STAR*DRIVE

GAMMA WORLD

STARCRAFT™

Inside this issue: eight converted Gamma World creatures, Miscellaneous Mishaps: supporting cast items, Transmissions, Alternity Superheroes, creating the best GW5 character you can, and more!

Designed by Jeff Ibach

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What It's All About

Welcome to the first issue of Action Check Magazine. The idea came from reading an interview by Robert Blezard with Alternity Brand Manager Jim Butler, in which the following was discussed:

Robert Blezard: *I'm a big fan of the Ares column in Dragon Magazine and would like to see it continue somewhere. What is your point of view of the idea of the Ares column becoming a monthly online feature?*

Jim Butler: *My original plan had us creating Ares Online, a monthly publication designed to support Alternity players. Dragon offered to bring us into the fold, though, and we jumped at the chance. While there are a lot of people online, it doesn't have the same reach as Dragon Magazine. I'd love to see fans create an online magazine to support Alternity. ;-)*

And with that, I created "Action Check" Online Magazine. Yes, all the material in here could be posted on my website, but there's something about having a good old printed copy sitting at the game table as you play. This way, people can post the issues on their websites so it gets more exposure. Folks who dislike cruising the web can get it sent directly to them.

What's the plan? For starters, I hope to get submissions soon. Anyone and everyone is welcome to submit articles of a semi-professional nature. Action Check will be published monthly and available from my web site Harvest Moon (see sidebar) or direct subscription. Hopefully Wizards of the Coast will like it enough to allow it to be downloaded from their site as well. Action Check will be as long as it needs to be, either 8, 16 or 24 pages maximum, and in the ever-popular PDF format.

At this time Action Check is not accepting submissions for the Dark*Matter campaign setting. Another excellent online magazine, solely dedicated to Dark*Matter called The Dark Times deserves your support and contributions. You can find them on the web at: www.thedarktimes.cjb.net.

Who are the Action Check staff? A stubborn RPGA group who feels Alternity is probably the best game system ever written and wants to see it supported for and from fans in the best way possible. ENJOY!

-Jeff Ibach

Creature Conversions

By Jeff Ibach

The new **Gamma World** Campaign Setting for the Alternity System is here! All the rules needed to play are included, the artwork is out of this world, the mood is right and the system spectacular. It's a meaty book filled with great resources. But even in a book this size there are limits. Like the number of old creatures they could convert to Alternity stats. So, here I present the first of a mini-series entitled Creature Conversions, in which I will take some of my favorite creatures from printed TSR Gamma World 3rd Edition material and convert them for use in the new Alternity Gamma World. Enjoy!

ARN

Also called dragon bugs, these giant dragonfly pests of the blasted plains are a danger to travelers.
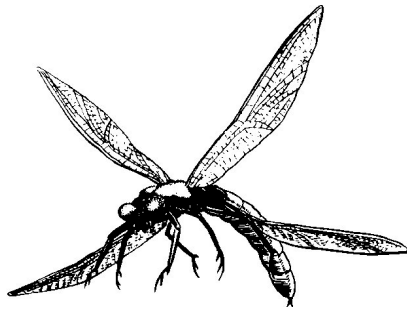
Description: Arns
vary from one to two meters long. They can carry loads weighing up to twice their Physical Strength in kilograms when airborne, but not while crawling along the ground.

Encounter: Arns are not the sharpest tools in the shed, and will usually attack a party even larger than itself if it thinks it can get a meal. It is soon to recognize when it's outmatched however. They are frequently found serving as the air force for organized small mutants and mutated animal packs. They will basically feed on any living thing, and when in a swarm of 4 to 6 will attack things much larger then itself.

Habitat/Society: Arns have no official organization, but do sometimes travel in groups of 1 to 6. They are often captured and domesticated as flying steeds by small humanoids and mutated animals. However, they are only trainable when young.

Game Data

STR   7 (2d6)   INT 2 (Animal 7 or 2d6)
DEX   10 (d6+6)   WIL 5 (d4+2)
CON   9 (d8+4)   PER 4 (d4+1)
Durability: 9/9/5/5 Action Check: 9+/8/4/2
Move: sprint 16, run 10, walk 4 fly 32
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2
Mutations: Energy Absorption (but only against attacks that also emit light, like a laser).

Attacks

Bite   9/4/2   d4+1s / d4w / d4+1w   LI/O

Defenses

+1 resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks

Skills

Acrobatics [12] - fall [13]; Stamina [9] - endurance [10]; Movement [9]

BLIGHT

The tricky "cloud worms", as they are sometimes called stalk the skies in search of prey.
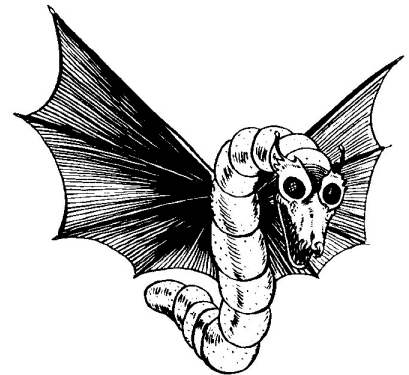
Description:
Blights are usually
3 meters long as an adult with up to a nine-meter wingspan. They have large, black, soulless eyes.

