



# AAB Proceedings

28 February, 1999

Issue 40

The newsletter of the History of the Imperium Working Group (HIWG). Produced and distributed by Clayton R. Bush.

## GenCon Events

--Clay Bush

Here's my annual listing of TRAVELLER events I will run at GenCon. For those not going to GenCon, this demonstrates the possible diversity of scenarios.

Th 12:00 - 4 p.m. Survive! The crash survivors are a mixed bag. Who's enemy is behind the crash? Who is hunting them?

Th 5:00 - 9:00 p.m. Law Comes to Boomtown An ennobled knight with a fief faces a recurring problem: ensuring law and order prevails.

Fr 12:00 - 4:00 p.m. Honura's Belt Millennia ago, was the Vendaam sect psionic? Was Honura's belt an emblem, an artifact, or a hidden base? Join the search.

Fr 5:00 - 9:00 p.m. B.U.M. A Big Ugly Monster has appeared on a colony world. The governor assembles a task force to research and resolve the problem.

## 2300AD

2300AD, TW2K and Dark Conspiracy were not part of the iMagic-MPG-Net merger. The person who owned MPG-Net and Tantalus (which was merged into MPG-Net last year) retained ownership of the games.

## News from Space

Satellites detected chemical reactions in the ozone layer where chloroflourocarbons broke down ozone. The layer's depletion is not part of an undocumented long-term cycle.

Two space probes, scheduled for 2005 and 2010, will provide sufficient data (by 2010) to observe and record spectrum from *terran* planets orbiting stars within 60 parsecs of Sol.

Space Interferometry Mission (SIM) picks the stars.

Terrestrial Planet Finder (TPF) takes loooong looks.

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## CREDIT

Aaron Barlow (New Zealand) provided the full page drawing in AABP39. I did not notice that the artwork didn't include a signature. A major error by me.

## Library Data

**Orbit:** The path an object follows around a planet or other object. Around a body with a magnetic field the Van Allen belts separate usable orbits into low and high. Measures used below are based on experience around earth-like planets.

**Low orbit:** Under the Van Allen belts extends out to 1,500 km. Communication satellites here orbit in about 100 minutes, so 50 would be needed to cover the entire globe.

**High orbit:** Above the Van Allen belts starts at 10,000 km. Communication satellites here orbit in about six hours, so 12 would be needed to cover the entire globe. This distance requires a radio dish with a diameter of 1-2 meters to pick up cellular phone transmissions.

**Geostationary orbit:** An orbit chosen to make the object's orbit exactly equal the rotation period of the body in question. On earth, this at about 36,000 km. Only 3-4 are needed to cover the entire globe. This distance requires a radio dish with a diameter of 10-12 meters to pick up cellular phone transmissions.

# AAB Proceedings Needs You!

-- Clay Bush

## 1. Articles

These should be about 800-1000 words. **ADVENTURES:** I prefer that they not specify characters to be used, but specify NPC and location details instead. **CONTACT:** 4-6 NPCs, connected by a common theme. (All diplomats; all from tech 0 worlds; all connected to the Polity of Fizzbin; whatever.) It's a usability criteria. A referee can say, "I like this diplomat" or "The players meet the Fizzbin merchant first."

## 2. Maps

These are useful for fleshing out worlds or locations. I use a full page for a world map. For other locations, 8 cm or 18 cm wide.

## 3. Art

a) AABP uses a six column layout (usually running text in just two or three columns). A half-page wide art piece would be 3-1/4" (8 cm) wide. b) I have a scanner. If

you do too (or have a drawing program), I prefer TIF format with a 600 dpi resolution.

## PLANNED THEMES

**Issue 40:** Submit by: 28 Feb, 1999 The worlds in Corridor subsector A about year 99. Vilani populations which have dealt with Vargr dominance of space for centuries, but have recently been contacted by the Imperium.

**Issue 41:** April Fool

Submit by: 15 March? (A catch up the schedule issue.) Fun, humorous stuff.

**Issue 42:** Barnard's Nth

Submit by: 30 April, 1999

Starts a set during the Interstellar Wars. It's a milieu that's been discussed a lot, and #40 will have finished the story arc across Corridor sector.

Barnard's Star during the Interstellar Wars. A early crash

settlement by the Terrans, and where the wars began.

**Issue 43**

Submit by: 31 May, 1999

A system near Earth during the Interstellar Wars.

**Issue 44:** Dingir 2300

Submit by: 30 June, 1999

**Issue 45:** Post-GenCon

Submit by: 31 August, 1999

Post-Origins and GenCon issue.

**Issue 46:** Mars 99

Submit by: 30 October, 1999

Swinging away from the Interstellar Wars period back to year 99. Mars, circa year 99. Re-settled by squatters. Earth Corporation trying to muscle in on the best sites.

*Thought:* A popular Zorro-type figure is interfering.

**Issue 47:** Year-End

Submit by: 30 November, 1999

What happens during preparations for the eve of the Imperium's centenary year?

## Escort Destroyer Holland

--Clay Bush

I've recreated this ship design in each version of TRAVELLER. It is a multi-purpose ship for independent patrol missions. It is armored and shielded to risk a fight. It accepts a low jump-number, enough to get around, to concentrate on what it will most need while patrolling in normal space.

**Payload:** One missile bay, one meson gun bay, five triple lasers and five triple sandcasters. Carry one 50-ton launch, to permit all the possibilities of the modular cutter.

**Size:** 3,000 tons where tonnage limits hardpoints.

**Performance requirement:** Jump-2.

## GURPS Traveller

The most significant feature of the GT system (for this design) is that Gunnery programs can be installed, freeing gunnery bunks for two cutter crew and ten Marines. In other versions, more staterooms were needed to give a landing team capability.

As this vessel is likely to use active sensors often, it only has basic cloaking and stealth.

