



FREELANCE TRAVELLER

The Electronic Fan-Supported Traveller® Magazine and Resource



Featured Adventure

Clash of Cultures

by Garry Ward

A Note About Production

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

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

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From the Editor



Last month, I briefly discussed the character generation process in *Traveller* as a way to have the player 'bond' with the character, and *care* about the character. I also mentioned the greater level of lethality as an impetus for the player to explore non-combat characters, options, and scenarios. I don't think that mere lethality necessarily provides enough of an impetus; in some systems, a character could operate at his full potential, right up until the minute that the last point of allowable damage disappeared, because expending those points didn't actually affect the character's innate abilities, the way that lowering STR, DEX, or END does in most versions of *Traveller*. That difference made an impression on me—it meant that just like in real life, if I got hurt, I was less able to do things (anything—not just continue the fight), which made it harder to accomplish my aims until I recovered. And recovery would take time; there was no other character around who could wield eldritch power and make me instant-

ly hale by chanting some arcane invocation while I chugged a horrible-tasting beer. Knowing that, I tended to think along the lines of "I'll get in a firefight if I have to—but is there a better way?" I suspect I wasn't the only one.

Traveller actually caters to that mindset. While few careers will actually leave a character with *no* combat skills, there are certainly careers that emphasize other skills, and most careers provide characters with other tools to solve problems with. With the right combination of players and referee, it isn't particularly surprising to have a campaign where if the characters get into a firefight, it's because something obviously went badly wrong—and its entirely possible that a campaign could be interesting, exciting, entertaining, etc., without having a single combat episode. Perhaps that's not so odd, given the type of SF that has clearly influenced *Traveller*. Next month, I'll discuss that in a bit more depth. ☼



Buch 0: Eine Einführung

reviewed by Timothy Collinson

Buch 0: Eine Einführung. Gareth Hanrahan;

Transl. Bernadette Klein et al.

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

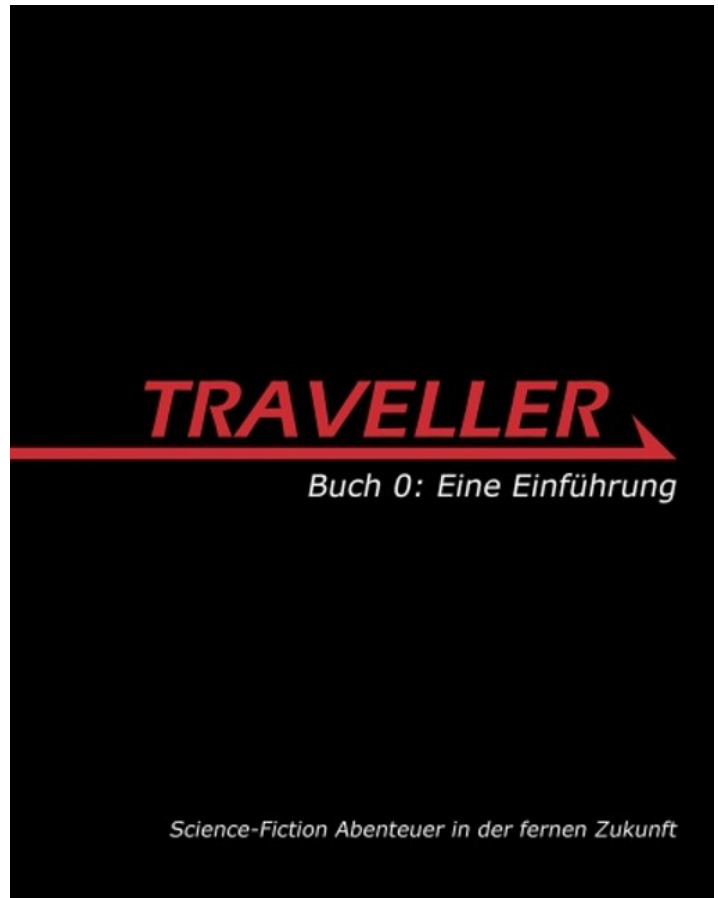
32pp., softcover

€5.00/SFr.7.50

Buch 0 is 13Mann's direct translation of *Book 0: An Introduction to Traveller* into the German language. It's essentially identical save for the shortening of the subtitle, and a matte cover instead of gloss. Both have softcovers in the usual black and red trim, both are 32 pages, and both provide 'cut down' basics of *Traveller* character generation aimed at players rather than Referees. Or perhaps, more likely, aimed at harried Referees with players clamouring to get started and not enough rulebooks to go round! In short, it's brief, to the point and does what it says on the cover in providing an introduction to *Traveller* or 'Science-Fiction Abenteuer in der fernen Zukunft'.

Like 13Mann's *Spinwärts-Marken* (The Spinward Marches), the pictures and perhaps the text block too, are printed a little lighter than their English counterparts. This shows up most obviously in the Character form on page 32 and isn't a problem, but is much improved in the limited edition *Grundregelwerk* (Core rules). Note that the form also includes the parentheses for cascade skills (as does the English *Book 0* version of the form, but unlike the English *Core Rulebook*). In other areas, layout has been made much clearer such as the 'Probability of Success' table on page 16 now in three columns as it should be rather than twelve! Also, errors have been corrected such as printing glitches in the English volume on page 13 where the multiplication symbol turned into either a box or a star.

One thing users should be aware of is an occasional slight confusion between commas and full-stops in numbers. In Europe except Ireland and the UK, commas are used as decimal points and full stops (or periods) as thousand markers—a complete



reversal of UK/US usage. In general, this is followed throughout the book, but not always. This isn't generally a problem, particularly if you're aware of it, but be warned!

For the most part – virtually all of *Buch 0* – the order of text is identical to *Book 0*. Just occasionally paragraphs have been moved to help layout (for example 'Gegenproben', 'Opposed Checks' on page 17). Artwork, too, varies a little. While the original has a few illustrations, there are three additional pictures in the German edition: two new: a pilot in his cockpit, a vargr and human soldier advancing, and one of a medikit taken from page 93 of the English *Core Rulebook*. In addition, the image of a saurian beast and distant spaceship on page 27 has been exchanged for a soldier firing his weapon (which can be found in darker form on page 62 of the English *Core Rulebook*).

Just like *Book 0*, not all skills are listed, so you won't find the sciences, Battle Dress, Jack-of-all-Trades, Language and several others mentioned.

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Like the English volume it's really only covering those shown in the two example careers: *Planetare Streitkräfte* (Army) and *Raumflotte* (Navy), although having said that it is possible to pick up Persuade and Steward in the Events of each career respectively and then discover there's no explanation of them. Mustering Out benefits struggle in the same way with *Antigrav* and *Beiboot* (Air/Raft and Ship's Boat) as possibilities, but with no explanation. In both cases, players or Referees would need the *Grundregelwerk* (the German *Core Rulebook*) for the detail. Other minor lapses mean that in some lists the English alphabetical order has been retained, for example, in the homeworld (*Heimatwelt*) list. Just occasionally, the actual tables have been revised so, for example, in the Army mustering out benefits tables a roll of 6 offers a choice of Combat Implant or +1 END rather

than only the latter, Navy mustering out offers Air/Raft or a Ship Share for a roll of 1 and Ship's Boat or Two Ship Shares for a roll of 6. In actual fact, this brings the German volume into line with the *Core Rulebook* (although the correction introduces the missing entries noted above).

To be fair, these are minor criticisms in what's a great addition to 13Mann's line of *Traveller* books. Providing its limitations are known German players may find it helpful to get started, Referees may find it useful to relieve the pressure on the main rules at character creation time, equipment selection, or during combat. It would also serve as a relatively modest way of English speakers wishing to develop their abilities in German or getting to know the sometimes rather specialised *Traveller* vocabulary. German speakers with no knowledge of *Traveller* may find it a helpful introduction to *Traveller* to see if they want to go further. 🌟

Doing It My Way

Trivial Skills: Add Color to Your Game

by Michael Hughes

Editor's Note: This article was originally posted to the Freelance Traveller website in 2004, and is edited and reprinted with permission.

Traveller is an awesome game. It was at one time the SF RPG and is still going strong. But, like its contemporaries, the mechanics were quaint, simple, and basically assumed people couldn't do very much. It was entirely too possible to have a character start with no skills whatsoever, and learning a new skill was a painful, lengthy, and expensive process.

But then *MegaTraveller* came out and solved most of that, making us heavy with skills. And we liked it. But even it still failed to entirely address the beauty that is man—to reflect knowledge, aspirations, and interests that make our lives worth living.

Trivia. Hobbies.

Most of us work to live. To enjoy ourselves doing the things we like. Undertake hobbies like gaming, fishing, or perhaps blazing away at targets with

a variety of high-powered weapons. But, in the *Traveller* universe, only the latter is supported in the skill sets. A player can scream until he's blue in the face that his character is a master of Venusian Chess, but without *Venusian Chess-4* after his name who's going to believe it? Hell, how is he going to *get* that skill?

The solution is Trivial Skills. Trivial Skills represent those hobbies, interests, and passions in life that make it worth living but that, in a gaming sense, have little intrinsic value beyond assisting in role playing the character. Things like Cooking, Wine Appreciation, Backgammon, Billiards, or Writing.

I work it like this: Every character (PC or NPC), gets their Education value in Trivial Skill levels to assign to Trivial Skills. List the skills separately from the main skills so the GM has a nice snapshot of possible motivations for that character. If they're given out (and selected) before career resolution actually begins, they might serve as inspiration for choosing the career, or for fine-tuning events explaining career anomalies.

Doing It My Way

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Editor's Note: If your game is played with the original rule limiting total skill levels to INT+EDU, you may choose to not count them against the total allowance, since they don't really represent any abilities 'useful' to the character. Then again, you might not, as time devoted to a hobby is time not devoted to 'useful' pursuits and skills. You're the GM. You decide.

If you're a player bringing a character to a new GM, and your old GM used these trivial-skill rules, you might want to explain this to your new GM—or point your new GM at this article—before bringing your character in.

Level 1 represents a passing familiarity, level 2 a decent knowledge, while level 6 means the character is a master of all minutia of that pastime and probably obsesses over it, talking about nothing else.

For example, Terry has an Education of 6. He gets 6 levels and assigns them thus: Holo Movies-2, Cooking-2, Beer Appreciation-2.

Terry is a holo movie buff. He has a vast collection on his hand computer and likes nothing more than to pop an exotic tinnie, put his feet up, and watch a classic flick. He's a dab hand in the kitchen, particularly desserts, much to the enjoyment of the rest of the crew. He is a big fan of beer, sampling local wares on every planet in a quest for a perfect ale. If able to he'll have a brew on the go in his mini high tech beer fermenting keg – even though it takes up a big chunk of his personal space allowance.

What's the point? If this skill is of limited game mechanic value why have it? Like I said, it helps colour a character, make him more of an individual instead of just a collection of stats.

Besides, give a character an interest and he'll pursue it. Add skill levels, and he's more likely to find ways to use it in the game. In the hands of a creative player or GM it could prove much fun.

Terry is thrown onto the grimy deck before Ragnar, the Corsair captain.

The other pirates laugh.

