Featured Article:

Bounty Hunting Made Easy

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

Wow! Lots of small articles means lots of variety for you, but next to no space for my bit of blather. And at that, I didn't even get to mention Paul Anuni's answer to an Essay Question… ✺

Foreven Worlds: Creature of Distant Worlds

reviewed by Brett Kruger

Foreven Worlds—Creature of Distant Worlds. Dale E. McCoy, Jr.
Jon Brazer Enterprises https://jonbrazer.com
29pp., PDF
US$10.00/UK£7.65

The PDF document consists of 29 pages, which includes the cover page, a disclaimer page, table of contents and 4 pages of ads at the end, which leaves 22 pages of content. Not too bad for $15 AUD, better if you can get it when on one of the numerous sales on DriveThru.

The book starts with a great two page introduction with five different ideas on how to use the creatures in your own adventures. The information is detailed enough to hopefully get your imagination working but not so much as to tell you do this, this and this. I think there is enough information for even a new GM to use the creatures outlined in the following pages.

Next come 17 pages of creatures, one type per page. Each page includes a description, combat tactics, ecology and habitat and one or more characteristic blocks of different varieties of the creature. The characteristic blocks are standard Mongoose *Traveller* 2nd edition statistics so are useable for most versions of *Traveller*. I found the description of each creature the most interesting for two reasons. First, the descriptions are clearly inspired, at least to my mind, by creatures from movies and TV shows. It became a fun little game as I read the book to try and work out where the inspiration came from. Some were self-evident, others not so much. The second reason I liked the descriptions stemmed from the first, knowing a source for the creature gave me ideas on how I could use the creature in my own games. The creatures are varied enough to use on almost any world your characters might find themselves. Oh and yeah, the artwork is great throughout the book and they definitely add value to the book.
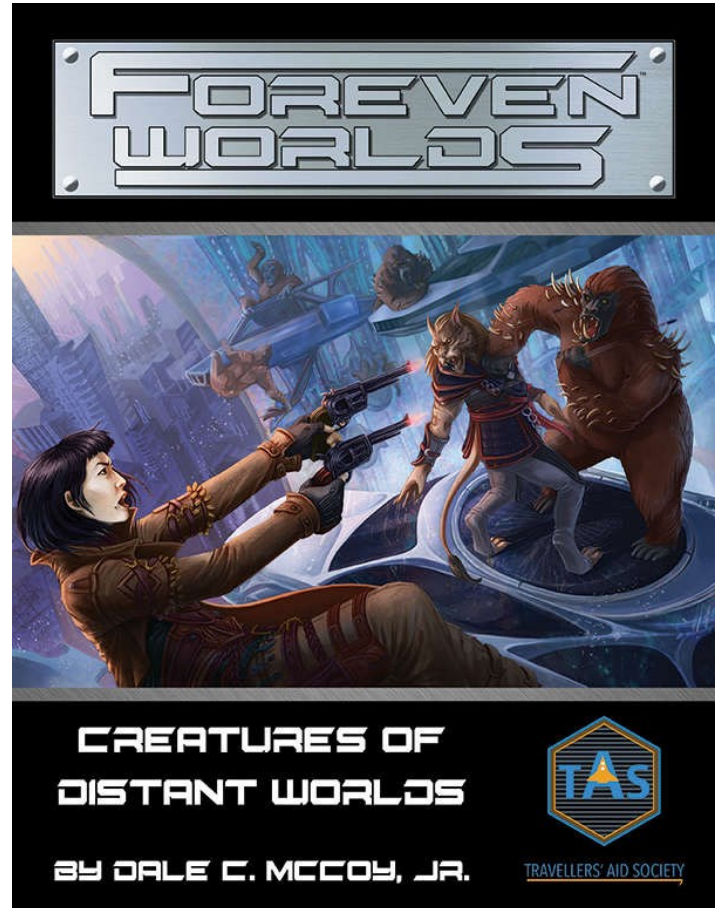
After the creatures is a page of stats for everyday creatures from Earth, which gives you a good basis of comparison for the previous creatures. The final two pages are the Traits pages, which gives you an outline of each of the traits covered throughout the book. This is especially good if you don't have the Mongoose 2nd edition core rule book and want to pick up *Creatures of Distant Worlds* for use in a non-Mongoose *Traveller* game.

So overall a really worthwhile edition to your Sci-fi gaming collection. Good formatting, clean, easy to read with great artwork. Only two things I can think of that would make this book better. First, a little more detail into where you would find the large and gigantic creatures, as opposed to the standard versions of them, such as giant creature X is 5 times less likely to be encountered and even then only in X locations. I guess this does allow the GM to be creative but would be helpful to new GMs. Second, more creatures!

When is edition 2 coming out?   ⚙

Navigation in Traveller

by Dan Corrin

This series will explore a number of concepts with navigation in *Traveller*. The rules are often unclear and the science and/or reasoning behind them not ideal. In your own *Traveller* universe you can of course ignore or alter these as you see fit. The previous article in this series covered the 100-diameter limit; and running *vs* standing jumps; future planned topics are jump masking and courses, jumping without a survey, and exploratory navigation.

Part 3: Calculating Jump Vectors

Space is huge, and planets and even stars are small in relation. When Andromeda collides with the Milky Way in 4.5 billion years it is estimated that with over 1.3 trillion stars between them there will be less than two direct stellar collisions.

Jumping to a star system even one parsec distant is not simply pointing the ship at the star and engaging the jump drive. Not only are the stars moving with respect to each other (about 100km/s on average), but the light from that star is several years old. If one doesn't know which direction the star is moving the chance of hitting even the 100D limit of the star itself is near zero (at 1pc it will have moved up to 69 AU in 3.26 years at 100km/s). Navigation in *Traveller* is not usually detailed beyond some notes about difficulty in calculating the math to open the jump space bubble. The computer needs to do things in just the right way based on the ship's jump grid and requires a lot of time and calculations is about all that is covered. The start of this process is obviously the coordinates, and thus direction to and distance of the destination. This might seem like the easy part, but is just the opposite. So navigation is just putting in the destination to the computer and it can, given an accurate current location of the starship (more on this another time), compute a heading and distance to where the star should be. Taking into account to avoid any known masses along the route in either the source or target systems, it can then perform the even more complicated jumpspace calculations. Despite how small the target is we can assume the technology is more than up for the task if we have navigational data.

Navigation data normally obtained by the scout surveys provides an ephemeris of all star motions in the Imperium relative to each other; this will account for almost all the trips that a normal ship will take. What happens if there is no data? That is where things get interesting. Some examples of where navigational data might be missing are:

- Stars outside of the Imperium. Other interstellar governments would likely have their own surveys, but covertly moving into Zhodani or Vargr space would be difficult without charts.

- Explorations (such as the Zhodani core expeditions) would not have charts.

- Military bases could have their stellar data slightly altered to discourage non-military visitors. A change of a few values could have unwanted visitors hundreds of AUs out of position after a jump into a red-zoned or covert military system.

- Non-Stellar objects. A brown dwarf would be much harder to identify than regular stars due to their light being primarily in the infrared rather than the visible spectrum; rogue planets would be even harder to detect, and only long-term observation and luck for such an object occluding a star would begin to identify its location. Navigation charts to these interstellar objects would be required in almost all circumstances. Assuming there is something of interest, such as fuel or special minerals the navigation charts themselves would have significant value.

The next section outlines some of the difficulties in determining where a star is located without proper stellar data. Thus charts for otherwise un-

Doing It My Way

surveyed systems would have some monetary value. This brings up several new adventure ideas:

- The PCs are hired to map out the actual location of an interdicted planet for a patron.

- The PCs must negotiate for accurate stellar maps when travelling on the fringes of the Imperium.

Angles used in determining the distance to or the location of a star are often expressed as "mas" milli-arc-seconds (an arc-second is 1/3600 of a degree, so 1/1000 of that). A 1 mas angle measured from the earth to the moon subtends 1.8m; that is, if you are off course by 1mas, by the time you reach the moon you are 1.8 meters from where you were targeting. Of course, like stars, the moon is moving, too, making things difficult. Extending that to 1 parsec, 1 mas subtends 150,000 km (1/1000 of an AU by definition).

Resolution of telescopes is an important part of determining where a star is. While large 8-10 m ground telescopes can have a resolution of 30mas, a space based telescope can fare much better and approach the theoretical maximum (Dawes' limit) expressed as 11.6/Diameter in cm for arc-second resolution. Thus the 8m ground telescope in space would have a resolution of 14.5mas. However there are ways to get even better resolutions. Interferometry can be used on very stable platforms (e.g., accuracy of 1 micrometer in a 100m array) to get resolution to 1mas which would be difficult to achieve in a spacecraft due to vibrations. Thus planets and deep space platforms can calculate good star positions.

Distance to a star is measured by parallax, which is the angle measured to the star from two widely-separated points (e.g., opposite sides of a planet's orbit around the system primary). We compare the relative position of the star from each of those locations. Given that a large planetary telescope array can resolve to about 1 mas that gives the position of the star to about ± 0.0005 parsec. But space is huge, so this is a variance of about 100 AU. For example,

decades of observations or Proxima Centauri with huge expensive telescopes lets us calculate its distance from Earth to be 4.2441 ± 0.0011 light years, or a margin of error of ±70AU, a lot more than the 100D limit of most stars. While not possible today, in *Traveller* the base line can be almost any distance and one would not need to wait 6 months to take the second reading. Two telescope platforms at the distance of Jupiter (around the planet and at the L3 point) would have a baseline of 10.5 AU giving 5× better accuracy or ±20AU. However, travelling 10 AU would still take over a week at 2G.

The alternative to being accurate with the distance to the star is to be accurate for position, as long as your course is accurate one can plan to jump "past" the star, hit the 100D limit and precipitate out. Unfortunately the trade-off is that it takes time to determine the movement of the star. If the telescope has a 10 mas resolution, the star needs to move 1.5 million km before it appears on a different pixel in the telescope, you would want at least a few such movements before you could have some confidence in saying where the star will be 3, 6 or more years in the future (as the light from the star is several years old). At 50km/s the 1.5 million km movement will take 8 hours, so a day will give you a rough estimate of where to travel to reach the star.

The problem is that ships (except perhaps lab ships) don't usually carry 8-10 meter telescopes, in fact optical sensors are usually not described in any detail. A 120mm telescope (current cost of about $500 – which could be assumed to be in normal sensors) would have an accuracy of about 1000 mas (1 arc-second), a $100K 700 mm telescope (definitely a line item in a starship design) about 175 mas. At 17 to 100 times less resolution the 8 hour time period per measureable position change becomes 6 to 30 days. So 18 to 90 days of observation to get a good idea where the star will be after the jump. Ships don't have that sort of time. Luckily the slower the

star, and thus harder to measure means that it will have travelled less distance too.

For almost all adventures that take place inside of the Imperium jumps can just be something that automatically succeeds with the navigator being able to reduce the distance from the destination at jump breakout with skill checks. (That exact value will be covered next article on jump masking.) However, for jumping without charts either at the edge of the Imperium or to a purposely "hidden" system, the following basic rules can be used to determine how extremely far away from the target the player's ship will be when it drops out of jumpspace (more detailed rules will be in a future article on exploratory navigation).

Basic Rules for Jumping Without Charts:

If the system location is purposely altered then the people who did so will have altered the stellar data in a systematic fashion, which will be known to those who are authorized to visit the system. The PCs may know that the alteration results in coming out of jump a known distance away, but not the direction of the error; alternatively, they may only know that the data is altered. In this case the players need to determine how long they would like to observe the star before jumping.

If the ship has drop tanks or is capable of jumping twice the distance to the star it will take less time to jump there, measure an accurate position from several hundred AU away (wherever they came out of jump), jump back, and jump again with accurate data than do the measuring from a distance. The downside of this is the extra expense and time of using three jumps to accomplish what would be done in one jump with accurate data.

Secretly roll 1D to determine the proper motion of the star: (1 = low, 2-5 = medium, 6 = high). Allow the PCs to determine how long they wish to spend observing the target star. They will have accurate information after the periods shown in Table 1:

Table 1:Observation Period for Accurate Stellar Position Determination		
Low Proper Motion	Medium Proper Motion	High Proper Motion
32 days	16 days	7 days

After the indicated periods of observation, the proper motion of the star will be known (in reality it is a spectrum of values not just three), and the players can adjust their estimate of the position.

Roll 1D and multiply by the square of the distance in parsecs (p) to the target star. Then, multiply by the proper motion factor from Table 2:

Table 2: Proper Motion Factor for Calculating Deviation		
Low Proper Motion	Medium Proper Motion	High Proper Motion
0.05	0.19	0.67

This is the deviation (d), in AU. $100/d^2$ is the base percent chance to hit the 100D limit. (Alternatively, use $20/d$ for main sequence stars and $4/d$ for dwarf stars). For each multiple of the minimum time given above with military sensors or 3 times the minimum time for civilian sensors the chance should be doubled; halve the chance if they haven't met the minimum time.

The navigator then rolls to determine if they hit the 100D limit of the star, in which case normal travel times apply. If they miss, they will be 10AU×p× (2D6+3) AU from the star. If the ship was able to make observations with a large baseline in the origin system, divide this distance by the number of weeks spent observing the target star.

Example: The target star is 2 parsecs away. The referee determines secretly the star has a medium proper motion. The players observe for 1 week and see that it is not measurably moving, so decide to wait another 9 days after which they can discern movement in their optics. They decide not to wait 7 total weeks to get the extra bonus with their civilian sensors so they jump. The referee rolls a 4 for the deviation calculation, so 0.19x4x2² = 3.04 AU. (10/3.04)² is 10.8%. If they had waited the extra 32 days to get good data it would have doubled to 21.6%— probably not enough better to make the extra delay

worthwhile, so likely a good call. If they had not waited the 16 days to start, the chances of hitting the 100D limit would have been halved to 5.4%. If they are lucky, they exit at 100D and have a quick journey to their destination. Most likely they missed the star and with a roll of 6 would come out 10×2×(6+3), divided by 2 for the 2 weeks of observation, for a final "miss" distance of 90 AU. Travel time is now 27 days for a total of 43 days. If they had military sensors and observed the target star for an extra 16 days, the chance would have doubled twice, to 43% and with 4 weeks of observation they would have been only 45 AU off target with the same roll, and 13 days of travel to come out with the same worst case (45 days) of total time and a much lower chance of failure. A Navigation skill check could be added to this as well to make the trip a little shorter (or longer, on a failure).

Travel with star charts is easy and can be ignored for any journey that isn't to a system with bad data. However without star charts a slow deliberate observation can still get you close – but remember to pack extra supplies. ✪

The Brotherhood of the Edge

by Jeffrey Schwartz

The Brotherhood is a subset of the Vilani religious scene, one that's been shrinking for the last few thousand years, and might be thought of as a parallel to the *Bushido* of Japan during the pre-WWII period.

Its practitioners follow the normal *Sazamshigzanaazi* beliefs as a baseline, but add an additional layer on top: one based on the early days on Vland, when life was a more violent struggle. They centered around the belief that while the Shugilii were critical to converting 'raw' food to an edible form, the world was a dangerous place.

The Ancient Death Machines still prowled during the era that the Brotherhood formed, and society in some areas was pushed down to hunter/gatherer levels, since obvious farming would often lead to a Death Machine responding unpleasantly.

The Brotherhood was formed primarily to protect those gathering plants, and the reference to "of the Edge" was to them being on the perimeter of the parties out searching for food to bring home to the Shugillii.

In those days, (about –10,000) they carried a variety of melee weapons, often hunting spears, sometimes with heads made from scraps of alloy they picked up from a destroyed Machine. Working those materials with a TL2-ish infrastructure was difficult, and required lots of continued manual effort to shape and sharpen the point and edge of the blades. On the other hand, the alloys were much more aesthetically pleasing than the flint or chipped stone or low-end metals that were more common in the encampments, leading to these weapons being called *lamak makhbi* ("Beautifully Sharp") in an archaic branch of standard Vilani language that is now pretty much dead (see http://wiki.travellerrpg.com/Vilani_(language))

That phrase started being applied both to the weapon, and the person who made/carried it.

In keeping with the Vilani attitudes toward consensus being better than individual fiat, there is no single recognized prophet/founder of the transition between this being a 'job' and it becoming a 'guild/religion'. Part of the ritual was to recite poetry con-

cerning the making, maintenance, and usage of the weapon while sitting and doing these things for long hours, in a kind of meditative state.

As time went on, and local technology improved, the Death Machines wound down and went extinct, and farming became the primary method of food production, the *Lamak Makhbi* changed. The hunting spears shrunk to become more like assegai, and eventually became all metal with a handle—a sword.

Around this time, with their original, practical reason for existence gone, they became more focused on protecting Vilani from each other, and the first schools of fencing formed. At the same time, the same metaphysical thinking that many other cultures that invented sword play began to manifest, and the contents of the meditative litany changed to more of a zen meditation. Portions of this litany very closely match ideas put forward by Yagyu Muenori, which goes to show that no matter where you go, humans are still humans: given the same body mechanics and biochemical processes in the brain, the same ideas will resurface. Practitioners of *Lamak Makhbi* consider such similarities proof that their ideas are so obviously right, natural, and sensible that *of course* they would be discovered elsewhere.

By the time the Solomani ran into the Vilani, the practice and number of hard-core Lamak Makhbi

had faded, but there were still cultural scraps of the Old Ways here and there, which was the primary reason for Vilani Navy and Marine officers carrying swords or blades "of presence" … and part of the reason Hiroshi Tokugawa Estigarribia was so respected during the surrender to Terran Confederation forces, since he allowed the surrendering officers to keep those blades.

In these more modern, enlightened times, the Brotherhood has shrunk to a secret society of sorts inside the Imperial services, along the lines of the Hash House Harriers of 20th century Terra crossbred with elements of Terran Freemasonry.

Their semi-official goals are:

- To promote physical fitness and mental agility
- To encourage an attitude of service and defense of the unarmed
- To acquire a good thirst and to satisfy it
- To persuade the older members that they are not as old as they feel

There is some truth to the rumors that at least three of the five voting members of the Imperial Marines' armaments board have been members since the founding of the Second Imperium and through the "Long Night" into the third, continuing to the present day, and that this is one of the reasons the Cutlass still holds its position in Marine life. ✪

Rifle Mugwort

by Benedikt Schwarz

Rifle mugwort owes its name to a horrible pun made by a Solomani explorer. The shape of the plant's leaves reminded him of mugwort ("Beifuß" in his native Anglogermanic), and he named it "Gewehrbeifuß" for its ability to shoot its seeds over long distances. "Gewehr bei Fuß", however, is also a formal military drill command, meaning "order

arms". The final exploration report was in Anglic, and the name was translated to "rifle mugwort" by the translation computer.

The sticky seeds travelled quickly to other planets on the outside of cargo containers, and rifle mugwort can be found on any number of worlds throughout the Aldebaran, Solomani Rim and Dias-

pora sectors, often in the vicinity of Class-D or lower starports (where there is little formal quarantine concerning foreign plant life), but especially around smuggler ports and pirate landing spots – everywhere ships touched down that had seeds sticking to their cargo and were not thoroughly sanitized.

Rifle mugwort is a bitter, slightly poisonous plant able to survive harsh extremes of temperature. In arid regions, it usually grows along subterranean water veins. For most of its cycle, the plant remains dry and barely alive, but a short rainy spell can trigger a sudden spurt of growth, and seeds ripen in the honeycomb-shaped pods within a few days.

During this time, the pods also build up air pressure and prime themselves for ejection. As soon as the humidity drops again, it becomes dangerous to move near a patch of mugwort.

Clusters of seeds are fired with considerable force in the direction of a source of vibration. In its native environment, the plant shoots its sap-coated

Morphology	Long vertical main root, wiry grayish branches, feathery leaves, beehive-shaped pods
Biochemistry	C/H/O/N, broadly compatible with human
Respiration	Carbon dioxide inhalant, dioxide exhalant, photosynthetic, tolerant of a wide range of atmospheres
Ecology	Indeciduous
Habitat	Arid steppes and deserts, along subterranean water veins (rifle mugwort), tropical jungles
Trophics	Demands low nutrient, sandy or rocky soil (rifle mugwort), humid, medium nutrient soil (sniper mugwort)
Reproduction	Self-pollinating, seeds ejected by pressured air.
Lifecycle and ontogeny	Perennial (blooming once per year, existing for several planetary years)

seeds deep into the bodies of passsing animals. The tacky sap ensures that even seeds that do not penetrate stick to fur or carapace and will be carried away, but the plant's main intention is to wound the animal. The sap's poison causes severe sepsis (ensuring the animal's death) and intense thirst so the animal will search out a watering hole or other place that has abundant groundwater before dying. In this way, odds are that the animal will die and deposit the seeds in an area with enough water for the emerging mugwort plant to prosper. Many mugwort plants can be found sprouting out of the pile of bones or bony shell left over from an unwilling host.

A single large plant can fire from twenty to a hundred bursts from its pods before it is empty. The damage is dependent on range, because the seeds lose their kinetic energy quickly. At close range, ejected seeds have been found to penetrate jack or mesh, and even at thirty meters they can raise an ugly welt on unprotected skin.

A person moving within a radius of 30m from a mugwort plant will be attacked each turn on 8+, with appropriate modifiers for causing stronger vibrations, such as carrying heavy equipment or wear-

ing servo-assisted armour. If an attack is triggered, 1D bursts will be fired at xir per turn. The plant is considered to have a DEX modifier of –2 and a "Gun Combat" skill of 0. Seeds are fired in bursts, which are treated like a burst attack by an automatic projectile weapon with an "Auto" trait of D3+1. Damage is D6 at a range of 10m, D3 at 20m and 1 at 30m, with appropriate modifiers for burst fire.

If a seed penetrates the skin (i.e., causes 2 or more points of damage – 1 point is considered a bruise but not a penetration) and is not immediately dug out and cleansed within a minute, the wound will become poisoned. The poison has an END check of DIFFICULT (10+) and does damage of 1D over an interval of 1D hours. Its side effects are fever (-2 to all actions), dehydration and a burning thirst. Victims must consume an additional two liters of water per day or suffer an additional 1D damage to their INT per interval.

