$\bigcirc$ AAB PROCEEDINGS

General News

By the time this reaches you, *Traveller: the New Era* will already be in your stores. (It went to the printers April 15, and began to ship to distributors on May 20.) The vagaries of international mail makes arrival of this newsletter hard to predict overseas, but most US readers will get this newsletter after getting the New Era.

The biggest change from original expectations is that design sequences will not be included in the basic set. Instead, a new product called *Technical Architecture* is planned that will provide rules for designing most anything. (Complete comprehensiveness is not plaaned; there will always be something you can think of designing that the system will not cover. Disbelievers are referred to a mathematical concept called Godel's Theorum.)

SURVIVAL MARGIN

Survival Margin is in game stores. Its intended audience is people already playing Traveller and MegaTraveller. It gives background on the Rebellion, carries the timeline forward to the New Era, and gives rules for converting old characters to the new system. Geo's comments are on the next page.

Do not regard the rules on character conversion as just for campaigns converting to the new time period. You can convert old adventures and run them under the new rules. If you do not write adventures, doing such a feat provides you with an easy way to show interested players how the new system works.

FOLIO ADVENTURES

Word is that *Arrival of Vengeance* will be the last folio adventure. The concept was "bleeding money." Of particular note was the high ratio of color to black and white. Color costs a lot more, and they could not charge enough extra to cover the cost. Marketing data showed that a folio sold in the stores when it first came out, and then it stopped selling. Lack of continuing sales made them unprofitable.

The packaging format may continue with products such as the *Twilight 2000 Referee's Kit*, because such products have a recurring sales value.

MegaTraveller Journal 4

DGP leaves Traveller with a bang. The featured adventure is almost enough material to count as a supplement; it could have been supplemented with a few world write-ups and various maps to fill out 96 pages. The majority of the material deals with the K'kree, and how those anti-social herbivores changed from a distant library entry to an immediate threat to residents of Gateway sector.

The connection to old library entries about the G'naak of K'kree prehistory show a continued practice of tying new developments in Traveller to an older element. Look at he Aslan revelation, Dulinor as infant terrible to traditional nobles, and the Cymbeline chips. Continuing campaigns do this all the time; they start with library data, and discoveries change the significance of what characters know. With the Collapse, we shall probably see little tying back of new developments. That's what the New Era's new start is about.

Contents

SHIPS

None this time. We're between rules systems!

Chairsophont's letter

--Geo Gelinas

MORE THAN THE NAME IMPLIES

Quite often, a company or organization will grow beyond what their original name implies. Take TSR for example: the letters stood for Tactical Studies Rules. I think we all know that tactical rules are NOT their best seller these days. Or FASA. How many of you know that FASA stood for Freedonian Aeronautic and Space Administration? FASA started as a licensee making deck plans for Traveller! When was the last time you saw a Traveller product from them? Therefore we can see that an organization can outgrow its original conception.

It is thus for HIWG. The History of the Imperium Working Group was created about the time of the advent of MegaTraveller. Ed Edwards saw a need developing in the Traveller background and got together with Mike Mikesh to form HIWG to fill that need. Others, including myself, soon joined. As originally conceived, HIWG would expand on the history of he Imperium from the time of the assassination bringing the conditions to those shown on the "1125 Peace Map".

HIWG set about in earnest toward that goal, but very quickly expanded beyond that. Many people joining HIWG were interested in aspects of MegaTraveller other than its history. Thus were born a number of Special Interest Groups. So HIWG became more than an organization creating history, it became an idea exchange. In that capacity, HIWG created a large volume of data.

Several people got their start as writers of Traveller material while creating material for HIWG. Both Digest Group Publications and Game Designers' Workshop, though under no obligation to do so, have used material developed by HIWG.

But that was then, this is now. It is evident to anyone who reads the Travellers' News Service in *Challenge* that the Imperium has passed 1125. Peace, as we expected it, is definitely not at hand. So, what is HIWG's role now? HIWG remains what it has become in recent years - an organization of Traveller players and referees. This is HIWG's most important role.

Game Designers' Workshop is still writing *Traveller: The New Era* as I write. Player opinion has already given some shape to that product, and will continue to do so. That is not to say that HIWG no longer does development. Quite the contrary. HIWG is deeply involved in developing HubWorlds, a campaign background that will be used in the Imperial Lines newsletter. Also, once *Traveller: The New Era* is released, HIWG will once again be developing at full steam.

HIWG is an important organization, but we can't get hung up on the history part. HIWG is more than just a working group for Imperial history, and has been for a long time now.

Survival Margin

--Geo Gelinas

This is a quick review of *Survival Margain*, the first TNE product. The module is subtitled "Gateway to the New Era," but could easily be subtitled "Introduction to the New Era," because that is really what the book is about.

Contents:

The TNS articles are selected reprints from Challenge. They are interspersed with excepts from material from Strephon, Dulinor, and Norris. While this portion does comprise over half of the book, it does put all this information in one place. Furthermore, not everyone has all the *Challenge* issues. Understanding the Rebellion is important to understanding at least how things happened. The excerpts make interesting reading, and give some insight to some of the Faction leaders.

The character conversion section is very thorough, and should produce reasonable New Era characters from Traveller or MegaTraveller characters. It is a valuable portion of the supplement, but there is a lot of other information in this book, much of it as useful or, in the long run, more useful than the conversion section.

Is this book worth the $10.00 fee? I bought it sight unseen. I was not disappointed, and would have bought it in the store, even after looking at its contents.

Is this book essential to the proper playing of TNE? No, I don't think so. I think it was intended to supplement the material in TNE, but TNE will be complete enough to allow play without this book. Nonetheless, it is a useful supplement.

If I had a complaint, it would be about the cover art. While it is a good piece, it was previously used on a *Challenge* cover. It shows the roots of the Collapse and eventually the New Era, but I think I would have liked seeing something more related to the times of the New Era.

Overall, this is a useful supplement. I believe we can look forward to an excellent product in TNE.

MegaTraveller Journal 4

--Clay Bush

Is this a great product? yes, I think it is. The adventure is broad and the players' actions are important to many worlds. The space opera feeling is there.

Will everyone play it? Probably not. It sets up continuing events in Gateway sector, and referees with established campaigns will probably not relocate.

Do you have to have this product? If you like everything Traveller, yes. The MTJs seem set to become collector's items. As they are not as datable as many JTAS issues, they may have higher values.

Do you have to have this product for role-playing? Probably not. The events will be ancient, little-known in the New Era. (Because of limited communication during the Rebellion, few will have ever heard about them before the Collapse. In the old Imperium, they would have been page one news everywhere.)

I recommend getting a copy before the limited print run sells out.

Traveller Material

The other material in MTJ4 is interesting. I liked the many tidbits and pieces that were discussed. There were several significant items.

The Sparkler discussion had progressed further than my informant knew. DGP and DGP discussed tying them to Knightfall and that adventure's "Pimordial" race.

The jump fuel discussion rages on. Can a starship make multiple jumps without refueling? Official: yes, but it is not what the engine was designed to do. Therefore increase the difficulty when not using all the jump fuel.

Many players and referees routinely go with the assumption that a jump-4 ship can make any combination of jumps up to 4.

Joe indicates that the neatest solution he has seen is summed up in an equation printed in MTJ4 on page 89. I like Joe's attitude, because the formula agrees with what I have been telling a referee here.

The jump fuel calculations include a +1% factor. Therefore, I argue, jump capacity cannot be simply divided. You must compute the fuel for each jump. In practice, a ship can make two or three jumps limited in total to its jump number *minus one.* A jump-4 ship can make a jump-2 and a jump-1. It is the jump-5 ship that can make two jump-2s on internal fuel

The easiest workaround, not addressed by either DGP or GDW, is putting jump-4 fuel aboard a jump-1 ship. This permits travel across abysses even at tech level 9. There is some time delay in moving fuel from a secondary fuel tank into the primary tank, but that is only inconvenient.

Library Data Guidelines

1. An entry hould read like an encyclopedia entry, not a news item.

2. Minimize historical detail and emphasize "fun to play" information useful for role playing.

The other important item (to me) was the item on library data on the vary last page. It is Joe's last message to Traveller contributors, and I emphasize it accordingly.