Encounter: Blights have the mutational ability called Improved Invisibility. When a blight attacks it becomes visible, but gains automatic surprise. Blights will use this mutation when fleeing (they can use it twice an hour, instead of the normal once). Blights are completely resistant to weapons involving radiation or heat effects. Their preferred method of attack is to wrap themselves around a victim, constricting and biting.

Habitat/Society: Not much is known about these mysterious creatures. They are thought to have nests high in the mountains where mates gather for the sole purpose of procreating.

Game Data

STR   11 (2d4+6)   INT   6 (d4+3)
DEX   9 (d8+4)   WIL 8 (d4+5)
CON   11 (d6+7)   PER 4 (d4+1)
Durability: 11/11/6/6   Action Check: 12+/11/5/2
Move: walk 4, fly 40   # Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2
Mutations: Radiation Tolerance, Environmental Adaptation-Heat, Improved Invisibility, Radiating Eyes

Attacks

Bite 12/6/3   d4+2s / d4+1w / d4+2w   LI/O
Coil 12/6/3   2s4s / 2d6s / 2d8s   LI/O

Defenses

+1 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks

Skills

Acrobatics [9] - fall [13]; Stamina [11] - endurance [12]; Awareness [8] - perception [10]

CAL THEN

The cal then, or flying rippers as they are called, are predatory yet clever mutated insects.
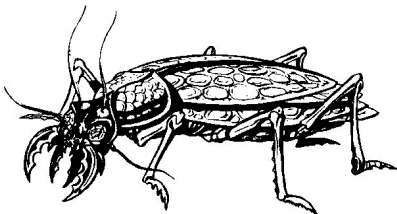
Description: It has an outer casing that is not as effective as it first appears. They are dark colored and often reach a length of 2.5 meters. Their giant mandibles are incredibly strong.

Encounter: It is immune to weapons using heat or cold. The cal thens feeds on bone marrow and will rip through anything (even metal armor, given time) to get at fresh bones. If without nourishment for days, they will attack with an almost single-minded ferocity.

Habitat/Society: Although one would imagine cal thens operating in swarms, they hunt alone or in very small groups (2-3).

Game Data

STR   10 (2d4+5)   INT   2 (Animal 13 or d4+10)
DEX   8 (2d6+1)   WIL 4 (d4+12)
CON   8 (2d6+1)   PER 3 (Animal 11 or d6+7)
Durability: 8/8/4/4 Action Check: 13+/12/6/3
Move: sprint 18, run 12, walk 4, fly 36
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2
Mutations: Environmental Adaptation-heat, Environmental Adaptation-cold

Attacks

Bite   12/6/3   d4+1w / d6+1w / d4+1m   LI/G

Defenses

+1 resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks
+2 resistance modifier vs. encounter skills
Armor: 1 (LI), 1 (HI), 1 (EN)

Skills

Athletics [10]; Movement [10] ; Stealth [10] - hide [13]; Awareness [14] - perception [15]; Resolve [14] - physical [15], mental [15]

CENTISTEED

Roaming the open plains of the Gamma World, centisteeds are a sight a cowboy of the old west would surely flee from!
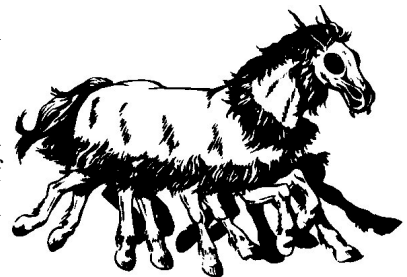
Description: Centisteeds are mutated horses of insectoid appearance. Each has between 12 and 18 legs.

Encounter: Centisteeds are not really quick to start a fight. They will defend themselves fully if attacked.

Habitat/Society: A centisteed can carry two human-sized characters. One rider must concentrate at all times on controlling the mount or it will try to throw (and then trample) the riders.

Game Data

STR   22 (2d6+16)   INT   2 (Animal 6 or d6+2)
DEX   5 (d4+2)   WIL 15 (2d4+10)
CON   10 (d6+6)   PER 2 (Animal 11 d6+7)

Durability: 10/10/5/5   Action Check: 14+/13/6/3
Move: sprint 26, run 16, walk 6 ez swim 3, swim 6
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2
Mutations: Telepathic Reflection, Kinetic Shield, Enhanced Metabolism

Attacks
Trample   12/6/3   d4+6s / d6w / d6+2w   LI/O

Defenses
+3 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
-1 resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks

Skills
Movement [20]; Stamina [10] - endurance [12]; Awareness [15] - intuition [16]

FENS

Fens are an intelligent species of mutated fish men.

