+1D)

Capsule: Tirgee Benyalle is an aging woman with silvered hair and thin, skeptical eyes. She typically dresses in fancy clothes typical of those visiting resort worlds, and keeps a sea flower tucked above her left ear.

Benyalle is the crimelord-turned-administrator of Kaal. She was running the casinos and other illegal gambits on Kaal before the Empire came. Since the Empire left, she has capitalized on the aquacultural industry the Empire only dabbled in. Now she has 10 immense repulsorlift harvesters which hover over Kaal's endless seas, scooping up the food provided by the waters.

Benyalle is getting old, and has a matronly sort of manner and wisdom. She wants to retain control of Kaal, but doesn't have the resources to continue to run both the casinos and aquacultural industry. She hopes an agreement with an outside power to purchase Kaal's food products will bring more money to support both her endeavors.

That evening in the casino, the characters have an opportunity to size up their competition. The three negotiators are playing different games for most of the evening (at separate gaming tables). Later, Benyalle gathers all the negotiators for a friendly, high-stakes game of sabacc. Until then, the characters have most of the evening for learning more about their competition — as well as trying their hand at some of the many



Imperial Army and Navy with food. The Imperial Advisors have their negotiating strategy, but Kermen has formed his own. He is determined to get control of Kaal's aquacultural industry for the glory of the Empire.

His Imperial Star Destroyer, *Belligerent*, is in orbit around Kaal, seemingly at a standoff with Moff Prentioch's Star Destroyer, aptly named *Prentioch*. The crew is on alert, prepared to counter any move Prentioch's ship makes against them.

Kermen is planning to force the deal with Benyalle at blaster point. His agents have already infiltrated Benyalle's luxury sail barge where the negotiations are to take place. During the past month, several sail barge crew members and officers have been affected by a rare strain of food poisoning, developed and spread by Kermen's agents. When the time comes, Kermen plans to take over the sail barge and hold Benyalle and the other negotiators hostage (with the help of his spies who have replaced sick crew members) until given control of the planet. As an added precaution, Kermen has bribed Benyalle's trusted Twi'lek bodyguard, Sendir, to aid him if all else fails.

■ Admiral Kermen

Type: Imperial Admiral

DEXTERITY 2D+2

Blaster 4D+2, dodge 5D

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Bureaucracy 5D, business 3D+2, intimidation 6D, planetary systems 5D+2, tactics 6D, willpower 4D+2

MECHANICAL 3D+2

Capital ship piloting 6D, communications 5D+2, sensors 5D

PERCEPTION 3D+1

Bargain 6D+2, command 7D, con 5D, gambling 5D+2, investigation 4D+1, persuasion 5D, sneak 4D+2

STRENGTH 2D+1

Stamina 4D

TECHNICAL 3D

Computer programming/repair 5D, security 5D+2

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 3

Character Points: 13

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink

Capsule: Admiral Kermen is a tall officer with close-cropped black hair and a finely-cut moustache. He seems rather serious at all times, even when gloating over his victories.

Kermen is in charge of the remnants of the Imperial fleet currently defending the Core Worlds from the New Republic advance. Although he takes his orders directly from the few Imperial Advisors left, he makes most of the decisions — the Imperial Advisors, ineffective rulers at best, are too busy bickering over how to resurrect the Empire to give sound tactical orders to their fleets.

Kermen is devious and sly. His serious facade hides any hint of his true manner, attitudes and intentions. Kermen can be cordial and polite when he needs to be, but in truth he offers no mercy when the stakes are high.

Moff Prentioch

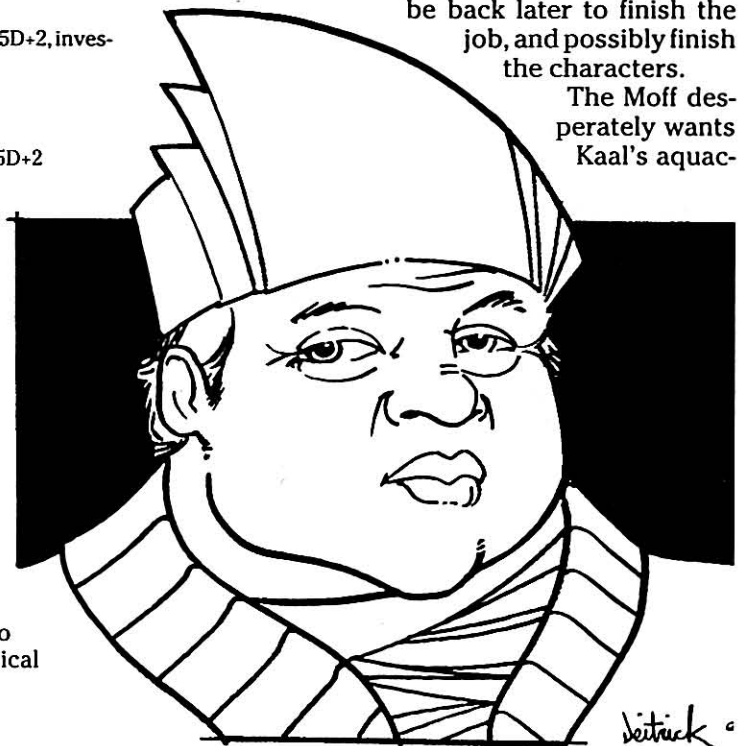
Moff Prentioch is playing at one of the Trin sticks tables, and losing rather badly. He has no idea how to play the game, but fancies himself an expert anyway. Anyone can beat him at this game. (He's even more clueless about sabacc, but he won't admit it.)

Any characters competing against him at the Trin stick table become the subject of Prentioch's demoralizing comments. Prentioch cannot believe anyone of such stature would challenge his mastery of the game, and harasses characters to no end about the inadequacy of their gambling skills — at least until he starts losing miserably.

A rather inexperienced advisor approaches him halfway through one game in which Prentioch is losing a considerable sum. He announces to the Moff that the bounty hunters have arrived and wish to discuss payment. Prentioch begins batting the man over the head with the few remaining Trin sticks in his hand, upbraiding his aide for blatantly announcing this to the entire casino. He throws his Trin sticks onto the table and leaves the casino in a huff.

Characters discreetly following the Moff find him meeting at the spaceport with a woman in bounty hunter armor and several surly bounty hunter types. If they are discovered, characters are chased away by the bounty hunters — they'll be back later to finish the job, and possibly finish the characters.

The Moff desperately wants Kaal's aquac-



ulture industry, both for practical reasons and his own prestige. Prentioch has stretched his available resources in his fight with Moff Eyrgen for control of the Wornal Sector. But he is determined to succeed, and feels that Kaal's food products would help alleviate his current supply problems, as he has only a handful of agricultural worlds under his control.

To insure his success, he has brought along his personal Star Destroyer, the *Prentioch*, to face off against Admiral Kermen's Star Destroyer if necessary. It is currently in orbit above Kaal, prepared for an imminent strike from Kermen's ship. He has also hired a band of bounty hunter rogues to assassinate any other small-time competition here for the negotiations, including the characters!

■ **Moff Prentioch**

Type: Former Imperial Moff

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 4D, dodge 5D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Bureaucracy 8D, business 5D, cultures 5D+2, intimidation 5D, languages 5D+1, planetary systems 6D, value 6D

MECHANICAL 3D

Communications 4D, sensors 4D+2

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 6D+2, command 5D+2, con 5D, investigation 5D+1, persuasion 6D, sneak 4D+2

STRENGTH 2D

TECHNICAL 2D

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 5

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink

Capsule: Moff Prentioch was formerly the ruler of Sombure Sector. When the Empire began to fall after the Battle of Endor, he quickly gained control of the military, dominating the weak-minded officers of the Imperial Army and Navy serving in his region. He quickly pushed to gain more territory, making advances into neighboring sectors. Prentioch ran into trouble in the Wornal Sector, where he met another former Imperial Moff carving out his own little empire, Moff Eyrgen.

Prentioch is a short-tempered old man. He huffs around as if he deserved the glory of the Emperor himself. He can be demanding of his aides and soldiers, and cannot tolerate failure or incompetence. Prentioch is so sure of his own importance that he has forsaken his past uniform in favor of gaudy robes which make him look like a warped version of an Imperial Advisor. In his eyes he is always right, he is always the best, and he demands to be treated so.

Syndic Pandis Hart

The final negotiator is a rather dapper gentleman named Syndic Pandis Hart, chief purchasing agent for the Sif-Uwana Council. When the characters arrive, he's already challenging several local gamblers to a high-stakes game of sabacc.

Hart seems genuinely cordial and friendly toward everyone he meets. He welcomes other players to his table — in the course of conversation during the game, he tries to find out why they are here on Kaal, and what their offer to Benyalle could be. He's not the best sabacc player in the galaxy, but he's good. And if he does lose, he loses gracefully.

At one point during the game, Hart excuses himself for a moment. He returns to his suite in the Grand Imperial hotel, where it sounds like he makes a call on a long range comm unit. Hart quickly checks in with someone called Tapper who seems to be searching for a ship of some sort at a location called the Unis Islands. Tapper believes he's found it, and gives coordinates to Hart. Hart then returns to the casino to get in on another high-stakes sabacc game.

Hart is really smuggler Talon Karrde, who came to Kaal



to negotiate a specific deal with Benyalle to further his own goals.

Karrde is on Kaal to find a downed starship which is rumored to have a cloaking device. The ship — possibly the personal yacht of the late Emperor Palpatine himself — supposedly disappeared from the Imperial palace after his death and crashed on a water world. Karrde has investigated several worlds already, and believes he has found the yacht in the ocean near Kaal's Unis Islands, to the northwest of Kaal starport.

Although the yacht is supposed to be a large ship (as big as a Corellian corvette), Karrde intends to retrieve it intact. To do that in secrecy, he wants to negotiate with Benyalle to run his own aquacultural harvesting operation in the area of the Unis Islands. Karrde's second in command, Quelev Tapper, is already searching for

the Emperor's yacht using a submersible craft purchased from a dealer on Kaal.

■ Syndic Pandis Hart (Talon Karrde)

Type: Smuggler

DEXTERITY 3D+1

Blaster 5D+1, brawling parry 5D+1, dodge 6D+1, melee combat 4D+1, melee parry 4D+1, pick pocket 6D+1, running 5D+1

KNOWLEDGE 2D+1

Alien species 7D+1, bureaucracy 7D+2, business 8D+1, cultures 7D+1, law enforcement 7D+1, planetary systems 5D+2, streetwise 8D+1, survival 4D+1, value 5D+1, willpower 6D+1

MECHANICAL 3D+2

Astrogation 7D+2, beast riding 4D+2, communications 6D+2, repulsorlift operation 5D+1, sensors 7D+2, space transports 8D+2, starship gunnery 5D+2, starship shields 6D

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 8D, command 9D, con 7D+1, forgery 6D, gambling 6D+2, hide 6D+2, investigation 8D, persuasion 7D, sneak 6D+2

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 4D+2, stamina 6D

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Computer programming/repair 4D+2, first aid 4D+2, security 6D+2

Force Points: 2

Dark Side Points: 2

Character Points: 26

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink

Capsule: Talon Karrde has been moving up in the world of smuggling since Jabba the Hutt's demise. Although Karrde's organization is on top of the smuggling pyramid, he keeps that fact a secret. He

is more subtle and unobtrusive in his dealings, and puts more faith in accurate information than pure brute force. His latest pursuits have included tracking down a starship with an operational cloaking device. Karrde doesn't necessarily need the ship, but the cloaking device would certainly be a valuable prize useful to many other parties.

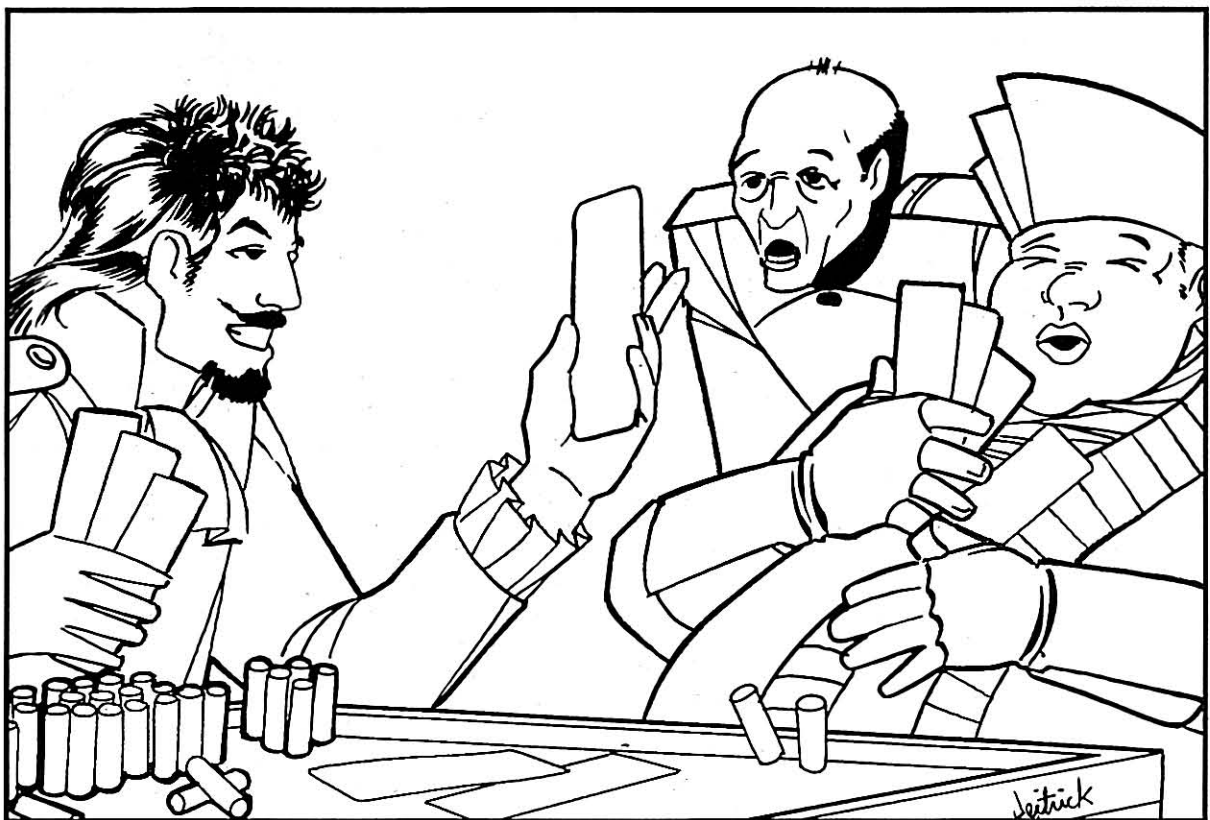
Karrde has a strong feeling of obligation to the people within his organization, and does all he can to help and protect them. He currently works off of a base on Myrkr which has served as a home to many in his organization, and he has become quite fond of the security and serenity he finds there.

Karrde is always investigating new and profitable ventures for his organization, especially with the greater resources available through his success. He and his lieutenant, Quelev Tapper, often check out business opportunities themselves.

Benyalle's Problem

Just before Tirgee Benyalle calls all the negotiators together for that high-stakes game of sabacc, her Duros major domo Boleb Hiiz approaches her. The two excuse themselves and head over to one unoccupied corner of the casino. Characters won't be able to hear what's going on unless some are disguised or manage to sneak up close.

Boleb explains to Tirgee that more crew members aboard her luxury sail barge — where the negotiations are to take place tomorrow — have become ill, apparently of food poisoning. Tirgee



orders him to replace the sick crew members immediately, and tells him to keep quiet about the apparent food poisoning.

The sabacc game is entertaining, as the characters get a chance to see how each of the negotiators and Benyalle fare in the contest, and how each reacts differently to winning and losing. After the game, Benyalle suggests everyone get a good night's rest, as they are meeting early the next morning at her sail barge to begin the negotiations.

Interlude: Bounty Hunter Ambush

When the characters return to their room, they have a surprise waiting for them. As they walk in the door, they notice a thermal detonator on the floor of their suite near the entrance, blinking away! The bounty hunters around the corridor corner outside are waiting for the character to react by dodging out of their room, and into the bounty hunters' field of fire. There is one bounty hunter for each character in the group.

The thermal detonator is real enough, but the explosive innards have been removed. It continues ticking until the characters — or the bounty hunters — shut it off.

The bounty hunters aren't too stupid — if they're losing badly, they'll toss a few smoke grenades at the characters and retreat down the hall to escape down a turbolift. Any captured bounty hunters, however, are quick to confess that they were hired by Moff Prentioch to keep the characters from the negotiations.

Bounty Hunters. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 4D, blaster 6D, dodge 5D, melee combat 5D, Perception 3D, hide 4D, sneak 5D, Strength 3D+2, brawling 5D.* Move: 10. Blast vest (+1 energy, +1D physical, torso only), heavy blaster pistol (5D), knife (STR+1D), smoke grenade.

Episode Two: At Blaster Point

Should the characters survive the bounty hunter ambush, they'll be all ready for the negotiations the next morning. They meet the other representatives and Benyalle in the Grand Imperial's lobby and travel over the shimmering blue seas of Kaal on Benyalle's luxury sail barge. After a half-hour's journey, they reach the *Sea Sprite*, one of Benyalle's immense repulsorlift harvester factories floating above the ocean's surface.

Benyalle's quick tour of the factory includes the huge water scoop units, several filtration and separation stations, an automated processing and packaging facility, and a hold large enough to contain enough food to feed a planet. As she

leads the tour, Benyalle explains she has 10 such repulsorlift factories. However, because she has problems finding and distributing to new markets, only three factories are operating now — and those factories are operating at half capacity. With the proper distribution network, Benyalle claims such an aquacultural industry could run at full capacity, generating food for several worlds, and still not make a significant impact on Kaal's ocean life for 100 years.

After the tour, the group boards Benyalle's sail barge again and heads for the meeting room, just aft of the barge's bridge control area. Personal security guards, such as Admiral Kermen's two stormtroopers and any characters serving as security for their negotiator, are also allowed to attend. Benyalle's bodyguard Sendir is also standing stoically behind her.

Benyalle outlines the basics of the aquacultural operation on Kaal — there are 10 repulsorlift harvester factories floating over Kaal's waters, and Benyalle is willing to sell 90 percent of the food to one buyer if the price is right. She favorably considers offers to help crew and command these factories, as long as no troops are stationed on Kaal. The buyer must provide transport and distribution for the food products.

Each group presents their offer, beginning with Moff Prentioch, then Syndic Pandis Hart, then the characters, and finally Admiral Kermen.

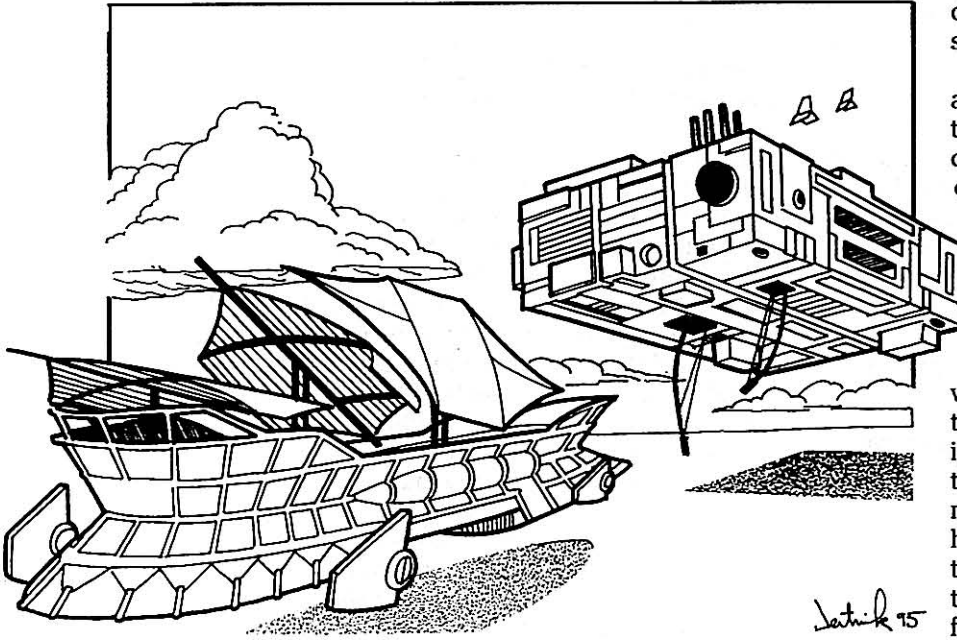
Moff Prentioch offers 10 million credits to seal the deal, and 500 credits per ton of food shipped off the planet (a substandard price — for Kaal's technology level, 1,800 credits per ton is standard). He also offers to construct 10 more repulsorlift harvester factories and provide crews.

Syndic Pandis Hart announces that the Sif-Uwana Council wishes to set up its own independent harvesting operations based within a 1,000 kilometer radius of the Unis Islands. He doesn't care who else gains control of Benyalle's main harvesting operation, as long as he is able to harvest his area with the Council's own equipment. He offers one million credits to sign the deal, with 50 percent of all profits from the operation going to Benyalle — 50 percent of 2,000 credits per ton of food shipped from Kaal is a rather generous price.

The characters must present their own deal. Perhaps Moff Prentioch puts it down or scrutinizes it. They should know what they're willing to offer, and how much the New Republic can actually deliver.

When it comes time for Admiral Kermen to present his offer, he begins a boring speech on Imperial power. Read aloud:

"Only two years ago," he says, "The Empire ruled this planet as a luxury world. Tirgee



Benyalle here kept the entertainment aspect of the planet in order. The Empire saw no need to harvest Kaal's vast oceans, at least not on such a scale as this. Since the Empire left Kaal, Tirgee has capitalized on Kaal's rich sea life and the food it provides. She has turned aquaculture on this planet into a large industry. Now the Empire is hard-pressed for supplies, and her remaining worlds are hungry. So it is only fair that we take back what my former commanders so frivolously gave away."

At that comment, Kermen rises from his seat, blaster pistol raised at the other negotiators — his two stormtroopers also level their blasters at the group. Benyalle immediately calls for the sail barge's commanding officer, Captain Huvis, to come in with his pistol ready. Several bridge officers enter with the captain, all with blasters at the ready. Benyalle orders the captain to throw Admiral Kermen and his guards in the brig. Before Captain Huvis responds, one of the bridge officers shoots the captain!

Most of the sail barge bridge crew has been replaced by Admiral Kermen's agents! They order everybody out onto the bridge.

This is the moment the characters should spring into action. If they don't start a firefight or a brawl, one of the bridge crew, still loyal to Benyalle, provides a

diversion by screaming "Traitors!" and shooting several mutinous agents.

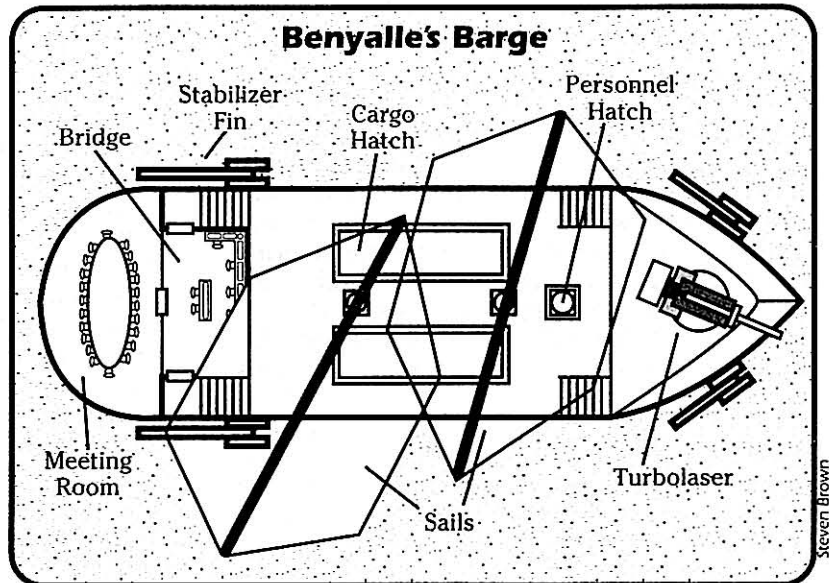
In the ensuing chaos, Hart, Benyalle and her bodyguard, Sendir, stay with the characters, while Moff Prentioch calls desperately for backup on his comlink. Admiral Kermen makes a dash for the door to help his accomplices — and possibly to escape to torment the characters another day. The characters must protect their allies while holding off the traitorous crew. And the only way out of the meeting room is through the bridge. Three traitors take cover in the door from the meeting room to the bridge — each firing a blaster bolt now and then to keep everybody's head down. But if the characters rush these thugs, they can break through to the bridge. Of course, there are a few more mutinous crew members out there.

Sendir 15

Kermen's Mutinous Agents. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 3D, blaster 5D, dodge 4D, sneak 3D, Strength 3D, brawling 4D.* Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D).

Sendir Makes His Move

If the battle has been going easy for the characters, and they have taken the bridge with few problems, then Sendir — Benyalle's silent Twi'lek bodyguard — decides to make his move and betray Benyalle for Admiral Kermen. It's possible he's been debating whether or not to betray her, and thus hasn't acted so far. Perhaps he was waiting for a moment when he could be most useful ...



STEVEN BROWN

Sendir tries to kill Benyalle by knifing her in the back, then turns on the rest of the group with his blaster. Perceptive characters might notice Sendir acting suspiciously in the moments before this attack, and could avert it if they move Benyalle away from her traitorous bodyguard. Depending on the situation, Sendir may instead take Benyalle hostage, hoping to influence the characters to surrender, or perhaps to bargain his way off the sail barge to safety.

Sendir. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity* 4D, *blaster* 6D, *dodge* 5D+1, *brawling parry* 4D+2, *melee combat* 5D, *hide* 3D, *sneak* 3D+2, *Strength* 3D+2, *brawling* 5D+2. Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), blast vest (+1 energy, +1D physical, torso only), knife (STR+1D).

If the characters manage to save Benyalle, she is grateful to them and offers to work out a deal with them in return. But the characters and the sail barge are still in the grip of danger.

During the fighting in the bridge, a stray blaster bolt has fried the barge's directional controls. It's now speeding straight ahead, on a crash course with the immense repulsorlift factory harvester!

To repair the damaged controls, a character needs to make a Very Difficult *repulsorlift repair* roll. The sail barge speeds closer to the repulsorlift factory, and a character manages to repair the controls just in time to steer clear of a collision.

Once the characters regain control of the sail barge, Hart steps forward and instructs them to hold the bridge and set a course for the Unis Islands — he knows a way to escape and get rid of Kermen and the mutinous crew at the same time, but the characters and Benyalle must trust him. Hart reaches for the bridge comm unit and begins hailing someone called Tapper. He instructs Tapper to "set the ship to blow" and then rendezvous with the sail barge near the Unis Islands.

In the mean time, the characters must hold off Kermen's agents trying to storm the bridge from the outer deck. Fortunately, crew members loyal to Benyalle are hampering their efforts, shooting back at the mutinous crew from hatches, portholes and other available cover. The characters have a good view of the battle from the bridge, which sits aft on the sail barge and overlooks the main deck.

Anyone able to get a view of the two Star Destroyers in orbit notices bright green turbolaser blasts flashing between the two ships. However, they also see a drop ship tearing through the atmosphere, heading directly for the sail barge!

The Unis Islands aren't far, and Hart brings the sail barge to a halt at a certain point several

Adventure Idea

After somehow hearing of the Emperor's lost yacht, an Imperial undercover agent working for the Imperial Advisors hires the characters to find the remains of Jeng Droga, who he believes escaped the crashed yacht to live on the now uninhabited Unis Islands. During their island search, the characters explore ruined resort buildings, possibly being attacked by predators which have emerged from the islands' jungles.

There are remains of Droga on one of the Unis Islands — an isolated hovel, some robes, and his lightsaber. They also discover cryptic carvings in a nearby cave, possibly made by Droga in his last days. Once they discover signs of Droga, they report back to the undercover Imperial agent, who might try to kill them to keep what they know as his own personal secret.

kilometers south of the islands. A submersible craft emerges from the sea and surfaces near the sail barge. Hart, Benyalle and the characters must make their way from the bridge to the outside deck of the barge, then jump into the ocean, where they are picked up by the submersible, piloted by Hart's associate, Quelev Tapper. As those crew members loyal to Benyalle are being soundly beaten, many of them also leap off and head for the submersible. The sea-going craft is large enough (when surfaced) so the characters and the fleeing loyal crew members can ride on its surface. Once everyone's aboard, the submersible speeds away on the ocean's surface, putting as much distance between it and the now stationary sail barge as possible.

If he hasn't already revealed himself, Hart explains his true identity as Talon Karrde. He came to Kaal intending to steal a ship he believes is the Emperor's yacht which supposedly crashed here several years ago. Karrde wanted his exclusive "aquaculture" contract so he could recover the ship without anyone knowing. Unfortunately, with two Imperial factions battling for Kaal, a probable harvesting contract with the New Republic and Karrde's inability to secretly remove the craft, he ordered Tapper to destroy it. If Talon Karrde can't have the ship, he's going to make sure no one gets it.

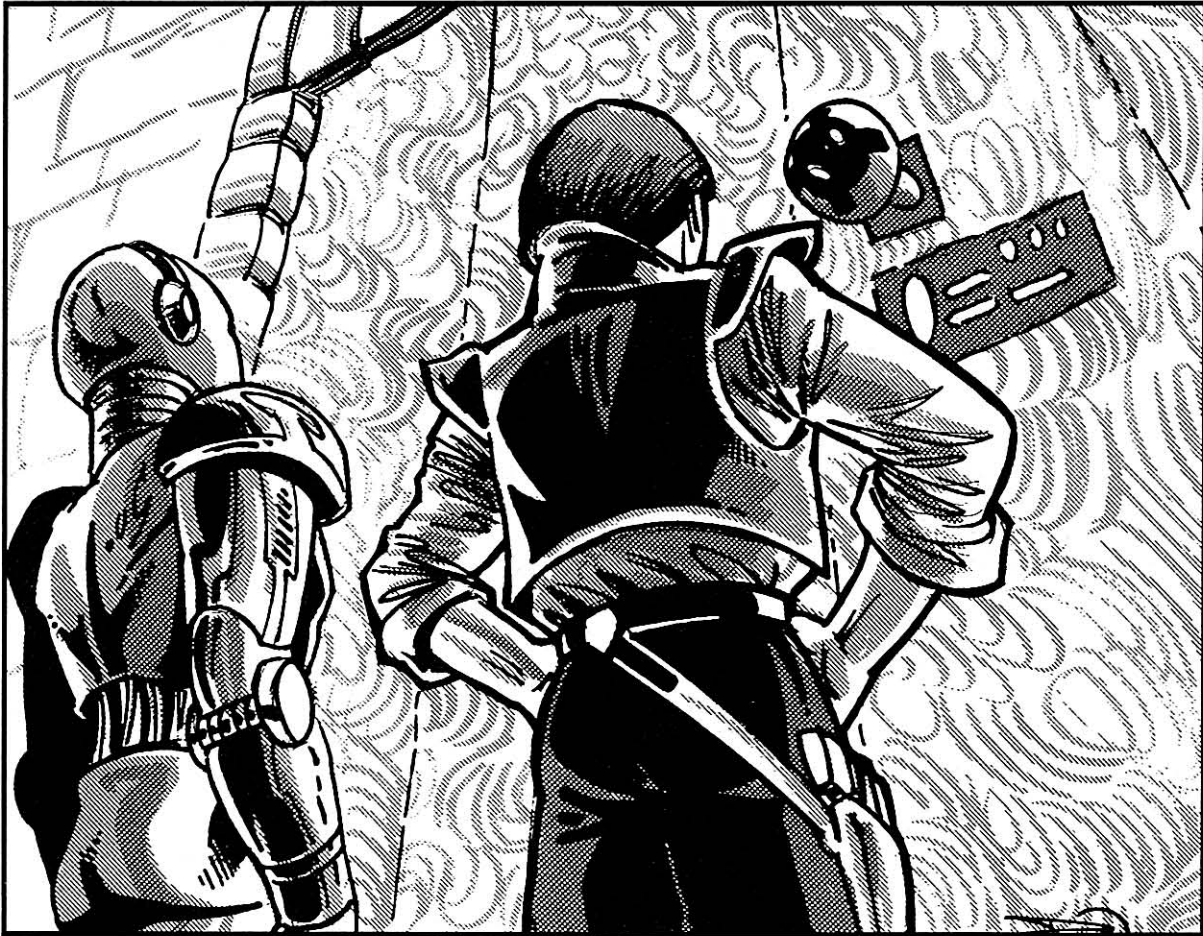
The drop ship bearing Moff Prentioch's personal insignia soon hovers over the still sail barge. Its disembarking troopers clash with the remaining crew loyal to Admiral Kermen. As Karrde's submersible craft speeds out of range, the charges Tapper set aboard the Emperor's yacht explode. The entire sail barge and the drop

ship are engulfed in a brilliant explosion from the submerged yacht, sending bits of metal and vaporized water into the sky. The characters have escaped safely with Karrde, saving Benyalle and her loyal crew, and getting rid of their antagonists.

When the characters return to Kaal starport with Karrde and Benyalle, the battle between the two Star Destroyers in orbit has reached a stalemate. Both ships are desperately trying to flee, while taking a few parting shots at the other Star Destroyer.

Karrde graciously bows out of any further negotiations, as his concerns on Kaal have been eliminated and he has no need for a harvesting contract. Since they are the only negotiating team left — and since they helped save her life — Benyalle works out a deal with the characters to sell Kaal's foodstuffs to the New Republic. As a reward for saving her life, she offers each character a position in her criminal organization (anything from bodyguard to hotel administrator or casino floor manager).

As for Talon Karrde, he's off to pursue some new venture he can capitalize on ... ☹



RELIC

By George R. Strayton

Illustrated by Doug Shuler

With Grand Admiral Thrawn's recent defeat at the Bilbringi Shipyards, the New Republic has scattered the remnants of the Empire across the galaxy. Hundreds of systems throughout the Core Worlds and Mid-Rim have since thrown their support behind the fledgling government, but an equal number remain unaligned.

Over the past three months, the conflict between the New Republic and the Imperial warlords has

diminished throughout the galaxy and the Provisional Council has therefore concentrated its efforts on bringing these remaining neutral worlds into the New Republic's sphere of influence.

But two days ago, New Republic Intelligence received unnerving reports from Corva Sector in the Outer Rim Territories. A relic lost for centuries has resurfaced, becoming fair game for the smugglers and pirates throughout the Outer Rim. Several

powerful persons have offered enormous sums in exchange for the artifact and Intelligence has decided to acquire it before it falls into the wrong hands.

Any object that brings an asking price in the millions of credits must be dangerous to the continued existence of the New Republic ...

The characters are New Republic operatives waiting in a briefing room aboard the cruiser *Nova* for their newest assignment. After a few minutes, Corva Sector fleet coordinator Captain Naren Bluuis arrives with his Sullustan assistant. He sets down his datapad and turns on the holo-display.

Read aloud:

"As you are aware, Intelligence has discovered a potential threat to the New Republic, an object over which many have already lost their lives." Bluuis flicks a control on the holo-display, bringing up a near-perfect representation of Corva Sector. One of the pinpoints of light near the far edge of the sector glows a soft green.

"We have just learned that Mahk'khar, a crimelord from the Triitus system, appropriated the device approximately 15 hours ago. Intel has provided the coordinates of his palace on the system's second planet, Tuulab. You must infiltrate Mahk'khar's fortification and gain access to his computer records. Since he has probably encrypted his files, download every document in the portable computer we're providing you; Cryptology will have to decipher the files when you return.

"I must stress that this is a retrieval mission — avoid direct confrontation at all costs. Once you have obtained the information, return to this location to rendezvous with the *Nova*.

"No one outside this room must know about the mission. Those are strict orders from high up in the New Republic.

"This operation will commence immediately. Proceed to docking bay eight. You have been supplied with a Trianii RX4 patrol ship, designated the *Instigator*. Should anyone question your presence, inform them that you are investigating the disappearance of a Corporate Sector bulk hauler called the *Star Streak*."

Naren Bluuis. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity* 3D, *blaster* 5D, *Knowledge* 3D, *bureaucracy* 4D, *law enforcement* 8D, *Perception* 4D, *command* 5D+2, *persuasion* 5D. Move: 10, Force Points: 3, Character Points: 7. Comlink, datapad, heavy blaster pistol (5D).

The Trianii RX4 patrol ship *Instigator* awaits the characters' arrival in docking bay eight. Though streaks of carbon scoring stretch across the ship's surface, the vessel is in excellent con-

dition. According to the nav computer, the *Instigator* will take 14 hours to reach the Triitus system.

■ Instigator

Craft: Trianii RX4 Patrol Ship
Type: Modified light patrol craft
Scale: Starfighter
Length: 33 meters
Crew: 2, gunners: 2, skeleton 1/+5
Passengers: 6
Cargo Capacity: 30 metric tons
Consumables: 2 years
Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1
Hyperdrive Backup: x14
Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 1D+1
Space: 4
Atmosphere: 295; 850 kmh
Hull: 5D
Shields: 2D+1
Sensors:
Passive: 20/1D
Scan: 35/1D+1
Search: 80/2D+1
Focus: 2/3D

Weapons:

2 Twin Turbolasers (may be fire-linked)

Fire Arc: Turret
Crew: 1 (may be locked forward and fired by pilot, but fire control is 0)

Skill: Starship gunnery

Fire Control: 2D

Space Range: 1-5/15/20

Atmosphere Range: 100-500/1.5/2 km

Damage: 4D (5D when fire-linked)

1 Ion Cannon*

Fire Arc: Rear

Skill: Capital ship gunnery

Scale: Capital

Fire Control: 2D

Space Range: 1-10/25/50

Atmosphere Range: 2-20/50/100 km

Damage: 3D+1

* The ion cannon draws off a special power generator and can only fire once per day

Episode One: Mahk'khar's Palace

Read aloud:

After 14.5 hours of lightspeed travel, the mottled sky of hyperspace bursts into starlines that immediately collapse into pinpoints of light against the blackness of space. Dead ahead looms the brown-and-green planet of Tuulab, the system's second satellite.

■ Tuulab

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate
Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Moderate
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Plains, hills, mountains
Length of Day: 18 standard hours
Length of Year: 452 local days
Sapient Species: Humans
Starport: Landing field

Population: 6,000
Planet Function: Colony, hidden smugglers' base
Government: Anarchy
Tech Level: Feudal
Major Exports: Minerals
Major Imports: Medical supplies

Capsule: Tuulab, the second planet in the Triitus system, has become a haven for those throughout the galaxy who desire a more pastoral life. The relatively docile weather and abundant natural resources provide these colonists with almost everything they need to survive, without forcing them to rely on high technology. During the height of Emperor Palpatine's reign, Ingas Lek of Corellia led an expedition of 721 Human settlers to Tuulab in the Outer Rim. As news of the freedom offered by the colony reached the Core Worlds over the ensuing months, a few Imperial citizens, who cared little for the Empire or for the Rebel Alliance, left their homes for the peaceful lifestyle of Tuulab. Over the years, the population of the planet swelled, at this point having topped 6,000 inhabitants. No government was ever formed, no Imperial nor New Republic outpost was ever constructed. The Tuulabi prefer to live out their rural existences without the burden of galactic politics, or galactic war.

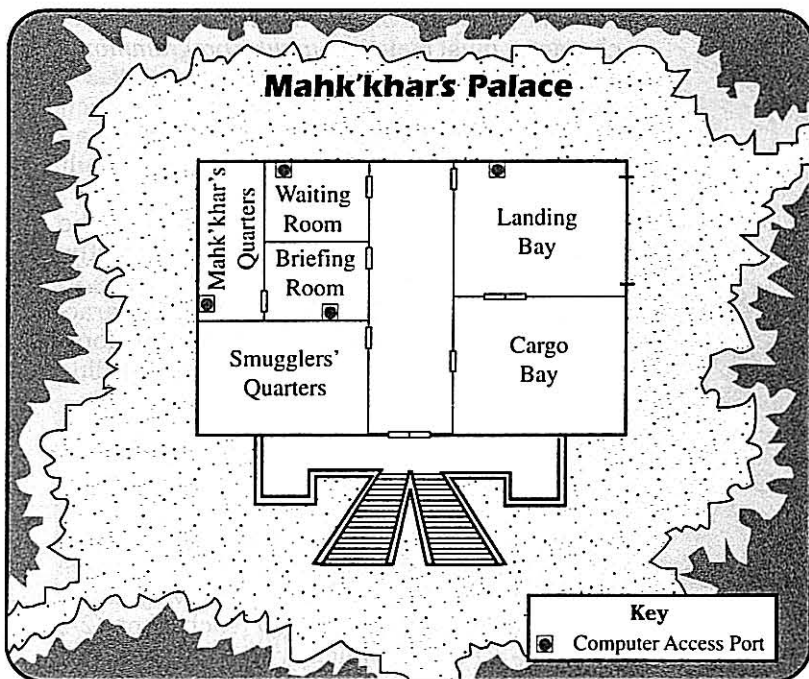
Recently, a crimelord called Mahk'khar settled in an uninhabited portion of the planet. He has not bothered the populace, and they have not bothered him — so far a bearable but tense co-existence.

According to the coordinates provided by New Republic Intelligence, Mahk'khar's palace sits atop a large hill along the western coast of the planet's northern continent. Though Intell has the correct location, only 10 of the original 60 guards remain, left here by Mahk'khar to guard the installation in his absence.

Tall, pole-like trees — gray trunks with no leaves and no branches — surround the compound. Between the palace and the treeline lies a 5-meter stretch of short grass, allowing guards atop the structure to immediately notice anyone who approaches the installation. The palace itself rises three stories into the air and is built of a gray-brown material trimmed in gold. Sharp angles and intricate carvings give the place a harsh appearance.

Twin staircases lead from the ground up to the set of massive doors that bars entry. Across the top floor of the palace are several shuttered windows, but not a single streak of light escapes from the structure.

Two guards, a Devaronian and a Kubaz, stand just inside the doors. If anyone knocks, the horned Devaronian pulls the door open and asks what the characters want. Should the characters attempt to con the guards, they completely fall for the ploy ... at least, that's what the characters think. The guards have specific orders to allow the infiltrators to enter the compound before



ambushing them.

The guards show the characters to a waiting room off of the hallway, then return to their posts and alert their comrades to prepare for the ambush.

Strips of dim light panels line the ceilings of the palace, providing enough illumination to see about 15 meters away. The doors in the compound have security panels, requiring a Moderate *security* roll to disengage. To prepare for the characters' arrival, Mahk'khar ordered all valuable equipment and cargo removed from his palace.

Read aloud:

Three long, cushioned couches create a semi-circle in the center of the waiting room. Exotic carpets woven with brilliant reds, oranges, and golds hang along the walls. All have similar symbolic patterns since they have their origin in the same, now-extinct, culture — the Kashi Mer.

Characters who make Difficult *planetary systems* or *cultures* rolls remember the following:

Many years have passed since your school teachers taught of the destruction of the planet Kashi shortly after the formation of the Old Republic. The reason for the star system's sudden supernova remains unexplained to this day.

The characters can recall nothing else about the planet Kashi or its civilization.

An Easy *search* roll allows a character to find a computer access terminal behind a concealed panel on the waiting room's back wall. To re-

cover information from Mahk'khar's computers, a character must make a *computer programming/repair* skill roll. On a Heroic result, it takes 3 combat rounds to download the files. For each difficulty rating lower, the download takes an additional round (4 rounds on a Very Difficult roll, 5 rounds on Difficult, etc.).

No matter how the characters entered the compound, whether surreptitiously or directly, eight guards open fire once the team begins to download the computer files. Should any characters be standing watch at the waiting room doorway, they notice several armed guards striding down the hallway in their direction.

10 Guards. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity* 3D, *blaster* 4D, *grenade* 4D+2. Move: 10. Blaster rifle (5D).

The guards burst into the waiting room with blasters blazing. Four charge into the room while four others fire from around the doorway, ducking back behind the wall after each shot (2/3 covered, +3D to the difficulty to hit them). The remaining two, Ferran and Opf, take positions near the palace entrance in case the characters manage to blast their way through the eight other guards.

Opf, who is now experiencing his first battle, panics soon after the combat begins and triggers the internal security array. Moments later, gray mist begins to shoot from vents throughout the compound. Everyone in the palace must make a Moderate *Strength* or *stamina* roll or immediately fall to the floor unconscious. If any characters resist the effects of the gray mist, Mahk'khar's guards beat a hasty retreat, firing a few more shots to discourage pursuit.

Unconscious characters can be revived by an Easy *first aid* roll. Should all of the characters succumb to the sleep-mist, they awaken several hours later just outside their ship. Their weapons have disappeared, but otherwise they still have all their equipment, including the computer to which they downloaded Mahk'khar's files. Once the characters have the files, they should return to rendezvous with the *Nova*. Read aloud:

As the *Instigator's* chronometer clicks down, you prepare to drop out of hyperspace. Three ... two ... one — you disengage the hyperdrives and, with a flicker of starlines, the familiar spaceship appears.

The *Nova* rests against the dark background and glimmering stars of the known galaxy while all around it smaller vessels swoop and turn, some thrusting to lightspeed, others dropping into realspace, then disappearing into the huge docking bays scattered across the cruiser's hull.

After receiving docking permission from the carrier's flight control, you set the *Instigator*

down in the center of bay eight amidst several starfighters.

As you head down the ramp, a squad of ship techs swarms around your vessel and begins to scan the *Instigator's* exterior with various instruments.

You glance about the docking bay and finally see Captain Bluuis standing across the hangar, engaged in conversation with his Sullustan assistant. Bluuis hands a datapad to the short woman and she nods her head, then strides across the polished, black floor and out into the nearest corridor.

Bluuis looks up and waves you over. His mouth makes a straight, thin line across his face and his eyes seem dark and sunken.

"Report."

Captain Bluuis has just learned that several former Imperial ships attacked and destroyed a squadron of X-wings on training maneuvers in the H'ken system's 20 kilometer-wide asteroid belt. He is not in a good mood.

Once the characters report on their mission, Bluuis calls over an Intell officer and tells him to rush the portable computer with the downloaded information to Cryptology. Before dismissing the characters, Bluuis orders them to report to the briefing room in one hour.

Episode Two: The Loremaster

When the characters report to the briefing room, read the following aloud:

Bluuis and his jowled Sullustan assistant look up from a datapad-covered table as you walk into the briefing room. With a nod, Bluuis dismisses his assistant. She gathers several datapads, then takes a seat in the front row of the terraced slope of chairs.

"Please." Bluuis motions toward the seats. "I'm afraid that grave times have come upon us. A squadron of X-wings was ambushed and destroyed in the H'ken system. Two of our best pilots were training recruits there when the surprise attack came.

"We do not know what force was behind this assault, but we have logged increased Imperial activity in this sector. The New Republic has given this the highest priority, so I have devoted most of my forces to defense and the rest to reconnaissance.

"But that still leaves the issue of the relic. I fear that the device may have some role in the recent activity and I have therefore decided to charge your team with its recovery."

Bluuis picks up a datapad and scans the text for a moment. "Here it is. We've located an archaeologist in the ..." he presses several buttons on the datapad's face, "... in the Delari

system. His name is Professor Oron and he lives with his daughter on the binary system's first planet. You can download the coordinates." He walks toward you and hands over the datapad.

"Find out everything about the relic you can. The Professor seems the best hope for figuring out the key to this artifact's value.

"Unfortunately, this is the only information about him that we were able to discover before the ambush; since then I've had to reallocate all our resources to our newest problem." He walks up to the table full of datapads and slowly shakes his head as he stares at the mess.

"Report to me, and me only, as soon as you return. I fear that this conflict will escalate in the near future. If this relic can help ... " His voice fades as he stares above your heads, a mixed look of horror and sorrow upon his face.

After a moment, he glances down at you. "Good luck, and may the Force be with us all. "Dismissed."

At this time Captain Bluuis cannot provide any additional information about the X-wing ambush or about the relic. Current circumstances have demanded all of his time — he can spare no more to speak with the characters.

Bluuis' assistant jumps up from her seat as soon as he dismisses the characters and the two begin going over the defense plans a fifth time.

The characters' lift-off from the *Nova* and subsequent hyperspace journey to Delari are uneventful. When the characters reach the Delari system, read the following aloud:

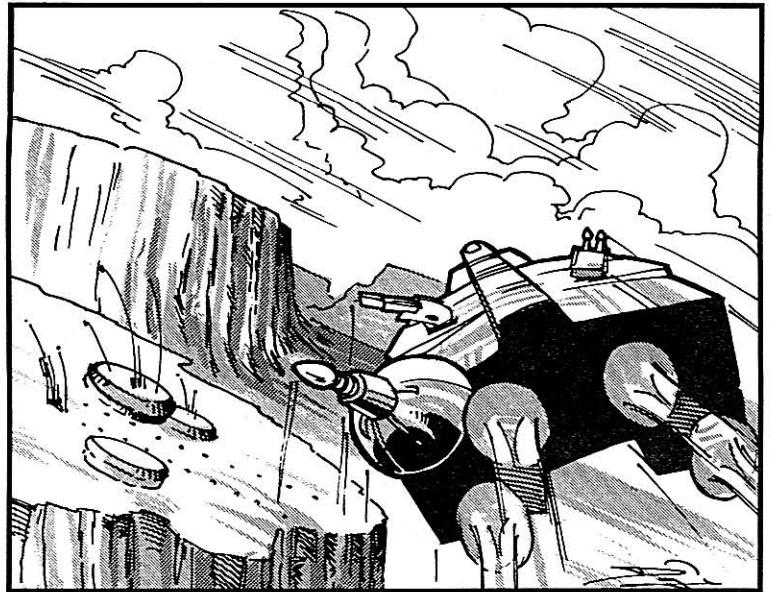
As your ship drops into realspace, sensors indicate that you have arrived in the Delari system. With a blue-white surge, your sublight engines propel you toward the orange-rust planet in close orbit around the system's dual suns.

Gradually, the planet's features sharpen as you close on it. Jagged, black lines form a complex web that crisscrosses the entire world. At the poles, patches of green and violet sit in small, irregular circles. According to the information provided by the New Republic, these two areas are the only locations on the planet that support any manner of vegetation.

As you watch, the planet rotates, constantly hiding half of the world in darkness and forcing the rest into the twin suns' blazing radiation — records indicate that Delari Prime has only a 10-hour cycle.

The coordinates of Professor Oron's dwelling put it near the equator, about halfway into daytime. In a few more minutes you'll be on the surface.

The *Instigator's* engines whine as you plunge into the atmosphere. Violent jets of air slam into



the ship, knocking it slightly off course with each impact. As you descend through the cloudless stratosphere, the details of the planet's surface come into focus.

What appeared to be jagged lines from high above the world now widen into intersecting chasms hundreds of kilometers long and at least one kilometer deep. The labyrinthine network of pathways must have resulted from severe fluid erosion over many thousands of years.

Up ahead, a dozen metallic poles jut from one of the rock islands created by the intersection of several chasms. The 10-meter tall rods bend this way, then that as gusts whip across the planet. You've arrived at Professor Oron's home.

■ Delari Prime

Type: Windswept terrestrial
 Temperature: Hot
 Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
 Hydrosphere: Arid
 Gravity: Standard
 Terrain: Canyons, rocky deserts
 Length of Day: 10 standard hours
 Length of Year: 113 local days
 Sapient Species: None
 Starport: Landing field
 Population: 2
 Planet Function: Former Imperial base
 Government: None
 Tech Level: Space
 Major Exports: Information
 Major Imports: High technology, foodstuffs, medical supplies

Capsule: At one time, Delari Prime was seething with life. Thousands of years ago, an asteroid several kilometers long crashed into the lush surface, knocking the world toward the system's twin suns, thereby shortening the planet's orbital distance. Within a few weeks, the oceans of the world began

to evaporate, forming thousands upon thousands of rivers that crisscrossed the planet. This sudden and massive evaporation distorted the normal weather patterns, creating huge discrepancies in pressure between one location and the next. Fierce winds began to whip across the planet, furthering the cycle of erosion.

Over the next several millennia, the constant battering of the world resulted in deep chasms that account for most of Delari Prime's surface area. The remainder, at the poles, which had been ice caps before the cataclysm, now spawned new forms of plant life that could withstand such an environment. The Empire set up a secret communications base on the planet. After the Battle of Endor, however, the base was abandoned and later sold to an elderly archaeologist.

Silent Welcome

Professor Oron has not used the subspace radio antennas since he took possession of this former Imperial outpost two years ago. He has no desire to converse with any being who wishes to use electron waves to project their voices across vast distances. Oron speaks to others only in person and therefore the characters receive no response if they attempt to hail him.

The planet's barren surface gives free reign to the wind storms that constantly rip into the pedestals of rock, eroding them ever farther. Should the ship's pilot decide to navigate the chasms, he must make a *Moderate space transports* roll or become caught in a gust that slams the *Instigator* into an outcropping — causing 3D damage to the hull.

When the characters attempt to land on Oron's island of stone, the *Instigator's* pilot must make a *Difficult space transports* roll. Should the character fail, the *Instigator* slams into the antennas, breaking them near the surface and causing 2D damage to the ship.

Once the characters exit the ship, they realize that the roar of the wind swallows any attempt at speech. Just a few moments later a cylindrical casing about three meters tall and three meters in diameter rises from the center of the island. A door slides open to reveal the interior of a turbolift.

Oron waits for the characters to board the turbolift. Then, by remote control, he closes its doors and brings it down to the lowest level of the outpost, the only portion of the facility with full power.

Once the characters reach the bottom of the turbolift shaft, the turbolift jerks to a halt. Light panels in the ceiling flicker and click, then resume their stable hum as the door slides halfway open.

The outpost has fallen into severe disrepair since the Empire left. Oron does not have the

resources to maintain it; he barely had the credits to buy it from the Empire in the first place. The only remaining equipment in working condition is the *Lambda-class* Imperial shuttle that the professor and his daughter used to fly to Delari Prime.

When the characters step out of the turbolift, read the following aloud:

You step into a room lit by several rows of light panels in the ceiling. A few sections of panels flicker constantly, alternately throwing shadows into far corners and then obliterating them with an artificial blue-white glow.

It looks like a bantha just came through here. Piles of datapads cover the half-dozen tables scattered about the room and ancient databooks and devices lay strewn across the floor. Movement near the far side of the chamber draws your attention as a balding Human, a scruffy gray beard hanging from his face, pushes himself up from a metal chair and braces his hands on the desk in front of him.

(In a raspy voice) "Lost your way? Well, I've already charted the hyperspace route to the nearest inhabited system. Take it and be gone."

The professor does not want to be bothered by anybody. He has much research to do, and little time left to do it in. He believes he has only a few more months to live, though no physician has agreed with that prognosis — he just senses it.

Until a few years ago Professor Oron studied the ancient cultures of the galaxy, pouring over millennia-old text written in dead languages, scouring devastated planets for hidden remnants of their civilizations, and leading expeditions to unexplored worlds. But, since the fall of the Empire, Oron has locked himself away in this stronghold so he can, without interruption, create a master database containing the overwhelming amount of information he has collected over his lifetime.

The characters have several options to extract whatever information Oron knows about the relic. Bribery does not work on the Professor since he believes he will have no time to spend the credits. If the characters intimidate him (a *Moderate intimidation* roll), he reluctantly divulges what he knows about the relic.

After scrounging through his computer records for a few moments, he calls up the scandoc about the relic. He reads the display, muttering to himself every few seconds as he does so.

