

**World Championship Rules  
The Black Asp Speaks  
Deathrunners**

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**Autoduel  
Quarterly**  
The CAR WARS® Magazine



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**Vol. 10, No. 2**

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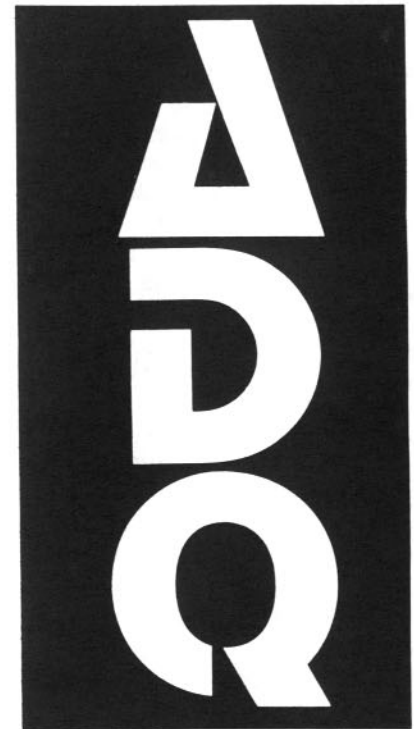
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# THE DRIVER'S SEAT

## The Electronic Age

If you want to submit a freelance submission to a magazine like *ADQ*, it's always a good idea to impress your editor. And the best way to impress *this* editor is to send your submissions on an MS-DOS compatible computer disk (either size is fine), in ASCII format.

Try to keep the ASCII as clean as possible, with a minimum of computer formatting tags. Working straight from disk makes my job infinitely easier, and makes producing the magazine significantly more efficient and economical.

A submission on disk definitely *will* be chosen over a submission of comparable quality on hard copy only. Please though, for your own protection, send a hard copy of your article along with the disk.

## 10 Years After

In case it slipped your mind, *ADQ* 10/4 will be the 10th anniversary, 40th issue of this magazine. I'm already looking at several special surprises for this issue, but I'm also interested in hearing what you'd like to see. If you have any ideas to celebrate our first decade, drop me a line. Ideas received before September 1 have the best chance of actually being used.

## Classier Classified

Use of "ADQ Classified" has really soared in the last couple of issues, and that's great. But when I was updating the page for this issue, I became appalled at how many of the ads started out *exactly the same way*. Folks, ask yourself, if your classified starts out with ATTENTION DUELLISTS!, and every other classified starts out with ATTENTION DUELLISTS! too, what's going to make people look at your ad?

So I went through and did a little editing. From now on ATTENTION has been banished from the classified altogether, and WANTED and LOOKING FOR have been reserved for ads about buying or trading games or merchandise – they're no longer used for ads about duellists looking for duellists. I took all the existing ads that began with the offending terms and replaced them with the city and state (or province, or country) of the person who placed the ad. This should make it easier

for readers to scan the page to see if there's anything there from their neck of the woods.

Nonetheless, when writing a classified ad, it's good to remember that you want that ad to be *noticed* and *read* by somebody, so try to come up with an amusing or eye-catching lead. Just don't get too cutesy, or you'll look like a flake. And don't get too chatty, or your ad will be mercilessly butchered by yours truly. If you can come up with two or three words that will grab the reader, great. If not, stick to the facts – where you're from, what you want and how people can get in touch with you. Just don't start the ad with ATTENTION!

## What's New

The *Car Wars Military Vehicle Guide* should be out about the time you read this. In addition to more than 80 designs for hard-hitting 21st-century combat vehicles, this opus also includes a guide to a commercial combat zone, and more than 150 full-color, two-sided counters, from dirt bikes to blimps (and even a chicken). At only \$12.95, this book is the *Car Wars* bargain of the year.

Other than that, everything is pretty much on the same track as reported last issue. The first *Car Warriors* novel from

Tor Books, David Drake's *The Square Deal*, should be on the racks within a few weeks of this issue of *ADQ*, and Tor is already so happy with the series that they've contracted with SJ Games to produce a fourth novel.

It's not officially on the schedule yet, but the next major *Car Wars* release will probably be the long-awaited second edition of *Chassis and Crossbow*. Also waiting in the wings are *Vehicle Guide 4* and the heavy transit supplement, *Golden Spike*.

*GURPS Vehicles* is still planned for early next year, with the second edition of *GURPS Autoduel* to follow apace.

Also due early next year are Ral Partha's new *Car Wars* miniatures. In the meantime, look for Ral Partha's miniatures for *Ogre* (due out in August) and for SJ Games' new miniatures battle system, *Hot Lead*.

Finally, you may notice a brand new boxed game from SJ Games on the shelf – *Orbit War*. Just so nobody gets confused, this is not the *Car Wars* supplement dealing with space shuttles and scramjets (which we'll probably do, someday). *Orbit War* is a two-person game of near-orbit satellite warfare. It's extremely cool, with rules for lots of deadly hardware, and a unique and realistic movement system, but it has nothing to do with *Car Wars*.

---

## Remember the Good Old Days?

Back when *Car Wars* vehicles didn't float, fly or rumble? Back before gas engines and x-ray lasers? Back when your *Car Wars* game fit in the back pocket of your body armor?

Well, Uncle Al remembers, and he wants you to remember with him.

### Announcing . . . Uncle Albert's Classic Catalog Collector's Packs!

Uncle Al will send you a copy of his **2035**, **2038** and **2039 Catalogs** – featuring the first appearance of classic gadgets like the Rocket Magazine, Smoke Discharger and Flame Cloud Ejector – all three for the unbelievable price of just \$10.00.

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE! Each package comes *individually signed and numbered* by "Uncle Al" HIMSELF!

These catalogs are no longer being offered to stores! They're not in the SJ Games Catalog! This offer is your last chance to grab these autoduellings classics, and it's **ONLY** being made to *ADQ* subscribers. Only 100 Classic Catalog Collector's Packs are available, then they are GONE!

The **Uncle Al Classic Catalog Collector's Pack** is a must-have for *Car Wars* completists and nostalgic autoduellists. Don't wait, friend – this offer will **NOT** come again.

Send \$10.00 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling (\$5.00 overseas) to: Uncle Al Collector's Pack, Steve Jackson Games Incorporated, PO Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760.

# AADA NEWS

## Regional Championships

DICE will host the Northwest Regionals July 11, at the Panreality Games convention in Everett, WA. For convention information contact Dreamcon, Panreality Games, 1992, 10121 Evergreen Way, Suite 103, Everett, WA 98004, or call Rick Lewis at (206) 337-4979 or J.P. Lost at (206) 271-9578. For information on the tournament, contact Greg Pratt, 14004 Silver Firs Dr., Everett, WA 9820, or call (206) 337-4979, or call David Schwebke at (206) 774-9577.

GONADS will host the Midwest regionals July 18, at 3807 N. Monroe Ave., Peoria Heights, IL 61614. The Div. 40 event will be held in a custom 3-D arena. Handling, speed and jumps will be emphasized. For more information, call Pat Barrett at (309) 685-2908.

And finally, CONFETTI-RAH! will host the Northwest Regional Championship the evening of July 10th, at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. The tournament will be two rounds, both Div. 25, probably in Hammer Downs. For more information contact Eric S. Goodman at (919) 668-2506.

## Regional Champions

Grand Master Duellist Mike Montgomery has officially come out of retirement to take the 2042 FOS Regional Championships, breezing to the top of a field of four in this two-round event.

Tim "The Weasel" Jacques remains unbeatable in the Central region, taking yet another regional title against a field of six. Don Jacques took second, and NOVA president Norman McMullen was third.

NOVA also hosted a racing regional for the midwest. Chris French took the championship and Norman McMullen took second in a three-round event.

Robert Shattuk is the Southeast Regional champion, winning a two-round event that ended in a 25-turn one-on-one duel against runner-up Chris Woods. Club president John M. Hurtt sat out the duel to officiate. He later made a play for the FOS Regional Title, but couldn't stand against Mike Montgomery.

The Canadian regionals were marred by controversy, when the winning car was found to be slightly overweight and over-budget at the end of the duel. The referee

deferred his decision to the AADA administration, which after reviewing the situation upheld Terry Wright of Saskatchewan at the Canadian Regional champion. Sal Costanzo of Masters took second in a Division-25 duel held in a 3-D recreation of Hammer Downs.

## Club Champions

DICE president Greg Pratt is also champion of his club, beating David Schwebke by a single point in a duel in Hammer Downs.

Dan Goertzen took the MASTERS championship in a hard-fought Division-60 3-car duel in the Gladiator Dueltrack. Club president Mike Hughes came in second in the five-man, 15-car event. The winner relied on concealed laser-guided rockets and a fake ramplate to take the day.

MADD's new champion is Joe Whelan, winning his title in the Central Missouri Combat Zone Urban Assault Facility - several blocks of bombed-out buildings - in an event with *no* prior examination of competitors' vehicles. Doug Roberts took second. Club president and this year's referee for the worlds, Craig Sheeley, played spoiler, but only made it to third place.

Randy Jung took the AVRO (formerly VCAA) title for the second year in a row. The duel was Div. 30, and ended in a fiery head-on between Jung and club president Bruce Lam. The winner's design, the *Ice Pirate*, was an x-hvy gasburning trike with two HMGs, an FOJ and prodigious amounts of component armor.

Chris Woods captured his second GODS championship in a four-man Div. 30 survival event. Dave Snipes took sec-

ond, and future regional champ Robert Shattuck was third.

Paul Dreyer is the CONFETTI-RAH! champion. That's all that's been reported so far about that duel.

## Official Tournament Rules Addendum

In view of the controversy over the Canadian Regional Championships (see above), the AADA is instituting the following addition to the "Vehicles and Equipment" section of the "Rules and Regulations for AADA-Sanctioned Tournament Combat," which originally appeared in *ADQ* 9/1.

Vehicle designs should be checked before the event by the referee, or another independent and impartial official. Illegal designs should be modified. If the design cannot be made legal, the duellist should be offered the choice of (1) submitting an alternate vehicle, (2) using a stock vehicle provided by the referee or (3) withdrawing from the competition.

If a vehicle is found to be illegal *during* competition (whether it was checked in advance or not), the vehicle will be modified by the referee to make it legal, and the duel will continue from the point it was stopped, with the modified vehicle. If the vehicle cannot be modified, it will be immediately removed from play.

If a vehicle is found to be illegal *after* the competition is over, the duellist will be stripped of his standing *only* if, in the judgment of the referee, based on the course of the duel, it would have been impossible for him to have attained his final standing with a legal design.

## 2042 World Championship Rules

Both the 2042 World Duelling Championships and the 2042 World Racing Championships will be held at the combined Origins/Gen Con convention in Milwaukee, WI. For convention information, contact 1992 Gen Con/Orgins, Game Fair Registration, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147, or FAX (414) 248-0389.

*Rule 1:* You must be a current member of the AADA, and present a copy of *ADQ*

10/2 with your address label attached. Competitors from sponsored AADA chapters may present a signed note from the manager of the sponsoring store, preferably on store stationary, indicating that the bearer is an active member of the AADA chapter. You *may* join the AADA at the convention, by paying for a subscription to *ADQ* at the SJ Games booth.

*Rule 2:* Vehicle designs must be turned in the *day before* the event you wish to

participate in, at the Steve Jackson Games booth. You may submit up to three designs for the referee to check; please indicate order or preference. No exceptions!

**Rule 3:** All rules in the *Car Wars Compendium, Second Edition* and *Uncle Albert's Catalog From Hell* and any official errata printed since their publication will be in effect. No rule or rule changes published after this issue of *Autoduel Quarterly* will be used. In case of conflict, *Catalog from Hell* takes precedence over the *Compendium*, as the more recent interpretation of the rules.

**Rule 4:** Any car found to be illegal may be altered by the referee to make it legal. If the referee determines that none of the submitted designs can be made legal, a substitute car will be issued.

**Rule 5:** Foul language, harassment of another player, coaching by a non-player or any other non-sportsmanlike activity (as determined by the referee or an SJ Games employee) are grounds for disqualification. There are no appeals.

**Rule 6:** Have fun.

## Events

The 2042 World Championships will be a four-round, five-event tournament. The at-large qualifier will consist of two events, one Thursday and one Friday. Competitors in the first event who do not advance will be allowed to compete in the second event, to keep record keeping simple and to reward those who attend the full con. Rounds two and three will be held on Saturday, and the final will be Sunday morning.

All rounds will award two points for a firepower kill and two points for a mobility kill, with an equivalent penalty for being firepower or mobility killed, in addition to any special scoring rules for individual rounds (see below).

Anything in the *Uncle Albert's Catalog From Hell* may be used, except those items marked as AADA-illegal or restricted. Gas engines and dropped weapons may be used in all rounds.

Advancement criteria will be determined by the referee, based on the number of competitors in each round.

Round 1 will be a Div. 5 contest using stock vehicles to be posted at the time of the event. Round 1 vehicles will be available for viewing at the SJ Games booth before each round 1 event.

The at-large qualifiers will be held in the arena from the small-box *Car Wars* game ("*Car Wars Classic*") with the op-

tional (white) obstacles removed. Scoring will be based entirely on kills. Both high scorers and sole survivors from each arena will be guaranteed an advance.

Round 2 will be a Div. 15 event held in the same arena, with the optional obstacles in place. One-half point will be awarded for driving between any of the four pairs of black and white bunkers. Points will not be awarded for going between the same pair twice in a row.

Round 3 will be held in the Arches Autoduel Park from the *Car Wars Arena Book*. Competitors will score 1/2 point for each bridge they pass over. Points will not be awarded for going over the same bridge twice in a row. Division-20 vehicles will be used.

The 2042 World Championship finals will be a Division 25 event held in a 3-D mockup of the Flying Fortress from *L'Outrance*. Tire shredders will be activated. One point will be awarded for a jump from the first level to the second, and two points for a jump from the second level to the same level, or from the second level to the third. Two points will be awarded for each lap of the third level that ends with a successful jump to level 2. Laps may begin or end at either of the ramps to level 3.

The arena will be *gridless*. Measuring the range to a target will be a firing action – the vehicle can fire on the same turn it measures range *only* at the target it measured to.

**Example:** Car A measures the range to Car B. Car B is too far away to hit, so Car A saves his ammo and doesn't fire. Car A has still used his firing action, and cannot fire in that turn. Car B measures the distance to an oncoming obstacle, using up his firing action. Car C measures the distance to Car B, then fires at Car B in the same turn.

## Characters

In all rounds, a vehicle may carry at most two characters. No passengers allowed. Characters should be built on 50 points, with a maximum of 30 in any one skill. Reflex rolls will be rolled individually.

## Seeds

Certain competitors may be seeded directly to higher rounds, as follows.

**Round 1:** Any current AADA member may participate in this round.

**Round 2:** Reported club champions and regional tournament referees will be seeded to this round.

**Round 3:** Reported regional champions and last year's finalists will be seeded to this round.

**Round 4:** Only the sitting world champion will be seeded to this round.

There is no seed for former world champions.

Third- and fourth-round seeds (reported regional champions and 2041 finalists, and the sitting champion) are eligible for a \$50 cash travel reimbursement, which may be picked up at the SJ Games booth.

A seeded competitor may choose to give up his seed in order to start at a lower round. In other words, if a regional champ wants to compete in the at-large qualifiers he may do so, but he forfeits his seed to round three – if he's eliminated in round 1 or 2, he's out.

## World Racing Championships

The World Racing Championships will also be held at Origins/Gen Con. This will be a two-round, three-event tournament. The at-large qualifiers are open to any AADA member, and will be held Thursday and Friday, with the finals on Saturday. Racing Championship and Duelling Championship events will be staggered to allow duellists to compete in both.

All rules above apply equally to the racing championships as to the duelling championships.

The at-large qualifiers will be a Div.-10 motorcycle race on an oval track. Bikes will be stock vehicles posted at the time of the event. Bikes can be viewed at the SJ Games booth before each Round 1 event. The 4 to 6 vehicles (depending on participation) from each event with the fastest time will advance to round 2.

The final round of the Racing Championship will be a Div. 30 Can-Am race on a custom 1/2-mile track. Points will be scored for passing other cars and completing laps – highest point total wins. There will be no weapons fire on the first lap. Competitors are advised to design for high top speed and good braking. Can-Am bodies only, and *no dropped solids or liquids*.

Characters must be created as for the Duelling Championships, above. Separate characters may be used for the at-large qualifiers and the finals.

Only the sitting World Racing Champion will receive a seed to the second round of the Racing Championships. All other competitors must advance from the at-large qualifiers.

# Rhode's Roads: A Day With the Deathrunners

By Cheryl Stevens

[An interview by NNAA journalist, Bob Rhode]

The morning sun glares through the spotted window as I sit, trying to smooth the rough edges of the early hour with a cup of something like coffee. For me, such drowsy moments are commonplace. News doesn't keep decent hours. Today is a special case, for today *Rhode's Roads* goes on the road with the much-maligned deathrunners.

The place is "Death's Door," a tiny greasy spoon in a forgotten corner of the Midwest called Gages Lake, IL. It's a deathrunner hangout, open at all hours to accommodate its bizarre clientele. It's also the place I've agreed to meet with the Packrats, a successful freelance deathrunning squad, in order to join them on a "pickup."



They make their appearance at six, a motley bunch spilling in the door, calling a casual greeting to the early-morning regulars. Some seat themselves on the torn vinyl of my booth, others pull up chairs, and one sits on the next table. Smiling, "Doc" Wallace, a charismatic young woman, introduces me to the members of her squad: Brett Miller, ex-duellist from the Alabama amateur circuits; Sam, who admits this is a pseudonym and wishes to remain anonymous; Izumi Saito, expert in electronics and a student of

death philosophy; Joe Paolo, the group's mechanic; and Mike MacDunne, grizzled veteran of both deathrunning and professional combat football. With this odd group assembled, I begin my interview.

**RR:** *Many of my readers have little concept of your work and how it fits into the business of cloning. Could you enlighten them on that subject?*

**JOE:** *(laughing)* We scrape up what's left of the rich stiff's and take 'em to the mad scientists. Ain't much more to it than that.

**DOC:** Crudely put, but accurate enough. When a client of a cloning company dies, and the company is unable or unwilling to send in its own pickup teams, deathrunners pick up the corpse for memory transfer. It sounds simple enough, but it's not an easy job. A couple of hours are all we've got to get the bodies to cold storage before the memories are lost, and there are all kinds of hazards to deal with. They don't all die in their sleep, you know. I've seen cars come off of deathruns looking worse than the losers of professional duels. Repair costs can get ridiculous.

**RR:** *Aren't the vehicles supplied, and therefore repaired by the companies you serve?*

**DOC:** No... except, of course, for the high-profile Gold Cross units, manned by techs. Deathrunners keep pretty much to their own squad, you see, which might be employed by several different companies over the years. A company's not willing to buy a vehicle for an unfamiliar squad to take out and get shot up; so, even if they display a company logo, the escort vehicles and hearses are property of the squad.

**MIKE:** We don't think of ourselves as company employees. When you're a deathrunner, your first loyalty is to your squad. To the company you're the little guy, the grunt. They don't like to think about you. So business is left pretty much to the squad, especially if it's freelance, like the Packrats.

**RR:** *When do the companies use their own techs for a pickup, and when do they use deathrunners?*

**DOC:** Company vehicles handle routine local traffic – they pick up from hospitals and homes, and handle most of the road casualties that actually take place in the same city as their home base. They're also kept on hand for CCZ wars and major AADA events.

Deathrunners mostly work the outskirts of the cloning facility's region. To make it as a deathrunner, you have to be willing to go anywhere, at any time. We go places where the police won't go... daily.

**MIKE:** The company techs get the milk runs, we handle the rough stuff.

**DOC:** That's not really fair. Some city pickups can be as bad as anything in the uncivilized zones, and the company techs are always on hand for riots, hostage situations and other police emergencies – that's no milk run. But the fact remains, Deathrunners will make the pickup anywhere.

**RR:** *Is it contempt on the part of the company that has influenced the social rejection of your occupation?*

**IZUMI:** Actually, there is a tendency in many Western cultures to fear and reject anything associated with death. The death-

runners, I believe, are victims of this superstitious fear. You would not be here if deathrunning did not hold some morbid fascination for your society, yet revulsion is mainly what your readers will feel towards us and our job.

**JOE:** Yeah, for some reason blood, gore and severed body parts with dangling shreds of skin and veins puts folks off. Go figure.

**DOC:** As you might have noticed, the occupation tends to make one callous about death, and the morbid sense of humor we sometimes develop to cope is often considered in bad taste.

**MIKE:** When you make money from dead men, people think you're some kind of vulture, like you're waiting around for your clients to kick off. The clone companies are making even more money off the business, but people only see them resurrecting. I ain't knockin' the Gold Cross or nothin', but there's not much to their miracles if the clone wakes up an amnesiac. That's not immortality.

**RR:** *So what you're saying is that the deathrunners' reputation is undeserved; that they perform a necessary function in the cloning process. But because they are closer to the death, they're stigmatized as ghouls.*

**IZUMI:** Yes. That's our side of the story, anyway.

**RR:** How does one get to be a deathrunner?

**DOC:** You need company certification. The basic qualifications are a college degree or two years hands-on experience in an appropriate field – technology or medicine, usually. Plus you need to be certified as a paramedic, and you have to pass an offensive driving test. In addition to testing and certification fees, you have to post a bond – usually about \$2,000 – which is returned to you after you've been on the job for 18 months, with no black spots on your record. After that, it costs about \$200 a year to renew your certification.

