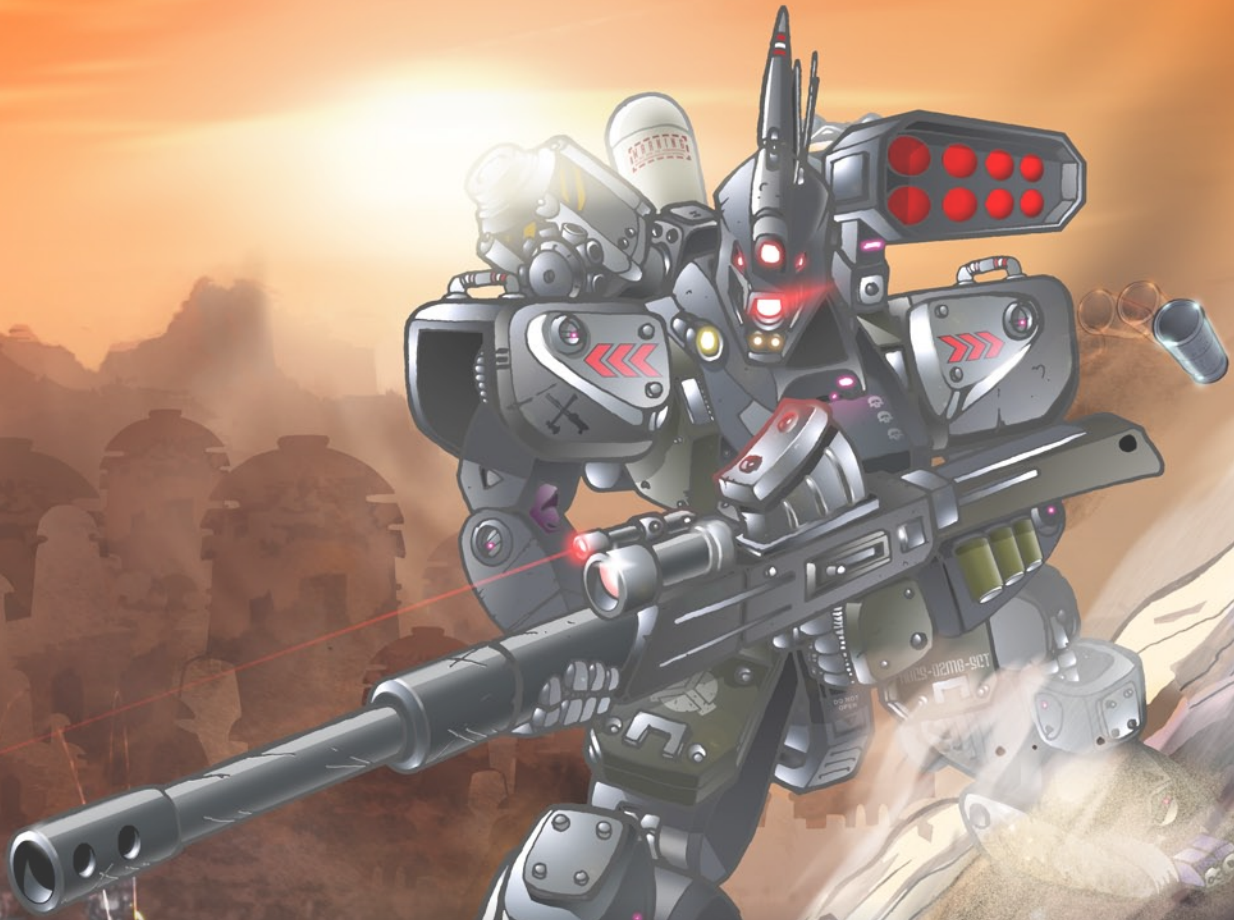


AURORA

THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
LOCKED AND LOADED IS HERE!
GEAR KRIEG AND HEAVY GEAR FICTION
THE PARANORMAL MEETS SUPERSCIENCE
VARIANT RULES FOR SILCORE



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AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE SHADES IN THE NIGHT

From the Editor...

“Lock and Load” was a military command in the United States. Originally, this order referred to the operation of the M1 Garand rifle. The phrase describes the insertion of a clip of ammunition into the rifle: before loading the clip, the proper procedure is to lock back the bolt using the operating rod. To load the clip without first locking the bolt could result in the bolt inadvertently expending a round, which could be lethal. Then you load the clip. Finally you locked the bolt forward again, forcing a round into the chamber, readying the rifle for use.

“Lock and load” has a more general meaning now, warning people to get ready for action. It was immortalized by John Wayne in 1949’s *Sands of Iwo Jima*.

-- With info from Wikipedia

The phrase is ubiquitous -- used even in Star Trek movies now. Get your weapons at the ready. The battle is about to commence. Contact is imminent.

Two polar states face off against each other across a desert no-mans-land that bisects the planet. From nowhere the attack can commence. They’re coming. Lock and Load.

As you have probably guessed, this issue is all about the release of *Locked & Loaded*. This huge book can only be properly celebrated with much fanfare. Last year, *Heavy Gear Blitz!* was nominated for an Origin award. After we peeled ourselves off the ceiling with excitement, the gears were set in motion to create an updated version of *Blitz!* that took the game to new levels, loaded with new goodness.

That version is now here, ready to ship in May. Inside *Aurora* this month we have previews of the finished product, a behind the scenes look at the development of the cover, and an interview with the award-nominated lead designer. It’s *Blitz!* month here...

Get ready! Here comes Issue 2.3.

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor

THE GREAT AURORA 2.4 CHALLENGE

A challenge! If we get enough art submissions (say around 20 artists worth), I will hereby make issue #2.4 an all art issue. Yes, you read that right. An **ALL ART ISSUE**. Any art type -- sketches, renderings, paintings, Wacom-drawings, photomontages, technical drawings... any and all. So all you artists out there, budding or no, get your art in and be published!

Submission date for #2.4 is June 15th.



OFFICIAL-DP9

Only articles stamped “Official” are considered to be from Dream Pod 9 for Tournament or similar reasons. Some official material will be noted as optional, and are therefore treated as “Officially Optional”. Said another way, consider the material in Official articles the same though published in a DP9 book.

TEST DRIVE

Articles stamped Test Drive indicates that the rules being presented are in testing. The rules are not official -- yet -- and being considered for later publication as Errata or are products in development. DP9 would appreciate feedback on their use, but they are not to be considered official. Note that they may change at any time or never be seen again.

Anything not so marked is a fan submitted rule not regarded as official and does not change the games or the DP9 game-universes as written in the books. Optional rules should only be used if all players agree upon their inclusion before play.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Alexander Perkins (ap@alexanderperkins.com) -- *Evolution of a Cover*

You can see more of Alexander's work at: <http://www.alexanderperkins.com>

Greg Perkins (gregoryperkins@gmail.com) -- *Evolution of a Cover*

Greg Perkins is a graduate student at the University of Waterloo School of Architecture. His spare time is generally occupied with graphic design or Heavy Gear related creative projects. You can see some of these projects at the following address: www.coolminiornot.com/artist/mason. NOTE the illustration is an homage/parody to the Patlabor TV series, this is the typical screen that would come before and after a commercial break: http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2013/2130168604_33d1907c5d_o.gif

Jason Dickerson (JDDWolf@yahoo.com) -- *Raimus' Raiders, The Asp End of the Stick 3, Magic and Psychics in GK*

Jason is continuing the crusade for converting all Heavy Gear player to Aspdom. He is the President of the Save the Asp Society (S.A.S) on the DP9 Forums. He also runs a Southern Play by Post campaign on the forums called "Chung Tang-Bang!" which heavily showcases the members of the 13th Heavy Gear Regiment and their allied Raimus's Raiders

Jason Jarvis (jayderyu@gmail.com) -- *Mana My Majik*

Jason a lover of Dream Pod 9 since purchasing Project A-ko and Video Fighter. Since then the Master of Engrish Mangling has been forcing his gaming group to play Silhouette ever since. Currently living in Vancouver (the Lower Rainland), British Columbia with his (very patient) wife and two distractions...err, kids. (This article also edited by Moriah Lalonde)

John Bell (jakarnilson@magma.ca) -- *Alfie's Tanners*

John Buckmaster (dp9.rules.support@gmail.com) -- *Messages from the Pod*

John Buckmaster is DP9's head rules monkey and line developer. He's one of the masterminds behind the whole Blitz thing, and has been a Heavy Gear fan forever.

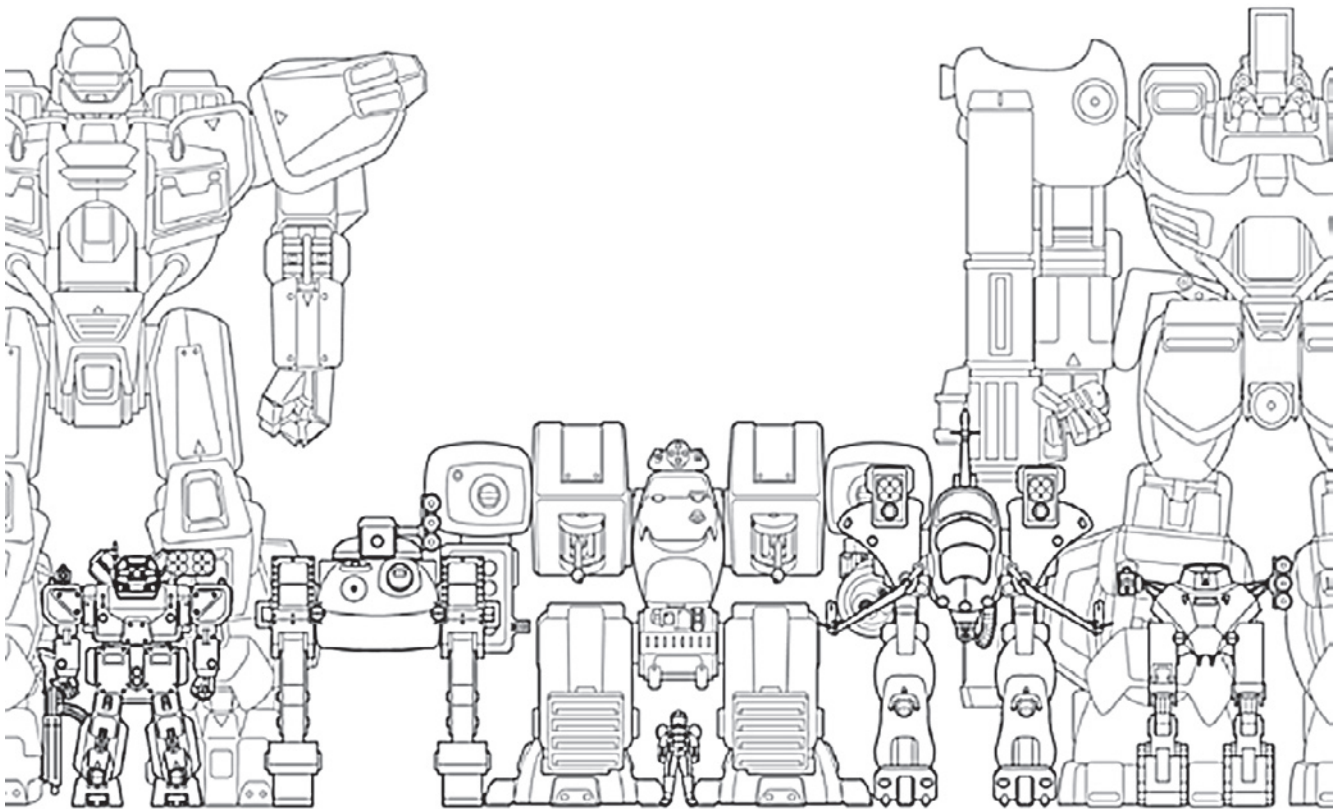
Oliver Bollmann (kannikcat@hotmail.com) -- *Core Injection: Variant RPG Rules, Words from the Designer*

It all started in a hobby store one day twenty odd years ago with an odd box containing something called Top Secret. Almost as soon as he began gaming he began writing, tinkering and adding for and to them, which led to self-publishing and e-publishing several supplements. In the times he's not playing games, practicing traditional Chinese martial arts, designing buildings, or being a stand for the world he continues to write and create for all manner of things. He's been in love with the DP9 universes since the first HG release and began his direct involvement with the Pod crew a couple of years ago.

Poh Tun Kai (ptikachu@gmail.com) -- *OACS-1M/SPPT JAGER SMOKEJUMPER*

Poh Tun Kai has worked as a technology writer, a two-fisted editor, and a wild-eyed game designer. His first experience with Heavy Gear was with a RAFM Iguana in a free-for-all tactical scenario in 1997. He was taken out by a kamikaze Jager with a hand grenade.

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Aurora Magazine, Volume 2, Issue 3, Published May 1st, 2008

"You want us to get it there, oui? Not a problem. We have it covered. Our pilots are, shall we say, more than capable. They'll drop us right where you want us to be."

Founded in the first week of the War of the Alliance, this notorious and feared unit had its roots in a moderately successful caravan security company called Valiant Shields, which operated as a Mekong mercenary group sanctioned by the Guild, but primarily operating in the Badlands. VS had been the brainchild of a Paxton manager named Vernon Meeks, who migrated to the Mekong in the late 1800's. He had garnered a great deal of success in his business through his contacts in Peace River as well as his Mekongese business interests. He employed a variety of light gears, hoppers, and ground vehicles to protect the massive caravans that made their way through the semi-seasonal circuits in the harsh lands of the Badlands. Right up until the first days of the CEF's attack on Terra Nova, the company had prospered into a company sized unit, but in the opening days of the invasion, the caravan that was being protected by VS was deemed to be a military column and attacked with aerial bombardments. The attacks left only a handful of survivors. Among those that survived at the time were two men that would eventually forge the Raiders from the ashes of Valiant Shields: Malcolm Ramius and Ocavian Paolo.

Ramius had been a longtime pilot for Paxton, before becoming a mercenary. He had joined Valiant a decade after it was founded and had risen to becoming an officer in the company, commanding the unit's air resources. Never an ambitious man, Ramius had the unfortunate luck of being the highest ranking survivor of Valiant. Unfortunate, because he found himself in charge of the worst elements of the company. The only survivors were a Northern expatriate, a band of Republicans with authority issues, and one young wild eyed feral Emirate, that claimed he was heir to a throne in his native lands. The struggle to keep the band alive had barely begun when the young Emirate nearly killed Ramius for his incompetence, but the wild youth was kept at bay long enough to turn his bloodlust towards the enemy.

After running into a band of rovers in their encampment and defeating them, the motley group found the means to escape from the Badlands. Making their way to the maglev lines in acquired vehicles, the group fled to Hsi Tsang and found themselves caught up in the defense of the league against CEF incursions. Though a small unit at the beginning, Ramius's contacts in the Guild gained them lucrative defense contracts in Mekong City, which allowed them to avoid the worst fighting in the early parts of the war and gain a better understanding of what type of enemy they faced. Ramius's unit also had the advantage of being highly mobile with an aircraft pilot leading

them, which would also prove to be an important factor later in the War. It was also during this time that the feral Emirate boy would prove to be more than a wild-eyed killer with boasts of his ancestry.

Ocavian Paolo a.k.a the Exsanguinated Emir, one of the boogymen of the ESE and the Mekong. Due to the outrageous level of violence and massacres that seem to follow in his wake, he's become a popular cultural figure whose notoriety has reached Jack the Ripper proportions. However, despite being both glamorized and demonized by Southern and Northern media outlets, no one seems to have any solid information about him. Most people think that he's in his late forties or fifties (cycles), tall, muscular, possibly horrible disfigured, impotent (yet also a rampant rapist), slaver, indulger of incest, torture, and pretty much any form of evil that can be attributed to him. In a way his association in the past with Ramius's Raiders has also given this organization its reputation.

One place that Paolo is generally not demonized is actually in Mekong City. There he is generally regarded as a local hero for his exploits during the War of the Alliance. Wings of Mercy, a movie made right after the war, spins Paolo as a capable and charismatic leader of the Thulian Strategic Services, a conglomeration of merc groups that rebelled against the Guild leadership in late 1914. A little known incident that occurred during that time resulted in the Guild revoking membership to those that wouldn't defend Hsi Tsang. The Raiders had successfully engaged and defended Mekong City's southern wall from a number of incursions and had set themselves up for the long term operations in the region. Their numerous successes with guerilla warfare and the capture of some CEF officers deep in enemy territory had marked the unit's growth. Most of these tactics were devised and implemented by Paolo and the unit was seeing a rapid growth from volunteers from the hard hit regions. The more people the unit recruited the more they were getting paid by the Peacekeepers, who saw the merc unit's results as worth the cost.