The sections below include as fitting out 3,800 missiles, 3,000 sandcaster loads, and the following programs; Astrogation-2, Library Data, Datalink, Damage Control, Targetting-7 x12, and Gunnery-7 x12.

## DE Holland

Captain (Leadership and tactics), Pilot (Pilot [spacecraft]), Navigator (Astrogation), 2 sensor operators (Electronic operations [sensor]), Communication officer (Electronic operation [communication]), Screens officer (Electronic operation [force field]), Computer officer (Computer operations/programming), 2 medic (Diagnosis, Physician, and Surgery), 15 engineers (Engineering & Mechanical), 12 gunners (Gunner [laser])

3000-ton streamlined hull. DR 7,426. Basic emission cloaking and stealth.

Five turrets with three 360-MJ lasers each. Five turrets with three sandcasters each. One meson gun bay. One missile bay.

Meson screen. Nuclear damper.

Command bridge (hardened). Engineering. Utility. Fuel processor. 25 staterooms. 4 low berths. 1 sick bay. 89.5 cargo space. 1400 maneuver. 90 jump. 600 jump fuel.

Vehicle bay for 50-ton launch. Modular cutter included.

**Statistics:** EMass 23,906.3. Cost MCr1,154.27. Hull size modifier +11.

**Performance:** Jump-2. Accel 5.85 G. Air speed 10,196 mph. MCr1,154.27.

## TL 15 UNRESOLVED G-CARRIER

-David Jaques-Watson

The Unresolved-class G-Carrier was commissioned by Adifux Inc LIC Pty Ltd as the company's primary means of surface transportation. Two of the company owners (the Aslan noble Sir Eoraokortitrikhue, OEG, of Rhylanor and the Droyne noble Sir Ervmisbe, OEG, of Auitawry) specified that the external shell be identical to the time-honoured Resolve-class, allowing them to hide a high-performance vehicle inside a facade that would not arouse suspicion - in effect, creating a Q-ship. Even the fusion gun has been modelled to look as much as possible like the Resolve's standard laser. As long as the vehicle is driven as though it were a Resolve (with a cruising speed of 315 kph and top speed of 420 kph), most people don't give it a second look. However, a close visual inspection will show that the "laser", at the very least, is not what it seems.

A normal extrality line inspection of the vehicle will not reveal the nature of the craft. A close inspection will reveal the extra sensor equipment, and a suspicious customs officer may wonder about the thick armour and the high-tech power plant (half the size of the original but with three times the output!). However, Low Law Level worlds (3-) will generally allow the craft through. At Moderate Law Levels (4-7), even a vehicle-mounted laser is illegal, and will not be allowed past the extrality line. In this event, the weapon must be removed before the vehicle can proceed. Fortunately for Adifux, they have a competent Vargr engineer (Sir Dakhrongkae, OEG) who can dismantle the fusion gun and conceal its components behind panels in the cargo area (they even plug in!). Only an extremely close inspection and scan of the vehicle will reveal the weapon when it is hidden in this way. However, it takes at least half a day to reassemble, reattach and realign.

The vehicle has only half the passenger capacity of the original and costs three times as much, but the owners believe that the extra performance and on-board equipment more than compensate!

CraftID: Unresolved G-Carrier, TL 15, Cr10,891,000

Hull: 100/240, Disp=10, Config=4SL, Armour=40G, Unloaded=78 tons,  
Loaded=130 tons

Power: 20/30, Fusion=75MW, Dur=10/30

Loco: 10/20, Std Grav, Thrust=196 tons, NOE=150kph, Cruise=450kph,  
Top=600kph, MaxAccel=0.5G

Commo: Meson=Regional (500km), Radio=System (1,000 AU), Laser=Regional  
(500km), Maser=Regional (500km)

Sensors: Active EMS=Regional (500km), Pass EMS=Cont (5,000km), EMS  
Jam=Regional (500km), Densitometer=HiPen/1km, Neutrino=10kW,  
NAS=VLong (500m), Pass Audio=Dist (5km), Act Audio (pinger)=Dist  
(5km), Pass Mag=VDist (50km), Pass Environ, EM Mask, Headlights  
x 2, Holorecorder-15 (includes Ervmisbe's "Ride of the Valkyries"  
recording), Ervmisbe's Removable Flashing Blue Light x 1,  
ActObjScan=Diff, ActObjPin=Diff, PassObjScan=Rout,  
PassObjPin=Rout, PassEngScan=Diff, PassEngPin=Rout

Off: Hardpoints=1

---

Ammo	Rds	Pen/Attn	Dmg	MaxRng	AutoTgts	DngrSpc	Sig	ROF
Fusion RFX-15	0	—	67/5	30 VDist(18)	4	45	Hi	160

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Def: Smoke Discharger x 10, Prismatic Aerosol x 10

Control: Computer=2 x 1, 1/fib x 1, Holo Link x 43, Holo HUD x 3 (all ECP)

Accom: Crew=3 (Cmdr, driver, gunner), Passenger=5, Seats=Roomy x 8,  
Env=Basic env, basic ls, ext ls, grav plates, inert comp

Other: Fuel=27kl, Cargo=50kl (3.7 disp tons), ObjSize=Average,  
EmLevel=Nil

Note that this design reflects the recent TML errata that multiplies all damage point figures by  
If you want to include a picture, use the G-Carrier from Book 3. This is the one later detailed in *101 Vehicles* as  
the "Resolve-class". This would be a work-for-hire picture, and therefore (I believe) usable in this instance.

