

AURORA

THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
BLITZ! TOURNAMENT RULES
HEAVY GEARS, REGIMENTS, AND MORE
GK, HG & JC FICTION

SPECIAL PULL OUT SECTION: INTO THE HINTERLANDS



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE
TABLE OF CONTENTS
VOLUME 3, ISSUE 4

Shades in the Night... <i>Editor's Message</i>	2
About the Authors <i>The Whos and Copyright Information</i>	3
Harlequin Knights, Chapter 3 <i>Fiction set in Heavy Gear by Dennis R. Johnson, Jr.</i>	5
Support Options <i>House Rules for Heavy Gear Blitz by Kevin Heide</i>	7
OACS-04X Dark Asp <i>Mechanical Design for Heavy Gear Blitz! by Poh Kun Tai</i>	8
Alfie's Tanners <i>Graphic Novel set in Gear Krieg by John Bell</i>	10
The 360TV Lightning Tournament <i>House Rules for Heavy Gear Blitz! by Brad Bellows</i>	13
SPECIAL PULL OUT SECTION — Into the Hinterlands Part 2 <i>Setting Info for Heavy Gear by the Save the Asp Society</i>	
Omega Company, Chapter 2 <i>Fiction set in Heavy Gear by Dennis R. Johnson, Jr.</i>	23
Urban Tiger Squad <i>Setting Info for Heavy Gear Blitz! by Poh Kun Tai</i>	25
Elysee's Final Act <i>Fiction set in the Jovian Chronicles by Rick Romero</i>	26
The WFPA in Preparation <i>Setting Info for Heavy Gear Blitz! by Kevin Heide</i>	35
The Widow's Legion <i>Setting Info for Heavy Gear Blitz! by Sean C Callaway</i>	36
Messages from the Pod <i>Official DP9 Material by John Buckmaster</i>	38
Submission Guidelines <i>How to Submit Material to Aurora</i>	41
Article Suggestions <i>What Aurora is Looking For</i>	42

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

SHADES IN THE NIGHT

From the Editor...

Sometimes you can just be self-referential...

You might have already noticed it, with a longer than average download. Maybe you saw the larger number at the top of your Acrobat window. Or maybe your computer went “OOF!” when it tried to lift the issue. (Alternately, maybe your laptop got heavier once 3.4 finished downloading)

If you *hadn't* noticed it, well go back one page and check out the Table of Contents. A) it's nearly full and B) we have a gaggle of pages. Not to forget mentioning another special “pull out” section with part 2 of Into the Hinterlands... It is what you could call a bumper crop issue! And starting with one very excellent cover...

Where there is excitement, there is material being produced. With an Origins nomination and the second book for Locked and Loaded just released Heavy Gear Blitz! picks up more and more speed... and with an article on setting up quick tournaments we present an excellent avenue for introducing yet more people (and players!) to this enduring world. Add to that a hefty dose of fiction from other DP9 worlds including the excellent and continuing Gear Krieg graphic novel and a mighty Jovian Chronicles novella.

And what would an Aurora be without an article on the ASP? Oh yes, we have one of those too!

There's nothing like a full round of articles and items, from a few Quick Shots to lengthy treatises to make an editor happy. And I know that whatever happiness I have, you, the readers and the players are yet happier still.

If this keeps up, I'll have to figure out how to put more into the table of contents. Now that would be a great problem to have...

Make it a great summer. Game on!

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor

Want the Pull Out Section all -in-one?

We first published Part 1 of Into the Hinterlands back in Issue 2.6. If you want both parts as a single file, you can download it from here:

http://aurora.dp9forum.com/Issues/Into_The_Hinterlands.pdf

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.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Brad Bellows (bradley.bellows@3web.net) -- *The 360TV Lightning Tournament*

A former nuclear engineer who now works with sewage; Brad lives in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada with his wife, three kids, mortgage and car loan. A fan of Heavy Gear and Jovian Chronicles since the days of Mekton and Mecha Press, he currently spends his spare time playtesting new tactics and building new and improved army lists for Heavy Gear Blitz!

Dennis R. Johnson, Jr. (griffon296@msn.com) -- *Omega Company Ch2 and Harlequin Knights Ch 3*

Dennis Johnson is a 27-year old who currently resides in Kentucky with his wife and child. A 6-year US Navy veteran, Dennis currently works at a GameStop where he torments his co-workers with an unending supply of Star Wars and Heavy Gear trivia.

Greg Perkins (gregoryperkins@gmail.com) -- *Illustration p8*

Greg Perkins occasionally works freelance for Dreampod 9 on top of the plethora of other things that consume his time and interests from architecture, to graphic design, painting, illustration, photography, and layout.

Jake Staines (jake.staines@gmail.com) -- *Cover Illustration*

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

He gets labeled a "walking-talking encyclopedia." He draws what goes through his mind. He builds what he can't afford. He walks what others would take a lift for. He'd probably trade in his bike for a real, working Ferret; but then again, who wouldn't?

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.

Kevin Heide (savage_bastard9999@yahoo.ca) -- *Support Options and The WFPA in Preparation*

Oliver Bollmann (kannikcat@hotmail.com) -- *EDF: Foundation*

It all started in a hobby store one day twenty odd years ago with an odd box containing something called Top Secret. Since then games have just become a big part of his life. 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 (pittkachu@gmail.com) -- *Urban Tiger Squad and OACS-04X Dark Asp*

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.

Rick Romero (stormcat@adventureminer.com) -- *Elysee's Final Act*

Rick lives in Monterey, CA with a cat named Princess Kiddo of the Infinite Meow. If Rick could design his own Gear, it would be gigantic with fur and require a Northco Behemoth to fill and empty its litter box..

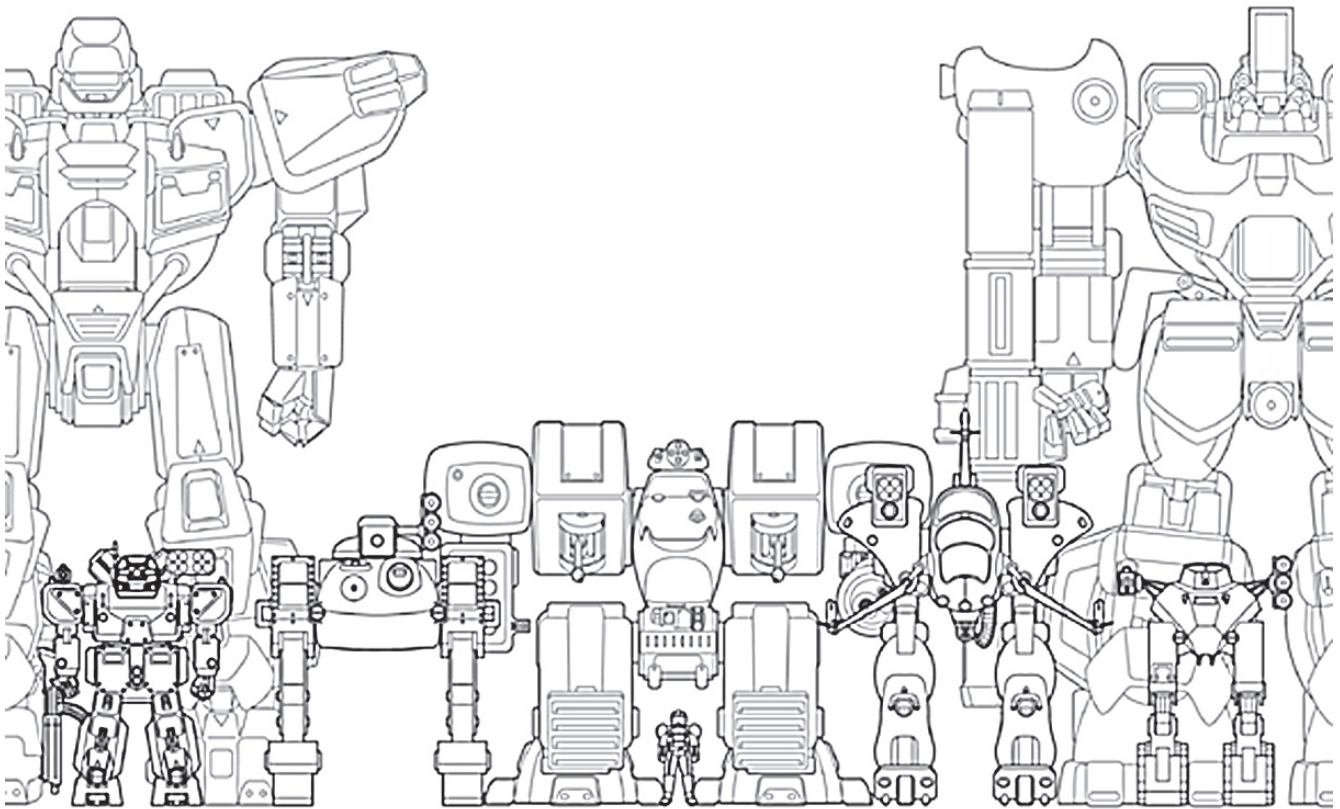
Sean C Callaway (paradox_zero_one@yahoo.com) -- *The Widow's Legion*

Sean, Paradox 01 at the forums, is a medic in the US Army currently deployed to Iraq. While he has yet to play a single game of HGB!, he enjoys painting the miniatures, tooling around with army lists, and reading up on the history of Gear development. He's also a Northerner at heart.

Multiple Authors -- *Into the Hinterlands, Part 2*

Jake Staines - Front Cover and Interior Artist
Greg Perkins - Interior Artist, Layout, and Maps
Stephen Fox - Interior Artist
Andrew McIntyre - Editor
Jason Dickerson - Writer

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE ABOUT THE AUTHORS



COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

Silhouette™, Silhouette Core™, Core Command™, Heavy Gear™, Heavy Gear Blitz!™, Jovian Chronicles™, Tribe 8™ and Gear Krieg™ are Trademarks of Dream Pod 9, Inc. Silhouette™ Core Rules are © Dream Pod 9, Inc.

All articles written within are © their respective authors, as indicated on the list above. Permission has been granted for the sole purpose of their publication in Aurora. No reproduction is allowed without their express consent.

All images not specifically listed above, as well as all game logos are © DP9 and their original artists. No reproduction is allowed without their express consent.

Permission granted to reproduce this document in full for private use.

Please visit www.dp9.com and aurora.dp9forum.com for more information.

Aurora Magazine, Volume 3, Issue 4, Published July 1st, 2009

"It is important to note that while rovers, encountered either by themselves or in small groups, pose little to no threat to any PRDF soldier or POC officer, they can, in large groups, cause trouble for even the most well-experienced and well-equipped squad."

-- Captain Tiber Stahl, in a briefing to his Section on rover gangs.

*Karaq Wastes, Badlands
20 Kilometers west of Mol Oasis Tower
20 August, TN 1937*

"So what's the problem?" Tiber asked as he walked up beside Ayanah, looking out across the vast stretch of the Wastes. Without a word, she offered her binoculars and pointed out to a point on the horizon. Tiber took the binoculars and looked through them towards the point Ayanah had indicated. What he originally thought was a small sand dune was, in fact, a dust cloud. A dust cloud being kicked up by several vehicles approaching at very high speed. They were still too far off for Tiber to identify, but based on both direction and the reckless speed they were approaching from, he knew they weren't from Mol Tower. He muttered several curses under his breath before handing the binoculars back to Ayanah.

"Rovers," he stated as the woman peered through the binoculars once more, "My guess is they'll be here in about half an hour."

"Did you manage to get through to your people?" Ayanah asked, still looking at the closing bandits.

"Yeah. They'll be here in an hour."

"Figures," she sighed as she lowered her binoculars. "What're our options?" Tiber quickly ran through several scenarios in his head before speaking.

"First, we could play dead. Pack up your tent, hide ourselves and hope help shows up before we're discovered. Of course, the problem is that there aren't a whole lot of places we could hide ourselves where they won't look first, and it'll be even harder to hide your barnaby."

"Ok, so what's our next option?"

"We could surrender and try and stall them until help arrives, but if they feel like shooting any survivors first, we're screwed."

"Anything else?"

"We fight," Tiber stated, "The Cataphract survived the crash relatively intact and has ECM jammers that can both blind the rover's sensors to our presence and keep them from calling any more buddies." Ayanah nodded thoughtfully before responding.

"Seems like a good plan. There's just one problem, though. What are you going to use for weapons? I don't think that any that might have survived the crash would be loaded."

"That's true, but I can see one right now that doesn't need ammo."

"Where?" Ayanah asked, and Tiber merely pointed. She followed his line of sight to where a massive vibrosword jutted out of the ground, its hilt and blade glittering in the Badlands sun. All she could say in response was, "Oh."

.....

Tiber and Ayanah spent the next several minutes frantically taking down Ayanah's small tent and packing it and Tiber's duffel onto her barnaby, which Tiber learned was named Oliver. After loading Oliver down, Ayanah reached into a saddlebag and pulled out a fairly large case. As Tiber began getting into his pilot gear, she opened the case, revealing a pair of pistols, an SMG, and a high-powered scope, which she attached to her rifle.

"That's a lot of guns," Tiber stated, "Is there something I should know?" Ayanah smiled her soft, sad smile again as she replied, "I like to travel prepared." Tiber was about to make a witty comeback when something in his vest shifted and pressed against his injured ribs, causing him to grimace with pain.

"Are you sure you want to do this?" Ayanah asked as she moved to help him.

"Really don't have much of a choice," Tiber replied, readjusting his vest and loosening some straps so he could catch his breath. "Can you pilot a Gear?"

"No."

"Then looks like I'm still in the pilot's seat," Tiber said as he finished donning his gear. "What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to take Oliver back to the remains of the fuselage over there," Ayanah said, indicating the relatively intact remains of the forward section of the crashed plane, "And I'll provide sniper support from the top of the wreckage."

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

HARLEQUIN KNIGHTS - CHAPTER 3

"Alright. I'll try and keep them away from you, but if it starts to get bad, I want you to disengage and head west. With any luck you'll run into the recovery team. Let them know the situation." Ayanah looked like she wanted to say something, but only nodded in agreement. Tiber knew what she wanted to say, but they both knew now was not the time for discussion. "You ready, Ayanah?"

"Locked and loaded, Captain," she replied.

"Good. Remember to not open fire until I've made my first move, and good luck and good hunting," Tiber held out his hand and Ayanah reached out her own to shake with him.

"Same to you," she said with a smile before turning and leading Oliver away. The young captain watched her walk away before turning and running for his Cataphract.

.....

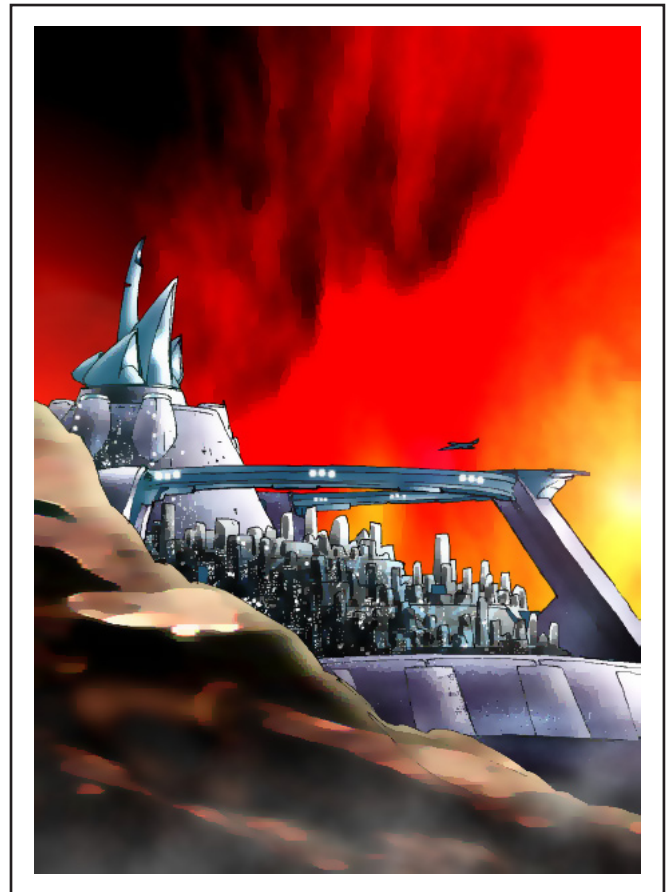
As soon as Tiber reached his Gear, he looked out and saw the rovers were close, close enough to see with the naked eye. He hoped they didn't spot him as he climbed into the Cataphract and quickly buttoned up. He quickly re-initialized all systems and brought everything he could online without starting his engines. He hoped the harsh sun would keep the rovers from noticing the omnicamera's lights powering up as his helmet began to light up with the feed from the gear's sensors. He counted what looked like four buggies and a truck of some kind, two of the buggies with mounted machine guns and one with what appeared to be an anti-gear rifle.

Tiber mentally noted that buggy would have to be the first one to be destroyed. The first buggy was less than a minute away now, and Tiber knew he'd have to time his move just right. He watched the rovers stop in front of his Gear and begin to exit from their vehicles. Only the gunners on the buggies stayed where they were, scanning the wreckage for survivors. As soon as they were far enough away from the vehicles, Tiber started the V-engine and initiated his ECM. He watched as several of the rovers simply stared at the machine, puzzled as to why it would start on it's own. A few of the rovers, the smarter ones, began running back to their vehicles.

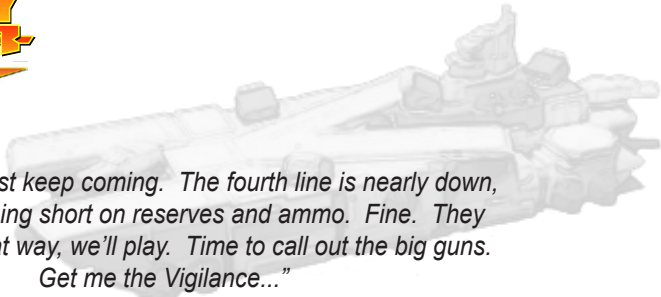
Tiber smiled wolfishly as he began to place the Gear from a prone position to standing. As he stood, he heard the sound of small arms fire beginning to ping off the Cataphract's thick armor as the rovers opened fire on him. Then he heard a much larger round hit him as the anti-gear rifle began firing. As soon as he stood, he quickly targetted the buggy with the rifle turret and quickly began to close the distance with it. The turret got only one more round off before Tiber had reached it and smashed the buggy with a punishing kick that sent the gunner flying several meters.

Having siezed the initiative and the upper hand, he quickly spun the Gear around and ran for the vibrosword, noticing that the other buggies' machine guns had gone silent. As he glanced at one, he saw one of the gunners slumped over his gun, blood pooling at his feet. No doubt Ayanah was fully in the fight now. He reached the sword and grabbed hold of it, swinging it around as he pulled it up, cutting down the enemy and also kicking up a huge dust cloud that would make it harder for the rovers to see him. He focused on taking out the vehicles first, taking out their truck with a swordthrust through the vehicle's cab and engine. He then smashed two of the buggies aside with a sweeping motion and brought his sword down on the last buggy to cleave it in two. With the last vehicle destroyed, he turned his attention to the remaining rovers on foot. There weren't many left between his rampage and Ayanah's deadly precision, and those few fell quickly to either Tiber's Gear or Ayanah's rifle.

As the dust settled, Tiber checked his sensors and visual feed to ensure that none remained alive. After confirming that all hostiles were indeed down, he looked in the direction of Ayanah and used his manipulators to give her a thumbs up. Ayanah stood from her firing position and raised her rifle above her head in triumph. Together, they had done it.



Peace River in the Distance



"Aaargh, they just keep coming. The fourth line is nearly down, and we're running short on reserves and ammo. Fine. They want to play that way, we'll play. Time to call out the big guns. Get me the Vigilance..."

With Support Options we get Airstrikes, Artillery Bombardment, but no Cruise Missiles Attacks...

Well, here are some rules for Cruise Missile Attacks, fired from a nearby Landship to support your unit with a couple of well placed missile attacks.

Use the following table for determining the cost and the profile for the performance of the attack.

CRUISE MISSILE ATTACK

Very Lt CM Attack	SP1 gives 1 Missile
Light CM Attack	SP2 gives two Missiles
Medium CM Attack	SP3 gives three Missiles, Priority 3 or more
Heavy CM Attack	SP4 gives five Missiles, Priority 4 only

CRUISE MISSILES

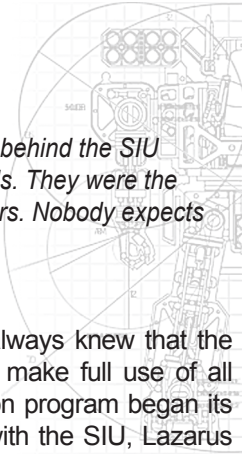
Cruise Missiles have the following profile:

Min/Max Move: 8/15, Turns: 1, Defence: +1, Armour: 5, Damage: [L][H], Detect: 2, Sensors: +2, Auto Comm: 0, Comm: 0, Actions for Round: 1, Attack: +1, Perks/Flaws: Low Profile, Weapons SDG (F, G, Blast 2)



Your fire support is INBOUND!