**JOE:** *(waving his hands around grandiosely at the diner and its patrons)* But in return for all that time and money, you get . . . all this.

**MIKE:** That's what gets to you, y'know. Not just anybody can be a deathrunner. This is a job for experienced, educated professionals, but we're still treated like road scum.

**RR:** *Because of their outcast status, the deathrunners seem to have banded more tightly together under their own bizarre code of honor. Are there any unwritten rules to the job that you'd like to explain before we go on the road?*

**MIKE:** Deathrunner honor's no more bizarre than simple respect for the job and those who do it. We're like family. We take care of our own.

**BRETT:** *(with marked bitterness)* 'Cause nobody else will.

**SAM:** A deathrunner doesn't fall into any social group but the deathrunner community, since most people will turn their backs on us. You can lie about your job, but someone's bound to find out.

**JOE:** Especially if you're the type of guy who brings his work home with him . . . *(Doc clears her throat and glares.)*

**SAM:** Even people who work in related or similar professions cut down deathrunners. For example, the techs at the cloning company think deathrunners are beneath them. Likewise, morticians will use you for body retrieval, but they aren't really fond of anyone in the cloning business. That leaves us stuck with ourselves, mostly.

**DOC:** We gather in places like this in the off time, and we watch each others' backs on the road.

**RR:** *What are the most common popular myths today about deathrunners?*

**IZUMI:** The worst one by far is that deathrunner squads ambush clients to drum up more business for themselves. That's based on the actions of a couple of rogue squads from the early years of the deathrunning industry. At the time the rogues were stamped out thoroughly, and there hasn't been another legitimately reported incident of that sort since.

**DOC:** A related rumor is that deathrunners who find their client still alive at the pickup point will allow him to die through neglect, or even finish him off. Our first responsibility is to the client, and we'll secure the client's corpse before dealing with any wounded on the site. But our official procedure for a pickup is to secure the body, provide first aid to survivors if possible, then deliver the body at best speed.

**RR:** "If possible?" So you'll sometimes abandon a wounded individual in order to make your delivery?

**DOC:** Sometimes it's necessary. But the Samaritans know their business as well as we know ours, and if we got in, the Samaritans usually aren't far behind, if they're needed.

**BRETT:** There's another myth – that rival deathrunner squads will fight each other over a pickup. I've got to admit, that used to happen, in the early days of industry, but it never happens anymore. The companies don't like it, for starters; it's bad for business. And deathrunners already pay enough for repairs without shooting up each other.

**RR:** *You've mentioned "the early days of the industry" a couple of times, now. When did deathrunning get started?*

**DOC:** There have been deathrunners for as long as there have been clones. In the early days of clone insurance, there weren't nearly as many facilities as there are now. So Gold Cross started a program where the best road duellists in a town without a clone factory would be loaned a refrigerated ambulance and a long-range radio. When a client needed delivery Gold Cross would call their local stringer, and tell him to make the pickup. Often, for security, the ambulance driver would invite some of his duelling friends to make the delivery with him, in exchange for a share of the profits. Those were the first deathrunner squads.

In the '30s, Gold Cross phased out the local stringer program in favor of Valkyries and CONDOR units. But at the same time a lot of new, smaller cloning companies were starting up. They had technology just as good as Gold Cross's, but they didn't have the same budget for client pickup, so they started relying on deathrunners as their primary means of client delivery, and the industry grew instead of dying out.

**RR:** *In addition to the usual dangers of the road, what are risks that are unique to deathrunning?*

**MIKE:** The most unique problem we have is probably corpsesnappers.

**RR:** *Corpsenappers?*

**MIKE:** Uh-huh. It's just what it sounds like – somebody either offs a client or picks him up after a fight, puts him in the deep freeze in the basement, and then calls the cloning company and tells them to pay up or they'll never see Uncle Joe's cerebral cortex again.

The big problem with corpsesnappers is pinpointing them. Fortunately this is one time when the cops and the companies cooperate fully with the deathrunners – *nobody* can stand a corpsesnapper.

Sometimes the company has to negotiate a ransom. But if we can pinpoint the corpsesnappers' location, then the deathrunners go in, on foot, with or without police support. That kind of extraction can get . . . intense.

**DOC:** Fortunately, such situations are still very rare. The Packrats have only had to go up against corpse-nappers twice, and that's more than most squads.

**RR:** *It sounds suicidal.*

**DOC:** Well, most of the people you're working with have clones tucked away with one of the companies as a sort of insurance plan; so death kind of loses its sting.

And the companies offer a substantial bounty for corpse-nappers – \$10,000 a head, dead or alive. At rates like that, you can afford to call in other squads for backup.

**JOE:** Yeah, and deathrunners always get a free ride in the freezer, even if they're from another squad. They might be *stiff* competition, but it's only civilized, you know. (*He snickers.*)

Doc rolls her eyes and smirks, sighing as she steps with casual grace from the booth.



“ ‘Bout that time, *mes amis*,” she comments while she slips slender hands into a pair of antique, leather driving gloves.

The others tumble from their seats and I follow, out to the cracked asphalt of the parking lot.

Doc leans in the open window of their hearse and flicks on the long distance radio. It's a memorable vehicle – a modified black station wagon with white skeletons dancing on the side. Its hood is adorned with a ram's skull while skull-and-crossbones grin from every hub cap. The perfect accents are assorted casualty markers and the whole fox pelt hanging from the antenna (in lieu of the usual tail, this appears to have been flattened in some tragic acci-

dent). I draw my attention back to the matter at hand, with obvious difficulty.

“You're notified of body locations by radio?” I ask.

“Usually, yes.” Doc begins, hoisting herself up to sit on the hearse's hood. The others lounge similarly, all save Brett, who meticulously cleans the fallen leaves from his spotless, red, turreted Chameleon.

“A company-contracted squad will usually get a list of two or three pickups from their HQ – clients who are being held in cold storage. While the squad's out getting the bodies on the list, they might get radioed with news of fresh kills – clients who've been killed on the road and haven't been frozen.

“Of course, that's just an average. Some days there are no pickups at all. But an established squad contracting with a successful company can usually count on at least one pickup a day, which is enough to cover expenses.”

“And some days are extra-busy. If all the company squads are out or unavailable, they open the call for freelance deathrunners. Sometimes they use freelancers just because we happen to be 20 or 30 minutes closer to the site. That's why you don't find deathrunner hangouts too close to the cloning facilities.”

“There's also the mortuary calls,” Mike goes on. “They can keep you going during a slow stretch, but they don't pay nearly as well as the clone runs.”

“As a freelance squad, we pay a special dispatcher who sends all these calls on a single, scrambled channel so we don't have to listen to all the company channels at once,” Doc adds. “Then there are general calls for cloneless bodies.”

“Some people don't think about getting cloned until they see the treads of the truck that's running them over. When that happens, the memories have to be stored on an MMSD, then they have to start a new clone. It's an expensive, time-consuming and risky process.”

“Who alerts the dispatcher or the company that a pickup is needed,” I ask, “and who determines which company gets the pickup of the cloneless body?”

“All cloning companies monitor all police and emergency channels continually,” Izumi answers. “Each accident and incident report is run through a computer, which determines the probability of it involving a client and being a fatality. If it seems certain or likely that a client needs a pickup, the call goes out. Of course, sometimes it turns out that the client's just fine, or that he just needs a Samaritan. Such calls are frustrating, but they're not a total loss. If your squad's the first one to make a definite report on a client's status after a call, you get a partial fee.”

“There's a new system out that will make such false alarms completely obsolete,” he continues, obviously warming to his subject. “It's a satellite network called LifeSat. Users wear one of these.” He displays a rather bulky white bracelet on his arm. “When vital functions cease, the bracelet sends out an encoded electromagnetic pulse, which is picked up by a satellite in geosynchronous orbit. The satellite's computers figure out your exact location and transmit it straight to your cloning company.

“Right now a LifeSat biomonitor is expensive – I got mine during a prototype test – but I predict that within three, five years tops they'll be standard wear for all clone-company clients.”

“As to who gets the pickup on a cloneless body,” Doc begins, but she's interrupted as the radio crackles and Joe jumps to feed the incoming message into the hearse's HAVOC computer. The others break into a flurry of movement, slipping into their vehicles



with surprising speed and starting engines in preparation for a quick departure.

"That's all up to the deathrunners, darlin'," Doc continues, from the window of her deep-green modified Python, "The squad who gets the body, gets the money, remember? Company squads take 'em to their company. For us, we get a bonus for takin' 'em to Iron Shield in Waukegan."

Joe yells, "Rollins Road, half-mile west of the Fairfield intersect. Iron Shield. Bikers. Been less than 15 minutes. Let's go, guys and ghouls!"

As the hearse screeches from the lot, Doc calls to me, "You're with Brett, Rhode!" and pulls out, moving to the lead.

I suddenly notice that I'm the only one left standing in the parking lot. The Packrats have boarded and started their vehicles before I could even consciously grasp that we are moving out.

I jump heavily into the seat beside Brett, causing him to wince. Before I can close my door completely, we're on the street, speeding down Route 45 as I fumble to latch my harness. The fourth car with Sam and Mike is close behind. Time is everything to a freelance deathrunner, and in only a few short minutes they reach the site.

A perfect spot for an ambush, the road curves to reveal a swarm of cycles hovering like greedy vultures near the carcass of a Morningstar limousine. Five bikers are busy picking it clean and loading the parts into a pickup near the ditch that holds our hapless client's body. The rest, perhaps a dozen cycles, turn and bear down, firing on our group, urged on by the Dead Beats' punk version of *Taps* booming from our hearse's speakers.

"Son of a . . ." curses my driver, "It's the flamin' Raven Raiders! Sit back and *don't touch anything!*!" He flicks a switch to bring the targeting scope up on his windshield, taking a second to align his sights with the cycle straight ahead. Without hesitation, our escorts race forward to meet the oncoming bikes, blazing machine guns and lasers in response to the Raiders' barrage.

Brett's shot is dead-on, but he hardly seems to notice – only swerves past the bike and speeds beyond the crash site to open

road. I am quietly panicking. We take a hit on the right side armor, but far from discouraging this vehicle-sensitive ex-duellist, the gunner has only sealed his place as Brett's next target.

"Flamin' road kill!" he fumes as we spin to attack again.

Smoking and broken cycles and riders are strewn across the road, obstacles for the return pass. They still have the numbers, but the hits we've taken are minor, and the bikers won't hold up well through the second volley. Already the pickup truck is fleeing with its load of loot, drawing a shot from our hearse as it goes.

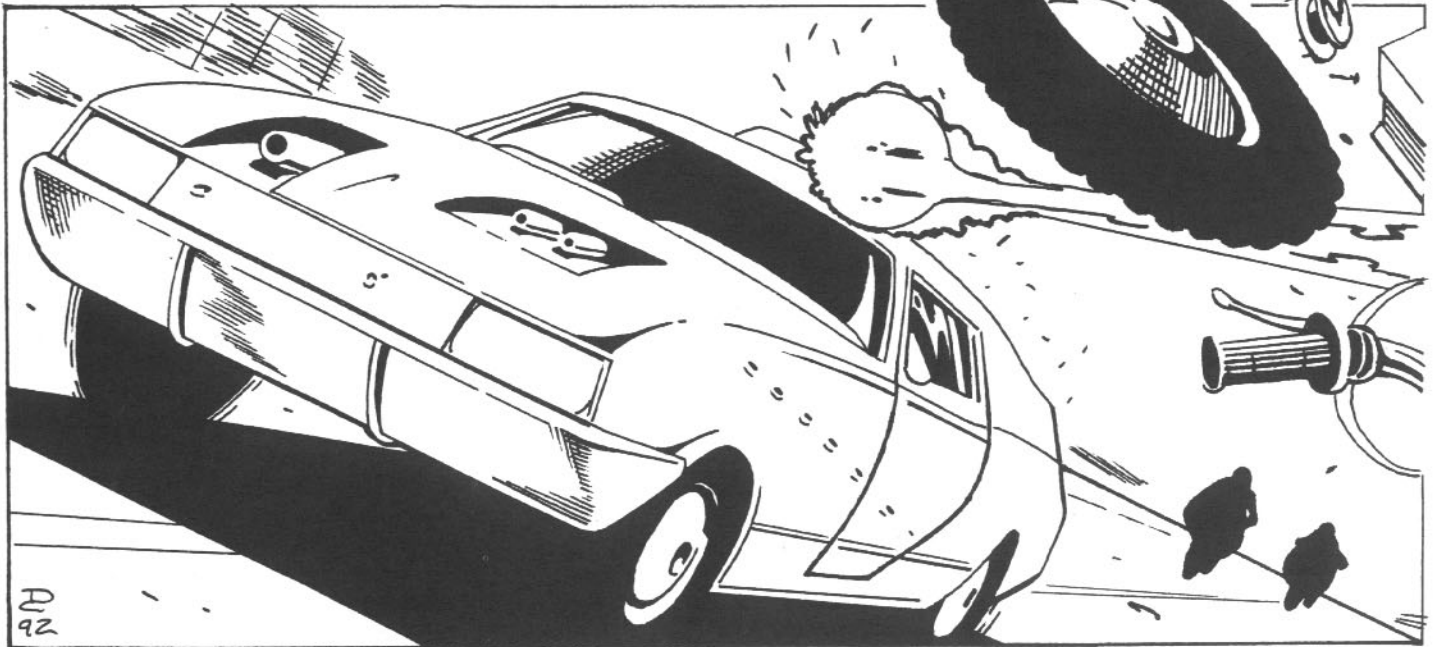
Again the escort vehicles charge while the remaining cycles speed in our direction, the flares from their guns blooming like short-lived flowers. Brett moves his scope up on the bike ahead of us – the same that had marred his paint job with a lucky shot moments ago. I hear a crack amidst the din, and a spidery mesh of fissures spreads across my view. We've been hit, knocking out the targeting display which fizzles a bit as it fades away. Brett curses, phrases that blister the plastic in the windshield. A spray of bullets punctuates his remarks while the cyclist is thrown back, several holes torn through his armor . . . and his chest. Even without the targeting luxuries, Brett proves he's got the feel for his weapon that defines a born gunner.

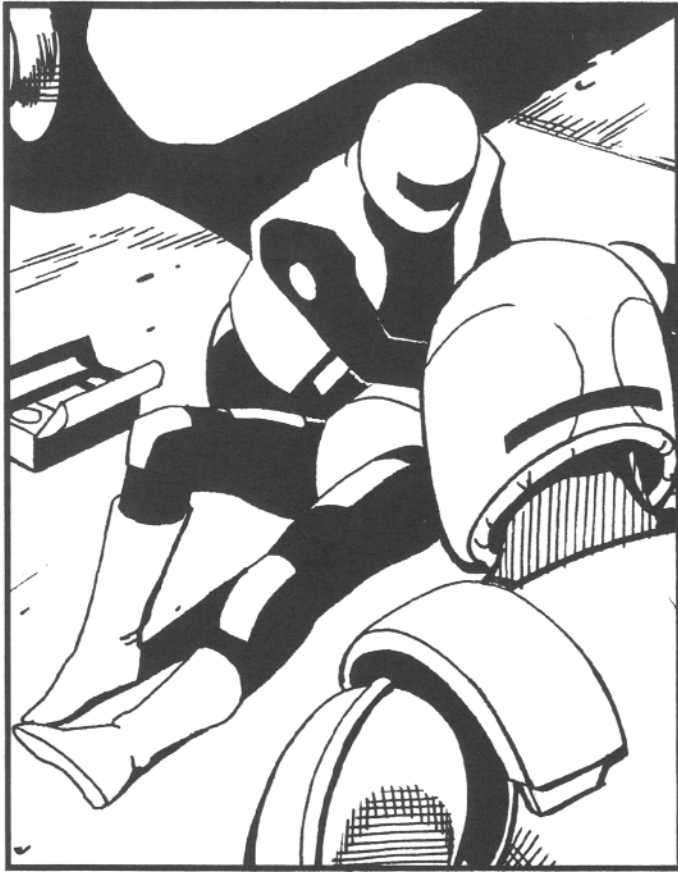
To the right, I watch as Mike's laser shot melts a tire and cuts its smoking path into a leg. The victim screams and falls to his left, into the path of Doc's Python. She's suffered some damage to her front armor, but it appears to be superficial, no vital components harmed.

Turning, I glance back to see that the remaining bikers are not attempting to turn for another "joust," but snatching up their wounded and continuing west at top speed.

"They're getting away," I remark.

Brett looks annoyed. "Ain't here to kill off scum, we're here to make a pickup." He stops a few car lengths from the hearse where in the ditch, Doc and Izumi are already working with the body. As





I step from the car, I notice Joe picking through the cycles for spare parts. He smiles as he works, chanting lines of poetry, "Quoth the raven, 'Nevermore.'"

"Most deathrunners don't have a very high opinion of looters," says Sam, who has wandered near. "That's not to say we don't make use of the equipment we run across," he nods to Joe. "But we never take a client's property unless it's absolutely necessary to do the job. See, those bikers are dead and won't be using those cycles anymore; clients won't be dead long if we're doing our job right. Taking their cars or equipment is like biting the hand that feeds you."

"You want to see the body prep?" he asks, and motions for me to follow.

"We don't always have time for the full treatment," Doc explains when we've drawn close enough to hear, "Sometimes it's just 'grab-n-go,' but we like to do some prep whenever we can risk it." Crouching over the body, she has her hand inside its chest, thrust through a gaping incision. Small sprays of scarlet liquid fountain from the wound in time with her movements as I realize she must be manually pumping the corpse's heart. For a moment, paroxysms of violent nausea overtake me, but Doc continues to lecture, ignoring my plight.

"If a neural preservative can be injected within two hours of death, it slows the deterioration. It's got to be pumped through the system by hand." She pulls her dripping hand from the man-made orifice and holds it up by way of demonstration. Swallowing hard, eyes averted, I thank God I skipped breakfast.

"I've had some medical training," she adds, discarding the crimson-smeared surgical glove and mercifully zipping the body bag. "Can you help Sam put him in the hearse? Thanks." Oblivious to the fragile state of my innards and without waiting for a reply, she's off, striding toward Brett who has beckoned her to his wounded vehicle.

"You going to be OK?" Sam inquires as he picks up his end. "You look green."

Steeling myself, I lift my end, and still unsure of the proper response. I answer, "Yeah, I'm fine." Still, I'm slightly chilled by the cold sweat that has formed on my brow.

The hearse is open in the back, and a drawer-like rack has been pulled out of the refrigerated compartment. We manage to lift the body into this berth and slide it back into the hearse. Izumi, mumbling something to the client, adjusts the temperature control.

"Deathrunners call these 'stiffcicle' tanks," I am informed by Sam, who points to the compartment we have just filled. "They're not as good as Gold Cross cryo-units, but they're cheaper, and unless you're going long distance for one body, these are more practical. You've got less time to get the bodies to the clone bank, but you've got to be quick to get the business."

Sam slides out a second drawer to accept the body of one of the bikers that Joe and Doc are now carrying in our direction.

"I'm redecorating my apartment," comes Joe's matter-of-fact response to my questioning look. That earns him a smirk from Doc as they fill the drawer and slide it closed.

"Actually," she explains, "There's a big demand for transplant parts. It's not entirely aboveboard, but selling a few 'John Doe' body parts makes a decent second income. In fact, it would be almost impossible to make our profit margin without them."

Joe stops whistling *Just a Gigolo* ("I ain't got no body . . .") long enough to add, "You gotta keep your bodies straight, or this banker here could have a radical personality change. He'll start wearin' leather ties to the office and gettin' really nasty on loan repayment . . ."

"Time to go, folks!" Doc breaks in. "Sam, you're with Brett this time. He's a little upset about the car and all, so he won't be very good company. I'm putting Rhode with Mike." As the team hurries to their cars once more, Joe reaches into the hearse and produces a four-inch, pink, fuzzy stuffed mouse of the sort native to truck stops and service stations, and tosses it through the open limo door.

"Trademark," the leader of the Packrats comments, winking. "A little calling card to let the police and clean-up crews know we're on the job. It's good advertising."

Gliding by, the wounded Chameleon takes the vanguard and Joe follows in the hearse. Doc has already turned toward her car; so, in true deathrunner fashion, I rush to my assigned vehicle and prepare for the next leg of this mission.

"Don't let it bother you," Mike advises me as we follow the evergreen Python away from the pickup site. "Brett doesn't like anyone else in the gunner seat, least of all a stranger." This takes me by surprise. I had thought the damage to his vehicle was the source of Brett's cholera, but I let the comment slide by with only a nod.

Gray pavement flies beneath our vehicle, and wide fields of grazing cattle speed by on both sides. The ride to Waukegan is longer than the preceding trip, so I spend the time prying information out of the squad's most seasoned member.

"Doc mentioned that a second income is needed. If you don't mind telling me, just how much are you paid for this?"

"Ain't much. Ain't near enough, but most of us got nowhere else to go." He smiles genially through the coppery bramble of his beard. "Doc was right when she said the pay could stand some padding. A squad's paid about \$4,000 per body, plus half vehicle repair, with a bonus if the clone turns out good. That's gotta be split up among the members of the team, and after payin' your share of repair, dispatcher fees, fuel costs and incidentals, it comes down to almost nothin'. Your only chance of makin' it in this racket is keepin' a squad small and takin' on any extra work that comes your way. So, you deliver non-cloned bodies to the morgue and stuff like that."

