

Supplement for
GURPS® Autoduel®
and
CAR WARS®

The AADA Road Atlas and Survival Guide
VOLUME ONE: THE EAST COAST



STEVE JACKSON GAMES

The AADA Road Atlas and Survival Guide VOLUME ONE: THE EAST COAST

A Supplement for Car Wars and GURPS Autoduel

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THE EAST COAST

History

This Road Atlas covers thirteen states: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. Although close together geographically, these states have had very different histories, and to this day have very different "flavors."

New England

This is the area of the United States which had the closest colonial ties to Great Britain, as can be seen by the names of most of the towns in the region: Bristol, New London, Manchester, and Southington. The stereotypical New England/Vermont accent sounds closer to an English accent than any other in the United States. Ironically, this was the region which inspired the other crown colonies of America to rebel.

New England is a region of stark contrast. The cities are industrialized, but the region is also very rural, with much of the population living on some of the most efficiently-run independent small farms in the world. These farms not only support the lives of the people on the farms, but they also provide a substantial surplus for the cities. The stereotypical yankee is taciturn, dryly humorous, pragmatic, unromantic, distantly courteous, and a heck of a lot smarter and tougher than you think he is. There's some truth in that.



North Atlantic

The North Atlantic states form the core of the administrative network of the United States, and as such have proven to be the most resistant to change. The North Atlantic states are still where most of the big corporations are based. Manhattan is still the business capital of the world. Until recently, New York was the only place in North America where vehicular weapons were illegal; the ban was lifted to allow for weapons licenses after a Supreme Court ruling that the ban disrupted interstate commerce.

Vigilante groups are common in the North Atlantic states, as they are throughout the rest of the nation, with one major difference — while most vigilante groups work openly and are often considered semi-official auxiliaries to the police, North Atlantic "vigs" are usually covert, working in small, hard-hitting squads and not on the best of terms with the local constabulary.

Mid-Atlantic

The Mid-Atlantic states are where The American South begins, and were much harder hit than the rest of the East Coast by the series of disasters which led to the modern world. The roads of Virginia are like those in the rest of the nation — touchy and violent, with none of the restraint found in New England or the North Atlantic. An exception to this rule is, logically enough, Washington D.C., where the peace is maintained not by the National Guard or the state police, but by the elite units of the armed forces of the United States of America. Troublemakers will not face FAVs or attack copters, but tanks and Supersnipe air-to-ground missiles launched by fighter rocket planes.



THE AADA ROAD ATLAS AND SURVIVAL GUIDE: THE UNITED STATES EAST COAST

Due to the overwhelming response by autoduellists everywhere to our "Excerpts from the North American Road Atlas and Survival Guide, 3rd Edition" published in *Autoduel Quarterly* magazine, and "The 2036 Mini-Atlas of North America (European Edition)" published in *GURPS Autoduel*, the American Autoduel Association is proud to present its own, expanded Road Atlas for the convenience of duellists everywhere.

The Atlas is written for the driver who has no knowledge whatsoever of the customs, laws, and tourist traps of an area. So, if information about your own area seems like "common knowledge" to you, that's why.

We want to thank all the East Coast chapters of the AADA, as well as independent duellists, couriers, law enforcement agencies, and truckers throughout the East Coast for providing valuable information and assistance in the preparation of this volume.

WEAPONS PERMITS

Many states on the East Coast require a weapons permit sticker to be placed prominently on the windshield of an armed vehicle. These permits are available only from the state police; they cost a token \$10 and there is a two to three month waiting period after applying to receive one. These permits expire after one year, but reregistering is quite easy and routine, usually handled by mail. Permits will not be granted to people who have been convicted for crimes in that state: Weapons permits are not considered a right, but a privilege.

Weapons permits are technically only good in the state which issues them, but police in other states will often ignore this infraction, or simply let you off with a warning, unless you do something which annoys them.

An interstate weapons permit is available; this is a sticker issued by the federal government of the United States to interstate truck drivers and other people who travel extensively, and can be issued with an entrance visa to the United States if it is specifically requested. The Interstate permit is valid in all states requiring a permit, costs \$30, takes three months to obtain, and expires one year after receipt. For travelers from foreign countries, an interstate permit expiring on the same day as your visa is

available for free at the US Embassy in your home country. This is a courtesy intended to promote tourism.

ROAD CUSTOMS

East Coast drivers do not approach the courtesy and self-control of Canadian drivers, but they are more relaxed than drivers throughout the rest of the United States, particularly in New England. A casual road infraction is less likely to inspire a fight here: East Coasters would in general rather lean on their horns than their triggers. This should not be misinterpreted as an unwillingness to fight.

In fact, the East Coast is well known for the "Instant Posse" effect: In heavy traffic, nobody likes a touchy driver. Witnesses to the fight's beginning will start broadcasting the description and license plate number of the vehicle which fired first (not necessarily the offending vehicle) and passers-by will start shooting at him. Each other vehicle may only take two or three shots, but this sort of thing adds up fast.

If an Instant Posse should start over you, get off the road as quickly as you can. When every vehicle in a twenty-mile radius is willing take a potshot at you, your chances are not terribly good. Go to a diner and wait an hour. They won't shoot at your car in a parking lot: The entire idea behind the Instant Posse is to get hotheads off the road and slap their wrists a bit.

Another risk of the Instant Posse is the chance EDSEL or the police might hear and decide to intervene. A policeman might pull you over and give you a \$50 ticket for anything: unwarranted use of force if he actually sees you shooting. Or you'll be nailed for something like dirty windows or a cracked plastic lens over your headlight. These tickets have a way of doubling in price each time a driver or passenger makes some sort of comment.

EDSEL, however, will try to wipe you out. Even drivers who approve of EDSEL's aims are unlikely to throw a fellow driver to the wolves. The smart thing to do is to watch your radar if you have one, and listen carefully to the radio if you don't. A reference to three or four small copters is your cue to stop shooting — immediately. You may care if you're in the right in a road duel, but EDSEL won't.



Judges and juries often consider EDSSEL and other self-appointed vigilantes to be legitimate targets. It is almost impossible to get a conviction in a case where a road duellist downs an EDSSEL copter.

VIOLENCE FREQUENCY

In the 1980s, the relative safety of an area was often rated by calculating the chance the average person would be directly victimized by some violent crime. Thus, you would have (for example) the statement that one person in ten will be mugged in his lifetime, and so on.

This sort of representation became effectively meaningless during the Food Riots and their aftermath: Virtually every human being in North America gets shot at many times in their lifetime. The question is not so much will the average person be involved in violence but how often.

Please notice that the violence frequencies for serious barbaric areas, such as downtown Hartford, Poughkeepsie, Old-Boston and Virginia Beach are not given. Inhabitants of those areas are lucky to get through a day without having to fight over food, water, clothing, or breeding rights. Foreigners — that is, anyone new who looks like they might be able to read — will be attacked almost automatically.

BRIBERY RATING

In some states, bribing a law officer to overlook an infraction is so common it is practically public policy; in other states, even a hint of a bribe will add another serious charge to whatever you are being arrested for. As a service to all drivers, the description of each state includes a numerical rating from +5 to -5; the higher the number, the more likely an individual trooper from that state is to accept a bribe. These are guidelines only — the disposition of an individual officer, the circumstances, and the amount (or type) of bribe offered will all affect results.

Note to GMs: Use the Bribery Rating as a modifier to an officer's reaction roll when a bribe is offered, taking into account the other factors mentioned above.

FACILITIES

The description for facilities includes how far you will probably be from the nearest truck stop or garage. Remember that this information tends to be pessimistic: only a maximum value for range is given.

If however, you want to know how far it is between recharge stations, then take the number given and multiply it by 1.5. This means that garages are about thirty miles apart in Connecticut, so you shouldn't worry much about range. In Virginia, however, this can be critical — especially for all those laser jocks out there.

CHANNEL 9

CB Channel 9 is the emergency distress channel, by rules laid down by the Federal Communications Commission in the 1970s. The Free Oil States follow this tradition because a channel reserved for emergency use is useful. Most CBs in 2037 are designed to continuously monitor Channel 9, and will break into a conversation on another channel if a signal from nearby (about ¼ maximum radio range) is received. This feature can be shut off, but it is a serious breach of road etiquette. Even if you choose not to get involved personally, you can at least relay the message to somebody who does care.

The problem, of course, is that gangs also listen to Channel 9. They're only too happy to know where injured drivers and vehicles are. Even if help arrives before they do, the people attempting to respond to a distress call are often too busy to maintain a decent guard.

This, in turn, has led to some wealthy eccentrics starting the Samaritan Program. A cordon of heavy combat vehicles starts broadcasting distress signals on Channel 9. Helpful drivers who show up are each given a \$500 bill to apologize for the inconvenience. When the first gang shows up, well . . .

Strictly speaking, this is illegal: Transmitting false alarms is a serious offense. However, no sane police officer is going to discourage a Samaritan Program in his area. Because word does get around, they only stay in one place for an afternoon or so.

In fact, the Pennsylvania Transport Authority often runs its own Samaritan Program. They only give donuts and coffee, but save the donut wrapper! A Transport Authority cop will usually overlook a minor infraction like speeding or illegal parking if you give them a wrapper from one of their Samaritan Programs.

STATES AND MAJOR CITIES

CONNECTICUT

Government: Democratic.

Police: Friendly, cooperative. The border with New York is heavily patrolled and defended, usually by helicopters and police blimps. Bribery Rating: 0.

Major Roads: I-95, I-91, I-84, US-6. I-84 and US-6 are the most heavily traveled in the state.

Tourism: The Bristol Oval in Bristol; the Mark Twain House, Kitchener's birthplace, various museums and galleries in Hartford. Live amateur theater is alive and well in Connecticut; don't miss the Christmas productions of *Nutcracker*.

Facilities: A wide range of automotive and other amenities are easily available throughout the state. You are never more than twenty miles from a garage staffed with qualified and honest mechanics. Armor repairs cost 110% of the national average; repairs to lasers and electronic equipment cost 105% of the national average. Fortified truck stops are very rare. There are only three in the state, mostly along the New York border.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of Connecticut will be involved in violence once in eight months.

Connecticut has the lowest highway fatality rate in the United States, a condition some ascribe to the design of its highways. The story goes that anyone trying to find his way on a Connecticut freeway is simply too busy trying to navigate to open fire on anyone. With the exception of snow removal, the roads are easily the best-maintained in the Northeast. However, they are very poorly designed, which gives them the "Fair to Good" rating. To cross from one major highway to another often involves driving through poorly-marked and maintained city streets. In addition, the highways have exits and entrances on both the right and left sides of the road; lanes vanish and reappear with bizarre whimsicality. It is claimed the man who designed Interstate 84 died in a road accident on 84 in Hartford. This has been cited as proof that there is a God.

Connecticut is the home state of Firetech, the world's largest privately-run fire and rescue service. Like all good fire fighters, Firetech's employees will risk their lives to save total strangers. Anyone attempting to delay or harass firetechs for any reason will usually be blown off the road in seconds. Thus, firetechs tend to combine an absolute respect for life and total ruthlessness — both aspects are considered part of their job.

For advertising, good public relations, and training purposes, Firetech will often respond to medical and fire emergencies anywhere in Connecticut at no charge. Firetech is not a charitable organization, but they are nowhere near as mercenary as Gold Cross.

Aside from New York, Connecticut is the only state in North America in which it is difficult or impossible to find signs advertising "Real New York Style" pizza or cheesecake or seltzer water. This is because of the Enfield Villains and Insane Lunatics: EVIL members are pledged to destroy any such sign they spot in Connecticut. Despite

its melodramatic name, EVIL's exploits have never extended much past petty vandalism and elaborate practical jokes, such as a helicopter raid on Manhattan to remove the first two letters of the sign on the famous Essex House Hotel. EVIL members dedicate most of their time to friendly in-club mayhem; the state police rarely intervenes with EVIL, because of members' political connections, fear that EVIL might be frightened into doing something really dangerous, and most importantly, the fact that EVIL is simply not a serious criminal gang. EVIL has no particular colors, but proud members often put a large yellow "E" somewhere on their car.

AADA ADVISORY: Autoduelling and possession of vehicular and personal arms without a permit are illegal statewide.

Hartford, Connecticut



HARTFORD

Population: 160,000.

Description: The downtown area is a barbarian ruin that even the police avoid, but the uptown is heavily defended, safe, and peaceful, especially the ultra-posh Asylum Hill area. People carrying anything more powerful than a pistol on their persons will be harassed by police. Hartford is the insurance capital of North America, and street violence is very much frowned upon.

Duelling Facilities: The Hartford Cycle Battle Arena, previously the civic center, is one of the largest indoor cycle arenas on the East Coast. Battles feature pedestrians against cycles, cycles against cycles, and pedestrians against pedestrians. Television coverage is wide, but the arena is not terribly popular locally.

Gang Activity: Numerous small, violent gangs vie for supremacy in the downtown ruins. Despite their hostilities, they will band together to fight a common threat. The richer parts of town are gang-free, due to intensive police protection.

BRISTOL

Population: 55,000.

Duelling Facilities: The most noted tourist attraction here is the Bristol Oval, a small dueltrack on the outskirts of town. The Oval is immensely popular, despite or because of its extremely simple design. The crowds at the Oval are not terribly blood-thirsty, and get more excited from an impressive feat of driving than a bullseye.

Another possible reason for the Oval's popularity is the fact that ESPN, a major sports network, is based in Bristol and has spent quite a bit of time covering the events at the Oval.

Other Facilities: Bristol is also the home of a good variety of stores, including an establishment specializing in inexpensive reproductions of 20th-century comic books.

Gang Activity: EVIL is active, but they wouldn't steal a postage stamp unless it struck them as a joke. Cycle gang activity is almost nonexistent, although there are campfire stories of Vandervecken's Sharks, a cycle gang which has been cursed to cruise I-84, for all eternity, searching hopelessly for the exit onto Route 6 West, knowing somehow that this is their only shot at redemption.



Government: Democratic.

Police: Quite mellow and relaxed. Bribery Rating: +1.

Major Roads: Interstate 13 and Delaware 36.

Tourism: Downstation Central does not allow tours, but boats filled with tourists with binoculars are tolerated to the outskirts of the clearly-marked minefield, about a mile from the station proper. Tours of Dover Air Force Base are quite popular; they are very well-guarded and no weapons are allowed. A tour group was once machine-gunned over an unfortunate misunderstanding involving a cigarette lighter, but Air Force security has publicly apologized for that mishap.

The City of Dover is quite proud of itself and welcomes tourists. Dover now has some of the finest cinema facilities in the world, but if you can't find a flick you're interested in, leave a note at the desk in your hotel and you'll have it on cube within an hour. Many "lost" episodes of "Doctor Who" and "Dynasty" have been found here. Dover is infatuated with duellists. Be polite and answer questions honestly and you'll have people returning tips.

Facilities: Garages are scattered all over the state; you are always within fifteen miles of one. However, they tend to be "noncombat" oriented — weapons components like guns and ammo cost 105% of the national average. This is not because of resentment, but a low demand.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of Delaware will be involved in violence once in a year. In the Dover Arcology, this drops to an almost incredible *five* years.



Delaware is among the quietest states in the U.S., a virtue appreciated by the many large companies which have important facilities here. Certainly the most impressive of these facilities is Downstation Central, floating on a six-acre artificial archipelago in Delaware Bay. Downstation Central is the primary mission control complex of North American Chemicals, which maintains an industrial space platform (Orbit One) for carrying out certain chemical processes and experiments in hard vacuum and microgravity.

Downstation Central incorporates recreation for its crew, ground command for missions in progress, some training and simulation facilities, and crisis control, where engineers attempt to duplicate and overcome in-flight problems with equipment the astronauts would have available. Downstation Central is a high-security area; guards are authorized to use deadly force against intruders attempting to board the structure.

The slogan "PER ASTRA AD BIG BUCKS" (To the stars through big bucks — the Latin is not terribly good) is painted on the primary radome in letters large enough to be read from Cedar Beach with binoculars. The letters have reappeared each time they were eradicated; nobody seems to know who could be responsible. Speculation about EVIL is not taken seriously by anyone.

Because of the popularity of the Bristol Oval, the Dover Downs International Speedway is being converted for dueltrack events. This is an "experimental" station, where the AADA is carrying out delicate studies of the dueltrack concept, trying to determine how to maximize safety, and researching tapes of old racing accidents to see how such occurrences can be prevented in the future. Uncle Albert's Safety Seat was designed in close cooperation with the AADA's Dover Downs Research Group. Security is tight, because some of the experiments in progress have been sabotaged. The persons responsible are unknown — theories of guilt include other dueltrack owners who fear competition or restrictive policies, northeastern arena owners who are afraid of the immense popularity of dueltrack events, and BLUD or EDSEL trying to delay expansion of the AADA.

Delaware is also the home of the Dover Air Force Base, currently the largest U.S.A.F. facility on the East Coast. After the Anarchist Relief Front's attack here in 2030, security has been beefed up considerably. Whenever an American dies abroad, this is where he comes home; Dover AFB has the largest refrigerated morgue in the Free World.

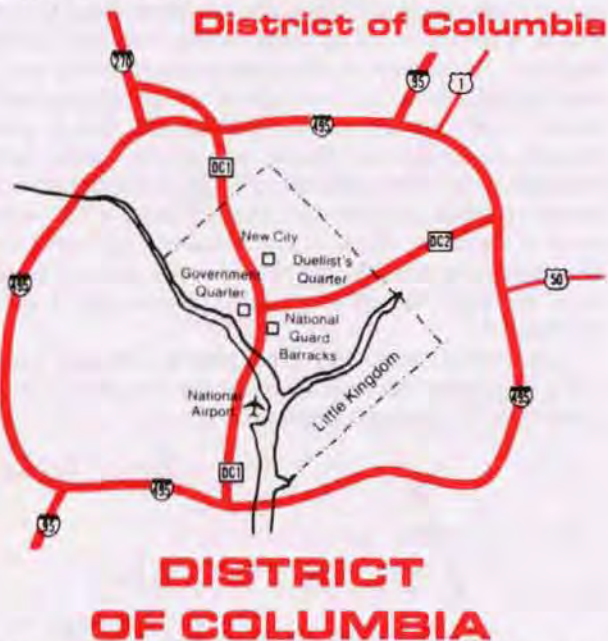
AADA ADVISORY: Autoduelling and possession of vehicular and personal arms without a permit are illegal statewide.

DOVER

Population: 2,500,000.

Description: Dover is the largest arcology (city within a single building) on Earth. The building is a rough circle, now two miles in diameter and still growing. A unique feature of Dover is its source of electrical energy: low-orbit powersats transmit to the microwave reception antennas covering Dover's roof. Walking under the antenna is quite safe, and even though it would take several hours to build up to a lethal dose, a popular local ditty concerns "Fried birds over / The concrete of Dover." No vehicles or weapons larger than handguns are allowed in Dover, except for security police.

Gang Activity: The most common penalty in Dover is expulsion for a first offense, so crime is very low. Most of the violent crime in Dover is of the domestic variety. Dover is so concerned with the specter of gang activity that two juveniles caught on their first burglary will be expelled if they're just wearing the same color shirts.



Government: Democratic. United States national capital.

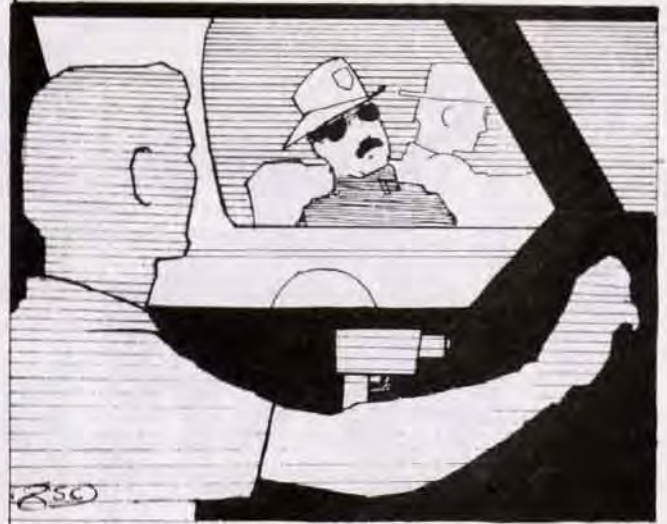
Police: Slightly on edge, but not hostile. Very used to tourists and other strangers. Bribery Rating: -1, -5 if it involves what appears to be a possible threat to national security.

Major Roads: DC1 and DC2 are the only roads in to DC proper; they are heavily patrolled. I-495 circles the DC area; I-495 may be entered by I-270, I-95, US-50, and US-1.

Tourism: A bewildering variety of national shrines, memorials, and museums. It is possible to spend years walking around the Government Quarter and staring. The Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum is the most-visited museum in the world.

Facilities: There is only one full-fledged truck stop open to the public, but there are four very well-equipped garages. These are all in the Duellist's Quarter.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of the District of Columbia will be involved in violence one time in a month. For a citizen of the New City, this drops to once every eight months.



Rioting virtually destroyed Washington in the years following 2016; the government was forced to withdraw from its own capital for the second time in United States history.

The United States government moved back, just as before, to a complete ruin. Reconstruction began, and the city was soon rebuilt. There are now four basic areas tourists will encounter.

THE GOVERNMENT QUARTER

The Government Quarter incorporates the offices of the Federal and city government, and foreign embassies. This area also has the rebuilt Smithsonian Institution and the various renovated memorials, which make the city well worth visiting. This is possibly the tightest security zone in the world. No private vehicles are allowed within the walls (convenient and heavily-guarded parking lots are available). There are no hotels, and the closest things to private residences are the White House and other government homes. Pedestrians should be very careful not to walk on the clearly-marked military roads; in the event of an alert, the combat machines which use these motorways are not expected to slow down for any reason.

THE NEW CITY

The New City is an arcology, a city built inside a single building. It's about a mile long now, and is still expanding. From observation areas on the roof, it is possible to get a certain melancholy satisfaction by watching the arcology expand into the riot-devastated rubble, rather like watching crystalization in progress. The only vehicles allowed inside are small electric go-carts used by internal security. Internal insurrections are dealt with severely.

THE LITTLE KINGDOM

The "Little Kingdom" is the only D.C. area to survive the Food Riots almost untouched. The community is completely self-enclosed and self-sufficient; they only have to trade for high-tech items. Nathan Ferrell rules the area and is not interested in inviting outside contacts. There is a sort of tense stalemate across the border between the Kingdom and the rest of D.C. The federal government seems resigned to having an independent state close by.



THE DUELLISTS' QUARTER

The Duellists' Quarter is much like any other town in autoduel America; this is the home of the Capital Centre Duelling Arena and Foster Motor Vehicles. Like the New City, The Quarter is also growing into the wasteland, but not as quickly.

Gang Activity: Caution is recommended when driving about the D.C. area, as the wasteland is infested with barbarian gangs. There are also two cycle gangs worth noting, the Redskins and the Coyotes. They are a serious threat to lone travellers, but groups are relatively safe. Any biker group large enough to tackle a decent-sized convoy will attract the unforgiving attention of the National Guard. The Redskins' colors are maroon and gold, while the Coyotes travel in dark gray with a white wolf's head emblem.

MAINE

Police: Courteous and friendly. Bribery Rating: 0.

Major Roads: I-295, I-195, I-95. Other roads can be in such bad condition that they can only be considered "off-road."

Tourism: The King Horror Haven in Portland is a lot of fun. Early protests over the "Carrie's Prom" exhibit have been responded to — the management will give your clothes a free dry cleaning if you happen to be accidentally splashed. Concerned parents may choose to go through once before allowing their children in. You have been warned. People interested in robotics may arrange for a special behind-the-scenes tour, originally started for those who were excessively upset by the "Dungeon of Dismemberment."

On the other side of the artistic spectrum, the Portland Literary Festival is held annually. Attend symposiums titled "Why Fenimore Cooper was a Good Writer." Literary duels are held in the Portland Autoduel Arena; to defray costs, they are open to the public and are quite popular. The dueling is not particularly skilled, but it is very enthusiastic. Duellists who surrender in a car which has not been "killed" may be forced to eat a paperback copy of something by Bulwer-Lytton. Hilarity will ensue.

Facilities: It's not easy to find a garage or food off the beaten track. At any time, you're probably within fifty miles of a garage. About one garage in ten is a fortified truck stop. Even *on* the beaten track, half will be unable to repair or reload exotic weapons like lasers or gauss and flechette guns. If they happen to have what you need, they'll charge as much as 120% of the national average.

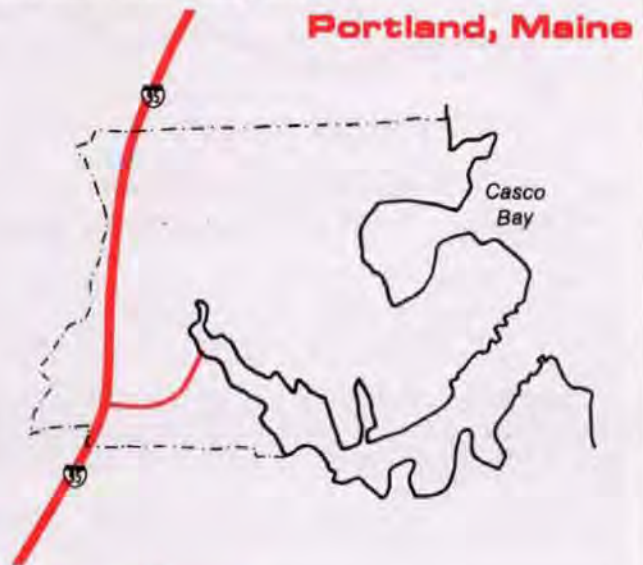
Violence Frequency: The average citizen of Maine will be involved in violence every two months.

Maine has an incredibly low traffic density. Perhaps because of this, Maine drivers maintain a continuous cheerful chatter over the CB channels. You'll need an LD radio to get in on this, however.

Maine has some of the most beautiful mountains and scenery in the Northeast. Hill clans rule most of the state outside of the urban areas.

Like most other northeastern clans, those of Maine are fairly peaceful. Unlike most of them, Maine groups are actively friendly to outsiders who are smart enough to stay neutral in the feuds and squabbles which dominate interclan relations. Hospitality to strangers is considered a way of showing off wealth, and is a form of one-upmanship among tribes. It isn't too unusual for a Maine hill clan to give a stranger an enormous dinner, a place to sleep, and a breakfast which would founder a horse, and then throw in a battery recharge from the clan windmill in return for a good game of checkers, darts, or just amusingly-told news from the rest of the country. Payment for this sort of thing is never accepted, though a tasteful thank-you gift is always appreciated.

Abuse of this hospitality is not merely rude, it is deadly. Nasty flatlanders can be lucky to escape with their lives, let alone their vehicles and possessions.



PORTLAND

Population: 50,000.

Description: With a population of 50,000, Portland is the largest city in Maine. To support themselves during the Food Riots, Portland turned to the sea. To this day, Portland has some of the finest seafood restaurants on the East Coast. Out-of-staters asking for directions are likely to be told "you cain't get thar from hyear." Laugh politely and persist: This is a local joke.

Portland, Maine is the site of the internationally famous Portland Literature Festival every November. In 2022, a panel of judges which had just elected Charles Dickens as the greatest writer of the 19th Century was torn to pieces by an outraged mob of Mark Twain fans disguised as characters from *The Gilded Age*. Security and critical competence have both been beefed up since, and there have been no similar inconveniences. Ambushing people with different literary tastes is considered rude in the extreme, but arguments about Chaucer's *Knights Tale* have been settled with blood.

Portland is well worth visiting, especially during the Festival. Nowhere else in the United States can one see combat cars stencilled with "I HATE IAMBIC PENTAMETER" and "SHAKESPEARE — STILL #1" duking it out in an arena rented for that purpose. This may be a Good Thing.

Gang Activity: Essentially nonexistent.



Baltimore, Maryland MARYLAND

Government: Democratic.

Police: Courteous and friendly. Bribery Rating: 0.

Major Roads: I-301, I-50, I-95, I-40.

Tourism: "Petrol Pete's" Real Oil Well in Cumberland is one of the finest ideas in the history of American tourism. The oil produced here is profitable, but even more is made from the restaurant and souvenir shops. It's not just a working pump — it's a museum devoted to petroleum technology. You won't find a mention of NorAm's zero-G artificial polymer process, but aside from that it's quite complete and fascinating.

The Cumberland Valley Rocket Club has been unpopular with tourists ever since their reproduction V-2 exploded, but don't let that deter you. These people live, breathe, and dream rocketry. If you want to make somebody eternally happy, ask about scramrockets.

Baltimore has many interesting museums and galleries, and is the home of the Chocolate Kitty, which has possibly the most interesting and classy pornographic stage productions in the western hemisphere. Rowdies are heavily discouraged.

Facilities: You'll never be more than ten miles from a garage, or fifty miles from a truck stop. The prices are average. In the Cumberland area, however, it is possible to

get rockets, armor, and tires for reduced prices — see the description below.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of Maryland will be involved in violence once in a month. Most of this is because of overly-touchy drivers, and not spill-over from Virginia.

Maryland was not seriously hit by the Food Riots. When the economic situation deteriorated, Maryland's small petroleum reserves became profitable to exploit. This was a lucky break which allowed Maryland to hang together until the Riots were over.

Maryland has some light petroleum production, so gas-powered cars, though rare, are sometimes seen on Maryland's racetracks. The Maryland dueltrack circuit is very popular because of the staggering performance possible by the gasburners. Non-AADA sanctioned gas/electric combo events are quite popular. One local idiosyncrasy of Maryland autoduellists is the Jousting event, a specialized arena event which rewards speed and maneuverability.

The "Baltimore Code of Honor" is called "rude driving" anywhere in the United States except for Maryland. Even minor roadway infractions, not usually considered serious enough to blow a horn elsewhere, will be replied to with weapons fire.

CUMBERLAND

Population: 30,000.

Description: Cumberland is currently the industrial capital of Maryland. It has been estimated that 45% of the ablative armor, tires, and rocket weapons in North America are from Cumberland.

Duelling Facilities: It is possible to find armor, tires and rocket weapons for as much as 15% off the normal price from Cumberland merchants (*Note to GMs: this requires a successful Scrounging roll*). Electronics prices are inflated: They run as much as 30% over the national average.