They came out of the darkness, right behind the SIU commandos, with APGLs on their heads. They were the cheapest and most unlikely of stealth gears. Nobody expects the Dark Asp.



MILICIA Commandant Aristide Lazarus always knew that the Special Intervention Unit, would need to make full use of all available resources. When the Black Talon program began its exchange of personnel and technology with the SIU, Lazarus arranged for Dark Series upgrade technology to be applied to some of the SIU's own infantry support units. There were still many enemies of Terra Nova lurking within the jungles, swamps, hills and even cities of the South. The overstretched, overworked infantry commandos of the SIU would need gears that could sneak as close to enemy targets as possible, in order to deliver grenades and devastating machinegun fire. And so was born the OACS-04X Dark Asp.

Addition

Add one or more Asps to a SIU Infantry Platoon. Apply the Stealth Level 2 perk to the Asps for +5 TV as per the SIU special rules.

Whatever happens next, you've already won.



Greg Perkins: Darkest of the Dark?

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE
OACS-04X DARK ASP



Miniature Assembly & Photography by Nigel Wong

ALFIE'S TENNERS

JOHN BELL

ALFIE'S TENNERS

ART & STORY: JACK BELL

FRANCE, MAY 1940. 2/LT. ALPHONSE MARCH AND HIS WALKER TROOP ARE TRYING TO PLAN THE BEST WAY TO PUSH BACK THE GERMAN OFFENSIVE. -WITHOUT MUCH SUCCESS, IT MUST BE SAID...

LT. MARCH! STOP WHATEVER YOU ARE DOING! MAJOR ANGWISH, MILITARY INTELLIGENCE! I HAVE MATTERS TO DISCUSS WITH YOU!

MARCH, FROM WHAT I READ HERE, YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER WAS IN THE KGL BACK IN THE NAPOLEONIC WARS...

YES, SIR. HE MOVED TO BRITAIN WHEN QUEEN VICTORIA WAS CROWNED. HE WASN'T FOND OF HANOVER...

KGL: KING'S GERMAN LEGION

GOOD THING FOR YOU, THEN. WE MANAGED TO INTERCEPT A CODED MESSAGE THAT ORDERED ALL THE GERMAN OFFICERS TO A CHATEAU. THERE'S MORE TO THIS, AND WE NEED SOMEONE TO FIND OUT WHAT!

SO YOU NEED SOMEONE TO POSE AS A JERRY AND SNEAK IN? I DON'T REALLY LIKE THIS, BUT YOU CAN COUNT ON ME, SIR!

ANY OF YOU LOT KNOW HOW TO SPEAK GERMAN?

ME AND MY WHOLE FAMILY COMPETED IN THE '36 OLYMPICS. I LEARNED ENOUGH TO GET BY.

ALL THE HARKERS? SO HOW COME NONE OF YOU BROUGHT US BACK A MEDAL?

THAT'S AN EASY ONE! WITH ALL THEIR ANTICS, THEY GOT KICKED OUT AFTER A WEEK!

GOOD LUCK, MARCH. YOU'LL NOTICE THE CAP HAS A CAMERA HIDDEN INSIDE IT.

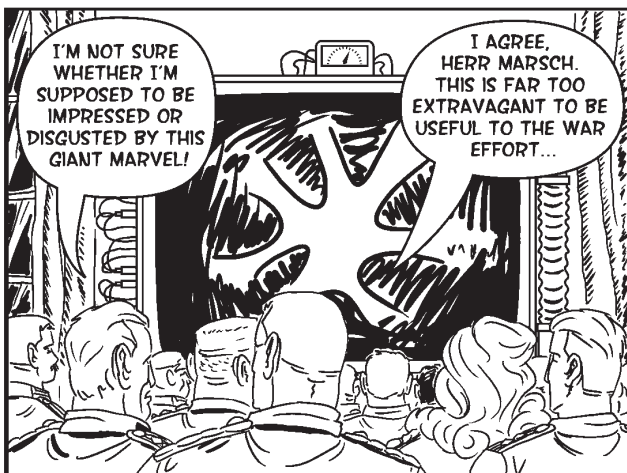
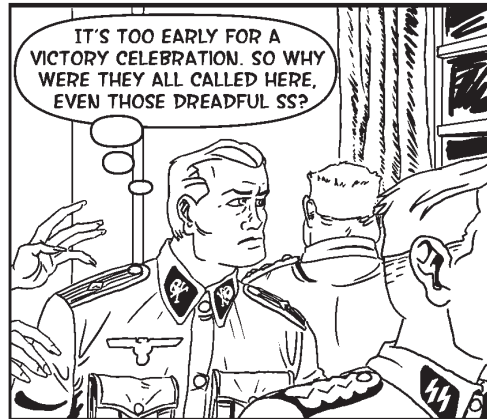
THANK YOU SIR. THIS GETUP IS A BIT CONSTRICTING, BUT I'LL MANAGE.

REMEMBER, TONIGHT I AM ALFONS MARSCH, PANZER COMMANDER, AND YOU ARE GEFREITER HANDLER.

HANDLER? GOOD ONE, SIR!

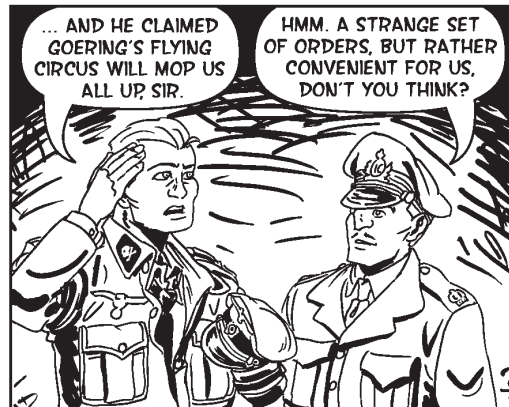
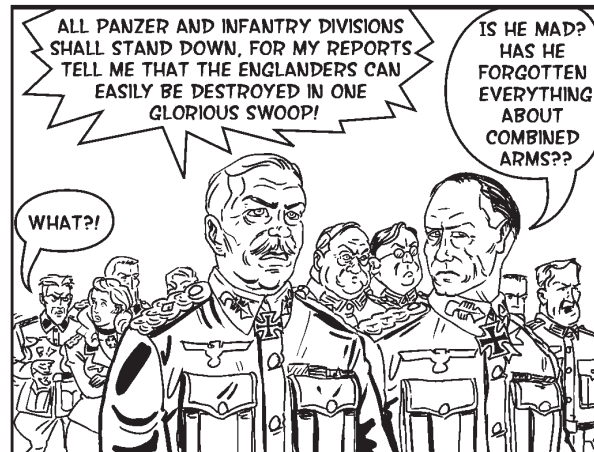
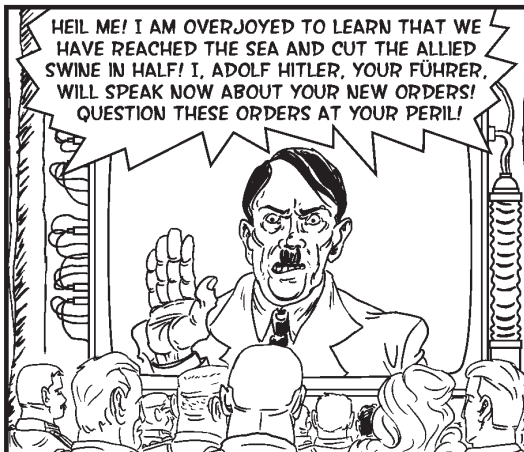
HERR MARSCH? JA, GO ON IN!

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE ALFIE'S TENNERS



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ALFIE'S TENNERS



NEXT EPISODE: THE TENNERS TRY TO HELP DEFEND A FRENCH POSITION!

Are you looking for a way to get some of your friends involved in Blitz? This short tournament format should help you introduce the game to new players given a minimum amount of time to play and a small material investment.

The Issue

Gaming Conventions can be one of the best ways to expose Heavy Gear Blitz to new players. However, many players are leery about getting into a new gaming system, considering the costs involved in buying rulebooks and miniatures. They also probably only have a limited amount of time to devote to learning the system.

Having played in several standard Blitz tournaments and invariably running out of time. I set about designing a tournament that could fit within a standard 4-hour programming block that seems to be the norm for gaming conventions.

Tournament Design

In designing the Tournament, I worked from the assumption that it isn't the total TV that determines the length of a game, but the total number of Combat Groups fielded. My rule of thumb from observing tournaments is to allocate 30 minutes of play for every pair of combat groups. Heavy Gear Blitz is a game of squads, so I felt you needed to give new players at least two squads for them to get a feel for how squads in an army interact. Given that I also wanted the tournament to finish within 4 hours, I couldn't add any more Combat Groups than that.

I also considered the size of the map. An Organizer wants players to close quickly to attack each other, but let them feel they have room to maneuver. I find another good rule of thumb is to provide 3 square feet of playing surface for every pair of combat groups. With two combat groups this equates to 6 square feet (a 2'x3' map).

The other consideration was to create pre-generated scenarios with set objectives and table effects. A variety of terrain and effects should be included to prevent players from building armies that take advantage of a particular objective or terrain type, encouraging generalized army builds. The objectives and terrain set up should be mirrored on both sides as much as possible. Having preset objectives and deployment help speed

up play since the players in each round will require less time for set up.

I also had to consider the types of armies that could be built. Being something of a power gamer myself, I always strive to maximize the performance out of my army lists for the minimum cost. This can ruin the game for some players as they may feel that army composition trumps actual tactical play. For this reason may be important to add restrictions to the army build in the areas of Priority Level, total number of units or actions, or some combination of the above.

Remember, the main purpose of the Lightning rules is to create a gaming experience that is enjoyable for all. This set up should be ideal for encouraging new players, since there is a minimal expenditure of time spent on this event for any one player, allowing them to join other events at the con. It should also appeal to experienced players, providing a series of challenges to prove their tactical prowess. And everyone should be able to blow something up at least once per game.



WFPA and HAPF forces duke it out for king of the hill!



Woofpies and Snakes battle it out in the Land of the Blind scenario.

It is also important for any Organizer to take into account the local gaming culture and tweak the Lightning Tournament Base Rules to balance the playing field between new and experienced players. It is with these thoughts in mind that I created the following rules.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

THE 360TV LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT

The Lightning Tournament Base Rules

1.0. A tournament will consist of no more than 8 players on 4 maps, with at least 1 Convener to judge the event. Additional Judges would be helpful to deal with rules disputes during the round. The Organizers should have at least four pre-generated armies available. If more than one player wants the same army, then the Organizer will decide by a random method who gets the army, and the other players will have to accept their second choice.

1.1. Prior to the start of the tournament, the organizers should spend 15 to 20 minutes provide a brief overview of the important rules, including Movement Modes and Speeds, Cover and Concealment, Active Detection, Forward Observation, direct and Indirect Fire, damage resolution, electronic warfare and communication events, and Command Points. Experienced players are expected to help new players if they have any questions during the game. If the experienced player does not know, they will call on the Organizer for the answer.

2.0. Player generated armies must have no more than 2 combat groups equaling 360TV built at any Priority Level from 1 to 4. Every army must include at least one combat group with at least 2 walker vehicles (includes gears, frames, mounts, and/or striders, *not* infantry). An army cannot have more than a maximum of 9 units and 9 actions. Players with 1 Combat Group can choose to divide it into sub-squads before each game. If Organizers feel these limits are too restrictive, then the army size can be increased to 480TV with up to 11 units and 11 actions to allow for more elite and better-equipped squads. Be warned that this may increase the number of units and playing time required.

2.1. Support Points are provided at 1 SP per PL as per the rules. Support Options must be chosen prior to the tournament start and each option can only be used *once* during the entire tournament (e.g.: A player builds a PL1 Northern force of a GP Squad and a Light Tank Squad and purchases two medium artillery strikes with his one SP. He uses one strike in the first game and uses the second strike in the third game).

2.2. Player generated armies with support options must be reviewed by the tournament Organizers prior to the start of the tournament for legality.

3.0. Each map will be 24"x36" with terrain laid out by the tournament Organizers. This includes Table Effects and Unusual Events (exception: For Variable Time Limit, start rolling the die after turn 2 instead of turn 4), Deployment Zones and Objectives. Deployment is limited to within 6 to 8 inches of each player's home edge. Organizers should set time before the start of the tournament for players to familiarize themselves with the conditions and objectives on each board.

4.0. Each round will be 75 minutes long consisting of three phases:

4.1. Assignment Phase (7 Minutes) - Players are paired off with opponents by the Organizers and assigned to a table with specific objectives for their army. Players set up their combat groups and then roll for initiative. Support Options can be kept secret to all but the tournament Organizers.

4.2. Game Phase (60 minutes) - This is how long the game is expected to last. Judges will announce the start of the round, the halfway point, and 5 minutes remaining. If at the end of the 60 minutes some games haven't ended yet, the Organizer will call time and all play will stop. The Judge will award VPs based on objectives achieved up to that point. Break ties based on Success Level, VPs, then PL, as per the *Locked and Loaded* rules. If this still results in a tie, the Judge will ask each player what his plans for the remaining turn were, then decide based on estimated results of the tactics. If all else fails, winner will be decided by coin flip.

4.2.1. Speedy play is expected. Players may notify the Organizers if they feel a player is deliberately slowing the game down. If a player is judged by the Organizers to be deliberately slowing the game down, they shall be given a verbal warning. On the second offence, they will forfeit the round and their opponent will be awarded full victory points.

4.2.2. Alternatively, players may be given time clocks set for 30 minutes per side. Once the start of the round is announced, the player moving second will press their button to start their opponent's time clock. The player moving first will choose a combat group and activate it. Once the player has completed all moves and actions with that combat group, they will press their button and start their opponent's time clock, repeating the process. The same order applies to airstrikes, artillery and reserves.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

THE 360TV LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT

4.2.2.1. At the end of each turn, the last person to play will roll for initiative before pressing their time clock. The player who wins initiative must immediately choose whether to move first or second. Play continues in this format until the end of the game.

4.2.2.2. If a player declares the use of command points or snap fire or move out of sequence during their opponent's turn, then the opponent immediately starts the interrupting player's time clock. Once the player completes their action or activation, the interrupting player presses their time clock button to resume the opponent's turn.

4.2.2.3. If the time runs out on a player's time clock, then the game ends and the player whose time runs out gains victory points for whatever objectives they have achieved up to that point up to a maximum of 2VP, while their opponent will receive full VP for all objectives.

4.3. *Resolution Phase (8 minutes)* - The Organizers determine who won and who lost each game and determine the pairings for the next round. Players reorganize their forces and prepare for the next round. Winning players receive 1 point, and losing players receive 0 points. Organizers will note what support points were used by each army that round.

5.0. There will be 3 rounds per tournament. Each round will aspire to pair players with a similar number of wins and/or Victory Points, with no player allowed to play the same opponent twice. Set-up is as follows:

- 5.0.1. Players randomly given a Number between 1 and 8.
- 5.0.2. For the 1st round, pair off the players and assign them the following maps: Board 1 – 1&2; Board 2 – 3&4; Board 3 – 5&6; Board 4 – 7&8.
- 5.0.3. For the 2nd round, assign the players to the following maps: Board 1 – Winners of 5&6 and 7&8, 1&2; Board 2 – Losers of 5&6 and 7&8; Board 3 – Winners of 1&2 and 3&4; Board 4 – Losers of 1&2 and 3&4.

5.0.4. For the Third round, try to place the two players with 2-0 records on a map neither of them have played, if possible. Then pair the next four teams at 1-1, ensuring that nobody plays the same person or the same board. If the latter is not possible, then make sure that players play on the opposite side of the board they previously played. The 0-2 players get the board that's left over.

5.1. If there are only 6 players, then set up as above, but have the winning player with the lowest VP total play the losing player with the highest VP total. If there are only 4 players in a tournament, then simply set up a round-robin format, moving the players between different boards as shown above. In the case of an odd number of players, the Judge could either get a volunteer to fill in for a missing player, play the missing spot himself (realizing that he will need to adjudicate and interrupt his game), or give the odd player a bye.

5.2. After all 3 rounds are completed; the Organizer will total the VPs for each player from each round. The winner is the player who has won the most number of rounds. In the case of a tie, award the tournament victory to the winner with the highest VP total at the end of the tournament. In the case of identical VP totals, then the winner should have the lowest PL. The same rules apply to determine the runner-up. The winner should receive a prize of some sort, preferably DP9 product, and the runner-up should also receive a lesser prize. Contact DP9 via e-mail prior to the tournament for possible prizes or approach them if they come to your convention.

5.3. These rules should allow a tournament to be completed within 4 hours, which is generally the amount of time that gaming conventions assign programming blocks. If you are in the fortunate position to have more than 8 people interested in the tournament, then set up 2 or 3 semi-final tournaments (either concurrently or in separate time blocks), with the players having the highest number of wins and top VP scores advancing to the final tournament. If players want to play in multiple semi-finals, they should be placed on a waiting list and fill any vacancies in following semi-final tournaments. Only consider the best tournament result for that player.

BASIC SCENARIOS

Not sure what makes a good scenario? Try play testing some ideas. Here are 4 scenarios that work:

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE THE 360TV LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT

IN THE LAND OF THE BLIND

Looking for an energy-signature needle in a lab complex haystack, you'd like to have a word with Intel who thought it was a good idea to use a sandstorm as cover...

Terrain: Flat with buildings (considered **Solid Cover** for detection purposes). Inside Lab Complex allows Walker and Jump Jet Movement only.

Table Effects: Dust Storm x2 – Add 2 Concealment for every 6 full inches of distance between models. If a Model uses an MB weapon, add +1 to the weapon MB trait and the Model loses 1 point of concealment. No Model will ever count as being “Fully in the Open” and all Indirect Fire attacks and Airstrikes suffer a –1 modifier.

Deployment: Narrow Edge – Models must be within 6” of board edge.

Objectives: **Wipe Out** a Random Enemy Combat Group (roll 1d6 to determine CG) (2VP),
Scout Objective (1VP),
Assassinate Enemy Army Commander (1VP)

WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE

You've got to get your intel to HQ tout de suite, so blow through your opponents. But what's that rumbling in the distance?

Terrain: Urban. All black surfaces considered Road (double Ground Movement). Vegetation counts as Light Cover.

Table Effects: Friendly Fire – During Artillery Phase, roll 1d6. On a 4 or higher, 1 SP of heavy artillery is incoming. The Player with the lowest VP at the time of the strike may choose the target points. In case of a tie, then roll to determine who chooses the target, then alternate on subsequent turns. Impact Point becomes rough Terrain within Blast Radius.

Deployment: Narrow Edge – Models must be within 8” of a board edge.

Objectives: **Breakthrough** Enemy Deployment Zone (2VP),
Survive a Random Friendly Combat Group (roll 1d6 to determine CG) (2VP).

WHAT'S YOURS IS MINE

You've been glaring at each other's bunkers across no man's land for ages. Now is the time for action!

Terrain: River Valley with river, crossed by Bridge with Road, with a bunker (Heavy Cover, indestructible) on each side. Vegetation counts as Light Cover. Gears can jump off bridge as Dangerous Terrain Test (roll defense skill versus threshold of 5).

Table Effects: None.

Deployment: Diagonal – Models must be within 8” of a board edge.

Objectives: **Seize** Opponent's Bunker (2VP),
Hold Your Bunker (2VP).

KING OF THE MOUNTAIN

Your satellite network is disrupted and the local terrain is playing havoc with communications. To reach higher ground, break out the climbing gear!

Terrain: Tall and Mountainous, many cliffs blocking easy passage and line of sight for combat locks. Rough patches make it hard to get around. Vegetation counts as Light Cover.

Table Effects: None.

Deployment: Wide Edge – Models must be within 6” of a board edge.

Objectives: **Seize** the top of the tallest hill (2VP) – must have climbing apparatus or arms,
Protect Your Army Commander (1VP),
Scout Objective (1VP) – another high spot as alternate comm location. (Note: Include elevation difference as 1” for detection range purposes).

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

THE 360TV LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT

Non-Lightning Tournaments

For a longer tournament with a greater variety of armies and tactics, allow forces a maximum of 4 or 5 combat groups each totaling 800-1000TV at any priority level, played on 36"x48" maps with normal deployment zones. Double the amount of time for each phase of each round (Assignment Phase: 15 min; Game Phase: 120 min; Resolution Phase: 15 min), and having a total of 3 rounds. Increase the number of rounds to 4 if there are more than 8 participants. Schedule 8-10 hours for such a tournament and have 1 judge per 8 players or portion thereof. If there are more than 16 participants, then have the top 2-4 players in 1-2 blitz playoff rounds lasting one hour each. (If they are that good, they should be able to play faster.)