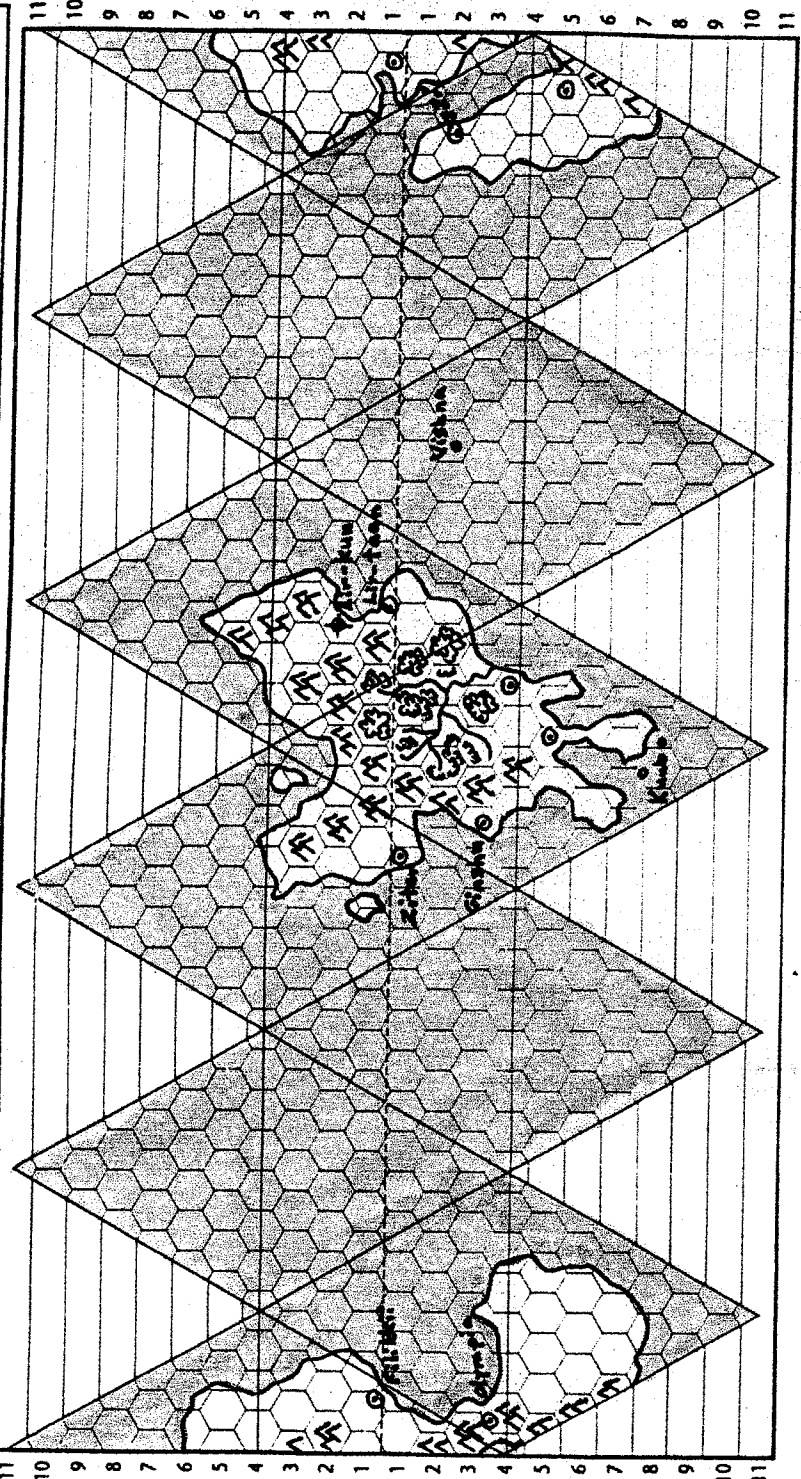
An essential characteristic of a fighting vehicle is its capacity to accept thicker armor and more powerful weapons. Only this capacity can quality be maintained without total disruption of production lines when repeatedly turning over to new models.

-Tank

A light fighting vehicle cannot possibly survive unless its weapon can knock out its most formidable opponent. If it can do that, then the one quickest on the draw will be the winner.

-Tank

Date: 00/-098      World Name: Lir      UPP: A5A8999-9      Hexagon Scale: 720  
 In Kilometers  
 Subsector and Sector: \_\_\_\_\_ / Corridor 0416      **GLOBAL DATA VIEW**



◆	Starport	⬮	Tunnel Underwater	⬮	Forest and River	⬮	⬮	⬮
⊙	City (5M)	⬮	Mountain	⬮	Forest/Jungle	⬮	⬮	⬮
⊙	City (500K)	⬮	River	⬮		⬮	⬮	⬮

# Lir World Write Up

## Lir System Descriptions

Lir occupies the innermost orbit.

**Mainworld:** The atmosphere around the secondary cities is heavily polluted. This is the atmospheric taint. Large regions are subject to acid rain in season.

**First moon:** This is an unrounded chunk of rock and ice. A naval observation station and storage for controlled goods make the world inhabited. There are no civilian residents.

**Second moon:** An unrounded chunk of stone-iron. It is desolate.

**Third moon:** This a captured satellite (size 1) is an extreme, elliptical orbit. It is recorded as desolate. Automated beacons warn ships not to land, for reasons left up to the referee.

### Outer System

There are three gas giants. No permanent settlements are found around them. (The Lirans have not left planetary orbit, for fear that any more distant settlement would only attract some Vargr Corsair band.)

## Monitoring Station

There is a largely automated Imperial monitoring station in the distant Oort belt. The crew is never more than three. Only one will be in the outer section with any arrivals. The secure section has personal weapons and escape launch.

In usual operation, the station records radio transmissions, logs ship movements, and collects reports from agents in Deneb for transmission back across Corridor.

-Clay Bush

This is a long settled world.

### Armed Neutrality

The Vargr have controlled nearby space for much of that time.

It maintains a small navy, to discourage independent freebooters, but has never raised a serious challenge to Vargr hegemony. Lir's leaders have felt that such a challenge would only draw overwhelming attention.

The government is benign towards its citizens. Visitors to the world are left alone as long as they stay near the usual haunts and routes, or are clearly engaged in mercantile actions.

