



FREELANCE TRAVELLER

The Electronic Fan-Supported Traveller® Magazine and Resource



Featured Articles

Lush

by Richard Morey

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A Note About Production

Freelance Traveller is prepared using Microsoft Office Publisher 2010 running on a Windows 7 Ultimate x64 system. The program is reasonably easy to use, and produces good results with moderate effort; it also supports advanced typographic features such as typographic quotes and apostrophes, small caps, ligatures, swashes, and stylistic alternatives (if the advanced features are implemented in the font). Generation of the PDF files is built in to this version of Microsoft Office; no additional products are needed.

The title and heading typeface is ZapfHumanist BT, a Bitstream adaptation of Hermann Zapf's digital redesign of his 'hot lead' typeface Optima, chosen as a 'tie-back' to the title typeface of the original edition of *Traveller*. The black-and-orange of the section headings is also a tie-back to *Traveller's* origins, though we felt that the 'correct' red was too dark. The heading sizes vary from 12 to 16 points. Body text is set in Palatino Linotype, also designed by Hermann Zapf, and is set at 11 points for most body text, giving approximately the same text spacing as Times New Roman at 12 point (which was the original *Freelance Traveller* body text), but a lighter 'color'. Palatino Linotype also 'balances' better as a body text typeface to Optima as a titling typeface.

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Contents

Freelance Traveller #037: January 2013

Editor

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Critics' Corner: *Mongoose Publishing*

Less Dangerous Game: *Scott Diamond*

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From the Editor

Jeff Zeitlin 1

Critics' Corner

The Third Imperium: Deneb Sector *reviewed by "kafka"* 2

Off the Table: Balance of Trade *reviewed by Jeff Zeitlin* 11

Up Close and Personal

Hampton Rhodes *by Scott Diamond* 4

Less Dangerous Game

Podge *by Scott Diamond* 5

Doing It My Way

Prior Career—Academia *by Robert Weaver* 7

Kurishdam

Lecture Hall and Library: Jump Destination: Lush *by Richard Morey* 12

Active Measures

Getting Off the Ground: Shanghaied *by Richard Morey* 23

Getting Off the Ground: Survey *by Richard Morey* 23

Raconteurs' Rest

A Most Unfortunate War *by Andrew Vallance* 24

In A Store Near You

The Showroom: Henry 3x9 Police Grav Cycle *by Ken Murphy* 28

TL1 Coach *by Ewan Quibell* 29

From the Editor



This issue marks the beginning of our fourth year of publication. Each of the three previous years represents about three hundred pages of material, all created by you, our readers, and the *Traveller* community. Yes, there have been some reprints, but our intent was always to have the occasional reprint, to integrate the older, pre-magazine material with the newer magazine format.

We've grown over the past three years, mostly in small increments to look just that little bit more professional—but also in expanding our coverage, carefully, so as not to dilute our core purpose. Last year, our May/June issue was a first in two ways, one good, one not so good: it was our first Theme Issue, highlighting *2300AD* as a new member of the *Traveller* family, and it was the first time we got so messed up and off-schedule that we felt we'd be better off skipping a month, and publishing a double issue. We ended up doing that again in November/December, due to "Superstorm Sandy", but

we're hoping not to make it a habit. We do intend to continue to grow, in both professionalism and coverage.

We anticipate additional Theme Issues in the near future: Once the ADB/Mongoose project for *Traveller: Prime Directive* comes to fruition, we'll have a Theme Issue highlighting it. Other planned Theme Issues, whether or not they happen this year, include Psionics, Space City, and The Cruise. We're looking for other themes, and welcome your suggestions (and any articles for a theme, as well).

As usual, we'd like to entreat you—all of you—to try your hand at writing for *Freelance Traveller*. We obviously have some authors who have established themselves in certain sections, but please, don't feel that those authors have 'staked out' those sections as their own—any idea developed enough for use in a game is welcome, and we'll work with you to make it sharable, just as we've worked with our 'established' authors. ☼



The Third Imperium—Deneb Sector

reviewed by "kafka"

The Third Imperium—Deneb Sector. Rob Eaglestone.
Mongoose Publishing. <http://www.mongoosepublishing.com>
120pp, softcover
US\$24.99/UK£17.99

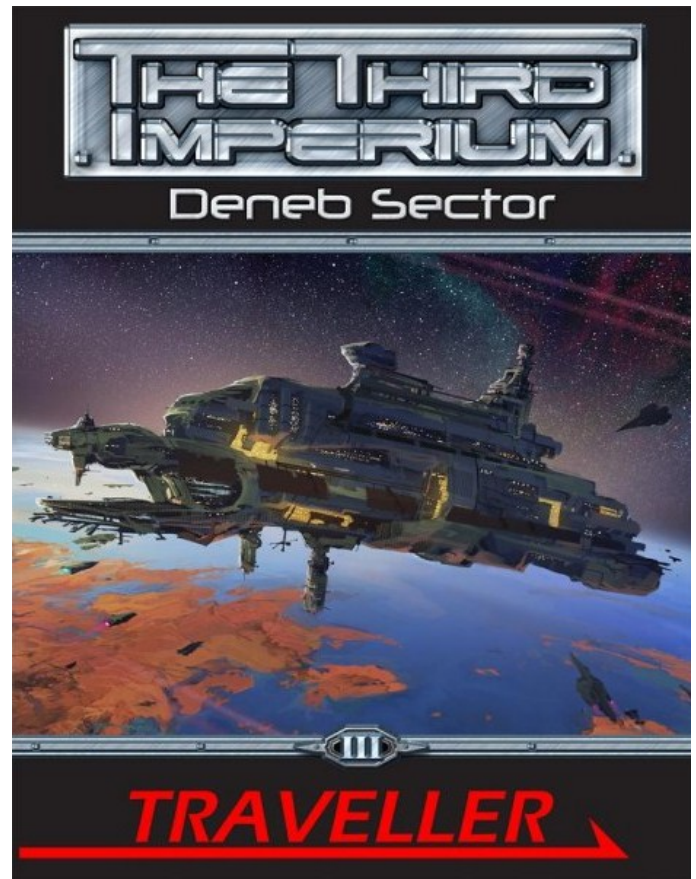
This review originally appeared on RPG.Net in September of 2012, and appears here with the author's permission.

Deneb, named for the brightest star in the sector, is a powerhouse of political and economic might in the OTU's Third Imperium, yet it has received scarce official treatment. Instead, it has grown up in the shadows of canon and quasi-canon, until now. Rob Eaglestone has produced an excellent sector book that integrates all previous information on Deneb.

First, perhaps, it is necessary to outline why Deneb is such a powerhouse and powerful sector. For that story, it largely is traced back to the Imperial Civil War—a time of great chaos, as starfleets raged across the Imperium to capture the throne of the Third Imperium in grand political gestures. Most of these fleets came from the Spinward sectors (the Spinward Marches and Deneb), and have whet their appetites in fighting back the Zhodani. In an act of revenge/shrewd politics the last Emperor of the Civil War stripped Deneb of its Duke, leaving a plethora of minor duchies (subsector or less) to fight among themselves for dominance – so long as central Imperial authority is not challenged and the Imperial Rules of War are observed.

Thus, an uneven peace reigns in the Sector, with different colonial fleets providing a defensive role and occasionally mounting an offensive campaign as a power grab for each Duchy, with the Imperial Navy providing overall defence of the realm and final arbitrator in disputes between different Duchies.

The next level of rivalry coexisting with struggle in politics are struggles between various Mega-corporations and Sector-wide companies. Long-standing *Traveller* players know that Trade War is



not only carried out on the economic front. Rounding the equation are semi-permanent mercenary bands who will fight in the numerous conflicts over the spoils and resources that the important players crave in proxy wars throughout the different worlds of the sector. This rich tapestry of history combined with real strength of troops/ship show that Deneb is far from stable but has found equilibrium in the constant struggle for power. Although this book does not use Mongoose *Traveller's Supplement 12: Dynasty*, one can see how to overlay that mechanic over the sector—a real crackerjack game. But, even without *Dynasty*, any creative Referee can apply different fleet and troop strengths into battle with a simple heuristic provided in the Sector book.

Next up is a listing of sophonts in the Sector (including the extinct civilizations) which is comprehensive and excellent. There are some old friends that have not seen the light of day since *MegaTraveller*, as well as some new races. One could wish that Mongoose had hired an artist to portray some of these races, but even with just the description, one's *Traveller* universe is infinitely

(Continued from page 2)

richer—although the sheer number of sophonts in the Sector is questionable (I had always gone by what I thought was a GDW house rule of no more than 1-2 per Sector). None of these aliens are men in rubber suits but well thought out and interesting Space Opera aliens... So I guess one has to await a future supplement that might actually illustrate them.

Next up is the collection of worlds that make up the Sector. They are not as detailed as some other Sector books but they are believable and compliant with the rest of the background outlined in the book. There are lots of worlds that come with merely a UWP and it is up to the Referee to highlight more thus not constraining the Referee in any way. A minor power here can rise up to challenge the larger powers or act in accordance with and be a pawn in the larger power struggles. No world maps nor culture details and very little of the planetary system is revealed – unlike (for example) Gypsy Knights Games products. Stellar data is similarly also absent; however, this data does exist elsewhere for the diligent Referee should they wish to look.

A Referees Only section and the index round out the book.

This book is very much a distillation of *Traveller* of the past – namely the Imperial Campaign or the OTU showing that it was far from a stagnant place where nothing of significance ever happened but rather a lively and dramatic place. And, while external borders and frontiers were closed for the Imperium – the insides were constantly in a state of flux. This book also re-acquainted us with old friends that have long appeared in supplements and magazines long since publication. That is what make this supplement difficult to review – it is clothed in nostalgia of an era when *Traveller* was first among all. and leading the pack. Now, some of these concepts might seem quaint and antiquated compared to contemporary (New) Space Opera but they do not mean that they should be cast

aside. Thus, I find myself wishing that whether more products would be like this one or that it should take the insights gleaned from other supplements/books that Mongoose has done to build a truly integrated vision. Critics may argue that Mongoose does do an adequate job in the quality department...to that I respond that every single edition of *Traveller* has been plagued with the same acquisition. When things shifted from CT to MT, critics howled at how their game had been altered. I was part of the shrill objectors that never accepted TNE (thanks to 1248, I do now). The point is that *Traveller* is more than the rules and alternations to the background – it is about a spirit of adventure where everything is not tame, nice and sanitized (yes, I am looking at you, *Star Trek*), and Rob Eaglestone has given us such a milieu in a Sector. I certainly look forward to more of Rob's work. And, while his sensibility maybe old fashioned, he unveiling a *Traveller* universe that is close to my heart and I am sure many of *Traveller's* oldest fans.

Deneb offers the classic place to operate a swashbuckling adventure where the flavor of the day is more Horatio Hornblower rather than James Bond (a la Solomani Rim) or the Frontier West (Spinward Marches) or Renaissance Europe (Reft) with high politics thrown in for good measure. Deneb reminded, as I stated earlier like a *Traveller Dynasty* game waiting to happen. For those who do not wish to play *Dynasty* but are interested in noble house intrigue might want to check out *Fading Suns* – while *Fading Suns* does offer religion into the mix, many themes could be ported over to Deneb especially the power struggles of the nobility. This is an excellent product for those looking to complete their OTU with a Sector of slash swagging swashbuckling adventure. It is, however, very specific to the OTU, and thus might be harder to translate into another game unless the game has the same scope that *Traveller* does. This book gets a hearty recommendation for those who like the OTU but as it is so specific to the Imperial Campaign...hard to know if others would get the same satisfaction from it.



Hampton Rhodes

Profiled by Scott Diamond

Hampton Rhodes 6A79AB Age 38

Merchant Captain

Blade-2, Bribery-1, Gunnery-1, Mechanical-1, Pilot-2, SMG-1, Streetwise-2, Vacc Suit-1

SMG, Blade, Free Trader *Fortunate Son*

Hampton appeared on the merchant scene looking more like a good candidate for the Naval Academy than working on some greasy Free Trader but as the second son of a noble he wasn't likely to inherit. Nor did he get along very well with his family so he decided to take the road less travelled by his ancestors: strike out for fame and fortune he could call his own. His relatively high social status made it easy to fork over the stake the captain demanded for an officer's berth (a real money-grubber type that would rather jury-rig a fuse than pay the few credits for a new one).

Hampton early on showed his worth as a pilot and an unusual aptitude for getting along and making deals within any strata of society – particularly with the lower ones where the captain of the *Close Call* usually found cargoes and passengers. The first flight resulted in a near miss with a pirate. Hampton was acting as the gunner during that incident and was badly wounded, which never properly healed and developed into a painful limp in his later years.

Saving the ship did result in a fast promotion, though, and to becoming a confidant to the captain when working dirtside looking for speculative cargo. Hampton showed a high aptitude for finding good cargoes and picked up some expertise with a blade in case negotiations got a little heated. Occasionally it was his skill with a knife that saved both himself and the captain from angry customers who might have felt cheated – which sometimes they were.