Hsi Tsang was not a defensible position and both Ramius and Paolo, who had by this time risen to second in command, determined that it would be suicidal and not financially viable for them to be thrown into the suicidal meat grinder. Rather than turning their backs on the Guild and those that had no other choice but to go, Paolo used the Raider's money and contacts to organize refueling bases and fall back points for those that would be fleeing the doomed city. Well after the fall of the city, the TSS operated for two seasons.. They had secured the line long enough to move a regiment's worth of troops back to reinforce Mekong City. During the last days of the doomed city's fight, members of the Raiders fought hard to rescue as many

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THE 13TH MILICIA HEAVY GEAR REGIMENT

members of the Guild out of the city. After the fall of Hsi Tsang, TSS picked up where the Mercenary Guild had left off and organized the mercs into a cohesive fighting unit that assisted in the defense of the capitol. After the war, key members of the TSS returned to Hsi Tsang and reconciled with the Mercenary Guild. Many of the senior members of TSS ended up as board members of the Mercenary Guild providing the means for the Guild to rapidly rebuild rather than fragment into infighting.

In general the movie represented the most accurate portrayal of Paolo of all of the movies, but even it was flawed in portraying Paolo as an ideal tall good looking man. It was the period right after the war that Paolo's notoriety began to flourish. Some of it was justified, but a good deal of the horrors attributed to him were just fanciful exploitations of the press.

After the War of the Alliance, the regiment sized mercenary unit was reorganized into three compagnies based out of Mekong City, Hsi Tsang, and the last left with Ocavian Paolo to rip away the throne from his mother's hands in his ancestral homeland. At the core of this fighting group was a band of men and women called the Bloodhands, a fanatical unit who worshiped Paolo as a god. How this evolved is not well known, but the atrocities that these followers committed in the ESE in the name of their god became the subject of many tabloids of the day as well as some of the talk-shows in the Southern Republic and the North, who pointed to this bloody civil war between a rural emir and one of her heirs as an example of Emirate excesses. The two cycle bloody conflict left twenty thousand dead among them most of the emirate household. The horrific brutality of Paolo's war was just too shocking for the leagues that had hoped for peace at the end of the War of the Alliance. The Curia had demanded the Patriarch to intercede in the conflict, but strangely he was silent on the matter. When Ocavian succeeded in capturing and executing his mother, the Patriarch recognized his claim, but rumors also say that Masao indirectly told Paolo to leave the ESE and not raise any more ire from the AST Curia. So having only ruled for scant weeks, Ocavian Paolo married his only surviving sister and left her in regency, which some claim was his intention all along. He disappeared after leaving his homeland, but rumors of massacres in the rural areas the Badlands, Mekong, or the ESE almost always get placed at Paolo's feet.

In truth with such poor documentation on the physical appearance of Ocavian Paolo, he blended back into the Raiders running their day to day operations. Though officially, he is no longer a member of the unit, he travels from place to place maintaining the logistics of the unit and occasionally taking command during jungle or urban combat.

The remaining units in the Raiders operated as primarily logistical support units for the Peace Keepers or the MILICIA, but they also maintained a highly elite group of bandit hunters. The Raiders have one of the largest independently owned fleets of Walfish and Bacchus transport craft and they are known for their unbelievable courage to fly under the worst conditions. Most of the pilots are veterans of the TSS who flew their craft while being harassed by CEF interceptors and terrible conditions. In addition to their transports, the Raiders also have broad access to Titan and Samson helicopters, which aid their ground units with mobile firepower and swift extractions for their infantry. Besides their air assets, the Raiders employ mostly tanks, infantry, and gears, though most of their gears fall into the heavier units. Most Raiders are veterans of the War of the Alliance and have proven repeatedly their resilience and expertise in their craft.

Fielding the Ramius' Raiders:

As an attached mercenary unit, the Raiders are built as a Leagueless unit that is attached to any Mekong, MILICIA, or ESE force. Up to fifty percent of the force maybe composed of the Raiders. ESE forces must use the Independent affiliation option to pick up the Raiders.

When fielding the Raiders as an independent force, use the MILICIA's Armor Regiment list but with the following modifications:

- They may not take any OPsec or MP units.
- No more than one strider unit may be used at any level of points.
- The independent Raiders may also use the Leagueless rules to build up to a third of their force to represent the nontraditional aspects of their regiment.

• They may not use the Convicts or Fresh Meat rules.
Rules for all Raider units:

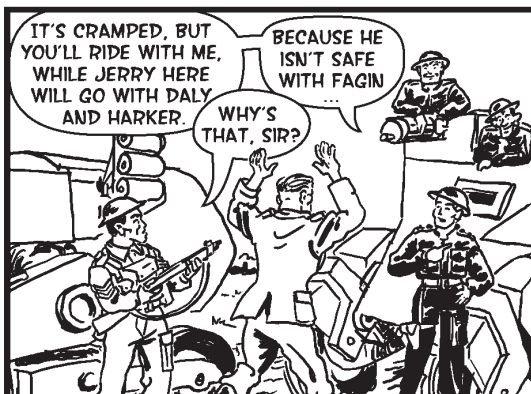
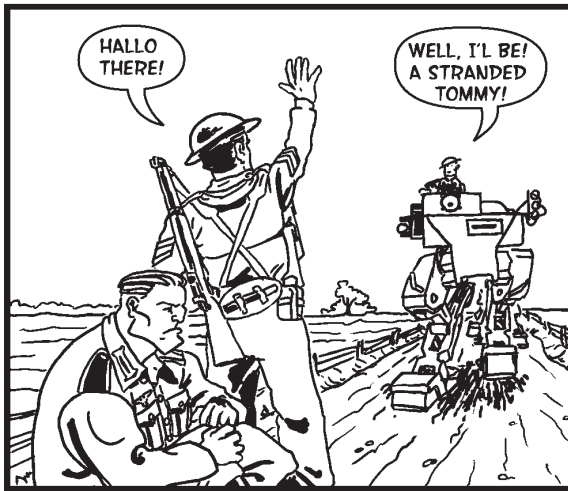
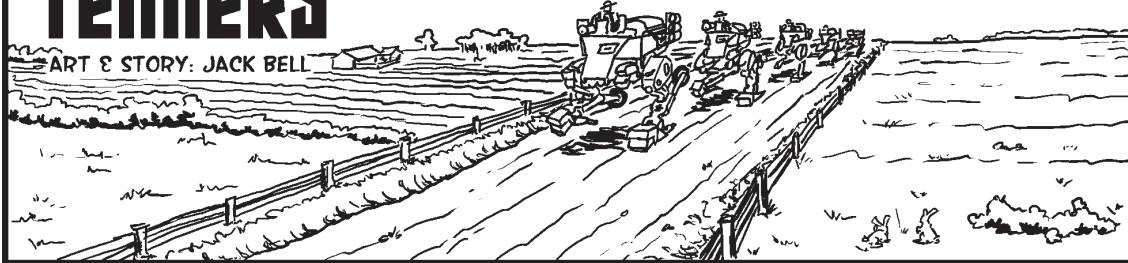
- Raider units are all considered veteran and must take at least one veteran option
- Urban Fighters: All Raider Infantry are tenacious urban fighters and receive a +1 bonus to defense rolls while inside structures. This increases the cost per escouade by +5 points. If Morale Rules are being used then one unit that has picked up at least three veteran options maybe designated as a Bloodhand unit. This unit is considered to be fanatical and ignore all morale checks. They never become demoralized or broken. This ability costs an extra +15 points.

JOHN BELL

ALFIE'S TENNERS

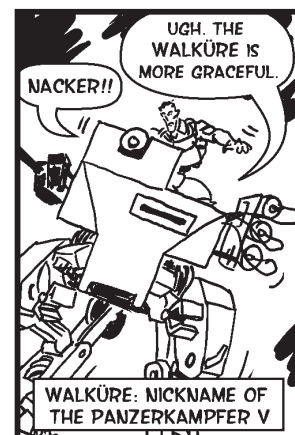
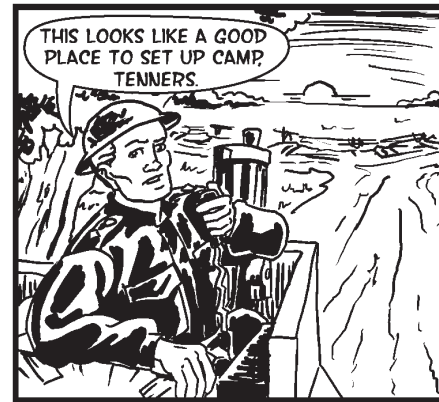
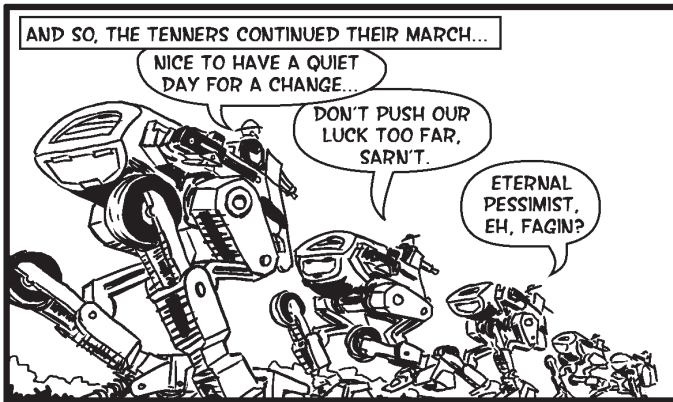
FRANCE, MAY 1940. 2/LT. ALPHONSE MARCH IS LEADING HIS WALKER TROOP THROUGH THE FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE, WHILE TRYING TO CATCH UP WITH THE BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE AFTER THEY WERE CUT OFF BY A GERMAN COLUMN...

ART & STORY: JACK BELL



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ALFIE'S TENNERS



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE
ALFIE'S TENNERS



NEXT:: THE TENNERS LICK THEIR WOUNDS & GET READY TO RUN!

The decade following the War of the Alliance saw two noteworthy developments that would have a surprising and profound influence on the Great Plains Fire Service.

The first, in the wake of the war, was the increasing availability of the Black Mamba in Southern airdropped units. The second, in TN 1931, was the retirement of Adjudant-Chef Ambrose Chard from the Southern Republic's 99th Gear Regiment - The Skyhawks. These two factors would lead to one of the most daring and spectacular uses of walker vehicles in the civilian world - as rapid-response airdroppable wildland firefighting gears.

As more and more paratrooper units began phasing out the old OACS-1M/PT Jager Paratrooper in favor of the newer Black Mamba, the older gear became increasingly available to second-line units, and began to appear in civilian use. One civilian outfit in need of such specialized vehicles was the Great Plains Fire Service. Based out of Aquitaine, the GPFS was formed to battle the brushfires that sometimes plagued communities in the dry, sun-parched regions of the Great Southern Plain. In particularly dry seasons, all it takes is a single spark to turn the bent and twisted trees and endless plains of dried grass and brush into thousand-acre wildfires. Over the cycles the GPFS became increasingly reliant on airborne operations to suppress wildfires, but was forced to use outdated fixed-wing aircraft and work gears due to funding problems.

In TN 1931, Ambrose Chard returned to his home city of Aquitaine, where the war hero was rewarded for his service with the then-vacant position of Director-in-Chief of the GPFS. Not content to rest on his laurels, the former regimental NCO of the famed Republican airborne gear unit immediately began using his military contacts to acquire more modern equipment for the GPFS, beginning with a consignment of thirty "obsolete" Jager Paratroopers. GPFS Assistant Chief of Logistics, Gilliam Nato, was placed in charge of the Jager Smokejumper project. Prior to Chard's arrival, the brilliant young Nato had attempted to adapt the Urban Rescue Iguana for wildland fire suppression duties, but the project had stalled due to budgetary concerns, as well as the difficulty of adapting the gear for parachute deployment from the GPFS' existing fixed-wing aircraft.

The airdroppability, rugged movement system, and the ease of maintenance and modification associated with the Jager chassis, made the Jager Paratrooper a much more suitable vehicle for the needs of the Great Plains Fire Service. With the coming summer season, predicted to be one of the driest ever, less than a season away, Assistant Chief Nato immediately began the work of installing chemical foam cannons and specialized brush-cutting tools on the gears. Chainswords,

vibromachetes, entrenching tools from old Desert Jagers, and even a duelist's vibroaxe were among the varied tool loadouts installed on the gears, to be used in clearing fire lines ahead of wildfires. A specialized fire-retardant coating was applied to the gears' armor and joints, while Director-in-Chief Chard brought in several former Skyhawks pilots to begin a crash training course in airdroppable gear operations for the vehicle crews of the GPFS. As the inevitable wildfire season approached, Chard and Nato pushed their teams to near exhaustion to prepare the new Jager Smokejumper Cadres for action, and two of the gears were put out of action during training accidents.

SERVICE RECORD

29 Summer TN 1931 saw not one but three massive wildfires spring up across the Great Plains between Aquitaine and Saragossa, endangering a dozen rural communities and small farms. As the Ministry of Information began loudly blaming "Northern Saboteurs" for the fires, Chard's rapid-response teams, equipped with 28 of the new Jager Smokejumpers, were already airborne. In the late afternoon of 29 Summer, Section 1 of Compagnie A of the GPFS Airborne Unit deployed the first 16 Jager Paratroopers over a ridge just north of the endangered plains town of Lufkin, ahead of a rapidly advancing wildfire.

Although 4 of the gears were blown several kilometers off course, the remainder of Section 1's Smokejumper cadres landed safely and joined local fire crews in clearing a fire line with entrenching tools, while two GPFS Bacchus foam bombers attempted to suppress the wildfire. As the fire approached, it looked as if even the additional efforts of the Jager Smokejumpers would not be enough. But Gilliam Nato had armed the gears for this contingency: each cadre leader's gear had a rear skirt-mounted storage bay containing "bunker buster" hand grenades, which were used in a risky but desperate attempt to blast a larger firebreak. In the wake of the blasts, even before the smoke had cleared, the Jager Smokejumpers were seen rushing back into action, to the cheers of the local fire crews. It was another exhausting hour later before it became clear that the worst of the fire had been turned away from Lufkin. Elsewhere that day, the other 12 Jager Smokejumpers were also deployed 100km west of the Saragossa range to protect several small farms from wildfires, also meeting with significant success.

In the wake of the Jager Smokejumper's spectacular baptism of fire, Ambrose Chard received approval to vastly expand his Airborne crews, and less than a cycle later, Territorial Arms' civilian division announced a full-scale conversion program to adapt more Jager Paratroopers for new airborne firefighting teams across the AST.

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OACS-1M/SPPT JAGER SMOKEJUMPER

HG3E STATS

Jager Smokejumper - Airdroppable Firefighter Gear
 Size: 6, Height: 4.3 meters, Width: 3.0 meters, Wperational Weight: 6450 kg
 Cost: 509,250 dinars (Mass Production)

Threat Value: 679

Defensive Threat Value: 418

Movement: Walker: 4/7, Ground: 6/12; Maneuver: 0

Armor: 15/30/45

Miscellaneous Threat Value: 1397

Crew: 1; Deployment Range: 500 km

Perks and Flaws: Communications (0/10km), Airdroppable, HEP Desert, 2xManipulator Arm (6, Can Punch), Fire Resistant, Reinforced System: Movement, Easy to Modify (all), Sensors (+0/2km)

Offensive Threat Value: 222

Fire Control: 0

Weapons:

Quantity	Name	Code	Damage	ACC	Range	ROF	Ammo	Special
1	Medium Flamer	MFL	x7	+1	0/0/0/1	1	40	IF, Non-Lethal, Fire-Fighting
2	Antipersonnel Grenade Launcher	APGL	x3	-1	1/2/4/8	0	5	IF, Non-Lethal, Fire-Fighting
1	Chainsword	CS	x9	0	0/0/0/0	0	-	Melee

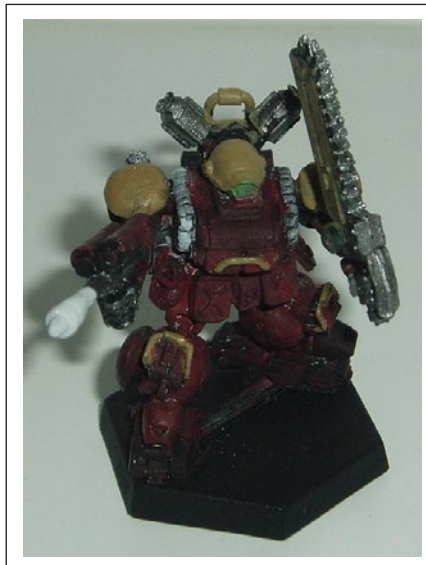
Optional Equipment:

Add 2 HHGs, Reinforced Ammo/Fuel (HHG): 849 TV

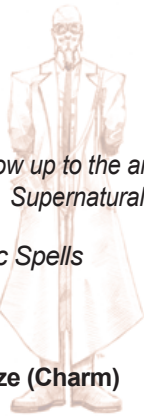
Add Mining Equipment (Light Duty): 807 TV

Replace CS with VB: 680 TV

Replace CS with VA: 692 TV



Miniature painted by Poh Tun Kai



This is a follow up to the article in Aurora Issue 2.2: Gear Krieg Supernatural: Magic in Gear Krieg.

