

AURORA

THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
GEAR KRIEG FICTION
HEAVY GEAR FICTION
PLAYING THE SRA



ISSUE 4.4

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE
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AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE SHADES IN THE NIGHT

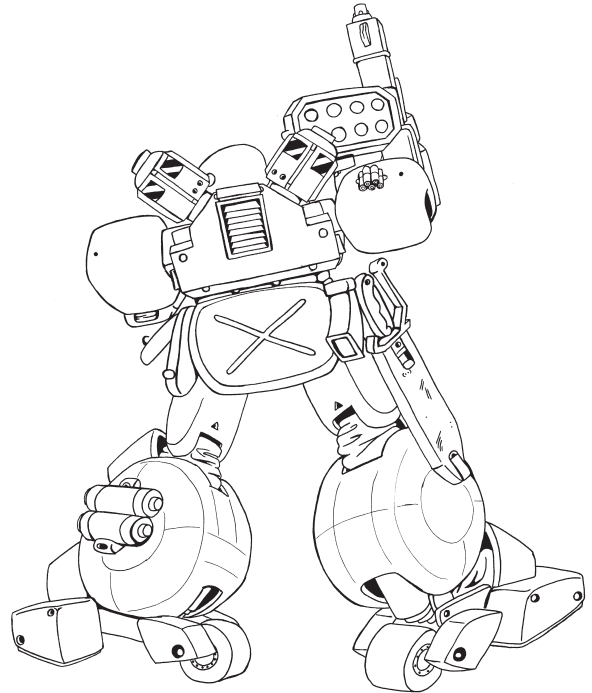
From the Editor...

A short and sweet one this issue here at Aurora... except it turns out it isn't so short. The ASA gets the love this go around with an article on one of the nastiest and sinister prisons on all of Terra Nova, with a piece of fiction to illustrate, then we delve into the intricacies and marvels of fielding an ASA army through a veritable and excellent treatise on ASA army building. Cap it off with further Gear Krieg action of Alfie's Tenners and you've got our summer issue (special winter issue for the southern hemisphere) of Aurora!

A little light reading that leaves you thinking. That's our motto here. (well, ok, no that's not actually our motto...) Either way, sit back, relax, cheer on your favourite team in the world cup, and imagine what it would be like if it were gears/exos kicking the ball around...

Game on,

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor



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.

HOME BREW RULES

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

Cesar Mateo "Tankero" Gonzalez (Tankero@gmail.com) -- *La Oubliette & Prisoner 19*

Gerrit "IceRaptor" Kitts (gkitts@gmail.com) -- *Army Spotlight: SRA*

Gerrit has been fascinated by the design aesthetic of Heavy Gear since stumbling upon NVC1 and SVC1 in 2002, but only jumped into the game with the arrival of Blitz! A Pod Squad representative for Columbus, OH area and a regular fixture on the forums, he might enjoy the math behind the game a bit too much.

Jason Dickerson (JDDWolf@yahoo.com) -- *From the Pod*

Jason is the Line Editor for Heavy Gear and has been an advocate of all things Heavy Gear since the first edition came out. He is also the founder and President of the Save the Asp Society (S.A.S) on the DP9 Forums.

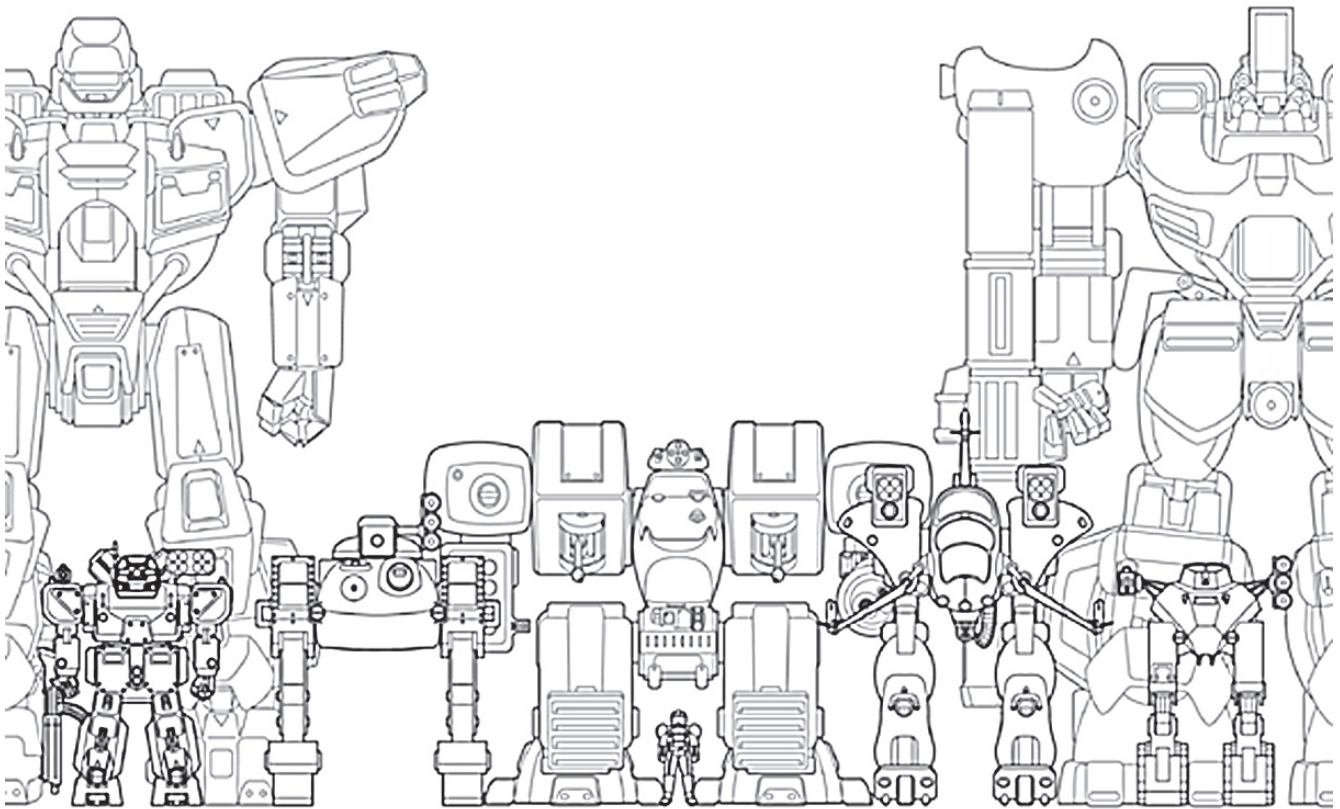
John Bell (jakarnilson@magma.ca) -- *Alfie's Tanners*

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?

Oliver Bollmann (auroramag@gmail.com) -- *Editor*

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. He also runs a gaming imprint *Kannik Studios*.

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ALFIE'S TENNERS

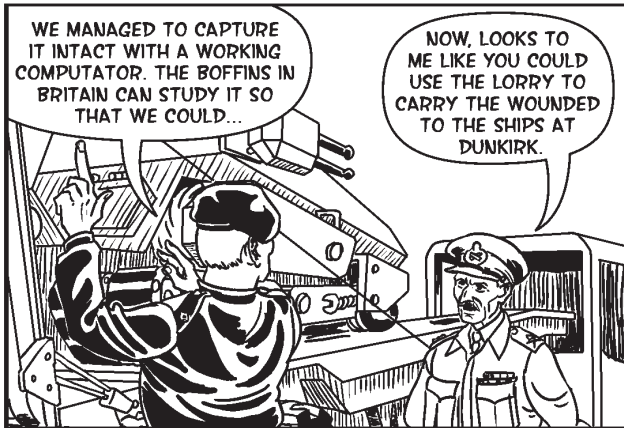
ART & STORY: JACK BELL

FRANCE, JUNE, 1940. 2/LT. ALPHONSE MARCH IS ABOUT TO SHIP OFF A GERMAN MARK V KAMPFER THAT HE AND HIS WALKER TROOP CAPTURED THE DAY BEFORE. HOWEVER, THINGS ARE NEVER SIMPLE FOR THE TENNERS...



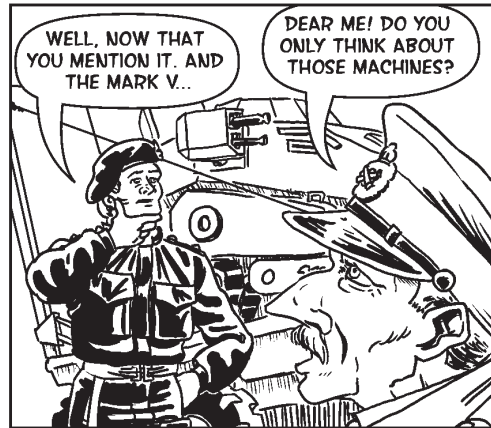
CAREFUL, LADS!
TOOK ME ALL DAY TO
FIND TRACTOR. EH?

WHAT'S ALL
THIS BUSINESS WITH
THIS WALKING
GIZMO?



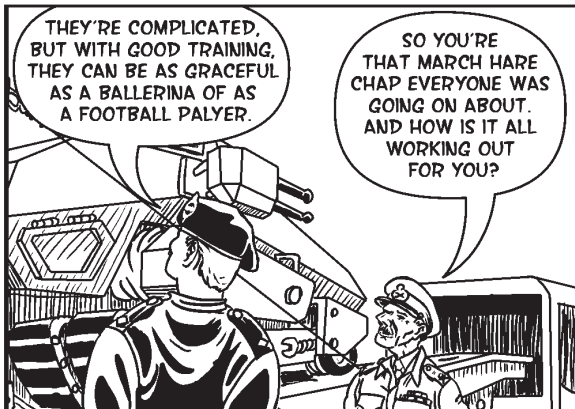
WE MANAGED TO CAPTURE
IT INTACT WITH A WORKING
COMPUTATOR. THE BOFFINS IN
BRITAIN CAN STUDY IT SO
THAT WE COULD...

NOW, LOOKS TO
ME LIKE YOU COULD
USE THE LORRY TO
CARRY THE WOUNDED
TO THE SHIPS AT
DUNKIRK.



WELL, NOW THAT
YOU MENTION IT. AND
THE MARK V...

DEAR ME! DO YOU
ONLY THINK ABOUT
THOSE MACHINES?



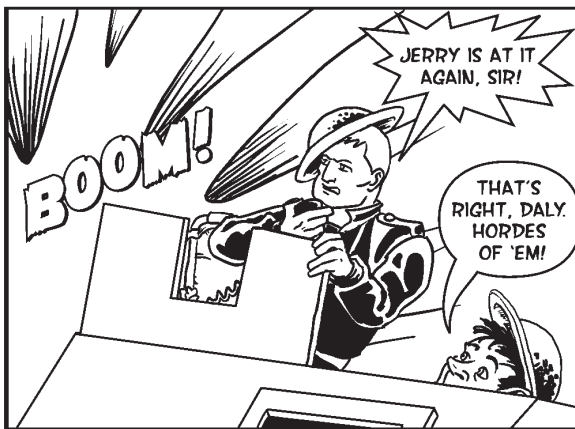
THEY'RE COMPLICATED,
BUT WITH GOOD TRAINING,
THEY CAN BE AS GRACEFUL
AS A BALLERINA OR AS
A FOOTBALL PALYER.

SO YOU'RE
THAT MARCH HARE
CHAP EVERYONE WAS
GOING ON ABOUT.
AND HOW IS IT ALL
WORKING OUT
FOR YOU?



AFTER BELGIUM, WE LOST
TRACK OF THE B.E.F., BUT
WE HELD TOGETHER
AND BLOODIED JERRY
UP A BIT.

TOO BAD YOU
NEVER ATTENDED THE
STAFF COLLEGE AT
CAMBERLEY. WHAT YOU
COULD HAVE LEARNED



BOOM!

JERRY IS AT IT
AGAIN, SIR!

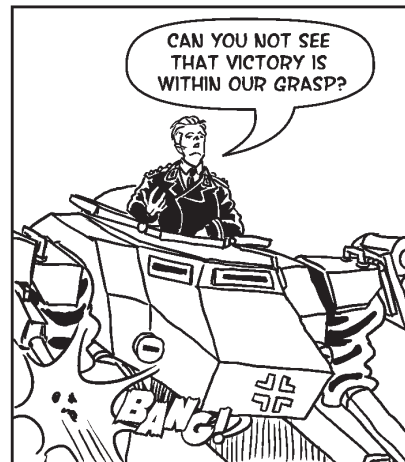
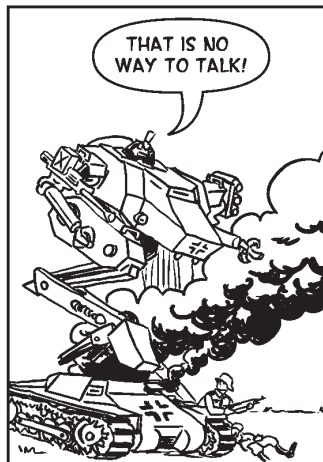
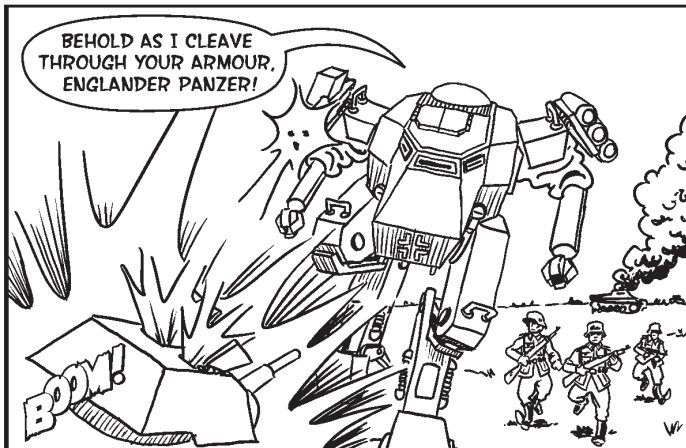
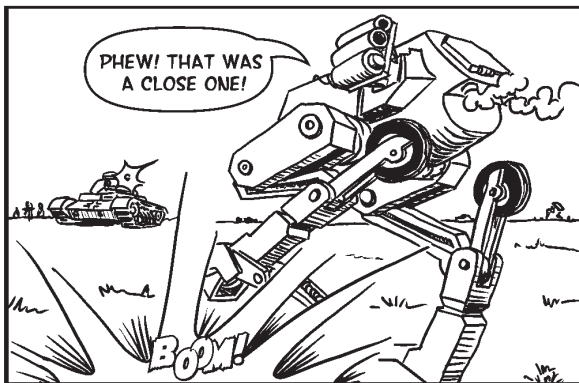
THAT'S
RIGHT, HORDES
OF 'EM!



