

AAB PROCEEDINGS

15 August, 1996

Issue 32

The newsletter of the History of the Imperium Working Group (HIWG), a Traveller club using the official Traveller universe. Produced and distributed by Clayton R. Bush.

Events

The last issue carried the announcements about GDW closing, and the rights reverting to the designers. It also brought a series of complaints (on email) about repeating things people have already read. So, here is my policy: this is a newsletter, and it goes to everybody, whether they have internet access or not. If something is announced electronically, I will repeat the announcement here. I try, however, to cover all news and to get other news items and announcements.

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Announcements

Pages 4-8 carry announcements posted electronically. To sum up, for those not on the HIWG electronic mailing list: Marc Miller and Traveller went to a start-up named IMPERIUM GAMES. The new version, titled "Marc Miller's Traveller" was released at GenCon. Hardcover copies will be shipped to fill pre-orders/ orders starting August 30 (a month late).

They have a list of planned releases running through December. A new JTAS seeks submissions. Other things are happening.

Related Titles

GDW's titles permitted cross-breeding of ideas. It is noteworthy that *Twilight 2000*, *Dark Conspiracy*, and *2300 AD* have gone to TANTALUS GAMES. Marc is a contact for this company. TANTALUS has announced no plans, perhaps because Marc is busy.

With Marc involved, future cross-breeding is possible.

The MPGN company has opened mailing lists for these games. TANTALUS is open to fan exchange of materials, as long as a disclaimer is included. (This is the least TANTALUS **must** do. Copyright law holds that permitting distribution without a rights notice concedes loss of ownership rights. That is how *formica* became a common place word rather than a brand name.)

What to Do

HIWG exists to exchange ideas supporting Traveller. On the next page, chairsophont Harold Hale advocates supporting the new Traveller by buying products and running convention events.

To contribute to Traveller (which is what many want to do), Traveller's Chronicle, JTAS, and Gold Rush Games are looking for submissions. The last, the newbie, could be the joker in the deck. All seek primarily adventures rather than background materials.

Chairsophont Letter

From: HDHale

<tape on>

This summer finds Traveller fans anxiously awaiting another release of Traveller, this time without the GDW name attached to its production. While some of you may have concerns about what Imperium Games has in store for Traveller, take some comfort in the fact that former Traveller writers Tim Brown and Lester Smith are among those who have been assembled for its production. Also be reassured that I have heard some very positive things about Imperium Games new version of Traveller, which appears to use a system of game mechanics which is loosely based upon all the previous incarnations, not just the stuff in the "little black books". I plan on purchasing a copy myself, and I am sure many of you will as well.

So what of HIWG in the "new" New Era? That depends upon you, the members of HIWG. Yes, some of us may have some problems with what has been done in previous versions of the game, but as I see it, Traveller needs our help, now more than ever. It needs to be re-established as the premier RPG of science-fiction, something that it was known as for many years. That means promoting the game whenever and however you can to the best of your abilities. Some of us will be doing that by giving Imperium Games our creative input in how we think the game can be improved, and will be attending national gaming conventions, but there are things you can do locally as well:

1) Buy new Traveller products. If your local game store doesn't carry them, ask them to start. If they won't, take all your gaming

business elsewhere. Once merchants figure out that having Traveller in their stores generates business, they'll make sure they put it on their shelves.

2) Add a person to your Traveller Gaming Group (or start a new one). This can also include convincing your Shadowrun, Star Wars, etc. group to try a few Traveller sessions as a change of pace. Hopefully they'll be convinced to add it as an additional game your group plays on a regular basis.

3) Run a Traveller scenario at a local gaming convention. I have done this, and I have found it to be a rewarding experience, especially when some guy new to the game decides that he likes it so much, he wants to go out and get his own copy.

**Not everything that counts
can be counted, and not
everything that can be
counted counts.**

--Albert Einstein

4) Start a Traveller Internet site, or develop a Web page for an existing site.

If you don't have Internet access (or even a computer), you can still start up a fanzine, a Traveller discussion group, or Traveller fan club at your local hobby store or community recreation center.

5) Create new Traveller material, and distribute it. If you have something intelligent to add to the Traveller universe (in whatever era), somebody else is bound to want to read it. This can include getting published by Imperium Games, but also Traveller

Chronicle, a fanzine, or even distribution through the Internet, including the Traveller Mailing List.

The idea here is to increase the base of players of the game by increasing awareness of it. I think that our organization is uniquely qualified to be ambassadors for Traveller, and it is time we did so locally, as well as globally amongst ourselves.

If I don't see you at Origins or Gen Con, have a great summer (or winter for our friends south of the Equator).

--Harold D. Hale

P.S. There. I gave my speech and not once did I resort to any shameless plugs of my work in Traveller Chronicle #10, entitled Children of Earth: The Solomani Rim In the New Era. I didn't even mention that **Traveller Chronicle** is available from Sword of the Knight Publications, or that Sword of the Knight can be contacted at: 2820 Sunset Lane #116, Henderson, KY 42420-2084 in the good old U.S.A. and that you can phone them at 502-826-1218, nor did I

mention that future issues of **Traveller Chronicle** will feature additional Children of Earth material. Good thing, or I would have also had to mention Sword of the Knight's Web site, located at <http://eeyore.lv-hrc.nevada.edu/~indy/traveller.html> where you can download for free a copy of the Solomani Rim In the New Era sector map. Whew! glad I didn't bring that up....