Sniper Mugwort

Virenni, the original home planet of the rifle mugwort, has large desert areas dotted by oases where there is surface water. The vegetation in these spots is lush, thick and jungle-like, and certain plants evaporate the groundwater under the thick canopy of leaves to create a humid rainforest microclimate. Mugwort seeds that are carried into an oasis by a dying animal (or drop from a container in a different planet's tropical zone) will grow into a different kind of plant from the mugwort commonly encountered in the desert.

This "sniper mugwort" has larger leaves and is less dry. Its pods are also larger and build up more pressure. The plant propagates itself by randomly scattering its seeds; since it grows in a moisture-rich environment, it does not need animals to carry them to water. The seeds are expelled with more force, since they have to slash through thick foliage, and are consequently more dangerous if they hit. They lack the poisonous coating, which makes the treatment of sniper mugwort wounds much easier.

A sniper mugwort plant will attack randomly and fire single seeds in all directions up to 30m away. The chance to be hit is actually pretty low (11+) unless the victim is within 5m of the plant (9+). Damage is 2D. The seeds hissing through the leaves and shaving the bark off trees often cause the impression that the group is under attack from a hidden sniper – which is a nerve-jarring experience that will cause a group to duck and freeze until being roused to action again with a successful DIFFICULT, INT, Leadership, SAFE roll. Realising that it is a plant and not a sniper firing at them takes a successful VERY DIFFICULT, EDU, (Gun Combat/Slug or Tactics or Survival or Science/Biology), SAFE, UNCERTAIN check. +2 is added to the roll if the group finds the projectile, although the dark, hard seeds do have the appearance of a slightly flattened bullet upon cursory examination. ✹

#43: Minimalism

I have a friend who has not only downsized her possessions to a minimum, but downsized her living space a couple of time until she's now inhabiting a tiny space. Bedroom, bathroom, very small kitchen, bit of a hallway and a lounge. That's it. I couldn't do it. Between all the books I have and the tendency to hoard other things as well, I struggle with the limits of a small "chalet bungalow" that I only share with two others.

I also know *Traveller* referees who exhibit similar minimalist tendencies. They might just have a rule

Confessions of a Newbie Referee

book – although one such I know simply borrows one from the nearest player on the exceedingly rare occasion there might be cause to look anything up. Their adventure notes are also limited. Another referee I've seen with his entire adventure 'mapped out' in a few lines of scrawl on a page and a half of reporter's notebook.

They seem to have powers of memory, powers of invention and powers of confidence that I can only look at and admire from afar.

I not only seem to accumulate things – the books mentioned above being the least of it – but I seem to accumulate ideas and half-started projects and…. well, you get the idea. In a supposedly digital world, even paper notes seem to expand to fill the space and don't get me started on electronic files here and there on this device or that platform.

When it comes to refereeing I've discovered I'm no better. For all I'm a librarian by profession so you'd have thought I'd have an easy time organizing things, I still find that I'm collecting this for that purpose and that for this segment. In a single game convention slot it's all just about manageable although I've written in these pages before about turn-

ing up with 100 pages of printed text to run an adventure.

Where it gets really out of hand, I'm discovering, is in running a campaign. Regular readers, or habitués of the *Traveller* Mailing List, will know I've been running *The Traveller Adventure* every other month for several years now. I started with a folder to contain my notes and it wasn't long before it was pretty heavy and then bulging. A session or three back I've had to admit to myself that I'm using two folders now. And I seem to spend more game prep time getting things in them straight following the chaos a game night breeds than I ever spend actually writing or creating anything.

Indeed, I'm writing this now as a displacement activity to avoid knuckling down and getting everything ready for our next game session. «*sigh*». I've no idea how others manage really. I've no idea why I can't be organized. I've no idea why I can't go entirely digital now I can barely lift the bag I carry. I think it may be a curse, but I'll bet I'm not alone! Does anyone employ a porter? Does anyone want the job?   ✪

Up Close and Personal

Baron Rory Furminger

profiled by Ewan Quibell

Rory Furminger is 6' 3" tall and weighs 192 lb. He has short-cropped dark brown hair, worn in the classic spacers cut, and blue eyes.

Furminger is relatively good looking. His face has undergone dramatic reconstructive surgery, although this is not noticeable to the naked eye, and his left forearm and hand have been re-grown. These injuries occurred in an action that saved Gvutson (3233 Gvurrdon), an Imperial client state, from a massive corsair raid.

Furminger is the third in line for the title of Marquis of Porozlo (2715 Spinward Marches) and as such is unlikely to inherit. For his 16th birthday his mother the Marquee bestowed a small Barony upon him. This allows him a small independent income although little or no influence in court or planetary affairs. With his elder sister likely to inherit Furminger did what lots of second and third siblings do and joined the Imperial Navy.

He attended the Naval Academy and passed, however he failed admission to flight school. He was

able to pull some strings and was posted to the flight branch although he had to take an assignment along the frontier with the Extents to achieve this.

Furminger's first years in the Navy were a little uneventful as he was posted to Depot (Corridor). He was eventually assigned to patrol duty along the frontier, and he launched himself into the work of corsair suppression. He was soon promoted. He commanded many strike missions against corsair bases and was decorated in numerous actions. His liking for the work and his successes allowed him to continue in this role. He gained a great respect for the Vargr he met also for those he came up against in battle and he started to study their language and cultures. As the years passed he became even more daring in his assignments and was awarded the Starburst for Extreme Heroism when corsair ships enlisted the help of a Vargr government destroyer squadron. Furminger fought a rear guard action that allowed the other Imperial ships under his command to jump to safety. Once his ships were all accounted for he used his powers as an Imperial noble to commandeer a colonial squadron and he then jumped back into the system to pursue and destroy the corsairs and force the destroyer squadron to surrender. This action resulted in the capture of three destroyers and a frigate, and the complete destruction of the corsairs.

Furminger enthusiastically continued in his assignments and was awarded a bar for his Starburst for Extreme Heroism when he took command of the system defences of an Imperial client state and with his ships he successfully fought off a concerted corsair attack on the systems main world. The corsairs retreated to refuel and Furminger gave chase. He received a nearly fatally wound when his ship took a direct hit. Lock Thormadon, who had served under Furminger for six months, saved his life by applying first aid during the action following the death of the ship's doctor. Thormadon had already come to the attention of Furminger as an efficient petty officer who was struggling in the Navy due to his backwater upbringing, and following the action Furminger started to think of ways to repay him for his efforts.

When attempting to sign up for his 6th term, Furminger was informed that he was no longer needed and was released from service. This was not only a complete shock to Furminger but to everyone else in the fleet as well. His peers saw Furminger as the epitome of an Imperial Naval Officer, and are still dumbfounded at his release to this day.

From his time along the frontier and in the Existents Furminger has gained an in-depth knowledge of the Vargr, their society and culture, and their attitudes and tactics. He speaks Gvegh fluently. He holds a great respect for them and is able to work and mingle in Vargr society with little effort.

Furminger came to the attention of Duke Norris of Regina after he received his second decoration of the Starburst for Extreme Heroism. Norris saw in him a great ability to be an Imperial trouble-shooter along the frontier of the Existents. With his great knowledge of the Vargr and his Noble and Navy training Norris saw great potential in the man that could be put to better use than being in the upper ranks of the Navy. Norris saw to it that Furminger's career in the Navy come to an abrupt end and arranged a membership in the Travellers Aid Society. Following a meeting at court Norris asked Furminger if he would be interested in being an Imperial trouble-shooter along the frontier. With nothing better to do Furminger accepted on the understanding that he could be accompanied by Lock Thormadon. Thormadon had been discharged from the Navy when he was unable to keep up with the pressures of paperwork.

Furminger has an effective charisma of 9 when dealing with Vargr due to his in-depth knowledge of how to carry himself and behave in their culture. At any time he can effectively drop this to any level be-

low 9 when he thinks it necessary to interact with lower charisma Vargr. While he can raise it above 9, when the occasion necessitates, he finds it relatively hard to sustain and can only manage it for very short periods of time.

Furminger is currently undertaking dedicated practice in the art of Vargr street fighting and in the use of an auto-pistol, as he thinks that this is necessary in his new role in life. He carries a letter from Duke Norris that asks the reader to offer any assistance Furminger thinks necessary, however Furminger tries not to use this if at all possible and relies on his own Rank and training to sort out any problems that he finds.

Rory Furminger 869ADC (CHR 9) Age 43 Cr76,900 Mixed-Race Human Male

Imperial Navy 5 terms, Final Rank Commander

Special Assignment: Naval Academy

Decorations: Eight combat commands, MCUF with four bars, MCG with three bars, and the SEH with bar.

Member, Travellers' Aid Society

Skills: Pilot-4, Admin-1, Brawling-1, Bribary-1, Communications-1, Computer-1, Engineering-1, Fleet Tactics-1, Foil-1, Handgun-1, Liason-1, Navigation-1, Ships Tactics-1, Vacc Suit-1

Personal Equipment: Foil, Auto-pistol, Vacc Suit TLF, Ducal Warrant ✸

The Kidnapping of Major L. Fure'du

by Donald Hahn

Synopsis: *An Imperial Army office must get to her home to save it.*

Initial Setting: *Pre-Stellar/Industrial-tech world, Low-mid population, Agricultural world, Scout base present.*

While having a meal and drink at a local mid-range night club the PC's overhear a mid 20's to early 30's woman, dark hair, nice upper class clothing, talking on the "new" cell phone network, and not being too careful about it. While this is a TL 7 world, and rather out on the far end of things, travellers from higher TL level worlds have been investing on-world and a new cell phone system has come on line. At the moment it barely covers the downport, but if the wind is blowing the right direction you can get a signal. If any of the PCs are Imperial military academy grads, they might notice the Imperial Army academy ring on her hand, and the first thought might be "aren't they teaching anything about Comm sec anymore?" Having dealt with the port schedulers' office before you know the two local… gentlemen… in the office are really over their heads trying to run the place. After confirming she has the schedulers' office, twice, and identifying herself a couple of times, her end of the conversation is, "What do you mean? But you said I was booked… Hello, hello…?". Then, after she slams the phone down on the table; you can see her shoulders slump as she puts her head down into her hands. It will take a minute to realize that she is quietly crying behind her hair and hands. Before anyone can make up their mind what to do, she straightens her shoulders, wipes her face with her hands, stands, digs in to a belt purse and tosses some coins on the table, with fists clenched so tight that her hands are white she walks passed you muttering something that can be just made out as "Damn Tukera!"

Any PC that has been in the Intelligence field or a special agent of some type can recognize the small knowing smile that the gentleman sitting with his

Active Measures

back to the woman is wearing just before it is covered by the drink he brings to his mouth. Finishing off the drink he waves at the barkeep, stands and gives the room a quick once over and also throws a few Coins on the table and walks out following the woman.

Some careful investigation will reveal that the woman is Major Lisa Fure'du of the Imperial Army. She is on a six-month leave, trying to get home to her family's winery and hunting lodge to find out if it is still there and worth rebuilding. She has two months to re-establish ownership of the property or it goes on the auction block. There are indications of long-term hostility between the family and Tukera, stemming from a family refusal to sell the property to aTukera subsidiary.

Major Lisa Fure'du 96BADA, age 26, Cr30,000
2 Terms Imperial Army, rank O-4 (Major)

Homeworld: Wet world, tainted atmosphere, Low population, nonindustrial. Amber travel zone.

Rifle-1, Grav Belt-1, Vacc Suit-1, Zero G Cbt-1, Energy Weapons-0, Tactics-2, Leader-2, Admin-1, Ships Boat-1, Mechanical-2, Battle Dress-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Medic-1.

Major Fure'du stands approximately 163cm tall and masses 54.5kg. Her hair and eyes are dark, and she is nicely tan, though it is difficult to tell whether it is her natural color or a result of spending time outdoors.

The Tukera VP of the county has found out that the winery and lodge is close to being on the auction block, and has decided to make a play for it.

———————————

Major Fure'du has run into all sorts of delays and problems just trying to get home.

Her six-month leave has been one headache after another. Figuring 2 weeks to her homeworld, another week or so getting to the property, a week checking the place out and another getting back to the downport, 2 weeks back and a couple of days doing the paperwork, lining up financing if she wants to keep it (she does) to pay the back taxes, she will be

coming in just under the wire, so any delay could be fatal to her family dreams. A little research will find that the winery was very well known some years back and had won sector and Imperial wide awards, even a few from Terra. A few tons of these wines especially if they are a couple of hundred years old would be worth millions. The local Tukera VP realizes this, and would rather the property (and the potential windfall) fall into Tukera's hands, so he has assigned an agent to impede Lisa as much as possible, so that the property will go to auction, where he expects Tukera to be able to easily outbid any other prospects and buy the winery out from under her.

Loren Den Veldt 55598B, Apparent age 42 (actual 58)
Cr350,000 (access to credit line Cr1,000,000)
10 term Special Agent
Streetwise-3, Intrusion-3, Forgery-3, J-o-T-2, Gambling-2, Handgun-2, Wheeled Vehicle-2, Medical-1, Demolitions-1, Carousing -2, Electronics-2.

This is Den Veldt's retirement assignment and while he normally feels that leaving bodies laying around is just untidy and adds complications he will put someone in a shallow grave without hesitation if necessary.

Author's Note:

I originally wrote this adventure in TNE timeline after the civil war in the new 4th Imperium, in the county of Ukse, Dagudashaag sector. In MTU Oberlines and Tukera have just opened small (like 3-4 people small offices and warehouses on Ukse). (Trade war, anyone?) Taxes must be paid on Ukse. PCs need access to a J2 ship, ATV, and personal firearms. This is a beat-the-clock adventure; the PCs are really only suppose to sleep while they are in jump space. Looking over my notes 150 Tons of wine is worth over MCr8.

I like having pictures of my NPC's to show the players; Major Fure'du is Demi Moore from G.I. Jane, *and Den Veldt is Burt Reynolds from when he appeared in* Burn Notice. ✪

NHR Low-Function 10 Robot Brain

designed by Ewan Quibell

The Brain is a standard design used to fit into any manner of robot chassis and vehicles to provide relatively good skills at a very reasonable price. The design has been adapted to be able to take any manner of programs and standard fittings have been designed to make integration into robot or vehicle chassis a simple procedure.

This brain has a CP Multiplier of 80 at TL8, 90 at TL9, 100 at TL10 and 110 at TL11.

The NHR low Function 10 Robot Brain provides INT 0 and EDU 1, allowing for a skill of size 4 to be run. Available programs for this brain are any one of the skills in the table below.

The price of the software is not included in the price of the brain.

Robot ID:	NHR Low Function 10 Robot Brain, TL8, Cr 7,150, UPP=xxx01x, INT=0, EDU=1
Hull:	6.9 litres, Unloaded=1.8 kg
Power:	External=0.83 kw
Loco:	-
Commo:	-
Sensors:	-
Off:	-
Def:	-
Brain:	CPU=Linear×7, Storage=Standard×11, FundLogic=LowData, FundCmd=LimitedBasic, Software=See Below
Append:	-
Other:	ObjSize=Small, EMLevel=None
Comment:	Cost in quantity=Cr 5,720

This brain is identical at TL9, 10 and 11   ✪

NHR Low-Function 10 Robot Available Skills

Program	Cost	Program	Cost	Program	Cost
Air Cushion Vehicle	Cr800	Grav Vehicle	Cr800	Security	Cr400
ATV	Cr400	Gunnery	Cr800	Sensor Ops	Cr800
Cargo Handling	Cr400	Hunting	Cr800	Ship's Boat	Cr800
Communications	Cr800	Intrusion	Cr800	Stealth	Cr800
Construction	Cr800	Janitorial	Cr400	Survival	Cr600
Demolition	Cr800	Lab Tech	Cr800	Steward	Cr600
Electronics	Cr800	Mechanical	Cr1000	Vacc Suit	Cr400
Forgery	Cr600	Recon	Cr800	Weapon (any one)	Cr600
Forward Observer	Cr800				

Three Shipborne Sightings of Animals

by Timothy Collinson

Svarb

Svarb are an ever present plague on many ships, particularly as they age and hulls and other bulkheads become more worn. They are very small (body length 1cm + antenna length 1cm) insects with eight legs and a relatively soft carapace. Not harmful in themselves, they carry disease which can be spread through unprotected food they've touched or contact with their droppings. Roll 12+ every month for a ship to become infected (DM -1 for every 50 years since the ship was constructed; DM -1 for every orbital station or other ship the vessel has docked with during the month). It is a Formidable task to eradicate them entirely (DM +1 for
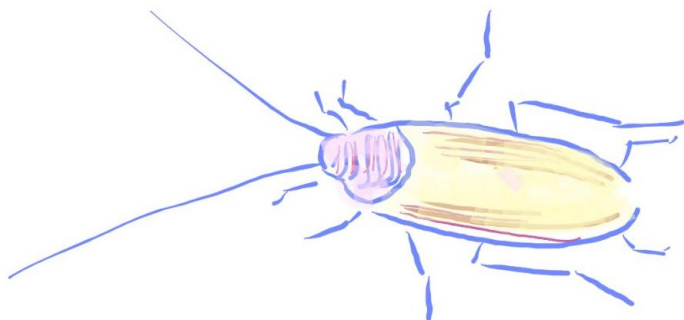
treatment at an A class starport, DM+1 at a world of TL 14+), however failure with an Effect of at least -2 will reduce their numbers and the problem for 1D months giving a DM -1 on the Easy task check of their 'attack'.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Svarb	1	9m
SKILLS	Athletics (Dexterity) 2, Stealth 2, Recon 0, Survival 0	
ATTACKS	Disease (see text if Easy task check failed. Check 1×Week if svarb are present.)	
TRAITS	Alarm (odor), Diseased (Difficult, 2D, 1D weeks), Small (-3)	
BEHAVIOUR	Scavenger, Reducer	

Streamer

Many worlds with Dense atmospheres (8+) support a lifeform called variously streamers, pennants, or aereels. Usually around 2-3m long, although they may grow to 4m and on some atmosphere D worlds 10m specimens have been known. With roughly cylindrical bodies no more than a few centimetres in cross section they fly in air currents using thin membranes that run along the length of each side of their bodies. Astonishingly agile, they are able to twist and spin and can vir-

tually tie themselves in knots; they never land, feeding, fighting and mating in the air. They eat small birds and insects as well as airborne plant matter. They are particularly attracted to cavorting in the wake of ships landing but pose no threat to such vessels and are usually considered to bring good fortune if sighted by a crew.
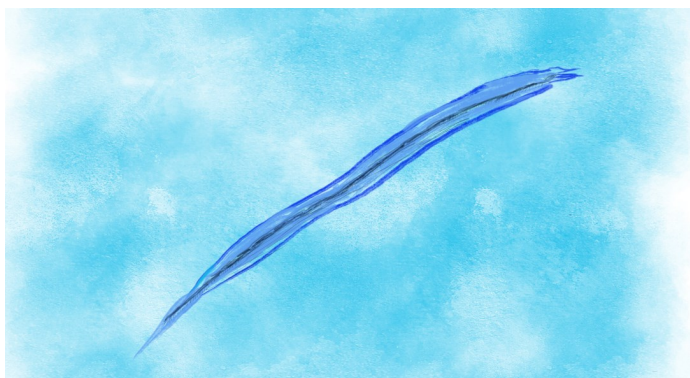
ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Streamer	10	500m*
SKILLS	Athletics (Dexterity) 3, Navigation 2, Recon 1, Survival 1, Tactics 1	
ATTACKS	Bite (1D)	
TRAITS	Alarm (Squeal), Flyer (High), Heightened Senses, Small (-1)	
BEHAVIOUR	Omnivore, Eater	
NOTE	* depending on wind strength and other atmospheric conditions	

Ship's Dog

Smaller vessels may carry a ship's cat, but on larger vessels there is room for even reasonably large dogs to live and exercise adequately. They are generally thoroughly domesticated and love being around humans but they can be trained as guard dogs for a particular territory or owner. They make unusually loyal pets; it should be noted that the supposed negative reactions from Vargr is not a reaction to the keeping of the dog as a pet—many Vargr consider humans keeping dogs as pets to be a minor joke, as there are Vargr that keep small, non-sophont simianoids as pets—but a reaction to the owner's attitude toward Vargr directly. One would be well-advised to look up the 'panet' relationship in the Julian Protectorate before giving credence to assertions of general Vargr disapproval of dogs as pets.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Dog	7	50m
SKILLS	Recon 2, Athletics (Dexterity) 1, Melee (bite) 1, Survival 0	
ATTACKS	Bite and Claws (D3)	
TRAITS	Alarm (Growl), Fast Metabolism (+1), Heightened Senses	
BEHAVIOUR	Carnivore, Chaser	

Jottings #11: Facing the Law

For some reason, it's fairly common for player-characters to find themselves taking actions that should put them on the wrong side of the law, whether or not they actually do. This Jotting will discuss some of the aspects of legal systems that might affect characters that do find themselves called to account for their actions.

The Powers of a Government

Broadly speaking, there are three powers that any government exercises: The **Legislative power** is tasked with creating law; the **Executive power** is tasked with enforcing the law, and the **Judicial power** is tasked with interpretation of the law. While it is common for each power to be exercised by a separate division of the government, it is by no means required.

From Arrest to Trial (A Brief Overview)

After it has been determined that an offense appears to have been committed, the Executive power will take the apparent offender into custody, and begin compiling the facts surrounding the incident. An in-depth investigation will be made, either by the Executive power (in Adversarial systems) or the Judicial power (in Inquisitorial systems), and a decision will be made whether to bring the offender to trial. The trial is conducted under the auspices of the Judicial power, and the Executive power and the accused will both present their respective interpretations of the facts, leading to the Judicial power rendering a decision on the accused's culpability.

The process can be short-circuited at several points prior to coming to trial:

(1) The investigating power may conclude that it does not have sufficient information for a successful prosecution, or develops information that fully exonerates the accused, and declines prosecution ("drops the charges", or *nolle prosequi*).

(2) In an adversarial system, when the information is presented to the grand jury, that body may decide that the information is insufficient to make a successful prosecution likely, and decline to indict.

(3) The accused may acknowledge culpability (guilty plea).

(4) The prosecution and the accused may come to an agreement where the accused acknowledges culpability to a lesser offense in exchange for the prosecution declining to proceed with the charges in the indictment ("plea bargain").

(5) The accused may not admit culpability, but may accept penalty in the interest of avoiding the trial process (plea of "no contest" or *nolo contendere*). This generally has the same immediate effect as a guilty plea, but may have different long-term consequences. Nolo pleas are not always available to a defendant.