Since it was a copy of an internal memo, I abstracted the points made into just the two points set out on this page. The second point is especially important to HIWGers, because the memo specifically refers to HIWG documents.

I hope that each reader will review the two points, and consider what they mean to the reader.

UWP BACKDATING - SOCIAL DATA

--Steven Eric Schwartz

The social data of a world's UWP are those that can, and do, change in a relatively short period of time compared to physical data. These aspects are Population, Government, Law Level, Tech Level and Starport. [I ignore allegiance for this discussion, but it can change rapidly too.]

POPULATION

From GURPS:Space, on a world with Earth-like conditions, the population will increase x10 every 100 years. This number is modified by the following conditions:

-2 if temp < 0 F or > 110 F

$-g^3$ if gravity > 1

-4 if temp < -20 F or > 120 F

$-(2-g)^3$ if gravity < 1

-2 if atmosphere is Thin-

-2 if density < 3 or > 6 or tainted (-3 if both)

-4 if density > 7

-3 if atmosphere is Exotic+

For population changes due to space travel, I suggest adding 1 for every 1% of increase for immigration (.01 x 100 years), and subtracting the same for emigration.

This Population Increase Factor (PIF) need not be constant for the entire period of backdating. A world with an atmosphere that was damaged due to war or pollution would have a lower PIF from that point on. A world that was terraformed after initial colonization would have an increase in its PIF. GM's should look at a world's history to decide whether it needs special attention.

Once the PIF is found, the current population is divided by the PIF raised to the power of the number of backdating years divided by 100, or in other words:

Old Pop = Current Pop / $PIF^{(BD \ Years/100)}$

If there are multiple PIFs, calculate the population for each period and use the figured population as the current population for the next time period.
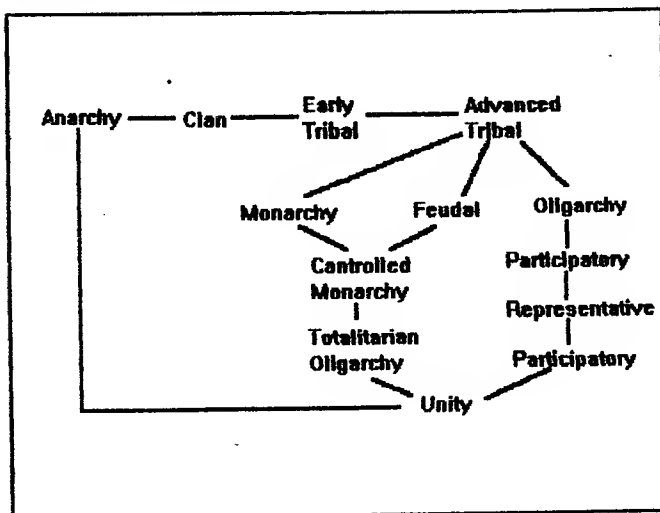
Two things to note. First, if any PIF is negative, then multiply [don't divide] the current population by the PIF part of the formula. This happens when the environment is so hostile that the population declined as time went on. Second, if the population is not affected by the environment, such as domed or orbital cities, then DMs to the PIF need to be based on how ideal the environment is.

GOVERNMENT

If and when a government changes, it tends to follow a specific progression from one type to the next. This progression is cyclic, as shown in the diagram below.

These categories are general descriptions and NOT absolute titles. The government types are placed into one or more of the ten categories:

Category	Governments	Category	Governments
Anarchy	0,7	Monarchy	2-5,8-10,12-15
Pre-Tribal	8,9,15	Con. Monarchy	1,2-5,11
Early Tribal	8,9,15	Rep. Structure	1,4,11
Adv. Tribal	8-10	Part. Structure	1,2,11
Feudal	1,5,6,13	Unity	1,8-10,12,13

It is now just a matter of tracing backwards from one category to the next. Since many governments fit into more than one category, a world can take different paths, depending on history and allegiance. The number of changes depends on how monolithic the world's culture is.

LAW LEVEL

Law level is directly related to government, 2D-7 + Government. Once again, culture, history and allegiance may alter a world's normal law level.

TECH LEVEL

Since many worlds were populated by Terrans or Terran-derived stock, we can use the time lengths on the Tech Level chart in the Ref's Manual. For the higher TLs (11-15), figure on 100-250 years per jump. Outside influence or a world's specific needs or interests could accelerate this progression. The skipping of TLs is not recommended, as one tech level's development is based on the basics of the previous TL.

STARPORT

From World Builder's Handbook, Starport is directly related to TL:

A = TL10, B = TL9, C = TL8, D = TL7, E = TL6, X = TL0

These are tech level minimums and usually apply to worlds that build and maintain their own starport. If there is outside influence, then the starport could be higher.

=END=

Thoughts On Technological Recovery

By Harold D. Hale

The rate at which a world regains its former technological level after some disaster (such as the Rebellion and Hard Times) would depend on several factors. These vary in importance, but I believe that each has at least some importance.

1. How long did the world have to prepare for what was coming? The United States spent millions of dollars over a period of years during the Cold War buying and storing obsolete heavy machinery, food stuffs, and other goods, so that in the event of a nuclear attack, the U.S. could maintain some manufacturing capability, and theoretically continue to fight. Creating such a depository for a TL 15 world, say of TL 12 or so equipment would be fairly easy. The problem is that someone with authority had to plan ahead and spend the money to do it. The Virus probably swept in as fast as the ash cloud which buried Pompeii in some places, somewhat slower in others, but too fast for people just to decide to buy up a bunch of low tech equipment at the last minute just in case (not that there would be any to be had at any price anyway).

2. How far did the tech level drop during the Rebellion and Hard Times Eras? It wouldn't do a group of TL 6 scientists any good to have the accumulated knowledge of a TL 15 society on a bunch of holodisks if they don't have a holodisk player, can't construct one, and wouldn't know how to repair or operate an old one. Ideally, and this relates back to the first question, someone would have thought to put all that information on various forms of media all the way down the technological scale to books (Imagine the size of that library!! As a librarian I'm awed, dismayed, and stimulated by the prospect).

The artifacts that survive will point a new generation of scientists in the right direction when rebuilding the technological base. The Scientific Revolution of the 17th and 18th centuries was built, at least partly, on the surviving manuscripts of work done by Greek and Roman researchers centuries before. The amount of surviving artifacts will largely determine how fast a world will move up through the tech levels back up to its pre-Rebellion levels.

3. Do the inhabitants of the world have access to raw materials? It doesn't do you a lot of bloody good to know how to build something (like a fusion power plant), if you are missing one or more key ingredients. Ask anyone who's tried to bake a cake, only to find out they're out of eggs. You can make some substitutions when constructing machinery (i.e. aluminum for titanium), but certain materials have no substitute (rare eath metals for jump drives).

The recovery on some worlds will come to a screeching halt if they lack certain raw materials and can't recycle enough of what they need from existing broken down items (which relates back to the artifacts mentioned in the second question). Those that can recycle critical materials will still be restricted in what they can do until they can find new sources for them. (I don't see too many houses wired with gold, somewhat scarce here on Earth in comparison to copper, though a much better conductor.) Other worlds which formerly exported their raw materials to more powerful (or wealthier, cash carrying) neighboring worlds or some megacorporation may now have those resources to exploit for themselves (assuming they can develop the know-how to do it). They may become more powerful than their former masters.

4. Are there any trained artisans left who can rebuild what has been lost? So far I have spoken mostly about information and materials, but people can also make a big difference. A trained craftsperson is much better than a manual when it comes to building and especially maintaining equipment. (Otherwise we'd all go out and buy a car repair guide and rebuild that engine ourselves, now wouldn't we?) Having people around who know what to do is critical especially if there is no manuals, or instructions, as mentioned in the second factor. Why were there no aqueducts built in Medieval Europe?