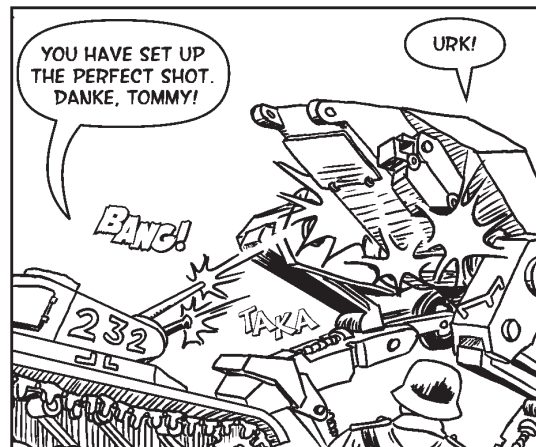
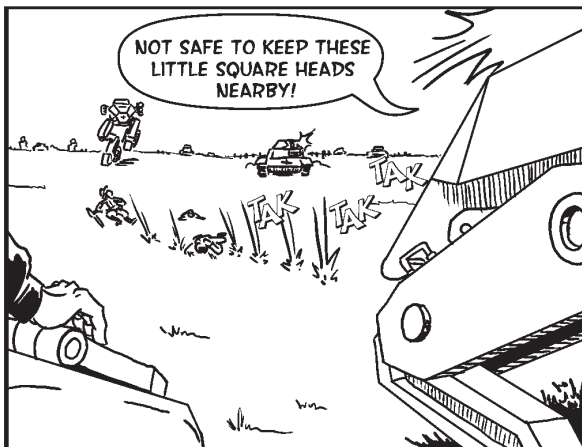
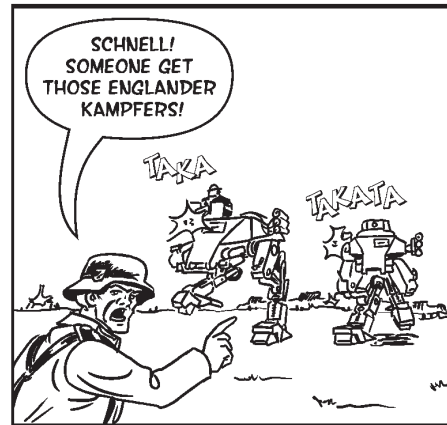
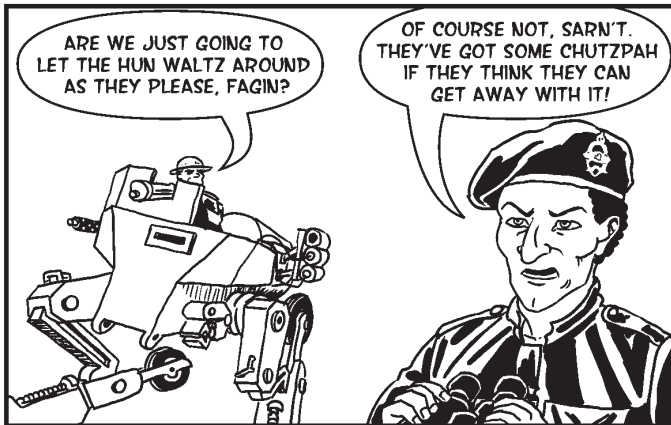
SORRY TO SEE
YOU GO, SIR. WE'LL MAKE
SURE TO EVACUATE
AS MANY WOUNDED
AS WE CAN.

GOOD, GOOD!
NOW, NEVER
FORGET THE MEN,
OR THE VALUE
OF A GOOD
SIMPLE PLAN.

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ALFIE'S TENNERS



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NEXT TIME: THE BEGINNING OF THE END...

Like other hegemonic nations in history, the Southern Republic has gone to great lengths to secure its power, creating places where those who might threaten it, from within and without, can simply disappear and never be heard of again. Like the Gulag of the Soviets, like Abu Ghraib of the United States, most know, but don't speak openly about La Oubliette. It is a place where secrets, men, and horrors are sent to be forgotten.

PRISON COMPLEX – LA OUBLIETTE

La Oubliette was an unofficial name used by the rank and file to describe the quasi-mythical prison where the most significant prisoners were sent to. The official name was Outpost Theta 3, which was originally built as a small scale proof-of-concept of the Gamma Base design. It is a self-contained military outpost built into the side of a natural cliff on the inside of a igneous rock mountain, a stronghold meant to be impregnable. Outpost Theta 3 was built in TN 1789 by the South Republican Army Engineer Corps, consisting of an above-ground, domed and turreted structure with automated defenses, and an underground complex that mirrors the layout of its upper half. At the time, there was no clear purpose for the outpost, as it was too small to house an army and its equipment in a practical fashion, unlike the Gamma bases that would follow. The 4th MP Regiment, using the political notoriety of its mission, chose Outpost Theta 3 as its base of operations soon thereafter, deeming its location away from most population centers, though still well within Republican territory as ideal. The underground half of the facility was promptly converted into the facility it is today.

La Oubliette receives its prisoners and supplies through either the road that splits from a local maglev station some 200 kilometers away, or by air through the small airstrip that is within its defensive perimeter. Very few people have ever left La Oubliette alive, guard or prisoner, and there have been no recorded successful jail-breaks, with attempts numbering less than a dozen.

The rolling plains that surround the solid rock mountain where La Oubliette is cradled are subdivided into farming plots and grazing fields all the way to the horizon. The farming communities in the area are sparse and rural, making a point of being incurious about the small military base. In their mind, just as with any other Republican citizen, they saw La Oubliette as the place where the most terrible secrets went to die.

There are a few persistent rumors that La Oubliette was the site of experimentation with captured G.R.E.L. soldiers. Those rumors have never been publicly confirmed.

Military Defenses

Although La Oubliette is a military base in its own right, given the conversion of half of its functional space into a prison complex, the SRA detachment that's stationed there is woefully underpowered. Single regiments from the Infantry, Cavalry and Gear branches of the SRA do the best they can in very confined quarters. In recent years, temporary buildings have been built around the outpost, encroaching on the plains below on either side of the road leading to the distant maglev station. Service at La Oubliette is often seen as a test of loyalty for units that fail to inspire confidence in the higher rungs of the chain of command. It's a chance for those disfavored units to prove themselves as steadfast soldiers of the Republic.

A single pair of automated defense turrets flanks the outpost with the typical, overlapping kill-zones cover the approach from the road and the airfield. There are other turrets mounted on the base itself, but their field-of-view is more limited due to their emplacement. Meanwhile, the regiments on-site can fortify and dig themselves in, if given enough advance notice of an attack. However, due to its location and relatively minor strategic value, a full-on assault is considered unlikely. At best, the Southern High Command argues, it has to be well defended enough to dissuade a commando raid. Given the nature of the base, such operations that would target it are assumed to be highly impractical, if not outright impossible to carry out successfully.

CAPOTE DU BOURREAU – 4TH MILITARY POLICE REGIMENT

When an officer who has proven himself to be otherwise competent, disciplined and bloodthirsty commits a capital offense, they're sometimes given a reprieve from the usual punishment. If such a reprieve is given, the offender is presented with a choice between an executioner's hood and a firearm loaded with one bullet with which to carry out his own sentence. Choosing the Capote du Bourreau entails forsaking all honor for the sake of either continuing to serve the Republic, or merely saving one's life. If the prisoner chooses the hood, he is still labeled as deceased and a grave is marked with his name. The newly anointed executioner is sent to La Oubliette, where he will serve the Republic's interests as a torturer for an indeterminate number of years. They carry out the duties that are too unsavory or dishonorable for regular officers, either in hopes that they will be released from service eventually, or merely because it appeals to their baser, crueler nature. In practice, they are not a military unit since they would never be deployed on to the field. Their role usually confines them to La Oubliette. If their services are urgently required elsewhere, for whatever reason, they will be escorted by a detachment of regular Military Police officers who never let their charge out of their sight, for their protection as well as to prevent them from escaping.

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They serve as interrogators, torturers, and executioners for the special category of prisoners La Oubliette is meant for. That category of prisoner is usually comprised by those individuals whose incarceration would prove politically difficult for the higher spheres of Republican authority and society, including their most bitter rivals, blackmailers, and political hostages. From time to time captured spies are sent there in order to be debriefed before being interrogated and disposed of. This last type of short-term imprisonment is colloquially referred to as “retrieval” by those who order it and those who carry it out. It involves anything and everything an experienced and unscrupulous interrogator would think useful for extracting (or, indeed, retrieving) every last piece of pertinent information from a prisoner. Technically speaking, the Capote du Borreau recruits from the same pool of candidates as Les Etrangers, the irredeemably disgraced, but with a different skill-set. This skews the membership of this regiment heavily towards shamed Military Police officers, which keeps both unofficial branches from competing with one another.

The regimental situation of the Capote du Borreau is similar to that of Les Etrangers, operating in a gray area outside of the usual chain of command and with little regard for honor, doing what is necessary, as ordered by the highest political echelons of the Southern Republic, but still within the bounds of a loosely interpreted Law. Notably, the Capote du Borreau will not execute a prisoner unless they are ordered to, nor will they subject a prisoner to any treatment that wasn't specified by those ordering their arrest. Very few prisoners in the care of the Capote de Borreau will be put on trial for their alleged crimes, for whatever reason, and so they operate under a different set of guidelines where they are merely the instruments of the will of outside civilian and military authorities, and it's those authorities who would have to answer for any crimes that the Capote du Borreau carried out on their behalf. Those crimes would be part of the Les Temoins files on a prosecutor's desk, in the unlikely event that a member of the political elite would be brought to trial as it, technically speaking, was committed by a dead man in their name. More likely than not, such a criminal would be a guest of La Oubliette instead, where the Capote du Borreau would dispense its own form of retribution.

Conscripted Personnel

The Capote du Borreau have several tiers of convict personnel, ranging from commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers and enlisted personnel, all of them guilty of crimes that would usually carry a death sentence. They fulfill the roles they did before their crimes were committed, in most cases, except for the tasks that require contact with the outside world. Those tasks, such as prisoner intake and transportation, complex repairs, and so forth, are handled by whatever unit is garrisoned in the upper

half of the prison. Technically speaking, the Capote du Borreau is subordinate to the particular SRA unit that is stationed at La Oubliette. That unit is authorized to summarily terminate any of the personnel it's guarding, but, in practical terms, the Capote du Borreau act independently within the confines of La Oubliette.

It isn't uncommon for a prisoner, usually sent there for life-long extra-judicial sentence, to switch sides and join the Capote du Borreau. The matter of which side of the bars they are on is largely inconsequential, they will most likely never regain their freedom.

PRISON LIFE

La Oubliette is not like other penitentiary institutions. There are no guidelines that apply to every prisoner. Because of this, the life of a prisoner could range from quiet, uneventful confinement in a small cell until a change in the political climate returns their freedom, or it can be a regimented Hell the likes of which haunted Dante's nightmares. Prisoners are not allowed to comingle; they're kept in their individual cells, which have facilities in accordance to their status, where they sleep, eat and live. Some of these cells could pass off as tiny, constrictive apartments, with bathrooms and a window that pipes in natural sunlight from the surface through fiber-optic conduits. Others, known as isolation pods, are no more than a suspension tank where prisoners are caged, fed intravenously. Some are allowed to slip into unconsciousness, while others, in accordance to the vindictiveness of those who sent them to La Oubliette, denied sleep through a variety of drugs and techniques. The treatment prisoners receive is entirely dependent of the whims of the authorities that sent them there.

Despite express prohibitions against it, prisoners do often manage to communicate with one another through contiguous cells. The guards often engage in smuggling, for themselves as well as well as for the prisoners. This black market is tolerated by the higher-ranked officers of the Capote du Borreau and by the SRA units stationed in the upper level of La Oubliette. Smugglers often use an alternate entrance through a nearby McAllen tunnel network to deliver their goods to La Oubliette clandestinely.

G.R.E.L. Experimentation

La Oubliette was the site where the oft-rumored experimentation with captured G.R.E.L. soldiers took place. The purpose of those experiments was to find ways three-fold: Find the abilities, limitations and weaknesses of the G.R.E.L. in order to develop tactics and weapons meant specifically for them, discover the extent of the Earth Concordat's genetic technology, and attempt to replicate and adapt those techniques for their own

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use. The experiments were led by hand-picked scientists in medical, biological and psychological fields, and ran the gamut from toxin exposure to invasive surgeries. The results of these experiments are ranked as most secret and have yet to be visibly influential in other Southern technologies. Some of the scientists that assisted in these efforts became inmates of La Oubliette themselves.

LA OUBLIETTE MAJOR NPCS

Warden Reynaud Lachenal (Knight)

The Warden of this particular prison is a disgraced Southern Republic Army (SRA) Officer, who was assigned to this post as punishment for political indiscretions – namely his political ambition and scheming. He was caught red-handed, quite literally, in an attempt to blackmail his betters. The resulting embarrassment to his political superiors compounded his crime, although he was never criminally charged.

He is the senior officer in the Capote du Borreau, given that unenviable distinction due to his rank when he was “recruited” into the regiment in TN1925, and became its leader soon thereafter. Before being named warden, he was Sous Prefect Reynaud Lachenal, a name he was forced to abandon when he chose the hood as punishment for an attempt of intrigue that went catastrophically wrong. He had proved himself in the field during the War of the Alliance, leading his infantry regiment meritoriously. That, and the private humiliation he would suffer when his name was stricken from the Republic’s annals, made him a great prospect from this peculiar unit. When confronted with his choice, he took the hood as he saw suicide just as cowardly as surrender. At times, while he carries out the more distasteful aspects of his duties, he wonders if he didn’t make the wrong choice.

Even so, he never lost his pride, but the experience did break his ambition. All he aspires to now is to live out his dishonorable life until he is truly forgotten or pardoned, both of which are unlikely, if not impossible. He does not accept defeat easily, and while he enjoys complete obedience from his regiment, as they fear to be subjected to the same punishment they dispense on their prisoners.

Archetype: Senior Officer

Attitudes: On the surface, he seems calculating, with a frigid, deliberate approach to his day-to-day duties. In the more quiet moments, when the work is done and he doesn’t have to play the role of warden, he withdraws into fantasies of his past, taking up the bruised pride of those days.

Combat Reactions: Warden Lachenal was an effective infantry leader, and he still retains that edge when pressed. If he is threatened directly with violence, he won’t waste his time with a prolonged confrontation. If he cannot immediately subdue his attacker, which he still could do, he will go for the cleanest killing blow available to him. If he is facing a military threat, he will pull his forces back to draw his enemy into a trap, setting up kill zones and other such ambushes. In a stalemate, he is not above negotiating.

Contacts: The highest echelons of Republican politics know of him and have something to fear from him. Despite that, his influence is limited to La Oubliette, where his authority is absolute. If he were to reach out to the outside world, he can intimidate anyone of political heft, but not so with anyone below the rank of Prefect.

Sous Adjutant Jacqueline Milliard (Bishop)

Sous Adjutant Jacqueline Milliard is not a member of the Capote du Borreau, she is the personal assistant to the Adjutant in charge of the outpost that rests on top of La Oubliette, who in turn answers to the Warden below. She is, by all accounts, a loyal yet unremarkable officer. Her assignment to this particular regiment came during an inauspicious time for the unit, which through circumstance and bad luck, it was assigned to man the outpost resting atop La Oubliette. They have been stationed for a few cycles now, and he has settled into the secretive routine of patrols and receiving newly arrived prisoners. Like any other Republican officer entrusted with a burdensome duty, she bears it with discipline and stoicism. In time, she has learned the ins and outs of the legitimate and clandestine functioning of the base. The prison itself is largely unknown to her, but she is very familiar with everything around it.

Archetype: Junior Officer

Guards

The members of the Capote du Borreau are outnumbered by their prisoners at least a hundred to one. They have to maintain perfect control over all of their prisoners at all times, or risk being overrun in the matter of an hour. This leads to a very tense and stressful environment for the guards, who have to follow the others of the Warden while keeping the tightest grip possible on the inmates. This, while being prisoners themselves of La Oubliette. That peculiar set of circumstances culls the weak-minded very quickly, cracking them in a matter of weeks. Most of the guards have military backgrounds, and have at least

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basic training in military police procedure and tactics. The only true benefits a guard of La Oubliette receives are time outside the prison's walls, under the strict supervision of the SRA units stationed in the upper half of the outpost, and direct access to the black market. The shore leave comes once every season and only for a short period of time, and being able to procure smuggled goods does give them a few luxuries to treasure in an otherwise miserable existence. Thus far, these two advantages have proven enough to maintain order in La Oubliette.