"Do the clone companies all pay the same, or is the pay a little better in one company or another?"

"Well, assumin' you can squeeze your money out of 'em, they're all about the same. See, payin' the deathrunners isn't high on the list of priorities for the company execs. But if you keep at 'em, eventually they'll pay you just to get out of their hair."

"As the front-runners of the industry, you'd expect Gold Cross, at least, to have the kind of security that can afford to pay top money for your valuable services."

"Gold Cross don't use deathrunners much. They have their own system. To hear them talk, they don't use freelance pickup at all."

"To hear them talk . . . ?"

"Well, even Gold Cross can't be everywhere. But if they were to use deathrunners, they wouldn't want it spread around, would they?"

I let it drop, returning to an earlier subject.

"Still, you'd expect that given the deathrunners' importance to the other cloning companies, they'd pay up promptly."

"You'd expect that, but you'd be wrong," Mike responds. "The clone outfits, like any other legitimate company, is limited to legal channels on collection procedures, so they can only get away with chargin' a customer so much for pickup. Goin' *outside* the law, like the Red Hand, for instance . . ."

I jump on the mention of that name, a phantom operation much heard about, but with no talkative witnesses.

"Would this be the *Mafia*-run cloning operation?" I ask, as casually as I can. "They hire outside deathrunners?"

Mike chuckles, shaking his head as if to inform me that I am opening the wrong can of worms. "I've only *heard* about them, of course, but they use deathrunners like any other." We spin around a corner before he returns to our conversation. "Anyway, they can pay the best, 'cause they can get the most from the customer. You see, after a clone is revived, it's real temptin' to pay off the pickup bill, no matter how big it is."

"You mean . . ."

"Yeah. You don't pay up, and they send a guy named Vito out to chop off an extra appendage or two by way of payment."

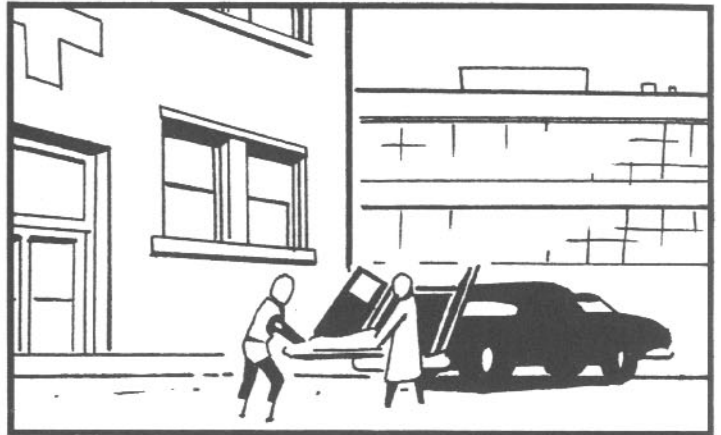
"Oh, I see. Aside from the clients' potential difficulties, though, you're saying that the Red Hand is the ideal company to work for?"

"They're not the ideal company. Deathrunners kinda like to go by their own rules, and you can't do that workin' Red Hand. Sure, the pay's better, and they'll deal you fair, but you're playin' on their field, their rules. Most deathrunners would rather work for themselves. Minor point, really, and some still get lured by the money, but freedom's kinda all we got, so we don't like to give it up."

Silence rules the air for what's left of the trip, with nothing but the whoosh of movement to fill our ears. My mind is still on

Mike's last statement as we pull into the hospital lot. Simply, it seems to sum up the spirit of a deathrunner: outcasts, they are nonetheless *free* outcasts.

Grisly, unappealing, you might say. The job of the deathrunners is not a pretty one. However, as I look out, squinting in the bright glare of early morning, I see not the ghoulish creatures society has branded them, but men and women, like shining Valkyries, helping to turn death into life.



## Notes

### *NNAA (National Newsmen's Autoduelling Association)*

An organization of journalists who specialize in covering duelling and duellists, in and out of the arena.

### *Packrats*

A freelance deathrunning squad based in northeast Illinois. They specialize in taking bodies from under the noses of company-employed squads. Coeur "Doc" Wallace, their leader, is a sharp and sneaky danger-junkie who tends to think of deathrunning as a hazardous game. The Packrats earned their name by leaving a cheap stuffed mouse in place of each body they take.

The Packrats' vehicles are listed below:

*Chameleon:* (*Vehicle Guide 1*, p. 27) modified with a hi-res computer in the driver position.

*Courier:* (*Vehicle Guide 1*, p. 17) cargo: one mid-size PR tire (50 lb., 1 sp).

*Doc's Modified Python:* (based on Python, *Vehicle Guide 2*, p. 21) luxury, x-hvy. chassis, super power plant, hvy. suspension, 4 PR tires, driver, VMG in universal turret, 2 linked FCE corner mounted back, DSP (with bumper trigger) back, HAVOC, fire extinguisher, cargo cap. 220 lb. 1 space, Armor: F40 R40 L40 B40 T20 U20 sloped standard plastic, four 5-point wheel hubs. Accel. 5, HC3; 6,600 lbs., \$18,700. cargo: one luxury PR tire (50 lbs. 1 sp) and a gas bottle for cutting torch (25 lb.).

*Packrats' Hearse:* station wagon, x-hvy chassis, large power plant with platcats and supercons, hvy. suspension, 4 PR tires, driver and gunner, VMG in turret, SS back, HAVOC in gunner

position, sm. stiffcicle tank: cap. 3 bodies, 450 lb., long distance radio, fire extinguisher, paint-resistant windshield, cargo cap. 1 space, 50 lb. Armor: F38 R34 L34 B39 T21 U21 fireproof plastic. Accel. 5, HC3; 6,595 lbs., \$41,430. Cargo: mechanic's tools (40 lbs.) and cutting torch (7 lbs.)

### Hearses

A deathrunner's hearse is a refrigerated vehicle designed for carrying corpses. It may be a "reefer" truck or have Gold Cross cryo-units, but most commonly it is equipped with specialized multiple-body refrigeration units called "stiffcicle" tanks (see below).

Aside from this basic distinction, hearses differ from their escorts in other ways. Protection from those escorts allows the hearse to be relatively light on weaponry. This lets the designer either bulk up on armor or increase acceleration. Choice of weaponry generally run to light defensive weapons. Smokescreens, spikedroppers and mines are common, since they put off pursuers. Likewise, armor is usually heaviest the rear to deflect pursuer's shots.

Accessories, if affordable, are mostly defensive in nature, like wheel guards or radar jammers. Since a long distance radio is necessary somewhere in the squad, it is usually installed in the hearse. In many civilized regions, the law requires special license plates for hearses (cost \$100 to \$150).

### Insurance

Most companies are willing to provide clones for each member of an accredited deathrunner squad. In order for a deathrunner to have a clone prepared, the squad normally must waive cash payment for the successful delivery of one body. Programming and maintenance fees for the clone while the deathrunner is employed by that company are guaranteed. If the deathrunner dies on the job, his clone is activated at no charge. Likewise, body retrieval is free and deathrunners never accept payment to pick up other deathrunners. If the deathrunner leaves the company that maintains his clone, he may continue paying maintenance fees, but at full price.

### Dispatcher Fees

Freelance deathrunners depend on dispatchers who transmit information on both cloned bodies and normal deaths (for the benefit of those who pick up morgue-bound bodies). A charge of \$500 per unscrambling device is paid to the distributor.

### LifeSat

A LifeSat biomonitor bracelet currently costs \$6,000 a year. The signal cannot be blocked by anything short of a dozen yards of solid earth or equivalent insulation.

LifeSat is a young company, and its technology is in a constant state of flux. LifeSat R&D is researching numerous possibilities to cut prices and upgrade service. Strong possibilities for future advances include satellite imaging, which would allow the satellite to take a high-resolution picture of the point of origin of a signal, to be used in assessing the risks of pickup and for visual confirmation of the coordinates. Another probable advance is a "panic button" feature, that would allow the client to send out a call for help via LifeSat when he's still alive.

### Raven Raiders

A cycle gang based in Round Lake, Illinois, recognized by a black raven displayed on jackets, etc. These rabble may attack anyone they feel they can bully, but specialize in ambushes of single, expensive, but relatively combat-weak luxury cars.

Their vehicles consist of anything they can steal, repaint and rebuild. They have a motley assortment of motorcycles, primarily medium and heavy. In addition, the gang often runs with a Longhorn pickup (*Vehicle Guide 2*, p. 29). Claws, their leader, rides a cycle he built from various stolen parts. Its statistics follow:

Nightwing - hvy. cycle, hvy. suspension, 50-cu. in. engine with turbocharger, 2 PRR tires, cyclist, MG front with HRSWC, cycle blades front, SS back, 5-gal. hvy. duty gas tank, streamlined, Armor: F30 B20. Accel. 10 (15 after 40 mph.) top speed 110, 60 MPG, HC 3; 1,295 lbs., \$9,675.

### Stiffcicle Tanks

Stiffcicle tanks are standard equipment for hearses. When constructing a hearse, stiffcicle tanks may take up both standard and cargo spaces and run off either the power plant or laser battery. (Two laser batteries for a large tank, three for an extra large.)

A Gold Cross Cryo Unit will keep a body in ideal condition for memory transfer for a week. Stiffcicle tanks will preserve a body for three days maximum.

If carrying MMSDs, a deathrunner may install an MMSD berth. This is a protective device that includes a cooling unit and component armor. They work off any power source that will power a stiffcicle tank.

UNIT	\$	LB	SP	DP	CAP.
Stiffcicle tank					
Small	13,000	150	7	3	3
Medium	16,000	200	12	5	5
Large	18,000	200	17	7	7
X-Large	20,500	250	21	9	9
MMSD berth					
Small	5,500	370	8	1&10 CA	1
Medium	10,800	470	14	2&20 CA	2
Large	16,100	570	20	3&30 CA	3

Weights listed are for empty compartments. When figuring the vehicle weight, add 800 lbs. per MMSD and 150 lb. per body.

### Gold Cross Cryo-Units

For details on the Gold Cross cryo-unit, see *Vehicle Guide 2*, page 56, "The Valkyrie."

### Transplant Parts

It is officially illegal to sell roadkill or other "stolen" body parts, but it is common practice among deathrunners, paramedics and crash vultures. If frozen within an hour of death, or delivered to a hospital within that hour, a full transplant body will fetch a price of \$1,500, while major pieces will bring \$75 to \$100. Small parts, like ears or feet, will bring about \$20. The victim must have been healthy and the part must be undamaged, and even so there is only a 50% chance that any body or part will be accepted when presented.

The roadkill black market used by deathrunners, paramedics

and authorized salvage operations has a quasi-legitimate status in most communities, official prohibitions notwithstanding. There is very little chance of arrest or prosecution as long as the seller keeps to established channels and keeps his nose clean in other respects. The laws against the roadkill trade are generally only invoked against gangs or predatory duellists who try to provoke fights purely in order generate roadkill and salvage.

### Pickup Fees

	Body	MMSD	Repair	Unreadable Body
Iron Shield:	\$4,000	\$1,750	½	-\$5,000
Red Hand:	\$5,500	\$2,000	all	variable

Unreadable bodies are those that arrive at the clone bank after the 24-hour limit, (or the 1-week limit if frozen) and cannot be read. The listed penalties are invoked if, in the company's judgment, the pickup was delayed due to deathrunner carelessness or incompetence. Red Hand penalties are stiff for such bodies (and not always monetary). Deathrunners must be mindful of time, since the bodies they pick up may be hours or days old at pickup.

It is not the deathrunners' responsibility to determine whether a body is or is not suitable for cloning, but most companies pay a 10% bonus if the transfer is 100% successful, to encourage the deathrunning squads to take extra measures and precautions like prepping bodies thoroughly.

Some companies will make a deal with a certain squad like the Packrats' agreement with Iron Shield. The squad agrees to deliver all uncloned bodies to that company, in return for preference in company pickup calls, and a cash bonus – typically 15% – on all uncloned bodies delivered.

If a deathrunner squad is the first to report that a client marked for pickup is *not* in need of cloning services, they will be paid an information bounty equal to 5% of the company's normal rate.

Clone companies pay 50% of vehicle repair for damage incurred during a successful pickup by freelance deathrunners. This is *not* paid for false runs.

Gold Cross, despite its claims to the contrary, is occasionally forced to use deathrunners. They pay rates that are a full 25% above industry standard, in return for which the deathrunners are expected to keep the deal strictly confidential.

Mortuaries may pay around \$1,500 for a body of a non-cloned citizen. In particularly difficult retrievals, if the relatives of the deceased are willing to pay extra, remuneration could be up to \$4,000. Mortuaries normally do not reimburse for vehicular damage.

### Deathrunners in GURPS Autoduel

In *GURPS* a deathrunner is built on 100 points. All have the disadvantage of Social Stigma -1 for -5 points. Necrophobia and Squeamishness are not wise choices for disadvantages.

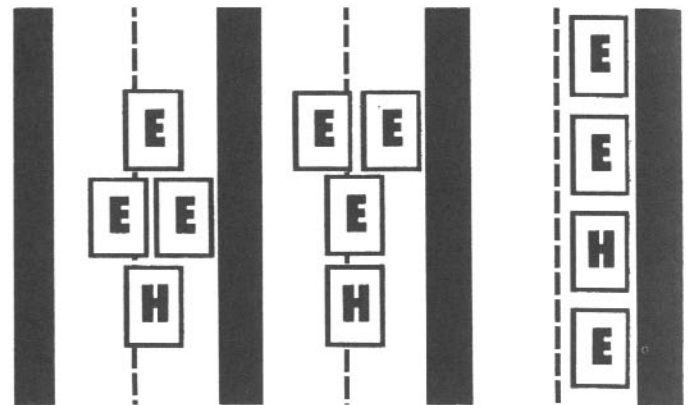
## General Information

The companies and the deathrunning squads maintain a national fund to finance bounties against criminals damaging to the cloning business. The fund was originally established because of rogue deathrunners "drumming up their own business" on the highway, but in recent years it's mostly been used to fight copsenappers.

### Common Formations

E = escort

H = hearse



Deathrunning squads generally adopt a standard formation in travel or combat which enables them to work smoothly together. Because hearses are lightly armed valuable equipment, squad formations are usually designed to protect them first. Additionally, they attempt to look intimidating, as scaring opponents takes less time than fighting them.

Tactics revolve around the purpose of the job: rush in, grab the body, and rush out. The initial charge is meant primarily to frighten any opponents away from the body. If that doesn't work, escorts try to draw fire while the body is loaded. This complete, escorts will drop the fight if allowed to and speed off, protecting the hearse. Mines, spikes, or smokescreens may be laid if there is a threat of pursuit.

### Deathrunner Adventures

Using deathrunners as encounters can spice up any campaign, offering a refreshing change from the usual cycle gangs and rival duellists. Have players encounter them at some point of their pickup run, or send a rogue squad out to drum up business by attacking a player who has a clone.

Deathrunners are also suitable foci for a campaign. Players could create their own deathrunning squad to go on regular deathruns as well as side adventures. Have players create a hearse and a few escorts. Give them a short list of frozen body locations in the area. While they collect these bodies, occasionally "radio" them with news of fresh kills and throw encounters at them. Usual encounters can be augmented by rivalry with another squad, crash vultures, and anti-deathrunner attitudes in fellow motorists. Interludes and side adventures might include a long haul to pick up a body in another state or a friendly wager, race or practice duel (with non-damaging ammo like rubber or paint rounds) between squads.

For players who have established non-deathrunner characters, the campaign could take a bizarre detour into the world of deathrunners. Offer a run as a method of payment for a character's cloning expenses, or have the party hired specially to fetch some high-profile client as a demonstration of a company's reliability. Whether the focus is on them, or they are merely a diversion, deathrunners can add a strange dimension to *Car Wars* adventures.

# Charge of the Light Brigade

By Thomas "Wrong-Way" Wright

## Introduction

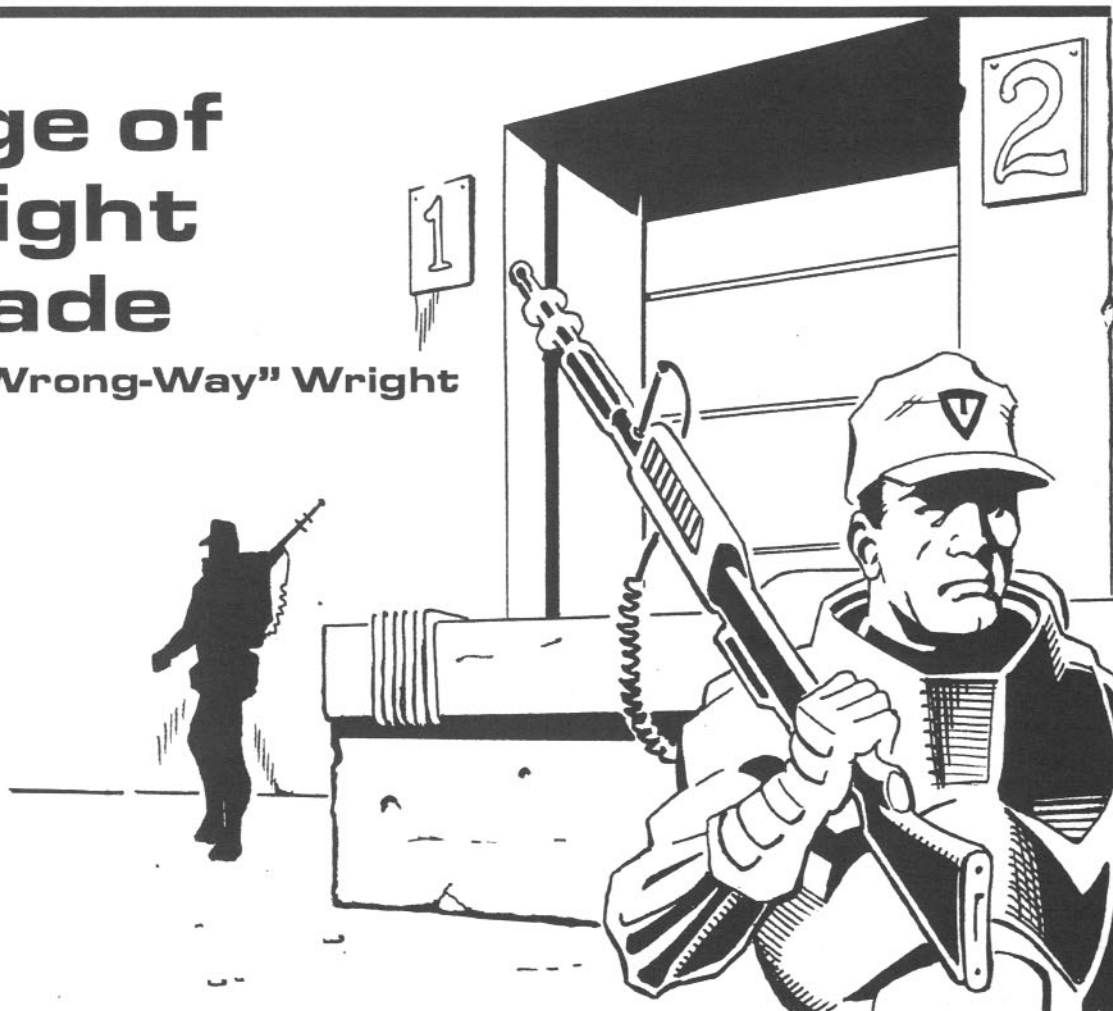
The PCs represent an independent group hired by Resnick Labs, the leading company in the field of research and development of laser-related technologies. The players have been contracted to get into a research lab operated by Quark Technologies, Inc., by any means necessary, and obtain as much information as possible regarding a recent development. In the past weeks, QTI's stock has skyrocketed, due primarily to a public announcement that they have "... perfected a new concept that will revolutionize the field." There has also been a rumor that QTI has secured a big military contract, and Resnick knows that they didn't get it. They're not even sure what the contract is for. Resnick Labs is understandably concerned. They want to know what this "new concept" is, and they want it bad. Bad enough, in fact, to finance this operation, and pay their operatives very well.

If you intend to participate in *Charge of the Light Brigade* as a player, you should read no further.

## The Mission

Even though everyone in the field of laser technologies expects Resnick Labs to do *something* about Quark Technologies, Inc., Resnick Labs is not about to go public about it. In return for their pay, the PCs are expected to keep their mouths shut about the operation.

The players have six characters and \$300,000 to spend on whatever equipment they may deem necessary. This includes *all* items found in *Uncle Albert's Catalog From Hell*. Any items that the referee feels would unbalance ongoing campaigns should be specified as being supplied by Resnick Labs, to be returned to them at the conclusion of the mission. Vehicles should be limited to "stock" models because, while the characters have been given plenty of time to prepare, there has not been enough time to construct custom vehicles. Also, referees will notice that there are plenty of vehicles around the lab, more or less "intended" for the characters' use. If the players try to turn this scenario into an all-out vehicular confrontation, tell them that Resnick will supply



transportation to and from a staging area near the QTI lab. The lab's defenses would be no challenge for a pack of armed duelling vehicles, but such an operation would blow the whole concept of the covert operation that Resnick Labs is paying for.