<tape off>

Progress Report Date: Fri, 1 Mar 1996

08:10:59 -0500

I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to (more people than I can count) who has responded to my several posts asking for input about Traveller in this time of change for the system. The emails and posts I have received offering support, constructive criticism, and general advice have been extremely helpful to me in coming to decisions about what I am going to do with Traveller and how I am going to set about doing it. Now, I know that I will not be able to please every single one of you out there, so after considerable thought, I have come to the obvious conclusion that I should please myself and believe that in doing so I will also please those who like and appreciate the game system which I created.

Under to terms of various agreements between myself and GDW, I have always held all rights to the games and intellectual properties which I created. Game Designers Workshop has decided

to close its doors, and as it closes down, the company has formally transferred to me all rights to the Traveller game system (including **Traveller**, **MegaTraveller**, and **Traveller: The New Era**). Included in that transfer are the licenses and contracts between GDW and various licensees. That transfer took place yesterday (February 29, 1996). So that part is official.

I had thought that I would have the additional details completed by yesterday, and that I would have a formal announcement to make about who will be publishing Traveller by today, but I do not. Too many people have been interested in participating (with more coming out of the woodwork at the last minute) for the various agreements to be negotiated and signed. You may see rumors about what is going on (and many of them will probably be true), but it is bad form to announce things before the papers are signed, so I need to wait a little while longer.

—Marc Miller

Further developments on next two pages ...

Digest Group

Digest Group's main Traveller activity is selling old material from its inventory. There has been no word on the earlier proposal to re-release their old MegaTraveller material on a hypertext CD-ROM disk.

Instead, Digest is working on its MacroCosm role-playing system. The first game is slated to be **A.I.**, which was announced a while ago but not recently. A science fiction game, using the same rules, is one of the planned expansions.

Roger Sanger still runs Digest.

Traveller Comics

A company called Maximilian Press has distributed a comic for the Traveller line. I have not seen any copies in Colorado, and the company's name didn't ring any bells with store employees or me. If it doesn't distribute better, it will soon be a collector's item.

Seeker

Seeker sold all of its inventory to Digest Group Publications. It is not producing anything (as far as I can determine).

AAB Proceedings

AAB Proceedings is distributed to all active HIWG members. All others may acquire copies at \$2.00 per issue (or \$12 at a time).

To submit material, please send it to: Clayton R. Bush, PO Box 895, Limon, CO 80828. All materials are copyrighted by AUTHOR, and printed for discussion by permission. (N.B. Copyright law protects words, not ideas.)

Acknowledgements

Traveller, *MegaTraveller* and *Traveller: The New Era* are trademarks owned by Game Designers Workshop. References to products of GDW or its licensees are not intended to infringe on their rights.

HIWG Connection

HIWG ("History of the Imperium Working Group") is a fan organization for the Traveller role-playing game. For membership information, write to:

Membership Secretary: Clay Bush, P.O. Box 895, Limon, CO 80828.

HIWG-Australia: David Schneider, 5 East Avenue, Allenby Gardens, SA 5009, Australia.

HIWG-UK: C.N. Walker, Bankside, Reddish Road, Marsden, Huddersfield HD7-6NF.

HIWG-NZ: Martin Rait, P.O. Box 27-025, Wellington, NZ.

Computers

IBM PC: Brian Borich, 3890 50th Street, San Diego, CA 92105-3005.

Macintosh: Rob Prior, 67 Greenbelt Road, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada L4C 5S1.

Journal of the Traveller's Aid Society

CRB: The following is from the Imperium Games web page, for those who do not have access to it.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

JTAS, The Journal of the Traveller's Aid Society, welcomes unsolicited submissions by fans of Marc Miller's Traveller.

The content of such submissions should be limited to: adventures, short works of fiction followed by the game statistics for one or more of the featured characters, new weapons and technology, and well-developed and inventive heroes and villains.

All submissions should follow the rules and format presented in Marc Miller's Traveller.

ADVENTURES

Adventures are the staple of the magazine. They should be exciting, fun, and must contain everything the referee needs to run them. "Everything" includes statistics for any non-player characters, aliens, equipment, and ships that the player characters might come across. The best guide is to consult previously-published adventures and to make sure your own adventure contains the same elements.

Each adventure should begin with a game master's summary revealing the plot, how to involve the players and their characters, and suggestions about how the action should flow. Such an introduction should range from 300 to 800 words. If your introduction is longer than that -- it's too long. You're not focusing your ideas.

An adventure should contain four to eight encounters--whether those encounters are scenes in which the characters can role play with interesting aliens, or all-out brawls

where the heroes have to use their wits and firepower to survive. Good adventures have a mix of role playing and fights, with a dash of mystery and problem-solving. The best adventures have a few surprises thrown in and a touch of "on the edge of your seat" action that makes the players fret over their characters' fates.

How long should your scenario be? That's really up to you. JTAS favors a variety--from short outings to epic adventures. A good rule of thumb is 2,400 to 8,000 words.