Apparently the artifact — a dark-gray stone roughly in the shape of a prism — was an heirloom of the Kashi Mer monarchy. The device was stolen by a young student of the Force named Reda Jalooz. Several months after taking the relic, Reda returned to Kashi, saying she had

uncovered a dark secret locked within the artifact, and that this was what had forced her to steal it. She had recently conquered the relic after realizing her misdeed and now came to ask the forgiveness of the Kashi Mer people. But shortly after she arrived on the planet's surface, the Kashi system's sun went supernova, destroying in an instant the planet and its thousands-year old culture.

Enter the Empire

On a Moderate *con* roll, a character may induce Oron to give up this information — anything to get the characters out of his lab. He also tells them about his encounter with the Imperials earlier today. Read aloud:

The professor begins to shake, then drops into his chair with a thud. His quavering voice sounds small and thin as it carries across the room.

"I'm sorry," he says as he presses several buttons on a control board to his right. "The Imperials arrived just a few hours ago. They took my daughter Meela and said they'd kill her if I refused to cooperate." He leans back, looking weak and tired as a pulsing red control casts a crimson shadow across his wrinkled face.

"They knew you were coming. Hurry, you don't have much time to escape."

Several hours ago, an Imperial force landed and captured Oron's daughter, Meela. They ordered the professor to hand over all the information he possessed regarding the relic and to alert them if any others came seeking the same data. If he refused, or they later discovered that he had held back any information, they would kill Meela. The Imperial leader told him that they expected a New Republic force to arrive within a few hours.

The comm signal Professor Oron just pressed alerts the hidden TIE interceptors that others have come looking for information about the relic.

If the characters threatened Oron, he fails to tell them about the Imperial's impending arrival — to escape, the characters must sprint across the space between the turbolift and their ship, about 20 meters, as the TIE interceptors fire upon the *Instigator*.

Once the characters take off, the four Imperial fighters close and engage. The fighters were left behind to deal with anyone seeking information about the artifact.

Unfortunately for the Imperial pilots, the interceptors were not created for operation in such a wind-swept atmosphere — their maneuverability drops by 2D. Their controls feel sluggish, their ships' responses slow. Any character who observes the Imperial vessels immediately realizes

this problem on an Easy *starfighter piloting* roll.

4 TIE Interceptors. Starfighter, *starfighter piloting* 3D, *starship gunnery* 3D+2, maneuverability 3D+2 (1D+2 in Delari Prime's atmosphere), space 11, atmosphere 435: 1,250 kmh, hull 3D. Weapons: 4 laser cannons (fire linked; fire control 3D, damage 6D).

If the *Instigator's* pilot descends into a chasm, he may successfully navigate the pathways by making a Moderate *space transports* roll during each round of combat. Every few seconds, the chasm abruptly turns in a different direction.

On the third round of combat, the *Instigator* turns down a rock corridor to find a dead end straight ahead. The pilot must succeed at a Very Difficult *space transports* roll or graze the cliff face while veering upward, causing 5D damage to the ship's hull. Centrifugal force presses the characters into their seats for the few seconds it takes for the acceleration compensators kick in. If the Imperials fail their *starfighter piloting* rolls, they smash into the sheer wall and explode in green-and-white spheres of sparks, gas and flames.

The characters leave the Delari system and return to their rendezvous with the *Nova*.

Episode Three: Imperial Interlude

Read aloud:

You arrive at the carrier cruiser to see a flurry of ships flitting into and out of the landing bays. It takes only a few minutes to set down and disembark. Bluuis' Sullustan assistant, Kiara, walks up to you and hands over a message from Bluuis telling you to report to the briefing room immediately.

You enter the briefing room to find Captain Bluuis already at the holo-display. Two Intell officers stand on each side of the display pointing at various locations on the hologram while they jabber streams of lingo you've heard from operatives before, but still haven't been able to decipher.

Bluuis looks up and nods toward the tiered rows of seats in front of him as the Intell agents continue their quick, monotone speech.

"Thank you, gentlemen," Bluuis says to the agents, cutting off their diatribe. They both nod once and head out of the briefing room.

Bluuis turns to you after the door slides shut behind the two Intell officers. "Cryptology has decoded the files. According to this information, Mahk'khar sold the device to ..." he pushes a few buttons on the holo-display and the image flickers, then becomes a page of text, "... to Ree Shala, a known smuggler in this sector. Her organization has recently begun to

Heavy Ion Cannon

After testing the characters' sensors readings, performing many computer simulations, and proposing several theories, New Republic scientists discover that one of the warring Imperial factions has devised a new heavy ion cannon.

This Imperial faction has begun experimenting with a new weapon that has the potential to completely ionize a ship on the first successful strike. Unfortunately, the cannon has several drawbacks. On occasion, it backfires and ionizes the vessel that carries it, shutting down the ship's controls completely. The heavy ion cannon also leaves nano-scopic fields of highly ionized particles, telegraphing the presence of a vessel that bears this weapon.

■ Heavy Ion Cannon

Model: GenaTech Weapons Zeta One Heavy Ion Cannon

Type: Heavy Ion Cannon

Scale: Capital

Skill: Capital ship gunnery; heavy ion cannon

Crew: 2

Cost: Not available for sale

Fire Control: 1D

Space Range: 1-5/15/35

Atmosphere Range: 2-10/30/75 km

Damage: 7D

Game Notes: There is a 2 in 6 chance per use of the cannon that it will backfire and ionize all the systems of the ship that carries it. At this stage in its development, the cannon requires a large amount of energy to fire and therefore can be used only once per 50 standard hour period.

The development of this powerful ion cannon can be the springboard for further adventures in Corva Sector. Characters might be assigned to discover which Imperial faction developed the cannon and either steal the plans or destroy a manufacturing facility. Perhaps they discover a weakness they can exploit, and rig other cannons to backfire. And if more Imperial ships are armed with this cannon, the New Republic's Corva Sector fleet could be waging a full-scale campaign against a powerful Imperial faction — with plenty of opportunities for further adventures.

expand. Apparently, she offers greater cuts to her employees.

"Intell has provided the coordinates of the bases we know about. I've already dispatched teams to four of the five — you will investigate the fifth." The hologram flickers again, changing to a familiar sector grid. A single point glows green. "Proceed to the Jaresh system. There you'll find Shala's base on the moon orbiting the third planet. I've already had the precise coordinates downloaded to your ship's computer.

"Now, what were you able to learn from Professor Oron?"

Bluuis nods with interest as he listens to the characters' tale. If they mention their bout with the Imperials, he says, "I knew this relic was

important." After commending the characters on their efforts, he reminds them that this information must remain secret. At this time only Bluuis, his assistant and the characters know about the mission.

"Gentlebeings, this operation is of great importance to the New Republic. Good luck and may the Force be with you."

The control station gives them immediate take-off clearance when the pilot signals that they are ready to depart. Allow the characters to undertake whatever activities they like while cruising through hyperspace. But about five hours into the trip, read the following:

Without warning, the *Instigator's* hyperdrive cuts out—you don't know whether it's a system malfunction or ... then through the viewport you see three heavily carbon-scored Imperial system patrol craft and a single Skipray blastboat hanging in space a scant few kilometers away. The oblong patrol craft have the blastboat surrounded, but suddenly their sublight engines flare a brilliant blue and they begin to break formation.

The patrol craft jump to lightspeed as soon as possible, leaving the disabled blastboat behind. Should the characters successfully strike a patrol craft with a good solid shot from the *Instigator's* guns, the patrol vessel explodes in a violent ball of green-and-yellow flame. The other patrol craft quickly jump to hyperspace.

3 System Patrol Craft. Capital, capital ship gunnery 4D, capital ship piloting 5D, capital ship shields 4D, sensors 3D, maneuverability 2D+1, space 6, atmosphere 300; 860 kmh, hull 1D. Weapons: 2 turbolaser cannons (fire control 2D, damage 4D), 1 heavy ion cannon (fire control 1D, damage 7D). *The ion cannon draws off a special power generator and has a 2 in 6 chance of ionizing all the patrol craft's controls.

On a Moderate sensors roll, the characters discover a cloud of nano-scopic, highly ionized particles surrounding the blastboat. The blastboat seems abandoned, and similarly explodes should the characters fire on it. The equipment aboard the *Instigator* cannot determine the composition of the field's particles, but can store enough scientific data about them to keep Intell busy for several weeks.

After this brief encounter, the characters may recalculate their astrogation coordinates and resume their voyage to Jaresh.

Episode Four: Shala's Moon

When the characters arrive at Shala's moon, read the following aloud:

The whine of the *Instigator's* repulsorlifts slows then cuts off as you land on a world of gray shadows. Hundred meter-tall trees of black, ridged bark jut through the mists, eventually becoming lost in the haze that hangs over the entire moon.

Chitters and screeches mix with tiny splashes, but you cannot see any sign of movement around you. As you disembark and walk across the ground, the surface gives way slightly, leaving imprints that quickly fill with a dark liquid.

Twenty minutes of trudging through the swamp forest brings you to a large clearing. The buzz of repulsorlift engines drifts down from directly above you, but you cannot see any ship through the thick mist.

■ **Jaresh**

- Type: Satellite
- Temperature: Hot
- Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
- Hydrosphere: Moist
- Gravity: Standard
- Terrain: Jungle
- Length of Day: 29 standard hours
- Length of Year: 98 local days
- Sapient Species: Various alien species
- Starport: Landing field
- Population: 20
- Planet Function: Smuggling base
- Government: Organized crime
- Tech Level: Space (only at base)
- Major Exports: None
- Major Imports: None

Capsule: Many lifeforms exist on Jaresh, though none of them are sentient. Trees reach hundreds of meters into the gray mist that continually rolls across the surface and millions of other plant species dominate the jungle floor. The crime lady Ree Shala purchased this moon two years ago. After constructing a permanent base of operations, she was able to greatly expand her smuggling activities, and now, two years later, she needs a larger command center. This system is not on a well-traveled hyperspace route, so no one has bothered her since she established her base on Jaresh.

Shala's base floats 50 meters off the ground, suspended in the air by four powerful repulsorlift engines. Since the 70 meter-diameter base was crammed with equipment, Shala arranged for a single docking bay that would fit only a small vessel, forcing the rest of her followers to land their ships elsewhere and walk to the base.

A hidden lift disk (large enough for eight people) and concealed control panel on the ground provide access to the floating base platform. A character who makes a Difficult *search* roll can discover the lift disk hidden beneath some jungle ground foliage and the controls built into a nearby tree. To operate

the device requires a Difficult *computer programming/repair* roll.

The disk rises slowly, bringing the characters through an opening cut into the base's platform. It stops once the top edge of the disk becomes flush with the base platform's main deck.

Shala built this base only two years ago, but she has recently outgrown it. The characters find only an abandoned complex. Half-eaten food and scattered debris hint that whoever was here left in a hurry, and sometime within the last few days.

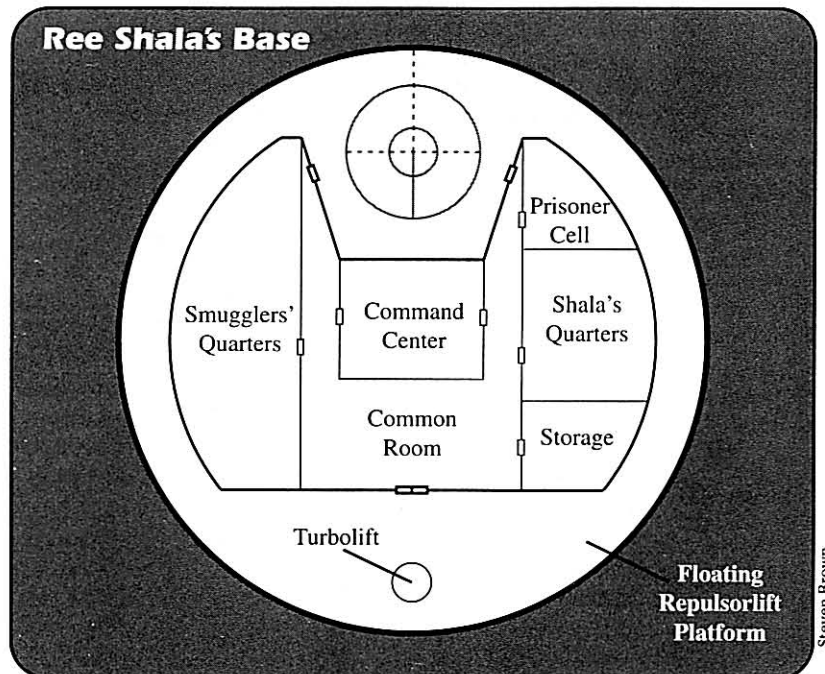
The sole remaining device in operation is a modified Cybot Galactica AC1 surveillance droid. Though the AC1's standard configuration lacks weaponry, this one — altered by Shala herself — bears two fire-linked BlasTech DL-44 heavy blasters and reinforced plating.

The spherical droid waits for the characters in the briefing room. If the AC1 makes a Moderate *sneak* roll, it automatically surprises the characters when they enter.

AC1 Surveillance Droid. All stats are 1D except: *Dexterity* 2D, *blaster* 3D, *dodge* 4D, *Perception* 3D, *search* 6D, *sneak* 4D, *Strength* 3D. Two fire-linked blasters (5D). Move: 10.

After destroying the droid, the characters may inspect the remaining pieces. Any character who succeeds at either an Easy *droid programming* or *droid repair* roll knows that the AC1's power cell normally lasts for only 24 hours before it requires recharging. Since this one has been modified with heavier plating and energy weapons, it couldn't last more than six hours without a recharge.

An Easy *search* roll in the briefing room turns



up a single broken datapad with a large dent in the back and several long scratches across the front. Fixing the datapad requires a Moderate *computer programming/repair* roll.

Once the datapad is fixed, its screen flickers for a moment before displaying a profile of the gas-giant planet Galaan in the Galaanus system. Any character who makes a Difficult (Moderate if using the *Instigator's* computer) *bureaucracy* roll remembers that the New Republic has hidden a communications center and Intelligence outpost within Galaan's atmosphere. If the station were destroyed, all communication between Corva Sector and other sectors could immediately cease.

When the characters return to the *Instigator*, they see a blinking light on the communications control panel. A recorded subspace message arrived while they were investigating Shala's base. When they key for play-back, read the following aloud:

The image of Kiara, Captain Bluuis' Sullustan assistant, appears on the screen.

"Please be advised that your new rendezvous coordinates have been coded to the end of this message. You must return at once — the Imperials have begun an all-out engagement with the Corva Sector fleet. Hurry."

The transmission ends, leaving only the coordinate information for the nav computer on the display.

Any character who makes a Very Difficult *Perception* roll notices that the dark gray metallic wall behind Kiara does not match the interior design of the *Nova*.

Should the characters attempt to use the subspace radio to communicate with the New Republic, or anyone else, they discover that the comm system has experienced some kind of malfunction. An Easy *space transports repair* roll allows the character to learn that a tiny explosive device planted within the system caused the subspace transceiver coupling to short out. Without a new one, the comm unit can't be repaired.

If the characters head directly to Galaan from Shala's base on Jaresh — a two-hour hyperspace journey — go to the next episode. Should the characters return to the original rendezvous location, they find that the *Nova* has left the area.

If the characters jump to the coordinates Kiara gave them to meet the *Nova*, read the following aloud:

The *Instigator* drops out of hyperspace at the specified rendezvous coordinates, but the *Nova* is nowhere in sight. Suddenly, the energy receptor sensor array starts flashing. It seems that the sensors have picked up a huge field of ionized particles directly ahead.

Bluuis' assistant, the Sullustan woman Kiara,

has betrayed the characters to the warlord controlling the Imperial forces in Corva Sector. A quick scan reveals two approaching Imperial *Carrack*-class light cruisers. The characters have only 30 seconds to jump to hyperspace before the cruisers come within range.

2 Carrack Light Cruisers. Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 4D+2, *capital ship piloting* 4D+1, *capital ship shields* 4D, *sensors* 4D+1, maneuverability 2D, space 8, hull 5D, shields 2D+2. Weapons: 10 heavy turbolasers (fire control 1D, damage 7D), 16 laser cannons (fire control 3D, damage 2D), 5 tractor beam projectors (fire control 2D, damage 4D), 1 heavy ion cannon (fire control 1D, damage 7D). *The ion cannon draws off a special power generator and has a 2 in 6 chance of ionizing all the patrol craft's controls.

Episode Five: Assault on Galaan

When the characters reach Galaan, read aloud:

The *Instigator* slows to sublight speed. Ahead looms the massive gas giant Galaan, its green, gray and white gas clouds swirled into rippled tendrils that wrap around the planet. Bright flashes appear intermittently near the northern polar region as if an enormous lightning storm was battering the planet's liquid surface.

■ Galaan

Type: Gas giant
Temperature: Frigid
Atmosphere: Type IV (environmental suit required)
Hydrosphere: Saturated
Gravity: Heavy
Terrain: Cloudscape
Length of Day: 132 standard hours
Length of Year: 479 local days
Sapient Species: None
Starport: Standard class (at base)
Population: 3,000
Planet Function: Hidden communications and intelligence base
Government: New Republic military
Tech Level: Space
Major Exports: Information, communication services
Major Imports: High technology, foodstuffs, medical supplies

Capsule: The dense green, gray and white gases of Galaan limit visibility to only a few hundred meters. Gravity near the planet's core would crush any ship or space station, so the New Republic has constructed its base floating through the clouds in the planet's upper atmosphere. All communications between New Republic parties within Corva Sector and between Corva Sector and nearby sectors are routed through the Galaan installation, and few know of its existence. Even fewer know that the base acts as the headquarters of New Republic Intelligence for this and several other sectors.

Shala, in her stolen assault shuttle, and

Mahk'khar, in his modified bulk freighter, have already begun their assault on the communications center. Two of Mahk'khar's associates have joined the battle in their Skipray blastboats. The characters must plunge into the thick gaseous planet and defeat the the enemy vessels before they destroy the entire base.

Once the characters join the battle, Shala and Mahk'khar flee in their personal vessels, leaving the blastboats behind to finish off the New Republic base. Shala's vessel has a damaged hyperdrive, so she has disengaged and waits in orbit on one side of the planet — Mahk'khar flees to the other side, intent on escape.

The thick gaseous atmosphere of Galaan limits visual range to less than 50 meters. To fly their vessel, the characters must rely on the *Instigator's* sensors. Each combat round a character must make a Difficult *sensors* roll (adding the 1D to account for the *Instigator's* passive sensors) or those on gunnery lose sight of the enemy ships and cannot attack.

If the characters do not disable or destroy the attacking ships within 15 combat rounds, the blastboats destroy the New Republic base.

2 Skipray Blastboats. Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 5D, *starfighter piloting* 4D, *starship gunnery* 5D+1, *starship shields* 4D+1. maneuverability 2D+2, space 8, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 2D+1, shields 2D. Weapons: 3 medium ion cannons (fire-linked; fire control 3D, damage 4D), proton torpedo launcher (fire control 2D, damage 9D), 2 laser cannons (fire-linked; fire control 1D, damage 5D), concussion missile launcher (fire control 1D, damage 6D).

The blastboats use their missiles against the base and fend off the characters with their laser cannons. Should the ships be heavily damaged, they cease their attack on the base and concentrate their firepower on the characters' ship. Each blastboat has three proton torpedoes and three concussion missiles left.

When the characters fly out of the planet's atmosphere, they encounter Shala's assault shuttle, *Striker*, in orbit. Her vessel's hyperdrive motivator was damaged in the battle, so she has no way to escape. With no other recourse, she decides to con the characters, hopefully gaining her enough time for her crew to effect the repairs and jump to lightspeed.

Shala hails the *Instigator*. If the characters open communications, read the following aloud:

A female voice comes over the comm channel. "Instigator, this is Ree Shala. I have come to warn you of an impending attack on this planet by Mahk'khar. His vessels are in orbit on the other side of Galaan. I thought this information might put me in better, ahem, standing with the New Republic."

Shala is stalling for time, hoping her mechanics can repair her ship's damaged hyperdrive. If questioned about the relic, Shala says she has heard of the reappearance of a relic, but denies knowing anything else ... unless the character are willing to make a deal. If they promise her safe passage from this system, she reveals that Mahk'khar actually has the relic aboard his ship. He has been travelling Corva Sector to find a suitable buyer (and a suitable price). Shala heard Mahk'khar mention that he intends to sell the relic at a rendezvous in the Jandoon system.

Shala has no intention of engaging the *Instigator* and attacks only to defend herself. It takes only ten minutes for Shala's hyperdrive motivator to be fixed. As soon as possible, she jumps to hyperspace, heading for a deserted area of deep space to plan out her next move.

Striker. Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 3D+2, *capital ship piloting* 5D, *capital ship shields* 4D. maneuverability 2D, space 8, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 3D+2, shields 4D+2. Weapons: 4 laser cannons (fire control 3D, damage 2D), tractor beam projector (fire control 4D, damage 5D+2).

■ **Ree Shala**

Type: Twi'lek Crime Lady

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 4D+1, dodge 4D, melee combat 5D, pick pocket 6D

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Business 5D, intimidation 4D, languages 4D+2, planetary systems 5D, streetwise 6D+2

MECHANICAL 2D+1

Astrogation 5D+1, space transports 6D+2, starship gunnery 5D+2, starship shields 5D

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 5D+2, con 6D, hide 5D+1, persuasion 5D, search 6D, sneak 5D+2

STRENGTH 3D

TECHNICAL 2D+2

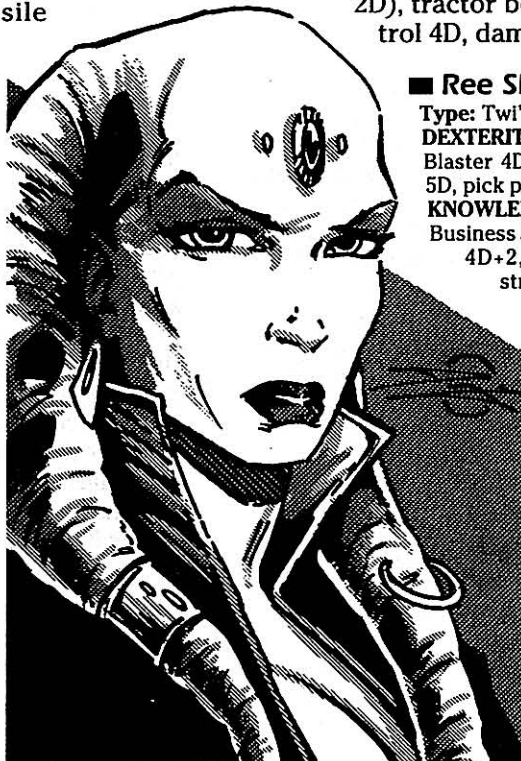
Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 5

Move: 10

Capsule: Ree Shala started out as a smuggler working the spice



runs. After many years, and many successful ventures, she decided to create an organization in which she set up the deals and others traveled the space lanes.

Over the past few years, the Twi'lek smuggler has managed to put together a mid-sized organization in Corva Sector. Recently, a mysterious Human approached Ree with a strange proposal — he wanted her organization to work for him on a permanent basis. To entice Shala to agree to the arrangement, the Human offered a substantial sum as a “sign-on” bonus. She accepted the offer and took on her first assignment — to destroy the hidden New Republic communications center at Galaan. How the Human had obtained information about a hidden New Republic installation Ree did not know, nor did she particularly care.

If the characters rush to the other side of Galaan, they find Mahk'khar's modified bulk freighter, the *Dark Star*. Unfortunately, he escapes to hyperspace just as the characters arrive. If the characters make a Very Difficult *astrogation* or *sensors* roll, they can deduce that Mahk'khar had set a course for the Jandoon system.

Making a Moderate *planetary systems* roll allows the characters to recall that the planet Jandoon was the home of an ancient species of aliens who died out several centuries ago. No one has yet attempted to recolonize the world, as rumors of dark spirits inhabiting it continue to circulate the galaxy.

Episode Six: The Exchange

Mahk'khar is meeting his contact on the abandoned world of Jandoon. He plans to trade the relic to Durrei, a dark Jedi student working for one of the Imperial factions wreaking havoc in Corva Sector. In exchange for the relic, Durrei plans to trade Meela, Professor Oron's kidnapped daughter, and 10,000 credits. When the characters arrive at Jandoon, Durrei and Mahk'khar are meeting in one of the ruins on the planet's surface.

Mahk'khar doesn't realize that his buyer is part of an Imperial faction that has steadily grown in power over the past few years. He knows the appointed time, place and price for the deal — nothing more.

■ Jandoon

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate
Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Moderate
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Plains, hills
Length of Day: 25 standard hours
Length of Year: 273 local days
Sapient Species: None
Starport: Landing field
Population: None

Planet Function: Abandoned and ruined homeworld

Capsule: The ancient species which once filled this world mysteriously died out several centuries ago. No one has been able to discover what caused this sudden extinction, and few would even dare venture to the planet to find out. Rumors of the wandering spirits of the dead continue to make their way through the galaxy. Ruined stone structures dot the planet's surface, but signs of technology have yet to be found. Some contend that the aliens hid their weapons and other technology deep within the world so that no one would ever find it — perhaps that was the key to their own downfall.

When the characters arrive, they may scan the planet for lifeforms. An Easy *sensors* roll allows the characters to pinpoint the location of two ships that have landed in a hilled area halfway between the equator and the southern pole. One ship is an Imperial *Lambda*-class shuttle. The other is a modified bulk freighter — Mahk'khar's ship, *Dark Star*.

The transaction is taking place among the remnants of an ancient stone structure built on the peak of a low hill. The characters may fly their ship into Jandoon's atmosphere and fire upon Mahk'khar and the Imperials from the *Instigator* — warn them, however, that they may accidentally destroy the relic.

The characters can land the *Instigator* within walking distance of the meeting place, concealing their ship behind one of the neighboring hills. Once they approach the stone ruins, read the following aloud:

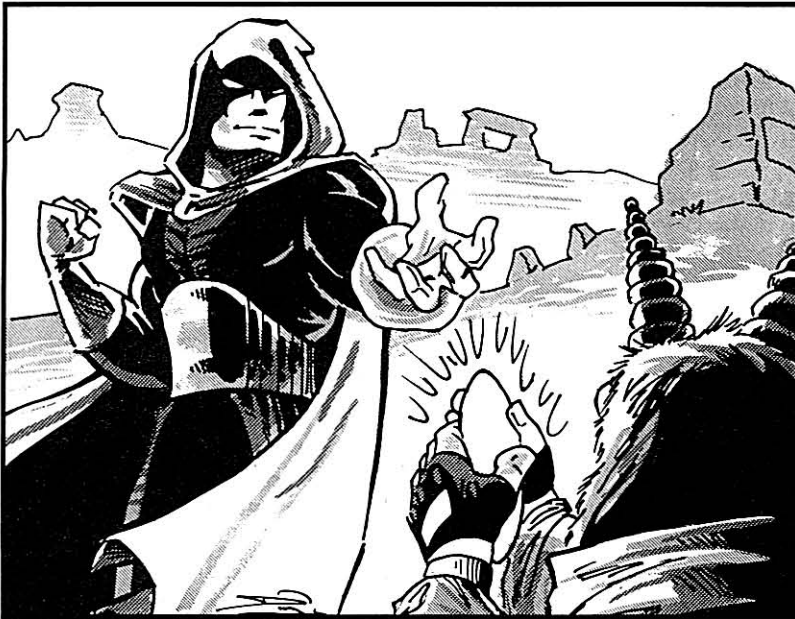
Many of the walls of chiseled gray stone have collapsed, leaving a field strewn with jagged, moss-covered blocks. Near the center of the ruin, several figures stand around a large slab of stone about one meter high and three meters long.

One of the beings, its back to you, has two conical horns jutting from the top of its head. A blaster dangles from a hip holster as the alien places a dark, hand-sized object onto the makeshift table — the relic! Four other beings — possibly bodyguards — stand on the far side of the group, wearing blaster-scarred helmets and worn battle armor. Each carries a blaster rifle and a force pike.

Directly opposite the horned alien stands a dark-haired Human. His eyes are surrounded by shadows, his young face twisted with anxiety as he gazes at the object presented to him.

All Force-using characters (Force-sensitive if the team has no Force-users) hear a thick voice in their heads saying, “Do not let the artifact fall into their hands. Take it. Use what they desire most against them.”

Continue to read aloud:



Bargain 4D, command 5D+2, hide 4D+1, search 5D

STRENGTH 3D+1

Brawling 4D, climbing/jumping 5D, stamina 3D+2

TECHNICAL 2D

Lightsaber repair 5D

Special Abilities

Force Skills: Control 3D, sense 2D+1, alter 3D+2

Control: Absorb/dissipate energy, control pain, reduce injury, remain conscious

Sense: Receptive telepathy, sense force

Alter: Injure/kill

Control and Sense: Lightsaber combat

Control and Alter: Feed on dark side*

* See page 79 of *Galaxy Guide 9: Fragments from the Rim* for more information.

This character is Force-sensitive

Force Points: 8

Dark Side Points: 7

Character Points: 12

Move: 10

Equipment: Comlink, heavy blaster pistol (5D), lightsaber (5D)

Two of the bodyguards place a crate on the stone slab, while a third pulls up a young woman and pushes her toward the horned alien. The dark-haired young Human reaches for the relic ...

The young woman is Meela, Professor Oron's daughter. Since the Imperial faction no longer needs her, she has become a part of Durrei and Mahk'khar's bargain. The crimelord plans to sell her on the slave market. The characters must act quickly, before Durrei possesses the artifact and uses its powers against them.

When the battle begins, Durrei's bodyguards dive for cover amidst the ruins and return fire. Durrei, the Human, tries to sense any Force-users in the characters' group. He then confronts that character, igniting a lightsaber as he strides toward her. The brilliant red of his light blade stands out against the dulled tones of the surroundings.

Mahk'khar draws his blaster and ducks behind a large stone block — he grabs Meela, tells her to take the box with the credits, and slowly makes a fighting retreat, heading back to his ship. He uses his thermal detonator only as a last resort — if he is wounded, or if the characters prevent him from reaching his ship.

■ **Durrei**

Type: Dark Side Student

DEXTERITY 3D+1

Blaster 4D, brawling parry 5D, dodge 5D+1, lightsaber 7D, melee combat 6D, melee parry 4D+1

KNOWLEDGE 2D+1

Cultures 6D, intimidation 5D, planetary systems 4D+1, willpower 5D+2

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Astrogation 4D+1, repulsorlift operation 3D, starfighter piloting 4D, starship gunnery 3D

PERCEPTION 3D

Capsule: Durrei, a man of just 22 years, has become engulfed by the flames of the dark side. In his quest to learn to use the Force, he has fallen into a pit from which he cannot return.

Many years ago a squad of Imperial stormtroopers arrived to Durrei's homeworld of Elrood and demanded that his family turn over his mother, whom they suspected of treason against the Emperor. When his father refused, the stormtroopers opened fire, blasting everything and everyone in their path. Durrei's rudimentary Force skills failed him in his time of need and his anger flared. He called

upon the dark side to give him the power to destroy these ravagers. In that instant he felt the blackpower that had been granted to him rip through his body and he unleashed it upon his enemies, striking them down one by one. Unfortunately, neither his mother nor his father survived the battle. Since then, Durrei has traveled in search of those few who could teach him anything about the Force, learn-



The Relic

This prism-shaped hunk of unknown gray rock — 20 centimeters long and 10 centimeters wide — radiates an aura of evil, an aura of the dark side immediately recognizable by a Force-sensitive character. It was an heirloom of the ancient Kashi Mer monarchy stolen by a confused student of the Force, Reda Jalooz.

The relic provides a Force-sensitive bearer with a +3D bonus to one Force skill each round. The bearer may choose which Force skill receives the bonus, and it may be a different skill each round.

Each round a character uses the relic, it drains one Character Point. When the user runs out of Character Points, the artifact drains one Force Point per round. Once the character's Force Points have been completely consumed, the relic *gives* the character Dark Side Points.

Any Force-sensitive character who touches the relic feels a cold darkness flow through him, accompanied moments later by a surge of power. This character has full knowledge of the artifact's abilities and may use them at will.

ing what he could. He has dedicated himself to learning as much as he can about the dark side so he will never be so helpless again.

Several years later, a stranger appeared at his home, asking if Durrei would like to join him in his battle against the remnants of the Empire. Durrei agreed without asking any further questions of the mysterious man. He discovered soon afterward that the man had stolen Imperial technology and planned to use it against those who had created it.

Recently Durrei learned of the appearance of an ancient artifact, which he believes, after researching it thoroughly, holds the key to tap directly into the dark side. He convinced his new master to give him access to troopers and former Imperial vessels so that he could retrieve the device.

■ Durrei's Bodyguards

Type: Bodyguard mercenaries

DEXTERITY 4D

Blaster 6D+2, brawling parry 6D, dodge 6D+1, melee combat 5D, melee combat: force pike 7D+2, melee parry 5D

KNOWLEDGE 2D+1

Intimidation 4D+2, streetwise 3D+2, survival 4D

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Repulsorlift operation 4D

PERCEPTION 4D

Search 4D, sneak 5D+2

STRENGTH 4D

Brawling 6D, climbing/jumping 5D, stamina 5D+1

TECHNICAL 2D

Demolition 4D+1, first aid 3D, security 4D+1

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster rifle (5D), mercenary armor (+2D physical, +1D energy, -1D *Dexterity*), force pike (STR+3D)

■ Mahk'khar

Type: Gotal Crimelord

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 6D+2, brawling parry 5D, dodge 5D+1, grenade 5D+2, melee combat 4D, melee parry 4D

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Bureaucracy 5D, business 6D, cultures 5D+2, intimidation 4D+2, planetary systems 5D, streetwise 7D, value 5D+2

MECHANICAL 2D

PERCEPTION 4D+2

Bargain 7D+2, command 5D+2, con 6D, persuasion 5D+2, search 6D, sneak 6D,

STRENGTH 3D

TECHNICAL 2D+1

Special Abilities:

Energy Sensitivity: +3 to *search* when hunting in wide open areas; +1D in crowded areas; -1D in intense radiation.

Fast Initiative: Gotal's receive a +1D bonus when rolling initiative against non-Gotal opponents.

Mood Detection: may receive *Perception* bonuses or penalties (for more information on Gotal's special abilities, see *Galaxy Guide 4: Alien Races*, page 48).

Force Points: 2

Dark Side Points: 2

Character Points: 3

Move: 10

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (5D), thermal detonator (10D)

Capsule: Mahk'khar has risen from his role as a lowly bounty hunter to become one of the most powerful crimelords in Corva Sector. He has recently entered into an arrangement with a wealthy Human who would like to hire Mahk'khar's services permanently. The Gotal's first assignment was to acquire a relic that had recently been discovered. Mahk'khar did so, but soon after discovered that New Republic Intelligence had learned of the acquisition. To throw Intel off his trail, he planted some misinformation in his palace on



Tuulab and left a skeleton force to "guard" it. The New Republic would hopefully believe the ruse and target Ree Shala as the new owner of the relic. Mahk'khar then received his second set of orders — to destroy the New Republic base at Galaan. The mysterious Human said only that others would accompany Mahk'khar's forces, but failed to reveal the identity of the allies.

Mahk'khar has always had a passion for any art or literature depicting the mythology of ancient cultures. "Legends spawn culture," he has been known to say. "I will one day be a legend. And that day will come soon."

If the characters defeat half of Durrei's bodyguards, Durrei attempts to flee with the relic, charging behind the remains of the stone structure while calling the shuttle over his comlink. He leaves his remaining bodyguards to deal with the characters.

After the battle, the characters might pursue either Durrei or Mahk'khar if they escape. Both ships could be recovered if their owners are killed or captured — they would be very useful on various missions for the New Republic's Corva Sector fleet.

Mahk'khar's Modified Bulk Freighter *Dark Star*. Capital, *astrogation* 3D+2, *space transports* 4D, *capital ship gunnery* 4D, *capital ship shields* 3D, *maneuverability* 1D, *space* 2, *atmosphere* 225; 650 kmh, *hull* 3D, *shields* 1D. *Weapons*: 2 laser cannons (*fire control* 1D, *damage* 4D).

Durrei's *Lambda-Class Shuttle*. Starfighter, *space transports* 5D, *starship gunnery* 4D+2, *maneuverability* 1D, *space* 5, *atmosphere* 295; 850 kmh, *hull* 4D, *shields* 1D+2. *Weapons*: 3 double blaster cannons (*fire control* 2D, *damage* 4D), 2 double laser cannons (*fire-linked*; *fire control* 3D+1, *damage* 4D+1).

Epilogue

After the characters return to the *Nova*, they brief Captain Bluuis on their findings. Bluuis commends them for their bravery and dedication. If the characters managed to retrieve the relic, it is taken to a hidden New Republic scientific outpost for further study.

If the characters mention anything about Kiara's betrayal, Bluuis tells them that she recently put in for a transfer and left for a diplomatic post on Coruscant yesterday. After this meeting he plans to issue an order for her immediate arrest. ☹

COUNTERSTRIKE



By George R. Strayton

Illustrations by Matt Busch

Corva Sector. The Outer Rim. Dark times have fallen in this backwater section of the galaxy. Once far from the center of the Galactic Civil War, Corva has turned into a war zone only a few months after Grand Admiral Thrawn's defeat at the Bilbringi Shipyards.

An Imperial faction led by a mysterious Human has recently destroyed the New Republic communications center hidden within the gas giant planet Galaan, hampering New Republic communications in the sector. Over the past two weeks, Imperial activity has exploded, forcing the New Republic to spread its troops and starships thin across the sector to protect the inhabited worlds from the death grasp of the Kaarenth Dissension — a powerful splinter of the once mighty Empire.

But New Republic forces have encountered resentment among the alien species in the Outer Rim. On some worlds the animosity has grown so fierce that the aliens have declared war on the New Republic. Intelligence operatives have discovered that these beings believe Coruscant plans to subjugate all of its non-Human citizens, much like Emperor Palpatine did during his tyrannical reign. Should these false beliefs spread, it could doom the New Republic presence in the Outer Rim — starting with Corva Sector ...

The characters have assembled in a briefing room aboard the New Republic carrier cruiser, *Nova*. Captain Naren Bluuis, the Corva Sector Network Leader, arrives a few moments later to address the group. Read aloud:

Captain Bluuis strides into the briefing room. His shoulders seem hunched, his face drawn and pale. He coughs into a clenched fist and scans your group for a moment as he slips a datapad from an inside pocket.

"This mission is a dangerous one, but critical to the New Republic's continued existence in this sector. As you are aware, a new Imperial faction has risen to power in Corva Sector. Though at first we thought it an extension of the Pentastar Alignment, we have recently discovered that it is an independent splinter group calling itself the Kaarenth Dissension.

"Several Intell agents have reported that the Dissension has begun to infect the alien cultures of the sector with false rumors of the New Republic's agenda in the Rim. The source of this slander must be squelched before he — or she, or it — causes any further harm. And your team will carry out that task."

Bluuis presses one hand to his temple and closes his eyes. His face tightens as if he were fighting some inner conflict, but the struggle lasts only a moment.

"You will pose as smugglers plying the space lanes of the Outer Rim, especially the Daranc Run. Halfway along the run, near the center of Corva Sector, is the Betha system, a stop-over point for traders to rest, restock supplies, and lose their miserable lives in gambling and drink. We have lost several vessels and a number of Intell agents on Betha II, making it the most logical starting point for this mission.

"Your goal is simple: trace these rumors to their source and eliminate it." He looks over your group, locking eyes with each of you in turn. "I feel this bears rewording: you must find the *origin* of these false words, otherwise you will succeed in removing only the pawn, not the master.

"You've been outfitted with a modified Trianii RX4 Patrol Ship, the *Instigator*. I had the ship

techs reprogram her transponder codes with the designation the *Surge* as part of your cover. Be careful with her, she's a bit battered and her systems have been severely modified, but she's a good ship — and one of the few we have left. With luck, reinforcements will arrive from Coruscant before the next Imperial attack, but for now, every vessel counts.

"When you reach Betha II, rendezvous with Cev Malanx at Docking Bay 92. He's the smuggler who will purchase your cargo of illerium. We felt this action would strengthen your masquerade as traders and allow you to more easily assimilate into the ... *culture*.

"Oh, and be careful with those storage tanks — the illerium becomes highly volatile if it's exposed to air. And that's also the reason you should watch out for pirates. My techs tell me that some groups have been known to use it in concentrated form as a substitute for detonite. If anyone manages to discover the nature of your cargo, you might encounter some trouble.

"Last, I must stress that this operation requires the utmost of secrecy. Do not contact the New Republic until you have completed it.

"Any questions?"

Captain Bluuis has not fared well since his appointment as Corva Sector Network Leader. The Imperial faction calling itself the Kaarenth Dissension has eliminated several key Intell agents, plus uncountable ships and equipment. One of Bluuis' aids turned out to be an Imperial spy, sabotaging crucial operations throughout the sector. And now, from improper nutrition and lack of sleep, the captain has fallen gravely sick. But, ignoring doctor's orders, he refuses to rest, saying that the New Republic is counting on him to save it from the darkness of the Empire.

Before leaving the briefing, Bluuis hands over a rectangular storage container about 100 by 50 by 20 centimeters that holds the equipment Intell has provided the characters for this mission: five medpacs, one BioTech FastFlash Medpac, a datapad, two blocks of detonite, a timing device (which can be jury-rigged into a detonator timer) and, the most expensive piece, a Drooim-Durtha Systems ShipFinder (a subspace tracking device) acquired from a recently captured crimelord called Mahk'khar. The case has two handles, one on each of the shortest sides.

The *Surge* awaits the characters in docking bay Zed-Eleven. It sits tucked in a corner by itself, having just been returned to working condition — like Bluuis says, at this critical time every ship counts. Though an older vessel, the *Surge* has undergone several modifications, most personally made by Captain Bluuis in his days before he joined the Alliance.

The *Surge* carries five metric tons of illerium —

a highly volatile chemical used in the production of ejection pod release charges — in 20 one-and-one-half-meter high, silver canisters. Cev Malanx, their contact on Betha II, has agreed to pay 5,000 credits for the shipment, which he plans to sell to an underground group that uses illerium as an inferior alternative to detonite. Unfortunately, one of the storage tanks was cracked as it was loaded into the cargo bay. If the characters check the containers for leaks, they discover the problem and may fix the damaged valve on an Easy *Mechanical* roll. If they fail to examine the canisters, however, the first time laser fire penetrates the ship's shields, the crack bursts open and the container of illerium detonates, knocking out the rear deflectors until repaired.

The hyperspace journey to the Betha System takes six hours.

■ **The Surge**

Craft: Trianii RX4 Patrol Ship
Type: Modified light patrol craft
Scale: Starfighter
Length: 33 meters
Crew: 2, gunners: 2, skeleton 1/+5
Passengers: 6
Cargo Capacity: 30 metric tons
Consumables: 2 years
Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1
Hyperdrive Backup: x14
Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 1D+1
Space: 4
Atmosphere: 295; 850 kmh
Hull: 5D
Shields: 2D+1
Sensors:
Passive: 20/1D
Scan: 35/1D+1
Search: 80/2D+1
Focus: 2/3D

Weapons:

2 Twin Turbolasers (may be fire-linked)
Fire Arc: Turret
Crew: 1 (may be locked forward and fired by pilot, but fire control is 0)
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 2D
Space Range: 1-5/15/20
Atmosphere Range: 100-500/1.5/2 km
Damage: 4D (5D when fire-linked)
1 Ion Cannon*
Fire Arc: Rear
Skill: Capital ship gunnery
Scale: Capital
Fire Control: 2D
Space Range: 1-10/25/50
Atmosphere Range: 2-20/50/100 km
Damage: 3D+1

* The ion cannon draws off a special power generator and can only fire once per day

■ **ShipFinder**

Model: Drooim-Durtha Systems ShipFinder
Type: Subspace tracking device
Skill: Sensors
Cost: 100,000
Availability: X
Game Notes: Use of the ShipFinder requires an Easy

sensors roll. If successful, the character can locate the tracking device and plot a course to it from her present coordinates.

Capsule: Under contract from Drooim-Durtha Systems, Neb Ufentes, a noted space vessel engineer and an expert in hyperspace theory, designed the ShipFinder for the remaining Imperial forces nearly two years ago. He created several prototypes over the ensuing months, informing his superiors that he had at last mastered the problem of the device's small size coupled with its need for vast amounts of power to project its signal its full range of 20 light years. Rather than emitting a continuous beam, the ShipFinder disperses bursts of particles at a given time interval. The faster the interval, the easier it is to track the device, but the shorter its power cell life. This current version lasts only eight days and then goes dead. Unfortunately, before Neb could transfer the latest incarnation of the device, the crimelord Mahk'khar and his forces raided his private lab on the outskirts of Corva Sector, killing the engineer and stealing the ShipFinder prototypes.

Episode One: The Delivery

Read aloud:

The *Surge* soars across the sector along the Daranc Run, the most heavily trafficked space lane in this part of the galaxy. Finally, after six hours of hyperspace travel, star lines stream past the front viewport and suddenly snap into tiny points of light.

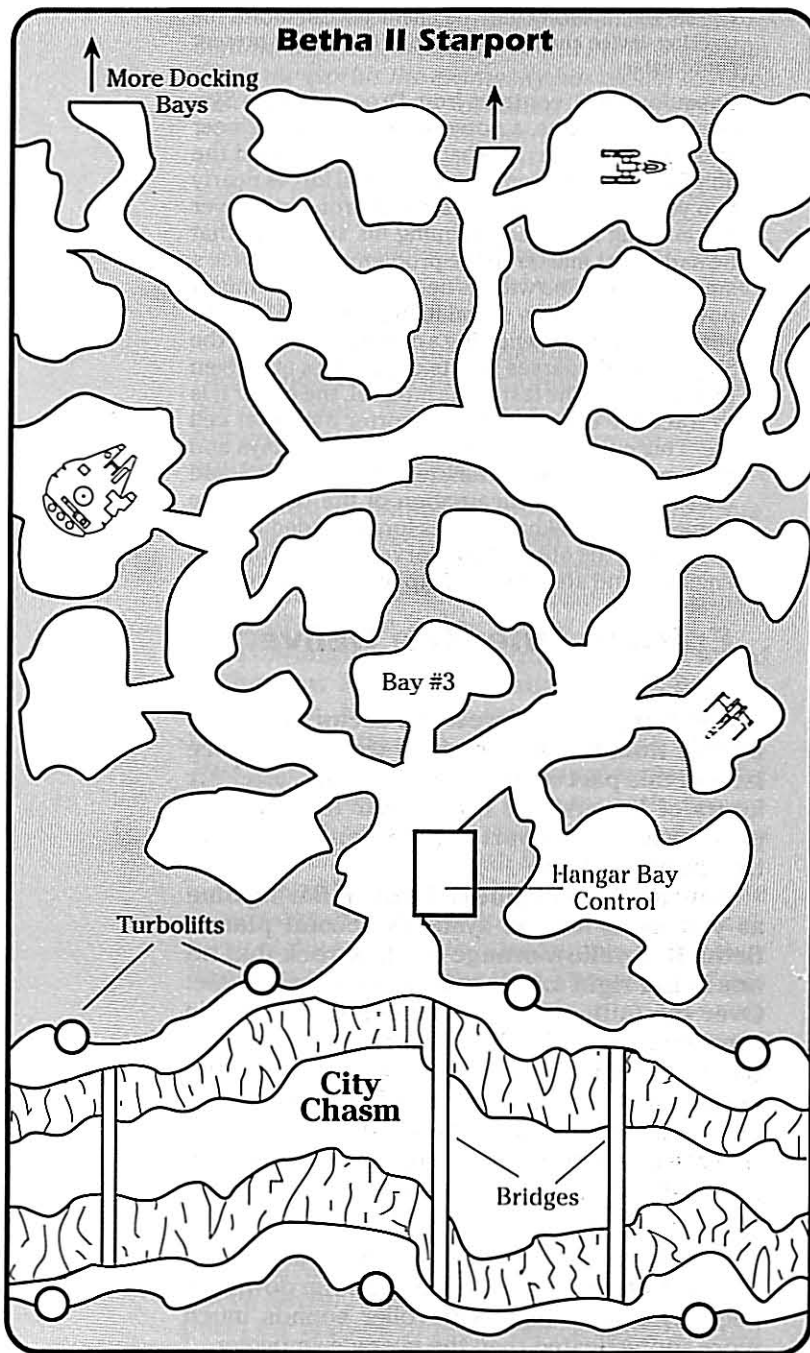
Your sublight engines take over, flaring blue as you head for the system's second planet, Betha II, a yellow-orange hunk of rock that no one in her right mind would want to call home. Over the millennia, the planet's moisture has escaped through its thin atmosphere, leaving a barren world of rocky crags and cliffs — the perfect spot for a smuggler's spaceport.

A flat, metallic voice blares over your comm as if the sender had turned up his output levels past critical. "*Surge*, we have you on our scanners. Please state your intentions."

Any character succeeding at a Moderate *Perception* check feels a tingling sensation run down her back. This spaceflight controller sounds much more sophisticated than the average smuggler ...

■ **Betha II**

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate
Atmosphere: Type II (breath mask suggested)
Hydrosphere: Arid
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Buttes, crevasses, desert canyons
Length of Day: 20 standard hours
Length of Year: 117 local days
Sapient Species: Various aliens and Humans
Starport: Limited services
Population: 800
Planet Function: Smuggler's outpost
Government: Anarchy
Tech Level: Space at starport, feudal elsewhere



Major Exports: Black market goods
Major Imports: Black market goods

Capsule: Thousands of years ago Beta II thrived as a rest point halfway along the Daranc Run. But over time, the planet's weak gravity began to lose its hold on its atmosphere and soon after, the remaining few colonists finally abandoned it. Not until 30 years ago did anyone set foot on the barren world again. An enterprising smuggler brought in atmospheric generators that re-established a gaseous envelope in a small area near the equator. A small smugglers' enclave sprang up around the genera-

tors, and Beta II became known as a hideout and repair base. Since then the smuggling traffic has remained constant.

The control tower does not have stringent requirements for docking. Their only interest in the nature of a particular ship's intentions is to decide which docking bay to assign it. The more important the smuggler, the better the bay location he receives. The flight controller assigns the *Surge* to Bay 47, one of the worst in the spaceport. Read aloud:

With a final whine of its repulsors, the *Surge* sets down in Bay 47. It was a tight squeeze — the bay is just a few meters wider than the ship.

You step down from the *Surge* onto a crumbling duracrete floor, large holes dotting the grainy, gray surface. Scorch marks, obviously from blaster fire, mar the bay's walls, but at least the illumination panels seem to be working.

Suddenly, with a hissing pop, several glow panels flicker and then short out in a flare of sparks.

No matter where the characters decide to go at this point — either to their rendezvous with Cev Malanx or out to explore the city — they happen upon the scene of a robbery at one of the adjacent docking bays.

Characters who succeed at an Easy *Perception* roll overhear someone muttering orders of "don't move" and "hands where I can see 'em" when they come within 20 meters of the robbery. Once the characters get within visual range of the bay, read the following aloud:

Looking into the bay you see two Humans standing against the right wall with their hands high over their heads. A horned Devaronian, his back to you, stands a few meters away from the men. In each hand he holds a blaster, both of them trained on his prisoners.

A battered Corellian YT-1210 tramp freighter, its cargo bay doors open wide, takes up the rest of the bay.

"Let's go. We don't have all day," the Devaronian grumbles, and a pair of Ho'Din — thick strands of hair sticking out from their heads like nests of snakes — drops another crate onto a repulsorsled and then rushes back into the freighter's cargo area.

Once finished unloading the freighter's cargo, the three thieves jump onto the repulsorsled and speed toward the docking bay entrance. If the

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characters engage in battle with the thieves, or in any way distract the Devaronian, the two Humans reach into hidden pockets, yank out hold-out blasters, and fire immediately on the horned alien. If the characters do not act, the thieves zoom off to Bay 63 where they load their cargo onto their own ship — a Ghtroc freighter — and then blast off into space.

1 Devaronian. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D, brawling 3D+2, grenade 4D+2, Strength 3D+1*. Move: 10. Heavy blaster (5D).

2 Ho'Din. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D, dodge 4D+2, repulsorlift operation 3D*. Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D).

After the battle, the Humans thank the characters for their help. Read the following aloud:

The two Humans stash their hold-out blasters back in their hidden pockets. One, the taller and thinner of the two, with the sides of his head shaved and a long swath of blond hair going back across the top of his head, strides toward you, his hand outstretched. "Hey, thanks for the help. It just ain't safe for Humans in this sector anymore. That's the third time we got — well, almost got taken. I'm supposed to pick up some cargo here but, hey, forget that. We're just getting outta here.

"And if there's ever anything I can do for you — you know, hook you up with some o' my connections or something — just let me know. The name's Cev Malanx."

Cev refuses to purchase the illerium — he wants to leave Beta II as soon as possible. If the characters succeed at a Moderate *con* or *persuasion* roll, however, he does agree to buy half.

■ **Cev Malanx**

Type: Smuggler

DEXTERITY 3D+1

Blaster 5D+2, dodge 5D, melee combat 5D

KNOWLEDGE 2D+1

Business 3D, languages 3D+1, planetary systems 4D,

streetwise 3D+2, value 5D

MECHANICAL 3D+2

Astrogation 4D+2, repulsorlift operation 4D, space trans-

ports 6D, starship gunnery 4D

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 4D+2, con 3D+2, forgery 3D+2, gambling 3D, per-

suasion 3D+2

STRENGTH 3D

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Blaster repair 3D, repulsorlift repair 3D+2, space trans-

ports repair 4D

Force Points: 1

Character Points: 7

Move: 10

Equipment: Blast vest (+1D physical, +1 energy, torso only), comlink, heavy blaster pistol (5D), hold-out blaster (3D)

Capsule: Cev Malanx joined the smuggling profession at an early age, for his father plied the spacelanes of the Mid-Rim and took young Cev

along to show him the ropes. When Cev reached what his father considered the proper maturity level, he sent his son off to the Outer Rim in a battered and bruised Ghtroc tramp freighter. But Cev, or his ship rather, never made it.

He found himself stranded at Gelgelar Free Port on the swamp planet of Gelgelar. Though traffic through the city was slow, Cev eventually met up with Regec Sloom, a fledgling smuggler looking for a pilot and partner. Only after the two had left Gelgelar in Sloom's Corellian YT-1210 freighter, the *Starspin*, did Cev learn that Regec had a few *problems* with the Imperials.

Since then the two have spent most of their time eluding the Empire. But over the past year they have started to become less concerned with the Imperials and more concerned with profit. But Corva Sector has proven hostile toward Humans as of late, and both Cev and Regec plan to return to the Mid-Rim or even to the Core Worlds as soon as they complete their next transaction.

Regec Sloom. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 4D, blaster 4D+2, starship gunnery 5D+1*. Move: 10. Heavy Blaster (5D), hold-out Blaster (3D).

Both Malanx and his companion, Regec Sloom, have visited Beta II often over the past few years. Though Regec remains quiet throughout the exchange, Cev can provide the characters with some information on the city's establishments. As soon as their conversation ends, Cev and Regec plan to leave the planet.

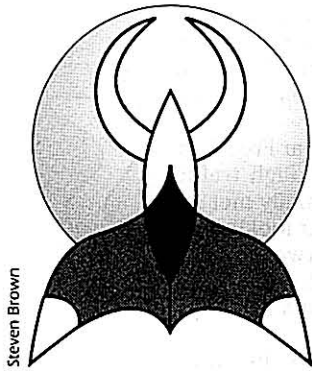
Should the characters decide to investigate the starport's control center, they arrive at a locked, heavy blast door. A slotted intercom next to the door crackles and buzzes, and then a filtered voice demands to know the characters' business. No matter what the characters say or do, the stormtroopers on the other side of the door refuse to allow the team inside...