He picked up a few more scars as the ship worked the rougher regions of the frontier. Even-

tually a submachine gun joined the blade at his side when cargoes were being loaded or sold in some pretty iffy ports.

Eventually, Hampton made First Officer on the ship and, being smart, he had stashed the majority of his earnings away for the day when he decided one close shave for a percentage was too many. He figured that if he was going to risk his neck he would rather it be for a captain's cut. On the last world they put in at some of the captain's past caught up with the *Close Call* and Hampton decided Fate was giving him a shove.

While the captain was off arguing for why he shouldn't be strung up from a lamp post over a bad incident involving spoiled medicine, Hampton took the *Close Call* to space with most of the crew eager to avoid the fate of their former captain. Hampton had some new papers drawn up through a previous contact on the street a while back so he was now the proud owner of a Free trader. He renamed it *Fortunate Son*, greased a few of the right palms for a new transponder and better documents, and was now ready to begin his own life as merchant adventurer. 🌐

The Freelance Traveller Forums

Our connectivity issues appear to be mostly resolved; the main issue at this point is having the time to put everything together. We hope to have something set up for limited testing soon, and are seeking volunteers for testing and discussion of various features. Interested people should contact us at tech@freelancetraveller.com. We apologize for the continued delay in restoring this service.

About *The Burrowwolf*

At the time this issue of *Freelance Traveller* "went to press", no new chapter of *The Burrowwolf* was ready for inclusion due to other pressures. We are assured that the comic will resume as soon as possible.

Less Dangerous Game

Podge

by Scott Diamond

Forest terrain

Gehenna

Qty	Animal	Mass (kg)	Hits	Armor	Wounds and Weapons		
2D6+10	Podge (Omnivore Gatherer)	2	4/1	jack	1D6+6 stinger*	A(if cornered)	F(if surprised) S2

* Also injects venom causing dizziness followed by rapid paralysis

The Podge is a small viviparous monotreme found on Gehenna living in the old growth coastal rainforests. The animal is social and found in groups ('clans') ranging from 12-24 individuals, clustering in loose family groups of 3-6 individuals. Podges, as nearly all animals on Gehenna are, is venomous, though they are not usually a danger to humans unless cornered and/or frightened. They are, however, easy to care for as a pet and thrive in captivity, and enjoy human company. Having a bluntly pointed face with large round eyes and a smile along its small jaws makes them, along with the fur, very appealing as pets, too.

The Podge is a small, round mammal-like animal with puffy fur that is extremely soft, and likened to chinchilla in quality. Because of this fur, the Podge has commercial value on some worlds and their pelts are high-end luxury items. Wild-caught Podge fur is more highly sought after than farmed, since the colors, ranging from creamy white to layered browns, tend to be richer and the fur denser. Podges have a long (1m) tail that is brown colored, smooth-skinned without fur, and thin – about as thick as a pencil. The tip of the tail has a bright pink to white puffball that contains a razor sharp set of barbs. The six barbs have venom sacs at their base and inject small amounts of a paralytic toxin into the animal's prey. If threatened or cornered, a Podge will slap its tail at the threat and barbs will inject their total venom load when they hit. The venom will cause near instant paralysis after a few seconds of dizziness and blurred vision. In humans, the paralysis can last for hours and there is no pain. If not treated with the specific anti-venom, though, it can (1 chance in six) cause a



total paralysis of the respiratory system and result in death.

If a predator actually surprises the Podge and bites (or swipes at it) the predator will likely hit the puffball waving about above the Podge. The last third of the tail will detach once the barbs sink into the predator's mouth or paw, and the Podge will run away. The tail and puffball will regrow within approx 4 weeks and the clan will protect the Podge during this time. The clan will also help feed the injured Podge as well.

Podges use their tails to help catch the insects and small animals they eat by holding the tail

(Continued on page 6)

Less Dangerous Game

(Continued from page 5)

straight up and slowly waving the puffball so it mimics a flower in the breeze. Insects attracted to the puffball are lured down to within reach to the Podge's snapping jaws or grasping paws when the Podge slowly lowers its tail. Small animals that the Podge eats are tempted by the puffball being popped around on the forest floor, or waved around the front of the prey's burrow. When the prey animal gets close enough, the Podge slaps it with the tail and barbs inject their venom to paralyze the prey. Podges that have lost their tails to large predators are fed by uninjured Podges who lure insects to within reach of the tailless Podges. Uninjured Podges also bring them small animals they have lured out of burrows. This social behavior is also seen when older Podges teach the young how to hunt and lure prey in with their tails.

The favorite food of the Podge is the Nepenthe Moth. This fat and large (6cm long with a 50cm wingspan) moth produces a powerful narcotic that mixes with the dust on its wings. This narcotic produces an ecstatic dream-state in humans when they consume it that lasts for hours. Unfortunately, the side effect is that people who take the drug (by eating the moth) also develop an increasing loss of short-term memory, hence the source of the name for the moth. Podges suffer no ill effects from the toxin and will become frantic in their efforts to catch a Nepenthe Moth. The moth's toxin is one of the ingredients of some Podge's venom, however, and if not fed the moth a Podge's venom will be far less potent. In captivity, a Podge will retain some venom toxicity, but it will be about as bad as a bee sting so long as Nepenthe Moths are not provided as treats, nor any other toxic insects or berries from a long list. The list can be had from any dealer in pet-quality Podges.

The venom provides yet another commercial value for the Podge due to its anesthetic properties of achieving paralysis without pain. Pharmaceutical firms are known to raise Podge populations, feeding them with poison enhancing food in order

to obtain it for pharmaceutical products (to the protests of ecologists and animal rights activists). Rumors suggest other, less legitimate uses being explored by the weapons sections of those same industries, but no proof has yet surfaced.

As a monotreme (similar to the Terran platypus and echidna), the Podge is mammal-like but has some reptilian attributes. They have glossy black scales covering their heads and feet. They are viviparous, but bear live young since the soft-shelled eggs hatch inside the mother. The mother then provides nutrition internally to the young while they finish development. When the young are born, they nurse from the mother for 6 weeks and are weaned to live food and berries. Podges reach sexual maturity in 8 months and have litters of 2-3 pups. Podges do not appear to mate for life, and there seems to be no interaction with the pups involving the males that fathered them – instead they are raised by the clan's mature females in large nursery groups.

Podge vocalizations range from low 'meeping' sounds that act as comfort noises for the young to loud barks when an alarm is sounded. Podges make long, trilling chirps when they greet each other and when they play – tag seems to be the favorite. A Podge will race around the herd chirping and carom off the others, who then fall down and freeze until the Podge that is 'it' stops running. Then they jump back up, and one of them now becomes 'it' and repeats the process. Xenozoologists specializing in animal behavior have no idea why Podges do this, and sometimes this game can last for an hour or more, but since neighboring herds will intermingle during the game until all are involved so it must fulfill some ritualized social behavior.

Because the Podges make easy to care for and affectionate pets, albeit pets with a potentially dangerous stinger and defensive reflex when startled (or when chased into a corner by playful children), there are laws regulating their importation and ownership, commercial or private. Occasionally, these laws are challenged as cruel when they

Less Dangerous Game

(Continued from page 6)

involve removal of the stinger, but the process does not appear to cause any discomfort to the animal. So long as food items known to enhance the Podge's venom to the paralytic and dangerous level are not fed to the animal, the venom will not be any more dangerous than a bee sting - however, since anaphylactic shock is more likely among humans the stinger is still dangerous.

After 4-5 removals, done every two months, the stinger will atrophy to merely a series of pointed bumps along the tip of the tail, and the Podge can no longer sting. Such domestic Podges are a source of controversy in Podge Showing, since only 'intact' animals are admitted into the competitions, but that average pet-quality Podge does not seem to miss the sting. The pet industries markets numerous toys and live food simulators to allow owners to feed their Podge in such a way as to allow the animal to use its natural predator strategy to 'catch' a moth or other small animal. If the Podge is startled and slaps a person on the arm or

face with the de-venomed tail, it will only leave a small bruise.

On worlds with Law Levels of 5 or higher, domesticated Podges are required to have their puffball/stinger removed by a licensed veterinarian on a set schedule (before the venom is produced). Failure to do so will result in the Permit for Possession being revoked, and the Podge confiscated. The only exceptions are issued on a case-by-case basis for zoos, medical facilities (usually involved in production of anti-venom or research), for "guard Podges" leased by licensed private security firms, or for governmental organizations.

On worlds with LL of 2-4, owners of Podges are required to post a warning at all entrances to premises where venomous Podges are kept. Owners of venomous Podges are usually held liable by civil law for medical treatment/damages caused by their venom, unless a person engaged in criminal activity at the time suffered the injury.

On worlds with LL of 1 or lower, ownership of venomous Podges is unrestricted. 🌟



Doing It My Way

Character Generation Rules

Prior Career: Academia

by Robert Weaver

Professor Moldova stormed out of the department meeting, fuming. Once again, the department chair had denied the funding for Moldova's big research project. Twelve years, Moldova thought, twelve years I've taught at this school, never less than full classes and consistent commendations from students and teachers alike. That fat-headed bureaucrat should never have been made department chair, but he was more adept at playing office politics than actual teaching. I think it's about time I got out of here, made some real money, and funded the research myself. He stopped mid-stride, and laughed aloud, a short barking laugh that caused several students to glance suspiciously his way. Why hadn't he thought of it before? He'd taught hundreds of students

the difference between a tritium injector and a thermal induction coil, and they were mostly out there working on actual starships, so why not him? Large merchant lines paid well for talented engineers, and offered shares as well. With the economics lessons he'd picked up from dating the Investment professor, he should be able to make enough to fund his research in a few years, and wouldn't it be nice to not have to wear a tie and grade exams and sit in pointless meetings like the one he'd just left? The first thing to do would be look up that Marketing professor whose family owned half of the Windegar line.

A month later, Mr. Moldova was assistant engineer aboard the Windegar liner Prospero, outbound for a six month tour of the coreward regions. No more stuffy suits, no more administrative meetings, travel, seeing new places and finally getting to test the Moldova process for eliminating contaminant buildup on the injector assembly.

Doing It My Way

(Continued from page 7)

Six months after that, frustrated with the bureaucratic regulations that covered every aspect of his job, reminding him of his former job, he left and signed on with the subsidized liner *Glorious Venture* as chief engineer, with the promise that as long as the engines kept running, he could run things how he liked.

A month later, the pirates attacked . . .

The Academic career represents the pursuit of higher education, generally with the goal of entering a specific profession. Most people who follow this path do in fact enter the chosen profession, but sometimes, the person's goals change, and they become a 'perpetual student' or an instructor, and every once in a while, a highly trained and educated individual chooses a life of adventure instead of the stability of a 'normal' career.

The Academic career was inspired by the College rules that first appeared in *Book 5: High Guard* from the original *Traveller* game. There, College (or the Naval Academy) was a single-term option. This treatment is intended to fill the role of a Classic *Traveller* basic (*Book 1: Characters and Combat*) career.

The Schools

The Academic career offers three different types of academic institutions: Trade Schools, Professional Schools, and Colleges or Universities. The three types of schools have different focusses, as follows:

Trade Schools emphasize practical knowledge and its use. The curriculum is aimed at quickly developing the ability to function in a role at more than minimal competency. Someone who has completed a course of study at a Trade School can use, and probably repair, the tools and mechanisms that they use, but would likely not be able to build any of them from components.

Professional Schools also emphasize practical knowledge, but at a level where more than basic understanding of the theory behind it is necessary.

They often assume that one has the equivalent of a Trade School understanding of the actual use of the skills and knowledge. The graduate of a Professional School could use and repair tools and mechanisms, and could likely build one at need, given the components, but probably could not design a new mechanism for a job where a familiar one is inadequate.

Colleges and Universities focus on the acquisition of knowledge, and on theory. Practical use is a secondary consideration at best. The College or University graduate might not be as good at operating, repairing, or constructing established mechanisms as his counterpart from a Trade or Professional school, but would understand the theory behind those mechanisms well enough that a new one could be designed at need.

Managing the Academic Career

Entering Academia

As with any Classic *Traveller* basic career, one must enlist in the career. For Academia, this is called 'admission' or 'enrollment', and is successful if 9+ on 2D is rolled. Characters with EDU 9+ have DM+2 for the Admission roll. After a character is successfully admitted, a series of four-year terms must be resolved. Each of these is resolved with three rolls of 2D, for Survival (called Success in Academia), Honors (the equivalent of Decoration), and Retention (equivalent of Reenlistment).

Resolving the Term

The player must declare whether the character is attending a Trade School, a Professional School, or a College or University before resolving the term. Once the school is chosen, roll 7+ on 2D for Success. Characters with INT 8+ have DM+2 on this roll. Characters that fail the Success roll end career resolution at this point. If the character succeeds, roll 9+ on 2D for Honors. Characters with EDU 9+ have DM+1 on this roll. A character that achieves Honors may optionally take DM+1 on the school skill table when rolling to receive skills.

