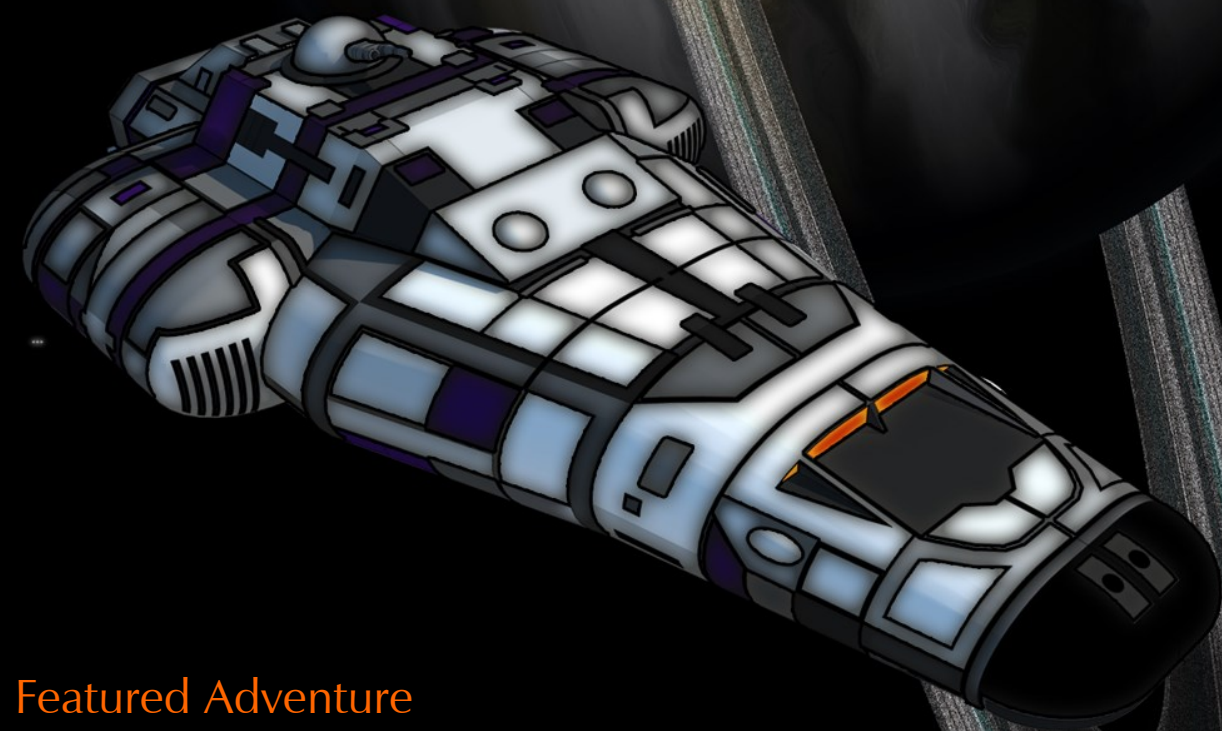




FREELANCE TRAVELLER

The Electronic Fan-Supported Traveller® Magazine and Resource



Featured Adventure

Benchmark

by Derek Wildstar

Issue 044
August 2013

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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Critics' Corner: *13Mann Verlag* (from their website), *Zozer Games* (from their website), *Pseudonymz* (via their product at RPGNow), *Terra/Sol Games* (via RPGNow)

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From the Editor



One of the strengths of *Traveller* has always been that there's room for characters and adventures that don't have or require combat skills. It is, perhaps, understandable that scenarios that are open to combat dominate—but that's largely a matter of choice, rather than a near-necessity imposed by the system or setting, due to a lack of development in non-combat areas.

But, how do you encourage players to explore non-combat scenarios?

Traveller has an answer to that: Make the player think about their character's mortality. *Traveller*, in its first incarnation, was unique in that it was possible for a character to die *before the game even started*. That was pretty quickly house-ruled, and recent editions retain pre-game death only as an option.

But that wasn't the only way *Traveller* could get players to care about their characters. The entire

character generation process was itself a way: Instead of simply rolling up a set of stats and maybe a couple of default skills, and sending the character out into the world, *Traveller* provided a character generation *process*. Characters had 'prior careers' in which Things Happened, and the Things that Happened could influence the player's choices for the character's subsequent development. Even the choice of prior careers offered the options, from the beginning—the character with the scientific bent could aim for the Scouts, the wheeler-dealer could go for the Merchants, and the Combat Monster could go for the Army or Marines. But regardless of what you chose, you, the player, were in a sense *right there* alongside your character—and there's never been a better way to bond with a buddy—or a character—than to share danger with him. ☼

Spinwärts-Marken

reviewed by Timothy Collinson

Spinwärts-Marken. Martin J. Dougherty;

transl. Sascha Lübke, Daniel Mayer.

13Mann Verlag <http://13mann.de>

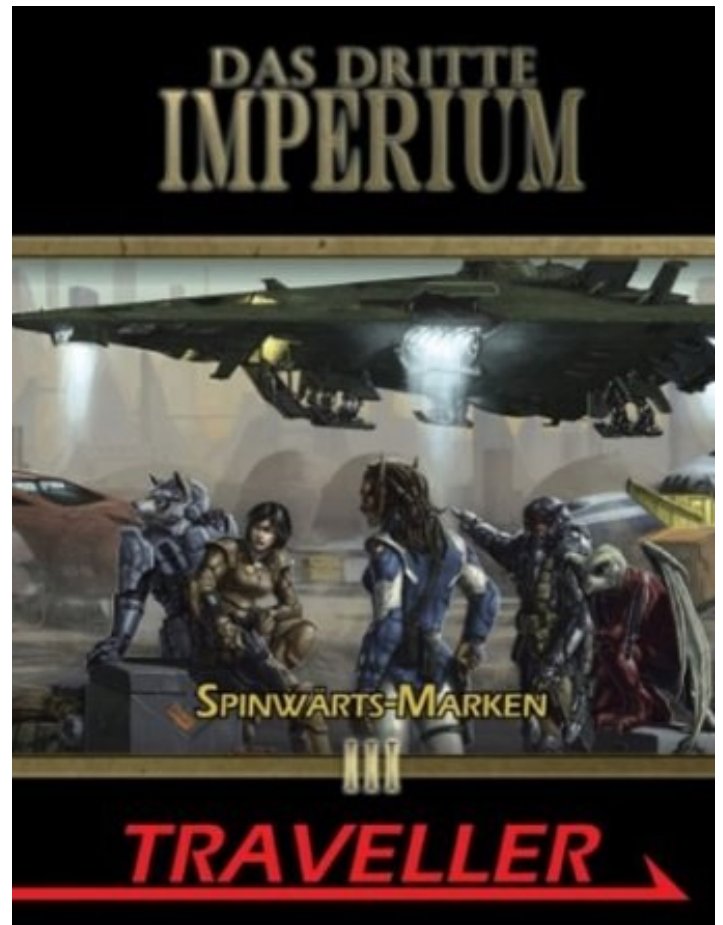
144pp, hardbound

€19.95/SFr.31.00

13Mann have produced a great line of *Traveller* products as German translations of several of the Mongoose books and *Spinwärts-Marken* is a terrific example of their high production values. This a straight translation of *The Spinward Marches* volume and is essentially identical. Three obvious exceptions are that this comes in a hardcover, has glossy paper throughout, and there's a black ribbon bookmark which extends some 10cm beyond the book. Possibly thanks to the fractionally larger cover, more of the cover illustration can be seen to the right hand side – the Droyne is more complete and the cargo on the ship's ramp can be seen more clearly. Also on the cover, the silver metallised 'The Third Imperium' branding has become a bronze (or golden?) 'Das Dritte Imperium'.

The interior text however is the same – an introduction to the Third Imperium; general notes on the Spinward Marches; individual sector world lists, maps and descriptions; and ideas for adventuring in the sector – although there are two extra pages in the German edition. This isn't due to longer German words (e.g., *strassenbahnhaltestelle* vs **tramstop**) – until the end of the book the page count is identical. It's because of a much superior index right at the end of the book. It's more complete, includes all the worlds in the Spinward Marches sector and contains some 767 entries as opposed to just 188 in the original English edition.

The page layout of the book is slightly different, with the two column format retained and virtually all paragraph breaks the same as in the English volume, but instead of blank lines between each paragraph, the German text has no such spacing and instead uses indents for clarity. This gives a slightly



denser looking text although this is marginally offset by the fractionally paler printing throughout the book. This is most obvious in the illustrations which are carried over from the English volume and in being 'lightened' become much clearer – the woman on page 7 (page 8 of *The Spinward Marches*), the Aslan on page 10 and the damaged starship on page 75 are good examples. It might, however, be argued that the desert scene on page 107 has become too bleached! On the other hand, the tables and maps have become somewhat lighter and opinions may differ on whether this is helpful or not. There are two additions to the artwork: on page 50 a larger version of the marine corporal from page 21 of the Core Rulebook and on page 37 the rogue from page 29 of the Core Rulebook. The "III" strapline at the top of each page has been redesigned to complement the front cover.

In terms of translation, most world names remain the same but some have been either translated directly (Lousy → *Lausig*, Riverland → *Flussland*,

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Critics' Corner

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Iron → *Eisen*, Junction → *Knotenpunkt*, and Dawn-world → *Morgenwelt* are just some examples), or they've been adjusted for German spelling or pronunciation (Wurzburg → *Würzburg*, Egypt → *Ägypten*, Beck's World → *Becks Welt*, and so on). On the other hand some worlds which might have been translated have remained with their English labels (Beater, Towers, Torment, Singer and perhaps even Nosea amongst others). Subsectors get the same treatment with Sword Worlds and Five Sisters becoming *Schwertwelten* and *Fünf Schwestern* respectively, while Jewell becomes *Juwell* and District 268 becoming *Distrikt 268*.

The opportunity has been taken to make some corrections to the original – for example the missing allegiance codes from the Sword Worlds subsector have returned and in the map of *Trins-Schleier*

(Trin's Veil) the world of 'Tee-Tee-Tee' gets its third 'tee' back. Anomalies in the English edition such as Andory in the Five Sisters world list appearing as Andor on the map get corrected in the German version but Dubarre in Darrian subsector's world list remains Debarre on the map.

English speaking fans with a small knowledge of German will find much to enjoy here – from the high production values of a well-made book, through the development of their *Traveller* vocabulary. With a little adaptation for translation differences, the index is much more useful than its English counterpart, but of course that's not the primary audience for this volume. For German-speaking players and Referees this is an invaluable book, particularly if adventuring in the official *Traveller* universe. Even in a home-grown setting this is a terrific source of ideas and adventure possibilities. This reviewer hopes to see much more of this quality from 13Mann. 🌟

Doing It My Way

Starting Early

by Bo Wozniak

With very few exceptions, and those for specific careers only in specific versions of *Traveller*, character generation starts with the character at age 18.