- *Low Magic Spells*

Charm Spells

Seductive Gaze (Charm)

Spell Rating: 2

Duration: MoS in Minutes +10 minutes

Range: Eye Contact

Casting Time: 1 Action

Save: Contested Will Save Against the Caster's Skill Roll

Effect: The spell overwhelms the primal needs of the intended target and provides the caster a +2 to all Seduction rolls made against a target.

Lingering Thoughts (Charm)

Spell Rating: 3

Duration: MoS in Days +1 Day

Range: Vocal One Target

Casting Time: 1 Action

Save: Contested Will Save Against the Caster's Skill Roll

Effect: The caster can implant a suggestion into the target that can be triggered with a command word within the duration period. The suggestion must be no more than a sentence long and cannot be directly harmful to the target. The target will be compelled to do the action, but is allowed another saving throw when activated by the command word.

Compulsion (Charm)

Spell Rating: 3

Duration: MoS in Minutes +10 minutes

Range: Vocal One Target

Casting Time: 1 Action

Save: Contested Will Save Against the Caster's Skill Roll

Effect: A one word command is uttered which makes the target do everything in threes for the duration of the spell. A target affected by this spell would open and close a door three times before going through it three times. If they were affected and were trying to load a firearm, they would load the magazine then take it out and reload it three times.

Hexes

Gremlin's Havoc (Hex)

Spell Rating: 4

Duration: A number of hours equal to the MoS + 1 hour

Range: Line of Sight and the Curse must be heard by the victim.

Casting Time: Verbal Curse

Save: Contested Will Save Against the Caster's Skill Roll

Effect: Mechanical Devices seem to fail to do what they're supposed to around the affected target. All skills that require interaction with technology are at a -2 for the duration. Any fumbles with the skill results in a malfunction of the device used.

Uncontrollable Utterances (Hex)

Spell Rating: 3

Duration: A number of hours equal to the MoS + 1 hour

Range: Line of Sight and Curse must be heard by the victim.

Casting Time: Verbal Curse

Save: Contested Will Save Against the Caster's Skill Roll

Effect: The victim says absurd or insulting things to people around them. A compliment turns into a major faux pas. The victim's social skills are hampered by -2 for the duration of the spell.

Standing in the Storm (Hex)

Spell Rating: 4

Duration: 1 Week

Range: Line of Sight and Curse must be heard by the victim.

Casting Time: Verbal Curse

Save: Contested Will Save Against the Caster's Skill Roll

Effect: The victim is drawn to all sorts of unfortunate events and circumstances. Nothing seems to go his way. Consider the victim to be saddled with the Unlucky flaw.

Cantrips

Helpful Hands (Cantrip)

Spell Rating: 2

Duration: 10 Minutes per Point of MoS

Range: 10 Feet

Casting Time: Single Word

Save: N/A

Effect: An invisible force that can be used to stir things, lift up light books, dust, or any sort of manual labor that doesn't require more than 5lbs of lift. The MoS of the skill check indicates the number of hands that can be controlled during the duration.

Invisible Solvent (Cantrip)

Spell Rating: 3

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Casting Time: Single Word.

Save: N/A

Effect: The caster may attach any two non living objects and bond them together.



In the age of supersciences, the study of the human mind has been studied and unlocked to different degrees of success. In the Soviet Union, mad scientists under the watchful eyes of the NKVD have developed a series of drugs to induce psychic abilities. Deep in Berlin, the SS experiments on super soldier projects have unlocked some of the potentials of the mind in their subjects. In a race against the Nazis, the British look to their occult experts and Hindu allies to study the ancient mental conditioning practiced by the yogis.

All over the world, the rise in psychic awareness is heightened by each addition to the fold. Nowhere is this truer than in Edgar Cayce's commune in North America. Working with the Office of Strategic Services, Cayce's indomitable will has drawn some of the most powerful psychics to his Kentucky farm. He claims that there is an evil rising in the world that must be stopped and his guidance is needed for the righteous to succeed.

In Supernatural Gear Krieg, psychics work similarly to those who work in Magic, but the key difference is that Psychics tap into the powers of their mind rather than the eldritch powers. The powers of the mind are deep, but the dangers are also great. Unskilled users can easily burn themselves out in their use.

NEW PERKS

All psychics are one of three types: Endowed, Born, or drug induced. One of the three must be chosen for a character to be able to use psychic abilities. Psychic Born and Endowed characters may also pick Psychic Drug User in addition to their base perk.

Psychic Endowment (Acquired Perk 5 Pts)

Psychic abilities are infused into the character. This perk allows for one of the four psychic skills to be picked up.

Psychic Born (Innate Perk 8 Points)

A psychic born is able to use all of the psychic skills, but one must be chosen as their primary. The primary skill must always be one level higher than the other skills.

Psychic Drug User (Acquired Perk 2 points)

Psychic drug users utilize superscience cocktails to temporarily allow them to use their powers. Without this feat someone ingesting or injecting a cocktail would permanently burnout (see table below) after one or two uses. Psychic Drug Users can only work their abilities while under the influence of their chosen drugs. When not on their drugs most users are substance abusers of different kinds (see addiction

flaw). Superscience Drug Cocktails give the user a base qualified skill that may never be raised. The effects are temporary, usually lasting about ten minutes per dose. A character must make a Health Check after each use against the Dosage Strength or suffer System Shock damage equal to the MoF.

PSYCHIC SKILLS

There are four psychic skills that control different abilities. Only the Psychic Born can use all four skills. Psychically Endowed Characters may only choose one skill. Those who have the ability to use the Psychic drugs always roll at a base skill level of 2. This skill may not be raised and is a constant for the drug user.

Using a skill is similar in some ways to a Magic User. Unlike magic, however, the Psychic can only use abilities that they have trained for. No ability can be used untrained. Every ability has a base threshold to roll against. The greater the ability the greater the difficulty. The psychic only needs to beat the threshold for the ability to activate. Any excess MoS generally increases the power's duration. Failure results in temporary burnout equal to the MoF in days. Fumbles result in a roll on the Psychic Burnout Table. Psychic Burnout lasts for one month.

All psychic abilities are picked up in the same way as spells. The point cost to pick up a new ability is equal to the threshold point. Psychics can specialize in a number of abilities equal to their associated skill level. Specializations may be picked up more than once, but the total may not exceed the total of allowed specializations.

PSYCHIC BURNOUT TABLE	
Roll 1d6:	
1.	Shattered Will. The Psychic's resolve is lessened. Reduce the character's Willpower by 1.
2.	Burning Fevers. A constant fever causes the psychic constant discomfort. All rolls receive a -1 penalty.
3.	Paranoia. The psychic is driven insane by phantom sounds and images. Pick up 5 points of mental flaws. These are permanent, but may be bought off with xp.
4.	Muted. The Psychic is unable to speak.
5.	Blinded. The Psychic cannot see.
6.	Total Burnout. The psychic is unable to tap into their mental abilities. No psychic abilities can be used.

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GEAR KRIEG SUPERNATURAL: PSYCHICS IN GK

Abilities are purchased like spells and a Psychic must pay a cost equal to the threshold to be able to use that ability. The exception to this are Psychic Drug Users who only have to meet the aftereffects of the Dosage Strength.

NEW SKILLS

Extra Sensory Perception (Complex Skill Psyche Based)

Extra Sensory Perception covers all sense based skills such as clairvoyance, psychosomatic abilities, and foretelling. It is generally considered to be the most common of the psychic abilities.

Psychokinesis (Complex Skill Will Based)

All abilities associated with moving objects with the mind and creating shields are covered with this skill.

Psychometabolic (Complex Skill Will Based)

Psychic healing and manipulating the human body are covered by this skill.

Psychoportive (Complex Skill Psyche)

Among the rarest of abilities, Psychoportive abilities allow the psychic to astral travel, physically be in two places at once, or many other traveling abilities. This is the most difficult skill to master and many psychics have burned themselves out trying to learn this ability.

SAMPLE ABILITIES LIST

- *Low Magic Spells*

Psychosomatic Senses (ESP)

Threshold: 4

Dosage Strength: 3

Usage Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Duration: 10 Minutes per MoS +10 minutes

Saving Throw: N/A

Effects: Psychosomatic users are able to perceive the past of any object held, though sorting through the torrent of information is difficult and requires a Will check against a threshold determined by the Gamemaster to pick out any valuable information. This can be used to diagnose potential flaws or defects in a mechanical item and if the character has the appropriate skills it can be used to quickly diagnose a problem.

Minor Telekinesis (Psychokinesis)

Threshold: 3

Usage Time: 1 Action

Dosage Strength: 4

Range: Line of Sight

Duration: 1 Minute per MoS +1 minute

Saving Throw: Dodge versus the Psychic's skill roll on thrown objects.

Effects: Minor Telekinesis allows the psychic to lift and move objects within their line of sight. The weight limit is five pounds per MoS with a minimum of five pounds.

Minor Psychic Healing (Psychometabolic)

Threshold: 3

Usage Time: 1 Minute

Dosage Strength: 3

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: N/A

Effects: The psychic can remove stun effects, one system shock box, relieve minor ailments such as headaches, hangovers, joint pains, and the like. A person may not benefit from the same type of psychic healing twice in one day, though other types of healing may be used.

Minor Gate (Psychoportive)

Threshold: 6

Usage Time: 1 Action

Dosage Strength: 6

Range: Known Location within 1 mile

Duration: 1 round per MoS +1 round

Saving Throw: N/A

Effects: Minor Gate allows the psychic to create a doorway for multiple people to go through. The Gate opens up a two way portal to a known location within one mile of the user. This allows the psychic to cover a great distance instantaneously.



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE CORE INJECTION: VARIANT RPG RULES

OLIVER BOLLMANN

Core Injections are meant as supplements to the existing set of rules and expansions; an addition of material to enhance game play. For the most part, these rules can be used piecemeal at will; that is, one does not depend on the other in order to function correctly. What rules to include also greatly depends on what RDL level being used, and also the tone of the campaign. Whether you call it variant rules, alternate rules or house rules, lay some down and expand your campaign to its fullest.

Initiative & Activation

INIT, CP & REACTIONS IN SMALL SCALE ACTIONS

During small-scale skirmishes, be they fierce one-on-one battles or slightly larger squad four-on-fours, pilots generally do not act as a cohesive unit and instead act independently*. In these high-intensity situations, as there is no commander there are no Leadership Tests made to generate CPs to use during the battle.

This lack of CPs creates a gap in the options available for units. While Emergency dice can be used to an extent, there are options provided by CPs that are not covered by EDs. This is most noticeable for when a unit wishes to close on another for melee combat -- if their opponent has already activated they may close with impunity. If their opponent has not yet activated then they are certain to face a point-blank shot to the face.

In such small-scale duels, to allow for greater cinematic battles and open up options, each vehicle gains Tactical Command Points equal to their Pilot's Combat Sense CPX rating **. These TCPs can only be used by the vehicle and cannot be transferred to another pilot or vehicle, and they cannot be replenished during combat.

Additionally, at the cost of one Action, a pilot can take a moment to 'assess the situation' and gain some temporary TCPs. The pilot makes a Combat Sense test against a threshold of 5, gaining a number of CPs equal to the MoS to a maximum of their Combat Sense CPX rating **.

These CPs last for a maximum of 6 turns, after which they are lost if they have not been used.

TCPs can be used for the following actions:

- Gain an immediate +2 to a single defence roll
- Gain an extra action at no die penalty (only once per turn, maximum)
- Shift their facing by up to 120 degrees (only once per turn, maximum)
- Add one die to the pilot's initiative (used during the initiative phase)

Thus, continuing the example from above, a unit moving in to engage a target not yet activated this turn could use the +2 to defence to ensure they are not obliterated while moving in (often with the visual of jumping high to avoid the counterattack). From the opposite angle, a unit already activated could use a TCP to attack a charging opponent, or at least turn themselves around to face the newcomer. If the Pilot is out of TCPs, well, they are out of luck until they spend an action.

* Each pilot rolls Combat Sense to generate initiative, similar to Character-scale rules.

** Note that in some campaigns, such as Heavy Gear, TCPs can instead be generated off a special one-on-one type skill, such as Heavy Gear's Duellist skill. This allows for competent soldiers who are nonetheless at a disadvantage against highly trained headhunter units, dueling pilots and any other time that you don't have the support of your squad behind you...



Showdown!

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Weapon Perks & Flaws

CASCADING DAMAGE (HAYWIRE) (Cost: 2)

The Cascading perk has the same game effects as does the Haywire perk, and can encompass the Haywire perk if desired (see below). However, a weapon with the Cascading perk does not necessarily cause its extra damage effect through massive electrical discharge. Instead, it covers any weapon where once inside a vehicle it causes more damage than might be expected from its penetration capabilities.

Examples include: penetrating (delayed) explosive rounds; rounds designed to ricochet inside softer targets (be it people or inside of vehicles); particle cannons where the particles splay like water when striking a surface (causing poor penetration but widespread damage inside the vehicle not from electrical discharges), HESH rounds, etc.

Depending on the campaign style, GMs may decide that Haywire and Cascading are the same Perk with different special effects; if so, then Haywire Resistant and Cascade Resistant are also the same Perk. Otherwise, while they have the same game effect, the reasons behind them are different and so the two types of damage effects would also be considered separate, and a vehicle would need both Resistance perks to be protected against both types.

AE (Cost: Varies)

Not all Area of Effect weapons are of the bursting type. Flamethrowers, charged particle beams and other weapons compliment the standard exploding-type round. While they may not have the range capabilities of the latter, they nonetheless have their own destructive merits.

Under the base SilCore rules, the only way to represent a non-spherical wide zone of destruction is to use the Wide Angle perk. However, WA does not provide the same benefit as does AE: a minimum of DM damage, even if the attack was successfully defended against.

The expanded AE perk gains several options, allowing the selection of an area of coverage. The Perk cost is based upon the number of hexes covered by the area of effect.

The basic areas of coverage available are:

- AE: Line (one hex line)
- AE: Line (three hexes wide)
- AE: 15~ arc
- AE: 30~ arc
- AE: 60~ arc
- AE: 120~ arc
- AE: 180~ arc
- AE: Radius (includes AE0 or One Hex)

For Arcs and Lines, the cone or line of hexes affected is always drawn from the target hex in a direct line away (match to closest hex face, see note below) from the firing unit.

Note that AE attacks must be bought as ranged attacks and cannot be bought as melee attacks, even if they have no range.

For example: A flamethrower is bought as an AE attack, 0 range with a 30~ arc.

Apart from the 'shape' of the hexes affected, this expanded AE perk follows all rules as described in the SilCore rulebook.

AE COST	
PERK COST	HEXES AFFECTED
1	1
2	7
3	19
4	37
5	61
6	91
7	127
8	169
9	217
10	271

Special effects for the AE perk include:

- AE: Any Area - This allows the AE perk to cover a variable shape; the shape is chosen when the power is used. There are two options of this effect. The first allows any simple shape may be chosen, including a straight line, a ring, triangle, square, arc or etc, and halves the number of hexes affected by the AE perk (any excess hexes, that cannot be fit into the simple shape, are lost). At the cost of dividing by three the number of hexes affected, the AE perk gains the ability to

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chose ANY shape desired, including lines that turn corners, tendrils to hit many opponents, etc. The only limitation is that all hexes in the shape must touch each other by at least one hex side.

- Selective Target - When activated, the firing unit can designate targets within the area of effect to not be affected by the AE attack, thus allowing attacks around friendly units.

Adding Selective to the AE perk halves the number of hexes affected by the AE perk.

- Personal Immunity - The unit is unaffected by its own AE usage. In effect it is a self-limited version of Selective Target, above. This allows the unit to center a blast upon itself and not be affected; the unit could even buy the system with no range (the system radiates outward or possesses a hole-in-the-middle special effect). Personal Immunity costs an extra 0.5 Perks.

Note about aiming: Technically, while an AE weapon could fire with its muzzle pointed anywhere within its Firing Mount arc, this could create nightmares on a hex map for figuring out what is or what is not affected by the weapon. The easiest option is to rule that AE weapons may only fire into the discrete hex-lines (examples of which are shown on the opposite page) within the available arc of the Firing Mount. A second, more flexible option, is to create a cardboard template of the appropriate firing area, laying the template on the field of battle to check for target inclusion. If the hexes are more than half covered by the template, that hex is affected.