The Cumberland Valley Rocket Club (CVRC) is a group of local eccentrics who develop rocketry systems on a amateur basis. Perhaps their most successful experiment to date is a liquid-fuelled unguided rocket. The impressive thrust gives it an improved range over standard solid-fuel rockets, but it has an unfortunate tendency towards premature detonation. Uncle Albert's believed the design was worth purchasing, however.

Gang Activity: There are a few small, well-organized cycle gangs working Maryland; most of these tend to stay at least 20 miles from urban areas.

Cumberland, Maryland





MASSACHUSETTS

Government: Democratic, with some oligarchic overtones. Rural inhabitants feel Boston exerts undue pressure to the detriment of the rest of the state.

Police: Their manner is slightly distant, but they're decent enough. Be forewarned, though — a popular local line holds that "Everything is illegal in Massachusetts." Most of these laws are not enforced, but know ahead of time that if they want you badly enough, they've got you. Bribery Rating: 0.

Major Roads: I-95, I-90, I-91, Route 128. These are the best maintained roads in the northeast.

Tourism: Uncle Albert's Catalogue Showroom is watched carefully by pro duellists for new gadgets which might change their strategies. It is also a popular place to just enjoy yourself — the popcorn popper working off waste heat from a battery of machine guns is typical of the whimsicality in the Showroom's design. Naturally, Boston is filled with reproductions of historical sites from the Old City.

Facilities: There are ten truck stops around the Boston area, and the easternmost section of the state is filled with garages and charge stations. Garages are required by law to report damage which smacks of road combat. They will turn a blind eye to light damage, but anything excessive (a side losing 80% or more of its armor, wounded gunners) will be reported unless a character successfully makes a \$50 bribe. The police won't do more than make you waste a day, but they will check your record and that could be embarrassing. Further west, however, things can get a bit sparse. Hill clans are suspicious of strangers but may let you recharge your power plant for free.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of Massachusetts is involved in violence every six weeks. This is constant throughout the state: what the rural areas lack in street gangs, they make up for in interclan violence. Please note that rural violence in Massachusetts is seasonal. Most of the combat takes place in winter.

The eastern part of the state is dominated by Boston; the heavily rural west is controlled by hill clans. It is very difficult to get lost and wind up in clan territory — it's just too far off the beaten track.

The old Yankee nuclear plant has been reactivated by a group led by a technological genius known as Tinker. Although it is generally agreed that Tinker is maping without a bucket, and it is rumored he was a NorAm Chemical astronaut who used parts of his own brain to glue a shuttle together, he has shown to be resourceful enough to keep his merry little band together. His people are safe against outsiders and large, hostile clans, and still have enough time to produce some impressive vehicular designs for high-paying autoduellists. He has been described as Thomas Edison with a sense of humor.

The Massachusetts Motor Vehicle department is possibly the most disorganized in the United States. Insurance companies don't even bother to try to get information from them any more.

BOSTON

Population: 2,000,000.

Description: Boston is the largest city in New England. The town was rebuilt in Cambridge after the Food Riots, and now stands as one of the most modern non-arcology cities in the United States.

Duelling Facilities: The primary attraction Boston will have to duellists is the Uncle Albert Catalogue Showroom, where components are sold for a 10% discount. Be warned that the AADA will not take this bonus into account when classifying a car for divisions.

Gang Activity: Moderate. The Pulsers and Hellriders spend most of their time in Old Boston, ripping up each other and what's left of the city. They sometimes make small raids on highway traffic. The Hellriders use a "winged H" logo on their bikes. The Pulsers' colors are red and white.

Boston, Massachusetts





NEW HAMPSHIRE

Government: Democratic. Relations between the urban and rural populations are probably the best in the northeast.

Police: Decent people who are grossly underpaid and forced to accept bribes to support themselves. They are, however, basically honest and no more likely to accept a bribe from a serious criminal than anyone else is. Bribery Rating: +5 for victimless crimes, 0 otherwise.

Major Roads: I-89, I-95, I-93.

Tourism: The White Mountain National Forest is very beautiful but does have its drawbacks: see below.

Facilities: Garages are commonplace, averaging about one every fifty miles. About four in six of these are simply recharge stations, without real repair facilities. They might be able to lend you tools and they're bound to know where you could get a hold of a decent mechanic. Recharges cost only 90% of the national average. Even in a full-fledged repair shop, repairing and reloading any weapon which does more damage than a standard rocket launcher will cost 115% of the national average.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of New Hampshire is involved in violence once every two months. This does not include crimes such as pickpocketing or swindles by con artists.

A trip through New Hampshire is almost like a trip through time. The state was almost untouched by the war and the Food Riots. Any criminality encountered here is most likely to be of the non-violent pickpocket and con job variety. Unfortunately, there is a lot of that, so watch out.

The White Mountain National Forest is magnificent, but camping is not advised because of "forest folk," the crazed debris of modern society. New England winters thin the herd appreciably, so early spring is the best time to go camping. The weather can be harsh even then, however, and finding a dead band of forest folk left over from winter can ruin your day, especially if they happen to be in your drinking stream. Overall, New Hampshire is still a nice place to relax and let the cordite clear from your nostrils.

AADA ADVISORY: Autoduelling and possession of vehicular and personal arms without a permit are illegal statewide.

COMBINE

Population: 175,000.

Description: Combine is currently the largest single producer of computer memory media in the United States, producing not just the ubiquitous cubes, but more exotic media like hologram and worm drives.

History: The three cities of Concord, Manchester, and Nashua were unified under a single city government in 2020.

Gang Activity: Very low. New Hampshire is efficiently patrolled. A particularly loathsome minority practices the "sport" of manhunting or enslaving the forest folk in White Mountain National Forest. Estimates of how widespread this is vary greatly.

NEW JERSEY

Government: Nominal democracy, but the Modified Golden Rule (who has the gold makes the rules) has never been more amply demonstrated than here. Corporate feudalism is the reality.

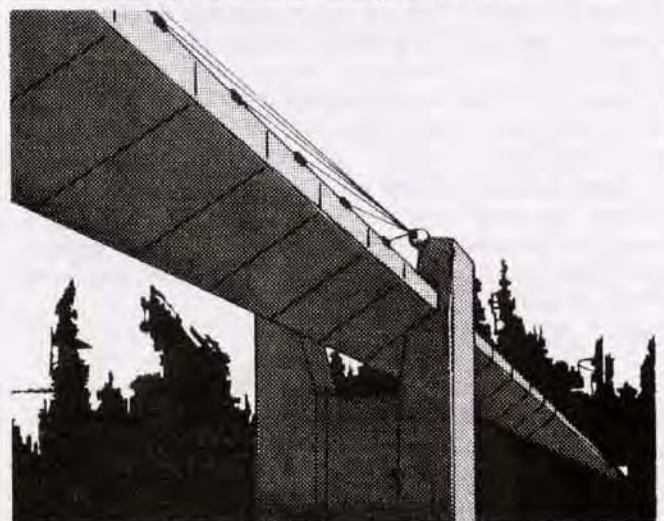
Police: Some are demoralized, depressed, and fatigued. The bad ones are outright crooks. New Jersey police are probably the only ones in the world who hesitate to come to each other's assistance. Bribery Rating: 1/3 of the time, bribes are accepted automatically, no matter the circumstances, so long as the bribe is substantial enough to cover the offense. The rest of the time, +5.

Major Roads: Garden State Parkway, the New Jersey Turnpike (which is essentially I-95), and I-80. They are indifferently patrolled.

Tourism: Virtually none. Newark has a few seedy hotels and museums, but the only good places to visit in New Jersey are by invitation only. Atlantic City used to be the Las Vegas of the East; it is now, unfortunately and unofficially, an enormous private club.

Facilities: There are numerous fortified truck stops scattered throughout the state. You won't ever be more than thirty miles from one. They tend to be slightly paranoid, and overprotective of Brothers. The only significant unfortified garages are in villages.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of New Jersey is involved in casual violence once every two weeks, one of the highest levels on the East Coast. This is almost entirely of the mugging and rolling variety, however.



New Jersey has been described as "looking like a fire sale in Hell" (John M. Ford). Its poor government services, casual violence, and generally bad standard of living place New Jersey squarely in the twenties; if anything, New Jersey has gone downhill in the last 20 years. A bad place to live, and you don't want to visit there.

A popular joke in New York claims that the only difference between death and New Jersey is that in New Jersey people can vote. The optimistic say putting this state back on its feet would require nothing more than a minor miracle. If you read Edgar Allen Poe to cheer up, you will like New Jersey.

Atlantic City, New Jersey



NEWARK

Population: 200,000.

Description: Socialists and union supporters love to point to Newark; this city shows the worst side of capitalism. It is governed by a few giant industrial corporations who employ secret police against each other and the general population. Federal health and safety inspectors are ignored — the inside of a Newark factory looks like a high-tech version of the more nightmarish scenes from "Metropolis." The only three growth industries in Newark are prostitution, cheap drugs (like alcohol), and random street violence.

Gang Activity: Mostly of the UP (Unorganized Punks) variety. The tough hombres are the ones who are bright enough to get knives. Most of these guys run if you narrow your eyes menacingly, let alone draw a weapon. There are plenty of easier targets for them.

NEW YORK

Government: Nominal democracy, with rural upstate interests disproportionately represented in Albany. Mayor Lionel Haid of Manhattan still has to put his name on a ballot, but he's never gotten less than 87% of the popular

vote, and that was the year his ex-lover had his biography ghosted and made into a movie.

Police: Honest and clean-cut. The Manhattan Police Department is one of the proudest in the world. State troopers are serious, grim, and incredible drivers. However, they're still getting used to their vehicular weapons. Bribery Rating: -1 for Manhattan police, -2 for State Police.

Major Roads: I-81, I-90, I-84, I-87, and I-88.

Tourism: Anything you can imagine and most of the things you can't are available in Manhattan. Anything from a T-shirt with a picture of a three-eyed man saying "I VISITED POUGHKEEPSIE," to gag LAWS which are actually Roman candles (note: fireworks are illegal) to Serious Theatre, it's there. The rest of the state is no slouch either — Niagara Falls, the Catskill Park, and the Rhinebeck Airdrome are all well worth the trip.

Facilities: There are numerous fortified truck stops scattered throughout the state. You will never be more than sixty miles from one. They may seem somewhat paranoid, but remember that upstate New York is a dangerous place. No matter how placid and friendly the area seems, at any moment a covert vigilante group could thunder by on a rendezvous with mayhem. Around Manhattan Island, more placid garages are available. Every town and village in upstate New York has a power station and a guy who makes money tinkering with cars; aside from them, there are no unfortified garages left.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of Manhattan will be involved in a minor incident about once a month. Manhattan is highly polarized, however — the bad sections hit once a week, and the good sections go to once every six months. Upstate New York averages out to one incident every two months. However, the "incidents" upstate are often incredibly violent — covert vigilantes often use hunter/killer helicopters, and some regional militia has air support consisting of P-38 fighters from World War II.

New York State has recently lifted their complete ban on vehicular weapons, and now requires a permit. While most people think only of New York City when they hear about New York, remember that upstate New York is not very urban at all. It is a highly rural area, with extensive dairy farms and apple orchards.

The traditional conflict between city dwellers and country folk was fanned to war in New York. A guerrilla war between Manhattan and the rest of the state started over grievances such as the right to pump fresh water out of the Hudson River. Since New York City was heavily involved in inter-borough violence and was supplied by upstate reservoirs and power stations, there was little they could do when upstate forces cut their water and power supplies. The resulting negotiations modified the state government into an electoral college system which has left the government of the state firmly under the control of upstaters ever since.

The typical New York covert vigilante group is very similar to a regional militia, but with important differences



as well. They are both technically illegal, but police tend to encourage militias — an honest gun next to you in a fight is worth winking at a few laws. The covertly are actively hunted criminals. Coverts probably cannot ever operate efficiently with police; one sheriff once pointed out that “the last cop to work well with a masked vigilante was Commissioner Gordon.”

A good example of a regional militia is the Paramilitary Organization: Pine Plains Emergency Reserve System. The POPPERS are very much like the famous MONDOs, a group of pals who drill together on weekends and fight alongside the police against the occasional bandit gang. Morale is superb. Unlike the MONDOs, the POPPERS (whose colors are canary yellow and black when not in camo) enjoy good relations with their local autoduel club, the Squealing Wheels Society. The POPPERS and SWS drill together extensively to develop combined-arms tactics: They are not quite a well-oiled machine, but at least they have enthusiasm and no acrimony. The SWS have even adopted POPPERS colors, with the AADA logo added in a prominent place.

Probably the best known vigilante force is Nightsword, which U.S. Army General (ret.) John Tacinelli has called, “quite possibly the best trained and equipped military force for its size on Earth.” Nightsword’s modus operandi is the nocturnal blitzkrieg. Nightsword’s “colors” are flat black, and their symbol is a point-down sword. While the AADA cannot condone criminal groups and always suggests cooperating with the local police, giving the police information which vigilante groups consider sensitive is not the way to endear yourselves to them, or to the population they draw from.

While in New York, spend some time at the Airdrome in Rhinebeck. They have one of the finest collections in existence of reproduction aircraft from the First and Second World Wars. On weekends during spring, summer, and fall, humorous and very popular air shows are held. It is an open, friendly museum atmosphere — and some of the more advanced fighter/bombers are still used as air power for POPPERS and similar organizations in Dutchess County. They are on display, but guarded.

AADA ADVISORY: Autoduelling and possession of vehicular and personal arms without a permit are illegal statewide.

MANHATTAN ISLAND

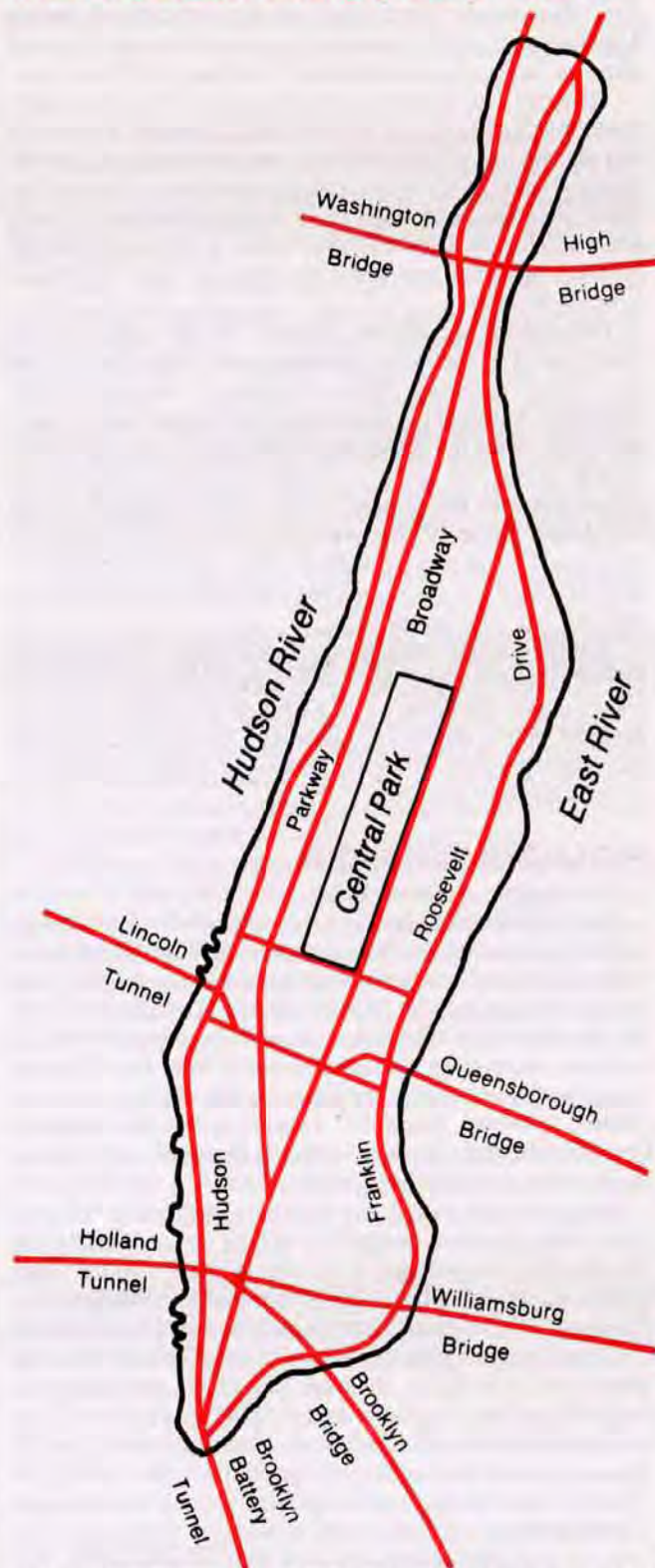
Population: 2,000,000.

Description: Manhattan is fiercely proud of its recovery and wants everybody to see it. The Tourist Pogrom of 2025, where 72 tourists were hanged by their own camera straps in Central Park, was a fluke and visitors should not be discouraged. Any trip to the United States should certainly include time in Manhattan to see the Museum of Natural History, the Museum of Art, The Metropolitan Opera, Broadway, galleries, and 42nd Street.

Try to avoid Manhattan during August. The “water emergency” has been a semi-annual tradition since 1975. Also, the climate is almost as oppressive as hearing well meaning natives observing that “It isn’t the heat — it’s the humidity.”

Perhaps the most striking police unit anywhere in New York is Manhattan’s Mounted Police, nicknamed “the

Manhattan Island, New York



Manhattan Mounties.” It has been proved that a single Mountie on crowd control is worth ten foot patrolmen. A mob isn’t afraid of a line of people, but 1400 pounds of well-trained horse is terrifying. Modern Manhattan Mounties and their horses wear armor and carry riot shields. Watching a Mountie pursue and “detain” an errant mugger can be a real treat, evidence that the old skills are still very useful.

Other Facilities: The game and comic book stores are particularly worth investigating, but there are many friendly and idiosyncratic stores of all types scattered across Manhattan. If you're looking for an artifact which doesn't blow up, someone in Manhattan is willing to sell it to you.

History: The Food Riots hit New York City particularly hard, and the city split into its five boroughs. Manhattan has shown incredible resiliency and admirable self-confidence. From the shell-shocked cannibal island it was a few years after the Food Riots, it is now the Big Apple — the First City of the United States. There is still some tension between upstaters and Manhattanites, but none is directed towards visitors.

Gang Activity: Almost entirely UPs and small gangs; bandits tend to be badly organized punk clubs. Sometimes the NYPD will run "punk roundups," moving in with Mounties, followed by patrolmen, followed by heavy weapons reserves for the occasional tough spot. If you should get caught in one, lie down — horses don't like stepping on people because the footing is bad. Then surrender to the patrolmen. Be as bright, articulate, and polite as you can manage; innocents get caught in these roundups fairly frequently and if the patrolmen happen to buy it, you'll probably get off with an apology.

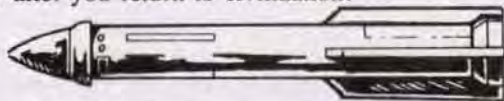
Bandit activity upstate is violent and unpredictable. Covert vigilantes probably won't gun for you without a good reason, but there's still a chance of getting iced accidentally. A TV reporter infiltrating a cycle gang's hideout was nearly killed recently when the Twilight Tempest coverts attacked the area.

POUGHKEEPSIE

Population: Approx. 300.

Description: Poughkeepsie is one of the very few areas actually hit during the Russo-American War. The Soviets used a 20-kiloton warhead mounted on a cruise missile fired from a "fishing trawler" in the Atlantic. Ground Zero was the development laboratories of an international business machine corporation, some three miles from the center of the city. Consequently, damage to the city proper was limited. Despite extensive relocation by the Federal Government, large numbers of people remained, and became the Townies of today (see below).

Lingering radiation is not a serious problem in the city. The levels are low enough to kill by cancer instead of catastrophic hemorrhage. It is only close to Ground Zero that levels exceed the maximum allowed in nuclear power plants, which are in turn comparable to the levels found in buildings made of granite, such as Grand Central Station in Manhattan. Remaining in a car should cut the dosage to insignificant levels. Nevertheless, NBC suits are highly recommended for extended work, especially near Ground Zero, where fallout could still presumably be inhaled. If you are forced to stay there long, use a gas mask, and throw it away after you return to civilization.



Gang Activity: The Townies are barbarians, and very little is known about them to this day. They are apparently semi-cannibalistic, but mostly rely on nets for Hudson river fish. The area is a good hideout for cycle gangs trying to lay low.



PENNSYLVANIA

Government: Bureaucratic oligarchy, theoretically democratic.

Police: Sincerely dedicated and courageous. Accepting a bribe is a capital offense for an officer and entrapment is legal. Bribery Rating: -10.

Major Roads: I-81, I-80, I-76, I-95.

Tourism: They make jokes about "Pennsylvania: Home of the Pennsylvania Turnpike." This is partially an exaggeration. You can visit the site of the Battle of Gettysburg — if the death of a soldier does indeed consecrate the earth, then this is the holiest place in the United States.

On a lighter note, you may wish to visit Hershey, the prime factory town of a major chocolate manufacturer. There, you can tour the facility (security is tight: no weapons needed or allowed), take pictures of the whimsical streetlights, go to the amusement park, or just sit back, relax, and enjoy the scent from what must surely be the best-smelling factory you will ever visit.

Autoduelling fans will want to visit the reconditioned Allentown Autoduel Arena. Held by the Steal Machine gang in 2033, it is now an AADA facility again, and symbolic of the gradually victorious war against the random-violence crazies.

Facilities: Fortified Truck Stops are easy to find throughout the state. You will never be more than forty miles from one. Garages are plentiful in the urban areas. The only unfortified garages left in Pennsylvania are the ones working out of somebody's back yard. A lot of these guys are quite good, and they are in it because they love cars; they will hardly ever try to rip you off.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of Pennsylvania will be involved in violence once every two months.

During the Food Riots of 2016, the state government of Pennsylvania was wiped out in a single riot. An administrative glitch placed the Transport Authority in control until free elections could be held again. Pennsylvania is still waiting for those elections.

However, the present state of Pennsylvania can be used as evidence that a military dictatorship is not necessarily a Bad Thing. Pennsylvania could have easily become a banana republic or slum town like Newark, but the Keystone State was blessed with the rarest event in political history: an oligarchy with a genuine sense of duty to the people.

The officers of the Transport Authority are local heroes, even though the editorial pages constantly poke at them. Morale is very high and the Transport Authority takes care of its own. Recently, a crooked state trooper was rescued from a lynch mob and taken by helicopter to Philadelphia just in time for his execution.

The Pennsylvania Turnpike is the finest road in the state. It is strictly noncombat, and Authority Police have complete power to kill anyone who does any duelling on the turnpike. The other roads in the state are poor when compared to those in the rest of the northeast. The most often-voiced criticism of the Authority is that they devote too much time to the Turnpike and not enough to the other roadways in the state.

ALLENTOWN

Population: 65,000.

Description: Allentown produces a lot of cars and steel. The city government is theoretically democratic, but remains responsible to the Transport Authority.

Gang Activity: Gang activity is very light. In 2034, Michael O'Sea's local "Steal Machine" gang was stung by a surgical mercenary strike. The Machine fled to Poughkeepsie, New York, to try to regain their losses and shape



up. An almost immediate surprise attack by Nightword, which killed O'Sea and over eighty members of the gang, cracked morale. The Steal Machine dispersed, and no other gang has become large enough to be a serious danger since.

RHODE ISLAND

Government: Democracy. Extensive Naval bases exert some influence on the state government; any reasonable and some unreasonable favors asked by the military are likely to be granted.

Police: Very friendly to visitors, no more or less bribable than most people. There is some slight chance of being arrested by U.S. Marines (not military police, but combat forces with gunship support). Marines have the "Me Soldier — You Enemy" mentality. The last Marine here to take a bribe was shot for treason. Rumor has it that, to this day, the Marines go out of their way to spit on his grave. Bribery Rating: 0 for state police, don't even try with Marines.

Major Roads: I-95.

Tourism: Tourist boats go out to watch the nuclear subs maneuver. The crews of these vessels enjoy showing off, and put the subs through a series of high-performance dives and surfaces when they know there's a good crowd. Also visit the shrine they built in Providence to hold the America's Cup — it looks like an architect's caricature of the Sydney Opera House. Visitors should be forewarned: Rhode Islanders return things they find on the street. It is rumored that out-of-staters have died of shock when complete strangers return lost wallets perfectly intact.

Facilities: There are many garages throughout the state capable of handling tanks, let alone trucks. There are no typical fortified truck stops anywhere in the state, though, as they're completely unnecessary. You're never more than ten miles from a decent garage, and never more than twenty-five from a superb one. The best garages in Rhode Island have prominent green rectangular signs with a white oval. This is the standard military symbol for tracked vehicles, and indicates the garage is able to repair heavy equipment, including tanks.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of Rhode Island will be involved in violence only once every eight months, making it one of the safest places in North America.

Rhode Island is home to many small cities with amusing names like Quonochontaug, Weekapaug, and Matunuk. Avoid mispronouncing these names if you intend to travel to any of them.

Rhode Island is also home to a surprising amount of the military muscle of the United States. There is an extensive sub base on the outskirts of Providence, with very heavy security provided by the Marines stationed there. A tradition dating back to the Food Riots gives the State Police the right to receive aid from the US military. This provides the police with impressive firepower, and gives Marine recruits a chance for their baptism of fire. Rhode Islanders are gracious hosts. A military uniform is good for free bus and taxi rides, and a hefty beer discount on the rare occasions nobody in the bar is willing to buy one for a soldier. This courtesy even extends to the less reputable establishments often found near military bases.

Most road vehicles in Rhode Island are completely unarmed. This is proof of how peaceful the area is, and how much faith Rhode Islanders place in the alliance between their State Police and the military. Rhode Island is one of the few places in the country where the state police are cops and not an assault force.

AADA ADVISORY: Autoduelling and possession of vehicular and personal arms without a permit are illegal statewide.

PROVIDENCE

Population: 180,000.

Description: Providence is three times the size of any other town in Rhode Island.

Other Facilities: Providence is the home of the Goddard Memorial Airship Port. The fire/rescue unit provided by Firetech is so good here, and the landing field is so large, that Goddard is the only airfield in the northeast listed as a potential emergency landing field for NorAm's orbital shuttles. Goddard is also the landing point for most transatlantic airship traffic.

Gang Activity: Practically nonexistent. Even the hookers are honest.



**Providence,
Rhode Island**

VERMONT

Government: Democracy. There is increasing rural dissatisfaction with the state government now centered in Burlington.

Police: Getting slightly nervous and paranoid. Vermont's always been a peaceful state, but recently there has been an increase of violence in the South. Bribery Rating: 0, -3 if the police suspect you are involved with cycle gangs or covert vigilantes.

Major Roads: I-89, I-91.

Tourism: Vermont is best known for maple syrup, but the scenery is beautiful and it can be well worth taking the scenic route.

Facilities: Up to now, the facilities have mostly been distantly-spaced unfortified garages — you could only count on one being within seventy miles. Recently, the garages have been shutting down to move into fortified



Burlington, Vermont

truck stops, especially in the south of the state. Since the transition is not yet complete, it can be tough to get your car fixed in the southern regions of the state.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of northern Vermont will be involved in violence once every two months. In southern Vermont, this increases to once every seven weeks, and the situation is getting worse.

Vermont has some of the best maple syrup, skiing, hiking and camping facilities anywhere on the continent. An off-road vehicle is recommended for seeing the real beauty of the state. The people are quite friendly to visitors who treat them with common courtesy. Visit northern Vermont and inside a week you'll be leaving your armor and automatic weapons in your hotel room.

Northern Vermont is separated from New York by Lake Champlain, a formidable barrier to NY-based cycle gangs. Further south the state begins to resemble an armed camp. It's not a truly dangerous area when compared with rural New York, but there is a great deal of concern that things will get worse before they get better. Several "Real New York Style" covert vigilante groups such as the Bennington County Berets have sprung up in southern Vermont. The tactical and legal debate is still raging: Should the State adopt a tolerant policy towards the coverts, or should it make their eradication a major priority?

AADA ADVISORY: Autoduelling and possession of vehicular and personal arms without a permit are illegal statewide.

BURLINGTON

Population: 40,000.

Description: Burlington qualifies as the most populous city in Vermont. Made the state capital in 2005, Burlington borders directly on Lake Champlain in the northwest of the state. The easy availability of water has made Burlington a major algae production center. Southerners are beginning to feel that the Burlington government is too far removed from the biker threat to take it seriously.

Gang Activity: Very light statewide; some minor activity in the south, mostly from New York gangs.

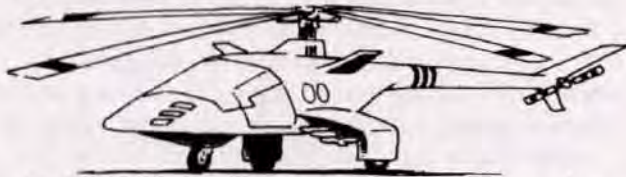
VIRGINIA

Government: Democracy, often dominated by mob rule. There are regions which deny allegiance to the governments of the United States and Virginia.

Police: Many are crooked, most are of limited competence, but there is a minority of dedicated peace officers. **Bribery Rating:** ranges from -1 to +4 (roll one die and subtract 2).

Major Roads: I-95, I-64, I-81, I-85.

Tourism: There is very little organized tourism in Virginia. What there is centers about interesting historical sites from the U.S.'s colonial period. Arlington National Cemetery has the first steel-and-concrete skyscraper mausoleum in the country; hopefully the last as well. Cruise ships and blimps often tour past Downlaunch Two so the passengers can watch a launch. Once in a while, a really large payload will be sent up with a Superdragon robot. These float erect in the ocean and take off straight up, like the rockets in the 1980s. They illuminate the ocean for miles around and are utterly spectacular.



Facilities: Fortified truck stops are a little sparse. At any time, drivers should be within about seventy-five miles of the closest one. It is strongly suggested that travellers in this state take every opportunity to recharge their vehicles and to pick up current road news. It has been said that the only Virginians left who like strangers work in truck stops, and it is true that Virginia truck stop people are possibly the friendliest on the East Coast. If you're short on cash, they'll be glad to take you on as a dishwasher for the night. Truck stop shops tend to stock limited supplies for exotic weapons, like MMLs or GGs: they'll charge you a fair price and work hard to satisfy you, but they simply may not have the parts available. Urban areas have garages, but try to avoid them if possible. They'll charge 120% of a fair price (and up) for anything.

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of Virginia will be involved in violence once every three weeks.

