

AAB PROCEEDINGS

The Quadrant One Newsletter

31 March, 1991

Issue 13

Part of the
History of the Imperium Working Group
Family of Documents, Fanzines, and Newsletters



Collected Notes

Gvurrdon

Rob Pryor and Greg MacClure have handed over Gvurrdon sector, and their work on it, to Roger Myhre. He's designed a great letterhead logo: I may have to steal part of it myself...

RM: Where the Gvurrdon map is already official (in Alien Module 3), I will only make up names for the worlds that do not have any names, in addition to the subsector names. I will do some mapping to lay out some minor trading routes and courier routes.

I have also got one problem. In Alien Module 5, Droyne, one Droyne system is mapped. When I try to locate this world in Gvurrdon, there are only vacuum worlds around. My best guess so far is that the world at 2005 has Droyne inhabitants.

There are two maps of Gvurrdon, one where lots of worlds are omitted, due to lack of Imperial mapping of the system. Should I do the same? I can figure out a lot of reasons to do this, but if they are practical is something else.

CB: DGP and GDW feel buyers (players and referees) want the truth, not any myths or propaganda. So I have to vote for one map. Parts of it may be limited by the referee, of course, and suggestions to that effect should be given.

Continued on page 8

New HIWG Documents

001 - *How to HIWG '91'*

5 pages. Clay Bush. (31-Mar-91)

142.03 - *Revised Alternate Starship Combat*

12 pages. Roger Myhre

142.04 - *SDB Fleets: How do they work?*

8 pages. Roger Myhre (9-Feb-91)

3312 - *The Hoxlian Religion*

2 pages. Allan Hopkins (Jan, 1991). Outline description of religion common in parts of Dagudashaag, and a character profile.

Rr03 - *Rift Republic Timeline*

4 pages. By Don McKinney.

A good (and usable without copyright dispute) version of how the Rift Republic could have come to be. Somewhat dated by appearance of Domain of Deneb map in MTJ1.

Rv07 - *Intelligence Activities*

3 pages. Clay Bush (15-Mar-90)

Discusses nature of operations undertaken by Vilani intelligence bureaus. Outlines role of AAB organization and a coordinating office in overseeing activities.

Espionage! See article
on page four for
details!

Not Another Reality Shift!

In a secret base somewhere within the Imperium.

The member of the HIWG Development Corp relaxed behind his cluttered desk admiring his new map. He now had every known sector name save those of the Hive Federation - and those where not immediately vital.

A buzz from his desk startled him out of his reverie. Following the sound, he soon discovered his commlink buried under a pile of TAS news reports. "Yes?" he said into the device once he had uncovered it.

"Sorry to bother you, Sir, but the Communications Society Liaison Officer is here to see you."

"Ah. Good. Send him straight in."

The iris valve hissed open shortly, and in walked a man wearing a ship's suit and a worried expression.

"Rost," said the HIWGer warmly as he shook the man's hand, "What seems to be the trouble?"

"Well, there seems to be a problem with our personnel," Rost mumbled, his eyes averted. "The thing is they seem to think they're working for someone else half of the time."

The HIWGer sat up in his seat. This sounded bad, very bad indeed. "Tell me more," he said while keeping his voice and face carefully controlled.

"Well, old Red Astin got back from a mail run a couple of days ago, and insisted that he was a member of the Curator Corps. It took us nearly four hours of arguing before he remem-

bered that he was a Society member. All over the place our people are suddenly thinking that they are part of the Curator Corp or they get an irresistible urge to go off and enlist in it."

The HIWGer sat silently for a moment. It was as bad as he feared. A reality shift was forming and unless he did something fast the Communications Society would vanish forever.

"Thanks for bringing this to my attention, Rost. I'll get to work on it right away." Rost noticed the familiar expression on his friend's face, and quietly left the room as the HIWGer sat thinking furiously.

"There must be a cause," he muttered to himself, and was suddenly struck by inspiration. Moving quickly, he rummaged through his desk until he found a new document labelled "Tiffany Star 24." He quickly scanned through it until ...

"I've found it!" he cried aloud. "The cause is that the HIWG Development HQ hasn't yet approved the society because they think it may be too much like Margaret's Curator Corp. They haven't realized the difference yet."

Without another wasted minute, the HIWGer swiftly prepared a revised document and sent it to Developmental HQ and other prominent members by courier. Now all he could do was sit back, wait and see which way the reality shift went.

If he remembered correctly, the analyst on Medurma and his S'mrii

By David Schneider

friend had some experience with reality shifts. Perhaps he should invite them over and discuss the situation. But first he had better make some sandwiches. He left the room headed toward the kitchen.

166.01 *Communications Society*

4 pages, by David Schneider (4 Jan, 1991). Covert organization spreading news and non-military technologies.



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Acknowledgements

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HIWG ("History of the Imperium Working Group") is a fan organization detailing the official *MegaTraveller* universe. For information, write to:

Ed Edwards; 1410 E. Boyd; Norman, OK 73071-2650.

MEGATRAVELLER II: QUEST FOR THE ANCIENTS

HUNT VALLEY, MD - Paragon Software, the innovative game designers of the hit MEGATRAVELLER I, has announced the April release of MEGATRAVELLER II: QUEST FOR THE ANCIENTS, distributed and marketed by MicroProse Software, Inc.

MEGATRAVELLER II is based on the popular Game Designers' Workshop role-playing system, the most successful science-fiction role-playing game on the market, and is also a sequel to MEGATRAVELLER I, Dragon Magazine's Computer Game of the Year for 1990. Marc Miller, creator of the MegaTraveller universe and role-playing genius, has produced the game's main scenario, concept and design. "The invaluable insight Marc Miller has given us into the nature of role-playing games will make this game extremely exciting to play," said Paragon President Mark Seremet.