(6) The accused may suffer from a psychiatric condition that makes it impossible for him to understand the charges against him, or to assist in his defense. This is a finding that the accused is not competent to stand trial, and is comparatively rare—it may only be available to the severely retarded or to individuals who are clearly 'disconnected from reality'.

Elements of the Case

In most jurisdictions, a successful prosecution "rests on three legs": **Motive**, or a reason for commission of the act; **Means**, or a method of committing the act; and **Opportunity**, or a time and place for the accused to have committed the act. If any of the three legs can be shown to fail (e.g., the accused was able to show that he was not at the location at the time the crime happened), the prosecution fails. Many jurisdictions weaken the need for a

motive to be proven by including in criminal statutes such conditions as negligence or depraved indifference; this has the effect of allowing prosecution for the results of failing to do something which would have prevented the act if done.

Inquisitorial Systems vs. Adversarial Systems

When a player-character "enters the system" for activities outside the pale of the law, the investigation and trial may, broadly speaking, operate according to one of two principles: Inquisitorial, or Adversarial.

In the **Adversarial system**, the investigation is done by the Executive power, who then submits their findings to the Judicial power. This is often in the form of a *grand jury*, a panel of citizens that evaluates the evidence presented, and advises the Executive power to procede to trial (the grand jury *returns an indictment*) or to end the process (the grand jury *declines to indict*). Once the decision is made to proceed to trial, the court's role is primarily to act as a referee, and ensure that the rules of procedure are followed by both sides, and secondarily to provide advice on the meaning of the law. Ideally, the court also ensures that the facts are brought out and presented accurately, but in practice the court remains neutral and passive in the presentation, acting only when violations are perceived, and even then primarily on request of one of the two parties that the court take cognizance of the violation. The court may not initiate an action on its own, nor may the court engage in any questioning or other investigation of the actions or claims presented.

In the **Inquisitorial system**, the Judicial power's role is more active, and may begin earlier in the process, with the Executive power bringing the bare facts of the incident before the Judicial power. The court is then actively involved in the investigation, questioning any of the involved parties or witnesses, pursuing investigation of presented facts, and initiating additional investigations as indicated. Adher-

ence to the rules is a secondary objective, but one that is often enforced rigorously due to the court's own ability to intervene. This type of court system is often viewed by Americans as being a 'guilty until proven innocent' system; the perception is incorrect: there is a presumption of innocence under both systems, but the inquisitorial system is seen as more likely to dismiss any accusations against an innocent party at an earlier stage of the process, and is also less amenable to setting up 'reasonable doubt' through such common (in Adversarial systems) legal maneuvers as careful questioning to suppress facts or present them in a biased manner, failure to call witnesses, excluding witnesses based on shaky legal theories, or biased presentation of the facts.

Civil Law vs. Common Law

In a **Civil Law** system, primacy is given to the codified law, which is written as short articles in terms of general principles, rather than setting out specific situations and the law's applicability thereto. Court decisions are made on the basis of applying those general principles to the specific situation; previous decisions in similar cases may be considered in an advisory capacity, but are not controlling (this is the doctrine of *jurisprudence constante*).

In a **Common Law** system, primacy is given to previous decisions of the court (case law), and codified law is written or modified based on the details of the decisions, with detailed descriptions of when and how the law applies to a situation. Generally, prior court decisions are held to govern where the facts of the case at issue are not significantly different from those prior cases (*precedent*), and the court will rule differently only reluctantly, and only where the facts are different enough to support overruling precedent (this is the doctrine of *stare decisis*).

(*It should also be noted that 'Civil Law' is used in a different meaning, to contrast with 'Criminal Law'. In this latter meaning, it refers to law governing torts, where*

the Executive power does not initiate action on behalf of the society. This Jotting focusses mostly on legal systems as they apply to Criminal Law.)

Customary Law and Statutory Law

This isn't 'vs.', because most societies actually use a mixture, although one or the other—usually statutory law—predominates. **Statutory Law** is law passed by a legislative power and set down in writing; it forms the basis for most law in societies that have gotten large enough that not everyone knows everyone else personally. Even then, where society isn't highly heterogeneous, **Customary Law**, or unwritten law generally based on 'community standards', will be a major factor that informs the law, and such isn't unknown even in highly heterogeneous societies. Customary Law is often poked fun at once a society develops enough to have a full-time legal profession; consider the derision implicit in stories about judges who "can't define it [obscenity], but know it when they see it", or about the defense that "he needed killin'"—both of those are examples of supposedly applying Customary Law to situations where society expects Statutory Law to be applied. To the extent that a society mixes Statutory Law and Customary Law, the latter will generally inform the judiciary alongside case law, but with lesser influence.

Private Prosecution

Some jurisdictions permit private persons, not associated with the State, to initiate a criminal proceeding against an offender. This is called **Private Prosecution**, and is usually limited to specific classes of offense, under specific conditions, and perhaps only in specific parts of the court. The use of private prosecution tends to decline (and may be eliminated by statute) as the body of professional lawyers—both trial and non-trial—grows and divides into specialties.

Arbitration

Arbitration is generally used in Civil Law (as contrasted with Criminal Law, not Common Law) as a way to resolve a dispute without involving the State. It represents an intermediate solution to a dispute, between negotiation of a settlement acceptable to all parties and going to the court to render a decision. The arbitration process has much in common with the civil trial process, and its use is often encouraged, formally or informally, by the State (to reduce the burden of such cases on the State's court system). One can easily imagine a system where private prosecutions for minor offenses might be allowed to go to trial before a private arbitration panel instead of the State's courts.

(It should be noted that many court shows on TV are actually small-claims arbitration panels where the panel is made up of one or more [usually retired] judges. The contending parties are induced to accept this arbitration instead of going to an actual small-claims court by offering both a small honorarium for doing so, and agreeing to pay any award to the plaintiff out of show funding instead of taking it from the respondent.)

Verdicts

In most jurisdictions, only two possible verdicts in a criminal trial are available: guilty, meaning that the court believes that the defendant is in fact culpable in the manner asserted by the State, and not guilty, meaning that the court does not hold the defendant culpable. The verdict of "not guilty" does not mean that the defendant did not commit the acts asserted; it might instead mean that the court found legitimate justification for the commission of the act (e.g., self-defense, provocation ["fighting words"], etc.), or that the law itself is unjust (or unjustly applied in a particular case) (*jury nullification*, not always acceptable). In Common Law jurisdictions, the prosecution is generally not permitted to appeal a verdict of not guilty; the defendant is only permitted

The Prep Room

to appeal a verdict of guilty insofar as it can be asserted that the verdict was due to procedural errors (e.g., improper exclusion of exculpatory evidence, improper instruction to the jury, improper application of the law by the judge or jury). In Civil Law jurisdictions, the prosecution may, under certain circumstances, be permitted to appeal the verdict even in the event of a finding of guilty.

Some jurisdictions admit additional verdicts: courts in Scotland, for example, admit the verdict of *not proven*; this is in its immediate effect an acquittal, but is notionally used when the jury (or judge in a summary proceeding) feels that the evidence presented does not indicate guilt beyond reasonable doubt, but does provide significant doubt that the defendant is not guilty. There is no evidence to believe that such a verdict allows the prosecution to retry the case after developing new information, but there is a belief that it does so allow in some societies that do not admit the verdict.

Many jurisdictions admit a verdict variously called *not guilty by reason of insanity*, or *guilty but insane* [or *mentally ill*], or some other similar phrase. This is generally only available when the defense enters it specifically as a plea, and is in effect an assertion that the defendant did in fact commit the acts for which he is accused, but suffers from a psychiatric condition that affected him at the time of the act to make him not responsible for the act. Such a plea requires that the defendant prove the assertion of psychiatric incapacity. ✸

Critics' Corner

Cascadia Adventures 3: Fled

reviewed by Megan Robertson

Cascadia Adventures 3: Fled. John Watts.
Gypsy Knights Games https://www.gypsyknightsgames.com
47pp., PDF
No longer available as a separate product.

As with the previous two adventures in the Cascadia series, this one is set in the alternate *Traveller* universe created by Gypsy Knights Games—it takes place in the Cascadia subsector which is part of Clement Sector. Again, the whole thing starts with the Razz Casino on Chance, a planet in Cascadia. Pre-generated characters and a ship are provided, or you can use your own. The advantage of the characters provided is that they are embedded into what is going on with links to the Casino and an array of useful contacts who pop up during the adventure to help—but if using your own characters it's not too hard to work them in. Likewise, if you are not using the alternate universe it will be possible to amend
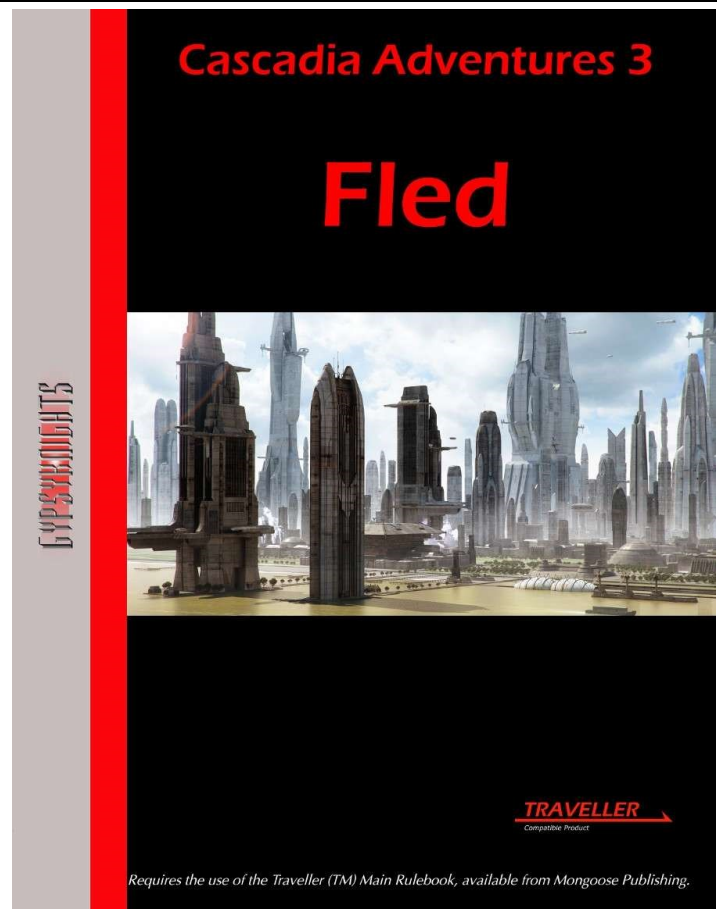
the adventure to fit in with your own. If you have either of the previous two adventures, there is some repeated material—the pre-generated characters, the ship, and details of the Razz Casino itself—primarily for the benefit of those who only have this work. Each adventure stands alone, so if you like this one, go back and try the other two!

The plot is quite straightforward—or at least appears to be when first introduced. A fellow called Hawthorne, part of Razz Casino security, has stolen a large amount of money from the Casino and the owner, Carrie O'Malley, wants not just the money back but Hawthorne's head on a platter as well. The party will be tasked with going to Cascadia, where Hawthorne used to live, and visiting his ex-wife to find out if she knows anything about the theft or Hawthorn's whereabouts. They'll have to be discreet, as this lady has since remarried… to one of Cascadia's leading politicians.

Once the party has accepted the offer—and it is, shall we say, in their best interests to do so—they can begin to make their way to Cascadia via Dimme, another world where they can refuel. Throughout, scenes are presented as 'essential' (necessary to the plot), 'optional' (flavour and role-playing opportunities, but not contributing to the plotline) and 'contact' (where the party has a chance to gather useful information)—a neat trick to keep things moving yet create a sense of reality in your game.

There's a spot of local color—and time for a meal—at Dimme, then on to Cascadia where the main part of the adventure takes place. There's a lot going on, particularly on the political front with a major election coming up and the party soon gets caught up in it all. There are copious details of Cascadian politicians and their parties to provide background and substance to what is going on. Many of them could make useful contact for the future. Or enemies, of course, depending on the interactions the party has with them. Many in the Cascadian political scene play the game hard and with deadly sincerity.

It all builds up to an exciting climax at a political rally. There's a plan of the auditorium and full notes about what's where and what is taking place. Guile rather than brute force is likely to win the day; indeed, this is the case throughout the adventure. Parties who plan their actions and come up with inventive schemes to achieve their goals are likely to do best… but fear not, at several points there are opportunities for a brawl, although the consequences may not be to participants' liking.

A well-written taut adventure that could leave the party with some measure of renown—or notoriety—as well as powerful friends and equally powerful enemies. And a ship.   ✹

Smoke Test: Once In A Blue Moon

by Michael Capriola and C. A. Pella

Chapter Six

"General Quarters! Repeat: General Quarters! This is not a drill."

"Bridge to Captain. Request status update."

"Plot a course back to the Seeker, Hua, and stand by." Lubbock pocketed his commo link and turned to Farb. "Secure this area and have your people return to their cabins. I want them strapped into their bunks in case we have to perform some fancy ma-

neuvers. A sudden vector shift at one-gee can still cause injury to the unwary." Without waiting fo ra reply, Lubbock sprinted for the stairwell and scrambled up the ladder to the next deck.

Cheng was at the number 2 position, this being her watch. Smith had grabbed the number 3. The First Mate had managed to get his pants on, but aside from that he wore an undershirt and bunny slippers. Both mates were belted into their chairs. Lubbock took his own seat and pulled the straps tight.

"Deck Two Engine Room to Bridge: manned and ready." That was Garcia over the intercom. "Power levels normal. Main Drive primed and ready."

"Deck Three Engine Room to Bridge: manned and ready," said Sprey. "Jump Drive on standby."

"Port Fire Control to Bridge: manned and ready." Fu Quan. "Upper turret powering up. Targeting computer activated."

"Starboard Fire Control to Bridge: manned and ready. Lower turret powering up." Lubbock heard some clicking and other noises over the intercom before Nguyen's voice came back on. "Bridge, lower turret targeting systems are malfunctioning."

"First Assistant Engineer to Bridge: you want me to take a look at it?"

"Stay put, Pepper. Isabell, take over the Port Fire Control and let Quan work on the malfunctioning targeter."

Both gunners acknowledged. Lubbock punched up the pre-planned course on his navcomp. "Moe, what's the Seeker up to?"

"They're still in orbit ten thousand klicks behind us."

Lubbock studied the course Cheng had laid in and found it satisfactory. The ship would use the main thrusters to brake and drop into a lower, faster orbit and come up on the Seeker from behind and underneath.

"Nguyen to Bridge. I'm on the upper turret controls and ready to rumble."

"Fu to Bridge. I'm going to have to yank the whole system out and go over it with a fine tooth comb."

"Save it for later," Lubbock told him. "Just strap in for now. Everyone stand by for a main engine ignition." He cut off the intercom and turned to the other bridge crew. "We'll have to keep in mind that the lower turret is out of action. We have to keep *Pygmalion* from getting under us. Fortunately, Hua's approach puts us underneath *Pygmalion*."

The *Grendelsbane* was already coasting backwards in its orbit. Garcia fired up the thrusters at Lubbock's command and the ship gradually dropped closer to the moon. It also picked up speed. At a predesignated position, Lubbock had the thrusters shut down, and the *Grendelsbane* settled into its new orbit. Lubbock then used the attitude jets to swing the ship around 180 degrees. That maneuver accomplished, he sat back and waited.

"Coming up on Point B," Cheng announced.

"Copy. Captain to Engine Room."

"Garcia here."

"Lay open those thrusters again, Don."

"Roger. Igniting main thrusters."

The *Grendelsbane* gradually moved away from the moon. When the ship was just under and behind the *Pygmalion*, Lubbock ordered the engines shut down again. He then used the attitude jets to tidy up his alignment.

And now, the moment we've all been waiting for. "Captain to crew. We're going to contact the *Pygmalion* and request permission to board her. We'll be looking for missing data cubes. Assuming the Seeker crew does not want to shoot it out, the boarding party will consist of First Mate Smith, Engineers Sprey and Fu, Technicians Rayne and Stevens, and Apprentice Grurrdzarg. Arghaz, do you copy?"

"Yes, Captain."

"An armed Vargr may intimidate the other vessel's crew and keep them from causing trouble for the boarding party. Be sure to obey the First Mate's orders. Understand?"

"Yes, Captain. I do you a good job."

"Swell. The First Mate will draw a weapon from the ship's locker for you. Okay, everyone: stand by until we see how the *Pygmalion*'s crew wants to play this." He switched off the intercom and glanced up at Smith whose expression quietly asked, *Are you sure you want to arm the Vargr?*

"Make sure the weapon you give her isn't loaded."

Smith visibly relaxed.

"Do you think the Seeker's crew will give us much trouble, Captain?" Cheng asked.

"Not if we lie about our intentions. See if you can raise them on the commo."

A minute later: "Got 'em, Captain."

Lubbock flicked the switch on his console. "*Pygmalion*, we're able at this time to send a party aboard to help you with your repairs."

"Sooner than we expected, *Grendelsbane*." *Did he sound suspicious?*

"We ran into a few snags that would've delayed us longer than the forty-eight hours, so we decided to switch priorities. I'm sending over my First Mate with an engineering team, including some technicians we have on board as passengers. They offered to lend a hand. Over."

"That's right neighborly of you. Glad to have the extra pairs of hands. Over."

"My people are going to suit up and head your way in a few minutes. Whereabouts is your airlock? Over."

"There are two in the aft section. One leads directly into the engine room, but the main 'lock to the left of the port thruster is roomier and better suited for a large group of people. Over."

"Captain, the door of the airlock he's talking about is visible thru the forward window."

Lubbock glanced out the window. The twin thrusters in the aft of the Seeker flanked the engine room airlock access, but another door was visible to the left. On the right was a double-door access for what was probably a cargo or small boat bay. "Roger, *Pygmalion*. We see the door. Expect us in ten minutes or so. *Grendelsbane* out." He cut the connection and turned to his Mates. "Be firm but polite when you explain to them that their ship has to be searched for contraband before you can help with repairs. Rayne and Stevens should know what to look for—have them lead the search teams. Use 'Jenghiz' Quan and Arghaz to guard the crew." Smith's somber face broke into a grin at that suggestion. "Any questions?"

"No, sir."

"Get moving. And change your footwear." Smith unbuckled and hurried out of the Bridge. "Captain to boarding party: grab your vac-suits and rendezvous at the personnel airlock on Deck Two."

––––––––––––––

Four people made up the crew of *Pygmalion*. Captain Archie Leach was a suave, debonair type with a nasally voice. The beefy Chief Engineer, Marion "Duke" Morrison, spoke with a drawl. His assistant was a shot, baby-faced volatile type named Joel Yule. First Mate Frances Gumm had pouty lips, and looks as though she took the armed invasion of *Pygmalion* as a personal affront.

Pepper disliked all four of them on sight.

First Mate Smith sent the Seeker crew into the main airlock, without vac-suits, and made them sit on the floor. He stationed Fu Quan by the control panel: at the first sign of trouble, he'd flush everyone

into space. Arghaz hefted a Gauss rifle and smiled at the captives.

"This is piracy, you know," Captain Leach said.

"Only if we take something from here that doesn't belong to us," Smith replied.

Back in the corridor, the searchers shucked off their vac-suits and divided into two teams, Pepper and April Rayne to search the starboard side of the main deck while Smith and Jack Stevens tossed the portside. They were very thorough, even to the point of ripping tiles off the walls of the shower stalls. Using her own pet theory that people tend to hide apples among apples instead of in a crevasse, Pepper ripped open the ship's computer core and quick-searched all the files. Nothing. Nothing in any of the staterooms, not even in the Captain's safe. (Or so said First Mate Smith when Pepper bumped into him in the corridor—Smith had used an acetylene torch to burn the safe open.) Nothing in dresser drawers or cubby holes or tucked under pillows or mattresses. Nothing in the ceiling crawlspace. (They took out some panels and boosted little Pepper up into the ceiling.) Nothing inside the floor or the walls as far as they could tell.

"Jack and I have done Engineering, and you two have covered the Bridge," Smith mused. "Did you check the Avionics Bay?"

"April did that," Pepper said with a nod toward her teammate.

"Let's take the upper gallery next. You go up the fore ladder and we'll take the aft."

"Aye-aye, sir."

Pepper headed down the axial corridor to the fore of the ship, technician Rayne in tow. They scrambled up the ladder into the Forward Sensor Bay. The two women searched that, then worked their way down the gallery to the aft hatch and ladder. "Where's the other team?" Rayne asked.

Suddenly, we're on speaking terms again. "They must have come up into the aft storeroom and fire control station through Engineering." The wall hatch popped open just then and Smith stuck his head out. "Any luck?"

"Yeah, all of it bad."

"What's left to search?"

Pepper considered the problem. She wasn't that familiar with the layout of a Seeker, except that it was a modified Courier design. She considered the outer shape of the vessel ….

Her head jerked up. "The lower cargo bay. Three and a half displacement tons under Engineering."

Smith waved a hand in dismissal. "Been there. There's two floor hatches in the aft of this bucket, and both lead to the lower cargo bay. Some prospecting and camping equipment there. We went through it pretty thoroughly." He glanced at his thumbnail chronometer. "Sheesh. Look at the time."

Pepper glanced at her own thumb. Nearly six hours, and they'd come up empty-handed.

"Did you check the vehicle bay?" Smith asked.

"Yes. Looked inside the 'buggy', and under the 'buggy' and on the roof of the 'buggy.' No joy."

"Crap." Smith pulled out his pocket commo. "Boarding party to Home Base."

"Home Base here."

"Nothing so far, Captain. We're going to look a while longer, but if this ship's crew took anything off that probe, they've done a good job hiding it."

"Roger that, Boarding Party. Take as long as you need."

"Roger. Boarding Party out." Smith put his commo away. "Okay, let's try this: Stevens and I will now search the starboard side of the ship while the ladies ransack the portside."

Raconteurs' Rest

Pepper led Rayne down the ladder to the main deck and began her search of the Engine Room. The two women spent close to an hour going over every centimeter of that chamber, over every nook and cranny. They headed next to the Port Ore Bay. It was empty, now, but they tapped the walls and pried up floor panels. Nothing.

"Where does this go?" Rayne inquired of a ladder and ceiling hatch.

"Must lead to the upper gallery. Yeah, that wall hatch off the sensor bay led to a compartment with a floor hatch in it."