Each of the characters has 150 points to spend on skills. The characters should have a wide range of skills among them, and should not spend more than 20 points in any one skill. They should also have enough vehicular skills to operate the vehicles found on the base, so that they can get them out of the lab and deliver them to Resnick. If necessary, tell the players that Resnick Labs suspects that their "new concept" must be weapon-related, and QTI may have already incorporated it into a vehicle of some sort.

If, at the end of the operation, the players have successfully gotten into the base and have managed to get back out again with a "satisfactory" amount of information, they will be paid when they return to Resnick Labs. This payment will include whatever amount remains from the original \$300,000 in cash, plus the dollar value of any vehicle(s) they turn over, excluding the delivery vans. Any "new concept" information or hardware reward value will be specified when it is found. Any equipment that was on loan from Resnick Labs will be bought back for its original price.

## Charged-Particle Laser (CPL)

Quark's new concept is the charged-particle laser. These weapons fire a low-frequency laser pulse, carrying a mass of suspended, electrically-charged particles. They do full damage to all types of armor, including laser-reflective, fireproof, radarproof, and met-

als. "Laser-proof" laminate AFV armor only takes one-fifth damage from any CPL (as opposed to one-tenth damage from regular lasers).

Any CPL produces a Fire Modifier of 1 and Burn Duration of 1 higher than a normal laser of the same size. This is due to the intense electrostatic field that any CPL hit leaves on its target, which takes a few moments to disperse. Fireproof and Laser-Reflective armors, as well as all metals, remain immune to fire-related effects from these weapons.

CPLs (also known as particle lasers or phasers) cannot be modified in any way, such as pulse (they already are), or blue-green (CPLs cannot be fired under or into water at all). Any CPL automatically treats smoke or paint as if it were infrared. CPLs draw the necessary particles from the air, so no ammunition is required. All CPLs do, however, require a power plant or other power source to function.

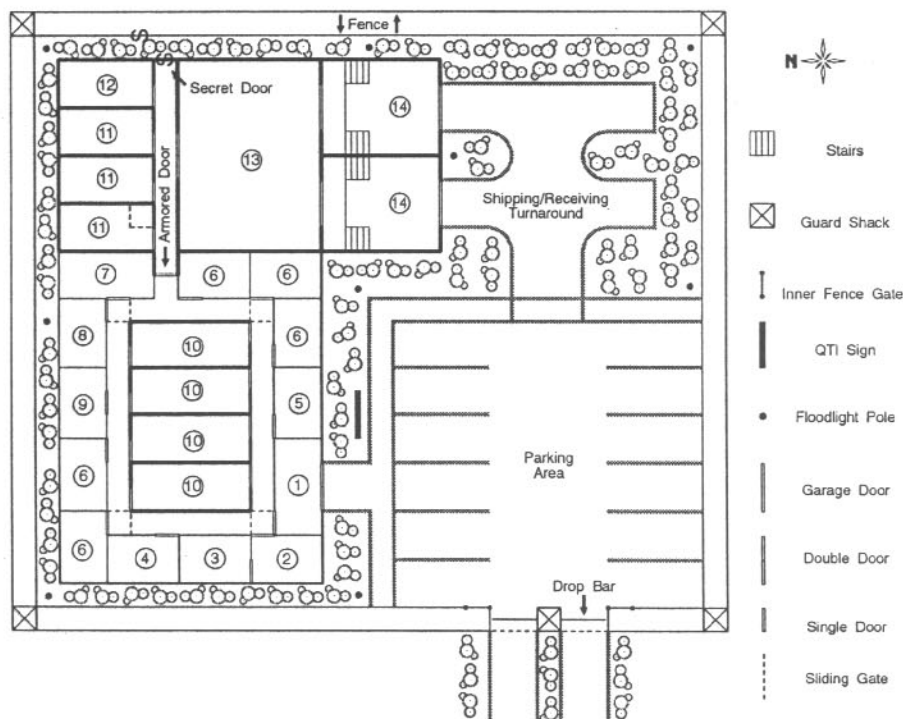
Because of its electrostatic nature, when used against pedestrians or exposed power plants all CPLs have an additional effect. Whenever a hit is scored on a pedestrian, roll one die. On a 1, that pedestrian is "stunned" for 1d seconds. When a hit is scored on an exposed power plant, roll one die. On a 1, the plant "shorts out" and ceases to function. The plant can be recharged normally. Gasoline engines are immune to this effect.

Descriptions of individual CPL types begin on p. 16.

### The Quark Technologies, Inc. Lab

The laboratory complex is a modern structure, built only one year ago. Its layout is simple and functional. It's a research lab, not a military installation – its defensive capabilities are secondary to its main purpose. It has none of the popular automated, anti-vehicular devices common to many such facilities of larger companies, but with the local police department only a phone call away, QTI staff hasn't yet had any major problems.

## Quark Technologies, Inc. Lab Referee's Map



Each area on the referee's map is marked with a number, as follows:

1. *Lobby* – This contains several chairs, a few end tables, and a couple of magazine racks holding the latest issues of *Autoduel Quarterly*, *Technology Today* and others. There is an open counterwindow in the west wall, and a door in the NW corner.

2. *Guard Station/Reception* – This is the receptionist's office during normal business hours, and the guards use it as a check-in point after dark. There is a desk, a chair or two, a couple of filing cabinets and a standard computer terminal. On the desk, among some personal items belonging to the receptionist, is a telephone with connections to two outside and two inside lines. The outside lines can be disconnected by destroying this phone.

3. *Guardroom/Storage* – The receptionist uses this room to store office supplies. At night, however, the relief shift of guards uses it to relax in. They keep a compact television, a card table and a couple of collapsible cots in here. They also store extra power and pistol packs in case of emergency.

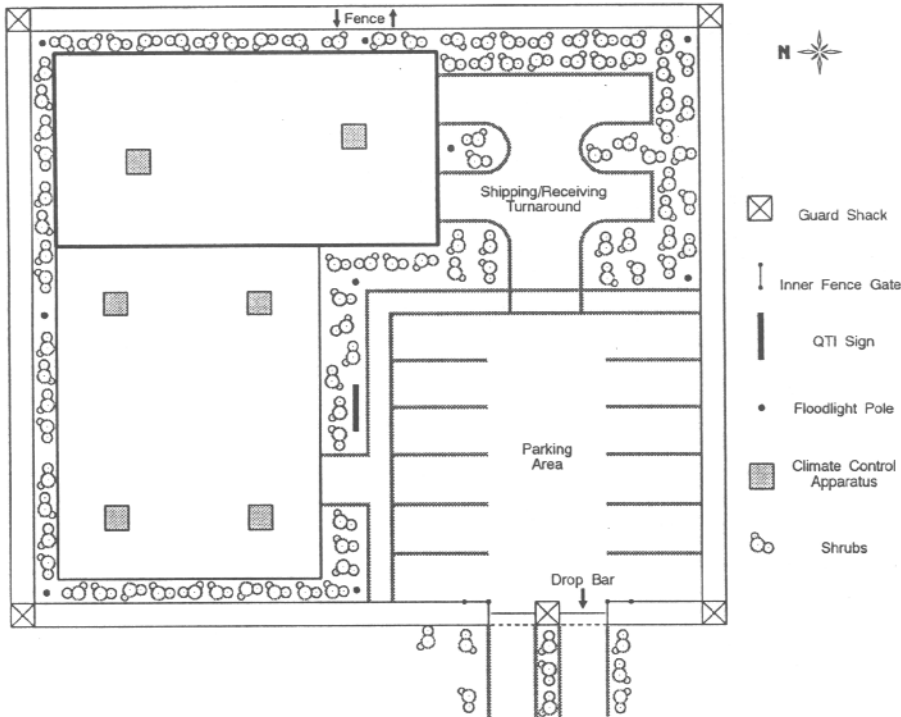
4. *President's Office* – This office contains a large executive-type desk, a padded reclining chair, a computer terminal and a telephone. The terminal can be used to access hidden surveillance cameras all over the building, as well as all QTI records. Any information received from this terminal can be transferred to a blank cube quickly and simply, including anything recorded by the hidden cameras. The President often checks surveillance recordings from the night before when he comes in in the morning. In the wall behind the desk is a mini-safe containing some important personal documents, such as vehicle and property titles, insurance policies, etc. The telephone has its own outside line as well as several inside ones.

5. *Vice President's Office* – This office has similar appointments to the President's, except that the computer terminal cannot access the surveillance cameras. (The VP doesn't even know the cameras exist, as a matter of fact).

6. *Technicians' Office* – These are all fairly similar, containing a desk and chair, a worktable, and a computer terminal. The terminals in these offices will usually only contain information pertaining to one specific type of CPL – whichever one that particular tech is responsible for. The terminal can transfer data as per the one in the President's office. There is a 1 in 6 change that one CPL of the appropriate type will be present in each office.

7. *Boardroom* – This room contains a large meeting table, a dozen or so chairs and a large video-cube player and monitor. At present, it contains a demo-cube of marketing strategies, featuring several different CPLs. Resnick Labs would find this cube very interesting.

# Quark Technologies, Inc. Lab *Players' Map*



a laser targeting scope and laser battery. The ignition code keys for these vehicles (and the delivery vans in the loading bays next door) are in a locked cabinet near the door. The computer terminals in this bay contain testing information regarding the Twin-25 (mod) and the Phaser – of course, this information won't be necessary if the raiders steal the vehicles.

**14. Loading Bays** – These bays each have a low dock with sets of steps along either side. Each also has a delivery van parked in it and a set of powered ramps to move vehicles in and out of the large bay beyond. The vans must be out of the docks in order to extend the ramps. The ramps take five seconds to extend or retract, and are controlled from a panel box on the wall in the Vehicle Mod/Test Lab, along with

**8. Breakroom** – This room contains several small tables, a bunch of chairs and a couple of automated snack machines.

**9. Storageroom** – This room contains boxes and crates of what is primarily bulk office supplies. Nothing here really pertains to the team's mission, but there are a few small boxes of blank cubes here that they might find useful to copy data onto.

**10. Static Labs** – These laboratories are used for fabrication of parts and assembly of the various types of CPLs. They contain all sorts of tools and components, stored in boxes, bins and lockers. Most of the company's products can be found here, in various stages of assembly. Without extensive training, skill and experience no character would be able to complete any of the CPLs in any of these labs. There is a 1 in 6 chance that a completed CPL of a random type will be found here, however.

**11. Test Fire Labs** – These laboratories are used to test the CPLs before they are shipped. They each contain a couple of work tables, a cube-recorder and a computer terminal containing information regarding test results of the various CPLs. Resnick would find this information *very* valuable. There is a 3 in 6 chance that 1d units of a random CPL type can be found in any of these labs.

**12. Storage** – This area is used to store assembled and tested CPLs of all types. There will be 2d boxes of each type here. CPL LAWs are packed two to a box, CPL VLAWs are packed four to a box, CPL Rifles come four to a box, and CPL Pistols come ten to a box. These boxes are of similar construction to Bulk Ammo Boxes. There will also be 1d of each of the vehicular CPLs, each in its own crate. These crates weigh 10 lbs. (and cost \$50, if purchased) per space held, and have 5 points of FP armor.

**13. Vehicular Modification and Testing Lab** – This large bay contains several worktables, computer terminals, and lockers. The lockers contain thousands of different sorts of tools, spare parts and test equipment. There is also a modified Twin-25 duelling car, a phaser motorcycle/sidecar combination and a tripod phaser with

the controls for the inner and outer bay doors.

The pertinent exterior features of QTI are listed below, along with any information regarding how they might effect play.

**Climate Control Devices** – 5 DP. These could theoretically be removed to allow access to the interior of the building through the roof ducts. They could be "moved" by blowing them off the roof with plastique or similar radical measures, but this is likely to draw a lot of attention. A CCD can be removed (i.e., disconnected) with a mini-mechanic in a couple of minutes – this is an easy task for a mechanic. However, a CCD weighs about 200 lbs., and the mech would need help to actually move one off of its duct mount.

**Drop Bar** – 5 DP. Takes one second to raise or lower. The controls are inside the main-gage guardshack. Hitting the bar is a D1 hazard.

**Floodlight (pole)** – 3 DP. These are 20' tall and topped with multi-directional lights that illuminate a 20' radius. Any events that take place within this radius are not affected by any nighttime modifiers. The glow from these "floods" disrupts the use of any night-vision devices, rendering them useless within 6" of any active lights. The controls for the lights are located in area 2. The poles are -6 to hit and the lights are -4 – each gets the 3 DP. The poles are D3 hazards if run into.

**Guard Shack** – 10 DP. They are +1 to hit and a D3 hazard to run into. They offer unrestricted arcs of fire to anyone within.

**Shrubs** – No DP. They're about 3 feet tall and provide concealment (*Car Wars Tanks*, p. 36) at -1 for pedestrians only.

**Quark Technologies, Inc. Sign** – 5 DP. 3.25 feet tall (1/4"). Two pedestrians can hide behind it and fire from cover (*CWC II*, p. 37) or act as lookouts. When a pedestrian is hiding behind the sign, he is at -2 to be spotted (*Car Wars Tanks*, p. 36).

In addition, the fences surrounding QTI have 10 DP (interior and exterior, independently) and are a D3 hazard to run into, per 3.25 (1/4") section. The exterior walls are 10 DP (west wing) and





20 DP (east wing) respectively. Interior walls are 5 DP (west wing) and 20 DP (east wing). Note that the interior walls surrounding the Static Labs (area 10) are also 20 DP. All lab areas (10, 11 and 13) have special target areas treated with laser and charged-particle absorbent materials to allow test-firing of such weapons inside, without danger of breaching the structure.

### The Guards

The guards employed by QTI are experienced, disciplined and well-equipped. They're paid well and treated fairly, and take their jobs very seriously. The building is normally patrolled by a watch commander, two guard sergeants and 12 guards. They follow a strict routine of rotation/replacement on the hour, every hour at the exterior posts, and the commander makes a random patrol of the interior and exterior areas. Except in an emergency, the commander will not enter any of the offices or labs, but will restrict his patrols to the hallways. He will, however, always check that all doors remain locked and undisturbed. His restricted patrols can be a benefit to the intruders, if they think to lock any doors that they open behind themselves. Occasionally the commander will have one of the off-shift guards accompany him, especially if something suspicious has occurred.

The sergeants are stationed one inside, in area 2, and one outside, in the main-gate guardshack. They trade places every two hours, so area 2 will be unmanned for a few minutes at this time. This could give the characters a chance to sneak a tear-gas or concussion grenade into the guardroom (area 3), or possibly disable the telephone.

The guards are on a tag-rotation, one in each corner guard shack, waiting to be "tagged" by a patrolling sentry within the "dog-walk." The "tagged" guard then walks to the next guard

shack to "tag" the next guard. This process keeps one guard in each shack and on in each "dog-walk" at all times. The extra guards stay in the guardroom (area 3) and relax until it is their turn outside, or the commander takes them on a random patrol.

In the event of an emergency, the commander will take four guards with him, and one sergeant will take another group. These two groups will investigate the problem directly. The remaining sergeant and four guards will stay in the guardshacks and secure the sliding gates. The guards will stay in constant radio contact, and if necessary summon the police (provided there is still a functioning phone to call from). The police will arrive in 2d minutes, their force consisting of 1d officers, in as many cars as necessary to carry them (no more than two per vehicle).

Watch Commander – body armor, gas mask, helmet radio, phaser pistol (or phaser rifle in an emergency) w/pistol pack. Running 1, Climbing 1, Driver 2, Handgunner 2, Leadership 2, plus one additional skill (referee's choice) at level 1.

Sergeants – body armor, gas mask, helmet radio, phaser rifle (outside) or phaser pistol (inside) with pistol pack (will always have Rifle in emergency). Running 1, Climber 1, Driver (or Cyclist) 1, Gunner 1, Handgunner 1, Leadership 1, plus one additional skill at level 1, as above.

Guards – body armor, gas mask, helmet radio, phaser rifle with pistol pack (will have Power Pack when summoned for an emergency from inside). Runner 1, Climber 1, Driver (or Cyclist), Gunner, Handgunner 1, plus one other skill at base level as above.

### Phasers

#### Personal Weaponry

Weapon	Abbv.	GE	Dmg.	To-Hit	L\$	Shots
Phaser Rifle*†	PR	2	2d	5	\$6,500	2
Phaser Pistol*†	PP	1	1d	5	\$3,500	4
Phaser LAW†	PLAW	2	6d	5	\$3,000	1
Phaser VLAW†	PVLAW	2	4d	5	\$2,250	1

#### Notes

\*This weapon requires a power pack (\$1,000, 3 GEs) to function effectively. The Phaser Rifle can get an additional 20 shots with the pack, and the Phaser Pistol can get an additional 40 shots. Either weapon can also use the Pistol Pack (see below).

†Does full damage to vehicles.

### New Equipment

Pistol Pack – \$750, 2 GEs or 10 lbs.. Any weapon that can use the power pack can use this item instead, if desired. Additional shots are as follows; phaser pistol: 20, phaser and laser rifles: 10, Gauss pistol: 60, Gauss rifle: 20. Note that both of the Gauss weapons still require ammunition.

For the Alternative Encumbrance Rules, the phaser rifle weighs 7 lbs. (two-handed), and the phaser pistol weighs 5 lbs. (one-handed), the phaser LAW weighs 20 lbs. (two-handed), and the phaser VLAW weighs 15 lbs. (two-handed). The pistol pack is no-handed (belt-clip) and doesn't preclude wearing a back-pack.

#### Vehicular Phasers

Weapon	Abbv.	To-Hit	Damage	DP	Cost	Weight	Spc.	Drain
Light Phaser	L-CPL	5	2d	2	\$4500	150 lbs.	1	1
Medium Phaser	M-CPL	5	4d	2	\$8250	250 lbs.	2	2
Phaser	CPL	5	6d	2	\$12,000	375 lbs.	2	2
Heavy Phaser	H-CPL	5	8d	2	\$18,000	750 lbs.	3	3
Twin Phaser	TwCPL	5	4d+8	3	\$15,000	550 lbs.	2	3

CPLs have no area or burst effects. Number of Shots, CPS, WPS, Mag. cost, and Mag. Wt. are not applicable to CPLs. Loaded cost and Loaded Wt. are the same as the figures listed above. The TwCPL is a special case. When it has been reduced to 1 DP, one Phaser has been destroyed and damage drops to 2d+3. Also note that *all* of the CPLs above have the additional effects listed in paragraph four.

*Editor's Note:* The rules above for phasers should be considered "unofficial" in any context except this adventure. Of course, referees are welcome to introduce them in an ongoing campaign or individual duels. Referees who try out phasers and strongly feel that they should or should not be included in the *Car Wars* system (with or without modifications) should let us know. This item may appear in a future "Uncle Al's," as an official addition to the system.

### New Vehicles

*Phaser (Quasar Mod)* – hvy. cycle, hvy. suspension, super trike power plant with PCs and SCs, 2 PR radials, cyclist, light phaser front, hi-res computer. LR armor: F25, B22. Accel. 15, top speed 180 (accel. 10, top speed 142.5 w/sidecar), HC 3 (w/sidecar); 1,289 lbs., \$16,011. 1 space and 11 lbs. left for cargo.

*Phaser sidecar* – hvy. sidecar, hvy. suspension, 1 PR radial tire, light phaser (smart-linked to light phaser on cycle) F, laser battery. LR armor: F6, R6, B4, T1, U1. 7398 lbs., \$7,258. 1 space and 12 lbs. left for cargo.

*Twin-25 (Med)* mid-size, hvy. chassis, light suspension, large power plant, 4 standard tires, driver (w/body armor), 2 TwCPSs (linked) F, hi-res SWC. Armor: F54, R34, L34, B34, T6, U6, 2 fake WGs B, 2 fake WHs F. Accel. 5, top speed 97.5, HC 1; 5,218 lbs., \$38,346.

*Delivery Van* – van, hvy. chassis, hvy. suspension, large power plant w/PCs, 4 PR radial tires, driver and gunner, fire extinguisher, 2 MGs linked in turret, 2 MGs linked F, 2 hi-res SWCs (driver; F MGs, gunner; turret MGs). Armor: F15, U5, 10 in all other locations. Accel. 5, top speed 92.5, HC 4; 5,430 lbs., \$21,400. 16 spaces and 620 lbs. left for cargo. Weapons (area 13) Tripod Phaser – \$14,200, 5 GEs, 213.5 lbs. AER. Has laser battery and laser targeting scope. Note the laser battery weighs an additional 100 lbs.

### Aftermath

Resnick Labs will pay the listed dollar value for any hardware or vehicles from QTI, with the exception of the delivery vans, which will be disassembled and disposed of. Any data recovered from QTI's computers will be purchased from the team for 1d × \$1,000 per cube. All of this is in addition to the original \$300,000. Resnick Labs, in their own interests, will also provide transportation to the nearest airport and airfare to anywhere far away.