Players face a global crisis on the desert planet Rhylanor, one of the thriving economic centers of the Spinward Marches. A mysterious structure, believed to have been built 300,000 years ago, has begun spewing life-threatening toxins. The only hope seems to lie in finding the reputed designer of the site, the fabled Ancient leader, Grandfather, who has remained elusive for thousands of years. Players will face the ultimate test of resourcefulness, skill and courage.

MEGATRAVELLER II features design improvements, interface enhancements and additional features not found in the first MEGATRAVELLER game. Over 100 detailed worlds will be explorable with at least half of a million square miles per planet containing starports, cities, terrain, animals and exciting people. Gamers will select from over ten different starship types for travel. Players will also be able to generate

both human and Vargr (genetically altered canines) characters that will act and react intelligently based on their individual skills and will combat in a non-arcade style.

MEGATRAVELLER II will require 640K and will support CGA, EGA, Tandy, High Res EGA and MCGA graphics as well as AdLib, Roland, Covox and Sound Blaster sound boards. A mouse and joystick will be optional. Suggested retail price will be \$59.95.

Paragon Software designs and markets a complete line of entertainment software for personal computers, including the recently released SPACE 1889. Its products are marketed by MicroProse Software, Inc. MEGATRAVELLER II will be released for IBM-PC and Tandy computers. IBM and Tandy are registered trademarks of International Business Machines and Tandy Corporation, respectively.

Aspects of the Vilani Imperium

by Karl Gaarsoe

The primitive nature of Vilani medicine has been mentioned in multiple sources. To be more precise, Vilani epidemiology and biological sciences in general never developed fully. The biosphere of Vland did not contain any analogues or disease vectors, and neither white rats for the lab or brown rats to carry plague. No cockroaches or mosquitos spread disease to humans or served as an infection reservoir.

This meant that Vilani contact with the Solomani must have been a considerable shock to their immune systems individually and the Vilani Public Health system in general. Also, Solomani development of jump-3 speeded up communications during the Rule of Man, one of the key

elements in the spread of disease vectors. Systems which were previously isolated from each other by travel time exchanged infections. Given the primitive nature of Vilani Biological science, isolation was the best method to avoid repeated waves of infection.

The waves of plagues sweeping out from Terra were probably an important factor in the Terran success, and also contributed to the downfall of the Rule of Man. Certainly the current human population has a relatively uniform distribution of immunity.

By the end of the Second Imperium, there were probably as many Solomani-descended humans as there were Vilani and associated minor races. While the Vilani remained the predominant ethnic and cultural force

in some systems, especially in the Vilani core, the Solomani became dominant in many other parts of the Rule of Man.

I believe this will give the Vilani a strong cultural prejudice against the use of biological warfare. Their technology never came up to state-of-the-art (a technical argument), and I suspect that, having been the cultural victims of it, suggesting the use of biological weapons would get a Vilani government ripped limb from limb.

Please note that any suggestion that the plagues of the Rule of Man were deliberately spread is a fabrication of radical Vilani supremacists. Reputable scholars have long accepted the evidence that the Rule of Man spent more on public health measures than on armaments: it just wasn't enough.

New ESIG Charter

The following letter should have gotten wide distribution than it did. I have recently developed one bureau's agency in the format outlined here, (HD Rv0?), and hope that other factions will follow suit in detailing their agencies.

August 24, 1990

Dear Prospective ESIG Contributor,

My name is J. T. Wister, an alleged expert on international affairs.

Hopefully, by the time you read this letter, I will be the newest HIWG member and ESIG coordinator.

PURPOSE: ESIG is to assemble material related to the intelligence and security service activities of the various factions during the Rebellion of 1116. The ultimate goal is to provide a gaming resource for other players by the submission of this material for eventual approved publication.

CREDIT: At this point I wish to address a point of concern indicated in one of the letters Charles received. As a member of our foreign service, I have learned first-hand the value of teamwork, trust, and cooperation. Contributors to the ESIG project should be treated and acknowledged equally.

When a published product is printed, HIWG may be mentioned, but I would *insist upon crediting each individual member for the contributions they were responsible for.* This has the further merit of allowing readers to directly contact the original contributor with questions or requests for clarification.

PAYMENT: As for any pittance of financial compensation, I am receptive to any suggestions. I really don't care what is decided upon. We must do some hard work, however, before we have the luxury of addressing this "problem."

Permit me to establish a few points and guidelines:

I. AGENCIES AND OPERATIONS

Each person who reads this letter has his or her own specific areas of interest. There are several specific areas that require major contributions, henceforth termed as *operations*.

A) Zhodani: The two principally mentioned organizations are SORAG and Tavrchedl'. It would be nice to have operations for each organization since they are relatively independent of each other.

B) Vilani: It is probably redundant to detail the security operations of each of the three Vilani megacorporations. One operation is sufficient here, detailing one megacorporation's security organization, responsibilities, etc. It would be necessary to briefly mention the responsibilities of the other sister services. One may need to consult the Vland domain analyst and any existing published text for help.

C) Vargr: Where a group represents many individual splinter groups, it is always best to detail one specific splinter group and call it a model for others. The contributor for this one operation has a lot of leeway in developing the specific organization for any known Vargr Corsair band. Some of the bands in Corridor sector may provide a starting point.

D) Solomani: Anyone like to write for those dedicated fanatics of SolSec? This could be a lot of fun.