Because there was no one left who knew how! Those individuals who decided to "sleep off" the Rebellion and/or Hard Times will find their services at a premium, especially those who have technical skills. It would be very easy to picture individuals who lived as "mercenary technicians", selling their services to the highest bidder (or alternately being held in virtual slavery, being kept alive only because of the specialized knowledge they possess). On some worlds, a cast system may develop, with skills pasted down from father to son, or mother to daughter, etc.; on others a system of guilds, similar to Medieval Europe (or a situation similar to DGP's AI where the technicians become a priestly class- no, I don't mean Jason...).

5. All of the above assumes that survivors desire to regain technology that was lost. In Central America, the Mayans built a civilization in the jungles of the Yucatan Peninsula that was in many respects on a par with ancient Egypt. Yet by the time the Europeans arrived, the Mayans had abandoned their great cities, and their decedents were living back at tribal levels. Any civilization continues to exist, only so long as those people who lived within it wanted it to continue on. The Jews are an example of a people who continued on as a separate culture even though they lost the lands from which they came more than once.

=END=

Michael R. Mikesh: Your comments makes sense. However, how can all this translate into game rules? What I'm doing with the HubWorlds is a very simple method to arrive at New Era tech levels.

STEP 1: Smack the UWPs down using Hard Times. In calculating tech, starports are effectively X because of the Virus.

STEP 2: Recompute the minimum world tech using standard rules.

The New Era tech is somewhere between the results of 1 and 2. Where between these two is the real question.

A Conversation with Dave Nilsen

CRB: The following come to me from the Traveller Mailing List, a computer information net focused on Traveller. I am unsure of the author's name.

Author: First of all, I'd like to thank Dave Nilsen for spending quite a bit of time answering all of these questions for us. Thanks, Dave! All of the answers below are based on my notes and memory, both of which have been known to be faulty on occasion. Phrases in quotes are direct quotes from my notes (and therefore, excepting my own errors, direct quotes from Dave).

The original questions I asked Dave are set off in bold. My summary of his answer, appears in plain text (not set off by anything). I sent that version of the document to the TNE-Pocket group and to Dave for comments before general release. Clarifications and expansions from Dave are set off by italics, while additional comments from me, prompted by questions from the TNE-Pocket group are again plain text.

ECONOMIC MODEL

Q. Does GDW have an economic model we can refer to? In other words, what is the normal level of trade and interstellar travel (in, say MCr of value, or displacement tons of cargo, number and size of ships?)

A: *GDW does not have any sort of economic model which can be used to predict the trade between any two worlds: in general, the rules are intended to provide guidelines for the kind of trade that player characters are likely to engage in.*

Dave favors the large trade, inter-related economies model, and realizes that this is needed to get the effects described for Hard Times. The suggestion that 90% or more of all interstellar trade is carried in large, bulk freighters (never to be seen by the player characters) "seems reasonable."

Dave also feels that "high-population worlds are largely self-sufficient in terms of staples," and that their major imports are consumer goods and luxury items to maintain their standard of living. On the other hand, lower population worlds (populations in hundreds of thousands or less) need interstellar trade to support their technology level and other necessities.

Dave: This one is very important: my mental picture of Hi-pop worlds being pretty much self-sufficient in terms of staples (by which I mean food) was only within the framework of a stable interstellar culture (e.g., pre-1116 Imperium). And what I mean by food is the standard SF image of acres of subterranean tissue and algae vats which are reprocessed into something a little more palatable. This food is not what everyone eats for every meal: luxury food, meaning real vegetables and real steaks are imported.

My reason for this model is the following test: How the hell did all these people get here, anyway? There had to be some mechanism by which these populations got as large as they are without people saying, "forget it, let's go to this other world over here." If each and every meal for these people had to be imported by starship, it's harder to picture how the population got as big as it did. (Somalia, for example, shows how a world needs to have some sort of self-supporting capacity to maintain high population. After all, people have to want to trade with you. If you don't have anything to offer in exchange for bulk carriers packed with grain, people will let you starve as often as not.)

However, just because they can feed their entire populations on remanufactured vat-grown goop, does not mean they are not dependent upon trade. I would say that the majority of the planetary economy is tied to interstellar trade. Like the United States, much of the economy is tied to moving, selling, and marketing things built by other people. As goods pass through these markets, "value added" money is stripped off and settles on the Hi-pop worlds, which provides the money to make the society work internally, as they buy and sell things to each other.

Once trade is cut off, the internal economy of the Hi-pop world collapses, and the staples that they can produce are

no longer uniformly distributed, because the society can no longer pay the money for the goods that need to circulate internally to keep the economy up and running. When the economy falls, social services fail, and things fall apart. I see this as one of the major effects of Hard Times, with one additional causal input: the Hi-pop worlds were the targets of major military campaigns, and suffered tremendous physical damage on top of everything else. This accelerated their collapse, even ones with good biospheres, because carrying capacity set up under one set of social assumptions is not necessarily stable.

However, I think that we can't say that all Hi-pop worlds are the same. Particularly extreme examples of Hi-pop worlds (N100ANN-N, N8C5ANN-N) may not be self-sufficient in staples at all. It is more convincing that these guys spend so much time and effort keeping their inhospitable environments at bay that they have correspondingly less excess wherewithal for other things. (These are the worlds that are going to be annihilated by the Virus.) These worlds will die off that much quicker when they are attacked, or when interstellar trade falls down.

A real economic model would require us to distinguish between many different kinds of Hi-pop worlds. There could be Hi-pop worlds that just have really good biospheres (e.g., Earth) that can just support that many people. Some Hi-pop worlds could spring up on inhospitable worlds that for astrographic reasons are the crossroads of many trade routes, and support many starports, shipyards, and headquarters for shipping companies, etc. Some Hi-pop worlds are manufacturing centers. The point is that different answers to the question, "Why are there so damn many people there?" give different economic pictures.

At the dawn of the New Era, almost all interstellar trade (if there is any at all; this is likely to be referee or campaign dependent) will be with worlds firmly a part of the economy of the pocket empire.

The New Era opens as exploration significantly beyond the borders of the empire begins.

This was stated poorly: A pocket empire will consist of a half-dozen or so worlds which are economically closely bound together. Almost all of the interstellar trade will be with other worlds of the pocket empire.

HARD TIMES (EFFECTS)

Q. Why do so few people die? In Diaspora, less than 2% of the population were killed. Shouldn't the casualty rate from the Rebellion/HardTimes be much higher to cause the effects we are seeing (more like WWI Russia's 9%, WWII Soviet Union's 15%, or the medieval Plagues at over 30%)?

A. "Glad you asked!" Dave knows that there were "far too few casualties" generated by Hard Times. Looking at Diaspora, he was tempted to change the numbers across the board, but it "felt funny to go through and kill people".

One of the biggest problems with mega-casualties is making these numbers impact on the player characters. How do you communicate the fact that billions of people have died, without reducing everything to emotionless numbers?

VIRUS EFFECTS

Q. The Virus (Effects): How many people die (related to question 13)?

A. "A lot more." Most worlds are knocked down to Industrial or even Pre-Industrial tech levels, and the Four Horsemen will ride until the population is reduced to what is sustainable at this level.

Many worlds (even high-population worlds), and particularly those worlds with vacuum, very thin, exotic, corrosive, or insidious atmospheres, will die. Everybody.

In addition, the Virus may (if the storyteller so decides) go and kill people. Nuke cities, blast holes in environmental domes, and that sort of thing. Worlds that are depopulated 90% or more are possible.

Q. Why does the Virus depopulate worlds with inhospitable conditions? By

the end of Hard Times, many of these worlds should be self-sufficient at TL6-8, which is high enough to maintain their life-support systems (filter masks, compressors, etc.) and build new ones with local technology.

A. Well, it doesn't have to. Again, this is a decision that the storyteller will have to make. In some cases, the Virus may well decide to nuke the planet, crash into the main water desalinization plant, or blow up a city's power reactor. On the other hand, it is also possible that a Vampire ship would decide to leave the planet alone, or even land and talk to the inhabitants.

Q. How deep is the destruction caused by the Virus? How do worlds manage to recover in 70 (more or less) years? How long will it take (after the dawn of the New Era) for worlds to regain Imperial trade and technology levels?