Description: These intelligent humanoids are adapted for living both on land and in water, having fish-like tails, stubby legs, and both lungs and gills. They can remain out of water for only 24 hours at a time.

Encounter: Fens can shapechange into the form of a bird of their own size. They carry Gamma Age weapons (usually clubs) and wear fishskin armor (similar to 'Leather Coat').

Habitat/Society: They live in rivers, lakes, and oceans, but never too far from land. They can breathe air as well as water. Their society is loose but they are loyal to one another and are very distrustful of outsiders. They hunt away from their homes in groups of up to 10.

Game Data

STR	11 (2d4+6)	INT 9 (d8+4)
DEX	6 (d4+3)	WIL 7 (2d6)
CON	9 (d8+4)	PER 6 (d4+3)

Durability: 9/9/5/5 Action Check: 11+/10/5/2

Move: sprint 16, run 10, walk 4, ez swim 2 swim 4, fly 32
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Marginal / 2
Mutations: Metamorphis (equal size bird form only), Enhanced Immunity (poison only), Radiation Tolerance, Energy Absorption (first 5 rounds of combat only)

Attacks

Spear	13/6/3	d4+1w / d4+3w / d4+1m	LI/O
Club	13/6/3	d4+2s / d4+1w / d4+2w	LI/O
Tailslap	12/6/3	d6s / d8s / d4w	LI/O

Defenses
+1 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
Fishskin Armor: d6-3 (LI), d4-3 (HI), d4-2 (EN)

Skills
Melee [11] - blade [13] , bludgeon [13]; Stealth [9] - hide [10]; Stamina [9] - endurance [10]; Knowledge [9]; Awareness [7] - perception [10]

GATOR

Woe to the traveler who underestimates these little terrors of the swamplands.
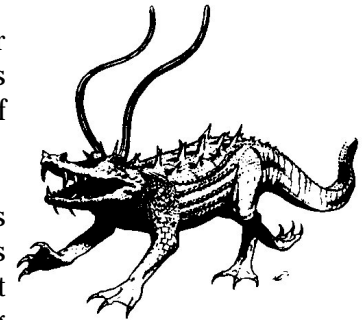
Description: Gators are mutated alligators that are only about one to two meters long from nose to tail. They have a pair of one-meter-long tentacles attached to their foreheads

Encounter: They may use their bite and tailslap at the same time. Their Mental Paralysis mutation is delivered by the touch of their tentacles.

Habitat/Society: Though solitary by nature, in the spring they congregate in groups of 10 to 60 to spawn.

Game Data

STR	10 (d6+6)	INT 2 (Animal 7 or 2d6)
DEX	6 (d4+3)	WIL 15 (d4+12)
CON	10 (d6+6)	PER 2 (Animal 6 or d4+3)

Durability: 10/10/5/5   Action Check: 10+/9/4/2
Move: sprint 16, run 10, walk 4 ez swim 2, swim 4

Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Marginal / 2
Mutations: Radiation Tolerance, Mental Paralysis (delivered by tentacle touch, and useable at will, not once per hour)

Attacks

Bite	11/5/2	d4w / d4+1w / d4+2w	LI/O
Tailslap	11/5/2	d4s / d4+1s / d6s	LI/O

Defenses

Armor: d4 (LI), d6-2 (HI), d4-1 (EN)

Skills

Melee [10] - tentacles [12]; Investigate [15] - search [16], track [16]; Resolve [15] - physical [16]; Stamina [10] - endurance [11]; Stealth [10]

HERPS

The bedbugs of your worst nightmares.

Description: Herps are 3.5-meter-long mutated beetles which have developed a nonfunctional striped wingcase giving them their distinctive appearance and offering their energy absorption mutation.

Encounter: They can squirt a stream of acid up to 30 meters (also note acid rules from the Alternity GMG are in effect, on subsequent rounds the acid continues to do damage, at 1 die less each round until done). They usually employ this attack first to kill prey then eat the remains...their bite is not quote as formidable. They are very fast and stronger than they look.

Habitat/Society: Herps are skilled hunters, able to track any prey in any weather.

Game Data

STR	18 (d6+15)	INT	4 (Animal 8 or d4+5)
DEX	9 (2d6+2)	WIL	10 (d6+6)
CON	12 (d6+8)	PER	2 (Animal 7 or 2d6)

Durability: 12/12/6/6   Action Check: 11+/10/5/2
Move: sprint 30, run 20, walk 8
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Marginal / 2

Mutations: Energy Absorption

Attacks

Acid Squirt	10/5/2	d4w / 2d4w / 3d4w	HI/G
Bite	12/6/3	d4+2s / 2d4s / d4w	LI/O

Defenses

+4 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
Armor: d4-2 (LI), d4-2 (HI), d4 (EN)

Skills

Stamina [12]; Resolve [10]; Movement [12]; Stealth [9] - hide [10]; Awareness [10] - perception [11]; Investigate [10] - track [14] , search [14]

HISSERS

Plying the desert trade routes, these advanced 'man-snakes' as they are known are mysterious beings.