E) Imperial: Notice the term, not specific to any faction. The agencies for Lucan, Dulinor, and Strephon are all firmly rooted in pre-Rebellion organizations, each requiring a separate operation.

• Naval Intelligence: Yes, this is the group that naval characters can go to school in in the Enhanced Naval Characters rules section. The good ol' NI will require a fair amount of detail in its write-up.

by J. T. Wister

• Ministry of Justice: To my knowledge, little has been written on this group. An organization within the MOJ, called the *Special Branch*, was mentioned in the defunct *Far Traveller* magazine, a good piece of work. This operation may require some tracking down of old articles.

• Imperial Interstellar Scout Service Covert Office: What a mouthful. I'll refer to it as the IISSCO. There is a good deal of flexibility here.

There are probably many more organizations within the Imperial border, but none with the resources and scope of the above-mentioned organizations.

F) Margaret: Tukera Lines anyone?

G) Aslan: Like the Vargr and the Vilani, only one organization from a specific clan needs to be detailed to serve as a model to others.

H) Daibei: University of Warinir.

I) Antares: Archduke Brzk's *Trasitor* agency. There isn't much background associated with it, so flexibility and imagination will go far.

(*) IRIS: Note to Charles Gannon: Your IRIS articles in *Challenge* are excellent pieces and good models for the presentation style each agency should get. IRIS is omitted from being an ESIG operation because it is presented as alternative-type material and all this nobility bashing may not mesh well.

Feudalism is a key element of the Imperial government IRIS may appear to give a strong impression of class conflict. The Imperium may have had a few flaws, but it was certainly not a prospective breeding ground for a prospective Marxist state (thankfully.)

I can't reconcile the concepts of the Imperium that the existence of IRIS would represent. I strongly urge you to develop any agency listed in the ESIG project.

II. REQUIRED ELEMENTS

For each organization, address each of the following areas:

- 1) Pre-Rebellion background
- 2) The Agency's Powers and Resources
- 3) Organization
- 4) Status and activities during the Rebellion
- 5) The Agency's Goals, before and during the Rebellion. (These may be very different.)

III. OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

- A) Examples of the Agency's covert and overt operations
- B) Character generation: a sample character representative of the Agency
- C) Quirks and enigmas associated with a particular agency

The above items should provide a good start. I'm sure you can provide many other interesting ideas, and I look forward to reading them.

IV. AVOID BLATANT NEGATIVE STEREOTYPING

Keep in mind that our material could have profound effect on players with

existing characters and campaigns associated with one of the agencies. For example, if these players portray their characters as heroic INI operatives, our work should not go out of its way to depict INI as a bunch of cowardly bootlickers. The good and the bad can be found in any agency, it is simply a fact of life.

A certain amount of characterization is called for in some cases. With the cosmopolitan nature of the Imperium, it is probably difficult to perform this characterization fairly. On the other hand, the almost exclusively human SolSec would be easier game.

Several published GDW adventures (i.e., *Signal GK*) depict SolSec agents as a dedicated, fanatical lot. Who knows? After all, the Zhodani were not as evil as we were led to believe. (Isn't propaganda/disinformation wonderful?)

V. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

It may not be totally realistic, but I set a tentative schedule. I'll be happy if we are anywhere near this schedule.

- 1) I hope to assemble material from everyone in 5-6 months. Don't fret, this isn't the end.
- 2) I shall send each contributor a full copy of the assembled material for

comments and constructive criticism. After receiving these responses, I will relay them to the appropriate contributor for action.

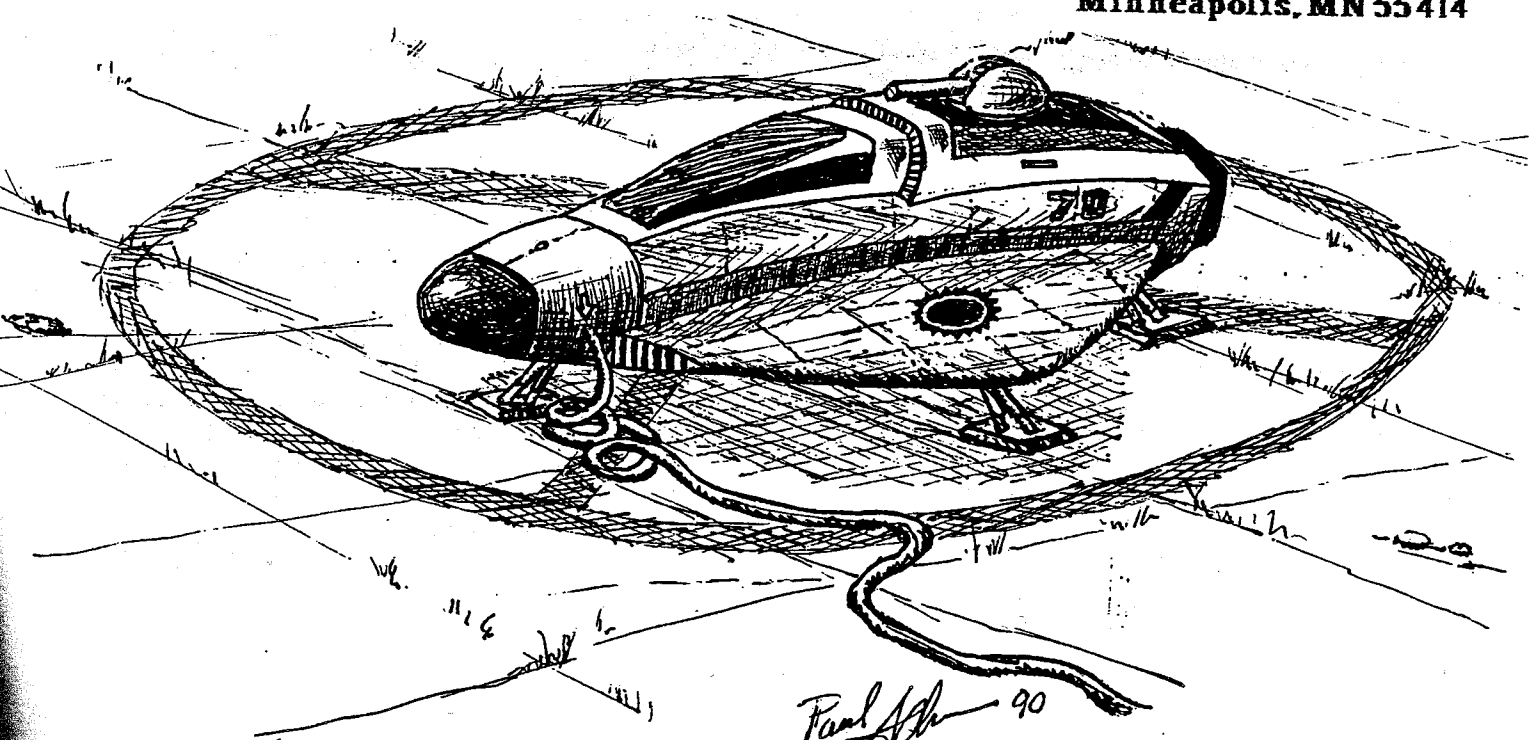
- 3) Each ESIG contributor will then have a two-month period for any corrections and additions.
- 4) I will send contributors a new copy. Then I'll assemble comments, and personally perform corrections after consulting with the proper writer over the phone. This twice-edited work will be submitted for review for eventual publication after a total of twelve months.