Virginia, once the most powerful state of the Union, has fallen on hard times. The megalopolis of Norfolk, Newport News, Chesapeake, Hampton, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach was torched and destroyed during the Food Riots. The area is considered a complete loss — cannibalism is still rampant.

The southern location and uninhabited ocean directly to the east make an ideal spacecraft launch area, and this is where NorAm's shuttles are launched. The thirty-acre station called Downlaunch Two (Downlaunch One is on the east coast of Australia) is accessed entirely by ferry and aircraft, and is defended from the townies by the largest antipersonnel and antivehicular minefield in North America. Downlaunch Two consists primarily of a three-mile runway, a concrete hangar, and a port where the shuttle cargoes are unloaded on to ships. Firetech handles disaster control, and are the only people at DL2 with a sense of humor. Firetech rescue copters will respond to distress calls from an area

around Downlaunch Two, unless they're otherwise occupied during a launch.

The urban areas of Virginia are relatively safe and hospitable, but entering a rural area with a foreign (i.e., non-Virginian) accent can mean the death penalty, unless you're a trucker. The Blue Ridge Mountains are especially dangerous — large areas of western Virginia are not under government control. The scenery is magnificent, though.

Virginia is the home of Fort Bradley. Constructed in 1998, Bradley is a maximum security installation holding extremely dangerous Federal prisoners. One unique aspect of the prison is its underground construction and its over-pressure security system. The atmosphere in the prison is a standard oxygen/nitrogen mix kept at two atmospheres of pressure, and it takes about twelve hours to decompress fully. Escapees will die of the bends before they can reach a decompression chamber. Attempts to liberate the prisoners from the outside would have to bring a diving specialist along. It is rumored that more exotic items of great value are kept there, such as the clones of the President and her Cabinet. Anybody smart enough to plan a raid on Fort Bradley is smart enough to know better — attackers would have to deal with tanks and defense robots.

RICHMOND

Population: 250,000.

Description: Richmond is now a major transport nexus for southeastern North America. "Secession Fever" once ran particularly hot here, but secessionism is now mostly an excuse for bar fights and to make a lot of noise at political rallies.

Gang Activity: Heavy and dangerous in some areas; ask at the local truck stop. There are places even truckers will wait for a convoy. Urban violence is disorganized, but common.

Richmond, Virginia



WEST VIRGINIA

Government: Democratic, with a heavy preponderance of political "bosses" with a good deal of power. Many of West Virginia's outlying areas are seriously infested with criminal gangs, bikers, and barbarian hordes. Some have reverted to a semi-feudal society, complete with serfs, warlords, and knights. A code of honor similar to bushido or chivalry has not yet evolved: Some common reprisals are horrifyingly sadistic.

Police: This is where you have to be a good judge of character. Some of the police are sadistic brutes paroled from the state prisons, some are merely lazy, and there are, as always, a few courageous peace officers risking their lives to hold things together. Bribery Rating: ranges from 0 to +5.

Major Roads: I-79, I-77, I-64.

Tourism: Nonexistent (see below).

Facilities: Truck stops are even rarer than they are in Virginia: you'll be lucky if the next one is eighty miles off. Laser-armed vehicles should take note. Truck stops vary in quality; converse with truckers to get an idea of where the best ones are (assuming you have a choice).

Violence Frequency: The average citizen of West Virginia is involved in violence once every two weeks. In the rural regions, this can be as high as every week.

Certainly the most violent place in the region. West Virginia is more a concept than a political entity. The rural West Virginians are vicious to strangers, and the police are primarily concerned with keeping Routes 64, 77, and 79 clear of illegal barricades. They struggle heroically, but the roads are still quite dangerous. Banditry on these roads is mostly of the barricade/tollbooth variety: Most truckers charge double to drive through West Virginia.



Charleston, West Virginia



CHARLESTON

Population: 50,000

Description: The inhabitants of West Virginia in general, and Charleston in particular, are too busy surviving to actually enjoy living. The nightlife is entirely of the get-drunk-and-collapse variety. The live music scene is surprisingly quite good: some of the local bands have real talent. Aside from that, bring a book and go to bed early, unless you happen to be into bad sleaze.

Gang Activity: Urban crime follows the pattern of the rest of the nation — it's there, but not usually organized. State banditry oversteps the bounds of "crime" and could be considered a continuous state of war between cycle gangs, petty warlords, and legitimate authority.

One of the most bizarre cycle gangs in the country operates here. The Mild Ones wear fake ties and tails over their body armor and are at extreme pains to behave with excessive courtesy and respect while they rob you. They are about fifty strong, and are very well-equipped. They are superb tacticians and very sneaky — what appears to be a simple pack attack is probably an attempt to force you into an ambush.

The Mild Ones never go out of their way to kill, and take pains to ensure their targets are able to return to civilization safely. It is possible to negotiate with them; if you can convince them that attacking you isn't worth their time, they'll wave off. The police have never made a concerted effort to wipe them out, for two reasons: their decidedly non-lethal approach to banditry, and their heavy firepower. Don't underestimate them — they're not likely to underestimate you.

SCENARIO SPRINGBOARDS

First, get a 1987 road atlas. The maps included in this supplement are good enough for most purposes, but there's really no way they can even come close to a full-color, 12" x 18" volume made by professional cartographers. Gousha/Chek-Chart's *The North American Road Atlas: United States, Canada, and Mexico* is particularly good.

Second, use the current and back issues of *Autoduel Quarterly*. The "North American Road Atlas and Survival Guide" articles are written by local duellists, who go into intimate detail and subtle regional jokes impossible to approach in these supplements.

The broad facts about an area will allow a GM to run an adventure, but it is the minor details which make it a place. An American in a Canadian fast food place will notice little packets of vinegar to pour on the french fries. This is barely worth mentioning from a gamer's standpoint, but it is exactly the kind of detail which makes a town in an RPG seem more real.

The descriptions of cities and states in this supplement include minor details like that, but don't be afraid to make up your own.

Here are some of those minor details to flesh out your towns. Before the players enter a small town or city, answer these questions (and others you will make up) to yourself and use them as part of your description.

Advertising. In a small town, most of the posters around town will be election bills, especially around Election Day (in November). This is because a small town's businesses will rely primarily on word-of-mouth. In larger towns, political advertising is primarily through electronic media, and business ads will tend to dominate the poster market. In big cities, almost every square inch of public transport will be covered in either graffiti or advertisements for various unhealthy habits. The only political

handbills you'll see are home-printed by groups who think President Williamson is actually the latest incarnation of Cthulhu. And there will be wanted posters, advertising bounties for dangerous criminals. Most of these offers are official, some (usually the most dangerous) are private.

Food. The big fast food franchises are dead, but their niche is being filled by small diners. A few chain restaurants have opened up; they are doing well and tend to emphasize their locations in metropolitan centers. Some small diners can be superb, with friendly service and delicious if simple food. Other places sell hamburgers of dubious quality which may date back to the 2020s.

The most widespread lunchtime treat is called the "Lunch Roll," now even outstripping the venerable hamburger in popularity. The Roll is about the size of a bar of soap, made of fried corn bread filled with chunks of cooked meat, a sauce of some indescribable flavor, and fried potato strips. The meat is always of mysterious origin — it could be a soybean synthetic, or then again, it might have been a living animal at one point, species and cause of death impossible to determine short of chemical analysis. Jokes about roadkills, missing persons and the movie "Soylent Green" are very old but always appreciated. Actually, there's a fairly good chance that most of the meat in a Roll used to be real, if not high-quality, beef. Highway food, while often bad, is almost never actually dangerous. The Brotherhood has driven through dirty kitchens in the past. Read that last sentence carefully.

And don't forget that different states have different "feels." That enormous war against a rapacious cycle gang should happen in rural Pennsylvania or New York, not Rhode Island. Adventures involving long-established bandit kingdoms should take place in Virginia or West Virginia.

Scenario Design Suggestions

Connecticut

EVIL's philosophy is to be obnoxious and to have fun doing it. An EVIL campaign is likely to be incredibly silly. The GM should play this up: If a PC is killed in a meeting with EVIL, you're not doing it right. EVIL player characters can be a blast, but it's not easy to come up with an elaborate practical joke every session. And allocating experience awards can be a bit strange. Which is worth more: filling a fountain with detergents so when it's activated soap flies all over the place, or rewiring an advertis-

ing sign to spell "BLUD MEMBERS ARE TURNIPS?" It's hard to come up with an objective scale.

Firetech often hires muscle to protect their paramedics on hazardous assignments. Players who accept this sort of job had better see it through or make many enemies.

Vandervecken's Sharks are only a myth (unless your campaign has a heavy supernatural element). On the other hand, humans have been seeing the nonexistent for thousands of years. And it would be perfect for a group like EVIL to paint some body armor and bikes with fluorescents and have a buddy with an emplaced UV spotlight. . .

Scenario Design Suggestions

Delaware

Intrigue is the name of the game. Who is sabotaging the experiments at Dover Downs? Ambitious referees might send characters to infiltrate Downstation Central. Scuba is probably the only way to do it — but don't think NorAm Security doesn't know this. Arcologies (this goes for the New City in D.C. as well) are extremely well organized; read Pournelle's *Oath of Fealty*. Of all the places in Autoduel America, these are the places where a well-pressed dinner jacket and quick thinking are more important than a fast gun.

District Of Columbia

This is the national capital. Scenarios which take place here could involve national or international politics. Players should have a good reason for getting involved, as champion duellists are rarely sucked into the whirl of national politics.

New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island

Everyone needs to relax once in a while. Besides, an unexpected cycle gang can be a lot more frightening than an expected one: this is a chance to see whether you have player-characters or vehicular components.

The "forest folk" can be used as a springboard for a scenario. The folk have too short and degrading a life for anyone to run one as a player-character, but they can make interesting enemies. Another twist: Have the PCs protect the forest folk from a nasty band of manhunters.



New Jersey

Don't let your characters enjoy themselves here. Players should enjoy themselves, but not characters. Emphasize the grime. Some of the drunks passed out on the street are actually corpses. The ten-buck prostitute smells bad, her hair is greasy, and there's dirt under her finger- and toenails. Decent people will kill for a fresh orange. Newark has been damned by God for sins unforgivable.

This might be a nice place for a revolution; however, remember that popular uprisings usually install leaders worse than their predecessors.

New York

A run-in with a Manhattan Mountie should impress characters who have never dealt with armored horse cavalry. Rural New York is a good chance to play covert vigilante.

Pennsylvania

The Transport Authority often hires outside "specialists" to deal with problems they have trouble with. Just remember that the Authority is a pretty mellow lot, but they're nobody's fools.

Maine, Massachusetts

Frontier adventures and run-ins with hill clans are the ticket here. Most of the combat in these states takes place during the winter, in heavy snow. In 2037, U.S. Polar Assault Specialists receive training from clan fighters — clans are deadly in the snow. Even an obvious trick, like burying white-clad infantry in a snowbank and leading your enemies into an ambush can devastate players. A complex trick, like luring your enemies onto a frozen, snow-covered river can be even better: the expression on a player's face as he hears an ominous crack under his boot is well worth it.

Maryland

This state is great for comic relief. A rocket attack could just be those wild and crazy goofballs from the CVRC making a little miscalculation. Marylanders are really into rockets.

A corporate exec will probably spend a little time in Baltimore, which is a major convention center. Characters could earn a little spending money as bodyguards.

Virginia, West Virginia

If you're into casual violence, these are the best places for them on the east coast. Even the civilized areas are reasonably dangerous. Characters would logically only come here if they have to, so it's up to the GM to make them. For example, truckers still make regular runs into the area — even anti-socials need food and the other necessities of life.

Mini-Scenarios

1) Joust Event: Maryland

An idiosyncrasy of Maryland autoduellling is the very popular Jousting event, which usually takes place on two parallel tracks, 300' long. Vehicles start on opposite sides of the track, thirty feet from each end of the track, and fire upon the other vehicle as they pass. The vehicles then must turn and make another pass from the opposite direction, thereby exposing alternating sides to point-blank enemy fire. The vehicles must start from their start line with each pass, at a speed of zero, and at the same time (to save time, the referee may assume the drivers are able to do this without incident). The lanes are separated by a low (HT 14, DR 14, or 10DP in *Car Wars*) barrier high enough to make it impossible to drop weapons onto your opponent's lane, or make tire shots. Contestants score 50 points for killing the opponent vehicle (defined as rendering it unable to move), 30 points for an opponent who surrenders, and -2 points when a duellist's vehicle leaves the boundaries of the map. A surrender must be accepted under penalty of disqualification — the disadvantage Bloodlust could be a real handicap here.

A map of the Joustduel Arena is included. The referee should photocopy the page, cut out the two sections, and lay them end to end. Referees and players should note that the section shown is not the entire arena. This means that a car which loses control and goes over the boundary line does not run into a wall — the driver just loses two points and is considered "out of bounds." If you must have the walls of the arena included, try placing the Joustduel Arena in the middle of a 21" x 32" grid map. A driver who still manages to hit the wall should get some sort of

trophy. A car which is out of bounds may not fire its weapons, but it may be fired upon.

A driver loses ten points every time he opens a breach in the barrier. A referee might allow a tire shot through the breach, but may also decide that the speed and size of the target makes it almost impossible.

A fast car is also an advantage. When the cars pass, each driver looks at the number in the upper right-hand corner of the square his car is in, and adds it to his score. Most of the time this will tend to even out, but in extreme cases, such as a car with 15 mph acceleration versus a car with 5 mph acceleration, the faster car could end up with as much as a twelve-point lead per pass!

Jousting events usually involve five or six drivers, each driving against each opponent once. The driver with the most total victory points wins the event. It is quite possible for a speedy car to win on points! A specialized jousting vehicle is fast, with heavily armored sides, linked side-mounted Heavy Rockets, and lousy tires (they can't be shot at — remember?).

Aside from the special rules, a Joust event is handled just like any other AADA event. The referee may pick his favorite Division and run his players through it: Division 25 is a good one.



2) Aussie It Back: Rhode Island

The America's Cup race of 2032 which took place at Melbourne was perhaps the most controversial in the entire



Mini-Scenarios

history of the event. An unbiased factual report goes something like this:

Yankee Retriever II, the leading boat in the race, was at dock and uncrewed when it was mistakenly shelled by a destroyer of the Royal Australian Navy. These things happen.

In the spirit of international sportsmanship, elements of the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet (including the submersible aircraft carrier *USS Rickover*) were dispatched to help coordinate the race with fleet maneuvers and prevent a similar accident from occurring again. The first runner-up, the Australian boat *Southern Cross V*, was unfortunately destroyed when the captain of *USS Truman* accidentally looked through her periscope with her blind eye before surfacing. Could have happened to anybody. This incident allowed the third-place boat, the American *Rhode Island Red VI*, to take the cup home in what must surely have been the most exciting yacht race of the 21st Century.

Paranoid conspiracy theories about cheating will always attract a certain element. In this case, a group from the Royal Australian Autoduel Association has swiped the Cup and replaced it with an empty can of Foster's. The PCs are security people in hot pursuit. Note — even if your player characters are Australian, they will probably want to prevent this deed to avoid a major diplomatic incident and some really bad publicity. They could at least have left a full can.

The six Aussies are built on fifty points (in both *Car Wars* and *GURPS*); no *Car Wars* skill can be greater than +3 and no *GURPS* skill may be greater than 14. They are equipped with four cars: a Torch van, two Joseph Specials, and a Vigilante pickup which is carrying the Cup. The Vigilante driver makes all Driving rolls at -1: He is the one who drained the Foster's. In *GURPS*, the Australians must have someone with a skill of Lockpicking at 13 or higher, and someone with the skill Electronics: Security Systems also at 13 or better. These may be the same character, but do not have to be.

If the players are not from a continuing campaign, give them \$50,000 and one beginning character each. *Car Wars* referees may choose to give them 50 point characters instead. Ideally, they should not know what sort of scenario they're going to play in, so they will not build specialized pursuit/interceptor vehicles.

If the combined values of the players' cars exceeds that of the RADAAs, give the Australians as many Joseph



Specials as they need to exceed the total price of the American vehicles. The referee may decide to adjust this in case the players are using vehicles with exotic equipment which is incredibly expensive but not really all that combat-effective, such as radar, LD radios, or ATADs.

The Australians are driving south on I-95 at 65 mph. I-95 is a three-lane, clear road, and there are no significant curves at the place they are intercepted. The Australians have adopted an arrowhead formation. The Torch is in front in the center lane, the Vigilante follows behind, and the Specials are in the right and left lanes behind the Vigilante (see diagram). Set the players up about three hundred feet behind them, in whatever formation they choose, at whatever speed they choose.

How close do they get before the fireworks start? If the players radio ahead and politely ask to pass, the Australians will allow them to. If the thieves are threatened, they'll respond intelligently and floor it and try to get away. Use common sense. The Australians have little interest in fighting — the primary objective is to get the Cup to safety. On the other hand, none of them are stupid enough to be willing to die for this.

The Vigilante will try to run, and the other cars will slow down to engage the enemy. This is the only clue the players get about who is carrying the Cup. If the Vigilante is stopped, the driver will grab the Cup, hold a Heavy Pistol (.357 Magnum in *GURPS*) to it, and snarlingly threaten to "blow its brains out unless you back off." Do this in a bad Australian accent and throw in the phrase "G'day" and your players may never forgive you. Remember, though, that none of them are willing to die to pull this off and they'll probably surrender once the bullets start ricocheting around their cockpits.

The support drivers will attempt to disengage if a crewman is wounded, or if any side of their vehicle loses 80% of its armor (Note to *Car Wars* players: It is possible to injure a car's passenger without removing all of one side's armor in *GURPS*).

The driver of the Vigilante is a special case. He feels responsible for the whole thing, and will not give up as long as he is conscious and his car is drivable. If his car is wiped out, he will grab the Cup and try to escape on foot as described above. However, he is not a blithering idiot! He'll surrender when he can see the rifling in the barrels of the players' SMGs. It is also possible to negotiate with him. Snarled threats will not work — he's expecting those. But if the players point out that the Cup can never be displayed, that he is making it impossible for Australia to win the Cup back honestly, and/or that all he's doing is convincing the world that there is no honor beneath the Southern Cross, he will see the wisdom of their words and try to negotiate an honorable surrender, so long as the cops don't get involved.

The Cup can take 10 DP or 26 HT (DR 1) before being completely obliterated.

Please try to remember that this is a prank, not a terrorist attack, and encourage your players to be slightly more mellow about things than usual.

Mini-Scenarios

3) Evil Spelled Backwards Is Live: Connecticut

There is a six-lane bridge crossing the Connecticut River at Windsor Locks. Since Bradley Airport had its operations cut back, traffic doesn't use it much any more, so EVIL has requisitioned it for their exercises in suicidal machismo.

The bridge is six lanes wide, and EVIL fights on the central 300'. The average EVIL mobile costs around \$15,000. Each player gets one car. They should be split into two equal-sized teams, entering from opposite sides of the bridge at whatever speed they can stomach. The odd player out can be a substitute brought in when somebody leaves the bridge.

The object of the game is drop bricks over on the opposing team's side of the playing field. A car is allowed to carry only one brick at a time (use grenade counters to represent the bricks). Dropping a brick is just like dropping a grenade, except, of course, it is nearly impossible to "miss." Make a to-hit roll just as though your character were pushing a grenade out through a slot in the door. On a critical failure, the brick misses the hatch, falls under the seat, and takes 1d6 seconds to extract. Otherwise, the brick is successfully dropped.

Additional bricks may be picked up back on the player's own side. The vehicle must come to a complete stop next to the friendly brick pile, and then spend 2d6 seconds trying to get another brick. Until a car does this, it may not score again. Since the final score is determined by counting the bricks on one side, it makes no sense to grab bricks on your opponent's side and drop them again.

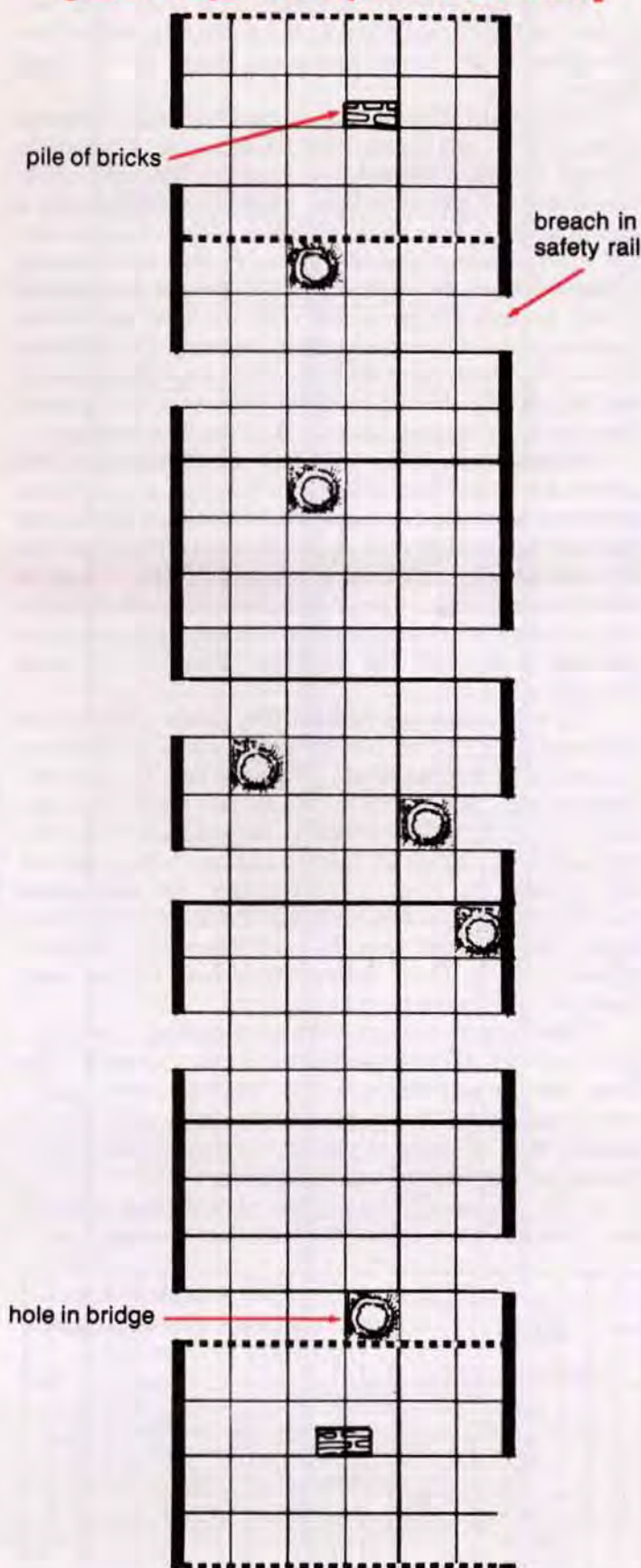
A car without a brick may not score, but it may run interference for other cars, and prevent opposing cars from scoring.

There are two possible ways to end the game. The game can end when one side has been wiped out. Then the bricks are counted; the supply of bricks on both sides is considered infinite.

The other way is a bit more challenging. Both sides start off with five more bricks than there are cars (if there are three cars on a side, there are eight bricks per side, three of which are in the cars). Play continues until one team has no more bricks on its side of the playing field. This makes it important to keep track of exactly where players drop their bricks on the opponent's field.

All versions of the game follow the same basic rules of conduct. A vehicle is always considered a legitimate target. Although a driver leaning out of a car to grab a brick is not considered a legitimate target, his car is. People leaving their cars must leave the field immediately, and are not considered legitimate targets. Cars which lose 90% of the armor on one side, or drivers who take damage, may leave the game immediately and honorably. The idea is to win the game, not kill your pals — an action which will obviously almost certainly kill somebody, like repeatedly ramming a vehicle with an unconscious driver, will probably get you thrown out of the club. On the other hand, ramming a car to push it off the bridge is considered a pretty keen thing to do, so long as you give the driver a

Windsor Locks Bridge (each square equals one inch)



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chance to escape. Using ranged weapons on a car which can no longer fire is considered cowardly in the extreme. It is not actually illegal, but the other players may call your character "wimp" for the next game month. This is a lot more fun than it sounds.

A map of the bridge section is included, in $\frac{1}{4}$ scale. (Each $\frac{1}{4}$ " square is actually a 1" square. The referee can enlarge the map or do some very nifty calculations with really tiny counters.) Shown on the map are the annoying 15-foot holes which previous combats have left in the pavement, and the 15-foot breaches in the guardrail where other players have left the game abruptly. Falling through the holes should not be automatic. If, at any point, part of a vehicle counter is over a hole, the referee should count or estimate the number of $\frac{1}{4}$ " squares of the hole covered by the vehicle counter, and roll 1d6. If the roll is less than the number of squares the vehicle is covering, bye-bye. This does give motorcycles a bit of an edge, but that seems reasonable. This roll should be made after every full 1" of vehicle movement. Please note that the edges of these holes are twisted downwards, which makes jumping over them almost impossible.

The guardrail is DP 10 (HT 8, DR 20 in *GURPS*). A vehicle sideswiping it must do enough damage to open three breaches to go through. A head-on collision must create two breaches. Realistically, a fall like this would have a good chance to drown or kill the driver outright, but it can be assumed that there are rescue boats in the water. Characters will lose their cars, but will be rescued. *GURPS* characters will take 2d6 damage from the fall; *Car Wars* characters will take two hits. Ejection seats will negate the damage, naturally. Characters who use their time in zero-G to sing "Splish Splash" should get some sort of bonus points.

Bricks aboard cars which take the plunge are considered out of play.

4) Birddog: New York

This scenario is a bit more sketchy than the others; this is deliberate. It is a suggestion for an interesting tactical problem, preferably one to pose to players who are not powerfully equipped. This is a chance to see how creative your players can be when faced with a bizarre problem, and limited technology.

There has been some severe dissatisfaction in the EDSEL ranks recently. A petition has been circulated to impeach the State Supervisor of Pennsylvania. It is being ferried to EDSEL HQ in Albany by a solitary attack helicopter.

It would be a crying shame if the helicopter were to be downed, and the petition destroyed, especially if it looked like the Pennsylvania Supervisor were responsible . . .

In a role-playing campaign, the players have whatever they can scrounge. Otherwise, give them no more than ten characters, two \$25,000 cars, and \$20,000 worth of equipment. The players should have a long time to discuss tactics. The limit given should make it impossible to establish a swat-em-out-of-the-sky SAM battery, which frankly isn't much fun anyway. But something like, "We fight with the

two cars to lure him close. Then we have snipers blow away his main rotor." should be possible. Another possibility would be to have five or six ejector seats set up — once the EDSEL is lured in, the players eject, and fly hang gliders above the EDSEL, an easy target for hand weapons. The EDSELS will eject if they know they've lost. The players will then have to track them down cross-country. The EDSELS may also eject if the players convince them they're a lot more powerful than they actually are.

This scenario could also work as an excuse for a dogfight. Beef up the EDSEL forces if the players happen to possess a full-fledged attack copter.

It might be a good idea to pose this problem at the end of a gaming session, and let them discuss it for a few real-time days before resuming play.

5) Eagle And Owls: New Hampshire

This is not a truly balanced combat scenario, but it is useful to teach players some simple elements of air tactics, and has some interesting ramifications for roleplaying scenarios.

EDSEL/NH has been getting overconfident and sloppy for some time now, and the State Supervisor, Vincent Devos, is concerned. He is convinced that the AADA intends to launch a major offensive on EDSEL/NH, one which, if successful, would split Maine from the rest of EDSEL, and possibly trigger a domino effect which could cause the collapse of EDSEL in New England.

In reality, the AADA simply doesn't have the control over its members that EDSEL does, and could probably never exert such an effort. It's not an army, after all. That doesn't keep Devos from worrying. Devos is quite charming and intelligent, but he is roller skating with a bent key. His plan is simple — to hire some mercenaries to wipe out an EDSEL squadron. Hopefully, this will clear out some of the deadwood and leave EDSEL/NH as a tougher, more serious organization: sort of an artificial Pearl Harbor.

Devos pretends to be an intermediary for the AADA, and will pay the party \$25,000 per EDSEL copter they destroy, up to a maximum of four. He'll give them some advice — the Snapdragon copter is vulnerable to attack from above. If the PCs don't have a copter, the referee should design a \$100,000 attack copter (on loan from Devos) to suit their skills.

EDSEL/NH squadrons on patrol consist of three Snapdragons and tend to cruise at an altitude of about 1000 feet at 80 mph. Exactly how the EDSELS respond depends on how the players attack. Diving in from the sun from above is a snazzy tactic, since EDSEL radars are blind in the upwards arc, and the party should be able to make an attack run before they're spotted. There should be at least one EDSEL survivor, though — he could bail out, or there could be an EDSEL with binoculars on the ground watching the dogfight. If you're using this just as a combat exercise, that should be the end of it. If you're using this a part of a roleplaying scenario, however, the plot thickens.

Devos will try to welch out of the money he owes them, and will in fact deny having ever heard of the group

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before. The phone number he gave them will be disconnected, and the only money they will get is anything they took for an advance. The PCs may try tracing their helicopter's registration to find who really owns it. Or, more likely, they might try to hassle the local AADA offices. The AADA, naturally, has no idea of what's going on. The referee may then allow the plot to unfold along the lines of a political cover-up thriller. If the players ever have the idea that even the referee doesn't know what's going on, then you're doing it right. The truth should out eventually: Someone may recognize Devos in a magazine picture, possibly game years later. When the truth is publicized, Devos will kill himself out of shame and to avoid EDSEL's wrath. Roll closing credits.



6) Battling Literati: Maine

The lights in the arena were bright, too bright, just like they always are. I've always felt that a fight like this should be held in darkness, where the environment can echo the innermost hearts of the participants. But the lights make the place seem to glow. It makes the whole thing less real, somehow. Like the audience. Do they know this fight is for real, that these two drivers want to see the other's blood mingle with spilt oil and fuel cell reactants on the ground, that they will be trying for kills?

Enough. I stepped forward, between the drivers. After a moment, they stopped staring into each other's eyes and responded to my presence. There was a slight curl to their lips. Each saw me as an obstacle between himself and the other's throat.

"David Amersen," I started. "You challenged Steven Roberts to this fight. Are you willing to withdraw your challenge?"

Amersen barely seemed to hear. "I'll withdraw, if Mister Roberts will withdraw his statements."

"Steven Roberts," I said. "You have in some way offended David Amersen. Would you like to withdraw your comments?"