"Oh, I remember."

Pepper moved alongside Rayne and looked up the ladder to the hatch overhead. They'd already searched the compartment the hatch led to. She lowered her eyes to the ladder itself. Something odd about the rungs; they were awfully thick. The engineer pulled a wrench from her tool belt and worried at a rung until one end detached. Data cubes spilled out. With a shout of glee, Pepper worked on the other rungs until she had them all off. Three of the rungs held data cubes. She and Rayne scooped them up.

Technician Rayne tucked her cubes into a leg pouch, then pulled out her pistol and pointed it at Pepper.

"The rest of them, please."

Pepper's jaw dropped. ✪

In A Store Near You   The Showroom

Urban-class Passenger Cars

designed by Ewan Quibell

Author's Note: *The range and duration of these vehicles is noticeably greater than that of nominally similar present-day cars.*

Please remember that MegaTraveller *and its design system, used to build these, is about 30 years old, and while it's had the benefits of 30 years of Travellers pointing out its inconsistencies and then subtly adjusting the system to better fit reality, it was and still is pretty good at turning out vehicles that approximate reality.*

In this instance, the Urban-*class Passenger Car has a fuel tank that is probably twice that of a car of today (26 gallons (imperial) vs 13 for a Ford Mondeo Estate), and while its MPG of around 34 isn't the best, it's only 4 off the Mondeo in urban driving. It has a range of around 890 miles against around 715 miles for the Mondeo (with efficient motorway driving), and weighs about 600kg less than an unloaded Mondeo Estate. It's also (adjusting for dollar inflation over the last 30 years) about 1/3 of the price of a new Mondeo, and has 2.75 times the cargo ca-*pacity of my chosen comparison vehicle, although its top speed is rubbish.*

The Urban E-*class suffers the same against electric vehicles of today: it's about twice the range, significantly cheaper with much more cargo capacity.*

You can, of course, adjust the parameters to suit your game especially if you're using Traveller *rules to play a modern day Earth setting (which in itself would be pretty cool …), and I could probably play with the ratios of the power of the engine and suspension and transmission of the wheels to see if I could get the stats to better match reality, but I could also leave that as a exercise for the reader …*

So, while not perfect representations of the current state of the technology, they aren't unresonably far off, especially given that the rules were published just over thirty years ago.

Editor's Note: The Ford Mondeo reference vehicle is marketed in the Americas, the Middle East, and South Korea as the Ford Fusion. Imperial gallons convert to US gallons at a 1:1.2 (5:6) ratio, and to liters at a 1:4.55 (20:91) ratio.

Urban-class Passenger Car

The *Urban*-class passenger car is a no-frills vehicle for getting commuters and families to and from their destinations designed predominantly for city travel. Built by Style Motors of Riftgate for the urban market thousands of these vehicles can be found across the planet and similar specification vehicles can be found across the old Empire.

The cargo compartment is accessed externally to the vehicle although is of limited capacity. There is a radio used predominantly to listen to broadcast news and entertainment.

CraftID: *Urban*-class Passenger Car, TL8, Cr 3,910
Hull: 1/1, Displacement=1, Conf=4USL, Armour=2C, Loaded=5.71 tons, Unloaded=1.034 tons
Power: 1/2, Improved Internal Combustion=0.16 Mw, Duration=12 hours
Loco: 1/2, Wheels=4, P/W=28, Road=119 kph, Offroad=24 kph
Comm: Radio=V Distant (50 km)
Sensors: Headlights×2
Off: Hardpoints=1
Def: DefDM=+2
Control: Panel=Electronic×1,
Accom: Crew=1 (Driver), Seats=Cramped×4, Env=basic env
Other: Fuel=0.12 klitres, Cargo=4.557 klitres, ObjSize=Small, EmLevel=Faint
Cost in Quantity=Cr 3,128

Urban E-class Electric Passenger Car

The *Urban E*-class passenger car is the adaption of the normal *Urban* class to an electrical vehicle offering the same no-frills ride for commuters and families who do not wish to use hydrocarbons to get to their destinations designed almost exclusively for city travel due to its limited range. Built by Style Motors of Riftgate for the urban market the greater expense of these vehicles means that they are not as predominant as the standard *Urban* class. Charging points are, however, available across major cities and larger towns. Similar specification vehicles can be found across the old Empire.

Cargo capacity is sacrificed for batteries. There is a radio used predominantly to listen to broadcast news and entertainment.

CraftID: *Urban E*-class Electric Passenger Car, TL8, Cr 10,578
Hull: 1/1, Displacement=1, Conf=4USL, Armour=2C, Loaded=3.713 tons, Unloaded=0.589 tons
Power: 1/2, Battteries=0.1 Mw, Duration=8 hours
Loco: 1/2, Wheels=4, P/W=27, Road=116 kph, Offroad=23 kph
Comm: Radio=V Distant (50 km)
Sensors: Headlights×2
Off: Hardpoints=1
Def: DefDM=+2
Control: Panel=Electronic×1, Interface=Power
Accom: Crew=1 (Driver), Seats=Cramped×4, Env=basic env
Other: Cargo=3.124klitres, ObjSize=Small, EmLevel=Faint
Cost in Quantity=Cr 8,462

Urban A-class Autonomous Passenger Car

The *Urban A*-class Autonomous passenger car is the adaption of Style Motors' *Urban* class to a fully autonomous ground vehicle. Set to revolutionise ground traffic in Riftgate with a massive disruption in the urban vehicle usage and market, the licensed use of New Home Robotics NHR Low Function 10 TL8 Robot brain and the addition of radar and a second radio for GPS positioning means that driving jobs across the planet will likely come under threat. Currently under regulatory trials so far there have been no accidents reported that have been caused by the A Class.

In A Store Near You

CraftID: *Urban A*-class Autonomous Passenger Car, TL8, Cr 12,960
Hull: 1/1, Displacement=1, Conf=4USL, Armour=2C, Loaded=5.703 tons, Unloaded=1.035 tons
Power: 1/2, Improved Internal Combustion=0.16 Mw, Duration=12 hours
Loco: 1/2, Wheels=4, P/W=28, Road=119 kph, Offroad=24 kph
Comm: Radio=V Distant×2 (50 km)
Sensors: Radar=Distant (5km), Headlights×2
Off: Hardpoints=1
Def: DefDM=+2
Control: NHR Low Function 10 Robot Brain Software=Wheeled Vehicle-1 Panel=Electronic×1,
Accom: Crew=0, Seats=Cramped×4, Env=basic env
Other: Fuel=0.12 klitres, Cargo= 4.547 klitres, ObjSize=Small, EmLevel=Faint

Cost in Quantity=Cr 10,368

Urban EA-class Autonomous Electric Passenger Car

The *Urban EA*-class Autonomous passenger car is the adaption of Style Motors' *Urban E* class to a fully autonomous ground vehicle.

The electronic version of the autonomous vehicle is the one that is likely to be put into full production following regulatory trials due to the complete absence of requirements for human interaction in refuelling, making the EA Class truly an autonomous vehicle.

CraftID: *Urban EA*-class Autonomous Electric Passenger Car, TL8, Cr 19,628
Hull: 1/1, Displacement=1, Conf=4USL, Armour=2C, Loaded= 3.705 tons, Unloaded= 0.5909 tons
Power: 1/2, Battteries=0.1 Mw, Duration=8 hours
Loco: 1/2, Wheels=4, P/W=26, Road=115 kph, Offroad=23 kph
Comm: Radio=V Distant×2 (50 km)
Sensors: Radar=Distant (5km), Headlights×2
Off: Hardpoints=1
Def: DefDM=+2
Control: NHR Low Function 10 Robot Brain Software=Wheeled Vehicle-1 Panel=Electronic×1, Interface=Power
Accom: Crew=0, Seats=Cramped×4, Env=basic env
Other: Cargo= 3.1141 klitres, ObjSize=Small, EmLevel=Faint

Cost in Quantity=Cr 15,702   ✪

Less Dangerous Game

Revvil

by Benedikt Schwarz

Revvils, also called pinkjackets, are a species of solitary burrowing insects, resembling a longish wasp of about 4cm in length, with a narrow, pink-and-purple patterned abdomen. The slender wings are opaque, shaded turquoise through purple. Although the abdomen is pointed and tapers toward an ovipositor in females, the revvil lacks a stinger. Its bite is painful, though, and its mandibles are serrated to dissect prey.

A revvil's bite is mildly poisonous (AVERAGE END check, 1 point of damage and slight hallucinations, interval 1D×10 minutes).

Unlike Terrestrial arthropods, revvils and related species do not have compound eyes; their eyes have a central pupil spot that seems to float inside the reflective vitreous sphere. The eyeballs are stationary; the creature moves the pupil by selective contraction of different areas of the iris. The vitreous is light-sensitive and can adjust its opacity and reflectivity to ward off direct sunlight.

Small animals, mostly other arthropods and diminutive mammals, are the favoured prey of revvils. Up to mouse-sized animals can be killed with one or several bites. Anything too large to be carried off will be dis-

sected by the sharp mandibles and brought to the brood. Not entirely carnivorous, the revvil complements its diet with gnawing fruit and leaves using a second set of mandibles.

Most of a female's lifecycle is spent caring for its brood. It takes the larvae two months to hatch from their eggs, and the adult female spends the major part of this time gathering food and stuffing it into the tunnels where it laid the eggs, for the hatchlings to feed on. After the eggs hatch, the female will leave the brood, hunt, eat, and store protein until it is again ready to mate – which takes about two to three months.

Revvils prefer natural narrow cavities for egg-laying, but if none are available, they gnaw holes into tree bark or dig little burrows. They sometimes lay their eggs inside emptied rifle or sniper mugwort pods, which have exactly the right size for their abdomen and ovipositor to fit in. Revvils defend their eggs viciously (attack on 5+ if someone approaches the plant).

Rock Revvil

A relative of the common revvil, the rock revvil or rock wasp, lays its eggs in small rock fissures and can be dangerous to climbers if it attacks. Older buildings and ruins may also have rock revvils nesting within the cracks in their plastoconcrete. It is similar in size and behaviour to the common revvil – including the aggressive behaviour toward anyone coming near its brood – but has a reddish-gray colouring that gives it excellent mimesis in its native environment.

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
Revvil	0 (automatically killed when hit)	15m
SKILLS	-	
ATTACKS	Foraging: Flee 6-, Attack 11+ Defending Brood: Flee 2-, Attack 5+ Bite (1)	
TRAITS	Flyer; Fast Metabolism (+3 initiative); Small (-4); Poisonous (AVERAGE, 1pt + slight hallu, 1d×10 min) [Rock Revvil: Camouflage (-2 to spot in rocky areas)]	
BEHAV-IOUR	Omnivore/Hunter	

Morphology	Bilateral symmetry, decapod, quadruped (two pairs of slender wings, four legs and two grasping arms), arthropod (segmented body and limbs).
Biochemistry	C/H/O/N, broadly compatible with human
Respiration	O_2-N_2 inhalant, CO_2 exhalant, tracheal breathing
Ecology	Diurnal (active during day and twilight)
Habitat	wide range of warm and temperate habitats, often encountered in arid lands or steppe
Diet and Trophics	Omnivore/hunter, ectothermic (cold-blooded)
Reproduction	Two genders, very little sexual dimorphism, conjugal intercourse, oviparous birth (laying 2-10 eggs into natural cavities or excavated burrows), iteroparous (reproduce several times during lifecycle). Progeny defended until hatching.
Lifecycle and ontogeny	Two months to hatching, several moultings, female imago (adult form) lives for about four

Your Input Helps

Freelance Traveller is always looking for new material to include. Please email us with submissions and ideas at *editor@freelancetraveller.com*, the main editorial address.

Size matters to us, not to you. Concentrate on making your article the best it can be. We'll offer suggestions that we think can fill gaps or improve an article; please take them in the spirit intended—we're *not* saying your writing is bad; we just want *Freelance Traveller* to be the best *it* can be, too! ❂

(Continued from page 27)

K'colau

Unrelated to the revvil, but very similar in appearance, is a flying arthropod called a k'colau. K'colau imitate the revvil's characteristic paper-rustle flying sound, to protect themselves from predators, most of which give the poisonous and aggressive revvils a wide berth. Except for their annoying habit of gnawing wooden structures (they pulp the wood to create beautifully filigreed spherical paper nests), K'colau are harmless. Adults care for their young but do not defend their nests. The nests are rarely disturbed by animals because the larvae are coated with a poisonous mucous (akin to ricin) that causes intestinal inflammation. ✿

ANIMAL	HITS	SPEED
K'colau	0 (automatically killed when hit)	10m
SKILLS	-	
ATTACKS	Flee 8-, will not attack	
TRAITS	Flyer; Fast Metabolism (+3 initiative); Small (-4)	
BEHAVIOUR	Herbivore/Grazer	

Morphology	Bilateral symmetry, decapod, quadruped (two pairs of slender wings, four legs and two grasping arms), arthropod (segmented body and limbs).
Biochemistry	C/H/O/N, broadly compatible with human
Respiration	O_2-N_2 inhalant, CO_2 exhalant, tracheal breathing
Ecology	Diurnal (active mostly during daylight)
Habitat	wide range of warm and temperate habitats
Diet & Trophics	Herbivore/grazer, ectothermic (cold-blooded)
Reproduction	Two genders, very little sexual dimorphism, conjugal intercourse, oviparous birth (laying ~ 50 eggs in spherical community nest built in joint effort by several k'colau), semelparous (reproduce once during lifecycle). Progeny cared for until adults die.
Lifecycle and ontogeny	Two months as a larva, dies nine months after hatching. Larvae hibernate if necessary and hatch when temperatures rise again. Nests are deserted and built anew every year.

Essay Question

What, in your opinion, makes an alien race "interesting"? ("Alien race" may include humans other than "mainstream Imperial".)

This question was originally asked in the April 2010 issue.

Paul Anuni answers:

I think this question applies even to so-called "mainstream Imperial" humans; *Traveller* doesn't really seem to have a "default culture" unless it's an implicit (and somewhat derided) 'Yanks in Space'. In any case, the answer comes down to *world-building*—if a society feels "real", like you've walked into something that's existed for a long time, and isn't just a 'set' for your characters and the NPCs to act in front of, the world-building has been done well, and is more likely to be interesting. Specific aspects that attract *my* interest typically involve discovering how the society portrayed differs from my own (so-called "middle America")—sure, it's 'easier' to play if my own assumptions about behavior hold true Far Away And In The Future, but why would I want to be a Traveller in such an environment? I'd want to go where Things And People Are Different, so that I could explore the local culture, and in the process perhaps learn more about *myself*. ✿

…Continued from previous issue
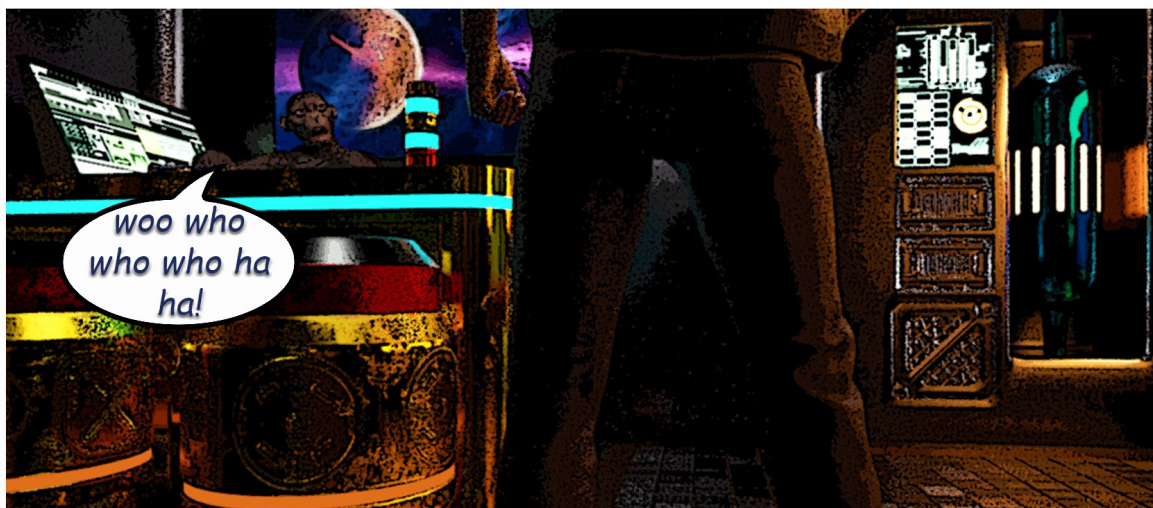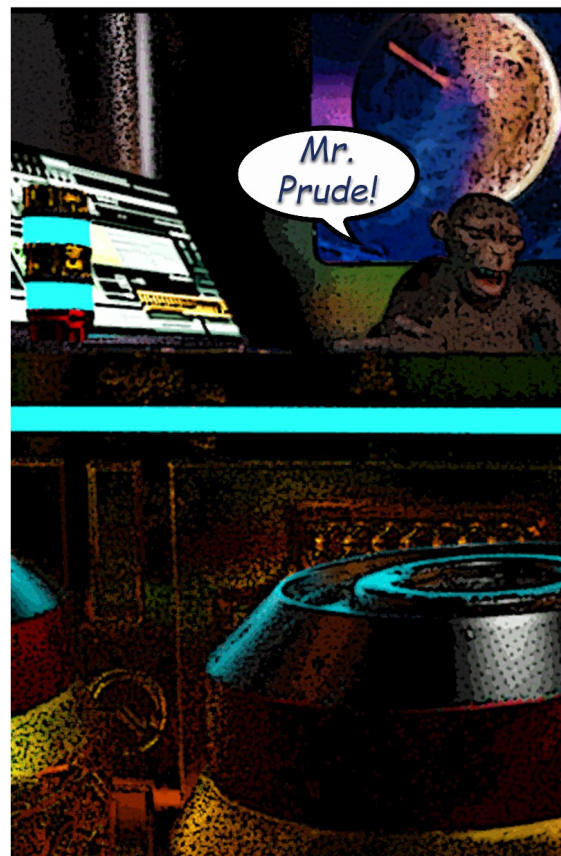
VALEDICTION FREEPORT IS NOT ORION TERRITORY. IT IS NOMINALLY GOVERNED BY A GROUP OF CRIMINAL CARTELS THE STRONGEST ONE HEADED BY ROLP QUINN. THE FREE-PORT IS KNOW. AS A HOTBED OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY INCLUDING DRUGS, GAMBLING, PROSTITUTION AND OF COURSE SMUGGLING.

JANE WAS FOUND IN ONE OF THE FREEPORTS BROTHELS BY THE CREW OF THE OSMOSIS. SHE PROVIDED THEM WITH INFORMATION ON THEIR MISSING CARGO AND THEY NOW SEEK TO HELP HER FLEE THE BROTHEL WHERE SHE WAS UNWILLINGLY HELD.
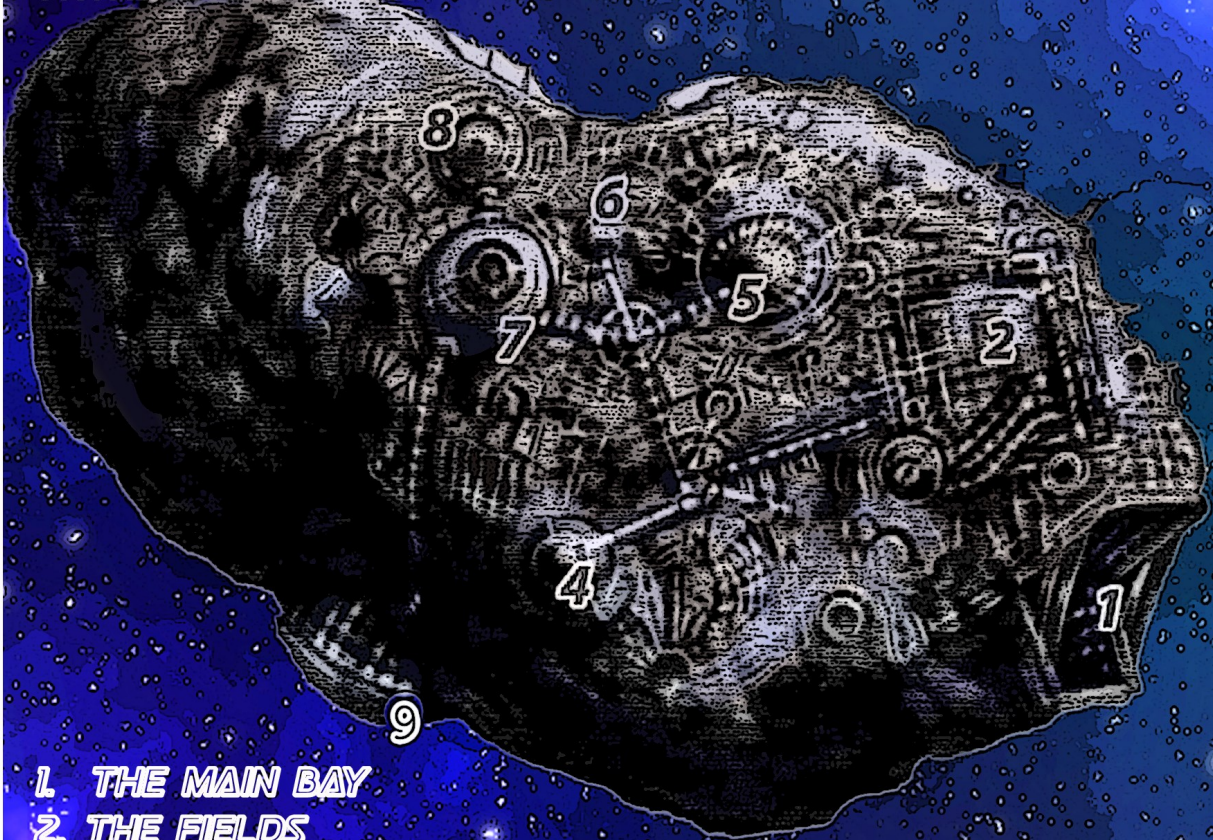
1. THE MAIN BAY
2. THE FIELDS
3. THE TANGAR OUTPOSTS
4. GEARTOWN
5. OUTPOST GAMMA
6. GLASSTOP
7. OUTPOST BETA
8. SOUTHPAW
9. THE CRYSTAL EMPRESS