VI. CONTACT ME

Please contact me ASAP with your preferences in the ESIG project. Please list two or three alternate choices as well, if you are willing to help and your first choice cannot be accommodated. Believe me, I'll do my best to keep everyone happy. When you list alternatives, bear in mind that it is sometimes fun to work in an area that you know little. The research can be fun.

Please respond ASAP. I look forward to hearing from you and working with you!
Sincerely yours,

J. T. Wister
631 Oak Street, SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414



Booster Plant Effects

The UCP on the left was done by Clay Bush, and uses the "optimal" 30-day fuel supply. The example on the right was done by Scott Olson, and uses booster plants.

There are several differences in the design specifications. Mine follows the *High Guard* USP's specifications. Scott Olson's design varies from the old *High Guard* design's specifications in that his carries 120 20-ton fighters and a Rapid Launch Tibe for them. This changes crew requirements, but I allowed full staterooms.

Scott's design is capable of 6G maneuver and provides enough purification plant to refine all his fuel in 12 hours. I had to cut down to 4G and an (odd) 28 hours to refine the fuel. In combat, even allowing for quantity discounts on his design, my version gives twice as many spinal mounts for a given budget, but he has agility-4 (to my agility-0), an extra five armor factors, and a fighter swarm.

Plankwell-Class Battleship

CraftID: Plankwell-class dreadnought, Type BB, TL 15, MCr 85735 (d)
 Hull: 180000/450000, Disp= 200000, Config= 4SL
 Unloaded= 2841077 tons, Loaded= 2965019 tons, Armor= 65 G
 Power: 15300/30600, Fusion= 2746800 MegaWatts, Duration= 30/90
 Loco: 29700/59400, Maneuver= 4
 13500/27000, Jump= 4
 NOE= 190, Cruise= 750, Top= 1000, Vacuum= 3400
 Agility= 0
 Commo: Radio= system x3, Laser= system x20, Maser= system x3
 Sensors: PassiveEMS= Interstellar x3, ActiveEMS= Far Orbit x3
 Densitometer= LowPen/250m x1, HighPen/1km x2
 Neutrino= (10kw) x3, EMS Jammer= Far Orbit x3
 ActObjScan Routine, ActObjPin Routine
 PasObjScan Routine, PasObjPin Routine
 PasEngScan Simple, PasEngPin Routine
 OFFENSE: MesonGun= Txx, ParticleAcc= xx 7, Missile= x 9x

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|----|----|----|
| Batt | S | 20 | 80 |
| Bear | S | 13 | 52 |
| BLaser= xx 9, FusionGun= xx 6 | | | |
| Batt | 20 | 20 | |
| Bear | 13 | 13 | |

 DEF: DefDM= 7, MesonScrn= 3, NucDamper= 9, ArmorDM = -8
 Repulsor= x 9x, Sandcaster = xx 7

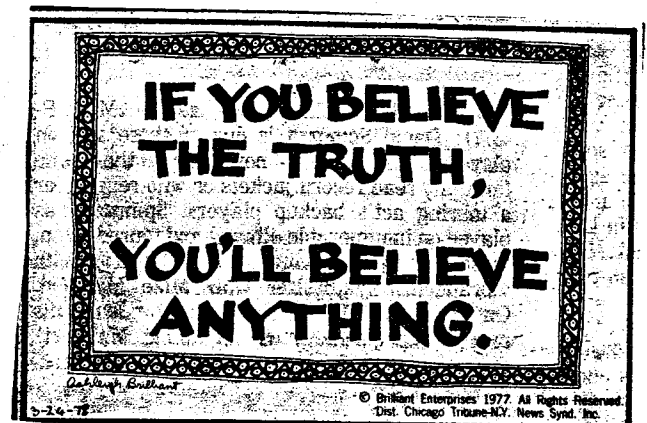
| | | |
|------|----|----|
| Batt | 50 | 50 |
| Bear | 33 | 33 |