FICTION

Though the bulk of the magazine is adventures, there's always room for a good story or two set in the Traveller universe. We prefer fiction submissions that range from 2,000 to 5,000 words. Further, the author should include character statistics for one or more of the protagonists or antagonists in the story so game masters can use the characters in their campaigns.

Perhaps you might want to suggest adventures game masters can create involving the characters or the setting.

Weapons & Technology

Don't just give us statistics on a new gun, mine, or spying device. Tell us who created it, what it's primarily used for, and where player characters might acquire it. Are there drawbacks to using your newly-created gizmo? Can you be arrested for possessing it? There's more to weapons and technology than just a collection of numbers.

HEROES AND VILLAINS

Any good hero or villain has a complex personality-- and such a personality must be part of your submission. What drives the

individual? What are his goals, weaknesses, strengths? What's his history? What's his future plan? A character must be rich and interesting to find his or her way into the Journal of the Traveller's Aid Society and subsequently into the campaigns of game masters everywhere.

Consider suggesting adventures involving your hero--hiring the player characters to help him on some grand quest, seeking refuge with them while outside forces hunt him, using them subtly so he can achieve his own goals.

As for a villain, consider giving him lofty plans that will keep him in a campaign for months to come.

FORMAT

The printout of your submission must be clean and clear. Make sure your name appears at the top or bottom of every page. Dot matrix printouts are acceptable if we can read them easily. We will not accept handwritten submissions.

While we do not require disks, we appreciate them, and including them could ensure that your submission sees publication faster. We accept Macintosh files, kept ASCII or as Microsoft documents; and IBM compatible files kept ASCII or in Word Perfect 5.1 or 6.0. Please label your disks and write your name on them.

We will only return manuscripts and disks if you include a SASE (Self-Addressed-Stamped-Envelope) with sufficient postage and of sufficient size.

Please retain a copy of your submission. Send submissions to:
JTAS--the Journal of the Traveller's Aid Society
P O Box 779
New Munster WI 53152

(continued on next page)

The Future Is Around The Corner...

From: ImperGame

Date: May, 1996

For 20 years, the sci-fi RPG phenomenon known as Traveller has recounted a saga of mighty interstellar empires' struggle to rule the stars, of super-technological and alien commerce networks that webbed the galaxy, of men's ever-unfulfilled thirst to travel and explore... Now, despite GDW's unfortunate demise, the journey of starfaring adventure continues in August, 1996, with Imperium Games, Inc. providing the groundwork for new chapters in **MARC MILLER'S TRAVELLER!**

Under the watchful eyes of Traveller's creator and Adventure Gaming Hall-of-Fame member, Marc Miller, this new edition brings together a truly stellar design team to create a release that eclipses all previous efforts. Some of the best

talents in gaming have convened under the Imperium Games banner for this exciting project, names like:

Lester W. Smith, system developer, whose design credits run from *Dark Conspiracy* to the bestselling *Dragon Dice*.

Tim Brown (2300 A.D.; *Dark Sun*), alien and xeno-culture, author of the upcoming *Alien Archive* supplement, as well as sales representative for Imperium Games.

Greg Porter (*Guns, Guns, Guns; CORPS, Macho Women With Guns*), vehicles and equipment.

Don Perrin (*Star of the Guardians*; *Wing Commander* collectible card game), starship design, layout, and construction.

Ken Whitman (*Mutazoid; Wizards*; former president of Whit Publications and convention coordinator for TSR, Inc.), psionic, also responsible for the business operation of Imperium Games.

Larry Elmore, interior art, renown fantasy artist with countless illustrations for periodicals and publications to his name.

Chris Foss (*Space 1999*) cover art, leading SF illustrator and concept designer; creator of *Starships* for the movie *Alien*.

FOUNDATION PRODUCTS

The foundation for the new Traveller will be a comprehensive rules system, set to debut at Gen Con '96 in both softcover (\$25) and limited hardback (\$30). This is a revision of ideas from the original classic game expanded in light of 20 years of role-playing experience, with streamlined character generation, new task system, and improved combat resolution. The rules also concentrate on the vehicles, Starships, and equipment players will encounter and employ.

The basic book aims to make the game easy to use, easy to understand, easy to access, while remaining flexible to all possibilities within the science fiction genre.

Add to that a continually expanding history. Imperium Games tentatively plans to release ten settings, each chronicling a specific era in the Traveller timeline for adventures and campaigns, starting with the Early Imperium, continuing on to the Aslan Border Wars, the Zhodani Core Expeditions, the Rebellion, even the Grandfather Era and the Far Far Future. Referees and players are no longer confined to just one setting, but able to draw their preference from a plethora of backgrounds straight out of Traveller's rich history.

Finally, look for a constant influx of support materials. The first supplement, **Starships**, will be available in September. Subsequent books such as *Central Supply Catalog* (by Greg Porter) and *Alien Archive* are scheduled for release on a monthly basis.

Also figuring into the Imperium directive is the August, '96 return of *The Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society (JTAS)* bi-monthly, edited by Jean Rabe of *Dragonlance* novels and *Polyhedron* fame!

Simply, Imperium Games is committed to bringing you first-class productions and support of the highest quality for the premiere sci-fi role-playing game. Look for the classic to return en force to a galaxy near you!