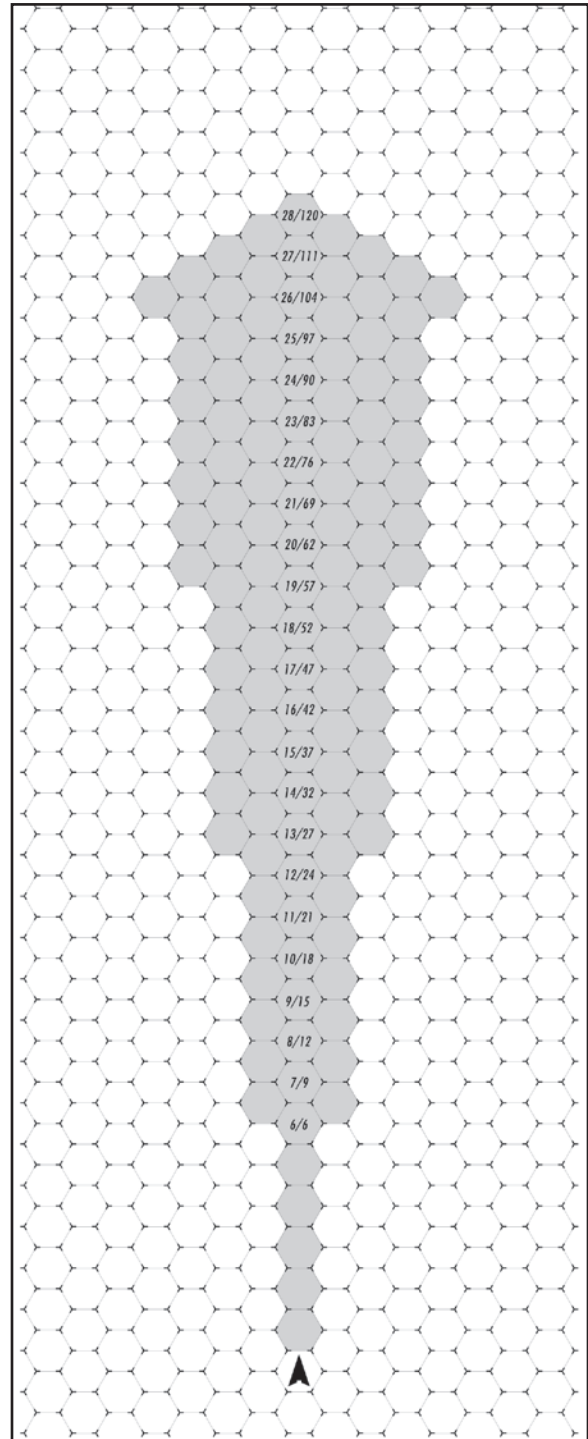
If not playing on a hex map, then a template is basically required. Any model who's base is crossed by the template is affected.

Sample AE arcs are found on the following pages. AE: Radius follows the Perk cost/radius structure from the SilCore Rules. I.e., AE:R1 is equivalent to AE1 in SilCore. For other AE types, they can be listed as AE:TypeSize. For example, AE:A30 would be AE with a 30 degree arc; AE:L3 would be a line effect 3 hexes wide.

For all diagrams, where X/Y

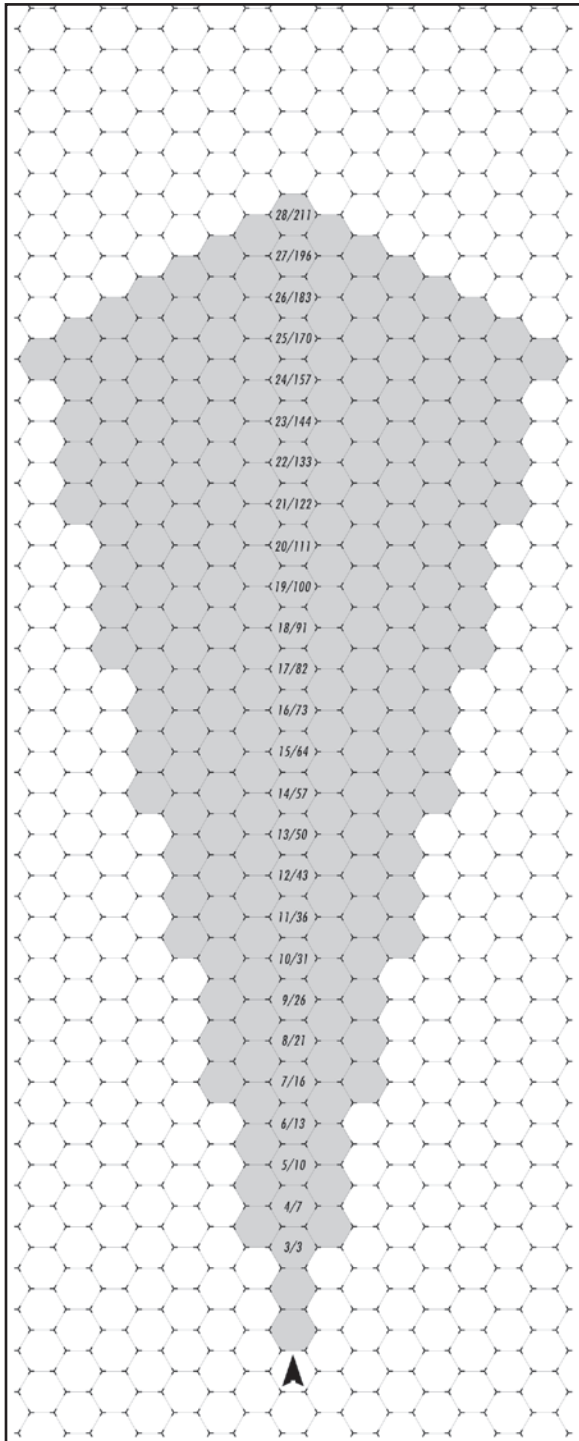
X = Distance in a straight line from start

Y = Total Hexes Affected

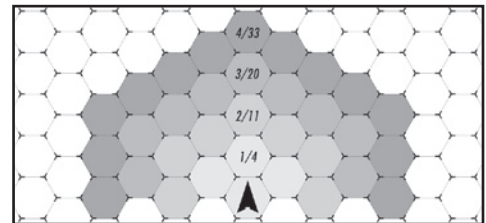


15 Degree AE Arc

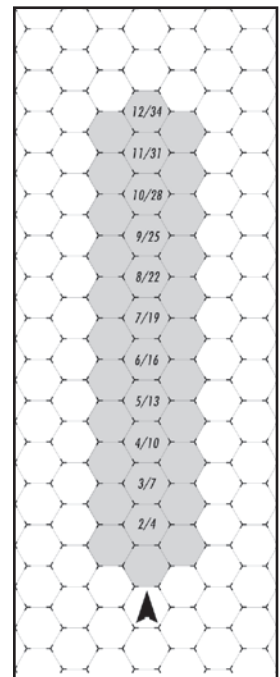
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30 Degree AE Arc

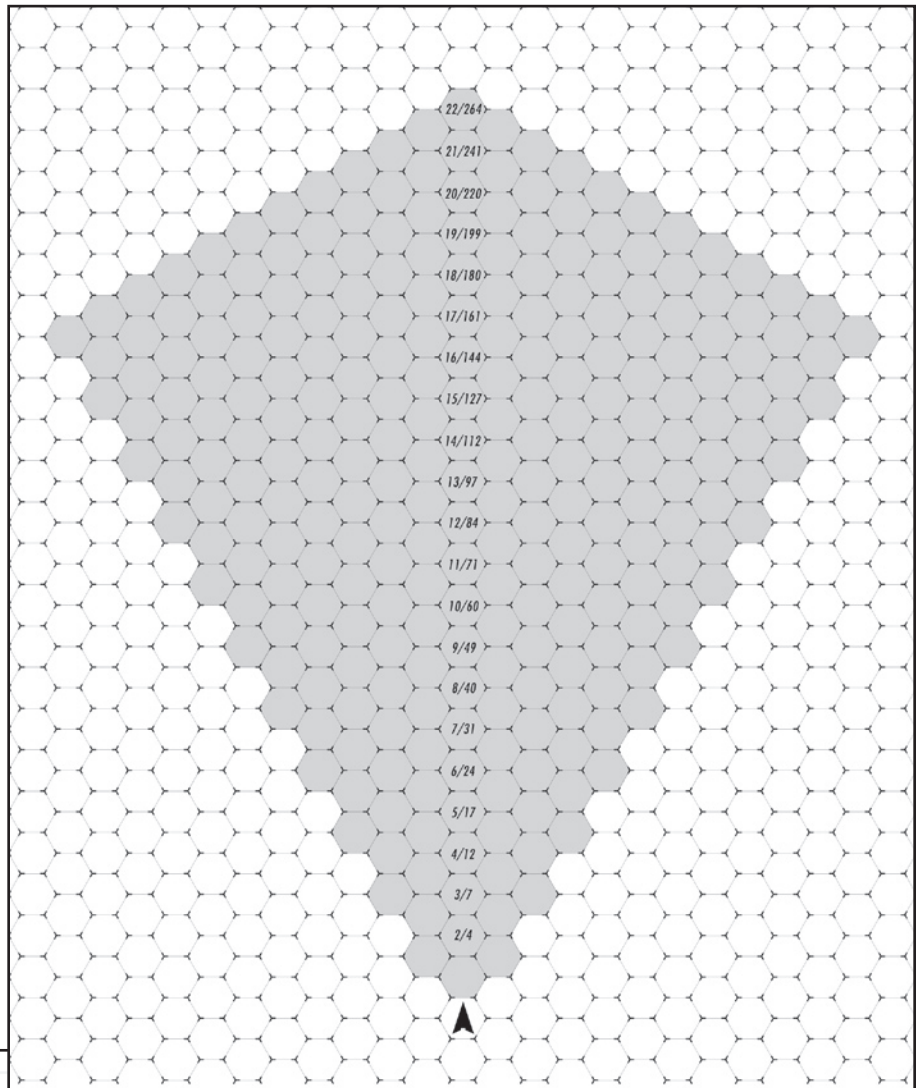


180 Degree AE Arc

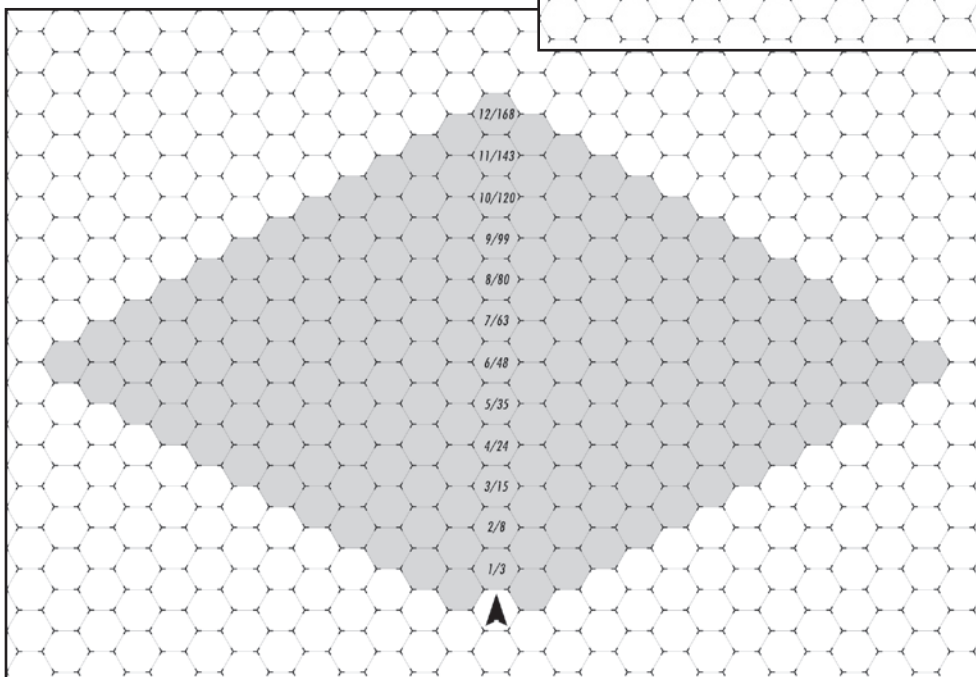


3 Hex AE Line

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60 Degree AE Arc



120 Degree AE Arc



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MANA MY MAJIK

JASON JARVIS

You have come far in your studies, young Erin. Your Mana Well is strong; it flows and weaves reality like none I have seen before. You are about set forth into this world of cars and fast food. This world is filled with people frightened of that which they cannot explain. They ignore the wonders of the world; in their ignorance they thus deceive themselves into believing that what they call "Magic" is only Illusion. You can use this perception to your advantage, however, Erin. People believe what they wish to believe, and thus will deceive themselves into providing a "rational" explanation for the true art of Majik. Use your arts carefully, disguise them as "Illusion", and be wary of those who would hunt you if they knew the truth of your powers.

The following is a rudimentary Mana based Majik system. It is designed to be simple and flexible so that it can be changed to fit the needs of the GM's setting. It does not cover concepts like rituals, magical items and other extras.

PERCEPTIONS OF MAJIK

Mana

Many cultures call this different names, but in essence it is a fluidic energy that comes from within oneself to manipulate the worlds own Energies, temporarily altering reality. Everyone has a base level of Mana that is stored throughout the body. Practitioners of Mystical Arts have honed and strengthened this mana capacity, and thus, the amount that can be used at one time.

Suggested Mana pool:

$$\text{Mana} = \text{setting level} \times (\text{Sorcery} + \text{Willpower} + \text{Fit})$$

Setting Strength	Level
High	5
Medium	4
Low	3

Restoring Mana

Mana restores at a rate of 1/hr or Meditation vs 1+1/hr MoS modified by standard modifiers like distraction.

See table to the right.

NEW SKILL

Sorcery

Specializations: Specific Spell, rituals, spell design

Possessed by: Shamans, Mages, Hollywood Witches & Warlocks

This is the default skill for performing majikal spells. Casting can take on various forms from weaving various energy patterns, making imagination to reality.

SPELLS

The spell is a manifestation from the use mana on reality. They take on a formulaic method to reduplicate the effects. These effects vary in nature. Spells in this system have a few common values that relate to use within the game system:

Spell layout breakdown

Name[level]

Attribute

Threshold/Difficulty

Effect

Level

Abstract value that represents both the Level of the spell and the Mana cost. A particular genre could use the level for various other purposes like a complexity rating. When the spell is cast the mana of the caster is temporarily reduced by this value.

Attribute

Different spells may require a different nature for a successful use. A fireball still needs to be aimed. Overpowering ones mind to put them to sleep requires a form of subtle domination.

MANA RESTORE MODIFIERS

Energy Level	Rate Modifier /hr
Ley Nexus	+3
Ley Line	+2
Strong area	+1
Normal	0
Decaying land	-1
Dead zone	-2

Thresholds

All spells have Thresholds. This is the minimum level that the caster must roll for the spell to work, which determines the MoS of the spell. A secondary value is either rolled or set by the spell. Thresholds can change based on the Caster Knowledge or Creativity attribute, subject to the GM's whim.

Difficulty

All spells have a difficulty, which is either a static value or an opposed value. The Casters MoS/MoF is determined by this value.

Effect

This is the spells special world bending ability. These rules are not always defined into easy repeatable patterns to be listed under normal rules. Effects could be Telekinesis, summoning food, causing the wind to blow over hordes of monsters.

EXAMPLE SPELL LIST

These rules are not meant to offer a massive list of spells. They are a sampling of spells so that others can be created using them as a template.

EFFECT DURATION	
Level	Duration
1	1 round
2	3 rounds
3	1 scene
4	1 day
5	1 week
6	1 month

Fire Ball[2]

Perception

4/Target Defense

Sends a flaming ball of fire at the target.

Base Range 2 + Sorcery.

Area of Effect equal to 2m

Damage equal to a fire Intensity equal to 8 + Sorcery + (MoSx2).

Remember to check for flammability.

Arcane Missiles[3]

Willpower

4/Target Defense

Creates a number of energy spikes that fly and home in towards the targets.

Base Range 2 + sorcery

Number of spikes equal to sorcery + 1

The Defender must make a Defense roll against each.

Damage X, 8 + Sorcery + Willpower.

Sleep[2]

Willpower

3/Target Willpower + current state(GM judgement)

Causes the target to become drowsy and fall asleep. The base time for the target to sleep is 4 minutes divide by the MoS. The level of sleep is relative to the Casters skill. Once the target is asleep, there is no other forced magic keeping them that way. Normal methods to wake them up will do so.

Paralysis[4]

Willpower

5/Target Willpower + 1

Causes the Target to be unable to move equal up to the effect duration of the spells MoS.

Freeze[3]

Knowledge

4/Target Fitness

The target receives an action penalty equal to the MoS for a duration equal to the Sorcery level Effect Duration.

Fire Blade[2]

Fitness

3/3

Causes a weapon to have a fire effect increasing the by 2 + MoS that lasts equal to Sorcery level Effect Duration. The Fire Intensity is equal that of 4 + MoS.

Teleport Self[5]

Knowledge

6/4

The caster can teleport to any location they can remember extremely well. The duration before the caster appears is 10 minutes divided by the MoS. During this time, the caster is between worlds, and time is bent making the transition for the caster unnoticeable.

Conceal[1]

Perception
3/Target Willpower

The caster causes the target to overlook the item, person or place. The MoS determines the Effect Duration of the spell.

Move[2]

Willpower
2/ 4 + (Build / 2)(minimum 1)

The caster can move the target a distance equal to the chart below. The caster does not need to let go of the Target to continue moving it, but will have to roll again, but at an accumulative -1 modifier. The cast can instead change the the distance to relational force and instead "Throw" the target. Living beings are naturally more resistant to being forced in this way. This causes a -1 Distance -3 Force minimum 1 MoS for determining the effect.