'We caught this one skulking in a drive access way,' says Lannut. 'He shot Mernak in the face.'

'Made him uglier, eh?' says Ragnar with a laugh.

'Made him dead,' says the escort.

A dark mood comes over the assembled throng.

'Our cook. Dammit. Now we'll have to eat T-rats again,' yells Ragnar, slamming his fist against the wall.

The other pirates mutter angrily.

'I hate T-rats,' complains Tagrett, rubbing his half metal head. 'They taste tinny.'

'And I hate what they do to my waistline,' growls Yeslick, pinching the rolls of flab under his vacc suit. 'I put on four kilos last time. Let's space the snecker.'

'I can cook,' says a small voice.

The pirates look down at Terry.

'I do a mean soufflé,' he adds. 'With wild berry jus.'



News About Traveller

Recent Traveller News and Findings

August 2013

- **Gypsy Knights Games** has released *Dawn Adventures 2: Hell's Paradise*, and *21 Starport Places*.
- **Spica Publishing** has released *System Book 2: Xibalba*, and *Through the Veil Parts 1, 2, and 3*.
- **Christian Hollnbuchner** has released *Starships Book II0I0: Cargo Barque*, *Deep Sea Explorer*, *Starships Book II0II: Arrowhead Fighter*, *Calmar Class Submersible*, and *Starships Book III00: Drone Lifter*.
- **Jon Brazer Enterprises** has released *Mech Tech 'n' bot: Warp Ships 1*.
- **Moon Toad Publishing** has released *Ship Book: Pukharra Fast Scout*.
- **Zozer Games** has released *Star Trader*.
- **The Forge Studios** has released *Instant Location - District 634P*





The Frozen Fire

by Michael Brown

Setting: Any Imperial world.

Required Skills and Equipment: A starship and cold weather gear. Hunting skill (*Book 4: Citizens of the Imperium*) is useful, but not required.

Players' Information

The crew is approached by the personal aide to this world's Imperial representative, who requests they accompany him to a meeting with his principal. Marquis Jeligan Vallarte has a reputation of being a little (to put it politely) eccentric. He also has a reputation for paying those in his employ very well.

Upon meeting with the Marquis, the party will immediately see that his reputation precedes him – Vallarte is indeed eccentric and more than a little flamboyant, but a look around his meeting room shows that he is used to having the finer things in life and is not afraid to spend money getting them.

The Marquis explains that while on a recent vacation, he had the pleasure of tasting a delicacy called simply firecrab, an animal native to an ice world in a nearby system. A complex dish that can only be prepared by licensed chefs, it is nonetheless much sought-after. The Marquis hired a chef to prepare the 'crabs for him and laid in a large supply, which has since run out. He wants to hire the party to go to the 'crabs' source world and bring back a cargo of them for his kitchens; he is hosting a dinner party for friends in a month's time and he would like to serve the 'crabs at it. He needs at least two tons (but the more, the better) and will pay Cr3,000 per ton and ship expenses, plus a bonus of Cr500 per ton of unused cargo capacity for timely delivery.

Referee's Information

The referee should create or designate any world within the PCs' current one-jump range as the firecrabs' source world. The planet environment is very harsh; it is a frozen world at the outer edge of its habitable zone with temperatures that typically hover around -30°C. Worse, the planet is entering its

winter; and huge, frequent snowstorms are an ever-present danger.

This is not the straightforward "bring 'em back alive" it appears to be. The PCs must deal with complications as they try to fulfill the Marquis' wishes:

- The 'crabs' export is controlled by a militant environmentalist group with active cells on several worlds in the subsector. As they had previously done on other worlds, they assumed stewardship over the planet when they became concerned about environmental damage being done, in this case the declining firecrab numbers due to overhunting. The activists now ensure that only a certain quota of 'crabs are taken from the world at any given time. They are equipped to TL9, including cold weather clothing, radios and assault rifles.
- The firecrabs, large pseudoarthropods that resemble the crustaceans they are named for, have adapted to their arctic environment by evolving a biochemical heating system. They combine certain chemicals in their bodies to produce a low-grade exothermic reaction. To fend off predators and other threats, they can "overload" the chemicals and thus raise their body temperature sharply. The chemicals are normally toxic to humans in their raw state; the proper cooking process transforms the poisons into benign substances that make the 'crabs' meat succulent and tasty. Only the most skilled chefs with the right training can neutralize the chemicals; this is why a license is required. Firecrabs also have formidable claws that can deliver a painful pinch. To top it all off, the creatures are highly aggressive during their mating season, which coincides with planetary winter.

Upon arrival, the heroes have the option of dealing with the ersatz wardens or not; doing so will gain them permits that effectively give them +2 on reactions with patrols but limit them to taking only 6D crabs. If the hunters choose not to deal with the preservationists, they may take as many 'crabs as they can find, but will incur a -2 on reactions with

Active Measures

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any stewards they encounter. They may also be considered poachers and attacked. If the group is issued permits, then is later caught violating the terms, the permits will be immediately revoked and the PCs branded poachers.

The adventurers will need to take 30 'crabs per ton, calculated per the suggested formula in Book 2:

Arctic Terrain

Roll 2D	No.	Animal	Mass	Hits	Armor	Wounds and Weapons	
2	1D	Flying Reducer	3kg	4/6	none	3 thrasher	A8F4S1
3		Eater	12kg	8/10	as Jack	7 thrasher	A6F5S2
4	2D	Carrion Eater	800kg	30/18	as Jack	4 claws	A9F5S1
5		Flying Hunter	50kg	20/8	none	7 claws and teeth	A3F3S1
6		Grazer	25kg	14/8	none	8 claws	F5A3S3
7	2D	Browser (firecrab)	12kg	10/5	as Jack	as Laser Carbine	F8A3S1
8	1D	Intermittent	200kg	14/10	as Jack	9 hooves and teeth	F9A4S1
9		Event: Snowstorm (see notes)					
10		Encounter: Conservationists (see notes)					
11		Pouncer (see notes)	800kg	32/11	none	10 claws	A0F0S1
12		Chaser (see notes)	400kg	21/14	none	18 teeth	A0F5S1

Notes

All the animals on the table are insulated from the cold by fur and/or a layer of subcutaneous fat except for the firecrab, whose method of survival has already been noted.

Event: Snowstorm: A snowstorm hits the area, cutting movement and visibility in half. Any PC failing a throw of END or less takes 1D hits of exposure if not wearing cold weather clothing or in a heated vehicle. On a 2D roll of 9+, this is a blizzard, which halts all forward progress and forces the PCs to throw vs. END regardless of clothing unless in a heated vehicle. A failed throw means 2D hits of exposure. The storm will last 1D hours, 2D if blizzard.

Encounter: Conservationists: 1D+1 conservationists, acting as a patrol as noted above, accost the party. They will demand the PCs' hunting papers and will attack if they are not forthcoming.

Starships. While this only works out to 360 kg for the 'crabs themselves, the remainder of the weight is the shipping crates and special refrigeration needed to preserve the meat.

As the adventurers hunt for the 'crabs, they will encounter specimens of the native wildlife per the encounter chances in *Book 3*. The referee can use the following animal encounter table or substitute his own, as long as the firecrabs have an entry.

The **pouncer** (#11) is an analogue of a Terran polar bear; the creature has superior camouflage ability and will attack from hiding only if it can achieve surprise. It flees immediately if it is itself surprised.

The **chaser** (#12) is a large, barrel-chested quadruped with a large, tooth-filled maw. It has incredible endurance, catching prey by relentlessly pursuing it until the quarry finally collapses from exhaustion. Since it is a solitary animal, it only hunts lone targets.

If the team fails in their mission, the Marquis will only pay ship expenses, and also spread the word that the PCs are unreliable. Deliberately crossing the Marquis would be unwise, as he possesses enough of a combination of eccentric and connected to make the adventurers' lives very difficult. Conversely, if the group does a particularly good job, he will put them at the top of his list for future work.

The referee should determine the flow of subsequent events.



Lepus-class Rim Trader (Type A4R)

designed by Keith Tims

Author's note: This ship is designed to Mongoose Traveller rules. The deckplan (appearing on the next page) was made with CC3/ Cosmographer.

Designation: (Type A4R) *Lepus*-class Rim Trader
Hull: 400 tons, Streamlined (16.16Mcr)
Armor: None
M-Drive: B (3 tons) (8 Mcr)
J-Drive: H (45 tons) (80Mcr)
Pwr Plant: H (25 tons) (64Mcr)
Fuel: 192 tons (160 tons for J-4) (16 tons/2 weeks)
Fuel Proc: 2 tons (20 tons/day capacity) (.1Mcr)
Bridge: 20 tons (1 MCr)
Computer: Model 3/bis (3 MCr) (Jump/4, Evade/1) (1.4Mcr)
Electronics: Basic Civilian (.05Mcr) (1 ton)
Staterooms: 6 (24 tons) (3Mcr)
Low Berths: 4 (2 tons) (.1Mcr)
Vehicles: Air/Raft (.6Mcr) (4 tons)
Armaments: 4 hardpoints. No weapons standard.
Cargo: 80 tons
Monthly Costs:
Maintenance: 14,785cr
Life Support: 12,400cr (18,400cr double occupancy)
Cost: 177,410,000cr
TL: 13

The *Lepus*-class Rim Trader was specifically developed at the Thlalyi-Adams shipyards for private merchants working where traditional Jump-1 or -2 distances would not be sufficient. Built on a 400 ton hull in a streamlined design, the *Lepus* uses much of that space for fuel and its Jump drive. In exchange, it is capable of Jump-4, allowing it to reach distant or remote markets. At full fuel levels, the *Lepus* can make 1 Jump-4 and operate for 4 weeks. It has 4 hardpoints, but does not come with armaments standard. An Air/Raft is standard and fits in a berth in fore of the ship.

Lepus-class Traders are traditionally named after swift, sprinting herbivores. While few private trading ships have the jump range of a *Lepus*, there are significant tradeoffs. The cargo load of 80 tons is comparable to that of the smaller Type A Free Traders, much smaller than the Type R Fat Trader built on the same size hull as the *Lepus*. In addition, quarters on the *Lepus* can be cramped, as it has only 6

staterooms. *Lepus* crews typically must rely on double occupancy, and will rarely carry passengers.

The *Lepus*' design is long and lean. Cargo is loaded underneath along the belly, with retractable landing skids supporting the ship on land. A lift at the fore of the cargo deck leads to the other parts of the ship: the Gun Deck with Sickbay, turret access, Air/Raft storage, and Fuel Systems; and the Upper Deck with the staterooms, galley, bridge, and engineering. At a minimum, the *Lepus* needs a Pilot, Astrogator, and Engineer to operate. However, most *Lepus* crews consist of a Pilot, Astrogator, Engineer, Medic, and Gunners/Deckhands for any weapon turrets installed, and a Steward if passengers are taken on.