Skills are awarded automatically. In the first term, the character receives three skill levels. One

Doing It My Way

(Continued from page 8)

must be rolled on either the Personal Development or Social column of the table; the character receives +1 in this skill. The other must be rolled on the table for the school that the character attended, and the character receives +2 in this skill. If the character achieved Honors, the school skill may be awarded an additional level (+3 instead of +2), or another roll on the school table may be made, taking +1 in the skill rolled.

In subsequent terms, the character receives only two skills, one of which must be rolled on the Personal Development or Social column. The second skill may be taken by the player's choice as +1 to any skill that s/he already has, or rolled on the school column. If a character has 3 levels of any

school skill, +1 in Instruction may be taken instead. If the character achieved Honors in this term, an optional second +1 to an extant skill or DM+1 on the roll on the school column may be taken (and see the Notes on Skills concerning the 'skills' on line 7), or the character may take +2 in the skill rolled (with no DM).

Once skills are awarded, roll 6+ on 2D for Retention. Succeeding at this roll allows the character to continue study for an additional term. In the first and second term, there is no DM on this roll; in each subsequent term there is a cumulative DM-1 for each term (i.e., DM-1 in the third term, DM-2 in the fourth, DM-3 in the fifth, etc.). Additionally, at the referee's discretion, DM+1 may be awarded for each two receipts of Honors, or each receipt of Publish.

Career: Academia	
Career Resolution Sequence	
Admission	9+ DM+2 if EDU 9+
Success	7+ DM+2 if INT 8+
Honors	9+ DM+1 if EDU 9+
Retention	6+ DM-1 if Each term after 2nd, cumulative DM+1 if Each two receipts of Honors or each receipt of Publish

Mustering-Out		
1D	Material Benefits	Cash
1	Low Passage	1000
2	Equipment	2000
3	+1 INT	2000
4	Credentials	3000
5	Credentials	4000
6	High Passage	5000
7	+1 SOC	5000
DM+1 on all rolls if any skill 5+, or on Cash if any Gambling skill		

Skills					
1D	Personal Development	Social Development	Trade School	Professional School	College/University
1	+1 EDU	Forgery	Mechanical	Engineering	Gravitics
2	J-o-T	Carousing	Trader	Broker	Science
3	Carousing	Gambling	Admin	Liaison	Legal
4	+1 INT	Streetwise	Electronics	Computer	Robotics
5	+1 END	Vehicle	Survey	Navigation	Science
6	Brawling	+1 SOC	Commo	Pilot	Medical
7			Cross-Reg	Cross-Reg	Publish
Note: Characters with skill-3 in any school skill may take Instruction +1 instead of school roll.					

Mustering Out

No character is compelled to remain in Academia; if a character elects to leave, there is no need to roll Retention. If Retention is rolled, but fails, the character musters out and begins adventuring. Characters may receive material benefits or cash when mustering out. Roll once on the Mustering Out table for each term spent in the Academia career. A character may make no more than three rolls on the Cash table. A character with level 5 in any skill receives DM+1 on all mustering-out rolls; a character with any level of Gambling skill receives DM+1 on Cash rolls (not cumulative).

(Continued on page 10)

Doing It My Way

(Continued from page 9)

Notes on Skills

All skill listed that appear in *Classic Traveller* Books 1-8 are as described there. The additional skills are handled as follows:

Science is a cascade skill which the player can select. Any branch of science not covered by another held skill can be specified.

Publish represents a character in a College or University having an article over his/her byline published in a peer-reviewed journal in a field in which the character has a skill. For each two levels of the Publish 'skill' the character receives, SOC or any one skill from any school column (but not from the Personal or Social Development columns) may be raised by +1. If the skill option is chosen, the character need not already have the skill, instead taking Skill-1 in any chosen school skill.

Cross-Registration allows the character to take a course at a school other than the one enrolled in, to gain a skill that would not be available in the normal curriculum. If this skill is rolled, the player may choose a skill from any school column (not the Personal or Social Development columns) of the same line of the table as a skill he already has.

Notes on Benefits

Credentials represent formal recognition of the character by a relevant professional or trade organization. This includes formal degrees from an accredited institution and some recognized contribution to the field such as research or innovative practice. It has no cash value and cannot be transferred, but a Credentialed character can claim greater compensation from a patron and get a bonus (Referee's discretion) on reactions when operating within the character's chosen field.

Equipment means the character has been given at no cost a set of standard tools (or other logical equipment) relevant to the area of highest skill. For example, a character with Mechanical-3 would receive a standard Mechanical tool kit. If the highest skill does not have standard tools, and a logical set of equipment cannot be agreed on between the player and the referee, then the player may choose a set for another skill (player's choice, but it's recommended that tools for higher skills be preferred over those for lower skills). Receipt of this benefit multiple times represents an increase in the quality of the equipment received. 🌟

News About Traveller

Recent Traveller News and Findings

December 2012

- **Mongoose Publishing** has released *2300AD: Tools for Frontier Living*
- **Zozer Games** has released *Orbital* (a TL9 Solar System setting), *Gift of the Makers*, and *Horizon Survey Craft*.
- **Gypsy Knights Games** has released *Cascadia Adventures 3: Fled, The Superior Colonies*, and *21 Plots Index*.
- **3Hombres Games** has released *Conspiracy Rules!* for *Traveller*.
- **Spellbook Software and Games** has released *The Sector From Hell, Subsector Beta; The Sector From Hell Small Craft 1 IISS Mini Survey*; and *The Sector from Hell IISS Tracked Cycle*.
- **Christian Hollnbuchner** has released *Starships Book II0I: Flying Wing Racer* and *Starships Book III0: Flying Wing Fighter*.
- **Avalon Game Company** has released *Hazard to Navigation, A Tale of Adventure in Reft Sector* (fiction). 🌟

Balance of Trade

reviewed by Jeff Zeitlin

Balance of Trade. Sharon Lee and Steve Miller.

Original publication: 2004

Current availability: ebook

Shannon Appelcline established a useful goal in his series of reviews that have previously appeared in this section of Critics' Corner. However, there are only a limited number of books that truly have the sort of direct connection to *Traveller* that Shannon used in choosing which books to review. I felt that there were more than a few stories that, while having no discernable direct connection with *Traveller*, nevertheless felt—at least to me—like they could happen in a *Traveller* universe, even if not the Official one. The *Liaden Universe*, for which this book is a good entry point (one of several, actually), is a set of books that meet my criteria.

It should be noted that this novel is an expansion of an earlier story of the same name by the same authors. That story ends where this story can be said to truly begin, when the main character accepts an apprenticeship with a Liaden Master Trader.

Story

It is impossible to synopsise the story—or rather, stories, as there are several threads that only slowly draw together—in a reasonable amount of space. In (totally inadequate) summation, the central character, Jethri Gobelyn, goes from apprentice trader on his family's ship, trading on the edges of Terran space and occasionally to the edges of Liaden space, to a fully-qualified Junior Trader, able to treat with both Terrans and Liadens. Along the way, he learns much of Liaden culture, but is able to solve—or at least catalyze solutions for—several purely Liaden problems, by drawing on his own nature and his Terran-shaped inclinations to do so.

Style

The story is quite 'dense'—Lee and Miller have managed to get quite a lot into this book, but it's

most definitely not a difficult read. Various aspects of the universe are revealed as the threads develop, progressively building an image not of a universe that exists for the sake of the story, but one which exists in its own right, and the story is merely one of the things that happens there.

Lee and Miller, for the most part, have avoided blatant infodumping; the information about Liaden culture is presented through Jethri's efforts as a non-Liaden to learn about and move within Liaden society, and the Terran culture that Jethri is from is presented through his efforts to explain his cultural baggage to the Liadens he is associating with, and to overcome it so as not to embarrass himself or offend others while 'on Liaden turf'.

I should note that I do *not* recommend reading this aboard a train or bus unless you plan on getting off at the last stop—the story is absorbing enough that on two occasions, I missed my station! Why is it *Traveller*?

The environment, for lack of a better word, is very suggestive of *Traveller*'s 'frontier' or 'pocket empire', in much the same vein as the universe of *Vatta's War*. There is trade, but little suggestion of an 'overgovernment', and virtually none at all of organized war fleets. Liaden culture is presented as generally homogeneous, but not uniform (some worlds are considered more conservative than others); Terran—or, more accurately, Terran-derived—cultures are suggested as being more diverse.

The experienced *Traveller* player will also get the sense of it being a 'small ship' universe, which this reviewer feels is a better universe for *Traveller* play. A *Traveller* Merchant Prince campaign could easily find itself comfortable in the *Liaden Universe*, and there are strong suggestions that part of the duties of the Liaden Scouts are a good match with the exploration and survey functions of the Official *Traveller* Universe's Imperial Interstellar Scout Service (and other suggestions that they also serve the function of the Imperial Research Stations with respect to 'Befores'). They also seem to serve as a sort of 'neighborhood watch', passing information

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

as necessary to ships or clans when changing social conditions may present risk for the unknown.

Unlike much SF, technology doesn't really play a key part in the story, except for where 'Befores' are involved—and the development of the story makes it clear that the technology in question maps most closely—in the social/semantic sense—to the Official Traveller Universe's 'Ancients' technology. Outside of that, the technology portrayed might even be considered lower tech (TL8-10) in

the normal *Traveller* milieu. In the general case, the mechanics of technology aren't explained; things like the interstellar drive or gravity control are just assumed as part of the environment, just as for the typical reader of this review, computers, cell phones, and electricity are all just assumed as part of the environment.

It should be emphasized that *Balance of Trade* is merely a good entry point into the universe; it does not tell the reader everything about it—but it forms a good ground for building on when the reader continues to the other books set in this universe—a continuation strongly encouraged. 🌀



Jump Destination: Lush

by Richard Morey

A note to GMs: Lush can serve as the main world of a system. Alternatively, Lush could be a secondary world. In the latter case, the main world should have sufficient population to provide a pool of workers as well as a reason for why they'd opt to leave their world for Lush. At the same time the main world should not be too unpleasant an environment without some explanation of why people chose to colonize it over the more habitable world of Lush.

General Information

Lush, UWP C58841A-5, is characterized by large shallow oceans dotted with small continents and numerous islands. The coastal regions of the continents in the equatorial zone are predominantly marshland. All of this water combines with the hot equatorial temperature to create an atmosphere heavy with moisture and meteorologically active. Cloud cover is common and serves to keep the temperature high while the vast open oceans provide little impediment to the strong winds that sweep far inland. Conditions are less severe outside the equatorial zone, though apart from the planetary corporate HQ and Downport, all human habitation is concentrated in this region.

The non-equatorial and inland equatorial regions of Lush remain unexplored.

Lush is owned by Schunamann und Sons AG (SuSAG), whose interest lies primarily in *sprice*, a legume which grows in the coastal regions of the equatorial zone. Sprice is a key component in a number of drugs, and the individual beans must be harvested when ripe; a very labor intensive process that has not been amenable to automation. The harvested sprice is transported from the marshes to HQ via shallow draft, wind-powered barges. From there it is shuttled to ships waiting at the Highport. One phenomenon of the large shallow oceans of Lush is that giant rogue waves sometimes occur. These can prove deadly to the sprice barges and their usually one-person crews.

Though Company property rather than Extraterritorial, the Highport is open to all. The Downport is open only to SuSAG vessels. No ships are granted permission to land anywhere outside the Downport. There is a squadron of six orbital fighters (Mongoose *Traveller*, *Traders and Gunboats* pp 24-25) and four strike boats (Mongoose *Traveller*, *Traders and Gunboats* pp 32-33) stationed there as well as ground security personnel. A minimum of two of the strike boats and two of the fighters are in orbit at all times for security purposes.

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

Main Concentrations of Population

Highport: The Highport is an example of corporate economy, containing no more in facilities or personnel than is necessary to perform its intended functions. The primary function of the Highport is the transloading of spruce from planetary shuttles to the large bulk freighters that carry it out to SuSAG's production plants in other systems. Indentured Workers (IWs – 'eye double yous') seeking to escape the terms of their contracts and conditions on Lush sometimes sneak onboard the shuttles, hoping to reach the Highport and hitch a ride to freedom. Stowaways are a growing problem for ships leaving Lush. For this reason, the Highport is heavily patrolled by SuSAG security. Personnel travelling to Lush may also debark for transport to the planetary surface. The Highport's secondary role is to provide fuel and repairs for ships transiting Lush so that they may proceed on their way out of the system as expeditiously as possible, SuSAG discouraging unwanted company. The Highport is SuSAG property and not under SPA control.

Downport: The Downport is co-located with SuSAG's planetary corporate HQ along the coast of one of the northern continents in the temperate zone. It serves as the base of operations for the shuttles that carry the spruce to the bulk Freighters docked at the Highport, containing hangar and full maintenance facilities for them. There are also hangar and maintenance facilities, as well as an armory for the fighters and strike boats that defend SuSAG's Lush interests. Several concrete landing pads capable of accommodating vessels up to 1000 dtons are available, though vessels wishing to land at the Downport must either be on official SuSAG business or have a Company approved permit. Permits may be obtained at SuSAG facilities on other worlds after offering a valid explanation for the request followed by a successful roll of Admin (INT or SOC) 10+ applying a +1DM

for each previous trip to Lush without incident, and payment of a CR 100,000 security bond. Refined fuel is available at Lush Downport for vessels operating on Company business.