VALEDICTION FREEPORT IS DETAILED IN STARFARER'S GAZETTE #1
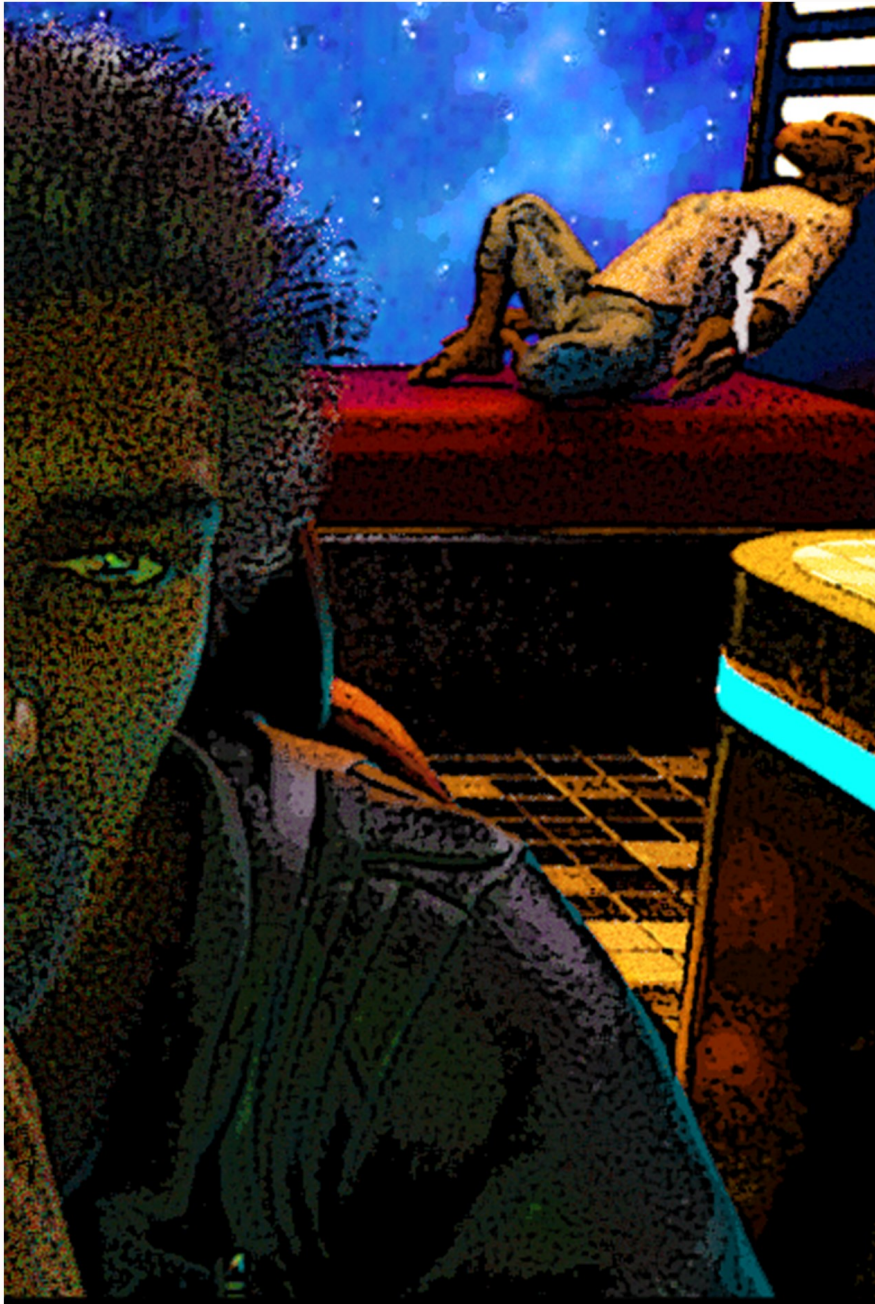
Jasvinder: Sam I know it's been a long time but I could really use your help.

Sam: Jaz you know I'll do whatever I can brother. Once a swabbie always a swabbie.

Sam: You're still with Naval Intelligence I take it?

Jasvinder: Yeah, and I think I'm working a particularly bad one. And to make it worse it's headed your way. I don't think Dorlass is the target. So you'd probably be best served just ignoring it and letting it pass you by. But if we do that I think a lot of people somewhere else are going to die.

Sam: How can we help?

Jasvinder: Thank you Sam. I wouldn't ask if I didn't think it was important.

Sam: I trust you Jaz. What's the plan?

Jasvinder: I'm going to have to send you help. My boss isn't going to let me go to chase this one down.

Jasvinder: I don't want to give out to much over the air. I've got someone coming to you.

Sam: We're that worried?

Jasvinder: Their Op here was very sophisticated. Jane will bring all the info down with her. Oh, by the way so you're not surprised. She's a Chimp.

Sam: A what? Chimp?

Jasvinder: An uplift. It's a long story. She can fill you in.

Jasvinder: And I've got one other asset I'm sending your way...Kiri.

Sam: Damn Jaz. That's a shot to the gut. Is she on Dorlass?

Jasvinder: Yeah, she bought a ranch there a couple of years ago when she mustered out.

Sam: ...all this time...and she's right here.

Jasvinder: Anyway, she's well trained for this sort of thing as you can attest to.

Sam: Well I got shit for proper investigators in my department. I'll be calling in a favor to get a properly qualified person from our end. Talk soon.

MEANWHILE ABOARD THE TERRA/SOL FLAGGED STARSHIP OMNIVORE: CAPTAIN SPARKS AND CHIEF ZWELLEN ARE SPEEDING JANE TOWARDS DORLASS AND A MEETING WITH WALTER SMITH AND COMMANDER JASVINDER TALWAR'S SISTER, KIRI.

Multimedia Gallery

STELLAR MAP: THE DORLASS SYSTEM

DRISCOLL
54 AU

HASTINGS
41 AU

ROCKFALL
32 AU

CHAMPAIGN
26 AU

BEHEMOTH
6.2 AU

OLEANDER
11 AU

KRESSLER ASTEROID BELT - 8.9 AU

INNER SYSTEM

VORMOOT
2.5 AU

DORLASS
0.87 AU

HOPE
0.42 AU

SERENDIPITY
1.3 AU
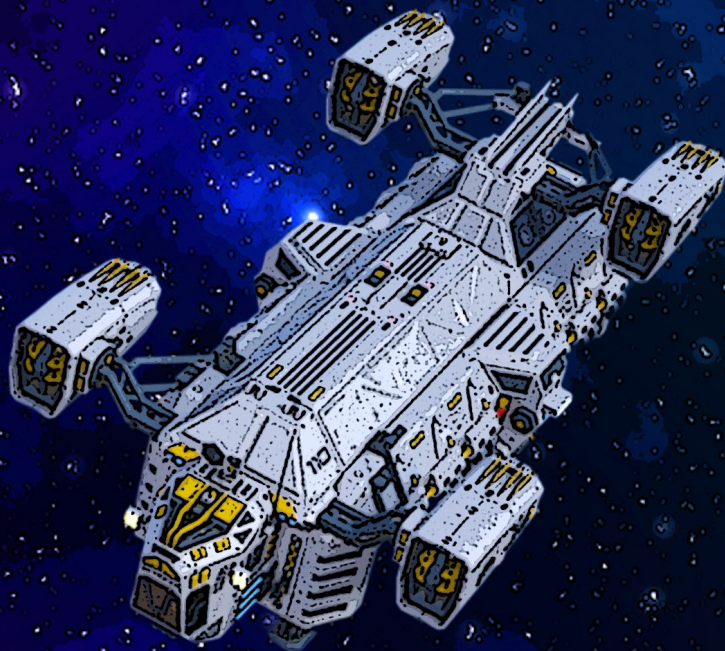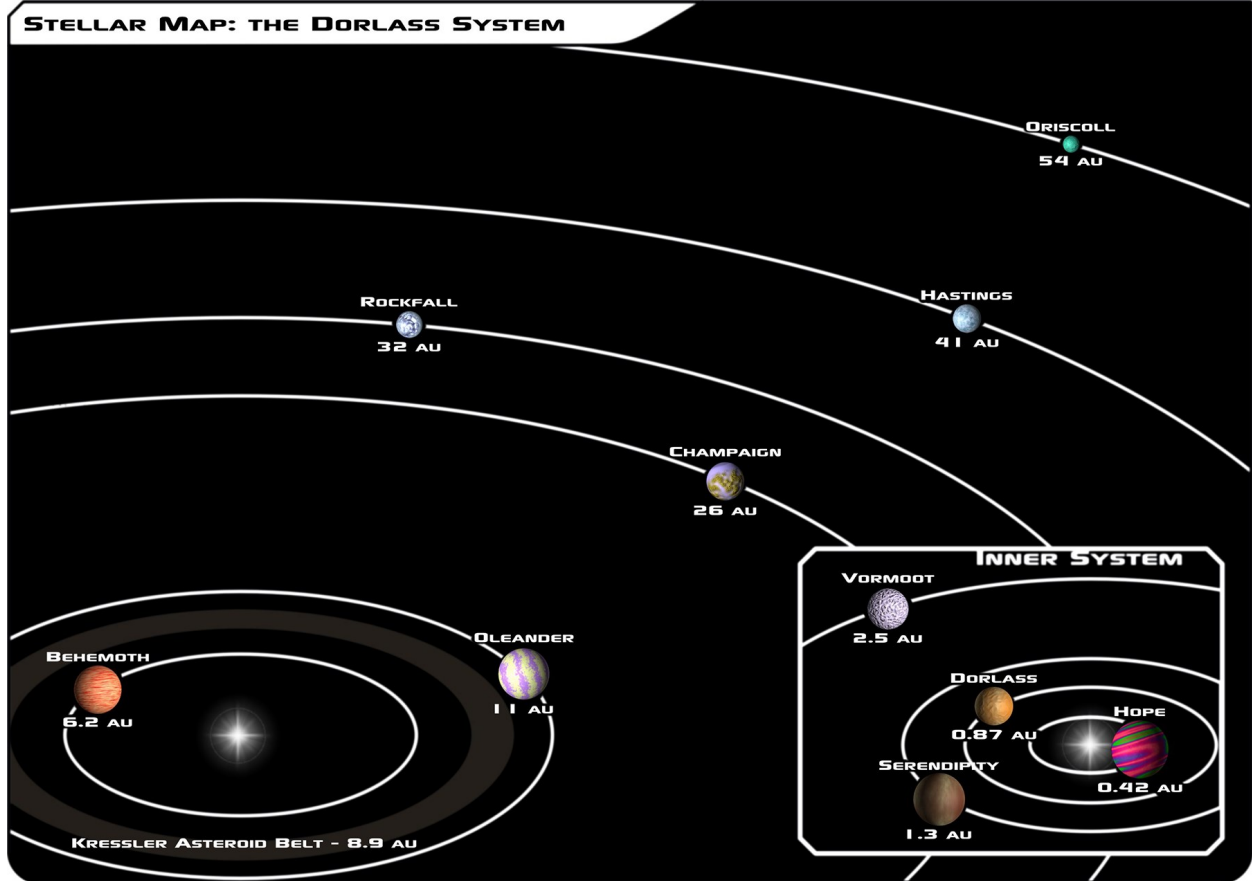
Fertile Land   Desert

SURFACE MAP: DORLASS

UWP: C86A1743B

NORTH POLE

SOUTH POLE
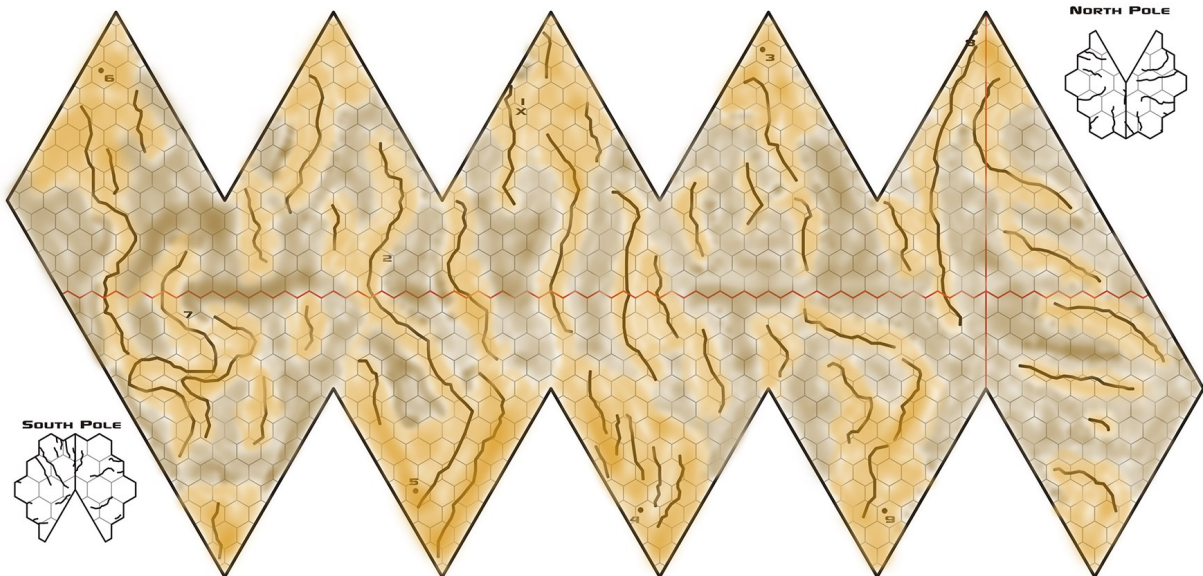
～	GORGE	1	TRINITY DOWNPORT	4	ORWELL	7	WINOW GORGE	1 HEX = 244 KM
×	STARPORT	2	PAINTED GORGE	5	DORLASS CITY	8	NEW SALT LAKE	
		3	NEW MADRID	6	MAHDI	9	CAROLINA CITY	

Continued next issue...

Supplement 14: Space Stations

reviewed by "kafka"

Supplement 14: Space Stations. Barnes Thomas
Mongoose Publishing http://www.mongoosepublishing.com
97pp., PDF
US$14.99/UK£11.58

This review originally appeared on rpg.net in March 2015, and refers to the out-of-print paperbound edition.

This book represents another colossal waste of resources aimed at a non-existent audience. For here we have 54 pages out of a book 98 pages devoted to deckplans and mediocre illustrations of different stations that really have had no place in the *Traveller* universe. And, with the first 34 pages dealing with the economics of running a space station. And, the 20 or so pages in-between dealing with detailing a station in a non-important system.

The economics of running the station are dry and uninspiring reading – it could have been written by someone who designs software not games to inspire the imagination. While the rules are fairly solid and playable – the question begs who would want to. It is geared toward perhaps the solo player who wants to be a space station administrator. When I think of space stations – I think of *Babylon 5* or *Deep Space 9* – this reminded me of the life of the Last Stop Gas Station. Hardly the life of high adventure among the stars.

The next portion as I said was a bit of colourful prose, not quite, purple but adequate devoted to a single station. Once again, there is a feeling that out of the myriad of mood pieces that one could invoke, *why was the author so uninspiring?* Old time players, might know about FASA's *King Richard* – that is positively riveting compared to this work. The author could have summarized much of what was said in a few pages and then move on to more exciting alternative stations. No, the author wanted to explore alternatives by presenting more deckplans and uninspiring art for space stations for the next and largest of the sections.

TRAVELLER

Supplement 14:
Space Stations

That's no moon...

Ok, Mongoose, *Traveller* fans were clamouring for deckplans – but you have gone overboard – and once again they are the boring 2D deckplans that might have been fine in the 1970s – but now, in 2015, they are not quaint but antiquated and boring. And, the deckplans really do not have the *Traveller* vibe, which is gritty, hard SF with Space Opera undertones. These are uninspiring, made all the more uninspiring by poor printing which, gives a dirty or bad photocopier look to the art.

I really tried to find something that I could like about this supplement, but only came up with "it would make a good magazine article". I am sorry, but if Mongoose continues to produce items like this, they will lose the core *Traveller* audience who keeps on waiting for the quality curve to turn around. Sadly, it *has* turned around, but opting for mediocrity. And, the fact that these are some of the first printed books that Mongoose has released in a long time in no way rescues the brand; rather, I fear it might *sink* the brand.

Finding Your Way Around the Starport

by Benedikt Schwarz

This series will, over the next few installments, cover the various parts of a starport and how they interact with each other, and what travellers can expect here. Each section will be given a short description and be furnished with a few adventure hooks and possibly typical specimens of the kind of people you could meet there. This is the third installment of the series; the first, in *Freelance Traveller,* November/December 2019, covered the general layout, the Civilian Dock, and the Bulk Cargo Dock; the second, in *Freelance Traveller*, January/February 2020, covered the Shuttle Berth.

Search and Rescue

If the port has a Search and Rescue service, its command center is usually located next to Traffic Control. From here, space (and occasionally planetary) rescue missions are coordinated as soon as Traffic Control's communications center receives a Signal GK, SOS, or Mayday.

The Search and Rescue center may have its own dock for paramedical and rescue vessels, or those may be parked at the Shuttle Dock. In many systems, these specialised boats are not available, and their role is filled by decommissioned tugs or pinnaces, or by the occasional free trading ship requisitioned along with its crew on an *ad-hoc* basis. Most understaffed ports simply offer a financial incentive, free refuelling, or favourable trade conditions for freelance captains making their services available in case of an emergency.

Sometimes, the port has no SAR service as such, but rudimentary search-and-rescue missions in the direct vicinity of the port may be initiated and overseen by Traffic Control. Some ports have one or more smaller freelancing companies on semi-retainer that offer salvage, search and rescue services and may occasionally moonlight as in-system couriers. Often, these firms make use of surplus or "retired" Type-S scouts, and many former IISS members can be found in freelance rescue operations. Where the system has no Scout Service base, SAR is usually a good place for ex-Scout travellers to get up to date on what the Service is doing. They can be found with their ships in rented Civilian Dock or Shuttle Dock berths and probably a small operations center in the Rental Booths section.

If there is an SAR area, it is bound to contain at least a small infirmary, a cafeteria and a few dorms or bunks for personnel on standby duty. The rescue workers and paramedics are usually a sociable lot, and eager to swap rumours and stories, although they tend to have a special kind of dark humour that is not palatable to everyone.

Adventure Seeds

1) In this system, the Starport Authority does not operate its own SAR service. Instead, vessels visiting the system are given free fuel in exchange for keeping themselves on standby for rescue missions should the port receive a Signal GK. Most of the time, nothing happens, and the free refuelling is a good bonus for those free traders who struggle to make their monthly mortgage payments. Of course, when the call comes, it happens at the most inopportune moment: when part of the crew is abroad on the planet investigating or making deals, or in the middle of negotiations with a crime syndicate. The ship has to take off with only part of the crew. (This makes for a good in-between adventure if only part of the players showed up to a session.)

2) As 1), but the emergency call is a fake. Pirates use this ploy to lure vessels into a trap. Suddenly, three battered scoutships rise from nearby asteroids and demand the surrender of the ship. If the travellers get clear, they learn that the portmaster is in league with the pirates – sort of: he agreed to send them possible lucrative targets, and they refrain from raids on his planet.

Traffic Control

Search and Rescue

Civilian Dock

Shuttle Dock

Rental Booths

Bulk Cargo Dock

Scout Service Base + Dock

Quarantine

Cargo Storage

Naval Base + Dock

Military Cargo Storage

Live Cargo Storage

Civilian Shipyard

Military Shipyard

Fuel Storage

Scrapyard

Defense

Damage Control

Starport Police

Ambassadorial Dock

Embassy Quarter

Ministry of Justice

Portmaster's Office + Admin

Customs

Bars + Brothels

Tourist Services

Viceregal Palace

Public Palace Grounds

Central Plaza

Brokerage

Medical Services

Hostelries

Vector Gravs

Power Plant

Main Maglev Line

Traffic Hub

Ethnic Quarters

Life Support

Communication Array + Sensors

Waste Reclamation

Recreation

Residential Area

Hydroponics

EXTRALITY LINE

Fascinating Flora

3) The travellers lose their ship to pirates or an accident and are picked up by a rescue vessel. Once at the port, they need to get back on their feet. They have incurred medical bills, they are now shipless drifters, and most of the good jobs require them to be part of a guild. When their morale is at their lowest, a local crime lord offers them a job as smugglers on a loaned vessel.

4) The life support on the travellers' ship fails. They are saved from slow suffocation by a rescue ship, and the rescue workers put a skeleton crew aboard to get the ship running again. Once portside, the travellers learn that their ship has been scuttled, supposedly because it was no longer operable. If they investigate, they find their ship hale and sound in one of the port's berths: the rescue team is in league with a band of "used ships" traffickers. Can they prove the ship is theirs before its frame is unrecognizably altered and a fake transponder installed?

5) A major disaster has happened in the asteroid belt, and hundreds of souls are in need of rescue. All available vessels, including the travellers' ship, are commandeered by the Navy to carry rescue personnel to the site. The travellers pick up survivors from the Naval vessel that caused the disaster. It appears to have had experimental warheads aboard, and the injured lieutenant implores the travellers to deactivate the remaining ordnance before it blows up and vaporises the rescue fleet. Immediately afterward, the travellers' ship is trailed by a Navy corvette, hailed and asked to stand down for a search: the Navy is afraid that they might have stolen some of the secret stuff (the warheads or the computer files). Only after a thorough search are the corvette's Marines satified. If there is any indication that the Naval experimental ship's personnel talked to the travellers, the Corvette will release them, wait until no other ships are in sensor range, and

open fire to silence the witnesses. A deadly game of hide-and-seek ensues in the dense asteroid field.

6) A friend or client of the travellers' has been rescued from xir ship after it was severely damaged in a firefight. They notice that xe seems to be somewhat groggy – one of the paramedics injected xir with a truth drug to get a certain set of coordinates from xir. The ship that attacked xir was a corsair whose crew wanted revenge: the travellers' friend had stolen a very valuable cargo from them, which xe stored away at the coordinates in question. The "paramedic" is a pirate from a rival gang in disguise. If the travellers are quick, they may be able to follow xir to the location – where they are caught in the middle of a stand-off between the two rival pirate factions.

7) A low berth passenger is rescued from a liner that suffered drive failure. The berth unit is damaged in transport, and when the patient is thawed out, xe dies. Sewn into xir clothes is a Ministry of Justice special investigator's badge / a Starport Authority auditor's credentials / a Certificate of Nobility. Obviously, the person travelled incognito for some reason. The travellers are asked by the rescue supervisor to do some discreet investigations – and to determine whether the damage to the berth was an accident or deliberate sabotage.