Archetype: Military Police

Political Prisoners (Pawn)

The AST's political arena, both in and outside of the Republic is fraught with treachery and intrigue. The higher the sphere of power, the more ruthless and malicious the game becomes, and nothing is off-limits. There are all kinds of political prisoners in La Oubliette, for all sorts of reasons, but political prisoners are usually there through no fault of their own, aside from being seen as leverage on someone prominent and unruly. This strategy isn't used to silence casual dissenters. However, the staunchest critical voices might find a family-member or a lover might gone one morning, picked up by the local authorities. By mid-afternoon, a Republican official might be asking leading questions, and advising caution. This type of prisoner is usually kept in the most comfortable cells La Oubliette can offer, often permanently, but separated from the rest of the prisoners. In the rare instances that one of these prisoners is released, they are returned to their homes, traumatized by their experience. Political prisoners have always been the exceptional minority of La Oubliette's population.

Archetype: Varies.

Criminal Prisoners (Pawn)

Criminal prisoners have earned their visit to La Oubliette; their guilt of some terrible crime is all but certain. They are sent to La Oubliette whenever their death isn't the immediately desired outcome. These prisoners can be military personnel or civilians who have somehow victimized the upper echelons of Republican society, knowingly or not. Usually, their life sentences at La Oubliette are cut short as they succumb to the treatment proscribed by the Republican official that sent them there. In other cases, these prisoners might be recruited as the lowest-ranking guards at La Oubliette, trading in the last of their pride for the few perks they might receive. This class of prisoner is usually

housed in small 2.5 meters by 1.5 meters, typically, but this can be escalated to the isolation pods, depending on the prisoner. A majority of these prisoners are expected to suffer some type of psychotic episode within a year of their imprisonment. The majority of La Oubliette's prisoners fall under this category.

Archetype: Varies.

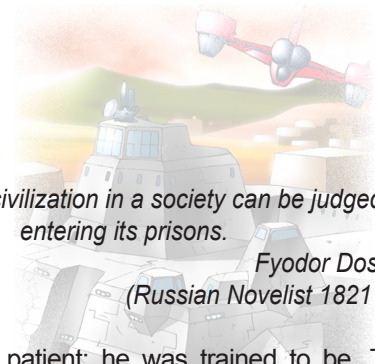
Special Prisoners (Pawn)

These individuals are considered to be prisoners of the State, mostly for security reasons. These include the G.R.E.L. and other Earth invaders that were captured during the War of the Alliance, as well as spies from other leagues. At La Oubliette, these prisoners are subjected to different kinds of interrogation, torture and experimentation. The most unspeakable acts ever committed at La Oubliette were probably the series of experiments conducted on the G.R.E.L. held there, some of which survive even today. The most peculiar prisoners who fall under this category are the researchers that were deemed as a security risk by Republican authorities, suspecting that these scientists could sell or otherwise divulge the findings of their work.

Archetype: Varies.

FURTHER NOTES

La Oubliette prison is meant to be a dungeon for role-playing campaigns, which players could explore or escape from. Consider the possibilities of the storylines tucked away into each cell, the secrets every door could reveal. The archetypes presented here are, therefore, purposefully vague. The Gamemaster is given absolute freedom to create whatever characters within the categories described above to suit the needs of their campaign, while La Oubliette serves as a rich and tense backdrop for the storyline that is being developed. The Archetypes noted above are suggestions for the statistics each NPC should have, mentioning archetypes contained in the Heavy Gear Player's Guide.



The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons.

*Fyodor Dostoevsky
(Russian Novelist 1821 – 1881)*

Prisoner M-19 was patient; he was trained to be. The dark closed in around him in his perfectly featureless cell as the guard's boot-steps faded a little slower than the light.

When he finally moved, he did so by inches, tracing the seam on the floor panes he had squatted on until he came to the wall. The same subtle edge continued upwards until it was crossed by a horizontal break. As quietly as he was able, M-19 shuffled along the wall on his bare feet until he found the tiny bump of the rivet he was looking for. Once he found that, he traced its shape and smiled.

The right block, the right layout, the proper tool. That tool he had he made out of metal shavings and beaten wire he had molded with his bare hands over the course of weeks. With his patience, he was able to stave off the despair, the boredom and distraction of an idle mind in the dark.

He had the means, now might have opportunity...He had been waiting for it since he stepped out of the armored personnel carrier and Outpost Theta 3 stood before him. The Terra Novan sun, came through the clouds with beams of sunlight he knew, some time ago, someone had called "the fingers of God". It was a moment of beauty that ended when he stepped into the shadow of the gateway of La Oubliette. The Republican soldiers handed him off to men whose uniforms didn't have any distinguishing marks, no unit or rank insignias, just an arm-band with one half of a bone-white skull. M-19, Gregor Manette before he stepped into the dark, knew who they were. He knew he would need his patience then.

"This one?", one of the arm-banded guards asked another as they drew Gregor's sleeve up to his forearm and pressed a device with a pistol-grip onto the inside of his wrist.

"M-19", the other guard replied. "Cold storage."

The cool metallic surface of the device seared Gregor's flesh for an instant, and he was Gregor no more.

After that, darkness was all there was for M-19. He held on to the memory of that day with both hands.

Now, however, his plans were going to come to fruition, half a season after he had been incarcerated. The building's innards didn't put up half the fight the panel did. For that moment, he was thankful for his nation's unshakeable determination to always

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hire the lowest bidder. A properly built cell would be much better isolated. His work was still slow, though, as he had to time it with the guard's patrol so that the sliver of light there would be when he turned on the camera connected to the monitor on the door wouldn't reveal anything untoward. It was the definition of a monotonous routine. Forty-five minutes of work per hour, five to conceal it, five in complete silence, and five more to get back to where he left off. Seventy two hours later, M-19 would finally be able to reach through the crawlspace between their cells and rap his knuckles on the wall of his neighbor.

"Hey!" M-19 called to the other side, his voice echoing through the empty hall outside his cell. "Is anybody there?"

"Leave me alone", a voice, dredged up from some deep well replied in broken Universal French.

"Listen" M-19 told the voice, gritting his teeth with the fierce thrill of nigh-impossible success. "Do you have a name? Tell me your name."

"Leave me alone! I don't know anything!" the voice insisted, desperate and guttural.

M-19 took a chance and spoke in Anglic, the Earthers' language, executing the next step of his scheme. "Over hill, over dale, through bush, through brier, over park, over pale, through flood, through fire, I do wander everywhere."

There was no reply from the other cell, not until the thrill had begun to sour.

The voice, a louder than it was at first, though now devoid of any emotional inflection, called back to him.

"Either I mistake your shape and making quite, Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite, Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are not you he?" The voice spoke the verse with confidence it lacked a moment ago.

"No, I am Oberon", M-19 replied, victorious once again as he finished the cipher, "and you are a bearer of my seal."

The knowledge of that sequence of verses and its reply was one of the most closely guarded secrets the Southern Republic had extracted from the remains of the Colonial Expeditionary Force. It yielded control over these living weapons, the G.R.E.L.

"Oberon, sir, you have my allegiance."

"Report your status, soldier", M-19 demanded in his curt, harshly accented Anglic.

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“Sixty percent operational, sir”, the voice replied.

“Are you a Mordred-class?” M-19 asked.

“Yes, sir. Generation II revision a”, the voice replied.

“Good”, M-19 said. His patience was yielding its dividends now. The adrenalin made his blood boil. With a growl he added “Rip down this wall, soldier.”

The G.R.E.L. went unquestioningly about his new task, and it was a moment too late that M-19 realized that he had grown impatient. His innate sense of time gave him a pang of dread against the thrilling prospect of escape. The sound of a guard’s boots coming down the hall was late. The Mordred’s fists beating the wall, each with the same brute force of a dozen men armed with a half-ton battering ram, nearly masked the quickened thumps of the guard dashing down the hall towards the noise. It was too late now, M-19 realized. He had crossed the Rubicon, the point of no return, too soon. There was no going back. All there was left was to go faster. M-19 yanked clumps of wires, propping his foot on a structural girder for the leverage.

Klaxons began to wail outside his cell.

Right at that moment thick purple fingers curled the sheet of metal between the two cells back, and the halogen light from the Mordred’s cell poured through the opening, blinding M-19 with its flash before he could close them. He cried and recoiled away from it.

Writhing with the heels of his hands pressing down on his eye sockets, M-19 was given a moment of clarity. M-19 could hear the Mordred tearing down a piece of pipe out of its fittings, boiling steam washing over the monster’s hands. He could hear the voice of the guard outside, speaking urgently just outside the door to his cell. Another voice spoke outside the door, booming over the P.A. with the thunder and severity of God himself.

He forced his eyes open when the sweet smell began to fill the cell.

“Gas!”

The colorless haze was already making M-19’s head swim. His thoughts tried to wrestle with the lethargy he breathed in.

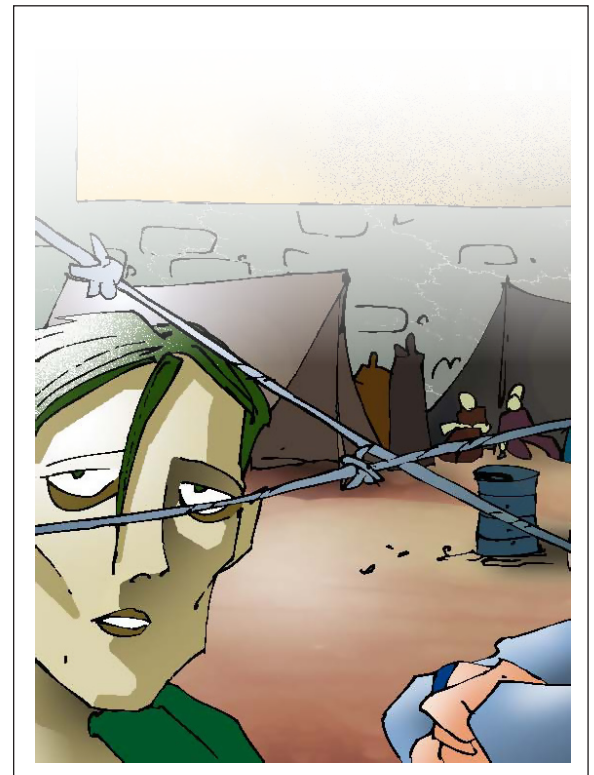
The Mordred stood over him, numbly waiting for M-19 to put the next thought in his mind. The halogen glare from the next room shone on the purple-skinned behemoth. One of the Mordred’s eyes and a couple of his fingers had been surgically removed, leaving a concave wound past his eyelids. That was the forty percent that was missing.

“Break that down”, M-19 managed to croak, pointing at the door.

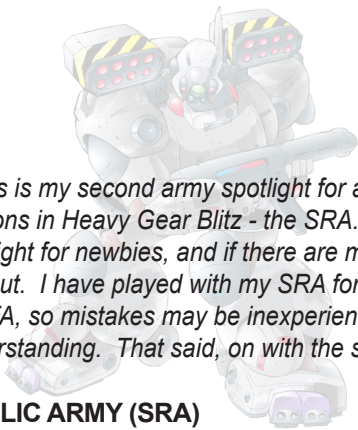
“Sir!”, the Mordred replied with crisp, fierce docility. He charged the door, making it buckle. His fists kept it shaking, with the force of each blow rippling through the floor. The hinges began to give way as M-19’s grip on consciousness finally began to slip.

The last thing he saw before he let go of it completely was the magnetic seals and hinges breaking. The last thing he heard were the weapon of the guard going off. The last thing M-19 felt was the Mordred picking him up and flinging him onto his shoulder.

The Mordred began to run down the hall, taking M-19’s unconscious body with him.



The Lost and Broken



Hello everyone - this is my second army spotlight for another of my favourite factions in Heavy Gear Blitz - the SRA. I hope it provides some insight for newbies, and if there are mistakes please point them out. I have played with my SRA forces far less than my UMFA, so mistakes may be inexperience as much as misunderstanding. That said, on with the show!

SOUTHERN REPUBLIC ARMY (SRA)

The Southern Republic Army - the SRA - are the proud lords of the southern hemisphere of Terra Nova. With the best soldiers of any southern league and the finest military machines produced on Terra Nova they have every right to be prod of their superiority. Powerful and respected, they are the very pinnacle of the city-state on Terra Nova; but this makes them a target as well.

For the miniatures war-gamer, the SRA poses a very difficult challenge. In order to have success with the SRA, you have to resist the lure to construct an army consisting only of the most elite machines and troops, and find a balance between quality and quantity. This challenge is extreme at lower TV levels, though the Southern preference for 4-gear combat groups alleviates this pressure to some extent. Additionally the SRA has more difficulty placing their Army Commander in the model they want; not only does he have a high cost but additional restrictions make the choice difficult.

WHY SHOULD YOU PLAY THE SRA?

Most SRA armies will be equipped with the very best equipment. Even a simple patrol squad will feature advanced gears and combat equipment, making them a dangerous opponent at any level of engagement. The SRA is typically played as an elite army with a few normal, grunt elements, giving modellers and tacticians alike plenty of challenges. The SRA also boasts one of the greatest possible concentrations of Black Mamba models - if you are a fan of that model, the SRA may work well for you. And finally, the SRA can field a Black Talon attachment, giving you an additional range of models you can collect and field. In short - if you want to play the most elite Southern army - play the south.

WHY SHOULDN'T YOU PLAY THE SRA?

The SRA doesn't do cheap well - they have few downgrades and their strengths lie in the advanced equipment they can field. If you prefer to play an army with lots of cheap troops, the SRA likely won't be what you are looking for. The SRA is also prohibited from being fielded at PL 1; if your gaming group uses a fixed PL, SRA players may be left out. In practice this isn't a major issue, but make sure you can field the army you want before looking towards the SRA.

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GERRIT KITTS

ARMY SPECIAL RULES

Well Funded: The well funded rule allows SRA armies to choose veteran options that are marked with an eagle in a non-veteran combat group. For instance, a non-veteran GP cadre can choose to make use of the option to upgrade two Jagers to Black Mambas. The potency of this special rule should not be underestimated, as it gives the SRA the ability to create very elite combat groups throughout the entirety of their army list. A SRA player can be more cavalier with their veteran slots than any other player due to this special rule, and opponents will often be facing equipment that far outmatches their own.

Assault Weapons: Assault weapons is something of a 'gimmie' special rule. On most gears, going from a VB at DAM equal to Size +2 to a CS at DAM equal to Size +3 is a minor benefit, and one generally forgotten about. Infantry benefit quite a bit more from the rule, being given an extra dice when rolling DEF tests at Point Blank range or in Melee. This DEF bonus dice is much more useful than the extra point of DAM from the CS, and is how I recommend you use this free upgrade. However, if you prefer the aesthetic look of chainsword equipped gears you should feel free to do so without hesitation - the Infantry bonus is very situational.

Pride of the South: As a modifier to the morale system, I can only offer speculative input on the usefulness of this ability, as I do not play with morale. Generally speaking this special rule appears to be a handicap more than a help, due to the ease with which you accrue morale tokens.

Combined Operations: By nature of being an elite army with advanced equipment, SRA armies will often feature small model counts. This special ability allows a canny SRA commander to balance their high TV models with cheaper, less skilled volunteers from the MILICIA. Though it is not necessary to use this rule, I can be very helpful if you want to maintain a reasonable amount of models on the table. The temptation with SRA armies is to go as elite as possible; but discretion is the better part of valour at times. However most armies should not include a MILICIA force of greater than 750 TV, as the cost of the Army Commander upgrade is prohibitive and rather wasteful.