A player might request that the character start early. Under certain circumstances, I'm inclined to allow it, but...

It's one thing if it's part of an overall background that the player wants for their character. It's another thing if the player is just trying to abuse this to "cheat" and get more skills before aging rolls start at age 34. I'll impose penalties on those early starters.

Some of these penalties are to reflect difficulties younger characters would have to qualify for careers, survive, and gain promotion. A 12 year will probably look young. On average, a younger person also won't have the same maturity and amount of life experiences as their peers. The penalties are low enough to still allow for the exceptional child char-

acter to be at least as competent as an average 18 year old.

Starting Stats

Rather than adjust the character stats, I've opted to impose DMs on the character as described below; it's marginally easier to manage in play. I'd recommend making a column of youth DMs on the character sheet, and just updating them or eliminating them over time.

DEX, STR: *DM -1 (each) for each two years or fraction thereof below the age of 18.* For characters starting younger than 18, their physical development is not complete yet. The imposed penalty is recoverable as the character ages back up to 18. A player that has their character start at age 15 would have a -2 youth DM for these characteristics.

Recovery is at the end of a term. If they are over 18, remove all the youth DMs. If they are still under 18, recalculate the DM. A character that starts at age 13 will have a -3 youth DM when they start; at the

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Doing It My Way

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beginning of the second term, the character will be age 17, and will have a DM -1 for youth.

END: *No DM.* I interpret END as an indication of general health and determination. In order for a character to be able to start early, determination is clearly exceptional, and general health has to be at least as good as an 18-year-old's.

INT: *DM -1 for each four years or fraction thereof below age 18.* While this is something more innate, I also see it as something that matures to its full potential as the person matures. A character that starts at age 15 would have DM -1 for youth.

Like DEX and STR, recovery is at the end of a term, and is simply recalculated. For the 13-year-old with a -2 youth DM to INT when they start, they will have a -1 youth DM to INT at age 17 when they start their 2nd term.

EDU: *Reduce the characteristic by 1 for each two years or fraction thereof below age 18.* Note that this is a **characteristic** change, not a DM, and it is *not* recovered! The reduction reflects the younger start and lower level of education compared to someone older. The character has been busy with a career and not in school. Increases through character generation are handled normally; no additional penalty is applied.

SOC: *Referee's discretion.* Play it loose; look at the back-story. A noble teen starting early might not warrant a SOC penalty if, for example, it's due to

inheriting the title when a family member passes. The same noble child might warrant a major penalty if, for some reason, either they have repudiated the family, or the family has repudiated them. The child of a merchant with higher-than-average standing might incur a minor penalty when taking over the family business before reaching age 18.

Background Skills

Because the character has not had as long to gain background skills, reduce the number of background skills or levels by 1 for every two years or fraction thereof below age 18. If the number of background skills or levels is normally dependent on the character's EDU DM, apply that penalty in calculating the number of skills or levels, then apply this one to the result.

Careers

At first I thought certain careers should be off-limits for starting early, like the military not taking you until you are 18, but if the player gives the character a good story I'll allow it. Maybe the Imperial army won't take a child but some worlds may have groups that force able bodied children to be soldiers—or just have a culture where a child as young as 13 or 14 might be considered old enough to participate in society as an adult. A 16-year-old who really wants to leave home and be a scout might pass themselves off as being 18. While a good story is a must, the youth DMs above still help reflect barriers to entry. ☼

News About Traveller

Recent Traveller News and Findings

July 2013

- **Avalon Game Company** has released *Apparition-class Multirole Deep Intruder* and *Kitbag 4: Hand Weapons*.
- **Mongoose Publishing** has released *2300AD: Salvage Rights*.
- **Christian Hollnbuchner** has released *Starships Book II000: Commercial Liner*, *Starships Book II001: System Explorer*, *Torpedo Bomber*, and *Rattler Light Tank*.
- **Scrying Eye Games** has released *Type Y Hunting Class Yacht "HMIS Dragon Cat"*.
- **Spica Publishing** has released *The Astral Splendour*.
- **The Forge Studios** has released *Instant Location - SAR-78 Mining Colony*. ☼



The Sons of Rudurgu

by Michael Brown

Synopsis: There's more going on than it appears when the PCs investigate the death of a chief's son.

Setting: any Imperial world with ATM 6 or 8, HYD 4-8, and TL 9+.

Required Skills and Equipment: None
Full Tribal Costume

This world—designated an Imperial resort—is lush and tropical. Tourists from all over the sector arrive to enjoy the mild climate, verdant forests and astonishing abundance of wildlife.

Unfortunately, no one asked the planet's indigenous inhabitants, the Wakkani, if they wanted the company. The tribal Wakkani are the descendants of an earlier culture that has lost most of its technology, who have been watching with dismay as the newcomers push their cherished culture aside to make room for their own. Wakkani lands have been taken over (sometimes through trickery, sometimes through stealth.) Wakkani rites have been mocked, or co-opted into vulgarized entertainment for the resorts' guests. Even the young Wakkani have been seduced into leaving via money, exotic (to them) peoples, and advanced technology. The result has been a low-grade cultural war, which the Wakkani are currently getting the worst of. Their response has been to stage visible but non-violent protests using such methods as silent intimidation, deliberate staging of Wakkani rituals on resort properties, and stealthy but thorough vandalism.

Recently, however, the culture clash took an ugly turn. The teenage son of a Wakkani chief was found dead on the grounds of one of the world's classiest resorts. The authorities' official explanation is that the young man was killed by some of the native wildlife while en route to vandalize resort property. The body was returned to the tribe and the case was closed. But the natives don't accept the official version of events and have tenaciously called for a full investigation, to no avail.

Thus it is that as the adventurers are relaxing between jobs, they are approached by a delegation of Wakkani in full tribal costume. They ask the PCs to listen to their tale (which consists of the above) and to meet with their chief. They offer the group a crude map of how to find their campsite before resort security rudely hustles the natives away. If asked, the guards explain that the Wakkani are not permitted on resort grounds and subtly hint that the resort's continued friendliness toward the PCs depends upon them having nothing to do with the primitives.

Always Walk Alone

The map leads to a location about 10 kilometers from the resort, in a lush valley with a narrow lake. A large tribe of Wakkani is camped by the lakeside. As the PCs approach, they are challenged by a war party of 6D men armed with primitive weapons such as spears, war clubs and knives, attacking at any hint of PC hostility. If the visitors clearly display their peaceful intentions and explain that they were invited by a tribal delegation, the war party instead escorts them into camp, where they are ushered into a meeting with the tribe's still-grieving chief, Akkai-Ni-Akkan. After a brief ritual greeting, Chief Akkai explains to them in reasonably fluent Anglic why he needs their help. Items in [brackets] are for the referee's clarification purposes only:

"Ikkari [the son] was not traveling to harm the tribe-from-the-sky or their dwellings, but was hunting for food. He took with him two Knives [companions] to help him see and hear. They left when the sun-chief first lit the sky. Later, one of the Knives came back, hurt and tired from running. Before he died, he said they had been surprised and attacked. I sent Spears [warriors] at once to help Ikkari and his other Knife. The Spears returned when the moon-wife was high in the sky. They told me that many knives-from-the-sky [resort security] had already found my son with the life gone from him because of a *rudur* [a native animal; see below] and said they would find out what they could. When the sun-chief next came, the knives-from-the-

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Active Measures

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sky brought to me my son's vessel and told me they knew nothing else and to honor Ikkari by our traditions. Then they left and I have not seen them since. But there was something strange. I have lived many seasons, and seen wounds by *rudur*. Ikkari had many wounds, meaning he was felled by more than one. This cannot be, as the Sons of Rudurgu always walk alone."

The youth's body is not available for examination, having already been disposed of. Information on the *rudur* is easily found (see below.)

Chief Akkai wants the adventurers, as members of the tribe-from-the-sky, to look into the matter of Ikkari's death and give them closure and justice. Akkai cannot pay the group in credits, only in barter items and the goodwill of his tribe. If pressed, he knows of an area in the valley where rocks valued by the tribe-from-the-sky can be obtained with little trouble; they are welcome to take of those for their help. (The referee can designate whatever ore the players would deem valuable.)

He urges the visitors to hurry; many of the young tribesmen are growing restless at his perceived cowardice. There is a faction that wants to attack the resort and slaughter as many of the tribe-from-the-sky as they can find. Akkai does not know how long he can persuade them to stay their hands.

The Natives Are Restless

When the group returns from the Wakkani camp, they find a message asking them to report to the resort office. Their rooms have been security-locked.

Reporting as asked, the PCs meet with the resort manager and Etienne Yoshida, the chief of security (see below.) The manager brusquely reminds the party that they were warned not to deal with the Wakkani; since they ignored that warning, they have been barred from the resort. They may collect their belongings from the resort vault, where they have been moved (there are small but valuable items

missing on a roll of 2D for 12 exactly for each PC.) If the group refuses to leave, they face a number of security guards equal to their own plus 1. Yoshida is little better than a hired thug, and welcomes any excuse to bust the group's heads for them.

The PCs can pursue the investigation however they like, despite the setback of being booted off the resort. The referee can determine how their exile affects their efforts. There are certain facts they can uncover that can help them piece together the cause of Ikkari's death, depending on where they look:

- There are several items of interest in the resort's computer system. Anyone attempting to access it must bypass the security protocols (throw 13+; DM: Computer skill). Some of the files have their own defenses, and thus their own throws; the Computer skill DM applies here as well. Failure activates security software (which automatically locks down the files and breaks the link) and alerts the guards of the intrusion. The adventurer finds the following files:
 - a. Plans for expanding the property and developing part of it into a nature attraction of the type where decadent resort guests can get close to docile (controlled) specimens of the planet's wildlife.
 - b. Plans for capture and containment of the animals (including *rudur*) using a controversial animal tranquilizer. (Throw 10+.)
 - c. Digital security video time-stamped the night of Ikkari's death: the young man and his friends can be seen running up to a *rudur* just inside the frame that seems to be in some sort of distress. The men stop short as they see something just off-frame...then the video abruptly ends. (This file is encrypted; throw 13+ to break the encryption before accessing it. The video cannot be watched with the encryption in place.)
 - d. A copy of a report written by the tranquilizer manufacturer (see below) strongly advising against use of the drug on *rudur*, citing unspecified "adverse reactions" to it.

