Featured Adventure

Angle of Incidence

by Michael Brown

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.

Contents

From the Editor

Whew! A *lot* of articles this issue, so not a lot of room for my usual blather. I'll make it quick: The June and July issues were combined simply because real life interfered enough that I simply didn't have the time to get my act—or the June issue—together. For that, I'm sorry; there's been an implied promise to get an issue out every month, and I've occasionally missed. I also don't particularly like loading an issue with reprints, but I try to make interesting choices when I feel that reprints are necessary. Which gets back to my usual theme: The more you, my readers, write and send in, the less I have to think about reprints—and the richer the entire *Traveller* community, not just *Freelance Traveller*, is thereby. Artwork is good, too—the limited amout that's been printed has been commented on, with wishes for more. I'm here… why aren't you? ✪

Mindjammer: The Roleplaying Game

Reviewed by Jeff Zeitlin

Mindjammer: The Roleplaying Game. Sarah Newton.
Mindjammer Press http://www.mindjammerpress.com
496pp, hardbound or PDF
US$54.99 (Print+PDF bundle)/US$27.99 (PDF only)

Disclosure: A complimentary copy of the PDF edition was made available to the author for the purpose of review.

Like *Diaspora* and *Starblazer Adventures*, previously reviewed in *Freelance Traveller*, *Mindjammer* is based on the FATE system. It represents a third esthetic for FATE-based SFRPGs, lying somewhere between the rollicking comic space opera of *Starblazer Adventures* and the very *Traveller*-like crunch of *Diaspora*.

The FATE system is very strongly narrativist, so the emphasis is on role-playing, with simple mechanics and little of the bookkeeping that characterizes most versions of *Traveller* as written. It has been discussed in *Freelance Traveller*'s prior reviews of *Starblazer Adventures* (reviewed by "kafka", October 2010) and *Diaspora* (reviewed by Jeff Zeitlin, February 2011), and so will not be discussed here; rather, the focus will be on the setting.

Transhumanism has not been a significant part of *Traveller*, though Mongoose *Traveller* does allow for some possibilities outside of the Third Imperium setting. *Mindjammer*, however, is a strongly transhumanist setting, and offers a significant degree of modularity, to allow elements of the setting to be transplanted to other games, or to be included or omitted as desired in a *Mindjammer* game. Rules for creating various aspects of the setting are detailed enough to satisfy even hard-core "gearheads" of all types, but where gearheading is unnecessary or undesirable, a few broad strokes of FATE Aspects can be enough to satisfy the needs of the game.

Character types, including various humans, both genetically modified and not, uplifted animals ("Xenomorphs"), artificials (including such things as sentient starships, space stations, and so on), and aliens, are available to players, each defined by vari-

ous combinations of Aspects, Flaws, and Extras. Further definition of characters is defined by additional Aspects, Skills, Stunts, and so on of Careers. While a wide range of sample careers and character types are presented, instructions for creating your own follow the examples. There is even a chapter on organizations in the Mindjammer setting, with rules and templates for creating your own.
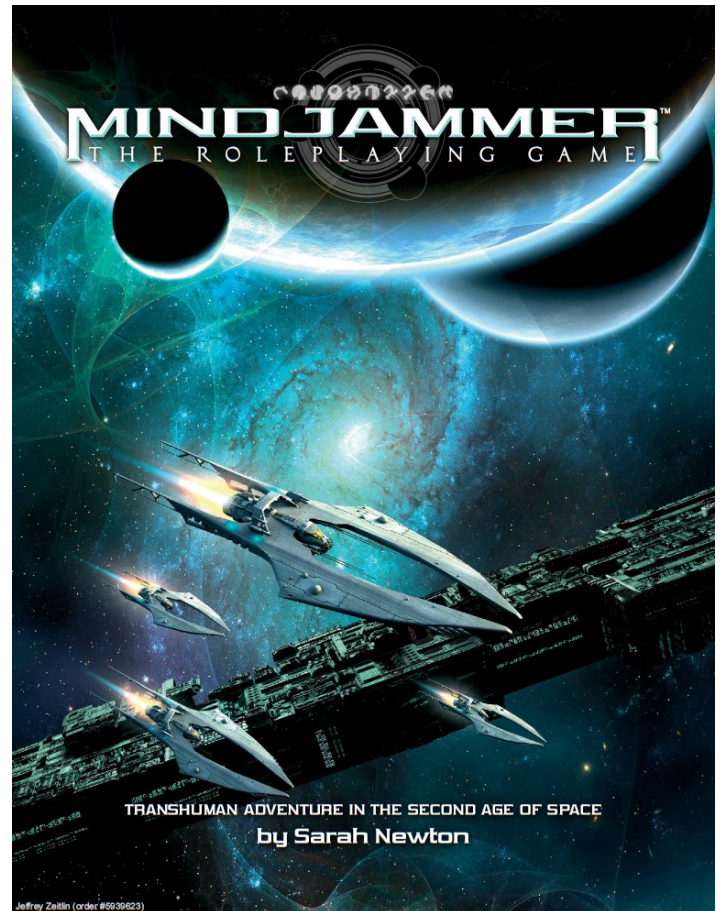
While the distinction between the 'real world' and 'virtual reality' continues to exist in *Mindjammer*, the line between them begins to blur with the Mindscape and an individual's 'halo'. The halo is described as an individual's extension into the Mindscape (through a Mindscape implant), and that extension enables the use of certain skills, enhancements, extras, and so on. Many of the skills provide analogues to "classic" psionic powers such as telepathy, psionic assault, and perception. Beyond that, virtual realities can be as convincing as the real world, and what happens in the Mindscape can have real-world consequences. The speed of light is

still a limit for data transmission, so the Mindscape is kept approximately synchronized between worlds through starships carrying updates.

An in-depth look at the sociopolitical structure of the setting is presented, outlining polities, corporations, cultures, and technology, fitting them together and providing rules for using them in the game, and (as usual) creating your own. Extensive rules for world-building (and star system building are included, as well, and potentially offer a greater range of environments than stock *Traveller*. It is even possible to define ecosystems ranging from artificial (for food production) through transplanted Terres-

trial biota to habitable-but-incompatible and completely alien.

One resource that Mindjammer provides in the core book that *Traveller* to date lacks is a guide to creating scenarios and campaigns. Obviously, it focuses on (and provides examples using) the standard *Mindjammer* setting and the FATE system, but the linkage is not strong, and the two chapters that comprise the guide would be a useful resource for any system.

Mindjammer is not *Traveller*, but this book is worth using as a resource for ideas that can be incorporated into *Traveller*, even if you don't want the high level of Transhumanism that its setting assumes.   ✤

Doing It My Way

Building a Ship's Financial Profile

By Jeff Zeitlin

It has long been held that *Traveller* is not "Accurate Adventures in Accounting", and that the economic system is broken. The point is often made that the inability to make sufficient money to stay up-to-date on a ship's mortgage is a feature, not a bug, since it effectively forces the party into 'adventures', which is the point of *Traveller*, rather than simply 'playing it safe' and being merchants. Nevertheless, it's not uncommon for a party – especially one made of inexperienced players – to want to try straight merchanting for a while.

Officially, the Imperial calendar divides a standard year only into days and weeks; no other divisions are formalized. However, ship's operating expenses are incurred on multiple bases, including per jump, annually, 'monthly', and perhaps daily, while revenues are accrued basically on a per-jump basis.

With the multiple periods involved, it becomes difficult to see at a glance where one stands in terms of making sufficient money to cover all expenses, and thus in turn to make decisions regarding such things as whether to hire a broker, and at what skill

level. Naturally, one could go 'full out' and keep detailed records, like a bookkeeper would, but that's often more tedious than players want to be involved with. Building the ship's financial profile offers the players a way to see essentially at a glance whether they have sufficient income to cover expenses.

The first step to building the ship's financial profile is to list out the various expenses and the basis on which they are incurred:

Cost Item	Incurrance Period
Mortgage	Monthly
Life Support	Per-Jump
Port Fees	Per Jump
Jump Fuel	Per Jump
Power Plant Fuel	Monthly
Annual Maintenance	Annually
Crew Salaries	Monthly

"Monthly" means twelve times per year, at approximate 30-day intervals.

A merchant starship, under optimum conditions, spends approximately a week in jump, followed by a week in port debarking passengers, delivering freight, selling cargo, buying the next batch of cargo, and contracting for more passengers and more

freight. Thus, with 52 weeks in a standard year, and taking two weeks for annual maintenance, a ship will make 25 jumps per year. This makes converting directly from "monthly" to per-jump awkward. So, as a first step, annualize the monthly costs, by multiplying by 12. Now, all of our costs are expressed as either per-jump or annual. Converting from annual to per-jump is easy: divide by 25. (Even easier: Double, double again, and shift the decimal point two places to the left.) Add up the per-jump costs thus arrived at; this final figure is your necessary per-jump income. It's probably not a bad idea to set out the per-jump, "monthly", and annual costs in a tabular worksheet – but the only column you really need is the per-jump.

Income is a bit trickier to figure. First, unless you're really lucky, you're not likely to be running full all the time. Second, the cost of cargo is variable. Your income figures, therefore, want to be broken out into separate lines: Passengers, Freight, and Cargo. Calculate each as follows:

Passenger Income: Multiply the number of staterooms available for passengers by the middle passage rate; this represents your maximum passenger income. Multiply this figure by what you estimate your long-term average percentage of capacity to be, e.g., if you have six passenger staterooms, and estimate that you'll average four passengers per trip, multiply your maximum passenger income by two-thirds. This final figure represents your expected average passenger income.

Freight: Multiply the hold size by the standard freight carriage price. This represents your maximum freight revenue. Multiply by your estimated freight carriage utilization, e.g., if you assume that a 100-ton hold will be 33% full of freight, multiply the maximum freight revenue by 33%. This final figure represents your expected average freight revenue.

Cargo: Unlike with passengers and freight, you do not calculate an expected average revenue; instead, you calculate the required profit per ton. Mul-

tiply your hold size by your estimated cargo utilization. This is your estimated cargo tonnage. Note that your estimated cargo utilization plus your estimated freight carriage utilization must not exceed 100%. Add your average expected freight revenue and expected average passenger revenue, then subtract the total from your per-jump cost figure. Now, divide the result by your estimated cargo tonnage. This final figure is the required profit per ton of cargo.

An example, using the *Beowulf*-class Free Trader, might be clearer: From Book 2, we have the following description: *Using a 200-ton hull, the free trader is an elementary interstellar merchant ship plying the space lanes carrying cargo and passengers. It has jump drive-A, maneuver drive-A, and power plant-A, giving performance of jump-1 and 1-G acceleration. There is fuel tankage for 30 tons, sufficient for the power plant and one jump-1. Adjacent to the bridge is a computer Model/1. There are ten staterooms and twenty low berths. No turrets or weaponry are installed, but there are two hardpoints and two tons are set aside for fire control. There are no ship's vehicles. Cargo capacity is 82 tons. The hull is streamlined. The free trader requires a crew of four: pilot, engineer, medic, and steward. Gunners may be carried if the ship is armed. The ship costs MCr37.08 and takes 11 months to build.*

We assume one jump per two weeks, with transit to/from the jump points requiring a total of about a day, leaving six days in port. Annual maintenance is performed once per year, for two weeks; the money that would normally go for (stateroom) life support for this period is instead used for the crew's off-ship expenses for this period (hotels, dining, entertainment, etc.). There is no separate port fee charged during annual maintenance; it is included in the cost of the maintenance.

Cost factors are as follows, using the figures from Book 2: The mortgage payment, made monthly, is 1/240 of MCr37.08, or Cr154,500. Annual Maintenance is 1/1,000 of MCr37.08, or Cr37,080. Crew salaries, also paid monthly, and assuming the minimum acceptable skill levels, are Cr6,000 (Pilot-1) + Cr4,000 (Engineer-1) + Cr3,300 (Steward-1) +

Cr2,000 (Medic-1), or Cr15,300. Jump Fuel is purchased per-jump, 20 tons at Cr500 per ton, or Cr10,000. Power plant fuel is purchased monthly, 10 tons at Cr500 per ton, or Cr5,000. Life Support for 10 staterooms, per jump, is Cr2,000 each (total 20,000) and for 20 low berths is Cr100 each, or Cr2,000 – but only if the low berth is occupied. Port fees, though calculated weekly and daily, actually accrue per jump, and will likely not require the overstay charge, so Cr100 per jump. These figures are entered in **bold** in the following table:

Cost Item	Per Jump (25 per year)	Per Month (12 per year)	Annual
Mortgage	*Cr74,160*	**Cr154,500**	*Cr1,854,000*
Life Support: Staterooms	**Cr20,000**/*Cr20,800*		**Cr520,000*
Life Support: Low Berths	**Cr2,000**		*Cr50,000*
Crew Salaries	*Cr7,344*	**Cr15,300**	*Cr183,600*
Jump Fuel	**Cr10,000**		*Cr250,000*
Power Plant Fuel	*Cr2,400*	**Cr5,000**	*Cr60,000*
Annual Maintenace	*Cr1,484*		**Cr37,080**
Port Fees	**Cr100**		*Cr2,500*
Totals	Cr117,488/Cr118,288		Cr2,957,180

The next step is annualizing the cost, which means multiplying the per-jump figures by 25, and the monthly figures by 12. The results are shown in the table in *italics*. Note that the annualized figure for Life Support: Staterooms includes an extra Cr20,000; this accounts for the crew expenses during the annual maintenance period.

Finally, the annualized figures should be reduced to per-jump figures (*underlined italic* in the table) by dividing by 25. Note that there are two figures for Life Support: Staterooms because of the "missing" two weeks for annual maintenance – the bold figure is the original per-jump cost; the underlined-italic figure is the per-jump reduction of the annualized cost (with the extra two weeks' cost). The

"bottom line" is that a *Beowulf* can expect to incur operating costs of Cr118,288 per jump, at most.

Costs are only half of the profile, though. The next step is to determine average expected revenues, and the level of profit required on speculative trade. It can be assumed that running completely full, with the maximum number of passengers in all classes and a full hold, will be vanishingly rare. Thus, one should estimate what percentage of full capacity will be used over time, and build the revenue worksheet on that basis. How you decide on that percentage is at your discretion; the location of your campaign, the general amount of trade, the question of large-ship vs. small-ship universe, etc., all come into play.

For the purposes of this example, we will make the assumptions and estimates shown below. Note that these are only for illustrative purposes, and may not reflect realistic expectations for any particular campaign.

- All estimates are per-jump, and all passengers, cargo, and freight will leave the ship (be sold if cargo, be delivered if freight, or debark at destination if passenger) after one jump.
- Of the six staterooms available for passengers (the remaining four are reserved for the crew), an average of four will be occupied. These will be assumed to be Mid passages.
- Of the twenty low berths available, an average of seven will be occupied.
- Of the eighty-four tons of hold space, fifty tons will, on average, be filled with Spec cargo, and fifteen will, on average, be filled with consignment freight. It is expected that cargo will be purchased to the maximum available that can be fit to the hold, and then as much freight as can be fit in the remainder, to the maximum available, will be accepted for consignment.

The revenue expectations, again using figures from Book 2, are thus:

Mid Passengers: Cr8,000 each × 4 = Cr32,000
Low Passengers: Cr1,000 each × 7 = Cr7,000
Freight: Cr1,000 per dton * 15 dtons = Cr15,000

Total "fixed" revenue per jump = Cr32,000 + Cr15,000 + Cr7,000 = Cr54,000

Once the fixed revenue is determined, it is subtracted from the per-jump costs: Cr118,288 – Cr54,000 = Cr64,288. This remainder is divided by the cargo tonnage (50 dtons) to determine how much profit per ton is needed to cover the ship's costs: Cr64,288 / 50 dtons = Cr1,286 per dton. Note that this is an average, over the long term. If sufficient liquidity is available, falling below this level for a few jumps (a run of bad luck) need not place the ship in financial distress, but if it goes on too long, it may be necessary to rethink the estimates.

It should be noted that some versions of *Traveller* vary revenues based on distance, and may vary some costs the same way. When preparing a financial profile under those versions, assume costs on the basis of the ship's *maximum* jump, but assume revenues on the basis of *jump-1*. This represents, in essence, the worst-case assumptions, and thus if profits are sufficient to cover costs under those assumptions, they can be expected to cover costs under most conditions, with a failure less likely. ✇

Active Measures

Afterday

by Michael Brown

The PCs encounter danger and intrigue while participating in relief efforts in the aftermath of a major disaster.

Afterday is a Classic *Traveller* adventure for 5-8 characters of diverse prior careers and backgrounds. No special skills or equipment are necessary to participate in the adventure, although a vehicle would be useful. The action can take place on any Imperial world that has recently suffered a major disaster. The disaster need not be planet-wide. The exact nature of the calamity is up to the referee, with the planetary characteristics serving as a guide. For example, a vacuum world (Atmosphere 0) may have suffered a meteor storm, or the habitats on a water world (Hydrographics A) may be recovering from a devastating hurricane.

Players' Information

The distress call was issued, and mercifully answered. Within hours of the catastrophe, ships from other worlds in the system arrived with aid and supplies, and starships in-system offered what aid they could. Help is still coming in from all over the system, and starships are spreading the news throughout the subsector; more help will follow.

The PCs may have been on site during the cataclysm, or they may be one of the hundreds of first responders. However they got the initial word, they are now on-planet in one of the hastily-erected disaster-relief centers. The local government is still reeling, so organized efforts have not yet been put in place. The adventurers are basically given an area to visit and asked to render aid as they see fit. They are tasked with submitting a detailed after-action report to the authorities but are more or less on their own. Naturally, money is a problem, but a transient partnership between the planetary and Imperial authorities provides for free fuel and a temporary relaxing of regulations.

Referee's Information

The adventure is very freeform. As noted above, the team may accomplish their missions however they like, as long as the larger goal of rendering aid is accomplished. Several structured scenarios are presented below for the referee's use. They can be used individually or collectively, in any order, and mixed-and-matched with other scenarios created by the referee.

Scenario I: Turf Wars

While waiting for an assignment from the disaster relief authorities, the PCs' leader (or whichever

adventurer is perceived as the leader) is approached by an officious little man accompanied by a dozen aides and staffers. Presenting a stack of forms, the man – who identifies himself as a representative of the Ministry of Emergency Operations – demands that each form be completed in triplicate to ensure proper documentation of the adventurers' efforts. This will necessarily include the divulging of their identities along with background checks as soon as it is feasible. Any PC with something to hide will have it discovered in 1D+1 weeks.

While the group is dealing with the MEO representative, a similar group from the Ministry of Resource Coordination does the same thing, insisting that the MEO forms are invalid until theirs are completed. The MRC group is soon followed by one from the Ministry of Reclamation and Restoration who wants their forms filled out and acknowledged first. Meanwhile, the disaster relief personnel are caught in the middle along with the travelers.

The heroes must decide how they untangle themselves from this bureaucratic mess. The help of a Bureaucrat (*Supplement 4: Citizens of the Imperium*) would be invaluable, but anyone with the other skills and stats listed in the following task would be helpful:

> *To escape the bureaucratic turf war diplomatically:*
> IMPOSSIBLE; Admin, Liaison, Terms (Bureaucrat), EDU, SOC; 2 minutes.

Of course, the adventurers, being adventurers, may always take an undiplomatic route out of their problem. If so, throw for the various officials' Reactions at -2.

Scenario II: The Forebears

A colony of elderly citizens hasn't been heard from since the disaster. The team is assigned to go there, assess the situation, render any medical aid needed, and either evacuate the residents if it is feasible, or otherwise direct rescue personnel to the location by establishing some sort of communication.

The community in question is one of the better-quality facilities of its sort, but the cataclysm hit it hard; there have been numerous casualties, and only a few buildings left sturdy enough to house the remaining residents and staff. The situation is crowded, tense, and disease-prone. The referee must determine how many residents and staff are left; it may be more than the adventurers can comfortably evacuate. However many the referee determines are still on-site, 1D+1×10% are injured, and 1D-2×10% are ill.

Regardless of the status of the survivors, one condition is common to all of them: fear. Most of the elderly residents don't want to leave, thinking that conditions outside their little complex are far worse. Some may even think that they're the only ones left alive on the planet! Attempts to move the residents by threats or force will only result in more injuries and terror. The group must use diplomacy and persuasion to get the residents to leave.

A further complication may arise in the form of a Queen Bee (every community seems to have one) who basically runs the show and is reluctant to give up her social power to a bunch of freebooting strangers. This individual must be swayed before any of the others will follow suit. And simply fomenting a rebellion is out of the question; her influence is too great. She reacts to the adventurers initially at -3.

Scenario III: The Wayfarers

The adventurers are approached by a small group of people expressing concern about family and friends in a distant province. Communications have been disrupted by the disaster and the petitioners are worried for their families' safety. The company has cobbled together Cr5,000 as payment for transport to the province and back. The trip, including travel time, is expected to take a day.

As the trip wears on, the PCs may notice that the passengers have with them an abundance of image recording equipment. Their mood also lifts from anxious to something approaching jubilation. When

they arrive, they discover that the province has scattered destruction, casualties and homeless citizens. As soon as the passengers disembark, they begin moving around the ruins as a group, taking pictures and acting more like a tour group than concerned family and friends. It appears that the PCs have been duped into supplying a ride for a group of disaster tourists.

The PCs must decide how they react to this news. If they get outraged, a complication may arise in the form of a noble's child who is part of – or maybe is the leader of – the group of tourists. What happens when this individual is confronted by an incensed band of star-scruff?