Episode Two: The Infection Spreads

Read aloud:

You head down the central promenade of the docking bay complex, passing dozens of tramp freighters from all over the sector. The area where you left your ship had dim lighting and various sorts of debris scattered across the duracrete. But as you get closer to the main exit, the bays seem to be in much better shape — clear of trash, well-lit, and recently painted. Worker droids busy themselves fixing holes in the floor and walls, and several repulsor sleds filled with shining spare parts whiz by you in both directions.

Just as you pass Docking Bay 3, a boxy shape suddenly slides out of nowhere to block your progress. An old, bulky droid hovers about a meter above the floor as its control panels flash



Steven Brown
**Kaarenth Dissension
Emblem**

in a seemingly random pattern. A rectangular panel slips down to reveal the black end of a blaster.

"I would not advise proceeding on your current course," it says in a monotone buzz. "The Dissension does not appreciate intruders." Its head swivels around a full circuit as its single photoreceptor scans the wide corridor. As it turns you notice that a strange design covers the rear section of its dome. The bold, swooping insignia looks familiar, but you can't recall where you've seen it before.

The droid's photoreceptor stares at you again, whirring as it constantly refocuses. "Tell your comrades to reveal themselves."

Tee-Eleven at one time served the Old Republic as a military tactics specialist, programmed with the details of millions of campaigns ranging from feudal skirmishes to devastating space battles. But when the Empire emerged out of the remnants of the Imperial Senate, Tee-Eleven immediately received transfer orders. It was reprogrammed to run a garbage scow which would meander the sectors of the Core Worlds swallowing the debris that littered the spacelanes. Unfortunately for Tee-Eleven, the slicer who did the reprogramming failed to re-initialize one of its memory units. And worse, that unit did not mesh well with its new program.

Slowly, Tee-Eleven's subroutines mutated as a result of the incompatibility. Its "thoughts" became erratic, snapping into one process in the middle of another. This sudden, involuntary shifting led to several "psychoses," the most problematic of which was paranoia. Not more than three months after its recommissioning, Tee-Eleven and the garbage scow vanished into the Outer Rim.

Agents of the Kaarenth Dissension recently recovered the scow (after a short blaster exchange). Tee-Eleven was transferred to a droid storage bay for purging — again. This time, however, it would not let them ravage his insides. After several weeks the slave droid in charge had lost all patience with Tee-Eleven and decided to send it out on the next request no matter what kind of droid was needed.

Tee-Eleven's only assignment on its current mission is to keep the Skipray blastboat docked in Bay 3 ready for immediate take-off. But it knows that the "others" slip through the shadows that its photoreceptor cannot penetrate, stalking it, waiting to catch it unaware and twist up its memory banks again.

Tee-Eleven snaps at the slightest provocation, lashing out with bright blaster fire. On a Moder-

ate roll the characters may *con* or *persuade* the droid that they stand with it as friends, not against it as enemies. If this occurs, Tee-Eleven decides that the characters can protect it better than its current master, and offers to join the team. But even if the characters decline the offer, Tee-Eleven follows them throughout the city, hanging back just enough to keep within sight of the group. As time passes, however, his circuits malfunction and he concludes that the characters somehow tricked him. He quickly heads back to Docking Bay 3 to await his master, afraid of the wrath that might come upon him if he should be discovered away from his post.

It has learned little of the Dissension aside from its name, though it has noticed that during the past several weeks, tension among the members of the group has increased significantly.

■ T-11 (Tee-Eleven)

Type: JV-Z1/S DataBank Droid

DEXTERITY 2D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

MECHANICAL 1D

PERCEPTION 1D

STRENGTH 1D

TECHNICAL 2D+1

Equipped with:

- Low-power repulsorlift unit
- Box-like torso and dome head
- Concealed blaster (4D)
- Vocabulator speech/sound system

Move: 8

Size: 1 meter tall

Game Notes: The constant short-circuiting of Tee-Eleven's systems has caused him to lose all specific knowledge and capabilities beyond his base attributes — he has lost all of his skills.

Docking Bay 3 houses a blastboat that bears the same strange markings found on Tee-Eleven's dome. The vessel seems a deep gray in color, but closer examination reveals a thin film of dust and grime that covers its metal surface, darkening its base hue.

Characters making a Moderate *Knowledge* roll can vaguely identify the strange markings as the symbol for the Kaarenth Dissension. The blastboat is the only vessel they've seen in the starport bearing such insignia. Should the characters feel that this starship is somehow important to their mission, they may attach their sub-space tracking device to its hull on an Easy *space transports repair* roll.

Heading Into Betha Starport

Read aloud:

After about 10 more minutes of walking, you finally reach the gaping exit of the complex. But looking out over the rocky landscape, you don't see any sign of a city — not even a single building — just the edge of a cliff about 35 meters away.

The city is built in a huge crevasse, with several bridges spanning the distance between the two sheer cliff faces. All of the city's establishments have been carved right into the rock. Six-meter wide turbolifts run through the city's three levels — Level Three being the bottom-most — in cylindrical shafts cut into the cliffs. The characters never have to wait more than three minutes for a lift. The docking bay complex is to the west of the city. When the characters approach the edge of the cliff, read the following aloud:

As you cross the pale-orange, rocky ground and near the cliff's edge, a tramp freighter soars by overhead and then disappears into the docking bays behind you. You continue forward, and when you get within five meters of the ledge, you see a gleaming metal cylinder set within the cliff wall nearby. Metal doors slide open with a whoosh to reveal the turbolift's interior.

The turbolift takes the characters to whichever city Level — one, two, or three — they desire.

Few people wander the city, giving the place a somewhat eerie feel — much like that of planets suddenly abandoned after their spice mines ran dry. The beings the characters do see are all aliens, who glare at any Humans in the group until one group or the other passes out of sight.

The characters may visit the city's establishments in any order they choose. Apart from those detailed below, the buildings along the cliff faces belong to private individuals — most of whom are not at home at the moment.

When the characters attempt to cross one of the bridges that stretches between the cliffs, read the following aloud:

As you cross one of the city's many bridges, a trio of Hammerheads steps onto the opposite side of the span. They walk casually toward you, slapping each other on the back as they whisper in a voice too low for you to hear. As they get closer, you notice that they seem to be staggering and bumping into each other randomly.

When they get within a few meters of you, they fan out into a line that blocks your passage. The center Hammerhead stares at you with its bulbous, milky-white eyes. "New here," it slurs in broken Basic. The two aliens flanking the speaker erupt in groan-like laughing.

These Hammerheads once plied the space lanes of the Mid-Rim Territories, but were ambushed by a group of Humans — former Imperials fleeing the Core Worlds after the fall of the Empire. These Humans stole the aliens' vessel and left them stranded in space in a malfunctioning assault shuttle that was already low on power.

Only through their technological skill and a string of good luck did the Hammerheads survive, and they vowed to find — and wreak their revenge upon — the men who had done this to them.

In their drunken stupor, the aliens mistakenly believe that the characters are members of the Imperial group that left them to die. The characters must proceed carefully in their conversation with the Hammerheads; a single mis-spoken word or contradictory attitude could result in a firefight. A Very Difficult *con* or *persuasion* roll, however, might allow the characters to pass without incident.

3 Drunk Ithorians. All stats are 2D except: *blaster* 3D, *brawling* 2D+2. Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D).

The Personal Supply Shop — Level One, West Cliff

Read aloud:

In a shaded corner of the city, blocked from the sun by a curving precipice high above, hangs a pressure-painted sign bearing the words "Serrooin's Gear."

Glaring white glow panels bathe the interior of the shop, reflecting off the sparkling metal, crystal, and transparisteel parts of the equipment on display. Nooks and niches carved into the rock walls hold both new and used gear, from illegal BlasTech heavy blasters to the latest in computer infiltration slicer cards.

Behind a smooth, stone counter on one side of the shop stands a Squib. "What do you want?" he says as one of his hands slips below the counter.

The Squib, Arrejis Mellaha, doesn't like the atmosphere that has fallen over the city lately. He trusts no one at this point, though he bears no particular ill will toward Humans, or toward the New Republic, for that matter. If it weren't for the government bans placed on certain trade goods, he'd be out of a job.

But he has learned not to become involved with any side in any dispute — better to sell to both and enjoy the extra profit. With the Kaarenth Dissension's recent offerings to alien smugglers in Corva Sector, the renovation of Betha II's starport facilities especially, Arrejis feels the war steadily marching toward his doorstep. And he plans to relocate to a safer sector before the fighting begins.

Since he needs to gather as many credits as possible to facilitate his move, he sells anything a customer shows interest in, including information. He answers any question put to him to the best of his knowledge for the fair price of 50 credits each.

Characters can find much legal and illegal equipment here, priced at 20% above normal. The gamemaster should use her discretion as to what Arrejjs has left in stock.

When the characters decide to leave, Arrejjs offers one final warning: stay away from Docking Bay Three. He will not explain further, saying that he wishes to distance himself from the conflict.

Arrejjs Mellaha. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 3D+1, blaster 3D+2, dodge 4D, running 3D, Knowledge 3D, business 3D+2, value 4D, bargain 3D+2, con 4D, persuasion 3D+1.* Move: 8. Blaster (4D).

Starship Supplies — Level Two, East Cliff

Read aloud:

On the second level of the East Cliff you find a gaping square hole about 15 meters high and 40 meters wide. A computer display to one side reads "Univamp StarParts" in huge block-letters.

Inside, a few small ships and several stripped hulks sit under the harsh light of the powerful, cone-shaped illuminators hanging above them. As you march across the gray duracrete, your footsteps echo off the high ceiling and several aliens in the midst of repairing a Z-95 Headhunter look up from their work.

The aliens do not wish to dally with the characters, saying they have important business to attend to at dusk. If pressed about their business at dusk, the aliens take on an arrogant tone and tell the characters to mind their own business, or else they might learn the nature of their upcoming meeting too soon for their liking.

If the characters ask about spare parts or new equipment for their starship, the owner, a Chadra-Fan named Gwinne Strov, emerges to taunt any Humans in the characters' group for a few moments, saying how typical it is that Humans are always hoarding the choice starship parts for themselves and their constant modifications. He continues by saying that Humans never leave well enough alone, and always have to bother themselves with other beings' business. The rest of the workers in the bay leave their work and stand behind their boss.

Strov refuses to sell the characters any starship parts, and firmly asks them to leave his establishment.

If the characters watch Univamp StarParts from afar, they eventually see most of the aliens pack up for the day and head off along the starports cliff ledges and turbolifts for their meeting at the Lazy Bergruutfa Cantina.

Lazy Bergruutfa Cantina — Level Three, East Cliff

Read aloud:

The inside of the Lazy Bergruutfa sprawls back into the cliff in a large circular chamber. Stone tables and benches sit haphazardly about the domed cantina, all centered around a disc-like stage where a group of aliens bash out garbled music. A hastily written sign pasted onto a huge, black, round instrument proclaims the group "The Galactic Plague."

Dozens of alien species — including Duros, Givins, Rodians, Kubaz and Gotal — crowd around the stone tables, muttering, whispering and laughing. Above their heads, near the ceiling of the large chamber, hangs a wispy cloud of cigarra smoke, highlighted by the red light from the few dim glow panels.

Several of the cantina's patrons look up as you enter, nudging each other while they stare at you.

The Bergruutfa offers the finest in smugglers' beverages — Corellian whiskey, Renan Irongut, Reactor Cores, spiced liquor, Socorran raava, and Ottegan mead.

The alien patrons ignore Human characters. Should a character provoke one of the aliens, it gives a harsh warning and resumes its business. If the provocation continues, however, the alien — and at least two of its friends — attack.

Alien characters who distance themselves from their Human companions have a better chance at acceptance. A larger-than-normal Kubaz named Shuzz wanders the cantina, stopping at various tables. He eventually sits down with the alien character and invites him to a special meeting at dusk. Shuzz does not explain further, saying only that the assembly will help all alien species across the galaxy retake their long-forgotten rights.

If the characters have arrived in time for the scheduled meeting, read the following aloud:

The musicians drag away their clunky instruments, leaving the stage completely clear. Then all at once the muttering of the patrons falls off, as if they were waiting for something — or someone.

A moment later, sharp footfalls break the silence. With long, deliberate strides, a tall figure — a Human — moves through the crowd and steps up onto the bare stage. He pivots on his heel, and stares out over his audience.

The man wears a black Imperial uniform with a multicolored rectangle of insignia across his left breast. His hair is brushed and oiled straight back, giving it the look of a tight helmet as it reflects the red light streaming down from the glow panels.



“Beings of the galaxy,” he begins. His voice sounds shrill and scratchy, as if ravaged by overuse. “You know as well as I the dangers of this New Republic government. We cannot let ourselves fall beneath them. And we cannot wait for them to gather their forces for the final battle for dominance.”

He eyes suddenly meet yours, and he glares at you for a moment, then looks away. “We must strike now. Strike hard, strike fast! Strike to *kill!*” He emphasizes the last phrase with a punch into an open palm.

He lets the silence hang for a moment, allowing his words to gestate, and then steps off the stage.

The Human — Commander Ulcane — steps up to the bar and orders a Corellian whiskey. Several aliens converge on him in a tight circle as they strain to hear his plans. Characters who succeed at a Difficult *Perception* check overhear snippets of the conversation. Apparently, Ulcane belongs to the Kaarenth Dissension. The former Imperials want nothing more than to distance themselves from their predecessors, at least that is what Ulcane says. The retaliation against the

New Republic will begin soon — the Dissension has already assembled a formidable fleet. It needs only a few more vessels, especially smaller ships to take on the New Republic’s starfighters. And that is where the alien smugglers come in.

Characters who study Ulcane’s clothing note an insignia on his uniform’s right shoulder — the same mark as the one on the droid Tee-Eleven and the blastboat in Bay 3.

A few of the aliens immediately voice their intention to join in the battle against the New Republic. The rest say nothing, but neither do they leave Ulcane’s side.

Then the conversation ends abruptly. Ulcane looks up and around, stands, and heads out of the cantina with a final nod to his listeners. Characters who succeed at an Easy *Perception* check notice that many of the aliens have slipped their hands to their blasters.

Two aliens — a Kubaz and a Givin — step in front of the cantina’s single exit, their blasters in hand. Six other aliens, the ones who had been speaking with Ulcane, draw their weapons and open fire on the characters.

The aliens chase the characters as far as the



docking bay complex, and then, apparently, give up.

10 Alien Smugglers. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity* 3D, *blaster* 3D+2, *dodge* 3D. Move: 10. Heavy blaster pistol (5D).

Meanwhile, Ulcane chuckles darkly to himself as he heads to his ship. He knows nothing of the characters' identity, thinking them merely a bunch of meddling smugglers, but he is pleased that his alien *friends* have finally fallen to his side. The New Republic in Corva Sector cannot stand against their combined force.

It takes Ulcane 10 minutes to arrive at and board his ship, a stolen and heavily modified Skipray blastboat, at Docking Bay 3. Four more minutes pass as the blastboat completes its power-up. He receives instant clearance from the control center, which is run by members of the Dissension, and plots a course to the Spawn Nebula.

When the characters arrive and attempt to plant their subspace tracking device, Tee-Eleven slips from the shadows near the bay's entrance and opens fire (if he hasn't already been somehow disabled by the characters). Once they have

defeated the paranoid droid, the characters may successfully affix the subspace tracking device to the outside of the blastboat on an Easy *space transports repair* roll.

■ Commander Meres Ulcane

Type: Kaarenth Dissension Officer

DEXTERITY 3D+2

Archaic guns 8D, blaster 7D, dodge 5D+1

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Alien species 5D, bureaucracy 5D+1, cultures 4D+2, intimidation 5D, languages 8D, planetary systems 6D, survival 4D+1, tactics 6D

MECHANICAL 2D

Astrogation 3D, repulsorlift operation 3D, space transports 5D, starship gunnery 3D

PERCEPTION 4D

Command 8D+2, con 5D+1, persuasion 6D

STRENGTH 2D+1

Stamina 3D+1

TECHNICAL 2D

Demolition 4D+1, security 3D+2

This character is Force-sensitive.

Force Points: 3

Dark Side Points: 4

Character Points: 11

Move: 10

Equipment: Comlink, datapad, heavy blaster pistol (5D), slugthrower (4D)

Capsule: Meres Ulcane entered the Imperial Academy at the age of 17. Though he scored low on his

entrance exams, Ulcane had an uncle in the military who persuaded members of the applicant acceptance board to let his nephew bypass some of the minimum requirements.

Ulcane's first posting put him in a lowly demolition squad, a skill for which he seemed to possess little natural talent. He began to suspect that some of his superiors detested him for his familial connections and planned to cut short his career. When his first assignment thrust him and his squad into the heart of Rebel Alliance territory, he confirmed his suspicions, and knew that his rise to the top might prove more difficult than he had imagined.

Field promotion had become standard practice with the outbreak of direct war between the Alliance and the Empire, and there Ulcane saw his chance. When his squad detonated an entire Rebel outpost, only he escaped — he had sealed the rest of his team inside their target.

Over the years he rose steadily — and always under suspicious circumstances — through the Imperial ranks. Since his comrades failed to accept him, Ulcane kept to himself. He immersed himself in the study of alien cultures, hoping to obtain a transfer to the Outer Rim where he believed he would gain more control over his underlings and fewer restrictions from his superiors.

A few years later, mere months after the Empire's devastating defeat at Endor, Captain Ulcane fled from a mass mutiny of his Outer Rim troops who threatened to eject him into space. He eventually fell in league with another former Imperial, a mysterious man who promised a new, stronger Imperial presence — a man who had created the Kaarenth Dissension from a splinter of Palpatine's Empire.

Ulcane soon launched his master plot to pit the aliens of the Outer Rim against the New Republic. He knows that without the support of the non-Human species, the New Republic will fall hard. He enjoys his excursions to the smuggler holes scattered across Corva Sector, though he never travels without his prized archaic slugthrower — and a good blaster, just in case.

Skipray Blastboat. Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 5D+1, *capital ship piloting* 5D, maneuverability 1D+2 (2D+2 in atmosphere), space 8, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 2D+1, shields 2D. Weapons: 3 medium ion cannons (fire-linked; fire

control 3D+2, damage 4D+2), proton torpedo launcher (fire control 2D, damage 9D), 2 laser cannons (fire-linked; fire control 2D, damage 5D+1), concussion missile launcher (fire control 2D, damage 6D).

Episode Three: Blast Out of Betha

Once the characters return to the *Surge* and prepare to leave the planet, the control center informs them that they do not have takeoff clearance. Only on a Difficult *con* roll may they convince the control center to allow them to exit the docking bay. If the characters proceed without clearance, the metallic voice screams over and over that the *Surge* may not leave the city.

When the characters exit Betha II's atmosphere, an Easy *sensors* roll alerts them to a group of four vessels coming at them fast. If they fail the roll, however, the incoming ships gain a free round of fire upon the *Surge*. Read the following aloud:

As you pull away from the orange sphere of Betha II and head into the blackness of space, four sparkling objects career toward you, skimming the planet's atmosphere.

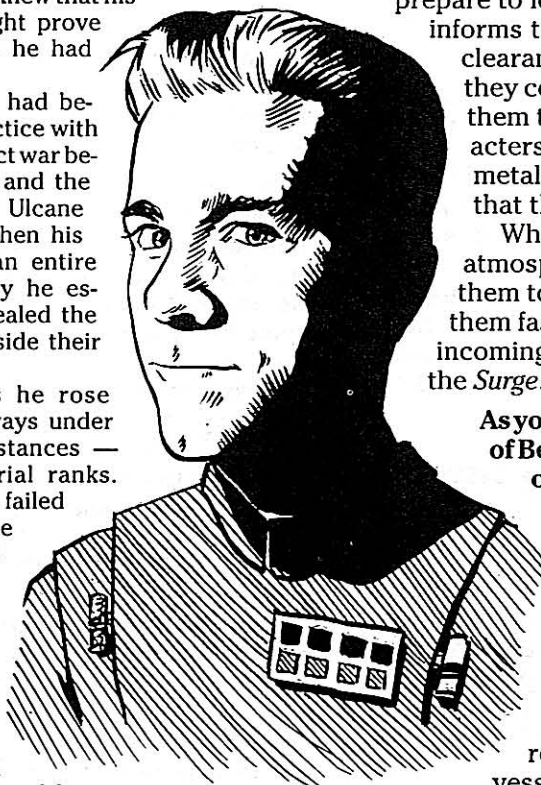
Ulcane asked his newfound alien allies to destroy the *Surge*. The more he thought about their curious arrival, the more suspicious he became. After a search through his own ship's data records, he found no references to a vessel in this sector bearing the designation *Surge*. And he could not afford to take any chances.

If the characters helped Cev Malanx, the smuggler arrives in his tramp freighter, the *Starspin*, to aid the characters after the first round of combat. Read the following aloud:

As laser fire slashes through space all around you, another ship zooms by overhead. Green bursts of energy lance out from the vessel and slam into a Z-95 Headhunter, sending the small fighter into a tight spin.

"Well," a voice howls over the comm, "looks like we'll be able to pay you back after all." Cev Malanx's tramp freighter makes a tight loop and comes in again with its laser cannons blazing.

2 Z-95 Headhunters. Starfighter, *starfighter piloting* 4D, *starship gunnery* 3D+1, maneuverability 1D, space 7, atmosphere 400; 1,150 kmh, hull 4D, shields 1D. Weapons: 2 triple blasters (fire-linked; fire control 1D, damage 3D), concussion



missile launcher (fire control 1D, damage 7D).

2 Ghtroc Freighters. Starfighter, *space transports* 3D+2, *starship gunnery* 4D, maneuverability 1D, space 3, atmosphere 260; 750 kmh, hull 3D+2, shields 1D. Weapons: 1 double laser cannon (fire control 1D+2, damage 4D).

Starspin. Starfighter, *space transports* 6D, *starship gunnery* 5D+1, maneuverability 1D, space 4, atmosphere 480; 800 kmh, hull 5D, shields 2D+2. Weapons: 1 laser cannon (fire control 2D, damage 6D), 2 concussion missile tubes (fire control 1D, damage 8D).

Cev duels with one of the Ghtroc freighters while the characters engage the remaining three enemy vessels.

After the battle, Cev, if he survives, bids the characters farewell, saying that he's heading for the Core Worlds. He hopes that their paths cross again soon.

On an Easy *sensors* roll, the characters can pick up the ShipFinder's signal. An Easy *astrogation* roll allows them to program the coordinates for the light speed jump to a nearby system.

Episode Four: Into the Nebula

Read aloud:

After only an hour out from Betha II, the nav computer begins its countdown to normal-space re-entry. The chronometer clicks down to zero and, as your pilot eases the lightspeed throttle forward, the gray clouds of hyperspace erupt into star lines and then snap into gleaming star-points.

And then the *Surge* shudders wildly, throwing everything — and everyone — not strapped down halfway across the ship.

Every character not strapped into their station must make an Easy *Dexterity* roll or suffer 2D of damage from smashing into one of the ship's interior bulkheads. The *Surge*'s pilot must make a Moderate *space transports* roll to steady the ship. As a result of the wild bucking, characters must make an Easy *Dexterity* roll each time they want to attempt a task.

The characters have dropped out of hyperspace at the edge of the Spawn Nebula. The gases, radiation, and gravitational energy of the nebula affected the *Surge*'s nav computer, causing it to return to normal space too early.

Any character making a Moderate *sensors* roll determines that the *Surge* must alter its course since, on their present vector, the ship will plunge into the heart of the nebula — and might never escape in one piece. The slight course adjust-

ment brings the *Surge* into a pocket of "empty" space within the nebula cloud.

If the characters do not change the ship's trajectory, its shields completely burn out after 20 minutes. This time an Easy *sensors* roll alerts them to the needed course correction. In this section of the nebula bursts of electrical energy erupt from where volatile gases collide, slicing through the cloud like huge ionization beams. As a result, for every additional 10 minutes that the characters remain within the nebula cloud, a randomly determined ship system goes off-line, returning to full function after several moments.

When the characters enter the pocket of "empty" space within the nebula, read the following aloud:

The *Surge* continues to buck uncontrollably, and you start to worry that it might fly apart. Then suddenly, the terrible shuddering ceases. You plunge out of the nebula, wisps of galactic dust trailing behind you. But you haven't escaped the cloud, you have only entered an empty pocket of space deep within it.

As you look out, dozens of tiny, gray blobs fill the viewport, each growing with the passing seconds. Then their details begin to form, and you realize that you're looking at ships. And not just any ships. Assault shuttles, system patrol craft, strike cruisers and frigates float lazily in space, highlighted by the red glow of the surrounding nebula cloud.

As the *Surge* levels out, it rises higher than the closest strike cruiser. Your vision finally falls past the cruiser, and then your mouths drop. The gray-white diamond shape of an Imperial Star Destroyer looms in the viewport, getting larger and larger as you drift closer. It is a monstrous thing, huge and imposing, a vessel with enough firepower to destroy an entire fleet.

All the ships orbit a central repair facility built around a reactor core, a spherical object nearly the size of the Star Destroyer. As the characters look on, a Corellispace Gymsnor-3 freighter shoots out from one of the reactor core's many docking bays and rotates 90 degrees, flashing its underside at the *Surge*. The pilot of the freighter comes over the comm, "Hey, just a word of advice. Don't try cheatin' 'em today. They ain't in the mood." The ship then leaps into hyperspace with a burst of white light.

Luckily for the characters, these Imperial ships currently hold no crews. Over the past year the Kaarenth Dissension has hoarded these vessels here, repairing and stripping what they could, readying this massive strike force for the Dissension's first battle against the New Republic.

The subspace tracker's signal emanates from a landing bay within the reactor core. Ulcane has landed here to discuss the shipyard's progress with its administrator.

Any character making an Easy *demolition* roll realizes that detonating the reactor will destroy all the ships docked in the repair facility, as well as all the vessels within the nebula pocket. The charges must be placed as close as possible to the core's main power coupling — inside the reactor sphere — to ensure complete destruction. No amount of firing upon the hull of the reactor facility has any effect, since it is enshrouded in a layer of heavy shielding.

When the characters approach the facility, a static-riddled hail demands to know their business. The Imperials continue to step up security as the time for the campaign against the New Republic draws near. Only a Difficult *con* roll allows the *Surge* to land in one of the gaping docking bays near the equator of the reactor.

Episode Five: The Shipyard's Heart

Read aloud:

As you zip through the shipyard, you notice tiny flurries of motion along the hulls of many of the floating vessels. Worker droids flit up and down, left and right, repairing damage that could not be fixed from the inside of the ship. Streaks of carbon scoring mar the dark gray hulls of many of the vessels and a few even have jagged, gaping holes with hundreds of tubes, pipes, and wires spilling out.

The spherical reactor core rotates slowly about a central axis. Widely spaced rings of tiny, square light panels circumnavigate the reactor's metallic surface, and tunnels open up to the sphere's interior repair and landing bays.

You head toward the docking bay designated by the core's control center and then slip into the rectangular opening. A wide tunnel with blinking blue lights running in parallel lines on each face leads inward. Finally, after about 30 seconds, you exit into a high-ceilinged bay.

Squads of stormtroopers march in tight formation across the polished, black floor as several uniformed men at one end of the bay unload crates from a modified Corellian YT-1300 freighter.

You set the *Surge* down in a clear section of floor and shut down its engines.

For the first 10 minutes, the stormtroopers and naval personnel in the docking bay ignore the characters, thinking them mere smugglers here to drop off supplies. After that point, a squad of troops arrives to question the charac-

ters about the cargo to be unloaded ...

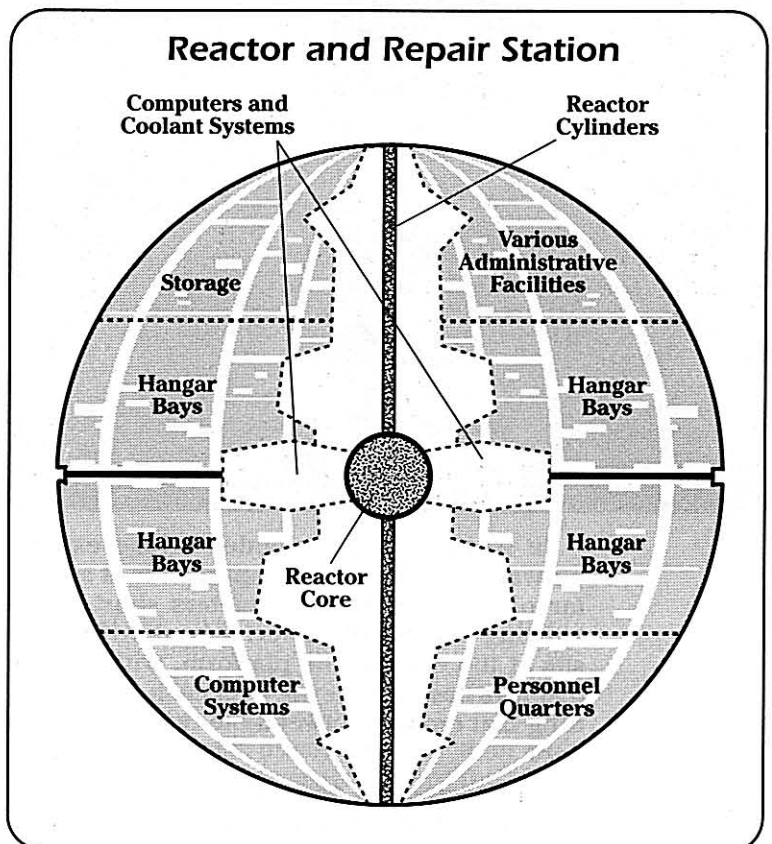
Computer interface terminals run along the base of the docking bay walls at five-meter intervals. A character plugging into the interface must make a Moderate *computer programming/repair* roll or Moderate *security* roll to locate the reactor's main power coupling. She may then download the information to a datapad which can show a map leading from the bay to the coupling.

Three repulsorsleds — two empty and one bearing five cases of food products — hover near the wall just a few meters away from the *Surge*. Characters may use them to enter the wide corridors leading to the reactor core under the guise of "transporting supplies."

It takes five minutes to reach the entrance to the main reactor section of the power station. A Moderate *security* roll opens the magnetic blast-door barring the entrance.

Read aloud:

The blast-door whips upward with a hiss, revealing the huge chamber that houses the main reactor. One massive, metallic cylinder hangs downward, its bottom a field of tiny, silver cones. A second cylinder of the same design pokes upward, ending about a few dozen meters below the first. Tendrils of blue energy crackle in arcs across the empty space between the two cylinders, drowning out all other sounds.





In front of you a slender bridge extends outward into the chamber and ends at a circular platform only a few meters short of the twisting tendrils of power. A bank of controls sits at the edge of the platform, with graphic displays flashing in sync with each arc of lightning that crosses between the two silver cylinders.

The characters need only set five thermal detonators (or jury-rig an explosive device using the canisters of illerium aboard their ship, a

block of detonite, and a timer) on the platform to have enough explosive force to destroy the reactor. After a Moderate *demolition* roll and two minutes of setting the charges, the characters may initiate the detonation timer and then head back to their ship. Unfortunately, as soon as one of the characters steps onto the control platform, an alarm alerts Imperial security.

Just as the characters prepare to leave the platform, read aloud:

As you turn to head out of the reactor chamber, a sudden hiss from above calls your attention. On the left side of the chamber, three stormtroopers step out onto a small observation balcony and aim their blaster rifles at you.

One round later four more stormtroopers open the blast-door to the bridge the characters are standing on and begin firing. Gamemasters should feel free to allow additional stormtroopers to join the battle if it will help enhance the adventure.

7 Stormtroopers. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity* 3D, *blaster* 4D, *blaster: blaster rifle* 5D, *brawling parry* 4D, *dodge* 4D, *brawling* 3D. Move: 10. Blaster rifle (5D),

stormtrooper armor (+2D physical, +1D energy, -1D *Dexterity*).

After the battle, the characters may race back to their ship unhindered. But as they enter the docking bay, Commander Ulcane's voice blares over the intercom, "Don't let the intruders escape! I know who you are. Give up now and I promise your punishment will be swift!" At the command of their leader, a squad of six stormtroopers breaks its tight formation and unleashes a barrage of blaster fire upon the characters (use the same stats listed

for the stormtroopers above). If the characters don't stop running, they reach the *Surge* in one combat round.

Episode Six: The Clock Is Ticking ...

Read aloud:

The *Surge* rises on its repulsors amidst a volley of blaster fire and then plunges into the exit tunnel. The running lights along the wide corridor zip by as the ship screams through. Then, up ahead, you see thick, metal bay doors sliding closed — one from above, the other from below.

The characters have two chances to escape. If the pilot makes a Moderate *space transports* roll, the *Surge* squeezes through in a fury of sparks as the closing doors scrape along its hull. Otherwise, a character at the laser cannon may blast the doors' override controls which are just to the right of the narrowing exit. The shot has a Moderate difficulty.

Read aloud:

You burst out of the spherical power station and begin to make your navigation computations for the jump to light speed, when movement from ahead calls your attention. Eight TIE fighters swoop over a strike cruiser and vector toward you. Blue sublight engines flare from behind their bulbous mid-sections as they accelerate.

The shipyard's administrator erroneously thought this location was totally hidden from the New Republic. Under this false sense of security he decided to refit all of his defense forces with new weaponry and put all available personnel on repair duties. These TIE fighters are flown by inexperienced pilots, since much of the facility's crew is busy trying to repair the other ships. They're not very effective under fire from a real enemy, but try to overwhelm the characters' ship by sheer numbers.

8 TIE Fighters. Starfighter, *starfighter piloting* 2D, *starship gunnery* 2D, maneuverability 2D, space 10, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 2D. Weapons: 2 laser cannons (fire-linked; fire control 2D, damage 5D).

The characters must blast past the TIE fighters while they continue calculating their jump to hyperspace. The TIE pilots offer easy targets — they clump together and try to attack all at once. Although this allows them greater firepower, it also brings them into a closer formation — any TIE fighter destroyed easily causes complications with nearby TIE fighters, possibly including control ionization, pilot confusion, or even colli-

sion. During the dogfight, however, the characters should be reminded that they're running against the clock — if they don't get out of the area soon, they're going to be going up in the reactor core fireball ...

After the battle with the TIE fighters ends, read the following aloud:

You speed away from the power station, knowing it's going to blow any minute now. And then, with a flicker, another ship enters the nebula's pocket — an Interdictor cruiser. Your onboard sensors start flashing as they pick up an increased power reading in one of the cruiser's gravity well projectors.

Interdictor Cruiser. Capital, *capital ship gunnery* 5D+1, *capital ship piloting* 5D, *capital ship shields* 4D, maneuverability 1D, space 6, hull 5D, shields 3D. Weapons: 20 quad laser cannons (fire control 2D, damage 4D), 1 gravity well projector (fire control 6D, damage blocks hyperspace travel).

One of the characters must make a Moderate *astrogation* roll to jump into hyperspace before the Interdictor cruiser uses its gravity well projector to block the *Surge's* escape path into hyperspace. If that fails, the characters may try a daring strafing run on the Interdictor cruiser — on a Very Difficult *starship gunnery* roll a character may damage and knock out the cruiser's single on-line gravity well projector.

When the characters have cleared their escape path, read aloud:

At the very moment you set the last hyperspace calculation, the power core explodes in a furious ball of orange-and-yellow flame and billowing, white gas. A shock wave of green energy bursts outward in a crackling sphere that grows impossibly larger every second. The ships floating nearest to the repair facility shudder as the wave hits them and then erupt in a violent blaze.

The green energy expands outward like a child's balloon, and you frantically punch at the *Surge's* controls. Something slams hard into the back of your ship. Then the stars elongate into bright lines and you leap into hyperspace.

Epilogue

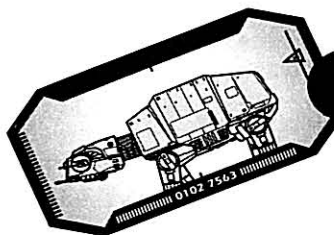
Back at the *Nova*, Captain Bluuis, now recovering from his illness, has learned of the characters' arrival and wishes to personally thank them for their heroic efforts. Read aloud:

With your covert operation now at an end, you find yourself once again aboard the *Nova*. Captain Bluuis enters the briefing room with an armload of datapads and stacks them on a

nearby table. Bluuis's skin has lost its sickly pallor and he seems to move more easily than he had the last time you met with him.

"I wish to commend you on your performance in this mission. Had the Kaarenth Dissension brought its fleet to bear, we would have

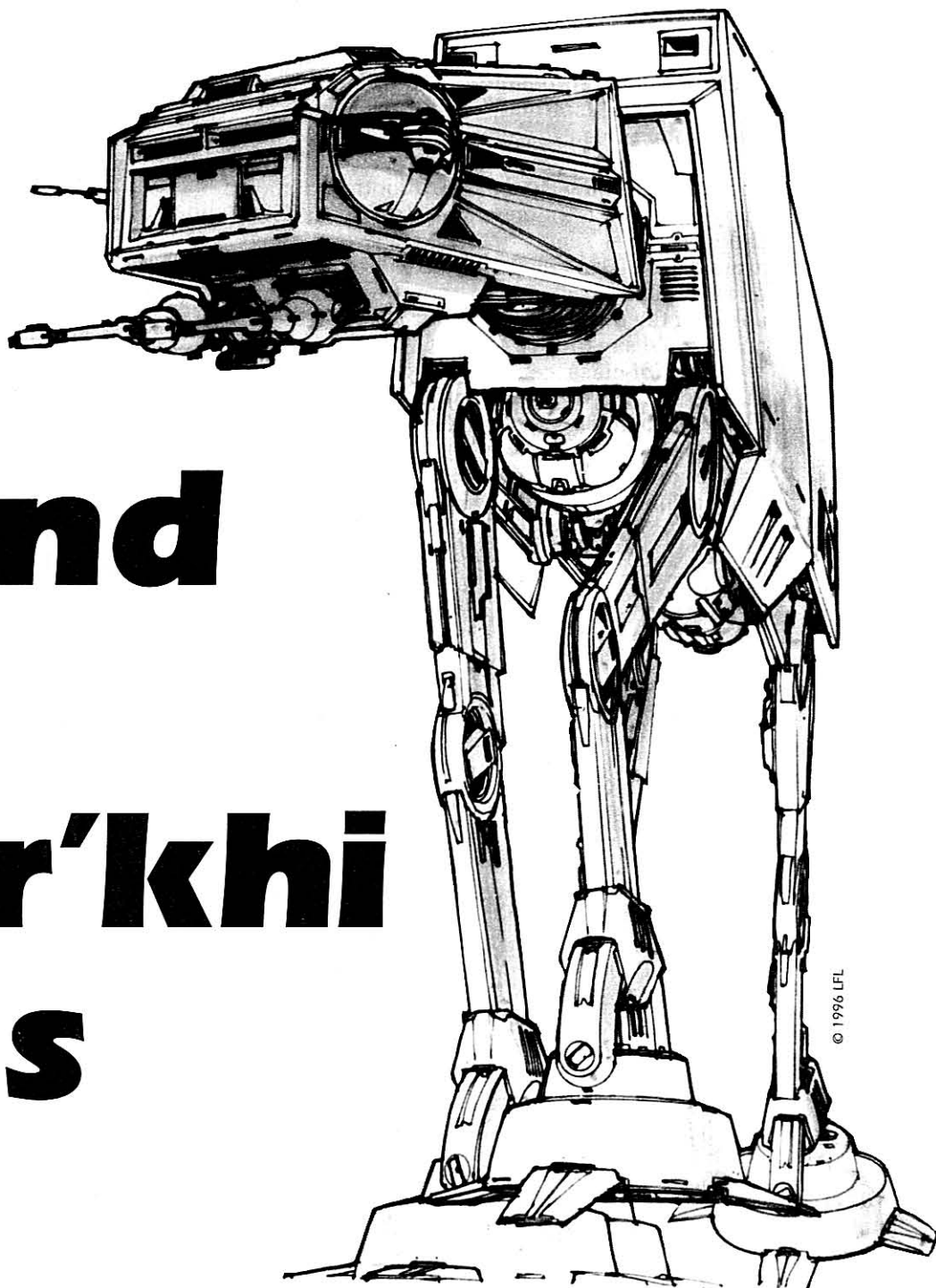
been doomed. Coruscant has now given priority to this sector for new ships and personnel, and we expect reinforcements within a month. And thanks to you, we should be able to hold off the remaining Imperials until then." ☺



OBJECTIVE SIGHTED

Stand at Bhir'khi Pass

By Timothy O'Brien



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The New Republic commander scanned the horizon rushing toward him. Somewhere on the other side of that ridge a metal behemoth was slowly striding forward to trample the life out of this planet. The cold mountain air whistled past, stinging his cheeks.

I should have been a poet, he thought. Or maybe a holo-vid writer.

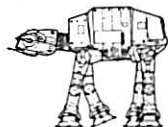
"Sir!" a sensor technician's reedy voice crackled in his ear. "New sensor data ..."

"Just a minute." The commander cut him off, then pulled into the slightly warmer air of the heavy tracker command vehicle, closing and latching the hatch behind him. He wedged his way into the sensor booth and leaned over the omniprobe screen.

"New data, sir. Definitely an AT-AT, still only one track showing the standard footfall. Something else—this is the new data—two repulsorlift shadows. Oval sensor tracks. They're moving around a lot. Didn't pick them up earlier because of the walker background vibration. Average speed of the new tracks is about 120 kilometers an hour. I'd say they're —"

"Imperial-class repulsortanks." The commander turned to the comm tech. "Advise vehicle commanders: two repulsortanks guarding the main target."

The commander rubbed his head. It was going to be a short day.



The AT-AT deck swayed slightly under the major's feet. The horizon dipped and rose slightly with each step his walker took. Several hundred meters ahead of the walker a tank came to a virtual halt as it swerved to double back and continue its orbit of the slower AT-AT. The tank's twin, behind the AT-AT, was probably doing exactly the same. There was no particular reason to circle the AT-AT at such high speed — the tank crews were simply showing off their speed and maneuverability.

Pucks, thought the major. I could step on one of your precious little tanks and crush it. If any of his men had voiced such a thought he would have had him stockaded, but he couldn't stand the blasted little floating pests either. Reminded him entirely too much of the Rebel repulsortanks.

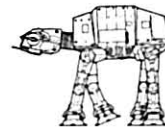
They're out there somewhere. Lying in wait. Ready to spring one of their cowardly, stock-in-trade ambushes.

"Sir! Relay from Regimental Headquarters!" the co-pilot barked.

The major scanned the message and his lips tightened into a firm line. "Corporal, request our

flankers to form up in line and prepare for engagement."

The major smiled. It was shaping up to be a short day.



"Stand at Bhir'khi Pass" is a *Star Wars Miniature Battles* scenario revolving entirely around vehicles, mainly repulsortanks. The *Star Wars Miniatures Battles Companion* is needed to play this scenario.

This battle is presented at a different scale than the standard 1 inch = 2 meters. The vehicle scale used for this scenario is 1 centimeter = 2 meters, neatly keeping the range numbers while increasing the usable table ranges. Most micro-armor miniatures fall roughly into this scale. This allows the battle to be fought at more realistic ranges than allowed by the larger squad scale.

Included in this article are several scale top view vehicle templates suitable for photocopying for personal use. These vehicle templates are at a 1 centimeter scale and show the correct weapon mounts and features for each vehicle.

The Situation

This battle occurs in a valley in Bhir'khi Pass, an access point to the mountain city of Marter An on the Outer Rim world Sheris. The battle occurs toward the end of the rule of Grand Admiral Thrawn, when the Imperial forces are on the offensive and gaining ground.

The Imperials have dropped a vanguard force to seize a major spaceport. The spaceport is protected by powerful planetary defense shields, and must be seized before the main landing force can be dropped. To this end a mixed force consisting of an AT-AT, stormtroopers, and repulsortanks has landed at the closest point possible, on the other side of a mountain ridge. (The stormtroopers are aboard the AT-AT and will not be a factor in the battle.) If the Imperials can get through the pass to the spaceport, they can quickly knock out the shield generators and land a large enough force to blitz the primary continent before local planetary forces can be organized.

The New Republic forces landed only shortly before the Imperials arrived in system, and were still unloading troops as the Imperials made their landing. A motley force of New Republic Combat Assault Vehicles (CAVs) were sent to quickly bottle up the advancing Imperial force. They chose Bhir'khi Pass as the best defensive site to halt the Imperial advance. If this small Imperial force can be stopped here, the remaining New

Republic forces will be able to deploy, and the local planetary defense forces will have time to mobilize.

The Forces

The Imperial forces consist of an AT-AT and two heavy repulsortanks. The AT-AT is carrying a platoon of stormtroopers, but since part of the Imperial objective is to get through the pass as quickly as possible, the troopers are not counted toward the Squad Generation Point balance.

For this confrontation, the New Republic contingent consists of a roughly equivalent force of seven freerunners and a heavy tracker.

Notice that the SGP balance is far out of balance and that the Imperials are significantly outnumbered. Playtesting shows that the Imperials nevertheless have an advantage in crew and vehicle quality.

Imperial Forces

■ All Terrain Armored Transport (AT-AT)

Drive System: Walker

Crew: 5

Passengers: 40

Turns: 1

Turn Distance: 4

Move: 21

Cautious: 2

Cruise: 6

Top: 21

Accel/Decel: 2/4

Body Str: 18

Body Pts: 180

Cover: F

Weapons:

2 Mark 2e/W Medium Blaster Cannon

Fire Arc: F

Skill: Vehicle blasters

Fire Control: 2

Range: 25-125/375/750

Damage: 9

2 Mark 3e/W Heavy Laser Cannon (fire-linked)

Fire Arc: F

Skill: Vehicle blasters

Fire Control: 2

Range: 25-250/750/1500

Damage: 18

SGPs: 822

■ Imperial Heavy Repulsortank

Drive System: Repulsorlift

Crew: 5

Passengers: 1

Turns: 2

Turn Distance: 3

Move: 105

Cautious: 10

Cruise: 30

Top: 105

Accel/Decel: 10/10

Flight Ceiling: 2m

Body Str: 10

Body Pts: 100

Cover: Full

Weapons:

Mark 4e/S Heavy Laser Cannon (320 SGPs)

Fire Arc: T

Skill: Vehicle blasters

Fire Control: 3

Range: 100-500/1500/2500

Damage: 12

Mark 3/S Medium Blaster Cannon (64 SGPs)

Fire Arc: LFR

Skill: Vehicle blasters

Fire Control: 1

Range: 25-100/250/500

Damage: 8

SGPs: 585

Imperial Assault Crews

- 18 Average Troopers (five in each vehicle, plus one commander in each vehicle).
- DEX 3, *blaster* 5, *blaster artillery* 5, *vehicle blasters* 4; KNO 1, *survival* 2; MEC 4, *repulsorlift operations* 5, *walker operation* 5; PER 2; STR 1; TEC 1; Move: 10.
- Walk Rate: 8; Run Rate: 13.
- Weapons: blaster pistol.
- Commander: *command* 4.
- Squad Generation Points: 561

Imperial SGP Total: 2577

New Republic Forces

■ KAAC Freerunner

Drive System: Repulsorlift

Crew: 4

Turns: 3

Turn Distance: 2

Move: 105

Cautious: 10

Cruise: 30

Top: 105

Accel/Decel: 10/10

Players Be Warned

Star Wars Miniature Battles is a fun pop-and-pretzels game. There is enough detail to keep things interesting, but the system is designed to reflect the simple action-adventure nature of the *Star Wars* setting. The dice can bomb-out or roll-over at the worst possible moment for someone and take the game wildly out of control. Vehicles will charge straight into obstacles and armor will fail. While this does a good job of simulating the chaotic nature of combat, it can also be very frustrating. No battle plan survives the first series of bad rolls. On the other hand, watching your opponent deal with this can be very amusing, at least until it happens to you.

This particular scenario may seem out of balance. The Imperials are outnumbered almost three-to-one and by about 2500 SGPs. Extensive playtesting shows that the Imperials nevertheless have a good chance of winning. The New Republic can expect to lose one tank every second or third round, unless they can be seen by the AT-AT, in which case they'll lose a tank every round, barring bomb-outs.

Flight Ceiling: 2m
Body Str: 6
Body Pts: 60
Cover: F

Weapons:

Mark 2/S Heavy Blaster Cannon

Fire Arc: LFR
Skill: Vehicle blasters
Fire Control: 1
Range: 25-100/450/1000
Damage: 10

Mark 2/S Heavy Blaster Cannon

Fire Arc: T
Skill: Vehicle blasters
Fire Control: 1
Range: 25-100/450/1000
Damage: 10

Mark 3e/S Laser Cannon

Fire Arc: LBR
Skill: Vehicle blasters
Fire Control: 2
Range: 25-150/400/750
Damage: 8

SGPs: 477

Freerunner Crews

- 28 Veteran Troopers (four per freerunner).
- DEX 2, *vehicle blasters* 4; KNO 1; MEC 2, *repulsorlift operation* 4; PER 2; STR 2; TEC 2; Move 8.
- **Walk Rate:** 7; **Run Rate:** 12.
- **Weapons:** blaster pistols.
- **Commander:** *command* 4.
- **Specialists** (for each freerunner):
 1: *repulsor operations* 5.
 2: *vehicle blasters* 5.
- **Squad Generation Points:** 130

■ **Heavy Tracker**

Drive System: Repulsorlift
Crew: 6
Passengers: 5
Turns: 2
Turn Distance: 3
Move: 45
Cautious: 4
Cruise: 12
Top: 45

Accel/Decel: 4/4
Flight Ceiling: 2m
Body Str: 12
Body Pts: 120
Cover: F

Weapons:

Mark 2e/W Heavy Laser Cannon

Fire Arc: T
Skill: Vehicle blasters
Fire Control: 2/4*
Range: 25-250/750/1500
Damage: 14
 *Against low level targets

SGPs: 376

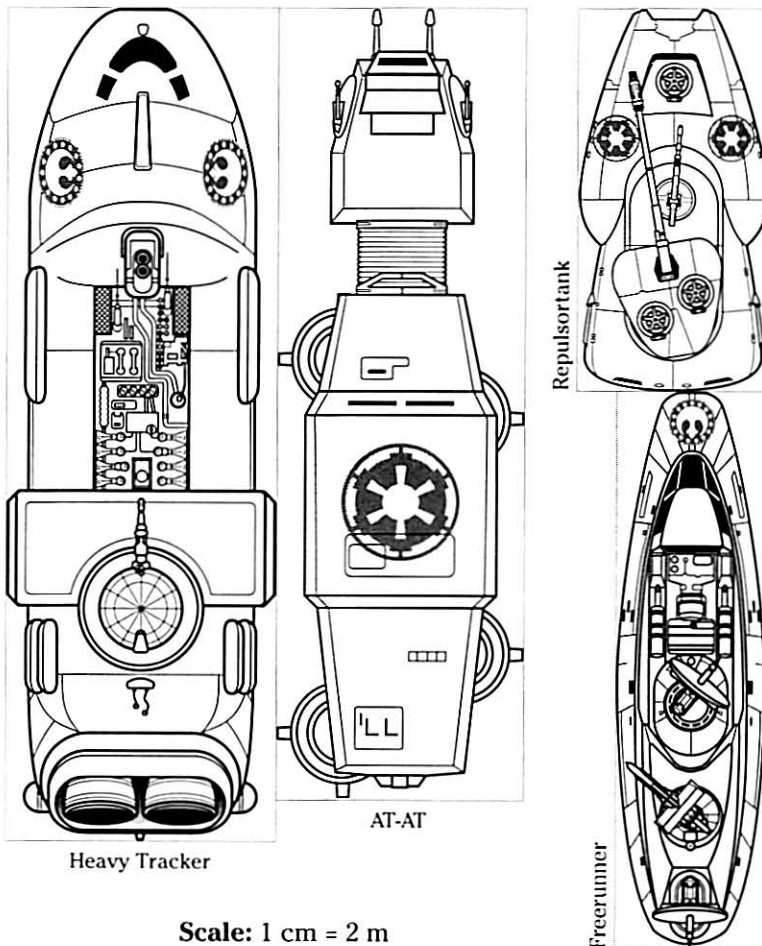
Heavy Tracker Crew

- 6 Veteran Troopers.
- DEX 2, *vehicle blasters* 4; KNO 1; MEC 2, *repulsorlift operations* 4; PER 2; STR 2; TEC 2. Move: 8.
- **Walk Rate:** 7; **Run Rate:** 13.
- **Weapons:** blaster pistol.
- **Commander:** *command* 5.
- **Specialists:**
 1. *repulsorlift operations* 5.
 2. *vehicle blasters* 5.
- Squad Generation Points:** 259

Heavy Tracker Sensor Crew

- 5 Veteran Troopers.
- DEX 2; KNO 1; MEC 2, *communications* 4, *sensors* 4; PER 2; STR 2; TEC 2; Move: 8.
- **Walk Rate:** 8; **Run Rate:** 13.
- **Weapons:** blaster pistol.
- **Commander:** *command* 4.
- **Specialists:**
 1. *sensors* 5.
 2. *communications* 5.
- Note:** the sensor team has two sensor specialists and two communications specialists. This team (two comm techs, two sensor techs and

**Stand at Bhir'khi Pass
Vehicle Counters**



Stephen Crane

Permission is granted to photocopy this page for personal use.

the commander) runs the heavy tracker's omniprobe sensor array, and rides in the vehicle.

Squad Generation Points: 240

New Republic SGP Total: 5124

The Battlefield

The Bhir'khi Pass valley is glacially carved — long and broad with light vegetation, a few large freestanding boulders, and a small lake at its center. The pass goes through the long access.

Several large boulders were deposited in this high valley thousands of years ago by a receding glacier. These boulders are several meters tall and weigh over a hundred tons each. Centuries of erosion have rounded off the boulders bases and deeply cracked them. Although they remain solidly balanced, any impact able to overcome their sheer mass could topple or even shatter them.

The boulders have a *Body Strength* of 18, and 180 *Body Points*. A normal damaging hit knocks a boulder off its base — the rock rolls down slope and into the lake. If a vehicle is in the path of the boulder, resolve as per the collision rules on page 26 of the *Star Wars Miniature Battles Companion*. The boulders have a movement rate of 18 and move before all vehicles. A critical hit shatters the boulder, which showers tons of rock on everything within 10 meters (5 centimeters) — an automatic *Strength* 6 hit.