Roberts stirred. "I spoke the truth. I will say it again." He paused for a moment. "Charles Dickens is at

least as bad as Bulwer-Lytton. Mister Amersen's affection for Dickens bespeaks more of Pavlovian conditioning than rational criticism."

Amersen's face turned red.

"That's a controversial position," he said calmly. "You'd better be willing to back it up with lead."

"Gentlemen," I interrupted, trying to prevent violence. "I respectfully request you reconsider your positions. The death of Mister Amersen will not edit one page of Dicken's works. And, Mister Amersen, Little Nell would have never approved of your killing Mister Roberts."

It seemed to be working. Doubt crossed over their faces for a moment, but then passed. I sighed to myself. I had seen it so many times before. They would show no mercy.

"You may each give your final statements. As challenger, Mister Amersen may begin."

I gestured to the sound booth, and Amersen waited for the parabolic mike to track and locate him. He took a deep breath and started.

"The works of Charles Dickens captured the imagination of his country, and drew the attention of the upper classes to the deplorable conditions their poor lived under. Dickens was the master of the complex, involved plot; his word sense and descriptive narrative often transcended prose and touched the poetic. In his many volumes, he depicted the average man with sympathy and artistry, producing an elegant and powerful celebration of the human spirit. His characters are people, never supermen, and despite great difficulties placed upon them by society, triumph at the end."

He bowed slightly, and the mike swung to cover Roberts.

"Charles Dickens," he began, "Wrote for magazines, churning out installment after installment regardless of such abstractions as 'plot'. His so-called meticulous plots are merely blathering incoherence, tied up clumsily in the last installment when his contract ran out. His championing of the poor was merely the exploitation of the pathetic. As for his characters, *Oliver Twist*, for example, is so poorly conceived that he is not in the last quarter of his own biography, and nobody who reads it seems to notice. His characters, far from being celebrations of life, are puny, weak, simpering mouths pushed helplessly about by Fate. When I think of a Dickens character, I think of a whimper given a body."

Roberts nodded politely.

"Gentlemen," I said. "Are you determined on this duel?"

"Yes," they both said, staring at each other with transcendent hate.

"By the authority invested in me as an officer of the Maine State Police, I do here declare and bear witness to the fact both these persons are aware they are entering a fight to the death, and that both had full opportunity to withdraw without bloodshed."

"Or honor," Roberts interjected.

Mini-Scenarios

"What do you have against Dickens anyway?" Amersen asked while pulling on his helmet.

Roberts looked up. "I've read *Oliver Twist*," he said simply.

This is a fight to the death between two cars. The opening introduction went into detail to give the flavor of the setup of a formal, legal duel between two consenting adults on the East Coast. Hand weapons in the vehicles are not allowed.

The police in most states on the East Coast permit formal supervised vehicular duels, but try to minimize the violence, hoping that drivers will realize their grudges are too expensive to keep.

The duel will take place in the Portland Car Arena (see map). The map is in $\frac{1}{4}$ scale. Referees may choose to use their own favorite vehicular and arena designs, but the recommended designs are good for an unusual fight pitting speed and maneuvering against power. In the scenario described above, the drivers want each other dead; actually murdering your opponent (by running him down while he's on foot) will result in your arrest and imprisonment for a few days before a judge gets around to dismissing the case.

Victory Levels

Decisive. The enemy is killed in "the heat of battle."

Major. The enemy is killed after he can no longer harm you.

Marginal. The enemy surrenders.

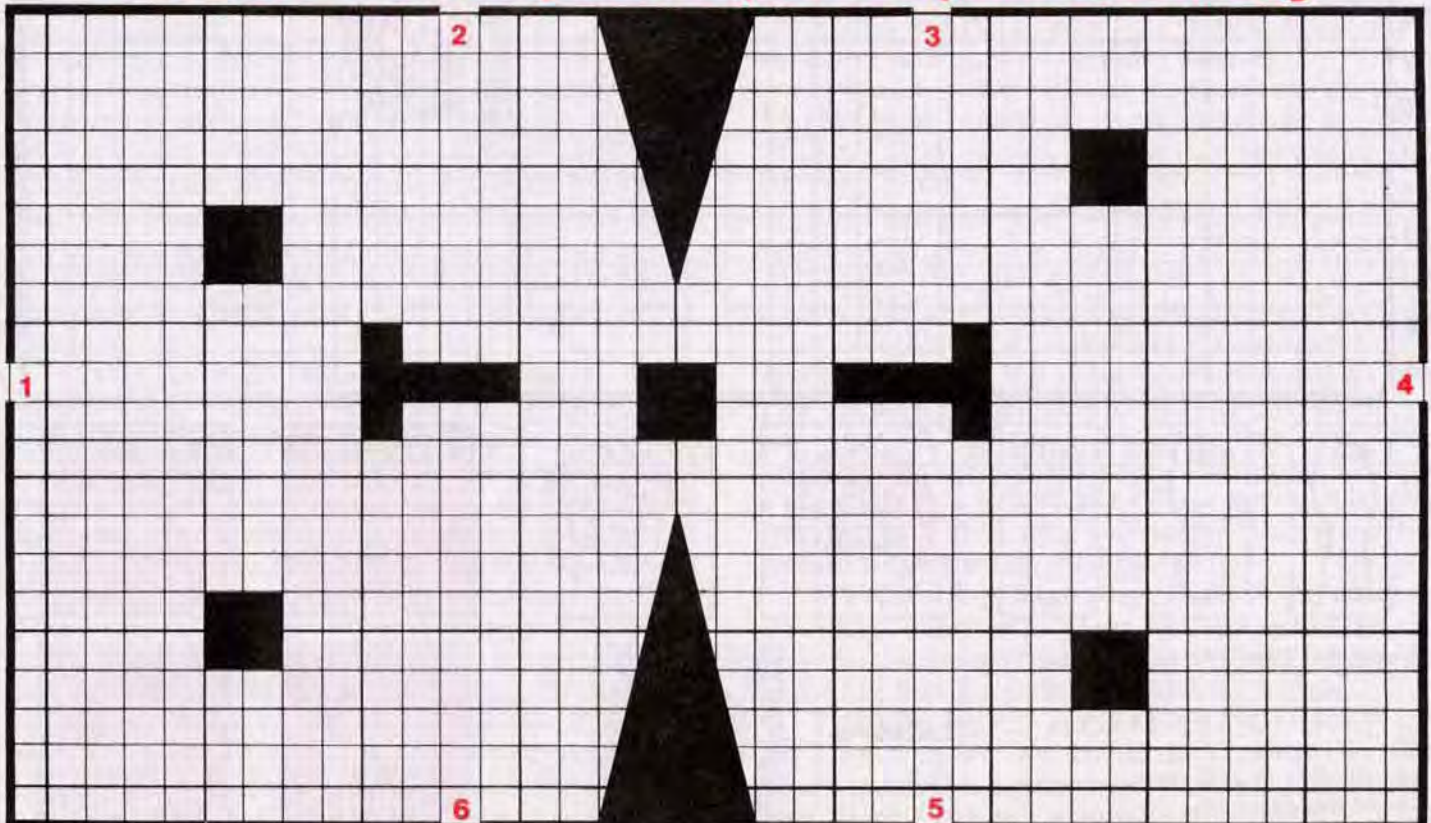
Draw. Both of your vehicles are killed, and you both bail out and try to jump on each other's foreheads. The cops will separate you and everyone will think you behaved like loons. They'll be making jokes behind your backs for years, whispering, "There goes Roberts the Barbarian!" just out of earshot.

7) The Theoretical Arena: Delaware

Direct computer interface can allow a real-seeming, but wholly artificial experience. This is useful for training — and wonderful entertainment. With a Micro computer game, a person can be placed into a completely different reality for a short period of time.

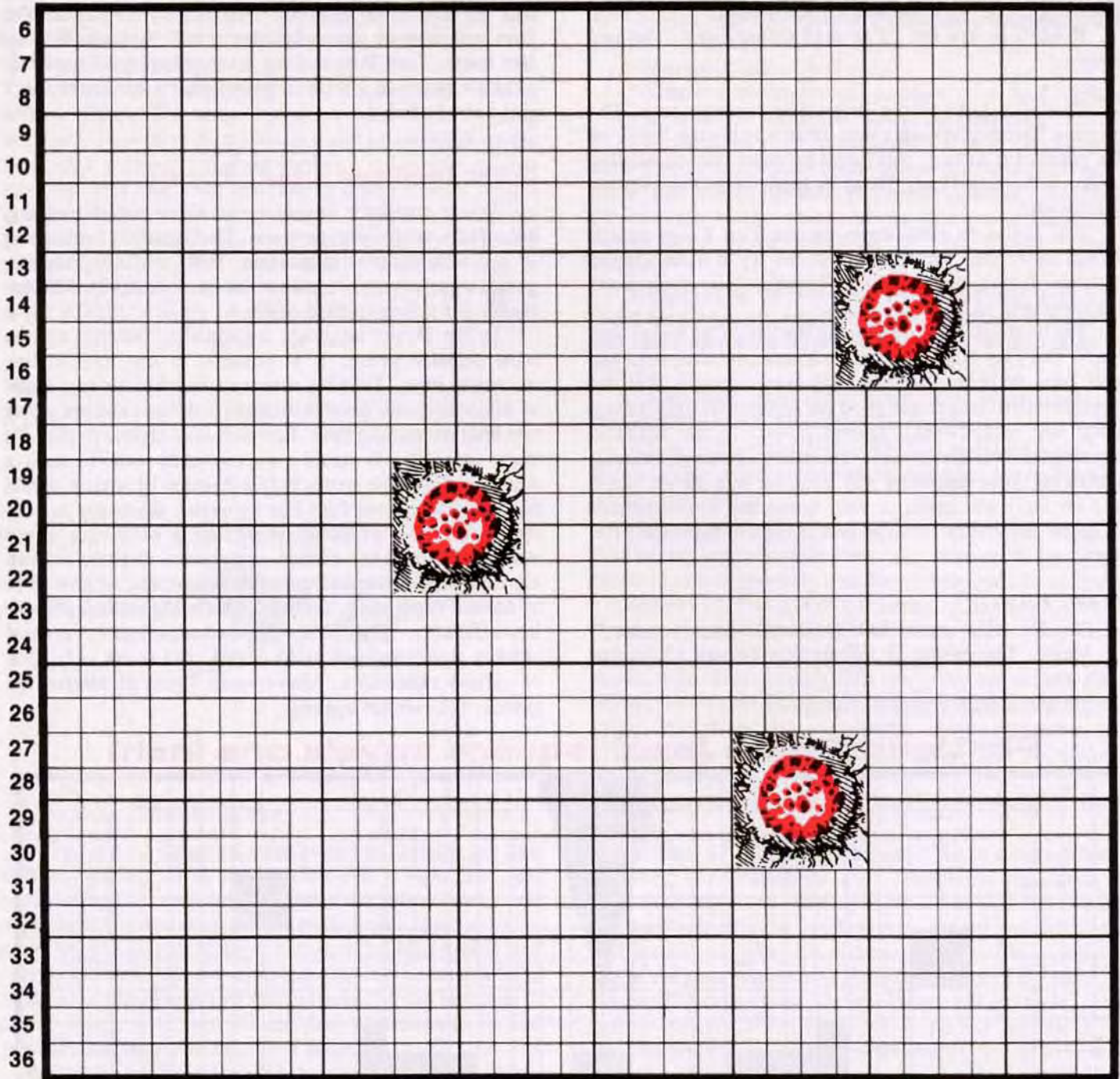
In the Dover arcology, autoduelling Micros are the most popular genre. It is possible to use autoduelling micros to train. Training scenarios usually last two hours of subjective time (twelve minutes real time) and are worth one hour of training time. Referees may choose to play out these scenarios in detail — experience won in such a scenario should be worth only a fraction of what it would have earned in real life. For example, skydiving is non-interactive and well-understood, so a skydiving micro would give 80% of earned experience. Fighter aircraft algorithms are interactive and less accurate, so give 75% of earned experience. Ground vehicle algorithms are still less efficient — give 50% of earned experience. Personal combat algorithms are pretty awful, and worth only 25% of earned experience. Man-to-man fights in micros are games, not combat training.

Portland Arena [each square equals one inch]



Theoretical Arena [each square equals one inch]

6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36



Theoretical Arena Counters

Caldera



Permission is granted to photocopy this sheet for personal use only.

Mini-Scenarios

In addition, no amount of micro training will train a *GURPS* character above a skill of 14, or a *Car Wars* character above +3 (the algorithms "short out" at these levels of skills, as the trainee's reactions begin to outstrip the computer's ability to calculate the results of those actions). If you run a campaign where skills degrade after a period of disuse, microsimulation should be able to maintain skills. It's not perfect by any means, but it's safer than actually shooting at people.

Aside from the serious applications of microgaming, it is possible to have a duel in an arena which cannot exist in reality . . .

The Theoretical Arena (see map) is shown in $\frac{1}{4}$ scale. The computer program can handle any vehicle up to the size of a luxury car, but cannot deal with trailers. The referee may use real cars in the scenario, handling it like an AADA arena event, with price limits and so on. On the other hand, it might be fun to break the rules with these cars. Giving them infinite ammo supplies and the ability to accelerate at 20 mph/turn, for example. The AADA does not recognize theoretical arenas as "serious" autoduelling, but the drivers often have a lot of fun playing with them.

Theoretical Rules

Random Placement. Many items show up due to random placement. The rules are simple: Each turn, after players have decided their speeds, roll 6d6 for the position on the X and Y axis, and place the item there. If the spot is already occupied by another generated item or a caldera, roll again. This will not produce a truly "random" placing — things will tend to concentrate in the center of the arena. This is deliberate.

Calderas. A caldera is the term for an active volcano. The calderas are filled with red-hot molten rock, bubbling and burbling ominously, smelling of brimstone. A vehicle entering a caldera will take damage as though each of its six sides has been hit by a standard MG. This roll will be made immediately upon entering the caldera, and at the end of every turn in which a car is inside a caldera.

Skills. *GURPS* skills of 14+ will be treated as though they were 14; *Car Wars* skills of +3 or higher will be treated as +3.

Hitting the Walls. Whenever a car hits any of the arena's walls, it instantly bounces off. Its direction is changed by 180 degrees and speed is completely unaffected.

Feet. Each turn, three huge feet will appear on the board at random. They will zoom down out of the ceiling and stomp on any vehicle unlucky enough to occupy the square inch they hit. They look like the foot that smashed everything in the opening credits to "Monty Python's Flying Circus." The car will take damage as though its roof has been hit by a rocket launcher, decelerates by 15 mph, and continues its turn normally (Okay, my car's been stepped on). If the vehicle's speed has been reduced to zero, the foot will "grind it into the ground," doing damage as though its roof and bottom armor had each been hit by a heavy rocket. Moral: Drive at least 20 mph here.



The feet will remain there for the entire turn. A car hitting them will instantly stop and take damage from the ram. Feet are utterly indestructible.

Dimensional Warp. There are two Warps; they are linked and change their position randomly each turn. A vehicle driving into one warp will instantly reappear from the other, at no change in speed or direction.

Bumpers. Four bumpers are placed randomly on the board each turn. Hitting a bumper is exactly like hitting a wall, except weapons fire passes right through them, and they do not block line of fire.

Personalities. Each turn, there is a 50% chance that a Personality will appear. Roll 1d6 on the table below and follow the description. Each personality will appear only once, and no two personalities will exist at the same time.

1) Cathy. She appears randomly, and is dressed in a long white nightgown. For 1d6 seconds she will run around the arena, screaming "Heathcliff! It's me! I've come home and I'm so cold . . ." Hitting Cathy will do absolutely nothing; she is a ghost, after all.

2) Omaha. A 5'8" bipedal female cat appears on the top of a random vehicle and starts performing a strip tease, which lasts 2d6 seconds. She can only be knocked off if the vehicle rolls.

3) Ultraguy. He wears red and blue, appears in a random position and cries "STOP THIS UN-AMERICAN ACTION!!" for 1d6 seconds. He will do absolutely nothing. Hitting him is just like hitting a foot (see above).

4) The Rabbit. A six-foot tall gray and white rabbit appears at random, and stands there, munching a carrot. Feet will not try to step on him. A car trying to hit him will fail — he will leap nimbly out of the way, and shove a grenade in through a weapons port. The grenade is actually a sputtering stick of TNT, but will act just like a standard frag grenade. The rabbit will vanish if he spends 1d6 seconds without setting off a grenade.

5) Heathcliff. A man dressed in the formal clothes of the 19th Century will appear and run around for 1d6 seconds, screaming "Cathy! Where are you?" Hitting him is just like hitting a pedestrian. He's not a ghost.

6) Graffiti Artist. A guy in a black leather jacket carrying a spraycan will run around and schpritz cars, with effects identical to a paint cloud. He dies horribly the first time he is hit with any weapon or ram.

Mini-Scenarios

8) Born To Be Mild: West Virginia

The setup is simple enough. The mayor of Harrisville wants to deliver a miniature safe (1 space, 4 cu. ft., 23 pounds) to Millstone in time for a birthday party for the mayor of Millstone. The safe contains three boxes of Havana cigars, and the mayor will pay the players \$1000 for each box which reaches its destination. Each box weighs a pound and counts as one grenade equivalent. They have to be delivered within three hours. Referees may choose to add encounters to this run to make it more interesting and challenging. Each player should have a vehicle worth about \$25,000, and a maximum of two characters (a driver and an optional gunner). No vehicle should be larger than a pickup.

In a roleplaying scenario, the GM should make it clear that stealing the cigars is probably not a good idea. They're not terribly valuable — each box is only worth about \$1,000, and it would be difficult to find a buyer who doesn't already have a supply. Taking this into consideration, it might be possible to convince the mayor to let the party carry the cigars out of the safe, though he will probably want some sort of security.

The road to Millstone is pretty straightforward: going south on Route 16, it is 6 miles to Washburn. From Washburn to Smithville is another 6 miles. From Smithville to Grantsville is 14 miles. From Grantsville to Mt. Zion is another 6, and from Mt. Zion to Millstone is 5, for a total of 37 miles. There is an alternate route. From Smithville, it is 8 miles to the ominously named city of Burnt House,

Born To Be Mild Route



from Burnt House it is 8 miles to Dekalb (on the banks of the beautiful Little Kanawha), from Dekalb it is 7 miles to Hattie, and from Hattie it is 6 miles to Grantsville. The detour adds 15 miles to the total trip and is mentioned because players may abruptly decide to take it. All the roads are two lanes wide, and are not in very good condition.

Harrisville has a population of 1500, Millstone 500. All other towns are considered abandoned. GMs may choose to add minor run-ins with local barbarians. Each town looks uncannily like Midville, so the *Crash City* maps may be used. Local barbarians won't do much more than throw rocks and scatter with the first shot from a burst-effect weapon.

The Mild Ones are the real threat. They have four encampments, and will do their best to courteously steal the players blind.

The first encampment is concealed one mile south of Smithville, and consists of six Spider cycles and drivers, and four techs. It will not be spotted by players — it is several hundred yards from the main road. Drivers with radar or detectors will immediately realize they have been touched by doppler radar of the sort used by EDSEL. Since the signal does not remain for long, they will probably assume they were not spotted or were ignored. Actually, their speed has been measured. The Mild Ones will sound a short ("Go. Ninety Seconds.") radio alert to the other bases, mount up, and wait until the players have had enough time to drive a mile. They will then follow at a speed 20 mph faster than the speed the players passed them. If the players are cruising at 40 mph, for example, they will wait about ninety seconds and pursue them at 60 mph; it will take them 3 minutes to catch up, assuming the PCs maintain the same approximate speed. Of course, there's no real reason for them not to: "We'll cruise at 60 mph until we go two miles past Smithville, and then we'll accelerate to 80," seems a touch suspicious. However, when the Mild Ones leave to pursue, the techs will lay 8 mine counters across the road and conceal them; they'll cover both lanes of the road, two counters deep. Roll 1d6-1 to determine the number of 15' increments distant the lead driver will be when he spots them. The techs will hide, not fight.

The second encampment is three miles south of Smithville, and consists of a Bollix (see the helicopter rules, p. 42), a power plant, and a technician. When the players are two miles south of Smithville (and one mile from her), she will activate the Bollix. The radios of the players will have their range cut to 200', and their radar systems will fail completely. At this point, they may decide to turn around.

The third encampment is ten miles south of Smithville. It consists of a shoddy barrier (10 DP, or 25 HT) which stretches across the road. Two Mild Ones, each armed with four LAWs and wearing Improved Body Armor, will hide behind the barrier and fire at oncoming players. They will run if injured, if the lead PC car comes within 60 feet, or when they run out of LAWs. Right behind the barricade are 12 mine counters, forming a coat three deep. Players will not see them until they hit them.

Mini-Scenarios

The fourth encampment is at Dekalb. Set this up as 600' of three-lane road with a T-intersection at the end. Going off the road will cause the vehicles to hit buildings (standard brick walls). Two troopers are in the buildings — they are equipped with scoped SMGs (Uzis), lots of fireworks, and the soundtrack to a really loud war movie. They will trigger the fireworks, the soundtrack, and start sniping at the group as they enter. The referee should do his best to convince the party they have just entered a trap with snipers blazing away at them from the buildings.

The players will probably round the T-intersection as fast as they can. To the left, the road is filled with oil drums, three deep, and there is a large hand-lettered sign: "AN OIL DRUM FILLED WITH WATER WEIGHS 400 POUNDS. HAVE A NICE DAY." The drums are empty. Hitting them will merely force a control roll and fill the air with bouncing plastic drums. Turning right at the intersection is worse. Players heading right find themselves flying over the beautiful Little Kanawha, spending a full second in midair before coming to a splashdown. This will promptly short out any power plant.

If the couriers are intercepted by the cycle group, the cyclists will attempt to harass the players and egg them on. They are not there to clobber the opposition, but to convince the marks that they're the threat. They will not get any closer than 180' to the players, and individual cycles that lose 80% of the armor on one side will quietly pull off.

The key to this whole scenario is misdirection: Nothing is what it appears to be. The heavy-duty snipers in Dekalb are two guys and a soundtrack; they're there to make the players panic and speed up, so they miss the turn at the end, a trap which works best against careful drivers who avoid combat. The barricade ten miles south of Smithville is there to keep drivers from seeing the minefield. The Bollix is to frighten the players, and get more circumspect types to take the alternate route. Anyone hotheaded enough to stay the course will certainly be hotheaded enough to try and ram the barricade . . .

The Mild Ones, as always, are ludicrously polite to people they rob. It is even possible that they'll allow the players to keep their cigars and to drop them off at Millstone — debt of honor between gentlemen, and all that, if the players go along with the joke. The Mild Ones will never slaughter people out of hand. They want reasonably intact vehicles to sell, not corpses and blood enemies. This, by the way, is why the drums at Dekalb are empty. Full drums would smash a vehicle and make it worthless. Mines are much better because they usually destroy tires and force people to abandon a vehicle.

9) Eggbeater Down: Suffolk, Virginia

The PCs are flying in a helicopter to Downlaunch Two, when their copter is forced down in the middle of a park in Suffolk. A distress call is sent out. Firetech at DL2 is on the way, but it might take them as long as half an hour to get there.

The reason for the crash can be as simple as mechanical failure, although some referees may choose to complicate matters. But the problem now is the local inhabitants of Suffolk . . .

The helicopter carries as standard supplies five SMGs (Ingrams) with three magazines each, three handheld grenade launchers each with a full clip of concussion grenades (set for three seconds delay), two LAWs, and a sniper rifle with two full loads (scoped rifle; a Remington M750), and one suit of body armor per player character (this is in addition to any equipment normally carried by PCs in a roleplaying campaign).

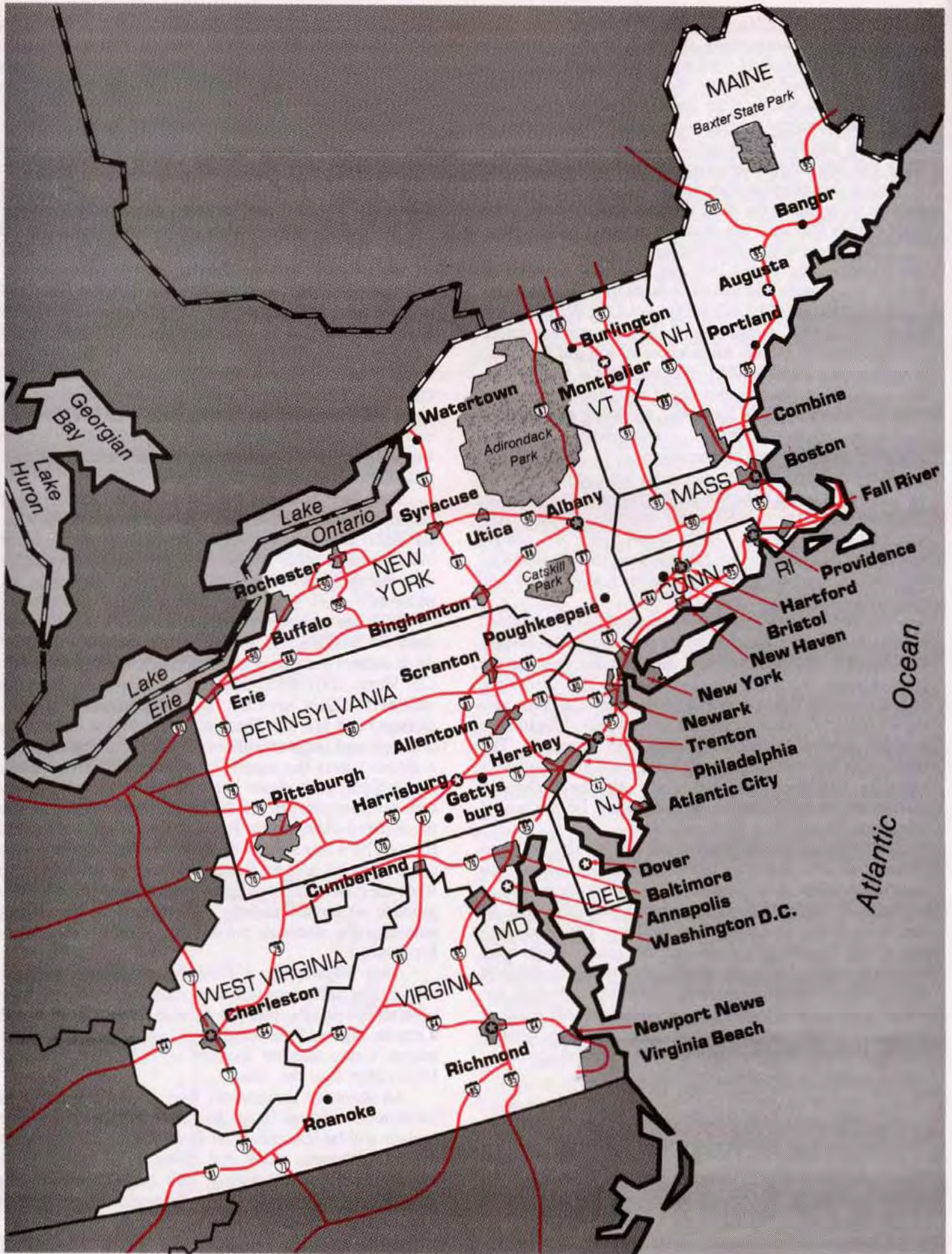
The helicopter is on its side; the gunslits which normally allow passengers to fire are unusable, as are its own weapons. The players must lean out of the copter to fire weapons, and they can be targeted as though they were firing out of windows. A LAW cannot be fired safely in this fashion. The back of the launch tube must be out in the open, therefore, a person firing a LAW must expose their entire upper body before firing. The barbarians have no weapons which can significantly affect vehicular armor — treat the copter as essentially indestructible.

Each five minutes of game time, 1d6 barbarians per player character, armed with clubs (in *GURPS*, they have all skills and stats at 10), will burst from the nearest building and attempt to rush the copter. When over 50% of their numbers have been wounded, they will retreat back to cover.

With the second such attack, archers will begin firing from the buildings in support of the attacks. There are three archers per player character, who will hit on a 9+ in *Car Wars*. In *GURPS*, they fire short bows and have Bow skill of 11. They have ST 10 (so the arrows will do 1-2 damage) and HT 10. These numbers do not include concealment and range modifiers. The archers will also fire if a player leaves the copter for any reason. Each time an archer fires, each player has a 50% chance (roll once per turn per character; in *GURPS*, use an IQ roll) of spotting the archer is firing from. Roll one die, add 6, and multiply the total by 4 (for a range of 28-48) to determine the range in yards to the archer. Remember that the archer benefits from the concealment of firing from a window. A LAW or grenade which successfully hits the correct window will automatically eliminate the archer — don't bother rolling for damage.

After 30 minutes, a Firetech rescue helicopter will arrive. The barbarians will immediately retreat; they know what an operating copter can do with rockets. It will lower a rescue cage and the scenario is over. It is suggested for morale's sake that the situation be compared to Rorke's Drift rather than the Alamo.

An inventive gamemaster may decide to expand this scenario so the siege lasts a few days. In this case, the barbarians will be less reliant on frontal assaults. They could dig entrenchments closer and closer to the helicopter, or even assemble a concealing wall out of cinderblocks, gradually spiralling closer to the damaged copter. The GM will have to account for PC's fatigue and lost sleep after a game-day or so.



MAINE

Baxter State Park

Bangor

Augusta

Portland

Burlington

Montpelier

VT

Combine

Boston

MASS

Fall River

Watertown

Adirondack Park

Syracuse

Utica

Albany

Catskill Park

Rochester

Binghamton

Poughkeepsie

CONN

Providence

Hartford

Bristol

New Haven

Erie

PENNSYLVANIA

Allentown

Pittsburgh

Harrisburg

Gettysburg

Hershey

NJ

New York

Newark

Trenton

Philadelphia

Atlantic City

Cumberland

DEL

Dover

Baltimore

Annapolis

Washington D.C.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

VIRGINIA

Richmond

Roanoke

Newport News

Virginia Beach

Georgian Bay

Lake Huron

Lake Erie

Lake Ontario

Ocean

Atlantic

EDSEL

The Eastern Driving Safety Enforcement League considers itself to be a logical extension of political action groups like Greenpeace, and traces its intellectual roots back to Thoreau and the Declaration of Independence. EDSEL has also been called everything from the world's largest vigilante group to the world's most blatant terrorist organization.