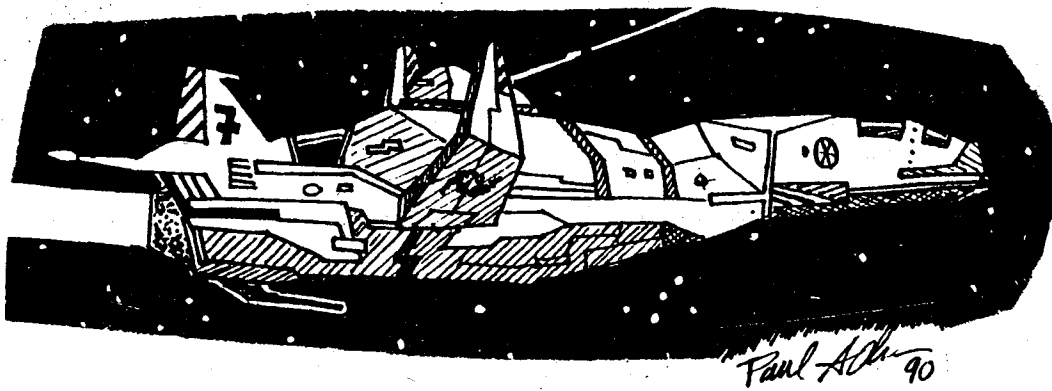
 Control: Computer= 9fib x 3, Panel = 4831
 Special= LgHoloDisp x50, HeadsUpHolo x250
 Basic Env, basic & ext LS, grav plates, inertial comp.
 Accom: Crew= 705 (200 x 4), Staterooms= 705
 (Bridge 28, Engrng 238, Mtce 40, Gunnery 60, Flight 15,
 Troops 200, Command 96, Stewards 23, Medical 5)
 Subcraft: Five 50-ton craft of assorted designs.
 Other: Fuel= 1663848 kliters, Cargo= 7472 kliters
 Fuel Scoops, PurificationPlant (28 hours)
 ObjSize= Large, EMLevel= Strong

COMMENTS:

Electronic Circuit Protection.
 One factor-T meson gun spinal mount.
 Fifty 100-ton repulsor bays.
 Eighty 50-ton missile bays.
 Two hundred triple beam laser turrets. Two hundred particle accelerator turrets. Forty double fusion turrets. Two hundred triple sandcaster turrets.
 Magazine holds fifty battery rounds of 2500 missiles.
 182 megawatts of power unallocated.

Design by Clayton R. Bush





Plankwell-class Battleship

CraftID: Battleship, Type BB, TL15, MCr211,068.6 + 37359.37
 Hull: 180000/450000, Disp=200,000, Config=1SL, Armor=70G
 Unloaded=4,595,270 tons, Loaded=4,666,239 tons
 Power: 42555/56739, Fusion=7,659,728Mw,
 Cruise Duration (M-2, no weapons or agility)=10/30
 Non-combat Duration (M-6, no weapons or agility)=10/30
 Combat Duration=1.5/4.5

Loco: 45,900/ 61,200, Maneuver=6,
 13,500/18,000, Jump=4,
 NOE=190kph, Cruise=750kph, Top=1000kph,
 Vacuum Cruise=3150kph, Vacuum Top=4200kph
 Agility=4

Commo: Meson=System * 4, Laser=System * 120, Radio=System * 120
 Sensors: EMMask, ActiveEMS=System * 6, PassiveEMS=System * 6,
 Densitometer=LoPen/250m * 6, Nuetrino=10Kw * 6
 ActObjScan=Rout, ActObjPin=Rout,
 PasObjScan=Rout, PasObjPin=Rout,
 PasEngScan=Simp, PasEngPin=Rout

Off: ParticleAccel = 0 90, MesonGun = T 9 x

| | | |
|------|----|-----|
| Batt | 10 | S 6 |
| Batt | 14 | S 8 |

 BeamLaser = xx 7, FusionGun = x0 6, Missile = x0 7

| | | | |
|------|----|----|----|
| Bear | 52 | 13 | 36 |
| Batt | 80 | 20 | 54 |

Def: DefDM= +11, MesonScreen=9(*3), Danipers=9(*3)
 Repulsors = x 9x, Sandcaster = xx 9

| | | |
|------|----|----|
| Bear | 16 | 32 |
| Batt | 24 | 49 |

Control: Computer=9fib*6(8fib*3 backup), Panel=HoloDynamic Linked * 71,
 Special = Large HoloDisplay * 175, ECP

Environ= basic env, basic ls, extend ls, grav plates, inertial comp, airlock * 60

Accomm: Crew = 200 * 10 Staterooms=257, Small Staterooms=1627, LowBerths=120
 (Bridge=351, Engineer=435, Maint=115, Gunnery=63, Flight=364,
 Marines=216, Command=257, Stewards=62, Medical=21, FrozenWatch=120),

SubCraft: 120 * 20 ton Fighters, 6 * 50 ton Cutters, 1 20-ton Launch Tube

Other: Cargo=1,823Kliters, Fuel=1,096,128Kliters,
 Fuel Scoops, Purification Plant=12hrs
 Nuclear Btty-Rds=144, HE Btty-Rds=72
 ObjSize=Large, EMLevel=Moderate

COMMENTS

The Plankwell-class Battleship is designed as a main battle line anchor, with good agility and weaponry, and excellent speed and armor. One of it's features is a high degree of redundancy amongst it's various systems: two complete backup computer systems, backup screens, etc. It's fighter complement is not inconsiderable, either, and is often used for scouting or direct combat, as required.

