



FREELANCE TRAVELLER

The Electronic Fan-Supported Traveller® Magazine and Resource



Featured Article

The "Other" Option

by Michael Brown

A Note About Production

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

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From the Editor



This issue’s “From the Editor” is basically an apology and explanation. A double issue at the end of January is not how I wanted to start *Freelance Traveller*’s fifth year of publication, but a series of real-life happenings—good and bad—conspired to leave me less time to edit the magazine at just the wrong time.

First... I got promoted at my real-world job. This is something that I’d been hoping would occur for more than half of the past twenty years I’ve been with my current employer—and which I honestly didn’t expect to see for at least another two years. As a result, I was utterly unprepared for it—I had to take time out from editing the magazine to get a suit to wear at the ceremony (I can no longer dress “off the rack”), for the ceremony itself, and for the inevitable celebrations—both office and personal/

family—that followed the ceremony. That chewed up most of the time I’d allocated leading up to the end of December, when I’d hoped to post this issue.

Then... I got sick for a couple of days, from over-indulging at the celebrations. There really is such a thing as too much Junior’s cheesecake... Then, I had some Internet connectivity problems. I was able to mostly finish the editing, but I couldn’t post. The internet problems got fixed, right in time for a winter storm to knock out my phone (which took down my internet). A week later, that got fixed—including internet. Except that three days later, my provider’s provider stopped providing (so I’m looking for new internet service, and posting from the library...)... None of this was looked for, and I truly am sorry it deprived you, my readers, of a month’s worth of enjoyment. I’ll keep trying; I promise. ☼



Mongoose Traveller: The Third Imperium—Crowded Hours

reviewed by "kafka"

Mongoose Traveller: The Third Imperium—Crowded Hours.

Martin J. Dougherty

Avenger Enterprises/Mongoose Publishing

<http://www.mongoosepublishing.com>

240pp, hardcover

US\$39.99/UK£29.99

This review originally appeared on RPG.Net in March of 2011, and is reprinted here with permission.

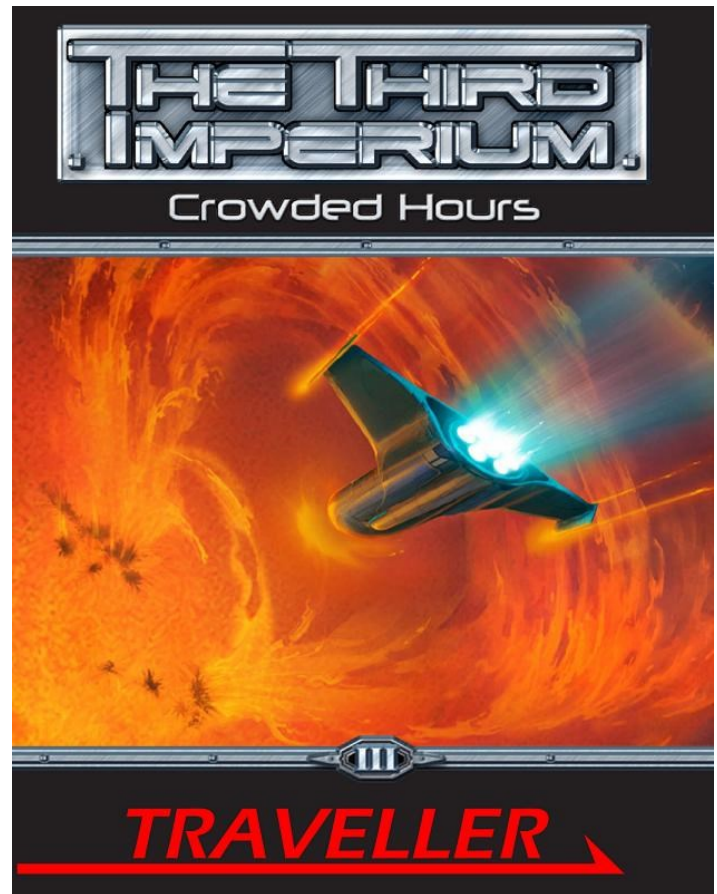
This review is based upon a partial playing of the adventures (but will not contain spoilers) contained within and partially just reading. I must say that I am very happy that Mongoose decided to bundle them together in a nice hardback edition with an inspiring cover to boot.

The adventures had previously been released by ComStar/Avenger which produced many great *Traveller* products such as the *Milieu 1248* line along with interesting adventures such as *Project Steel*.

The Good

I liked that these adventures use the Third Imperium as the backdrop for the adventures rather than keeping it generic, allowing the Referee to get a taste of what has gone before. That said, as the writer points out, there is no real need to have it set there, so one can keep it generic if desired. However, this is not the same Imperium as GDW's Classic *Traveller* era (which usually featured sandbox scientific puzzles), nor like what has passed for adventures in the Mongoose line (which have been a real mixed bag). These are adventures akin to the (William H. and J. Andrew) Keith adventures in the Gamelords/FASA products from the earliest days of *Traveller*. "Wham, bam, and thank you Sam" – or in the case of the author's motto, "Roll some dice, and blow stuff up" – action-packed escapades reminiscent of "The Mummy Returns" directed by Stephen Sommers rather than "The Mummy" films of the 1930s and 1950s.

This is not to say the cerebral element is downplayed but rather the adventures focus more upon



creative solutions to problem solving. Most of the adventures revolve around what seems to be a common theme for MJD – rescue and exploration which can lead to a conflict where characters are left to hold the Alamo against overwhelming odds.

This is a healthy addition to the Official *Traveller* Universe whose adventures from Mongoose tend to be comb the dungeon – gain the magic artifact in the form of something leftover from the Ancients. This is not to say *Prison Planet* or *Beltstrike* are not enjoyable, but adventures like *Tripwire* are positively not how *Traveller* should be run. Notwithstanding, I find that these Avenger adventures lack a certain *je ne sais pas* (I don't know what) aspect that makes halfway a classic adventure and something that is not *Traveller*.

Littered throughout the text of the adventures are puns which provide a bit of levity to the rather grim adventures. Some of these puns are fine for the convention game but really did not add anything to the game itself. So, as much as I use puns myself – humor is something really specific and one is always in danger of losing the reader let alone the player.

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The Bad

What Avenger did here was merely take the pre-existing adventures previously released only in PDF on DriveThruRPG, re-number the pages, slap covers on them, and put them up for sale. And, this is wrong on many levels. More strenuous and vigorous editing was needed to make this a complete product. For instance, circumspect editing to remove redundancies such as virtually the same introduction throughout the adventures, consolidating Library Data and Planetary Data in one section at the back of the book. It would also have been nice if there were some new art or pre-generated characters—there is one adventure that has pre-gens; why not write those characters into the first adventure?

What's more, how hard would have been to create art could be thrown in for fun? Maybe I am being a 'pain in the arts' but I think good art serves RPGs well, by inspiring the imagination, but it also gives the reader a pause – a rest bit for the eyes when all that one has is endless text to digest.

Furthermore, sections marked as characters are really non-player characters. The text tends to jump around without a coherent thread. Yes, it is touted as a framework rather than a flowchart. But, what happens is the text repeats itself in several places leaving the reader at best confused, at worst bored. This is surprising as its style unlike most of MJD's work (of which I have great respect for) tends toward being rambling and disjointed therefore lackluster. Everywhere in these adventures, one gets the impression of the Vargr just there to make the setting science fiction either in their capacity as serving as an alien oppressed underclass or just exotic trimmings to the background. Nowhere are the Vargr as they are written up in a variety of *Traveller* sources. Maybe, this is a concession to those who want it generic but when I see the word Vargr, I would expect something referencing back to another product that I purchased, or at least capture that vibe.

As I did buy all the PDFs prior to the release of the book, I wished the good folks at Avenger had thought of ways of adding value not merely posterity to their work. However, I do recognize that this is probably the last OTU Avenger product that we are likely to see for a long time—which is a pity, as they do have a good feel for the Third Imperium, as I play it—but even as a Swan Song, it would been appreciated had they left the scene with a bang rather than a whimper.

The Ugly

Aside from poor editing, there are ugly deck-plans (fortunately, Mongoose remedied this by putting nice ones for free to download off the book's site). The art and the maps look like a 1980s *Ultima* game with over-sized houses meant to represent villages. Also, the adventures supposedly can be linked together. But, other than the throwaway line saying so, there is little motivation to do so.

The idea that these adventures are a framework and not a flowchart is a good one, one that many Classic *Traveller* adventures rested upon... notwithstanding there is a balance between creating a sandbox and just giving ideas. And, as much as it is good to get new ideas, I came with the expectation that I was buying adventures not just some random doodles on a page. Unfortunately, many of these adventures seem like the outline for something, as the skeleton is not complete and still bits of flesh cling onto it – therefore, it is something neither fish nor fowl.

Lastly, I am also not certain that framework adventures is where *Traveller* players are at – I personally like the flowchart or nugget format pioneered by DGP, as it allowed for structure combined with sandbox. It also prevented the author from wordy excesses and a long-winded style.

In short, it is hard to give this one a solid thumbs-up or -down – anyone who buys it cannot expect to run it straight from the box and will have to slog through lots of redundant text to get to the meat. 🌀



The Night Visitors

by Bill Cameron

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

Synopsis

While standing overnight 'cold' watch on a grounded freighter, the PCs must deal with a group of intruders hell-bent on searching the ship.

Background

Squatting dejectedly on a remote pad at the local starport, a grounded merchantman awaits repairs. The actual reason for the delay, whether parts required are not yet on hand, payment hasn't been made, or a repair vessel is in route, doesn't matter. All the players need to know is that there is a job available, namely standing 'watch' in the grounded vessel before it is moved to the Yard and her extensive repairs begin.

The local spacer hiring hall is looking for two watchstanders per overnight shift: a bridge watchstander and a 'rover'. (Referees can either simply presume two 6-hour, overnight shifts per 24 hour day or come up with a shift schedule built around the actual local day. However, having two overnight shifts to fill will allow more PCs to be involved.)

Watchstanders are only needed at night; during the day there are various Port and Yard workers aboard, all involved in simple repairs and planned maintenance. The bridge watch should have either computer, engineering, or pilot skills. The 'rover' needs no specific skills. Because the hiring is being done through the local spacers hall, all applicants should have some shipboard experience. (The various crew certifications listed in *GURPS Traveller* can guide a GM here.)

The Ship

Any ship for which the Referee has deckplans can be used. However, a scout/courier or seeker would definitely be too small for all but the tiniest player parties. A *Beowulf* or *Empress Marava*, thanks

to having two decks, can be used. A Type-R may be ideal, multiple decks and plenty of compartments. (I have used both the Type R and other, larger ships when running this.)

The ship has no internal power and no way of generating any internal power; i.e. the power plant is 'cold' and the batteries 'flat'. Power comes aboard either via a shore power connection or is supplied by a off-hull generator. The ship's computer is inoperable and no anti-hijacking program can be run. Some basic internal indicators and sensors are operable. These are primarily hatch and door indications plus various electrical distribution displays. Due to the work being performed during the day, the number and kind of indicators and read-outs will change from day to day.

Lighting aboard is also limited. While the bridge is fully lit, all other spaces will not normally be so. Cargo holds, staterooms, passageways, engineering spaces and the like will either be lighted normally, with temporary fixtures, or not at all. As with the indicators and sensors above, the lighting plan will change from day to day.

The ship's hold is mostly empty. There are a few (1d6) standard cargo containers scattered about. Some are empty and some contain the tool cribs and parts the day workers use. There will also be equipment, tools, and parts in the other areas of the ship where work is taking place. The numbers, types, and locations of these will change from day to day.

Watchstanding itself will be boring. The bridge watch will monitor and log what little information is displayed by the electrical distribution system. The 'rover' will do just that, rove around the ship looking out for fires, egregious safety violations, spills of various liquids, and so forth. The rover is also supposed to prevent and/or report intrusions aboard by unauthorized personnel.

Communication between the two watchstanders either uses the ship's internal comm system or handheld comm-links. Like every other system aboard, some comm stations will be out of order and those will change from day to day. The handheld

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units are usually good backups; their operation may be spotty in certain compartments however.

The Plot

Certain crewmembers aboard the vessel were engaged in the 'small package' trade; i.e. smuggling. They were killed or injured when the incident that grounded the freighter occurred. The local parties who had contracted for the 'delivery' are now quite concerned about claiming their property. While they know that the parcel is aboard, they don't know exactly where aboard it is and they feel quite certain that the parcel will be found when the freighter is in the Yards.

Just where the parcel is and what it contains is of little matter. Aside from the bridge, the Referee can place it anywhere onboard and have it contain any kind of item(s) at all; gems, drugs, political tracts, blackmail materials, anything. The parcel is small; perhaps 15cm × 20 cm × 1cm, and is artfully hidden.

The Action

The first night on watch will be relatively peaceful. There will be a few, seemingly spurious indications of hatch and door operation. The rover may catch fleeting glimpses of intruders or just hear undetermined noises. After their first night(s) aboard, the players should only be aware that something odd is going on.

That feeling should become a certainty when the players are approached by someone who wishes to gain access to the freighter that night. This individual, or group, should at first ask, then attempt to bribe, and finally threaten the players. Just what happens next is up to the PCs, naturally.

Some will take the bribe allowing the search and retrieval to occur. Those PCs should run afoul of both the local hiring hall and the local police in the next few days. The hiring hall will learn of the players' 'blind eye' and move to void their various spacer certifications. The police will wish to question and possibly charge the players with a crime.

If the PCs refuse to allow access to the searchers, even in the face of threats, the following night (or nights!) on watch should be quiet. The locals are using this time to decide on and plan their next moves. This lull in NPC activity will have two effects. First, it will leave the players jittery.

Second, the lull will undercut the story the players tell local authorities. Some players will report the bribe offer and threats to local authorities, such as the police or port security. How well their story is received should depend on how well the players tell it. The players could be simply ignored, more frequent check-ins arranged, or extra patrols set up. Any of the added security arrangements will not last long when nothing occurs, however.

Some players will search for the smuggled parcel themselves. Skills like streetwise, intrusion, holdout, and others can help the player's search for the parcel once they know it is aboard and once they know which compartment it is in. The latter is the most important.

Searching the entire ship is obviously impossible. The Referee should place the parcel with the job held by the smuggler in mind; gunner in a turret, drive lackey behind a maintenance panel, steward in the kitchen, human forklift in the hold, etc. If they wish to search for the parcel themselves, the players will first have to determine its general location before beginning. There are many methods of doing this.

One would be to interrogate or bribe one of the NPCs involved. Another would consist of examining the last crew roster and comparing it with the list of dead and injured. Still another has the players offering to search the ship for the local smugglers. While the method the players use to narrow their search doesn't matter, the search itself should be very time consuming and take days, not hours.

After the lull and if the players haven't decided to work with the smugglers, two acts of direct violence by the locals will occur in the same day. First, an attempt to beat a player or players will happen.

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Active Measures

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The locals are hoping that the beating will scare off the players and allow a more pliant group to take over the 'cold' watches. If the beatings do not work, the locals will make an armed assault on the ship that night.

The number of assailants and the type of their arms should be tailored to the players' group. At one extreme, only body pistols and knuckle dusters will be used, while at the other ACRs and grenades may be more appropriate. In all cases, local laws levels should be strictly observed for both the players and their opponents. If the players show up for work with FGMPs or the smugglers drive up in a *Trepida*, People Will Notice and Questions Will Be Asked. Despite their clumsy acts thus far, the local smugglers still believe in stealth and discretion.

The local smugglers plan on taking the players captive first and searching the ship second. While they will settle on keeping the players from interfering with the search, the smugglers do not want any 'stray' players running off to summon port security or arranging *Die Hard* style problems for them. They will prefer to intimidate rather than kill. After all, smuggling is one thing while murder is something entirely different. (This may prove difficult to control in an ACR/grenade situations.)

The smugglers' plan is to first cut off both electrical power to the ship and communications with the outside. Immediately after that, the rover(s) are to be rounded up with the capture of the bridge to follow. The smugglers will be counting on speed above all else; they want to gain control of the vessel quickly to leave enough time for their search. Again, depending on the tone of play, the smugglers may either overawe the rover(s) with a show of force and give the bridge watch a chance to surrender or shoot down the rover(s) and assault the bridge quickly after.

The smugglers' search will take little time. They have previously worked with the crewman involved

and know something of his methods. The search will be split between two locations aboard. The Referee should select a stateroom and a work location to be searched. The time required for each location will be between 35 minutes to an hour (30 minutes + 1D6 × 5 minutes). Whether the smugglers find the parcel in the first location searched or whether they can search both locations at the same time is up the Referee. (When I ran this scenario, I decided that two smugglers were required for each search party. Whether there were two search parties then depended on the size of the smuggler group, casualties, the number of guards needed, etc. In one case, because a player was still loose, a search party required two searchers and guard.)

Of course, the resolution of the smugglers' assault will depend on the actions of the players. They can be captured and they can surrender. They can escape and evade. They can even fight off the smugglers or hold on and summon help. In the latter case, just how fast the police or port security arrive is up to the Referee, as is how many cops arrive. Remember that the players have cried wolf before, so unless presented with extraordinary 'evidence'—like a comm call from the bridge in which gunfire can be heard—the police or port security should just send a patrol at first, two men in a patrol vehicle. Their reports; ship's power cut, comm links down, bodies, someone shooting at us, etc., will then bring down a veritable Avalanche Of Law Enforcement.

As always, the Referee should determine the course of further events.

Mixing It Up

Here are a few ideas with which to complicate this scenario:

The More The Merrier: How does the idea of *two* different groups of smugglers sound? The player could make a deal with one, only to be attacked by another. The assault could turn into a three-way fire-fight, too. One group could use bribery and the other use beatings. One group could even be the cops. Keep your players guessing.

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The Enviroment: Put the ship on an airless world. Put it in orbit. Put it in a corrosive atmosphere. Make everyone wear vacc-suits and listen to them grumble. Play with gravity too. Have the ship's intenal grav down everywhere except the bridge and a few randomly selected compartments that change daily.

The Big Ship: You don't need reams of penciled graph paper or CC2 or the AHL deckplan set to have a big ship. Try a very old favorite of mine, the 'stretched' Type-R. The subbie's plans are found everywhere, from the 'net and in nearly every all edition of *Traveller*, if memory serves. Simply lay out two sets of subbie plans nose to tail and make a few

adjustments. The cargo deck is now twice as long with two loading doors on either side. The drive 'tunnels' in the wings are now twice as long, too, with the additional access points. The upper engineering compartment is also twice as long. The bridge remains the same. You can either double up the crew/passenger section sandwiched between the bridge and upper engineering deck or you can keep one section and make the other an upper cargo deck. A bigger ship is spookier, harder to attack, harder to defend, and—my favorite—gives you more places to run and hide; "I'll be under the inboard bunk in Stateroom 24B if you need me...". ☼



Doing It My Way

Character Generation Rules

The "Other" Option: An Extended Career for Classic *Traveller*

by Michael Brown

One of the strengths of the Third Imperium is its diversity. Beings of every sort come together to fire the engines of commerce, social organization, and progress. Along with such diversity must come a diversity of occupations that allow each sapient to contribute to society.

Classic *Traveller's Book 1: Characters and Combat* introduced us to the first six adventuring careers: Army, Navy, Marines, Scouts, and Merchants, and a sixth simply called "Other". It was apparently designed to be a "catch-all" for characters that didn't fit the other paths, but seemed to assume that those pursuing that option were criminals of some sort, through the skill lists skewing heavily toward such pursuits. "Other" is also the only career that offers a chance to lose Social Standing.

But what of those who have a yen for adventure yet come from non-military backgrounds? This generation system is intended to address that by expanding the "Other" career options using an expanded generation systems like those in Books 4-7.

It is also intended to create rich, diverse characters that offer more motivations for adventuring than simply having been a soldier, explorer, or dealer.

The Career Categories

These rules will take a slightly different direction than previous ones of its sort. Since the number of occupations that could fall under "Other" can reach into the thousands; rather than try to present specific careers, we will work with twelve broad categories designed to generically encompass as many vocations as possible:

Conservators work primarily in the outdoors. Includes such individuals as farmers, fishing industry workers, environmentalists, rangers, and foresters. Hunters and Barbarians are covered in *Supplement 4: Citizens of the Imperium*.

Constructors build and fabricate structures and finished goods, or mine raw materials on a world's surface. Includes construction workers of all types, manufacturers, and miners.

Creators utilize imaginative imagery and techniques to convey ideas and promote communication. Includes artists of all types, writers, and multimedia workers.

Designers engage in developing blueprints and plans for structures and machines, usually to be sub-

Doing It My Way

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sequently built by Constructors. Includes architects and engineers (other than starship engineers).

Educators instruct others in new concepts, ideas, and techniques. Teachers make up the largest segment of this career, but it includes academicians, scholars, and childcare workers.

Entertainers provide diversions and amusements through song, dance, acting, or other such performances. Includes actors, musicians, and other performers on stage and screen. If the industry is legal on a given world, may include sex workers. Characters with DEX 9+ may be acrobats.

Entrepreneurs use their knowledge of and talent for business to keep the engines of commerce running. Includes businesspeople, financiers, and general office/administrative support.

Helpers are the largest class of workers, handling a variety of duties usually involved in directly serving others in some capacity. Includes servants, salespeople, support staffers, food prep and other menial workers.

Lawbreakers ply their trade in the dark world of lawlessness. Includes criminals and scofflaws of all stripes, ex-cons, and sex workers (if the industry is legislated against.) Pirates and Rogues are covered in *Supplement 4*.

Litigators interpret the numerous and often complex laws of the empire and its worlds. Includes attorneys, paralegals, arbitrators, and judges.

Trainers work with animals, preparing them for use in labor, entertainment, or exhibition. Includes animal handlers, animal breeders, and zookeepers.

Transporters move and coordinate the movement of goods across distances. Includes logisticians, and vehicle operators.