A. Dave estimates that it will take a couple of generations before the area that once was the Imperium is economically back up to the pre-Rebellion level. By 1205, however, the Hiver-backed human ("Star Viking") states will be "meeting in force" explorers from the Domain of Deneb.

THE VIRUS (INTENT)

Q. What is the intended effect of the Virus, and how does it achieve this effect.

A. The Virus is supposed to be a story-telling device. Dave does not want to nail down exactly what it can and can't (or will and won't) do under each and every circumstance. The idea is for each storyteller (be it the individual referee, or the author of an adventure) to decide what is reasonable and believable for the story he or she wants to tell.

Dave: I also want to make clear that the various characteristics/capabilities of the Virus being negotiable according to story-telling needs applies to the roleplaying level, not to the macro-social level. On the grand scale of the Imperium, the Virus did infect the vast majority of all ships (and of those it infected, it has destroyed the vast majority), did wipe out

the vast majority of computers and databases in the Imperium, and did depopulate the vast majority of Hi-pop and inhospitable worlds.

However, on the PC scale, there will always be exceptions: uninfected starships and computers, caches of data, uncollapsed worlds. However, there were clearly not enough of these to prevent interstellar society from collapsing. So while the Virus and its effects are not negotiable on the grand scale, they are all negotiable on the PC/storytelling scale.

THE VIRUS (SPREAD)

Q. Where does the Virus start? How fast does it spread? (In other words, when and where does it hit Aoreriyya?)

A. The Virus is released in Core sector in approximately 1130, and spreads "at the speed of jump." It spreads through all forms of communication, but particularly through transponders, the Traveller News Service, and along X-Boat routes.

The Virus has an "incubation period" of about 45 days. During this time it "hides" in the computer (takes no overt action; the computer functions normally although it already contains the Virus), and analyzes what the computer is used for and how it works. During this period the Virus may infect other computers (depending on the complexity of the computer it's trying to infect, and whether or not such a move would be noticed).

Dave: One final point I just thought of: It is probably more useful to think of the Virus not as "it", but as "them." The Virus is not a single force that behaves in one single stylized way. After all, the main reason it was so dangerous and successful was that it did not behave in just one way. Each system infected by the Virus that had sufficient computing power (and let's just say for purposes of discussion that the threshold is Computer Level 2 or TL 9, whichever comes first) for it to achieve AI becomes a separate personality which learns to operate in different ways. The offspring of these viruses will be similar to the branch of the Virus that they came

from, but will also begin to mutate in their own direction. The TNE rules will include some basic guidelines for Virus strains, and I would welcome input on further strains that are of interest. Examples include the following (references to die rolls are merely to assist the referee when randomization is desired, and should not be considered absolute):

Strain 1 "Suicider": This strain is the most straightforward, in that it kills itself and the entire operating system it is in very soon after gaining control, usually only sending out 2D6 copies of itself before doing so. For obvious reasons this strain is fairly rare nowadays, as its behavior has put it out of business.

Strain 1A "Suicide Inducer": This is an early mutation of Strain 1, in which the virus has decided to keep itself alive to infect other systems with Strain 1 "Suiciders." One obvious result is that the Strain 1s that it sends out would have a relatively higher probability of mutating into Strain 1As, just like dear old dad.

Strain 2 "Samson": This virus is not content with merely destroying the operating system which it occupies. Rather, it wants to destroy all of the hardware that is controlled by the operating system, and would do this fairly quickly, after only bothering to send out 2D6 copies of itself. If a Strain 2 infected a starship, it would then crash itself into a star or a planet. If it infected the life support system of a domed world, it would shut down the cooling system for the nuclear plant and cause a meltdown, etc.

Strain 2A "Destroyer": Like Strain 1A, the Destroyer interprets its programming to destroy to apply to everyone else, but not to itself. Thus a starship infected by Strain 2A would become a destructive vampire ship, running around and shooting up other ships, orbital starports, domed cities, power plants, etc, in addition to infecting as many other targets as possible.

Strain 2B "Reproducer": Like 2A, but is careful to only destroy things that it cannot infect. It is evolutionarily more adaptive than 2A, because rather than

destroying potential hosts, it makes the most of opportunities to reproduce itself, and therefore Strain 2Bs become rather plentiful.

THE VIRUS (ABILITIES)

Q. Can the Virus infect computers that are not connected to a transponder or other Cymbelline-derived device (for example, over a computer network or a communicator)? Can it infect FIB (fiber optic) computers? What about alternative computer technologies? Can it infect small computers (a Mod-1? A Mod-0? A Hand-Computer? A 486-PC? A PC/AT? A PC/XT? A CP/M box? An Atari 800? A Timex-Sinclair? A PDP-11? A Varian 630? ENIAC? A pocket calculator?)

A. The Virus can infect almost any computer, given enough time. It can certainly infect hybrid organic-electronic computers (apparently these hybrids are common in high-end Imperial computer systems) by first infecting the electronic component, and "figuring out" the organic component. Very small computers (like "an Atari video game") simply don't have the memory and processing power to support the virus. The best it can do there is to leave eggs (required circuit chips) and/or attempt to damage the computer. If the simple computer is then ever connected to a system large enough to support the Virus, the egg hatches and infects the large computer over the mainframe.

The physical technology alone will not stop the Virus from taking over a computer system. If it supports enough memory and processing power, the virus can get in. In general, "the easier it is to use, the easier it is for the Virus to get in." Low-tech computers are therefore more resistant than high-tech ones.

For purposes of discussion, let's just say that the threshold is Computer level 2 or TL 9. The theory here is that a high-tech Model-1 is actually a much more powerful (by several orders of magnitude) than a TL-5 vacuum-tube version of a Model-1. Instead of providing extra control capability, the high-tech Model-1 provides

advanced user-interface features (like voice recognition and synthesis, natural language program-ming, and so forth). The high-tech machine has more than enough capacity to support the Virus, while the low-tech computer doesn't. Very low-tech computers (below TL-8) may be too limited for the Virus to successfully take over.

Completely unfamiliar computers (new or different technology and architecture) will confuse the Virus, are "more difficult to take over," and "really weird computers will slow it down" a good bit.

Q. What are the specific effects of the Virus? What does it normally do? Is there anything it CAN'T do? Why?

A. Dave doesn't want to put distinct limitations on what the Virus can and can't do. Many of its capabilities will vary due to mutation, and it is ultimately up to the storyteller to decide what a specific virus will and won't do under certain circum-stances. It is probably perfectly correct for one strain of the Virus to be able to do something that another strain somewhere else can't, won't, or doesn't think of.

The Virus is a plot device: it's supposed to "wreck civilizations's store of data." Its ordinary modus operandi is to enter a computer, spend some time observing the computer and its operation (if needed, to figure out the hardware and the operating system, so it can take over). It eventually takes over and achieves AI; at this point it starts wrecking things and then (typically) kills itself. Thanks to Lucan's weapons labs, the Virus has this persistent compulsion to destroy things. Anything, even itself.

Once in a computer, the Virus has access to all of the computer's original programming, all of the data, and all of the interconnections. (This is how a Vampire ship works: the AI Virus still has all of the programming required to operate and navigate the ship.) Due to its Cymbelline origins, the Virus can re-cut hardware (presumably only reasonably conventional hardware, although I didn't press this point) to literally install itself in the

Conversation (con.)

computer hardware permanently. When it goes into its suicide phase, the Virus will destroy itself and try to take out as many other computers as it possibly can.

Sometimes (a "small but finite" chance) the Virus is stable for a period of time (no virus is stable forever; they will all eventually go crazy and suicide in one way or another). Vampire ships are an example of these. Vampire ships can network themselves into a Vampire fleet; sharing computer resources and in effect creating a "group mind." Although not intended, the Vampire ships lend themselves to the same sorts of plotlines that Saberhagen's Berserkers do (no surprise, actually).

The Ithara/Virus co-operation idea sounded plausible and interesting. Several other people are also exploring symbiotic and/or parasitic relationships between the virus and humans (or other sentient creatures).

Q. Does the Virus destroy all information storage devices? Erase optical disks and holocrystals? Even read-only ones?

A. This depends on the storyteller's needs. While the Virus may not be able to erase media which are physically read only (as opposed to software read-only which it can and probably does erase), it may very well be able to make sure that there are no more working readers.