Imperium Games, Inc. P.O. Box 481 Lake Geneva, WI 53147 Ph#: 414-275-3984 Fax#: 414-275-5368
Contact: Ken Whitman, 414-275-3984

Check out our web site at www.Imperiumgames.com

JTAS (continued)

ACCEPTANCE

If we accept your submission for JTAS, we will mail a contract to you.

Far Futures Enterprises, the company that holds the Traveller license, purchases all rights to material accepted for JTAS. Keep in mind when you work on a submission that you will be selling all rights. If you do not wish to sell all rights to a piece, please do not submit it.

JTAS pays approximately \$20 to \$25 per printed magazine page. Submissions accompanied by a disk command the higher rate.

We purchase what we print. So understand that if you mail us a 10-page submission, and we print only half of it, we will pay for what we use.



Gold Rush Games

—Mark Arsenault, 96-07-03

We have been approached by the good folks at Imperium Games concerning GRG publishing licensed material for the new "Traveller" RPG! I spoke with Ken Whitman and we came to some basic terms. They are interested in having us publish some great Traveller books—from adventures to sourcebooks—but we are missing just one thing... **AUTHORS!**

If you have a love of Traveller, some cool ideas for an adventure or supplement, and a bit of talent in the writing department, then drop us a line! We want you! You can obtain our basic Submission Guidelines from the GCS Library on AOL or from our Home Page at <http://members.aol.com/goldrushg/index.htm>.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Sourcebooks contain rules expansions, campaign locations, new gadgets or equipment, material to aid in or enhance character creation, non-player characters, and so on. Sourcebooks should be useful not only to GMs but to players as well. This allows us to market the books to all fans of a particular game, or genre.

Sourcebooks make up the majority of our supplements. They will be published at 96 pages, 128 pages, or 160 pages.

Adventure Books: Adventure books contain scenarios for use with a particular game. Adventures should be for 4-6 players of low to medium experience. We want to publish adventures from 12 to 32 pages long. Thus, for a 96 page book, we could publish either three 32-page, six 16-page, or even eight 12-page adventures.

Campaign Books detail an entire

campaign "world," providing an established setting in which to play the game. Campaign books also provide a fair amount of source material and a few adventures. Lengths can range from 96 pages to 256 pages.

PROPOSALS

The first step that you, as a prospective author, should take is to prepare and submit a product proposal. The product proposal consists of the following:

Concept: a brief, one or two sentence description of the product that describes the project and why someone should buy it. Give the proposed title of the project, the length and type of book it is intended to be, the game system it is for, and a general description of what the book is about.

Summary: a brief synopsis of the project.

List of Contents: essentially an index (without page numbers), which illustrates the topics you would write about and organized the way you would write the manuscript.

Writing Sample: one to two pages from the book itself.

Completed Character Sheet: This demonstrates your knowledge of the rules for the game system your product is being written for.

Send all correspondence to:

Gold Rush Games
P.O. Box 2531
Elk Grove, CA 95759-2531
U.S.A.
GoldRushG@AOL.COM

CRB: Authors are warned that GRG has a strongly worded product release statement. Authors are advised to send GRG a SASE for the complete submissions guideline document.

Interesting Quotes

One of the serious problems in planning the fight against American doctrine is that the Americans do not read their manuals, nor do they feel any obligation to follow their doctrine...

—*a Notebook for Soviet Lt.s*

The major difference between a thing that might go wrong and a thing that cannot possibly go wrong is that when a thing that cannot possibly go wrong goes wrong it usually turns out to be impossible to get at or repair.

—Douglas Adams (*Mostly Harmless*)

The modern conservative is engaged in one of man's oldest exercises in moral philosophy: That is, the search for a superior moral justification for selfishness.

— John Kenneth Galbraith

HIWG - Thoughts

—Clay Bush

Marc Miller's Traveller

By now, the drafts should be back from the printers and Imperial Games should be busy preparing to ship the pre-ordered rules and gearing up for GenCon. I have this sense of calm, since I can't influence anything now. I also have a sense of "why bother?" right now, since for a few weeks I have nothing to comment on. But I persist in the dry spells, so I'll ramble a little here.

Harold: It really is all on the line this time. You sorta got that sense when TNE came out, but I think that had more to do with the radical departure in the story line than the possibility that the game would go out of print permanently if it didn't work out.

There is still the issue of the New Era follow up, which apparently Dave Nilsen is putting together for IG. I also radically filled Kevin Knight's mail box on Monday with material for TTC#11—I hope I was in time Kevin....

Anyway, I'm more anxious than anything at this point. The creative process is still ongoing, and I'm trying to wrap up a number of things Traveller-wise before September when I start my Tech writing course.

I can't very well keep a full-time job going, a labor-intensive college course going, and still keep my hand in so many other projects while maintaining my sanity. Traveller will be moving down a couple of notches on the priority list, at least between September and early December.

Base Codes

Why do we have all those base codes? Why not just use N for any

human allegiances' navy bases? That still leaves letters free for clan and corsair bases and the like, but the surfeit of base codes is confusing to newcomers.

I sent email to FarFutures saying we should pare the codes down. Just waiting to see what happens.

Harold: Sounds OK to me. That's all I've ever used to signify a naval base. The Terran Republic has Outposts ('O'), but those are not true naval bases—they are a combination Marine/Navy/etc. base.

Glenn Goffin: I'm with you on this.