The *Lepus* is a speciality ship, designed for crews who want to travel far and fast. While one can turn a profit in a *Lepus* with a solid trade route and good brokers, in most parts of the galaxy the expense and upkeep of a *Lepus* don't make good business sense, when you can get cheaper ships that carry more cargo, though can only make Jump-1 or -2. In Rim territories, a *Lepus* will only attract occasional attention from authorities: Jump-4 ships are still unusual and suggest illegal activity. However, coreward, the long-Jumping *Lepus* will raise suspicion much more often, and the crew may have to submit to many searches and justifications for why they fly this particular ship. 🌟

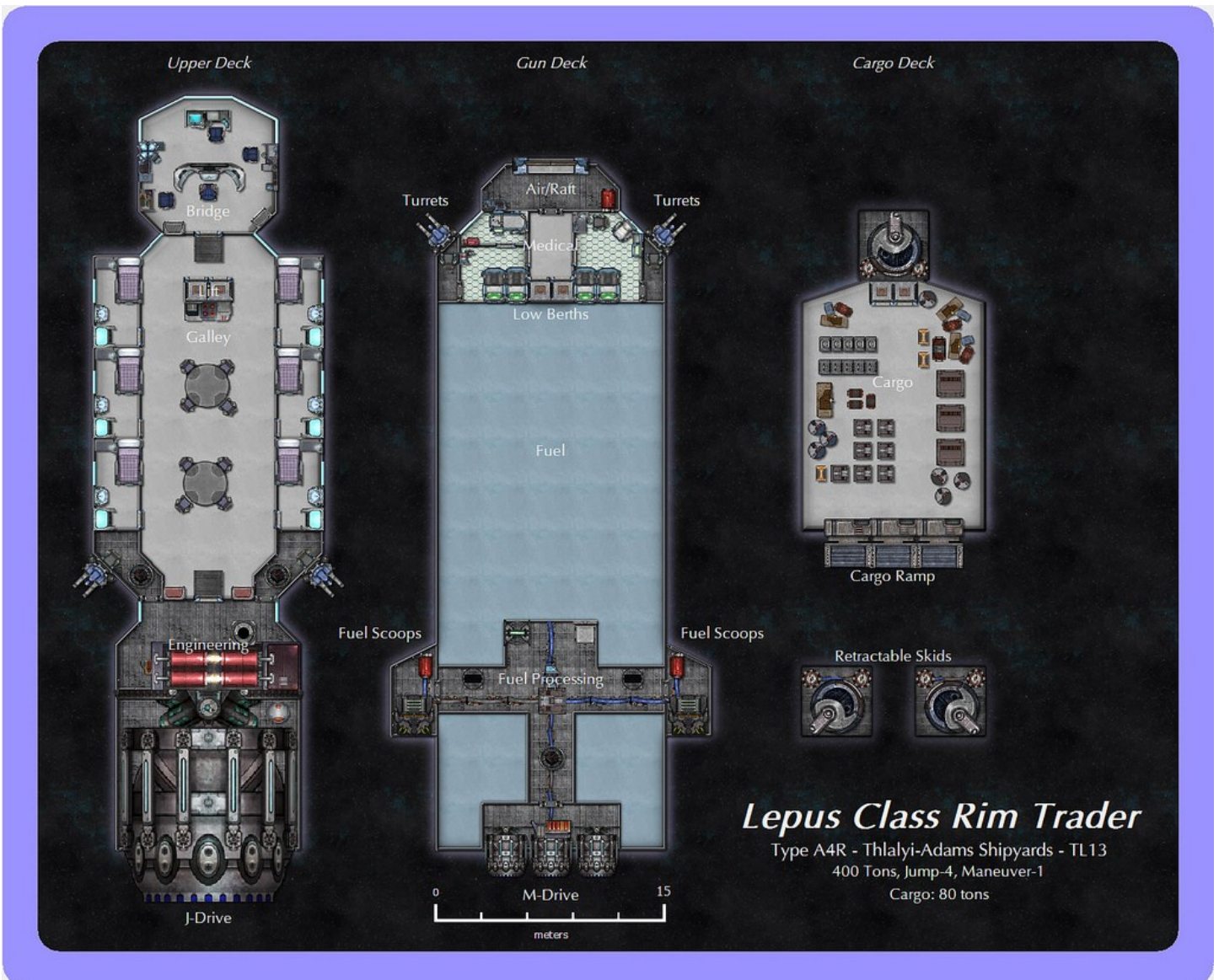
The Freelance Traveller Forums

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

About The Burrowwolf

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

The Shipyard



Raconteurs' Rest

For Luck

by Andrea Vallance

Part 4

24th of 2028 (215-96): The Battle of Muuingigi

It had finally come, the Imperial counter offensive. This was different now, a real fight and we were losing. Muuingigi was an outpost for our main line and the Imperials had landed a week ago. We just didn't have the strength to hold them back and we were already pulling out. Our team was behind their lines, assigned to slow them down. By a vital

bridge, just making life hard for them, four of us trying to hold back a full platoon of infantry.

Sheska had been picking them off one by one as they tried to get forwards, she'd already taken out a good seven of them and they were staying back. I was forward as normal, spotting, Renal and James back covering her position. She sounded happy "So *serganet*, anyone moving down there?"

I chuckled, she did so like calling me by my rank. I'd been promoted six months ago and she knew it irked me when she called me by my rank. "No, you've got them good and spooked but quit

(Continued from page 8)

with the *serganet* or I'll..." I hesitated, I actually didn't have a good comeback.

I could hear her sniggering "Oh, real quick there, aren't you?" She turned her attention back to the job. "Renal, James, you see anything?"

I heard Renal's deep voice, "Not here sweetie-pie, same as all day. James and I are thinking of popping off for a quickie."

I heard her deep laughter, "Not without us you're not; we haven't had any fun time since we got here."

There was fire behind me, at least three rifles. I barked quickly "All team, report!"

Sheska's voice "Here, but can't see anything, it was in front of me."

I waited a moment then "James, Renal, report." Silence. "Report!" I started to make my way back as fast as I could, worried now... "Report, damn you two!" The ether was still. I called HQ "Team *Tunai*, need support now."

More fire, then Sheska "Taking fire, support if you don't mind guys" She sounded calm but concerned.

I moved faster. "On my way."

The rifles barked again, steady now. I found Renal and James face down. I paused briefly to check. Both dead. No time for grief but I felt rage stirring in me. Firing continued, Sheska, "Hurry, lover."

I tried to move faster. I made a loud smacking noise with my lips, "A kiss lover, for luck!"

I could hear her grinning as she smacked back, "And you lover."

The rifles became silent but so was my comm. I opened my mouth to call her, but no, too risky now. I reached some low cover, I could see her position. Four dead Imperials, her on her knees, hands behind her head. Two Impies standing easy covering her, helmets in their hands and one, a woman, with a rifle to her skull. There was a sound and she fell.

The emotion drained from me as Sheska's body hit the ground. I raised my rifle and took exceptionally careful aim. Three bursts, two of them fell instantly, price for relaxing. The other I made sure, in the legs. She fell too, rifle falling away from her. She tried desperately to reach it as I sprinted towards the scene. I kicked her rifle out of reach and planted my boot firmly in her stomach. She groaned, but I wasn't really paying attention to her, it was Sheska I was running to. I took her in my arms and felt the stillness, lifeless. I closed her eyes and softly brushed the remains of her hair, I so wished there were lips I could have kissed. I wept.

I heard scrabbling behind me; it drew me back. I snapped around and saw the woman still trying to crawl to her gun. My eyes dried. I stood and walked slowly. One foot firmly on her back to force her into the dirt. I knelt beside her, held her by the hair and forced her eyes to meet mine. There was a look of terror, I felt nothing. I spoke without emotion, "She was my lover, they all were." I reached down and drew my knife.

74th of 2028 (265-96): The Battle of Iguu

The support had arrived ten minutes later; they found me cradling Sheska's body, apparently. I don't remember much of the next few days. A base hospital, *dokhtors*, drugs, all a sort of haze. They'd wanted to invalid me with combat fatigue. I'd kicked up a huge stink, all I wanted to do was kill Imperials. But things were desperate and I got my wish. I don't know how many I killed, I lost count. Iguu, the final battlefield of the campaign; if it fell our line was broken. A new team now, still strangers to me. I'd been summoned to HQ, Kirsov himself want to see me. I knocked on the door, paused a moment, I could hear explosions nearby, we'd lost this world, then entered.

He sat looking weary, he glanced up as I crossed the threshold, a steely look in his eyes "Ah *serganet*, just the man I've been wanting to see."

I saluted and stood at easy, puzzled. "Sir?"

(Continued from page 9)

A brief smile flickered across his face, "Still haven't got out of that habit have you?" I just grinned. He looked at a datapad in hands "I've been reviewing your file and I have a special task for you."

I felt a strange satisfaction; I knew we were pulling out but that a stay behind force was being arranged. I'd been hoping I get assigned "*Geenor*, I'm ready."

His eyes met mine, looking deep into them. One eyebrow raised, "Really? Ready for what, Ariaryn?"

"The stay-behinds, I assume that's what you want."

He spoke slowly, softly, as if a father to his son. "No, you'll not be staying, Ariaryn. I want you to supervise the evacuation of the last group of wounded. You'll be handling their transfer to the liner... *Cleon II*"

I was transfixed, he couldn't be serious, it was a milk run, I wanted to stay and kill and... die. I felt fury rising in me, my voice grew loud, "*Geenor*, you can't be serious. I'm needed here, I can do something here, I'm not playing nurse to cripples!"

A brief flash of anger went through those eyes, then passed. He looked at the pad again "I've been studying your medical file, the recent entries. Combat fatigue, that's the diagnoses they gave after Muuingigi. You should have been taken out of the line then for treatment."

I tried to compose myself, I really did but the anger and rage just exploded "Combat fatigue! Combat fatigue my arse! They murdered my lover and I have to make them pay!"

He remained calm. "*Serganet*, may I remind you who you are addressing?"

I stood fist clenched, wanting to speak but not able to. I took several deep breaths and regained some balance. "My apologies, *Geenor*."

He nodded, "It's okay, Ariaryn, I am sorry too, let's just forget our ranks for a moment." He spoke again, as a father would, "For the last two months

you've been consuming yourself, pretty damn obvious you are trying to get yourself killed. We, the Protectorate, can't afford for men like you to be killed unnecessarily. We're going to need you; the war isn't over and we'll need every good soldier we have now." He stood, walked to me and took my hands. "Ariaryn, sit, please." I took a seat and he perched on his desk "She died, a lot of people have died, your death will not bring her back."

I cradled my head in my hands and wept, the first time I'd wept since she died. "I know, but how do I keep living without her?"

He embraced me, "We just do, Ariaryn, we just do."

He let me cry, holding me and letting me cry. Finally I looked up. "But, *Geenor*, all the same, I can do more good here, surely?"

"No, you need rest, son, I want you off this rock and back safely. A few months to grieve properly. You will supervise the evacuation of the wounded."

I wanted to argue but part of me knew he was right. I stood, saluted, "*Geenor*," wheeled, and left.