A Weight Build ratio can be found on (SilCore pg.138de)

MoS	Distance meters	Force meters/sec
1	1	2
2	2	4
3	4	12
4	8	48
5	16	240
6	32	480

Mend Flesh[2]

Knowledge
4/Target Total Wound Penalties + 2

The Targets tissue is quickly mended. This removes a number of wound penalties equal to the MoS. This spell can only be used once per scene of gained injuries.

Abram has collected 3 Flesh Wounds during a fight against some Hell Hounds. The Priest manages to recover 2 of them leaving only 1 Flesh Wound. The next fight Abram gains 2 more Flesh Wounds, the priest rolls a MoS of 4, but can only remove the 2 newly gained wounds.

Dense Skin[3]

Fitness
3/4

The Target gains an increase to their Wound Threshold equal to an armour rating of the Casters Sorcery x 3. The length of the spell is equal to the Effect Duration.

Animalken[5]

Fitness
5/5

The Caster can change her form to that of any animal that she has studied thoroughly up on(3xp). The Caster gains all the benefits of the animal. The disadvantage is that the Caster can cast no spells in this form, however they can cancel the spell returning back to their normal shape. The length of the spell is equal to the MoS Effect Duration.

Fortune[1]

Psyche
2/3

The Target of the spell gains a +1 bonus to various luck based rolls like gambling. The effect lasts equal to the MoS Effect Duration.

Truth[1]

Psyche
2/3

The Caster gains a bonus +2 when rolling against any deceit. These could be lies, hidden passages, concealed items. This includes ones done by other spells. The Effect lasts that of the MoS Effect Duration.

Strings[5]

Willpower
5/Target Willpower

The Target is controlled by the Caster, however the Caster at this time is unable to control herself. The Effect lasts equal to the MoS Effect Duration.

Door[3]

Creativity
4/4 + density & thickness 0-4(GM whim)

This creates a normal man sized opening through any kind of wall. The Effect lasts equal to the MoS Effect Duration. Cut the size by half for each level under the difficulty, but higher than the threshold.

"Great....Just how I wanted to spend my evening." I muttered looking out of the unmarked patrol car that I occupied with Gant. Excuse me, Officer Paul Gant. He'd be ticked if I just called him Gant. Not that it usually stops me from doing just that.

So far we had been parked out of Local 595 of the United Workers Union. Lousy bunch of no good thugs and...oh wait that's Helse, my plumber and neighbor. I rolled down my window and called out, "Hey, Karl! Karl!" He's hard of hearing. Guess it has something to do with all of the banging pipes or something. Looking around a bit dimly, he turned around and saw my beaming face hanging out of the window. Suddenly I was pulled roughly back into the car. Gant's forehead was full of popping veins again. He was about to say something when I smiled, "Frisky tonight aren't you Gant? If you wanted to grab my ass then ask."

"I wasn't.." Gant was about to finish saying something when Helse stuck his head in the window and asked, "Heya, Nikki. This guy giving you problems?" Gant swallowed hard as he looked at Karl Helse. Gant's a pretty large guy. He body builds constantly to stoke his fragile ego, but Karl had been a champion athlete in the Marabou Iron Man competitions and was still a frightening man. It didn't hurt that he had a gruesome scar that crossed his face in just the right way to add to his menacing appearance. Karl got that back in the War of the Alliance manning a field gun against incoming CEF hovertanks and GRELS. Old history now, but the man was a legend in his unit. Another reason to respect the man, he was a fellow ex-MILICIA soldat and one of my regular drinking mates down at Porkmans, the bar near my apartment.

"Nah, Gant here was just trying to cop a cheap thrill. I just told him I wasn't his type. You know those submissive little debutantes they push out of Port O every cycle." I replied with a big smile. I could just feel Gant shrinking behind me or maybe he was turning different shades of red and purple because I was insulting his honor. Karl laughed a bit, then I continued, "Haven't seen you around lately? What gives? I need to get my toilet at home unclogged. You know how Marius likes to use too much TP. This time he got it good. I spent all night trying to plunge that thing. No luck."

Karl grinned and nodded knowingly about my boyfriend's habits. It wasn't the first time the lumbering plumber had visited my place to fix that problem. I figured it would be a good ice breaker. "Yeah, Marie told me you called, but I had a late meeting with my union brothers last night. I'll stop by when I get home. Just don't tell anybody about it. We're supposed to be on strike and I don't think they'd appreciate doing some work on the side."

Good ole' Karl, I knew I could rely on him to get him to work on my toilet. With that I nodded eagerly and gave his rugged face a playful slap. "Thanks, old man! Marius will be happy to hear that too. The place is really stinking up. He's making Putenessca tonight. I'm sure he'd be happy to dish you out a plate since I can't make it tonight."

"Thanks, Nikki. I'd like that. Marie's out doing her modeling gig tonight so she can't cook. Well, I gotta get going. The boys get antsy when we get to a meeting late."

I nodded knowingly. Union reps were a bunch of foul mouthed thugs that'd easily tear your head off, but luckily you pay the union dues and that wrath is directed to the people you point them at. But that's what they get paid for. When I got back to the base earlier today, I went straight to mine, a butch ex-drill sergeant named Alice Krupp, to get the air conditioning fixed in Killer, my custom Asp gear. Oh and my men's units too. I added that as an afterthought, but emphasized that I needed my AC. I have my delicate skin to consider. Really I'm just ticked that something's broken on my precious Killer. I flung myself back into the seat of the car and sighed with relief. I had my plumbing issue covered and I could ask him about his meetings in private in my apartment.

Karl started to turn to leave when that idiot Gant had to open his mouth, "Excuse me, Karl. I'm just wondering. Have you seen this man?" The idiot produced the photo of Bailey Swoles, the man we had been on stake out for the last five hours. I elbowed Gant hard in his stomach. I couldn't help myself. It was wide open and he really ticked me off. He doubled over coughing hard. "Why..why..did you do that, Volof!"

"Sorry, Karl. Gant here's looking for someone that owes him money. He just doesn't know when to stop. You've got your meeting to go to and we're done here. I'll let Marius know you'll be by later. I'll be sure he saves you a big plate of Putenessca." I said easily, but really I was seething. What was Gant thinking showing Swole's picture out in front of the very place we were trying to track him to. Idiot.

Karl nodded an affirmative then turned to walk into the plain concrete building. Gant opened his mouth again, "What the hell is wrong with you, Volof! I'm reporting this to your comman..." I turned around and give him my deadliest look. It usually worked pretty well. Tonight wasn't an exception. Gant glowered at me, but didn't finish his line. Instead he asked, "I assume that you had a reason to ask him over here and blow our cover?"

I grinned Gant wasn't always slow. Sometimes he showed some wits inside that meathead noggin of his. "Karl's a friend and my toilet's really stopped up."

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

THE ASP END OF THE STICK - CHAPTER 3

Gant looked at me suspiciously, "You have got to be kidding me. You were serious about that? I thought you were trying to get information from him."

"I was, but not out in front of his union lodge. I was going to ask him in the comfortable surrounding of my apartment where he can be a little more liberal about what he might tell me. He knows that I'm in the city militia, but not that I work with the police." I answered honestly. I had a feeling Gant already realized that by now. No sense in lying.

Gant's forehead furrowed and he shook his head as he slipped back into his seat. "So you think your friend might know something? What if he's involved? He looks ex-military."

I had considered that, but I seriously doubted it. For one, I would have picked him out in the crowd. Secondly, he was an artilleryman not a trooper or gear pilot. Not that I didn't think he could be capable of using automatic weaponry. Even artillery troopers get trained in the use of small arms. What really made me think he wasn't involved though was his relationship with Marie. She was half his age and a beautiful model. Totally opposite from the grizzled and scarred vet, but really who can figure out how love really works? The two had met in Ashanti last Summer and had really struck up a close relationship. I had heard that she asked him to be in her circle last season and he reciprocated. I don't think Karl would risk Marie for a lousy ten percent increase in pay. "Karl's not the type that would engage in terrorism. He's too grounded and has no reason to be violent. Something else is going on here and I think the unions are just a scapegoat. I guess I'll find out when they get done here. We can head over to my place if we don't see anything else here by the time Karl's meeting ends." I said as I looked at the last of the union members file into the lodge.

Gant nodded then turned the ignition on the car. Without looking at me, he retorted, "I hope you're right. I'd hate to think you'd have to turn in someone that's a friend." I nodded silently. Gant had done just that last cycle. His partner of ten cycles had been taking dirty money from a local crime syndicate. Gant had accidentally discovered it and had to make the hard decision to turn him in. That made what I was going to do a difficult proposition. I really wanted to ditch him before tonight.

He drove us around the block to find a different vantage point to settle into. Finding a parking space in front of a small drug store, Gant brought the vehicle in slowly and eased it back into the slot. The drug store reminded me of an urgent need for rash cream and I turned to say something to Gant, but my eye caught

the figure approaching us from across the street. Pushing Gant down, I heard automatic gunfire and bullets ripping into the car. My instincts were sharp enough to keep me alive for a bit it seemed. Gant was saying something, but for some reason I couldn't hear what he was saying. Then my world turned red then black..

.....

When I woke my head felt too big and my eyes throbbed as the blood pounded behind them. Ooooh... I'd felt this before. Hangover. Thank goodness. It was all just a weird dream. I tried to stand, but felt a sharp pain shoot up my side and something was keeping me down. As my eyes focused from the haziness, I saw three men working hard on turning Gant into a bloody mess. I almost didn't recognize him, but this wasn't the first time I'd seen torture. I wasn't considered for the Legion Noire's Auxillaries for my charming discourse or my warped sense of humor. I sighed to myself wondering when my turn would come around. Poor Gant. I didn't like the man, but he really didn't deserve getting pummeled with wrenches. Well maybe just a bit, but nowhere near the amount that was getting dished out to him now.

Then the thought crossed my mind, what were they trying to get out of him anyways? If I gave it up maybe they'd just do us in quickly instead of the hours of torment and pain. Turning my head left and then right made me want to throw up the contents of my stomach, but I had a feeling that would end up making me feel worse, so I swallowed hard. Besides the three men working on Gant, the only other person in the room was Karl, who was handcuffed and unconscious next to me. A large welt graced the side of his head. That made my stomach sink further. I had dragged an innocent man into this and probably gotten him killed. "Karl!" I whispered. He shifted a bit, but looked passed out still. "Karl!" I tried again. I silently cursed his deafness. I cursed these damn plumbers. I cursed Gant for getting us caught so easily. I cursed Beaupre for sending me out on this fool of a mission, but most of all I cursed the intense feeling of needing to scratch the rash between my legs. Unable to contain my anger, I yelled at Karl, "Wake up you oaf!"

The three men turned around and stared at me. The tall one looked at the lanky one and said, "I thought you said that one was good as dead. She looks like she's got some life in her still."

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THE ASP END OF THE STICK - CHAPTER 3

Lovely, I thought. Me and my big mouth. They thought I was dead, which meant that they'd have probably not bothered torturing me. The lanky fellow with the bad haircut approached me and lifted up my face. I'm not sure what expression I had, but he quickly let go and shrugged. "Well, you two finish up that one and I'll take this one for some fun in the next room."

Fun. Jeez. I wonder what he means, I thought glumly. Maybe I could bite him or gouge out his eyes or.. Karl could wake up and swing the chair he was seated into the lanky fellow. I watched amazed as the lanky fellow's head twisted in an unnatural way as his head slammed into the wall. The heavy metal chair frame was bent from the blow, but Karl wasn't finished yet. He dove at the tall one who looked at the man incredulously as the legs of the chair crushed into him then pinned him into the wall. The tall man shuddered once trying to clutch the metal legs that had pierced through him, then he died. The last man, a fat balding greasy fellow, nervously drew a small semiautomatic out of his pocket and shot at Karl, but only grazed his cheek adding another scar on that wonderful beaten face of his. Glaring at the rotund man, Karl pointed at the man, which led to the jerk collapsing to his knees in panic. He was babbling for forgiveness or some such foolishness. It was quite a sight. Karl tore the chair out of the tall fellow and sat it down in front of the blubbering man, then he reached for the weapon and plucked it out of the fellow's hand. Looking back at me, Karl's eyes widened and he turned to the fat man and slammed his fist into the him.

"I guess you heard me.." I said weakly. Karl grinned and nodded. Searching through the unconscious man's pockets, Karl found the keys to the handcuffs and unlocked the cuffs on himself and then me.

"These punks told me to follow them back to the office then they cold cocked me. I guess they saw me talking to the cop over there." He replied lifting me up out of the chair. "Some of these guys are really riled up over the massacre today."

"Massacre? Those guys were terrorists, Karl." I said trying to stand on my own. Looking down, I could see that my t-shirt was soaked in blood. Had I been shot?

Karl sat me back down and pulled up the shirt to get a better look at the wound. "That's not what the union members are saying, Nikki. Apparently, there's a trid with everything that happened being shown. I couldn't believe it when I heard, but that's why I came down here tonight. You've got a decent chunk of metal stuck in your abdomen. It's not deep

though. Good thing you keep yourself in shape."

I nodded. What the hell did they do to the car that got shrapnel stuck in my side? These guys were playing way too rough. "Karl, you trying to sneak a peak?" I joked, then in seriousness, I added, "I was there today. These guys were well armed terrorists. In fact, the pic that Gant showed you is one of the worst. I can't believe that the plumber's union would kill to get their way."

"We can figure that out once we get out of here. I'll check on your friend there. Hold still for a minute." He gently pulled my shirt back down and headed over to Gant. After a few moments of checking him, Karl lifted him onto his shoulder and walked over to me. "You're going to have to walk, but I'll help you along."

.....

Karl took us out of the basement room and walked us to the end of the hall near an emergency exit. "We'll go through here, but they'll try to find us as soon as we go through that door. I need you to bear the pain and run as hard as you can to Sal's place down the road. He's a friend that's got more friends if you know what I mean. They hang out at a café with a hopper smoking a hookah. You can't miss it. You're going to have to trust that I'll be right behind you."

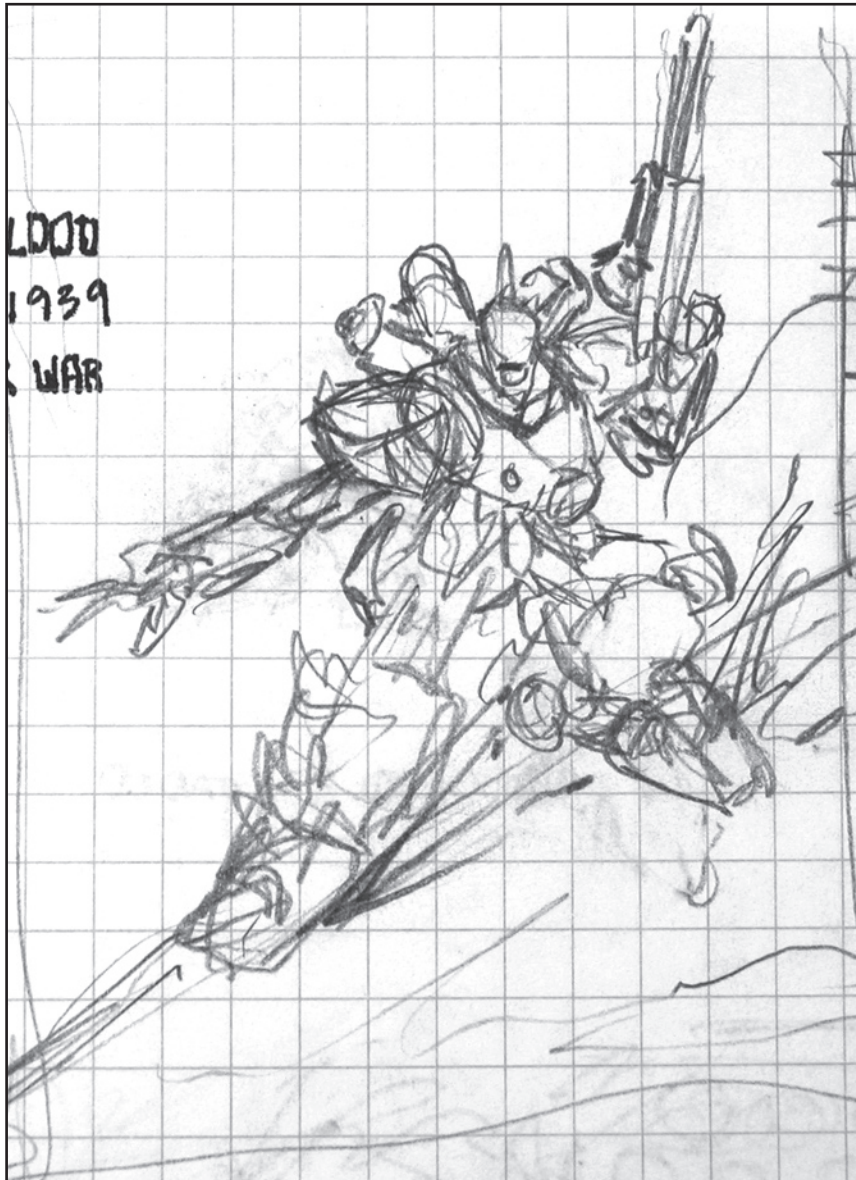
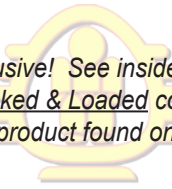
Damn straight I was heading right there. I wasn't even going to bring it up. Once there I'd probably get Karl's friends to go and rescue him, but one of us had to get help and Karl seemed to be capable of handling himself. I gave him a solid affirmative.