Stellar Companions

Marc was interested in hearing suggestions about suggestions for tables that gave more realistic results. I asked Leroy to send his proposal in, and he did.

If the tables have changed, what say we just rework the stellar data and post it in libraries? I think Marc would approve of a updated listings, since they would be based on the original files, support the new rules, and prevent people asking him about what to do about having old data by having new data available.

[Marc is not interested, and would not treat any files we generated as "official." He wants referees to do their own sector settings.]

Harold: I see the stellar companions issue as a litmus test of how serious IG is about making improvements to Traveller, and not just regrinding old material to make a quick buck.

A number of people over a long period of time have suggested corrections both to GDW and IG on how to improve the design sequences in this area. We're not talking here about something that will radically alter game balance, or

cause them to spend endless hours redeveloping the system. It is just a matter of taking an afternoon to insert the corrections Leroy, myself and others have suggested and iron out any contradictions.

If changes were not made (particularly if they resorted to the old Book 6: Scouts as they were talking about), I will be much less enthusiastic and much more cynical about IG's further Traveller offerings.

Ship Archives

I've realized that most of the starship designs done for MegaTraveller were never put into the HIWG library. (A collection problem.) Does anyone see any point in putting those collections in the library? I figure I have collected about 200 designs in standard MT UCP format.

(I approached Kevin, and he said he wasn't interested in supporting an old system in CHRONICLE. So print publication is out. But maybe they should be available for electronic collectors.)

Harold: Couldn't hurt. It's not like it will be taking up space in *my* file cabinet (the one that still contains the old High Guard designed fleet).

Seriously, they may serve as design inspiration for somebody in the future, so go ahead.

Glenn Goffin: I, for one, still use MT, and may well continue to use it even after acquiring T4, so I may well have use for the designs, and recommend keeping them for people in my situation. How much space are we talking about — a couple of diskettes? or perhaps space on a web site?

I'm willing to keep an archival set of diskettes, and make copies available to others. I have a set of Rob Dean's vehicle designs. I've

GenCon Report

been slowly fixing their formats.

Ship Designs

I've only fiddled with FF&S a little. I spent a year perfecting my design spreadsheets for MT, but largely as a project to learn all the ins and outs of my spreadsheet program. Working with the formatting functions was interesting, and I had a feeling of accomplishment for getting everything right, down to the last comma.

FF&S required starting all over again. I had less spare time, couldn't justify it as a training project, and THIRD PLANET SOFTWARE planned to release a FF&S design aid program.

I probably should revisit FF&S and the new (FF&S-derived) design sequences, because ...

Third Planet

Has anyone heard anything from THIRD PLANET? I placed an order for the Navigator program, which was never filled. I think they just walked away from the market. Has anyone heard anything or had any luck contacting them?

Harold: The last I heard from PLANET III SOFTWARE, they were still very much in business and they were going to send me a beta version of the ship design software just as soon as I signed a release form saying that I wouldn't take their software and do evil things with it (like sell copies for profit). The individual I spoke with sounded very enthusiastic about the software and I assumed that the release form would be sent to me within the week.

That was before GDW went belly up. I have not seen any release form, nor have I seen the promised beta version.

Sounds like a question for TML. I'll post it.

--Mike Mikesh

IG put out a professional looking two-leaf color glossy ad for T4, included in the pack of freebies given to each GenCon attendee. Unfortunately, empty shelves on the first day probably cancelled a lot of attention IG could have gotten in convention talk during the rest of the gathering. The hard cover copies never made it at all, but these mishaps were seemingly beyond their control.

T4 soft cover was on the shelves by the second day. I won't get into what all is in there, leaving that to Harold or others whose post you'll probably see before this. I will mention, though, that all the color artwork of ships & worlds is very exciting. The pieces don't conform to classic Traveller style or designs, but the images will appeal to fans of science fiction even if they've never heard of Traveller.

It was nice to see Tim Brown and Lester Smith working in Traveller's corner again. I didn't know the rest of IG's crew, but Marc is very pleased with them. As you might know, Ken Whitman's offer was the

most attractive to Marc because of his commitment to the success of the product line. Instead of using Traveller as the cash cow nurturing other product lines, profits for Traveller go only to the growth of Traveller.

Ken's objective is to produce a new Traveller product every month, even beyond the bi-monthly issues of JTAS, which we should see by November if I remember correctly.

The aim for JTAS is to contain mostly adventure material. While they could include adventures for any Traveller milieu, it sounds like they'll give the most consideration to adventures that can fit several time periods.

During the Traveller seminar (which was well attended), they made a special appeal for attendees to promote attention for Traveller. T4 isn't just one of the many new games to come forth from no-name companies every year. It comes already with a solid core of players, and to assure IG can continue producing Traveller products, they need to capitalize on this strength.

DGP plans?

When the new edition was announced, I heard rumors that DGP was considering releasing their MT materials on a CD disk. Hyper-text, and all that. And I've not heard anything since. Anyone heard anything?

Roger Sanger: We are learning that designing a new game is difficult and slow. But we are still plugging away at it. It is starting to shape up nicely though, and looks like it will be a winner.

Wish us luck!

Sincerely,

Digest Group Publications

TL 10-12 Designs

I will probably get into the new design sequences to work out some TL10-12 ships and craft for the INVASION: SYLEA project. (How's that for a working title.) And I'll probably get to it after GenCon. Winter is my most productive writing season.