Model collectors should note that this is the only way to include a MP Cadre in your SRA force.

Political Officer: This special rule is difficult to talk about, because it's use is very situational. In essence it grants you an unblockable CP that can only be used for a re-roll within 10". Unlike a CP, the unit that receives the re-roll from the political officer can still receive a CP later (or earlier) in the turn sequence. With a cost of +20 TV - equivalent to two upgrades to Attack and

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Defense 3 skills on other models - this upgrade isn't necessarily the most 'efficient' use of TV. It is however extremely popular and potent when used well - but there may be games these TV go to waste.

Army Commander: The SRA army commander upgrade poses a unique, difficult challenge when constructing an army. Unlike other armies where the Army Commander can be safely tucked away in a relatively cheap model with ECCM, the SRA requirements force the Army Commander into the most expensive combat group in the army with a Black Mamba or Iguana. Failing that, the Army Commander must be placed in the most expensive combat group. This exacerbates the SRA problem of 'too many eggs in one basket', and is costly as well, requiring a full 40 TV to upgrade all of the commanders skills by one.

You should keep this in mind when building your army; at times it may be useful to use the Well Funded rule to upgrade a Jager to a Black Mamba in an inexpensive squad, rather than force the AC into more expensive squad. This is especially true if you plan on using your Army Commander's actions for coordinated attack, calling airstrikes or artillery, or other 'support' roles - those actions will be more expensive for you than any other army.

[Post-1940 Rules \(Available in Return to Cats Eye or the Errata document\)](#)

Black Mamba Weak Facing Upgrade: This upgrade removes the 'Weak Facing' flaw from a Black Mamba, making it so they don't have to worry as much about shots from rear. This upgrade is quite useful, but pricey in large quantities. As with many upgrades in the SRA, try to reserve this for the units that will benefit the most from it - Strike Squads and similar front-line units - and leave it off others.

Dedicated Tankhunters Initiative: This upgrade makes a SC a truly terrifying weapon against both tanks and gears. Extending the effective range from 3-6" to 6-12" would be good enough, but increasing the ACC makes hits that land that much more damaging. This is an expensive upgrade but in the right hands can be very potent - in moderation it can make for a very dangerous model.

CGL Razor Fang Black Mamba: The Razor Fang upgrade for a Black Mamba has a complex value. Generally it's better to spend your CGL's action on something other than generating a CP; there are other units out there that are cheaper and can generate CPs for you. The 'coordinate attack' action or calling artillery are important roles for a CGL, and this gives you some temptation to ignore them. However, there will be times when you really need this ability; when some other elements needs

the CP more than the CGL needs to do a 'coordinated attack' action.

Brahmin Cobra Upgrade: This upgrade is another gem, allowing a Spitting Cobra to function as an assault model instead of just a fire support gear. It greatly improves the survivability on the Spitting Cobra by quite a bit, taking it to something better than a Jager. This is a good upgrade if you have TV to spend but nowhere to put it. But only assign it to Cobras as a matter of course if you intend to expose them to fire. If they are going to hide behind a hill, these are wasted TV.

CORE COMBAT GROUPS

General Purpose Cadre [Locked & Loaded pg. 111]

The South's GP Cadre is a true gem. Low cost and with good weapon upgrades, the GP cadre can also make excellent use of the Well Funded rule. An SRA army will rarely feel the need to upgrade their GP Cadre unless you are looking for skill upgrades; it already has everything you could be looking for in a gear-centric force.

First off, the Combat Group Leader [CGL] has a great deal of flexibility in this cadre. You can go for the bare minimum, and keep the CGL in a Jager; upgrading to a command Jager buys a larger autocomm distance and a slightly better Comm skill roll. The CGL can also be put in an Iguana, which is an excellent command vehicle due to it's high Comm and DEF modifiers. Note too that the CGL can be placed in the squad's only Sidewinder; you gain some attacking ability with the MRPs and you may find this useful to have a commander that stays behind cover. Finally the CGL can be fielded in a Black Mamba, which features good ATK and DEF modifiers. This last option can be pricey if you use your commander primarily for support actions, but at low-TV games allows you to field a highly elite force.

The remainder of the squad can upgrade their Jagers to either Black Mambas, Iguanas or a Sidewinder. In my opinion the Sidewinder upgrade should be considered standard, as it is quite the steal for an upgrade to both a MAC and MRPs. You have to be very strapped for points to consider cutting this option from your roster.

Swapping your Jagers to Iguanas gives you a 'mini' recon cadre, that is quite useful at low TV games. With a pathetic EW skill of 1, they will not win many battles of ECM, but they can still be useful due to their high Sensors and DEF scores. This does lock you out of any weapon upgrades in the squad, as the DPG on the Iguanas provides no upgrade path.

On the other hand, exchanging Jagers for Black Mambas can turn the GP Cadre into a 'mini' strike cadre. Players who routinely

face gear-centric opponents can use put Black Mambas to great use with either of the weapon upgrades available in this squad. In particular LBZK equipped Black Mambas are fearsome against enemy gears, while Paratrooper rifles provide some stunning ability at longer ranges (due to the Black Mamba's inherent +1 ATK modifier).

Example GP Cadres:

[270 TV] GP Cadre 1 "Our scrubs are your pros"

[CGL] Black Mamba

2x Black Mamba w/ Paratrooper Rifle

1x Sidewinder

A very elite squad that doesn't cost you a veteran slot. The Sidewinder stays a bit back from the action using its MRPs for support, while the Black Mambas with Paratrooper rifles stun high DEF targets to make them easier picking. Swap the Paratrooper rifles for LBZKs for better single target firepower, and a TV savings to boot.

[245 TV] GP Cadre 2 "Eyes on Target"

[CGL] Iguana w/ LBZK

2x Iguana

1x Sidewinder

Practically a recon cadre in disguise, this GP Cadre works best in low-TV games where you want to achieve EW objectives but don't want to commit an Aux slot - or you don't have the TV - to commit to a Recon Squad. Though they can be easily overwhelmed by more skilled EW opponents, they will still give a good accounting of themselves, and can fight in a pinch.

[210 TV] GP Cadre 3 "Throw a Barnaby on the Barby" <Veteran>

[CGL] Iguana

2x Jager w/ MFL, IRP/20 Fire Resistant

1x Sidewinder

A very odd cadre but one that should work well against infantry and light armor. The Jagers MFLs will be highly dangerous to enemy troops due to their +1 ACC and AE traits. The Iguana provides FOs for the Sidewinder, who pummels light armor from a distance. Quirky but fun.

Infantry Platoon [Locked & Loaded pg. 120]

The South's infantry Platoon is virtually identical to their northern counterparts, with few exceptions. They can serve a variety of roles from area defense to quick interdiction, but die frighteningly quickly outside of cover. They are generally considered excellent filler for an army that doesn't know what to do with that least 100 TV, or that needs additional activations to prevent being swamped by horde armies.

The current consensus seems to be that infantry are divided by their movement type into three categories. Infantry on foot - those without any movement upgrades - are useful in built-up terrain where they can go on the defensive. Typically you'll find these platoons equipped with a Light Mortar or Anti-Gear Rifle, staying back in a deployment zone. In this respect infantry can provide a useful defensive block for the SRA, which typically suffers from having too few models to be everywhere at once. Cheap infantry can be placed on a defend objective without too much hassle or impact to the remainder of the army.

Infantry on ATVs or Riding Beasts gain in mobility, but lose in durability. At some point they will need to break cover to make best use of their weapons, and then they are at a severe disadvantage. This doesn't mean that they are useless; demo drones can make them effective one-shot wonders, and recon drones let them spot for the remainder of the army. They are in particular quite effective on built up boards with the amphibious perk, which the SRA can purchase for non-veteran squads.

Infantry on ORVs tend to be treated like gears, as they can move and fire the infantry weapons. Rocket Launchers, AGMs and Grenade Rifles are perennial favorites for these squads, as are Demo drones. They lose their DEF modifier however, so be careful not to close too quickly; they die as easily to gear-sized HGs as any other infantry.

Southern infantry platoons can add Caimans or Hittite tanks as attached armor elements. The Caiman is a reasonable upgrade, giving foot infantry a MAC for anti-gear firepower and a much quicker move. It is rather fragile though, and tends not to last long in battle. The HRP/48 upgrade can be very useful in as a supplemental 'short-range artillery' battery in conjunction with Light Mortars. The Command Caiman is an option if you choose to use the Infantry Platoon as your Army Commander, as it gives your ECCM(2) and Comm +1, as well as unlocking a LD skill upgrade. The Hittite has a HFL, which is reasonably good against most light armor targets or high DEF scout gears, and plenty of HMGs to chew through infantry. Unless your gaming group fields a lot of infantry, you may not find the Hittite all that useful.

Two final thoughts on infantry upgrades. Armor upgrades are extremely situational; the AI perk grants any anti-infantry weapon +2 to ATK, which makes a mockery of the +1 armor you get with medium armor or the +2 for heavy armor. ORVs with heavy armor are a +20 TV but only armor 12; that's as good as most gears but they only feature a +0 DEF. ATVs with armor 10 are +1 DEF, but a HG will make a mockery of either.

The Stealth(2) upgrade can be quite useful for foot infantry or other infantry that's stationary; but keep in mind that both

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movement and weapons fire reduce your concealment by some amount. Stealth(2) can quickly be reduced to 0 by moving too quickly, making the TV you spent for it practically useless. My recommendation would be to consider it for foot infantry kept far from the front, but less so on ATVs or ORVs that you intend to send forward.

Example Infantry Platoons:

[110 TV] Infantry Platoon 1 "This is our town!"
[CGL] Infantry Escouade w/ AGR, Demo Drone
2x Infantry Escouade w/ AGR, Demo Drone
1x Infantry Escouade w/ Light Mortar, Demo Drone

A basic squad that you can drop into an urban area and expect to rough up - or outright destroy - any target that comes their way. Cheap and effective, but not terribly mobile; displacing would mean they'd have to leave their liquor behind.

[120 TV] Infantry Platoon 2 "Drive by bombers"
[CGL] Infantry Escouade w/ ATV, Demo Drone
3x Infantry Escouade w/ ATV, Demo Drone

These guys are berzerkers; they rush forward, looking for the opportunity to drop their Demo Drone. After that they are spent; they might be able to put some damage on opposing infantry, but that's about it. They have a really big bang while it lasts.

[160 TV] Infantry Platoon 3 "Dirt Chasers"
[CGL] Infantry Escouade w/ ORV, GR, Demo Drone
2x Infantry Escouade w/ ORV, RL, Demo Drone
1x Infantry Escouade w/ ORV, GR, Demo Drone

Marginally tougher than the ATVs, the true worth of the ORV is the ability to move and fire. This squad tries to make the most of that with a combination of stunning weapons on the GLs and direct fire in the RLs. Capable of taking on a gear squad on their own, but only if they get the drop on them; hand grenades will make quick work of this squad.

[235 TV] Infantry Platoon 4 "Why leave base camp?" <Veteran>
[CGL] Infantry Escouade w/ Recon Drone
3x Infantry Escouade w/ Light Mortar
4x Caiman w/ HRP/48

Somebody has to guard the supplies, right? Drop this platoon somewhere where they don't have to move - preferably behind solid cover - and let them setup shop. They can put out quite a bit of firepower for their cost, but the Caimans are horribly vulnerable while stationary. Still, quantity has a quality all it's own...

Infantry Sniper Escouade [Locked & Loaded pg. 121]

The Sniper Escouade is often seen with a heavy emphasis on recon, and less on sniping. With no upgrades to weapons beyond the Laser Sniper Rifle, the only viable targets for this escouade are other infantry. It's rare for an army to have few enough AI weapons to need this dedication, so these escouades are often paired with a Recon drone or ATV to work as spotters for the remainder of the force. With their Stealth(2) and small size this is role that can work well for them, with or without the added equipment.

Example Escouades:

[15 TV] Infantry Sniper Escouade 1 "All we have are binocs?"
Infantry Sniper Escouade

At 15TV they are cheap and they can provide a FO with EW 2. That's hard to beat for the price... but that's about all they can do for you. A useful addition to the 'Why leave base camp' army above, where the additional FOs can give you more targets.

[35 TV] Infantry Sniper Escouade 2 "Why can't we get an AGR?"
Infantry Escouade w/ ATV, Recon Drone

They are quiet and hopefully useful, but at a steep price tag; it's arguable if a gear would be better worth the 35 TV you've spent on these recon drones.

AUXILIARY COMBAT GROUPS

Recon Cadre [Locked & Loaded pg. 111]

The Recon Cadre is a reliable scouting unit that can be configured either as a primarily scouting unit, or as a light sniping unit. In both cases they can excel, as they have few extraneous models either way. There is only a single benefit to the squad from the SRA affiliation, in the form of the Razor Fang Black Mamba; but this upgrade tends to be more aesthetic than useful.

The CGL has two options in the Recon Cadre; Iguana or Black Mamba. Generally you will stick with the Iguana, as you can swap the TD and LRP/24 for ECM(3) and ECCM(3). The latter upgrade makes it very difficult for an opponent to prevent any comm event from your CGL. This is extremely useful for an Army Commander, and the availability of LD skill 3 with the veteran option makes this an attractive squad for your Army Commander in many forces. You may have a hard time keeping the squad's cost high enough to reach this goal, though you can always add an additional Iguana to bump your squad cost as well. The upgrade for the CGL to add a Sat. Uplink is less useful, since you rarely will want to transfer his action to a cheaper model. If

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you have a Visigoth this might be useful; otherwise keep in mind the cost of the Iguana before choosing this (unless you take the LRP/32 downgrade, discussed later).

The 'downgrade' to swap your TD,LRP/24 for ECM(3) and ECCM(4) is generally useful, though it may not appear so at first glance. The South features few weapons with the Guided perk, so losing the TD is not as much of a hindrance as it might appear. And the loss of the LRP/24 is hardly terrible for a gear that isn't supposed to be in combat; you may find yourself lamenting it's loss when dueling a Grizzly. The veteran upgrade to Sensors +2 and Auto Comms 7 is also useful, as the latter gives you 2" further to deploy a recon drone.

Finally, when choosing between the LAC and LRF, choose the LRF; with the Sniper you can shoot from further ranges, and you're likely to want them to sit and shoot instead of trying to run and gun. Make sure to couple this with the swap of the TD,ECM,LRP/24 to the LRP/32 for maximum points saving, and a better weapon to boot. The last upgrade is certainly worth keeping in mind as a TV-saving measure; if you have enough ECM elsewhere (or choose to live without it), these swaps can really stack up and you still have a model that's good at performing a FO due to it's high Comm score.

Because there are no real upgrades for them in the squad, I suggest leaving the Black Mambas out of this squad. The upgrades in the Strike or GP squad put these to shame and are a better use of the Black Mamba's strengths than here.

Example Recon Cadres:

[250 TV] Recon Cadre 1 "Electric lizards"
[CGL] Iguana w/ LRP/32,Sat. Uplink, LD:2
1x Iguana w/ ECM(3), ECCM(3)
2x Iguana

A cheap but effective cadre that could form the core of a balanced SRA army. The CGL uses their action to call artillery, FO or generate CPs while the other three Iguanas scatter to provide FOs for heavier firepower. The TD equipped Iguanas seeks out targets for guided weapons, while the last one concentrates on calling in rocket barrages.

