

The Republic of Garoo

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Introduction

The Republic of Garoo is a very minor interstellar power in the Darrian Subsector of the Spinward Marches. This article develops the Republic as an adventure setting and details the worlds of the Garoo System for use by GMs.

Full details of the Republic of Garoo and the "Darrian Renaissance" are presented in the sourcebook *Behind the Claw*, but for the GM's convenience the following facts are presented.

In the wake of the Fifth Frontier War (1107-1110), the Spinward Marches were left in a political mess with various interstellar powers struggling to take advantage of the situation. One such power was the Darrian Confederation, which retook the Entropic Worlds from the Sword Worlds in 1109 and have since annexed Condaria and Nonym. The Darrians see no glory in conquest but are driven by cold-blooded necessity to establish control over the entire subsector in order to defend their domains. Most of the independent worlds of the subsector view this "Darrian Renaissance" in a positive light, as the Darrians' benevolent control of the region offers protection from potential conquerors such as the barbarous Sword Worlds or the Zhodani Consulate.

On the world of Garoo, capital of the tiny interstellar Republic of Garoo since 1117, the Darrian expansion is viewed with horror and foreboding. The Republic's claim to the world of 886-945 (renamed New Garoo) has not been recognized by the Darrians or the Imperium, though the Zhodani Consulate has declared its support.

With a resurgent Darrian Confederation on its border and no firm allies, the Republic of Garoo is walking a tightrope over an abyss.

The Republic of Garoo

The people of Garoo have maintained a democratic government since Solomani colonists settled the world in -1508. Contact with the Third Imperium led to the construction of an excellent starport to serve Imperial traders traveling between the Five Sisters and Reidan subsectors.

The old Garoo Republic was founded in -1482 but did not become an interstellar entity until 806 when a colony was set up on Uniqua with financial support from the Imperial Megacorporation Naasirka and the Imperial Colonial Office. The colony was very unsuccessful. The world's population was confined to a few caverns, operating hydroponics farms to simply sustain themselves, and supporting the colony became such a financial burden that the Old Republic granted the world its freedom in 902. The

Imperial Colonial Office remained until 979 when it withdrew its personnel and financial support due to the outbreak of the Third Frontier War.

In 1117, the Republic took action to counter the growing threat from the Darrian Confederation. A war council was appointed to take charge of what became known as the New Republic, made up of representatives of Garoo's six main political parties. Its goal was to ensure that Garoo remained independent. The New Republic's first move was to reclaim Uniqua, a move welcomed by the population of the world. Only Naasirka voiced concern, as it had continued to invest in the world and viewed the New Republic as anti-Imperial in outlook, posing a threat to Naasirka's ownership of the starport and other commercial interests. This situation has not yet been resolved.

In 1119 the New Republic made an overtly expansionist move and claimed the world of 886-945. The annexation met with protests from the Darrian Confederation, followed by a declaration of economic sanctions on 32-1120. All Darrian trade with Garoo was to be cut off until the Republic withdrew from 886-945. Political pressure was also brought to bear on Darrian allies to endorse and comply with the action.

On 207-1120, Archduke Norris declared that the Republic's military action in claiming 886-945 was a destabilizing influence in the region and that Imperial vessels would no longer be allowed to trade with or via Garoo. However, the Archduke did offer to host diplomatic talks at the Karin Naval Base and dispatched Marquis Victor Aledon, cousin to the Archduke and a trusted advisor, to negotiate with the war council.

Naasirka used its power at the Archduke's court to have Naasirka vessels operating to and from their base at Uniqua exempted from the trade prohibition, but still the main threat to the New Republic is economic. Without the revenue from trade through the starport the Republic is sure to plunge into a downward economic spiral.

The Garoo Question (as it came to be known) took on a new and disturbing tone when a *Shivva*-class Patrol Frigate of the Zhodani Consular Navy (detailed in Alien Races 1) arrived carrying Ambassador Chipystelr, who offered economic support and technical assistance with the salvage operations at Graveyard (the space sargasso discussed later under *The Worlds of the Garoo System*).

The Future of the Republic

If it comes to a military clash with the Darrian Confederation, the Republic is finished -- with one aging Vargr heavy cruiser and a squadron of composite vessels salvaged from Graveyard, the Republican Navy has no chance.

However, if military conflict can be avoided, there is some chance that a diplomatic solution can be found. The Zhodani are the key to this situation. Supposing the Zhodani captain threatened to block or even fire on any invaders of the system? It would certainly be necessary to return fire, and firing on a Consulate warship is an entirely different matter to destroying the Republican fleet. It could even lead to a Sixth Frontier War.

The question is: would a Zhodani captain really intervene? And would the Consulate go

to war over one live-fire incident? Nobody wants to find out, but a dangerous game of brinkmanship is being played, notwithstanding.

There are not likely to be any huge space battles in the near future. Instead, there will be economic and political maneuverings, and covert operations in support of political policy. Perhaps the odd starship infiltration and even single-ship actions. Everything that happens in the Republic will affect the political outcome.