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Active Measures

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- e. Reports from a veterinarian contracted to do necropsies (animal autopsies) on several dead *rudur* in the nearest city. The reports are heavy on medical jargon, and cannot be interpreted without Medical skill. The necropsies detail several systemic hormonal changes in the animals' bodies caused by the introduction of an unspecified chemical substance. (Throw 10+ to deduce what specific changes the drug caused, DM: +Medical skill, -2 for working on animals.) If the group decides to visit the vet, he and his staff refuse to talk to them, and call law enforcement if they become hostile.
- f. A confidential, encrypted report from another pharmaceutical manufacturer. It details the search for a counteragent for the tranquilizer mentioned above, and reports success, although the quantity the resort ordered will not be ready for several weeks. (Throw 13+ to break the encryption; failure corrupts the document, making it unreadable.)
- The tranquilizer's manufacturer is easily found: a local pharmaceutical conglomerate that produces both medical and veterinary drugs. The company has been in the planetary news lately for several minor violations of local law for rushing drugs to market without conducting all mandated clinical studies.
- The local news mentioned several reports of the animals attacking resort guests, but resort publicists have been spinning the stories as overly-bold people getting too close to wild animals.
- Yoshida has damning evidence on his office computer, but accessing it is very difficult. First, the group must get onto resort grounds, then locate Yoshida's office, bypass the keypad lock on his door, then defeat the computer's security software. The referee should determine the chances for succeeding in each step. Access gives

the group copies of items a, b, and e, above; along with the following:

- a. A copy of item c that continues beyond the abrupt cutoff. The video runs as above, but after Ikkari and his companions see whatever surprised them off-frame, they turn to run but are cut down by a hail of laser fire. Seconds later, Yoshida, accompanied by several security guards, walk into the frame and examine the victims. Ikkari moves slightly, apparently still alive. Yoshida hauls the young man into a sitting position by his hair, yells something at him, then stabs the youth with his own knife. Yoshida and the guards then withdraw. After 15 minutes, one of Ikkari's companions apparently recovers enough to escape. Fifteen minutes after that, several *rudur* rush into the frame, apparently driven there by something, and begin mauling the remaining bodies. The video then ends.
- b. Duty records of several of Yoshida's security employees showing that they were off duty on several nights when they were scheduled to work; the official records show them as being on duty.
- c. Likewise, armory records showing several weapons missing at the times of the Ikkari incident, checked out by the same guards. This official record shows the weapons were secured at the time in question.

If at any time in the team's investigation the guards get involved because of a computer alarm, or they fail an investigation throw with a "2", Yoshida becomes aware of their snooping and immediately sends his most trusted lieutenants (the guards with duty and weapons irregularities above) to make the party disappear. If he catches them in his office, or discovers evidence that they were there, he kills them on sight.

As if they did not have enough trouble, the group is under a time limit. The Wakkani Spears are growing increasingly restless and hostile. The refer-

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Active Measures

ee should make an initial Reaction throw for the Spears, applying the Chief's Leader skill level as a positive DM. Each day, the referee should throw this modified Reaction to see whether the Spears' anger boils over; if so, 10D+20 of them will mount a massacre at the resort that night. There is a cumulative -1 penalty per day to the Reaction throw, but the Chief cannot use his Leader skill beyond the initial throw. However if the PCs have regular contact with the Wakkani, any of them can apply their Liaison skill as a positive DM to the daily throw.

Walking Through the Green

By the time the heroes finish their investigation, they should have enough information to reasonably deduce what happened (see The Plot below) and possibly put Yoshida and his aides behind bars. But if Yoshida learned of their investigation, he makes killing them a priority. Likewise, the Wakkani are growing more agitated daily by Chief Akkai's seeming weakness. The resort and the surrounding area is a powder keg.

If the Wakkani attack, resort security is caught completely off guard, as they usually don't pay the natives any attention. However, the fight will be lasers vs. primitive hand weapons; once the guards rally, things quickly go one-sided. Still, resort guests (who are blissfully unaware of the brewing tensions) are caught in the middle.

The *rudur* are a wild card. There are still aggressive specimens wandering about, and some of them could find their way onto resort grounds. A pack of berserk omnivores appearing during a pitched battle between guards and natives could either unite the combatants, or produce a general bloodbath.

If Yoshida is still around afterward, he gathers as many friendlies as he can find and visits the Wakkani camp to give the primitives a taste of their own medicine. The PCs will be hard-pressed to stop the resulting carnage.

However, Yoshida is not stupid, nor is he particularly brave. If things go too badly against him, he will disappear into Startown (where his background

allows him to fit right in) long enough to obtain a change of appearance and travel documents that let him skip the planet.

The group can claim victory if they 1) produce evidence of Ikkari's murder at Yoshida's hands; 2) Capture Yoshida or otherwise prevent him from escaping; and 3) prevent a massacre by the Wakkani, the resort guards, or both.

The Plot

The resort, as part of an expansion phase, decided to turn part of the area into a nature park, where visitors could view some of the native wildlife in its "natural" (i.e. strictly controlled) habitat. The plan called for the capture and relocation of several *rudur*, but the resort discovered that the tranquilizer drug interfered with the animals' normal hormonal balance, making them unnaturally aggressive. Worse, the hormones are closely tied to the creatures' reproductive cycle, so their procreative capacity was also sent into overdrive. The combined effect of the unnatural mating drive and the aggression has created packs of large, berserker predators.

Realizing its mistake, the resort quietly hired a corporation to develop a counteragent to the tranquilizer. Meanwhile, the belligerent *rudur* were endangering the resort; stopping them fell to Yoshida. Ignoring the *rudur*'s sanctity to the Wakkani, the Security Chief set out to destroy the animals. It was during one such quest that Ikkari and his companions, while hunting, discovered Yoshida's men harassing sacred animals, and tried to stop them. Yoshida killed the young man out of racist anger and set as many *rudur* on the bodies as he could find to cover up the crime. Realizing that the resort's security cameras caught the crime, he set about deleting all the footage he could find and covering up his crime in other ways.

NPCs

Resort Security Chief Etienne Yoshida (Ex-Rogue)

88CA95; Age 34 (3 terms); Cr110,000

Streetwise-1, Leader-1, Gun Cbt-2, Brawling-1, Laser Pistol

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Active Measures

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Resort head of security for the past four years, Yoshida puts his shady background to very effective (if brutal) use in his job. He is not above tapping some of his old street buddies to perform deniable assignments (even murder) for him. He is a horrible bigot who does not hide his hatred of the Wakkani. His laser pistol is mentioned in JTAS #2, p.3 (len: 350mm, wt: 750g, Cr2,000; damage as laser carbine.)

Wakkani Chief Akkai-Ni-Akkan

487945; Age 58 (10 terms); Cr9,000 (represents value in barter goods)

Spear-1, Sword-1, Leader-2, Brawling-1, Survival-2, Recon-1; Blade

Chief Akkai has watched the encroaching Imperials make a mockery of his once-proud culture, but long ago abandoned the radical ideas now pushed by the younger members of his tribe. He is sickly

and knows he is long past his prime, and has basically given up.

Rudur		Mass	Hits	Armor	Wounds and Weapons	Action
1	Gatherer	400kg	20/9	jack	thrasher	A5F7S1
1D+1	Gatherer (Aggressive)	400kg	20/9	jack	thrasher	A1FAS1

Rudur are solitary omnivorous mammals the size of bears resembling Terran pangolin, with a spine-studded tail they can swing with great force, and also claws they use to dig for roots and fight other rudur, which they typically do on sight; they only come together to mate. Under normal circumstances they prefer to flee humans unless cornered or protecting young. They are also highly sacred to the Wakkani, and figure prominently in stories of their nature-god Rudurgu.

Kurishdam

Games People Play

Sekhoma

by Jeff Zeitlin

This article was originally posted to the Freelance Traveller website in April of 2002, and is reprinted here with the author's permission.

Sekhoma is a card game known primarily in the Arcturan and Sylean regions of known space. It fits into the same social niche as the Terran card game of Poker, and has many elements in common, but the degree to which the two games are related is uncertain.

Sekhoma is played by two to six players, using a 72-card deck consisting of six suits each with the numbers one to six repeated twice in each suit. One player is initially designated dealer; deal rotates through the players each hand. The objective in each hand is to achieve the highest-ranked hand.

The dealer deals six cards face-down to each player. Before picking up their cards, each player antes a mutually agreed amount (usually one or two units, where a unit is the smallest amount of money

that may be wagered on the game. Social games usually use a unit size of centcredits; casinos use units ranging from one credit upward), placing it in the center of the table. Players are given an opportunity to examine the cards dealt to them (which are kept concealed from the other players), and one round of betting takes place. The first player (the one to the dealer's immediate left) announces "bet" or "no bet", and if "bet" is announced, includes the amount bet, and places that amount in the center of the table with the antes. Betting then continues to the left, with each player having the following options:

"Call" - The player announces "call" and places an amount equal to all prior bets and raises in the center of the table, and remains in the game.

"Raise" - The player announces "raise" and an amount of an additional bet, and places an amount equal to all prior bets and raises, plus his additional bet. Players preceding him in the round must immediately add the raise amount to the center of the table, or "fold", forfeiting all monies bet during the hand.

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“Fold” - The player drops out of the game for the remainder of the deal, forfeiting any monies wagered in the hand.

After each player has had one opportunity to bet, raise, call, or fold, the player to the dealer's left may exchange up to four cards. The discarded cards are placed face-down on the table, and the dealer deals an equivalent number from the remainder of the deck. Play proceeds to the left, with each player exchanging up to four cards. After all players have had the opportunity to exchange cards, a second round of betting occurs, following the same rules as the first. After all players have had the opportunity to bet, raise, call, or fold, all hands are revealed, and the player with the highest ranking hand collects all monies in the center of the table. The player to the dealer's left becomes the dealer for the next hand. Play continues as long as desired. In casino play, games are generally continuous, with players allowed to drop out or enter at any time (provided that no more than six are playing at any time); home play generally allows dropping out but not joining.

Hands in Sekhoma are ranked as shown below. In case of ties, the sum of the values of the cards that make up the scoring portion of the hand are compared, and the higher value wins.

One Pair: two cards of the same suit.

Two Pair: two pairs, of different suits.

Three of a Kind: three cards of the same suit.

Three and a Pair: a three-of-a-kind, and a pair.

Two Threes: two three-of-a-kinds, of different suits.

Three Pair: three pairs, of different suits.

Sekhoma: one card of each suit.

Four of a Kind: four cards of the same suit.

Four and a Pair: a four-of-a-kind and a pair.

Five of a Kind: five cards of the same suit.

Flush: six cards of the same suit.

In some areas where Sekhoma is popular, in addition to normal play for casino stakes, there is a fast

-play casino variant where the player and the dealer compete against each other individually (though the dealer will usually be playing against several players at once): Fiddler-Crab Sekhoma.