76th of 2028 (267-96): The Battle of Iguu

The *Cleon II* was a pig of a ship, Ex-Imperial apparently. Getting the wounded up had been easy, but now we seemed to be having trouble leaving. The ship was taking a pounding; I'd been assigned to damage control. Engineering had taken a lot of damage and the jump drive was down. I could see the chief engineer working furiously on it. A fierce woman, slender, blonde hair, typical strong *Verasti Dtareen* features, I smiled as she cursed her precious drives. The ship shuddered as another blow hit home, she nearly lost her feet but kept working. I saw a bright blue flash then the sickening stomach churning lurch as we entered jump. She laughed in triumph and made her feelings known in no uncertain terms. Her face changed as she tried to raise the bridge. She barked at me, "Damage control schematics to this console now!" I could see her hand, scorched and burnt as she worked. The colour drained from her face. I heard her whisper, "Greg?"

(Continued from page 10)

and she collapsed. I rushed and caught her, eyes fixed into the distance. I'd seen this look before. Luriani, our emotions are our strength—and our weakness. I remembered Alsuy and Despi. I swept her up, hair falling against me and headed for sick bay. Odd how much she reminded me of Sheska.

102nd of 2028 (293-96):

Base hospital on Askimir, psychiatric ward.

I sat in a very pleasant sunny room looking out over the gardens, thoughts lost in times so long ago before this horror had started. Kirsov *Geenor* had apparently filed an order for my treatment, compulsory psychiatric assessment and treatment. I felt like a child, sent to his room without his supper. I hated it here, the lone survivor. But I wasn't alone. "Hey you, want to head out and have some fun?"

Her name was Jane, Jane Alexon *Komanda*. Both of us basket cases from the *Cleon II*. She was lively, not Sheska, but lively nonetheless. We attended group sessions together and for some reason on the way back she seemed to have latched on to me. I smiled, "*Komanda*, don't you think we might get into trouble?"

There was an odd frenetic laugh, "I could make it an order, *serganet*."

I'm no *dokhtor*, certainly no psychiatrist, but even I knew her demeanour was a front. She drank far too much, she slept with just about anyone who so much as looked at her. Hell, she'd tried to get me into her bed at least seven times, now. She was going out and nothing would stop her. I tagged along to keep an eye on her. Don't know why, just did, better than sitting around watching the flowers grow. I sighed "Okay, but promise me you'll keep your clothes on this time please. Don't want any trouble do we?"

Her grin was mischievous but there was desperation in those eyes "Ahhh, but I'm sure a big strong Guard like you will keep me safe."

156th of 2028 (347-96): Armistice day, Gami's bar, Verasaryn

Over, it was finally over. Officially just an armistice, but everyone knew the war was over. There were parties going on, drinking, cheering, people hugging one another with wild abandon. Jane had tried all her powers to make me come with her to one but I had something important to do. I'd promised I'd see her later. I knew she'd need me, she was going down fast and nobody seemed able to stop her.

I expected the place to be packed; I was surprised when walked in how few people were there. A few instructors drinking quietly in one corner, a few solitary *rekhots* sitting like wall flowers wondering where everyone was. I glanced at their faces and felt so glad they'd be spared. I wondered if she'd turn up. Our last meeting had not gone well. I ordered a lightning ale, been a long time since I'd had one. The taste had not improved. I sat and waited.

I didn't have to wait long; she walked with an odd gait, stiff, sort of limping but not quite. Her face had changed, almost the same but not quite; if you hadn't known her before you'd never notice. I looked at her in trepidation as she approached. An officer's uniform now, a *lekhtenant*, I wondered at that. She sat across from me, and signalled the bartender, "Whiskey." I didn't recognise her voice. But again, you wouldn't know unless you'd known her before. Her eyes met mine for several seconds, then she spoke, "The others?"

I looked down at my drink, a heavy voice, faces in my mind, "Just me, Melissa, just me."

She stared at the table as drink arrived, a heavy sigh, "You know, worst thing about these damn eyes is I can't cry. I so want to cry." She sighed again, "I guess the wonders of medical science only go so far."

"We lost Despi and Sharik on Alsuy, not long after..." My voice trailed away.

"After me, you mean."

"And Barii."

(Continued from page 11)

"Yes, I do remember." She took a deep drink then looked me in my eyes, "I am sorry, Ariaryn, so very, *very* sorry. I know it was unforgivable, but please, can you forgive me? I am so very grateful you saved me. I wish I'd never said what I said on Alsuy."

I looked at her and took both her hands. "There's nothing to forgive and you owe me no apology, Melissa. But thank you, and yes, I am so sorry, too."

She kissed me, on the lips and hugged me across the table, "Thank you, Ariaryn." Another drink, a look of relief "So, Renal, James, Sheska?"

"They lasted almost to the end. A few months before Iguu, all of them in one go," tears formed in my eyes

"I do so envy you those tears, Ariaryn." Her turn to take my hands, "Did you and Sheska ever match?"

It made me smile, happier memories, "Yes, and Renal and James, as well." a chuckle "We actually formed an *ami*, we were going to all live together after."

Her eyes grew soft, "It would have been an excellent *ami*, damn this war, damn it to all the hells of all the gods." She stood and took her glass, "I don't want to drink to victory Ariaryn; it's no victory. But I do want to drink to those we've lost." I stood and joined her, we recited their names and drained our glasses. I look around, the bar was standing and they drained their glasses.

We talked for hours, I told her all of what had happened, the sadness and the joy. We remembered them. We laughed, we drank. She told me of her recovery, a year of therapy, then a commission in intelligence. Something hush-hush she couldn't talk about. We sang and saluted them all, not just Bari, Sharik, Despi, Renal, James, and Sheska, but all of them. All the lives cut short. I didn't make it back to Jane that night. I found peace in Melissa's arms instead.

192nd of 2028 (018-97): A startown bar, Daramm

I'd been offered a permanent rank in the Guards, I'd refused. I'd had my fill of war and wanted nothing more than to forget it all. I spent a lot of time with Jane now, she needed someone to look after her. She'd lost her spouse at Iguu, and with him, herself I think. I tried to keep her safe as best I could. I was fighting a losing battle. I hadn't seen her for three days now. I found her in a bar, wrapped around yet another sleaze. I sat beside her. I looked at the drunk beside her and glared. She left. Jane glowered at me, her voice slurred by the liquor "I was intending to have her company tonight!"

"You have company most nights. You are drunk, *Komanda*, and you do no honour to yourself or those you have lost."

She was angry, "Not a *komanda* anymore, *jkomovaa*, and don't talk to me about loss, what do you know?"

She raised her hand, it came towards me. Mine rose automatically and caught it, "I know more than you might think, Jane Elizabeth Charles Pederson Alexon *Komanda*. You are not the only one who couldn't save a spouse. Her name was Sheska Victoria Eneri Eadaasa Mman *Korpial*, and I am most definitely not a *jkomovaa*!"

"Eadaasa Mman," she snorted, "So you were matched, not the same!"

"I watched her die and couldn't do a *aneer* thing to save her! So yeah, I think it's close enough."

She slumped back and laughed, "You know Ariaryn Despi Ora Mman Eadaasa *Serganet*, I think that is the first time I've heard you swear," she reached for her glass, "*Aneer*, now there's an idea. Since you've scared away my date, how about you and me go find somewhere private?"

I took the glass from her, "How about I take you and pour you into a shower then put you to bed"

She draped her arms around me and planted a large, sloppy, neither exactly pleasant nor unpleasant, kiss "That was kind what I had in mind, sugar."

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(Continued from page 12)

I didn't argue; I just led her out.

I half carried her, half dragged her to my room. A cheap hotel, but clean. I pushed her in the shower fully dressed and turned it on cold. She screamed and swung wildly. "Not nice, sugar!"

I held her in and let the icy water play over her. She struggled but wasn't going anywhere. I held her there for about five minutes before I let her out. Her eyes were daggers into me for a moment, then she collapsed into me and kissed me again. "Okay, so now to bed."

There was no point arguing, so I simply led her to my bed. She fell onto to it, dragging me with her. Her lips locked awkwardly on mine again. I pulled away. "Jane, you have been trying to bed me since we met. Has it ever worked?"

She sighed heavily, "No, but always a first time, sugar." Obviously the shower had not sobered her up any.

She fumbled at her blouse. I sat beside her. "Jane, tell me about your spouse."

Her face turned to mine, and, I swear, her look could have killed. "Why? You tell me about yours!"

"Okay, I will, but then you need to tell me of yours."

"You've tried this before, it never works."

"Always a first time."

She turned away. I touched her shoulder. She rolled back, grinned and slurred "If I do, you have to lay with me tonight."

I hesitated. She was so drunk, it went against all my sense of honour to lay with a women in that state and she knew it. This was her way of ending any argument. I was tired, I guess too tired. I just said "Deal."

She sat bolt upright, stunned, then grappled me, pulled me down and began to fumble with my clothes. I pulled back "Our deal, Jane."

She looked like I'd slapped her. She was fuming. She fumed several minutes then fell back, "His name was Greg."

I woke the next morning and she was gone.

220th of 2028 (046-97): A diner, startown, Daramm

I'd been surprised to get Jane's message. After three weeks I was beginning to think I'd never see her again. All the more surprising in that she said she had a job for me. I'd ordered a light lunch and wondered at what it might be. To be honest, my thoughts had been turning to my future again. I was thinking of going back to the *Ecole* and finishing my studies. After the war, cooking didn't seem half so bad any more. I poked at my lunch and knew food should not taste like *this*.

I heard the door as she entered; she wasn't alone. He was obviously *Mmarislusant* and walked with an air of confidence and self assurance. I'd seen that demeanour before, he reminded me of Kirsov. She looked better than I'd ever seen her. Hair neatly arranged, nails clean and manicured, her blouse straight and skirt crisply pressed. And she was smiling, not the smile she'd found in a bottle before but a real, honest smile. For the first time I realised how damn good looking she was.

She sat on my right, the man my left. She kissed me lightly on the cheek. "Ariaryn Despi Ora Mman Eadaasa..." she hesitated, "Lul, may I introduce Si-ishubuu Manish Khaadii *Mmarislusant Kaptan*."

I nearly fell off my stool. All I could manage was a squeaky, "A pleasure."

He sniggered. We exchanged greetings and he picked up a menu. "So, what would you recommend?"

I whispered, "Eating elsewhere."

He laughed, "Well, a sense of humour, always a plus." He ordered a coffee and a seafood salad.

(Continued from page 13)

I turned to Jane, "You're looking well, much brighter than last I saw you."

She kissed me again, "And with more clothes."

I turned bright red, the *kaptan* looked at me and then her, "Do tell, Jane."

Her mouth turned up in a wicked grin, "Oh Si-ish, nothing to tell, honestly." I nodded furiously.

His eyebrows raised as he looked us both up and down, "Mmmmm. If you say so..."

I tried to change the subject, "Jane, you said something about a job?"

The *kaptan* answered, "Jane here tells me you're a qualified gunner." He took a bite of his salad. His face twisted just a little, I was impressed by his self control. "And you can cook."

Jane had ordered a burger, she looked a bit sheepish. "It tasted... different, a month ago."

I couldn't suppress the snicker. "A month ago, most things would have tasted... different, to you." I turned to the *kaptan* and replied cautiously "Yes, I was trained in gunnery in the Guards and yeah, I'd say I'm a half-decent cook. May I ask why?"

A smile. "Straight to the point; I like that."

"Seems not a lot of reason to avoid it, so why?"