Origins

The Friends of Safe Roadways (FSR) was founded in Albany, New York, in 2025 by Janet Wilkinson as a peaceful political action committee lobbying for the outlawing or at least limitation of vehicular weapons. Their argument was that such weapons inevitably found their way into the hands of cycle gangs, producing a net escalation in road violence levels, and not the reduction claimed by the AADA and similar groups. Eschewing vehicular armament, FSR members were forced to rely heavily on helicopters for transportation (gangs almost never attempt to attack passing helicopters, because when they hit the ground, there's not much left to strip). FSR was successful in maintaining a weapons ban in New York and forced the passage of many anti-weapons regulations throughout the northeast.

Members of the AADA nicknamed the FSR "the Edsels," a reference to a 1960s American automobile of legendary bad design. Then — entirely without official AADA sanction — members of the AADA took up sniping at FSR helicopters as a safe way of practicing weapons skills.

In October of 2030, "Mad Jack" Ryker, an experienced helicopter gunship pilot from the New Hampshire Air National Guard and FSR member, led a squadron of FSR helicopters over the AADA state offices in Augusta, Maine, where the noise of their rotor blades made it impossible to continue work. After two days of this, an irate secretary fired a 5.67mm pistol at one of the helicopters.

The FSR helicopters promptly climbed and destroyed the building. Thirty-four workers, many of whom were clerks and administrators and not members of the AADA, were killed. Ryker surrendered to the police, but the courts ruled he had acted in self-defense.

On December 25th, 2030, the FSR was officially renamed the Eastern Driving Safety Enforcement League, throwing the old insult back into the duellists' faces. With this name change came a marked change in philosophy — while the old FSR was an organization dedicated to "persuasion and legislation," the new EDSEL believed in direct armed intervention as the solution to dangerous road combat.

EDSEL adopted the geographical range of the FSR and much of FSR's administration. The switchover to EDSEL cost the organization many of its finest leaders because of the obvious philosophical problems with a militant peace group. Some of these people have sold organizational secrets to the AADA.

The Drang

Two years later, EDSEL felt confident enough to attempt to expand. Thus began "Project DRANG," whose name came from the German phrase "Drang nach Iowa," the drive to Iowa. DRANG was to be the establishment of secure EDSEL installations in Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, in the first step toward expanding EDSEL from coast to coast.

Ohio was the first new ground entered by the military forces of EDSEL, quickly followed by Indiana. At this point, expansion halted; EDSEL felt it would be safer to establish a firmer hold in those two states before moving on. David Vasquez, the EDSEL State Supervisor of Ohio, was ordered to maintain security, and to establish regular truck routes through Ohio to Indiana. EDSEL





EDSEL's Goals

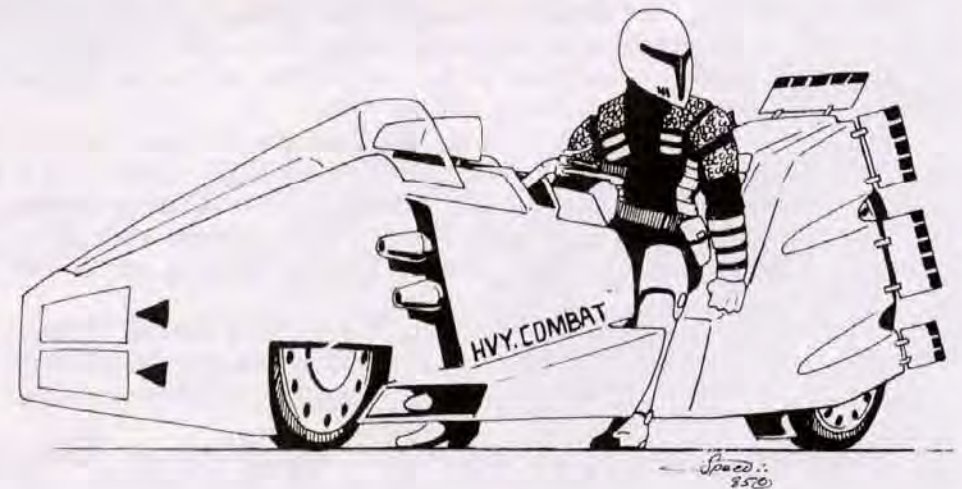
EDSEL is pushing for the total disarmament of all civilian vehicles in the United States. Their argument is:

The legalization of heavy armament has not caused the promised and claimed reduction of violence. Indeed, the only result has been an arms race with gun manufacturers reaping the profits, since new weapons invariably end up in the hands of cycle gangs. Secondly, cycle gangs are simply not a major threat in most of the United States — a driver is more likely to be killed by hotheaded fellow drivers than by cycle gangs.

Therefore, the only possible way to reduce the violence in North America is to remove the hardware at the source. Having a .50 caliber gun under the hood, ready to fire at any moment, is just too tempting.

Nevertheless, EDSEL realizes that a disarmed vehicle is a death warrant. Therefore, they patrol the skies in armed helicopters and destroy armed vehicles attacking vehicles which do not return fire. If an EDSEL vehicle spots a violent situation, it will fire at everything it sees firing. There are those who will notice that EDSEL is laying claim to a "right" they wish to see abolished. They believe this is made sadly necessary by this time of national crisis. Wolves are kept from sheep by dogs; until the state police forces are able to maintain forces which can keep the peace, EDSEL will hunt for wolves.

(continued)



Vasquez in Ohio felt confident enough in the foothold EDSEL had made in Ohio that he took the extreme step of declaring the entire state "Street Legal." His miscalculation was nothing short of disastrous. Vigilante groups such as the MONDOs were popular heroes, and they had been around long enough to develop highly-sophisticated yet flexible chains of command and strategies. The reaction was swift and staggering. Overnight, every EDSEL base in Ohio was in flames. Vasquez and his deputy were killed in the first few hours; the EDSEL/OH organization fell apart by dawn.

EDSEL/Indiana had good reasons for panicking. Indiana was essentially cut off from the rest of EDSEL, and supply convoys would have to cross neutral or even hostile territory to reach them. Local support was good, but Indiana's EDSEL was by no means even close to being independent. Meanwhile, The Floral Gulch Autoduelling Society was engaged in a vendetta with a rival motor-car gang. Shan was determined to make EDSEL look stronger than it was. She diverted much of EDSEL's forces to Floral Gulch to deal with the duel and keep the peace.

GAS was able to demolish the rival gang, and even destroyed several EDSEL attack helicopters, taking no casualties. EDSEL lost an incredible amount of face in the engagement; the local organization became a laughingstock.

EDSEL In The Political Theater

Political pressure directed at New York's weapons ban had always been quite heavy, from the AADA, the Brotherhood, police groups, and munitions factories. Pressure against the state government had always been ineffective. But late in 2035, the United States Supreme Court ordered New York State to lift its weapons ban, on the grounds that the ban interfered with interstate commerce.

This has been the biggest defeat EDSEL has ever faced politically, potentially more dangerous than the purely military defeat of the DRANG. EDSEL is now primarily concerned with maintaining its presence in the states where it is active. Aggressive expansion will have to wait until EDSEL has reassessed its strategies and past errors.

EDSEL's greatest successes in the political arena have been in propaganda directed towards the southern states of the East Coast.



Hawks And Doves

Many people within EDSEL (the "doves") have strongly advocated reducing EDSEL's military forces. They point out that EDSEL's military is incredibly expensive, degrades EDSEL's pacifist support, antagonizes the population, and that attempts to form military solutions to a political problem have led to unmitigated disasters such as the Drang. They point out that EDSEL's military has been severely beaten many times in the past, and they are simply not popular. This, in turn, reflects badly on the entire organization and its platform. EDSEL must rely on popular support, and become respected as a spokesperson for *vox populi*.

Their "hawk" opponents point out that the modern perception of popular support is military power, and that a disarmed EDSEL would be no more effective than the FSR. In order to be taken seriously, EDSEL must be armed and active. They promote an intense program to upgrade the military forces of EDSEL, a program with three basic goals:

1) Replacing the Firebrand. Its chief flaw stems from its basic design as a helicopter gunship, tactical air support for use against ground targets. The Firebrand is a sitting duck against an air wing.

2) Train EDSEL forces better. The performance of EDSEL forces usually ranges from mediocre to awful. EDSEL must adopt a more conventional military organization. A Flight Leader has no authority outside of his own Squadron; this must change if EDSEL forces are ever to work together. Flight Leaders must qualify as military commanders before they can even try to command a combat flight.

3) Alter the platform. EDSEL must acknowledge the right of a private citizen to bear arms. In this way, EDSEL could enter the mainstream of American society as a civilian vigilante group, capable of cooperating with moderate groups such as the Brotherhood. It is argued that the public perception of EDSEL is intolerably negative. While vigilantes, the AADA, and the Brotherhood shoot cycle gangs, EDSEL fights the vigilantes and the AADA!

EDSEL, however, is a rather inflexible bureaucracy and its own inertia cannot be easily overcome. Tension between EDSEL's doves and hawks may split the organization in the future, but this seems unlikely. The most radical of either side tend to quit the organization in disgust and join other groups which better suit their political beliefs.

EDSEL's Goals (continued)

The chief political opponent of EDSEL is the AADA, which defends a Constitutional right for an American citizen to bear arms. AADA arguments are:

The only way to achieve domestic tranquility is to arm and train civilians to fight efficiently. The United States of America and the Free Oil States are simply too large for a single authority to police effectively. The AADA also points out that Americans have never obeyed the laws they disagree with. "Civil disobedience" is an American concept borrowed by Gandhi. The Declaration of Independence — the political platform of the United States — explicitly states that a population has the right and the duty to disobey a despotic government. By extension, a single individual has the moral right to break a law which conflicts with his or her beliefs.

In the 2030s, the vast majority of decent, law-abiding Americans want to equip their vehicles with heavy armament. This is a fact, not open to legal interpretation. Any attempt to impose a law against heavy weapons is axiomatically doomed to failure. EDSEL may claim popular support in much of the East Coast, but these are mostly people who are being nostalgic and unrealistic. Even though people may claim they want weapons restrictions, they are never willing to surrender their own, a simple fact which is adequately proven by EDSEL itself! For EDSEL is a heavily-armed military command group which denies others the right to arm themselves, as though there is some magic associated with EDSEL which makes them above the law.



EDSEL Forces and Tactics

EDSEL refers specifically to the national organization headquartered in Albany. The state organizations are usually denoted by appending the two-letter state abbreviation after a slash; thus, the EDSEL organization acting in New York is called EDSEL/NY.

On the average, EDSEL has one combat base per county in a state. There are 14 counties in Connecticut, for example; Connecticut has about 14 bases. Each base has from 1 to 6 (roll two dice and divide by two, rounding up) squadrons associated with it. Each squadron has three helicopters, sometimes four. EDSEL cannot maintain a strategic reserve — over 87% of their machines are on combat patrol at any given moment.

The squadron is the core of the EDSEL military organization. EDSEL does not use infantry per se, although they do have unobtrusive spies on the ground. The spies are not trained to fight, and are not intended to deal with combat at all. Sometimes, however, they will let their enthusiasm get the best of them.

EDSEL combat tactics is almost a contradiction in terms. Helicopters fly in formation, spot a car fight, and start shooting at everything that they think might have fired. They have no interest in a "fair fight," and the average squadron commander is not smart enough to realize he's losing the fight until he starts losing copters. EDSEL copters have been known to fly in formations so tight they crash into each other.

Of course, some EDSEL squadron commanders actually do know what they're doing. They can be dangerous.



EDSEL

The EDSEL Firebrand

Firebrand Light Assault Copter — Small copter, small copter power plant, driver, gunner; 2 Cluster Bombs; Vulcan MG with HD ammo front; Improved Fire Extinguisher, radar, two ejection seats, Hi-Res computer (gunner position), Long Distance Radio. \$54,850, 8,000 lbs, accel. 5, maximum speed of 200 mph.

GURPS stats: armor Honeycombed in all positions; PD = 0. F DR = 30, L DR = 25, R DR = 25, U DR = 40, B DR = 20, T DR = 7. Firebrand gives a +2 to all Piloting rolls.

Car Wars stats: Armor F50, L40, R40, U75, B30, T10. HC 2.

Technical note: The ejection seats of this helicopter are considered linked: triggering one will trigger both. When the ejection seats are activated, explosive bolts in the main rotor are triggered, causing the rotor to fly off the chopper. The crew then goes through hatches in the roof.

The radar system aboard the Firebrand is not terribly good; it scans all arcs except the upwards arc. In short, Firebrands are effectively blind to everything in their top arc. This was considered acceptable when they were first produced because EDSEL never intended them to do anything but attack ground targets.

EDSEL State By State

NOTE: In order to make this survey of state EDSEL organizations complete, some states not covered in the East Coast road atlas are mentioned here.

Connecticut

State Supervisor: Edward G. Norton

EDSEL is a common sight in Connecticut. They are perceived as a bunch of interfering busybodies. It is considered courteous to transmit the position and course of any EDSEL copter spotted to other drivers; many friendly exchanges of heavy caliber weapons fire have been stopped by a timely warning of "EDSEL eggbeaters." EDSEL had a single action against EVIL, but it proved to be such a military, financial, public relations, and morale disaster that EDSEL/CT no longer involves itself in fights between vehicles flying EVIL colors.

Norton is a smiling, amiable man, with a weakness for bad puns.

Delaware

State Supervisor: James F. Dougan

EDSEL has good support in Delaware. Delaware EDSELs will always give a warning before attacking — this courtesy is unique to the Delaware chapter. This allows the drivers a chance to cool down and decide if they really want to bother with their squabble. For this reason, EDSEL in Delaware is probably the most effective in the country.

Dougan is quiet, relaxed, undemonstrative, and very polite. He has the respect of everyone who knows him, even his political enemies.

District Of Columbia

District Supervisor: William Chambers

A heavily-armed independent group of EDSEL's size and potential for destruction could never be tolerated in the federal capital. EDSEL in DC fights strictly with campaign donations and lobbying, and has no combat groups operating in the District of Columbia.

Chambers never forgets a face, is offensively over-friendly, and as believable as the paper cup Socrates used to drink hemlock. In short, he is perfect for a post in DC.

Georgia

State Supervisor: Tamara Rand

EDSEL is active in the urban centers, but is virtually unknown throughout the rest of the state. The Georgian branch of EDSEL is currently running an unusual and effective public relations campaign, depicting EDSEL as the harried, victimized dreamers of a better world, blowing things up more in sorrow than in anger. Georgian EDSELS frequently perform well-publicized "good deeds for the day" like carrying urgently needed drugs or rescuing kittens and such.

Rand is a brilliant propagandist, but is more a public relations expert than a general. Her talents are being used very efficiently in her state, but she's not the sort to go around with a gun and interact with people violently. Her first response to any problem is to draft a press release. She leaves combat tactics, dirty tricks, and the like to lieutenants who enjoy it more.

Indiana And Ohio

In 2032, EDSEL mounted their first major offensive here, the now infamous Drang nach Iowa. EDSEL forces in Ohio made the incredible blunder of getting on the wrong side of the MONDOs, collapsing EDSEL support in that state. The EDSEL organization in Indiana is now isolated, a "paper tiger" joke to drivers. The minimal and ineffectual presence EDSEL maintains here only hurts them more.



Maine

State Supervisor: Evan D. Jameson

EDSEL is active in the urban areas, but tries to avoid antagonizing the hill clans. EDSEL forces in Maine are small, but morale is good and EDSEL/ME pilots are excellent.

Jameson is a tactician, not a strategist. He'd probably be better off back at his post as a Base Commander.

Maryland

State Supervisor: James L. Sinclair

Maryland residents want EDSEL to clean up the roads — starting with all the other drivers. Because of this attitude, EDSEL forces in Maryland tend to stay out of one-on-one road duels and direct their attention to larger firefights.

Sinclair is possibly the best soldier EDSEL has outside of New Jersey. He is dashing, personally charismatic, and has a knack for unusual, underhanded tricks in combat.

Massachusetts

State Supervisor: Alexis O. Murdoch

EDSEL/MA is almost entirely an urban organization. The hill clans have proven difficult to deal with from helicopters, as their light vehicles and infantry have a depressing tendency to lay aside their differences and vanish when a helicopter attacks. Besides, hill clans have very good memories for grudges, and there are still areas where EDSEL copters on peaceful flyby are attacked on sight. The hill clans consider EDSEL a joke. EDSEL has never considered the clans to be a major item on the agenda.

Murdoch is a cyborg, badly injured in a firefight with the hill clans. His primary concern is trying to negotiate a lasting peace with the clans; unfortunately, clan politics and customs may simply make it impossible.

EDSEL Personality

Naturally, there is no single "EDSEL personality," but there are a few common types.

There are EDSELS who are serious, professional soldiers who are more than a match for the average *GURPS* character. EDSEL/NJ, for example, has a streamlined chain of command, and sincere, dedicated combat troops. On the other hand, there are casual EDSELS who get in one firefight and decide the whole thing isn't really for them. This section describes the "rank-and-file" EDSEL member. Exceptional non-player characters will have to be devised by the referee.

EDSEL has never lost its roots as a political party. Fifty years ago, the people in EDSEL would probably have been attending Ban the Bomb or Ban Abortion rallies. The average EDSEL member is fairly intelligent, college-educated, politically-oriented and convinced he is making a better world every time he kills a road duellist. They are, in short, fanatics of the sort who don't realize that fanaticism is far more dangerous than any opinion can ever be. EDSELS are dogmatic, rigid, absolutely certain of the correctness of their opinions, and consider anyone who has the gall to disagree with them to be idiots, fascists, communists, or worse.

EDSELS are not cycle gangsters, they are not duelists, they are not truck drivers, and they should never be handled like them. They are not motivated by rapacity, wanderlust, profit, or even a private sense of right and wrong. They are loyal to The Cause.

Taking EDSELS as hostages will rarely work. They are "glorious martyrs to The Cause" as far as their buddies are concerned. However, EDSELS are very often completely unnerved by an immediate threat of personal violence. That means a cocked magnum will often persuade them to tell everything they know, and quickly.

Appropriate skills for EDSEL copter crews include Pilot: Helicopter, Gunnery: Machine Gun, and Gunnery: Bombardier. Helicopter Maintenance would be characteristic of logistical support crews, as well as other engineering skills.

New Hampshire

State Supervisor: Vincent Devos

The New Hampshire roads are quiet, and EDSEL/NH takes full credit. In reality, EDSEL/NH has more "unbloodied" troops than any other EDSEL group in the country; they are possibly the worst EDSEL has.

Devos is unbalanced, a severe paranoid who is convinced every lost paper clip is a subtle attack on EDSEL. Most people who know him think he is merely rude, but he frets for hours about how minor incidents are actually parts of some enormous, complex plan to blot out EDSEL and himself. He can be quite charming if he tries, but sees himself as the sole desperate hope for EDSEL.

EDSEL Command

Any large group needs a formal command structure to maintain cohesion. This goes double for a military organization. A flaw of EDSEL's chain of command is that it is based on single state operations; two units from different states are in different chains of command and the resulting confusion could be catastrophic. EDSEL forces have been clobbered while trying to figure out who is in command.

The first action of any EDSEL officer is to select a deputy. A Flight Leader may not select the other crew of his helicopter, but that is the only restriction. If an officer is selected for higher office, the deputy moves into the abandoned office and selects a new deputy. Terms of office are three years.

EDSEL squadrons elect a Flight Leader from among themselves. The only restriction is that the Leader must lead from the air; therefore, EDSEL leaders must be qualified as either pilots or gunners. Since a squadron consists of fifteen or twenty people at the most, the Flight Leader usually is the best person for the job available.

Flight Leaders select a Base Commander from among themselves. If a base can air only one squadron, this is a fairly simple task. If there's a tie, (as often happens when there are two squadrons) then the personnel of the base vote. If there's still a tie, then Base Commander is selected by the next higher link in the chain of command.

The Base Commanders of a state select from among themselves a State Supervisor. Ties are handled in the same manner as for Base Commander. The tie is first sent to the Flight Leaders to be settled, and should that fail, the Supervisor is selected by the National Chair.

The National Chair is selected from among State Supervisors, and must move his offices immediately to the National Headquarters in Albany, New York. The National Supervisor must authorize all interstate EDSEL operations before they take place. These communiques are often intercepted by the New York AADA, which then — quite unofficially — alerts militia and vigilante groups which might be interested. This is a major factor in EDSEL's morale-breaking failures in their home state.

New Jersey

State Supervisor: Barbara Hampshire

EDSEL/NJ is a common cover for corporate death raids against vehicles and unarmed people. Characters are likely to have the impression that EDSEL/NJ is a gang of unspeakable thugs who blow up people at random because dealing with road violence is too dangerous. EDSEL has been trying to reduce the size of EDSEL/NJ because of potentially catastrophic public relations problems.

In reality, EDSEL/NJ is lean, deadly, and efficient, and furious at being used as patsies. EDSEL/NJ is almost an outlaw group within the context of EDSEL, and much closer in spirit and style to covert vigilantes than the rest of the EDSEL organization.

If Sinclair is the best soldier in EDSEL, Hampshire is the best fighter, a cold, calculating risk-taker. She is quite willing to work even with EDSEL's avowed enemies (both individual duellists and entire AADA chapters) in order to crack down on the private corporate mercenaries flying EDSEL colors while doing whatever they please. Sinclair privately considers EDSEL's higher echelons to be more of a threat to EDSEL/NJ than the AADA. She's probably right.

New York

State Supervisor: National Chairman Colin Pardus

EDSEL has never been able to establish an effective combat base in New York, and is forced to make sorties from over the borders of nearby states. EDSEL squadrons have often blundered into carefully-set traps, with "road duellists" who abruptly turn out to be mobile anti-aircraft batteries.

A major factor in EDSEL/NY's failure to establish itself successfully lies, oddly enough, in an open-air museum in upstate New York. The Rhinebeck Airdrome is dedicated to maintaining and displaying old propeller-driven aircraft. They fly reproduction Fokkers and SPADs, using a locally-brewed liquid fuel produced from grain and wood alcohol. The craft from World War One are strictly museum pieces — they mount very light weapons and cannot endure heavy fire.

The Airdrome has a total of eight aircraft from various theaters of World War Two, unarmed with modern weapons, electronics, and avionics to match. These craft are based on World War Two airframes, but their hearts are thoroughly modern. Nowhere else in the world, perhaps, is it possible to see a combat flight made up of an Italian Folgore, an American Lightning, a British Hurricane, a German Messerschmidt, and a Japanese Shinden.

The Rhinebeck Airforce has in the past been willing to serve all over New York State. EDSEL has learned the hard way — they never attempt to engage these unique machines in combat any more.

Pardus is a native New Yorker. He is honestly hurt that his fellow residents hate EDSEL. He is quickly becoming obsessed with the idea of establishing bases in New York.



North Carolina

State Supervisor: Francis Harridan

EDSEL is quite popular throughout the state. EDSELS in North Carolina tend to be cocky and overconfident, and canny AADA forces often take advantage of this. EDSEL often uses North Carolina units to deal with threats springing up in other states.

Pennsylvania

State Supervisor: Angela Maglio

The position of EDSEL here is similar to that in the District of Columbia: EDSEL/PA is trying desperately to get the backing of the Transport Authority before it tries any further expansion. EDSEL/PA's political situation is precarious at best. Public support is lukewarm, and ever since a combat flight once destroyed an unmarked Authority police interceptor by mistake, EDSEL/PA's combat squadrons are few and far between. They never interfere with the Turnpike, and are reluctant to fight even on the back roads. For the most part, EDSEL/PA limits its role to photographing the license plates of cars in illegal duels and sending the mail to the Authority. It is possible that EDSEL has truly found its niche as a nonviolent protest group acting as an unofficial police recon unit.

Maglio is soft-spoken and unassuming, but she is a superb strategist and longs for the chance to "take the gloves off" and see what her organization can do.

Rhode Island

State Supervisor: Peri Brown

Rhode Island rather likes EDSEL; this state is a major source of contributions. Yet the EDSEL organization does not have many forces in Rhode Island. The military serves as a powerful stabilizing force in Rhode Island and there is little perceived need for EDSEL/RI to send out patrolling combat flights. Besides, the chances of killing a soldier on leave are just too great.

The State Supervisor is British by birth and adopts an American accent which fools absolutely nobody who's ever been to North America. Her office workers lampoon her voice mercilessly whenever she is out of earshot. However, aside from this quirk, she is quite competent at her job.

EDSEL Characters

The average EDSEL pilot/gunner has ST 10, DX 11, IQ 11, HT 10; Research-11, Teaching-10, Pilot/TL7 (Hang Glider)-9, Pilot/TL7 (Helicopter)-11, Gunner/TL7 (MG)-12, Gunner/TL7 (Bombadier)-12, Driver/TL7 (Cars)-10, and Guns/TL7 (Pistol, Rifle, and Bazooka)-12. Also add a M/H scholastic skill at Level 13: this represents a solid college major in philosophy or the like. The GM may also choose to add or subtract from these skills.

This character is qualified as a helicopter pilot/gunner. A specialized pilot or gunner should not be much better than the pilot/gunner listed above.

EDSELS tend to carry a LAW, a S&W 55 pistol (Heavy Pistol in *Car Wars*) and thirty rounds of ammunition. They wear standard body armor.



EDSEL And The Brotherhood

EDSEL and the Brotherhood have never been allies, but until the Drang, they were at least able to share the road peacefully. Ultimately, both groups wanted to see less violence on the road and there was a certain quiet mutual respect. The Hawks in EDSEL in particular wanted to maintain good relations with the Brotherhood.

During the Drang, EDSEL spearheads relied heavily on overland transport for support. They foolishly insisted on hiring vehicles which had been disarmed. This is not quite as suicidal in the northeast as it is in the rest of the United States, but it's still pretty dangerous. The fact that their cargoes were mostly "high rollers" (Brotherhood slang for cargoes attractive to thieves) made it an exceptionally deadly thing to do. EDSEL was forced to divert patrols to convoy with the trucks. This just made matters worse, advertising that the vehicles below were unarmed. Some drivers claimed that they were frequently abandoned by their "escort" the moment a fight broke out.

EDSEL copters then began flying over armed trucks as though escorting them, trying to convince bandits that not all the trucks EDSEL flew over were unarmed. This naturally antagonized the truck drivers who were being used as involuntary Q-ships, getting involved in fights for a group which wouldn't pay for ammo. This hurt EDSEL's image vis-a-vis the Brotherhood even more. But the final straw occurred when an overzealous Flight Commander ordered the destruction of a truck after it dropped mines to discourage a pursuing cycle gang.

EDSEL was declared an Enemy of the Brotherhood. Their status has been modified since then: Now Brothers will give them a cold shoulder instead of hot lead. In return, EDSEL will usually not interfere with a fight when a Brother is involved.



South Carolina

State Supervisor: Jamie McPhearson

EDSEL forces are quite active in the urban areas, where they have a great deal of popular support. This support is relatively weak in the outlying areas of the state. EDSEL's state headquarters are in Charleston. EDSEL is engaging in a dynamic propaganda campaign to generate more popular support in the rest of the state, and to maintain their position in the urban areas.

McPhearson is the most outspoken hawk in EDSEL. He has given Hampshire's EDSEL/NJ a great deal of undercover support in the past.

Vermont

State Supervisor: Fred Gordon

The recent escalating violence in Vermont has resulted in a gradual upgrading of the previously sleepy EDSEL/VT organization. It is rumored that EDSEL/VT is under strict and secret orders to avoid antagonizing any covert vigilante groups, in hopes of convincing the coverts of New York that it is possible for EDSEL and coverts to operate peacefully in the same state. It appears to be working; while the Vermont coverts dislike and distrust EDSEL, they are certainly not going out of their way to attack EDSEL/VT forces.

Gordon is polite, mild, a sadist, and very good at concealing it. He actively enjoys watching another person in pain, and perhaps twice a year "vacations" to New Hampshire, where he captures a "forest folk." He then enslaves, torments, and finally beats him (or her) to death. He is able to justify this to himself as a minor weakness, compared to the great good he has done with EDSEL.



Virginia

State Supervisor: William Anthony "Buck" Gordon

EDSEL/VA is despised by Virginians; the only way they can operate safely is to patrol in squadrons of ten or more helicopters. Obviously, this cuts down on the territory EDSEL can cover, and limits the organization's effectiveness as a peace-keeping organization.

Gordon flies with a combat squadron every week. He is a ruthless commander, and reckless with his life and the lives of those under him.

West Virginia

State Supervisor: Rose Templar

West Virginians pay little attention to EDSEL; most of the organization's forces here are tied up in defending EDSEL bases instead of actively patrolling. EDSEL is in serious trouble here, and may have even reached a sort of "natural boundary" for EDSEL's effective range.

Rose Templar is a good commander, serious and cautious, but lacks the personal style and flair to command EDSEL in the dangerous situation it is in now.

EDSELS as PCs

A campaign built around EDSEL? Why not? The PCs could be AADA agents infiltrating the enemy. Or they could be genuine pious fanatics, dedicated to blowing those Godless duellists off the road. Why not some of both types?

Treason

The most obvious idea is to have your players act as double agents for the AADA against EDSEL. Be prepared to be a little silly with this — after all, James Bond had a lot more fun than George Smiley. Assassinations, microfilms, agents with LAWs surgically implanted in their foreheads (okay . . . how about a derringer in his forearm?). This sort of campaign could change in a hurry. If EDSEL suddenly finds out, your players might well decide to become covert vigilantes or truck drivers in California.

This is a good way to have fights which get the players out of their armed and armored wombs.

The referee should realize, however, that the EDSEL leadership is not stupid. If the players keep “screwing up” from EDSEL’s point of view, they’ll eventually be transferred to desk jobs. They could still be very effective double agents, but this would get dull in a hurry. So the thing here is to hurt EDSEL and make it look like a rousing success . . . a certain test of the imagination. Or the failures the PCs are constantly associated with could be blamed on other EDSELS, preferably dead ones.

One scenario is to have an AADA group target the players, who are of course working for the AADA by working for EDSEL . . .

Dirty Tricks

The PCs are EDSEL covert operations staff, reporting directly to the National Chairman. Again, this is a spy campaign, with all the advantages and disadvantages of the Treason campaign.

The PCs’ job is to do things EDSEL will disavow later, especially if they flub up. Players might be assigned to infiltrate the AADA, or EDSEL/NJ. Players might be “plumbers,” sneaking in and out of locked offices with information. It might be necessary to assassinate a lower-ranking EDSEL official. And how about destroying those modified WW II fighters in Rhinebeck?