8) A SAR shuttle brings in unconscious patients rescued from a mining accident on an outlying asteroid station. The travellers notice with a shock that one of the alleged miners is a friend of theirs who works as an investigative journalist. Did he uncover something he shouldn't have, and was what happened to him and the miners really an accident?

9) A SAR shuttle brings in wounded soldiers from a Naval ship. One of them is a defector and takes the doctor hostage.

10) A SAR shuttle brings in the crew of a military or trade ship. Which one of them killed the captain and sabotaged the vessel? Each tells a different story. All of them are lying. Each has a personal reason for not telling the whole truth.

11) A solar flare has disabled the sensors and comms of all shuttles that operated in the inner planets. Every available ship is called upon to help. The ships need to get close to a shuttle to get someone aboard and guide the shuttles in. Making a landing in atmosphere with a shuttle riding shotgun under the ship's wing is a difficult feat.

12) As 11), but the shuttles have injured or irradiated personnel aboard who need to be treated on the travellers' ship. The remaining crew may be too radiation-sick to be able to pilot their ship properly, let alone make an atmospheric drop or a precision landing at a highport's dock.

13) As 11), but further solar flares damage the travellers' ship. They have to guide the shuttle in, land or dock their own ship with half-blind sensors, rescue injured personnel, and effect repairs at the same time. While they are at it, they might need to take cover behind a nearby planetoid's magnetosphere to ride out the next impending flare.

14) A rescue crew sends a distress signal from where their boat is docked at a mining station. When the travellers arrive, they find that the station's security system has malfunctioned. There are security robots active in the station which run an erratic police-curfew program, have locked the miners down in their staterooms and cornered the medics in the storage area.

15) Grav-skiff racing is a popular sport in this star system. An error in traffic control causes a flock of racers to cross the assigned atmospheric trajectory of the travellers' ship. Some pilots panic and veer off, spinning out of control in their skiffs, and two collide in mid-air. The travellers have to pluck them from the air with their far-from-nimble ship before their gravs give out and they plummet to their deaths. And afterward they are going to want to have a word with the traffic operator who approved the race.

16) As 15), but the race is a cover for a smuggling operation; the pilots pretending to be competing in the race have packets of contraband on their persons. The skiff-drop races from the highport down the gravity well provides the smugglers with a way to bring drugs or other illegal substances dirtside.

Denizens of the SAR Dock
Alina Godarivvi 349946
social worker

Persuade-2, Law-1, Steward-1, Carouse-1, Streetwise-0

Alina is a portly, energetic woman of indeterminable age who has been a fixture at the SAR dock for as long as anyone can remember. With the help of a few volunteers, usually students from the local university, she runs a soup kitchen located at the dock's entrance.

Many of those who end up in the SAR infirmary have lost their ship to an accident; they arrive at the port with little more than the clothes on their back. Most likely, all their possessions were left on their ship or destroyed with it, and there is no social security for transients at the average port. Alina takes those stranded spacers under her wing and helps them get back on their feet. She knows a lot of people at the port who may offer odd jobs or a place to sleep for a few standard days; she will try to help

them get acknowledged as fugitives by the Port Authority (with little hope or success, but it's worth a try), get a good listener to comfort them (losing their ship is often a severe blow to a spacer's self-esteem), and aid with the necessary paperwork to get their medical expenses deferred. She'll yell at the newshounds to have them keep a distance, and threaten the police who investigate the ship's accident with going to the press if they push their interrogations too far and don't give her clients some breathing room. The loss of the ship will likely entail a legal investigation and possibly charges, but even if not, the huge amount of paperwork can be a terror, especially if your main concern has to be avoiding starvation and getting a place to sleep. Alina knows a few people who can at least offer advice on the legal side.

Alina's stranded spacers are fed whatever she can scrounge, wheedle or cajole out of the port's storekeepers. Half her time is devoted to caring for her wards, the other half she uses to tirelessly drum up support for her charity. While she's away, one of the students will tend her kitchen – or her husband, after his regular work. Adam Godarivvi is employed as a mid-level clerk in the Starport Administration, and has been dragged by his wife into helping out in his spare time.

Brother Tampais 454A84
Chalcidite monk

Psychology-2, Theology-2, Streetwise-1, Melee/blade-1

Brother Tampais is a Chalcidite monk. With his shaven head and simple robes, he is a conspicuous sight: two meters ten and lanky, he towers over most people. Tampais used to be an enforcer for a local crime ring but had a change of heart and joined the Chalcidite faith. One of the Chalcidite tenets is selfless assistance, and he found his calling counselling spacers who lost their ship. Most travellers build their lives around their vessels, and loss of

their ship is like losing one's home, one's best friend and one's entire plans for the future at the same time. Tampais tries to help them mourn the loss, come to grips with the fact that the ship is gone, and re-invent themselves. He is a good friend of Alina Godarivvi and often helps out in her soup kitchen. The local Chalcidite congregation has collected money to establish a small 2×4m shrine in one of the port's Rental Booths; this is where he sleeps and prays when he isn't out lending people his ear.

Ghretta Halqvist 899894
Space Rescue Paramedic

Medic-2, Jack-of-all-trades-2, Biology-1, Drive/grav-1, Vacc suit-1, Chemistry-0, Zero-Gee-0, Law-0, Melee/Brawling-0

Short and just on the pudgy side of an average build, Ghretta wears her flaxen-blonde hair in a tight bun. She is of Sword Worlder extraction – her parents fled the Coalition and settled down on this Imperial planet. They had been doctors on their home planet but never got their practice permit approved by the Imperium, and as a result had to take lower-paid jobs to make a living. Their daughter is determined to become a physician, and has volunteered for the paramedical service in order to get a tuition grant. It never materialised, and she seems stuck in the emergency service unless a miracle happens.

Plagued with supply shortages, jury-rigged ships and outdated equipment, the SAR service isn't Ghretta's favourite place to be. She is fed up with the low pay, high responsibility, back-breaking work, endless overtime and constant on-call duty. Whenever she's working, a steady stream of complaints and grumblings issues from her. And yet she's doing her job, and doing it well, and she never would let those down who are in need of rescue. In her quieter hours, she realises that she, like all her colleagues, has been infected with *Morbus Medic*: the kind of utter dedication to helping people that

makes all the ugly aspects of her work fade into the background.

Hansel Demaral 787896
Freelance SAR captain

Pilot-3, Carouse-2, Zero-Gee-2, Medic-1, Sensors-1, Vacc suit-1, Gun combat/Accelerator-0, Drive/grav-0, Streetwise-0

A small, wiry man with a faded boyish grin and a shock of dark hair, Hansel is owner of a decommissioned scout refitted as a Type-S(R) rescue vessel. He and his crew usually work on retainer for the various trade houses that mine the asteroid belt, and operate from the largest mining station located there. Everyone in the belt at least knows someone who was rescued by Hansel's ship; asteroid mining with outdated equipment and rickety seeker ships is a dangerous activity.

The belters may resent their employers, but despite working for the mining bosses, Hansel is well-liked. Recently, the miners have tried to make him their spokesman to the trade houses about the terrible working conditions; he is still undecided. Speaking out for the belters may cost him his retainer status, and he still has to pay off the mortgage on the ship. But every time he has to rescue someone from an accident because the management cut corners on the belters' equipment, it gets more difficult to keep his neutrality. ✪

Type-S(R) Rescue Vessel

by Benedikt Schwarz

This is a common refit of the ubiquitous Type-S scoutship. Since the complex jump drive is the part of the ship that wears out first, degraded Jump capability is a common reason for decommissioning. Such ships are often sold to private enterprises offering in-system courier, salvage or rescue services.

The refit for medical and rescue operations is rather simple; the drone bay and workshop are cleared out and converted into a small medical lab, surgical theater and sick bay. The air/raft bay usually holds one to four rescue sleds and additional equipment; instead of the usual emergency tube link, a solid extendable airlock is installed and fitted with docking clamps. The jump drive may have been removed to create more workspace, but usually is left in place. In theory, many of those converted ships would still be able to jump in an emergency, but their performance will be shaky – neglect of maintenance will most likely have compounded the original jump system flaws which had the ship decommissioned in the first place.

The extendable airlock is usually attached to the scout/courier's original airlock, but some models instead mount it in the ship's starboard aft, joined to the rescue sled storage area. When retracted, the airlock shaft fits underneath the ship's belly, just starboard of the lower deck. This configuration allows for rapid debarkation of the rescue sleds and easier transportation of patients to the sick bay. It is more difficult to dock with the main drive thrusters pointing at the other ship, though, so docking with this configuration takes a steady hand at the controls.

The number of vacc suits stored in the ship's locker is doubled; in addition, some of the suits will be "emergency suits" that can be fitted to an unconscious person in pieces before being joined and put under pressure (rather than being a single coverall that is difficult to put on without the assistance of the intended wearer).

In keeping with its humanitarian mission profile, the standard Type S(R) rescue ship has the turret

The Shipyard

UPPER GALLERY

STORAGE

MEDLAB

SURGERY

GUNNERY

EMERGENCY
HATCH

BRIDGE

COMPUTER

STATEROOMS

CRAWL-
SPACE

EMERGENCY
HATCH

INFIRMARY

COMMONS

STATEROOMS

AIR-
LOCK
[EXTENDABLE,
W/DOCKING
CLAMPS]

KITCHENETTE

SHIP'S
LOCKER

MAIN DECK

ENGINEER-
ING

RESCUE SLEDS
& ROBOT STORAGE

STORAGE

CARGO
LIFT

LOWER DECK
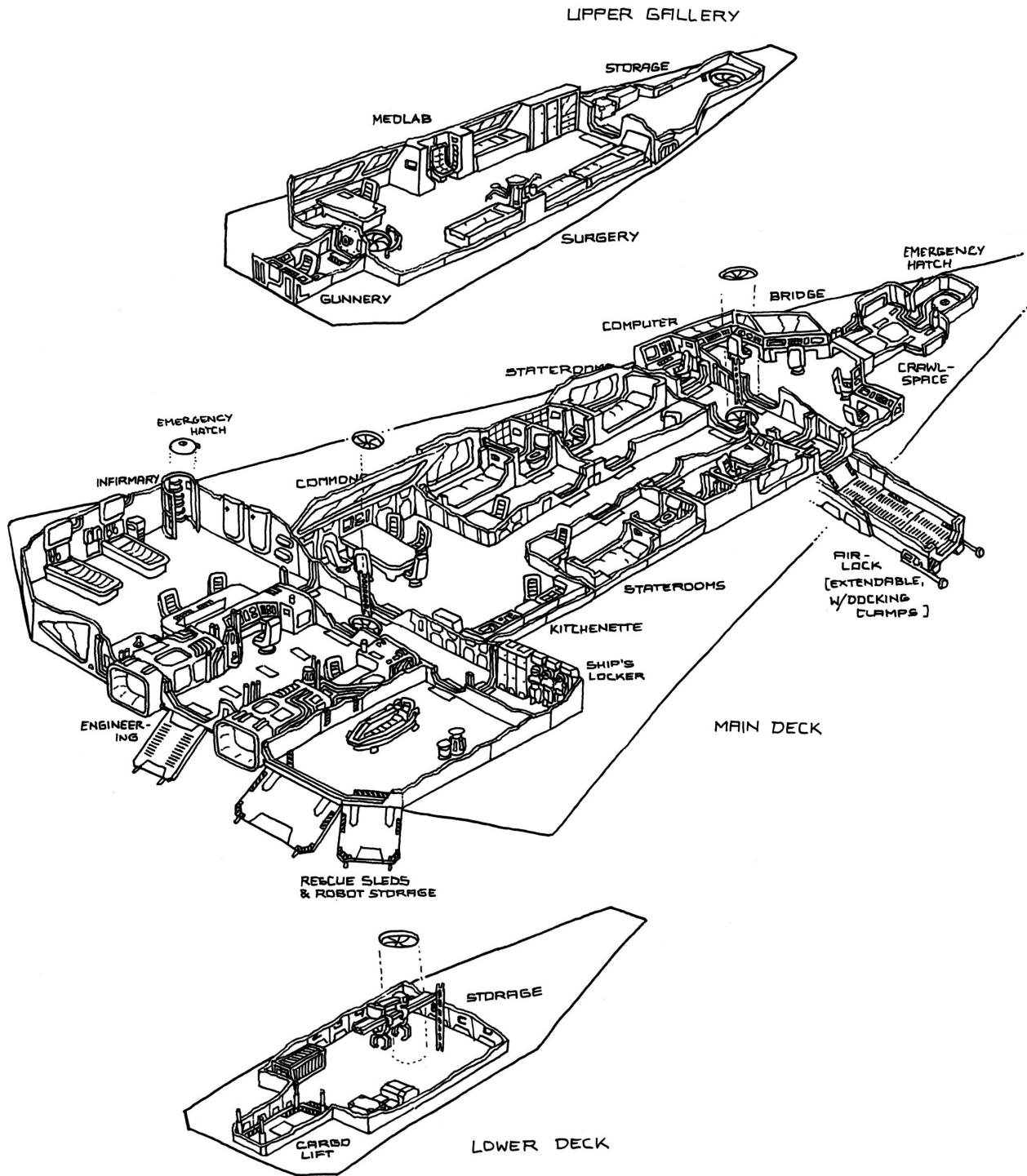
(Continued from page 43)

removed and is unarmed. The hardpoint is still there, though. In outlying systems and near major shipping lanes where pirate action is a constant threat, some resuce ships are refitted with a double turret, usually mounting a single pulse laser and a sandcaster.

Unarmed rescue vessels can claim noncombatant status in Naval battles under several conventions of war agreed between the Imperium and its neighbour states, and as long as they broadcast their status and refrain from hostile action may not be apprehended, attacked or boarded. Not everyone has signed the various conventions, though, and especially the various Vargr polities may or may not abide by the letter of the rules. On the Aslan side, only the major clans of the Ya'soisthea and Tlaukhu signed the compact with the Imperium, so other clans may obey them out of personal honour or respect for the signing clans, but are in no way obliged to do so.

Where Type-S(R) vessels mount a turret, it is usually equipped to be detachable and can be jettisoned in order to be classed as noncombatant.

The usual crew is one pilot and three rescue/paramedical personnel, of which one will be an emergency physician and one an engineering specialist.

Type-S(R) Rescue Vessel (Scout/Courier Refit) (*Mongoose 2nd Edition*)				
System	Description	Power	Disp (*dtons*)	Cost (MCr)
Hull	100 dtons, streamlined		-	5.000
Armour	Crystaliron (40 hull pts)		5	0.250
Maneuver Drive	Thrust 2 g	20	2	4.000
Jump Drive	Jump-2 (often shaky)	20	10	15.000
Power Plant	Fusion, Power 60		4	2.000
Fuel Tanks	1×Jump-2, 12 wks ops		23	-
Bridge		20	10	0.500
Computer	Model 5/bis		-	0.045
Sensors	Military Grade (DM +0)	2	2	4.100
Weapons	None as standard, 1×hardpt for double turret		-	
Systems	Fuel Scoop		-	1.000
	Fuel Processors (40 t/day)		2	0.100
	Docking Space (4 t)		5	1.000
	Workshop (Medical lab)		10	5.000
Staterooms	Standard×4		16	2.000
Cargo space			11	
Total			*100*	*39.995*
Crew (Monthly salary)	*Pilot/Astrogator*			*Cr6000*
	Engineer/Rescue technician			*Cr4000*
	Medic/Steward			*Cr3000*
	Emergency physician			*Cr3000*
Monthly Maint				*Cr3064*
Total Monthly Cost (not including mortgage)				*Cr19064*

Doing It My Way

Bounty Hunting Made Easy

by Mark McCabe

We have seen all forms of Bounty Hunting in Science Fiction. From *Star Wars* to *Bladerunner* to *Killjoys*, we have seen people in this occupation running the star lanes in pursuit of the scum and villainy of the Imperium. I know this subject has been addressed in a wide variety of forums, but it is my hope that this article will go from soup to nuts how to conduct business as a registered and licensed Bounty Hunter. I have also included a character generation process for Mongoose *Traveller*, with three specializations: Independent (Indie) Hunter, Organization Hunter, and Skip Tracer.

Assumptions

- The Imperium will want to have some sort of means to control wildcat or unauthorized boun-

ty hunting. In that light, unlicensed bounty hunters will only receive 50% of the listed value of any bounty.

- Bounty Hunters are not headhunters, *per se*. Therefore, all assassination attempts should be handled outside of these considerations.

- Bounty Hunters must establish contact with planetary authorities (if they exist) when it comes to carrying and using weapons. Bounty Hunters will typically not be sporting hand-held energy bazookas while hunting a mark. Referees can take liberties with planetary officials taking bribes to allow more 'unorthodox' items of 'self-protection.'

- Bounties may be researched on most worlds, but all Imperial bounties must be turned in at the sector and subsector capitals to the proper law enforcement authorities.

Qualifications

Anyone who wants to consider Bounty Hunting as a trade must be licensed to do so. The Imperial Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will recognize those individuals who they deem qualified and reliable enough to fulfill and serve an Imperial warrant. You must be recognized by the MoJ in order to pursue a "Jump Skipper" or to be fully rewarded for an Imperial warrant.

To gain a personal bounty hunting license you must obtain an Imperial Bounty Hunter Bond. This is an one-time, non-refundable surety of Cr100,000, to be held in any Imperially-approved financial institution against claims for possible damages caused in the pursuit of a wanted individual. Generally, Independent hunters will find it necessary to arrange financing of the bond through a financial institution-backed loan; Organization hunters will generally have the bond paid for by the organization employing them. Once the license is issued and the bond on file, the hunter is allowed full access to the Imperial

Bounty Database, an IISS-maintained, MoJ-fed information program on who and where potential wanted persons can be found. The bond is 'tapped' (value deducted) for damages that are incurred. This facet of Bounty Hunting is referred to as "Bounty Solo" or "BS" to those who have corporate backing.

Many Bounty Hunters become members of a Bounty Hunting Association. This is a company, much like a mercenary company, that employs a stable of bounty hunters in order to pool and share resources. Safe houses, lodging and Imperial credentials can be obtained with membership dues of Cr5,000 annually (minimum) and 20% off the top of all profits obtained from a bounty. Many Imperial Nobles run their own Bounty Hunting Companies as some see it as a sport much like a safari. Some organizations will have a "prime membership" where those that pay double or triple annual fees get the best pickings for bounties. To help pay for the initial Bounty Bond, the initial cut for the company is usually 50% until the bond is paid in full. This seems to motivate the bounty hunters to bring in more marks. Some Associations are run as coöperatives by the Bounty Hunters themselves and you can expect yet another annual membership fee of some sort to help this group maintain its resources. An exception to all of this would be the company hunter who maintains a corporate salary with bonuses based on their success. The referee should recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all structure; some companies will be rigidly structured, others will not.

Ordinarily, the bounty hunter will be required to pay an annual fee of Cr5,000 to maintain their license in good standing. If a claim is made against the hunter's bond, an additional annual assessment of Cr10,000 is imposed until the claim is settled in full. If a bounty hunter wishes to "go inactive" then the annual fee is dropped to 1,000 a year (for maintenance). If they wish to "go active" during that year, they must pay the additional 4,000 credits or be

treated as unlicensed and receive only 50% of the posted value of a successful hunt. If a claim is made against a hunter's bond, the Imperial authorities will investigate to validate it; no payment will be made until the claim is validated. This protects the hunter and/or his organization against 'bond gouging'. It also identifies to the Imperial authorities those bounty hunters that are somewhat reckless in their pursuit of bounties (which can be identified for remonstrance, or to organizations for special attention), and those worlds that are hostile to hunters (which the Imperial authorities can provide warnings about to hunters and organizations).

Skip Tracing will be discussed in greater detail later in the article. Unlike individual or corporate hunters, these are specialized bank-funded strike teams that are focused on the recovery of the asset (the ship) more than bringing a criminal to justice. Their funding is based on this recovery, but like their bounty hunting cousins they too must be bonded in a similar fashion.

Obtaining a Bounty

Official ("Posted") Bounties

Posted bounties are of two types: Imperial bounties and Local bounties. Imperial bounties generally have wider dissemination and higher values, but there are fewer of them available. In general, posted bounties indicate that the individual is wanted for a most-serious felony; approximately 1/6 of Imperial posted bounties are for "Jump Skippers".

Unofficial Bounties

There is always an exception to the standard bounty offers. Underworld organizations, Megacorporations, the Nobility and the many different levels of the government can and will offer bounties or job offers that are not listed in any official records. For referees, I would recommend a third party representative contact the bounty hunter(s) they desire and the offer of compensation should at a minimum

be worth double or triple the standard fees. Common business would normally include one-third the bounty up front, the other two-thirds upon delivery and obviously, no questions asked. These offers may make life complicated for corporate hunters and their patrons.

Finding Bounties

To determine the number of bounties listed as available on a world, you will need to know the Starport, Population, and Law Level digits of the world's UWP. The Starport determines whether the list of Imperial bounties is available on that world; the Population and Law Level determine how many bounties may be found.

If the hunter wishes to seek Imperial bounties, roll 2d6 for the totals below:

Starport	A	B	C	D	E	X
Imperial Bounty List Available on	3+	5+	7+	9+	n/a	n/a

The Imperial Bounty List is automatically available on Subsector and Sector capitals; do not roll.
DM +1 if world is on X-Boat route
DM –1 if world is in a frontier sector.

The table below indicates the number of bounties listed on a world, based on the world's UWP Population digit. Roll the indicated number of dice for the type of bounty sought and apply modifiers as indicated.

Bounty Availability					
	Planetary Population from UWP				
	0-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	A+
Imperial bounties*	n/a**	d6/2-1	d6	2d6	4d6
Local Bounties	n/a	d6	3d6	6d6	12d6
Unofficial offer?	No	2d6: 2-	2d6: 3-	2d6: 5-	2d6: 7-

DMs for Law Level: Law 5-, DM –2; Law 6, DM –1; Law 7, No DM; Law 8+, DM +1 for each level of Law above 7.
* In order to discover the Imperial warrants (or "tags") in an area, they must be posted. Delivery of the intended mark is to be made to the Sector or Subsector capital or to a Bounty Hunter's licensed facility.
** If world is a Sector or Subsector capital, treat POP 0-3 as POP 4-5.