After characteristic generation, players enlist in one of the chosen career categories. A specific career can be selected within a category at any time, taking the character concept and scores into account. For example, after generating the six scores, a player

might look them over and enlist as a Trainer, waiting until later in the process to pick a specific vocation such as zookeeper.

Throughout the generation process, the concept of *Capital* is used. Capital represents social or professional rewards such as minor honors, official recognition, good publicity, and other things which reflect well on the individual and which may help advance his or her career. Capital is accumulated at a rate of 1D-3 per successful indicated throw on the table. 5 points of Capital may be traded in for a +1 DM on any generation table except where indicated. Once traded in, the points are lost but can re-accumulate. Any Capital remaining during the mustering out process is lost.

Pre-Enlistment Options

It is not necessary for a character to immediately enlist at age 18. Other options allow the character to further develop his/her basic skills and maturity. For the "Other" career, these include College, Trade School, Business School, and Wanderjahr.

College

College is a four-year (one-term) process that focuses on developing basic education and maturity. A character that succeeds in this option enlists in his/her chosen career at age 22 rather than 18, and resolves all career terms normally.

Admission	9+	DM +2 if EDU 9+
Success	7+	DM +2 if INT 8+
Education	1D-2	DM +1 if EDU 9+
Honors	10+	DM +1 if EDU 10+

To resolve College, roll on the table above, first Admission, then Success, then, if the character succeeds, Education (the result of which is added to the character's EDU), and Honors. DMs apply based on the *unmodified* stats; that is, the DM for Honors is only available if the character had EDU 10+ *before* enrolling in College. If the character fails the 'Success' roll, he/she ages one year and enlists normally, with the first term being a short one of only three years.

Doing It My Way

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Trade School

Trade School is a one-year process that focuses on skill development. After Trade School, the character's first term is a short one of only three years.

Admission	8+	DM +1 if EDU 8+
Success	7+	DM +1 if INT 8+
Education	1D-3	DM +1 if EDU 9+
Honors	9+	DM +1 if EDU 9+

To resolve Trade School, roll on the table above, first Admission (if the character is sent to Trade School as a special assignment, Admission is automatic), then Success, then, if the character succeeds, Education (the result of which is added to the character's EDU), and Honors. DMs apply based on the *unmodified* stats; that is, the DM for Honors is only available if the character had EDU 9+ *before* enrolling in Trade School. If the character succeeds at Trade School, roll once on the Trade School skill table and add one level in the indicated skill. If the character succeeds in achieving Honors, roll again on the same table and add one level in the indicated skill.

Business School

Business School is a one-year process that focuses on the development of specifically business-related skills. After Business School, the character's first term is a short one of only three years.

Admission	9+	DM +2 if EDU 10+
Success	9+	DM +2 if INT 8+
Education	1D-3	DM +1 if EDU 9+
Honors	9+	DM +1 if EDU 9+

To resolve Business School, roll on the table above, first Admission (if the character is sent to Business School as a special assignment, Admission is automatic), then Success, then, if the character succeeds, Education (the result of which is added to the character's EDU), and Honors. DMs apply based on the *unmodified* stats; that is, the DM for Honors is only available if the character had EDU 9+ *before* enrolling in Business School. If the character succeeds

at Business School, roll once on the Business School skill table and add one level in the indicated skill. If the character succeeds in achieving Honors, roll again on the same table and add one level in the indicated skill.

Wanderjahr

Wanderjahr ("Travel year") is a one-year process focusing on the development of personal maturity. After a Wanderjahr, the character's first term is a short one of only three years (but see below). A character that elects to take a Wanderjahr should roll 4+ for Survival. If the character survives, roll 4+ on 1D to receive *either* one level in the player's choice of skill from the Initial Training table *and* DM +1 to enlist in that career, *or* +1 to the player's choice of characteristic. Alternatively, a character that completes a Wanderjahr may subsequently attempt enrollment in College, Business School, or Trade School with a DM +1 for Admission. If the character enters College, the *second* term is only three years; if the character enters Business or Trade School, the first term is only *two* years.

Resolving the Career

The career is resolved first by enlisting, followed by a sequence of four-year terms, each consisting of four one-year assignments, followed by re-enlistment for the next term.

Enlistment

Each career type has its own enlistment roll, as shown on the table below. For all careers, enlistment is automatic if the character has graduated College, Trade School, or Business School with Honors; if no Honors but EDU 10+, all careers have DM +1.

Conservator	6+	Entrepreneur	6+
Constructor	6+	Helper	3+
Creator	5+	Lawbreaker	3+
Designer	7+	Litigator	9+
Educator	6+	Trainer	6+
Entertainer	7+	Transporter	5+

If the throw for enlistment in the desired career fails, the player has a choice of trying to enlist in the

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career again at a cumulative DM of -1 per each attempt, or attempting enlistment in another career.

Initial Training

Upon enlistment, the character undergoes initial training and orientation. This process is part of the first assignment, and effectively gives the character an extra skill for the first term. Award the character the skill listed in the table below for the career in which the character has enlisted. Note that if the character already has the skill at level 1 or higher, an additional level is *not* granted.

Conservator	Survival-1	Entrepreneur	Trader-1
Constructor	Fabricate-1	Helper	Liaison-1
Creator	Art-1	Lawbreaker	Streetwise-1
Designer	Struct Eng-1	Litigator	Legal-1
Educator	Instruction-1	Trainer	Animal-1
Entertainer	Perform-1	Transporter	Hvy Veh-1

Assignments

Each term consists of four one-year assignments. To determine the assignment, roll 1D on the Basic Assignment table below; Lawbreakers have a mandatory DM -1 on these rolls, all others may take an optional DM -1 to earn 2×Capital for the year. A player cannot both use Capital for a positive DM *and* take the optional DM -1 on the same assignment. Lawbreakers may use Capital to offset the DM -1.

Basic Assignments			
0	Danger	4	Routine
1	Field	5	Office
2	Field	6	Special
3	Routine		

If a Special Assignment is received, roll 2D on the Special Assignment table below:

Special Assignments			
2	Turning Point	6	Cross Training
3	Sabbatical	7	School
4	Networking	8	School
5	Networking	9	Award
10	Windfall		
11	Mentor		
12	Turning Point		

Assignment Explanations

Office: The year is spent in an administrative capacity at a corporate headquarters or subsidiary office; or in the case of careers that have no offices per se (such as Lawbreakers), the year is spent in easy, nondangerous work.

Routine: The individual is engaged in the routine duties of his or her chosen career.

Field: The character is assigned outside of the normal territory of his or her career. For example, an Entertainer may go on tour, or a Conservator may help rangers in another forest.

Danger: The individual is assigned to duties that carry a significant chance of danger. For example, an Educator may be assigned to teach in a rough part of town or on a lawless world; or a Designer may be employed designing structures in a war zone.

Special: The PC is on a special assignment for the year. See below.

Special Assignment Explanations

Turning Point: A career adversity (for example, a layoff or an economic downturn), means the individual can no longer continue in his or her chosen career. Enlist in another career. Enlisting in the previous career is not permitted.

Award: The character has been selected to receive an award in recognition of his or her service. +1D Capital and Cr(2D×100).

Cross-Training: An opportunity arises to cross-train in another career, perhaps on some sort of detached duty or a continuing education class. The player may throw twice on any other career path table of his or her choosing, but both throws must be on the same table.

School: The individual has an opportunity to return to Business School (Entrepreneurs, Educators, Entertainers, Litigators, and Transporters) or Trade School (all others). Resolve as indicated on the Business School or Trade School table above. Admission is automatic; there is no need to roll.

Sabbatical: The worker has been granted an extended paid leave of absence from work. +1 EDU and two throws on the Personal Development table.

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Networking: The year is spent building or maintaining a network of colleagues. +1D Capital and throw twice on the Working Life skill table.

Mentor: The PC gains a person who offers guidance through their career. +1 EDU, +1D Capital, and choose the next year's assignment. The mentor may become a recurring contact later in the campaign.

Windfall: The individual receives unexpected good fortune in the form of a monetary award (such as contest winnings.) Throw once on the appropriate Cash Benefit table below.

Assignment Resolution

After the assignment (other than Special Assignment) has been determined, roll on the Assignment Resolution Table to determine Survival, Skills, and Capital. If the Skills roll is successful, the player should choose a skill table and roll 1D to determine the skill gained. The player may expend Capital at the rate of 5 points of Capital for each DM +1 on the Skill table. If the Capital roll succeeds, roll 1D-3 to determine how many points of Capital are gained. Note that if the character has earned double Capital for taking DM -1 on the Basic Assignment table, the player should still roll 1D-3, *then* double the result.

Skills

Each assignment a character may be eligible to receive a skill (if the Skills throw is successful, or if the skill is an entitlement due to a special assign-

Assignment Resolution Tables				
	Office	Routine	Field	Danger
Conservator, Constructor, Lawbreaker, Transporter				
Survival	Auto	4+	6+	8+
Skills	None	3+	4+	5+
Capital	None	9+	9+	11+
Creator, Designer, Entrepreneur, Helper, Litigator, Trainer				
Survival	Auto	Auto	3+	5+
Skills	3+	3+	3+	3+
Capital	8+	8+	8+	8+
Educator, Entertainer				
Survival	Auto	3+	5+	7+
Skills	3+	3+	3+	4+
Capital	8+	8+	9+	10+

ment). The player should select a column to roll on, then throw 1D to determine the skill awarded. Capital may be expended at the rate of five points of Capital for each DM +1. Skills are as described in *Classic Traveller Books 1-7*; new skills appear in bold and are described following the tables. In Skills Table 1, the Personal Development and Working Life columns are open to any character; the Office, Routine, Field, and Danger columns are open to characters in any career classification who have received the appropriate assignment; the Trade School and Business School columns are open to those who are resolving a special assignment to those schools, or who are attending those schools as pre-career options. In Skills Table 2, each column is open to any character in the indicated career classification.

Skills Table 1								
Roll	Personal Development	Working Life	Office	Routine	Field	Danger	Trade School	Business School
1	+1 STR	Admin	Admin	Computer	Mechanical	Recon	Electronics	Broker
2	+1 DEX	Primary	Electronics	Vehicle	Vehicle	Blade Combat	Mechanical	Liaison
3	+1 END	Primary	Computer	Primary	Instruction	Gun Combat	Medical	Trader
4	+1 INT	Primary	Liaison	Primary	Liaison	Brawling	Trader	Admin
5	+1 EDU	Primary	Communications	Liaison	Jack-o-T	Brawling	Computer	Admin
6	Carousing	Vehicle	Recruiting	Jack-o-T	Leader	Survival	Communications	Legal
7	Gambling	Jack-o-T	Jack-o-T	Mechanical	Carousing	Bow Combat	-	-
8	+1 SOC	Computer	Leader	Electronics	Recruiting	Tactics	-	-

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Skills Table 2

Roll	Conservator	Constructor	Creator	Designer	Educator	Entertainer
1	Survival	Fabricate	Liaison	Naval Architecture	Leader	Blade Combat
2	Survival	Fabricate	Jack-o-T	Computer	Instruction	Brawling
3	Hunting	Fabricate	Art	Structural Engineering	Instruction	Perform
4	Hunting	Mechanical	Art	Structural Engineering	Instruction	Perform
5	Animal	Mechanical	Art	Structural Engineering	Admin	Jack-o-T
6	Equestrian	Exoskeleton	Computer	Admin	Admin	Liaison
	Entrepreneur	Helper	Lawbreaker	Litigator	Trainer	Transporter
1	Leader	Steward	Forgery	Admin	Instruction	Vehicle
2	Broker	Steward	Blade Combat	Interrogation	Survival	Vehicle
3	Trader	Liaison	Streetwise	Legal	Animal	Heavy Vehicle
4	Trader	Liaison	Gun Combat	Legal	Animal	Heavy Vehicle
5	Legal	Vehicle	Brawling	Interrogation	Equestrian	Exoskeleton
6	Admin	Jack-o-T	Bribery	Liaison	Hunting	Cargo

Explanation of Skills

Skills are per the original Classic Traveller source material they appeared in, listed below:

Book 1: Characters and Combat: Admin, Air/Raft, ATV, Blade Cbt, Brawling, Bribery, Carousing, Computer, Electronics, Engineering, Forgery, Gambling, Gun Cbt, Jack of All Trades, Leader, Mechanical, Medical, Steward, Streetwise, Tactics, Vehicle

Book 4: Mercenary: Instruction, Interrogation, Liaison, Recon, Recruiting, Survival

Book 5: High Guard: Communications

Book 6: Scouts: Equestrian, Hunting, Naval Architect

Book 7: Merchant Prince: Broker, Legal, Trader

Supplement 4: Citizens of the Imperium: Air Craft, Prospecting, Water Craft

New Skills

Primary: Immediately gain a level in the skill listed in Initial Training for the career classification.

Animal: The individual is skilled in training and working with non-sentient beasts. When encountering an animal, the trainer can use his or her skill to modify the creature's reactions; the skill level divided by 5 (round down) is applied to the animal's

throw to attack or flee (per Book 3). The skill level is also applied as a DM to any throws made to train an animal. Note the difference between Animal skill and Equestrian skill (Book 6).

Art: The hero is accomplished at creating objects of great cultural or aesthetic value from varied materials. This is a broad field encompassing the visual arts (such as graphic design, fine art, and filmmaking) and the literary arts. The skill level is used as a DM not only to create objets d'art, but also to appraise the value of a completed piece or the relative competence of another artist.

Cargo: The adventurer is able to properly load and secure cargo in a ship's hold or on a surface vehicle. This skill also covers the operation of fork lifts and other loading aids, but not exoskeletons (see below).

Exoskeleton: The individual can operate an internally-piloted exoskeletal robot that exponentially augments the operator's strength. Such devices are typically employed in cargo loading and construction. An exoskeleton pilot can use Powered Combat Armor at -1 to skill.

Fabricate: This skill covers the manufacture and assembly of finished goods of all kinds, from small,

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portable items all the way up to and including structures. It also includes the use of devices like 3-D printers and robotic assemblers.

Heavy Vehicle: Heavy vehicles as defined here are large conveyances such as trucks, buses, construction vehicles, and trains. ATVs are generally not covered by this skill, although an individual with Heavy Vehicle can drive an ATV with DM -1.

Perform: The individual can present a pleasing and amusing entertainment to an audience, using such talents as singing, dancing, or acting. Use the skill level as a positive DM for audience reaction.

Structural Engineer: The skill of designing large-scale projects such as buildings, bridges, and dams. Individuals with this skill are able to calculate stresses and loads, select suitable materials based on strength and durability, and determine the quality of such works.

Re-Enlistment and Mustering Out

Re-Enlistment

At the end of each term (four assignments), the player must roll to determine if the character may continue in the career. Roll 2D for the indicated number or higher on the appropriate career classification on the Re-enlistment table below. This should be done even if the player does not wish to continue character generation; if a 12 is rolled, the character must continue for an additional term. Capital may not be expended for DMs on re-enlistment.

Re-enlistment Table			
Conservator	5+	Entrepreneur	6+
Constructor	5+	Helper	3+
Creator	4+	Lawbreaker	3+
Designer	5+	Litigator	5+
Educator	5+	Trainer	6+
Entertainer	6+	Transporter	5+

Mustering Out

When a player no longer wishes to continue character generation, or when a survival roll is

failed, the character 'musters out'. This process gives the character some equipment, possessions, and/or liquid assets. For each term completed, the character may roll once on the Mustering Out table. Capital may be expended at the rate of 5 points of Capital for DM +1 on the Material Benefits table, but not on the Cash table; characters that have Gambling skill may take DM +1 on the Cash table.

Different career classifications offer different benefits upon mustering out. Use the columns indicated below for the various classifications. Characters who have been cross-trained in a different classification may roll on any appropriate column.

- A. Helper, Lawbreaker
- B. Conservator, Constructor, Creator, Educator, Trainer, Transporter
- C. Designer, Entertainer
- D. Entrepreneur, Litigator

Mustering Out Table				
	A	B	C	D
Material Benefits				
1	Low Psg	Low Psg	Low Psg	High Psg
2	Mid Psg	Gun	Mid Psg	+1 SOC
3	Gun	Mid Psg	+1 INT	Gun
4	Gun	+1 INT	+1 EDU	+1 EDU
5	Blade	+1 EDU	High Psg	+1 SOC
6	-1 SOC	Mid Psg	+1 SOC	TAS
7	High Psg	High Psg	TAS	Yacht
Cash				
1	1,000	5,000	20,000	10,000
2	1,000	5,000	20,000	20,000
3	5,000	10,000	20,000	50,000
4	5,000	10,000	30,000	50,000
5	10,000	20,000	50,000	100,000
6	20,000	40,000	60,000	100,000
7	30,000	50,000	100,000	200,000



XF-309 “Pigeon” and XF-310 “Spider”

designed by Daniel Boese

Overview

Intended target: Irregular TL6-7 infantry, who hide and maneuver in caves, urban areas, and among civilians, making it difficult to find and identify them in time to destroy them.

“Pigeons” are deployed in swarms on the order of 10-50,000, which fly around a target zone, look, network with each other and with behind-the-lines fire control; and when they’re assigned a target, go and explode themselves at it. (The “Spider” variant scurries where “Pigeons” can’t fly.)

These drones are built using *GURPS 3ed.* rules from *GURPS Vehicles*, *GURPS Robots*, and *GURPS Ultra-Tech 1* and 2.

The warhead yields can be, and often are, down-graded significantly, in order to minimize collateral damage. Careful selection of lethal radius, and with the guidance of a skilled pilot at the forward base, can allow, for example, for one ground-car to be de-

stroyed without harming those nearby—or even for the passenger to be killed without killing the driver.

These drones have also been made available in smaller quantities to law enforcement for use in specialized situations where direct approach by officers is contraindicated.

Design requirements:

- TL8
- One ‘Flock’ is 10,000. Standard deployment is 1-5 flocks, thus cost is a factor. Target: \$5k each.
- ‘Pigeon’ flies and can hover. Target endurance: 6 hours. ‘Spiders’ crawl where ‘pigeons’ can’t fly.
- Sees, even without sensor module. Target: LLTV or better.
- Networks with other members of flock.
- On command, flies to and explodes at target.

When possible, before deploying Pigeons, artillery should be used to clear the area of opposing artillery, MBTs, and radio jammers. The latter can also be located by certain sensor modules, the data communicated by lasercomms, directing Pigeons to target such jammers.

Design Details

Common chassis:

		Description	Mass (lbs)	Volume (cu ft)	Price (\$)
Body	Drive	<i>See Drive Options (one required for use)</i>			
	Electronics	Radio, short range (10 mi)	25	0.005	50
		Scrambler			500
		LLTV	0.5	0.01	1250
		GPS	0.5	0.01	100
	Computer	Small, Robot, C2	2	0.005	1000
		Program: Computer Navigation, C2			500
		Tiny, Dedicated, C1	0.25	0.005	40
		Program: Datalink, C1			400
		Internal Battery: Rechargeable Power Cell, 20,000 kW	2.2	0.022	220
	Modular Socket A	3	0.06	30	
	Modular Socket B	3	0.06	30	
Structure	Streamlining: Good; Strength: Super-light; Materials: Std; Struct: Robotic. Cheaply made. 1HP		1.46		548
Surface	Armor: Metal, Advanced, DR1		0.548	0.001	11
	Blackout Paint				0.731
	Waterproof				7.31
	Liquid Crystal Skin		0.731		146
TOTALS			39.189	0.178	4833.041

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The common chassis contains basic functionality, except for being able to move. There are two drive options, the “Pigeon” and the “Spider”, as shown below. One option must be selected for each drone, at the time of manufacture.

Drive Options:

Description	Mass (lbs)	Vol (cu ft)	Price (\$)
“Pigeon” MMR Helicopter Drivetrain, 1.67 kW, lift 20 lbs, thrust 2.67 lbs	5.5	0.11	137
Multiple Main Rotor (MMR), folding, 1HP	0.366		110
“Spider” Legged Drivetrain, 0.1 kW (0.017 kW per leg)	6	0.12	300
Legs×6, Improved Suspension			

With either drive system, these drones have Size Modifier -2, Health 11, Body ST 2, DX 9, and IQ 5.

Performance Characteristics

“Pigeon” configuration: Stall Speed 0, Drag 1.22, Top Speed 130 mph, Accel 3 mph/s, Maneuver Rating 12g, Stability Rating 3, Decel 50 mph/s, Endurance 7h50m, Maintenance Interval 179h.

“Spider” configuration: Speed Factor 13, Top Speed 40 mph, gAccel 10 mph/s, gDecel 20 mph/s, gMR 1.75, gSR 4, ground Pressure 92.9 lbs/sf, Off Road Speed 40 mph, Operating Duration 5d16h of movement. (Nearly indefinite when standing still.)

Size comparison: Take a dozen US-standard bricks (7"×3.5"×2.25"), and stack them on top of each other. From top to bottom, that’s roughly the size of the drone, nose-to-tail.

Module Options

These modules are all 3 lbs mass, 0.06 cu ft volume, for fitting in Modular Sockets A and B. Load-outs are per drone per mission, and can, with proper support (e.g., some number of drones being equipped with the Robot Arm module), be changed during deployment.

Munitions Modules

Gas modules allow chassis recovery/reuse; explosives modules usually cause chassis destruction.

Munitions Options		
Explosives		
HEDP	Default module for Module Socket B 91mm, normal. Configured as self-destruct. Damage 6d×25(5) [6d]	108
ICM	Damage: 0-120 yds: 4d concussive + 4d frag. 120-240 yds: 1d + 1d	300
Gas		
Blackout Gas	Radius 39 yds	1560
Tear Gas	Radius 39 yds	310
Riot Gas	Radius 39 yds	1060
Sleep Gas	Radius 39 yds	2560
Nerve Gas	Radius 39 yds	2560

Non-Weapon Modules

A wide range of modules are available for information-gathering and control.