The smile broadened, he was sizing me up. "Jane speaks highly of you and I have a small ship. I need a crew, including a gunner," his gaze returned to his lunch, "and a cook."

I considered a bit, a ship—a small, probably independent ship; my plans were rather more pedestrian at the moment. But then again Madam Manish's son seemed unlikely to get into too much... mischief. "And, *kaptan*, what would this ship be doing?"

"Wandering, *Mman lul*, just wandering. After the war I find myself wishing to just wander awhile." His face had taken on a look I knew, I'd seen it a lot recently, including in the mirror. "So, would you like to join our merry band? There would be myself, Jane and a *dokhtor* of my acquaintance."

I stared at my food, I looked at Jane, then the *kaptan*. "I prefer just plain Ariaryn." I considered, wandering, somehow it did seem attractive. "I would be honoured, *kaptan*."

"Just Siish, everyone calls me Siish." ❁

Confessions of a Newbie Referee

Timothy Collinson

The Game That Was

An old friend came to visit the other day; I'll call him K. When I say 'old', we go way back; to school some 35 years ago; we were best men at each other's weddings, have holidayed together with family—his four daughters and my two—and so on. At school, K's natural genius meant that he could play miniatures war-games through his O-levels (aged 16) and pass, and run D&D adventures through his A-levels (aged 18) and pass easily. Unfortunately I missed the latter as by that time I was elsewhere. But I heard they were great games.

On this particular visit, along with his wife he brought 17-year-old daughter and 15-year-old daughter, plus a male friend of the younger one. As

we sat chatting in the shadow of an Ikea bookshelf pretty much stuffed with *Traveller* books stretching across 35 years, it wasn't long before one of them noticed the collection and asked about it. Well, that was too good an opportunity to miss and they got an enthusiastic summary of *Traveller* and what it was about. Their interest piqued, they wanted to know if they could 'play' and of course I thought it would be easy enough to at least to take them through generating some characters.

A little while later with their character sheets in hand, it was hardly surprising that they then wanted to actually play. To be honest, my nerve failed me at that point and I doubted I could 'perform' adequately at such short notice; not to mention the fact that I was feeling rather unwell. But K had seen the writing on the wall and had used the character gen-

Confessions of a Newbie Referee

(Continued from page 14)

eration time to think up a small plot. He was skilled enough to run it as we went; with the advantage that at last I would get to play in one of his games.

Our characters were an eclectic bunch but somehow K drew us together successfully and off we went. Suffice to say that the rest of the afternoon passed in fun and excitement as we endeavoured to uncover what was going on around us and at first escape from, and subsequently confront, the bad-dies. It was interesting as well to be both playing a character and advising K on the 'Traveller' aspects of the universe which he only vaguely knew.

If there's a lesson to be learned it is two-fold: firstly, never miss a chance to proselytise about *Traveller*—the three young ones have all returned to colleges and university and tracked down role-playing clubs to join. Secondly, always be prepared to run a game if you're asked! It's unlikely to happen often, but there's a little part of me that regrets not seizing the opportunity to run a pre-prepared game of my own. On the other hand, there was the treat of seeing K in action and—for someone who tends to massively over prepare—learning from how he dealt with the situation. ☼

Critics' Corner

Off the Table

Career Book 1

reviewed by Jeff Zeitlin

Career Book 1. Richard Hazlewood.

Spica Publishing <http://spicapublishing.co.uk>

40pp., softcover or PDF

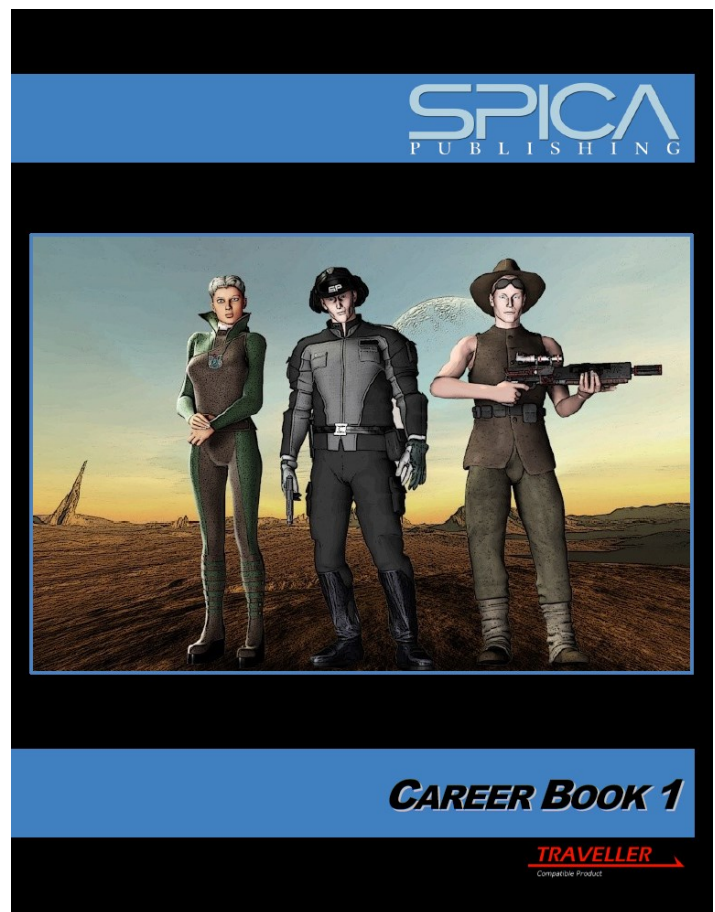
US\$12.50/UK£6.05 (softcover, Lulu)

US\$6.99/UK£4.47 (PDF, DriveThruRPG)

Spica Publishing expands the character generation career options.

On the Shelf

Forty pages isn't very large, so shelving this volume spine-out will cause it to be lost among other books. The cover is black, with a central panel about two-fifth of the cover in height, and extending almost edge-to-edge, depicting three characters in a desert landscape. Above the picture is a medium-blue (New Yorkers will recognize the color as "Con Ed blue") stripe extending from the left edge almost to the right edge, with Spica's logo on it; below the picture is a similar stripe bearing the title. At the bottom, lined up with the right edge of the lower stripe, but on the black area below, is the *Traveller* Compatible logo. The stock is good quality, with a finish that could be considered glossy, but not high-gloss.



On Inspection

There is very little explanatory text; most of what exists is in the one-page Introduction, which basically explains that you need the *Traveller* Main Book (TMB) from Mongoose, and why. Following the In-

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roduction is a section of alternative Mishap and Event tables for several of the TMB careers. The revised Mishap tables are 2d6 rather than TMB's 1d6, and the Event tables are d66 rather than 2d6, thus offering more choice—though there is no discussion of why the author felt the standard tables to be inadequate. Each career's revised tables fits on a single page. Following the career event tables are two pages of Life and Unusual Events tables, each of which is d66 rather than the single 2d6 table in TMB; again, there is no discussion of why these should be preferred over Mongoose's. I am generally in the camp that says that "more choice is better", but I also acknowledge the possibility of too much choice and the potential that dithering over such choice might lead to wasting time. In this case, I don't disapprove of the new tables; I disapprove only of the lack of discussion of *why*.

The following section should be considered the real meat of the book; each of eight new careers is presented on two pages, similar to the TMB presentation of a career. Each career follows the pattern set by Mongoose in the TMB—three career paths, each with specific skills, supplementing three general tables open to all characters in the career. The Mishap

and Events tables are the expanded 2d6/d66 versions. An experienced referee could probably come up with ways to use these careers in a campaign; it's less clear whether a less-experienced (or rookie) referee could do so. I could thus wish that an extra page had been devoted to each new career, providing a character overview, adventure seed ideas, and/or suggestions for integrating a character from the career into a campaign.

The remainder of the book is some pre-generated characters; these are just raw data—stats, skills, and equipment (which includes Contacts/Rivals/Allies/Enemies). No suggestion of career-ending mishaps or life events has been included, and no personality profile—really, nothing to inspire the referee or the players to "get into" the characters.

Conclusion

I can't really be more than lukewarm about this; there's just too much that could have—and, in my opinion, should have—been included to really make the idea behind this book 'pop'. On the other hand, accepting the limitations, the author has done a credible job, though the proofreader could have used a bit more practice. For those reasons, I'd rate the PDF a better value than the print-on-demand edition. 🌟

Active Measures

Clash of Cultures

by Garry Ward

Editor's note: This is an edited version of an adventure that was originally posted to the Freelance Traveller web site in 2007.

Introduction

Two neighboring worlds, Mintacca and Alkor, are both inhabited, and have been in contact for generations. Mintacca is the home of a human minor race with an elaborate legal code and a bureaucracy to enforce it. Alkor is the home of a minor race that is about as ursinoid as the Aslan are leonine, and are unrelated to the Ursa. Alkorite culture is less regi-

mented, and justice is generally enforced through social custom, including an honor code and a *code duello*. There are enclaves on each world where those from the other tend to gather, and in those enclaves, their own law tends to hold as long as it doesn't involve the majority culture, largely because neither culture considers it necessary or appropriate to subject 'family' disputes to an outsider. When the laws or customs followed in the enclaves come to the attention of the majority regarding incidents between two minority-culture members, it generally generates amusement and disbelief among members of the majority culture's society, and only occasional and scattered hostility.

Active Measures

When a cross-culture incident happens, it can usually be resolved peacefully. Unfortunately, ‘usually’ and ‘always’ are not synonymous.

The Trigger

During a tense night time security operation in a major Mintaccan city just outside the Alkorite enclave, a newly-arrived Alkorite, Samayj, unfamiliar with the city, rounds a corner and walks into the operation. Constable Aureyon is abruptly confronted by a being half again his size, in the middle of a major operation against known, armed, organized criminals.

Constable Aureyon orders Samayj to lay face down. The Alkorite, surprised, confused, completely not expecting that anyone would be yelling at him to lay down, hesitates.

Constable Aureyon perceives the hesitation as refusal and the towering bulk of the Alkorite as threatening, so he empties his gun into Samayj until he does lay down, permanently.

This is the first incident between Mintaccans and Alkorites—on either world—that has involved a death. Metropolitan Security moves quickly to suspend Aureyon (without pay) and investigate, according to their own internal procedures, and determines that the incident was *not* a ‘good shoot’, but also that it was not criminal. This is an unprecedented finding, and the Mintaccan city government and the Security Officers’ Fraternal Association are suddenly at odds regarding the proper response—SOFA says that since there was no criminal liability, Aureyon should be retrained, but suffer no other penalty; the city government, aware that the local Alkorite community is upset, wishes to dismiss Aureyon for ‘egregious violations of procedure, bringing disrepute upon MS and the city’.

The Fallout

As the dispute between the city SOFA drags on, with no actual action being taken, Alkorite diplomatic personnel request that Aureyon stand trial before the Alkorite’s family under Alkorite custom. No official response is immediately received, but

unofficial remarks are overheard that characterize Alkorites in a derogatory manner. These remarks rapidly travel through the Alkorite grapevine, and an increasing number of Alkorites now believe that the Mintaccan planetary government has a policy of anti-Alkorite bigotry.