Offworlders have never won a law suit following a vehicular accident. They have normal good fortune in other cases.

### Economy

Lir has been a market world for the freebooters. Its primary exports are agricultural. Its limited high tech industry supports its little navy and planetary military forces sufficient to maintain order across the planet (and independence).

**Entertainment Industry:** Lir has an important recreation industry. It's not a famous world, and it lacks landmarks. Instead, it has a reputation as a nice place to visit. Tourism is significant as an easy way to trade local produce for foreign currency. It is therefore federally protected.

It draws tourists from the Empire of Freebooters and nearby independent worlds. Travelers on the Imperial route across Corridor find it a convenient resting place. Groups are sufficiently dispersed among small establishments that the world's atmosphere is not cosmopolitan. There is a great deal of curiosity when new aliens are encountered away from the starport.

### Populace

Native life never developed beyond plants and insects. Terran and Vilani

immigrants dominate the ecology today.

The population is primarily of Vilani bloodlines, with some minor race representation. They tend to be tall, with an average height of 2.025 meters.

The population has been in the billions for millennia, limited by finite resources and Malthusian pressures. Culturally, a large population in established cities has developed into a stratified society. Heredity plays a large role in educational and work opportunities.

### Starport

A government corporation runs the starport. The corporation accommodates the federal government anything it wants. It steadfastly denies any local or provincial requests. And that's what the marked extraltery zone signs mean in practice.

It's status as a legal sanctuary has drawn oppressed groups into a squatter camp nearby. The federals forbid recruiting for either mercenary or colonial groups. They enforce this restriction consistently and firmly. Moving people into the starport isn't enough to gain their freedom; the corporation will automatically 'grant' the federals permission to enter and remove them.

A Makhidkarun office is present. It sells a wide variety of entertainment programming to local companies.

### Black Market

Lir has a large black market, dealing with goods from the Empire of Freebooters. Most off world goods can be found at an open-air marketplace outside Parina, a satellite town 15 km south of the starport.

Some weapons, personal and starship, can be found on the outermost moon. They are kept in storage areas within the purview of the naval observation post on it. Title is usually transferred at Parina, with the controlled goods then delivered in orbit.

# Adventure on Lir

—Clay Bush

## 1. Hired at Spaceport

Lir has a spaceport, as well as a starport. Landing fees are cheaper.

A chubby, middle-age man approaches the group (at the starport if need be). He needs two passengers taken from the spaceport to the undersea settlement at Vishna on short notice. Why them? Any Imperial spacecraft can operate underwater; he wants to charter theirs.

Deliver signed receipts for their arrival to Karl Steinway, and he'll reimburse you.

**Checking:** Steinway has an import/export license. The contract can be registered.

## 2. Pickup and Transfer

The spaceport has lower landing fees than the starport. A warehouse complex sorts goods for just-in-time delivery anywhere in the world.

Steinway has a small warehouse. He has two passengers to transfer to Vishna. Neither passenger speaks Anglic.

The pilot must make piloting rolls on entering the water and for traveling underwater. A system of beacons clearly marks the approaches to Vishna, so navigation is easy.

## 3. Vishna Docks

The two passengers wander off.

A woman arrives late to meet them. D. Kapala is professionally dressed, and in her mid-20s.

She quickly signs the receipt for the two passengers, and says she'll track down the passengers. She asks one of the group to deliver a package to Steinway's warehouse. It is wrapped in an unbroken customs seal.

## 4. Back at Steinway's

Steinway asks about the package. He'll promptly pay cr2,000 for it.

When reminded about the receipts for the passengers, he'll pay that too. But he has to get the

money, since he only had cr2,000 on him.

he has no other work for them, but will keep them in mind.

## 5. Abduction

Action picks up when Ferzon captures an isolated group member. In uniform, Ferzon beckons the PC over. Ferzon has three associates, one driver and two muscle.

## 6. The Notice

Ferzon contacts the group about exchanging the captive for the package the security video shows they were given.

## 7. Exchange

Ferzon wants to make the exchange at the spaceport. (He has friends there, and will be tipped off if the police there are involved.)

He will deliver the captive, take the package, and leave. "If it isn't what I expect, you'll see me again."

Players should bring something to exchange.

## 8. A New Notice

Ferzon states, "The package isn't the real material. I want it, and this time it will not be so easy."

This time he will meet them in a deserted church. He arranges the details.

## 9. Another Kidnaping

Well before the appointed meeting, there is another kidnaping attempt. The delay was intended to put the characters off their guard.

A false damsel in distress is the intended lure.

## 10. Second Meeting

While the party is at the rendezvous site, Ferzon will be after the small craft or vessel used. He is convinced the real goods were planted, and he's ruled out the PC's having the goods on them. If the goods are not on the craft, he will try Steinway's.

# Patrons

## Rupi Sizakowski

Chubby, middle-aged.

This rebel leader knows that Pininski has valuable information. He hired a group to steal it; now he needs a way to transport it out of the undersea settlement of Vishna.

He approaches the characters in Lir-kun, and sends them to Vishna on false pretenses. While they are there, an undersea robot attaches a data package to their craft. His agents at the Lir-kun spaceport will retrieve the data.

**Motivation:** Scrupulously honest in all dealings. He is also rather selfish. He demands a payoff for any help, and gives nothing away.

**Skills:** Diplomacy, Tactics.

## Karl Steinway

A broker at the minor spaceport outside Lir-kun. He prefers it to the starport a few miles away. "I'd rather be the biggest frog in a small pond than any fish in the ocean."

**Motivation:** Ambitious: out to impress others as an important person. He does not respect honesty, and enjoys misleading others. He also enjoys causing others grief, which occasions show him that he has power.

**Skills:** Trader, Broker.

## Deana "D" Kapala

Mid-20s, professionally dressed.

This daughter of a travelling missionary went into the world on her own. She worked in the usual small jobs a girl on her own gets, and is on her first job as a courier. She has no police record, nor have others tracked her yet.