The player offers the bet, and nine cards are dealt to each. Each then divides the nine cards into a “Large Hand” of six cards, and a “Small Hand” of three cards. After both player and dealer have divided their hands, both show both hands. The Large Hand is compared to the Large Hand; the Small Hand is compared to the Small Hand. The results are as follows:

If both of a player's hands outrank the dealer's, the player wins, with a payoff twice his bet (that is, on a 10Cr bet, the player retains his 10Cr, and receives 20Cr).

If the player's Large Hand outranks the dealer's, but the Small Hand does not: The player wins, with a payoff equal to his bet (that is, on a 10Cr bet, he retains his 10Cr, and receives 10Cr).

If the player's Small Hand outranks the dealer's, but the Large Hand does not: This is a ‘push’, and no payoff is made, nor is the bet lost. Depending on house rules, the player may be required to let the bet ride on a new hand, or may be permitted to withdraw the bet without penalty.

If both of a player's hands are inferior to the dealer's, the dealer wins and collects the bet for the house.

Hands are compared on the basis of the Sekhoma hand ranking; all Sekhoma hands are possible in the Large Hand, but only Pair and Three-of-a-Kind are possible for the Small Hand. Unlike standard Sekhoma, the showdown does not take into account the rank of cards making up a hand; if the two hands are of the same type (e.g., both are four-and-a-pair, or both are Sekhomos), the dealer wins. It is common, but not universal, for the house rules to require the dealer to make the best Large Hand possible, even if this results in a poor Small Hand. ♣

Starfarer's Gazette #2

reviewed by "kafka"

Starfarer's Gazette #2. Martin J. Dougherty, et alia.

Terra/Sol Games <http://terrasolgames.com>

87pp, PDF

US\$7.99

This review originally appeared on RPG.Net in April 2012, and is reprinted here with the author's permission.

Terra/Sol Games has now issued the second issue of their fanzine for the Twilight Sector, this time highlighting the world of Edge. As the name implies this is a frontier world with all the attributes of an interesting civilization of galactic hillbillies with a measure of border reavers to boot. Essentially, while this world is specific to the Twilight sector, it can be transported with no difficulty to any *Traveller* Universe thus providing an excellent template for a frontier world. What makes this fanzine so interesting is the integration of the whole magazine to support life on Edge.

Thus, one gets a mandatory description of Edge. A world dominated by leaden skies, endless swamps and interesting critters. This naturally has coloured the inhabitants worldview/outlook upon the universe. Assisting the process is that most of population survives by remittances, being subjects for medical experimentation, and rice. And, rice is king. As most have to scrape the swamps just to eke out a modest living, one is reminded of the Swampers (residents of the Okefenokee) and parts of the Louisiana bayou replete with GEVs. However, one is also reminded of any group of people who live relatively isolated from civilization and each other at an approximate TL 6-7 level – not averse to higher technology but just have no means of maintaining it, thus stagnating at this level. The authors have clearly given substantial thought to explaining how this culture copes with the hostile environment and isolation, producing the perfect frontier world. In a sense one is reminded of MJD's *Project Steel*, set in the Spinward Marches, as a similar frontier world – settled in the backwoods of space where endless



plains of rock and scrub stand in for Edge's swamps. Most interesting are the critters that inhabit Edge – for they are not neo/pseudo crocodiles and similar analogs but interesting animals.

Then, we move to the supporting material, new weapons and a couple vehicles are profiled. Edge weapons are naturally more akin to shotguns and other pump weapons than high energy weapons and vehicles tend to be on the simple side such as GEVs or gasoline motorbikes. Similarly, in a section called Ordinary Joes – we meet typical NPCs for Edge and as an added bonus – the citizen career gets a revamping to tailor NPCs and possibly PCs should they originate from Edge. A couple of exploratory agencies are thrown in for good measure, as well, as a potential adversary in the form of Biotech Company. Rounding the selection out is a piece of fiction, that while good is nothing really special – it rather

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Critics' Corner

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serves the purpose of tying the different threads encountered in the articles together. Weaving it all together is more background in the form of a timeline and suggestions of the colonization patterns for the Sector. Lastly, to top everything up is an adventure outline. Oh, yeah, there is also Galactic News Service.

The writing is clear and consistently good throughout, it benefits from originating from largely a single authorial voice – Martin J. Dougherty. So, either you like that cantankerous and dry English wit or you don't (and there is an awful lot of it here). Similarly, the art for the most part remains at the higher standard that Terra/Sol Games is now famous for setting. There are a few things in the art

that are sliding back to the jokey side that marred some of their early releases but for the most part, the art is top notch.

So, if you are looking for a reasonable priced PDF that provides a detailed frontier world and had it up to your gills with pseudo-Western towns standing in for the frontier, Terra/Sol Games has provided you with an excellent aid aimed at describing a series of frontier settlements in a different and equally unforgiving environment. I look forward to seeing how they will incorporate Edge into the future products. If your *Traveller* Universe is in need of an interesting frontier world then you might want to make Edge a Port of Call... If there is any drawback, it is the format, PDF only at this time. Here's hoping that Terra/Sol Games will make it into a print product sooner or later. 🌟



Raconteurs' Rest

Drop Out

by Ken Murphy

Part 24

The *Waffles* was berthed down on the surface of Heimdall at the Lowport at Everlight, some 30 kilometers southwest of the massive Showroom complex, at one of the dozens of round, ferrocrete landing pads which, from the air, looked like a cratered moonscape.

Perhaps her crew was thankful that they were small enough to land on the 'crete pads. Several kilometers further south—and that much further from Showroom and the city—could be seen the huge flooded craters for the water landings of the really large Merchants and Liners that only rarely came to the surface.

On the bridge, Numbers One and Two, along with pale Kelowna, were sitting on the floor with the computer divided into several parts as they attempted an upgrade for the old 5600's program suite with several new programs from their most recent acquisition. Sitting to Hertzog's right, just to

the other side of a pile of computer brains, sat one of the Flint engineerbots, 'Poly-Three', on loan from the black gang.

The Flint *Polythemus* was designed as an expert at mechanical repair and electronics, and a fair hand at engineering. About a meter tall, its size allowed for its deep green, armored chassis to squeeze into spaces smaller than most humans can get to. Its single red eye was equipped with several enhancements, including telescopic vision. Its four limbs could be used as legs (for propulsion or elevation) or arms (for manipulation or grasping) as needed, allowing for multiple tasks to be undertaken at once. With several different pieces of fire-fighting equipment and cutters built in, the Flint had been used for years as a damage-control 'bot by the Imperial Navy. Its use subsequently caught on with many Emergency Crews; though the programming differed greatly between the Navy and civilian models.

Down on the Crew Deck, most of the rest of the crew sat around the battered mess table, looking at the large, Tri-D holoprojection of a red subdwarf star floating a half meter above the table's surface.

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"Here is our quarry, people," Captain Fyyg said, feet crossed on the table as he smoked his long stemmed pipe, jabbing at the star with the stem, "DM-45 537. According to the star charts, the system is lifeless, and both the Revenue Cutter Service and Imperial Navy have interdicted the system. Apparent radiation hazard."

"Miss Donaldson?" The Captain said, motioning toward the sun.

Kalifra was lounging on a couch, one foot stretched out along it, the other resting on the deck, her combat boots untied as she sipped a can of Old Piggy Stout.

"Oh, this must've been seven or eight years back," she began, "right after I'd mustered out of the Navy. The Navy said they'd send me off toward home, but never specified just how far. I wound up knocking around Nuevo Santiago for a time, not being able to speak the local language, and still trying to find a way to produce the passage I needed to get home to Aretius that didn't involve milking wienies, when I saw an Army & Navy Club at the Highport.

"For those of you who don't know, you have to be a current or former member of the Imperial Armed Forces—any of them—or one of their guests, to enter.

"It's a nice feeling when you're out there hanging by a thread, to feel the instant sense of belonging when you walk in. Unlike the TAS, with its deals and free tickets, about the best you'll get with the Army & Navy Club is a free drink or two, maybe a hot meal, and someone may line you up a place to sleep for a night or two if you're very lucky.

"Thank the Goddess! I slept on more than my share of couches and cots at first!

"While I was there, I made friends with this CPO, Larry Beltran. He was an old guy, 'bout my grandfather's age, I guess. Had this pair of old robotic legs he used to get around with, after a fashion.

"So one day Larry got drunk; which he did a lot, and told me how he'd lost his legs. Now, as I under-

stood it, this was way back during The Wars. There was a massive IN fuel processor orbiting DM-47 537 at the time, with a fleet of fuel skimmers and hundreds of Mosquito Rigs.

"Now, I can't remember which of the Rebel Principalities it was, but one of them wanted the facility. The IN fought for it tooth and nail with the Rebel Fleet.

"According to Larry, it was a slaughter, and he was one of a very few to make it out alive. He said the place is a graveyard now, a Sargasso: ideal for salvage!"

"The Cheese!" Brodie said, sitting in a large padded chair, Salome sitting in his lap.

Captain Fyyg hit a control, the image shifted from that of a star to be that of an Imperial Corvette; one of the older *Saint Faragut*-class boats.

"This would be the Cat," the Captain said, "Only half-again as large as the *Waffles* here, but it is both more heavily armed and armored than we are."

Kalifra added, "And if she's made it through budgetary cuts, she'll still have a boarding boat, and a fighter aboard."

From there on, the crew's conversation covered many different points and ideas. The bridge crew, tied in through the comm while they rebuilt the ship's computer, offered their comments and ideas as well, until, in the end, the call of all that valuable salvage proved too much to bear, and the majority of the crew voted to go after the cheese.

"Well, my little mice," the Captain said, "It's said that fortune favors the bold. I hope fortune proves to be with us again this time." Then he nodded to Mr. Isaacs, giving the Purser the signal to begin offering a shot from a bottle of rye whiskey to each crewman.

"For Luck!" Captain Fyyg toasted.

As Isaacs offered a shot in turn to each crewman on the deck, Captain Fyyg stepped up to the comfy chair where Tam was sitting. Bowing slightly, he offered her his hand, as if they were going to dance.

"Would you do me the honor of accompanying me to the surface, Miss?" the Captain asked as he helped her to her feet.

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"Charmed I'm sure, Figgie." replied Murmisagli, using Ilsa's per name for the Captain, and getting a laugh from the crew.

"We shall need to be inconspicuous, my dear," Captain Fyyg whispered as they walked toward the elevator.

Waiting outside Tam's cabin, the Captain stood, looking at nothing really until he caught a flash of movement from Tam's half-opened doorway. If he leaned back on his heels from where he was standing, he could catch Tam changing her clothes in a full length mirror.

The gentlemanly thing to do would be to look away. Nordel Fyyg was not always such a gentleman.