As above, Mintacca is a world of carefully crafted laws, many volumes of them, and an extensive legal system to ensure they are enforced.

Alkor, however, is a simpler world. Law there is more a matter of assembled custom. Alkorite custom when someone kills another, and the killing is not clearly intentional, is for the perpetrator to face an designated member of the deceased’s extended family in one-to-one battle. If the perpetrator survives, then the gods have forgiven them and the deceased family must also. If the perpetrator does not survive, well, the gods have made their judgment.

The Alkorites demand that Aureyon be sent to Alkor to participate in such a duel. Aureyon isn’t interested in going to Alkor to be beaten to a bloody, dead pulp. SOFA publicly supports Aureyon, and a union spokesperson remarks, publicly, that ‘no Mintaccan should ever be subjected to such barbarism’. While there may be conciliatory members of the Mintaccan government, there are also conservative members who agree with the SOFA spokesperson. It is somewhat quaint when the Alkorites do that to each other, but not to a Mintaccan.

Alkorite custom holds that if the perpetrator refuses to appear for the duel, then they are declared dishonored and fair game for anyone who can hunt them down. With Aureyon firmly on Mintacca, the head of Samayj’s extended family on Alkor declares Aureyon to be honorless, and further characterizes him in ways that even a Mintaccan would recognize as insulting. Samayj’s family head also declares the traditional bounty in such cases; anyone killing Aureyon and proving it will receive the traditional payment from the deceased’s extended family. The declaration causes outrage among Mintaccans, and there are some hurried meetings between Alkorite

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Active Measures

and Mintaccan diplomatic personnel. The rhetoric is cooled down, with some sharp reprimands to the people who have publicly expressed 'bigoted' views.

As part of the effort to cool things off, Aureyon offers to retire (he's eligible, though unhappy at the prospect; he'd hoped to be 'career constabulary'), provided that his exit evaluation carries no negative comments or record of his suspension, and he receives his full pension. If his retirement—not a resignation—is accepted, he will not sue for the pay lost while on the suspension that is to be expunged from his record as part of the deal. SOFA, reluctantly, supports him on this, and the government accepts it, feeling that it will allow them to put the matter to rest.

Involving the PCs

There are several ways that the PCs can be involved in this:

- [METAGAME] One of the PCs may in fact be former Constable Aureyon; as the last thing in his character generation, he fails miserably on a roll and the event that costs him his original career is the accidental killing of Samayj. He now has a price on his head and many large, bear like creatures wanting to brutally kill him.
- The PCs are law enforcement on Mintacca (or contracted to assist them) and now find themselves having to deal with attempts on Aureyon's life.
- The PCs may be bounty hunters who, with incomplete information, come looking for the 'murderer Aureyon' to take him to Alkor. They arrive expecting that the Mintaccan government will be cooperating with them in capturing the 'murderer'.
- The PCs may be diplomats attempting to defuse the situation—there is still a lot of upset that Aureyon hasn't—by Alkorite lights—been punished, and Samayj's family is adamant about both the declaration of dishonor and the traditional bounty, while Aureyon and the Mintaccan

government are equally adamant about Aureyon not facing the traditional duel.

The Situation Deteriorates

Assuming that PC involvement before this point doesn't resolve the issue, and that Aureyon doesn't die quickly, Mintaccan constabulary agencies have had to deal with multiple attempts on his life by Alkorites. Alkorite tradition holds anyone attempting to protect a declared dishonored murderer to be a viable target as well.

Mintaccan constabulary have no way to tell if any given Alkorite they encounter is planning to attack. With several constables already injured or dead, they begin to treat all Alkorites as potentially hostile, which leads to additional confrontations.

The leadership of those Alkorites living on Mintacca raises political protests against the treatment. Where the Mintaccan constabulary see their actions as sound precautions, Alkorites on Mintacca see them as oppression and harassment. Some Alkorites begin to believe that the only way they can survive an encounter with the constabulary is to shoot first and more. So far, though, any violence between Mintaccan and Alkorite has only involved Mintaccan constabulary.

Further PC Involvement

- One place is again as Mintaccan constabulary, or contracted to them, this time dealing with growing unrest amongst the Alkorites and violence directed at the constabulary.
- The PCs may be Mercs hired by Alkorites to help them 'throw off the oppression' of the Mintaccans.
- The PCs may be hired to bring weapons in to the Alkorites.
- The PCs may be hired to infiltrate smugglers bringing in weapons to the Alkorites.
- The PCs could again be diplomats, still trying to defuse the situation. Alternatively, they could be ordinary citizens, either Alkorite or Mintaccan, reaching across the cultural divide to try to get the diplomats to listen to possible solutions.

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Situation Irretrievable

At this point, if PC involvement has still not produced a resolution, whether Aureyon is alive or not is irrelevant. The attempts on his life cost more Mintaccans their lives, so they cracked down on the Alkorites, which cost Alkorite lives which lead to more Alkorite extended families declaring vendettas and outlawry against Mintaccans which cost more Mintaccan lives. Worse, some accidents have resulted in Alkorites killing Mintaccans who were *not* members of the constabulary, and much of the Mintaccan public who might have been neutral about the whole situation have now shifted to being anti-Alkorite—which only increases the violence and animosity between the two cultures.

The Mintaccan government, now loaded with law and order conservatives because of the past violence, decides the only way to deal with the barbaric Alkorites is to herd them all into controlled areas from which they can be deported back to Alkor, once the criminal element has been isolated and properly punished.

The Alkorite government, now loaded with hard line conservative traditionalists because of what the Mintaccans have been doing to Alkorites on Mintacca and because the Mintaccans have repeatedly

demonstrated that they have no sense of honor whatsoever, object to the what the Mintaccans are doing. Seeing that no Mintaccans have any honor, all Mintaccans living on Alkor are declared outlaw and viable targets for the vendettas. The Mintaccans on Alkor are rounded up for killing.

As soon as word of the first executions on Alkor of Mintaccans arrives at Mintacca, Mintacca declares war on Alkor, and starts treating all Alkorites on Mintacca as enemy aliens and spies. Alkor, naturally, reciprocates.

More PC Involvement

- As Mintaccan or Alkorite military (or contracted to one or the other) confronting each other.
- If there is an interstellar government in the setting (e.g., the Imperium in the standard Traveller universe), perhaps as diplomats acting as mediators and trying to find a solution.
- If there is an interstellar government in the setting, perhaps as members of the interstellar government's armed forces, assigned to try to keep the two warring worlds apart.
- As weapons suppliers, overt or covert, selling to either or both sides.
- As Free Traders who walk into the midst of the situation with no idea of what happened, why it happened, or why they are being shot at.



Doing It My Way

Character Generation Rules

Psionic Guardians: An Expanded Classic Traveller Career

by James Ramsay

Editor's Note: This is a revised version of an article that was originally posted to the Freelance Traveller website in 2003.

Background

Although the default Third Imperium setting for *Traveller* essentially bans general psionics use, there is still the possibility for psionic undercover operatives. Other settings may make heavy use of psionics

and may have the equivalent of a psionic police force that protects the populace. Some of these psionic guardians may go about their duties relying heavily on mysticism; others may go about it in a scientific way. Psionic usage also varies; some do almost everything using their powers, while others use their powers when it is the only option. The social order can vary just as much, with one group having a heavily stratified order while others are essentially democratic. Generally, any psionic guardian organization can be split into three groups: law enforcement, social welfare, or military (which

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may be divided further into covert or overt). Not all organizations will have all these groups, and in those that do one group might be more important or larger than others.

Required Materials

This article assumes that the *Classic Traveller* core rules (Books 1, 2, and 3; *Deluxe Traveller*; or *The Traveller Book*) are available. Special attention is directed to the Psionics rules in any version. The various extended career books (*Book 4: Mercenary*, *Book 5: High Guard*, *Book 6: Scouts*, and/or *Book 7: Merchant Prince*) or third-party *Classic Traveller* extended careers from other sources may be useful as well.

Generating Psionic Guardian Characters

The basic process is the same as for any career:

1. Generate the character's stats
2. Enlist in a career
3. Resolve the career

In settings where psionics are legal and openly used, follow the core rules (except as noted below) for determining the character's psionic strength and abilities, and training, as part of step 1.

For legal psionics, assume that training is available on any world of POP 6+ and TL4+; on other worlds, roll 2D for 8+, DM -1 for each level of POP or TL below the above. Since this is being done as part of initial character creation, do not impose age penalties when rolling Psionic Strength Rating.

If psionics are illegal or generally unavailable, as in the standard Third Imperium setting, use the procedure for finding a Psionics Institute and receiving training as outlined in the *Traveller* core rules. Alternatively, finding training and later joining a psionic guardian organization may drive an adventure.

In any case, a character may not join a psionic guardian organization unless his PSR is 5+.

Enlistment

If an extended career that the player feels is appropriate for his character is available, follow the normal enlistment procedure for that career. Other-

wise, use the "Other" career from the *Classic Traveller* core rules. If the character fails the enlistment roll, roll for Draft as normal.

Once a character has enlisted (or been drafted) into a career, if the character has PSR 5+ and expresses an interest, they will be accepted into the career's psionic guardian arm.

For third-party careers, the referee should use his best judgment as to the most appropriate psionic skills for the career. The Service Psionic Skills table entries for the Other career may provide useful guidelines.

Acquiring Skills and Expertise

If you are using one of the extended character generation procedures (Books 4-7 or third-party expanded careers), follow the normal procedure for resolving the career, except that along with the usual yearly Survival, Decoration, Commission/Promotion, and Skill rolls, roll for Psionic Experience as per the core rules for each psionic talent that the character has that is also on the Service Psionic Skills list for the service. Note that the training period that equals the first yearly assignment includes psionic testing and training for psionic characters (and such testing and training should be conducted as per the core rules, with the Service Psionic Skills being tested for first), and the Psionic Experience roll should be made even if no other rolls are. If the referee permits, at the end of the term, roll Psionic Experience for each psionic talent that the character has that was *not* rolled for during the term.

Service Psionic Skills			
Service	Skills	Service	Skills
Army	Teleportation, Clairvoyance	Navy	Telepathy, Clairvoyance
Marines	Telepathy, Teleportation, Clairvoyance	Scouts	Telepathy, Telekinesis, Clairvoyance, Awareness
Merchants	Telepathy, Telekinesis	Other (Law Enforcement)	Telekinesis, Awareness
Other (Social Welfare)	Telepathy, Clairvoyance	Other (Covert Operations)	Teleportation, Clairvoyance, Awareness

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Psionic Guardians for “Other” Characters

It is assumed that the character has enlisted (or been drafted) into the “Other” career normally, as discussed above, and has rolled a PSR of 5+.

Terms of service: Upon enlistment, a character embarks on a term of service lasting for four years. This adds four years to the character’s age. Each time a character reenlists, it is for an additional four year term of service.

Each Term of service is subdivided into four one year assignments. Characters will determine their new assignment each year and resolve all pertinent actions pertaining to it. At the conclusion of four assignments, a character has completed a term, and may attempt to reenlist.