Scenario IV: The Predators

The group is sent to assess the situation in a town where reports seem to be rosy; the damage and casualties is reported to be slight, and the residents seem to have rebuilding well in hand. A relief center staffer who hails from the town, however, is suspicious; the area is a notorious hotspot of criminal activity in the best of times. The residents can't possibly have weathered the trouble so easily.

When the adventurers arrive, they find the opposite situation. Much of the town is in ruins with a populace gripped by fear. Bands of looters operate brazenly. Citizens who dare to resist suffer brutal beatings and worse. Several gang leaders have set themselves up as minor warlords, carving out sections of town as their own personal fiefdoms patrolled by street toughs. Law enforcement is nowhere in sight.

The referee should carefully tailor the state of affairs to the PCs' capabilities. They will certainly be outmanned, but they don't have to be outgunned. The various oppressors are street punks, not trained soldiers. Many will run when faced with the PCs' firepower and training. Since they have the townsfolk completely cowed, most of them don't even

have firearms, only hand weapons. What few firearms they have are in the hands of the bosses and may be nowhere near the lethality class of those the PCs possess.

The methods the PCs use to bring order to the town are completely in their hands. Again, the referee should carefully tailor the situation to their capabilities. It can be an exercise in persuasion or manipulation involving the crimelords, or it can be a series of fights with the rank-and-file street scum. They may even draw inspiration from several Hollywood movies and encourage the townsfolk to rise up against their persecutors.

A complication may arise in the form of disease beginning to take hold in the town. There is plenty of medicine to treat it, but it is controlled by a gang boss who is using it as a tool of oppression. He is accompanied at all times by bodyguards and keeps innocents nearby as hostages and human shields. The PCs must find a way to take the drugs from him and neutralize his threat without harming the citizens.

Scenario V: The Evil That Men Do

Depending on the nature of the disaster, there is a possibility that it was an intentional act by an individual or an organization with a hidden agenda. While it is impossible to engineer a hurricane or a large seismic quake; an asteroid strike or a grain blight, for example, are different matters.

While assisting with the relief effort, the PCs uncover evidence of such deliberation. Obviously, the information they find depends on the nature of the catastrophe. If the heroes backtrack, they eventually find the person or persons responsible for setting the disaster in motion. The referee must determine the scope and details of the plot, and exactly who is involved. The revelations may lead into a new campaign or introduce recurring enemies.

The referee should determine the flow of subsequent events.   ✺

11: Ideas

Sometimes I'm asked where the ideas for writing *Traveller* material come from. The short confession is that I don't know. But sometimes I'm able to spot the exact moment of inspiration and things just 'flow'. This happened with "Into the Unknown" (spark of an idea in Africa, mulled in my head for 25 years, and then I sat down after TravCon11 and wrote 7,000 words), Estë Toivenen[1] (inspired by a real person I met) and "Three Blind Mice"[2] (Rouven Weinbach from 13Mann in Germany inviting me to write an adventure reminded me about a previous occasion when I'd helped someone translate an adventure out of German and I'd not known that a 'blind passenger' was a stowaway. Why not write about a blind stowaway?). The key thing I find with flashes of inspiration is to capture them at the time: in a notebook, on your phone, on a post-it. Whatever. Don't rely on memory for more than a few moments. Or maybe that's just me.

On other occasions it is more that ideas are bludgeoned out of my brain with a bat and each word seems a struggle. There's an aphorism about writing being easy; just sit at a typewriter and open a vein.

However inspiration comes, I believe you can encourage them in a number of ways; I offer these, not as answers but as things that have helped me.

Read *Traveller* books. Soak yourself in the setting, but also in individual items of equipment, ships, vehicles or character write ups. As you inhabit the *Traveller* universe in your mind, you'll more easily generate connections and be inspired. The adventure "Ashfall"[3] grew from two sentences in my write-up of a Darrian Special Arm Commando[4]. I'm not certain I could find inspiration in a random page of *Traveller* material, but it's a rich universe.

Read science fiction. It goes without saying but I've lost track of the number of times I've thought 'that would make a cool adventure/gadget/

character'. Of course, if you're writing for publication, beware of copyright issues. Most recently for me, *Undertow* by Elizabeth Bear suggested an amphibian, watery society and Robert Llewellyn's *News from…* books suggested very interesting and very different futuristic cultures.

Read out of genre. Detective stories, romance (yes, really!), non-fiction. All these can give a breadth and depth to writing or trigger thoughts that lead into other ideas. Four from the Jungle[5] grew out of reading some natural history and "Wooden Ships and Iron Men"[6] came out of books about Nelson, Hornblower and the like – not to mention living near HMS *Victory* and having a father who took part in field gun running.

Watch the world around. It might be a news item, a URL on the *Traveller* Mailing List pointing to some new technology, a conversation at a bus stop, or even a chance encounter with someone like Estë above. All of these can be mined. My series of TL8 vehicles in these pages (a ferry, bus, catamaran etc) all came straight out of my daily commute to work.

Finally, when inspiration is flagging, try sub-creation. *Traveller* is great for mechanical systems such as UPPs, UWPs and more recently life events, QREBS and so on, which take no creativity at all – just dice rolls. I find that looking at these and beginning to interpret them can be a great source of ideas as I try to explain to myself what these numbers mean, or what a combination of numbers means. Plus when the creativity bug does return, you'll have a great collection of worlds or characters to draw on.

1 http://www.freelancetraveller.com/features/characters/timothy-collinson/este-toivenen.html

2 http://www.13mann.com/index.php/en/download/category/52-traveller-adventures

3 Not yet published but used twice at TravCon14.

4 http://jtas.sjgames.com/login/article.cgi?1328

5 http://freelancetraveller.com/features/animals/jungle4.html

6 http://www.freelancetraveller.com/features/rules/chargen/rttwetnavy.htm

Choices

by Andrea Vallance

Part 4

151st of 2029 (342-97): In Jump

I woke in what passed for our sick bay, a converted stateroom. Ariaryn was in the other bunk, still unconscious. Isabella saw I was awake and came over. "Here, thought you might want this." She handed me a slug. "A centimetre to the right and it would gone straight through your liver."

I looked at the metal bullet. "Thank you."

"It's my job." Something was clearly bugging her.

"What's up?"

"Why did you bring him back? You know he'll never able to go home."

"Would you rather I shot him?"

"Might have been cleaner. At least I got to choose my fate." Her anger was obvious.

"You don't mean that."

"No, probably not, but he's not going to have an easy life now."

My turn to be irritated. "At worst, he'll be an honoured guest."

"Oh, yes, an honoured guest of the Lord Protector. Let me tell you something, your precious Protectorate is not as shiny and nice as you'd like to believe. If they think you've got something they want, they'll get it, honoured guest or not. And they keep you on a leash, better you behave, the looser they hold it, but it's still a leash." There was hurt in her voice, so much hurt.

"But he's not got anything they'd want?"

She snorted "He's a marquis' son, that is something in itself. They'll hand him over to the PEIS or PSB[35] when we get back; he won't last five minutes with them. And pray, just pray, he doesn't end up in Sesh Liryn."

I was confused. "Sesh Liryn ? What the hell is Sesh Liryn?"

"Sesh Liryn is hell." There was so much pain in her eyes.

"I'm sorry. It seemed like the best option."

She sighed "It's okay; I'm sure he'll… adapt, in the end. And yeah, I'm sorry, too."

"Where is he?"

"Siish has him locked in a stateroom while he figures out what to do with him. We're in jump now, left as soon as you two got back. So he's fine for the moment."

"I'll go see him."

She looked hard at me "You came about a *banish*'s leg from dying. You are not leaving here for at least a week, doctor's orders."

153rd of 2029 (344-97): Ministry of Justice Offices, Winchel

Special Agent Fakri Vu reviewed the evidence, such as it was. Not a lot to go on, one security camera outside the alleyway, some badly degraded DNA, two dead bodies and a heap of personal files. The young woman was a known radical, probably a terrorist, the other one of young Lord Trace's minders. The camera clearly showed Trace firing three times. Neilsson had been shot three times in the back, obviously one went with the other, there was already a warrant out for that. But who was Trace aiming at after that and who were the other two in the alley? Assistant Director Mushiika entered "Any progress, Fakri?"

"Not much, sir; we've got Trace and Neilsson outside the alley on camera, a dead terrorist in the alley and two unknowns."

Mushiika pondered. "Protectorate agents?"

"That would be a safe bet sir. But the real question is what were Neilsson and Trace doing there."

"Any theories?"

"Lots, none of them make any sense." Nothing about this made much sense.

"Do you think young Lord Trace has been turned?" A marquis' son, the political fall-out would be huge.

"It would seem possible sir. We know he travelled on a Protectorate ship, the *Raledenet*, and he clearly aided two Protectorate agents. I interviewed his other escort," Vu reached for a file, "Yoshi Takawa. He said Trace had become infatuated with one of the crew. It would fit."

"But the Traces are staunch Makerites, hardly the type to become traitors."

"I've often found people with a very clear cut vision of right and wrong can be swayed by moral concerns. Unfortunately, the crew member concerned was one of the victims of Interrogation Centre Seventeen and that hardly presents us at us at our most moral. Takawa does mention the crew made a point of informing Trace of the details."

Mushiika was clearly annoyed. "Damn Darant and damn that centre. It keeps coming back and biting us."

Vu smiled. "I believe, Admiral, Darant has already paid for that mistake."

"So, suggestions?"

"Flag the *Raledenet* as 'of interest' and bring Trace back."

Mushiika nodded. "See to it personally, Fakri."

158th of 2029 (349-97): Layover on Ashmaze

I'd gone to Siish before seeing Sakuya. Isabella was right; he wouldn't last five minutes with Intel. "Siish, Sakuya, any idea what will happen to him?"

He looked peeved. "You should never have brought him back; you were a fool. I imagine the PEIS will want him and I pity him there."

"Isn't there anything you can do? I mean your mother?"

Actually annoyed this time. "Run off to Mother and ask for help? *Dinkir*, you made a mess; it's too late to start having second thoughts."

"I couldn't very well have killed him!"

Calm and cold. "Yes, you could have, and you probably should have. We can't let him go, he knows too much."

"He saved my life, Siish." I was pleading. "Did you find the bug he made?"

He chuckled. "Eventually, though it took Jane and I hours. A piece of work, I tell you; he's got talent there alright. Intelligence will be very interested in it."

"Siish he won't survive if PEIS get hold of him, please."

Siish looked at the console awhile and then sighed "OK, *dinkir*, for you. I'll talk with Mother and see if anything can be done. But no promises and you owe me for this."

I grinned. "I already owe you for a lot of things Siish."

———————————

I knocked on Sakuya's door and entered the code to unlock it. "Come in." He was sitting on his bed looking miserable but he smiled when he saw me "They told me you were okay, Ariaryn too, thank the Maker."

I smiled back "Yep, though Ariaryn has our puffup lungs to thank."

He looked at the deck. "What's going to happen to me?"

I sat on the bed next to him. "I don't know, Sakuya."

"I'm not ever going home again, am I?"

"No."

"You knew this when you asked me to help you, didn't you?"

"Yes, I'm sorry." I really was, but I couldn't undo it.

"Doesn't matter, Siish lets me read the news." He pointed at his terminal. "They want me for killing Anna anyway." He sounded so resigned, the guilt was tearing at me. "I can either stay here and spend the rest of my life as a prisoner or go home and be executed."

"Siish is going to talk with his mother."

He shrugged "Isabella tells me the Protectorate treats its prisoners as honoured guests, guess that can't be too bad. She keeps coming to see me, trying to cheer me up."

I took his hands "Yes, yes we do, Sakuya, and it's not that bad. Even if we can't do anything, it's not that bad." The image of the pain in Isabella's eyes kept coming back to me.

He snuggled into my shoulder, his delicate frame pressing against me. "I really messed it all up, didn't I?"

I stroked his hair gently, trying to comfort him "No, Sakuya, you didn't. You saved my life, I'll never forget that."

He started to cry, "What am I going to do, *yasva*?"

I stroked his check with the back of my left hand and ran his down mine "You can start by stopping calling me *yasva*."

"What should I call you, then?"

"You could try my name."

He laughed through the tears, "Afira Renal Wilhem Corig Corig *Seshyishinti*[36], it's a bit of a mouthful."

"Then just call me Afira." He smiled.

Notes

35. Protectorate External Intelligence Service and Protectorate Security Bureau. The external and internal intelligence services respectively.

36. Seshyishinti translates as Pilot.

✹

Trader Tales from the Golden Age of the Solar Clipper

reviewed by Kevin Nikolai Payne

Trader Tales (*Quarter Share, Half Share, Full Share, Double Share, Captain's Share, Owner's Share*).

Nathan Lowell

Original Publication: 2007-2013
Current Availability: Free audiobooks (iTunes or PodioBook.com) or (non-free) paperback or eBook (Amazon or PodioBook).

About the Story

His name is Ishmael. Ishmael Horatio Wang (pronounced "Wong"). He tells you about it in the first couple of pages—more entertainingly than Melville, and even Forester gets a decent challenge.

Nathan Lowell's *Trader Tales* center on the life and activities of Ish Wang, from his hiring as a lowly kitchen helper on a space freighter without a clue what a career as a deep space merchant involves to his (much) later activities as a ship owner.

This is not wild and wooly space-based action, so if that's what you like you may want to pass. To quote Lowell himself: *"For once, the hero isn't the Cap-*

tain of the ship. He's not even an officer. He's a broke, uneducated, orphan from a backwater planet at the edge of no-where. He's not a 'hidden prince' and he wasn't adopted. He's just an average Joe trying to make it in the universe when his mother is killed in a mindless accident and he's suddenly left to his own devices."

The story begins on the company planet of Neris, where his mother, a college professor of literature, has just been killed in a tragic accident. At 18, with no job prospects and as a legal adult, he is given 90 days to remove himself at his own expense to another planet. A friendly and sympathetic merchant's union rep gives him a chance and he is hired as a quarter-share cook's helper on the *Lois McKendrick*, a massive freighter that is working its way through the quadrant on its regular run.

The "shares" of the title are how much bonus each crew member earns if a leg of the trading circuit is profitable. Quarter-share berths don't pay much and have a very low mass allotment (20 kilos). Ish is starting at the bottom, indeed.

He soon learns how to get along, and how to advance. He also learns how to make some extra money—all orbitals (read high ports) have flea markets that allow earth-siders and starfarers to trade items

they've brought from elsewhere or made or otherwise wish to parlay into cash money.

Each book concentrates on another aspect of life in the "Deep Dark", and shows us another aspect of Ish's "growing up" into a fine crewman, then officer, captain, and finally owner.

Genre and Style

If you are a big fan of slam-bam action, or deep political intrigue, or heavy-on-the-space-opera stylings this probably is not the series for you.

It's not really hard sf, but it's not space opera either. There are some "adventurous" happenings, but a lot of it is the drama of "just life", though transplanted from 20th century Earth to 23nd Century space. I personally found it inspiring my desire to tell deeper stories through the games I run with *Traveller*. Whether I can do that or not, we shall see.

These are *good* stories, told in a capable and entertaining way.

There are a few quirks of the author's style, but I won't prejudice you against them. They will become apparent, but honestly, as critical as I am of the stuff I read, you can easily live with them.

For the sheer simplicity of how a person has to live in a starfaring, trading environment, with very little space opera, and making Ecclesiastes clear ("There is nothing new under the sun") and showing life then probably won't be all that different in how you choose to live—I recommend it. Plus, it's chock full of ideas to enhance your game.

Applicability to Traveller

To be honest and upfront, space travel tech in the Solar Clipper series is not *Traveller* at all. That's not a bad thing, it's just that you'd have to change some assumptions if you wanted to use some of the ship and trading material in your *Traveller* campaign. Or if you are brave and have the knowledge, you could probably work up the solar sails and the Burleson drive without a great deal of trouble. Personally I'm considering it—it *really* would take you

to the whole "age of sail" paradigm that *Traveller* has claimed for 35 years, albeit without "sailors on the hull lashing down the wheel and furling the sails" (these are energy sails, not sailcloth).

Beyond that obvious and major difference, everything else just screams "*Traveller*!", at least to me. Maybe not quite the same way *Firefly* did, since that is an independent trader rather than part of a trading company. But it's a difference that merely enhances both approaches, at least for me.

For the merchant marine nut, here is a well-described commercial system of ranks and ratings. This is the kind of thing you see in military SF, but not very much in trader stories. I think our trader tales tend to be the small tramp freighter types, and we give fairly short shrift to larger starfaring mercantile styles. Mind you, Solar Clipper companies are *not* spit and polish, flying the Queen Mary, rigid pseudo-military establishments—though they could be, depending on the owners and the captains. But trying this kind of star trader might be an eye opener to many, with a bit more structure than we are used to having. That's not a bad thing, as the tales of Ish Wang will demonstrate.

There's a *lot* of description of systems and how things work and how they fit into daily life. Definitely check out the Solar Clipper website which gives you a lot of insight into how Mr. Lowell is thinking and where he is coming from. But even more, even if not working up solar sail systems or an instantaneous point to point jump drive, there are innumerable adventure seeds, ideas for shipboard and orbital and starport life, and much more.

And if you like coffee, which I do, you will learn things you never knew!

Conclusion

I recommend the series. I recommend letting the ideas play around in your head, and seeing if you can extract some power-ups for your *Traveller* game. If worse comes to worst, you will at least have read an enjoyable set of books.

At least give it a try.   ✪

Travelling Alone

by Dave Cooper

Editor's note: This is a lightly revised version of an article originally posted to the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 2004.

I started playing *Traveller* in 1978 with the original LBB set. Book 1 said *Traveller* could be played solo, but didn't say how. I followed the starting advice given in an early *White Dwarf* and rolled a few planets, crewed up a Free Trader and started to get the hang of the rules by travelling around and trading. It was out of this that the system developed, but it is still being refined and modified.

The system is designed for solo play, but can also be used by a referee in an episodic campaign, or to set up events etc in advance.

The important thing to realize is that the system is not designed as a programmed paragraph adventure (although a later subsystem does use paragraphs.) It is designed to make you think, to create situations to spark your creativeness.

It is important to write things down as they occur; this is your personal history. It also provides continuity and it is scary sometimes how the game seems to take on a life of its own, with events 'just falling into place' (and past events providing justifications for present actions and incidents). In the example below, perhaps during the mini-scenario starting with the offer of an illegal cargo of drugs, Judson shoots and injures a police officer in getting away. Years later, that same police officer might turn up as a Chief Inspector when Judson is brought in on a minor charge. And he's got a long memory.

Have Fun!

Example

Let's take Judson Deathdancer, ex-Army, newly mustered out on Neu Regari. (Go to 1.)

At (1), having assembled all characters, go to (2).

At (2), Judson has to pay Upkeep equal to Cr10×soc². Now throw 1D. A 6, so he goes now to (5) Healing.

At (5), he can heal if necessary, or pay for a prolonged stay in hospital, or buy medikits or drugs, etc. Judson wants some Slow Drug; depending on the law level of the world you may have to set up a mini-scenario using bribery, streetwise, etc. Perhaps the cops get involved? Do as much detail as you want and play it out. At the end, throw 1D. A 1, so now go to 7 (Event)

At 7, throw D66 on Event Table, throw is 66, (offered illegal cargo, drugs.) Aha! In his earlier dealings trying to by the Slow Drug, did Judson come to the attention of the local crime boss and chief pusher? Is he being offered a job as a courier, or being set up a a fall guy? Roll up some characters for who's involved and design a scenario, then play it out… (etc.)

(Incidentally, all of that was rolled as I typed it, so none of it was preplanned to 'make it fit.')

Note: Clarification of Areas 3 & 4: Buy/Sell **one** item or group of related items. This is deliberate, you can only buy *one* 50m length of rope *or* 24 bullets (or whatever). It is designed to a) stop players saying "right, we'll buy everything we need plus replace everything we used" and b) abstracts the fact that the item may not be available, that the shop was closed, that you forgot to buy it, it was out of stock, there was only one available or you ran out of time…. The later Buy/Sell area (13) does not have so many restrictions.