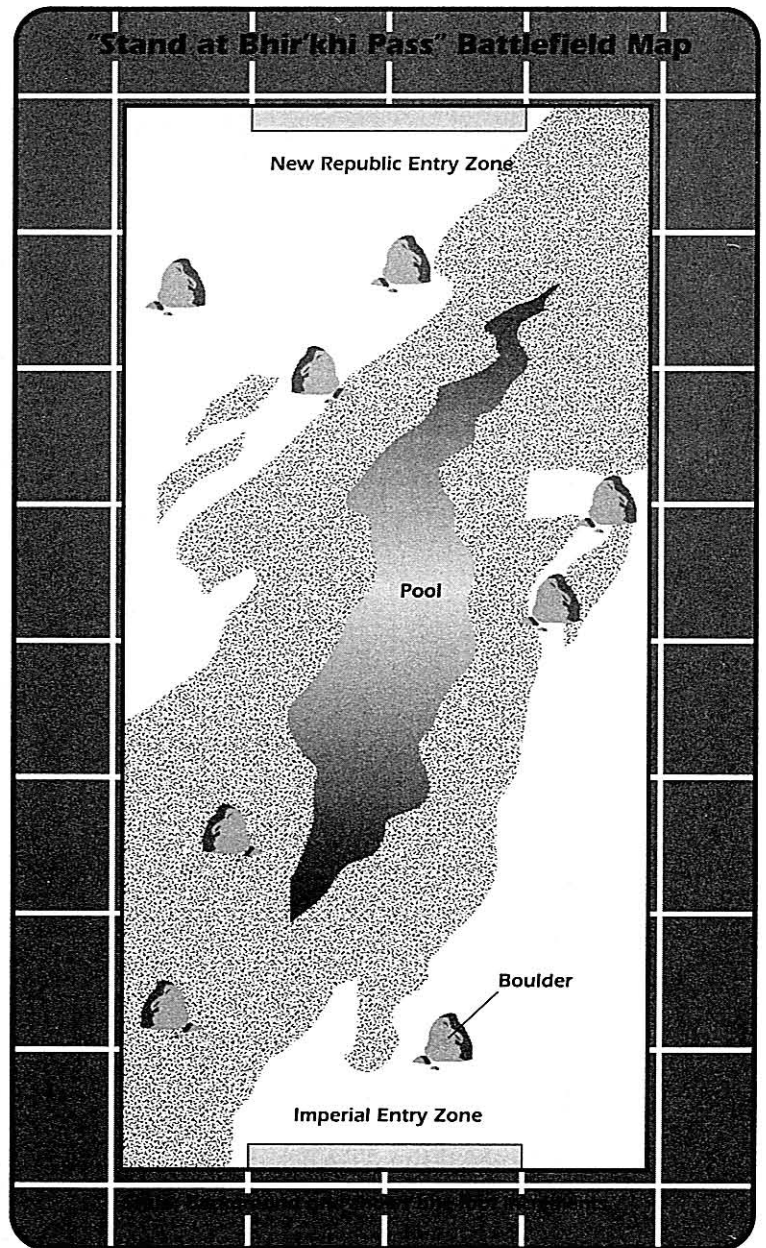
A boulder can block line of sight — or partially block line of sight — providing light cover (at less than one-third blockage), medium cover (between one- and two-thirds blockage), or heavy cover (over two-thirds blockage). The gamemaster, if the game has one, has final say. See the Line of Sight guidelines on page 16 of the *Star Wars Miniature Battles* main rules.

The sides of the valley rise sharply. Vehicles may not exit the board via the table sides, except where noted on the map. Any vehicle that does so — as a result of a out-of-control vehicle or critical hit mishap — runs up the cliff face, falls back onto the board, and flips as per the table on page 25 of the *Star Wars Miniature Battles Companion*, under "Out-Of-Control Vehicles."

The lake in the center of the table is a deep pool of ordinary water fed by several small mountain streams (omitted from the map for clarity). The lake has no effect on the repulsorlift-drive vehicles. If the AT-AT enters the water, it must slow to half speed.

The Set-Up

All vehicles set up in their respective entry zones at either end of Bhir'khi Pass. Each player can decide how his vehicles are arrayed — there are no restrictions on how far any tanks or the AT-AT should be from other units.



Gamemaster Notes

Imperial Objectives

The Imperial force's main objectives are to pass through the valley with the AT-AT and infantry intact and destroy the New Republic shield generator protecting the starport. A major victory requires the force to exit the valley within 20 turns of entering. Delay of more than 20 turns degrades the victory to a minor victory, as the New Republic will then have time to organize reinforcements.

Once the Imperials have reached the New Republic entry zone, they must fire on the shield generators (off-board) and destroy them. The



Orders of the Day Imperial Commander 295.902/V8

Commander: Approach and destroy the shield generators at grid reference X175.15/Y421.66. Deploy stormtroopers to occupy and secure this facility.

Alert: Message received from Regimental Command HQ.

Commander: Long range scans indicate Rebel forces converging on intercept course. Project interception at grid reference X171.65/Y418.05 — Bhir'khi Pass. Intelligence report follows.

New Orders: Do not allow Rebels to delay your mission. Intelligence estimates that further Rebel forces will be able to reinforce and converge on your task force in approximately 45 minutes. Your task force will be approximately 35 minutes from achieving a firing position on the Rebel shield generator when the Rebels engage you in Bhir'khi Pass. In the event your All-Terrain Armored Transport is disabled, use your *Imperial*-class repulsortanks to fire on the shield generators.

generators are at range 400 and have a *Body Strength* of 20 and 200 *Body Points*. Any vehicle can fire at the generators, but the AT-AT has the best chance of destroying them.

The Imperials suffer a minor defeat if they are not able to destroy the shield generator within the time limit. They suffer a major defeat if the AT-AT is destroyed.

New Republic Objectives

The New Republic's main objective is to defend the shield generators protecting the starport from direct attack. A major victory is achieved if the AT-AT is destroyed. A minor victory is achieved if the AT-AT is delayed more than 20 turns, as New Republic forces will be able to bring up reinforcements.

The New Republic forces suffer a major defeat if the shield generators are destroyed. There is no minor defeat for the New Republic in this scenario.

Imperial Tactical Advice

The AT-AT is one of the most powerful ground vehicles ever fielded. It can withstand many strong direct hits and destroy any repulsortank it can target. However, the AT-AT itself is a slow and easy target. Enough concentrated firepower will eventually wear down even this mighty behemoth. It is only able to fire forward and will have to rely on the escort to guard its flanks and rear. Do not attempt to chase down the maneuverable New Republic freerunners; they'll just run circles



Orders of the Day New Republic Commander Rone Mothin

Commander: Imperial forces have landed outside the city shields and are approaching Shield Generator Station 3. If this station is captured or destroyed the Imperial forces will be able to land troops directly into Marter An Starport and occupy the city.

Long range omniprobe scans indicate the enemy force is small, including only one AT-AT and two repulsortanks. Your force should be able to engage the enemy as early as 30 minutes before they can target the shield generator. Reinforcements are converging on the generator, but will not be able to arrive for almost 45 minutes. You must delay the AT-AT long enough for reinforcements to be brought up. If possible, destroy the AT-AT and as much of its escort as you can.

around it. Head directly for the exit.

The *Imperial*-class repulsortanks are among the best repulsortanks in the galaxy. The heavy Imperial tank mounts a powerful, highly accurate, long-range main gun. The tanks themselves are generally tough, fast, and maneuverable. While these tanks have no major design flaws, they are outnumbered. Maintain cruise speed at a minimum to remain a difficult target.

New Republic Tactical Advice

All of the New Republic vehicles should enter the field at a high speed and try to get behind the AT-AT as quickly as possible. Use the boulders to cover vehicle moves across the board. Maneuver at high speeds to present harder targets. Stay outside of the AT-AT's forward firing arc. The AT-AT can kill anything it sees.

The heavy tracker is tough and mounts a strong, accurate, long-range gun. It has a decent chance to hit any target on the board. Unfortunately, it is fairly slow and a relatively easy target.

The freerunners are medium tanks; reasonably maneuverable and decently armed and armored. They should circle the AT-AT and blast away with all three guns in broadside.

The heavy tracker is equipped with a highly advanced omniprobe sensor array, which adds +2 to its weapons fire control against low-level targets only. This increases the *Squad Generation Point* value of the heavy tracker by 2, to 378, plus crew.

YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW!

by James Cambias

Illustrations by Scott Neely



The Rebel Alliance is having serious supply problems. Many Rebel ships are old designs that are no longer produced by the galaxy's shipyards. Finding the proper spare parts for the ships is a constant headache for Alliance quartermasters. In the past, the Rebels have been able to steal parts from Imperial depots, but as the Empire has shifted to using new types of equipment, the supply of parts available to the Rebels has dwindled. As the adventure begins, the characters have been sent by the Alliance to meet with the notorious smuggler Tal Pak, who claims to know the location of a cache of spare parts.

Episode One: Shopping Trip

Tal Pak has arranged to meet with the Rebel characters in a seedy dive called the Red Moon Saloon in Mos Eisley spaceport on Tatooine. As always, the bar is full of shady characters of all descriptions. Pak is seated at a table in a secluded alcove at the back of the bar, sipping a glowing mist-cocktail. He is accompanied by his henchman Vassk, a sinister-looking Twi'lek. Tal Pak is an oily, overly friendly fellow, with a rat-like face and rotting teeth.

Tal Pak. All stats 2D except: *dodge 3D, streetwise 3D+1, value 4D, Perception 3D.* Move: 10. Sporting blaster (3D+1), vibroblade (STR+3D).

Vassk. All stats 2D except: *Dexterity 3D, streetwise 3D, sneak 3D, Strength 1D.* Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), comlink.

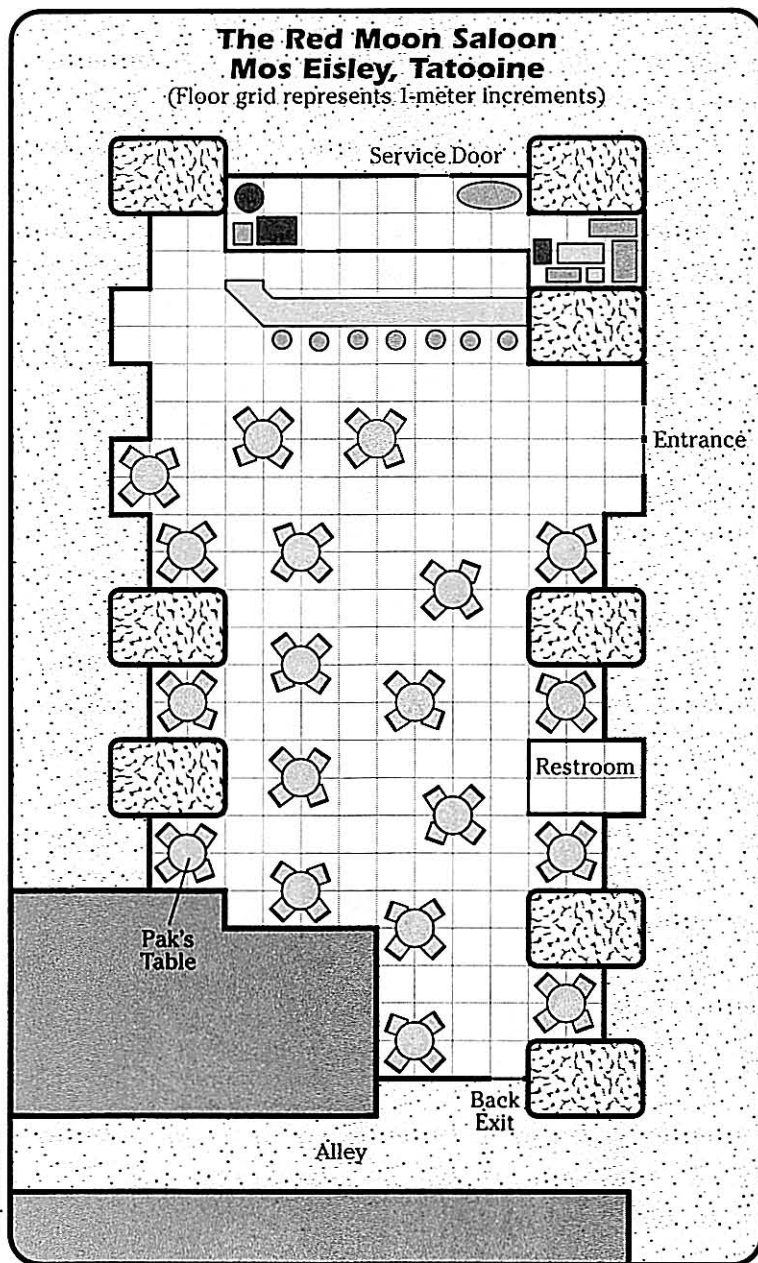
"Let's get down to business," says Pak. "I spent a lot of time and effort finding your precious spares for you, and I want my money. Pay up and I'll let you know where to pick up the stuff. We're talking top-quality merchandise, too — NeuroSaav K-64 targeting systems, Kuat 7300 hyperdrive regulators, and some Incom B7Y plasma phase coils. All mint condition, never used. Still in the factory packaging. I'll let you have them for 10,000."

The characters may try to haggle with him using their *bargain* skill. Characters who make a Difficult *Perception* roll (or Force-sensitive characters using *receptive telepathy*) can tell that Pak is concealing something. When the price is settled and the characters have produced the credits, Pak reveals a drawn blaster hidden under his cloak. With a sneer, he tells the Rebels, "Now you can pick up your parts — they're in a storage depot on the planet Sirpar. Hee hee hee!" Pak starts to scoop up the money and begins to leave.

Betrayal

Before the players can react, Pak's henchman Vassk reveals a blaster aimed at Pak. "I've decided to go into business for myself, boss. These Rebels should be worth a bundle," he says, as a squad of stormtroopers bursts into the bar. Vassk has sold out to the Empire! The characters must shoot it out with the Imperials and escape capture. Use the Red Moon Saloon floorplan to run the battle.

There should be as many stormtroopers as there are Rebel characters. The troopers are there to capture the Rebels, and so will try to block off the exits and subdue the player-characters. They will withdraw if they suffer more than 50 percent casualties, and call in a force of Imperial Army troopers to cordon off the area.



Stephen Crane

Stormtroopers. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity* 3D, *blaster* 4D, *grenade* 4D+2. Move: 10. Blaster rifle (5D), stormtrooper armor (+1D energy, +2D physical, -1D to *Dexterity* and related skills).

Vassk is only interested in protecting himself—he'll leave the fighting to the professionals. Tal Pak will try to grab the money and get away from the Empire and Rebels alike. The other patrons of the bar will all be trying to hide, flee, or look innocent.

If the Rebels can get clear of the saloon, they will be safe for the time being. But they had better leave Tatooine soon, before the Imperials think to surround the starport or blockade the planet.

Episode Two: Mission To Sirpar

If the Rebel characters get off Tatooine with the information, they are assigned by Alliance High Command to recover the parts from Sirpar. A Rebel officer briefs the characters on the next phase of the mission.

"As some of you may know, Sirpar is the primary Imperial Army training center for this sector. Data on the planet is provided in your scandoc packets. We have recently acquired a set of induction chips from some Imperial draftees who defected to the Alliance. The plan is for you to use these induction chips to impersonate new recruits. You will travel to Sirpar for basic training aboard an Imperial transport. Once on Sirpar, you can locate the components. This hygiene kit," the officer says, holding up an ordinary-looking personal grooming kit, "contains a hidden burst transmitter which you can use to call for pickup. Your transport will be waiting for your signal in the outer fringe of the system." The officer smiles sardonically. "Guess what—you're joining the army."

Since the Imperial Army only accepts Human recruits, alien and droid characters cannot be part of the infiltration team. Players whose characters cannot participate may wish to switch to a Human character for this part of the adventure. Alien or droid characters can wait aboard the rendezvous ship.

Insertion

Armed with their stolen induction chips, the characters meet an Imperial transport at the sector capital for the voyage to Sirpar. The false chips list the Rebels as being new conscripts from the planet Andooweel. At the starport, the characters join a huge line of new draftees and recruits waiting to board.

There is a tense moment as the officer at the ship's boarding hatch scans the characters' in-

duction chips and then peers at them suspiciously.

"Your chips say that you boys are from Andooweel. Is that correct?"

If the characters answer yes, there is a long nervous pause as the officer checks his datapad. Finally he looks up.

"I thought so! You're in luck. I've got eight more from Andooweel in bunkroom 6-L. You'll feel right at home."

The transport is a huge, rusty, and ancient ship jammed full of recruits for the training camp on Sirpar. It is very slow, and there is nothing to do during the week-long voyage. The only food on board is reconstituted protein colloid. Twelve soldiers are jammed into each bunkroom.

The other recruits in Bunkroom 6-L are all volunteers from Andooweel—they were in trouble with the law for petty thefts and illegal speeder racing, and chose to join the Imperial Army instead of going to jail. They are naturally curious about these other recruits from their homeworld, and try to draw the characters into conversations about local politics and affairs. They are particularly interested in the latest speeder-racing scores. Unless the Rebels can fool the boys from Andooweel, the recruits may inform the Imperial officers that the characters

Sirpar

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Hot
Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Dry
Gravity: Heavy
Terrain: Jungle, desert, mountain
Length of Day: 28 standard hours
Length of Year: 399 local days
Sapient Species: Eklaad (N), Humans
Starport: Standard class
Population: 1.5 million Eklaad, 8,000 humans
Planet Function: Military training and support
Government: Colonel of 414th Infantry Support Regiment
Tech Level: Space (humans only), stone
Major Exports: None
Major Imports: Foodstuffs, military supplies

Capsule: Anyone who has served in the Imperial Army knows about Sirpar. Even soldiers who never trained there have heard stories—none of them good. Sirpar is the Empire's main training facility in this sector. It is where the Imperial Army turns ordinary citizens into the brutal enforcers of the Emperor's will.

Sirpar is a large planet, with few natural resources and little to recommend it. The gravity is about 1.25 standard gees—just high enough to be uncomfortable. Reduce all *Strength* and *Dexterity* skills by 1 pip due to the gravity.

Sirpar's native life is tough and hardy, totally inedible by most races in the galaxy. Imported crops grow poorly, and there are no useful mineral deposits. The world was never colonized because there is little to attract settlers. Sirpar has a wide variety of climates and terrain types, and extensive high-altitude deserts.

are not who they claim to be.

Andoowel Recruits. All stats at 2D except: *Strength* 3D. Move: 10.

Imperial Facilities on Sirpar

The Empire has built a score of training camps on Sirpar — from the Arctic Environments Combat Range at the north pole to the Deep Ocean Operations Camp in the tropical seas. In all, Sirpar is home to eight basic training camps, four advanced training centers, and a dozen special environment operations camps. Besides the training camps, there are five surplus equipment depots scattered across the surface, along with an ordnance proving ground and a space bombardment target range.

Planetary defenses are not very extensive, since the only things on the surface are a horde of Imperial army trainees and some primitive natives. The primary starport is located on an island on the equator. It is a reasonably pleasant place, but the new recruits spend less than half an hour there before being bundled aboard a big repulsorlift transport to be taken to their training camp.

The Eklaad

Sirpar is home to a sentient species, the Eklaad. The Eklaad are peaceful beings without advanced technology. Consequently, the Empire considers them utterly useless. Since the arrival of the Imperials, the Eklaad's numbers have dwindled drastically. A few make a living scavenging for scraps and waste near the Imperial camps, while the rest survive in hidden settlements or roving nomadic bands.

The scattered tribes of Eklaad are ruled by hereditary chieftains. At one time there was a planetary Council of Chieftains to resolve differences between tribes and plan joint activities, but the Council has not met since the Imperials arrived. The Eklaad have nothing more advanced than bows and spears.

■ Eklaad

Attribute Dice: 12D
DEXTERITY 1D/3D
KNOWLEDGE 1D/3D
MECHANICAL 1D/4D
PERCEPTION 1D/4D
STRENGTH 3D/5D
TECHNICAL 1D/2D

Special Abilities:

Armor: Eklaad get +1D to resist damage. This armor only protects against melee weapons and mis-

siles, not energy attacks.

Story Factors:

Timid: Eklaad do not like to fight, and will avoid combat unless there is no other choice.

Move: 8/10

Size: 1-1.5 meters tall, 1.5-2 meters long.

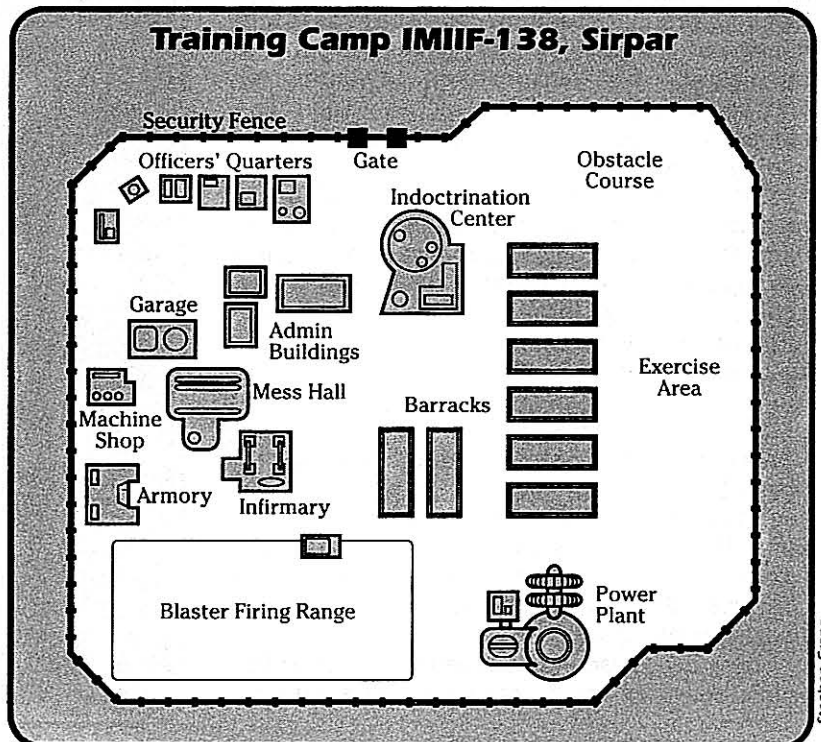
Capsule: The Eklaad are short, squat creatures somewhat resembling primitive Gamorreans. They walk on four hooves, and have an elongated, prehensile snout ending in three digits. Their skin is covered by a thick armored hide, which individuals decorate with paint and inlaid trinkets.

Eklaad are strong from living in a high-gravity environment, but they lack agility and their senses are not acute. The Eklaad are vegetarians, and are naturally timid and unaggressive. When confronted with danger, their first response is to curl up into an armored ball and wait for the peril to go away. Their second response is to flee. Only if backed into a corner with no other choice will an Eklaad fight. But in such cases they will fight bravely and ferociously.

The Eklaad speak in hoots and piping sounds; a few have learned Basic by hanging around the Imperial training camps. Since almost all of their experience with offworlders has come from the Empire's soldiers, the Eklaad are very suspicious and timid.

Episode Three: In Training

Once on Sirpar, the characters are transported to their new home, Training Camp IMIIF-138. It is a sprawling facility in the muggy heat of Sirpar's equatorial continent, surrounded by a vast expanse of jungle. The weather alternates between broiling sun and pouring rain, but the rain never



cuts through the damp heat. The ground is always muddy.

The camp is home to the 19,016th Imperial Line Infantry (Training) Company. It is a very large unit, nearly the size of a battalion. There are six infantry platoons and two heavy-weapons platoons; each platoon consists of eight squads. A squad has eight trainees under a sergeant. Including officers and headquarters personnel, the camp has 640 soldiers. There are about 200 droids assigned to the company; 160 of these are standard support units, while 40 are special E2-I6 instruction models.

The camp is commanded by Captain Strelk. Strelk is from an old aristocratic Senatorial family, and detests the primitive conditions on Sirpar. He ignores his unit as much as he can, and never seems to realize that his poor conduct is what keeps him marooned in the boondocks.

Sergeant Slag

The instructor in charge of the characters' squad is "Slag" Jankar. Jankar claims to be the

Sergeant "Slag" Jankar



Type: Drill Sergeant
DEXTERITY 3D+2
 Blaster 4D, brawling parry 4D
KNOWLEDGE 2D+1
 Intimidation 4D+1, will-power 4D+1
MECHANICAL 3D
PERCEPTION 3D
 Command 4D+1
STRENGTH 3D+2
 Brawling 4D, stamina 4D+1
TECHNICAL 2D+1
Character Points: 5
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), blast vest (+1D physical, +1 against energy, torso only), comlink

Capsule: Jankar is a proud veteran of the Imperial Army, and the Army of the Republic before it. But the corruption and inefficiency of the Republic Army disgusted him, and Jankar admires the Emperor for bringing back pride and discipline. His real loyalty, however, is to the Army itself.

Sergeant Jankar prides himself on being the toughest drill instructor on Sirpar, and has a very high rate of success at turning troublesome recruits into crack soldiers.

Slag Jankar is a very large man with a booming voice. He wears an Imperial Army uniform that is always immaculate. Jankar never speaks in anything softer than a shout when addressing his trainees. His face is weather-beaten and craggy.

toughest drill sergeant on Sirpar, and routinely gets the troublesome recruits. The boys from Andooeel looked like problem soldiers, so they were assigned to Jankar. And since the Rebels came in on the same ship, with chips listing them as being from the same planet, they got assigned the same sergeant.

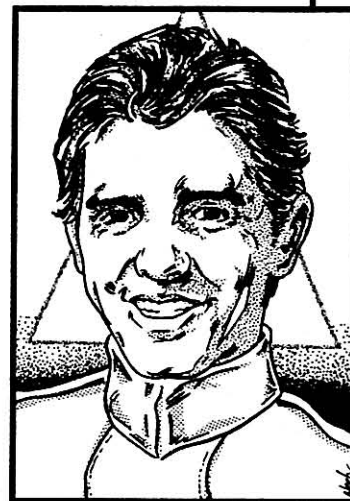
The characters' first encounter with Jankar is memorable. Cramped and tired from a week cooped up aboard the transport, they are ordered to line up in the ankle-deep mud of the parade ground. As the recruits stand broiling in the sun, swatting at biting insects, a huge man in a sergeant's uniform slowly paces down the line, with an expression of pure disgust on his face.

Read aloud:

"Awright, you lazy grubworms, lissen up! This here camp is where we turn mush-brained nerf-herders like you into real men and women! Right now you're nothing but mynock droppings, but when I'm finished with you, you'll be soldiers! You either leave this unit an Imperial soldier, or you get a decent burial. I'm Slag Jankar, the biggest, toughest, and meanest sergeant in the Emperor's Army. The only reason I'm not out killing Rebels is 'cause the Emperor feels sorry for 'em. So I get to take out my frustrations on you worthless bantha-ticks!"

Dagnian Sark

Type: Imperial Security Bureau Agent
DEXTERITY 4D
 Blaster 5D, dodge 5D
KNOWLEDGE 3D
MECHANICAL 2D
PERCEPTION 4D
 Investigation 5D, search 5D, sneak 5D
STRENGTH 3D
TECHNICAL 2D
 Security 4D
Character Points: 2
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), blaster rifle (5D), blast vest (+1D physical, +1 against energy, torso only), blast helmet (+1D physical, +1 energy against damage to head), hold-out pistol (3D)



Capsule: Sark has been sent to Sirpar in search of Rebel spies. He is fanatically loyal to the Emperor, and would gladly sacrifice himself for the New Order. But he is ambitious, and hopes that a successful capture of Rebel spies will lead to promotion.

Sark is a slender, agile man with constantly darting eyes and an insincere smile. His attempts to be ingratiating only make him seem oily.

Vreel



Type: Naive Recruit
DEXTERITY 4D
 Firearms 4D+1
KNOWLEDGE 2D
 Survival 4D
MECHANICAL 3D
 Archaic starship piloting 4D, beast riding 4D, sensors 3D+1
PERCEPTION 4D
STRENGTH 3D
 Stamina 3D+1
TECHNICAL 2D
 First aid 4D
Force Points: 1
Character Points: 2
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), blaster rifle (5D), blast vest (+1D physical, +1 against energy, torso only), blast helmet (+1D physical, +1 energy against damage to head)

Capsule: Vreel is a young man from a remote world on the fringe of the Empire. His planet's culture is bound by ritual and tradition, but Vreel was a nonconformist who didn't fit in. He dreamed of traveling through the galaxy. When the Empire imposed a draft quota on his world, Vreel volunteered. What he has seen of the Empire has disgusted him — he recognized its tyranny from the start. Vreel might well join the Rebellion if only he knew how.

Vreel is very tall and slender, with intricate tattoos visible on the sides of his scalp. He is full of questions about the wonders of the galaxy.

"You!" Jankar shouts directly into the face of one character. "Why are you here? Answer!"

The correct answer is "To serve the Emperor, sir!" Characters who have been in the army before will know the correct response; otherwise it requires a Difficult *Knowledge* roll to guess the answer. An incorrect reply brings another torrent of abuse from Jankar. But a correct reply is even worse.

Read aloud:

"Oh, an educated intellectual! The educated intellectual here thinks he knows everything! Let's see if the educated intellectual knows how many pushups a soldier can do before passing out. Drop and start, maggot!"

If any of the characters dares to talk back to Jankar, he'll be branded the troublemaker of the unit. Jankar piles extra work on the character and berates him constantly. The sergeant makes the troublesome character carry extra pack loads during training exercises, so that all task rolls are raised an extra level of difficulty.

Other Trainees

There are a few other interesting people in the characters' squad. One is called Vreel, a naive young man from a backwater world. The other is

an unctuous Human named Dagnian Sark.

Vreel is an idealist, who volunteered to help fill his planet's quota for the Imperial draft because he wanted to see the galaxy. He is curious about everything, and bombards the characters with questions about their homeworlds and the places they've seen.

Dagnian Sark is actually an agent of the Imperial Security Bureau. He is very friendly, in an oily, hypocritical sort of way. Sark always manages to be listening in the background when Vreel asks the characters questions.

Army Life

Life at IMIIF-138 is very busy. The trainees are awakened an hour before dawn, and have 10 minutes to shower, dress, and make up their beds. Sergeant Jankar is constantly alert to anyone trying to cut corners. Trainees who skip their shower are berated by Jankar ("Are you a soldier? You smell like a bantha! Maggots, get some detergent and boiling water — we're going to clean this muckbeast up!"). Sloppily-dressed trainees are required to spend an extra hour each night starching and ironing their uniform — making it hideously uncomfortable. Trainees who fail to make their beds properly are forced to sleep outside, with the mudflies and stingbeetles.

The trainees start each day with the basic physical conditioning course. This is an endless round of calisthenics, long-distance running, and obstacle courses. Each character must make a Difficult *stamina* roll to make it through the course. Anyone who fails is labelled "Private Hutt" by Jankar, and forced to spend an hour running laps every night when the other trainees are in bed.

Between breakfast and lunch the trainees have weapons instruction. They are drilled in how to assemble a blaster rifle, and spend hours on the firing range shooting at holographic targets. Anyone with a *blaster* skill greater than 3D is noticeably better than the other recruits. Sergeant Jankar will want to know how the character learned to shoot ("So you think you're a crack shot, eh? Just wait until there's a Rebel with a knife trying to cut your liver out — then what good will your fancy shooting be?")

In the afternoons the trainees fight mock battles in the jungles outside the camp, using blasters set on stun. Soldiers who fail to make a *dodge* skill roll are stunned. Stunned characters awake in time to be mercilessly berated by Sergeant Jankar. ("You lumpfooted thick-skulled fungus! The Rebels don't use stun settings in battle! You've got to learn to dodge fire and advance under cover. Since you spent so much time sleeping on the battlefield, I guess it won't hurt for you to run the obstacle course for an hour tonight.")

Just after dinner each night is an Imperial

indoctrination session. The trainees sit through hours of Imperial propaganda tapes, lectures, and tests. Indoctrination droids from COMPNOR give interminable lectures on the glories of the Emperor's New Order, and make helpful suggestions to individual recruits on how they might improve their attitude to better serve the Emperor.

At least once during the indoctrination sessions, the soldiers see holotapes of "devastation and atrocities committed by the Rebel terrorists." The characters recognize the scene as the aftermath of an Imperial attack. Impulsive characters will have a hard time controlling their urge to shout out the truth.

Dagnian Sark is very observant if anyone questions or criticizes the Imperial indoctrination programs. He does not contradict anyone critical of the Empire; in fact he eggs the characters on, hoping that the speaker says something treasonous which he can report.

After the indoctrination session the trainees are given a couple of hours of instruction on how to operate equipment, map reading, and the basic elements of tactics. At midnight the exhausted soldiers stagger off to their bunks — unless they have been assigned punishment duty which keeps them up.

Training Accident

By the end of the first week of training, all the trainees are numb and bleary-eyed from exhaustion and lack of sleep. One morning, during instruction on the use of thermal detonators to clear obstacles, Vreel makes a mistake in setting the timer on his detonator. Characters who make a Difficult *demolition* skill roll notice Vreel's error — there are only seconds before the detonator blows! A Moderate *Dexterity* roll is required to grab the detonator and throw it clear. (Force-sensitive individuals who have the *telekinesis* power may use that to get rid of the detonator.)

Vreel is extremely grateful to the character for saving his life. On his native world, such an act would mean that Vreel is honor-bound to serve the character until the debt is repaid. Even Sergeant Jankar grudgingly praises the character's quickaction. ("Good throwing, maggots. Now move yer tail — it's chowtime!") Dagnian Sark is also full of praise, and asks the character where he learned so much about thermal detonators.

Episode Four: Locating The Spares

The Imperial Army uses exhaustion as an effective way to maintain discipline. Soldiers who are busy every second of the day cannot become mutinous or disloyal. For the first few weeks of

their stay at IMIIF-138, the characters have no chance to slip away and look for the parts.

Finally, after two weeks in the camp, a scheduled indoctrination lecture is cancelled due to droid malfunction. The trainees have two whole hours of complete freedom. They can use this time to find the spare parts. The obvious place to start is the military computer network.

The Camp Computer Network

The computer network at IMIIF-138 is large but out of date. It is not yet obsolete, but is at least a decade behind cutting-edge Imperial technology. There are terminals in all of the administration buildings, the indoctrination center, the armory, and the powerplant. Finding a terminal not in use is hard; only those in the indoctrination center are available. Getting at the others would require a Moderate *bureaucracy* or *con* skill roll.

Gaining access to the network without proper authorization requires a Moderate *computer programming/repair* skill roll. If a character makes less than half of the required roll, a guard arrives in three minutes to catch the would-be computer slicer.

If the characters avoid detection, they can use the computer network to locate the vital spare parts. According to the inventory files, they are located at Nonessential Equipment Storage and Disposal Facility 456, and are scheduled for routine disposal in four days.

Caught!

Just as the player-characters finish their search of the computer net, they hear a voice behind them.

"Studying up on computer systems for the tech exam? Or spying? Hands up — Rebels!" It is Dagnian Sark, the characters' fellow trainee.

"I've had my eye on you for some time now," he explains. "The Imperial Security Bureau sent me here to watch for Rebel infiltrators. Now that I've caught you, I can leave this grubworm pit and that idiot sergeant."

Sark is armed with a blaster pistol. He does not fall for any attempts to *con* or *persuade* him. The Rebels must defeat him in combat, without causing a commotion and attracting notice.

Stealing The Spares

The surplus equipment depot is located halfway across the planet from the training camp. The characters will have to beg, borrow, or steal an airspeeder to make the trip. The only speeders at IMIIF-138 are the two kept for the use of the captain and his aides. One is a standard Army-issue airspeeder, identical to the Rebel Alliance combat speeder except that the power harpoon has been replaced with room for two extra pas-

sengers. The other one is Captain Strelk's personal vehicle. The captain's airspeeder is an expensive luxury model, with space for three passengers and the pilot, a built-in bar, autopilot, massage unit, and sound system. Strelk's speeder carries no official markings, so anyone using it will be very conspicuous.

Custom Private Airspeeder. Speeder, maneuverability 3D, move 400; 1,200 kmh, body strength 2D.

NESDF-456

Nonessential Equipment Storage and Disposal Facility 456 is located on a high desert plateau, where it never rains. A security fence stretches nearly four kilometers around a vast expanse of junk placed in neat rows. There are old-model TIE fighters in various stages of disrepair, old AT-ATs and AT-STs, Juggernauts, tanks, airspeeders, droids, etc.

Material that may be used again is kept in plastic cocoons filled with inert gas. Vehicles scheduled for salvage are unprotected, and technicians or work droids occasionally come by to strip out components. Spare parts are kept in cargo containers. As components are declared officially obsolete, they are destroyed in a huge plasma furnace. Everything at the facility bears an electronic identification tag.

Upon arrival at NESDF-456, the characters discover that the center is staffed by a squad of eight Imperial Army engineers and a dozen tech droids. An eight-man squad of troopers patrols the perimeter, watching for Eklaad scavengers. The engineers carry blaster pistols; the soldiers have

rifles. All are standard Imperial Army troops.

The grounds are also patrolled by a pack of four vicious Gamorrean watch-beasts, which attack any visitors they do not recognize.

Gamorrean watch-beast. *Dexterity 4D, dodge 5D, Perception 4D, sneak 4D+1, Strength 3D, brawling 4D.* Special abilities: bite does STR+1D damage. Move 12.

The Rebels can either blast into the depot by force, or else try to con their way inside. The trooper in charge is Sergeant Nanda, a grizzled old veteran who is waiting to retire.

Sergeant Nanda. All stats are 2D except: *bureaucracy 5D.* Move 10. Blaster pistol (4D), comlink.

Episode Five: Hauler Chase

The spares are kept in six large container modules; each one is two meters tall by one meter wide and four meters long. The characters can load the modules onto a big cargo hauler for removal.

The closest hauler is a standard Ubrikkian SuperHaul cargo skiff with a bow-mounted laser cannon.

Ubrikkian SuperHaul. Speeder, maneuverability 0D, move 70; 200 kmh, body strength 2D. Weapons: medium laser cannon (fire control 2D, 3-50/100/200, damage 4D)

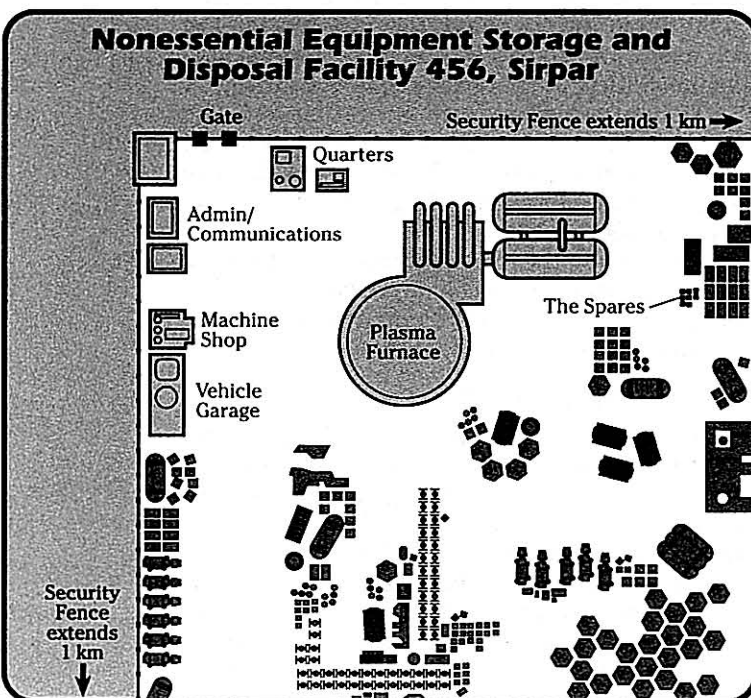
Just as the hauler is loaded, an announcement comes over the facility's loudspeakers. Read aloud:

"Attention! Several Rebel spies impersonating trainees are known to be in the vicinity of NESDF-456. All personnel in that sector are placed on full alert. The Rebels are armed and extremely dangerous. Terminate on sight!"

If the characters move fast, they can get clear of the disposal facility before the staff can react. Fortunately, the prearranged rendezvous point where the Rebel transport will meet the characters is only a hundred kilometers away.

But the characters are not home free. The Imperials send a squad of scout troopers to intercept the characters and delay them until other forces can reach the scene. The five troopers on speeder bikes roar up in pursuit of the hauler and a running battle across the desert begins. The terrain is flat and open, with scattered rock outcroppings; the difficulty rating for movement is Very Easy. The scout troopers are riding Aratech 74-Z military speeder bikes.

Scout Troopers. All stats are 2D except: *blaster 4D, brawling parry 4D, dodge 4D, Mechanical 3D, repulsorlift operation: speeder bike 3D+2, brawling 3D.* Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), blaster rifle



(5D), 2 concussion grenades (4D), scout armor (+2 against damage; does not affect *Dexterity*), helmet macrobinoculars and comlink.

Aratech 74-Z Military Speeder Bike. Speeder, maneuverability 3D+2, move 175; 500 kmh, body strength 2D. Weapons: laser cannon (fire control 2D, 3-50/100/200, damage 3D)

Out of the Frying Pan

When the characters have managed to fight off three scout troopers, a second group of five appears, screaming in from the left on an intercepting course. But suddenly, all the pursuers veer off, leaving the Rebels alone. They may congratulate themselves on their escape, but then huge explosions begin going off around them as a computerized voice blares from the comlink:

"You have entered Weapons Testing Area 34. An artillery ordnance test is in progress. Please leave the area until the test is completed. You have entered Weapons Testing Area 34 ..."

The characters have wandered into the target zone for a battery of field missile launchers. Concussion missiles fired from long range are landing all around the hauler. The missiles are being fired at randomly-designated target coordinates, not at the characters themselves (though they don't know that). The blast radius for each missile is 20 meters, with a damage value of 5D.

Escaping destruction by the artillery is a test of *repulsorlift operation* skill; the cargo skiff's maneuverability is so poor that it gives no benefit. The hauler pilot must make a Difficult roll to avoid being hit. After evading six missiles, the characters have passed through the target zone and can proceed to their pickup point.

Episode Six: Escape From Sirpar

The Rebel ship meets the characters at the rendezvous point, and blasts off for space with them and the precious cargo on board. If the characters have a ship of their own, that is used as the pickup craft. Otherwise use a stock light freighter, modified by the Rebels. If some of the players had alien or droid characters waiting aboard the party's ship, the gamemaster may wish to play through a scene in which they pilot the ship through Sirpar's defenses.

Modified Light Freighter. Starfighter, *starship gunnery* 4D+2, *starship piloting* 4D, maneuverability 2D, space 6, hull 3D, shields 1D. Weapons: laser cannon (fire control 2D, damage 4D).

The Imperials have a network of three defense satellites in orbit. One satellite can always fire on any ship approaching or leaving the planet. The

idea is for the satellites to cripple unauthorized vessels with blasts from their capital-scale ion cannon, so the intruders can be finished off by fighters.

Imperial Defense Satellite. Starfighter, *starship gunnery* 4D, maneuverability 0D, space 0, hull 4D, shields 2D. Weapons: ion cannon (fire control 2D+2, damage 3D), 2 laser cannons (fire control 2D, damage 5D).

Sirpar's fighter support wing has 24 TIE fighters, but happily only one flight of four fighters can scramble to pursue the Rebels right away. These are standard TIE/In fighters, but three of the four are flown by trainee pilots, who have skill levels of only 3D in *starship piloting* and *starship gunnery*. The flight leader is an experienced pilot with normal skill levels.

Other forces can be mobilized to intercept the fleeing Rebels the longer they remain near Sirpar. Another four flights of TIE fighters launch after a few minutes. There is a *Guardian*-class Imperial Customs patrol cruiser elsewhere in the system which can be called in to stop the Rebels. If the characters are having too easy a time of it, the gamemaster can bring on some heavy naval units — a Star Destroyer or two should give the characters a few nervous moments before the jump to hyperspace.

Other Adventures On Sirpar

The Imperial training camps could be the setting for other adventures. Perhaps the characters are rounded up by an Imperial press-gang on a remote planet, and drafted into the army by force.

The Eklaad might wish to start fighting back against the Imperials, and need the Rebels to provide weapons and advice. Or perhaps they have learned something important about Imperial plans, and need to get word to the Rebel Alliance. Possibly one of the Eklaad has natural affinity for the Force, and must get off the planet to find a trainer and avoid the agents of the Emperor.

The other Imperial facilities on Sirpar could be of interest to the Rebellion. Perhaps a new secret weapon is being tested at the weapons testing area. Perhaps the Empire is using strange and sinister forms of brainwashing on new recruits. Captured Rebels might be held in a prison camp on Sirpar.

Under the New Republic, Sirpar might remain under Imperial control, so that Rebels might have to sneak onto the world to contact the Eklaad. Or else it might be under New Republic control, but Imperial holdouts could cause trouble in the wilderness. Rather than seeking vital components for the Rebellion or New Republic, the characters might come to Sirpar in search of valuable parts to sell for their own profit. ☹



The Pentastar Alignment

Somewhere in Space ...

It was far too late before the merchant freighter finally realized that the approaching container ship was more than what it seemed. A Corellian gunship suddenly emerged from the immense container ship's loading bow, ravaging the merchant freighter with ion cannon fire before it could summon even a whimper of distress. With well-timed efficiency, the pirates quickly attached a docking claw to the disabled merchant and ejected the crew bodily in the ship's escape pods. The merchant ship was now theirs to examine at their leisure.

"That's the whole lot of it," Tara tossed the datapad to her captain, who was reclining thoughtfully in the merchant ship's command chair. "Five metric tons of consumables, plus 30 casks of Ipehrilla firewater. Enough to keep the crew drunk and happy for a very long time, I figure."

Roark Slader fingered the datapad, correcting her. "Enough to keep a sleaze like Begas Tok drunk and happy for a long time, for a slob of his proportions. He'll pay us well for the firewater. Maybe enough to get us another Corellian cruiser from the wasteyards near Jaemus."

"Be nice if it was another gunship," she gestured with a nod at *Slader's Raider II*, sitting off protectively some distance away. Perhaps there was some good to this New Republic after all, pushing the Empire out of the local systems and giving opportunists like themselves a free hand to dip into the barrel of helpless interstellar cargo traders. Business had been so good lately, perhaps there was enough room for another pirate in this sector, Tara smiled to herself. Perhaps.

Slader merely grunted something non-committal when his comlink went off. Tara immediately recognized Mac's voice aboard the *Raider II*. He was shouting excitedly about a large mass that had just arrived in their local

space. Slader was about to order the man to calm down and explain when a volley of heavy turbolasers struck the gunship from the stern. Tara saw what had fired, an all-too familiar wedge shape was bearing down quickly upon them.

"It's one of those new Enforcer cruisers! No. Two of them!" she pointed. Slader cursed in five languages as he jumped out of the command chair. Both warships were close enough to see the unique five-star pattern painted on their hulls. "Damn Pentastar Alignment again. Lose one empire, gain another, I suppose. Well so much for suppositions," Slader barked quickly into the comlink. "Mac, back *Raider II* around and take the long way out of the system. Draw their fire until Tara and I get out on *Raider I*." He then thumbed the comlink's general call button using a secure frequency. "Slader to all hands, we are departing — post-haste!" He cut the channel and they both started out of the disabled merchant ship's bridge.

"But what about the firewater and the stores?" Tara ran after him. "What about Begas Tok's deal?"

"You're more than welcome to take it to Tok." Slader whipped around just long enough to disengage *Raider I*'s landing claw from its prey. "Other than that, all bets are off!"

With a flurry of explosive bolts, *Slader's Raider I* turned away from the merchant ship as its smaller sister led the pair of Enforcer picket cruisers along another route. From the control bridge of the modified *Raider I*, Tara watched as their prize slipped slowly away in the distance. She then turned her gaze upon the dreadful shapes of the Alignment ships, wincing inwardly for every cannon hit that struck *Raider II* as it struggled along its desperate escape trajectory.

Perhaps business was not so good after all, she thought.

By Anthony P. Russo

Illustrations by Chris Gossett

In the Wake of Endor

Despite the Rebel victory over the Emperor at Endor and the birth of The New Republic, the relinquishing of systems and worlds still within the grip of the Empire has been a slow and difficult task. Many Imperial leaders have refused to step down from power, while battle groups from loyal Imperial forces continue to harass the New Republic and its allies. Meanwhile, numerous pretenders to the Emperor's throne are jockeying for position, while the power-hungry from the Imperial regime and corporate bureaucracy continue to consolidate their power.

In the distant Outer Rim Territories, a new threat to the New Republic and peace for the galaxy has emerged from these power seekers — the Pentastar Alignment. The following report contains profiles on Pentastar Alignment leaders and its organizations, information on certain trade zones and worlds under the Alignment's control,

and stories about the profiteers and pirates who slip through the gaps in the Pentastar Alignment and the New Republic.

After the triumphant Battle of Endor, with the Imperial Fleet withdrawing from many regions of space it once firmly controlled, the New Republic continues to fight the remnants of the Empire's forces, trying to reunite the fragmented and fear-stricken systems of the galaxy.

But in the vast region known as the Outer Rim Territories, the downfall of Emperor Palpatine has left numerous Imperial leaders squabbling among themselves. Ships and forces loyal to one are often sent to overthrow another, leaving many secure trade routes and space lanes in chaos as nests of pirates are left to plunder as they please. Anarchy is rampant on some worlds, while armed rebellion and civil unrest plague others.

In addition, corporations and private entities once loyal to the Empire now face extinction as the Imperial machine that once protected them flees.

Notes from Conciliatory Meeting aboard flagship *Reaper*:

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In attendance: Imperial Governor Ib Dekeet, Commerce Master Commissioner Gregor Raquoran, Dynamic Automata Corporate Head Elta Besk, Galentro Heavy Works Representative Wyrn Otro, Grand Moff Ardu Kaine.

Continued from 7[^]-7340a-2[^]WED

Governor Dekeet: I still do not understand why all vessels and vehicles, even troops, under my authority have to display this ridiculous-looking star badge.

Grand Moff Kaine: Consider it instant recognition, Governor. And reputation as well. The next time some pirate or criminal tries to make off with one of your merchant ships, who will respond? Not just Imperial forces under Governor Dekeet, but the combined might of the Pentastar Alignment. Those who defy us will soon remember us. And as for the symbol of the Pentastar as a badge, I must commend you for your excellent choice of words, Governor. A badge, after all, represents authority and organization. Our authority. Not those usurpers in this poorly misguided New Republic. Systems will soon respect us. They will *have* to respect us.

CMC Gregor Raquoran: But tell me Kaine, what about this alliance of forces? Combined military forces are quite understandable, considering the times. But what good is political unity? The Velcar Free Commerce Zone is quite stable, I can assure you.

Kaine: Ah, but for how long, Gregor? How long before the New Republic sends its representatives all the way to Entralla, or even your home world of Capza? The New Republic is still merely the Rebellion, thinly disguised as an official entity. They are

outlaws, and they will continue to think and do as such. In the Pentastar Alignment, there will be no tolerance for any Rebel insurrection.

Elta Besk: Don't forget, Raquoran, this New Republic has some queer ideas about alien rights. They believe the Velcar Free Commerce Zone exists only to exploit defenseless aliens. I'll wager they can't wait to hatch some liberation plot for the Entymals that work the gas mines around Bextar. Gas mines that my Amber Sun Industries run — and are supposedly under your protection.

Raquoran: Where they shall remain, good woman.

Besk: ... Until they fall back into alien hands.

Kaine: Enough, both of you. Remember. The New Order has never fallen. Only the Emperor. If no one will accept the responsibility of enforcing Imperial laws and doctrine, then we shall. The Emperor may be dead, but the Empire lives on!

Wyrn Otro: We must all stand together, or be swept aside.

Kaine: Exactly, sir.

Otro: And what about you, Grand Moff Kaine?

Kaine: In what respect?

Otro: Come, come now. I've read this treaty of yours. Is this an alignment of power, or just another excuse to declare yourself Emperor Kaine? I have known, long before Palpatine's death, of your wish to be transferred to the Imperial City and serve the Emperor by his side. Now can it be assumed that you wish not to serve beside the Emperor, but in his place?

Kaine: I have no desire for such a title, nor the position. An Emperor rules alone, and he is gone. But even an Emperor cannot do what our combined strength and resources can, and that is *rebuild* the Empire ...

The New Republic wishes to hold many of these private companies — the so-called Imperial *corporates* — accountable for their ruthless business practices, such as the enslavement of alien species, damage to planetary environments, and corruption of the social integrity of many systems.

However, the New Republic is an unwanted and distrusted presence in the Outer Rim. Squadrons of New Republic ships are few and far between out here, and their personnel, while excellently trained, have little authority but to protect themselves and their vessels from attack.

Founding the Alignment

Some time after the Emperor's death aboard the second Death Star battle station, at a carefully arranged meeting, high officials of the Empire and representatives from two large Imperial *corporates* held an unprecedented discussion aboard the personal flagship of Grand Moff Tarkin's replacement, Ardur Kaine. Because their number was five at the time, Kaine ceremoniously dubbed their meeting the Pentastar Talks.

Suspicion and even outright accusation filled those long days as the five argued amongst themselves. But Grand Moff Kaine was known to be a hard man who succeeded where others had failed. Like Tarkin before him, Kaine believed in the principles of the New Order, and earnestly knew that Palpatine's writings and methods could help reforge the chain that bound the Empire. Eventually the Grand Moff hammered out the details and allegiances necessary for the others to sign the Pentastar Alignment Treaty.

The Pentastar Alignment

The Pentastar Alignment Treaty quickly led to the dread and deceit that would be known simply as the Pentastar Alignment. With hundreds of capital ships and several legions of loyal Imperial Army soldiers and stormtroopers at their command, and more forces joining all the time, the Alignment has swallowed whole systems in its path while installing planetary overseers to its will and desires. And with the forces of the Alignment, so travel the Imperial *corporates* and their dark enterprises. Alien species and their right to exist peacefully continue to be swept aside in a wave of exploitation, while the profits of trade and industry flow into the Alignment's coffers.

Organization

During the extent of the "emergency" Kaine has declared, the Pentastar Alignment and the regions under its control maintain much of the Empire's infrastructure, although several changes have been made in the organization of its legislative and enforcement bodies. For its purposes, the Alignment has adopted a unique blending of

Preamble from The Pentastar Alignment Treaty

"... In accordance with the rules and regulations concerning emergencies which directly affect the ability to maintain order, we at this gathering swear to uphold the practices of the New Order, to defend the territorial claims of the Galactic Empire, to remove unrest and usurpers, to contest all acts of treason and deliberate disobedience against the New Order, and to summarily return all worlds and systems which are the undisputed territory of the Galactic Empire.

"We at this gathering swear allegiance for the duration of this emergency to the Pentastar Alignment of Powers, to jointly remove all corruption of the New Order from the Galactic Empire, to support the rights of its citizens and the law of the New Order, and to defend this Alignment at all costs ..."

various Imperial organizations with its own, although many of the Alignment's organizational policies and procedures are attributed to the writings of Grand Moff Kaine.

The Pentastar Alignment's legislative arm consists of two major factions: Order and Enforcement. Order combines many responsibilities of the old Imperial Select Committee, the Imperial Ubiquitorate, and sections formerly maintained by COMPNOR. (Refer to the *Imperial Sourcebook* for the operations of those respective offices.) In addition, several new posts were created at the suggestion of Grand Moff Kaine — Politorate, Insurrection, Judgment, and Protectorate.

Pentastar's Enforcement division maintains public allegiance, enforces civil codes and regulations, and disciplines offenders through its widespread Pentastar Patrol. Not surprisingly, the Pentastar Patrol has achieved a notoriety all its own where its methods of maintaining civil order are concerned.

In keeping with Grand Moff Kaine's intention to restore the glory of the Empire, the Alignment military remains relatively independent of the legislative government. In fact, with the exception of a few cosmetic changes (for example, applying Pentastar symbols to uniforms and vehicles), and the addition of new pieces of mission-specific equipment, the forces of the Pentastar Alignment remain dreadfully similar to their Imperial counterparts.

Order

The Chamber of Order

The highest commanding body within the Pentastar Alignment is the Chamber of Order. Its membership is increasing constantly as more Imperial and corporate officials recognize Kaine and join the Alignment. The Chamber of Order never holds public audience, considering the

potential for disaster if certain organizations, such as the New Republic, were to discover the location of such a meeting. For this reason, full Chamber meetings occur at randomly spaced intervals and only at highly secure sites.