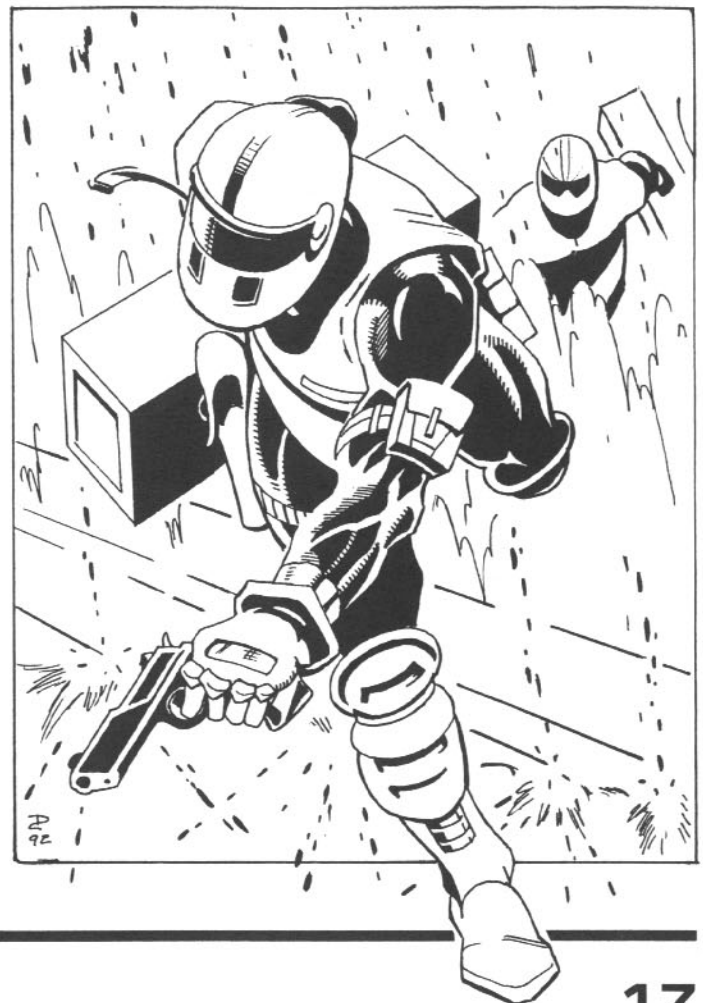
If the characters escape from the QTI lab, and the guard force is more or less intact, the guards may pursue them. The Chief may have up to a \$15,000 car, the sergeants up to \$10,000, and the subordinates can have up to \$5,000 vehicles. It will take the usual amount of time to get them started and moving, and then they can take off after the thieves. The referee can elect to use stock vehicles, or design custom models. However, it is highly unlikely that any of the subordinates would have custom vehicles. At any rate, a particularly nasty turn of events could land the characters in a sandwich between the pursuing guards and the oncoming police. All the guards' vehicles should be placed in the parking lot at the

start of the game so that the characters have every opportunity to sabotage them, if they think of it.

### Designer's Notes

During playtesting, several interesting strategies were used. One approach was subtle – glider chutes (from a rented plane) to the roof, and in through the ductwork with needle and stun guns. They got lucky with the guards' spotting rolls. Another was more blatant – rocket-packs from the staging area for a grenade-bombing run over the lab.

Encourage the players to be creative with this scenario. They've got plenty of money to play with, and the possibilities are almost endless. One intruder booby-trapped all the guards' vehicles with plastique, while they slept off several needle hits apiece. The group hid down the road and waited for the guards to awaken and call the police. When the cops arrived, the "Mad Bomber" radio-detonated approximately 20 bricks of plastique, at least five of which were in the commander's custom gas-burner, complete with linked Spear 1000s loaded with napalm mines. Nearly the whole parking lot was covered with vehicular components, cops, guards, burning gas and napalm. The raiders then took a nice, leisurely cruise back to Resnick Labs, confident that it would take Federal agents weeks to figure out what had happened. Granted, it hadn't been as quiet as Resnick might have wanted, but it didn't seem fair to penalize the players for providing such a spectacular conclusion. Besides, the players had covered their tracks about as well as could be expected, short of blowing the entire complex (a few more bricks of the "Mad Bomber's" magic might just have done it).



# The Black Asp Speaks!

## An Interview with the Leader of ASP

By Craig Sheeley

Ever since the summer of 2037, when the organization first made its presence known with the now-famous Minuteman Missile Raid, ASP (Assassination, Sabotage, Protectionism) has been in the news – sporadically at first, then with more frequency. The activities of this terrorist organization are now common items on the national news reports.

Few outlaw groups achieve this level of notoriety. For a time, BLUD scored as high an audience identification factor in media surveys, but their notoriety ended with the practical destruction of the organization. The Anarchists' Relief Front (ARF) made an impact at the dawn of autoduelling with their infamous raid on Midville; ARF activities continue to this day, but have been massively eclipsed by those attributed to ASP.

At great personal risk, this reporter set out to investigate the organization known as ASP, to uncover the secrets of its massive structure and seemingly unlimited resources. To my immense surprise, the leader of ASP – the notorious Black Asp – took an interest in the investigation and had me conducted into his presence for an interview. The process of reaching the Black Asp included at least two aircraft flights, a short submarine cruise and several lengthy automobile trips. More details of the journey were impossible to distinguish, since I was blindfolded the whole time.

Imagine my shock when the blindfold was finally removed and the meeting's venue revealed. The room was brightly lit and very comfortably appointed, with gaily-colored furniture and deep carpeting. Glancing out the wide windows letting sunlight into the room, I immediately recognized the scenery below. The Black Asp had chosen to meet me in the top room of the Magic Castle, in the Los Disneys Pleasuredome.

Only one piece of furniture stood out from the saccharine color scheme: a towering jet-black chair, its high back obscuring its inhabitant. "Greetings," the chair's occupant hissed. The hissing continued as the chair swung around under hydraulic power. "I'm so glad to make your acquaintance."

The Black Asp. A man of medium height and build, clothed in a modified suit of body armor, complete with medal-adorned breastplate and reflective-visored helmet. He gestured for me to be seated, and glanced significantly at my minicam.

**ADQ:** *If the camera disturbs you, I won't use it. It's not on right now.*

**Black Asp:** Good! Give me a moment. *(He pulls out a mirror and examines his appearance.)* Excellent! Turn it on, and make sure you get my good side.

**ADQ:** *Uh, yes. I am . . .*

**Black Asp:** I know who you are, or you'd

not have gotten here. Enough chatter; let's talk about something important, namely me. Ask your questions.

**ADQ:** *O-o-o-kay. Let's start with the question everyone wants to know: Just who is the Black Asp? What's the name of the man behind the mirror-visor?*

**Black Asp:** Don't be fatuous. You know that I won't answer that question. Not until I'm long dead, anyway. Then my memoirs will reveal all at a reasonable price . . . vids and micros extra, of course. Next question.

**ADQ:** *Just what is ASP?*

**Black Asp:** It's a terrorist organization, you twit!

**ADQ:** *What I meant was, what is ASP's background, origins, and goals?*

**Black Asp:** Oh. That's different. And a much more complicated question. Let's take the question in specific stages, if we could.

**ADQ:** *As an overview, what is ASP?*

**Black Asp:** ASP, as you know, stands for Assassination, Sabotage and Protectionism. Actually, ASP does quite a bit more than that, but the letters made a neat acronym!

ASP is a sort of super-terrorism enterprise, a bit like the old organized crime, with fingers in a lot of diverse pies, so to speak. We do blatant crimes, like wanton destruction and armed strikes. But we also do more subtle schemes, such as gun-running – a very profitable enterprise, when you're both manufacturer and middleman – computer crime, banned substance smuggling – not drugs! There's much more profit sneaking real midwestern beef into Los Angeles – black marketeering, gambling, and producing explicit micros.

**ADQ:** *What about "insurance"?*

**Black Asp:** I would never sink so low! Nor would I engage in law! Insurance salesmen and lawyers are even lower than Nebraskans!

**ADQ:** *I meant protectionism.*

**Black Asp:** Well, why didn't you say so. Yes, there is some of that, but it's not as profitable as it used to be. Too many weirdos with guns, you know. Now, ASP does have some straight operations that provide security, for a price.

*(Grins.)* Those operations are also excellent methods of gathering information. Clients can't really hide much from their own security, now can they?

**ADQ:** *Let's go on to the next subject. How did ASP get started?*

**Black Asp:** To be blunt, I was bored with the way things were going. I had far too much money and too much time on my hands, so I just decided to start my own world power. I had some forces left over from the Lawless Years, and enough technology had returned to make a world macro-organization feasible. Within the space of a month, I had secret factory orders for ASP equipment and vehicles, and began recruiting.

It wasn't easy at first. No other terrorists would take me seriously. I showed them; ASP did little jobs around the world, small



stuff, but flashy in the right circles. Like paint-bombing the Taj Mahal – and I mean *paint-bombing!* – with four 1,000 lb. paint bombs! – torpedoing a whale off the California coast, arranging for Her Majesty the Queen of England to sit on a whoopie cushion on live vid, perpetrating the Garlic Mock-Rice Incident in Nippon . . .

**ADQ:** *ASP was responsible for every algae plant in the islands turning out garlic-flavored mock-rice for two weeks?!*

**Black Asp:** Yup. Now the truth can be known. They just found the turncoat programmer last year. What a stink! Literally.

But that's the sort of thing I did . . . daredevil stunts, to attract the attention of my fellow terrorists. Then came the *piece de la resistance*, the Minuteman Missile Raid. It didn't work out as well as I had planned, but it was a wonderful piece of propaganda! At last, ASP was revealed to the world!

**ADQ:** *And as to the accusations that you based the organization on comic books and a classic animated TV show?*

**Black Asp:** Listen, those comics had some pretty good ideas! The whole ball of wax was there . . . the flashy gear, the neat-looking uniforms, the public appeal, the melodramatic speeches, megalomaniacal leadership. Big as life and twice as colorful! Um. But in answer to your question, there is no truth to any accusations of copy-cat plagiarism.

**ADQ:** *So where is ASP headed now?*

**Black Asp:** Business as usual, actually. This foolishness with the Nebraskans and their self-appointed representative, the Mon-goose, is currently occupying my time.

**ADQ:** *I'd like to come back to that later. What I meant was, does ASP have any goals or ideals it stands for and works for? What are your aspirations – no pun intended.*

**Black Asp:** Pun accepted. Clever turn of phrase! ASP stands as a testament to my greatness, and it is the tool of my destiny. I intend to become a world power; the world is recovering, and I want to have my say in it. Call it simple global domination. Or at least a whopping great lot of enjoyment for yours truly.

**ADQ:** *ASP is sort of a hobby, then.*

**Black Asp:** Best game in town.

**ADQ:** *Right. Here's a question that's often asked: Where does ASP get all its equipment? All its forces? Just how rich is ASP?*

**Black Asp:** Very rich. Very rich indeed. I had wealth left when things started to recover – about '29, roughly – and I invested it wisely. At present, I – that is to say, ASP – have subsidiary industries in armaments, food production, advanced technologies, aerospace research, government contracts, medical technologies, autoduellings, corporate war teams, construction industries, toy manufacture, video and micro production . . . You get the picture. Plus the profits from illegal money-makers! It adds up.

**ADQ:** *Does ASP subcontract for its gear?*

**Black Asp:** Once upon a time. Now ASP's industries subcontract for parts and other specialties, just like any other industry.

**ADQ:** *And you produce so much equipment that you can afford to sell it on the black market?*

**Black Asp:** *(Laughs heartily.)* ASP is one of the foremost dealers in black-market military technology in North America! Of course, ASP makes it and conveniently "loses" it, in order to charge ridiculous amounts to the cretins who covet the stuff. There are mullets out there who'll mortgage their clones for a single shot of depleted uranium ammo. I don't make that, by the way – I just steal it from the government!

**ADQ:** *So ASP's support base is widely diversified. Is ASP itself as widely spread? Is there a central ASP base?*

**Black Asp:** I have a favorite hang-out; I suppose I could call it the nerve center of ASP. However, most of the time I'm mobile. In this day and age of electronic data transfer, who needs to be tied down to an office? Or a throne room.

**ADQ:** *Just how big is ASP? According to reports from multiple sources, ASP forces have been encountered in Missouri, Nebraska, Illinois, South Dakota, Colorado, New York, Kansas, Texas, California, Maryland, Florida, Connecticut, New Jersey . . .*

*(At this point the Black Asp lapses into grating laughter for a good two minutes. When he calms down, he wipes tears from his eyes beneath his helmet visor.)*

**Black Asp:** I owe such press to the denizens of the Great North Waste, the Nerds' Organization of Vapid Apes, otherwise known as NOVA. But I must credit them with much of my recent success; their little war on me gave me the most brilliant idea of my ASP career. How big is ASP? I directly employ fewer troops and operatives than Sooner Petrochem has in New Tulsa. So ask me how ASP can field so many forces with so few personnel.

**ADQ:** *How can ASP field so many forces with so few personnel?*

**Black Asp:** The answer is so simple, I'm ashamed that it took so long to figure it out. After all, it's been a business staple forever. Call it sub-contracting and franchising.

**ADQ:** *I don't follow you.*

**Black Asp:** Say ASP needs a job done somewhere, a piece of routine terrorism. Rather than risk my troops directly, I look for a local group that will fit the bill and hire out for a fraction of the overhead involved in moving ASP operative. So I ship ASP uniforms and gear, enough evidence to link the action to ASP, and *viola!* Instant ASP operation. And if the caper goes sour, then I deny any responsibility. Any evidence linking ASP to the failure is denounced as a futile attempt to drag innocent little ASP into the arena and provide an alibi for the losers.

**ADQ:** *Plausibly-deniable mercenaries.*

**Black Asp:** Exactly! Just like regular corporate and government "black ops." It's a tried and proven method; why shouldn't ASP use it, too?

**ADQ:** *You mentioned franchising?*

**Black Asp:** Yes. Sheer brilliance! I'm such a genius. The scam goes like this: ASP seeks out local gangs and other criminal organizations that want to commit a little mayhem, but don't have the resources to be more than small-time operators. I cut them a deal. ASP provides funds, equipment, some training, and a new self-image. In return, the gang gets to claim that they're part of ASP – I insist on it! – and they agree to do some little jobs for ASP now and then. Call it Rent-A-Gang. Works like a charm! A little money, some equipment, and Poof! Ready-made ASP force, with local connections and knowledge.

**ADQ:** *So when an ASP base is wiped out . . .*

**Black Asp:** It's actually a small-time gang made good! And



little skin off my nose. One of these Rent-A-Gangs costs less than \$250,000 a year to equip and supply. A similar ASP force would cost twice that in vehicle maintenance and ammo alone.

And for every gang wiped out, there are lots more waiting in the wings . . .

**ADQ:** *I think it's time to address your feud with NOVA. How did it start?*

**Black Asp:** It began when the No-Brains claimed to wipe out an ASP base in Missouri. There was no such thing! I was furious. They were putting out more propaganda than ASP! Bad for the image, being upstaged by a bunch from a state where the third largest city is Cornhusker Stadium during a home game.

**ADQ:** *You claimed responsibility for a retaliatory air raid on a warehouse district.*

**Black Asp:** Certainly. In a propaganda war, no lie can go unpunished.

**ADQ:** *When the mysterious "Mongoose" placed a bounty on ASP operatives, the war heated up. What was your reaction?*

**Black Asp:** The "Rat" is a total joke. He's the reason for my franchising idea. I figured that if he was going to pay good money for ASP personnel, I might as well up the ante. Heh, heh, heh. At this rate he'll run out of money. After all, I can hire lots and lots of operatives for around \$300 apiece. Every one he has to pay for costs \$500. Remember the Cold War? Well, I'm the USA. I'll force him to spend himself into defeat.

And the grand joke is that their propaganda is so beneficial! Because of the Huskers, I've been approached by BLUD, ARF, and several other organizations offering alliances and mutual support in a war on the Rats. Thanks to the NOVA Rats, ASP is truly a household word, and accepted as a major player in terrorist politics! I couldn't have planned this better! I only hope that they keep attacking me at every point. If they stop, I'll lose credibility. In this business, you're judged by the public nuisance level you generate.

**ADQ:** *And Operation "No Shoulders?"*

**Black Asp:** You mean Operation "No Brains?" The Rat and his cronies are off on another wild snake hunt. I'm sooo scared. See me shake? The only outcome will be more NOVA propaganda and more allies – and publicity – for ASP

**ADQ:** *Do you have any plans for ending this war?*

**Black Asp:** What?!? And give up show business!?! I'll win the right way: By outlasting the opposition. In the meantime, ASP benefits from the process.

**ADQ:** *What about the grudge match between NOVA's new nuclear-powered tank prototype and your Fang Mk. II tank this summer in north Kansas?*

**Black Asp:** That's not part of the war. It's an object lesson in AFV design and tactics. Call it a personal challenge.

**ADQ:** *Will you be personally managing the combat?*

**Black Asp:** I'll be overseeing the action from a command position, for the proper, uh, detachment. A commander has to be detached from the tactical situation to oversee the "big picture." The Fang II will be directly managed by qualified military subcontractees.

**ADQ:** *Professional mercenaries.*

**Black Asp:** I believe that's what I said, yes.



**ADQ:** *I'm almost out of memory space. Is there any parting information you'd like to express to our readers and viewers?*

**Black Asp:** Yes. Dear viewers: Watch for the new *Aspie's Angels*, coming to a vid channel near you this fall! It's my latest project, you see. It builds a favorable image, sharpens my directorial talents, and there's the added advantage of working with the *Aspettes*. Va va vooom! Say, I believe this vid screen will accept this tape of the pilot episode I just happen to have with me . . .

*Fortunately for the viewers, the vidcam memory ran out at that point. For the next two hours I was forced to endure unspeakable torture, watching a vid show that made *AI's Gals* look like *Masterpiece Theatre* by comparison. If ASP perpetrates this atrocity on the public screens, it will surely be the most heinous act of terrorism the organization has ever committed.*

*It is said that greatness and madness go hand in hand. This reporter can attest to the fact that the Black Asp is greatly gifted in one of those two qualifications.*

## NOVA Responds

*(Editor's note: The following message from NOVA was received in response to "The Great Asp Hunt," in ADQ 9/4, but since it addresses many of the points raised in the above article, it was decided to let it serve as a rebuttal to the Black Asp's statements above. – CWM)*

I must express my extreme disappointment with Mr. Craig Sheeley, specifically with his report on my seeming demise in Omaha, as described in ADQ 9-4. Some statements are in order here:

1) I was not in the Omaha area at the time of those alleged events. In fact, I was in western Nebraska at the time, engaged in the destruction of a partially-completed ASP base, located some 30 miles SW of Scottsbluff.

2) The meeting described by Mr. Sheeley is not the way I handle payment on ASP prisoners or cadavers. In fact, I come to the bounty hunter, not the other way around.

3) Only a total moron could fail to see what was going on. This series of events was no more than an attempt by the Black Asp to shore up the morale of his troops, seeing as every time ASP has attacked Nebraska, it has gotten its tail kicked through its teeth.

4) You believed a person whose intelligence apparatus is so faulty it could not accurately report how much the bounty on his head actually is. "\$5,000?"

That's \$50,000, you nob.

Mr. Sheeley, surely you could have recognized when you were being led down the primrose path. The Black Asp handed you a setup series of events, and you reported it as truth.

To conclude, Mr. Sheeley, you have done the forces of law and order a great disservice by believing the Black Asp's lies. In the future, please report only facts, not propaganda.

To the Black Asp, I can say only one thing: you can't get me that easily.

And one other thing: *Wibble!*

– *The Mongoose*

# Telegraph Road

By Ian Knights

The black and yellow Republic FrostGiant crests the low hill leading on to the plain. The color scheme of the prairie is broken by a mural of a pig in sunglasses with a trotter around a nude blonde, "MC Pig - In Search of Paradise Tour, 2023." My personal mark on the truck I claim as home. Maybe I didn't own it, but sentimental value means no one tries to take it from me.

The weathergirl had been right. The sun beats down on everything that isn't sheltered from the heat wave as revenge for all those who said there wasn't enough over the weekend. Fair weather ahead. I travel alone; a smart link and computer replace the gunner and my possessions fill his position: clothes, magazines and guns. Cubes sprawl over the dash, the funk/rock of the Aussie band Overkill pumps its swing from the speakers. Al Johnson's Airplane decorates the sky, watching over the roaming herds. My view is almost as superb as his. Everything feels so right, so good.

Three targets have been closing since I cleared the city defenses, one ahead and two behind. The tailing two move into visual range while the other is still just allowing us to catch it slowly. I casually drag my finger over the touch pad in the center of the steering yoke, and the HUD lights up with scans, screens and reports, shocking my caffeine-charged nerves back into action. A car weaves wildly across the road, a bike flitting around it like a fly. I select the turret launcher and the computer awaits my choice of targets. The bike accelerates past, pulling a wheelie, while the sedan makes another erratic swerve. Have to be joyriders, seeking fun from abuse. I hear their jeers as echoes of city cries. A bottle smashes against the carrier. The car pulls back to my left side then sweeps across my path, collecting my front as it passes. I've spent my life running for sanctuary and ain't going to retreat from it now.

I open fire on the sedan's tail and accelerate to swipe it off the road. I push it out of my way, leaving it pointing off to the dust. The hothead driver rushes to get back on the road and skids to a halt. The bike drives off road. To his surprise, I guess, I follow - the OR tires were completely legal Army-surplus, and a layer of steel protects the undertray. I scare the hell out of him and let him go. Felt much better not to pursue it to the bitter end.

A voice comes over the radio and I notice the computer has targeted the vehicle ahead.