The Tables

A. Off-Time Flowchart

1) **Start.** Assemble Characters. Once party is assembled, go to (2) Upkeep

2) **Upkeep.** Sell Cargo, pay Ship costs, pay Crew wages. All characters pay Cr10×soc² for upkeep, clothes, etc. After accounting is completed, roll 1D6:

1-2	Go to (3) Buy Equipment
3-4	Go to (4) Sell Equipment
5-6	Go to (5) Healing

3) **Buy Equipment**. Each PC may buy *one* item or group of related items of equipment. After purchase, roll 1D6:

   1-2   Go to (4) Sell Equipment

   3-4   Go to (5) Healing

   5   Go to (7) Event

   6   Go to (3) Buy Equipment

4) **Sell Equipment.** PCs may sell any *one* item of surplus equipment and/or curios they have collected. Equipment may be sold at 50% of base cost; curios, etc., throw 9+ to find a buyer then negotiate. After sale is concluded, roll 1D6:

   1-3   Go to (3) Buy Equipment

   4   Go to (5) Healing

   5-6   Go to (6) Event

5) **Healing.** Recover Wounds or pay for Medical Aid. May also purchase medipacks, drugs, etc. Roll 1D6 when complete:

   1   Go to (7) Event

   2-3   Go to (10) Seek Patron

   4-6   Go to (8) Options

6) **Event.** Roll on Event Table. Events may affect the whole group, or just an individual. Some have long-reaching effects, see Event Table for details. After dealing with the Event, roll 1D6:

   1-3   Go to (8) Options

   4-6   Go to (9) Healing

7) **Event.** Roll on Event Table. Events may affect the whole group, or just an individual. Some have long-reaching effects, see Table for details. Deal with the event, then roll 1D6:

   1-2   Go to (8) Options

   3-4   Go to (10) Seek Patron

   5   Go to (12) Expenses

   6   Go to (3) Buy Equipment

8) **Options.** May take any Action, initiate new project, take a job etc. Afterward, roll 1D6:

   1-2   Go to (11) Hear Rumor

   3-4   Go to (13) Buy/Sell Equipment

   5   Go to (10) Seek Patron

   6   Go to (14) Encounter

9) **Healing/Medical.** Recover Wounds or pay for Medical Aid. May also purchase medipacks, drugs etc. Roll 1D6 when completed:

   1-3   Go to (13) Buy/Sell Equipment

   4-5   Go to (11) Hear Rumor

   6   Go to (8) Options

10) **Seek Patron?** Roll 1D (or choose using another method):

   1-4   Generate Patron as per Chart C

   5-6   No Patron

   Go to (11) Hear Rumor

11) **Hear Rumor.** Roll on Rumor Table with appropriate mods. After generating rumor, roll 1D6:

   1-2   Go to (8) Options

   3   Go to (14) Encounter

   4-5   Go to (9) Healing

   6   Go to (13) Buy/Sell Equipment

12) **Misc. expenses.** An unforeseen expense that must be paid. Roll 1D:

   1-2   Cr100

   3-5 $Cr1 \times soc^2$

   6        $Cr5 \times soc^2$

   After payment, roll 1D6:

   1-3   Go to (14) Encounter

   4-6   Go to (16) End

13) **Buy/Sell Equipment.** Group may buy/sell as much equipment as is desired.

   1   Go to (14) Encounter

   2-6   Go to (16) End

14) **Encounter.** Group may encounter NPC's, Law Enforcers or even creatures.

1-2   No Encounter

3   Law Enforcers. Throw 2D6 for Law Level+ to avoid.

4-5   Roll on Encounter table and check reaction

6   Animal. Roll on Animal Encounter table for area.

After encounter, roll 1D6:

1-4   Go to (15) Healing

5-6   Go to (16) End.

15) **Healing.** Recover Wounds or pay for Medical Aid. May also purchase medipacks, drugs etc.
Go to (16) End

16) **End.** Either repeat cycle if a further week on planet is necessary, else roll for Cargo availability, passengers etc. Check for passage off-world if you don't own your own ship.

B. Selling Cargo

Throw for availability of Broker; DMs Streetwise, Bribery, Admin.

Broker Skill	Available on 2D6 throw of
Broker-1	5+
Broker-2	7+
Broker-3	9+
Broker-4	11+

On an unmodified throw of 12 there is no broker available this week. PCs must cycle through Chart A and try again next week, or sell without a Broker.

C. Patron

Roll Patron

Generate Stats (if required), plus tags etc. See NPC creation.

Generate mission (or select one,) decide if PC's will accept it (or roll 1D 1-3 = Yes; 4-6 = No)

Return to Chart A (10)

D. Events

Throw 2D6 reading individually ("D66") for the event:

11 Meet NPC
12 Meet new PC (a way to introduce new characters)
13 Legal encounter, throw Law Level+ to avoid
14 Gambling. Win Cr100×(2D + Gambling)
15 Misc. expenses. Pay Cr50×1D
16 Receive a message from….

21 Patron encounter
22 Random encounter
23 Hear Rumor
24 Get involved in a brawl (fight it out)
25 Shot at by accident (throw 10+ to be hit)
26 Meet NPC

31 Opportunity to buy exotic item
32 Close relative dies (who?)
33 Inherit Cr100×3D
34 Weapon rendered permanently useless (see notes)
35 Legal encounter, throw Law Level+ to avoid
36 Opportunity to buy property (may be worth rent etc.)

41 Hear some news about….
42 Opportunity to make TAS application (open entry)
43 Receive information about…
44 Meet NPC
45 Robbed/burgled. Lose 50% of possessions (see notes)
46 Mistaken identity (roll reaction)

51 Meet alien or group of aliens
52 Civil disorder on planet (why?)
53 Planetary event (see notes)
54 Hear rumor
55 Patron encounter
56 Some equipment breaks down and needs to be fixed.

61 Papers/documents not in order. (see notes)
62 Complication with cargo (see below)
63 Special charter (transport to…, act as bodyguard to…, etc.)
64 Asked to carry message
65 Gain Contact or Favor owed by NPC (who, why, what)
66 Offered Illegal weapon/Black market goods/drugs etc.

Doing It My Way

Event Notes

34 Weapon rendered permanently useless: Customize this event to the particular weapon, e.g., a sword might have the blade broken off short, a gun's chamber might be damaged by firing a round with too much powder, etc.

45 Robbed or burgled: Divide possessions into two approximately equal piles. Randomly determine which pile was lost.

53 Planetary Event: This can be any sort of serious disruptive event appropriate to the world, e.g., earthquake, storm with severe flooding, breach of protective dome, meteorite strike, etc.

61 Papers or documents not in order: This is a bureaucratic annoyance. A scenario similar to the mini-adventure "Exit Visa" would be appropriate.

62 Complication with cargo: There is a potential problem with any cargo that will be picked up in the End Phase. Once cargos are generated, throw 2D6 for each, 9+ to have a potential problem. Then roll 1D6 for where the problem is, this end (3-) or at the destination (4+). If this end, then roll 1D on the table at the top of the next column to see what it is. If destination, do not roll until PCs get there!

Roll 1D	Type of Problem
1	Needs special import/export license (see Chart A (8) Options).
2	Damaged. Real value reduced by 10-30%
3	Offensive stench will permeate LS system and make passengers unhappy
4	Hazardous cargo, throw 12+/day in transit to leak/explode and damage cargo area
5	Customs believe it is contraband and cargo is impounded
6	Shipping manifest was wrong and half/double (roll) agreed amount has arrived

E. Passage Off-World

Check for ship availability depending on class of starport. The notation nD6:m+ should be read as "Roll nD6. The number you roll indicates how many D6 to roll. For each die that shows m+, a ship is available to take passage on." If the result of the first roll is zero (e.g., if 1D6-3 and you roll a 2), there are no ships available this week. For example, 2D6:3+: Roll 2D6; the result is 6. Now roll 6D6; the results are 3 4 2 5 3 1. Since four of the dice are showing 3 or more (3+), there are four ships available to take passage on.

Port Class	Ship Availability	Port Class	Ship Availability
A	2D6:3+	D	1D6-2:5+
B	2D6:5+	E	1D6-3:5+
C	1D6-1:4+	X	1D6-4:6+

News About Traveller

Recent Traveller News and Findings

May 2014

- **Christian Hollnbuchner** has released *Starships Book I0II0I: Pilot Boat*, *Starships Book I0III0: Scrap Liner*, *Starships Book I0IIII: Flare class Corvette*, *Commerce Raider*, and *Seawolf Submarine*.
- **Gypsy Knights Games** has released *21 Plots: Samaritan*, and *Ships of Clement Sector 4: Small Craft*.
- **DB Game Design** has released *Fat Cat Far Trader*.
- **Mongoose Publishing** has released *Supplement 14: Space Stations*, *Book 1: Mercenary (Second Edition)*, and *German Vehicles of World War II*.
- **Samardan Press** has released *Flynn's Guide to Azri Drakara: Cepheus Subsector*.
- **Jon Brazer Enterprises** has released *Foreven Worlds: Vehicles of the Frontier*.
- **Stygian Fox** has released *Colonial Times #5*.

Wood and *Tree* Grav Bikes

designed by Ewan Quibell

```
CraftID: Wood Grav Bike, TL10, Cr24,146
Hull:    1/1, Disp=0.13, Conf=4SL Open, Armor=1E,
         Loaded=0.6511 tons, Unloaded=0.6055 tons
Power:   1/2, Fuel Cell×2=0.18Mw, Duration=30/90 (80
         hrs vacuum)
Loco:    1/2, StdGrav=1 ton, MaxAccel=1.536G,
         NOE=140kph, Cruise=750kph, Top=1000kph,
Comm:    Radio=Regional (500km)
Sensors: Headlights×2, PassEMS=VDist (50 km),
         PassObjScan=Form
Off:     -
Def:     +2
Control: Panel=Electronic×6
Accom:   Crew=1 (Driver), Seats=Cramped×2
Other:   Fuel=0.576kl, Cargo=0.0456kl, ObjSize=Small,
         EmLevel=Moderate
```

The *Wood* Grav Bike is produced by Christchurch Corporation on Home, and was designed for the mass market aimed specifically at the commuter. The high performance along with the excellent sensor ability allow for a quick ride to work, however there is very little cargo space, enough for a brief case and laptop.

Due to the high performance of the Wood Home government tightened the vehicle licensing regulations and air/raft license in order to reduce the number of high speed low altitude accidents and collisions that had increased as a direct result of the introduction of the *Wood*.

```
CraftID: Tree Grav Bike, TL10, Cr6,814
Hull:    1/1, Disp=0.081, Conf=4USL Open, Armor=1E
         Loaded=0.5185 tons, Unloaded=0.429 tons
Power:   1/2, Fuel Cell×2=0.18Mw, Duration=30/90
Loco:    1/2, StdGrav=1 ton, MaxAccel=1.928G,
         NOE=40kph, Cruise=225kph, Top=300kph,
Comm:    -
Sensors: Headlights×2
Off:     -
Def:     +2
Control: Panel=Electronic×2
Accom:   Crew=1 (Driver), Seats=Cramped×2
Other:   Fuel=0.576kl, Cargo=0.0895kl, ObjSize=Small,
         EmLevel=Moderate
```

The *Tree* Grav Bike is Christchurch Corporation's response to the need for a cheap everyday grav vehicle for the general population. Based on the successful *Wood*, the *Tree* is stripped down to the essentials, seats, controls and drive and power plant. It is expected that designs like these will start the move away from ground vehicles in significant numbers.✪

BioJewels

by Jeff Zeitlin

This article was originally posted to the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 2002.

Ordinary jewelry depends on the ambient light for its best appearance. BioJewels, produced by several corporations, depend on the wearer's lifesigns, instead, providing an ever-changing reflection of the wearer's physical state, and indirectly his/her mental and/or emotional state as well. Although popular in their own right as costume jewelry, they have also proven to be useful to medical professionals such as personal doctors and nurses who need to monitor their patient continuously but unobtrusively, when the patient is in the public eye.

BioJewels are composed of a substrate that contains both a reprogrammable sensor and an electronically-sensitive material that reacts to the sensor signal by glowing. The sensor portion is generally reprogrammable for both metric and signal strength with the appropriate equipment by an individual with computer-2. The substrate can be produced to match the appearance of most precious stones, but cannot be changed after production.

Most jewelers on worlds of TL11+ (B+) that sell BioJewels are equipped for reprogramming, generally at a cost of Cr100-200 and one hour of time per jewel to be reprogrammed. On worlds of TL10- (A-), reprogramming will generally not be available.

When activated, the BioJewel glows at an intensity proportional to the strength of the incoming signal. Clear-substrate BioJewels can also be programmed to change color based on signal strength; colored-substrate BioJewels are limited to changes of hue (for example, a red-substrate BioJewel can be

In A Store Near You

made to vary from orange to maroon, but cannot be made to glow green or blue).

BioJewels (TL12 In)

Wholesale Cr200/gram, vol. negl. (5t/m³), lot size 0-5kg

Retail Cr1000/gram, volume negl.

BioJewel Sensor Reprogrammer (TL12 In)

Wholesale Cr7500, mass 5kg, volume 3000 cm³

Retail Cr10000

Referee's Note: Use the wholesale prices listed when determining the cost for purchasing as speculative cargo or when selling to a gem dealer. Use the retail prices listed for sales to end-users. ✪

☀ Critics' Corner

EPIC Adventure 4: Merchant Cruiser

reviewed by Ewan Quibell

EPIC Adventure 4: Merchant Cruiser. Michael Taylor.

Quicklink Interactive/FarFuture Enterprises

http://www.farfuture.net

37pp, PDF

Originally US$5.00, now available only on T20 CD-ROM

This review was originally posted to the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 2005.

Fourth in the LLB-style Adventure Series, *EPIC Adventure 4* seems to mirror the LLBs in content. Similar to *Leviathan* in theme, Michael Taylor's content details a merchant ship that the characters are hired aboard for a cruse into non-imperial space by the Outworld Mercantile Company.

Stats in *Traveller*²⁰ and Classic *Traveller* for a ship, the *Lorimar*-class merchant cruiser, are given. A written description of the specification adds character to the class. The production schedule adds history and also a couple of intriguing asides. The ship description and detail is rounded out by the first piece of artwork in the *EPIC Adventure* series from QLI. The art takes a whole page and I think that this lets the players familiarise themselves with the ship and is, I think, a positive inclusion.

In the adventure itself the players are encouraged to take parts of importance in the command structure of the ship such as the ship's master (the trade regulator) or the pilot or navigator, and as such will have a high impact on the performance of the ship and the outcome of the adventure. If command positions are not taken, the players will just

For Referees Only

*EPIC Adventure 4
Merchant Cruiser*

TRAVELLER.²⁰
*Science-Fiction Adventure in
the Far Future*

QLI/RPGRealms

CT - Classic Traveller
T20 - Traveller20
Gateway Domain

be side kicks that miss lots of the action. In support positions they will have little or no influence on the outcome of the adventure and as this negates the point of the EPIC completely, it should be avoided.

The guts of the adventure are the characters in a race to a world recently opened to off world trade against the firm's main Imperial rivals. There are complications alone the way as you might expect, but a main part of the story is a moral dilemma that the characters must deal with. While an excellent idea I found this moral dilemma a little high pow-

ered as the characters have to and are expected to use morally questionable business practices to beat their rival company, and while Michael hand-waves this as business practice on the world in question they are still morally questionable (in fact illegal) in today's business environment. One scene in the EPIC almost assumes that the characters will use an act of piracy to achieve their goals. While it's entirely possible for the characters to obtain their goals while using only slightly disagreeable activities the assumption that they have to kind of leads me to question the whole 'moral dilemma' thread. While the thread is very interesting, and gives great opportunities to role play, I think it is just pitched badly and doesn't sit quite right with the fact that the characters will have to use questionable tactics to obtain their goals anyway.

One aspect of the EPIC I found interesting is the contract negotiations that take place, as these give great opportunities for role play. Encouragement for players to stay in character should, in my opinion, be given and rewarded. There is a supplies entry in this part of the adventure that really adds to the act and hopefully to the roleplaying experience.

The planet the players end up on is quite restrictive in its law level and the descriptions of it are good, as are those of its government. There is a map of the Starport that can add to the playing experience, a picture being as good as a thousand words as they say. Animal encounters are given for the world and while this is a little redundant as the players are unlikely to ever leave the starport their inclusion adds to the overall wholeness of the world and allows for adventures away from the main one.

Along with the main adventure the EPIC starts the same as the others with much the same text explaining the EPIC system and giving examples. This is followed with background material on the Third Imperium and Client States. There are two subsectors mapped, Diamond-Prince and Outworld, with their UWP listings. There are descriptions for seven systems which I think are a little lacking and short to my mind; however, as the characters are not likely to spend any time in them on the way out this doesn't detract from the overall adventure. There are stats for a SDB, a cutter, and an armed merchant to add to those of the Merchant Cruiser, along with stats for a security robot that may provide the players with one of the exceptions along the way. The cast of characters finishes the EPIC.

To conclude I think this EPIC adventure as written is a little swings and roundabouts. On one side there are a couple of production errors that could have been sorted before release, the world descriptions could do with brushing up, and I think the whole moral dilemma thread is questionable as presented. Whilst on the other hand there is the *Lorimar*-class write up and description, plans, and stats, the adventure itself and the opportunities to role play within it. I have to admit that I'm a little biased as I tend towards merchant campaigns over mercenary ones and role playing over combat, but I think this EPIC, with a slightly different presentation, where the characters are employed by corporations who conduct trade wars and who are expected to do anything to obtain profits, is another good product from QLI.

Eminently suitable as a one off or possibly an enabling adventure for the characters to obtain a Jump 2 mortgage for themselves, this is another one I'm hoping that will make it to print so I can add it to the growing T20 area of my *Traveller* bookshelf.✿

TravellerCON/USA

TravellerCON/USA 2014 will be taking place October 10—12, at the Lancaster Host Resort and Conference Center in Lancaster, PA. Registration is open; the full weekend is $30 for referees or participants (age 12+ only); $35 for vendors. There is a discounted room rate at the Resort; mention TravellerCON when making your reservation. Further information can be found at the TravellerCON/USA website, http://www.travellercon-usa.com   ✿

Heriot-, Hare-, and Heyerdahl-class Hyperdrive Merchants

designed by Benjamin Pew

Heriot-class Hyperdrive Merchant , TL12				
Hull	Streamlined, self-sealing. Hull 8, Structure 8, Armor 0		*400.0*	MCr21.600
Interstellar Drive	Hyperspace Drive B		30.0	MCr20.000
Maneuver Drive	D, 2G acceleration (2 pc/day in hyperspace		7.0	MCr16.000
Power Plant	D		13.0	MCr32.000
Fuel	4 weeks		16.0	
Bridge			20.0	MCr2.000
Computer	Model/2	TL12, Rating 10		MCr0.300
	Software	Intellect (Rating 10)		MCr1.000
		Hyperspace Portal 2 (Rating 10)		MCr0.200
		Fire Control 1 (Rating 5)		MCr2.000
		Library (Rating 0)		-
		Maneuver Control (Rating 0)		-
Electronics	Basic Military (Jammers omitted)		2.0	MCr1.000
Staterooms	13		52.0	MCr6.500
Low Berths	9		4.5	MCr4.500
Vehicles	Lifeboat		20.0	MCr14.000
	Air/Raft		4.0	MCr0.275
Escape Pods	13		6.5	MCr1.300
Turrets	4 Double Turrets		4.0	MCr2.000
	4 Beam Lasers			MCr4.000
	2 Missile Racks			MCr1.500
	2 Sandcasters			MCr0.500
Cargo			221.0	-
Totals			**400.0**	**MCr130.675**

Using a 400-ton streamlined self-sealing hull, the *Heriot*-class merchant is designed for frontier trade and shipping. It mounts Hyperspace Drive B, maneuver drive D, and Power Plant D, giving performance of 2G and 2 parsecs per day. Fuel tankage of 16 tons supports four weeks of operation. Adjacent to the bridge is a TL12 computer of rating 10. There are 13 staterooms, 9 low berths, and 13 escape pods. Four double turrets are installed, and four tons allocated for fire control. They are equipped with four beam lasers, two missile racks, and two sandcasters. Ship's Vehicles include a 20-ton lifeboat, and an air/raft. Cargo capacity is 221 tons. Construction costs are MCr130.675, exclusive of architect's fees. The

Heriot requires a crew of eight: Pilot, Navigator, one Engineer, one Medic, and four gunners, one of whom should also have steward skills.

The *Heriot*-class hyperdrive merchant is based on the old *Akkigish*-class Jump Drive Fat Trader design, but the use of hyperdrive makes it faster, longer-ranged, and higher capacity. The longer range allows it to provide services over long trade routes. The *Heriot* is the most common variant of this hull used by smaller corporations and free traders, as it is considered to be the most versatile for their purposes. There is a freight-only version which is used on similar routes, along with a passenger-only version, descriptions for both of which follow.

(Continued from page 21)

Hare-class Hyperdrive Freighter , TL12				
Hull	Streamlined, self-sealing. Hull 8, Structure 8, Armor 0		*400.0*	MCr21.600
Interstellar Drive	Hyperspace Drive B		30.0	MCr20.000
Maneuver Drive	D, 2G acceleration (2 pc/day in hyperspace		7.0	MCr16.000
Power Plant	D		13.0	MCr32.000
Fuel	4 weeks		16.0	
Bridge			20.0	MCr2.000
Computer	Model/2	TL12, Rating 10		MCr0.300
	Software	Hyperspace Portal 2 (Rating 10)		MCr0.200
		Fire Control 1 (Rating 5)		MCr2.000
		Library (Rating 0)		-
		Maneuver Control (Rating 0)		-
Electronics	Basic Civilian		1.0	MCr0.500
Staterooms	6		24.0	MCr3.000
Vehicles	Air/Raft		4.0	MCr0.275
Escape Pods	6		3.0	MCr0.600
Turrets	2 Double Turrets		2.0	MCr1.000
	4 Beam Lasers			MCr4.000
Cargo			275.0	-
Totals			**400.0**	**MCr103.475**

Using a 400-ton streamlined self-sealing hull, the *Hare*-class freighter is designed for freight and cargo carriage on otherwise poorly-served routes. It mounts Hyperspace Drive B, maneuver drive D, and Power Plant D, giving performance of 2G and 2 parsecs per day. Fuel tankage of 16 tons supports four weeks of operation. Adjacent to the bridge is a TL12 computer of rating 10. There are 6 staterooms. Two turrets are installed, and two tons allocated for fire control. They are equipped with four beam lasers. The Ship's Vehicle is an air/raft. Cargo capacity is 275 tons. Construction costs are MCr103.475, exclusive of architect's fees. The *Hare* requires a crew of six: Pilot, Navigator, one Engineer, one Medic, and two gunners.

The *Hare*-class freighter is often the choice of both governments and corporations to support regular freight service to backwater worlds that would otherwise be irregularly served, such as colonies or low-population worlds off major routes. It repre-sents a best-effort at maximizing the revenue potential for a cargo/freight carrier and minimizing the cost of operating such routes, but even so, subsidies may be required. Corporations may also use the *Hare* to serve small bases in newly opened territory, or to link through a low-traffic area two routes with moderate-to-high-traffic.