Choice of arm: Upon entering the academy the character is given 8 months of general training, followed by psionic testing and four months of psionic training (as detailed in book 3). At the end of this period they are given the choice of which arm of the order they want to enter. These arms are Law Enforcement, Social Welfare and Covert Operations. To enlist in that arm the character must have *all* the talents shown for the arm in the Service Psionic Skills table.

Law Enforcement involves catching dangerous criminals such as murderers and drug smugglers.

Social Welfare includes councillors, diplomats, psychologists, doctors, etc.

Covert Operations is mainly for small scale assaults against heavily armed opposition (such as military and organized crime bases). They often work closely with Law Enforcement.

Basic Training: During the academy training the character has the opportunity to learn the following skills. Roll 3+ on one die for each skill legal, admin, gun cbt and blade cbt.

Advanced Training: At the end of advanced training the player may roll to see if their character’s psionic experience has increased (per the core rules);

they may also roll on the skill table for their arm. Basic Training plus Advanced Training together take one year, and includes the four-month psionics training period.

Assignments: Following basic and advanced training, the player will determine his first assignment. Each term, a player will carry out four assignments. Basic and advanced training constitute the first assignment of the first term. Resolution of assignments is carried out in three steps: determine general assignment, determine specific assignment, determine outcome of the assignment.

General Assignment: Locate the column of the general assignment table corresponding to the player’s arm of service. Roll a six-sided die to determine which general assignment is received. If the player has an intelligence of 8 or higher, a DM of +1 may (but need not) be applied.

General Assignment			
Roll 1D	Law Enforcement	Social Welfare	Covert Operations
1	Outreach	Intelligence	Intelligence
2	Intelligence	Outreach	Action
3	Outreach	Intelligence	Intelligence
4	Intelligence	Outreach	Action
5	Training	Training	Training
6	Special Assignment	Special Assignment	Special Assignment

Action: The character will principally be involved in armed hostilities.

Intelligence: The character’s assignment is principally to gather information.

Outreach: The character’s assignment principally involves interacting with individuals outside the service to establish a positive relationship.

Training: The character’s assignment is principally involved with increasing his own skills, or teaching others in the service.

Specific Assignments: Special assignments are handled in a separate section below. If the player has not rolled Special Assignment, roll one die and determine the result from the appropriate column of the Specific Assignment table. Also roll for Psionic Experience (per the core rules).

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Specific Assignment				
1D	Action	Intelligence	Outreach	Training
1	Raid	Police Action	Patrol	Administration
2	Raid	Police Action	Patrol	Administration
3	Counter-insurgency	Ground Duty	Administration	Ground Duty
4	Patrol	Space Duty	Administration	Ground Duty
5	Internal Security	Administration	Internal Security	Space Duty
6	Garrison	Administration	Garrison	Space Duty

Administration: The character is assigned to do the paperwork that allows the organization to operate on a day-to-day basis.

Counterinsurgency: The character is acting against hostile elements within the local society.

Garrison: The character is assigned to a defensive position against hostile action that is considered low

-probability, or to a base from which patrols are sent out.

Ground Duty: The character is assigned to general duties appropriate for his skills, based on a planet.

Internal Security: The character is assigned to investigate and locate possible hostile elements operating within the guardian organization.

Patrol: The character is assigned to be a visible presence in the local society, while watching for and prepared to respond to hostile or criminal activity.

Police Action: The character is assigned to operations aimed at preventing hostile forces from operating in the area.

Raid: The character is assigned to operations aimed at disrupting or shutting down the operations of hostile elements.

Space Duty: The character is assigned to general duties appropriate for his skills, aboard a spacecraft or starship.

Assignment Resolution Table									
	Administration	Counter-insurgency	Garrison	Ground Duty	Internal Security	Patrol	Police Action	Raid	Space Duty
Survival	auto	8+	4+	5+	3+	3+	6+	6+	5+
DM +1 if		INT 8+ or Awareness 4+	INT 8+	INT 8+	INT 8+	INT 8+	INT 8+ or Awareness 4+	INT 8+ or Awareness 4+	INT 8+
Decoration	none	5+	10+	9+	None	10+	9+	6+	9+
Commission	11+	7+	10+	9+	11+	10+	9+	7+	9+
Promotion	10+	6+	9+	8+	10+	9+	8+	6+	8+
Skills	8+	5+	7+	7+	8+	7+	7+	5+	7+

DMs All assignments: +1 Commission or +1 Promotion if any Service Psionic Skill 4+

Resolving the Assignment: Four or five results must be rolled for in a normal assignment: Survival, Decoration, Commission or Promotion, Skills and Psionic Experience (per the core rules).

Survival: Most activities involve some danger, and even accidents in training occasionally cause fatalities or injuries. To survive a normal assignment, a player must roll the indicated number or higher on two dice. If the indicated number itself is thrown, the player has been injured or wounded. Injuries and wounds have no effect except in Raid,

Counter Insurgency and Police Action. Each of these assignments is officially classified as a combat action, and sustaining a wound or injury in such an assignment causes the player to be awarded the Purple Heart. As an alternative to killing a character as a result of a failed survival roll, the player may muster out with half a six-sided die (rounded up) worth of damage applied to STR, END or DEX. A player may elect to take a negative DM on his or her survival roll and then apply it as an equal positive DM for decorations in the next step.

Doing It My Way

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Decoration: If the player rolls the indicated number or higher, they are awarded the citation for Meritorious Conduct Under Fire (MCUF). If the player rolls a number at least three higher than the stated number, he or she receives the Medal for Conspicuous Gallantry instead (MCG). If the player rolls at least six higher than the number indicated he or she receives the Starburst for Extreme Heroism (SEH) instead. If a negative DM was taken on survival, an equal positive DM may be used to attempt to win a decoration. For example, a player might elect to take a DM of -2 for survival, thus increasing the chance that the throw will not be achieved. If they survive nonetheless, then a DM of +2 is allowed when rolling for decorations. The reverse of this procedure (positive DMs for survival and then forgoing decorations because of the negative DMs) is not allowed.

Commission or Promotion: The character may be promoted if the player rolls the indicated number or

higher. A character that has Enlisted rank may roll for Commission, and if successful, receives rank O1. A character may not receive a commission *and* a promotion in the same assignment. Members of the Social Welfare arm may only roll for promotion once per term. See the note on rank at the end of the article.

Skills: If the player rolls the indicated number or greater, one skill may be rolled for. All players can roll on the service or life table for their arm of service, or their general assignment table. Players on Space Duty may roll on the Shipboard table. Those on Ground Duty, Patrol, or Police Action can roll on the ground table. Players on Raid, Counterinsurgency or Police Action can roll on the Combat table. A player can never have more skill levels (e.g., Pilot-2 counts as two skill levels) than INT+EDU. If at the end of character creation a character's total skill levels exceeds INT+EDU they must reduce any skills they want till the total is equal to INT+EDU (a skill level of 0 is not the same as not having that skill).

Service Skills						
	Law Enforcement Life	Social Welfare Life	Covert Operations Life	Law Enforcement Service	Social Welfare Service	Covert Operations Service
1	+1 STR	+1 EDU	+2 STR	Admin	Admin	Admin
2	+1 DEX	+1 INT	+1 DEX	Liaison	Liaison	Blade Combat
3	+1 END	Streetwise	+2 END	Streetwise	Medical	Tactics
4	Carousing	Carousing	Carousing	Gun Combat	Legal	Interrogation
5	Streetwise	Brawling	Brawling	Blade Combat	Computer	Gun Combat
6	Brawling	Gambling	Blade Combat	Leader	Steward	Leader

Assignment Skills								
	Intelligence	Outreach	Training	Action	Shipboard	Ground	Combat	Specialist
1	Interrogation	Blade Combat	Interrogation	Interrogation	Computer	Vehicle (Wheeled)	Brawling	Computer
2	Forgery	Gun Combat	Recruiting	Liaison	Ship's Boat	Vehicle (Grav)	Blade Combat	Medical
3	Bribery	Steward	Instruction	Mechanical	Gunnery	Streewise	Gun Combat	Legal
4	Electronics	Computer	Liaison	Electronic	Vacc Suit	Gambling	Hvy Weapons	Mechanical
5	Mechanical	Liaison	Leader	Vehicle	Navigation	+1 STR	Tactics	Electronics
6	Jack of All Trades	Jack of All Trades	Jack of All Trades	Jack of All Trades	Pilot	+1 END	Fwd Observer	Communications
7					Engineering	+1 SOC	Leader	+1 INT
DMs					+1 if INT 9+	+1 if SOC 5-	+1 if INT 8+	+1 if EDU 9+

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Special Assignments

Determine which assignment a player receives by rolling once on the appropriate Special Assignment table. The means of resolving special assignments are listed below.

Special Assignments			
Roll 1D	Law Enforcement	Social Welfare	Covert Operations
1	Cross-Training	Recruiting	Seconded
2	Specialist School	Specialist School	Ship Training
3	Seconded	Seconded	Specialist School
4	Specialist School	Teaching	Cross-Training
5	Ship Training	Ship Training	Seconded
6	Recruiting	Diplomatic Mission	Recruiting
7	Diplomatic Mission	Cross-Training	Teaching

Optional INT 9+ INT 9+ or SOC 9+ INT 9+ or PSR 9+ DM +1 if

Cross-Training: The player rolls once on the Arm of Service table of any other service arm than his or her own. They further note that they have been cross-trained in that arm. At the conclusion of any term after a player has cross-trained in another arm, and the player successfully reenlists, and has the required talents, the player may switch to that arm.

Specialist School: The player has been chosen to receive specialist training in a specific field. The player rolls a single six-sided die and receives one level of expertise in the indicated skill from the Specialist skill table.

Seconded: The player has been seconded (loaned) to another service. The player can either attempt to enlist in another service or can submit to the draft. Once any training is finished the player is automatically given a commission. The player then resolves the rest of the assignments left in the current term in that service. At the end of the term, provided the player makes a successful reenlistment roll for that service and was promoted at least once, he or she may elect to stay in that service. If at the end of a term the player fails a reenlistment roll or wishes to

leave that service, they muster out and return to the Psionic Guardians. The player must attempt to reenlist normally.

Ship Training: The player has been selected to receive training in the operation of a star ship. Roll 3+ on one die for each of Vacc suit, Pilot, Navigation, Engineering, and Computer.

Diplomatic Mission: The player has been sent on an important diplomatic mission. Roll 10+ on 2D for SOC +1; each time this results in the character having SOC B+, the character receives an additional roll on the Mustering Out table.

Recruiting: The player has been assigned to a recruiting station and automatically receives Recruiting. Roll 4+ on one die for each skill to receive Liaison and Streetwise.

Teaching: The player has been assigned either to teach at an academy or to look after an apprentice. He or she automatically receives Instruction skill and a commission to teaching rank (O1). If player is already of teaching rank than they are promoted.

Changing Arms of Service

At the beginning of any term of service, a character who has successfully re-enlisted may transfer to a different arm of the service, provided that he has been cross-trained in that arm *and* has the appropriate Service Psionic Skills.

Automatic Skills

Term and rank skills as called for in the core rules are neither rolled for nor received, as the extended character generation rules result in greater levels of skills.