Will the Republic remain independent? Be forced too far into the Zhodani camp? Or will some compromise be reached? This is "The Garoo Question."

Military Forces of the Republic

The Republic has a somewhat unusual military structure, in that they don't follow the usual service distinctions (Navy, Army etc.). Instead the Republic has several "Corps" which are assigned vessels and personnel of whatever type are needed from a central pool of trained personnel. Mobility between corps is quite common. All have a standard rank and command structure, and use the same equipment.

The Garoo armed forces have been expanded greatly over the past few years, and are now larger than the Republic can reasonably afford. Maintenance of the Graveyard ships is a nightmare, and the technical branches are particularly large. The Republic cannot afford these ships and troops, yet the military keeps on expanding out of necessity. Sooner or later, the War Council is going to have to slim down, rationalize, or launch an attack on someone.

The armed forces are organized as follows:

The Reconnaissance and Intervention Corps (RIC)

Generally referred to as "the scouts," the members of the RIC are assumed by uninformed

Imperial citizens to be equivalent to the IISS. In fact the RIC is a small special forces corps whose duties include intelligence gathering, covert operations, and the operation of sensitive outposts. This is the Garoo force most likely to be encountered during adventures. The RIC has six companies of TL 9 infantry equipped for the strike role, a maintenance branch, and naval personnel manning a number of starships. In addition, the "Covert Company" is an administrative body to which special agents and covert ops teams belong.

The RIC operates a 2,000-ton armed transport (on a merchant hull) and two 300-ton Covert Infiltration Vessels (stealthy scoutships with the ability to land small teams on-planet).

The Salvage Corps

Comprised mainly of small-craft crews and technicians, plus security personnel and a single SDB crew. The SDB is built around the hull of a *Broadsword*-class mercenary cruiser, crammed with weapons salvaged from other ships. It is stationed at Graveyard and is not jump-capable. The Salvage Corps protects the Graveyard installation and also supplies security personnel for the shipyards at Garoo.

The Planetary Defense Corps

The Planetary Defense Corps (PDC) operates orbital and ground defense stations, SDBs assigned to the orbital defense role, and most of the ground troops of the Republic. In addition to the TL9 ground forces of the Republic, a number of reserve units are being raised for the duration of the crisis. A small contingent of the PDC defends Uniqua, but most of the corps is based at Garoo.

Uniqua is defended by three SDBs created from merchant craft, plus a number of armed Cutters and other small craft. These are based out of the starport, which has a few salvaged turrets and some security troops. Garoo itself has a large (12,000-ton) Orbital Defense Station which is the base for three squadrons of TL9 fighters, a flight of TL9 gunships mounting salvaged weapons of a higher TL, 12 SDBs of various types ranging from a missile boat converted from a Scout/Courier to a 1,000-ton Xboat tender retrofitted with heavy hull armor and a particle accelerator bay. The mainstay of the PDC is a 5,000-ton monitor built out of six other ships.

The Republican Naval Corps

The RNC operates out of Garoo Starport, where a few security troops and a far greater number of technical personnel look after the ships of the fleet. The RNC actually operates fewer warships than logistics and transport vessels (although all transports are lightly armed and could contribute to a last-ditch defense of the system).

The RNC operates 11 transports, along with a fleet of 7 jump-capable warships. These range from a pair of 300-ton escorts to a 20,000-ton Vargr heavy cruiser (now much modified).

The Republican Customs Corps

The Customs Corps has about 300 personnel stationed around the Republic. Its personnel also operate three Cutters, mainly to enforce prospecting restrictions at Garoo III.

No statistics are given here for Republican units. If a vessel is required for a scenario, its statistics will be presented there. GMs are encouraged to design their own ships for the Republic, with the following guidelines:

• Most Garoo ships are built around components salvaged at Graveyard. Construction is thus directed by what is available, and most ships are highly individual. Some mount Darrian, Aslan, or even Droyne systems alongside Imperial-standard ones. A few ships, especially small craft, are locally built with TL 9 components and are far more standardized.

• There is always a lot of wasted space in Garoo designs as a result of using non-standard components.

• Design philosophy is to maximize firepower, at the expense of mobility if necessary. Low jump numbers and poor to inadequate defenses are common.

Adventures in the Republic

There are many, many opportunities for adventure against the backdrop of the Garoo Question. Covert operations may be undertaken by all sides. Free traders may engage in illicit trade and smuggling. Scouts may be assigned to infiltration and intelligence gathering. The military might even conduct surgical strikes. An ambitious GM might choose to run a diplomatic-level campaign in which the above are all tools at the players' disposal. With so many powerful groups involved, such a campaign could take many interesting turns.

The Garoo System

The Garoo system comprises three worlds and a sparse asteroid belt, orbiting two suns.

GM's Data

Garoo Prime is a main sequence star which provides little warmth to the two worlds orbiting it (Garoo and Garoo III), while Garoo Beta is a tiny subdwarf in a far orbit. Garoo Beta provides a little light to its single frozen world, Graveyard.