**Motivation:** She is friendly, likes the excitement so far, and wants to impress the people she meets. She is enjoying using other people. This may only a phase, which can change if she or someone she uses gets hurt.

**Skills:** Dance, Sing, Liaison.

## Unfriendlies

### Colonel Pininski, Retd.

He is blackmailing King Balan with evidence that the Ultima Bank of Zitar is bankrupt.

When he discovers the theft of his records, he will have Lieutenant Ferzon pursue the characters. While the pursuit occurs, he will travel to the starport to sell backup copies as a scoop.

*Motivation:* A aggressive, take-charge personality, he believes in control. His speech is marked by very violent metaphors and tone.

*Skills:* Strategy, Surveillance.

### Lieutenant Ferzon

This military police officer has been serving as Pininski's muscle. He will take personal leave to pursue the package, but will travel and act while in uniform.

*Motivation:* A very violent person who regrets not being born into a major war. He seeks danger out, and is known in certain circles for being willing to undertake personal missions.

*Skills:* Leadership, Tactics, Small arms.

### Biff Longneck, Driver

Quiet, non-descript attire.

Not the sort of person you would normally notice. He wants to change that. Paying attention to him (not just what he knows) earns positive reaction DMs.

Longneck will bargain for whatever he reveals. He is looking for a BK-4 dual-drive contra-grav engine for his weekend race car.

His goal is to be the best. For example, if mistreated, he will derive a certain pleasure in exceeding player's expectation of what he can take before breaking.

## Imperials

### Cpt. Dan Loomis

He heads the Imperial mission to Lir. The players may approach him about getting off world. His interest is in getting Balan to better support Imperial interests.

*Motivation:* He seeks high position in the government. He prefers to control others, instead of persuading them.

*Skills:* Leadership, Survey.

### Ensign Darius Roland

He drew the assignment of capturing those pursuing the characters. Helping the players isn't his primary interest.

*Motivation:* A social, charming junior officer. He was selected for this diplomatic mission to get on people's good side. His dominant characteristic is lust and PCs will notice him looking and flirting.

*Skills:* Tactics, Small Craft, Small Arms, (SMG)

### Lian Newman, Reporter

A curious, well-educated woman who writes feature articles and news stories to pay for her travels. She's willing to run risks to get a story, but she will not go against the established authorities.

*Secret:* The 'Newman' last name is a legacy of genetic experiments. She has travelled far from her home world in the Imperial Core to escape the stigma (and expectations) of those around her.

*Skills:* Communication (Writing and Video Composition), Bargain, Hand-to-Hand Combat.

### Vladimir Pollyfax, Spy

*Skills:* Fast Talk, Electronics, Hand-to-Hand combat.

He benefits from signal-traffic analysis performed by a hidden Imperial satellite. He operates here with the permission of Dean Itaki, the world's ruler. He may receive instructions to intervene, if Itaki is convinced to help. And then Itaki is completely cut out of the mess.

## Power Players

### King Balan

(His first name is 'King'; his father chose it.)

A leading regional politician, Balan is heavily associated with the mega-city of Zitar. He is indebted to the Ultima Bank of Zitar, and has been encouraging others to invest in it.

*Interaction:* A sociable politician who appears friendly in all interactions. When negotiating, he drives a hard bargain. He's the kind who smile and offer you a drink as they double their price.

*Quote:* "So, if I help you, I get the records this Pininski person is looking for?"

*Skills:* Persuasion, Recruiting, Fast-talk, Broker.

*Power base:* Governor of the world's richest province. Sits on the world leader's Advisory Council.

### Dean Itaki, Charismatic leader

Son of the former head of government, who took over from the man who brought the world government to its current authority.

*Outlook:* Believes all are self-centered. He won't help without knowing how it benefits the applicants and himself. If he finds out he was used, he will cruelly punish those who used him.

*Values:* Strong commitment to justice and the common welfare.

*Quote:* "Justice is the first duty any government owes to its citizens."

*Skills:* Interrogation, Economics, Leadership

*Power base:* He controls the starport. He is trying to emulate the Third Imperium, by building up the trade and transport companies which he has a large stake in.

# A Stellar Collision

—Clay Bush

## Hiring On

The PCs are approached by a planetary science institute, GomSteck. The institute seeks experienced spacers to crew a shuttle documenting the fiery death of an errant asteroid, GKA-422. The record may permit improvements to spaceships that will enable them to perform better near stars.

First, install a payload of sensors on and in the asteroid. Find suitable caverns, place sensors and meson communicators inside, and seal them in.

Second, operate the shuttle near the star during the fiery death, to record messages that might not penetrate the outer chronosphere with enough power to reach platforms farther away.

## Spaceship *Makrimarikh*

Description: No jump engine. 4-G acceleration and contra-gravity.

Small craft: An air/raft is in the cargo hangar. Using it in deep space will halve its performance compared to how it would perform on a planet.

**Sabotaged supplies:** The spaceship has been fully serviced before the PCs report. The water containers which should come into use on day 20 and after contain a small dose of a drug that will progressively make people edgier and more nervous.

## Passenger

Yuta Someza, a planetary engineer, will oversee and troubleshoot the devices she built.

Skills: Physics, Communication, Robotics.

Strengths: Total recall.

Weaknesses: Deathly afraid she will foul up and embarrass her parents. Prone to freezing up when working alone.

## Emplacer

During negotiations, a contract officer will suggest that the PCs require someone skilled to operate explosives (or a fusion drill) to emplace the sensors. Players may disagree. Identifying him later will be the only chance to figure out later who placed the drug in the water.

## Twent Oberon, Navy Officer

He is transferred from a first officer position, and resents the move. He performed similar duty on planet's moon three years ago. He resents moving backward, or sideways; however it's described.