Design By Scott Olson

Collected Notes (con.)

Dagudashaag

Jae Campbell is taking over as Dagudashaag Sector Analyst. He sent me three developed subsector maps and UWPs: Pact (K), Argi (N), and Sapphyre (O). Toward library data, I have a draft of an article on Scanians, a geneered race of Daguudashaag. Look for a new HD announcement when I get a final version.

Jae intends to start a quarterly fanzine specifically set in Dagudashaag. It'll detail planetary stats, news, etc. It will "be easier for me (Jae) to devote 8 to 12 pages detailing a minor race than it would be for you." As I've set AAB Proceedings at 10 pages, that's a true statement. Tentatively titled *Signal GK*, the fanzine aims to highlight British and European talents.

Karl Gaarsoe wrote that *Shattered Imperiumis* "dead as a commercial product." He didn't say what the fatal factor was, but his work and effort are appreciated. There are good ideas in his *Shattered Imperium Papers*.

Gushemege

David Burden has taken over as Gushemege sector analyst. He's already submitted five HIWG documents, and is working on detailing the Lancian culture. This will fill in the Gushemegen part of the "Four Corners" area.

David's work divides Gushemege up into cultural zones: while these do not agree with the 1120 borders, that fact actually gives him his future faction disputes.

He is interested in cyberpunk. So far, he has accepted Lai's idea of Lancia being a peaceful, pastoral society. They and the S'mrii, therefore, developed the technology - for peaceful purposes. It has spread to less pacifistic areas, and thereby hangs the tale.

Vland

It's about time the Vland sector analyst produced some more documents. Efforts in designing starships and typing in Maliszewski's minor human races and other documents do not advance development of Vland. (Even though the Thaggeshi and Answerin write-ups refer to races in Vland sector.)

The most decisive action so far has been dropping Rv01 through RV04 as obsolete, and he is engaged in reviewing current HDs to see how others have organized their work. **Clay Bush** will have new HDs in the list next time, or I'll have to fire him as sector and faction analyst.

Windhorn

Dave Cheever has taken over Windhorn. His package developing

library data and one subsector arrived at the same time as *Flaming Eye I* mistakenly told him that *Flaming Eye* developed Windhorn M, which he had developed.

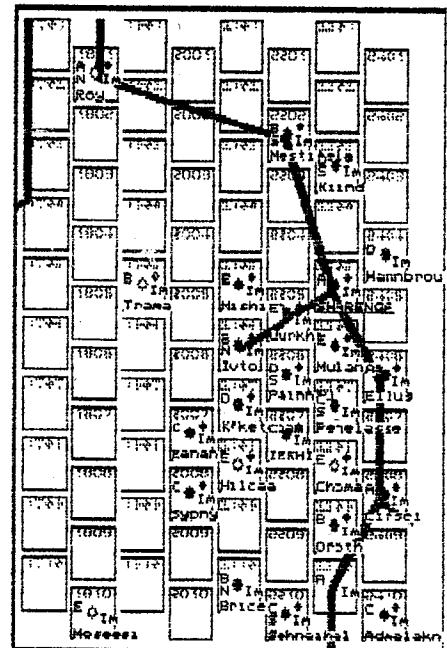
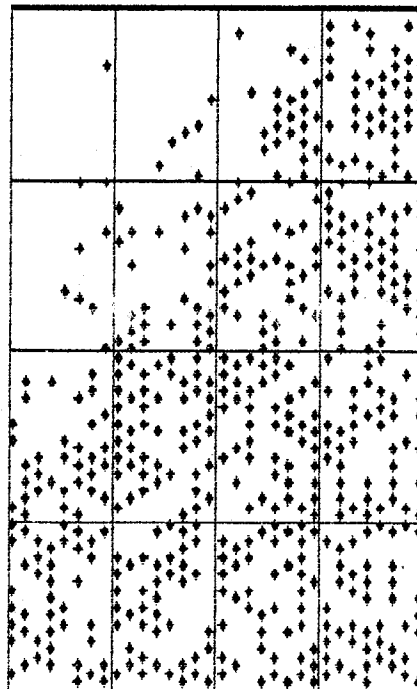
I was wrong. As he points out, it gives UWPs for a few worlds in the corner. Ikhog does have a full-page treatment, but it's still only four worlds. The ball is back in his court, where it belongs. And I am sorry for any delay caused by my confusion.

Zhodani Space

Evan Spence, a new HIWGer, wrote asking for information on the Zhodani. The following people have recently expressed interest in the Zhodani:

- David Schneider, Australia
- Siegfried Zuber, Germany
- Evan Spence, Scotland

I am trying to find someone(s) interested in starting work on the Zhodani section of an alien race book. So far, despite expressed interest, no one has done anything with them. Those who actually act to develop areas will become famous (at least in certain circles). % ^ %



Notes on Naval Operations

As some of you are aware, my long-term goal in working on starship spreadsheets, ship design philosophies, collecting source material, and so forth has been to clear the path for a naval adventure supplement. This could be considered an updated *Trillion Credit Squadron*. While it is on no one's production schedule, the idea of this supplement gives organization to and prioritizes a number of activities. The project's title is *Imperial Naval Handbook (INH)*.

SUBJECT: JUMP DURATION

C. BUSH: Fan discussion has assumed that ships which jump to the same destination arrive at different times over two days. There is a reference to having the best navigator in a squadron plot one course, and all ships in communication with him jump together. In this case, would the "squadron" roll once for the time in jumpspace, for all ships?