Fyyg watched as Tam sat on the couch, then, crossing her legs at the knees, right over left, she unfastened her right greave and boot and removed them. She then pulled her jeans down and free of her right leg. Once done, she put the right boot and greave back on, then removed the greave and boot from her left leg. Then removing the jeans from her left leg, she put the left boot and greave back on.

Watching, Captain Fyyg didn't know what to think of these odd maneuvers. Tam wore her greaves all the time, it seemed. Surely this wasn't how she dealt with wearing them? Always with one on? That just didn't make any sense.

Finding out something perplexing, rather than something lurid and titillating, Fyyg looked away, as he should have done in the first place.

Putting on a short dress, Tam jammed the small four-shot into her left greave, inside the bulbous knee-guard, then quickly brushed her hair and came out with an unlit C&J in her left hand.

"I've got that four-shot," the brunette said, meaning the almost undetectable composite-synthetic-ceramic model she'd lifted off a thief.

In the elevator headed for the bridge, Fyyg commed, "Are you still with me, Number One?"

"Aye, Cap'n," the First Officer replied.

"And how's that rebuild coming?" Fyyg asked. Hertzog looked at Ilsa and Kelowna, who, along with the robot, each gave the thumbs up sign.

Milo smiled, "Just about finished, Cap'n," he replied as the elevator stopped at the bridge and the pair stepped out.

Tam took a drag from her cigarette, exhaling a clove-and-jasmine-scented cloud, only to be informed by the Bridge Anti-Smoking klaxon that smoking was forbidden there. "Uh huh," Tam acknowledged, as she kept right on smoking.

Fyyg acknowledged Hertzog's report. "Good. Come with us, Milo. I need your input. We are going shopping."

Hertzog stood and straightened his clothes a bit. The Captain looked right past him, at the ladies, saying, "I believe the Misses Freilander and Brewster can finish this up."

The trio hailed and boarded a cab, which turned out to be one of the more modern *Cabayello* cabs, shorter and more boxy, with a robot driver. Giving the Showroom as their destination, they settled in for the ride.

Half an hour later, the Showroom came into sight, on the other side of a huge parking area. The three passengers hoped that the cab would deposit them on the front steps of the building, but instead, it deposited them at a labeled taxi stand on the other side of the lot, nearly a kilometer from the building.

"This sucks, Captain." said Tam, the bounce going out of her step.

Once inside the complex, the Captain told an Infobot that he was looking for the Naval Simulations & Combat Theory Department, which he thought was on the 6th floor. Confirming the Captain's memory, the Infobot called for one of the fleet of robot-driven grav Sleds.

The Sled came up to the group and settled for them to board. "Hello riders, my name is Barrabas," the Sled told them. "I will be your guide to Heimdall Corporation's 'World of Tomorrow'.

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Raconteurs' Rest

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"Please take us to the Naval Simulations & Combat Theory Department, Barrabas," Captain Fyyg requested. In just a few seconds Barrabas was rising up through the atrium to the 6th floor, and moments later they were deposited at the entryway to the desired hall.

As the group stepped into the hall, a trio of robots stepped from different points in the walls and converged on them to offer assistance.

"Hello," the Captain said, "We're looking for missiles."

As the robots heard the Captain's use of the pronoun, two of the robots returned to their niches in

the wall, leaving behind a robot with 'Harley' written across his breastplate.

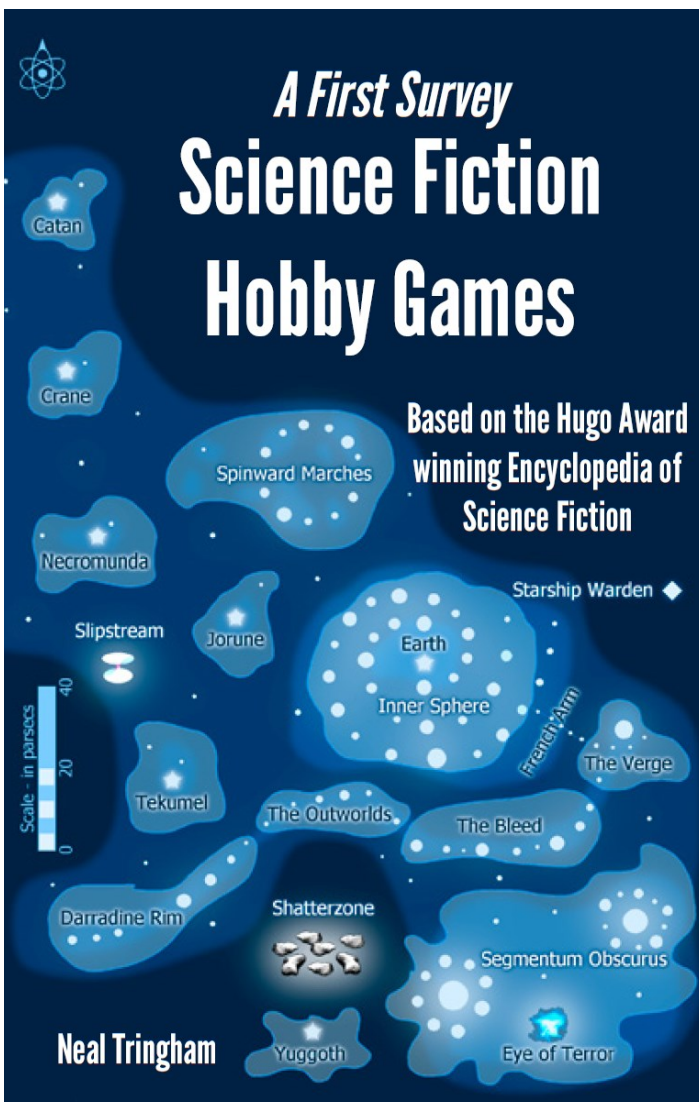
"Missiles, why of course," Harley said, guiding them to the products. "I am happy to answer any and all questions, sir," he continued, then stepped back to be less obtrusive.

Several hours later, the cab carrying the trio from the *Chicken and Waffles* headed for their pad at the port, with a large delivery Sled from The Showroom following close behind.

A few hours after that, a call on the comm brought out a large Sled from 'Mmmmmm', one of the larger and more reputable food providers to Independent Merchants. 🌟

Critics' Corner

Off the Table



Science Fiction Hobby Games:

A First Survey

reviewed by Jeff Zeitlin

Science Fiction Hobby Games: A First Survey. Neal Tringham.

Pseudonymz <http://www.pseudonymz.com/>

354pp., multiple formats

hardback: UK£24.99/US\$39.99

paperback: UK£15.99/US\$24.99

eBook (PDF, Kindle, ePub): UK£6.99/US\$9.99

I'd first like to extend my thanks to Neal Tringham and Pseudonymz for the complimentary copy of this work that they provided for this review.

In titling this work "A First Survey", the author does in fact tell you what you are getting: most of the three-hundred-plus pages are encyclopedic summaries of the publication histories and default settings of over a hundred science-fiction games, covering such widely differing formats as role-playing games, wargames, board games, card games, postal games, and gamebooks.

In addition to the game summaries, there is about thirty pages of introductory matter, explaining what the book is and how to read it; another twenty-five or so of glossary; a five-page bibliography; and about fifteen pages of index.

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The author sets out his purpose and approach in the Foreword; these can be summarized by two phrases from it: "This book is ... devoted mainly to critical analysis of the works and traditions it considers..." and "...this book is primarily concerned with hobby games as works of science fiction rather than as games...". The rest of the Foreword elaborates on those two phrases and sets out the structure of the book.

Following the Foreword is a section on the conventions used in the book. This section is perhaps over-written, but it is hard to criticize the author for wanting to make sure that his writing is understood. The biggest flaw is that it's somewhat repetitious; there is no reason, for example, that the specific descriptions of the entries for novels, gamebooks, anthologies, and nonfiction could not have been folded into a single description.

A section titled "Hobby Games and Science Fiction" begins the book proper (that is, it begins the discussion of the subject matter of the book, rather than discussing the book itself). An overview of the historical relationship between games and science fiction is presented, leading to a supposed bifurcation into "hobby games" such as the author focuses on in this volume, and digital computer games. It is here that I find a flaw; while text adventures such as Crowther and Woods' "Adventure"/"Colossal Cave", or Infocom's *Zork* series (or, more relevantly to this work, "Planetfall") are definitely "computer games", they are, in my view, no less "hobby games" than the 'Choose Your Own Adventure' books that the author explicitly includes in the encyclopedic section. If one were to look at the history of the text adventure/"Interactive Fiction", it arguably follows that of "hobby games" more closely than it does the rest of the computer game industry.

The next section is titled "Game Worlds", and discusses how the world—what is often called the "setting"—influences the play of the game, and how the needs of the game (most notably, the need for

some degree of balance between the players and their in-game antagonists) affect the setting.

The next section, "Game Stories", discusses the various structures that a game story—what in the RPG world is generally called an "adventure" or a "campaign"—can take on. The author identifies a surprising number of different models, but in the description of each, manages to justify the separation. While the examples given tend to suggest that certain structures are more prevalent in certain game formats, there is no hard linkage between them, and enough examples and discussion to suggest that virtually any of the story structures can occur in almost any game format.

Following this is the encyclopedic reference section. This is divided by format (e.g., Role Playing Games, Gamebooks, Board Games, etc.), and each section begins with an introductory description of the essential characteristics of the game format, along with discussion of the history of and specific general developments for the format (for example, GNS theory (which the author refers to as "GDS theory", substituting "Drama" for "Narrative") in the section on Role Playing Games). In many ways, these introductory sections are the most interesting parts of the book, and it can be argued that they are the most important—they provide context for the entries for the specific games that the author looks at. It should be noted that some of the "specific game" entries are actually settings for games or campaigns (for example, *Tékumel* has its own entry). Some of the decisions made in this section might be questioned; for example, there is no mention of the FATE or FUDGE systems in the introductory matter for Role Playing Games, though *Starblazer Adventures* has an entry—but *Diaspora* does not. In the Gamebooks section, there is some discussion of Choose Your Own Adventure, and the similar *Crossroads Adventures*, in the introductory matter, but only CYOA is specifically discussed in its own entry, without mention in the entry of the other essentially identical lines from other publishers, or giving those other lines their own entries. These

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Critics' Corner

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flaws don't detract from the ultimate interest and value of the work as a whole, however.