Description: These intelligent, three-meter-long, scale-covered humanoids have a human torso and arms and a snake's lower body and head.

Encounter: In addition to their species' mutations, all hissers will have one other randomly-selected mental mutation. Note although they have 'natural' armor listed they could wear other armor of the GM's choosing, but usually refrain from doing so. Hissers will almost always possess one or more artifacts (some possibilities are listed under attacks).

Habitat/Society: They inhabit deserts and ruins. Hisser societies are matriarchal and each village will have one queen and 20d6 male attendants. They have no language (using contact among themselves) and will seldom know even basic trade languages.

Game Data

STR	16 (2d6+9)	INT	9 (d8+4)
DEX	10 (2d4+5)	WIL	10 (2d4+5)

CON   11 (d6+7)   PER   7 (2d6)
Durability: 12/12/6/6   Action Check: 12+/13/6/3
Move: sprint 16, run 10, walk 4, ez swim 2, swim 4
Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2
Mutations: Energy Absorption, Contact, Telekinetic Blast, Empathic Symbiosis

Attacks

Bite   11/5/2   d4s / d4+1s / d4w   LI/O
Light Revolver 12/6/3   d4w / d6w / d4m   HI/O
Grenade
  Incendiary   17/8/4   d6+2s / d4w / d4+1w LI/O
Collapsible
  Baton   17/8/4   d4+3s / d4+5s / d4+9s LI/O

Defenses
+3 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
Armor: d6-3 (LI), d4-3 (HI), d6-4 (EN)

Skills
Modern Ranged Weapons [10] - pistol [12]; Athletics [16] - throw [17]; Melee Weapons [16] - bludgeon [17]; Movement [11]; Awareness [10]; Resolve [10] - physical [11]; Stealth [10] - sneak [12]; Stamina [11] - endurance [12]

GRIDSITES

The **Windows Alternity Character Manager**, or Walter, is a very valuable tool for the GM who could save some time prepping for a game (and who couldn't). Creating Supporting Cast in the forms of thugs, aliens, and skills and equipment from many Alternity sourcebooks, it's become a staple of our group. Point your gridcaster to:

http://www.thecastle.com/walter.html

Chris West's Alternity GM Resource Center has a number of nifty downloads in PDF format to help your Alternity game, with supporting cast sheets, ammunition tracks, and our favorite, the Action Check record sheet which has found itself at every one of our games.

http://home.earthlink.net/%7ewestwinds/

TRANSMISSIONS
By James Sharkey

Among the Grid's knowledgeable, Count Shadowstrife has long been renowned for his (usually) harmless pratical jokes on the Grids of both VoidCorp and the Rigunmor Star Consortiums. His shadow has somehow always been able to slip past the best defenses, and plant things like his famous "electronic whoopee cushion" on the personal gridcasters of even the most high-ranking VoidCorp managers.

However, his normally ubiquitous avatar of a 19th century vampire has completely disappeared from the Grid. He hasn't been heard from in several months, and the Grid's denizens are concerned that maybe he finally got nabbed. That's when the party's most hacking-oriented member gets an old-fashioned e-mail:

"Surrounded by garlic and crosses.
Need help. Shadowstrife"

Attached is a set of coordinates, located in Insight space.

Possibilities:

1) Either Rigunmor or VoidCorp has tracked him down, and is closing the net around him. Hopefully, the PCs will have a grudge against one of the two stellar nations. Or, alternately, the PC's could have some personal connection to Shadowstrife.

2) The PC's have annoyed some group enough to make setting a trap worthwhile.

3) Insight needs muscle, and the PC's have proven themselves very capable. Perhaps the coordinates are set up in a puzzle, and the Insighters are hoping a group good enough to figure it out will take a specific job for them.

Miscellaneous Mishaps
By Dawn Ibach

Personal Effects – Supporting Cast
Modern Day and Future

Ever at a loss for what the enemies might have in their pockets? Here is a list of things players can find on their opponents. If the GM doesn't have time to roll for effects before the game make sure the players don't have to sit around waiting - have them roll!

First Glance
Tables A and B and C contains some items that are immediately noticeable or items that could be used during the encounter as weapons or enemy quirks, i.e. the players can immediately identify these during a combat scene.