*Why:* This posting places him in the way of the drugs in the spacecraft's systems. His family and Someza's are rivals. Both are opposed the contract officer's Faljaka family faction.

## GKA-422

The asteroid is cylindrical. It is a kilometer long and about 400 meters wide. These characteristics make it very useful for assessing the stresses a large ship would undergo.

There are four sensors to place on the surface, eight to place 50-70 mtrs below the surface, and two *hoped* to be placed in the center of the asteroid.

The sensors are designed for placement in 1.25 by 1.25 meter spaces. Placing a reflective tarp over it and pouring a quick-setting concreting mix over the tarp will provide sufficient

protection for the tests.

Players may think to use fusion drills. A fusion-drill will quickly create suitable size emplacements in crevices, and in the asteroid's center. Suitable skills will make this a safe and enjoyable activity.

## Martial Law Declared

First, a routine vote of confidence is contested. Second, members of the ruling council disperse to their respective territories. Third, the Premier places a loyal follower, Herna Oberon, in charge of space operations.

This Oberon is, however, a fanatic isolationist. He orders the shuttle returned to monitor surface activities from orbit.

The question of contract payment should come up. There is no recall clause in the contract. Their bond would be revoked.

Twent Oberon will feel he was moved here to set up his ship for a mutiny. He'll blame Someza, of course, and any who protect her.

## Imperial Ship

The I.N. destroyer *Nebular* arrives in system. *Nebular* carries one passenger. Admiral Nogaro commanded his home world's fleet and opposed Imperial annexation. He is being transported to exile in the Spinward Marches with only his music collection.

This ships' appearance provides a chance for players to surrender to someone besides the planetary authorities, and the ship's doctor may figure out the drug angle if players haven't.



# The Black Bird

-Clay Bush

The party is on a planet for one week (or two, for annual overhaul), and looking for a place to stay away from their ship.

The patron, Reginald Delarue, has inherited a small villa in the country. He has an offer for the statues, which will pay for hiring the party to transport them and for remodeling expenses. Besides the standard payment for transporting cargo, the party can use the villa as a base of operations during their stay here.

The villa was owned by Ven Vangrove, a retired provincial legislator. He collected artifacts and trinkets that travelers brought to the world, often by exchanging gifts received with other legislators.

## Discovery

The party discovers the warm body of an elderly man on the grounds. The body was hidden from the house by a low wall. He was hit in the back of the head by a blunt object, possibly a brick.

If the police are called, they advise the party to stay in the area. The police identify the body as Robert Granby, an elderly local. He retired from a job in town three years ago, and settled here. He was often seen walking the paths around the villa's grounds.

## Witness

The Applegates, residents of a nearby house, should have seen something. There are three Applegates: Jeremy (32), Virginia (30), and their daughter Patty (14).

They tell the police that they were away, but no one can support their alibi. The Applegates avoid the party members by day, and decline to answer any questions in daylight. They state that the police told them not to discuss the case with others.

At night, however, Patty comes over. The Applegates moved here to escape enemies. (Witness protection is implied.) They will not get involved publicly.

There were two men met Robert Granby on the grounds. The three were pointing at different statues and arguing. While Granby was

talking to one, the other suddenly hit him from behind with a brick. Both fled in a blue sedan.

## At Market

Eventually someone has to buy food. The market is an enclosed atrium setting, between an enclosed grocery store and two-story municipal buildings. Grav parking is atop the buildings, with open-air concrete staircases down to the ground.

A short, weak and balding man meets the buyer. He informs the buyer that Alton McMurray, a man with connections, wants a black bird statue that Granby said was at the villa. The party has several days to find where it was moved to.

The statue is not on the grounds.

## The Detective

Amanda Shang, a police detective, arrives at the villa. She intends to confuse the evidence. She will try to land and enter the villa unobserved in order to plant a disk with falsified sales records. The party should have a chance to detect her arrival or find her in the room where the disk is planted.

If the disk is planted, then the detective will arrange for a police search.

Shang is the daughter of the curator of the local museum.

## Museum

The curator, Vincente Shang, was looking forward to getting the

Vangrove collection. He was upset when the will did not deed them to the museum. Instead, with the estate, they went to a distant relative who has not been in the province for two decades.

Granby visited the museum several times when he first arrived. He often visited areas with statues. Vincente Shang recalls that Granby was good at identifying them as to world and time period.

Amanda Shang will visit the museum during the party's visit. Afterward, she will ask for the party's help.

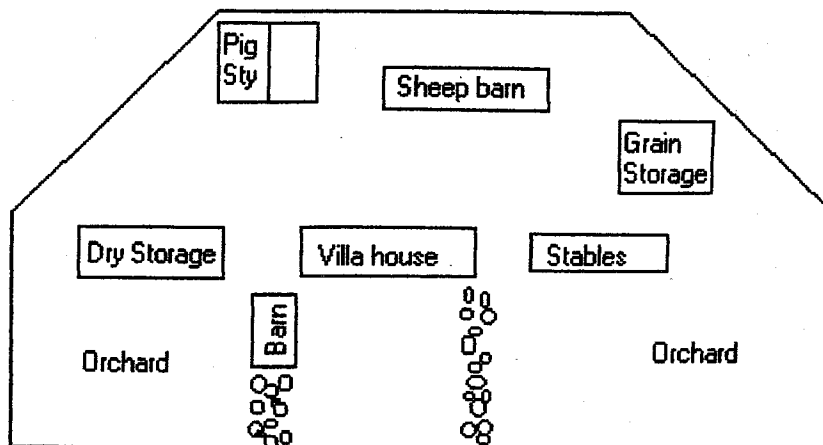
## Amanda's Story

Granby was a retired police inspector who worked smuggling cases. He was still working on old, open cases. He felt that statues were too common an import, and were traded around too much. He felt some were used to communicate or conceal hidden objects, and he was inventorying all he could find, and tracing their movements.