Pulling the tab on a fire alarm, Karl opened the door and pushed me through. Good idea, I thought. The fire alarm would make the regular members of the union leave creating us some cover to escape. I really needed to recruit this man, I thought. Rushing up the staircase to the ground level, I rushed out the next emergency exit and out onto the street. My heart sank as I stared at the open fields. We weren't in the city anymore.



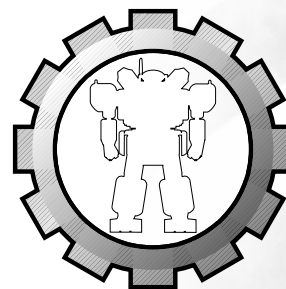
Not the city

Aurora Exclusive! See inside the process of the development of the Locked & Loaded cover, from inception to the final product found on the cover of Aurora!



Greg Perkins: Initial Concept

Here's where it begins... the initial concept sketch!



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE EVOLUTION OF A COVER



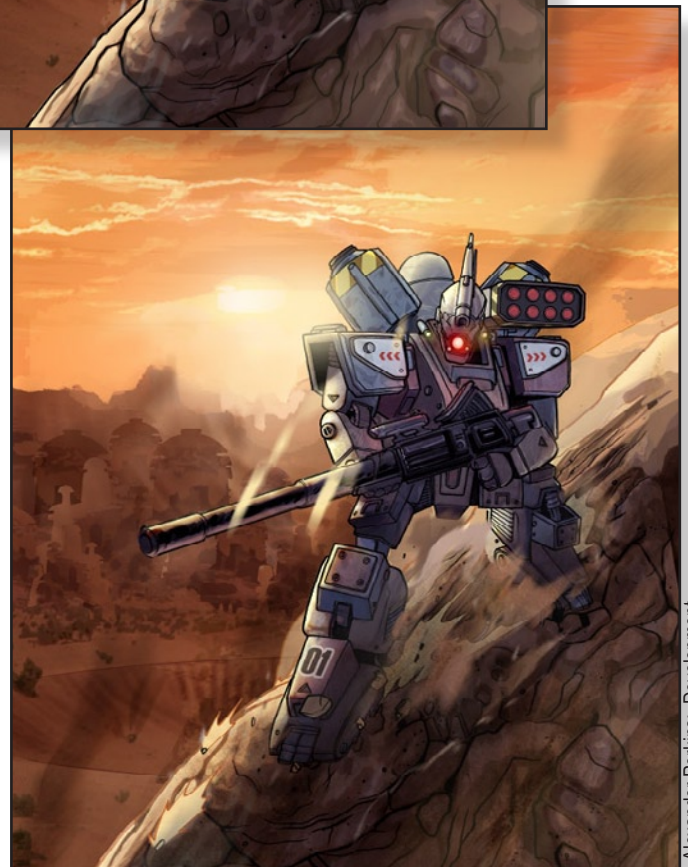
Alexander Perkins: Development

A rough sketch painting is made with the iconic Heavy Gear border graphic elements added to get a good feel for composition. Composition is important to nail down here -- it is easy at this point to make modifications, and being sure the image works with the title and other necessary cover bits is crucial.



Alexander Perkins: Development

From there the actual artwork is begun, successively being built up, layer by layer.



Alexander Perkins: Development

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE EVOLUTION OF A COVER

Alexander Perkins: Development



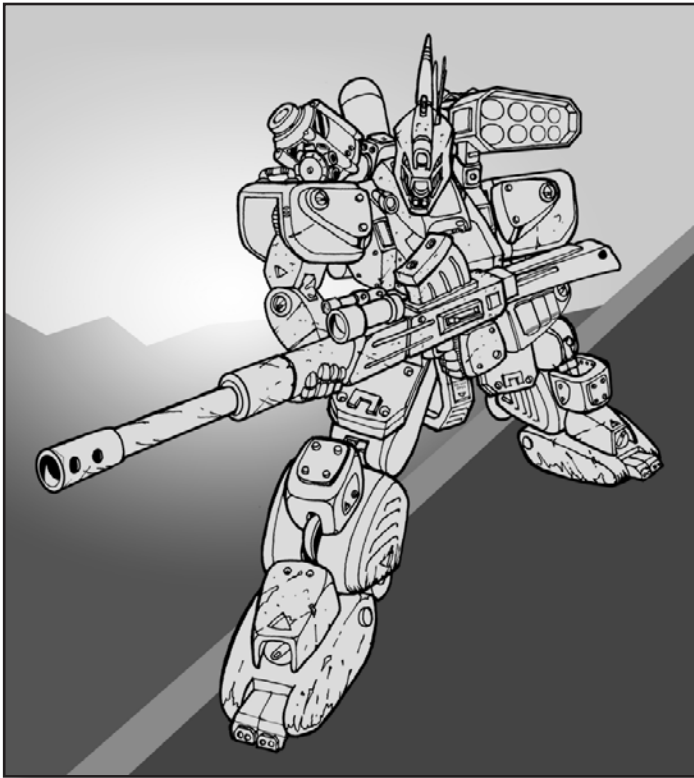
What other elements to include? We want background elements that add to the composition, add to the story of Heavy Gear, and add interest -- without overwhelming the foreground.

Background elements added. Looks like quite the battle is going on there...



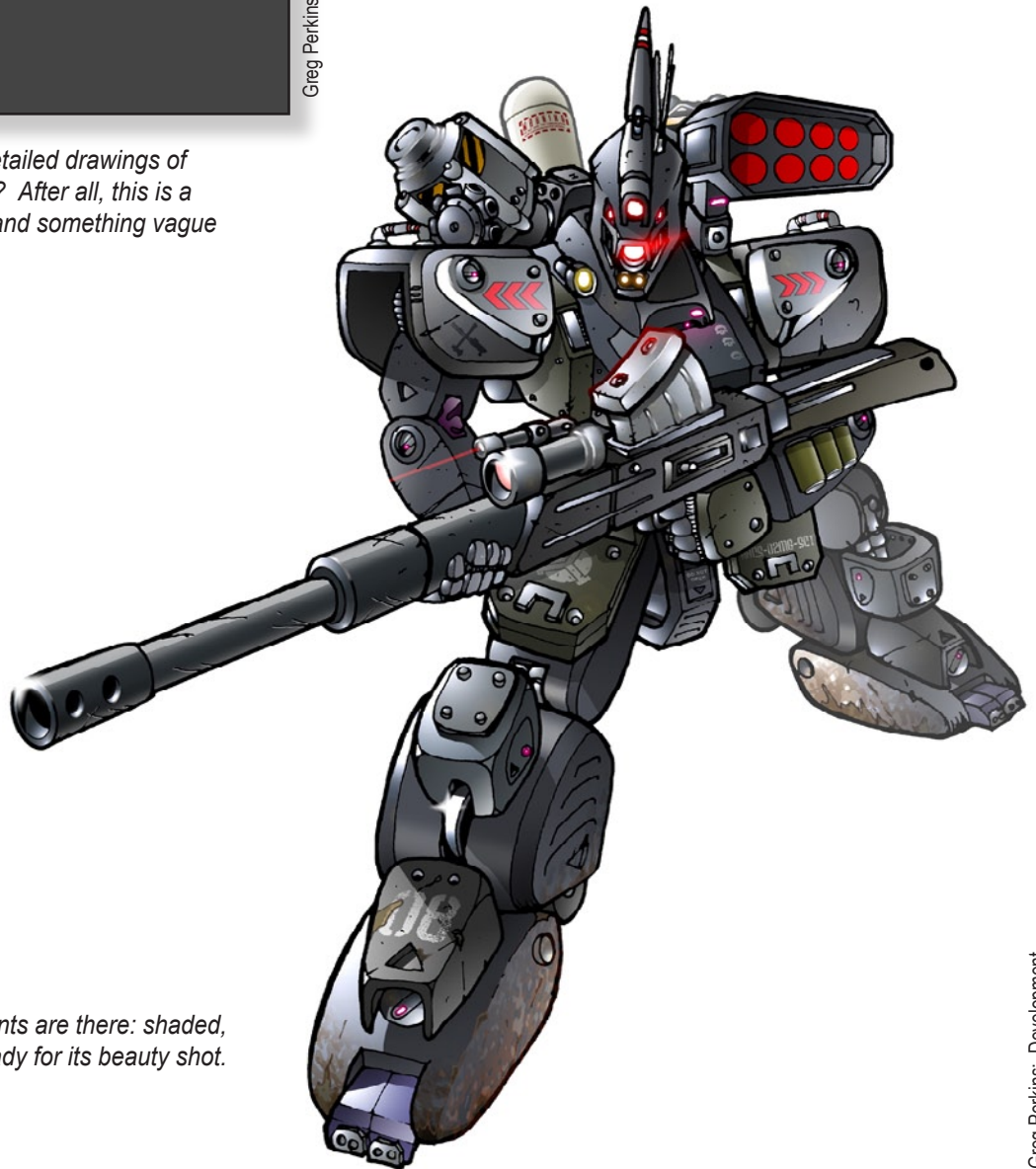
Alexander Perkins: Development

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE EVOLUTION OF A COVER



Greg Perkins: Development

Let's get technical! Precise and detailed drawings of the gear has to be mandatory, yes? After all, this is a game that features Heavy Gears, and something vague would not do!



Greg Perkins: Development

All the elements are there: shaded, shadowed and ready for its beauty shot.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE EVOLUTION OF A COVER



Greg Perkins: Final Layouts



Greg Perkins: Final Layouts

*Lastly it's final layout choice time, including just exactly
which title to highlight for the product.*

Done! Ship it!

With the release of Locked & Loaded this month, I caught up with the lead designer of the project, and asked hard hitting questions, the kind that give politicians nightmares... ok, maybe not quite like that.

Aurora Magazine: Thank you for taking the time for this interview.

John Buckmaster: Thank you for interviewing me. It's not often I get to talk to people about the design process.

AM: Describe for me the process and impetus for L&L.

JB: I detailed this a bit in the introduction of Locked and Loaded, but to sum up, Blitz was a Fast Play HG and while it works well, it was honestly never built as a fully independent game. Many systems and rules were directly ported or derivatives of the older HG rules and given that most Blitz players are either new players or older players who stopped playing older rules because of those rules, it became apparent that the rules needed updating to ensure we not only kept, but grew our fanbase. Timing was a bit of a problem, but we figured that solidifying all the rules and base army lists before we went onto the grand journey that is the storyline would be a very good thing.

AM: Had you received a lot of fan reports and feedback?

JB: Very much so. Most of it positive and constructive, which is what we built on for Locked and Loaded.

AM: What was your main goal in writing L&L?

JB: Locked and Loaded is really designed for players and to get people playing. I'm a bit of a perfectionist with rules and so I listen to almost every complaint I have received (the complaints my Fiancee made of not having enough buttwheels in the Southern lists I did ignore, I hope people understand why...). As such, areas players had problems with have been streamlined and reworded, complex systems replaced with more intuitive and tactical options and the book is wholly re-organized.

AM: What was the hardest thing to work on?

JB: Army lists, actually. Making sure all the math works out takes a lot of time and make your eyes glaze over. Playtesting them can be complex and you get wildly different views on what each army needs.

AM: What is the new feature of L&L that has you the most excited?

JB: The new Electronic Warfare rules. They're streamlined, being maybe half the length of the old rules, but have more options and require more tactical planning. I will also say that the new simplified army building ranks up there.

AM: How would you describe L&L to someone who bought Blitz! when it came out?

JB: Locked and Loaded is your game. It's based on your feedback, your wishlists and is an all in one resource for Blitz players.

AM: That sounds pretty compelling to me. How many people do you have on your writing team?

JB: Primarily, there is Nick Pilon and myself, however we have many contributors such as Greg Perkins, Paul Nemeth, Bradley Bellows and a large support team of playtesters who do more work than they really need to.

AM: What was your favourite moment of designing L&L?

JB: Seeing the Playtesters go from somewhat unimpressed when I posted the first draft to "wow, that played wonderfully," when they actually played it. Although "My Mammoth lived!" was another great moment.

AM: Something tells me there's quite the story behind that... If you could add one thing to L&L that you weren't able to, what would that be?

JB: Dueling rules. I had wanted to include Duelists and a more in-depth melee and close quarters set of rules, but we simply didn't have the time or the space. Maybe in the next book? [ed: Count me in for the duelling book!]

AM: What is the 'coolest' moment you've ever had playing HG?

JB: Seeing a Ferret take out a Hovertank with its only Grenade. Well, that and my first time playing when we designed Gears ourselves and played with rubber dinosaurs.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

WORDS FROM THE DESIGNER

AM: Heh, I can picture the image of playing with rubber dinosaurs. What was something you heard from a player that made you cheer the most (perhaps internally)?

JB: I've had quite a few tell me that they absolutely love the game, which is nice, but the *best* is when I see someone "get" what I was going for with the rules. And those ones that curse my writing because it makes them buy more stuff. It's happening more now as I get better at my job, but it's wonderful each time when you see the little light bulb go off.

AM: What was something you heard from a player that made you wince the most (also perhaps internally)?

JB: Not any one thing but generally when players don't give criticism, only vague and misleading complaints, often with veiled threats of "the game being doomed," or personal insults. I know I can't please everyone and this happens very rarely, but it still throws me a bit.

AM: What beans can you spill to us about the future of HG and Blitz!?

J: The butler did it. Oh, you mean seriously? Well, we will be moving the Storyline forward and you can expect to see the Black Talons, CEF and some colonial forces as we move forward, but I can't reveal much of the Storyline other than I hope you'll be surprised. We even dropped more hints this time.

AM: That sneaky butler, can't trust him. What was your reaction to the Origins Award nomination?

JB: I was moderately surprised. I was more surprised at the votes we got. Had we only submitted one item, we might have even won.

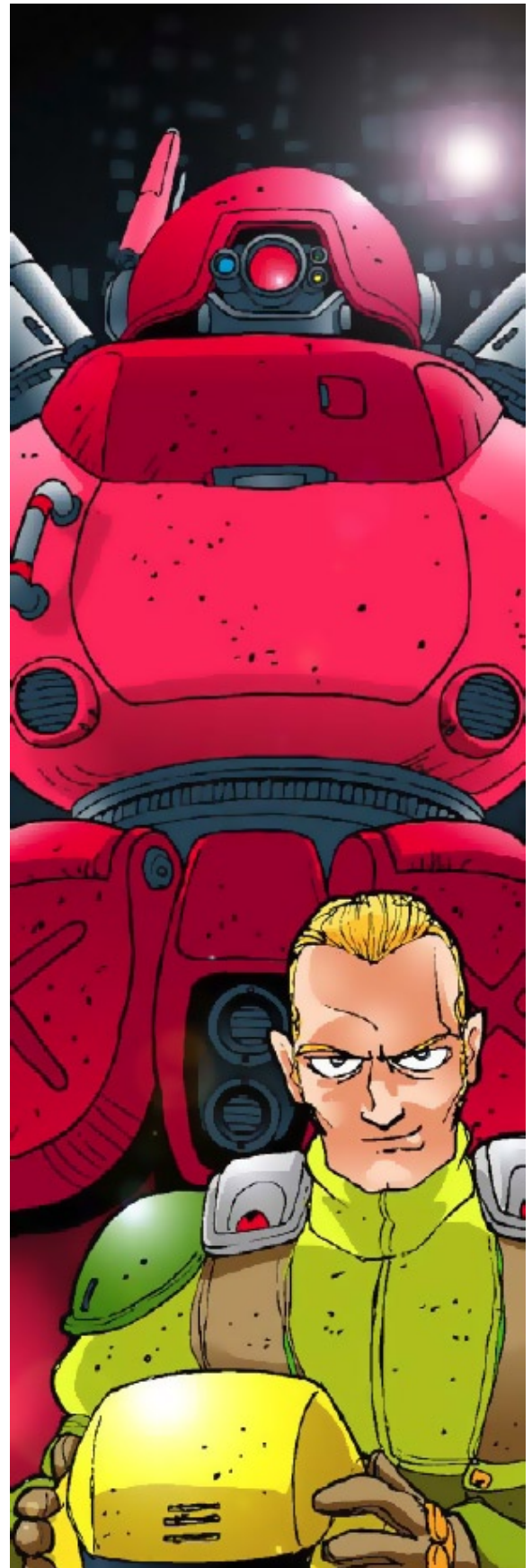
AM: If you were a gear, what gear would you be?