Suggested Materials

Since this tournament is designed to entice new players, the Organizer must have reference materials and some pre-generated armies available. The Heavy Gear Blitz Quick Start Rules available from the website are useful, as are printouts of the datacards for each pre-generated army. The armies aren't too difficult to build, since most players can build two 360TV armies from their own forces. For example, you could easily build two Lightning Tournament forces from a 1000TV army. The Organizer should also have several measuring tapes, dice, and pencils available.

When pre-generating forces, try to create armies that match the character of the faction they represent, since one of the reasons for having pre-generated armies is to attract new players to a faction with their look. The HAPF tend towards striders and tanks, with only a few high-tech gears. The SRA take the best units money can buy while the MILICIA get the table scraps, but both usually have Political Officers attached to watch over the units. The Mekong Dominion builds their forces around MP squads and VibroKatanas. The ESE can be a real mixed bag, but have a higher proportion of Iguanas and Basilisks than their neighbours. The NAF like big guns and use Chaplains to exhort the faithful. The UMFA tend to have a higher proportion of expensive specialized squads. The WFPA tends to field whatever is cheapest to buy and repair. The PRDF has a variety of units with lots of EW capability and their Tankstriders. The PAK and Earth Forces are known for their Hovertanks and GREs. The Capricians have their Mounts while the Black Talons are known for their stealth and being grossly outnumbered.

Sample Armies

Not sure how to make a competitive force? Here are some sample armies that might give you some ideas:

Humanist Alliance Protection Force (HAPF) Army

2 CGs, 4 Units, 6 Actions

Priority Level: 1

Support Points: 1

Command Points: 3

Strider Cadre (Command Naga) (180) (Core)

Options: Swap Naga for Command Naga (-40)

Swap MAC for HFL (+0)

Command Naga is Army Commander 140 points

Tank Cadre (Hun, 2 Black Mamba) (180) (Aux)

Options: Add Hun (+90)

Swap 2 Hun for Black Mamba (-50) 220 points

Mekong Dominion Peacekeeper Army

2 CGs, 8 Units, 8 Actions

Priority Level: 1

Support Points: 1

Command Points: 3

MP Cadre (Black Mamba MP, 3 Iguana MP) (205) (Core)
<Veteran, SWAT>

Options: Swap BM MP FCG for LAAC (+5)

Swap 2 Iguana MP FGC for LAC + 3xHHGs (+0)

Add Level 3 Att/Def to Black Mamba MP (+10)

BM MP is Army Leader 220 points

GP Cadre (Basilisk, Sidewinder, 2 SD Jäger) (160) (Aux)

Options: Swap 2 Jäger for SD Jäger (-30)

Swap LAC for LBZK on SD Jäger (+5)

Swap LAC to Paratrooper Rifle (LAC/LGL) on SD Jäger (+10)

Swap Jäger for Iguana for Basilisk (-10)

Swap Jäger for Sidewinder (+5) 140 points

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

THE 360TV LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT

Southern Republican Army (SRA) Force

2 CGs, 6 Units, 8 Actions

Priority Level: 3

Support Points: 3

Command Points: 3

Strike Cadre (3 BM, 1 Sidewinder) (240) (Specialist)
<Veteran, Assault Troops>
Options: Swap Jäger for Sidewinder (+5)
Swap Jäger for Black Mamba (+25)
Swap 2 Black Mamba MAC/LRP for HGLCs (-10)
Add Field Armour to HGLC Mambas (+20)
Swap Lead Black Mamba MAC for HGL (+15)
Cadre is Assault Troops <Swap VB for CS on Mambas> (+0)
Add Level 3 Att/Def to Lead HGL Black Mamba (+10)
HGL Mamba is Army Commander 305 points

Cavalry Patrol (Command Caiman, Caiman) (40) (Aux)

Options: Swap 1 Caiman weapons for HRP/48 (+10)

Upgrade Leader to Command Caiman (+5) 55 points

Norlight Armed Forces (NAF) Army

2 CGs, 6 Units, 8 Actions

Priority Level: 3

Support Points: 3

Command Points: 3

Dragoon Squad (2 Jaguar, 3 SD Hunter) (305) (Specialist)

<Veteran>

Options: Swap Rabid Grizzly for Jaguar (-30)
Swap Hunter for Jaguar (+20)
Swap Hunter for Cheetah (+25)
Swap 3 Cheetah for SD Hunter (-120)
Swap 2 Jaguar LRP for AGM (+20)
Add HPZ/HMG to 1 SD Hunter (+5)
Add Recon Drone to non-HPZ SD Hunter (+10)
Add Chaplain to non-Lead Jaguar (+20)
Increase Leader and Chaplain Att/Def to Level 3 (+20)
Jaguar is Army Commander 275 points

Light Tank Squad (Tyburr) (160) (Specialist)

Options: Swap Klemm for Tyburr (-75) 85 points

Western Frontier Protectorate Army (WFPA) Force

2 CGs, 9 Units, 9 Actions

Priority Level: 1

Support Points: 1

Command Points: 3

Recon Squad (2 Jaguar, 2 Ferret, Wild Ferret) (345) (Aux)

<Veteran>

Options: Swap Cheetah for Jaguar (-5)
Swap 3 Cheetah for Ferret (-90)
Swap Ferret for Wild Ferret (-5)
Swap Wild Ferret DPG for LRF (+0)
Swap 2 Ferret DPG for LRF (+0)
Swap 2 Jaguar MAC for HRF (+0)
Add +1 Defense to Jaguars and Ferrets (+20)
Add +1 EW to Wild Ferret (+5)
Jaguar is Army Commander 270 points

Infantry Platoon (4 Squads) (60) (Core)

Options: Add Light Mortar (+15)

Add Rocket Launcher (+10)

Add AGR (+5)

Non-HW Squad is Army Commander 90 points

PAK Force

2 CGs, 6 Units, 8 Actions

Priority Level: 3

Support Points: 3

Command Points: 3

Support Squad (2 Jaguar, Basilisk, Wild Ferret) (210)

(Spec) <Veteran>

Options: Swap 2 Tiger for 2 Jaguar (+0)
Swap Sidewinder for Basilisk (-15)
Swap Sidewinder for Ferret (-10)
Swap Ferret for Wild Ferret (-5)
Increase EW of WF to 2 (+5)
Increase Wild Ferret Leadership to 2 (+10)
Wild Ferret is Army Commander 195 points

Light Hovertank Squad (2 LHT-67) (160) (Auxiliary)

Options: Swap 1 x HAC for HGLC (+5)

Swap 1 x HAC for LPA (+0) 165 points

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

THE 360TV LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT

CEF/Caprice Force

(PL1, 4VP, 1SP, 3CP) 360 points

2 CGs, 6 Units, 8 Actions

Priority Level: 1

Support Points: 1

Command Points: 3

Patrol Squad (2 Bashan, 2 Aphek) (170) (Auxiliary)

Options: Swap HMG for APM on Bashan (+0)

Swap HMG for ECM2/ECCM2 on Lead Bashan (+0)

Swap HMG for VLAC on Aphek (+0) 170 points

Light Hovertank Squad (2 LHT-67) (220) (Core)

Options: Swap 2 x LHT-71 for LHT-67 (-60)

Swap 2 x LPA for HGLC (+10)

Lead LHT is Army Commander (+20) 190 points

PRDF Force

2 CGs, 5 Units, 6 Actions

Priority Level: 3

Support Points: 3

Command Points: 4

Support Tankstrider Squad (Red Bull MkII) (170)

(Specialist)

Options: None 170 points

Anti-Rover Squad (Skirmisher, 3 Pit Bull) (130) (Auxiliary)
<Veteran>

Options: Swap Pit Bull for Skirmisher (+15)

Swap Pit Bull LAC for FGC + 3 HG (+5)

Swap 2 Pit Bull LAC for RFB (+10)

Swap Skirmisher LRP for ECCM(2) (+0)

Skirmisher becomes Army Commander (+30) 190 points

CanGames: The Litmus Test

Preparing for the tournament took me the better part of two weeks as I put together the terrain set up, assembled and painted Miniatures required for the factions, and generated player packages. These packages included the Blitz Quick Reference rules sheet from the DP9 website, a page containing the breakdown of the pre-generated army and possible support options. I also included three pages of army datacards in each package, one for each round of the tournament. I wanted to make sure that players had all the information they needed at their fingertips and something they could take home as a keepsake and template they could use to build a future Blitz army.

So as tournament day rolled around, I brought my materials to CanGames and set up on Sunday Morning. I ran a little late assembling the terrain, so it was after 9 am when I called all the interested players over. There were 5 in all, with John Nguyen agreeing to play as an extra to round out the numbers. Of the remainder, 2 were experienced Blitz Players, 2 had heard of Blitz but never played other than a demo occasionally, and one 10-year-old player who thought the Models looked cool.

I took everyone over to where I had set up the pre-generated armies. There I explained the gist of the rules for movement, terrain, cover, weapons fire, damage, and Command Points while reviewing one of the data cards. I then gave a brief explanation of the characteristics each army faction and allowed players to chose which force they would like to play. The 10-year-old, Max, took the HAPF because he liked the strider. Steve took the SRA because he liked the thought of Heavy Gatling Lasers paired with a Heavy Grenade Launcher on the Mambas. Tim took the WFPA because he liked their Frontier mindset. John took the CEF/Caprice army because he wanted to see the Mounts in action. The two experienced players brought their own armies that I approved after reviewing them – Mike with his Mekong Strike Cadre of 3 Black Mambas and 2 Black Adders, and Ben with his HAPF force of a Naga backed up by a GP Cadre.

After choosing their armies, I took them around the 4 scenarios and explained the background, objectives, and special rules for each one. Then the players drew cards and paired off for the first round on their assigned scenario maps.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

THE 360TV LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT

Round One

The CEF and HAPF squared off in the “What’s Yours is Mine” scenario. John was patient explaining some of the rules to Max, who started getting the hang of it after turn two. Max lost his Hun early, but his Naga killed both LHTs with ATMs before being taken down with a parting shot from an LPA. The Black Mambas and Caprician mounts skirmished in the middle of the bridge, with neither gaining an advantage. The game was called at the end of the 4th turn with John barely holding his bunker.

Over in the “With Friends Like These” scenario, Mike’s Peacekeepers and Tim’s WFPA sparred amidst the buildings. Tim’s infantry proved to be very hard to dislodge as they moved from building to building while the gears rocketed back and forth along the pavement. The Recon Squad managed to wipe out Mike’s Strike Cadre, but not without losing over half the Squad. Still, the Woofpies achieved their Breakout objective by working their way into the enemy deployment zone by Turn 5.

The SRA and HAPF fought hard to be “King of the Mountain”, but James was able to take the high ground and rain down destruction on Ben’s entire Humanist force, but at the cost of his Army Commander. After Turn 5 and the smoke cleared, the SRA hoisted their flag high above the battlefield on their objective.

Round Two

The WFPA and SRA were assigned the unenviable task of fighting in poor visibility in “The Land of the Blind” scenario. Both played cautiously and ended up unable to complete the 4th Turn before time was called. Neither team achieved any objectives, but since the WFPA had the lower Priority Level, Tim was declared the winner of the round.

Things were much more lively in the “With Friends Like These” scenario, as both Ben and Max had a little civil war between their HAPF forces. Max learned that a Stationary Naga will just about kill anything it sees, then die soon after by retaliatory fire. Max also learned what happens when you place your gears too close to an artillery target, as one of his Black Mambas was fratricided by an incoming artillery round as it took out an enemy Jäger. Soon Max was down to his lone Hun tank versus 3 sniping Jägers. To finish it off, Ben had one damaged Jäger run up and place a hand grenade under the left tread of the light tank. The blast destroyed the Jäger and would have destroyed the Hun except I reminded them that hand grenades were AI weapons, and the Hun got to roll an extra die, which saved it from complete destruction. The Hun proceeded to run down, shoot and ram the remaining gears into mush, winning the scenario.



Players in the CanGames 2009 Lightning Tournament. From l to r: Mike, John, Tim & Max



A Mekong Razor Fang Mamba finds itself up close and personal with an WFPA Jaguar and Ferret MkII.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

THE 360TV LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT

But by far the most lopsided game of the tournament occurred on “King of the Mountain” as the CEF faced the Mekong. The mounts were terrifying as they scaled the sheer cliffs with impunity. Scuttling around the shadows, they would concentrate to take apart whatever enemy was closest with the LHTs providing supporting fire. By the end of turn 4, the CEF stared down at the wreckage on the battlefield in total victory.

Round Three

Based on last round’s results, I was getting worried that “The Land of the Blind” scenario was too complex to complete in an hour. Mike’s Peacekeepers and Ben’s HAPF proved me wrong as they went in guns blazing and finished the entire scenario in 25 minutes flat. Both experienced players raced towards the complex heedless of the danger. Mike continued to funnel his troops around a blind corner for the Naga to kill with ATMs until it ran out of actions and the Mekong proceeded to blow it to smithereens. The battle devolved into close-quarters combat among the lab complex resulting in the annihilation of the entire HAPF army.



Land of the Blind. ‘You go first.’ ‘No, you go first!’

The WFPA and Max’s HAPF both tried to send units to scale the heights in “King of the Mountain”, but Tim was able to use his infantry along fire lanes and to call indirect fire on the enemy and keep them away from the heights. One of the more humorous events was the confrontation between the Naga and a Ferret booting along at Top Speed. Again, Max went stationary to designate and fire an anti-tank missile at the tiny gear from point-blank range. To say the Ferret was overkilled would be an understatement, smearing gear parts across the landscape. But Tim had the last laugh as one of his Jaguars parked well behind the battle lined up the Naga and sent a heavy rifle round through the engine and into the fuel tank, blowing the strider sky-high. The game ended with Tim’s Jaguar perched on top of the seize objective and Max’s forces reduced to one critically damaged Hun.



The SRA clusters to repel a CEF assault.

And in the final battle to decide “What’s Yours is Mine”, the SRA played a waiting game, daring the CEF to attack. Again, both sides were cautious and the game was called midway through the 4th turn with John successfully holding his bunker while both sides fought for control of the SRA side of the map.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

THE 360TV LIGHTNING TOURNAMENT

Aftermath

The final game of Round 3 ended at around 1 pm, which was very good considering the late start. After totaling the wins and Victory Points, John and the CEF came out on top. But since he was staff, he had to settle for winning the shotgun position in the DP9 van all the way back to Montreal. That left Tim and the WFFA as the overall winner with 3 wins and 6 Victory Points. Mike and his Mekong Army won the runner-up prize with James and the SRA as the second runner up. Max and his HAPF placed next and won the "Best Youngest Player" Award while Ben won the "Best Sport in the Face of Adversity" for continuing to plug away at the tournament despite ending up with 0 wins and 0 Victory Points.

I believe a fun time was had by all. Max said he'd bug his dad for some Heavy Gear miniatures while Tim used his prize certificate to purchase the Locked and Loaded rulebook and learn the rules inside and out. Steve was a little miffed that a poor finish marred his strong start, but I think he understood that he needed to buy the rules to learn the game better. Overall, only 3 of the 9 games didn't finish on time and all games made it to at least the middle of the 4th Turn.

Conclusions

Based on my CanGames experience and talking with the players, I think I have found a sweet spot. The lightning tournament rules allow players with small numbers of units to participate in a tournament and test their skills against other players. The tournament seems to produce a fairly even result so even players who don't have a lot of experience can still hold on to the hope that they could win the event. Now that I have the majority of the armies built and ready for action, next year won't

be as hectic. I'll have to build some new scenarios, though. If anyone builds a new scenario to fit with the Lightning Tournament format, please share it with the rest of the Pod People at the DP9 forums.

Have fun with these rules, and good hunting – both for new players and enemy targets!

I would like to thank Robert Dubois for the loan of his camera to take pictures and the prizes for the players. And I would like to thank all the tournament players, since without them there would be no report.



Tim, the winner of the CanGames 2009 Lightning Tournament, and his prize.



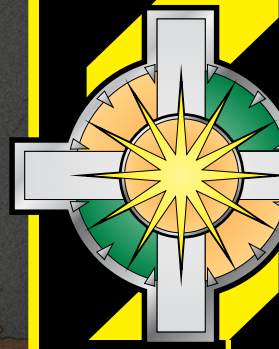
◀◀ Make up your own caption!

HEAVY GEAR

INTO THE HINTERLANDS



GADIZ



A REGIONAL SOURCEBOOK FOR THE HEAVY GEAR UNIVERSE

INTO THE HINTERLANDS VOLUME I: GADIZ: DIRECTED by Jason Dickerson GUEST STARRING Charles Webb, Chris Gunter, Chris Hall, Brian O'Connor, DJ White, Mike McTavish, Jason Baker SCREENPLAY by Jason Dickerson BASED ON A GAME by Dream Pod 9 PRODUCER Greg Perkins CINEMATOGRAPHER Greg Perkins FILM EDITOR Andrew Mac Intyre COMPUTER GRAPHICS Masakari SPECIAL EFFECTS Jake Staines, Greg Perkins, Ghislain Barbe, Stephen Fox SOUNDTRACK Children of Dune © Varese Sarabande PRESENTED by Aurora Magazine and Save the Asp Society © MMVIII



TOWN INFORMATION: GADIZ

Gadiz was established by Batiste Paolo in an idyllic valley with fertile earth and a temperate microclimate. Half of the forces that accompanied Batiste and Valantino remained in the region and settled in the valley with the first emir of Gadiz. Batiste loved the valley. The two large stoneheads at the base of the valley reminded him of the legend of the Pillars of Hercules from his home city of Gadiz in Spain. The architecture of the town is very similar to traditional Spanish and Moorish styles and features a high degree of embellishments, minarets, and domes. Most of the buildings feature fountains, atriums, slender columns, and pools. The city is filled with a mansions, temples, and large administrative structures. At the northern end of the city is the Palace of the Chalice, the emir's residence. The blue and gold marble palace is the easily the most memorable structure in the city. The palace is connected to the Temple of Kali (formerly Shiva), where Batiste is interred. The temple used to be a popular spot for people to congregate, but since the reconsecration to Kali the temple has taken on a menacing air. Rumors abound of human sacrifice and dark rituals, but little is actually known about the practices of the temple.

The majority of the shajhalin population work at the numerous plantations located in the valley or serving the solicitor and emir. Those that do not live in the mansions or the palace, live in block apartments called insulas. These buildings are six stories high with a central plaza area and stores located on the ground level. These apartments range in different sizes, but generally house about 150 to 200 residents.

In recent cycles the city has grown by leaps and bounds. The influx of Ramius Raiders and their wealth has changed the dynamic of the city to a degree. Many of the plantations that have popped up are owned by officers of the unit. A strip of land on the southern end of the city is a small fortified base where the majority of the unit's equipment is housed. The Auction House is a large mansion near the base that is used to sell off slaves at private auctions. The mansion is sumptuously appointed to house clients during the week of each season that the auctions occur.



GADIZ

Founding Date: TN1499
Joined ESE Date: TN1499
Method of Government:
 Hereditary Aristocracy
Head of Government:
 Emir Ocavian Paolo,
 Emir Lucilla Paolo
Population: 80,298
Principal Industries: Cawfee,
 Grapes, Sugaro, Wool, Slaves,
 Government Services

STREETS

1. Passe de Carlos
2. Calle Campo del Sur
3. Calle de la Torre
4. Calle de la Cruz
5. Calle de San Batiste
6. Av del Puerto
7. Calle de la Campania
8. Calle Sagasta
9. Calle Nuevo Mundo
10. Plaza de Astrubal
11. Camino Real



POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Pillar of Hercules: Two enormous stoneheads that flank either side of the Camino Real, which is the largest road that leads to the Dolores Highway in the south.
2. Ganges River: major river that runs through the town. The older part of the town is located on the western bank of the river. Most of the plantations are located on the eastern side.
3. Palace of the Chalice: Home of the Emirate family. The building is built in a blend of Spanish and Moorish architecture. The palace made of a blue marble with veins of gold streaking through it and has a number of stained glass windows portraying Batiste's journey to the valley. This is the largest structure in the valley and clearly dominates the city's vista when entering the valley as it is located at the end of the valley up on an artificial plateau.
4. Temple Batiste (Temple of Kali): The Neo-Hindu temple dedicated to Kali. Made of rose marble and quartz, the building stands clearly in contrast to the Palace of the Chalice. Once a popular location for the few tourists that made it to the valley, the recent change from the worship of Shiva to Kali has transformed the temple into a dark place. The temple has been nicknamed the blood house since it was taken over by the cult of Kali.
5. FBP Hercules: The Raider base located on the eastern side of the Ganges. It is a heavily armed and substantial walled off facility housing one full company of the Raiders. The facility does have vtol landing pads, barracks, warehouses, hangars, and administrative facilities, but lacks any amenities such as bars and a PX.
6. The Auction House: This sprawling four story mansion is located near the FBP and is the place that the Raiders auction off slaves to privately invited guests. Auctions are held four times a cycle and last one full week.
7. Latifundia Estates: Mostly located on the eastern bank, these estates are plantations that creep up the terraced cliffs and primarily grow Serpentine cawfee, but recently sugaro and grapes have been introduced to the region. The western bank estates grow Serpentine cawfee and raise Terra Novan goats and sheep.
8. Solicitors Court: These two buildings house the bureaucracy of the emirate and centrally located in Gadiz. The buildings flank Plaza de Astrubal and are constructed in a classic Spanish architecture. When seen from above, the two buildings form the shape of the Greek character Phi.



POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Old Quarter: This walled off district houses most of the solicitor families that call Mumbai home. The architecture of the district is unique in that it is Consortium era architecture in surprisingly good condition. A small branch from Collegio Smyrna has offices in this district to study they town's unique history.
2. Sirinda's Home: The former private residence of Sirinda Veno, the building was renovated after TN1920 by Ocavian and then abandoned after his disappearance. The building is now used as an orphanage with Lucilla's blessing. Sirinda and Isilla's graves are also located in a small chapel in the gardens.
3. Oil Derricks: The three huge derricks are located in Lake Vihar and are the largest employers for Mumbai.
4. Cannery Row: Located near the docks, the canneries are another major employer for the town.
5. Temple of Shiva: One of twelve granite temples located in the town. This large structure stands near the center of town and is the tallest building in the town. It has a strong resemblance to the Somnath temple located in western India.
6. Temple of Kali: Home of the Thugee Cult and the location of the Indarez Prophecies. This imposing structure is not as large as the temple of Shiva, but the menacing atmosphere from the structure makes it seem more substantial. Architecturally, the temple takes its inspiration from the temple of Dakshineswar in Calcutta, India, but the dark granite sets it apart from the Earth structure.
7. Temple of the Gentle Prophet: The small temple of the Massadan Revisionists is located near the Temple of Kali and is run by the missionary Anders Halmud, a peaceful Northern expatriate who established the temple in reaction to the coup of TN1920.

TOWN NOTES: MUMBAI

The ancient town of Mumbai is over a millennium old. Located on the shores of Lake Vihar and next to the Ganges River, the town has varied in population over the years, but the economic plan has brought the population levels up to the peak levels seen during the colonization period. The town sprawls out along the shores of the lake. NeoHindu architecture dominates as the style of choice for this town. Granite temples rise from the low level residences. There are twelve temples of varying sizes, but the largest ones are dedicated to Shiva and Kali. Located on either side of the town, these massive structures were constructed in the ninth century and are the center of NeoHindu life in the region. Ninety percent of the shajhalin population in the Gadiz region are followers of the NeoHindu religion. The remaining population worship in Jerusalemite churches or practice no religion at all. There is very little interest in Revisionism in the town, though there is one small temple dedicated to the Massadan style Revisionism. This was established by a missionary during the well publicized coup of TN1920. Most who attend the temple are foreigners.

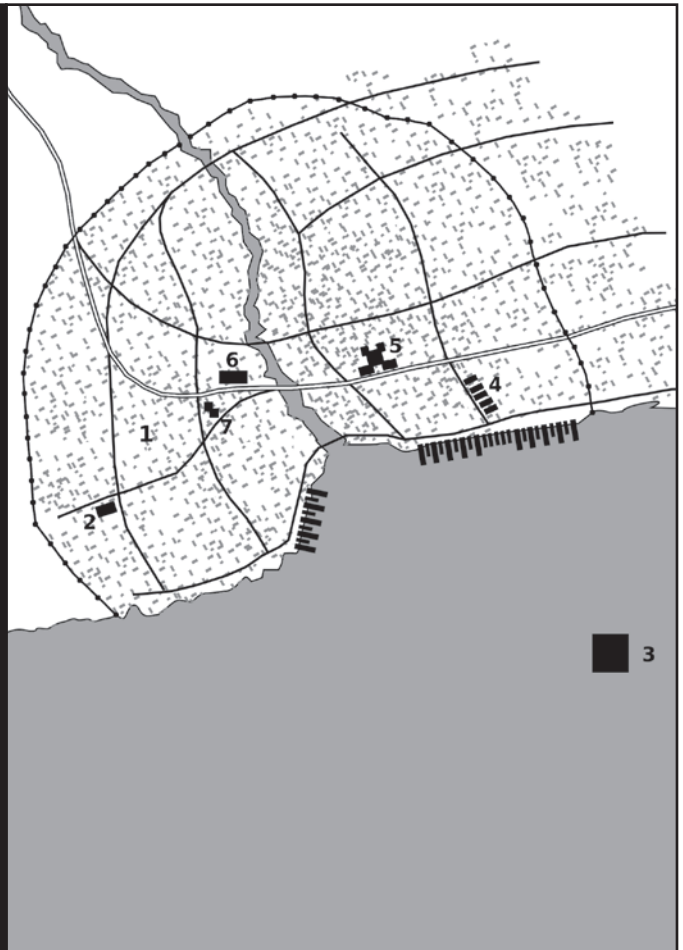
Very few mansions are found in the city, but the rare solicitors that call this town home, live in mansions that were former executive residences from Consortium days. Most of these locations show their age and have earned the name nickname of the Old Quarter. The Concordant era architecture of the Old Quarter is a stark contrast to the NeoHindu style. From the shore of the lake, the three new oil derricks are easily seen on a clear day. A ferry runs from the recently built docks three times a day to the derricks where most of the shajhalin workforce spends a week on them then four days off. The docks were enlarged as a part of the agricultural improvements initiative of TN1880. New warehouses and canneries dot the dock area to support the burgeoning fishing trade. While the economic boom has had its benefits, many of the NeoHindu population resent the drastic changes to the land. Regent Lucilla understands this and has been able to curb some of the resentment by increasing the standards of living in the area and regularly attending and sponsoring the numerous religious festivals throughout the cycle. She is also aware of the need to respect the ecology for both religious and economic reasons.

MUMBAI

Founding Date: TN800
Joined ESE Date: TN1500
Method of Government:
 Hereditary Aristocracy
Head of Government:
 Emir Ocavian Paolo, Emir Lucilla Paolo
Population: 58,880
Principal Industries: Fishing, Agriculture, Oil Exploration, Oil Refining

STREETS

1. Purandare Wadi Boulevard
2. Mahul Road
3. Keshay Rao Khadyne Avenue
4. Vashi Road
5. Powai Boulevard
6. Sakki Nakka Street
7. Madh Marve Road
8. Akurli Road
9. Uttan Avenue
10. Indira Docks
11. Shivajji Docks



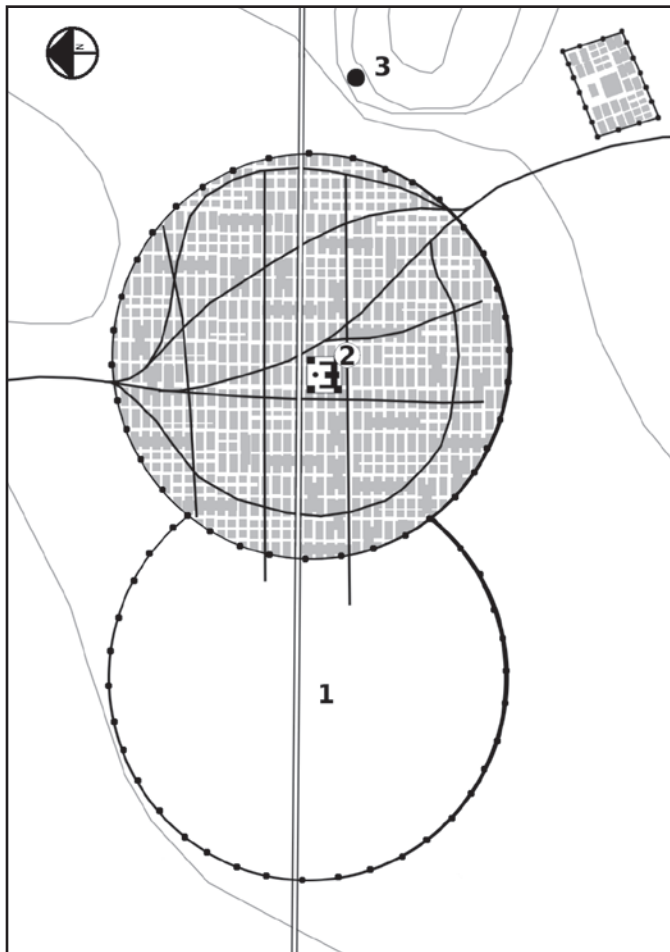
TOWN NOTES: CALCUTTA

Nearly as old as Mumbai, but less prestigious than its sister town, Calcutta has never had a steady population. A significant portion of that population is NeoHindu just as in Mumbai. The smaller town is served by a single large granite temple, which was built in TN1114 during one of the town's heyday periods. The temple is dedicated to all of the NeoHindu pantheon and is served by roving priests. The town has a chaotic mélange of architecture ranging from Concordant era, NeoHindu, to Moorish styles. Recent additions of plain utilitarian buildings used to house incoming labor forces only adds to the unique character of the town. In the TN1700's some of the emirs of the period constructed a stone wall around the caravan grounds to provide a greater sense of protection to inbound caravans. The wall was extended to the town in the first cycles of Isilla's reign and the caravan grounds were expanded. While caravans are in the town, the caravan area is transformed into an impromptu bazaar. The new oil and ore refineries are not located in the town, but rather fifteen kilometers north. The facilities operate thirty six hours a day and refine the ores mined in the Blanco Frio Range. This facility is the primary employer in the region, followed by the lumber mills located fifteen kilometers south. As a secondary byproduct of the lumber industry, local artisans manufacture NeoHindu style furniture. The furniture is popular in the ESE, but beyond the league the demand is miniscule. Calcutta is also known for a bizarre stonehead known as the Laughing Stone. Unlike typical stoneheads which are solid stone, the Laughing Stone is a hollow at points allowing for air to flow through it. The resonating sound created from the air sounds like a ghostly laugh.



POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Merchant's Grounds: A large walled off area located on the western portion of the town, this area houses merchant caravans heading east or west along the Dolores Highway. The only amenities in the area are two fountains and some restroom facilities. During the trade season, this area is a vibrant bazaar, which attracts locals from Gadiz and Mumbai.
2. The Pantheon Temple: The large granite Neo Hindu complex dedicated to all of the deities of the faith is centrally located in the town. Though dedicated to all of the deities, Hanuman's worship is the most popular in the town. The monkey god's popularity is so great that many shajhalin have statues dedicated to him in their homes.
3. The Laughing Stone: This hollow stonehead faces east and produces an eerie laughing sound when the wind blows through stone pipes located on the back of the head.



CALCUTTA

Founding Date: TN864
Joined ESE Date: TN1500
Method of Government:
 Hereditary Aristocracy
Head of Government:
 Emir Ocavian Paolo, Emir Lucilla Paolo
Population: 30,934
Principal Industries:
 Logging, Mining, Refining, Caravan Trading

STREETS

1. Temple Boulevard
2. Khidirpur Road
3. Chetta Central Road
4. Motilal Gupta Road
5. Purbachal Main Road
6. Rash Beharl Road
7. Dhapa Avenue
8. Akrur Dutta Lane
9. Tala Avenue



ADVENTURE IDEAS IN GADIZ EMIRATES

The rural emirates have a great potential for campaigns. The vast untouched areas have dangers both natural and manmade. The ESE is known for their dangerous politics and in Gadiz, the politics aren't any less dangerous. Cimmaro is a looming threat to the burgeoning economy. Lucilla's grasp on power is tenuous at best as her brother is the rightful ruler of the lands and she only holds regency for her daughter until she is able to take over. There is also the possibility of unknown relatives coming back to exert their claim to the throne of the emirate. Outside of politics, the Thugee cult lays claim to hidden power behind the throne, and many of Indarez's Prophecies have yet to come true. Are they real or are there darker entities at work behind the scenes..?



CAMPAIGN PLOT: BARJHAL'S INTERESTS

Cimmaro's obese emir, Barjhal, has long had connections with the Paolo family, but the relationship has not always been a good one. The successful increase of revenue to the region of Gadiz has made the emir wary of the Paolo family looking to other emirs for patronage. Even though Barjhal benefits financially from the success of the region, he wants to send a message to the rural emirs on who really rules the area. To accomplish this he has sent the players to disrupt the oil industry via sabotage and to induce members of the solicitor class to turn on their master. The coup resulted in most of Barjhal's loyal solicitors being executed and since that time, he has not been successful in coaxing any of the remaining solicitors from coming to his side. The few that have turned have ended up missing or murdered brutally in the streets.

The players will have to be wary of a number of elements in the setting. The Thugees are very active in Mumbai and are reputed to receive part of their funding from the oil industry. Any disruptions would endanger this lucrative business. The cult members will not hesitate in murdering anybody trying to damage the pipelines or derricks. Many of the crews on the derricks and along the pipeline are active members of the cult and might surprise the players. The solicitors live in constant fear of the Exsanguinated Emir. As a boogeyman, Ocavian Paolo has instilled a state of paranoia among his bureaucrats. His brutality during the coup was monumental and even after his disappearance, corrupt solicitors and their families would be found dead, furthering the fears. Convincing the solicitors to become agents of Barjhal will require extreme measures. Blackmail and kidnapping would not be unheard of in this case in order to secure the loyalty of the official.

ALTERNATIVE IDEAS

The players work for Lucilla and are part of her loyal intelligence network. They are tasked with keeping Gadiz free from Cimmaro's influence and have to thwart attacks.

One of the players is secretly a member of the Thugee Cult. He is tasked with killing one of Barjhal's closest advisors. He has infiltrated Barjhal's forces, but hasn't had an opportunity to kill the man. The player now has an opportunity to be on the assault team.

Members of the Raiders have heard about the plot and have captured the players. They offer them their lives and money if they'll become double agents.

The players are members of the Gadiz solicitors and have grown tired of being paranoid. They must escape the emirate and Barjhal's men offer an interesting way out..

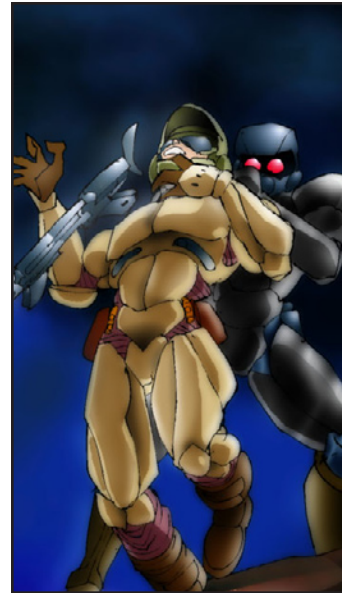
The players never make it to the towns, but instead are being hunted by hidden enemies along the Dolores Highway.

The players are contacted by the Thugees and are told to leave in exchange for a hidden prophecy from the Indarez text. One that directly affects both the player and their patron.



CAMPAIGN PLOT: THE EXSANGUINATED EMIR

Boogeyman, ruler, or myth? What has happened to the missing emir of Gadiz? The players are sent to investigate the true story about the infamous man by a news network. Once they arrive and begin the investigation, the producer is found in his hotel room with his throat crushed and the walls painted in blood with the word: Leave. What will the players do... ?



ALTERNATIVE IDEAS

The players are bounty hunters trying to track down the emir either to kill him or to capture him for a client. Instead of the producer, the team's leader is the one murdered.

The players are members of an anthropology team investigating the Indarez Prophecies. One of the team members is found strangled the day after the group approaches the temple for permission to study the text. The Temple claims that they did not have a part in the murder, but says the team may come back the next day to investigate the text.

The MILICIA is interested in building a small base in Calcutta to reinforce the region. The players are part of the survey team that is sent to find a good place to build it. The commander has mysteriously disappeared. Foul play is suspected, but there is no proof.

The players are survivors of the coup of TN1920 and have sworn vengeance against Ocavian Paolo and his family. They have returned to Gadiz in secrecy, but the leader of the group is found dismembered with the words, "Share his fate" carved onto his chest.

The players have been tasked with keeping the reporters safe by Lucilla. They may be from the Raiders or part of her personal staff. They are also tasked with keeping the truth hidden from the reporters.

The players are members of the Raiders that know Ocavian Paolo. They have been ordered by the Exsanguinated Emir to convince the reporters to leave.



CAMPAIGN PLOT: THE ASHANTI CONNECTION

For decades, conspiracy theorist Anastazia Berning has theorized that members of the Kir Aryan scientist caste escaped not to Mars, but rather to Terra Nova. Her theory is based on a find from the ruins of the Ashanti Library. The Codex Methuselah was a theoretical paper written by an unknown scientist from the period. The manuscript is nearly worthless from the damage it received from the fire, but it offers tantalizing evidence that someone had theorized a way to stop the aging process of the body. The Codex was never clear on how it stopped the aging process, but only that a scientist named Paul Batiste had been rumored to have perfected it. Genetic sciences were one of the major areas of development in Kir Arya so the theory is not too far fetched; however, Berning's theory takes it one step further. She believes that some Kir Aryan scientists had knowledge of Tannhäuser anomalies centuries before their discovery and had escaped Earth to Mars and then from there to Terra Nova. Among the wilder theories she has are that the Koreshi are descendants of the Prime Knights that followed their masters, that the stoneheads are part of a communications network of the Kir Aryans, and she also claims that Batiste Paolo was actually Paul Batiste.

The ludicrous claim theorizes that the Methuselah process wasn't perfected by Batiste during his lifetime, but that his 'son' was the first to benefit from the process. Berning theorizes that Batiste actually transfers his engram map into a carefully cloned body. She theorizes that he does this every millennium or so and generally does not vat grow his replacements for some reason. She compared the barely recoverable photo of Paul Batiste in the Codex to the only known painting of Batiste Paolo and the similarities are striking, though not conclusive. She also claims that Ocavian Paolo was meant to be Paul Batiste's new host body, but something went wrong and the real reason that he disappeared was to escape being taken as a host. To prove her point, she has come to Gadiz by asking Lucilla Paolo to provide her access to records and Batiste's body. The players have been hired by Berning to assist her in her investigations. Surprisingly, Lucilla has allowed her to investigate.

ALTERNATIVE IDEAS

Berning is losing her mind and the players have found out a little too late. The further she investigates the worse her paranoia and schizophrenia is exposed. Worse still, she's claiming the players are out to steal her research and has hired members of the Raiders to ensure the players never leave Gadiz.

Berning's theories have gotten the wrong kind of attention. Whether or not they are accurate, someone doesn't want the truth to come out.

One of the members of Berning's team is a local boy named Eight Paul and he's taken a keen interest in helping out, but when the players discover the unsettling resemblance to the painting of Batiste and Eight, the boy disappears with all of Berning's research.

Lucilla orders her intelligence network to spread disinformation to the investigators. To this end, she has ordered the players to appear to support Berning, but to steer her to a positive conclusion of her theory. Unfortunately, there is another unseen group that is working against the players to ensure that the theory is disproved.

The players are members of the Thugee Cult and have been tasked with keeping their master's secret from outsiders. They have been ordered to track down and murder every member of the research group.

Someone has been secretly funding Berning's research, but the unknown benefactor has ordered the group out of Gadiz for some reason. Berning decides to stay, but is found dead the next morning.

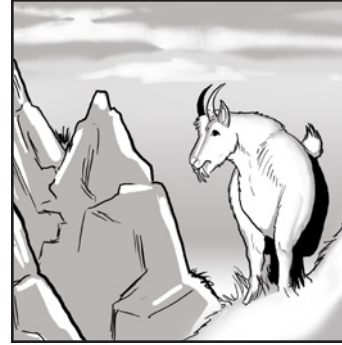
BESTIARY OF GADIZ

TERRA NOVAN GOAT OR SHEEP

The Terran goat and sheep were both exported with the colonization of the region and the initial results were poor, but Consortium scientists managed to genetically alter both of the livestock to adapt to the diet of the new world. Both goat and sheep are larger than their Earth cousins and have a high degree of immunity to a variety of toxins as a result of their new genetic makeup. The Terra Novan Goat and Sheep can be found in many areas along the Serpentine Range as well as other mountainous regions in the South. A few pockets can be found up North where they were imported during the seventeenth century.

Skills:

- Hand to Hand: 1/0
- *Natural Weapon
- Special Abilities
- Horns (x4)



Stats:

Agi	Build	Fit	Ins	Per	Wil	Str	Hea	Sta	UD
2	4	2	3	3	1	3	3	60	13*

GREATER PACK LIZARD

These Pack Lizards are native to the fernwood forests of the Serpentine and are extremely dangerous to the ill prepared traveler. Nearly twice the size of their Mekong cousins, the Greater Pack Lizard runs in smaller packs, but are much more aggressive in their hunting practices. Their primary source of food are the Barnaby Iguana's that live in the lower hills of the region, but some packs have taken a liking to hitting caravans during the trade season. Greater pack lizards can be domesticated like their Mekong counterparts and some caravaners will use them as beasts of burden or riding animals explicitly to keep wild versions away. Most Greater Pack Lizards do not attack rival packs.