Non-Weapons Options		
Battery		
Battery	Default module for Module Socket A TL8 Rechargeable Power Cell, 27,272.7 kWh	360
Electronics		
LLTV	Mag ×6	1500
PESA	Range 0.75 mile	12000
Thermograph	Range 1.5 mile	6000
LADAR	Range 0.75 mile, 0.375kW	3750
RADAR	Passive, Range 1.5 mile	9000
RADAR	Range 1.5 mile, 0.375kW	1500
RADAR	Low-Res imaging, range 0.75 mile, 0.375kW	3750
RADAR	High-Res imaging, range 53 yds, 0.375kW	3000
Sound Detect	Surveillance, Level 15	15000
Laser Chemsan	Range 750 yds	1500
Visual Sensor	Robot, Night Vision, 360°	7100
Laser Optics Det.	Range 3.75 mile	3750
Radiation Sensor	Basic Sensor + RADAR/Laser Detector	100
Anti-jammer		650
Radio Dir Finder	Receive-only, range 10 mile	
Laser Comm	Range 20 mile	
Robot Arm	ST 10, retractable, 0.05 kW. Use to change modules mid-flight in other Pigeons/Spiders.	6000



President-class Holiday Liner

designed by Michael Gilliam

This ship design was originally posted to the pre-magazine *Freelance Traveller* website in 2003.

Specifications

General Data

- Displacement: 4000 tons
- Configuration: Slab SL
- Tech Level: A (10)
- Jump: 1
- Maneuver: 4
- Fuel Purifier Plant
- Construction Costs (approximate): MCr 2600

Accommodations

- Crew Cabins: 72
- Passenger Cabins: 240 (16 High, 224 Middle)
- Cargo: 90 tons displacement

Crew

Officers: 7 or 8 (Captain, XO, Senior Pilot, Chief Engineer, Purser, MAA/Gunnery Officer, Surgeon. An additional unspecified officer may be carried if desired.)

Crew: 56 to 64 (12-16 Engineers, 36-38 Stewards, 4 Gunners, 2 Pilots, 2 Boat Mechanics. An additional 2 unspecified crewmen may be carried if desired.)

Small Craft

2 Ship's Boats, 10 Lifeboats

Armaments

40 Turrets available. Weapons mix is customized for each system, and information on a particular ship's weaponry is not generally disseminated.

The following material is taken from the Starways Holiday Lines brochure for the Jefferson Davis, a ship considered to be representative of the class. Starways Holiday Lines operates in the Regatta—Pentosa system, where the adventure I.C.E. (also appearing in this issue) is set.

The Ship

The Regatta—Pentosa system is a pair of G-class stars in distant orbit about each other. Regatta, an

energetic TL10 industrialized world with one billion people, orbits one star, while Pentosa, an up-and-coming TL6 agricultural world with ten million, orbits the other. Commercial and cultural contact has been taking place for many years via numerous small non-jump-capable vessels, and recently a new corporation, Starways of Regatta, has begun undertaking regular passenger transportation between the two worlds. The *Jefferson Davis* is Starways' second liner, and their first luxury vessel. Though not quite up to imperial standards (it would be classed as a Holiday Cruiser) it has attracted great interest in Regatta—Pentosa and is very popular. Many locally famous personalities and businessmen have taken to travel between the two worlds on business and pleasure, and Pentosa's decision to subsidize half of the finance charges for the Regattan vessel is proving productive to Pentosa's development.

At maneuver 4, travel time between Regatta and Pentosa varies from five days to ten days. When the journey in normal space will take seven or fewer days, the *Jefferson Davis* relies on its maneuver drives, but if the journey will take eight or more days under the maneuver drive, the ship uses its jump-1 drive to make the trip in seven. Travel times usually consist of one day to lift off, five to seven days maneuvering or jumping, another day to descend planetside, and three days to debark passengers, clean and restock, and embark new passengers.

The Crew

Ship's officers wear dashing navy blue dress uniforms. The stewards wear white coats with black pants, and the engineers wear orange utility suits. Other crewmen wear black utility suits. On duty, all have lightweight headset radios to maintain contact with the ship's communication system—when on-call, these headsets are usually simply worn around the neck, beeping to page a particular crewman. The Master-at-Arms and the gunner's mates, in their role as ship's security, are openly armed with 9mm pistols; all other crew members, except Stewards, carry concealed 9mm pistols. Stewards are trained in un-

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armed combat and in subduing out-of-control passengers. The crew is on standard union hours—8 hours on duty, 8 hours on call, and 8 hours sleep time. Pay, hours, conditions, and benefits are good, and most of the crew are happy with their jobs.

Procedures and Traditions

On boarding, all passengers are interviewed and screened by ship's security personnel, i.e. the Master-at-Arms and the four gunner's mates. All projectile weapons must be turned in to the Master-at-Arms, but passengers are allowed to retain knives and swords. Passengers involved in incidents where weapons are drawn will be asked to surrender all weapons pending investigation of the incident by ship's security, and if it is deemed necessary, will be confined to their cabin and turned over to the authorities at debarkation time. All baggage is screened as well.

Before lift-off, all passengers must assemble for the crew to review emergency equipment and procedures. A certain number of passengers (usually 10 percent) must demonstrate some proficiency in some damage-control activity such as emergency hull patching, firefighting, or first aid. The idea is to show the passengers that they too have a role in getting the ship safely to its destination.

During lift-off, passengers and (off-duty) crew celebrate the journey with a large party. All drinks are free for a few hours, all entertainment facilities are active, and several impromptu contests are held (beauty contests are popular). The captain makes a speech, and officially the journey has begun.

The ship settles into a routine enroute. All entertainments by the crew or the passengers themselves are announced in the elevator well first deck marquee. At the journey's midpoint the captain makes a simple announcement, and the bar hands out one free drink. Each evening the captain will invite several guests of his choice, or perhaps a contest winner, to dinner in the officer's lounge. The crew will

give tours of the ship's bridge and engineering spaces to interested passengers. Otherwise, passengers are free to pass the time as they please.

A few hours before set-down the ship will hold another party with a theme of "Auld Lang Syne".

Deck Plans

The *President*-class Holiday Cruiser has four decks, generally numbered 1 through 4 from the top of the ship.

On all deck plans, the following notations apply:

e: Emergency Hull Escape Panel

g: Gear Locker

dc: Damage Control Locker

dh: Dishwasher

Deck 1

Frames 003 - 006

The upper bridge, containing electronics associated with various life support functions and interior communication systems (such as hatch locks, surveillance cameras and recording systems, etc). Port and starboard on the aft bulkhead of the access passage are manual hatches leading to the upper deck crew berthing area, and on the deck are manual hatches leading down to the main bridge and other bridge levels. The "e" at centerline indicates an emergency hull escape panel in the overhead.

Frames 006 - 020

The upper crew deck. Port and starboard on the central athwartships passage at frame 013 are iris valve hatches and ladders going down through the Officer Country Deck and to the crew lounge.

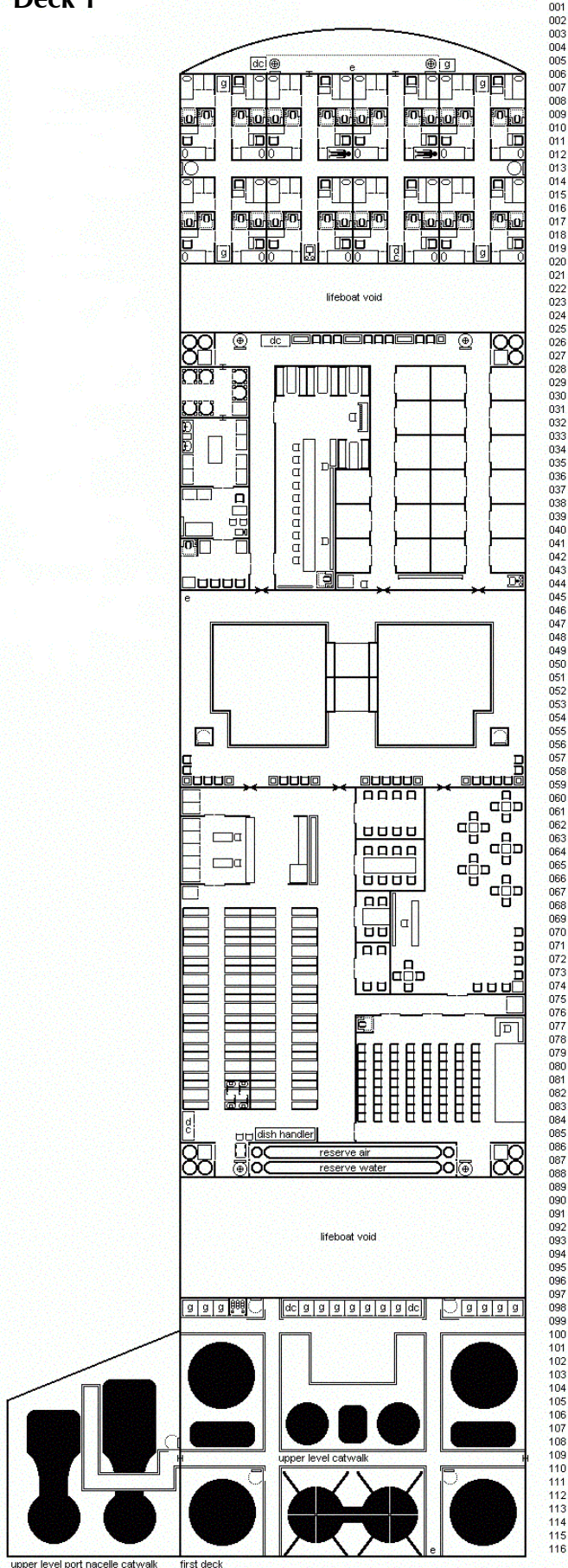
Frames 020 - 025

This space is part of the forward lifeboat bay. There is no access to this space from this deck.

Frames 025 - 044

The forward promenade deck. At frame 025 centerline is a row of chairs and planters with live plants, and also a damage control locker with various shipboard damage control equipment. Outboard of these are emergency manual escape hatches that lead through the lifeboat deck and all the way down

Deck 1



(Continued from page 17)

to the fuel deck. Outboard of these hatches are life support (LS) modules that carry the majority of the life support load. On the port side beginning at frame 028 is the medical facility with (forward to aft) a low berth room with six low berths, a small surgery theater, an examination and consultation room, and a waiting room with a lavatory module. At frame 028 on the centerline is the ship's tavern, with ten seats at the bar, four private booths, and a beat-up old piano. The whiskey, scotch, and bourbon are excellent, and not overly expensive. An old wooden plaque of a sleeping lion hangs just outside the entrance. At frame 028 on the starboard side are twenty-one private holograv booths. (To use these one puts on gloves and boots or an entire body suit with gravitic response plates. The booth then uses gravitic fields and holographic projections to provide the user with any number of fully depicted and physically interactive environments. The user may walk along a beach, lift weights, climb a mountain, engage in martial arts competition with computer opponents, hunt holographic animals with holographic weapons, practice disassembling and reassembling machinery, or engage in thousands of other recreational or educational programs available on the ship's computer.) There are enough holograv booths to allow each crewman and passenger over one hour per day. The passageway aft of the booths and immediately forward of frame 044 holds shelves of clean towels and gravitic response boots and gloves, all being washed in the laundry machine on the far starboard side. To use a booth one needs to check in with the attendant, who hands out keys to the doors, loads programs, and collects dirty towels and equipment. The booths are open and attended 24 hours per day.

Frames 044 to 059

The elevator well. Two open cage elevators ride back to back in the middle of a large open area bounded by walkway railings. This gives passen-

(Continued from page 18)

gers a feeling of space and helps relieve any feelings of confinement. The overhead is lined with a flatscreen view projector that during day hours displays a scene of a blue sky with continuously changing cloud patterns and during night hours displays a moon in a cloudy night sky. All passageways and entry points to this space both on this deck and other decks are iris valves to allow for automatic air leak isolation if necessary. A pair of cage ladders port and starboard at frame 055 descend to the second deck walkway, and a row of seats and planters with live plants line the aft bulkhead at frame 059.

Frames 059 to 088

The aft promenade deck. Port side at frame 061 is the “kitchen” (No food is actually cooked, rather previously frozen meals are simply flash-thawed here. No food is allowed anywhere else on the ship.), followed aft by restaurant-booth style seating. Usually one steward mans the “kitchen”, while two more continually clean the dining area. A dishwasher is aft of the booths near the attendant’s station, along with a dish cart. The structure just port of centerline at frame 061 holds cleaned dishes, silverware, and other food service items. This dining area is open and attended 24 hours a day. Starboard of centerline beginning at frame 059 are several conference rooms, with and without seating, for private meetings and recreational activities. To use a room one must reserve it on the schedule chart posted on each door. Starboard from frame 059 is the ship’s Hall. This is the most lavishly appointed room on the ship, with superior artwork on the brightly painted artfully molded walls and ornate brass and silver fixtures at all locations. The outboard hull is mirrored to create a sense of a larger space, and an overhead view projector on the ceiling displays an image of an ornate baroque ceiling with a chandelier far above. The wines here are some of the best in the sector, and while they are not free the mark-up is not high. An open area allows dancing if anyone

cares to, or live entertainment when it is available. The Hall is open and attended 24 hours per day. Starboard side at frame 076 is the ship’s theater, which is capable of displaying film, tape, disk, and crystal 2-D and 3-D third-person entertainment media (interactive media requires a holo booth). It also has a simple stage for live shows. This station, too, is attended 24 hours per day, with a large selection available on request. Centerline at frame 086 are large reserve air and reserve water tanks, and outboard of these are emergency manual escape hatches that lead through the aft lifeboat deck all the way down to the fuel deck. Outboard of these hatches are two more life support modules, and another damage control locker is on the port side.

Frames 088 - 097

The aft lifeboat bay void, also inaccessible from this deck.

Frame 097 - 116

The Engineering Upper Deck catwalk. The engineering spaces are both open two decks high, with the upper portions of the drive machinery accessible by catwalk. In this catwalk a DC locker and a vacc suit locker with three vacc suits are available, along with lockers filled with spare parts, tools, and other such. The catwalk extends over the roof of the EOS, and four cage ladders lead down to upper level.

Deck 2

Frames 001 - 006

The main bridge. The captain’s chair is centerline, frame 004, and has various control panels adjacent to it. Forward are the pilot and navigator seats, with the usual controls. Outboard of those are the four damage control stations. The two forward seats are the monitoring stations—the port station monitors electronic and automatic indicators of ship’s status in the engineering spaces, while the starboard station monitors similar indications in the remainder of the ship (including life support). These stations also have remote control over various ship’s functions such as life support, hatch and iris valve locks,

Raconteurs' Rest

(Continued from page 19)

surveillance cameras, lighting, gravitics, and the like. The aft seats are simply phone talker stations—they receive verbal reports from and pass orders to damage control and other personnel from the engineering spaces (port) and the rest of the ship (starboard). The starboard seat also makes shipwide loudspeaker announcements. Outboard of these are four more chairs, one for each anticipated weapons battery. The two inboard stations are also auxiliary communications stations—the port seat usually deals with navigational authorities such as port traffic control, while the starboard seat deals with ship-to-ship communication. Two guest seats are behind the captain's chair to allow bridge visitors a view of operations. At least a pilot and a phone talker are always on duty on the bridge, but other seats are usually manned only when needed. The ship's main computer is here, and can only receive programming from here.

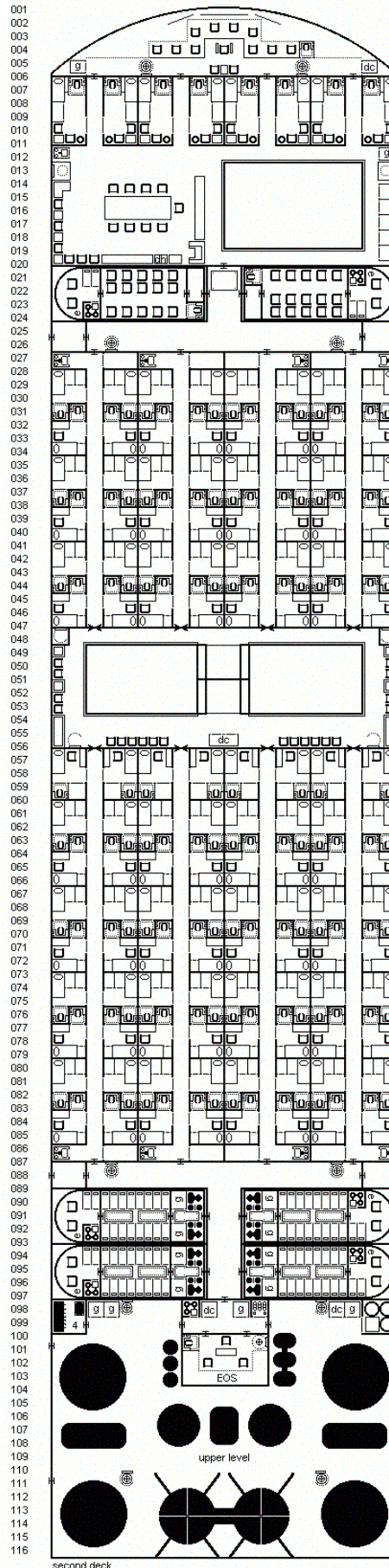
Frames 006 - 020

The 'officer country' deck. Immediately aft of the main bridge are the eight senior officer staterooms. To port is the officer's lounge, while the starboard side is open down to the crew lounge on the third deck. On the starboard hull are various general gear lockers.

Frames 020 - 026

The ship's boat bays. Passengers or visitors who are flown in or out are received here. A removable hatch in this deck and on the third deck allows access to the ship's cargo space. Outboard at frame 024 are two airlocks. There are eight airlocks altogether, and any or all are used to receive passengers and/or provide crew access. Other than the cargo hatches on the fourth deck, they are the only normal non-boat access through the ship's hull. Passengers are restricted from frame 27 forward unless escorted or directed by a crewman, boarding lifeboats, or escaping a damage control situation. The manual hatches aft are never locked, and in fact have no locks.

Deck 2



(Continued from page 20)

Frames 026 - 047

48 middle-passenger staterooms. Each has its own lavatory module. Those cabins that have a chair are single-occupancy only, and their beds lift up for more luggage space underneath. Those cabins without chairs and which have double lockers are double-occupancy if so desired. The forward end of each passageway has a linen closet for storage of typical stateroom supplies, and a laundry machine opposite for passenger laundry.

Frames 047 to 056

The elevator well second deck. The elevators continue through this large open space. The walkway has several seats and planters with live plants. Two cage ladders aft rise up to the first deck, while two cage ladders forward descend to the elevator well third deck. A damage control locker is on the aft walkway.

Frames 056 to 087

More passenger staterooms. The forward eight are the full staterooms, not much larger than a regular stateroom but more richly appointed and more closely attended by the stewards.

Frames 087 - 097

The second deck aft lifeboat deck. Passengers are restricted from frame 87 aft unless escorted or directed by a crewman, boarding lifeboats, or escaping a damage control situation. The manual hatches forward are never locked, and in fact have no locks.

Frame 097 - 116

Engineering Upper Level. The space centerline at frame 097 is known as the Atrium. It allows controlled entry to the engineering spaces during engineering casualties, and also functions as an airlock if necessary. It contains (port to starboard) a life support module and three lockers containing damage control gear, general gear, and three vacc suits. Aft of this is the EOS (Engineering Operating Station) at

frame 100, with all necessary local controls to operate engineering. The huge fusion power plant towers and electrical collectors are located port and starboard outboard at frame 101, with a smaller one located centerline at frame 105. The jump drives are located centerline at frame 111, while the maneuver drives are located in the outboard nacelles beginning at frame 100. Portside at frame 097 is electrical load center number 4, which controls all electrical power to Engineering Upper Level. Starboard at frame 097 is another life support module, this one being for the engineering spaces. Outboard of EOS are smaller sets of engineering equipment. Four cage ladders lead up to the catwalk, while at their base are manual hatches leading to Engineering Lower Level.

Deck 3

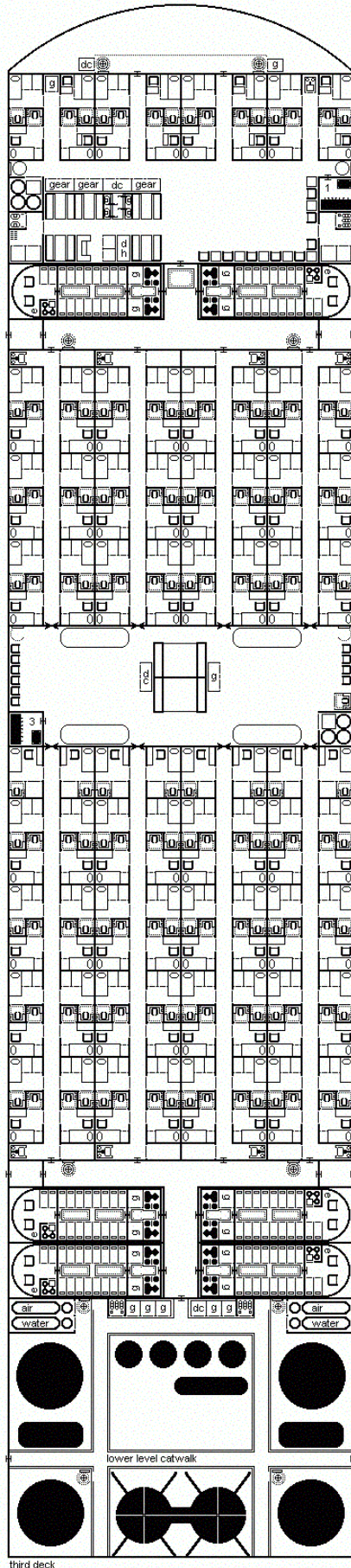
Frames 001 - 006

The sensor bridge. Most of the active and passive sensor projection systems such as radar, IR, and UV, along with their controlling electronics, are located here. The ship's computer is here.