The asteroid belt lies in an extreme orbit around Garoo Beta. It consists mainly of small dust particles with a few bodies massing more than a few pounds. Ton-plus asteroids are very rare.

For a binary system, Garoo is empty and rather barren, with no gas giants. A microjump is the quickest mode of transit between the distant worlds of the system. If transit is made without using jump drive, the following table should be used to compute travel time. All transit times are given in days.

Â	1g	2g	3g	4g	5g	6g
Garoo Prime to Garoo III	1.7	1.2	1	0.8	0.8	0.7
Garoo III to Garoo	2.1	1.5	1.2	1	0.9	0.8
Garoo to Garoo Beta	5.6	4	3.2	2.8	2.5	2.3
Garoo Beta to Graveyard	14.5	10.3	8.3	7.2	6.3	5.9
Graveyard to Planetoid Belt	21.9	15.5	12.6	10.9	9.8	8.9

Worlds of the Garoo System -- Garoo

- **Starport:** Class V
- **Diameter:** 1,802 miles (2,900 km)
- **Atmosphere:** None
- **Surface Water:** None
- **Climate:** Frozen
- **Population:** 200,000,000
- **Government:** Oligarchy (The Garoo War Council)
- **Control Rating:** 5
- **TL:** 9

Garoo is the outermost of the two small rocky planets orbiting Garoo Prime. The world possesses an abundance of minerals but has little else to recommend it. Sealed habitats cover roughly 65% of the planetary surface, in which the population is fairly self-sufficient.

Garoo Starport is the world's greatest asset and contains a TAS hostel, a large highport, an Astroburgers franchise office, an AI Morai brokerage, and a sizable complex of shipyards. The population of Garoo is mostly Solomani in descent, with Vilani and other humans making up less than 10% of the population. An enclave of Vargr (3.6% of the population) live in a ghetto known as Fenris Town. These Vargr are descendants of a group who arrived on Garoo in 603 during the First Frontier War aboard a misjumped heavy cruiser. The vessel and the plunder it contained were traded for the right to live on Garoo as part of its society.

Although they live apart from humans, Vargr are full members of Garoo society and have a representative on the war council. Some extremists still view the Vargr as unclean "foreign dogs" and want to send them home to the Vargr Enclaves -- or anywhere else but Garoo.

Vargr starship design and weapon systems have greatly influenced the construction of Garoo war and merchant vessels.

Worlds of the Garoo System -- Garoo III

- **Starport:** Class I
- **Diameter:** 8,000 miles
- **Atmosphere:** Standard Oxygen-Nitrogen
- **Surface Water:** 43%
- **Climate:** Cool
- **Population:** 200
- **Government:** Colony
- **Control Rating:** 6 to 3 depending upon where you are on the planet
- **TL:** 9

Garoo III is the nearest planet to Garoo Prime, and is actually more habitable than Garoo itself. The world was the last body in the system to be explored, hence its name.

Garoo has remained undeveloped as it has little or no mineral wealth. This has not stopped hopeful prospectors from continuing to search for the deposits which, they reason, surely must lie hidden somewhere. There may be something in the rumors of hidden wealth, for in 1101, Sternmetal Horizons set up a 12-man base and began extracting uranium from a site in the Dorra Badlands.

The only other settlement on the planet is the Republic's starport, Port Herty. This is a simple affair of precast concrete structures, operated by about 100 personnel of the Republican Customs Corps. Their main function is to check all the mineral claims, sell supplies to prospectors, and claim prospecting taxes.

All spacecraft arriving at Garoo III are required to land at Port Herty for an inspection, and no ships are allowed to operate away from the port. Prospectors are thus forced to use small ground vehicles. This simple law allows the customs service to effectively regulate prospecting activity, as all claims and finds must come through the port.

Worlds of the Garoo System -- Graveyard

- **Starport:** Class 0. The Salvage Corps operates a polar refueling station for salvage operations
- **Diameter:** 1260 miles
- **Atmosphere:** Trace Oxygen-Nitrogen

- **Surface Water:** None
- **Climate:** Frozen
- **Population:** 750 Naval and Salvage personnel
- **Government:** Commander in the Salvage Office
- **Control Rating:** 5
- **TL:** 9

Graveyard is a small iceball of a world at the very outer edge of the system. It has been something of a gold mine for the Republic. Over the years many vessels have misjumped into Graveyard's gravity well, notably the heavy cruiser which brought the Vargr population to Garoo. The reason for this strange attraction is unknown, but as usual, the Ancients have received the blame.

Salvage operations have yielded a number of composite vessels to add to the growing strength of the Republican Navy. At present the silent wrecks orbiting Graveyard include several Imperial traders. A Salvage Office SDB guards the wrecks as a swarm of gigs carry technicians and salvage officers between the polar salvage station and the various derelicts.

Editor's Note: The authors propose to write a series of adventures dealing with "The Garoo Question," if there is sufficient reader interest.