The Chamber of Order typically concerns itself with deliberate or profound threats to the Alignment, or new policies or regulations. Each member, including the corporates among the assembly, is free to call upon the Alignment to supply military units for assistance, as long as it does not interfere with another Alignment sphere of influence. Any Chamber member must consult with the entire Chamber of Order before requesting any military action. The Chamber of Order is responsible for the suggestion and installation of planetary and sector overseers, the Alignment's version of governors, on those worlds or systems that are considered "troublesome" or of particular interest or value to the Alignment. Chamber members may also point out developments in their own regions, with recommendations for action given to a general vote by the Chamber. The only deciding vote belongs to Grand Moff Kaine. Kaine can veto the Chamber's actions if necessary, except when faced with a complete majority overthrow vote. Rarely has anyone questioned Kaine's veto, however, as few would actually confront him.

The Chamber of Order deliberately distinguishes between the titles of overseer and Imperial Governor so that it is not possible for an appointed overseer to claim a seat within the Chamber. Thus the Chamber restricts membership to only the highest (and not to mention original) Imperial and corporate officials.

New Branches of Order

At the insistence of Grand Moff Kaine, the Pentastar Alignment Treaty dictated that the various offices that comprised COMPNOR and the Ubiquitorate were to be combined, with redundancies eliminated and moved to supplement other offices. Naturally there was some resistance to this union, since COMPNOR's Imperial Security Bureau absolutely despised having anything to do with its counterparts within Imperial Intelligence's own Bureau of Operations, and vice versa.

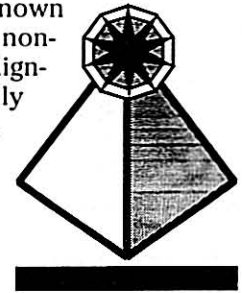
The sudden arrival of the new branches of Order soon changed their minds when certain troublemakers within the ISB and the Bureau of Ops began to vanish without warning, complete with rumors concerning re-education camps on ice planets and steamy jungle worlds. Eventually, ISB and Imperial Intelligence declared an uneasy truce, if only for their own occupational survival.

Politorate

"Politorates: the last to know what's going on, and the first to get ejected out the airlock ..."

— anonymous Alignment Admiral

The regulatory body known as COMPNOR is, in effect, non-existent in the Pentastar Alignment and is not specifically named in the Treaty. Grand Moff Kaine personally considered the constant feuding between Imperial Intelligence and COMPNOR a ridiculous waste of time and effort, and admitted that COMPNOR itself had gained a considerable amount of distrust among even its own agents and officials.



Since all actions of the Pentastar Alignment were considered essential to the preservation of the New Order, a new office was required to ensure that the principles of the New Order were enforced among Alignment personnel. This responsibility has been delegated to the Politorate Branch — each Alignment office, vessel, garrison, and political body has its own Politorate officer or Pol, for short.

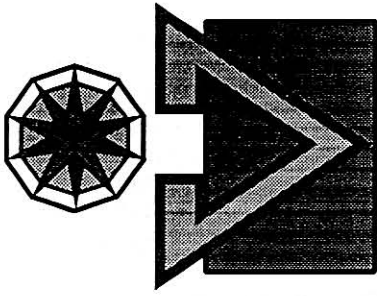
Pols make certain all actions by personnel are in strict accordance with the demands of the Alignment and the New Order. Pols can order accountings of computer records, search personnel files — no matter how secure — and conduct investigations wherever loyalty to the Alignment is concerned. Politorate officers have the authority to remove ground and ship commanders from their posts, on the spot, for breaches in discipline.

To suggest that Politorate Branch is little more than a spy organization for the Chamber of Order is grounds for immediate dismissal and transfer to a re-education center on one of the harsher worlds within the Alignment. Most Alignment personnel have learned to work around the prying eyes of their Politorate officers, often by restricting certain scandocs and destroying personal records, while Naval and Army units consider their Politorate officers nuisances who usually do more harm to their troops' morale than good.

Pentastar Politorate Officer. All stats are 2D except: *Knowledge* 3D, *bureaucracy* 4D, *intimidation* 6D, *willpower: loyalty to Alignment* 6D, *Technical* 3D, *security: computer systems* 4D+2. Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D).

Insurrection

The Order branch known as Insurrection grew from a secret investigation by the Chamber of Order into the reasons systems fled the Empire



and joined the New Republic. The investigators theorized that the fragmented Empire has become much too concerned with confronting the New Republic militarily

and keeping its remaining regions under tighter controls and restrictions. This, they believed, provided the means for the New Republic to persuade perfectly upstanding and peace-loving citizens of the Empire into rebellion for “improved lifestyles” and “overstated freedoms.” The investigation recommended the devotion of resources and personnel to attack the New Republic and its allies on a variety of political and other more subtle fronts.

Insurrection agents are responsible for using deception and misinformation to prevent more systems from falling into the hands of the New Republic. Insurrection has a nasty arsenal of equipment and tricks at its disposal, including surveillance droids which spread rumors of defeat and poor cooperation among the ranks of the New Republic military, false New Republic couriers sent to government leaders to reveal their traitorous ways, protest rallies staged against the New Republic, and attacks on diplomats who favor the New Republic. All efforts are designed to cause maximum political damage and internal turmoil within the New Republic.

Insurrection’s newest strategy is to target worlds and systems that have already turned over to the New Republic, carefully sowing seeds of intolerance and hatred about aliens, planting political fraud into a system’s fledgling government structure, and even prying into the New Republic Council. Their latest plot apparently centers on undermining the Mon Calamari and other core New Republic members.

Insurrection Agent. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 3D, blaster: heavy blaster pistol 4D+2, grenade 3D+2, Knowledge 2D+2, bureaucracy 3D, Mechanical 2D+2, communications 3D+2, space transports 3D+2, Technical 4D, computer programming/repair 4D+2, demolitions 5D, droid programming 4D+2, security 5D+2.* Move: 10. False identity card, hold-out blaster (3D), secure comlink, security bypass tools.

Judgment

“If justice is blind, then Judgment must surely be deaf — considering all the pain and suffering they’ve caused ...”

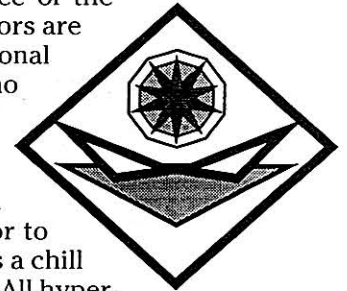
— Angry New Republic official

Grand Moff Arduus Kaine became concerned with the lack of a visible organization to uphold the mandates of the New Order. While the Empire had been devoted to the control of information, Kaine believed there was little the Empire did to promote adherence to the New Order, with the exception of COMPNOR’s Coalition for Progress. Kaine was particularly interested in the old Justice branch of the Coalition, and how it tried to mesh the policies of the New Order with the legal system. He then determined that the Alignment should become a symbol of the New Order — and created Judgment.

The sinister appearance of Judgment and its various representatives is not accidental — the Empire established that fear by image and deed is far more powerful than fear alone. The Great InQuestors of Judgment, threatening men who wear long black cloaks and hide their faces beneath oversized black hoods, serve as the principal tool of maintaining the decree of the Pentastar Alignment. The InQuestors are accompanied by their own personal cadre of Protectorate troops who not only seek out miscreants and lawbreakers for the InQuestors to cross-examine, but also act as the InQuestors’ personal bodyguards.

The arrival of a Great InQuestor to an outlying world or system sends a chill to nearly all beings in the vicinity. All hyperspace travel in or out of the system is forbidden (by Interdictor cruiser) while the InQuestor conducts his investigations to root out deception, crime, and acts of treachery against the New Order. InQuestors can seize property and persons without writ or warrant, conducting their sessions aboard ancient Imperial dungeon ships. Their practices are sometimes compared to ancient witch hunts and mass trials as they use fear and confession to gain access to traitors. Tales have been circulating the star lanes about public punishments, even executions. Such actions have been subject to strong protests by the New Republic.

Judgment InQuestor. All stats are 2D except: *Knowledge 4D, alien species 4D+2, bureaucracy 5D, intimidation 6D+2, law enforcement 5D+2, planetary systems 4D+2, Perception 4D, persuasion 5D+2.* Move: 10. Comlink.



Adventure Idea

One of the characters discovers that his home world is under the scrutiny of a Great InQuestor. Fearing for the lives of friends or relatives who may be loyal to the cause of the New Republic there, the character must attempt to smuggle them off the planet and to safety.

Protectorate

"Not the most brilliant bunch of plant-heads in the galaxy, but certainly the most trigger-happy. Saw a whole squad of them take out a speeder taxi once because they thought it moved suspiciously ..."

— Roark Slader, independent businessman

The new Protectorate Branch replaces the Internal Security Branch (IntSec) of the Ubiqtorate and the Imperial Guard Corps, and is charged with protecting Pentastar Alignment personnel and equipment. Grand Moff Kaine and his staff noted that performance ratings for the former Imperial offices were far less than satisfactory, and an increase in the quality of security and protection of vital personnel and equipment was an absolute must. To ensure their loyalty to the Alignment, recruits for Protectorate usually come from former fanatical CompForce troops rather than from regular Imperial Army or Navy personnel.

Protectorate prefers to keep knowledge of its training practices and operational procedures to itself, even from other Alignment offices, which only magnifies the cloak of secrecy that veils its agents and personnel. A key scheme identifies the grade of a particular protector, from "10" for most general troops to "1" for the elite guardians, protectors of members of the Chamber of Order. The "0" designation is usually reserved for Protectorate Branch command officers. Many Protectorate agents prefer all references about them to be based on their agent grade. To heighten the confusion, agents with identical grades identify themselves by their subclass rating from their divisional offices — such as 1A, 2C, and 3G.

As if that was not enough, Protectorate has also devised an elaborate color-coding scheme to indicate the threat level of any possible situation and the necessary application of defense and force necessary to achieve success. The color is followed by a number used to indicate the danger of the situation. For example: a Yellow-1 threat could mean an attack by a mad lone gunman, while a Red-100 alert can indicate the arrival of the entire New Republic fleet! Threats in the Blue and Black spectrums are considered threats to be captured — the Protectorate agent should attempt to capture the assailant alive for questioning by Interrogation. Conversely, Yellow and Red threats are "destroy first, explain later" situations, warranting immediate action by the Protectorate agent.

Protectorate Agent, Levels 2 to 10. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D+2, dodge 3D+2, grenade 4D, melee combat 4D+2, Strength 3D, brawling 4D+2.* Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), secure comlink.

Guardian Protectorate Agent, Level 1. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 4D, blaster: heavy blaster pistol 5D+2, brawling parry 5D+1, dodge 4D+2, grenade 5D, melee combat 5D+1, melee parry 4D+2, vehicle blasters 4D+2, Mechanical 3D, communications 3D+2, repulsorlift operations 4D, sensors 3D+2, space transports 4D+1, Strength 3D, brawling 4D, Technical 3D, security 5D+2.* Move: 10. Heavy blaster pistol (5D), secure comlink.

Enforcement

One of the initial problems encountered by the Pentastar Alignment has been the application of its limited military forces. With other, non-aligned Imperial forces still at large and the New Republic probing deeper into the Empire, the defense of the Alignment has been crucial to its survival.

Military tacticians and commanders have long complained that one of the many unnecessary burdens heaped upon the Navy and Army has been local law enforcement. Local planetary constabularies and militias are only as organized and effective as the systems they patrol. There has been an ever-increasing need for a centralized enforcement arm that can uphold the code of the Alignment as well as local laws.

Kaine created a new Enforcement faction for this purpose. While it combines much of the same duties as the Justice and Enforcement branches of the Galactic Empire, it has new sweeping powers, specialized equipment and facilities, and personnel. The many branches under Enforcement cover the known limits of crime throughout the galaxy, with new suboffices being created almost as quickly as personnel and computer storage space can be found for them. Criminal science laboratories are constantly working on breaking data transmission code schemes and data slicing techniques. Analysis and identification specialists attempt to trace the path of crime through the star lanes. Many investigative offices serve certain regions in the Alignment, like the Velcar Free Commerce Zone. Other suboffices specialize in certain types of crime: smuggling, forgery, credit counterfeiting, starship theft, homicide, piracy, and criminal organizations.

Despite the long chain of offices and suboffices, there is one symbol that best represents the Alignment's new Enforcement arm. Hailed as friend of the innocent citizen and foe to the common crook, they are considered the embodiment of justice, fairness, and the galactic way — the Pentastar Patrol.

The Pentastar Patrol

"Collectively, the Patrol's about as bright as banthas armed with blasters, and just as subtle. I get the shivers just thinking about them."

— Roark Slader, independent businessman



The Pentastar Patrol constitutes Enforcement's largest body of personnel and equipment, and has become perhaps the most successful symbol of the Pentastar Alignment and its authority. The Patrol has replaced a large number of Imperial Army garrisons and Naval orbit operations, allowing those forces to participate in the continuing conflict between the Alignment and those who oppose it.

The Pentastar Patrol is unique in that it permits some aliens to join its ranks. While this decision has enabled the Patrol to gain wide acceptance among citizens, the idea has not settled too well within the Chamber of Order or other Alignment branches, which always try to follow Imperial decrees to the letter.

After a precursory physical and psychological examination, each applicant to the Pentastar Patrol Academy receives an intense, three month-long training program to promote physical endurance and develop early combat skills. As each course level is passed, the cadet is tested on how he or she will best serve the Patrol. Less than 40 percent of all applicants succeed in the final training levels, and even fewer make starting rank of "patrol officer first class." Those who pass the training program but fail to make patrol officer qualification are usually assigned to desk and record-keeping duties, but are still entitled to the full Patrol compensation and benefit package.

The standard Pentastar Patrol officer is equipped with a blue and black service uniform tunic with matching gloves and boots, protective blast vest, full utility belt, stun baton, mag-lock binders, and standard blaster pistol. The most distinguishing feature of all Patrol officers is their helmets, resulting in the unfavorable nickname of "cueball" by some criminal types. A rounded white affair with a molded black half-visor, the helmet has a built-in secure comlink that provides direct communication with other Patrol officers, their Patrol precinct or Patrol cruiser in close orbit. Officers can access Enforcement's entire body of information about a particular subject, citizen, or starship as long as that information is within Enforcement's databases (and if that citizen or ship does business within the Alignment, chances are that the information is). The helmet also provides voice amplification speakers for crowd control and has a target-enhancement and tracking system transposed over the inside of the helmet's visor. The enhancement system can increase the heat signatures of targets in darkness or modify spectral signatures in case of obscuring smoke or fog.

Pentastar Patrol duties are deliberately far-ranging, enabling them to participate with other



Adventure Idea

The galactic media conglomerate, Galaxy 9, hires the characters to investigate corruption in the Pentastar Patrol Academy. To do so, they must attempt to join the Patrol by applying as cadets and passing their rigorous training tests. The situation can be made more humorous by appointing a drill sergeant to the character-cadets, who watches their every move and makes life miserable for them.

Enforcement branches and the military in a support role. Besides their normal law enforcement duties, they may be called upon to provide staff support or to flood regions with security sweeps. Even so, the most common sights on a commercially upscale trade world or bustling spaceport in the Pentastar Alignment are Pentastar Patrol officers doing what they do best — going on patrol. Traveling on foot, flitter, or by ground-effect vehicle, the Patrol makes its presence felt by sheer numbers. On rougher, more backwater worlds, the Patrol appears less often but still as potent, cruising systems in their readily identifiable Pentastar Patrol cutters.

Knowing it represents the Alignment and the principles of the New Order, the Pentastar Patrol is constantly releasing bulletins of their latest deeds of public courtesy, heroism, and long lists of arrests and feats of crime-busting for the galactic media's scrutiny. The news links' attitude toward the Patrol has always been somewhat suspect, although reporters never seem to hesitate to take an opportunity to record some officer reciting the Patrol's famous code — "justice, fairness, and the galactic way." Even children on some worlds have been swept up in all the admiration, purchasing toy replicas of Patrol officer helmets and acting out their own imagined capture of some dangerous crime lord.

Pentastar Patrol Officer. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D+1, melee combat: stun baton 4D+2, Strength 3D, brawling 4D.* Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), blast vest (+1D to torso for physical attacks, +1 for energy attacks), helmet (+1D to front and back for physical attacks, +1 to front and back for energy attacks), stun baton (STR+2D+2 damage using energy shock, STR+1D without using shock).

Personalities of The Pentastar Alignment

With its unique government structure and a background firmly rooted in trade and conquest, the Pentastar Alignment contains many interesting characters and worlds. Here are a few of these

personalities for those characters seeking fortune and fame in the Pentastar Alignment.

Grand Moff Ardu Kaine

During meetings of the Chamber of Order, it is not too difficult to see that Grand Moff Ardu Kaine is the center of all attention and debate. A gifted orator, Ardu Kaine was among Palpatine's earliest converts to the principles of the New Order and one of his most ardent supporters during his rise to power. Kaine supervised attempts to obtain support of the military for Palpatine and helped found COMPNOR when there was some concern over the rapid reorganization of Imperial Intelligence. For his fervent loyalty, Palpatine granted Kaine governorship of several worlds, later followed by his appointment as Moff. When Grand Moff Tarkin perished aboard the first Death Star battle station, Palpatine made Ardu Kaine Grand Moff of the Outer Rim Territories.

But Kaine felt betrayed by the Emperor. Instead of drawing him closer so that he might aid him in important matters, Palpatine had sent him to repair the damage caused by Tarkin's passing and the Rebel's most important victory to date. Grand Moff Kaine took personal charge of the Scourge Squadron, an elite force of Star Destroyers assigned to seek out and crush Rebel activity in the Outer Rim Territories. He was aboard the squadron's flagship, the Super Star Destroyer *Reaper*, when news of the Emperor's death finally reached him.

The news did not shake him, but only tempered the resolve within him. He believed in the New Order, and knew that if put properly to use, the principles laid out by Palpatine would work to help restore the Empire.

The Grand Moff's physical and electronic perimeter is always monitored by a force of Guardians, select agents from Protectorate Branch. The Guardians are often seen chauffeuring Kaine about, checking his food, and interrogating servants and droids at random. See the Protectorate Branch above for Guardian stats.

Grand Moff Ardu Kaine is a hard, cold, and extremely calculating man. A brilliant theorist and tactician, he has put great emphasis on success through total domination, an applied principle of the New Order. He views himself as one day taking the position of Emperor, not of the Imperial Galactic Empire, but of the *New* Galactic Empire.



Grand Moff Ardu Kaine

Type: Imperial Grand Moff

DEXTERITY 2D

Blaster 3D+2, dodge 5D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Bureaucracy: Chamber of Order 10D, bureaucracy: Velcar Free Commerce Zone 8D, intimidation 8D, languages 6D, law enforcement 7D, planetary systems 8D, value 6D, willpower 6D

MECHANICAL 3D

Communications 4D+1, repulsoflight operation 3D+2, space transports: Imperial shuttles 5D+2

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 7D+1, command 10D, investigation 5D, persuasion 7D+2

STRENGTH 2D+2

TECHNICAL 3D+1

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 2

Character Points: 11

Move: 10

Commerce Master Commissioner Gregor Raquoran

Gregor Raquoran is an always-suspicious, obese man with an incurable glandular condition that makes him sweat constantly. He is unique among Imperial officials, since he rose to his position not as an initial supporter of Emperor Palpatine or even as a loyal devotee of COMPNOR, but as a former corporate head and profitable businessman. Raquoran obtained his post as Commerce Master Commissioner for the Velcar Free Commerce Zone by carefully spreading favors among the Imperial officials responsible for the Zone until his nomination was ensured.

Unlike the Grand Moff, Raquoran is neither interested nor has the slightest concern for political theory. He signed the Pentastar Treaty because he is a shrewd businessman and he secretly knew (but publicly dismissed the notion) that the Velcar Sector would be a prime target for the New Republic. He also knew Kaine's fervent following would bring military units to his cause, and indeed, loyal Imperial units ar-



rived in droves. Now Raquoran can obtain as many Alignment Naval and Army units as his sector needs.

Master Commissioner Gregor Raquoran is a brusque man who hides underneath the mantle of his Imperial uniform. He often negotiates deals in the Velcar Zone for his own personal profit, and does not mince words where his loyalties are concerned. Raquoran purportedly lives in the lap of luxury on Capza, a lush tropical world ringed with high escarpments, where he employs the local natives as his personal servitors. Rather than leave the fate of his physical well-being in the hands of Protectorate Branch, Commissioner Raquoran keeps guards selected from various species in the Velcar Free Commerce Zone at his disposal.

Raquoran firmly believes the Pentastar Alignment should protect and defend the Velcar Free Commerce Zone to the last, despite what Grand Moff Kaine might have to say. It has been suggested that Kaine tolerates Raquoran only because of the importance of the Velcar Sector and his plan to rebuild the Empire.

■ **Commerce Master Commissioner
Gregor Raquoran**

Type: Imperial Commerce Commissioner

DEXTERITY 2D

Blaster 3D+2, dodge 2D

KNOWLEDGE 4D+2

Bureaucracy: Velcar Free Commerce Zone 10D, intimidation 7D+2, languages 7D, planetary systems 8D+1, value 7D

MECHANICAL 2D+1

Communications 4D, repulsorlift operation 3D+2, space transports 3D+1

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 5D+2, command 8D, hide 5D, persuasion 7D+2

STRENGTH 2D+2

TECHNICAL 3D+1

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 9

Move: 10

**Elta Besk, Dynamic Automata
Conglomerate**

Elta Besk represents one of the most powerful of corporate families enmeshed in the political structure of the Empire and the Alignment. Elta is the only daughter of Metron Besk, founder of the Besk family company, Dynamic Automata.

The elder Besk built Dynamic Automata from a single firm that supplied logic enhancement circuits to third-degree droids. Later on, Besk established Dynamic Automata as a major provider of technology to the Imperial war machine. Much of the advanced droid circuitry aboard Sector Plexus droid vessels and Imperial probe droids originated from Dynamic Automata, although the company has long since turned over

production to other manufacturers within its structure.

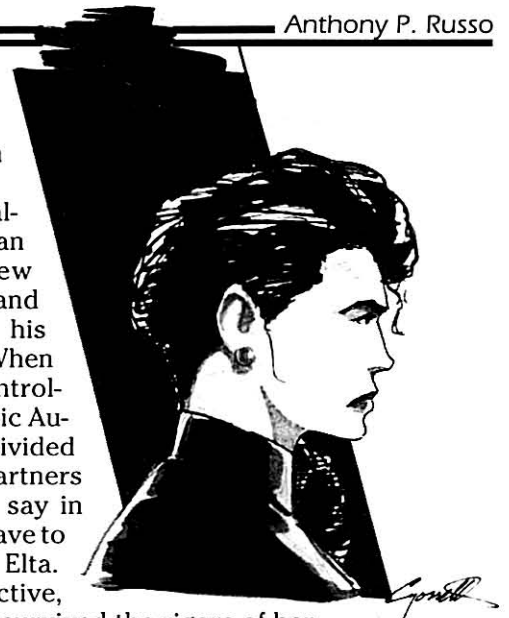
Metron Besk was always a suspicious man who eventually grew tired of the bickering and backstabbing among his company's partners. When he died, the bulk of controlling interest in Dynamic Automata was carefully divided so that none of his partners would have the final say in the firm — all would have to defer to his daughter, Elta.

Elta Besk is an attractive, calm beauty who has survived the rigors of her high position in the company. Her father had personally trained her in the subtle arts of corporate and armed warfare. Her charm hides a certain ruthlessness as she works to make her own place in the Chamber of Order — it was her idea that Dynamic Automata would be among the first of the corporates to join the Alignment to protect company interests within the Entralla Route. She continually sides with Grand Moff Kaine on most political fronts and, in turn, he seeks out her advice, a partnership that has led to a great deal of grumbling among the other corporate members of the Chamber of Order.

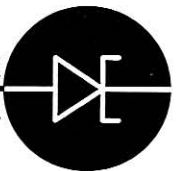
Despite its long-standing commercial success, public image is Dynamic Automata's only real product these days, as the other entities within it wreak havoc on unsuspecting systems. Dynamic Automata has paid careful attention to insure that certain "unglamorous" company activities or actions would never be seen by public eyes. To the many citizens under the heel of the Pentastar Alignment and the remnants of the Empire, Dynamic Automata appears as a benevolent and caring corporation, as its music-filled holos and other publicity data transmissions declare, "We Care, So You Don't Have To."

Elta oversees Dynamic Automata's various interests throughout the Pentastar Alignment. She travels in her personal starship, a brand new Corellian Buccaneer, yet another modification of Corellian Engineering's famous blockade runner series of corvettes.

Solar Dynamica. Capital, *astrogation* 4D+2, *capital ship gunnery* 4D, *capital ship piloting* 4D+2, *capital ship shields* 4D, *maneuverability* 2D+2, space 7, atmosphere 350, hull 4D, shields 3D+2. Weapons: 10 double turbolasers (fire control 3D, damage 5D).



**DYNAMIC
AUTOMATA**



■ Elta Besk

Type: Corporate Leader

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 4D+2, dodge 5D, brawling parry 5D, melee combat 5D+1, missile weapons 4D, vehicle blasters 4D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Bureaucracy 8D+2, cultures 7D, intimidation 7D, languages 6D, planetary systems 8D, streetwise 5D, survival 5D, value 8D+1, willpower 5D+2

MECHANICAL 3D

Astrogation 4D, capital ship piloting: Corellian Buccaneer transport 4D+2, capital ship gunnery 4D, capital ship shields 4D, communications 4D, repulsorlift operation 4D+2, sensors 4D

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 5D+2, command 6D+1, con 5D+1, hide 5D, persuasion 6D+2, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 2D+2

Brawling 4D+2, swimming 4D

TECHNICAL 2D+1

Computer programming/repair 10D, droid programming: probe droids 9D, droid repair 6D, security 3D+2

Force Points: 1

Dark Side Points: 1

Character Points: 10

Move: 10

Wyrn Otro, Galentro Heavy Works

The Galentro family of companies began many years ago as a hastily organized alliance of commercial exporters. They initially banded together to protect their trade routes from other competition and piracy. Since then, the terribly quiet Galentro Board has slowly increased the corporation's sphere of influence to include asteroid and gas mining, manufacturing, and other heavy industries. Their corporate crest and slogan, "Galentro Works For All," can readily be seen on sites across the Velcar Free Commerce Zone.

Wyrn Otro is the chief representative of Galentro Heavy Works in the Chamber of Order. Like most elite members of the corporation, Otro was raised in a Galentro family enclave in the Core Worlds. During that time, he was tutored rigorously to believe that Galentro and its survival is critical, even before that of the Alignment and the Empire. An unspoken word exists for such unblinking devotion — *corporata*, the belief that the corporate family is the only family one ever needs. Otro knows that without the Alignment or the Empire, the corporates would slowly fall to predators. So for the time being, an uneasy state of cooperation exists between the corporate and the political state. However, Otro and his superiors know that the only thing that lasts forever in the galaxy is time itself.

Wyrn Otro is unmistakably loyal to Galentro. While he plots and plans with the best of the Chamber of Order corporates, all of his efforts are for Galentro. He considers Elta Besk and Dynamic Automata little more

than fortunate freebooters, a somewhat successful corporate who scaled the ladder to the elite from the outside. Like any good devotee to Galentro, he ignores the propaganda generated by the usurpers who call themselves the New Republic and their claims that Galentro uses slave labor in its mines and uproots entire alien populations in its quest for raw materials and exportable resources.



For his personal safety, Otro can call upon Galentro's Rangers, a seldom-seen detachment of elite security that protects Galentro personnel and equipment. The Rangers often travel in unmarked ships with forged identity documents, making their origin difficult to trace. The Rangers sometimes guard critical Galentro sites and mining regions.

■ Wyrn Otro

Type: Corporate Representative

DEXTERITY 2D

Blaster 3D+2, dodge 4D

KNOWLEDGE 4D+2

Bureaucracy 9D+2, business: Galentro Heavy Works 10D, cultures 5D, languages 6D+2, planetary systems 8D+1, value 8D, willpower 5D

MECHANICAL 2D+1

Astrogation 5D, communications 4D+1, repulsorlift operation 4D, sensors 4D+1, space transports 4D+1

PERCEPTION 4D

Bargain 6D+2, command 6D, con 5D+1, hide 6D, persuasion 7D+2, sneak 6D

STRENGTH 3D

TECHNICAL 2D

Security 4D+2

Character Points: 6

Move: 10

Freebooters

Pirates!

That word alone is enough to raise the hackles on even the most grizzled of star travelers and independent spacers. Pirate raiders are a constant problem in the neutral space between the New Republic and the Pentastar Alignment, and any unarmed merchant is considered fair game for their guns.

Freebooters prefer to hide among the cracks of the iron-handed justice of the Pentastar Alignment and its corporates. Independent by nature and ever-suspicious of any attention or gesture made toward them, freebooters and buccaneers



ply the star lanes, looking for booty in the form of slow, fat merchant cruisers and traders.

Most freebooters get their start as honest freighter captains and scouts. Only when they run into the stone wall of corruption within the Alignment and the powerful corporations do they realize that the only profitable route to take is the one of the pirate.

Roark Slader is a rare example of a freebooter who manages to survive in this dangerous profession. Running with his innocent-enough looking container ship, *Slader's Raider I*, he and his crew frequent the less-traveled star lanes. Their course is never random though. Slader keeps contacts with the dockmasters of several major shipping ports, waiting for word of a particularly enticing target that has recently debarked.

When its prey is in sight, usually just before they reach one of their hyperspace jump points, *Raider I* opens its loading bow to reveal the feisty Corellian gunship, *Slader's Raider II*, secreted inside. *Raider II* quickly renders the merchant ship powerless with its ion cannons. After quickly ejecting the merchant's crew aboard the ship's life pods, Slader stuffs *Raider I* with whatever booty he desires and either leaves the ship adrift or scuttles it completely.

Roark Slader keeps a bloodless operation, and would prefer not to injure anybody during his activities if he can help it. While some might claim he is weak, Slader just calls it good business sense.

■ **Roark Slader**

Type: Pirate

DEXTERITY 4D

Blaster 5D+2, dodge 5D, brawling parry 5D, vehicle blasters 5D

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Alien species 5D, bureaucracy 5D+1, business: Velcar Free Commerce Zone 6D, languages 6D+2, planetary systems 8D, value 8D+1

MECHANICAL 3D

Astrogation 5D, capital ship gunnery 5D, capital ship piloting 5D+2, capital ship shields 4D, communications 5D, repulsorlift operation 4D+2, sensors 4D, space transports 5D, starfighter piloting 5D

PERCEPTION 2D

Bargain 6D+1, command 4D, con 6D+2, hide 6D, persuasion 6D, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 4D+2

TECHNICAL 3D

Blaster repair 5D, capital ship repair 5D+2, capital ship weapon repair 5D, computer programming/repair 6D, droid repair 4D, security 5D+1, starship repair 5D

Character Points: 10

Move: 10

Equipment: Comlink, datapad, modified blaster pistol (4D+2), modified container ship and Corellian gunship.

Capsule: Roark Slader is a loner who has no open desire to talk about his past, even though there is the off-chance someone might recognize him as a former military commander for the Entrallan Mil-

Adventure Idea

The characters are hired to transport a nagging, simple-minded corporate official back to his company's headquarters somewhere in the Pentastar Alignment. Along the way, numerous bounty hunters, corporate security mercenaries and other armed thugs attempt to prevent the characters from completing their task. Eventually they discover that the official has accidentally revealed the corporation's business dealings with slavers to agents from the New Republic, and the corporation wants its former employee out of the way. The characters must now risk getting the official and themselves back to the safety of the distant New Republic.

tia. When the Emperor died at Endor, the citizens of Entralla surged into a major civil rebellion of its own in an attempt to join the Rebel Alliance. Many officers of the militia, including Commander Slader, were waiting for just an opportunity to overthrow the Imperial governor.

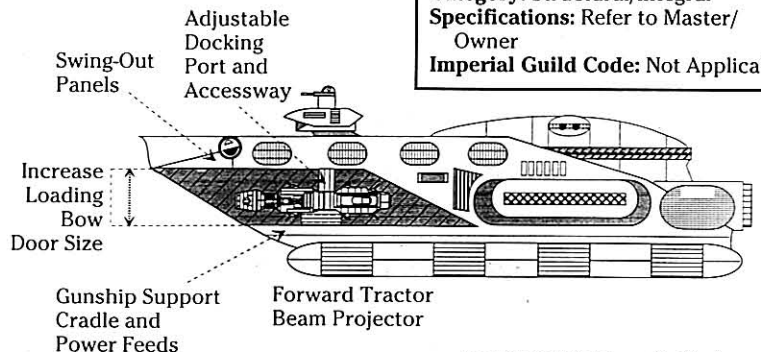
Instead there came a huge crackdown on the population (some say with the assistance of the Guild of Interstellar Merchants that resides on Entralla), and many members of Entralla's resistance fled. The citizens of Entralla now find themselves citizens of the Empire yet again, this time under the Pentastar Alignment.

Ports-of-Call

The Pentastar Alignment encompasses hundreds of worlds. Several areas are paramount to the survival of the Alignment. Other worlds hold known and unknown secrets the Alignment wishes to protect. Here are just a few areas of interest within the Pentastar Alignment.

**Slader's Raider I and II
Shipwright's Specs**

Vessel's Name: Slader's Raider I
Vessel Type: Vee-Kir 4 Bulk Transport
Master/Owner: Roark Slader
Work Type: Internal Modification
Category: Structural/Integral
Specifications: Refer to Master/Owner
Imperial Guild Code: Not Applicable



APPROVED: R. Slader

Anthony P. Russo

Velcar Free Commerce Zone

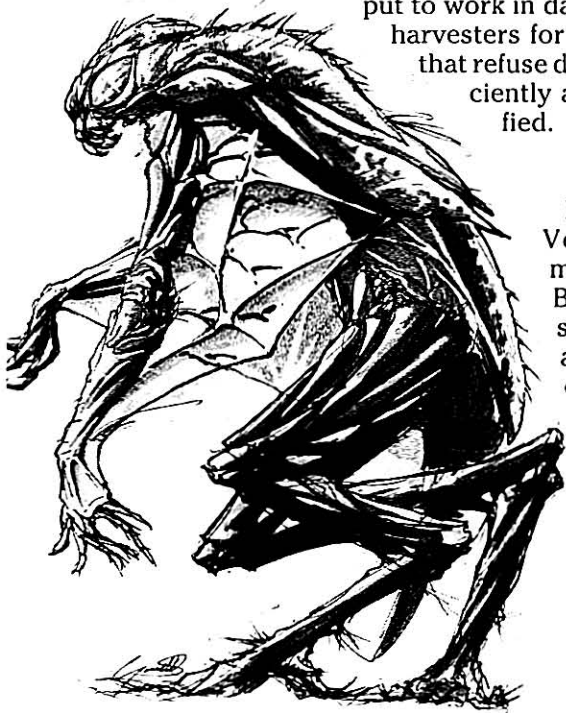
"Free commerce? Sure ... for a price. The FCZ exists solely for the Imperial corporates, not for the puny little independent spacers and free-traders out there, and the corporates take an extreme disliking to anyone who messes around with their little free enterprise racket. Fair warning: if you want to play here, better bring your own cards."

— Roark Slader, independent businessman

Little more than a strip of systems and interstellar dust from wayward nebulae, the Velcar Free Commerce Zone is many a merchant's fantasy turned real. The worlds in this region provide the raw materials needed for advanced technology — mantium ore and plexite for starship hulls, heavy gases for engines and energy weapons. The Pentastar Alignment relies upon private corporates to develop and exploit this plentiful region for its own demands, and has set up special rules and regulations in the Free Commerce Zone that allow powerful corporates to bypass most of the required world settlement and development permits and planetary claims procedures.

Under the direct authority of Commerce Sector Commissioner Gregor Raquoran, scouts are constantly on the lookout for new sources of materials and exportable goods. Worlds with commercial potential are then contracted out to ravager corporates, whose practices can include anything from direct core mining to atmosphere tapping.

Unfortunately, the worlds within the Velcar Free Commerce Zone are home to mostly primitive native species. They are easily displaced by the corporates to serve other, useless worlds, or put to work in dangerous mines and harvesters for low wages. Worlds that refuse development are efficiently and ruthlessly pacified.



Bextar

Deep within the Velcar Free Commerce Zone, the Bextar system consists of four gas giants that slowly circle a listless pale yellow sun. Few of the planetoids or their numerous tiny moons are hospitable to most lifeforms, but a thriving corporate mining colony ex-

ists there nonetheless. Here the Amber Sun Mining Corporate, a subsidiary of Dynamic Automata, mines for engine and heavy energy weapon gases.

Based on several of the craggy moonlets that circle Bextar's gaseous planets, the colony mines the planets with scoop ships and satellite stations. Scoop ships descend in dangerous close orbit and extend huge funnels, gathering atmospheric gases into their storage tanks. Refiners and distillers isolate the gases and expel the rest. Satellite stations directly descend into the dense atmosphere and extend huge tap pipes to collect gases. Like most corporate colonies, Bextar utilizes cheap alien labor provided from other worlds. Since Bextar's dangerous mining techniques require excellent pilots, much of the labor force consists of alien Entymals.

The Entymals are but one example of the fate of numerous alien species throughout the Free Commerce Zone. Most Entymals are easily recognizable by their hardened, lanky exoskeletons of jade green and jewel-like eyes on top of their pronounced heads. Much of the Entymal worker population is female, with queen Entymals producing offspring after an elaborate mating ritual with a rare male drone.

Entymals have a thin, chitinous membrane that extends from each wrist joint to the side of the abdomen. When extended, this membrane unfolds into a parawing, permitting gliding for short distances like some species of flying mammals. Entymals have unprecedented reputations as excellent pilots and navigators wherever they travel.

The Entymals, however, cannot enjoy such preoccupations. Removed from their ancestral hive home, they have been put to work piloting scoop ships and satellite miners in the gas mines of Bextar. A courageous few have escaped the mines and fled to the New Republic and other regions, hoping to return one day and liberate their fellow Entymals.

■ Entymals

Attribute Dice: 12D
DEXTERITY 2D/4D
KNOWLEDGE 1D/2D
MECHANICAL 1D/3D
PERCEPTION 1D/4D
STRENGTH 2D/4D
TECHNICAL 1D/3D

Special Abilities:

Gliding: Under normal gravity conditions, Entymals can glide down approximately 60 to 100 feet, depending on wind conditions and available landing places. An Entymal needs at least 20 feet of flat surface to come to a running stop after a full glide.

Armor: The natural toughness of the Entymals' chitinous exoskeleton makes them resistant to the effects of *brawling* attacks; add +2 to *Strength* when figuring resistance to a brawling attack.

Story Factors:

Rituals: The only Entymals that "mate" are the male drones

and female queens during the mating ritual — which also happens to be a death ritual for the male Entymal. Any Entymal will find most displays of affection by other races, especially among Humans, confusing. Most male Entymals in general will find the entire pursuit of Human love most disagreeable: "Really now! This constant fixation with the continuation of your species ... disgusting!"

Move: 10/14

Size: 1.2 to 2 meters tall

Entralla and The Guild of Interstellar Merchants

"I wouldn't join GIM if my life depended on it. And for what, to have your name displayed prominently on some open data facility for any Alignment official to nose through? No thanks."

— Roark Slader, independent businessman

The shining spaceports of Entralla serve as the home seat of the Guild of Interstellar Merchants, one of the first and perhaps best known organizations of all spacers and star pilots in the Pentastar Alignment. Referred to simply as GIM, the Guild is responsible for setting transaction fees and transport schedules between its members and Guild-sponsored worlds. When tempers flare between shippers and spacers concerning damaged goods or property seized during hostile actions, GIM sends a mediator to settle the dispute. Many systems within the Velcar Free Commerce Zone are Guild-sponsored, often whether they desire sponsorship or not.

Many independent spacers join GIM for access to its Authorized Shipper List, a lengthy compilation of merchants and exporters who have already agreed to pay Guild-set prices for transport of goods and services. But joining GIM is pricey for the free-trader — up to 20,000 credits a year or a percentage of the gross value of the tonnage transported by the spacer. Joining the Guild and paying of dues can only be accomplished in person at the Guild's headquarters on Entralla, although any other related activity (like consulting the Authorized Shipper List) can be done at any Guild-authorized databank location.

GIM is an extremely powerful political organization — capable of forcing the economies of entire systems to shrivel and dry up for lack of trade or transport. When GIM cannot get its way with representatives of a system, GIM calls for a "rest period" from its collective membership. These stretches of inactivity can drive even the calmest dockmaster to fury as ships and goods get literally stacked up to the docking bay walls.

To ensure its position within the Pentastar Alignment, a representative from GIM is always on hand in the Chamber of Order to protect the interests of innocent merchant traders, and the vast accumulated fortune from dues and member fees that line the Guild's pockets.

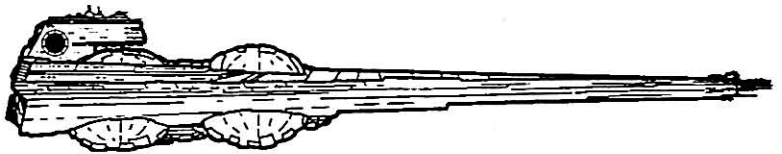
Jaemus

The Jaemus system is the site of a major Galentro space vessel construction and repair port, nearly as large as the New Republic's shipyard facility at Sluis Van. Jaemus is also the home of two major contributors to the Imperial Navy — Kuat Drive Yards, builders of the infamous Imperial Star Destroyer, and Sienar Fleet Systems, which maintains an extensive testing range at Jaemus for new starship designs. Both corporations have representatives within the Pentastar Alignment's Chamber of Order.

At Jaemus, Sienar and KDY are currently working under joint contract to develop and build the new *Enforcer*-class picket cruiser for the Alignment Navy. The *Enforcer* uses the hull frame of Sienar's effective Interdictor Cruiser. Despite being half as large as an Imperial Star Destroyer, the *Enforcer* is surprisingly maneuverable and bristles with armament.

The *Enforcer* is another tactical concept inspired by Grand Moff Kaine, who ordered his Naval architects to quickly rebuild the strength of the faltering Imperial Navy under his command. Naval architects discovered the design flexibility of the Interdictor Cruiser hull after removing a test vessel's gravity well projectors and re-arranging its massive array of power grids. Beefing up the ship's complement of energy weapons, tractor beams, shields, and engine power proved quite successful, resulting in a very potent capital ship.

Enforcers engage in picket operations along the uneasy region of space between the New Republic and the Pentastar Alignment. Because of the ship's reduced cost and crew needed for operation, they can operate in pairs, although formations of four or even six have been sighted as their numbers grow.



■ **Enforcer-class Picket Cruiser**

Craft: Sienar/KDY *Enforcer*-class Picket Cruiser

Type: Heavy cruiser

Scale: Capital

Length: 600 meters

Skill: Capital ship piloting

Crew: 3,000, gunners: 60, skeleton: 1000/+10

Crew Skill: Astrogation 4D, capital ship piloting 5D, capital ship shields 4D, capital ship gunnery 4D, sensors 4D

Passengers: 300 (troops)

Cargo Capacity: 10,000 metric tons

Consumables: 2 years

Hyperdrive Multiplier: x2

Hyperdrive Backup: x10

Criton's Point

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Temperate
Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Arid
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Treacherous
Length of Day: 28 standard hours
Length of Year: 400 local days
Sapient Species: Human
Starport: None (landing is forbidden without proper clearance)
Population: 1,000
Planet Function: Archaeological site
Government: Pentastar Alignment planetary overseer
Tech Level: Primitive
Major Exports: None
Major Imports: None

Capsule: Criton's Point is a restricted area. All entry into the system and planetary landings are expressly forbidden by the Pentastar Alignment and the Commerce Master Commissioner of the Velcar Free Commerce Zone.

A small scientific team is currently conducting excavations in and around the mysterious Library of Xer, and maintains a small settlement and starship landing field nearby.

Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 1D+2
Space: 6
Hull: 5D
Shields: 3D
Sensors:
Passive: 50/1D
Scan: 100/3D
Search: 200/4D
Focus: 6/4D+2
Weapons:

10 Turbolaser Batteries (fire separately)

Fire Arc: 4 front, 3 left, 3 right
Crew: 1 or 2
Skill: Capital ship gunnery
Fire Control: 4D
Space Range: 3-15/36/75
Atmosphere Range: 6-15/72/150 km
Damage: 3D

10 Quad Laser Cannons (fire separately)

Fire Arc: 4 front, 4 left, 4 right, 2 back
Crew: 1 or 2
Skill: Capital ship gunnery
Fire Control: 2D
Space Range: 3-15/36/75
Atmosphere Range: 6-15/72/150 km
Damage: 4D

Adventure Idea

Characters who are sensitive to the Force feel an almost uncontrollable desire to journey to Criton's Point, despite the warnings of the Pentastar Alignment. Upon arrival, the characters are drawn to the Library of Xer, where the research team has just opened a container from a vault. Inside the container is a tiny living tree, nourished by unknown means. The tree is very powerful in the Force and has drawn other Force-users to Criton's Point besides the characters — others who have dark intentions for the mysterious tree.

6 Ion Cannon Batteries (fire separately)

Fire Arc: 2 front, 1 left, 1 right, 2 back
Crew: 1 or 2
Skill: Capital ship gunnery
Fire Control: 3D
Space Range: 1-10/25/50
Atmosphere Range: 2-20/50/100 km
Damage: 3D

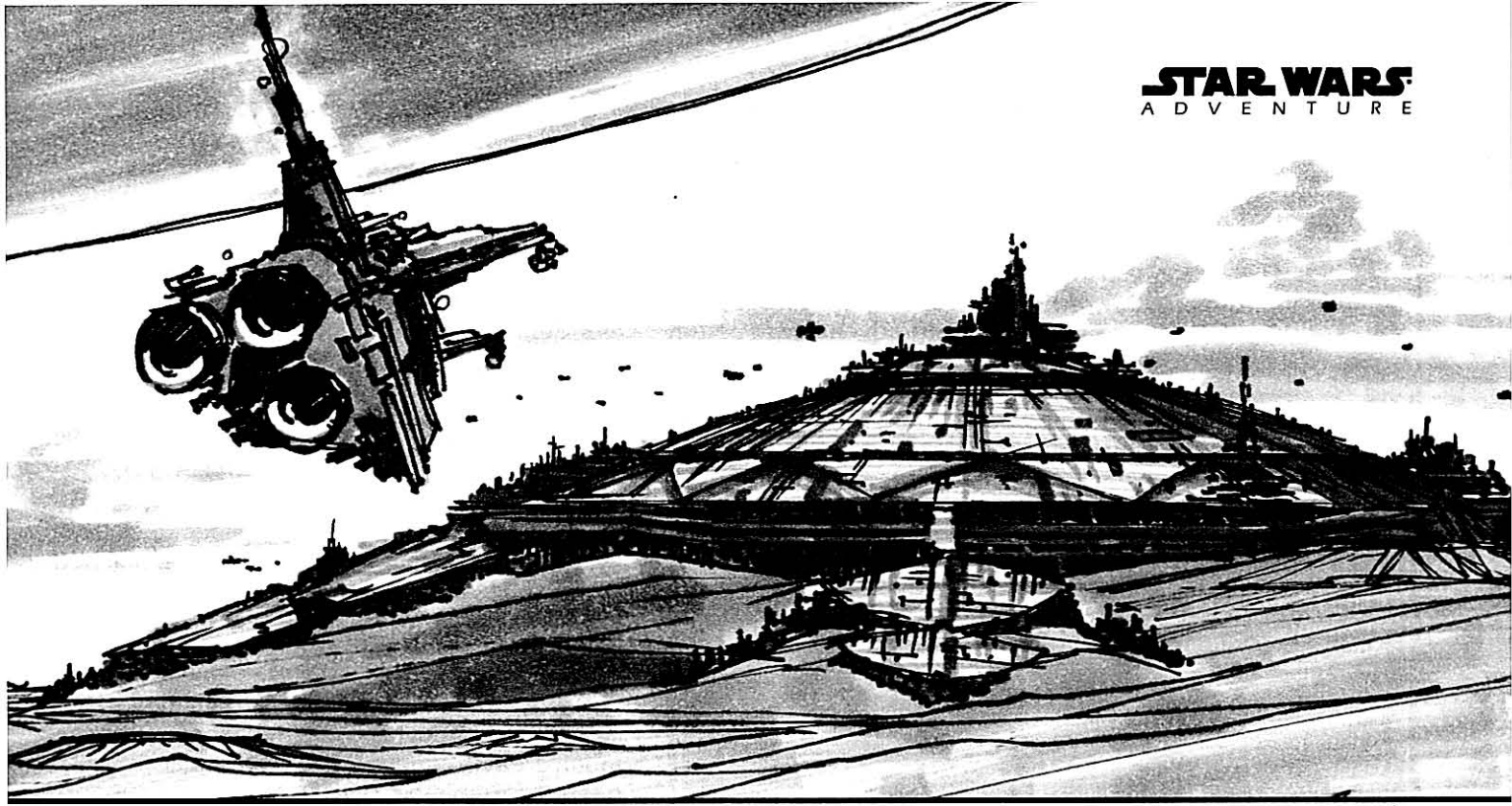
4 Tractor Beam Projectors (fire separately)

Fire Arc: 2 front, 1 left, 1 right
Crew: 2
Skill: Capital ship gunnery
Fire Control: 2D+2
Space Range: 1-5/15/30
Atmosphere Range: 2-10/30/60 km
Damage: 4D

Criton's Point

Somewhat off the regular hyperspace routes in the Pentastar Alignment is Criton's Point. The Point is a desolate world of ancient ruins that includes the Library of Xer, a vast storehouse of accumulated knowledge rigorously controlled by the Empire and now the Pentastar Alignment.

Very little information is available on Criton's Point or the library, but many historians are keenly interested with the planet. Rumors suggest that the library may have been erected before even the time of the Old Republic. The scientific team residing on the planet has issued a public statement claiming that the contents of the library currently resist all translation attempts.



ENEMIES FOR LIFE

by Stephen Luminati

Illustrations by Chris Gossett

The Gorgon lay in wait, hiding in the shadow of Tinn VI-B. The moon's orbit carried it just outside the gas giant's magnetic field, making it the perfect surveillance position. They had evaded him in their last encounter ... it was only his genius in astrogation that allowed him to predict their emergence point from hyperspace. They were running like scared animals, looking only to their rear for signs of pursuit. They wouldn't see the gas giant until they were ensnared in its devastating field.

He superimposed the Gorgon's crystal gravfield trap analysis onto his holographic heads-up display and waited. Twenty seconds later, the display indicated a sharp gravometric emission halfway into Tinn VI's magnetic field. Magnifying the spectrum transceivers, he watched the hologram shift to show a carbon-scored freighter spiral out of hyperspace. The vessel was clearly out of control. Theoretically, they might not regain guidance in time to avoid the gas giant. But he knew better. The pilot was clever, if not overflowing with bravado.

The freighter wobbled, righted itself, then lost all indications of power emissions. He smiled—the Tinn VI gas giant had claimed another victim. Their ship's magnetic bottle had failed, leaving them two options: shut main power

down or explode like a small nova. Wisely, they had chosen the former. He watched the crippled vessel abruptly engage emergency power, slowly rotate into position, then limp toward the populated Echnos moon.

He could swoop in for the kill now. But the contract hadn't been officially declared yet, and he wanted the money more than he wanted the revenge. It was only through non-official channels that he learned of his prey's extraordinary value. Yes. Wait eight hours. Let them be entranced by the wealth and pleasures of the city dome. Then let panic seize their throats and paralyze their minds before he struck. In eight hours.

And then the hunt would begin.

Introduction

Enemies for Life is a short adventure for three to six *Star Wars* characters, all of whom should have at least two skills above 5D. The party should have the normal prerequisites of gun-bearing characters, but heroes with diplomatic and technical skills can be a valued asset to the party. Force-sensitive and Jedi characters are always a helpful addition to a mission, but are not required for

the successful completion of this scenario. The characters should have their own ship, which may be of a wide variety of classifications. Since Echnos is an overpopulated, high-technology city dome, gamemasters may wish to play electronic or "techno" music during the adventure to better create the mood of Echnos.

Gamemasters may insert elements from their own campaigns into *Enemies for Life*. The BlastBoast 2000 contest — a repulsorlift combat derby in which characters may participate — is the perfect

opportunity to insert a recurring rival gamemaster character into the scenario. As the characters strive to win prize money, an arch-nemesis could stand between the heroes and their much-needed award money. If in a previous scenario the characters' ship was damaged or had suffered a hyperspace mishap, this scenario can be easily linked to the last gaming session's conclusion.

The scenario begins with a forced landing at the Echnos City dome. Echnos is located on a moon that circles the sixth planet in the Tinn system. A tremendously large gas giant, Tinn VI, emanates a particularly strong negative magnetic field. This field strips unprotected ships of their magnetic bottle shielding, causing their power-generating fusion reactors to become unstable. Once affected, a ship dares not operate its main power for fear of losing hydrogen containment.

Echnos City has grown up in the shadow of the gas giant. Although prolonged exposure to the moon's environment is toxic, the massive city offers a complete oxygen-nitrogen life support system. It's also the only place in the system the characters can find a shielding compound known as Polydex-9. They must find this compound and apply it to their magnetic bottle before they can leave Echnos.

Echnos (Tinn VI-D)

Type: Satellite
Temperature: Cool
Atmosphere: Type III (breath mask required)
Hydrosphere: Dry
Gravity: Standard
Terrain: Barren
Length of Day: 41 hours
Length of Year: 120 local days
Sentient Species: Humans, Sullustans, Ithorians, Rodians
Starport: Imperial class
Population: 8.6 million
Planet Function: High-tech manufacturing, trade
Government: Anarchy
Tech Level: Space
Major Imports: Foodstuffs, metals
Major Exports: Mid and high technology

Capsule: Echnos is one of six moons in orbit around the Tinn VI gas giant. Its surface is composed of barren stretches of land broken occasionally by rock outcroppings. The hydrosphere is buried from 10 to 200 meters under the surface, and contains frozen water and ammonia. The environment is hostile to most carbon-based life forms, which require breath masks to journey out onto the moon's surface. The thin atmosphere is bereft of oxygen, primarily containing nitrogen and several noble gases. Echnos' orbit pulls it close to the gas giant and the huge planet often dominates the night sky. Half of Echnos' year is spent in the grip of Tinn VI's magnetic field, which mandated the construction of the sea-blue transparisteel dome that surrounds the city. This dome protects the life and technology from the dangerous effects of Tinn VI's powerful magnetic field.

The Echnos moon was mistakenly colonized during the Old Republic when explorers were ensnared by Tinn VI's massive magnetic field. Their hyperdrive motivators burned out, and their only recourse was to attempt to tame the most hospitable of worlds — Tinn VI-D. As galactic expansion continued, several hyperspace routes came near the Tinn system. Many travelers were forcibly pulled into the system by the gas giant's powerful magnetic field, and found the fledgling settlement able to effect their needed repairs.

In the first 15 years of the Echnos colony's existence, over 10,000 visits were recorded. As word of Echnos spread, it became a standard refueling and trading port along several cargo runs to the Outer Rim Territories. Technology was the most common commodity exchanged, as the barren moon had little natural resources to offer. Industries began to develop, most of which specialized on customizations needed by scout ships and trading vessels headed to the Outer Rim. Returning vessels sold natural resources and commodities discovered during their explorations.

Echnos' growth slowed when the last of the Outer Rim Territories systems along Echnos' outward vector were explored. The exploration effort was focusing further from the Tinn system, where more unexplored star systems were awaiting discovery. However, Echnos had already built up a sizable industrialized economy, and was widely recognized as an important, if not somewhat out-of-the-way, world for the research and development of technological goods.

Episode One: Forced Landing

Read aloud:

The view outside the cockpit is a steady blur of brilliant colors as your starship blazes through the dazzling realm of hyperspace. With casual interest, the pilot notices that one of the power indicators begins to fluctuate. According to the engineering control computer, a loss of efficiency to the magnetic bottle is causing a power drop off to the hyperdrive.