TABLE A
1   Heavy perfume or cologne
2   Plastic hospital band
3   Plastic amusement park band
4   Handcuffs or Binders on belt
5   Wool ski mask
6   Brass knuckles
7   Umbrella or cane
8   Pepper Spray
9   Prescription glasses
10 War paint
11 Firecrackers
12 Painted finger/toe nails
13 Jewelry, costume or real
14 Religious charm on necklace
15   Good luck charm on necklace
16   Parasite/Rash
17   Burn/Laser scars
18   Smokes cigars/cigarettes
19   Chews gum
20   Tool belt

TABLE B
1   Photojournalist vest
2   Class Ring
3   Facial Tattoo
4   Facial Piercing
5   Facial hair
6   Dyed Hair
7   Wears all one color
8   Odd nickname
9   Never speaks
10 Can of spray paint
11 Uses stimulants
12 Butane lighter, fancy or cheap
13 Hand held video recorder
14 Sunglasses
15 CD player and head set
16 Orthodontic braces
17 Limb in cast, false or real
18 Heavy cosmetics
19 Flashlight
20 Air horn

TABLE C
1   Unusual Contact lenses
2   Attack with lighter and aerosol
3   Backpack
4   Bandana
5   Beeper
6   Baseball hat
7   Dimples
8   Chews toothpick
9   Garrote
10 Whistles
11 Bad breath
12 Chewing tobacco
13 Vampire fang implants
14 Hearing aid
15 Uses colorful language
16 Wears a hairpiece/wig
17 Ink stained fingers
18 Wears shoes with cleats
19 Smells of muscle liniment
20 Lollipop

The following table can be used to search fallen foes. Roll d4-1 to determine how many items appear on a Supporting Cast Member. Roll d100.

1 Identification, card	51 Roll of Duct tape
2 Identification, number tattoo	52 Batteries
3 Identification, military tags	53 Cellular phone
4 Identification, badge	54 Metal keys
5 No fingerprints	55 Water pistol
6 Synthcards (pictures) of family	56 Hand held game
7 Breath freshener	57 Data Slate or Day planner
8 Controlled substance	58 Magnifying glass
9 Prescription bottle	59 Antacids
10 Candy, bar or hard candy	60 Store receipt
11 Clean undergarments	61 Lottery ticket
12 Restricted club ring/card	62 Calculator
13 Dice, loaded or not	63 Compact disc
14 Deck of cards, marked or not	64 Novel, on tape or disc
15 Weapon clips, full or empty	65 Rubber gloves
16 Hair brush or comb	66 Note from a child
17 Rubber band, hair or office	67 Postcard or letter
18 Toothbrush, with toothpaste	68 Can of pet food
19 Ink pen, full or empty	69 Harmonica
20 Pad of note paper and pencil	70 Old Military tattoo
21 Prophylactic	71 Musical pocket watch
22 IP card to night club	72 Self help book/tape/CD
23 Lip balm, flavored or un-	73 Credit card or stick
24 Small cut bandages	74 Bank Statement
25 Needle and thread	75 Smelling salts
26 Cosmetics	76 Caffeine tablets
27 Handkerchief or tissues	77 Cough drops
28 Pocket knife, fancy or cheap	78 Whoopee cushion
29 Salt dispenser or packet	79 Whistle
30 Scrap of paper with a number	80 Take out food menu
31 Wallet, leather or synthetic	81 Cat toy
32 First aid kit	82 Gambling marker
33 Key card	83 Delinquent bill
34 Business cards	84 Letter
35 Contact lens case	85 Water balloons
36 Watch, plastic or fancy	86 Box of matches
37 Flashlight or light sticks	87 Animal tooth on necklace
38 Alcohol flask	88 Cellular phone
39 Cough medicine bottle	89 Yo-yo
40 Compass	90 Airline peanuts and liquor
41 Tattoo, real or fake	91 Appointment reminder card
42 Map, space or land	92 Bottle pain reliever
43 Name Tattoo	93 Engagement ring in a box
44 Pocket camera	94 Undelivered mail
45 Roll of used film	95 Subpoena
46 Can/bottle opener	96 Pierced ears, but no earrings
47 Coupon, valid or expired	97 Lock picks
48 Measuring tape	98 Asthma inhaler
49 Binoculars	99 Allergy medication
50 Remote control	100 Wad of cash

Make Your Super Power FX Game More Like the Comics

The Alternity system is tremendously versatile, easily allowing GMs and players alike to adventure in settings ranging from the Civil War to the far-flung future. The addition of the revised FX rules in *Beyond Science* and *Dark Matter* further added to that versatility.

However, as they stand, the core Alternity rules and the super power FX rules are not geared towards a high-powered superhero campaign. It is more a situation of heroes having a few powers beyond those of the people around them, a few edges over their foes. If a group wants to run a truly comic book style game, it is going to have to make some adjustments.

Here are a few house rules that our group has been using for the Protectorate, super heroes that watch over Washington, DC in a modern day setting. Some of these rules are intended to make sure that our heroes aren't worried about facing a lone mugger armed with a revolver. Others are more concerned with making the game more like a comic book, adding some cinematic flair to super hero combat, and allowing the heroes to push themselves past a point where ordinary people would have fallen unconscious.

Starting Ability Points: Instead of starting with 60 ability points, a character can start with more. In the case of the Protectorate, every hero got to start with 72 ability points. However, they were not allowed to take Increased Ability Score as an FX ability.