SuSAG Planetary Corporate HQ: Co-located with the Downport, and housing the Downport's administrative and control operations, is SuSAG's planetary corporate HQ. There is a large multi-story building divided into Administrative, Residential, Recreational, Supply and Maintenance, and Security zones to house SuSAG staff and their functions on Lush. The entire building is climate controlled and can be sealed if necessary. In addition to the main building, there is an extensive dock network on the coast to receive the barges carrying the spruce from the various work camps scattered throughout the Equatorial zone. A collection of large warehouses to hold the spruce awaiting shipment off world are part of the dock network.

All told, there are some 5,000 people living and working in the Corporate HQ/Downport. With the exception of those loading/unloading the spruce and 'spouses,' all of the people at the HQ/Downport are regular SuSAG employees. While many may view their assignment here as some form of punishment, the reality is that they have a life of relative comfort compared to those working out in the Spruce Camps and life goes on in a more-or-less normal fashion, at least as normal as can be when one's entire world is limited to the confines of a few massive buildings.

Some SuSAG employees bring their families with them, many do not, nor have no family to bring. Still, to help offset the remoteness and isolation of assignment to Lush, the Company provides a stipend to help cover the costs of having 'non-productive' family members present. It has become common practice, especially among the upper echelons, to take temporary 'spouses' from among the indentured workers. The SuSAG employee receives the extra money and the indentured spouse enjoys the much better life at HQ as compared to the camps. Some supervisors encour-

(Continued from page 13)

age their subordinates to take a spouse as well, agreeing to split the stipend with the subordinate and gaining the services of multiple spouses. For their part, the spouses put up with the situation as life at HQ is more physically tolerable than life in the camps. They must tread carefully however; having no legal basis for their status, they can be replaced anytime and sent to the camps to finish out their terms of indenture.

Sprice Camps: Camps scattered throughout the marshlands of the equatorial zone serve as the base of operations for the work of harvesting the sprice. Those near the coast serve as regional collection centers and have smaller versions of the dock and warehouse facilities at the Corporate HQ. All of the camps have buildings devoted to Administration, Security, Camp Executive Residence, a Camp Store, Maintenance, Worker Dining Hall, Male and Female Worker Dormitories, and Warehouses. The first four are climate controlled, the others are not.

Depending upon the size of the camp, there are from 100 to 500 people present, the majority being indentured workers who harvest sprice. Unlike HQ, Company employees at the camps are not authorized to have family present, nor do they receive stipends. Still, many will take a temporary spouse anyway. The reasons for the spouse agreeing to the relationship are the same as for those at HQ, as are the dangers.

Unlike HQ, life in the camps is basic and brutal with camp authorities seldom having to answer to anyone above them for anything other than meeting production quotas. The indentured workers live in Company housing and eat at the Company dining hall, all of which is charged against their earnings. What little is left over is often spent on drugs or alcohol at the Company store to dull the misery of existence in the marshes, leading indentured workers into a spiral of increasing debt and servitude. Life in the camps is cheap, with people

dying from disease, Lush's wildlife, or violent disagreements with each other fueled by desperation and hopelessness; camp security only steps in if fights threaten regular SuSAG employees or property.

SuSAG recruits indentured workers to harvest the sprice. Recruits are advanced CR 20,000 which is to be paid off by their work on Lush. They are shipped via Low Passage to Lush at Company expense, also charged against future earnings. Once on Lush they work in the sprice marshes until they have paid off their debt, at which time they are free to continue on as wage earning employees, or leave. Being paid Cr 1000/month, of which Cr 400 is assessed for room and board, it would take 3 years to pay off their contract to SuSAG assuming they incurred no other expenses. The reality is that the sprice harvesters live in Company towns, with their expenses charged against future earnings. Between the exorbitant prices of the Company Store and the widespread use of chemicals to dull the monotony of life in the camps, most workers find themselves getting ever deeper in debt. Few leave SuSAG service alive, especially given the oppressive physical conditions of working in the tropical heat and dense, humid atmosphere.

Some of the workers have found a way out of the killing labor of the sprice marshes, preferring a more personal servitude to the overseers of the labor camps and the Execs in HQ by becoming the aforementioned 'spouses.' Others seek escape into the wilds where life is usually shorter and ends even more violently than in the camps, though there are persistent rumors of colonies of renegade free workers. Some workers try to organize the camps and demand better conditions. They often end up having accidents. It is as much for the social conditions as the physical that Lush is classified as Amber.

The Tech Level of 5 in Lush's UWP applies to the camps where most of the population lives. At the HQ/Downport the TL is closer to 10 – 12.

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

The Bargemen

One group that stands out in Lush's social order is the individuals who operate the barges transporting the spruce across Lush's shallow seas. These are former indentured workers who manage to pay off their contracts and choose to remain on Lush. They are an independent self-reliant breed, much like the stereotypical cowboys of Solomani legend. Most operate alone, though some may assume the contract of an indentured worker to have some help, or simply company. The bargemen exist because regular SuSAG employees are not interested in working under such conditions and indentured workers can't be trusted on their own. Though hardly paid more than indentured workers, and having to pay a large portion of that back to the Company as a lease on the barge, the bargemen have proven themselves a frugal lot adept at living off what Lush's biosphere has to offer. Additionally, there is precious little to spend one's money on alone at sea. As free individuals, and the only ones present to defend their barges and precious cargo, the bargemen are permitted by SuSAG to carry personal weapons for self-defense. The bargemen are a close-knit fraternity.

Terrain, Events, and Encounters

Spruce Marsh: Swampy coastal areas where spruce grows. Humid, misty, and wet. Between the height of the spruce shoots and the ever-present mists, visibility is generally limited to Medium (50m) range, and even those elevated above the spruce plants can generally see no further than Very Long (500m) range. In most places the ground is either soft mud or underwater (60cm deep), making movement difficult; reduce all ground movement by 1/2. The stagnant marsh water is a good breeding ground for microorganisms that then get carried on the mists. The most common disease, Swamp Fever, causes nausea and a high fever. It can prove fatal due to dehydration or

excessive body temperature. Upon first prolonged exposure (1D6 hours), make an END 9+ roll. If successful, the character is resistant to the disease and need not check again. On a failure, take 1D6 hits. Roll once each day until successful or dead. Once successful, the character takes no further damage and is immune to further infection. For each day or fraction thereof spent in a spruce marsh, roll 2D6 6+ for an event. If an event occurs, roll 1D6, +1 DM if within 1 km of the coast, on the table below.

1	Spruce Gnats	5	Storm
2	Spruce Gnats	6	Lurker
3	Storm	7	Rogue Wave
4	Lurker		

Oceans: Though extensive, Lush's oceans are shallow and choppy. For each day or fraction thereof spent on the ocean roll 2D6 8+ for an event. If an event occurs, roll 1D6, +1 DM if within 500 km of a spruce swamp, on the table below.

1	Storm	5	Flatfish
2	Flatfish	6	Snarks
3	Storm	7	Spruce Barge
4	Rogue Wave		

Ice Cap/Frozen Oceans: In the Polar Regions the oceans are desolate expanses of ice and snow. Still, some of Lush's life forms have adapted to this harsh environment. Any animals encountered in this area add one point of armor due to their thicker fur and additional layers of fat. Renegades living in the Polar Regions have improvised armor of 2. For pack animals, halve the number appearing due to the more limited food supplies available. For each day or fraction thereof spent on the frozen oceans roll 2D6 10+ for an event. If an event occurs, roll 1D6 on the table below.

1	Snow Storm	4	Lum Ox
2	Chasm	5	Runners
3	Fighters	6	Renegade Hunting Party

Jungle: The equatorial regions of Lush are covered by dense rainforests so thick that vehicular

(Continued on page 16)

Kurishdam

(Continued from page 15)

travel is impossible except along cleared roads; and such roads must be constantly recleared. Visibility is limited to Short (12m) range and the overhead canopy blocks out the sun, not to mention interfering with radio and sensors (Comms EDU or Sensors EDU 10+). For each ½ day or fraction thereof spent in the jungle roll 2D6 6+ for an event. If an event occurs, roll 1D6 on the table below.

1	Storm	4	Pack Rats
2	Spike Thorns	5	Weavers
3	Gliders	6	Spruce Gnats

Plains: Outside the equatorial regions, Lush's land surface is covered by open plains where one can see for kilometers interrupted only by occasional rocky outcroppings. For each day or fraction thereof spent on the plains roll 2D6 8+ for an event. If an event occurs, roll 2D6 on the table below.

2	Little Men	8	Lum Ox
3	Pack-rats	9	Lum Ox
4	Spike Thorns	10	Runners
5	Spear Grass	11	Dirt Pigs
6	Fighters	12	Renegade Hunting Party
7	Storm		

Tundra/Arctic Plains: In the Polar Regions the plains are desolate expanses of ice and snow. Still, some of Lush's life forms have adapted to this harsh environment. Any animals encountered in this area add one point of armor due to their thicker fur and additional layers of fat. Renegades living in the Polar Regions have improvised armor of 2. For pack animals, halve the number appearing due to the more limited food supplies available. For each day or fraction thereof spent on the frozen plains roll 2D6 10+ for an event. If an event occurs, roll 1D6 on the table below.

1	Snow Storm	4	Lum Ox
2	Chasm	5	Runners
3	Fighters	6	Renegade Hunting Party

Badlands: Rocky outcroppings that include a number of overhangs and hidden valleys. This is where Renegades make their camps. Because of the hilly terrain, visibility is usually limited to Long (250m) range. The badlands are more geologically active than the rest of Lush, with regular outgassings of superheated vapor. For each day or fraction thereof spent in rough country roll 2D6 8+ for an event. If an event occurs, roll 2D6 on the table below.

2	Dirt Pigs	8	Tremors
3	Pack Rats	9	Outgassing
4	Spike Thorns	10	Renegade Hunting Party
5	Firebirds	11	Renegade Camp
6	Fighters	12	Rock Mole
7	Storm		

Arctic Badlands: In the polar regions, the Badlands are covered in ice and snow, but are otherwise like the temperate and tropical Badlands. Any animals encountered in this area add one point of armor due to their thicker fur and additional layers of fat. Renegades living in the polar regions have improvised armor of 2. For pack animals, halve the number appearing due to the more limited food supplies available. For each day or fraction thereof spent in rough country roll 2D6 8+ for an event. If an event occurs, roll 2D6 on the table below.

2	Chasm	8	Tremors
3	Chasm	9	Outgassing*
4	Renegade Hunting Party	10	Renegade Hunting Party
5	Snow Storm	11	Renegade Camp*
6	Fighters	12	Little Men
7	Storm		* Roll 2D6 9+ for Renegade Camp accompanying Outgassing

Encounter Descriptions

Following are descriptions of the events and encounters listed in the preceding tables:

Chasm: A large crevasse has opened up in the snow/ice pack. It is a barrier to land travel and requires 4D6 hours to find a way around it.

(Continued on page 17)

(Continued from page 16)

Dirt Pigs: Dirt pigs are essentially warthogs without tusks. They advance across the plains in slow but steady line abreast, devouring everything in their path. Though they cannot eat metal, dirt pigs can and do eat rubber tires.

4D6 **Dirt Pig** 12 kg Omnivore Eater 57A06E
 Flee 4-; Attack (auto); Move 3m/minor action—walk
 Teeth (1D6); Furry Hide (2)
 Athletics 0, Survival 1, Recon 0, Melee 0

Fighters: A pair of SuSAG fighters screams by low overhead. Perhaps they are hunting for renegades, or checking up on the PCs. They may attack something in the distance. Is it a renegade camp, a band of little men, or a lum ox herd?

Firebirds: These birds of prey soar on the thermals created by outgassing. They wait for an animal to be trapped by the vent wall and then swoop in for the kill. They use their talons to crush their prey before eating it.

1D6 **Firebird** 12 kg Carnivore Hunter 5960A4
 Attack 10+; Flee 5-; Move 4m/min. act.—walk; 12m/min. act.—fly
 Talons (claws) (1D6+1); Feathers (1)
 Athletics (Fly) 1, Survival 1, Recon 0, Melee 0

Flatfish: Flatfish bear some resemblance to ray-like creatures that travel in schools. Flatfish take in large quantities of water and filter out the plankton. While usually mild, they have been known to attack *spring barges*, (Total up the damage done by the individual flatfish ramming the barge then divide by 2 to determine actual damage.) They also use their long tails to attack characters in the water or near the edge of the deck. If flatfish are present, roll 2D6 10+ for a school of snarks (*q.v.*) to be trailing them and ready to attack.