This sort of thing has happened before. You give the indicator a tap with your finger. The reading obediently returns to normal, then plummets to absolute zero as a whining scream reaches from the rear of the ship. Alarms echo through the hallways, and thousands of red lights flash in protest.

The characters' ship has passed near the Tinn system — the gas giant of Tinn VI has a notoriously strong magnetic field which can adversely affect certain starship systems. This magnetic field's projection into hyperspace has polarized the ship's magnetic bottle, rendering it ineffective.

As most good star-faring beings know (or at least those making an *Easy space transports repair* roll), a starship's power is generated by a high-speed hydrogen fusion generator. The only thing keeping this fusion reaction under control is the magnetic bottle. Without the bottle, all the fuel components would rapidly react. The ensu-

ing explosion would incinerate the ship and anything in proximity to it.

The characters have four rounds before the main generator overloads and incinerates the ship. Gamemasters should avoid this dire and premature end to the scenario. Make certain the characters know that this failure is a potentially disastrous fault, and not an annoying quirk like a grinding landing gear strut. During the crisis, characters making an *Easy space transports repair* roll realize that the hyperdrive will fail in 12 seconds due to main power drop-off, and that it would be advisable to bring the ship into realspace before that time. Another *Easy space transports repair* roll disengages the main generator and puts the hydrogen fuel into a safe cold storage position.

A *Moderate space transports repair* roll diagnoses the problem: the magnetic bottle shielding has been polarized, forcing the generator into an overload. Power loss and radiation leaks are only minor symptoms of the danger.

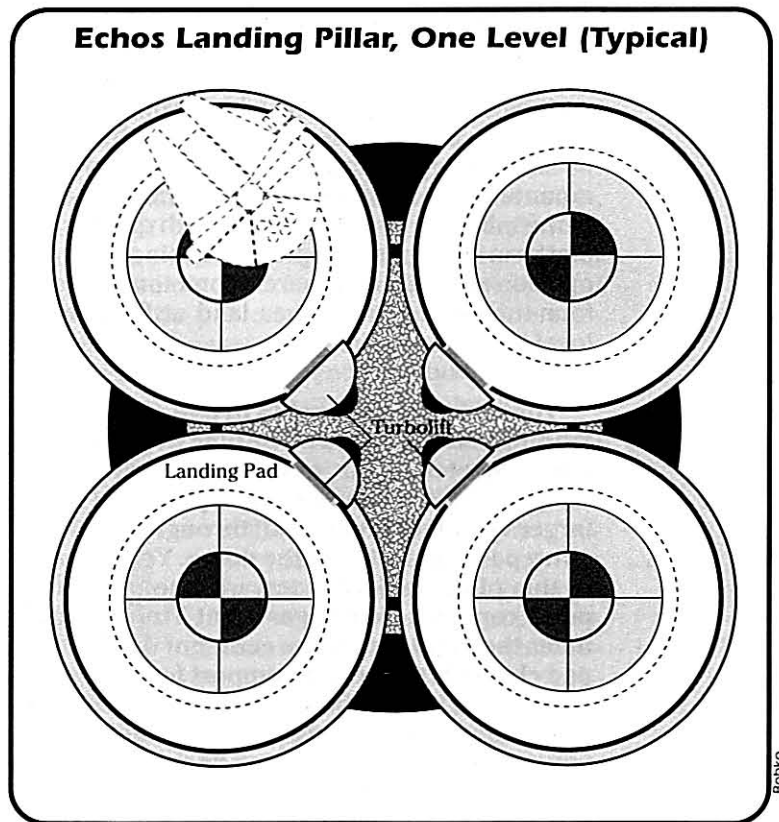
A *Moderate space transports* roll brings the ship out of hyperspace smoothly. If the pilot fails this roll, the ship exits from hyperspace in an uncontrolled manner, spinning madly on one axis, yawing to the port or starboard. The ship takes 2D of hull stress damage — this damage occurs every round until a successful *Moderate space transports* roll is made.

Without main power, the characters have to rely on emergency backup batteries to fulfill their power needs. These batteries, depending on the ship's configuration, can sustain life support for at least 25 hours. Other ship systems demand more energy. Maneuvering thrusters and repulsor engines can operate at 50 percent capability for about one hour. Weapon and shield systems have enough energy for a few scant seconds of offensive and defensive capability. Ion drives, since they depend on the magnetic bottle-fed hydrogen for fuel components, are inoperative.

Characters making a *Difficult space transports repair* roll realize that in order to re-shield the magnetic bottle, they need a compound called Polydex-9 — usually found at Imperial class starports or starship construction facilities. The characters need to find some Polydex-9 or be stranded in the Tinn system.

Welcome to Tinn System

Sensors can help characters collect information about the Tinn system. The system has seven planets in total, all of which orbit around twin stars. The two stars are both in the orange stage of their life cycle. Tinn VI, the planet the heroes are closest to, is a large gas giant composed mostly of hydrogen, nitrogen, and ammonium. It is huge as gas giants go, and emanates a powerful negative magnetic field. Six moons sur-



round Tinn VI, all of which pass through the gas giant's magnetic field at some point in their orbits. None of the satellites are innately capable of supporting life, although one (the gas giant's fourth moon, Tinn VI-D) emanates massive indications of power production.

A closer inspection and an *Easy sensors* roll reveals that there is a tightly packed blister of life on the far side of the barren moon. A quick check of astrogation computers shows that a city named Echnos exists on the moon's surface. The ship can limp its way to the satellite on its maneuvering jets and landing repulsor power. An orbital analysis reveals that this moon is currently within the magnetic fields of the gas giant, and will continue to be so for another standard week.

Upon entering Echnos space, the communications light flashes. Echnos starport control hails the characters, directing them to the entry ports on the top of the domed city ahead. Characters notice that Echnos control is surprisingly lax. No inquiries are made as to departure point or current cargo. If asked whether a log report or ship identification verification is necessary, Echnos control responds with something akin to "Uh ... sure ... whatever makes you happy."

Episode Two: Echnos City

The Echnos City dome is a massive hemisphere encircling an area 20 kilometers in radius

and 2,000 stories high. Access to the city dome is through one of eight airlock entry ports located at the top of the dome. These airlocks are of various sizes, the largest of which can accommodate ships of up to 200 meters in length.

The landing facilities consist of circular pads mounted in clusters of four on pillars on the top of the tallest Echnos buildings. Each quarter of a platform holds one ship. The landing pads are open on all sides, and share a common cluster of four turbolifts. The heroes land at 0900 hours local time.

Read aloud:

You've landed your ship in one of the round landing pads on Echnos. The blue transparisteel dome stretches far overhead, where some airspeeders and small ships zip around while larger vessels enter and exit through the airlock entry ports at the top of the dome. Your quarter of this pillar looks out toward one of Echnos' polar caps, where the gas giant Tinn VI dominates the night sky. In the center of this landing pad cluster is the central support for your docking pillar, with a turbolift at the center. Looking downward over the edge of your landing pad, you see at least 50 levels of docks cloaked in white mist. The smells and sounds of Echnos City float up from the unseen bottom.

Next to the turbolift, an automated docking services computer attends to the ship's mundane needs. Automated refueling, consumables replenishment, and minor damage control are carried out by automatons controlled by this station. Upon the insertion of the appropriate number of credits, or by drawing on an established Echnos City account, the characters may order these services.

The characters may try to ascertain their position and determine the cause of their unfortunate circumstances. An *Easy planetary systems* roll allows a character to recall that Echnos is a technologically oriented city dome. Many species come to Echnos for all sorts of technological devices — a good number of which are black-market. Characters making a *Moderate planetary systems* roll know that Tinn VI produces a strong magnetic field, through which the Echnos moon often passes. Another such roll reveals that Polydex-9, a material used in magnetic bottle shielding, is often in high demand on Echnos (as every ship in the system requires it). They also realize they need Polydex-9 to re-shield their magnetic bottle if they're ever going to leave Echnos without blowing up their ship's power generator.

A character who can successfully make an *Easy survival* roll knows that the radiation that dumps down on Echnos from Tinn VI makes life outside shielded areas extremely hazardous.

Most carbon-based life-forms could not survive without protection for more than 20 minutes.

Characters making a *Moderate space transports repair* roll know that the strong negative magnetic field that Tinn VI produces depolarizes many magnetic devices. Ion engines quickly become detuned. More importantly, the field rapidly degrades a starship's magnetic bottle. Raised shields often prevent this field from affecting ship systems. As a ship in hyperspace can not operate with combat shields, it must carefully plot a course around Tinn VI's magnetic field, which also projects a dangerous shadow into hyperspace.

Going to Town

When the group descends toward the Echnos streets, read aloud:

Echnos' streets are little more than narrow corridors surrounded on all sides by metal gratings and masses of hopelessly tangled pipes. Light wisps of steam cling to the walls and bottom of the passageway. Some of the floor sections are steel plating, while others are grating, allowing you to see down to the lower levels of the city. Above, you can see the boots and feet of a thousand other beings, all on the next-higher street level. Turbolifts are scattered along the main thoroughfares, although ladders, ramps and stairwells are more common. Every now and then, you catch a glimpse of the blue Echnos dome surrounding the condensed city.

The area underneath the transparisteel dome is almost completely filled by metallic constructions. Level 75 is the last open air level — all floors beneath it span the entire protective area of the dome.

Echnos is filled with every kind of seedy establishment. Most are tightly packed into small spaces, forcing claustrophobic characters to feel ill-at-ease.

Hotels: Most of the accommodations in the city are very constricted — Echnos is almost bursting at the seams and has a great need for more floor space. The rooms are very cold and artificial, with dull metallic plating providing the majority of a guest room's decor. Fitting two people into a "luxury suite" is a squeeze. Most rooms do not have windows. Those that have windows which offer a scenic view grace the guest with a vista of the opposite side of the street, no more than five meters away. Some lower-rent areas do not even have paneling — the walls consist of the life-support piping and conduits that keep Echnos City alive. Rates are relatively expensive, ranging from 50 credits for a basic bed-in-a-closet to 250 credits for a luxury flat.

Casinos: Echnos' entertainment establish-

ments are also pressed for room, and often share space with a cantina. The average casino operators' *gambling* skill is 4D, but some of the fancier places have dealers with *gambling* as high as 6D. Popular games include sabacc and Tertan's Wheel. Chance-based games are also available, and require the player to beat a prescribed difficulty. Even/odd tables require a Moderate *gambling* skill to win, while 2:1 paying tables require a Difficult *gambling* roll to win. A given table's betting range is between one and 1,000 credits.

Retailers: A plethora of stores exists, most

selling technological wares at discount prices. Weapons are extremely easy to find, though disreputable shops offer damaged or non-functional equipment. Echnos' economy is strongly biased toward technological and manufactured goods. Such items are discounted 10 to 40 percent from their standard prices. By contrast, raw materials, foodstuffs, luxury items, and chemical compounds are extremely expensive. The few stores that stock Polydex-9 charge between 4,000 and 6,000 credits per canister. Light freighters — such as the vessel the characters are flying — require two canisters to completely re-shield the

magnetic bottle. Most shops are out of the highly prized Polydex-9, but offer to place an order aside when next week's shuttle arrives.

While Echnos has a higher proportion of life-forms using bionics and mechanical augmentations than is found in the rest of the galaxy, it is important for the gamemaster to remember that such cybernetic technology is frowned upon by the galaxy's population. Cyborgs and the like are looked upon with distrust, and there is a large amount of opposition toward technologies that replace living tissue.

Credit Opportunities

Data terminals are extremely common in Echnos. From them, the characters can access city maps, docking registries, shop advertisements and listings, and city publications. An *Easy Perception* roll allows characters to spot a "merce-

The BlastBoast 2000

The Ultimate Sportsbeing's Challenge!

Echnos City's weekly demonstration of demolition destruction was designed for you!

Pick your ship!

For a modest registration fee, you get to choose from one of our three rampaging repulsorlift machines!

- Stinger Velocity 200: A fast and deadly machine with enough missiles to go around.
- Maeltorp Intimidator: Who needs guns when you have 0.5 meter thick armor and a duranium drill?
- Dominator AV: A great all-rounder with a turret laser to boot.

Pick your strategy!

The BlastBoast 2000 comes to violent life in Echnos' main exhibition dome, almost two kilometers across! The terrain is so varied, you can do just about anything!

- "Tritium Tree" Forest, not a good spot for a picnic!
- "The Maze," a twisted labyrinth of duranium death!
- Lift platforms for superior firing positions!

Or pick your winner!

If you don't have what it takes to play with the big bruisers, then you can bet on them. Our computers keep up-to-the-microsecond odds on all your favorite competitors.

Last week's winner won 45,000 credits!

What are you waiting for?

The BlastBoast 2000: An Echnos Tradition

BlastBoast 2000 makes no warranties, either explicit or implied, on the quality or condition of its rented vehicles. The BlastBoast 2000 is for recreational purposes only and is an exhibition, not a competition. No independent wagering, please. The Mandellian Corporation and its subsidiaries can not be held responsible for any injuries sustained during the BlastBoast 2000. Sorry, medical insurance is not available to participants. Always wear your flight helmet.

Echnos City Public Access System

Public Announcement: 100 out of 212 in sub-area "General Contracts"

Subject: Mercenary Contracts

Posted By: Anonymous

Over 120 lucrative contracts to be offered in Meeting Arena 4, Level 89 at 1600 hours today by a large organization.

Contracts to include:

- Cargo runs
- Scouting explorations
- Corporate reparations
- Personnel inquiries
- Technology acquisitions

Over 1,300,000 credits in contract monies available. References not required.

Sorry, further information not available until official announcement at 1600.

nary's convention" where hundreds of lucrative contracts are being offered.

An *Easy computer programming/repair* roll allows the characters to find a good amount of discussion from beings interested in this gathering. It is likely that many spacers will be an attendance. Characters making an *Easy streetwise* roll realize that the subjects of "corporate reparations" and "personnel inquiries" are probably bounty targets.

Flashing advertisement videos also attract the characters' attention. They advertise such places as pleasure cantinas, cruise yachts, and other leisure-time activities. An advertisement for something called the BlastBoast 2000 also catches the

eyes of money-hungry characters as a quick way to win credits. Registration starts at 1200. The competition officially begins at 1800 hours.

Episode Three: A Wretched Hive

If the characters opt to attend the mercenary's convention, they can head to the proper meeting room at 1600 hours. Read aloud:

You enter an expansive yet stout meeting room in one of the many levels of Echnos City. Several rectangular tables of different sizes stretch across the room, dividing the room lengthwise into uneven intervals. At the far side of the conference area are two wall-sized vidscreens and a speaker's podium. The room is already packed with entrepreneurs of every kind: from the reckless joy-riders to the professionally lethal.

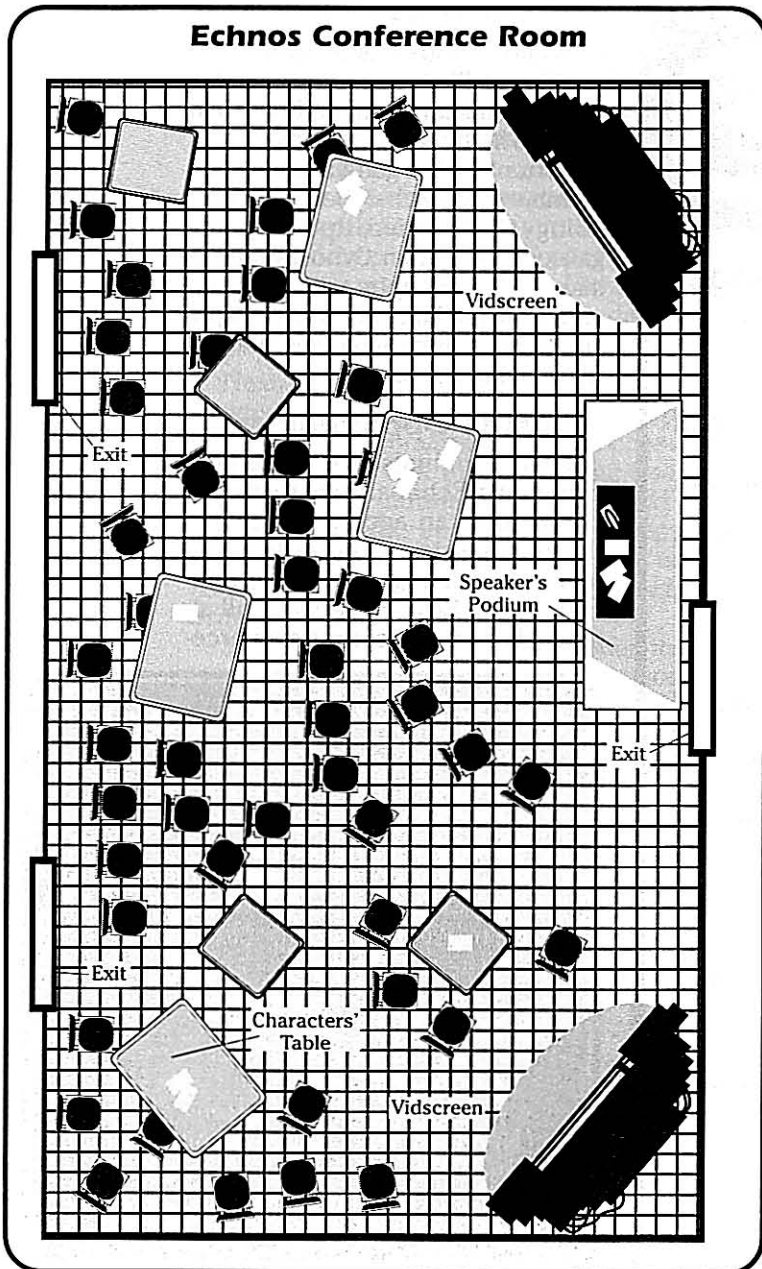
The lights dim as you enter, and you squeeze your way over to a corner in the back. Most of the attendees are bipeds, but you notice more exotic species in addition to the presence of sinister-looking droids. Most of the organics are dressed in either flight suits or combat armor—half of the latter are wearing helmets that conceal their facial features. The overhead lights dim to their lowest level as soft lights inside each of the tables come to life, garnishing the room with an eerie glow. An attention signal chimes three times, and the audience quiets.

An Imperial officer walks onto the podium from a back entrance and begin to address the crowd. The Empire is offering a host of contracts for lost or stolen cargoes, information on the Rebellion, and the capture or extermination of specific targets. He details the lower-bounty contracts first, and steadily moves on to more profitable opportunities. The gamemaster is encouraged to have the bounties presented and explained by a recurring gamemaster character Imperial officer who has plagued the heroes in previous scenarios. If one is not available, use Lieutenant Gatharard.

Toward the end of the specified program, the characters encounter a nasty surprise. Their ship and their faces appear on the vidscreens, with an appropriately high credit reward. The exact bounty is up to the gamemaster to determine, as it should be based on how much grief the heroes have caused the Empire in past scenarios. A minimum value of 10,000 credits is recommended.

Read aloud:

"And finally, this ship and its crew are wanted for multiple offenses of treason and armed rebellion. The crew of this craft are notably



BOOKS

dangerous and cunning, and may be heading for this sector.”

Your faces flash on the vidscreens. A ripple of excitement runs through the packed room.

■ Lieutenant Vincent Gatharard

Type: Imperial Officer

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 5D, dodge 5D

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Bureaucracy 4D

MECHANICAL 3D

Repulsorlift operation 4D, capital ship piloting 5D, capital ship gunnery 4D

PERCEPTION 4D

Command 5D, investigation 4D+2, search 5D

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 3D+2

TECHNICAL 2D

Force Points: 2

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, Imperial uniform

Capsule: Born on Corsucant and raised in a military academy, it was only natural that Vincent Gatharard joined the officer's corps in the Imperial Navy. He takes a great pleasure in lording his authority over others, and is anxious to return back to the Imperial Academy as an instructor. His self-proclaimed superiority is his most distinctive feature. To sneak out of the crowded meeting room without being noticed, each character must make a Heroic *sneak* roll. If a character succeeds in making only a Difficult *sneak* roll, then that character is not identified, but their sudden departure is noticed.

Within three rounds of the announcement — if the characters aren't already heading for the exits — a bounty hunter sitting at an adjacent table turns to the characters to whisper, "I'd like to get my hands on them." Allow the characters the chance to talk their way out of the situation. If any mercenary gets a direct look at the characters, they immediately make their best effort to collect the recently offered bounty.

If a firefight erupts in the conference room, the gamemaster should keep in mind the following factors. Since the collection of bounty hunters and mercenaries are not trained to fight together, they cannot coordinate their attacks and do not gain any collaboration bonuses. Although the room has over 60 enemies, only 10 are close enough for a clear shot — especially since the whole room is likely to get to its feet at the first cry of "It's them! Blast 'em!" The characters' table is about 10 meters from the door, but movement rates are halved (since chairs, tables, and bounty hunters restrict movement) during combat. Due to the close quarters, it may not be possible to draw and aim blaster weapons, forcing players and mercenaries alike to resort to using their *brawling* skill.

Echnos Bounty Hunter. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 4D, blaster 5D, dodge 4D+1, Percep-*

tion 3D, Strength 3D+2, brawling 5D+1. Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), blaster rifle (5D), blast vest (+1 energy, +1D physical, torso only).

When the party bursts out of the conference area (accompanied by a torrential rain of blaster fire), they have two rounds of free action before the pursuit begins. The characters could return to their ship, but without the Polydex-9, it is effectively grounded. They will need to continue their quest for the compound while avoiding a relentless pursuit. Or they may head for the crowds and action at the BlastBoast 2000 in an attempt to lose their hunters.

Episode Four: The BlastBoast 2000

The characters may already be on their way to the BlastBoast 2000 — unaware of the bounties on their heads — or may run for the contest as a means of escaping the droves of bounty hunters suddenly searching Echnos for them.

The BlastBoast 2000 is held in the Echnos Exhibition Dome, located in the very bottom of the city. The 10 registration desk attendants (all in ridiculously cute uniforms) answer all questions related to the brutal sport with the cheerfulness of a Galaxy Tours cruise ship activities director. Behind them is an electronic status board of all the competitors, their numbers, repulsorlift designation, and operational condition. When the characters ask to register, the attendant cheerfully asks them to certify their agreement to the BlastBoast regulations. They are handed a thick datapad with an embedded video module. When the datapad is activated, the characters are treated to a two minute demonstration video. The vid is narrated by an annoyingly cheerful voice.

Read aloud (use a late night vid announcer's voice when appropriate):

A tacky BlastBoast 2000 logo appears in the small vid display, and is accompanied by a fanfare of tinny instruments. The assault of music gives way to the voice of an announcer who had too much fizzyglug the morning the recording was made.

"Welcome to the BlastBoast 2000! The BlastBoast is a well-established tradition at Echnos City, and has become one of the top 10 competitions of its kind in this sector! Your objective is simple: keep your repulsorlift vehicle running by eliminating as much of the competition as possible!"

The current image fades and is replaced by an overhead view of what you presume to be the competition grounds.

"The BlastBoast 2000's arena is constantly changing, and is one of the most challenging

terrains since the game of Z-Slam. One quadrant hosts a forest of metal pillars, each one adorned with a hundred tritium projections! Avoid them at all cost! The opposite quadrant holds our Death Maze with more than 2.3 kilometers of sharp corners — and an opponent could be hiding behind every one! There are eight lift platforms scattered about the arena. Each one will give you a starship eye's view of the competition. Just remember ... if you can see them, they can see you!"

The display zooms in to what appears to be an elevation pad painted with green stripes.

"If your vehicle should be disabled during the competition, make your way to one of these exit points. You'll be dropped out of the competition, but also out of everyone else's gun sights!"

The video screen blinks to show three wire frame models of repul-sorlifts, all of them rotating to show the various side views.

"Ask our hospitality representative about our repul-sorlift rentals. We guarantee there's one just for you! All of our vehicles are configured with emergency ejection seats ... just in case."

The vidscreen blanks, and is replaced by infinitesimally small text. The text scrolls through the display screen at a supersonic speed.

"To join in the fun of the BlastBoast 2000, we'll need your assent to these brief legal terms. Just press your thumb against the scanner, and you'll be in the most exciting fight of your life!"

The pages of legal terms continue to scroll on until the attack of the canned symphony returns. Then the display fades to black.

The legal terms all relate to the assent of competitors not to pursue legal action against the Mandellian Corporation (owners of the

BlastBoast 2000), referees, other competitors, audience members, or anyone else who might cause the characters bodily injury (or death) during the BlastBoast 2000.

The attendant does not enroll the characters until all participants have agreed and imprinted their thumbs on the datapad. She then asks for the 250 credit repul-sorlift rental fee, and offers the players a choice of repul-sor vehicles. Privately owned repul-sors may not be used, although modification of rented repul-sors is permitted. The group may rent more than one repul-sorlift if they wish, as long as they have sufficient personnel to crew them.

The characters have from whatever time they register until 1800 hours to prepare for the competition. Those not directly participating in the BlastBoast 2000 can watch from the stands around the dome — they can also try to evade the bounty hunters who are even now trying to track them down.

At 1800 hours, all repul-sorlifts are towed into their designated starting positions somewhere on the playing field. To ensure a fair (and exciting) start, all vehicle engines are electronically disabled. At the start of the competition, BlastBoast control transmits a signal that activates all the repul-sorlifts' engines. The character-controlled vehicles start in one of the open ground sectors. There are some 90 competitors scattered in the arena.

As the characters and their vehicles are towed out onto the field, read aloud:

Strapped into your ejection chair, you fidget as your vehicle is pushed along by one of the BlastBoast's utility tugs. You emerge from the close confines of the service tunnel into the

■ **Stinger**

Craft: Stinger Velocity 200
Type: Modified Velocity speeder
Scale: Speeder
Length: 1.9 meters
Skill: Repul-sorlift operation: landspeeder
Crew: 1
Passengers: 0
Cargo Capacity: 10 kilograms
Cover: 1/2
Altitude Range: Ground level — 4 meters
Maneuverability: 3D
Move: 140; 400 kmh
Body Strength: 2D
Weapons:
 Minlet Concussion Missiles (10)
Fire Arc: Forward
Skill: Missile weapons
Fire Control: 1D
Range: 40/100/250
Damage: 4D+1

■ **Dominator**

Craft: Dominator AV
Type: Modified Dominator landspeeder
Scale: Speeder
Length: 2.4 meters
Skill: Repul-sorlift operation: landspeeder
Crew: 1, gunners: 1
Passengers: 0
Cargo Capacity: 15 kilograms
Cover: 3/4
Altitude Range: Ground level — 3 meters
Maneuverability: 1D+2
Move: 105; 300 kmh
Body Strength: 3D
Weapons:
 BlasTech Protector Laser
Fire Arc: Turret
Crew: 1
Skill: Vehicle blasters
Fire Control: 1D
Range: 100/300/600
Damage: 3D

■ **Intimidator**

Craft: Maeltorp Intimidator
Type: Modified Maeltorp Cargorunner
Scale: Speeder
Length: 3.4 meters
Skill: Repul-sorlift operation: landspeeder
Crew: 1
Passengers: 0
Cargo Capacity: 25 kilograms
Cover: Full
Altitude Range: Ground level — 1 meter
Maneuverability: 0D
Move: 70; 200 kmh
Body Strength: 6D
Weapons:
 Tritium Mining Drill
Fire Arc: Forward
Skill: Repul-sorlift operation
Fire Control: 0D
Range: Contact
Damage: 6D

yawning battle arena. The dome is still immersed in darkness, but you can make out the motion of other tugs, no doubt pushing rival competitors onto the field. Looking up, you can see the massive scoreboard hovering 30 meters high under the power of its own repulsors. Beyond the colorful display you can make out thousands of insect-sized bodies, writhing back and forth behind the protection of the BlastBoast dome. No doubt they are loyal fans anxiously awaiting the start of the carnage. Your vehicle jolts slightly, as the tug releases you with a metallic thunk. Through the cockpit's thin transparisteel viewport, you can hear the muffled voice of the BlastBoast announcer, his voice echoing through the arena.

When the BlastBoast 2000 begins, read aloud:

Your eardrums are shattered by a cannon blast, and then the lights of the arena jump to full brilliance! Your repulsorlift is activated by BlastBoast control, and the cockpit indicators leap to life. Although the crowd's roar is only pumped into the arena on speakers, it is almost deafening. Ahead, you can see the other vehicles are under way, beginning to jockey for position as they trade volleys.

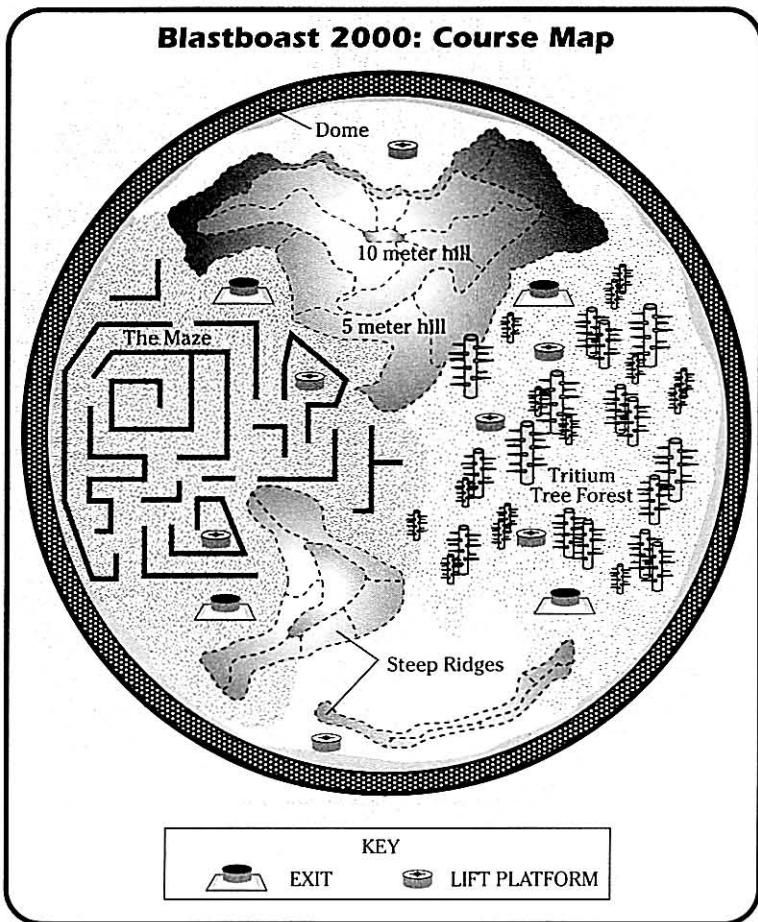
While it is important to describe the BlastBoast as a massive demolition derby, do not try to determine the status of each vehicle through game terms and mechanics. The BlastBoast 2000 is a lightning fast survival of the fittest, and characters do not have the luxury of considering strategic moves and counter-moves. Each round there is 50 percent chance a rival vehicle engage the character. Determine the type of this vehicle randomly (Roll one die, 1 or 2 is a Velocity 200, 3 or 4 is an Intimidator, 5 or 6 is a Dominator).

BlastBoast 2000 Competitor. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity* 3D, *blaster* 4D, *dodge* 4D, *vehicle blasters* 4D, *Mechanical* 4D, *repulsorlift operation* 5D, *Strength* 3D. Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), jump suit.

Each competitor's skills start at the die codes prescribed above by the BlastBoast 2000 Competitor stats. As the contest continues, describe other vehicles' efforts and demises (for example, vehicles explode while throwing debris, repulsorlifts crash through maze walls, stray shots strafe the players).

The longer the characters survive, the tougher the competition becomes (as the experienced and professional pilots weed out the rookie crews). After 10 rounds of action, augment all newly engaging competitor's skills by 1D. After another five rounds, increase the opposing skill values by another 1D. At this point, there are only 10 vehicles left.

Blastboast 2000: Course Map

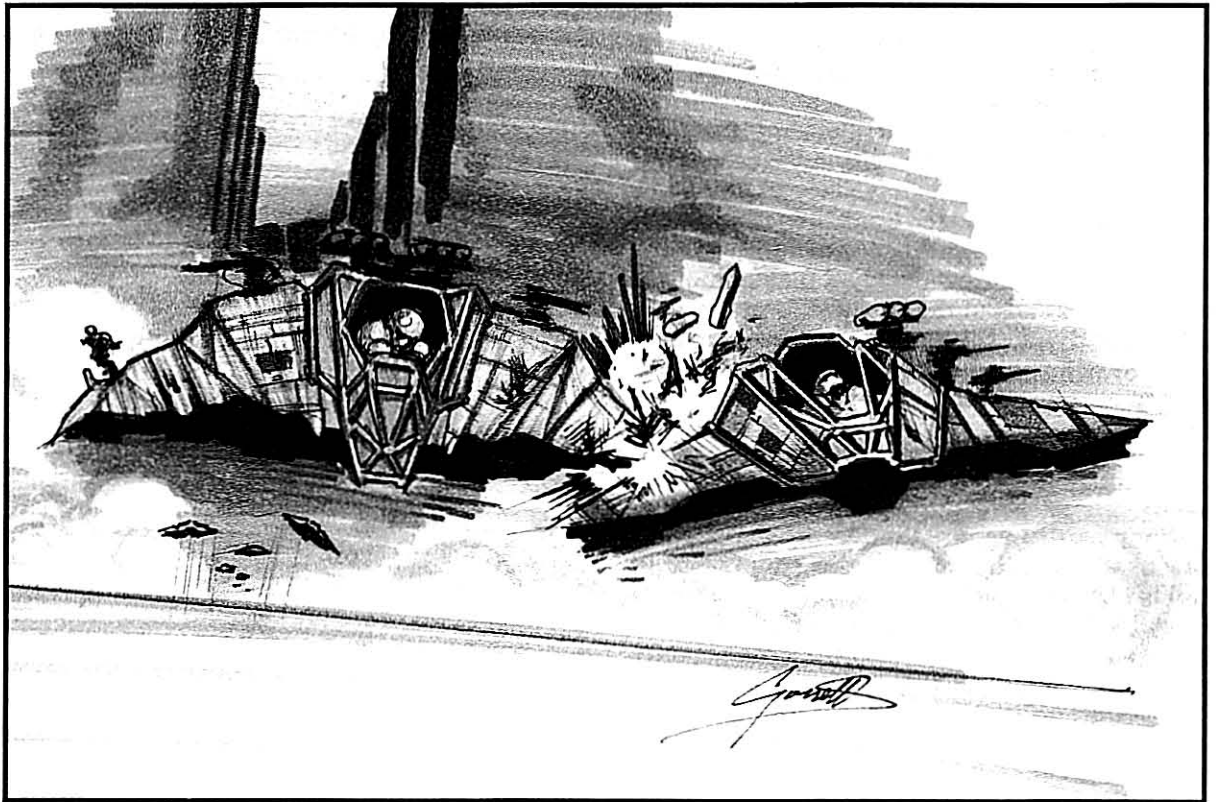


If you have inserted one of your campaign's recurring gamemaster character enemies into the BlastBoast, he or she is one of the 10 remaining rivals.

BlastBoast Obstacles

The BlastBoast's terrain is riddled with obstacles. The maze is a series of duranium plates 10 meters tall (terrain difficulty Moderate). If a vehicle fails a turning maneuver (which must be a 90 degree turn), roll the strength of the wall (5D) against the hull strength of the vehicle, and compare the difference on the Vehicle Damage Chart on page 95 of *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game, Second Edition*. If the wall is lightly or heavily damaged, it is dented, ripped, or similarly damaged. A destroyed wall breaks apart, and other vehicles may fly through the newly formed aperture. Of course, if the wall's strength roll is greater than the vehicle's body strength roll, the character's repulsorlift craft is damaged.

The tritium pole forest (terrain difficulty Difficult), consists of 50 metal cones of varying sizes. The average base diameter is one meter. All of the poles are decorated with spiked protrusions, which do 3D+2 damage to any vehicle whose



pilot fails the Difficult *repulsorlift operation* roll needed to safely navigate this obstacle. The hill-covered areas are Easy terrain to negotiate. See *Star Wars: The Roleplaying Game, Second Edition* for information and rules on repulsorlift operations and combat.

Eight lift platforms, approximately four meters across, have power sensors mounted in the exact center of their metallic shell. When one detects a continuous power emission (in this case, a repulsorlift engine), it activates dynamotors located under the BlastBoast arena. The platform, supported by four duranium struts, rapidly rises to a height of 12 meters. From this position, any vehicle firing weapons gains a +1D bonus to the gunner's roll to hit, and opposing vehicles do not gain the benefit of defensive cover.

To lower the platform, the vehicle must edge itself off the power sensor without falling off the platform itself. This requires a Moderate *repulsorlift operation* roll. While on a raised lift platform, it is impossible to take evasive action. Any vehicle jumping or falling off a lift platform must have its pilot make a Very Difficult *repulsorlift operation* roll or take 4D of impact damage. The support struts have a strength of 3D. If two are hit, a lift platform will collapse.

Each of the four exit points is clearly marked, and each has a vehicle-sized turbolift and a character-scale staircase. Vehicles and personnel reaching the exit point can descend to the adja-

cent hangar level and find safety. However, this puts them out of contention for any prizes.

Anybody Left Is A Winner

If the players are lucky to finish in the top five positions, they are awarded prizes and an appropriately gauche trophy. Fifth place earns 2,500 credits, fourth place 5,000 credits, third place 7,500 credits, second place 10,000 credits, and first place 15,000 credits. There is a casual award ceremony, with large amounts of beverages being sprayed over the victors and their craft.

Sadly, the characters may not know or recall that the convention 88 levels up has come to its conclusion hours ago, and it is likely that some of the bounty hunter attendees are present. The characters soon find their celebration cut short by a group of angry bounty hunters out to claim their own prizes.

Episode Five: A Friend Among Foes

At some point the characters run into a band of bounty hunters actively intent on collecting the rewards posted. If they have just participated in the BlastBoast 2000, the characters meet the bounty hunters at the awards ceremony or as they're leaving the BlastBoast arena.

If the group avoids the BlastBoast 2000 and is still on the run in Echnos City, they occasionally

encounter a mercenary or bounty hunter looking for them. There are three repulsorlift vehicles also engaged in the search. It is important for the gamemaster to remind characters of the ongoing chase, without resorting to combat at every sighting. Allow the players an opportunity to take some sort of evasive action before the hunters see them. For example, give all players a chance to make a Moderate *Perception* roll to hear a repulsor moving at high speed through an Echnos street. As they dash for cover in stores or behind street debris, the repulsor cruises by.

The characters should keep in mind that even if they get to their ship, without the Polydex-9 it will be impossible to leave the Echnos system.

Eventually they are ambushed by several cunning hunters who have been tracking them at a distance from their other less skilled and less subtle colleagues.

■ **Cunning Bounty Hunters**

Type: Bounty Hunter

DEXTERITY 4D

Blaster 6D, dodge 5D, melee combat 5D

KNOWLEDGE 2D+2

Streetwise 3D+2

MECHANICAL 2D+2

Jet pack operation 4D, repulsorlift operation 3D, space transports 4D

PERCEPTION 3D

Hide 4D, search 5D, sneak 4D+2

STRENGTH 3D+2

TECHNICAL 2D

Move: 10

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), blaster rifle (5D), bounty hunter armor (+1D energy, +2D physical, -1D

Dexterity), 2 grenades (5D), jet pack, medpac,

vibro-knife

(STR+1D)

Halfway through the bounty hunter ambush, the heroes are pulled aside by a man who seems to be a smuggler. He introduces himself as he fires at some of the group's antagonists. After forcing the bounty hunters to retreat or disband, he leads them through a maze of corridors and passageways to relative safety.

Read aloud:

The man introduces himself as Daxtorn — he is an agile young man dressed in loose brown clothing. His hair often waves down in front of his eyes before he clears it away with a casual hand motion. He wears a modified heavy blaster pistol at his side, its telescopic scope along its barrel indicating that he's done some work with it. His brown uniform is accented by a rather bulky black belt that surrounds his waist.

Daxtorn introduces himself as a rogue smuggler with no love for the Empire or their hired goons. He asks the characters if there is anything he can do to assist them, as he has been intent on joining the Rebel Alliance. Upon hearing of their troubles, he mentions that he has a reserve supply of Polydex-9 he would be happy to share — in return he simply asks the characters to grant him an unnamed favor in the future. He gives directions to the bay where his shuttle is docked and asks them to meet him there in one hour. With that he departs, explaining that he must continue repairs on his starship if he is to complete a trade agreement.

Daxtorn is actually a resourceful bounty hunter who intends to capture the characters in an elaborate trap. He helped the characters fight off the other bounty hunters



to rid himself of some competition and to secure the trap he has laid for the group in his shuttle craft.

Daxtorn's belt is a unique holographic projector which allows him to change his outwardly appearance with any programmed image. Characters making a Difficult *Perception* roll detect an odd "haze" about Daxtorn, as though he were standing in the center of a faint heat mirage. Jedi characters with appropriate Force abilities should roll against Daxtorn's *Perception* of 3D if they wish to probe his mind for indications of his true intentions.

Daxtorn Lethos



Type: Bounty Hunter
DEXTERITY 4D
 Blaster 7D, dodge 7D, grenade 5D+2, heavy weapons 5D
KNOWLEDGE 3D
 Cultures 4D+2, languages 5D, planetary systems 4D, streetwise 6D, value 5D
MECHANICAL 2D+2
 Astrogation 6D+1, repulsorlift operation 3D+2, space transports: heavy interceptor 8D, starship gunnery 7D, starship shields 5D
PERCEPTION 3D
 Command 4D+2, hide 7D, search 5D+2, sneak 7D
STRENGTH 3D
 Brawling 5D, climbing/jumping 4D+1, stamina 3D+2
TECHNICAL 2D+1
 Demolition 4D+1, repulsorlift repair 3D, space transports repair 5D

Force Points: 4
Dark Side Points: 2
Character Points: 10
Move: 10

Equipment: Advanced holographic belt, heavy blaster pistol with telescopic sight, +1D to fire (5D), 2 flash grenades, datapad with list of current bounties, the *Gorgon* (heavy interceptor), 4,500 credits.

Capsule: Daxtorn Lethos attended the Academy, where he first began his familiarity with starship operations. A year before graduation he disappeared without a trace. Although he was doing well in his training, officials believed he found the structured learning approach beneath a man of his intelligence and capabilities. Daxtorn appeared several years later, running illegal high-technologies to a variety of illicit organizations. It was only much later that his career took him into the bounty hunting business.

Daxtorn is able to slip by authorities and targets alike through use of his holographic belt. The belt allows him to project an image over himself, allowing him to take any humanoid appearance he chooses. His favorite disguises are dashing Humans in their young adult years. Daxtorn, while being old for a man of his trade, is a highly respected individual in his chosen line of work. However, he is not so overly confident in his abilities that he refuses to retreat and fight another day when circumstances demand it.

Episode Six: The Trap is Sprung

When the characters visit Daxtorn's landing bay, read aloud:

You enter the highest tier of this docking pillar, located near the top rim of the city dome. A large landing pad stretches across the entire pillar's surface. A small shuttle craft rests close to you, while a ship almost six times its size stands behind it. The main bay doors on the shuttle are open, and its boarding ramp is extended outward. The larger ship has a more ominous look, though it appears to be sealed and powered down. Four powerful ion engines are mounted on each corner of her broad base, one of which is being attended to by a repair droid. The ship's hull slopes upward toward the cockpit some 30 meters above the landing pad floor. Impressive weapon clusters are shouldered on either side of the cockpit module.

Daxtorn appears in the shuttle craft entrance, and waves to you to come on board.

Daxtorn is not truly in the shuttle craft, but is waiting in the cockpit of his heavy interceptor, the *Gorgon*. The image the characters see on the shuttle is a previously recorded holographic projection of Daxtorn. The ceiling-mounted projector uses similar technology as his belt. As such, Daxtorn's equipment does not suffer from the artificial appearance and sound that is inherent of more compact and affordable technology (such as holoprojectors found in R2 series astromech droids).

Characters with *life sense* may attempt to verify Daxtorn's presence, but only if they specifically state they are doing so. Since the image is within line-of-sight and the characters have met Daxtorn only once, add a +14 modifier to the difficulty number.

Easy *space transports* or *space transport repair* rolls permit the characters to identify the starships. The smaller craft is a Garlonti Personal Shuttle, with minimal armament and defensive capabilities. The larger vessel probably belongs to the heavy interceptor classification, used by some independent systems for patrol and defense operations. While heavy interceptors' drive sections are commonly under-powered, their superior weapon and shield systems make them impressive gunships. This particular interceptor appears to have had its engines upgraded. Characters succeeding in rolling a Difficult *space transport repair* or Moderate *Perception* roll notice the heavy interceptor does not appear to be seriously damaged, as there is no indication of hull stress or secondary carbon scoring. In truth, there is nothing wrong with the *Gorgon*. The repair droid is present only to add credence to Daxtorn's ruse that he needed to repair his own ship.

When the characters enter the shuttle, read aloud:

You have just entered the shuttle craft's main compartment. At the front of the ship is a flight console, with a seat for the pilot and the copilot — both of which are empty at the moment. Through the pilot's forward viewport you can see the heavy interceptor standing at silent attention. The main compartment has several plush seats, a small table, a computer terminal, and a limited auto kitchen. To the rear are what appears to be storage compartments and two escape capsules. Three metallic canisters rest on the table.

The canisters are filled with genuine Polydex-9, as any droid or hand-held sensor scanners can verify. Once all characters in the bay are aboard, the shuttle's doors seal and lock. Characters wishing to squeeze out the closing hatch must make a Difficult *dodge* roll. It takes one round for the doors to close.

Once the ship is sealed, read aloud:

With a small whirring sound, a strange mechanical device with multiple lenses drops from the ceiling. Daxtorn appears in the pilot's compartment, one hand on each chair. "Ah, greetings," he smiles, "I'm glad you've come, though I'm sorry I won't be able to join you myself, except in spirit."

Just as one of you lurches by him to the controls, his joviality turns to deadly seriousness. "Don't try messing with the shuttle's functions, they're locked into their program — which is to take you out of the Echnos dome, into the apex of the magnetic field, and then shut down the main generator. I'm sure you realize what this means. From a 10-kilometer drop, I understand death by impact is rather sudden."

Daxtorn's grin returns. "Well, I have contract money to count. I am forever in your debt," he bows. "You've made me a very rich man."

As you hear the engines begin their warm-up sequence, the image of Daxtorn fades.

Loopholes in the Trap

Within two rounds the shuttle lifts off from the landing pad. Four rounds following, it enters one of Echnos' external airlock entry ports and departs the Echnos dome. The shuttle then commences a rapid power climb for three rounds, during which characters must make Very Easy *Dexterity* rolls to maintain their footing. The shuttle then noses over toward the surface of the moon, fires its thrusters once, and shuts down its main generator. During this round, characters must make Moderate *Dexterity* or *climbing/jumping* rolls to get a grip on a protrusion or take 2D damage from careening into the shuttle's walls.

The party has five rounds of free fall before impacting on the surface of the moon. If this unfortunate event should occur, all characters take 8D damage.

The heroes have several avenues of escape. Naturally, none of them are easy.

Engine Sabotage. While within the Echnos dome, the group may choose to disconnect the engines. A Difficult *space transport repair* or *search* roll allows a character to find the control and power lines that run to the engines. By disconnecting them, the ship immediately drops to the ground. For each round the ship has been airborne, add 2D to the damage sustained by shuttle occupants when it lands. Remember, it takes four rounds before the shuttle reaches Echnos City's airlock entry ports.

Flight Controls. The flight controls have been locked into the on-board computer and do not respond, regardless of how hard characters push and pull at them. However, if the computer can be located and disconnected, the flight controls return to normal operation. A character making a Moderate *search* roll (while forcibly removing one of the cockpit's dash panels) finds a blinking box with a myriad of connections snaking from it. An Easy *space transports repair* roll identifies this as some kind of pre-programmed control computer. A series of four Difficult *space transports repair* or *computer programming/repair* rolls allows a character to disconnect all of the cables from the box, and reassemble them to their correct flight console controls. Each repair roll takes one round. Describe the cables as a hopeless mass of tangled connectors, each one knotted with another. The cables are color-coded, but only a character making a Heroic *space transports repair* roll is able to differentiate the connectors' purposes. Although this is a crisis situation, this scene has the potential for some humorous moments ("I thought you said cut the blue wire with the red striping!").

All four rewiring rolls are required for correct operation of the controls. If fewer than three rolls are successful, randomly determine which systems fail, discounting rolls that identify the hyperdrive or nav computer. If the character rolls three out of four successful attempts, major systems have been correctly connected, but some controls have been mis-wired. Perhaps the engineer crossed flight control leads, causing the ship to bank left when the control stick is pushed right. Such minor mistakes in the repairs add a +10 difficulty modifier to any attempts at piloting the shuttle.

If the controls are restored, the ship answers all commands. However, if the repairs were completed after main power was lost, the pilot only

has chemical maneuvering jets and airfoils to control a landing. Add +10 to all *space transports* difficulties. If the shuttle is in a free-fall dive at the time the pilot regains command, a Very Difficult *space transports* roll is required to bring the shuttle under control.

Escape Pods. The escape pods are sealed by electromagnetic locks, making them impossible to burn through with blasters. However, the magnetic lock deteriorates when the shuttle's main power shuts off. The blast door has a strength of 7D (character scale) once the magnetic seal has failed. If the damage roll of any weapon does not exceed the door's strength roll, the attempt is completely unsuccessful and the door acquires no lightly or heavily damaged status.

Each pod is designed to can carry two human-sized occupants. Three can fit in the safety webbing, but upon landing all occupants take 2D in

impact damage. The pods launch by the detonation of explosive bolts, which require a Moderate *space transports* roll to ignite.

Once airborne, the pod is powerless but can be flown via manual air maneuvering vanes. The pod must be guided to a "safe" landing area, away from the original flight path toward Echnos' mountain range (a Difficult *space transports* roll). A Heroic *space transports* roll lands the pod intact with no damage near the Echnos City dome. A Moderate *space transports* roll allows the pod to bounce to a shaky stop, but all occupants not in the safety webbing suffer 5D in impact damage. Echnos flight control officials detect the escape pods and a rescue repulsor arrives at the pod's location within 10 minutes.

Bailing Out. Any character making an Easy *search* roll finds plastithread tarps stored in one of the shuttle's main compartments, along with two days of rations. There are at least 20 square meters of fabric — most commonly used to protect sensitive equipment from hostile weather. A Moderate *survival* roll allows a desperate character to construct a makeshift parachute. By spraying it with the Polydex-9, the chute also offers some protection from Tinn VI's magnetic radiation — an idea a character can come up with on an Easy *survival* roll. Remember, to survive on the moon's surface, characters need breath masks. Characters can find a utility compartment with several breath masks with a Moderate *search* roll.

To abandon ship, the heroes must blast through the ship's hull. The cockpit's transparisteel viewport is especially susceptible to such actions, and only has a 6D strength (character scale). If outside the Echnos City dome when the hull is punctured, the shuttle violently decompresses. All characters must make a Moderate *climbing/jumping* or *Dexterity* roll to grab hold of something, or they are shot out of the shuttle prematurely. Once parachuting, a character must make a successful Moderate *climbing/jumping* roll or suffer a bad fall and 3D damage when landing. While protected by the Polydex-9, a character has only about 50 minutes of safety before the radiation begins to negatively impact their health. The characters should try to either reach the Echnos City dome or find some way to signal for help.

Episode Seven: Parting Shots

When the haggard characters return to Echnos City, they more than likely have acquired the Polydex-9 via one of several methods — either purchasing it with their own credits or credits won in the BlastBoast 2000, or by getting it through Daxtorn Lethos' trap.

The Gorgon

Craft: Corellian Engineering INT-66
Type: Modified heavy interceptor
Scale: Starfighter
Length: 50 meters
Skill: Space transports: heavy interceptor
Crew: 1
Passengers: 3
Cargo Capacity: 35 metric tons
Consumables: 4 months
Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1
Hyperdrive Backup: x10
Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 2D
Space: 8
Atmosphere: 185; 530 kmh
Hull: 5D
Shields: 2D
Sensors:
Passive: 20/1D
Active: 45/1D+2
Search: 75/2D+2
Focus: 3/3D+2
Weapons:
2 Turbolasers (fire-linked, fire every other round)
Fire Arc: Front
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 2D
Space Range: 1-4/15/30
Atmosphere Range: 100-400/1.5/3 km
Damage: 7D
4 Multi-Repeat Blasters (fire-linked)
Fire Arc: Front
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 2D
Space Range: 1-3/12/20
Atmosphere Range: 100-300/1.2/2 km
Damage: 4D
Double Pulse Laser
Fire Arc: Turret
Skill: Starship gunnery
Fire Control: 3D
Space Range: 1-3/12/25
Atmosphere Range: 100-300/1.2/2.5 km
Damage: 5D+2

When they return to their ship, astute characters (those making a Moderate *sensors* or *Perception* roll) observe Daxtorn Lethos' starship, the *Gorgon*, lifting off from its landing pad. It takes one minute and an Easy *space transports repair* roll for characters to apply the Polydex-9 to the magnetic bottle, after which their ship is ready for flight. Since only two canisters are required to complete repairs, the characters may have a surplus of the chemical — in which case they may sell the remainder for a handsome profit.

If they are wise, the heroes do not pursue the *Gorgon*, as it is likely the heavy interceptor is far better armed than their ship is. However, vengeful characters probably want to take some parting shots.

Depending on the characters' method of evading certain doom in the shuttle trap, Daxtorn may believe them to be dead and proceeds out of the Tinn system to his next job. If the characters do nothing the scenario ends without a starship confrontation. If the characters attack, Daxtorn recognizes their ship and sets out to make sure they're dead this time.