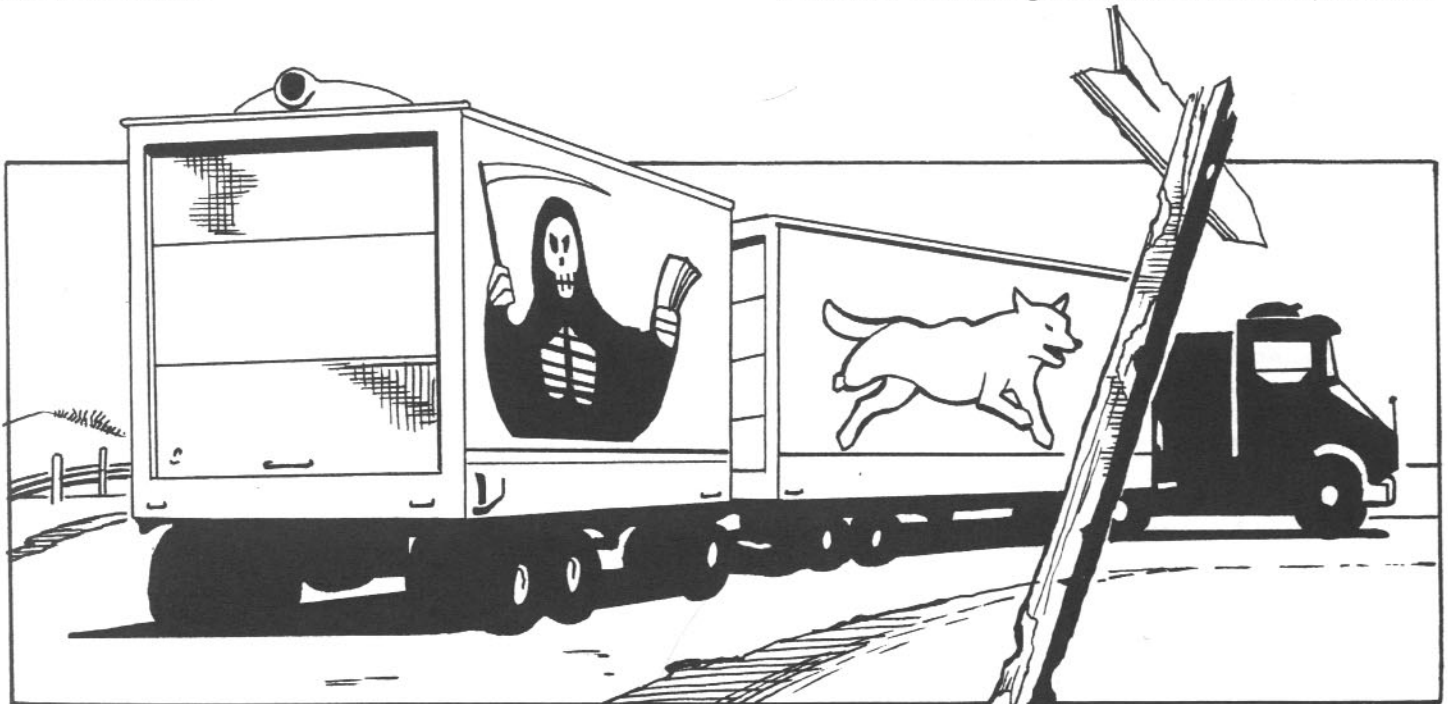
"You collectin' salvage on those jokers or what there, buddy?"

"Or what," I reply. "They ain't trashed, for a start."

"We'll see. Out." is the answer. The tail ahead widens to adopt the lines of a Crane Industries Road Train. I close up as the behemoth drags itself through its wide turning circle. All black with a mural of the Grim Reaper holding a wad of cash in its other hand. A dog had broken its chains to attack the beholder. I drive on. Room enough out here not to be ensnared in the affairs of others. The sickening feeling of guilt will lessen with the miles.

I continue deeper into the open prairie. That's one of the good things about it, you always keep on being drawn into its vast expanse without reaching a city. Enough space to be yourself. There's also the peace of the desolation. Not the pop-peace of one big happy family but real inner peace that leaves you feeling whole. The passing blimp becomes part of the scenery and I admire the sheer expansiveness of the view. I'm melting in the sun which stares through the tint . . . The stereo snaps me from highway hypnosis, identifiable by that between-sleep-and-first-coffee feeling. I am nearing the Omaha reservation. The truck rocks off the edge of the road waking me further. I casually cut across the dirt until I reach the track leading to the low reservation buildings; the real reason for having on OR truck. No sign of any escort, which is odd.

An ANASF road block greets me as I reach halfway. Dust trails



show the road behind being closed off. I keep rolling until I reach my welcoming party. Bruins flank the road, infantry aim VLAWs from any available cover. I stay put. Two figures walk towards the cab, the old man stopping short. The other continues and becomes recognizable by the armor markings as my friend and regular escort River Thomas. He taps the door and I touch on the switch, making it pop out and slide back along the body work.

"Two trailer rig tore up a civilian target last night. The chief's so mad they had to fly in an Eld' to mediate. Nothin' personal but you're in deep. Stick by me and leave your shades in the cab." I drop to the dust, squinting to protect my near albino eyes from the sun. We reach the Elder. I'm spared all formalities.

"The Brotherhood has allowed its members to persecute us." A nice unprovocative start. River turns away with embarrassment, which means quite a lot from such a passionate fighter. Training had given enough thoughtfulness to keep him alive, but he's still keen to die in battle.

"Some ranchers want our land. We won't sell, so a two-trailer rig thunders through the night to level a cattle station. You know these lands well for a white man . . ." I decide against all the abusive answers, which leaves, "Nothing to do with me."

"Look at me when you say that," replies the Elder. I consider the guns around me and drop my own. I step towards him and shade my eyes, staring into the eyes of judgment,

"I didn't dump on you, OK?" My throat is as dry as the ground.

"The Brotherhood still allowed a racist attack."

"Corporate war isn't racist. They do it to each other all the time . . ."

"Until Hicksville."

"It's still war. Cry terrorism to the Feds, they'll let you do anything."

"Let us enforce their law and be accused of race hatred. Don't tell me that wasn't thought about before we were shot at."

"Still not my fault, or anything to do with me . . . I'm not promising anything." I return to my SMG. I'm covered in sweat but it could just be the heat.

I sulk in the loading bay as the first batch of pre-packed foods is swapped for raw beef. My oldest trait – I hate being bulldozed like that. I unclip the traveling lid from my Gunner's Mate™ and console myself with a long overdue coffee. River saunters over.

"I'm s'posed to thank you and give you all the help you need."

"I ain't done nothing yet."

"All the same, they asked me to acknowledge your support after making you native enemy number one." I refrain from bitching, tempting though it is.

"You go into the Hamilton ranch next, don't you?"

"Ye-es . . . why?"

"Don't s'pose you'd be surprised to learn he wanted our land."

"Makes sense, he is next to you. Keep back but within radio range, see you in Bart's."

The trip to Hamilton's is overcast with fear and loathing. As it turns out, nothing much happens. Hamilton's his usual suave, self-centered self. I ask about the truck. ". . . 24 counts of taking the money and running, bad for business," over four glasses of water to keep me fresh. The usual politician's politeness and joviality. I leave still knowing he'd hired guns to get the land, but he hadn't confirmed it. If only he did the same to friends, I'd have told him to beat the city slickers at their own game.

Bart's is on the edge of Homestead – an early reconstruction settlement, home to the local co-operative workers, also the sight of the biggest bloodshed of a co-op war in 2028, typically trivial-

ized by the media as the Hicksville Massacre. The approach to Homestead is called Telegraph Road, because Bart beams Route 66 over a wide beam microwave link alongside the road. Bart's isn't what a cartographer would call a truck stop, but this far out that name is given to anything where a truck stops, except for lights. Bart's an ex-army chef and provides a nap trap with all the comfort of city life without the sharks to complement his bar and garage.

I park the truck and swap my armor for jacket and shades. I take an overnight bag and give the keys to Chuck for reloading. I stick to the long shadows walking to the bar, kicking up dust as I go. Old friends and the Sultans of Swing welcome me into the pale gloom, the Sultans' latest cube thundering carefully from the speakers. Most of the regular crew are in the half-light, minding their own business when not sharing good times. The tight jeans and T-shirt are virtually a uniform for those who wear armor for their long drives. Mitch's kid's escaping the world in the violent arena contained in his Virtuality Boy – the wounds more visible but shallower, or is it that he could turn it off when he wanted? Let's not get philosophical.

I shower and make my mark on my room before returning to the bar, now bathed in the lazy shades of a sun on its way to setting as well as the usual ethereal glow. I get a coffee, a real beefburger and fries. I'm not a great alcohol drinker.

"You seen a black Crane Industries Road Train recently?" I ask Bart over my second coffee.

"One stopped by here 2:00 a.m., freshly scarred. Would've left us dry to refit that mother so we sent them to Lincoln. Some kinda



traveling salesman. Would've sold us salvage but didn't look like guys to deal with. Grim Reaper mural said it all."

Since he doesn't ask, I don't trouble him with why I want to know. Whoever this guy is he isn't afraid to leave a trail. I take a brew to play pool with Julian McMahon – coffee and pool don't mix. It's a mystery why I play; I've minimal co-ordination, but I enjoy it and conversation would be easy.

Julian's nearly twice my age and has gypsy trucked for the past 31 years. He's now rich enough to spend nearly all his time here, being too keen on women to spend time being a knight. Still, he's seen it all. I put the white away on the second shot.

"Damn, who'd have the money to buy a Road Train while living as a free trader or mercenary?"

"No particular crew I know of, but some likely candidates I've left behind. Anything I should know about?"

"The NAA accuse a black two-trailer outfit of ventilating a cattle station. A black Road Train with a Grim Reaper mural appears on our roads, nothing from the Brotherhood. Whoever he is can frag off my route."

"Brandon Willis used to do anything for a buck except take a regular job. Used to buy up bankrupt stock, unclaimed cargoes and the like, ship 'em off and sell for a higher price collecting salvage and missions all along the way. Try for that one into the middle pocket."

"In your dreams. So this guy's your best bet?"

"Not many mercenaries would own a Road Train, and he'd definitely see it as just another commercial war."

"Hard to disagree with that, I don't wanna make no high 'n' mighty, hypocritical judgment on the guy but I don't like who pays the price 'cos he wants more. Think we should kick him back into line?"

Julian yells at Marty, his gunner and hacker. Marty knows Route 66 like the back of his hand and sneaks in regularly. We're the closest to knights on these roads and we don't wait around for information from The Books.

The spinal-jack wouldn't look so dominant if Marty wasn't a dwarf – he sometimes leaves the optic cable jacked in and trailing over his shoulder like a grotesque deadlock. He always keeps his holo-disk ("my disguise, lock picks and tool kit") and jack-server with him.

Marty jacks in and configures the com to obey the link-up. We begin our private investigations.

One file's all it takes to establish a false ID, enter the net and become invisible. The old user disappears and Route 66 thinks we're just part of the scenery, asking questions but it doesn't know or care who we are. Marty adopts his distant expression as he's taken in by cyberspace. I start on a fresh coffee. The screen flashes up a display, for our benefit and because it hasn't been told not to. The database of truckers flows down from the top to be quickly replaced with a search inquiry from the editor, which disappears as fast as it appeared. After a pause long enough for me to take another sip the report comes back, "String 'Willis, Brandon' not Found." More importantly the alarm icon starts flashing the message "DefCon 5." The screen cycles through logging on and vehicle search screens like a late office worker catching up on four hour's work. The alarm goes to DefCon 3 and audibly warns us off, the TimeFinder and Disappear routines are put in a queue for when the vehicle search finished. They never get through. The cube drive goes dead as DefCon 1 flashes up, disconnecting the jack from the feedback put into a forced cutoff.



Marty sits back defeated and rubs his eyes, re-adjusting to using them. I start another coffee, Marty starts on a beer,

"Debriefing time. To you or I, Brandon Willis don't exist, and Route 66 doesn't like being asked about him. At least enough to kick up a fuss to Doc Teeth. I can't tell him I'm just a machine he didn't know he had. The drivers list would've been copied. I can carve it up, kill the prodigal son and look for scars where Mr. Willis has been cut out of the picture. All a matter of knowing what to look for. My guess is the jerk carried his self-styled capitalism too far and the Knights are going to clean house, but until they do Mr. Willis is so embarrassing that he became a blank."

"Probably just gave him more freedom," Julian offers.

"And no-one'll care if we deal with him ourselves," I say, heading for my room.

"Make sure you get the right guy. Stay cool, right," Julian calls after me.

I can't sleep in the heat. I can control the hate with the cool afforded by the easy peace of the land. Couldn't do that in the big city – hated the evil around me so much I lost sight of the good stuff. What made it all worthwhile. Now I take it easier – no more bitter tears. I chill off in the all 'round shower, let the fresh cool wash over me like a new sensation, then admire the view from my window with a Coke from the minibar, feel night air still warm against my face. I hear an owl. I wonder why it is so far from its territory. The low hum of a power plant and rumble of truck axles eases across the open space and out of the night slides a Road Train. I dress and make for the door. The phone rings. I almost leave it, but don't. River had been recalled to the reservation. They'd chased the raider off again, but only after he'd leveled a cold store and killed some livestock. I head for the bays.

It's the same truck. More combat damage. The Sultans of Swing could still be heard in the bar as the doors swung. I can see the mural in detail close up. More notes line the Reaper's cloak and the hound bears the nameplate "War." Its owner approaches, lean built but bolstered by IBA. He removes the neck roll and helmet and makes to shake my hand. I don't take him up on that, but greet him.



"Hi stranger."  
"So they really are all that friendly out here."  
"This is my personal leaning post, I don't move without good reason."

"OK then. You interested in buying salvage?"

"I'll take a look."

He leads me round the back of the 30-footer. The doors are already open. Inside is a bulkier man, scarred across his face, surveying his spoils of war. He looks up at me,

"You've met one of my gunners, then." So I was wrong. Sue me. "Eddie's the latest to join our motley crew. You look fresh yourself."

"When most places'll cover up the wounds for free I don't see the point in showing off how many times I've got myself shot. And you might be?"

"Dick Morten." So, not the name I was hoping for. "Trader and trucker for hire. I collect on all my kills. Don't have to look for 'em. Money for nothin'. So see anything you want?"

"Dunno. Can I look in?"

"Sure."

I step up into the trailer and check out what's there. Guns, ammo, electronics – anything small enough to stow. Some parts could've come from the joyriders but I don't recognize any of them. One of the wheels matches the type used on ANASF Scouts. I look it over. Indian's head logo stamped on the fairing. I move on unselfconsciously. Have to keep cool. I note an Artech VMG, also bearing the ANASF ident. They must've gone back to the wrecks after security had collected the driver, or corpse I s'pose.

Dick picks his way over to me, "You buying?"

"I'm concerned about your source. This Vulcan would be better than an RL at the right place." Morten pauses for thought then shrugs and announces,

"... I ain't staying so long. I scrapped some ANASF vehicles in the line of duty. It's fresh salvage. What say you gimmie a price?"

"One K, loaded."

"No deal."

"Fine. Have to watch my weight anyway." I hear Julian's voice at the doors. We both turn to look at him. Julian's got full armor and shades on and carries an assault rifle over his shoulder.

"Brandon, always lousy seeing a face from the past."

"Shoulda known I couldn't dump my old name just 'cos the Brotherhood did. Been good though, being less infamous."

"Can't believe trade's good out here."

"You'd be surprised, a lot of co-ops are out for cheap hardware. Every dollar counts."

I take the chance to exit the trailer and join Julian,

"You didn't say you knew Julian."

"We go back some way, but your pal was always choosier about his clients. Easy to let principles come between friends, wasn't it?"

"I make up my own mind what's right and wrong." Julian backs off a few steps then turns, heading for the bar. I follow and keep my mouth shut. Julian will tell me in his own time – better that way. I owe it to River to call him straight off. But I owe it to everyone else not to get Bart's trashed in the inevitable dust-up. Everything will come in time. Julian gets a beer and sits in front of the vid. The Sultans have been replaced by the news: NJ National Guard used to oust corrupt police, destruction of major Louisiana assets in Oklahoma in corporate warfare, homophobic demonstrations in Manhattan. It'd all come here. I call over to Julian,

"You reckon he'll still be here in the mornin'?"

"Gotta sleep somewhere, he ain't scared of me – sadly."

"If you wanna talk, say so, otherwise . . ."

"I know. Thanks."

"Stay cool, okay?" I head for my room. I listen to my Cubeman as I lie awake, "... on their knees, listen like thieves . . . all in your hands."

I'm showered and virtually ready to roll when Julian bangs on my door. With an edible cargo an early start is the norm.

"Brandon and his crew are having breakfast in the bar, guess they'll head off after that." Julian follows as I grab my McDade T-shirt (so, I like the show) and we head downstairs, brothers in arms. The Sultans of Swing are shaking the building again, singing about the *Walk of Life*. We enter the bar. Brandon's crew are paying up. I get a coffee off Bart on my tab, and my Gunner's Mate™ filled as I swallow as much as hot as I can. It'd be suspicious if we just followed them out so I've got time for toast.

We go outside and head for the trucks. They wait in the bays exuding a quiet, selfless power. The kevlar's cool to touch. I get in, at home in the driver's seat. I twist the key with newfound confidence building up as the drive train flywheels reach their peak. I put an Overkill cube in the player for a battle cry and the truck crawls forwards, making the world wait for it to catch up. I'm ready to kick. Julian jogs from one of the long bays and flags me down. I stop and touch the window down pad. Julian steps up on the side,

"A-holes took my front tires. Bart oughta toughen security." I opened the door. "No backseat . . ."

"Your truck, your call."

"And careful with my stuff you're pushing around!" I put my foot to the floor, not that I'm gonna get anywhere fast, powering over the dusty space trying to build some momentum.

On the road, stretching in front of us an infinite battlefield, we see the black shape of a Road Train in the heat haze ahead. We close ever so slowly – not obviously in pursuit; we've all the road we want. We're hailed on the radio,

"Hi there, aren't you that buddy of Jules'?"

"Yup. On that subject, you'd have nothing to do with him having no tires? He was pretty upset when I left the nap trap." Nice and cool, I hadn't even lied.

"What if we had? We didn't actually trash 'em and we don't like pursuit."

"Fair enough. I gotta reach the city 'fore my load defrosts, so if you could let me past . . ." Julian looks put out. Still he knows attacking from the rear of a rig is suicide, and I have to get past somehow. No doubt they're in combat mode just so long as they don't fire first. Julian stays below the window as we crawl past, only 10 mph faster by my guess. Small projectile ports mark it as the '39 model. Probably customized, though. I know it looks more impressive than it is, but I'm not dying to get into this fight. My 10-wheeler wasn't built for waging war.

I have a plan. The weakest point on any rig's the cab, but it's a safe bet its crew know what they're doing. Out in front, but only just, I ease off to 50 and steel myself for the conflict, feeling time expand in my mind to accommodate the rush of decisions which will have to be made. I flick from navigational to combat mode and my mind is ready, analyzing every second in a suddenly minute world. I can picture the grill of the sleeper-longnose only 30' behind. I want to loose it. I select the dropped/turret link and fire. The fireball spits hot shrapnel through the paint clouds so I must've hit. The minute explosions of the explosive spikes can be

heard outlasting the roar of the rocket hits. Autocannon fire cuts through the noise and rocks the back of the truck. I steady and resight as soon as the computer will allow, the rig's slowing but still popping the spikes. I can't see it for paint – guess he's using radar. Brandon emerges from the paint, rough riding off road. Being at an angle allows him to bring all three cannons to bear – not good. I hit the accelerator, multiple shell bursts lashing the back. It's hard to tell how many hit, but the damage report is that the armor's gone. I resight on the nose of the black hulk and try another shot. Ignoring whether or not I hit, I kill the paint and keep my foot down; change of tactics definitely required, despite it being late in the game.

Julian adds some constructive criticism:

"Don't just run with ya tail exposed! Keep his head down at least."