Like in the Dirty Tricks campaign, players might well choose to come in from the cold and change the campaign overnight.

Eggbeaters Anonymous

The PCs are in charge of an EDSEL base somewhere in the boondocks. Other posts in the base are handled by NPCs. These guys are best used to trigger ambushes: think of them as the unfortunates in red shirts in “Star Trek.” Perhaps the base has only one squadron, which would save on NPCs.

As Base Commanders and Flight Leaders, the group will have to deal with the AADA, road combat, cycle gangs, police, and the Upper Echelons of EDSEL. This is a Clubhouse Blues scenario, with all the advantages and disadvantages of any of them with one exception — money. Everything’s being paid for by the national organization. Players will have to collect donations from schoolchildren and others, with the money turned over to the National Organization. This makes things easier for the GM, as you can give the PCs what you want them to have, but take it back if there’s trouble.

The GM may choose to personalize the group’s equipment. Give them a decent helicopter or two. Their base will have to be defended from ground and air attacks. Recon patrols will have to defend the base. The players might even screw up so badly that they lose their base and then have to explain the matter to their superiors, who will probably fail to see the humorous aspect of the situation.

If the players are really successful, they might be chosen as roving specialists, being shuttled all over the East Coast to troubleshoot at the personal request of the National Chair. This gives the campaign mobility.



EDSEL And Vigilante Groups

EDSEL has always had a hard time with vigilante groups. The problem is their own fault — the EDSEL platform specifically denies individuals the right to armed resistance. Consequently, vigilantes have always perceived EDSEL as an enemy. This is ironic, because EDSEL is itself often considered a vigilante group.

The coverts of New York and Vermont are particularly hostile. The Twilight Thunder coverts of southwestern NY have gone as far as to launch cross-border raids into Pennsylvania against EDSEL/PA. Twilight Thunder claims these raids are preventive strikes to keep EDSEL from establishing bases in New York State.

EDSEL’s Hawks are trying to convince the coverts and other vigilantes that EDSEL is not a threat to them. It is possible that if the Hawks gain enough power in EDSEL to modify the platform, this hostility will decrease in the future, although it seems unlikely that an open alliance between EDSEL and covert vigilante groups is possible in the long run.

EDSEL/NJ is a special case, much closer in spirit and action to a covert vigilante group than any other chapter. EDSEL/NJ is not run from an office — it is run from the pilot’s seat of Hampshire’s copter. Hampshire is intelligent and flexible enough to sacrifice EDSEL’s platform to stomp thugs. In fact, Hampshire has refused to allow EDSEL access to New York through New Jersey.

HELICOPTERS IN GURPS



Construction

Helicopters are built like other vehicles. Components have displacement, weight, and price, and vehicle chassis types are rated for maximum capacity.

Acceleration and Performance

Helicopter chassis do not have maximum weight ratings — they have no suspensions to overload. However, power plants are rated for the maximum weight they can lift. If the weight of a helicopter is less than or equal to the 10 mph column in the power plant description, it has an acceleration of 10 mph/second. If the weight is less than the 5 mph column, it has 5 mph/second acceleration. Otherwise, it cannot fly, although it can scrape across the ground in an amusing fashion.

A helicopter's maximum airspeed in level flight is 200 mph. This may be exceeded by "pushing" the power plant or by diving. A helicopter's range is about 200 miles. This assumes a cruising speed of 100–125 mph. Exceeding this cruising speed should reduce range to about 150 miles. A helicopter's service ceiling is around 15,000 feet (see sidebar).

Power Plants

Power Plants	Cost	Weight	Cu. ft	HT	5 mph	10 mph
Mini	\$10,000	2,500	40	40	5,000	3,333
Small	\$15,000	3,000	50	50	8,000	5,333
Standard	\$20,000	3,500	65	65	14,000	9,333
Super	\$25,000	4,000	80	80	20,000	13,333

Chassis

Body Size	Cost	Weight	Cu. ft. Capacity	Piloting Modifier	Rotor HT
One-Man	\$10,000	500	65	+3	3/3
Small	\$20,000	800	95	+2	5/3
Standard	\$40,000	1200	120 (+30)	+2	6/4
Transport	\$80,000	2000	120 (+85)	+1	8/4

The *Piloting Modifier* is added to the pilot's Piloting skill whenever a skill roll is required. Smaller helicopters are easier to fly than large ones, and this modifier reflects that. The first number under *Rotor HT* is for the main rotor; the second number is for the smaller stabilizing rotor in back.

Armor

Body Size	Normal (\$/lbs)	FP (\$/lbs)	LR (\$/lbs)	LR/FP (\$/lbs)
One-Man	160/80	320/80	176/88	400/8.8
Small	200/100	400/100	220/110	500/110
Standard	300/140	600/140	330/154	750/154
Transport	350/170	700/170	385/187	875/187

Movement In The Air

Helicopters may decelerate by 5 or 10 mph per second without hazard. A helicopter may decelerate by 15 mph in a single second, but this requires an immediate control roll. A critical failure indicates the main rotors have just twisted off. Bye-bye.

Otherwise, a helicopter may Turn, Drift, and perform Evening Out and Defensive Swerve maneuvers exactly like any other vehicle. A helicopter may Rotate if it is flying at 20 mph or less. Each second, it spins 90 degrees without penalties or control rolls, and continues to move in its original direction. A helicopter may fly backwards or sideways only if its speed is 20 mph or less.

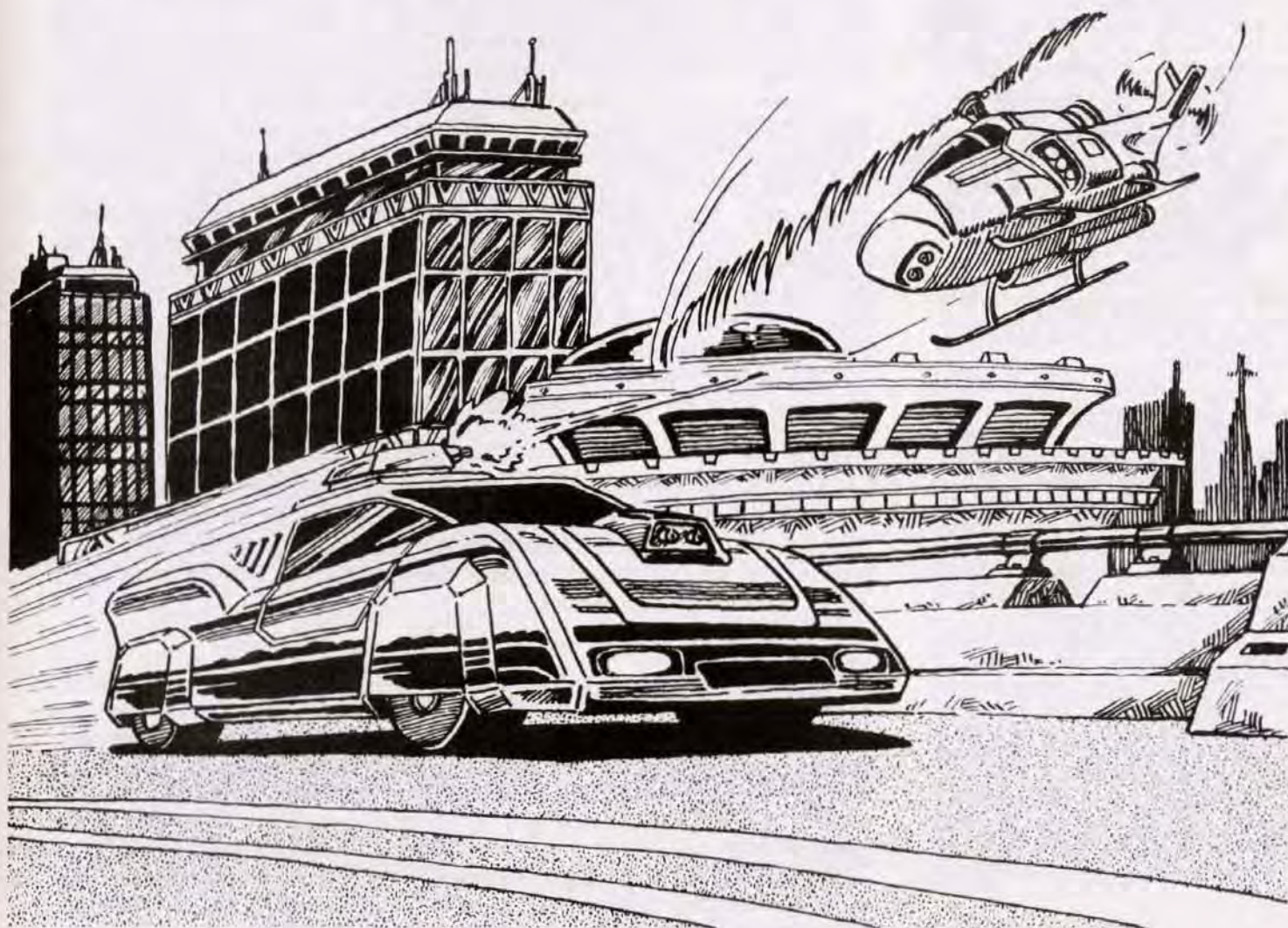
Piloting skill rolls to maintain control of a helicopter during a maneuver, and the possible results of losing control, use the same rules as cars (as explained in *GURPS Autoduel*, pp. 46-50). There is one important difference — when figuring the modifier to the original skill roll (on p. A48) and the modifier to the Crash Table roll (on p. A50) divide the helicopter's speed *in half* before consulting the table. A chopper traveling 140 mph, for example, would have a -3 modifier to the Piloting skill roll, and a +1 to the Crash Table roll (the values for 70 mph on the two tables). A new Crash Table for helicopters is given below.

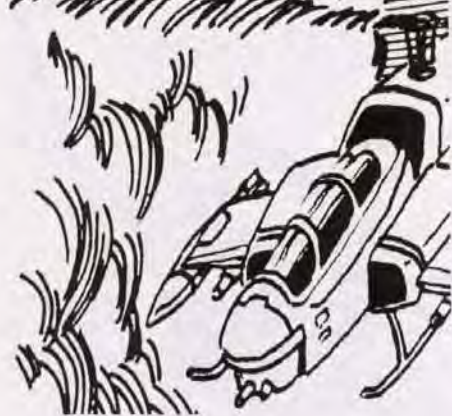
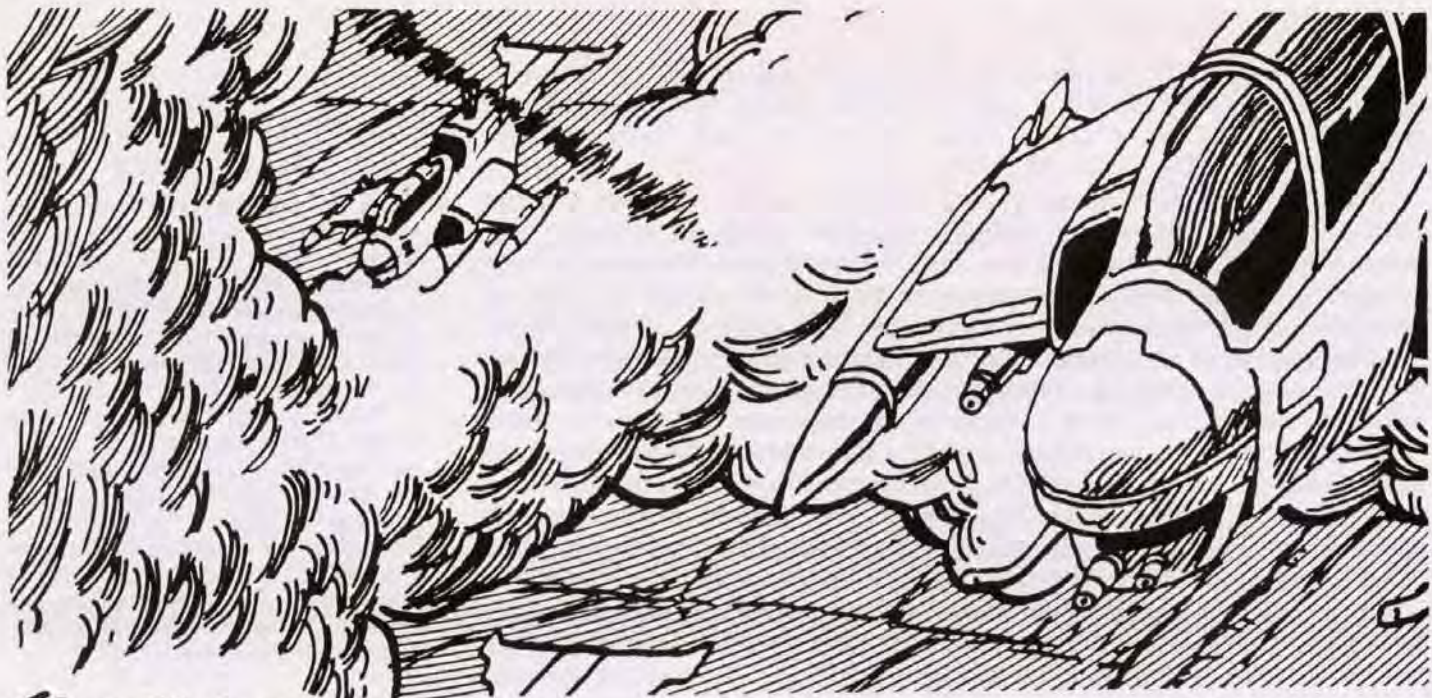
Air vehicles add a whole new dimension to movement. In order to climb, a helicopter gives up $\frac{1}{2}$ " of forward movement (the *Car Wars* scale of 1" to 15 feet will be used throughout this example) to climb $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Up to 1" of forward movement may be expended per second, causing the copter to climb $\frac{1}{2}$ ". A helicopter flying at 10 mph may therefore fly straight up, at $\frac{1}{2}$ " per second. A helicopter may lose $\frac{1}{2}$ " of altitude per second. This is a controlled descent, and not a dive.

Service Ceiling

As of this writing, the helicopter altitude record of 40,820 feet was set by a heavily modified SA 315B Llama. The production model has a rated service ceiling of only 18,000 feet. A generic ceiling of 15,000 feet seems both generous and reasonable. Halve the rate a helicopter climbs when it goes above 10,000 feet.

Players should be able to get up to around 20,000 feet or so. Your players won't have much need to fly higher than this anyway — 10,000 feet is a perfectly safe altitude to parachute from, and is more than high enough to avoid reasonable levels of ground fire. Besides, at 18,000 or so you have to start worrying about cold and low pressure. Life support systems are not standard equipment with helicopters!





Hang Gliders

Hang gliders fly at about 20 mph, and stall at 15 mph.

Every two seconds, a hang glider loses a yard of altitude automatically (treat as $\frac{1}{4}$ " or 3.75 feet, if you are using a small-scale map). The pilot must make a Piloting: Hang Glider skill roll at the same time. A failure will cause the loss of another yard of altitude; a critical failure loses *two* yards and causes an immediate roll on the Crash Table. Remember, these are 2030s gliders. For 1980s gliders, the roll would be at -2; they're comparatively primitive.

A hang glider can do anything a copter can do, except rotate, carry weapons, or fly slower than 15 mph. Ejection seats are often equipped with these instead of parachutes. You can fly about 700 yards — .4 miles — with these things before being forced to make a landing.

A hang glider cannot mount vehicular weapons, but the pilot may fire hand weapons. The next Piloting roll made after a weapon is dropped or fired, however, is at -4.

A helicopter may dive to pick up speed. This can be dangerous. Split the helicopter's speed into two components — "Natural" speed and "Dive" speed. Natural speed is the speed a helicopter has picked up by using its power plant; Dive speed is what a helicopter picks up by diving. Dive speed may increase by up to 10 MPH each second. Each 5 MPH of dive speed a helicopter has will give the helicopter an additional 5 MPH of speed to use in horizontal movement.

However, at the end of each turn, the helicopter will lose $\frac{1}{2}$ " of altitude for every 5 MPH of dive speed. Dive speed just doesn't go away — you have to pull out of a dive. You can think of a dive as a sort of "negative climb." Every inch of forward movement you give up reduces dive speed by 5 mph.

Example: A helicopter pilot is flying a copter capable of 5 mph acceleration. He is flying at 10 mph and needs to gain speed quickly. At the beginning of the turn, he accelerates to 15 mph and adds 10 mph of diving speed. He travels 2.5" that turn, and loses 1" of altitude. The next turn, he accelerates to 20 mph and reduces his Dive speed to 5. He would normally travel 2.5", but since he's pulling out he only travels 1.5", and he loses $\frac{1}{2}$ " of altitude.

The next turn, he accelerates to 25 MPH and lowers his dive speed to zero. He moves 1.5" and loses no altitude.

Combat

Most mounts are restricted to 45 degrees of elevation or depression. This means that if the difference in altitude is greater than the difference in linear distance, you cannot fire at it, unless the gun is in a universal turret. Copters will usually carry weapons in belly-mounted universal turrets. This means cars need special equipment to shoot back.

Damage to Rotors

The stabilizing rotors and main rotors are at -9 to hit. Instead of rolling normal damage, roll 1d6. A six does two points, otherwise, the rotor takes one point. The rest of the damage "blows through." If the main rotor is destroyed, the helicopter crashes. If the stabilizing rotor fails, then the copter begins making a series of uncontrollable counterclockwise rotate maneuvers. The pilot must make control rolls every turn, at -1 for every 10 mph faster than 20 the copter is flying.

The HT of the main and stabilizing rotors are listed on the Chassis table, under Rotors. The first number refers to the main rotors; the second to the stabilizing rotor.

Special Copter Equipment

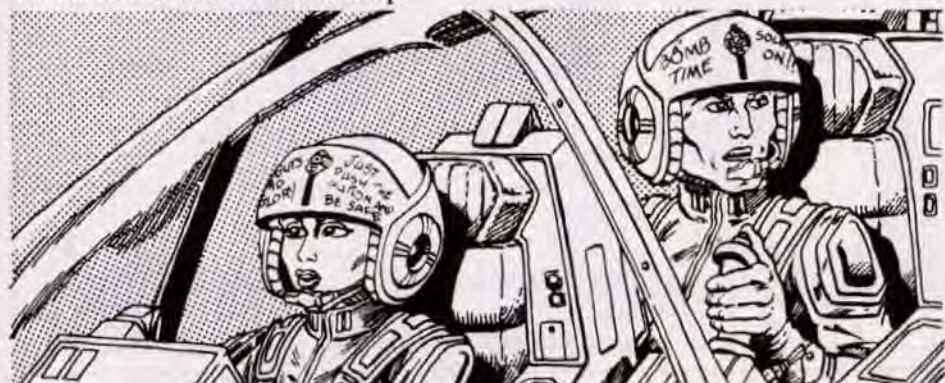
Skid Stretches. 25 lbs., \$300, HT 5, DR 3. These are lightweight cloth and plastic stretchers which enable a helicopter to carry people outside of the body. Please note that destroying a skid stretcher is difficult because bullets and lasers will just riddle the webbing with holes and not really wreck it.

Pontoons. 50 lbs., \$500, HT 20, DR 2. These allow a copter to land safely on water. A copter needs two (obviously); if they are destroyed (HT reduced to 0), the helicopter will sink completely in 10 seconds. In 3 seconds, it will be too angled to take off.

Winch. 6 cu. ft., 100 lbs., \$500, HT 8, DR 4. A winch is a mechanism designed to lift payloads with cables. It must be mounted on a side with a door or on the bottom of a helicopter equipped with a bomb bay, and may only be used when that door is open. The machine is a rotating drum mechanism with 90' (6 game inches) of cable, able to support 4000 pounds of force. The mechanism may safely reel out at the rate of 1" (15 feet) per second. It will reel back in at 1" per second if the payload is less than 1000 pounds; 1/2" per second if the payload is between 1000 and 2000 pounds; and 1/4" per second if the payload is over 2000 pounds. The cable may be lengthened; each additional 15' of cable adds one cubic foot, 10 pounds, and \$50. A block and tackle modification may be used to increase the total weight that can be lifted. A block and tackle is rated by "increments," which must be a whole number. Divide cable length by the increment to find the new total cable length; multiply the time for takeup by the increment (block and tackles are slower); and multiply the total weight which can be supported by the increment. For example, a winch with a block and tackle increment of two (one pulley) can lower 45' below the helicopter, can lift anything under 2000 pounds at 1/2" per second; anything between 2000 and 4000 pounds at 1/4" per second, and (now this is the payoff) anything between 4000 and 8000 pounds at 1/8" per second. In case it should ever come up, a helicopter may not lift a weight greater than its own unless the winch is situated in a bomb bay (it tilts the helicopter too much).

Bomb Bay Doors. 3 cu. ft., 100 lbs., \$1000. These are powered doors mounted on the belly of a helicopter, through which equipment may be dropped. A helicopter does not need a bomb bay to use bombs — nowadays, bomb bays are used primarily to lower heavy loads more efficiently.

Cluster Bombs are essentially packages of about fifteen defensive grenades. They will do 4 dice crushing damage to the target, 4 dice burst damage to everything within 15 yards, and 2 dice burst damage to everything else within an additional 10 hex radius for a total danger zone 25 yards in radius. Cut this damage by two points per die if a character is prone (Hit the dirt!). Cluster bombs have the firing characteristics and HT of heavy rockets. Alternatively, you can figure out how long it will take the bomb to hit the ground from the copter, and plot where the helicopter will be at that time if it keeps the same speed or direction it had when it dropped the bomb. Then roll to hit that hex as though the helicopter was firing a heavy rocket. Every point the attack roll is missed by will result in a scatter of 2 yards in a random direction. The bomb will strike that point when it finally hits the ground. It's more complex, but it is fun to watch people trying to get away from a bomb's blast radius. You might require a Vision roll to see the bomb drop.



More Special Gadgets

Foils. A foil is a computer controlled air surface designed to automatically compensate for an aircraft's instability. A pair costs \$3000, has DR 5 and 10 HT per foil and weighs 300 pounds. These figures must be multiplied to match any special armor type the copter may have. One-man and small helicopters may mount one pair; larger copters may mount two.

Each pair of foils gives a +2 to all piloting rolls at 60 mph or more.

A foil may be targeted at -3. The destruction of one foil in a pair will negate all bonuses, although the other foil will in no way impede the helicopter's performance.

Rescue Platform. \$2500, 500 lbs., 45 cubic feet. The winch is not included in this cost or weight. Rescue platforms are designed to be lowered to pick up cargo or people. A bomb bay is usually needed. A helicopter attempting to maneuver while carrying a platform at the end of the cable (not within the body of the copter) takes a -2 to all piloting rolls at a speed of 40 mph or more because of wind resistance.

Option 1: Collapsed Storage. The platform occupies only 5 cubic feet as cargo. The platform may be deployed in flight. While the platform is unfolded, the -2 to piloting rolls is in effect. The platform, in its open position, may be entered from the copter. The only advantage to this is the fact the platform occupies less space within the helicopter while cruising.

Option 2: Sidearm Crane. The rescue platform occupies no space within the helicopter, and does not require a bomb bay, but will give a -3 to all control rolls made at a speed greater than 50 mph. Not only is there drag, but the drag twists the helicopter sideways.

CACR. 20% of body cost, 400 lbs., 10 cu. ft. A Co-Axial Counter Rotating blade system is a method of overcoming the torque of the main propeller without using a stabilizing rotor. It consists of two main rotors, spinning in opposite directions. Each rotor has the HT of the original main rotor.

A helicopter equipped with a CACR has its maximum speed increased to 250 mph, and adds one to all piloting rolls. When the main blade is hit, roll randomly to see which of the two rotors, top or bottom, is hit and damaged by the attack.

Bollix. \$5000, 9 cu. ft., 200 lbs., 3 HT. This is the ultimate in electronic warfare available to civilians. A Bollix will shut down all effective radar and radio within three miles of its position. These are illegal wherever there are laws, and possession can result in up to five years' imprisonment.

Radar Detector. \$300, one pound, no effective space. A radar detector sounds an alarm when radar locks onto a vehicle, and gives range and bearing of the radar unit. It is capable of discriminating between tracking and missile homing radar.

Crash Table

1 or less — Involuntary Drift. The helicopter performs a drift maneuver in whatever direction it was turning, and loses $\frac{1}{4}$ " of altitude. If the helicopter was flying straight, roll randomly for direction.

2-4 — Involuntary Veer. Helicopter turns 30 degrees in the direction of the maneuver which forced the control roll, and loses $\frac{1}{2}$ " of altitude. If the helicopter was flying straight, roll randomly as above.

5-7 — Severe Veer. Helicopter turns 30 degrees in the direction of the maneuver which forced the control roll, and loses 1" of altitude. All weapons fire from the helicopter for the rest of the turn is at -5.

8-10 — Diving Veer. The helicopter turns 30 degrees, loses 1.5" of altitude, and increases its Dive Speed by 10 mph. No weapons fire is allowed until the Dive Speed is reduced to zero. The pilot must immediately make a Piloting roll: A critical failure causes the main rotors to break off.

11-13 — Spinout. The helicopter turns 90 degrees. Next turn, it will end in a Diving Veer. The pilot must immediately make a Piloting roll: A critical failure sends the rotors south for the winter. No weapons fire is permitted.

14+ — Rotors fail automatically. Use parachutes if you're high enough; ejection seats if you have them.

Helicopter Damage Allocation Table

0 or Less — Front Armor. Reduce the PD and DR of the front armor by half, rounding down. If there is no front armor, then damage is taken to the nose turret. If there is no nose turret, then roll again.

1, 2 — Main Rotor. Remember that the rotor damage rules are unusual.

3, 4 — Front Weapons. If there is more than one, roll randomly. If there are no front-mounted weapons, then damage is taken by nose turret-mounted weapons. If there are none, then do not roll again — the damage goes to break up some twisted metal in the weapons compartment.

5, 6 — Accessory. Roll randomly among the vehicle's accessories, which are anything inside a vehicle which has its own HT score and is not made of armor. Include already-destroyed accessories in the roll.

7, 8 — Power Plant. If the power plant is already destroyed, do not roll again.

9, 10 — Weapon. Roll randomly among all the vehicle's weapons: If an already-destroyed weapon comes up, then subtract the original HT of the destroyed weapon and re-allocate the remaining damage.

11, 12 — Crew. Roll randomly among all crew positions, including empty seats. If an empty seat comes up, subtract ten points of damage from the attack and roll again. Remember: A character can only take 25 points of damage from a single attack.

13, 14 — Cargo. If there is less than 5 cubic feet of empty cargo space, then roll again. If there is more than that and it is empty, the damage is blown into the empty space. If any cargo of any size is carried, it takes the damage.

15 — Rotor. Roll randomly between Main or Stabilizing rotor, but use common sense.

16 — Armor. Take whatever side was hit, and follow the rules given above for 0 or less.

17, 18 — Rear Mounted Weapon. If there is more than one, roll randomly.

19, 20 — Stabilizing Rotor.

21 + — Rear Armor. As for Front Armor, above, except if the rear armor is already gone, roll again.



EASTERN CAMPAIGNS

The Role Of Random Violence

Some areas in the atlas are listed as more dangerous than others — this refers to random violence, violent events which have little or nothing to do with events in the rest of the campaign.

There should be some events of this type in your campaign. This particular fictional world is not a nice place to live, and things are out of control. Random violence is also useful as a plot device. Zorro Riprock is carrying a microfilm stolen from EDSEL in his wallet. He gets mugged. This might be bad luck. Maybe it isn't. In fact, it would probably be a lot more interesting if it were part of a plot.

But, unless it is established that people do sometimes get mugged your players will automatically assume that this must have been some sort of covert EDSEL action. To keep players from assuming that an event is significant simply because the GM describes it, you must throw in the occasional false lead — a mugging with no sinister motive, or a suspicious-looking gentleman who looks suspicious because he's feeling guilty about cheating on his taxes.

Random violence should be low-key for the most part. A casual street punk will run when chased by five heavily-armored guys with Uzis and grenades. Cycle gangs don't fight to the death; they'll abandon an attack if it's not working.

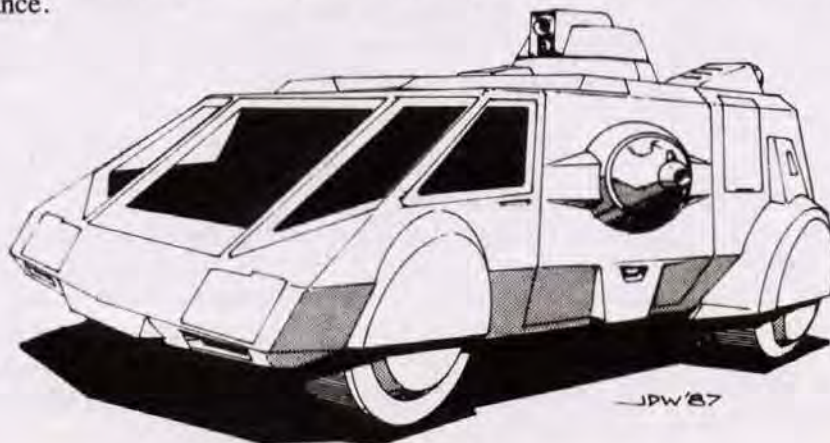
Clubhouse Blues

Two additions to the *GURPS Autoduel* list of clubhouse scenarios — players can be involved in one of the mountain clans of New England or in a covert vigilante group.

Mountain Clansmen

In this relatively low-tech campaign, each player controls one of the mountain clans of rural Massachusetts. Each clan is an extended family, farming and hunting a few thousand hilly acres. The leader ("Paw" or "Grampaw") and the other elder males make the decisions outside the house. Women rule the household. Some young women hunt and fight, but most quit when they marry.

Clan courtesy and honor is rigid and taken very seriously; a dishonorable clan member is likely to find his brothers dragging him behind a truck for two miles or so over paved roads. No single clan is large enough to dominate the rest, so clan honor, not strength, is the only defense against an overwhelming alliance.



Local Flavor

New England is known for maple syrup. Farms often open small restaurants where you can purchase just about anything you could conceivably slather with maple syrup, and some things you can't. Some New Englanders put maple syrup on hamburgers. It is also possible to purchase locally-made crafts and, of course, jugs of maple syrup.

The winter in New England is brutal. Anyone driving in New England in winter without a radio or snow chains is foolish; anyone without snow tires and warm clothing is suicidal. Eighteen-inch snowstorms in Massachusetts are not terribly unusual.