2D6 **Flatfish** 200 kg Herbivore Filter BAG187
 Attack 10+; Flee 5-; Move 4m/min. act.—swim
 Tail (thrasher) (1D6+1) or Head (thrasher) (2D6); Scales (1)
 Athletics (Endurance) 1, Survival 0, Recon 0, Melee 0

Gliders: Glider packs live one per tree, and packs do not aid one another. If a fleeing glider climbs a tree belonging to a pack other than its own, conflict between the interloper and the resident pack is essentially inevitable. Like flying squirrels, gliders have loose skin between the forelegs and hind legs on the same side of the body, which stretches into a 'flying membrane' enabling them to glide between trees or to the ground. While their diet consists primarily of fruits and bugs, gliders will eat pack-rats (*q.v.*) if they can catch them. They have prehensile tails giving an extra minor action per combat round.

2D6 **Glider** 6 kg Omnivore Gatherer 586078
 Attack 9+; Flee 7-; Move 6m/min. act.—walk or glide
 Claws (1D6+1); Hide (1)
 Athletics (Coordination) 1, Survival 0, Recon 0, Melee 0, Stealth 1

Little Men: These humanoids operate in small family groups, almost appearing sentient. They use primitive tools (improvised clubs and thrown stones) and, while they cannot make fire, the lead female of the family will carry an ember supply from the last fire encountered to start the next. Families are members of clans and each has its own territory which it will defend against other Little Men. If an invading Little Man defeats the owner of a territory, then he takes over the family of his vanquished foe as well. There have been a few clashes between Little Men and Renegades. If it is learned that the Little Men are emerging sophonts, the IISS will place Lush under Imperial Interdiction. SuSAG does not want this to happen, and will make strong efforts to prevent word of the Little Men's existence from getting out. They will additionally attempt to destroy groups of Little Men if encountered or if clan habitations can be identified.

1D6 **Little Men** 50 kg Omnivore Hunter-Gatherer 7E82A5
 (Humanoid Pre-sophont)
 Attack 10+ if outnumber or larger than prey; Flee 5-;
 Move 6m/min. act.—walk
 Club (2D6) or Thrown rock (1D6); (in Arctic only) Furs (2)
 Athletics (Coordination) 1, Athletics (Endurance) 1, Survival 1, Recon 0, Melee (Bludgeon) 1, Tactics (Ground) 1

Kurishdam

(Continued from page 17)

Lum Ox: Lum Oxen are shaggy quadrupeds, somewhat resembling oxen or buffalo, but with a pair of horns running up the centerline of their snout/forehead. They are generally docile, usually only attacking if attacked. If attacked, the adults form a protective ring around the young and wait for the battle to come to them.

5D6 **Lum Ox** 800 kg Herbivore Grazer E7C07F

Attack if attacked; Flee 6-; Move 6m/min. act.—walk

Horns (2D6+1), Hooves (2D6-2); Furry Hide (3)

Athletics 0, Survival 1, Recon 0, Melee 0

Lurkers: Carnivore gatherers that work in pairs, these 400 kg amphibious predators stalk the sprice marshes in search of prey. They move under the shallow waters, rising up to attack and then drag their prey back under the water. Attacks are either claws or a venomous projectile; if an attack with the projectile succeeds, the prey will be dragged underwater and drowned while paralyzed.

2 **Lurker** 400 kg Carnivore Hunter EBC1B3

Attack 6+; Flee 5-; Move 8m/min. act.—swim, 4m/min. act.—walk

Claws (3D6), Special (Venomous Projectile)*; Hide (2)

Athletics (Coordination) 2, Survival 0, Recon 0, Melee 0

* 2D6 damage for armor penetration; injects venom paralyzing victim for 10×1D6 minutes (roll END 10+ to avoid).

Outgassing: Superheated gases have forced their way through fissures to the surface, creating walls of scalding vapor (Damage 4D6 in burns). This outgassing can last from 1D6 hours to 1D6 days. On a successful INT 10+ roll, the character may notice the heat waves before crossing a vent line and avoid taking any damage. Going around such fracture lines adds 1D6 hours to travel. In arctic regions, roll 2D6 for 9+ to also find a Renegade Camp nearby.

Pack-rats: Pack-rats nest among the spike thorns and immune to their toxins. They are extremely curious and collect spike-like objects.

When attacked, they tend to retreat to their nests, but will defend them, their young, and each other fiercely. If pack rats are present, the thorn bushes hiding their nest will be close by.

4D6 **Pack-rat** 1 kg Herbivore Grazer 24219C

Attack if cornered or defending nest; Flee 6-; Move 8m/min. act.—walk

Teeth (1D6)

Athletics 0, Survival 0, Recon 1, Melee 0, Stealth 2

Renegade Camp: A collection (minimum 20+4D6 people) of escaped former indentured workers who have established semi-permanent residence in either natural or man-made caves as much to hide from SuSAG patrols as for protection from the elements. Size and organization varies from one camp to the next, and cover the range of organization, both 'political' and social, that is possible for small clan/tribe groups. There may be children present. At least initially the renegades will assume that the party is SuSAG security and try to kill them in order to keep their camp's location hidden. A **Renegade Hunting Party** (4+1D6 people) will be sent out at intervals to hunt for food.

Renegade SuSAG IW 777665 Cr0

Club or Small Blade or Spear; Improvised Armor (1)

Athletics (Coordination) 1, Melee (Unarmed or Weapon Possessed) 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1, Trade (Varies) 1, Carouse 1, Gambler 0, Animal 0

Rock Mole: Rock Moles burrow into the rock at the base of a ravine and wait for unsuspecting prey to stumble into the funnel shaped trap (1D6+1 tiers deep). They flee by digging deeper into the rock. To avoid a rock mole pit requires winning a contest of either Recon INT or Survival EDU (+1 DM to either for prior experience with rock moles) vs. the rock mole's Deception INSTINCT. If the PC loses then they fall into the pit. Roll DEX 8+ each round to climb up one tier. Failure means the victim slides one tier closer to the Rock Mole. Once the PC reaches the bottom tier, the rock mole attacks with its teeth.

1 **Rock Mole** 100 kg Carnivore Trapper DBC070

Attack if victim trapped; Flee 5-; Move 3m/maj. act.—burrow

Teeth (2D6+2)

(Continued from page 18)

Rogue Wave: Seismic activity beneath Lush's shallow seas occasionally produce rogue waves – small tsunamis – that sweep across the ocean surface to crash into the coastal marshes. Such waves inflict 1D6 damage due to the character being knocked about and also require an END 10+ roll to avoid taking another 1D6, unmodified by armor, from drowning. It requires a STR 8+ roll to avoid being washed out to sea with the retreating water, or washed overboard if on a barge. If on the ocean a successful Seafarer(Sail) EDU 8+ roll is required to prevent the loss of the barge. On a successful Survival INT 10+ roll, DM +2 if previous experience with rogue waves, the character may notice the warning signs, allowing them to prepare and gain DM +2 on the END, STR, and Seafarer rolls.

Runners: Runners hunt in packs (3D6 in size), coordinating their efforts for maximum effect. When stalking a group, runners will try to isolate one member and then attack the lone prey from multiple directions. Their primary prey is the Lum Ox, but they will also attack Dirt Pigs or single humans.

3D6 **Runner** 50 kg Carnivore Chaser 7K919A
 Attack (auto if single victim); Flee 5-; Move 12m/min. act.—walk
 Teeth (1D6+2); Hide (2)
 Athletics (Endurance) 2, Survival 0, Recon 1, Melee (Natural Weapons) 1, Tactics (Pack) 1

Snarks: Snarks look like giant eels. They travel in packs of 1D6 members. While flatfish are their preferred meal, snarks will eat anything, even turning on their own, attacking with teeth and the stinger in their tail (if a member of the pack is injured, other snarks must roll Pack 8+ to avoid attacking it).

1D6 **Snark** 100 kg Carnivore Killer CG80B5
 Attack 6+; Flee 3-; Move 12m/min. act.—swim
 Teeth (2D6+2), Stinger (stunner) (1D6); Hide (3)
 Survival 0, Recon 0, Melee (Natural Weapons) 3

Spear Grass: Patches of a tough, tall (visibility limited to Close (3m) range) plant with a razor

sharp edge. Passing through Spear Grass causes 2D6 damage. Spear Grass is used by the Renegades to make their spears. Detouring around a stand of spear grass adds 1D6 hours to travel time.

Spike Thorns: Clusters of bushes with long thorns (that do 2D6 damage for armor penetration purposes only) that inject a neurotoxin (END roll, DM -4, 1D6 damage to INT. When INT reaches 0, character is paralyzed.) The leaves drip a dissolving agent that turns the paralyzed victim into so much fertilizer. Passing near spike thorns requires a DEX 8+ roll to avoid contact with the thorns and possible penetration, 10+ if reaching into the spike thorn, 12+ if "entering" it. The spike thorn has a symbiotic relationship with pack rats, the latter being immune to its toxins and making their nest inside. This in turn draws predators into the spike thorn's reach. On a 2D6 roll of 7 exactly, there is a nest of pack rats within the spike thorn encountered. Safely going around a patch of spike thorns adds 1D6×10 minutes to travel time.

Spruce Gnats: Omnivore eaters, spruce gnats appear as clouds of bothersome insects. Their bites cause painful swelling that can impair a character's physical performance (reduce STR, DEX, END by 1) until the swelling goes down (1D6 hours). A Melee(Unarmed) attack is the only effective countermeasure, each point of damage killing one gnat.

2D6* **Spruce Gnat** 0 kg Omnivore Eater 161069
 Attack 5+; Flee 4-; Move 12m/min. act.—fly, 2m/min. act.—walk
 Teeth (1D6)**
 Athletics (Fly) 2, Survival 0, Melee 0

* per member of party encountering

** DM+1 for armor penetration only on successive combat rounds

Snow Storm: A heavy snowstorm lasting 1D6 days during which visibility is reduced to zero and non-instrument navigation is impossible. If navigating by instruments, a successful Sensors EDU 8+ roll is required or an accident occurs. Accidents cause 2D6 damage to vehicles and occupants and result in the vehicle being stuck. Furthermore, flying vehicles are grounded. It takes 1D6×4 hours and a successful Drive EDU 8+ or Science(Physics) INT 10+ roll to free a stuck vehicle. Movement af-

ter the storm, and during for ground vehicles, is reduced by ½ for a number of days equal to the 1D6 storm duration roll because the snow has not yet packed down into a solid weight bearing surface.

Storm: An intense rainstorm lasting 10×1D6 minutes during which visibility is reduced to zero and non-instrument navigation is impossible. If navigating by instruments, a successful Sensors EDU 8+ roll is required or an accident occurs. Accidents cause 2D6 damage to vehicles and occupants and result in the vehicle being stuck. Furthermore, flying vehicles are grounded. It takes 1D6 hours and a successful Drive EDU 8+ or Science(Physics) INT 10+ roll to free a stuck vehicle. Movement after the storm, and during for ground vehicles, is reduced by ½ because of soggy ground. This lasts for a number of hours equal to the 1D6 storm duration roll. Since the rain rapidly runs off the rocky terrain, this only lasts for an hour after the storm in Badlands.

If on the ocean, a storm requires a successful Seafarer(Sail) 8+ roll or the barge and occupants take 2D6 damage. In coastal waters a barge may get stuck as per other vehicles above, use Seafarer (Sail) in lieu of Drive to refloat the barge. Otherwise, barges have no additional post storm movement penalty.

Tremors: Strong localized tremors shake the ground and may knock characters from their feet. Roll DEX 8+ to remain standing. Falling characters suffer 1D6 damage, unmodified by armor. If driving a vehicle roll Drive DEX 8+ or suffer an accident, with consequences as per storm. Tremors may create fissures (2D6 7+) that begin outgassing (*q.v.*). Within 50km of shore, they may also cause Rogue Waves (*q.v.*).

Weavers: Weavers emit a sticky secretion that they use to “weave” nets from leaves in the jungle canopy. The nets are then dropped on unsuspecting prey. If a weaver is encountered, roll a contest between the victim’s Recon INT or Survival EDU (+1DM if prior experience with weavers) vs. the

weaver’s Stealth Instinct; a PC success means the weaver flees, otherwise it attacks by dropping its net. Roll STR 8+ to escape the net, with the difficulty increasing on each successive attempt as the victim’s struggles cause them to become more entangled. Once the target number exceeds 12, the victim is effectively immobilized. At that point, the weaver descends to inject the prey with a dissolving enzyme and suck up its nutrition.

1D6-3 **Weaver** 25 kg Carnivore Trapper BC6062
 Attack if have surprise; Flee (auto); Move 3m/min. act. — walk
 Stinger (2D6+1), Venom (1)*
 Athletics (Coordination) 2, Recon 0, Survival 0, Melee 0, Stealth 2
 * Stinger damage for armor penetration only, and occurs only once the prey has been immobilized; once penetrated, Venom damage is per round until death.