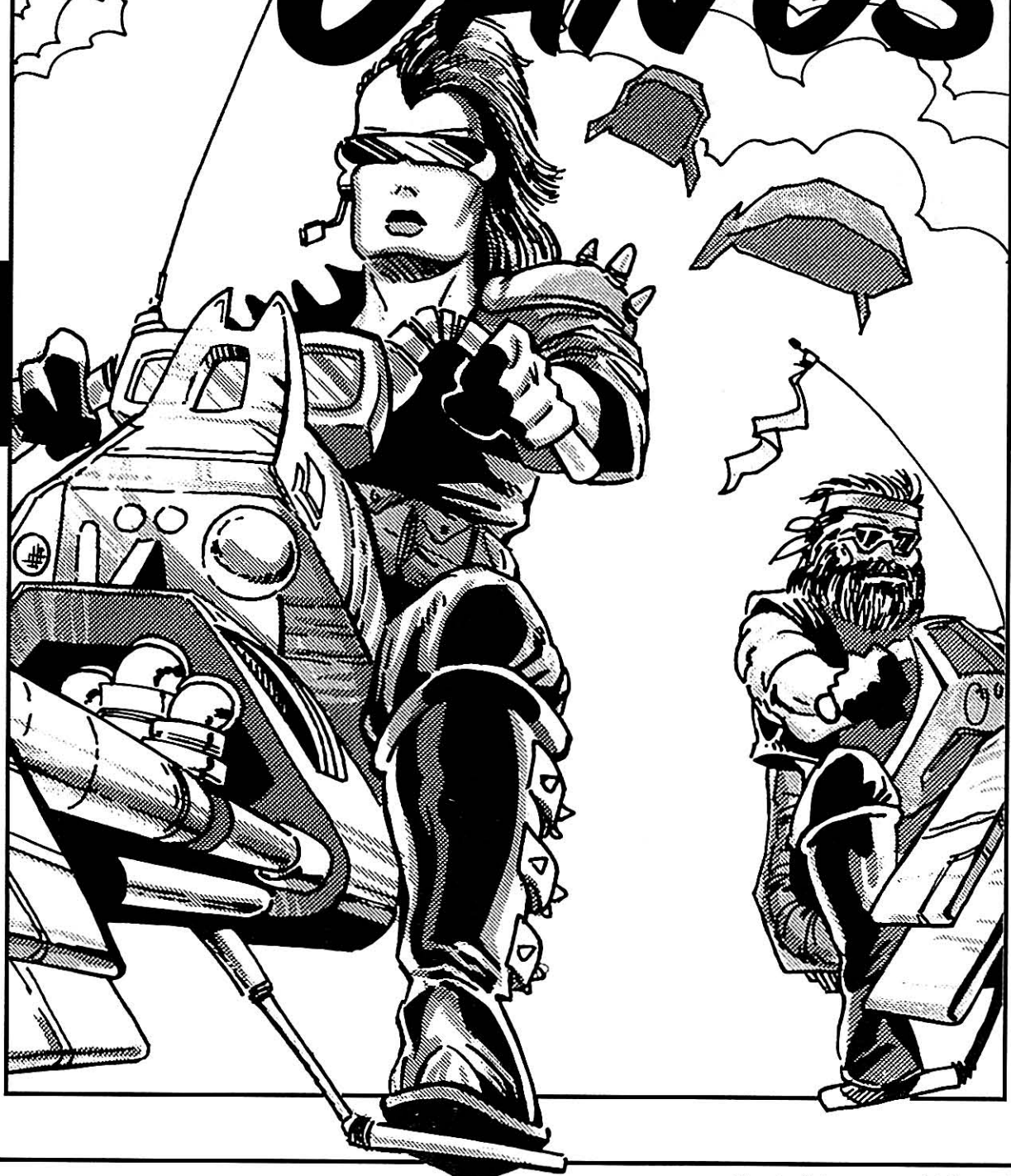
Echnos City flight control does not take kindly

to armed starship combat within the dome. However, any warfare conducted at a safe distance from the city dome is not interrupted. If shots are fired within the city dome, Echnos control launches 12 Protector StarSpeeders to eliminate one of the contestants. Their first target is likely be the characters' vessel since the characters fired the first shot and are in a ship the StarSpeeders can easily defeat.

Echnos Patrol Protector StarSpeeder. Starfighter, *starfighter piloting* 4D+2, *starship gunnery* 4D, *maneuverability* 3D, *space* 9, *atmosphere* 195; 560 kmh, *hull* 3D. Weapons: 2 laser cannons (fire linked, fire control 3D, damage 4D).

Daxtorn is a seasoned and cunning pilot. If he senses that he is on the losing side of a fight, he seeks the quickest route from the Echnos system and returns to claim his bounty another day. He is particularly proud of the *Gorgon* and will be equally indignant and furious at the characters should they damage it. Before jumping to hyperspace, he promises to extract his revenge upon the characters and all that they hold close to them. Daxtorn Lethos has become an enemy for life. ☹

SWOOP GANGS



By John Beyer & Wayne Humfleet

Illustrations by Kathy Burdette & Doug Shuler

The high-pitched screams of multiple repulsorlift engines echoed through the narrow streets and alleys of Gallisport, announcing yet another clash between the authorities and the local residents. Barely ahead of pursuit, two repulsorlift swoops raced along at breakneck speeds. The drivers wore the distinctive red and black colors of a local swoop gang, the Rabid Mynocks. Behind the swoops a pair of lightly armored personnel carriers followed dangerously close, engines strained to the limit. The swoop riders had yet to lose the carriers in the maze of streets and buildings of the abandoned business district, despite some dangerous maneuvers.

Quayce, the raven-haired rider on the lead swoop, swore through clenched teeth, then activated the comlink headset she wore. "Why don't they go home already!" she yelled into the mike. "I mean, all we did was steal a few loaves of bread."

On the trailing swoop, Roy adjusted the throttles and pulled up aside Quayce's swoop before answering. "Raiding a food distribution center and picking it dry is more than just 'stealing a few loaves of bread.' Or don't you make such distinctions?"

"I don't make distinctions when I'm hungry," she grumbled. "Besides, they started this one. Just because a few factory workers go on strike is no reason to stop distributing food to the rest of us."

"Moot point now." Roy declared. "Besides, we've gotta get back before they give out all the good stuff!"

Quayce dared a quick look over her shoulder. Barely 10 meters behind her the two carriers hummed, the letters "L.A.L.A." in dark metallic blue visible on the drab gray hull. This was wrong, she thought. Legally Authorized Law Authorities (called LA-LAs by the gangs) were not supposed to be this dedicated. Hired by a corrupt government to keep control in places real security forces feared to go, LA-LAs amounted to nothing more than paid bullies. In some of Gallisport's outer suburbs, the LA-LAs were actually run by the very same gangs and criminal organizations they were hired to apprehend. Unless they were paid well, there was very little incentive for the hired help to risk their lives to this degree.

Today's raid — no matter how daring in nature — had been small in comparison to the usual food riots. Striking just as the center's guards were changing shifts, the gang caught the defenders by surprise. The Rabid Mynocks were just withdrawing when the counter-attack began. The gang retreated and split into small groups, allowing the ground transports to get away with the stolen food. By now the transports should have reached their various destinations and the distribution of food to a hungry populace should be well under way. For the past 10 minutes Quayce and Roy had been leading the two personnel carriers on a wild gundark chase, buying the transports additional time. Usually the LA-LAs would have given up by now and withdrawn pursuit, but this time they were actually serious about performing their duties. The idea of giving free food to hungry people must have hit a nerve with someone high up. Quayce was convinced that right now someone was pulling strings and calling in favors to get such a dedicated response.

"Loading docks up ahead." Roy called over the comlink. "Your call, Boss."

Quayce thought it over for just a second before answering. "Let's play some high-low. I got high!" She pulled hard left, off the main street, disappearing down a connecting service tunnel. Simultaneously, Roy repeated the maneuver, but banked to the right and turned into a service tunnel on the opposite side of the street.

The carriers predictably split formation, one following Quayce, the other, Roy. The service tunnels were only about five meters high and not

much wider. Built primarily as subterranean access for power and communication lines, the confining tunnels ruled out any thoughts of fancy maneuvers. Although the carriers were lightly armed, there was little fear they would actually open fire. They were built for crowd control and not high speed pursuit. Any shot would probably miss the smaller, more agile swoops, and the power drain would cause the carriers to lose speed.

The tunnels would continue to descend under the loading docks in a gently curving semi-circle before climbing back to street level. Quayce opened the throttle full. Behind her, the sudden change in pitch from the carrier's engine told her the LA-LAs had done the same. Hunching over her controls, Quayce adjusted her repulsor field, gaining as much altitude as she dared. Bare centimeters above her head, the ceiling raced by at a dizzying speed. Quayce allowed a smile to cross her tightly clenched lips, knowing that right now Roy would be performing a similar maneuver. Instead of gaining altitude, however, Roy would be cutting his repulsor field to almost nothing, allowing his swoop to hug the ground at a suicidal level.

The tunnel ascent had begun, the late afternoon light marking the exit just ahead. Holding her breath and mentally humming her favorite tune, Quayce blasted through the exit and back onto the main street. Immediately she banked hard to the left and turned her swoop into the center of the road. Roy's swoop emerged from its underground run across from her, trailing sparks as it bounced onto the street. With less than half a meter clearance, Roy passed directly under the bottom of Quayce's swoop. He immediately banked to the right, not daring to raise his head.

Just seconds behind them, two personnel carriers emerged from their respective tunnels at maximum speed. Even if the pilots of the armored carriers could react, there was no place for them to go. In a massive and quite spectacular manner, the two vehicles tried to occupy the same portion of the street at the exact same time. The impact caused a resounding explosion that shattered glass and shook buildings for more than a kilometer.

Slowing to a halt, both swoop riders finally let out their breath and rose up from cramped positions. Looking back at the fireworks display, Roy let out a shout that would have been deafening — if the roar from the explosion had left their hearing intact. Quayce waited until the ringing stopped before asking Roy if he wanted to go somewhere and grab something to eat. Laughing hard from relief as much as from humor, they revved their swoops and headed home.

Running Swoop Gangs

Swoop gangs. Mention these two words together at any gathering and be prepared for a barrage of conflicting images and opinions. To some, swoops and those who ride them conjure only images of criminals and anti-social psychotics reported by the NewsNets. Others see swoop gangs as rogue heroes of questionable means but good intentions. To a certain degree both images are correct. The goals, motivations, and morals of individual swoop gangs are as diverse as the environments they inhabit, making no two gangs exactly identical. By comparing and contrasting these two extremes, swoop gangs become easier to understand and integrate into *Star Wars* campaigns.

The Good

In some systems swoop gangs are the good guys. Drawn together for reasons of mutual protection and other causes, these gangs receive the support of the local citizenry and are hailed as heroes. On economically depressed worlds, criminal organizations and crooked officials dominate planetary governments. Caring only for power and profit, they do little for the general populace as the planet's economy spins out of control.

In places like these, swoop gangs often organize not as criminals, but to protect family and friends. Bound by detailed codes of honor and a strong sense of duty, they are often the only honest law enforcement on the planet. The members protect their communities from rival gangs and the so-called "legitimate government agencies." Where these gangs have existed for generations, entire feudal societies have developed. Rich in history and accompanied by elaborate rituals of membership, positions in these gangs are often hereditary, with weapons and swoops becoming family heirlooms.

In other instances, small but highly organized street gangs have taken to swoops to rid their homes of Imperial forces. Although the Empire can muster countless troops and unimaginable firepower, catching these home-grown Rebels has proven to be a near impossible task. The extreme raw power and high maneuverability of most swoops gives gangs an edge in an otherwise uneven fight. Striking from ground and treetop levels, gangs attack their Imperial oppressors' weak points with devastating results. If properly disciplined, the gangs retreat to safety, blending into the local terrain before the Imperial forces can mount an effective counter-strike.

This is not to imply that swoop gangs are pro-Alliance. Despite common ground, the Rebel Alliance has had very little success convincing these gangs to aid their cause. It seems that the

gangs resent most forms of organized government, and consider the Alliance to be as much a threat to their way of life as the New Order. Undaunted, efforts continue to recruit the gangs into the Rebel mainstream.

The Bad

In contrast, many swoop gangs fall into the opposite category. Ill-tempered, undisciplined, and largely anti-social, these gangs are made up of career criminals and sadistic tyrants. With a callous disregard for lives and property, they terrify whole planets, taking what they want, when they want it. It is these acts of terrorism and their devastating after-effects that the NewsNets focus on. Often the only images the general populace can recall of swoop gangs are those reported on last night's holo-cast.

These gangs use various illicit means to finance and maintain their way of life. The most frequently used method is straight and simple robbery. Everything from quick smash and grab to full assaults are attempted by these mobile crime clubs. Bank robberies, hijackings of commercial transports, and armed raids on fortified corporate warehouses are not uncommon in gang territories. Occasionally, well-armed gangs attack military convoys and fortifications in order to obtain restricted gear and weaponry not available on the black-market.

Soon after establishing a territory to operate from, most gangs move on to extortion. Operating on a simple "pay or be hurt" system, gangs offer the local residents protection from physical violence and destruction of property. Often the only protection needed is from the extorting gangs themselves. Failure to make these voluntary payments starts with an unannounced visit from the gang and ends with a very unfortunate accident. Sometimes during territorial disputes the offer of protection is gratefully accepted. In these instances, violence erupts as the gang in question defends the territory from other gangs, criminal organizations, and law-enforcement agencies. When the blood settles and the boundaries are re-established, the gang is now free to reinvest their ill-gotten profits into legitimate business fronts. Bars, concert halls, and repulsorlift supply shops are the most common choices, although just about any business can be used.

The Indifferent

Regardless of differences in morals and methods, swoop gangs share common ground. They hold little regard for regulations, laws and the agencies that administer them. They consider all forms of regulated government a threat to their way of life. It does not matter to them if the

Empire or the Rebel Alliance rules the world they happen to occupy. Nor does it matter which side ultimately controls the whole of galaxy. Except for the few actually making money from the current conflict, most gangs remain happily ignorant to the true extent and meaning of the galactic civil war. On a daily basis, most gangs are too busy subverting or eluding law enforcement to concern themselves with broader events.

The only loyalty shown by swoop gang members is reserved for the gangs themselves. While each gang is guided by its own set of rules and traditions, a common street code and honor system does exist. The street code defines the gang's rank and standing among its peers, and is followed almost as closely as the gangs' own rules. Loss of respect and position on the street is more highly feared than an Imperial task force.

The unique symbols and markings of swoop gangs are collectively known as "gang colors." Whether simple jackets or elaborate logos and tattoos, colors represent the swoop gang's past history and current reputation. To slight a gang's colors is to insult the entire gang — a gesture not taken lightly by the offended, and often fatal to the offenders. The highest challenge and most difficult initiation for new gang members is to capture or disgrace another gang's colors and survive to tell about it.

Swoop Gang Characters

Swoop gangs are comprised of tough streetwise individuals who do not have the opportunity or desire to travel through the galaxy. As a result, most do not possess spacefaring skills. Instead, swoopers focus on the essential street skills needed to survive in tough urban environments. Several new templates are included specifically for swoop gang members, reflecting their most common skills. Standard templates can also be used, once gamemasters have made simple modifications. Space-related skills should be replaced with swoop style skills on a one-for-one basis.

For instance, imagine a Young Jedi who's never seen a starship up close, let alone ventured into space. Instead, this Jedi has mastered the swoop, electing to use his limited abilities in the Force to battle injustice on a corrupt homeworld. The gamemaster may choose to eliminate the skills of *astrogation*, *beast riding*, *space transports* and *starship shields*. In their place the Jedi would receive *swoop operation*, *ground vehicle operation*, *firearms*, and *armor repair*. The gamemaster may also replace the Jedi's droid with a swoop or speeder bike.

Templates for the Curious Explorer, the Bounty Hunter and the Wookiee First Mate can also be easily modified for play. Other templates like the

Kid and the Smuggler can be used just the way they are. Existing characters from other campaigns can be integrated into a swoop campaign by spending a few character points to learn the *swoop operation* skill.

Campaign Scope and Themes

Swoop gang campaigns can be played on an epic scale, with a continuing series of adventures lasting for dozens of gaming sessions, or they may last just a few games, giving the players and gamemaster a break from their usual campaigns. The adventures may be very dramatic in nature, focusing on strong moral dilemmas and deadly personal conflicts. The best swoop gang adventures, however, are run with a light touch. Humorous events occur when characters attempt to accomplish simple goals (like obtaining sold-out concert tickets) with the same intensity they display when destroying the Death Star. Once the size and tone of the campaign is chosen, the gamemaster should select its theme. The most common are the Local Hero Campaign, the Renegade Campaign, and the Gamemaster Character Campaign.

The Local Hero Campaign is played very much like a standard *Star Wars* campaign. In this setting, the characters are basically good guys, although their methods of operation may be questionable. In this setting, the characters' goals are to stop the injustice and tyranny running the local or planetary governments. The planet may be run by crimelords, corrupt officials, or the Empire. Be inventive — perhaps the characters' homeworld is a small forgotten colony established during the Old Republic. Several generations ago, a small fleet of ships arrived and took over the planet, enslaving the population. The slavers may be pirates, Imperial raiders, or a strange alien race who's purpose for enslavement has yet to be discovered. The characters are the acknowledged heroes of the enslaved populace, receiving help and aid whenever possible. They are also the enemy of the oppressors who will stop at nothing to eliminate them.

The Renegade Campaign makes the characters fugitives on the run. Accused of numerous crimes, the characters seek refuge and adventure while trying to clear their names. It does not matter if the characters actually committed the crimes — they are wanted felons, pursued by all law enforcement agencies on the planet. More importantly, the general populace also believes the characters to be violent criminals and may fear them, refusing aid. Bounty hunters and concerned citizens may attempt to capture the characters for the large rewards offered. If the characters value their freedom, they don't stay in one place for long. They might just move from hiding

Swoop Gang Leader

Character Name: _____



Player: _____
 Species: Human
 Sex: _____ Age: _____
 Height: _____ Weight: _____
 Physical Description: _____

Background: You watched as your planet fell into economic ruin. You stood by when the Empire asserted control. You laughed when the gangs started running things, you even helped them torch the local security station. But when they canceled the concert tour of your favorite band, they went too far. Now you're mad and you're gonna make them pay (or at least reschedule the concert). You've gathered your gang and you're ready to ride!

Personality: You're assertive and tough — you prefer action to just sitting around. But you always have a plan first, then take the fight to the enemy. And, of course, one

of your first concerns is the welfare of the gang and those who depend on the gang.

Objectives: To deal some damage to the authorities and win back what you want. Also, to watch out for the best interests of your gang.

A Quote: "What do you mean canceled? Mount up boys!"

Connection With Other Characters: _____

Equipment: Comlink, gang jacket and colors, heavy blaster pistol (5D), swoop, vibro-shiv (STR+1D), 1,000 credits

DEXTERITY	3D	PERCEPTION	3D+2
Blaster	_____	Bargain	_____
Brawling Parry	_____	Command	_____
Dodge	_____	Con	_____
Grenade	_____	Gambling	_____
Melee Combat	_____	Hide	_____
Melee Parry	_____	Persuasion	_____
Running	_____	Search	_____
Thrown Weapons	_____	Sneak	_____
Vehicle Blaster	_____		_____

KNOWLEDGE	2D	STRENGTH	3D
Intimidation	_____	Brawling	_____
Languages	_____	Climbing/Jumping	_____
Law Enforcement	_____	Stamina	_____
Streetwise	_____		_____
Survival	_____		_____
Value	_____		_____
Willpower	_____		_____

MECHANICAL	4D	TECHNICAL	2D+1
Repulsorlift Ops	_____	First Aid	_____
Swoop Ops	_____	Repulsorlift Rpr	_____
	_____	Security	_____
	_____		_____

Special Abilities: None

Move: 10

Force Points:

Force Sensitive?: Yes No

Dark Side Points:

Character Points:

Wounded

Incapacitated

Mortally Wounded

Swoop Brute

Character Name: _____



Player: _____
 Species: Human
 Sex: _____ Age: _____
 Height: _____ Weight: _____
 Physical Description: _____

Background: Your dad said you'd never amount to much, and he might be right. You're big and mean, and you tend to bully anyone that's smaller than yourself. While you might not begin all the fights, you're never far from them when they start. You took to riding swoops because they, like you, are loud and powerful. You're the enforcer of the gang, the leader's right hand man, and proud of it.

Personality: You're somewhat brash and bossy, and not afraid to throw your strength around and intimidate others. You're also intensely loyal to your fellow gang members.

Objectives: To have some fun with your swoop gang buddies and see some brawling action.

A Quote: "Hey you! Spot me five credits and I'll let you keep your teeth!"

Connection With Other Characters: _____

Equipment: Blaster rifle (4D), comlink, gang jacket and colors, 2 grenades, riot suppression gun (6D stun), shades, swoop, 25 credits in change, credit pouch attached by chain

DEXTERITY	3D	PERCEPTION	2D
Blaster	_____	Command	_____
Brawling Parry	_____	Gambling	_____
Dodge	_____	Persuasion	_____
Firearms	_____	Search	_____
Grenade	_____		_____
Melee Combat	_____		_____
Melee Parry	_____		_____
Vehicle Blaster	_____		_____

KNOWLEDGE	2D	STRENGTH	4D
Intimidation	_____	Brawling	_____
Languages	_____	Climbing/Jumping	_____
Streetwise	_____	Lifting	_____
Survival	_____	Stamina	_____
Willpower	_____		_____

MECHANICAL	3D+2	TECHNICAL	3D+1
Ground Veh. Ops	_____	Blaster Repair	_____
Repulsorlift Ops	_____	Demolition	_____
Swoop Ops	_____	Repulsorlift Rpr	_____
	_____		_____

Special Abilities: None

Move: 10

Force Points:

Force Sensitive?: Yes No

Dark Side Points:

Character Points:

Wounded

Incapacitated

Mortally Wounded

Outlaw Swoop Tech

Character Name: _____



Player: _____
 Species: Human
 Sex: _____ Age: _____
 Height: _____ Weight: _____
 Physical Description: _____

Background: You've always had a knack for taking things apart and putting them back together (most of the time they still work). Add your fascination for speed and your destiny was set. Now you've hooked up with this swoop gang and can tinker to your heart's content — providing you can find the spare parts. It doesn't pay too much — it doesn't pay at all — and you spend a lot of your time watching your back. It could be worse, but you wouldn't have it any other way.

Personality: You're fascinated by anything technical, especially machines that go fast. You'll do almost anything to tinker with a new toy, or get your hands on some new

spare parts.

Objectives: To collect more spare parts and to keep modifying the gang's swoop bikes to be better and faster.

A Quote: "I just made a minor adjustment. It'll work. Trust me."

Connection With Other Characters: _____

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, datapad, gang jacket and colors, multi-function tool kit, spare swoop parts, swoop, 250 credits

DEXTERITY	2D+1	PERCEPTION	3D+1
Blaster	_____	Bargain	_____
Brawling Parry	_____	Con	_____
Dodge	_____	Forgery	_____
Pickpocket	_____	Hide	_____
Running	_____	Search	_____
Vehicle Blaster	_____	Sneak	_____

KNOWLEDGE	3D+1	STRENGTH	2D
Business	_____	Brawling	_____
Languages	_____	Climbing/Jumping	_____
Streetwise	_____	_____	_____
Value	_____	_____	_____

MECHANICAL	3D	TECHNICAL	4D
Communications	_____	Armor Repair	_____
Repulsorlift Ops	_____	Blaster Repair	_____
Swoop Ops	_____	Computer Prg/Rpr	_____
_____	_____	Droid Program.	_____
_____	_____	Droid Repair	_____
_____	_____	Ground Veh. Rpr.	_____
_____	_____	First Aid	_____
_____	_____	Repulsorlift Rpr	_____

Special Abilities: None

Move: 10

Force Points:

Force Sensitive?: Yes No

Dark Side Points:

Character Points:

- Wounded
- Incapacitated
- Mortally Wounded

Street Thief

Character Name: _____



Player: _____
 Species: Human
 Sex: _____ Age: _____
 Height: _____ Weight: _____
 Physical Description: _____

Background: You sneak through the dark alleys and stake out your target. Get in quickly and blow the security, grab the loot and make for the exit. That's if all your calculations were correct, which they always are. The gang depends on you to provide those hard-to-get parts and banned music holos — you try to do your part and help out. After all, you're the best of the best. Growing up on the streets has taught you all the skills you need to survive, but it's a big world and everyone needs a place to call home. The gang is your home now, and your only family.

Personality: You're quiet and contemplating — always sizing up the situation, finding the best way in and out.

Your eyes are always open for opportunity and the chance to make off with a prize your gang really needs.

Objectives: To make sure the gang has all the equipment and items it needs, and to obtain them when needed.

A Quote: "You want the new Hyperspace holo-demo? That'll be tough, but I think I can squeak it."

Connection With Other Characters: _____

Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), fine work tool kit, gang jacket and colors, hold-out blaster (3D), rope and multi-grapple, swoop, vibro-shiv (STR+1D), 500 credits

DEXTERITY	3D+2	PERCEPTION	4D
Blaster	_____	Bargain	_____
Brawling Parry	_____	Command	_____
Dodge	_____	Forgery	_____
Melee Combat	_____	Hide	_____
Melee Parry	_____	Search	_____
Pickpocket	_____	Sneak	_____
Running	_____	_____	_____
Thrown Weapons	_____	_____	_____

KNOWLEDGE	2D+1	STRENGTH	3D
Cultures	_____	Brawling	_____
Law Enforcement	_____	Climbing/Jumping	_____
Languages	_____	Stamina	_____
Streetwise	_____	_____	_____
Survival	_____	_____	_____
Value	_____	_____	_____

MECHANICAL	2D+1	TECHNICAL	2D+2
Communications	_____	Computer Prg/Rpr	_____
Repulsorlift Ops	_____	Demolition	_____
Swoop Ops	_____	Droid Program.	_____
Sensors	_____	Security	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Special Abilities: None

Move: 10

Force Points:

Force Sensitive?: Yes No

Dark Side Points:

Character Points:

- Wounded
- Incapacitated
- Mortally Wounded

Street Weasel

Character Name: _____



Player: _____
 Species: Human
 Sex: _____ Age: _____
 Height: _____ Weight: _____
 Physical Description: _____

Background: You grew up in a tough town where you had to have something to survive. For some it was money or muscle, but you had the gift — the power to charm people with a smile or an innocent look, the gift of fast talking and thinking faster. You became good at conning people into protecting you or giving you stuff. But now you're playing with the big boys — you're playing come-up flector for a swoop gang, helping them stay on top. In return, they protect you and help you out on the street. Because sometimes the gift isn't good enough. When the con fails, you hope you feet and your friends won't fail, too.

Personality: You're friendly, outgoing, and always on the prowl for a scam. You can merge into a group and feel and act right at home — exactly what you need to do to flam whatever you need from these folks.

Objectives: To use your gifts to survive and help your gang get whatever it needs.

A Quote: "Gentle-beings, have I got a deal here for you ..."

Connection With Other Characters: _____

Equipment: Datapad, various styles of clothing, 4 forged identities, hold-out blaster (3D), landspeeder, 1,500 credits

DEXTERITY	3D+1	PERCEPTION	4D
Blaster	_____	Con	_____
Dodge	_____	Forgery	_____
Running	_____	Hide	_____
		Investigation	_____
		Persuasion	_____
		Search	_____
		Sneak	_____
KNOWLEDGE	4D		
Bureaucracy	_____	STRENGTH	2D
Cultures	_____	Climbing/Jumping	_____
Law Enforcement	_____	Stamina	_____
Languages	_____		
Streetwise	_____		
Survival	_____		
Willpower	_____		
MECHANICAL	2D+1	TECHNICAL	2D+1
Ground Veh. Ops	_____	Computer Prg/Rpr	_____
Repulsorlift Ops	_____	First Aid.	_____
Swoop Ops	_____	Security	_____

Special Abilities: None

Move: 10

Force Points:

Force Sensitive?: Yes No

Dark Side Points:

Character Points:

- Wounded
- Incapacitated
- Mortally Wounded

place to hiding place in a large city, or they may undertake a cross-country journey in pursuit of those who can prove their innocence. The plots for these adventures should allow the characters just enough time to make new friends and perform some heroic deeds before they are forced to move on again.

The Gamemaster Character Campaign is used by gamemasters to add swoop gang elements to existing games without creating an entirely new campaign. By using swoop gangs as bad guys, the gamemaster can pit blaster-happy Rebels and cautious free-traders against a new class of villains. The gamemaster's gangs should be populated by the scum of the universe. The leaders of these gangs could be sly, calculating power mongers, or deranged madmen who embrace all that is evil. Gamemasters will be challenged to create worthy opponents that have very limited resources. Unlike the Empire, most swoop gangs do not have countless troops to throw at the characters. The equipment and weapons used are equal to those of the characters, although their morals and temperament are much worse. The players may be Rebels who must infiltrate a swoop gang in order to prevent a terrorist attack on a pro-Alliance world. Perhaps the swoop gang has stolen an important item from the characters or kidnapped someone dear to them.

The Gallisport Campaign

The Gallisport campaign takes place in the Shesharile System of the Minos Cluster. More detailed information on the Shesharile system and the entire Minos Cluster can be found in *Galaxy Guide 6: Tramp Freighters*. Gallisport is home to some of the largest and most notorious swoop gangs. Both player-run and gamemaster-controlled gangs can be easily integrated into this game setting.

Gallisport is the capitol city of the Shesharile system, a small, relatively unimportant system at the edge of known space. Two populated moons, Shesharile 5 and 6, orbit a large gas giant. Both moons, commonly called the Twin Planets, share a common government and a common fate. On the verge of economic collapse, the moons are home to one of the most corrupt governments in the galaxy. Various criminal organizations have begun to fund the retirements of elected officials, receiving virtual *carte blanche* in return. As a result, the streets of Shesharile 5 are now ruled by the gangs.

Both moons are heavily settled with massive industrial complexes located amidst crowded population centers. The Twin Planets have never been terribly high-tech, and demand for their slightly out-dated products has dropped sharply,

though the cheap cost of labor offsets this to some degree. In their headlong pursuit of wealth, the people of the Shesharile system have ruined the environment of their worlds. Both moons are heavily polluted and it has become impossible to escape the filth and mounting piles of industrial waste. There are resorts and private retreats on Shesharile 5 for the extremely wealthy, but even these places are considered dirty by galactic standards. Still, the people of the Twin Planets have become so accustomed to the filth that no one notices it anymore.

Gallisport is not only home to the system's capital, but also to the moons' largest commercial starport. The starport, the government sector, and the wealthiest residential sectors are located behind heavily patrolled security walls, offering an exclusive level of security for those who can afford it. The remaining industrial and residential sectors have been split into territories called zones, which are patrolled by private security firms hired by the city administrators.

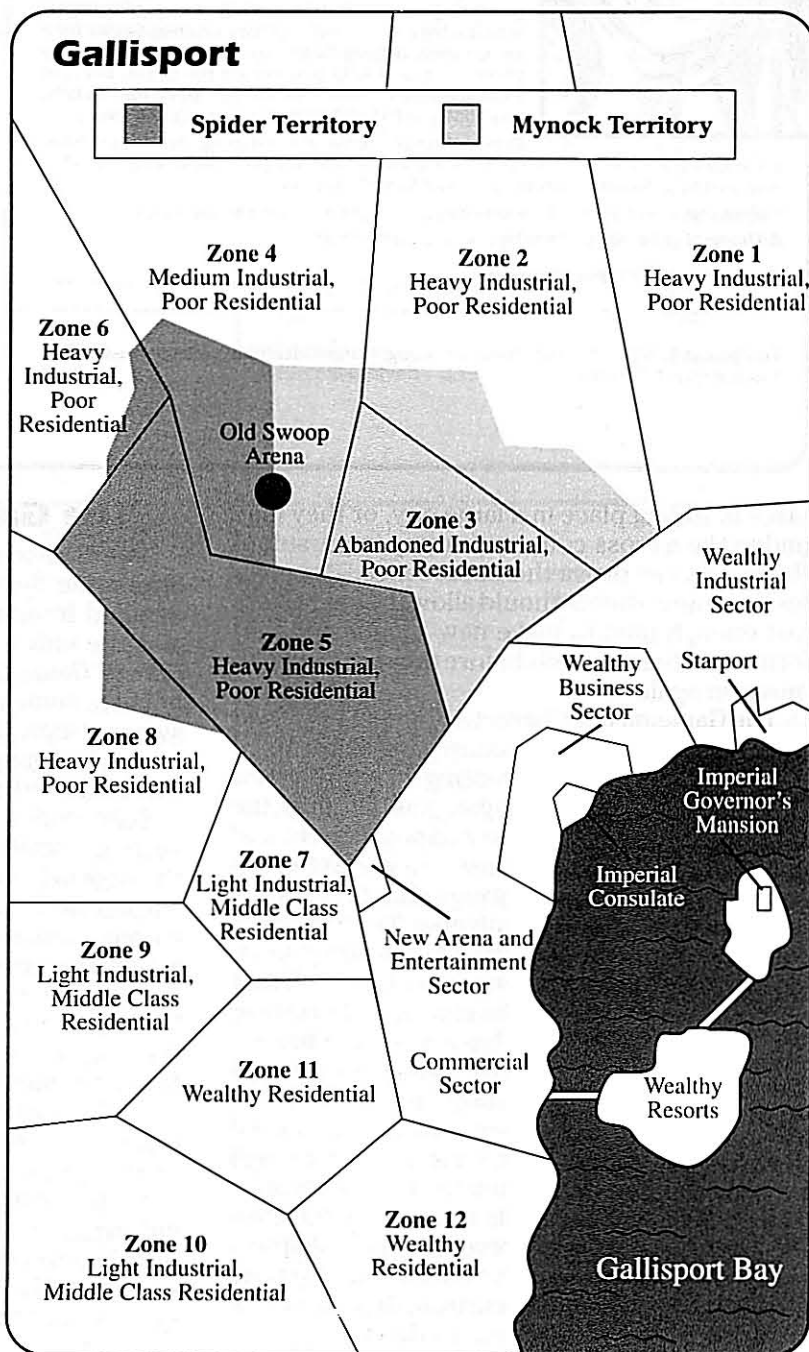
LA-LAs and the Gangs

These Legally Authorized Law Authorities (laughingly called LA-LAs by the gangs) are in most cases composed of the exact same criminal elements they are supposed to apprehend. Granted complete autonomy, the LA-LAs may use whatever means they wish to maintain order. Most LA-LAs forcibly collect protection fees from the residents in order to maintain large private armies. Citizens who refuse to pay are arrested and convicted on trumped-up charges. The legal system is also rife with corruption, with lawyers and judges siding with whoever has the deepest pockets.

Numerous swoop gangs have risen up throughout the system, and Gallisport is home to most of them. Some gangs stand apart from the others. Banding together, heroic swoopers fight insurmountable odds in an attempt to retain their individual freedoms. Still, the majority of the swoop gangs desire power

and wealth, and attempt to destroy anyone who stands in their way.

The Empire maintains an Imperial consulate in Gallisport, housing some 5,000 Imperial Army troopers and a detachment of 400 stormtroopers. The consul-general and his two dozen staffers perform minimal duties, acting mostly as trade liaisons and tax collectors for the Emperor. They seldom leave the consulate compound and almost never interfere with the crime-ridden government. Imperial intervention, while not unheard of, seldom occurs in the Shesharile System. The Empire does not maintain large forces



Steven Brown

in the Minos Cluster and appears in strength only when riots and strikes threaten to disrupt the timely delivery of Imperial shipments. Imperial Customs corvettes maintain regular patrol routes in a vain attempt to stem the flow of black market goods being smuggled to and from Gallisport.

■ **Shesharile 5 & 6**

- Type: Terrestrial
- Temperature: Temperate
- Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
- Hydrosphere: Arid
- Gravity: Standard
- Terrain: Urban
- Length of Day: 26 standard hours
- Length of Year: 377 local days
- Sapient Species: Human
- Starport: Standard class
- Population: 12 billion
- Planet Function: Trade
- Government: Democracy (controlled by organized crime)
- Tech Level: Information
- Major Exports: Munitions, illegal spice
- Major Imports: Food, illegal spice, luxury items

Gallisport Street Slang

The language of the street is often a completely different dialect than a planet's native language. Gallisport is no exception. Street slang is a common part of any swoop gang campaign — these terms can be integrated into any swoop gang campaign to add another level of atmosphere to roleplaying.

Back Door: An easy entrance or exit, usually created as needed.

Blinkers: Narco-spice addicts (because of their rapid involuntary eye blinking).

Boost-Bot: A droid designed to help steal repulsortcraft and parts.

Cherry Bombs: Grenades.

LA-LAs: Locally Authorized Legal Authorities — private cops who control the zones.

Lighter: A flame-thrower.

Popper: A riot suppression gun, named after the loud popping sound created when fired.

RT's: Real Things — real law enforcement officials, legitimate cops who seldom leave the protection of the walled sections of Gallisport.

Sissy Straps: Seatbelts.

Slag: A local swear word.

Slag It or Slag You: Choice curse phrases.

Sprinkle: Narco-spice.

Stonemen: Imperial stormtroopers.

Street Cleaners: Imperial Army troopers.

SUBAR: Slagged Up Beyond All Repair.

Swoopers: Swoop gang members.

Toaster: Thermal detonator.

Torch: Blaster.

Zones: Territorial divisions in Gallisport.

Zoomies: Professional swoop racers.

A Funny Thing Happened at the Cantina ...

Roy raised his glass in a toast, the azure liquid sparkling unnaturally in the cantina's dim lighting. The others followed his example, raising their drinks high.

"Mynocks take care of their own, and take care of their home," he proclaimed in his gruff manner. The others acknowledged the salute with a hardy cheer before downing their drinks.

"At least Zone Three won't be going hungry this week after the raid on that food center," Quayce chimed in. The other Mynocks sitting around the table gave a murmur of agreement.

"I'm glad we're done with that, I'm starving," Roy stated matter-of-factly.

"You would be, Roy," Quayce returned with a smile.

The din in the cantina was at its normal level: loud. The Mynocks usually came here to celebrate after a successful mission against the corruption that made up the government in Gallisport. Sevron Ta, the astute Sullustan owner of Ta's Roost, made sure that the Rabid Mynocks always had a table. Besides, having Zone Three's protectors as regulars was great for business, providing a sense of security to his other patrons.

An unusual hush fell over of the cantina. All eyes went to the entrance, where a group of



newcomers stood. They wore the sandy tan ponchos of the Raging Banthas, a new gang that had banded with the Spiders to wrestle control of the zone from the Mynocks. The leader, a punk named Westwood, held a red and black flag in his hand — the flag of the Rabid Mynocks.

"I told you losers not to show your faces in Bantha turf again. Looks like you didn't listen to me." Westwood sneered, his words almost unintelligible due to the cigarillo clamped tightly between his teeth. Throwing the flag into the air, he drew his blaster and fired. The flag fluttered, smoking, to the ground.

Roy and Quayce exchanged glances, grins creeping to their faces.

"What an idiot," Quayce said.

"This is gonna be fun," Roy replied.

The Rabid Mynocks

The Rabid Mynocks have been a fixture in Gallisport since before the establishment of the zones. Gangs like the Spiders and the Raging Banthas usually band together for mutual profit, feeding off the weak. This is not the case with the Mynocks. The only reason for forming the gang was for protection in a violent city where gangs rule.

The gang has had numerous leaders and members over the years. Members came and went, but the Mynocks have never faded. They choose their leaders through a majority vote — after the death of their last leader, Roy was chosen to lead them. He declined the honor, suggesting Quayce take over in his place, and under her leadership the gang thrived. Her reign lasted six years, until they were framed for crimes they did not commit. The core gang members were arrested and the rest fled to join other gangs or hide.

Before they could be sent to the spice mines of Kessel, the Mynocks' core members escaped with the aid of friends. The Spiders — up to their old tricks — moved in on their turf and made yet another attempt to steal the Star Slinger, an advanced swoop prototype. The Mynocks, not yet recovered from their brief lock-up, foiled them and resumed control of their original territory.

After a brief recruiting campaign, and still running from the law, the Rabid Mynocks have once again resumed their original operations as Zone Three's guardians. The gang raids local food distribution centers and banks and distributes the wealth gained among the citizens of their zone. They are hailed as heroes, and the

people of Zone Three would risk anything to protect them from the long arm of the law. The authorities in Gallisport are relentless in their pursuit. The Mynocks are attempting to clear their names, but their road to innocence is a difficult task.

Typical Rabid Mynock Gang Member. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 3D+1, blaster 4D+2, dodge 4D+1, swoop operation 6D, streetwise 5D.* Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D).

Rabid Mynocks' Swoop: Mobquet Nebulon-Q Racer. Speeder, maneuverability 4D, move 210; 600 kmh, body strength 1D. Weapons: 1 blaster cannon (fire control 1D, range 3-50/100/200, damage 4D).

Quayce

Not even Quayce knows where she was born. Without a backward glance, she left her homeworld as a stowaway. Unlike the other ten-year-olds at home, she yearned for adventure and excitement among the stars. Unfortunately for her, she had unknowingly chosen to stow away on a pirate ship.

The pirates accepted her into their band and she spent the next six years aboard their ship as the steward. This was definitely not the life of action she had imagined. She spent most of her time working her young hands to the bone, performing menial labor only fit for a droid. The pirates said that the droids were too important to do such jobs. Quayce grew to hate droids with a passion. Because of this, she would often go out of her way to beat one senseless. Life on board ship was not all bad, however. The pirates taught her much, including



the art of war, and she studied the captain's leadership style.

Upon setting down in Gallisport, Quayce jumped ship. If she could not find excitement in space, she would make her own fun on this planet. Gallisport proved challenging enough — she had dropped herself into the middle of a gang war. The safest place in the zones was to be a member of a gang. Being her only option for survival, she joined the Rabid Mynocks.

Quayce found that she loved the Mynocks like a family, and within a few years rose to lead them. Under her leadership the gang prospered, until the day they were framed. After the Mynocks

escaped, she shaved one side of her head and put on her shades. Nobody messes with the Rabid Mynocks and lives.

■ **Quayce**

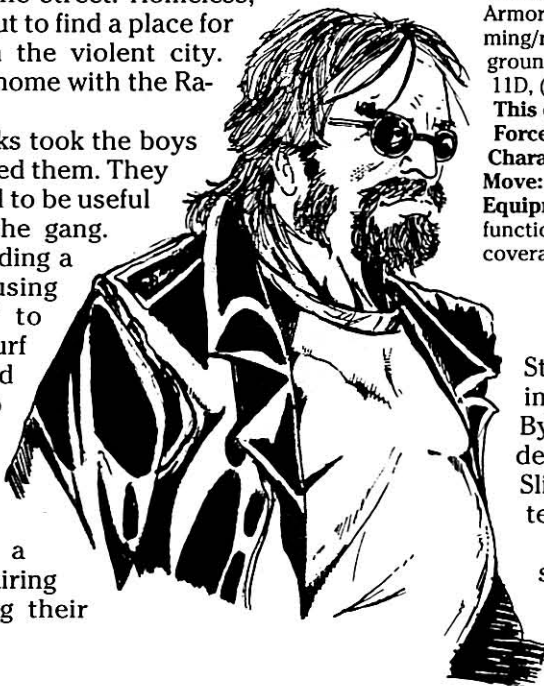
Type: Swoop Gang Leader
DEXTERITY 3D
 Blaster 5D+2, brawling parry 4D, melee combat 6D, melee parry 5D, thrown weapon 4D+2
KNOWLEDGE 2D
 Intimidation 4D+1, law enforcement 3D+2, survival: urban 5D, willpower 4D+2
MECHANICAL 4D
 Repulsorlift operation 5D, swoop operation 7D
PERCEPTION 3D+2
 Command 5D+1, con 5D+2, gambling 4D
STRENGTH 3D
 Brawling 6D+1, stamina 4D+2
TECHNICAL 2D+1
 Repulsorlift repair 5D, security 4D+1
Force Points: 2
Character Points: 10
Move: 10
Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (5D), red and black jacket, swoop, 400 credits

Quayce's Swoop: Modified Mobquet Nebulon-Q Racer. Speeder, maneuverability 4D+1, move 260; 750 kmh, body strength 1D. Weapons: 1 blaster cannon (fire control 1D, range 3-50/100/200, damage 4D).

Chop Harlison

Chop Harlison had a promising future, having completed most of his degree in advanced repulsorlift design, when his parents died and the money ran out. One of the many gang wars that occurred in Gallisport killed both his father and mother and forced Chop to take over responsibility for raising his younger brother Roy. His father's debtors claimed their home and put the boys out on the street. Homeless, the boys set out to find a place for themselves in the violent city. They found a home with the Rabid Mynocks.

The Mynocks took the boys in and protected them. They in turn learned to be useful members of the gang. Roy took to riding a swoop, and using his "popper" to defend their turf when he was old enough. Chop learned to fix things — lots of things. The techs found Chop to be a natural at repairing and improving their



swoops. After few years, he took all the knowledge learned from the Mynock techs and earlier schooling and started experimenting with new swoop designs to begin development on the Star Slinger.

Life with the gangs is not all fun and war. Soon after joining the Mynocks, Chop met Sharda, the woman he fell madly in love with. Sharda and Chop had a child they named Jardra, now the lead singer of the radical band Hyperspace. A rival gang, the Spiders, killed Sharda on one of their numerous raids on Mynock territory. With Sharda dead, Chop saw no reason to stay with the gang. Removing Jardra from the gangs' influences, he opened his own legitimate tech repair shop and called it Chop's Shop.

Chop's main concern now is taking care of Jardra and keeping an eye on Roy and Bobi, a street orphan he took in. He would lay down his life for either of them. Chop maintains contacts with the Rabid Mynocks as a favor to Roy, helping the gang as much as he can. For now, he is happy tinkering with his experiments and watching Jardra's promising music career take off.

■ **Chop Harlison**

Type: Veteran Swoop Tech
DEXTERITY 2D+1
 Blaster 6D+2, brawling parry 5D, dodge 6D, pickpocket 5D, running 4D+1, vehicle blasters 8D+2
KNOWLEDGE 3D+1
 Business 7D+2, languages 5D+1, streetwise 7D, value 6D
MECHANICAL 3D
 Communications 3D+2, repulsorlift operation 6D, swoop operation 7D
PERCEPTION 3D+1
 Bargain 6D+2, con 5D, forgery 7D, hide 4D+1, search 5D, sneak 3D+2
STRENGTH 2D
 Brawling 6D+1, climbing/jumping 4D
TECHNICAL 4D
 Armor repair 6D, blaster repair 5D, computer programming/repair 8D, droid programming 5D, droid repair 5D, ground vehicle repair 6D, first aid 6D, repulsorlift repair 11D, (A) repulsorlift engineering 9D
This character is Force-sensitive.
Force Points: 2
Character Points: 17
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, datapad, multi-function tool kit, Star Slinger prototype swoop, work coveralls, 3,000 credits

The Star Slinger

The brain child of Chop Harlison, the Star Slinger is the result of years of tinkering and advanced repulsorlift engineering. By incorporating restricted parts with new design theories, Chop has made the Star Slinger the premiere example of swoop technology.

Starting with the body of a Mobquet-Q swoop racer, Chop replaced the standard repulsor coils with lift coils from the

Empire's new Aratech 64-Y Swift 3 repulsor sled. The Aratech 64-Y uses the newly manufactured coils made of refined duralium—they are banned for civilian use, and may only be obtained on the black market, or from an Imperial production facility.

The coil chamber is flooded with a mixture of Tibanna gas and chemical stabilizers. Chop uses a mixture of 85% pure Tibanna gas and 15% Tibanna stabilizer. Normal mixtures uses only about 45% pure Tibanna gas. Chop has kept the exact formula for his stabilizer a closely guarded secret. The repulsorfield created as the charged coils interact with the gases is almost 50% greater than standard field strengths.

This mixture has also proven to be extremely volatile. An impact or blaster bolt striking the chamber coil results in a spectacular explosion, usually destroying the swoop and operator. Prolonged exposure to charged repulsor coils degrades the stabilizers' effectiveness, dramatically increasing the chances of an explosion. This problem was solved by exhausting the charged gas into the swoop's propulsion system. The burn-off of pure Tibanna gas acts as a turbo-booster, drastically increasing the swoop's cruising speed.

With the increase of lift and thrust, the swoop's maneuverability becomes virtually non-existent. Again the black market provided the solution. Using the guidance package and field manipulators of the Merr-Sonn PLX2 "Plex" missile, the Star Slinger can make over 1,000 critical adjustments to the repulsor field each second. The Star Slinger handles so smoothly that Chop is considering installing the same guidance system in other swoops as more missiles become available.

Currently there is only one functional Star Slinger in existence, although there are three prototypes in Chop's workshop. Two are being rebuilt as parts become available.

It would take years of expensive research and testing to duplicate Chop's results—or an operational Star Slinger to copy.

■ Star Slinger Prototype Swoop

Craft: Custom-built prototype swoop
Type: Swoop
Scale: Speeder
Length: 3 meters
Skill: Swoop operation
Crew: 1
Cargo Capacity: 5 kilograms

Cover: 1/4

Altitude Range: Ground level — 75 meters

Cost: Not available for sale

Maneuverability: 4D+2

Move: 330, 950 kmh

Body Strength: 1D

Weapons:

1 Blaster Cannon

Fire Arc: Front

Skill: Vehicle blasters

Fire Control: 1D

Range: 3-50/100/200

Damage: 4D+1

Roy Harlison

Roy Harlison was raised in Gallisport by his older brother, Chop. Gang wars killed their parents when Roy was 10 years old. For safety, Roy and Chop turned to the rival of the gang that destroyed their family—the Rabid Mynocks.

The Mynocks protected and educated the boys in the ways of the Gallisport streets. By the time Roy was 12 he was riding his first swoop, a pastime he enjoyed immensely. They gave him "Old Besi," a popper (riot suppression gun) which Roy still uses to aid in the defense of their territory.

Life was good for the Harlisons, until the day Roy was conscripted by the Imperial Army. The army taught

Roy the ways of the Empire and he was assigned to a scout trooper support unit. Within

the first week he discovered a way to increase the speed of the scouts' bikes. It was a simple process, removing the speed governor and the air brakes. Roy was going to inform the scout captain of the new modifications when they arrived for their daily patrol, but Roy, being a man of instinct, left to find some food. The

scouts arrived early and started their patrol, which lasted about 30 seconds and ended when the captain's bike collided with a tree.

Court-martialed and discharged, Roy returned to Gallisport where he re-joined the Mynocks. He never strove to lead others, so when chosen to lead the gang he passed control of the Mynocks to Quayce. He has been happy to follow her as second-in-command ever since.

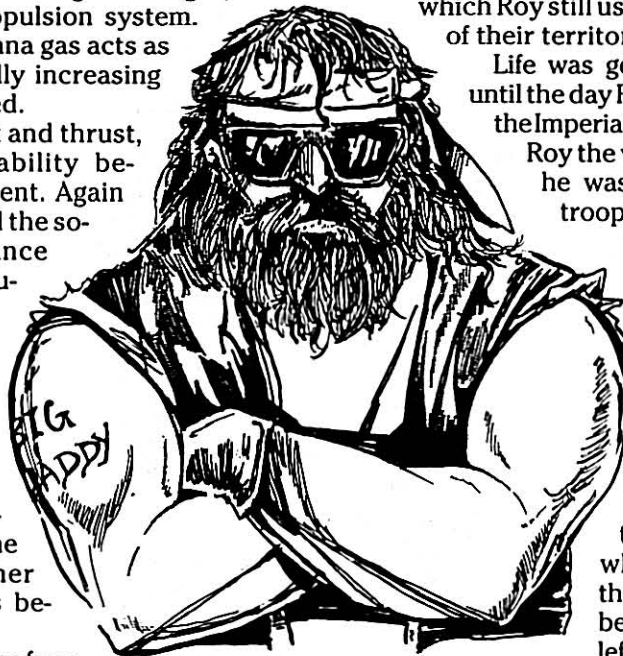
■ Roy Harlison

Type: Swoop Brute

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster 4D+2, dodge 4D+2, firearms 6D, grenade 3D+2

KNOWLEDGE 2D



Intimidation 5D, streetwise 4D+1, willpower 4D+2
MECHANICAL 3D+2
 Repulsorlift operation 4D+1, swoop operation 7D
PERCEPTION 2D
 Command 4D, search 4D+1
STRENGTH 4D
 Lifting 5D, stamina 5D+2
TECHNICAL 3D+1
 Demolition 4D, repulsorlift repair 3D+2
Force Points: 2
Character Points: 13
Move: 10
Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (5D), red and black jacket, riot suppression gun "Old Besi" (6D/5D/4D stun), siderider swoop, 30 credits

Roy's Riot Suppression Gun — The Popper

The Talex-Delcor SWE riot suppression gun is a duel barrel, breech-loading rifle used primarily by law enforcement agencies for crowd control during riots and public demonstrations. Only one shell may be loaded per barrel, although both barrels may be fired simultaneously. Empty shells are ejected manually. When fired, the chemical shell explodes inside the barrel and emits an expanding wall of over-pressurized air and chemical reactants capable of knocking down doors, people and minor barricades. The weapon has only been proven lethal at point blank range, but minor physical injuries can result from being knocked down. Ammo shells costs 25 credits each.

■ Riot Suppression Gun

Model: Talex-Delcor SWE/2 Riot Suppression Gun
Type: Sonic stun effect rifle
Scale: Character
Skill: Firearms
Ammo: 2
Cost: 800
Availability: 2,R
Fire Rate: 2
Range: 2-3/5/10
Damage: 6D/5D/4D (stun)
Game Notes: This weapon is highly dangerous. It's ammunition is an unstable chemical explosive compound that must be loaded manually every two shots. A character must make a Moderate demolition roll to reload the barrels. Failure causes an explosion that inflicts lethal damage to the loader (6D). It takes four combat turns to safely reload a popper, but this time can be cut in half by increasing the difficulty of the demolition check to Difficult. Both barrels can be fired at once in combat, but a one on the Wild Die means that the gun explodes, doing damage from both barrels to the shooter. The weapon's blast affects most targets in the gun's line of sight, with stun damage decreasing over range.

Siderider Swoop

The siderider swoop is a technological wonder in swoop design. In theory, it is impossible for it to fly at all. Chop, never one to worry about theory, found a way around the problem. He found that by adding a large wing for counterbalance, along with additional compensators, al-

lowed the swoop to actually fly. The swoop is harder to maneuver than its normal cousins — Chop has added an additional blaster cannon on the siderider to compensate for its lack of maneuverability.

■ Siderider Swoop

Craft: Modified Mobquet Nebulon-Q Racer with siderider
Type: Swoop
Scale: Speeder
Length: 3 meters
Skill: Swoop operation
Crew: 1
Passengers: 1
Cargo Capacity: 20 kg
Cover: 1/4
Altitude Range: Ground Level — 50 Meters
Cost: Not available for sale
Maneuverability: 3D+2
Move: 260; 750 kmh
Body Strength: 1D
Weapons:
 2 Blaster Cannons
Fire Arc: Front
Crew: 1
Skill: Vehicle blasters
Fire Control: 1D
Range: 3-50/100/200
Damage: 4D

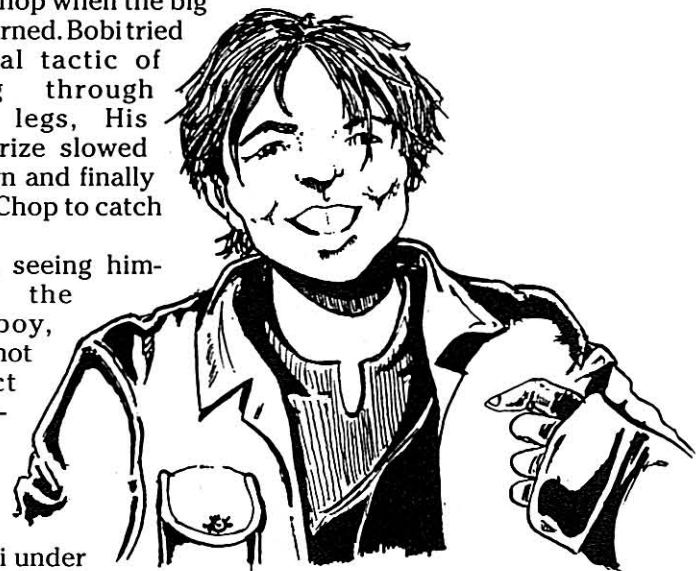
Bobi

Bobi wanted a life of adventure. Being an orphan in Gallisport usually meant a struggle for survival, with little time left over for fun. He and other street kids ran from zone to zone looking for shelter and stealing enough credits to survive.

Street life honed Bobi's skills. Although not great in a fight, he's quick, dodging and running whenever somebody takes offense at his petty thievery. The only one who ever caught him was Chop.

Being bold, Bobi had attempted to steal Chop's credit box. It almost worked. He was at the exit of Chop's Shop when the big tech returned. Bobi tried his usual tactic of dodging through Chop's legs. His heavy prize slowed him down and finally allowed Chop to catch him.

Chop, seeing himself in the young boy, decided not to exact any punishment. Instead, he decided to take Bobi under



his wing and get him off the street. To Bobi's amazement, he found a home. Bobi apprenticed himself to Chop, aiding him in whatever he needed, including breaking the captured Rabid Mynocks from prison. Grateful for his help, the Mynocks invited Bobi to join the gang. Bobi, still very impressionable, jumped at this chance for adventure. He boosted his first speeder bike and has ridden with the gang ever since, earning the honor of wearing the gang colors. Bobi yearns for the day when he will be grown enough to handle a swoop.