Frames 006 - 020

The main crew deck. Forward are crew staterooms. Aft are the crew dining area (port of centerline) and the crew lounge (starboard of centerline). The lounge is open up to the second deck to create a feeling of space. Port of the dining area is the secure locker, with ten shotguns and ten pistols with appropriate ammo, along with electronics and other equipment that require secure storage. Two suits of combat armor and two gauss rifles are located in the inner weapons locker. The secure locker can be opened by the main bridge or by entering a key code using an adjacent control panel. The weapons locker can only be opened from the main bridge, or with a security card and a key code using an adjacent control panel. Forward of the secure locker is another life support module. Starboard of the crew lounge is a general locker containing, among other things, three vacc suits. Forward of this locker is electrical load center number 1, containing circuit breakers and overload protection equipment. This load center

Deck 3



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controls electrical power to everything between on decks 1 to 3 forward of frame 025, including the bridge, sensors, remote control circuitry, exterior lighting, and interior and exterior communications equipment.

Frames 020 - 026

The forward lifeboat bays. Passengers are restricted from frame 26 forward unless escorted or directed by a crewman, boarding lifeboats, or escaping a damage control situation. The manual hatches aft are never locked, and in fact have no locks.

Frames 026 - 047

Passenger staterooms, identical to those on the second deck between frames 026 - 047.

Frames 047 to 056

The bottom of the elevator well. This is the semi-safe area where parents can take their children to run and play. Against the forward and aft bulkheads are sturdy plastic climbing toys for tots, and out-board are seats for parents. A damage control locker is here, as is a general equipment locker (half of which is devoted to toys). Port aft is load center number 3, which provides control and circuit breakers for all electrical systems in the passenger areas. Starboard aft is another life support module. Out-board forward are two cage ladders leading up to the elevator well second deck.

Frames 056 to 087

Passenger staterooms, identical to those on the second deck between frames 056 - 087.

Frames 087 - 097

The third deck aft lifeboat deck. Passengers are restricted from frame 87 aft unless escorted or directed by a crewman, boarding lifeboats, or escaping a damage control situation. The manual hatches forward are never locked, and in fact have no locks.

Frame 097 - 116

The Engineering Lower Level catwalk. Similar to the Engineering Upper Level catwalk. Large banks

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of reserve air and water are located forward port and starboard.

Deck 4

Frames 003 - 006

The lower bridge. This contains primarily exterior communications equipment, backup systems (including the backup computer), and navigation signal systems.

Frames 006 - 015

The lower crew deck.

Frames 015 - 025

The ship's cargo space. This vessel travels exclusively between highly civilized areas with major starports, so it doesn't need much in the way of cargo and spare parts. If it ever does then this cargo space will be available. In the meantime it is used mostly to store passenger excess luggage, and to carry mail.

Frames 025 - 097

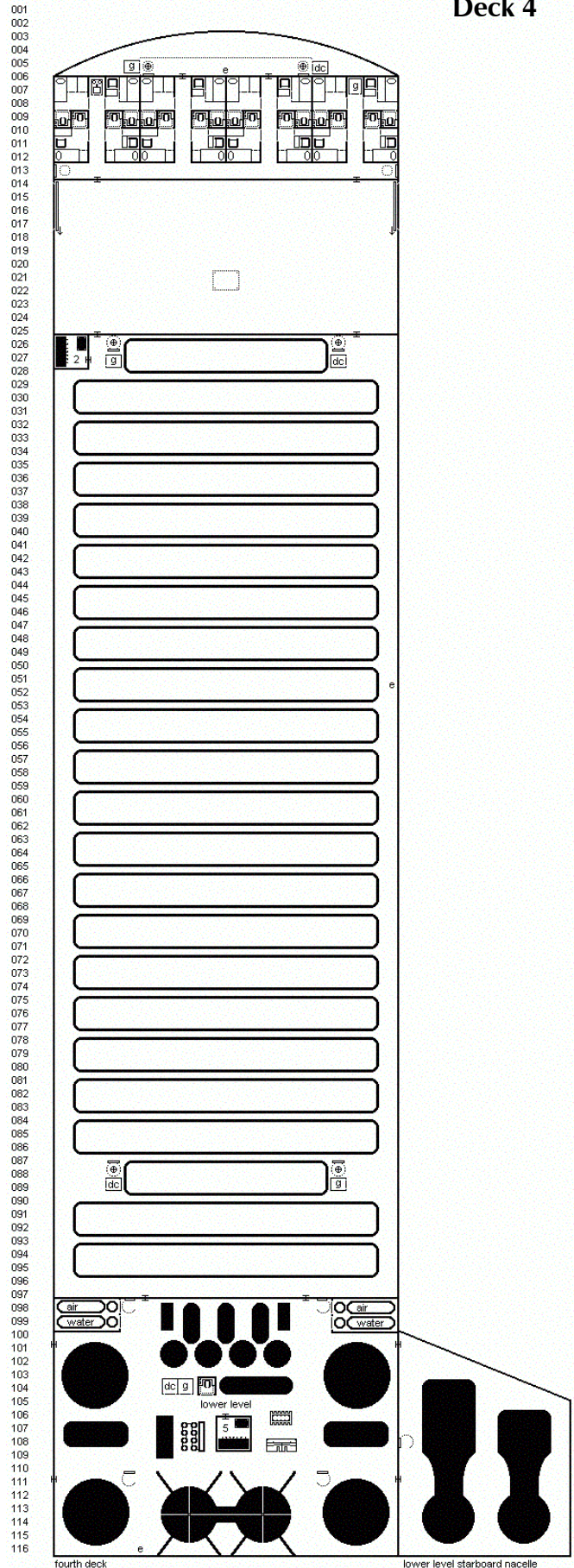
Fuel tankage. Walkways allow access to all fuel tankage indicators, pumps, and equipment. The crew usually accesses engineering by these walkways. Load center number 2 supplies electrical power to all equipment on this deck except for the engineering space.

Frame 097 - 116

Engineering Lower Level. Similar to Engineering Upper Level, except that instead of an Atrium or EOS there is a fuel purifier system. Load center number 5 controls power to Engineering Lower Level. Large banks of reserve air and water are located forward port and starboard.



Deck 4





Soren Kjellgaard

profiled by Richard Crowley

Traveller: The New Era stats:

Soren Kjellgaard C329970-0-5

(Wet) Navy Commander, 4 terms

Homeworld: Czerniak (Jayna/Old Expanses 1118)

UWP (1105): A9899C8-C S Ag In Hi Ri

UWP (1200): A9899C8-8 Ag In Hi Ri

Acrobatics 2/14, Ground Vehicle 2/4, Pilot (fixed wing) 2/4, Armed Martial Arts (small blade) 2/14, Slug Pistol 2, Large Water craft 3/12, Forward Observer 1/10, Electronics 2/11, Leadership 1/1, Tac Missile 1/3, Energy Artillery 1/3
Armed Martial Arts(Large Blade) 1/13

GURPS Traveller stats:

ST 14; DX 8; IQ 9; HT 7; Charisma 10; Status 1

Courtesy Rank: 5 [5]

Primary Skills: Guns/6 pistol 4, Seamanship 8, Leadership 2, Gunner/6 (Missile) 2, Gunner/6 (Beam) 2,

Secondary Skills: Broadsword 2, Forward Observer/6 2, Electronics/6 (Comm) 4

Background Skills: Acrobatics 4, driving (Automobile) 4, Piloting (light airplane) 4, Knife 4

Advantages: Combat reflexes [15], Status 1 [5]

Disadvantages: Code of honor (Naval Officer) [-5], Honesty [-10], Intolerance (Reformation Coalition) [-5], Stubbornness [-5]

The Wet Navy on Czerniak (1118 Jayna) has been well regarded for its high tech accommodations, integrated naval tactics and the high quality leadership that kept the rich industrial world free from crime, invasion and political uprisings. In fact, it could easily be said that the Navy served the government in repressing public discontent in all layers of society.

Thus, it was natural for the young, weak and clumsy Soren Kjellgaard to dream of an adulthood as a naval hero, saving his people from an invisible malice. Unfortunately, during his young life, he saw Czerniak systematically ravaged by Virus. The great Navy that once protected the empire now struggled to keep several fleet groups together at one time. It was time for a hero. Soren has spent his adult life in pursuit of a great dream: to retain the once-strong government of Czerniak and establish a society worthy of a high population world. At a time when the tech level of Czerniak was blasted back to the industrial age, the planetary Navy needed reorganization and Soren was the one to do it. Using his high level of education along with his innate skills in Leadership and military tactics, he managed to scrape out a career that led him to the upper echelons of the Wet Navy while rebuilding the planet and sustaining the people that he loved. Soren considers himself to be an enemy of the Reformation Coalition still thinking that Czerniak is culturally super to other systems in the Old Expanses.

In the thinking of Cmdr Kjellgaard, Virus is the ultimate enemy of his people and also the Czerniak, to him, was and is the home of the most advanced and healthful societies rimward of the old Imperium. Soren should be a good addition to any crew or planet-bound band of adventurers. He is highly intelligent, possessed of great combat skills and fully versed in nearly every form of planetary transportation in existence on Czerniak. A TNE crew might come across him at a starport selling his ability as a mercenary or just as an information source. Scenarios involving Soren will most likely relate to on planet strategic missions or exploratory ventures into the wilds of his home on Czerniak. He can also act as a liason between the group and the local party leaders. He knows and loves many things about his own culture group.



Choices

by Andrea Vallance

Part 2

118th of 2029 (309-97): Leaving Daramm

The plan was straightforward, act like a routine tramp, four jumps, Mur Mura, Puluke, Ithukar and finally Winchel. We'd rendezvous with *Gaaskii*, a light cruiser, while refuelling at Mur Mura and pick up fifty million *keedits* worth of gems, so cargo only for the first jump. Meet with our 'friends' on Winchel and hand over the gems. Not like the Imperium might think a high jump ex-naval courier with a former Navy *ami* might be up to something. The Imperium is many things; stupid isn't one of them. Yep, straightforward, but definitely not easy.

The cargo was loaded and I'd taken *Raledenet* out towards the jump point. It was good to be at the controls again; I was rusty, but it came back quickly. Siish was watching, "Like falling off a log, *dinkir*."

"Yeah, well, she handles like a *gabalail*."

"Jump three into a two hundred ton hull, something's gotta give. Just get us into jump, let's see how tight you can get the match."

A good jump was tricky. Matching the ship to jump space, easy, anybody could get you in and roughly out again in the right system. But you'd never know how long the jump would take or exactly where you'd come out. Getting tight so you control the jump, not so easy. Mark of a good pilot was how close you got it. "We're a trader, remember, Siish; a certain sloppiness is expected."

"I can see the dials, *dinkir*, you never did sloppy." He was right; I'd got her pretty close.

I hit the comms, "Jane?"

She sounded irritated, "Any time you're ready, deary, I've had them spun up for ten minutes."

I entered the code, killed the viewers and hit the button. The sickening lurch as we tore space apart and plunged into chaos. "Well, nothing to do now but sit back and enjoy the ride."

"Good; I could do with dinner."

Whatever Ariaryn had made for dinner was good; I was on my second plate. Jane and Siish were both smiling. "What is this, Ariaryn?"

"*Shugane*."

"*Shugane*?"

He look sheepish "*Shugane*" I looked at him, I looked at the plate, I looked back at him and then the plate again; the boy could cook. Siish laughed "Just like mother used to make."

"Siish, not one of my mothers or fathers could ever make *shugane* taste like anything other than three day old leftovers¹⁸."

Jane produced a bottle of *leenkwin*¹⁹ "Who's up for a drink?"

Ariaryn was first to answer, "Please." She poured a drink, gave the glass a half turn and passed it to him²⁰.

He turned bright red. I whispered "Jane, don't play with the boy."

"Who says I'm playing?" She grinned broadly, "A tune, please, Isabella, a lively one. Ariaryn, would you care to?" She took him to the floor while Isabella got her *getre*²¹ and began to play.

I stood next to Siish; he looked at his feet. "Do I have to ask?"

"I'm not much in the mood for dancing." He kept his eyes on the floor.

I grabbed his hands and pulled him to his feet. "Dance with me, please." He sighed and joined me. We danced, his arms around me comforting, I wished I could feel him. It was good to just dance again, you can lose yourself there.

I went to the bridge before bed, to check the jump. Didn't need to; if the drives are well tuned and the course is good, a ship will pretty much fly itself through jump. Jane always had her drives tuned like a concert piano and my course was true. In truth, I wanted to think for a while. I sat and thought, my hand hovered over the viewer. They

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say if you look at jump space you'll lose your mind. I switched them on. The patterns twisted and writhed, interlocked in ways a mind couldn't comprehend, but for a brief moment I thought I saw order, a stately dance in the insanity. Then it was gone, nothing but brain warping chaos. I switched them off. Sometimes it's good to think.

Jane was waiting when I got to the room. "It's good to see you smiling again."

I couldn't help it; I smiled "It was a good night."

"You danced with Siish a lot. Wondered if I'd have the room to myself tonight."

I threw a pillow at her, "Jane, it's Siish!" And anyway, who'd want broken me.

She rolled her eyes, "Sometimes, deary, I wonder at you."

"So, Jane; Ariaryn, you serious?" I'd rather talk about her than me.

"He's a good man, funny, attractive, caring."

"He's a kid Jane, barely damp."

She looked straight at me, sadness in her eyes, "Nobody who came out of that war is a kid any more, deary."

124th of 2029 (315-97): Mur Mura

We arrived at Mur Mura on schedule; I'd got it right, nice and close to the gas giant. We had the whole *ami* on the bridge; we'd need everyone's eyes. The giant's blue-green skies were a boiling mass of storms. We'd have to go in up near the north pole; calmer there, but it would still be a bumpy ride. Already the massive gravity was tugging at us.

"I really hope they're there, Siish. And whoever's flying her can keep her steady."

"Just get us in and out, just another scoop run."

"Yeah right, docking with a nineteen thousand ton cruiser inside an atmosphere, just another run." Isabella was perhaps a little pessimistic.

"If anyone can do it, my *dinkir* can." Siish at least sounded sure. "Now, *dokhtor*, I assume they taught

you to use a comms panel in the Imperial Navy, so watch and tell us when we pick up her ping. Ariaryn, use the targeting sensors to give us vector and velocity when we do." Calm and certain, it's what made Siish such a good *kaptan*. "And, *dinkir*, I would appreciate it if we stay in one piece."

I recalled the last time he'd said that as I took her into the upper layers, the gravity now pulling more, the turbulence starting to buffet us. Deeper, rougher, clouds of ammonia and methane. The idea of docking in an atmosphere was simple, just drop down and let the cruiser catch us. Of course if the cruiser wasn't there, we'd never get out again and the turbulence between the ships would be 'considerable', but in theory, it was simple. Tanks full, I levelled off and started to lose speed; we'd start sinking soon. "If we go much deeper I won't be able to get us out, so they can start calling any time now, please."

Isabella sounded a little concerned, "Nothing."

The warning alarm started squawking like a wounded animal. "Siish, what should I do?"

"Can you get any deeper?"

"A little; not much."

"That far, and no more, then."

Deeper, outside was a maelstrom of ice and hydrogen, Isabella again, "Still nothing, wait... got them; very faint."

Siish barked like when we were on Martinez "Ariaryn, where?"

"Below us," he paused, "way below us."

"Well, the idea is they push us out, so down we go."

I killed thrust and we started sinking. I switched to ventral viewer, there was lightning illuminating the clouds of gas. We dropped; I tried to keep her steady in the boiling atmosphere, heading towards the waiting cruiser. I brought up the thrust again to counter the giant's growing pull, further, up into the red. You could hear the hull of *Raledenet* groan as well fell. Ominous creaking. The winds were worse

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(Continued from page 26)

down here, I saw the hulking black shape of *Gaaskii* outlined by the lightning. I gently let *Raledenet* drift over *Gaaskii's* silhouette. Now just to let her drop and line up with the docking clamps. Oh, and avoid being thrown off by the turmoil between us.

Down and down, the closer we grew, the more the atmosphere churned between us as vortices and eddies formed. *Raledenet* dipped and bobbed with the currents. I watched the red lines as I drew her nearer and nearer. Green now, on target, just hold her steady and straight down. Down, the ship dancing like a maniac in the swirling current. Starboard wing dipped and just kissed *Gaaskii's* hull, the whole ship shuddered.

"Mind the paintwork, deary," Jane, smiling.

A clunk as clamps engaged. "Down and safe."

145th of 2029 (336-97): En-route to Winchel

Finding cargo and passengers had been fairly easy. Trade was picking up after the war. A lot of merchants had been lost and there was still a shortage of shipping. Siish made a half-decent free trader. We got a honeymoon couple and what I think were a mobster and his guards on Mur Mura. A boring 'leader of commerce' and the third son of an Imperial Marquis and his chaperones on Puluke. He was on his grand tour and thought travelling on a Luriani ship would be a bit of romantic adventure, they paid for two jumps in advance. He'd asked me to teach him some Luriani, said he'd teach me to play a game called go in return.

"So, Lord Trace, what's this ship's name mean?"

"Call me Sakuya; Lord Trace is my father, *yasvati*." *Yasvati*, teacher, he'd insisted on calling me that since I'd taught it to him first lesson.

"Well, I'll call you by your name if you call me by mine."

"But *yasvati* sounds so much more mysterious." I sighed, only four years separated us, but he seemed so much younger. I wasn't going to win this one.

"So, Sakuya, *Raledenet*, what does it mean?"

He thought for a moment, "*Ral* means something's not there; *edenet* means fear, so 'no fear'. It's the name of a ship, so it's got to be an attribute; it would mean 'fearless'."

"Close, but 'heroic' would be better; *kammoedenet* would mean 'fearless'."

He was puzzled, again, "Uh, I don't understand? *Kammo* and *ral* both mean something's not there, though."

"*Kammo* means it never was there; *ral* means it's not there but it should be. So *raledenet*, 'no fear where there should be fear', 'unafraid'; as an attribute, 'heroic'."

It was his turn to sigh, "I don't think I'll ever get it, it's sometimes damn frustrating." He was getting it; he just lacked a little patience. "You fought in the war, didn't you?"

"Yes, we all did."

"Were you *raledenet*?"

"They say I was." My voice was growing quiet, I was staring at the table, the others could see I wasn't comfortable.

"Did that happen to you when you were *raledenet*?" His hand moved toward my face. It was chaos Siish was pulling him out of the chair. Sakuya's chaperones, Anna and Yoshi, were shouting and threatening. There was screaming and yelling, Jane, Ariaryn, even Isabella. So much noise.

I left. I didn't want to cry, at least not in public. I went to my room, lay on my bed and the tears just kept coming. Sishgukhidtar, once pretty face.

Jane came in later; she didn't say anything, just lay down next to me and held me, like when we were children. I know she meant well, but it didn't help. I couldn't feel her next to me any more, not like I did then. It just reminded me of what was taken, but I let her stay, it was better than being alone. We lay there silent for what seemed like an eon. Eventually she spoke. "You should've seen Siish rip into him. Never seen a purple *Mmarislusant* before."

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"And young Ariaryn, think he was ready to clobber him." She paused, "He didn't understand, you know"

"Who? Ariaryn?"

"No, the young Lord Trace, you idiot," she hit me with a pillow. Another hesitation, a long one. "Siish described it. What they did, in detail. I think the boy was going to be sick. He may not understand, but he does know now."

147th of 2029 (338-97): Enroute to Winchel

Anna Neilsson made her way to the cargo bay. This job had turned sour. It had seemed a good deal at first, escort young Lord Trace on his grand tour. Easy enough and the chance to get close to an eligible member of the nobility. It had gone well at the start, a bit of flirting, a bit of subtle encouragement. It wasn't a bad thing; Sakuya was attractive, smart, charming and kind, everything you'd look for. He also came from a strict Makerite²² family. All she had to do was get him into her bed once and his morals would take care of the rest. And, though she would never admit it, especially to herself, she'd actually fallen for him. Young Sakuya had started to take the bait. Then along came that walrus²³ tramp and ruined everything. All Sakuya could do was moon after her like some love sick puppy. Now he was sulking in his room because he'd 'insulted' her. She snorted; insulted, she'd looked up this tramp. Anna had had a brother on the *Skanna*, that tramp got everything she deserved. It made Anna mad, she kicked the wall, hard. Stupid, it hurt, but that sound. The wall was hollow, she'd studied this class as an analyst in Naval Intelligence. That wall should not be hollow.

148th of 2029 (339-97): Enroute to Winchel

Sakuya stayed in his room for the next two days. Anna and Yoshi didn't say much; you could see the anger and disgust in them. Didn't matter, we'd be arriving tomorrow and they'd be gone. I'd done the final checks on the bridge and gone to dress for din-

ner; Ariaryn always made something special for the last day in jump. Sakuya was sitting at the table along with his minders, he'd gone all out to dress. He actually scrubbed up quite well, but he hardly said a word through dinner. We finished eating and Ariaryn sat at the piano and began to play. Jane pulled Siish to his feet, Isabella seemed to be struggling to get Yoshi up; sometimes Imperials have no manners.

Sakuya marched straight up to me and said "*Shi yasvati awel shish fa ap ae*"²⁴

I was still hurt, but an invitation to dance, I couldn't very well say no. So I got to my feet, took his hand and simply answered, "*Ae*."

Spend a couple of weeks in jump on a small ship and you end up dancing with everyone, a lot. So it was odd he kept so far away.

After a while he looked straight at me and all seriousness announced "*A oi Yoirnishako*." I knew what he meant to say, but I couldn't help it; I laughed.

"What? What's so funny?" He looked hurt.

"You just told me your name is Big-the-greatest-sorry-possible."

"Uhh?"