Its long endurance, greater range, and increased cargo capacity as compared with the equivalently-sized stock Type R offers the possibility of a faster payoff under standard subsidy terms, and for planning of routes to maximize potential return on speculative trade.

About *The Burrowwolf*

The authors/artists of *The Burrowwolf* have reached out to us, and let us know that they're planning on getting "back into harness", and resuming work on the comic. Watch this space for further developments.

The Shipyard

Heyerdahl-class Hyperdrive Liner , TL12				
Hull	Streamlined, self-sealing. Hull 8, Structure 8, Armor 0		*400.0*	MCr21.600
Interstellar Drive	Hyperspace Drive B		30.0	MCr20.000
Maneuver Drive	D, 2G acceleration (2 pc/day in hyperspace		7.0	MCr16.000
Power Plant	D		13.0	MCr32.000
Fuel	4 weeks		16.0	
Bridge			20.0	MCr2.000
Computer	Model/2	TL12, Rating 10		MCr0.300
	Software	Hyperspace Portal 2 (Rating 10)		MCr0.200
		Fire Control 1 (Rating 5)		MCr2.000
		Library (Rating 0)		-
		Maneuver Control (Rating 0)		-
Electronics	Basic Civilian		1.0	MCr0.500
Staterooms	30		120.0	MCr15.000
Low Berths	40		20.0	MCr20.000
Vehicles	Air/Raft		4.0	MCr0.275
Escape Pods	30		15.0	MCr1.300
Turrets	2 Double Turrets		2.0	MCr1.000
	4 Beam Lasers			MCr4.000
Cargo			152.0	-
Totals			**400.0**	**MCr136.175**

Using a 400-ton streamlined self-sealing hull, the *Heyerdahl*-class liner is designed for passenger carriage on otherwise poorly-served routes, though it is also used as fill-in on high-traffic routes. It mounts Hyperspace Drive B, maneuver drive D, and Power Plant D, giving performance of 2G and 2 parsecs per day. Fuel tankage of 16 tons supports four weeks of operation. Adjacent to the bridge is a TL12 computer of rating 10. There are 30 staterooms, 40 low berths, and 30 escape pods. Two turrets are installed, and two tons allocated for fire control. They are equipped with four beam lasers. The Ship's Vehicles is an air/raft. Cargo capacity is 152 tons. Construction costs are MCr136.175, exclusive of architect's fees. The *Heyerdahl* requires a core crew of six: Pilot, Navigator, one Engineer, one Medic, and two gunners. A variable number of stewards are also required for servicing passenger needs; the exact number required depends on the number and mix of high and middle passengers, and the skill levels of the stewards.

The *Heyerdahl*-class liner is the passenger variant based on the *Heriot* design. It is generally used for passenger service in areas where the *Hare* finds a use for freight and cargo carriage, and for much the same reasons. They are also seen on corporate high-traffic routes as 'fill in' ships, where demand exceeds the capacity of standard large liners, but not by enough to make an additional large liner profitable. Governments may also subsidize these liners to provide passage between poor, high-population worlds and other worlds, or occasionally as supplemental colonial carriage (though larger vessels, if available, are preferable.). A few *Heyerdahl*s are in service with free trader crews who prefer to cater to passenger service, and a common after-market conversion is to take a few tons of cargo space and make a casino. Some incidental cargo may be carried, or passengers may be given a more generous baggage allowance.✪

John Law: Character Generation for Classic *Traveller*/*MegaTraveller*

by Russel Bornschlegel (with consultation from Jeff Zeitlin)

Introduction

MegaTraveller introduced the Law Enforcer career, but provided only the brief Classic *Traveller Book 1* style of character generation. This article provides an expanded, *High Guard*/*Mercenary* style character generation system for the Law Enforcer career.

Character Generation

Enlistment

After rolling the personal characteristics for your character, roll 2D for enlistment with DMs as shown below. If enlistment fails, select an alternate service as usual, either by draft or by attempting to enlist in other services. Enlistment is for a term of four years. After each term, the character may either leave the service voluntarily or roll 2D for Reenlistment. Failing the reenlistment roll results in discharge.

Enlistment Roll	*8+*
DM +1 if:	*STR 8+*
DM +2 if:	*INT 8+*
Re-Enlistment Roll	*5+*

At the referee's discretion, a character discharged from one service may attempt to enlist in another, with a DM of -1 applied to the enlistment roll for each full four years of age over age 18.

Automatic Skills

Certain skills are gained automatically by police characters, representing initial training. Once enlisted in the Police, the character gains the following skills: Streetwise-1, Gun Combat-1 (usually with a pistol), and Vehicle-0. Police gain Leader-1 upon attaining rank 2 (Sergeant) and Liaison-1 upon reaching rank 3 (Lieutenant).

Automatic skills are never cumulative. For example, if a Police Officer with Leader-2 reaches Sergeant, he or she does not gain Leader-3.

Assignment

Once enlisted in the Police, the character rolls 2D and consults the following table to determine duty assignment. Once assigned to a particular duty, the character remains in that duty until he or she opts to change in a given year and makes the Change Assignment roll associated with the duty, or until the Change Assignment roll is 10+ whether the character wishes to change or not. The following year, roll again for assignment. Assignment is retained from year to year and across a term reenlistment unless the change roll is made.

Assignment Table

2	Disciplinary Action	8	Beat Cop
3	Detective	9	Elite Force
4	Detective	10	Elite Force
5	Desk Job	11	High-Tech Investigation*
6	Beat Cop	12	Internal Affairs
7	Beat Cop		

* Not available if local TL is TL7-. Treat as "Elite Force" in such cases.

Assignment Resolution

First, make a 2D roll for Survival; failure of this roll results in a severe injury sufficient to discharge the character from service. The referee determines the injury and its results; the character should be rendered "interesting" rather than "unplayable" as a result. If both Intelligence and Endurance are 8 or over, there is a +1 to the survival roll.

Next, roll 2D for Skill; if the roll is made, the character gain a skill from one of the available tables. The Police Life table is always available; the Advanced Education table is available to characters with EDU 8+, and the Assignment Skill table corresponding to the current Assignment is available. The character is not eligible for a skill roll in any year in which they obtain an automatic skill, including their first year of enlistment.

Cascade skills allow the player their choice of the listed skills; Gun Combat, Blade Combat, and Vehicle are the standard cascades for the game system in use. Vice is a cascade of Bribery, Forgery, Carousing, Gambling, or Intrusion. Hacking skill is a selective combination of Intrusion and Computer, and covers both illicit access to electronic systems and detection thereof.

Third, roll 2D for a Special event; if the roll is made, consult the Specials table.

Next, roll 2D for promotion. Police characters start at rank of Rank 1 (Officer/Detective) and advance one rank every time the promotion roll is made. Promotion from Rank 3 to Rank 4, or Rank 4 to Rank 5 carries a DM of -1; promotion from Rank 5 to Rank 6 carries a DM of -2. Only one promotion is possible per four-year term. Police gain automatic skills of Leader-1 at rank 2 and Liaison-1 at rank 3.

Finally, roll 2D for Change of Assignment. If the roll is 10+, the character's assignment changes the following year, like it or not. If the indicated number or above is thrown, the character may change assignment if desired.

Assignment Descriptions

Disciplinary Action: The character has been accused of misconduct. This results in a Beat Cop type of assignment, but the character is on probation, and must keep squeaky-clean. Resolve as normal for Beat Cop, but do not roll for promotion, and apply the following changes:

- When rolling for special, ignore results of 4+.
- When resolving On Trial or Corruption, DM-2.
- Do not roll for Change; next assignment will be Beat Cop without these modifications.

This character henceforth has a permanent DM-1 for promotion. This DM is cumulative.

Detective: The character is assigned to investigate major crimes: murders, grand thefts, grevious assaults, and so on.

Desk Job: The character is assigned to administrative tasks, and does little if any field work.

Beat Cop: The character patrols the streets, doing a significant amount of deterrence as well as criminal investigation.

Elite Force: This assignment includes special units such as the Vice Squad (or Public Morals Division), Anti-Terrorist/Hostage Rescue teams, and task forces targeted at specific "popular" crimes.

High Tech Investigation: The character is assigned to combat High Tech Crime. If the world's tech level is 7 or below, treat this result as "Elite Force".

Internal Affairs: The character investigates the activities of other police. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*

Assignment Resolution Table			
Assignment	**Detective**	**Desk Job**	**Beat Cop**
Survival*	6+	3+	5+
Skill	7+	8+	8+
Special	7+	9+	8+
Promotion*	8+	10+	10+
Change	6+	7+	8+
Assignment	**Elite Force**	**High Tech**	**Internal Affairs**
Survival*	6+	3+	4+
Skill	7+	7+	6+
Special	7+	7+	5+
Promotion*	8+	9+	9+
Change	6+	5+	6+

Survival DM +1 if INT 8+ and END 8+
Promotion DM -1 if Rank 3 or Rank 4; DM -2 if Rank 5

Skill Tables			
Police Life	**Adv Edu[2]**	**Detective**	**Desk Job**
1 +1 STR	+1 EDU	Streetwise	Admin
2 +1 DEX	+1 INT	Forensics	Admin
3 Svc Weap Cbt[1]	Computer[3]	Interrogation	Forgery
4 Vehicle	Leader	Computer[3]	Computer[3]
5 Brawling	Interrogation	Svc Weap Cbt[1]	Legal
6 Streetwise	Legal	Brawling	Instruction
Beat Cop	**Elite Force**	**High Tech[3]**	**Internal Affairs**
1 Streetwise	Medical	Computer	Liaison
2 Brawling	Demolitions	Liaison	Interrogation
3 Vehicle	Spcl Weap Cbt[4]	Streetwise	Admin
4 Carousing	Vice[2]	Hacking	Computer[3]
5 Jack-o-T	Vehicle	Electronic	Leader
6 Interrogation	Interrogation	+1 Education	Legal

(1) Standard service issue weapon.
(2) Advanced Education available for characters with EDU 8+ only
(3) Not available below TL8. See Low-Tech Alternatives
(4) "Special weapon" refers to a weapon, other than the standard issue service weapon, which may be used in exceptional situations (e.g., hostage situations). At referee's discretion, Tactics may be substituted

(Continued from page 25)

Special Events Table	
1	Corruption
2	On Trial
3	Vendetta
4	Hero
5	Journey
6	Patron

Table of Ranks	
1	Constable or Officer or Detective*
2	Sergeant
3	Lieutenant
4	Captain
5	Inspector
6	Chief or Commissioner

Detective is used if the character has ever held a Detective assignment.

Trial Resolution		
Result	**Sentence**	**SOC Mod**
0 or less	Cruel and Unusual Punishment*	-10
1	Death Sentence or Life Sentence*	-8
2	Prison Time: 10D Years	-6
3	Prison Time: 5D Years	-5
4	Prison Time: 2D Years	-4
5	Prison Time: 1D Years	-3
6	Prison Time: 1D Years	-2
7	Prison Time: 1D/2 Years (round up)	-2
8	Prison Time: 1D/2 Years (round up)	-1
9	Prison Time: 1 Year	-1
10	Prison Time: 6 Months; no jail skill roll	-1
11	Prison Time: 90 Days; no jail skill roll.	-1
12	Guilty of Misdemeanor; fined 1D×Cr1000.	0
13	Guilty of Misdemeanor; fined 1D×Cr500.	0
14	Acquitted.	0
15	Acquitted.	0
16 or more	Acquitted with publicity	+1

* Referee's discretion to explain survival/escape, or write off character.

Special Event Resolution

When a special event is indicated, roll 1D on the special events table. Consult the following descriptions for the special events.

On Trial: The character is arrested on suspicion of a serious crime. The character may or may not actually be guilty. The character may allocate legal fees if he or she has any money (from reward money, corruption takings, previous careers and the like) in increments of Cr5000. 2D are rolled. The character's current SOC and (legal fees/Cr5000) are added to the roll. The number of previous trials the character has faced are subtracted from the roll, and if the character has spent any time in the Rogue career, the number of terms so spent is also subtracted. If the law level of the world involved is known, (5-law level) is added. With all modifiers totalled up, consult the following table. If a sentence is indicated, go to Prison Time, below. Add or subtract the indicated modifier to the character's SOC. SOC below 2 should be retained for posterity and amusement; the minimum SOC is 0. For the most extreme sentences, the referee should either simply write off the character or explain how the character gets out of jail. The player should have the option to write off a character and start over if the sentence would make the character too old for the player's taste. If a Police character is tried, and does not end up either Jailed or Acquitted, his or her next assignment is automatically Disciplinary Action.

Prison Time: If the character is sentenced to prison for any length of time, they are automatically discharged from Police service. At the referee's discretion, the character may muster out normally, or the referee can determine what effects a criminal record has on other enlistment opportunities. After the first year of jail, and every 4 years in jail thereafter, roll 1D on the Jail Skills Table to see what skill is gained while in jail. In the first year, the skill must be taken from the Convict Life table; later rolls may be taken on the Trustee table at the player's discretion if the character has EDU 9+. No Jail Skill roll is made if the character is sentenced to less than one year. If the character is only fined, and does not serve jail time, the next five years of assignments are all automatically Disciplinary Action, and the character has an automatic cumulative DM –3 for future promotion.

Patron: Someone with money or power, possibly a political or underworld figure, owes the character a favor, or considers him or her trustworthy enough

Doing It My Way

Jail Skills Table	
Convict Life	**Trustee**
1 Brawling	Legal (Max level 2)
2 Brawling	Gambling
3 Streetwise	Vice
4 +1 STR	Admin (Max level 2)
5 +1 END	+1 EDU
6 +1 END	Steward

to consider for a future job. This special may be "traded in" and lost to cancel Prison Time received later in the career process. The referee determines any other effects of the Patron.

Vendetta: The character has made an enemy. The referee determines future encounters with the enemy.

Hero: The character did something brave and hazardous, and had his or her fifteen minutes of fame as a result. +1 SOC plus the result of 1D rolled on the following table:

Hero Reward
1 +1 SOC (total +2)
2 1D×Cr500 reward money
3 High Passage
4 Medal, Plaque, etc., worth 1D×Cr10
5 Busy Year: Resolve the next year *twice*, applying all results. The character ages only one year.
6 Traveller's Aid Society Membership

Journey: The character's career takes him or her to several other star systems, possibly as an exchange program. The character gains +1 EDU and a skill rolled on the following table.

Journey Skills
1 Gunnery or Commo (Referee's discretion)
2 Liaison
3 Vehicle or Ship's Boat (Referee's discretion)
4 Vacc Suit
5 Carousing
6 Zero-G Combat

Corruption: The character becomes aware of corruption on the force. The player has a choice; he or she can either Blow The Whistle or Join The Party. If an enemy is made from Blowing The Whistle, or if money is gained from Joining The Party, roll 1D; on 4+, the character's next assignment will be Disciplinary Action.

Blow the Whistle
1 The character is discharged at the end of the current year.
2 The character is falsely imprisoned; resolve a Prison Term as above.
3 The character makes an enemy; resolve a Vendetta as above.
4 The character makes an enemy; resolve a Vendetta as above.
5 The character becomes a Hero as above.
6 The character becomes a Hero as above.

Join the Party
1 The character is caught and jailed; resolve a Prison Term as above.
2 The character is caught and jailed; resolve a Prison Term as above.
3 The character pockets Cr1000.
4 The character skims Cr5000.
5 The character scores Cr10000.
6 The character heists Cr20000.

Mustering Out

When leaving a service, the character makes rolls for mustering out benefits. One roll is allowed per four year term served or portion thereof; Police of rank 3 or 4 gain an extra roll; Police of rank 5 or 6 gain another extra roll. Rolls on the cash table gain a +1 if the character has Gambling skill; rolls on the material benefits table for Police of rank 5 or 6 gain +1. No more than three rolls may be made on the cash table in any event.

Mustering-Out Benefits	
Material Benefits	**Cash Benefits**
1 Low Passage	2000
2 Middle Passage	5000
3 Gun	10000
4 Watch	10000
5 Forensics Kit (if char has Forensics skill, else +1 EDU)	20000
6 High Passage	30000
7 Traveller's Aid Society	40000

Doing It My Way

Customizing the Career

Different cultures have different needs for policing. For color, consider some of the following customizations:

Service Issue Weapons

For many cultures, this will be a gun skill, most likely Pistol or Revolver. However, there are places where the police might not routinely carry guns, in which case you might want to have the issue weapon be a sword (which uses Blade, Sword, or Cutlass skill, depending on type), a knife/dagger (uses Dagger skill), or a nightstick/baton (which uses Club skill). Alternatively, in a really tough environment, heavier armament may be standard, such as a shotgun, submachinegun, or carbine (use appropriate skill). Whichever you choose, substitute it for "Service Weapon Combat" in the skill tables.

Low Tech Alternatives

High Tech Investigation capability is unlikely to be available on worlds below TL8. Instead, treat this assignment as though it were "Elite Force". Also, where "Computer" skill is awarded, choose an alternative appropriate to the tech level - in most cases, Admin will do nicely, although a detective might have the opportunity to gain Forgery or Intrusion skill instead.

Similarly, "Vehicle" may be changed to "Animal Handling" if the TL is low enough (TL 5-).

Rank

Feel free to adjust the rank titles as you see fit. Some suggestions might be "Subaltern" for "Lieutenant", "Marshal" for "Chief", "Major", "Commandant", or "Colonel" for "Inspector", or just translate the terms into another language. Also, the extended character generation sequences in the original *Traveller* introduced a more detailed rank system, with up to 10 enlisted ranks plus up to 10 commissioned ranks. If you wish to use such an extended rank system, either add a roll for Commission to the Assignment Resolution Procedure (recommended: target number is promotion +1), or assume that a character must progress through all the ranks, going from E10 to O1 as a normal promotion. If you chose the latter, remove the one-per-term limit on promotions, and allow a promotion every year.

Ext. Rank	Title	Equiv. Basic Rank	Ext. Rank	Title	Equiv. Basic Rank
E1	Recruit	1	O1	Lieutenant	3
E2	Officer	1	O2	Captain	4
E3	Corporal	2	O3	Deputy Inspector	4
E4	Sergeant	2	O4	Inspector	5
			O5	Deputy Chief	5
			O6	Assistant Chief	5
			O7	Bureau Chief	6
			O8	Chief	6
			O9	Commissioner	6

Depending on local culture, the table may look like that for one of the military arms, or it might be completely different. A sample rank table, based on the New York City rank structure, might be:

Note that for the purposes of DMs affected by rank, the Equivalent Basic Rank is used.

Journey Alternatives

A journey might be an exchange program with a police department elsewhere. At the referee's discretion, instead of the simple +1 EDU, the character may be awarded a skill level in a skill that might not be available on the homeworld—for example, if the exchange is to a lower TL, where the police ride horses instead of using air-rafts, the character might get Animal Handling. ✹

Angle of Incidence

by Michael Brown

Synopsis: An obsessed researcher hatches a dangerous plot to reunite with his late wife.

Setting: An Imperial Research Station. The adventure can start from any Imperial world. The time is sometime after the Fifth Frontier War (1107-1110).

Skills and Equipment Required: Starship handling skills.

Prologue: Ever Drifting Down the Stream

Feric McDonough is anxious and sweating heavily in his rumpled suit. He clearly has a problem. A shipload of supplies for an Imperial research station should have lifted a day ago; its crew is nowhere to be found; and McDonough's boss has been hospitalized with an acute case of *gurratu* fever. His desperation grows as he explains all this to the PCs in the course of hiring them to ferry the goods. He offers them triple standard rates to make the run.

The station is several jumps away, in orbit around a black hole. Assuming PC (and player) anxiety, he hastens to add that this is not the first time his company has run cargo to the station, and it is his understanding that the station has been in a stable orbit around it for years. McDonough is frantic and will sweeten the deal as much as necessary.

The starship is a Type A2 Far Trader with a full hold. McDonough also gives the team permit codes and papers for use on arrival at the station and vouchers for fuel purchases and port fees en route.

I: Our Attitudes and Expectations

Traveller lacks rules for the placement of black holes, but common sense will serve. The referee should place the anomaly within any void of 2 or more parsecs radius. Obviously, no x-boat routes will link to it, and it will be classified a Red Zone.

Attempts to gather information beforehand on the station fail—the work ongoing there and the personnel is classified. They can only find the generalized research station Library Data such as that mentioned in *Adventure 2: Research Station Gamma*.

The referee may refer to the information in Imperial Research Station Sigma below.

The adventurers arrive in-system with a bang, literally. Moments after breakout from jump, a key component of the drive fails explosively. Anyone nearby at the time takes 4D damage. The explosion also damages the power plant, which fails completely in 17D minutes. The maneuver drives are undamaged. Distress calls to the station are answered by an officious woman who seemingly ignores the heroes' growing concern in order to gather information. The first instance of dialogue (including communications lag time) takes 30 minutes and consists of questions concerning the team's business in the system, and verification and authorization of any information they supply. At the end of 30 minutes, the referee throws her reaction (DMs: PCs' Liaison skill; prior Naval service, +1; exceptional persuasiveness on the players' part, as determined by the referee, +1; transmitting the codes supplied by McDonough, +3.) A positive reaction grants permission to approach the station. A negative reaction results in another 30 minutes of questions and answers, but automatic access to the station.

If the group approaches the station without permission, or without first transmitting McDonough's codes, they are fired on as soon as they are in range.