[230 TV] Recon Cadre 2 "Sniper washouts"
[CGL] Iguana w/ LRP/32,Sat. Uplink, LD:2
3x Iguana w/ LRF, LRP/32

Let's drop all pretenses that this unit is about recon, and focus instead of what they try to do; snipe gears, preferably ones that aren't too big and aren't too small. They can mix it up at point

blank range if they have it; the LRP/32 can be effective against Hunters and similar gears in close. However their lack of ECM can hurt you against opponents that brought alot of indirect fire to the party...

[290 TV] Recon Cadre 3 "We have eyes everywhere" <Veteran>
[CGL] Iguana w/ LRP/32,Sat. Uplink, LD:3
2x Iguana w/ ECM(3), ECCM(3), Sensors +2, Auto Comm 7, Recon Drone
1x Iguana w/ Recon Drone

This is where you pay the big TV, but get really nice equipments. Recon drones on all of the minons and LD skill of 3 for the CGL makes him a prime candidate for the Army Commander. The 7" deployment range of the non-TD equipped Iguanas let them spot from safely behind cover, using the Recon Drone's TD(1) for guided weapons if necessary.

Fire Support Cadre [Locked & Loaded pg. 113]

The Fire Support Cadre is designed - as it's name implies - to provide heavy firepower from a reasonably safe distance. Composed primarily of the iconic Spitting Cobra gear, the squad is not designed to last under heavy fire for any period of time. Ironically however the squad features many upgrades that are suitable for direct fire support, and can be devastating in that respect if used carefully.

The CGL has several options in this squad; a stock Jager, Command Jager, Black Mamba, Sidewinder or Iguana in non-veteran squads and a Spitting Cobra or King Cobra in a veteran squad. The choice of CGL gear is directly influenced by the role you wish for them to play with the remainder of the squad. If their action is going to be spent coordinated strikes for the other cadre members, then the Jager is likely suitable. If you'd like to give the CGL a bit of a punch on the cheap, the Sidewinder is a solid choice. If you want the CGL to survive most attacks, a Black Mamba is a solid choice. And if you want to maximize the squad's firepower, the Spitting Cobra is likely the best choice. If you expect the CGL to be a bodyguard for the remainder of the squad, the Black Mamba or Sidewinder is likely the best choice. Because of the isolation of the squad leader in this squad - it can literally function without him - the choice of what to do with him is more personal than for other armies.

Spitting Cobras are the mainstay of this cadre and they have plenty of options. The HAC, LGM to MBZK swap is rather rare, since the Spitting Cobra's HRP is a better weapon than the MBZK by virtue of larger RoF and slightly better DAM. The HAC, MRP to VHAC option is extremely common as you save TV for a net gain in performance; the MRP is rarely if ever used. The HRP, LGM to VLFG swap is also common, but tends to be seen in moderation as the AE from the HRP is rather useful.

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This is a solid gear-killing weapon, however. And the veteran option to swap everything for ATMs is not unheard of, though it's an expensive upgrade for six shots. You should be warned that ATMs are a prime target whatever platform they are on, and a stationary Spitting Cobra is a very tempting target.

The SRA upgrade for Jagers to Black Mambas here isn't a bad choice; but the useful weapon swaps for those gears are in the Veteran options and are not accessible through Well Funded. However those options can be quite impressive. Many people swear by the LRP to 2x MRP/36 swap. This makes the Black Mamba very fearsome, but also pricey; at 115 TV after the link (which is practically mandatory if you take the MRPs) the model is worth nearly two full Black Mambas. An oft-overlooked upgrade however is the swap from LAC,LRP to MRF (sniper) for -5 TV. Combined with the inherent +1 ATK of a Black Mamba, this becomes a dangerous weapon against most gears, and for a cost savings to boot. My recommendation would be to take the saved TV and purchase a Demo drone, which complements the Black Mamba's skills.

Jagers can swap their APGL for an APM; this gives you some range and can be helpful when dealing with infantry, but has limited utility if you don't commonly face them. The HAC veteran upgrade can make the Jagers more useful than they were, and is an excellent weapon if you intend for one or two of them to serve as bodyguards for the Spitting Cobras. Though it will have trouble against really good gears, it should serve well enough to deter causal attacks.

Sidewinders work well in this cadre, by using the MRPs for short-range interdiction and fire support while the Spitting Cobras provide longer range fire. You can work a 5 model cadre as a two front force, with the Sidewinders in front and Spitting Cobras in the rear to provide a line of fire that's dangerous to cross. The Sidewinders are also tougher than the Jager and work well as bodyguards.

Finally, the King Cobra. Oft maligned, the King Cobra suffers from 'Too Many Weapons Syndrome', which plagues models with more options than actions. At 110 TV for the stock model it's rather expensive, but extremely iconic and potent in the right circumstances. If you choose to field one (or two) I heavily suggest you swap the LPA for a LLC, as it is one of the most deadly weapons in Heavy Gear Blitz. A King Cobra such equipped with likely be pounced on as a high priority target, but when you are the best you have be willing to prove it.

One word of caution. Because the South makes such heavy use of rocket packs in their Fire Support squad, and rocket packs rely upon RoF to generate an AE, it's very much worth the cost to upgrade these gears Attack skill to 3. This reduces

the chance of a getting an 'Out of Ammo' event drastically and ensures your models can keep firing. There are few things more pathetic than a Spitting Cobra charging from cover after it's ammo is exhausted.

Example Fire Support Cadres:

[255 TV] Fire Support Cadre 1 "A backwater assignment"
[CGL] Sidewinder
3x Spitting Cobra w/ VHAC

A basic, no frills fire support cadre. Designed to maximize as much of the cadre's AE firepower through the liberal use of rocket packs, the squad needs support from the remainder of the army to be effective. Find some cover and keep them hidden - but ready to move if discovered - and you will get plenty of use out of them.

[280 TV] Fire Support Cadre 2 "Onward to glory... or death" <Veteran>
[CGL] Black Mamba w/ 2x MRP/36 (linked), LD:2, ATK:3, DEF:3
3x Spitting Cobra w/ VHAC, VLF, ATK:3, DEF:3

This cadre is designed to take the fight into the teeth of the enemy, relying upon heavy armor and good dose of luck to be successful. The Spitting Cobras can hit hard but can easily be swarmed, so you'll need to pick your battles wisely and ensure you're not throwing your soldiers away.

[440 TV] Fire Support Cadre 3 "When money is no obstacle" <Veteran>
[CGL] Black Mamba w/ LD:2, ATK:3, DEF:3, MRF
Black Mamba w/ ATK:3, DEF:3, MRF
Spitting Cobra w/ ATM, ATK:3, DEF:3
2x King Cobra w/ LLC, ATK:3, DEF:3

When you have deep pockets - and the SRA has some of the deepest - you get sometimes find that you have more than you need. This Fire Support Cadre combines excellent firepower against gears and armor in a way few others can - but you'll pay dearly for it. Not for the faint of heart.

Tank Cadre [Locked & Loaded pg. 118]

The South Tank Cadre combines hard-hitting armored units with the ability to field attached gears. Unlike most other factions who's tank squads are formed solely around armor, this gives the South the ability to setup effective crossfire from long ranges by mixing close-range gear combat and long-range armored fire. This combination can be brutal when properly exercised.

The mainstay of the Tank Cadre is the humble Hun. With an effective weapons load-out for killing Heavy Gears and a decent amount of armor, the Hun is a basic, reliable tank that is well worth it's 90 TV cost. The VLRP/128 downgrade is brutal,

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stripping the Hun of most of its range and firepower. In very dense terrain against light armor targets, you might find this useful for indirect fire, but generally you want to keep the stock load-out. A HK drone can be a very useful addition to prevent infantry from charging with Demo Drones as well.

The Visigoth is the one of the most dangerous units in the game, boasting incredible armor and deadly weapons. The extreme range and DAM rating of the HFG should never be underestimated, nor should the Visigoth's ability to weather incoming attacks. The LPLC upgrade reduces the range of the vehicle and forces it into a direct fire role, but also allows it to generate three LPLC attacks a turn with a CP expenditure. This can thin the ranks of most gear squads rapidly and has a substantial TV discount. The SC downgrade is harder to justify, as the SCs are far more situational. If you play defensive missions with very built up terrain you may find these useful, as few things will be willing to get close enough to give you a shot - at least until they're sure they can make a good parting shot. The Visigoth Khan upgrade is also very useful, granting ECCM and improved Comms and turning the Visigoth into a viable Army Commander vehicle. Note however that it can be difficult to get your Army Commander into this vehicle, as you must have no Black Mambas or Iguanas anywhere else in the army

Because they have no weapon upgrades in the Tank Cadre, the attached Gears tend to be relegated to support roles for the tanks. This tends to favor the humble Jager over any other gear, though the Igauna or Black Mamba will be seen from time to time in the role of Combat Group leader, especially in non-veteran squads for the SRA.

Example Tank Cadres:

[330 TV] Tank Cadre 1 "Combined Arms - SRA Style"

[CGL] Black Mamba, LD:2

Black Mamba

2x Hun

This cadre works best as two different elements. A Black Mamba initiates an attack on the target to generate a crossfire bonus, and the Hun goes for the kill with its LLC and HRF. The CGL can also use their action for 'coordinated attack' to ensure the -1 DEF penalty regardless of distance or angle of attack. In small TV games, you can split this cadre down the middle, with each Mamba acting as a CGL - and thus eligible to do 'Coordinated Attack'. Feel free to replace the Mambas with Jagers for a cost savings in this case.

[360 TV] Tank Cadre 2 "Gear hunting safari"

[CGL] Hun

3x Hun

With 4 LLCs and 4 HRFs, this cadre is the nightmare of many a gear squad. By coordinating between them with longer-ranged LLC shots to generate crossfires against tough opponents they can operate a wolf-pack, bringing down prey that is much larger. However this comes at a substantial cost in TV for a mere 4 models; beware of opponents with ATMs to spare.

[310 TV] Tank Cadre 3 "A wall of light and sound"

[CGL] Visigoth, 2x LPLC (linked), LD:2

Visigoth, 2x LPLC (linked)

A different tank on the gear-hunter list. With extremely high front armor and the deadly LPLCs, these tanks can carry the fight to lighter opponents where-ever they may be. Though they cannot stack up against heavy armor their utility against gears makes up for this. If you have the veteran slot to spare, give them the VHAC upgrade to maximize all three of their actions each round.

[680 TV] Tank Cadre 4 "Loose the Huns" <Veteran>

[CGL] Visigoth Khan, VHAC, LD: 3, Visigoth, VHAC

2x Hun

This is what you get when you go big. Once again we treat a paired Hun and Visigoth as a separate combat unit to generate crossfire bonuses. Use the Huns like foxhounds of hold to drive targets into their masters line of fire, then follow with the killing blow from the HFG on the Visigoth. The Khan upgrade is included in the event that you put the Army Commander in this vehicle, but most of the time you can freely ignore it - your AC will be looking for a Black Mamba to ride in!

Cavalry Patrol [Locked & Loaded pg. 119]

A South Cavalry Patrol is a fast but lightly armed and armoured interdiction unit, designed to shore up a flank or rush to provide assistance where needed. Incapable of serving as a spearhead unit, these cadres would normally be rarely seen except for one reason - the Recon Hun. With the Well Funded rule, a SRA player can take advantage of a Cavalry patrol to add a relatively cheap LLC to their force, on a platform with actions to spare. This is not to dismiss the role of the Caimans in the cadre, though they are rather fragile and can be difficult to use successfully.

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Example Cavalry Patrols:

[115 TV] Cavalry Patrol 1 "These seem to be everywhere"

[CGL] Caiman

Caiman

Recon Hun

A cheap cadre that provides hard-hitting firepower from the Recon Hun's LLC. The Caimans are not the best attackers, but at very close ranges their MAC can be dangerous. This cadre has an additional Caiman to allow you to field multiples; you should feel free to drop one Caiman if you only plan on fielding a single Cavalry patrol. Remember to get your crossfire and coordinated attack bonus for the Recon Hun!

[90 TV] Cavalry Patrol 2 "Paper-thin artillery"

[CGL] Caiman w/ HRP/48

2x Caiman w/ HRP/48

Another cheap cadre that boasts really nasty weapons - but really thin armour. You will need other assets to make these guys shine, but as long as you have some heavy terrain to hide them behind, they can be very imposing. Just don't let anything get a clear shot on them - at stationary speed they die to stiff breezes.

SPECIALIST COMBAT GROUPS

Strike Cadre [**Locked & Loaded pg. 112**]

The Strike Cadre is the home of the hardest hitting, in your face gears available to a southern player, and has plenty of options to choose from. Designed to hit something really hard in the teeth, the cadre has a reliance on direct fire weapons - and several really big ones at that. This is the home of the most elite of pilots, and it shows - though you may pay a premium, a Strike cadre strikes terror into the heart of it's opponents.

The CGL begins in a Black Mamba and only has the option of a King Cobra in a Veteran squad. The King Cobra upgrade is typically unwise as you lose several points of DEF, increase in TV cost by quite a bit, and generally paint a huge bulls-eye on your CGL. If this is your Army Commander, this is even worse. And as stated elsewhere, the Razor Fang upgrade is also somewhat underwhelming, since in theory your CGL or AC has much better things to do with their actions than pass them down to a subordinate via the Satellite Uplink. It's worth nothing that due to the cheap LBZK upgrade, it's worth always giving your CGL additional firepower in this squad, just in case you need it. The cost is very small for the utility it adds to your CGL, who can now engage in a fight rather than just lead with support actions.

This squad features the two gears that are rare in the SRA list; the Black Adder and Desert Viper. Both gears are tougher than a stock Jager but will still die to concentrated, heavy firepower as their DEF modifiers are equivalent to a Jager. In addition the Desert Viper lacks any Ground movement modifier, making it slightly less defensible than the Black Adder and considerably slower (with a top speed of 7 versus 12 on the Black Adder). Their roles however, are very different.

The Black Adder is a dedicated assault gear that can switch between anti-tank and medium-range fire support roles. In it's default configuration it comes with a MRP/36 for anti-gear, and SC for anti-armor firepower, and works best a little back from the remainder of the squad. Use the MRP/36 to inflict damage or crossfire penalties on masses of troops, and dart forward for the SC for a kill on a high armor, low DEF target. The option to swap the SC for a LAC and MRP/36 (linked) makes it truly dangerous at a reasonable cost. One important note is that the Black Adder benefits greatly from the Dedicated Tankhunter upgrade available in either RtCE or the L&L errata; the range of the SC extends to about 6-12" and it becomes far more dangerous. The Black Adder is one of the only models in the game that can benefit from this upgrade without suffering from Limited Ammo, so Southern players should take advantage of it!

The Desert Viper is another assault gear, but one that is more specialised. With no equipment swaps it's stuck with the HGL and MRP/18 it comes with - but this is a very useful package of weapons. The HGL is excellent for applying stun counters on difficult to hit targets, and the MRP can hit rather hard against single target, allowing the Desert Viper to give a Strike squad cheap stunning ability. The Desert Viper's lack of wheeled movement can be a problem however, since it's stuck moving at most 7" a round, making it unsuited for lightning strikes. However if you need your Strike squad to serve as a defensive unit, the Desert Viper can bring much-needed suppressive ability to your composition.

The arch-typical Sidewinder makes an appearance here, as always providing some hard-hitting area-effect firepower to a squad on the cheap. As always they are a solid upgrade, complementing the Black Mamba core of this squad as a mid-field support gear.