"Trust me." Brandon's dumped his trailer standing on its skid plate like a forlorn son on a crutch and the tractor's coming after us like a champion in front of his posse. Fortunately, it's nicely in my trailer turret's line of sight. I fire and slam down the brake. I miss, I fired before lock on, Julian rushing me – don't get distracted, don't think – instinct! I pull the truck round a 160° turn as the shells explode against the side, pushing the tail round. Covering fire from the 30' trailer hits the windscreen. The searing brightness and thundering explosions bring fearful reality screaming through. For a moment I see Julian so scared to be helpless. I see the crosshairs awaiting lock-on and snatch instinctively at the thread of reason. Cool logic slices through the panic like a scalpel, as good as ice in a heat wave. I sight and fire all four launchers and my view is crazed by smoke trails. A fireball unfurls itself to embrace the black tractor and I take my vehicle into the dust. The

cannon fire beats the engine bay and bits of my truck fly across my view, black shadows in the fire. Computer reports 20% integrity for the front, quick calculation rates that at 8 layers spread over the front. The rough ride makes the gun sights shake, but I hit. Both trailer guns get a clear shot at my turret. The tractor's cannon streams shells into my front, tearing into the fuel cells. The glare of the shell bursts clears and I can see the cab turning, front in tatters. A hit from the back will go straight to the driver – still a chance. The cab pivots. I fire into the exposed back as cannon fire tears into the cab. The glare makes me wince. Barely audible through the thunder of the explosions is the radio picking up frantic yells,

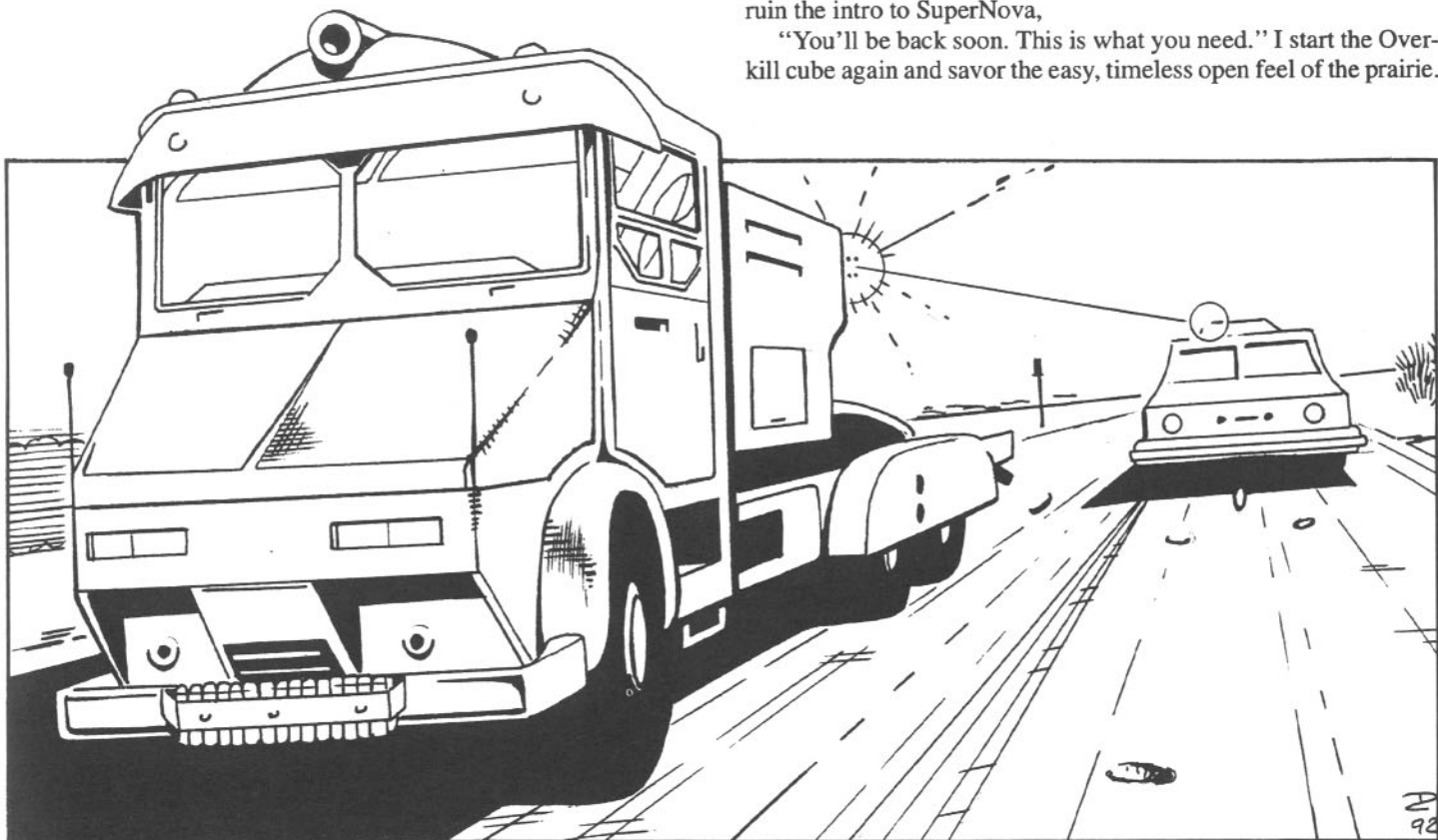
"Brandon! Oh, man! Say you're alive, frag pig!"

We got him – concentrate, it's not over. Does go to show it's not size that counts but what you do with it. I turned my side to the trailers and started on a wide arc around them, hoping they'd rush a medic to him rather than fire. No such luck – no one saves lives like his. Shells rake the sides, I pressed the pad tuning the CB to the ANASF frequency,

"Your two-trailer rig's stranded down Telegraph Road, 13 miles west of Bart's. Don't say the Brotherhood does nothin' for ya." I shut it down. I didn't want the hero status, no big deal. Someone was a charred corpse in a wreck. Nothing to celebrate. Figures could be seen leaving the semi as I pulled away. They'd be found. I don't care, I've paid my dues. I want to be outta here.

Julian escorts my tattered truck to Omaha. For once I could do with the company to stop me brooding. He wouldn't follow me into the rat race, the shoulder to cry on would desert me when needed most. I've never been a crazy guy, but I've always preferred restraint to rules and faith in each other to repression and suspicions, so give me the wildlife any day. Julian's parting words ruin the intro to SuperNova,

"You'll be back soon. This is what you need." I start the Overkill cube again and savor the easy, timeless open feel of the prairie.



# Game Notes

Crane Industries Road Train '39 – Sleeper longnose, x-hvy chassis, super PP with SCs & PCs, solid tires, driver, universal turret: AC with 2 mags (one loaded with HD), mag switch, SAMs in 3-space mag. IFE, IR, surge protector, HD shocks, windjammer, HD brakes, LD radio, radar, radar detector linked to jammer, hi-res computer, no-paint tinted windshield, LR armor; F40, R40, L40, B20, T40, U25, 6 10-pt WGs, 9-pt 5th WG, 10-pt CA for Driver, 16,200 lbs., \$130,236.

40' semi-trailer, solid tires, QR kingpin, 3 gunners, universal turret TB as on cab, smart links to cab turret, AC, RB & LB smart linked to 30' trailer side guns, IFE, solar panel, no paint tinted windshield, HD brakes, HD shocks, 3 hi-res computers, laser battery, surge protector, IR, STEP, QR hitch, 53 spaces cargo, LR armor: F20, B20, TF 30, UF25, all else 40, 6 10-pt. LR WGs, 10-pt. CA for solar panel, 10-pt. CA for crew all together, 16,421 lbs., \$98,640.

30' van trailer, X-Hvy chassis, SB solid tires, universally turreted AC with 2 magazines, one loaded with HD ammo, 2 ACs (LB, RB), magazine switch, 3 MDs with 2 magazines (B, LB,

RB), one load each napalm, all mines proximity fused, mag switch each MD, HDFCE with mag, link all dropped weapons and all to AC, IFE, PES TF, HD shocks, HD brakes, 5 spaces 1,087 lbs. cargo, LR armor: F20, FT30, FU25, BU25, all else 40, 4 10-pt. WGs, 10-pt. CA for PES, 15,833 lbs., \$84,300.

Whole rig – \$313,176, 42,459 lbs. cargo in semi-trailer. (The 2041 model mounts side ACs in sponson turrets only on the semi-trailer.)

Prodigal Son routines are included in all Route 66 files and on many other databases. This program knows where the file should be located and checks that its “surroundings” are right every time it’s read. If it’s not in the right place it starts a virus and tries to find a way to report its theft back to a programmed location. The reporting mechanism is limited, working by trial and error. A virus containing the report is formed which knows about certain networks and will copy itself along all the routes it knows. It’s fairly easy to delete (roll vs. Computing at -1). The main virus makes any computer affected impossible to use. Cutting it out of a file using a cube or disk editor requires a Computing roll at -4 to recognize it, and a roll at +2 to delete it, leaving all else intact.



UNDERWOOD '92

# Petersburg, VA

By Timothy D. Jacques

Civilization is slowly coming back to Virginia, but it has a long way to go. The Petersburg area (covering the areas of Petersburg, Colonial Heights, and Hopewell) is a good example of a rural community struggling for survival.

**Warning:** The AADA has classified Petersburg as a Class 3 danger zone. There is no recognizable city government yet, and mob rule is the norm. Several politically-organized "clans" exist, but they can be dismissed as nothing more than organized, well-armed gangs. The clans are in a never-ending war of terrorism to take sole control of the area. Travelers should stay neutral in all political matters while in this area.

## History

Petersburg has enjoyed a long and colorful past. It was a strategic supply center in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, due to its access to the James River and well-built roads. Industry came in the 1920s, as the result of very cheap land and an eager work force. Fort Lee was constructed in 1917 as the Army Quartermaster training school, and a basic-training camp for World War I. After the war, the basic training duty was moved south to Georgia, and the Quartermaster School stayed.

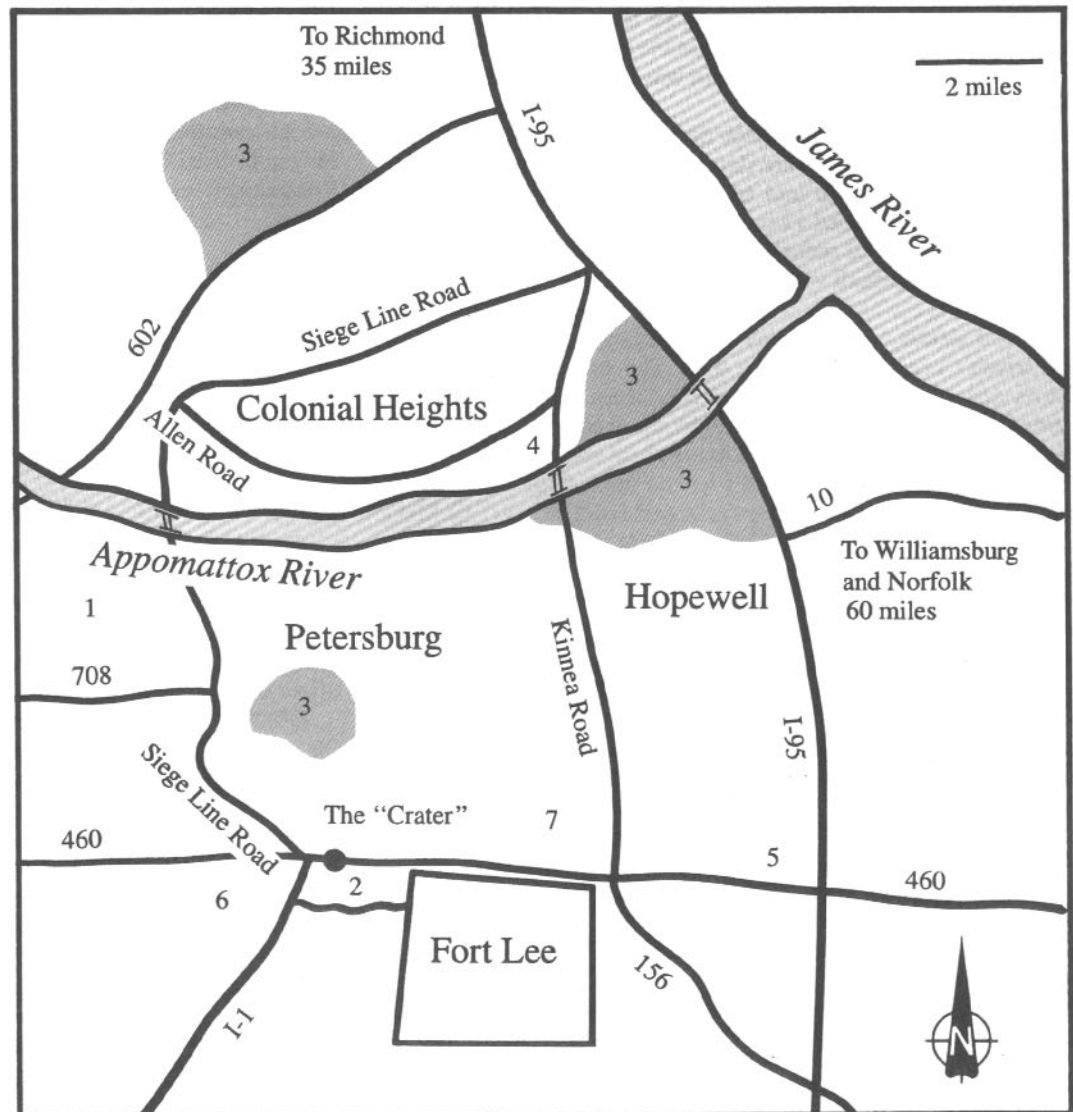
The Dark Years brought the usual ruin and riots. The civilian government collapsed in the second week of rioting, as politicians literally ran for their lives. Whole sections of the town were burned to the ground. The military police forces on Fort Lee did what they could, but it was too little too late. Neighborhood protection forces formed quickly, and with Army training and support things began to settle down at around 2019. But Petersburg remains an uncertain place to be. Violence can and will erupt anywhere at anytime.

Reconstruction has been slow at best. Constant fighting between political clans has made rebuilding difficult. The U.S. Army has had little interest in Petersburg affairs since 2020. They claim that it's now a state problem, and not their responsibility anymore. This has opened the door to uncontrolled violence and anarchy.

## Places of Interest

**1. Fort Lee** – Established in 1917, Fort Lee serves as the training center for the Quartermaster Corps. Also stationed at the fort is a battalion of Mechanized Infantry and Armor. The base's policy on Petersburg since 2020 has been non-intervention, but they have

## Petersburg, VA



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been known to intervene in emergency situations which seem to threaten the security of the fort. On post, the fort is extremely safe. Tours of its Quartermaster Museum can be arranged by appointment.

**2. Petersburg National Battlefield Park** – In 1864, Union Forces laid siege to the town of Petersburg (the Confederate supply nexus) in order to starve the Confederates out of food, ammo and supplies. The siege lasted a year, with trench warfare being extensively used. Using a strategy of attrition, Union forces captured the city and drove Lee's forces out. Lee and his troops were pursued for week, until they surrendered at Appomattox Court House.

A National Park commemorating the battlefield was built in the early 1930's. Though the park was only able to save a fraction of the actual siege lines built, the area saved was the most memorable in the entire campaign. Areas to see are the tourist building (with exhibits and 3-D slide show), Fort Stedman (Lee's last offensive), live trench demonstrations, cannon shootings, and "the crater."

"The crater" deserves special attention. Early in the siege, Union generals tried a bold plan. Miners dug a tunnel long enough to stretch beneath a whole section of Confederate trenches. The tunnel was then planted with explosives. The charges were exploded, opening up a 500-yard gap in the lines. Union troops rushed in to secure the breach and win the siege but they went *into* the hole and not around it. The result was a mass of confusion and the offensive bogged down.

The Confederate counterattack decimated the Union attackers. Over 3,000 Union troops were slaughtered. After that, Union leadership decided to dig in and try to beat the rebels in a war of attrition. They succeeded 11 months later.

The park has good security and is properly maintained. Troublemakers will be dealt with severely. No weapons are allowed in the park.

**3. Red Zones** – These areas were destroyed in the Food Riots and haven't been touched since then. The streets are filled with debris and most of the buildings over three stories have been burned to the ground. During the night, these zones are active with the worst scum imaginable. *Stay out of these zones!!*

**4. "New" City Hall** – Don't let the name fool you. This is merely a fortified bunker where the largest political clan (the Masters) have set up headquarters. Since 2036, the Masters have declared themselves the official city government of the Petersburg area. Their claim is problematic in at least two ways; first, there are several other political clans who have made a similar statement, and second, the general populace doesn't give a damn. However, the Masters are heavily armed and highly trained. Don't mess with them.

**5. Cousin Ed's Truck Stop and Grill** – In such a hostile territory, it's nice to have someone who's hospitable to strangers. "Cousin Ed" runs the town's only truck stop. His prices are fair and the employees work hard to satisfy. A good tip is usually earned and definitely appreciated.

Besides the truck stop, there is a small motel, a bar and cafe. Helicopter pads are located on the south side, and a navigational beacon is provided for bad-visibility landings. The truck stop can fix helicopters. It is believed that the local EDSEL chapter frequents the grill, but Ed's is neutral ground and Uncle Ed makes sure this status is respected.

Ed's Truck Stop is walled and efficiently armed and guarded, but Ed relies on his reputation as much as on hardware for security.

**6. Aerostar Industrial Center** – After the fall of the major American corporations in 2016, more efficient companies stepped in to pick up the pieces. The Aerostar Corporation bought the local chemical facilities in 2023 to produce fertilizer and industrial chemicals. River-port facilities can be found nearby, as shipments are made around the clock. Security is extremely tight. Mine fields and automated defense bunkers surround the complex.

Rumors say that Aerostar is backing the Masters political clan with money, weapons, and equipment. Aerostar naturally denies this, but independent investigative studies suggest otherwise. Approach these people with extreme caution.

**7. O'Conner Duelling Zone** – Petersburg doesn't have an arena per se, but it does have a place for people to settle disputes. The zone is nothing more than an abandoned parking lot. There are no spectators or prizes. Most local challenges are fought here.

### *Facilities*

Petersburg has a full selection of services for travelers. There's an airfield (with shuttle service to Richmond and D.C.), hospital, Cousin Ed's and several questionable garages. The hotels here are expensive due to security costs. Expect to pay 50% more than for equivalent lodging in a secure city or fortress town.

With the exception of Cousin Ed's, most local businesses give a cold reception to outsiders. Expect to pay 25% more and wait longer in line. Trying to protest only exacerbates the situation. Without any real police force, the only laws here are the ones you make.

### *Roads*

Interstates 85 and 95 are in fair condition. All the other roads in the area are in poor condition. Off-road suspension is strongly suggested. Though the winters are mild, the slightest snowfall can be extremely hazardous on some of the two-lane roads. Use extreme caution.

### *Groups and Organizations*

The *Masters* political clan can be identified by their blue cars and green and brown clothes. They number around 500 active members, with some 60 vehicles and one helicopter. They claim to be the "official" city government, but there are several smaller groups who make a similar claim as well. The Masters are not afraid to use terrorism to accomplish their goals.

*EDSEL*. Nearby, a small EDSEL outpost is stationed to keep the roadways safe from vehicular combat. Their activities are rather limited, due to the fact that they're fighting for their survival most of the time. They try to stay out of local politics, but it's believed that they quietly support the Masters, who plan to ban all weapons in their area if they take full power.

The *Bloodsuckers* are a vicious cycle gang who are known for an active hijacking operation, usually using road blocks and booby traps. Their colors are black and gray with two bloody fangs painted on their vehicles. They number about 60, with some 30 cycles. Without an effective police force they roam the back roads almost unchallenged. They're not known for taking prisoners. Captives are later found dead, usually with two puncture marks on their neck.

# ARENA WATCH

## The Circle of Doom, Hartford, CT

By Brian Morrison

The most recent addition to the duelling scene in the Greater Hartford area is the Circle of Doom, constructed on the site of the old Dillon football stadium. Completed in October, 2039, it serves as host to some of the best duelling competition in the area, and the usually small Hartford sports market has been drawn heavily to this arena, making it one of the most successful venues in the region.

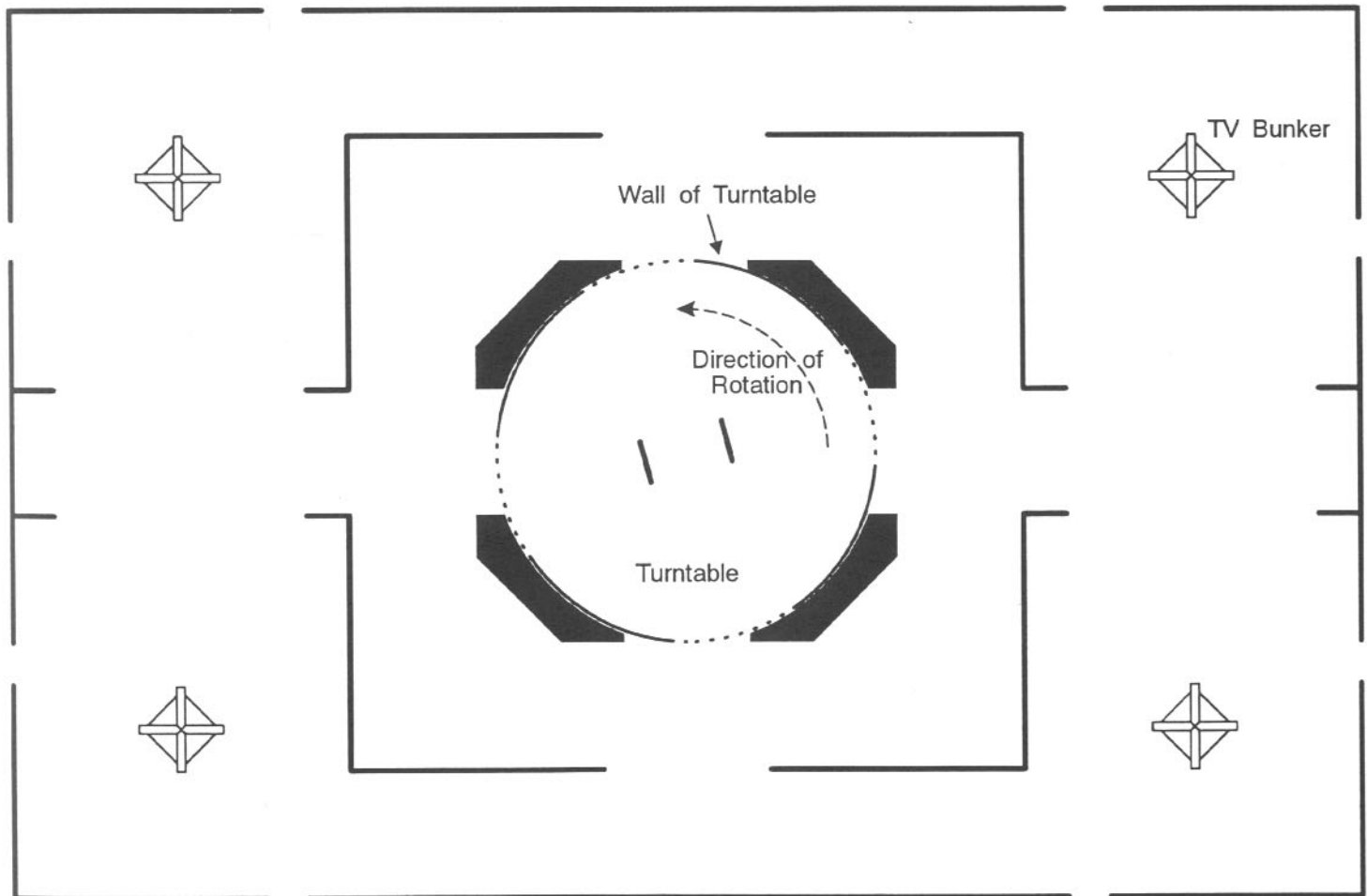
**Arena Notes:** The main feature of the arena is the circular center area, which actually rotates counter-clockwise at 25 mph (moving 1/2" every phase). The walls on the circle, and the walls of the surrounding parts of the arena each have four openings. Thus, when the platform has rotated 45°, there will be no openings from the platform to the rest of the arena! The walls on the circle

are 25 DP, and the ones in the rest of the arena are 40 DP (except the structures closest to the circle, which are indestructible). The TV bunker walls have 75 DP. It is a D2 hazard to enter or leave the circle, because of the speed at which it is rotating. Usually, there are no dropped weapons allowed on the platform itself, but anywhere off of it or in the openings leading to it are fair game.