Q. Is the Virus psionic? Can the Virus be detected by a psionist ("detect life", for example)?

A. Dave's initial reaction was a flat "No, the Virus is not Psionic." However, on reflection, he speculated that if it were to become aware of the possibility (for example, by infecting a computer used to gather psionic research data at a psionic institute), it might figure out how to become psionic in a limited way (send and receive thoughts, for example).

Similarly, a psionic adept would not automatically be able to automatically detect a virus in any computer. However, the psionist would be able to pick up some sort of pattern, and with some experience, it would not be too hard for him or her to learn to identify Virus-infected computers.

THE VIRUS (COUNTER-MEASURES)

Q. Are there any effective countermeasures to the virus? How does the Domain of Deneb survive? What about the Vargr? The Zhodani? Duke Craig?

A. There are effective countermeasures; every world that solves the Virus problem will probably solve it in a different way. Virus-resistant computers can be developed, although Dave feels that it is likely that this effort would take enough resources that the world would not be able to devote enough to regaining starflight. The Hivers will have "virus-proof" computer technology. Not so immune that you can go around taking stupid chances with the Virus, but enough so that it is no longer the biggest danger to interstellar travel. Other worlds may be able to do similar things.

The Domain of Deneb owes its survival to advance warning and astrography. While Virus incursions into Deneb were not totally unknown, in general the Virus was not a problem there. The Great Rift prevents direct contact between the Imperial Core and the Domain. The shortest route is around the coreward edge of the Rift (through Corridor); however, the general trend of the predominantly Vargr traffic in this area is away from the Domain and into the Imperial core. The Virus also spreads more slowly through Vargr and Aslan dominated areas, due to the large variety of different types of computer systems in use (as compared to the relatively standardized Imperium).

More than one ship manages to learn of the Virus without actually being infected in the process. Dave suggests the scenario where the ship is down for maintenance when the Virus "hits," allowing the crew to realize what is going on and take protective measures before bringing their ship back on-line. It is also possible that security systems built into a very secure system will detect the Virus, and slow it down for long enough for a human to take action.

Disabling the transponder drastically reduces the chance of infection, and

removing computer-to-computer communicator links to the outside will reduce it to nearly zero. Although it might be possible for the Virus to take over a starship computer through the sensor systems, Dave rates this as unlikely.

Enough warnings reach Deneb and the Zhodani for these two states to be able to take effective countermeasures against the Virus, and they survive with little change into the New Era. During the New Era, there will be a multi-way power balance in the region; much like European politics at the turn of the century.

Q. Does the Virus "die" when you turn off its computer? Erase its memory and storage devices? Destroy the computer?

A. The Virus doesn't normally die when you turn off the computer. Using it's chip re-wiring capability, the Virus will ordinarily have hard-wired itself into the computer. For the same reason, wiping all of the memory and storage devices will not always kill it. Physically destroying the computer (smashing it to bits, or frying it with an electromagnetic pulse) will certainly kill the Virus.

NEW ERA START

Q. Is the "Dawn of the New Era" at 1200 or some other date? Why this date (as opposed to sooner or later)?

A. No good reason; 1200 sounded like a good round number. The Hivers (masters of computer technology that they are) are hit hard, but manage to recover quickly and develop "virus-proof" technology. The Hivers back the expansion of human states through what was once the Imperium and the Solomani Confederation.

By the time of the New Era, the instability of the Virus and the ability of worlds to improvise solutions will make the Virus something to be careful of, but by no means the most threatening thing out there in interstellar space.

Q. Local knowledge: How far "out" in any direction is "known space" at the Dawn of the New Era? In other words, how far is mapped relatively reliably, how far is partly explored, and how far is hearsay, old

folks tales, and Imperial-era starmaps (and how common are Imperial-era starmaps)?

A. This is likely to be highly campaign dependent, governed by the referee's discretion and "good storytelling." There are several possible campaigns to run in the New Era setting. Dave and I talked about three general scenarios in detail:

Survivors: this one would involve MegaTraveller player characters who spend the interval in cold sleep; these characters are likely to have personal knowledge (and maybe even Imperial-Era navigational databases) of a much wider area than most pocket empires have explored at this time. Such players may even have Imperial-era starships, powered down and stored in cometary orbits or in one of several possible hiding places on a world.

Pocket Empire: A small trading coalition or pocket empire which is just on the verge of expansion. These folks will have direct knowledge of only a few systems beyond the borders of their empire, and hearsay from one of the "rare, few free traders left." Both exploration and the salvage of technology and data will be important to these campaigns. Data may actually have more value than technology items: Imperial-era technical data to help increase local technological abilities, starmaps, and the like will all be sought after.

Bootstraps: In this campaign, the player characters are literally the first interstellar travellers to leave their world. The players find a mothballed starship, or a military base with intact equipment, and begin to re-acquire starflight technology. Gimmicks like simulators, teaching programs, and similar aids will be needed to give the player characters sufficient skills to be able to accomplish this. In such a campaign, the players initially have no knowledge of what's out there. Again Imperial-Era data will be useful if they can find it.

Imperial-Era data will cover a large amount of space, with little detail (and by now) even less accuracy. In the intervening time, a lot of changes have taken place, due to the Rebellion, Hard Times, the Virus, and the Pocket Empires.

PUBLICATION

The folio format adventures have been unprofitable (I believe "bleeding money" was the phrase used), primarily because of the high cost of the 6 pages of color, as compared to the relatively low selling price for something which has only 16 or 32 pages of adventure material. So the folio format will be dropped, in favor of the larger book format (like the sourcebooks for MegaTraveller).

Adventures generally only sell the initial print run. Once it's no longer new, people don't tend to buy it. Sourcebooks, background material, is different, and seems to have more lasting value. So for the New Era, the idea will be to include adventure material in the sourcebooks, and not to publish separate adventures.

Current plans for *Traveller: The New Era* is to sell modules which are books of approximately 96 to 120 pages. New Era books are expected to be about 1/2 to 2/3 background or sourcebook type material. The balance will be adventures "loosely" related to the sourcebook data. The idea is not to outline a whole campaign of interlocking adventures, but to provide a number of different stories which the referee can incorporate into ongoing games, or use as-is. Each of these adventure ideas should be relatively short (less than 16 pages) and more-or-less independent of one another.

=END=

Computer News

--Rob Prior

A word about library formats. We seem evenly split between Macs, IBMs, and Others. Thus, most people upload two versions of everything: a 'native' version for those who have the same computers, and a 'lowest-common-denominator' version for the heretics. That's why I upload both PICT and GIF files. The PICTs are more accurate and easier to edit, but the GIFs are useable by everyone.

CITYMAPPER release 0.9

--Rob Prior

It's here! The program you've all been waiting for!

Seriously, what I have is a HyperCard stack that produces a reasonable facsimile of a Midwestern city in five minutes or so.

The algorithms I used are a combination of Conway's Life, the Voting Game from *The Armchair Universe*, and some rules of thumb that felt reasonable.

As it stands the stack can't be expanded any more, but I feel that it has proved that this approach works reasonably well. My next goal is to write a Pascal program with ASCII output that duplicates this version.

After that will be nice graphical output with scrolling windows and other things Mac people have come to expect.

Sector Listings

--Leroy Guatney

I've found a few error in sector files you downloaded from the GEnie library. J.P. and I also entered several sector listings printed by DGP. To differentiate them from the old ones, I used the suffix ".NSC." Available are: Core, Corridor, Daibei, Daibei-1116, and Daibei-1120, Dark Nebula, Diaspora-1124, Fornast, Gushemeg, Riftspan Reaches, Spica, and Trojan Reach.

= END =

The Surrounding Wilds

--Mike Mikesh

It occurs to me that the Third Imperium has left behind an enormous amount of hardware. This includes orbital install-ations, starships, bases, and starports, all abandoned. An enterprising group of people could potentially set themselves up at a former class A starport on a doomed or dead world and begin refurbishing ships. One location might not have all they need, but sifting through other ports and bases will eventually yield everything.