Special Trade Considerations

Because of the unique situation on Lush, and the fact that most commerce is conducted either by Company ships or ships under ongoing contract to SuSAG, the normal rules governing available passengers, cargoes, and speculative trade from the Mongoose *Traveller Core Rulebook*, pp. 160–166 are modified as follows:

Passengers: (*Note: In all discussion below, the term “DL” represents the distance in parsecs between Lush and the origin/destination of the passengers.*) Since SuSAG is always recruiting new indentured workers, odds are pretty good that any ship heading to Lush can find customers for its low berths. If headed to Lush there are (4-DL)D6 low passengers available. Departing Lush it’s not quite as lucrative, (1D6-DL) low passengers available.

For middle and high passages, roll (1D6+DL) if heading to Lush, or (1D6-DL) if departing Lush, to determine the total number of passenger groups available. For each such passenger group available roll 1D6 on the table on the next page.

These will all be SuSAG corporate employees. The high passengers are high level execs, the middle passengers are lower level execs, admin/clerical staff, security, or maintenance/operations staff.

(Continued on page 21)

(Continued from page 20)

1	1 High Passage	4	1 Mid Passage
2	Family (1D6-2 members)*	5	Family (1D6+1 members)†
3	2 Mid Passages	6	Roll twice more

* High Passage, one double-occupancy plus a second single-/double- if needed

† Mid Passage, as many double occupancy as needed, plus one single if needed

(Note: If all available staterooms are filled before all passenger rolls have been made, stop rolling.)

Mail: Mail contracts function as normal.

Freight: If heading to Lush, there are 1D6 dtons of freight awaiting shipping. If departing Lush for a destination within 3 parsecs then the hold may be filled to capacity with sprice, payment to be made at standard shipping rates. No other outbound freight is available.

Speculative Cargo: Because of the small size and controlled nature of the population on Lush, speculative cargoes greater than 1 dton cannot find a market. Even then, the only speculative goods that can sell on that scale are: Advanced Manufactured Goods, Luxury Consumables, Luxury Goods, and Spices. Lush has modifiers of 0 for both purchase and sale when comparing with the world of origin trade modifiers. There are no speculative cargoes available for purchase on Lush.

Typical Lush NPCs

SuSAG Senior Planetary Exec 676899

6 – 7 terms Citizen/Corporate rank 4 Senior Manager
Advocate 1, Admin 2, Broker 2, Computers 3, Diplomat 0, Carouse 2,
Gambler 1, Drive 0, Comms 0, Leader 1.
Cloth(TL 10), Comm(TL 10), Hand Computer(TL10).

Company loyalty is fighting a losing battle with resentment over being ‘banished’ to Lush. Their careers essentially over, these people are focused on maximizing personal comfort and wealth.

SuSAG Junior Planetary Exec 677887

2 – 5 terms Citizen/Corporate, rank 2 Manager
Admin 1, Broker 1, Diplomat 0, Carouse 1, Drive 0, Comms 0, Leader
0, Computers 2.
Cloth(TL 10), Comm(TL 10), Hand Computer(TL10).

Company loyalty is fighting a battle with resentment over assignment to a backwater like Lush. Some will take a cue from their seniors and follow suit. Other will believe that if they can accomplish something and make a name for them-

selves it will be their ticket off Lush and upward within the Company. This is also the highest level individual that will be assigned to a sprice camp.

SuSAG Planetary Admin Personnel 677776

1 – 2 terms Citizen/Corporate
Admin 1, Computers 1, Comms 0, Diplomacy 0, Carouse 0. Drive 0.
Comm(TL 10).

The Admin Assistants, Secretaries, and Clerks that keep the paperwork flowing. Officious, especially to those not acknowledging their power.

SuSAG Planetary Support Staff 767765

1 – 3 terms Citizen/Worker
Trade(Appropriate for assigned function) 2, Carouse 1, Mechanic 0,
Drive 1, Engineer 0.
Appropriate Tool Kit(TL 10).

The people keeping the physical plant running.

SuSAG Planetary Security 888766

2 terms Army/Infantry
Melee 0, Gun Combat(Slug Rifle) 2, Persuade 0, Carouse 0, Recon 1,
Drive 0, Heavy Weapons 0, Navigation 1, Sensors 1.
Combat Armor(TL 11), Gauss Rifle with HUD, Blade, Comm(TL 10).

Deferential to Senior Management, moderately civil to anyone who may be of use to them, and overbearing when dealing with all others. Always ready to bust a few heads or caps. Operate in four man teams on foot; the team leader adds Leader 1 to skills. Often operate with TL 10 G/Carrier (Mongoose *Supplement 6: Military Vehicles*); G/Carrier crew substitutes Gun Combat(Slug Pistol) 1 and Flyer(Grav) 1 for Gun Combat(Slug Rifle) 2 and replaces Gauss Rifle with Gauss Pistol.

Sprice Camp Overseer B79966

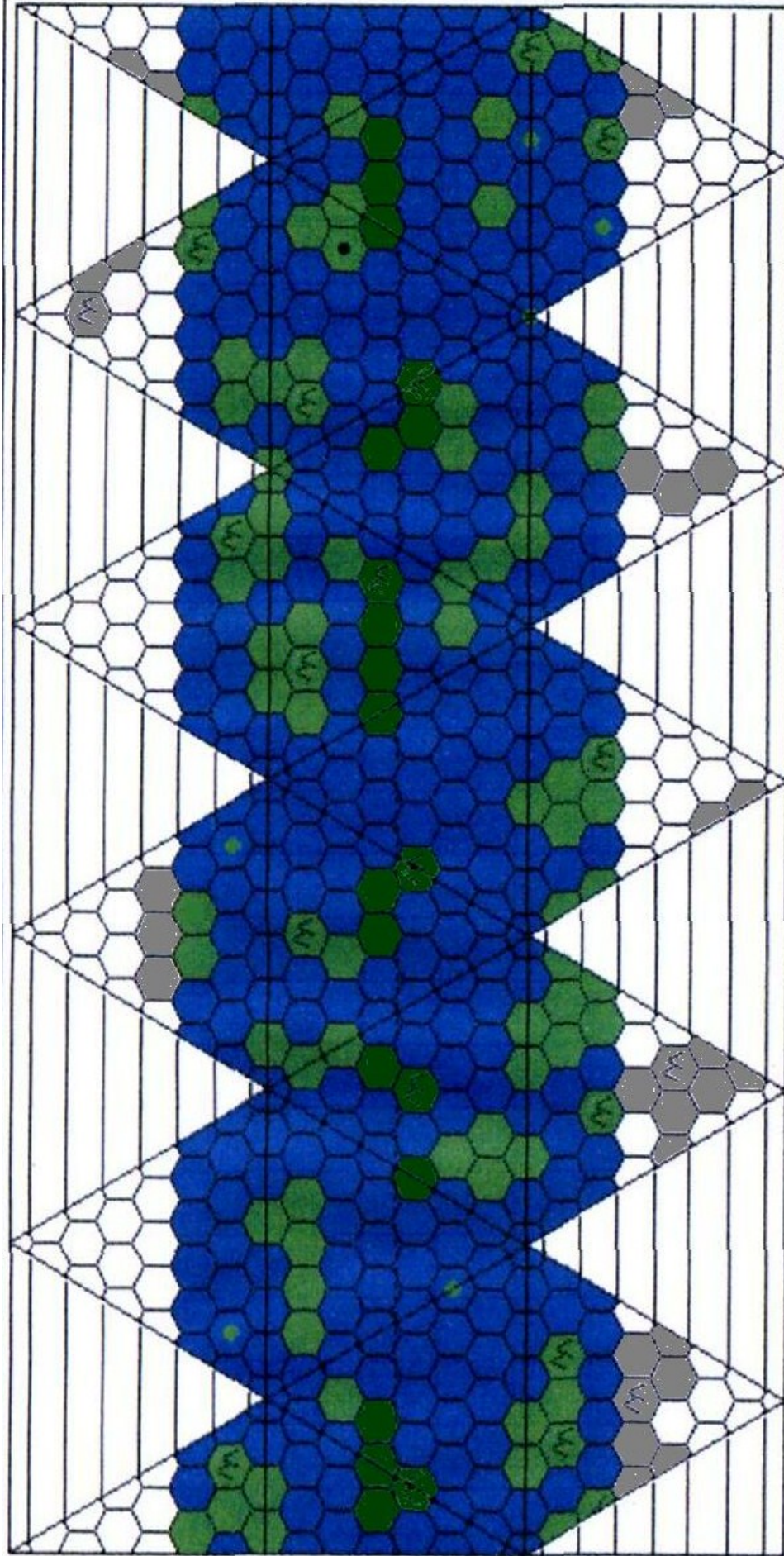
3 – 4 terms Citizen/Colonist or Worker
Melee(Unarmed) 1, Melee(Bludgeon) 2, Admin 0, Carouse 1, Persuade
1, Animals 0, Survival 1, Trade(Varies) 1.
Mesh, Stunstick, Comm(TL 6).

A former indentured worker who has bought off his contract and risen to a ‘supervisory position.’ Often sadistic and enjoys wielding power over others. The link between the Camp Manager and the indentured workers.

Indentured Worker 676664

1 – 4 terms Citizen/Colonist or Worker
Melee 0, Carouse 1, Drive 0, Animals 0, Survival 1, Trade(Varies) 1

The unfortunates who work, and often die, in the sprice marshes. A bit cowed, and suspicious of anyone who claims to want to help them. 🌱



Lush C58841A-5
1 hex = 774 km (484 miles)

-  Plains
-  Ocean
-  Jungle (Spruce Marshes in Coastal Areas)
-  Plains (Frozen)
-  Ocean (Frozen)
-  Rough
-  Corporate HQ & Downport

Map modified from one produced by Heaven & Earth software.



Shanghaied

by Richard Morey

Given SuSAG's appetite for indentured workers on Lush, it's not surprising that there is a black market for bodies to feed it. A common practice is to lure unsuspecting people into situations where they can be drugged or otherwise rendered unconscious and then turned over to local SuSAG reps for a 'finder's fee.' The victim doesn't regain consciousness until they are being revived from their low passage to Lush, at which time they are in debt to SuSAG, and will have to work it off (though they don't have the contract fee to worry about). The rare successful protest will 'allow' the victim to opt to take their chances in the wilds. Most victims don't last long enough to get off-world to expose the situation.

The PCs are approached by Milt Girflet. He explains that his son, Helgi, disappeared a year ago. He has since learned that Helgi was shanghaied by black-market 'recruiters' and sold into indentured servitude on Lush. Milt has mortgaged everything he owns to come up with the Cr 20,000 to buy Helgi's contract and fund a team to retrieve his son. He offers the PCs Cr10,000 each to go to Lush, find Helgi, buy his contract and bring him home.

This adventure may be run multiple times, each time in search of a different unfortunate victim of the black market supply system.

Possible directions to take this adventure:

1. The situation is just as Milt has presented it. The PCs will need to obtain permission to land on Lush, pay off Helgi's contract, and then travel to one of the spruce camps to retrieve him. Travel to the camp will be by ground vehicle supplied by SuSAG. The vehicle has a GPS transmitter in it so that SuSAG security can monitor the PCs location. Tampering with the device will result in fighters being sent to locate the PCs with SuSAG security teams in G/Carriers following up.
2. As in 1, but before the camp manager will release Helgi he will demand that all debts incurred at the camp, Cr 6000, are paid directly to him.
3. As in 1, but at the camp the PCs learn that Helgi died a month ago from swamp fever.
4. As in 3, except Helgi didn't really die. He was trying to organize the indentured workers and, learning that he was 'going to be dealt with,' Helgi fled into the wilds where he is now with one of the renegade bands.
5. As in 1, but Helgi has been sent on to another camp.
6. As in 2, but Helgi has fallen in love with another indentured worker, Asvii Drystaan, and won't leave without her. In addition to her contract, Asvii owes the camp Cr 8000.



Survey

by Richard Morey

The referee will need this issue's Jump Destination article on Lush to run this adventure, as it has the encounter information and map.

With an entire planet at their disposal, SuSAG management is wondering what other treasure Lush may yield. The PCs are hired to conduct a survey. The party should include the following skills: Drive(Track), Mechanic, Sensors, Survival,

Life Sciences(Biology), Space Sciences (Planetology). If the PCs lack the science skills, SuSAG will assign the scientists profiled at the end of this article to the team.

SuSAG will provide the party with sufficient tracked vehicles for their use, rigged with GPS monitors so that SuSAG security can monitor the PCs location. Tampering with the device will result in fighters being sent to locate the PCs with SuSAG security teams in G/Carriers following up. There will also be regular supply runs via one of

Active Measures

(Continued from page 23)

SuSAG's launches. They will be dropped initially on one of the continents to begin their survey. Upon successfully completing that continent, the PCs will be paid Cr 3000/month and may be offered another contract for another continent.

Double travel times for the party to reflect the fact that they must spend time stationary taking sensor readings, as well as dismounted to collect samples. This also means imposing twice as many rolls for possible events (use the events in the Jump Destination article on Lush in this issue).

Whether the PCs discover anything of value will be left to the referee. The main point of this adventure is to explore Lush and ultimately deal with the issue of the Little Men.