Overall, the ebook is certainly worth its price, and I doubt I'd turn down the paperback at the

listed price. Neal has done a very credible job, and anyone who found Shannon Appelcline's *Designers and Dungeons* (which is named in the bibliography of this book) of interest should put a copy of this book right next to it. ☸

Confessions of a Newbie Referee

Timothy Collinson

Canon

As a long time lurker on—and occasional contributor to—the *Traveller* Mailing List, I find it interesting to watch the regular debates about what constitutes *Traveller* canon. I've collected *Traveller* books across 35 years, so somewhere in that mass of print is whatever does comprise 'canon'. I can well understand newcomers to the game struggling to get to grips with the huge 'history' of *Traveller*. Thus far I've used only my own material to run games, so I've not had to concern myself very much with what's gone before and keeping everything consistent—although I've tried! My limited experience of refereeing has also often been with complete newbies to role playing, never mind *Traveller*, so on those occasions I've not even had to worry about a weight of expectation from players as to what constitutes *Traveller*. All this isn't to say I don't think it's important. Indeed, I've felt the pressure to represent *Traveller* in the best possible way. But in the end, I would argue that the fun of the game should take priority even if something needs to be unpicked afterwards with a discussion on any 'deviation' and whether it should be adopted in the local situation or quietly dropped.

For my first convention game at BITS' TravCon12, I knew that it had to be based on Mon-goose rules and I knew that it needed to meet the expectations of experienced players. For the rules I intended to play 'rules-lite', but had developed the PCs using the formal character generation and had ensured the task checks were correct. The only deviation was in presenting much more detailed system data than *Book 3: Scouts* allowed for. Meeting ex-

pectations of those who knew *Traveller* was one of my big fears. Although the science fiction plot was appropriate, I was aware that it was virtually impossible to set it in Charted Space, which is a little too well known, so I'd kept the location very vague. Also, I'd quite deliberately set it up with no combat. In fact, Scout characters rolled up using Book 3 get very little in the way of combat skills 'out of the box', and the 6 PCs I'd created had only one such skill between them. Would players accept that and accept not having any combat as a satisfactory adventure?

I was aware of one reason to conform tightly to 'canon' with the convention game: having put in a lot of work, I was hopeful it might be published at some point if it worked and if there was any interest, whether from BITS itself or an online journal. In the event of such interest, it would obviously be in its favour to conform to what was expected as much as possible. With that in mind, you can imagine my particular delight when one player said post-game that it was "very *Traveller*".

The term 'canon' is more generally used of scripture and what is or isn't regarded as sacred or divinely inspired. It helps establish orthodoxy and identify heresy. I hope there are no *Traveller* fans who seriously use the term canon to imply Marc Miller is a god! But there are certainly those who have very clear ideas of what is 'allowed' in *Traveller* and what isn't. So, is it important to have a rigid canon of literature? I certainly think it's helpful for shared gaming experience and a coherent universe developed by multiple authors, to have a basis from which to work. But may I risk heresy by suggesting it's not that critical? Have fun! ☸

Murmansk-class Scout Support Tender

designed by Scott Diamond

Murmansk-class Scout Support Tender (type SD)	TL-15
40,000dt	close structure w/scoops, fuel purifier (High Guard design)
Jump Drive (5)	Jump-5
Maneuver Drive (1)	1-G (Agility 0 / Emergency agility 1)
Power Plant (5)	(energy=2000)
Fuel = 22,000 tons	Cargo = 850 tons
Computer Vehicles	Model 6fib (CPU-15/ Storage-35)
	2 Shuttles
	2 Cutters / 2 extra modules (typically 2 passenger and 2 cargo)
	100 ton Assembly/Maintenance Deck
Docking facilities for:	15x100 ton type S & S(b) Scoutships
	10x150 ton type S(k) Scoutships
Crew:	(126 Staterooms)

Command	Engineering
Captain	Chief Engineer
1st Officer/Relief Pilot	50 Ratings
Pilot	Flight
Communications	Navigator
Medical	4 Small Craft Pilots
Chief Medical Officer	4 Small Craft Nav/Gunners
Senior Doctor or Nurse	60 Ground Crew
Orderlies from Ground Crew or Engineering Ratings as needed	

Medical Facilities include 4 Autodocs (16 total capacity) and 5 Emergency Low Berths


Active Measures

Benchmark

by Derek Wildstar

The IISS is organizing volunteers from across the sector to participate in a benchmarking survey of a navigationally-important pulsar. The PCs will be volunteers assigned to this mission.

Benchmarking is the process of obtaining data that is used as the basis (“benchmarks”) for the positioning and navigation throughout the Imperium. Usually, this process involves taking a number of detailed and precise astronomical observations, particularly of unique or navigationally-useful phe-

The *Murmansk*-class Type SD Scout Tender is designed to provide a mobile support base for scout ships operating wherever intensive intelligence gathering may be needed. The ship carries enough supplies and has the facilities to repair and maintain 100-ton Type S and S(b) and 150-ton Type S(k) scout ships, and also acts as a transport to carry the shorter ranged scouts rapidly to areas where they are to be deployed.

In addition to intelligence gathering, when sufficient resources are available, *Murmansks* may be deployed as coordinating bases in areas where detailed stellar surveys are to be conducted, including beyond the demarked borders. In such cases, although they cannot provide the same level of comprehensive support as for the smaller ships, provisions for supporting some of the larger survey scout ships are made, and on occasion, two SDs may operate in tandem as a single support base.

The vessels are considered fleet tenders and not armed, but since they carry up to 25 scouts and are not considered a warship of the line they don’t need to be. The ships carry entertainment and relaxation facilities for the scout crews, and are available for use by “detached” scouts on a limited, first-come basis. ☼

nomena. Pulsars are one such phenomenon—they emit radio or X-ray pulses at an extremely regular rate, and can effectively be used as a “GPS-like” system throughout Charted Space. However, pulsars’ pulses slow down over time, and they occasionally have “glitches” where the pulse rate changes suddenly. So, to ensure that Imperial ships have accurate navigational databases, the IISS observes the signals of these pulsars, and distributes updates to the standard Imperial navigation databases. Since the pulsar signals travel at the speed of light, the observations have to be taken well outside the Imperium to ensure that the IISS has enough time to

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Active Measures

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distribute the updates (a process which can take years). Typically, the IISS gathers decades or even centuries worth of data in a single expedition—this maximizes the return on their investment in the expedition, and reduces the number of updates to be disseminated to every starship in the Imperium.

This particular expedition will survey a pulsar known to the IISS crews as “target L713” after the last few digits of its database identifier (the target number does not have anything to do with the astronomical identifier of the pulsar or its location). This target was previously surveyed in 983; data from this survey were supplemented by an IISS observatory on the edge of charted space. That observatory will be the starting point for the expedition. The objective is to travel at least 30 parsecs, and ideally much further, in the direction of the pulsar.

The IISS has refitted ISC-6336, *Luray Explorer* (a former *Lightning*-class cruiser), for the mission. The refit introduced a number of changes, specifically:

- **Deck 1:** The auxiliary bridge has been optimized for use when collecting benchmarking data; the ship is controlled from here during each data-gathering session. Specific changes include changing position 6 to the primary survey data collection station, and replacing gunnery positions 9 and 10 with additional data-gathering and analysis workstations.
- **Deck 71:** The second hangar deck has been refit as a cargo deck, and holds supplies for the long-duration mission. This reduces the fighter complement to 30. Three 40-ton launches are carried in the hangar instead of gunboats.
- **One fuel shuttle and its mounting** have been replaced by fixtures for carrying four Type S scout/courier starships. This increases refueling time to about a week, six days at an absolute minimum. Crews for these Type S scouts occupy the unused flight crew quarters (vacated by the reduction in hangar deck capacity).

Typical benchmarking operations call for a starship to spend time receiving and processing pulsar signal data; roll 1d6 for the number of days required to collect the required quality of information. Apply the following DMs based on circumstance:

- **DM +1** if one of the Type S scouts, rather than the *Luray Explorer*, is doing the data collection, to reflect the difference in sensor capabilities of the two ships.
- **DM +1** if a TL-5+ world with population 6+ (e.g., a world that emits significant radio “noise”) is nearby and close to the line of sight to the pulsar (in one of the three hexes “forward” of the ship).
- **DM +2** if the ship is orbiting a TL-5+, population 6+ world when making the observations.
- **DM +1** if the ship is orbiting a “noisy” gas giant when making the observations (large gas giants are “noisy” on a 1D6 roll of 5+, small gas giants on a roll of 6+).

The ship may take an initial measurement anywhere within 5 parsecs of the IISS observatory. Analysis of the observation will indicate how far the ship may jump before taking the next observation. Roll 1D6 for the number of parsecs that the ship may jump toward the pulsar before taking the next observation. Note that the ship is not required to jump the full distance—the die roll indicates the *maximum* distance the survey team is comfortable with; they will always accept the opportunity to take more-frequent observations. If the ship jumps short of the maximum distance, apply the unused distance as a DM to the next distance roll. Regardless of the applied DM, the maximum distance the survey team will be comfortable with is 6 parsecs. [for example, at hex 2238, the distance roll results in a 6. The ship jumps 4 parsecs and takes an observation. The next distance roll will be at DM +2, and the possible results will be 3, 4, 5, 6, 6, or 6 parsecs].

As the orders are written, the objective of the benchmarking survey mission is to take all required observations for at least 30 parsecs from the observatory. Ideally, IISS high command would like the survey to progress considerably farther: treat 30 parsecs

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as completing the letter of the orders but a disappointment to high command; treat 45 parsecs as routine “mission accomplished”, and 60 parsecs or more as a major victory. Secondary to the benchmarking survey, and provided that such activities do not endanger the successful completion of the survey mission, the expedition is to gather data on worlds, cultures, and phenomena that they encounter, and make contact with potentially-friendly cultures, and act as representatives of the Imperium.

Notes

This is intended as a framework for an exploration and contact mission within the established *Traveller* universe; this is relatively hard to do given the well-explored nature of most of the map.

I deliberately haven't specified the location of the observatory where the expedition starts—in a sense, it isn't terribly relevant. Similarly, the exact location and identity of the pulsar isn't important, either. The pulsar itself is hundreds or possibly even thousands of parsecs away—the goal is only to get 30 to 60 parsecs closer to it. This will provide detailed observations that will keep Imperial ships navigating accurately for the next century or two.

Regardless of the starting point or “actual” direction of travel, I recommend orienting the subsectors long-ways, so that one of the short ends is towards the pulsar, and the other is towards the observatory. Fully-map one subsector, and place the observatory at the bottom hex row. Data about this subsector is presumed known to the observatory staff and in the *Luray Explorer's* library computer.

The referee should generate additional subsectors as needed, but some of their contents should be kept secret from the crew of the *Luray Explorer*. As a slight extension to CT rules:

- Positions of the stars are well-known, so the players always have access to a dot map, plus the number and types of each star in the system.
- Most TL-5+ cultures advertise their presence (via radio emissions), so star systems that have a

world with a TL-5+ culture should also be marked. Analysis of the transmissions can give the expedition information about the species, language, and culture, so the note should also give an approximate TL (industrial, pre-stellar, early, average, or high stellar), an estimate of population (the population digit, +/- 1).