M. MARSH2 [Michael]: I use a method call military linking, NOT official but it solves the problem. All nav computers are linked to the flag nav plot, one course is computed and fed into all Nav computers. The individual ships nav computers correct the figures based on known ship statistics.

The margin of error is in hours not in days at this stage. There is still a ragged exit from jump space but it is ships arriving hours apart rather than days. As far as military ops goes, the effect is that military units jump so as to arrive outside a system's defenses and enter on maneuver drive, rather than attempt to jump as close as they can.

Detection: Part of this is due to my allowance of a non-standard item: a pre-jump exit detector. I believe such an instrument would/should exist based on the description of entering jump space in Starship Ops manual. If you have to tear a rift to get in, then you have to open a rift to get out. That rift emits energy - detectable energy - PRIOR to transition back to normal space.

DIGEST.GROUP [Joe Fugate]: I like Michael's description of military vessel jump exit and it jives well with what Marc Miller and I have been discussing about military ship jumping in general. Essentially, military ves-

sels, when they know they have to arrive in unison, spend significantly longer at the start computing and sharing jump vector computations. This leads to a much more accurate jump exit at the other end, with the error dropping significantly.

The formula in SOPM vol 1 for normal jumpspace exit is:

$124 \text{ hrs} + (2D \times 6 \text{ hrs})$, yielding a result of from 136 - 196 hours (5.7 to 8.2 days)

If double the jump preparation time is spent with all the affected ships in computer link via communication lines, use the following formula instead:

$167 \text{ hours} + (2D \times 0.1 \text{ hr})$, yielding a result from 167.2 - 168.2 hours.

Most ships will arrive within minutes of each other, with the worst spread being up to an hour apart.

Constant communication during the jump vector generation is essential for this to work, and DOUBLE the normal vector generation time must be observed. But when getting there "on a dime" timewise is essential, then this technique is the key. Most civilian vessels don't bother.

SUBJECT: MISJUMPS

Karl Gaarsoe, 31-Aug-90: Ed confirmed that the "mis-jump" rules disappeared from MT: this is an important mechanic for limiting Vilani expansion and the pattern of conflict in *Imperium*. The Vilani and Rule of Man rarely made jumps to or from deep space. In a super-*Imperium*, do we let players buy drop tanks?

Nah, simply say that jump theory does not allow consistent navigation from deep space

until you reach tech level 14. Published data say that you jump to a place in a gravity well: all the rule has to say is that it is wildly unreliable. Sure, the bold, daring, and desperate accept a 30-40% chance of misjump, but that's not a good planning factor for commercial or military operations.

SUBJECT: JUMPING - ARRIVAL IN SYSTEM

C.BUSH: SOpM1 says ships automatically emerge into normal space when they penetrate within 100 diameters of a planetary body. Does the primary's 100 diameter limit override that of inner planets?

I assume, for now, that reinsertion occurs at 100 solar diameters unless you aimed for an outer planet. This would give a way to estimate distance from main world to jump point, for resolving detection attempts.

It also gives an inner world hours or days to prepare. There would be time advantages to placing refueling stations in the third orbit or on worlds farther out... Those are consequences of my answer to my second question.

M.MIKESH: I'm certain jumping in (or out, safely) can only occur 100 diameters (or equivalent) from any significant object, including planets, stars, and other spacecraft. I don't remember where I heard confirmation of this, and I can't think of anything in the literature stating this either.

SUBJECT: JUMPING - ARRIVAL DETECTION

C.BUSH: Departure is easily detected because of the heat generated during creation of the rift into jumpspace.

Predictable exit points give primary search area for insystem sensor operators. SOpM1 does describe visual effects on departure and arrival, but doesn't specify how far away they are visible. There's no energy production

(from the power plants) involved in arriving, so detection is based solely on those visual effects. (I haven't heard anything about gravitic or other effects of reinsertion into normal space.)

SUBJECT: CHAMELEON HULL

J.KUNDERT [(Farstar)]: Is there an additional cost for the Chameleon Hull option mentioned in SOpM? What other information about this option has been worked out?

DIGEST.GROUP [Joe Fugate]: Our line of thinking at DGP is that a chameleon hull and EM Masking are the same thing. That answers the questions about it. After all, visible light is a part of the EM spectrum. A vessel with em masking should be able to change hull colors, as well as mask for IR or UV sensors -- in fact, mask for most of the EM band. Sounds an awful lot like chameleon hull, doesn't it? That's what we thought, too.

SUBJECT: ARMOR

The current rules do not have weight or volume for armor. The tech level limit is the only effective limit to armor. Look at the Armor-120 ships of FSOTSI: i.e. all ships in that product! With the armor DM formula, you get plus-modifiers that make surface hits totally ineffective.

I favor keeping the TL limit on armor, changing the armor DM formula to divide by five (rather than three), and setting planetoid configurations 8 & 9's armor factors to 55 and 70. The armor table could be pruned of odd values at higher levels (e.g., 101-104) to make room to extend the table to factor 145. [(TL 15 * 5) + 70]

J.KUNDERT [(Farstar)]: Armor weight isn't totally ignored, it can play merry hell with ground vehicles (our tank is SINKING in concrete!!!) and it wipes starship agility out at an alarming rate. If you don't mind an Agility

of zero, then why sure there's no armor limit...

SOLSON4: In many cases, having an Agility of 0 and good armor is just fine, especially if you're deep in the Terran-Vilani War archives [like Clay usually is :)]. As long as your enemy does not have meson guns, what do you care if you can't dodge a turtle? His point, I think, is that the weight doesn't affect anything, except agility, in starships.