"The *-ko*²⁵, it changes a verb into a proper noun and if it's the biggest it can't get any bigger²⁶. You mean *A oi irnisha*"

He blushed, "*Oh, A oi irnisha*."

I smiled and replied, "*A oi vie yonisha*."

"You're sorry too?" he sounded confused, "Right?" I nodded. "Why are you sorry?"

I smiled; his naivete was disarming. "Oh, for allowing you to embarrass yourself, being there when you put your foot in your mouth, watching you make a fool of yourself, take your pick. It just means it's okay, you're forgiven. It lets you keep face, silly."

I could see Jane and Siish dancing, quietly laughing at all this. "So, did anyone give you any hints on how to say it?"

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The *keedit* dropped, "I shouldn't have listened to them?"

"No." I kissed him lightly on the cheek and smiled, very disarming.

Notes

Notes numbered 1-17 appeared with Part 1 of Choices.

18. *Shugane* is a traditional scraps dish. It essentially is three day old leftovers.
19. A distilled grain alcohol.
20. Turning the glass. A form of flirting in Luriani culture. The degree of turn indicates the level of attraction. From a quarter turn indicating a mild fancy to a full turn inviting intimacy.
21. A seven stringed musical instrument.
22. The Church of the Maker, a religious group common at the time. Noted for its strict moral code.
23. A derogatory Imperial slang term for Luriani.
24. The best translation is 'will you dance with me teacher?' but the literal translation is 'you teacher wish-to dance with me yes.' Standard Luriani uses a six form yes/no (ae, ia, ma, mee, aema, and iamee) and a yes/no question is formed by adding either the affirmative yes (ae) or negative no (mee) to the end of a statement. Thus shi yasvati awel shish fa ap ae can be answered ae (Yes - I will dance with you), ma (No - I will not dance with you) or aema (Maybe - Perhaps I will dance with you). The question could also be phrased shi awel shish fa ap yasvati mee (you wish-to dance with me teacher no), in which case it would be

answered ia (Yes - I will not dance with you), mee (No - I will dance with you) or iamee (Maybe - Perhaps I will dance with you). In practice, it would be very impolite to phrase an invitation to dance in the negative and equally impolite to refuse one. It should also be noted that, in the case of an invitation to dance, the length of the response indicates the degree of enthusiasm. Thus simply answering ae is in itself, slightly impolite, indicating that another invitation is unwelcome. The more usual response would be at least ae a awel (yes I wish-to). A response such as ae a awel shish fa shi (yes I wish-to dance with you) would indicate that another invitation is desired.

25. The suffix -ko is usually encountered in family names, the equivalent of the Anglic -er. To turn a verb to a normal noun, you use the suffix -ti. For example *uryn* is to grind grain (mill), *urynti* is a miller while *Urynko* is a person named Miller. Also due to the weakly inflected nature of Standard Luriani verbs, it can be encountered in a poetic or metaphorical sense a *oi shishko*, 'I am dance' as opposed to the normal a *oi shish*, 'I am dance(ing)'.
26. The prefix sequence is *gi-*, *yo-*, and *ir-*, big, bigger and biggest. The converse is *ba-*, *dai-*, and *va-*, small, smaller and smallest. The confusion lays in the way these can be compounded. Generally they can be compounded freely, both within and across the two sequences and multiple times. The only rule is that *gi-* and *ya-* are terminators. Once they are used the compound can not be moved any further in that direction without moving it the other first. Also, while the compound can in theory be any length (such as *gidaigiyoir-*, biggest smaller biggest bigger big), in practice it is rare to go past two, with three being the effective limit unless the speaker is deliberately trying to appear humorous or facetious.



Active Measures

Getting Off The Ground

The Slavers of Gennare

by Bruce Johnson

This adventure was originally posted to the pre-magazine *Freelance Traveller* site in 1997

Outline: The PCs (presumed to be the crew of an exploration ship) make contact with the world of Gennare, an agricultural world at TL 3-4. The majority of the worlds population lives on the continuation of Rackmala, which is predominantly semi-tropical plains and forests comprising some 80% of the planets land area. Santerre is a smaller, more rugged island, home to less than 7% of the population. There are considerable, largely untapped mineral resources on Santerre and in subsea deposits.

Gennare D468637-3(4)

Gennare has one major starport, near the equator. It's not much more than a large flat field and some warehouses, situated next to a large freshwater lake, suitable for unrefined fuel. There are also two gas giants in the system suitable for refueling.

Gennare is mostly ocean; only 17% of the surface is land. The climate is predominantly semi-tropical on Rackmala, with hot, humid summers and mild winters. Santerre is temperate to near arctic, and the coast nearest Rackmala is subject to severe gale force to hurricane force storms during two storm seasons, in late summer and late winter.

Gennare has ongoing trade with offworlders, and in the last fifty years, the Orinanthan Guild has had increasing influence over the rulers of Gennare.

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Gennare is ruled as collection of feudal estates, although there is a small middle class restricted to the cities. The lords of Gennare are the owners of the large plantations; and in the centuries of the Long Night, the ruling class has become insular and exclusionary.

During the First Imperium, Gennare was a bureau agricultural world, run by Naasirka, with huge automated farms growing witchila, a thin, weedy plant that grows abundantly in Rackmala. Witchila is the source of extremely tough fibers incorporating boron and silicon into their cellulose-like structural molecules, which are used to reinforce polymers and composite materials. It can be grown elsewhere, but only with the addition of expensive synthetic micronutrients that occur naturally on Gennare. Since Gennare was incorporated into the Vilani empire late in its history, little research was ever done on the ecology or biology of witchila. Since the plant grew pretty much like a weed, it was also very cheap to produce, which made the witchila fibers competitive with synthetic alternatives, and it is stronger than many of them.

Unknown to anyone now, there is an introduced seaweed (*lassilaissa*) in the oceans that is now quite abundant, that produced an important series of complex synthetic intermediates for Vilani chemical industry. It was introduced as a pilot project near the end of Vilani occupation of this world, and abandoned during the Interstellar Wars. This could provide an important cash crop for anyone exploiting this planet. (If the PCs have the time to make a detailed orbital survey, spectral data will show that the seas seem to contain a lot of industrial chemicals. It will take a ground survey/analysis to show that the chemicals are in the seaweed rather than industrial pollution. This is a good opportunity to confuse the PCs since the rest of the survey will be inconsistent with the readings from the sea, i.e., you have industrial pollutants with no visible industry.)

After the fall of the Vilani empire, Gennare was resettled by Terrans, and the cultivation of witchila fell considerably, since the soils of Gennare were quite suitable for a number of Terran food plants, and the bonding agents used in typical Terran composite materials of the time, slowly degraded the witchila fibers, weakening the material greatly. (Current Imperial composite technology uses different bonding materials and methods, and thus witchila will be of considerable value to the Imperium.) Gennare was settled and incorporated officially as a Terran colony of the Bodeanauer Sect, a pastoralist society that looked for salvation in a simple life with minimal technological influence.

The Bodeanauer Sect has evolved into the Bodean Church, which emphasizes a pantheist belief in Nature as God, with a strong anti-tech bent.

The ruling class of Gennare is composed of about 60 families, owners of the large plantations. They control over 90% of the arable land in Rackmala, ensuring a lock on the food supply, as well as having direct control of some 70% of the population, as their serfs.

There are several medium sized cities, where what technology that exists on Gennare is concentrated, and is home to the small middle class. The major industry is processing witchila into finished fiber such as thread and cloth for export, and crude composite materials for local consumption. Transport is predominantly on foot, by animals (descendants of Terran horses and oxen), and by oared galleys and sailing ships. Anything more advanced is officially banned by the Church.

Most of the rest of the planet has been explored, but since Rackmala comprises 85% of the land mass of the planet, there are few people living elsewhere. The one exception is Santerre, a very large island or very small continent to the north of Rackmala.

Santerre is colder and more rugged than Rackmala, mostly mountains and dense forest of mixed Terran and Gennaran vegetation. The arable land is concentrated near the coast, where it is subject to severe seasonal storms, both summer and

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winter. The inhabitants of Santerre aren't organized into any true political structure, but they do maintain a cooperative that owns several sailing craft that trade with the mainland for materials they are unable to grow or mine, bringing in return, forest and mining products unavailable on the mainland. Many of the people are officially outcast from the mainland by the Church, predominantly for their views on technology, and so Santerre enjoys a technological advantage over the mainland. It isn't much, since they cannot easily afford to 'waste time' on research and development, but there have been significant advances in fields related to mining, and logging, and to a lesser extent, communications.

About 100 years before the present, Gennare was re-contacted by Orinanthan Guild traders. The Orinanthan Guild is a loose association of free traders and small states with starflight capacity; it operates as an informal trade council, mediating disputes between members, and most importantly, from the member states point of view, restricting interstellar trade to members only in its realm of operations. It will not look kindly on the Sylean explorers coming into these sectors.

The Orinanthans have carefully cultivated the Gennaran ruling class. Witchila fiber has become very important to the Guild, yet they wish to keep the Gennarans generally unaware of this, since that will keep prices low, and the Gennarans under their thumb. To that end they have played families against each other to prevent any single faction from gaining absolute power, with varying degrees of success. They have encouraged the Church to frown on trade with Santerre, while simultaneously introducing technological 'toys' to the nobles as status symbols; toys only the Guild can supply, at high cost. They have also worked to keep the power of the middle class and the cities from growing. Still, the price that the Gennarans have been able to command for witchila has grown over the years, and with it their economic clout.

The Guild's power over the Gennarans increased greatly with their introduction of another trade: slaves. An epidemic swept through the plantations 20 years ago. Guild merchants were able to acquire medicines to treat the nobles, but the serf population was devastated. After the disease died out, the Guild was able to come up with a solution for the nobles' pressing labor needs: indentured labor. Recruited on poor, high population worlds, the Guild is able to supply thousands of workers for the plantations of Gennare. Technically the workers aren't slaves, but contract workers. The nobles buy their 'contracts' by paying the Guild for their passage to Gennare. The workers then owe their new Gennaran bosses for their passage, their room and board.

They pay from their wages for working in the fields. It is an old, old practice, sadly reproduced on thousands of worlds throughout inhabited space. The wages, of course, never quite add up to the costs charged for room and board, much less to the huge initial costs of the passage to Gennare, so the workers are trapped into working for life for their masters. Their children are born into the system, owing more than they can ever repay. Contracts are commonly sold between families, the cruelest breaking up families by selling the young children.

Working in the fields of witchila is harsh; since no mechanization exists, all the work is done by hand. Harvest time is particularly brutal...the witchila plants are tough and quite hard to cut down, and harvesting the plant releases quite a bit of the fiber in microscopic form. Breathed in these fibers can do considerable lung damage over time. The life expectancy of many of the slaves now working in the fields is less than 10 years of work in the field; because they're from poor, high population worlds, often with tainted atmospheres, the contract workers start off malnourished and in poor health. Significant lung damage may occur in under 2 years. The thin weedy plants also readily erode skin and gloves during handling; most workers have very thick scars on their hands from handling the plants. Witchila cuts take a long time to heal.

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Runaways are treated harshly, usually tortured publicly before their executions. The system has led to sporadic revolts, which the Guild factors have helped suppress with their superior firepower.

The owners have also established a lottery system, however, as a 'carrot' for the workers. Tickets are cheap and readily available, monthly winners have their indenture reduced or eliminated. An annual Grand Prize not only grants freedom to the worker, but enough money to buy freedom for his family, if there is one, and set up a small business, typically in the city. These winners are often paraded quite conspicuously around the plantations.

Ominously, however, an increasing number of the 'contract' workers are arriving involuntarily. The Guild leadership has been maneuvering towards greater power, with aspirations of becoming true lords over the Guild territory. The slave trade has been a good place to 'lose' dissidents and opponents to their plans.

The Gennarans are upset over this development: these new workers aren't the docile, easily cowed slaves of old, but intelligent, articulate, and very angry. Two of them organized a revolt that was able to take over a plantation for several weeks, until the Guild factors' savage counterattack. In the ensuing chaos, the plantation 'Big House' was burned to the ground, the plantation owner escaped with her life, but without her left leg, and her husband, and eldest daughter, heir apparent, and the rest of her immediate family were killed.

The ringleaders of the revolt were presumed dead, along with their followers and hostages when the house was burned. All surviving slaves were summarily executed. In reality, a small band escaped, including the ringleaders, and arranged passage aboard a Santerrean ship. They are now on Santerre, working their small farm to survive, and in the case of the ringleaders and some 10-15 of the other escaped slaves who have filtered to Santerre, hoping to get back to their homes offworld.

Factions on Gennare

Owners: The aforementioned 60 families who own the greatest extent of the land on Gennare. The families intermarry heavily, and intermarriage with the serfs is banned. There is, however, a long tradition of taking in the illegitimate sons and daughters of liaisons between owners and serfs, so that the genetic diversity of the families is maintained, and there are as yet few problems of inbreeding. They are loosely allied; disputes are settled by a ruling Council of Owners; essentially the heads of the families. The council is comprised of 60 people, headed by 'the Seven', the Autarch of the Church and the heads of the six families with the largest holdings.

The Church: The Bodean Church has great influence over many parts of Gennaran life. The very religious have small rituals covering virtually every part of life. The Church itself has large land holdings, and is economically independent from the Owners, hence its position on the Seven. The vast majority of Gennarans are members of the Church. The Church's main tenets are that all humankind are mere stewards of their planet; salvation is reached by harmonious coexistence with the land using your own hands and the living earth (meaning water power, draft animals, and lately, human slaves). Technology greater than about TL 3, is frowned upon. There are radical sects that eschew all technology above TL 0, living a truly stone-age existence, but most of the Church accepts some technology. The coming of the Guild troubled the Church greatly; their clearly high tech level violates all the tenets of the Church, which regards such technology as corrupting, distancing the user from the purity of the natural world.

Objections from the Church forced the Guild to adopt a low profile in public on Gennare. The starport is located in a remote area; the Guild factors have only small offices in the major cities.

The Church also maintains pressure to suspend trade with Santerre, where it has excommunicated and exiled many people for dabbling with technology, or advocating doctrine against the Church. This

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is the source of the true power of the Church. Along with its power to excommunicate, comes the power to seize the excommunicated person's land and holdings. There have been corrupt Autarchs in the past who have used this power to gain wealth or as a weapon of personal vengeance.

The Church's stance on technology varies with time, and the current Autarch has issued several edicts lightening it somewhat, to restrict the bans to machines that perform useful work, rather than all devices. This loophole stems from Guild influence over the current Autarch, who harbors a secret, guilty fascination with technology, and allows the Guild's current profitable trade in high tech 'toys': clockwork singing birds, mobile stuffed animals, wind-up ornithopters that fly towards you when you clap your hands, train sets that carry wine bottles around the table, things like that, all done in precious gems, and fine hand craftsmanship

The Guild: The Orinanthan Guild is 163 years old, making it one of the oldest human institutions in the sector. Originally, it was a loose coalition of traders, banding together to discourage piracy, and later, to aid in starship maintenance in an era when parts and skilled workers were few and very far between. It has grown to be a large and influential organization. Within its realm of operations, it maintains a stranglehold on interstellar trade; everything must pass on a Guild ship. It is essentially impossible to own a ship without registering it as a Guild vessel and paying the dues. The few worlds that have tried have found their ships mysteriously vanish, or crash; their starports bombed, and trade with their world restricted or cut off entirely. Any individual owning a starship, of course, either willingly or was forced to join the Guild, or left Guild space.

Gennare is at the far coreward reaches of Guild space, at the end of a long, unproductive journey of about 6 jumps, but since witchila is a vital raw product in Guild space, Gennare is a very important world to them. Only the apparent lack of any com-

petition from further coreward has kept the Guild from doing more to take over the planet. Besides, they make a decent profit on both legs of the trip, bringing slaves and toys in, and hauling witchila fiber out. The average TL of the Guild is about 7-8, the highest is B at Loweir, about 20 parsecs away to the rimward of Gennare. The Guild now encompasses about 4-5 subsectors worth of space, mostly rimward and antispinward of the Imperium.

Serfs: These are the survivors and descendants of the survivors of the plague of 20 years ago. They hold themselves distinct from the contract workers who have largely displaced them, and they feel themselves more tightly bound to the land. Many are very devout Bodeans. Under Plantation law, they do have rights and privileges guaranteed them by the owners; the owners are responsible for seeing that they have their plot of land to tend for their own food, and the time to tend it, and the owners may not arbitrarily punish, dispossess or kill them. They have become the overseer class on the plantations since the advent of contract labor.

Contract laborers: These people are at the bottom of the pile on Gennare. Recruited by the Guild from their crowded, poor homeworlds by offers of independence and wealth, they soon realized they were just as trapped in grinding poverty in their new position. Some have been forcibly moved here, either by their own governments or by the guild. Many of these latter slaves try to run away, a very few actually escape, mostly to the cities, but some make it all the way to Santerre. There is an 'Underground Railroad' of sorts, but it is small, and often infiltrated by Church or Owner agents.

Cities: The cities are a relatively new phenomenon on Gennare; none are much over 150 years old. Most of their commerce is centered around witchila processing, and the service industry for the traders and inhabitants. There is a small artisan class, and a growing middle class. These people are less likely to be devout church members, and there are tiny groups of a more radical pro-technology persuasion here, which the Church tries to regularly root out.

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Santerre: This, rugged, mountainous island is largely unexplored. The coastal areas to the south have fertile valleys that are quite suitable for cultivation, but the severe seasonal storms of the area kept the original terran settlers on the Rackmalan mainland. There has been little need for the mineral and timber wealth of the island, so trade is somewhat sporadic. The majority of Santerreans are subsistence farmers, miners and lumberers, either exiles from the mainland or their descendants. There are, however, a number of foods that grow well in Santerre that don't grow well or at all in Rackmala, so there is some luxury trade in that, and in fish from the northern seas, with the mainland. There is also increasing demand for timber and metals, especially with the northern cities.

There is, thanks to the Church, a thriving pro-technology feeling here. In fact, there are several small groups who are performing the rudiments of research and development, mostly oriented towards improving the efficiency and safety of the mining operations. There are a number of steam engines in use, and a few faltering steps toward the use of electricity have taken place. This has accelerated with the arrival of Ras Modovar and Sulian Gransenth, two escaped slaves from the mainland.

Gennaran social attitudes

The majority of Gennarans are more or less devout Bodeans, and this influences their attitude towards offworlders considerably. The most devout will have nothing to do with them and their corrupting technology; they tend to view the mere presence of offworlders on the planet as a dangerous and perverting influence on all of Gennare, an influence that should be purged, with fire if necessary. The majority will treat offworlders with an attitude varying from lofty disdain to pity, 'poor lost souls'. The most tolerant, simply think that offworlders are spiritually lost, but it is none of their business to convince the offworlders to change.

Major NPCs

Beldoin Logique III: Logique is the acknowledged leader of the Seven. His families holdings are vast, and he is easily the wealthiest person on the planet. He can trace his ancestry directly to Aliane Majeurreste, who was the leader of the original Bodeanauer Sect settling the planet. He is almost always accompanied by his daughter Aliane IV, his heir apparent and closest advisor. Beldoin is a tough businessman and ruthless owner; his holdings have prospered mightily since the coming of the Guild and especially since the introduction of contract laborers.

Antoine Hunstatter: Hunstatter is the current Autarch of the Bodean Church. He came to this position as a relatively young man as a compromise when the subtarches could not agree on their first choices. The fourth son of a minor landowner, Antoine was groomed for the church early, and is a relatively weak individual both physically and personally. His deeply held secret is a fascination with technology, which has opened him up to Guild manipulation.

Theresa Rachminov: Rachminov is the Chief Guild Factor on Gennare. She is a cunning political infighter. Surviving the byzantine intrigues of the Guild have made the Gennaran Council easy prey for her. She has great influence over the Autarch, and since Beldoin Logique owes much of his fortune to her and the Guild, she exerts considerable influence on the planet. But she is accustomed to backroom politics and bedroom intrigue, and leaves a great deal of the day to day operations to her subordinates.

Lt. Col. Erik Garcia-Krueger: Garcia-Krueger, nicknamed the 'Stoltar', by his hand-picked mercenaries, is the Guild military attache on Gennare. A stoltar is a fierce carnivore on his home planet, renowned for its fierce attack and stubborn tenacity. He is in charge of security operations for the Guild as well as putting down slave rebellions, which he does with abandoned ferocity. Guild military assets on the planet consist of 20 veteran troops, armed

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with 9 mm autorifles, and one squad laser rifle, a grav APC armed with 4 20 mm autocannon and a grav tank armed with a plasma gun.

Garcia-Krueger thinks that the Guild should dispense with the 'charade' as he terms it, of dealing with the Gennaran nobles, and simply take over the planet themselves.

He received an official reprimand for the assault on and subsequent destruction of the Hackover plantation, which left the owner's family dead, and the owner herself nearly dead.

Donata Hackover: Hackover was the owner of a medium sized plantation, until a slave revolt led by Sulian Gransenth, a political dissident sent into slavery by the Guild, took over the plantation. Her entire family, being held hostage by the slaves demanding offworld passage, was killed when Baron Garcia-Krueger led an assault on the main house that ended in its destruction. She herself lost most of her left leg in the assault when Garcia-Krueger pumped round after round from the grav-tanks plasma cannon into the main house. She is alive but faces staggering reconstruction costs to rebuild her plantation. Her plight has galvanized considerable anti-Guild feeling in the Council of Families.

Sulian Gransenth: Gransenth was a opposition leader on a planet heavily committed to the Guild. She advocated seceding from the Guild with a number of other worlds and forming their own confederation. She was arrested on trumped up treason charges, and officially deported to a prison world. Then, as Theresa Rachminov puts it, "...some brain-dead Guild accounting deet decided to make a few bucks..." and had her sold on Gennare under another name. Gransenth, a talented and charismatic politician, organized the revolt among the slaves on the Hackover plantation. This was crushed by the Guild security forces, and in the chaos ensuing afterwards, Gransenth escaped, eventually making her way to Santerre.