Upon arrival, the team is greeted by Dr Agata Dorlais (whose voice they recognize as the one on the comm) and an engineer introducing himself as Kinnaird Vashu; both attended by an armed security guard. Dorlais is all business, confining her interactions to informing the team of the station rules, assigning them temporary quarters, and once again verifying their information using a hand computer. Vashu is much friendlier. Not only is he eager to examine the ship's damaged drives, he seems pleased to see the PCs.

Vashu gets right to work upon gaining permission. Upon getting any of the PCs alone, he begins speaking oddly; throwing non sequiturs, seemingly nonsensical slogans, and turns of phrase that do not really fit into the conversation. The heroes may

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throw INT or less to realize that he is feeding them passphrases and is waiting for the proper counter-signs. After a few awkward exchanges, Vashu also realizes this and asks quietly if they are there to back him up. Obviously they are not.

Vashu then takes them into his confidence: he is actually an undercover Imperial agent, investigating possible criminal activity on board the station. He was expecting fellow operatives as backup. Once apprised of the situation, he understands. He explains that McDonough was not part of the organization and could not have known to replace the original ship's crew with another team of agents, thus grabbing the first available crew. The drives were deliberately sabotaged to give the agents a reason to linger at the station; they knew to avoid the explosion. Vashu was to work on repairing the drives while his colleagues took over the investigation, coincidentally finishing once the culprits were exposed. Now he must work the adventurers into the plan. He offers to deputize them, promising payment later if the mission is successful. Any PC taking the offer will get one throw on the Scout Mustering Out Cash Table after the adventure.

II: In Which Everyone Shows Their Image

Before leaving them, Vashu gives the team important information: they are not to violate anyone's rights, and must bring any useful information to him. He warns them that maintaining his cover is paramount; he must disavow any illegal actions they are caught undertaking. Finally, the station is a firearm-free zone, but Security is not so restricted, and they are loyal to station director Dr Anson Ogele. Otherwise, the group should stay alert.

As they settle in, Dr Dorlais issues the PCs access codes to the living quarters and the laboratories and reveals the station routine: First Watch (0900-1700) is devoted to research and station maintenance. Second Watch (1700-0100) is for recreation and personal time; and Third Watch (0100-0900) is

reserved for rest. The adventurers will be expected to adhere to this general schedule.

Dorlais does not reveal the security schedule. Security work 12-hour shifts in pairs. The security chief is always "on-call". Ex-military PCs will note that five guards for a crew of 43 is excessive; a clue that something is not as it seems.

The referee should throw for the crew's initial reactions to the PCs. Especially positive or negative reactions may require ongoing monitoring. If asked about their opinions of the station leaders, the scientists will express nothing but confidence and loyalty in Ogele and Dorlais.

Each day the PCs interact with the station staff, they have a chance to pick up useful information. The adventurers may throw 8+ once per day to gain a clue. If successful, throw 1D+1D (DMs on 1st die only: If investigator is a Scout or Scientist, -1; if investigator is Engineer-3+, +1) on the table below to determine exactly what information is gained. Not all the data is true; some are outright lies, and others are highly subjective. Each clue or a rumor should only be used once, except as noted below:

2nd Die	1st Die					
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
1	A	B	C	D	E	F
2	G	U	U	W	W	H
3	I	U	Y	Y	W	J
4	K	X	Z	Z	V	L
5	M	X	X	V	V	N
6	O	P	Q	R	S	T

A. It is very unusual for the Scouts to so extensively refit a decommissioned *Purcell*. Someone somewhere pulled some strings to make it happen.

B. The station medic—who is also a trained psychologist—is worried that Ogele is obsessed, but there is not enough evidence of insanity to relieve him of duty… yet.

C. Ogele is a workaholic. When he is not on the bridge, he can usually be found in the main astrophysics lab running programs that seem to take a lot of processing power.

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D. A popular video on the station's entertainment channel is a documentary by a prominent astrophysicist discussing the likelihood of parallel universes.

E. A low-ranking scientist mentions he was late for a duty shift last week. Dr. Ogele did not seem overly upset. The problem was that the researcher's clock was running slow. "Come to think of it, all of the clocks were off that day; we had to have a station-wide synchronization."

F. The computer holds two sets of research reports. The first set (submitted to the Imperium) recounts slow progress in the study of the black hole. Another set (encrypted and passcode-protected [hacked on a throw of 14+, DM: Computer skill]) mentions success in detecting unstable wormholes in the black hole's event horizon, progress with a mysterious project, and the results of jump drive tests, apparently in support of that project. Failure to hack the passcode will alert security to the intruder's location.

G. Navigational data indicates that the station is not where it should be in its orbit, given how long it has been in the system. The only way to explain the discrepancy is that it would have had to "blink" in its orbit several times.

H. The investigator discovers very complex mathematical calculations. Their purpose is not immediately evident. On a throw of 15+ (DM: INT/5) a Scientist can deduce that the calculations deal with space-time formulae.

I. The Chief Engineer has carelessly left specs for a Darrian-built jump drive out. Engineer-3+ can determine the specs match the auxiliary jump drive in the Drive Room.

J. A technician mentions Dr. Ogele's hatred of Zhodani and speculates that the reason is there's a Zho spy on board somewhere.

K. Two of the station scientists are overheard in the mess hall engaged in an animated discussion of wormholes.

L. Some of the most recently-accessed files in the ship's library computer involve Einstein's Theory of Relativity and Schwarzschild coordinates.

M. A look at the station's financial records shows some irregularities. Digging deeper will reveal that massive payments were made to a Darrian jump drive manufacturer and an Imperial manufacturer of jump grids. Payments were also made to consultants to aid with installation. The books were cooked to cover up the expenditures.

N. A computer file holds sensor data that allows the computer to build a representation of the black hole's interior structure.

O. Two security guards are overheard discussing "the operation." They seem to be anxious about it, but will clam up if confronted.

P. The station has installed a second jump drive and jump grid.

Q. One of the scientists is seen reading a book of Darrian poetry that she received as a gift.

R. An encrypted computer file (same chances to hack as F above, but with no alarms) holds a very complex program designed to precisely control the operation of the jump drive, the auxiliary drive, and the supplemental jump field.

S. About a year ago, the station hosted a delegation of Darrian scientists and engineers. The engineers spent a lot of time installing a jump drive.

T. The navigator recalls being asked hypothetically by Dr. Ogele how long it would take for the station to travel to the hole from its current orbit. The answer is about 24 hours, including acceleration due to the increasing gravity.

General Rumors

These rumors and clues can be used multiple times, changing it slightly each time:

U. Black holes are fairly common in the galaxy, but seem quite rare in Charted Space.

V. A staffer says that it is his understanding that between the times it was an Xboat Tender and a research station, the ship was a prison barge.

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W. The system consists not only of the black hole, but two gas giants, an asteroid belt, and a rocky iceball world. The station refuels from the giants.

X. A researcher surmises that an Ancient site exists in the black hole; why else would the Imperium devote a whole research station to studying it?

Y. Dr Ogele was once a respected researcher on Regina, but when his wife was killed in the Fifth Frontier War, something in him died as well.

Z. A researcher swears he saw a report that other interstellar governments are using black holes to regularly travel to other parts of the galaxy. The Imperium had better get that technology if it wants to keep up.

Vashu also gathers information in this manner. He will debrief the heroes once per week, using a weekly poker game as cover. During this time, the group can report their findings, brainstorm the solution to the puzzle, and formulate plans to stop it.

In the meantime, he has his station engineering duties to attend to in addition to repairing the team's ship. Once per 24 hour period, he must throw 9+ to make temporary repairs sufficient to allow a jump to the nearest system (he does not have the equipment or parts necessary to make permanent repairs; a shipyard is necessary for that.) If it looks like the investigation is dragging, he can extend the time it takes to fix the drive to buy the PCs and himself time.

On any throw of a natural 2 during the information-gathering, an adventurer has raised suspicion in some way. Make an immediate Reaction throw for that individual at -2; any positive result gives the victim a chance to talk his or her way out of trouble (subject to the referee's determination.) Any negative result means Security takes that person straight to Dr Ogele.

Whether any of them are taken to Ogele or not, the entire group is now under suspicion and constant monitoring. They will also be restricted to the habitat decks (except for the bridge) and their own ship. Any deviation from station routine or non-restricted areas results in the group being confined to an empty stateroom until their ship is repaired.

The referee should also throw 11+ each day for a special event to occur (see "At Once Air and Stone" below) related to the testing of the supplemental jump drive, and implement the indicated result.

To start them off, Vashu can supply what he has already found:

• Ogele has made substantial changes to the station personnel; including replacing key staffers and letting go those who do not seem to fit into some sort of project.

• The station has been fitted with an extra jump drive of odd configuration. He does not know the purpose of the drive, and has been unable to investigate further without raising suspicion.

• Vashu is no psychologist, but it seems Ogele is developing a number of obsessions. One is a fixation on images of his late wife Loret. Another is a hyperfocus on the black hole.

Vashu does not yet have enough evidence to bring Ogele up on charges, and in any case he was waiting for his backup. He urges the heroes to find something he can pin on Ogele and expose whatever he is involved in. But however they go about it, subtlety is vital. A handful of station staffers have simply disappeared, and Vashu suspects they ended up in the black hole.

III: A True Soul Mate

If any of the heroes are detained and taken to Dr. Ogele, he can be found on the bridge during the first two watches. There is a chance he can be found there during Third Watch as well; roll 8+ on 2D.

Anson Ogele is not a nice man. His loss has deeply traumatized him. That trauma has caused him to turn his tremendous intellect to devising a scheme to cheat death. He does not care that its chances of working are slim, and far more likely to cause death and destruction.

He will barely even acknowledge the heroes' presence. He is totally focused on his goal and the black hole beyond. He will distantly regard any

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charges brought against the team, but will essentially leave their disposition to the security squad.

Each adventurer may throw 10+ to get a glance at Ogele's control panel, which displays several colored lines leading into an image of the black hole. PCs with Navigator skill recognize an approach vector modeling program. However, they only get a glance—Ogele quickly switches the panel off or blocks it from view. If asked about it, Ogele obliquely answers the question with a lengthy rant of the capricious nature of life and death, then of his wife and their love for one another. Finally he rails against how she was taken from him by "the accursed Zhodani" and recounts how he found prior research into the possibilities of parallel universes and realized that he could see his beloved again.

Ogele's rambling answer allows the heroes to put the final pieces of the puzzle into place: Ogele has hatched a mad scheme to travel through the black hole to a parallel universe!

IV: Crack'd From Side to Side

After Ogele orders security to deal with the adventurers, he washes his hands of them and returns to his work. How the guards deal with the PCs is up to them. If they cause no trouble, the guards simply lock them in a spare stateroom. Otherwise, the guards gun them down without mercy.

In no instance will Vashu break cover. He will attempt to get a subtle, coded message to the group (throw 7+ for success, DMs depending on the method used), but will not act overtly.

Ogele is now certain the heroes are on to his plan and intend to interfere. In response, he decides to move his timetable up. He activates a secret computer program that engages the station's autopilot and puts it on an approach vector into the hole. He then locks out any other operators with a complex memorized passcode. The computer will destroy the controls if it detects hacking attempts. Once the maneuver drive is engaged, the station will reach the event horizon in 24 hours.

The referee should keep careful track of time from this point forward. No one will know anything is wrong for at least an hour after Ogele activates the program. Until an hour before the station enters the throat, the team and Vashu still have time to stop the plot. Therefore, the group and Vashu have 22 hours to try and stop Ogele. If he activates the program on Third Watch, the heroes may have even less time to act.

Epilogue: Eternity Gazing At Itself

From this point, the resolution of the adventure rests on the heroes. They must realize what is occurring, escape their confinement, and either stop Ogele or escape the station. They will be up against the security team and a panicky ship's crew. Vashu may or may not have finished repairing the group's ship; regardless, he has a sense of duty to bring Ogele to justice. He is not a fool; if things seem hopeless, he will persuade the team to leave, saving as many of the station's staff as possible.

If the team is aboard the station as it enters the event horizon, they have no choice but to pray that Ogele's plan works. This depends on the referee: Ogele is either a madman, in which case the station is destroyed with all hands; or a visionary, in which case the group is part of the first group to cross over into another universe through a black hole.

If the referee decides that the station successfully crosses over, decisions need to be made. The first is where the station emerges. The trip through the black hole will cause a massive misjump. Regardless of where the station ends up, Ogele immediately goes in search of the new universe's analogue of his wife. This could lead to an all new campaign.

The referee also needs to decide the nature of the new universe and the differences, if any, from the previous one. The referee might take the opportunity to introduce a different version of *Traveller*; perhaps the Rebellion and aftermath of *Megatraveller* or *Traveller: The New Era*; or the universe of *GURPS Traveller*. They could end up in the past or the distant future. The possibilities are endless.

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If the group escapes the station, they will bear witness to the sight of the station falling ever more slowly into the anomaly, appearing redder and redder due to light dilation, until it seems to stop entirely, forever frozen just outside the event horizon, a permanent visual record of one man's obsession.

The referee must determine the flow of subsequent events.

NPCs

Anson Ogele 567FDC Age 60 Cr111,000
10 terms Scientist; Station Administrator
Admin-2, Computer-1, Electronics-2, Gravitics-3, Jack-O-T-1, Leader-1

Dr Ogele was a prominent astrophysicist affiliated with the University of Regina and a rising star in his field until his wife Loret died during the Fifth Frontier War. Her death left him traumatized, harboring an intense hatred of the Zhodani, and an obsession with finding a way to enter another universe where Loret might yet live. He is bereft of almost all emotion and this is reflected in his treatment of staff.

Kinnaird Vashu 8A7AB8 Age 35 Cr11,000
4 terms Investigator; Engineer Grade II (Imperial Inspector)
Computer-1, Engineering-1, Gun Cbt-1, Jack-O-T-1, Mechanical-1, Recon-1

Vashu is an undercover agent for an Imperial law enforcement organization similar to the FBI. His cover is an engineer, which gives him a good reason to snoop in discrete areas of the station. While he does not have the complete picture by the time the heroes show up, what he has discovered so far is disturbing. Vashu is dashing and efficient and is built with the Scout career template, with Recon skill (from *Book 4: Mercenary*) substituted for Pilot.

Agata Dorlais 466DD9 Age 55 Cr70,000
9 terms Scientist; Deputy Station Administrator
Admin-1, Computer-2, Electronics-1, Jack-O-T-1

In many ways, Dr Dorlais is a reflection of Dr Ogele. She witnessed the death of her fiancée during the Zhodani's siege of Efate—and blames herself for his death. Like Ogele, untreated trauma has manifested as frostiness. Unlike Ogele, she is still salvageable; her interactions with the PCs will have undercurrents of a cry for help. If she is shown friendship, perhaps even love, she may switch sides and help the PCs.

Station Personnel

The station personnel are not detailed here. The referee may generate them as needed, using the following parameters: thirty scientists and one medic (*Supplement 4: Citizens of the Imperium*); three engineers (a Chief Engineer with Engineer-3+, Vashu, and one other); and five Security guards, including the chief, equipped to Tech Level E and packing Auto Pistols. Referees who wish to put in the work may produce brief character descriptions of each of these NPCs to help bring them to life for the players.

Imperial Research Station Sigma

Refitted from a decommissioned 1000-ton *Purcell*-class Xboat Tender hull, Research Station Sigma is designed for long-term, cutting-edge astrophysical research, with a focus on detailed study of gravitic anomalies such as black holes. It mounts jump drive L, maneuver drive E and power plant L, giving performance of jump-2 and 1-G acceleration. Fuel tankage of 230 tons supports the power plant and allows one jump-2. Adjacent to the bridge is a model/7 computer. There are 35 double-occupancy staterooms and nine emergency low berths. There are three hardpoints and three tons allocated to fire control. Three single beam laser turrets are installed. There one ship's vehicle: a 30-ton ship's boat. Cargo capacity is 60 tons. The station is unstreamlined, but aerodynamic enough to allow fuel skimming from gas giants.

The station requires a crew of six: pilot, navigator, three engineers, and a medic; and can accommodate up to fifty scientists; thirty are currently on du-

(Continued from page 34)

ty. In addition, there are five security personnel, who also operate the ship's vehicle and the turrets. Including Ogele and Dorlais, the total station complement numbers 43.

Major changes to the *Purcell* hull included sealing off the vehicle bay and building decks, including another habitat deck and 107 tons of laboratory space, increasing the sizes of the jump drive, power plant and fuel tankage, and creating a smaller bay for the ship's boat.

Anomalies of note are the presence of another jump drive of non-standard configuration; fuel tankage to support it; and an auxiliary jump grid, also of non-standard configuration.

The station orbits the black hole in a complicated and largely computer-controlled rosette pattern at roughly 0.5 AU.

At Once Air and Stone

Ogele is convinced he has found a way to use the black hole to travel to a parallel universe, where his beloved wife hopefully still lives. To accomplish this, he has had to make a number of changes to the station and its staff. The staffers are among the best and brightest in the field of astrophysics, although nowhere near Ogele's level of understanding.

Through the use of probes, Ogele has determined that the object is a Kerr (rotating) black hole. The rotation produces an ellipsoidal field of energy (an ergosphere) around the event horizon. The ergosphere is key to his plan.

Through a combination of his personal fortune and misappropriation of Imperial funds, Ogele installed a cutting-edge, Darrian-built jump drive aboard the station and supplemented it with an auxiliary jump grid. This "phase drive"—as Ogele refers to it—is designed to hold the station in a phased state between normal space and jumpspace, existing in both and neither at the same time. The phase drive also causes two effects: localized relativistic effects, and an energy resonance that allows the vessel to "skip" across the ergosphere like a flat stone across water.

The entire plan involves powerful computing, split-millisecond timing, bleeding-edge technology, a critically-precise approach vector, and a lot of luck. During the operation of the phase drive (which lasts for only a few minutes), the sensors search for a specific energy signature indicating the formation of a momentary wormhole. Once one is found, the phase drive field is used to "skip" across the ergosphere and carom the station into the wormhole. At the exact moment of contact, the station's conventional jump drive is engaged, allowing the vessel to pass through what would normally be an impassable barrier without being precipitated out into normal space. The effort will result in a massive misjump, but the crew will survive.

Every so often, Ogele orders the phase drive powered up for calibration and testing. The result is relativistic effects aboard the station. On a throw of 11+ as detailed above, Ogele has ordered the testing of the drive. The test duration is 1D minutes; throw 2D on the table below to determine the effect, which lasts 1D combat rounds except where noted:

2 Station clocks run slightly faster in relation to the time outside, gaining 5D minutes. The heroes experience fugue on a throw of 9+.

3 The group notices the stars red-shifting (indicating rapid recession).

4-5 Sensor ghosts or odd optical effects outside the station are observed (for example, a projection of the station elsewhere in space or celestial bodies appearing much closer than they are).

6-7 Station clocks run slower relative to time outside. The clocks lose 1D hours. The heroes experience déjà vu on a throw of 9+.

8-9 Distances within the station will seem to be shorter (1-3) or longer (4-6) by a factor of 2D.

10 Red-shifted versions of the crew "replay" previous actions. The referee should determine the length of the replays based on the specific event.

11 Personnel aboard the station or the station itself briefly appear in two places at once. The effect lasts 2D seconds. On a throw of 12 exactly, the station may be in danger of colliding with itself!

12 A temporal effect similar to 10 above, except much more extreme; past events up to and including the arrival of the station several years ago replay. The referee may use the event to feed the adventurers more clues.

Cirque

reviewed by Timothy Collinson

Cirque. Gregory P. Lee.
Greylock Publishing Lines
   https://www.facebook.com/CirqueT5Supplement
186pp, paperbound or PDF
US$27.00

Cirque started as a Kickstarter project and has produced the second published adventure material for *Traveller⁵* after a much anticipated wait. It's really a campaign in the grand style of *The Traveller Adventure* or the Grand Tour of *Travellers' Digest*, with 22 linked adventures set in the 'classic era'. (The cover proclaims "21" but two chapters at the end are labelled 'Episode 21'). The classic era is defined as beginning in 1105 and *Cirque* starts at the end of 1110, a few months (confusingly, the text says years) after the Fifth Frontier War. The war is important as it gives the rationale behind the 'tour' of a portion of the Spinward Marches that forms the backbone of these adventures. A travelling circus is aiming to play its part in healing war-weary worlds in the sector and veterans scarred by devastating battles. The circus of course allows a motley cast of characters, and for once the word motley seems particularly apposite, to venture into a variety of worlds and situations and find adventure along the way. It concentrates on role playing activity rather than die rolling activities—although there's plenty of those as well—and there's good variety throughout which means that even run as a full campaign, interest should be maintained to the end. This is what John Ford's marvelous "Roadshow" might have looked like (for circus performers rather than rock stars) had it been expanded from the Amber Zone in *The Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society*, no.23.