Invasion Sylea: This project started as a discussion of the feasibility of doing the movie Independence Day as a Traveller adventure. Trashing large parts of earth wouldn't fit into the universe's history, so another world why not, say, Sylea in the Long Night?

....

One way we can help keep Traveller alive and growing is by running our games openly in the game stores. If the gaming community can see that it's a game that is being played, more players will consider playing it and buy Traveller products. In my book, Clay has already done a lot by running games at the con. His games got listed in the convention program, thus their mention was seen by gamers across the country.

IG did express at the seminar a sense of frustration about the fan community (without naming HIWG) putting a lot of effort in such things as sector generation, things that referees can create themselves from tables throughout the Traveller system. They do not mean to say we should not generate and post ships and such. If its fun, then have fun. Rather, I think they're impressed with the body of fans Traveller has, yet frustrated that fan activities don't do a lot to promote the game.

To illustrate, I noticed that White Wolf gave table space to a fan organization that supports Vampire, called The Camarilla. The Vampire setting is richer than even Traveller with a deep body of pre-history, personalities, mythology, and so on. As far as I've seen, members of The Camarilla are not engaged in activities like fleshing out the Tremere Chantries of Denmark, or getting an official stamp for their particular resolution to an enigma in the literature.

Instead, The Camarilla organizes games, conventions, and just plain social events among players across the country on many levels, both table-top and live-action. It's interesting to note that the live-action players were quite visible during the convention. While I did see one person in a

Star Trek uniform, and a couple apparently from the Society For Creative Anachronism, I saw several groups on the streets of Milwaukee all wearing black, i.e. the LARP Vampire players.

I'm not seriously suggesting there should be a revolution within HIWG. HIWG was never meant to be an organization like The Camarilla. Support of the kind IG seems to want is probably better left to a brand new Traveller organization even with a lot of cross over in membership with HIWG (hint, hint). Rather, I think I understand where IG was coming from on this and thought I'd better say something just in case anyone concludes their comments during the seminar were an attack on HIWG. They weren't. They just want fan help.

Something I'm glad to see is that IG is very pro-licensee. GDW was this way back during classic Traveller, thus we saw Traveller products from Group One, Digest Group, Marischal Adventures, FASA, and Judge's Guild. That reversed itself by the time of TNE, probable because of Marc's withdraw. Now things are back to normal, I'm sure much to Kevin Knight's delight.

--MIKE

OTHER COMMENTS

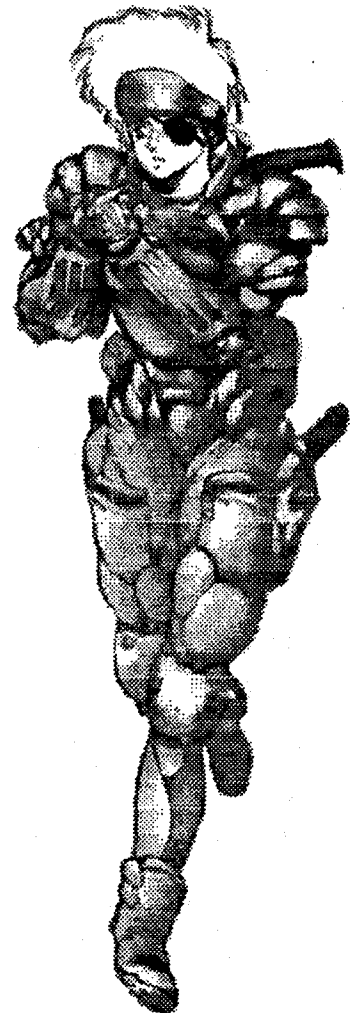
Joe Walsh: At the Marc Miller seminar, it was established that T4 was meant to be the simple foundation of a system that will become much more complex. That is, the T4 rule book was meant to be as simple as possible, so that new players could easily join in (as opposed to, say, 2nd Edition AD&D, which makes it very difficult for newbies, unless there is someone more experienced to hold their hands). Thereafter, as with

CT, more complex systems would be added via optional supplements.

So, if the basic T4 book isn't seen as being simpler than TNE, they haven't achieved their goal. I personally feel that T4 is pretty simple. Not only are the systems in it simple, the book itself is short enough that it shouldn't be daunting to someone new to RPGs.

Q: Folks have mentioned ships looking different several times already. What's so different? Are the new ships like the pictures on IG's web page?

Andrew Boulton: Of *course* the ships look different - the ones we're used to won't be designed for several centuries!



GenCon 1996

--Clay Bush

Harold Hale, Mike Mikesh, and myself [and Kovalic and Kundert] represented HIWGs at GenCon. (I'm still surprised so few HIWGs attend conventions, but not going did save you all having to deal with 30,000 gamers and full hotels.)

Because I submitted my event list in February, I was unable to schedule my events around the interesting seminars. Consequently, I missed the TRAVELLER, GDW, and HARPOON seminars. I caught only one seminar, on the real Soviet plans for Red Storm.

(They were going to push through the north German plain. The primary thrust was to be *through* the British Army. A secondary thrust would rest its southern flank on the Hartz mountains. Fulda Gap would only have seen a holding action. Another secondary thrust would have been through 'neutral' Austria around the south of the American army.