If any of the PCs, or Dr. Amr, makes it clear that they intend to report the Little Men to the IISS, and do not relent in the face of SuSAG inducements to the contrary, the Company will attempt to prevent them by any means possible from reporting to the IISS. They may also initiate a full-scale effort to exterminate the Little Men before an IISS interdiction can be imposed.

It's also possible that the PCs may form an alliance with a renegade party or two as well, eventually leading to a revolt.

SuSAG Staff NPC Scientists

Dr. Asa Amr 697AA9

3 terms Scholar/Field Researcher, rank 1

Comms 0 Computer 0, Diplomat 0, Medic 0, Investigate 2, Life Sciences(Biology) 2, Survival 1, Sensors, social Science(Sophontology) 1
Cloth(TL 10), Comm(TL 10), Hand Computer(TL 11).

Asa is as comfortable in the wilds as she is in the laboratory, perhaps more so. If confronted with the Little Men, Asa will recognize them as emerging sophonts and insist that the IISS be notified. This will not go over well with her SuSAG superiors. So long as they are not held hostage, Asa will support not reporting renegades.

Dr. Lanzo Pant 6779B9

4 terms Scholar/Scientist, rank 2

Sensors 1, Diplomat 0, Medic 0, Space Science(Planetology) 2, Comms 0, Investigate 0, Physical Science(Chemistry) 2, Engineer(Electronic) 1, Computer 1
Cloth(TL 10), Comm(TL 10), Hand Computer(TL 11)

Lanzo prefers the Lab, where all of the variables can be controlled. He believes that science, and scientists, should remain neutral regarding any moral issues arising out of their research. He will not have strong feelings one way or the other on the Little Men issue unless subjecting Lush to IISS interdiction will threaten some other discovery he makes during the survey. As a loyal company man, Lanzo will insist upon reporting the location of any lost Company property (renegades). ☪



Raconteurs' Rest

A Most Unfortunate War

by Andrew Vallance

Part 4

55th of 2029 (246-97): Repatriation from Musni

Siish stood behind Halligan *Kaptan* as he brought the *Martinez* slowly towards Musni. She was one of thirty-seven liners in the system. One for each survivor. Command had been felt a demonstration of the weight of the Protectorate's feelings was called for. Repatriation would be individually, at the same time. It had been years

since he'd stood here. He surveyed the bridge, remembering the innocent faces that sat there five years ago. So long ago, so very long ago.

"We'll be in orbit in fifteen minutes, *Vebmral*; we've just received clearance."

Siish nodded, lost in thought.

"I've had a boat made ready and *Estrada Korneet's* team is at your disposal. I've assigned *Luresh Ensin* as your pilot; she's my best shuttle pilot."

"Thank you, but if it's all the same, *Kaptan*, I'd rather take the boat down myself."

"Of course, *Vebmral*."

Raconteurs' Rest

They were on final approach, Siish reached to the comms. "*Martinez Three* to Musni Downport control, requesting final clearance."

"Musni Downport control. Copy *Martinez Three*, approach path beta one two, pad naval charlie eight. Priority clearance to land."

"*Martinez Three*. beta one two, naval charlie eight, understood, thank you Downport control." He entered the information, the computer flashed and calculated the course. His hand hesitated for a moment, then hit the auto button. "Feeling lazy Siish?" He hadn't seen Jane come in.

"No, distracted, and shouldn't you be back there strapped in with the others?"

"What, you planning on crashing into the planet or something? And this seat's as good as any. Thought I'd enjoy the view."

Siish could see Jane was restless "I'm worried about her too, she's my *dinkir*, remember, but we'll be down in a few minutes"

Jane was in a thoughtful mood "*Dinkir*, humorous fish, never understood that one, is it an insult or an endearment?"

"Can be either, depends how you stress it."

"So Siish, what did mummy want to let us have this gig?"

"What makes you think that? Friends and family, remember".

Jane chuckled "Yes, but having Lady Councilor Manish as a mother couldn't have hurt."

"No, it didn't. And dinner, she demanded dinner."

"Awww, dinner with mom, how quaint"

Siish blushed. "No, not Mother. Sharik Gubashiidi"

"Never gives up, does she?"

"No, no, she doesn't."

"Doesn't she realise it's pointless now? There's somebody else?"

"Oh, yes, but that's never stopped Mother before. Besides, the somebody else has never noticed." Siish sighed.

Jane gave a slight smile "Yes, she always was a bit thick that way."

The boat set down lightly; Siish had brought it in himself for the actual touch down. There was a party of Imperial Navy officers waiting. Siish and Jane were last to descend the walkway to meet them. There were salutes and a slightly older Commander Mann spoke. "Vice Admiral, Commander, a pleasure to meet you. I only wish the circumstances were more favourable."

Siish, in his ever so polite way, corrected her, "*Vebmral* and *Komanda*."

"My apologies, *Vebmral*, *Komanda*." Jane waited for Siish to respond, as did Commander Mann, but he just smiled. As *Mmarislusant*, technically he didn't have to apologise in return, but it was usual. Jane couldn't help but giggle, just a little, as she thought, *Siish is very good at this*.

"Well *Vebmral*, if you would care to come this way, we have transport waiting. I've arranged a medical team to be ready, if you desire."

"Thank you, but I'd prefer to use my own *dokhtor*." Siish's voice was polite, but cold. Mann had expected this.

"Of course." She ushered the group towards the waiting grav carrier. Mann decided to risk some conversation. "I was commanding the *We-etab* when we picked her up."

Siish remained non-committal. "Oh?"

"Yes; she must have been the best pilot I had ever seen."

This managed to crack Siish just one iota "Yes, she is good." Mann was an excellent tactician and knew when to take an opportunity. "Did they ever give her a commendation?"

"Star for Valour, posthumous."

"Nobody informed your people she was alive? I passed all the details to headquarters." Mann was genuinely surprised.

Jane was the one who answered "No, she's been four years dead for us."

I sat in my little world, like I'd sat for one thousand, one hundred and fifty-three days before. The cell was different now, its walls awash with colour. They'd brought me books, music, new clothes. They sat unused in the corner, but the food was

(Continued from page 25)

better now. Somebody had said the war was over, that I'd be going home soon, but that was almost a year ago. I guess it must be over. What passed for my clothes here were bright yellow overalls, Jane would've had a fit. I didn't care any more, I hadn't cared for a long time. Just sit and wait. I didn't want to go home, I couldn't *feel* any more. I was broken, damaged goods. I couldn't face the pity and the shame. There was a sound at the door, then a gruff marine's voice: "Please stand by your door." I got to my feet slowly. There was a metallic click and the door slid open. The gruff marine appeared there. "Come with me, please." I didn't speak; I rarely did now. But this was wrong, gruff marines did not say *please*.

I followed, down the corridor to the guard post. There a smartly dressed Imperial Navy officer, a full Captain no less, was waiting. She gave a snappy salute. I stood there. I thought if I had a watch I could time her. I think it was over a minute before she gave up waiting for me to respond and put her arm down. "Lieutenant-Commander, sit, please sit."

"*Komant*" I corrected her. I found I much preferred the short form now.

"Ah yes, *Komant*, my apologies." She waited; I remained silent.

"I need you to sign some papers; you're going home."

I must have heard wrong. "Home?"

"Yes, *Komant*, home. I'm afraid there were some... unfortunate... complications that delayed your repatriation. I'm sure you'll understand." No, I didn't, but then again nor did they; how could they? They had no idea what they'd done. "So, *Komant*, if you could just sign here."

I almost did; something stopped me. "I want to read it."

Her smile slipped for just one second. "Certainly, *Komant*, it's just a standard release, for the records."

I read. Yes, standard, but tucked in one corner were the words "...acknowledge I have been treated in accordance with the established customs and rules of war." It was odd, funny in a way. Five years ago I would have been yelling and screaming and raising hell like any decent Luriani. But I couldn't yell any more. I simply broke the pen in half and placed it neatly on the table. The captain said nothing, but the smile was gone. Not that it mattered, nothing mattered.

"There are two letters for you as well, *Komant*." She passed over two gilt-edged paper envelopes. Who uses paper any more? I looked at them. The maroon one had "On behalf of his Imperial Majesty, Artemsus" printed, neatly by machine. The other, silver, had my full formal name. It was written by hand and bore the seal of the Archduke of Gateway.

The gruff marine lead me down another corridor. I'd not seen this one before. We reached a junction and he paused. He looked both ways, back and forward, then whispered "It was wrong, what they did, it was wrong. I'm sorry." Gruff marines do not say *sorry* either. I couldn't move. I just stood there, unable to move. The gruff marine looked awkward for a moment, then held me, he stroked what was left of my hair. He said "It's alright, love, you'll be home soon." I felt nothing.

We eventually reached a door. The gruff marine turned and saluted. I returned his salute. The door opened, the light was blinding. I saw figures beyond. I heard a roar of outrage and I knew who was there at once "What the hell have they done to you, deary, and what in the name of *Basijk* are you wearing?"

I don't recall much about the next few weeks. I remember Siish and Jane waiting for me. Siish bellowing at a young Imperial lieutenant to "get her a wheelchair this instant or I'll feed you to a *Mmaryn*³⁹." Jane's hand was badly scarred. A face, a woman, a distant memory, who saluted me as we left. *Dokhtors* prodding and poking. Jane putting me to bed and telling me it'd all be alright now. *How could it ever be alright?* She lay with me,

(Continued from page 26)

like when we were children, holding me. It wasn't the same; I couldn't feel her any more.

Jane told me the news; that Enli, Midori and Kamees were all dead, my father Wilhem and To-car too. She cried over them when she told me. I said nothing, I practised with Kamees almost a year when we were at the academy and I said nothing. A sister and a father⁴⁰ and still I said nothing. Ora and Oluku were still here, they had two fat children, apparently. She and Siish were actually retired. Siish's mother had got him a ship, the *Raledenet*, and the two of them were 'wandering'. It seemed they'd given me the Star for Valour, posthumous. They'd even named a ship after me, a little one. That would be awkward. They sat with me constantly, in shifts, one of them was always with me, waiting for me to speak. They fed me; I ate, not much. They kept saying I had to eat. I was numb, I just kept wishing I'd died counting the stars.

It was thoughts of children that brought me back in the end. In the end I had to ask "Do you have pictures?" I could hear the struggle to remain calm in Jane's voice. "Pictures, deary?"

"Of the two fat children."

"Ora's?"

"Yes."

"Of course, deary, would you like to see them?" The children were beautiful, like their mother. It was like opening a flood gate. I cried, you could have filled all Daramm's oceans with my tears. Then I talked. I asked about Greg, she said he was a year dead and no more. I asked how her hand got scarred; she changed the subject. I didn't push. I asked if Siish's mother had found him a 'nice respectable *Mmarislusant* girl from a good family' to marry, yet. Seemingly not; Jane said he had eyes for somebody, though. I asked how come they were the ones to get me. "Siish's mother. And anyway, the silver hats thought it better if you were picked up by friends and family." Siish came in sometimes, mostly just to sit, but

he talked, too. He wouldn't let on who he had eyes for. I said she'd have to be good to him or I'd hunt her down and kill her. He assured me if he was ever to be matched I'd be the first to know. He 'offered' me a job. "The *Raledenet* needs a new pilot, I'm getting too old and running her takes too much of my time." He was lying; Siish could fly rings around most of the pilots in the fleet and running a ship was in his blood, but I said *yes*. There's no point in saying *no* to Siish; he always wears you down in the end and besides, I thought I'd like to wander, just awhile.

113th of 2029 (304-97): Endgames on Dirir

The old man entered the Archduke's office. "Sirean, it is a pleasure to see you again."

"The pleasure is mine, Your Grace."

"I must congratulate you; the peace appears to be holding and the settlement... acceptable."

"Yes. They didn't want much, mostly a guarantee to be left alone."

"You know there have been calls for your replacement. Ceding worlds rarely finds favour at court.⁴¹"

"They were reluctant citizens at best; for the moment we're better off without them."

The old man appeared grave "Do you read the intelligence reports from the Protectorate?"

"I make a point of it."

"Councillor Jkuaese has switched allegiance, that gives the hard-liners control of the Security Committee.⁴²"

"Yes, but the moderates still retain a majority in the Council itself, and there is little we can do about it." Sirean looked sad. "So much blood for nothing."

The old man nodded "Perhaps not quite nothing; it's not a mistake that will be repeated." He sat and waited as the young secretary poured tea. "They sent an apology, in response to Artemsus' for the... regrettable matter, expressing their deepest sorrow and sympathy for our losses. The Emperor was rather shocked." The old man laughed lightly.

(Continued from page 27)

"It is their custom."

The old man recalled his conversation with the *Komant*, "Yes, I have been made aware of that. You were right, they found Darant dead. Poisoned in a back alley. They tell me his death would have been completely painless. Funny, I expected their response to be more... expressive."

The corners of the Archduke's mouth formed the smallest of smiles "It was. He died alone."

"Darant was well connected; there will be trouble over his death."

"There already is. I have launched an investigation. But I think it wise not to push it too far."

The old man stared at his tea "You know, the greatest tragedy is that we've probably lost any chance of them joining us."