Some ex-cons were asking about the black bird statue. Granby started looking for it, and found a black bird statue in Vangrove's collection. He learned that Vangrove acquired the black bird statue from a fellow legislator.

Granby's house has been searched by someone. He had 'borrowed' the statue, but she took it from him safekeeping until the new owner turned up.

Subsequent events are up to the referee.



# GURPS Books and TRAVELLER

—Clay Bush

In a previous issue, I reviewed IG's books, and described those I thought belonged in a basic library. The focus was gamers outside the U.S. who had to special order.

## ESSENTIAL SET

### GURPS: Traveller

This (GT) is the sourcebook for a Third Imperium with no Rebellion. The biggest omission is section on world generation. There is a page (p123) on converting planetary descriptions from the *GURPS Space* format.

The character section gives special rules and universe-specific templates for creating characters. I found the *GURPS Basic Set* sufficient to finish designing characters.

It includes a ship design system, and a starship combat system. It is designed for two tech levels (It felt wrong to see TL15 starships now described as "tech level 12." I've just seen TL15 for over a decade.)

Other GURPS books referenced: *Compendium I*, *Compendium II*, *Space*, *Ultra-Tech*, and *Vehicles*.

### GURPS: Basic Set

This book is essential to create characters and resolve encounters and personal combat. If you don't have it, you bought GT for library data and the ship combat system.

GT references are to pages in the Third Edition. The copy I picked up had additions, but Steve Jackson Games added them at the end of the book rather than throw off the page references in all the published books. The additions were not critical, and an older printing of Third Edition is still good.

### GURPS: Space

I picked up my store's last copy of the second edition. Their order forms showed it going out of print. What is happening is that a third edition is due out.

It has chapters on space campaign skills, equipment, starships, and worlds. The skills section helps to flesh out characters in a GT setting. The

equipment list isn't Traveller, but the items listed are all common to SF settings. For example, the referee could choose to allow screamers: sonic weapons that inflict damage, with some specialized models being used to stun.

The starships section is designed to cover all tech levels and different universes. The combat system is designed to use PC skills, and is 'scalable' so that fleet battles can be resolved as well as ship duels.

The world generation section covers the key gap in GT. The section on star systems, star types, and stellar objects is better than SCOUTS. It recommends a 3D system of graphing selected system locations, with notations to indicate their elevation relative to the piece of paper. Planets are described in as much detail as in Traveller. There is no UPP; the system record form includes mapping the world's surface, and recording the system's family of planets.

I recommend getting this.

## VERY USEFUL

### Compendium I: Character Creation

This compiles skills and rules for attributes for advantages, disadvantages, and racial characteristics from all GURPS books. There are a lot of interesting things ... but a beginning GT game only needs the three books above.

### Compendium II: Combat and Campaigns

This compiles advanced and alternate rules for anything other than character creation. There's a space combat system, a space *opera* combat system, and the 'Mass Combat' rules for army engagements. That's just in the combat section.

I recommend getting it before getting *Compendium I*. I would not require getting it immediately. I make this cut, because you need *GURPS Space* to generate worlds and it provides a fleet combat system. Just use that system, and

play. Buy this, consider the alternate systems, and expect discussions about which to use instead of starting gaming.

The fun stuff in here may be hard to introduce later ("Why are we just now checking how cold it is on Iceball? We've been here a dozen times."), but I expect using it from the start will bog down play. Too many places to look for rules, instead of winging it immediately.

## CONCLUSION

Besides *GURPS: TRAVELLER*, get the third edition *BASIC SET* and *GURPS: Space*. Use those three, see how you like them, and only then consider adding other materials.

The above is my personal opinion, is not binding on anyone else, and doesn't necessarily reflect anyone else's views.

## Cloning

*GURPS: Space* includes the following text on page 65.

"Typical cost to grow a single limb, eye, or organ is \$5,000. Or you may grow a whole clone body for \$10,000 and keep it as a source of spare parts...few see anything wrong with using a clone body as a source of transplants."

Oops.

If it has all the organs needed to function, a body is considered a being, regardless of religion, age, species, or origin. A society that rules clones are not full humans can make other such rulings. This argument goes back to debates about abolishing slavery.

Does a clone have a soul? Did slaves? A body was created; did God lose count of the number of souls needed?

Religious arguments about are being debated already. Harvesting full body clones is unlikely to be accepted easily and quietly.

# Empress Wave

-Derek Stanley  
dstanley@direct.ca  
Date: 2/28/99

Here are some letters I wrote some time ago.

**Q:** Did the Empress Wave phenomenon "create" the GT alternate universe, in place of the MT/TNE universe?

**DS:** No... Well maybe if you're assuming time travel here. There are rumors that the EW might make an appearance in GT. Rumors that's all.

**Q:** What is the "Empress Wave"?

**DS:** The EW was the reason the real Strophon wasn't at Capital when Dulinor assassinated his double. Please note that it has nothing to do with the "Sparklers" or "Baddies to the Core" both of whom were officially invalidated by *The Regency Sourcebook*.

The EW is a psionic / psychic phenomenon emanating from the Galactic Center, traveling outwards at the speed of light. The basic thing that goes along with the wave front is a vision of a woman standing in front of a burning city attempting to communicate something to the person who receives the vision.

There are a number of theories on what the EW does to people and a great number of discussions on it in the TNE side of thing. Basically it seems to "change" the patterns of people (include all aliens in this) and possible awaken their latent psionic potential.

The most dramatic effects of the wave seem to follow some 50+ years after the initial wave front. What happens "back there" is anyone's guess. In MT the LongBow stations out in the Vargr Extents all seem to go offline after the wave front passes over them. This could be because INI is utilizing psionics at these stations in their observations of the Zhodani core expeditions. In TNE the Zhodani Consulate appears to be coming apart at the seams.

There's plenty more thoughts on what this is or what it means.