JB: Warrior IV or Jaguar. Nothing overly fancy, but fairly reliable. And unless I start biking again, I'm going to have "field armor" myself (looks at beginnings of the Sturdy Box on his abdomen).

AM: Anything else you'd like to say or to add?

JB: Not really, other than I hope people give the new book a chance and that they enjoy it.

AM: Great! Thanks again for taking the time after the big push out the door.





From the rules monkey...

200 pages (!). Full colour spreads. Four full field guides.

Gears. Lots of Gears.

All Terra Nova.

Locked and Loaded is here. The eBook is already available for purchase, and the books are available for pre-order with a shipping date of May 23rd. And here at Aurora, we have the mondo preview to end all previews. 8 full pages torn from the very book itself. [Hope that's not my book those pages were torn from – ED]

It's been a labor of love; here's the result. Enjoy.

Locked & Loaded Rulebook (DP9-9996)

eBook available at:

<http://www.drivethrurpg.com>
<http://www.rpgnow.com>

Softcover and Hardcover available at:

<http://www.dp9.com/Products/HGBLITZ.htm>

LIMITED EDITION *FULL-COLOR* Hardcover available at:

<http://www.dp9.com/Products/HGBLITZ.htm>





RULES



MOVEMENT MODES

GROUND

Ground Movement represents wheeled or similar propulsion. Models with this movement may move at double speed along roads, but treat Very Dense Terrain as Impassible. Ground Movement allows 2 turns while Stationary, 1 turn for every 2 inches of forward or reverse movement while at Combat Speed and 1 turn per 3 inches of forward movement while at Top Speed.



OPTION: DRAMATIC WHEELED MOVEMENT

Ground vehicles with wheels only need to move ahead a distance equal to their base or body length before being eligible for a Turn. Instead of a turn, Wheeled vehicles can “drift,” moving one inch forward as well as one inch left or right, while maintaining their same facing. This costs the same as moving one inch forward. Wheeled Vehicles may also “slide” instead of turning. This costs one MP and allows the Wheeled Vehicle rotate 60 degrees around on front corner, swinging the back end of the Model around to match the new facing. Ground vehicles with Tracks may not employ these options.

OPTION: TRACKED VEHICLES

As Tracked vehicles move differently than wheeled vehicles in real life, players may choose to represent models with Ground Movement as Tracked if the Model possesses tracks or treads. As such, Soft Terrain is considered Open and the Model may roll an extra die when testing for Difficult or Very Difficult terrain.

Tracked Models may turn twice per inch of forward movement at Combat Speed and may make one Turn per inch of movement at Top Speed. Otherwise, treat Tracked as Ground Vehicles, although they may not use any options in “Dramatic wheeled Movement.”

WALKER

Walker movement indicates the Model moves using two or more legs. Rough and Very Rough terrain have their MP requirements lowered by 1, while Soft Terrain has its MP requirements increased by 1. Walkers at Combat Speed can move in any direction, even sideways or backwards. As such, they don’t need to use the standard Reverse Speed rules. Walkers have no requirements for turns while Stationary or at Combat Speed and thus may turn freely, but may only make 1 turn for every two inches of forward movement while at Top Speed.

HOVER

Hovercraft ride on cushions of air, allowing them to skim over the ground. They may treat Deep and Shallow water as Open and treat Dense/Very Dense Terrain as Impassible. Hover vehicles may make up to three turns while Stationary, one turn per two inches of forward or reverse movement while at Combat Speed and one turn per four inches of forward movement at Top Speed.

Hover Models lack the traction to perform quick maneuvers and must “drift” through turns. When a Hovercraft makes a Turn its facing changes immediately but it must continue moving in its original direction until it is allowed to make another Turn. At this point, it stops drifting and must move in its new facing. Movement during this drift counts towards the vehicle’s next Turn, so a Hovercraft that has just finished drifting can immediately Turn again, but will drift based on its new facing.

STATIC

Static Models are Models that do not move, such as buildings, bunkers, ammo dumps, automated turrets etc. When setting up terrain, make sure to note which items on the table are treated as Static Models. Static Models cannot ever move during the game and always count as Stationary. By default, Static Models can be targeted but do not take damage. This is simply for ease of play, as most people do not have the models or resources necessary to represent a building in various stages of damage. Some Defensive Models allowed in armies are Static models, in which case they will have listed stats and take damage as usual. Static Models are always considered to have rolled a 1 for Defense. Compare all attacks against this for purposes of damage and mark Damage on them as you would an ordinary Model. See the Scenario Rules on page 36 for more detail on this kind of Model and their use in-game.

KEEPING IT FAST AND FRIENDLY

Measuring every 2 or so inches and being exact about Turns can end up taking a very long time. A measuring tape laid out beforehand and estimating the turns is fine as long as all players are in agreement. Unless the terrain is very tight, or something very important hinges on the Turn, try to be friendly and use common sense.

PRIORITY LEVELS

PRIORITY LEVEL 1

This is the lowest priority level you may choose and represents a force deployed to a backwater area, on a perceived “useless” patrol or otherwise deemed a low priority by command.

Core	Minimum of one Core Combat Group, maximum is unlimited
Auxiliary	Up to two Auxiliary Combat Groups may be taken
Specialist	Up to one Specialist Combat Group may be taken, but you must first have two or more Core Combat Groups
Elite	No Elite Combat Groups may be taken at this Priority level
Veterans	Any one Combat Group may be made Veterans

PRIORITY LEVEL 2

From garrisoning an area to patrols of a contested area, to taking a moderately important objective, this Priority Level represents a standard deployment in the field.

Core	Minimum of two Core Combat Groups, maximum is unlimited
Auxiliary	Up to three Auxiliary Combat Groups may be taken
Specialist	Up to two Specialist Combat Groups may be taken
Elite	One Elite Combat Group may be taken at this Priority level, but you must first have three or more Core Combat Groups
Veterans	Up to two Combat Groups may be made Veteran

PRIORITY LEVEL 3

As the importance of missions increases, so do the options made available by command. This Priority Level is your standard Hollywood movie-level military force with specialized squads and fairly important objectives.

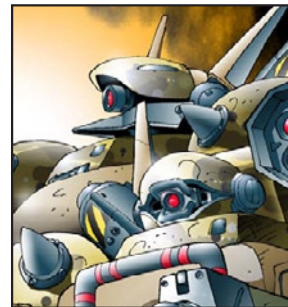
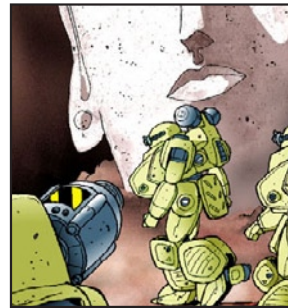
Core	One Core Combat Group may be taken for each Auxiliary bought
Auxiliary	An unlimited number of Auxiliary Combat Groups may be taken
Specialist	One Specialist Combat Group must be taken, and there is a maximum of three Specialist Combat Groups
Elite	Up to two Elite Combat Groups may be taken
Veterans	Up to three Combat Groups may be made Veteran

PRIORITY LEVEL 4

At this Priority Level, the objectives are simply too important to ignore or require the utmost skill to complete. Quite often, Special Ops commando raids and other “deniable actions” take place with forces such as these, as do top-priority missions that general troops normally cannot perform.

Core	One Core Combat Group may be taken for each Specialist bought
Auxiliary	Unlimited Auxiliary Combat Groups may be taken
Specialist	Up to four Specialist Combat Groups may be taken
Elite	One Elite Combat Group Must be taken, and there is a maximum of three Elite Combat Groups
Veterans	Up to four Combat Groups may be made Veteran

The above represent “hard” values. In any given force, there are only so many of any type of squad. Just as high command would not waste a stealth commando squad on a routine patrol, they will not send average grunts after an important objective unless absolutely necessary.

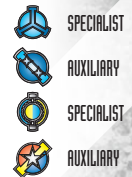


NORTHERN COMBAT GROUPS



THREAT VALUE: 180

STRIDER SQUAD



OVERVIEW

Striders are often assigned to support Gear formations as, unlike more conventional combat vehicles, they have similar maintenance requirements and can cross rough terrain in order to keep up with Gears. Originally, Gears were assigned to Strider squads to protect the slow moving machines, but lately the NG has been assigning an entire squad of Gears to cover a Strider Squad and ensure the heavy support gets where it is needed. In fact, this combination has allowed assault Striders to become more useful and survivable, and battles involving them often end up looking like small naval battles on land.

OPTIONS

- ◆ Add up to two additional Mammoths for +170TV each.
- ◆ Swap up to two Mammoths for Thunderhammers for +50 TV each.
- ◆ Any Mammoth may swap its MAC for a HAC (F, no Reloads) for +5 TV.
- ◆ Any Mammoth may swap its MAC for 2x VLRP/128s (F/Rr, ROF6, no Reloads) for +5 TV.
- ◆ Any Mammoth may swap its ATM launcher for a second SC (F, no Reloads) for -55 TV.
- ◆ Any Mammoth may swap a SC for a FGC (F, no Reloads) and MAC (F, AA, no Reloads) for -5 TV.
- ◆ Any Mammoth may swap one or more SCs for HGLs (F, no Reloads) for +0 TV per SC.
- ◆ Any Thunderhammer may swap its LFG for 2xHGM (T, no Reloads) for +35 TV. These may be Linked for an additional +5 TV.
- ◆ Any Thunderhammer may swap its LFG for 2xHAAC (T, no Reloads) for -40 TV. They may be Linked for an additional +5 TV.
- ◆ Add Smoke Launchers (10) to any member for +5 TV.
- ◆ Add a Recon drone to any member (max one per squad) for +10 TV.

SPECIAL RULES

A Strider squad must have at least two Striders before an additional Strider Squad may be taken.

VETERAN OPTIONS

- ◆ Any Model may have their Attack Skill upgraded to Level 3 for + 10 TV per Mammoth or +15 TV per Thunderhammer.
- ◆ Any Model may upgrade their Electronic Warfare Skill to Level 3 for +10 TV per Mammoth, +15 TV per Thunderhammer.
- ◆ Any Mammoth may be given a "Mastadon refit." add 1 to all of its Defense Modifiers for +15 TV.
- ◆ Any Mammoth may swap a SC for an additional ATM (F, Limited ammo 8) for +55 TV.
- ◆ The Combat Group Leader may upgrade its Leadership Skill to Level 3 for +10 TV.
- ◆ The Combat Group Leader's Mammoth may be upgraded to a Command Mammoth for +10 TV.
- ◆ Any member can have the Leadership Skill at 1 for +10 TV.
- ◆ Add one Hunter-Killer drone to any member (max one drone per Model) +5 TV.

BASIC UNITS + SKILLS

ALL STANDARD LOADOUT

Combat Group Leader

1x Mammoth

Attack 2

Defense 3

Electronic Warfare 2

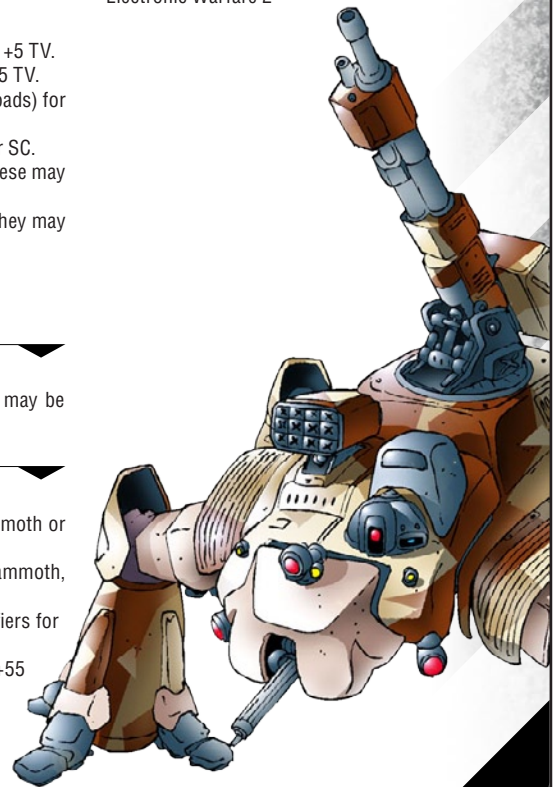
Leadership 2

Additional Striders

Attack 2

Defense 3

Electronic Warfare 2



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Order of Charon 1



Order of Charon 2



Order of Charon 3



Service Ribbon



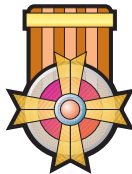
Crimson Sun



Ruby Tear



Légion d'Honneur



Légion Noire



AWARDS AND HONORS

Like most militaries, the armies of the South have their own set of official and unofficial awards and honors. Official honors are worn only with the dress uniform, and the "Death's Head" kill markers, while lusted after by most MILICIA members, are officially discouraged by the MILICIA. In fact, the first solo kill grants a MILICIAman induction into "The Order of Charon." The mock ceremony starts with solemn dark rituals as the awardee is brought before his superiors and promptly degenerates into a night of drunken debauchery. The event is mostly ignored by high command as necessary for morale, but even so, the revelry can and has become a problem in the past.

The most common honors are service ribbons, awarded to each soldier who has served at least five cycles and to those who participated in a significant battle or campaign. A service ribbon is granted for five cycles of service, to which a triangular device is added for every 5 additional cycles of service. Veterans in the MILICIA are regarded as veterans or cowards, depending on how they managed to survive that long. Other Militaries tend to treat service ribbons with more respect.

Campaign ribbons are unique to each campaign. All veterans of the War of the Alliance wear a blue and red ribbon marked by a lightning bolt pip and the blue/green "expert marksman" ribbon is a common sight among veterans.

Soldiers injured in combat are awarded the Ruby Tear, a triangular gold insignia inlaid with a small ruby. Soldiers who receive this ribbon are revered for their stamina, pitied for their luck, or both. The Ruby Tear is required to be worn on the dress uniform if awarded, but most do not since few soldiers feel like being reminded of their injuries.

Medals of Valor are, for the most part, unique to each League. Unbeknownst to most MILICIA Soldiers, the MILICIA Awards of Valor were created as something of an inside joke amongst Republican Administrators. None of the administrators thought MILICIAmen were capable of rising from the dregs, but they instituted the awards as a matter of formality. Much to their surprise, many MILICIA members managed to meet the requirements, even with the odds stacked against them.

The "Légion d'Honneur" (Legion of Honor) is the closest a MILICIAman may ever get to being awarded one of the prestigious Republican equivalents. It is presented only to exceptionally brave individuals, for the feats that can make Republican overseers actually take enough notice to grant this medal are Herculean. The "Crimson Sun" is the MILICIA's standard award for Valor, distributed mainly while the MILICIA is at war. It was created as a propaganda tool and is used very dramatically and with obvious favoritism. Units and Regiments favored by high command tend to amass great numbers of these, while backwater units get virtually none no matter their accomplishments.

SPECIAL FORCES BADGES

An exceptional kind of soldier is needed for the special forces. One that is rarely found in the MILICIA. The few MILICIA members who do join the Special Forces command much respect. Special forces members are allowed to wear their membership badges even after they leave the military.

The Black Armband is issued to past and present members of the Légion Noire Auxiliary. The members of the Auxiliary are assigned dangerous, unglamorous jobs the Légion feels are beneath them. Members of the Auxiliary are among the most dangerous and unhinged people on Terra Nova.

The elite frogmen of Camp Blackwater wear the Blackwater Ring, a gold ring engraved with a set of swamp shark jaws. Members tend to keep to themselves and regard those who do not possess such a ring as inferior.

The Duelist's badge was standardized during the War of the Alliance, allows any Duelist from across the globe to be recognized and accorded appropriate respect. Across Terra Nova, the Duellist represents and defends the honor of the Regiment. Northerners, however, consider the Southern concept of honor to be more about saving face than truly acting honorably, and are likely to treat Southern duellists with a mixture of contempt and respect.

PEACE RIVER COMBAT GROUPS



THREAT VALUE: 315

SPECIAL FORCES SQUAD



ELITE



SPECIALIST

OVERVIEW

Special Forces Squads normally make their home in Combined Task Force Regiments, but the unified command structure of the PRDF allows for the inclusion of special squads within normal Regiments when mission profiles demand it. Special Forces Squads are the elite of the elite in the PRDF, and carry on their shoulders the weight and expectations of the entire Paxton Protectorate. Capable of being airdropped, equipped entirely with Stealth technology, and given access to the secretive Shinobi Gear, Special Forces Squads are meant for pinpoint strikes and “plausible deniability” missions.