The "Unofficial offer?" row does not give a number of bounties; rather, it indicates whether the hunter can be approached to take an unofficial bounty. Roll the given dice for the indicated value

Doing It My Way

(e.g., 2d6:7– means to roll 2d6; if the result is 7– an unofficial bounty may be offered).

If the hunter takes an Imperial bounty, roll 1d6; on a result of 6, the bounty is for a Jump Skipper (see below).

Value of a Bounty on a Felon

The basic value of an Imperial bounty is 3d6×Cr100,000 for a successful capture (defined as alive and able to stand trial). The felon must be turned over to Imperial authorities at a Sector or Subsector capital for the bounty to be paid.

The basic value of a Local bounty is 2d6×Cr10,000 for a successful capture. The felon must be turned over to authorities on the issuing world for the bounty to be paid.

The actual value of a bounty is increased by 10% for each law level above 9 (e.g., a bounty with basic value Cr80,000 will be worth Cr96,000 on a world with Law Level B [Cr80,000 + Cr8,000×2])

If the felon is alive but unable to stand trial (permanently incapacitated), only 50% of the value of the bounty will be paid.

If the felon is deceased, regardless of whether the death occurred before or after capture, either the body or DNA proof of death must be presented to the issuing authority, and only 10% of the value of the bounty will be paid.

Local bounties (*only*) may be offered as "Dead or Alive". If a bounty is so offered, the full value of the bounty will be paid even if the felon is unable to stand trial, or, if deceased, on presentation of the body or DNA proof to the issuing authority.

Locating the Target

The referee will want to know ahead of time where the target is located (if they are still alive).

Roll 2d6: 2-deceased, 3-already in jail (no bounty), 4 to 9-planetside, 10-trying to escape the planetary system, 11+ gone from the system already.

Jump Skipping

Jump skipping is the act where a person or persons have gone over 90 days in arrears in paying off their ship. The bank holding the loan note will hire responsible bounty hunters who know that they need to save the ship as best as possible, more than bring the thieves to court. You can find an example of this type of hunting in *Freelance Traveller*, Issues #81 and #83, written by Joshua Levy. The following breakdown applies to Jump Skippers:

Ship Displacement

Roll 2d6	4-	5-7	8	9	10	11+
Ship Displacement (tons)	100	200	300-400	500-800	900-1500	>1500

Bounty Value

The bank will pay the bounty hunter's team 10% of what the ship is worth when they have the ship in their possession. The bank will deduct for repairs that need to be done in order to bring the ship back to operational status. Every crewmember of that ship will make for an added Cr50,000 bonus, but only if they are found guilty in a trial. There are no bonuses for dead prisoners. The desired ship must physically be returned to the bank's corporate office located at the sector or subsector capital.

Assumptions

This is not a job for the solo hunter. Skip Tracing Teams ("ST2s" for short) usually consist of a mix of marine boarders, wildcat pilot/navigators and thrill-seeking engineers/gear heads. The standard ST2 will consist a team of eight: a minimum of four (4) combat-skilled marines (one with combat medic skills), one (1) pilot/navigator, one (1) software specialist who needs to override the ship's security measures and two (2) engineer-mechanics who will likely need to make immediate repairs along with ensuring the targeted starship is jump-worthy. Obviously a second ship will be needed to carry this eight (8) person team to its intended location. Often, older Naval

gunboats such as the *Gazelle*-class or patrol craft such as the Type T are bought from the mothball fleet by corporate banks and used for this purpose.

One thing to keep in mind is the fact most banks do not want a bloodbath. They just want their ship back. Many banks would, after the ship has been returned, recruit the wayward fugitives to perform a new contract with potential borderline legalities. The boarding parties of the ST2s may want to think about ways to subdue the wayward fugitives quickly rather than opening up with energy weapons or slug throwers in close-quarters fighting.

More than likely, a bank representative with some financial and legal background will accompany these recovery teams. Referees should consider this NPC to be a stabilizing force to keep the team focused on their task. Usually this person will be the annoying bean counter who is constantly trying to keep the recovery costs at a bare minimum. This NPC will normally be next to useless because they will turn on the team if things go badly wrong. Most will be interested in maintaining what they call 'plausible deniability' of any possible wrongdoing.

The Bounty Hunter Career

Bounty Hunters:

Individuals who seek out and apprehend fugitives from the law.

Qualification:

Int 7+ (-1 DM if previously in any military career path (due to military training))

Assignments: choose one of the following:

Indie Hunter – you hunt down fugitives mostly by yourself

Survival: Dex, End or Int 5+

Advancement: Int 6+

Organization Hunter – The hunter is backed by resources provided by others, and remits a portion of any bounties collected to those others

Survival: Dex, End or Int 5+

Advancement: Edu 7+

Skip Tracer – you hunt down fugitives who have skipped their bank payments on their starship

Survival: Int 5+

Advancement: Edu 6+

Skills and Training			
1D	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (Edu 8+)
1	Gun Combat (any)	Streetwise	Medic
2	+1 Strength	Recon	Remote Operations
3	+1 Dexterity	Computers	Comms
4	+1 Endurance	Survival	Stealth
5	+1 Intelligence	Investigate	Social Science: Law
6	Melee (any)	Drive (any)	Sensors

Specialist Skills			
1D	Independent Hunter	Organization Hunter	Skip Tracer
1	Tracking	Computers	Pilot
2	Survival	Language	Navigation
3	Gun Combat (any)	Deception	Mechanic
4	Melee (any)	Admin	Admin
5	Admin	Gun Combat (any)	Engineering
6	Language	Melee (any)	Gunner

Ranks and Benefits				
	Independent Hunter	Skill	Organization Hunter/ Skip Tracer	skill
0	Rookie	Social Sc: Law-1	Rookie	Social Sc: Law-1
1	Hunter	Streetwise-1	Hunter	Zero-G Ops-1
2				
3	Senior Hunter	Gun Combat (any)-1	Senior Hunter	Recon-1
4			Team Leader	Leadership-1
5	Master Hunter	Jack-of-all-Trades-1	Senior Team Leader	Admin-1
6			Team Director	+1 SOC

Starting Out Gear

Indie Hunter: Personalized armor (as least cloth), Personalized unique weapon, hand computer

Organization Hunter: Combat-type armor, Hand computer/communicator, Security-locked hand weapon

Skip Tracer: Combat-type vacc suit, starship repair kit, hand computer/communicator

Doing It My Way

1D	Independent Hunter		Organization Hunter		Skip Tracer	
	Cash	*Material Benefits*	*Cash*	*Material Benefit*	*Cash*	*Material Benefit*
1	5,000	+1 Int	10,000	+1 Int	10,000	+1 Int
2	7,500	Combat Implant	15,000	Wafer Jack	20,000	Wafer Jack
3	10,000	Armor	20,000	Armor	30,000	Battlearmor
4	15,000	Weapon	25,000	Weapon	40,000	Weapon
5	20,000	Bounty Hunter gear	30,000	Ship share	50,000	Ship share
6	30,000	Ship Share	40,000	Bounty Bond paid	75,000	Bounty Bond paid
7	50,000	Huntress class ship	50,000	TAS Member	100,000	Starship, Type T

DM +1 on Material Benefits if Rank 4+. DM +1 on Cash if Gambling skill 1+

Organizational Hunters and Skip Tracers are no longer associated with their respective organizations. Independent hunters are on Inactive status if they elect to pay the license maintenance fee; they are in poor standing and considered unlicensed otherwise.

MISHAPS

1D	Event
1	**Severely injured by your target:** Roll twice on the injury table and take the worst result.
2	**Bribery:** Your target offers you double their bounty to let them go. If you accept you may leave this career (no benefit roll for this term). If you refuse you gain an injury and an Enemy.
3	**Bigger than you thought:** Your target has a lot of higher support. You make the bounty, but they are soon released. Gain a secret along with an enemy. You are mustered out with benefits.
4	**Elusive target:** Your target not only slips away, but you lose half your monetary benefits for a term. You are mustered out while you gain a rival (the thief) and a load of embarrassment in your reputation.
5	**Mistaken identity:** You apprehend the wrong person. Gain an enemy. Lose Cr5,000 in fines.
6	**Injured in the pursuit:** Your target gets away and you roll once on the injury table.

Events

2D	Event
2	**Disaster!** Roll on the Mishap Table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	**Marooned:** In pursuit of your target you are left stranded in the wilderness for a time. Gain either Recon, Animal or Survival skill.
4	**Is There a Doctor in the House?** You gain some instruction as a First Responder. Gain Medic skill.
5	**School Daze:** You gain training as a specialist in an Advanced Course. Gain a roll on the Advanced Education Table.
6	**Hardship:** You are assigned a tough mission. Roll 2d6. On 8+ you bring them in and gain an additional roll on the specialist table for your field. On 7- you are injured and reduce one physical characteristic by one point.
7	**Life Happens:** Roll for a Life Event
8	**On the Road, *Again*:** Steady work. Gain an additional roll on the specialist table for your field.
9	**Assist:** You help out another bounty hunter in distress. Gain an ally and gain +2 DM on your next advancement roll.
10	**Protégé:** A more experienced bounty hunter take you under their wing. Gain a Service skill and add +3 to your next advancement roll. Gain an ally.
11	**Poker night:** You manage to find your way into a group that gambles frequently. Gain Gambling skill.
12	**Winning streak:** You manage to bring in many different targets successfully. Automatically pass the next advancement roll. Also gain an additional monetary benefits roll.

Doing It My Way

Example Character

Initial Generation

Sten Reznikov (human, Solomani-Vilani mix)
Str-8, Dex-7, End-8, Int-7, Edu-5, Soc-5
Homeworld: Efate/Spinward Marches/1705 (non-industrial, High Population)
   Skills (pre-adult): Streetwise-0

Career Progression

(*age 18*)   Joins the Marines/Ground Assault
   Skills: Gun Combat(Energy Rifle)-1, Stealth-1
   Event: front lines (#8), gain Leadership-1
   Failed advancement roll

(*age 22*)   Failed survival roll, dismissed from service
   Skills: Survival-1
   BENEFITS: +Cr5,000; +1 EDU

(*age 26*)   Joins Bounty Hunter/Indie Hunter
   Skills: Social Science:Law-1, Investigate-1
   Event: First Responder Training (#5), gain Medic-1
   Passed advancement roll, now Rank-1

(*age 30*)   stays an Indie Hunter
   Skills: Computer-1, Streetwise-1
   Event: Life event (#7). Rolls a '7'. Gains a new contact (bounty hunter).

(*age 34*)   Musters Out. No failed aging rolls.
   BENEFITS: +Cr10,000, Bounty Hunter gear

Final Character Profile

Sten Reznikov 878765 age 34 Cr15,000
(Marines-2 terms, Bounty Hunter-2 terms)
Computer-1, Gun Combat(Energy Rifle)-1, Stealth-1, Leadership-1, Survival-1, Investigate-1, Medic-1, Streetwise-1, Social Science:Law-1.

Bounty Hunter gear, Personalized armor (at least cloth), Personalized unique weapon, hand computer.

Contact (bounty hunter).

PCs Bounty Hunting

After a player-character has mustered out, they are considered completely out of their organization (applies to organizational hunters and skip tracers). If they wish to continue in the game setting as a bounty hunter they could consider paying for a physical exam (1,000 credits at a local military base) and then posting their own bond. Their name and record are on file if they paid their 1,000 credit "inactive" fee so unless they were forced out due to a mishap, re-obtaining a personal license should not be a problem.

Indie Hunters are simply continuing to ply their trade. Their bond has been paid so they simply need to maintain the costs of their license (5,000 credits/year for an active hunter; Cr1,000 if inactive). If the indie hunter was removed due to a mishap injury, they can likely bribe the doctor to have them pass the aforementioned physical exam.

Example

Sten Reznikov, our 34-year old recently retired bounty hunter is running into hard times on his homeworld of Efate. He decides to go down to the local starport to see if there are any bounties he might pick up for some quick cash. He has not paid his one-time bond, but he is simply looking for a quick mark. He could pay the 5,000 credit annual fee, along with the 1,000 credit exam, but he chooses not to part with a chunk of his current standing money.

EFATE (1705/Spinward) - A646930–D.

Starport A. A roll of 3+ is needed for a list of bounties to be publicly posted. The referee rolls 5, so there is a public list posted.

Population 9, *Law Level 0*. The table shows that there will be 2d6-2 Imperial bounties. The reeferee rolls 7, so there are five (5) Imperial bounties available. The table also shows 6d6-2 local bounties. The referee rolls 20, so eighteen (18) local bounties are

available. The Imperial bounties are worth 3d6×Cr100,000; the local bounties are worth 2d6×Cr10,000

One of the local bounties is for an individual accused of murder. The posted value is Cr120,000 (at 50% for being an "unofficial" hunter, Sten would earn Cr60,000). Since this is Sten's homeworld and he has Streetwise skill, he decides to go after this person. At this time the referee rolls to see the disposition of this person. A roll of 6 means the person is still alive and on planet.

Using a combination of his Computer and Investigate skills, Sten locates his target within a week. He does not need to worry about the local law re-strictions on weapons, so he armors up and heads toward the target's hideout.

Will Sten bring in his man? Does the target have allies? Is he hiding in a "priest's hole" behind a patron's bookcase? This could easily be a decent one-shot adventure.

Later, Sten could use his contact (bounty hunter) to join an Organizational bounty company or start on his own solo career. He will likely need to pay the Bounty Hunting Bond (100,000 credits) to go after the juicier marks. There is plenty to work with here; I hope you find these ideas and guidelines useful. ✪

Call of Cthulhu: Investigator Weapons

a double review by "kafka"

Investigator Weapons Volume 1: The 1920s & 1930s.
Investigator Weapons Volume 2: Modern Day
                    both by Hans-Christian Vortisch
Sixtystone Press http://www.sixtystoneprss.co.uk
132pp (Vol. 1) 240pp (Vol. 2), Softcover or PDF
$21.99(S)14.99(P)25.99(S+P) (Volume 1)
£17.09(S)11.65(P)20.19(S+P) (Volume 1)
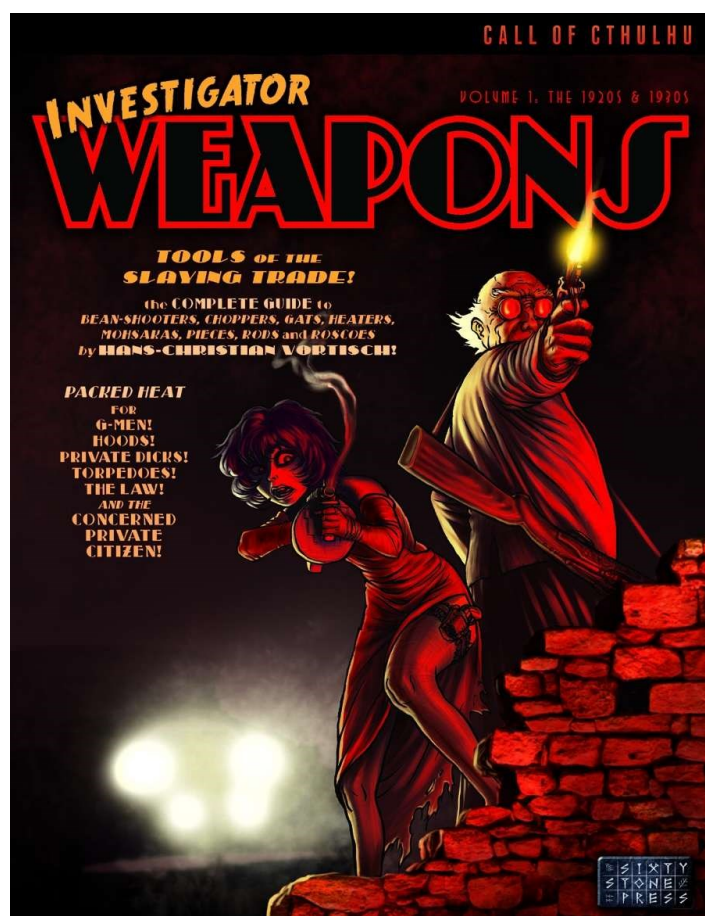$30.99(S)14.99(P)35.99(S+P) (Volume 2)
£24.08(S)11.65(P)27.96(S+P) (Volume 2)
$38.23(S)22.48(P)56.66(S+P) (Bundle)
£29.70(S)17.47(B)44.02(S+P) (Bundle)

Volume 1: The 1920s & 1930s

First and foremost, allow me to thank the publisher Adam Crossingham for gifting me a copy of this PDF for this review.

Gunporn… that is what this is. And, I am not afraid to say it. There has always been a segment of the *Call of Cthulhu* audience that has been obsessed with guns and the effects that they might have on the Mythos and the result usually entails the bad-dies getting even madder. As a result the character's descent into madness becomes ever more acute.

Sixtystone Press has done a fabulous job here in culling together a sourcebook for Players-Keepers and historical enthusiasts alike. This volume deals with the so-called Classic Era (1920s/1930s) *Call of Cthulhu* where real world weapons of all sorts are stat'ed for the Basic Role Playing system. Subsequent volumes will address Modern and presumably archaic and maybe Future and/or exotic weapons. Currently, the work is only available as a PDF but I am given to understand that it will come in a print form later this year.

However, the breadth of this work and the research done is truly phenomenal, as it has meticulously researched the usage of weapons from not only the United States but Europe and Japan thus giving and laying the basis for globetrotting campaigns in which Keepers can use the right weapon for the right place. Note the use of term *weapon*, for not only do we have the standard array of pistols, rifles, machine guns, and shotguns (all good fun in any *Call of Cthulhu* game) but also some less than standard weapons that make their way into the game including the different forms of dynamite and flame throwers plus an array of cultist weapons, including silent and deadly ones like a blowgun. Each weapon is given a comprehensive history and their real world context – littered throughout are advertisements from the era giving an authentic feel to the material, as well as ready-made props for the Keeper to use. However, this creates a daunting task for this reviewer, as pages upon pages of gun history does cause things to blur – fortunately the author was aware of this downside and created a magnificently comprehensive index along with cheat sheets for the Keeper who just needs the stats. Making locating a particular weapon or part of the world where a particular weapon is commonplace so easy, the only thing is that it is currently a PDF and unless you have a tablet, using a computer might be a tad difficult as the pages are not hyperlinked.

Notwithstanding, if grounding Cthulhu in the real world was not good enough, it gets better. There are rules for everything and excellent rules that bring together rules from a variety of sources. Rules for bullet proof vests, rules for shooting underwater, rules for autofire, rules for shooting on mount/vehicle, rules for shooting in the cold, rules for shooting in a desert, etc. – rules that can cover almost any circumstance of the era that the players may find themselves in – thus allowing the Keeper to have the rules necessary to make that cinematic/pulp game a little closer to reality. Best rule – naturally, are the rules for recovery of gunshot wounds. There is also the nice touch of pairing different investigator occupations with particular guns – making NPCs a snap. Fortunately, again, the index does come to the rescue for these rules which are also nicely indexed.

Nevertheless, there is one slight drawback in all these rules is that they cross-reference a great number of the game's canon including some pretty hard to get items from Pagan Publishing or the King of Chicago. I realize that the author does not want to be accused of plagiarism and hence must cite the source but it does become annoying a tad when there are references to products that I do not own nor can ever own. Nice background also on the regulation of weapons in the different parts of the world – allowing the Keeper to throw in a historical red herring or something for the players to consider before, they think that they can just go to the "gun shop" and cash out to kill some bad guys. Chances are the cultists are in league with the authorities or at the very least the gun shop owners and these facts give an excellent way of getting the players just where every Keeper wants them to be – screaming in abject terror and just not to have an easy run of it. This is Cthulhu kids, not, D&D.

The style of writing is witty and engaging with just the right tempo without reverting to a stiletto

style. Lavishly illustrated with loads of real world photographs and period piece advertisements gives the impression that one is flipping through the Sears-Roebuck or equivalent from the day. So the criticism is noted in the review, many rules cite game books and supplements that are very hard to find and that the copious abundance of the information is ill suited for a PDF. The latter will be rectified once the deadtree rolls off the presses and will be an excellent addition to any BRP gamer's collection and the former – there is enough detail that one does not need the source material – one can just play this just out of the box.

Volume 2: Modern Day

The earlier volume of this series, I unfairly categorized as "gun porn", while this might be the view of some – this is, however a comprehensive and beautifully done sourcebook/catalogue of modern weapons. Building from simple handguns to rocket propelled grenade launchers (the other RPG) along with an assortment of what typically might be held in the hands of a cult. Furthermore, there is an invaluable guide to the laws in major countries and zones of the world that may aid or more often than not in the modern period hinder the player's access to firearms. Very often, players, especially at conventions tend to view the weapons page like the cache in *The Matrix*. However, the real world does not work that way.

The weapons come with a standard stat bloc and then comes the detail, in which, one can learn a lot about the gun and its appropriate use in the game by reviewing its history. Contained within the history will be variants of the weapon. And, whether these variants make their way into one's game is the province of the Keeper and player's interaction. However, it does breed in a great deal of realism to the descriptions. Furthermore, the

author makes an extraordinary connection with illustrating where in popular culture (usually TV or movies) the gun has been seen in use.

Each firearm comes with usually a photograph, thus, commentary on the level of art is unnecessary– it is realistic and gritty. Just what one needs in a sourcebook such as this. This book is a comprehensively explored treatise on the guns highlighted both from a historical and technical standpoint, and it is very clear that the author has intimate workings of many guns profiled here. Since the rules do not venture into fantastical but are grounded in solid gritty realism. That said, it is still an item that enhances play and should not be used as a real life guide.