**Arena Events:** The Circle of Doom runs a standard AADA Divisional weekly schedule, with Sunday cleanup and Friday amateur nights. One of the more common Special Events is as follows:

**Center Scramble:** Victory is based on points, with one point for a firepower or mobility kill. Vehicles lose comparable points when their own firepower or mobility is lost. Vehicles must cross the center of the middle circle before they can score any positive points (although negative points may be scored). Dropped weapons are banned on the center circle for this event.

### Circle of Doom



# BACKFIRE

I have a question about using an SWC with Smart Links. I think it was Ken Scott who said that this was not possible. I would have to disagree with him on this point.

First of all I would accept the fact that a SWC is not sophisticated enough to handle being used while a smart link is being used. But why can't you use the SWC when only using one of the weapons? If I have two linked machine guns front and a pair of linked machine guns in a turret, and I have both pairs smart-linked together, why can I not also hook up an SWC to the turret guns? The SWC would only give me the +1 if I was using *just* the turret MGs; if I wanted to fire all four guns I could not get the SWC bonus.

I'd also like to share the stats for a new body style, the Racing Bike. \$2,000, 200 lbs., 1,500 lbs. Max. load and 9 spaces. Cost is \$30 per point and 15 lbs. per point. A Racing bike already has a carbon-aluminum frame and can not mount a sidecar. Treat like a heavy cycle in all other regards.

Finally, having done some numbers for Custom Gas engines, I would like to submit to the readers of *ADQ* the following formulas for creating a racing engine for their cars of any size:

Space - Every 25 CID is 1/2 space. A 400-CID engine would be 8 spaces.  $CID/25 = \text{Space}$ .

Weight - Every engine has 25 lbs. of base weight plus 20 lbs. for every cubic inch in size. A 400-CID engine would weigh in at 825 lbs. A bit lighter than a normal engine, but these use the latest in high-tech materials.  $(CID \times 2) + 25 = \text{weight}$ .

Cost - Each engine costs 35 times its CID. So again, a 400-CID engine would cost \$14,000. A bit more than the store-bought version, but again they are using more expensive materials than an off-the-shelf model.  $CID \times 35 = \text{Cost}$ .

Power Factors - Multiply the displacement of the engine by 18 to get the number of power factors. Keeping with the 400-CID engine, it would have 7,200 power factors.  $CID \times 18 = \text{Power factors}$ .

MPG - Probably the hardest step in this whole process to figure out. Because smaller engines are more efficient than larger engines, two formulas are needed. If your engine is *smaller* than 100 CID use

this formula:  $3,500 / (100 - CID) = \text{MPG}$ . So a 50-CID engine would get 50 MPG.

If your engine is 100-CID or larger, then use this formula:  $(1/CID) \times 5,000 = \text{MPG}$ . Our running 400-CID engine would get 12 MPG, less than a factory model but this is a racing engine.

DP - Last but not least, divide the CID of the engine by 25.  $CID/25 = \text{DP}$ . The big block 400 CID we have been working on would have 16 DP.

Notes: Round all numbers in the *worst* direction. So on space, weight and cost round up, and on DP, MPG and power factors you would round down. An engine can have a minimum of 1/2 space, 1 DP and get 1 MPG.

- Dave Searle  
*The Office Upstairs*

*Please test out the rules Dave suggests above and let us know how they work.*

- CWM

Judging by recent responses, I believe NOVA (and our challenges) has been misjudged. To begin with, we plan to meet all challengers who wish to engage us. This is not meant to be bullying, but to show our commitment. It doesn't matter whether it's ASP or another AADA chapter.

If it seemed like we were trying to come off as "the baddest chapter," then realize that was not our intent. Even though we have many years of duelling under our belts, we can be beaten. Also, we enjoy a good duel. Since the AADA has been pushing for chapter-to-chapter challenges for years, NOVA chose a worthy opponent. (Granted, some annoyance was involved.) Now that the RCADA has

expired and its members have scattered to the four winds, I leave creation of opinions concerning its individual members to all of you out there.

For years, one of NOVA's main goals (not that anyone has noticed yet) has been to increase and improve communication between duellists, duelling chapters and SJ Games. If it takes a challenge or two to do so, then so be it, although I'd rather not promote bad blood between them. NOVA knows all too well what that results in.

We'd rather have a good duel and shake hands afterwards, to be honest. NOVA prefers to duel honestly, courteously and tactfully. We are offended by those who cannot do so. We are sorry, but we saw RCADA as an example of such behavior.

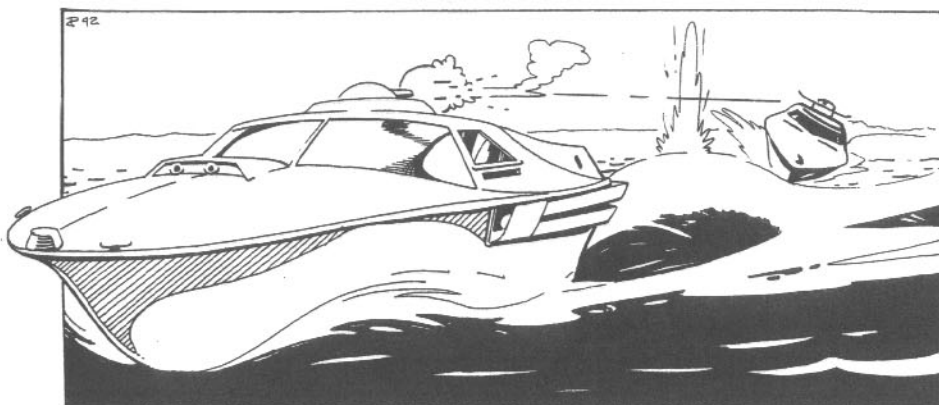
Whether NOVA duels all, some or none of the other chapters is up to them. Otherwise, NOVA will see them at the Worlds with no bitter feelings. We hope other duellists are able to do the same.

*Car Wars* is just a game and is for fun. Anyone who takes it personally deserves everything he gets. NOVA would rather have friends than foes any day.

We may not like all of the "back door" rules changes, but, like everyone else we live with them. On a local level (inter-NOVA), we choose which kind of item (old rules or new rules) we prefer. No, we don't like the "new and improved" gas engines, jumping rules, VFRPs, RGMs and ramplates. And we would like to see the return of the *Blank Map Sheets*.

Enough said.

- Norman McMullen  
NOVA President  
Omaha, NE



(Editor's Note: This issue's guest guru is Craig Sheeley, the author of *Aeroduel* and *Car Wars Tanks*. – CWM)

1. The Goshawk's top speed should be 962.5 mph, not 905 mph.
2. The Goshawk's top speed with afterburner should be 1,205 mph, not 1,795 mph.
3. Why are aircraft restricted to a mere 25 mph acceleration? There are cars that go faster!
4. Jet engine fuel consumption is too high!

– Bruce Lam  
Vancouver, BC, CANADA

1. Quite correct. I did forget that pesky landing gear.

2. As the formula goes, correct. The doubling of power factors was ignored for purposes of adding to the aircraft mass for speed. This was purposeful, not an error; my error was failing to put the rule down! **Afterburner Top Speed:**  $[1000 \times (\text{Normal PF} \times 2)] / (\text{Normal PF} + \text{Aircraft Weight})$  is the formula as I had intended it. This makes the Goshawk's top speed 1,912.5 mph.

3. As for acceleration, would you believe that the F-15, one of the fastest-accelerating aircraft in the world, accelerates from 0 to 275 mph in 25 seconds? And that's on afterburner! In *Car Wars*, though, we don't have to worry about little facts like inertia and motion constraints. Therefore, the Acceleration Rules are expanded:

30 mph Acceleration: Power Factors =  $1 \frac{3}{4}$  times aircraft weight.

35 mph Acceleration: Power Factors = 2 times aircraft weight.

40 mph Acceleration: Power Factors =  $2 \frac{1}{2}$  times aircraft weight.

45 mph Acceleration: Power Factors = 3 or more times aircraft weight.

These new accelerations are, of course, only possible with jets, usually on afterburner.

4. No, it's too low. In the real world, a jet uses much more than the moderate amount I set. Of course, thanks to Scott Haring's ruling years ago that 1/space only holds 10 gallons of fuel (when in actuality it should hold roughly 20-30), no jet will ever carry enough fuel to be effective.

– CS

1. Can a helicopter's rotors be folded? How long does this take, and can it be done automatically?

2. Would transport helicopters fit in trailer widths?

3. Can helicopters mount assault ramps? Can they be mounted on the sides?

4. Can troops disembark through bomb bays?

5. Can a helicopter mount retractable landing gear in its pontoons? Can pontoons be armored?

6. Can semi trailers have a roll-up door? Can helicopters have roll-up tops?

7. Can a 20' van be mounted on a 40' trailer?

8. Can ten-wheelers have Thundercats?

– Keith A. Tapp  
Ontario, CANADA

1. Sure. Pay \$100 for the folding rotor. It has to be done manually – you don't want more gadgets at the rotor hub to malfunction – and takes 10 man-seconds per rotor blade over 1 (a four-blade heli would take one man 30 seconds to fold the rotors, or 3 men ten seconds).

2. Yes, on flatbeds only. And the heli would tend to stick out a couple of feet on each side . . .

3. Yes. No.

4. Sure.

5. No. No.

6. Yes. No.

7. Yes. The other 20' of the trailer would count as a flatbed, and could not later be converted to a 40' van.

8. No.

– CS

1. On the *Aeroduel* counter sheet, what size aircraft counter goes with what aircraft?

2. Can rocket weapons use HEAT and HESH warheads?

3. Why are some military weapons restricted in AADA events?

– Carl McLaughlin  
Boscawen, NH

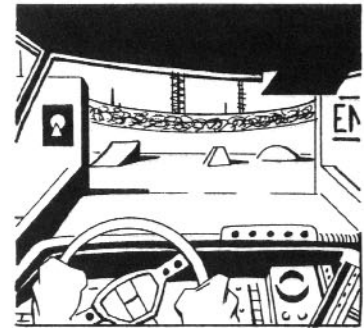
1. Full *Car Wars* scale: The 1" by 1" counters are microplanes. The 2" by 2" counters are airplanes. The 4" by 5" counter is a Cargo plane. The 3" by 8" flying wing counter is a Large Cargo flying wing. Air-to-Air scale: The 1/4" by 1/2" counters are microplanes, the 1/2" by 1/2" counters are airplanes, and the balloon

counters are balloons. The airship is 9 3/4" long, which makes it a Small airship!

2. Rocket weapons use Armor-Piercing warheads, which are the same thing as HEAT. They can't use HESH warheads.

3. The AADA doesn't want one-shot bloodbaths. What kind of sport is that?

– CS



1. How much does a silencer cost?  
2. Which stats for Beehive ammo are correct, those from the text or the stat sheet?

3. What skill is used for driving armored cars?

4. Can you make DPU APFSDS?

– Brian Mauger  
Hayward, California

1. Both vehicular and personal silencers are in *Uncle Al's Catalog From Hell*.

2. Beehive damage is correct; the TG 9 damage is halved and rounded down. Use the 3" path from the stat sheet for the TG 10; ignore the text rule limiting 3" paths to guns over 110mm.

3. Trucker.

4. Uh, it already is. DPU fires a depleted uranium sub-munition.

– CS

1. Does an artillery piece violate the 1/3 spaces-per-side rule if it only has one weapon?

2. What is the meaning of "10% slope, 20% slope," etc. in *Car Wars Tanks*?

– Chris Herrera  
Pico Rivera, CA

1. Yes. This is why they're mounted in turrets or open mounts, which don't have that problem.

2. This indicates the percentage of the vehicle's internal spaces used to slope that side (not facing, side), giving +50% armor to a side for each 10% slope.

– CS



# ADQ CLASSIFIED

**EUROPEAN DUELLISTS:** The Danish Organization of Offensive Motorists is looking for somebody to pick on. We are dangerous and we are serious. Would-be members, competitors or guests are welcome to write to: DOOM, c/o Ben De-Veny, Mejlgade 72, 4.TH, 8000 Århus C., DENMARK.

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA:** We're looking for a few good men (or women) to complete the baddest new club this side of . . . Omaha? Become one of the few, the proud, the heavily-armed! Join the AR-MADA! in the San Gabriel valley, Los Angeles area. Contact Sean Jettero Heller Motylinski, (818) 284-7293, 501 W. San Marino, Alhambra, CA 91801.

**BRITISH COLUMBIA:** Looking for duellists to add to new chapter AVRO. Spectators welcome. Contact Bruce Lam at 1270 W. 51st Ave., Vancouver, BC, CANADA V6P 1C5, or call (604) 266-9024.

**BANGOR, MAINE** needs *Car Wars* players! I would like to form an AADA chapter in this area. Sniveling cyclists need not apply, unless they like steamrolling buses . . . Contact T.H. Knight, 99 Fling St., Brewer, ME Apt. 3, or leave name and # on machine at 990-3416 (refer to Joshua).

**TRIAD AREA IN NC:** Duellists wanted. Please send all letters to: 418 Bunker Hill Rd., Colfax, NC 27235. Or call (919) 993-2909. As for Brett Froelich.

**ASP AGENTS** have sabotaged my home base, and I've been forced to relocate. To all of my pen pals, my new address is: Tim "The Weasel" Jacques, 513 Wilshire Dr. #6, Bellevue, NE 68005.

**I AM RECOVERING** from a house fire, and trying to replace lost *Car Wars* materials - especially early ADQs. Also, I am interested in starting an AADA chapter for Cicero/Chicago/western suburbs. Contact James "Frankenstein" Watson Jr., 4900 W. 28th Place, Cicero, IL 60650.

**CENTRAL NEW MEXICO:** Looking for fellow duellists and other sociopaths. Seeking to organize a local AADA chapter, but will be satisfied to meet others in-

terested in wanton destruction. I refereed the *Car Wars* events at ConWest last year, and will again this year. Contact "Wrong-Way" at 12931, Central Ave. NE #43, Albuquerque, NM 87123. I'm also looking for *Vehicle Guide 2*, *Uncle Albert's 2038 Catalog*, ADQ 8/1, 8/2 and the issue with the original laser LAW and VLAW.

**EH BRAH**, you live in Hawaii. You like broke da adda guys ca' wit one gun. Eh, we lookin' fo' you. Try call Lee "Da Haole" Ayres at (808) 422-6296. O' if can write, my address is 31 Halawa Dr., Honolulu, HI 96818. I tryin form one chaptah. (For the Pidgin impaired: Hello, guy. Do you live in Hawaii? Do you enjoy Auto-duelling? We want you. Call or write Lee "The Caucasian" Ayres at the above address or number. I want to form a chapter.)

**CENTRAL ILLINOIS Duellists!** Are you tired of getting squeezed every time you go out for a drive? Have the balls to give the scum of the world what they deserve! Join GONADS and get the support you need, because at GONADS we always work in pairs! GONADS - we're not mean, we're just nuts! Contact Pat "Toecutter" Barrett, 3807 N. Monroe Ave., Peoria Heights, IL 61614, or call (309) 685-2908.

**CORRESPONDENTS WANTED:** NOVA has an open forum policy. We are interested in communicating with any and all duellists on any subject. Just write to NOVA, c/o Norman McMullen, 701 S. 22 St. #73, Omaha, NE 68102.

**OPERATION: NO SHOULDERS:** The news of my demise has been greatly exaggerated! The Mongoose is alive and well. It's ASP that's in sorry shape. Operation: No Shoulders is about to commence. The hunt continues. The Mongoose.

**I'VE RECENTLY QUIT *Car Wars*** and want to sell my *Car Wars* products. My collection includes *Tanks*, *Aeroduel*, *Boat Wars*, *Car Wars Deluxe Edition*, *Compendium* Second Edition, many ADQs, and other supplements. Write to Joshua J. Eide, at 1533 6th St., S. Fargo, ND 58103, or call (701) 232-2321.

**ANAHEIM, FULLERTON** or Buena Park area duellists, write to Alexander Lau, 214 W. Sirius, Anaheim, CA 92802. Or call (714) 971-9855. Any age welcome.

**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY** duellist looking for fellow duellists to form new chapter. Please call (510) 827-3696. Ask for Hank or leave a message.

**DEUTSCHLAND:** Ich suche duellisten in ganz Deutschland, die bereit sind, neue chapter zu gründen. Contact GBAH, c/o Thorsten Haude, Hildesheimer Str. 52, 3014 Laatzen, 0511/8 79 14 52

**FELLOW GAMERS:** I'm selling all of my *Car Wars* books, including *Car Wars Deluxe Edition* expansion sets. All are in near-mint condition. For more information, send an SASE to: Tim Honke, 6717 Wartburg Circle, Mequon, WI 53092.

**TACTICAL OVERLAND PATROL** of Gunther's Grenadier Unit Now Striking Strategically (TOP GUNS) is looking for duellists, armored vehicle crews and flotilla personnel in the University of Florida and SFCC area. Contact Gunther "Swashbuckler" Bellows, Route 2, Box 157, Micanopy, FL 32667. (904) 466-0117.

**TORONTO AREA:** Wanted: duelling clubs which are now recruiting new members, or duellists looking to form a duelling club. Scarb., North York, Etobicoke, York, Woodbridge, Thornhill, Vaughn area also okay. Criteria: Understanding of the rules and subscription to ADQ. I hate rules conflicts. Age not a must, maturity a factor. Please send SASE to: KAT, 22 Tampa Terrace, Weston, Ontario, CANADA M9M 1T9

**POTTSVILLE AND KUTZTOWN** area duellists; I'm looking to form a chapter. Write to: Roger L. Harris, Jr., R.D. #2 Box 1274, Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972. P.S.: Jaguar . . . where are you?

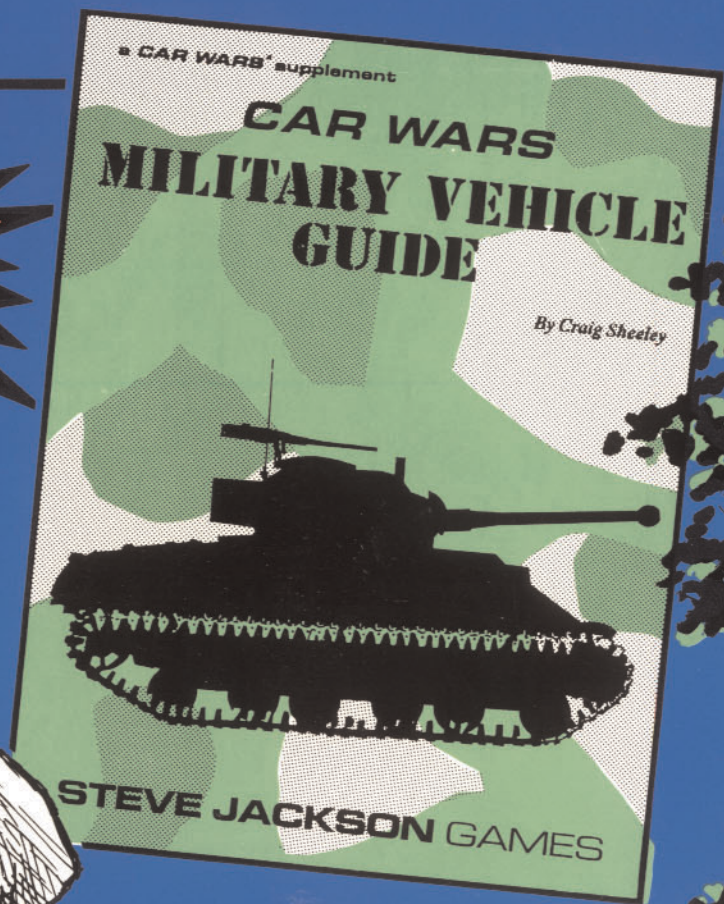
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