(And the Baltic Fleet would try to force the Skagerrak, between Denmark and Norway. Hello, Roger Myhre, naval reservist!)

SEMINAR REPORT

Harold is supposed to write one on the TRAVELLER seminar. He was there.

One person stood up and asked, given Millieu 0 is a TL12 empire expanding into the ruins of a collapsed empire, what is the difference from the Reformation

Coalition? Marc's entire reply: "No Virus."

PHILOSOPHY: Traveller writers are encouraged to write adventures. That is what JTAS wants, and Marc Miller encouraged Gold Rush Games to publish the same. The more generic the adventure, the more it can be fit into anybody's

campaign, the better.

MARC MILLER'S TRAVELLER

The new Traveller book should arrive at homes around the 15th. I saw the system at GenCon, but went ahead and ran my events with TNE rules. (I already knew those...)

- o The number of dice you use is determined by the difficulty of the task. A 1d3 is mixed in with d6 in some cases.

- o Combat is as in the first books. Damage is applied to one attribute at a time, and no provision for hit location is made.

- o The rules for system generation go all the way back to the black books. You do not determine the star type(s), and merely record G for gas giants.

- o The rules for ship design looked like the tables in HIGH GUARD. I didn't have time to study them in detail.

- o According to an insider, David Golden, there is a disconnect in the power plant size between TL11 and 12. This will help explain the Sylean's eating up their opponents.

MINIATURES SYSTEM

Harold and I played in the demos of the miniatures starship combat system. Small ships and fighters were featured, and it was hard to kill opponents. Those low factor weapons will do it every time...

Armor factors ablated away, however, so you could eventually kill anything. This contrasts with HIGH GUARD, where TL11- battles often ended when one side had no weapons on the outside of its hull--despite its opponent's failure to kill ships.

The final product will not be out till 1997, so these were in part play tests.

GenCon Ship Combat

David J. Golden: They added movement rules to use a hex map, changed the ranges to 5/10/15/20 hexes (close/short, etc.), and only had lasers, missiles and sandcasters. Here's a quick synopsis:

1. Initiative for each side was #Ships - Leadership - d3. Low initiative won. Winner got to move **second**.

2. Movement: A ship's speed and direction was conserved from turn to turn, unless modified by maneuver. G-Rating is your total maneuver. One point of G-Rating will change your speed by one hex OR change your direction by 1 hexside. Only 1/2 your G-Rating could be used for turning.

Once you've determined your speed and turning, you move 1/2 your speed (round up), make 1/2 your turn (round up), finish your move, then finish turning.

3. Sensors could be Active, Passive or Jamming. Until a ship had been locked up, it was represented on the board as a black ping-pong ball on a stick. Once detected, the model was put on the table

4. Combat was simultaneous. Your base number to hit was target size + your fire control rating - target G-Rating. Range determined how many dice you rolled.

Missiles covered one range band per turn. Missiles weren't plotted, and couldn't be dodged. To-hit roll was made the turn the missiles arrived, at Very Short range.

Each missile battery had a missile rating, turrets 2 and barbettes 5. The rating was the total number of missiles you could fire in a single turn. The total available was twice that (so you had two salvos). Missiles did 1 point each, and a salvo was treated as a single

(continued on page 12)

T4 Ship Design Notes and Critique

--Harold Hale

Here is the errata/potential errata I've found so far:

Step 2, the text directs you to "select a hull from the table on the next page." The chart it is referring to is on page 107, 15 pages later.

Step 3, the text says, "on the following table, cross-index the jump level desired with the size of hull." There is no such table, not below nor anywhere else in the book, making it impossible to design jump capable ships.

Step 6, the text indicates that missile launchers "do not have to be crewed when operating as part of a missile battery under the control of a master fire director", but in Step 9 the text indicates that "one gunner is required for each weapon, sandcaster and nuclear damper battery installed." For missile batteries, is this gunner in addition to the one required for the MFD? The two statements seem to contradict each other.

Also, I now know why people *really* loved the Third Imperium so much--missiles were free, shoot all you want!!! No where have I been able to find any mention of the *cost* or *displacement* of spare missiles, which presumably you will need after you shoot off the ready missiles provided in the turret or barrette (which I guess are also free).

Step 7, Small Craft External Grapples are described, Small Craft Hangars and Launch Ports (table for which is on page 112) are not. Fuel Purification Plants are mentioned on page 89, but not in Step 7, which is presumably the section they belong in (the table for them appears on page 111). Ditto Shops and Labs, which rates a chart on page 111, but no explanatory text beyond what is on

the chart and a brief mention of Sickbays in Step 9.

Step 10, the text indicates you should, "multiply the number of crew members that need workstations by the workstation characteristic above." One big problem: there is no characteristic above. The chart you need is actually located on page 112.

Chart section problems

The Standard Military Controls table on page 105 indicates that the crew requirements for such controls is 0.0 at all tech levels. Given that the Standard Civilian Controls table on the same page gives some number from 1 to 3, it appears that the crew numbers for SMCs are incorrect.

The Thrust Plate Drive Potential table on 108 is rather awkwardly labeled, giving one the impression that the Gs column starts at 100! Easy enough to figure out that 100 refers to displacement and that Gs run from left to right, but this should have been done better.