As for vehicles, ever look at the Lagerhedd AFV from page 19 of 101 Vehicles?? It weighs 584 (!!!) tons. As long as it's ground pressure is low enough, it doesn't affect you as long as you can avoid bridges.....

Personally, I think the rule (of TL*5 for armor) is OK, although it causes some problems in the lower tech levels (5-8), where armor is forced to be unrealistically low (13 cm of armor MAX at TL6?????).

Long Passage #1

Roger Myhre, 7-Mar-91 and 12-Mar-91:

Naval combat in the far future holds many possibilities, but many important factors must be considered. Vector movement is one important factor.

MT starship combat is a step forward and a step backward in development. The step forward is the wide array of deadly weapons such as meson guns and fusion guns. The step backward is the lack of tactics which can be exploited on the game board. The velocity and heading of a ship have no impact on what you fire at.

There may be more options to use on a strategic scale: from deployment of a fleet entering a star system to the target world. When the situation comes down to a tactical combat, it turns out to be a slug-it-out-till-one-side-decides-to-run-away. Speed in MT combat only tells who can run away from whom.

I have some ideas for strategic and tactical doctrine for **IHN**.

1. The jump exit flare would likely not be

detected if a starship exits jumpspace with the black globe active. The zuchai crystals in the jumpdrive will manage to swallow the energy from the burst safely. However, if the craft does a rough exit and there are no spare crystals, the crystals may be overloaded and destroy the ship.

2. An invasion could be done by letting a blackglobe squadron head for the target system some days before the main force. (Not all ships utilize black globes.) When these ships enter the target system undetected, they can travel in the system with small chance of being detected. They may wreak much havoc by surprise attack on enemy targets. When the main force arrives, important positions may be destroyed or their operation capability severely curtailed.

3. What about psychological stress factor on navy personnel that have been confined to the craft for several weeks? Fighting ships have less space for comfort than commercial ships do. All my naval designs include bunks for ordinary crew and small staterooms for medics and officers. SDB craft are something else: they don't have to sacrifice space for jumpdrive and fuel for crew space.

In Larry Niven's *A Gift from Earth*, the police put short-term prisoners to sleep by sending small electrical currents through some parts of their brains to make them sleep without dreams. This can be done on crew members to reduce stress and also the use of calming drugs. For safety reasons, a ship crew must be alert at all times and not under the influence of mind-altering substances.

4. Why not use robots as crew members on starships? Say somewhere between 15% and 60% of the crew are robots. Officers must be living beings. I read somewhere that robots cannot be in control of a starship: I don't remember what the reason was.

With part of the crew as robots, the cost will go down and efficiency may go up. Robots have few costs when first purchased. A living being must have training, salary, health care,

food, clothing, and lodging, all of which cost money. A robot needs maintenance, fuel, and storage space. Depending on design, it may be more expensive than the initial training of a crew member, but the navy would save money in the long run on a crew that does not demand food three times a day.

A robot would only need one or two programs for the current task (pilot and navigation or gunnery and ship's tactics). If required for other tasks, a robot may change programming by down loading a program stored in the ship's computer storage.

5. What is the status on jump fuel consumption? My view is that if you have a ship with jump-5 capacity, it should be possible to make a jump-2 then a jump-3. This issue must be settled once for all before anyone can write a good campaign.

A squadron of jump-4 ships may eliminate a tanker or two if they are to attack a system only two parsecs away. They would have reserve fuel if the operation went sour.

If they cannot split their fuel, a tanker or two must be brought with them. The ships can refuel immediately after they exit jumpspace. This increases the likelihood of the operation succeeding: travelling to a gas giant can expose them to enemy defense forces.

The factor which makes a war machine move is the logistics, and fuel is one of the most important factors in the navy. Uncertainty in this field can spoil many good campaign ideas.

Long Passage #2

Gary Affeldt, 28-Jan-91:

I was playing a pirate so I went pirating. I designed a ship with three power plants. Number One was the minimum to power life support and electronics: I could fire six factor-2 missile batteries. I used Number One for laying in wait, because the EM Mask could mask my EM signature entirely. Number One and Two were used to move the ship from

point A to point B. Number One, Two, and Three were used in combat situations. This gave me my agility and beam weapon power.

The effectiveness of this design was proved in its first outing. I was lying in wait near Narsil/Sword Worlds/Spinward Marches. I detected a Far Trader exiting jumpspace and starting to head toward the main world. I powered up, moved into position, and fired everything. The attack resulted in three critical hits on the Far Trader: two did nothing and the third killed the crew (Crew-1 result). Having surprise and that they all died without knowing what hit them allowed me to put a prize crew aboard.

[CRB: although only ONE power plant can operate at a time, the result achieved above can also be achieved through powering-down. Running his power plant at three levels would impose some delay in powering up, but the above is substantially unchanged.]

A flaw that seems to prevail in MT is that they tell you to roll these dice and this happens. They don't tell you how or why it happens, it just does. More detail would be great. (Senors is one area.) As one player mentioned, MT generalizes everything and specifies nothing. More specifics are needed.

0 GDW did not place much effort in this revision. Many parts are copied verbatim from Traveller: little problems creep in. For instance, one critical hit can destroy your bridge. In Traveller, everyone knew where the bridge was. In MT, there's a bridge section. Does this entire bridge section go when that critical hit is rolled? Where do the pilot and navigator sit to fly the ship? We just placed a small room with the control panels. We also placed two more aboard the ship somewhere else. Didn't know what else to do.

Another big problem with starship combat was that you don't take account where certain elements of the ship are located in the design. In theory you could have a great big glass bubble and it wouldn't make any difference in combat!

%^%