FX Broad Skills: The FX broad skills, as they are currently classified, are geared towards giving player characters some extra abilities "beyond those of mortal men." For super heroes, though, there is some overlap in which skills might apply to a given type of hero.

Rather than force a player to buy several unrelated broad skills in order to get skills that would apply to his style of powers, create a new broad skill. Often, the applicable skills are already out there, and simply need to be placed in a new broad skill.

For example: New broad skill – Speedster
Specialty skills – Fusillade, Lightning Speed, Mighty Leap, Phasing

Amazing Hits: In the comics, heroes are always being knocked around. Bodies fly everywhere when the punches start flying. So on an Amazing hit the unfortunate PC or NPC on the receiving end gets sent flying away from the attack for some distance determined by the GM. In addition, rather than having the victim make a *Stamina:Endurance* check to avoid losing consciousness, have him make the check to avoid some additional damage on the landing (d6 stun regardless of armor is a good guideline unless the victim hits something unpleasant). Bodies are flying everywhere during combat, but heroes aren't knocked out on a lucky hit, so everyone stays in the fight.

Shaking Off Stun: When the PCs or powerful NPCs are at maximum stun, they don't fall unconscious. Instead, the character takes and additional +1 step penalty to all his actions. In addition, after every time he is hit again, or takes any combat action, he must make a *Stamina:Endurance* check or fall unconscious, having pushed himself beyond even his own super heroic abilities.

The DC Protectorate has found that these rules let us use Alternity but keep the over-the-top, "wahoo" feel of the comics. Remember, super heroes are supposed to be fun, so don't be afraid to sacrifice the minutiae of the rules to make something look cool!

Sample Alternity Superpowers Character

Captain Canada is the name of my Superhero character I play in the ongoing bimonthly supers games. His overall concept, while bordering on the humorous, actually has a number of instantly playable hooks and generates a great visual. Artwork by Scott Thomas.

Captain Canada
Level 3 human male Combat Spec (Superhero)

STR   14 [+2]   INT   11 [+1]
DEX   15 [+3]   WIL   11 [+1]
CON 11 [+1]   PER   10
Durability: 11/11/6/6   Action Check: 17+/16/8/4
Reaction Score: Good/2   #Actions: 2
Move: Sprint 28, Run 18, Walk 6, Swim 6
Perks: Reflexes   Flaws: Clueless 4
Attributes: Helping Others, Gallant, Egotistical
Last Resorts: 1   Last Resort Cost: 3

Attacks
Unarmed   16/8/4   d6+2s/d6+4s/d4+2w   LI/O
Hockey
Stick   18/9/4   d4+4s/d6+5s/d6+3w   LI/O
Hockey
Puck   16/8/4   10/20/60 d4s/d4+2s/d4w LI/O

Defenses
Schmega Deflection [3] CON Level 1 d6+1/d6/d4 (acts as Body Armor F/X Skill)

Skills
Athletics [14] - climb [15], jump [15], throw [15]; Melee Weapons [14] - bludgeon [18], power martial arts [16]; Acrobatics [15] - dodge [17]; Primitive Ranged Weapons [15] - slap shot [16]; Vehicle Operation [15]; Movement [11] - race [12]; Knowledge [11] - computer operation [12]; Awareness [11] - perception [12]; Interaction [10] - intimidate [11]

Notes
Reflexes DEX Resistance Modifier Bonus
Combat Spec Action Check Increase: action check score increased by 3

Combat Spec Situation Bonus of -1 to a selected skill (Melee Weapons—bludgeon

Superpowers FX

SPEEDSTER POWERS BROAD GROUP [10]

Enhanced Reflexes [3] DEX Level 1 -2 to Action Check (adapted from Gamma World mutation) (Permanent; costs 3 FX Power Points)

Schmega Deflection [3] CON Level 1 d6+1/d6/d4 (acts as Body Armor F/X Skill) (Permanent; costs 3 FX Power points)

Phasing [3] WIL Level 3 14/7/2

FX POWER POINTS: O O O O O O O O O

Captain Canada is a hockey hero from the Great White North. With his old red & white hockey shirt and stainless steel stick, he now roams the U.S.A. and specifically Washington D. C. to do battle with evil. Currently in league with another group of 'deviants' including Nighthawk, Skater X, Knuckles, and Discord, they form The Protectorate supers group. He can deflect bullets with a lightening swish of his stick, amazingly pass through solid objects, and bean a thug with a well-placed slap shot with a metal puck at 20 meters! He's...CAPTAIN CANADA!

By Derek Holland

Porcupine

Description:

These are the new species of porkies. They have evolved a way of converting the chlorine in the salt they enjoy so much into a deadly toxin in their quills. They also now have claws that allow them to grasp the ground and not be tipped over by predators (a STR feat check with a -1 step bonus is required to attempt to tip one over - a CF means a quill has impaled whatever is attempting to push the porky over).