Additional Criticisms

The beginning of the Spacecraft section promises, "with the systems in this chapter, a player design nearly any type of spacecraft, up to 5000 tons displacement." While the Standard Hull Configurations chart does go up to 5000 tons, there are very few options in the configurations you have to choose from (at 3000, 4000, and 5000 tons there is only one type).

Also, the minimum size hull is 100 tons displacement. This means forget designing your own small craft, fighters or jump shuttles for now. I would have much preferred that this chart be taken out to a full page, and a wider variety of standard hulls be presented. Surely

some company in the Third Imperium makes standard small craft components!

While it appears that the wholesale errata that plagued MegaTraveller (aka MegaErrata) has been avoided (thank the Divine Being), this section is probably the most poorly laid out of any of the four attempts (classic T, High Guard, MT, TNE) to present a ship design system in Traveller.

For example, the charts for weapons and defensive systems (something one would assume you could find all in one place) are scattered over four separate pages in the charts section. In attempting to assemble a 1000 ton TL 12 destroyer (an attempt thwarted by the lack of a proper jump drive chart mentioned above), I found myself frequently flipping back and forth between pages to find the proper chart or instructions. While the actual work involved in putting the ship together was much less than with FF&S, the constant page flipping was very annoying. Were I to use this system on a regular basis, I would end up photocopying the entire section and redoing the layout so that it was in a more logical sequence. Those responsible for the actual layout of this section (who now will never admit it in public) should be ceremonially flogged with a piece of wet spaghetti.

Well that's what I've found on the first run through. If anybody else has any errata they have found (particularly in the charts), please post it here. If someone at IG would like to respond to what I've found so far, I'm sure everyone would like to hear it.

Starship Design Changes

--Guy "Wildstar" Garnett,
wildstar@qrc.com

If you've purchased **Marc Miller's Traveller** (also known as Traveller 4, or just T4 for short), there are errors in the ship design system.

The most serious is that the Jump Drive Potential table is missing.

Changes

o The HEPIaR maneuver drives had incorrect (too low) power consumption figures. The corrected value is 140Mw per displacement ton of drive (and not 10Mw as stated before version 1.4). Ships designed with the old values will need to be re-designed.

o Thrust-plate maneuver drives had incorrect (too low) power consumption figures. The corrected value is 14Mw per displacement ton of drive (and not 1Mw as stated before v1.2). Ships designed with the old values will need to be re-designed.

o Power plant fuel consumption was calculated incorrectly. The values stated *9in versions prior to v1.4) will provide for only 6 months of continuous operation. Ships designed with the old values do not need to be corrected; simply note that the power plant duration is six months.

o Power plant surface area is spurious. Disregard any mention of surface area requirements for power plants. Ships designed with older versions do not need to be corrected.

Fire, Fusion, & Steel Changes

The following changes have been made to *Fire, Fusion, and Steel* to update it for the new **Traveller** game. The QSD Systems is based on FF&S with these changes.

o Fusion power-plant minimum volumes were increased to reflect the "Fusion Plus" breakthrough in Milieu 0.

o Thrust Plates have been restored as the primary type of maneuver drive. The cost of thrust plates has been reduced to 1/5th of the amount listed in FF&S.

o Laser power has been limited to TL*50Mw.

o Jump Drive fuel has been restored to Parsecs*10% (back to Classic Traveller standards), since Thrust Plate maneuver drives do not require reaction mass.

o Crew requirements have been re-calculated based on Classic Traveller crewing models. Additional crew members can always be added (so that 24-hour watches can be maintained, or to replace casualties in battle). The values given are the minimum; larger crews are never wrong.

o Contra-Gravity systems can now produce lift and thrust (above that used to cancel the vessel's apparent weight). QSD System ships will carry contra-gravity systems with sufficient thrust to cancel a ship's weight, but not enough to provide significant maneuvering thrust.

Updated: August 20, 1996

(continued from page 10)

attack regardless of how many were in it.

5. Sandcasters defended against both missiles and lasers. If they were successful, the sandcaster rating subtracted directly from the weapon damage. It was rather hard to defend, and I only saw it work once or twice. At Very Short (0-5 hexes) you needed 3 or less on 2d6; at Short 4; at Medium 5 and at Long 6.

Again, the sandcaster rating was the maximum salvo size, and a ship had exactly two salvos.

Lasers not used for offense could defend against missiles. Four plus your fire control rating was the target number; if you succeeded you subtracted the laser rating from the missile attack.

6. Damage points were subtracted from the ship's armor rating until it was gone, and then subtracted from structure. Once structure was gone, the ship was destroyed. For each weapons hit (not damage point) scored against armor, you also got one roll on the Surface Explosion table. A hit that scored on structure got a roll on the Interior Explosion table. If a single hit scored against both (i.e. a 5 point missile hit with only 2 armor points left), you got one roll on each.

Comments ranged the gamut from "not deadly enough" to "too deadly" (no joke!). Generally previous Traveller players thought combat was supposed to be deadly, and didn't have too much trouble with it. Non-Traveller people thought it was too deadly.

Jump Drive Potential

Jump-n	1	2	3	4	5	6
Percentage	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%
Fuel %	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%
TL	9	11	12	13	14	15