The Jager has some surprises in the Strike squad. First, a Jager can swap it's LAC for either a MAC or LBZK, both of which are decent choices depending on what role you need them to fill. For close range firepower against gears the LBZK is the preferred option; if you board layout allows you to play with longer ranges the MAC can be useful. If you're unsure, the LBZK is probably

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the safer bet. Jagers also can swap their LAC and LRP for a MFL, IRP and Fire Resistant; this makes them terrors against infantry and dangerous against low armor, high DEF units like Cheetahs. Most of the time you'll want to pass on this upgrade, however. The APM upgrade is only useful if you commonly face infantry and have a problem with them; otherwise, pass on it.

Finally Jagers can choose to swap their LRP with a ATM for a whopping +55 ATM, basically the price of another Jager. This upgrade is great when used carefully; few models in the game will survive an ATM shot, especially if guided by a TD, but the Jager immediately becomes a very high priority target because of that. With only average DEF, it's not difficult to put a Jager out of action before it gets to place the ATM just right - making this a gamble at best. Still, it goes to prove the adage that 'big surprises come in small packages'.

Black Mambas have a slew of upgrade options in this squad, and most of them are reasonably good. First, note that the Mamba can also be equipped with the MFL and IRP/20, due to the wording 'any autocannon'. This gives you +2 to ATK before counting cover or range, and can be excessively destructive against infantry. Using a Black Mamba to hunt infantry is very much overkill though, so the utility of this upgrade is debatable. However the MAC -> LBZK upgrade is very useful for the Black Mamba, giving it very good killing power against gears for a cheap +5 TV. This is a good 'default' upgrade, if you don't know what else to do with your Black Mambas. The VLRP/32 'downgrade' is pretty much a 'gimme' as you will rarely rely upon your LRP, and you only lose a few points of DAM by downgrading to the VLRP/32. Paired with the LBZK upgrade you get a Black Mamba with a LBZK for the price of a stock Black Mamba; it's like getting twice the firepower for free.

A Black Mamba can also upgrade it's LRP to MRPs, and when linked these weapons can be extremely destructive. They also raise the cost of the Mamba above the 100 TV mark, so you need to be sure you can get their worth back out of them. However, few defenders will successfully make both rolls against a direct fired salvo of MRPs, making this option a popular choice. A second upgrade that adds excellent firepower is the HGL option, providing good hitting power with stunning ability. This is a very good all-around ability for a Black Mamba, and should not be overlooked.

However, the real gem of the Strike Squad is the upgrade that swaps the MAC and LRP for a HGLC, at a discount of -10 TV. This upgrade is simply murderous at close ranges, and on the Black Mamba you have enough speed and DEF to close range to a point where the MB trait on the HGLC doesn't matter. With a very high DAM and +1 ACC, the HGLC fits the Black Mamba

like a glove. And best of all, the SRA Well Funded rule makes this a non-veteran upgrade, giving you every reason to field a non-veteran Strike squad that is just as deadly as a veteran one.

The final model you can add to the Strike squad is the King Cobra. As I commented in the Fire Support Cadre squad, the King Cobra often costs too much for what it accomplishes on the battlefield. At 110 TV before the LLC upgrade (which is practically a requirement), it provides a very bit target for your opponents. In the right circumstances it can be rather destructive, but you'll probably be burning a CP on it each turn. If you keep that in mind - and it's low DEF scores - it's possible to make solid use of them.

Example Strike Cadres:

[240 TV] Strike Cadre 1 "Into the fray we charge"

[CGL] Black Mamba w/ HGLC

Black Mamba w/ HGLC

2x Sidewinders

A basic cadre that mixes solid close-range firepower with mid-range firepower from the Sidewinders. Use this squad in depth, with the Black Mambas taking point and the Sidewinders a 6"-12" behind, providing cover and supporting fire with their MRPs. Something of a steal, considering the cost.

[265 TV] Strike Cadre 2 "SRA - where pilots come first"

[CGL] Black Mamba w/ VLRP, LBZK

2x Black Mamba w/ HGLC

1x Black Adder w/ 2x MRP/36 (linked), LAC

A variation on the above theme, but with more Mambas and a Black Adder providing the supporting fire. The CGL gains the choice of using his action for coordinated attack or an outright attack, allowing this small cadre to generate very punishing firepower.

[280 TV] Strike Cadre 3 "Top of the line equipment, run of the mill troops"

[CGL] Black Mamba w/ LBZK, VLRP

2x Black Mamba w/ HGLC

1x Black Mamba w/ VLRP, HGL

Like the squad above, but swapping out the Black Adder for a Black Mamba with a HGL. The HGL provides stunning ability to complement the HGLCs on the other Mambas.

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Paratroop Cadre [Locked & Loaded pg. 115]

The Paratrooper Cadre is designed to get very close to a distant targets and punch hard. Restricted to gears that can be airdropped, the squad features an abundance of stunning weaponry but little in the way of knock-out punch. With the utility of airdroppable reserves a hotly debated topic on the DP9 forums, your mileage with this unit may vary greatly. This doesn't preclude them from being used as a straight up assault force however.

The CGL begins in a Black Mamba and a veteran slot unlocks a LD:3 skill upgrade, making this squad a passable (but not great) choice if you want to find a home for an Army Commander when the rest of your army doesn't have Black Mambas. As discussed elsewhere the Razor Fang upgrade is a mixed bag; your CGL is 70 TV with it, and that's quite a bit to transfer it's action into the CP pool.

Black Mambas attached to this squad can be upgraded with either a Paratrooper rifle or 2x MRP/36s. The former is a somewhat cheap way to gain the ability to stun with decent DAM of x15. Thanks to the Mamba's +1 ATK modifier, you can also use the LGL in as an indirect fire weapon more effectively too. The 2x MRP/36 upgrade - especially when linked - it murderous, but boosts each models' cost to nearly 105 TV. If you go this route, make sure that you do link them, as it increases their lethality to incredible levels.

Iguana Paratroopers are good on their own, with a Paratrooper Rifle and excellent DEF modifiers. With the ability to swap their Paratrooper Rifle for a LRF or MAC, they can provide decent anti-gear firepower if necessary, and for cheap. Recon drones provide them a way to serve as a 'mini' recon cadre if necessary to support the rest of the army. Finally the Iguana Commando upgrade is an excellent choice as it provides a LBZK - useful against most gears - and more importantly, Smoke(6). Smoke can provide concealment for vital targets like a Army Commander or friendly tank, and should not be underestimated.

Jager Paratroopers are solid gears with a decent weapon. With the Veteran swap of APGLs for a LGM, they can serve as a decent indirect fire platform for the remainder of the force. And like the Iguanas, they can serve in a sniper role with the LRF upgrade if absolutely necessary - but the recon cadre probably does this role better.

One final note - the CR swap to DPG is completely worthless. You should never take it. Unlike the HG 'upgrade', you gain absolutely nothing from this swap, except to waste TV.

Example Paratrooper Cadres:

[285 TV] Paratrooper Cadre 1 "Throwing good gears out the window"
[CGL] Black Mamba
2x Black Mamba w/ Paratrooper Rifle
1x Jager Paratroopers

A basic cadre with plenty of stunning power. The Black Mambas with Paratrooper rifles have good accuracy out to decent ranges, while the Jager Paratrooper has to get closer. The CGL coordinates for the remainder of the cadre or takes pot-shots with his MAC at distant targets.

[270 TV] Paratrooper Cadre 2 "Catch us if you can" <Veteran>
[CGL] Black Mamba w/ Paratrooper Rifle
2x Iguana Commando
1x Iguana Paratrooper

The Iguana Commandos provide a punch with the LBZKs against targets stunned by the Iguana Paratrooper or Black Mamba. Smoke can help cover their advance or the retreat of a badly mauled friendly unit. With good DEF scores all around, this unit can be difficult to kill, but don't bunch them too closely together.

[245 TV] Paratrooper Cadre 3 "I didn't sign up to ground pound" <Veteran>
[CGL] Black Mamba
2x Jager Paratrooper w/ LRF
2x Jager Paratrooper w/ LRF, LGM

Practically a light fire support squad, this Paratrooper cadre tries to stay at midfield and support friendly cadres. This cadre can be hard to balance, but also operates very differently than a normal Paratrooper cadre. This quirkiness can give you the edge over an opponent who's expecting you to drop these models in their backfield.

Strider Cadre [Locked & Loaded pg. 117]

Striders are the grand-daddies of Heavy Gears, with an emphasis on larger weapons and a correspondingly slower speed. Each strider serves a very different role, allowing a Strider Cadre to be mixed and matched to some degree. Most striders however prefer to remain hidden and strike with indirect firepower, as their DEF modifiers are poor. The new GearUP DEF modifiers breathe a spark of life into many striders, and if you are fan of these giant, stompy robots you should check out those trial rules.

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First up, the Naga. The Naga is a solid choice and one that many people field, as it's both useful and good looking. The 'Long Fang' upgrade - which replaces the ATMs with LFGs and stabiliser mounts - is a solid choice if a bit of a gamble. Requiring that the model is stationary is very unhealthy, so it's rare to see more than one or two of these in a force. The AGM 'downgrade' however is relatively safe, as it allows the Naga to shift it's focus from anti-armor to anti-gear tactics, for a nice decrease in TV. The HATM upgrade is much more focused and hard to justify; it does make killing heavy tanks easier, but you only get 4 shots and still have to be stationary. You become an immediate threat, and at 215 TV an expensive decoy. In contrast the LLC upgrade is very nasty, providing the Naga with excessive direct firepower for a points discount. If you are willing to spend the Veteran option, this is a solid choice for your Nagas.

Of particular note is the Command Naga, which is an excellent choice for an Army Commander. Again providing ECCM capability and with the AGM swap, you can have a decent multi-action model that combines striking power with good command ability. A perennial favourite, and for good reason. As an option in non-veteran squad due to Well Funded, few people consider this a bad investment.

The Fire Dragon is an iconic unit, but one that has some problems with performance. With worse DEF modifiers than the Naga, it does have a HRP with a Sniper system, allowing it to engage targets at range effectively. However, it does pay quite a premium for this at nearly 190 TV bare. The MFL to SC swap isn't a bad choice, though it ends up being a wash in many ways; the lower DAM of the MFL is offset by the higher ACC, whereas the SC has good DAM but poor ACC. The swap of the HRP for 2x MFM is a solid choice, but again expensive; at 355 TV for this model it is as expensive as entire cadres of gear squads - new players in particular should be wary of it's high points cost and vulnerability. The AMS swap can be useful both as a TV measure and to allow it to spot through concealment; if your Fire Dragon is constantly targeted by indirect fire weapons it might be better to keep the AMS in place.

The Sagittarius strider is imposing looking but anaemic in it's default configuration; the VLRPs lack range and DAM capacity. In built up terrain, or with a bit of finesse, the Sag. can be a fair gear-killer, but generally the HAPF upgrades are required to make it shine. However the ABM launcher upgrade should not be dismissed; as a Blast(2) weapon this guarantees damage against any Scout gear, infantry or GREL. Though it takes a Veteran slot, the upgrade is inexpensive and well worth considering. Additionally, the Sag. can work well as a forward observer and EW platform. With two actions and ECM on the

model, it's possible for a Sag. to hold it's own against dedicated EW gears, especially with ECM skill upgrades or LD:1 upgrades to allow it to call artillery.

Example Strider Cadres:

[140 TV] Strider Cadre 1 "All by myself.. way, way far back in the back."
[CGL] Command Naga w/ AGM

A common enough sight on many battlefields, especially when you plan on not fielding any Black Mambas or Iguanas. The ECCM capabilities are always useful, and the AGMs can be fired indirectly against light tanks or gears. This cadre is a hallmark of the SRA, as their Well Funded rule makes it possible without using a Veteran slot.

[280 TV] Strider Cadre 2 "Big stumpy recon cadre" <Veteran>
[CGL] Command Naga w/ AGM
Sagittarius w/ EW:3, LD:1
Sagittarius w/ EW:3, LD:1

Though they may not seem to fit the profile, with ECM:3 and two actions, a Sag. can be a good EW platform. Boosting their skill to 3 helps them tackle dedicated recon units, but isn't strictly necessary - you can live with it if you need to save the Veteran slot. And thanks to their LD:1, they can also call in artillery with a reasonable chance of hitting! High PL, low TV lists may find this cadre useful as it keeps the expense low for quite a bit of utility.

[150 TV] Strider Cadre 3 "Who doesn't like explosions?" <Veteran>
[CGL] Sagittarius w/ ABM
Sagittarius w/ ABM

When you need a Cheetah smacked around, or GRELS roughed up, these Sag. can help. With Blast(2) each ABM can wipe out an entire squad of GRELS, and you have plenty of shots to do it in. Remember you can always burn their second action to give the ABM shot +1D6 ATK; if you don't have a target for their MAC this can be very useful.

[350 TV] Strider Cadre 4 "Snakes gone mammal hunting" <Veteran>
[CGL] Naga w/ 1x AGM
1x Naga w/ AGM
1x Naga w/ 2x LLC

With variations on a single model, we can create a dangerous cadre that can handle pretty much any target thrown into their sights. With ATMs for heavy tanks, AGMs for gears, and the LLC for everything between this cadre is versatile - but a bit on the pricey side. Use them carefully and know your opponent probably carries a big grudge against every single model.

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[380 TV] Strider Cadre 5 "Find me a swamp and I'll be happy" <Veteran>
[CGL] Fire Dragon w/ 2x MFM, ATK:3

You chose to go big... and hopefully he delivers. With 2x MFM and plenty of actions to spare, you can be generating 3 shots a round at rolling 3 or 4 dice to place with a CP (fire MFM, fire MFM, CP to fire Linked MFM, action for +1D6 ATK). This is a very large amount of firepower, and one you'll need to take advantage of with the price.

Field Gun Section [Locked & Loaded pg. 121]

The South Field Gun Section is virtually identical to its Northern counterparts; they are basically immobile firebases used to pour out an impressive level of firepower. The LFG on the Field Gun can be dangerous to most gears and even light tanks with a sufficiently clear line of sight. However with poor DEF modifiers and no armor to speak of, these guns are easily silenced and need to be safely in the rear of the action. You shouldn't waste a Veteran slot on this combat group unless you really want the LD:2 skill upgrade - likely for the unblockable CP allocation.

One important point to remember is that a minimal field gun section is only 35 TV, and counts as a specialist choice. This can fulfil your PL 3 requirements, and allow you to take other choices as you see fit.

Example Field Gun Sections:

[105 TV] Field Gun Section 1 "Lawn chairs... and big guns"
[CGL] Field Gun
2x Field Gun

A fully equipped field gun section. Keep them behind solid cover, stationary and preferably hidden, and they might even live through the entire game. Beware of inbound counter-artillery fire or enemy airstrikes.

ELITE COMBAT GROUPS

Opsec Cadre [Locked & Loaded pg. 116]

The Opsec cadre is full of stealthed elite gears ready to perform deep recon or assassinate vital targets. This cadre is expensive in terms of both TV and the required Veterans slot; if you want to take them in your army you need to budget for them from the very beginning. However in the right hands they can be very potent, striking from the shadows and fading before an opponent has the chance to retaliate.

The core of the cadre is the Green Mamba, which is essentially a Black Mamba with ECM and stealth. These are a solid, if unremarkable model as Stealth (3) only lets them hide from the

weakest of sensors after moving or shooting. Their only option is to upgrade their MAC to a LBZK or to add drones. Neither a poor choices, but they do require your Green Mamba to close to within 12-18", which is very close for a stealth gear. Since an enemy ignores your stealth within 6", you end up playing a dangerous game of chicken with these models. The MAC allows you to attempt to snipe from longer ranges, but you may find them unsatisfying in this role.