The roads in Connecticut are worthy of special mention. They are very well maintained — when driving west on 84, it is possible to tell when you cross the border into New York simply by the extra potholes. However, they are poorly designed, with exit and entrance ramps on both the right and left sides of the road.

New York state is probably the only place on earth that doesn't have signs advertising "Real New York" pizza or cheesecake or whatever. New York has the second-most expensive state government in the United States, and probably the least competent. New York is also the only state which had an internal civil war in the 21st century. While the boroughs of New York City were busily hacking at each other, the rural and suburban upstate citizens sabotaged the electrical power grid and water supplies, forcing the state government into many concessions reducing state aid to the City.

The Mid Atlantic states are not as violent as the country further west, but they are more violent than other parts of the East Coast. Baltimore, Maryland, is a convention city. It is quite safe to visit, provided you stay in the better part of town and off the road — the Baltimore Code of Honor is very touchy. Macho road duels for "honor" are depressingly common in Virginia, and West Virginia can only be described as a maniac's playground: an area which has collapsed into barbarism.

Notes For Non-Americans

Since a lot of *Car Wars* and *GURPS* players are not North Americans, it seems like a reasonable courtesy to spend a few inches of space on things which might be confusing to them.

The National Guard is a group of militia units run by the states — hence, we have the California National Guard, Connecticut National Guard, and so on. National Guard units are under the direct command of their state's governor. However, the federal government pays the vast bulk of the National Guards' budget and supplies them with surplus equipment from the national armed services; the President has the right to assume personal command of a state's National Guard as was done in the 1960s to enforce federal desegregation policies. Air National Guard units are, obviously, air support wings for their state's Guard. In the 1980s, a National Guardsman spends one weekend a month and two weeks a year under military training and discipline, although activation in the event of an emergency can take place at any time. The pay is nominal and service is strictly voluntary. Actual duties of the National Guard include emergency disaster relief, search and rescue, and — very rarely — riot control.

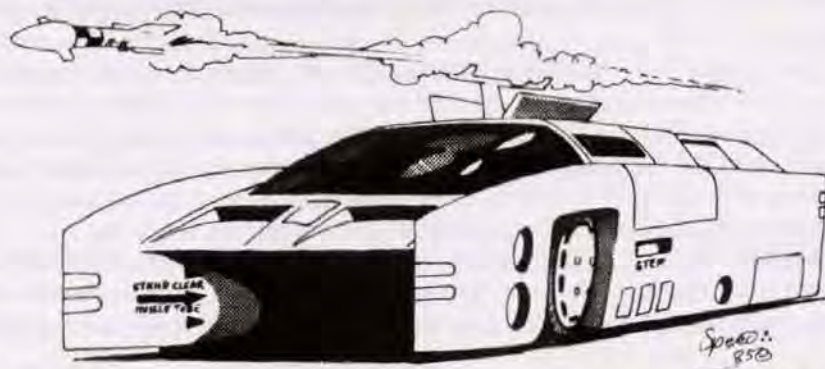
National Guard units are not usually as well-trained or equipped as the troops of the United States Army or Marine Corps. In the *Autoduel* universe, however, Guardsmen will obviously be much more experienced — there is a far greater opportunity for casual mayhem. Service in the National Guard is a good way for a duellist to show a sense of civic duty: give a +1 to reputation to a Guardsman. The National Guard is particularly significant in the *Autoduel* universe because it is probably the largest military force players will ever be required to deal with, the "heavy muscle" of the average campaign which does not deal with elite US military units such as the Army Rangers, Delta, and Marine Sea Air Land (SEALs). The equipment of these forces is quite likely out of the scope of *GURPS Autoduel* rules: Delta will not be buying Vulcans from Uncle Albert.

(continued)

Clans keep to their own territory, and will rarely trespass. A vehicle flying the flag of truce will not be molested, but will be expected to explain its presence to the clan elders as soon as possible. Sometimes a vehicle flying a white flag will enter and leave another clan's territory without stopping to explain; this is a serious breach of courtesy and a very good explanation will be expected. Something like driving somebody to a hospital would be an acceptable excuse, as would rushing to fight a fire or attend a childbirth.

Sending troops to attack an enemy clan through neutral territory is considered a serious violation of neutrality. The neutral clan will almost always ally with one side or the other after an action that rash. Sneaking through the brush with a white hanky tied to your suspenders is not considered "being under a flag of truce"; you have to be out in the open, and making a lot of noise.

Even in peacetime, occasional incidents of interclan violence will break out. If the target is a specific person, the only honorable way to attack him is by challenging him to a formal duel. The two involved fight after agreeing on place, time, weapons and ground rules. Duels are not always lethal, but a nonlethal duel is taken as seriously as a blood duel. A more military target can be dealt with by a small raid. There is a series of rules for honorable raid behavior called Raiders' Rights.



Raiders' Rights

A raider claiming these rights must fly a black flag from his vehicle. This is a formal announcement of intent. Such a raider may never open fire on unarmed people. In return, it is considered dishonorable for a defender to open fire with weapons heavier (i.e., which do more damage) than anything used by the raiders. That's right: If a clan claims Raiders' Rights using nothing heavier than an MG and your lightest weapon is a Vulcan, you may not legitimately fire at them, except to return fire at someone who shoots at you first. Raiders are obliged to state who they are if they're not recognized, although clan devices are so well known and prominently displayed that this is rare. A retaliatory raid is considered almost mandatory; usually, such retaliations will concentrate on an enemy target similar to the target of the original raid.

Storage buildings, supplies, and livestock are often legitimate raid targets; homes and emergency shelters never are. This is easily understood when one realizes how severe New England weather can be. Therefore, napalming a 300-year-old farm house is not considered a legitimate raid. This is not even a legitimate act of war. This is a war crime and prisoners from the raiding party will be hanged from the maple trees. In fact, in the event of a fire threatening a shelter, people from all the bordering clans will rush to help, even to the point of ignoring vendettas. Even though it is extremely gauche to expect any more reward than a polite "thank you," this is extremely practical behavior in an area where nature can still be the most serious enemy.

The clans are primarily concerned with maintaining the status quo and survival. During spring, summer, and autumn, a "real life" mountain clan will be too busy mapling, planting, harvesting, and maintaining farmland to shoot up their neighbors. Winter is therefore the traditional campaigning time, with the result that the United States Army relies heavily on clanfighters to train arctic assault specialists. This raises an obvious problem — it isn't terribly interesting to roleplay farming, mapling, et. al.

There are at least three ways around this. Player characters could be unofficial clan military specialists, engaged in year-round squabbles and settling down to serious fighting in the winter. The referee could time things carefully, running three seasons of a year in a single evening of play and reverting to slower "game-time" during winter. Simplest of all, the time scale could be an eternal winter, if you're willing to handle time in an unrealistic and open-ended fashion. Finally, of course, it's possible that a state of vendetta might occur any time of the year.

Clans usually coexist peacefully. Under most circumstances, people who rely entirely on farming don't have the surplus to remain in a constant state of war. And remember that hill clans rely on their own farm for most of what they can use.

There are three ways clans can interact:

Peace. A state of peace is the most common. Clan members meeting on neutral territory will not open fire unless there is personal animosity or rivalry. A clan member trespassing on the other clan's territory will draw fire, but it will probably not be aimed to kill at first; a trespasser can then "wave off" and leave hostile territory. It is considered rude in the extreme to fire upon a member of a peaceful clan who is trying to leave your territory with good grace. "Raiders' Rights" are in full force. Invitations between peaceful clans to wedding and birthday feasts are not at all uncommon. There is no obligation to help a member of a "friendly" clan in trouble, but it is considered neighborly and a personal debt of this fashion cannot honorably be ignored. Besides, not helping in an emergency can cause two peaceful clans to turn hostile.

Hostility. Trespassers, accidental or not, will draw fire intended to kill or disable. A wounded hostile will be given first aid and returned as soon as possible to his home by clan members under a flag of truce, in hopes the other side will return the favor. Raiders' Rights are still respected, but defenders will not feel bad about using their lightest weapons systems, even if they are heavier than any used by the raiders. Using countervalue tactics, such as attacking noncombatants, farm equipment, harvesting equipment, etc., is not considered neighborly. Should this sort of thing be done (especially killing noncombatants) the situation will rapidly deteriorate to —



Vendetta. This is no-holds-barred kill-on-sight, although most clan members will be reluctant to shoot enemy noncombatants or neutrals who happen to be spotted in enemy territory. This isn't gallantry, this is pragmatic: Ammo isn't cheap, and every shell must be conserved. Vendettas are taken very seriously, and clan members will not have any desire for a fair fight. Anyone wandering through the area is certain to hear about a vendetta from neutrals before stumbling into it.

A truly interesting thing to do to a character is to put him or her into a romance with a member of a hostile or vendetta clan. *Romeo and Juliet* is a story which has been retold in every situation it could possibly make sense; but you should avoid the temptation to name a nemesis NPC Tybalt.



Notes For Non-Americans (continued)

Towns and cities have their own local police forces. Rank titles, going up, are Police Officer, Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, and Inspector. Higher ranks are considered part of the metropolitan government.

States are divided into counties, each of which elects a Sheriff who is authorized to appoint deputies (technically, Sheriffs deal with civil law while Police deal with criminal law, but subtle distinctions like that could be lost in a time of severe domestic disruption). Furthermore, there are State Police — a.k.a. State Troopers — who have statewide jurisdiction, especially with regard to highways.

Strictly speaking, there is no National Police: the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI, also known as "The G-Men") has authority only over crimes which cross a state border and certain federal crimes like kidnapping.

The Treasury Department has authority over counterfeiting; one of its branches, the Secret Service, has authority over threats to the lives of Federal officials. These are the men in sunglasses who can make Uzis appear out of thin air. Federal Marshals have jurisdiction over restricted territories where state law enforcement is either nonexistent (in the case of a Territory, which is a possession of the United States which is not a state), ineffective, or unreliable (such as a case where Federal Marshals forcibly removed a state governor from a school in his state).



Cliffhangers

They're hokey! They're contrived! They're lots of fun. Try timing sessions so they end at a high point of tension. Cliffhanger endings can be badly done: "suddenly, a grenade flies into a window!" is worthy of pulp fiction and Golden Age comic books but not modern roleplaying games. Try to be a little more subtle, and a little more menacing. An orphan can find a photograph of his mother on the villain's bedroom wall. Then point out that it's getting late. If the players bombard you with popcorn you did it right. Of course, the real value of a cliffhanger is to make the players eager to start the next session. A secondary value lies in giving the players a little more time to consider the situation carefully.

MONDO Mayhem

There are many volunteer militia units bouncing around the east coast. It might be possible to have a campaign where the PCs are militiamen, but militia units are best used as non-player characters. Militia teams are, after all, big. Only a small percentage could be player characters. It's hard for the referee to handle battles between five PCs, the other fifty members of their militia team, and a hundred-strong cycle gang.

Players could be mercenaries hired by militia units to deal with some strange problem beyond the competence of the locals, or the players could be a cadre unit brought in to teach the militiamen tactics, or how to use Uncle Albert's latest equipment.

Dark-Clad Avengers of the Night

Covert vigilante groups are most common to the Northeast, especially in New York and Vermont. Vigilantes can operate openly anywhere else in North America, but the law isn't quite so mellow in the northeast, where vigilantes are by definition hunted criminals. Nightsworn, for example, was formed before New York lifted its law against vehicular armament.

Players in a covert vigilante group campaign will have some unique problems. Your characters will be hunted by the police and by bandit gangs. Their radio communications may well be monitored; they will have to assume that everything they say over the radio is heard and recorded by the police. To complicate matters, the party should be reluctant to fight policemen; while an outlaw vigilante is not really "on the same side" as the cops, killing a good policeman working in the line of duty is not the best way to endear yourself to the populace or to the police. Helping a wounded cop home will not dismiss charges against your players in court, but it could mitigate them, and besides, that cop and his buddies might well be inspired to return the favor at some point. Unofficially, of course. "Sorry, sir. I tried shooting them, but I guess I must have forgotten to take my Ingram off safety. Silly me."

On the other hand, the citizenry is predisposed towards clean vigilantes. Grateful villagers will lie to the police to cover the players, shelter their wounded, and give them moral support (financial support will often be beyond their means). A drink of water and a packed lunch can be very valuable at the right moment.





A covert vigilante group will have severe logistical problems. Ammunition will be difficult to obtain in large quantities without arousing suspicions. Smuggling supplies in could be a major scenario in itself. And, of course, running a vigilante group can be a very expensive proposition. Players could recoup some of their losses by stripping destroyed enemy vehicles, but then they run the risk of being confused for the bandits they're out to destroy. If your vigilante group is starting to show a profit, people will start getting cynical about them.

The covert vigilante campaign allows for two simultaneous campaigns because of the PCs' day jobs. One of the characters could be an AADA champion, or a noted engineer, or even a police inspector.

The big drawback to a vigilante campaign is it could get static easily. It will be a lot of work to make certain it doesn't become the-cycle-gang-of-the-week. Some alternative scenarios might be breaking a member out of prison, delivering evidence of corruption to a newspaper, or a one-player scenario where one of the vigilantes is out alone and has to make his or her way back to base, through a police dragnet. A vigilante group could volunteer to run a rescue mission. A burning skyscraper when the players have the only copter able to make a rescue is a decent test of paladin-hood. In the event of massive corruption in the police department, the vigilantes might find themselves the only group an informant trusts (and what if the informant is lying?).

On The Duel Circuit

On page 77 of *GURPS Autoduel*, a minor mistake was made: Connecticut, Delaware, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont were left out of the Atlantic Armor Circuit. This may make the Atlantic Circuit seem rather large, but please remember that most of these states are quite small compared with those in the rest of the nation, and that some haven't had a decent contender for years now. Dueltrack events tend to be favored in the Atlantic Armor circuit; a popular house rule forbids cars to fire weapons unless they are traveling at 60 mph or more. Dueltracks place a greater emphasis on driving ability over sharpshooting, and dueltrack events tend to last somewhat longer than arena events, which makes them more attractive to TV stations.

The East Coast is also home to the quirky Baltimore Joustduel Arena, detailed in the mini-scenarios (see p. 21).

Technical Background

Reliability and durability are the two most important design requirements in the *Autoduel* universe. As a result, the weapons produced are quite different from their counterparts of fifty years ago. Almost all hand weapons of the 21st century exclusively use caseless ammunition, which is designed to be fired by either mechanical percussion or electrically. Caseless rounds are bullets sitting on top of a compressed solid explosive such as gunpowder or guncotton combined with a binding agent to make it strong. A gun designed to use caseless ammo does not need a cartridge ejector system, which makes the weapon simpler mechanically, and less likely to get dirty (dirt cannot enter the breech while the case is ejected).

Guns designed to fire standard bullets with cases can also use this ammunition, provided the caliber is correct (in other words, a 9mm caseless round is the same size as a 9mm cased round).

With the exception of revolvers, guns designed to fire caseless ammunition cannot fire conventional rounds. The difference lies in the fact a caseless gun does not need to eject a cartridge, and revolvers never do that anyway.

Some 21st-century guns, particularly sniper rifles, use electrical ignition systems which require a small 9v battery. Automatic pistols, rifles, and SMGs designed for caseless ammo do not have to make provisions for ejecting spent shells, which greatly increases the potential rate of fire, simplifies the firing mechanism, and renders it less prone to jams caused by dirt entering the mechanism. Consequently, 21st Century weapons are as maintenance-free as possible.

For example, the latest Uzi and Ingram SMGs fire .357 magnum rounds (the Uzi does slightly more damage because of its longer barrel) at an astonishing cyclic rate of 2400 rounds per minute. This enables them to fire a burst of three rounds before the recoil of the first round can ruin aim; this is why there is no "snap shot" disadvantage to firing these weapons on automatic.

Making A Living

CONDOR

Headquartered in Manhattan is a special division of Gold Cross: CONDOR. Originally just a plainclothes pickup team ("nondescript," in British parlance), Covert/Nondescript Operations and Recovery evolved into an elite undercover unit. For outrageous prices, they recover "irrecoverable" bodies, operate in regions where cloning is illegal or socially unacceptable, and deal with clients who (for political or personal reasons) cannot admit they have a clone. CONDOR also "discourage" rival operations, protect top corporate executives, and "watch the watchmen," infiltrating and double-checking Gold Cross' regular security forces.

A CONDOR operative could expect to earn well over \$1,000 per month, plus occasional hazard bonuses. No single skill is required; choose from those appropriated to a high-tech secret agent, including Driving, Piloting, Guns, Gunner, Stealth, Fast-Talk, Computer Operations, Electronics, First Aid, and Survival (Urban Waste). Hazard modifier is -3. Critical failure results: 4d, LJ/8d, LJ.

CONDOR teams have access to state-of-the-art equipment, naturally avoid combat whenever possible, and operate all over the continent, making for an interesting and varied, albeit morbid, campaign.

Actually, the very grimness of a CONDOR campaign can make it tempting to lighten it up. Characters could smuggle a frozen severed head in a shipment of basketballs, mail a 175-pound man in 2,800 first-class envelopes, transmit an MMSD file by modem, or accidentally merge the brain patterns of an experimental horse and a respected church leader, resulting in a minister obsessed with jogging and oats (a ten-point character disadvantage, by the way). A radio transmission of the tune to "I Ain't Got Nobody" is a good code for a retrieval mission failure. Can you imagine what the Marx Brothers might have done with this? The referee should resist every temptation to resist this temptation. Give the players experience points for making you laugh hysterically, a la *Toon*. The campaign may not make much sense, but if you only want drama, stop wasting your time with RPGs and read something written by a depressed, long-winded Russian.



Mutations

Except in bad science fiction, "random mutation" is a term synonymous with "birth defect." It takes thousands or millions of years of random mutations to produce a radically new species. After all, no new animal species have been reported in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, although there have been many heartbreaking reports of birth defects.

The mutations in nuclear zones should show up first in species with fast generational cycles — there's only been one generation of humans born in Poughkeepsie after the bomb hit but there have been hundreds of generations of flies.

So while it might be tempting to have three-legged barbarians roaming the radioactive ruins of Poughkeepsie, you're much more likely to see a new species of fly or two-tailed rats. Giant badgers or people able to throw lightning bolts can be amusing, but it can also ruin your players' ability to believe in what's going on.



Actually, a CONDOR campaign could also work if played straight. The concept works for both combat scenarios and stealth and intrigue adventures. The campaign is flexible, since Gold Cross will likely select specialists to go on certain missions even though they try to keep teams together. This gives the referee the ability to adjust scenarios for unstable groups of PCs (the so-called "Mission: Impossible" option). The players are on an expense account, so they can blow things up a lot without worrying too much about every shell expended. But Gold Cross is a profit enterprise, so the players have to exercise some restraint, too.

In fact, the key to most East Coast adventures is restraint. PCs just won't get away with blowing up everything in sight. Note that this must work both ways once in a while; sometimes, the forces of Law will rescue them, unless they are obviously criminals.

ESCAPE FROM POUGHKEEPSIE

Overview

In this adventure, the players are hired by NorAm Chemicals to go to the nuked-out remains of Poughkeepsie, New York, and bring back a hologram disk on which is encoded an algorithm for solving the Traveling Salesman Problem, which is a family of complex mathematical problems with wide applications.

The hook in this scenario is the money offered by NorAm. Most characters will be quite happy to accept this sort of offer. Even highly moral vigilante groups might accept this sort of ticket; after all, NorAm doesn't want people wasted. They just want a valuable object recovered from hazardous territory. It probably won't even be necessary to steal it.

On the other hand, a game master might want to try something a little more subtle — perhaps NorAm will supply the players with upgraded fuel cell components, or access to NorAm's unique experimental material: Interferon for a sick Aunt May, a super fertilizer for a town with failing crops, that sort of thing. Please try to avoid super-weapons or super-armor, as NorAm's equipment is just slightly more advanced than the average.

Character Types

Somewhat experienced combat types with a background in subtlety and sneaking around. A highly-charismatic leader, played by someone who can negotiate, would be valuable. Ideally, the group should have one computer nerd (who will know about the hologram paradigm and the Traveling Salesman problem), someone with a smattering of knowledge about working underground, and a high-DX martial artist killing machine/acrobat (there's one in every group). Heavy firepower types will also be effective, but the Big Shootout should be only a last resort.

Plot Overview

It has long been the practice of the United States Government to make some extra money by giving the highest bidder one year's exclusive knowledge of recently-declassified technical documents. Interested parties are historical societies, aerospace companies, and such. NorAm Chemicals was the highest bidder on a document entitled *The Traveling Salesman*. This document revealed that the experimental labs of IBM in Poughkeepsie had developed an algorithm of unprecedented efficiency to solve this problem (see sidebar, p. 00). The algorithm is not described, although NorAm knows it would have been stored in a strong vault on a hologram computer disk. The classified document is dated February 8, 2012: two months before Poughkeepsie was hit by a 20-KT Soviet nuclear warhead.

The underground vault, NorAm thinks, should have survived the off-target air-burst. The hologram disk, being a non-magnetic medium, would certainly have survived the electromagnetic pulse and flare of intense heat from a small fusion warhead. The disk is probably still there.

When the players first enter Poughkeepsie, they see a few weird things, including an ambush by the Townies, residents of Poughkeepsie. This is primarily to loosen up the party and give them something to shoot at early.

When the players arrive in the lab, they meet a local, who tells them the disk is no longer there — it was given to a man who lives in the library. When they get to the library, they are told the disk was stolen by the barbarians living at the base of the Mid-Hudson Bridge, where it is an emblem of the chieftainship. This





in turn leads to a climactic hand-to-hand battle on the suspension cables of the Mid-Hudson Bridge to earn the right to claim the disk and return.

Recruiting

The precise way the players are hired for this job is up to the referee, who should tailor it to suit the needs of the campaign. It is possible that the NorAm contact has heard about the players through a friend's friend who once hired them. Word of mouth is good advertising for mercenaries.

Janice Fielder is in charge of NorAm's operations in New York. She is calm, intelligent, and reasonable. She will be slightly impressed by characters who have heard of the Traveling Salesman problem (Mathematics or Computer Programming -2 roll). She cannot be cajoled into paying more than \$50,000 for the entire successful operation, although she will grudgingly agree to give 10% for a good attempt. She will willingly supply players with equipment, with the understanding that it must be returned or paid for. She will certainly recommend (or insist) players wear NBC/L Armor and will supply it.

The Hologram Paradigm

Any player character with computer skills may make a roll to understand this concept. Characters may also roll vs. Philosophy skill; the concept existed long before it had a technological analogy, and because players rarely let their characters develop skills in areas which don't involve blowing things up. Characters should find an education in the liberal arts useful once in a while.

If you take a photograph and cut it in two, you will have two half-photographs. If you take a hologram and cut it in two, you will have two slightly fuzzier, but complete, holograms. Each section of a hologram contains all the information needed to duplicate the entire hologram. What this means in game terms is that the players just need to bring back a section of the holodisk. Any piece large enough to see is large enough to be readable.

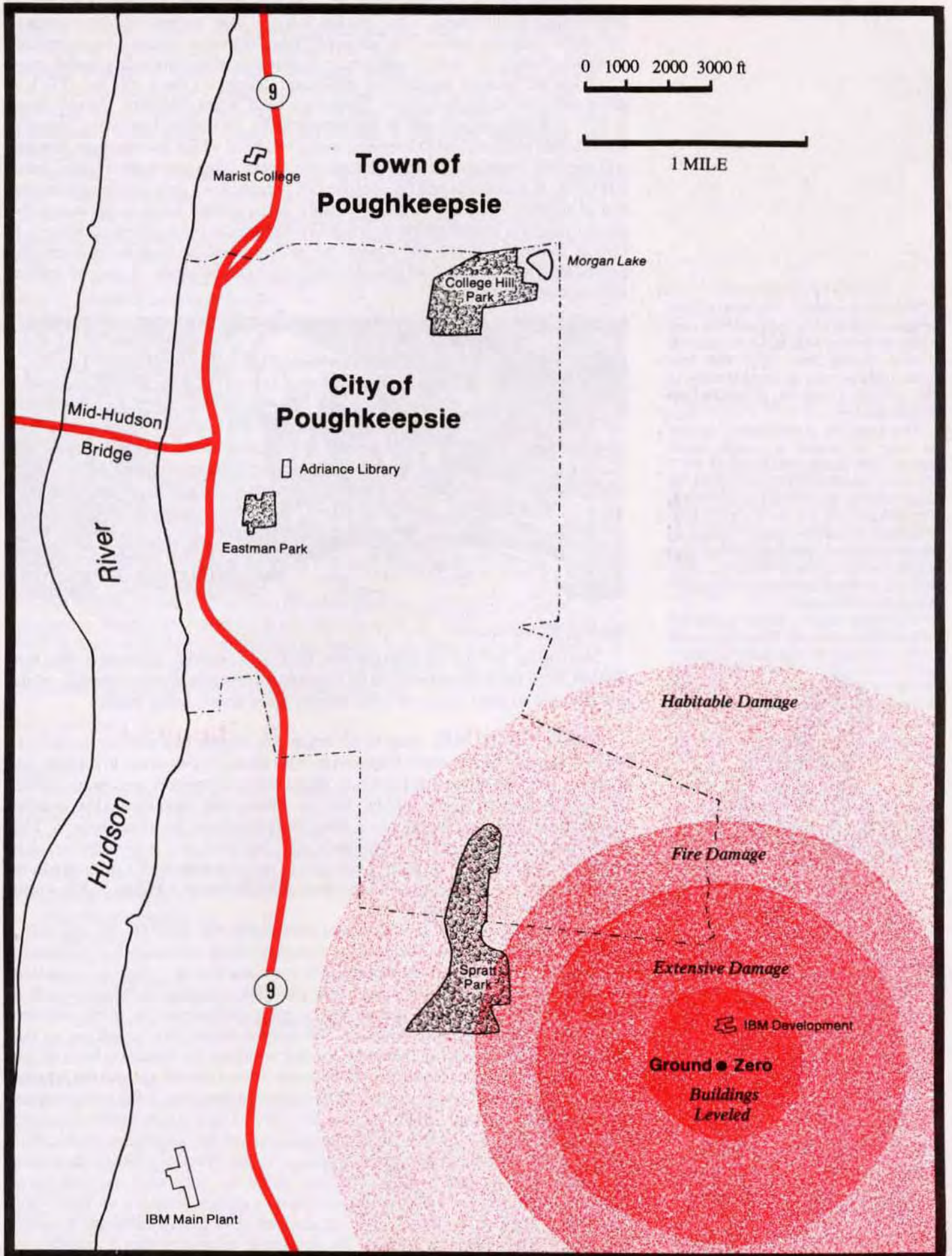
The people at NorAm will assume this is common knowledge. ("So what if it's broken? Go back and bring a piece back, you noodge!")

Poughkeepsie: The Players' Handout

Poughkeepsie (po KIP see) is nestled on the east bank of the lovely Hudson River, some seventy-five miles north of New York City. Poughkeepsie was the home of Vassar College and *ElfQuest*. The presence of high-technology research installations inspired the Soviets to nuke the place in April of 2012, using a trawler-launched stealth-configured cruise missile armed with a 20-KT warhead. The labs were the target, and they were not in the densely-populated section of town; consequently, casualties ran only into the thousands. The computer research laboratories were flattened and the rest of the city was severely damaged.

Now, 30 years later, Poughkeepsie is home to a few hundred "Townies." They are organized enough to pose a serious threat to cycle gangs attempting to use Poughkeepsie as an advance base. Townies cluster about the area of the Mid-Hudson Bridge, presumably living off the fish in the Hudson river. Large nets have been seen in the area of the Mid-Hudson Bridge, a local suspension bridge landmark of art deco design. Some cannibalism, possibly of a ritual nature, has been observed from reconnaissance aircraft. Townies avoid helicopters, fleeing them whenever they are spotted, which makes information about them almost impossible to confirm.

Vehicle use in Poughkeepsie is strictly limited. Most of the streets are blocked by rubble. The astonishing thing is that most of these building collapses cannot be ascribed to the nuclear device, because the buildings were too far from the blast, and have fallen in the wrong directions. This implies that many of the buildings were intentionally collapsed in such a way as to make it nearly impossible to drive a vehicle through Poughkeepsie.



The area within a mile or so of the IBM labs (see map, p. 55) is classified as a hazardous environment, which means that one hour's unprotected exposure to the more intensely radioactive areas exceeds Federal guidelines on acceptable radiation dosage. Protective equipment is essential to operate safely in this area.

After an hour of unprotected exposure, characters must roll vs. HT-1 to avoid radiation sickness and roll again each hour. After 10 hours, the roll drops to HT-2. Radiation sickness is characterized by weakness, headaches, nausea, and internal bleeding; all DX-related skills will be at -2 for the duration. NorAm will provide treatment for any affected characters; after one week of care, make a HT roll. A successful roll reduces the DX penalty to -1 (and another successful roll in another week will cure the patient), and a critical success roll means the patient recovers immediately. A failed HT roll means the sickness continues. A critical failure on a HT roll means the patient must be treated for 3 months before another HT roll (and possible recovery) can be made. A second critical failure kills the patient.

Traveling Salesman

Here's the problem. You have a finite number of points on a map, and you want to find the shortest route which connects all of them. No big deal, right? With four points, there are only 24 possible routes to take, after all. Check 'em all and find the shortest one.

That's true, but as the number of points get larger, the number of possible routes becomes quite literally astronomical. It's a factorial progression. If you have only seven points, then the number of possible routes is 7! or 5,040 (7 x 6 x 5 x 4 x 3 x 2 x 1).

In fact, the numbers get so big that no computer can deal with this problem adequately. So, an algorithm which can solve this problem would represent quite a breakthrough in mathematics.

This disk is valuable, but not to players. It's an example of a quest for an item which the PCs will have no real desire to steal.



Special Equipment

NorAm is willing to provide the PCs with special equipment for this mission, with the understanding it be returned afterwards. Please note that while it is possible to steal a suit of NBC armor, there aren't many buyers.

Shields. The *GURPS* rules cover lexan riot shields (see sidebar, p. B107). Players may choose to outfit themselves with these if they think it's worth the bother of carrying them around. Since Shield skill is extremely uncommon in the *GURPS Autoduel* world (except for the Manhattan Mounties), the referee should make sure the players pay a price in aggravation for using them. ("The shield bangs against your shin with each step, but your arm is too tired to lift it higher.") Shields could be a big help against the barbarians. A Lexan Medium Shield weighs 7.5 pounds and will increase your character's PD by 3. It's worth \$120 if you decide to keep it.