In theory, such an approach could possibly assemble a fleet more powerful than the navy of the neighboring pocket empire. In practice, the enterprise would be lucky to put together a small squadron. The main reason is manpower. There aren't that many people around qualified as starship crewmen.

Worse, there are no technicians trained to install or maintain TL15 equipment. Computer aids could help lower tech level technicians to do the job. But after the Virus, technical computer libraries will be scarce indeed. A lot will depend on trial and error. Technicians obsessed with tinkering and learning everything they can about the hardware will command a very large share of the take.

There are many other problems as well.

Logistics: The richest surviving sources of hardware will probably be at the most inhospitable places. No air, food, or recreation that's not brought in.

Inventories: A base might be well stocked with parts, but with no surviving record of what's there, let alone precisely where it is. People will be needed to inventory every-thing. Even then, they won't necessarily know what they're looking at.

Computers: The Virus will probably have gotten to everything important. Groups will have to adapt lower-tech, modern computers to ships and installations.

ClaimJumping: If one group could reach an abandoned installation, others could as well. You might plant your flag at one old scout base, but, when you return, you might find new tenants taking inventory

and unwilling to move without a fight.

The Government: Empire governments will themselves probably form reclamation agencies to recover high tech parts from nearby worlds (diplomatically if the world is still occupied). After all, they will want to maintain control of scarce resources for state needs.

Governments probably will not welcome the activities of these independent salvage companies for several reasons:

1) Salvage companies are out of reach of regulation. They could damage sites unnecessarily and present false reports. They could even steal from surviving worlds -- worlds the government might want as partners later.

2) The government would probably not pay the salvaging companies what commercial or private buyers might pay. Salvagers would likely sell much of what they come across on the black market.

3) Salvage companies could potentially come across some frightful firepower, including nuclear weapons.

From this perspective, salvagers would probably have to operate outside of the law. Also, if they are already outlaws,

there's not much keeping them from looting without restraint or raiding defenseless communities. They could also take hostages to support their bases or to do those exhaustive inventories of Imperial supplies and spare parts.

The salvagers might also shanghai ship crewmen and technical personnel. (They could even break into the Timers Club and kidnap from cold berths pre-Rebellion members with the skills they desperately need. What a way to introduce a MegaTraveller party to the New Era!)

As result, an outlaw civilization could come into existence beyond the borders of the pocket empire. These would take over old Imperium bases and starports outside the reach of the navies and reclamation agencies. Salvagers and looters would collect parts and equipment. Technicians would maintain the ships at TL15 with what is found. Looters and raiders would collect valuables from worlds. Smugglers would carry the booty to the black markets for profit and goods unavailable from looting. Raiders and pirates would kidnap laborers and hostage technicians to serve at the bases.
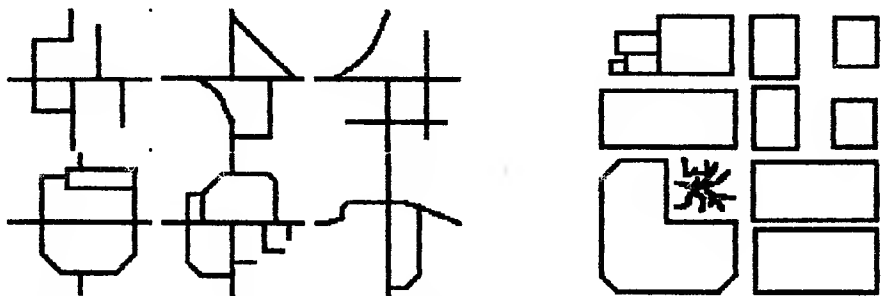
Mapping for Refereeing

--Clay Bush

Before raising any expectations, let me state that GDW has their own map drawer in the company. So, any maps that you submit with an article are treated as sketches.

Because players treat a map as evidence they are someplace important, referees tend to sketch them just for combat. Still, maps can provide atmosphere.

How can you make maps quickly? I have run across two approaches.

First, you use a geomorph package. Cutting and pasting is messy, but geo-morphic mapping works easily on a computer. The layouts above use 2300AD geomorphs from *Rotten to the Core*.

Second, use area movement in urban areas. Just outline bases, business areas, etc., and forget individual buildings.

Zhodani Rimward & Trailing Policy (DRAFT)

--Harold D. Hale

The Zhodani have a somewhat conservative policy regarding "absorbing" or annexing systems to their spinward and rimward, a policy that contrasts dramatically from their expansion to coreward. A number of factors led to this policy. Though that policy may change in the distant future, it is unlikely to do so even in the face of the realities of Post-Imperium, Post Successor-State Era.

General Consulate policy regarding annexing and later "absorbing" star systems entails using previously annexed territory as a base, never annexing more than a few parsecs of space at a time in a subsector. Local authorities are given authority to chose which systems should get priority in annexation, but all formal annexation procedures must ultimately be approved by the Consulate's central government. While this means that colonization activity is somewhat stifled (by old Imperial or Solomani standards), it also means that Zhodani colonists are never far from assistance should the colony have problems. It also means that the Zhodani do not have the kinds of problems the old Imperium had with colonists deciding to break away because of the remoteness of central authority.

There are exceptions to this policy. The Consulate government has seen fit at times to annex clusters of two or three or more star systems (but never more than a subsector) far beyond the borders of the Consulate proper. This is usually done because the Consulate wanted to establish control of systems that are especially rich in mineral wealth or lanthanum.

Exceptions have also been made for the establishment of chains of "trading posts" to reach the Aslan, or some of the human minor races in the stellar region. Some systems are "by-passed." This is usually done because the system contains a minor race, which the Zhodani hope to peacefully absorb at a later time. The rise of human states to rimward, most the result of Imperial colonial expansion which ended in the 700's (many of them anti-Zhodani in outlook) has recently posed the possibility that further slow, peaceful expansion in that direction will soon come to an end. Zhodani policy in this area may be about to undergo a transition.

There have been two major exceptions to the general policy of slow expansion: the Core Expeditions and the conflict in the Spinward Marches. The reason for the first major exception is well known (CRB: to players! Unknown to PCs) -- the Zhodani fascination (some say obsession) with the Ancient's stellar projection device. As to what the Zhodani plan to do once they reach the Galactic Core (or as close as they can practically get, crushing gravity would prohibit them from getting to the core itself) is still unknown. No one within the Consulate government has likely given it much thought.

As for the Spinward Marches conflict, it should be noted that prior to contact with Imperial colonists, Zhodani policy in this region was the same as it was in the spinward and rimward regions. It was later, when the Zhodani discovered that they were faced with what they considered to be an expansionist interstellar empire, the Imperium, that they changed this policy to one of preemptive military confrontation (the First through the Fourth Frontier Wars). These wars were defensive in nature, attempts at controlling the growing power of the Imperium in this area.

The failure of this policy led hardliners within the Zhodani government to stage a kind of "coup," which allowed them to be in a position to dictate policy toward the Imperium. In the Fifth Frontier War the hardliners attempted to force the issue in the Spinward Marches with one bold military stroke, designed at conquest. When this failed, more moderate forces once again took the reigns of foreign policy, and a policy emphasizing peaceful co-existence has been pursued ever since.

Since the fall of the Imperium, the extension of that policy to the Domain of Deneb has become increasingly important for many of the same reasons that minor states are tolerated elsewhere.

Back in the era when the sectors spinward of the Spinward Marches, the Trojan Reach, and sectors beyond to spinward were being settled (400's-700's), lawlessness became a problem all along the rimward edge of the Zhodani Consulate. Prime Zhodani worlds which previously took their safety for granted suddenly became the target of corsairs, pirates, and general thugs. Rather than militarize the whole of the rimward frontier (a vast area with no natural barriers to travel such as rifts) the Consulate government let be the various minor states that were arising in the area be, provided they help combat the pirates. Zhodani experience with the Vargr was influential in formulating this policy, as ambassadors were sent to many of the systems in the region to negotiate non-aggression treaties, trade treaties, military alliances, and a host of other settlements and agreements. Some of these fledglings would eventually become Zhodani client states, others would become strictly neutral, while some even later became hostile to the Consulate. (Those that were no serious threat were ignored- those that were a potential threat were "discouraged" from having any designs on Zhodani territory, through some "show of force." Those that were an immediate serious threat were quickly crushed). The pirate threat eventually subsided, and the Zhodani policy of slow, relatively peaceful expansion resumed.