Skills:

- Hand to Hand: 3/2
- Stealth: 3/2
- Tracking: 3/3
- Combat Sense: 3/3
- *Natural Weapons
- Special Abilities
- Bite (x8) Claws (x6)
- Run 60m/per round.
- Leap up to 5 meters



Stats:

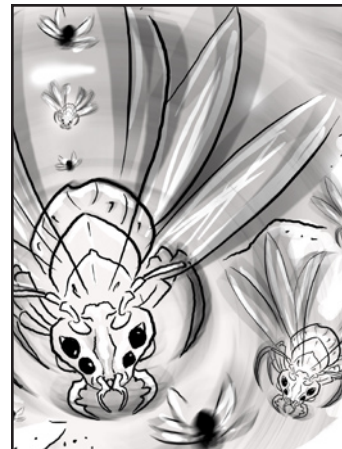
Agi	Build	Fit	Ins	Per	Wil	Str	Hea	Sta	UD
2	4	2	3	3	1	3	3	60	13*

MYCENE SWARMS

The Mycene are an indigenous insect that makes its home on the shores of the Lake Land region of the Interior. They are known to burrow into the shore and wait for hapless animals to walk over their nests. Disturbing the nest causes them to swarm the victim and sting any exposed areas. The small insects do not have a high enough toxicity to paralyze a human individually, but in swarms it is possible to become victim to their poisons. Once the prey has been paralyzed the insects will burrow into the victim and feed off of it for months. Locals know to avoid carcasses on the shore due to knowledge that generally there are Mycene swarms near them. They also wear durable overalls when walking the shores. During the ritual bathing in the Ganges and Vihar, the locals will use insecticides and fire to eradicate the pests, but they are not always successful in their endeavors.

Skills:

- Toxin (Paralytic Toxin with a strength of 3)



Stats:

Aggressiveness	Damage per turn	Damage Threshold	R.Horde Size	B.Horde Size
4	3	5	2d6	40-60



STOCK NPC'S

GADIZ SHAJHALIN

The majority of the population are descendants of the original Neo-Hindu workers that colonized the region. They speak a distinct variation of Larabic that is heavier on the Indian roots, than their Asian and Arabic blends. They are a proud and religious people. In many ways, they are more independent than their counterparts in other regions as their religion dominates their lives rather than the emir, but the Paolo family has been very successful in integrating themselves into the religion. Most of the population is literate in Sanskrit to one degree or another due to their religious roots.

ATTRIBUTES

Agi: 0 App: 0 Bld: 0 Cre: 1 Fit: 1 Inf: 0 Kno: 0 Per: 0 Psy: 0 Wil: 0

Str: 0 Hea: 0 Sta: 25 UD: 4 AD: 4

SKILLS

Hand to Hand: 1/0 Melee: 1/0 Craft (varies): 2/1 Streetwise: 1/0 Hagglng: 2/0

Cooking: 2/1 Music: 1/1 Tinker: 2/1 Notice: 2/0 Swimming: 2/1 Survival: 1/1

TYPICAL EQUIPMENT

Tools, Poncho and overall

GADIZ SOLICITOR

There are two types of solicitors in Gadiz. The traditional solicitors and the new blood are equally represented in the cities, but the tension between the two groups is palpable. The new blood were installed after Isilla seized power in TN1872 when she married off the survivors of her family to outsiders brought into bolster the talent of the older solicitor caste. The traditional group struggled for cycles to reclaim their position of prominence with the Paolo family and thought they had an opportunity when they supported Ocavian's coup in TN1920. Unfortunately, Ocavian proved to be a harsh master and soon both factions were in equally bad positions with the new emir. Lucilla continues to play off both factions in order to keep them under control and is not above invoking her brother's name to keep them in line when she believes there to be a plot. The majority of the solicitors live in constant fear of Ocavian and a slow state of paranoia has developed over the cycles.

ATTRIBUTES

Agi: 0 App: 0 Bld: 0 Cre: 1 Fit: 0 Inf: 1 Kno: 1 Per: 0 Psy: -1 Wil: 0

Str: 0 Hea: 0 Sta: 25 UD: 4 AD: 4

SKILLS

Hand to Hand: 1/0 Melee: 1/0 Business: 2/1 Bureaucracy: 2/1 Etiquette: 2/1 Combat Sense: 1/0 Human Perception: 2/-1 Foreign Language (1): 2/1 Foreign Language (2): 1/1

Law: 1/1 Investigation: 1/0 Computers: 1/1



THUGEE CULT MEMBER

The typical Thugee does not stand out from the rest of the shajhalin. They work normal jobs, have families, and attend a variety of temples. When they are commanded by their leaders to sacrifice for their goddess, Kali, they do so without hesitation. The favored method of murder is strangulation and to accomplish this they operate in groups. The leader of the group is called the Jamaadaar. The leaders tend to be the most ruthless and fanatical member of the group, but generally speaking most members are ruthless and fanatical so the distinction is very subtle. Typically, a Thugee lures their victim through enticement or camaraderie to a prepared location called a beles and there two or three members ritually strangle their victim. While the act is happening other members usually mask the noises by performing music outside of the location. When strangulation is not an option, they utilize any method available to them. Centuries of the practice have developed some extremely dangerous individuals.

ATTRIBUTES

Agi: 1 App: 0 Bld: 1 Cre: 0 Fit: 1 Inf: 1 Kno: 0 Per: 1 Psy: 0 Wil: 1

Str: 1 Hea: 1 Sta: 35 UD: 3 AD: 3

SKILLS

Combat Sense: 2/1 Hand to Hand: 3/1 Melee: 3/1 Small Arms: 2/1 Dodge: 2/1

Human Perception: 2/0 Notice: 2/1 Investigation: 1/1 Demolitions: 1/0 Music: 2/0

Etiquette: 1/1 Dancing: 1/1 Stealth: 2/1 Theatrics: 2/1 Streetwise: 2/1

RAMIUS RAIDER MERCENARY PILOT

The typical Raider mercenary is the cream of the crop when it comes to mercenaries. The majority have combat experience as far back as the War of the Alliance and saw harsh fighting after the war during Ocavian's coup. These men and women are no nonsense and unsympathetic to those who are not part of their group or their client. A portion of the unit stationed in Gadiz are usually found in the Free Emirates enslaving the population. The rest act as the core of the Gadiz military. The stats presented here are for the pilots (tankers, aircraft, or gear) and not the infantry. Pilots make up the bulk of the forces in Gadiz.

ATTRIBUTES

Agi: 2 App: 0 Bld: 0 Cre: 1 Fit: 1 Inf: 0 Kno: 0 Per: 1 Psy: 0 Wil: 0

Str: 0 Hea: 0 Sta: 25 UD: 5 AD: 5

SKILLS

Combat Sense: 2/1 Melee: 2/2 Small Arms: 2/2 Hand to Hand: 2/2 Notice: 1/1

Pilot Skill: 3/2 Gunnery Skill: 3/2 Tactics: 2/1 Electronic Warfare: 2/1

Communication: 1/0 Navigation: 1/0 Intimidation: 2/0 Athletics: 1/1 Dodge: 2/2

Throw: 1/2 Streetwise: 1/0 Survival: 1/1 Parachuting: 2/2



GADIZ EMIRATE GUARD

Gadiz has one combined arms regiment (The Orobas) of soldiers that serve as a policing force as well as security for the Paolo household. Many of these soldiers are former gladiators that Ocavian brought with him from Cimmaro during his coup. They are a professional force that has been expertly drilled by members of the Raiders. They are one of the few units that have had successes against the Free Emirates and were known for their viciousness in the field. They were particularly adept at fighting in the swamps due to their regular training in the Lake Land regions. Recently the forces have been working with the Raiders on airborne tactics and have begun a paratrooper program. The guards presented here are the infantry, which make up the bulk of their forces.

ATTRIBUTES

Agi: 1 App:0 Bld: 1 Cre: 1 Fit: 1 Inf: 0 Kno: 0 Per: 1 Psy: 0 Wil: 1

Str: 1 Hea: 1 Sta: 35 UD: 6 AD: 6

SKILLS

Combat Sense: 2/1 Small Arms: 2/1 Hand to Hand: 2/1 Melee: 2/1 Dodge: 2/1

Throw: 1/1 Heavy Weapons: 2/1 Drive: 2/1 Tactics: 1/1 Survival: 2/1 Swimming: 2/1

Athletics: 2/1 Navigation: 1/0 Survival: 1/1 Parachuting: 1/1 Intimidate: 1/1 Notice: 1/1 Stealth: 1/1 Camouflage: 1/1

MAJOR NPC'S





LUCILLA PAOLO (HNIGHT)

Lucilla is the eldest daughter of Isilla Paolo and Sirinda Veno. She is currently the de facto ruler of the rural emirate of Gadiz. Although unheard of in most parts of Terra Nova, Lucilla is incestuously married to her brother, Ocavian, and her only child, Ashura, is the heir apparent to the emirate. She is well liked by the majority of the population and has the support of the Neo Hindus, the Raiders, and her personal guard. The only group that resents her is the solicitors. While they despise her for her association with Ocavian, they also realize that she is a better alternative than having her brother actively ruling. Her biggest concern currently is to balance the growth of the region without appearing to be much of a threat to Cimmaro. Past relationships between Gadiz and Cimmaro have fluctuated between good and bad, but she legitimately assesses that Barjhal will not allow her territory to grow too much.

Profession: As the regent of the emirate, Lucilla actively administers and governs the region. Following her mother's' footsteps, she has continued to expand the developments in the region and has added to the infrastructure as well. In addition to her duties as a ruler, Lucilla personally educates her daughter in the methods of leadership, economics, and law. Lucilla's Garamond education is apparent as many of her policies have their roots in Republican economic theory.

Attitudes: Lucilla has a distinctly refined demeanor and sometimes can be seen as aloof. This is primarily a survival mechanism learned as a child growing up in a hostile environment. She has a survivor's mentality and is willing to do anything to see another day. She has little tolerance for any threats to her rule and has no problem issuing orders of execution or quelling uprisings (something she has not had to do yet). Lucilla is not above using diplomacy, deception, or even threat to achieve her goals, though she prefers to use diplomacy if she can. Her only weakness is her love for her daughter and her brother. She is extremely protective of Ashura.

Combat Reactions: Lucilla has only basic combat skills and would not remain to fight under most circumstances. She would try to flee to the nearest ally for protection. In most circumstances, Lucilla has at least a squad of Orobas guarding her and Ashura. These men and women are chosen from the best in the unit and are devoted to the regent and daughter.

Contacts: Siranno Barjhal (Age: 69 Specialties: Underworld Connections and Emir of Cimmaro) Malcolm Ramius (Age: 58 Specialties: Aircraft Pilot and semi-retired owner of Ramius Raiders. Malcolm owns a coffee plantation in Gadiz) Ocavian Paolo (Age: 46 Specialties: Commander of the Raiders, Emir of Gadiz, and husband) Tanya Sully (Age: 50 Specialties: Economics and Law. Republican friend from her days at Garamond University) Alphonse Saxena (Age: 62 Specialties: Warfare and Gear Piloting. Commander of the Orobas. A hardened veteran of the War of the Alliance and former member of the Raiders. He is also a member of the Bloodhands). Simeon Veno (age: 78 Specialties: Underworld Contacts, gladiatorial knowledge. Lucilla's uncle and a powerful solicitor serving Siranno Barjhal. Very connected to the underworld network.)

VITAL STATISTICS

Age: 55 cycles Height: 1.54 meters Weight: 50 kg Hair Color: Blonde Eye Color: Blue

ATTRIBUTES

Agi: 0 App: 2 Bld: -2 Cre: 2 Fit: 0 Inf: 1 Kno: 2 Per: 1 Psy: 1 Wil: 1

Str: -2 Hea: 1 Stamina: 20 UD: 1 AD: 1

SKILLS

Combat Sense: 1/1 Melee: 1/0 Small Arms: 1/0 Dodge: 1/0 Hand to Hand: 1/0

Notice: 2/1 Investigation: 1/1 Riding: 1/0 Hagglng: 1/1 Streetwise: 1/1 Leadership: 1/1

Literature: 1/2 Music: 1/2 Teaching: 2/2 Human Perception: 2/1 Theatrics: 2/1

Business: 3/2 Bureaucracy: 3/2 Computer: 1/2 Law: 2/2 Security: 1/2

Social Sciences: 1/2 Psychology: 1/2 Investigation: 1/1 Etiquette: 2/1

Notes: Lucilla is fluent in Mandanese, Universal French, Larabic, Anglic, Equatorial Hispanic, and Interlingua. She does have the Fast Learner Perk.





ASHURA PAOLO (ROOK)

Born from the incestuous marriage between Ocavian and his sister, Lucilla, Ashura is currently the heir apparent to Gadiz. Even at a young age, Ashura's mind is incredibly keen. She has a perfect memory like her father and is incredibly analytical in everything she is exposed to. Surprisingly, Ashura has not developed any problems from having been born from such an unusual pairing, instead it seems as if she is the sum of all that is best in both parents; however, unlike her parents, Ashura is extremely kind and obsessed with religious experiences. Even at her young age, Ashura has already had three books published on the ecstatic experience and the exploration of spirituality in nature. Regarded by a number of experts as a rare genius, Ashura's expertise extends to other areas as well. Under her mother's tutelage, Ashura has quickly learned the theories of economics and social sciences, almost being on par with Lucilla in many areas.

Attitudes: Ashura truly loves her people and her family. It distresses her to no end when the media paints her father in such a terrible light. She has an extremely close relationship with her father and mother. Though she rarely sees Ocavian, Ashura regularly corresponds with him via traditional letters, something Ocavian treasures. Because she is the daughter of Ocavian, she is regarded by the Neo Hindu's as a living incarnation of the nurturing aspect of Kali. Ashura has embraced this recognition and strives to live up to it. Among the Bloodhands, she is regarded as the guardian of Ocavian's purity and in some ways a part of him. She struggles with some of the brutal measures that her mother has to resort to, but the analytical side of her mind helps her cope with the realities of ruling. Ashura dreads taking over the emirate precisely because she does not want to be forced into doing what is necessary to rule. She despises the practice of slavery and privately voices her disdain for the practice to her mother regularly.

Profession: Ashura aids her mother in the day to day administration of the government and in doing so is also learning the methods of ruling the emirate. While she has excellent managerial skills, Ashura lacks the experience and contacts that her mother and father possess. Lucilla has been working to remedy this situation, but Ashura has a general disdain for crucial allies of the emirate such as many of the members of the Raiders, her great uncle Simeon, and Siranno Barjhal. She secretly admires Rafael Bhravo and has written to him about his experiences in spirituality and Apostate Revisionism. Her mother and father are unaware of this friendship. For all of her disdain for the Raiders, Ashura is close to Malcolm Ramius and Sirdar Alphonse Saxena, commander of the Orobas and a Bloodhand. Ramius taught Ashura how to fly a few years ago and she loves to traverse the region in her Flea. Ashura enjoys Ramius's laid back personality and his stories about her father. Saxena fills the void of not having her father in her life. The grizzled veteran is extremely protective of the young woman and has spent most of his cycles in Gadiz as her bodyguard and as her mentor in military theory. It was Saxena that encouraged the Bloodhands to acknowledge her place within their religion.

Combat Reactions: Ashura is always protected by a large military contingent. As the heir apparent, she has no less than a section of the best soldiers protecting her. If personal combat were to occur she would look for an advantage and flee. While she is well versed in military theory and leadership abilities, she is not personally trained as a combatant. Her personal bodyguard is Morgana Devis, a GREL captured by Ocavian during the War of the Alliance. Devis's loyalty to the CEF was destroyed after the surrender. She was desperate to find a new master and chose to serve Ocavian, who had been using a technique he had developed to wear down the hypnotraining's effects since discovering about it from a captured CEF officer.

Contacts: Rafael Bhravo (age: 14 Specialties: Mysticism and Emir of Okavango) Morgana Devis (Age: 25 Specialties: Combat and Assassination. GREL bodyguard) Alphonse Saxena (Age: 62 Specialties: Warfare and Gear Piloting. Commander of the Orobas. A hardened veteran of the War of the Alliance and former member of the Raiders. He is also a member of the Bloodhands) Malcolm Ramius (Age: 58 Specialties: Aircraft Pilot and semi-retired owner of Ramius Raiders. Malcolm owns a coffee plantation in Gadiz) Seji Adachi (Age: 55 Specialties: Publisher and Agent out of Yung An, Mekong)

VITAL STATISTICS

Age: 24 cycles Height: 1.52 meters Weight: 49 kg Hair Color: Blonde Eye Color: Grey

ATTRIBUTES

Agi: 0 App: 2 Bld: -2 Cre: 2 Fit: 0 Inf: 1 Kno: 2 Per: 0 Psy: 1 Wil: 1

Str: -2 Hea: 1 Sta: 20 UD: 1 AD: 1

SKILLS

Business: 2/2 Bureaucracy: 2/2 Social Sciences: 2/2 Psychology: 1/2 Etiquette: 2/1

Theatrics: 1/1 Aircraft Piloting: 2/0 Navigation: 1/2 Literature (mysticism): 2/2

Music: 1/2 Notice: 1/0 Investigate: 1/0 Human Perception: 2/1 Dance: 1/0 Ride: 1/0

Notes: Ashura speaks Mandanese, Larabic, Anglic, Equatorial Hispanic, Interlingua, Universal French, Siberian, and Interlingua fluently. She is beginning to learn Indo-Arabic in order to read the Khodaverdi in its original language. Ashura has both Fast Learner and Photographic Memory (Rank 3).





MALCOLM RAMIUS (KNIGHT)

The founder and co-owner of the Ramius Raiders lives part of the cycle in Gadiz, where he has a vast cawfee plantation. He has been very close to the Paolo family ever since meeting Ocavian during the War of the Alliance (for more information on the Raiders see the article detailed in Aurora 2.3). Since his semi-retirement, Ramius indulges himself with growing the perfect cawfee. He spends half of every cycle's income on improving his lands in Gadiz and has heavily invested in building up the region's infrastructure including a Raider owned airstrip outside of Calcutta. His other passion of flying is indulged there. He keeps a fleet of small aircraft at that location, but also has a Walfish available for the unit at the same location.

Attitudes: Malcolm Ramius is extremely laid back. He loves his cawfee, flying the skies, and keeping stress out of his life. He never planned on owning a mercenary company and he certainly never thought that he'd be friends with one of the most notorious men in the Southern hemisphere. He has a kindred spirit in Ashura Paolo, who he views as a niece. By nature, Ramius is not a violent man. His success in life came from a series of weird twists and turns, but he takes it all in stride. While he finds some of the activities that his mercenary unit performs personally distasteful, Ramius takes a practical approach on the matter and turns a blind eye towards things like slavery. Cycles of turning a blind eye to the lucrative trade contributed towards his semi-retirement five cycles ago. It just interfered too much with his third love in live: keeping stress out of his life.

Combat Reactions: Though not violent in nature, Ramius is not unskilled in combat. He will gladly kill any enemy in his path and not think twice about it. He values his life too much. Too many cycles of trying to unsuccessfully negotiate surrenders have jaded the merc commander's views of mediating. If faced with overwhelming numbers, Ramius will try to escape or call in allies. Even though he is semi-retired, Ramius does have access to all of his mercenary unit's resources. In an aircraft, Ramius is a thrill seeker. In the cockpit, he has predatory instincts and is among the best at the fine art of helo combat. He is also a specialist in flying cargo haulers like the Walfish and Bacchus.

Contacts: Ocavian Paolo (Age: 46 Specialties: Commander of the Raiders, Emir of Gadiz) Heinrich Pullo (Age: 58 Specialties: Gear Piloting. One of the founders of the Raiders and close friend) Molly Ramius (Age: 36 Specialties: Cooking and Seduction. Ramius's wife and expert barista) Walter Godman (Age: 62 Specialties: Business and Mercenary Work. Long time friend and one of the board members of the Mercenary Guild in Hsi Tsang)



VITAL STATISTICS

Age: 58 cycles Height: 1.77 meters Weight: 81kg Hair Color: Grey Eye Color: Blue

Attributes:

Agi: 2 App: 0 Bld: 0 Cre: 1 Fit: 0 Inf: 1 Kno: 1 Per: 1 Psy: 0 Wil: 0

Str: 0 Hea: 0 Stamina: 25 UD: 5 AD: 5

Skills:

Aircraft Pilot (Spec: Helicopters; Transport Planes): 4/2 Aircraft Gunnery: 3/1

Combat Sense: 3/2 Small Arms: 2/2 Melee: 2/2 Hand to Hand: 1/2 Dodge: 2/2

Business (Spec: Mercenary): 2/1 Bureaucracy: 1/1 Leadership: 2/1 Tactics: 3/1

Electronic Warfare: 2/1 Communication: 1/1 Navigation: 2/1 Notice: 2/1 Streetwise: 2/1 Etiquette: 1/1 Drive: 2/2 Cook (Spec: Cawfee Products): 1/1

Notes: Ramius speaks Universal French, Mandanese, Anglic, and a little bit of Siberian and Larabic. Ramius is mildly addicted to Cawfee and suffers from Insomnia as a result.