Sirean chuckled "Perhaps not in our lifetime, but I would not totally discount the possibility Your Grace. They are... unpredictable."

"The *Komant* I talked with, what happened to her?" The old man showed more than a touch of concern.

"Repatriated, like the rest. She's with her people now, they will take care of her."

"Good, good." He was lost in thought for a moment "It was a most unfortunate war."

Notes

The notes numbered 1 to 20 appeared with Part 1, those numbered 21 to 30 with Part 2, and those numbered 31 to 38 with Part 3.

39. A carrion eater native to Daramm. Takes the role of a mischievous and deceptive trickster in Luriani mythology.

40. Luriani and *Verasti Dtareen* (though not *Mmarislusant*) families traditionally consist of a number of adults and associated children. All of the adults are considered to be parents and all the children siblings, regardless of the biological connections. The relationships between the adults are broadly monogamous, though alignments do change over time and some latitude is allowed.

41. In the final settlement, a number of Imperial worlds were granted independence to create a buffer zone between the Imperium and Protectorate.

42. A powerful committee of five members of the Lord Protector's Council. Responsible for the day to day running of the Protectorate's military and security services. ☸

In A Store Near You

The Showroom

Henry 3x9 Heavy Police Grav Cycle

designed by Ken Murphy

The Henry Corporation has been making two, three, and four-wheeled vehicles for generations, and when the term "Grav cycle" is mentioned, most sophonts tend to think of the Henry; a big, heavy military bike seen at some point in just about every War movie or documentary produced within the borders of the Imperium for more than 100 years.

All hand-assembled, the Henry is a benchmark of quality, and fetches a premium price from buyers.

The Henry 3x9's computer responds to simple directions from the rider, and can meet up with its Officer at some point, or approach hostiles and lay down suppressive fire as the Officer directs.

The trio of large containers at the rear and on each side of the Henry are large enough to store a variety of law enforcement gear. The Henry, with its finely tuned, hand assembled grav modules produces a distinctive, low thrumming.

The *Henry 349* is armed with a VRF Gauss Gun, with ammo split between drugged rounds for crowd control, and normal rounds for suppressive fire.

In A Store Near You

(Continued from page 28)

A variant, the *Henry 359*, has a sidecar attached. It replaces the VRF Gauss Gun with a Gatling Gun pintle-mounted on the sidecar (ammo for suppressive fire only), and has additional storage on the rear of the sidecar.

Craft ID: "Henry 349" Grav Cycle, Type AV, TL 10, Cr673,062
Hull: 1/2, Disp=5.1m³, Config=4SL, Armor=4E, Unloaded=3.799262t, Loaded=3.982362t, Hull +1
Power: 1/2, Storage Battery=0.5Mw, Excess=0.8968Mw, Duration=62 Days
Loco: 1/2, Low Power High G, Thrust=8t, NOE=140 kph, Cruise=750 kph, Top=1000 kph, Max Vacuum Accel=1G, Space Agility=1, Atmospheric Agility=+6/+6/+7.
Commo: Radio=Very Distant×1
Sensors: Headlights×12, Neutrino=Directional×1, Magnetic=Very Distant×1, Environmental×1, Passive EMS=Very Distant×1, Active EMS=Distant×1
Off: VRF Gauss Gun-10×1 (1,000 rds ammo)
Def: -2 in Space Combat
Control: Computer=0/fib×1, Special=HUD×1, Electronic Circuit Protection, Environment=Basic Env, Inertial Comp
Accomm: Crew=1 (rider), Seats=Cramped×2.
Other: Cargo=0.1831kl

Craft ID: "Henry 359" Grav Cycle, Type AV, TL 10, Cr396,562
Hull: 1/2, Disp=5.1m³, Config=4SL, Armor=4E, Unloaded=1.247262t, Loaded=1.753362t, Hull +1
Power: 1/2, Storage Battery=0.5Mw, Excess=0.2027Mw, Duration=62 Days
Loco: 1/2, Low Power High G, Thrust=4t, NOE=140 kph, Cruise=750 kph, Top=1000 kph, Max Vacuum Accel=1.2G, Space Agility=1, Atmospheric Agility=+6/+6/+7.
Commo: Radio=Very Distant×1
Sensors: Headlights×12, Neutrino=Directional×1, Magnetic=Very Distant×1, Environmental×1, Passive EMS=Very Distant×1, Active EMS=Distant×1
Off: 7mm Gatling-8×1 (5,000 rds ammo)
Def: -2 in Space Combat
Control: Computer=0/fib×1, Special=HUD×1, Electronic Circuit Protection, Environment=Basic Env, Inertial Comp
Accomm: Crew=1 (rider) Seats=Cramped×2 (Riders), Cramped×1 (Sidecar Passenger)
Other: Cargo=0.5061kl



In A Store Near You

The Showroom

TL1 Coach

designed by Ewan Quibell

CraftID: Coach, TL1, Cr 566.85
Hull: 1/1, Disp=0.5, Conf=4USL Open, Armour=0W (Coach), 0Z (Cover), Unloaded=0.186 tons, Loaded=0.186 tons
Power: External=0.000745 Mw
Loco: 1/2, Simple Wheels x4, Outboard Suspension, P/W=4, Road=31 kph, Offroad=4.65 kph
Comm: -
Sensors: -
Off: Hardpoints=1
Def: -
Control: Direct
Accom: Crew=1 (Driver), Seat=Bench x2 inside (4 sophants), x1 outside (2 sophants)
Other: Cargo=0 klitres, ObjSize=Small, EmLevel=None

This TL1 wooden, livestock drawn, coach is a swift passenger vehicle that can be found on almost any low tech planet. The hull is 2cm thick wood with a hide/cloth cover offering weather protection to the passengers inside. The cover can be followed down into an integral storage area

within the hull. The driver sits on the outside bench on top of the main body of the coach using direct controls to the livestock, reins, and a direct lever action foot break that can be applied to the on-side front wheel. There is no cover for the driver. There is no luggage compartment and no ability to carry cargo, unless stacked on the seats.

The coach is drawn by 1 animal, in the above case the external power source was calculated using the standard Terran horse thus producing 1hp. The speed of the vehicle varies considerably depending on the road conditions, and can be driven up to its top speed of 31kph. The transmission for the coach, or the harness, is external to the vehicle itself and attached to the animal. The suspension is also external to the vehicle. The transmission can be removed from the coach and broken down into its individual wooden, metal and leather parts to a much smaller volume for storage as needed.



Feedback

Please tell us ...

- what you think of both magazine and website
 - what you think of the articles we publish
 - how we can make our magazine better
 - how we can make our website better
 - what kind of articles you do or don't want to see
 - what you think of our look
 - how we can make it better
- Please, give us your opinion! We've provided several ways you can do so:
- e-mail: feedback@freelancetraveller.com.

- feedback form at <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/feedback/ftfbf.html>.
- Forums:
Traveller Fanzine section of SFRPG: <http://www.sfrpg-discussion.net/phpBB3/viewforum.php?f=36>
Lone Star at Citizens of the Imperium: <http://www.travellerrpg.com/CotI/Discuss/forumdisplay.php?f=13>
Note: you must be registered with the forums to be able to use this method.

Traveller on the Internet

IRC: The #Traveller and #LoneStar channels

Freelance Traveller sponsors channels for *Traveller* fans on the Undernet and Otherworlders IRC networks, and the two channels are "bridged" so that if you're visiting either, you can see what's going on in the other, and talk to people there. For more information about both channels, see our informational pages at <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/travnet.html#IRC> and <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/travchat/index.html>. Come talk "live" with other *Traveller* fans about anything at all, *Traveller* or not, and make both channels "jumping" places to hang out!

You can also run "play-by-IRC" game sessions in either channel; please stop in and ask one of the channel operators (FreeTrav or EMT_Hawk) to schedule it, so we can ensure that the 'bridge' and the 'bartender' are set into a nondisruptive mode.

Please watch the Traveller Mailing List, the Mongoose Traveller forum, and the Lone Star section of the Citizens of the Imperium forum for announcements of Topical Talks!

Information Center: Request for Information

Here is a list of all of those publishers that we are aware of that are currently putting out material for *Traveller* (any version) or *Traveller*-compatible material not specifically for *Traveller* (this list is based on products that the editor owns, and notifications from "follow your favorites" from DriveThruRPG). If you know of others, or if any of those on this list are not in fact currently operating/publishing, please write and let us know. We'd also appreciate either lists or pointers to lists of all of the *Traveller* and *Traveller*-compatible material put out by any of these companies, or any companies that we may have omitted from the list. If you have contact information, we'd appreciate that as well.

List of Traveller/compatible Publishers

3Hombres Games
Avalon Game Company
Avenger Enterprises
Christian Hollnbuchner
D.B. Design Bureau
DSL Ironworks
Expeditious Retreat Press

FarFuture Enterprises
Forever People
Game Designers' Workshop(!)
Gorgon Press
Gypsy Knights Games
Jon Brazer Enterprises
K-Studio
Loren Wiseman Enterprises
Mongoose Publishing
Postmortem Studios
QuikLink Interactive
Samardan Press
Sceaptune Games
Srying Eye Games
Spellbook Software and Games
Spica Publishing
Steve Jackson Games
Terra/Sol Games
Toxic Bag Productions
Zoser Games

Submission Guidelines

What is *Freelance Traveller* looking for?

We're looking for anything and everything to do with *Traveller* – reviews of products, house rules, alternate settings, NPC profiles, world write-ups, adventures, equipment, starships, fiction, “color” articles... If you see it in *Freelance Traveller*, or on our website, we're interested in it. Even if you don't see it in the magazine or on the website, we might be interested; write to *editor@freelancetraveller.com* and ask.

Some things that we want that you might not think of as “*Traveller*” would include reviews of non-*Traveller* products that easily lend themselves to being ‘mined’ for ideas for use in *Traveller*, or reviews of fiction (in any medium) that “feels” like *Traveller* in some way. In these cases, your article should focus on the *Traveller*-esque aspects of the item. There may be other things, as well; if you're not sure, write and ask.

What about ...

The rule of thumb is “If it's a *Traveller* ruleset, or a setting that has been published for use with a *Traveller* ruleset, go for it!”. That includes the non-Official *Traveller* Universe settings that have been published for use with any version of the *Traveller* ruleset, including (but not limited to) *Judge Dredd*, *Strontium Dog*, *Babylon 5*, *Reign of Diaspora*, *Twilight Sector*, the two *GURPS* variants on the Official *Traveller* Universe, *Avenger Enterprises' Far Avalon*, and the forthcoming *Traveller Prime Directive*, and any others we may have forgotten.

...Hyperlite?

We've made the decision to support *Hyperlite* as though it were an alternate *Traveller* setting, much like *Twilight Sector* or *Reign of Diaspora*. The changes that Sceptune Games has made to *Traveller* to get *Hyperlite* aren't really much more than the differences between Classic *Traveller*, *MegaTraveller*, *Marc Miller's Traveller*, and *Mongoose Traveller*, and converting between any of those systems and *Hyperlite*, in either direction, should be ‘trivial’.

... Diaspora, or Starblazer Adventures?

If your article is about “crossing over” between these products and any of the “standard” or supported *Traveller* rulesets or settings, by all means, submit it! If it's support for those systems beyond *Traveller*, we'll accept and hold the submission, but will not print it

unless/until we've had a reasonable level of expression of interest in such support from our readers.

How should I submit my article?

What needs to be in the submission?

At the very minimum, we need the submission itself, your name (for credit), and a valid email address to contact you at if we need to.

What format should I submit it in?

That depends on what you're submitting. Generally:

Text should be submitted in Microsoft Rich Text Format (RTF), Microsoft Word 2003 (DOC) or 2007/2010 (DOCX), OpenOffice Writer (ODT), or plain text (TXT). Most word processors will support one of those; if yours seems not to, please write to us for assistance. Avoid PDF if at all possible; it is difficult to reformat PDFs for our magazine or website.

Graphics should be submitted in the format that's best for the type of graphic. Most of the time, that will be GIF, PNG, or JPG/JPEG. Submitting in higher resolutions is better; we have tools to resample a picture to make it smaller if we need to – but it's not possible to make a picture larger without it becoming pixellated.

If you're submitting a graphic that you'd like to see us use for a cover of an issue, please make sure that it will fit nicely on both US Letter and ISO A4 pages—we'll crop the picture to fit, to avoid distorting shapes, so please leave reasonable “margins”; don't run “critical” imagery right to the edge where it will look bad if we crop it. A good resolution is 100 dpi or more.

Plans (deck plans, building plans, maps, etc.) may be better submitted in a vector-based format such as CorelDRAW! format (CDR) or any format that can be imported into CorelDRAW! X4. Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG), Windows Metafile (WMF), Enhanced Metafile (EMF), Encapsulated PostScript (EPS), or Microsoft Visio (VSD) are some common vector formats that can be imported.

How do I get it to you?

Email it to us at our submissions address, *submissions@freelancetraveller.com*. Your subject line should specify the type of article that it is, and what section you think it should be put in, e.g., “Combat Rules for Doing It My Way”.