Snakeye Black Mambas increase to Stealth (5), which allows them to shoot from most concealment and remain hidden from even recon gears. This can allow them to operate as long range snipers, in conjunction with their very handy SLC. With exceptional range and good ACC (+1 for both the SEBM and SLC), a stationary Snakeye can be very dangerous against most gears.

The stars of the cadre are the humble Chameleons, variants of the Iguana chassis. With excellent Stealth, good DEF and solid weapon choices, a cadre composed entirely of chameleons isn't necessarily a bad thing. They have a TD to help guided weapons find their mark; but being attached to them (unlike a recon drone) you may have a hard time positioning them so that they benefit from concealment but their target does not. It is my opinion that using Chameleons for spotters are a waste of TV; there are other, less expensive units that can do this role better.

Instead, the Chameleons have many options to make them dangerous saboteurs or snipers. Though the DPG to LAC swap is rather pointless, the DPG to MRF (sniper) swap is excellent, giving you good range on a model with great stealth. Though they lack the ACC and ATK modifiers of the SBEM, they are cheaper and thus easier to field in numbers as a dedicated Sniper cadre. Coupled with the LRP to APGL swap (which saves some TV) and the TD to HPZF swap, you end up with a cadre that's useful at both short ranges and long, and dangerous at both.

Example Opsec Cadres:

[285 TV] Opsec Cadre 1 "All-star all-rounders" <Veteran>
[CGL] Chameleon w/ APGL, HPZF, Demo Drone
1x Green Mamba w/ LBZK, Demo Drone
2x Chameleon w/ APGL, HPZF, MRF, Demo Drone

Saboteurs par excellence, this squad is designed to get close and tear something to shreds. Featuring extremely heavy firepower that will only last a round or two (depending on CP usage), they need to hit hard and fade before strong resistance can be mounted against them. Used properly they will win games for you - but expose them to fire and they will die horribly.

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[310 TV] Opsec Cadre 1 "All-star all-rounders" <Veteran>
[CGL] Chameleon w/ APGL, HPZF, MRF
Chameleon w/ APGL, HPZF, MRF
2x Snakeye Black Mambas

This squad is designed to snipe from a distance, and do it well. Find a comfortable, secure spot to drop these guys - preferably in a crossfire situation - and let them pick off slower, less mobile gears. The Chameleons can get tangled in up close if necessary, but try to keep the SBEMs in the rear, to let keep shooting as long as possible. They need to make up for their higher costs.

ARMY COMPOSITION

As has been said elsewhere, the SRA has an abundance of elite troops inserted into common squads. Some squads benefit more than others, and this allows you to tailor your armies to your preferences, while preserving critical veteran slots. This is the often overlooked benefit of the Well Funded rule. By skimping on the upgrades you need for a squad that you want to include, you can unlock more potent abilities for squads you may not necessarily want to include and make them more useful. An excellent example of this is the Command Naga upgrade in a Strider cadre. As part of an armor force you can choose this option and do not have to spend the veterans choice; you can instead put it on a Strike cadre to allow 2 HGLs instead of just 1.

In my opinion, the SRA is well positioned to create both PL 2 and PL 3 army lists. While they have solid Core and Specialist choices, their Elite choice is only moderately useful, and acts more as a support element than a nucleus to build an army around. This gives players some options in how they choose to approach army composition; do they attempt to remain at PL 2 and rely upon the strength of the GP Cadre, or move up to PL 3 and rely upon the Strike Cadre or Strider Cadre. Any works well as the nucleus of an army, and fills it's required slots, freeing you to use whatever else you like. A Tank Cadre can also serve as a nucleus, though it's position as a Auxiliary makes it more complex; you either have to support it with 2 Core choices or a more expensive Specialist choice. Fortunately, PL 2 and PL 3 are both common PL levels for organised play, and the SRA remains a competitive force at either level.

Core Choices: CP Cadre, Infantry Platoon, Infantry Sniper Escouade

Both major Core choices (GP Cadre, Infantry Platoon) are useful for different reasons. The GP Cadre can be very useful on it's own, especially against gears. With an abundance of LBZKs

and LGLs, a South GP is a very solid investment for new players and veterans alike. SRA upgrades allow an abundance of Black Mamba gears, making the GP Cadre usable as a cheap Strike cadre which provides quite a bit of punch for any list.

On the other hand, Infantry can be used to provide a cheaper 'Core' requirement, or to serve a more specialised function as discussed above. It is in the first role (a cheap core) that they make their most common appearance in most lists, but you should not underestimate their ability to hold ground.

Auxiliary Choices: Recon Cadre, Fire Support Cadre, Tank Cadre, Cavalry Patrol

Auxiliary choices in a SRA army are very much the support units their name implies. At both PL 2 and PL 3 these choices provide more flexibility or striking power to the nucleus of the force, without compromising it's identity. Choosing how much TV to allocate to auxiliary choices - and which ones to take - are often the hardest choice when composing a SRA army.

Recon Cadres are often seen in SRA armies as they provide solid EW capability with some hitting power, if you so choose. They are often necessary to secure recon objectives or defend against an opponent's forward observations. Against an army that is reliant upon indirect fire, ECM can provide the ability to shut down one or two critical FOs, which most commanders can appreciate.

Fire Support Cadres are also a common sight, since they provide the same indirect firepower we were just discussing. Powerful and relatively cheap for their function, the South benefits strongly from the 4-gear cadre here. With a cheaper cadre you can go cheap and get a second one, or save the points to upgrade another element of your force. However they will not run interference against more mobile trooper gears well, so they need coordination with other units.

Tank Cadres have the potential be game-makers or game-breakers. It's a truism that given enough effort, a focused attack with an ATM will ruin any single model's day. However the sheer intimidation factor and firepower these monsters bring to the table can cow an opponent before you even begin. The very high cost associated with these models makes them more of a nucleus element rather than a pluggable support element; but for players who love armour, this isn't an issue. Everyone should have at least one tank in their Heavy Gear Army, and the SRA is no exception as they are solid, dependable choices that other elements in your army can use as a mobile fire-base.

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Cavalry patrols are very difficult units to use right, unless they are simply chaff for a Recon Hun. Caimans are fragile to being with, but low TV, so this squad can provide a small but useful TV sink, if you have more TV than you feel comfortable spending on upgrades. However, don't expect much out of them until you get used to their unique quirks.

Specialist Choices: Strike Cadre, Paratrooper Cadre, Strider Cadre, Field Gun Section

The specialist choices available to a SRA army are all solid, with the only marginal choice being the Field Gun Section. The remainder of the choices can all stand on their own as either the nucleus of a force, or as support elements for other parts of a force. Each brings its own problems and benefits to the table, and uniquely perhaps can support each other quite well.

Strike Cadres are a solid, dependable choice that many people fall back on, for good reason. They have excellent direct firepower and can bring respectable indirect firepower as well. Against gear-heavy armies a strike squad can do a significant amount of damage, though it can be overkill against infantry heavy armies. Tank heavy armies will require some customization and careful use of gears to make a strike squad shine, but it's still possible to bring down the big targets with this cadre. If you want to put together a PL 3 force, but don't know what to include, it's generally a safe bet to use a Strike cadre as the nucleus of your force.

Paratrooper Cadres are a bit more situational than Strike Cadres, as they are focused more on direct firepower than their Strike brethren. Their ability to airdrop may or may not be useful, depending on the size of the board you play upon and your opponent's force composition. And they can be as pricey as a Strike Cadre, if outfitted with Black Mambas. It's certainly possible to use these as a direct assault force that marches across the board into the teeth of the enemy positions, but you

will need to bring in longer ranged firepower for suppression from outside of this cadre. Keep this in mind if you decide to build your army around a Paratrooper Cadre.

Strider Cadres are flexible but fragile, and tend to be better in a support role rather than being the stars of the show. That's not to say you can't build an army around them; but their abilities are often better used when another cadre is taking the brunt of the enemy's ire. Nagas are potent fire support elements against gears and tanks, especially if there is thin, solid terrain on your deployment side where their sensor booms can be of use. Sagittarius are useful in various roles but highly specialized in

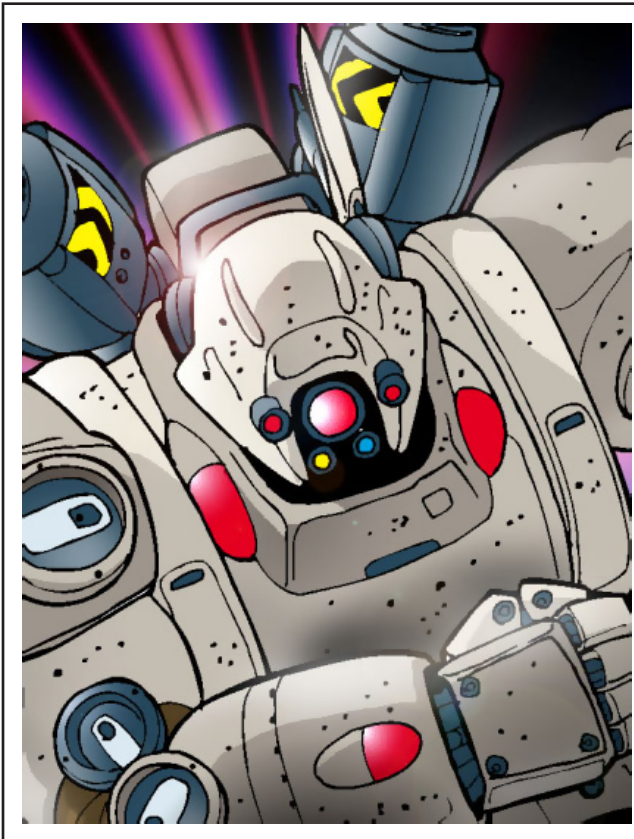
each; you shouldn't expect a stock Sagi to take an enemy hard point by its self. Fire Dragons can be heavy indirect firepower, but are terribly exposed on their own and need defensive elements to support them. For these reasons it's generally better to design an army that can meet its needs, and then plug in strider support options. However, there's nothing preventing you from taking a Command Naga, Long Fang Naga (2x LFG option) or Sagittarius as a single model for a cheap PL 3 unlock.

Field Gun sections are the same for all of the major powers; good indirect fire coupled with horrible defensive ability. Even from across the board, stationary field guns are a sitting duck and thus need to be well hidden. Their firepower can be very useful but you need to pick their deployment carefully, or they will be wasted. In low TV games you may want to steer clear of

using them as a force on their own, since a full squad can constitute a significant portion of your force. However, at any TV level they are excellent for fulfilling Specialist slot requirements.

Elite Choices: Opsec cadre

The only Elite slot choice for the SRA is the Opsec cadre. The highly specialized nature of this cadre, coupled with their high TV cost, makes including them in any force require that they be useful. Their stealth abilities can be very useful when coupled



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with more direct assault elements, and their recon abilities can supplement an existing recon cadre's role. However, they will likely not be game-makers on their own; your other elements need to be carefully considered when fielding an Opsec cadre.

Priority Level 2 Armies

Priority level 2 armies require two core choices and allow several auxiliary or specialist choices to be taken. Fortunately for the SRA, both of their core choices are excellent and can fill these requirements nicely. Generally speaking you will equip your core choices with the Well Funded rule, and reserve your veteran slots for either your auxiliary or specialist choices. This allows you to have practically veteran GP Cadres working alongside a veteran Strike cadre for a very dangerous, in your face army.

Keep in mind that some choices - like putting your Army Commander in a Command Naga - will necessitate not using the Well Funded rule to it's full capacity. It typically makes Black Mambas or Iguanas - or some variant thereof - available to a squad, and doing this prevents much choice in the way of your army commander for other vehicles. Like most issues with the SRA, this is one of balance and finding your own preference for how elite you want your forces to be.

Priority Level 3 Armies

Priority level 3 armies require a specialist choice, but allow unlimited auxiliary and one core choice per auxiliary taken. This will typically be a PL you will want to take to include Strike cadres or Paratrooper Cadres as the central theme of your force, or if you want those elements at a low TV level. However this is also an excellent priority level if you wish to blend a well-balanced 'generalist' force together, as you can take several strong specialist squads who hopefully can work together to a great effect.

Consider carefully the auxiliary choices you bring in a PL 3 force. Generally speaking most auxiliary choices do not benefit from Well Funded as much as the GP Cadre does, making the requirement to include them sometimes difficult to work with. The GP Cadre provides solid anti-gear firepower for a relatively cheap TV cost, making it a crowd favorite, and if you intend to include more than one in a PL 3 force, you will either need to play a high TV limit game or use the less effective Cavalry Patrol choices to meet this priority level's composition requirements. If there is some mix of multiple auxiliary choices you must have, you might consider dropping to PL 2 instead.

Priority Level 4 Armies

Priority Level 4 armies require 1 elite choice; which means you are required to field an Opsec cadre. The caveats and warnings of using an Opsec cadre come front and center when you are considering a PL 4 army. Unless you are dead-set on including a Opsec cadre, it's worth noting that this priority level only buys you one more veteran slot than PL 3 and one more support point. The veteran slot isn't as useful to the SRA as other armies, thanks to the Well Funded rule, but you will have to determine how critical that support point is to your army. It's my opinion that the lower victory requirements of PL 3 are more suitable for the vast majority of SRA armies instead of PL 4, since your force composition is still very flexible.

Using (and abusing) the MILICIA

Though I did not cover it extensively in this discussion, one of the major benefits of the SRA is the ability to field an 'attached' PL 1 MILICIA army. The MILICIA army features many TV saving choices, making them an excellent way to keep your total model count high, while your SRA force has only a few, elite models. A single GP Cadre with veteran Rattlenakes and SD Jagers w/ LBZKs comes in just around 110 TV, and carries a heavy punch for their cost. Other cadres can benefit similarly from this optional rule, and a wise SRA commander will make good use of the MILICIA as cheap 'cannon-fodder' for his more elite units.

The PL 1 requirement for the MILICIA does make their inclusion more useful at PL 3 than PL 2, since you will rarely want to include 3 Core choices in a SRA + MILICIA combined army (unless for modeling or aesthetic purposes). Since they are a different 'army' they do not fall under the one core for one auxiliary requirement of a PL 3 army, allowing the SRA commander to focus on specialist forces and bypassing any auxiliary requirements. This gives the SRA unmatched flexibility at PL 3, as their force composition requirements are greatly weakened.

One word of caution however; never include a MILICIA detachment over 750 TV. At this point, the MILICIA detachment requires it's own army commander, and that's (in my opinion) 40 TV wasted. This is only an option for a 1500 TV or greater game however, so you may never come across this requirement in normal play.

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SAMPLE ARMIES

Here are a few sample armies for your viewing benefit. These are not necessarily highly competitive armies, but armies that I've tried to showcase the benefits of playing SRA with. Often those two goals intersect, but not always.

500 TV Sample Armies

PL 2 "Anti-gear Patrol" [SP: 3 CP: 3]

{APE: 0.74 TAR: 0.64 BUC: 0.64 CGD: 0.8 AMP: 1.13 }

[265 TV] GP Cadre 1 <Veteran>: [AC] Black Mamba w/ LD:2, Remove Weak Facing; 2x Black Mamba w/ LBZK; 1x Sidewinder

[235 TV] GP Cadre 2 <Veteran>: [CGL] Command Jager w/ LBZK; 2x Black Mamba w/ LBZK; 1x Sidewinder

As the name suggests, both of these squads are equipped to attack and destroy rival gears with frightening efficiency. The LBZKs can one-shot kill most opposing gears from the Black Mambas, and the Sidewinders' MRP provides some indirect punch. This army is a bit weak against armor and has no stunning capability; swap some of the LBZKs for Paratrooper rifles on a Mamba or two to remedy the latter.