Ras Modovar: Modovar is another political 'volunteer'. He was Chief Engineer of a class A shipyard in the same cluster of worlds Sulian Gransenth is from. His crime was opposing the increased Guild influence at the shipyard, and the Guild's subsequent orders to use substandard parts and materials, supplied by the Guild, of course, at inflated prices. His ending up on Gennare was almost accidental: he had to be gotten rid of in a hurry, so he was beaten unconscious, and tossed into the nearest Guild ship, which happened to be a slave transport headed to Gennare. The captain of the transport never got any orders regarding this unconscious man dumped on his ship, so he just tossed him in with the rest of the slaves. Modovar was a crucial part of the Hackover revolt, making explosives and crude cannon and firearms for the slaves, essentially from scratch. His hatred for the Guild is pathological at this point; he would risk anything to kill Guild personnel on the planet, especially Garcia-Krueger.

He has single-handedly advanced the tech level of Santerre, introducing the concept and practical use of electricity and steam power, and even crude radio, but his true goal is to build weapons, and a force that can sail into port, assault the Guild compound, and steal the APC and/or the grav tank. He would then use that transport to get to the landing zone, and steal a ship to get off world. He has Pilot 1 and Navigator 1, as well as Engineer 4 skills. There are a number of other slaves that he knows of who have some skills with starships. Once off planet they'll make a run for it; either back to sympathetic planets in their own space, or towards unknown space—in this case towards the Sylean Federation.

So where do the PCs come into this??

Well, there are a number of interesting situations here: this may be the Guild's first contact with the nascent Imperium, already too large for the Guild to challenge directly. Theresa Rachminov will, upon interviewing the PCs, probably grasp this immediately unless the PCs are very close mouthed.

Active Measures

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The problem is what, if anything, the PCs learn about the planet. If they figure out the value of the witchila fiber to the Guild, and potentially, the Imperium, they will be in a very dangerous position. The ship's library will have some reference to witchila, enough to let them know it's worth something.

A thorough orbital survey of the planet will give the the spectrophotographic signature of the seaweed, as well, although they could misinterpret the data as evidence of industrial pollution, as mentioned above.

Rachminov could easily have them killed, which will get her two birds with one stone. First, the PCs' death will delay Imperial investigation into this planet, at least until they are missed, and a search effort, if any, is raised. Second, the Guild gets an intact TL-12 ship to tear apart and figure out how to build. This will raise her fortunes in the Guild considerably. Krueger-Garcia will almost certainly see things this way. At the least, if he is the first to contact the PCs he'll attempt to seize and imprison them, if not kill them outright.

On the other hand, she could see the advantages of changing sides, if the PCs tell her enough of how the Imperium works. She could easily become the reigning Imperial noble on this planet...what, after all, does she owe the Guild? All they ever really gave her was headaches and orders.

Finally, on the gripping hand, a conflict between the Guild and the Imperium will be a short, one sided war...any hint in Guild space that there was a new, separate power among the stars, the tenuous bonds holding the Guild together would evaporate, whether or not they had a TL-12 ship.

If the PCs make any contact with the Gennaran nobility, Rachminov may be rendered irrelevant. As soon as Hackover's faction learns of the existence of the Imperium, they'll quickly figure out that they don't necessarily *have* to sell to the Guild...

If the PCs don't land on Rackmala, but on Santerre instead (based on the signs of higher TL there

(EM transmissions, etc.)) they will be contacted by Modovar and Gransenth, and apprised of the situation in Rackmala. If the PCs don't, at least, promise some hope of off-world passage, Modovar will attempt to steal the PCs' ship. If the PCs do offer to take them offworld, Modovar will attempt to get into the missile bay on the PCs ship and launch missiles against Guild targets on Rackmala.

If the PCs arrive at the same time there is a guild ship (or two) on the planet or in orbit, things could get sticky, and lead to combat.

If you really want to get nasty, have the Guild ships damage the PCs' ship to the point of crashing. Putting the PCs to ground on a world like this could be fun...for the GM.

If there is a Guild ship on the ground, or in orbit, the PCs may offer to help Modovar steal the Guild ship; once in control, he will try to attack Guild targets on the planet. Any attack on Rackmala is surely going to cause considerable collateral damage, with lots of civilian deaths.

This could get strange, too, if the ship is a Grognard, loaded with slaves. Since they're uncomfortable from having lived, essentially, in large cargo containers for the last two months, and they have been promised good jobs on Gennare, they will definitely *not* want to go back. Loaded with witchila, it's a valuable cargo, and Guild ships may be leery of destroying it, and the PCs could well ask that the cargo be their price for getting them offworld.

Sulian Gransenth, however, has managed to retain some objectivity. She will see the PCs as an opportunity to free several tech 8 through A systems from the Guild. She, too might well see the great political advantages of being the first official contact with the Imperium. As an elected official of a representative democracy, she may balk at the noble-oriented structure of the Imperium at first, but if the PCs convince her that the Imperium isn't just a bigger Guild, she'll be enthusiastic. She will definitely want to see the Imperium ban the kind of exploitation that the Guild was perpetrating.

(Continued from page 36)

Delivering her to her planet alive, with her in good shape will certainly topple the present government and sweep her into power. She will certainly be able to negotiate on an official basis with the Imperium, then, and the PCs will have gained a very valuable contact. She will also have a great deal of influence with the other political leaders she was trying to convince the secede from the Guild. If they are allowed to join the Imperium as a sub-confederation, they will, and place significant technological, and potentially military assets on the side of the Emperor.

This will make great friends for the PCs back home, too.

Back in the Imperium, the news of Gennare could spark serious debate about the role of the Imperium vis-a-vis member planets, especially if Rachminov and the Gennarans apply for membership... does the Imperium allow slavery within its borders? As the Imperium is originally constituted, yes—except for outright chattel slavery. Other forms of the slave trade may be outlawed on individual worlds, but since technically, the slaves being imported to Gennare are ‘contract workers’ there are a number of legal loopholes. This leads to other possible scenarios for the PCs... when they get back, an investigative (or sensationalist) media operation hires them to go back to Gennare to investigate.

Guild Ships

There are three main Guild shiptypes that the PCs could encounter: the *Mirreken*-class merchant escort, displacing 400 tons (TL A), the *Grognard*-class bulk carrier at 1000 tons (TL 9), and the *Chi'ilithin*-class merchanter at 300 tons (also TL 9).

Trade drives the Guild, so even what passes for military vessels have significant cargo space.

The *Mirriken* merchant escort is a TL A 400 ton armed escort ship. It comes in two main versions, one has fuel tankage for two jumps, and is designated the Long *Mirriken*. Converting jump to maneuver fuel gives it some long legs in combat situations, too.

Some space for the additional fuel tankage was gained by substituting bunks for the small state-rooms for the crew, giving the captain a small rather than large stateroom, and eliminating one emergency low berth.

Not surprisingly, the Long *Mirriken* is known by other, unprintable names by the crew.

Since the Guild doesn't really have a Navy, *per se* (yet), *Mirrikens* are either owned by larger mercantile combines, or are private ‘escorts for hire’.

Mirriken Merchant Escort

Tons: 400	Vol: 5600	Cost: 347 MCr	TL A
Crew: 10	Passengers: 0	Low: 8 (ELB)	
Cargo: 110	Controls: Milspec Std.		
8 Size Rating		1 Jump Rating	
3 Fire Control Rating		3 G Rating / HEPLar	
L Batt 1 - 2 0 0 0		5 Powerplant	
M Batt 2 - Turret 2		82 SR Fuel	
M Batt 3 - Turret 2		4A 4P 0J Sensor	
M Batt 4 - Turret 2		10 Armor	12 Struct
6 Missiles Ready		3 Missiles Controlled	

Long *Mirriken* (extended jump) Merchant Escort

Tons: 400	Vol: 5600	Cost: 346 MCr	TL A
Crew: 10	Passengers: 0	Low: 4 (ELB)	
Cargo: 91	Controls: Milspec Std.		
8 Size Rating		1 Jump Rating (2J range)	
3 Fire Control Rating		3 G Rating / HEPLar	
L Batt 1 - 2 0 0 0		5 Powerplant	
M Batt 2 - Turret 2		112 SR Fuel	
M Batt 3 - Turret 2		4A 4P 0J Sensor	
M Batt 4 - Turret 2		10 Armor	12 Struct
6 Missiles Ready		3 Missiles Controlled	

The *Chi'ilithin*-class merchanter is one of the commoner merchant designs in the Guild, and the model here is the basic cargo version. It is an old design, and most of the extant examples have been modified in some fashion by their owners; there are passenger versions, mixed passenger and cargo versions and everything in between.

Chi'ilithin Merchant Freighter

Tons: 300	Vol: 4200	Cost: 297 MCr	TL 9
Crew: 11	Passengers: 0	Low: 0	
Cargo: 140	Controls: Basic Civilian		
8 Size Rating		1 Jump Rating	
0 Fire Control Rating		2 G Rating / Fusion-CG	
M Batt 1 - Turret 2		0.5 Powerplant	
		34 SR Fuel	
		1 Sandcaster (18)	
		1A 2P 0J Sensor	
		10 Armor	10 Struct

Specifications for the *Grognard* bulk carrier are not available.





Darthanon Queen

reviewed by Ewan Quibell

Darthanon Queen. Martin J. Dougherty
Judged Guild
240pp, softcover
US\$/UK£

This review was originally posted to the pre-magazine *Freelance Traveller* site in 2003. The publication data and cover images were not part of the original post. The editor found two possible cover images, and both have been included.

It's surprising how a simple black, white, and red cover makes a *Traveller* product look good, and this plus with Kevin Siembieda's back cover art, had me opening it for a read, hoping for good things.

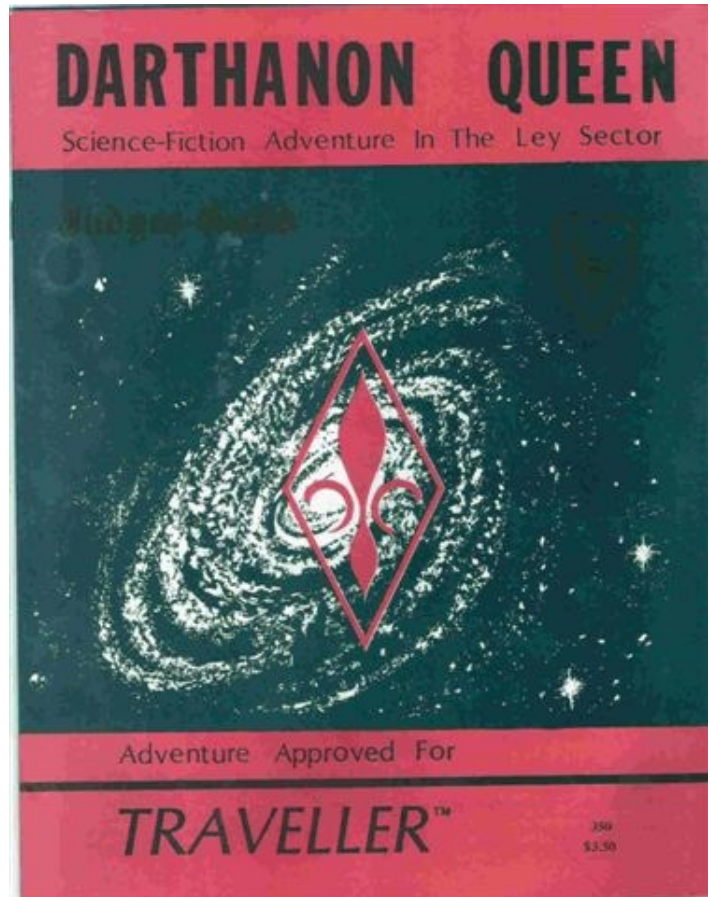
The *Darthanon Queen* is a 600-ton Subsidized Merchant, and the main thrust of the module details the crew, passengers, deckplans and some scenarios.

The scenarios are disappointing. The first is the classic "Alien awakes in the hold and kills everyone", although this is saved a little by the "roll the Alien's attributes". The alien can be rolled to have varying different attributes some of which can be special ones. The special attributes are explained (some are quite interesting), and action points for *Snapshot* or *Azhanti High Lightning* are given as well.

The second scenario is a rescue mission as the *Darthanon Queen* has had charges placed on it to stop evidence of government corruption from getting off planet. Some charges have already gone off. The players are tasked with saving the evidence for a big payoff, and a bonus is added for each passenger saved. There are various rules for how the charges go off and how to disarm them but this scenario lacks... well, just lacks, really.

The third is a mutiny by the crew and is your basic *Snapshot* or *Azhanti High Lightning* scenario "save the hostages from the desperate mutineers", which is acceptable but nothing special.

The Referee is encouraged to mix, change, or combine the scenarios for different effects, and to be brutally honest you would probably have to, to improve what is offered.



The *Snapshot* scenario leads us nicely to the deckplans. The *Darthanon Queen* is basically a rectangular box, a large proportion of which is fuel and cargo. The two passenger decks are long corridors with staterooms off each side, with turret access through a couple of them. This seems strange. The passengers share freshers, which doesn't feel right for the High Passengers that the ship is supposed to serve. The whole layout is, to me, a little disappointing, unimaginative, and not thought through.

To end the module there is a subsector detailed on a page that is just a map and the systems UWP listings—that's fine, but nothing special; and lastly crew lists for two possible rescue ships.

The whole of the *Darthanon Queen* module contains areas for noting damage, a whole, almost blank page is dedicated for the detailing of the Alien's stats and another for notes. While I can see the thought behind this I just view this as a waste.

The layout of the module is a real classic early 80s medium to low budget production and the artwork goes from good outside to bad in.

Critics' Corner

The gem and the saving grace for the whole module, for me anyway, was the crew of the *Lucky Winds*. This is one of the rescue ships that the players might take as pre-generated characters. This lot are on the wrong side of various laws, with one of them being an undercover agent, and all of them disliking or failing each other in numerous ways. As stated by the author role playing this lot would be a task all in itself, and I have to say that reading the descriptions of the crew had me thinking of three or four scenarios over and above the obvious ones.

I feel this one page, out of the thirty two, is the only real redeeming feature of the module and could lead to a few sessions of enjoyable playing.

While I wasn't expecting miracles from an early *Traveller* product such as this, by today's standards this misses the mark widely; unless you are a completist, I suggest that your gaming cash is better spent elsewhere. ❄️



News About Traveller

Recent Traveller News and Findings

December 2013 and January 2014

- **Spica Publishing** has released *Through the Veil* Parts 7 and 8
- **Mongoose Publishing** has released *Judges Handbook II, Supplement 15: Powers and Principalities*, and *2300AD: Black as Pitch*
- **Christian Hollnbuchner** has released *Starships Book I000II: Snapping Turtle*, *Starships Book I00I00: Heavy Yacht*, *Starships Book I00I0I: Cutlass Heavy Fighter*, *Starships Book I00IIO: Kite Class Corvette*, *Adventure Seed - The Christmas Robbery*, *Snow Crawler*, *Slate Aerodyne APC*, *Mule Aerodyne Liner*, and *Jackal Tank Hunter*
- **Gypsy Knights Games** has released *Ships of Clement Sector 2: Vulkan*, and *Quick Worlds 26: Winston*
- **Moon Toad Publishing** has released *Vehicle Book: Navarro UTE*
- **Jon Brazer Enterprises** has released *d66 Escalations of a Panicked Crowd*, *d66 Shops in a Spaceport*, *d66 Terra System American Warship Names*, *d66 Terra System French Warship Names*, *d66 Terra System Chinese Warship Names*, and *d66 Ways Your Contact Was Killed*
- **BITS** has released *101 Patrons*, *101 Plots*, *101 Lifeforms*, *101 Religions*, *101 Rendezvous*, *101 Travellers*, and *At Close Quarters*
- **13Mann Verlag** has released the following *Traveller Crew for Hire* items: *Engineers*, *Gunners*, *Marines*, *Medics*, *Merchants*, *Navigators*, *Pilots*, *Psion*, *Scientists*, *Stewards*, *Vargr Corsairs*, and *Security Details*. They have also released *Traveller Hephaestus*.
- **Gorgon Press** has released *Gun Book: Mk8 EMA-1*
- **Trooper X** has released *Captain Sturmhammer's Command Cards* ❄️

I. C. E.

by Michael Gilliam

This adventure was originally posted to the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 2003. Information about the Jefferson Davis appears in this issue.

Requirements

For one or more players. Interrogation, recruiting, carousing, liaison, computer, electronics, and weapons skills will all be very helpful, but none are absolutely required. Classic *Traveller* is assumed.

Setting

The adventure team is temporarily on the planet of Regatta, a lively if contaminated TL 10 industrialized world of 1 billion people. Regatta is a dual system, one GV star with another GV star in far orbit, around which orbits Pentosa, an up and coming TL 6 agricultural world of 10 million people. The economy here is good and the people are happy.

While carousing in a local recreation dome and engaging in a spirited game of drunk jump ball in front of a roaring crowd the adventure team takes up with an imposing individual who seems particularly good at knocking down the ball carrier. His name is Lex Tarson, and he is playing hard to work off a lot of stress. As he and the adventurers swap stories over whiskey between game rounds Lex begins talking about how the concern he works for, Mercury Chemical Company, has recently been penetrated by a spy who stole an entire computer program detailing Mercury's manufacturing secrets. The thief appears to have been a ronin employee who stole the data three days ago, just one day before the plant was shut down for a refit. All the ronin employees have been gone for two days and have scattered over the surface of Regatta, many going to seasonal fishing boats near the planet's polar icecaps. The company is under a lot of pressure from technologically inferior but numerous competitors, and the loss of these secrets almost guarantees the business failure of Mercury. Lex is completely responsible for his company's security, and while he is

a competent computer programmer who had thought his company's secrets were electronically protected, now not only has his primary skill proven insufficient but he has no idea of how to proceed to rectify the situation. Lex knows his supervisor is beginning the process that will lead to his job termination, and Lex can't bear the thought of becoming a ronin worker. (There is no need to simply lay this out before the players. Let it come out in conversation between Lex and the characters.)

If the players fail to take on this patron, move them along to the next adventure, else continue.

Lex is positive that Mercury will pay the team handsomely if they can save the company from its impending demise. He is so pleased that he has found someone who knows what to do to help him keep his job that he knocks out the next ball carrier he manages to catch, and he and the adventure team win a smashing victory. Well, no-one quite remembers winning, but how else to explain the Cr20,000 Lex and each team member have the next morning?

To Catch A Thief

Around noon the next day Lex meets the adventure team at their quarters and asks them what they plan to do. He shows them a letter from the Mercury CEO authorizing the adventure team to have full access to Mercury's plant and systems, and partial access to the company's expense account, in pursuance of the successful recovery of Mercury's industrial secrets. The letter states that the company will pay the adventure team well (the referee should determine the actual amount) if they can resolve the company's problem with maximum discretion. Lex will explain that the discretion is vital because legal action on Regatta is terribly expensive, and bankruptcy would be cheaper than the ensuing financial disaster of even a successful criminal charge. If the adventure team desires they may call the CEO directly and get the same statements from him verbally (though he will switch to a secure phone system). Assuming the team wishes to begin its investigation at the chemical plant, Lex offers to drive them there

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Active Measures

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in his company ground car. The adventurers will have to step quickly from their protected quarters, through the contaminated air and into the vehicle.

Pulling into the employee parking lot, the team sees it is vacant except for a big garbage truck moving in to empty the large bins overflowing with trash left by the departing workers. The adventurers again race from the purified air of their vehicle through the unhealthy atmosphere and into the walkway tubes between the personnel buildings. Lex takes a more leisurely pace, being born on Regatta and somewhat immune to the bad air.

The plant is shut down and deserted. Trash, dust, and the other assorted detritus of large numbers of the lower-class linger everywhere. The only people present are an old and slow-moving janitor in the barracks and a secretary doing catch-up work in a front office. The secretary is processing data for the next batch of incoming personnel when the plant reopens. The only sounds are the gentle breeze from the single air purifier left on-line and the thundering booms from the garbage truck in the parking lot. A large Regattan housefly (1 inch wide) that somehow got past the air filters will race at the adventure team until it is killed.

Lex will show the adventure team the machine on which he thinks the thief hacked into his security system. It is a general access terminal, and was used at one time or another by virtually every ronin who has ever worked in the plant, including the last batch when they signed out for their final paychecks. Secure files do indeed show the system was compromised from this terminal just 20 hours before the ronin began leaving, during the company party. If any player character has computer-2 he will be able to determine that the security system was probed but not compromised twice before, apparently in practice runs a week before the actual theft. Lex says he missed these probes. If a character suggests that the thief may be in management, Lex will point out that the company managers have been

with Mercury for several generations and are unlikely to have endangered their status in this way. He will also say that in any case all of the secretaries, managers, and executives at the plant appear to be accounted for at the time of the security breach, either because he was with them or because they were singing on stage (no need to ask).

Personnel records list 492 workers on the payroll with access to these buildings at the time the theft took place. Cross-referencing this with people who were present during the probes will eliminate from consideration 3 workers (if the adventurers wish to so eliminate anyone). A character with computer-3 will note that the security violation involved a list of commands that indicate the hacker was not trained in computer operations, but was simply following a tedious and blind but thorough algorithm designed to produce results that an untrained person could recognize and use. Nothing on the system will give any other indication of who the hacker was.

Factory Observation Points

The adventure team should now think to search for clues in the trash left behind by the workers, including the large dumpsters outside, and to stop the garbage truck in the parking lot. Should they not do this then let their investigation trail away to failure, and move the players on to another adventure. If the team does remember the truck after it has driven off, give them half an hour to find it and stop it, else it will have already dumped its load into an incinerator. If the truck does drive away, point out in passing that the garbage truck has left and the plant is now completely silent.