Encounter:

Porcupines do not attack. If attacked, a porky will raise its quills and let the aggressor impale itself on them. Those attacking one with a weapon shorter than .75 m must make a DEX feat with –1 step bonus - a CF means d4+1 quills are embedded in the attacker, a F means d2 quills are embedded, and O-A means no quills are embedded. Each quill has the equivalent of one dose of standard hemotoxin (from the GMG).

Habitat/Society:

Porcupines are found in the northern forests of Meriga. They prefer coniferous forests, but will be found anywhere that snow falls regularly. Because of their dense fur and quills, they fair poorly in warm regions. Porcupines are solitary animals. Each year a female may have 1 or 2 kits and this is the only time they congregate.

Biome: northern forests
Encounter chance: probable in conifers, unlikely in hardwood
Group size: 1 or d3
Organization: solitary
Niche: herbivore
IQ: low order animal.

Game Data

STR   6 (d6+3)   INT   1 (Animal 2 or d3)
DEX   3 (d4+1)   WIL   2 (d3)
CON   3 (d4+1)   PER   1 (Animal 2 or d3)
Durability: 3/3/2/2   Action   Check: 5+/4/2/1
Move: sprint 10, run 6, walk 2
Actions: 1
Reaction Score: Marginal / 1
Mutations/powers: poisonous quills, claws

Attacks

Quills   3/2/0   d2w / d3w / d4+1w   LI/O

Defenses

-2 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
-2 resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks

Skills

Acrobatics [6] - climb [8]; Awareness [2] - perception [4]

Our group barely escaped this porcupine. It was an arrowing experience. There's more to tell, but I'll spear you the details.

Derek Holland is an active member of the Gamma World mailing list. You can e-mail him at dmh71@juno.com

GAMMA WORLD

Supporting Cast
By Derek Holland

Josh

Level 1 male rat (mutant) Tech Op

STR   4   [-2]   INT   13 [+2]
DEX   16 [+3]   WIL   11 [+1]
CON 10   PER   6
Durability: 10/10/5/5   Action   Check: 16+/15/7/3
Reaction Score: Good/2   #Actions: 2
Move: Sprint 40, Run 24, Walk 8, Easy Swim 4, Swim 8
Mutations: Night Vision, Enhanced Reflexes
Defects: Severe Phobia (snakes)

Attacks
Unarmed 2/1/0   d4-2s / d4-1s / d4s   LI/O

Defenses
None

Skills
Athletics [4]; Stealth [16] - hide [19], sneak [17]; Acrobatics [16] - dodge [17], Survival [10]; Knowledge [13]; Technical Science [13] - artifact knowledge [15], invention [15], repair [16]; Awareness [11]; Interaction [6]

Personal data:
Age - 12 years
Length - 1.5 meters
Weight - 20 Kg
Allegiance - none
Social status - urban scavenger
Contacts - leader of Evergreen Point
Enemies - badders of Blue
Wealth - 35 gp and 4 caches of artifacts (trinkets)

Description
Josh is a very large black and brown rat who is 1.5 meters long including his tail. His forefeet are as useful as a human's hands in manipulating artifacts. He can speak, but because he learned dabber later in life, he punctuates his sentences with squeaks.

Background
Josh is a mutant child of 2 normal rats. He was born in Blue and spent several years there collecting junk that caught his eye until some dabbers stole some of his property. He followed in hopes of retrieving it, but was captured. After the dabbers found out he was intelligent (by the ways he escaped his cages), they taught him to speak and how "shinies" work. He visits them every few months for trading (usually to get some of his stuff back) and to keep them informed about what goes on in Blue. He has had several run-ins with the badders, but his speed has kept him from getting hurt. Unfortunately, now they hate him and always try to kill him on sight.

Josh the mutant rat can show up as an NPC friend or foe in your first Gamma World adventure.

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Getting the most of Character Creation in Alternity Gamma World

By William E. Herrmann

Mutants and Dabbers and Sleeth, oh my…

The biggest change to Gamma World in its latest incarnation (GW5e) is the use of the Alternity engine. In addition to a new, universal dice mechanic, character generation has changed drastically. Ability scores (formerly attributes, STR, DEX, etc.) are no longer determined randomly, and mutations, while still semi-random, are allocated with character balance in mind. What this means to you, the player, is that you are less likely to create a hopeless character that must be tossed in the recycle bin before getting a chance. You're also less likely to get a high-powered, "force of nature" mutant squirrel. For that matter, mutant animals are gone from the core rules altogether. You must choose between pregenerated species, namely, Pure Strain Humans (PSH), Altered Humans (AH), Androids (An), Dabbers (Da), Sleeth (Sl) and Sasquatch (Sa). If you're interested in playing mutant animals, please refer to Andy Collins excellent article on page 98 of *Dragon* issue 272.