OCAVIAN PAOLO (EMIR OF GADIZ)

In the time since his hostile coup, Ocavian Paolo has spent little time in his emirate and has instead placed his sister, Lucilla, in charge as regent for their daughter. There are a number of rumors as to why he has left his emirate including an exile by the Patriarch, but the truth of the matter is much simpler. The man known as the Exsanguinated Emir to the rest of the Southern Hemisphere has simply decided he does not have any interesting things to do in the Eastern Sun Emirates. His time in exile in the Mekong Dominion and the building of the Raiders marked an important part of his life and he found that sense of accomplishment fulfilling. His coup in TN1920 was a matter of survival and vengeance against Isilla for the murder of Sirinda Veno, his other mother. Though Isilla was not directly involved in the assassination, she did little to prevent it and in Ocavian's eyes she was just as culpable as the ones involved.

Though he rarely spends time in the rural lands of his ancestors, Ocavian still visits from time to time to weed out any dissidents and potential threats to his sister and their daughter. More often than not, Ocavian can be found in Cimmaro dealing with Emir Barjhal over matters of slaves and information gathered in the Mekong Dominion and in the Badlands. While on the surface Ocavian and Barjhal are allies, the truth of the matter is that the relationship is strained. The economic measures taken by Isilla and continued by Ocavian help the growth of Gadiz, but also cause a great deal of trepidation between the two men as Barjhal sees an independent Gadiz a threat to his power in the region. For this reason, Ocavian goes out of his way to pay respects to the bloated emir of Cimmaro. The arrangement has been enough to keep Barjhal from crushing Gadiz, but Ocavian is keenly aware of the problems of this dangerous arrangement.

In the Mekong, Ocavian has a number of interests and contacts that he relies on for his operations. His chief source of revenue in the Mekong Dominion comes from his ownership of the Ramius Raiders mercenary group, but he also owns a large amount of real estate in Mekong City and Hsi Tsang that was acquired during the War of the Alliance. For all of his rumored atrocities, Ocavian has a good working relationship with the Peacekeepers, something neither actively advertises. In fact for services Ocavian rendered during the War of the Alliance, he was actually issued the minimum stocks to become a citizen by the commander officer of Mekong City, though under the assumed name of Paul Baptiste. This name was also used in his Mercenary Guild membership and has led to a number of errors when researching his activities during the War of the Alliance.

Another lesser known group that Ocavian is associated with is the community of Jan Mayen. During the War of the Alliance, Ocavian was extremely interested in the GRELS he encountered. In fact during the war, he managed to capture three alive that he was able to study extensively. He developed a deep sense of respect and kinship with the three captured soldiers and after the war, Ocavian took steps to secretly help any GRELS he found to Jan Mayen. He is disgusted by the experimentation that occurs in Smyrna and has on two occasions personally raided the facilities to rescue captured GRELS from the facility with the help of Emir Shara Khajar. While he is sympathetic to the plight of GRELS, Ocavian has utter contempt for the officers of the CEF.

VITAL STATISTICS

Emirate: Gadiz

Allies: Emir Barjhal (Cimmaro), Emir Shara Khajar (Smyrna), Mercenary Guild (Mekong)

Enemies: Emir Anumira Khajar (Smyrna), Free Emirates

Goals: Ensuring the survival of Gadiz and himself.

Influence: Ocavian's influence within the ESE is limited primarily in his own emirate; however, he does have contacts through his uncle in Cimmaro that allow him to tap into the wider network of information that Emir Barjhal possesses. Within his emirate, Ocavian's presence is one of fear to his solicitors and one of worship among his shajhalin. Though he does not rule openly, Lucilla can invoke his name to provide the needed effect to ensure loyalty and industriousness in her people. Recent successes by the Gadiz emirate retinue have gained a measure of respect from certain emirs, but also a degree of jealousy among others.

Current Concerns: Ocavian's primary concerns are for the stability of his emirate and the growth of his Mekong assets. As soon as he feels that Ashura, his daughter, is capable of taking over in ruling the emirate, Ocavian will abdicate to her. He has very little interest in ruling, but Ocavian does not want to see centuries of rule be lost due to incapable heirs. One thing that has been bothering Ocavian lately is his lack of aging since leaving Gadiz. Some deep seated instinct warns him away from his homeland and also pushes him to move every few weeks. After cycles of this behavior, Ocavian is beginning to see patterns of behavior that indicate something greater than the typical paranoia emir's experience is bothering him, but he can not figure it out.





OROBAS RETINUE

Founded during the bloody coup of TN1920, the Orobas Retinue originally started as the Hellion Horses mercenary company based out of Cimmaro in the ESE, but during the course of the conflict the unit was absorbed into the Ramius Raiders unit after their disastrous battle with Isilla's loyal retinue at the capital during the first weeks of the campaign. Zolan Mallinoux, the company owner died during the fighting and the lack of any good officers among the unit resulted in Ocavian Paolo appointing members of his Bloodhand cult into positions of influence. The newly appointed commander of the force was a former gladiator and devout follower of the Bloodhand named Alphonse Saxena.

Saxena reinforced the unit with his ties to the gladiatorial schools in the region and also with members of the Thugee cult, who joined early during the conquest by Ocavian, but had no formal appointments till the restructuring of the Hellion Horses into the Orobas Retinue. With the revitalized unit in place the Orobas quickly went from a mediocre unit to a ruthless instrument of the Exsanguinated Emir's will. In Summer of TN1921, Saxena was given orders to take the garrison of Mumbai and to leave only one survivor to spread panic to the other garrisons in the region. The attack on the garrison was swift and effective. The brutal executions and public displays of the mutilated loyalist guards' corpses to the town worked in Ocavian's favor and a few weeks later Ocavian was able to seize Calcutta's garrison without firing a shot. Unfortunately, images of the brutality were broadcast worldwide and helped seal Ocavian's reputation as another brutal emir.

As a reward for their service during the takeover of the rural emirate, the Orobas was officially made Ocavian's retinue. Saxena was elevated to the solicitor class and given command of all of the emirate's forces as Sirdar. Today, the Orobas is still a formidable force of gears and infantry. Heavier assets such as tanks and fire support gears usually are found with their allied Ramius Raider unit stationed in Gadiz.

Color Schemes: The Orobas parade colors are similar to the Paolo Family crest and are predominately a rich green with orange shoulder armor and golden embellishments. The Paolo crest is usually painted on right shoulder with the ESE crest found on the left skirt armor plate. In the field the Orobas paint their units in practical camouflage for their environments. Pilots that distinguish themselves are given the right to paint their left shoulder with a badge, usually their gladiatorial mascot or slogan.

BLITZ! RULES

The Orobas Regiment can be fielded as a Priority Level 2 or higher ESE army with Independent ties. They may field the Ramius Raiders as their mercenary options (see the previous page for rules).

Amphibious Fighters: All Orobas Units must choose available amphibious upgrades regardless of veteran status. Gears can take up the amphibious perk for +5 points, but this is not mandatory upgrade.

Gladiators: Most of the Gear Pilots in the Orobas are former gladiators from Cimmaro as such they have a propensity to use an assortment of close combat weaponry. Any gear unit equipped with a Vibro Blade may upgrade it to a Vibro Rapier for +5 points, Vibro Axe +10, or Chain Sword +5. Any Gear not equipped with a Vibro Blade may equip one for +5. Veteran Units may pay an additional +5 for an added die to melee attacks. This is in addition to any other attack upgrades.

Thugee Infiltrators: If a defense mission is rolled or selected, any infantry may be designated as Thugee Infiltrators. If this is done they must pay +5 per escouade for the stealth upgrade listed under infantry. Any number of infantry units may be designated as Thugee Infiltrators. In addition to stealth upgrades, for every Support Point spent on Infiltrators a Thugee escouade can deploy within "2 of the infiltration unit for free. Once deployed they may move freely. This may only be done if defense missions are taken in mission generation.

RAMIUS'S RAIDERS



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 wildeyed killer with boasts of his ancestry.

Ocavian Paolo a.k.a the Exsanguinated Emir, one of the boogeymen 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 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.

RULES FOR FIELDING THE RAMIUS'S RAIDERS

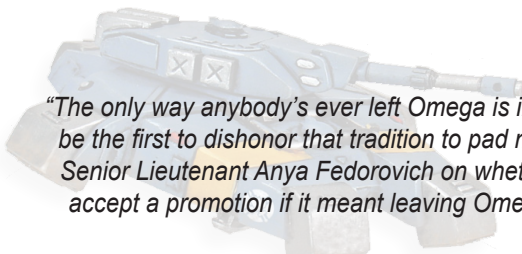
As an attached mercenary unit, the Raiders are built as a Leagueless unit that is attached to any Mekong, MILICIA, or ESE force. Up to fifty percent of the force may be composed of the Raiders. ESE forces must use the Independent affiliation option to pick up the Raiders.

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.



"The only way anybody's ever left Omega is in a box. I won't be the first to dishonor that tradition to pad my resume. " - Senior Lieutenant Anya Fedorovich on whether she would accept a promotion if it meant leaving Omega Company.

*Barrington Basin, Badlands
West Base Officer Quarters, Port Arthur
03 August TN 1936*

Senior Lieutenant Anya Fedorovich watched as Lieutenant Symon Newell adjusted his uniform in the mirror for what felt like the thirtieth time that morning and wondered if she was ever that green and nervous. To be honest, she probably was at one point, but she'd never admit it to anyone now.

"For God's sake, Newell, how long are you going to preen yourself?" she said, smiling as she stood from her bed. Symon stopped adjusting and turned to face her, a wry smile on his face.

"As soon as you stop staring at me, Fedorovich," he snapped back, "This is my first time meeting the Captain, and I don't want to screw up. I've heard stories about him." Anya laughed as she grabbed her longcoat and slipped it on. She found herself liking the earnest young lieutenant, in spite of herself. After the initial shock of finding out she would be sharing her quarters with Lieutenant Newell, they found they had a bit in common. Both were born to hard-working families with not a lot of income. Neither were poor, but it was a struggle to make ends meet. Symon's parents were homesteaders out in the counties, and Anya's were miners from the Yakut peninsula. Both had joined the military to better themselves and to help support their families, and both had been forced to operate behind enemy lines.

Anya grabbed Symon's longcoat and tossed it at him before opening the door to their quarters. "C'mon, you don't want to keep the Captain waiting," she said, "And besides, I've heard all these stories before, they're nothing like how he runs things." Symon stopped as he was going out the door and looked at her.

"Really?" he asked, and Anya savored the relief in his voice and the look of hope on his face.

"Oh, absolutely," she grinned that predatory grin of hers as she replied, "He's way worse." Symon's face fell immediately.

"That's not funny, Anya," he said petulantly as he walked off, Anya's laughter following him down the hall.

.....

Muster was held in Omega Company's primary tank bay, the sound of welding, tools, and work gone for now, but the smell of lubricants and fuel still hung in the air. By the time Symon and Anya arrived in the hangar, the last of Omega Company was filing into ranks. The first thing Symon noticed that was different was that GRELS were mixed in with the humans in ranks. Typically the GRELS would muster in a completely different formation and receive their own orders separately. Already Symon was beginning to understand just how different Omega was from the rest of the PAK.

He followed Anya to the front of the formation where a female officer with Lieutenant rank insignia and a male Sergeant Major stood. Upon seeing Anya, both the Sergeant Major and Lieutenant came to attention and saluted sharply.

"Good morning, ma'am!" the Sergeant Major stated as Anya returned the salute, "Omega Company present and accounted for."

"Excellent, Sergeant Major. By the way, this is Lieutenant Newell, our new heavy hovertank troop commander. Lieutenant Newell, this is Sergeant Major Mitchell and I'm guessing Lieutenant Nagashima." Symon shook hands both Mendenhall and Nagashima. In terms of both appearance and personality, neither could be more different from each other. Mendenhall was average in height, appearance, and build, with a relaxed, casual attitude about him, even in full uniform. His green eyes, light brown hair and relaxed smile seemed to put Symon at ease. The kind of man who could blend in almost anywhere and with relative ease. Nagashima was shorter than the other assembled officers, but even with the light armor she had on, it was clear she had a strong, muscular figure. Her hair was cropped close, and her brown eyes were as hard and uncompromising as diamonds. Beneath her left eye Symon also noticed a scar that ran from just under her left eye up her cheekbone before trailing off before her hairline.

"Pleasure to meet you Sergeant Major, Lieutenant," he said. Mendenhall was about to reply when he caught something over Symon's shoulder and immediately faced the formation.

"Omega Company, ten-hut! Captain on deck!" he bellowed, and immediately everyone in the hangar snapped to attention. The only noise in the entire hangar was the sound of Captain Ewy's boots as he strode across the hangar deck.

"At ease," he said, his voice gruff and gravelly, "We've got a busy schedule ahead of us. Looks like our two new troop commanders have just arrived. Lieutenant Nagashima here will be the replacement for the infantry troop, and Lieutenant Newell

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

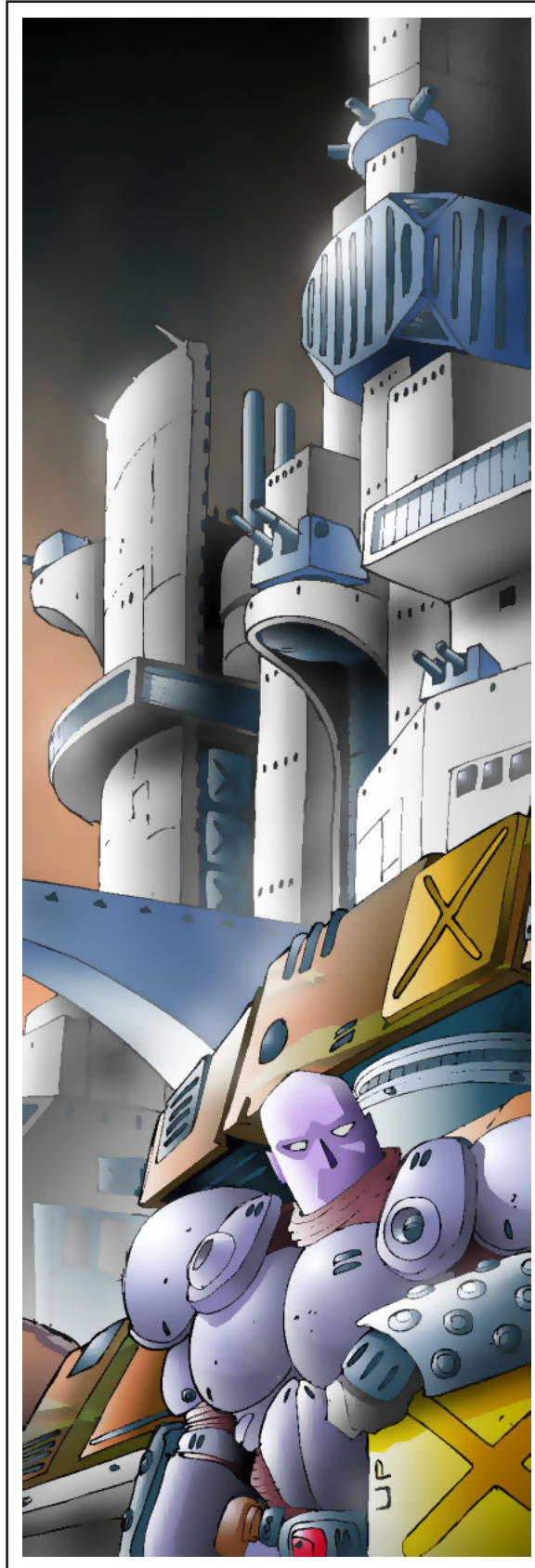
OMEGA COMPANY - CHAPTER 2

will take over the heavy hoverships. I want these guys to get caught up to speed, so Watkins, Andropov, I want you to be prepared to brief them and turn over command as soon as I'm done with them. Also, we've got some drill time later today, so I want everything up and running by 2000 today, understood?"

"Yes, sir!" the formation barked.

"Good, dismissed." Captain Piotr Ewy turned away from the now disintegrating formation and looked over Symon and Nagashima.

"So you're the replacements?" he asked. His black, bushy eyebrows furrowed as he made a show of judging each officer before speaking again. With his dark hair and eyes, mustache and permanent five o'clock shadow, and broad frame, he certainly looked the imposing figure. "Well, you both look up to snuff, but we'll see soon enough. I want both of you to integrate into this unit as fast as inhumanly possible. Things between the poles are heating up, the Third is taking advantage of all the chaos, and now this Proust character seems to be stirring up even more trouble. Colonel Arthur doesn't think this is going to cause problems for us yet, but if things keep going the way they do, we'll be in the thick of it soon. We've got some formation exercises today, just a couple of drills that will help us all get familiar with each other. The rest of the week is going to be moving up from there to gunnery training, ambushing, combat exercises, and so on until I feel we're combat-ready.



"Now, you've both been assigned quarters and you've got all your gear squared away?" he asked. Nagashima nodded and Symon fidgeted before speaking.

"Yes and no, sir," he said, explaining, "I've been assigned quarters, but they haven't cleaned out my assigned berth yet, so I've been temporarily assigned."

"With whom?" Ewy asked.

"With me, sir," Anya spoke up. For what seemed like several very long seconds, Ewy scowled at Anya, then to Symon before bursting into laughter.

"Ah, beauraucracy," Ewy said as his laughter died down, "You still managed to get squared away, Lieutenant?"

"Yes, sir," Newell answered.

"And you have no objections, Fedorovich?"

"No, sir."

"Alright then. Since it's only temporary, and there seems to be no problem between the two of you, I won't bother with playing musical beds. Just remember to put the seat down, Newell."

"I'll try, sir," Symon replied, smiling.

"Good. Now, go get to know your troops. Dismissed."

Inside Port Arthur

This configuration of the Ranger Squad manages to incorporate stealth, powerful forward observation options, and accurate short-range indirect combat capability. The Urban Tiger Squad is the Northern combined arms doctrine applied specifically to urban gear combat.

Ranger Squad (Specialist, Member States: NAF)

Combat Group Leader

- 1x Sabertooth Army Commander (Attack 3, Defense 3, Electronic Warfare 2, Leadership 3) with Stealth 2
- 2x Tiger (Attack 3, Defense 3, Electronic Warfare 2) with Stealth 2
- 1x Cheetah (Attack 2, Defense 2, Electronic Warfare 2) with Stealth 2, Recon Drone
- 1x Cheetah (Attack 2, Defense 2, Electronic Warfare 2) with Stealth 2, Recon Drone

Base cost: 345 TV

Options:

- Swap Combat Group Leader Jaguar for Thunder Jaguar (+10)
- Swap Thunder Jaguar for Sabertooth (-5)
- Swap 2 Jaguars for Tigers (0)
- Give Level 3 Attack and Defense Skills to Sabertooth and Tigers (+30)
- Add Recon Drones to both Cheetahs (+20)
- Add Stealth 2 to all gears (+25)

Total optional cost: 425 TV

Squad Development History

The 100th Bluehorns Regiment first developed the Urban Tiger Squad based on the doctrines laid down by former Kenema Gear Police officer, Senior Ranger Elias Clarke. Clarke commanded the Gear Section of B Company during the Northern Guard ESE Task Force's initial assault on Raleigh in TN 1936, where the Urban Tigers had their baptism of fire. Each Urban Tiger Squad was formed from a specialized Ranger Squad composed of a Sabertooth, two Tigers and two Cheetahs, all coated with sensor-absorbent paint. The two Cheetahs carried Ovni Recon Drones, with which to forward observe enemy units in the streets of Raleigh long before the Urban Tiger Squad could be spotted in return.

Once targets had been spotted, the Urban Tigers could either engage the enemy using indirect fire from the powerful Medium Rocket Pods of the Sabertooth and Tigers, which would have the advantage of firing from ambush thanks to their near-total concealment, or the Cheetahs could call in fire support from the regiment's Rabid Badgers and Field Guns.



*Star after star from Heaven's high arch shall rush,
Suns sink on suns, and systems systems crush,
Headlong, extinct, to one dark centre fall,
And Death and Night and Chaos mingle all!*

– Erasmus Darwin, *The Botanic Garden*

Ellesworth Station, Luna

Lieutenant Ridd Kennan entered the sparse room and sat at an old metal desk. The room was large and nearly empty save for the desk, its chair and an equally ancient and worn plastic chair facing it. Ridd flipped open a thin file and stared at the image of a man's face. He was obviously a big man, one with a mane of grey hair, a similar beard and alert-looking dark eyes. The name on the file read Yano Thaker.

In contrast, Ridd was a compact man with cropped blonde hair, slicked back like so many others in the Lunar police forces. Although working in police intelligence often brought him into contact with those offering information, Ridd knew that today's meeting was going to be different.