The first 59 pages of the book present the background for the adventure: setting; deck plans, description, *Traveller⁵* stats, cargo and ship routines for the *Cirque*; stats and descriptions of other ships; player characters, non-player characters, and animals of the circus; and a description of 'The Stanford
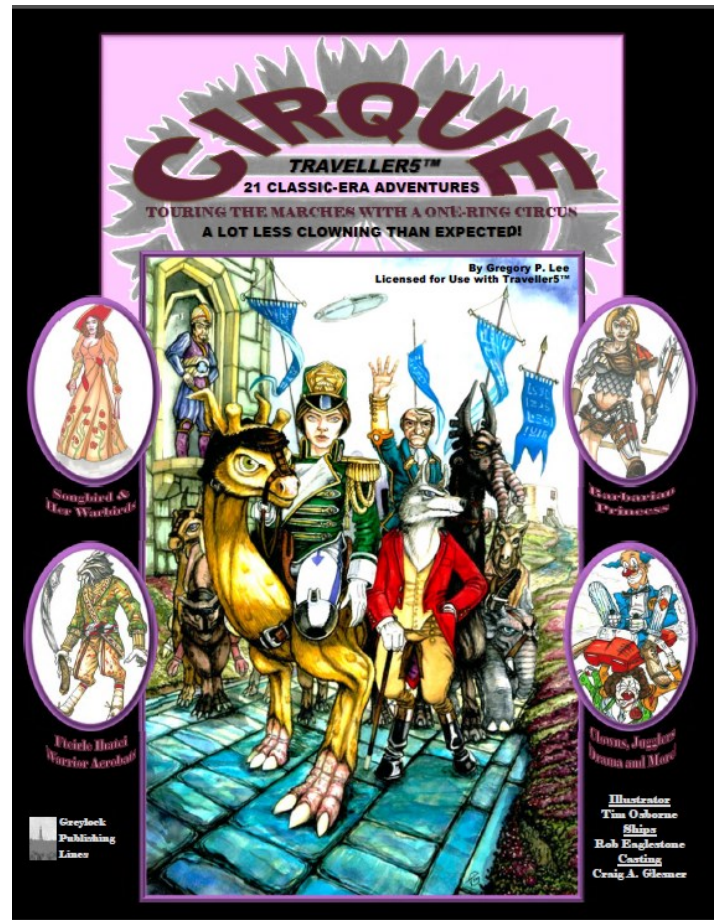
Torus', a standard spinning space station which we're told is common in Imperial space. The remainder of the book (125 pages) is taken up with 22 episodes averaging five or six pages each and an epilogue 'Somewhere Beyond Regina' of just a page.

The *Cirque* itself is a repurposed military vessel, the so-called *Ringmaster* class, which had large docking rings for various modules it could carry through Jump. It is a multi-purpose 1140-ton Jump-3 tender (Jump-6 with no modules) and has three auxiliary modules called Big Top 1, Big Top 2 and Big Top 3. The first is a converted ortillery/missile platform now used as the primary performance space, the second is a converted troop carrier now used as a rehearsal space and recording stage, and the final module is devoted to fuel tankage and sensors. It's a cramped space for the troupe and its animals but provides a flexible platform for their needs and is an interesting starship for gaming.

Unfortunately, the deck plans of the various ships and stations are far too small to be usable and

appear here more as illustrative art than anything else, although some plans (for example, a flare bunker) have zoomed in versions. Many are not labelled, and so close reading of the text which usually contains the descriptions is necessary—and even then, not everything is always clear. Occasionally, references are made to colours in the maps or plans which can't really be seen in the greyscale print version. Separate electronic files in colour of these otherwise good looking plans somewhat rectify these problems, but it's unfortunate they weren't given more space and labelling within the printed volume.

In a similar vein, the text throughout is fairly small, but not unreadably so, and *Traveller⁵* tables, for ship forms for example, are presented in a Courier font which is unusual but distinctive and clear. Maps are infrequent and not a lot better than the plans. There are a couple of world maps which are small but have little detail so that's not a problem, however there aren't any keys to them which again makes them illustrative rather than useful although there is description in the text. The maps are for Dymwn (or variously Dyrnwyn or Dymwyn – Spinward Marches 1522) and Derchon (Spinward Marches 2024). The map of the *Cirque*'s route is in greyscale in the textblock and in colour on the back cover, but again is rather small with the whole of the Spinward Marches taking a third of a page or so and Imperial space marked in a bright red. Together, it's rather hard to use and readers may wish to have an alternative map of the region to hand. On the upside the art, which is greyscale throughout, is generally well executed and it's a particular delight to see many old friends from the beastiary pages of JTAS revisited with new illustrations. The Crested Jabberwock, Afeahyalhtow and Seed Spitter are just three of the creatures given this treatment and it's surprising just how 'real' these feel after some thirty years in a reader's head! These of course are just some of the creatures that will be performing along with the circus troupe as well as requiring care and attention

and just possibly being involved in some of the adventures themselves.

The Episodes, forming the bulk of the book, range from 3 to 11 pages, vary widely and are all rooted in the locations where they happen. Each begins with some colour text from an NPC who knows the area, and goes on to detail the world and any relevant physical or social features. One underrated use of this book is possible even if the adventure material is ignored: it makes a great sourcebook for the worlds in the Spinward Marches which are visited. There is a lot of detail and a lot of adventure possibility which could easily be used elsewhere or to inspire other scenarios. After this section comes the action and this is followed by brief bullet point checklists outlining the adventure and providing more details. These last are divided into 'Acts' which is both appropriate to the show business setting and the EPIC adventure breakdown of *Traveller⁵* (page 640). Most Episodes have four acts, but may range from three to six; one isn't divided into acts at all but into several streams of action which may be taking place in parallel. The checklists and the text of the adventure need to be used in conjunction with each other as neither contains 'complete' information. There are prison breaks, outdoors travel, lost kids to rescue, train hijackings to deal with, political shenanigans, star-crossed lovers to reconcile, and ultimately the aim is to perform for Norris at the end of the year Holiday. Psionics play a part in some of the goings on with the Zhodani generally cast as baddies but even here there are layers and while the *Cirque* isn't a front for anything clandestine, the campaign is given depth by there being PC and NPC biographies which, well, complicate matters. There are moments when one wonders why the PCs would dare to disembark as something untoward is bound to happen at each stop. But the "show must go on" is a constant refrain and drives much of the action. In fairness, it feels like a weekly TV series with 22 episodes where of course something is going to happen or there would be no show. It works well and given how 'samey' it could feel,

there is a terrific variety here and referees who don't like the look of any particular scenario can always leave it as a dull stopover where nothing much happens and move on to the next episode.

One touch of detail I found particularly interesting was the handover from the "advance sophont party" in each port who had been making preparations before the arrival of the *Cirque*. Having spent two years living on a ship which used exactly this system of what we called 'line-up crew' to prepare for our visits and arrange performances and so on, I loved these small vignettes.

In line with acting as a sourcebook as well as a series of adventures there are a good lot of PCs and NPCs as well. All are given names and Traveller5 stats so these pages can act as examples of character generation which are sorely missing from the Core Rules. The many animals that are part of the circus are described and given *Traveller⁵* Beastmaker details. These are well done – the illustrations particularly – and the creatures add to the carnival atmosphere of the circus as well as providing possible assistance in some of the adventures. Animal encounter tables are provided for worlds where relevant. Finally, in addition to the *Traveller⁵*-built *Cirque*, there are stats for the three 'Big Top' modules, an Enhanced Scout/Courier, a 400-ton raider, a 500-ton yacht, a 600-ton cruiser, and a 400-ton lab ship to neatly round out the encounters of the adventures.

Two other treats for readers appear in the form of the various Old Station establishments listed in Episode 1. These are named for Kickstarter backers and perhaps this reviewer should have declared an interest in being included in these four pages as the owner of a cheese cupboard! It's a fun way of recognizing contributors to the project and also provides an extensively detailed set of shops, eateries, offices and other emporia which could be used to add colour and flavour to other starports, stations and cities that referees need to present to players. Secondly, for old-time travellers, Aramais P. Lee makes a

cranky return introducing the setting of each Episode in his fondly irascible way. Those who know *Lee's Guide to Interstellar Adventure* from 1983 will remember his introduction there and his journals converted into adventure notes[1]. He hasn't mellowed in the intervening years and it's great to see him again. His comments add a different viewpoint although readers, referees and players are all advised to take him with a large dose of salt. Throughout there are literary links with the likes of Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet* or *The Tempest*, and Melville's *Moby Dick*, film references (*The Wizard of Oz*) or music references (*Peter and the Wolf*) to mention just a few. These cultural connections add to the show business feel of the entire campaign, work well and suit the material.

Cirque is an adventure to cherish and I'd like to think it's a classic in the making. It makes a great read and should make for some great playing experiences. With slightly more attention paid to the presentation of the otherwise excellent plans and maps I'd rate this as truly brilliant. Even so it's an excellent sourcebook and source of adventures for the classic era Spinward Marches. Although it uses *Traveller⁵* rules it could easily be used with other rule sets and this should grant it a wide audience. The author has done a stunning job of presenting a huge wealth of material in an interesting, informative and humorous way. It's a delight that I'm proud to have played a tiny part in supporting. Now I just want to run away and join the Cirque!

[1] This was a 48-page digest-sized book from Gamelords written by Gregory P. Lee (the author of *Cirque*) and ten different worlds with adventure possibilities. Each was generic enough to be used in several locations in the Spinward Marches or the Solomani Rim. A final chapter offered adventure seeds on x-boat routes. Aramais P. Lee (with Gregory as his nephew editing the diaries) was posited as the source of the adventures and quotes from his journals were used as well. The book is available as a PDF on the classic *Traveller* CD-ROM *The Apocrypha I: FASA and Gamelords*.

Jump Destination: Breeforth's Legacy

by Ken Pick, based on notes from a campaign c.1978-1979

This article was originally posted to the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 2008.

This system main world originated in the 30-year-old "Glavion Cluster" campaign notes of Steve Marsh. This is a generic version for insertion into any Traveller campaign.

Breeforth's Legacy B657414-A Ag/NI

Trade Class 3; Small Navy facility (orbital)

A small world in a nondescript close-binary system, Breeforth's Legacy has a thin atmosphere, no moon, extreme seasons, and an 18-hour day. The world is a corporate colony of an offworld Megacorporation, ruling over and exploiting the descendants of the long-ago original colony.

The Megacorp rules Breeforth's Legacy under a Corporate Charter and runs the starport, leasing port space to a small Navy outpost (which accounts for the Class B port rating; civilians are normally limited to a Class C downport). This Company rules over the five lower-tech feudal clans that make up the majority of the population. Though the Five Clans produce the agricultural and mineral exports, all imports and exports channel through the Company monopoly, which takes the lion's share of the wealth produced. This unstable situation has resulted in recent Clan rebellions, normally put down by Company mercenaries; though the present situation is relatively quiet, there is always the chance of another flareup. (As well as opportunities for smuggling, dealing directly with the Five Clans.)

Breeforth's Legacy has a Eaglestone Trade Index of 3 (Ag/NonIndustrial); assuming a location two parsecs/one Jump from the Company's mother system (originally Arnex in the Glavion Cluster), port traffic would be primarily "cash crop" agricultural goods for the Company, with little passenger traffic. Total volume would average 50 passengers and 1000 dtons/week, with seasonal peaks of up to 10,000/week. System defenses would be around 1000 tons, a mixture of Navy and Company privateers.

Planetary Geography

Breeforth's Legacy is 3/4 the diameter of Earth, but with a similar hydrosphere. Its land area (1/3 that of Earth) is broken up into several small landmasses concentrated in one hemisphere, with flatlands (open plains, grasslands, and occasional forests) predominating. Though the world must have had some native life to allow a breathable atmosphere for colonization, all land life (including "cash crop" livestock) seems to have been imported before the Long Night; nothing remains of the original ecosystem except plankton, microbes, and primitive sea life.

Surface Conditions/Sky Picture

Surface gravity is around 3/4G; the atmosphere is breathable but thin, with sea-level pressure about equivalent to Earth at 2500m altitude. Visitors from standard or dense-atmosphere worlds are at risk of altitude sickness. The day is only 18 hours, with a year of 370 local days (about nine T-months); sunrise and sunset can easily sneak up on visitors.

G-class suns and thin atmosphere also make for a severe sunburn hazard; there is a reason why native Breeforthers (the Five Clans) are dark-skinned, and traditional native dress emphasizes sun protection. Visitors are advised to keep to low altitudes, avoid any highlands or mountains, and take sunburn precautions.

Flatlands, grasslands, and open plains are the most common terrain type; mountains are normally low and gently-sloped, with one or two exceptions. The short day leaves little temperature variation, though the pronounced axial tilt leads to extreme seasons and storms at hemispheric summer and winter; at these times, the shadow hemisphere has an extensive polar cap, which melts completely and reforms at the other pole during hemispheric summer. The starport and all settled areas are close to the equator, where the day/night cycle is relatively normal (though stormy twice each year).

The sun is a close-coupled G8v binary, two lemon-yellow suns orbiting each other every 33 local

days, with two eclipses each cycle. At .2 AU (Orbit 0) separation, maximum separation in the sky is about the width of a hand held at arm's length.

Corporate Enclave/Starport

Pop 5000 (Megacorp employees/vassals and dependents), Gov 1 (corporate), Law 4, TL 10

Class C Ground Port with the only true "city" and Startown on-world, with Class B orbital facilities aboard a small space station in geosynch orbit overhead. Total population 5000 megacorp employees/vassals and dependents. The Company maintains a small oil/petrochemical plant just outside the port city, exporting petrochemicals in addition to what's produced by the Five Clans.

Climate at the port is temperate, with extended rainy seasons twice a year during hemispheric summer and winter. Most unnecessary activity - Company and Five Clans - shuts down during the rainy seasons, riding out the weeks-long storms and accompanying floods.

The Company enforces its will through a battalion-strength mercenary unit: "The Merry Fellows" under Colonel William Ferney. This TL10 mercenary force numbers around 600, airmobile in TL9 Camaret tilt-rotor *Planeur* "heliplanes" modified for the thin atmosphere. (Despite the thin-atmo mods, they still have a lessened service ceiling, unable to climb beyond the usual low mountains.) The Merry Fellows themselves have a reputation barely above pirates, and are said to have provided "muscle" for the mother system's Mafia.

The Navy leases half of the small Class B Highport station for fueling and maintenance of smaller military and courier vessels. The station, in geosynch orbit directly above the downport, is shaped like a dumbbell with a spinning ring habitat at the center; one end of the dumbbell core houses the civilian highport, the other the military. Though the Navy facility in the station has direct line-of-sight to almost all the world's landmasses, the Navy normally does not interfere in Corporate/Clan

affairs (though the base CO does have some discretion).

System defenses are jointly run by the Megacorp and the Navy: 10 surface-mounted laser-turrets, a fighter squadron, 800 tons of SDBs, and two platoons of Marines.

The Five Clans

The Five Clans are the native population of Breeforth's Legacy, descendants of the original colonists who regressed into feudalism during the Long Night. Each clan is divided into three classes: "Family", the actual aristocratic families who can trace descent from the original colonists, "armed retainers" who make up the clan's security and armed forces, and the rest of the population who are normally tenant farmers/workers.

Even in those clans governed by Direct Democracy (Gov 2), the word of "Family" has greater weight. As low-tech livestock ranching is the world's main "cash crop", "Family" aristocrats are more akin to "Old West Cattle Barons" than traditional nobles - established clans of "Cartwrights" and "Barkleys" now under the thumb of "Dudes from the East".

Each clan has two Law Levels; the first is the "official" Law Level, enforced by the Company and the Merry Fellows; the second (in parentheses) is the actual internal Law Level.

Dormai Clan: Pop 2000 (100 "Family", 500 armed retainers), Gov 3, Law 6 (5), TL 4

Dormai Clan are primarily ranchers, with sidelines into logging and textile manufacture. They run between 15 and 75,000 head of "hulks" depending on season, plus a breeding herd of 100 horses. Exports meat, wood, textiles.

Kulu Clan: Pop between 2000 and 3000 (all "Family"), Gov 4, Law 7 (3), TL 6

A ranching and mining clan, Kulu is considered the dominant clan of the Five and attracts the most attention from the Company. If things blow up on BL again, Kulu Clan will play a major role. Running 20 to 100,000 head of "hulks", they have their own Class E port and maintain a single (unofficially-

(Continued from page 40)

armed) pinnace. Exports wood, tin, iron, blades, meat.

Tamai Clan: Pop 1000 (10 "Family", 200 armed retainers), Gov 2, Law 6 (3), TL 4

Tamai Clan are ranchers and miners, running 20,000 head of mutant cattle and three crystal/gemstone mines. Exports meat, crystals, gemstones.

Upshoggoth Clan: Pop 1000 (50 "Family", 100 armed retainers), Gov 2, Law 6 (2), TL 5

Another ranching clan with an additional reputation as fine horse breeders, Upshoggoth Clan runs 20,000 head of mutant cattle and 500 horses on BL's plains. Exports meat, grain, livestock (purebred horses; treat as TL8 for horse-breeding and hybridization).

Urgary Clan: Pop 3000 (40 "Family", 1000 armed retainers), Gov 5, Law 6 (6), TL 7

The highest tech of the Five Clans (and the most cooperative with/loyal to the Company), Urgary are primarily sea ranchers, running an extensive aquaculture. They maintain four hovercraft and four patrol boats to support their aquaculture operations. Exports sea salt (unique chemical composition), meat (fish), and pharmaceuticals.

The Clans may also have secrets—Anagathic stashes (primarily Kulu), pre-Long Night artifacts (some of them still operational), and weird/nasty underground religions (like a whispered-about secret society, primarily Upshoggoth and Urgary but extending into the other clans). These would be kept secret even within the clan, never mind from the Company. Even Urgary, the Company's "pet clan", might have some secrets stashed away to use against them in the next flareup.

Adventure Nuggets

The Clans vs the Corporation (with echoes of the Wild West), need we say more? Lots of opportunities for smuggling and extralegal/covert ops dealing with the Five Clans under the corporate radar. Though the Navy's highport facility can detect and track any ship landing for such free trade, they normally keep a hands-off attitude towards planetary affairs.

The big event during the dry seasons (once the storm-floods have run off and the land has dried a bit) are the cattle/hulk drives to the Starport Enclave, with Five Clans "cowboys" taking the livestock to market. This is when the port enclave becomes "the world's biggest cowtown" teeming with natives, and the Clans come together both overtly and covertly.

And don't forget Clan Secrets for wild cards and weirdness. ("They're paying in anagathics?" "What was that chant we heard? *Ia, Ia, Something Something*?")   ✦

Iper'mar Nomads

by Alvin Plummer

This article was originally posted to the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website as a RICE Paper in 1995.

There is some debate in Scout circles on whether Iper'mar nomads should be treated as a world, as a cultural group or as an Imperial client state: for the purposes of this RICE Paper, they are being treated as a cultural group. Even though they are not a world per se (although they do have territory: see following) the Regency Institute for Cultural Education has decided that this culture is important and unique enough to merit a paper on them, especially considering the value of their work as unsung but important members of the Regency community.

In Person

The Iper'mar ('Refugees' in Old Kuræ) can be found throughout the Regency, but are noticeable in Querion, Vilis, Lanth, Lunion, Five Sisters, Plankwell, Glisten and Trin's Shroud subsectors, as well as throughout the Regency portions of the Trojan

Kurishdam

Reaches. Most casual tourists will meet them around starports, public functions or supervising and designing the operation of high-tech equipment on low-tech worlds.

Often, the Iper'marion (singular of Iper'mar) will be wearing the uniform of his contractor—often a large, Regency-wide corporation, or local clothing. On their own ships and installations, they prefer simple short-and-shirt overalls, often in some dull shade of khaki or grey, but with bright accessories (flashy jackets, oversized jewelry, and high boots for women; aviation helmets (with engraved family glyphs), humongous capes and complex, everchanging TL D-E bodypaint illustrations for men). They don't use deodorants, but do use sonic showers.

Their Anglic is quite clear, but somewhat high-pitched. About one out of five can still speak Old Kuræ, the mother tongue. Many of the upper and upper-middle classes can speak 3 or more human languages: they're somewhat racist, and avoid dealing with Vargr, Aslan, or other non-humans when possible. However, they are absolutely fascinated with the Zhodani, not so much for their psionics, but with their culture.

The Iper'mar are proud of their technical expertise, (they consider TL E items as beneath them, and absolutely adore little TL G trinkets), and tend to be condescending to those from worlds below TL F. Many have a 'colonial master' attitude to low-tech commoners that they are in charge of, but can respect low-tech rulers and merchants… if they are good. They will never demean a low-tech client to their face, but if tested, have subtle ways of letting their feelings be known.

Within the Regency, Iper'mar business practices are ethically impeccable: they realise that the Regent won't stand by and let High-tech nomads rip off Low-tech locals. Moreover, they like to have long-term relationships with their clients, relationships that flourish best in an atmosphere of trust. Finally, they value their business reputation: they have been nomadic for over 450 years, and interstellar traders for another 200 years, and know what doors a good rep can open.

Outside of the Regency, their practices are somewhat more… flexible.

Government within the Iper'mar is by neo-tribal democratic methods, similar to that of Tausus (Spinward Marches/1138: B584620-A), but with greater reliance on AI (non-viral). The Archon—or the top ruler of the tribe—is little more powerful then his fellow tribal lords, but has the Noble rank of Marquis. Intergration with the new democratic elements of the Regency is going quite smoothly.

Because of their support (above and beyond the call of duty) of the Imperial government within the Empty Quarter they were granted certain legal privileges, rendering their ships effectively immune to searches by system governments, by Emperor Gavin. The Iper'mar remain rather civic-minded for interstellar nomads, and will support the Regency when they can. They generally want the rest of the Imperium to be re-integrated, but carefully and slowly and with caution… the Iper'mar use the best anti-viral technology on the market, but still deeply dread any kind of outbreak. (Iper'mar ships started to revisit Trin only 7 years ago!)

The religious attitudes of the Iper'mar are rather bland, generally worshipping as the locals do. They have no real strong religious feelings, and—on their ships and bases—prefer to philosophize about the gods rather than pray to them. The dead tend to be simply buried on some world or other (according to local custom), and eventually forgotten.