The Wave appears to have had dramatic effects upon the Consulate but little noticeable effect on the Extents. My theory is the Wave's effects are most noticeable on "Static" rather than "Dynamic" societies. Thus, the Zho's and the Vilani would be hardest hit, while the kinds of changes the EW brings about would be virtually unnoticed in the Vargr Extents, as things are in a constant state of flux there.

Derek

## Empress Wave 2

**Dedly@aol.com:** I think "destroyed" is a bit strong based on the evidence given [for the Zhodani Consulate]. "Thrown them into chaos" seems more like it.

**DS:** Given that analogy then the Roman Empire was "Thrown in chaos" by the Goths. When a political entity ceases to be it is in effect "destroyed." The Zho's government effectively collapses in the face of the chaos that is brought about by the Empress Wave.

**Dedly@aol.com:** Another thing to keep in mind is that there are a lot more Zhos practicing psionics than any other race (except the Droyne) in Charted Space.

**DS:** Granted.

**Dedly@aol.com:** Yes the races all have the same psionic *potential* but nowhere is that potential realized except in the Zhodani Consulate. From where I stand, it seems that the EW wreaked havoc upon those beings with *matured* psionic skills.

**DS:** Possibly, the EW also flattened the Imperial Longbow sites out in the Vargr Extents. It is also likely that the EW had a similar effect upon the Vargr but given their generally chaotic political nature it was just far more difficult to detect. The Zhodani were a single large monolithic state, when something goes wrong in there it's very easy to see. The Vargr on the other hand are in a nearly constant state of flux, in fact the only constant in Vargr politic's is the fact

that tomorrow it's going to be different.

**Dedly@aol.com:** If you believe in the "flowering of psionics" hypothesis then you could say that the average being all of a sudden has some kind of psionic development that he/she/it was previously denied. I don't necessarily believe that the EW would be as bad as you describe it, otherwise, what would be left?

**DS:** I do believe in the "flowering of psionics" theory, unfortunately I also believe that there's far more a work here than a simple awakening of psionic's, although that would explain some of the damage in Zhodani space. I believe that there's also something far more philosophical going on here, something spiritual if you will, though I'll be the first person to admit I'm anything but a spiritual person.

**Dedly@aol.com:** Stephen King's "The Stand" in space? I can see some more Chaos but not destruction.

**DS:** With Chaos there comes destruction, it is inevitable. We might all think we're perfectly civilized but at heart we're all only three meals away from savagery.

**TravelrTNE:** There is absolutely no evidence that "everything coreward of the Imperial border" is affected the same. We have only anecdotal (and dubious) "evidence" for what's happening even to the Zhos, much less the Vargr, etc. It's too bad we never got any Regency epic adventures ... Avery was going into Vargr space to see what it did to them.

**DS:** This is true. I was merely saying that everything Coreward of the border is in it's zone of influence. The Zho's just appear to be an extreme case of what's going on in the EW.

It occurs to me that perhaps the Vargr have been similarly affected, they just don't know it. With the

## TNS News Item

Tekkfakkh, 074-100

Battleship *Bunza* has docked in orbit. The crew reports that authorities of the human Third Imperium lured them into an ambush. Although they acquitted themselves well, the Imperials superior numbers prevented a full success.

Admiral Vaakkhagrrir states that the ship was invited to transport surplus equipment to Arkind (Corridor 3209). The Imperial agents were specific in requiring an armed warship to ensure the cargo was adequately protected. On arriving in system, however, the *Bunza* was immediately attacked, without warning or provocation.

*Continued from page 11:*

arrival of the EW through the Extents during the Rebellion there suddenly appeared a great, if electronic, Vargr leader. Perhaps the Vargr scientists were somehow inspired by the effects of the EW and the result was Oekhsos. Who knows. Perhaps the EW's affect on Vargr is to unite them into a single people rather than a bunch of small packs.

**TravelrTNE:** TNE was not about simple matter-of-fact, "This is how it is, always has been, and always will be" static answers. Especially to something like the EW. TNE was about a dynamic universe where things are subject to many factors. Who says the Wave is one gigantic and eternal phenomena? Its just as likely it comes in "pulses" or repeating waves, like ripples in a pond or something similarly in the "psionic dimension" alluded to in RSB?

**DS:** From conversations I've had it appears to be, to those perceptible to it. One big bitching boogie board of a wave front followed by a constant background with ripples. I have to agree, TNE was nothing about static events suspended in a jar, it was an evolving universe and the EW was but one of those evolutions. The Black Curtain opening up was another, as was the departure of the Star Vikings. I'm pretty sure the EW isn't a repeating phenomenon. It's a continuous broadcast if you will, like a psionic camera in the most important place in the world broadcasting continuously. Kind of an Empress Web Cam if you will, but the Empress is always there.

**TravirTNE:** Maybe the Wave itself isn't a single, solitary phenomena, but a bunch of related ones, following in succession or w/ delayed/different effects?

**DS:** Like an encyclopedia that keeps showing up every month with new stuff.

**TravirTNE:** Re: "Things we do know: Avery has left with a large crew of Psionics, both artificial and natural. By artificial, yes, we are indeed referring to VIRUS here." Not just Virus. Reference BECESR (or however it goes).

**DS:** Ah, yes I see them now... It's the ships that are controlled by Virus. Wouldn't the Regency just \*\*\*\* if they knew this.

"Books should be closed each year, especially in partnerships, because frequent accounting makes for long friendships. (The law helps those who are awake-not those who are asleep.)"

Fra Luca Paciola, father of double-entry accounting

Technology is complex and expensive, with lots of little details and limitations that can overwhelm a player. A game must show the players the significant details {at their level of command}, and ignore the rest.

—Harpoon rulebook

## AAB Proceedings

AAB Proceedings is distributed to all HIWG members bi-monthly. Membership rates are \$10/year in the U.S.A. and \$18.00/year overseas. (The difference goes entirely to the postal service.)

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

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## HIWG Connection

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

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