Yano Thaker was the president of Thaker Mining & Salvage Corporation, one of a handful of Earth-based companies operating in the Belt. The man had influence, and he had spent the last two weeks using every bit of it trying to get a meeting with the leadership of CEGA's intelligence organization. CEGA's lunar liaison rebuffed him as a matter of course, but called Ridd's boss and asked if he was interested. Yano was adamant that he had information critical to CEGA's future.

"This one's for you," Ridd's boss, a balding, chunky man, had said as he handed over the file. "Find out why he's so worked up."

Yano's intelligence file had little to offer: born and raised in the Belt, started the company from scratch, an old profit and loss statement, a news report about a pirate base he destroyed using mercenary exo-pilots and Marines, and a recent shipping invoice for 20 metric tons of life support equipment.

Hearing footsteps in the hall, Ridd closed the file and dropped it in an empty drawer. Ridd looked down at the black pistol in his shoulder rig, wondering if he should put it away, then decided against it. Civilians tended to be less verbose in the presence of openly displayed firearms.

The door snapped open and a uniformed police officer motioned for Yano to enter. The officer nodded to Ridd and closed the door, leaving the two men alone.

"Have a seat." Ridd motioned toward the plastic chair.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE ELYSEE'S FINAL ACT RICK ROMERO

Yano was a bear of a man wearing a faded blue jump suit festooned with zippered cargo pockets and thick boots. Pausing to take in his Spartan surroundings, Yano stood holding a large envelope in front of him.

Ridd leaned back in his chair, deciding on a different tact. "What brings you to the Moon, Mister Thaker?"

"Well," Yano looked at a fan slowly turning overhead, "it wasn't to have a meeting in a police interrogation room."

Ridd began to respond, but Yano waved him off. "No offense, Captain, but I came here with information critical to the Earth Government, and they sent me here."

"Lieutenant," Ridd corrected. "I work in the intelligence unit."

"That's Lunar Police intelligence, not CEGA intelligence," Yano replied sharply.

Ridd had meant only to clarify his title, not his position. He resisted the impulse to argue the point. "You've got two choices, Mr. Thaker: back to the Belt or talk to me." Ridd made another welcoming gesture toward the chair.

Yano paused, sighed, and walked forward. "Ok, I guess you're going to be the one," he replied, sitting before Ridd. The old chair squeaked in sharp protest.

"By the looks of it, you've got something important in that envelope, Mr. Thaker."

Yano leaned forward, opened the envelope and pulled out half a dozen printed images and laid them on the desk. Ridd rolled his chair forward and began to examine them.

"Looks like..."

Yano cut him off. "Start here, with this one." Yano jabbed a scarred index finger into the first image on Ridd's left.

"Hmmm, boulders, lots of them. An asteroid field."

"And here?" The scarred finger jabbed again.

"Looks like a ship, far away."

"Yes. Now look at this one." Yano jabbed again.

"The ship, closer this time. I can't identify the class; it's too dark."

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ELYSEE'S FINAL ACT

Yano slid the next image over. Several floodlights illuminated the ship, revealing a punctured and pockmarked hull.

"If I had to guess, I'd say it's an old explorer, Scout-class," Ridd offered as he leaned back and added, "Ok, I get the picture, literally. Now tell me, what is this all about."

Yano leaned forward, his eyes wild with excitement. "One more, Lieutenant. Just one more." He slid another image, this time a close up of the battered hull, clearly burned and warped in the flood lights. Faded block letters were centered in the image.

"Lieutenant, how well do you know your history?"

Ridd eyed the company president for a moment then picked up the image. "CSS Scout. She was lost in the Battle of Elysée, wasn't she? Just disappeared if I remember correctly."

"Yes, correct on both counts, Lieutenant. Now..."

"I'm sure there's some historical value here, Mr. Thaker, but I fail to see..."

Yano held up a hand as he unzipped a chest cargo pocket. He unfolded a paper covered with scientific data and images of corpses, corpses of impossibly large humans with orange- and purple-blotched skin.

"The Scout was on her way back when she got caught up in the battle. She was on her way back with something they found out there, on a moon. But they never made it home. Just disappeared as you said. I found her, but more importantly, I found what she found."

Ridd, sitting erect, took the page and scoured the data and the images.

"You're telling me you found the Scout and this is actual data from her computer?" Ridd stared hard at Yano. "This, all of this, is real?"

"Yes. I have the ship and the data."

"Assuming this is real, how much do you want?"

"What I want is a meeting with CEGA, their intelligence people. I'm not here to sell the ship or these records."

"Then what is it that you are selling?"

"I'm here to sell a plan, Lieutenant. A big one. To do that I need a meeting with CEGA."

Ridd locked eyes with the big man for a moment then pulled a thin chrome communicator from his pocket, tapped the screen and held it to his ear.

"CEGA Naval attaché's office," the voice answered.

"I'd like to speak with Captain Gorsuch."

"I'm sorry, but the Captain is..."

"Black 3-5-9," Ridd interrupted.

There was a sharp inhale, then, "Yes, sir. Transferring you now."

.....

JSS Godfire, Jupiter Orbit

The admiral turned away from the speaker on the conference table and stood before the viewport, his tall frame silhouetted by a line of reddish-orange festoons swirling in the atmosphere.

"That's it, the entire conversation?" the admiral asked.

The Jovian Intelligence Service director stood and joined him. "Yes, admiral. The CEGA agent arranged a meeting with the naval attaché then left with Yano Thaker. Our source claims this occurred eleven months ago -- our people concur with the source."

"I assume you've located the moon and CEGA activity there?"

"We have located their facility, yes. Through computer imagery analysis of every moon in the solar system. It's taken months to check every possibility. We've finally isolated it. It's on Enceladus, a large white mushroom shaped structure, 400 meters wide, 40 tall, no heat signature, no ELINT, or physical activity -- just a symmetrical structure quietly sitting on the surface. Without the computers we never would have found it."

The admiral's eyebrows furrowed. "You mean to tell me CEGA built a base on a moon in our backyard, resupplied it, and we never once noticed any ships travelling outside the merchant routes to Titan? No one has been following up on any survey ship activity?"

"Admiral, that's just it. They haven't sent any ships there, nobody has for years."

"So how..."

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ELYSEE'S FINAL ACT

The JIS director sighed and ran a hand over his bald head, "It took us a while to figure it out. Actually, a junior agent did it. He's been promoted. He used to be considered a conspiracy fanatic due to his obsession with the Magellan –"

"The Magellan Project!" the admiral bellowed.

"Yes, admiral. Yano Thaker's Magellan Project."

The Magellan Project had been regarded as yet another of the CEGA council's laughable attempts to demonstrate its moral superiority to the solar system. One hundred probes, powered by magnetic sails, sailing through space like Ferdinand Magellan, to the uninhabited planets and moons of the solar system. Each carrying a message of hope and goodwill.

As many in the Confederation expected, several of the slow-moving craft malfunctioned. Tenders were sent out to repair them, but many were lost as they crashed or disappeared into the void. In one such incident, twenty-eight of the craft clustered together near Saturn and then disappeared near Enceladus.

The admiral turned to the JIS director. "So they didn't disappear or crash. They used the magnetic sail ships to deliver the materials and equipment necessary to construct their facility and stock it with supplies." A wry smile crossed the admiral's mouth. "The entire project, all of it, was a ruse to create that base. They did it right in front of us while we laughed.

"So then, what do your analysts say?"

The director nodded and returned to the table. He picked up his data pad and scrolled through the glowing screen. "Looking at the possible tonnage delivered, a facility with forty personnel, operational for at the last six months, with enough supplies for another six."

"Security?"

"Significant. Fifty or so exo-armor units, fifty exo-suits, and," the director paused, "a destroyer-sized vessel with any number of weapons systems."

The admiral's smile vanished. "What! A CEGA destroyer! Next to Titan!"

"Admiral, do you remember the Magellan tender, the one that lost maneuvering control, reportedly destroyed in Saturn's B-rings? The rings that are so highly reflective of sunlight we couldn't observe it?"

The admiral walked over to his chair and sat, placing his face in his hands. With his eyes shut, he spoke as if reading from his own report: "As the ship hid among the rings, it ejected all that debris we found. And some of the Magellan probes also disbursed debris for us to find."

"I think you've got the picture, admiral. This is why you were ordered to send the exos, Marines and shuttles to Titan using the Ebiru. Once refueled, they'll conduct the assault. I know that conducting a surface raid without aerospace support isn't JDF doctrine, but if we want proof of Edicts violations, we need to hit them before they know we're coming."

The admiral scrolled through his own data pad. "These orders you've brought me. I'm to sortie the 1st fleet in 10 hours to blockade the Saturn system and support the assault. I'm sure President Itangre knows it will be over before I get there."

"She does, admiral. And if the assault fails, you'll mop up and nuke the site from orbit."

The admiral stood abruptly and returned to his view of Jupiter's multicolored bands and churning storms. "If it were up to me, I'd fight my way into Earth orbit and drop nukes until their atmosphere looks like the one I'm looking at now."

.....

Enceladus

"Where am I," Captain Kelso Torbin asked, thoroughly confused about his whereabouts. It was dark, he was in his vacuum suit, floating on his back. Thousands of dim stars twinkled in the blackness above.

"Shut up."

Kelso briefly considered challenging his cryptic respondent, but his overwhelming desire to discern his whereabouts took precedence.

The Captain felt a tug and then another and another. He was being pulled by a swimmer through calm water.

"Found your night eyes yet?" Again, the cryptic voice crackled in Kelso's helmet speaker.

"No, lost 'em," another voice responded, female, resolute.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ELYSEE'S FINAL ACT

Kelso couldn't resist the urge to spit inside his helmet. The taste in his mouth was foul, accompanied by a scent just as disgusting. The taste and smell opened a door in Kelso's mind, filling him with panic.

Flying the shuttle into the ocean beneath the moon's icy surface, the collision, losing control, the flooding. My copilot! Cindi wouldn't let me unbuckle her straps. She wouldn't listen. "Cindi, we have to get out!" She fought me! The freezing water enveloping us. The horrible smell. The taste. Cindi wasn't wearing her helmet. Darkness.

"Pilot, can you swim?" the female voice asked.

Kelso moved his limbs. "Yes."

"Good. I'm rolling you over. Don't use your light. Can you see?"

Kelso rolled and took in the dark shape of a helmet floating in front of him. He could see the faint outline of a woman's face inside. "Barely. Is it . . . night?" How long have I been out? he wondered.

"It's still day. We're inside the base. No more questions. Just focus on swimming."

The base! Flying above it, a large white mushroom-like structure on the icy surface of Enceladus. Saturn's pale atmosphere and bright rings high above.

"Why are there stars?" Kelso whispered.

"Shut up! Last warning, pilot," the cryptic voice replied.

Kelso heeded the warning and resigned himself to swimming. His suit was buoyant but difficult to steer. Once again, his mind wandered back into the recent past.

Kelso was in the shuttle cockpit with his copilot, Cindi. Their cargo bay, being towed by the Ebiru-class cargo ship, was open, revealing Saturn floating in the distance. Soon they would launch to begin their approach.

It had been three weeks since Cindi learned that her twin sister had died while performing life support maintenance on Joshua Station. It was a freak accident. An airlock failed; she was immediately sucked into the vacuum, her blood boiling as she tumbled above the Jovian world.

The two of them, slender brunettes with sparkling eyes and bouncing pony tails, had been soul mates from birth. Karri's death was too much for Cindi to bear without the sedatives discretely distributed by the medical department. Initially Kelso thought the little red pills were a good idea, but not after entering the cockpit for preflight and seeing Cindi strapped in her seat, catatonic, staring at the ringed gas giant in the distance. How many had she taken? Cindi was always a simple, energetic woman – never one to pause and ponder the imponderables. It's no wonder she wanted to drown.

"I can stand!" It was another male voice this time, not Mr. Cryptic.

"Ok, Ramos, you got the point." Mr. Cryptic apparently, was in charge.

Kelso continued swimming until the woman in the suit stood and moved forward, catlike. Although she crouched, Kelso could tell she was tall and muscular. She held a black assault rifle with one hand and motioned for the pilot to follow with the other.

Kelso felt better being on his feet even if he was still waist deep in the dark water.

"Halt," Ramos said somewhere up ahead.

The woman stopped and turned to make sure Kelso did the same. She turned back and raised her assault rifle to her shoulder.

Being surrounded by thousands of giant ice boulders was almost hypnotic. Kelso stared out the cockpit and watched the silent parade of white behemoths. Fifteen shuttles huddled together, some just below and others just inside Saturn's A-ring. Many of the Pathfinders and Retaliators had gone ahead, seeking to locate and neutralize CEGA forces before the shuttles made their mad dash. With any luck, they had entered the ring undetected.

Kelso turned to Cindi and placed his hand on her shoulder. "I've never been so close to the rings. They're beautiful."

"It never lasts," she whispered. "Nothing beautiful ever does."

Cindi closed her eyes and began sobbing. "We're going to die."

"All clear, keep moving." It was Ramos again. Kelso wondered how Ramos could see anything in the inky darkness.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ELYSEE'S FINAL ACT

Finally everyone made it to a sandy shore. Mr. Cryptic announced that the atmosphere was breathable but there wasn't any reason to depend on it. He instructed Ramos and Jensen to switch to lightskin headgear and take an inventory. The lightskin was a less bulky airtight helmet used by special forces. It had the appearance of a black rubber ski mask with thick goggles. Bulges over the ears held sound amplifiers. Their bulky suit helmets were abandoned.

The woman approached and plugged a cord into Kelso's helmet. "My name's Jensen. We're speaking via the line, no one else can hear. Are you injured?"

"No. Just a little disoriented."

Actually, Kelso felt sick. *How much of that god-awful ice water did I swallow?* Kelso hoped the lighter gravity of the moon would enable him to continue without too much discomfort.

"No wonder you almost drowned. You were flying without your face plate secured," she accused. "And your copilot, no helmet? My God!"

"Did you get me out?"

"No, the major did." She flung her thumb over her shoulder. "Almost went down with the shuttle doing it. That's why he's so pissed. That and the loss of the rest of our team."

Kelso thought of his shuttle spiraling toward the bottom, bubbles trailing, with Cindi still inside. "I don't understand where we are. I could swear it's night."

Jensen sighed. "When we exited the shuttle we just floated straight up until we reached the bottom of the pod."

Kelso remembered spotting a thick yellow pylon beneath the ice, attached to the dome on the surface. As the shuttle descended, circling the pylon, a large black pod at the bottom became visible. That's when they collided with a legless Minotaur that had fallen through the ice.

"We found an opening," Jensen continued, "and swam through a maze of tunnels. Then we surfaced in here. We need to get back up to the surface."

Jensen's voice slowed as she took in their surroundings. "Might be a facsimile of another world."

Kelso didn't recognize any of the stars twinkling above. *Why did they put stars on the ceiling?* "Where to now?" Kelso asked.

"Up the pylon." Her thumb parked itself over her shoulder again.

Kelso looked around. "I don't see it." It was too dark.

"Here." She reached for the pilot's forearm and pulled open a long plastic zipper, revealing his suit's control panel. She murmured to herself as she accessed different displays.

"Your filter's on," she deadpanned. "How about now?"

The world suddenly brightened. It was still "night" but Kelso could see the sand, the water, two stocky commandos with thick necks digging through a bag, and a dark, massive pylon ahead. The star field above was thick and ablaze. Kelso should have been awestruck by the CEGA's technical wizardry, instead he just felt like an idiot.

"Much better, thanks."

"Don't thank me, thank our orders. We're supposed to protect pilots at all costs. I guess one of you has to stay alive to get those records back to Titan. I'm tuning your receiver to the new frequency we're using."

Mr. Cryptic announced that it was time to move. Jensen told Kelso to follow and keep quiet. As they walked, Ramos and the major complained bitterly about the loss of their gear. Kelso's mind wandered.

Shadows danced across the shuttle cockpit as boulders tumbled overhead. The force was in EMCON as the exos scoured the rings for the enemy. Cindi sat quietly, staring ahead.

The clock displayed 0600, the appointed time for the cargo ship to make a dash for Enceladus to provoke a CEGA response. An alarm sounded; Kelso examined his ECM display:

THREAT * THREAT * THREAT
ULLER MISSILE FIRE CONTROL RADAR

A missile cruiser? Kelso doubted it. The mission brief had said that a destroyer-sized hybrid vessel with any number of weapon systems could be employed. Whatever it was, it was starting to look deadly.

While maneuvering the shuttle to get a view of the cargo ship, Kelso engaged the intercom system and updated the commandos in the passenger compartment. Things would happen quickly now. Kelso could see the cargo ship, a little dot moving toward a white orb. The alarm beeped again:

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ELYSEE'S FINAL ACT

THREAT * THREAT * THREAT
HARPOON III RADAR

This was bad news: the CEGA ship had the means to deliver ship-killing warheads at long range. There were two dots now, one slow, one fast. The two merged in a flash. War is hell, Kelso reminded himself. The exos must have a good idea where that ship is now.

Cindi looked over at Kelso with red eyes. "Kelso, I'm sorry. I lost it." She offered a brief smile.

"It's ok, Cindi. Don't apolo-"

A large shadow filled the cockpit; Kelso turned to find himself face to face with a Wyvern, its KKC pointed directly at him. Cindi shrieked as Kelso fired the engine, dropped the nose and turned in one violent maneuver. There was a thud as the shuttle clipped the Wyvern and left it spinning in its wake.

Kelso gripped the controls as he accelerated, maneuvering to avoid the large boulders as others smacked against the hull. Cindi screamed and gesticulated wildly. Nothing Kelso said calmed her. Her panic was infectious. Kelso felt it creeping at the edges. That pilot wanted to shoot me in my face! Kelso thought. That exo-pilot could have destroyed us at any time, but he wanted a face-to-face kill. He wanted to see the terror on my face. That's how I could have died – in sheer terror.

The radio was alive now. It sounded like fighting was breaking out everywhere. The Battle of Enceladus had begun.

"Whoa! Look at that," Ramos called for the others to join him.

The group stood at the rim of a large crater. The pylon was at its center, surrounded by clusters of large domes. It was a 20 meter drop.

"We've got company, Minotaurs," Jensen said, looking back at the dark shoreline through her rifle scope. "A squad comin' up fast."

Kelso turned and saw a small cluster of bulky, hunchback-looking figures with large rifles bounding along the shore.

Mr. Cryptic barked orders: "Move, move, move! Find a way down! Ramos, find a spot and plink 'em from behind."

As Ramos dropped to the sand and began to bury himself, the group moved clockwise and found a depression leading to the bottom. They slowed as they approached the tall domes

clustered around the massive pylon. The domes had gritty surfaces, like mud plaster with round windows up high and three-meter high entrances below. Strange, Kelso thought.

They moved quickly through the domes toward the pylon, Jensen in the lead, Kelso following and Mr. Cryptic watching the rear. Above and behind, Ramos' 7.5mm assault rifle popped intermittently. It was soon answered by the roar of the Minotaurs' AC4s.

Kelso was breathing hard, wondering how long he could keep up the pace when he saw Jensen stop, raise her assault rifle to her shoulder and cut loose with a long, sweeping burst. Kelso tried to stop, fumbled and fell with a thud, landing next to Jensen's boots. Before him were four soldiers in light grey armor with white eagle symbols tumbling and falling as Jensen's rounds tore through them.

An empty magazine bounced off Kelso's helmet; he rolled over to see Jensen slapping a fresh magazine into her weapon.

Mr. Cryptic helped Kelso to his feet and surveyed the four splayed bodies. All were face down, all had several holes in their back armor. "Nice job. Looks like they need to work on their rear security.

"Ok, Jensen. Tactical movement, you got the point."

Jensen moved forward, crouching with her assault rifle against her shoulder. Kelso and Mr. Cryptic followed. In the distance a pistol fired several times, answered by AC4s.

The group hadn't moved more than 10 meters when the deafening roar of automatic weapons filled the air. All three hit the sandy ground, sending up a small dust plume between two of the tall domes.

Several weapons continued their roar nearby but were out of sight. Jensen rolled to her side and looked back, holding up three fingers. She pointed the fingers toward the weapons fire on her left.

"Let's haul ass!" Mr. Cryptic shouted over the din as he began to stand. The shooting suddenly ceased and Jensen turned to find a Minotaur with an ACH16 running with long strides toward her. It was so close that she buried her face in the sand and covered her head. The Minotaur ran through the group without stopping.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ELYSEE'S FINAL ACT

Each felt the pounding feet of the Minotaur next to their bodies. Kelso and Jensen stood, examining themselves. Mr. Cryptic was nursing his shoulder. "It clipped me as I jumped to the side." His assault rifle lay in the sand, crushed. "It just kept running," he added as he pulled a non-regulation Holt Exterminator from his hip holster.

"I suggest we do the same." Kelso's helmet moved back and forth between the two soldiers. The weapons fire ceased. They nodded and ran, as if possessed, toward the pylon.