Most Iper'mar are of "Imperial" descent—that is, of Solomani/Vilani mixture, but also have strains of four different minor races (including the Daryen). Most run on the tall side, but all can easily function in one gee: their ships are set to 1G largely because they have to go dirtside so often in their line of work. There were at least four different "races" of Iper'mar pre-Rebellion, but the only known surviving one—the Deneb branch of the culture—is of

light complexion, with brown to sandy blond hair, large facial features, and dark eyes.

There are 8.34 million Iper'mar within current Regency borders (down from about 30 million, Imperium-wide, before the Rebellion/Collapse). Roughly 5 million are in two deep space bases, Laro Dif ('The Twilight Star' in Old Kuræ) and He'seme ('Gentle Starlight'). While their location is known to the Regency Navy, the Iper'mar are secretive regarding their location to outsiders. Only 500,000 are on the roughly 1400 starships that the Iper'mar own at any given time: most of the rest are on 'ground assignment' helping to design, maintain, and sometimes build high-tech items for their low-tech clientele (or low-tech items using high-tech knowledge or methods). Outside of the Regency, roughly 72,000 are known to reside within the Zhodani Consulate: roughly 1.2 million operate spinward of the Spinward marches, mainly in The Beyond and Far Frontiers sectors.

Insistent rumours about 'the lost clans' somewhere in the Wilds are generally discounted by the Iper'mar themselves: because of their proclivity towards high-tech equipment, they were probably more vulnerable to the AI Virus than the free traders. (Nevertheless, there *are* surviving Iper'mar in the former Imperium.)

History

The Iper'mar are interstellar nomads, originating from the Great Dimurik Miim War of 740. Essentially, the Iper'mar are the decendants of a number of powerful trading families from Kuræ a once-notable world that suffered through a impoverishing and destructive series of wars from 723 to 792. As their wealth was being seized by the governments involved in the Dimurik Miim War, the merchants choose to flee the system, surviving first as a merchant line, but by 800 their livelihood was earned as a mobile professional knowledge elite, trading on their technical expertise.

From Zarushagar sector, they spread throughout the Imperium coreward of Zarushagar, and were especially prominent in comparatively low-tech regions of the Imperium like the Spinward Marches and the Empty Quarter. Specializing in providing workable high-tech solutions to low-tech systems, the Iper'mar were (and in the Regency, remain) one of the binding forces of the interstellar community.

The Kuræ system is located in Zarushagar sector, hex 0503: UWP fell from A66794B-D in 700 to X667872-A by 800; the UWP was D667989-6 just before the Rebellion. By 930, the Republic of Haasii, the government of Kuræ, was attempting to lure the Iper'mar back to Kuræ; about 418,000, or 7% of the total Iper'mar population, were residing on Kuræ by 1100.

As an interstellar business and as a culture, they suffered bitterly during the Rebellion. Their stock-in-trade needs safe starlanes in order to work: without it, they were forced to stay dirtside, trying to survive in an unfamiliar, deteriorating enviroment.

Even in the Spinward Marches, where the Iper'mar both had semi-safe trade routes (thanks to the Domain Navy) and a solid economic environment (the Archduke often used their services in order to save damaged and doomed worlds within the Domain), they still had to suffer heavy drafts—both military and otherwise—and a skyrocketing tax rate. Afterward, in the wake of Virus, the Iper'mar had to cope with virus-proofing their installations and ships, a very expensive endeavor. (They are still paying off the cost of it.)

Economics

First arriving in the Marches c. 820, the Iper'mar rapidly gained prominence within the hostile-environment branch of the construction industry as low-cost producers, eventually becoming so successful as to become a favoured subcontractor for several megacorps working in the region. They expanded to the starport construction industry in the 940s, and invested in both planetary weather management (designing and overseeing controlled weather sys-

tems for poor and low-tech governments) and experimented briefly in mass robot construction gangs from the 1090s to the Rebellion period.

In the post-Collapse period, the Iper'mar specialized in helping low-tech governments (up to TL D, in some cases) virus-proof starports, communication equipment, etc.—largely under the Regency ægis. They also made some real money, rebuilding the rimward Regency border regions from Aslan attack.

Currently, the Iper'mar are in a great debate on whether they should expand into the Wilds. As TL F people, they are extremely vulnerable to Virus infections, but the scale of the money to be made is simply mind-boggling. The Iper'mar are constantly on the lookout for ways to reduce their vulnerability to the AI Virus: they will pay any price for a reliable, broad-spectrum "vaccine" for Virus.

Starship Design Philosophies

The classic, instantly-recognizable ship of the Iper'mar is the *Or Viasic*-class liner, built to a closely-guarded design on Rhylanor. Built to house 84 field specialists and their families, it's a common sight on low-tech starports and the poorer worlds.

With an extensive communication suite, it can be used as a orbiting or space-borne operations and control platform for a variety of projects. The design accompanying this article is meant for Regency operations: for out-of-Regency projects, starmercs are usually hired for protection. Note the lack of cargo space: Iper'mar clients usually either arrange cargo transportation separately or the Iper'marion clanlord will outsource this to non-Iper'mar traders. Note the main deficiency in this design: no small craft capacity. This is considered "a waste of space" by the Iper'mar: the same people who installed 123 apartments on their ship, of 400 kl each!

Non-Imperial Iper'mar use the same design, but routinely make extensive modifications, adding internal armour, lasers, sandcasters, MFDs, and extensive cargo space. (No, they don't have docking bays:

they prefer to use the cargo bay to store vehicles.) This cuts down on living space drastically: Non-Imperial Iper'mar are considered the 'poor cousins' of the Iper'mar due to the routine indignities they have to put up with, from having to sleep four to a small stateroom (vs. the small apartments on the ship below) to having to actually use the 'repair facilities' (the term is used derisively) of a TL C, Starport D world, to having to actually use Inferior Equipment (anything below TL F) to repair their ship.

The thing that Non-Imperial Iper'mar have to worry about most is adding or repairing their ship with Strange Tech. ("Strange Tech" includes any electronic item, hard or software, that isn't of Regency (or, in a pinch, Zhodani) manufacture, still untouched and shrink wrapped). The legends and tales surrounding Strange Tech is a sure party-pleaser in most starport bars.

Powerful and wealthy Clanlords tend to drastically cut the amount of personnel on their ships, using the space for parks, gyms, pools, etc. The Archon's ship is pratically a jump-capable party, as he "liases" with subsector-to-Regency notables, and the occasional visiting Zhodani: Aslan and Vargr are never invited.

Important Note: Non-Imperial Iper'mar have no problem with using robots on their ships: however, these robots are never permitted to communicate to the outside world, never leave the ship, and are forbidden to handle Strange Tech until the owner has O.K.'ed it.

Or Viasic-class Iper'mar Starship: standard config:

```
Disp    8000        Hull Armour  20  P Plant  4500 MW
                                         (11 MW surplus)
Len       90 m      Volume  112000  Jump         4
Price   2329 MCr    Tech        F   G-Rating     2
Config  Dome USL    Size        M   G-Turns   43.8
Mass 34263/30959 mt                 Maint.    1369

Computer   TL F x 3 (st)
Commo       1 x Maser (1000 AU)
           10 x Radio (3000 km)
           10 x Laser (300000 km)
Sensors    A-EMS (30 000 km), P-EMS (30 000 km)
Avionics, Terrain (190 kph)
```

Doing It My Way

```
Extended L.S. w/ AG
Crew - 492          Maintenance - 5  "Family"  - 369
  Engineering - 14  Troops      - 5
  Electrical  - 5   Command     - 6
  Maneuver    - 2   Specialists - 84
Accomo: Sm. Apartments x 123
  [ Sm. Apartments: Vol 400, Mass 30, MW .01, Mcr 1,
    Hit 7 H ]
  [     Each apartment holds an Emergency Low Berth
        for four]
No Cargo
Air Locks x 80
Scoops: refill all in 10 hr 4 min, jfuel in 6 hr 15 min,
    maneouver fuel in 4 hr 11 min
Fuel Purification: all jfuel in 12 hours
8 additional Emergency Low Berth's
20 extra regular workstations


Combat  21/21              Travel 450/675
Surface Area
  1        1      1 - 19  Radio, Laser Ant
                  20      Maser, A-EMS ant
              2 - 20  Hull
2 - 20    Hull
```

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Damage Area
  1        1 - 5    Elect
           6 - 10   Quarters
           11 - 20  Hold (fuel)
 2 -  9  Hold (fuel)
10 - 17  Hold (fuel)
18 - 19  Engineering
20       Quarters

System Damage
  Electronics
    Maser, 10 x Radio, 10 x Laser, A-EMS, P-EMS(1h) Ant
(1h)
  Hold
    (fuel only)
  Quarters
    Sm. Apartments   7 H x 123
    L.S.            44 H
    E.L.S.          22 H
    A.G.            23 H
    Emg. L.B. (extra) (1h) x 8
Engineering
    Jump Drive     112 H
    HEPlaR           3 H
    Power Plant     15 H
    Fuel Pur        56 H
    Contra Grav     16 H
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☀ Raconteurs' Rest

The Lottery

by Roger Barr

This story was originally posted to the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 2001.

Colin's peaceful sleep was shattered by the irritating buzz of his alarm. He reached out from under the warmth of the bed covers and slapped at the offensive device. On the third try he located the switch and silenced it. Rolling over, he relaxed to go back to sleep.

The door to his quarters opened, and he heard the familiar step of his roommate.

"Lights!"

The room exploded in a harsh brightness. Colin quickly pulled the sheet over his head. Under the protection of the sheet the glare was bearable, and the scout quickly returned to his peaceful slumber.

"Colinashaar! Wake up!" Startled by the loud call of his roommate and annoyed by her use of his formal name, Colin pulled the sheet from over his head and glared through squinted eyes at the woman standing before him.

Narra was already dressed and ready for her duty shift. Her uniform was pressed and nearly perfect, as always. He knew her morning routine. She'd spent the last two hours lifting weights, running, eating breakfast, and getting ready for her shift while he still slept. Colin couldn't figure how someone could be so eager to get out of bed before they absolutely had to, much less just to lift weights.

"Get moving Colin, you have less than a half an hour to get ready for your shift." She snatched the sheet from him. "I cannot imagine why you are so willing to sleep until the last minute like this. You have to rush every morning to keep from being late. This kind of laziness reflects poorly on the honor of your family."

Colin frowned as he rubbed his face, and ran his hands through his sleep-matted short blond hair. Narra's speeches about family honor always baffled him. She might have been raised in the middle of an Aslan colony, but he hadn't; Colin could never understand what honor could possibly have to do with sleeping. He perked up as he detected the familiar aroma of his favorite morning beverage. "You

brought me some caf!" Colin couldn't begin a work-day without the aid of caffeine in a beverage.

"Yes, I grabbed a cup for you as well. Get in the fresher, it will still be hot when you get out."

Rubbing his eyes, he slowly stood to his feet and stretched. A hot cup of caf could forgive nearly any speech Narra made, as far as Colin was concerned.

"I'm movin'…"

It wasn't until he was nearly dressed twenty minutes later that he realized that his muscle bound roommate had completely avoided mentioning the significance of this day. It was his last day in the scout service, and he would officially be a civilian this time tomorrow. He knew she was disappointed that he was leaving the service, but she wouldn't admit it to him. It wouldn't fit in that strange sense of honor and personal discipline she had. He liked Narra, and she'd been like an older sister to him from the moment he'd arrived and been assigned to share the room with her. He'd never shared his quarters with a woman before in the entire six years he'd been in the scouts, but he drew her as his roommate when he arrived. He didn't mind, really. It was nice that she wasn't his type of woman. She stood a half a head taller than Colin, easily outweighed him by several kilos, and acted more Aslan than human at times. They'd gotten to be friends fairly quickly, and living so close made it easier to see her as a sister. A really big sister.

Colin was finally dressed and ready for his duty shift. He checked his watch. He had four minutes to get to his post. Taking careful sips from his steaming cup of caf, he walked down the light gray metal corridors of the asteroid base known officially as Imperial Interstellar Scout Service Way Station 86. He remembered coming to work here two years ago. Most of the scouts here called it Dead End Station. Everyone knew that the administrators who were assigned here were those who were waiting out the last few years before retirement. None of those ever assigned here had spectacular careers, and typically it made for an unpleasant assignment for the field scouts. Nobody wanted this assignment, and most of the scouts here grumbled about the boredom. He thought it funny that he had requested this post. It was a great way to shock the new arrivals.

Passing another scout in the hallway, Colin stopped sipping from his cup long enough to nod in silent greeting to the Droyne. Colin understood how to relate to most of the sophonts assigned here, and could talk to nearly all of the major races without difficulty, but he had difficulty with the Droyne. They just weren't very talkative. Something about that caste system, he guessed. Being assigned a specific role in society that would be the same for your entire life seemed like it took away all the surprises. He didn't understand how they could stand it. He unlocked an access hatch on a maintenance area, ducked inside and closed it quickly. This was one of his favorite shortcuts to save time getting to his duty station, as it avoided the lifts crowded with people changing work shifts. Climbing down the metal ladder into the pipe filled chamber, Colin saw a tech from the night duty shift finishing up some work on the waste processing system. Poor soph', the guy was covered in black goo. Colin hated those assignments; the station's processors always smelled terrible and usually took much longer to clean than nearly other repair. Knowing the fumes would still be fairly strong, he closed the lid on his drink, held his breath, and walked by quickly. His eyes watered as he reached the fumes, but he was through them and into the next corridor in mere seconds. Once in the hall, he exhaled heavily and wiped the tears from his eyes. He looked at his half full cup of caf, then decided against it. He tossed it into a wall-mounted trash chute and continued on. He'd get a second cup once he'd picked up his tools and received his first assignment of the day.

Reaching the door of his duty station, Colin tapped the door's OPEN button on the panel, and nothing happened. Muttering to himself about the poor quality of technicians on the station, he tapped it harder. Nothing. Finally, on the fourth try, it

clicked and the door slid quietly open. Colin glanced at his watch as he stepped into the room.

The somewhat raspy voice of his supervisor called out, "Blackwell, you're late. Again."

Colin paused, and couldn't decide which was more annoying; the fact that in fact this time he really wasn't late, (thirty-three seconds didn't count), or that his superior still didn't turn around to speak to him. Dabrick was like that all the time; the man reveled in his authority, and in the keen ability he had to annoy people while doing his job. It was probably the reason he'd been assigned here last year. The man had the diplomacy skills of a groat herder.

Colin made a mental vow to avoid getting into another argument with this man. He would not have it ruin his last day in the service. "I'm here, Dabrick. What's on the list?"

"I've got a *Sulieman* that just arrived in Bay Eight. It needs a few minor adjustments. Since you're on ship support this week, you handle it." The man keyed a few instructions into his computer console, and the datapad on Colin's belt chimed to confirm receipt of a new file. "It needs the air filters scrubbed and treated."

Colin thought he detected the faint suggestion of a smile on the side of the man's face, but he couldn't be sure. The guy was probably expecting an argument. The special cleaning chemicals the filters required smelled almost as bad as the waste disposal work. No one wanted that duty if they could avoid it. Colin opened a locker with his thumbprint, and picked up a command code passkey from the rack inside. The electronics inside that little white plastic card would allow him to access any scout vessel assigned to his station. He also grabbed a set of work coveralls and his tool belt.

"Okay. Sounds like it might take a while. I'll let you know when I'm done." Dropping the card into his uniform pocket, he headed for the door.

"Blackwell," The man coughed in a feeble attempt to hide his amusement. "You've got eight work orders today. Let's not have any last day lagging about, or complaints about the jobs, eh lad?"

Colin reminded himself he wasn't going to get into an argument. Twice. Forcing himself to keep a pleasant tone, he replied with a simple "Affirmative." When the door slid quietly closed behind him, he realized that was the first time he'd ever gotten the last word with Dabrick. Interesting. This might still be a good day after all. He headed toward the mess hall to get a fresh cup of caf.

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Walking out into the huge natural rock cavern that had been converted into a sealed docking bay, Colin admired the sparkles of light coming from the veins of ore in the walls. He strode toward the old vessel parked on the far side. The 100-ton *Sulieman* scout/courier was one of the most common ship designs in the Imperium, and the one he was most familiar with of all of the scout vessels in service. He slowed as he approached, enjoying the sight. He loved flying these little ships whenever he got the chance. He walked slowly toward the wedge-shaped vessel, heading for the airlock back by engineering. Colin admired the sleek lines of the craft, appreciating both the appearance and the capabilities of such a small starship. He smiled to himself. If everything went as he expected tonight, he would be getting one of these ships for his personal use.

The Imperial Scout Service had a most unusual custom that dated back nearly a thousand years. The ships had changed a great deal over those years, but the tradition still remained. When accountants decided a courier vessel had reached the end of its operational cycle, it wasn't destroyed; it was retired, so to speak. Any sophont electing to leave the scout service at the end of his term had the opportunity to enter the Lottery, which was a chance to win the use of one of these ships as a personal craft on Detached Duty. All scouts were trained in flying the ships as part of basic training, so any scout could enter the Lottery. The winner would be free to roam the Imperium in the vessel at his leisure, enjoying the ability to explore and travel to his heart's content. He'd

even receive free fuel and maintenance at any scout base any time the ship needed it. They were subject to recall, of course, should the need arise, but that rarely happened. Since most scouts spent two thirds of their service time in space, it seemed only fair in Colin's mind to try to spare some of them the drudgery of spending the remaining part of their life after retirement stuck on some planet.

The greatest thing about this tradition was that you didn't have to be retiring to take advantage of it. Any scout had a chance to win. Colin had signed his mustering papers the second he was offered the chance. He knew he had good odds to win. That's why he'd volunteered for this remote location to serve for the last two years. He had checked the files, and knew that several ships would be coming up for the lottery here during the year, and he wanted to be here to get one. Once he did, it would be the start of the good life. He had lots of ideas on that…

"You going to work on my ship or stand there staring at it all day?" A woman's voice interrupted Colin's thoughts.

"Huh? Umm, yeah, I'm here to work on it." He looked over at the approaching scout. She was human, a slender woman with long black hair pulled back in a ponytail. She wore the typical scout service uniform, and had a bright smile. Colin noted the communications branch patch on her uniform with the field operations insignia below it. The woman carried a sealed courier data pack under her arm, and a vacc suit storage bag slung over the opposite shoulder. He didn't recognize her as having previously visited the station, and her bag's strap blocked her uniform's name patch. She had beautiful long black hair, bright green eyes, and a pretty smile. Colin was sure he would have remembered her.

She glanced at his name patch. "Hi, Blackwell." She paused, then smiled. "Wait, you're Colinashaar Blackwell?"

He nodded in reply, slightly puzzled, as his only his last name was on his uniform. "I go by Colin.

Only my mother and my roommate call me Colinashaar."

She nodded. "I'm Leese, Leese Kavid. Your mustering out party is tonight, right?"

Now he understood. An informal notice was posted weeks in advance of any event; scouts loved any excuse to have a party. A mustering out ceremony was a really good excuse for a celebration. "Yep, this is my last duty shift. I'll be flying out tomorrow, if all goes well."

She gave him a knowing smile, "You're going for the Lottery?"

He grinned back, "Of course. Who wouldn't? See you at the party tonight?"

She nodded with a friendly smile. "I should be there. If the reply to this data isn't urgent, I'll be leaving during tomorrow's night cycle. If it is, I'll need the ship ready to go ASAP."

Colin checked his datapad. "The work order is short, so it should be ready before lunch. Just the filters and a few little adjustments, right?"

"Yes, that's all for now. Good luck tonight, in either case."

"Thanks." Colin headed off toward the rear of the ship. He glanced back toward Leese for another chance to look at her, only to see her doing the same thing. Her eyes widened slightly and she turned away quickly. Ooops.

Slightly embarrassed and flattered at the same time, he climbed up the narrow metal ladder and entered the small ship. He figured cleaning the filters shouldn't take too long if he put some effort into it, and then he could get changed in time for lunch. He wondered if he'd run into to Leese in the mess hall. If he didn't, it wouldn't be for lack of trying on his part. He keyed a note on his pad to make sure he verified the ship was fully fuelled before she left. It'd be a nice touch, and wouldn't take much longer.

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Dropping a spanner into the tool kit, Colin wiped his forehead with his jumpsuit sleeve, and checked his watch. The end of the duty shift had finally arrived, and he was relieved. He had finally

finished making several adjustments to the jump governor on an X-boat, and his shoulders were tired from crawling around in the narrow maintenance access ports. He closed the maintenance hatch carefully and reactivated the seals. He was tired, hungry, and ready to call it a day.

Dabrick had assigned him eight work orders today, apparently in celebration of his last work shift in the service. Colin had been determined to get them finished before the end of the day. He wasn't sure why, except maybe down deep inside he figured that letting his work slip today might somehow impact the drawing tonight. He didn't want to risk anything that might bring him bad luck. He had missed his lunch hour completely, only stopping to grab a protein snack bar from the vending machine in the tech support office about two hours from the end of his work shift. He'd hated losing the chance to talk to Leese again, but he hoped he would see her at the party. Colin gathered his tools together and headed back to the tech support office. The asteroid station's night cycle was about to begin, and the party would start an hour after that.

Colin was tired, but anticipation of the Lottery kept him going. Entering the large room, he saw several of the other techs had already returned and dumped their tool packs on the workbench. Dabrick was the only man in the room, still hunched over his computer console. He was most likely studying efficiency reports. Colin keyed the locker, replaced the command code passkey in its rack, closed it back and then dropped his tool kit on the bench with the others for use by the techs on the next shift.

Dabrick's rough voice called out softly. "Hey Blackwell." Colin turned and looked at his supervisor, wondering what last parting shot the man had been saving until now. The older man still faced his console, but had stopped working.