- The *Luray Explorer* can detect the presence or absence of gas giants at a range of 2 parsecs (the Type S scouts at 1 parsec per CT rules) during the course of a normal data-gathering run. Additional gas giants may be detected: roll 1D6+1; one additional gas giant (located in a system of the referee's choosing, but within 5 parsecs of the *Luray Explorer* or 3 parsecs of a Type S) is revealed for each multiple of this time spent observing. [Example: *Luray Explorer* spends its entire refueling time observing, 7 days, even though the survey team had the data they needed after 3 days; the presence or absence of all gas giants within 2 parsecs is revealed. The referee further throws 1D6+1 = 3, and reveals the presence of 2 additional gas giants anywhere within 5 parsecs. Note that the referee does not reveal any data about the absence of gas giants outside of the 2-parsec radius.]
- The *Luray Explorer* (but not the Type S scouts) can detect the presence of planets at a range of 1 parsec; this observation produces the planet's size, atmosphere, and hydrographic values. The referee should impose specific events at likely points during the survey. These events can include:
 - A pulsar “glitch”—observations have detected a sudden difference in pulsar emissions; a “glitch” has occurred somewhere between the previous observation point and this one. The survey needs to observe the glitch in detail—the referee should determine which hex contains the glitch, and allow the expedition to conduct a binary search for it. This will likely involve using the *Luray Explorer* as a base of operations, and using it to refuel the Type S scouts. Once the correct

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hex is found, it will take about 1D6×2 weeks to locate and observe the glitch within the hex.

- A pre-stellar or early-stellar culture that is hostile
- A potentially-friendly culture
- An interesting scientific phenomena that bears further investigation.

Critics' Corner

Attack Squadron: Roswell

reviewed by "kafka"

Attack Squadron: Roswell. Paul Elliott.
Zozer Games <http://zozer.weebly.com>
84pp.
US\$5.99

This review originally appeared on RPG.Net in April 2013, and is reprinted here with the author's permission.

Once again, Paul Elliott and Zozer Games, redefine *Traveller* not as dreary and uninspiring Space Opera heuristic but a heuristic for all types of Science Fiction games. In this case, Zozer Games, with *Attack Squadron: Roswell*, returns to the same wonderful mix of Hard and Soft by using *Traveller* to explore the genre of Alien Invasion films of the 1950s. Like *Outpost Mars* and *Orbital*, this is strictly an Alternative *Traveller* Universe (ATU) that could be ported over to the OTU but with some modifications to both this product (in the form of modifying the Invaders) and the OTU, but, works perfectly fine as a standalone campaign concept. Using *Traveller* in this way, players take on the role of USAF fighter pilots that are charged with photographing and shoot down the seemingly endless incursions of UFOs into American airspace... as players move from the shooting gallery, the referee can flesh out more of the back story of this being a full-fledged invasion of Earth itself. This a valuable sourcebook for anyone who wants to play a lower powered *Traveller* in real world conditions without sacrificing some of the crunch value of aliens.

The players should probably have two sets of characters: one set representing the expedition's command team, including the captain and key senior officers. In this role, the players should act as key decision-makers for the expedition. They should have an alternate set of characters that are the crew of one of the Type S scouts (the one that gets sent on all of the "interesting" missions). ☼



So what does this book include?

The core of this sourcebook is 14 aircraft designs from the 1950s drawn from the USAF squadrons of the 1950s forming an invaluable resource for *Traveller* worlds that are TL7 or the actual 1950s. Thus, anyone wishing to have "generic" but realistic jet aircraft should check out these outlines. New speedy rules ('lite') for air-to-air combat, appropriately themed for the 1950s aircraft (either aircraft to aircraft or aircraft to UFO missions), largely based off

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Critics' Corner

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the Mongoose rules, emphasize flexibility and dynamism rather than a comprehensive simulation of the entire battle space. Additionally, there are rules for ground attack missions that are suited for the 1950s, in case the plans of the Invaders are to launch a ground assault using mutated giant ants or other similar "monster" tropes.

Although, *Traveller* is frequently called "shotguns in space", the ironmongery of *Traveller* largely dates from the late 1960s and mid-1970s with some "futuristic weaponry", but the 1950s had a different sensibility – indeed, more akin to shotguns and similar lower powered weapons. My problem is weapons that the Invaders are equipped with... I do not expect a full fledged *Men in Black* arsenal but I would expect more nods to the main *Traveller* rules, albeit with 1950s chrome.

Next up, there is a partial history of the alien invasion, and, yes, Virginia, they have been with us longer than we would have suspected. I loved the inclusion of a mutant rebellion and the mutants escaping into the wilderness in around Tunguska, Russia in 1908. However, details of the "international" dimensions à la *Dark Skies*, or my *Traveller Now* will have wait until this is fleshed out in print form (I hope) or future supplements/adventures. They want more than our women, and endanger our way of life, but, as every referee is bound to take on a slightly different track for the Invaders, I will not reveal too much of the master plan that is outlined in the sourcebook. With Invaders, there are the 4 flying saucer designs, with two deck plans spelled out along with their capabilities. As with the comments on firearms, I would have preferred standard *Traveller* technology but given a 1950s gloss, for instance, the alien communicator description screams a meson communicator but instead given another name. I understand, why Zozer avoided this, in some ways, it would have made the Invaders impossible to defeat...as a TL15 civilization would have squashed us like bugs. But,

the essence of role playing and science fiction is always one person overcoming the odds with luck, fortune and simply *chutzpah* – otherwise, how could some farm boy blow up the Empire's prime battle station that had been 18 years in construction and costing trillions of credits, simply because a someone did not decide to fortify the heat exhaust pipe?

Naturally, any game that is *Top Gun* along with a smidgen of *The Right Stuff* will need rules for creating fighter pilots; those rules are solid, but I would have liked to see advanced rules covering the beginning of astronaut/cosmonaut training...for players beginning to take things to the next level. Also, missing are the rules for genders...for the 1950s had very strict gender conventions but were frequently broken in real life – such as the first astronauts were going to be women. Similarly, there is a full range of stereotypes that could make for more interesting play, if gender was explored in both concrete (real life) and fictional (TV/movie tropes) terms.

Background for New Mexico, Roswell and the USAF – this is the section that one would want to see more. One can go to Project Blue Book and dig up case files of "real" encounters across the continental United States and beyond, but it would be nice to see more "global" stories being told here. There is a growing literature of UFOlogy coming in from the Other Europe (i.e. behind the Iron Curtain) showing the same fears and insecurities plagued them, as well, as cozy catastrophes of John Wyndam and some French/Japanese films of the era all show the uncertainty were global in nature. Certainly, any referee could already do this, but, it would be pleasant to see it reflected in a supplement lest it descend to games of "Yanks saving the day" constantly. So, it is this lack of global interaction that pulls the supplement down – somewhat.

Historically relevant event tables, sample PCs and adventure seeds round up this product to make this a well rounded sourcebook for the 1950s. Again, I would have liked to see more global adventures that might account for things. When I bought the product, I was excited to see, if I could make the Red

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Critics' Corner

Airforce the heroes fending off the Invaders that seem to be engaging the airforce from the Russian-Mongolian-Chinese border (from the Plateau of Leng), this supplement certainly gives inspiration but nowhere is the sense of a globe trotting adventure evidently built-in.

In short, this PDF is very good value for its money, if you want to play USAF versus the aliens... however, if you are looking to play *Traveller* in the 1950s versus the aliens...you might want to hope that the print version does carry with it a little more meat. For this provides an excellent skeleton building upon great *Traveller* products of the past like the flawed COACC but does not quite reach the global

scope that *Traveller* demands. One should certainly buy this product, if they are looking to expand one's own *Traveller* universe either in the direction suggested by the ATU or as I said, with modification, the OTU. For as I read the supplement, images of how to incorporate these concepts into my TNE game floated past. Certainly, a few good campaigns can be set in the 1950s, as *Atomic Age Cthulhu* or the author's own *GURPS Atomic Age* shows the time period is a rich era for role playing...and the sheer profusion of films novels highlighting this pulpish yet hard science fiction makes it perfect for *Traveller* players who crave the mixture of hard and soft. Thus, I wholeheartedly recommend this product. 🌟

Doing It My Way

Extending the UWP

Government

by Jeff Zeitlin and Glenn Grant

This article was originally posted to the pre-magazine *Freelance Traveller* website in 1998.

Introduction

The existing UWP code for government provides a very generalized overview of the structure of the government of a world, and shoehorns a government into one of a limited number of types. Unfortunately, there are limitations to this; often an actual government configuration can fit into more than one classification, and many classifications cover a wide variation in the actual structure of the government.

While the debate over the proper scope and function of a government will probably not end prior to the actual heat-death of the universe, it is generally agreed that there are three functional divisions to government: the Legislative function, or the making of law, the Executive function, or the keeping of law, and the Judicial function, or the interpretation of law. In addition, there is the "State" function, which, rather than being connected with law, is more focused on ceremony and diplomacy. Each of these functions has its own characteristics, and the government overall has characteristics of its

own. This article will develop a more detailed method of profiling a government.

It is proposed that the existing UWP Government code expresses the most notable feature of the government in question, and may not present a true picture of the government's functions. Thus, although the governmental systems of the United States and the United Kingdom of pre-starflight Terra are functionally very similar, the government codes would be different—the most notable aspect of the United States government is that frequent elections for virtually all positions, including legislative representatives, are held, making the government a Representative Democracy, while, in spite of the fact that the UK operates much the same way, the most notable feature is the existence of a hereditary head-of-state who theoretically can exercise power at whim, and enjoys the support of the people of the country, making the government a Charismatic dictatorship. A more accurate profile would reveal that both governments are in practice very similar.

It should be noted that this profile applies only to the highest levels of government—it is entirely possible that lower levels of government have subtly or radically different structure (for example, a

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functional autocracy at the top level may still permit local governments to make local decisions on a consensus or democratic basis).

An extended Government profile is a string with at least three and as many as six groups. The first two groups are fixed in format; the remainder can vary somewhat:

000-0-L0000/E0000/J0000/S0000

The groups represent, in the order given above,

- Overall Evaluation
- Limitation of Power
- Characteristics of Legislative Function
- Characteristics of Executive Function
- Characteristics of Judicial Function
- Characteristics of State Function

(NOTE: The L,E,J, and S substrings may appear in any order; the most visibly dominant functions appears first. Where Functions are combined in one office, the strings are combined, i.e. "LS0000" unites Legislative and State Functions.)

Overall Evaluation

The Overall Evaluation portion of the extended code describes the basic characteristics of the government as determined by a routine survey with little depth. It consists of the standard UWP Government and Law codes, representing the apparent structure and intrusiveness of the government, respectively.