Moving on, how should you approach the creation of your first GW5e character? The first step is talk to the GM. See if he's using any house rules, added or removed a species from the list in the book, etc. As an example, in my campaign, characters are created with 66 points, not 60, due to the violent nature of Gamma Terra.

The second step is choosing your species. This is important, as it determines your ability score range and the number and types of mutations you can have. The core book suggests you assign your ability scores next, but I like to determine my mutations next. Why, you may ask? I'm of the opinion that if you grew up with a certain gift or defect, you'd capitalize or compensate most of your life.

Now, ask your GM which method of muta-

> A sasquatch doctor can be a blast to play. "What, little pink-skin want anesthetic? Tool of the devils it is. Bite down on this, please. Nurse, where's my saw?"

tion assignment you should use. If you're to use the purely random method, there's not much I can do for you in this phase. However, if you're using guided randomness, you're in luck. One very important thing to keep in mind is that you can only get an Amazing mutation now, when creating your character. If you want one, get it now. Of course, this only applies to Altered Humans. Doing so will leave you with either 3 ordinary mutations, or 1 ordinary and 1 good. Place these mutations in either the physical or mental categories as you like, or flip a coin if you can't decide. Follow the same procedure for your drawbacks.

You'll notice that many familiar mutations are back, but they are not as powerful or flexible as they once were. Dual Brain, while still worthy of its Amazing quality rating, is no longer the cool source of extra "free" mutations it once was. Be sure to read the description of each mutation you roll to avoid confusion.

After you've rolled up your mutations, take a moment to think about your characters youth. What would his life be like with the mutations he's received? I'm inclined to think that a community might guide a mutant with a tough carapace, claws and enhanced stamina into a career that will capitalize on those attributes; for example, a career in Law Enforcement or the militia would be likely choices. Pick your profession and assign your ability points to make the most of your mutations.

Choosing your profession is one of the most important things you will do when creating your character. While every species can and does contain members of every profession, it's worth pointing out that some are more suited to a given profession than others.

Sleeth, for example, have relatively high maximums in every ability score, except Dex. At 12, that's still not bad, but it does make them

less suited to becoming Free Agents than other races. Sleeth are also pacifists, making Combat Spec another "second-string" choice. With their high potential in Int, Wil, and Per, Sleeth can make excellent Diplomats and Tech Ops. With their default mutations, they make very potent Diplomats, indeed. By tying in a Diplomat's secondary profession skills, a Sleeth can be a very versatile addition to your party.

Sasquatch, it would seem, are tailor made to be combat specs. They are. With their lower than average potentials in Dex, Per and Int, they aren't the best choice for Tech Ops, Diplomats or Free Agents. Their inability to use higher than Gamma Age equipment makes them particularly ill suited for Tech Ops careers. Don't let any of this stop you, though! A Sasquatch doctor can be, and is, a blast to play. "What, little pink-skin want anesthetic? Tool of the devils it is. Bite down on this, please. Nurse, where's my saw?"

Dabbers, with their stealthy mutations and high Dex, make excellent Free Agents. The only problem is that with a maximum Per of 12, you won't get the most out of their extra Last Resort points bonus. They also make excellent Tech Ops, aside from their inability to use Shadow Age equipment. And never underestimate a sniper with a high Dex and the ability to hide using illusions!

Androids are without a doubt, the best Tech Ops in the game. They have a high Int potential, a bonus for figuring out artifacts, and can use most, though not all, shadow age equipment. They make excellent Combat Specs, but their inhibitions with regard to hurting Pure Strain Humans, and inability to use the best weapons, keep them from truly shining in that role. Their low Per potential makes them less suited to be Diplomats, and restricts their Last Resort points, also making Free Agent a secondary choice.

Altered Humans, or Mutants, are the most varied species in the game. They can excel in any Profession, depending on their suite of mutations. Keep in mind that like most species, they cannot use the bulk of Shadow Age equipment.

Pure Strain Humans, like their mutant brethren, have a lot of choices. They're the baseline species, so they compare favorably with the other species when it comes to ability score potential. Keep in mind that only PSHs can make use of any and all Shadow Age equipment, if they can figure out how to use it. This makes them excellent Tech Ops and Combat Specs. Their immunity to mutation, and extra five skill points should not be overlooked.

Next issue, we'll take a look a selection of Gamma World characters designed with these observations in mind.

For those of you who would rather use a more traditional random Ability score method, look to the table below.

	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIL	PER
PSH	2D6+2	2D6+2	D6+8	2D6+2	2D6+2	2D6+2
Android	2D4+6	2D6+2	D8+6	2D8-1	D6+6	D8+4
Dabber	D8+3	2D4+7	D8+4	2D6+3	2D4+4	D8+4
Mutant	2D6+2	2D6+2	2D6+2	2D6+2	2D6+2	2D6+2
Sasquatch	D8+8	D8+4	D8+8	D8+5	D8+4	D8+4
Sleeth	2D6+2	D8+4	2D6+2	2D6+3	3D4+4	3D4+4

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