Kelso realized he was going to crash his shuttle into one of the mammoth boulders if he didn't slow down. He pulled on the control stick and popped up above the rings. In a well-practiced maneuver, he flipped the shuttle and opened up the plasma drive for ten seconds. A glance at the threat indicator revealed nothing. He flipped again and dove deep into the sea of ice and rock.

Kelso briefly glanced at Cindi, finding that she had returned to her catatonic state. The radio crackled to life: "All units, CEGA warship located; exos converge on my beacon, out."

Kelso maneuvered the shuttle below a gigantic boulder and came up to find a Pathfinder and a Fury locked in melee, each ripping at panels, wires, and appendages. He yanked the shuttle's nose up to avoid a collision and was stunned as a massive battle came into view. Retaliators, Pathfinders, Syreens, Furys, and Wyverns were everywhere. Dozens of missiles flew in various stages of flight.

One volley of missiles erupted along the head, shoulders, and back of a Retaliator, their shrapnel ripping through its armor and into its fusion drive. A mini sun flared and engulfed a nearby Pathfinder, creating another mini sun. The blinding blasts sent several exos from both sides hurtling uncontrollably. Their kinetic kill shots went wild and slammed into boulders, breaking them into smaller spinning chunks. Missiles followed, streaking in all directions. More boulders shattered. An unfortunate Fury was caught between two flights of missiles, leaving it a blackened skeleton. A Syreen deftly avoided five Deathsong medium missiles but still absorbed their blasts and shrapnel when they were detonated by one of the many shock waves crisscrossing the area. The warped and pockmarked Syreen tumbled lifelessly as its pilot felt her oxygen venting into space through a dozen holes.

Kelso gripped the controls with white knuckles. The shuttle shook violently as blast waves came and went. As he wondered which direction might be safest, a loud smacking sound reverberated through the hull followed by another.

EMERGENCY * EMERGENCY * EMERGENCY
HULL BREACHES – PASSENGER BAY

Boulders ahead were shattering as if by magic. KKC rounds! Kelso thought. He slammed the throttle forward and maneuvered wildly. The commandos in the bay would be ok as long as they weren't hit directly.

The shuttle came rocketing above of the roiling sea of ice, its momentum taking it higher and higher. As Kelso rolled the shuttle and began a wide loop, he stole another glance at Cindi. She remained oblivious and, Kelso noticed, wasn't wearing her helmet.

"Attention all units, we've broken through the defense perimeter, and we're engaging the CEGA ship. Be advised, the ship just fired everything in its inventory. Remember, those Harpoon IIIs can find their own targets, stay in the rings until I give the signal, out."

As if on cue, the alarm came to life:

THREAT * THREAT * THREAT
HARPOON III RADAR

"Not now!" Kelso yelled. His choices were grim: accelerate back into the ring, virtually guaranteeing a head-on with an ice boulder, or decelerate and wait to be blown apart. Kelso froze, succumbing to his panic.

Knowing there was nothing else he could do, he looked over at Cindi. She turned, slowly, to face him. There was a slight smile on her lips, a glow of serenity on her face. Her eyes sparkled. For precious seconds they stared at one another. Kelso felt the panic begin to fade. "Just let go," a quiet voice said inside his mind.

Kelso flipped the shuttle and engaged the plasma drive. He took his hands away from the controls, took a deep breath and slowly exhaled. "There's nothing I can do," he said as he watched five bright dots streaking toward him.

The radio broke the silence: "Attention decelerating shuttle, maintain course. We're passing close." Two Stormriders nearly scraped the hull as they passed above and below the cockpit window. Their weapons flared as they hurled everything they had straight ahead. Both exos were cast in shadow as a brilliant fireball erupted and expanded before them.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ELYSEE'S FINAL ACT

The Stormriders turned sharply and formed up with the shuttle; their head units rotated toward the cockpit. "You got big brass ones, pilot. We'll escort you to Enceladus."

"No bullet or explosive damage," Jensen observed as she squatted over a twisted foot pad.

The pylon was close and the gun fire farther away. The group had stumbled into an area strewn with Minotaur parts and occupants' remains.

"The blood's fresh," Mr. Cryptic observed. "No sign of any weapons use against them. What did this?"

Kelso looked around nervously. "Exos maybe? Pissed off Pathfinder pilots?"

"To get in this close you'd have to absorb a lot of ACH rounds." Kristen stood and scanned the area. "There were at least eight armed Minotaurs. No way."

The ground shook hard. Everyone turned, searching. Again the ground shook, closer this time.

"What do you think lives in these domes?" Kelso wondered aloud.

Mr. Cryptic dropped to one knee and raised his assault rifle skyward.

Kelso and Jensen turned as a Minotaur dropped from the sky and broke apart as it smacked into the sand.

"Run!" Mr. Cryptic ordered.

Everyone ran to the nearest dome. "Pilot, get upstairs. Tell us what you see. Jensen, let's cover the entrance."

Kelso ran up a set of crude steps set against the curved wall, above was an apparent loft with a circular window. Both levels were barren, just craggy walls, stairs and a sandy floor. The ground level had no windows.

Jensen and Mr. Cryptic were crouched near the entrance, watching. "Well?" he asked in a hushed voice.

Kelso looked through the circular opening. There was no movement, just the distant crackle of weapons fire. "Nothing."

The roof exploded above Kelso and something large came crashing through the hail of debris. Then the loft floor collapsed.

Kelso grabbed hold of the window edge as the floor gave way. As Kelso struggled to get one of his feet onto the top stair, he could hear the others below:

"Oh, hell!"
(Shooting)

"Kill it!"
"Get up!"
(Shooting)

Kelso began to pull himself into the window when one of the commandos flew past and slammed into what remained of the ceiling, sticking at the waist, legs dangling limply. Debris rained onto Kelso's face plate.

That sight spurred Kelso and he got one of his legs through the window. Next, he felt a pair of hands lift and shove him through. Kelso tumbled down the side of the dome and hit the ground hard, rolling a few times.

A giant toad-like creature with purple- and orange-blotched skin burst through the dome's wall. Kelso, although dazed, groped at his suit, hoping for a weapon of any kind.

The horrifying giant took a few steps and leaned over Kelso, its black eyes staring and its maw gaping.

Jensen appeared in the second story window with her assault rifle.

"Shoot! Shoot it!" Kelso screamed. Jensen aimed the big black rifle but nothing happened. She fidgeted with the weapon.

Kelso grabbed a handful of sand and threw it at the creature. It roared as its blotched facial skin bulged outward.

Kelso looked around frantically and spotted the little red pills laying in the sand. As the creature grabbed his left ankle and yanked him into the air, Kelso threw the pills at it.

Kelso dangled upside down, waiting to be thrown when Jensen came sliding down the dome on her back. She held an autopistol with both hands and fired rapidly, emptying the magazine as she slid. It was quite cinematic, Kelso observed, except that the 9mm rounds had absolutely no impact on the creature.

The creature let go and Kelso hit the ground again, a jolt of pain shooting through his right shoulder.

He looked up.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

ELYSEE'S FINAL ACT

The purple-orange monster was on its knees, less than a meter away, heaving violently. A powerful jet of mustard liquid blasted the sand, spattering his face plate.

The little red pills, Kelso thought.

Jensen ran over and dragged Kelso to his feet. "Up! Move!" They ran to the pylon. There they found a small elevator and stabbed at the controls.

On the surface, dozens of JDF Marines were lined up behind a barricade, shooting. Medics were treating flailing wounded. The white dome towered above. Scorched debris lay everywhere, and a smoky haze lingered about the scene.

A Marine corporal pointed and a colonel ran over. Kelso and Jensen saluted, expecting a rifle, a bayonet and a speech.

"Are you a pilot?" the Colonel asked Kelso, breathing hard inside his helmet.

"Yes, sir, shuttles."

The Marine officer reached into a pocket and shoved a crumpled sheet of paper into Kelso's hand. "You've got orders from the task force commander."

As Kelso unfolded the paper, the colonel continued, "They were given to another pilot. He's dead. These orders are genuine, follow them."

"Yes, sir."

Kelso and Jensen recognized the 1st Fleet emblem.

FROM: Commander Task Force 12
TO: Any Shuttle Pilot

YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO FLY TO TITAN AND
DELIVER THE FACILITY RECORDS.

THIS ORDER SUPERCEDES ANY OTHER.

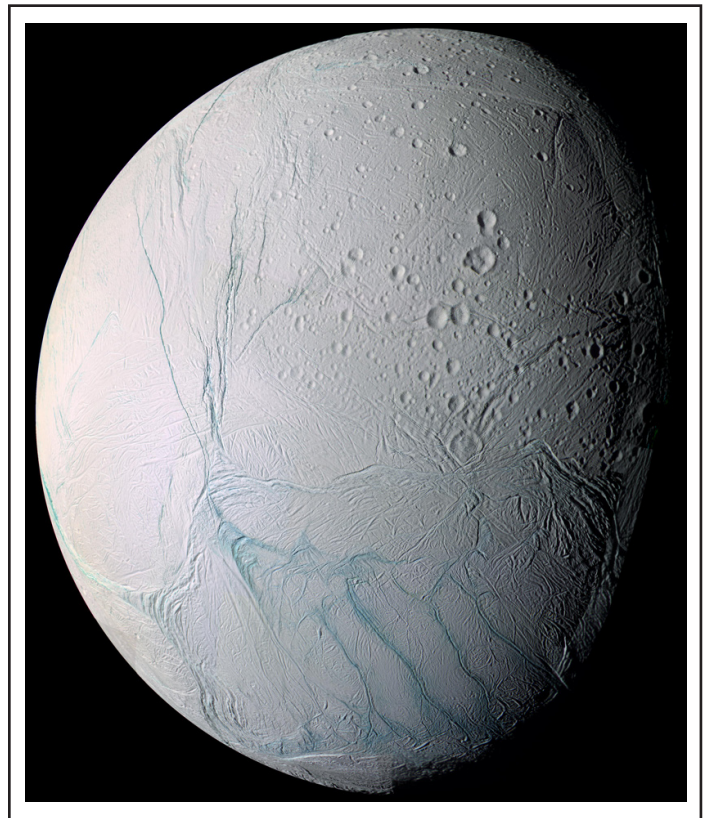
Jensen's eyes glistened behind her thick goggles as she surprised Kelso with a bear hug. "We got the records!"

Kelso returned the hug. "Thank you, Jensen. You saved my life, too many times. I'll look you up when this is over."

A squad of Marines flanked by two battle-scarred Falconers ushered Kelso to a nearby shuttle and secured a large metal case in the passenger bay. Before hopping out of the shuttle, a corporal turned to Kelso: "Sir, the fleet just arrived in-system. You're clear all the way to Titan."

As Kelso left the bright, frozen surface of Enceladus behind, powerful emotions ebbed and flowed, swirling inside. Soon the adrenaline began to fade and in the darkness of space, time seemed to slow.

Kelso turned to the empty seat beside him. He thought of Cindi, still strapped in her seat, submerged for eternity. Her skin pale blue, her eyes wide open, staring into oblivion, and her long black hair fanned out in the frigid water, unmoving -- a haunting yet serene epitome of a race so self-destructive yet so in love with living.



Cassini Imaging Team, SSI, JPL, ESA, NASA Imagery: Enceladus in full glory



The CEF is coming... will you be ready?

With the CEF second invasion looming over them, the military council in the Western Frontier Protectorate was beginning to feel the pinch. Budget constraints were preventing them from getting the more advanced machines they knew would need. In this atmosphere the CEO of Karlston Engines approached the council with a plan. It would get the Western Frontier Protectorate more recon Gears. Karlston Engines had just finished an upgrade package for the Bobcat, increasing the Bobcat's ground movement and equipping it with a Riley M222 Autocannon Rifle.

When the CEO of Western Armouries heard about this she herself made a deal with the Humanist Alliance engineering firm to modify the Mad Dog into a better machine. Western Armouries also evaluated several weapon packages for the Mad Dog. What the Humanist Alliance got is still a mystery as no money was transferred over. By 1948+ the two gears were in production and being sent to units throughout the Western Frontier Protectorate.

New Developments

- Any Veteran Mad Dog R can upgrade their defence modifiers by +1, and upgrade their sensors to 0 for +5TV.
- Any Bobcat can increase their Ground Speed's Top Speed by +1 and be armed with a LAC (F, reloads) for +5TV.

Field Kits

- Up to two Mad Dog R2s in a Squad can swap their MRPs for AGM (F, no reloads) for +15TV.
- Up to two Mad Dogs in a Squad can swap their MRPs for a HRP/48 (FF, ROF4, no reloads) for +0TV.
- Up to two Bobcats in a Squad can swap their DPG and LRP for a HRF (F, no reloads, Sniper) for +10TV
- Up to one Bobcat in a Squad can swap their DPG and LRP for a LAAC (T, reloads) for -10TV



FORT MILITIA SQUAD

Fort Militia Squad 210TV Core

1 Hunter: Attack 2, Defence 2, EW 1, Ld 1
(Combat Group Leader)

4 Hunter: Attack 2, Defence 2, EW 1

Options

- Add an additional Hunter for 40TV
- Any Hunter can be swapped for a Mad Dog R for +0TV
- Up to two Hunter can be swapped for a Bobcat for +10TV
- Up to two models can swap their LAC for MAC (F, reloads) for +5TV

Veteran Options

- Increase the attack and Defence level to 3 for +10TV
- The Combat Group Leader can have Leadership to level of 2 for +10TV
- Up to two Stripped-Down Hunters can have AGM (F, limited ammo 2) for +10TV
- Any Mad Dog R can be upgraded to a Mad Dog R2 for +5TV
- Any Mad Dog R2 can swap their HAC for HRF (F, reloads, sniper) for +5TV



"Such power and dignity, unhampered by sentiment. If I may put forward a slice of personal philosophy, I feel that Man has ruled this world as a stumbling, demented child-king long enough! And as his empire crumbles, my precious black widow shall rise as his most fitting successor!"

- Vincent Price in Alice Cooper's "The Black Widow"

The Widow's Legion is a typical Liberati organization made up of numerous cells that all take orders from a single leader known only as the Black Widow. Little is known about this enigmatic leader, as she is only ever seen wearing a black leather skinsuit and full facemask, complete with a red hourglass over her left breast. Various intelligence agencies (chief among them the CID) have expended enormous resources trying to dig up her real name and past, to no avail. Only her most trusted lieutenants know anything about her, and even that knowledge is limited.

The Black Widow's face was disfigured in the same attack that killed her family and every friend she ever had. A former Hakkar employee, the Widow came across a security report that Elite Genome Labs was due to test one of its "doomsday" viruses on a small, isolated community at the behest of the CEF. The inhabitants were mostly free-lance miners, though they kept to themselves as much as possible. However, this was also the community where the Widow was born and raised and she still had family and friends living there. She rushed off to try and warn them, but it was too late. Everyone in the town was already dead, and she barely escaped EGL's clean-up operation.

On that day she swore to drive the CEF from her home planet and fight back at the corporations that work with them. Ironically, she also makes every attempt to attack or disrupt the operations of her former employers.

The Hakkar corporation supports the CEF publicly, though in reality they provide supplies and intelligence for the Liberati.

The Black Widow is cold and distant and approaches everything she does with a clinical detachment. She has a brilliant tactical mind and exhibits great patience and forethought when planning an attack. Known for leading from the cockpit of her Meggido-class mount, the Black Widow

will sit in ambush for days on end and use Caprice's terrain against the CEF, often attacking from above passing patrols. Her Executive Officer, a man known only as Sentenzo, once said of her, "She thinks in four dimensions". Each of the unit's cells even goes so far as to move its headquarters frequently, always staying one step ahead of the CEF. This has led to people believing they have agents in the CEF.

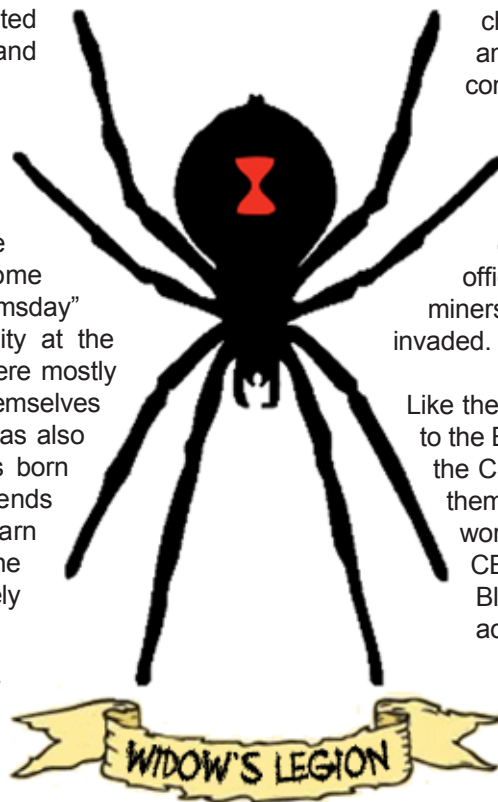
The Widow's Legion has gathered a following of like-minded individuals, and any member of the unit would suicide before allowing themselves to be captured. They all share a common hatred for the CEF and anyone who collaborates with them. Almost every member of the unit has lost loved ones to either CEF attacks or corporate greed. Often as not, it's a combination of the two.

This hatred has led to whole combat groups charging the enemy in a berserker rage in an attempt to engage them in hand-to-hand combat. Fortunately, this happens rarely as the Legion usually fights with cold, clinical precision and many of its leaders and soldiers have had some sort of formal military or paramilitary training, and even a few are former corporate security officers. However, just as many of them were miners and construction workers when the CEF invaded.

Like the rest of the Liberati, the Legion is grateful to the Black Talons for their assistance in fighting the CEF or the corporations, but will never join them in an attack. They believe that it's their world, so they need to be the ones to kick the CEF off. They do share intelligence with the Black Talons, but that's as far as they'll go in accepting help.

The Legion is one of the best and most troublesome of the Liberati groups, and the CEF has had quite enough of them. The CID has posted numerous bounties on the Black Widow's head and those of any of her cell leaders,

and goes to great lengths in tracking down the merest rumor of a Black Widow sighting. Upon hearing how furious her ability to evade capture made the head of the CID, she gave orders for a "calling card" to be left whenever one of her cells defeats a CEF force (preferably on the enemy unit leader's Frame or hovertank); a playing card with a picture of a black widow spider and the words, Oderint dum Metuant, old Latin for "Let them hate, so long as they fear".



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

THE WIDOW'S LEGION

Color Scheme:

Like the rest of the Liberati, the Widow's Legion has no unifying logo, badge or color scheme, but due to the unit's proclivity for ambushes and night-fighting, it does paint its mounts and vehicles in camouflage schemes based on whatever terrain a particular mission calls for. Many pilots have taken to using the darker colors and/or patterns of various species of spiders and scorpions. The Black Widow's mount is painted an appropriate solid, flat black with a red hourglass on its "belly".

Regimental Organization:

The Widow's Legion is built as per a Liberati army. However, it trains its infantry just as intensively and thoroughly as most Terra Novan armies. Any Veteran Infantry Squad may be given Stealth (2) for +5 TV. The unit's preference for fighting alone means that Black Talon Combat Groups may not be taken. When determining how many Veteran Combat Groups may take skill upgrades, round up instead of rounding down. The Legion managed to intercept a CEF supply shipment recently, and has been able to put some of the captured equipment into service. Any Mount (including the Hamath) that doesn't already have them may be equipped with Jump Jets (3) and LSP (1) for +5 TV each. If the Mount already has a LSP, then add +1 to its rating. A Widow's Legion army may only be built at PL2 or higher.

The author would like to thank Gerrit Kitts and Brett Dixon for editing the article, and Christian Noak for the text work on the unit logo.



Surveying the Landscape



From the rules monkey...

Our 2009 Squad Painting contest is complete! We received a number of great entries with the goal being to paint a legal squad built from Heavy Gear Blitz: Locked & Loaded or the recently released Black Talon: Return to Cat's Eye.

The winners are below. First place received a \$55 credit at the web store, second received a \$35 credit at the web store and third received a \$25 credit at the Web store. And everyone received a round of high-fives. Great work!

For additional entries, visit our Gallery at www.dp9.com



First Place: North Mammoth Strider Squad by Jake Staines



Second Place: South Elite OPSEC Cadre by Patrick St-Armand

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE MESSAGES FROM THE POD



Third Place: WFP Strike Squad Squad by Henri Härkönen



Honorable Mention: North Fire Support Squad by Michael Abbot



Honorable Mention: North Veteran Airborne Squad by Brock Ecevit

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE MESSAGES FROM THE POD



Honorable Mention: Liberati Ammon Heavy Mount Squad by Nigel Wong



Honorable Mention: South Fire Support Cadre by Patrick St-Armand



Honorable Mention: South Veteran GP Cadre by Ryan Henshaw

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 its 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 choose 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 #3.5: August 15th 2009

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.