Among all of the usual interesting things the adventure team will find in the remaining debris, the following items will stand out.

One locker is stuffed full of trash bags containing faux paper printouts of all plant personnel and their personal information. Nothing will come of investigating this (but, of course, let the players try, without comment).

One locker is still locked. It contains undisturbed personal possessions, including a wallet with an ID

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card. The individual in question is not listed in any personnel file. Lex will have no idea why this would be, but the secretary working in the front office will be able to find out that this worker died five days ago and that the personnel office has already purged his existence from their active files. She will pull up the man's record from the seldom-used archive files, and it all seems otherwise normal. She will take the personal possessions to send them to the next of kin. Nothing more will come of pursuing this.

One emptied locker is found to contain three confidential manuals on procedures involving elemental mercury. Though buried under some trash they appear to have been carelessly dropped and forgotten. This too is a dead end.

One outside bin next to the front office is filled with vast quantities of shredded faux paper, smashed data disks, party favors, and empty beer kegs (great party).

The trash bin outside of the factory power plant contains several 5 gallon drums of acid. This is very illegal, and very dangerous. Finding this before it went out with the garbage will save Mercury a painful investigation and about Cr1,000,000 in fines.

This trash bin, one of several by the barracks, contains old clothing, magazines, newspapers, a dead plant, a crushed radio, and other trash. Stuffed down one corner are a large number of travel ticket jackets for busses and trains, printed in dull colors on cheap faux paper. One of these, however, is bright red and gold on real paper, and stands out immediately if unburied from its shallow covering. The front has nothing but a simple gold logo of a swirl around a depiction of the planet Regatta on a red background, but the back proudly proclaims that Starways offers the best in luxury accommodations to discerning space travellers on their way to Pentosa. If the player characters ask Lex or some other information source about this ticket jacket they will learn that a ticket to a Starways liner would cost ten months wages for a ronin worker at Mercury.

Get Me To The Starport On Time

If the adventure team decides to pursue this and uses a local computer net connection to check for the next Starways flight to Pentosa (Starways has no flights to other destinations) they will find that the next vessel out, the *Jefferson Davis*, is leaving in six hours and already has been boarding passengers for the last six hours. The previous flight was a week ago, and the next is scheduled in a week. If the team decides to pursue this and asks Lex for transport he can get the adventure team into a grav vehicle and have them standing in the starport in one hour, five hours before liftoff. This will leave the adventure team with plenty of time to see all the Starport Observation Points. If for some reason the team does not check the flight schedule immediately or otherwise fails to move quickly they will get there two hours before liftoff and will only have time to see Starport Observation Points 4E and 5 below. In no case will the adventurers have time to return to their quarters to retrieve any of their possessions before the *Jefferson Davis* lifts off (though of course Lex may be able to make some kind of arrangement for his new friends and saviors).

If pursuing this, very fast-moving players will ask for tickets now. This will cost quite a bit, and Lex will suggest the adventurers gather more concrete evidence while he checks with his CEO.

Waiting For Mr. Shpy

While hardly as busy as the sprawling ports at Mora or Trin, the Regattan Spaceport is fairly active with a large clientele. On their way to the new wing constructed for Starways' luxury liners the adventure team will pass both the original starport "mall" (a general gaggle of shops offering spacefaring supplies) and the new upper-class department stores offering luxury goods such as wines, designer clothes and uniforms, luggage, and the other travel accessories of fine people everywhere. The processed and purified air in here smells good for some reason. Of particular note, one small shop sells high-quality knives and swords.

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Presumably the adventure team will position themselves on the starship concourse to discretely observe everyone boarding and debarking the *Jefferson Davis*, in an attempt to try and identify suspicious characters who might be the man they are searching for. Unless players have previously stated otherwise they are dressed plainly, and even though there is a spot outside the secure area where incoming passengers can be quietly observed the adventurers will still stand out. Everyone nearby is noticing them. Hopefully the players will think to have their characters take turns using the money they won in their game of drunk jump ball and fix themselves up in the local malls. Excepting any player who previously swore up and down that he was leaving his money in his quarters or somewhere else safe and it's not in his wallet, let each character find he is carrying his money.

Four men dressed in black coveralls and wearing sidearms are manning the gangway checkpoint. Two officers in very sharp navy blue uniforms and several stewards in white vests and black pants stand with them. All are wearing light headsets with one earpiece over the right ear. A single probing machine for carry-on luggage is next to the roped entry, as is a weapons detector. As passengers trickle up the men in black greet them and politely ask them to place their luggage on the machine and step through the detector. The stewards assist anyone who needs help with their bags. Some passengers hand over firearms, which are then signed for, placed in canvas pouches, and carefully loaded into a padded case nearby. Passengers with knives and swords are allowed to retain them. The officers introduce themselves to each passenger, speaking for several moments and then directing them up the gangway.

Occasionally a few crewmen dressed in orange coveralls walk off, go to the starport malls, and come back carrying shopping bags. They nod to the

security detail who glance at them as they walk straight through.

Through the tall glass wall at the rear the *Jefferson Davis* is visible outside. It is four decks high, painted a brilliant red, brand new and shining in the sun. The golden Starways logo gleams at the curve of its bow. The cargo doors are open, and a bright orange loading robot is quickly packing luggage into the bay. The bridge window shield is raised, and one or two men can be seen at the controls. The ship begins to start up its huge maneuver drives, and their silent exterior harmonics can be felt in concentric circles inside the starport.

Starport Observation Points

If the adventurers try to memorize the faces of company employees and then look for any of these faces at the starport, each attempt to do so will require a roll of 2d6+2. If the result is less than or equal to the character's INT then the character knows, yes or no, if the person was listed in the company's personnel roster, else the character is not sure. At this point all the definite answers are no.

Among all of the usual interesting things the adventure team will see at the starport gate the following events will stand out.

As one passenger is boarding he will begin arguing with the head of the security detail. As an officer steps up the man begins arguing him instead. Apparently he is upset that his luggage has not yet been placed on board. The officer assures him that he will personally see to his luggage, and the man seems mollified. The officer summons a steward and sends him on an errand, through a security door and out to the cargo loading area. The steward puts on a breathing mask before stepping out.

A very well-dressed and courteous old man slowly hobbles out of the ship and passes back through the passenger screening area. He tells an officer that he needs to do some shopping before the ship leaves and asks if he has enough time, and the officer says that he has a few hours. He hobbles into the mall, and will return an hour later to be re-screened and re-boarded by the security detail.

Active Measures

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One boarding passenger has a child who is throwing a wild temper tantrum. Her mother has to drag the howling minor all the way to the gate. She is exhausted, and begins trying to pull out her ticket. A steward comes forward to assist the passenger, but before he can get to her the child breaks free of her mother's control and climbs into the baggage probing machine to hide. The security men panic and run around trying to remember how to shut down the machine. She refuses to come out, and the steward has to climb in to retrieve her. The security men show the child and her embarrassed mother the child's recorded probe image and explain that she has just received a dose of radiation. The child becomes thoroughly cowed and begins crying. By this time the ship's doctor has arrived, and he takes her into his lap to explain to her that she didn't get enough radiation to get sick but that from now on she would have to listen to her mother or next time she might get hurt. Looking horribly sad the child nods tearful assent, and the doctor escorts the child and her mother up the gangway onto the *Davis*.

While the child is causing this scene one passenger will debark. He is short, rat-faced, and shabbily dressed, but he has an enormous smile. He goes immediately into the luxury mall and into a clothiers. If the adventure team decides to tail him they will observe points A to C.

He begins buying a good quantity of high-class luxury clothing, spending some time trying to figure out what he wants while rudely disregarding suggestions from shopping advisors.

He will take several sets of clothing into the changing room. As he tries them on, if a character is in an adjacent changing room he will be able to hear the man mutter to himself, "Well Danny, looks like you've hit the big time."

When he attempts to pay for his purchases, wearing one of his new suits, the cashier will inform him, "I'm sorry, Mr. Oshon, but your debit card isn't registered and has no funds." Mr. Oshon will be-

come very agitated, saying things like "I'm not going to be pushed around like this!". The cashier will ask how old his debit card is, and Mr. Oshon will say he just got paid about an hour ago. The cashier will explain that it takes about two hours for "the system" to register a debit card. Mr. Oshon will fume but wait, and after another ten minutes the debit card will work. Mr. Oshon will smile broadly and comment, "For a while there I thought I'd been played for a sucker."

On his way back to the ship Mr. Oshon will buy several bottles of very expensive wine, more than he can comfortably carry, and will drop and break one at the screening gate. He will laugh it off, saying "I don't have to worry about that anymore", and he will airily tip a security man a Cr100 note (which he will decline). One of the stewards immediately begins cleaning up the mess.

If the characters are distracted by the child's tantrum in Observation Point 3 and the players do not specifically state that they continue to observe passenger traffic in spite of the display then they will miss Mr. Oshon's debarkation and shopping trip. Their only chance to pick up on him will be at observation point 4D. If an adventure team character is attempting to recognize faces and Mr. Oshon attracts his attention, he will recognize him if a roll of 2d6-2 is less than the character's INT. Danny is a common Regattan name, but Oshon is not, and if any character picks up on the name Oshon and somehow compares it against Mercury personnel records he will get a match.

On being screened for boarding, Regattan starport security men approach and question a certain passenger. After searching his carry-on luggage for a few minutes they arrest him and lead him away. The arrest goes without incident. The man is a known gem smuggler. (Note: this leaves a high stateroom unoccupied.)

I Need A Holiday

At this point the players should realize that Mr. Oshon has already made his drop to a passenger

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Active Measures

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already aboard, and that they need to buy tickets and embark if they wish to find out who is behind this theft and to recover the stolen industrial secrets. Presumably the adventure team should contact Lex and inform him of this circumstance. On hearing that the thief and his contact are definitely going to Pentosa, Lex will comment that the company originating the espionage will almost certainly be Sasparrilla Chemical of Pentosa, whose local products have been competing poorly with imports from Mercury. But Lex can offer no suggestion as to exactly who the contact is. It could be anyone. If the adventure team manages to search the ship passenger data base in an attempt to look for likely suspects they will find that it carries little personal data beyond billing information.

Tickets for the *Jefferson Davis* cost Cr18,000 each for a full stateroom, Cr20,000 for a high stateroom, and Cr8,000 for the second member of a double occupancy. If the adventure team doesn't have such money and if they contact Lex he can give them a single instance access number to which the adventurers can charge their tickets. The tickets can be purchased at the front of the starport. Allow enough staterooms to be available to accommodate all members of the adventure team, and locate these rooms on a copy of the ship's deck plans. If they haven't yet done so, give the players one last chance to realize that they need to dress up. If they fail to do this they will have enormous difficulty interacting with the passengers and crew of the *Jefferson Davis*.

Before they board, Lex will pass on a change in plans to the adventure team. The CEO congratulates them for their work so far, and he still wants the team at least to recover the stolen commercial secrets, but if they can he instead wants them to substitute a set of false data for the real data in order to confuse their competitors and waste their time. The CEO promises a bonus if the adventure team successfully pulls this off. The false replacement data

can either be transmitted directly to the adventure team onto their communication devices if they have appropriate ones, or it can be sent up as electronic or physical mail to the *Jefferson Davis* before it leaves orbit for Pentosa. Lex also gives the adventure team the name of the senior Mercury representative on Pentosa, along with his comm number, and a security code to establish their validity and relationship with Mercury.

On passing through the security point the adventurers will find that Starways allows passengers to carry knives and swords. The two officers, who are the ship's Purser and Master-at-Arms, will greet them and exchange the usual pleasantries. The team may then proceed aboard.

(If the referee wants to give the players a difficult challenge, as the characters all step within the screening area have one of the ship's security personnel courteously ask them what such a clearly unprepared group of people were doing watching the gate and incoming passengers for hours before buying their new clothes and their tickets at the last minute. The characters will then realize that a very discreet and helpful circle of stewards, backed by the rest of the security men, has softly formed around the screening area and their baggage, that the officers are standing easy talking to each other but are blocking the gangway to the ship, and that six starport security men are back a distance on the concourse eating donuts and porkdogs and watching the scene out of the corner of their eye.) (If this is too much for the players, one possible resolution is: "We're the championship drunk jump ball team, on our way to Pentosa for a game. Didn't you see us last night?" Or perhaps one of the crewmen will recognize them and simply ask if they are scheduled for a game on Pentosa.)

Five, Four, Three, Two ...

The *Jeff D.* is a great boat. As the adventure team boards, describe the vessel and its crew to them in detail. They're going to be spending a week here pursuing an unknown passenger throughout the decks, so they'll get to know it well. Make sure you

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know it well first. The ship has a life of its own apart from anything the characters do—several famous and significant people are aboard, in addition to many who are merely rich and powerful. Make the players feel it.

Liftoff

This journey by the *Davis* will take seven days, using maneuver drives to accelerate to the half-way point and then to decelerate until arrival at Pentosa. While most crew and passengers will be ordinary and appropriate within their roles, some are special or have special problems. The game referee need not use all, or even any, of the encounters presented below. They are included to provide subplots and plot twists should the referee find them useful. The referee should also generate several of his own characters and have them interact many times with the adventure team throughout the voyage to build a sense of a closed and familiar environment. In addition, following the characters is a selection of events the referee may find useful.

The Master-at-Arms: This man is completely paranoid, and he knows it. He is convinced the entire world is out to get him, especially the passengers who are just dying to ruin his career. He only has six months to go before he can retire, and he is rigidly controlling himself in a desperate effort to keep his problem out of sight despite everyone's hateful attempts to trip him up and ruin his pension that he has worked for thirty years to get. But everyone knows, everyone watches him, everyone talks about him behind his back. He doesn't care, he'll beat them all, no matter what it takes....

An Engineer: This man is a spy wannabe. He reads all the cheap spy vids and detective e-magazines he can get his hands on, both on and off duty. The adventure team characters may see him reading while going to and coming from duty. He also spends time trying to design and build hand-made spy equipment such as bugs, trackers, and

comm devices, though he keeps this secret. He has successfully completed several crude but serviceable devices. If the adventure team expresses interest in them he will offer to sell a few, but if he finds that a passenger is being targeted he will refuse and explain that it is impossible for him to participate. If the adventure team presses him he will stop speaking to them. He frequently stands watch in EOS.

A Steward: This pleasant-appearing man is a former covert ops commando with a college degree in psychology. Working as a senior steward he keeps an eye on the passengers and crew of the vessel, reporting regularly to the captain to allow him to get ahead of any potential problems. He is thoroughly fit, works out in the holo booths every day before sleeping, and is a formidable hand-to-hand fighter. A player character with commando experience has a chance (2d6 for less than the number of tours as a commando) of realizing, from his bearing and word selection, what this steward is. (If a character does recognize this, feed him clues to this effect rather than just tell him.) He hasn't yet twigged on the problems the Master-at-Arms is experiencing. "Yes. Yes, we won. Victory covers a multitude of sins."

A Steward: This ordinary-looking man is an evangelical Christian preacher. On Sundays he holds church services in the ship's theater. He is a very forceful and practiced orator who preaches straight out of the Bible, holding most people's attention regardless of their opinions about "religion". About a fourth of the crew attends his sessions, usually along with many passengers, silk suits alongside orange coveralls. On the last voyage he persuaded a Pentosan senator to become a Christian. Outside of this he enjoys his service jobs and performs them with a will. "And all that you do, do it for the Lord." He is the one who climbed into the baggage probing machine.

A Passenger: (This young woman is similar to Rose Dawson of the movie *Titanic*.) She is on her way to Pentosa to begin an arranged marriage with a man she has never met, and she has severe misgiv-

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ings. While unquestionably beautiful, she is selfish, reckless, depressed, and prone to great irresponsibility. She is also an accomplished pianist and vocalist, and will bang out rousing renditions of ancient drinking songs on the beat-up piano in the Old Lion. She views this voyage as a last opportunity to “be free”. She is berthed in a High suite on Deck 2.

A Passenger: This older man is a bodyguard to the woman above, and he wears a rapier that he knows how to use. He has worked for the family for many years and is presently entrusted with getting the young woman to the church on time with minimal incident. She is really giving him a run for his money, however, and he is having difficulty keeping her under control. He is berthed in the full stateroom immediately aft of hers.

A Passenger: This man is a high-ranking underground fight club champion. Some scars, very fit, sometimes overly forward and aggressive. He’s on his way to a scheduled fight on Pentosa. Such fighting is illegal on both Regatta and Pentosa, but it is still very popular. He is berthed in one of the High suites on Deck 2. He is accompanied by his male trainer and female secretary, who are married and who are double-berthed immediately aft of him.

A Passenger: This is a famous hunter, on his way to Pentosa to hunt the deadly raptors on Sally’s Island. He is the worst dressed person aboard, wearing simple khaki pocketpants and a hunting vest, but with his beaming smile, suntanned skin and powerful arms he somehow looks better dressed than most. He has a serious scar down the left side of his face. He carries an enormous bowie knife, and he knows how to handle it and how to throw it (and how to show it off). He is very popular, and will regale civilized listeners with well-told stories of his hunts (including how he got the scar). When reminded that half of all hunters who attempt the Sally’s Island raptors are killed by their prey he will confidently answer that the man who hunted before him was killed, and that he knows the man sched-

uled to hunt after him is no good, so he feels certain that he will be in the half that survives. When a little girl tells him that she doesn’t want him to die he crouches down to her and says with a tremendous and sunny smile, “Everyone dies. Even little girls. What counts is how you live.”

A Passenger: This teenaged boy is a chess grandmaster from Regatta, on his way to a tournament on Pentosa. He will give several simultaneous exhibition matches during the voyage. He is also a savant, able to rapidly perform complex mathematical operations in his head.

A Passenger: This woman is a Japanese flute master, famous throughout the subsector. She will give several solo concerts, both formally and informally, during the journey. She likes the acoustics of the elevator well and will sometimes practice there, causing everyone to stop and listen. She is sensitive and moody, and sometimes she will simply stand with her bamboo flute, her eyes shut, swaying slowly back and forth, listening to something in her head.

Power Failure

At some point in the journey a rapid series of power outages will occur in the passenger berthing and promenade deck areas. Suspecting a fire in load center 3 (elevator well third deck port) a team of two engineers and two stewards in vacc suits and with firefighting gear will converge on the load center and open the door. Inside are a man and his wife engaged in, uh, energetic activities which have accidentally tripped various circuit breakers. They will emerge to the applause of the spectators in the elevator well who have followed the dramatic entrance of the firefighting team.

Shipboard Observation Points

The adventure team needs to locate Mr. Oshon’s contact. Several approaches suggest themselves, the most obvious being the direct one of forcing or terrorizing Mr. Oshon into revealing the required information. But in addition to being illegal and hard to hide, this may tip off the contact, who may seek

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official refuge or otherwise make the stolen data unavailable. If the ship's officers begin to ask questions then legal involvement may be inevitable, to the ruin of the Mercury Chemical Company. The approach most likely to succeed will be to simply sit back, observe Mr. Oshon, and wait for him to become careless or comfortable and to indicate by his interactions who his contact is.

Each day Mr. Oshon will interact with his contact in the following manner. If the adventurers are reasonably thorough in watching him they will observe the events in the following order (unless a previous interaction disallows subsequent listed events).

Day 1

During the lift-off celebration Mr. Oshon will see his contact, Angela Croughton. He will catch her eye and raise a glass in silent but ostentatious toast to her. She will attempt to ignore him. At this point no one else is ignoring Mr. Oshon, and Mr. Oshon displays little courtesy or respect for anyone else. It will take some observation skill to pick this up.

Day 2

Mr. Oshon is dismissive and rude to most passengers and stewards, and resentful of any crewman with authority. He makes impertinent and suggestive remarks while eyeing the bodies of several attractive women, but otherwise expresses no interest in or consideration for anyone else. Many people are beginning to ignore him. But, when he meets Miss Croughton in a narrow corridor or on the elevator, he steps aside with exaggerated mock courtesy and a sly smile and does not pursue her or make rude comments. He acts familiar with her. She ignores him. This behavior will be mildly obvious.

Day 3

After a bad day of gambling Mr. Oshon gets drunk and confronts Miss Croughton outside of a holograv booth as she is stepping out. He insists that

he should have been paid more for his services. She dismisses him, but he drunkenly stands his ground and she has to push past him.

Day 4

Mr. Oshon begins seriously drinking and gambling. On losing a great deal of money he goes to Miss Croughton's High suite and pounds on her door, saying that she owes him. She brings him inside to avoid further unwanted notice, and he loudly argues with her about getting more money. She buys him off and dismisses him, telling him to never contact her again. The High suites are almost sound-proof, so the adventurers will not hear what is said in the suite unless they take appropriate measures.

Day 5

Mr. Oshon becomes very ill, almost incapacitated. In the medical office he will insensibly begin talking to himself about many things, mostly uncivilized subjects but including comments about how "she set me up, I can't get a break". If persistently asked by a patient person, he will insensibly state her name.

Day 6

Mr. Oshon's condition worsens, and the ship's doctor places him in cold sleep pending planetfall, when he will be transferred to a full hospital.

Day 7

At planetfall Mr. Oshon is transferred to a hospital without being revived.

Angela Croughton

Angela Croughton is the daughter of Mr. Asp Croughton, CEO of Sasparilla Chemical of Pentosa. She is young, tall, fairly strong, typically Pentosan-blond, and a no-nonsense kind of woman. Her father is considering her to replace him as a CEO, and she is taking to the task with alacrity and discipline. She wants the job, and she knows that if she screws up anything too badly her younger brother will inherit the CEO chair when he turns 18. Her skills are computer-1, brawling-1, rapier-1, administration-1,

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Active Measures

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and broker-1. Of course feel free to adjust to these as necessary, but no skill should be over 1.