"Yeah?"

The man turned slightly, looking at the wall near Colin's head. "You did good today. Worked real hard. Good luck tonight."

Stunned, Colin was at a total loss for words. Uncertain of exactly what to say in reply, he finally nodded in thanks and headed for the door.

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The party had already started when Colin arrived. He wasn't really late, but no scout he knew was going to wait for the guests to show up before they started having fun. He spotted a few of the technicians he worked with on a regular basis, many mixed with a number of sophs he didn't recognize at all. Narra was there, talking to Leese of all people. Colin wasn't sure if this was a good thing or not, so he hurried over to say hello and see how much damage control this conversation might need.

As he arrived, Narra looked over at him. "Hello Colin. Well, it appears that one of our guests of honor has finally arrived," Narra grinned playfully as she looked at Colin's wary expression. "Is there some kind of problem?"

This was very different and out of character for normally reserved Narra. He chose a cautious reply. "Umm, no. Don't think so. You?" She shook her head negatively, and smiled with that same predatory gleam in her eye. It was the same one she wore when sparring in the gym, and that always meant he was in for some pain.

Leese smiled brightly. "Hi, Colin, good to see you again."

"Yeah, you too," he replied, his eyes still watching Narra. When he turned to Leese, she was staring at him curiously. He shrugged. "Sorry, I'm not used to seeing my roommate so, well…"

"Happy?" Narra interrupted, "Hey, this is a party. Everyone can cut loose tonight, right?"

Colin looked into Narra's bright green eyes, but saw nothing that made him suspicious. She was still smirking, and he shook his head. "Sure. I'm getting a drink, I'll be right back." He took a step toward the bar, then turned back to Leese. "Sorry, can I get you something?"

Both of the ladies laughed at something that was apparently just out of Colin's perception. Puzzled, he decided to leave it alone for the moment and headed for the bar. After waiting for a few minutes at the counter to place his order, and shaking the hands of a few scouts who wished him well, Colin managed to acquire his drink. Before he could make it back to Narra and Leese, the chime rang twice, indicating time to begin the ceremony had arrived.

The tall and lean form of Administrator Varuk appeared on the room's small dais and motioned for quiet. Stage lights flared to life, and the man blinked and then raised his hands again. When the chattering fell to a reasonable level, he cleared his throat.

"Greetings Gentles, I hope you are having a good time." This brought a chorus of cheers. "Glad to see it. Well, I want to get the formalities over with quickly so you can get back to having fun. We are here this evening to bid two scouts farewell; Madrin Lun and Colin Blackwell. Madrin has served with the scout service for thirty-two years, and is finally retiring. He has been offered a position as technical consultant in General Products' Engineering Division. He will be missed, but we know he'll finally get his chance to buy a house and stay in it for a while." Sporadic laughter followed, as the older man's friends obviously knew the inside joke.

"We know that Field Scout Mandrin Lun's vast knowledge and experience will be missed here. Come up here, Mandie." The administrator shook the man's hand, and Colin saw the quiet engineer shifting from foot to foot nervously trying to hide his embarrassment. Varuk looked at his wristwatch. "In six hours your service will officially be over, you will have retired from the service, and will be free to go to your new position." More cheers followed.

Colin clapped politely. He was glad to see the old engineer treated so well. He also hoped he wouldn't be entering the Lottery. If the old man did so, Colin's chances of winning would be low. Each four year term of service purchased a scout a token

in the drawing. Colin had two to his credit, but Mandrin would have eight. Eight to two odds were not good, but Colin had a feeling the man didn't want a ship. A lot of old timers wanted to settle down, and Colin hoped the engineer was one of them. A bead of sweat trickled down his temple. If he didn't want the ship, Colin had it. There was no one else in his way. He wiped the sweat from his temple, waiting for the decision.

"The datapad contains your transfer papers, as well as a small gift of appreciation from the staff. Since you have elected not to participate in the Lottery, we have purchased a high passage ticket for you to travel to your next destination in style. The booking agents have placed you on the *Emerald Dawn*, one of the nicest passenger cruise liners this side of Core. Enjoy this, Mandie, you've earned it." The room nearly exploded in applause and shouts of encouragement, and the older man flushed bright red. The administrator smiled and clapped for a moment, and then called out, "Somebody get this man a drink!"

Colin blinked and realized he'd stopped breathing. With a sigh of relief, he laughed. He'd done it. Mandrin, bless his heart, had given him the ship. Colin cheered and clapped in appreciation of the older scout, particularly in his Lottery choice. He hadn't really known the old man, but he knew generosity when he saw it.

Narra appeared as if by magic at his side, poking him playfully in the ribs, making him jump. "You're next, you know." Colin nodded. She grinned. He realized Leese was nowhere to be seen. Before he could ask Narra about her, Varuk continued.

The administrator shielded his eyes from the bright lights on the stage and peered into the crowd. "Where is Colin Blackwell?"

Narra elbowed his roommate. "Get up there, what are you waiting for?"

He looked up at the tall woman, and into her knowing gaze. She had that smile still. She knew something he didn't. His stomach rolled, and he

hesitated. She playfully pushed him forward. "Go on…"

"Blackwell? Oh, here he comes." The lean man adjusted his work uniform and smiled. "You know, I was not surprised when this young man was on the muster list. Field Scout Colinashaar Blackwell, known by most as Colin, is also known to others by less favorable names." The man smiled broadly and laughter followed.

"Colin, come on up here."

Reaching the dais, he stepped up and into the spotlight. He stood next to the administrator of the station, a man with whom he'd shared only a few conversations, some of which had not been positive. Colin really didn't like him much, but that wouldn't matter after the night cycle ended. Varuk had a gleam in his eye, and it echoed the expression he'd seen on Narra's face. This did not bode well.

"Young man, I am not surprised to find you here. I know you've been looking to win the Lottery for a long time, and even requested a transfer to this outpost over two years ago in planning for that very event." The young scout smiled nervously, the bright lights of the stage blocking his view of most of the people in the station's small auditorium. He nodded in reply, a bit too nervous to actually say anything.

Varuk continued. "Colin, even though you've been a thorn in my side at times in the past, I never like delivering bad news to anyone. When Field Scout Nagharush returned from her courier run, the vessel she was piloting suffered a static charge overload when exiting jump space. The vessel blew out several major power relays and had to be towed back into port." He glanced at the card in his hand. "Scout/Courier XJ5-29B-16349, affectionately known to many as *Wombat*, was the only vessel scheduled to be rotated from active to detached duty. It would have been on the table for the Lottery. I'm sad to say that *Wombat* is sitting in docking bay twelve with

several burned out power relays in her maneuver drive. Sorry to have to tell you this, Colin, but there will not be a Lottery tonight."

Colin froze. The room was silent, all eyes were on the young man who'd gambled everything on this chance and lost. He didn't know what to do. He had never contemplated losing the Lottery. Everything he'd planned for the past four years had just slipped through his fingers, and now he was out of the service. No ship, and now not even a job. Unsure of what to say, he looked back at the Administrator, and saw the man was smirking. He knew that Varuk disliked him, but he didn't think the administrator would be pleased to see Colin fail to get the ship he'd hoped to acquire. He thought furiously, desperately seeking a way to escape this unexpected twist of fate.

"Gentles, there is no Lottery tonight. Colinashaar Blackwell will rotate to detached duty at midnight. The *Wombat* is off the flight line, and thereby ineligible for the Lottery." Varuk paused, and then smiled at Colin. "The only way that this young man can have his ship is if she returned to flight capable status before he is transferred to detached duty." He held up a little white plastic card; a technician's command code passkey. He tossed it to Colin, who barely managed to catch it. Varuk grinned. "You've got six hours to get that ship operational, Mister Blackwell, I'd suggest you get moving."

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Sprinting down the corridor with his engineering tool belt and a fresh pair of coveralls in his arms, Colin entered Bay Twelve and spotted the *Wombat* sitting in the corner of the docking bay. A small stack of brand new repair parts sat next to the vessel. Beside it stood Leese, wearing a matching set of work coveralls and unwrapping a spool of power cable. Colin slid to a stop in surprised shock.

The attractive young woman grinned at him. "You going to stand there all night, or are you going to give me a hand fixing this thing?" ✪

Aoungarr Brighteyes

profiled by Angus McDonald

This article was originally posted to the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 2002.

Description

A description of Aoungarr must mention his liking for flashy (some would say gaudy) jewelry. From the gold rings in his left ear, to the gems hanging from chains around his neck and the clashing gold bracelets on his legs and arms, he is every bit the over-the-top, arrogant Vargr trader captain.

He has the typically short muzzle, and large eyes of Irilitok slave-kin. Like most spacers his rust-colored coat is trimmed short everywhere except for his proudly bushy tail. He has splashes of black around his tail, limbs and ears and a blaze of fawn/white down his front, frequently shown off by his clothes. The shorter hairs around his muzzle are graying now that he is in his forties.

Aoungarr affects to like fashion, but is really most interested in exuberantly outlandish and colorful clothes. Currently his favorite outfits are based around loose interpretations of ancient Panoramian hill-tribe kilts (from Panorama 0127/Julian/Amdukan). He tends to team the formal black and green kilts with purple and orange floral shirts and black socks. For particularly cold worlds he has an orange all-weather coat with hood, black gloves and black boots.

History

Aoungarr is an Irilitok Vargr from Keketepara in Oulduktak, the coreward trailing subsector of Antares. Keketepara is part of the Rukadukaz Republic, a member state of the Julian Protectorate, and the funnel for most of its trade with the Third Imperium. Before he was born, Aoungarr's parents had moved to Keketepara with a number of other Asimikigir natives in order to help local aquatic industries development. As some of the few Irilitok Vargr on the planet, they became both minor celebrities and slightly discriminated against.

Having enough of this, the young Aoungarr wanted to see more of the Protectorate; when he and his panet reached their majority, they took off to the local Star Legion recruiting office. They both had their hearts set on joining the Legion Navy's Main Fleet and commanding a warship one day. Unfortunately for the two boys, the Star Legion is required to maintain a certain quota of Humans and Vargr in the different services, and the Farguard's Scouts were falling short of Vargr recruits, especially ones used to water. Aoungarr's panet, Mahmed Isruel, did go on to join Main Fleet, but Aoungarr's own application was overridden and he was ordered to begin basic training with the Farguard.

Aoungarr's first term in the Scouts showed him a lot of the universe he'd wanted to see when he was trapped back home. More than he wanted to see in some instances. The extent of Human-Vargr racial tension in other parts of the Protectorate, and the rampant imperialism of Vilani megacorporations trying to break into Protectorate markets made him realize that there were more battles to be fought than from within a battleship.

When it was time for him to re-enlist, Aoungarr applied for a position in Farguard's Intelligence division. After an in-depth security check, his application was provisionally granted. Aoungarr was a willing and able intelligence recruit, and the maturity lent him by his prior term served him well. He took a key role in organizing several field missions, and ended up in the field himself. He earned his first decorations in this term, for Bravery Under Fire and Wounded In Combat.

It was apparent that the young Vargr had plenty of potential, and so he entered the world of field operations himself. Taking on a variety of undercover roles, Aoungarr learnt more with each mission, things to avoid, traps the enemy would use, the appropriate use of white, gray and black propaganda, and how to avoid being caught. He served another two terms with Farguard Intelligence.

During his time with the Farguard, Aoungarr had sought to keep in touch with Mahmed, his old

panet. He had enjoyed Main Fleet basic training, but got on the wrong side of a superior officer who was more interested in keeping his own stock high than in listening to a snot-nosed junior officer, especially a scent-dead Human.

While trying to cheer up a depressed Mahmed, Aoungarr hit upon an idea that would get the two trouble-makers back together, and help the Protectorate expand their intelligence operations into Antares sector. He put in a request for an extended, undercover field position, as a trader captain working the Mendan main, and other trade routes between the Third Imperium and the Julian Protectorate. Part of his submission included a request that Mahmed be detached from Main Fleet duty to help operate the trader as the engineer and provide another Star Legion influence amongst the crew.

After checking Mahmed's background, Aoungarr's superiors agreed to the idea, and arranged a careful back-story for the panet pair. Mahmed and Aoungarr struck up a not-so private correspondence lamenting the wild and free days of their youth, and griping about the Star Legion's discipline. Mahmed mustered out of the Legion Navy, at the same time as Aoungarr mustered out of the Legion Farguard, and they threw their finances together. A couple of shaky (setup) deals later, and they had access to a beat up old Type A2 Far Trader, that they renamed *There Ain't None*. It is of course heavily modified, rumor has it by several black market deals and some smuggling, but in actual fact paid for 'legitimately' by Farguard Intelligence through shadow ops budgets.

There Ain't None has seen some heavy use since then with trips down both ends of the Mendan Main and several jaunts into Third Imperium territory. Aside from spreading propaganda (all shades), Aoungarr and Mahmed have carried several couriers both into and out of the Domain of Antares, and have gathered intelligence from the merchant community, on both sides of the border.

Reputation

What sort of reputation do Aoungarr, his partner Mahmed Isruel and their ship *There Ain't None* have? The best—and the worst. If you've got a cargo that must get there, no matter what the opposition, then *There Ain't None* is the right ship for you. If you need a sharp trader to cut a deal for you, then talk to Aoungarr, if you need a steady hand to fix your ship, ask Mahmed for a hand, he'll let you pay him back at the next port.

But if you want to impress a client, don't introduce him to Aoungarr, not unless he's deaf and blind! If you want some advice about your love life, then don't ask Aoungarr to help, he's seen more broken hearts than Jump flashes, and Mahmed is made of ice, they say he's got more emotion for a run-down engine than any living being. And for your honeymoon? Don't book a high passage on *There Ain't None*, it's said that the staterooms are OK, but they've had a nasty problem with the freshers backwashing …

Profile

Aoungarr Brighteyes (7 Scout, 2 Merchant) Vargr Tactician (Farguard Intelligence)

Homeworld: Keketepara (Oulduktak/Antares 3204) A-79A794-B Wa 610 Jr (Rukadukaz Republic/Julian Protectorate)

Attributes

STR: 10 +0
DEX: 16 +3
CON: 10 +0
INT: 16 +3
EDU: 12 +1
WIS: 12 +1
CHA: 14 +2
SOC: 8 -1
PSI: - Not Tested
PRE: 15 +2 (Vargr Charisma)
BAB: +5
Fort: +4
Ref: +7
Will: +7

Up Close and Personal

(Continued from page 53)

Skills

Skill	Stat/Class	+ Misc	+ Ranks	Total
Bribery	INT/Class 3	JoT 2	0	5
Gather Information	CHA/Class 2		6	8
Gunnery	WIS/Class 1		6	7
Leader	INT-CHA/Class 3		6	9
Liaison	CHA/Class 2		8	10
P/Administration	WIS/Class 1	JoT 2	0	3
P/Survey	WIS/Class 1	JoT 2	0	3
Pilot	INT-DEX/Class 3		9	12
Spot	WIS/Class 1	Vargr 1	6	8
T/Astrogation	EDU/Class 1		8	9
T/Computer	EDU/Class 1		6	7
T/Medical	EDU/Class 1	JoT 2	0	3
T/Sensors	EDU/Class 1		9	10
T/(any)	EDU/Class 1	JoT 2	0	3
Trader	INT/Class 3		8	11
Gambling	INT/Class 3	JoT 2	0	5
Driving	DEX/Class 3	JoT 2	0	5
Forgery	INT-DEX/Class 3	JoT 2	0	5
Navigation	EDU/Class 1	JoT 2	0	3
Ride	DEX/Class 3	JoT 2	0	5
Survival	WIS/Class 1	JoT 2	0	3
Appraise	INT/Class 3	JoT 2	0	5
Bluff	CHA/Class 2		6	8
Broker	INT/Class 3	JoT 2	0	5
K/Interstellar Law	EDU/Class 1		6	7
K/Trade	EDU/Class 1	JoT 2	0	3
P/(any)	WIS/Class 1	JoT 2	0	3
Sense Motive	WIS/Cross Class 1		6	4
Speak Irilitok	-	-	-	-
Speak Transform	-	-	-	-
Speak Galanglic	-	-	-	-
Read/Write Illitok	-	-	-	-
Read/Write Transform	-	-	-	-
Read/Write Galanglic	-	-	-	-
Any EDU Skill	EDU/Cross Class 1	JoT 1	0	2
Any WIS Skill	WIS/Cross Class 1	JoT 1	0	2
Any INT Skill	INT/Cross Class 3	JoT 1	0	4
Any DEX Skill	DEX/Cross Class 3	JoT 1	0	4
Any CHA Skill	CHA/Cross Class 3	JoT 1	0	4

Feats

Armor Proficiency (Vac suit), Armor Proficiency (Light), Weapon Proficiency (Marksman), Vessel (Starships), Vessel (Grav), Ship Tactics, Jack of all Trades (x3), Weapon Proficiency (Ship's Weapons), Negotiator, Barter, Narrow Escape, Connections (Merchants)

Equipment

Type A2 Far Trader, *There Ain't None*
Full safety and survival equipment for ship
Menderes Corp. TL12 SMG
Menderes Corp. TL12 Auto-Pistol w/silencer
Nuclear Arms TL15 Body Pistol
Reflec undershirt, Flak jacket
Tailored TL14 Vac Suit
Combat Armor (hidden on ship)
Autodoc (hidden on ship)
Medical Kit TL14
Hand Computer TL14
Long Range Communicator TL14
Personal Communicator TL14
Sundry Tools
Lots of expensive, gaudy clothes

GM Notes: How to use this scoundrel?

For Imperial players: Aoungarr turns up to get them out of a bind, perhaps some bureaucratic difficulties, or a problem with an underworld character. He might ask them a favour, or just want to get to know them better. They might find he's part of a problem they've been told to solve (perhaps his cover has been blown), or they might want to use him to get something smuggled into the Protectorate. He could even be plotting to bring them into Farguard Intelligence for questioning.

For Protectorate players: *There Ain't None* might be the ship used to insert a team into 3I space, or Aoungarr could be an important contact for the players to turn to for help when a mission blows up in their face. It could be that the Farguard has put Aoungarr onto the players' tail because they are suspected of being traitors, or he might need some information they could possess. On the other hand, Aoungarr could need a friend in a 3I port, and might saunter over to the players' ship to ask them to help him get something back to the Star Legion.⬡

Valshanti's Spice Experience

profiled by Walt Smith

This article was originally posted to the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 2009

Valshanti's is a restaurant chain located along a trade main, especially on TL6+ worlds with populations of 6+. Restaurants are usually found along the busiest tourist-oriented thoroughfare in A and B downports. At least two restaurants are operated as "exclusive clubs" aboard luxury interstellar passenger liners. Few people know about the original Valshanti, a retired megacorporate financial specialist who started the restaurant as a kind of hobby—he's been dead for decades, but the company he founded is doing well in his absence.

The outside appearance of a Valshanti's varies depending on local trade regulations, prosperity, architectural norms and such, but is usually utilitarian and understated. The interior decor is a kind of kitschy attempt at pre-4th war sector court style, almost like it had been researched with a holonovel by someone who liked endless amounts of bric-a-brac. Pricing is that of the more upscale restaurants at the highport, and while usually busy there's seldom a wait of more than a few minutes for a table.

Respectable dress and behavior are expected, but the staff are more lenient towards offworld aliens and other obviously foreign clients—this is company policy, as that touch of exoticness adds to the atmosphere the owners want to present. The lighting is bright, but not glaring—people want to see and be seen, especially because of the spectacles and ceremonies that make up the dining experience.

Tables are low, circled with multicolored seating cushions in a dazzling array of textures. The air is heady with the scents of odd spices, as wait staff and specialists thread between the tables bearing platters of bowls and decanters. The food is all a near-tasteless grey paste, and has been compared to both cream of wheat and argu. The beverages are all cool (but not cold) pure water. Both are presented in large covered tubs in the center of the tables, in some restaurants rising up through the center of the tables on unobtrusive lifts. Stacks of small bowls, capable of holding not more than a handful of the paste, are provided and quickly spirited away by the wait staff as they are used and emptied.

The main attraction of Valshanti's, of course, is the spices. Gathered from "every corner of the cosmos", each Valshanti's is said to have a spice vault holding megacredits worth of exotic ingredients, doled out grain by grain by the Spicemasters in their "Symphonies of Flavor". Revelers present their paste or water bowls to the extravagantly costumed Spicemasters to have tiny dabs of herbs, powdered seeds, pungent oils and more exotic flavorings added, and then carefully taste the result to experience what is described as a nirvana of subtle flavors.

This is all done in a ritualized style, and while newcomers are enthusiastically served the true adherents learn rituals as well to fully partake of the experience. Interest in these rituals has led, on some worlds, to them being treated as a mark of high culture, similar to the ancient Nihongo Tea Ceremony—participation in certain exclusive business or social groups may hinge on proper execution of a sip, bite, or appreciative expression.

Valshanti's isn't for everyone, of course. It takes a carefully cultured palate to appreciate the nuances present in each of the Spicemasters' creations, and the grey paste itself has almost no nutritive content. There are those who don't appreciate the experience; some go so far as to call the whole thing a massive sham, a collusion between the restaurateurs and the faux cultured—one offers a supposedly exotic experience and says that only the most refined can appreciate it, while adherents pretend to be those with the discernment to enjoy it. Some naysayers even claim that the special rituals associated with each spice are nothing more than a hodgepodge of religious ceremonies cribbed from historical records and fiction. A little bit of research on most worlds with a Valshanti's will turn up an annotated list of many spice rituals and the fictional holonovels they supposedly came from.   ✪

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 Sceaptune 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".