Nuclear/Biological/Chemical Light Armor Mk VII. \$15,000, 40 lbs. NBC armor provides protection identical to Improved Body Armor, but incorporates some special features. An aluminum layer provides almost complete protection against microwaves and alpha and beta particles. Gamma radiation is still a hazard. An internal oxygen supply can support the wearer for thirty minutes (additional tanks weigh five pounds). The oxygen supply can be left on, or the wearer may select an option whereby the suit monitors the radiation level of the outside air, and switches automatically between filtered outside air and the internal supply when the level gets too high. In this mode, a small red LED in the helmet shows when the internal supply has been activated. There is a powerful flashlight built into each wrist, the helmet's forehead, and the right shoulder of the suit. The lenses of the helmet go instantly opaque in the event of a bright flash like that caused by a nuclear fireball. The band about the right wrist incorporates a .22 pistol and six rounds of ammunition (treat as a Light Pistol or an HK17-B). A grappling hook on the left shoulder is attached to 45 feet of cable and a winch able to lift 300 pounds of weight. An automatic release makes it possible to



attach the hook, drop 45 feet, and release the hook from the bottom. A helmet radio is built-in, and the IR goggles (which enable you to see darkness as a green-tinted universe) may be dropped over the eyes. The NBC/L provides adequate protection against most hazardous biological or chemical situations, and should be more than enough to make working in the "hot zone" safe. The suits are a day-glo International Orange, each clearly marked with a number, which will make it impossible for players to get confused about who is in which suit.

Atchisson Type 4 Automatic Shotgun. This weapon is often called "the lead hose," and is essentially a man-portable Flechette Gun. The damage type is Crushing, and it does 3 dice damage. Point Blank range is 3, Increment is 2, ½ damage is at 10, and maximum range is 20. (Remember, these distances are in hexes; if *Car Wars* scale is used for combat, divide the numbers by five for conversion to inches.) It costs \$500, weighs 12 pounds, has an ST rating of 12 and has a 21-round drum magazine.

Car Wars players should treat the Atchisson as a normal shotgun which does one point to vehicles.

If the players think to ask for them, NorAm will supply them with anything they want (within reason). Knives, hatchets, blankets, glass beads, chocolate, cigarette lighters, fishline, whiskey and the like are easily available. The referee should remember, however, that many things have been scavenged from the ruins of the town — the only things the players could probably trade with any success are consumables, such as cigarettes, liquor, or chocolate.

Insertion

NorAm will drive the party right to the southern outskirts of Poughkeepsie in an unmarked tractor trailer rig. They'll stop about a mile from the labs, and wish the group good luck.

The trailer carries a 15-space (75 cubic feet) decontamination center. When the players return, they will have the outside of their NBC armor washed for about an hour before they're allowed to remove it or enter the rest of the truck. The trailer also has personnel quarters — not luxurious, but comfortable. One mile's walk should take about twenty minutes.

Encounters

Graffiti

Throughout the ruins of Poughkeepsie, there are graffiti on the walls, and general vandalism everywhere. The closer the players get to ground zero, the less of this there will be, for two reasons. One, there are fewer buildings left to write on; two, the townies stay away from this part of town as much as possible.

Most of the graffiti is meaningless, but some of it provides useful information. A few examples:

"The Knife Rules"

"Cracker Jam"

"Frodo Lives"

"Eastman Alliance"

"Strangelove Was Here"

. . . and others. The GM is encouraged to come up with more, ranging from nonsense to valid clues.

Ambush

Before the PCs get too close to ground zero, a group of townies will ambush the players. (The townies are not organized enough to have patrols — this is just a group out for a morning scavenge that happens to stumble across the party.)

Streets in this section of town are 8 hexes wide, with 2-hex wide sidewalks on each side. Beyond that are various half-standing buildings, burnt-out storefronts, and yards full of rubble. Pick a suitable ambush site for the attack — one with plenty of close-in cover. The townies will not charge across a 50-yard vacant lot at the players.

After The Bomb Falls, Mother, I'll Think Of You

A twenty-kiloton air detonation could not annihilate Poughkeepsie, any more than Hiroshima or Nagasaki were destroyed by their bombs. Poughkeepsie was a small city of 30,000 people or so, most of whom lived a good distance from the epicenter of the blast. Two miles from the blast, there was severe fire damage but most buildings remained standing. Extremely solid buildings with 10" walls survived as close as 1.2 miles from the blast, although they were severely damaged. Anything closer than .8 miles was flattened — no buildings remained, but there was a lot of blown concrete. Visible signs of the blast such as charred buildings, broken windows, and so on, extend eight miles from ground zero, although there were probably few casualties beyond two miles.

The lab building itself is technically within the total destruct radius of the bomb. However, the building was of extremely heavy construction and the basement was designed with nuclear war in mind.



Important NPCs

Cracker. 142 point character. ST 20, DX 12, IQ 5, HT 15. Skill of Brawling at 13. Toughness 2. Barbarian, Severe fear of fire, Berserks, Illiterate, Poor, and Mute. Wears a Greathelm and Gauntlets, which give him a +2 to punching damage (actual damage: 2+1). 6'8", 280 lbs.

Car Wars: 5 DP: he's big and lightly armored. Does 1-4 damage in HTH.

Cracker is probably significantly less intelligent than some great apes. The Knife goads him into combat by having warriors poke torches at him. In the tribe, he is treated more like a trained attack dog than a human being. He is completely incapable of communicating on any level. His thoughts never go above the level of "Cracker hungry," or "Cracker kill now." He has never been trained in the use of weapons because he is incapable of figuring out how to use things like "clubs" and other examples of higher technology. It would all be very sad if it weren't for the fact he's going to try to wring a player's neck later on.

Generic Townie Warrior. 25-point character. ST, DX, IQ, HT of 11. Skills: Bow-15, Survival/Urban-11, Knife-13, Fast Draw/Arrow-12. Disadvantages: Barbarian, Scared of "The Knife," Poor, Illiterate, and assorted quirks. Owns a short bow, 10 arrows, a quiver, a large knife, and various ragged clothes and meaningless personal effects.

Car Wars: 3 DP, Bow and Arrow at +2.

Townie Warriors are primarily concerned with not annoying "The Knife," food, and breeding rights — in that order. They'll fight and die for "The Knife" because they know what Cracker will do to them if they don't.

(continued)

Escape From Poughkeepsie

The townies are of the generic variety (see sidebar, this page), and there are 8 of them. Their tactics are to fire their bows from cover, then retreat after a couple of volleys to set up in another location. If they can sneak up on a victim, they will engage him in close combat and try to go for a quick kill with a knife to the throat. They will *not* mount a direct charge unless the prey is both outnumbered and unarmed. They will certainly not charge anyone wearing NBC armor, mainly because they don't have the foggiest idea what it is.

Should half the townies be killed or seriously wounded (more than two points damage), they will flee. Tracking them would be possible, but difficult (-4 to Tracking skill); simply chasing them will not work — they are faster and know the territory much better.

Should the townies kill or disable any party members, the players will have to decide what to do. If they decide to leave the unconscious or dead comrade and move on, the body will be gone within 20 seconds after the PCs lose sight of it. If the players meet the townies again, they may get an opportunity to rescue or bargain for their friend and his equipment. Otherwise, the abandoned character will be ritually slain (if he is not dead already), cooked, and eaten.

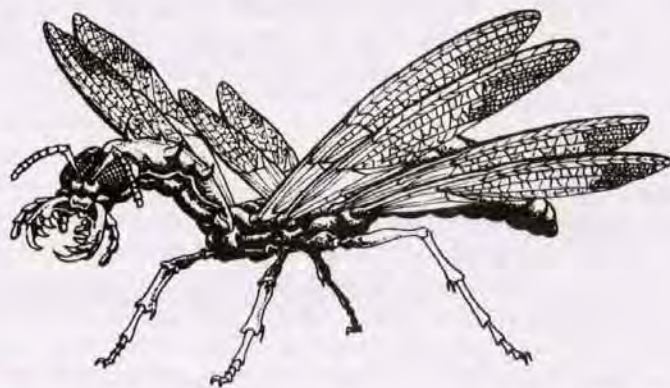
Swarm

Along the way, the group will see smoke coming from an old fire hydrant about fifty feet off. PCs looking through binoculars (or approaching to investigate) will see that the "smoke" is actually a dense cloud of flying insects. Nearer the hydrant, they will hear a dull, ominous, high-pitched buzzing which does not sound like bees or wasps. If the party spends five minutes looking, one of them will catch a three-inch long segmented flying insect with four sets of wings. It has jaws a half inch long and will start chewing (uselessly) on the player's NBC suit.

Anyone will realize that this is not an ordinary creature. Anyone making an Entomology or Zoology roll will notice that it doesn't even match the classical definition of insect: It has five body segments, eight wings, and four legs. If the little beastie is brought back to civilization (exactly how is up to the players' ingenuity), the PCs will get a \$5,000 award and some favorable publicity in the scientific community.

Treat a swarm of these according to the rules on p. B138. The Swarm has a Move of 5, takes 20 hits, and does three hits. Bugs cannot penetrate NBC armor. The Atchisson shotgun will do 3 dice of damage per shot to a swarm.

(**Car Wars** players: The swarm cannot penetrate NBC armor, but will do 1 point of damage each turn automatically to unarmored people. The swarm will disperse if 20 points of damage are done to it — flame weapons do double damage.)



Ground Zero

The lab building was over a thousand feet long. The bomb went off over the roof. The top of the building was smashed down, and the walls pushed outwards. Everything in this region is burnt black on the side facing the lab building. The rain gutters on buildings not knocked down are segmented and folded away from the blast. Once in a while, the group will see grim silhouettes burnt on the walls, showing dogs, people, mailboxes, and such.

The Building

The PCs have to find a way to get into the basement. There are five entrances which NorAm feels might still be intact. A map of the basement of the building is provided on p. 60. *Do not* show this map to the players.

Most of the building is completely impassable rubble. Three small sections survived, and very narrow, rough passages were cut through to connect them by the Ratman (see below) and the townies. There is no electrical power, and no lights. The entrances and rooms are all numbered (when more than one room has the same number, it means that all such rooms are essentially the same).

Entrance #1. The doors here open easily, but there is nothing but solid wreckage on the other side. Most of it is identifiable as computer equipment, but it is now worthless — the electromagnetic pulse of the Soviet warhead wiped out every chip and circuit board.

Entrance #2. The doors here are blocked with broken concrete. It will take 3 man-hours of work to clear, and the radioactive concrete dust that is raised will cause the NBC suits to switch to internal oxygen. Unfortunately, there is just more wreckage on the other side of the doors.

Entrance #3. The doors here are blocked by a fallen pillar. The combined pull of three winches on the NBC suits will roll it out of the way sufficiently to open. Inside is a dirty, but clear, hallway.

Entrance #4. These doors are fused shut. A cutting torch could get through in six hours; but then all they'd find on the other side is impassable junk.

Entrance #5. The doors here are open, and a blanket hangs in the opening, flapping in the wind.



Room #1. These used to be technicians' and middle-management types' offices, and they are all accessible by unblocked doors. Some offices are completely intact, others are partially buried by rubble. There is nothing left of value in any of these rooms, but they serve as sturdy (if slightly radioactive) shelter. When a storm comes through the area, many townies come here for protection.

Room #2. These rooms are also offices, but the entrances to them have been destroyed, effectively cutting them off. If the players break through the walls (DR 3, HT 20), they will discover an undisturbed time capsule dating back to the day of the blast: Cups of coffee, now cold and mold-covered, on the desks; yellowed calendars turned to April 2012 hanging on the wall; and the occasional skeleton huddled in the corner. There may be a few personal effects of value (watches, jewelry, petty cash), but little else of more than morbid interest.

Room #3. These two rooms are connected by an unblocked door, but the players must break through a wall (as above) to get to either one. This was the library/file room/archives, and there are a number of documents in here that may be of interest to NorAm or another technical company. Unfortunately, all the magnetic tape and computer records are lost. The only things that can be salvaged are paper records, and they are of varying quality and completeness. Anyone with Computer Operation or Computer Programming skill may attempt a skill roll to identify useful files.

If all rolls fail, nothing of value is found. If the skill roll is made, the material found is worth \$1,000 for every point by which the roll is made. For example, if someone had a skill of 13 and rolled an 8, he would find \$5,000 worth of records. If a critical success is rolled, roll one die and multiply it by \$10,000 to determine the reward.

Fiendish referees should require the crew to cart around boxes of files for the remainder of the adventure, exposing them to various perils, without knowing their value, if any. Only upon returning to NorAm do they make the rolls listed above, and find out if they have salvaged anything of value.



Important NPCs (continued)

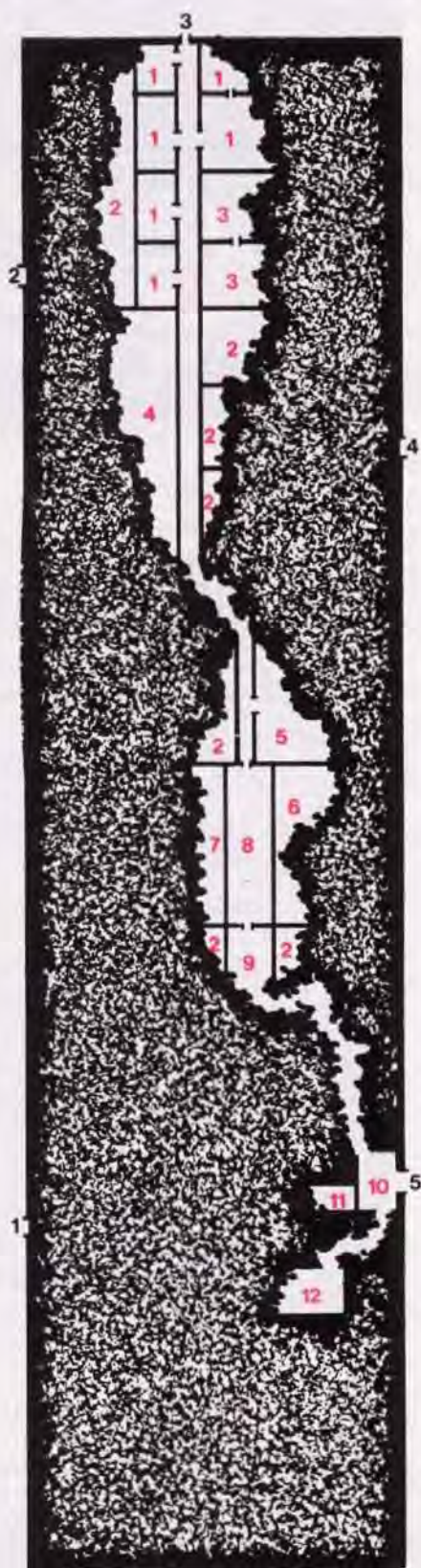
Glenn "The Knife" Knickerbocker. 114-point character. ST 12, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 11. Skills: Bow-16, Survival/Urban-12, Knife-14, Fast Draw/Arrow-13, Shield-15, Carpentry-16, Leatherwork-16, Swimming-13, Leadership-15. Advantages: Toughness 1, Combat Reflexes. Disadvantages: Barbarian, Lecherous, Illiterate, Bully. 5" 11", 160 lbs. Owns ornamental leather armor (PD 2, DR 2), Regular Bow, 20 arrows, 2 quivers, large knife, various tribal articles of office, medium shield.

Car Wars: 4 DP (armor). He has a Bow he uses at +3.

"The Knife" is a wild man, so warriors flock to him. He is also smarter than most people realize. He has an intuitive grasp of elementary tactics. He was smart enough to keep the Steal Machine out of his tribe's area, launching a series of raids which killed a Machinist or two without losing anybody. He is an artist when it comes to leatherworking — the ornaments he wears he made himself, and are probably worth a few thousand dollars. When the players arrive, he knows he can't afford to be frightened by them, but he doesn't want to risk having his tribe wiped out, either.

(continued)

IBM Development Lab



Room #4. It is necessary to break through a wall to reach this lab. Much of the equipment in here is intact, but any of it that depends on microchips to operate (that is, most of it) will not work. Most players should realize this, but if they don't, allow a Computer Operations, Common Sense, Electronics, or Intuition roll to think of it.

There is one item of considerable value in a drawer — nearly a pound of gold, spun into spools of wire for electrical research, and worth \$5,000. For every ten minutes of searching, each searcher gets to roll 3 dice; on a 6 or less, the gold is found.

Room #5. This room is accessible from the hall, and therefore has been stripped of anything of value. The Ratman likes to keep this room free from intruders, however, and has trapped the door. The trap is very simple, and can be detected with an IQ roll. If the trap is not detected and the door is opened, a small vial of nitroglycerine falls to the floor in the doorway. The explosion does 5 dice of damage in the hex of the doorway, 3 dice in the surrounding 5 hexes, and 1 die of damage in the next 5 hexes.

If the trap is detected, it is easily defused. Have the character defusing it make a Traps +5 skill roll. If the roll fails, the trap goes off. The party may keep the vial, for creative use later — but make sure the GM keeps track of who is carrying it. If the character with the vial falls down, or takes 3 or more points of damage, roll one die. On a 1 or 2, the vial goes off. The GM may allow DX rolls by a character who thinks of it to cushion a fall so that the vial won't go off.

Room #6. Again, the only way into here is through the wall. This was a senior administrator's office, and as such, is very richly appointed. Some of the brass fixtures, sterling silver pens, etc. are of some value — maybe \$750 total.

Room #7. The only way in is through the wall. This used to be a conference room, and it was in use when the bomb hit. There are a dozen bodies either in the room or half-buried in the rubble, and probably more buried underneath tons of concrete and steel. The bodies are mummified (Consult *GURPS Horror* if you want to give your players a real scare, but otherwise these are just dead bodies.) but could yield personal effects worth \$2,000.

Room #8. A decontamination corridor. The doors at both ends have airtight seals and still work, though the positive-air-flow fans and UV lights no longer work. PCs will notice that the construction is heavier than normal, and that there are a number of translucent panels and odd holes in the walls and such that they can't identify. Good for heightening paranoia.

Room #9. This was a security station, but anything of use or value was taken long ago.

Room #10. This room is lit with a flickering, yellow light. As the players approach, they will see it comes from a candle stuck into a human skull. As the players get closer, they will see more skulls — a total of ten. Anyone who checks will find that the skulls have fillings in their teeth, indicating that they were probably killed by the blast.

There are some empty bookcases in this room, and an empty desk. The first PC in the room will see some small, scurrying animals leave the room, heading down the passageway for Room #12. If the PC makes a Vision roll, he will notice that the rats had two pink tails.

Room #11. This is a strongly built vault, lined with racks and shelves for various tapes, disks, and other storage devices. There is a metal grid embedded in the walls, ceiling, floor, and door — it is a Faraday cage, designed to nullify the effects of an electromagnetic pulse. (Give the players a Physics, Electronics, or Computer Operations skill roll to know this.)

The vault's door is open. It has four skulls in it, casting their cheerful light. The racks are labeled with many things, indicating everything from expense ledgers to game programs. After some searching, the players will find the slot labeled for the Traveling Salesman disk. There are a number of videotape, computer tape and holodisk cases hanging on the racks, but they are all empty. The Traveling Salesman disk is also gone.

Room #12. This is the Ratman's lair. It is smelly, unsanitary, and thoroughly unwholesome. It does contain everything in the world the Ratman holds dear,

however, which includes some books borrowed from the library, and some junk jewelry, bits of glass and metal, and other hunks of interesting-looking trash.

Meeting the Ratman

As the players are investigating the vault (Room #11), they will notice that there is a loud squeaking, gradually growing louder. Three swarms of rats enter Room #10, and block the three exits. Each rat has two tails.

Even more striking, the players will hear a human voice (do this as a Peter Lorre impression if you can manage it). "Don't hurt them, my friends. They can't hurt me."

When he enters the room, the players will see why he was so confident. He is holding a deadman switch attached to a battery on his belt and lots of little glass tubes in his vest. An explosives belt, probably loaded with nitroglycerine (make a Demolitions roll at +2 to guess about the nitro: anyone will realize he's mined).

He is the Ratman and he's not nearly as ominous as he initially looks. (Complete stats are in sidebar, this page.) He is naturally suspicious — bordering on



Important NPCs (continued)

Ratman. 6-point character. ST 9, DX 9, IQ 11, HT 12. Skills: Animal Handling-19, Flails (nunchuck)-13. Advantages: Animal Empathy and Night Vision. Disadvantages: Barbarian, Albinism, Ugly (-2), Struggling, and the two quirks I Love my Rats and Everybody Hates Me Except Specks. 5' 6", 120 lbs. Owns Bomb vest, nunchuks, and a tremendous pile of junk.

Car Wars: 3 DP. Does 1-3 damage in HTH with nunchuks.

The Ratman is an outcast even among barbarians. All he really loves are animals, who love him back. He can hold out his hand in a park and a pigeon will land on it. He has trained the rats in the lab, and has effective command over ten swarms. Specks has treated him kindly in the past. They often discuss fiction, because the Ratman is one of the few townies Specks trusts enough to lend library books. The Ratman is very lonely and will respond very positively to any kind words, if you can get him to listen.

(continued)



Important NPCs (continued)

Specks. 80-point character. ST 9, DX 12, IQ 15, HT 10. Skills: Demolitions-19, Bow-13, Fishing-15, Research-14, and History-14. Specks has 15 points of Luck. Disadvantages: Barbarian, Nearsighted, and two Quirks: Paranoid about Glasses, and Books are Holy. 5' 8", 140 lbs. Owns eyeglasses (DR 0, HT 1), Short bow, 20 arrows, and a lot of books.

Car Wars: 3 DP, can fire a Bow and Arrow at +1.

Specks is an explosives expert, and highly educated. He has memorized everything about history which could reasonably be in the library (newspaper files go up to 2012).

The most striking thing about Specks' physical appearance is that he wears glasses, which is quite unusual for a barbarian. Specks is highly regarded among the townies as a wise and powerful man. He is the one who figured out how to demolish buildings to set up antivehicular barricades all through the city. Specks has a complete monopoly on explosives in Poughkeepsie.

The man is brilliant, and has a quiet cold-blooded nerve about him, which would earn him respect even if he weren't a bomb builder.

There are no bombs in the library, because Specks refuses to risk the destruction of his books.

paranoid — but he is also very lonely, and if the party is at all nice to him, he will help them all he can. Here's what the group will learn from him, if they treat him nicely and ask the right questions:

He has lived with his friends for a long time. (He doesn't look too good; the continuing exposure to radiation will kill him very soon, and it's too late to save him.) Before that, he lived with Specks in the library.

He gave the Traveling Salesman holodisk to Specks.

Specks still lives in the library, where he taught the Ratman to read. He really likes Specks, and named his favorite rat after him. Specks gave him the nitro belt. The library is the Adriance Memorial — the players will have no trouble finding it on the map.

Players can get on his good side by being cordial, friendly, complimenting his rats, and giving him a "pretty" (something shiny and gaudy), or chocolate. He's basically lonely for human companionship and wants to make friends.

If the players scare him badly enough, he will not hesitate to release the button. The blast in such a confined place will do 40 dice of damage to anyone in rooms #10 or #11, (20 dice in the passageways, 10 dice outside Entrance #5) and collapse the roof on them — high stakes for rudeness indeed. It will be difficult to find the disk without the Ratman's help. Let them try to describe what happened to Fielder: "We went in, couldn't find the disk. Then this guy came in with rats and we shot him." No money. (In case of disaster, though, see sidebar on p. 64.)

The Library

The front door to the library opens onto the main foyer. There are other doors in, all unlocked. If the players use any of the others, let them pick their way through the library, finding nothing of interest, until they find the main foyer. There, they will see Specks (for stats, see sidebar, this page) sitting at the head librarian's desk, cooking fish over a merrily-burning copy of *Great Expectations*. He's a book lover, but he's not a masochist.

If the players enter loudly (guns blazing with warning shots, shouting, etc.) Specks will look up at them, visibly angry, and hold one finger to his lips. He will then return to the fish.

Probably the best way for players to deal with Specks is to tell him that they want to borrow a hologram disk on the Traveling Salesman Problem. He'll be only too happy to tell them what happened. It was broken in two when he dropped it, and he gave the pieces to Glenn "The Knife" Knickerbocker, the city's chief. He's only too willing to help the players in any way he can. After all, he is the last librarian in Poughkeepsie. He'll be very grateful for any books the players give him or promise to give him. Give an extra character point to players who keep their promises.

Specks will give them some vital information, if they stay on his good side:

Probably their only chance to talk with The Knife is to keep yelling that "Specks sent me." Otherwise, the Townies will avoid them like the plague (or worse yet, ambush them).

The Knife has about 50 warriors, so an all-out attack is unwise. The Eastman Alliance (the name of the tribe) does have a code for settling disputes by duel — it might be easier to get the holodisk by challenging The Knife to single combat.

The Knife prizes the holodisk fragments, because they reflect light into rainbow patterns.

The Knife is not a liar, but he is no gentleman either. The players had better be prepared to try something else if he tries to renege on any deals.

The Knife can be found at the Mid Hudson Bridge or Eastman Park.

Specks will not provide any explosives to the party under any circumstances (he keeps what little he has left in a well-hidden location). Specks is a thinker, not a fighter, though his Demolitions expertise shows that he is not against violence as a tool. He will not threaten the players in any way, no matter how badly he is treated, but will instead try to escape. If the players kill Specks,



they'd better make sure the townies and the Ratman don't find out — otherwise, they're dead meat.

Mid-Hudson Bridge

Unless the group enters out in the open, walking along the road, all they will see are Townies running away like a frightened deer. If they follow Specks' advice, they will quickly be stopped by a warrior who will ask them what they want. If they ask to see The Knife, the warrior will tell them to wait where they are and rush off to get him. After half an hour, The Knife will show up.

The party has two options at this point: negotiation or combat. There are 25 archers concealed in buildings all around. It would be possible to blow The Knife away, grab a large disk fragment, and run. The players might be able to escape, but it would be dangerous.

The Knife is not willing to trade his holodisk, or any part of it, unless the players happen to be carrying a compact disk or another holodisk. If they do have one, he'll accept their disk in fair exchange for a large fragment of his holodisk and let them leave peacefully.

Otherwise, he'll only turn over the disk if the one of the PCs can defeat his champion, Cracker, unarmed, in hand-to-hand combat. (Oh, you mean Specks forgot to mention that champions could be used in a formal duel? Must have slipped his mind . . .)

The fight with Cracker is to take place on one of the support cables of the Mid Hudson Bridge. The player will start climbing up the eastern side. Two people will untie Cracker on the western side and push torches at him to goad him onto the cable. The player must go at least as far as the top of the first support arch. Cracker will advance on the player and start smashing at him. The character may not carry weapons (except any he might choose to conceal), and he may wear armor. (But *not* the NBC suits — The Knife has no idea what they really do, and will rule them an "unfair advantage.")

There is no need to have a map — there's no room to maneuver. The cable is a few feet thick, and the only way to move is to go forward or backward. The player may choose his position so he will be as much as two feet higher than Cracker when the fighting starts, or below him, or even with him.

The drop is 40 yards to the pavement of the bridge, or 80 to the water. Roll randomly to see which one a falling character hits. If you hit the bridge, the fall does 40–80 damage (see p. B114). An easier way to figure it: Roll 4 dice, subtract 8, and *multiply* by 10 to see how many hits you take.

If you hit the water, roll 5 dice, subtract 10 (or 15 if you make your Swimming roll) and multiply by 10.

Each time a hit is scored (in *GURPS*), he must roll his DX at minus the points of damage in the attack (before subtraction for DR; the shock is still there). If the roll is failed, the character falls. If it is a player character, especially a well-played player character, the referee should consider allowing him to grab the cables (with a successful DX roll) and save himself, so he can climb back up and reenter the fray. In *Car Wars*, assume player characters have a base 4/6 chance to keep from falling, while Cracker has a base 3/6 chance, and subtract one for each point of damage he takes.

Cheating is certainly possible. The PC could shoot Cracker. Then, so long as Cracker falls into the river, everyone will assume Cracker just slipped. Otherwise, they'll find the bullet hole(s). It has to be a silenced pistol, because the crack of a pistol carries well over a river. If one of the PCs can slip away with a suppressed sniper rifle, he could conceivably pick Cracker off without anyone noticing. A cigarette lighter or other fire will make Cracker retreat 1–6 yards (roll one die). He will have to make a DX roll for every yard retreated to keep from falling.

If the PC loses the challenge, his surviving buddies can always use the Ultimate Option: Shoot Everything that Moves. This is not a dramatic, satisfying ending, though.

If Cracker is defeated in a fair fight (or if the PCs' cheating goes undetected), make a reaction roll for The Knife. If it is neutral or positive, he will abide by the terms of the challenge, giving up the disk. If his reaction is negative, he will try to renege, claiming foul play, or bad luck, or whatever.

The players have a number of options here, including an all-out attack. If Cracker is dead, the players may realize that fear of Cracker is what has kept Knickerbocker in power, and without his enforcer, the time may be ripe for a change at the top. The players may also try to convince the crowd (through Fast-Talk, Bard, or other communication skill) that their leader is behaving dishonorably and should be deposed. Faced with an angry mob no longer afraid of him, The Knife may be willing to make a deal.

Aftermath

If the PCs get back to the NorAm trailer, they will be safe, even if the entire Eastman Alliance is chasing them. Once the townies see the heavy weapons mounted on the trailer, they will quickly abandon the hunt.

If the adventurers have any part of the disk, they will get the promised reward. The PCs also get to keep the proceeds from anything else of value they found while they were there.

Other Ways To Get The Disk

OK, so the players decide to blow the Ratman away and somehow live through it. Or they gun down Specks for his fish, or don't visit him at all. How are they going to achieve their goal?

The smart-aleck answer is they're not, of course. But "one true path" adventures can be dull, and there are other ways the players can get their hands on the disk.

If the players lose any members to the townie ambush, and the townies drag them back to their camp, the players could track them, and then spot the disk pieces hanging around Knickerbocker's neck.

Or the players could figure out from some of the graffiti clues that the tribe lives in Eastman Park, and find The Knife — and the disk — then.

After that, the players could do just about anything, including a daring raid on the camp. Depending on just how many guns they brought with them, the players could conceivably wipe out the entire Eastman Alliance — if they can hunt them all down. The tribe will scatter and be very difficult to root out — they know the town, and the players don't.

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