And, while the guns and their description do carry much of the weight of the book, it is not to say that additional rules for firearms do not pull their own weight. For the author has culled together tons
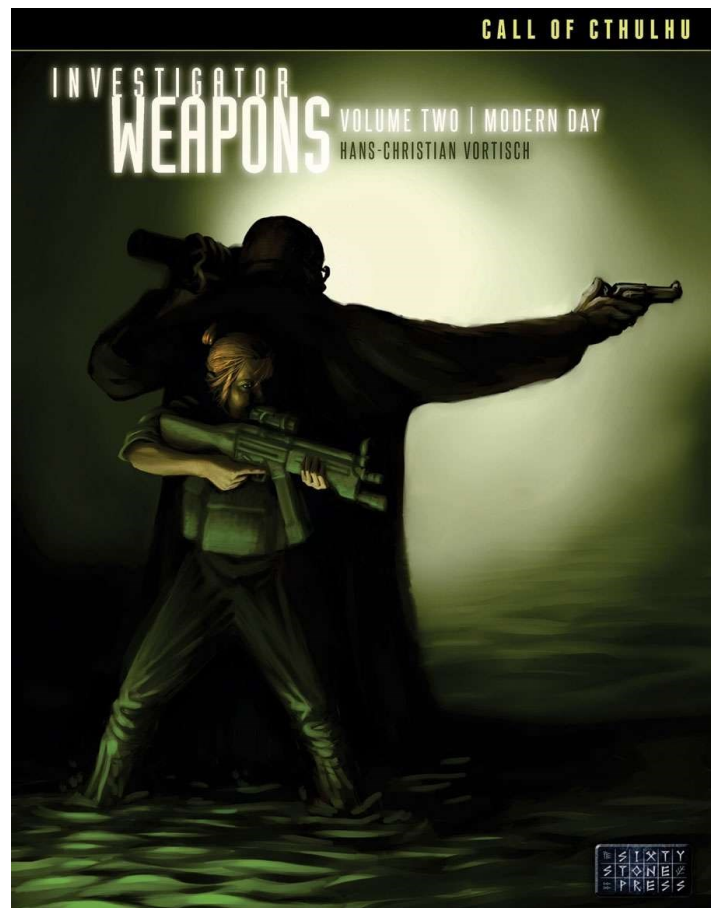
of useful guidelines from a myriad of other source-books and putting them together in one place. I wonder once this series of books is complete that Sixtystone Press will be compiling the weapons together in Keeper Screen sheets, with the vitals available for quick reference.

Nor should these rules provide any discomfort for the Keeper, for all the rules are scalable and the author does go out of the way to assert the truism – what is true in popular culture may not be true in *Call of Cthulhu*, i.e., the proverbial shot to the head may not work on Cthulhu zombies or that given many telescopic gun sights utilize mirrors, it may render some forms of undead invisible. However, on the positive side, even though Deep Ones might have tougher torsos due to natural armour, a directed shot to their gills is likely to do the same damage as shooting a human in the larynx would.

Additionally there are rules that include how different levels of cover work, or shooting into or underwater, effects of fire and countless other tropes that can be found in any major film or action TV series brought to life. And, most importantly the treatment of said wounds can be played with greater realism than just "healing surges" and blooded wounds. Firearms, especially, modern firearms do have the capacity for shock and awe thus the very first rules are confusion and fright.

Once again, I am amazed and floored by the astonishing detail of research that went into the creation of this book. If there were to pick apart this book, one might find the occasional typo or misattribution but none of that should detract from the scale of the work. It is majestic and wonderful undertaking that makes modern games a snap. Thus, this book can be used for any espionage, tech-nothriller, or near Future SF game that utilizes the BRP mechanic not just the Cthulhu family of games. Sixtystone Press has to be commended for bringing a volume like this to the light of day. It is certainly worth every cent and hoped that it will get wider distribution.   ✪

Knight SPR Grav Sled

by Benedikt Schwarz

Ling-Standard's *Knight* series of rescue sleds is one of the standard vehicles used in rescue. It has limited grav flight (capped at 100m altitude for safety reasons) and can carry two patients on couches which can be detached and operate as (unmotorized, hand-pushed) floating stretchers. When the couches are attached, the patients are monitored by the sled's medical expert system, which can administer first aid using several robotic arms folding out of the vehicle's central spar. Pulmonary aids, defibrillators, tracheal tubes and IV feeds can be employed by a paramedic to keep the patient alive. Those can be constantly monitored by the expert system once they are in place, although the computer is not authorised to administer them by itself.

The sled is driven from an open seat mounted in the back of the vehicle. A second and third crewman can cling to the handrails and ride the vehicle for short distances. The whole driver's seat and control assembly is mounted on a rotating ring and can be swiveled around if the sled is moving in reverse.

With its narrow profile (between 1.5m and 2m in width), the *Knight* SPR ("Sled, Paramedic Rescue") can navigate starport corridors and even the passageways of larger starships. It is able to move in

In A Store Near You

any direction, including sideways, to facilitate movement in relatively tight spaces, and can pivot around its own center in any space of 3m to 3.5m diameter. Turning corners can be a problem in cramped quarters, though, and there have been un-confirmed reports of the grav drive interacting un-predictably with the grav plating in low-technology ships.

There are few variants of the basic SPR model. One common variant has one of the patient couches removed and the other upgraded to a portable cry-oberth. ✪

Technology Level	13
Skill	Drive (Grav)
Agility	-1
Speed (Cruise)	Slow (Very Slow)
Range (Cruise)	80 (140)
Crew	1 (unless operated by autopilot)
Passengers	2*
Cargo	.2 tons (medical supplies)
Hull	2
Armour: Front	3
Armour: Sides	3
Armour: Rear	3
Shipping	1 ton
Cost	Cr 106,000
Equipment and Traits	Open-topped vehicle Short-term life support (plastic foil bubble) Communications (TL8) Navigation (Basic) Sensors (Improved) Autopilot (3) Computer/3 (Intellect-1, Medic-1, Life Science-1, Chemistry-1, Drive/grav-1, Database) Medical scanner Extensive TL12 medikit (+2 to Medic checks performed for first aid) Biomonitor (+2 to Medic checks to keep a patient alive)
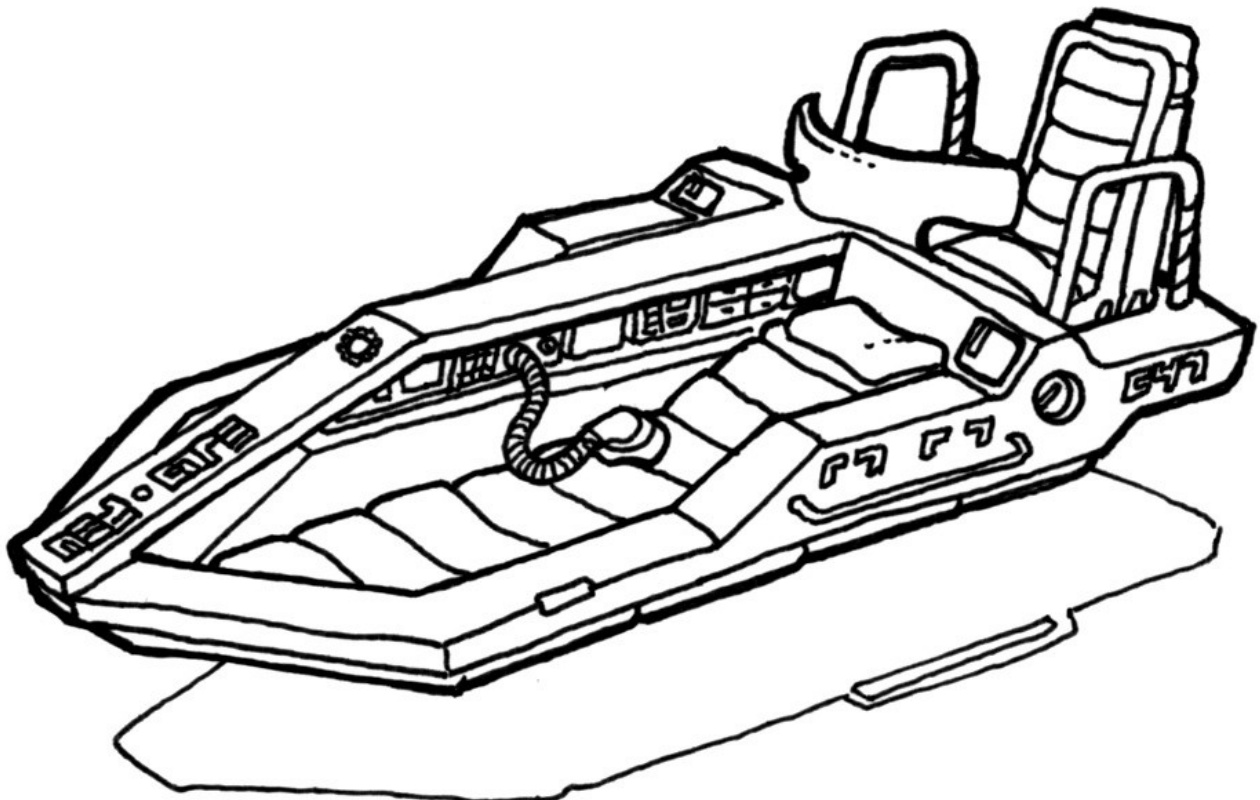
Wheelchair

designed by Ewan Quibell

This TL5 sophont-powered wheelchair is a passenger vehicle that can be found on almost any low tech planet where sophonts have lost the use of their legs. The frame is steel with a seat. The operator(s**) either sit in the chair and move the wheels by hand or stand behind the chair and push using two handles provided.

There is no luggage compartment(*) although there is a shelf under the seat to provide a limited carrying capacity for incidental items. The vehicle is not intended to take much load above the sophont sitting in the seat.

The wheelchair is powered by the operator. The speed and power source are calculated using a standard human producing 200 watts(**).

The speed of the vehicle varies depending on the number of humans powering the craft, although it can achieve 15kph with only a single operator.

The wheelchair can be collapsed to be able to stored in smaller spaces.

CraftID:	Wheelchair, TL5, Cr 417
Hull:	1/1, Disp=0.185, Conf=0USL, Armor=1A, Unloaded=0.184 tons, Loaded=0.232 tons*
Power:	External=0.0002 Mw**
Loco:	1/2, Wheels×4, P/W=0.86**, Road=15 kph, Off Road=2 kph
Comm:	-
Sensors:	-
Off:	Hardpoints=1
Def:	-
Control:	Simple Mechanical×1
Accom:	Crew=1 (Operator), Seat=Cramped×1
Other:	Cargo=0.0475* klitres, ObjSize=Small, EmLevel=None
Comm:	Price in quantity=Cr 334 ✪

Converting Worlds from Classic *Traveller* to *GURPS: Traveller*

by S. B. Amundson

This article originally appeared on the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 2002.

As noted in *GURPS Traveller: First In*, the world-building rules in the original *Traveller* produced many worlds which, by current science, are impossible. The world-building rules in *First In* are probably more realistic, but give a narrower range of possibilities. These guidelines allow the conversion from previously published materials to *First In*.

Population-related details are more or less flexible, and can be ported directly to the new system. However, the physical details of a world can be updated as follows. In terms of a player's experience, the size of a world is not terribly important. It does

establish the level of local gravity; but on the other hand, many GMs ignore this. Similarly, a world's hydrographics affect an adventure only a little; a world is wet or dry, and that is all.

But a world's atmosphere is of paramount importance. A breathable atmosphere dictates one style of life, a polluted atmosphere another. People live differently on vacuum worlds, or on worlds with a corrosive atmosphere. For this reason, we will treat the atmosphere digit of a (previously published) Universal World Profile first.

Doing It My Way

Physical Details

There are three main types of worlds: Habitable, Vacuum and Exotic. In *Traveller* terms, a habitable world has atmosphere type 4-9, a vacuum world is type 0-1, and types A-C (10-12) are exotic. Types 2-3 and D-F are borderline cases.

Habitable worlds, with atmosphere types 2-9 or D-F, must either be Earthlike worlds or else worlds which have been terraformed. In *GURPS: Terradyne*, Mars is terraformed in only 200 years, and most worlds in *Traveller* have been inhabited far longer.

Habitable worlds of size 5+ might be Earthlike worlds, or terraformed Hostile (N) worlds. An atmosphere of nitrogen and carbon dioxide could plausibly be converted to a breathable atmosphere within a few centuries, by the action of (possibly engineered) microbes. In game terms, therefore, any habitable world of size 5+ needs no revision.

Habitable worlds of size 4 are almost certainly Desert worlds which have been terraformed. In *Terradyne*, Mars is the equivalent of UWP 410; after terraforming it is UWP 462. Such worlds should not have a hydrographic coverage over about 40%. Habitable worlds smaller than size 4 are impossible; they should be enlarged to size 4.

Habitable worlds of size 9+ might be of Hostile (SG) subgiant-type world. These worlds take longer to terraform, but compared to the long history of the Imperium the task is manageable. These worlds should have at least standard atmospheric pressure (UWP 6-9).

In *First In*, Vacuum worlds come in two flavors: Rockball and Icy Rockball. A Vaccuum world of size 0-3 is probably a Rockball. Larger Vacuum worlds are possible, in the outer system, as Icy Rockballs. Such worlds will never have open oceans; any positive UWP hydrographic digit must refer to ice, or to water crusted with ice such as on Callisto. (Cf. FI69)

The largest Vacuum world in *Traveller* should have size 6; this is possible only in the outer system.

The rules in *First In* generate a great many worlds with exotic atmospheres. *Traveller* listed three types: A (exotic), B (corrosive) and C (insidious). Exotic atmospheres are found on Desert and Hostile (N) worlds (size 4-9). Corrosive atmospheres, per *First In*, are usually high in ammonia. These worlds are found throughout the system, as Desert, Hostile (N), Hostile (A) and Hostile (SG) worlds. A small (5-6) world of either type can be reduced to size 4 occasionally. It is possible that a type A (exotic) world was originally type B (corrosive), but has been partially terraformed. Insidious atmospheres (type C) are only found on inner Greenhouse worlds (such as Venus), and must have size 5+. With most *Traveller* materials, this will not pose a problem. Insidious atmospheres such as chlorine or fluorine, popular in science fiction, are probably impossible, but these chemicals could occur as pollutants in habitable or corrosive atmospheres.

Atmosphere types D-F are breathable atmospheres with exotic shape. Type D is an atmosphere too dense to breathe, but habitable at high altitude. Type E designates an elliptical world, with oceans and high pressure at the poles and high sierra at the equator. (A world can bulge at the equator, but never at the poles.) Type F is the opposite of D: a world with an unbreathably thin atmosphere, which is habitable only in deep canyons. (Larry Niven's Known Space includes a world of this type.)

Atmosphere types D-F are habitable, like types 4-9, and should be treated as above. These atmospheres are rare, and occur only on worlds of size 8+. These atmospheres might occur naturally, or might occur when a Hostile (SG) world is terraformed. For most purposes, treat these worlds as having a stand-

(Continued from page 58)

ard O2-N2 atmosphere, but reduce MSPR by -1 due to limited land area.

Examples: Rethe (Spinward Marches 2408) is listed as UWP 230. It might be a terraformed Desert world, but should have size 4 or 5. Mora (Spinward Marches 3124) is large, and might be a terraformed Subgiant world. Retinae (Spinward Marches 0416) is probably a Greenhouse world, but if so it should not have any water. Forine (Spinward Marches 1533) is a typical Icy Rockball. Binges (Spinward Marches 1635) is too, but its large size is anomalous. This may be amended to size 6, or blamed on the Ancients.

Daryen (Darrian: Spinward Marches 0627) is probably an Earthlike world, and should be at least size 5. Ordinarily, a habitable world of size 4 might be a terraformed Desert world, but Daryen's extreme antiquity makes this unlikely.

To summarize: in converting worlds from older *Traveller* materials, any world with an atmosphere of type 2-9 must have at least size 4. Worlds with atmosphere digit 0-1 cannot be larger than size 6; if they are larger than 3, they are probably frozen outer worlds. Type A+ atmospheres normally need no changes; they are probably worlds where life never arose.

Population-related Detail

First In does provide a somewhat more realistic method of correlating worlds with population and tech levels. This is optional; stone-age people living in a vaccuum is one of the quaint features of the original *Traveller*. However, the GM who wishes to convert may calculate a world's MSPR and compare it to the population. In infrequent cases, you may wish to reduce a low-tech world's population slightly to bring it within the MSPR. More often, an increased TL is indicated. The vast majority of worlds will need no changes. ✵

Dhe

by Anders Backman

This article originally appeared on the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 1998.

The gameboard consist of six squares where you can place your bets and a croupier that handles the dice and bets. The croupier rolls two standard, fair, six-sided dice inside an inverted cup so that nobody can see the result. Each player bets on a number from 1 to 6.

If none of the dice shows your number you neither won nor lost. Your bet remains on the table (some variants allow the withdrawal here or change of number but generally this is not allowed).

If only one of the dice shows your number you lose.

If both dice show your number you win, collecting 9 times your bet.

The gamblers reasoning goes like this:

"If none of the dice show my number I neither win nor lose so that's OK. If one of the dice show my number there is a 1 in 6 chance the other one will as well so if I get more than six times my money I'll gain on the average."

Most Dhe tables generate quite a lot of cash so obviously the reasoning above is flawed. ✵

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Please, give us your opinion! We've provided several ways you can do so:

- e-mail: *feedback@freelancetraveller.com*. (preferred)
- feedback form at *http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/feedback/ftfbf.html*. (Temporarily down; we're working on it.)
- Forums:
  Traveller at Mongoose Publishing: *http://forum.mongoosepublishing.com/viewforum.php?f=89*
  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 the channel operators (FreeTrav) 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!

News About Traveller

Recent *Traveller* (and *Traveller*-compatible) Releases

January/February 2020

- **Frontier Explorer** has released *Frontier Explorer — Issue 27*.
- **Independence Games** (*formerly* **Gypsy Knights Games**) has released *Tech Update: 2350*.
- **john wallace** has released *Regina Map*, *Jenghe Map*.
- **Jon Brazer Enterprises** has released *Foreven Worlds: Careers Beyond the Claw*.
- **Michael Brown** has released *This Place of Wrath and Tears*, *Alternative Vector: Mr.Madison's War*, *Dossier: Brady Vasilyev*, *External Factor: The Asmodeus Society*, *Hexpunk*, *Vox Judex*, *Career: Citizen*, *Lifeform Reading: Kuvu*.
- **Mongoose Publishing** has released *Wet Work*, *Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society Volume 2*, *Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society Volume 3*, *Ghouls*.
- **Okumarts Games** has released *Extrastellar Set Nine: Alien Foes*, *Extrastellar Set Ten: Space Heroes*.
- **Old School Role Playing** has released *Death Race*, *Chameleon*.
- **Stellagama Publishing** has released *The Sword of Cepheus*.
- **WMB Saltworks** has released *Alien Body Plans: Mollusks & Other Lophotrochozoans*.
- **Zozer Games** has released *Roughnecks*, *Hostile Tool-Kits*, *Modern War*, *Modern War—Gun Conversion*. ✸

Submission Guidelines

Content

Freelance Traveller supports *Traveller* in all of its incarnations, rulesets and settings, both. However, there are some limitations on the combination of ruleset and setting that we will enforce:

We refer to the rules defined in Classic *Traveller*, *MegaTraveller*, *Marc Miller's Traveller* (T4), *Traveller⁵,* and both editions of Mongoose *Traveller* as "Classic Compatible" or "2D6". This includes Sceaptune Games' *Hyperlite*, and Samardan Press' *Cepheus Engine*. For these rulesets, any setting, whether official, commercially-published-but-unofficial, or house setting, will be supported. A partial list of published settings supported under 2D6 *Traveller* includes the Third Imperium setting (including polities other than the Third Imperium proper), Reign of Discordia, Clement Sector, Hyperlite, Twilight Sector, Orbital, 2300AD, Foreven Sector, Mindjammer, and I'm sure I've missed others.

Other rulesets, such as *GURPS Traveller*, *Traveller²⁰/SF20*, *FATE*, *Hero System*, and so on are different enough from 2D6 *Traveller* to make conversion more difficult, and will only be supported for the Third Imperium setting (including polities other than the Third Imperium proper)—we feel that combining these rulesets with a non-Third Imperium setting makes the game something other than *Traveller*. The Third Imperium setting includes *all* eras and polities of the Third Imperium, however, so mixing (for example) the "Milieu Zero" Third Imperium with *FATE* rules would be fair game, as would be playing out some of the Zhodani core expeditions using *SF20*.

Send us any type of article—house rules and rulemixes; animals you've created for encounters; adventures (both long form and short); after-action writeups of conventions or your gaming night; equipment; vehicles; starships; other consumer goods; character profiles (NPC or PC); reviews of *Traveller* products, of products for other games that you feel can be "mined" for use in *Traveller*, of fiction (or non-game nonfiction) that "feels" like *Traveller*, or presents ideas that would be of interest to *Traveller* players or referees; new races or organizations or societies; artwork; or pretty much anything else you can think of. Articles on real-world science are of interest, when accompanied by rules for applying that science to *Traveller*. Tools and techniques you use for preparing for a session or a game are also welcome. We're also compiling a "*Freelance Traveller* Cookbook"; quick and interesting recipes for snacking before, during, or after sessions go here.

Published *Traveller* has generally been kept to a rating approximating the MPAA "PG-13" rating, or the ESRB "T" rating, and *Freelance Traveller* respects that, but does not draw a hard line. Mature themes may be addressed, but explicit or excessively violent/bloody material will not be accepted for publication.

Where To Send It, and What To Send

Except in very rare cases, all submissions must be through email, sent to either editor@freelancetraveller.com or submissions@freelancetraveller.com. All submissions should include the submission itself and a full name and valid contact information for the submitter. If you wish the material published under a "handle", please give the preferred handle and explain why publication under your real name is not acceptable—we prefer to publish under the real name, but realize that this can be a problem in some cases.

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Text material can be submitted in any common textual or word-processing format, but we prefer (in no particular order) Microsoft Office, Open Office or one of its forks (we currently use Libre Office), RTF, minimally-formatted HTML, Markdown (including CommonMark and Github-flavored) or plain text, all with full Unicode support. Our readership is principally English-speaking, however, so foreign languages and scripts should be used sparingly, and if not intended as purely decorative, an English transcription of pronunciation (and possibly a definition in English as well) should be included.

Graphics should be submitted in an appropriate format for the subject matter—in most cases, that will be GIF, JPEG, or PNG at 100dpi or higher. If it's principally line-drawing material, it may be more appropriate to submit it in a vector format; most common vector formats can be imported by our tool of choice, CorelDRAW! X4 or X6. Please try to leave some space around the edges for cropping, especially for covers. We publish in PDF in US Letter and ISO A4 sizes, and columns in the magazine are roughly 3.5 inches (actually a little more) wide.

Avoid submitting in XPS or PDF format; these are generally seen as "output-only" formats, and trying to extract material in usable form from these formats is problematical.