OPTIONS

- ◆ Upgrade any member’s Attack and Defense to Level 3 for +10 TV.
- ◆ Upgrade up to two members’ LRFs to LACs (F, Reloads) for +0TV.
- ◆ Up to two Skirmishers may swap their LRP for ECCM 2 for +0 TV.
- ◆ One Skirmisher may swap its LRP for a Satellite Uplink for +10 TV.
- ◆ Up to two Skirmishers may add a Target Designator (Rating 2) for +10 TV.
- ◆ Upgrade any Skirmisher to a Warrior IV for +30 TV.
- ◆ Upgrade any LAC to a MAC (F, Reloads) for +5 TV.
- ◆ Up to two members may swap their LAC for a FGC (F, Reloads) and lower HG ammo by 3 for HHGs (F, limited Ammo 3) for +5 TV .
- ◆ Upgrade any LAC to a RFB (F, Reloads) for +5 TV.
- ◆ Add Field Armor (an additional Sturdy Box) to any member for +10 TV.
- ◆ Add a Recon drone to any member (max one drone per Model) for +10 TV.
- ◆ Add a Hunter-Killer drone to any member (max one drone per Model) for +5 TV.
- ◆ Add Stealth (2) to any member that does not currently have Stealth for +5 TV.

SPECIAL RULES

At PL 4, the PRDF (not POC) may choose a single Veteran Special Forces Squad as an Elite Choice without using a Veteran slot. Sniper applies to weapons swapped for the Shinobi’s LAC.

VETERAN OPTIONS

- ◆ Upgrade any member’s Electronic Warfare skill to Level 3 +5 TV.
- ◆ Swap any Warrior IV to a Shinobi for +0 TV.
- ◆ Swap the Chieftain IV to a Shinobi for -5 TV.
- ◆ Swap the Combat Group Leaders’ Shinobi’s LRP for a Satellite Uplink for +20 TV.
- ◆ Up to two Shinobis may swap Sniper on their weapon for a Target Designator (Rating 2) for +5 TV.
- ◆ Swap any Shinobi’s LAC for a LRF (F, Reloads) for +0 TV or a MAC for +5 TV. Sniper moves to the new weapon.

BASIC UNITS + SKILLS

ALL STANDARD LOADOUT

Combat Group Leader

1x Chieftain IV

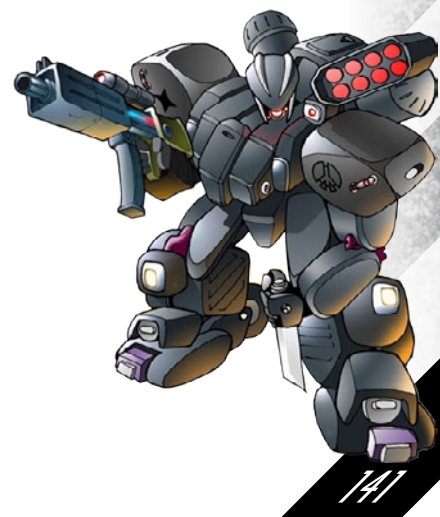
Attack: 2
Defense: 2
Electronic Warfare: 2
Leadership: 3

2x Warrior IV

Attack: 2
Defense: 2
Electronic Warfare: 2

2x Skirmisher

Attack: 2
Defense: 2
Electronic Warfare: 2



HEAVY
GEAR
BLITZ!

PORT ARTHUR KORPS COMBAT GROUPS



LIGHT HOVERTANK SQUAD

THREAT VALUE: 160



BASIC UNITS + SKILLS

ALL STANDARD LOADOUT

Combat Group Leader

1x LHT-67

Attack 2

Defense 2

Electronic Warfare 1

Leadership 1

1x LHT-67

Attack 2

Defense 2

Electronic Warfare 1

OVERVIEW

Light Hovertank Squads are the core of smaller armored formations. Though they cannot stand and fight as well as regular light tanks, they are fast and fearsomely armed. In larger armored formations, Light Hovertanks perform harassment, flanking, recon, and skirmish duties. Prowler-class Light Hovertanks form the bulk of the PAK's forces, since they are much easier to refurbish and repair than the heavier models.

OPTIONS

- ◆ Add up to two additional PAK LHT-67s for +80 TV each.
- ◆ Upgrade one PAK LHT-67 to a PAK LHT-71 for +20 TV.
- ◆ Upgrade any member to a GREL crew for +25 TV. GREL pilots have Attack 3, Defense 3, and Electronic Warfare 2. If the Combat Group Leader is upgraded to GREL crew, its Leadership is increased to 2.
- ◆ If the Combat Group Leader doesn't have a GREL crew, increase the Leadership of the Squad Leader to level 2 for +10 TV.
- ◆ One LHT-67 or LHT-71 may upgrade its HAC to a HGLC (T, no Reloads) for +5 TV.
- ◆ One LHT-67 or LHT-71 may upgrade its HAC to a LPA (T, no Reloads) for +0 TV.
- ◆ Up to two LHT-67s or LHT-71s may swap their MRPs for 2x FGC (T, no Reloads, Linked) for +10 TV per LHT-67 or -5 TV per LHT-71.
- ◆ Up to two LHT-67s or LHT-71s may take a Recon Drone for +10 TV each.

SPECIAL RULES

Each Light Hovertank Squad must have three Hovertanks before an additional Light Hovertank Squad can be purchased.

VETERAN OPTIONS

- ◆ A non-GREL crew may upgrade any of their Attack, Defense, and Electronic Warfare Skills by one level (to a maximum of 3 for Att/Def and 2 for EW) for +10 TV per skill.
- ◆ One additional LHT-67 or LHT-71 (maximum two) may upgrade its HAC to an LPA (T, no Reloads) for +0 TV.
- ◆ One additional LHT-67 or LHT-71 (maximum two) may upgrade its HAC to a HGLC (T, no Reloads) for +5 TV.
- ◆ Upgrade one additional LHT-67 to a LHT-71 for +30 TV.



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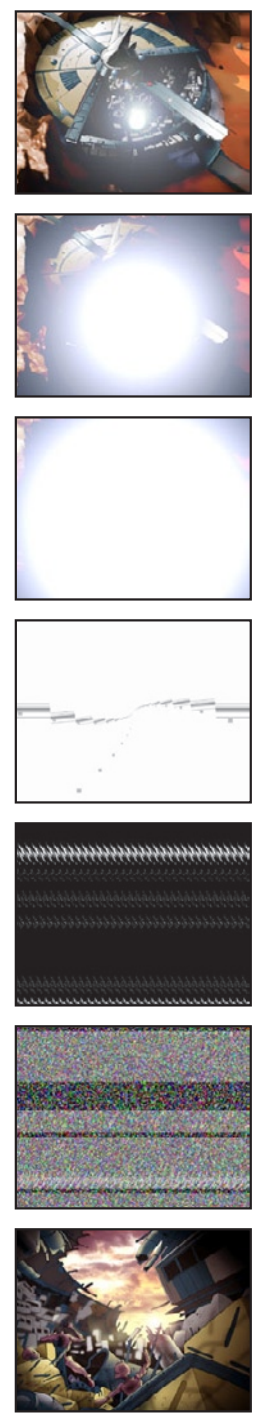
AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE MESSAGES FROM THE POD

SANDS OF BLOOD - TIMELINE



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Autumn, 1937	Northern forces are entrenched in the Emirates and eastern Alliance and steadily gaining ground in both Leagues, but have had no success at invading the Dominion or Republic. Southern raids have done serious damage to cities all along the Northern border, but their NLC Task Force is slowly being pushed back toward Yele and Skadi. Power players on both sides are beginning to see their support wane, and fierce fighting continues across the Badlands.
20th Winter 1938	Helene del Pulciano, a Caprican Liberati, is recovered by a Northern gategship after making the crossing from Caprice through a micro-anomaly in a one-man gategcoffin.
Winter and Spring, 1938	In an attempt to restrict the flow of supplies to Northern forces in the Alliance and Emirates, the South launches another major offensive, this time striking at the eastern Federation and south-west NLC through the Karaq Wastes. The Northern Guard meets the offensive near the holy city of Massada, and the fighting quickly spills over into the Paxton Protectorate. Massada itself is devastated, and the PRDF is mobilized to secure Paxton Arms' territory. A vicious three-way war ensues.
15th Summer, 1938	Discontent across Terra Nova has reached a boiling point. After two cycles of bloody war, the people have had enough. Peace protests and riots shake city-states in both poles, and the fighting slows as supply lines are disrupted and military units are pulled back to help keep order. Attempts by the Revisionist Church and Southern propaganda ministries to shore up support for the war effort fall on deaf ears. The failure of military leaders and politicians to produce the easy victories they had promised empower opposition parties.
Winter 1939	With both poles still wracked with dissent and protest, the fighting has slowed. Most of the ongoing conflict is concentrated in the Badlands, with the polar armies attempting to gain favourable positions there before support for the war completely evaporates.
35th Spring, 1939	Exhausted by two and a half cycles of intense warfare, the North and South agree to participate in peace talks hosted by Peace River.
2nd Summer, 1939	Just before the Peace talks ceremony, Peace River is destroyed by an anti-matter bomb. Over 75% of the city's residents are killed. The majority of the PRDF is outside of the city at the time, but are quickly recalled to lead the rescue effort. Within hours, the Northern Guard and MILICIA forces in the Wastes stand down and are ordered to provide any and all assistance. The bulk of both polar peace delegations had been travelling towards the city by maglev when the bomb went off, and are instrumental in managing the explosion's aftermath.
18th Summer, 1939	Although the blast had initially been blamed on the Badlands Revolutionary Front, rover and former CEF collaborator Valis Garrick is identified as having been near Peace River prior to the bombing by Terra Novan super-spy Nicos Renault. A mysterious "Scruffy Man," believed to be a CEF agent, is also identified in the photos. Renault releases this information to AST Lord Chancellor Kenichi Tanaka and influential WFP politician Lang Regina.



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE MESSAGES FROM THE POD

HEAVY GEAR BLITZ! GALLERY



Sculpted by Philippe F LeClerc, Painted by Dominic Pelleter, Photographed and Composed by Greg Perkins

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Article Guidelines

The Aurora Magazine focuses on the worlds created by Dream Pod 9. As such, we are primarily interested in, but not limited to, articles dealing with SilCore and Blitz rules (variants, additions, explorations of the rules) and on fiction, mechanized designs, equipment and the like that draw on established DP9 universes. This does not mean, however, that articles that are generic in nature or that do not deal with unique or original material, only that the focus is on exploring Silhouette and it's attendant universes.

Any article that is a promotion piece for another product, be it an excerpt or a lead-in to another product, must be clearly defined as such within the article body.

No articles will be accepted that use another's Intellectual Property or Copyrighted material without an included signed permission to use said material.

Fiction may be a one-off or serial based, as desired. Please note that long works of fiction may be split into multiple pieces over multiple issues for length reasons; if you are writing a long story it is best to indicate breaks in the story (chapters, for example) that allow us to chose the best point to split the story, if necessary. In keeping with the nature of the magazine we ask that fiction be accompanied by Silhouette CORE or Blitz! rules detail of some kind, be it stats for characters or equipment in the story, game scenarios, mechanized designs, new rules or explanations of how to simulate aspects of the story using the Silhouette/Blitz rules. This is not a hard requirement, and you may request that another contributor be asked to create the rules support based on your story.

Aurora is also looking for original artwork. Art may be used to accompany the article and/or for the cover of the APA. Please see below for copyright information regarding images.

Submission Guidelines

All work for Aurora should be submitted in an .rtf (Rich Text Format) file. The text within should be in Arial 10pt font, and single-spaced. Hard returns should be used only to separate paragraphs (with a double hard return) or with bullet points and list items. Do not indent paragraphs. You may use italics, boldface or bullets where deemed necessary.

Tables may be included in the submission. Preferably, tables should be created with minimal lines between cells, instead using background colour and/or cell spacing for clarity. Tables may also be included in courier-font/fixed-formatting. Identify these kind of tables with the following: <<<Table>>>

The article's title should be clearly noted at the beginning of the file, followed by a short (less than 75 words) introductory text. This introductory text can either be a synopsis, a quote, story, etc. It will be used at the beginning of the article to 'set the stage'.

The file should end with the Author's name(s), contact information (if desired) and a short bio (optional). This information will be placed on a Contributing Author's page in the magazine.

Please spell check and proofread your article. English or American spellings may be used as desired.

Photos, drawings or images should be accompanied by photo credits as well as a brief description/caption for each photo (optional). Indicate within your article where the images are to be included like so: <<<Image_Filename.ext>>>. Images should be sent at a maximum of 150dpi for greyscale or colour images, 300dpi for black & white images (1-bit). Given the size of a page, images should be no larger than 7 by 7 inches (18 by 18 cm). If we need a higher resolution image, we will contact you. Images should be compressed with an appropriate method; please check the quality of your images before sending. If by including images the submission would grow over 2 megabytes in size, please place the images on an Internet-accessible server where we will download them (don't forget to tell us where they are located).

Copyright Guidelines

Quotes or information that are attributable to other sources are permissible in appropriate quantities, and should be identified/cited (including page numbers), preferably within the article. Be sure that each quote is written exactly as it appears in the original source.

If you wish to include photos/drawings/images with your article, please provide the photo credits (artist/photographer/illustrator and subject if applicable). You may only submit images for which you have obtained permission to include in your article.

All articles and images used by Aurora remain in the copyright of the original submitters. You, as the author, must consent to release the article for publication by Aurora, with the knowledge that Aurora will not provide any compensation other than what has been listed above, and that Aurora, as an online magazine, will be downloaded by third-parties in a PDF format. All work for Aurora is volunteer-based. Should DP9 decide at a later time to compile and sell articles within a contract will be negotiated with the author at that time.

The End Print

Please send all submissions to the following email address:

auroramag@gmail.com

Thank you everyone for your interest, and we look forward to seeing your submissions soon!

Deadline for Submissions for Issue #2.4: June 15th 2008

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ARTICLE SUGGESTIONS

Historical Articles

Under this broad category are pieces meant primarily for illuminating or detailing something within the game universe. This can be truly historical in nature (describing history), detailing a region, the language, customs, architecture, technical systems, corporations, social structure, music, and more, to name a few. Articles may either be written from a neutral point of view (impartial observer from above) or written 'in character', that is, in the manner such information may be presented if it were available in the game world. See the Historical Accuracy note, below (especially important for this category).

Fiction

Any story (narrative with characters) that takes place within the established DP9 game worlds falls under this category. See the Historical Accuracy note, below, and also see the submission guidelines for further requirements.

Modules

Also known as adventures, a written collection of plot, character, and location details used by the gamemaster to manage the plot or story in the DP9 RPGs. All manner of modules are open for submission, from espionage to social to military to a combination of all three. Module submissions must be detailed enough for the GM to run the entire adventure, including descriptions and dispositions (where applicable) of major NPCs, locations, accessories and story/plot. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Scenarios

These are the tactical equivalent of modules, an encounter between two (or more) factions set up for combat. A complete scenario will detail the background of the encounter (the why), the forces engaged (the who -- what physical units at a minimum, regiment and designations to go the full way), the map and terrain (the where) the victory conditions (the how) and any special rules or conditions (the what). Scenarios should be designed to be balanced for each side, either via the types/numbers of units or through special circumstances or conditions. If the scenario is not balanced this must be mentioned in the background. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Note: Historical Accuracy

Aurora is committed to accuracy within the established DP9 worlds. All articles that take place 'within' the game world should be checked for its accuracy within the established timeline, faction dispositions, available equipment, etc. Submitted articles will be run by the game world historians, so check your work! You may, however, submit your article clearly marked as "Alternate History" and if published the article too will bear this mark. Be sure, if you submit this way, to provide in the background all that is necessary to describe what has changed.

Designs

New mechanical designs/vehicles/ships for use in the DP9 worlds. Designs must be legal and use either the latest SilCore rules (including all errata and the FAQ) or Blitz rules. Please indicate which design rules were used. Mechanical designs should fill a void that is not already covered by another unit. Background and a description must be included with the design, while artwork is optional and preferred. See the Historical Accuracy note, above.

Artwork

Aurora accepts all artwork for consideration, no matter the media type (rendering, sketch, painting, etc) within the rules set herein. Miniature photographs will also be accepted (dioramas encouraged!). Artwork must relate to an established DP9 universe and be easily identified as such. Artwork with nudity, racial undertones, sexism or sex will not be considered. See the submission guidelines on how to submit images.

House Rules

Original rules for the Silhouette/Blitz! system and modifications to existing rules. All rules submittals must include an explanation of the rule's purpose, the rules themselves clearly written, and an example of the rule in play.

Note: Blitz! Rules

House Rules covering existing Blitz! Rules will be limited. New Rules covering areas of the game not explicitly contained in the existing rules (as found in the Blitz! line of books) may be submitted freely. House Rules that modify or replace the written Blitz! ruleset (as found in the Blitz! line of books) will be forwarded to the line developer for review and comment. They will then contact you if the idea may proceed forward. Note that this applies only to the Blitz! line -- rules may be freely submitted for any other SilCore game.

Tactics

Have you won countless battles? Have a strategy you would like to share? Write a tactics article. Usually this type of article will be in a step-by-step (or turn by turn) format to illustrate the tactic. An introduction and conclusion is required to create a complete package and to convey to the reader where the tactic is applicable and how it came about.

Miniatures/Modeling

Any article on preparing miniatures, painting, terrain making, sculpting, foliage techniques, etc will be accepted. Photographs and/or diagrams are strongly encouraged.