Multiple Assignments to Specialist School or Ship Training

Players who receive several assignments to the specialist school or ship training are considered to be taking a refresher courses and gain the listed skill or (in the case of ship training) may attempt again to receive each of the listed skills, unless a player upon receiving such an assignment already has a skill level of 2 or higher in any one skill offered by the

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school. In this case, the player is assigned to the school as an instructor, and receives one automatic Instruction skill, in addition to be commissioned to teaching rank O1 (if applicable).

Re-enlistment and Mustering Out

After completing four assignments, a player has completed one term, and may attempt to reenlist. Reenlistment is as per the Classic *Traveller* core rules, except that a player with PSR 9+ or a Service Psionic Skill 5+ may take an optional DM +2. At the conclusion of a player's last term, they roll on the mustering out tables once for each term of service. Ranks O1 to O6 get two extra rolls. All ranks higher than O6 get three extra rolls.

A Note on Rank

This article assumes that the rank structure is roughly based on standard military rank structures,

with nine "enlisted" and ten "officer" ranks. Other rank structures are possible, with more or fewer ranks, with or without separation between "enlisted" and "officers", and with various titles ranging from military to mystic to religious. It is also possible to base rank strictly on psionic ability. The referee should consider the nature of the campaign setting and design a rank structure appropriate for it. ☼

Mustering Out Benefits		
Roll 1D	Material Benefits	Cash
1	High Passage	2,500
2	Blade	5,000
3	Gun	10,000
4	TAS Membership	25,000
5	Psi Drug SPECIAL (4 doses)	50,000
6	Ship	100,000
7	Yacht	250,000
DM +1 if	Rank O6+	Gambling 1+

The Shipyard

Type S(b) Fast and S(k) Deep Scouts

designed by Scott Diamond

Type S(b) Fast Scout	TL-15
100 ton	streamlined needle w/scoops and fuel purifier
Jump Drive (3)	Jump-3
Maneuver Drive (3)	3-G (Agility 3/Emer agility 3)
Power Plant (5)	(EP=5)
Fuel	35 tons
Cargo	10 tons
Computer	Model 2bis (CPU-6/ Storage-0)
Vehicles	Air/Raft
Weapons	1 Triple Turret typically armed w/2 Beam Lasers and sandcaster
Staterooms	3
Low Berths	2
Crew:	1 (Captain/Pilot)

Type S(b) Scouts are faster than the Type S, but trade mission space and duration for fuel capacity, drive, and powerplant to stay within the same size hull. As with the standard Type S, the ship can be manned easily by a single pilot, though a gunner may be carried for security reasons if the ship is armed. This type almost always is since it is de-

signed to act as a fast, gunned courier for the military services. The ship also acts as an intelligence gathering ship for inserting and extracting intel officer deep behind enemy lines. The two low berths can be used for extraction or rescue operations.

Type S(k) Deep Survey Scout	TL-15
150 ton	streamlined wedge w/scoops and fuel purifier
Jump Drive (4)	Jump-4
Maneuver Drive (2)	2-G (Agility 2/Emer agility 2)
Power Plant (7)	(EP=7)
Fuel	67 tons
Cargo	10 tons
Computer	Model 4 (CPU-8/ Storage-15)
Vehicles	Air/Raft
Weapons	1 Double Beam Laser Turret
Staterooms	4
	Autodoc w/ 1 capacity
Crew:	4 (Captain/Pilot, Navigator, Engineer, Turret Gunner)

Type S(k) Deep Survey Scout are the latest design for long range exploration. They are equipped with increased computer power and extra-long range sensors (+50% increase in range and sensitivity) for surveys and mapping of uncharted space. ☼

Shipbook: Mirador

reviewed by "kafka"

Shipbook: *Mirador*. John Lees.

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

92pp., PDF

US\$5.99/UK£3.85

Editor's note: This review originally appeared on RPG.Net in July 2011 and is reprinted here with permission.

Ship books are problematic for Mongoose *Traveller*... that much is easy to admit. Prior to Mongoose, deck plans were scarce and usually followed a basic shape—even as ships did get more interesting in their appearance, the deck plans that accompanied them did not. Then came the *Serenity* RPG which blew everyone away with its beautifully rendered deck plans and whole host of companies followed the lead of Margaret Weiss Productions (MWP). Mongoose *Traveller* created an abundance of deck plans but they are grounded in old school and deadened the illustration to something that Referees can colour in the chrome. As a consequence, Mongoose made great illustrations of the exteriors in the *Traveller* main rulebook but somewhat lacklustre subsequently offerings since and ignored the MWP innovations of deck plans. Mongoose has made amends to their earlier (*Supplement 2: Traders and Gunboats*) *faux pas* of illustrating every level even if redundant.

And, unfortunately this product by Terra-Sol Games seems to be following very much in Mongoose's footsteps. As this supplement is a sourcebook for one class of ship – the *Mirador*, which can be used either as a luxury liner (cruise ship) or an exploration vessel. So what we have is the same basic ship outline with different interiors. And, the deck plans are rather nonsensical when approaching the Large Ship universe for not only is there a problem with redundancy but also filling of space. This was the problem that Imperium Games ran into when they did their *Starships* book for T4. And, that product ranks among the worst, so new publishers beware – even though fandom craves new ships, doing something innovative is the key.



Somewhat redeeming TSG is that they did do something innovative: they gave the ship a cast of (non-player) characters which includes the treatment of the ship itself. They also broadened the trade rules to make it more compatible with the Alternative *Traveller* Universe (ATU) of the Terra/Sol milieu. This was the most interesting part of the book, but as we are dealing with just a tiny sub-sector, it would be interesting to see how these rules will be fleshed out in a future supplement expanding it to a sector or quadrant. The ship personalities also come with a series of adventure hooks centred on the ship's purpose. On the whole, nothing that any seasoned Referee has not done before but good to see these ideas in print and not just as thought.

As noted, the deck plans are traditional *Traveller* deck plans and hence not very interesting. One

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thing TSG could have done was to have high quality shots of the interiors (much as DGP's *Starship Operators' Manual Vol.1* did) to give a ship a more realistic feel. Coupled with the awful comic book rendition of NPCs (again!!) makes the interior art of the product seemed very poor and belittles some the more interesting aspect of the book.

What would I like to see? (As how can I be so harsh without saying a few words of what I do like?) *Chthonian Stars* does a nice job (not perfect but better than some others in the MgT line) as does Ki-Ryn Studios with their Future Armada line. I am really surprised by the interiors, for one of the things, which attract me to TSG, is their gorgeous covers but equally good interiors. If they need pointers then look at the DGP MT line but try to innovate beyond what is already out there. Just as their cam-

paign, *Beyond the Open Door*, broke new ground; let their ship books do the same.

In conclusion, this is TSG's first foray into doing a ship book and sadly, not a good one. If one wants to stay traditional but innovate in terms of interior and exterior art, *Chthonian Stars* (Wildfire LLC) has done a superior job that both Mongoose and TSG should be taking notes from. The little innovations, such as trade rules are going to get a reworking in a later supplement – so my advice avoid this product until Mk II comes out and hopefully reworks the whole thing. So, there is 92 pages of lacklustre content. However, if traditional Traveller deck plans are your thing – then you might find some merit it. And, if you did like T4's *Starships* book then you have found a sequel. ☼

In A Store Near You

The Showroom

Watson-class Air/Raft

Designed by Ewan Quibell

CraftID: Watson Air/Raft, TL9, Cr 25,831
Hull: 1/2, Disp=1, Conf=4SL, Armor=1B,
Loaded=5.9743 tons, Unloaded=1.9012 tons
Power: 1/2, MHD Turbine=0.898 Mw, Duration=5/15
Loco: 1/2, Std Grav=7ton, MaxAcel=1.0277G,
NOE=40kph, Cruise=750kph, Top=1,000kph
Comm: Radio=Regional
Sensors: Radar=V Distant, Headlights×2
Off: Hardpoints=1
Def: +2
Control: Panel=Electronic×3
Accom: Crew=1 (Driver), Seats=Cramped×4,
Env=BasicEnv
Other: Fuel=3.01728kl, Cargo=1.05582kl,
ObjSize=Small, EmLevel=Faint

The *Watson* is an enclosed air/raft offering from Inness Corporation from Pawel in the Home system. While the technology used is mature by Home standards the revelation is the use of a hydrocarbon turbine for the power source only made affordable due to the increased provision of biodiesel from New Home. While the fuel may be moderately expensive the cost of the *Watson* is not.

Inness are targeting their *Watson* air/rafts at the family market where the freedom of an air/raft li-

cense gives them the ability to travel around Home as needed, visiting relatives, going on holiday, or using it for daily commuting at considerable speeds.

The radar and radio come as standard due to the speed at which the vehicle can be driven.

CraftID: Watson S Air/Raft, TL9, Cr 37,003
Hull: 1/2, Disp=1, Conf=4SL, Armor=1B,
Loaded=5.6793 tons, Unloaded=2.2082 tons
Power: 1/2, MHD Turbine=1 Mw, Duration=5/15
Loco: 1/2, Std Grav=7ton, MaxAcel=1.3207G,
NOE=130kph, Cruise=750kph, Top=1,000kph
Comm: Radio=Regional
Sensors: Radar=V Distant, Headlights×2
Off: Hardpoints=1
Def: +2
Control: Panel=Electronic×4
Accom: Crew=1 (Driver), Seats=Cramped×4,
Env=BasicEnv
Other: Fuel=3.36 kliters, Cargo=0.1111 kliters,
ObjSize=Small, EmLevel=Faint

Inness offer a Sports variant of the *Watson* which includes avionics and increased turbine output for a faster NOE speed and better handling at the expense of cargo space. While there are four seats in the *Watson S* the two in the back are very cramped.

The *Watson S* is targeted at young urban professional couples with disposable incomes. ☼

Feedback

Please tell us ...

- what you think of both magazine and website
- what you think of the articles we publish
- how we can make our magazine better
- how we can make our website better
- what kind of articles you do or don't want to see
- what you think of our look
- how we can make it better

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

- e-mail: feedback@freelancetraveller.com.

- feedback form at <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/feedback/ftfbf.html>.
- Forums:
Traveller Fanzine section of SFRPG: <http://www.sfrpg-discussion.net/phpBB3/viewforum.php?f=36>
Lone Star at Citizens of the Imperium: <http://www.travellerrpg.com/CotI/Discuss/forumdisplay.php?f=13>

Note: you must be registered with the forums to be able to use this method.

Traveller on the Internet

IRC: The #Traveller and #LoneStar channels

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

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

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

Information Center: Request for Information

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

List of Traveller/compatible Publishers

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

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

Submission Guidelines

What is *Freelance Traveller* looking for?

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

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

What about ...

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

...Hyperlite?

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

... Diaspora, or Starblazer Adventures?

If your article is about “crossing over” between these products and any of the “standard” or supported *Traveller* rulesets or settings, by all means, submit it! If it's support for those systems beyond *Traveller*, we'll accept and hold

the submission, but will not print it unless/until we've had a reasonable level of expression of interest in such support from our readers.

How should I submit my article?

What needs to be in the submission?

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

What format should I submit it in?

That depends on what you're submitting. Generally:

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

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

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

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

How do I get it to you?

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