Angela's High suite is located on Deck 2, all the way port. Her personal computer is on her desk, and a case of copper data rods is nearby. All the rods are clearly labeled in Angela's precise handwriting, except one which has an ugly scrawl on it that seems to read "vengeance man" or possibly "vegan man". This rod contains the original stolen information. There are also three other rods in a luggage case under her bed, labeled "Sasparilla Accounts" (indecipherable financial data), "Regatta" (a college course program regarding the history of Regatta—Pentosa), and "Backup" (a backup copy of Mercury's industrial secrets). If the adventure team fails to locate this backup copy then any other action they take will have no ultimate effect.

Doors

All staterooms may be locked and unlocked by swiping a passcard through a reader adjacent to the door. Any door can be opened from the inside at all times unless the Master-at-Arms overrides this with a certain code. Three passcards exist for each stateroom: one for the primary occupant, one for any double-berthed person, and one in the Master-at-Arms' keybox in the secure locker on the main crew deck. Passcards are issued to passengers as they board. Additionally, any door can be opened by command from the main bridge—and, unknown to most crewmen, by hacking the backup computer in the lower bridge.

There are three ways to force a stateroom door. The first is by someone with electronics-2, two days, and sufficient tools to alter their own room passcard to act as a master passcard. The second is by someone hacking the backup computer; this requires computer-3 and ten minutes, or computer-2 and one hour, or computer-1 and two hours. The third involves de-energizing the passenger stateroom door security system locks. The breaker for the primary power supply for this system is located in load center 3, and is labeled "Door Security PRI". The breaker for the alternate power supply is located in load center 2 and is labeled "Passenger Door Security ALT". Both supplies converge in load center 3 on a small relay box labeled "Passenger Door Security" which automatically selects whichever power source is available. The cables leading into the box are labeled "3-DS(PRI)" and "2-DS(ALT)". The relay box has a handle with three positions labeled "PRI", "OFF", and "ALT". On losing power, all passenger stateroom doors revert to manual operation, opening and closing using a simple latch. The card swipe devices no longer have any effect, but this will not be immediately obvious to passengers unless one tries to open a door without having swiped their passcard key. A Door Security System Power-On indicator light in EOS is the only indicator of the status of the system. If the system loses power this light does not go out, but blinks. EOS is always manned by one person, three during general quarters.

Players may think up other methods of entry. All vent ducts are one foot wide at most. 🌟

Confessions of a Newbie Referee

Timothy Collinson

#7: Combat

I don't know if I should admit this in public, but I'm not terribly into combat in *Traveller*. I was initially drawn to the creative aspects of world building and character generation. It's not that I'm opposed to role playing combat in principle, I just find that it

tends to slow down the game and can detract from the story telling if not handled well. Of course, I'm aware that some players live for the planning and the weapons stats and the die rolling and the miniatures; and I'll admit that it can be intensely exciting in context and at the right moment. But I don't live for it and am quite happy if a game doesn't involve very much combat at all.

Confessions of a Newbie Referee

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One of the fears I mentioned in my first Confession was whether the absence of combat in the game I was running would detract from the experience. In fact, the game included one encounter with one animal with only one of the PCs armed. I seem to recall the critter was dispatched in one game with two shots and in the other with three shots. Five die rolls in eight hours with such limited possibilities of weapon/armour/range etc, I can manage. The reception the game received – from both sets of players – suggested that the absence of more really wasn't a problem.

However, for a second convention game, I thought I really ought to give it a go and allow the scenario to climax with a bit of derring-do for the players. That meant getting to grips with Mongoose's rules and understanding not just the details of how it worked, but also understanding where it gets bogged down and creates longueurs for those not directly involved. With the PCs as nobles there was only one weapon of choice – rapiers, and I set it up so their opponents would have stunsticks. I could dispense with armour and too many options and variations.

With virtually no inexperienced at it, I spent several weekends over a few months running the pro-

posed scene over and over. Trying to get a feel for how the die rolls worked, what happened to the UPP stats, what variations might crop-up. One concern I had was not knowing much about tactics so would players throw curve balls in their actions and were my baddies acting reasonably optimally? That's when I sent a couple of examples of my simulations to a respected *Traveller* referee for comment. (Thanks, D!) One of the first things I'd discovered and he pointed out was that stunsticks would probably make the fight too one-sided so I reduced the baddies to simple club type weapons and a couple of the leaders kept the stun variety. I naturally wanted the PCs to be able to win, but for it not to be a walkover. In just one simulation the PCs managed to win without receiving a scratch between them, but mostly it was a close run thing with varying injury levels.

When it came to it, in the convention, my hours of practice at that specific situation paid off in keeping the whole thing moving briskly – it perhaps took the last half hour or so of each game and made a fitting climax. I failed to ask the players how it had gone, but the overall reaction to the game was positive. So who knows? Perhaps another time I'll advance to more serious weapons. And, hopefully, with more of an appreciation for the detail, I'll enjoy combat sessions in other games much more. 🌟

Doing It My Way

Character Generation Rules

Martial Artists: A Career for Mongoose *Traveller*

by Gary Charles Wilkens

Unarmed combat and combat with 'archaic' and improvised weapons has long been given short shrift in *Traveller*—there are stats for such weapons within the normal rules, but no real opportunity for a PC to specialize in it the way that one can specialize in military skills, merchant skills, and so on. This article presents a worked-out career for Mongoose *Traveller* for the specialist in Martial Arts, presented

in a form recognizably similar to the careers presented in the *Traveller* Core Rules (which are a required prerequisite) and supplemental career rulebooks, such as *High Guard*, *Scouts*, *Dilettantes*, and so on.

This career includes a new skill, Martial Arts Weapons (M.A.Weap.). M.A.Weap. includes specialties of Thrown Weapons, Staves, and Archery. Thrown Weapons covers Ranged (thrown) use of knives, daggers, shurriken, and other similar weapons; Staves covers the use of staffs, nunchaku, and so on; Archery covers the use of a bow-and-arrow. See the Martial Arts Weapons table for combat statistics for Martial Arts weapons.

Doing It My Way

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Martial Artist

Individuals who make their living fighting with fists or melee weapons.

Assignments

Choose one of the following:

Streetfighter: You took on all comers on the streets to protect your reputation.

Monk: You dedicated your life to the study of meditation, philosophy and the martial arts in a monastery or school.

Combat Athlete: You were a professional athlete who fought in a ring or cage.

Note on Skills: Where two skills are shown in the table, the player must choose one. A choice on one roll does not constrain the choice on later rolls.

Skills and Training

	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (EDU 8+)	Streetfighter	Monk	Combat Artist
1	+1 STR	Melee (Unarmed)	Medic	Melee (Unarmed)	Melee (Unarmed)	Melee (Unarmed)
2	+1 DEX	Athletics (Coordination)	Diplomat	Streetwise	Athletics (Any)	Art (Acting)
3	+1 END	Melee (Any) or M.A.Weap. (Any)	Advocate	Melee (Bludgeon) or Gun Cbt (Slug Pistol)	Social Science (Philosophy)	Athletics (Any)
4	Melee (Any)	Athletics (Endurance)	Social Science (Any)	Carouse	Melee (Any) or M.A.Weap. (Any)	Streetwise
5	Athletics (Any)	Stealth	Language (Any)	Persuade	Medic	Melee (Any)
6	M.A.Weap. (Any)	Recon	Trade (Any)	Gambler	Persuade	Carouse

Rank Skills

	Streetfighter		Monk		Combat Athlete	
	Rank	Skill	Rank	Skill	Rank	Skill
0						
1	Brawler	Streetwise 1	Disciple	Athletics (Any)	Prospect	Athletics (Any)
2						
3	Tough Guy	Gun Cbt (Slug Pistol) 1	Warrior Monk	Soc. Sci. (Philosophy) 1	Contender	Art (Acting) 1
4						
5	Bad Ass	Persuade 1	Master	Medic 1	Champion	Persuade 1

Qualification: Dex 7+; -1 DM for every previous career.

Career Progress

Specialty	Survival	Advancement
Streetfighter	END 6+	DEX 7+
Monk	DEX 7+	EDU 8+
Combat Athlete	END 6+	DEX 7+

Mustering-Out Benefits

Roll	Benefits	Cash
1	Contact	100
2	Weapon	500
3	Ally	1000
4	+1 DEX	2000
5	Weapon	3000
6	+1 EDU	5000
7	Two Ship Shares	10000

Doing It My Way

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Mishaps

1	Severely Injured. (This is the same as a result of 2 on the Injury table.) Alternatively, roll twice on the Injury table (p.37 of the <i>Traveller</i> Core Rules) and take the lower result.
2	You dishonor or embarrass yourself in a fight. Lose one Benefit roll from this career, and take Drifter as your next career.
3	A Martial Artist training with you betrays you. Gain a Rival or an Enemy who is a Martial Artist of equal ability.
4	You are forced to kill someone in a fight and must flee the planet. Gain Deception-1, and an Enemy in Law Enforcement.
5	Your Art is declared illegal by the local authorities. Gain Trade (Any)-1
6	Injured! Roll on the Injury table (<i>Traveller</i> Core Rules).

Events

2	Disaster! Roll on the mishap table, but you are not ejected from this career.
3	You are publically challenged by a superior fighter. If you accept the challenge, roll Melee (Unarmed) 9+. If you win the fight, gain +1 SOC. If you lose the fight, roll on the Injury Table. If you decline the challenge, suffer -1 SOC.
4	You help to found a school to teach your art. Gain Admin 1 or Advocate 1 or Diplomat 1.
5	You are favored by a teacher of your art. Gain +1 to any one Benefit Roll, but also gain someone overlooked for the same honors as a Rival.
6	You have an opportunity to betray a fellow martial artist for personal gain. If you do so, gain +4 DM to you next Advancement Roll. If you do not, gain him as an Ally.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events Table (Main Book page 34).
8	You spend many months at an isolated retreat, training your body and skills furiously. Gain +1 DEX or +1 END, and Melee (Any).
9	Your gang, school or team is attacked by rivals. Roll any Melee skill 8+. If you succeed, gain an extra Benefit roll. If you fail, roll on the Injury Table.
10	You are forced to get a "regular job" to earn a living, in addition to your art. Roll END 8+. If you succeed, gain another Benefit Roll. If you fail, suffer -1 END.
11	A master of your art deems you worthy of special training. Gain Melee (Any).
12	You win an epic battle. You are automatically promoted.

Martial Arts Weapons

Weapon	Martia Arts Weapon Skill Specialty	TL	Range	Damage	Heft	Mass	Cost
Shurriken	Thrown Weapons	2	Ranged (thrown)	1d6-1	-	-	Cr5
Knife/Dagger	Thrown Weapons	1	Ranged (thrown)	1d6+2	-	-	Cr10
Bow-and-Arrow	Archery	1	Ranged (Pistol) (not Personal)	2d6	-	5kg	Cr50
Nunchaku	Staves	2	Melee (Bludgeon)	1d6	1	1kg	Cr5
Staff	Staves	1	Melee (Bludgeon)	2d6	1	2kg	-



Techbook: Chrome

reviewed by "kafka"

Techbook: Chrome. John Lees.

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

136pp, PDF

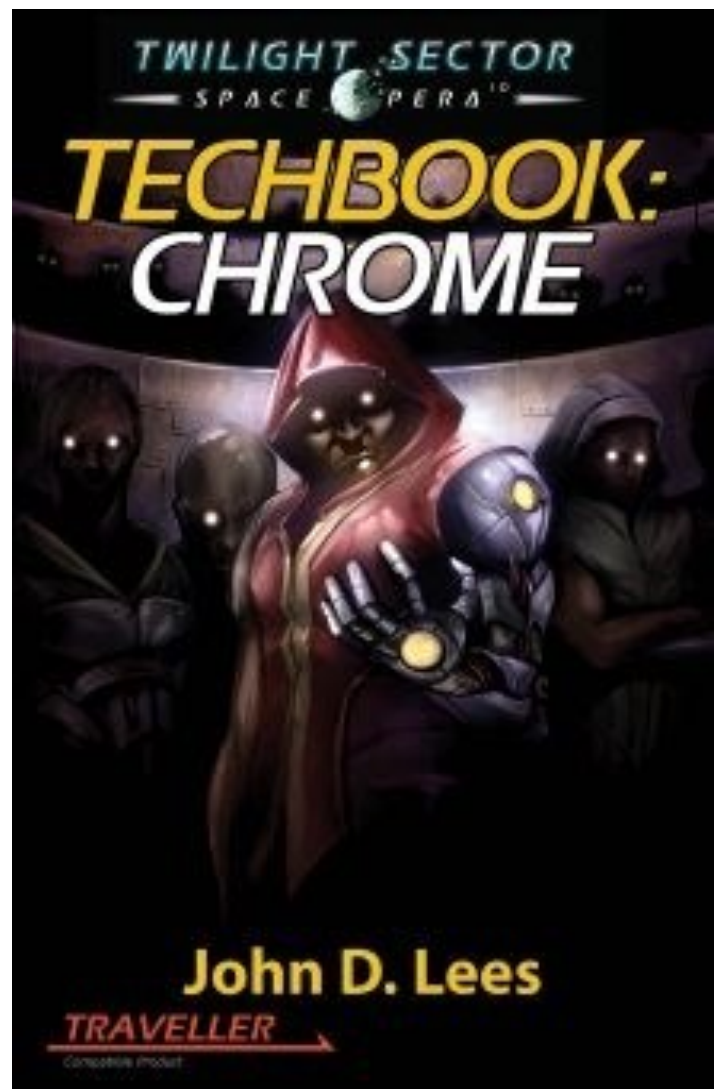
US\$8.99

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Does your Space Opera game need a neocyberpunk veneer? Do you enjoy the simple 2D6 Mongoose *Traveller* rules? If the answer to both questions above is affirmative then you would be wise to check this new offering from Terra/Sol Games.

Cyberpunk came into *Traveller* very late in its life and always suffered from that. It was much more grounded in golden age sensibilities in which men were real men (not augmented cyber freaks) and women were real women (not buxom faux princesses) and there were no furry creatures from Alpha Centuri (at least not in the OTU) yet the culture was changing around it with the arrival of *Star Wars* in the same year that it was released. Without getting too heavily into the debate whether *Traveller* and *Star Wars* share similar DNA – the point is that they grew up together and if one believes that traits are also socially acquired – *Traveller* adopted more Space Opera than perhaps the creators had wished for harkening back to Golden Age Science Fiction (Hugo-Greenback era). *Traveller* also had sensibilities that took from literature from the "Age of the Sail" because of onerous travel times involved in interstellar distances. So, it is that *Traveller's* DNA was a complex affair from the beginning. But, DNA doesn't remain static – viruses enter cells and rewrite DNA and mutation spreads.

One such mutation was cyberpunk, that strange beast that roared out of the 1980s. The difference, as that genre was completely alien to *Traveller's* sensibilities, it was a marginal force slowly eating away at *Traveller's* philosophical underpinnings. *Traveller* could not ignore it for very long, as the margins were pushing their way to the centre, a phenomenal



game *Cyberpunk 2020* raced side-by-side with *Traveller* through great fanzines like *Signal GK* directly co-opted cyberpunk into *Traveller*. More traditional groups could pretend that cyberpunk did not exist but like the genre itself, it changed the DNA and that freely mingled into things like *Star Wars* and Hard SF thus creating a new organism than what was envisioned in 1977. Keeping abreast with literary trends, even classic Space Opera, had morphed and became something known as the New Space Opera that appropriated more directly the cyber (or chrome) and somewhat the punkish (at least, dark and conflicted heroes) into its mainstream.

Traveller (at least Mongoose *Traveller*) ignored the developments of New Space Opera along with the interesting questions raised by transhumanist SF for its Cybernetics supplement/book and focused

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more upon the Golden Age SF with cyberpunk trimmings. So, while that book was a great leap forward for *Traveller* by adopting a more systematic approach, it did so, in the generic way – by giving you a tool kit of options, not, basing it at all in a social science milieu. So, you could have worlds where augmentation is possible and worlds that it is not. While this approach is desirable for a supplement, *Traveller* has always been about combine the social sciences with the physical sciences with a bit of handwavium thrown in. Thus, the cybernetics books left gaping questions how to address cyberpunk in a mainstream *Traveller* universe, say, unlike *Judge Dredd* or *Strontium Dog* which had a more radical approach to cyberpunk. So, in steps Terra/Sol Games, who is a company that firmly embraces the New Space Opera and transhumanism *and* has an integrated history/social science approach.

Already there is a different tone in this book than the track that the Mongoose supplement takes on – for if one wants to play hardcore 1980s cyberpunk then the Mongoose supplement does a great job but if you want to take on some of the more bizarre incorporations of the introduction merging man-machine i.e. transhumanist and neocyberpunk themes then one would be wise to pick up this supplement even if you do not like the Twilight Sector back-story (passing familiarity with the major interstellar players of that milieu would enhance the product and allow you to translate it into YTU).

So, what does this supplement actually contain? First and foremost, it identifies those who augment their bodies are both the norm and deviants of the milieu. For the awakening that brought mutants to the forefront was also when human beings of Earth 2 were experimenting with human augments including the biomechanical. Thus, we get a long treatise of the different cybernetic replacements from the mundane (Golden Age SF) one-to-one replacement of a lost limb/organ to the more exotic (traditional cyberpunk) biomechanical sheaths. The

rules contained within give a little more edge toward cybes (or chromers as this supplement calls them) with little or negligible impact upon one's humanity. Thus, these rules to normalize the use of cybernetics in the Terra/Sol milieu (even though some Stellar Nations may have stringent rules against cyber modification) which is in keeping with the overall New Space Opera vibe. The rules themselves are solid and well written (and allude to as of writing an unwritten supplement entitled *Mutants & AIs*). It is this part that could easily be ported into any *Traveller* universe just like the Mongoose book, though one might ask, "is that all there is?".

Terra/Sol resounded says: *No*. For in the next, we get into biological modification and rules there within. So, Terra/Sol Games takes the old fashioned notion of bionics and puts into a transhumanist vat and comes up with decent and excellent rules how to go further than just mere chrome into the promise of cybernetics might eventually lead into...virtually indistinguishable but augmented human beings. It was this section that impressed me more than the chrome add-ons because of where it leads.

Cyborgs. Long a staple of science fiction, but, at the same time virtually ignored in *Traveller*, save, maybe a passing mention. The question arose what happens when you put an organic brain in a machine – is there a ghost that resides in the machine? What does it mean to be human when your body is merely a mechanical shell keeping you safe and/or alive with only your brain (although, parts of that might already are wired into a biological computer. This is by far the strongest section, as it builds upon the excellent robot rules and those that Terra/Sol Games has done in the previous two chapters, as well as supplements such as *Tinker*, *Spacer*, *Psion*, *Spy* and posing these questions as a moral dilemma.

Then this supplement goes one step further by probing the boundaries of *cygeware* – cybernetics and genetic modification. And, this section is where traditional *Traveller* is blown away – it brings *Traveller* completely in line with the recent developments of Science Fiction. Just as *Star Wars* redefined Sci-

(Continued from page 54)

ence Fiction on the screen (big and small), cyberpunk the boundaries of Science Fiction literature... cygware is all about pushing the envelope further.

For these reasons, that this represents a superior book for Mongoose *Traveller*, it is hoped that it can get into dead tree soon (reminding you that Mongoose *Traveller* is not your Granddaddy's *Traveller* – although, the Mongoose *Cybernetics* supplement allows one to play in their Dad's game). This is a fresh, innovative and truly remarkable take on cybernetics that is thoroughly modern yet grounded in Space Opera. It also seems that Terra/Sol is outgrowing the *Traveller* incubator and developing into

a new game in its own right. (I know that they are planning to covert the setting over to Savage Worlds but whether this is part of the shift/conversion or just creeping independence is hard to know) If your game is more Hard SF then just appropriate the parts you need or rely on the already excellent book that Mongoose put out as the motto of Terra/Sol Games is Space Opera to the power of 10 – this supplement lives up to that slogan. Buy this book, if your game is Space Opera in need of modernization (ever wonder what TL C+ is like). Do not buy this book, if you content to slough through the Golden Age classics. But, you will not know what you are missing. ❁

In A Store Near You

Trailbluffer Boots

by Art O'Mary

Maker of some of the most durable and well-known boots in the Imperium, Trailbluffer started as a small company on Henoz/Rhylanor making work boots. Word of the quality spread and they expanded into markets for explorers, hunters and mercenaries. They bid on a contract for the Scouts and, though they failed to win the contract, they gained a following as word spread from the review team about the comfort and quality of the boots. Soon they became a 'must-have' for Imperial officers in most services, and the company flourished. Other service members found them useful as well, including anyone who ever had ship shoes sucked off their feet crossing a muddy Class D landing field.

Trailbluffer boots come in a variety of styles, but each pair comes with a seven-year integrity guarantee. The high-tech materials are waterproof, resistant to stains, tears, wear, mud, most solvents and corrosives. They are built to be easily and quickly custom-fitted to the wearer, meaning that break-in time is almost non-existent. The purchaser's information is kept in a memory crystal implanted in the boot, and lifetime refitting is included with the purchase. Re-

fitting is only done by a qualified tech, and they will *not* resize boots if your information does not match the boot chip.

The most basic type is a calf-length boot with detachable knee guards, brown or black, with clasp closures along the sides although pull-on and lace-up styles are available. Crushproof toes and laminate shanks are standard.

Options include a broad variety of colors and textures, including simulated exotic animal hide. Real leather, laminated to the exterior, is available although it is not covered by the damage warranty.

The really high-end models have memory coating and a chip with a few dozen color and texture combinations, to allow instant adaptation of the boots to a changing wardrobe. Boots come in Engineer, Equestrian, Hiking, Dress, Military and other styles. (It is reported that black market chips can make the surface appear to be skin that has come from sentient beings—human skin, Vargr or Aslan fur, K'kree leather, etc. Use of these chips, if they do exist, will instantly void all warranties).

A variety of sole treads and materials can be chosen, and can include magnetic soles (a power pack must be attached), retractable tree climbing spikes, retractable crampons, or toe spikes. ❁

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