PL 2 "Airdropped Patrol" [SP: 3 CP: 3]

{APE: 1 TAR: 0.96 BUC: 0.96 CGD: 1.2 AMP: 0.92 }

[265 TV] Paratroop Cadre 1 <Veteran>: [AC] Black Mamba w/ Remove Weak Facing; 1x Iguana Commando; 2x Jager Paratroopers w/ LGM

[120 TV] Infantry Platoon 1: [CGL] Infantry Escouade w/ ATV, Demo Drone; 3x Infantry Escouade w/ ATV, Demo Drone

[115 TV] Infantry Platoon 2: [CGL] Infantry Escouade w/ AGR, Demo Drone; 3x Infantry Escouade w/ Light Mortar

This army has three parts that need to work in conjunction. The first is the paratroop cadre, which has most of the punch in the army. It doesn't have a great amount of firepower, but can finish off targets that have been weakened by the light mortars of the infantry platoon 2. Infantry platoon 1 spots for the indirect fire of infantry platoon 2 or the LGMs on the Paratroop cadre. In general, try to stay a little back from the front line and hammer your opponent with indirect fire.

PL 3 "Recon in Force" [SP: 4 CP: 4]

{APE: 1 TAR: 1.12 BUC: 0.72 CGD: 1.2 AMP: 1.16 }

[290 TV] Strike Cadre <Veteran>: [AC] Black Mamba w/ VLRP/32, LD:3, ATK:3, DEF:3; 1x Black Mamba w/ VLRP/32, HGL; 1x Sidewinder; 1x Black Adder w/ 2x MRP/36 (linked)

[115 TV] Cavalry Patrol: [CGL] Caiman APC, 1x Recon Hun, 1x Caiman

[95 TV] Cavalry Patrol: [CGL] Caiman APC, 1x Recon Hun

This army is designed to kill gears and be difficult for most other 500 TV forces to deal with. While the Caimans are fragile, the Recon Huns are not, and bring their LLCs to the party. Few gears will stand up to both of them firing each turn as they cross the board. The Strike Cadre has a mix of weapons, from the MAC on the Army Commander to the Black Adder's MRPs. The Black Mamba with HGL has the ability to do damage and stun opponents, and should not be underestimated. This is a relatively smash-mouth type of force that is easy to work with - just avoid recon objectives.

750 TV Sample Armies

PL2 "Vanilla" [SP: 3 CP: 2]

{APE: 0.9 TAR: 0.85 BUC: 0.85 CGD: 1.07 AMP: 0.87 }

[220 TV] GP Cadre <Veteran>: [AC] Black Mamba; 1x Black Mamba w/ LBZK; 1x Jager; 1x Sidewinder

[90 TV] Infantry Platoon: [CGL] Infantry Escouade w/ AGR; 2x Infantry Escouade w/ AGR; 1x Infantry Escouade w/ Light Mortar

[215 TV] Recon Cadre: [CGL] Iguana w/ LRP/32, Sat. Uplink, 2x Iguana w/ ECM(3), ECCM(3); 1x Iguana w/ LRP/32

[225 TV] Fire Support Cadre: [CGL] Jager; 2x Spitting Cobra w/ VHAC; 1x Spitting Cobra w/ VHAC, VLFG

This is about as vanilla as it comes, showcasing the south's ability to bring 4 cadres of mixed elements at 750 TV quite nicely. Dropping the TDs from the Iguanas doesn't hurt this army as there are no guided weapons, and the Spitting Cobras can provide heavy firepower from their HRPs within a wide radius. The Infantry platoon should be deployed on any defend objectives with clear lines of sight, using their light mortar to

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stun targets for the AGRs. The GP Cadre is very flexible and can be configured as you see fit; I've included what I consider a decent 'SRA' flavored one, but with 220 TV you could drop the Black Mambas and field Jagers as alternatives, and put the Fire Support CGL in a Sidewinder for more firepower. The choice is yours - this is a very plain template only.

PL 3 "Armor, Striders and Infantry - Oh My!" [SP: 4 CP: 3]
{APE: 0.95 TAR: 1.23 BUC: 0.69 CGD: 1.07 AMP: 0.85 }

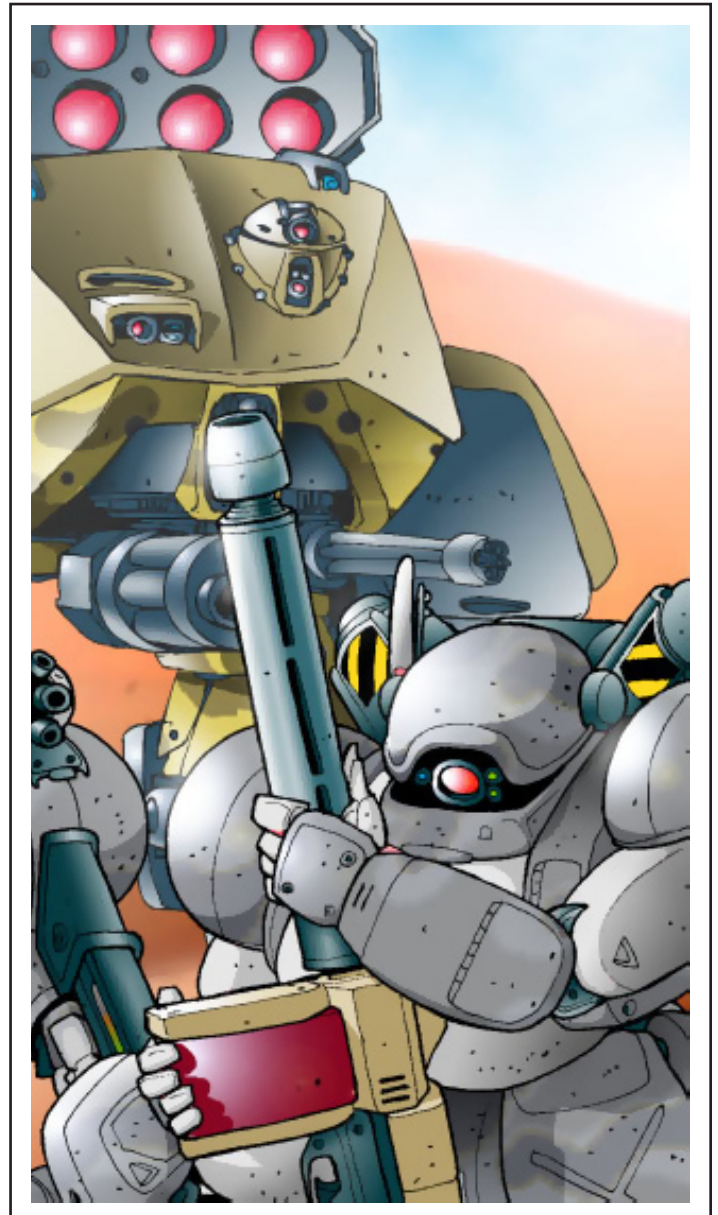
[170 TV] Strider Cadre <Veteran>: [CGL] Sagittarius w/ ABM;
1x Sagittarius w/ ABM

[100 TV] Strider Cadre: [AC] Command Naga w/ AGM

[280 TV] Tank Cadre <Veteran>: [CGL] Visigoth w/ LD:2, Hun
w/ VLRP/128s

[210 TV] Infantry Cadre <Veteran>: [CGL] Infantry Escouade w/
AGR, 2x Infantry Escouade w/ AGR; 1x Infantry Escouade w/
Light Mortar; 4x Caiman w/ HRP/48

An odd army but an uncommon one at 750 TV. The Sagittarius act as recon elements that can also handle light gears or infantry, while the Command Naga sits safely in cover to direct the battle. The Visigoth can serve either as a line breaker or defensive platform, and the Hun w/ VLRPs scoots forward to observe and generate crossfire for the Visigoth. The Infantry Cadre will only work as a defensive element, but can provide quite a bit of firepower, especially if the Sagittarius are spotting for them. This army lacks mobility and can be outflanked easily, but when used properly brings an enormous amount of firepower to the table.



Southern Republican Army -- Heavy Firepower



From the line editor...

Operation: Drop Bears Dive! (DP9-9175) is now available! Grab your copy from our DriveThruRPG store and get ready to hurl yourself out of a perfectly good airplane. We've got a few pages for you to peruse in this month's issue to whet your appetite.

As we continue developing our next product ideas we've been attending the convention circuit these past few months and have some photos to share of the great battles that ensued, demoing Heavy Gear Blitz! and introducing new and old players alike to the worlds of DP9.

Have a great summer season!



CanGames 2010



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Game Summit 2010



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HEAVY GEAR MEMORIAL

IV



MEMORIAL

The sounds of sizzling and welding echoed through the hangar, where Massimiliano was sitting with his dinner. The contents of the Weird but Tasty take out box sat half-eaten on the table next to the blueprints of his design. The strange fungus meal never settled well in his stomach, but it reminded him of times gone by. Today was his anniversary. He usually celebrated by drinking a bottle of Fort James Best, sometimes two bottles when the pain was too much to bear. Twenty cycles and the wounds of Burnington Gate hadn't fully healed and probably never would.

Charlie tapped at Massimiliano's pant leg and reached up to the haggard engineer. The grey marsupial had been a gift from the 117th MUCIA, a unit that he had served next to in Baja for over a season. The commandant of the unit had helped him get through the worst of his self-destructive habits and a strong friendship had been won that cycle in addition to retribution against the CEF-ers that dared attack their planet.

Reaching over, Massimiliano picked up the koala from the floor and set it on his lap. Almost immediately, Charlie grabbed the shiny paratrooper badge off the table and the small creature began turning the green and brass pin over in his claws. He looked up to the mechanic before extending his paw and handing it to him. "So much like a child," Massimiliano thought to himself. He grinned and took the badge offered to him. Charlie leaned forward and grabbed the Weird but Tasty box to help himself to its contents. The mechanic rubbed the koala's head and let it enjoy the brown, sauce-infused fungus.

Massimiliano's eyes drifted towards the picture that was partially hidden under the blueprint and he felt a sadness well up inside him. He had lost so many friends and fellow soldiers over the cycles. "Never again," he told himself. His design would save lives in his regiment. It would bring firepower to where they needed it at the front. Tomorrow's field-test would prove to the proposal that her faith in his work was justified. Tomorrow, he would prove to himself that he could still make a difference. "I'm still here, protecting them, Kat," the mechanic prayed silently hoping his wife would hear him. Massimiliano's eyes looked over at the glass of whiskey he'd poured for himself, but hadn't started on yet. "Not this cycle," he thought. "No, never again..."

"Come on Charlie, we need to get a good night's rest. We have to be at our best when we show off your species' namesake tomorrow." The koala looked up at the mechanic, its paw stilled in its mouth. The wretched animal nodded, hopped off the chair, and walked a few paces before turning around.

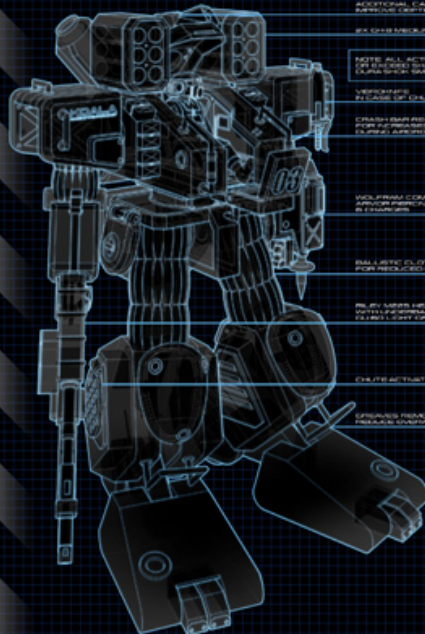
TOO HEAVY TO HANDLE



TOO HEAVY TO HANDLE

HEAVY GEAR SPEC SHEETS

KOALA HACS-01 HG-PARA/AST



GENERAL STATS

Threat Value	795
Threat Value Clvl	795
Offensive Threat Value	1,658
Defensive Threat Value	306
Midline/Weak Threat Value	354
Offensive Threat Value Clvl	1,237
Defensive Threat Value Clvl	436
Midline/Weak Threat Value Clvl	863
Size	7
Original Default Size	9
Individual Lancer Clvl	3
Core Actions	1 / 1 Clvl; 2 actual
Reus Actions	0

ARMOR

Armor Clvl	16
Light Damage	16
Heavy Damage	33
Overkill	48

ELECTRONICS

Sensors	0 (2)clvl
Communications	0 (1)clvl
Fire Control	0

MOVEMENT

Primary Movement Mode	Walker
Combat Speed	3
Top Speed	6
Secondary Movement Mode	Ground
Combat Speed	6
Top Speed	12
Maneuver	0

VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS

Name	Koala
Vehicle Type	Walker
Production Type	Mass Produced
Cost	471,214,29
Manufacturer	NorthCo / Riley Weapons Systems
Use	Deep Strike
Height	4.8 meters
Width	3.7 meters
Arm. Armor Thickness	74 mm
Armor Material	Steel w/ Composite
Standard Op. Weight	6500 kg
Primary Movement Mode	Walker (28 spd)
Secondary Movement Mode	Ground (72 spd)
Deployment Range	400 km
Sensor Range	2 km
Communication Range	10 km
Powerplant	V Engine
Engine Output	780 hp

AVAILABILITY

Availability Threshold	4
Max. Number on Field	10

PERKS

Name	Rating	Base Effects	Perk
Air Droppable		Can Be Airdropped	Ass
Hostile Environmental Protection: Desert			
Improved Off-Road (Off-Road Ability)	-1	MP cost, minimum 1 MP	
Reinforced Armor (Front)	1	F ArL, add to base armor	
Manipulator Arm x2	7	Can punch	

FLAWS

Name	Rating	Base Effects	Flaw
Large Sensor Profile	1	Subtract rating from Concealment	

WEAPONS (2nd Edition)

Qty	Name	Acq	Acc	Base	Range	SR	Rate	Special
1	Heavy Autocannon	HAC	F	+10	3 / 8 / 12 / 24	11	60	
2	Medium Rocket Pack/PS	MRP/PS	FF	+10	2 / 4 / 8 / 16	+3	18	F
1	Light Machine Gun	LMG	F	0	x3 / 1 / 2 / 4 / 8	+4	200	AI
1	Light Grenade Launcher	LGL	F	-1	+15 / 1 / 2 / 4 / 8	+2	4	F
1	Heavy Spike Gun	HSG	F	-1	+14 / 0 / 0 / 0 / 0	0	6	AP

WEAPONS (3rd Edition)

Qty	Name	Type	Acc	Acc	Base	SR	Rate	Perks & Flaws, Notes
1	Heavy Autocannon	F	F	+10	3	1	40	HP, HEAT
2	Medium Rocket Pack/PS	M	FF	+10	2	3	18	HP, AI
1	Light Machine Gun	P	F	0	x3	1	4	200
1	Light Grenade Launcher	M	F	-1	+10	1	2	4, HP, F, HEAT
1	Heavy Spike Gun	P	F	-1	+14	M	0	6

HEAVY GEAR
BLITZ!

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Article Guidelines

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

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

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

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

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

Submission Guidelines

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

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

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

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

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

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

Copyright Guidelines

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

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

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

The End Print

Please send all submissions to the following email address:

auroramag@gmail.com

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

Deadline for Submissions for Issue #4.5: August 15th 2010

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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.