To this, it adds a third digit, representing the level of popular support that this government enjoys. This is defined as the portion of the governed population that would prefer the present governmental structure (as denoted by the UWP government code) over any other governmental structure. This support level is rounded to the nearest ten percent, and the tens digit used as the indicator in the Extended Government Profile. Thus, if 68% of the people wished to keep the current government structure, in preference to any other structure, the Popular Support digit would be '7'. In the event that support is unan-

imous within rounding error, the code used is 'A'; '0' indicates no support whatsoever within rounding error. It should be emphasized that this is about support for the *structure* of the government, not for the current individuals actually exercising the functions thereof.

Limitation of Power

"Limitation of Power" is a single digit, and indicates how the theoretical limits of governmental power are established. The valid codes are:

- 0 No explicit limits to government power. Leaders may be limited by personal ethics alone.
 - 1 Powers limited only by unwritten custom and oral tradition.
 - 2 Powers limited only by unwritten custom, oral tradition, and some written statute law.
 - 3 Statutory Constitution and Stare Decisis; powers generally limited by statute law and precedent, sometimes by oral tradition.
 - 4 Statutory Constitution and Stare Decisis; powers limited only by statute law and precedent.
 - 5 Enabling Constitution; specifies powers, allows any power not explicitly prohibited.
 - 6 Enabling Constitution; specifies powers, allows most powers not explicitly prohibited.
 - 7 Impeding Constitution; specifies powers, prohibits most powers beyond those limits.
 - 8 Impeding Constitution; specifies powers, prohibits any power beyond those limits.
 - 9 Restrictive Constitution; specifies powers and prohibitions; specifies process for deciding legality of some unspecified powers.
- A Restrictive Constitution; specifies powers and prohibitions; specifies complicated process for deciding legality of most unspecified powers.
 - B Highly Restrictive Constitution; specifies exact powers and prohibitions; specifies complicated, time-consuming process for deciding legality of unspecified powers.
 - C Extremely Restrictive Constitution; specifies limited powers and prohibitions; specifies complicated, time-consuming process for deciding legality of unspecified powers.

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The State, Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Functions

The remaining groups in the Extended Government Profile describe the functional divisions of the government. Each functional division profile starts with a letter (indicating the specific division), and is followed by a structure code, a selection method code, and two optional restriction codes. The restriction codes answer the questions “How do I decide who may be chosen?” and “How do I decide who may choose?”

The digits of the functional division profiles represent the following:

- The structure of the division:
 - 0 Direct participation by the populace at large.
 - 1 Multiple demotic councils (selected from the populace at large).
 - 2 Single demotic council (selected from the populace at large).
 - 3 Multiple demotic and elite councils, with advice/consent of populace at large.
 - 4 Multiple elite and demotic councils (selected from a restricted population) with advice/consent of populace at large.
 - 5 Multiple elite councils (selected from a restricted population).
 - 6 Single elite council (selected from a restricted population).
 - 7 Single individual exercising power with strictures imposed by other branches or populace at large.
 - 8 Single individual exercising power with advice/consent of a formal demotic council (selected from the populace at large).
 - 9 Single individual exercising power with advice/consent of a formal elite council (selected from a restricted population).
- A Single individual exercising power at discretion.

- The method of selection of the division
 - 0 Not Applicable (or Direct participation of general populace).
 - 1 By hereditary succession, including appointment by predecessor.
 - 2 Appointed by the Executive division.
 - 3 Appointed by the Legislative division.
 - 4 Appointed by the Judiciary division.
 - 5 Appointed by the State division.
 - 6 Elected by highly restricted franchise.
 - 7 Elected by restricted franchise.
 - 8 Elected by the populace at large, with some restrictions.
 - 9 Elected by the populace at large.
- A Selected by random or arbitrary process.

In the case of multiple councils selected by different methods, the method for selection of the largest council (most members) should be used, and there should be associated notes explaining in more detail.

In cases of elective selection with restricted franchise, or of selection from a restricted population, a third (and possibly fourth) digit should be included, to indicate the nature of the constraints on eligibility. It may be assumed that election by “populace at large” is in fact restricted to citizens at or above the age of majority; “restricted franchise” indicates the imposition of additional restrictions. If two restriction digits are needed, the first is for the restricted group from which the membership is selected; the second for the restricted group that does the selecting. In any case, notes should be provided to explain the specifics of any restrictions.

Restriction codes are:

- 1 Political. Franchise/Eligibility is limited to recognized members of a certain political party, faction, or ideological movement.
- 2 Hereditary. Franchise/Eligibility is limited to those who can prove descent along specified lines from a certain individual.
- 3 Ethnicity. Franchise/Eligibility is limited to a certain race, species, linguistic group, or eth-

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nic identity (inherited and involuntary); may involve genetic testing.

- 4 Religion/Culture. Franchise/Eligibility is limited to members of a certain religion or cultural identity (sometimes inherited and involuntary, often voluntary).
- 5 Gender. In polysexual (2 or more sexes) species, franchise/eligibility is limited to specific sexes, and denied to the rest. This should be interpreted to refer to restrictions based solely on biological/genetic sex only; if the restriction is based, in whole or in part, on "social gender" (e.g., how the person acts or self-presents), record the restriction using code '4'.
- 6 Financial. Franchise/Eligibility is restricted to those who can demonstrate a certain level of wealth and/or property ownership.
- 7 Age. Franchise/Eligibility is delayed until after majority, revoked after a specified age, or both.
- 8 Occupation. Franchise/Eligibility is limited to members of approved trades, professions, or occupations.
- 9 Intelligence/Education. Franchise/Eligibility is limited to those who can demonstrate a specified level of intellectual competence.
- A Merit/Competition. Franchise/Eligibility is limited to those who have demonstrated a certain level of competence or achievement in a certain field, bested other candidates in a competition (such as debates, sport, or combat), or passed a test of skill.

Examples:

(1) The United States of America has a moderately intrusive government (moderate law level) whose most notable characteristic is an elective legislature (Representative Democracy). There is a written Constitution that both prohibits and allows governmental powers, and leaves the decision in areas not explicitly mentioned or unclear areas to a decision by

other methods. In general, focus on the government for the purposes of news reportage is on the head of government, who is the head of the executive branch, and elected by the populace at large, theoretically from the populace at large. The head of government is also head of state, and there is little differentiation between the functions. When the Executive is not the focus of government-focused news, the Legislature generally is. The legislature is several councils, theoretically selected from the populace at large by the populace at large (although certain individuals, such as convicted felons, are denied franchise). The Judicial branch is a single elite council (selected from scholars of law), appointed by the Executive (though with approval from the legislature). When surveyed, less than 10% of the population would propose a structure that would not be classified as a representative democracy, meaning that the current form of government has a 90% support level.

The government profile for the United States of America would be

449-9-ES78/L18/J628

(2) The fictitious Caliphate of Arrak has a highly intrusive government (high law level) whose most notable characteristic is a hereditary monarch as head of state (Charismatic Dictatorship). There is no Constitution; the monarch has theoretically absolute power. The legislative parliament is a single council that selects the head of government, and is elected by and from the male citizens only. The head of government is limited in his ability to exercise power by the advice of the parliament. The judiciary is composed of members of the priesthood appointed to the supreme judicial council by the monarch. When surveyed, somewhat over half (58%) of the people expressed a desire for a more representative and responsive government, giving a support level of only 42%.

The government profile for the Caliphate of Arrak would be

A84-0-SA1/E738/L6755/J658.



Metzger- and Sintzenich-class Passenger Hovercraft

Designed by Ewan Quibell

CraftID: Metzger-class Personal Hovercraft, TL7, Cr91,200
Hull: 1/1, Disp=0.5, Conf=0USL, Armor=1C, Loaded=2.6684 tons, Unloaded=1.8438 tons
Power: 1/2, Gas Turbine=0.36 Mw, Duration=30 hours
Loco: 1/2, AirCushion=3.61 tons, MaxAccel=1.3528G, Cruise=78.75 kph, Top=105 kph,
Comm: Radio=Regional (500 km)
Sensors: Headlight
Off: Hardpoints=1
Def: DefDM=+2
Control: Panel=Electronic×16,
Accom: Crew=1 (Driver/Pilot), Seats=Cramped×1, None×1
Other: Fuel=0.72kl, Cargo=0.1046kl, ObjSize=Small, EmLevel=Faint
Comment: Price listed is for production in quantity

CraftID: Sintzenich-class Passenger Hovercraft, TL7, Cr151,133
Hull: 1/2, Disp=1, Conf=4USL, Armor=1C, Loaded=3.6689 tons, Unloaded=3.0238 tons
Power: 1/2, Gas Turbine=0.6 Mw, Duration=12 hours
Loco: 1/2, AirCushion=5.16 tons, MaxAccel=1.4064G, Cruise=90 kph, Top=120 kph,
Comm: Radio=Regional (500 km)
Sensors: Headlights×2, Radar=Distant (5km)
Off: Hardpoints=1
Def: DefDM=+2
Control: Panel=Electronic×27,
Accom: Crew=1 (Driver/Pilot), Seats=Cramped×4, Env=basic env
Other: Fuel=0.48 klitres, Cargo=0.165 klitres, ObjSize=Small, EmLevel=Faint
Comment: Price is for production in quantity

The Metzger- and Sintzenich-class hovercraft are passenger transport vehicles intended for short crossings over water, or over marshy or slightly uneven ground; however, they have the ability to operate over a variety of non-rugged terrain.

Built by Hess Motors of Udesch, although vehicles with similar specification can be found across the old Empire, both models are marketed to the more affluent, the Metzger for largely recreational use, and the Sintzenich as a family vehicle.

The Metzger's minimal cargo capacity allows for small loads to be carried without the need for a rucksack to be worn by the operator, and there is provision for a single passenger (or a single set of golf clubs) to be carried as well. The cargo capacity of the Sintzenich is enough to carry the family groceries or golf clubs, but significant weight is beyond its capacity.

The radio in either model may be used for two-way communication as well as to receive broadcast news and entertainment.

The Sintzenich is completely enclosed allowing considerable protection from the elements. The Metzger is normally sold as an open-top vehicle, but some third-party customizers have sold add-on top enclosures and basic environmental controls to allow it to be used in a wider variety of weather con-

ditions, though it will never be as comfortable as the Sintzenich. Hess Motors does not support such modifications, and use thereof voids all warranties.

Editor's note: for those who would like to visualize these vehicles, one might imagine the Volkswagen Aqua concept car in convertible form as a stand-in for the Metzger; for the Sintzenich, the hovercar from the movie Spaceballs might do, though its lines are not exactly elegant. Both vehicles have images that can be easily found using major search engines. ☪

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.

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
Scrying Eye Games
Spellbook Software and Games
Spica Publishing
Steve Jackson Games
Terra/Sol Games
Toxic Bag Productions
Zozer 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”.