■ Bobi

Type: Swoop Kid
DEXTERITY 3D+2
 Blaster 4D, dodge 4D+2, melee combat 4D, pickpocket 4D
KNOWLEDGE 2D+2
 Streetwise 4D+2, survival: urban 4D+1
MECHANICAL 3D
 Repulsorlift operation 4D
PERCEPTION 3D+2
 Con 5D, hide 5D+1, search 4D, sneak 5D
STRENGTH 2D+1
 Stamina 3D, climbing/jumping 4D+2
TECHNICAL 2D+2
 Repulsorlift repair 4D
Force Points: 1
Character Points: 8
Move: 10
Equipment: Blaster pistol (4D), red and black jacket, speeder bike, 50 credits

Bobi's Speeder Bike: Ikas-Adno 22-B Nightfalcon. Speeder, maneuverability 3D+1, move 160; 460 kmh, body strength 1D+2. Weapons: 1 laser cannon, (fire control 2D, range 3-50/100/200, damage 4D).

The Spiders

The Spiders have been an icon in Gallisport for years. Although they have not always been as large as their current numbers, Dean Lado — their current leader — changed that. Lado made alliances with other smaller, newer gangs, bringing them together under the Spiders' colors.

The Spiders are vicious. They have all the bad traits associated with swoop gangs — ruthless, calculating, terrorists. Through various means the Spiders have managed to take control of Zone Five and portions of the surrounding zones, subverting many gangs, good and bad alike, under their banner. In recent times, the members have been concerned with Lado's obsession for the mysterious Star Slinger prototype swoop and his lack of concern for the day-to-day welfare of his gang.

Typical Spiders Gang Member. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity* 3D, *blaster* 4D+1, *dodge* 4D+1, *swoop operation* 6D, *streetwise* 5D. Move: 10.

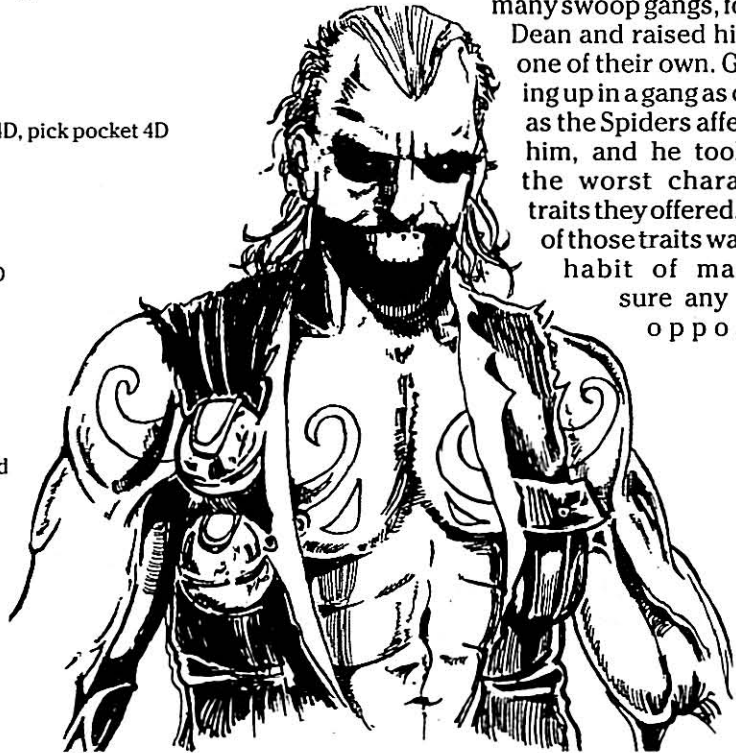
Blaster pistol (4D).

Spiders' Swoop: Mobquet Nebulon-S Racer. Speeder, maneuverability 4D, move 210; 600 kmh, body strength 1D. Weapons: 1 blaster cannon (fire control 1D, range 3-50/100/200, damage 4D).

Dean Lado

Dean Lado was born in Gallisport, his parents abandoning him to the mercy of the zones when he was a child. The Spiders, one of Zone Five's

many swoop gangs, found Dean and raised him as one of their own. Growing up in a gang as cruel as the Spiders affected him, and he took on the worst character traits they offered. One of those traits was his habit of making sure any who opposed



him died for their efforts, usually in a spectacular manner.

When he was 20 he made his move for power. The gang's leader, an aging biker, decided to vie for control of the neighboring zone. Dean participated in the raid along with the leader and assassinated him when the opportunity arose. The Spiders unanimously elected Lado as their new commander. Some voted for him out of respect, most out of fear. Under Lado's rule the Spiders grew to dominate the entire zone and most of the neighboring zones.

■ Dean Lado

Type: Swoop Gang Leader
DEXTERITY 3D
 Blaster 9D+2, brawling parry 5D, dodge 6D, melee combat 5D, melee parry, 6D, running 5D, thrown weapons 6D, vehicle blasters 7D
KNOWLEDGE 2D
 Intimidation 8D, languages 4D, law enforcement 5D, streetwise 9D, survival 7D, value 5D, willpower 7D
MECHANICAL 4D
 Repulsorlift operation 5D, swoop operation 8D

PERCEPTION 3D+2

Bargain 5D+2, command 9D+2, con 5D, gambling 7D, hide 5D, persuasion 6D, search 5D, sneak 5D

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling 8D, climbing/jumping 5D, stamina 6D+2

TECHNICAL 2D+1

First aid 4D+1, repulsorlift repair, 6D+1, security 5D+1, demolition 9D+1

Force Points: 2

Dark Side Points: 5

Character Points: 15

Move: 10

Equipment: Comlink, heavy blaster pistol (5D), modified Nebulon-Q Swoop Racer

Dean Lado's Swoop: Modified Mobquet Nebulon-Q Racer. Speeder, maneuverability 4D+1, move 260; 750 kmh, body strength 1D. Weapons: 1 blaster cannon (fire control 1D, range 3-50/100/200, damage 4D).

The Challenge

"He's going to cheat," Chop said, an unusual seriousness in his voice.

Quayce nodded in agreement. She pulled her shades over her eyes — as she keyed the ignition, her swoop roared to life. The noise of the modified swoop drowned out the jeers of the crowd. This wasn't going to be an easy audience to deal with. Fortunately, the code of the challenge kept the Spiders at bay. Knowing they wouldn't interfere, Quayce would only have to worry if she lost. She took a moment to fasten the sissy belt — it wouldn't do any good if she got thrown before the race started.

Beside her on his own swoop, Dean Lado sneered at her. Like most of the Spiders, he was cocky — a dangerous combination when mixed with a cold heart. Lado wanted the Star Slinger prototype swoop for himself, and would do anything to own it. How many of the Spiders had thrown their lives away trying to get the experimental swoop and failed? It was hard to tell.

This time was different. Dean Lado did not target the Star Slinger itself, but Chop's daughter, Jardra. Jardra was a good kid — Quayce wished she weren't caught up in this mess. Jardra's promising singing career had just started with the release of "Trench Warfare," a rock song that was already on the Empire's banned list.

"The belt won't help you any! You've already lost! Why not hand over the plans for the Star Slinger and forget it?" Lado yelled with a smile creeping onto his mouth.

"You're lap-happy, Lado!" she snapped back.

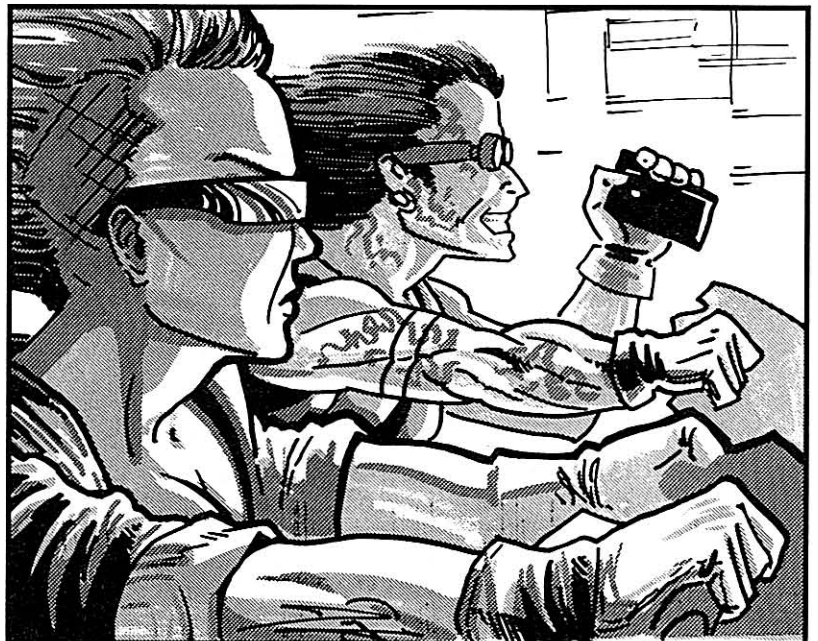
Quayce wished she were as confident as she sounded. Lado didn't know that she rode the Star Slinger prototype, the very prize he sought. He did have the advantage, though — Lado

was an excellent racer, usually winning one way or another at every swoop gang rally he raced in. She, on the other hand, was a competent rider, but had never raced in any of the past rallies. Her only advantages were the Star Slinger and a special "equalizer" she hoped she wouldn't need. She would have to stay focused. Lado was known to set traps for his prospective opponents, and a mistake could prove fatal.

This race's only rule was no outside interference. The challenge was simple — three times around the ancient swoop track, which was littered with debris from years of neglect. There was no telling when a piece of the stadium would fall or where. The racers would have to rely on instinct alone to guide them. If Lado won, he would get the plans to the Star Slinger, and Quayce would give up leadership of the Mynocks. If Quayce won, Jardra would be returned to them and Lado would step aside as leader of the Spiders. The code of the challenge bound the loser to honor the outcome. Failure to do so would result in the entire gang losing face.

A hush fell over the stadium as two burly Spiders escorted Jardra to the center of the cluttered lane. In each hand she held flags bearing each gang's colors: red and black for the Mynocks, silver and blue for the Spiders.

Frightened, she looked to Quayce for support. Quayce gave her a thumbs-up that brought a tiny smile to Jardra's face. She signaled both racers to get ready, raising both flags into the air above her head. Quayce and Lado both revved their accelerators in preparation for the upcoming signal. Chop backed off of the track, yelling and whooping loudly in support of the Mynocks' leader. Jardra looked at both racers. Then the flags came



down. Both swoops rocketed forward with a fierceness that startled even the veteran gangers. The race had begun.

Lado took the lead easily, maneuvering his swoop over and between obstacles. Quayce lagged behind, though not by much. The Star Slinger performed much like a normal swoop. Its special boosters would remain dormant until activated. Chop had warned her before the race to use them only in an emergency. While the Star Slinger could easily overtake the other swoop, its predecessor's first and only test run with the boosters had ended in a fiery explosion. If that didn't kill her, it would certainly kill the swoop's engine. She would have to risk the boosters as a last measure.

The first lap ended with Lado in the lead. Hardly surprised, Quayce raced on. Several times Lado attempted to force her to the far edges of the track where the debris lay thickest. Quayce managed to stay out of that danger zone, but each effort had cost her ground. Lado wore a smug grin as they began the second lap. He decelerated abruptly as they entered the first turn, smashing his swoop into hers. Again and again the swoops collided as Lado tried to force Quayce into the ruins of the crumbling arena.

Quayce adjusted her controls, compensating for minor damage. Below her the ground passed by at a phenomenal rate, causing the track and the spectators to merge into a distracting blur. As the racers entered the final lap, Quayce prepared for another attempt by Lado to force her off the track. To her surprise, he didn't even try. Instead he gave her a wide berth and was now moving at top speed toward the final turn. Trailing just behind, she saw Lado remove a small box from inside his jacket. The box appeared featureless except for a small red button raised from its center.

"Two can play this game," Quayce told herself as she removed a small spherical device from inside her jacket — the "equalizer." Years of winning rallies had helped Lado master cornering techniques, and as they emerged onto the final straightaway, he held his lead. Pointing the small box before him, Lado pressed the red button. Suddenly, small green lights blinked on the track ahead of him, visibly announcing the presence of a very lethal repulsor minefield.

The repulsor mines, Quayce guessed, were probably rigged to detonate after sensing a second repulsorlift field. Lado would zip by, and, unable to maneuver to safety, Quayce would follow in his wake, blowing herself up in the process. Quayce prepared to activate the Star Slinger's boosters, but Lado had maneuvered ahead of her, making a clear run impossible.

Sensing victory, Lado let the black box drop from his hand. It fell to the ground, smashing as

it bounced along the track. With a triumphant grin, Lado looked over his shoulder to measure Quayce's reaction. Quayce, however, had ignored his last stunt. To Lado's surprise, she was shouting something, her words impossible to make out. She tossed something toward him — the "equalizer." Lado turned pale as the unmistakable form of a mag-grenade sailed forward, and with a magnetic thump, attached itself to his swoop. Lado began to careen wildly, trying unsuccessfully to shake the mag-grenade off his bike. Seeing her opportunity, Quayce activated the thrusters. In a burst of speed, Quayce rocketed past Lado just as the swoops entered the minefield. Lado screamed in disbelief as the first mine detonated beneath him. The force of the blast tossed him further into the mines. The remaining mines detonated simultaneously in a massive explosion that shook the foundations of the arena. A fireball blossomed over the swoop track, shooting flames a hundred meters high. Quayce emerged from the fireball, jacket smoldering, her swoop in flames as the Star Slinger caught fire. She quickly cut off power to the boosters and unfastened her sissy belt. As the swoop crossed the finish line, Quayce jumped to the ground, rolling around to extinguish the flames on her clothes. The Star Slinger roared past, slammed into the arena wall, and exploded.

The challenge was over. Quayce had won and Dean Lado was dead. She limped over to join Chop and Jardra in an emotional reunion.

"When we saw the minefield, we thought you were a goner," Chop said. "What was that you did to distract Lado?"

"Do you remember the mag-grenade the Spiders tossed at us last week?" she asked. "I just returned the favor."

Chop's eyes widened. "But it didn't work. It was a dud. You must have known that."

Brushing soot from her jacket, Quayce responded, "I knew it. You knew it." Pointing over her shoulder towards the flaming wreckage that was once Dean Lado, she said, "Tell it to lap-happy!"

Adventure Outlines

Here are some outlines for adventures for swoop gang characters, and Rebel characters who can become involved with swoop gangs. Gamemasters are encouraged to tailor these outlines to their own campaigns, using their own familiar settings and recurring characters to flesh out the adventure.

An Unlikely Partnership

Alliance High Command has targeted a manufacturing complex located in one of Gallisport's outer zones. The factory produces stabilizing

motivators for Imperial AT-STs. A successful sabotage attempt could cause setbacks to the Empire's war efforts. The complex is located deep within Spider territory, and previous Rebel attempts to infiltrate the zone have failed. The characters may use any combination of Rebel characters or swoop gang members.

Episode One: The Rebel operatives arrive in Gallisport and attempt to contact a swoop gang to assist in the mission. Rebel intelligence has identified the character's gang as the most likely to comply. The Rebels must negotiate a deal with the swoop gang despite the fact that the gang has no reason to get involved, and makes unreasonable demands.

Episode Two: The characters must infiltrate Spider territory to scout out the complex's defenses and develop a plan of action. Avoiding both Spider, LA-LA and Imperial security patrols, they must sneak into the complex. An encounter with some Spiders could liven things up.

Episode Three: Once inside the complex, the characters must split into two groups — one reprograms the production computers, while the other sabotages some assembly equipment. The characters must remain undetected despite plant security officers and security droids.

Episode Four: After completing their mission, the characters must quietly sneak back out of the complex, possibly drawing the attention of security guards. And if they've angered the Spiders earlier, they might run into a larger, meaner group of the swoop gangers just as they leave the complex.

The Show Must Go On

The characters' gang has recently befriended a local band. On the eve of the group's debut concert, the band's equipment is stolen. With only hours to spare, can the characters find enough gear to let the show go on?

Episode One: The characters arrive at the rehearsal site only to discover a robbery in progress. The thieves (possibly a rival swoop gang or thugs hired by a rival musical group) are well-armed and take a few parting shots before retreating through a well-planned escape route. All the important and expensive equipment has been removed or destroyed in the fire. The characters must protect their musician friends and secure the concert hall.

Episode Two: After driving off the thieves, the characters realize they have to replace most of the equipment. The instruments are fairly easy to find, but the special holo-sound system is much harder to replace. The characters help the band track down new instruments. They may have to buy, borrow or steal them. The characters scare most merchants if they arrive on

swoops displaying weapons and gang colors. The merchants attempt to charge twice the normal price for the requested gear. Threats and violence could result in a visit by the LA-LAs. The merchants are greedy enough that bribes and cons may work very well.

Episode Three: The characters must replace the holo-sound system computer core. Without lights, holographic images and blasting sounds of a high-tech production, the concert won't be successful. Unfortunately, the only system the characters can reach in time is located in the Imperial consulate's communications lab. The characters must infiltrate the lab and remove the system core. The system is extremely fragile and quite awkward to move. The communications lab is a large maze of tunnels and workstations. Imperial stormtroopers guard the facility and high security clearance is required for admittance.

Episode Four: With the new equipment in hand, it's back to the show. The characters must get past any alerted Imperial patrols and other gangs. Once at the concert-hall, they must set up the equipment or fend off the Imperials long enough to get the show started.

The Big Breakout

The characters are gang members who have been arrested and are being held in a LA-LA jail. They need to formulate some kind of escape plan against impossibly tight security before they're transferred to a slave labor camp.

Episode One: During transfer the characters are freed by an outside party, an allied swoop gang which disables the transport. Seeing the opportunity, the characters make their move — they must get away before reinforcements arrive. The characters have no possessions and are manacled to the transport and to each other. The LA-LA guards carry only a few light weapons, but LA-LA escort vehicles are close by and offer pursuit.

Episode Two: The characters make it back to their old territory. They recover some credits that they've stashed away, but have nothing else. They need to re-supply and re-arm or they will be easy prey for rival gangs. The characters must call in favors and make deals in order to obtain the weapons and supplies they need. Everybody tries to cheat and swindle them, demanding outrageous prices or deals. The characters have to act tough to negotiate well.

Episode Three: The characters find out that their swoops and some other large equipment are being stored at a local LA-LA impound. They must reclaim their swoops before they are sold or destroyed. The impound site is patrolled by security droids and snarling guard beasts that look very mean and hungry ...

The Cure

By James L. Cambias

Illustrated by David R. Deitrick

The characters are Rebel operatives called in for a briefing by Doctor Andros Hareel, the head of the Rebel Alliance's medical section. Read aloud:

“Six months ago, the planet Sedesia was hit by a devastating plague. The unknown virus spread uncontrollably through the population, infecting 90 percent of the inhabitants within the first month. Thousands died, and more were dying. During the chaos, the Empire quickly moved in and took control of the planet. They established a quarantine and set up medical facilities to combat the disease. Since then, we’ve had no word from Sedesia. Now the Imperial medical service claims to have ended the plague.”

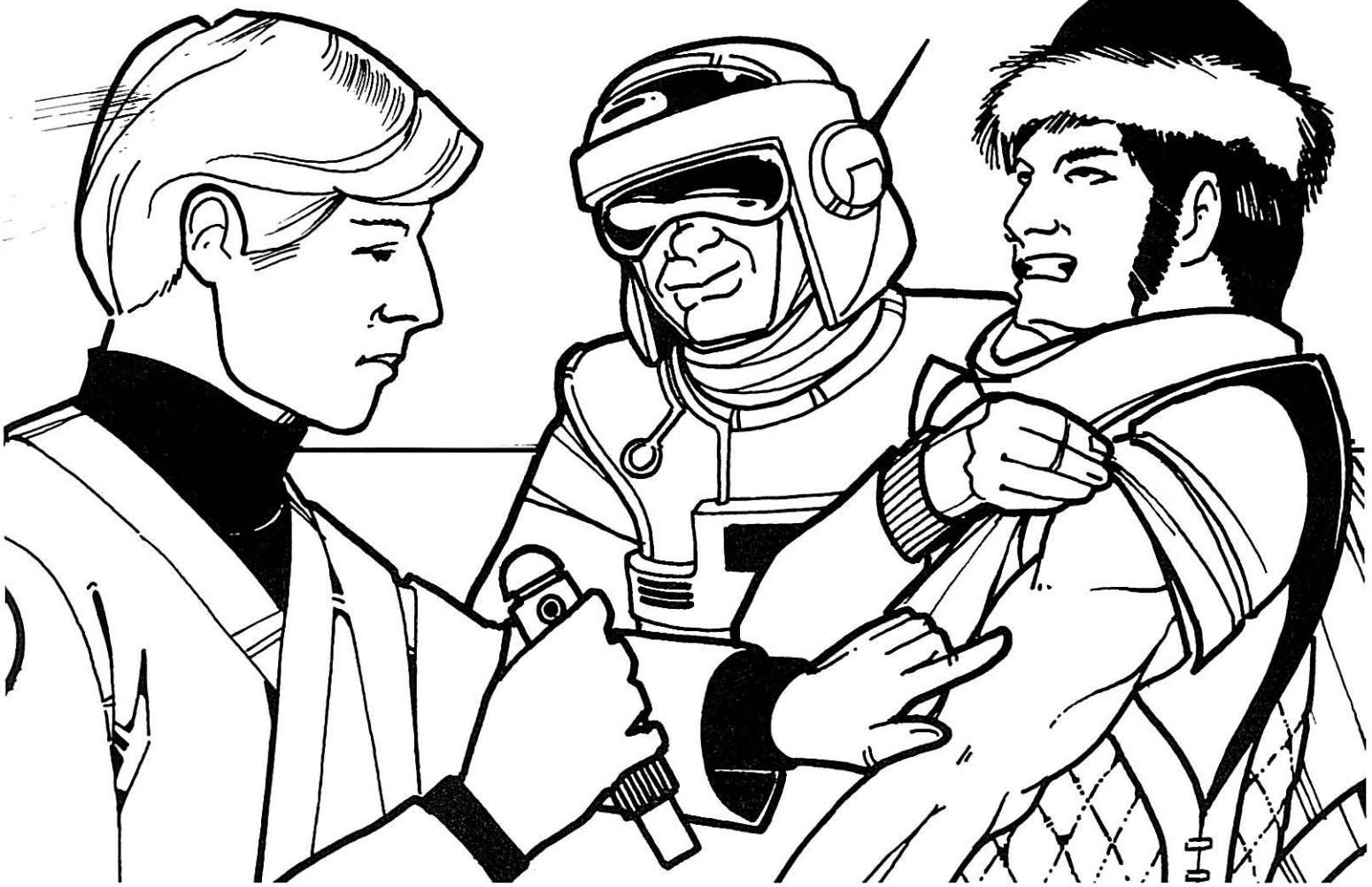
Hareel activates a holoprojector showing an Imperial news release about the plague. According to the tape, “the benevolent guidance of the Emperor has once again saved his subjects from harm. The Imperial medical service has ended the terrible plague on Sedesia. No new deaths from the disease have been reported in the past month. The quarantine of Sedesia will remain in effect until the Imperial medical service has determined there is no danger to the rest of the Empire.”

Hareel turns off the holoprojector. “Needless to say, I’m suspicious — the Empire is seldom so benevolent. When Tallek had that outbreak of thorn fever, they just hauled all the sick off to isolation camps and let them die. Alliance Command shares my skepticism. We need someone to go to Sedesia and uncover the truth. What’s really going on there? How are the Imperials coping with the plague, and how can we help the people of Sedesia?”

The team is provided with one of the Rebellion's vast supply of stock light freighters, along with coordinates for a hidden landing-field at a ranch on the surface of Sedesia, and the location of Rebel contacts in the capital city. The Alliance has had extensive contact with the people of Sedesia before the plague, so the Rebel database on the planet is detailed and accurate.

■ Sedesia

Type: Terrestrial
Temperature: Cool
Atmosphere: Type I (breathable)
Hydrosphere: Dry
Gravity: Heavy
Terrain: Tundra, forest, mountains
Length of Day: 20 standard hours
Length of Year: 220 local days
Sapient Species: Humans
Starport: Limited services



Population: 1.5 million

Planet Function: Breedtash ranching, logging, mining

Government: Imperial Military

Tech Level: Space

Major Exports: Food, raw materials

Major Imports: Technology, manufactured goods

Capsule: Sedesia is a dry, cold world with vast expanses of steppe and tundra. Its economy is based on ranching and herding, with some logging in the wetter regions. The planet's axis is tilted 45 degrees, giving it very extreme seasons. During the winter, nearly a sixth of the planet's surface gets no sunlight at all. The combination of extreme temperature differences and fast rotation creates violent weather on Sedesia. Sudden wind storms of incredible violence can arise with little warning. Consequently repulsoircraft are seldom used on Sedesia — all transport is by ground vehicles.

The people of Sedesia are traditionally very stubborn and independent. Scattered across the surface in isolated ranches, they are very self-reliant and do not take kindly to being ordered around. Their planet's harsh climate and heavy gravity make Sedesians tough and determined. Before the plague struck, Sedesia was a center of Rebel sympathy and support. Fugitives from the Empire often found a haven on some outlying ranch, and a considerable tonnage of breedtash meat made

its way into Rebel mess halls.

Though Sedesia has access to modern technology, most communities employ a mixture of imported space-level equipment and locally-made industrial-level goods. Six-legged riding animals called striders are the most common means of transportation, particularly in outlying areas where roads are bad.

Because of Sedesia's high gravity, all *Strength* tasks are increased by one level of difficulty on the planet. Natives of Sedesia all have an average *Strength* code of 3D. The inhabitants speak Basic, with a slight accent. Sedesia is located in the Mid-Rim region of the galaxy, and has been inhabited for several centuries.

Episode One: Quarantine

Sedesia is sealed off from the rest of the galaxy by an Imperial quarantine squadron. One old *Dreadnaught*-class cruiser is in orbit, accompanied by a strike cruiser and two Imperial Customs light cruisers. The two capital ships each carry a squadron of TIE fighters. This is an incredibly small force for an Imperial occupation — normally at least one Star Destroyer would be present. Experts in space tactics can tell that the

squadron is deployed to control the space lanes around the planet, to prevent ships from traveling to or from Sedesia.

Dreadnaught Cruiser. Capital, *capital ship piloting 4D, capital ship gunnery 4D, sensors 4D, maneuverability 1D, space 4, hull 5D+2, shields 2D+1.* Weapons: 10 laser cannons (fire control 3D, damage 2D), 20 quad laser cannons (fire control 2D, damage 4D), 10 turbolaser batteries (fire control 1D, damage 7D).

Strike Cruiser. Capital, *capital ship gunnery 5D, capital ship piloting 4D, sensors 4D, maneuverability 2D, space 6, hull 6D, shields 2D+2.* Weapons: 20 turbolasers (fire control 2D, damage 5D), 10 turbolaser batteries (fire control 1D, damage 7D), 10 ion cannons (fire control 4D, damage 4D), 10 tractor beams (fire control 2D, damage 4D).

2 Guardian-class Light Cruisers. Starfighter, *starship gunnery 4D, space transports piloting 5D, maneuverability 1D, space 9, atmosphere 400; 1,150 kmh, hull 5D, shields 2D.* Weapons: 4 laser cannons (fire control 2D+2, damage 5D).

TIE Fighters. Starfighter, *sensors 3D, starfighter piloting 4D+1, starship gunnery 4D, maneuverability 2D, space 10, atmosphere 415; 1,200 kmh, hull 2D.* Weapons: 2 linked laser cannons (fire control 2D, damage 5D).

Lately, the blockade force hasn't seen much action. Nobody really wants to visit a planet wracked by a deadly disease, so merchant shipping has been avoiding Sedesia. There are no ships left on Sedesia except those of the Imperial medical mission. For months the squadron has been sitting idle. Of course, the Rebels don't know this.

To get past the blockade the Rebel characters must first evade the outer perimeter patrols of TIE fighters, then get through the main force in orbit, and finally get under cover on the surface. The Rebel Alliance has given the party the coordinates for a hidden landing strip on a ranch near the Sedesia's capital city of Besia Osrune.

The TIE fighter patrols extend out to the normal hyperspace jump radius from the planet. Evading the TIE perimeter requires a Difficult *space transports* roll to outmaneuver the fighters. The Rebels can also try to slip past the blockade undetected. Roll the Imperial pilots' *sensors* skill (3D); detecting a ship sneaking by requires the Imperial pilot to beat an Easy task by 15. Imperial success means two TIE fighters jump the Rebels immediately, and the two *Guardian-class* light cruisers move to attack the intruder. The two larger ships position themselves between the invader and the planet, and launch additional TIE fighters.

If the characters avoid the patrols, they must still get past the main force, orbiting closer to the planet. This requires a Very Difficult *space transports* roll to exploit a gap in the Imperial formation, or else another attempt to slip past the sensors. Failure means the ship comes under attack by the strike cruiser, while the dreadnaught and the patrol cruisers maneuver to block any escape.

Once the characters' ship enters atmosphere, there is a one in six chance of encountering one of Sedesia's terrible windstorms. The pilot must make a Difficult *space transports* roll to avoid damage in the storm. The ship must shake any pursuers before landing at the ranch.

Episode Two: Angels of Mercy

The secret landing field is located on the ranch of Elodd Fask, about 30 kilometers west of Besia Osrune, the capital city of Sedesia. The Rebels can set down their ship at the hidden landing-pad, then conceal it within a barn fitted with a masking system to cover the ship's power output.

Nobody comes out to meet the Rebels when they land. The Fask ranch appears to be abandoned. There is no sign of a fight, and all the riding animals are in their stalls in the barn, hissing and growling for food. The main house of the ranch is tidy and undisturbed. But a horrid surprise awaits any character who ventures into the upstairs bedrooms — there are half a dozen bodies upstairs, all several weeks old and shockingly decayed. Apparently the virus breaks down all the soft tissues of the body, leaving only skin and bones behind. The bodies take on a grayish color, making them look like ancient mummies.

With the Fask family gone, the characters must seek other local help. There once were many Rebel sympathizers on Sedesia, and the characters have been provided with an identification code to locate any who have survived the plague. Their file on the planet lists a Rebel contact in the city of Besia Osrune, an old rancher named Sybogh Abya.

Besia Osrune

Besia Osrune is the biggest city on Sedesia, with a population of 250,000. The planet's small starport is located in the city, along with a large stockyard and processing plant for breedtash meat. In fall, when the ranchers drive in their breedtash herds for sale, Besia Osrune is full of herders carousing and spending their year's pay all at once. The rest of the year it is a quiet, businesslike town without much in the way of entertainment. The buildings of the city are all

squat and solid, with narrow windows covered by heavy shutters for protection against wind storms.

One startling sight which the characters notice in the streets of the city is how friendly the citizens are toward the Imperial CompForce troops occupying the planet. Small children and old ladies wave as Imperial ground transports roar past. Shopkeepers give fruit or drinks to CompForce troopers on patrol. The whole city looks like an Imperial propaganda holo come to life.

The characters also notice "health stations" set up in each neighborhood, manned by fresh-faced volunteers from COMPNOR's youth agency, the Sub-Adult Group (SAGroup). If the characters wait long enough, they can see an entire family lining up to get injections at a health station. The parents make pleasant small talk



with the SAGroup volunteer, who tells them how exciting it is to serve the Emperor's New Order.

If the characters enter a health station, the volunteer in charge greets them politely. "Good afternoon, citizens — is it time for your booster immunizations? Just give me your ident numbers and I'll check your dosage records." The volunteer switches on a hand computer and waits expectantly.

The Rebels have no proper ident numbers, of course. When they cannot provide them to the health station volunteer, a look of concern crosses his face. "You're in great danger, citizens! Without booster immunizations you are all vulnerable to the plague! You wouldn't want to get the Gray Death, would you? Go to the central medical

facility and get yourselves registered at once."

SAGroup Volunteer. All stats are 2D except: *bureaucracy 3D, Perception 4D, Technical 3D, first aid 3D+1.* Move: 10. Blaster pistol (4D), comlink, medpac, hand computer.

Rendezvous With Abya

Making contact with Sybegh Abya requires the Rebels to meet him at a tavern he is known to frequent, a place called the Trail's End. The bar is located near the stockyards in Besia Osurne, and is popular with breedtash herders and meat packers. The identity signal consists of drumming out a particular pattern on the tabletop with one's fingers. When the characters make the signal, Abya leaves the bar and leads them to his home on the outskirts of town, where they can speak freely.

■ Sybegh Abya

Type: Breedtash rancher

DEXTERITY 3D+1

Blaster 6D, dodge 4D

KNOWLEDGE 2D+2

Business 4D, streetwise 6D, survival 5D

MECHANICAL 3D

Beast riding 7D, ground vehicle operation 4D+2

PERCEPTION 3D

Bargain 5D, persuasion 4D+2

STRENGTH 4D

Brawling 5D, lifting 6D, stamina 5D+2

TECHNICAL 2D

Ground vehicle repair 3D+2

Capsule: Sybegh Abya is a typical Sedesian. He is short and wide, built like a repulsortank. His personality fits his build — stubborn and determined. Abya doesn't easily change his mind, and having given his word he will keep it. He doesn't like anyone giving him orders. Abya began helping the Rebellion a few years ago, smuggling breedtash meat to the Alliance and supplying information on Imperial activities on Sedesia. His motive has always been simple: "I don't like the way those Imperials always try to boss people around."

Abya is almost always accompanied by his droid, Aytoo Beefour. The droid handles most of Abya's business accounts, and is fully aware of his contacts with the Rebellion.

■ Aytoo Beefour

Type: Accounting and business droid

DEXTERITY 1D

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Bureaucracy 8D, business 8D, value 7D

MECHANICAL 1D

PERCEPTION 1D

Bargain 3D

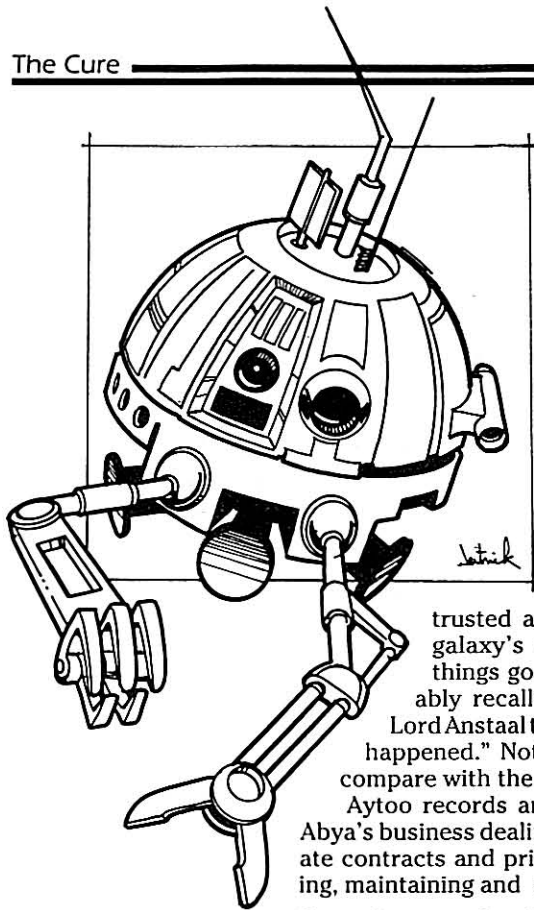
STRENGTH 1D

TECHNICAL 1D

Equipped With:

- Hemispherical body with two fine manipulators
- Repulsor unit (2 meter ceiling)
- Visual and auditory sensors (Human range)
- Speech synthesizer
- Holographic recorder and projector

Move: 10



Size: 1 meter wide, 0.6 meters tall
Cost: 8,000

Capsule: Aytoo Beefour is a small, non-humanoid droid built for business administration and accounting. Its first owner was a fabulously wealthy aristocrat of the Old Republic, Lord Anstaal. The droid never lets anyone forget that it was once the

trusted advisor of one of the galaxy's richest men. When things go wrong, Aytoo invariably recalls, "When I was with Lord Anstaal this sort of thing never happened." Nothing on Sedesia can compare with the old days for Aytoo.

Aytoo records and keeps track of all Abya's business dealings, and helps negotiate contracts and prices for buying, herding, maintaining and selling breedtash.

Once they are all safe at his home, Abya greets the Rebels. "I didn't ever expect to hear that code again," he says. "Kind of figured the Alliance had given up on Sedesia since the Gray Death hit."

To their surprise, the characters find that Abya has nothing but good things to say about the Imperial project on Sedesia. According to him, almost 30,000 people had died by the time the Empire arrived, but as soon as their doctors got to work the death rate dropped to almost nothing. "You'll find few on Sedesia who mind the Empire these days," says Abya. "A few didn't trust the Imperials, and didn't get injections in time — they're all dead now. Just about all the leading Rebel sympathizers on Sedesia are gone."

According to Abya, the Imperials have not yet been able to find a cure for the plague. So once a week everyone must get a booster shot of antiviral drug in order to stay healthy. Anyone who misses more than two booster shots gets sick, and without rapid treatment, they die horribly of the Gray Death.

The characters may worry about catching the plague themselves. The gamemaster should encourage this by asking them to make *Strength* or *stamina* rolls to avoid contagion. Actually, they are in no danger, as they learn later. Only if they get shots at a "health station" can the characters catch the plague.

Abya informs the characters that Doctor Fesjo Negleem is the chief of the Imperial medical unit.

Characters must make a Very Difficult *Knowledge* roll to recognize the name. Negleem was once a prominent researcher in the Imperial Army's biowarfare division.

Snooping Around

The Rebel agents should try to learn as much as possible about the Imperial force on Sedesia. The Alliance can always use data on the Imperial troop deployment. While the Imperials do not advertise their military strength on Sedesia, it is not hard to determine the size of their occupation force. Any of the CompForce soldiers in Besia Osurne can be made to let slip general information on Imperial strength with an Easy *con* or *persuasion* skill roll. Alternatively, characters with a military background can deduce the force size from the amount of supplies moving through the starport — this requires a Moderate *Knowledge* roll.

The 3,000 Imperial Army troops aboard the Dreadnaught in the blockade squadron are the only Imperial regulars in the system. The actual planetary occupation force consists of a regiment of CompForce troopers (soldiers from the military arm of COMPNOR). The regiment has two battalions of infantry and an assault battalion. Normally the regiment would have a battalion of repulsorcraft forces, but the terrible wind storms of Sedesia make repulsorcraft flyers dangerous. Instead, the battalion has been equipped with hoverscouts and wheelbikes. The regiment has 2,560 troopers (from a total complement of 3,380 men), with 88 combat hoverscouts and 22 wheelbikes.

The CompForce regiment is scattered across the surface of Sedesia, with units of company size in all the principal cities and towns. Besia Osurne, as the capital city, has the largest concentration of soldiers, including one heavy weapons company (armed with light repeating blasters), a regular infantry company, a hoverscout company, and a wheelbike company.

The CompForce troops are not as professional as Imperial regulars. They are highly motivated by loyalty to the Emperor's New Order. This makes them very difficult to bribe or con. In combat they are merciless and suicidally brave. Where regular troops pay attention to things like tactics and doctrine, CompForce soldiers rely on fervor and blind obedience.

If trouble breaks out on Sedesia's surface, the garrison commander can summon help from the Army regiment and fighters in orbit. The strike cruiser carries two AT-STs and an AT-AT walker, along with a company of stormtroopers.

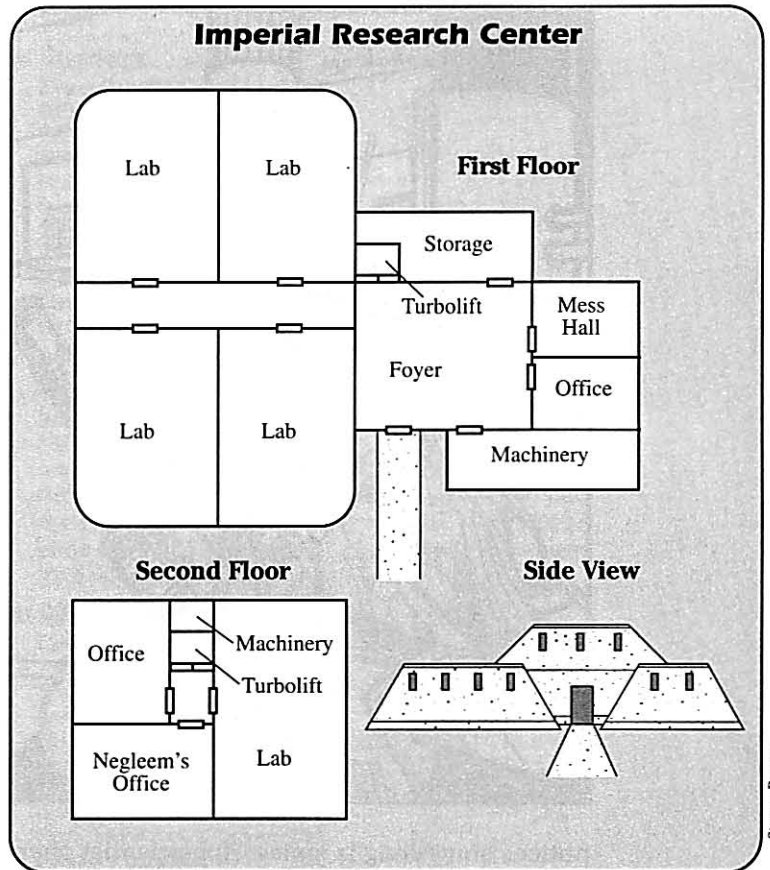
Episode Three: The Laboratory

The Imperial medical team has taken over an old veterinary-medicine center outside Besia Osurne for use as a laboratory. The lab is surrounded by rangeland, and to get there the Rebels must ride striders, a native pack and draft animal trained to carry Sedesian ranchers. The medical center is surrounded by an ordinary fence, supplemented by fairly simple detectors. Characters notice the detectors on an Easy *security* roll, and can override them on a Difficult roll. Failure brings a squad of CompForce guards running to investigate.

The main building is guarded by CompForce troopers — to get in the characters must either *con* the guards (a Difficult task), *sneak* past them (Very Difficult), waylay a researcher and steal his identification, or use Force powers to deceive the guards.

CompForce Troopers. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D, dodge 4D, melee combat 4D, Perception 3D, brawling 3D.* Move: 10. Blast helmet (+1 energy, +1D physical), blast vest (+1 energy, +1D physical), blaster pistol (4D), comlink, force pike (STR+2D).

The research center's ground floor is divided into several large laboratories. Any scientist-type character examining the labs immediately



Steven Brown

Pathogen-Based Loyalty Enhancement Report

From: Dr. Fesjo Negleem, Sedesia Project Director
To: COMPNOR Coalition for Improvements, Redesign Bureau
Subject: Pathogen-Based Loyalty Enhancement Program Evaluation

The Sedesia test project has succeeded admirably. Six months after the virus was introduced to the planet by covert aerial spraying, a former hotbed of Rebel activity is now completely loyal to the Emperor. The plague, a modified form of my virus FNV-23, achieved 99 percent infection in the first two weeks. Mortality rate during that period was 35,310, or 2.3 percent of those infected. The disruption of government allowed a completely bloodless occupation, conducted entirely by a single regiment of CompForce personnel. Once control of the planet was secured, a program of inoculations was instituted, using volunteers generously provided by SAGroup.

This inoculation program is the key to the entire plan of loyalty enhancement. The drug (my own antiviral agent FNA-23-B) prevents replication and breaks down the outer protein coat of FNV-23. Normally, this would be followed by a complete cure as the victim recovers from the effects of the virus. However, each injection of antiviral drug also includes tiny globules of the FNV-23 virus encased in a polysaccharide coat. The globules break down after 10 to 20 days, releasing fresh viruses into the victim's system. Thus reinfected, the victim requires a fresh dose of FNA-23-B to avoid suffering the effects of the plague.

The shifting-antigen feature of the FNV-23 virus makes it impossible for any victim to become naturally immune. And the formula for antiviral agent FNA-23-B is an Imperial secret. The result of this is obvious — the inhabitants of Sedesia are now completely dependent on us for the antiviral drug. If we choose to deny it to them, they will die. For them, loyalty to the Emperor is now a matter of survival.

The success of this project is undeniable. All known Rebel sympathizers on Sedesia have been eliminated by the simple expedient of withholding the antiviral drug. I propose we expand this program, beginning viral spraying on other worlds. The attached document includes a cost breakdown of the entire Sedesia operation. Note the dramatic savings when compared with the price of a military invasion and pacification campaign.



notices something is amiss. Non-scientist characters must make a *Moderate Knowledge* roll. The scientific apparatus is all wrong for a biological laboratory — there are bits of chemistry and astronomy gear jumbled in. None of the lab benches are set up to perform actual experiments. The computers are all loaded with entertainment software. The place is a sham!

Doctor Negleem's office is on the second floor of the center. The door has a voice-operated security lock. Getting in requires either a *Difficult security* roll to bypass the lock, or a *Heroic Strength* roll to force the door open. Forcing the door sets off an alarm, and a squad of CompForce troopers responds quickly.

A search of the room reveals little. Negleem's office is kept obsessively tidy, and he is not one to leave important things lying around. His desk has an elaborate computer console equipped with its own security interlocks to prevent access by anyone except the doctor himself. It requires a *Difficult security* roll to defeat the interlocks before using the computer, and then a *Difficult computer programming/repair* roll to get into Negleem's secure files.

Once the characters get into Negleem's personal files, they find the draft of a report to COMPNOR detailing a pathogen-based loyalty enhancement program being tested here on Sedesia.

A second file includes notes on expanding the program to other rebellious planets. (At least

one of the worlds listed should be a character's home planet.) There is also a downloaded newsnet concerning the outbreak of Candorian plague on Dentaal; Negleem has added a comment at the bottom: "Bunglers!"

Next to Negleem's office on the second floor is the only working laboratory in the entire complex. It is here that the drug is prepared for distribution to the health stations across the planet. The door to this lab has the same security systems on it as the door to Negleem's office.

To locate a pure sample of the drug in the lab requires a *Moderate search* skill roll. Characters with the *medicine* skill can also find it with an *Easy medicine* roll. With a pure sample, they can synthesize FNA-23-B at any large modern medical facility — like the hospital in Besia Osurne, or the labs of the Alliance's medical section.

Face to Face

As the Rebels are leaving the building with the sample, they turn a corner in the hallway and find themselves face to face with Doctor Negleem. After a moment of startled surprise, Negleem cries out, "Stop them!"

■ Doctor Fesjo Negleem

Type: Imperial Scientist

DEXTERITY 2D

Blaster 3D, dodge 3D

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Alien species 6D, bureaucracy 7D, intimidation 5D



MECHANICAL 2D
PERCEPTION 4D
 Command 5D, investigation 6D, search 5D
STRENGTH 2D
TECHNICAL 4D
 Computer programming/repair 5D, first aid 6D, (A) medicine 8D, security 4D+2
Force Points: 1
Dark Side Points: 3
Character Points: 7
Move: 10
Equipment: Comlink, datapad, hold-out blaster (3D)

Capsule: Negleem is very ambitious. Through this Sedesia project he hopes to make the biowarfare division a separate branch of the Imperial military, with himself as its commander. He is a tall man, very slender and pale, with piercing eyes under heavy eyebrows. Negleem dresses in standard medical service whites, but always wears sterile plastic gloves. He is obsessed with cleanliness, insisting that all those around him change clothes and wash several times a day.

Negleem is loyal to the Emperor because he sees the Empire as a way to gain power for himself. Negleem is a great advocate of using disease as a weapon — a favorite saying of his is, "I can carry an entire division of my little soldiers in a test tube, and they can defeat any army in the galaxy."

Episode Four: A Plague of Imperials

Doctor Negleem is accompanied by a squad of four CompForce guards (plus a few unarmed scientist flunkies). The guards engage the Rebels in a brief firefight, but since their chief responsibility is to protect Negleem, they do not chase after the characters if they flee.

But the Rebels won't get away without a fight. As they gallop away from the medical center on their striders, they hear the whine of motors behind them as five wheelbikes follow in hot

pursuit.

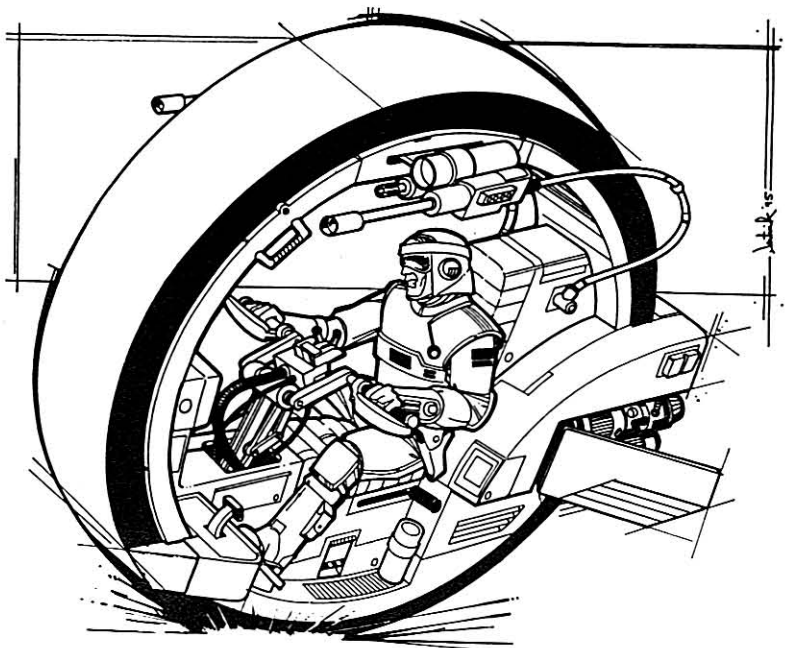
■ Striders

Type: Reptilian riding animal
DEXTERITY 2D
PERCEPTION 2D
STRENGTH 5D
 Brawling 6D, stamina 7D
Special Abilities:
Tail: Does STR damage.
Tusks: Do STR+1D damage.
Move: 20
Size: 1.5-2.5 meters tall at the shoulder, 6-8 meters long
Omeriness: 3D (females), 5D (males)

Capsule: Striders are large six-legged reptilian creatures native to Sedesia. They are fast runners and have excellent stamina, which has made them the riding animal of choice on the planet. Striders are very cantankerous and hard to train, however. Females are merely willful (*Omeriness* of 3D), but male striders are downright vicious (*Omeriness* code of 5D). When angered, they attack with their long whiplike tails and sharp tusks.

■ Wheelbike

Craft: Gallis-Tech Scout Wheelbike
Type: Surface scout vehicle
Scale: Speeder
Length: 2 meters
Skill: Ground vehicle operation: wheelbike
Crew: 1
Crew Skill: ground vehicle operation: wheelbike 3D
Cargo Capacity: 20 kilograms
Cost: 10,000 (civilian version)
Maneuverability: 1D
Move: 35; 100 kmh
Body Strength: 1D+2
Weapons:
1 Repeating Blaster
Fire Arc: Front
Scale: Character
Skill: Vehicle blasters
Fire Control: 1D
Range: 3-50/120/300
Damage: 6D



Capsule: Wheelbikes are a popular sport vehicle on many worlds, particularly where conditions make repulsorlift speeder bikes unusable. Many different brands are in use on Sedesia, of which this model is typical. A wheelbike consists of a single large wheel, two meters in diameter. The driver and power unit are located inside the wheel, and gyrostabilizers keep it upright. Civilian wheelbikes are generally two-seaters, but the Imperial scout bikes replace the passenger seat with a repeating blaster firing forward.

The CompForce soldiers piloting the wheelbikes are more heavily armored than the guards, with enclosed helmets similar to those of Imperial speeder bike scouts. These men normally use repulsorlift speeder bikes, and so are not as skilled with wheelbikes as one might expect.

Wheelbike Pilots. All stats are 2D except: *Dexterity 3D, blaster 4D, dodge 4D, vehicle blasters 4D, Mechanical 3D, ground vehicle operation: wheelbike 3D, repulsorlift operation 4D.* Move: 10. Blast helmet and armored leggings (+2 against all attacks), blast vest (+2 energy, +1D physical), blaster pistol (4D), blaster carbine (5D).

Half a kilometer along the road from the research center to Besia Osrune, the fleeing Rebels encounter a vast herd of breedtash being driven to the stockyards. There is no way around the herd, and the CompForce bikers are gaining fast. Getting through the herd requires a *Difficult beast riding* roll. Failure means a character's strider refuses to move among the close-packed breedtash. Attacking the breedtash may cause them to panic — roll a die each time an animal is hit by blaster fire. On a roll of 1, a stampede results. Trying to ride a strider in a breedtash stampede is a *Very Difficult beast riding* task. The CompForce troopers are brave (or foolish) enough to try getting through the herd on wheelbikes — it is a *Heroic* roll to avoid having their bikes toppled and crushed by stampeding breedtash.

Breedtash. *Dexterity 2D, Perception 1D, Strength 5D, brawling 6D.* Special abilities: Barbed tail does STR+1D damage; trample does STR damage. Move: 18.

Once the characters escape pursuit, they must get the purified serum to the Sedesian medical authorities quickly. If they delay too long, Doctor Negleem will have a company of CompForce troopers seize the central hospital in Besia Osrune. Initially the hospital has only four guards, identical to the ones at the research facility, but if the Rebels don't go straight there, the place will soon be surrounded by CompForce soldiers.

At the hospital, the Sedesian medical authorities are shocked to learn that the plague is artifi-

cial. They quickly begin synthesizing the antiviral drug — without the virus globules — and transmit the formula to all the other clinics and hospitals on the planet.

Once news gets out about the plague, Sedesia becomes a time bomb ready to explode. Nearly everyone on the planet has lost a friend or loved one to the Gray Death, and would love to get revenge on those responsible. Mobs start to fill the streets as a general uprising against the Empire begins.

Further Adventures

Since most of Sedesia's native military leaders died from the plague, the inhabitants look to the Rebels to take charge of the revolt and defeat the Imperials. Though the CompForce troops are scattered and outnumbered, they do have better weapons and can get reinforcements from orbit. Unless the characters can come up with some swift, decisive plans to defeat the Imperials while they are still disorganized, the uprising may be put down.

Also, there are many outlying communities without medical facilities. Somebody must get a supply of pure antiviral drug to them, without using flying vehicles. Just making the journey across the rough surface of Sedesia would be an adventure, even without Imperial soldiers to worry about.

When the Imperials discover that Negleem's plan has failed, a task force shows up with orders to retake the planet by force. The gamemaster can run several adventures involving the Rebels helping in the defense of Sedesia — or even making a break to bring in more Rebel Alliance forces. The Imperials will probably be able to recapture Sedesia, but the Rebels can remain on the planet in hiding, conducting guerilla operations against the occupation force. The characters may have to run through the Imperial task force in order to summon aid.

If at all possible, Dr. Negleem should get away from Sedesia in order to hinder the Rebels in the future. As a brilliant and utterly amoral bioweapon designer, he can show up on almost any planet, using diseases to fight for the Empire.

Sedesia can be the setting for a variety of other adventures, without involving the Empire at all. Characters might somehow acquire a ranch in some remote region of the planet, either by inheritance or as a gambling debt. Their foray into breedtash ranching can include dealing with rustlers, driving the herd to market, and all the other themes of Western movies. Characters might also get involved in a search-and-rescue mission for a crashed starship during the planet's long dark winter. ☹

STAR WARS®

CLASSIC ADVENTURES VOLUME FOUR

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