Since then, the growth of the minor states has outpaced Zhodani expansion. In the Tsadra Sector, that expansion has reached almost explosive levels, as a Solomani-derived, genetic-enhanced race of humans known as the Californians have begun an aggressive exploration and annexation campaign up the Orion Spur spinward. Zhodani policy toward this potential new threat has not been formulated completely, though relations between the two groups has thus far been cordial.

Future Zhodani policy toward the minor states on their rimward borders, and the Dominion of Deneb will largely depend

upon how much of a danger the Zhodani perceive the individual states to be. It is not likely that they will pursue a policy of aggression against these states, since the Consulate wishes to concentrate its efforts coreward. A policy that involves playing the various governments against each other in "proxy wars" (Zhodani client states versus anti-Zhodani governments, etc.) seems more probable should any of the states become too powerful. This would appear to be the trend of Consulate policy, given recent history.

The example of the tragic fall of the Imperium, on the other hand, may make the Zhodani come to the aid of governments that appear to be collapsing into anarchy. Whatever the Consulate's government decides to, their goal will likely be to maintain the status quo, and ensure peaceful, stable borders for the Zhodani Consulate.

=END=

--Dave Nilsen

We are planning on going with the two meter grid because so many things in the house game system that rely on that grid for combat results (i.e. movement, demolition, explosion, deviation scatter). My plan was that instead of the old system of two 1.5 x 1.5 x 3 meter cubes = 1 ton, it would be one 2 x 2 x 3.5 meter cube = 1 ton.

I feel the extra overhead space is not out of line for two reasons. First, lots of equipment (liquid plumbing, air conduits and vents, power cables, the omnipresent mythical grav field/inertial compensator floor plates) must be shoehorned in between decks. Second, artists always draw these ships with fairly high overheads, and they really do seem nicer that way.

So what about how this scale screws up existing designs that we already know their length/height ratio? No problem. I think its odd that everyone draws corridors in exact multiples of 1.5 meter. Just because there is a standard scale does not mean that ships will be designed to fit their bulkheads exactly along the grid lines. That's a game convention rather than a physical reality. After all, just because I design a game and I say the hexes are 5 nm/8 km across, you don't see all the rivers and mountains and things moving around to space themselves in multiples of 5 nm (although it would be awful nice if they did, sometimes). Thus a ship deckplan that laid out in multiples of 1.5 meters is not obsolete. Just lay a two meter grid over it.

Miniatures
--Clay Bush

I've been shopping around, and most SF (and fantasy) miniatures are 25mm scale. The exceptions (such as Space Orks) are larger, not smaller. I hope TNE does not use a "non-standard" 15mm, as the few Traveller miniatures did.

15mm figures are smaller, and so larger distances can be simulated on a table. Because of less detail and lower cost, 15mm is fairly standard for Napoleonics and other miniatures gaming where large numbers of pieces are used.

Changing to pewter lead may make miniatures to expensive for most, however. For those unaware of it, several localities have begun to ban sale of lead figures, because lead is poisonous. (Arguments that few people eat them haven't worked.) Unable to handle multiple manufacturing methods in the distribution cycle, the manufacturers are starting to switch to pewter lead, which is safer but 50-100% more expensive to make.

Volume
--Kundert

If we use 1 square = 2 meters then a size of 1" = 2 meters for a deck plan would work well. Most 25mm figures are closer to 30mm, but that shouldn't really matter.

While we are on the subject of deck plans, I did some quick calculations. One ton of the old grid size gave 4.5 meters squared of floor space. In the new scheme it will give 4 meters squared of floor space - not too great a loss.

Problem
--Geo Gelinas

The problem with the change in scale is that all prior plans become questionable. There are two exceptions which may be used without modification. These are the Beowulf Type A presented in the *Starship Operators Manual* (which uses a 1 meter grid without admiting it), and the Empress Marava Type A2 (which, when treated as a 1 meter grid, is about 200 tons). These two ships stood out as being nowhere near their stated tonnage in previous editions, but are now just fine as long as you treat the existing grids as 1 meter.

I would much rather do ships on a 1 meter scale, instead of the 2 meter scale sug- gested. Despite Dave's arguments, designers will follow the lines when drawing walls, and he cannot do anything about it. A 1 meter scale is very simple to use as a 2 meter scale for combat purposes, and is an easier scale to draw in. Corridors will still probably be 1 grid wide (that being about 3 feet, the standard in houses these days).

Newsletters and Fanzines

-Clay Bush

The following are notes on the various fanzines that I have recevied from HIWGers. Some of these issues date back to 1992.Because of coverage of TNE in past issues, I have gotten behind in my mail. However, this article and the next page's document list cover most of the backlog. I could not fit the Collected Notes column into this issue, but a long column next issue will catch that up to current activities as well.

Each section gives the name and address of the producer, and each includes enough information to determine your interest in the material. The following sections are in alphabetical order.

IMPERIAL LINES #3/#4

At GDW. We don't know yet when it will ship. This Vilani/Vargr and Zhodani/Psionics issue includes:

X-LINK by Mark 'Geo' Gelinas

EARLY VILANI/TERRAN CONTACTS by Terrence R. McInnes

LOOT!: WORLD RAIDING AS PC VARGR by Mike Mikesh

OPERATION OVERWATCH (adventure) by Roger Myhre (Norway)

CONSENSUS OR FAMINE -- A LEE'S GUIDE ADVENTURE by Gregory P. Lee

BESTIARY: THE GIANT GURAAN by Mike Mikesh

THOUGHTS ON THE VILANI by Clayton R. Bush

LIBRARY DATA - KAGAMIRA SUBSECTOR by Robert Bates (UK)

THE INTENDANT -- A LEE'S GUIDE ADVENTURE by Gregory P. Lee

MORE PSI-DRUGS FOR MEGATRAVELLER by Gregory P. Lee

PSIONIC ACTIVITY DETECTORS by Gregory P. Lee

CARGO: BARTENK RESIN by Leighton Piper (UK)

NOQL-CLASS ZHODANI FREE TRADER (deck plans) by James Kundert & Paul Sanders. Plus artwork by Phil Morrissey, Kate Lebherz-Gelinas, Paul Sanders, and James Kundert.

IMPERIAL LINES #5

Imperial Lines #5, the space encounters and Hard Times issue, is still in the works. The material so far includes:

X-LINK by Mark 'Geo' Gelinas

WINTER COAT (adventure with ship deck plans) by Bertil Jonell (Sweden)

LARAA SUBSECTOR (Dagudashaag-P) by Adrian Stewart, Nick Walker, Jae Campbell, and Leighton Piper.

FARM BELT (Hard Times adventure in Laraa) by Gregory P. Lee

INTERSTELLAR PIRACY by Mike Mikesh

I hope to see more personal equipment type material for this issue, especially boarding equipment.

IMPERIAL LINES #6

Imperial Lines #6 is planned as the first issue under Traveller: The New Era. It will introduce the Kaggushus campaign setting, which we are currently calling The Hub Worlds. A subscription is $8.00 sent to GDW, $12.00 (U.S.) for overseas.

KFAN UZANGOU #3

February, 1993. 7 pages, good quality.

Focus: Vargr.

Smooth Shave (fiction), Time Crystal (amber zone type adventure), news items and library data for Gvurrdon sector, Tireen system write-up.

Roger Myhre; Ammerudgrenda 168; 0960 Oslo, Norway.

MELBOURNE TIMES #1

January, 1993. 8 pages, good quality.

Focus: Earth Colonies Campaign

Develops an alternate three-dimensional SF universe instead of the Imperium. Several states around 31st Earth with both humans and aliens involved. Highest tech level is 13.

News service; dolphin personality; Earth system write up; Contact: sentient dolphins; library data; one subsector.

David Johnson; PO Box 18956; Boulder, CO 80308.

STARBURST

Focus: Yiklerdanzh sector, HIWG-Australia

Appears bimonthly. Photocopied, good quality.

Contact: David Schneider; 23 Barwell Avenue; Marleston, South Australia 5033; Australia.

Starburst #17: Nov-92, 6 pages. Religion in the Imperium (part two), sector statsitics for Yiklerdanzh (demographics, naval budgets, and so on).

Starburst #18: Jan-93, 10 pages. Religion in Imperium (part three), sector development notes, and maps: trade routes, sector dot map, and large-scale pullout map showing full world symbols and names.

Starburst #19: Mar-93, 10 pages. HIWG-Australia membership list, news items, expanded Yiklerdanzh sector timeline. Color sector map showing names and full world symbols.

Starburst #20: May-93, 10 pages. News items, address changes, counter-insurgency. World write-up of Pieflip.

WHITE NOISE #12

November, 1992. 2 pages, photocopied. Irregular.

Focus: News and surveys for HIWG-UK.

Best line:

Q: Do S'mrii like Vilani?

A: Yes, but they can't manage a full one for breakfast.

Nick Walker; Bankside; Reddisher Road; Marsden; Huddersfield, HD7 6NF; Great Britain.

Signal-GK, the Fanzine

"The name Signal GK is not intended to infringe upon the earlier GDW adventure of the same name. For review purposes, please refer to this magazine as either 'GK', 'S-GK', or 'Signal-GK the fanzine.'"

Mike Mikesh: Clay, Jae mentioned that he would send you copies of all S-GK files he produced, or by the Dagudashaag Development Team, two months before the each issue. But, the material was never treated as part of the HIWG library. Was there a reason for this?

Clay: I included the documents I did receive in the HIWG Document List. For example, most of the material in S-GK #5 appeared as HDs with 33xx numbers. See the quote to right.

Overview

Signal-GK is distributed in Traveller circles in the United Kingdom, and is sold over the counter in UK hobby stores.

Each issue consists of a main part which is letter-size and side-stapled (like *AAB Proceedings* is). This contains articles, adventures, and illustrations on topics about Dagudashaag sector (mainly), Traveller, and the Rebellion.

Supplements are one-half letter size, which is the same size as the old Traveller black books. Each subsector supplement is 14 double-sided half-pages, and contains a subsector map, world UWPs, library entries, and an overview.

I consider the fanzine a quality work well worth wider distribution in the United States.

Features:

Each issue contains a one-page editorial in the lead-off (first text page) location. If you want to submit an editorial, I suggest you keep it under 1,000 words.

Adventures are multi-page articles, not brief (sketchy) Amber Zones.

INDISS is a sector-level competitor to TNS, developed by the Dagudashaag team.

A.K.A. presents a character in sufficient detail for a player to run the character.

Port of Call details one world/system.

Signal-GK #7

Due out this summer, Issue #7 will be the first multi-system issue. This is not due to the release of TNE (although that may have contributed), but because the contributors wanted to explore other areas.

Signal-GK #6

44 pages, photocopied and side-stapled.
Editorial by Stuart Machin: MegaTraveller lost interest because it lost "space opera" feeling.
Mercenaries of Dagudashaag.
Port of Call: Depot.
Alternate high tech personal weapons and military heavy weapons.
A.K.A. Salina (character)
INDISS news items.
Homonak adventure, part 5.
TCS adventures in Rebellion-era Dagudashaag
Salvage (adventure nugget)

> "While most of our main contributors are HIWG members, not all are and for this reason (amongst others) S-GK is not a HIWG magazine."
> — Jae Campbell, S-GK #6

Rebel Well? (adventure)
Traveller Q&A
Combat encounters (pregenerated, specialized encounters for worlds with fighting on the planetary surface).
Contact: Burugdi
Supplement:Gadde Subsector (Dagudashaag L)
Supplement:two Vargr UCPs and deckplans (letter size).

Signal-GK #5

40 pages.
Editorial by Duncan Law-Green: *Hard Times* suggests another GDW "Dark Future" game.
A Children's Story: home-brew thermonuclear weapons in Hard Times.
Contact; S'mrii; Refereeing S'mrii characters; S'mrii character generation; Port of call: Mimu, the S'mrii homeworld.
A Gathering of Strangers: adventure with S'mrii NPCs.
INDISS news items.
A.K.A. Silornich (female Alikasch character)
Legends and lore of Dagudashaag
Supplement:Mimu Subsector (Dag A)

Signal-GK #4

40 pages.
Supplement:"Just Another World" adventure.

Signal-GK #3

40 pages.
Supplement:Ushra subsector (Dag F)

Signal-GK #2

40 pages.
Supplement:Argi subsector (Dag N)
Supplement:Contact! Jala'lok
Supplement:Pact subsector (Dag K)
Supplement:Contact! Athar

Signal-GK #1

22 pages.
Supplement:Dagudashaag UWP listing by subsector. It is like the original Spinward Marches and Solomani Rim supplements.

Actions

Send *letters and subscriptions* to Jae Campbell;The Sanctuary; 45 Fairfield; Hebden Bridge; West Yorkshire HX7 6JD; Great Britain.

US subscriptions are available from Clayton R. Bush.

Send *contributions* to Leighton Piper; 11 Skeffington Road; Preston, Lancashire PR1 5UP; United Kingdom.
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New HIWG Documents

California Federation Preview
Harold Hale. 11 pages
Notes on his New California setting, including races and history notes. Includes sector map for Tsadr sector.

Tsadr Davr Sector
Antioch Subsector (H)
3 pages
Gateway Subsector (L)
3 pages
Santa Cruz (P)
3 pages

Tsadr Sector
Shtara March Subsector (E)
3 pages
Lancaster Subsector (F)
3 pages
New California Subsector (I)
3 pages
Valkarian March Subsector (J)
3 pages
Valkaria Subsector (K)
3 pages
Nalumar Subsector (M)
3 pages
New Arizona Subsector (N)
3 pages
Outland Subsector (O)
3 pages

Yiklerdanzh
7C01 - *Alien Module: Talpaku*
by Grant Sinclair. (18 pages)
Draft developing a minor race in Alien Module format.
7C02 - *Talpaku Subsector*
by Grant Sinclair. (4 pages)
UWPs, library data, map of Yiklerdanzh I.
7C03 - *String of Pearls Subsector*
by Grant Sinclair. (4 pages)
UWPs, library data, map of Yiklerdanzh M.

Sidiadl Sector
5B01 - *Sidiadl Sector Data*
Ed Schmitt (6 pages).
UWP listing
5B02 - *Sidiadl Sector map*
Ed Schmitt (1 page).
5B03 - *Sidiadl: Background Data*
Ed Schmitt. (14 pages)

Intro, timeline, subsector data, 9 local minor races, data on 5 starfaring races in sector, Ancient sites, history essays, fleet strengths (in squadrons), and present situation.

Far Frontiers
7D01 - *Far Frontiers Working Documents*
Geoff Kelly (5 pages).
3 pages timeline, two subsectors.

Numbered Documents
187.SPA - *SPA and Hard Times*
Robert Bates (5 pages).
This is an update of the JTAS 19 article on the Starport Authority, revised from Traveller to megaTraveller.
200.01 - *Zhodani-Galangic Dictionary and Glossary*
James Kundert. (11 pages)
Compilation of all printed Zhodani words. Looks complete!
206.03- *Zhodani Philosophical Mindset*
Angus Foster (2 pages)
Argues that Zhodani emphasis on psionics leads them to use technology to emulate the effects of psionics.
206.04 - *Meichntid Ibl Working Document*
Angus Foster (7 pages)
224.10 - *Standard Turret Weapons*
Ed Schmitt (13 pages).
224.22 - *Dead Fall Ordnance*
Ed Schmitt (9 pages).
224.24 - *System Defense Forces*
Ed Schmitt (9 pages).
224.25 - *Navy of the Darrian Confederation*
Ed Schmitt (9 pages).
233.01 - *Zhodani Government Types*
Geoff Kelly. (3 pages).

Quadrant III
Exodus: the Human Trailing Edge
Bertiglia Paolo (6 pages)
Develops the sector the K'kree call Kaa Gl'kui. Includes timeline, cultural notes, and a sector map.